

Training & Development: State of the Industry 2025

This report presents comprehensive findings from our 2025 Training & Development Industry Survey, which gathered insights from T&D and L&D professionals across multiple countries, industries, and organizational levels.

The survey explored current challenges, priorities, and future directions for the T&D function during a time of significant organizational transformation.

The landscape for training and development professionals continues to evolve rapidly in 2025, shaped by technological advancements, changing workforce expectations, and increasing pressure to demonstrate tangible business impact.

Our research reveals a profession at a crossroads – increasingly recognized as essential for organizational success, yet still struggling with resource constraints and the challenge of quantifying its value in business terms.

Key Findings

1 Budget and resource constraints

Budget and resource constraints remain significant barriers to effectiveness, with 45% of respondents citing budget limitations and 36% reporting insufficient staffing. This resource gap hampers innovation and limits the strategic impact of T&D initiatives, creating a cycle where limited resources prevent the very improvements that would justify greater investment.

2 Measuring and demonstrating impact

Measuring and demonstrating impact continues to be a critical challenge for 42% of respondents. T&D and L&D professionals struggle to connect learning activities to business outcomes in ways that resonate with senior leadership, limiting their strategic influence and budget justification capabilities.

3 Technology satisfaction is notably mixed

Technology satisfaction is notably mixed, with only 39% of professionals reporting satisfaction with their current Learning Management System (LMS). This suggests a significant gap between available technology solutions and the evolving needs of modern T&D functions, particularly around analytics, user experience, and integration capabilities.

4 Automation and deeper data insights

Automation and deeper data insights have emerged as the most desired improvements, reflecting a profession seeking to reduce administrative burden and strengthen its strategic positioning through better analytics. 58% of respondents prioritize deeper insights into training effectiveness and ROI, while 52% want to automate routine tasks.

5 Four equally important priorities

Four equally important priorities dominate the 2025 agenda: demonstrating ROI of training programs, improving learning outcomes, increasing participation rates, and reducing manual processes (each cited by 42% of respondents). This balanced focus reflects the multifaceted pressure on T&D to simultaneously prove value, enhance effectiveness, boost engagement, and increase efficiency.

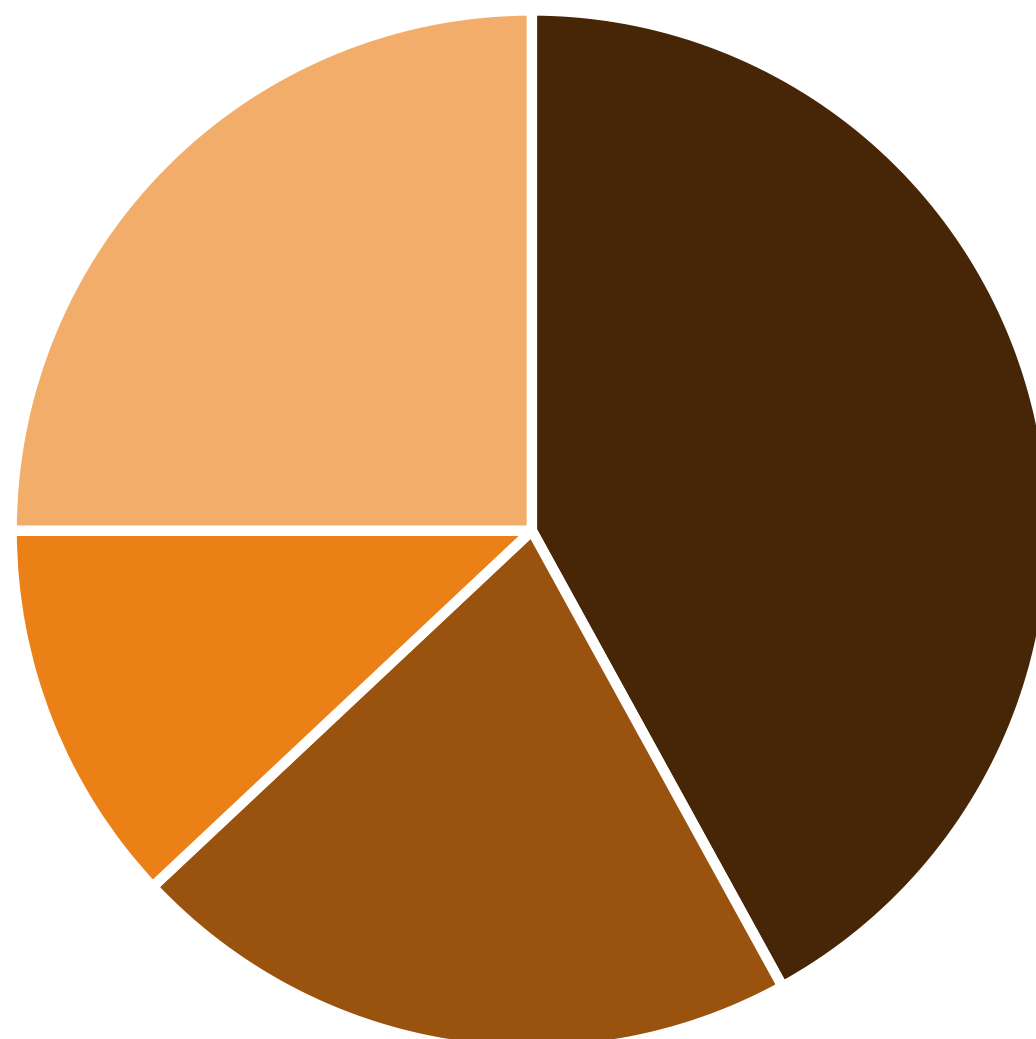
This report offers detailed analysis of these findings and practical recommendations for T&D and L&D leaders looking to overcome common challenges and position their function as a strategic business partner. By understanding industry trends and peer challenges, T&D and L&D professionals can better prioritize initiatives, advocate for resources, and align their efforts with broader organizational goals.

