

# Creating Learner-Centric Solutions

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## Learning Advisor Master Class Series

Session 5  
07 June 2018

# ler•ning ad•vīzar

Learning Advisors  
impact business outcomes  
by leveraging their L&D  
and business expertise to  
proactively influence talent  
and business decisions.

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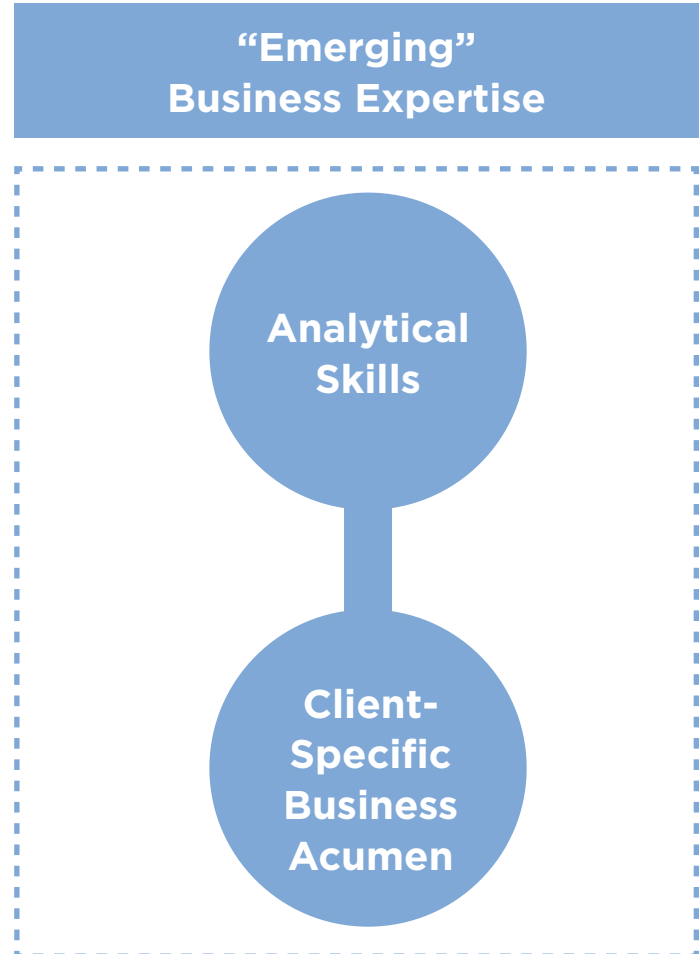
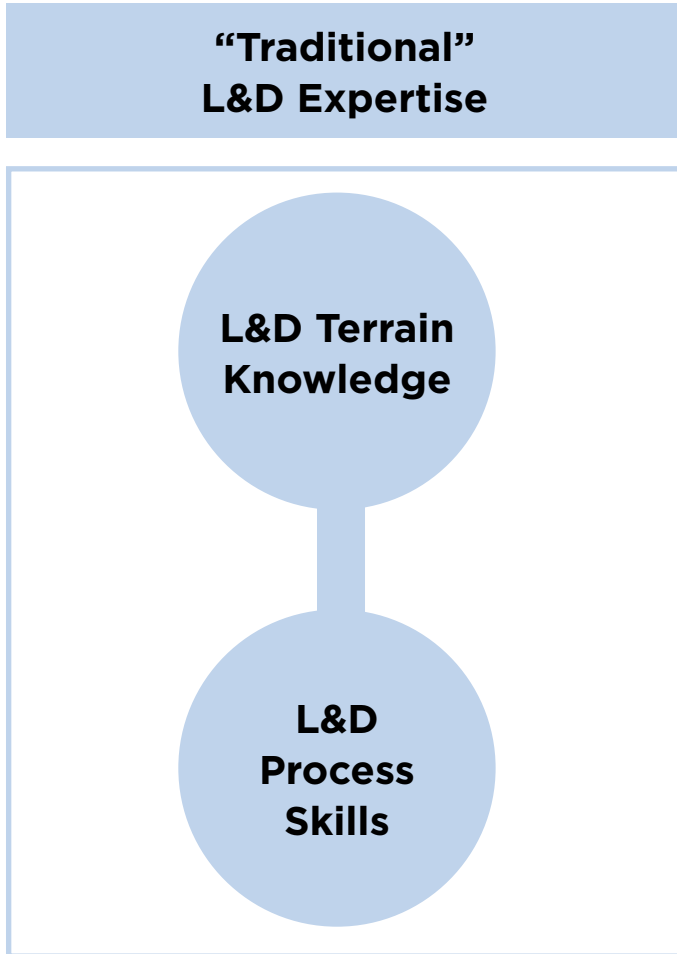
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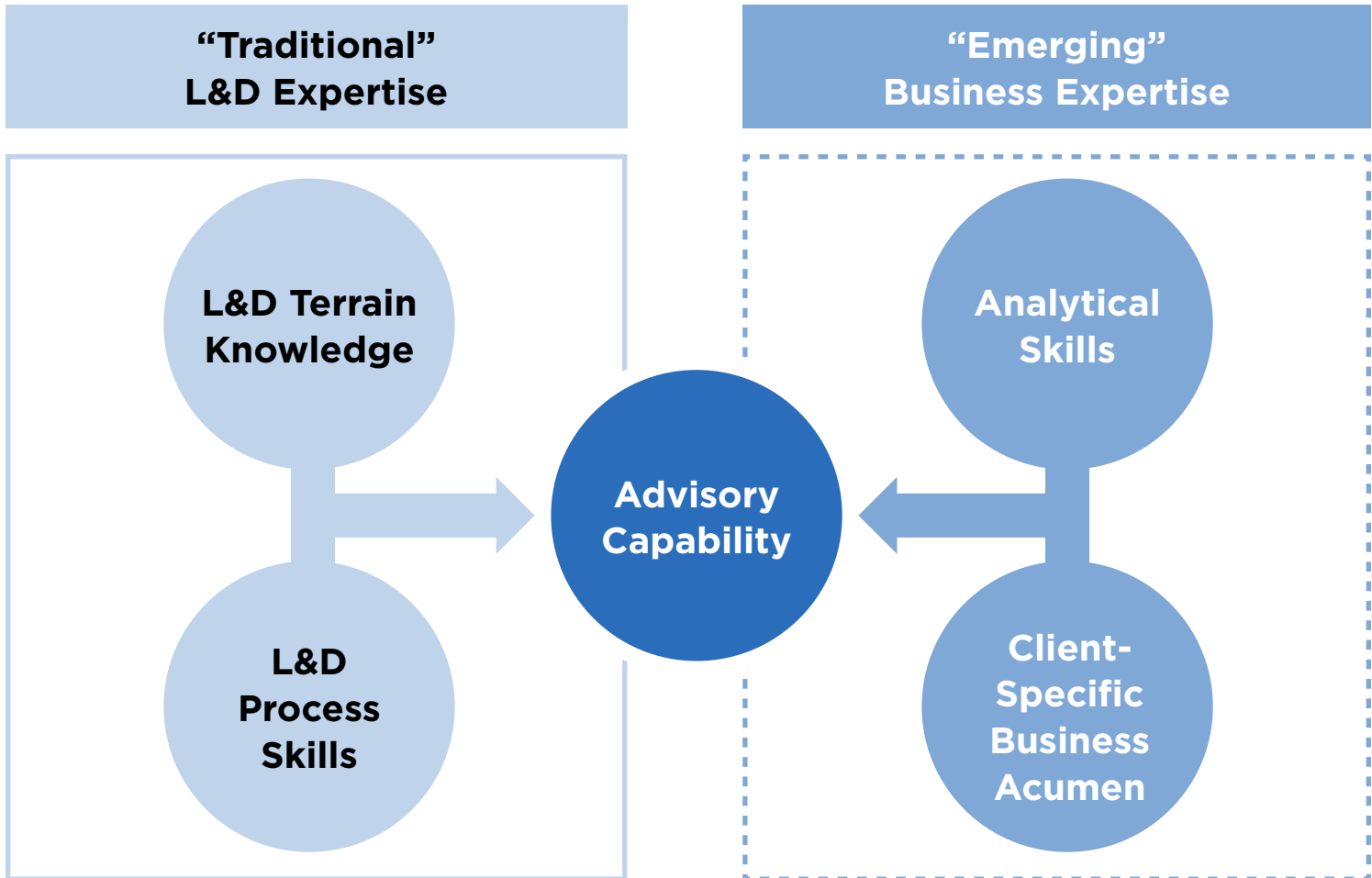
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# The Learning Advisor Model



