



**FOSWAY
GROUP**

Boost Learning in-the-Moment with AI Assistance

The shift to remote and hybrid working has altered learning dynamics, making it harder for employees to access informal peer-to-peer learning. Quick, casual desk-side questions - once a foundation of workplace learning - have largely disappeared. This loss has created a change in the way learners learn, potentially hindering day-to-day problem-solving, knowledge sharing and even upskilling.

There is already a known skills gap issue - Fosway Group's research highlights the severity of it: 77% of L&D leaders acknowledge significant skills gaps within their organisations, yet only 5% report advanced personalisation capabilities in their learning systems. Current personalisation efforts often stop at surface-level recommendations, failing to address the nuanced needs that informal peer-to-peer learning once fulfilled.

AI learning agents might present an innovative solution to this challenge by providing tailored, real-time contextual support for both minor and more complex questions, bridging critical knowledge or specific skill gaps. When integrated into learning systems, such AI buddies can capture valuable data, including the questions employees ask and the resources they use. This data enables organisations to identify recurring gaps, personalise learning, and measure the impact of informal learning on workforce capability over time, ultimately transforming how organisations approach skills development.

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Why is this important?

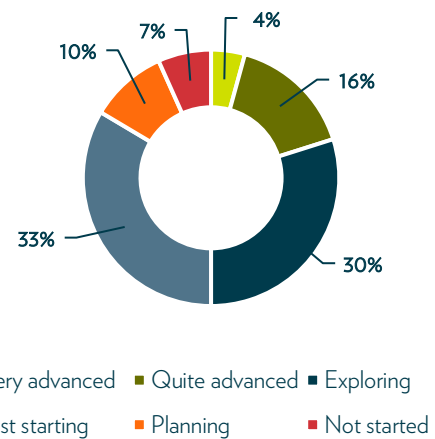
Hybrid work demands more flexible learning

Hybrid and remote work remain prevalent, even though economic pressures have led many companies to mandate partial office returns. While leaders try to rebuild in-person collaboration, employees still prioritise flexibility. This tension calls for learning models that not only change rapidly to shifting circumstances, but also deliver timely, contextually relevant support for everyone. Standardised ‘one-size-fits-all’ formal courses do not meet the in-the-moment needs of a dispersed, time-pressed workforce. To maintain both productivity and engagement, organisations must embrace personalised, on-demand interventions that reflect the evolving conditions and each learner’s unique needs.

Formal training misses unique skill gaps

For over two decades, much of the content delivered through learning systems has been classified as formal, often compliance-driven training. Classroom sessions and e-learning modules have dominated, often designed for broad audiences and pushed out en masse by L&D teams. It’s not surprising, then, that only 20% of L&D teams currently consider themselves ‘advanced’ in enabling learning just-in-time or in-the-moment, with many others still just starting, exploring, or planning improvements.¹ Even with generative AI, most content still follows a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. While this technology can speed up content creation, it does not fully address the specific, immediate needs of individual learners. Without timely, targeted support, critical skill gaps persist, hindering both personal growth and organisational agility.

How advanced is your L&D function in executing “Learning in the workflow”?



¹ Digital Learning Realities 2024 - Part 1: L&D Priorities and Learning Strategy in the Modern Era, Fosway Group



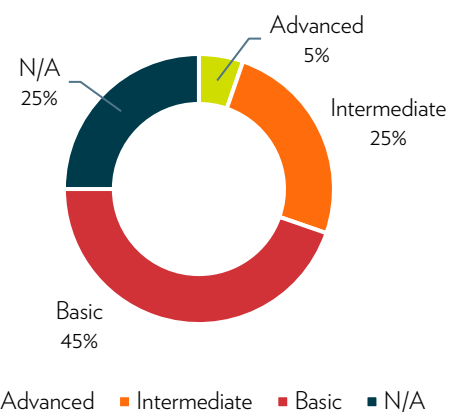
Remote work erodes informal learning networks

With the shift to remote and hybrid work, the rich, incidental learning that once flourished in office settings has diminished. Formal learning systems are ill-equipped to replace these spontaneous exchanges - asking a colleague for quick guidance or sharing insights over coffee – that were pivotal for accelerating problem-solving, transferring knowledge, and fostering collaboration. Without this organic just-in-time guidance, employees face delays in resolving everyday challenges, and teams struggle to share best practices effectively. Similarly, other opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, such as informal mentorships and collaborative brainstorming, have become harder to replicate in distributed environments, too. The erosion of these informal networks not only reduces individual productivity but also slows the overall pace of organisational skills development, increasing the risk of knowledge silos and reduced organisational agility.

