



The Learner Voice

part 1

2000 staff provide their perspective on
how they are really learning in the private sector workplace

April 2014





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

Insights have been drawn from the Towards Maturity Learning Landscape Audit which is an ongoing research initiative that started in 2003. The LLA helps individual businesses uncover the facts about how their staff learn, both formally and informally.

As part of this process we gather confidential feedback from learners across all types of organisations and the results are fascinating. Each organisation has a unique profile of behaviour but there are some trends across all of the businesses that we could not wait to share.

The Learner Voice Part 1 draws on insights from 2000 learners from a range of companies across the private sector. All data was gathered in the period Jan 2013 to Jan 2014. We report on some of the interesting differences in role, responsibility and time in job. However we do not report on differences in approach as a result of age as there weren't any!

We also compare some of the learner findings with some of the feedback from L&D professionals in our 2013-14 Towards Maturity Benchmark. We leave it to the reader to decide if L&D are tuned into the learner voice!

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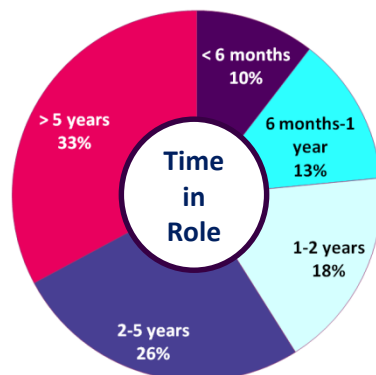
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Demographics

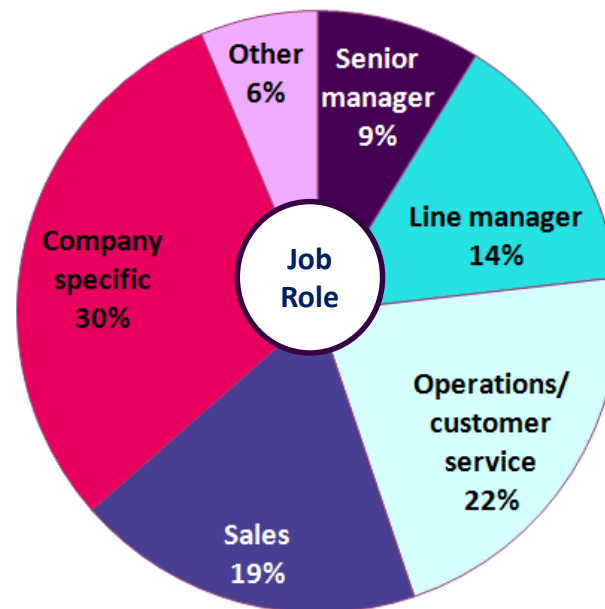
Sample of **2000** learners surveyed between May and October 2013

Gender	Percentage of sample
Male	65%
Female	35%



	% of sample
Have a regular place of work	83%
Responsible for managing own time at work	89%
UK-based	64%

Throughout this overview we'll also bring you direct quotes from learners themselves



A range of private sector organisations took part in the Learning Landscape study. This report looks at a representative sample across all participating organisations.

We also explore the findings for differences between job role (manager, non manager, sales); length of time in role (over 5yrs vs under 6 months) and age (under 30 vs over 50)



How do staff learn what they need for their jobs?



88% agree
they like to learn at
their own pace

Managers are the most likely to find the following very useful:

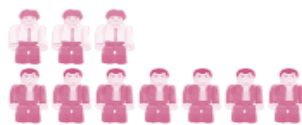
- Google (80% vs 70% on average)
- Access learning via mobile (48% vs 43%)
- Use video clips and podcasts (36% vs 29%)

Sales staff are most likely to find the following very useful:

- Self paced e-learning (56% vs 51%)
- Online Performance support (54% vs 41%)
- External networks and communities (45% vs 40%)

Those **in role less than 6 months** are the most likely to find the following very useful:

- Job aids (66% vs 55%)
- Support from managers (84% vs 70%)
- Internal networks and communities (54% vs 44%)



Differences

*"I regularly access tips and blogs.
I would like to hear about more
tools I could access."*

What tools do staff find **most** useful?

