

Learning Quarterly

Second Quarter 2019

In This Issue

Feature

The Unspoken Self-Connection

Connector Managers Make

Page 3

Enterprise Issue

How the Platform Economy

Could Revolutionize L&D

Page 12

Innovators

Ginny Gray, Intel

Page 18



Gartner®

Learning Quarterly

Second Quarter 2019

Contents

Feature The Unspoken Self-Connection Connector Managers Make	3
Data Snapshot Manager Development	9
Enterprise Issue How the Platform Economy Could Revolutionize L&D	12
Take Action Tool Creating a Skills Exchange	17
Innovators Ginny Gray, Intel	18
Quick Wins Brokering Experiences	23
Suggested Reading In Case You Missed It	24

Legal Caveat

© 2019 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Gartner is a registered trademark of Gartner, Inc. and its affiliates. This publication may not be reproduced or distributed in any form without Gartner's prior written permission. It consists of the opinions of Gartner's research organization, which should not be construed as statements of fact. While the information contained in this publication has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information. Although Gartner research may address legal and financial issues, Gartner does not provide legal or investment advice and its research should not be construed or used as such. Your access and use of this publication are governed by Gartner's Usage Policy. Gartner prides itself on its reputation for independence and objectivity. Its research is produced independently by its research organization without input or influence from any third party. For further information, see "Guiding Principles on Independence and Objectivity."

Any third-party link herein is provided for your convenience and is not an endorsement by Gartner. We have no control over third-party content and are not responsible for these websites, their content or their availability. By clicking on any third-party link herein, you acknowledge that you have read and understand this disclaimer.

The Unspoken Self-Connection Connector Managers Make

In addition to the three connections they make, Connector managers make a fourth connection — with themselves.

L&D leaders should help Connector managers become aware of their own workloads, strengths, weaknesses and behaviors so they can better serve their employees' development needs.

Imagine a typical manager at your organization; let's call her Molly. Now, imagine her to-do list: meetings all morning, working through lunch on a presentation and emails streaming in all day. Also, as part of an organizationwide initiative to make coaching and feedback more frequent, Molly has been trying to set up more opportunities to coach her employees.

While the new process has been more demanding on her time, Molly trusts giving more feedback to her employees will be helpful for their success. By receiving more frequent performance updates, employees can translate the feedback into higher performance. **What could go wrong?**

Managers Getting Misleading Advice

When the time came for Molly's 360-degree performance review, she was puzzled by what she learned. To her surprise, her employees didn't respond as positively to her new feedback approach as expected. "It sometimes feels like Molly doesn't trust the way I do my work," said one employee. But why didn't Molly's new feedback approach work as well for her team as her organization thought it would?

As organizations face increasing pressure to innovate and grow their capabilities, they are calling on managers to play an expanding role in developing their direct reports. In addition to keeping on top of emails, measuring employee performance and delegating work

responsibilities, managers are expected to coach employees toward better performance. Learning and development (L&D) relies more on managers to be role models, change agents, learning partners, performance coaches and career guides. Seventy-two percent of heads of L&D we surveyed agree managers are expected to be more involved in employee development than they used to be.¹

As we looked into the manager types L&D was developing, we quantitatively identified four types of managers, each with a distinct approach to coaching direct reports:

 **The Teacher** manager develops employees using their own experience and expertise.

 **The Cheerleader** manager enables employees to take development into their own hands.

 **The Connector** manager refers employees to the right people to meet their development needs.

 **The Always On** manager provides continuous coaching and feedback for a broad range of skills.

With L&D leaders expecting managers to spend 27% more time coaching, the continuous coaching, hands-on style of the Always On manager has become the preferred style for many organizations.¹



Without realizing it, Molly's management approach had come to resemble an Always On manager's. Despite her best intentions to help employees succeed, her organization's mandate for more frequent, continuous feedback led her astray. Instead of boosting her employees' performance, her feedback left them unsure how to proceed and overwhelmed by the sheer volume of input.

Our analysis showed Always On management is the least effective of all styles, actually degrading employee performance by up to 8%. The amount of feedback Always On managers provide can end up overloading employees with too much information. The approach can often be disengaging for employees, irrelevant to their needs and even misleading for employee development. But what about the other manager types?

Teacher and Cheerleader managers can improve performance to some extent (7% and 9%, respectively). Teachers provide strong coaching where they are subject matter experts but default to disengaging behaviors similar to those of the Always On manager when providing feedback in areas outside their expertise. Cheerleaders try to motivate employees through positivity but with their more hands-off approach, often fail to provide proactive help.

Luckily for Molly and her company, the approach Connector managers take can improve their teams' performance by up to 26% — the equivalent of adding a whole extra member to a team of four.²

What Do Connector Managers Do?

Connector managers focus on providing the right coaching and development to employees, not just more of it. In shaping development around their employees' needs, Connector managers take an employee-centric approach to coaching and development. And recognizing they don't always have the skills and expertise needed to coach their direct reports, Connector managers use a broader coaching network.

Connector managers use a broader coaching network.

Connector managers make three key connections that maximize the benefits of their approach (see Figure 1):

1. They personalize development moments with direct reports to ensure individual coaching and development are relevant.
2. They create a team environment that unlocks the power of peer-to-peer learning.
3. They support employees in extracting maximum learning from connections throughout the enterprise.

By taking a Connector approach with her employees, Molly could individually tailor her feedback more.

