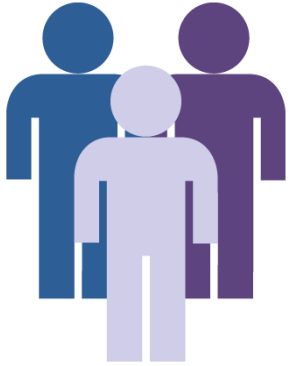


# The Learner Voice

*Part 2*

5,700 staff provide their perspective  
on how they are really learning in the  
private and public sector workplace



The ***Learner Voice*** series aims to help L&D leaders challenge their assumptions about workplace learning and to identify new opportunities to connect with and engage their staff.

Direct learner insights have been drawn from the Towards Maturity Learning Landscape Audit (LLA); an ongoing research programme that started in 2003. The LLA helps individual businesses uncover the real facts about how their staff learn at work, both formally and informally. Each organisation has a unique profile of behaviour, but there are some trends across all of the businesses that we look to share in the Learner Voice series.

***The Learner Voice Part 2*** provides:

- ***Insights from 5,700 learners:***\* A new sample drawn from 17,000 learners responding from a range of companies across private and public sectors.
- ***A perspective on current behaviours:*** All data was gathered in the period Jan 2014 to October 2014.
- ***Key Differences:*** Comparing role, responsibility and time in job.
- ***A challenge to L&D:*** As we compare learner perspectives with feedback from L&D professionals in our 2014-15 Towards Maturity Benchmark.

We leave it to the reader to decide if L&D are tuned into the learner voice!

*\* This sample predominantly consisted of knowledge workers from service industries in the UK and Europe.*

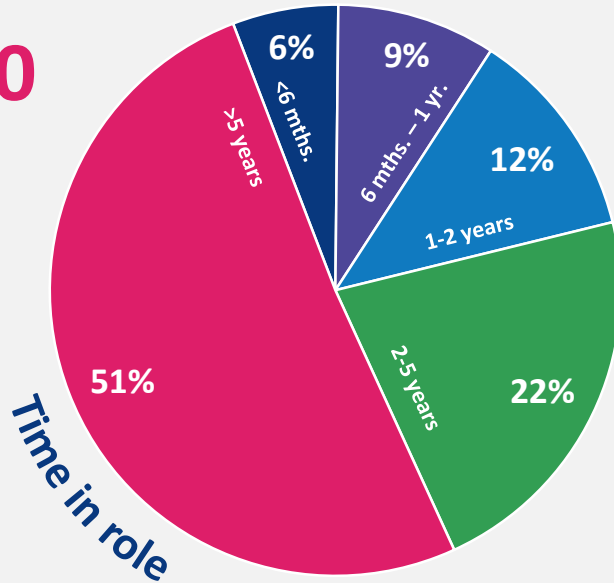
## Contents

1. Demographics
2. How do staff learn what they need to do their jobs?
3. The Line Manager's Voice
4. The Sales Person's Voice
5. The New Starter's Voice
6. The Voice across Generations
7. Staff views on learning culture
8. Are L&D teams tuned into the learner voice?
9. Characteristics of top deck L&D teams

