



# The Skills Advantage

Insights to help your employees learn, grow, and thrive

## Introduction

# The future of skills is here

If you're like most leaders, you're feeling like the future arrived yesterday. You have a strong sense that the skills and expertise that propel your company's momentum today are not the same as what's needed for tomorrow. Meanwhile, you see employees also craving growth opportunities to stay relevant and excel in their careers.

Your intuition is correct — an investment in skills is mandatory insurance against irrelevance and a powerful engine for future success. You're also in good company: a majority of Learning and Development (L&D) pros rank upskilling and reskilling as their [most pressing priority](#). Almost two-thirds say L&D is no longer a “nice to have,” but rather a driving force for transformation.

Read on to find strategic insights that paint a clear business case for a skills-based approach to helping your employees learn and grow. You'll also get advice on priorities that can help build a culture of continuous learning from the ground up, and discover methods and technology to support your strategy.

The future of skills looks bright.



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## About the insights

This report was primarily adapted from previous analyses by Glint and LinkedIn Learning. The data includes insights from as many as 3.4 million employee engagement surveys primarily conducted in 2020 and 2021 on the Glint Platform as well as LinkedIn behavioral and survey information.



## Chapter 1

# Insights to power your skills strategy

New data points show a surprising yearning for learning — and reveal how learning powers positive culture.



# Learning creates great culture

The tumult of our times is proving the ultimate test for organizations to live their values. But it's important to know that employees have shifted how they think about those values. They see the accelerating speed of change and want to keep pace just as much as leaders do.

In fact, according to Glint's Employee Well-Being Report, the [drivers of great work culture](#) changed drastically in the past year as employees have made it clear that they want more than a paycheck. And the No. 1 factor that people say defines an exceptional work environment? Opportunities to learn and grow.

## Top 5 drivers of great work culture:

- 01 Opportunities to learn and grow\*
- 02 Belonging
- 03 Organizational values
- 04 Support for well-being
- 05 Collaboration

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\*Previously ranked #9 in 2019 — a significant change in only two years.

# Great culture drives success

Not only is learning more important for culture, we also know more than ever about just how important culture can be for business success. Positive culture powers engaged employees who are energized and inspired to bring your organization's strategy to life.

Engaged employees impact your company's ability to innovate and grow, delight customers, and beat the competition. They're personally invested in their jobs; see a strong connection between their strengths and their role; and are more willing to contribute time and effort to business success.

The emerging significance of learning and culture for business success means L&D leaders can — and should — have a bigger voice in strategic conversations.

Employees at organizations with highly rated cultures are:

**31%** more likely to recommend working for their organization

**25%** more likely to report being happy working for their organization\*



\*compared to peers at organizations without highly rated culture.



# People want to create value with skills

In many places around the globe, roles have been created, displaced, and changed at a record pace in recent months. Meanwhile, almost a quarter of employees are not confident that their skills are being put to good use in their current roles — a strong risk for turnover. Amid job market flux, giving people opportunities to clearly exercise or stretch their skill sets is an essential way to retain talent.

**10x** Employees who feel their skills are not being put to good use in their current job are 10x more likely to be looking for a new job\*

