

# DO YOU HAVE A **LEARNING** MINDSET?

What Workers Want Report 2022





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## What is a learning mindset?

Hays and Go1 define a learning mindset as a person's orientation to upskilling. Those who show a positive attitude, high levels of aptitude and make themselves available to learning new skills, are considered to have a high learning mindset.

## About the report

With skills shortages impacting most industries across the country, upskilling and continuous learning could be the key to overcoming skills gaps.

With that in mind, this report delves into attitudes and aptitudes towards upskilling, as well as the availability of the right learning resources. We asked employers and employees their views towards these three aspects and identified disconnects in defining what learning is and the best approaches to learning.

We hope you find the insights in this report useful to support your own or your team's upskilling.

## Methodology

The survey on which these findings are based was carried out in April-May 2022 and received almost 800 responses. The survey was completed by employers and employees from across Ireland, working across a range of industry sectors and employed in various types and sizes of organisation in both the private and public sectors.

# BRIDGING THE LEARNING DISCONNECT

Welcome to our annual What Workers Want Report. With skills shortages showing no signs of slowing, this year's report focuses on the importance of having a learning mindset and how a culture of continuous learning within an organisation can help overcome skills challenges.

Having a mindset geared towards continuous learning is vitally important for the success of both individuals in their own careers and organisations as a whole. This is only set to become more important as digital transformation forges ahead at pace.

At Hays, we're no strangers to the rapidly evolving landscape in which organisations are currently operating. That's why back in 2019, we partnered with online training experts Go1, enabling us to offer learning to teams through our [free online Thrive platform](#).

In this year's What Workers Want Report, we wanted to understand what matters most to staff when it comes to learning in the workplace, and define the best approaches to upskilling via improved and accessible learning strategies. The findings in this report are based on responses from almost 800 professionals working across a multitude of industries, and take a closer look into employee openness to learning, attitudes and aptitudes towards upskilling, and the availability of the right learning resources for staff.

So, what did we uncover? Our report demonstrates the points of disconnect between employers and employees when it comes to learning in the workplace, highlighting the breakdowns in communication which drive these differences.

For example, while half of employees say that continuous learning is extremely important to their career, only just over two-fifths of employers agreed that continuous learning is a key part of their organisation's culture. Furthermore, only just over a third of employees have a clear development plan in place that involves specific learning objectives.

**88% of professionals believe they are very much open to learning new skills, but only 60% of employers believe their employees are open to learning new skills.**

Skills shortages are a big concern for employers, with 90% worried about a lack of skills at their current organisation. Most also said they would be willing to hire someone who doesn't have all the right skills with the intention of upskilling them on the job.

However, whilst employees show a willingness to learn and say that they apply newly acquired skills quickly and effectively, employers are not necessarily recognising this in action.

Communication is key to addressing the areas of disconnect highlighted in this report. Employers must set clear strategies for learning and work with their employees to put plans in place. Regular feedback on learning approaches is vital to optimising your organisation's training investment, recognising when newly learned skills are being implemented, and ensuring the training you provide is up to scratch. Having this approach to learning not only helps with employee retention as workers receive the upskilling support they need, but also allows your organisation to set itself apart from competitors when hiring new talent.

I hope you find the outcomes in this report useful to helping build your learning strategies, whether for your organisation or for your own career journey.

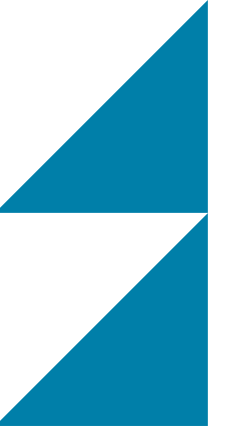
**Maureen Lynch**  
**Director**  
**Hays Ireland**







# FOREWORD FROM GO1'S CO-FOUNDER **CHRIS EIGELAND**



Transformational changes are rapidly sweeping through workplaces worldwide as organisations act quickly to enable and upskill a remote workforce.

Even with the best of intentions, though, many employers seem at a loss to identify and embed the skills needed for an effective workforce. This has resulted in a mismatch between the skills that employers need and the skills that workers actually have.

Organisations are also weighed down by the challenge of engaging employees in learning. Even employers who recognise the importance of upskilling are struggling to find learning content that meets the full spectrum of their learners' needs.

So, what can employers do to improve their approach to training and development? And how do they address this skills gap, equipping their people and organisation for the future?

We know that people are leaving their employers because of a lack of training opportunities that directly link to career development and new internal opportunities. And we know that organisations who are not doing enough to nurture their people are experiencing high levels of employee turnover and burnout, while also struggling to attract future talent.

Organisations that will thrive amidst this upheaval are those that embrace upskilling and stay ahead of the curve by providing their people with the right learning content to boost their foundational skills. That is, skills that will be in constant demand, surviving any technological or workplace evolutions.

In the coming years, demand for these foundational skills, such as problem-solving, decision making, and communication, is likely to continue rising.