Source: CEB analysis.

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Source: CEB analysis.



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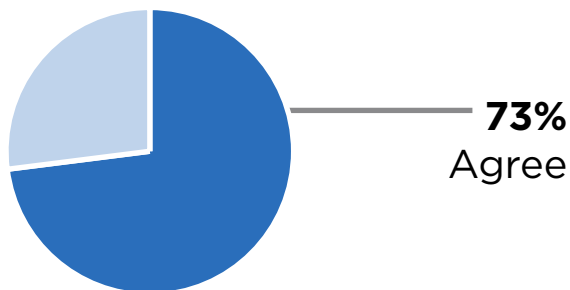
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# Employees Work Differently Today

## Greater Volatility in Work for Employees

Organizations Expecting More Change



## Higher Productivity Expectations

Top Changes in Business Units Within the Last Three Years

**Greater Volume of Work**  
50%

**More Changes in Roles and Responsibilities**  
43%

**More Ambitious Goals or Objectives**  
40%

**Timelines Have Become Shorter**  
36%

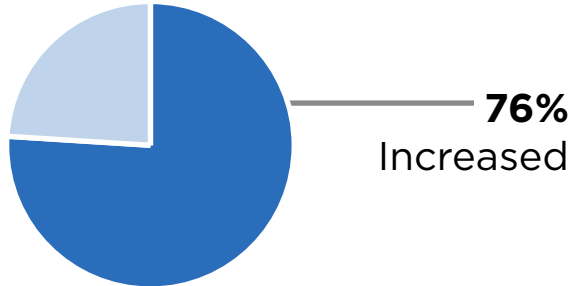
*n* = 306; 112.

Source: CEB 2016 HR Change Readiness Survey; CEB 2016 L&D Digital Learner Survey.

