Trends in corporate training in 2021-2022

Discover the prevailing methodologies and themes following a year of profound change in the labour market.
About homuork

Since 2013, homuork has been promoting the social and digital transformation of work environments through e-learning. Our professionals turn training into an entertaining, accessible online experience, tailored to suit each individual.

During this time we have trained more than 500,000 people on five continents. In addition, we are partners of Coursera in Europe and have agreements in place with various consultancy firms in Spain.

Our excellent reputation in the sector is due to the high quality of our courses, the development of a personalized platform for each client, and the high level of engagement and fulfilment of our training courses.

100+ courses created since 2013
500,000+ students on five continents follow our courses
Inditex, LinkedIn and The Red Cross count on our services

Trends in corporate training in 2021-2022
Table of contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About homuork</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/ Online training is the new standard</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From urgent action to training excellence</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodbye Flash. Hello HTML5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person training, but with high added value</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/ Mental health and wellbeing will be a priority</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital switch-off to combat burnout</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health training</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/ Speeding up of upskilling and reskilling</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learnability and the culture of lifelong learning</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/ Soft skills: human skills at a time of change</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for efficient teleworking</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most important soft skills for 2021-2022</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to implement soft skills in the coming months</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/ Conclusions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online training is the new standard
When we published the previous guide to trends in mid-February last year, nobody could have imagined the tremendous changes that were about to take place. The COVID-19 pandemic spread at an incredible speed, causing a major health crisis and forcing companies to adapt to an unprecedented scenario. Work centres were abandoned and teleworking became the norm in millions of households.

The rapid growth of online working also made itself felt in Human Resources and Training departments. Physical classrooms were closed indefinitely, and all educational activities were digitized. Needs were pressing, and it was necessary to come up with rapid responses.

In 2021-2022 this trend will continue. Now they have overcome the initial urgent training needs, companies will start focusing their efforts on long-term, high quality programmes. They will also continue to migrate e-learning content from the now-defunct Flash to HTML5. Finally, in-person sessions will take on a strategic function once social distancing measures are relaxed.

The digitization of corporate training: a one-way journey

The percentage of in-person training plummeted by up to 9% at the time of peak COVID-19 crisis. However, training managers do not expect to return to pre-pandemic levels once the situation normalizes.

### Percentage of corporate training in terms of the format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Before COVID-19</th>
<th>During the pandemic</th>
<th>After COVID-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaching and mentoring</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asynchronous e-learning</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synchronous e-learning</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person training</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From urgent action to training excellence

The emergence of the pandemic forced all L&D professionals to make serious efforts to adapt and harness their creativity. Planned training sessions had to be cancelled or digitized as rapidly as possible. Other pressing needs also became apparent, such as training in teleworking skills and content development for new members of the workforce.

This intensive experience served to reaffirm the benefits of e-learning, including aspects such as lower costs, the ability to make training sessions more uniform, and greater flexibility. Companies that were already committed to this form of training will be taking it even further this year. Meanwhile, those who had to introduce it at the height of the pandemic will want to continue exploring this option.

For all these reasons, 2021-2022 will be a time for dropping down a gear, analysing needs with a greater focus on the medium term, and implementing high quality online training. The return on investment in this area is only possible by introducing attractive learning itineraries that encourage interaction.

What aspects of your online training would you improve in 2021?

Four traditionally in-person training formats that will be digitized in 2021-2022

- **Onboardings**
  With teleworking so prevalent, the processes of introducing new staff will be digitized.

- **Sales team**
  Materials will be a priority in this area due to the high number of sales professionals and their wide geographical distribution.

- **Live sessions for big audiences**
  The webinar format will replace large training events while social distancing is still a necessity.

- **Compliance and occupational risks**
  As this type of training is adapted to each company, any existing content must be digitized.

Goodbye Flash. Hello HTML5

On 31 December 2020, Adobe Flash stopped operating on all web browsers. Having been invented in the late 1990s, this programming language became extremely popular in the development of animations, online games and, most importantly for us, online training. All of them became obsolete in the new year.