Survey Demographics

Our survey captured perspectives from a diverse range of T&D and L&D professionals, providing a comprehensive view of the industry landscape in 2025. Understanding the demographic makeup of our respondent pool is essential for contextualizing the findings and identifying potential biases or trends that might influence the results.

Experience Level Distribution

The survey reveals a respondent base dominated by seasoned professionals, with 63% having six or more years of experience in training and development. This wealth of experience brings depth to our findings, representing perspectives from professionals who have witnessed the evolution of the T&D function through multiple economic cycles, technological shifts, and organizational transformations.



■ More than 10 years ■ 6-10 years ■ Less than 6 years ■ Other/Not specified

The majority of respondents bring substantial experience to their roles, with 42% having more than 10 years in the field and 21% with 6-10 years of experience. This concentration of experienced professionals suggests our findings likely represent mature, well-informed perspectives on the state of the industry. Notably, the relative scarcity of early-career respondents (only 12% with less than 6 years of experience) may indicate challenges in recruiting and retaining new talent in the field, a potential concern for future workforce planning.

This experience distribution is consistent with broader industry trends showing T&D roles increasingly requiring greater strategic sophistication and business acumen, attributes that typically develop with career progression. The depth of experience in our sample lends particular credibility to findings related to strategic challenges and long-term trends in the profession.

Job Roles and Geographic Distribution

Job Roles Represented

The survey captures insights across the full spectrum of the T&D hierarchy, providing a holistic view of challenges and priorities from multiple organizational perspectives. This diversity of roles helps illuminate how priorities and challenges might differ based on organizational position and scope of responsibility.

Senior leadership roles (Directors, VPs, Senior Managers) represent a significant portion of respondents, suggesting our findings may skew toward strategic rather than tactical concerns. The inclusion of specialists, coordinators, and administrators, however, ensures that front-line implementation challenges are also represented in the data.

1 Executive Leadership

Vice President of Learning & Development, Associate VP, Senior Director of L&D

2 Management Level

Training Director, Training & Development Manager, Department Manager, Manager of People and Talent Development

3 Specialist Roles

Learning & Development Specialist, Senior Training Consultant, Training and Development Specialist

4 Coordination & Administration

Training Coordinator, Skills Development Facilitator, Learning & Training Administrator

