

WHITE PAPER

Why L&D is the Key to Achieving Your Company Culture Goals

A guide to building positive company cultures that strengthen business performance.



Background

Spotlight on Company Culture

The last few years have changed the way we work and what companies expect of employees. With the shift to remote work, many organizations realized their cultures needed improvement to thrive. A [Korn Ferry survey](#) found that 38% of working professionals stated they would quit their job without another opportunity lined up, with the biggest reason being poor company culture.

At the same time, more than one-third say that no counteroffer would convince them to stay. One key to attracting top talent is a renewed focus on company culture. Businesses that succeed will rethink employee engagement and develop an employee-centric work environment.

Many businesses have learned the importance of having a solid company culture and adapting it when things get tough. Strong company cultures create resilient teams. An adaptive culture provides the groundwork for transformation and innovation.



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Mentions of “burnout” in reviews have surged **32% year-over-year and are now 50% higher than pre-pandemic.**

Companies with a culture that fosters trust, transparency, and collaboration are **5 times more likely to have strong financial outcomes and 2.5 times more likely to retain their talent.**

Organizations appearing on Fortune’s annual 100 Best Companies to Work For list also see **higher average annual returns, with cumulative returns as high as 495% instead of 170% (Russell 3000) and 156% (S&P 500).**



Company Culture’s Influence on Burnout and Performance

Employers also recognized that positive company cultures help maintain employee engagement and performance while supporting an increasingly burned-out workforce. But unfortunately, burnout at work is real. A [2025 study](#) found that **66% of U.S. employees are experiencing burnout.**

This is an all-time high. The main drivers include excessive workloads, lack of resources, economic uncertainty, labor shortages, and return-to-office mandates. Further, according to a [Glassdoor analysis](#), mentions of “burnout” in reviews have surged 32% year-over-year and are now 50% higher than pre-pandemic. That’s why more companies are moving from a burnout culture to a wellness culture.

In addition, organizational culture is the top influencer of employee engagement and performance. Companies with a culture that fosters trust, transparency, and collaboration are **5 times more likely to have strong financial outcomes and 2.5 times more likely to retain their talent**, according to [Deloitte’s Global Human Capital Trends study](#). And there is a clear correlation between corporate culture and financial performance. [According to Forbes](#), companies with strong cultures have seen a 4x increase in revenue growth. Not only that, but **organizations appearing on Fortune’s annual 100 Best Companies to Work For list also see higher average annual returns, with cumulative returns as high as 495% instead of 170% (Russell 3000) and 156% (S&P 500).**

Intentional or Not, You Have a Company Culture

Whether you acknowledge it or not, you have a company culture. The question is, is it intentional? When organizations fail to prioritize company culture, they risk more than just losing valuable talent. **A toxic culture can put your reputation to the test.** [The CEO of Better.com](#) brought his company's culture into the public eye by announcing 900 layoffs over Zoom. He has since apologized, but the press coverage prompted a third-party investigation into the company's work environment, which revealed that the CEO's behavior was reflective of a poorly evolved culture.

And let's not forget Uber. [Uber's focus on aggressive growth, failure to prioritize compliance, and lack of transparency](#) internally resulted in siloed teams that lacked coordination. Allegations of sexual harassment and gender discrimination further emphasized how toxic the culture truly was. These events led Uber to hire an employee to review its workforce, improve its culture, and build out its management team.

On the flip side, progressive companies like Spanx are thriving with strong cultures based on fun and creativity. In fact, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast" is one of Spanx founder Sara Blakely's favorite quotes. Blakely was in the news for [surprising each employee with a \\$10,000 bonus](#) plus two first-class tickets anywhere in the world to celebrate the sale and partnership with global investment firm Blackstone.

And, Google (Alphabet) puts learning and development career growth at the forefront. Google provides continuous learning opportunities and supports employees through mentorship programs and internal job mobility.

Spanx and Google are just two of many who understand that culture matters and has implications for the bottom line. **Great company culture can create a work environment that encourages team building and employee engagement and helps retain top talent.** In the long run, you're in a position for better business success.



Progressive Companies Focus on Their People

Progressive companies have goals around employee growth and well-being and shared values which aren't just altruistic. They lead to attracting the highest quality candidates, improving engagement, reducing turnover, and increasing productivity—all during a time when turnover is still a significant issue for many companies. According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#), the number of employees quitting their jobs as of mid-2025 remains above pre-pandemic levels. **In 2024, the quit rate was around 2.7% of the total workforce per month. That's roughly 4.5 million workers quitting every month. This number is still significantly higher than the pre-pandemic average of around 2.3%.**

But what is culture? Company culture has many dimensions, including symbols, norms, practices, rituals, and beliefs. **But at the heart of culture are core values.** Core values are the clearly stated principles of the company's mission and vision that unite employees around a guiding philosophy to achieve business goals. But ensuring that everyone understands values and culture isn't easy. It requires hard work and exceptional internal communication.

