

L&D Skills Prioritiser Tool

Identify the critical skills your L&D
team needs to achieve your goals



The
CharityLearning
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This tool works best when used in conjunction with the other tools in this series

1. Needs Analysis Tool
2. Curation Decision Tool
3. Communication Plan Launch Tool
4. Cultivating Learning in Online Communities Tool
5. Improving Impact Tool
6. Power Hour Tool
7. Improving Impact Tool
8. Team Skills Mapping Tool
- 9. L&D Skills Prioritiser Tool**
10. Change Journey Planner



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Introduction

While the challenge of making time for learning is not new – and is just as relevant to other teams in the organisation – there is added urgency for L&D. With the rise of new challenges in organisations due to the recent redefinition of work and skills, L&D is being called upon to solve bigger, more strategic problems. Both a challenge and an opportunity, this is leading L&D teams to rethink how they work and the skills they need. This tool offers a straightforward guide to identify the most critical skills required by an L&D team to achieve their goals and increase impact on their organisation’s most pressing business needs.

The L&D skills prioritiser tool will help you:

1. Be future ready in a world of change, prioritising the right learning for yourself so that you can prioritise the right learning for others.
2. Cut through the overwhelm of the breadth of L&D skills that could be developed to identify what is most critical for you.
3. Engage your team in a conversation about why they need to build their skills and what skills are required.
4. Prepare to efficiently audit your team’s skillset.

By using this tool to inform the development of your L&D team, your organisation will see improvements in areas such as:

- Motivation of L&D team members to learn.
- Role Modeling of continuous learning by L&D team members.
- Development of L&D team skills.
- Capability to achieve L&D goals, particularly those that require a shift in learning approach.
- Attraction and retention of L&D talent.

Who is this tool for?

This tool is for you if you are an L&D leader or practitioner who:

- Recognizes that the demands upon and opportunities for the profession have increased.
- Feel nervous about being left behind.
- Is overwhelmed by the challenge of keeping your skill set or that of your team up to date.
- Looking to improve your impact.

This tool offers practical steps to identify critical skills required, positioning you to audit your skills and create an action plan to address gaps. This tool may be used by L&D leaders with their teams or individual L&D practitioners to support their own professional development planning.



When should you use this tool?

Use this tool when you want to:

- ✓ Equip your L&D team with the skills required to achieve goals and increase impact.
- ✓ Prepare your L&D team to shift how learning happens in your organisation.
- ✓ Make smart choices about what skills to develop or recruit to your L&D team.
- ✓ Offer your L&D team growth opportunities with immediate opportunity to apply new skills.

This tool will help you:

1. Focus on your organisation's most important L&D goals in the coming 12–24 months.
2. Draw upon high-quality L&D skills frameworks to explore skills.
3. Identify the most critical L&D skills required to achieve your goals.
4. Position yourself to map your team's competency level and interest in these skills.

How to use this tool

This tool has three steps, each of which logically builds upon each other to help you focus your learning on the skills that will generate the highest impact on your work and build your credibility in your organisation.

Step 1 – Identify your goals

- Pinpoint goals for the whole L&D team or for individuals.
- Identify your most important goals for 12–24 months.



Step 2 – Use L&D skills frameworks

- Review common L&D skills.
- Dig deeper using published skills frameworks.



Step 3 – Select priority skills

- Select the most critical skills necessary to achieve your goals.
- Refer to examples of common L&D goals.



This tool provides guidance for each step in the process and a template for you to record your goals and priority skills.

Read through this tool fully before using it for the first time.

Once you have identified your priority skills, use the Team Skills Mapping tool to map your team's competency levels and interest in developing each skill as the next step in creating an L&D team development plan.

Step 1 Identify your L&D goals

Reflect on the following questions to identify the activities and goals that are most important for your L&D team to deliver on in the coming 12–24 months. Select up to three goals in total with at least one of these in response to the second question below. In reality, you are likely to have more than three goals you are working toward. By narrowing your goals down to your top three, you will be able to focus on developing the most critical skills your L&D team needs.

1. Consider your work plan for the coming 12 months. What are the most important initiatives and activities for you or your L&D team to deliver on in the coming 12 months to help achieve organisational goals?
2. Consider your vision for learning in your organisation in the next 12–24 months. What are the most significant changes needed in learning approaches and how do you or your L&D team work to achieve this vision (e.g., better alignment of learning solutions with business needs, self-directed use of curated learning resources, managers taking responsibility to develop their teams)?



Write your most important three goals in Step 1 of the template.



Step 2 Review L&D skills frameworks

There are many publicly available skills frameworks for L&D professionals. Developed by industry experts using collaborative processes, these public frameworks have credibility and reflect industry standards. They provide a benchmark that helps L&D professionals keep their skills current. However, there are so many of them that it can feel overwhelming, particularly as they are all structured differently and many list more than 20 skills.

Let us take some of the heavy lifting out of it for you!

We'll help you avoid the trap of getting too lost in the details and help you hone in on the skills that are most relevant to you. We examined high-quality L&D skills frameworks to identify common or similar entries. We then compared these with recent research reports [see Digging Deeper section] to identify the most significant skills that high-performing L&D professionals say they need for the future. The distilled list in Table 1 is a good place to start to identify skills that may be critical to achieve your goals.