The almost unanimously adopted solution was to convert these programmes to HTML5, a more modern language that fulfils all the current requirements for developing high quality training courses. Its main features are as follows:

1/ Supports different content formats such as graphics, animations and interactions.

2/ Works on the most popular web browsers: Google Chrome, Safari and Firefox, among others.

3/ It is compatible with smartphones and tablets, the devices we use 70% of the time we spend online, according to a report by IAB Spain.

4/ In contrast to Flash, it can be viewed without the need to install plugins or extensions.

5/ It facilitates data storage for connection-free access.

How to migrate e-learning content to HTML5

In the last year, we have worked with a number of companies on converting their Flash formats to HTML5. These are the four phases that need to be taken into account.

- **Creation of a training inventory**
  Separating updated training itineraries from those that need to be migrated.

- **Content reviews and update**
  It is advisable to check whether each course continues to fulfil its original objectives.

- **Migration of Flash to HTML5**
  homuork can help you with the process if you do not have in-house experts.

- **Establishment of quality controls**
  By creating and monitoring KPI for usability, design, responsiveness and content.
Yes to in-person training – but only with high added value

Digitization will be the focus of a large percentage of the efforts of L&D teams in the next twelve months. However, the prominent position attained by e-learning will not detract from the importance of in-person training. When social distancing measures are finally relaxed, the classrooms will be filled with students again. However, they will only attend for high added value training.

In this respect, according to a study made by The Ken Blanchard Companies, physical spaces will continue to form part of the training strategies of 57% of professionals in the sector, but as part of a blended learning system. The hope, therefore, is that in-person sessions will be reserved for the sections of training itineraries that are more effective when given in situ.

Some examples of in-person training with high added value

Examples of cases in which in-person training is the perfect complement to e-learning programmes are described below.

- **Training of management staff**
  Achieving the commitment of people in these positions is essential to motivate the rest of the team. Planning an in-person session for them before starting the training itinerary is an excellent idea.

- **Inaugural classes**
  Communication is key to the success of e-learning courses. One way of increasing visibility and taking advantage of the benefits of in-person settings is organizing the inaugural class in situ.

- **Training-the-trainer**
  Some companies and departments need internal trainers to give the online sessions. Although they can be trained remotely, the physical classroom is the recommended space for small groups.
Mental health and wellbeing will be a priority
In the last year, the percentage of employees who described their mental health as poor or very poor increased from 5% to 18%, according to figures from the teleworking platform FlexJobs. Aspects such as isolation, uncertainty and the loss of loved ones had a big impact on people as a whole.

As well as the factors directly related to the pandemic, employees experienced periods of exhaustion and stress peaks. These were partly due to difficulties in switching off, longer working hours, and extremely high demand in certain sectors.

Far from having been solved, many experts warn that the long-term impact on mental health caused by COVID-19 will last longer than the effect on physical health. For this reason, in 2021-2022 companies will have a pressing need to protect and promote the mental wellbeing of their employees. Part of this task will fall upon the Training and Development departments.


Depression and anxiety disorders represent a loss of productivity to companies valued at one billion dollars per year.

For every dollar invested in mental wellbeing programmes, companies save €3.27 in employees’ health costs.


Source: Udemy.
Digital switch-off, a remedy for burnout

Teleworking has even further blurred the line between work and home life. Working days have become longer and longer, and the number of testimonials of people unable to switch off have proliferated. The result is that 7 out of every 10 employees have suffered from burnout at least once in the last year, according to figures from the software company Asana.

Digital switch-off – or the right of employees not to have to be connected to a digital device for professional reasons during their time off – is recognized in the laws of various countries. However, this legislation is not enough to change deeply-rooted habits and routines. This is where specific training plays a key role.

The five main consequences of burnout, according to employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Low morale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Mistakes are made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Feel less committed to the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>Need more time to complete their work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Anatomy of work index 2021, Asana.
More training to protect the mental health of employees

The promotion of employees’ mental wellbeing is a task that depends on multiple departments within the company. Among these preventive actions, training plays a key role. These are some of the aspects that will have the biggest impact in 2021-2022.

