

**2020 SURVEY RESULTS**

# The State of High-Stakes Learning

Intrepid by VitalSource once again surveyed 1,000 learners in the U.S. to determine:

- WHAT LEARNERS THINK** are the most high-stakes training topics facing their organization.
- WHAT LEARNERS SEE** as the best ways to deliver high-stakes learning.
- THEIR ASSESSMENT** of the effectiveness of their organization's L&D culture.
- HOW THEY SEE** leadership defined at their organization, and who they prefer to learn from about leadership topics. NEW

## 2019 vs 2020 Trends

- MOST CRITICAL TOPIC**  
**STILL LEADERSHIP**
- BEST MODALITY**  
**STILL LEARNING WITH/FROM OTHERS**
- LEARNING CULTURE**  
**STILL SEEN AS NEGATIVE**

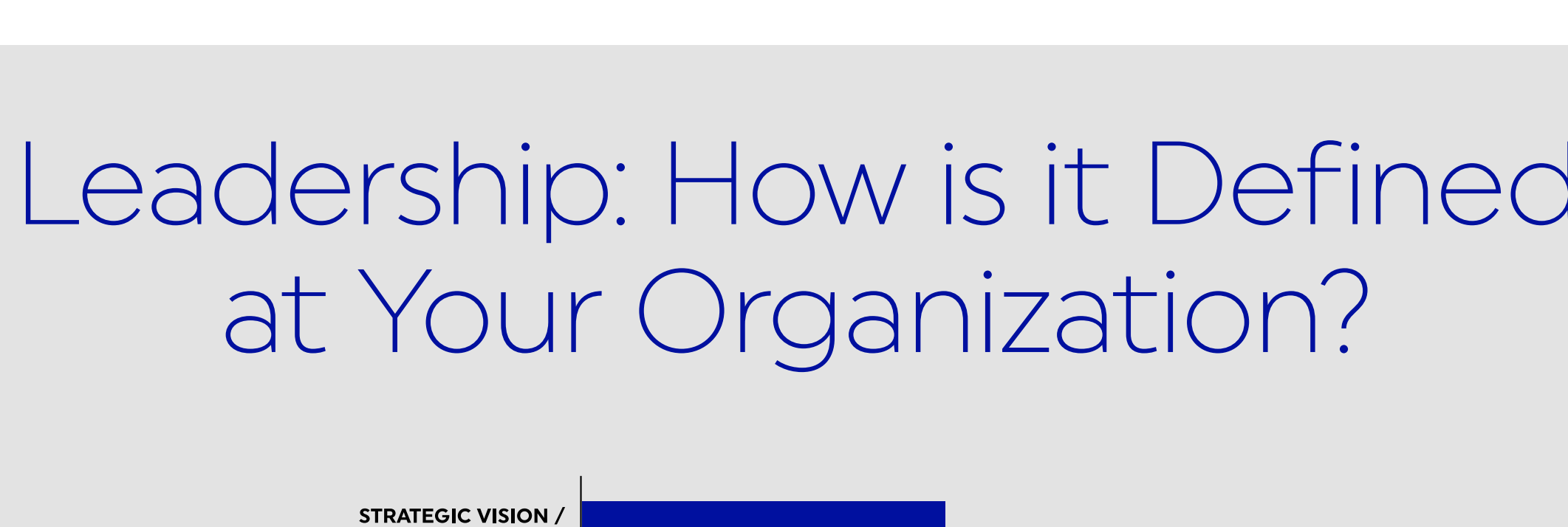
## The Trends are Clear from 2019 to 2020

- Corporate L&D is still failing the individual learner, even as L&D departments have made some attempts at changing their learning culture and approaches.
- Learners still prefer collaborative learning above all other modalities but aren't being offered this as a frequent choice
- Learners still feel that leadership is the most critical pain point for their organizations.

