Bluewater™

2021 INSIGHTS

A yearly report for the state of Learning and Talent.

Introduction

In the spring of 2021, Bluewater asked professionals from a variety of industries and job levels to partake in a survey providing their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses in their organization's learning and talent management processes and technologies.
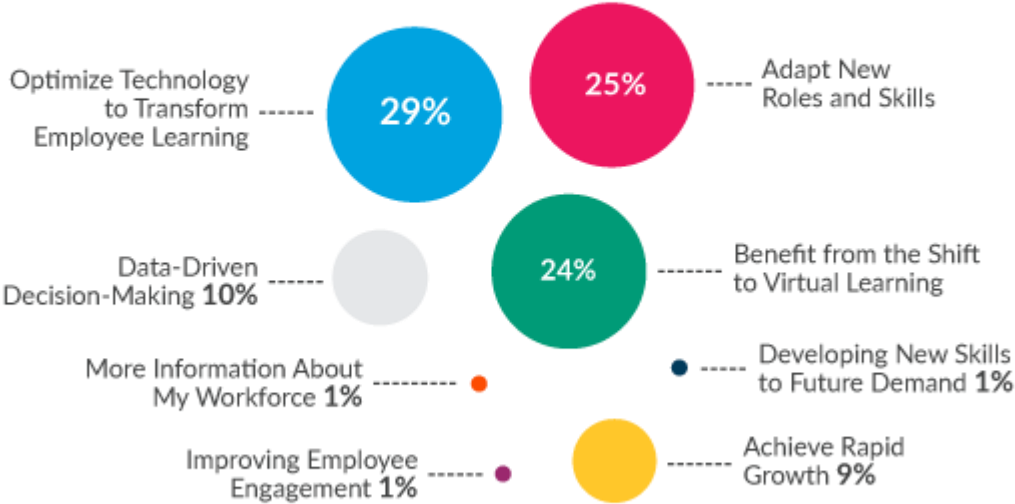
The survey results have helped to craft our 2021 Insights report, a report focused on several categories and trends within learning and talent. Dive into the specific results below, as well as tips and insights for improvement within some of the survey categories.

