



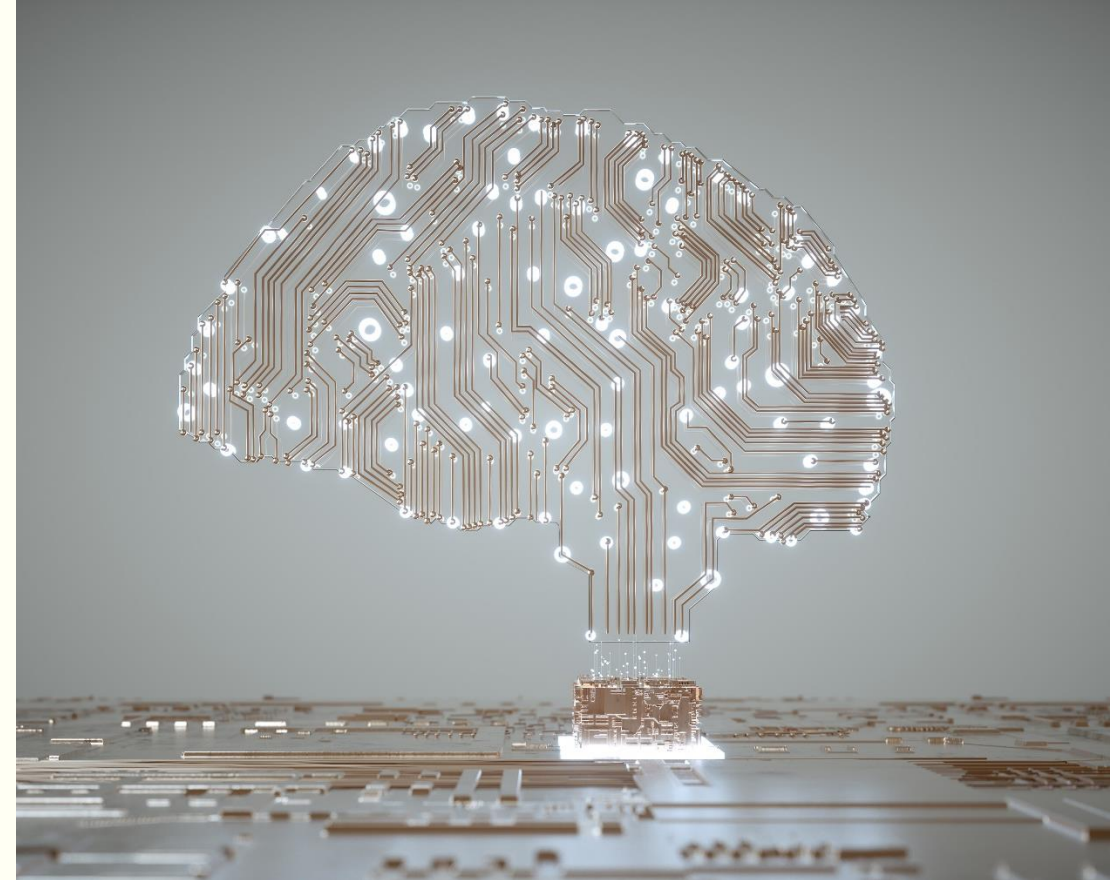
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ASSIGNMENT 1

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Introduction

The technologic landscape is rapidly changing, therefore the L&D function needs to keep up with new tools and methods while also maintaining a solid grasp of learning theory and engaging learners (Thite and Thite, 2018). The development of digital tools has boosted flexibility, enhanced constant training access, and provided superior solutions across various workplace areas (O'Donnell, 2021).

