

The Learning Maturity Model

Understanding your learning culture

What is learning maturity?

Every organisation has a culture, and included in that culture is a set of assumptions and practices around learning — the organisation’s learning culture.

Training, upskilling, reskilling, adapting, and equipping employees to excel are common ways we as organisations build and express our learning culture. There are, however, wide variations in the people, process, and technology resources applied to these objectives. Learning maturity describes the organisation’s progressive path from elementary to visionary learning culture.

Learning culture and learning maturity vary across organisations. In this white paper, we present an overview of a learning maturity model Kineo developed as a reflection of our market insight work, a discussion of what is driving organisations to accelerate their movement toward a greater level of learning maturity, and examples that illustrate how organisations can transition from one maturity stage to the next.

A model for how organisations mature

At Kineo we regard learning maturity as a continuum.

Along this continuum, we’ve found that organisations typically cluster in four stages, which we’ve named:





Chalk & Talk

An organisation at the Chalk & Talk stage has a young learning culture with little emphasis on upskilling workers. These organisations may deploy training on workplace processes and procedures or on their own products and services with the goal of equipping workers to perform effectively and efficiently in their job roles.

Training technology is minimal; if there is an LMS, it may be a basic one or used primarily for compliance content, reference or how-to guides or videos, or as a

tool to track and record learners' completion of required courses or certifications. Integration with talent management or development tools such as an HRIS is minimal.

The majority of training at this stage occurs in-house, using instructor-led classes or manuals, paper documentation, or internally produced training tools. Organisations at the Chalk & Talk stage are unlikely to have a dedicated learning and development (L&D) team.



Brilliant Basics

When Chalk & Talk organisations commit to developing a learning culture and enabling employees to participate in self- and professional-development activities, they move into what we call the Brilliant Basics stage.

These organisations may begin to push learning opportunities, encouraging learners to spend time on improving their skills or knowledge. Training opportunities include mandatory and compliance training — but extend beyond that to embrace personal and professional development. Brilliant Basics organisations may launch leadership development programs, for example, by teaching or reinforcing soft skills development; they might encourage learners to try to master new skills for their current or aspirational job roles. Training goals could be specific, such as improving performance or developing a particular skill; or they could be developmental, such as nurturing creativity or improving soft skills like mentoring workers or providing feedback.

Organisations at this stage are likely to use an LMS to host and track online training including conventional elearning courses and tutorials, featuring libraries of content that include interactive eBooks, documents, courses, and videos.

Brilliant Basics organisations may seek to deepen their learning culture by developing their L&D team and expanding the variety of training opportunities available to some or all of their employees. They may seek greater integration between the LMS and other elements of their talent management ecosystem or between online and face-to-face learning opportunities. They might be seeking to develop more customised, in-house training in addition to extensive use of professionally created third-party content libraries.



Investors in People

Organisations that have moved into the Investors in People stage have committed to performance management and talent development. These organisations have a maturing learning culture that sees a strong correlation between professional development and improved business performance.

Investors in People seek a strong return on their training investment (ROI) and see clear value in building their L&D team. Training opportunities extend far beyond what's needed to ensure efficient day-to-day performance and look to the future. Training goals include developing future leaders and empowering employees with new skills that enable them

to move into new roles and take on "stretch" assignments and challenges.

Investors in People fully exploit the capabilities of their LMS and may overlay a Learning Experience Platform (LXP) for greater learner engagement and personalisation. They encourage self-directed learning and perhaps host a knowledge base, extensive curated content, and performance development tools in addition to more conventional synchronous and asynchronous learning tools like elearning courses, microlearning, documents, and videos. They may host webinars, virtual classroom-based courses, and collaborative learning platforms and opportunities.



Future Gazers

Organisations characterised as Future Gazers have a mature learning culture and actively encourage learners to engage with self- and professional development as part of their workday routine.

These organisations likely have (or are planning to implement) an integrated talent development ecosystem that includes a robust, full-featured LMS, an LXP, a performance management platform and other tools that track, manage, and expand learning opportunities. They may be early adopters of AI technologies and immersive training platforms, for example, that take

learning in new and innovative directions. Digital learning is deeply ingrained in their learning culture alongside — or supplanting — much face-to-face learning as their organisations grow and become more globally focused.