If you have any feedback or questions related to the content of the report, please don't hesitate to reach out to Bluewater here.
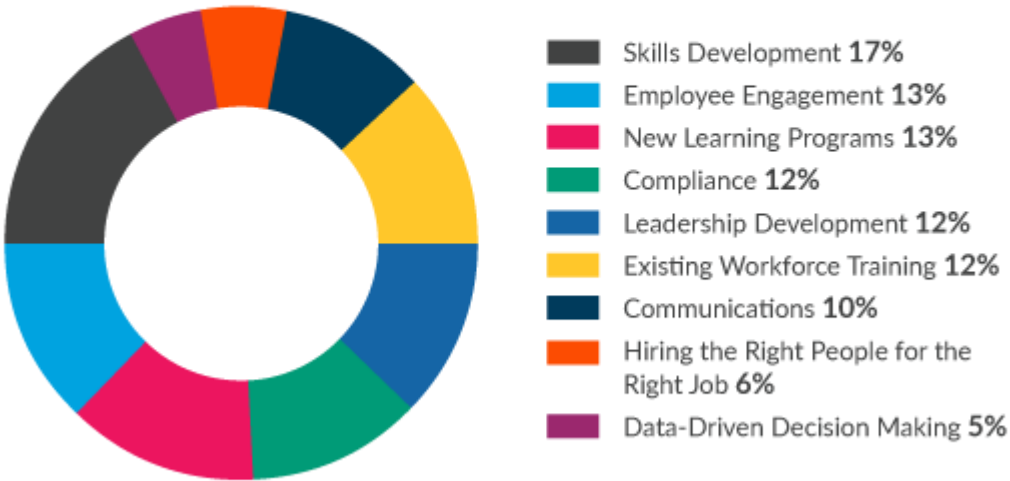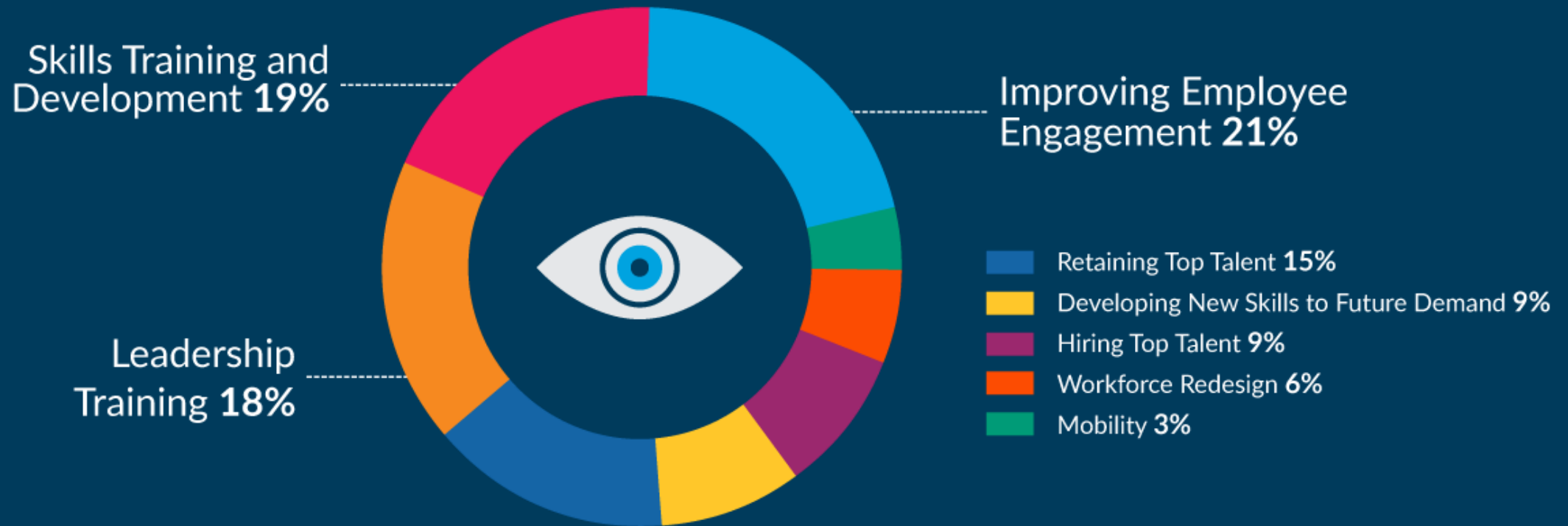
Key Findings Include:

- Skills development is at the core of improving employee and customer experiences, yet every survey respondent recognized a continued need to eliminate skill gaps that exist within their organization.

- Organizations are focused on using existing and optimized technologies to support the need to address employee engagement and development in their organization.

- In addition to meeting the needs of their future, organizations are concerned about both losing high performers and that critical roles are staffed with people with the wrong skills.

- Despite future challenges, organizations are generally satisfied with their current levels of employee engagement but recognize additional development will be required.

How Ready is Your Organization to?

Optimize Technology to Transform Employee Learning ------- **29%**

Adapt New Roles and Skills **25%**

Data-Driven Decision-Making **10%**

Benefit from the Shift to Virtual Learning **24%**

More Information About My Workforce **1%**

Developing New Skills to Future Demand **1%**

Improving Employee Engagement **1%**

Achieve Rapid Growth **9%**

What are the top areas in which your department makes the biggest organizational impact?

- Skills Development **17%**
- Employee Engagement **13%**
- New Learning Programs **13%**
- Compliance **12%**
- Leadership Development **12%**
- Existing Workforce Training **12%**
- Communications **10%**
- Hiring the Right People for the Right Job **6%**
- Data-Driven Decision Making **5%**

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Skills Training and Development 19%

Improving Employee Engagement 21%

Leadership Training 18%

Retaining Top Talent 15%

Developing New Skills to Future Demand 9%

Hiring Top Talent 9%

Workforce Redesign 6%

Mobility 3%

In your opinion, what factors are most critical to achieving your company's vision?

