



2022 LEARNING TRENDS REPORT: INFORMING STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

WRITTEN BY

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WELCOME

As learning and performance professionals, we have experienced in the last few years the single largest upheaval in our field. We've seen the COVID-19 pandemic push us to a leaping pivot from classrooms to Zoom. In this past year, we've bounced from variant to variant, from heading back to the office to heading back home and back to the office again. Along with the pandemic disruption, we've been living other trends: the move beyond training to performance, sophisticated new learning technologies, the science-of-learning revolution, behavior change, and data analytics, among other accelerating innovations.

**More than ever, to prepare ourselves we need to take stock, plan strategically, and learn from each other.
This is the purpose for this report—Learning Trends 2022.**

THE REPORT

This is the seventh year of the Learning Trends diagnostic survey and report. This year, we surveyed 377 people from around the world; a majority were from the United States and Canada, with many also from Europe and the UK, followed by other countries where English is spoken by many, including Australia and India.

Given the accelerating trends in our industry, we decided to completely redesign this year's diagnostic survey. We expanded and updated our questions and options. We added questions to drill down into our overall performance outcomes, learning evaluation, and the impact of COVID-19.

We made the report more relevant to your decision-making and our diagnostic survey more helpful as a tool for your reflection.

WISDOM FROM OTHERS

We at TiER1 take great pride in our expertise and the amazing 300+ employees and associates we work with everyday. We also know there is great wisdom in the learning and performance field, and we actively seek it out. We asked 48 thought leaders to share their favorite content from the past year. **It is already one of our most popular articles, in which more than 30 of those global industry-leading thought leaders shared their thoughts on the trends for 2022!**

To review the Learning Trends data we gathered, we asked a few of those thought leaders if they were willing to give us even more of their time, and we were thrilled when Rob Brinkerhoff, Judy Hale, Hadiya Nuriddin, Megan Torrance, and Nigel Paine met with us to review the data. They were amazing, helping us see things we would have missed, plan where to look deeper, and find the bigger picture. Even more than that, meeting with Rob, Judy, Hadiya, Megan, and Nigel was a joy for our team! Thanks all, it was an honor.

We also must thank Sharon Boller, the original author and inspiration for the Learning Trends Survey. Sharon got the whole thing started when she was CEO of Bottom-Line Performance. Also, a hearty thanks to Jerry Hamburg, Principal at TiER1, who was instrumental in nurturing the Learning Trends Survey when TiER1 began managing it.

SURPRISES

Every year, we find surprises. We found that for this year, in 2022, 73% of us will be working almost exclusively or mostly from home! We will talk more about this incredible finding and how it aligns with reports across the working world.

We asked learning professionals like you, “How successful was your learning team in creating learning opportunities that improved employee work performance?” Only 38% reported that they had strong or indisputable evidence of success.

When we asked about learning evaluation, we got both concerning and positive signs of advanced measurement. 65% were NOT ABLE to do the evaluation they wanted to do, yet a healthy 37% measured task competence (LTEM Tier-6), 28% measured learner work performance (LTEM Tier-7), and 28% measured organizational results (LTEM Tier-8)—higher numbers than have previously been reported. (LTEM, The Learning-Transfer Evaluation Model, is composed of eight levels—starting from completely inadequate methods of learning evaluation all the way through to the effects of learning transfer.)

When we asked people how satisfied they are with their work, almost all of us—about 95%—reported doing work that makes a contribution or fulfills us. A full 21% reported doing the best work of their careers!

We also found fascinating results on where we receive our professional development, how successful we are in innovating, and the design practices, models, and thought leaders we are following.

WHY YOU SHOULD READ THIS REPORT

Your time is valuable, so you'll want to know why to read this report. Here's a quick list of the rigor and scope of the survey:

- The Learning Trends Survey asked important questions of particular relevance to L&D professionals.
- Questions were updated and improved this year and were designed using rigorous methods and exhaustive deliberations.
- This report represents a wide global audience across organization sizes, roles, types of learners supported, age of respondent, levels of experience, etc.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- **What are the most common L&D tasks that people are working on?**
- **What L&D technologies are currently in use?** What are L&D teams going to be spending the most time getting started with in 2022?
- **How are L&D teams dealing with COVID-19?** Are we doing okay, or have we been disrupted from our strategic goals?
- **Where do L&D professionals like us go for their professional development?** Are we supported? What level of budget is allocated for our professional development? Are we getting the professional development we need? Is it any good?
- **What design processes are L&D teams using?** How many are using the most sophisticated or research-based practices? How many are using ADDIE? How many are using Design Thinking, or Cathy Moore's Action Mapping, or Michael Allen's SAM, or David Merrill's Five Principles of Instruction, or Agile, or TiER1's Performance Experience Design, or the brand new Thalheimer and Hamburg Performance-Activation Model?
- **How often do our design teams include our target audiences in the design process?**
- **How often do our learning teams go beyond training and focus on performance improvement or get into the work context to support people directly in doing their work?**
- **What are the top methods used by learning teams to gain insight and diagnose learning needs?** Are subject matter experts still the most common source? Are we gathering insights from both expert performers and novices? Are we prototyping, doing user testing, and actively anticipating risks?
- **What are our learning design goals?** Do we provide learners with support after learning to apply the learning to their work? Do we design specifically to create long-term remembering? Do we help learners in developing competence in decision-making?
- **How are we feeling about learning evaluation?** Are our organizations supporting it? Are learner surveys the only evaluation method? How many of us are actually measuring decision-making or task competence? Has LTEM (The Learning-Transfer Evaluation Model) begun to supplant the Four-Level Model?
- **How much personal connection have we felt with our work group over the last few months?** Is it true that our virtual work environment has hurt our ability to connect?
- **How successful were we in our learning teams in creating learning opportunities that improved employee work performance?** How many of us reported having "undeniable evidence of success" or even "strong indications of success?"
- **How well are we innovating?** Are our learning and performance teams creating a culture of innovation or not?

EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS

We are exploring a new feature this year, looking to find distinctions between what the best organizations are doing and what the rest of us are doing. Specifically, by looking at key indicators, we selected respondents who are in the top 15% of the represented organizations.

These “exemplary” organizations were chosen based on how well they are improving employee work performance and how rigorous they’ve been conducting learning evaluation. Those who claim the highest levels of success in improving work performance—especially when they are using evaluation methods that reliably reveal actual learning-performance indicators—are organizations who are exemplary. These are the organizations that we should all be emulating.

We are adding this exploratory analysis because we want to do everything in our power to give you data you can use to support your work and your advocacy. When you see what the exemplary organizations are doing, you may decide that you’d like to do that too. Similarly, you may now have the data to go to your leadership and your stakeholders to make your case!

USING THIS REPORT

We’ve designed this report as much as possible to be user friendly—to help you be able to use it to support your work. Of course, maybe you’ll see something else we could have done—so please let us know what we can improve for next year.

One thing we noticed in the data is that many of us in the learning and performance field are strong advocates for improving our methods and practices. We actively advocate for research-aligned practices, more efficiencies, and more time and resources to do things right! Indeed, those of us at TiER1 who read the many comments are in awe of you and are inspired by you!

We’ve designed this report to honor and enable your advocacy. We’ve divided the report into clear focus areas so that you can zoom in on an area of interest. We’ve summarized findings so you can get a quick read without having to laboriously process all the details. We’ve provided the actual data for every question asked on the survey, so you can see for yourself what it means. We’ve crafted the charts with pithy callouts so you can quickly parse the graphs while also grabbing screen captures to share the results you find most compelling with your team/organization and on social media.

You will find ways to use the report, but you might consider:

- Scanning the document for practices to emulate
- Reviewing the document as you do your strategic planning
- Gathering your team to brainstorm lessons learned
- Using the data to help you advocate with your key stakeholders
- Sharing with your colleagues as a learning opportunity

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Respondents

RESPONDENTS

Our respondents tended to be learning and performance professionals attracted to practices that lean toward a performance focus, who look to science and research to guide their design choices, and who are hungry to keep learning themselves. Specifically, our survey respondents:

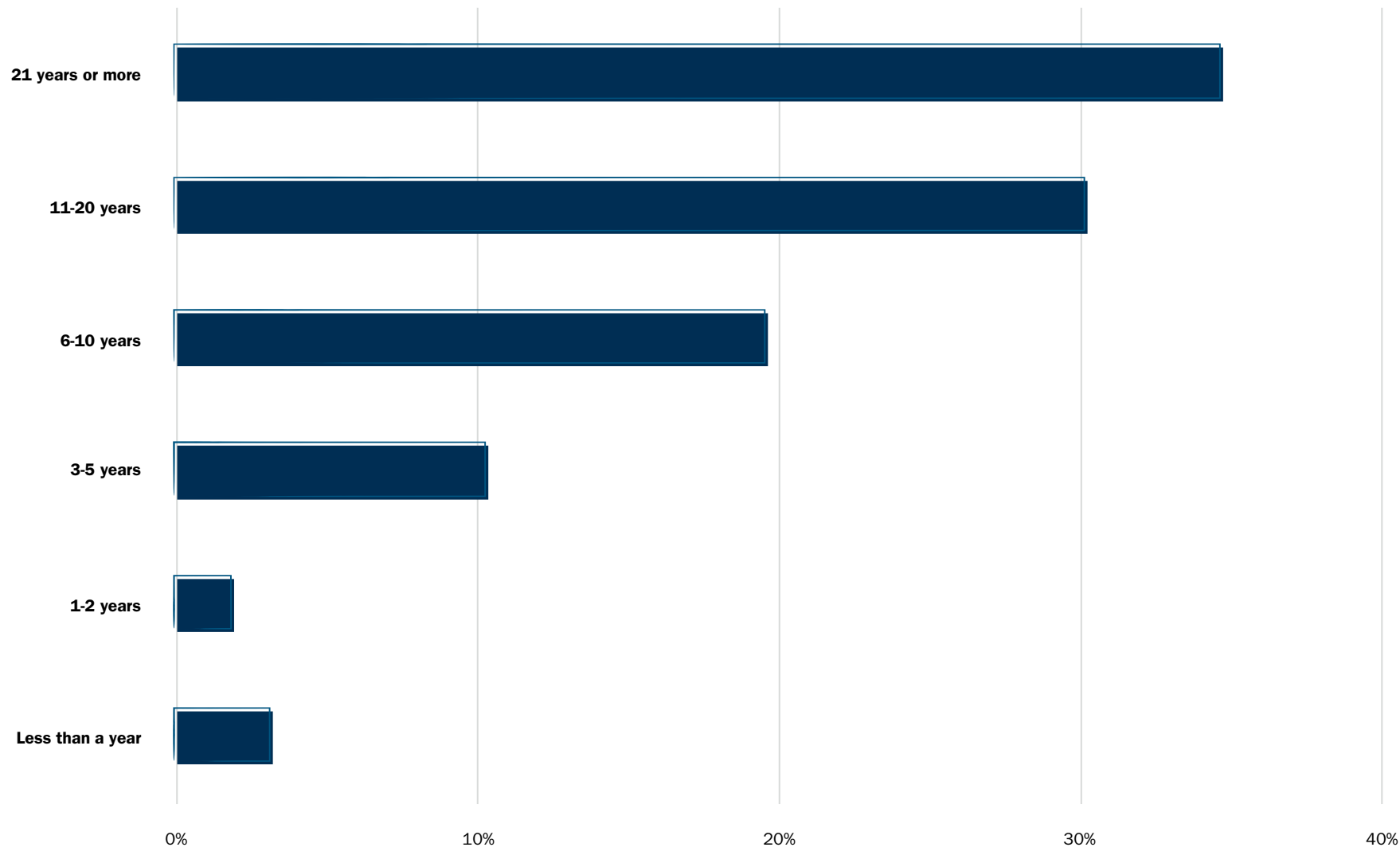
- Are very experienced, with over 60% having more than 10 years of experience.
- Have ages across the lifespan, with about 17% from 26-35, 25% from 36-45, 32% from 46-55, 25% from 56-65, 6% are 66 and older, and 1% are 26 or younger.
- Lean heavily to the US and Canada, represented by 64% of respondents, with 24% from Europe and the UK, and 8% from Australia, New Zealand, and India.
- Mostly focus on learners in their own organizations (57%), with 27% focusing on learners in other organizations, and 16% focused on both.
- Play a wide variety of roles, from individual contributors (32%), leaders of teams (25%), project managers (12%), and senior L&D leaders (10%), among other roles.
- Work on an immense number of task areas, including building online instructor-led live sessions (the top task), documents/handbooks/etc., self-study eLearning, and dozens more.
- Work for organization of all sizes, including companies with 200 or fewer people (29%), companies from 201 to 10,000 people (40%), and companies from 10,001 to 25,000+ people (31%).
- Work for different types of organizations, including not-for-profits (about 6%), government (10%), educational institutions (7%), business NOT in the learning industry (51%), and vendors and consultancies that provide learning or learning-related products/services (26%).

We can't claim that our respondents are representative of all learning and performance professionals. From these responses we think they are probably more experienced, more performance focused, and more likely to be opinion leaders and managers in their organizations. The diversity of experience, task goals, and organization types and sizes bode well for a full perspective on the issues we surveyed them about.

We will now share the demographic and background data so you can see the specifics for yourself.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AS A LEARNING PROFESSIONAL?

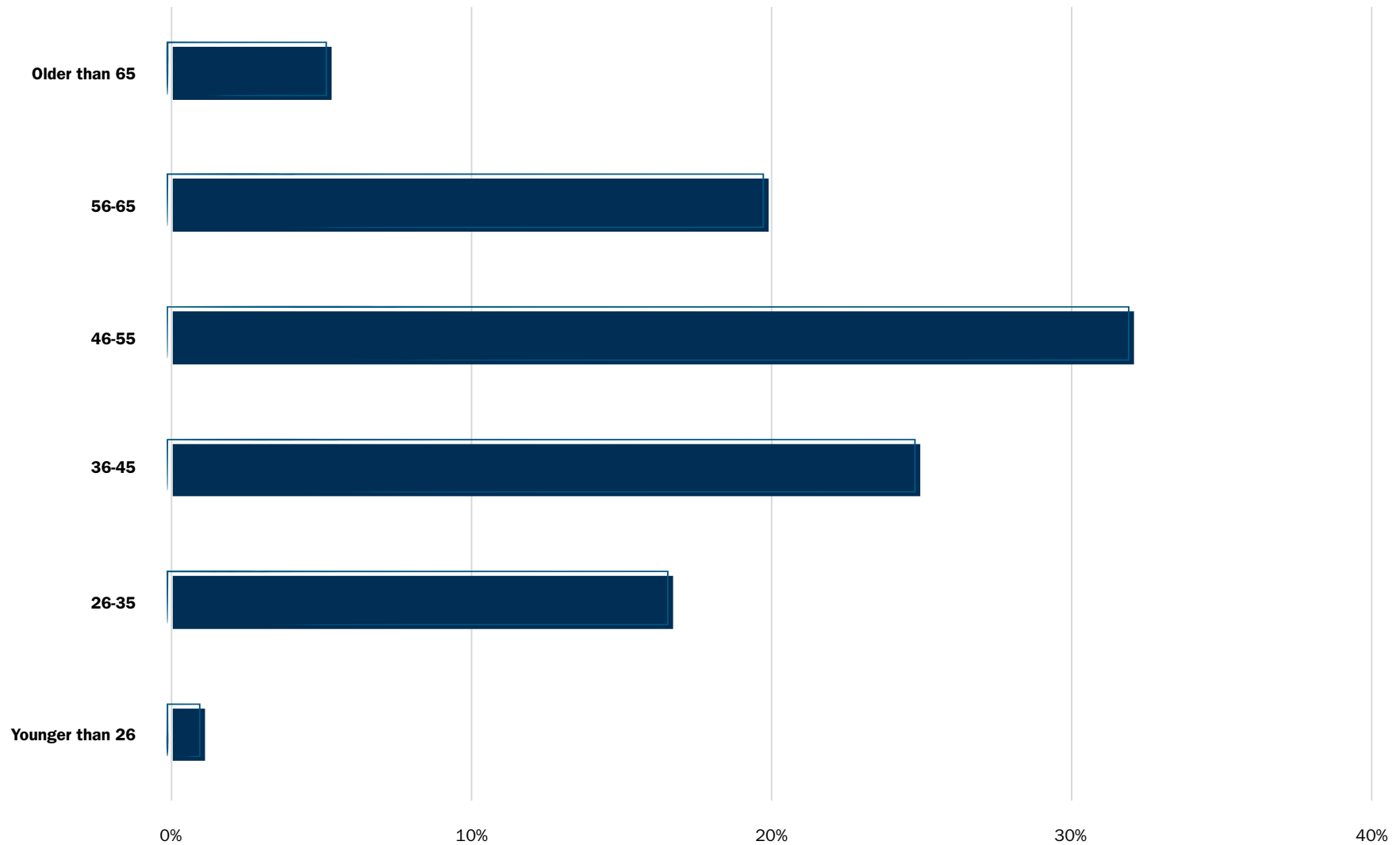
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Very experienced respondents for the most part.

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

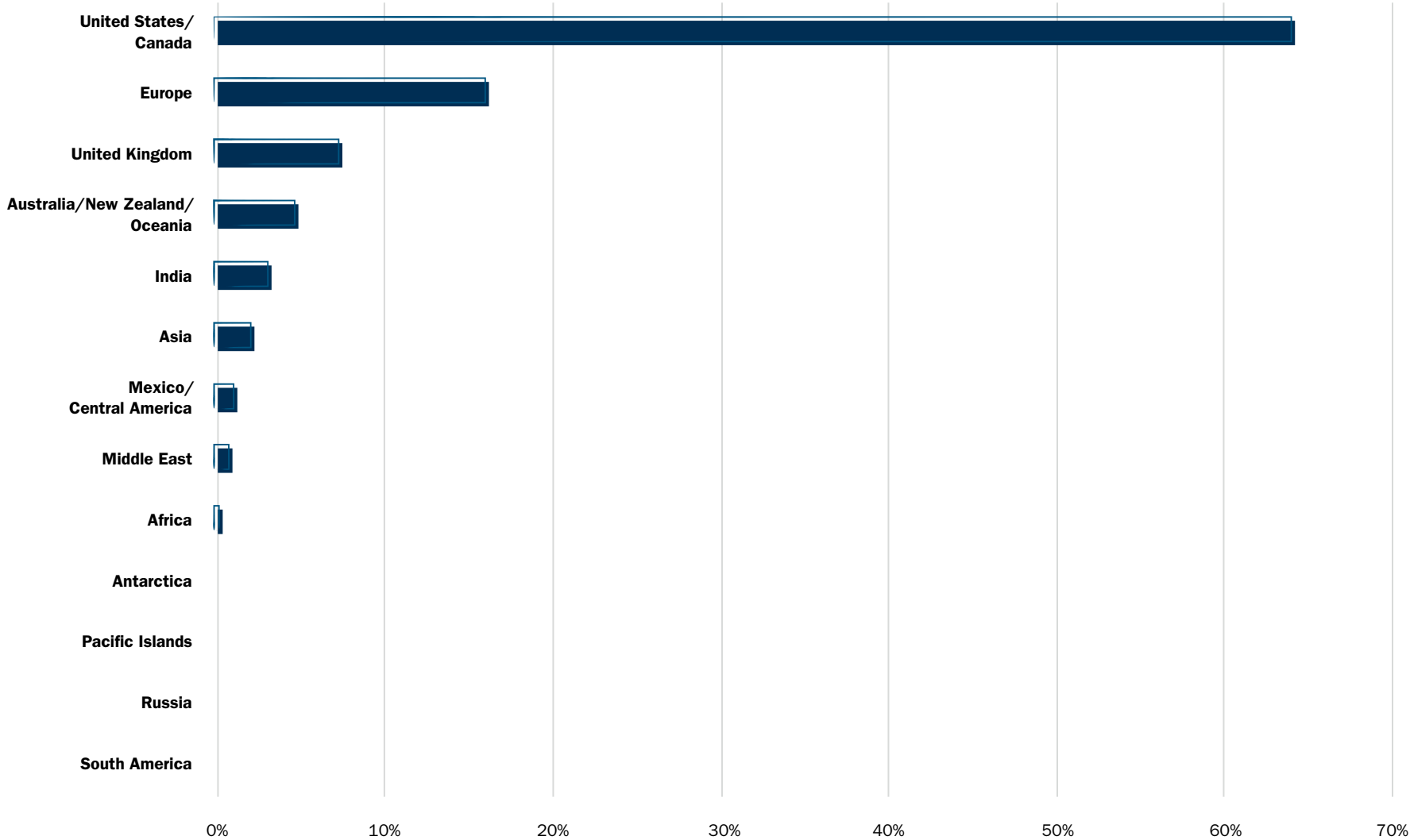
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A healthfully wide range across age groups from 26 to 65.

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

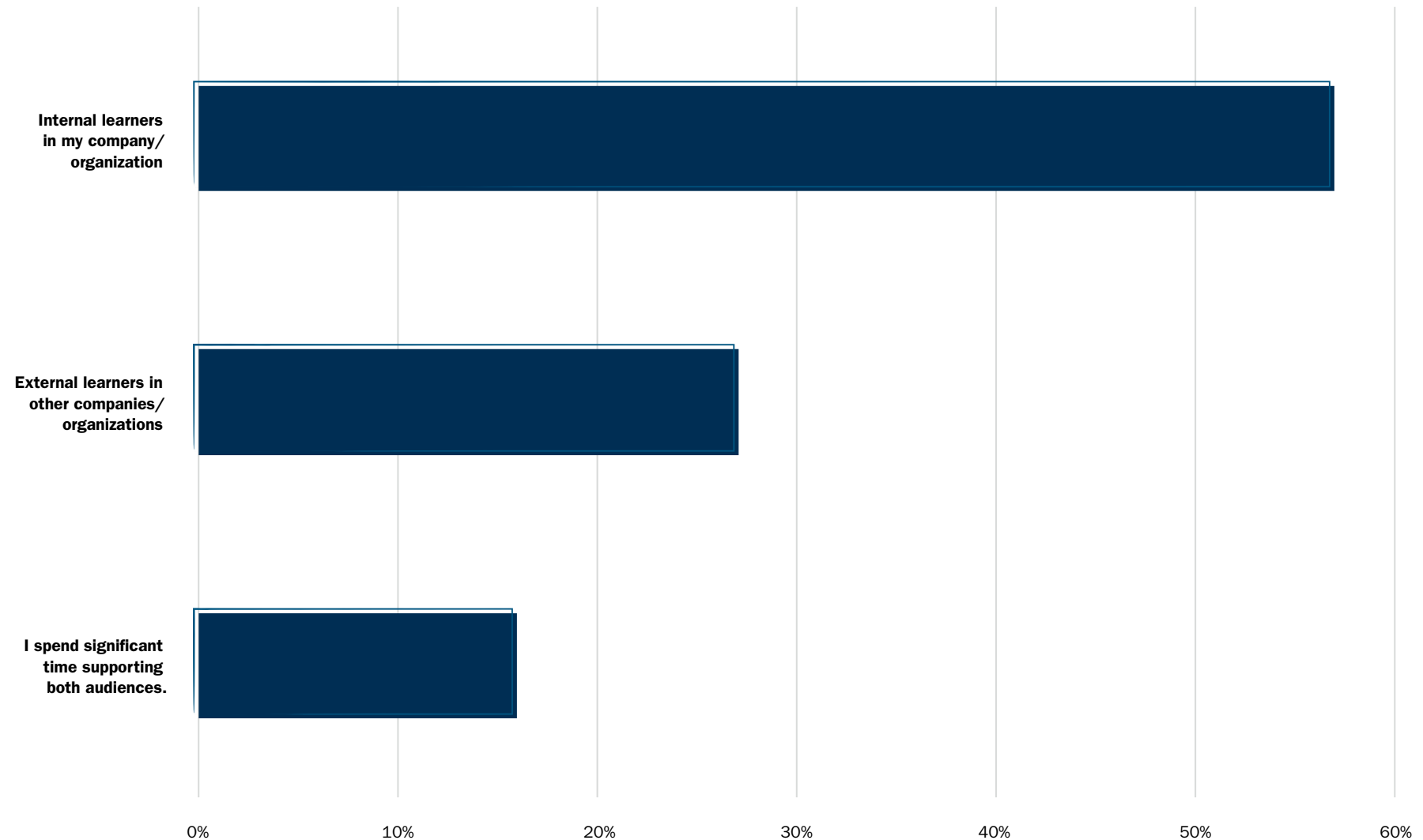
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Mostly US/Canada and Europe/UK, but some representation from other regions of the world.

IN BUILDING, DEPLOYING, OR SUPPORTING YOUR LEARNING INTERVENTIONS, WHO IS YOUR PRIMARY TARGET AUDIENCE?

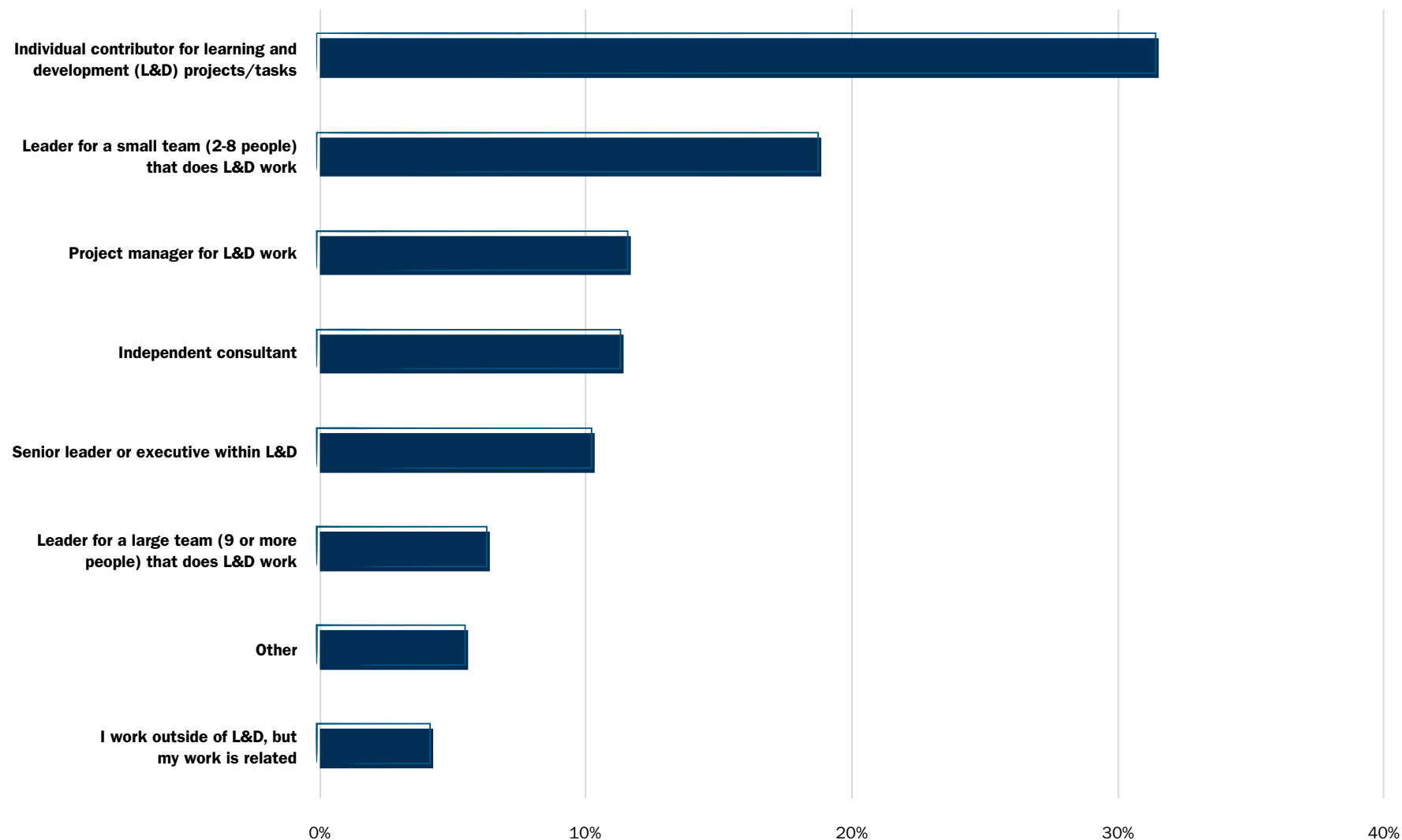
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Good mix, but more people supporting learners in their own organizations.