The top 5 approaches that people find either *essential* or *very useful* to learn what they need for their job are:

86% Working in collaboration with other team members

83% General conversations and meetings

70% Google/search/web resources

70% Support from managers

64% Classroom courses

The following approaches were also rated as helpful by over 50% of the participants: Support from a coach/buddy (62%), internal company documents (59%), job aids/checklists (55%) and self paced e-learning courses (51%).

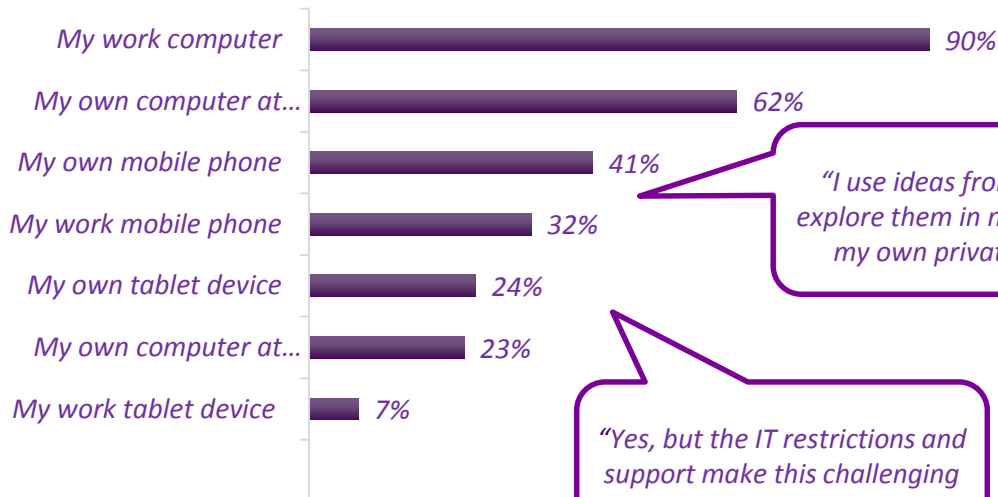
Whilst formal learning is still important for many, **88%** of learners agree that they like to learn at their own pace.

What technology choices are staff making to support learning?



43% agree accessing learning from their mobile is essential or very useful

What technology do you use to access resources to help you do your job?



"I use ideas from work and explore them in more detail on my own private devices"

"Yes, but the IT restrictions and support make this challenging where it should be easy"

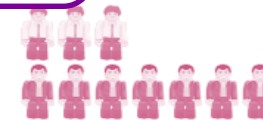
78% own a smartphone or tablet device

26% use their own devices to access work-related resources

- **Of the 74% that don't:**
 - **23%** would be happy if the right resources were available
 - **8%** don't know what is available
 - **33%** prefer to keep work and personal separate
 - **6%** don't want to use up their monthly data allowance

• **78%** of staff download apps to their own mobile devices

- 26% education or training (33% of managers)
- 21% productivity tools
- 18% pod or video casts



Differences

Managers are most likely to use their home computer (70%) and own tablets (38%) to access learning. Those **in role <6mths** are most likely to use own mobile (52%)

When are staff learning?