To achieve the organization's vision, companies believe they must focus on employee engagement, skills training and leadership training. This emphasis on employee development drives the constant development of skills in a way that allows employees to connect to the organization and grow their careers in a way that is rewarding to both the employee and the organization. Development of skills requires careful assessment of necessary capabilities, an assessment of current skills, and an understanding of the activities required to close that gap.
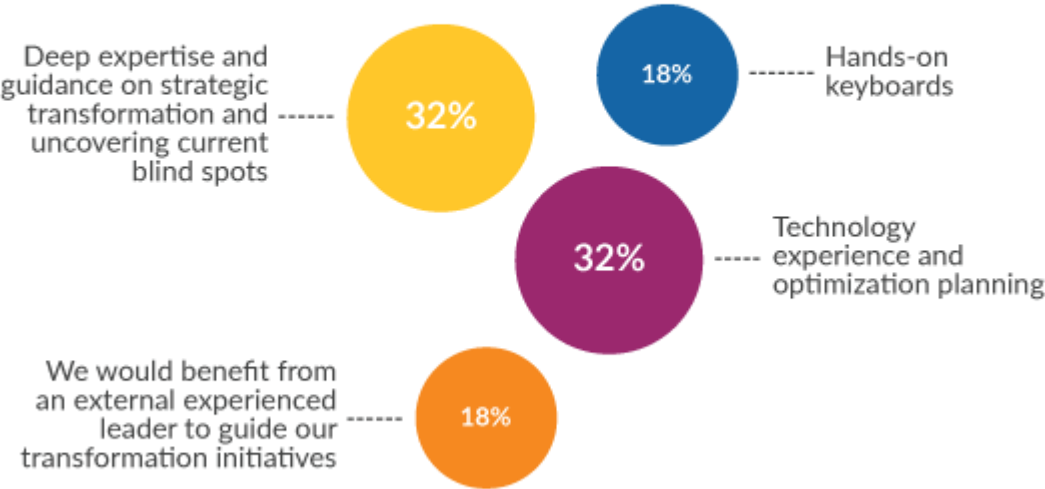
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Not confident 11%

Somewhat confident 11%

Confident but lacking resources 33%

We got this 39%

We would benefit from an external experienced leader to guide our transformation initiatives 6%

How confident are you in your organization's ability to drive digital transformation?

While organizations are confident in their knowledge and ability to drive digital transformation, they are less confident in using learning and talent to navigate organizational change. Many organizations generally feel they lack resources to address these changes, creating a strong demand for guidance, application, and support as they navigate the challenges of the current environment.

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How confident are you in your organization's ability to utilize learning and talent to navigate organizational change?

45% Somewhat confident	25% Confident but lack resources	20% We got this		

- 5% Confident but lack resources
- 5% Not confident

What level of help does your company need to accomplish your organizational transformation?

Deep expertise and guidance on strategic transformation and uncovering current blind spots ------ 32%

18% ------ Hands-on keyboards

32% ------ Technology experience and optimization planning

We would benefit from an external experienced leader to guide our transformation initiatives ------ 18%

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Use learning and talent technology to improve employee connection and communication 31%
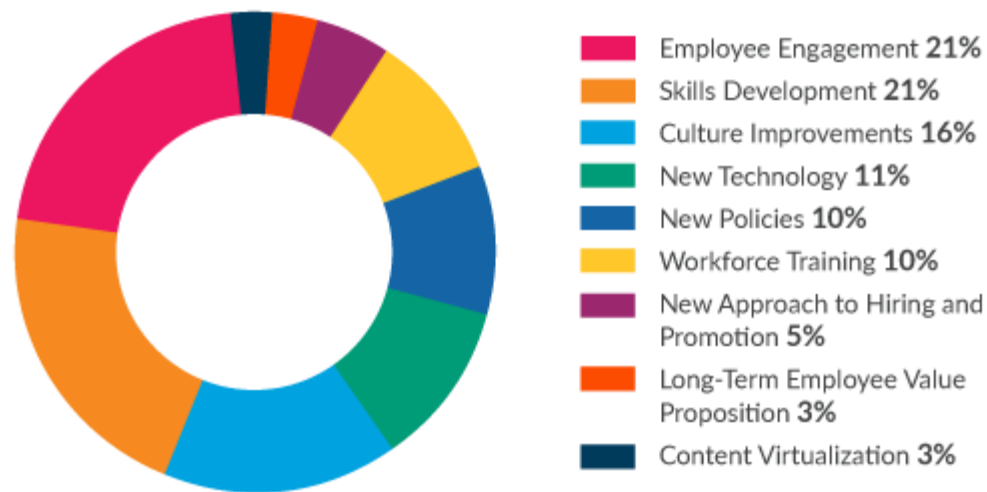
Optimize existing technology 18%