# Demographics

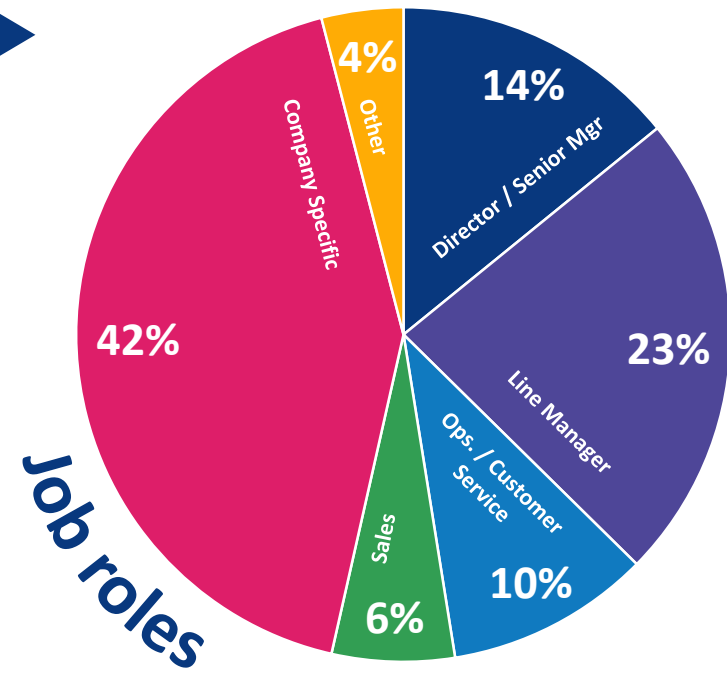


Sample of **5,700** learners surveyed between January and October 2014








Gender	% of sample
Male	58%
Female	42%

	% of sample
Have a regular place of work	76%
Responsible for managing own time at work	87%
UK-based	73%
Graduate/post graduate qualified	70%



Considerable data regarding learner behaviour is explored in the Learning Landscape Audit. This study shares just a few of the findings that specifically explore:

- The line manager voice 
- The salesperson voice 
- The new starter voice (those in role for less than 6 months) 
- 21s–30s compared with older generations 
- General views on learning culture 

*Throughout this overview we'll also bring you direct quotes from the learners we sampled.*

# How are staff learning what they need for their jobs?

## TOP 10 LEARNER PREFERENCES

*Rated as essential or highly useful methods for learning what they need for their job:*

1. **91%** team collaboration
2. **81%** manager support
3. **73%** web search
4. **83%** conversations / meetings
5. **67%** support from mentor / coach / buddy
6. **64%** formal education course
7. **55%** internal company documents
8. **52%** internal networks / communities
9. **50%** mobile
10. **49%** live online learning /  
**47%** self-paced e-learning

*“In recent times, I have found external resources and the company library the most useful resources for self-development. We need to be more rigorous with the quality of internal resources – quantity is not substitute for quality.”*

**82%** agree that they like to learn at their own pace

*“I like to learn at my own pace, often courses (especially online courses) are too slow.”*

**91%**

**AGREE COLLABORATION IS  
ESSENTIAL OR VERY USEFUL**

# Learning online: what works for staff (and what doesn't)?

## WHAT MOTIVATES STAFF TO LEARN ONLINE?



- 75% want to be able to do their job faster and better
- 51% like to learn just for personal development
- 50% want to be eligible for promotion
- 47% want to obtain professional certification
- 41% want to be enabled to earn more money
- 39% want to keep up with new technology
- 35% want to achieve/maintain a higher certification level
- 35% want to increase productivity
- 22% want to pass an assessment
- 10% want to compete against colleagues for a high score

**75%**

**WANT TO DO THEIR JOB  
FASTER AND BETTER**

*"Current online courses available only cover one aspect of a topic – not the whole thing. This means I can finish a course and think, 'Great! I can do THAT...but how on earth do I do THIS?'"*

*"I would like a study plan, requiring time and support from my Line Manager. I'm not sure where to start; there's so much on our online learning portal, it's a bit overwhelming."*

## WHAT STOPS THEM FROM LEARNING ONLINE?

- 63% lack of time for self-study
- 40% can't find what they need
- 41% find current online learning not relevant to their need
- 28% lack of somewhere appropriate to study
- 26% find learning content uninspiring
- 25% technology issues such as low bandwidth
- 22% learning objectives are not clear



**40%**

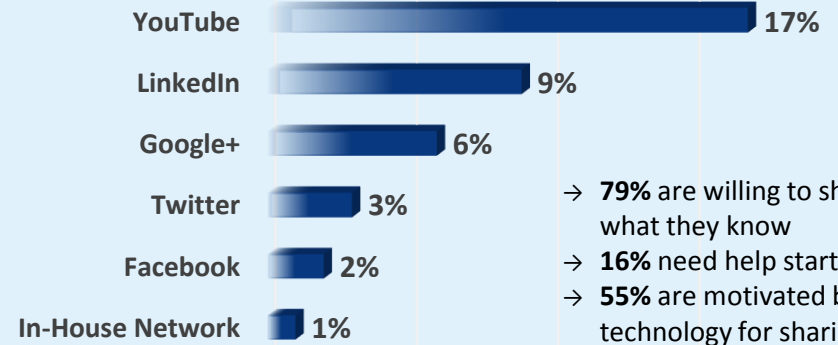
**CAN'T FIND WHAT  
THEY NEED**

## How do line managers learn what they need to do their job?

- **91%** team collaboration
- **81%** manager
- **71%** web searches
- **61%** classroom
- **58%** internal documents
- **54%** buddy / mentor support
- **49%** use a work mobile
- **35%** use their own mobile
- **56%** use home computer
- **81%** like to learn at their own pace
- **77%** know what learning they need (59% know where to get it)

