



Strategic Learning Platforms

The D2L Edition



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Industry Report

D2L



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Executive Summary

Organizations are entering a new era of workforce transformation where competitive advantage depends less on what employees know today and more on how quickly they can acquire, apply and continuously develop new capabilities.

Artificial intelligence, rapid technological disruption, changing business models and persistent talent shortages have fundamentally altered the relationship between learning and organizational performance. Learning is no longer a support function operating on the periphery of the business. It has become a strategic capability that enables organizations to adapt faster than competitors, accelerate workforce readiness and execute business strategy with greater confidence.

This transformation represents a significant departure from the role traditional learning management systems (LMSs) have historically played. For decades, most corporate learning platforms focused primarily on delivering courses, tracking completions and supporting regulatory compliance. While these capabilities remain important, they are no longer sufficient.

Business leaders increasingly expect learning organizations to demonstrate measurable contributions to operational performance, workforce productivity, employee retention, leadership readiness and organizational agility. Learning must now help organizations prepare employees for rapidly changing roles, support large-scale business transformation initiatives and ensure that strategic priorities are translated into workforce capability.

The emergence of artificial intelligence has accelerated this shift dramatically.

Generative AI has compressed product development cycles, altered knowledge work and created an urgent need for continuous reskilling across virtually every function. Research from the World Economic Forum estimates that nearly 40% of workers' core skills will change by the end of the decade, while approximately half of the global workforce will require significant reskilling or upskilling during the same period. These changes are occurring simultaneously with increasing pressure to improve productivity while controlling labor costs. Organizations can no longer rely on periodic training initiatives or static learning catalogs. Workforce capability must evolve continuously alongside the business.

Unfortunately, many organizations remain constrained by learning technologies designed for a different era.

Traditional LMS platforms excel at administering courses but often struggle to support personalized learning, business-specific capability development, rapid content creation, meaningful skills intelligence, or measurable business outcomes. Learning content frequently exists in disconnected repositories, managers have limited visibility into employee development and learning teams spend excessive time creating and maintaining content instead of enabling workforce transformation.

At the same time, learning organizations themselves face growing operational constraints. Teams are being asked to support expanding audiences, new business initiatives, hybrid workforces, leadership development, onboarding, compliance, AI enablement and skills transformation, often without additional staff or budget. The challenge is no longer simply delivering learning. It is scaling organizational capability with limited resources. D2L's customer research consistently highlights four recurring themes: learning teams lack sufficient resources, organizational complexity continues to increase, executives demand measurable ROI and leaders seek practical, responsible approaches to applying AI within learning operations.

These realities are giving rise to a new category of enterprise learning technology: The Strategic Learning Platform.

Unlike traditional LMS platforms that primarily manage courses or learning experience platforms (LXPs) that emphasize learner-directed discovery, strategic learning platforms align workforce development directly with organizational priorities. They connect structured learning programs, personalized development, AI-assisted content creation, analytics and business outcomes into a unified ecosystem that supports continuous workforce readiness. Rather than measuring activity alone, these platforms help organizations build the capabilities required to execute business strategy. Brandon Hall Group believes this represents a structural evolution in enterprise learning.

High-performing organizations increasingly view employee development as an enterprise-wide capability rather than a function owned exclusively by learning and development. Business leaders, HR, IT, operations and frontline managers all play critical roles in building workforce capability. Learning technology must therefore serve multiple stakeholders simultaneously, providing measurable value for executives, intuitive experiences for

learners, efficient authoring tools for content creators and secure, scalable administration for technology teams.

Artificial intelligence further reinforces the importance of this integrated approach.

Organizations do not simply need AI features embedded within learning systems. They require AI that accelerates content creation, personalizes learning, supports decision-making and improves operational efficiency while remaining transparent, secure, ethical and governed appropriately. Purposeful AI should reduce administrative burden and amplify human expertise rather than replacing instructional design, managerial judgment, or organizational oversight. D2L's product strategy reflects this philosophy by positioning AI as a practical capability that enhances learning creation, learner engagement, analytics and workforce readiness while maintaining strong governance principles around privacy, transparency, accountability and security.

This report examines the market forces driving the emergence of strategic learning platforms and explores the organizational challenges leaders must overcome to prepare their workforces for continuous change. It outlines the characteristics that define best-in-class learning ecosystems, presents a framework for building a compelling business case for investment and evaluates how D2L addresses these evolving requirements through its strategic learning platform.

Rather than viewing learning as an isolated HR process, leading organizations are repositioning workforce development as a core business capability that enables transformation, strengthens organizational resilience and creates sustainable competitive advantage. As technology, AI and business strategy continue to evolve, organizations that invest in strategic learning will be better positioned to develop talent faster, adapt more effectively and execute with greater confidence than those relying on traditional approaches.

The Business Challenge

Learning Has Become a Strategic Business Capability

Organizations today operate in an environment where the pace of change continues to accelerate. Artificial intelligence is reshaping work, digital transformation initiatives are redefining business processes and evolving customer expectations are forcing organizations to adapt more quickly than ever before. Concurrently, workforce demographics, persistent skills shortages and economic uncertainty are creating new pressures on leaders to improve productivity while preparing employees for roles that continue to evolve.

These forces have fundamentally changed the role of learning within the enterprise. Learning organizations are responsible for delivering training, administering compliance programs and documenting employee participation. While these responsibilities remain important, they no longer define success. Today, executive leadership expects learning to accelerate workforce readiness, support strategic transformation initiatives, strengthen leadership pipelines, improve employee retention and ensure employees develop the capabilities needed to execute business strategy. Learning is no longer simply a function that supports the business; it has become a function that enables the business.

The challenge is that many organizations are attempting to meet these new expectations using technologies and operating models designed for a different era. Learning management systems were developed to administer courses and maintain training records. They were not designed to support continuous capability development, rapidly changing business priorities, personalized learning at scale, or the business-specific knowledge that organizations increasingly require. As the pace of change accelerates, the gap between what organizations expect from learning and what many learning ecosystems can deliver continues to widen.

The Evolution of Enterprise Learning

 Traditional Enterprise Learning	 Strategic Learning
Delivers training programs	Develops workforce capability
Measures course completion	Measures business outcomes
Supports compliance requirements	Supports business strategy
Focuses on learning activity	Focuses on organizational readiness
Generic learning content	Business-specific capability development
Learning owned primarily by L&D	Shared accountability across leaders, managers, HR and employees
Periodic training events	Continuous workforce development
Learning Management System	Strategic Learning Platform

Enterprise learning is evolving from an administrative function centered on training delivery into a strategic capability that enables workforce readiness and organizational performance.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The competitive advantage of tomorrow's organizations will be determined not by how much employees know today, but by how quickly they can develop the capabilities required to meet tomorrow's business challenges.

Complexity Is Growing Faster Than Organizational Capacity

The expanding role of learning is occurring at the same time organizations are experiencing unprecedented levels of operational complexity. Every strategic initiative now creates new learning requirements. Artificial intelligence demands new technical and leadership capabilities. Digital transformation introduces new systems, workflows and ways of working. Product innovation requires continuous enablement of customer-facing teams, while changing regulatory environments create ongoing compliance obligations. Even routine organizational changes such as mergers, acquisitions, restructurings and market expansion require employees to learn new processes and adapt to new business realities.

Learning organizations are expected to respond to each of these demands simultaneously. They must develop new content, modernize existing programs, personalize learning experiences, support multiple audiences and demonstrate measurable business value. Yet, despite this expanding scope of responsibility, most learning teams operate with relatively stable budgets and staffing levels. The result is a widening gap between the capabilities organizations require and the resources available to develop them.

D2L's own market research reflects these challenges. Organizations consistently cite increasing complexity, limited internal resources, pressure from executive leadership to demonstrate measurable return on investment and uncertainty about how to apply artificial intelligence responsibly within learning programs. These are not isolated operational issues; together, they define the environment in which enterprise learning now operates.

Research Insights

Organizations report four consistent challenges:

1. Learning demands continue to increase while internal resources remain constrained.
2. Executive leadership expects learning investments to demonstrate measurable business value.
3. Organizations require more business-specific learning content than generic course libraries can provide.
4. Artificial intelligence is creating both new workforce development requirements and new opportunities to improve learning operations.

Drivers of Learning Complexity

Business Driver	Impact on Learning Organizations
Artificial Intelligence	Continuous workforce reskilling and AI literacy
Digital Transformation	Ongoing process, systems, and technology enablement
Skills Disruption	Faster development of emerging capabilities
Hybrid and Distributed Work	Personalized, accessible learning experiences
Workforce Mobility	Accelerated onboarding and role transitions
Business Growth	Scalable employee development across the enterprise

From Training Delivery to Workforce Readiness

One of the most significant shifts occurring within enterprise learning is the move away from measuring activity toward measuring organizational capability. Learning organizations focus on metrics such as enrollments, completions, certifications and hours of training delivered. While these indicators remain useful for understanding participation, they provide only limited insight into whether learning is improving organizational performance.

Business leaders increasingly ask different questions. How quickly can new employees become productive? Are managers prepared to lead through organizational change? Can sales teams successfully introduce new products? Are employees developing the skills required to work effectively alongside artificial intelligence? These questions focus on business outcomes rather than learning activities, reflecting a broader expectation that workforce development should contribute directly to organizational performance.