Add additional integration to existing technology 15%

Adopt new technology 12%

Upskilling 8%

Add functionality to existing technology 8%

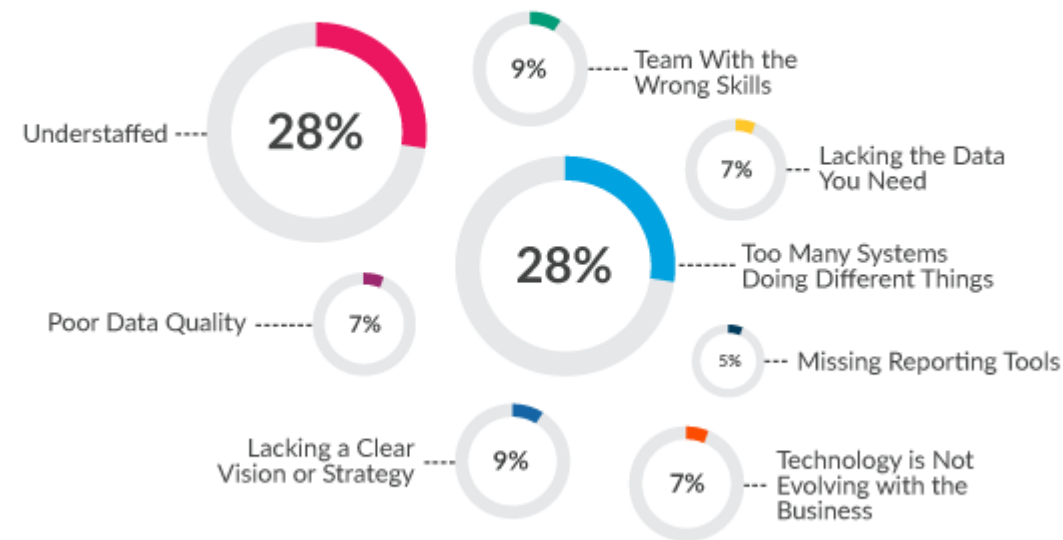Open communications around organizational performance 8%

How do you plan to engage workers in the future?

Companies recognize engaging workers requires the use of learning and talent technology, as well as connecting existing technology that is optimized. This recognition reinforces the need to concentrate efforts on the processes that technology supports within the organization and making sure those processes are aligned with the goals of the organization.

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In what ways are you transforming your company?

Employee Engagement **21%**
Skills Development **21%**
Culture Improvements **16%**
New Technology **11%**
New Policies **10%**
Workforce Training **10%**
New Approach to Hiring and Promotion **5%**
Long-Term Employee Value Proposition **3%**
Content Virtualization **3%**

What are the challenges preventing you from success?

Understaffed ---- **28%**

9% ----- Team With the Wrong Skills

7% --- Lacking the Data You Need

28% ------- Too Many Systems Doing Different Things

Poor Data Quality ------- **7%**

5% --- Missing Reporting Tools

Lacking a Clear Vision or Strategy ---- **9%**

7% --- Technology is Not Evolving with the Business

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Improve Customer Experience 19%