*(37% find e-learning, 32% online performance support and 49% find live online learning essential or very useful)*

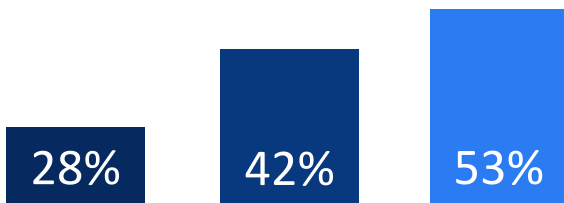
## Which social networks do line managers use for learning?



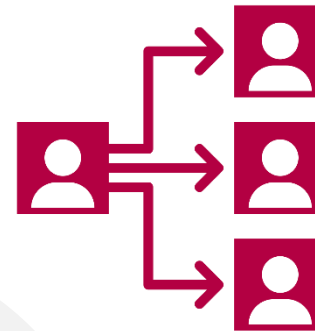
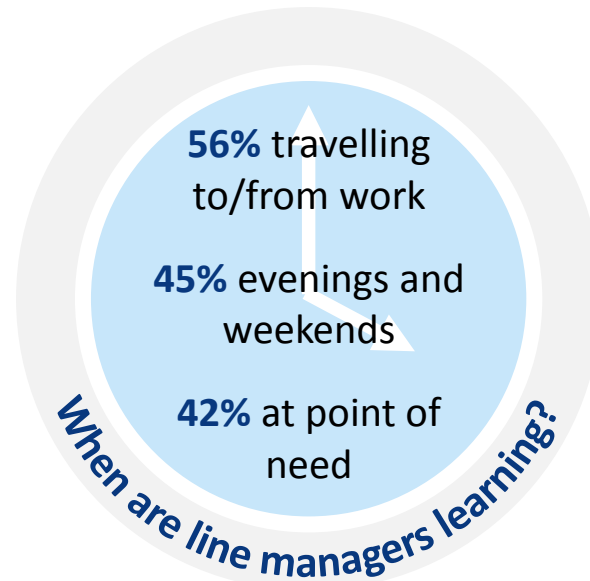
- **79%** are willing to share what they know
- **16%** need help starting
- **55%** are motivated by technology for sharing

# The Line Manager's Voice

Tutor support    Quality    Relevant & Timely



**Top 3 factors that contribute to great online learning**



*"In summary, very happy to do any online learning or classroom training. Definitely not into learning on my mobile device; when I'm mobile I'm generally too distracted for learning."*

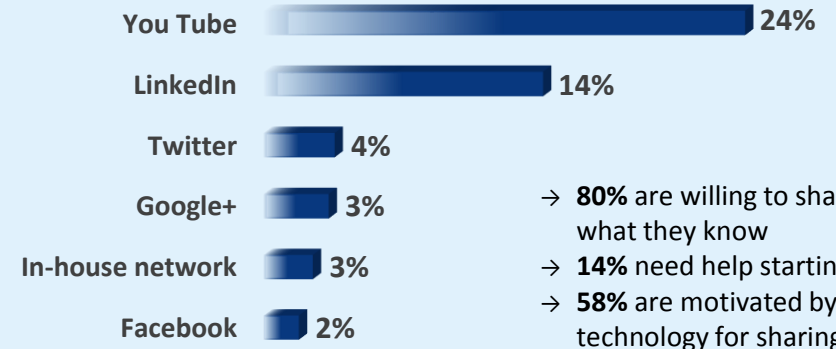
**56%**  
MANAGERS LEARN  
TRAVELLING TO/FROM  
WORK

## How do sales people learn what they need to do their job?

- **88%** general conversations
- **84%** team collaboration
- **82%** buddy/mentor support
- **73%** manager support
- **69%** web search
- **66%** internal networks
- **46%** use a work mobile
- **51%** use their own mobile
- **61%** use home computers
- **76%** like to learn at their own pace
- **74%** know what learning they need (64% know where to find it)

*(48% find e-learning, 30% online performance support, 43% live online learning essential or very useful)*

## Which social networks do sales people use for learning?



- **80%** are willing to share what they know
- **14%** need help starting
- **58%** are motivated by technology for sharing

