



MOSAIC

Elevating Workforce Performance

**20
22**

Future of Training

Benchmark Study: Findings Report



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Introduction to the Study

Mosaic surveyed over 90 training and operations leaders representing 44 utility and pipeline companies to identify current training challenges and future strategy evolutions to elevate the value of training in a rapidly evolving and resource-constrained business. Our goal is to provide insight into the unique perspectives of these two groups, identify areas of misalignment between training and operations, and find opportunities to bridge the gap between training effectiveness and business value.

Benchmark participants shared that energy and utility organizations face a perfect storm of game-changing external disruption and internal transformation impacting the workforce.

New and evolving business needs enhance the importance of building a competent, skilled, and high-performing workforce and require training organizations to approach their work with more flexibility and agility.

Many of the challenges training organizations face 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 systems and inconsistent training 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

This summer, Mosaic will issue an exclusive report to share best practices and recommendations for addressing these challenges. The following report provides a detailed summary of the findings from the benchmark study.

 MOSAIC	Arizona Public Service	ATCO Group	Atmos Energy	Austin Energy	AVANGRID	Avista Utilities
BC Hydro	Black Hills Energy	Chesapeake Utilities	Colonial Pipeline	Consolidated Edison	Consumers Energy	DCP Midstream
Dominion Energy	DTE Energy	Enbridge	Enstor	Equitrans Midstream	Evergy	FortisBC
Hawaiian Electric	 <div>Participating Companies</div>					Idaho Power
Kinder Morgan						LGE and KU
New Mexico Gas Company	Northwestern Energy	NW Natural	Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	Portland General Electric	PPL Electric Utilities
Public Service Enterprise Group	Puget Sound Energy	San Diego Gas & Electric	Seattle City Light	South Jersey Industries	SMUD	Southern California Gas
Southern Company Gas	Southwest Gas	TECO Energy	UGI Utilities	Washington Gas	Xcel Energy	 MOSAIC

The Business Context is Changing



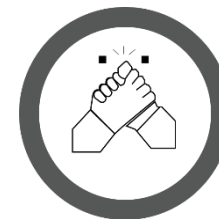
Rapidly evolving customer expectations

It is no longer just about price and dependability. Customers demand that energy and utility companies understand and proactively adapt to social, environmental, and market preferences.



A seismic shift in the regulatory landscape

Federal, state, and local policy and oversight are changing dramatically, requiring increased investment in innovation, process improvement, and reporting capabilities.



Intense competition for resources

Challenges around recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining talent have intensified. Competition is fierce and workers have more options and different career expectations.

Utilities are responding to these shifts by transforming the way they do business: becoming more customer-centric; adjusting business models; employing integrated technologies across the enterprise; and utilizing data to make faster, smarter, risk-informed business decisions.

“
The rate of change is accelerating, and employees will see far more changes in the future than they've seen in the past or see today. We need employees who can thrive in that environment.

– VP of Operations

”

Training Organizations are at a Crossroads



Safety has, is, and always will be a foundational organizational priority.



Historically, the primary purpose of training has been to ensure worker and public safety while meeting compliance requirements.



Over the past decade, there has been a visible shift from compliance- to competence-focused training that prepares employees for the entire job and aligns training goals to tangible business outcomes. However, as the pace and magnitude of change continue to increase across the business, training organizations are facing new and expanding challenges.

The traditional methods for developing a competent workforce often no longer meet the needs of the business. The business needs its training partners to expand their purpose from building a skilled and prepared workforce to sustaining an agile and ready workforce capable of adapting to ongoing change confidently and competently.

“

The rate of change and the complexity of our industry is accelerating. We still need to support our legacy programs like our apprenticeships. However, wildfire-related training, emergency response training, contractor training, and responding to changing regulatory requirements are examples of additional training efforts that were not part of our book of business three to five years ago. The volume of requests for new training is increasing based on these newer drivers, AND the rate of change determining how long existing training is current is also increasing. It's a perfect storm.

– Senior Director of Training

”

Significant Resource Constraints

Training may have a seat at the table, but the training budget is only commensurate with its perceived value when competing with all other organizational priorities. “Workforce” has moved into the top ten on corporate priority lists. However, training is just one component of building a safe, productive, and engaged workforce, and many executives do not fully value training or understand the challenges it faces.



Training resources are often inexperienced and stretched thin, making it hard to do more with less.



Trainers with subject-matter expertise and facilitation skills are in high demand.