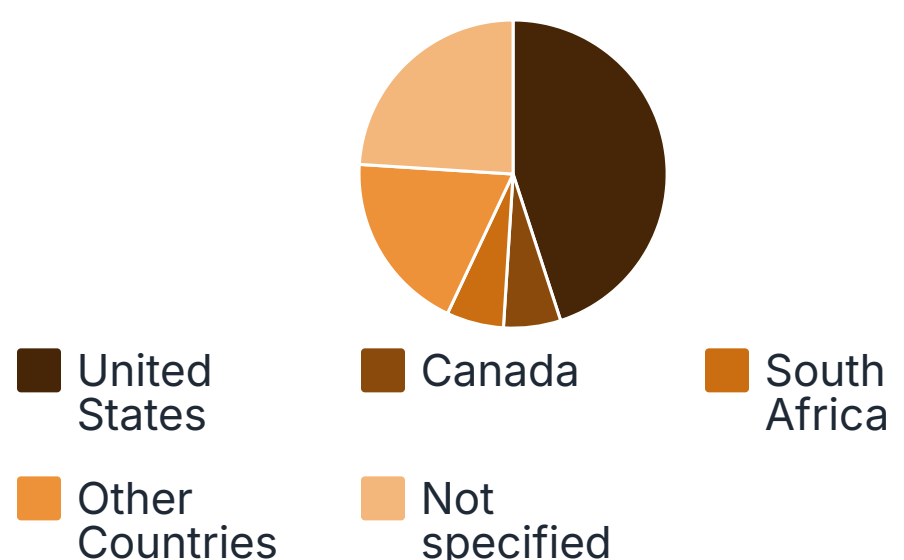
5 Specialized Focus Areas

Sales Training Specialist, Training and Safety Coordinator, Director of Training Design

Geographic Distribution

The geographic diversity of our respondents provides valuable cross-cultural perspectives on T&D challenges and priorities, though with a notable North American emphasis. This distribution allows us to identify both universal challenges and regional variations in approach and priority.

While predominantly North American (51% of respondents), the survey includes global perspectives from Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. This international representation enhances the applicability of our findings across global organizations and provides insight into how regional factors might influence T&D priorities and challenges.