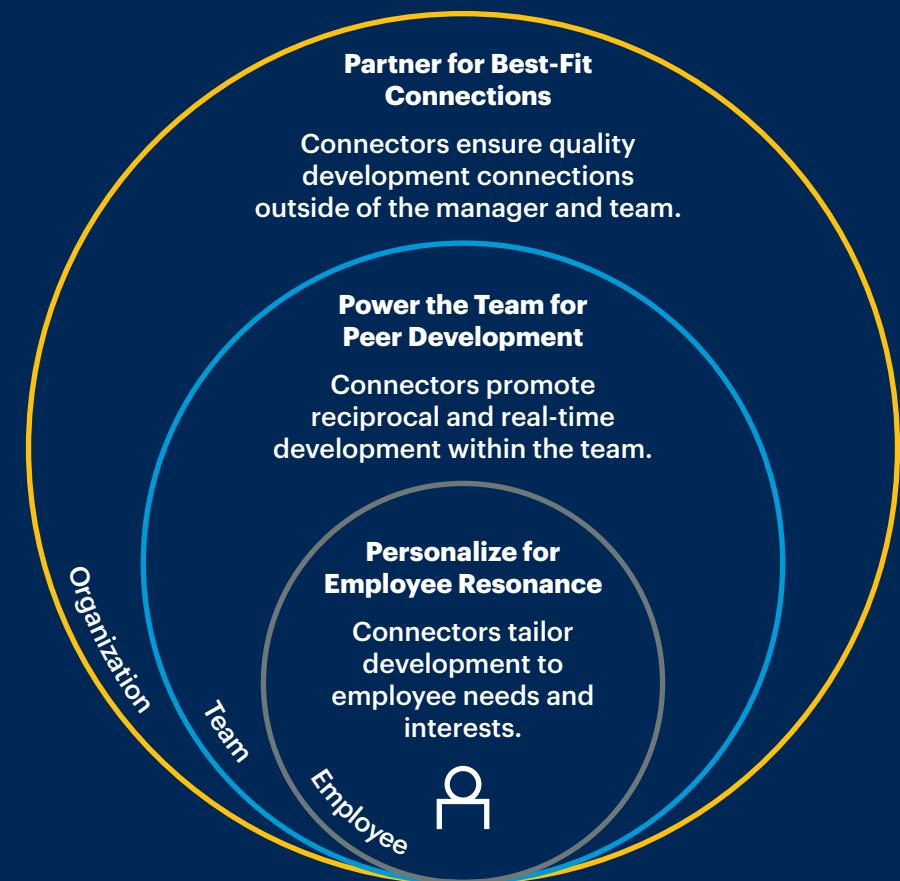
Instead of following a blanket approach that “more feedback is better feedback,” Molly can get to know which employees want and need more coaching and feedback and which need more autonomy to work effectively. She also doesn’t have to worry about being the only person who needs to spend time coaching her employees.

Fundamentally, Connectors are comfortable connecting their direct reports with other coaches and subject matter experts when they don’t have all the answers to an employee’s questions.

The 4th Connection: Managers’ Connection With Themselves

Until she saw her direct reports’ feedback in her performance review, Molly had no idea her coaching approach wasn’t working for her team.

Figure 1: The 3 Connections Connector Managers Make



Source: Gartner

With her constantly packed schedule and large team of direct reports, she missed that her feedback occurred more often than was helpful for her team. In moving to a Connector approach, managers like Molly should strive to build awareness of their own management approach and how it might affect their direct reports.

Beyond the connections they make for employees, Connector managers need to make one final connection with *themselves*. To know their time for coaching, managers must know their own workloads. To know which areas they should coach, managers must know their own strengths and weaknesses. Finally, they need to translate their self-awareness as managers into behaviors that serve employees' needs. Managers can make the self-connection by getting to know their own workload, building self-awareness and developing a Connector mindset.

Know Your Workload

Many have heard the familiar announcement over the airplane loudspeaker as the flight attendants prepare for takeoff: *"In the event of a rapid loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will drop from the ceiling. Secure your own mask before assisting others."*

This advice leads back to the importance of self-care. If managers don't have enough time to complete their own work, they won't be very successful coaching others on their work. Before taking on a new list of coaching responsibilities, managers need to think about how much time they actually have.

Managers should think about how much time they spend attending meetings, managing direct reports and conducting administrative tasks and other activities. When we surveyed employees, we found the amount of time managers spend coaching employees has no correlation with employee performance (see Figure 2). This means managers should provide the right coaching, not just more coaching.

By maintaining a clear sense of their own workloads, managers know how much time they can coach direct reports or other people throughout the organization.

Figure 2: Employee Performance Versus Hours of Manager Coaching



n = 7,309 employees
Source: 2017 Gartner Manager Effectiveness Survey

Build Self-Awareness

Another manager at Molly's company, Ethan, tried to provide coaching to his direct reports and others in the L&D function whenever he had time. He was the function's go-to guru for questions on computer skills. Not wanting to let anyone down, when his direct report, Marla, asked him for help on her public speaking ability, he tried to help her despite being less confident in his speaking abilities. Ethan didn't realize Marla was overwhelmed by the mock speeches he had her practice. It led her to focus too heavily on the technical details of public speaking while failing to improve her confidence as a speaker. What could Ethan have done better?

Managers can make the self-connection by getting to know their own workload, building self-awareness and developing a Connector mindset.

While Ethan had the right intentions in offering his help, he failed to evaluate where his coaching expertise might fall short. Just because Ethan had always been a great coach for technical skills didn't mean he would be a great coach on everything. In this case, the best option for Marla's development might have been connecting her to someone with experience in coaching public speaking skills.

Understanding where one can or can't provide effective coaching is a key to becoming a Connector manager. By developing an awareness of their strengths, managers can prioritize coaching in areas where they have expertise. At the same time, managers should know where their coaching abilities may be weaker, so they refrain from trying to coach people in these areas. In these cases, managers should connect their employees with coaches with more proven experience in a given area. In becoming aware of their own strengths and weaknesses as coaches, managers can limit their coaching to areas where they will make the most positive impact.