Improve Employee Engagement 19%

Drive Growth 19%

- Upskilling Your Workforce 13%
- Increase Margin 9%
- Develop Top Talent 9%
- Develop Next Generation of Managers and Leaders 9%
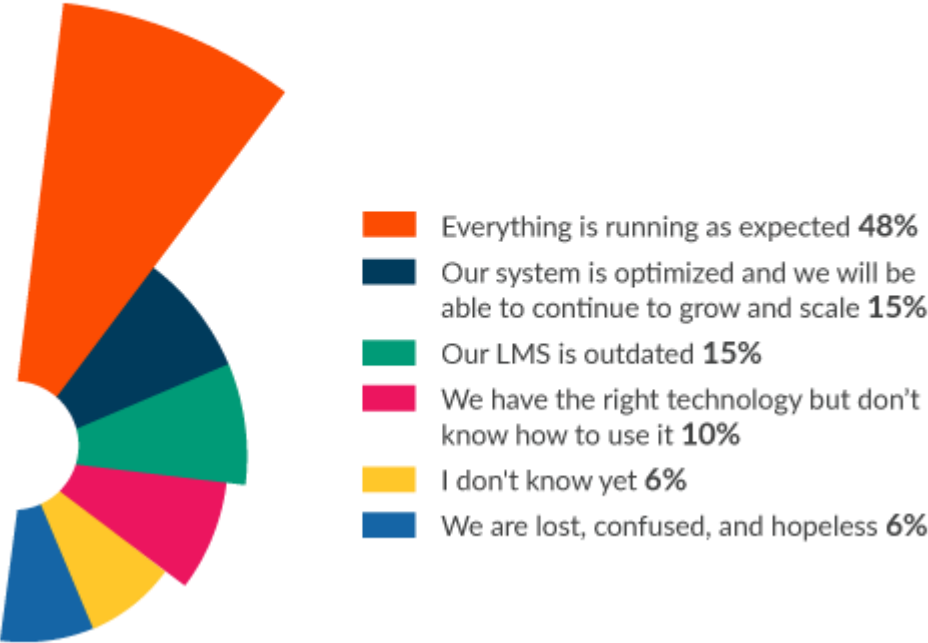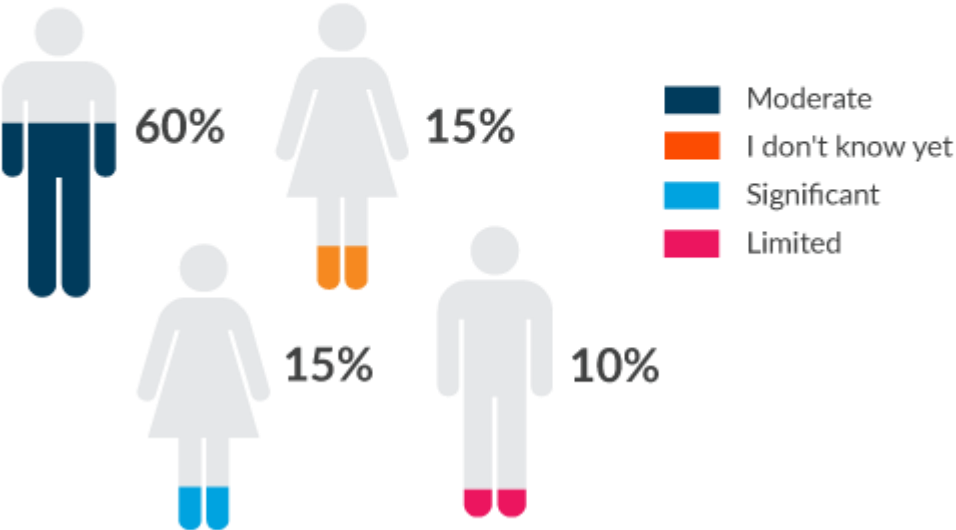- Increase Our Promotion From Within 3%

What are your most important quantified goals in the next three years?

