


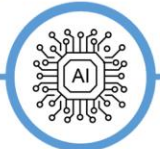


**MOSAIC**

*Elevating Workforce Performance*



# **2022** **Future-Proofing** **Your Training Strategy:** **Building and Sustaining** **A Resilient Workforce**



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# Executive Summary

There has not been a time in recent history when the need for **solving workforce performance challenges** has been so high.



Between the pandemic, labor market changes, and economic cost pressures, companies are struggling to find the right talent, keep employees trained and proficient in a continuously changing business context, and retain a very mobile and empowered workforce.



Work is evolving, and standards for employee performance are changing with it.



Whether adapting to changes from a safety management system or grid modernization, operations leaders and workers face continual change.



Training organizations are responsible for ensuring the workforce is ready to perform at a level of excellence amidst persistent disruption.

Employees who can confidently perform their end-to-end job, in all conditions, are what make your company run – that's competence. No longer is it enough to be safe and technically effective. Employees and contractors must be able to:

Adopt and champion constantly evolving tools and technologies.

Maintain technical and safety performance as roles and workflows change.

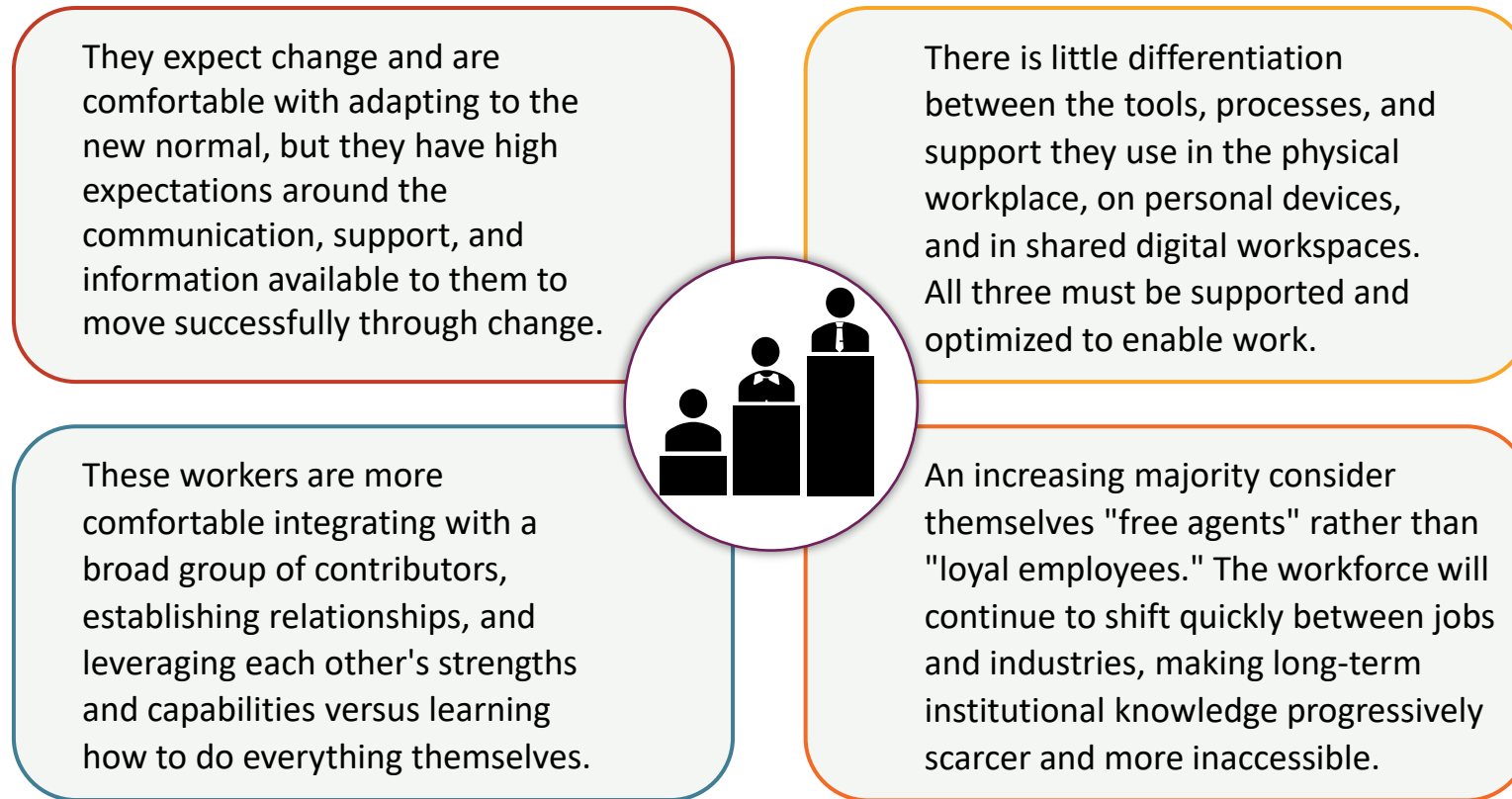
Integrate documentation and recordkeeping with 100% accuracy into their workflows.