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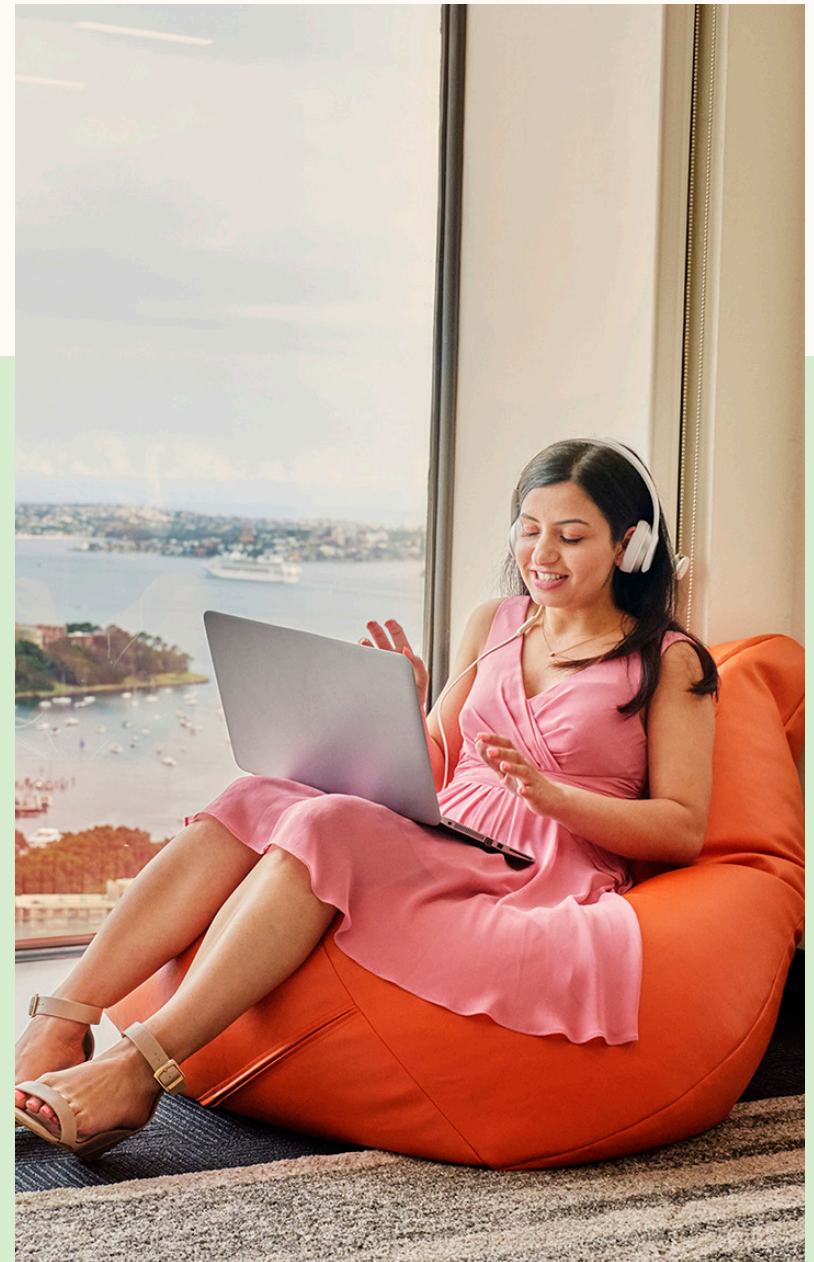
\*compared to those who do feel their skills are being put to good use.

# Internal mobility boosts retention

Let's recap: seeing opportunities to learn and grow is *the top driver* for great work culture, and the job market has experienced unprecedented turnover. Luckily there's a clear way to solve the pain point of turnover while creating an attractive place to work: cultivate internal mobility. This means empowering individuals to craft their career within an organization. A skills-based, learning culture that embraces internal moves is an important antidote to employee frustration and attrition.

Nearly  
**2x**

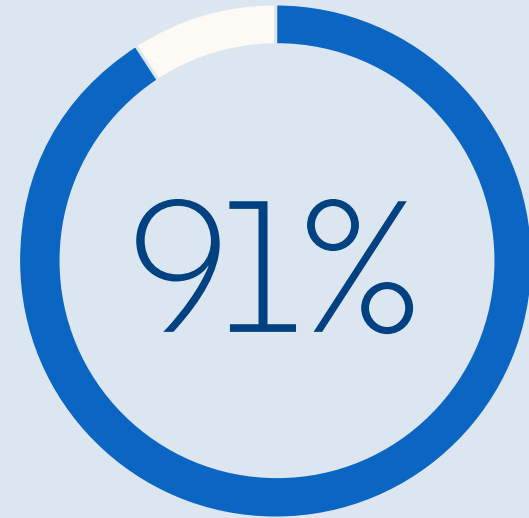
Companies that excel at internal mobility are able to retain employees for an average of 5.4 years. That's nearly 2x as long as companies that struggle with it, where the average retention span is 2.9 years.





# Managers bring learning to life

Every person's direct manager has a strong influence on their ability to do their best work. It's managers who provide ongoing support and inspiration. And managers have an outsize ability to help their teams embrace new knowledge, new skills, and career advancement. Companies that invest in manager skills can benefit from a ripple of energy across their organizations.



91% of employees say it's important for managers to inspire learning and experimentation.



## Chapter 2

# The top five priorities for skills transformation



In a universe of possibility, a focused to-do list amplifies your impact.