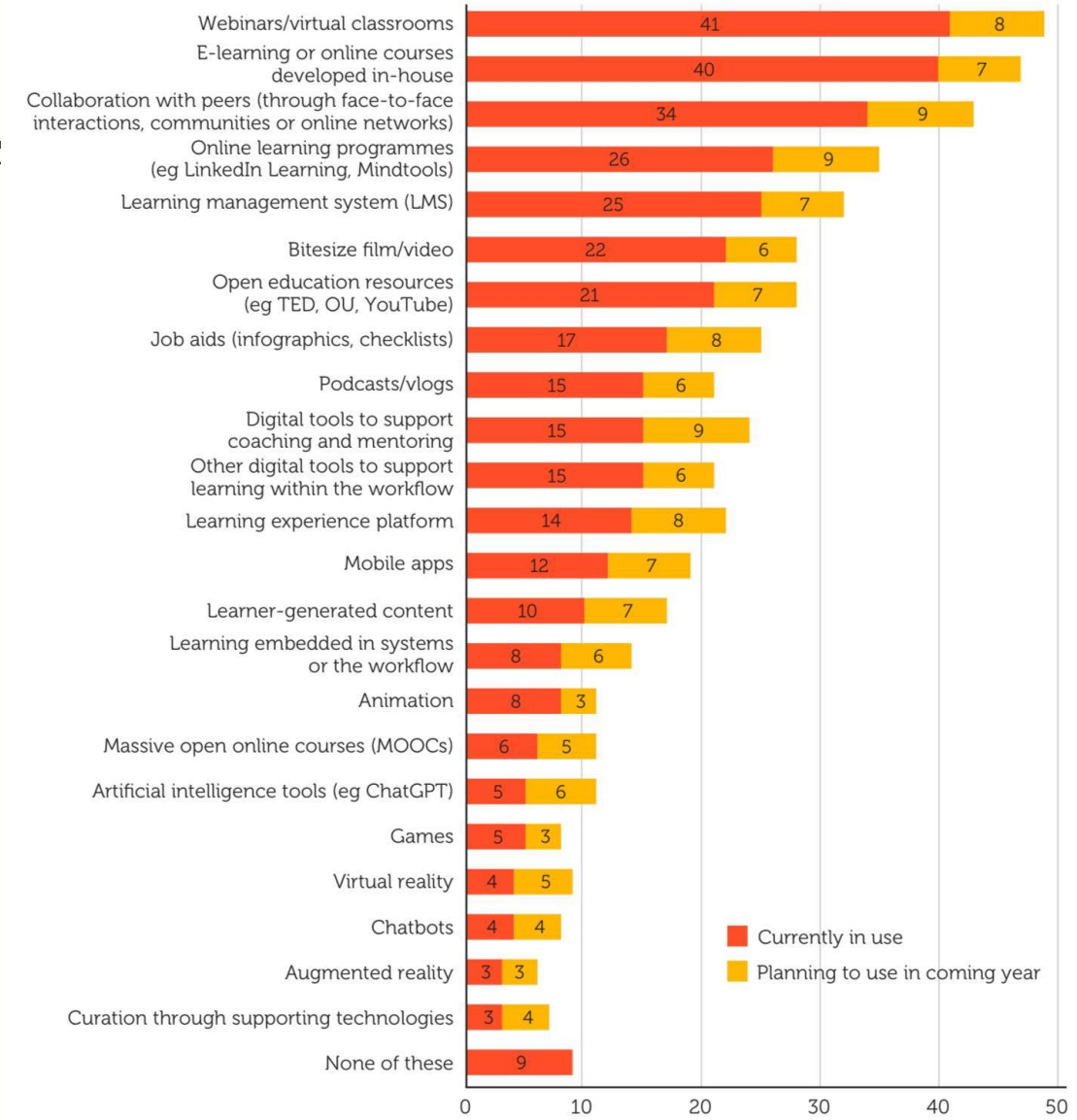
As per Armstrong (2021), digital learning involves providing and managing learning opportunities and support through computer systems, networks, and web technologies.

The trend shows a decrease in face-to-face learning and a rise in digital learning, with 48% indicating an increase in usage since 2021 according to CIPD (2023).

Technology-driven L&D Channels

- LMS platforms: deliver, manage, track e-learning.
- VR and AR: immersive, interactive training.
- Gamification: engaging, interactive learning.
- Mobile Learning: anytime, anywhere training.
- Video Conferencing and Webinars: live virtual training, remote collaboration.
- Simulations and Interactive Modules: practice skills, feedback.
- AI and Machine Learning: personalize, adapt, automate training.

Digital technologies used to support L&D now and planned use for the coming year (% of respondents)



Source: CIPD (2023)

The Impact

O'Donnell (2021) discussed about how technology impacts learning and development in organisations, and her key findings are:

Opportunities

- Access to diverse learning materials
- Reduced training costs
- Learning at one's own pace
- Tailored learning paths
- Interactive and engaging content
- Data-driven decision making
- Connecting global teams
- Lifelong learning
- Adapting to organisational change

Challenges

- Ensuring access to technology for all employees
- Ensuring quality of materials and employee engagement
- Lack of social interaction
- Lack of structured schedules when employees train at their own pace

How Technology-enhanced L&D Benefits Employees

1. Flexibility and Convenience

Through digital training, employees have the opportunity to partake in learning activities according to their individual pacing and convenience. This adaptability can result in improved completion rates and stronger information retention (Thite and Thite, 2018) .

A case study by Torrington et al (2020) described how John Lewis Partners are given tablets to update while working on the shop floor. There is a big investment in a self-service learning and development website. Partners can access training anytime using any device. It's not meant to save costs. A mentoring database and online courses from Ashridge Business School are also available. The main aim is to equip all partners for excellent customer service. John Lewis values lifelong learning and focuses on developing individuals. They offer subsidized leisure learning with up to 50% off courses outside work on any topic for partners.

2. Access to Diverse Resources

Employees can access a broad range of learning materials and tools through digital platforms that may not be readily available in a traditional setting. This includes multimedia resources, online libraries, and interactive modules (Thite and Thite, 2018).