Personalisation is key to effective upskilling and reskilling

Personalised learning is critical for adapting to fast-changing skill requirements, helping employees build relevant capabilities efficiently. Yet, currently, only 5% of L&D teams consider their learning technology ‘advanced’ in personalisation.² Many current learning systems, even ones with AI-driven recommendations, treat learners with similar backgrounds as identical, overlooking nuanced gaps that learners must address individually. True personalisation goes beyond surface-level suggestions. By aligning learning experiences with each individual’s current skill level, career ambitions, and preferred learning modalities, organisations can accelerate capability-building, reduce time-to-competence and improve learner engagement. In today’s business landscape, where skills quickly become outdated, personalisation ensures employees can rapidly fill their unique gaps, adapt to shifting demands, and build long-term resilience. This tailored focus on upskilling and reskilling not only empowers individuals to advance their careers but also strengthens the organisation’s competitive edge through a more capable and agile workforce.

How advanced is your use of learning technology to support personalisation?



² Digital Learning Realities 2024 part 4: Evolving learning, Fosway Group.



AI-enabled learning in the moment has the potential to bridge the personalisation gap

By integrating AI-driven learning assistants into learning systems, organisations can do more than push content and support learners who increasingly need immediate, targeted insights. In the absence of effective formal training, employees often turn to peers or external sources, but these informal interactions generally remain untracked and overlooked. AI-driven learning assistants are able to track these real-time interactions, collect any external sources learners might have searched for, highlight emerging skill gaps, and deliver tailored support or bite-sized content within employees' daily work.

For example, if multiple employees often seek guidance on a new software platform, the AI assistant might proactively curate short, targeted tutorials to speed up their mastery. Armed with this data, individuals can shape their own development paths, while organisations refine L&D investments and align talent strategies. Over time, this visibility into both formal and informal learning ensures that capability-building efforts are truly comprehensive, aligning skill development with evolving organisational needs.

What should you do?

Start with clean, up-to-date data for AI personalisation

Accurate people data is the foundation of any AI-driven personalisation initiative. Before implementing AI systems, audit and cleanse employee data to eliminate errors, mismatches, and inefficiencies. Clean data ensures AI models deliver meaningful insights, enabling personalised learning recommendations tailored to real employee needs.

However, personalisation goes beyond recommendations. AI learning assistants can deliver highly specific, context-aware responses when integrated into learning systems. By focusing on internal, organisation-specific data, AI assistants can provide more targeted, and contextualised guidance, avoiding the noise and conflicting information often found in external sources. This approach ensures responses reflect the organisation's unique data and 'voice.'

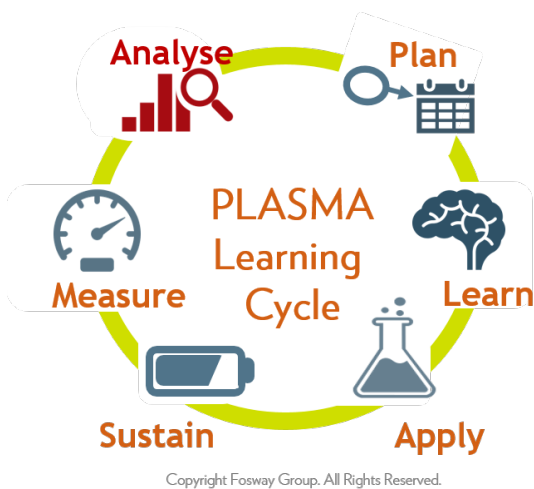


Work with internal teams to secure AI tools

Generative (content-creating) and Agentic (doing) AI tools can provide significant benefits, but they also come with security and compliance risks. To mitigate these, collaborate closely with IT, cybersecurity, and legal teams to ensure AI tools meet data protection regulations and align with corporate security policies. Establishing clear guidelines and safeguards is critical for responsibly integrating AI into your organisation.

Global regulations for AI tools vary widely, with stricter approaches in regions like the EU and China compared with evolving standards in the US, Singapore, and Japan. To stay ahead of regulatory changes, develop strong relationships with internal policy teams early. This ensures your organisation is prepared to address the increasing volume of compliance and security requests in the years to come.

Apply the PLASMA cycle to all learning formats



Having dealt with the data cleanliness and security in light of AI, there is then a need to step back and look more holistically into your digital learning approach. What are the opportunities for technology to power individual learning? A model that Fosway developed some years ago is known as the PLASMA learning cycle:³ Prepare, Learn, Apply, Sustain, Measure, and Analyse. By examining every learning moment through this lens, organisations can ensure that learning is not only delivered but also planned, applied and

converted into practical action; even for short, informal learning experiences. The PLASMA approach can be used whether it is a two-minute read to fill a gap that can be immediately applied, through to a six-month onboarding blended programme with opportunities to measure the time-to-value of each individual.

Too often, the industry defaults to focusing on just a few phases, such as Analyse, Plan, and Learn, leaving critical steps like application, sustainability, and feedback underutilised. By embracing the full PLASMA

³ *The Learning Cycle: Delivering At Every Stage*, Fosway Group,



approach, organisations can drive skill development, deeper skill retention, foster peer knowledge-sharing, and ensure continuous improvement. Whether it's a bite-sized microlearning moment or an extended programme, PLASMA ensures that learning delivers measurable, lasting value to both employees and the organisation, no matter what modality it is provided in.