They encourage "pull" learning — initiated and directed by learners themselves — and understand learning opportunities as a way to engage employees and provide an outstanding employee experience, with the knowledge that this is one way to hold onto valuable high-performers.

How Mature Organisations Leverage Learning

Attract top tier talent

Hire the cream of the crop

Onboard them into your organisation

Train and develop their technical skills

Engage them through continuous collaboration and social learning

Boost performance by aligning employee ambition with company goals

Exit at a mutually beneficial tenure and positive exit experience

Determining an organisation's learning maturity level

Where each organisation lands on the continuum is determined by a host of factors, including:

- **Types of training needed and used**
Training types include onboarding, product and services knowledge, compliance training needed to satisfy legal or regulatory requirements or maintain certifications for employees in specific roles, or skills training to improve safety or performance.
- **Training modalities employed**
Conventional and digital training takes place via face-to-face instruction; text-based learning materials; online training modalities including synchronous means, such as virtual classrooms, or asynchronous means, such as elearning, microlearning, self-directed searches; and more.
- **Purpose of training**
Organisations train employees to increase skills and knowledge, facilitate their professional growth or personal development, or prepare them to take on a new role or move into leadership positions.
- **Platforms and technologies deployed for training**
Learning management systems (LMSs), content management systems, learning experience platforms (LXPs), or social and collaborative learning platforms are all options for hosting and managing training.
- **Training and learning goals**
When organisations develop learning goals, they might follow a recognised format, such as developing lower- versus higher-order thinking skills according to Bloom's Taxonomy; they could also set performance- or outcome-based learning goals that are tied to specific business goals.
- **Measurement and assessment**
Assessing the effectiveness of training requires choosing which tools are used to measure learning and performance and examining whether training correlates to changes in key business metrics.

Workforce trends draw L&D towards maturity

Trends in culture, technology, and social norms ultimately find their way into the workplace, which is, after all, where most people spend the majority of their waking hours. Business trends directly affect learning strategy, process, culture, and the progress of learning maturity.

Among the trends influencing business and learning today are:



The growth of the globally-dispersed, remote, contract, and freelance workforce



Increased demographic of digital-first generations who expect technologically-advanced business systems



The dueling pressures of automation and the talent gap

1. Workforce Redefined Remote, Freelance, and Agile Teams

Multiple forces have been pushing business leaders to rethink the definition of “employee.” The globalisation of business, for example, means that functional teams now comprise people from across the continent and often across the oceans. The discovery that remote workers actually can be highly productive, benefitting from the flexibility, lack of commute, and other perks of working from home, is leading companies to entertain hybrid work-from-home-and-office models. Adapting principles from agile development, ever-changing functional teams pull employees, temps, contractors, and freelancers together based on just-in-time skills rather than departmental hierarchies. Fast Company reports that this gig economy is likely to grow to the point that “by 2020, over 40% of U.S. workers will be independent contractors.”

The decades-old, familiar model of learning in a classroom with an in-person instructor has been upended by these trends, gradually moving

aside to share space with virtual learning, asynchronous elearning, and other forms of online training.

Organisations already transitioning to a blended learning strategy, combining in-person with online training, or a digital-first strategy are better positioned than those at the “Chalk & Talk” stage, where nearly all learning is conducted in face-to-face classes and workshops. Even some of the newer models of blended learning are being pushed to evolve, since micro-learning and spaced learning provides the agility that workers need when their roles are constantly shifting, either by choice or circumstance. Learning resources that are personalised and in the flow of work are necessary to keep pace with worker mobility.

Online training professionals recognise the upside of this trend: with more remote and temporary workers, the need for elearning in its myriad formats will continue to grow. Organisations are seeing the benefits of moving training programs online: training is more

easily delivered to remote or global employee populations; they can gather data on learning progress and results more easily than with in-person training; and the training is easier to scale and deliver consistently.

A trend toward online learning that was already well underway, driven by cost savings, effectiveness, and environmental concerns associated with business travel now has additional impetus, as the traditional career-long tenure at one or two companies is disrupted by the workforce mobility that has been embraced by companies and workers alike.