IN 2021, WHAT WAS YOUR PRIMARY ROLE?

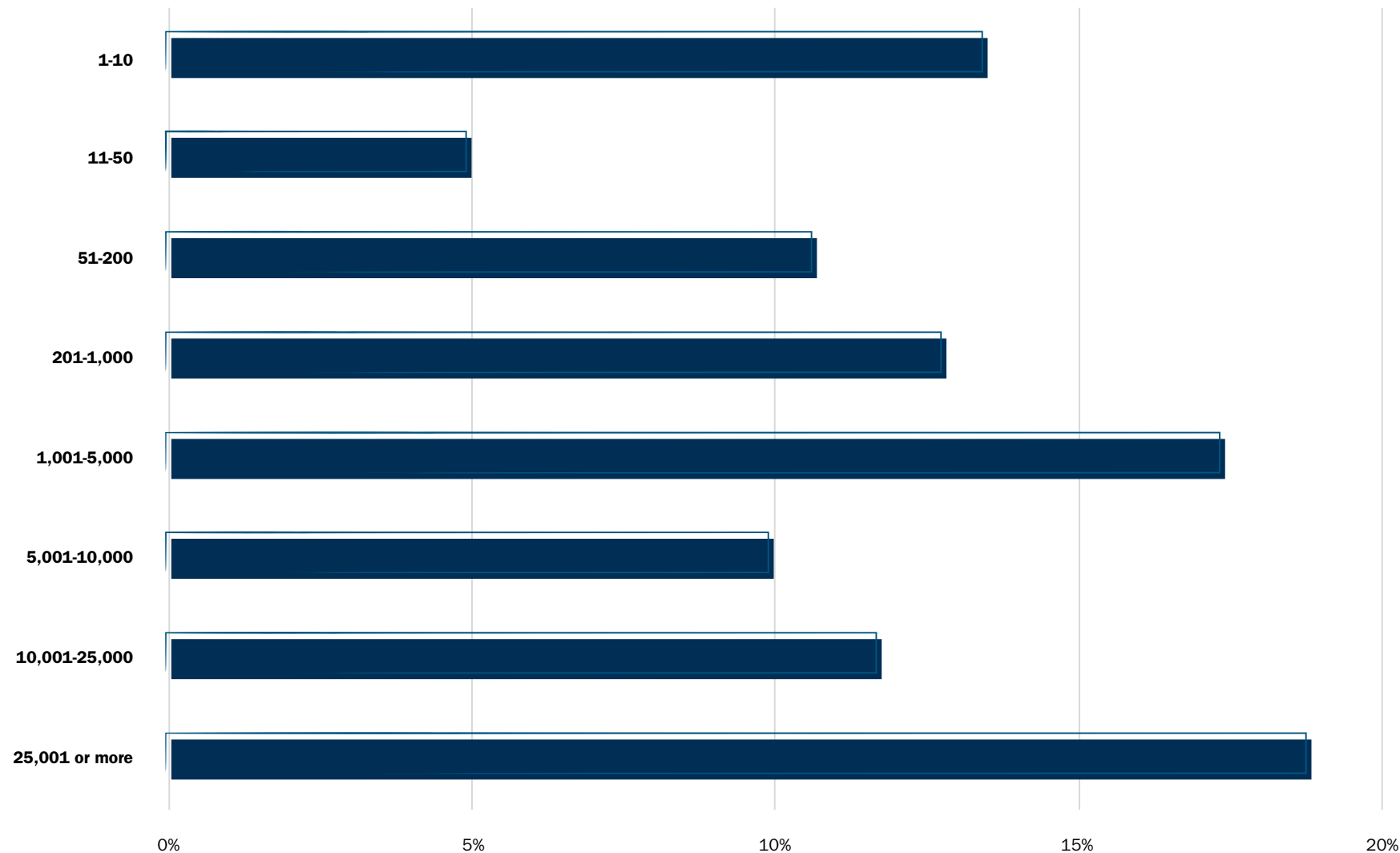
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Good mix of roles, with many in various leadership roles.

HOW MANY EMPLOYEES WORK IN YOUR COMPANY/ORGANIZATION?

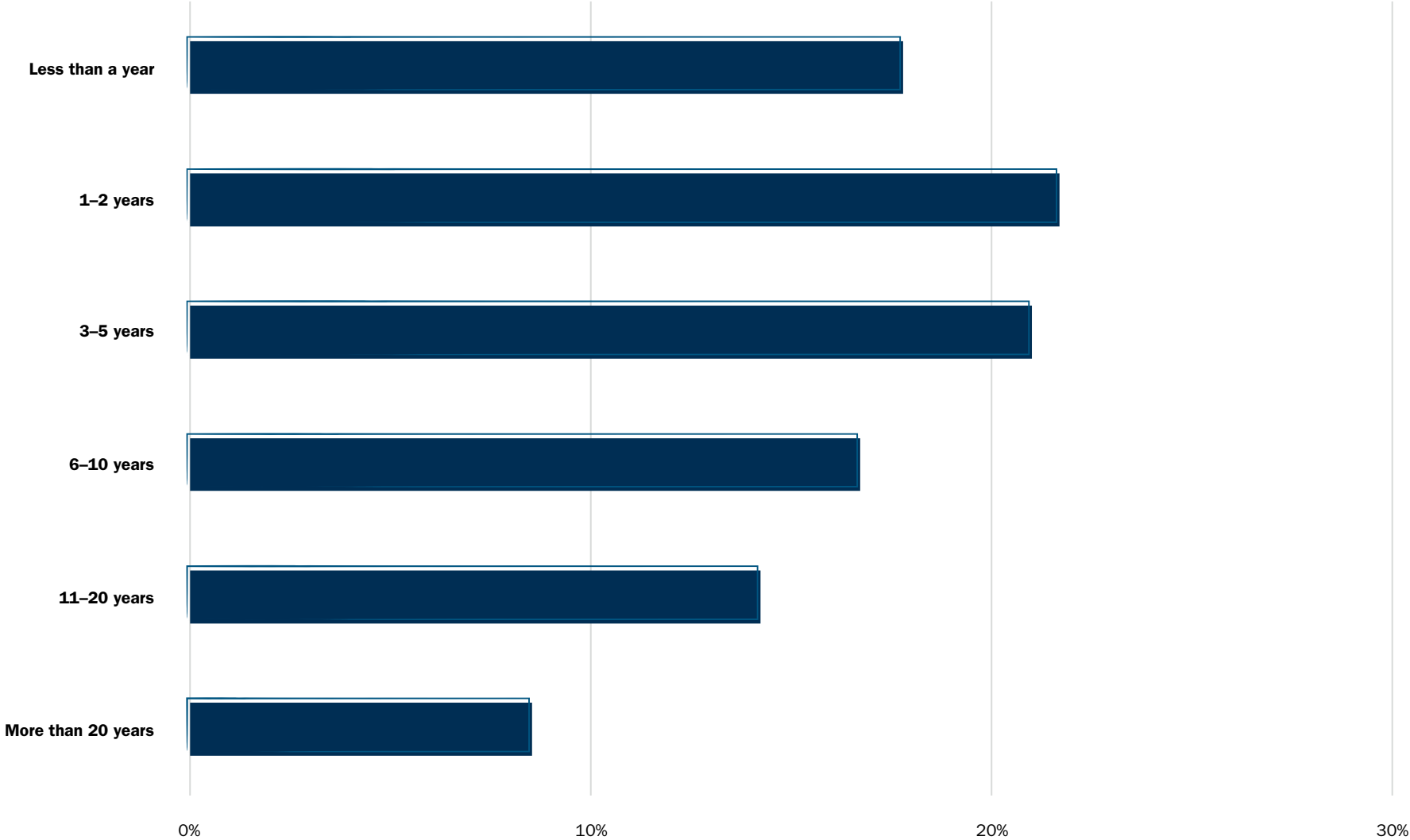
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Good mix of organization sizes.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT YOUR CURRENT COMPANY/ORGANIZATION?

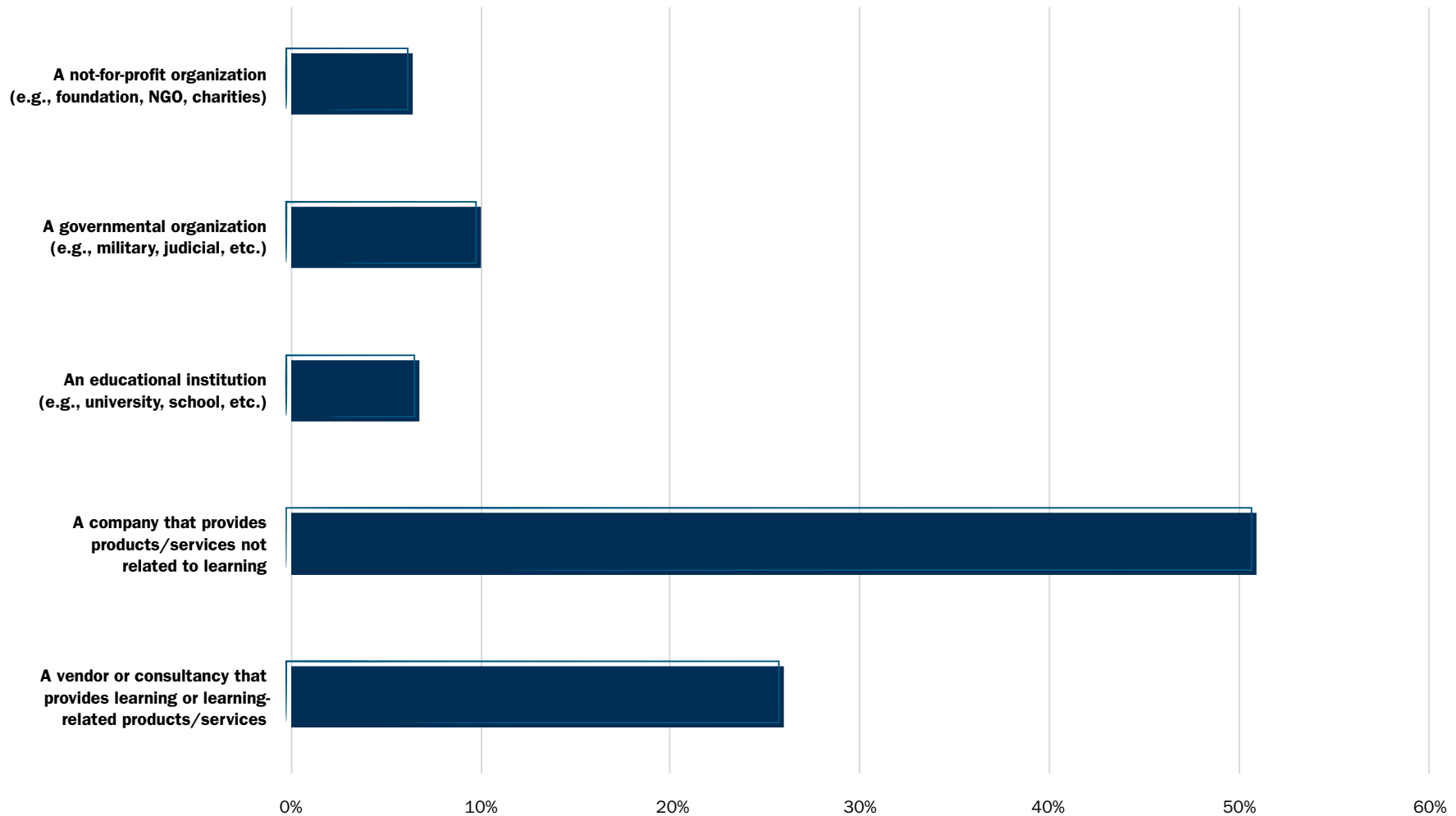
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Even though we have very experienced people overall, they seem to be switching organizations quite frequently.

WHAT TYPE OF COMPANY/ORGANIZATION DO YOU WORK FOR?

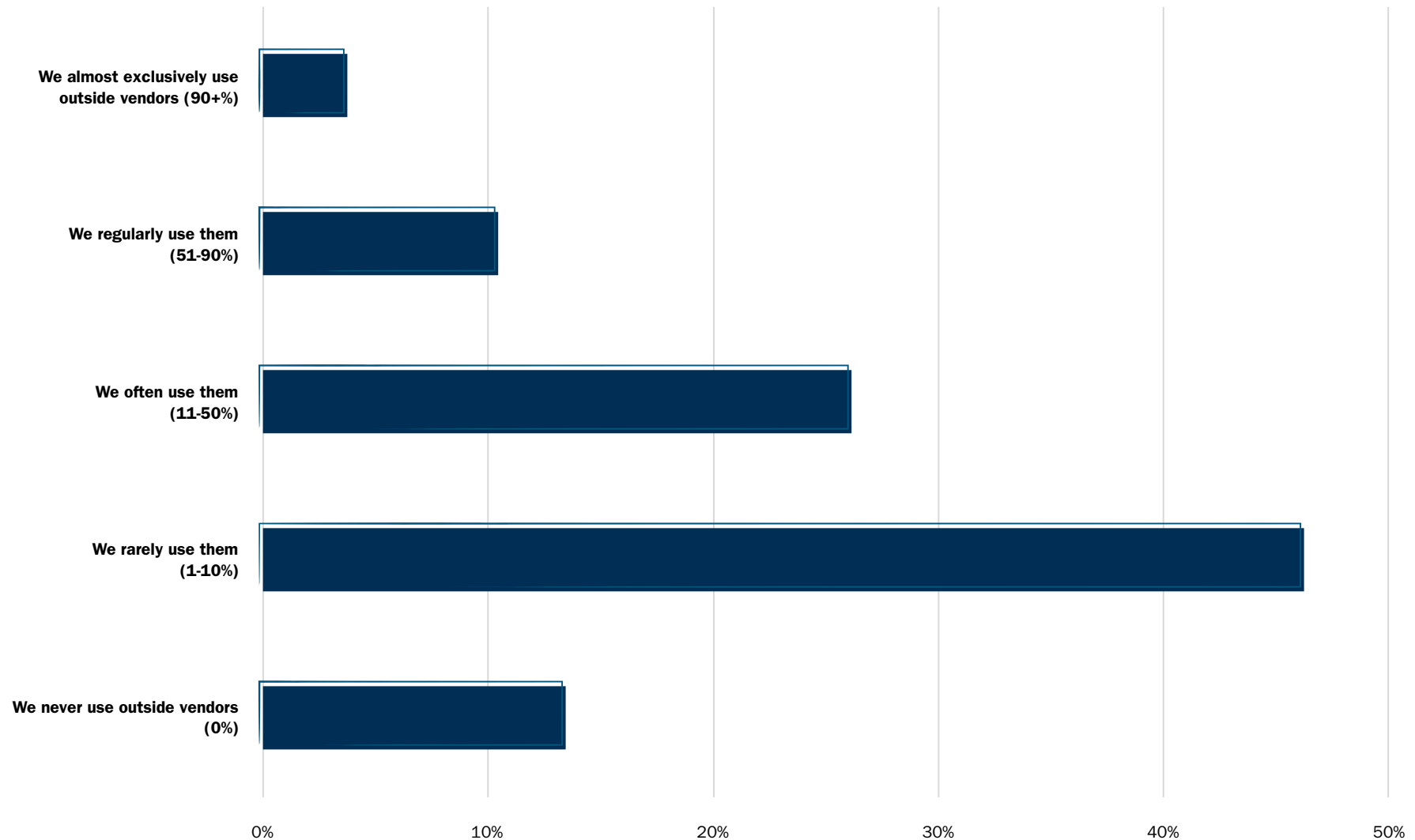
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The bulk of people work in businesses.
51% work in companies that are NOT in the learning business.
26% work in vendor companies or consultancies.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR TEAM'S OVERALL LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE WORK GETS DONE BY OUTSIDE VENDORS?

Select one



Outside vendors are often or regularly used in 40% of organizations, leaving 60% of organizations who rarely or never use them.

Exemplary Organizations

EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS

For the first time, the Learning Trends data are being indexed by the concept of “exemplary” organizations. Throughout this report we will highlight what exemplary organizations are doing that typical organizations are not doing. We hope that these insights empower you and your team to use the data to benchmark your practices against the best.

With this information, we want to enable you to:

- Get data to share with your senior management—to show where your learning team is excelling AND to get budget, resources, and support to improve in areas where your current practices may be falling short.
- Inform your learning strategy by uncovering opportunities you may not have considered before and by prioritizing the best practices you are already using.
- Energize and educate your learning team by enabling them to examine their own practices and reflect on where they align (or don't) with the practices of exemplary organizations.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

The secrets are in the details but let us tease a few of the findings. Our survey data have revealed that people in exemplary organizations utilize more innovative practices, feel a deeper sense of belonging and connection to their coworkers, engage in professional development that is more transformative, and are more likely to be doing the best work of their careers compared with people in more typical organizations.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS

Exemplary organizations were selected based on ❶ the success of their learning teams in creating learning opportunities that improved employee work performance, and ❷ the rigor of the learning evaluation metrics and practices they utilized.

In essence, we define exemplary organizations as those who use systematic methods to gain insight into their learning designs and results—and with this window into their practices, they report success in enabling improved work performance.

The data is based on answers to a series of questions. These answers were provided by people in the learning and performance field.

EXPLORATIONS OF THE CRITERIA

To identify exemplary organizations from typical organizations, we chose criteria based on our beliefs about what makes a successful learning team. We could instead have chosen exemplary organizations based on the experience, age, or education of those on their learning teams. We could have selected organizations based on the models, tools, or design methods that they use. We could have had them rate their level of skills and knowledge.

Instead, we boiled it down to two criteria: reported success in improving people's work performance and reported learning-evaluation approaches. To evaluate, we utilized LTEM criteria and reports of evaluation success. (LTEM is the Learning-Transfer Evaluation Model developed by Will Thalheimer, one of the authors of this report.)

We won't claim genius here! Our criteria arose from the common sense already known in the learning and performance field. One of our most important goals is to improve work performance.

Here was our thinking. We humans are biased in believing that the work we are doing—indeed any efforts we are making—are producing good results. We can't help it; we are built to believe that we are doing good work.

To counteract this tendency, we figured that learning teams who were using more rigorous learning-evaluation practices would be more likely to see the truth of their outcomes. They wouldn't have perfect insight—nobody does—but when they reported success in improving work performance, we would be able to trust their assessment more than those who were using poor evaluation approaches.

Because this was our first time classifying responses into exemplary and non-exemplary, we didn't know whether the distinction would be predictive of other important factors and outcomes. We didn't know whether our selection criteria would work. Would people in exemplary organizations be more or less likely to report that their organizations were innovative? Did they use or avoid the ADDIE model? Were they fostering more, or less, cohesive learning teams?

If our two chosen criteria worked to define success and provide insights to guide learning teams, it would be a remarkable result.



DID THESE CRITERIA WORK?

Although we are confident in our rationale for the exemplary-organization selection criteria, we also know that human behavior is often fickle and hard to predict.

We will wait for a few years of data to know for sure, but early results seem to support our selection criteria! We found that 63% of people in exemplary organizations engaged in professional development that “significantly improved” or “completed transformed” their work performance, while only 41% of people in typical organizations reported the same. Our team is astounded by this finding—a 22% difference in the impact of professional development!

When we found that 81% of people in exemplary organizations reported using innovative practices, while only 54% of people in typical organizations reported the same, we knew that the exemplary construct was sound. Exemplary organizations are using 27% more innovative practices! The results are so distinct with such a large gap between exemplary and typical. We are quite confident that we are onto something fundamental. Yet, we will seek to replicate this finding over the next few years before we draw any final conclusions.

HOW THE EXEMPLARY DISTINCTION IS USED

As you'll see, we utilize the exemplary distinction throughout the report but not for every question. We also look at the results by comparing vendor companies to regular companies and sometimes to government, not-for-profit, and educational organizations.

We are using these deeper analyses strategically to uncover insights. We are purposely not overburdening the report with too much detail and minutiae.

HOW YOU CAN USE THE EXEMPLARY REPORTING

The data will be straightforward. By looking at the question options—and answering the question for your learning team—you'll then be able to compare your answers to the exemplary results.



Professional Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As learning and performance professionals, we help other people with their professional development. It's job #1 for us! But what about our own professional development? If we're going to maximize our performance, are we getting what we need? **The Learning Trends 2022 surprised us.**

THE TOP SOURCES OF LEARNING & PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

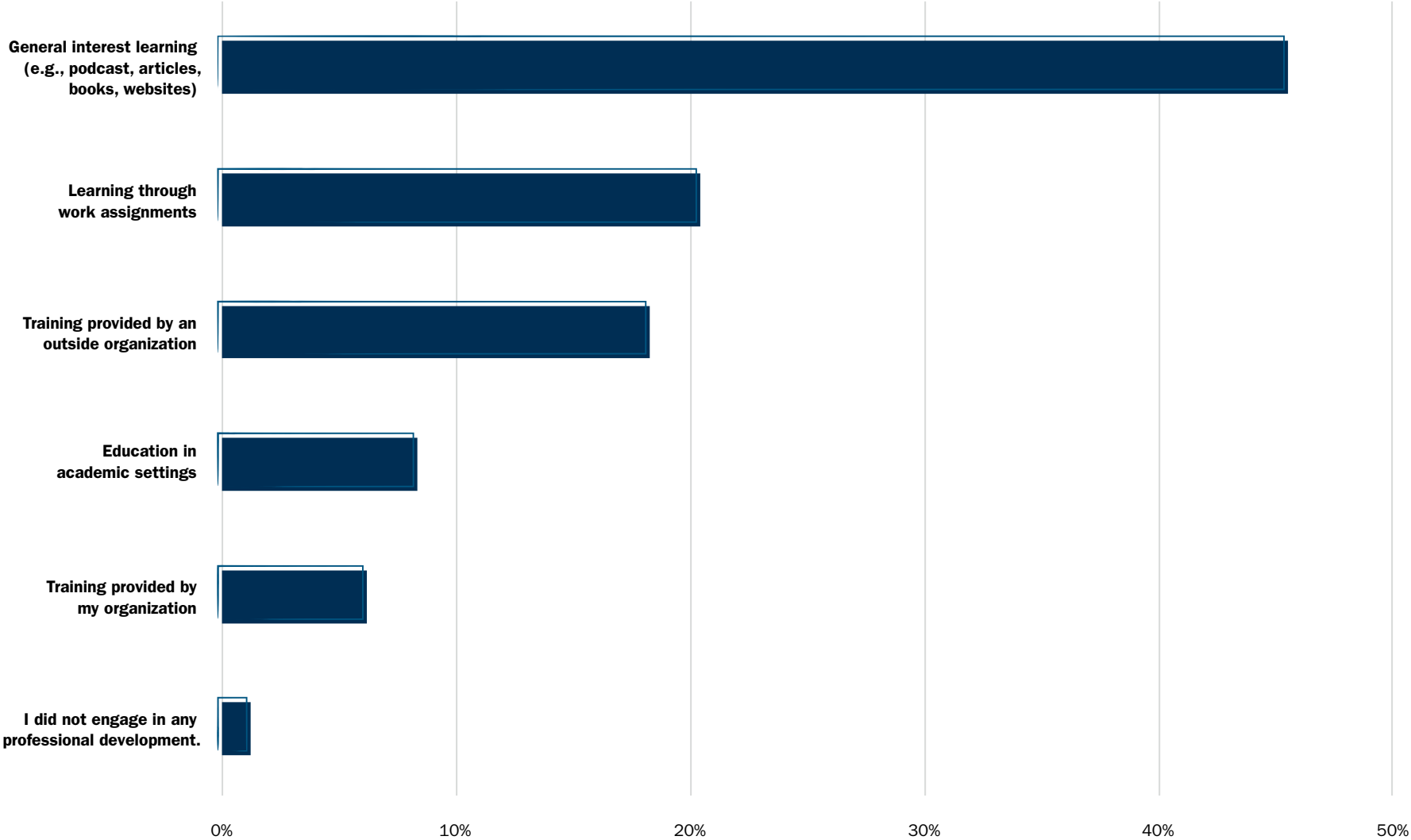
By far, the most significant source of our professional development is “general interest learning (e.g., podcasts, articles, books, websites).” Even when asked about specific sources, it's these general interest modalities that push to the top. The top specific source listing is “online articles, blog posts, reports, or white papers.” Followed closely are webinars, books, videos, and podcasts. It seems we may be on our own in terms of our professional development.

SATISFACTION WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We seem to be of two minds. On the one hand, about 68% of us want more professional development or more support for it. At the same time, 48% of us—almost half—reported that we got a “good amount” of professional development in 2021.

IN 2021, WHERE DID YOU GET MOST OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Select one



Most professional development came from our own efforts, not from formal training. Also, training provided by our organizations was the least common way we got professional development!

IN 2021, WHICH SPECIFIC TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN?