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Company Culture Goals are Notoriously Difficult to Achieve

Maintaining a positive company culture takes a lot more than just posting a mission statement on your website or the break room wall. Building a unified culture takes consistency, hard work, and dedication. You must periodically measure progress, monitor behavior and actions, and tweak programs accordingly to steer the organization successfully ahead.

But who is responsible for cultivating organizational culture? Traditionally, the HR team works to achieve company culture goals. [McKinsey's study](#) on corporate culture emphasizes that culture is a shared responsibility between leadership and employees. **Leadership sets direction, but employees drive the culture through their daily actions, interactions, and behaviors.**

Historically, many businesses defined culture as free lunches, a beer fridge, and ping pong tables. But those are perks, not culture. Perks don't help to establish core values that drive the business. They also don't teach employees the interpersonal, communication, and conflict resolution skills needed to navigate the new normal in business. **But you have a secret weapon that you may not be aware of—it's your learning ecosystem.**



Your Learning Ecosystem is Your Secret Weapon

Your learning ecosystem can be more than just a set of learning tools, such as a learning management system (LMS) or learning experience platform (LXP). It can be a source of community, engagement, culture, and rich learning experiences. But you can't build a strong corporate culture overnight. That's why your learning ecosystem needs to be scalable and easy to access.

Employees aren't going to make an effort to learn if the process isn't seamless. Whether through an LMS, LXP, intranet, etc., delivering courses must be a user-friendly and intuitive experience. Ideally, you should have on-demand learning that enables your teams to access course materials anywhere at any time via smartphone or tablet. This feature is vital so that today's remote and hybrid workforces can quickly learn on the go and in the flow of work. The good news is, that if your learning ecosystem is already in place, then all you need now is the right content!



According to [research by Bersin & Associates](#), organizations with a robust learning culture have:

- 37% greater employee productivity
- 92% more likely to innovate and a 46% greater likelihood to be first to market
- 26% greater ability to deliver quality products

Add the Right Content to Fuel Your Company Culture Goals

[According to research by McKinsey](#), L&D's strategic role in the organization spans five areas:

Develop people capabilities. Companies that make investments in future leaders see impressive returns. According to McKinsey:

"Companies in the top quartile of leadership outperform other organizations by nearly two times on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA). ...Companies that invest in developing leaders during significant transformations are 2.4 times more likely to hit their performance targets."

Attract and retain talent. Opportunities for learning and growth are among the top reasons people join a company. On the flip side, a lack of growth opportunities is one of the key reasons workers cite for leaving an organization.

Motivate and engage employees. To consistently engage employees, your organization must continue to invest in them. Proper training and development can significantly enhance employee engagement by nurturing talent and improving performance. When highly engaged employees have the skills to grow, they are more likely to be energized and satisfied with their organization.

Build your employment brand. Given the current situation, companies are working harder to compete for top talent. Investments in L&D can help enhance your brand and boost your reputation as an employer of choice.

Create a values-based culture. As the workforce becomes more dispersed, L&D can help build a culture based on values and a sense of community. Education about values-based leadership should reinforce how to model desired behavior, encourage reflection among employees, and deal honestly and openly with ethical issues as they arise in the workplace.



Content That Resonates

Accessibility and relevance are crucial to creating memorable educational experiences, improving engagement, and increasing ROI from training initiatives. Unfortunately, most learning content lacks the approachable, inspirational tone needed to encourage shifts in thinking and behavior. **That's because the standard one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective and outdated.** Ideally, your content balances business objectives and addresses the needs of both people leaders and individual contributors.



Your L&D strategy should focus not just on the general technical skills your organization needs, but also on developing learning paths that build the soft skills necessary to succeed in today's workplace. Emotional intelligence, inclusion and belonging, adaptability, and resilience are important. Offer flexible options that give employees a “choose your own adventure” experience so they can easily find the content that aligns with their learning style and professional development goals.

Personalized learning content should also be current and relevant. When employees take courses that apply to their role and skill level, their engagement and retention improve. **Your L&D strategy should guide employees on a path that builds the skills necessary to embrace change and learn about the values surrounding your newly defined company culture.**

Content With Choice

Offering multiple formats and delivery methods—like learning on the go—is one of the best and most convenient ways to engage employees. This mobile approach also gives employees ownership over their learning journey. **Providing choices helps you increase engagement and enthusiasm for professional development.**

Now, Put It On Repeat

Here's a fun fact. Humans have a shorter attention span than that of a goldfish! [Studies in recent years](#) have found that the average human attention span has fallen from 12 seconds in 2000 to eight seconds today. Yet the importance of learning in the workplace hasn't diminished. **A company culture of learning can make your organization more innovative and adaptable.** But how can employees absorb large amounts of information with such short attention spans? [The solution is microlearning.](#)

Microlearning is particularly effective because it can be accessed on-demand while your employees are on the go, working remotely, or performing their job. Each microlearning segment builds on concepts through digestible bite-sized chunks of content. You can think of them as learning snacks delivered via text, images, audio, video, quizzes, podcasts, or even interactive games.