# Employees Work Differently Today

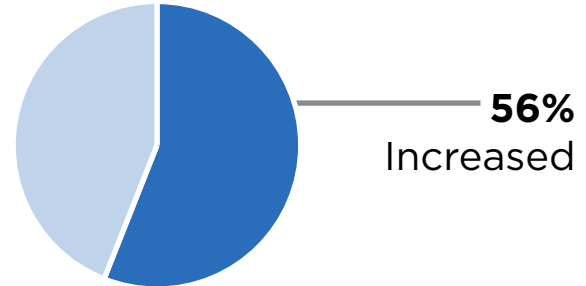
## More Interdependence

Need for Employees to Collaborate at Work



## Increased Access to Information

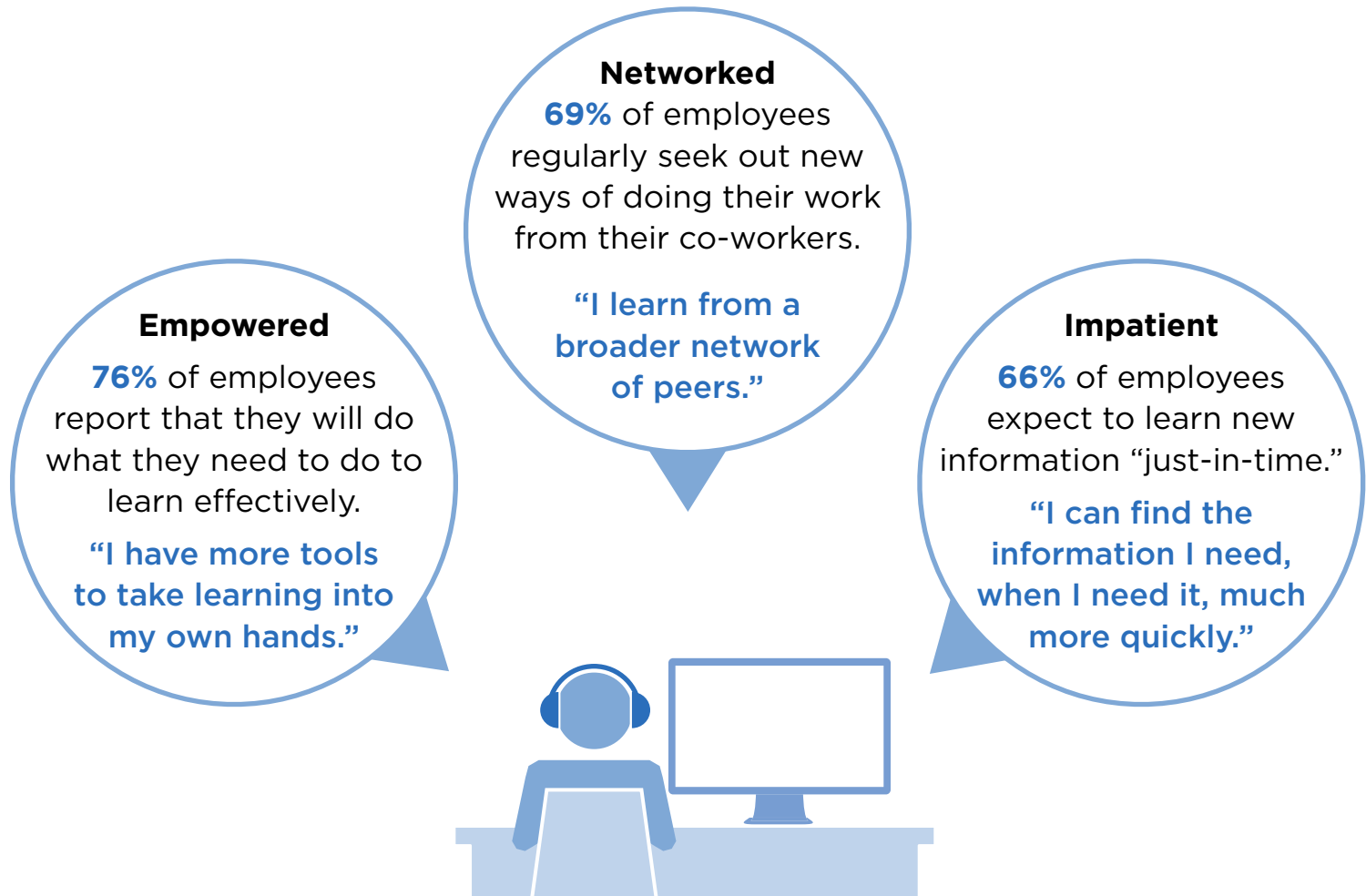
Time Spent Collecting and Analyzing Data and Information Within the Last Three Years



$n = 9,071; 10,531.$

Source: CEB 2016 L&D Digital Learner Survey.; CEB 2014 Enterprise Contribution Workforce Survey..

# A New Profile of Learner Has Emerged



$n = 23,764$ .

Source: CEB 2014 Learning Culture Survey.

# Learning Is Not Effortless



**55%** of employees find learning **hard to consume**.

**57%** of employees find learning **hard to access**.

**77%** of heads of L&D say that they are increasingly asked to **show more impact**.

**65%** of heads of L&D agree that the L&D function is **more important to driving business outcomes** than three years ago.

# Traditional L&D Design Processes Fall Short

L&D Design Processes Fail To Place Learner At the Center



## **Rigid Process**

The linear process fails to account for changes, making L&D solutions quickly outdated.



## **Slow Solution Creation**

A focus on developing the end-to-end learning solution makes learning design too lengthy and slow.




