2024 LEARNING TRENDS REPORT

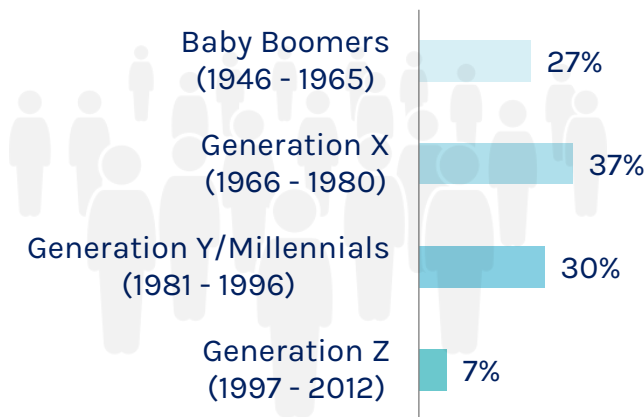# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Simitri's 2024 Global Learning Trends Report serves as a guiding compass in an era defined by rapid technological advancements, evolving workforce dynamics, and innovative educational methods.
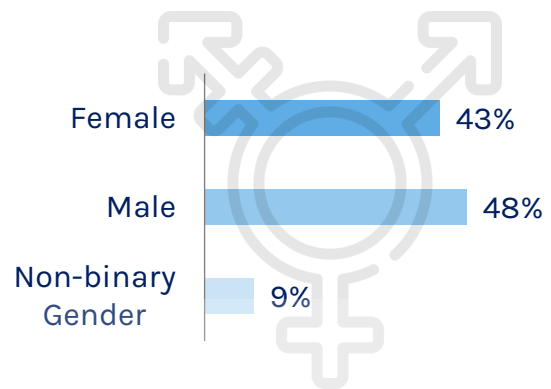
With insights from seasoned Learning & Development (L&D) experts, this report delves into the key trends shaping L&D in 2024. The central theme for this year's results revolves around Mastering Present Leadership by acknowledging the ever-advancing future driven by technology, a spotlight on wellbeing and adaptability, and a growing focus on societal and environmental wellbeing.

240 L&D Professionals surveyed

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

GENERATION

- Baby Boomers (1946 - 1965) — 27%
- Generation X (1966 - 1980) — 37%
- Generation Y/Millennials (1981 - 1996) — 30%
- Generation Z (1997 - 2012) — 7%

GENDER

- Female — 43%
- Male — 48%
- Non-binary Gender — 9%

INDUSTRY

- Financial Services — 20%
- Consulting — 15%
- Consumer Products — 12%
- Chemical Manufacturing — 10%
- Healthcare — 10%
- Others — 10%
- IT — 8%
- Real Estate — 8%
- Non-profit — 7%

REGION

- Asia — 42%
- Australia/NZ — 11%
- Americas — 17%
- Europe — 25%
- Middle East/Africa — 5%
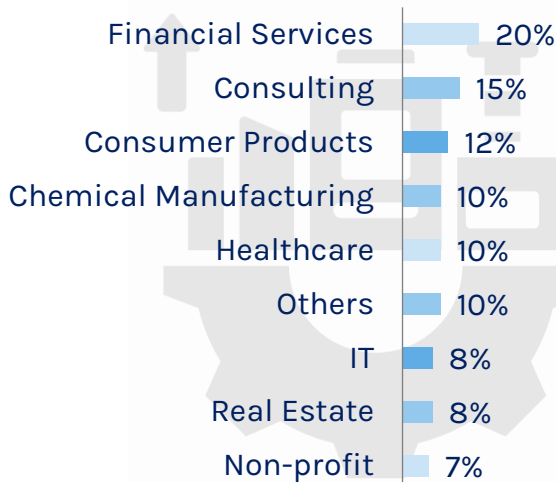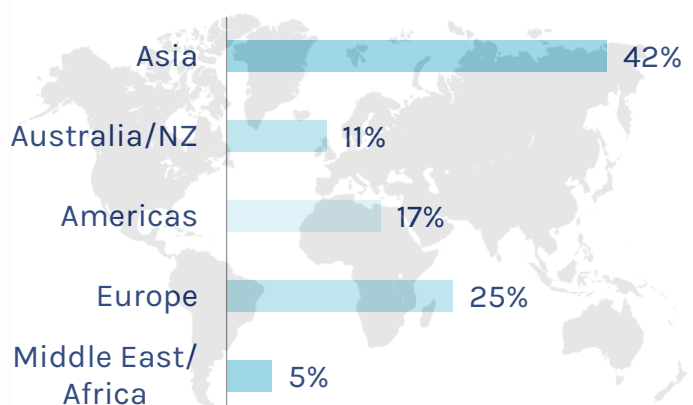
LOOKING BACK AT 2023