Develop a Connector Mindset

As managers become more aware of their coaching strengths and limitations, they will likely adjust some of their behaviors. Many managers mistakenly think they need to have all the answers or believe they need to express a strong sense of authority. Connector managers adopt a more effective coaching mindset that involves:

- **The vulnerability to admit when they're wrong.** By being vulnerable, managers can open themselves up to changing their behavior as they get feedback from peers and direct reports.
- **The humility to realize someone else might know an answer better than they do.** By having humility, they will realize when to connect employees with best-fit connections instead of trying to be their only coach.
- **The curiosity to seek out the answers they don't know.** By being curious, Connectors can get to know employees on a deeper level to identify where their development needs lie.

For L&D, changing managers' attitudes and mindsets about coaching is the hardest shift to make in building Connector managers. To achieve greater effectiveness with coaching employees, managers must realize the need to change. To accomplish this, Amdocs, a Missouri-based software company, launched a program to help managers adapt their mindsets through self-discovery.



Case in Point: Amdocs' Manager Self-Discovery Analysis

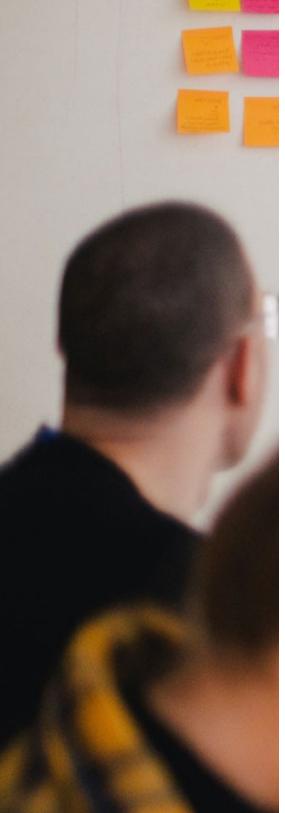
To show managers their current approaches had flaws, Amdocs used data from online reviews and employee feedback on managers' coaching to make the business case that something had to change. They asked managers to reflect on the importance of employee development for the business through a "data walk," where they examined the internal and external feedback. After they realized where they had been failing to support employees' development, managers formed small groups to identify how they could change their management approach in the future.

Conclusion

Managers all have natural tendencies that affect the way they coach their direct reports. While some managers naturally gravitate to the Connector approach, many will have to learn to shift their coaching styles. The Connector manager approach relies on coaching teams based on one's strengths and fostering development connections to fill in the gaps. The best way to get your managers to become Connectors is to build awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses so they're comfortable with their areas of expertise.

¹ 2017 Gartner Head of L&D Manager Effectiveness Survey

² 2017 Gartner 2017 Manager Effectiveness Survey



Data Snapshot

Manager Development



See a snapshot of findings from our 2019 Manager Development Benchmarking Report, which helps L&D leaders benchmark their manager development strategies.

Understand how L&D's manager development budget has changed, and evaluate the challenges L&D faces and the solutions it is deploying in 2019.



As the work environment becomes more complex, learning and development (L&D) leaders will need to rely on managers to prepare the workforce for the future. Although the nature of work has changed, most employees report managers' quality has not significantly shifted in the past six years. In our 2019 Manager Development Benchmarking Report, we detail the top challenges and expectations L&D leaders report facing when it comes to manager development. A snapshot of our findings follows.

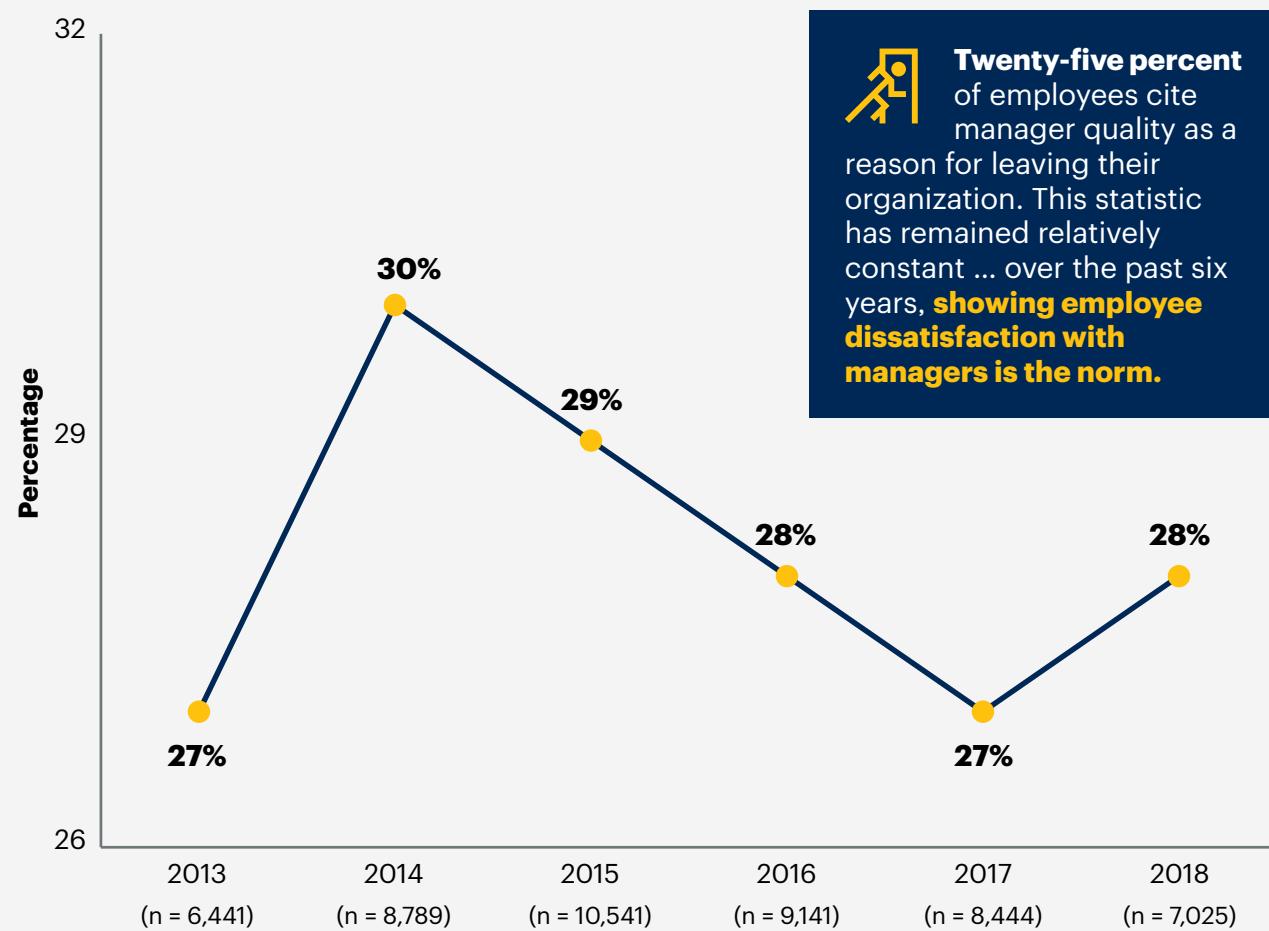
Quality of Management Affects Retention Rates

