

Bersin's Top Three L&D Developments to Watch in 2019

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Learning & Development has been pinpointed as the top-rated challenge in [Deloitte's 2019's Global Human Capital Trends](#). According to the report, people now rate the “opportunity to learn” as among their top reasons for taking a job, and business leaders know that changes in technology, longevity, work practices, and business models have created a

tremendous demand for continuous, lifelong development.

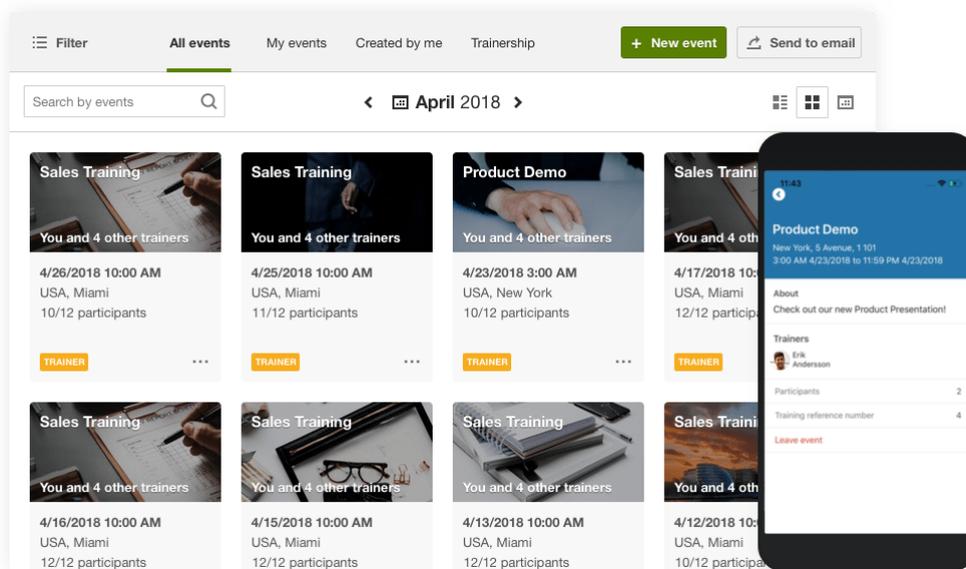
There has never been a more important time to be in the L&D space, says Josh Bersin, world-renowned thought leader and global HR analyst. Ahead of his keynote at [L&D Innovation & Tech Fest](#) 2019, he outlines three key areas of corporate learning to watch in 2019.

1. Learning Experience Platforms (LXPs)

The Netflix of learning is here. [Learning Experience Platforms](#) (LXPs) designed to make corporate learning content easy to find and enjoyable to experience are offering up a fresh alternative to the traditional LMS.

“LMS systems were never designed to be employee-centric. They were developed as “Management” systems for learning, focused on business rules, compliance, and catalogue management for courses,” says Bersin.

LXPs by contrast focus on content discovery (the same things that made Google a multi-billion dollar company), featuring content recommendations, skills mapping, and content pathing. “The LXP, which looks more like YouTube or Netflix, is a true content delivery system, which makes modern content easy to find and consume,” Bersin explains.



Since the explosion of this market (now worth over \$300M and growing at 50%+ per year), Bersin says that the market is moving in six different directions at once:

- **Skills based learning:** While all LXP systems have skills-based tagging, leading vendors are starting to build skills assessments, skills inferences, and skills-based learning paths.
- **Usage based analytics:** many LXPs are aggregating massive amounts of data to recommend learning based on the usage of others. A good idea in theory but trickier in practice as it often means popular content “crowds out” other content that might have more value and credibility.
- **AI based content analysis:** Platforms that read the content and figure out “what is this trying to teach people?”
- Understanding learners needs: LXPs are trying hard to understand the learners’ needs in order to recommend content. E.g. asking about your tenure, aspirations, levels of expertise, and even your “way of learning.”
- **Expanding the learning business rules:** business rules, which we have heretofore left in the LMS, are creeping into the LXP – e.g. sexual harassment training, certification, induction training. “This is a heavy lift for the LXP players, but hey whoever said being a learning platform company was going to be easy.”
- **Storing and manage data and analytics:** Right now LXP systems are collecting a lot of data: utilization, history, tracking, assessment, and compliance data. But they don’t store much of it, leaving that to the LMS. This raises the question of where all of this will be stored – LMS or LXP?

Is this the end of the LMS? Not necessarily says Bersin, but it’s complicated. “This market is too big to ignore. Most LMS vendors are building this type of functionality,” but he reasons, “It’s hard to make old software do new tricks. As the LXP space grows in size and value, training departments have to decide where they want to spend their money,” Bersin says.

2. VR and Immersive Learning

In soft skills, real-world simulation is the most effective way to learn but it is often expensive, dangerous, and just impractical to create a real-life simulation that works. E.g. How will you train someone to deal with a robber who points a gun in their face? Time is another factor driving the popularity of VR learning – how much time do you have to simulate a sales call or an angry customer in real life? VR and is taking the challenges out of this, providing real-life simulations in a cost-effective and efficient way.

“The potential for virtual reality in training is enormous, and the problems it can solve are everywhere,” Bersin says. However, many people are put off by the term “virtual reality”, thinking it is new or expensive technology. So Bersin offers up another more L&D friendly term – [Immersive Learning](#).

“Immersive Learning is an L&D term that simply refers to programs that use truly “Authentic Practice” in their approach.” Think simulating a customer interaction at a checkout, taking a tour of a new factory, or training how to react in a crisis situation.

Bersin says this form of “real-world practice,” is what creates muscle memory and helps us retain what we’ve learned (which is significant considering [we forget 50% of information within one hour of learning it](#)).

“This new concept gives the VR market legs: it helps us fit it into a bigger context. VR is not a “technology” being applied to training: it’s a new paradigm to learn, one which every human being can take advantage of.”

3. New Research on Learning and Employee Performance

These new learning technologies are making it easier to find content and making the learning experience more enjoyable, encouraging more people to partake in learning. This is significant in light of new research that shows that the amount of learning you do has a significant impact on your performance as an employee.

“Employees that spend more time learning are measurably more engaged, productive, and successful than their peers,” says Bersin, citing the [research he undertook with LinkedIn](#) to find out what drives their feelings of satisfaction at work.

- Among the 2,400+ professionals surveyed, 7% spend more than five hours a week in education and learning.
- The “heavy learners” are significantly more productive, successful, engaged, and happy than their peers, seeing almost three times the benefits of light learners.
- When asked why they might leave their company, professionals tell us “their ability to grow and progress” is almost twice as important as salary.
- Even those who spend an hour a week learning show significant benefits above those who don’t spend time learning at all.

Bersin’s research gives us two simple takeaways, both a huge positive for the L&D community:

- Learning makes people feel better.
- Learning has tangible benefits for business.

His advice for L&D leaders is this: “Your job is not just to “teach,” it’s to create an environment where people can truly [learn in the flow of work](#). Give people an environment to

learn; promote and reward development; reward experts and leaders for teaching others; and look at the new learning platforms that let people learn in the flow of work.”

Some final advice from Josh Bersin for corporate learning in 2019

- Upgrade your infrastructure
- mix micro-learning experiences with longer form content
- Embrace new forms of content like VR, AR, self-authored videos, peer-to-peer online practice.

“It’s going to be an exciting time and if you embrace the concepts of design thinking and experimentation you’ll be able to take advantage of some of those exciting innovations.”

Hear more from Josh Bersin and other L&D innovators at [L&D Innovation & Tech Fest](#), 18-19 November, ICC Sydney.