Over the past year, we have witnessed the convergence of traditional and innovative learning methodologies, fuelled by digital transformation and a renewed emphasis on adaptability. From remote work becoming the norm to the rise of artificial intelligence, the intersections between technology and education is expected to mould new frontiers of growth and progress.

In 2023, there were several emerging AI-driven educational platforms designed for self-guided learning. While these platforms appeared promising, a notable **62%** of survey participants expressed a preference for **customised training** and **group coaching** over machine-driven solutions.

What formats and approaches excite you most in the coming year?

62% *customised training*

17% *VR/AR/AI learning solutions*
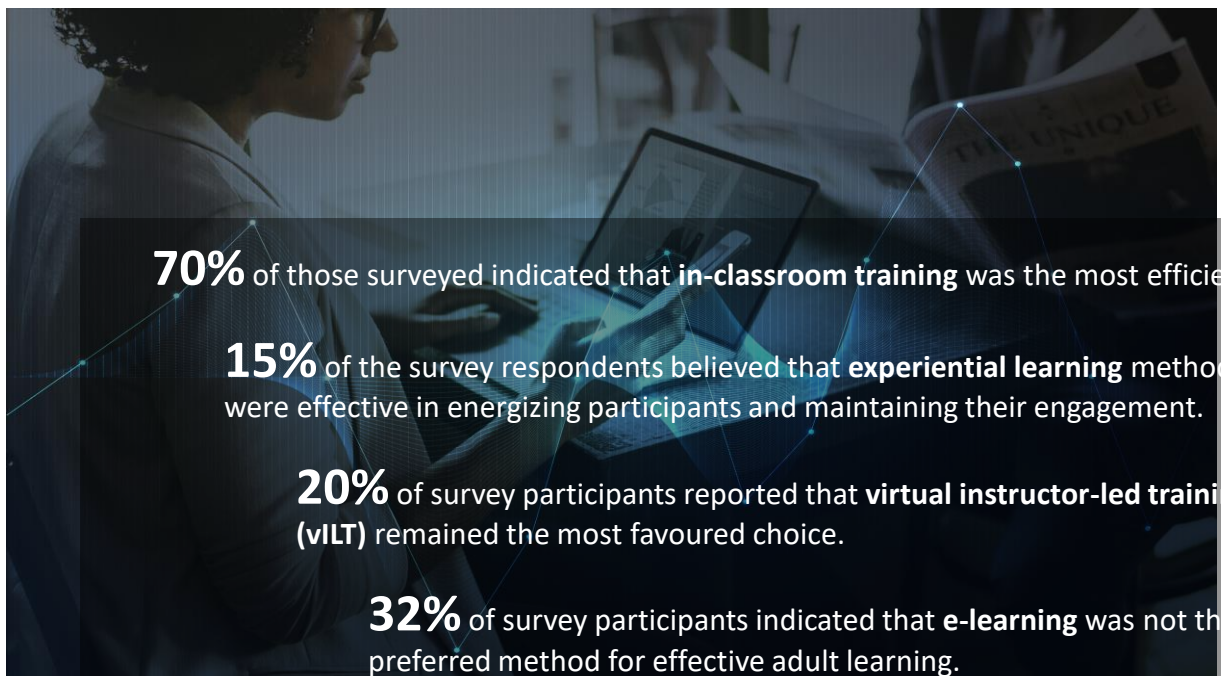
70% of those surveyed indicated that **in-classroom training** was the most efficient.