Although managers make up 20% of the employee population, L&D spends more than one-third of its budget on them, indicating that this population is important to organizations. However, only 34% of L&D executives believe their organizations are effectively developing frontline managers. As a result, 25% of employees cite manager quality as a reason for leaving their organization (see Figure 1).

This statistic has remained relatively constant, fluctuating between 27% and 30% over the past six years, showing employee dissatisfaction with managers is the norm.

Figure 1: Employees Citing Manager Quality as Reason for Leaving

Percentage of Employees



Source: 2013–2018 Gartner Global Labor Market Surveys

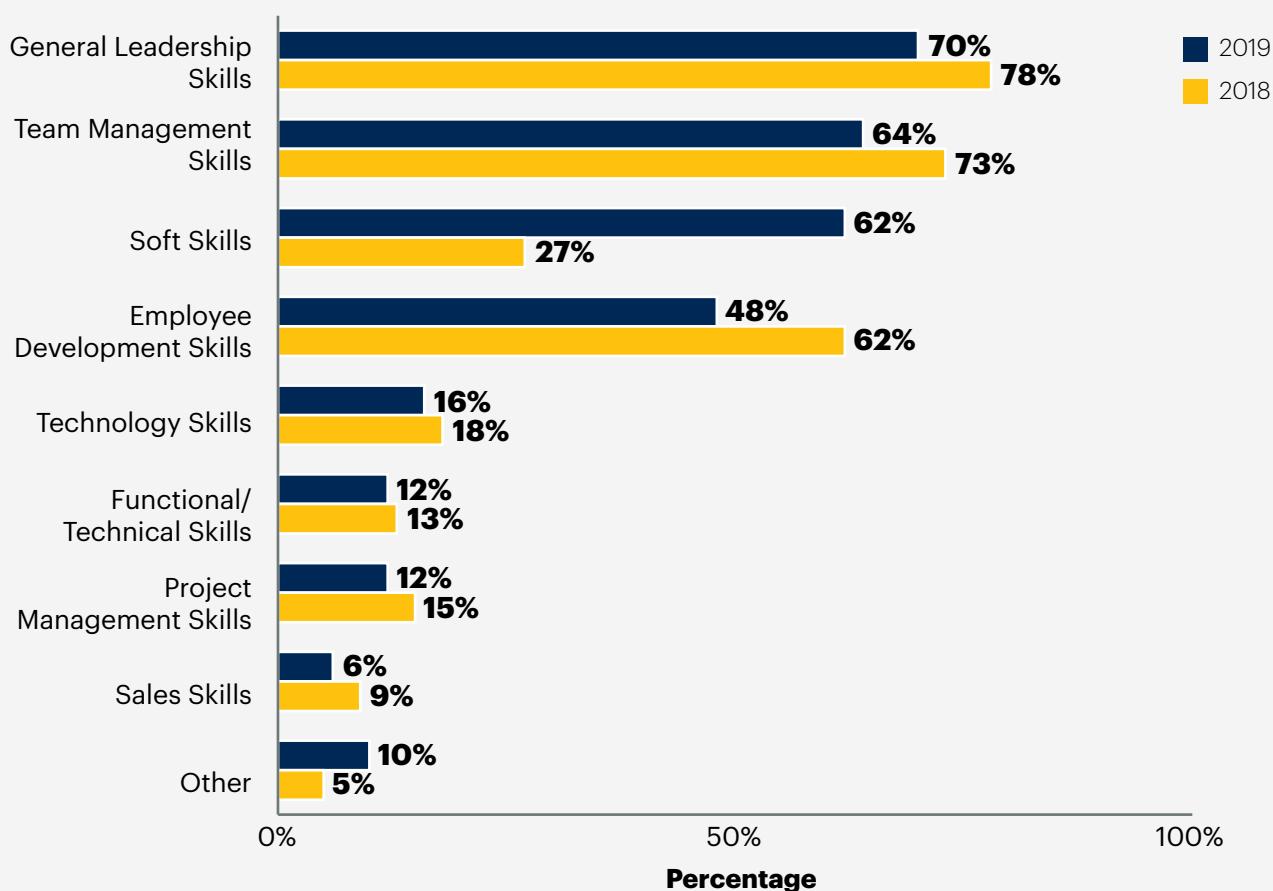
Soft Skills Surge in Priority

While general leadership and team management skills remain the top two skills managers need to develop in 2019, the percentage of L&D leaders prioritizing these has dropped over the past year.

However, the biggest shift in priority is the increased focus on soft skills, which has more than doubled as a development priority since 2018 (see Figure 2). The rise in ranking for soft skills suggests HR leaders are prioritizing the development of soft skills for managers at their organizations.