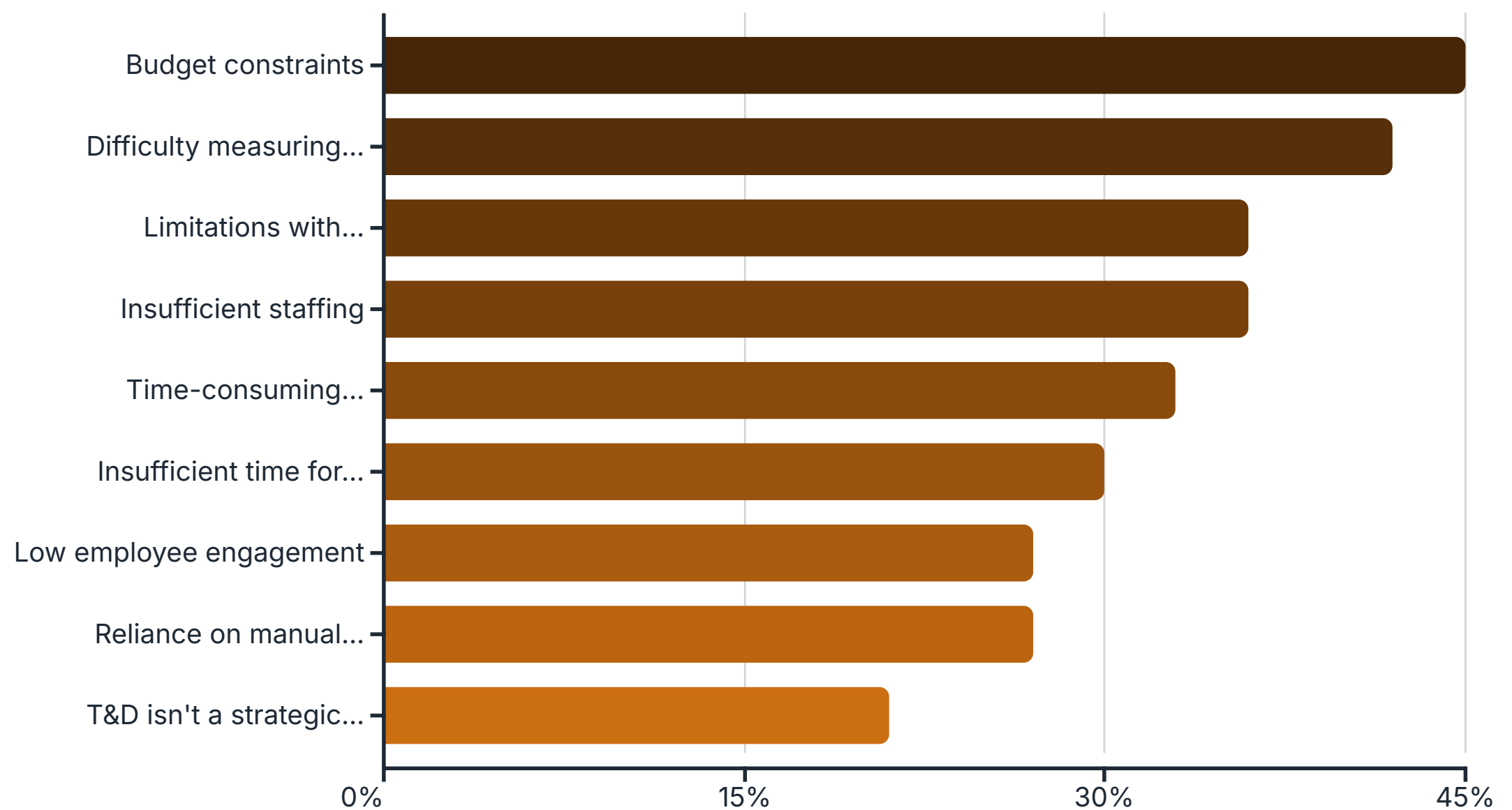


The strong North American representation aligns with the region's historical emphasis on formalized corporate learning functions, while the inclusion of emerging markets provides valuable perspective on how T&D is evolving in diverse economic contexts. Interestingly, European representation is more limited than might be expected given the region's strong regulatory emphasis on professional development and worker training.

Current Challenges in T&D

Training and development professionals in 2025 face a complex landscape of interconnected challenges that significantly impact their effectiveness and strategic influence within organizations. These challenges are not isolated issues but rather form a systemic web of constraints that collectively diminish the function's ability to deliver maximum value.

Top Challenges Ranked



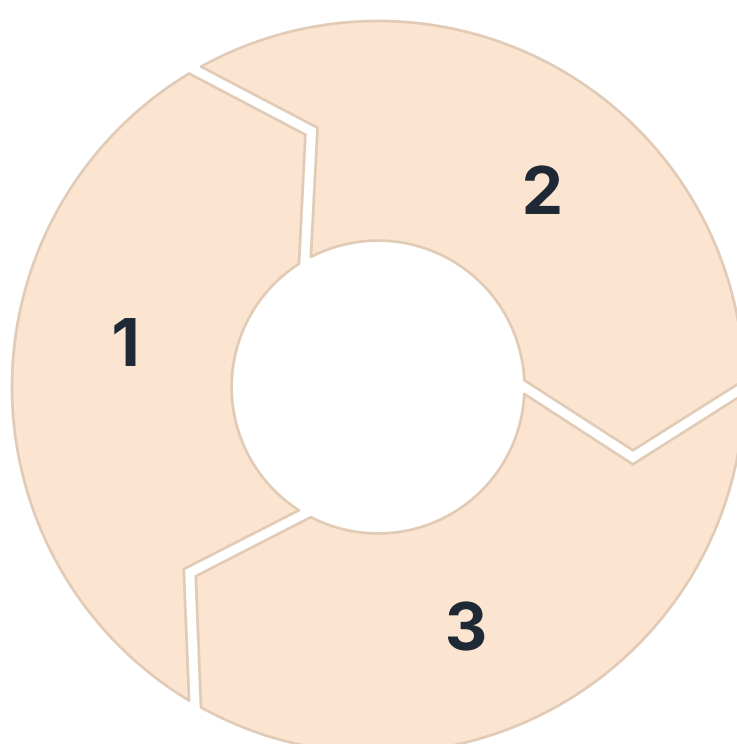
The prevalence of budget constraints (45%) as the top challenge indicates that T&D continues to struggle for adequate financial resources, often functioning as a cost center rather than being viewed as a strategic investment. This challenge is particularly notable given the growing expectations placed on T&D functions to support digital transformation, reskilling initiatives, and hybrid work arrangements—all of which require significant investment.

