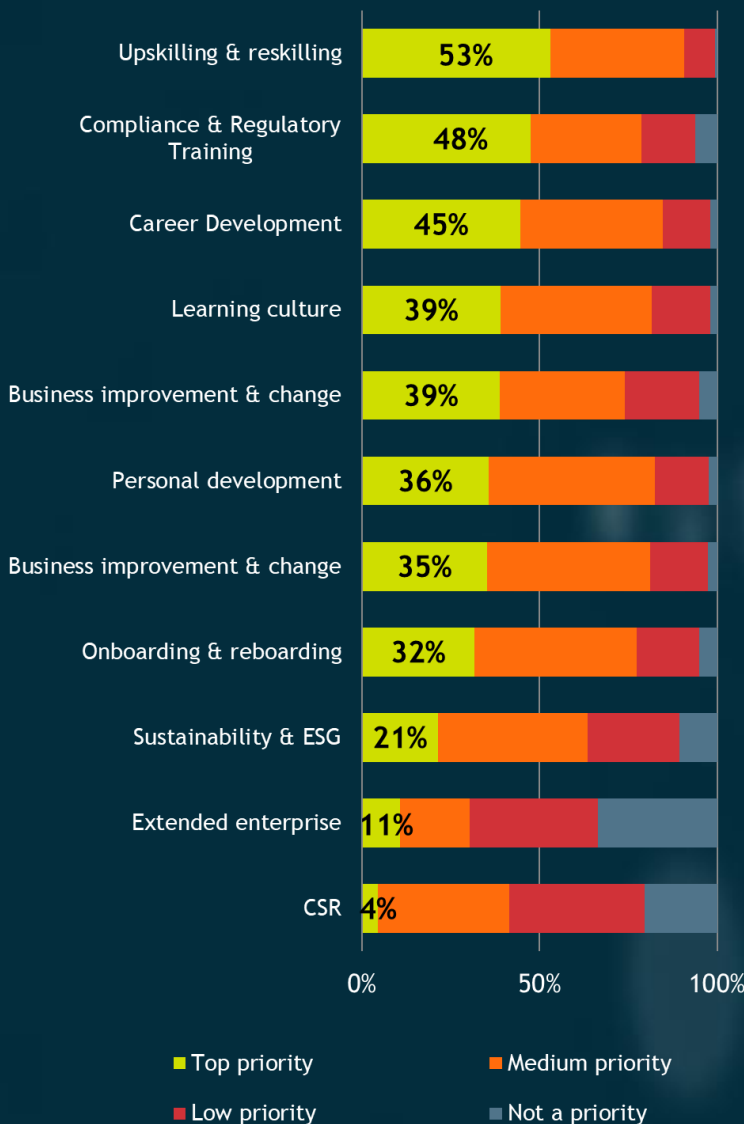


# Digital Learning Realities 2024

## L&D Priorities and Learning Strategy in the Modern Era

What are the top priorities for your learning strategy for the year ahead?



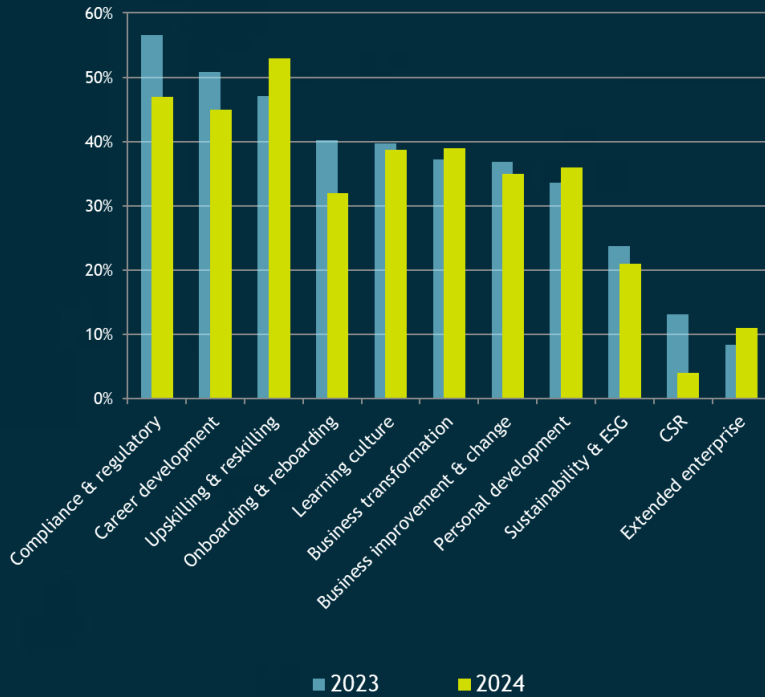
### Upskilling and reskilling are the top strategic priority for learning

Compliance and regulatory training has long been the top driver of corporate learning, but in 2024 things have changed.