Select all that apply

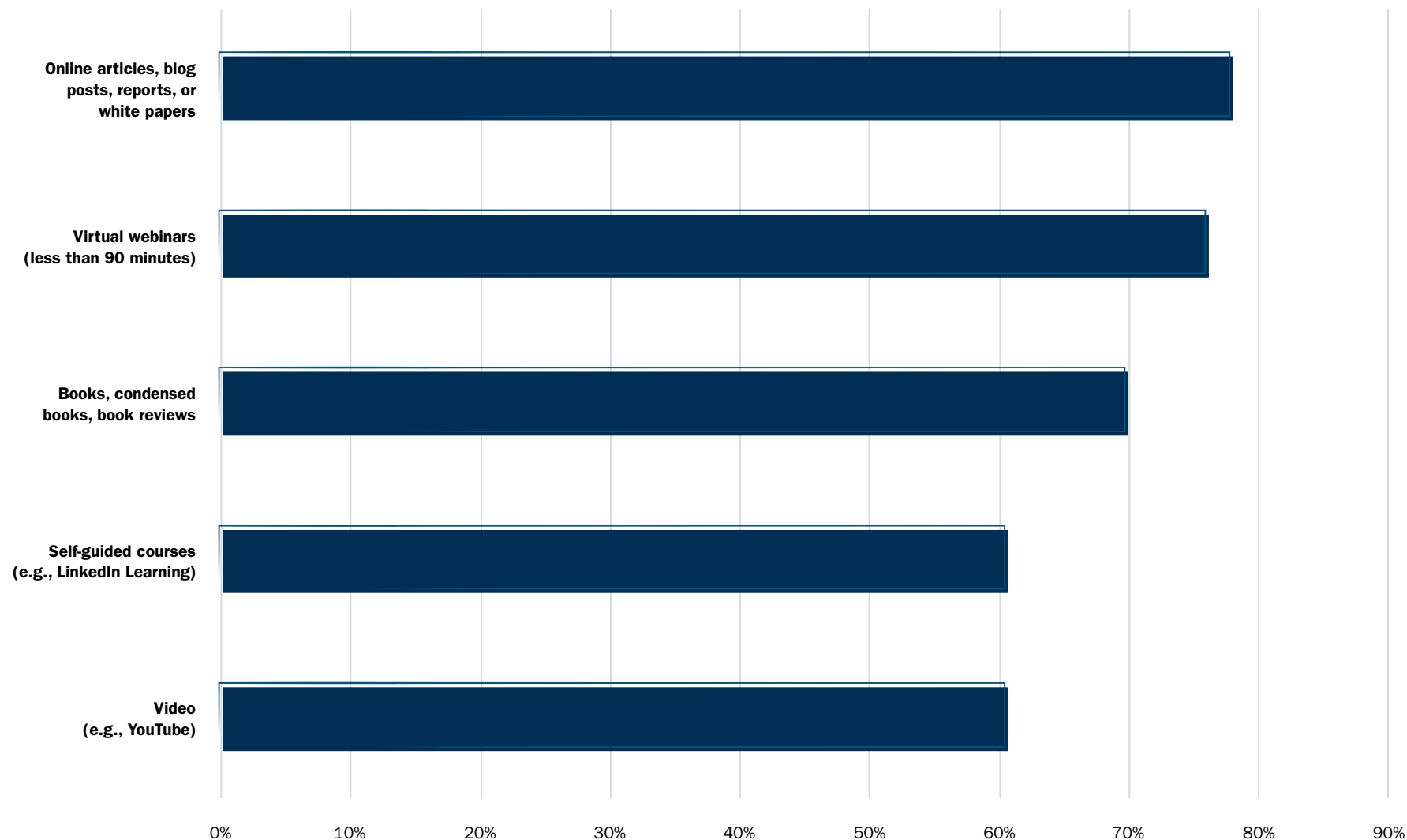
Online articles, blog posts, reports, or white papers	78%
Virtual webinars (less than 90 minutes)	76%
Books, condensed books, book reviews	70%
Self-guided courses (e.g., LinkedIn Learning)	61%
Video (e.g., YouTube)	61%
Podcasts	49%
Professional membership groups (e.g., ATD, Learning Guild, LDA, ISPI)	47%
Virtual workshops (more than 90 minutes)	42%
Print media (magazines, newspapers, reports, white papers, etc.)	41%
Conferences	33%
Compliance training	29%
Coaching/mentoring	25%
Certification/recertification training	21%
Live broadcasts (e.g., LinkedIn Live)	15%
In-person workshops	12%
University graduate degree programs/studies	11%
Television (including broadcast, Netflix, etc.)	11%
Academic hosted events (e.g., local universities)	9%
None. I did not participate in any professional development.	1%



*We used a wide variety of sources for our professional development.
Looking at workshops, it appears most of our learning for 2021 was online.*

IN 2021, WHICH SPECIFIC TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN?

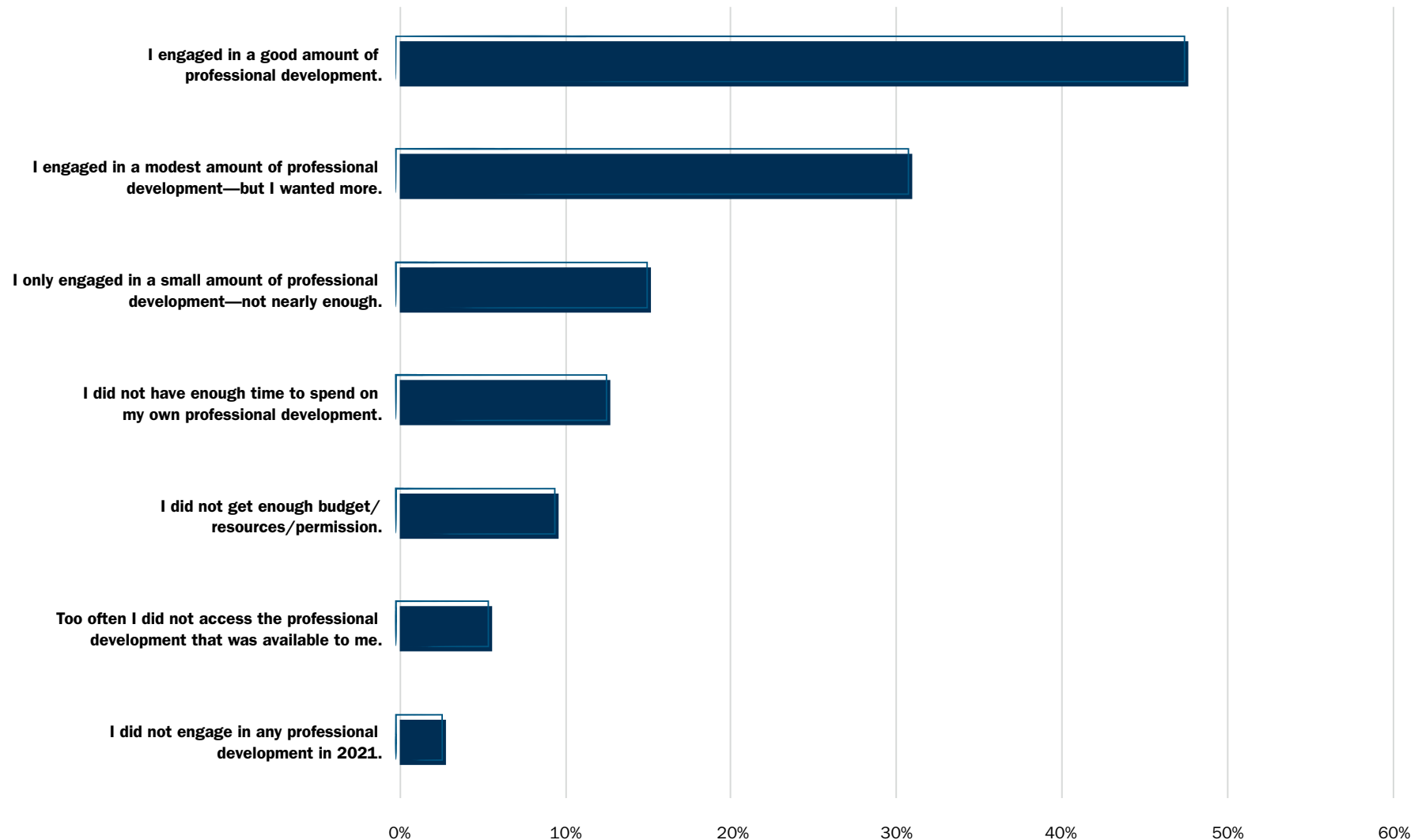
(displaying top five only)



Of the 18 types of professional development that we asked about, these were the ones selected by over 50% of our respondents.

IN 2021, WERE YOU ABLE TO GET THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT YOU NEEDED TO DO YOUR BEST WORK AND/OR ADVANCE YOUR SKILLS?

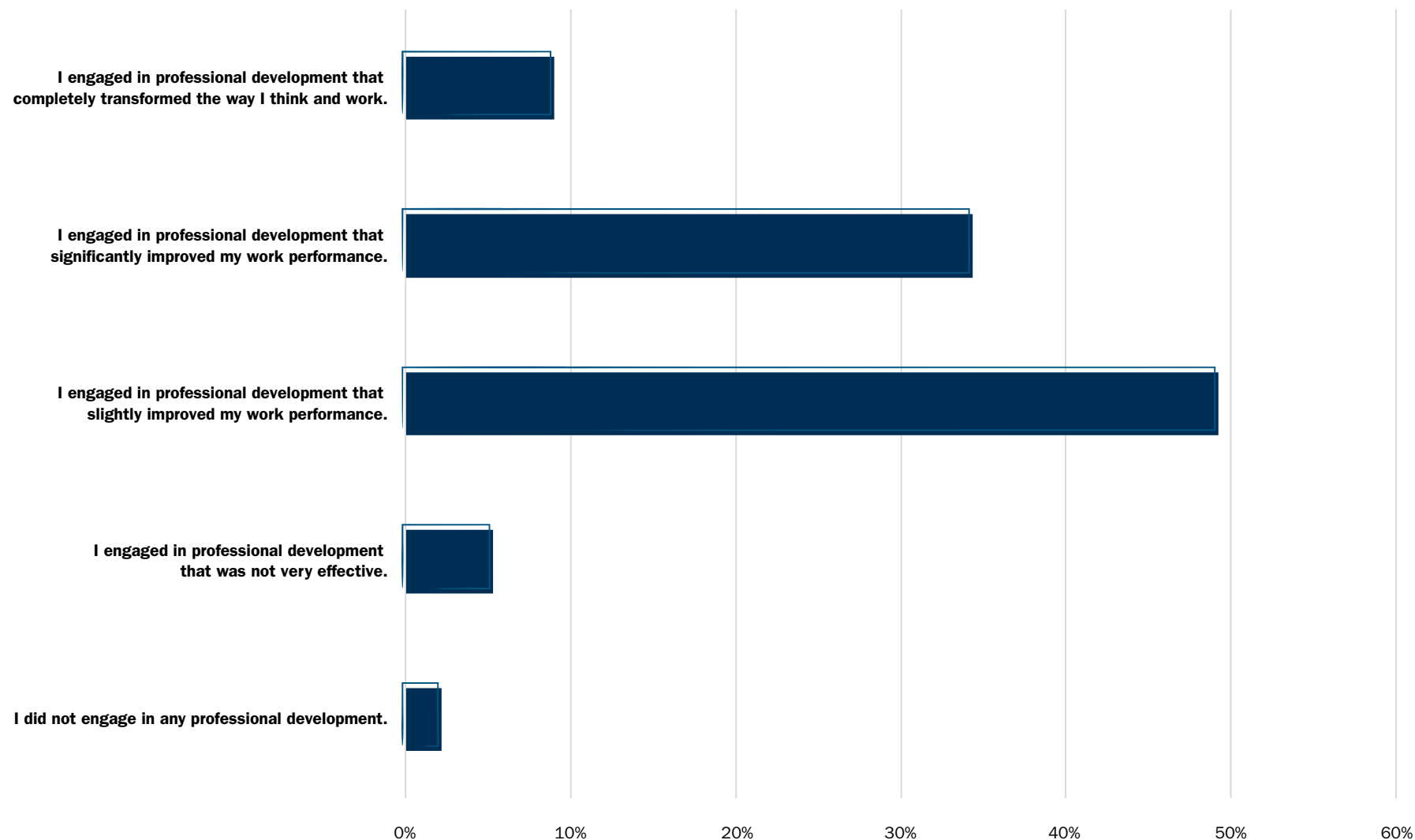
Select all that apply



**48% of us engaged in a “good amount” of professional development.
Still, 68% of us wanted more professional development or more support for it!**

IN 2021, HOW WAS THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT YOU ENGAGED IN?

Select one



34% of us engaged in professional development that significantly improved our work performance. Nearly 50% of us engaged in professional development that only slightly improved our performance. Fortunately, only about 5% had to endure ineffective professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

The type of organization did not seem to make much of a difference in the quality of the professional development received.

Perhaps what is most notable by looking at these numbers is that less than 50% of people think the professional development they are getting is transformative or significantly improved their work performance. For us in the professional development business, there is a little irony here.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SATISFACTION	BUSINESSES	LEARNING VENDORS	NOT-FOR-PROFIT GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATIONAL
"Significantly improved" or "completely transformed" their work performance.	41% n=58	42% n=31	46% n=30
"Slightly improved," "was not very effective," or "did not engage in."	59% n=83	58% n=42	54% n=35

DO PEOPLE IN EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS GET DIFFERENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAN THE REST OF US?

We tracked two aspects of professional development: ❶ the amount received, and ❷ how effective it was.

People in exemplary organizations received about the same amount of professional development in 2021 as people in all the other organizations, 69% compared to 62%.

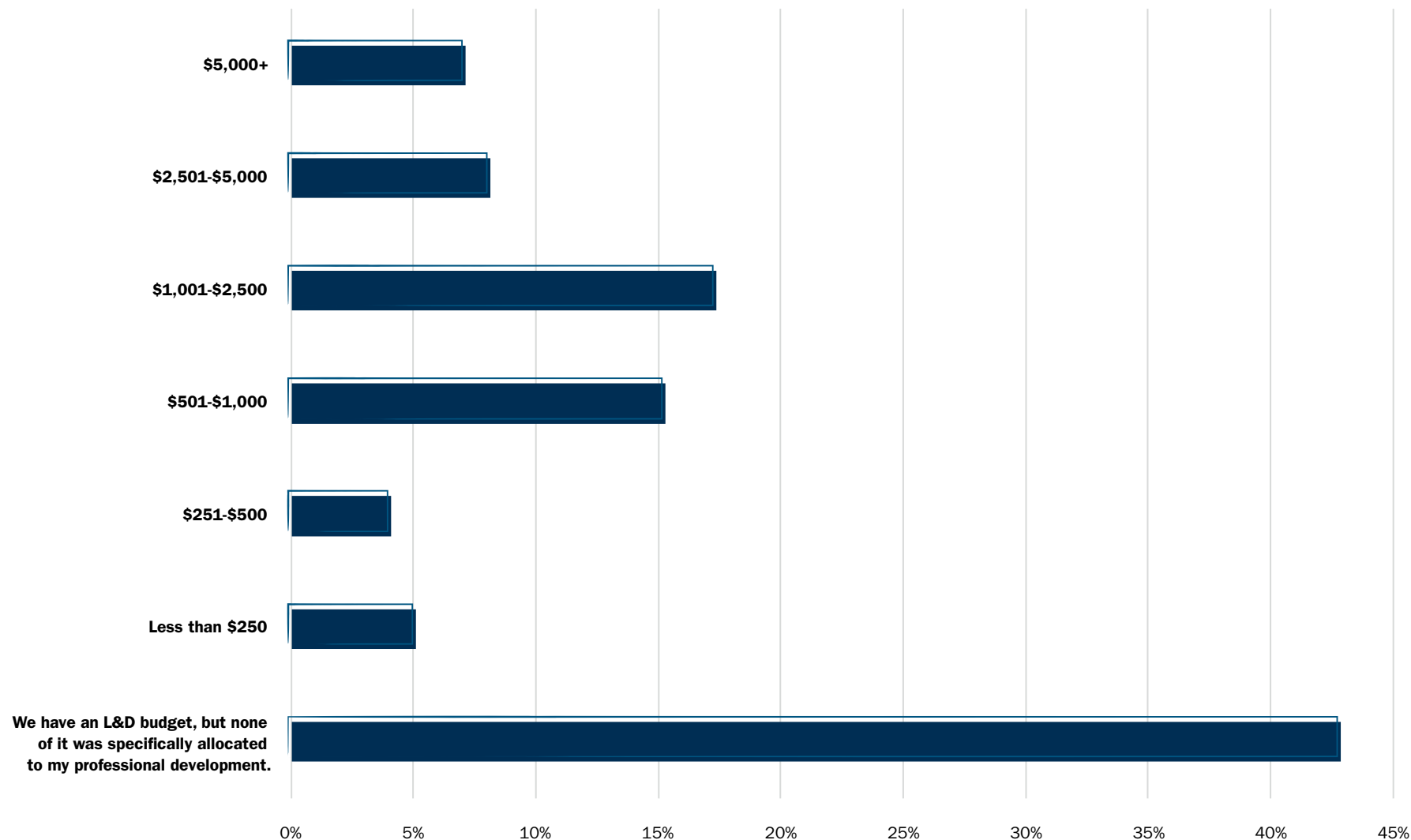
However, 63% of people in exemplary organizations seemed to experience more professional development that “significantly improved” or “completely transformed” their work performance, compared with only 41% for non-exemplary organizations. We are somewhat circumspect in this conclusion; our sample of exemplary organizations is a little smaller than ideal, opening the possibility that the sample is unrepresentative. Yet, the difference between 63% and 41% is large, so it does seem likely that people in exemplary organizations feel the professional development they received in 2021 was superior.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMOUNT RECEIVED	EXEMPLARY	ALL OTHERS
Got a “good amount of professional development” or “a modest amount.”	69% n=33	62% n=221

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS	EXEMPLARY	ALL OTHERS
Their professional development “significantly improved” or “completely transformed” their work performance.	63% n=25	41% n=115

IN 2021, HOW MUCH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET WAS AVAILABLE TO YOU TO USE FOR YOURSELF (WHETHER YOU USED IT OR NOT)?

Select one



**57% of organizations or employers have a clear budget for professional development.
Median amount was \$1,001-\$2,500.
43% do not have allocated amounts.**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SOURCES

We asked respondents who they would recommend as good sources of professional development. We got hundreds of written responses, which we'll categorize below.

Here's the specific question that we asked:

"What professional development providers/sources outside your organization would you highly recommend to other learning and performance professionals?"

We asked for respondents to type their responses—we provided no specific choices or suggestions.

The top entries were professional associations. Specifically, ATD (Association for Talent Development), LDA (Learning Development Accelerator), and the Learning Guild. These three were by far the most popular responses.

The rest of the responses varied widely and received much fewer responses. Included in this wide list were institutions like Harvard Business Review, well-known consultants in the learning field, universities, training companies, podcasts, etc.

Care should be taken in interpreting the professional associations chosen. Remember that many more of our respondents are from the US and Canada, so professional associations elsewhere are likely to be underrepresented in our data.

TRUSTED THOUGHT LEADERS

We asked respondents:

"In 2021, what thought leaders did you follow closely?"

We got hundreds of responses.

The top names were (presented here in alphabetical order by first name):

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Adam Grant | • Josh Bersin |
| • Cara North | • Mirjam Neelen |
| • Clark Quinn | • Patti Shank |
| • Connie Malamed | • Paul Kirschner |
| • Donald Clark | • Simon Sinek |
| • Guy Wallace | • Tim Slade |
| • Jane Bozarth | • Will Thalheimer |

FINAL WORDS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our respondents would like more opportunities for professional development, but they seem quite active in finding their own sources of learning. Particularly notable are trade associations like ATD and professional membership organizations like the Learning Guild and LDA. Respondents also seem to be actively following several thought leaders within the learning field and outside the field as well.

It's hard to say whether organizations should provide more planned professional development opportunities for their employees in learning and development—or whether they should give their employees a budget to join a professional association, purchase their own professional development, or seek their own sources in books, podcasts, articles, etc.

One of the most difficult things about learning is finding valid, useful sources of information and skill-building. Professional associations can vet content. Learning teams can provide a source of guidance. Thought leaders can keep others apprised of trusted sources. Groups of professionals can do the same. The key is curation, which is critical to professional development. We as learning professionals want to learn valid information—and we want to avoid the fads and misinformation that may surface from time to time.

Our Perception of Trending

OUR PERCEPTION OF TRENDING

Every year, a heavily anticipated component of our survey data is the focus on the technologies, tools, approaches, and solutions we're shifting toward as a field. Anecdotally in everyday conversations in the field, there are always topics that seem to be trending—whether or not they are actually being used in real work.

In 2021, the industry buzz was still about big data, predictive analytics, creation of virtual experiences, and the rise of virtual reality and augmented reality (which always seems to be a “year away from being a year away” in every report).

THE REALITY OF WHAT IS TRENDING

Despite the headlines, the data tell a different story. In this year's survey, we asked respondents to help us understand the methods they would implement this year AND those they would implement for the first time this year. This two-question approach allowed us to move beyond the perception of what's popular, to focus on what is happening in our work.

THE QUESTION WE ASKED

We asked:

“What learning trends or methods will you (or your organization) use in 2022 to provide learning and/or performance improvement? Which ones will be new for your organization?”

We gave respondents a list of 30+ options to choose from. They could select as many as they felt applied to their organization.

KEY FINDINGS IN THE RESULTS

In the results, various trends appeared:

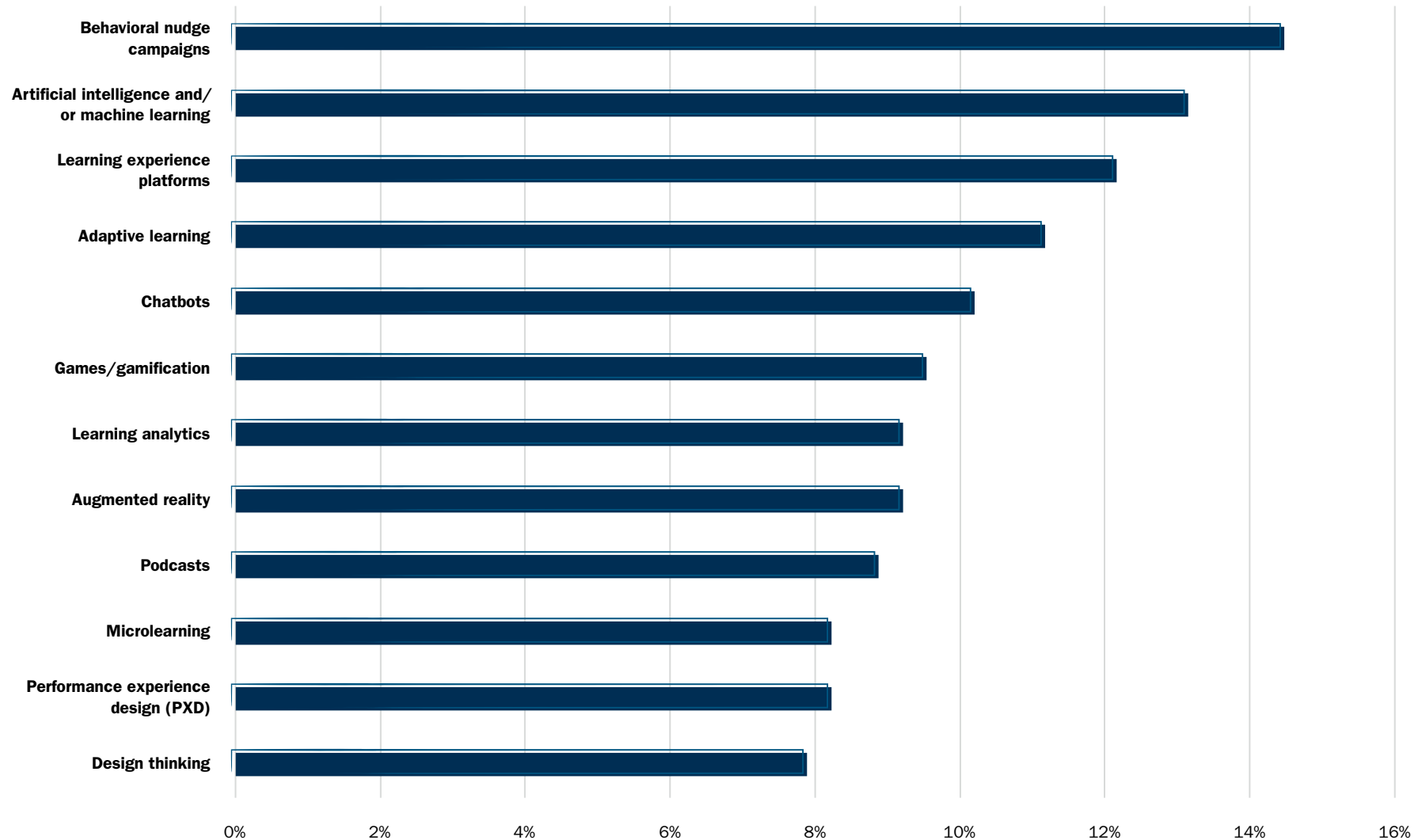
- 1. Less technology-based and more psychology or behavioral economics-based approaches like nudges or habit formation are poised to emerge this year.**
- 2. Data is becoming less theoretical and shifting to integration into technologies to support serving up resources—as in the growing adoption of learning experience platforms.**
- 3. New methods for creating experiences continue to gain traction through the adoption of performance experience design.**
- 4. Tried-and-true approaches to changing performance are still key, as shown through continued focus on eLearning, instructor-led training (both classroom and online), video, microlearning, mobile experiences, and podcasts.**

On the next few pages, we'll share the data on what learning and performance professionals think their organizations will be doing for the first time in 2022.

After this first-time data, we'll share what they said their organizations would be doing in 2022, whether it was new for them or not.

THE TOP DOZEN METHODS ORGANIZATIONS WILL USE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2022

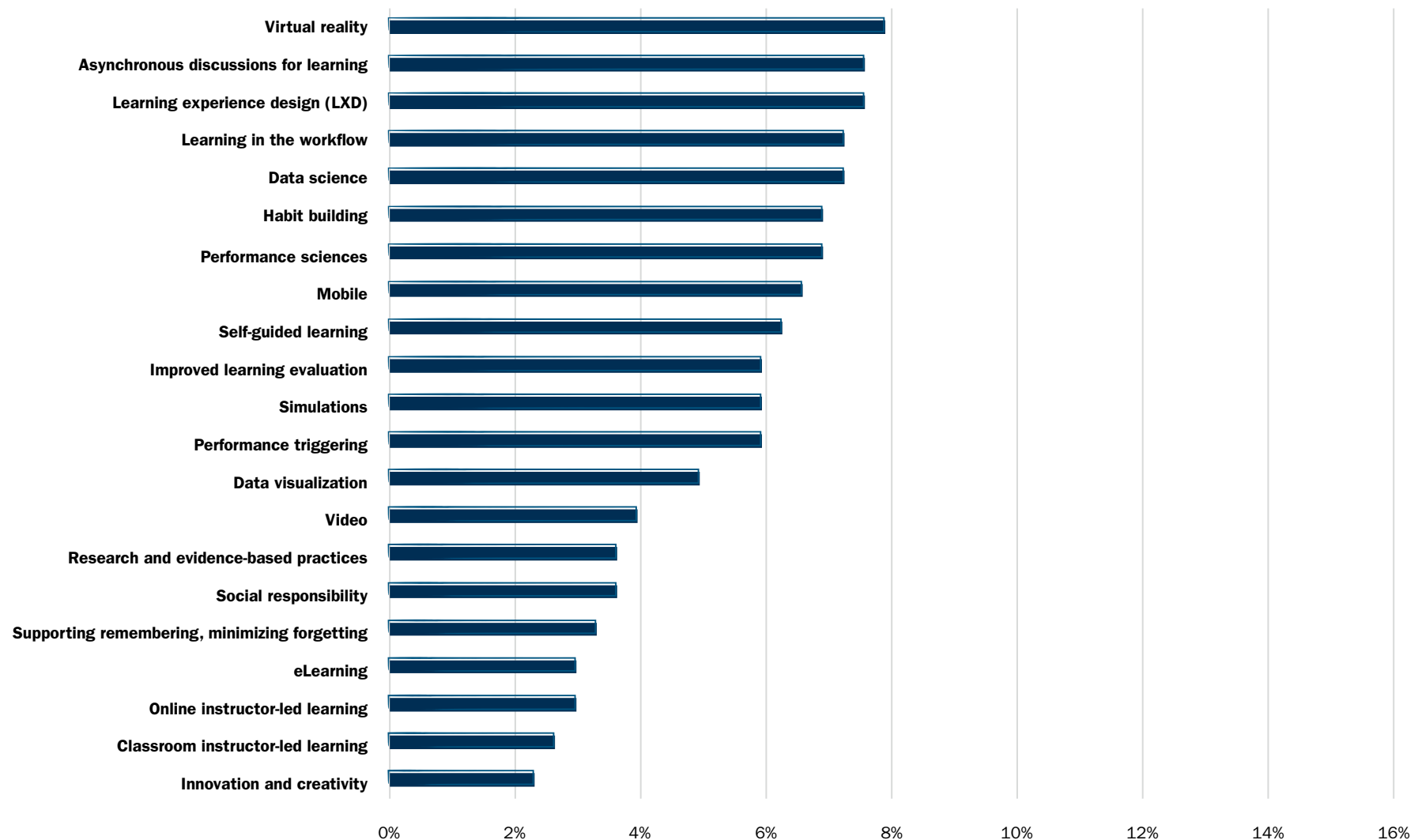
On this page we show the top dozen; on the next page, we show the rest.