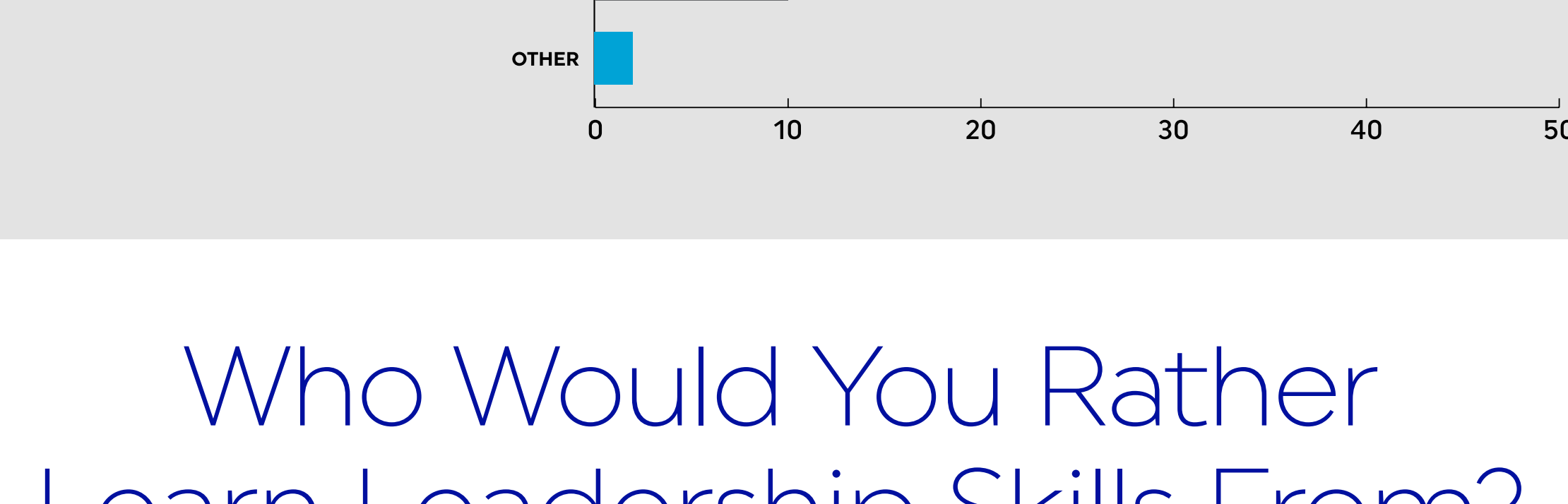
## 2020 Most Critical Pain Point



## What types of Corporate L&D offerings Have the Most Value for You?



## Leadership: How is it Defined at Your Organization?



## Who Would You Rather Learn Leadership Skills From?

Internal experts as the top answer speaks to the need for L&D departments to wrap company context and input from internal leaders into their leadership programs.