The past two years have truly emphasised that human capital is any organisation's core business asset. What's more, employee development has become existentially important – for individuals and organisations alike. Our [own research](#) clearly illustrates that people are eager to learn new skills. They recognise that upskilling, reskilling, and continual growth are the keys to job promotion, greater job satisfaction, and more career options.

With the aid of modern technology, the core skills that people are hungry for are within grasp. Online learning has utterly transformed the way we upskill, providing people with the training they need to succeed, within a workplace culture of learning. Employers can now adapt their training programs to fit their employees' needs. They can also make learning as accessible as possible in an employee's day-to-day working life.

At Go1, we're confident that with the right guidance and the right technology, all organisations can foster a culture of learning. We're committed to empowering L&D and HR professionals in their roles, so that they can feel equipped to empower their own people and organisation.

We believe wholeheartedly in the power of learning for both individuals and organisations and are excited to partner with Hays, who share this vision to transform organisational learning.



**Go1 can provide you with the tools and support you need to inspire a love of learning in your organisation, while helping to elevate your workplace's learning culture.**





## **APTITUDE, ATTITUDE AND AVAILABILITY**

Hays and Go1 identified three core characteristics that are important in defining a person's learning mindset: Aptitude, Attitude and Availability.

Our study was broken down into these three traits accordingly, the results of which are outlined in this section.

# APTITUDE

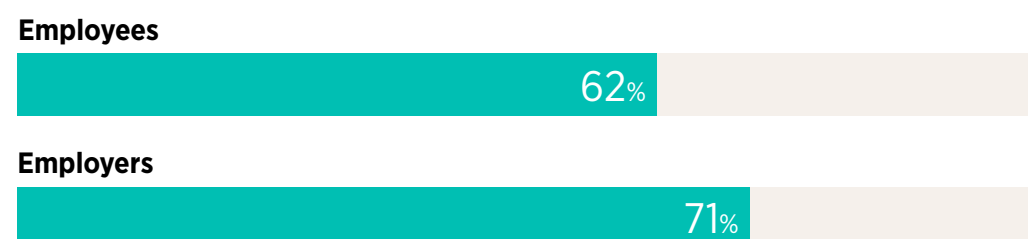
Our definition: To what extent a person needs to develop and how well-suited they are to different learning methods.

Employees feel they learn and apply newly learned skills quickly, but employers don't necessarily agree.



Employees are less likely than employers to think they have access to learning resources that best meet their needs.

The learning resources offered by my organisation suit employees' preferred methods of learning:



Most effective ways of upskilling:

- 1 In-person classroom teaching
- 2 Online courses with a set time and tutor
- 3 Online courses you take at your own pace
- 4 On-the-job training
- 5 Own research (forums, blogs, articles)
- 6 Events/seminars

Preferred methods of learning:

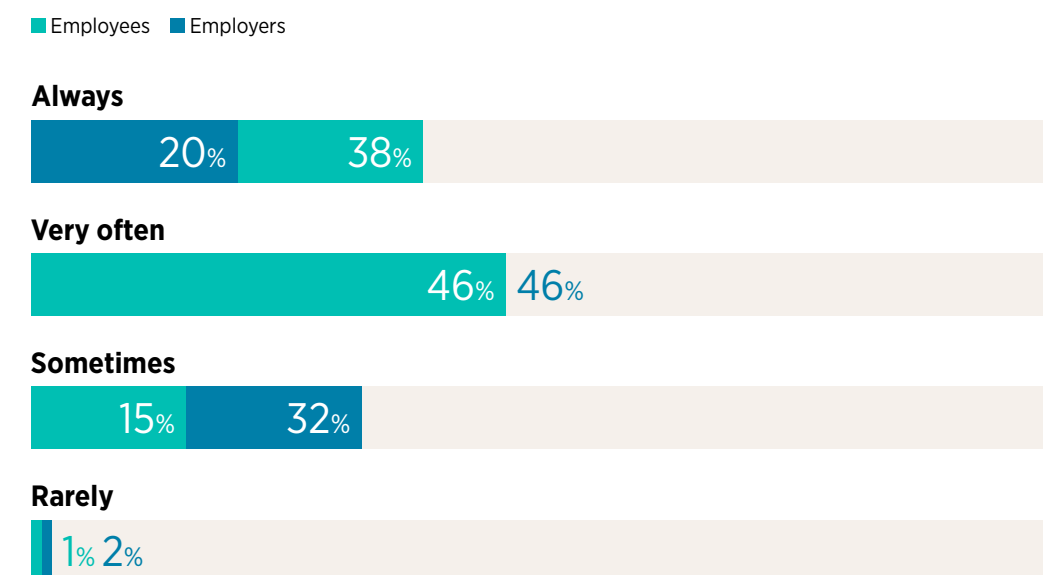
- |          |                       |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 1 Visual | 3 Reading and writing |
| 2 Aural  | 4 Kinaesthetic        |

Best ways to retain new skills:

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Testing yourself      | 4 Revision   |
| 2 Teaching others       | 5 Repetition |
| 3 Practical application |              |

Employers are more likely to say they only sometimes see new skills being applied than always seeing them applied.

How often are new skills applied quickly and effectively?