Prevention of burnout

As mentioned in the previous point, burnout or exhaustion meant that 2020 was an extremely stressful year for employees. One of the dangers of this kind of stress is that when it becomes chronic it can result in Burnout Syndrome.

Some of the symptoms of this disorder include a feeling of being overwhelmed, diminished job performance, and an increase in negative emotions towards the job.

Mindfulness

In the current context, more and more people are resorting to mindfulness and full consciousness techniques to calm their minds.

Companies can help by offering introductory courses in this subject matter and virtual sessions with an expert.

Inclusiveness in mental health

Disorders such as anxiety, stress and depression have increased considerably in the last year. However, the subject of mental health is still taboo in most workplaces.

Promoting more open and inclusive dialogue on these issues is partly the responsibility of companies’ L&D department.
Speeding up the processes of upskilling and reskilling
As confirmed by several of the trends featured in this guide, 2020 gave rise to new needs but, above all, speeded up existing needs. This was the case of both upskilling, or conventional further training, and reskilling, or professional retraining to perform different functions and tasks.

In 2021-2022 we will continue to witness an uncertain and changing scenario at work. Digital transformation will play a key role in this respect, in a cross-cutting way with the incorporation of basic digital skills in every kind of job position. This will also be the case in specialized training in areas such as machine learning, cybersecurity and data analysis, all of which are booming.

All of this requires L&D departments to equip themselves with agile, adaptable training solutions that are capable of being updated in a matter of weeks, ready for rolling out online.

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### Estimated percentage of the workforce that has taken part in upskilling processes in 2019 vs 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimated Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### The goal of L&D programmes

The most popular options chosen when training professionals are asked about the three main objectives of their programmes.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To increase the workforce’s engagement.</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote the growth of the organization.</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To resolve the lack of skills.</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learnability, the key to a culture of lifelong learning

In a scenario such as the one described above, in which a great deal of importance is ascribed to reskilling and upskilling, the formula for success entails developing a culture of lifelong learning in organizations. To achieve this, we need to foster learnability. As you very probably know, learnability combines the ability and the desire to continue learning. Thus professionals with high levels of these skills are particularly valued at times of change and transformation, given that they take a positive attitude to tackling and overcoming any obstacles that may arise.

A fact that underlines the importance of learnability was provided by researcher and educator José Antonio Marina before the pandemic. At that time, he estimated that young people joining the labour market would need to update their knowledge and skills between 10 and 14 times during their careers.

Six techniques for promoting learnability in 2021-2022

1/ Promote individual learning
   Employees will be more motivated and will not see training as a burden.

2/ Encourage personal development
   This improves our self-perception as being capable of improving every day.

3/ Publicize success stories
   Stories of professionals who have been promoted after training are inspirational.

4/ Create channels for communication
   This will also serve as a newsletter, like a Slack channel or internal forum.

5/ Embrace diversity
   Learnability is strongly associated with adaptability and creativity, both features of diverse teams.

6/ Facilitate knowledge transfer
   The accumulation of knowledge is extremely valuable. Encourage people to share it.
Soft skills: human skills in a time of change
The pandemic has radically changed working methods in organizations. Since it began, it has been necessary to take decisions, organize teams, and communicate in difficult circumstances. The inherently human skills have taken on a new dimension and become indispensable for the effective operation of working teams.

According to the report entitled *What Workers Want* 2020, prepared by consultancy firm Hays, soft skills are those that have the most influence on recruitment, above and beyond ‘hard skills’. The same report stated that 6 out of every 10 companies believed that personal skills are more important than technical skills in the professional development of employees.

Training in soft skills will be the area with the highest growth between 2021 and 2027.

The development of soft skills in organizations increases productivity by 12% and offers a return on investment of 250%.


Until 2019, only 8% of the population practised teleworking to a greater or lesser extent, but it is estimated that by the end of 2021 between 25% and 30% of all jobs will be done remotely, according to a study by consultancy firm Global Workplace Analytics. Rather than referring to a skill in itself, teleworking is associated with a set of skills that have now become essential. According to the human resources consultancy firm SHRM, the four most important soft skills associated with this form of working are resilience, self-motivation, communication skills and teamwork.