Curriculum development teams lack the ability to scale quickly and efficiently or take advantage of digital learning solutions.



Budgeting processes (e.g., rate cases and annual planning) have not evolved fast enough to account for the increased cost burden of keeping training current and effective amidst all the business change.

Training

We need support and structure to handle the magnitude of work.

– Director of Training

I am currently running highly technical training programs absolutely bare-bones. I am barely getting by instead of providing training and education as effectively as a Fortune 500 company should. I know what it could be, and with my passion for training, it is disheartening not to be able to do everything well.

– Technical Training Manager

Our main concern is getting the organization to see and invest in training as a viable business unit that brings measurable value at all levels.

– Training & Development Manager

Operations

Training priority is regional across the company. Different workgroups put varying amounts of emphasis on training resulting in a mixed bag of employee development.

– Asset Management Director

Benchmark Findings:

Significant resource constraints and a continuous backlog of training needs were consistent themes in the benchmark survey responses.



Resource constraints are the most common training challenge listed by benchmark participants representing **training** departments (**64%**).



Both operations and training participants ranked **keeping up with the pace of change** as their **1st** or **2nd** most critical priority for long-term training strategies.



The **3rd** highest priority for **training** organizations over the next 3 to 5 years is **curriculum development (new and maintenance)**.

Note: Click any of the statements above to jump to the corresponding chart in the Detailed Findings section.

Shifting Core Responsibilities

Training continues to be responsible for the administration that drives compliance and safety, but additional responsibilities are being added without a proportionate increase in budget, resources, or time.

These **responsibilities** include:



Maintaining alignment with operational priorities and initiatives.



Meeting the digital learning expectations of the workforce.



Increasing the scope and volume of training to keep up with process, technology, and regulatory changes.

The following benchmark survey findings highlight the increasing need for and responsibilities of effective training despite the resource constraints laid out in the previous section:



Training

The old 'bring everyone in for all training' is too costly and time-consuming and no longer works for today's learners or our business partners.

– Technical Training Manager

Employees want to know what they have to know for their current roles AND the roles they aspire to in the future. And they expect us to provide efficient training programs that support career progression.

– Learning & Development Manager

Operations

We will continue to experience a high level of change, both internally and externally. Our success will be dependent on training's ability to adapt to meet the needs of a diverse and distributed workforce and support learning paths for critical positions.

– Director of Customer Service

We need to teach the workforce how to be learning agile. The rate of change is accelerating, and employees will see far more changes in the future than they've seen in the past or see today. We need employees who can thrive in that environment.

– VP of Technology Operations



Training participants listed **modernizing learning methods, proving value to the business, and keeping up with business changes and needs** as the **most significant** training challenges (after resource constraints).



Operations participants listed **lack of experience and staffing challenges** as their **1st** and **3rd** biggest workforce challenges. Yet the business acknowledged that it doesn't always see training as a solution to its problems. They need to be able to do more with less too, and training is an additional cost and time burden.