Figure 2: Highest-Priority Skills for Managers

Percentage of Heads of L&D Selected



n = 50 heads of L&D (2019); 55 heads of L&D (2018)

Source: 2019 Gartner Manager Development Survey; 2018 Gartner Head of L&D Manager Effectiveness Study



Enterprise Issue

How the Platform Economy Could Revolutionize L&D



Platform businesses create value by connecting and facilitating exchanges between consumers and producers.

See how L&D leaders can learn lessons from these businesses and implement platform HR in their functions to better serve their employees.

Many organizations today are preparing themselves for the next disruption to affect their industry. One likely disruptor is the platform business — companies such as Airbnb or Alibaba that create value by facilitating exchanges between two or more user groups. These platform businesses continue to grow in the digital economy and disrupt an increasing number of traditional industries. To remain competitive, more businesses are starting to borrow and adapt platform model elements for their own strategies. Similarly, heads of learning and development (L&D) should consider following suit to capitalize on the benefits platform models bring.

An article by professors Geoffrey Parker and Marshall Van Alstyne describes how platform

business models are moving from the margins to the mainstream of corporate strategies. The emergence of technologies that allow organizations to facilitate previously impossible or impractical transactions drives this trend. The authors highlight five platform business principles drawn from a recent MIT summit, two of which relate directly to the talent implications of platform businesses:

- Having “data-driven, AI-savvy platform talent”
- Being able to “build value through diversity”¹

We focus on the key characteristics of platform businesses as well as how L&D leaders can begin thinking about adopting these characteristics at their organizations.

What Is Platform HR?

L&D leaders hoping to ensure their functions remain viable in an increasingly uncertain future may consider adopting a platform HR model. Gartner has defined “platform HR” as a model of HR organization and strategy that connects individuals throughout the organization for valuable talent interactions, just as platform businesses connect customers — or users — with providers. Functions that adopt this model use insights from employee interactions to improve their offering and, as a result, organizational outcomes.

While most L&D functions today face long lead times to source organizational needs and set up programs, platform HR promises to bring more accuracy and speed in detecting and developing employees based on their individual needs. Employees are looking for the same personalization they get in consumer interactions, such as receiving personalized product recommendations based on previous purchasing behavior.

In this context, L&D functions find it hard to keep up with creating learning content for all the new skills and competencies their employees need today. In fact, our 2019 Leader Effectiveness Survey for Employees reveals only 35% of employees agree the development provided by their L&D function is personalized to their needs (see Figure 1).

L&D functions looking to reap the benefits from the platform HR model first need to understand their L&D products may not necessarily be their greatest asset. For example, Airbnb, a platform-based business, does not own or design any hotel rooms; instead, it puts in place mechanisms to ensure rooms are made available, of good quality and correctly priced. This does not mean L&D functions should disavow all formal, classroom learning. But rather, L&D leaders should take advantage of increased technological capabilities to connect employees throughout the organization to each other for learning.

With a platform HR model, L&D functions can treat leaders, managers and employees — their users — as producers and consumers of talented-related information, tools and services (see Figure 2).

L&D functions that can make this mindset shift have a great deal to gain. Three characteristics provide the underlying power of platform businesses that L&D functions can learn from.²

Figure 1: Q — “The Development Provided to Me by the L&D Function at My Organization Is Personalized to My Needs.”
Percentage of Employees Agreeing



n = 3,970 employees

Source: 2019 Gartner Leader Effectiveness Survey for Employees

Figure 2: Platform HR



Source: Gartner

1 Platforms Generate Value Through Networks, Not Assets

Platform businesses have few capital investments, enabling them to be adapted and scaled quickly. Traditional L&D functions can benefit from shifting toward this model. While many L&D teams today focus on creating learning content or acquiring learning technology assets that are expensive and often take a long time to deliver results, a platform model enables L&D to take advantage of already existing opportunities and talent.

Rather than controlling the production of all learning content, L&D functions can develop necessary future workforce skills by facilitating connections between employees. Platform HR generates value for the business by connecting the right employees throughout the organization to the right challenges, not by creating and controlling the learning content.



Case in Point: Intel's Development Opportunity Tool

Intel faced two common challenges to filling skill gaps: Managers lacked the skills they needed on their team, and employees didn't know where to find skill development opportunities outside their immediate roles. Instead of delivering separate solutions to each challenge, the L&D function created a platform, the Development Opportunity Tool (DOT), to facilitate the exchange of skills between managers and employees. The platform created two-way skill visibility to find opportunities where an employee's skill profile aligned with a manager's team capability gap.

Employees interested in continuing their development or learning new skills can specify that in their search and find the most compatible opportunity to develop and receive coaching from other teams. Managers who allow their

employees to do this exchange benefit by having their own team members develop concrete skills, create potential talent pipelines or receive assistance on their own projects. Read more about the case study on page 18.

2 Platforms Focus on Facilitating Exchange, Not Delivering Solutions

Once they have connected employees, L&D functions must guide the involved parties to have meaningful and productive interactions. Instead of focusing their resources on creating and selling a product, platform businesses prioritize enabling high-value exchanges between sellers and buyers, using financial and nonfinancial incentives to motivate them to participate appropriately in the market.

For example, Airbnb ensures the quality of its listings by having hosts and users rate each other and provide comments. L&D functions that adopt a platform model should likewise concentrate on optimizing L&D interactions between people at all workforce levels. Their focus should be on implementing the right incentives and processes to ensure interactions are successful and productive for all parties involved.



Case in Point: American Express' Event-Based Network Brokering

American Express helps managers identify employee networking partners to provide actionable advice to employees on their development areas. To ensure employees extract relevant and productive learning from a development connection, L&D prepares a guided reflection process for managers and employees to complete together before, during and after the development period.

This reflection guide helps managers communicate the network connection's relevance to employees and identify what employees should be learning. Managers and employees are encouraged to continue participating because of the benefits they receive. Managers can better facilitate employees' learning applications, and employees can better apply the learning to their daily jobs. Read more about this case study on our website.