Some of these methods are relatively new, while others have been heavily used for years in many organizations.

THE BOTTOM 21 METHODS ORGANIZATIONS WILL USE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2022

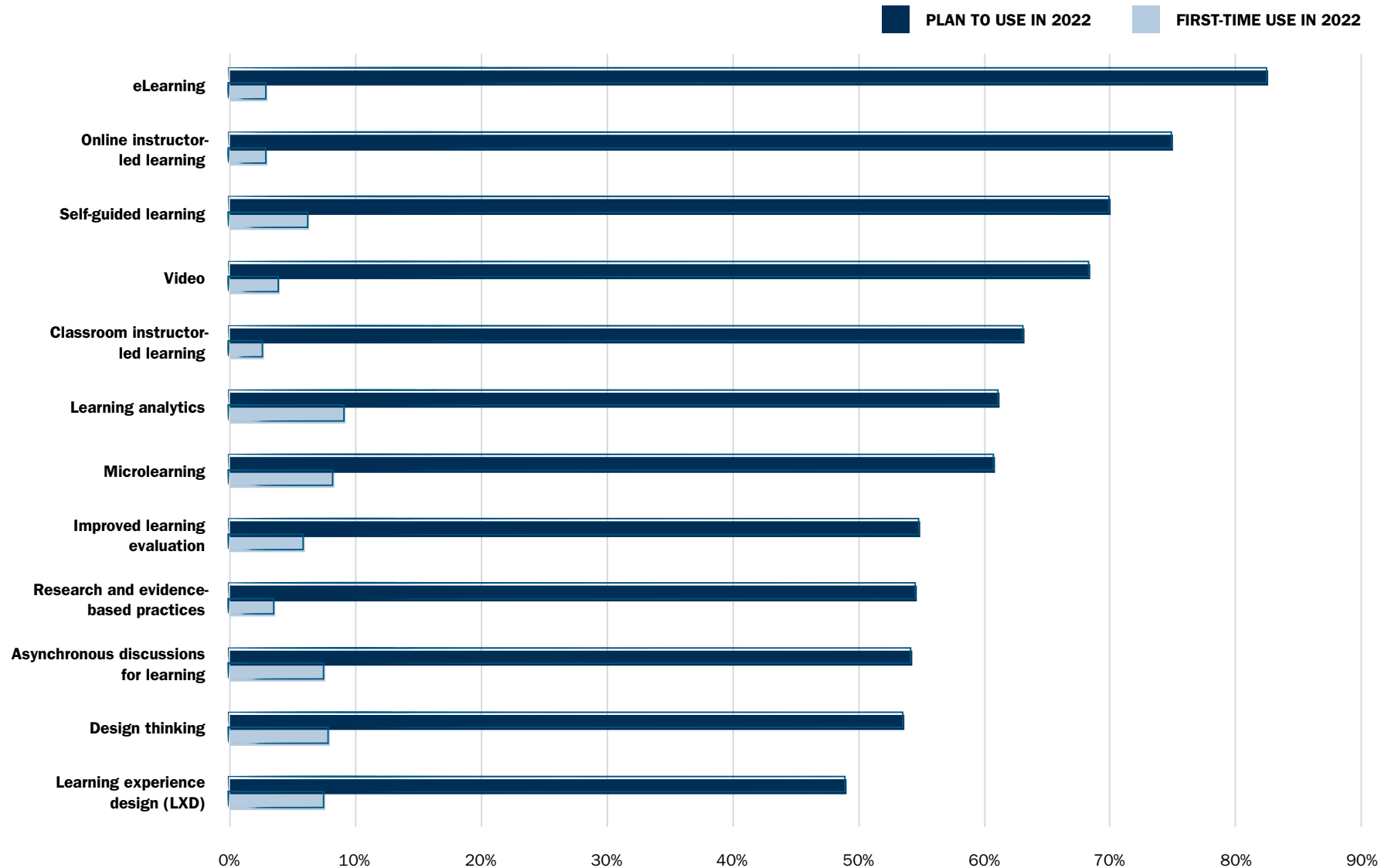
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Note that items on this list—the first-time in 2022 list—may be included because many organizations have used them in the past and so few are new to them (eLearning), or because they are relatively new practices in the industry and only a few organizations are even trying them (performance triggering).

THE TOP DOZEN METHODS ORGANIZATIONS PLAN TO USE IN 2022

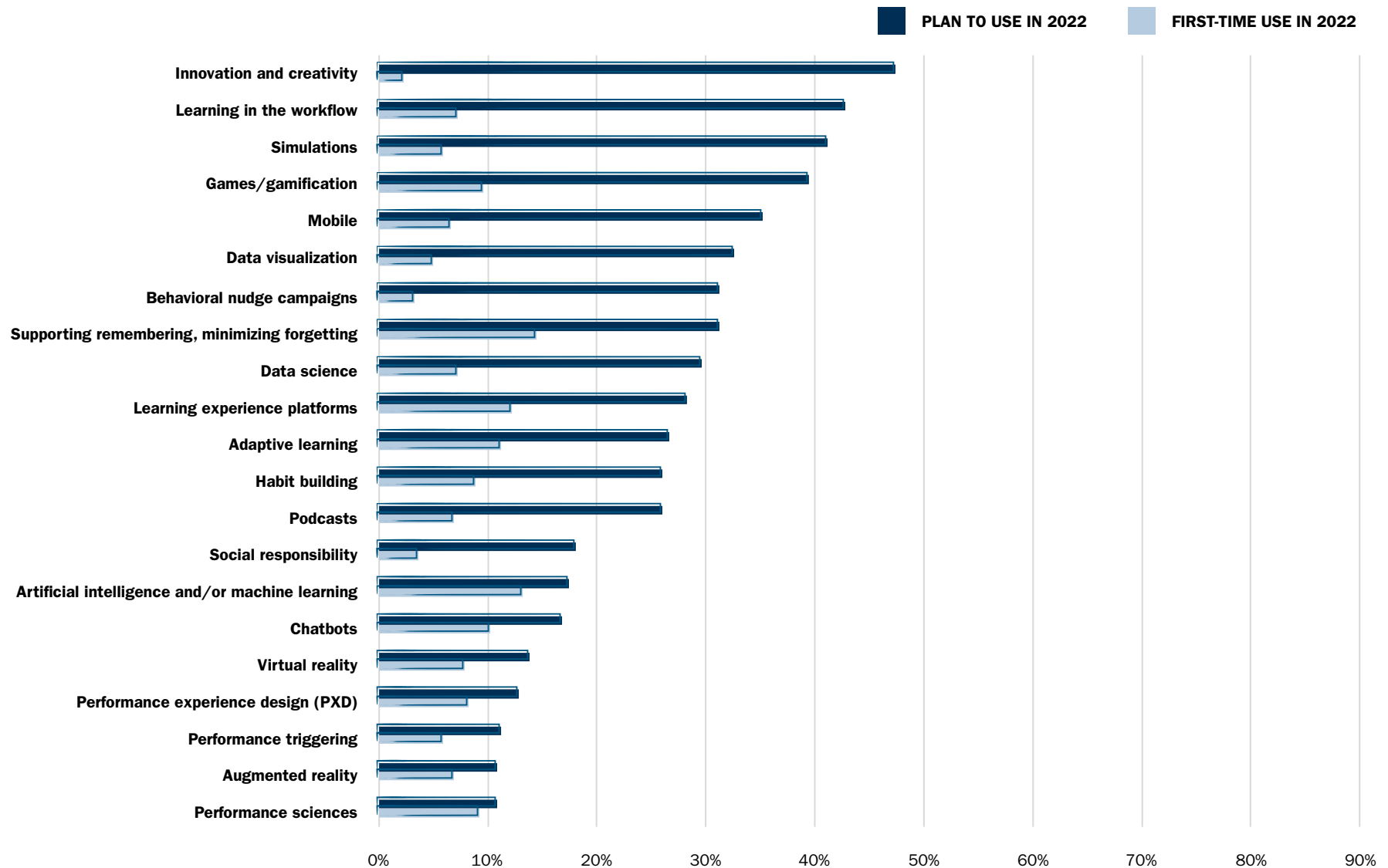
On this page we show the top dozen; on the next page, we show the rest.



Now we're switching the view to the predicted overall use of these trends and methods for 2022. The first-time use is repeated here in the shorter lighter blue bars.

THE BOTTOM 21 METHODS ORGANIZATIONS PLAN TO USE IN 2022

Continued from the previous page.



If you read from the bottom up, you'll see that some of the “hottest topics” in the industry are not yet getting traction in many organizations—certainly not to the extent that the industry buzz would indicate.

EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS USE MORE METHODS

We wondered whether exemplary organizations were planning to use different methods in 2022 compared to typical organizations. The answer is sometimes.

Exemplary organizations, in general, are using more methods than typical organizations, 51% compared with 38%.

TOOLS AND METHODS	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL
Percentage of the tools and methods selected by each group	51% n=40	38% n=264

THE BIGGEST DISPARITIES

Sometimes, the gap between exemplary organizations and typical organizations is huge. Exemplary organizations are focusing much more on supporting remembering, data visualization, social responsibility, adaptive learning, data science, and design thinking. See the chart below for the details.

TOOLS AND METHODS USED	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL	LARGEST DIFFERENCE IN USE
Supporting remembering, minimizing forgetting	55% n=22	28% n=73	27%
Data visualization	55% n=22	29% n=77	26%
Social responsibility	40% n=16	15% n=39	25%
Adaptive learning	48% n=19	23% n=62	24%
Data science	50% n=20	27% n=70	23%
Design thinking	73% n=29	51% n=134	22%

THE TOP METHODS FOR BOTH GROUPS

The largest differences don't tell the whole story. It's also useful to look at the top five methods used for each group. Do these differ or are they the same?

Exemplary organizations are using about the same amount of eLearning as typical organizations (80% compared to 83%). However, for typical organizations, eLearning is in their top five list. It's the same with classroom instructor-led learning—exemplary organizations are at 60% and typical organizations are at 64%, yet for typical organizations, classroom instructor-led learning is in their top five.

We've listed the top five tools for each group in the table on this page.

PLANNED METHODS TO USE IN 2022

EXEMPLARY

OVERALL — Respondents selected 51% of the tools.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

1. Online instructor-led learning (80%)
2. Self-guided learning (78%)
- 3. Research and evidence-based practices (75%)**
4. Video (75%)
- 5. Learning analytics (75%)**

TYPICAL

OVERALL — Respondents selected 38% of the tools.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

- 1. eLearning (83%)**
2. Online instructor-led learning (74%)
3. Self-guided learning (69%)
- 4. Classroom instructor-led learning (64%)**
5. Video (57%)

FIRST-TIME METHODS TO USE IN 2022

EXEMPLARY

OVERALL — Respondents selected 4% of the tools.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

1. Artificial intelligence/machine learning (15%)
2. Adaptive learning (13%)
- 3. Asynchronous discussions for learning (13%)**
4. Behavioral nudge campaigns (10%)
- 5. Virtual reality (10%)**

TYPICAL

OVERALL — Respondents selected 8% of the tools.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

1. Behavioral nudge campaigns (15%)
- 2. Learning experience platforms (13%)**
3. Artificial intelligence/machine learning (13%)
4. & 5. **Learning analytics (11%); Games/gamification (11%);**
Adaptive learning (11%); **Chatbots (11%)**

WHAT LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONALS CREATED IN 2021

Asking people to predict the future (if that future isn't too far away) is a good way to gain insights for which we can be reasonably confident. Yet it never hurts to “triangulate” the data—measuring from multiple vantage points to maximize the reliability of the findings.

In addition to asking people to tell us what methods they and their organizations were planning to use in 2022, we also asked what they personally spent time working on in 2021. Specifically, we asked them what learning and performance assets they helped to create.

Here's the question we asked:

In 2021, did you personally spend a significant amount of time building, deploying, or supporting the following learning and performance assets?

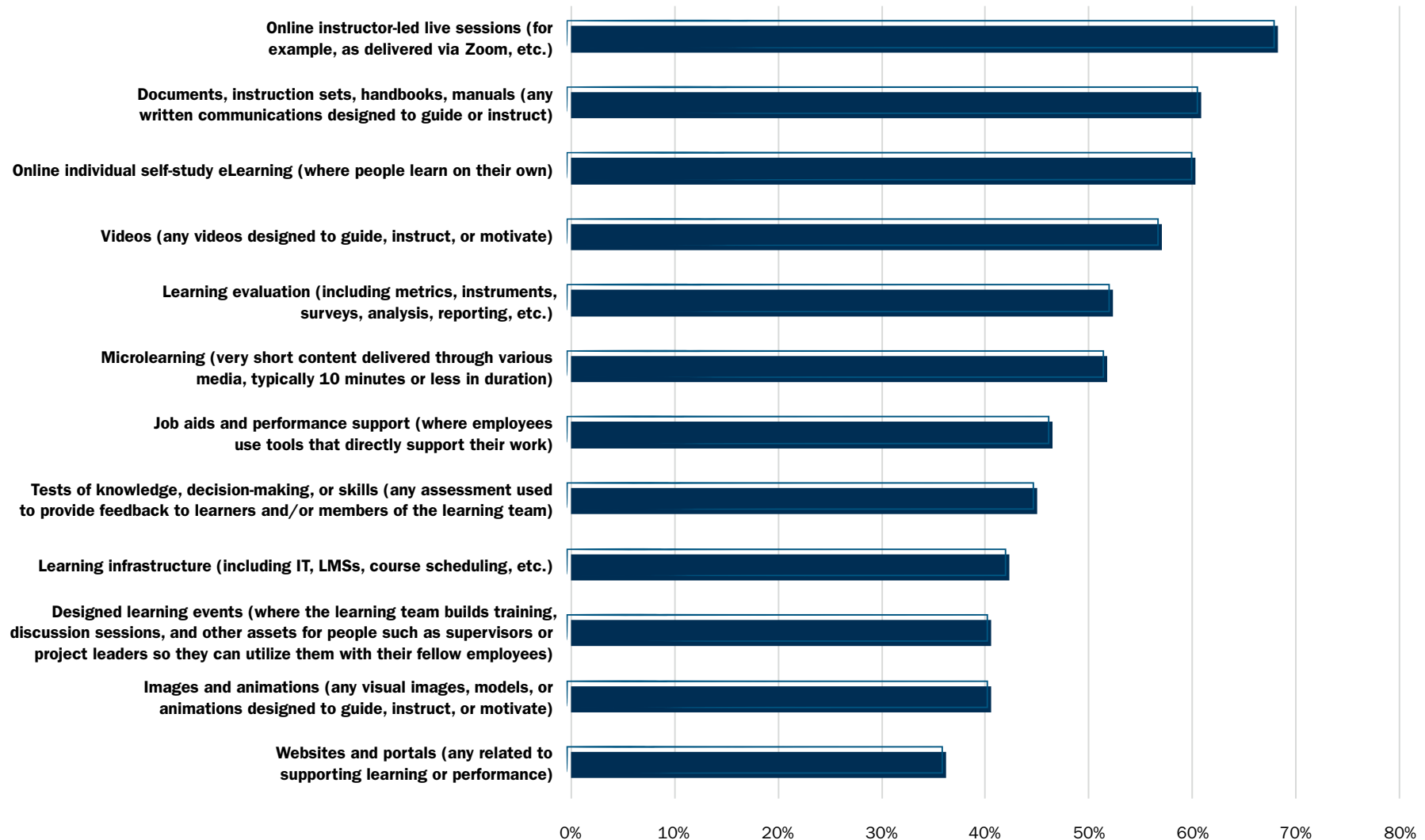
Again, we gave people a long list of items from which to choose. Here we wanted to know what deliverables people worked to create. We didn't use the exact same items from the previous question—although there was some overlap.

Because there were so many response options, we again have divided them into the top dozen on one page and the rest on a second page.



THE TOP DOZEN TYPES OF LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE ASSETS PEOPLE WORKED ON IN 2021

On this page we show the top dozen; on the next page, we show the rest.

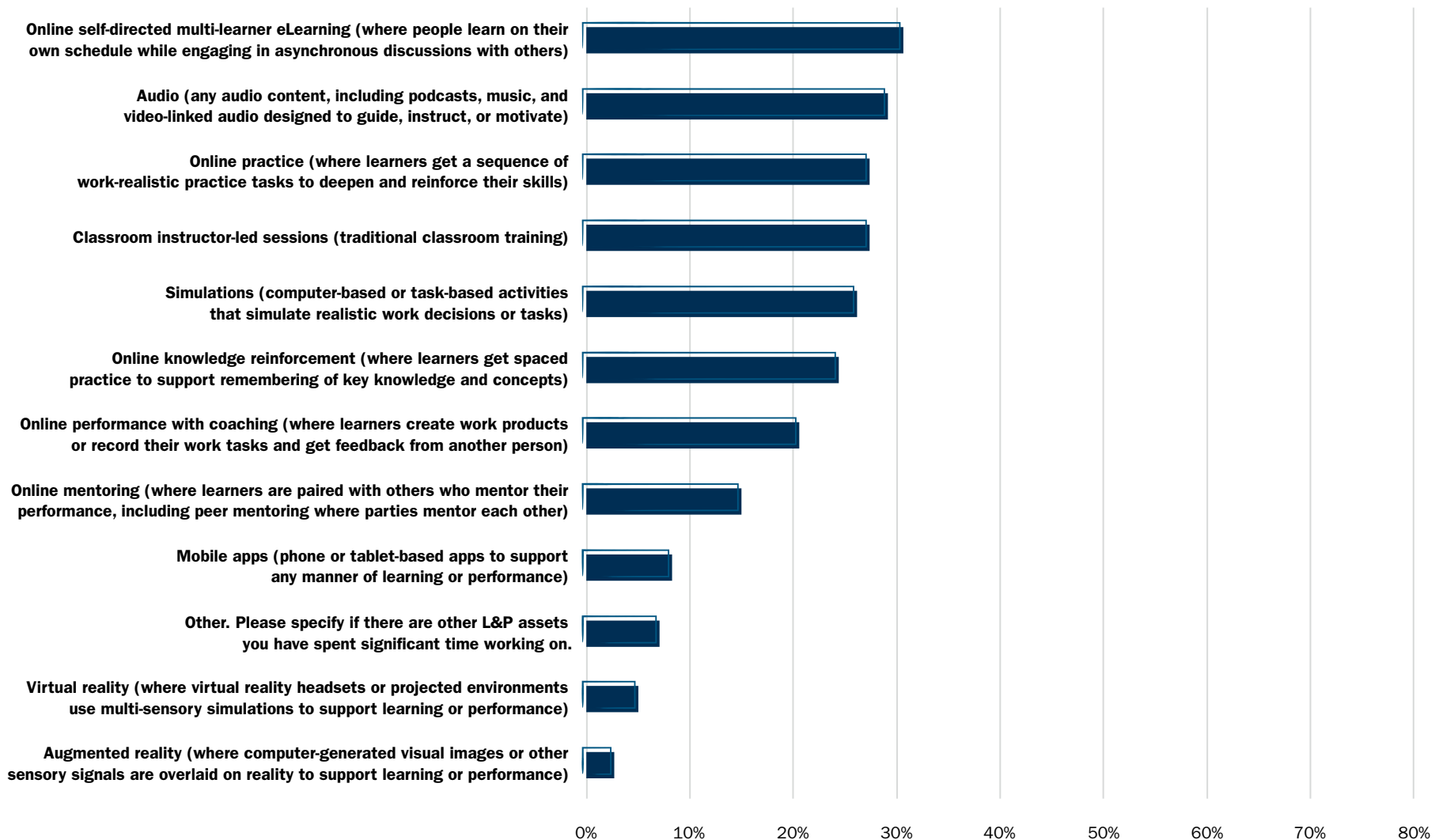


These are the things people said they helped create in 2021.

Several things of note: ❶ Lots of things are happening online. ❷ Learning evaluation is touched by over 50% of people. ❸ Job aids and tests of competence were touched by about 45% of people.

THE BOTTOM DOZEN TYPES OF LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE ASSETS PEOPLE WORKED ON IN 2021

Continued from the previous page.



Several things of note: ① Fewer than 30% of respondents worked to build classroom training last year. ② Only 5% of respondents said they worked on virtual reality last year. ③ About 25–30% of respondents are using more research-aligned practices like online practice and knowledge reinforcement.

WHAT L&P ASSETS DID YOU WORK ON IN 2021?

The top dozen

- Online instructor-led live sessions
- Documents, instruction sets, handbooks, manuals
- Online individual self-study eLearning
- Videos
- Learning evaluation
- Microlearning
- Job aids and performance support
- Tests of knowledge, decision-making, or skills
- Learning infrastructure
- Designed learning events
- Images and animations
- Websites and portals

WHAT TRENDS/METHODS WILL YOUR ORGANIZATION FOCUS ON IN 2022?

The top dozen

- eLearning
- Online instructor-led learning
- Self-guided learning
- Video
- Classroom instructor-led learning
- Learning analytics
- Microlearning
- Improved learning evaluation
- Research and evidence-based practices
- Asynchronous discussions for learning
- Design thinking
- Learning experience design (LXD)



PEOPLE IN EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN BUILDING MORE TYPES OF ASSETS

We wondered whether learning and performance professionals in exemplary organizations and typical organizations engaged in building the same types of learning and performance interventions. The answer is not always.

People in exemplary organizations selected 49% of the listed types of learning interventions, whereas people in typical organizations only selected 34% of the assets listed.

LEARNING INTERVENTIONS & ASSETS	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL
Percentage of the learning interventions and assets selected by each group	49% n=40	34% n=264

THE BIGGEST DISPARITIES

Sometimes, the gap between exemplary organizations and typical organizations is huge. The chart on this page shows the biggest gaps between these two groups, and tellingly, these gaps are largely for practices based in the learning and performance sciences. Exemplary organizations are simply doing much more in the way of research-aligned practices! To highlight just four:

- Online knowledge reinforcement (using spaced practice to support long-term remembering)
- Online practice (where learners get work-realistic tasks to deepen and reinforce their skills)
- Job aids and performance support (used by employees to directly support their work)
- Designed learning events (where the learning team designs/creates events that managers or leaders within the organization use to support learning)

Each of these practices is aligned with research showing that work improvement depends on supporting learners in both learning and remembering, and on utilizing prompting mechanisms to directly nudge thoughts and action.

LEARNING INTERVENTIONS & ASSETS USED	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL	LARGEST DIFFERENCE IN USE
Online knowledge reinforcement	60% n=24	20% n=59	40%
Online practice	60% n=24	23% n=69	37%
Websites and portals	65% n=26	33% n=97	32%
Job aids/ performance support	68% n=27	44% n=131	24%
Online mentoring	35% n=14	13% n=37	22%
Designed learning events	60% n=24	39% n=114	21%

PEOPLE IN BOTH EXEMPLARY AND TYPICAL ORGANIZATIONS WORKED ON THE SAME HIGH-PRIORITY ASSETS

People in exemplary organizations are working on the same high-priority learning and performance assets as people in typical organizations. There are slight variations, but most of the top priorities are the same. Even the two differences listed in the table below are not large. For exemplary organizations, job aids and performance support were listed as the fifth highest priority; for typical organizations, these were listed as their seventh highest priority. Where learning evaluation was listed fifth for typical organizations, it was tied for sixth for the exemplary organizations.

The overall trend is consistent. The top four things survey respondents worked on, whether in an exemplary organization or a typical one, include:

1. **Online instructor-led live sessions**
2. **Documents, instruction sets, handbooks, and manuals**
3. **Online individual self-study eLearning**
4. **Videos**

THE TOP FIVE LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE ASSETS WORKED ON

EXEMPLARY

OVERALL — Respondents selected 49% of the assets listed.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

1. Online instructor-led live sessions (78%)
2. Documents, instruction sets, handbooks, manuals (78%)
3. Online individual self-study eLearning (70%)
4. Videos (70%)
5. **Job aids and performance support (68%)**

TYPICAL

OVERALL — Respondents selected 34% of the assets listed.