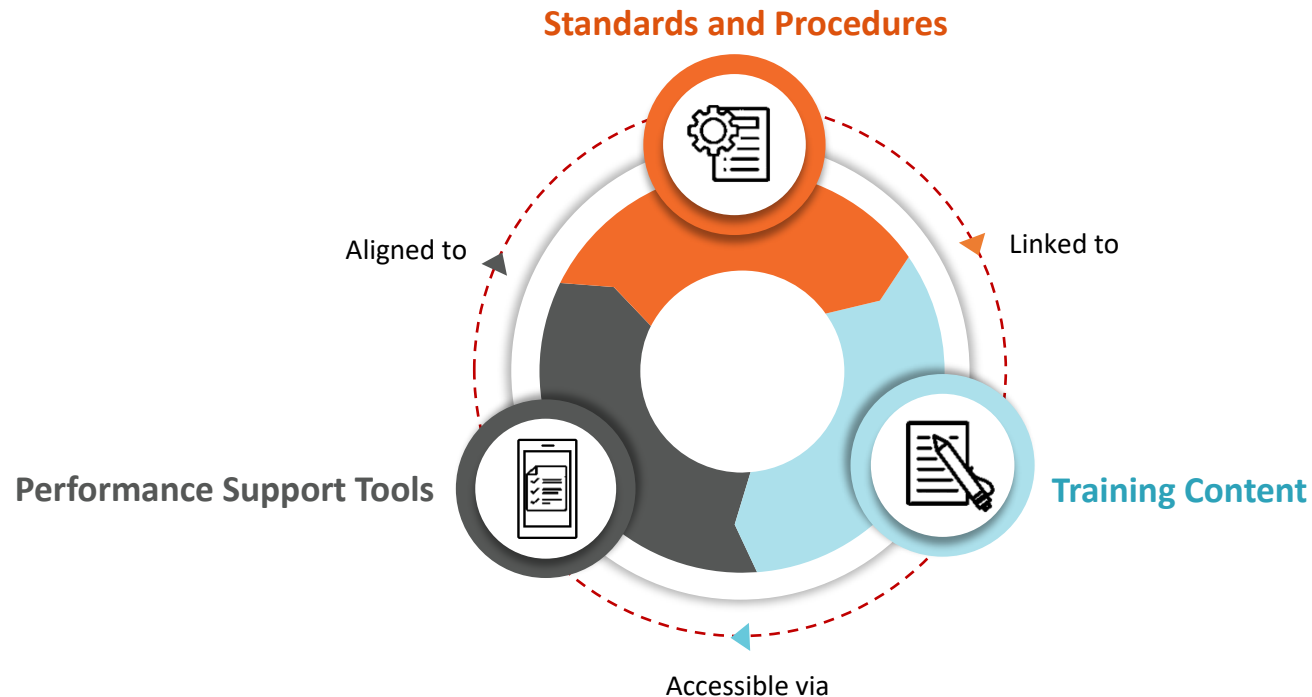
Benchmark participants representing **operations** listed **improving the alignment of training and organizational priorities** as their **2nd** highest priority for future training strategies. But most operations leaders admit they don't know enough about how good training happens to be part of the solution.



In Mosaic's 2020 Digital Transformation Benchmark Study, more than **75%** of energy and utility **executives and business leaders** reported that their organizations are **not ready to support the volume of training needed to prepare impacted workgroups for digital change**.

However, while they may want the training department to do something different to keep up with the pace of change and provide more valuable training experiences, it is not a top priority in corporate planning and budgeting.

Cumbersome and Inaccessible Content



Many training assets are still housed and managed as individual documents on disparate systems across siloed organizations, making it difficult to quickly access, update, and reimplement content when something changes. This lack of insight and workflow management creates challenges for training organizations to keep up with changes and for employees to access and consume up-to-date, relevant content in their moment of need.

“

Training

Content update is crucial to our business and having a broad blend of training solutions helps keep our programs and trainers current.

– Manager of Technical Training

In our regulated industry, tracking and recording training and qualification records for new and ongoing training is essential to ensure compliance. The solutions we have found are siloed and don't communicate with other systems within our company, creating extra work, frustration, and possible compliance issues.

– Technical Training and OQ Manager

Operations

We need robust, on-demand, up-to-date, and efficient training for our field employees.

– Director of Operations

”

Benchmark Findings:

Benchmark participants listed technology and management of change challenges as barriers to keeping training up-to-date, consistent, and readily available:



Implementing systems that manage and maintain content to keep up with the pace of change is the **top priority** for future training strategies for **operations** benchmark participants and the **2nd** highest priority for **training** participants.



According to both **training and operations** participants, **irrelevant, outdated, and/or ineffective training content** is the top current training attribute that needs to be eliminated or fixed.

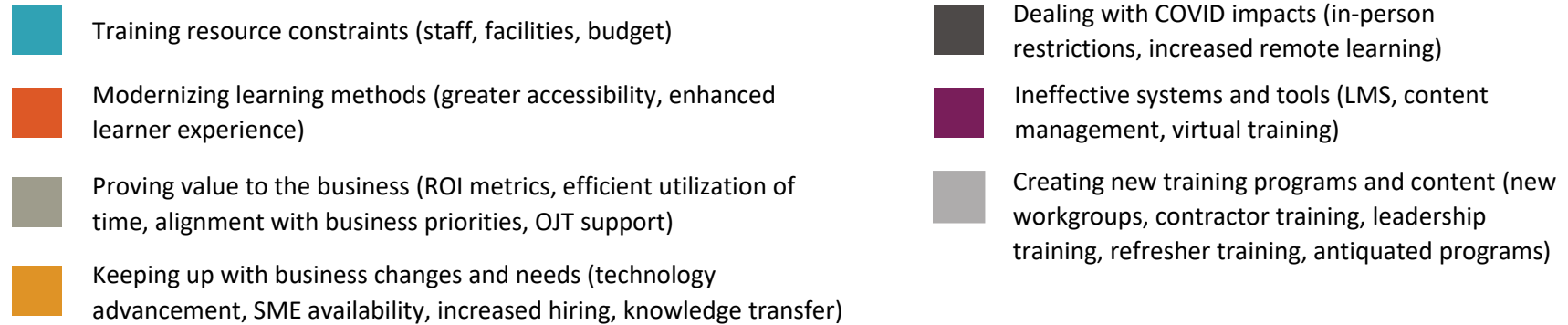


Operations participants listed **keeping up with changing business needs** as the **2nd** highest priority for training strategies.