3 Platforms Prioritize Efficiency From the Customer's Perspective

Platform businesses are hyperfocused on the quality of interactions within the network of producers and consumers or buyers and sellers. For example, if the promised interactions are inefficient at connecting the network and delivering results in a timely manner, customers may stop using the company's service. Similarly, L&D functions using a platform model need to ensure they keep their employees' contexts top of mind.

Many L&D functions have been experimenting with empathy mapping and creating employee personas to better understand the environments in which their employees learn. Then, they tailor learning content to match these to employees' real work environments. By using a platform model, L&D can gather data on employees' experiences and preferences, redeploying them to better personalize the development processes and initiatives L&D offers.



Case in Point: Ericsson's Digital Skills Academy

Ericsson realized it needed to improve its employees' digital readiness, but employees

throughout the organization were starting from different levels of digital maturity. Realizing personalization is difficult at scale, Ericsson created the Digital Skills Academy to give employees a personalized view of how they are keeping pace against digital skill development goals.

Employees first take a digital maturity quiz that reports their levels of preparedness for Ericsson's future and their biggest areas of improvement (see Figure 3). With this information, L&D encourages employees to go to Ericsson's Digital Skills Academy community platform to receive personally relevant learning that includes a diverse selection of learning options and information about each offering. Instead of dictating what employees should develop, the L&D function enables employees to choose the offerings that best fit their personal contexts and development goals. Read more about this case study on our website.

Figure 3: Ericsson's Digital Maturity Quiz



Source: Ericsson

Conclusion

The idea of platform HR is a big conceptual shift for L&D functions accustomed to thinking about platforms only as technological support systems. The shift inverts their thinking from HR platforms to platform HR. By making this

change to HR operating models, L&D has the potential to deliver stronger workforce capabilities in the future. Yet, most L&D functions interested in making this change have a long way to go. L&D functions at the forefront of moving to a platform model will have to grapple with challenges such as incentivizing the connections between employees or maintaining the quality of content produced.

With six in 10 CEOs rethinking the value of the HR function, heads of L&D should consider how platform HR could help address some of their concerns.³ By placing the focus on creating high-value L&D interactions between individuals throughout the organization, platform HR functions could be better-positioned than traditional HR organizations to generate more business value.

¹ "How Platform Strategies Continue to Create Value," MIT Sloan.

² These characteristics are based on "[The Platform Manifesto](#)," by Sangeet Paul Choudary.

³ "[60% of CEOs Are Rethinking Their HR Function](#)," PwC.

L&D functions that can make this mindset shift have a great deal to gain.



Take Action Tool

Creating a Skills Exchange



How Can You Unlock the Skills Within Your Workforce to Fill Current Skill Gaps?

This tool will help L&D leaders offer best-fit development to employees through internal opportunities by creating a skills exchange.

Skill Brokering Effectiveness Assessment

Agree

Disagree

Instructions: Select whether you agree or disagree with the statements below to gauge your effectiveness at connecting employees to development opportunities that will help them develop new skills within the organization.

- 1 My L&D team focuses on providing self-service development options for employees to upskill themselves.
- 2 My L&D team mainly provides experience-based development opportunities only to exclusive pockets of employees, such as high-potential employees and leaders.
- 3 The business struggles to identify skill gaps throughout the organization.
- 4 The business relies primarily on hiring new employees to fill skill gaps.
- 5 Internal job postings are the best way for employees to find development opportunities and fill the necessary skill gaps within the organization.
- 6 Managers at my organization only support their employees to take on development opportunities or stretch roles if they stay within the manager's span of control.

Results

If you **agreed with three or more** of the statements above, you and your team are most likely facing obstacles in creating internal development opportunities for employees in your organization.

Solution: Broker Development Experiences by Creating a Skills Exchange

What Is a Skills Exchange?

A skills exchange is a formal space or process in which employees and managers — the sellers and buyers of skills, respectively — share and partake in opportunities for short-term experience or project-based learning within the organization.

To understand how to facilitate development experiences for employees in your organization, use our three-step "Ignition Guide to Creating a Skills Exchange."

Ignition Guide to Creating a Skills Exchange

Overview



Plan

Build

Monitor

- Plan to create a skills exchange.

- Understand skills gaps in your organization.
- Design the skills exchange.
- Launch the skills exchange.

- Monitor the skills exchange.

Source: Gartner

Innovators

Interview With Ginny Gray

Intel's Development
Opportunity Tool

The idea that skill needs are changing is no longer breaking news, but what are you doing about it at your organization today?

The key issues many organizations face are lack of visibility into what skills they have in their workforce and not having the systems for sharing those skills where they are most in demand.

Ginny Gray, career services HR manager at Intel, set out to address these challenges and ensure Intel's workforce would be prepared for the future. She and her team realized while managers reported their teams lacked the skills they needed to get work done, employees cited their perceived lack of development opportunities as the top cause for attrition. Facing these dual challenges, Intel's career services team set out to unlock skills within the workforce to fill the organization's skill gaps.



Ginny Gray
HR Manager, Intel

Ginny Gray is the career services HR manager at Intel. She is responsible for delivering global career development programs, which empower their employees and managers to drive the course of their careers within Intel. Ginny has over 27 years of experience at Intel and has held various other positions including project/program management, web design/development and management, HR business partner and HR manager. She holds a master's degree in psychology, focused on organizational behavior and a bachelor's of science in management information systems.

Using Development to Fill Skill Needs: Intel's Development Opportunity Tool

The career services team within Intel's talent management function is broadly responsible for helping employees grow their careers at the company. The team realized they could simultaneously solve the problem of managers needing skills on their teams and employees needing development opportunities by connecting managers and employees throughout the organization with matching skill needs.

To create these cross-organizational development connections, career services created the Development Opportunity Tool (DOT), a platform where managers can post development opportunities and employees can freely access, browse and apply for them.