15% of the survey respondents believed that **experiential learning** methods were effective in energizing participants and maintaining their engagement.

20% of survey participants reported that **virtual instructor-led training (vILT)** remained the most favoured choice.

32% of survey participants indicated that **e-learning** was not their preferred method for effective adult learning.

PREPARING FOR 2024 OPPORTUNITIES

As the world continues to grapple with unprecedented challenges and opportunities, the significance of equipping individuals, organisations, and societies with the necessary knowledge and skills cannot be overstated.

With the diverse opportunities that constitute the learning journey in our interconnected world, Learning and Development professionals around the world are excited about the varied avenues available to them to foster organisational advancement in 2024 and the future.

We explore the following in the coming pages:

◆ Preparing Leaders for the Future

◆ Crafting Successful Hybrid Working Conditions

◆ Paving the Path for Effective AI-Employee Integration

◆ Investing in Employee Health and Wellness Programmes

Companies boasting comprehensive and adaptable employee training and development programs are best equipped for success. The competitive advantage derived from cultivating employees internally is only expanding.

Respondents identified the top 3 most pressing objectives for their companies in 2024.

Adapting to market, industry changes

Improving team collaboration

Developing future skills for digitalisation

Top Objectives for 2024

PREPARING LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE, EMBRACING THE PRESENT AND BEYOND

In a rapidly evolving world, preparing Leaders for the future has never been more critical.

The future is not some distant destination; it is already upon us.

The complexities of today's globalised, technology-driven, and ever-changing landscape demand Leaders who possess a unique blend of skills, including adaptability, technological fluency, ethical leadership, and a global perspective.

Preparing such Leaders should start with promoting enhanced self-awareness and being courageous during **change** cycles.

76% of those surveyed identified **Change Management** as the top skill required in 2024, followed by:

Leadership Coaching and Motivation

Mindset Culture Change

**Future-proof skills for Digitalisation and Technology**

Self-aware Leaders are more authentic and genuine in their interactions with others. When Leaders understand their emotions and motivations: they can communicate openly and honestly, fostering trust and transparency within their teams; they become better at understanding the emotions and perspectives of their team members.

Courage is necessary to stand by one's values and principles, even when faced with adversity or opposition. Courage allows Leaders to engage in empathetic leadership by addressing sensitive issues and creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

Self-awareness helps Leaders recognise when they are experiencing stress, burnout, or emotional exhaustion. By acknowledging these feelings, they can take proactive steps to manage their well-being and build resilience.

Courage is necessary to seek help or make necessary changes to maintain personal and professional balance.
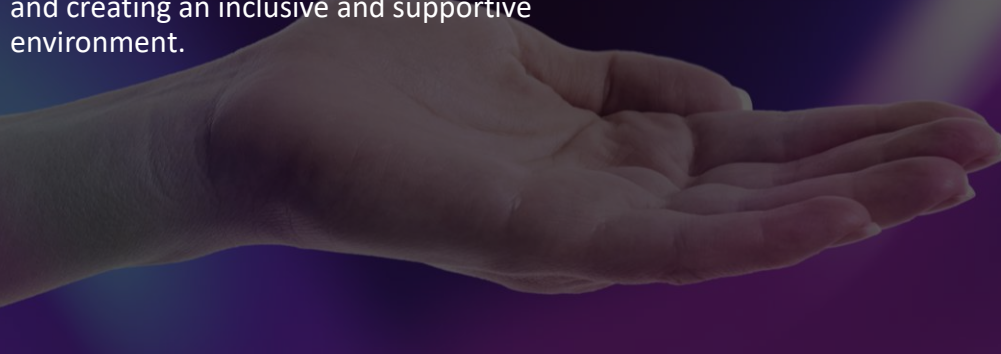
PREPARING LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE, EMBRACING THE PRESENT AND BEYOND