This evolution requires learning ecosystems capable of connecting learning with business strategy. Organizations need platforms that enable rapid content creation, support personalized development, integrate with broader technology environments, provide meaningful workforce insights and help leaders understand whether learning investments are translating into measurable capability. The objective is no longer simply to manage learning. It is to accelerate workforce readiness and strengthen the organization's ability to execute its strategy.

Executive Considerations

Before evaluating any learning technology strategy, executive teams should ask several fundamental questions:

1. Can our current learning ecosystem adapt as quickly as our business strategy evolves?
2. Are we measuring workforce capability or simply training activity?

3. How rapidly can we create and deploy business-specific learning at scale?

4. Does our learning platform help managers develop people, or simply assign courses?

5. Can our learning investments be directly connected to business outcomes?

The Business Imperative

Workforce Capability Has Become a Competitive Differentiator

Organizations view learning as a supporting function that enables business strategy. That relationship has fundamentally changed. Increasingly, workforce capability determines whether business strategy can be executed at all.

Organizations can develop innovative products, invest in advanced technologies and establish ambitious growth strategies, but none of these initiatives succeed without employees who possess the skills and knowledge required to execute them. Whether implementing artificial intelligence, entering new markets, transforming customer experiences, or introducing new operating models, every strategic initiative ultimately depends on the organization's ability to prepare its workforce for change.

This has elevated learning from an operational function to a strategic business capability. Executive leadership increasingly recognizes that organizational agility is directly tied to workforce readiness and workforce readiness is directly influenced by how effectively learning organizations can develop new capabilities at scale.

Learning has become one of the few enterprise functions capable of influencing productivity, employee engagement, innovation, leadership development and organizational resilience simultaneously.

Workforce Capability Is the Foundation for Business Performance



Every strategic initiative ultimately depends on the organization's ability to build workforce capability.

**Learning is now a business enabler
and no longer a support activity.**

The Pace of Change Has Eliminated the Traditional Learning Cycle

Organizations had the luxury of time. New systems were implemented over months or years, product portfolios evolved gradually and workforce development programs could be planned well in advance. Learning organizations operated on predictable annual calendars, updating curricula periodically and introducing new programs as business needs evolved.

That operating model is no longer sustainable.

Artificial intelligence continues to reshape job responsibilities almost monthly. Regulatory requirements evolve more rapidly, customer expectations shift continuously and organizations regularly introduce new technologies, products and business models. Skills that were considered current only a few years ago may now require significant revision, while entirely new capabilities emerge with increasing frequency.

The implication is clear: workforce development cannot be treated as a sequence of isolated learning events. Organizations require learning ecosystems capable of supporting continuous capability development, enabling employees to acquire new knowledge as business priorities evolve rather than according to an annual training calendar.

This represents a fundamental shift from delivering learning to enabling continuous organizational readiness.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

Organizations now compete on how quickly their people can learn, adapt and execute, not just on product and services they offer.

Artificial Intelligence Is Accelerating the Need for Strategic Learning

No technology has accelerated the need for continuous workforce development more dramatically than artificial intelligence.

Much of the conversation surrounding AI has focused on automation and productivity. Equally important, however, is its impact on workforce capability. AI is changing how employees perform knowledge work, collaborate, make decisions, create content and interact with customers. Every function, from finance and HR to sales, operations and customer service, is experiencing some level of transformation.

Preparing employees for this environment requires more than providing access to AI tools. Organizations must establish governance frameworks, develop AI literacy, redefine business processes and continuously update workforce capabilities as technologies evolve.

AI presents an opportunity to transform learning itself. Purposefully applied, AI can accelerate content creation, personalize learning experiences, recommend development pathways, surface actionable insights and reduce administrative burden for learning teams. The objective is not simply to embed AI into learning platforms, but to use AI responsibly to improve organizational capability while maintaining transparency, governance and human oversight. D2L's product strategy reflects this philosophy by emphasizing purposeful AI that enhances the work of learners, authors, administrators and leaders while adhering to principles of privacy, accountability, transparency and security.

Research Insight

Organizations are redefining the purpose of enterprise learning.

YESTERDAY		TODAY	
	Teach employees how to perform their jobs	Continuously prepare employees for changing jobs	
	Deliver learning efficiently	Improve organizational performance	
	Maintain compliance	Build organizational resilience	
	Track learning activity	Measure workforce readiness	

Learning Must Become Part of the Business Operating Model

Perhaps the most significant implication of these changes is that learning must operate collaboratively with the business.

Learning initiatives were often designed after strategic decisions had already been made. Business leaders determined direction and learning organizations were subsequently asked to develop training programs that supported implementation. While effective for relatively stable operating environments, this sequential approach is increasingly inadequate in a world where business priorities change continuously.

Progressive organizations are embedding learning directly into the business operating model. Learning leaders are becoming strategic partners who participate in workforce

planning, technology adoption, leadership development, change management and organizational transformation initiatives from the outset. Rather than responding to change after decisions are made, learning organizations help shape the workforce strategies that enable those decisions to succeed.

This integrated approach also changes how learning technology is evaluated. Organizations can't afford to select platforms solely based on content management or course delivery capabilities. They need solutions that integrate learning with broader business systems, accelerate content creation, support personalized development, generate meaningful workforce insights and connect learning investments to measurable business outcomes.

Executive Considerations

Organizations evaluating their learning strategy should consider several critical questions:

1. Is learning represented in enterprise transformation initiatives from the beginning or introduced after decisions have already been made?
2. Can our current learning ecosystem respond as quickly as our business strategy evolves?
3. Does our technology help leaders understand workforce capability across the organization?
4. Are we developing skills continuously or simply delivering training periodically?
5. Can our learning investments be directly connected to business performance?

Recognizing learning as a strategic business capability is only the first step. Organizations must also determine how to operationalize that capability in a way that is scalable, measurable and aligned with business strategy.

Immediate Operational Impact

The Cost of Maintaining Traditional Learning Models

The pressures reshaping workforce development are not theoretical. Organizations are experiencing their effects every day through slower onboarding, inconsistent employee readiness, delayed transformation initiatives and increasing pressure on managers to develop employees without the tools or visibility needed to do so effectively. While many organizations recognize the need to modernize learning, fewer fully appreciate the operational costs of maintaining traditional approaches.

These costs rarely appear as a single budget line. Instead, they accumulate across the organization through lost productivity, duplicated effort, delayed decision-making and missed opportunities to develop critical capabilities. Over time, these incremental inefficiencies become structural barriers that limit organizational agility and slow business execution.

Perhaps the most immediate consequence is the increasing amount of time required to move employees from hiring to productivity. As organizations introduce new technologies, products and processes, onboarding becomes more complex. Employees must absorb larger volumes of information while managers are expected to coach, monitor progress and reinforce learning during the transition. When onboarding relies on static content, disconnected systems, or manual processes, organizations extend the time required for employees to become fully productive and increase the burden placed on both managers and learning teams.

The same pattern emerges throughout the employee lifecycle. Leadership development programs struggle to remain aligned with changing business priorities. Product enablement initiatives become difficult to update as offerings evolve. Compliance programs consume disproportionate administrative effort, while technical training often lags behind the pace of technology adoption. Rather than enabling business transformation, learning organizations find themselves reacting continuously to operational demands.

Operational Impact of Traditional Learning Models

BUSINESS ACTIVITY	TRADITIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	BUSINESS IMPACT
 Employee onboarding	 Static, one-size-fits-all programs	 Longer time-to-productivity
 Product enablement	 Manual course updates	 Slower sales readiness
 Leadership development	 Periodic classroom programs	 Inconsistent manager capability
 Compliance	 Administrative tracking	 High operational overhead
 Skills development	 Generic content libraries	 Persistent capability gaps
 Organizational change	 Reactive training development	 Slower transformation execution

Traditional learning models create operational friction that affects workforce readiness across the employee lifecycle.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

Organizations rarely lose competitive advantage because employees are unwilling to learn. More often, they lose advantage because learning cannot keep pace with the speed of business.

Managers Have Become the New Learning Leaders

One of the most significant changes occurring within organizations is the expanding role of frontline managers in employee development. Employees cannot rely exclusively on formal training programs to build new capabilities. Managers are expected to coach performance, reinforce learning, identify skill gaps and support career development as part of their everyday responsibilities.

Unfortunately, most managers have received little support in fulfilling this role. They often lack visibility into employee progress, have limited insight into individual development needs and rely on disconnected systems to understand learning activity. Coaching conversations therefore become reactive rather than proactive and opportunities to accelerate employee growth are frequently missed.

Modern learning strategies must therefore extend beyond the learning function itself. They must equip managers with timely insights, recommended actions and development tools that allow learning to become part of everyday work rather than an activity that occurs separately from it.

Research Highlights

Organizations expect learning technology to support managers by enabling them to:

1. Monitor employee development in real time.
2. Identify emerging skills gaps.
3. Assign targeted learning aligned with business needs.
4. Reinforce learning through coaching conversations.
5. Connect employee development with business performance.