Provide customers with the levels of service and customization only previously seen in other industries.

Apply standards and best practices to new situations every day.

# The Workforce of Tomorrow is Now

Tomorrow's workers, who are increasingly making up a large percentage of today's workforce, have always had a world of information at their fingertips. And more importantly, they've always had control over how, when, and why they access information. These employees have also grown up in a world where the things they use every day change often.



These characteristics are merging with a fluctuating business context where most organizations face significant business transformation, increasing customer expectations, seismic shifts in the regulatory landscape, and intense competition for resources.

So, what does this mean for training?

# “Future of Training” Benchmark Results

The “Future of Training” benchmark study revealed that:

**Many of the challenges training organizations face in being able to adapt are long-standing and persistent:**



Budget, time, and skillset constraints



Competing priorities at the executive level



Siloed business units and management of change processes



Disparate training systems and inconsistent methods

**However, new and expanded challenges also emerged:**



An increasing pressure to keep up with a continual stream of change in the business



Workforce recruiting and retention challenges resulting in more significant knowledge and skill gaps



The demand for more modern learning methods from a new generation of workers

Companies have typically viewed training as a necessary "must-have" but not necessarily a competitive advantage. But that is changing. Executives are beginning to recognize that effective workforce planning must include adaptive and impactful training strategies. To provide real business value, **training organizations must expand their purpose from building skilled and prepared employees to sustaining an agile and ready workforce capable of adapting to ongoing change confidently and competently.**

# Learning Adaptivity

Research shows that **85%** of training is useless—or called "scrap learning"—because learners did not apply the knowledge, so it cannot impact organizational goals or needs.

1

Recent research by Josh Bersin demonstrates that companies with adaptive learning teams spend **27%** less on L&D and deliver far greater business outcomes.\* Given that the L&D market is more than \$240B in size and large companies spend an average of \$1,400 per employee on training annually, the return on being adaptive is very high.

Shifting from reactive training programs to an adaptive training system is a journey, and the time and investment required to enhance adaptivity increase with the size of the business.

The ideal future state is a culture where training is flexible, collaborative, and continually evolving, positioned as a trusted advisor and valuable partner to the business, with a common goal to prepare employees for the future of work.

3

Building an adaptive training system that is responsive and flexible is key to creating and sustaining a competent workforce that is prepared, productive, and resilient to change.

2

Defining competencies upfront and building new hire training that prepares employees for their job is no longer enough. Even seasoned workers need to develop new skills and knowledge regularly, and leaders don't have the capacity to send employees back to formal training every time something changes.

The rest of this report highlights Mosaic's perspective on the considerations and preparations training leaders should make to build an adaptive training system that:

- Responds to business changes with agility,
- Ensures job readiness.
- Sustains workforce competence to support new and emerging business objectives.

4



# Training as a System

Training is a critical system within the business and should be a key component of workforce planning and performance optimization. Training organizations need to function and be managed like any other management system to play that role and provide sustainable business value. When training is treated as an event or a support function in a silo, it can quickly become irrelevant and ineffective.

