

# THE FOREM

## SCALING LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE FOR LIVE TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP

*Why Cohort-Based Learning and Automation Drive Engagement, Retention, and Business Impact*

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### INTRODUCTION: RETHINKING LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT IN A CHANGING WORKPLACE

The way we work—and learn—has changed forever.

Once upon a time, corporate training was a one-size-fits-all experience: long PowerPoint decks, static e-learning modules, and lecture-style workshops that employees attended simply to check a box. Today, we know better.

Modern employees crave **engaging, relevant, and interactive learning experiences**. They want opportunities to apply their knowledge, interact with peers, and receive guidance from mentors. And they expect organizations to invest in their development—not just as a compliance measure, but as a critical step in advancing their careers.

Yet, many companies still struggle with L&D effectiveness. The 2025 LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report highlights a growing skills crisis, with **49% of executives expressing concern that employees lack the right skills to execute business strategy**. Meanwhile, **91% of L&D leaders agree that continuous learning is more critical than ever** for career success, but time constraints and lack of managerial support remain key barriers.

The challenge? Many training programs prioritize **convenience over impact**.

New research from **The Forem Benchmark Report 2024**, which analyzed over 3,000 participants across 150 companies, reveals a powerful solution: **live cohort-based learning, mentorship integration, and scalable automation**. This model is proving to be a game-changer, driving **higher engagement, stronger retention, and measurable ROI**.

For HR leaders, talent managers, and L&D professionals, the message is clear: **It's time to move beyond passive learning experiences and invest in dynamic, interactive training models that truly move the needle.**

## KEY FINDINGS & STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

### 1. LIVE COHORT TRAINING: THE SECRET TO RETENTION & BUSINESS IMPACT



If you want to build a learning culture, you have to build a community around it.

— Josh Bersin, HR Industry Analyst & Learning Expert

**Why is live learning so effective?** Because it mirrors the way we naturally absorb information—through **discussion, role play, and collaboration**. It is critically important to practice *while* being taught, which is a key feature of live training. Participants retain more information by reinforcing concepts in real-time. They feel accountable to peers, and better prepared to tackle new challenges or work, **increasing engagement and retention**.

Many organizations assume that e-learning or self-paced modules are enough to drive skill development. But a webinar - or absorbing videos in isolation - just won't cut it.

#### DATA TELLS A COMPELLING STORY ABOUT LIVE TRAINING:



Additionally, **organizations with strong career development programs are 42% more likely to be frontrunners in AI adoption** than those without structured career learning paths.<sup>5</sup>



**Actionable Takeaway:** Move away from passive, lecture-based training models. Emphasize **interactive, discussion-based learning formats to boost retention and drive real business outcomes**. Mixing departments in training programs pays dividends. According to The Forem's data, not only do Product and Eng participants rate programs higher when participating alongside other orgs such as Sales, but GTM participants cite how strengthening cross-functional relationships enables them to support clients more holistically.

1. The Forem Benchmark Report  
2. The Forem Benchmark Report

3. Harvard Business Review  
4. The Forem Benchmark Report

5. LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report 2025

## 2. THE ROI OF SCALING TRAINING WITHOUT LOSING QUALITY



The biggest challenge in L&D today isn't content—it's scalability.

— Brandon Hall Group, 2023 Learning Trends Report

Every L&D leader faces the same dilemma: **How do we scale training while maintaining high-quality outcomes?**

Traditional training methods are **resource-intensive**. Managing schedules, coordinating facilitators, and tracking progress across hundreds (or thousands) of employees is no small feat.

But new data suggests that **scalability is possible—without sacrificing engagement.**

- Programs with 30+ participants maintain high ratings, proving that quality isn't lost at scale.<sup>6</sup>
- Companies using automated training platforms report 50% less administrative burden.<sup>7</sup>
- 55% of career development champions see internal mobility as a rising priority, meaning training needs to scale across multiple levels of an organization.<sup>8</sup>

### WHAT MAKES SCALABLE TRAINING SUCCESSFUL? THE KEY IS AUTOMATION.

With the right technology, organizations can save hours of productivity time per program:



**Automate participant onboarding, reminders, and surveys**, freeing up L&D resources.



**Leverage real-time analytics** to track engagement and course corrections.



**Standardize content across multiple geographies and time zones** without losing personalization.



**Actionable Takeaway:** Use **learning automation and AI-driven platforms** to streamline L&D efforts while maintaining program quality.

6. The Forem Benchmark Report  
7. Deloitte 2023 Future of Learning Report

8. LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report 2025

### 3. THE MENTORSHIP MULTIPLIER: WHY TRAINING ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH



People don't leave companies—they leave managers who fail to support their growth.

– Gallup Workplace Report

Training is critical—but without reinforcement, **employees struggle to apply what they've learned**. That's why **mentorship is a missing piece of many L&D strategies**.

- Mid-career professionals, in particular, are the **heaviest users of mentorship programs**, often benefiting from guidance during career plateaus.
- Companies that integrate mentorship into training programs see higher program engagement, stronger skill adoption, and increased employee satisfaction.
- Mentees who are participants in The Forem's programs report feeling highly prepared to navigate challenges after their mentor sessions (rating of 9.2/10)

The best organizations treat **mentorship** as a **built-in component of training**—not an afterthought.



**Actionable Takeaway: Bundle mentorship with training programs.** Offering guidance and coaching alongside live learning **creates a continuous feedback loop** that enhances knowledge retention and career growth.

### 4. TIMING TRAINING FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT



It's not just what you train—it's when you train.

– Julie Winkle Giulioni, Author of 'Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go'

Many organizations schedule training based on **internal calendars, not employee availability**. This is a major oversight.

According to The Forem's data:

- September is one of the worst months for training, as competing business priorities lower attendance.
- Q3 training requests are high, but engagement is low due to corporate deadlines.
- Summer (July & August) is an untapped training window, as employees have fewer competing demands and - even if they take one week or so off for PTO - they won't miss out on the full experience *if the sessions are recorded*.



**Actionable Takeaway:** Schedule training strategically—**avoid Q3 crunch times and leverage summer months** for engagement boosts.

# CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF CORPORATE LEARNING IS SCALABLE, INTERACTIVE & DATA-DRIVEN

The **2025 LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report** confirms what the best HR and L&D leaders already suspect: **traditional corporate training is broken.**

Employees don't want to passively watch videos or check compliance boxes. They want **real engagement, interactive learning, and access to mentorship.**

For organizations to stay competitive, they must embrace:

- **Live, cohort-based training models** that foster peer interaction and real-world application.
- **Automated learning solutions** that enable scale without losing quality.
- **Integrated mentorship programs** that reinforce skill adoption and career growth.
- **Strategic scheduling** to maximize participation and impact.



Great training isn't enough . . . companies need to make it easy to run and measure or training can't scale. Relying on video training as the scale mechanism is ineffective and we need to continuously connect with learners to reduce the forgetting curve and increase ROI.

– Alli Young, Founder and CEO, The Forem

## FINAL THOUGHT: THE COMPANIES THAT INVEST IN MODERN, SCALABLE L&D STRATEGIES WILL NOT ONLY RETAIN TOP TALENT BUT WILL ALSO DRIVE REAL BUSINESS IMPACT.

**READY TO TRANSFORM YOUR L&D STRATEGY?** Explore how The Forem can help you scale training, increase engagement, and maximize ROI. **REACH OUT TO SET TIME TO SPEAK WITH OUR TEAM HERE,**  or request a copy of our full 2024 Benchmarks Report