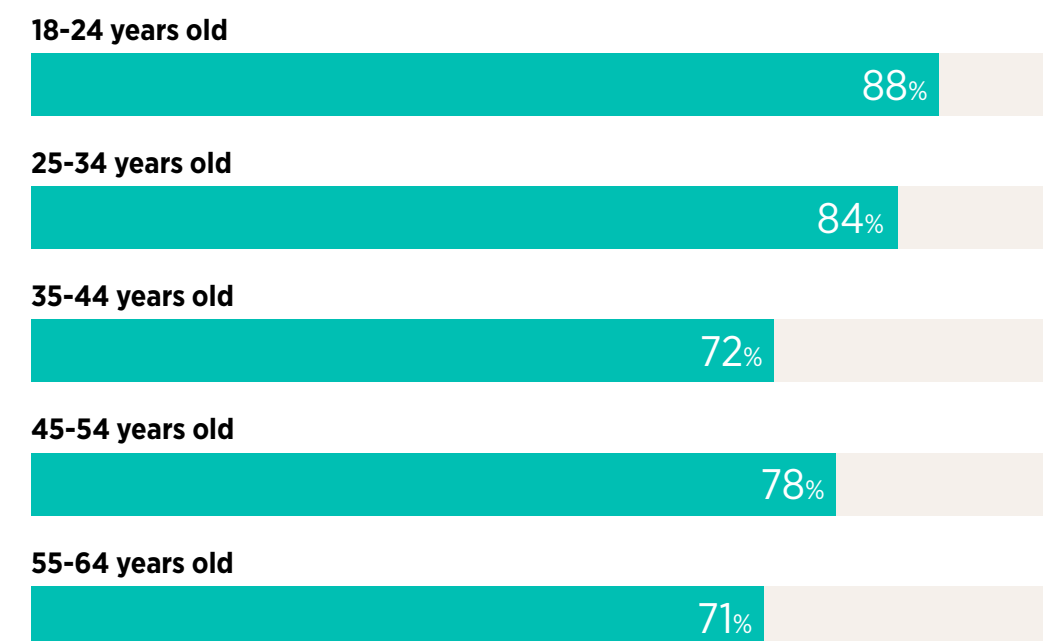
**81%**

of employers would consider hiring candidates based on their aptitude with the intention of upskilling them while in their role

**79%**

of employees would apply for a job even if they didn't have all the required skills, with the belief they would learn them quickly on the job

Employees who would apply for a job without all the required skills, by age:



“Knowing how employees like to learn can provide HR professionals with insight into how they can **adapt their training programmes** to fit the needs of their employees.”