Functional training systems include four core characteristics:

## Clearly defined objectives in support of business outcomes.

We design systems to achieve specific objectives, and training systems are no different. For some organizations, training is responsible for end-to-end, competency-based new hire training, but the assumption is that longer-term employees will pick up every change through other means. Other companies have strategies that rely on minimal training programs focused on technical qualifications, with different mechanisms covering all other knowledge and skills.

The importance isn't on which is the better model, but that all stakeholders clearly define and agree upon the objectives.

## Defined inputs, outputs, and processes to support objectives.

A system's effectiveness relies on the effectiveness of the processes in place to achieve its objectives. Training often has defined processes for requesting training, delivering a class, and supporting on-the-job training or qualifications. However, the processes for designing and delivering a course for a one-off audience or updating materials as standards and procedures change aren't always defined. The distinction is not that the process isn't occurring but that it isn't defined or controlled.

Creating a training system means accounting for all the processes involved in preparing the workforce. Each input and output must be defined and captured through process management.

## Clear ownership and resourcing to drive process outcomes.

Having agreement on stakeholders, decision authoring, budget authority, and resourcing allows training to pull the right levers. Many operations stakeholders agree that they are partners with training. But when it comes time for funding, allowing time for training, supporting headcount, or providing a forecast that helps training plan for the future, the relationship can fall apart. If that happens, outcomes fall at risk, and the relationship between the business and training further fractures, damaging process adherence and the system as a whole.

Process owners, training, and sponsors must consistently work together to make the system work.

## Continuous maturation to enable sustainable value and relevancy.

Setting up training and maintaining it as a system is the only way to maintain alignment and relevancy. As organizations evolve, moment-in-time solutions, inefficient practices, and misaligned priorities make it difficult for training to provide meaningful business value over the long haul.

Regardless of where you're starting—in terms of scope, resourcing, and process—it's the discipline of setting goals and plans, executing them, measuring performance, and adjusting on a regular cadence that will drive continuous improvement.



# Components of an Adaptive Training System

To reach a level of maturity where training functions as a system, the processes within the training organization must be aligned and cohesive with those of the business and those that drive the right way of doing work.

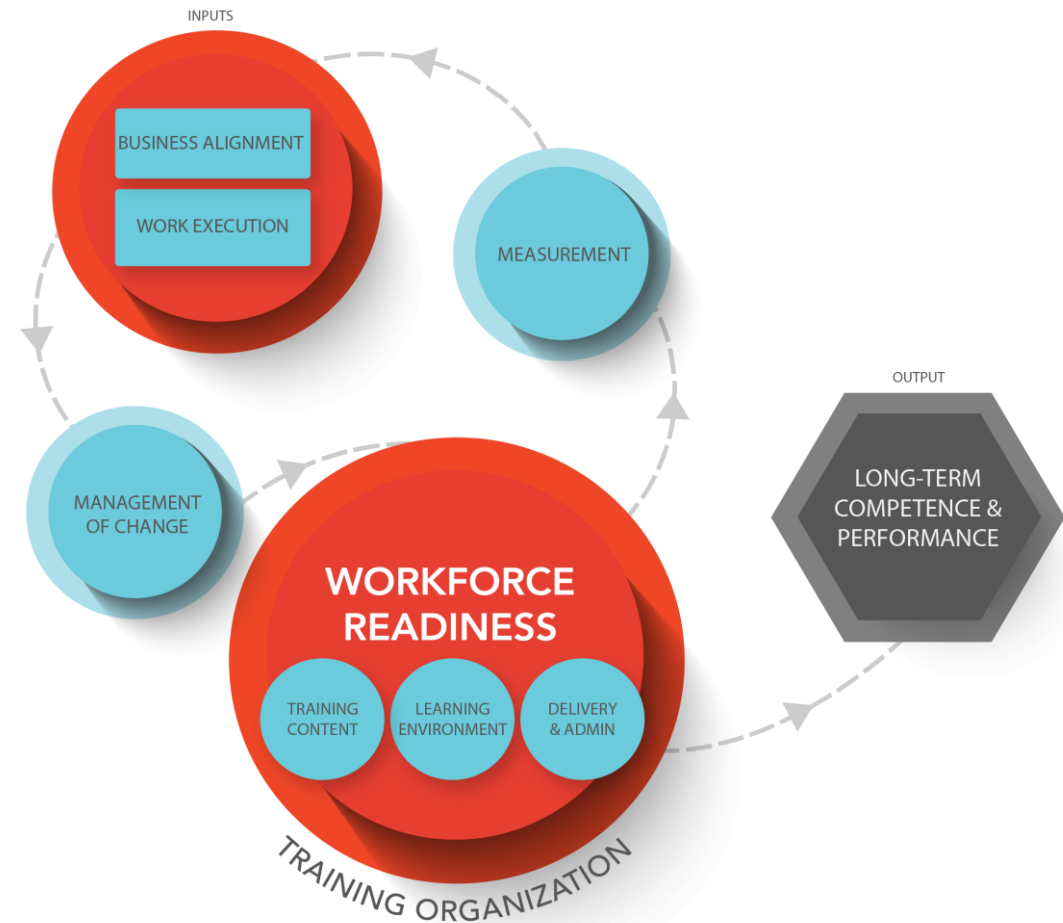
**Business Alignment** processes result in a strategic vision and set of priorities that govern the initiatives at any given time and set the success criteria for the organization.