Top organizational goals focused on employee engagement, customer experience, and growth all require the effective use of technologies to execute and measure these goals. Specific goals will differ by organization based on their focus, but long-term efforts to measure these outcomes are circling on the need to improve key stakeholder experiences.
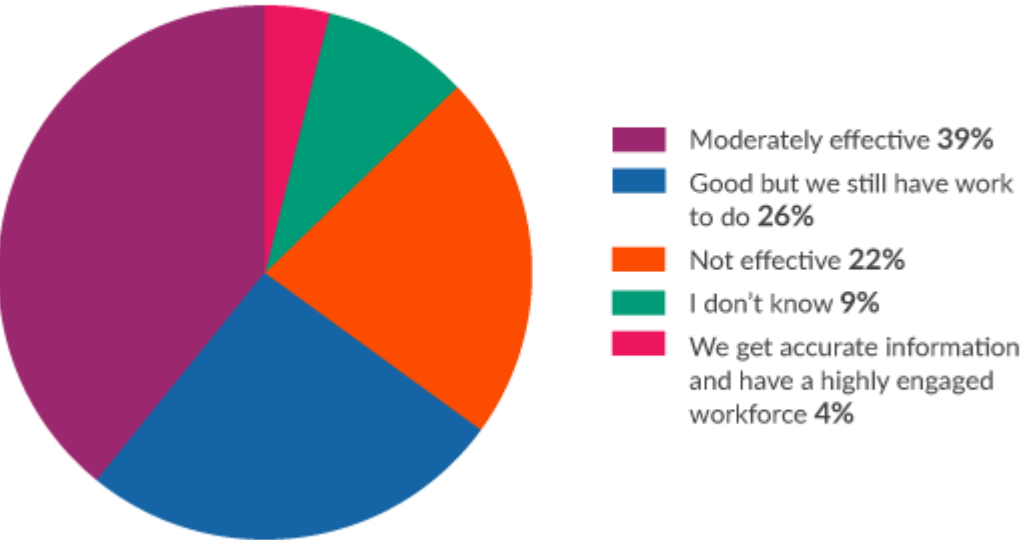
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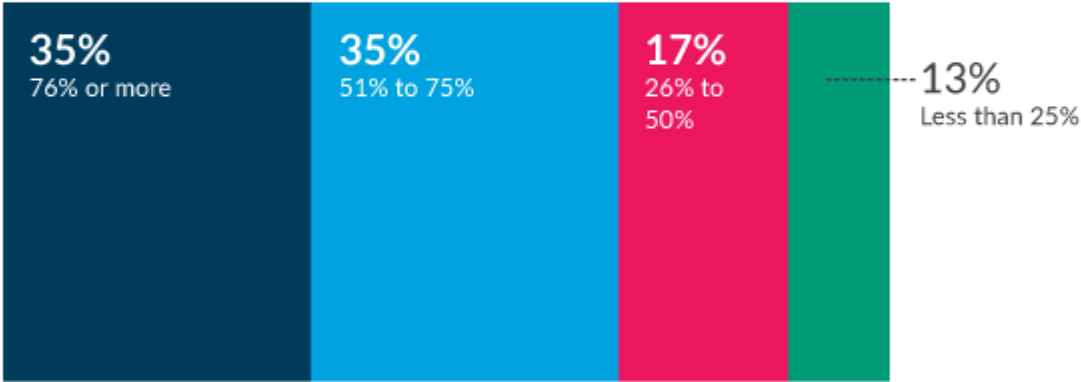# How well does your LMS support your current organizational needs?

- Everything is running as expected **48%**
- Our system is optimized and we will be able to continue to grow and scale **15%**
- Our LMS is outdated **15%**
- We have the right technology but don't know how to use it **10%**
- I don't know yet **6%**
- We are lost, confused, and hopeless **6%**

How much investment is your organization making in your employees' futures?

60% 15%

15% 10%

- Moderate
- I don't know yet
- Significant
- Limited

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How effective is your employee engagement program?

- **Moderately effective 39%**
- **Good but we still have work to do 26%**
- **Not effective 22%**
- **I don't know 9%**
- **We get accurate information and have a highly engaged workforce 4%**

What percentage of your employees would say that they are committed to your organization?

35% 76% or more

35% 51% to 75%

17% 26% to 50%

13% Less than 25%

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We have a significant skills gap between what we need to drive future success and where we are today **35%**

We don't know what our skills supply is **35%**

We feel confident about our future talent's ability to function **25%**

We have a significant skills gap between what we need to drive future success and where we are today **5%**

How big is the gap between your demand for employee skills and your supply of employee skills?

Few organizations are prepared today to balance the supply and demand for employee skills. Additionally, organizations that understand their current supply or future demand recognize the need to fill the large gap that exists to meet those future needs; this gaps will require significant action from organizations to address those gaps quickly.

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What percentage of your critical roles are staffed with people with the wrong skills?