## **Minimal Employee Feedback**

The process doesn't include employee feedback, leading to a lack of understanding of learner needs and values.

Source: CEB analysis.

# Taking a Lesson from UX Designers



“ UX design is the process of designing (digital or physical) products that are **useful, easy to use, and delightful** to interact with. It’s about **enhancing the experience that people** have while interacting with your product, and making sure they **find value** in what you’re providing ”

# Taking a Lesson from UX Designers

## UX Design Principles

### Be Contextual

Know your user's context, not just needs

### Be Human

Design to be approachable, open, and trustworthy

### Be Findable

Make it easy for your user to find and access you

### Be Easy-To-Use

Limit your user's cognitive burden, establish a visual hierarchy that's easy to follow

### Be Simple

Establish clear signal value and avoid complex wording or visual distractions



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# Assessing Your Learner-Centric Design

**Q1**

Do you understand employees' learning needs, values, and challenges?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

# Assessing Your Learner-Centric Design

**Q1**

**Q2**

Can you identify the highest priority gap in the learner's experience, not just rely on the business-reported development problem?

☐

**Yes**

☐

**No**

# Assessing Your Learner-Centric Design

**Q1**

**Q2**

**Q3**

Do you connect learners' needs to new product ideas?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

# Assessing Your Learner-Centric Design

**Q1**

**Q2**

**Q3**

**Q4**

Do you continue to solicit learner perspective throughout the design process, not just once at the beginning of design?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

# Assessing Your Learner-Centric Design

**Q1**

**Q2**

**Q3**

**Q4**

**Q5**

Are you comfortable designing  
in a less traditional way?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

# Result

If you selected “**NO**” for any of these questions, then **let’s get started.**

# Knowing Your Learners

## Get to Know Your Learners

Knowing your learners means not just understanding their needs, but understanding their personal context, concerns, and values for learning. This is key to delivering value and boosting their application from learning.

1. Who are your learners?
2. What concerns do learners have about their jobs or careers?  
How can learning address those concerns?
3. How do learners typically work?  
How might this affect how they learn?

## What We Typically Know About Our Learners

- ✓ Demographic
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Type of work
- ✓ Required skills

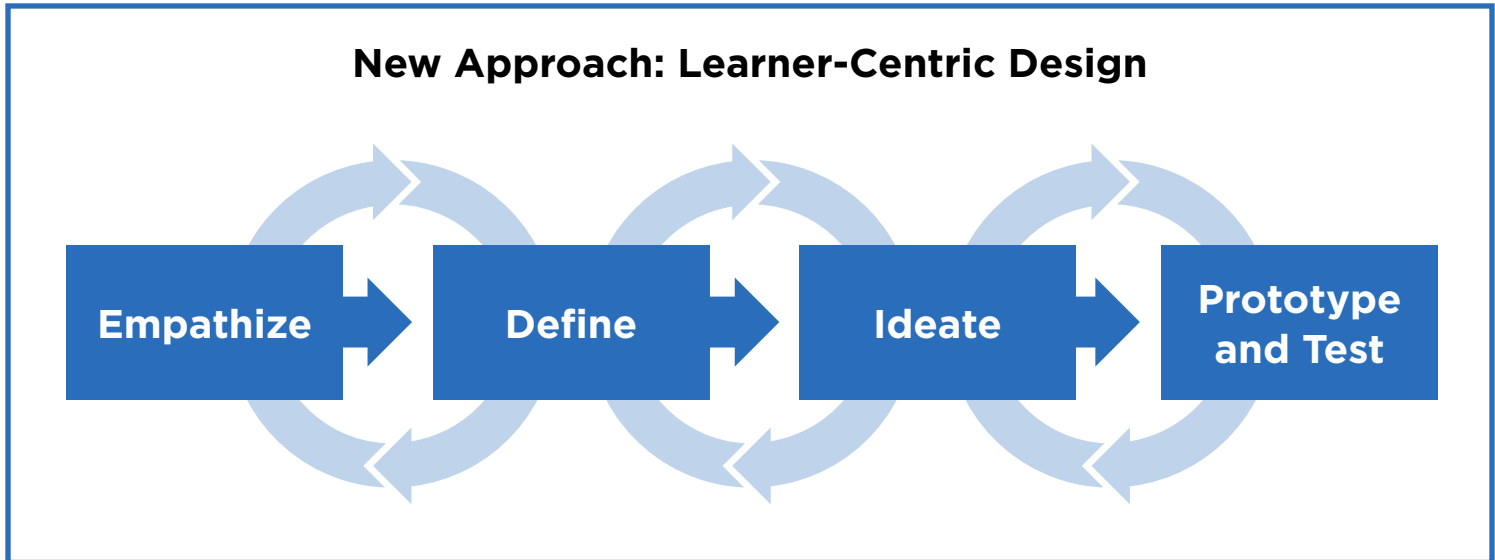
## What We Should and Can Know

- Core values
- Employability concerns
- Career opportunities
- Thoughts, feelings, and responses to L&D offerings

Source: CEB analysis.



# Learner-Centric Design Overview



**Flexible  
Approach**



**User-Integrated  
Design**



**Fast, Solution  
Creation**

Source: CEB analysis.