TOP FIVE OPTIONS (bold items in orange are unique)

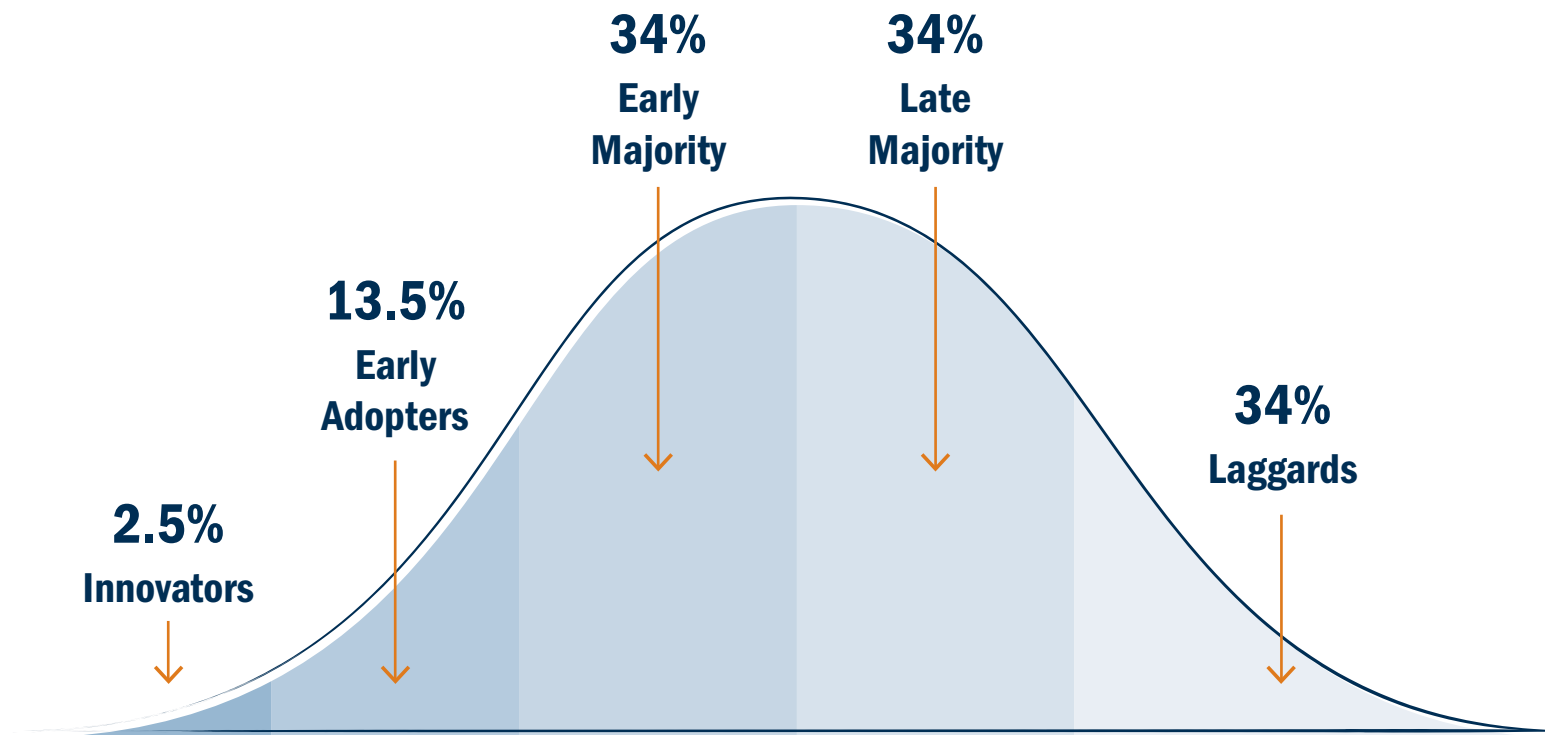
1. Online instructor-led live sessions (68%)
2. Online individual self-study eLearning (60%)
3. Documents, instruction sets, handbooks, manuals (59%)
4. Videos (56%)
5. **Learning evaluation (51%)**

FINAL WORDS ON TRENDING METHODS AND SOLUTIONS

In reviewing the data, you might conclude that our field can sometimes innovate slowly. If that were the case, it would be for good reason. It takes significant time and energy to build up new capabilities. As learning and performance professionals, we wait to ensure new methods are actually useful, and then we upskill ourselves in the successful use of those new methods. We also often need to deploy new infrastructure in our organizations to support new methods. Those are time-consuming tasks and meaningful decisions not to be taken lightly.

Yet, to look at the data from another lens, for methods that will be used for the first time this year, the number of respondents ranged from about 5–15%. When you compare that to Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (see adoption curve on this page), we begin to see those 15% of respondents as innovators and early adopters of that new method. This makes sense! As a field, once methods are proven out, the remaining ~70% majority will be ready to move them into regular use—a space that methods like eLearning continue to occupy now.

Wherever you're at this year, take comfort in knowing the field is continuing to innovate on par with other industries. Share back with us as you learn more about the methods and technologies you're trying for the first time!





Design Models, Processes, and Methodologies

DESIGN MODELS, PROCESSES, AND METHODOLOGIES

Our field is full of research-proven ways of approaching our work. This year's survey data support this abundance of choice with a variety of different processes we're each using, and no clear majority in any one camp (separate from ADDIE, which still reigns as the most popular design methodology).

DESIGN PROCESSES

Whether you're anchored to your first "true love" (such as Understanding by Design) or pushing to continually adopt modern approaches (like Design Thinking or Performance Experience Design), there's a lot of diversity in how we approach our work.

In that diversity, the data show that our processes help us in several different ways:



They provide clear process steps to follow or chronological phases to the work (e.g., ADDIE).



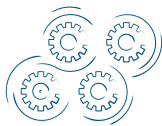
They remind us to work from problems and opportunities as understood by our end users (e.g., Design Thinking/HCD).



They keep us working iteratively or in agile sprints (e.g., Agile).



They orient us to behaviors (e.g., Cathy Moore's Action Mapping).



They help us see the whole system (e.g., ISPI's HPT).



They orient us to the learner (e.g., Gagne's Nine Events).



They keep us focused on the "experiments" in our work (e.g., PDSAs).

Wow! With everything we need to focus on as learning and performance professionals, it's no wonder we utilize so many models and processes to do them!

ACTIVITIES AND METHODS IN DESIGN PROCESSES

Since there is such a diversity of processes we follow, we also asked respondents specifically about the methods they employ.

Here we found that over 95% of respondents interview subject matter experts. Beyond that, there were only five other activities that over half the respondents completed:

- Gathering insights from expert/experienced performers
- Interviews
- Goal/problem statement development
- Surveys
- User testing

When looking at the activities that less than one-third of respondents completed, we found some interesting opportunities in 2022 for our field:

- Putting more focus on synthesizing interview/observation “verbatim”
- Articulating our insights as “How might we...” opportunity statements prior to brainstorming
- Diagnosing obstacles/enablers in the work itself
- Evolving prototyping with A/B testing once we have ideas in mind

INCLUSION OF END USERS

Like in years past, this year’s survey asked about inclusion of end users—59% of the time, respondents “always” or “usually” include learners in the design process.

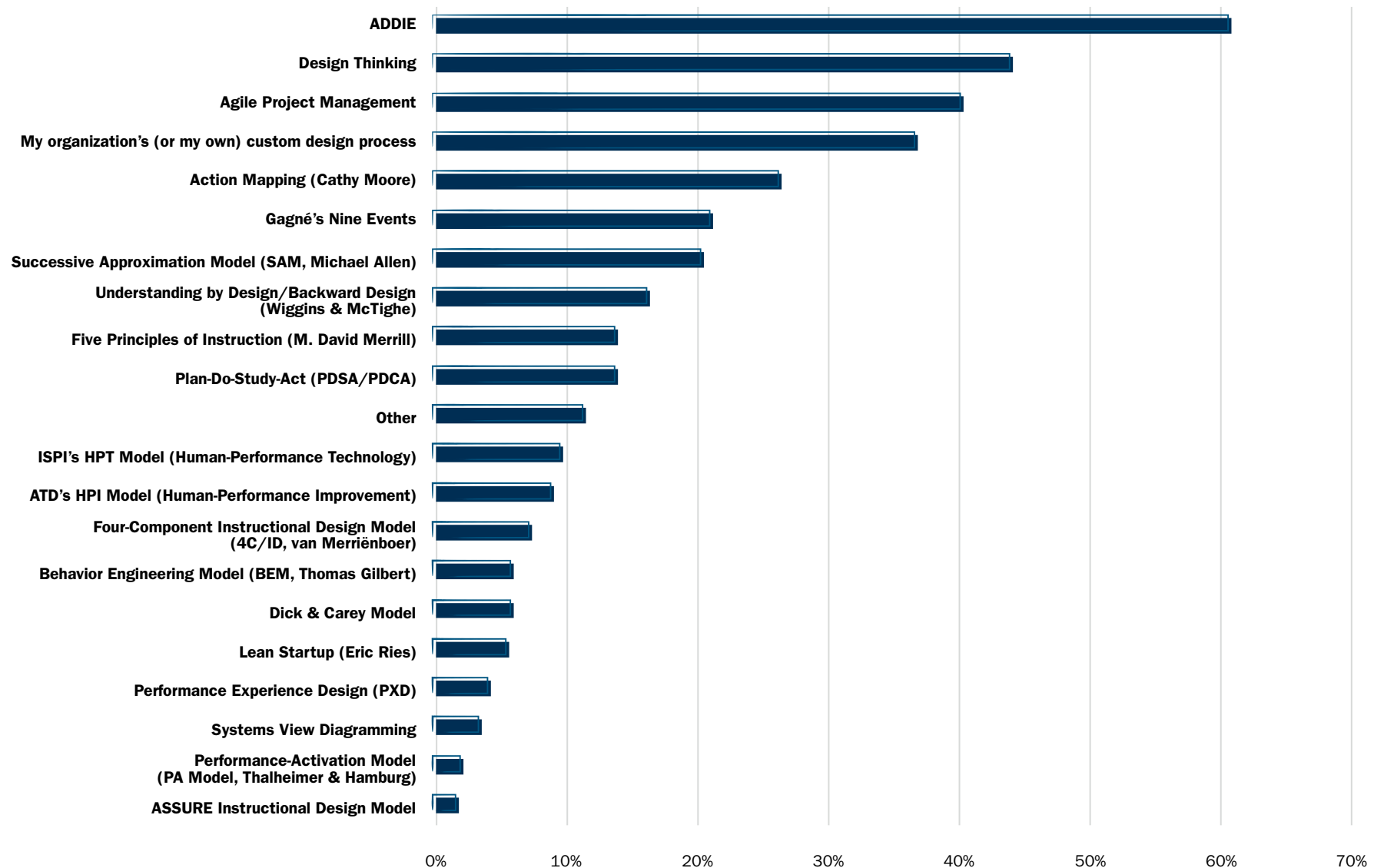
However, that leaves 41% in the gray space of “sometimes,” “occasionally,” or less gray, “never.” Over the past three years, the data has been quite variable—perhaps due to COVID-19—making it hard to see clear trends. However, from last year to this year, more people reported engaging with end users, which likely indicates that any pandemic-related decreases in seeking input from our target audiences are reverting back to normal.

In addition, when reviewing the listed activities/methods in a separate question, only 31% listed “target audience participation in design sessions” as a method used in design.

Since it's generally a best-practice to engage our target audience in our learning-design analysis, it's good news we are back to trending up in including our end users in our work.

IN 2021, WHICH DESIGN PROCESSES DID YOUR TEAM REGULARLY EMPLOY IN BUILDING LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS?

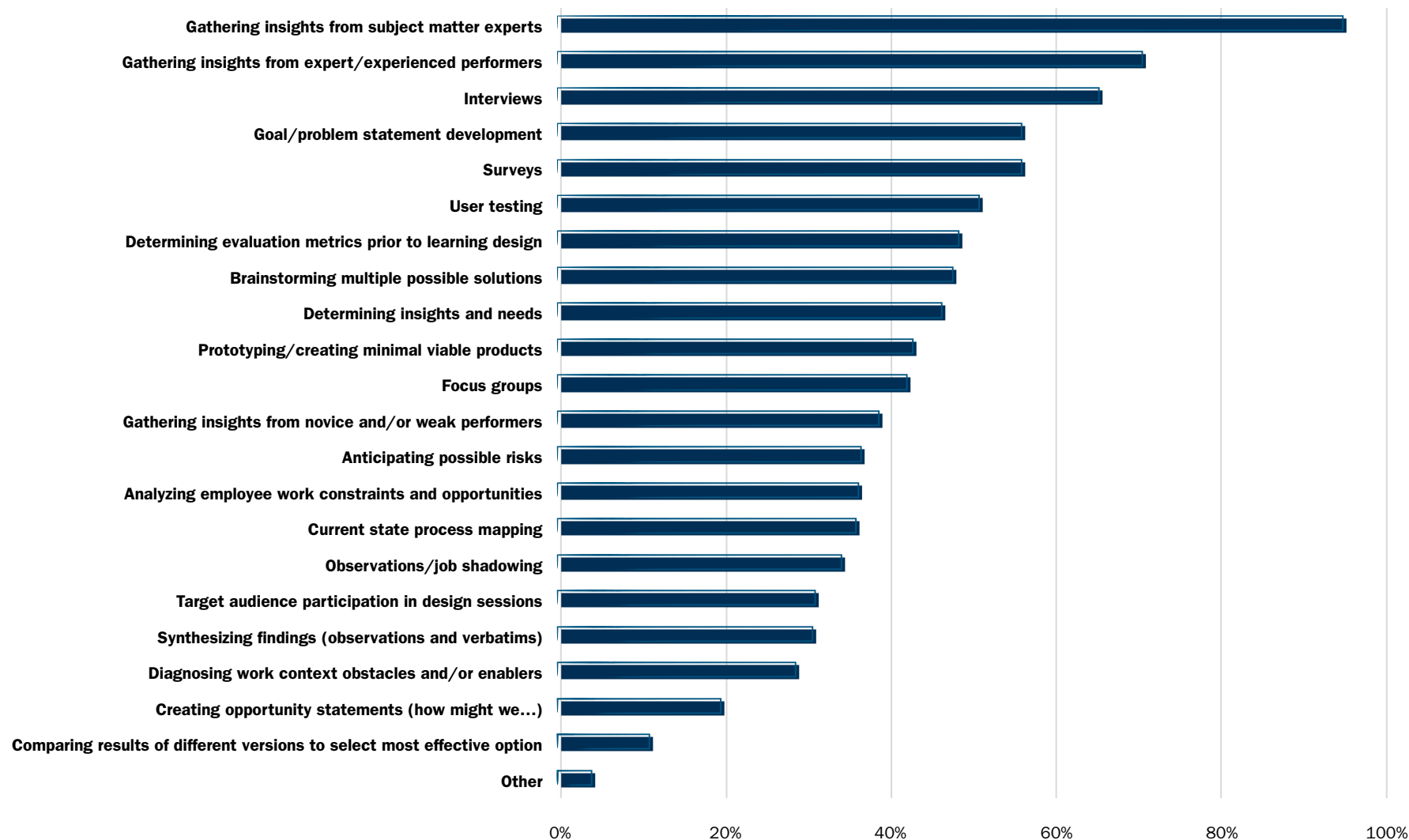
Select all that apply



The distribution curve shows there are a few heavy favorites, but otherwise a great diversity in how we work in the industry.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS ARE PART OF YOUR LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE TEAM'S DESIGN PROCESSES?

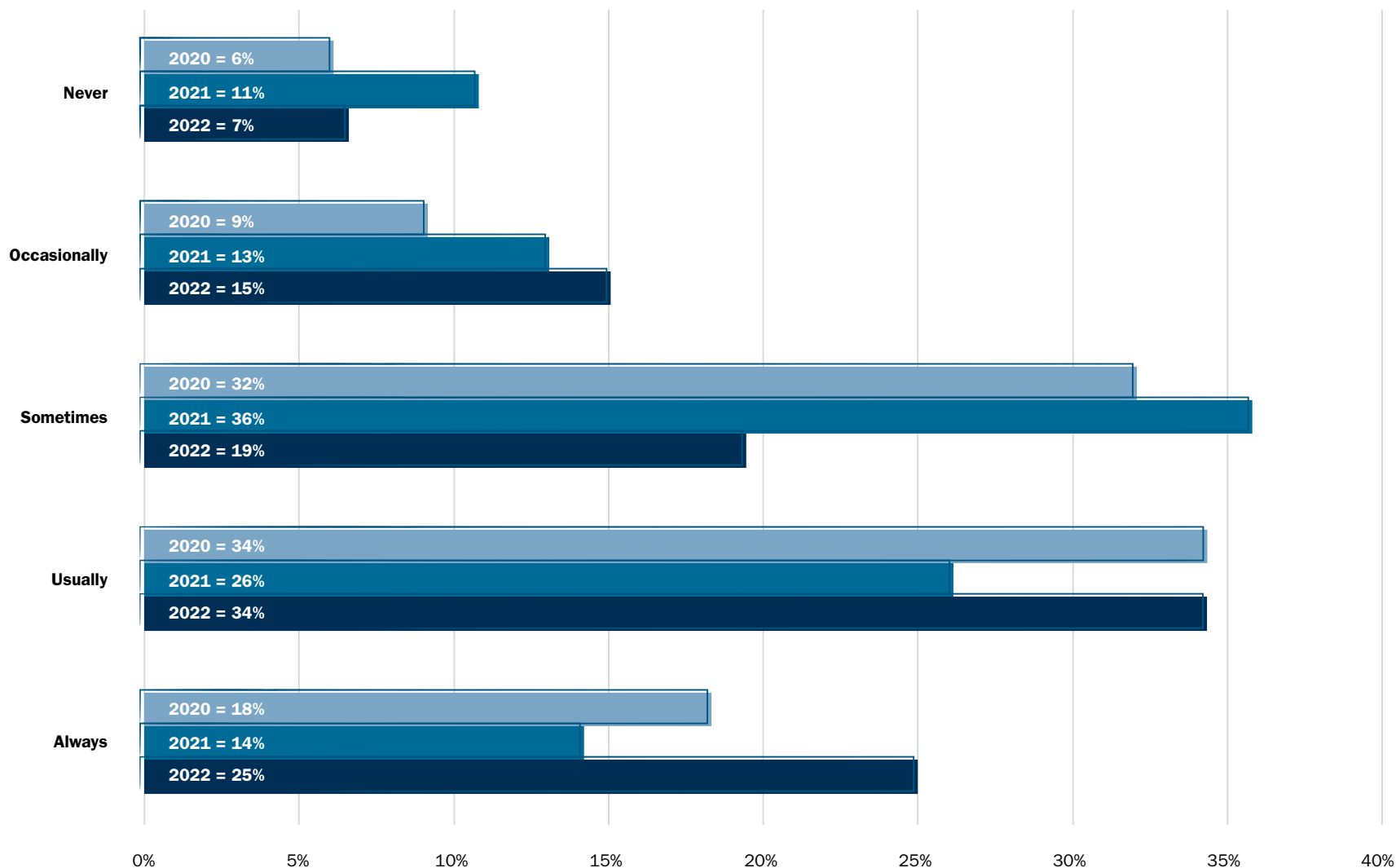
Select all that apply



Learning and performance professionals: ① Strong in collaboration (insights from SMEs, performers, interviews, surveys, user testing) ② Consistent when it comes to solutioning (user testing, brainstorming, prototyping) ③ Have opportunities to think systematically more often (anticipating risks, analyzing constraints/opportunities, process mapping, diagnosing obstacles/enablers)

HOW OFTEN DO YOU INCLUDE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

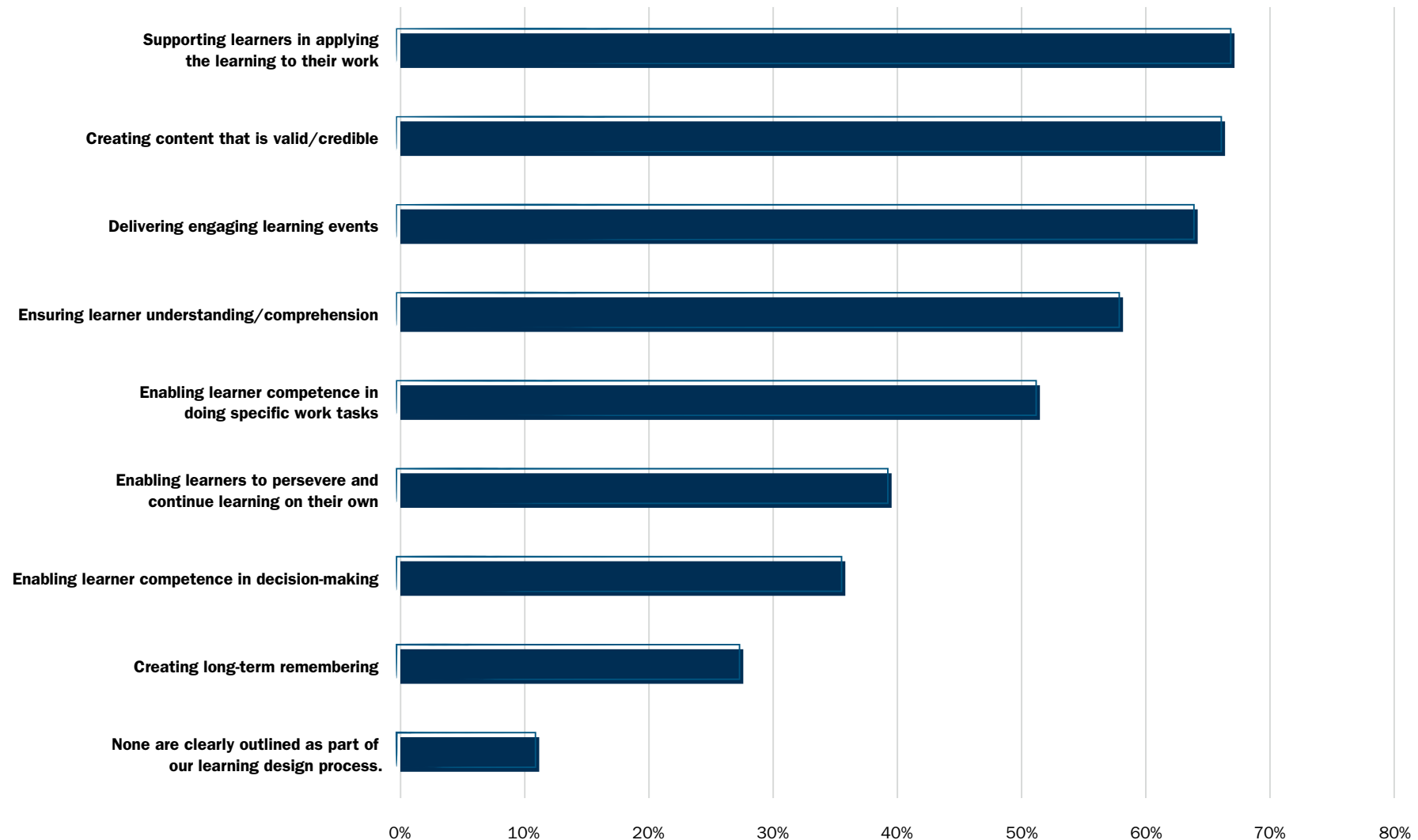
Select one



We can't detect clear trends over the past three years—there is too much variability in the data—but there is a statistically significant increase from 2021 to 2022, which could suggest that we recovered enough from the COVID-19 pandemic to again be including our target audience in our development work.

WHAT GOALS ARE CLEARLY OUTLINED AS PART OF YOUR LEARNING DESIGN PROCESS? (THIS EXCLUDES GOALS THAT ARE ONLY IMPLIED OR ASSUMED.)

Select all that apply



Less than 50% of us are creating long-term remembering, enabling learner competence on decision making, or enabling learners to persevere in learning.

FINAL WORDS ON DESIGN MODELS, PROCESSES, AND METHODOLOGIES

Based on the data, ADDIE is still top pick for design processes (how we work); working with SMEs is still top pick for methods (what we do); supporting learners in applying knowledge is still top pick for our goals (why we work).

It could be easy to wonder why these staples haven't progressed over time. However, as we review and process the data in context, it starts to make sense.

In normal years, in the L&D space we're regularly asked to do more with less when it comes to supporting the business or our clients. Even when resources are plentiful, time is not. With impacts from COVID-19, we're striving to work more efficiently as ever.

In that light, ADDIE is fairly universally known; conducting a SME interview is a pretty universal skill; supporting learners in applying knowledge is understood. The universality of these ways of working mean they require limited upskilling, training, or explaining. Whether someone new has joined your team or individuals are being asked to work in different areas, it begins to make sense that these transferable skills continue to be reinforced.

Two questions for us to consider as a field:

How will we know when some ways of working are ready to be retired?

How will we make the time and space to adopt something new when it adds value to our work and our learners' outcomes?

Learning Evaluation

LEARNING EVALUATION

Learning evaluation can be one of the most important things we do as learning and performance professionals. It can provide us with feedback so we can maintain the best aspects of our designs and improve components that aren't working well enough. Rigorous evaluations can help our sponsors and stakeholders see that we are working in a diligent and professional manner. In this sense, evaluations can help us gain credibility, resources, and autonomy. Unfortunately, as many of us already recognize, we sometimes can't—or don't—do the evaluations we want or need to do.

LTEM AND THE FOUR-LEVEL MODEL

In the Learning Trends Survey, we asked respondents what types of learning evaluations they were doing. We didn't mention any models or frameworks, but we are able to report on people's responses by indexing them using both LTEM and the Four-Level Model.

Will Thalheimer's LTEM, or The Learning-Transfer Evaluation Model, is composed of eight levels—starting from completely inadequate methods of learning evaluation all the way through to the effects of learning transfer.

The Four-Level Model was built by two people, Raymond Katzell and Donald Kirkpatrick. Raymond Katzell first conceived the four categories and then Donald Kirkpatrick labeled and popularized the model.

LEARNING & PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONALS ARE STYMIED

When we asked people whether their teams were able to do the learning evaluation they wanted to do, 65% of people said NO! Only 4% said they used “sound, research-supported evaluation practices.”

WE ARE DOING MORE WORK-FOCUSED EVALUATIONS

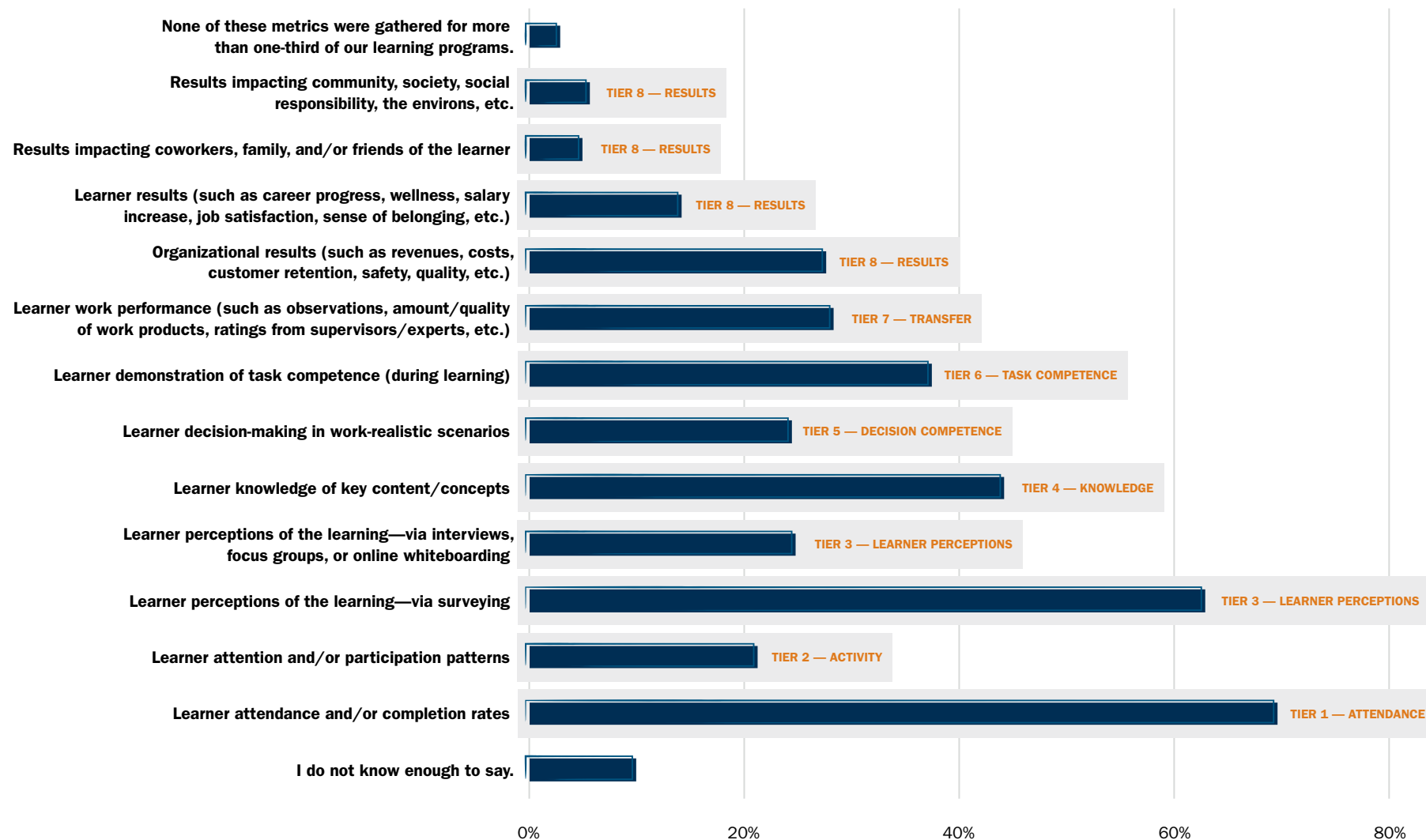
There is good news! A full 28% reported measuring learner work performance and organizational results. These are higher percentages than have been reported in other surveys of learning professionals. We doubt that these numbers are fully representative of the industry as a whole, but rather reflect the relatively experienced and dedicated sample of respondents who answered the survey.