Technological fluency is vital for Leaders as it enables informed decision-making in the digital age, facilitates innovation, and ensures effective communication with tech-savvy teams. Leaders who grasp technology's potential can harness it for organisational growth and competitiveness, staying relevant and driving transformative change in the modern business landscape.
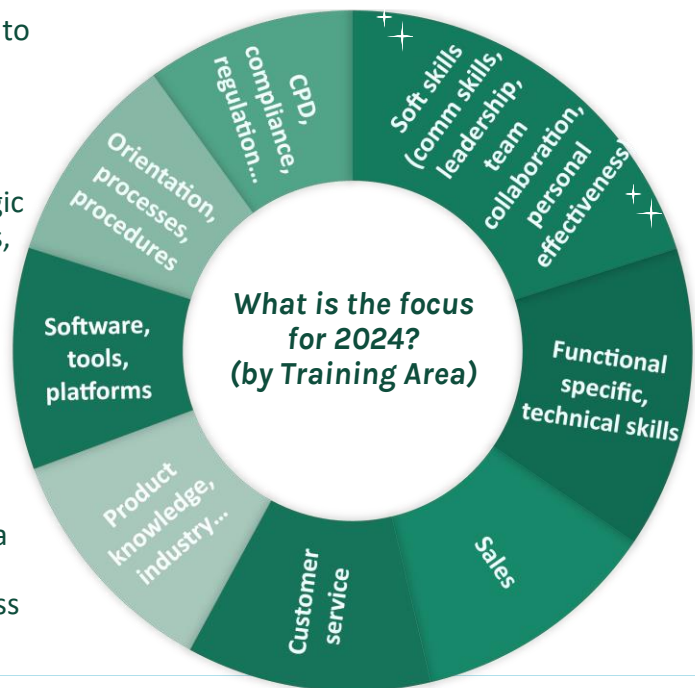
Ethical leadership is crucial as it fosters trust, integrity, and a positive organizational culture. Ethical leaders set the moral tone, inspiring ethical behaviour in teams, enhancing reputation, and reducing risks. In an era of heightened social responsibility, ethical leadership is key to sustainable success and stakeholder confidence.

Adaptability, not only in leadership but across the board, is a crucial skill in today's workplace. The ability to adjust to new conditions, environments, situations involves being flexible, open to change, and capable of thriving in situations that may be uncertain, unpredictable, or different from what you're accustomed to.

Leaders need a Global Perspective to navigate today's interconnected world. It fosters awareness of international markets, diverse cultures, and geopolitical factors. This understanding enables strategic decisions, expansion opportunities, and effective collaboration in a globalized economy, fostering competitiveness and sustainable growth.

The future is already here, and Leaders must be prepared to meet its challenges head-on. Leadership development for the future is not a luxury but a necessity. It is an investment in the long-term success and sustainability of organisations.

What is the focus for 2024? (by Training Area)

- CPD, compliance, regulation...
- Soft skills (comm skills, leadership, team collaboration, personal effectiveness)
- Orientation, processes, procedures
- Functional specific, technical skills
- Software, tools, platforms
- Sales
- Product knowledge, industry...
- Customer service

CRAFTING SUCCESSFUL HYBRID WORKING CONDITIONS

60% *of respondents remain in a Hybrid work environment; a reduction of 19% from last year*

Employee expectations on when, where and how we work and learn, continue to be in flux.

The situation with employees returning to the office is quite dynamic and varied based on the geographical location, industry specifics, and company policies.
While Asia quickly returned to the office as the norm, North America predominantly remains remote, and Europe provides a steady Hybrid approach to working.

While there are many benefits to Hybrid working conditions, amalgamating remote and in-office setups can yield adverse effects on businesses. Leaders are concerned about disrupted communication, diluted team cohesion, and potential inequalities in resource access.

"There is more pressure on Leaders to master Agile Leadership skills."

A higher percentage of Leaders are pushing for the return of employees to the office. The transition may be slower than desired, therefore crafting adept strategies becomes imperative to mitigate these drawbacks and sustain optimal business performance.

For organisations to be successful in today's demanding environment, Managers need to implement structure, support and guidance on activities that can be performed at home versus those that require in-person attention.

Embed practices to:

- Align Team Goals with the organisation's objectives and growth plans

- Set Expectations on working hours, responsiveness and quality work outputs

- Empower Team Members to make the appropriate decisions and to be proactive in company growth

- Be Inclusive

- Recognise Effort and Success

PAVING THE PATH FOR EFFECTIVE AI INTEGRATION

Many organisations and Leaders are excited for the integration of generative AI, including tools like ChatGPT, Bard, Claude, Midjourney, and similar content creation utilities.