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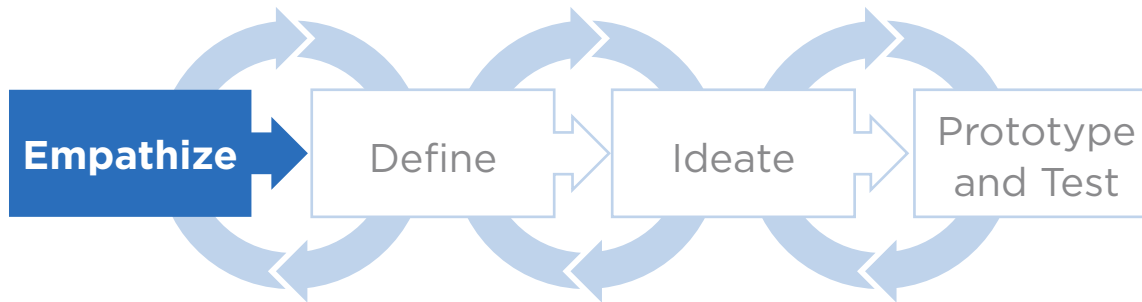
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# Empathize Overview



## L&D Objective

Understand employees' learning needs, values, consumption preferences, and challenges.

## Timing

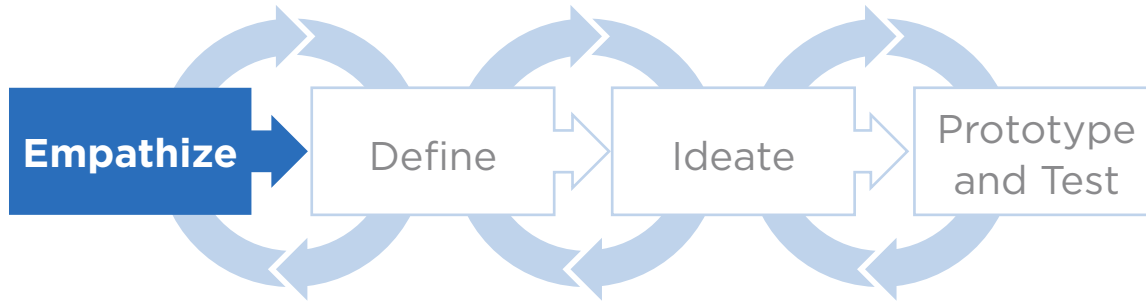
Continuously update your understanding of learners' needs, behaviors, and environment. Determine the level of analysis needed based on your level of understanding.

## Key Question for L&D

Who is my user, or learner, and what matters to this person?

Source: CEB analysis.

# Empathize Overview



## How to Do It

1

Identify the most relevant learning audience.

2

Interview, observe, or collect information about learning behaviors and needs.

3

Map your understanding of learners, focusing on what they see, feel, think, and do day-to-day.

Source: CEB analysis.

# Empathy Exercise



## Empathy Mapping Excerpt

**Instructions:** Think about a specific project, program or initiative and the targeted learner segment. Then check the box if you know the information about the learner segment. At the end, brainstorm how you will fill gaps in knowledge.

I know how this learner segment perceives L&D's reputation.

I know what my learners see in their environments when using L&D solutions.

I know what my learners say or feel when using L&D solutions, whether in public or private.

I know what other tasks or activities they might be doing while using an L&D solution.

I know their main pain points while using solutions, and what makes it easy or hard to consume.

I know if learning is a positive or painful experience for them.

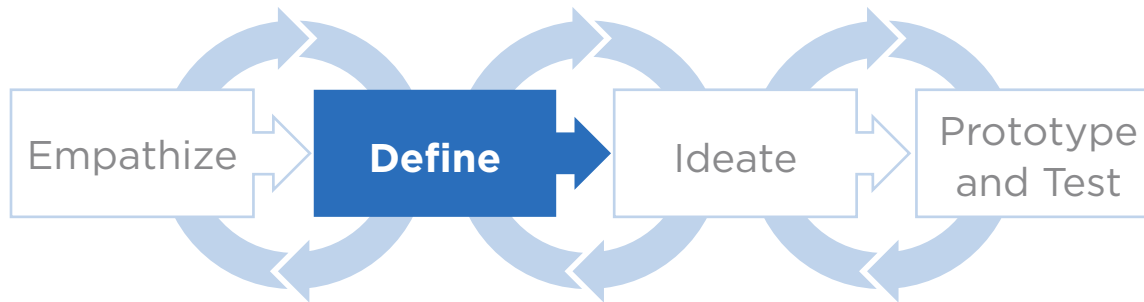
I know what a typical day looks like in their world.

I know what they hope to gain from accessing L&D solutions.

I know which consistent words, phrases, or feelings are associated with L&D.

**How will you collect the information you do not know?**

# Define Overview



## L&D Objective

Identify the biggest gap in the learner's experience or the highest priority L&D needs to address.