Less than 25% ------ **48%**

76% or more ---- 4%

51% to 75% ---- 4%

26% to 50% ---- **44%**
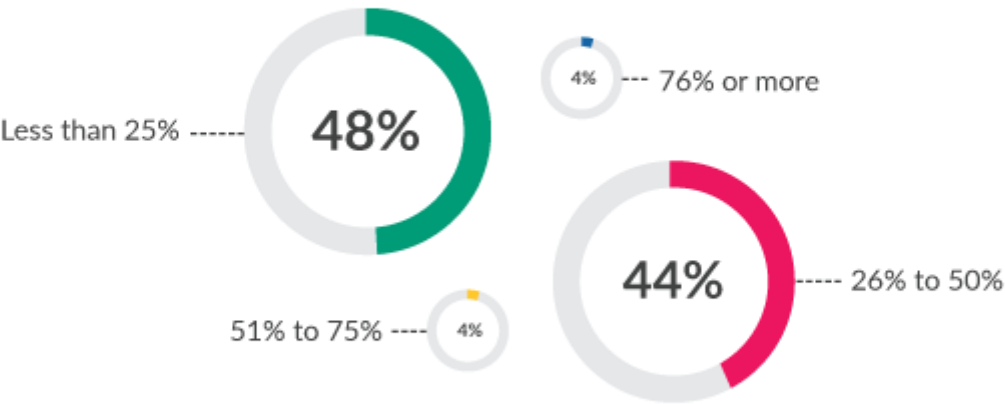
What percentage of your high performers are at high risk for departure?

- 26 to 50% - **62%**
- 26 or less - **24%**
- 51% to 75% - **14%**
- 76% or more - **0%**
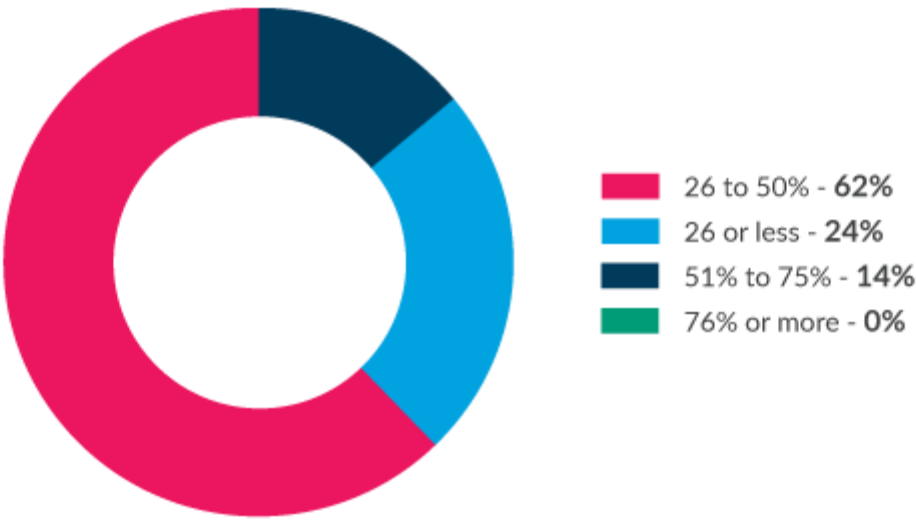
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About Bluewater

Bluewater is the client-side partner for learning, talent, and human capital management that brings deep expertise for the selection, implementation, and operation of learning and talent management systems. As a full-service consulting and services company, Bluewater focuses on solving business problems by maximizing the value of our client's technology investments in these areas.

Founded in 2003, Bluewater is headquartered in Plano, Texas, and has employees with locations in the US, and Europe.

To learn more about Bluewater, visit our **website** or follow us on **Twitter**, **LinkedIn**, and **Facebook.**

Our Methodology

Our reasoning behind everything we do is...YOU! Over the course of more than 18 years serving clients, Bluewater has designed and created the Bluewater Center of Excellence (COE) Methodology. The COE defines 7 critical service areas clients must address to obtain value from their Learning and Talent software. **Learn More**

Our Holistic Approach

After years of serving clients, we have identified 7 core elements of the Employee Engagement Life Cycle. We help clients engage employees and transform their business by aligning and optimizing their Learning and Talent technologies and processes throughout the stages of this cycle. **Learn More**

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