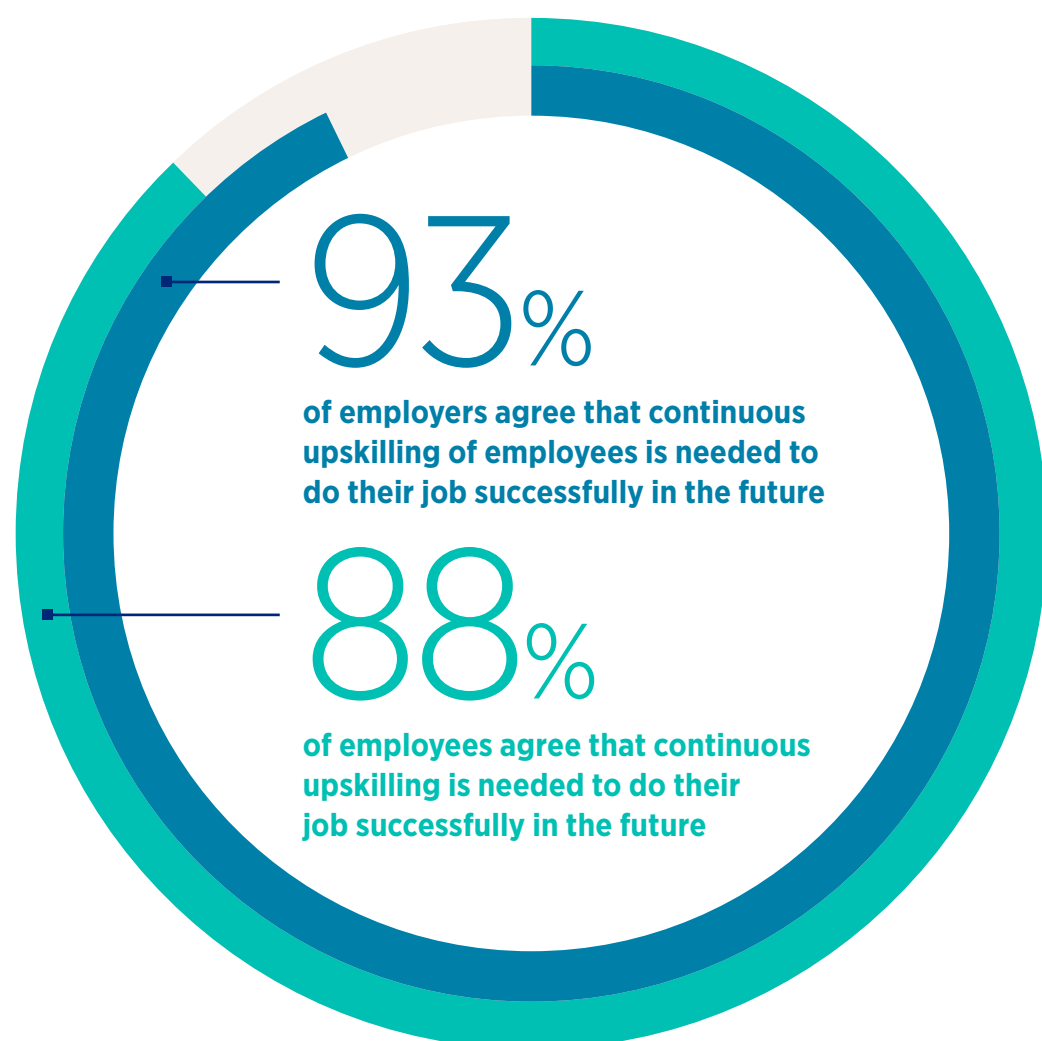
Go1



# ATTITUDE

Our definition: A person's feelings towards learning and the importance they place on it for their self-development.

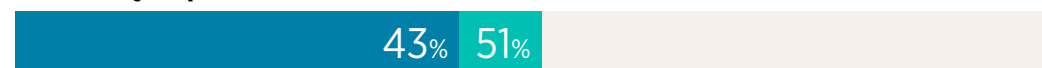
Employees consider continuous learning as extremely important in their career, but fewer employers say it is as important within their company culture.



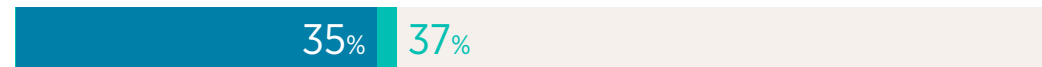
Importance of continuous learning to employees in their career and employers in their company culture:

■ Employees ■ Employers

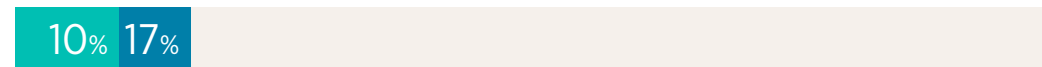
**Extremely important**



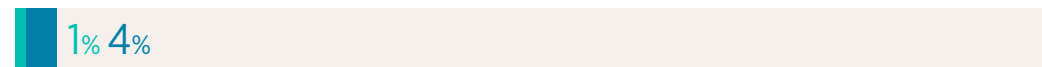
**Very important**



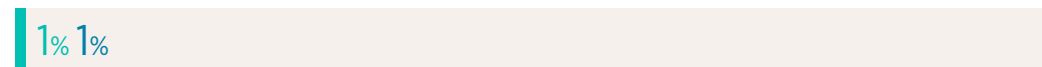
**Important**



**Of low importance**



**Not important at all**

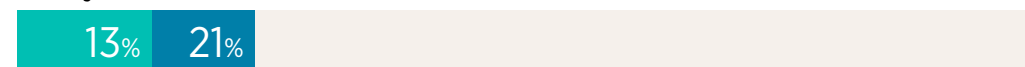


Although employers say they encourage employees to frequently upskill during work hours, employees say they only sometimes do so. Not having the time to upskill during working hours is a key barrier to learning according to employees.

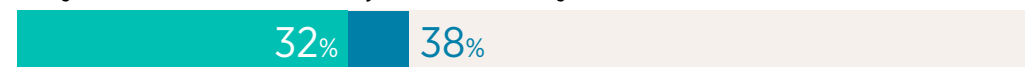
How often employees improve their skills during work hours compared to the frequency employers encourage this:

■ Employees ■ Employers

**Always**



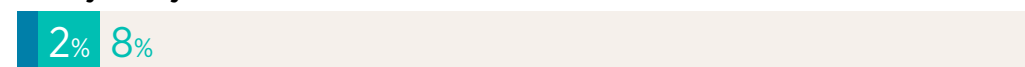
**Very often - in a structured, consistent way**



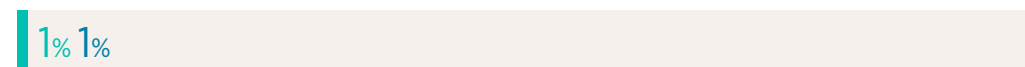
**Sometimes - as training opportunities arise**



**Rarely - only when asked**



**Never**



Top barriers to learning new skills for employees:

- 1 Current workloads and work hours (66%)
- 2 Personal or family activities (36%)
- 3 Lack of support (26%)

Reasons employees upskill:

- 1 Personal development (39%)
- 2 Career progression (21%)
- 3 Improved performance (17%)
- 4 Pay rise (12%)
- 5 New job (11%)

Reasons employers upskill existing employees:

- 1 Improved performance (34%)
- 2 Career progression (22%)
- 3 Employee satisfaction (20%)
- 4 Cheaper than external hiring (17%)
- 5 Employee retention (7%)

Most employers are investing in their team's upskilling, but only just over a third of employees have a clear development plan in place that involves specific learning.