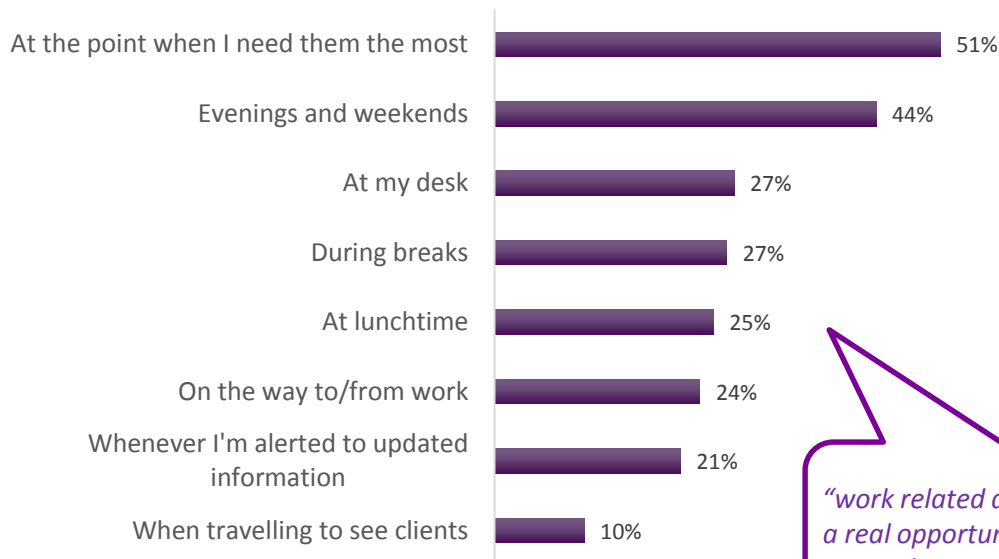
54% agree they like to be able to learn on the go

62% agree that their manager makes time for them to learn at work

29% agree that they are encouraged to learn at home

54% agree that they like to be able to learn on the go

When do staff spend most time using work related apps and websites from mobile devices?



Who is most likely to access apps and websites at weekends and evenings?



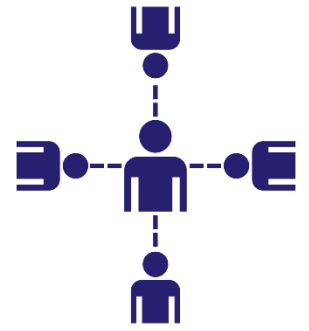
Differences

- Those in role < 6months (52%)
- Managers (48%)
- Sales (42%)

Managers are also most likely access on the journey to work (38% vs 24% on average)

“work related apps/websites provide a real opportunity to release content and potential in our people”.

How confident are staff with Social Media?

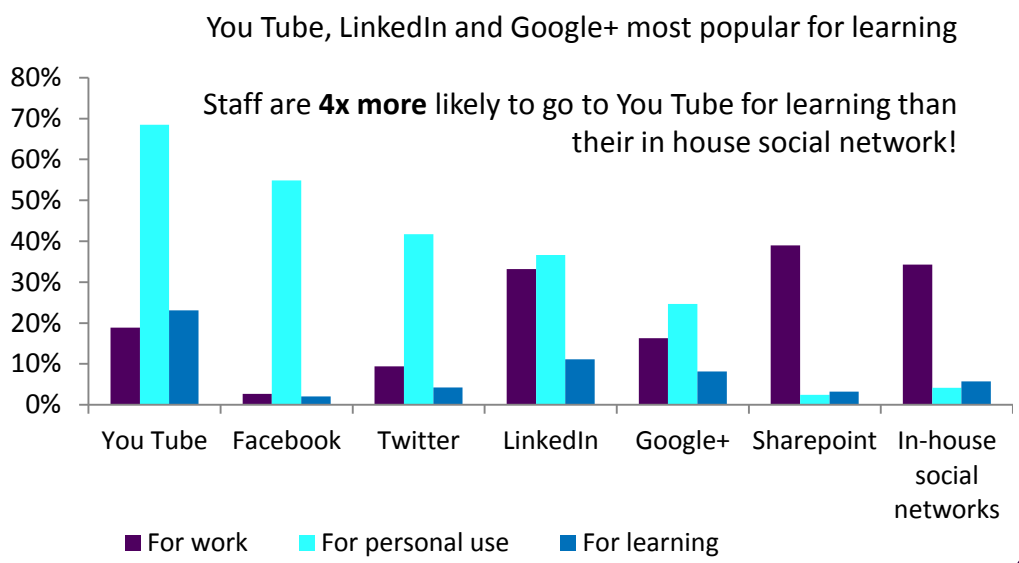


84% are willing to use technology to share knowledge and help others learn.

84% are willing to use technology to share knowledge to help others learn:

- **22%** do this regularly already
- **42%** would share if they had the opportunity
- **11%** don't have time
- **5%** would feel too uncomfortable

How are staff currently using social networks?