The Administrative Burden Continues to Grow

As learning requirements expand, administrative complexity grows alongside them. Learning teams are responsible for maintaining content, updating curricula, managing compliance requirements, assigning learning, supporting multiple audiences, generating reports and responding to changing business priorities, all while maintaining consistent learner experiences.

The introduction of artificial intelligence adds another layer of responsibility. Organizations must educate employees about AI while simultaneously determining how AI can improve learning operations themselves. This requires governance, content development, change management and ongoing oversight, adding further demands to already constrained learning teams.

Without greater automation and more efficient content creation, organizations risk devoting increasing amounts of time to administrative work at the expense of strategic workforce development.

How Learning Teams Spend Their Time

TRADITIONAL FOCUS	FUTURE-STATE FOCUS
 Course administration	 Workforce strategy
 Content maintenance	 Capability development
 Manual assignments	 Personalized learning
 Reporting completions	 Measuring business impact
 Compliance tracking	 Organizational readiness
 Operational support	 Strategic business partnership

Delayed Capability Development Creates Strategic Risk

The greatest risk associated with traditional learning models is not administrative inefficiency. It is the inability to build workforce capability at the speed required by the business.

Organizations introducing new technologies cannot afford six-month delays in workforce readiness. Product launches depend on sales teams that understand new offerings immediately. Regulatory changes require rapid employee education. AI initiatives succeed only when employees understand both the technology and the organization's expectations for responsible use.

When learning cannot respond at the pace of business, strategic initiatives slow. Managers compensate through informal coaching, business units develop their own disconnected learning resources and organizational knowledge becomes fragmented. These work-arounds may solve immediate problems, but they create inconsistency, duplicate effort and long-term operational inefficiencies. These challenges create a widening gap between organizational ambition and workforce capability.

Executive Considerations

As learning demands continue to expand, executive teams should evaluate whether their current approach enables or constrains organizational performance.

1. How quickly can new employees reach full productivity?
2. Can learning content be updated as rapidly as business priorities change?
3. Do managers have meaningful insight into employee development?
4. Are learning teams spending more time administering training than building capability?
5. Can workforce readiness keep pace with AI adoption and digital transformation?

The operational challenges described in this section are symptoms of a broader issue: many learning ecosystems were designed to manage training rather than develop workforce capability. Addressing these challenges requires more than improving existing processes; it requires a different architectural approach to enterprise learning.

The Strategic Learning Platform Framework

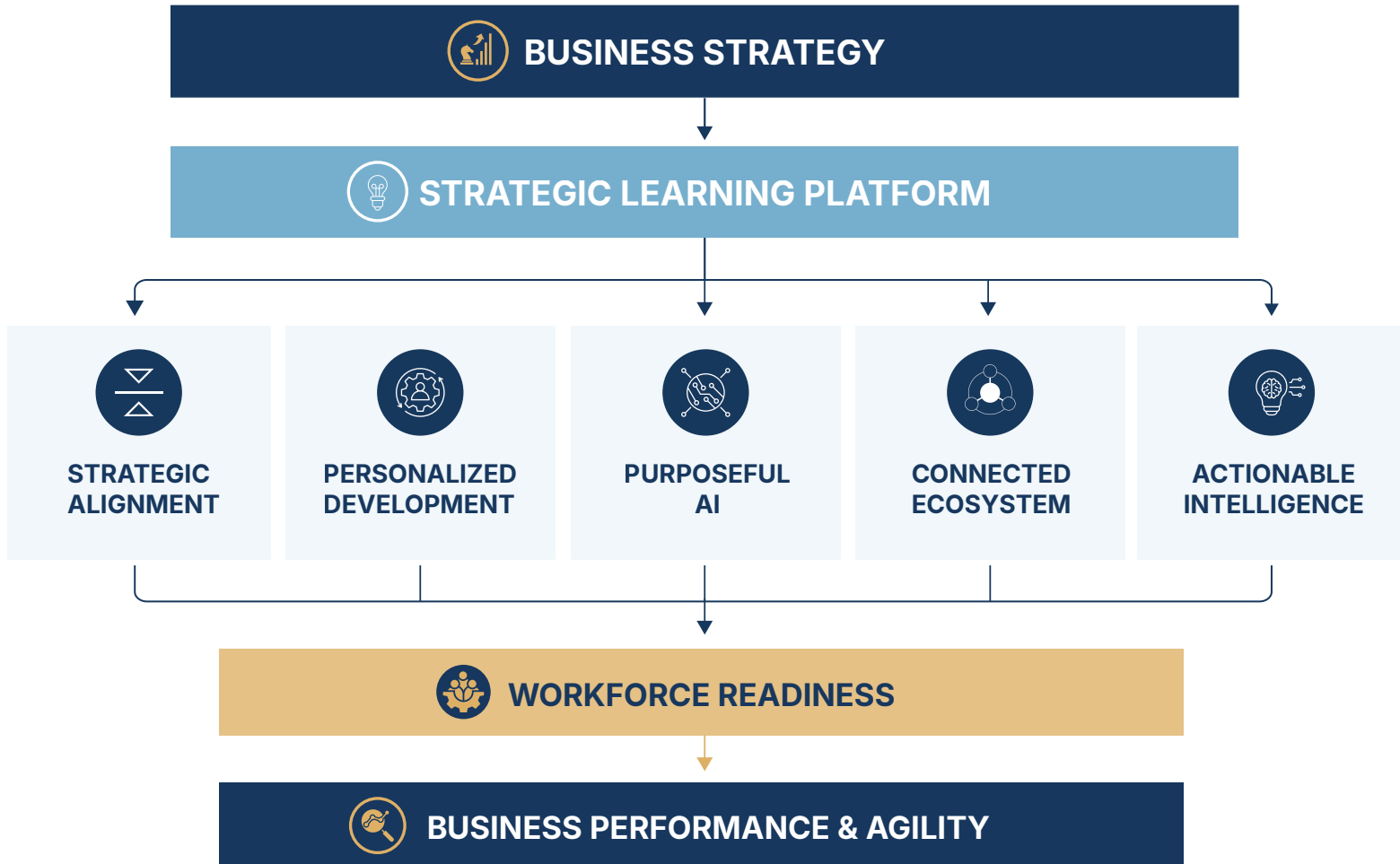
Building the Foundation for Continuous Workforce Development

Organizations have reached a point where incremental improvements to traditional learning technology are no longer sufficient. The accelerating pace of business change, widespread adoption of artificial intelligence and growing importance of workforce capability require a fundamentally different approach to enterprise learning. Executive teams must determine what capabilities a modern learning ecosystem needs to support continuous workforce development while enabling the business to adapt and compete.

Brandon Hall Group believes great organizations are moving beyond the current Learning Management System (LMS) toward what can best be described as a **Strategic Learning Platform**. Unlike earlier generations of learning technology that focused primarily on course administration or content delivery, Strategic Learning Platforms align workforce development directly with business strategy. They enable organizations to build new capabilities quickly, personalize learning experiences, generate meaningful workforce intelligence and continuously adapt as organizational priorities evolve.

This evolution reflects a broader change in how organizations think about learning itself. Learning cannot be viewed as a collection of individual training events. It needs to be an integrated business process that supports workforce planning, leadership development, digital transformation, organizational change and long-term business performance.

The Strategic Learning Platform Framework



Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The purpose of a Strategic Learning Platform is not to deliver more learning. Its purpose is to develop organizational capability faster than business requirements change.

Strategic Alignment Must Come Before Learning Design

One of the defining characteristics of high-performing learning organizations is that they begin with business priorities rather than training requests. Instead of asking, *“What courses should we develop?”* they ask, *“What capabilities does the organization need to achieve its strategic objectives?”* This fundamentally changes how learning investments are prioritized, designed and measured.

When learning initiatives are directly connected to business goals, they become easier to justify, easier to measure and more likely to receive executive sponsorship. Leadership development aligns with succession planning. Product training supports revenue growth. Customer service education improves the customer experience. AI literacy enables responsible technology adoption. Every learning investment contributes to a measurable organizational objective rather than existing as a standalone program.

Organizations that consistently achieve this level of alignment view learning as an integral component of strategic planning and not an activity that follows implementation.

Characteristics of Best-in-Class Organizations

Organizations with mature learning strategies consistently demonstrate several common characteristics:

BEST PRACTICE		BUSINESS IMPACT	
	Learning priorities are established alongside business priorities.		Development investments directly support strategic objectives.
	Executive leaders actively participate in workforce planning.		Stronger organizational alignment and sponsorship.
	Managers are accountable for employee development.		More effective coaching and faster capability growth.
	Learning success is measured by business outcomes.		Greater visibility into organizational performance.
	Workforce development is continuous rather than event-based.		Improved agility and long-term workforce readiness.

Personalization Is Becoming the Standard

Today's workforce expects learning experiences that reflect the way people actually work. Employees perform different roles, possess different levels of expertise and pursue different career goals. Organizations cannot rely exclusively on standardized learning catalogs that deliver the same experience to every employee.

A Strategic Learning Platform enables organizations to personalize development based on role requirements, existing skills, career aspirations and organizational priorities. Instead of asking employees to search through extensive content libraries, these platforms deliver relevant learning at the moment it is needed, helping employees build capabilities more efficiently while reducing the administrative burden placed on learning teams.