**64%**

of employees invest in their own upskilling because they want to, not because they must in their profession

**88%**

of employers invest in their team's upskilling

**84%**

of employees think they're most responsible for their own upskilling

**55%**

of employers think they're most responsible for employee upskilling

Do employees have a clear development plan set with their employers involving specific learning?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not sure/not applicable



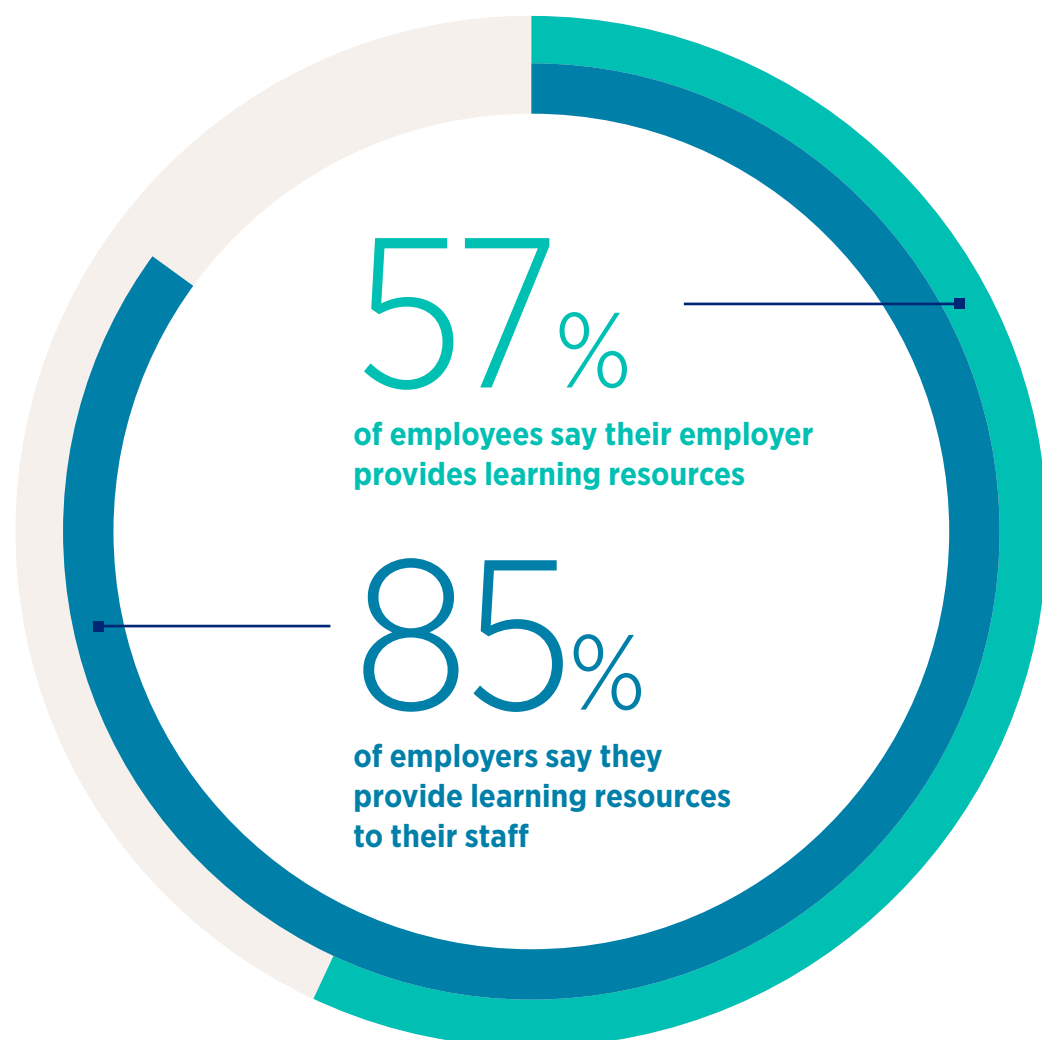
“Most employees like to feel a sense of pride in their work, do their jobs well, and advance within an organisation or company. Without training, it's harder for employees to do this, which may lead to them feeling undervalued and unable to achieve their goals.”

Go!