65% agree that they are motivated by using technologies that allow them to network and learn with others

- Managers are the most likely to already be regularly sharing what they know using technology (30%)



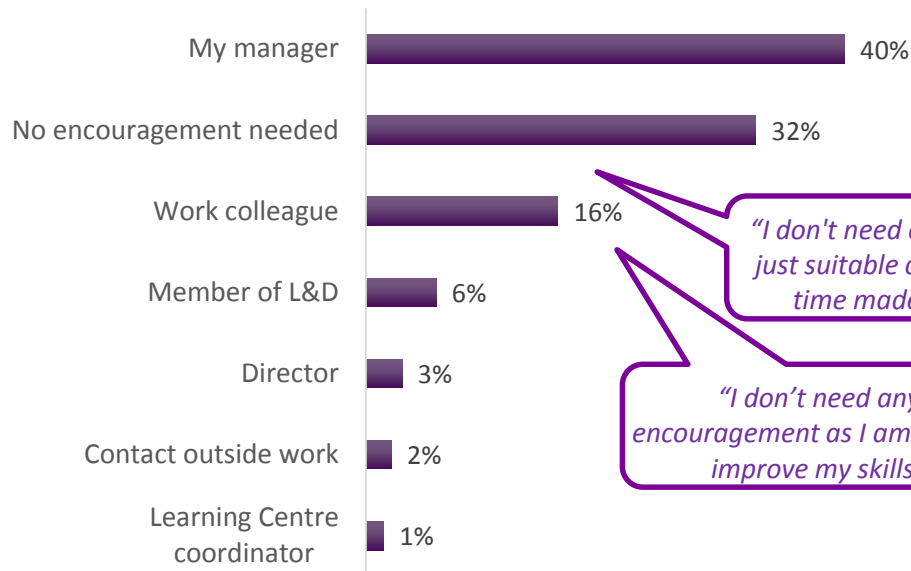
Differences • Sales are the least likely (18%)

Online learning – what is working?



40% are influenced by their line manager to engage with online learning (only 7% are influenced by L&D)

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



"I don't need encouragement just suitable courses and the time made available"

"I don't need any encouragement as I am keen to improve my skills"

83% know what learning they need (but only 67% know where to find it)

82% are responsible for managing their own learning and development

75% agree that they are happy to engage with online learning without prompting

69% agree that their company provides them with online learning that is directly relevant to their job

48% agree they learn more by finding things out for themselves than from the classroom or formal courses

66% agree they quickly put into practice what they learn through online learning

64% would recommend online learning as a result of their own experience

Who are most likely to put what they've learned online into practice?

- Sales staff (75%)
- Those in role <6mths (72%)



Differences

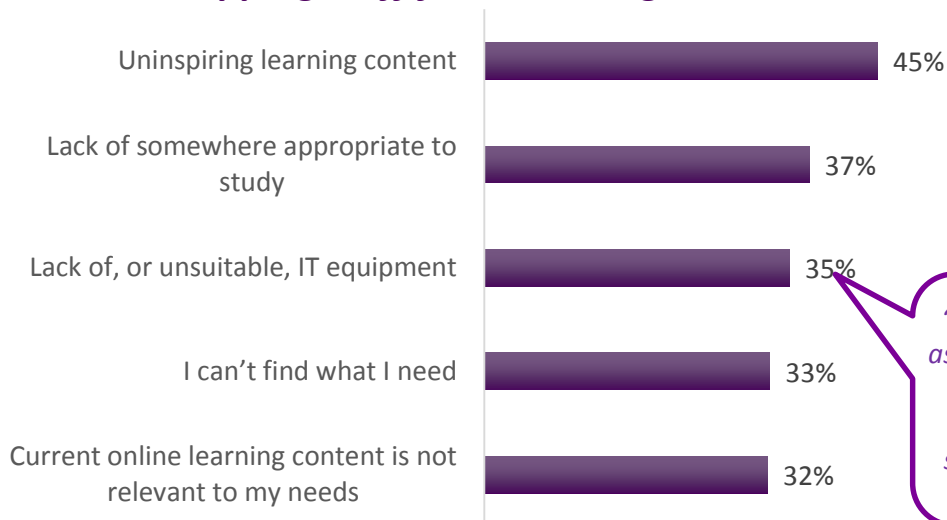
Online learning – what is NOT working?