This level of personalization also transforms the manager's role. Managers no longer need to manually identify development opportunities, they gain visibility into employee progress, recommended learning and emerging skills gaps, allowing coaching conversations to become more proactive, targeted and meaningful.

From Standardized Training to Personalized Development

TRADITIONAL LEARNING	STRATEGIC LEARNING
 One curriculum for all employees	 Learning aligned to role, skills and business priorities
 Employees search course catalogs	 Relevant learning is recommended automatically
 Learning occurs periodically	 Development is continuous
 Reporting focuses on completions	 Insights focus on workforce readiness
 Learning managed centrally	 Managers actively support development

Purposeful AI Should Amplify Human Capability

Artificial intelligence represents one of the greatest opportunities to improve enterprise learning, but only when implemented with a clear understanding of its purpose. The objective should not be to replace instructional designers, managers, or subject matter experts. AI should amplify their effectiveness by reducing administrative effort, accelerating content development, improving learner engagement and providing actionable insights that support better decision-making.

Organizations increasingly expect AI to streamline content creation, personalize learning experiences, recommend development opportunities and surface meaningful workforce analytics. They recognize that trust must remain central to AI adoption. Privacy, transparency, governance, security and human oversight are essential components of responsible

AI implementation. As AI becomes more deeply integrated into workforce development, organizations will evaluate platforms not only on functionality, but also on how effectively they balance innovation with responsible governance.

Research Insight

Purposeful AI does not replace human expertise. It enables learning professionals, managers and employees to spend less time administering learning and more time developing organizational capability.

Integration Creates Organizational Intelligence

Learning cannot exist independently from the broader technology ecosystem. Workforce capability is influenced by information originating across HR systems, talent management platforms, performance management applications, collaboration tools, productivity software and business intelligence environments. When these systems operate independently, organizations struggle to develop a complete understanding of workforce readiness.

A Strategic Learning Platform creates greater organizational intelligence by connecting learning with the broader flow of work. Integrating learning data with HR, talent and business systems enables leaders to understand not only who completed training, but also how workforce development contributes to performance, leadership readiness, internal mobility and organizational capability. Learning data becomes a strategic asset that informs business decisions rather than simply documenting learning activity.

Executive Considerations

As organizations evaluate a Strategic Learning Platform, executive teams should consider the following questions:

1. Does the platform support business strategy or simply administer learning?
2. Can workforce development be personalized without increasing administrative complexity?
3. Does AI improve learning while maintaining transparency, governance and trust?
4. Can managers actively participate in employee development through the platform?
5. Does learning data contribute to workforce planning and business decision-making?
6. Can the platform evolve as business priorities continue to change?

Understanding the characteristics of a Strategic Learning Platform provides organizations with a framework for evaluating modern learning technology. The next challenge is translating these capabilities into an investment strategy that delivers measurable business value.

The following section presents a practical approach for building the business case, quantifying expected benefits, evaluating financial return and demonstrating how strategic learning investments contribute directly to organizational performance.

Building the Business Case

Demonstrating the Strategic Value of Workforce Development

For organizations, the decision to modernize learning technology is driven by this question: **How can the organization build workforce capability quickly enough to support its strategic objectives?**

Answering that question requires a different approach to building the business case. Traditional technology evaluations often compare features, licensing costs and implementation timelines. While these considerations remain important, they represent only a portion of the overall investment decision. Executive leaders increasingly expect workforce development initiatives to demonstrate measurable contributions to productivity, organizational agility, employee retention and business performance.

Organizations should evaluate learning investments through the same lens applied to other strategic initiatives. Rather than asking whether a platform delivers additional functionality, leadership teams should ask whether it enables the workforce to execute business strategy more effectively. The conversation moves from technology acquisition to organizational capability.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The strongest business cases begin with measurable business outcomes that cannot be achieved efficiently using existing technology approaches.

Start with the Business Problem, Not the Technology

Organizations frequently make the mistake of building technology business cases around product capabilities rather than organizational challenges. Executive stakeholders are rarely persuaded by longer feature lists or additional functionality. They are persuaded when technology investments are clearly connected to solving business problems that already exist.

For example, if new employees require six months to become fully productive, the issue is not simply onboarding efficiency. It is lost productivity, delayed customer value and increased pressure on managers. If product knowledge cannot be updated quickly enough to support new offerings, the issue extends beyond course development to revenue enablement and market responsiveness. Likewise, when learning teams spend the majority of their time maintaining existing content rather than developing new capabilities, the organization incurs an opportunity cost that often remains hidden.

Framing these operational challenges in business terms enables executive leaders to understand the broader organizational impact of workforce development investments.

Building the Business Case



Effective business cases connect workforce development investments directly to measurable business outcomes rather than focusing exclusively on technology capabilities.

Quantifying the Cost of the Current State

Every organization incurs costs associated with inefficient workforce development, although many of those costs remain difficult to identify because they are distributed across multiple business functions. Lost productivity during onboarding, duplicated content development, inconsistent manager coaching, delayed product enablement, fragmented learning technologies and manual administrative processes collectively represent significant operational expense.

Organizations should begin by documenting the current state of their learning ecosystem. Key questions include:

- 1.** How long does it take new employees to become fully productive?
- 2.** How much time do learning teams spend updating or recreating existing content?
- 3.** How many disconnected systems support workforce development?
- 4.** How often do managers lack visibility into employee progress or skill development?
- 5.** How quickly can learning respond to changing business priorities?

Answering these questions establishes the baseline against which future improvements can be measured. More importantly, it shifts the discussion from technology replacement to operational performance.

Executive Worksheet

Current-State Assessment

 QUESTION	 CURRENT STATE	 TARGET STATE
 Average onboarding time		
 Time to update learning content		
 Number of learning systems		
 Manager visibility into employee development		
 Time required to launch new learning initiatives		
 Ability to measure business impact		

Measuring Value Beyond Cost Reduction

While operational efficiencies often justify a significant portion of the investment, the greatest value of a Strategic Learning Platform typically comes from its ability to improve organizational performance. Faster onboarding enables employees to contribute sooner. Better manager visibility strengthens coaching and employee engagement. Personalized development improves workforce readiness while helping organizations address emerging skills gaps before they affect performance.

These benefits may not always appear directly within the learning budget, yet they create measurable value across HR, operations, sales, customer service and the broader business. Consequently, organizations should evaluate learning investments across multiple dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on administrative savings.

Sources of Business Value

 Operational Benefits	 Strategic Benefits
Reduced administrative effort	Faster workforce readiness
Faster content development	Improved organizational agility
More efficient onboarding	Stronger employee retention
Streamlined compliance	Better leadership development
Reduced technology complexity	Increased business resilience
Improved reporting	Better workforce planning

Research Insight

The most valuable learning investments are those that improve organizational performance and not simply learning efficiency.

Building an Executive Scorecard

To sustain executive support, organizations must measure outcomes that resonate with senior leadership. While learning metrics such as course completions and participation rates remain useful operational indicators, executive scorecards should focus on workforce capability and business performance.

Recommended executive measures include:

 Operational Metrics	 Strategic Metrics
Time-to-productivity	Workforce readiness
Content development cycle time	Skills growth
Learning adoption	Employee retention
Manager engagement	Internal mobility
Compliance completion	Organizational agility
AI adoption within learning	Business performance

These measures create a more balanced view of success by combining operational efficiency with broader organizational outcomes.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

Executive leaders rarely ask how many courses employees completed. They ask whether the workforce is prepared to execute the organization's strategy. The business case for strategic learning should answer that question directly.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	IMPORTANCE	QUESTIONS TO ASK
 Strategic Alignment	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Does the platform support business strategy?
 AI Capabilities	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Is AI purposeful, governed, and practical?
 Content Creation	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Can business-specific learning be developed rapidly?
 Personalization	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Does learning adapt to roles and career paths?
 Analytics	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Can workforce readiness be measured?
 Integration	● ● ● ● ● HIGH	Does the platform connect with enterprise systems?
 Services & Support	● ● ● ● ● MEDIUM	Can the provider accelerate adoption and value realization?

Once organizations establish the strategic and financial rationale for investment, the next step is evaluating providers capable of delivering those outcomes. While many learning platforms offer similar functional capabilities, fewer are designed around the principles of strategic workforce development, purposeful AI, integrated ecosystems and continuous capability building.

The next section examines D2L and explores how its Strategic Learning Platform aligns with the framework presented throughout this report, helping organizations transform learning from an administrative function into a strategic driver of business performance.

Evaluating a Strategic Learning Platform

A Framework for Executive Decision-Making

Selecting a learning platform is a strategic investment that influences workforce capability, organizational agility, leadership development and business performance. While feature comparisons remain important, they rarely distinguish solutions that can support long-term business transformation from those designed primarily to administer learning.

Brandon Hall Group believes organizations should evaluate learning platforms against a consistent set of strategic capabilities rather than individual product features. The question evolves from **“What can the platform do?”** into **“What business outcomes can the platform enable?”**

The evaluation criteria presented below represent the capabilities most commonly found in organizations that successfully align workforce development with business strategy.