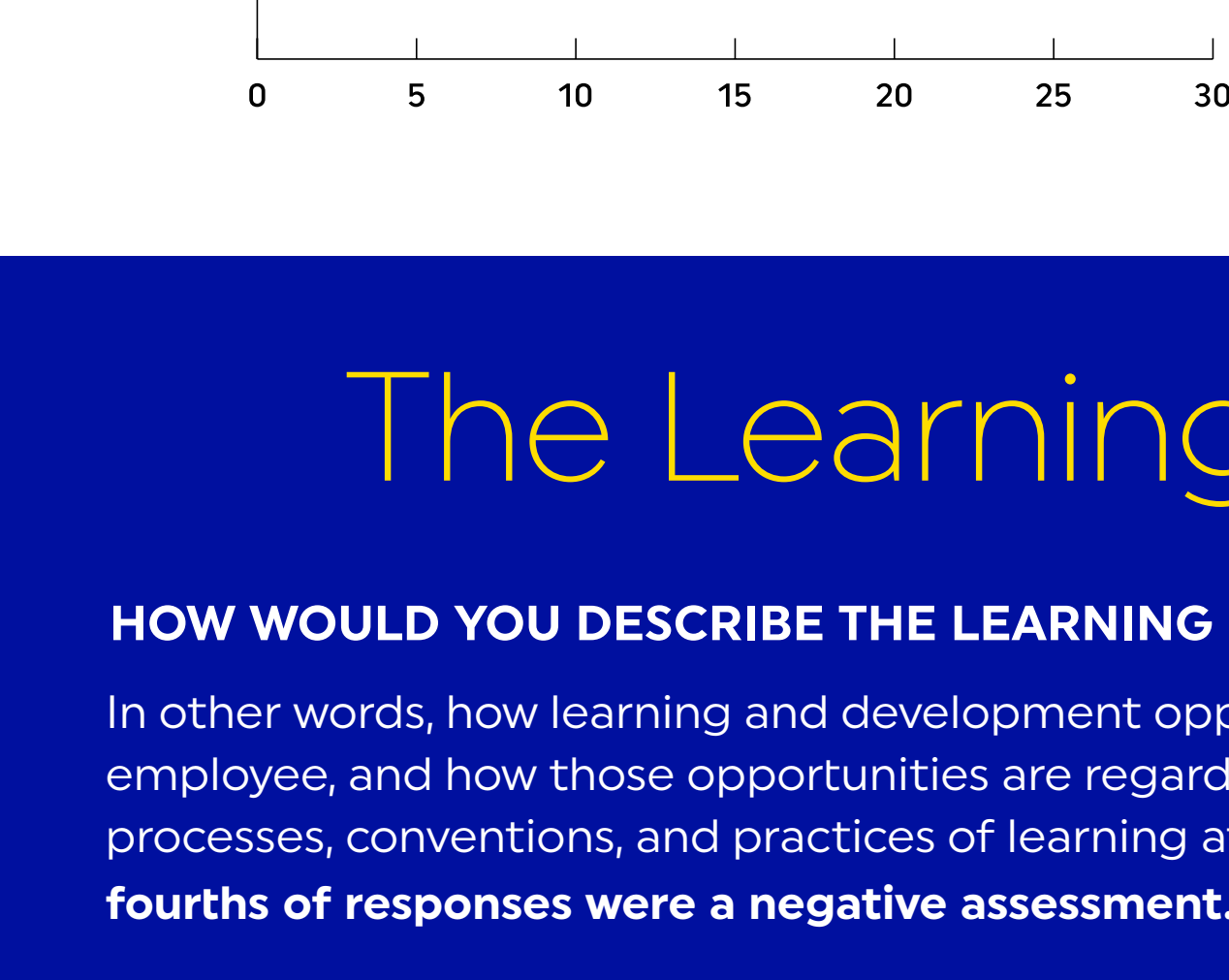


## How Much Did Your Organization's L&D Help Grow Your Career Last Year?



## Professional Development Programs and Application

### WHAT TYPE OF PROGRAM WAS THE LAST ORGANIZATION-DELIVERED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT YOU COMPLETED?



### HOW MUCH OF WHAT YOU APPLIED IN YOUR WORK SINCE THEN?



## The Learning Culture

### HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE LEARNING CULTURE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

In other words, how learning and development opportunities are presented to you as an employee, and how those opportunities are regarded by you and your colleagues – the processes, conventions, and practices of learning at your organization. **About three-fourths of responses were a negative assessment.**

- 34.62%: Our CEO talks about learning but we don't really have formal learning opportunities.
- 22.62%: Tick the box/afterthought.
- 25.1%: Enthusiastic but off-the mark / not actually useful.
- 17.66%: Embedded in the organization / meaningful and useful.

Learners were split between positive and negative comments about their learning culture. **One interesting increase this year over 2019 was the number of "one step forward, two steps back comments" such as:**

- Highly encouraged, but not always effective.
- They like to roll out fancy sounding programs with a lot of industry buzzwords, but when it is actually executed it is lackluster compared with how it was presented.
- Learning is offered, but there's not a strong effort to make sure employees truly have the option to participate - i.e. supervisors pay lip service to the importance of learning, but they do not free up employees to attend by covering their work, etc. So they can be out of the office.
- Well-intentioned but poorly organized.
- They are all for it but never want to pay for it.
- Willing yet becomes an afterthought due to other priorities
- Earnest but misguided.
- Looks good on paper
- They really see the benefit of training the employees it just isn't always successful how they choose to do it.

This tells us that although L&D departments are trying, **their methods to date are not meeting the mark.**

## What Would You LIKE Your Organizational Learning Culture to Embody?

- Proactive
- Useful
- Structured
- Open
- Relevant
- Collaboration
- Inclusive
- Active
- Incentivized
- Variety of topics
- Modern
- Empowering
- Innovative
- Supportive
- Teamwork
- Organized
- Accountable
- Context
- Quick

## Time Needed vs Time Spent

There is a disconnect between the amount of time learners think is needed to make a meaningful change in the effectiveness of their day-to-day worklife, and the amount of time they are currently devoting to professional development per week.



## Lessons To Be Learned

In 2019 we said the state of high-stakes business challenges is 'unprepared' and the state of the learner was 'quite frustrated.' Not much has changed on those fronts in 2020, but the opportunities remain vibrant and viable for corporate L&D to respond to learners' clear requests for collaborative leadership (and other) training. But self-paced e-learning, the most-reported last organizational training received, is clearly missing the mark when it comes to the desire for learning with and from others collaboratively, and isn't leading directly to the kind of on-the-job application required for real behavior change and organizational transformation.

- RESPOND TO LEARNERS' DESIRE** for collaborative learning in their choice of training modalities
- TIE LEARNING PROGRAMS DIRECTLY TO DESIRED BUSINESS OUTCOMES** and communicate this link more clearly to employees
- GIVE LEARNERS THE HALF-HOUR MORE LEARNING A WEEK** they feel is necessary to see a real difference in their day-to-day jobs
- FOCUS ON LEVERAGING EXISTING TACIT KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS** in addition to external training in order to move business goals forward