Alicia Aradilla, sociologist and author of Teletrabajar, pero bien (Teleworking done well) attributes the rise in the implementation of remote working, above and beyond the current health crisis and employee safety, to the fact that it enables companies to lighten their cost structures and improve productivity, provided it is implemented optimally.

Skills for efficient teleworking

Between 25% and 30% of employees will be engaged in telework for several days a week by the end of 2021.

Source: Global Workplace Analytics.

Social distancing measures may be necessary intermittently through to 2022.

Source: Projecting the transmission dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 through the postpandemic period. Science magazine.

Some 82% of business leaders expect distance working to remain in place after the pandemic.

Source: Workforce Transformation survey. Published by Adecco.
The most important soft skills in 2021-2022

Adaptability
Change has become one of the most significant features of our time. For this reason, adaptability will be a priority skill, as it allows a quick and robust reaction to any challenges that arise.

Analytic thinking
According to Future of Jobs Report by the World Economic Forum, analytic thinking will grow in importance in companies, ultimately becoming the most in-demand skill by 2025.

Learnability
Learnability is the skill that drives us to acquire new skills throughout our lives. Employing this aptitude helps us to learn new skills, enhances our own work, and further develops our careers.

Creativity
Connecting the dots that do not apparently seem to be connected to generate original and useful solutions will be an incredibly valuable skill in future workforces.

Leadership
In digital working environments, leadership facilitates collaboration and communication between members of the team, engendering working relations based on trust.
How to promote soft skills in the coming months

One of the main characteristics of soft skills is that they can be taught. Indeed, the ‘soft’ factor comes from the fact that these skills can be moulded, changed and improved. To a large extent, soft skills are strengthened every time we tackle an everyday challenge both at work and in our personal lives. One of the best ways of refining and speeding up this learning process is through corporate training. By reinforcing skills such as time management, stress management, emotional intelligence and communication, it is possible to increase overall performance and achieve greater wellbeing in organizations.

Four tips for training employees in soft skills

- **Use microlearning techniques**
  This type of virtual learning is based on short ‘shots’ of content which helps students to move forward in their training even though they may have little time to devote to it.

- **Use video support**
  Videos let you reach a bigger audience and help to improve memory retention. This format also lets students experience what is being taught in a closer, more visually direct way.

- **Promote ‘learning by doing’**
  Problem-solving, drawing up projects and creating space for reflection in training sessions show how content can have real-life use in everyday work situations.

- **Include interactive exercises**
  Adding interactive activities that involve playful dynamics and associations will encourage students’ interest and also help with knowledge retention.
Conclusions
During the course of this guide, we have seen how some major changes have taken place and will continue to occur in the area of Training and Development, which will occupy a very important position in organizations in 2021-2022. In this respect, the success of companies in the short- and medium-term will depend on their capacity to formulate effective training strategies for their different teams.

These are the four key areas that will define the coming years in the field of L&D:

1. **Online training will be most widely used for developing talent**

Following a year of rapid and forced adoption of online training, organizations will digitize their training itineraries in the medium and long term. The quality of content will be a priority, as will the search for engagement.

2. **Mental health and occupational wellbeing will be more important than ever**

The population has been strongly impacted by the pandemic. Companies will need to cope with a wave of disorders resulting from stress, uncertainty and exhaustion by strengthening their training content in this particular area.

3. **Reskilling and upskilling will speed up to fill gaps in training**

2021-2022 will be a very demanding year in many sectors. In order to address this, it will be necessary for workforces to be brought up-to-date and for the culture of lifelong learning to be adopted to foster the development of new skills.

4. **Soft skills will be fundamental in an era of change and digitization**

The popularity of these inherently human skills has been growing in the last few years. The sudden digitization and spread of teleworking will place them at the centre of every gaze.

At homuork we develop catalogue courses and e-learning experiences adapted to the latest systems in the market.

We can also provide advice and study the specific needs of each company.

If you prefer, send an email to info@homuork.com or call us on 936 06 88 06
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