# The Salesperson's Voice

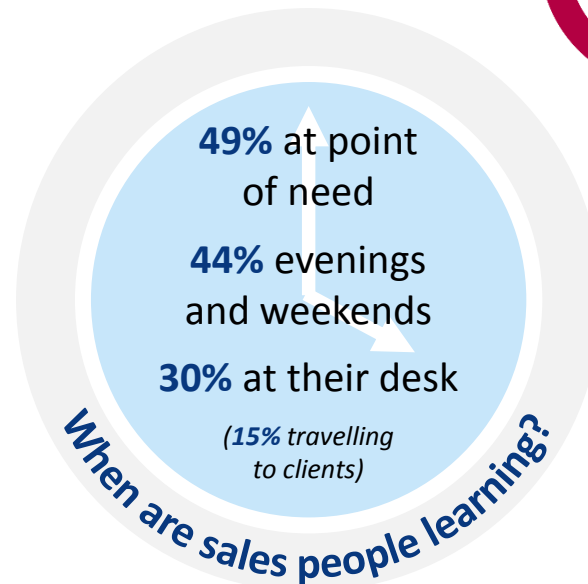


*"Training is critical, and the online delivery route is both flexible and effective. Our organisation's efforts in that direction are noticeable and increasingly impressive."*

Tutor Support      Blended approach      Relevant & Timely



**Top 3 factors that contribute to great online learning**



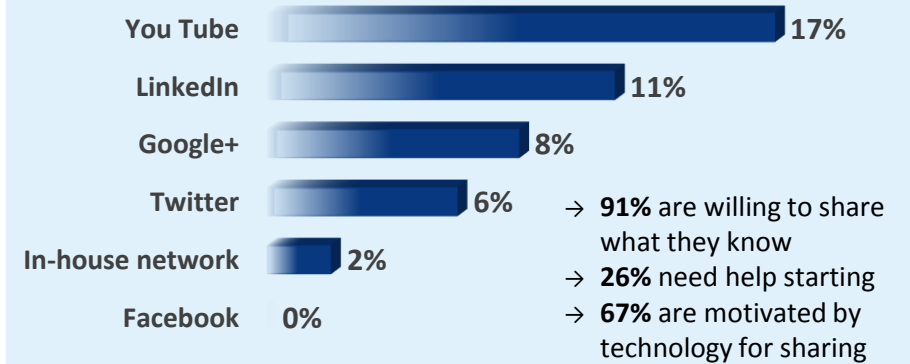
**61%**  
SALES PEOPLE  
USE THEIR HOME  
COMPUTER TO LEARN

## How do new starters learn what they need to do their job?

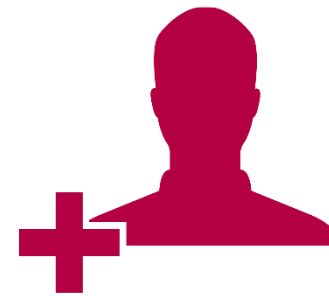
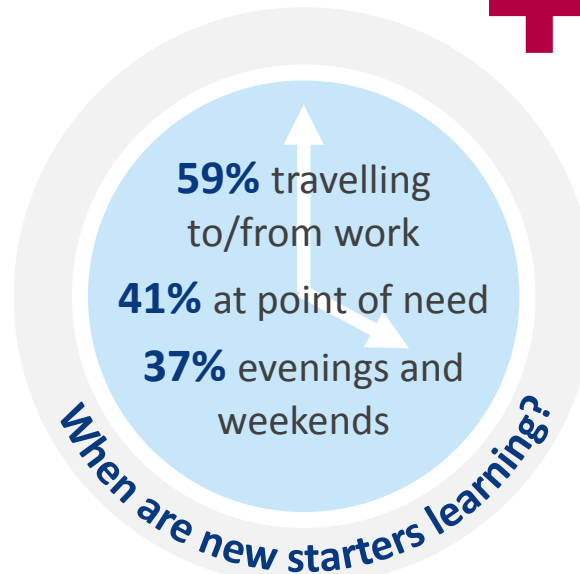
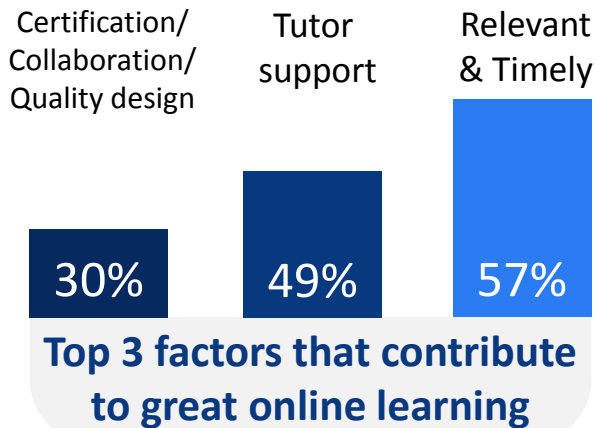
- **96%** team collaboration
- **92%** manager
- **88%** general conversations
- **81%** web searches
- **72%** formal education
- **66%** mentoring/coaching
- **58%** internal documents
- **50%** use a work mobile
- **44%** use their own mobile
- **51%** use home computer
- **83%** like to learn at their own pace
- **68%** know what learning they need  
(53% know where to get it)