45% of staff say that uninspiring content is the top barrier to engaging with online learning

L&D take note!

What is stopping staff from learning online? (NB it's not time)



66% say recognition that they have taken part in online learning is important

Managers take note!

- 58% of learners agree that their managers expect them to apply the learning points afterwards
- 60% agree that online learning has had a positive impact on their job performance
- 26% agree that their managers discuss learning objectives with them before they start any formal learning
- 57% understand how their job contributes to the organisation's overall objectives

"I am very interested in developing and development opportunities however I don't feel I am supported in this by my managers."

"Perhaps there is a lack of promotion as to what learning content is available and where. Completing this survey made me think I'm missing out on something potentially quite useful to me."

Managers are the most likely to report that current learning is not relevant to their needs (37%) or that content is uninspiring (56%)

Are L&D tuned into the Learner Voice?

This study doesn't ask about what learners want, it investigates what they do! The Learner Voice provides opportunities to challenge assumptions and refine the way that L&D supports learning in the organisation. The following table compares the Learner Voice with a few of the responses from 500+ Learning and Development professionals who participated in the Towards Maturity 2013-14 Benchmark.



88% of staff agree they like to learn at their own pace

43% of staff agree accessing learning from their mobile is essential or very useful

54% of staff say that they like to be able to learn on the go

84% of staff are willing to use technology to share knowledge and help others learn

40% of staff are influenced by their line manager to engage with online learning (only 7% are influenced by L&D)

45% of staff say that uninspiring content is the top barrier to engaging with online learning



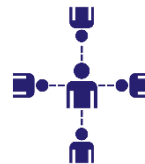
23% of L&D agree that learners have the confidence to manage their own development



15% of L&D agree that they encourage individuals to use their own mobile IT devices to access their learning



44% of L&D agree learners can choose to learn at places convenient to them



18% of L&D agree that staff know how to productively connect and share knowledge



16% of L&D agree that managers make time for staff to study on the job



69% of L&D are developing online learning in house but only **38%** believe they have the skills to do it!



Learner perspective

L&D perspective

If these were learners in YOUR organisation how would these findings influence your learning strategy?

- How would they influence the way you support learning
 - For managers?
 - For sales staff?
 - For those new in role?
- How would they influence the media that you use to deliver learning?
- How would these findings influence the skills that you need in the L&D team?

Turning data into insights and insights into action

The New Learning Agenda



Towards Maturity have been benchmarking effective learning strategies for 10 years and in our 2013-14 Benchmark Study, *“The New Learning Agenda”* we outline 9 action areas to help businesses build talent, drive performance, support change and improve agility.

One of these action areas is the importance of delivering *customer activated learning*. The consumerisation of IT means that many staff are immersed in technology every day both at home and work. They have many more opportunities to learn across multiple technologies and applications and can think it through for themselves. In many cases they don't realise and recognise it as learning. It is imperative that we see the learner as a customer within our organisation and give a voice to how they learn best to do the job they are being asked to do.



This first **Learner Voice** study provides an indication of the customer perspective for the private sector but your organisation is probably different.

As you develop your learning strategy moving forward, be sure to find out!

Download the “New Learning Agenda” at www.towardsmaturity.org/2013benchmark

Challenge your own assumptions by conducting your own Learning Landscape Audit

Compare your internal insights to those in the TM2014 Learner Benchmark

Get involved

Find out more:

www.towardsmaturity.org/learner

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

Acknowledgments

This report has consolidated Towards Maturity Learner Landscape findings for 2000 private sector organisations. Information on the way that data has been gathered from learners and definitions used can be found on page 65 of the ***New Learning Agenda***.

Please visit www.towardsmaturity.org/shop to download the following free Towards Maturity studies that explore how L&D can respond to the Learner Voice themes raised in this report:

- New Learning Agenda
- Learning in the Mobile Enterprise
- Talent Optimisation (coming soon)

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

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New Learning Benchmarks