Upskilling and reskilling now leads learning strategic priorities. In much of Europe the continued pressure of an aging population and the challenges behind the availability of skilled talent is making skills a hot topic. This combined with the need to build new people capability in the face of unprecedented global and technological change has pushed upskilling and reskilling up from 3<sup>rd</sup> place last year to 1<sup>st</sup> place for L&D professionals' priorities for the year ahead.

Whilst this could be seen from a L&D only perspective, what this genuinely represents is a growing momentum for 'skills-powered' organisations typically led by a wider HR strategy. In the CIPD Spring Labour Market Outlook report over half of organisations had responded to hard-to-fill vacancies by upskilling more employees. Skills is the HR zeitgeist and its influence is clearly filtering through to learning teams. And this means effective L&D teams need to partner much more deeply with other HR teams to make sure skills is coherently joined up across the people experience. The last thing any L&D professions should do with skills is stand in isolation. You do need to be connected.

What are the top priorities for your learning strategy for the year ahead?



## The L&D priority for compliance, career development, onboarding and CSR all saw decline

One of the consequences of the surge around upskilling and reskilling has been the waning priority for compliance, career development, onboarding and CSR. All of which took a noticeable dip compared to their ranking last year.

How much this has been driven by a tightening around new hiring and what some have called the ‘Great Talent Stagnation’ is unclear. But it does hint at a refocusing on workers’ employability rather than the promise to deliver career progression. That could be indicative of organisations enabling people to keep pace with existing roles as much as enabling them to step into new ones.

## Sustainability and ESG are a major part of corporate learning priorities, but still lag well behind other strategic drivers

63% have ESG as a Learning Priority



As the dangers from climate change and ecological tipping points become ever more perilous, sustainability is becoming a major learning driver with 63% highlighting it as a priority. Similar to the results from last year, 22% have Sustainability and Climate as a top priority for their learning strategy.

Whilst the headline numbers are some cause for optimism, there should also be a note of concern. Compared to other strategic priorities Sustainability is 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom of priorities ahead of CSR and Extended Enterprise training. As Climate becomes one of the defining issues of our age, perhaps we all need to be doing more to push this up corporate agendas.

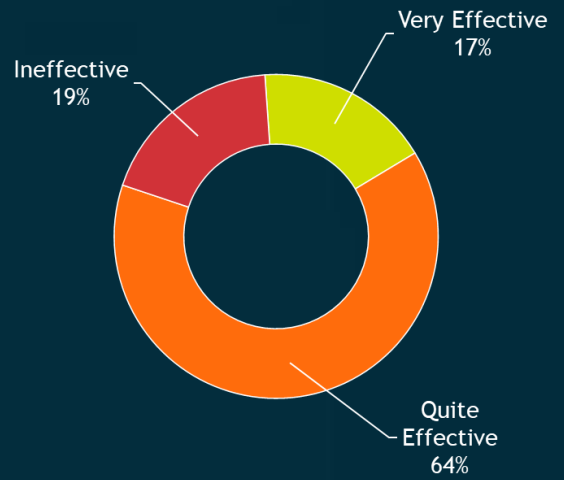
## Only 17% of L&D teams believe their learning strategy is very effective at developing people’s skills

Despite upskilling and reskilling being the TOP strategic priority, L&D teams do not believe they are very effective at developing people’s skills. Only 17% believe their learning strategy is very effective, compared to 52% who believe their approach to compliance and regulatory training is very effective.

There is clearly lots of work for L&D teams to do to this challenge. Some of this is ultimately about transitioning to more practice simulations, coaching, collaborative and workplace learning, rather than the knowledge-heavy courses that have often dominated learning technology solutions in the past. Especially as skills gaps and the need for skills building is so critical to organisations’ success.

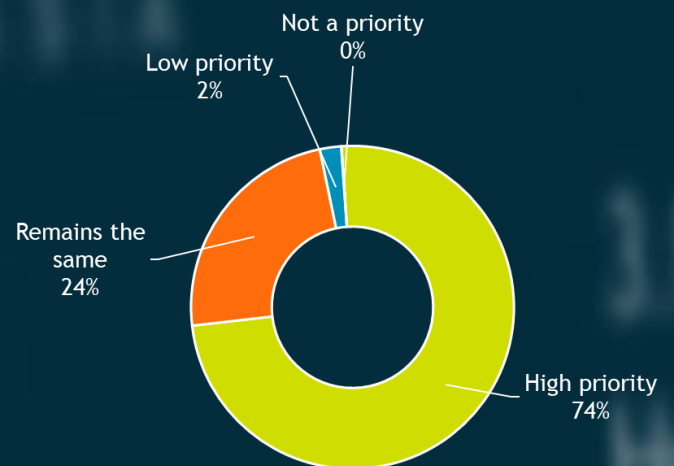
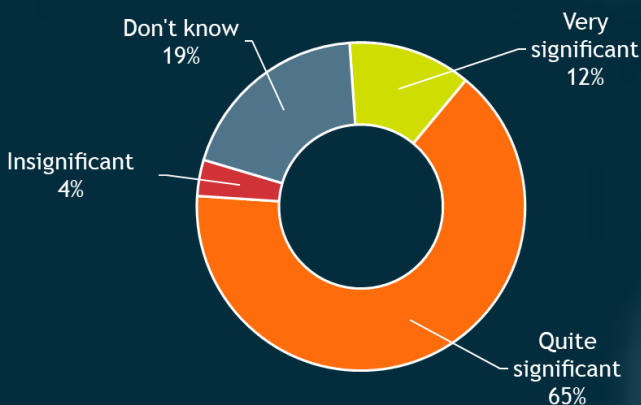
How effective is your learning strategy at delivering the following?

