

# The L&D gap: How to close it and help future-proof the workforce - HR Executive

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## Executive Summary

This article addresses the persistent gap between organizational learning and development (L&D) efforts and workforce skills needs, with i4cp research indicating 70% of organizations struggle to equip their workforce for future requirements. The authors present predictions from HR technology vendors and consultants about emerging L&D trends for 2025, emphasizing AI-driven personalization, integration with augmented reality, and metrics-driven approaches. Key evidence includes Deloitte's 2024 survey showing 95% of employees value human skills as timeless, and Schoox data revealing only 24% of frontline workers feel adequately supported. The article concludes that while technology will transform L&D, success depends on clear strategy and strong leadership alignment between CLOs, CTOs, and CHROs.

## Key Insights

1. AI will enable hyper-personalized learning experiences that adapt to individual progress and career aspirations in real-time
2. Multigenerational workforces will drive 360-degree mentoring where younger employees teach digital skills while experienced workers provide organizational context
3. Only 24% of frontline workers feel adequately supported, representing a significant training gap that requires mobile-first and integrated learning approaches

## Practical Takeaways

- Organizations should measure L&D effectiveness through productivity improvements, employee retention, customer satisfaction, and ROI calculations
- Training programs should balance technical skills development with enduring human capabilities like divergent thinking and emotional agility

## Critical Analysis

Strengths include longitudinal i4cp data and specific survey statistics from reputable sources like Deloitte. However, the article relies heavily on vendor perspectives, which creates inherent bias toward technology solutions. The lack of independent research validation for many claims and the predominance of forward-looking predictions over proven outcomes limits reliability. The focus on technology trends may overshadow fundamental L&D challenges.

## Organizational Practice

Organizations are implementing AI-powered learning platforms with teaching assistants, creating personalized learning pathways, and establishing 360-degree mentoring programs between different generational cohorts. Some companies are conducting training audits and adopting mobile-first approaches for frontline worker development.

## Strategic Implications

The convergence of AI and AR technologies in L&D suggests organizations will need to invest in both technical infrastructure and change management capabilities. The emphasis on measurable outcomes indicates a shift toward ROI-driven learning strategies, while the focus on human skills alongside technical training suggests a balanced approach to workforce development will become competitive advantage.

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