## Timing

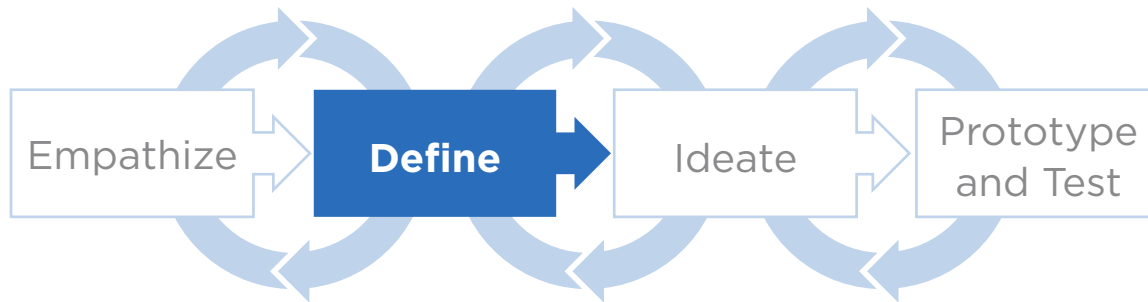
At the beginning of a new project, define the problem and determine its scope. You can change the scope throughout the process.

## Key Question for L&D

Which learners' needs aren't being met?

Source: CEB analysis.

# Define Overview



## How to Do It

1

Identify gaps in the learning experience based on the information collected.

2

Identify learning challenges' potential root causes.

3

Summarize and define the problem you are trying to solve.

Source: CEB analysis.

# Define Exercise



## Access Barrier Checklist

**Instructions:** Thinking about the same project, program, or initiative, use the Access Barrier Checklist to help think through the potential learning gaps and challenges for employees, taking into account the user experience from the previous empathize step. Check the box if it applies to your organization.

### Physical Barriers

- Do employees have the required hardware to access learning?
- Do software and network permissions allow employees to access the information they need?
- Are employees in geographic proximity to learning resources?

### Behavioral Barriers

- Are employee habits aligned to where learning is placed?
- Is task-relevant learning available where work tasks occur?

### Time Barriers

- Can employees quickly search and find relevant learning solutions?
- Do employees have time in their day-to-day work to access learning solutions?

### Awareness Barriers

- Do employees receive communication about where learning solutions can be found?
- Are employees aware of available learning?

### Peer Proximity/Availability Barriers

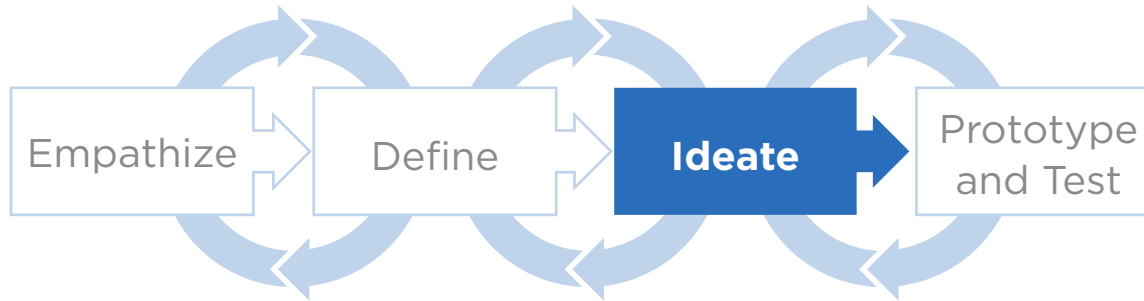
- Do employees work in close proximity to their peers?
- Are colleagues available for peer learning?

### Manager Support Barriers

- Do managers lack the time, motivation, or ability to help their direct reports access learning?
- Are managers aware of their responsibility to help their direct reports access learning?



# Ideate Overview



## L&D Objective

Connect learner needs to new product ideas through creative brainstorming.

## Timing

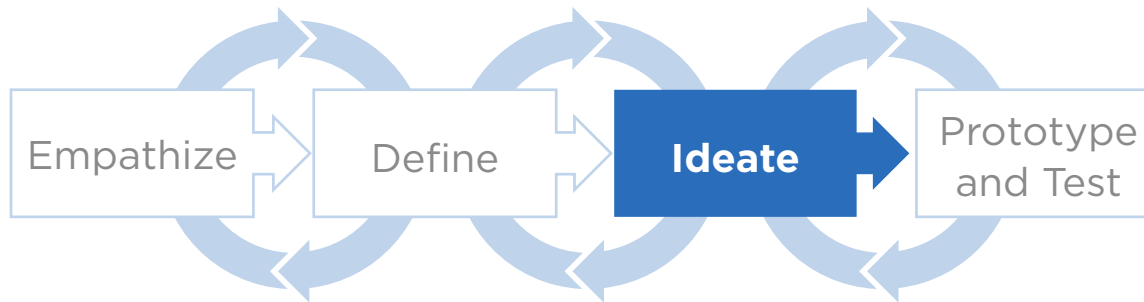
Start brainstorming after clearly articulating and scoping the problem. You can return to this stage at any point to address user or business feedback.

## Key Question for L&D

How can I best show my ideas in the form of a solution?

Source: CEB analysis.

# Ideate Overview



## How to Do It

1

Leverage your team to think creatively about the challenge.

2

Collect all ideas, and explore likely solutions further.

3

Test likely solutions against key learning design criteria.

Source: CEB analysis.

# Ideate Exercise



## Four Principles of Consumable Design

**Instructions:** Thinking of the same project, program, or initiative, use the prompting questions in the principles below to help brainstorm creative, easily consumable learning solutions. For this exercise, choose one of the quadrants to focus on.

### 1. Substance

How can I make my content **more:**

- About the learner and his or her work and less about the act of learning?
- Easier to understand and less complex?