2. Digital-First Generations Work and Learn Online, On the Go

The earliest evidence of an online learning transformation tends to be the conversion of onsite training to virtual classrooms and video conferences. But these methods have their limits.

While moving from in-person meetings and learning to videoconferencing is quick and relatively easy, employees and trainers soon find that hours-per-day video sessions are exhausting, draining, and impractical for many types of training or collaborative working.

Moreover, the generations who are not-so-gradually taking over the workforce – GenX, Millennials, and GenY – have, to varying degrees, digital-first expectations in their professional as well as personal lives. These consumers of learning are eager for development opportunities, but they bring consumer-based learning preferences to the workplace. SNHU, in a 2019 “Guide to Employers of Young Professionals,” quoted a recent Harris Poll that found “60% of people between the ages of 14 and 23 look to YouTube when they want to gather information, and a similar percentage credited the video-sharing platform, with its integral peer recommendations, “contributed to their education.”

The generational change is not just about moving to video as a training modality. While we may hold the mental image of younger employees replacing computers with smartphones, it’s not just about the device either. Josh Bersin states clearly, “Digital Learning does not mean learning on your phone, it means “bringing learning to where employees are. It is a “way of learning” not a “type of learning.”

“To be successful,” Declan Fox wrote in Training magazine, “organisations will need to shift to a new model of digital-first experiences,” that enable learners to have “hands-on” experiences and to interact with one another. These include virtual instruction, group discussions, collaborative projects, and more.

Fox suggested four strategies for transforming learning:



Spreading digital learning over a longer time period than an equivalent in-person course would take.



Design learning experiences around authentic work situations so learners will be able to apply them to their jobs.



Create and choose (curate) content carefully to enrich learning and provide context.



Preserve social connections through collaboration, discussions, assignments, and formal and informal feedback opportunities.

3. The Automation of Labor Balanced by Reskilling

In 2017, Josh Bersin warned that, "AI, Robotics, and Cognitive Computing Are Changing Business Faster Than You Thought." The automation trend — replacing some worker roles with automated processes or robots — is well underway. The good news, Bersin argues, is the evidence that technology will not create massive unemployment and lead to the jobless society that many workers fear. The reality is that companies are automating tasks, not jobs, giving workers more time to be creative and productive with their human skills.

Among the 10,000+ companies surveyed in the 2017 Deloitte Human Capital Trends research, 77% believed that automation will produce more jobs; only 20% saw job reduction as a consequence. How is that possible? By following the example of 50% of these responders who are already investing in reskilling employees to "work side-by-side with machines."

Given the costs of recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and training

a new employee, reskilling and internal hiring make financial sense for the organisation. In fact, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) notes a trend among organisations to reduce recruiting budgets while maintaining or increasing L&D budgets.

In addition to keeping you off the battlefield of the war for talent, reskilling pays off in the equally-important metric of employee retention. Data from the LinkedIn Global Talent Trends 2020 supports that "employees stay an average of 41% longer at companies with high internal hiring." Moreover, in-house new hires reach productivity faster than external hires, given the institutional knowledge they bring to their new role.

To be successful at internal hiring, HR, L&D, and the systems they deploy must work together to identify future-need skills and competencies, chart career paths for ambitious employees, and offer development resources to pave the way.

"The generations taking over the workforce have digital-first expectations in their professional as well as personal lives"



Transitioning to a higher learning maturity phase

The forces of change in business and work may be pushing many organisations to transition into digital learning more quickly than they had anticipated. However, this acceleration presents opportunities to develop employees, shape future leaders, and meet the demands of changing markets. Organisations typically take incremental steps to upgrade the people, processes, and technologies that enable employee development.

The People, Processes, and Technologies that Define Learning Maturity

Chalk & Talk - Team size 1-3

- No specialisation within the team.

- Basic processes to load events and track attendance.

- Microsoft Office, LMS, standalone (if present) Network File System.