MANY STORIES OF OBSTACLES

When we asked respondents to share their experiences with learning evaluation, many mentioned lack of time, lack of budget, lack of evaluation expertise, and lack of leadership and organizational support. We share the actual words people used to describe their stories, both their struggles and their successes.

IN 2021, WHICH EVALUATION METRICS WERE MOST FREQUENTLY USED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

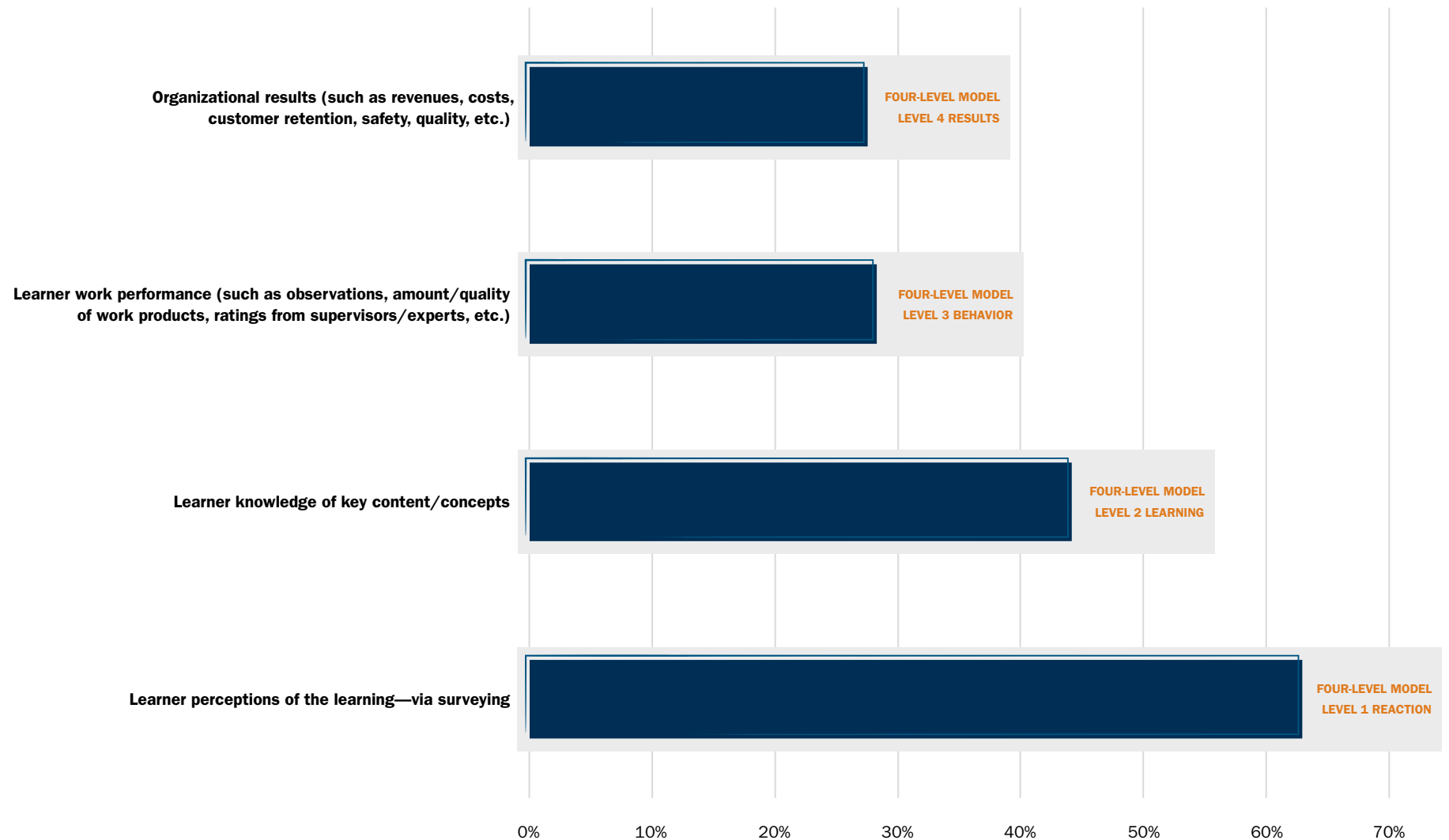
Select all that were used for more than one-third of your learning programs.



Data is indexed by LTEM Tiers.

IN 2021, WHICH EVALUATION METRICS WERE MOST FREQUENTLY USED IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

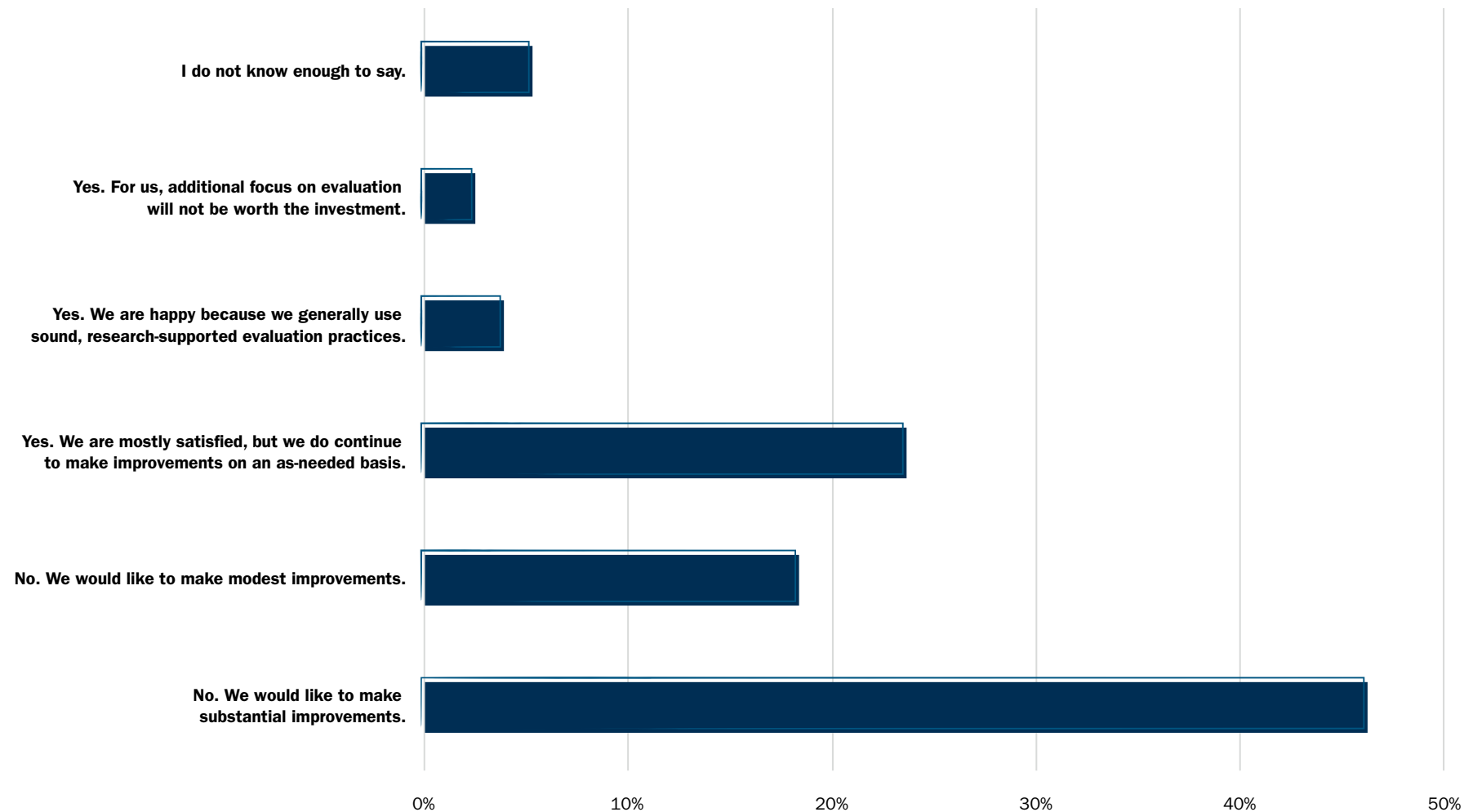
Select all that were used for more than one-third of your learning programs.



Data is indexed by the Four-Level Model.

IN GENERAL, IS YOUR LEARNING TEAM ABLE TO DO THE LEARNING EVALUATION IT WANTS TO DO?

Select one



Only 4% are using SOUND, RESEARCH-SUPPORTED evaluation practices.
24% are MOSTLY SATISFIED with their learning evaluation.
65% are NOT ABLE to do the evaluation they want to!

LEARNING EVALUATION BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Wow! Respondents who work for learning vendors are much more satisfied with their learning evaluation approaches than respondents from other non-learning business or not-for-profit, governmental, or educational organizations.

While over 70% of respondents from other organizations want to make modest or substantial improvements in their learning evaluation, only 42% of those from learning vendors or consultancies report being dissatisfied. That difference is huge!

It's intriguing that 11% of respondents from vendors report doing "sound, research-supported evaluation," whereas all others are at 1%. These numbers are small so they may be due to random chance, but if they are representative, they are telling.

ARE YOU ABLE TO DO THE LEARNING EVALUATION YOU WANT TO DO?	BUSINESSES	LEARNING VENDORS	NOT-FOR-PROFIT GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATIONAL
No, we want to make "modest" or "substantial improvements."	75% n=107	42% n=31	71% n=46
Yes, "we're mostly satisfied;" "we use research-supported practices;" or "it's not worth additional investment."	22% n=32	45% n=33	29% n=19

COMMENTS AND STORIES

We asked respondents to tell us their evaluation stories, specifically asking them ❶ what drives their evaluation practices, ❷ what obstacles they are facing, and ❸ what are their hopes for their evaluation practices in 2022. Here's what they told us.

Vendors are sometimes unable to move clients to better evaluations:

- *"Bringing our clients up to our standard of care for benchmarking and metrics is where our efforts are focused."*
- *"Being a content provider, for us it's more about educating clients on evaluation. Our focus is working with them to start doing this evaluation piece and stop looking at vanity metrics like courses complete, hours of training, or pass marks."*
- *"The biggest challenge is working with clients who have their own entrenched evaluation practices."*
- *"Client sometimes do not care, they need 'just training certificates.' If a performance goal isn't clear, it is difficult to do meaningful measurement."*

Some organizations don't budget enough for evaluation:

- *"We do not have the resources to pursue the learning evaluation strategy we would like. They have cut our staff to the bone even though we are making record profits."*
- *"Obstacles include limited resources to focus on measurement."*
- *"Main drivers are budget. We face the obstacle of not having enough money."*

Time constraints are a huge roadblock for many:

- *"Time/capacity. The organization tends to be eager to move on to the next thing, rather than investing the time/resources into fully evaluating what we've just implemented."*
- *"Obstacles: time investment."*
- *"Obstacles: time (ours, SMEs, managers)."*
- *"Time and expertise/lack of."*
- *"Time, we don't have the time at the moment."*
- *"Time and available resources drive our current evaluation practices. Our training is so jam-packed that we don't have time for more in-depth and realistic evaluation practices."*
- *"Folks in our department are overwhelmed. Content design and evaluation are impacted by this."*

Many note their team's lack of evaluation expertise:

- *"Lack of competent people."*
- *"Obstacles: lack of administrator/leadership experience/knowledge in how to apply/create/demonstrate or assess best research-based practices in designing + assessing learning opportunities."*
- *"Obstacles: not knowing what to focus on measuring (to be cost effective), not knowing exactly how to go about gathering the data."*
- *"Obstacles: lack of knowledge."*
- *"Organization is an immature learning organization—badly written assessments and old-style 'experts' at the center of everything."*
- *"Our learning professionals don't have the right skills to evaluate effectively."*

Lots of complaints about leadership indifference to evaluation:

- “Current manager does not demonstrate adoption of any course evaluation other than numbers of those trained and survey/opinion responses of convenience sampling. Efforts to suggest bringing in best practices are seen as defiance and quickly brushed aside. I hope the team that I will be vacating will start to incorporate research-based learning best practices to make the L&D team effective.”
- “The business doesn't seem very interested to measure impact.”
- “The main thing driving our current practices is the status quo. According to our manager, this is the data we have always collected and she doesn't want to change.”
- “Restrictions from LD management that keep team from investigating needs and/or results of training. Hoping to work with team to bypass these restrictions and start truly gathering input, feedback, and metrics.”

From the Four-Level Model to LTEM:

- “My hope is to get official approval on the LTEM model, which we have been promoting for 2 years, but didn't get endorsement from higher management, to be able to restart the discussion.”
- “I would hope to deploy LTEM in 2022, but our client is committed to the Four-Level Model.”
- “Forced to use the Four-Level Model model only.”
- “the Four-Level Model is expected, but we all know it's unproven.”
- “The LTEM model is driving my advocacy work with my team, to show them there are professional ways of evaluating learning, which can influence how we design learning experiences in the first place.”

Some report good progress and support:

- “We are in the middle of an LMS migration which should lead to much better data collection. This will also enable us to use xAPI to record actions in non-LMS systems so that we can link learning to actions.”
- “We have a great business analytics team that helps isolate the impact of learning resources on business results.”
- “The main [positive] driver is my team's knowledge of best practices in learning evaluation. I feel we have a good understanding of methods and results of different levels of evaluation.”

FINAL WORDS ON LEARNING EVALUATION

The data suggests that we as learning and performance professionals are moving in the right direction in learning evaluation. We do have some obstacles, but there are many of us who are actively advocating and planning to navigate to better evaluations.

Environmental Impacts

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

2021 was our second year living in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the data show, our understanding and response shifted as we adapted.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

People were less impacted by COVID-19 than you might imagine (almost a quarter reported “little or no disruption” and only 6% reported “extreme process/performance breakdowns”).

Along with how we were facing and responding to COVID-19, another question weighed on our minds: When should we head back to in-person work?

WORK LOCATIONS AND CONNECTION

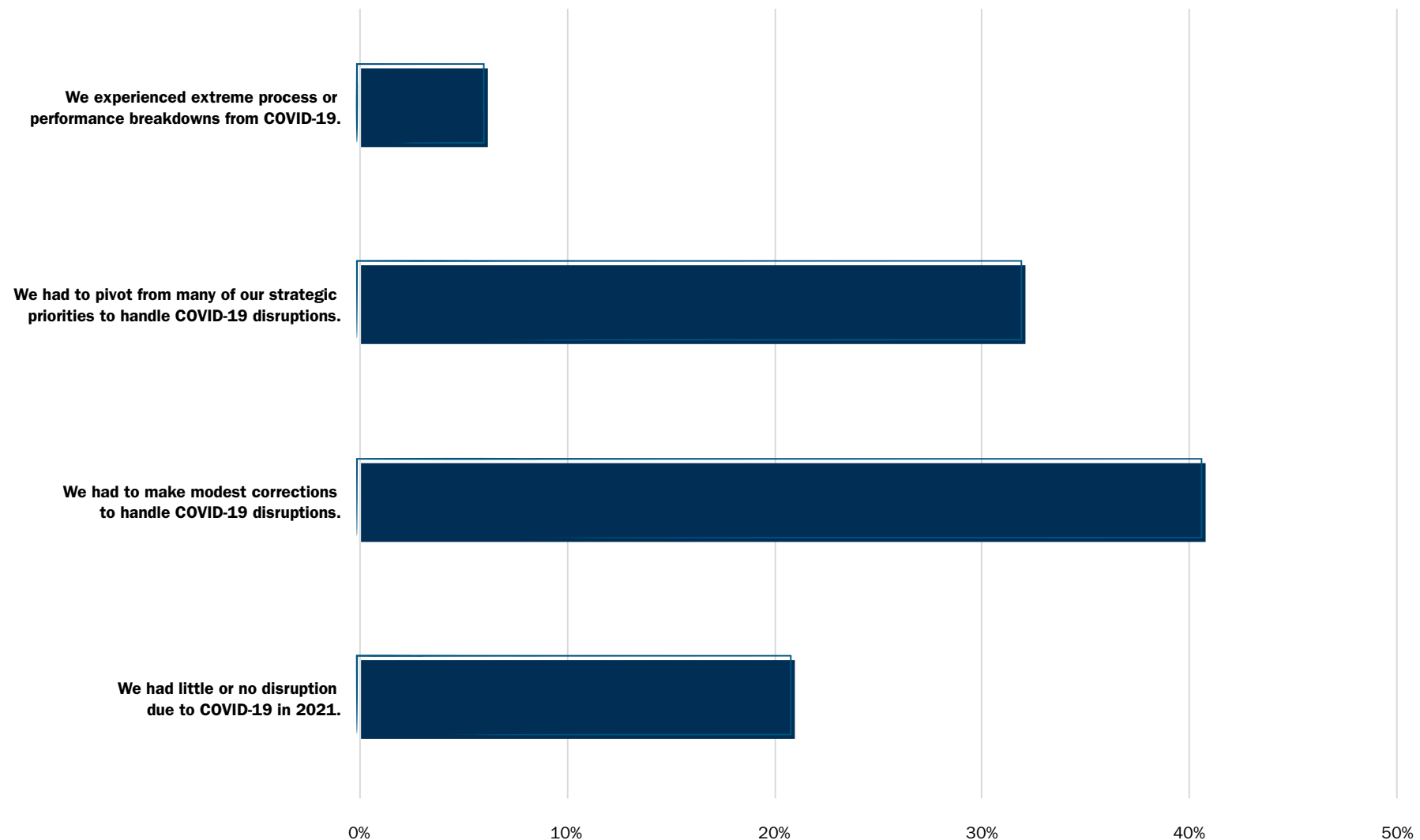
It’s clear that in 2022 most people are situated to work from home/virtually, as 73% of respondents reported they would work “almost exclusively” or “mostly” from home.

While we know that may have an impact in the long term, in the short term, it seems that working from home hasn’t yet changed how connected we feel with one another—54% of respondents replied that they feel “a deep sense of belonging” or “positively connected” with coworkers.

Review the data on the next page to see how your experience compares.

IN 2021, HOW MUCH DID COVID-19 DISRUPT YOUR LEARNING TEAM'S ABILITY TO FOCUS ON ITS PREVIOUSLY OUTLINED STRATEGIC INITIATIVES?

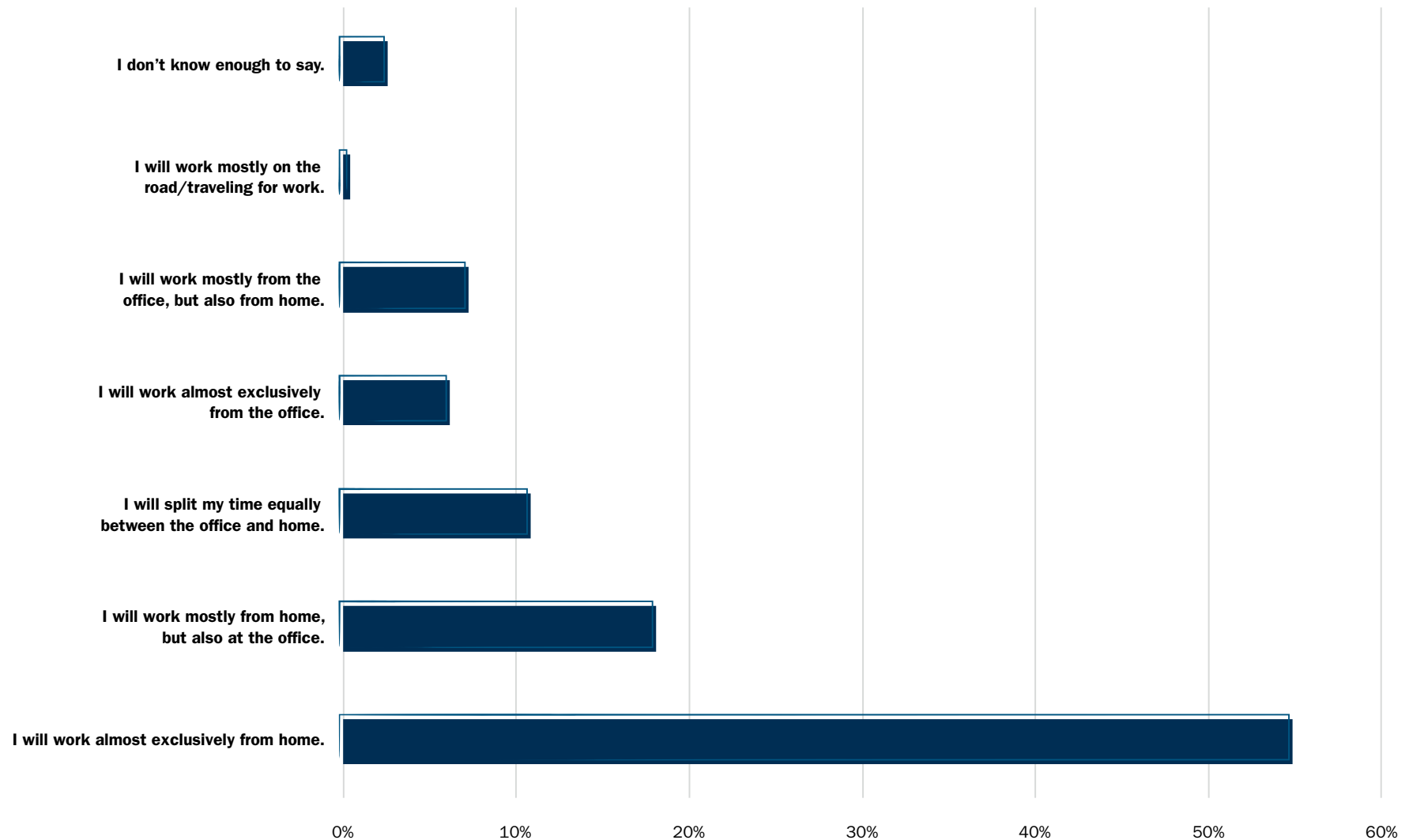
Select one



There was less impact from COVID-19 on our work than we might have expected or felt. 62% of respondents made NO, LITTLE, OR MODEST CORRECTIONS to handle COVID-19 disruptions.

WHERE WILL YOU PRIMARILY BE SITUATED TO DO YOUR WORK IN 2022?

Select one



**Only 13% are working MOSTLY FROM THE OFFICE.
73% are working MOSTLY or ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM HOME.**

WHO’S MORE LIKELY TO WORK “EXCLUSIVELY” FROM HOME?

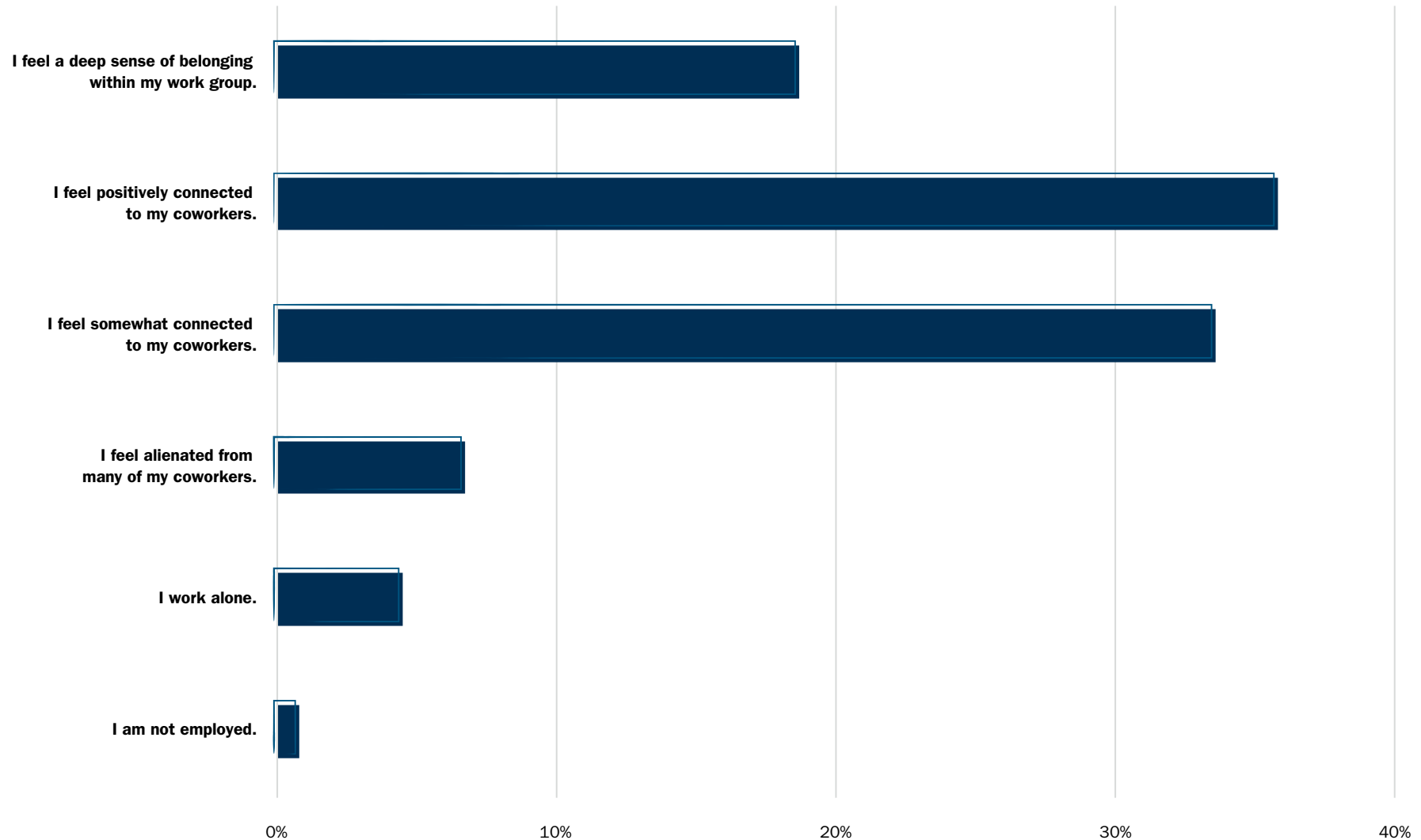
While about 73% of respondents will be working mostly from home, and 55% shared that they will work almost exclusively from home, there were two sub-groupings of respondents who will work from home even more: vendors and independent consultants.

We might hazard some speculations about these differences. Those who work solo or as vendors/consultants may be more likely to embrace a virtual work environment. Or, they may also have more flexibility than larger companies who may have less flexibility in their owned or leased office space.