### 2. Voice

How can I make my content feel **more:**

- Organic and open to interpretation and less “corporate” and polished?
- Authentic, like a trusted friend, and less “flat” and impersonal?
- Candid and less legalistic?
- Naturally worded and less jargon-y?

### 3. Visual

How can I make my content **more:**

- Stimulating and inspiring and less graphically dull?
- Multimodal and less static and two-dimensional?
- Physically portable and exportable and less destination-dependent?

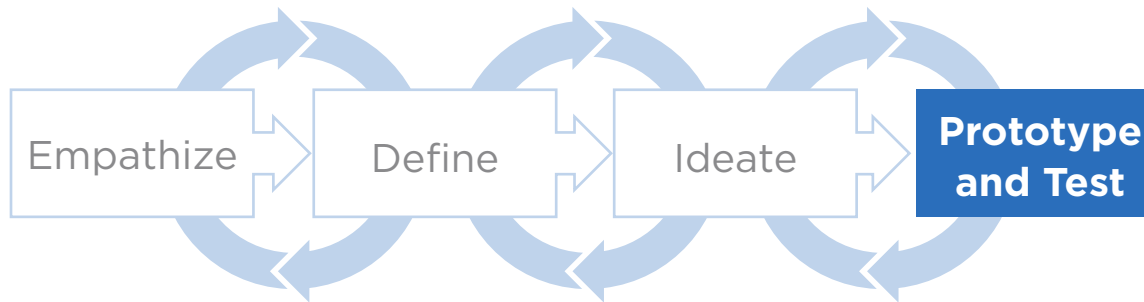
### 4. Interaction

How can I make the interaction **more:**

- Interconnected and building and less stand-alone modules?
- About learner behavior, action, and reaction and less passive?
- Actionable and directive and less theoretical and suggestive?

**Record your responses here:**

# Prototype and Test Overview



## L&D Objective

Gather learner feedback throughout the design and delivery phase.

## Timing

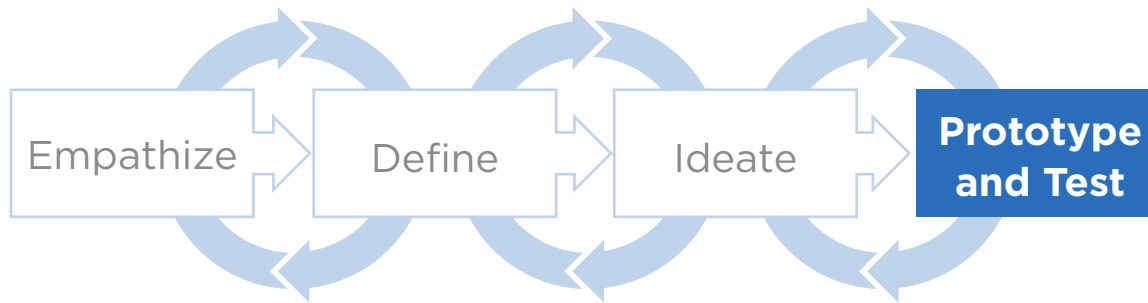
Prototype and test your solution. Test the idea with employees, rather than building out a complete solution. The feedback may lead you to revisit previous steps.

## Key Question for L&D

What worked and what didn't?

Source: CEB analysis.

# Prototype and Test Overview



## How to Do It

**1**

Create a prototype of the learning solution.

**2**

Collect feedback from your test audience, and update the product.

**3**

Repeat until you are satisfied with the product.

Source: CEB analysis.

# Prototype and Test: Keys to Success

## Prototyping Tips

- ✓ Strive for “good enough” for each round
- ✓ Design test parameters before implementation
- ✓ Be prepared for iterations
- ✓ Avoid linear development processes
- ✓ Select and prime a good audience
- ✓ Involve employees throughout

## Feedback Discussion Questions

- Where does the learning solution best fit in your workflow?
- What is the best format for this learning solution?
- When do you most need and use this learning solution?
- Does this learning solution meet your needs and values?
- What did you like least and most about the learning solution?
- How did the new learning solution make learning easier?
- How can we improve this learning solution?
- What would you recommend we do to address similar challenges in the future?

Source: CEB analysis.