Brilliant Basics - Team size 3-5

- May include roles like LMS Admin and Instructional Designer (responsive to other function's needs).
 - Light intake process focused on "getting the order right".
 - Increased use of "consumption" data from LMS to identify weak courses/programs.
 - LMS - integrated feeds from HRIS systems, Zoom, Teams and Intranet portal.
-

Investors in People - Team size 5-10

- Increase specialisation and structure to serve the needs of internal clients. Possibly add data person, technical resources to support integrations and talent development specialist.
 - Robust intake processes to surface points of failure and opportunities for improvement.
 - Increasing instructional support to extend "events" to journeys with LMS functionality.
 - Starting to proactively engage with internal clients to improve outcomes.
 - Building out of role-based skills development plans.
 - LMS, Performance Management System, LXP, Intranet Portal, MS Teams for Collaboration, Zoom, 3rd party content collections.
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Future Gazers - Team size 8-15

- Continued increased specialisation - social learning.
 - R&D skills added to the team.
 - Experimentation and innovation become more systematic.
 - Learning analytics drive continuous improvement.
 - Enterprise visibility into skills and competencies to fully identify the leverage existing capability.
 - Embracing of "gig" mentality with internal talent.
 - LMS, LXP, Performance Management, Mobile Tech, AR/VR, Knowledge Management Systems, MS Teams/Zoom, Intranet with group discussion forums.
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Case In Point

As the examples across the next few pages illustrate, strategically implementing a digital learning and working transition with the right provider can upgrade learning infrastructure, even within an era of budget tightening, and position organisations to focus on long-term success.

Case In Point

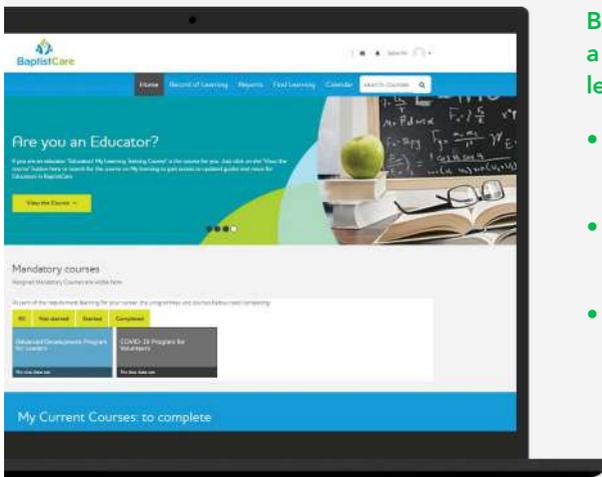
From Chalk & Talk to Brilliant Basics with blended learning

Baptist Care is a nationally respected organisation that provides care for aged and disadvantaged citizens in Australia. Seeking to streamline and standardise training across their 160 facilities, Baptist Care realised it was time to move from a conventional face-to-face instruction paradigm to a blended model that included some digital training.

Working with Kineo to implement a Totara Learn solution with Kineo courseware, the organisation was able to meet its diverse needs with a single platform.

Baptist Care is able to meet a variety of training and learning needs, including:

- Employee onboarding and ongoing training
- Volunteer onboarding and training
- Compliance training, tracking, and reporting



The Totara Learn LMS platform provided a robust learning platform that offered Baptist Care flexible course design, state-of-the-art data and system security, and easy integrations with their existing recordkeeping tools, including their HR management system. The ability to maintain up-to-date data records in a single secure location resolved a significant pain point for training administrators and ensured accurate compliance recordkeeping and reporting.

Baptist Care has adopted a 70/30 blended learning solution that incorporates a robust elearning content library along with short, targeted microlearning content. Now in the Brilliant Basics phase, Baptist Care is confident that their learning solution will grow with their organisation and enable them to strategically plan employee growth and development into the future.