Table 1 – Key L&D Skills

Skill	Description
L&D strategy	Developing and implementing learning strategies aligned with the organisation’s people and business strategies. This skill will help you to improve business alignment, generate stakeholder engagement, and increase the impact of L&D.
Business acumen	Understanding your organisation, the commercial context, and the wider world of work. This skill will help you identify opportunities to contribute to your organisation’s strategic goals and better connect your work to business needs.
Leading and influencing others	Aligning people and tasks to support the organisation’s strategy and building relationships to gain the buy-in of others. This skill will help you gain commitment to your initiatives and harness resources to execute them.
Consulting and needs analysis	Partnering with customers and clients to analyse performance gaps and identify underlying needs when L&D support is requested, recommending appropriate interventions to improve performance. This skill will help you ensure you are addressing underlying problems and aligning attention and effort with what matters most.
Learning design and development	Designing and developing learning experiences and materials that use appropriate strategies, methodologies, and technology. This skill will help you ensure knowledge and skills are acquired and support transfer to the workplace.
Learning delivery and facilitation	Facilitating learning events, experiences, and media using appropriate delivery options. This skill will help you make learning engaging and effective in a way that addresses learner needs, meets learning objectives, and encourages adoption of desired behaviours.
Continuous learning	Empowering individuals to develop self-directed and self-managed learning skills. This skill will help you accelerate learning and increase agility and innovation in your organisation.
Data analytics and evaluation	Ability to collect, analyse, and use data to gain insights and enable decisions to improve learning and performance, including improving the effectiveness and impact of learning programs. This skill will help you have better-informed conversations with stakeholders and make better decisions.
Technology use	Defining, selecting, implementing, and using technology to meet individual and organisational learning and performance needs. This skill will equip you to enable and scale effective needs analysis as well as learning and performance solutions.
Project management	Initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing work on projects. This skill will help you manage work to achieve team goals.
Change management	Using structured approaches to engage and empower people, teams, and organisations to shift from current to desired future state. This skill will help you accelerate change in a sustainable way that positively affects performance.
Marketing and communications	Creating, communicating, and delivering campaigns and messages about learning and development. This skill will help you promote and engage people with L&D initiatives and learning.

Step 2 Review L&D skills frameworks

Table 2 provides a list of skills descriptions from three published frameworks that you can refer to if you think any of these skills may be relevant to your goals. Click on the hyperlink in the header row to access the framework that interests you. Once you have opened the link, search for the relevant skill description using the title in the table. Read the descriptions of skills that appear relevant, then make a short list of these skills. You will find additional skills listed in these frameworks. Scan these to see if there are any others that appear to be highly relevant to your goals.

Write the three most critical skills for each of your goals in Step 2 of the template. It is okay if skills are duplicated in this list – you will make your final selection in the next step.

See the sample completed template at the end of this tool for examples of suggested critical skills for three common L&D goals.



Table 2 – Key L&D Skills: Descriptions In Public Frameworks

Skill	LPI Capability Map	ATD Talent Development Capability Model	CIPD People Profession Map
L&D strategy	L&D strategy	N/A	
Business acumen	N/A	Business insight	Business acumen Commercial drive
Leading and influencing others	L&D as a leader and cultural catalyst	Collaboration & leadership	Professional courage and influence
Consulting and needs analysis	Performance consulting	Consulting & business partnering	
Learning design and development	Performance design, content design, and creation curation	Instructional design	
Learning delivery and facilitation	Facilitate face-to-face learning Facilitate live virtual learning Facilitate hybrid learning	Training delivery and facilitation	
Continuous learning	Drive continuous learning	Lifelong learning	Passion for learning
Data analytics and evaluation	Performance impact analytics	Data & analytics Evaluation impact	Evidence-based practice Insights focused
Technology use	Manage L&D people, processes, and technology Drive R&D and innovation	Technology application	Technology and people
Project management	Project management	Project management	
Change management	Enable change	Change management	Change
Marketing and communications	Marketing and communications	Communication	

Step 3 Select priority skills

You will now have a list of up to nine skills in your template. It's easy to fall into the trap of trying to develop too many skills at once, especially if you have a small L&D team or are using this tool as an individual. It's time to prioritise!

Reflect again on the three most important goals entered on your template. We know that each of them is important to deliver in your organisation – that's why you chose them. Use the following questions to identify the three highest-priority skills to start developing now.

1. Consider the tasks and activities required to achieve each goal. Based on this, how much time do you have to develop each skill?
2. Are there any skills listed that apply to 2–3 of your goals?
3. What is the risk to successfully achieving each goal with the current level of skill available to you? (Note: You may have a sense of this right now; however, if you haven't mapped competency levels in your team, we recommend you do this using the Team Skills Mapping Tool as your next step.)



Tick up to five highest-priority skills in the column at step 3 of the template.

“When you have too many top priorities, you effectively have no top priorities.”

–Stephen Covey

L&D Skills Prioritiser Template

GOALS Step 1: Most important goals for the coming 12–24 months	CRITICAL SKILLS Step 2: Most critical skills for each goal	PRIORITISE Step 3: Tick up to five

L&D Skills Prioritiser Example

GOALS Step 1: Most important goals for the coming 12–24 months	CRITICAL SKILLS Step 2: Most critical skills for each goal	PRIORITISE Step 3: Tick up to five
Driving adoption of a new or existing content library	Consulting and needs analysis	
	Curation	
	Marketing and communications	
Increasing self-directed learning in the organisation	Continuous learning	
	Change management	
	Curation	
Reducing risk by improving compliance training	Consulting and needs analysis	
	Learning design and development	
	Evaluation	

Digging Deeper

If you would like to explore L&D skills, we recommend looking at:

- LPI Capability Map – [View Link](#)
- ATD Talent Development Capability Model – [View Link](#)
- CIPD People Profession Map – [View Link](#)
- L&D skills for the future: Leveling up, RedThread Research Community, 12 December 2024
- Mind Tools For Business, 2022 Annual Learning Benchmark Report – [View Link](#)

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