# AVAILABILITY

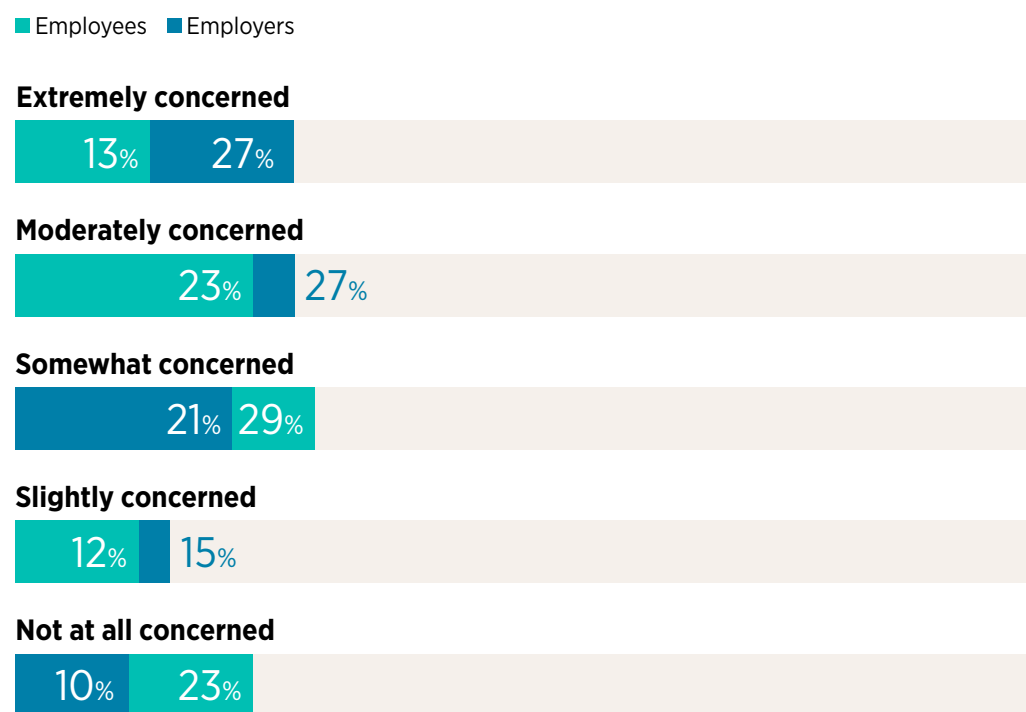
Our definition: The access someone has or thinks they have to learning tools, and how much personal time they spend learning.

Most employers provide learning resources to employees, but only just over half of employees say the same.

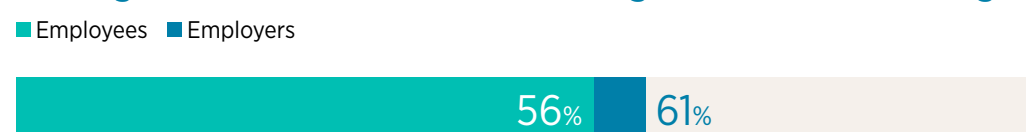


Employers are more concerned than employees about skills shortages at their organisation but are also more likely to believe the learning resources they provide will address these skills gaps.

How concerned are you about the skills shortage at your organisation?

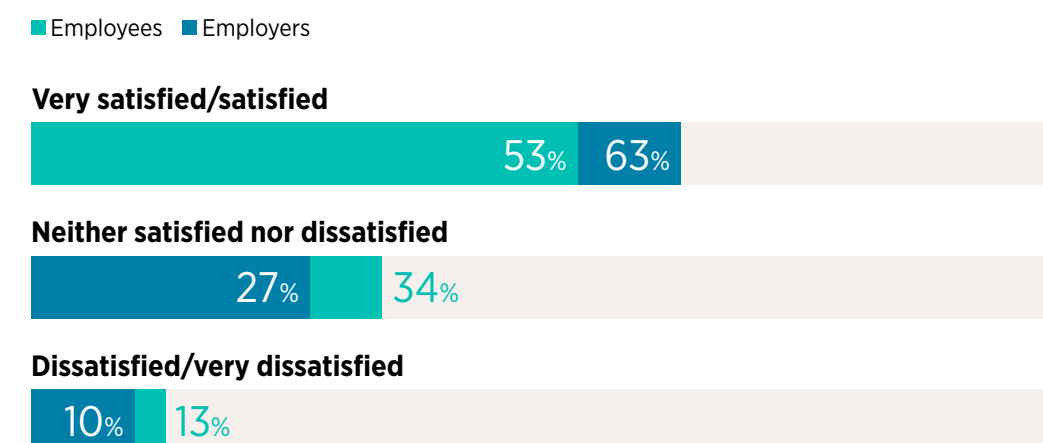


Employers and employees who agree their organisation provides learning resources that will address their organisation's skills shortage:

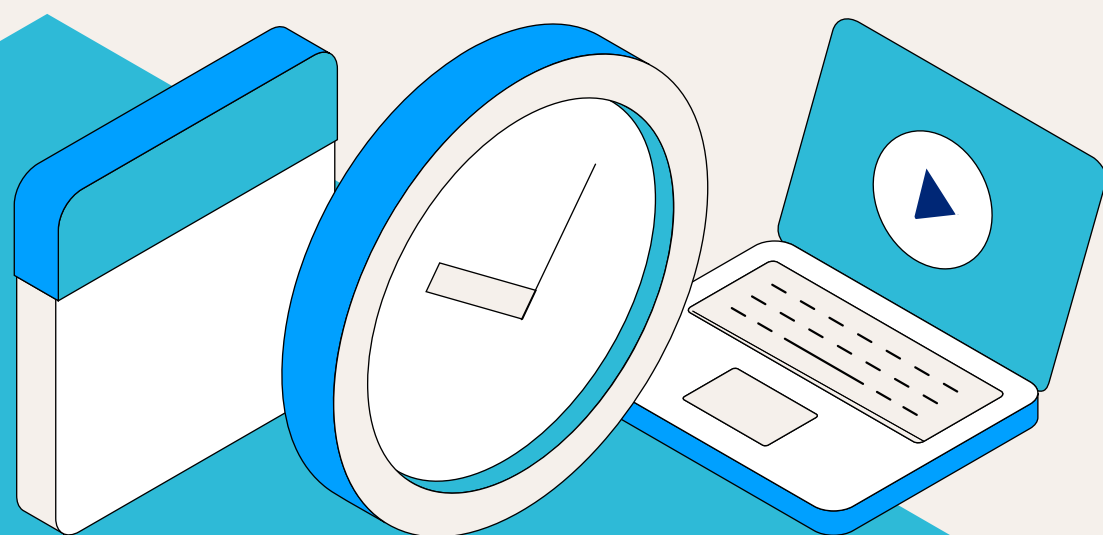
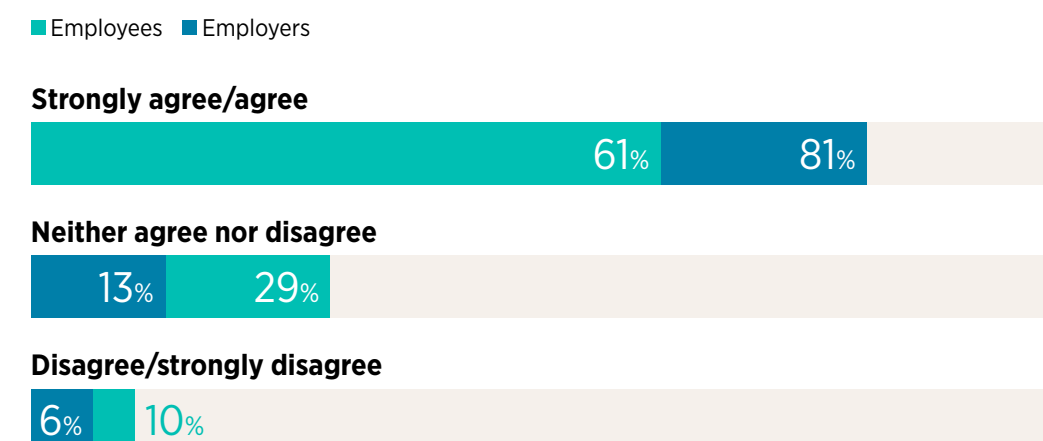


There's a disconnect between employer and employee views on whether available learning resources are suitable. Employees are less likely to be satisfied compared to employers.

How satisfied are employers and employees with the learning resources available at their organisation?



Do employers and employees believe the learning materials they have access to meet employee needs?



“It’s vital that HR leaders, as well as their employers, **adapt their training methods and solutions** to best empower their workforce, making skill development more effective and attainable for their employees. It’s also now down to employers to **take active responsibility in ensuring they retain staff**. After all, employees are a company’s biggest asset, and investing in talent is essential to business growth and success.”

Go1



# RECOMMENDATIONS

It's clear that upskilling employees has numerous benefits, including helping to alleviate the shortage of skills affecting most industries. Whether you're an employer looking to improve your upskilling offering to your staff, or you're an employee wanting to make the most of the training opportunities available to you, read on to find out our recommendations.

## EMPLOYERS

### Ensure continuous learning is ingrained in your culture

Employees highlight the importance they place on continuous learning, but this isn't necessarily reflected in their organisations' culture. In today's rapidly changing landscape, continuous learning is essential to the success of any organisation.

Your organisation's investment in employee upskilling should be a key part of your EVP to help not only attract new employees, but to retain existing ones. There are many ways to support continuous learning, from investing in formal, face-to-face training, online courses such as those in our [Thrive packages](#), or allowing employees the time to shadow colleagues or attend industry seminars.

### Make sure your learning resources are up to scratch

Employees have the appetite and openness to learn new skills. However, they don't necessarily feel they are receiving the right learning resources from their employer nor the time to undertake training.

Two-way communication is key to best support staff in their upskilling, and everyone – both employers and employees – are equally responsible for ensuring continuous learning happens. Work with employees to put structured learning plans and resources in place which are aligned to their professional goals and your organisation's skills requirements.

### Let potential candidates know about your upskilling opportunities

It's a tough hiring market for many industries at the moment. Add the fact that skillsets are rapidly evolving, it's perhaps no surprise that most employers say they're open to hiring someone who doesn't possess all the required skills with the intention of upskilling them.

Make sure you're promoting your willingness to take on less-skilled candidates in your job ads or when in discussion with your recruitment professional as this could help broaden and diversify your talent pool.

### Measure the success of upskilling

It's all well and good investing in learning opportunities for your staff, but unless you're measuring its success, how do you know it's working?