**Work Execution** processes result in a system that defines the right way to do work, and monitors and measures whether it is being performed accordingly.

These inputs are filtered through a **Management of Change** process to identify risks and change impacts before reaching the training organization.

**Workforce Readiness** processes create training solutions that result in a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and ability to perform work safely and competently.

As performance and training outputs are evaluated, **Measurement** processes provide feedback to the business, starting the process over again.



Each of these components is not only complementary but needs to be interdependent for success. Without alignment between all of these elements, you risk losing training value and relevancy over time.



# Benefits of an Adaptive Training System

An Adaptive Training System increases the adoption of change, shortens learning curves, and sustains long-term competence by:



Seamlessly integrating with business planning and management of change processes to proactively identify new roles, skills, and knowledge needed to perform jobs and tasks critical to business success.



Increasing and maintaining alignment with business objectives and focus areas, ensuring resources are available to execute on identified priorities.



Creating training solutions that allow for delivery flexibility, personalization for the user, and competence assurance without sacrificing compliance, reliability, defensibility, or cost control.



Defining the right way to do work and tying training to work standards and procedures in a way that enables measurement.



Gaining the trust and confidence of the organization by providing demonstrated value and a customer-driven commitment to rapid and continuous improvement.

An Adaptive Training System builds sustainable workforce readiness by taking competency-based training strategies to the next phase of maturity, where training functions as an integrated system that monitors change and continuously evolves to align with business priorities and needs. It shifts the training's focus from defining and achieving competence to monitoring and maintaining workforce readiness as the business context changes. It is also an agile process based on systems thinking that recognizes there is no end point for achieving competence—it's a journey.

# The Evolution of the 7 Pillars

The following **table** describes the seven components of an Adaptive Training System. Each component describes the activities needed to reach a level of Proficiency (meeting the needs of the business at that moment in time) followed by the progression required to achieve Optimization (sustainable workforce readiness that supports the business as it evolves).