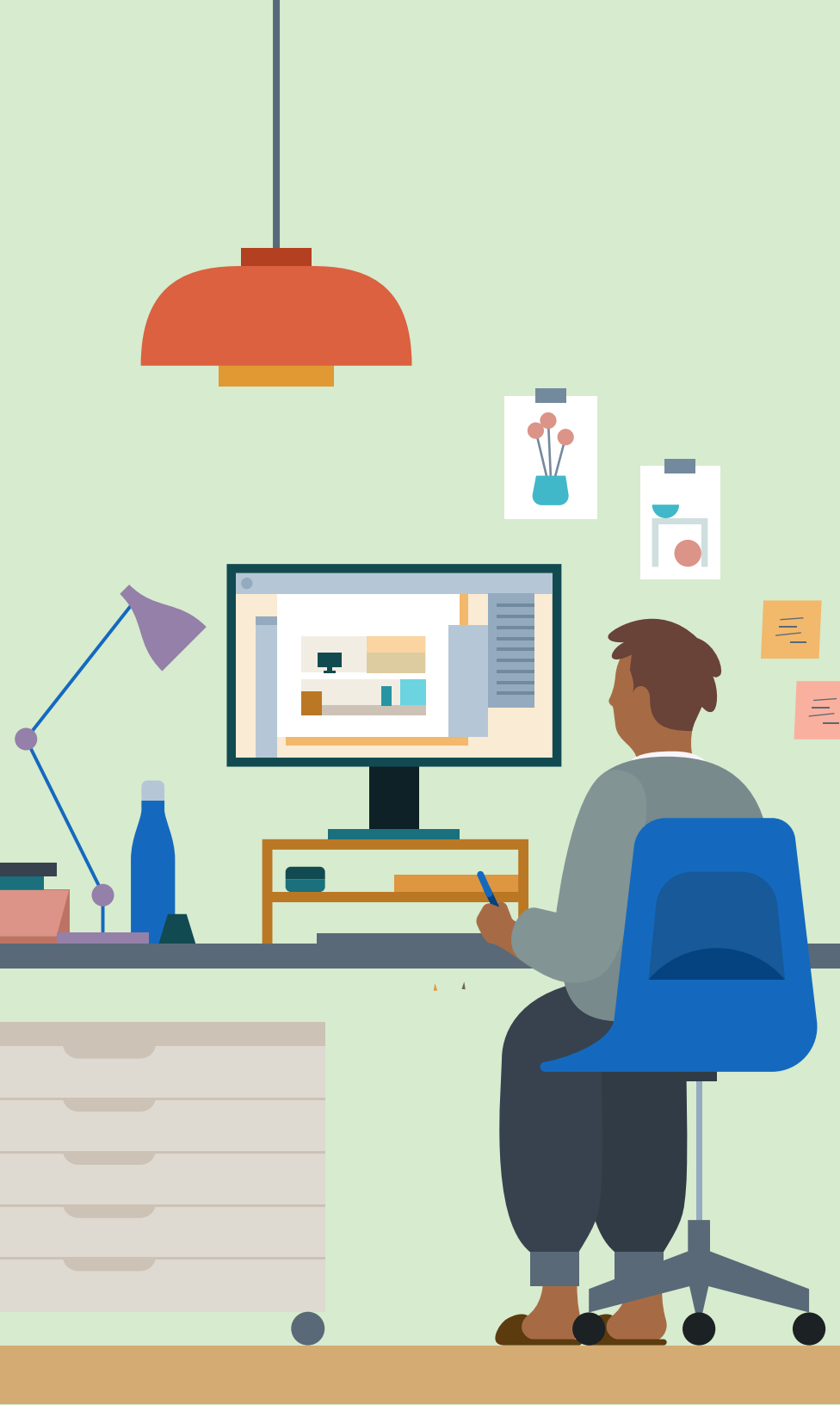
# Start with 5 steps forward

It's not an overstatement to say we're living and working in extraordinary times. People everywhere have reevaluated their careers in the context of the life they wish to lead. A poll in mid-2021 found 66% of LinkedIn members had either left their job or considered leaving in the past year to pursue a passion project.

As a counterweight to attrition, a culture of learning has emerged as a powerful force for business success. Organizations that value constant and continuous learning are poised to win in two ways — with an engaged and energized workforce, and with always-growing skills and knowledge to outpace their competition.

How do you build this engine to capitalize on the skills advantage? Begin the journey by focusing on five strategic shifts.





## Priority #1

# Help your organization keep pace with digital transformation

According to the [World Economic Forum](#), 85 million jobs will be displaced and 97 million new jobs created by 2025 as a result of accelerated automation and increased economic uncertainty.

For learning leaders struggling to get their arms around how to manage so many fluctuating skills, analyst [Josh Bersin](#) offers a new approach. Instead of trying to “boil the ocean” and figure out what 50,000 technical skills may be required, focus on the top 50 business-critical *capabilities* your organization needs, both now and in the future, and determine which skills ladder up to those. This mindset shift is critical to moving L&D from a reactive to a proactive function.



[Insight222's](#) study of 50 global companies found 90% want to use skills-based workforce planning; only 26% are already doing so.