Unfortunately, the common complaint about the introduction of these new technologies involves employee reluctance to adapt to change. Many individuals exhibit hesitancy in accepting AI due to concerns related to job displacement, perceived loss of control, and ethical deliberations.

A similar response emerged when personal computers were introduced during the 1980s. Fast forward four decades, and it's now more common for households to possess multiple PCs. The proficient utilisation of PCs has notably enhanced the education system and our capacity to access information in a mere moment.

The use of AI has already made a significant impact with:

o Chatbots translating and communicating across languages, culture and generations

o Image recognition used in medical analysis, research and treatment

o Fraud and algorithmic detection

o Optimising energy consumption, predicting equipment failures, and managing energy grids more efficiently

o Personalising learning by adapting educational content to individual student needs and learning patterns

o Precision farming for crop monitoring, disease detection, and yield prediction

Adopting AI in the workplace can amplify efficiency, automate repetitive tasks, enhance decision-making through data analysis, and foster innovation.

It empowers teams to focus on higher-value activities, stay competitive in rapidly evolving industries, and unlock new insights for informed strategies – leading to increased productivity and growth.

Leaders can facilitate successful AI adoption by addressing employee anxiety around implementing the technology in their roles, especially if they're expected to learn how to use it quickly and effectively.

1. Transparent **Communication,** explaining purpose, benefits, and potential impact on roles to alleviate concerns

2. Provide comprehensive **Training** to build employees' AI skills and confidence in using new tools effectively

3. Offer opportunities for **Upskilling** to enable employees to transition into new roles that AI can't replace

4. **Involve Employees** in AI initiatives, seeking their insights and **Feedback** to create a sense of ownership

5. Implement **Change Management** strategies to guide employees through the transition smoothly

6. Establish support **Networks** or mentorship programs to help employees adapt and share experiences

7. Set **Clear Expectations** about how AI will complement—not replace—human work

8. Continuously gather **Feedback** and iterate AI solutions based on employee input

9. **Recognise and Celebrate Employee Achievements** in adapting to AI-driven changes

PAVING THE PATH FOR EFFECTIVE AI USAGE

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterised by AI, automation, and data-driven decision-making, is revolutionising industries at an unprecedented pace.

Leaders who are not technologically fluent risk becoming obsolete.

Preparing leaders for the future means ensuring they are not only familiar with these technologies but also equipped to leverage them strategically for the benefit of their organisations.

77% *are worried that AI will lead to job losses in the next year.*

— *Forbes Advisory study*

Simitri's Programmes:

AI in Business provides participants with an introduction to the use of AI in a business setting. During the program we look what AI is, the benefit for business, when AI should not be used, and other challenges and concerns around the use of AI such as privacy, ethical concerns and data bias. Participants also spend time practicing the use of some AI tools.

BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS
By completing this programme, you will:
- Have a better understanding of AI and its applications in the workplace
- Opportunity to try some AI apps in order to enhance productivity and efficiency

The Future of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) will provide participants with valuable insights into the future of ICT, its impact on various industries, and how to best equip themselves for the rapidly changing digital landscape.

BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS
By completing this programme, you will:
- Gain a thorough understanding of ICT's significance and current industry trends
- Delve into the future of ICT, including 5G, AI, Blockchain, etc., to identify innovation opportunities
- Prepare for the fast-changing digital landscape, acquire soft skills, and become a digital leader

AI unleashes the collective energy, passion, and capabilities of your people.

— *McKinsey*

INVESTING IN EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMES

While technical expertise has maintained its importance over time, there is currently a noticeable uptick in the demand for interpersonal aptitudes such as emotional intelligence, empathy, dependability, trustworthiness, and comprehension. At the organisational level, the emphasis is shifting towards prioritising the wellbeing of employees, with leaders placing employee feedback and engagement at the forefront of their decision-making processes.

