
L&D: The Future Is Bright

Executive Summary

Over the past year The Learning Guild has taken repeated looks at the effects the pandemic was having on L&D. We offered help where we could, for instance, making all events available online and tailoring programming to include more about dealing with crises and responding to demands for what became known as “emergency remote teaching”.

Learning Solutions offered more content aimed at issues like adapting to remote work, and we took a deep, research-based look at facilitation skills needed for virtual delivery, as well as ways of redesigning for the virtual classroom using some standard ideas of effective design.

We’re now turning our attention to: What’s next? What did we learn during the pandemic era, what can we take forward, and how can we be better prepared for next time?

While some L&D practitioners, in responding to a survey offered in early 2021, reported ongoing struggles and the feeling they were falling behind, the overall tone of responses was positive and optimistic. Many respondents:

- Reported that their plans for technology use had held steady and often advanced, particularly in regard to delivery methods and development approaches.
- Indicated that due to the circumstances of the past year L&D’s status and visibility were enhanced, and L&D staff were recognized for having useful knowledge and skills needed to help the organization move forward.

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- Found the changes energizing, feeling they were finally getting things in place. In conversation people were eager to talk about their experiences, with emails going into several hundred words and calls running over their allotted time. The enthusiasm was palpable.
- Felt the pandemic accelerated their ability to make plans for the future. As noted in the April research report, this may indicate confidence that a move to digital delivery platforms will be a more resilient and future-ready approach.

We have, for years, dealt with familiar problems. Not enough funding. Inadequate staffing. Interference from stakeholders who didn't understand learning/instruction. Rather than focus on those, this report looks at the people who felt their organizations did well. What supported success? Where did they find ways to make the proverbial lemonade out of terrible circumstances? What tips to do they have for others? What did they learn, and what can they teach us?

When this report was submitted for publication it seemed most of the world was finally emerging from the worst of the pandemic. Unfortunately, developments in India changed that perception. We have many Learning Guild members, sponsors, and friends in India, and hope they, their loved ones—indeed, everyone there—comes through this latest phase quickly and safely.

To download the full report, [click here](#).