The difficulty in measuring impact (42%) represents an existential challenge for the profession. Without clear, compelling evidence of training's business impact, T&D and L&D leaders find themselves caught in a credibility trap: they need resources to implement better measurement systems, but struggle to secure those resources without already having robust impact data. This measurement challenge directly affects the strategic positioning of T&D within organizations.

Challenge Clusters

Resource Constraints

Budget limitations, insufficient staffing, and time pressures create a foundation of scarcity that limits innovation and strategic impact.



Technical & Process Limitations

LMS dissatisfaction, manual processes, and time-consuming reporting create inefficiencies that drain capacity from strategic work.

Strategic Alignment Gaps

Difficulty measuring impact, low priority status, and engagement issues undermine T&D's strategic positioning and influence.

These challenge clusters create a self-reinforcing negative feedback loop: resource constraints limit ability to improve systems and processes, which in turn makes demonstrating strategic value more difficult, ultimately reinforcing resource limitations as T&D struggles to justify larger investments. Breaking this cycle requires simultaneous progress across multiple fronts.

LMS & Technology Landscape

Learning technology, particularly [Learning Management Systems \(LMS\)](#), forms the backbone of modern T&D operations. However, our survey reveals a significant gap between current technology capabilities and the evolving needs of T&D functions. This technology shortfall has far-reaching implications for learning delivery, measurement, user experience, and strategic impact.

Current LMS Satisfaction



Legend: Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Neutral, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don't have an LMS

Only 39% of respondents report satisfaction with their current LMS, while 21% express dissatisfaction. Combined with the 15% who don't have an LMS at all, this highlights a significant gap in technology enablement that affects more than a third of T&D functions.

The substantial neutral response (24%) suggests many professionals have accepted technological limitations as an inevitable condition rather than actively embracing their systems. This resignation to mediocre technology represents a hidden cost to the profession, as T&D and L&D leaders adapt their strategies to accommodate system limitations rather than pursuing optimal approaches.

LMS Challenges

Limited analytics and reporting capabilities

Current systems often provide basic completion tracking but lack the robust analytics needed to demonstrate business impact, identify learning patterns, or predict future needs.

As one Director of Learning commented:

"Our current LMS gives us completion data but nothing about actual application of learning or business impact. We're essentially flying blind when trying to connect our efforts to business results."

Poor user experience leading to engagement issues

Outdated interfaces, complex navigation, and unintuitive designs create friction that dampens learner enthusiasm and increases abandonment rates. The contrast between consumer-grade digital experiences and typical corporate learning platforms grows more stark each year, with one respondent noting:

"Our employees use TikTok and YouTube daily, then log into our clunky LMS and immediately disengage. We're competing with sleek, algorithm-driven platforms using decade-old technology."

Difficulty integrating with other business systems

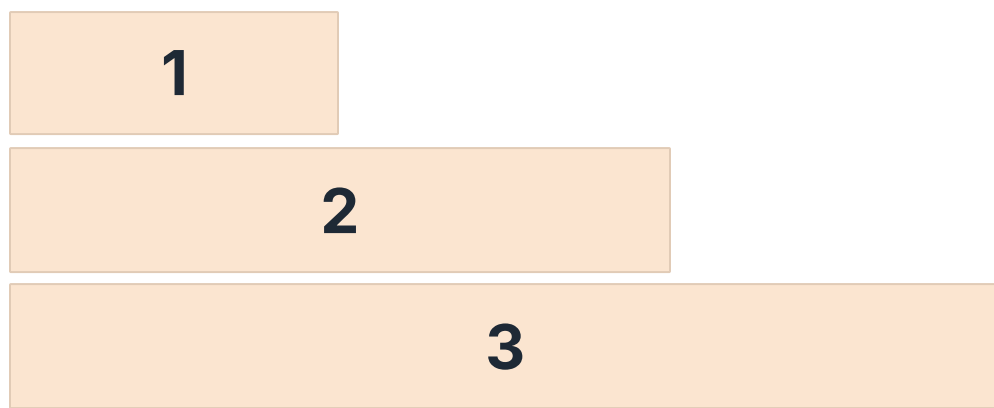
Learning data remains siloed in many organizations, unable to connect with performance management, talent systems, HRIS, or business intelligence platforms. This integration gap prevents T&D from correlating learning activity with business outcomes and employee performance. A Training Senior Manager explained:

"We know which employees completed compliance training, but we can't easily connect that data with error rates, performance reviews, or productivity metrics without manual data manipulation."