Strategic Learning Platform Evaluation Framework

EVALUATION AREA	KEY QUESTIONS	BUSINESS IMPACT
 Strategic Alignment	Does learning directly support business objectives and workforce strategy?	Ensures development investments support organizational priorities
 Purposeful AI	Does AI improve learning creation, personalization and insight while maintaining governance and transparency?	Accelerates productivity while reducing administrative effort
 Content Creation	Can learning teams rapidly create and update business-specific learning?	Responds faster to organizational change
 Personalized Development	Does the platform adapt learning to individual roles, skills and career goals?	Improves learner engagement and workforce readiness
 Manager Enablement	Can managers actively coach and develop employees using meaningful workforce insights?	Strengthens employee performance and retention
 Enterprise Integration	Does learning integrate with HR, talent, productivity and business systems?	Creates a connected workforce development ecosystem
 Analytics & Intelligence	Does the platform measure workforce capability rather than simply learning activity?	Enables data-driven workforce planning and executive decision-making
 Scalability & Innovation	Can the platform evolve as organizational priorities and technology continue to change?	Protects long-term technology investments

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The most successful learning platforms are defined by how effectively they enable organizations to develop workforce capability in support of business strategy, rather than by their features and capabilities.

Looking Beyond Functional Requirements

Traditional technology evaluations often begin with feature checklists. Organizations compare reporting capabilities, mobile functionality, content libraries, certification management and administrative tools. While these capabilities remain important, feature parity across enterprise learning platforms has increased significantly over the past several years. As a result, functionality alone has become a poor predictor of long-term business value.

Instead, organizations should focus on how effectively a platform supports continuous workforce development.

1. Can learning be created quickly enough to support changing business priorities?
2. Can managers actively participate in employee development?
3. Does the platform generate meaningful workforce intelligence?
4. Can artificial intelligence be applied responsibly to improve learning operations?

These questions move beyond product functionality and focus on the organization's ability to develop capability at the speed required by the business.

From Features to Business Outcomes

TRADITIONAL EVALUATION	STRATEGIC EVALUATION
 Number of features	Business outcomes enabled 
 Course administration	Workforce capability development 
 Learning activity reports	Organizational readiness insights 
 System usability	Employee adoption and engagement 
 AI functionality	Purposeful AI that improves productivity 
 Content library size	Speed of business-specific content creation 
 Vendor roadmap	Long-term partnership and innovation strategy 

Organizations increasingly differentiate learning platforms by the business outcomes they enable rather than the individual features they provide.

Questions Every Executive Team Should Ask

Before selecting a learning platform, executive stakeholders should challenge prospective providers to demonstrate how their solution contributes to measurable business outcomes.

Strategic Alignment

- How does the platform support organizational transformation initiatives?
 - Can workforce development priorities be aligned with business goals?
-

Workforce Capability

- How does the platform identify and address emerging skills gaps?
 - Can managers actively participate in employee development?
-

Artificial Intelligence

- How does AI improve learning creation and delivery?
 - What governance, privacy and transparency controls are built into the platform?
-

Organizational Agility

- How quickly can new learning programs be developed and deployed?
 - Can learning adapt as business priorities evolve?
-

Business Intelligence

- Can executives measure workforce readiness?
 - Does the platform generate insights that support workforce planning?
-

The Next Phase of Enterprise Learning

Organizations that evaluate learning technology through this broader strategic lens are better positioned to select platforms capable of supporting long-term workforce transformation. They invest in platforms that enable organizational capability, strengthen business performance and adapt alongside changing business priorities.

The following section examines D2L through the lens of this Strategic Learning Platform Framework, illustrating how its approach to purposeful AI, personalized learning, rapid content creation, enterprise integration and workforce intelligence aligns with the characteristics of best-in-class learning organizations.

Introducing **D2L**

<https://www.d2l.com>



Enabling the Strategic Learning Enterprise

From Framework to Execution

Throughout this report, Brandon Hall Group has argued that organizations are moving beyond traditional learning management systems toward Strategic Learning Platforms that align workforce development with business strategy. The market is shifting away from technologies designed primarily to administer training and toward platforms that enable organizations to continuously develop workforce capability, accelerate organizational readiness and measure business impact.

D2L's strategy reflects this broader evolution. D2L has built its platform around the concept of strategic learning, a model that connects employee development directly with organizational priorities. This approach recognizes that learning is no longer an isolated HR function. It has become an enterprise capability that supports onboarding, leadership development, product enablement, compliance, AI adoption, upskilling and continuous workforce development throughout the employee lifecycle.

Central to D2L's philosophy are three guiding principles that define how organizations can transform learning into a strategic business capability: **Align, Personalize and Optimize**. Together, these principles provide a practical framework for connecting workforce development with measurable business outcomes.

Three Principles of Strategic Learning



*Adapted from D2L's strategic learning philosophy, this model illustrates how organizations can align workforce development with business priorities through three interconnected principles: **Align, Personalize and Optimize**.*

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

Technology alone does not create workforce capability. Organizations achieve sustainable results when learning is intentionally aligned with business priorities, personalized for employees and continuously optimized through data and intelligent automation.

Align Learning with Business Strategy

The first principle recognizes that learning should begin with the business and not with the course catalog. High-performing organizations define the capabilities required to achieve strategic objectives and then design learning experiences that help employees develop those capabilities. This represents a significant shift from traditional approaches, where learning initiatives were often created in response to isolated requests or compliance requirements.

D2L's strategy reflects this business-first philosophy by positioning learning as an enabler of organizational performance rather than simply a mechanism for delivering training. Whether supporting onboarding, leadership development, product enablement, or reskilling initiatives, the objective is to ensure workforce development contributes directly to measurable business outcomes.

Personalize Workforce Development

Organizations recognize that workforce capability cannot be developed through standardized learning experiences alone. Employees enter organizations with different backgrounds, perform different roles and follow different career paths. Delivering the same content to every learner often creates unnecessary friction while limiting engagement and knowledge retention.

D2L addresses this challenge by emphasizing personalized learning experiences that adapt to individual needs while remaining aligned with organizational priorities. Personalized learning pathways, role-based development and AI-assisted recommendations help employees access relevant learning more efficiently while giving managers greater visibility into employee progress and development opportunities. This individualized approach

supports stronger learner engagement while helping organizations develop critical capabilities more effectively.

Optimize Learning Through AI and Insight

The third principle focuses on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of learning operations. As workforce development becomes increasingly complex, organizations require tools that enable learning teams to create content more rapidly, automate repetitive tasks, generate meaningful analytics and continuously improve learning experiences.

Positioning artificial intelligence not as a replacement for instructional designers or learning professionals, D2L emphasizes purposeful AI technology designed to accelerate content creation, personalize learning, provide actionable insights and reduce administrative effort while maintaining transparency, governance and human oversight. This philosophy aligns closely with Brandon Hall Group's view that AI should enhance human capability rather than replace it.

Mapping D2L to the Strategic Learning Platform Framework

Strategic Learning Principle		Representative D2L Capabilities	Business Outcomes
	Align	Role-based learning, onboarding, leadership development, product enablement	Workforce readiness aligned with strategic priorities
	Personalize	Personalized learning paths, learner experiences, adaptive development	Higher engagement, faster capability development
	Optimize	Lumi AI, Creator+, analytics, dashboards, integrations, learning services	Greater efficiency, stronger insights, improved business performance

D2L's platform strategy aligns with the Strategic Learning Platform Framework introduced earlier in this report by combining business alignment, personalized development and purposeful AI into an integrated workforce development ecosystem.

Beyond Learning Management

Perhaps the most significant aspect of D2L's strategy is its emphasis on learning as an enterprise capability rather than a standalone technology function. The platform is designed to support multiple stakeholders including learning leaders, managers, content authors, IT teams and executive leadership recognizing that workforce development is now a shared organizational responsibility. By integrating learning experiences, content creation, AI, analytics and enterprise connectivity, D2L extends the role of the traditional LMS into a broader platform for workforce capability development.

This approach closely reflects the Strategic Learning Platform Framework presented earlier in this report. D2L seeks to help organizations develop the capabilities required to execute business strategy, respond to change more effectively and build a workforce prepared for continuous transformation.

Understanding D2L's strategic philosophy provides important context, but platform strategy alone is not enough. Organizations also need technology that can operationalize these principles through practical capabilities that improve learning experiences, simplify administration and generate measurable business value.

The next section examines the core capabilities of the D2L platform including learning experiences, content creation, purposeful AI, analytics and enterprise integration. The section explores how these capabilities enable organizations to translate strategic learning into measurable business outcomes.