*(48% find online performance support 42% MOOCs, 41% e-learning and 53% live online learning essential or very useful)*

## Which social networks do new starters use for learning?



# The New Starter's Voice

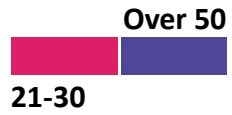


*"I know what qualifications I want and need to progress in my chosen area of interest, though some visibility of jobs other than on-job news would be nice. I lack a support community to help me through awkward exams."*

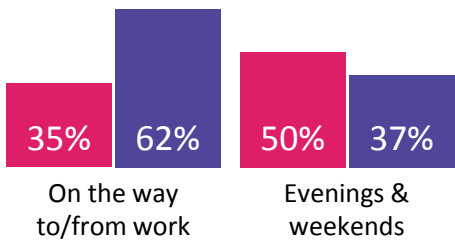
**96%**  
OF NEW STARTERS FIND  
TEAM COLLABORATION  
ESSENTIAL OR VERY USEFUL



The sample shows few significant generational differences, with older and younger both showing similar rankings when rating the usefulness of online, face to face and collaborative practices for learning – however, these findings caught our eye...



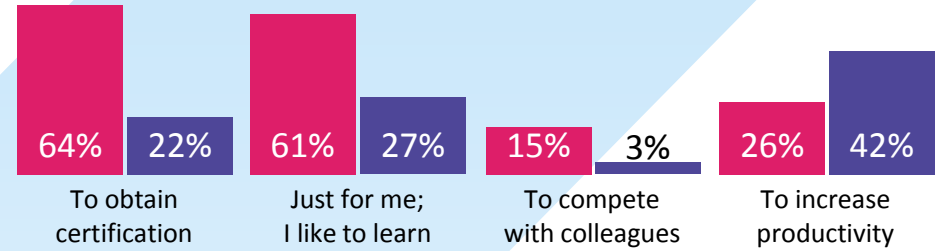
### When are they learning?



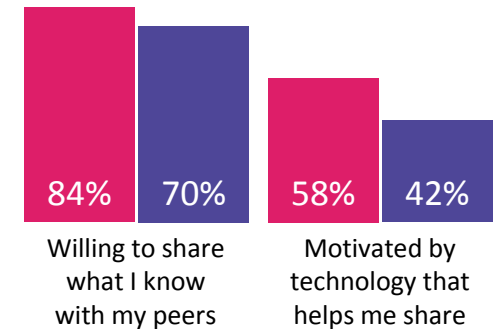
*"I strongly think encouragement from your own management to learn and develop (discuss about objectives) is crucial. Otherwise people won't be able to find relevant learning tools useful and practical."* (under 30)

*"I've worked for this firm for 15 years. In that time, IT and learning has improved significantly; both in design and the ability to find what you are looking for."* (over 50)

### Motivation for learning



### Willingness to collaborate



# Generational Differences

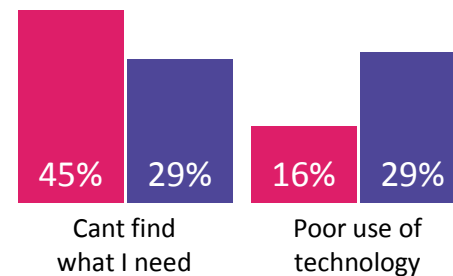


**1/3** are not willing to use their own mobiles for learning as they want to keep work and personal life separate (regardless of age)