Metrics That Matter & Budget Trends

Metrics Framework

Effective measurement represents perhaps the most critical capability gap for modern T&D functions. While only a subset of respondents provided specific metrics they use to demonstrate impact, their responses reveal an emerging framework for connecting learning activities to business outcomes.



1 Business Impact Metrics

Cost savings, employee retention, revenue growth, customer satisfaction, productivity gains

2 Operational Metrics

SOP compliance, error reduction, process adherence, efficiency improvements, tool adoption

3 Learning Metrics

Completion rates, assessment scores, knowledge retention, participant reaction

The most effective T&D functions connect their activities to business outcomes through a clear chain of evidence, moving beyond completion statistics to demonstrate tangible impact. This measurement approach requires early alignment with stakeholders, multi-level measurement, technical capability, business partnerships, and attribution methodology.

Budget & Resource Trends

T&D functions continue to face significant resource constraints that limit their ability to deliver strategic value, even as organizational expectations for learning impact continue to rise. This resource tension—increasing demands paired with stagnant or declining resources—creates a challenging environment for T&D and L&D leaders seeking to elevate their function's strategic contribution.

Compensation Insights

\$20K

Minimum Salary

Likely represents part-time roles

\$76.6K

Average Salary

Middle-tier professional function

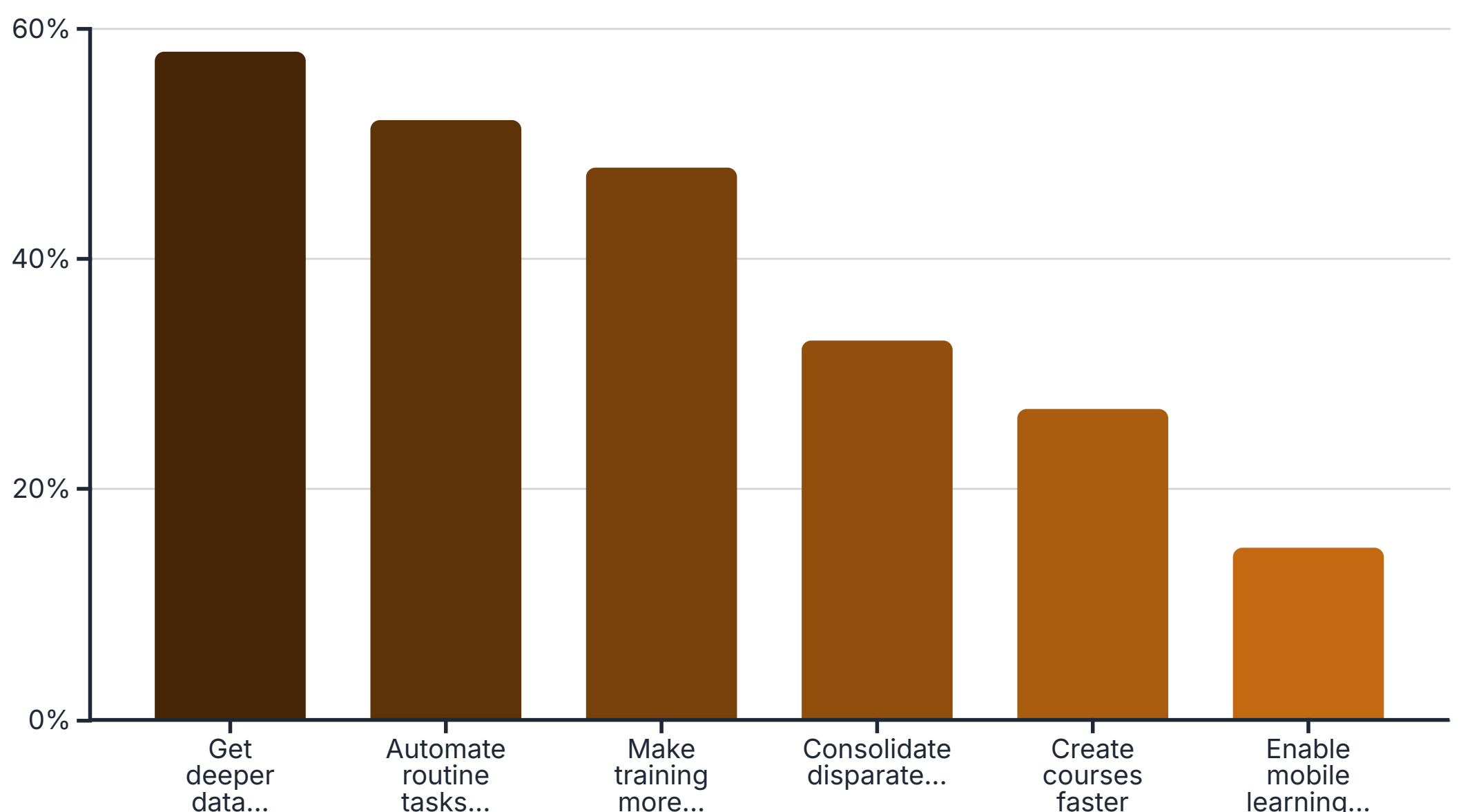
\$198K

Maximum Salary

Executive T&D leadership

This nearly 10x difference between minimum and maximum salaries within the profession underscores the highly variable valuation of T&D roles across organizations. The wide range likely reflects differences in organizational level, geographic location, industry sector, organization size, and strategic positioning.

Desired Initiatives for 2025



The predominance of data insights as the top initiative (58%) reflects the profession's recognition that its future relevance depends on better connecting learning activities to business outcomes. This priority directly addresses the "difficulty measuring impact" challenge identified earlier and represents a strategic pivot toward more evidence-based practice.

Key Recommendations

Our research reveals a Training & Development function at a critical juncture—increasingly recognized as essential for organizational success yet still struggling with resource constraints and strategic positioning challenges. The findings point to specific actions that both T&D and L&D leaders and executive teams can take to enhance the function's impact and strategic value.

For T&D and L&D Leaders

1

Strengthen measurement capabilities