Three key features of DOT have made it a success:

1. Two-Way Skill Visibility
2. Best-Fit Development Opportunities
3. Clear Manager Benefits

Two-Way Skill Visibility

As career services staff began to build a platform to enable cross-organizational development experiences, they realized their key goal should be providing high visibility to all. Consequently, career services has made DOT accessible to all Intel employees and requires users to be transparent about their specific skill interests and needs. This gives managers and employees equal information on where they can find the skills and opportunities they need in the organization.

Employees fill out a profile on DOT with their résumé, the skills they have and the skills they would like to develop (see Figure 1).

Employees fill out a profile on DOT with their résumé, the skills they have and the skills they would like to develop.

Figure 1: Employee Profile on DOT

The screenshot shows a web-based application window titled "Development Opportunity Tool". Inside, there is a profile section for "Danielle's Profile" featuring a circular icon with a person symbol. Below the icon, the text "Roles I Am interested In: Finance, Marketing" is displayed. The profile is divided into two main sections: "Skills" and "Development Interests". The "Skills" section lists: "Project management", "French — business-fluent", and "Database management". The "Development Interests" section lists: "Networking" and "Business acumen". At the bottom of the profile section, there is a heading "Résumé and Biography" followed by a large, empty rectangular box for inputting resume/bio information.

Source: Adapted from Intel

At the same time, managers can post opportunities on the platform to find employees throughout the organization who can fill skill gaps on their team. When posting projects on DOT, managers must consider which skills are required for each opportunity and which skills are not core but could be developed on the job, as well as logistical information such as the start date and duration (see Figure 2). The granularity of information provided on the platform ensures connections meet managers' and employees' needs.

Best-Fit Development Opportunities

A search for a skill or role on DOT will reveal opportunities throughout the organization, including places where the employee may not have an existing connection or would not have considered for developing a particular skill. For example, an employee may be surprised to find the opportunity to practice data science skills in the marketing function (see Figure 3).

Search results distinguish between required skills and skills that can be developed. Requiring high proficiency in the “skills required”

Figure 2: Example DOT Listing for Blue Hire Talent Champion Role

The screenshot shows a web-based application titled "Development Opportunity Tool". A listing for a "Blue Hire Talent Champion" role is displayed. The listing includes the title, length (Four months), and time commitment (100% flexible). It is divided into two main sections: "Skills Required" and "Opportunities to Develop".

Skills Required	Opportunities to Develop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teamwork Strong internal networking Business or technical acumen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee development and coaching Stakeholder management and influencing Knowledge of internal hiring processes

Source: Adapted from Intel

Figure 3: Sample DOT Search Results

The screenshot shows a search results page for "data science" on the Development Opportunity Tool. The results are presented in a table with columns for Title, Department, Skills Required, and Opportunities to Develop.

Title	Department	Skills Required	Opportunities to Develop
Analytics Everywhere – People Scale PM	Enterprise Data and Platforms (EDP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing communications Project management Training/instructional design and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data science Basic HTML
Project Manager/ Data Analyst	GIA Marketing Science and Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project management Data processing Data science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business acumen Personal networking skills

Source: Adapted from Intel



DOT's design means each opportunity can be used flexibly.

section ensures the core of the work in a DOT opportunity can be successfully completed. With DOT's focus on employee development, managers are also required to consider which skills can be developed on the job, listing them in the "opportunities to develop" section. This results in a win-win situation that is key to DOT's success.

DOT's design means each opportunity can be used flexibly. Employees may select the development opportunities that best meet their skill needs. The structure of the platform enables this by requiring managers to distinguish between skills required and development opportunities. With this structure, different employees could use the same DOT listing in different ways, based on their level of skill proficiency.

For example, a programmer might be interested in applying coding skills in another part of the business as a new and different challenge. This programmer could focus the search in DOT on opportunities where the coding languages are listed under "skills required." Another employee might have a lot of experience in the marketing function but is interested in learning HTML skills. This employee could search DOT for opportunities that require marketing and communications skills but have HTML in the "opportunities to develop" section.

Alternatively, some Intel employees use DOT as a low-risk way to test out roles and career paths they are interested in. In fact, many

Intel employees have switched between vastly different roles — such as from manufacturing to HR or in a project management role from one product domain to another — after a DOT opportunity in which they were able to apply and showcase their transferable skills in a new environment. This support for employees' short-term skill development and long-term career exploration through DOT has strengthened Intel's employment value proposition and reputation in the marketplace.

Clear Manager Benefits

Intel realized manager buy-in was critical if they wanted DOT to work. To get buy-in, Intel incorporates elements in the manager DOT experience that demonstrate the benefit of sharing talent.

First, managers are encouraged to use DOT to make good development connections for their employees. Opportunities have defined time limits, as listed in the DOT postings, so managers know employees who use DOT will return to their home team with an expanded skill set, boosting their team's overall performance. Additionally, employees who take on a DOT opportunity are not always leaving their role entirely. Depending on an employee's capacity, they can search DOT for opportunities that require different levels of time commitment.

At the same time, a manager could use DOT to fill skill gaps on their own team and see the skill development the employees they receive can

experience. This provides further proof of the impact DOT assignments could make on their own direct reports' development.

Moreover, the distinction between the skills required and the skills to develop opens up a pool of candidates the manager may not have thought of or had access to without DOT. The realization that an employee doesn't have to fully master all the skills involved in the project — only a core subset — enables more candidates to take on a job. This ultimately opens up more possibilities for matches between managers looking for help and employees looking for development. It also allows managers to create a potential talent pipeline by trying out new employees to validate fit.

By showing managers the benefits of giving and receiving employees through DOT, Intel overcomes the major objections organizations typically face when trying to increase talent fluidity. This creates a sense of support for employees looking to take advantage of skill-building opportunities throughout the organization.