Amazon aims to simplify access to essential skills for career advancement, with two significant investments planned by 2025. The first involves a £10 million investment over three years to upskill 5,000 employees through Career Choice. Additionally, they are offering free cloud computing training to 29 million individuals globally through public programs (Amazon, 2024).

3. Individualised Learning Routes

Tailored digital training programs can be customised to meet the unique learning requirements and preferences of each individual, thereby boosting the efficacy of the training. Customized learning routes can assist employees in concentrating on the areas requiring the most enhancement (Thite and Thite, 2018).

McDonald's learning app offers restaurant employees an engaging way to look beyond their daily tasks, featuring a variety of content aimed at career growth and educational enhancement according to a case study by Armstrong (2021). Building on the Archways to Opportunity program, the app includes tools such as a working style quiz, a comprehensive list of career pathways, options to set and track learning goals, and a chatbox for questions about the program. Additionally, employees have opportunities to engage in coaching sessions to further their personal and professional development.

4. Enhanced Participation and Interaction

In digital training, interactive features like quizzes, simulations, and gamification are commonly incorporated, leading to heightened employee engagement and motivation (Thite and Thite, 2018).

Deloitte turned to gamification to enhance engagement among top-level executives in their learning management system by partnering with Badgeville to integrate game mechanics into the DLA website. They employed three key mechanics: rank and rewards, where executives earned points and achievements for interacting with content and high-value behaviors; missions, which involved a set of achievements and challenges to help executives complete courses and monthly learning goals; and leaderboards, allowing executives to compete and become experts in various development areas based on their engagement levels (Deep, 2016).

How Technology-enhanced L&D Benefits Employers

1. Improved Analytics and Monitoring

Digital training platforms typically include sophisticated analytics tools that enable employers to monitor employees' progress, completion rates, and identify areas where employees may encounter difficulties. This data-driven approach assists in making well-informed decisions regarding future training requirements (Thite and Thite, 2018).

Citi Bank leverages data significantly in its operations and training delivery processes, recognising its pivotal role. Data analysis aids employers in comprehending employee usage of L&D support, providing convenient access to new information, personalised training details for enhanced resource allocation (Citi, 2024).

2. Continuous Training Delivery

Employers can use digital learning and development in their favour, to ensure all employees receive consistent standardised training content, contributing to the maintenance of quality and uniformity across the organisation (Thite and Thite, 2018).

Ernst and Young, a prominent accounting firm, discovered that the COVID-19 pandemic was a pivotal moment for digital education. They have embraced synchronous virtual experiences and asynchronous digital learning. Utilising various learning approaches like curated content, videos, virtual classrooms, webinars, and e-learning modules, they aim to foster a culture where ongoing learning is a norm (Ernst & Young, 2023).

3. Cost and time efficiency

Digital training programs result in cost savings and time efficiency by cutting down expenses linked to conventional training approaches like travel costs, venue rentals, and print materials. This allows organisations to offer top-notch training at a significantly lower cost. Furthermore, digital training programs often lead to a quicker completion compared to traditional methods, thereby enhancing productivity and reducing time spent away from daily work duties (Thite and Thite, 2018).

ROI in learning activities demonstrates value by comparing the total costs (design, time away, location) against the benefits aligned with organizational objectives, using specific evaluation methods (Torrington et al, 2020).

Adobe's digital transformation involved shifting to a SaaS business model, utilizing cloud technology, revamping HR strategies, and adopting data-driven operations. To achieve these goals, Adobe focused on attracting top talent by fostering an employee-centric work culture, providing tech-based learning opportunities, and enhancing employer branding. This comprehensive transformation illustrates that digital initiatives can offer significant competitive advantages and must encompass the entire organization to redefine operational practices (Quixy, 2024).

4. Higher staff retention

By providing chances for ongoing learning and growth, employers can enhance employee satisfaction and retention rates. Employees who perceive that their skills are being nurtured are more inclined to remain committed to an organisation (Thite and Thite, 2018).

In January 2013, Cisco incorporated Knowledge Guru into their Cisco Sales Associate Training Program (CSAP) based on participant feedback indicating a need for better content mastery and retention (Deep, 2016). The gamified platform was used for multiple modules in the program, ensuring new associates gained a deep understanding of Cisco's architectures and technologies before working with customers. This approach leveraged the advantages of gamification, allowing associates to make and learn from virtual mistakes, thus preventing costly errors in real situations. The advancement opportunities, and the modern digital delivery channels of L&D, participated in Cisco being ranked #3 in the World's Best Workplaces 2023 list (GreatPlaceToWork, 2023).

Conclusion

Technology has transformed training and development, offering employees and employers unique chances for advancement and effectiveness. Employees benefit from tech-driven training programs with better learning experiences, higher engagement, access to current knowledge, and flexible learning choices. Employers, on the other hand, see enhanced efficiency, cost savings, data-driven insights, and improved talent retention through these programs. As companies increasingly adopt technological progress, the learning and development environment will evolve, propelling both personal and organisational achievements.





QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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