Case In Point

From Brilliant Basics to Investors in People with personalisation

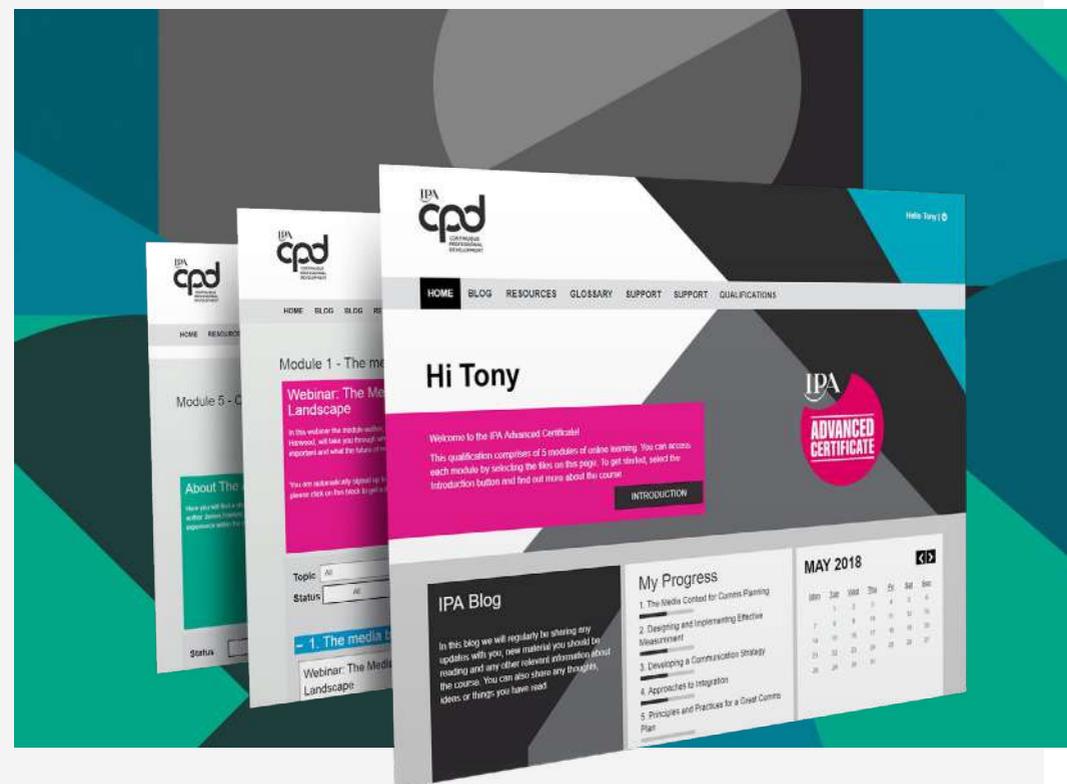
Organisations at the Brilliant Basics stage of learning maturity may transition to the next level with the goal of providing an improved learner experience. This can boost engagement, improve training outcomes, and lead to improved overall job performance. Alternatively, organisations moving to the Investors in People phase may be looking beyond improved job performance and be on the cusp of investing in leadership and employees' professional development.

Updating the learner experience

A global development organisation for advertising professionals, IPA serves more than 14,000 people in 87 countries. Their widely respected certificate is a sought-after credential. Yet IPA knew that their 15-year-old learning delivery platform was falling short. The

organisation sought to move examinations online while allowing learners and training teams greater flexibility and independence in managing their learning programs.

IPA decided to launch a new learning platform together with a planned relaunch of an advanced certificate program, knowing they needed to get the learner experience right to retain their



respected position as a professional development and certification leader.

The Totara Learn solution IPA chose provided an engaging and intuitive experience that enabled learners to see their progress toward qualification. Learners enjoy iOS and Android apps and the ability to download course content for offline access.

Since launching the new learning platform, IPA has updated and upgraded the experience for all their learners, relaunching their flagship training programs, each with distinct branding. IPA especially appreciates the ease of creating new credentials and content and the ability to manage consistency and access across their global portfolio.



Case In Point

Providing diverse learning journeys to emerging leaders

Australian icon Reece is a strong believer in developing people. Their training focuses on nurturing a leadership mindset. Yet Reece realised that their training needed an update. Learners wanted mobile-friendly content that was available on demand. The organisation also sought a stronger leadership focus and training that would challenge learners with relevant activities.

Reece adopted a learning experience platform that supported a shift to Agile content development and a move to blended, personalised learning journeys. Learners benefit from always-on access and content that teaches and challenges them, with supporting content that allows for workflow learning and performance support.

Reece worked closely with their learner population to develop the types of training that learners wanted. The resulting platform provides collaborative and social learning in a blended format. A range of leadership-development journeys emphasise short daily learning moments, personal research, and action-oriented learning. Reece is developing targeted content in-house to meet the needs of its emerging leaders, now and into the future.