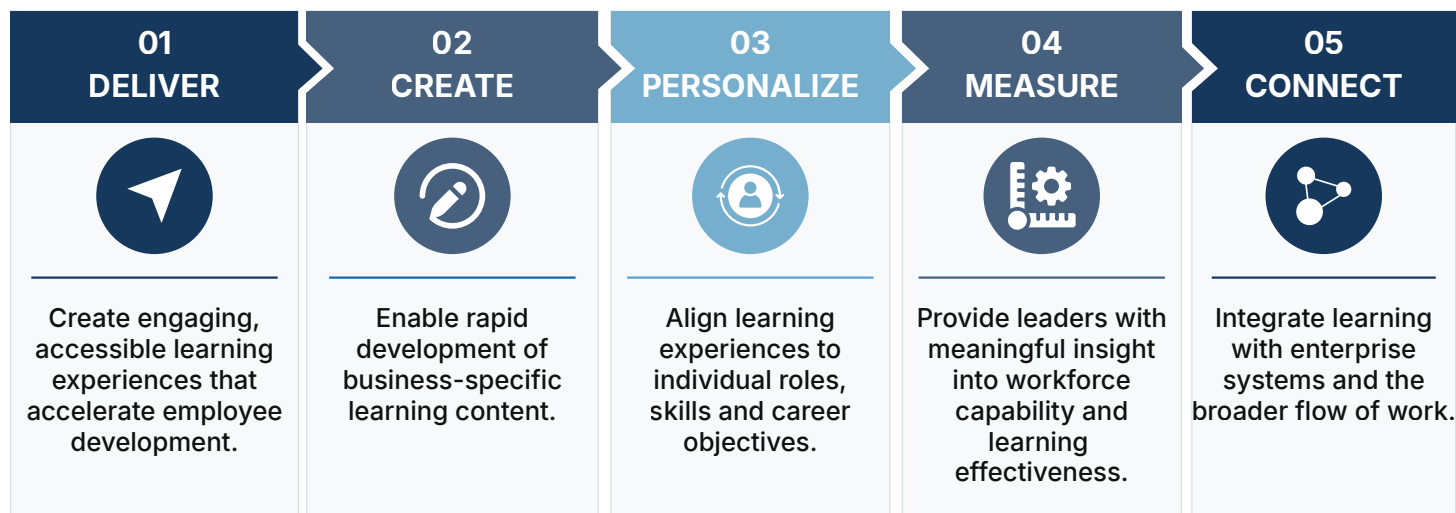
Operationalizing Strategic Learning

How D2L Translates Strategy Into Business Outcomes

The value of a Strategic Learning Platform is ultimately determined by its ability to translate strategy into execution. While vision establishes direction, organizations realize business value only when learning technology enables employees, managers and business leaders to develop capabilities more efficiently, respond more quickly to change and make better workforce decisions.

Brandon Hall Group's evaluation of D2L indicates that the platform has been designed around five operational capabilities that together enable organizations to build workforce readiness. D2L's platform combines mutually reinforcing product features to create an integrated learning ecosystem that supports continuous employee development and measurable business outcomes.

The Five Capabilities of a Strategic Learning Platform



Together these five capabilities create the operational foundation for a Strategic Learning Platform.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

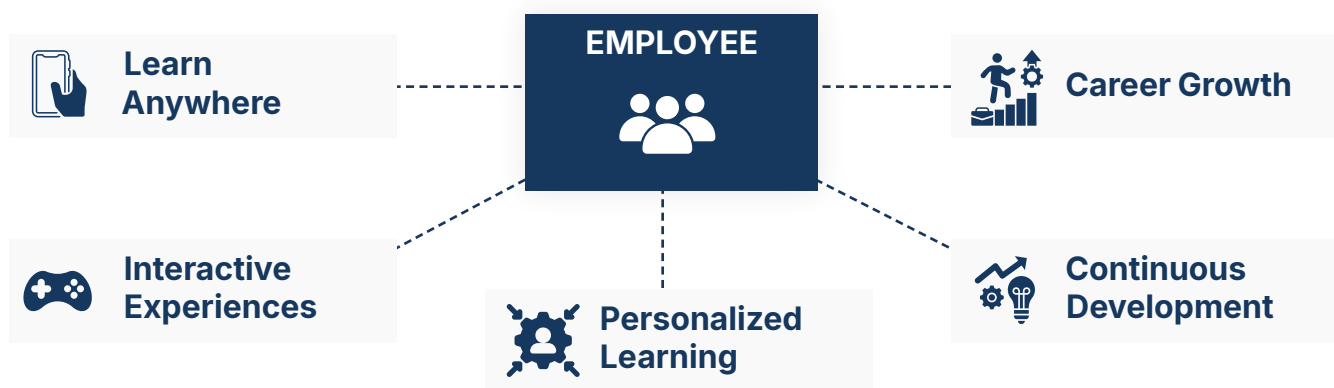
Organizations do not create workforce capability through technology alone. Capability develops when learning experiences, content, analytics, AI and enterprise systems operate as a connected ecosystem.

Deliver Learning That Employees Want to Use

One of the most consistent challenges organizations face is sustaining learner engagement. Employees increasingly expect learning experiences that are intuitive, relevant and accessible regardless of where work occurs. As hybrid work models become more common and workforce demographics continue to evolve, organizations require learning environments that accommodate different learning styles while supporting both structured and self-directed development.

D2L's Brightspace is designed around this learner-centric philosophy. The platform emphasizes engaging learning experiences that encourage continuous development across onboarding, compliance, leadership, technical enablement and professional growth. Mobile accessibility, interactive learning and personalized learning pathways help organizations create experiences that employees are more likely to complete and apply in their daily work.

Learning Designed Around the Employee



Create Business-Specific Knowledge Faster

Perhaps one of the most significant needs within enterprise learning is the growing importance of proprietary organizational knowledge. While third-party content libraries remain valuable for foundational topics, competitive advantage increasingly depends on an organization's ability to develop learning experiences that reflect its products, customers, operating procedures and culture.

D2L addresses this need through a combination of Creator+, H5P and Lumi AI, enabling learning teams and subject matter experts to develop interactive, business-specific content more efficiently. Along with instructional design expertise, these tools are intended to accelerate content development, improve consistency and reduce the time required to respond to changing business priorities.

Research Insight

Organizations increasingly differentiate themselves by the quality of the knowledge they create, not simply the content they develop.

Personalize Development at Scale

As discussed earlier in this report, standardized learning experiences rarely meet the needs of today's workforce. Employees require development opportunities aligned with their responsibilities, existing capabilities and future career aspirations. Managers need greater visibility into employee progress, while organizations require confidence that workforce development investments are producing meaningful capability growth.

D2L supports this objective through personalized learning experiences that adapt to learner needs while remaining aligned with organizational priorities. Employees don't need to navigate extensive course catalogs independently; the platform enables more targeted learning pathways that connect development opportunities with business objectives and workforce planning initiatives.

From One Learning Path to Many

TRADITIONAL LEARNING		STRATEGIC LEARNING	
	One curriculum		Personalized pathways
	Standard assignments		Role-based recommendations
	Periodic development		Continuous learning
	Course completion		Workforce capability

Measure Workforce Readiness

Learning data has traditionally focused on participation metrics such as enrollments, completions and certifications. While these measures remain operationally important, executive leaders increasingly require broader insight into workforce capability and organizational readiness.

D2L's analytics strategy reflects this evolution by emphasizing dashboards and reporting that help organizations understand learner progress, identify trends and support data-informed decision-making. The objective is to provide leaders with actionable intelligence that connects workforce development with broader organizational goals rather than simply documenting learning activity.

Connect Learning Across the Enterprise

Learning creates greater value when it is integrated with the broader technology ecosystem. Workforce development is influenced by information originating across HR systems, performance management platforms, collaboration tools and business applications. Organizations that connect these environments are better positioned to understand workforce capability and respond more quickly to changing business needs.

D2L emphasizes interoperability through integrations, APIs and enterprise connectivity that enable learning to become part of the broader employee experience rather than an isolated technology environment. This integrated approach supports greater organizational visibility while simplifying administration and improving the overall learner experience.

A Connected Learning Ecosystem



Key Takeaways

D2L's platform capabilities reinforce the central argument presented throughout this report: organizations require more than a system for delivering courses. They require an integrated platform capable of supporting continuous workforce development, accelerating content creation, personalizing learning, generating actionable workforce intelligence and connecting learning with the broader business ecosystem.

These capabilities illustrate how D2L operationalizes the Strategic Learning Platform Framework introduced earlier in this report. The platform is designed to help organizations build workforce capability as an ongoing business process.