Setting clear learning objectives and putting regular catch ups in place with team members can help ensure visibility of newly learned skills being applied by your team. This includes both formal learning that your organisation has invested in as well as 'micro-learning' that takes place every day such as reading industry blogs, attending seminars or learning from colleagues. Formalising the outcomes of continuous learning can help identify skills gaps, inform training requirements, and justify future training spend.

## EMPLOYEES

### Get your learning plan on track

Our findings show that most organisations are investing in their employees' learning, so it's up to you to make the most of what's available.

Work with your employer to put in place a structured learning plan which is aligned to your professional development goals. Identify the skills most needed within your team and in the wider industry – our [salary and recruiting trends guide](#) is a good starting point – and tailor upskilling plans to these. Remember that upskilling includes both formal learning, such as in a classroom, and micro learning which you're probably already doing such as reading industry blogs or shadowing a colleague.

### Ensure you have the learning resources you need to succeed

To make the most out of learning, you need to have the right resources to hand. Do your own research, perhaps there's an online course or an industry seminar which your manager will let you take the time to attend.

If you're not getting the resources or the time you need to undertake training during working hours, communication remains key. Many organisations are investing in learning resources and skills shortages are widespread, so providing the right training is in their best interests. Speak to your manager, outline the benefits of you undertaking the training, and see what can be done.

### Make it clear how you're applying your new skills

The work doesn't stop once you've upskilled – your employer needs to see those skills being applied. Get regular catch ups in place with your manager to discuss your continuous learning and let them know how your new skills are being applied day-to-day, whether it's from the 2-day course you attended right down to the 2-minute online video you watched.

Making it clear to your manager how your skills are being used and are benefitting the team can not only help your own career progression, but also informs future training investment by your organisation.

### Don't be afraid to apply for a new job without all the required skills

Our research shows that most employers would be willing to hire underqualified candidates, with the intention of upskilling them on the job. When job searching, if a role piques your interest but you're missing a key skill, don't give up hope. Show a willingness to learn and examples of how you've upskilled quickly in the past when applying for the job and you may well get noticed by the hiring manager.

# ABOUT HAYS

At Hays, we invest in lifelong partnerships that empower people and organisations to succeed. With over 50 years' success under our belts, we've evolved to put our customers at the heart of everything we do. So much more than a specialist recruitment business, what really sets us apart is our knowledge through scale, deep understanding and our ability to meaningfully innovate for our customers. Whether you're looking for what's next in your career, or have a gap to fill, you can rely on us to deliver today and help you plan for tomorrow.

Find out more by visiting [hays.ie](https://hays.ie)



## Our core services

### Permanent recruitment ▶

- Find passionate people to transform your business
- Fill positions to meet both immediate and future skills needs
- Place match-fit candidates to your business purpose
- Get committed support throughout candidate offer, acceptance and notice period

### Outsourced permanent recruitment ▶

- Reduce time-to-hire with access to ready-made, quality talent pools through Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO)
- Leverage progressive talent strategies and mechanisms to ensure you have the right talent in place – for today, and tomorrow
- Enhance your candidate experience through branding, technology and ways of working to ensure you stand out in a talent scarce market

### Executive recruitment ▶

- Navigate organisational change by finding those inspirational leaders
- Empower business transformation with executive hires
- Steer your organisation to success with high-level strategic thinkers
- Build success through diversity with bespoke job ads and transparent interview processes

### Temporary recruitment ▶

- Achieve instant impact with quick hires and cut down long-term costs
- Access niche skillsets for project-based work
- Inject your business with fresh perspective fast
- Cut out lengthy admin and processes with externally managed pay and timesheets

### Fully managed temporary recruitment ▶

- Gain clarity and control over your contingent headcount through a Managed Service Programme (MSP)
- Combine expertise and insights with proven processes to shape the future of your workforce
- Benefit from the scale of our knowledge across local, regional and global regulatory requirements

# ABOUT Go1

Go1 makes it easy for organisations to learn, with the world's most comprehensive online library of learning resources. Go1 pulls the world's top online learning providers into one place, delivering all the learning an organisation needs in a single solution. With over 3.5 million learners – and growing – Go1 is a world leader in online learning.

To learn more, visit [go1.com](https://go1.com)



## Our advisory services

### Salary Benchmarking ▶

- Use real-time data to have that competitive edge
- Be insight-led for relevant remuneration strategies
- Gain long-term cost savings
- Attract, retain and nurture best in class talent

### Career Transition Services ▶

- Give your employees the right outplacement and transitional support
- Deliver safe spaces to employees for those honest and open conversations
- Manage restructuring processes with effectiveness, agility and speed
- Get to the heart of what clinches staff engagement and retention

### Assessment & Development ▶

- Feel absolute confidence in your recruitment decisions
- Cut costs with bespoke selection solutions
- Accelerate time-to-hire with tailored end-to-end support
- Acquire the right skills for your business

### Employer Branding ▶

- Stand out as a top employer brand with a proven USP
- Leverage engaging employer branded recruitment solutions
- Enhance your Employer Value Proposition with a people-first approach
- Fill your roles with match-fit talent

[hays.ie/what-workers-want](https://hays.ie/what-workers-want)