WORK SITUATION	ALL RESPONDENTS BASELINE	VENDORS (TYPE OF COMPANY)	INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS (ROLE)
I will work “almost exclusively from home.”	55% n=152	78% n=36	81% n=26

IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS, HOW MUCH OF A PERSONAL CONNECTION HAVE YOU FELT IN YOUR WORK GROUP?

Select one



In an era when many of us are working online, there may be more connection than we suspect—54% of us are positively connected or have a deep sense of belonging.

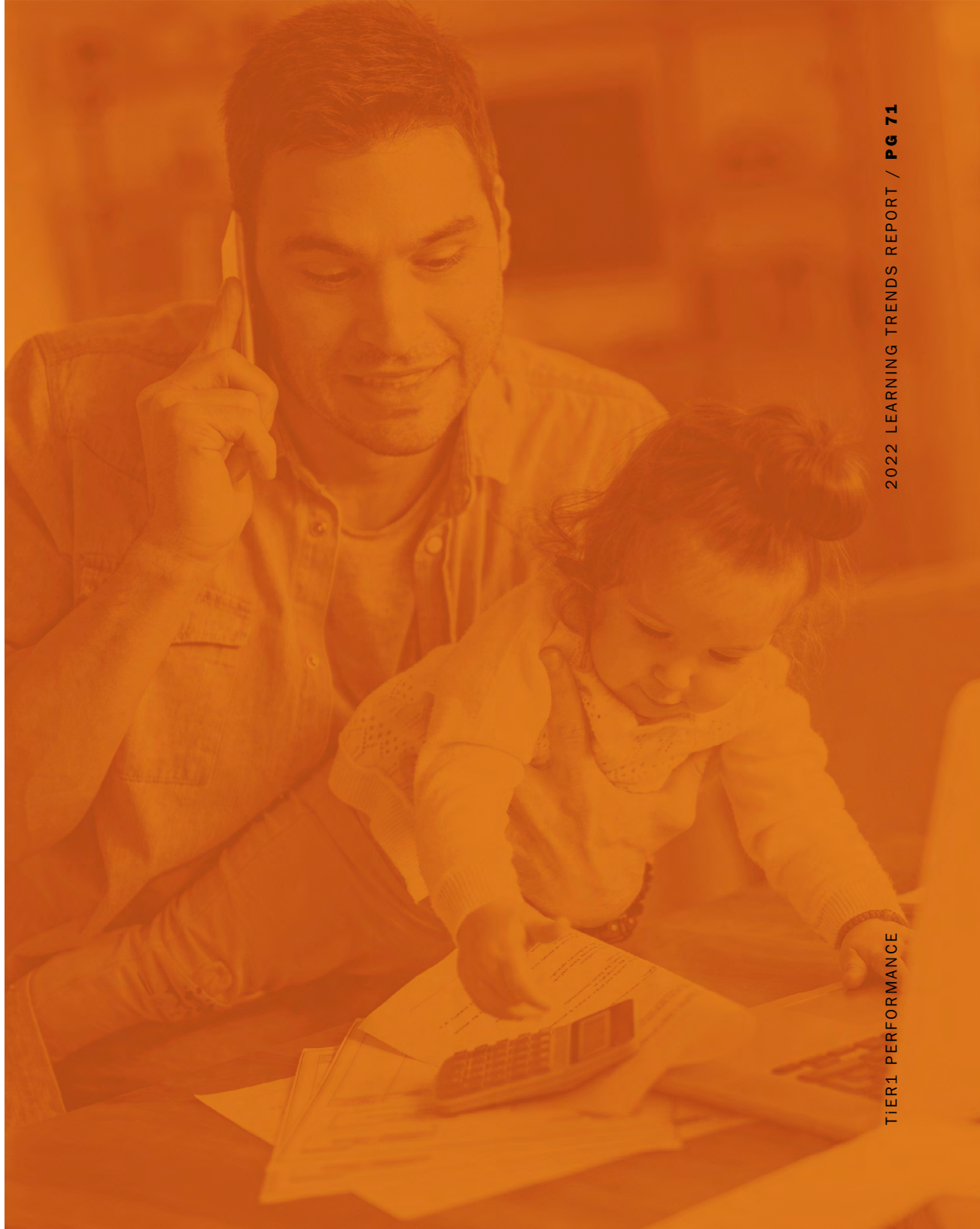
FINAL WORDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The data we've just reviewed are intriguing. Almost 40% of survey respondents reported that their teams experienced significant disruptions due to COVID-19. Over 70% of respondents expect to work from home in 2022. Despite these results, over 50% of respondents feel high levels of connection to our fellow workers, with a full 88% feeling at least "somewhat connected" to our coworkers.

Are learning professionals feeling differently about working remotely from other workers? No. The **2022 State Of Remote Work** report (published by Buffer) shows that, globally, 89% of workers described their experience with remote work as somewhat or very positive. An incredible 97% said they would recommend remote work to others and furthermore they would like to work remotely, at least some of the time, for the rest of their careers!

The truth seems to be that right now, in 2022, most workers have turned the page on the traditional work-at-the-office routine.

This seems true for us too as learning and performance professionals. Not only are we successfully working at home, but we've also moved mountains to go from classroom training to online learning.



Success in Enabling Work Performance

SUCCESS IN ENABLING WORK PERFORMANCE

As learning and performance professionals, one of our most important goals is to help employees improve their work performance.

To determine how well we're doing as an industry, we asked respondents how successful they've been in meeting this goal.

To ensure accuracy, we asked respondents to tell us how they know about their success. Specifically, we asked them whether they had "undeniable evidence of success," "strong indications of success," or merely "confident intuitions of success." These distinctions are critical! They nudge respondents to a more highly considered answer—and they give us better data.

So, how do our respondents think they are doing in enabling employee work performance? About 38% felt their learning teams had either "undeniable evidence of success" or "strong indications of success." That leaves more than 60% of us who aren't sure whether we've improved employee work performance.

While that's not great, maybe the picture is not that bleak. Another 29% of us have "confident intuitions of success." If we added that to the 38% who have some evidence of success, we have 67% of respondents—two-thirds—feeling that they achieved success.

OUR EVALUATION EFFORTS ARE INSUFFICIENT

If we're honest, about half of us don't seem to know whether we are improving work performance. What the 29% are telling us—in choosing that they have "confident intuitions"—is either that they didn't measure or that they don't trust their evaluation metrics. Add that to the 22% who say they "have no real idea about our success," and we've got 51% who are indicating some lack of knowledge of their outcomes. Add the other 4% who say they "have doubts about our success" and there's 55% of us who are lacking firm evidence.

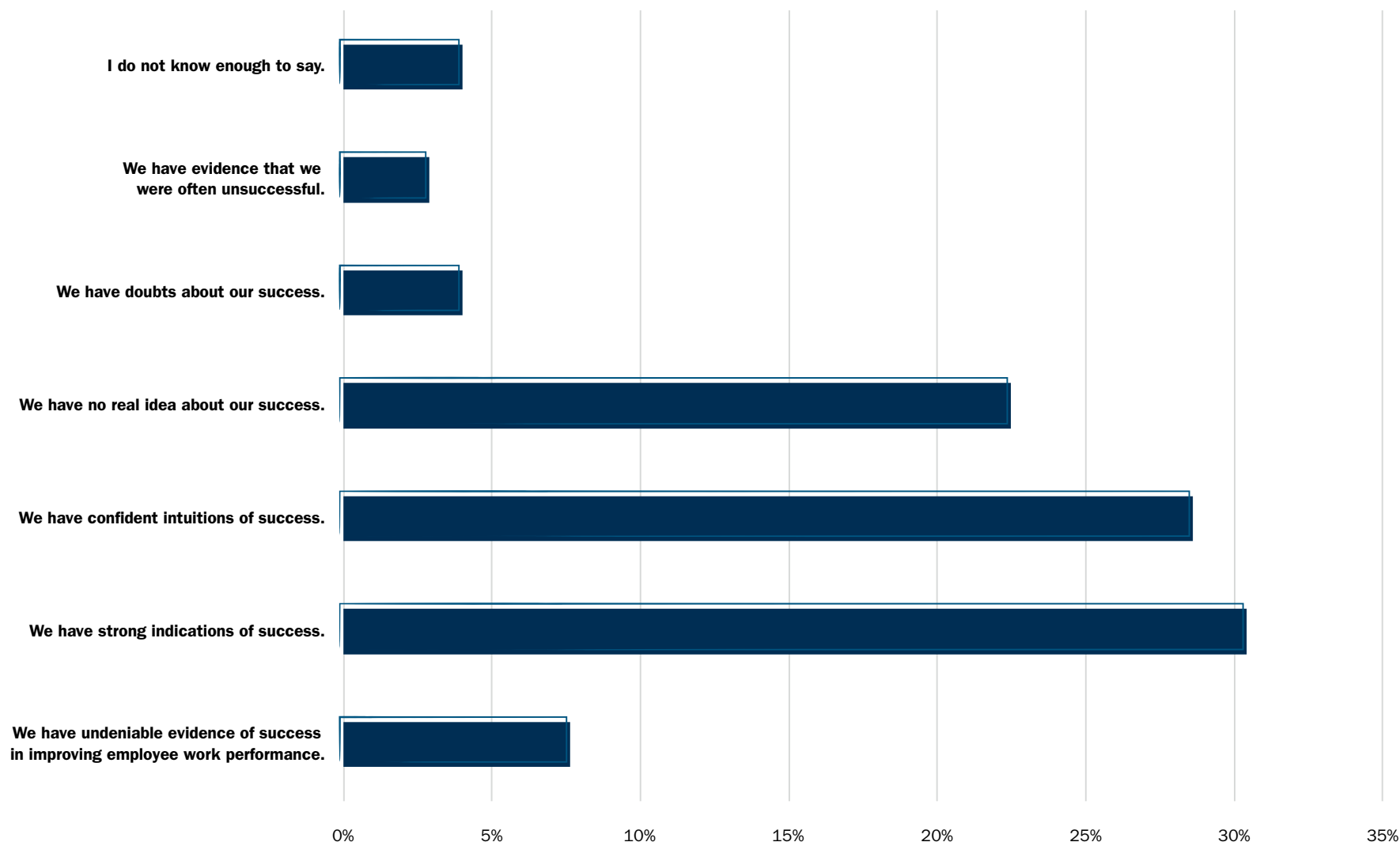
Only about 8% say they have "undeniable evidence of success" and only about 3% say they have "evidence that we were often unsuccessful." That's 11% who say their learning teams have "evidence" of an impact on work performance.

WHAT SHOULD WE CONCLUDE?

First, we should be working toward better evaluations, so that we have more evidence about our ultimate outcomes. Second, we should cheer on the 38% who reported achieving success in 2021—especially given the difficulties of COVID-19 and the relative newness of moving almost all our learning online. Finally, it looks like we have more room to grow in enabling work performance.

IN 2021 OVERALL, HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS YOUR LEARNING TEAM IN CREATING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES THAT IMPROVED EMPLOYEE WORK PERFORMANCE?

Select one



22% have NO REAL IDEA about success.
38% have STRONG (or better) indications of success.

SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING OUR ULTIMATE GOAL: IMPROVED WORK PERFORMANCE

The type of organization did matter in reports of success. Learning and performance professionals working in businesses were less likely to report having undeniable evidence or strong indications of success than learning vendors. Yet, while people in vendor companies reported the highest levels of success, they were also the most likely (11% of respondents) to say they “did not know enough to say.”

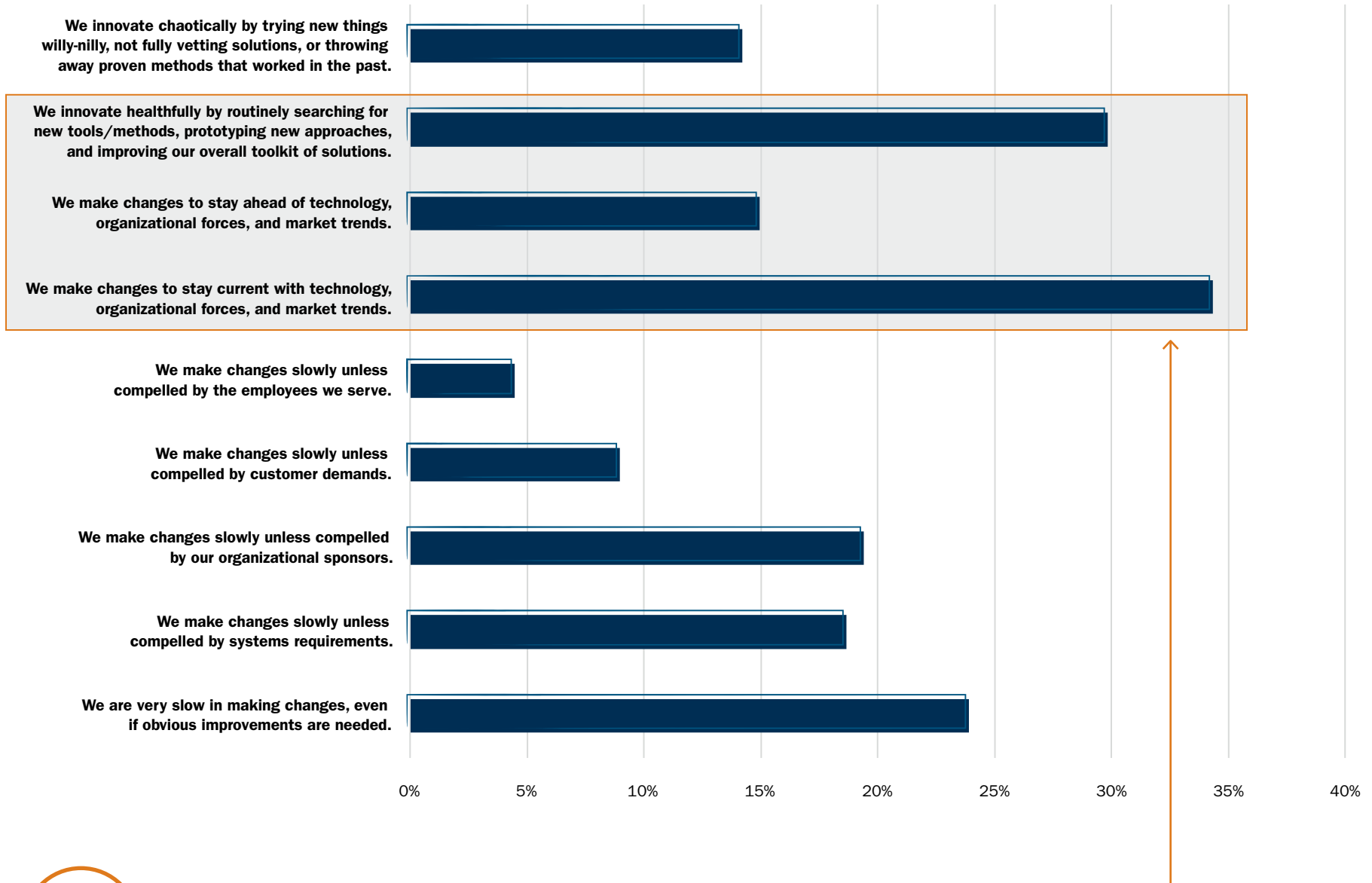
Our guess, though this is speculative, is that the data may indicate that some vendors don’t feel they need to measure results, while others make it a priority to measure so that they can use the data to enable effectiveness and have data to show to clients and prospective clients.

Note that, in some sense, this survey question is about both success and measurements of success. Learning teams could be achieving excellent success, but not be measuring it. Still, it’s rather disheartening that so many of us don’t have firm evidence one way or another.

SUCCESS IN HELPING LEARNERS ACHIEVE WORK-PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS	BUSINESSES	LEARNING VENDORS	NOT-FOR-PROFIT GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATIONAL
We have “undeniable evidence” or “strong indications” of success.	34% n=48	44% n=31	41% n=26
We have “confident intuitions” of success.	30% n=42	27% n=19	28% n=18
We have “no real idea,” “doubts,” or “evidence of lack” of success.	34% n=48	18% n=13	31% n=20

HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE TEAM'S CULTURE AROUND UTILIZING NEW METHODS?

Select all that apply



The gray area above represent responses that indicate a culture of healthy change.

INNOVATIVE CULTURES: LEARNING VENDORS VS. OTHER BUSINESSES

In the previous question, there were three answer choices that connoted good innovation practices:

- We make changes to stay current with technology, organizational forces, and market trends.
- We make changes to stay ahead of technology, organizational forces, and market trends.
- We innovate healthfully by routinely searching for new tools/methods, prototyping new approaches, and improving our overall toolkit of solutions.

The other answer choices connoted slowness or chaotic innovative practices.

Looking solely at the three good-innovation options (the ones above), 76% of people who worked for learning vendors and consultancies selected at least one of these options compared with only 51% of people working for non-vendor businesses.

If we look at only the top two options above (“we make changes to stay ahead...” and “we innovate healthfully...”), the disparity is even more striking! 53% of people from vendor companies chose one or both options, whereas only 25% of people in non-vendor companies selected one or both.

Again, caution is urged because the relatively low number of respondents answering these questions, 38 for vendor businesses and 61 for non-vendor businesses. Still, if these numbers are representative of the whole population, the data would suggest that vendors and consultancies are much more innovative than non-vendor businesses.

INNOVATION PRACTICES OF YOUR LEARNING TEAM	BUSINESSES	LEARNING VENDORS
Chose at least one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovate healthfully • Make changes to stay ahead • Make changes to stay current 	51% n=61	76% n=38
Chose at least one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovate healthfully • Make changes to stay ahead 	25% n=61	53% n=38

INNOVATIVE CULTURES: EXEMPLARY ORGANIZATIONS

Do people in exemplary organizations report higher levels of innovative practices? Yes, they do! If we look at all three good innovation options, 81% of people in exemplary organizations selected at least one, whereas for non-exemplary organizations, only 54% selected an option. Using the more stringent criteria of the top two options, 78% of people in exemplary organizations chose one or both good innovative options, whereas only 51% of the people in non-exemplary organizations selected a good innovation option.

Again, some caution is advised as we had 27 respondents from exemplary organizations and 107 responses from non-exemplary organizations. As a reminder, when the number of respondents is relatively low, then it may be less likely that the respondents are representative of the full population.

INNOVATION PRACTICES OF YOUR LEARNING TEAM	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL
Chose at least one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovate healthfully Make changes to stay ahead Make changes to stay current 	81% n=27	54% n=107
Chose at least one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovate healthfully Make changes to stay ahead 	78% n=27	51% n=107

The Focuses of Our Work

THE FOCUSES OF OUR WORK

In this section, we get to explore both “how” and “how well” we feel we are spending our time as learning and performance professionals. To avoid burying the lede, things are going really well!

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE WORK

First and foremost, virtually everyone who responded to the survey felt they were doing work that “makes a contribution,” work that “mostly fulfills me,” or doing “the best work of my career.”

Those are no statements to scoff at. Amid an ongoing pandemic, shifting work locations and collaboration styles, and ongoing changes in the methods and modalities we produce, people are highly satisfied. This shows that people are doing very meaningful work—and meaning and purpose are always important factors to our growth and engagement, whether you’re looking at deep research studies or simplified models like Dan Pink’s AMP model.

REVISITING WHAT WE’RE WORKING ON

Earlier in the report, we did a deep dive looking at what learning and performance professionals were actually working on last year. We repeat that data on the next page to reorient you before we look at a couple of follow-up questions.

BUT WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Underneath all that satisfaction, what types of work are we considering deep and meaningful? The data tell a few different stories:

- **Work Modality:** The most dominant things we’re working on fall into instructor-led training and online instructor-led training, eLearning, and document creation.
- **Work Types:** As you can imagine, “creating learning experiences” is the primary focus of our role based on responses—but things like stakeholder management, professional development, evaluation, and facilitation are also significant focuses.
- **Non-Learning Work:** When asked about “work that goes beyond training and learning interventions,” respondents selected performance support as the most common work they perform.
- **Guided Work:** Lastly, respondents shared that scientific research found in non-academic sources (books, articles, blogs, podcasts, conferences, etc.) most guided their work, followed by models and frameworks (like ADDIE or LTEM).

IN 2021, DID YOU PERSONALLY SPEND A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME BUILDING, DEPLOYING, OR SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE ASSETS?

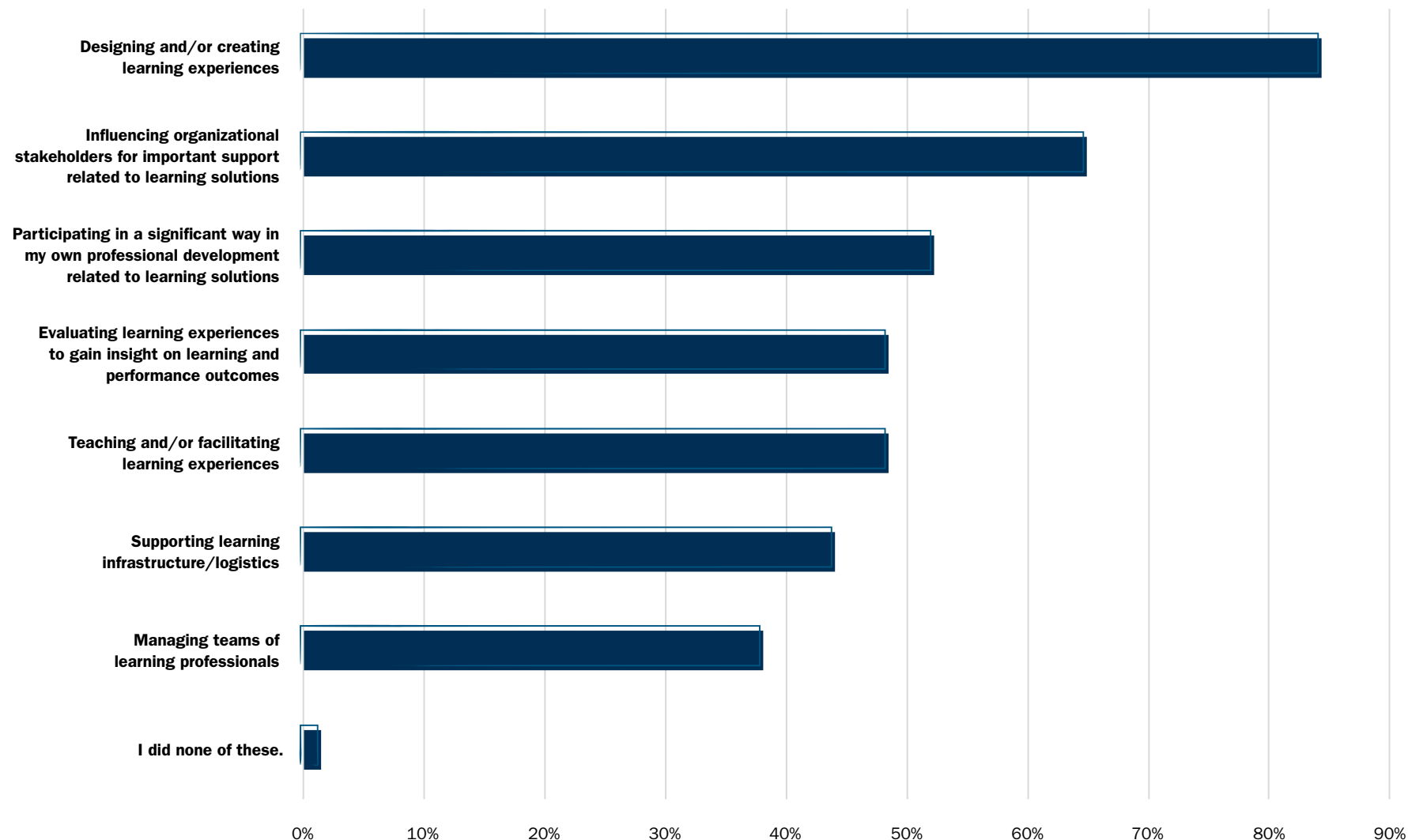
Select all that apply



We shared this graphic earlier. Scan it before going on to the next set of questions.

IN 2021, WHICH TYPES OF LEARNING-FOCUSED WORK DID YOU DO IN YOUR ROLE AS A LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL?

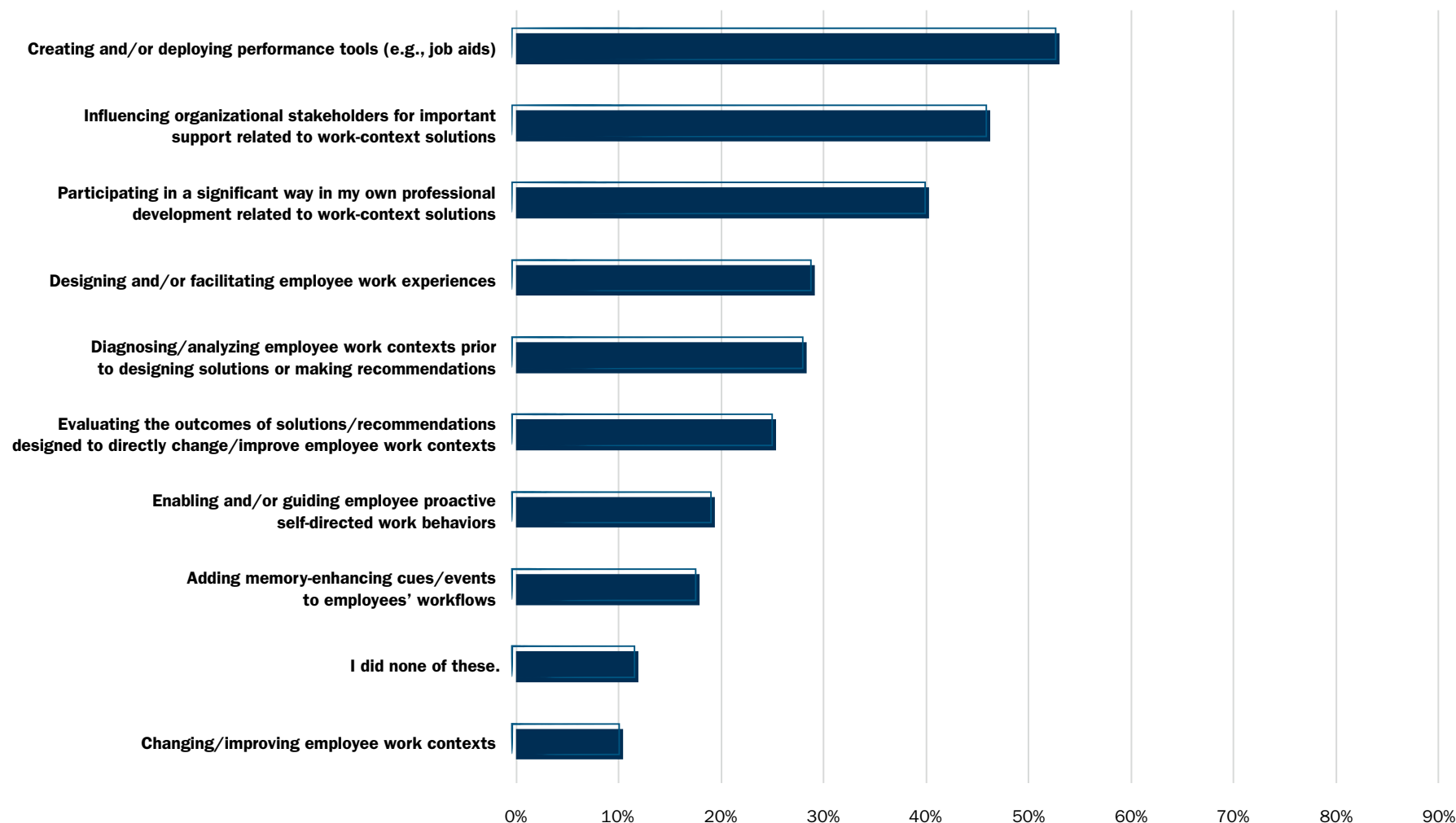
Select all that apply, but select an item only if it was a major focus of your work in 2021.