Purposeful AI: Transforming Learning Without Replacing People

Moving Beyond AI Features to AI Strategy

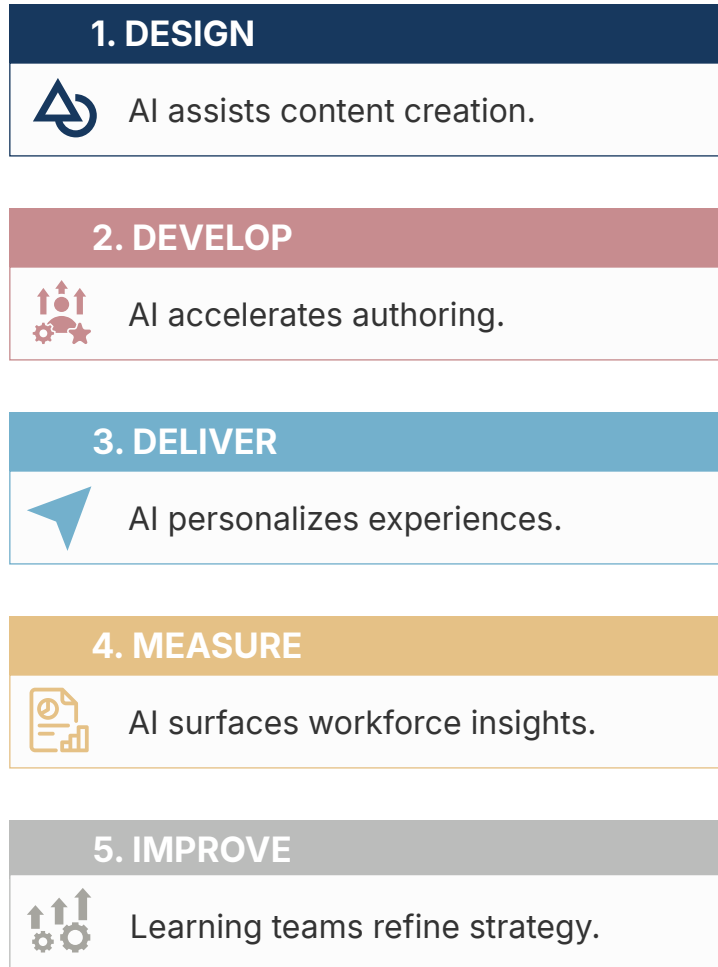
Artificial intelligence has rapidly become one of the defining forces shaping the future of work. Organizations across every industry are exploring how AI can improve productivity, accelerate innovation and enhance decision-making. AI is reshaping the expectations placed on learning organizations. Employees must develop new technical competencies, managers must learn to lead AI-enabled teams and organizations must establish governance models that encourage innovation while maintaining trust.

For learning leaders, AI presents a dual challenge. They are responsible for preparing the workforce to use AI effectively while also determining how AI can improve learning itself. This distinction is important. Implementing AI within learning is not simply a matter of adding new functionality to an existing platform. Organizations must determine where AI creates genuine value, where human expertise remains essential and how both can work together to improve workforce capability.

Brandon Hall Group believes the most successful organizations will approach AI as an enabler of human performance rather than a replacement for human expertise. AI should reduce administrative effort, accelerate content development, improve learner engagement and generate meaningful insights that allow learning professionals to focus on higher-value work. It should enhance instructional design, support managers and empower learners without removing human guidance.

This philosophy aligns closely with D2L's approach to what it describes as purposeful AI. D2L does not emphasize automation for its own sake; it positions AI as a practical capability that helps learning teams create better content, personalize learning experiences, streamline administrative tasks and provide more meaningful insights while maintaining transparency, governance, privacy and human oversight.

Purposeful AI Enhances Every Stage of the Learning Lifecycle



Purposeful AI supports every stage of the learning lifecycle by reducing manual effort and enabling learning professionals to focus on strategic workforce development.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The question organizations should ask is whether AI enables people to perform more meaningful work while maintaining transparency, trust and accountability.

AI Should Improve the Work of Every Stakeholder

One of the more compelling aspects of D2L's AI strategy is that it considers the needs of multiple stakeholders rather than focusing exclusively on learners. Learning professionals require tools that accelerate content creation and simplify administration. Subject matter experts need easier ways to contribute organizational knowledge. Managers benefit from better visibility into employee progress and development needs, while executives require meaningful insights into workforce readiness. Learners, in turn, expect personalized experiences that help them acquire relevant skills more efficiently.

D2L's AI capabilities are designed to support each of these audiences in different ways. Creator+ and Lumi AI assist authors by reducing the time required to develop engaging learning experiences. AI-powered recommendations help personalize learning, while analytics enable leaders to identify trends and make more informed workforce decisions. This enterprise-wide perspective reflects the growing recognition that learning is a shared organizational responsibility rather than the exclusive domain of Learning and Development.

AI Creates Value Across the Enterprise

Stakeholder		AI Contribution	Business Value
	Learning Leaders	Automates administrative tasks and accelerates content creation	Greater efficiency and scalability
	Content Authors	Assists with course development and interactive learning	Faster content production
	Managers	Provides insight into learner progress and development	Better coaching and performance support
	Executives	Delivers workforce intelligence and learning analytics	Improved strategic decision-making
	Learners	Personalizes recommendations and learning experiences	Higher engagement and faster skill development

Purposeful AI creates value across the learning ecosystem by supporting the unique needs of every stakeholder involved in workforce development.

Responsible AI Requires Governance, Not Just Innovation

As organizations expand their use of AI, responsible governance has become just as important as technological capability. Learning leaders must ensure that AI-generated content is accurate, organizational knowledge is protected, employee privacy is maintained and human oversight remains an integral part of decision-making.

D2L explicitly incorporates these considerations into its AI philosophy. The company's approach emphasizes privacy, transparency, accountability, security and human intervention as foundational principles rather than optional capabilities. This focus recognizes that trust is essential to enterprise AI adoption. Organizations are more likely to realize long-term value when AI operates within clearly defined governance frameworks that align with organizational policies and ethical standards.

Research Insight

Responsible AI is not defined by the number of AI features a platform provides. It is defined by the organization's confidence that those capabilities are transparent, secure, governed and aligned with human decision-making.

AI Enables Learning Teams To Focus on Higher-Value Work

Perhaps the greatest opportunity presented by AI is not automation but the ability to shift the focus of learning organizations. For years, learning teams have devoted significant time to administrative activities such as formatting content, updating courses, assigning learning and generating reports. While necessary, these tasks leave less time for strategic initiatives such as workforce planning, leadership development, skills strategy and organizational transformation.

Purposeful AI enables learning professionals to spend less time managing processes and more time partnering with the business. By accelerating content creation, simplifying administrative workflows and surfacing actionable insights, AI allows learning teams to concentrate on the work that creates the greatest organizational value: developing workforce capability.

From Administration to Strategy

Without Purposeful AI		With Purposeful AI	
	Manual content creation		AI-assisted authoring
	Administrative reporting		Workforce intelligence
	Repetitive operational tasks		Strategic workforce planning
	Static learning experiences		Personalized development
	Limited organizational insight		Continuous capability optimization

Artificial intelligence represents only one component of a modern Strategic Learning Platform. Equally important is an organization's ability to demonstrate that learning investments produce measurable business results.

The next section examines how organizations are using D2L to improve onboarding, accelerate workforce readiness, strengthen leadership development and support business transformation through measurable customer outcomes.

Evidence in Practice

How Organizations Are Turning Strategic Learning Into Business Results

One of the defining characteristics of high-performing learning organizations is their ability to translate learning investments into measurable business outcomes. While every organization faces unique workforce challenges, Brandon Hall Group consistently observes a common pattern among organizations that achieve lasting success with strategic learning. Rather than implementing technology for its own sake, they align learning initiatives with specific business priorities, establish clear measures of success and continuously refine their approach based on data and workforce insights.

The organizations using D2L span industries, geographies and workforce models, yet many of their objectives are remarkably similar. They seek to accelerate employee readiness, improve learning engagement, scale workforce development without proportional increases in resources and create learning experiences that support long-term organizational performance. These outcomes reinforce an important point made throughout this report: the value of a Strategic Learning Platform is measured not by the number of courses delivered, but by its contribution to workforce capability and business execution.

Common Business Outcomes Achieved Through Strategic Learning

Business Objective		Representative Outcome	
	Accelerate onboarding	Reduced time-to-productivity and faster role readiness	
	Improve learner engagement	Higher participation and stronger completion rates	
	Scale workforce development	Support larger learner populations without proportional resource growth	
	Increase operational efficiency	Faster content development and streamlined administration	
	Improve workforce capability	Better visibility into learning progress and skills development	
	Support organizational growth	Consistent learning experiences across locations and business units	

Organizations adopting Strategic Learning Platforms consistently focus on outcomes that improve workforce capability and business performance rather than learning activity alone.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

The strongest customer success stories are not about software implementation. They are about solving business problems through better workforce development.

Scaling Learning Without Sacrificing Quality

As organizations grow, learning often becomes more difficult to manage. New employees require onboarding, experienced employees need continuous development and managers expect learning to support evolving business priorities. Current learning models frequently respond by adding more courses, administrators and manual processes. While these approaches may address immediate needs, they rarely scale efficiently over time.

Organizations using D2L demonstrate a different approach. By centralizing learning, streamlining content development and providing consistent experiences across diverse learner populations, they are able to expand workforce development without proportionally increasing administrative complexity. This enables learning teams to focus more of their effort on strategic initiatives rather than operational maintenance.

A compelling example is **Colliers Project Leaders**, which faced the challenge of onboarding large numbers of employees while maintaining consistent learning quality across multiple international offices. Using D2L, the organization created a blended learning model that supported more than 100 hours of first-year training, expanded learning opportunities across its workforce and achieved high learner satisfaction while continuing to scale its business. The organization also reported significant growth in course enrollments and completions, demonstrating that an effective learning ecosystem can grow alongside the organization it supports.