With drip learning, you can deliver smaller bits of content over time. That way, you keep the learning manageable. This approach also allows you to address questions in between lessons and review how employees retain and apply the information. Learners can process information before tackling the next lesson with a break between courses.

It is important to note microlearning content is not just traditional lessons chopped up! **It is intentionally crafted for microlearning.** For example, imagine creating a course on unconscious bias. Lesson one builds awareness around what it is and why all humans have it. Then lesson two dives into how it impacts the workplace; finally, lesson three addresses identifying and avoiding it in our day-to-day professional lives. Drip learning is also instrumental with new-hire training, where most employees feel like they are drinking from a firehose. **With microlearning, you can turn the firehose into a fountain.**



"Microlearning enhances learning and performance in the most efficient and effective manner possible through short pieces of content."

According to the [Association for Talent Development](#)

Creating Learning and Development Content is Hard

Microlearning has many benefits, including increasing employee engagement and improving knowledge retention. But it can take time and effort to maintain. **One way to address this is to empower more people within your organization to create content.**

This approach, also called employee-generated learning, means giving subject matter experts the authority to develop and maintain valuable learning materials. It harnesses their expertise and allows them to share it with colleagues.



Things are Constantly Changing

Another challenge in creating content is that change is a constant in today's aggressive, fast-moving business environment. **And as the business landscape changes, your microlearning content will need to change along with it.** That will require your organization to remain agile and ready to pivot as needed. For example, as stress and anxiety increased, more companies recognized the importance of incorporating learning resources on resilience, mindfulness, burnout, and adapting to change.

Yes, things are constantly changing. just ask AI! This tool and how we use it in today's business environment is still evolving. HSI has steadily introduced multiple AI features to the HSI platform, streamlining actions for professional development learning, EHS Incident Management functions, safety, process document creation, and customer support, with a singular user interface, and all-in-one platform. The LMS portion of the HSI platform now has an AI-enhanced query of all training content, and provides tailored learner recommendations.

It's Complicated

Another hurdle to creating content is that the material needs can vary across the organization. For example, you may want leadership content customized to managers leading growing teams and more advanced materials targeted to employee resource groups and cultural ambassadors. **You'll successfully increase engagement and productivity by providing employees with personalized training paths.**

But to remain flexible and deliver personalized learning content, you'll need a robust library of rich content across a broad and deep range of topics. Creating that much information can be time-consuming to develop and difficult to maintain. For that reason, many companies choose to partner with a firm that offers off-the-shelf content so you can easily meet your L&D goals, engage employees, and drive your business forward.



What Does a Content Partner Look Like?

HSI is one such partner. HSI delivers [world-class learning](#) to corporate clients through a library of over 5,000 microlearning assets with fresh new content published regularly. Whether it's training around soft skills, HR compliance, leadership development, or inclusion and belonging, **HSI has content to align with your company's unique mission, strategy, and culture goals.**

An example of HSI in practice is with clients who roll out the platform to their employees with learning journeys to help your learners understand how to collaborate, solve problems, and thrive with AI. Lessons arm learners with the knowledge and confidence to leverage AI to maximize productively and innovation.

And the best part—you can leverage our engaging platform or inject our award-winning content into your learning ecosystem. Either way, your people can enjoy seamless, relevant, and inclusive microlearning crafted how the brain learns best—one lesson at a time.

You can't build a strong corporate culture overnight. It requires innovative leadership and employee buy-in. But the L&D team can play a significant role so that you can get there much faster. Integrating learning into every aspect of work can inspire employees to join you on the journey to an improved culture.

Allowing employees to experiment, share experiences, and learn is essential to creating a culture where employees can take their professional development into their own hands. Culture change is a marathon, not a sprint. By being intentional about building and preserving it, you will succeed in achieving your culture goals while attracting and retaining top talent.

About HSI



HSI is your single-source partner for EHS, Compliance, and Professional Development solutions. HSI provides integrated e-learning content, training solutions, and cloud-based software designed to enable your business to improve safety, operations, and employee development. Across all industries, HSI helps safety managers, and technical employees, human resources, first responders, and operational leaders train and develop their workforce, keep workers safe, and meet regulatory and operational compliance requirements. HSI's focus is on training, software, and services for safety and compliance, workforce development, industrial skills, and emergency care. HSI is a unique partner that offers a suite of cloud-based software solutions including learning management, safety management, chemical SDS management, and more, integrated with content and training so businesses can not only monitor and manage multiple workflows in one system, but train employees via one partner.

For more information, visit [hsi.com](https://www.hsi.com)