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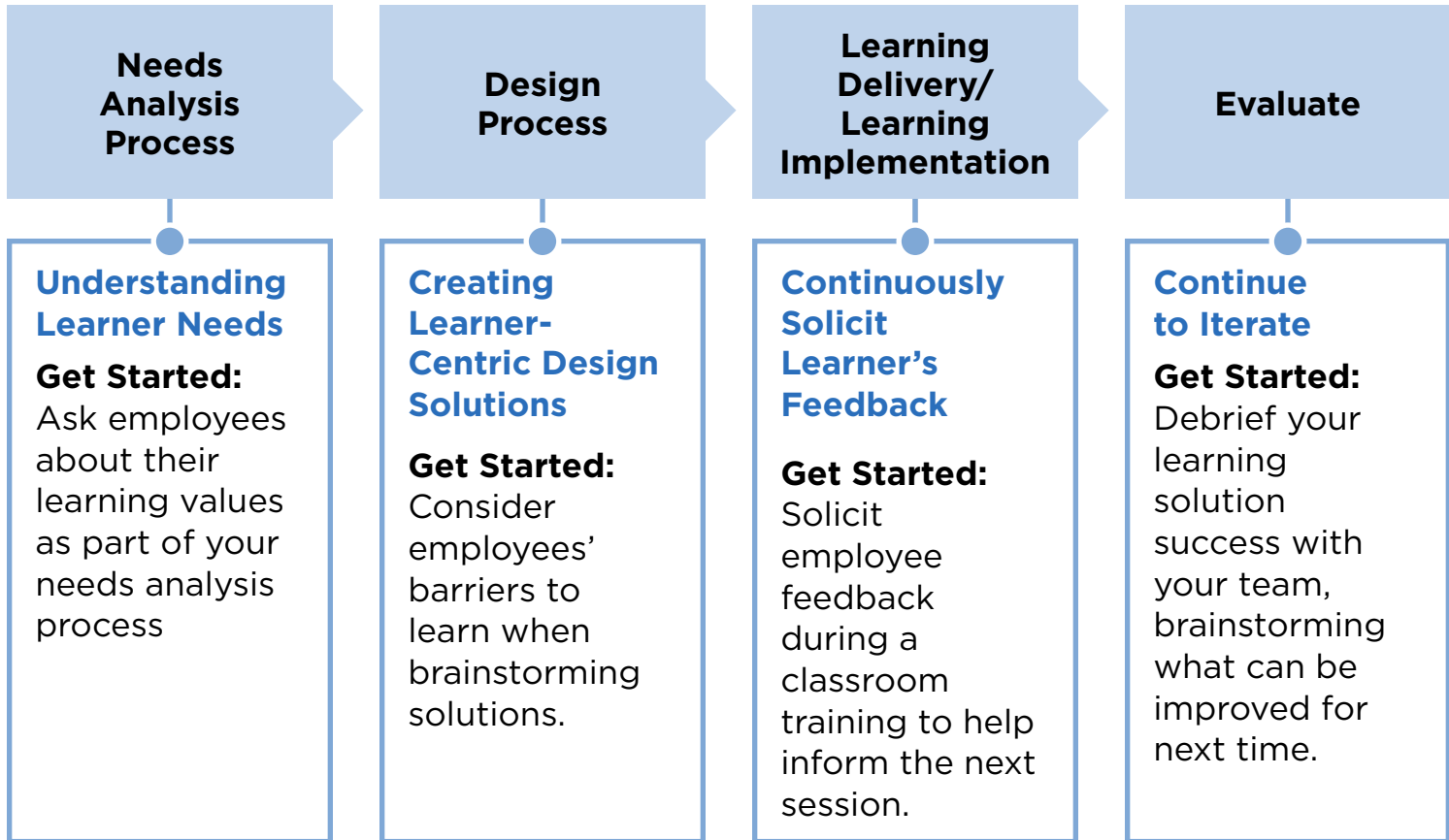
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# Use Learner-Centric Design in Your Role

## L&D Activities



Source: CEB analysis.



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# Building and Applying Learner-Centric Design: Action Plan



**Instructions:** Use the following steps to identify how you can gain and apply learner-centric design skills in the near future.

**Step 1:** Identify who you can leverage to learn more information about your learners.

**Step 2:** Write down questions you would want to know

**Step 3:** Brainstorm creative ways to get the information from each stakeholder group

Roles	Names	Questions	How
Learners			
HRBPs			
Managers			
Your Colleagues			
Line Leaders			
Other			

# Building and Applying Learner-Centric Design: Action Plan



**Instructions:** Use the following steps to identify how you can gain and apply learner-centric design skills in the near future.

## Step 4: Identify Opportunities to Apply Learner-Centric Design

Opportunity	Date	People Involved	Where to Bring in Learner-Centric Design Skills
<i>Middle Manager Development Program</i>	<i>April 7th</i>	<i>Emilie Jensen, Line Leader for Sales</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Needs analysis conversation with Emilie</li><li>▪ Set up focus group with Sales middle managers</li></ul>

## Step 5: Prepare for Questions or Pushback

Stakeholders	Potential Questions	Prepared Answers
<i>Line Leader</i>	<i>Why are you asking more questions in the upfront than you have in the past?</i>	<i>As we are working to create solutions centered around the way learners access, consume, and apply content, we need to spend more time getting to know their context.</i>

# Appendix



# Implementing Learner-Centric Design

## Expect Pushback or Questions from Key Stakeholders

### Managers and Leaders

#### **Current Expectations:**

One-time review of a complete learning solution portfolio

#### **Questions They Might Ask:**

- Why are you deploying a learning solution that is not end-to-end?
- Why do you need my input multiple times throughout the design process?
- How will these shifts in design impact my employees?

### Learners

#### **Current Expectations:**

Passive recipients of learning solutions

#### **Questions They Might Ask:**

- Why are you seeking my input for learning design? Isn't this L&D's job?
- What are my new expectations for learning solutions?

Source: CEB analysis.

# Learner-Centric Design Goals

## Create Learner-Centric Standards for Your Solution Design

### **Design Objectives:**

- ✓ Identifies learner needs to align with business ideas
- ✓ Understands and aligns with learner experience and business context
- ✓ Contributes directly to business results through demonstration of his or her business acumen
- ✓ Uses a more “build as you go” or iterative approach to design
- ✓ Suggests new channels and formats of learning solutions

Source: CEB analysis.

## **A Framework for Member Conversations**

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