An effective workplace wellbeing program can yield mutual benefits for individuals, organisations, economies, and communities. Healthy workplaces empower individuals to thrive and realise their full potential. This entails creating an environment that actively fosters a sense of contentment, benefiting both employees and the organisation.

Investing in employee wellbeing can lead to enhanced resilience, heightened employee engagement, reduced absenteeism, and improved performance and productivity. Nonetheless, wellbeing initiatives often fall short of their potential because they operate in isolation, disconnected from everyday business operations.

To derive genuine benefits, employee wellbeing priorities must be seamlessly integrated throughout an organisation, ingrained in its culture, leadership practices, and people management.

The learning and development profession holds a unique position in propelling this agenda forward, convincing senior executives to make it a priority, and ensuring that line managers are both confident and capable of supporting their team's wellbeing.

"Without determined action, the impact of COVID-19 on mental health may last for longer than the pandemic itself."

— UN Secretary-General (2021)

Simitri's Programmes:

Building Psychological Safety for Leaders investigates the importance and benefits of Psychological Safety on individual, team performance and your organisation's ability to remain competitive. It will also delve into ways to prevent burnout and reduce pressure at work.

Building Psychological Safety: PERMA looks at Positive Psychology, pioneered by Professor Marin Seligman, who has developed an evidence-based model for the active ingredients of wellbeing.

Thriving Under Pressure explores causes, signs and symptoms of workplace pressure, before spending time on techniques participants can use to manage workplace pressure and strategies to take control of the events which may be causing negative effects.

Navigating Ambiguity and Change with a Growth Mindset explores the constant change that is happening and the benefits of this can bring–focusing on strategies and actions to maintain a growth mindset, navigate ambiguity, and maximise their effectiveness during change.

IN-PERSON TRAINING

Survey respondents anticipate a surge in in-classroom workshops in 2024. Early bookings for Simitri in 2024 substantiate a heightened interest in face-to-face training.

The resurgence of in-person training can be attributed to these compelling factors.

78% *in 2024*

45% *in 2023*

Human interaction and face-to-face engagement foster a more dynamic learning environment, enabling immediate feedback and personalised guidance that can be challenging to replicate in virtual settings.

Certain skills and tasks, especially those involving hands-on training or physical presence, are best taught and learned in person.

Many individuals have expressed a desire for a return to a more social and collaborative workplace, where in-person training sessions offer opportunities not only for learning but also for networking and team building.

The human element of in-person training enhances **employee engagement** and helps build a stronger sense of belonging within an organisation.

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."
— Confucius

WHERE NEXT WITH L&D?

Learning and Development (L&D) encounters numerous hurdles, with budget constraints emerging as the primary challenge for the majority of the surveyed L&D professionals. This implies that the department lacks sufficient funding.

Effectively utilising the allocated budget is paramount to achieving a favourable influence on the organisation. Scaling L&D's effectiveness and making the most of training investments are vital objectives for the upcoming year and beyond.

Measures to help maximise budgets:

- Extend the shelf life of training programmes by customising detailed case studies and role plays

- Provide learners with flexible options for learning with a blend of virtual instructor-led and classroom training

- Eliminate the training modes that are deemed ineffective

- Centralise L&D budget to maximise usage and resources

- Outsource the non-value add activities

- License the foundational training topics—eliminating costly re-runs

27% of organisations spend $1000 USD per employee.

30% training budgets set to be flat to last year's spend.

19% said training budgets higher for 2024.

ABOUT SIMITRI

Simitri Group International is a training, coaching and consulting company. We improve our clients' bottom line by transforming both individual and team behaviour.
By combining our business expertise, industry knowledge and some of the most effective courseware, techniques, and tools from around the world, we provide our clients with uniquely personalised solutions that address their issues and requirements.
With our globally-based consultants and centralised logistical support, Simitri acts as a single point of contact for training worldwide. Our structure allows us to deliver in the local language with local expertise: saving our clients time and money as well as ensuring smooth planning and delivery every time.
Simitri is about change: changing behaviours, attitudes, perceptions and mindsets to drive business results.

CONTACT US TO
FIND OUT MORE

Email: marketing@simitrigroup.com
Phone: +65 6235 3297
Website: www.simitrigroup.com