Customer Spotlight: Scaling Workforce Development

Challenge	D2L Enabled	Business Impact
Rapid organizational growth	Blended, scalable learning delivery	Consistent employee development across locations
Extensive onboarding requirements	Structured learning pathways	Faster workforce readiness
Growing learner population	Centralized learning management	Increased enrollments and completions
Limited training resources	Efficient program management	Greater operational scalability

Learning as a Driver of Organizational Agility

Another consistent theme emerging from customer experiences is the role learning plays in organizational agility. Business priorities rarely remain static. Product portfolios evolve, regulations change, technology advances and workforce expectations continue to shift. Organizations that can update learning quickly are better positioned to respond to these changes without disrupting operations.

Strategic Learning Platforms enable this agility by simplifying content updates, supporting rapid deployment of new learning initiatives and providing managers with better visibility into workforce progress. Rather than treating learning as a separate process that follows

organizational change, leading organizations integrate learning directly into transformation initiatives, allowing workforce capability to evolve alongside the business.

This reinforces an important observation from Brandon Hall Group's research. Learning organizations create the greatest value when they are viewed as strategic partners in business transformation rather than providers of training services.

Research Insight

Organizations that can rapidly develop new workforce capabilities respond more effectively to market disruption, technology adoption and organizational change. Learning agility has become business agility.

Beyond Metrics: Measuring Business Impact

Traditional measures of learning success such as course completions, attendance and certifications remain useful operational indicators, but they tell only part of the story. Organizations increasingly evaluate learning investments through broader measures such as employee readiness, operational efficiency, leadership capability and the speed at which strategic initiatives can be executed.

The customer examples presented throughout D2L's briefings illustrate this broader perspective. While engagement metrics and learning participation remain important, the more meaningful outcomes are those that demonstrate improved organizational capability, increased efficiency and stronger alignment between learning and business priorities.

Measuring What Matters

Traditional Metrics		Strategic Metrics	
	Course completions	Time-to-productivity	
	Training hours	Workforce readiness	
	Attendance	Employee capability	
	Certification status	Organizational agility	
	Learning activity	Business performance	
	Compliance rates	Strategic execution	

Key Lessons from High-Performing Organizations

While every organization's learning strategy is unique, Brandon Hall Group's research suggests that successful organizations consistently share several characteristics:

1. Align learning initiatives with measurable business priorities.
2. Invest in technologies that scale with organizational growth.
3. Empower managers to become active participants in employee development.
4. Use AI to enhance learning operations rather than replace human expertise.
5. Measure workforce capability alongside traditional learning metrics.
6. Treat learning as an ongoing business process rather than a collection of isolated training events.

These characteristics closely mirror the Strategic Learning Platform Framework introduced earlier in this report, reinforcing the conclusion that workforce capability has become an essential driver of organizational performance.

The experiences of organizations using D2L demonstrate that strategic learning can produce measurable business value when aligned with broader organizational objectives. The final section of this report examines what these findings mean for executive leaders and outlines the characteristics organizations should prioritize as they modernize their learning ecosystems.

The Future of Strategic Learning

Preparing the Workforce for Continuous Change

The organizations that will be most successful over the next decade are unlikely to be those with the largest workforces or the most sophisticated technology. They will be the organizations that can adapt more quickly than their competitors. As artificial intelligence reshapes work, business models continue to evolve and employee expectations shift, competitive advantage will increasingly depend on an organization's ability to continuously develop new capabilities across its workforce.

This represents a fundamental change in the purpose of enterprise learning. Historically, learning organizations were expected to support the business by delivering training efficiently and maintaining compliance. Today, they are expected to help organizations anticipate change, prepare employees for new ways of working and ensure workforce capability evolves alongside business strategy. Learning has become a strategic operating capability that directly influences organizational resilience, innovation and long-term performance.

Throughout this report, Brandon Hall Group has pointed out that this transformation requires more than replacing an existing Learning Management System. Organizations must rethink the role learning plays within the enterprise and invest in platforms that connect workforce development with measurable business outcomes. Strategic Learning Platforms represent this next stage of enterprise learning by bringing together personalized development, purposeful AI, enterprise integration and actionable intelligence into a single ecosystem designed to improve workforce readiness.

The Evolution of Enterprise Learning

01 Yesterday 	02 Today 	03 Tomorrow 
Deliver Training	Develop Workforce Capability	Enable Continuous Organizational Adaptation
Learning Supports HR	Learning Supports the Business	Learning Shapes Business Strategy
Compliance & Administration	Skills & Workforce Readiness	Organizational Agility & Innovation
Annual Training Plans	Continuous Development	Continuous Capability Transformation
Learning Activity Metrics	Business Outcomes	Predictive Workforce Intelligence

Enterprise learning continues to evolve from an administrative function to a strategic capability that enables organizations to anticipate and respond to continuous change.

Brandon Hall Group Perspective

Organizations that treat learning as a strategic capability will adapt more quickly, develop talent more effectively and execute business strategy with greater confidence than those that continue to view learning primarily as an administrative function.

Characteristics of Future-Ready Organizations

Brandon Hall Group's research consistently demonstrates that organizations leading in workforce development share several defining characteristics. They begin by aligning learning investments with strategic priorities rather than isolated training requests. They empower managers to become active participants in employee development and equip learning teams with tools that allow them to focus on capability building instead of administrative work. They measure success through workforce readiness and organizational performance rather than learning activity alone.

Equally important, these organizations recognize that technology is only one component of successful workforce transformation. Leadership commitment, governance, change management and a culture that values continuous learning are essential to realizing the full value of any learning platform. Technology provides the infrastructure, but organizational commitment determines long-term success.

As AI becomes more deeply embedded within enterprise operations, these organizations will also distinguish themselves through responsible adoption. They do not implement AI simply because it is available; they will apply it thoughtfully to accelerate content development, improve learner experiences, support decision-making and reduce operational complexity while maintaining transparency, security and human oversight.

Characteristics of Future-Ready Learning Organizations

Capability		How Leading Organizations Respond
	Business Alignment	Learning priorities are established alongside business strategy.
	Workforce Readiness	Skills are continuously assessed and developed.
	Leadership Engagement	Managers actively coach and develop employees.
	AI Adoption	AI enhances learning while maintaining governance and trust.
	Data & Analytics	Workforce insights inform strategic decisions.
	Enterprise Integration	Learning is embedded within the broader technology ecosystem.
	Continuous Improvement	Learning evolves as business priorities change.

Executive Priorities for the Next Three Years

As executive teams evaluate their workforce development strategies, Brandon Hall Group recommends focusing on a small number of strategic priorities that will have the greatest impact on long-term organizational performance.

1. Shift the conversation from training to capability.

Learning investments should be evaluated based on their ability to develop workforce capability, accelerate organizational readiness and support strategic execution, not simply by the number of courses delivered.

2. Build an integrated learning ecosystem.

Disconnected learning technologies create fragmented employee experiences and limit organizational visibility. Future-ready organizations integrate learning with talent, performance, HR and business systems to create a more complete view of workforce capability.

3. Adopt AI with purpose.

Artificial intelligence should reduce administrative effort, improve learning quality and strengthen decision-making while operating within clearly defined governance frameworks that emphasize transparency, privacy and human oversight.

4. Empower managers.

Managers have become one of the most important drivers of employee development. Organizations should provide them with the tools, insights and learning experiences needed to coach employees effectively and support continuous growth.

5. Measure what matters.

Completion rates and attendance remain useful operational metrics, but executive leadership requires a broader understanding of workforce readiness, organizational agility, leadership capability and business performance.

Executive Checklist

Is Your Learning Strategy Future-Ready?

- ✓ Learning priorities are aligned with business strategy.
- ✓ Managers actively participate in employee development.
- ✓ AI is governed, transparent and designed to enhance human performance.
- ✓ Learning data informs workforce planning and business decisions.
- ✓ Employees receive personalized, continuous development opportunities.
- ✓ Learning technology integrates with enterprise systems.
- ✓ Success is measured by workforce capability and business outcomes.

Final Thoughts

Enterprise learning is entering a period of profound transformation. The convergence of artificial intelligence, rapid technological change and evolving workforce expectations has elevated learning from an operational necessity to a strategic business capability. Organizations that continue to rely on traditional approaches will find it increasingly difficult to develop the workforce capabilities needed to compete in a changing market.

The Strategic Learning Platform Framework presented throughout this report offers a practical model for navigating this transition. By aligning workforce development with business strategy, embracing purposeful AI, personalizing learning experiences, integrating learning with enterprise systems and measuring organizational capability rather than learning activity alone, organizations can position themselves to adapt more quickly and execute more effectively.

D2L's strategy and platform capabilities demonstrate how this model can be operationalized in practice. Its emphasis on strategic alignment, purposeful AI, learner-centered experiences, enterprise integration and measurable outcomes reflects many of the characteristics Brandon Hall Group associates with high-performing learning organizations.

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Shaping Excellence in the Future of Work

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A world where every HR organization drives business transformation through human capital excellence.

Our Mission

To provide CHROs, CLOs, and workforce leaders with the intelligence, tools, and community they need to drive business transformation through human capital excellence.

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- Reduce risk in workforce transformation and strategic investments.
- Accelerate the execution of HR, talent, leadership, and learning initiatives.
- Build organizational capabilities that create lasting business value.
- Learn from proven practices of organizations recognized by the Excellence Awards Program.

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