### Upskilling and reskilling



How much of a priority is building skills becoming to the future success of your organisation?

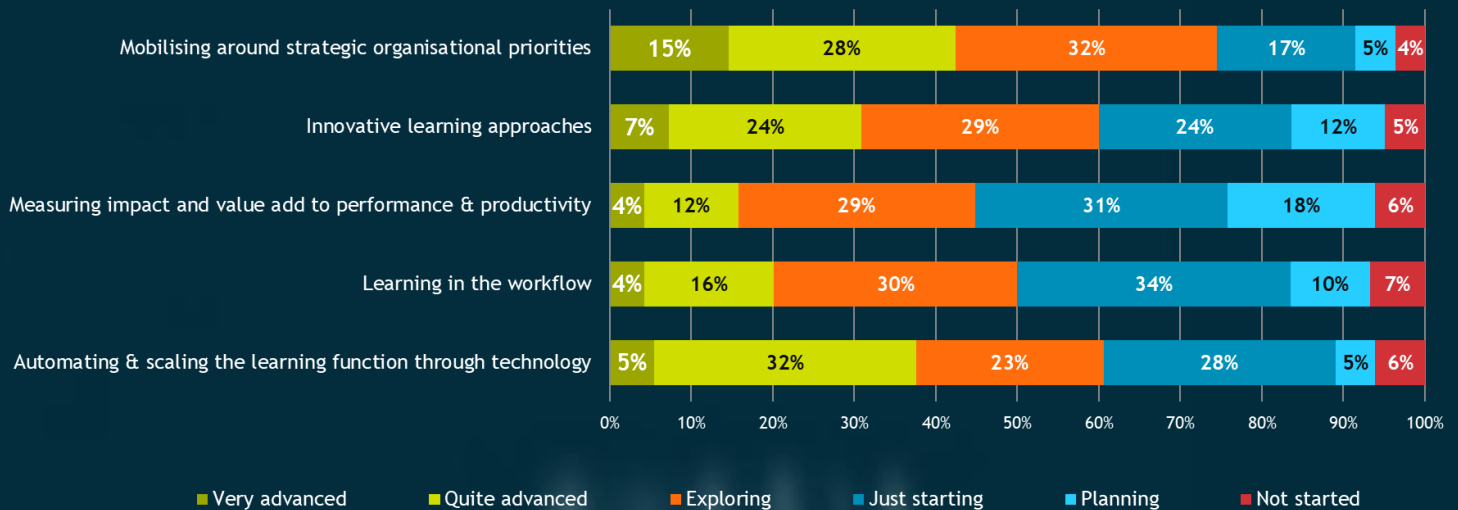
Overall, how significant are skills gaps in your organisation today?



## Most L&D teams are not truly capable of being a strategic partner and business influencer

In an age where learning and skills development is so critical to success, there continues to be a worrying lack of maturity in many L&D teams around some foundational aspects of the learning function. The systemic issues of being tightly aligned to business priorities, enabling real business change at scale, is something that shows little signs of changing. But the stakes are getting higher, and the need to demonstrate the value of learning to organisational performance and productivity is also growing, particularly as learning budgets and investment are coming under ever greater scrutiny from the C-Suite.

### How advanced is your L&D function in executing the following?



This is ultimately all about the influence L&D teams can exert, and the harsh reality is that being a weak influencer for learning at a time of high change is a recipe for failure, when so much of the future of organisations is bound up in being able to embrace innovation and new ways of working. That only 16% see themselves as advanced in measuring their impact and value, puts the vast majority of L&D teams at a distinct disadvantage in being a true strategic business partner. Being more closely aligned to organisations’ strategic projects, workforce planning and strategic skills management as part of a joined-up HR approach is critical to rectifying this and providing a value-centred proposition to what L&D do.

**Sources of Information & Background**  
As Europe’s #1 HR industry analyst, Fosway is uniquely positioned to help the industry with independent research on these issues. More information and insight on our research will be made available on [www.fosway.com](http://www.fosway.com)

Fosway Group conducted the survey of its corporate research network and Learning Technologies Show conference attendees in partnership with Closer Still between January 2024 to July 2024. Responses were gathered from CHROs, Talent & L&D Directors, Managers and Learning, Talent & HR Technology professionals.

Results are drawn primarily from enterprise organisations in Europe and the survey includes responses from 434 individuals. 85% of respondents are based in Europe, and over 51% have a global role.

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