## Priority #2

# Rethink how to assess skills and measure impact

Defining and assessing skills are critical steps towards [tying the impact of learning to business outcomes](#). To assess skills and track progress on closing skills gaps, learning leaders must use a broad swath of techniques, including everything from certifications and manager feedback, to employee 360s and engagement surveys.

With so much data living in separate HR silos, connecting the dots can be a major challenge. It's also an opportunity to strengthen connections with teams across your organization's HR functions.



### Priority #3

# Create accessible, inclusive learner experiences

Today, the learner experience needs to be personalized, interactive, and social to keep employees interested. And to truly drive learner engagement and success, learning needs to be accessible and inclusive.

Here are 3 important ways to make sure you're meeting the expectations of today's learners:

01

Make sure content is accessible to different learning styles, abilities, and preferences.

02

Be transparent about skill-building programs to help people navigate and take full advantage of their own learning journey.

03

Connect skills across talent acquisition and talent development to support internal mobility opportunities.

## Priority #4

# Put skills to work for diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging

Historically, academic degrees and personal connections have represented a person's credibility and capability. But that picture is incomplete. It perpetuates bias and prevents companies from tapping into the talent of historically underrepresented groups.

A skills-based approach helps companies better understand and match people to opportunity.

**Focusing on skills creates a more equitable path to business and individual success by:**

- Creating a standard expectation of what it takes to be successful within a role.
- Providing transparency on what can be learned or developed to perform a role well.
- Opening opportunities for redeployment from one role to another based on a common set of trainable expectations.
- Establishing flexibility to revisit and refresh role requirements on a regular basis.
- Offering employees a more understandable target to direct their learning, growth, and career path.



## Priority #5

# Ensure learning is at the center of conversations

L&D is becoming more strategic, diving into business problems ranging from DEI and talent acquisition to internal mobility and retention. The tendency is to go full steam ahead. Yet amidst so much change, there's never been a more critical time for L&D leaders to take a step back and [re-evaluate with your CEO and executive team](#) what you're trying to accomplish.

Alignment between L&D and the executive team is necessary for a culture of continuous learning, and it starts with the CEO. Once that happens, Josh Bersin advises,

***[“talent mobility and job mobility and growth become much easier to implement.”](#)***



## Chapter 3

# Technology to harness the skills advantage



The right tools and techniques  
bring unprecedented sophistication  
to workplace learning.

# A new era of opportunity

In the midst of global transformation, L&D leaders have a unique opportunity to help employers and employees navigate these changes in ways that lead to wider doors and a more dynamic global economy.

Organizations need more than just good content to achieve reskilling and upskilling. They need an intelligent tech stack that can create a personalized, social experience and act as a catalyst in creating a culture of learning across their organization.

As more talent leaders focus on skills, they need insights into how skills are currently distributed across their organization, what skills are being developed, and what skills their organization needs to stay competitive now and in the future.

Read on to find out how technology can power learning culture.