	Proficiency	Optimization
Work Execution (Procedures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create procedural and decision-making information and documentation for safety-critical or compliance work.</li><li>• Make the information and documentation useable and available to the field, and align training to work procedures.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a process for defining the right way to do ALL work and ensure employees know and abide by those expectations.</li><li>• Define key metrics to evaluate the performance of high-priority work tasks and develop a process for sharing that data and trends.</li></ul>
Business Alignment (Governance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define what training is and is not responsible for, and establish a cross-functional steering committee and process for setting training priorities and approving budget allocation.</li><li>• Establish a process for determining which roles and tasks most significantly impact productivity and risk for prioritization.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze business goals and workforce impact, and use that information to define governance requirements. Then, build an enterprise training strategy that guides short- and long-term investments.</li><li>• Evolve the governance process to provide active management of change that aligns with organizational decision-making criteria, anticipates emergent training needs, and builds advocacy in the organization for consistent sponsorship and funding of training.</li></ul>
Workforce Readiness (Competence)	Define a strategy to ensure employees are qualified and competent at each stage of job progression and with movement between roles.	Extend the strategy beyond building competence for new hires and those new to their roles. The strategy should include assessing employees on their entire job, monitoring performance after training is complete, and intervening when and where needed.
Training Content (Content & Tools)	Build and buy instructionally sound training content that meets business needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build and buy instructionally sound training content that can be delivered with enhanced flexibility, improve learner engagement, support ongoing performance and assessment, and provide insight into competence sustainment needs.</li><li>• Modernize training's administration toolset and utilize technology to organize, maintain, and deliver content efficiently.</li></ul>
Facilitation & Administration (Instructor Excellence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare instructors with the knowledge and skills needed to manage learning environments and train employees effectively.</li><li>• Define learning profiles with required training linked to every role utilizing a consistent system of record.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop professional instructors, coaches, and leaders that can adapt to evolving training content, support diverse learning environments, and meet modern learning expectations.</li><li>• Create flexible learning materials and integrate digital tools to enhance training delivery, optimize training time, and support competency assessment.</li><li>• Expand learning profiles and implement processes and tools to track and administer various learning delivery modalities.</li></ul>
Learning Environment (Facilities & Props)	Build training facilities that enable students to apply what they're learning in a controlled, hands-on environment.	Incorporate the use of high-fidelity environments for the practice of hands-on activities, especially those that are difficult to achieve within existing learning environments. Digital environments can help optimize the use of physical space and incorporate more scenarios and types of equipment into training.

\*The Adaptive Training System is built on the foundation of the original 7 Pillars with an elevated focus on engagement, agility/speed, technology/digitization, and management of change. Technology is no longer a standalone pillar because it is intrinsically linked to all the others as it becomes more integrated into every aspect of operations and training.

# Getting Started

There is a perception that training organizations and teams will be automatically embraced as valuable business partners if they keep building effective training. As training leaders, it is critical to business success that you deliver sound training that develops competence, promotes safety, and meets compliance requirements. However, training will never be the company's core business or the highest priority for executives. Positioning yourself as the solution of choice for elevating workforce performance and promoting meaningful behavior change requires more than operating efficiently and building good training. Your organization must also be easy to work with, available when needed, trusted advisors and reputable experts, and ready to adapt quickly and usefully to meet immediate and long-term business needs.

Below are the steps we've seen training leaders take to shorten the gap between where they are and a more optimized state. The key is not letting optimal maturity goals get in the way of making immediate progress.



## Build Relationships

Build strong connections with advocates, sponsors, and partners that can drive the change and the funding needed to make "training done the right way" a priority. Speak their language, and recognize that hierarchal control and influence are not the same—leverage the influencers.



## Quantify Your Value

Challenge your business partners to help you identify available data that you can use to quantify the impact of training. Don't be afraid to start small and get creative about how to get the data, but ensure your measurements are in business terms.



## Be a Performance Consultant

Build a business case for training that accurately defines the business problem, identifies the optimal solution, and proposes an implementation plan. You cannot win in the digital age being an order taker—we need more consultants bringing ideas to the table.



## Prioritize the Work

Determine the jobs and roles that significantly impact value and risk, then allocate training resources and budget accordingly. Figure out how to create and deliver low-volume or low-risk training differently, cheaper, and less resource-intensive.



## Expand Skillsets and Capacity

Evaluate the extent to which your resources have the capabilities needed to build a high-performing training team: Business acumen, data analytics, a growth mindset, technology acumen, agility in approach, and digital curation. Then, beat this challenge through collaboration—within your organization, across the industry, and with vendor partners.



## Understand Resource Allocation

Make sure you understand how the company allocates resources, then work through those channels to advocate for training. Line up with budget cycles, and make sure your business case aligns with the company's priorities and decision-making criteria.



## Contact Us

The thought leadership in this report is in response to the findings from Mosaic's "Future of Training" benchmark study. You can download the benchmark findings report on our website: <https://themosaiccompany.com/our-thinking/adaptive-training-systems>

Please reach out if you would like to discuss the findings from the benchmark study or learn more about how to approach training as a system to help you on your journey toward building and sustaining a competent workforce that is prepared, productive, and resilient to change.

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