Develop clear links between training activities and business outcomes using a multi-level measurement framework. Implement pre/post metrics that demonstrate value beyond completion. Create executive-friendly dashboards that speak to business priorities rather than learning activities. Build measurement into program design rather than treating it as an afterthought.

2

Pursue strategic automation

Identify and eliminate manual processes that drain capacity by conducting a comprehensive workflow audit. Focus technology investments on high-impact automation opportunities that free capacity for strategic work. Build business cases for automation using time and cost savings estimates to secure necessary resources.

3

Enhance engagement through design

Incorporate gamification and interactive elements strategically to increase engagement without compromising learning integrity. Implement microlearning for better completion rates. Leverage learner data to personalize experiences based on role, experience level, performance needs, and learning preferences.

4

Consolidate technology landscape

Evaluate current technology against strategic priorities rather than feature checklists. Consider platforms that integrate tracking, delivery, and analytics to reduce system fragmentation. Build requirements based on desired outcomes, not features by focusing on what the organization needs to accomplish.

For Executive Teams

Recognize T&D as strategic, not administrative

Include T&D and L&D leaders in strategic planning processes to ensure learning implications of business initiatives are considered from the outset. Link T&D activities to business transformation initiatives by making learning an explicit component of major change efforts. Establish clear expectations for how T&D supports business goals through formal goal alignment processes.

Invest in measurement capabilities

Support technology that enables better analytics by prioritizing systems with robust reporting and data visualization capabilities. Provide access to business metrics for correlation analysis to enable T&D teams to connect learning data with operational and financial outcomes. Expect and reward data-driven approaches to T&D by establishing clear expectations for evidence-based decision-making.

Address resource constraints strategically

Consider the hidden costs of underinvestment in people development including increased turnover, slower technology adoption, higher error rates, and reduced change capacity. Support automation to redirect resources to strategic activities by funding technology that reduces administrative burden. Evaluate T&D investment against industry benchmarks rather than arbitrary internal targets.

Create accountability partnerships

Establish clear roles and responsibilities for T&D and business partners in learning initiatives. Include learning support in leader performance expectations at all levels of the organization. Create formal governance mechanisms for major learning initiatives that include both T&D and business representation.