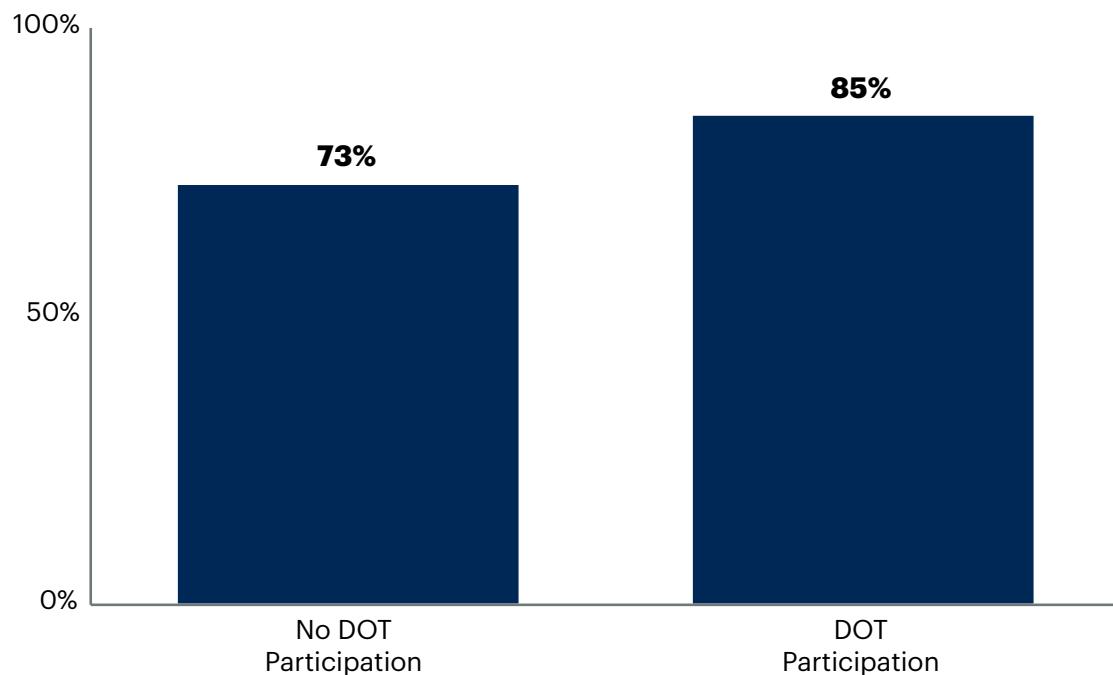
Results: Increased Talent Fluidity

Since DOT was launched, Intel employees are more confident of, and satisfied with, the organization's support for their development. Employees who have participated in DOT opportunities are 12% more likely to agree Intel provides them with the tools and resources to manage their development (see Figure 4).

Employees have responded to the tool with enthusiasm. DOT has become a critical component of Intel's employment value proposition and a driver of engagement, as it signals the organization cares about employees' careers, growth and development.

One employee reported after using DOT: "The Development Opportunity Tool is why Intel is outstanding compared to other companies. Intel doesn't just say it'll give employees a bright future; it actually does it."

Figure 4: Respondents Agreeing, "Intel Provides Me the Tools and Resources to Manage My Development"



Source: Adapted from Intel

Brokering Experiences

Allowing employees to browse learning content and mold their own development paths sounds ideal and liberating, but most employees find it confusing and overwhelming.

In fact, while learning and development (L&D) functions continue to invest heavily in self-service development opportunities, only 34% of employees think self-service development is effective.

Rather than focusing on self-service development, the best L&D functions broker development experiences, connecting employees to people or projects to accelerate new skill development. Use the quick wins below to help your L&D function create the infrastructure needed to help employees find and take advantage of development experiences.

1. Equip managers to create a team environment that promotes transparency for skill sharing.

- Provide managers with tactical support for promoting and facilitating skill sharing in everyday work and projects.
- Use our “Increase Team Transparency” guide to brainstorm how to help managers increase skill visibility on their teams.

2. Identify an appropriate platform to host your skills exchange, based on technical capability.

- Select a technology or system to enable effective skill sharing your team is equipped to manage.
- Brainstorm the different platform types you could use for skill sharing, and choose the most applicable to your organization using the first step in our guide, “Set Up A Skills Exchange.”

3. Communicate the benefits of sharing employees throughout the organization for manager buy-in.

- Ensure managers understand the benefits of sharing talent will outweigh their major objections.
- Gain manager buy-in by using the communication tips in steps two and three of “Set Up A Skills Exchange.”

4. Enable employees to identify development experiences that will equip them for their roles today and in the future.

- Provide employees with resources to help them determine the skills they want to develop and where they can find the opportunity to develop those skills.
- Give employees our action plan, “Identify Development Experiences,” to help them discern the specific skills they wish to develop, identify the colleagues that will help them and plan the steps necessary to attain their skill development goal.

Suggested Reading

In Case You Missed It

To find these and other publications for L&D professionals, search our website or contact your account manager.



What's New?

- “2019 HIPO Development Benchmarking Report”
- “Business Case for Building Connector Managers”
- “Business Case for Reskilling the Workforce”
- “The Top Skills Marketing Leaders Want”
- “State of Supply Chain Talent”
- “Building a Learning Environment That’s Open”

Don’t Miss Our New Report on Digital Dexterity

Despite significant investments in new digital technologies, most organizations are seeing limited returns. How can you ensure your talent is digital-ready?

The conventional approach does little to prepare employees for working in a volatile and matrixed digital business environment. Rather, L&D leaders should focus on equipping their workforce with the set of beliefs, mindsets and behaviors we call digital dexterity. Our report, “Developing Digital Dexterity: How to Prepare Your Workforce for the Future of Digital,” will help you understand what digital dexterity is, spot its myths and common misconceptions, and understand how to identify and develop employees to address their digital dexterity deficit.