*"The majority of the online training that I have been required to take is 'one size fits most' - it's not appropriate for a member of staff with over 30 years' experience. Completing is simply a box ticking exercise, and I gain nothing from it."* (over 50)

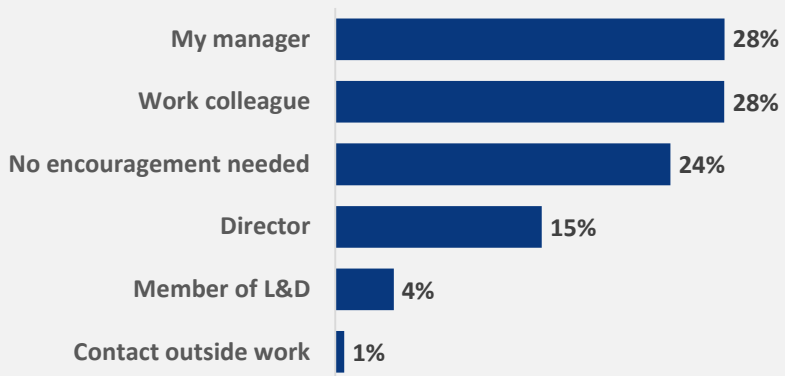
*"The online learning available at my company isn't very easy to locate. I also find that having only been in my role for a year, there isn't much information made available advising on where to start, support available, or who to approach with questions."* (under 30)

### Barriers to Learning



**64%**  
UNDER 30'S ARE LOOKING FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION FROM LEARNING

## Who's opinion will most likely encourage people to learn online?



38% of under 30s encouraged by work colleague (18% >50)  
34% of over 50s encouraged by manager (28% <30)

*"We have a 'learning culture' in the organisation, but it's not strongly connected to doing things like online learning, unless it's compulsory."*



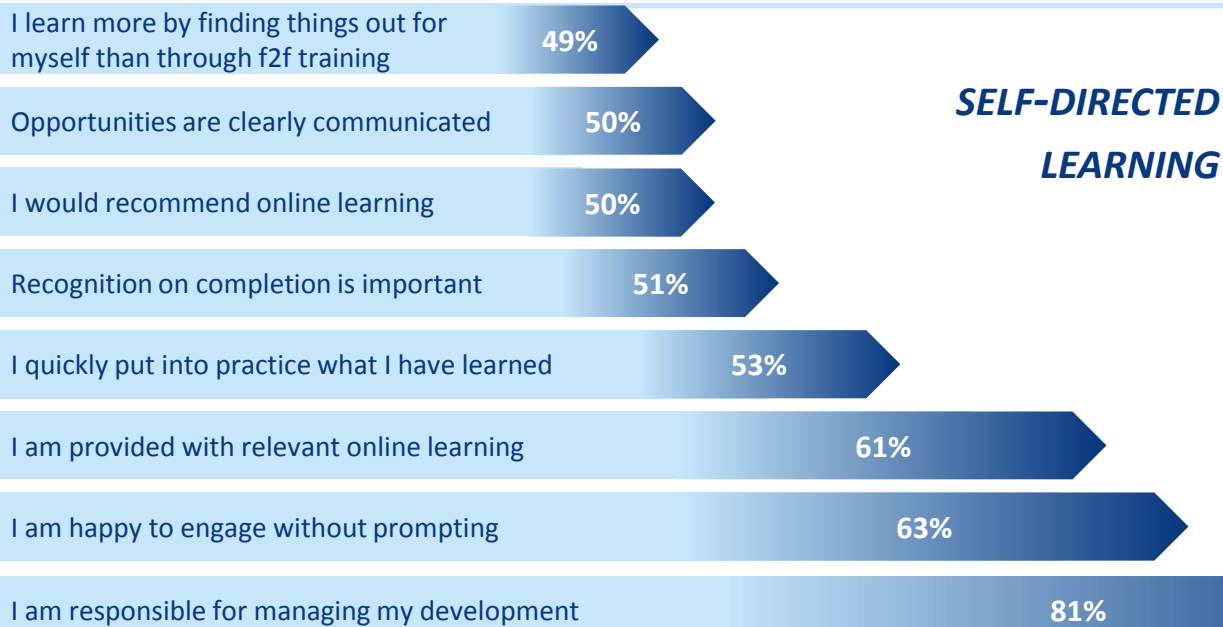
## The Vital Role of Managers

- 58% agree 'my manager makes time for me to learn at work'
- 51% agree that learning is always discussed as part of their performance review
- 33% agree managers discuss learning objectives before they start formal learning
- 49% agree that managers expect them to apply learning in the workplace
- 77% understand how their job contributes to the organisation's overall objectives

*"I feel as though I am continually encouraged to learn more and develop my professional and technical skills. It is the culture at my organisation and I appreciate being in this kind of environment..."*

# Learning Culture

Staff agree that...



## SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

**49%**  
OF STAFF AGREE MANAGERS EXPECT THEM TO APPLY LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE

# Are L&D tuned into the Learner Voice?

This study doesn't ask about what learners want, it investigates what they do, what motivates them and what doesn't! The Learner Voice provides opportunities to challenge assumptions and refine the way that L&D supports learning in the organisation. The following table compares the Learner Voice with a few of the responses from 600+ Learning and Development professionals who participated in the Towards Maturity 2014-15 Benchmark.

**56% of managers** agree they learn travelling to and from work

**61% of sales people** use their home computers to learn

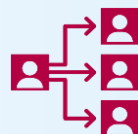
**96% of new starters** agree that team collaboration is essential for them to learn what they need

**64% of under 30s** are looking for professional recognition/certification from their learning.

**49% of staff** agree their line managers expect them to apply learning after they have completed a course

**75% of staff** turn to online learning to help them do their job better and faster

**45% of staff** say that they can't find the learning they need



**27% of L&D** agree that technology is used to support the way that they develop leaders

**44% of L&D** agree that learners can learn in places convenient to them

**20% of L&D** agree that staff know how to productively connect and share knowledge

**25% of L&D** agree that staff are rewarded or recognised for their achievements

**18% of L&D** agree they equip line managers with resources to help their teams get the most from learning

**47% of L&D** agree that their initiatives are delivered in TIME to meet the needs of business

**38% of L&D** agree that they have a communications plan in place for all key stakeholders

LEARNER PERSPECTIVE

L&D PERSPECTIVE

**STOP for a moment...**

**IF THESE WERE LEARNERS IN YOUR ORGANISATION, HOW WOULD THIS RESEARCH INFLUENCE YOUR LEARNING STRATEGY?**

→ **How would they influence the way you support learning:**

- In the workflow?
- For managers?
- For sales staff?
- For induction/onboarding?