For this question, we asked respondents to consider their learning-focused work. In the next question, we ask them about their performance-focused work. You'll see clearly that we do much more to focus on learning than on performance.

IN 2021, WHICH TYPES OF PERFORMANCE-FOCUSED WORK—WORK THAT GOES BEYOND TRAINING AND LEARNING INTERVENTIONS—DID YOU DO IN YOUR ROLE AS A LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL?

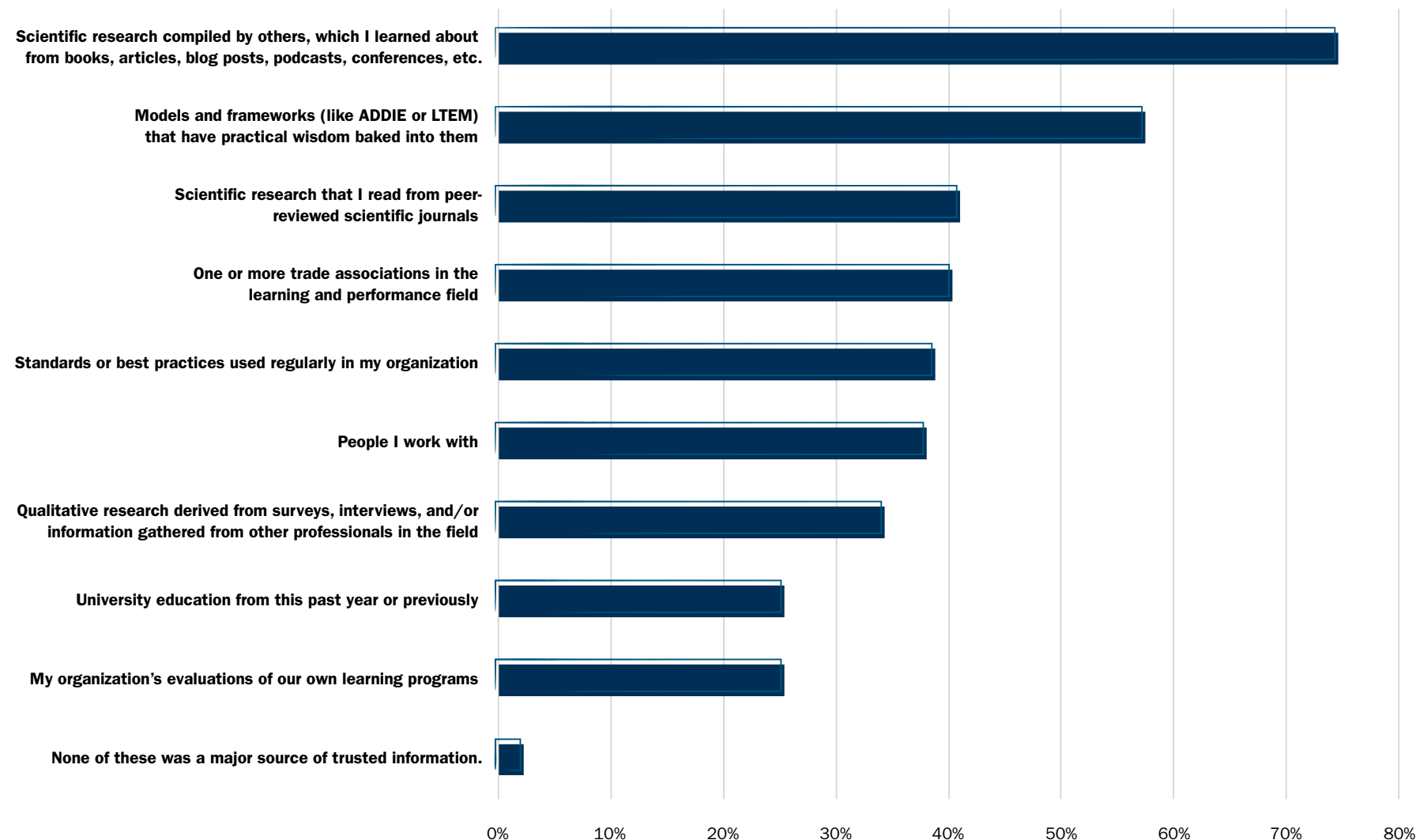
Select all that apply, but select an item only if it was a major focus of your work in 2021.



There's lots of opportunity to continue to expand beyond training and learning interventions. Performance support is common, but focusing on the work context, self-directed behaviors, and habits/cues are not.

IN 2021, WHICH SOURCES OF TRUSTED INFORMATION MOST GUIDED YOUR WORK AS A LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL?

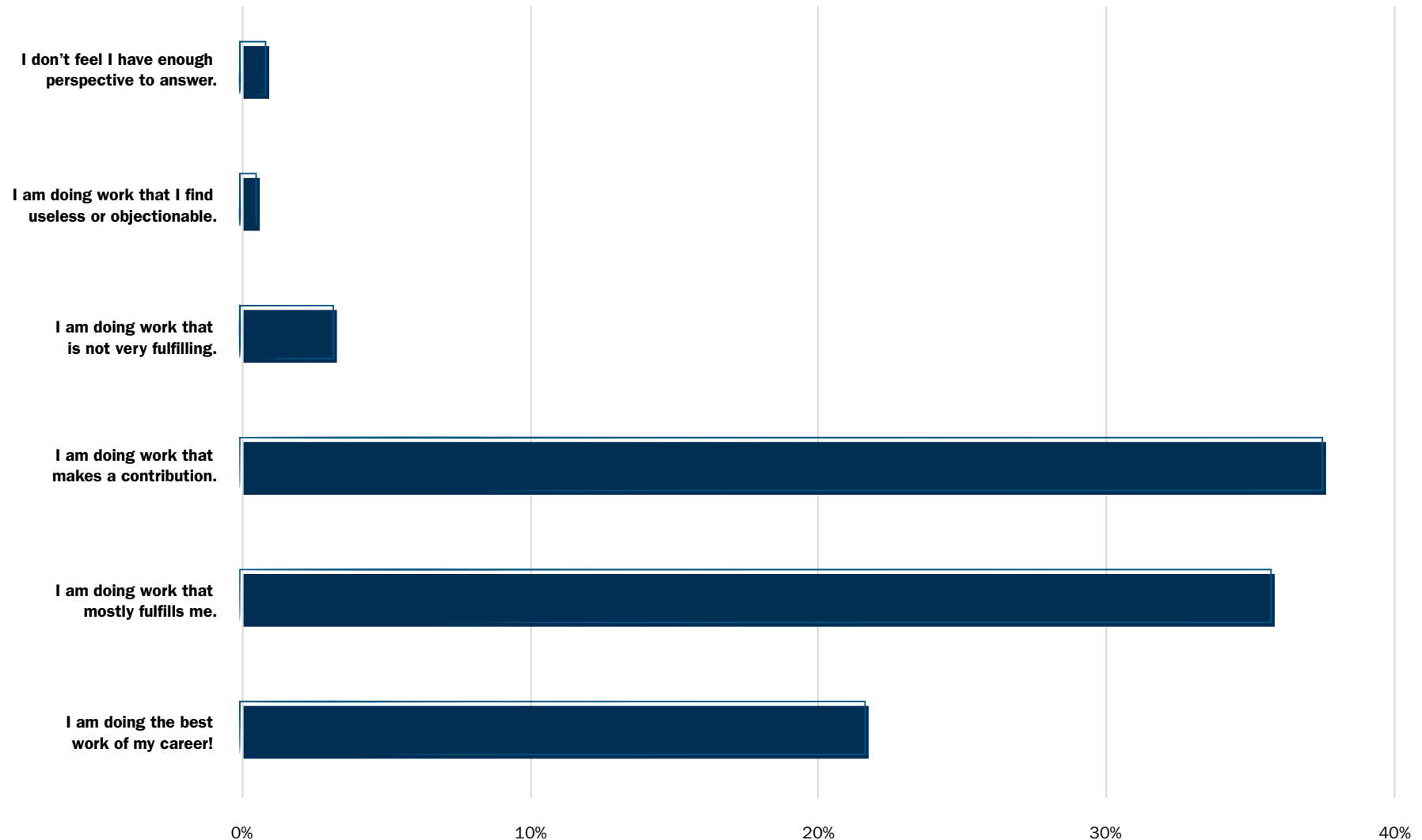
Select all that apply



It's impressive that so many of us are turning to scientific research for guidance (see both the first and third choices). Fortunately, there are many good research translators available to us today. The key is to find trusted unbiased sources—while avoiding the snake oil salespeople that inhabit every field.

RATE YOUR OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR RECENT WORK AS A LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL. HOW ALIGNED ARE YOUR TASKS WITH WHAT YOU WOULD CONSIDER YOUR BEST WORK?

Select one



A full 95% of us feel very good about the work we are doing.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR WORK

Based on responses, those working in “exemplary” organizations are more than twice as likely to report they are doing the best work of their careers, 45% compared with only 19% in typical organizations.

Interestingly, more people at typical organizations are reporting that they are doing work that is fulfilling and work that makes a contribution (77%), compared with exemplary organizations which report 51% on these slightly less-desirable options. Indeed, if we look at the top three options—best work, mostly fulfilling, and makes a contribution—95% of people from both exemplary and typical organizations chose one of those options. Here there’s no difference at all!

The cause of the big difference on the option of “best work of my career!” is impossible to know just from our data—perhaps it’s just perception in the ways that exemplary organizations position their work. Alternatively, maybe there are meaningful differences in the types of work that individuals get to engage in while working in exemplary organizations.

The number of respondents on this question was 40 for exemplary organizations and 300 for typical organizations. Remember, overall, only about 11% of the responses met the criteria for exemplary organizations.

Because we have so few exemplary organizations, we should be somewhat restrained in making bold assertions. While the “best work of my career” difference seems huge and potentially meaningful, the wide disparity may not be fully representative.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR WORK	EXEMPLARY	TYPICAL
“Best work of my career!”	45% n=18	19% n=56
Work that “mostly fulfills me”	28% n=11	37% n=111
Work that “makes a contribution”	23% n=9	40% n=119
Work that is “not very fulfilling” or that is “useless or objectionable”	3% n=1	4% n=12

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR WORK

The results show that there's not much difference between the type of organizations when it comes to overall satisfaction with our work. While there's a slight trend showing that people may be modestly less satisfied if they work for a learning vendor or consultancy, the numbers are too small to be taken seriously—most likely these differences are due to random chance.

This is good news. It shows that we as learning and performance professionals can find fulfilling work in a variety of settings. The key to our satisfaction likely depends on how well our organizations align with our values.

Overall, we seem to be experiencing extremely high levels of work satisfaction. A full 58% of us find our work fulfilling or are doing the best work of our careers! An additional 38% feel their work is making a contribution.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR WORK	BUSINESSES	LEARNING VENDORS	NOT-FOR-PROFIT GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATIONAL
"Best work of my career!"	21% n=30	16% n=12	22% n=14
Work that "mostly fulfills me" or that "makes a contribution"	74% n=105	77% n=56	77% n=49
Work that is "not very fulfilling" or that is "useless or objectionable"	4% n=6	7% n=5	2% n=1

Odds and Ends

ODDS AND ENDS

In one of the final questions of the survey, we asked respondents:

“Is there anything else we should have asked about?”

Anything else you want to share about how industry trends are impacting/energizing your work?”

People shared some interesting tidbits.

TEACHERS BECOMING WORKPLACE LEARNING PROFESSIONALS

Several people mentioned their observation that there are lots of teachers who are leaving teaching—the teaching of children—and are becoming trainers and/or learning designers. Here are some of their direct quotes:

- *“There’s been mass migration of teachers into instructional design. Would have been interesting for you to be able to stratify your analysis to see what’s unique to their experience.”*
- *“I’m fascinated by the trend of school teachers pivoting to learning and development opportunities. I wouldn’t even think I could jump into teaching in a school classroom setting without further education and training, yet it seems that many teachers believe they can transfer to an L&D environment without much effort!”*
- **If this trend is real, not just apocryphal, this person might welcome it:** *“The K-12 space is almost entirely ignored, yet almost every single ‘new thing’ we see in research, higher ed, and corporate has been in K-12 for years prior. This is a missed opportunity for L&D, something I am taking advantage of!”*

GREAT QUESTIONS SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS

We received lots of praise for the survey questions we asked, and respondents added some great questions on their own:

- *“I’m interested in learning where the instructional designer team is situated. Are we noticing a trend of centralized or decentralized teams?”*
- *“What LMS or delivery platform do we use?”*
- *“With the current resignation trend it would have been interesting to see some questions related to learning strategy to attract, engage, and retain employees.”*

TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2022

IN JANUARY 2022, TIER1 REACHED OUT TO 48 THOUGHT LEADERS ACROSS THE GLOBE TO ASK THEM TO SHARE THEIR FAVORITE CONTENT THEY HAD CREATED IN THE PAST YEAR.

We wanted to provide learning and performance professionals a treasure trove of some of the most important thoughts, ideas, and recommendations from some of our industries' foremost thinkers. [You can access the amazing compendium here.](#)

We also asked whether they wanted to share any "Trends to Watch for 2022." Many were generous enough to do that. We've categorized their "trends to watch" into groupings so you can find what's most relevant to you.

We are grateful to this incredible group: Ruth Clark, Rob Brinkerhoff, Sardek Love, Karl Kapp, Ashley Sinclair, Chad Udell, Donald Taylor, Becky Willis, Nigel Paine, Irene Boland, Karen Foster, Donald Clark, Bartlomiej Polakowski, Arun Pradhan, Judy Hale, Clark Quinn, Ben Betts, Connie Malamed, Fiona McKenzie, Michelle Ockers, Owen Ferguson, Lori Niles-Hofmann, Laura Hoppa, Jack Phillips, Guy Wallace, Jane Bozarth, Jos Arets, Patti Phillips, Danni Johnson, Aaron Barth, Mike Taylor, Patti Shank, and Michael Allen.

Note that we left their responses pretty much as they wrote them, and so you'll see relatively straightforward language using both American English and British English spellings.

TECHNOLOGY BENEFITS TO WATCH FOR

Less courses, more blended, more smarter platforms using AI, such as LXPs and adaptive.

–Donald Clark

More and more apps and digital products will be introduced that could serve as a resource for L&D professionals. The challenges will be to stay digitally competent, not fall prey to shiny new object syndrome.

–Sardek Love

Key trend is that things which were “hot” 3–4 years ago will surface as viable tools to support learning. I’m thinking in particular data, analytics, AI VR.

–Donald H Taylor

Many of our analog tools (like card games and whiteboards and stickie notes) are going to be more virtual. And, of course, the metaverse.

–Karl Kapp

Technology for workforce learning and performance continues to evolve in capability and ease of use.

–Ruth Clark

#NoCode is already a huge game changer. NoCode is revolutionizing how software is created and L&D needs to get plugged into this ASAP. Many are already reaping the benefits, but the vast majority of the L&D industry isn’t even aware of what it is yet.

–Mike Taylor

Learning Ecosystems continue to be of great value, regardless of company size. Having a user experience that drives usage is nothing but good. HOWEVER, there are lots and lots of choices and not all are a fit, let alone a good solution. Work with the experts and do your homework. The answer is in the strategy, not the software.

–Becky Willis

A key trend to watch is obviously integration of AI as a service into learning tech products. Quite simply: it’s going to be everywhere soon. With the advent of publicly available platforms like GPT-3, the barrier to entry is being lowered significantly. Be mindful that the marketing teams may be overselling the products’ capabilities, so always be sure to do some research to make sure the messaging on the website or in the webinar is backed up by the actual offering.

–Chad Udell

OVER-EMPHASIS AND PROBLEMS WITH TECHNOLOGY

Over-reliance on big tech systems to solve human issues around re-grouping or re-skilling that they were never designed to solve without context, and building the conditions for success.

—Nigel Paine

The trend to declare existing technologies as brand new is not slowing. Recently, one company claimed they were starting to create the metaverse—a technology that has been in existence and developing for more than 20 years. Regardless of what a technology is called (Metaverse, Second Life, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality) learning professionals have a responsibility to independently evaluate its usefulness and effectiveness for learning before jumping on board.

—Irene Boland and Karen Foster

Negative trend: a continued overemphasis on content and technology. In my opinion these are rarely a solution to a root problem in L&D. In many cases we over-rely on tech and content because it's something we can change. And so we latch onto changing this stuff, only to find that when it's rolled out the same outcomes occur. That's because these are vehicles to learning—and if there are deeper problems lurking (such as poor attitudes towards learning, lack of awareness, disengagement, etc.) the tech ALONE is unlikely to shift these deep-set cultural problems. Let's do the good work, dig deeper, and stop falling back on tech because it's an "easy" solution to really, really complex problems.

—Ashley Sinclair

BENEFITS OF UTILIZING THE LEARNING SCIENCES

The markets are confusing skill in a software with expertise in learning science.

–Judy Hale

The trend to using the cognitive and learning sciences to support our work will continue and accelerate.

–Clark Quinn

A negative trend is that many will still focus on tools and technology over learning science.

–Bartłomiej Polakowski

I'm seeing a trend of "modular skill building" programs, particularly around professional/soft skills. As organizations become more creative with talent mobility, they will continue to break down roles into skills plus experience, with greater opportunities to shift and reinvent careers as a result. This will create demand for L&D to create a more modular approach to building skills that can be plugged into different contexts and support such mobility.

–Arun Pradhan

WISDOM FROM OUTSIDE LEARNING

There will be a growing recognition of the role of “trust” and “belief” in democracy, learning, and transformation.

–Fiona McKenzie

I think learning experience design practitioners will continue to enhance and expand our design skills. Watch for new models, processes, and techniques from other fields, such as Design Thinking, to help us continue to solve difficult problems in new ways.

–Connie Malamed

Sounds trite, but of course I am going to say marketing in a learning context. L&D MUST start looking beyond their current approaches and practices if they ever want to garner different outcomes for the function. We cannot rely on our old ways anymore. It is broke, and we do need to fix it. Wider than this is the continued introduction of “atypical” skills into the L&D function such as marketing and comms, design thinking, analytics, and more. All these are, and will continue to be, paramount to the longevity and success of L&D. Let’s stop being a cost-centre and prove our value!

–Ashley Sinclair

Education / learning as a central benefit in the arms race to keep employees engaged and employed in their role.

–Ben Betts

WISDOM FROM OUTSIDE LEARNING

Learning journeys conducted on digital learning platforms are the future and immediate present of the L&D profession. But it is not a question of learning journey or not learning journey: it is a matter of how much of a learning journey is needed—from almost not at all to the Full Monty.

—Rob Brinkerhoff

Because of the pandemic and the pivot to online instruction, trainers and educators, and course developers are seeing that we end up with pretty awful instruction (and bad outcomes) when we simply try to repurpose classroom instruction to online. We MUST prepare trainers, instructors, and others to design and teach IN THIS ENVIRONMENT.

—Patti Shank

The dreadful uses of technology in distance learning that most of our children and many work-at-home employees are suffering through has increased awareness of what we do and don't want from ed tech. Good experience-based design is finding broader interest and support and we're seeing increasing innovation and creativity in designs. The trends are moving in great directions.

—Michael Allen

THE WAY OF WORK IS CHANGING

Organizations must prove that hybrid work arrangements add value to continue with them in the future.

–Jack Phillips

Performance management is about to change drastically. Rather than managers offering performance feedback and coaching, the script will flip: these touch bases will become “stay” conversations, growth discussions, and manager listening meetings.

–Laura Hoppa

Every conversation I’ve had with senior organizational leaders and senior HR leaders over the last year has been heavily weighted towards the rather nebulous term “hybrid working.” How we work now that being physically collocated isn’t going to be the norm for many/most organizations is the trend I think will have the most lasting impact on what we do in L&D.

–Owen Ferguson

Uncertainty. Two years since the pandemic began, and we continue to face uncertainty on many fronts. Uncertainty about the location of work, the talent market, the expectations of our workforce, the nature of effective learning experiences and content, our role and highest value contribution. This demands L&D agility and experimentation, underscored by an open mindset, evidence-informed practice, and personal resilience. It is a time for bold action.

–Michelle Ockers

Given higher turnover in jobs, we should consider technology for performance support in ways that can bypass or compress traditional training time.

–Ruth Clark

Workforce performance metrics – Microsoft is implementing these with abandon and they can have very negative consequences and result in misinterpretation of learning needs. For example, the number of emails sent is not a true metric of productivity.

–Lori Niles-Hofmann

IMPROVING OUR OWN L&D PROCESSES

L&D professionals will continue to struggle to deliver highly engaging, performance-enhancing training because they don't have repeatable design and delivery processes in place to do so.

—Sardek Love

Increased interest in accessibility. We seem to finally be moving from the “one more thing I gotta do” mindset to “making it accessible makes it better for everyone.”

—Jane Bozarth

DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging) is becoming a bigger part of L&D / L&P's job. Understanding that they have influence and where to execute that influence will be key to leadership roles in L&D moving forward.

—Danni Johnson

There is this negative trend where most of the L&D departments are placed within HR. As a consequence, L&D reports to HR and will have to contribute to HR-goals as well. I call this the HR-isation of L&D.

—Jos Arets

I hope that the shift in language from Instructional Systems Design to Learning Experience Design is more than linguistic gymnastics and always includes Authentic Performance Analysis Informed Design as a subtitle and practice. Also, here's something I'm wondering about: What should people entering the field from other disciplines read, and in what order, to start their journey in Workplace L&D? What should people with experiences have on their reading lists?

—Guy Wallace

Avoiding performative, virtue-signaling diversity training. Most progressive organizations have taken the first step in providing diversity, equity, and inclusion training to their employees. Most of this work has been event-based: Either a single workshop or eLearning experience. Employees have responded positively, but are now asking, “What's next?” L&P needs to have an answer to this. Otherwise, we risk looking performative, which could undo any positive progress we've made.

—Aaron Barth

Talent development will continue strengthening its alignment with the business as it becomes even more integrated throughout the organization. Demonstrating the impact and ROI of programs will become ever more important. It will also become easier as talent development professionals build capability and gain ground in cross-enterprise collaboration and partnerships while technology democratizes measurement and evaluation.

—Patti Phillips

Final Thoughts

FINAL THOUGHTS

Learning Trends 2022 has covered a lot of ground—too much to squeeze into one cohesive narrative. Real life is more complex than that and we don't want to insult your intelligence by grasping for a simple set of conclusions.

Some of the data surprised us, some of it we expected, and some of it we're still wondering what it means. We expect that you've had a similar experience.

GUIDANCE FOR REFLECTION

This report covered many topics relevant to our performance and success as learning and performance professionals. We designed the diagnostic survey and the report with you and your team in mind.

We encourage you to gather your team and review the report section by section—mentally benchmarking yourselves against the data. As many people mentioned in taking the survey, just answering the questions helped them consider their own practices in a new light. Now with data, these benefits can be extended.

LOOKING TO BECOME EXEMPLARY

One of the innovations in this report was the use of the “exemplary organization” construct. About 11% of respondents were categorized into organizations that met criteria to be selected as “exemplary.” As we explained in more detail earlier, there were essentially two criteria in the selection process: ❶ did your learning team create learning and performance solutions that improved work performance, and ❷ did they also use rigorous learning-evaluation methods so they could have valid insights about their performance.

We hope this construct has been useful as you read the report and encourage you to consider what the exemplary organizations are doing that typical organizations are not doing.

We welcome your feedback about the exemplary concept! Please let us know how useful it was for you and your team. Also, tell us what more you would need as a team to move up the curve from typical to exemplary and beyond.

THANK YOU AND GRATITUDE!

Our team would like to thank all of you who completed the diagnostic survey and who shared it with your colleagues and contacts in the industry!

Thanks in advance to any of you who send feedback and/or share the report.

To us, this was a labor of love. We are grateful for your involvement.

THE TIER1 PERFORMANCE LEARNING TRENDS 2022 TEAM:

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Learning Expert & Researcher

Will Thalheimer, PhD, MBA, is a Principal at TiER1 Performance who has worked in the learning and development field for 30+ years. Will has played many roles over his career, including instructional designer, leadership trainer, simulation architect, eLearning developer, project manager, researcher, learning evaluator, speaker, author, consultant, and more. He views learning as practical in helping people and organizations and redemptive and foundational for society and country.



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Zac Ryland is a Principal at TiER1 Performance who designs learning solutions such as eLearning modules, instructor-led training, and mobile learning. He has a passion for culture, engagement, and growing people. Drawing upon his experience teaching in K-12 classrooms as well as leading and coaching teachers, Zac combines his passion for culture and growing people with data, content, and methodology to produce strong results.



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Will Phillips is a Research Intern at TiER1 Performance. Will is a data devotee in the process of completing his master's degree in industrial-organizational psychology at Northern Kentucky University. Will's past work experience has given rise to a passion surrounding redesigning the work experience, especially regarding healing toxic work environments and eliminating inefficiencies.



WALTER WARWICK, PhD

Principal Scientist

Walter Warwick, PhD, is a Principal at TiER1 Performance who has more than 15 years' experience developing computational models of cognition and human performance. Walter has a deep interest in understanding and improving the methods used by computational modelers to create, validate, and communicate the workings of their models. His research contributions span over two decades from computational cognitive modeling and cognitive performance to human cyber behavior and much more.

WE ACTIVATE YOUR STRATEGIES THROUGH *people*

Strategy is only as valuable as the activation behind it: how it shows up, how work gets done, how your employees own it, and how your customers experience it.

HOW WE *activate* STRATEGY



Consult

Identify and align on performance factors needed for strategy activation.

In addition to driving clarity around the desired future state, we partner to understand how the unique dynamics of your organization (culture, leadership, roles, systems, etc.) intersect and influence each other to create opportunities and overcome barriers for successful strategy activation.



Design

Create the performance experience and everything needed to sustain it.

We deliver the plan and detail needed for your people to be empowered and aligned around your strategy: outlining key training, communication, performance support tools, technology, and associated timelines in a clearly articulated blueprint, journey map, or experience design.



Build

Activate strategy through engaging, results-focused deliverables.

From custom technology to high-volume communication and training, our studio teams of instructional designers, software developers, designers, copywriters, and videographers create engaging deliverables that allow your people to have what they need when they need it—boom, strategy activated.



Enable

Empower successful strategy activation through training, coaching, and more.

We equip your organization with methods, mindsets, and models (and sometimes people) to enable and sustain the change you seek to make—empowering your people to lead the transformations required for sustainable results—ultimately activating strategy from within.

CUSTOM SOLUTIONS THAT *activate* STRATEGY

Every organization has different strategic priorities—and therefore different needs. We custom-craft the solution that is right for you.

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