# Start with the power of personalized learning

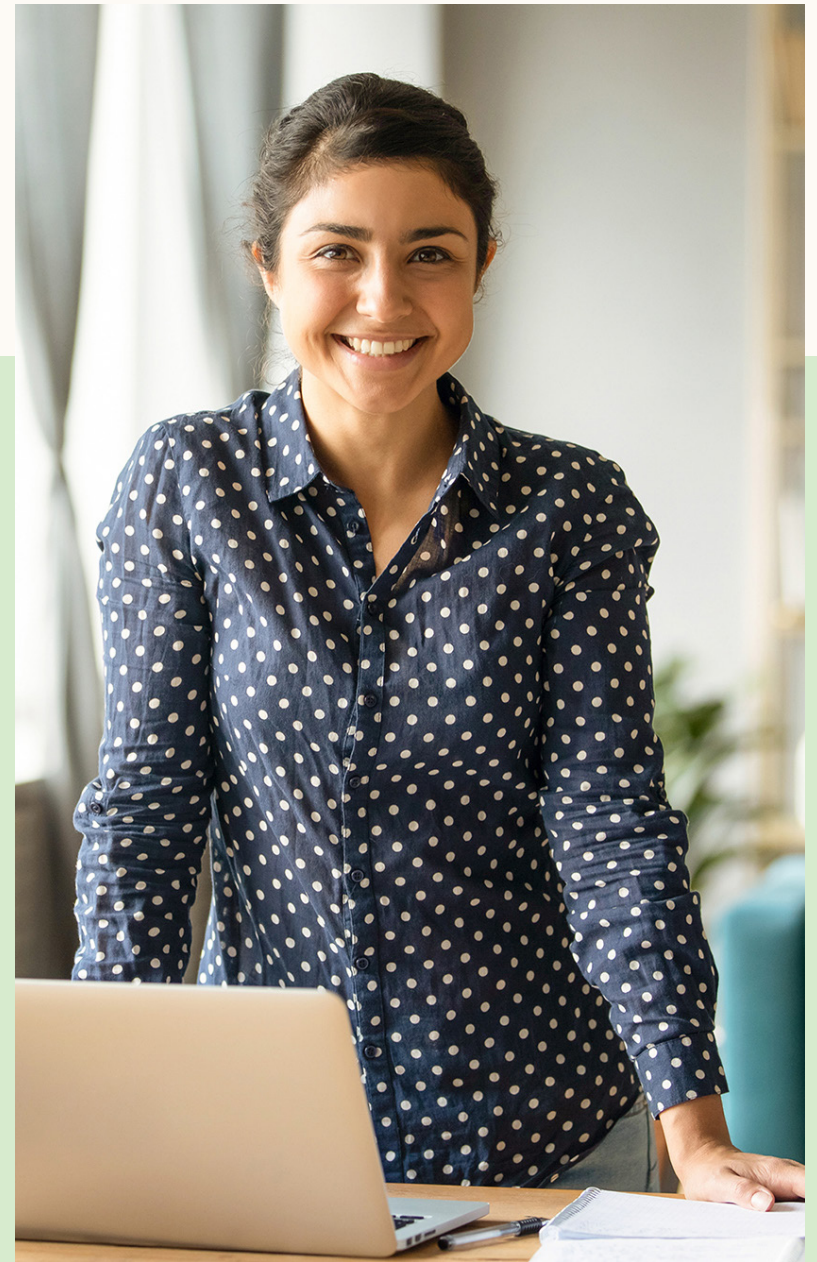
[Personalized content](#) makes it easier for learners to build the right skills at the right time. With AI-driven recommendations from across an organization's resources, the right learning platform surfaces the most relevant and applicable content based on users' learning activity and skills profiles. By meeting learners where they are and showing them the path to achieve their professional ambitions, personalized learning creates a meaningful and engaging learner experience.

It's becoming a best practice to aggregate all of an organization's learning content in one place, so that L&D leaders can access skills insights, measure engagement across their learning sources, and customize the learner experience with curated learning paths. The right solution can also integrate with leading content providers, such as edX, Pluralsight, Udemy Business, Harvard Business Publishing, O'Reilly Media, Udacity, and many more.

# Add the energy of community

Learning with others makes the process more human and more enjoyable. [Community-based learning](#) connects learners with peers and experts inside and outside of their organizations. With more remote work and distributed teams, digital spaces for people to share ideas and learn from one another have immense value to learning outcomes and personal well-being.

**30x** Employees who use LinkedIn Learning's social features spend 30x more hours learning than those who don't.



# Amplify impact with skills insights

[Skills development insights](#) inform L&D leaders with the data they need to thoughtfully reskill and upskill employees for new and emerging roles. Learner insights allow L&D teams to understand which people in their organization have the greatest appetite for learning, and how individuals and teams are progressing towards closing skill gaps.

The right technology can connect learning outcomes directly to skills, providing leaders with a clear understanding of the impact of learning strategies and how their people's breadth of skills stack up relative to competition in their market and industries.



# Ready to level up on skills?

Today's talent challenges and opportunities are immense. But tackling the work from a skills perspective opens up a revolutionary framework for success in:



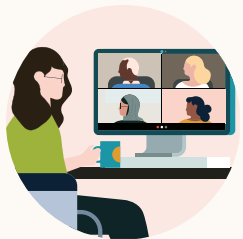
Hiring



Retention



Succession  
planning



Engagement



Diversity, equity,  
inclusion, and  
belonging



Internal  
mobility

# Introducing LinkedIn Learning Hub

LinkedIn Learning Hub is an intelligent learning platform that can create a personalized, social experience, and act as a catalyst for a culture of learning across your organization. LinkedIn Learning Hub also offers an unprecedented sophistication in data insights by aggregating learning content and connecting learning outcomes to tangible skills.

LinkedIn Learning Hub can help you revolutionize your L&D strategy, be a more strategic advisor to the C-Suite, and deliver talent solutions that drive business outcomes.

The Skills Advantage

The insights layer on top of LinkedIn's Skills Graph — the world's most comprehensive skills taxonomy, with:

36K+ skills

14M+ job postings

740M+ members of the largest professional network





# Unlock the skills advantage today with LinkedIn Learning Hub.

[Learn more](#)

**LinkedIn** Learning Hub