→ **How would they influence the media that you use?**

→ **What skills would you need in the L&D team to support these learners?**



**36% OF L&D LEADERS**  
KNOW HOW THEIR STAFF LEARN AT WORK

*DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR STAFF ARE LEARNING?*

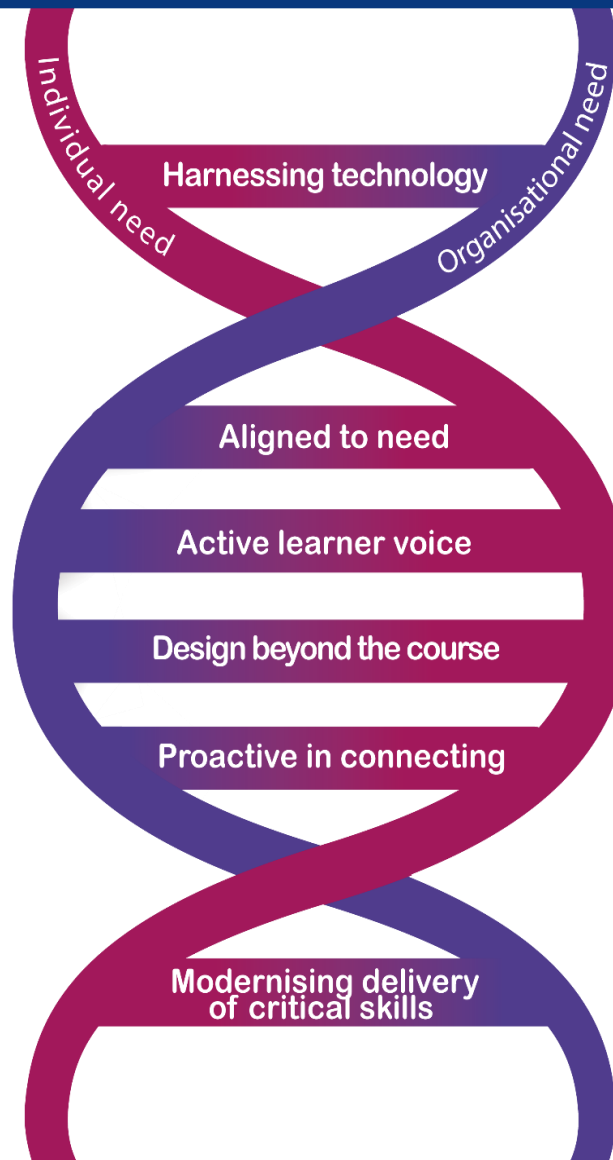
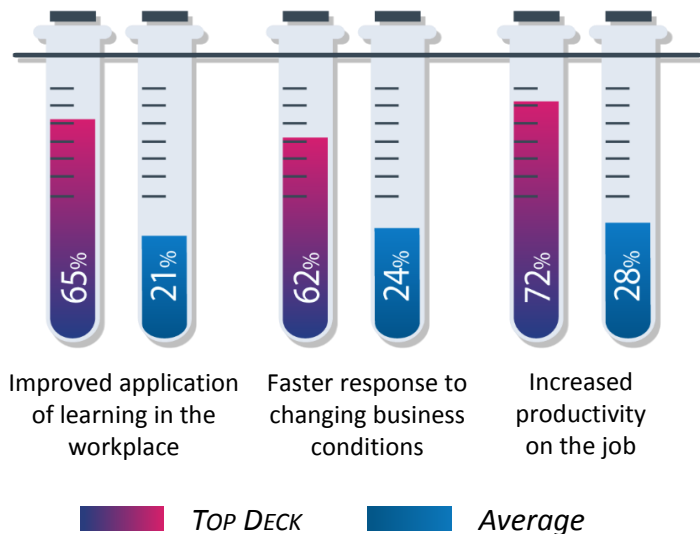
**TAKE ACTION**

**Challenge your thinking by conducting your own Learning Landscape Audit  
Find out more [www.towardsmaturity.org/learner](http://www.towardsmaturity.org/learner)**

# MODERNISING LEARNING: BECOMING A TOP PERFORMING L&D TEAM

The **Towards Maturity Model** has long provided a benchmark for effective learning practices, with the top quartile of the **Towards Maturity Index™** consistently delivering more for less. We need to understand what the top performers are doing that makes a difference.

That's why we look the Top Deck (top 10%) of the Towards Maturity Index.™ Across the board, these organisations are **twice as likely** to achieve the benefits they seek from a modernised learning strategy, reporting **30% fewer barriers** than average across the sample.



CHARACTERISTICS OF TOP DECK ORGANISATIONS

This second **Learner Voice** study provides an indication of the customer perspective for the private and public sectors, but your organisation is probably different.

**ALL** Top Deck organisations provide their staff with an active voice in learning. As you develop your learning strategy moving forward, be sure to do the same!

**TAKE ACTION**

Challenge your thinking by conducting your own **Learning Landscape Audit**  
Find out more [www.towardsmaturity.org/learner](http://www.towardsmaturity.org/learner)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report has consolidated Towards Maturity Learner Landscape findings for 5,700 private and public sector workers. Information on the way that data has been gathered from learners and definitions used can be found on page 70 of *Modernising Learning: Delivering Results*.

Please visit [www.towardsmaturity.org/research](http://www.towardsmaturity.org/research) to download free Towards Maturity studies that explore how L&D can respond to the Learner Voice themes raised in this report:

- *Modernising Learning: Delivering Results*
- *L&D: Evolving Roles, Enhancing Skills*
- *Leadership Development – Coming Soon*

*“Thanks for this opportunity to know more about myself and help me find a better way to self-educate.”*



*Towards Maturity is a benchmarking practice that provides authoritative research and expert consultancy services to help assess and improve the effectiveness and consistency of L&D performance within organisations. It leverages the data gathered from the largest learning and development benchmark in Europe.*

Find out how to conduct your own Learning Landscape Audit: [www.towardsmaturity.org/learner](http://www.towardsmaturity.org/learner)

Find out your own Towards Maturity Index to see if you are amongst the top learning organisations at: [www.towardsmaturity.org/mybenchmark](http://www.towardsmaturity.org/mybenchmark)



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