The elusive Future Gazers level of learning maturity

The achievement of Future Gazer status may be a rather utopian vision, a unicorn, if you will, compared to earlier stages on the journey. In certain organisations, there are departments that have come close; but becoming a true Future Gazer organisation requires buy-in and adoption by the collective enterprise. The key characteristic of organisations growing beyond Investors in People is the openness to new learning concepts, strategies, and technologies – championed by L&D leaders who constantly pursue knowledge of leading-edge ideas.

It is these organisations who today are experimenting with virtual reality, augmented reality, interactive video, and user-generated content. They view the technology landscape as an environment of integrated competency, performance, business, and learning applications with the employee experience as the central connector.



The learning maturity journey focuses on long-term success

Moving to the next level of the learning maturity continuum is an investment in the long-term success of your organisation. Partnering with the right provider makes the journey smoother, helping you map your progress through reachable, cost-effective milestones.

No organisation charts the same path; each has unique needs and capabilities. Advance your learning maturity with a solutions provider who can inspire you to grow while keeping pace with what's just right for you and your learners now.



We want to hear from you!

Where do you think your organisation falls on the Learning Maturity continuum?

[Get in touch for a digital learning health check](#)



Are you a Future Gazer?

Like a unicorn, you're a rare and unique organisation. We'd love to interview you!

[Reach out here](#)

Introducing Totara: Kineo Edition Talent Experience Platform: Achieve the full potential of your organisation

Comprising three solutions - that are powerful on their own, but transformational when used together - Totara: Kineo Edition is built on Totara's Talent Experience Platform, helping you build a better workplace, increase resilience and prosper in today's fast-changing world. It unites:

Totara Learn

The flexible LMS trusted by millions of learners and favored by companies worldwide (like [Samsung](#) and [Indeed](#)) to deliver transformational learning.

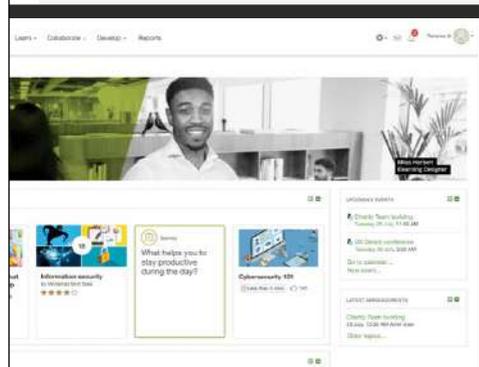
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Totara Engage

The new learning experience platform (LXP) built to engage, unite and upskill your workforce. Totara Engage empowers employees to simplify complex knowledge sharing with collaborative workspaces and Microsoft Teams integration, to deliver higher employee engagement.

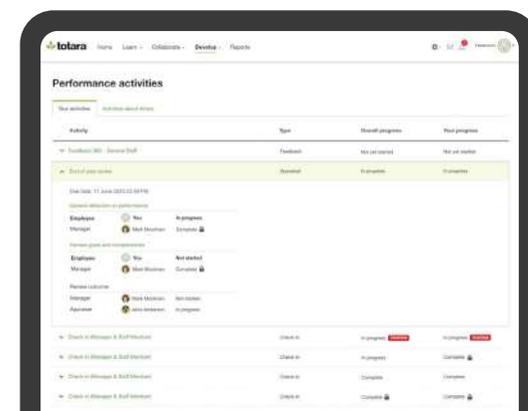
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Totara Perform

With flexibility, organisational control and continuous performance management at its core, Totara Perform enables the modern enterprise to deliver peak productivity. Evidence-based performance reviews allow for objective performance measurement to boost workplace productivity, anytime, anywhere.

[Find out more](#)



Discover how we're shaping the future of learning

Everything we do at Kineo stems from a simple idea – if we design a better learning experience, together we'll get better results.

Kineo helps the world's leading businesses improve performance through learning and technology. We're proud of our reputation for being flexible and innovative, and of our award-winning work with clients across the world.

Whatever your business challenge, we will partner with you every step of the way to find the learning solution that fits best – and delivers results.

**So, how can we help you?
Get in touch about your digital learning challenges.**

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