Track formal, peer-to-peer, and on-the-job learning

The PLASMA learning cycle provides a robust framework for ensuring that learning is planned, delivered, applied, sustained and measured effectively. To realise its full potential, organisations must track learning across all formats - formal courses, peer-to-peer interactions, and experiential on-the-job learning. Whether it is a two-minute read to address a product knowledge gap or a twelve-month leadership programme, robust tracking tools help monitor outcomes and create a holistic view of employee development.

Traditionally, tracking has relied on a simple check-box approach, focused on whether courses are completed rather than how skills are applied. While some of this tracking has been automated by learning systems, some tracking still relies on manual attendance marking by tutors. However, this basic level of tracking is no longer sufficient. Achieving true skill mastery requires tracking methods that capture hands-on practice, real-world application, and informal learning moments. Any tracking 'beyond the checkbox' that can be implemented is a step in the right direction.

Comprehensive tracking will take time to mature, but progress is underway. Automated tools that monitor interactions with AI learning assistants, such as the questions employees ask or the guidance and resources they receive, represent a significant step forward, possibly the first meaningful progress in over two decades. These systems not only highlight emerging skill gaps but also help organisations measure the effectiveness of learning in real time. Over time, this data-driven approach lays the groundwork for better workforce planning, stronger alignment with organisational goals, and demonstrable ROI on learning investments.

Plan for the costs of generative AI systems

Generative AI offers powerful capabilities, but organisations must plan carefully for the associated costs, including data processing, model training, infrastructure, and ongoing maintenance. These costs can vary significantly depending on the deployment model chosen.



Learning systems vendors take different approaches to pricing generative AI solutions. Some include costs within licence fees, which may increase over time, while others charge for additional AI modules or use a consumption-based model where credits are purchased as needed. Organisations should evaluate these pricing strategies carefully, accounting for long-term scalability and the potential for hidden costs.

To ensure generative AI delivers tangible value, businesses must align their investments with clear goals, such as improving learner outcomes or driving measurable business impact. By planning ahead, tracking ROI, and working with vendors to understand cost structures, organisations can maximise the benefits of generative AI while managing its financial implications effectively.

In Summary

The shift to remote and hybrid work has fundamentally changed how employees learn and collaborate, disrupting informal, peer-to-peer learning that once enabled quick, casual knowledge-sharing. This loss has widened skills gaps and made it harder for organisations to address employees' immediate learning needs effectively. AI learning assistants can fill this gap by offering tailored, real-time support while also enabling organisations to track previously unmeasured learning interactions, such as informal guidance or knowledge sharing. Tracking these informal interactions could move the needle on monitoring upskilling and reskilling into a modality that has not been tracked previously.

To adapt to this new landscape, organisations must:

- **Ensure data quality:** Accurate, up-to-date data is critical for AI-driven personalisation.
- **Collaborate on AI security policies:** Work with internal teams to mitigate risks and comply with evolving regulations.
- **Apply the PLASMA learning cycle:** Use this proven framework to ensure all learning formats—formal, peer-to-peer, and on-the-job—are planned, applied, and measured effectively.
- **Track all learning formats:** Move beyond checkbox tracking to monitor formal, informal, and experiential learning outcomes comprehensively.



- **Plan for AI costs:** Evaluate vendor pricing strategies and align investments with measurable goals to maximise value.

While challenges remain, leveraging generative AI tools to deliver true personalisation and track informal learning is a transformative opportunity. By addressing skills gaps with real-time, context-aware support, organisations can create a more capable, agile workforce and significantly enhance the employee learning experience.

Recommended Fosway reading

For further Fosway analysis relating to this topic, please see the following papers or resources.

- [Transforming the Learning Team in 2024](#)
- [Beyond the hype, what is the reality of AI for Learning Systems?](#)
- [Digital Learning Realities 2024 part 3: AI and L&D](#)
- [Personalised learning: Training you can't afford to ignore](#)
- [The Learning Cycle: Delivering At Every Stage](#)
- [PLASMA Learning Cycle Checklist](#)



Accelerate and De-risk

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For over 25 years, we have been analysing the realities of the market, and providing insights on the future of HR, Talent and Learning. Fosway analysts work extensively with our corporate clients to understand the inside story of the challenges they are facing, and their real experiences with next gen strategies, systems and suppliers. Our independent vendor analysis also provides a vital resource when making decisions on innovation and technology.

And just like the Roman road we draw our name from, you'll find that we're unusually direct. We don't have a vested interest in your supplier or consulting choices. So, whether you're looking for independent research, specific advice or a critical friend to cut through the market hype, we can tell you what you need to know to succeed.

Example clients include: Alstom, Aviva, Boots UK, BP, BT, Centrica, Deutsche Bank, Faurecia, HSBC, International SOS, Lloyds Banking Group, Novartis, PwC, Rolls-Royce, Royal Bank of Scotland, Sanofi, Shell, Swiss Re, Telefonica, Thomson Reuters, Toyota Europe, and Vodafone.

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