Detailed Benchmark Findings

The State of Training (Training Survey)

Question #1: **What are your top three training challenges over the next 3-5 years?**

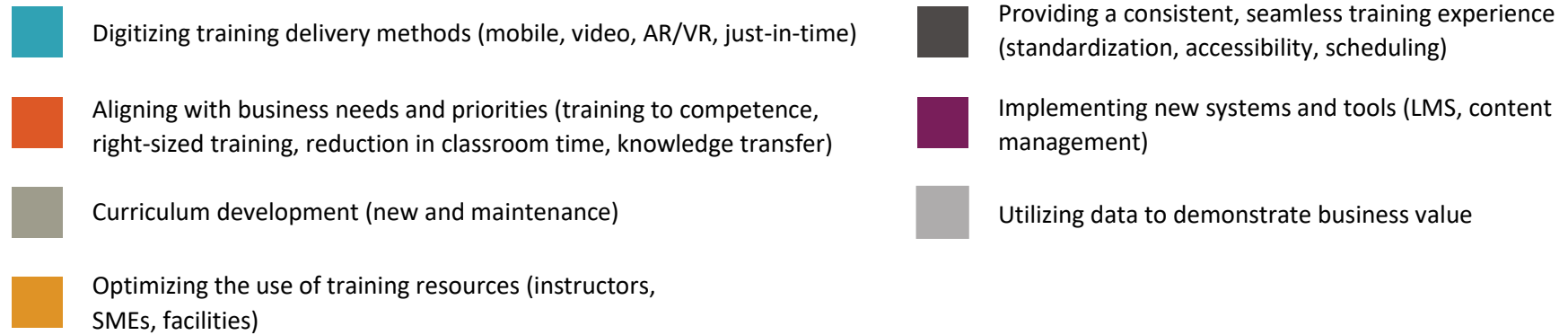


Other Responses:

- Resistance to change in the business
- Inflexibility in union contracts

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Question #2: What are your top three training priorities over the next 3-5 years?



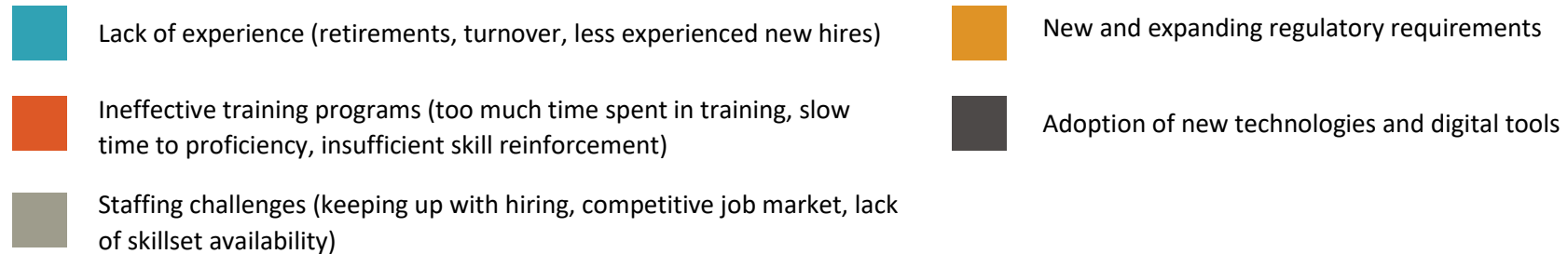
Other Responses:

- Sustaining virtual learning post-COVID

Detailed Benchmark Findings

The State of the Workforce (Operations Survey)

Question #1: **What are your top three workforce challenges over the next 3-5 years?**



Other Responses:

- *Adapting to industry and business changes*
- *Maintaining a strong safety culture*

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Question #2: What are your top three workforce priorities over the next 3-5 years?



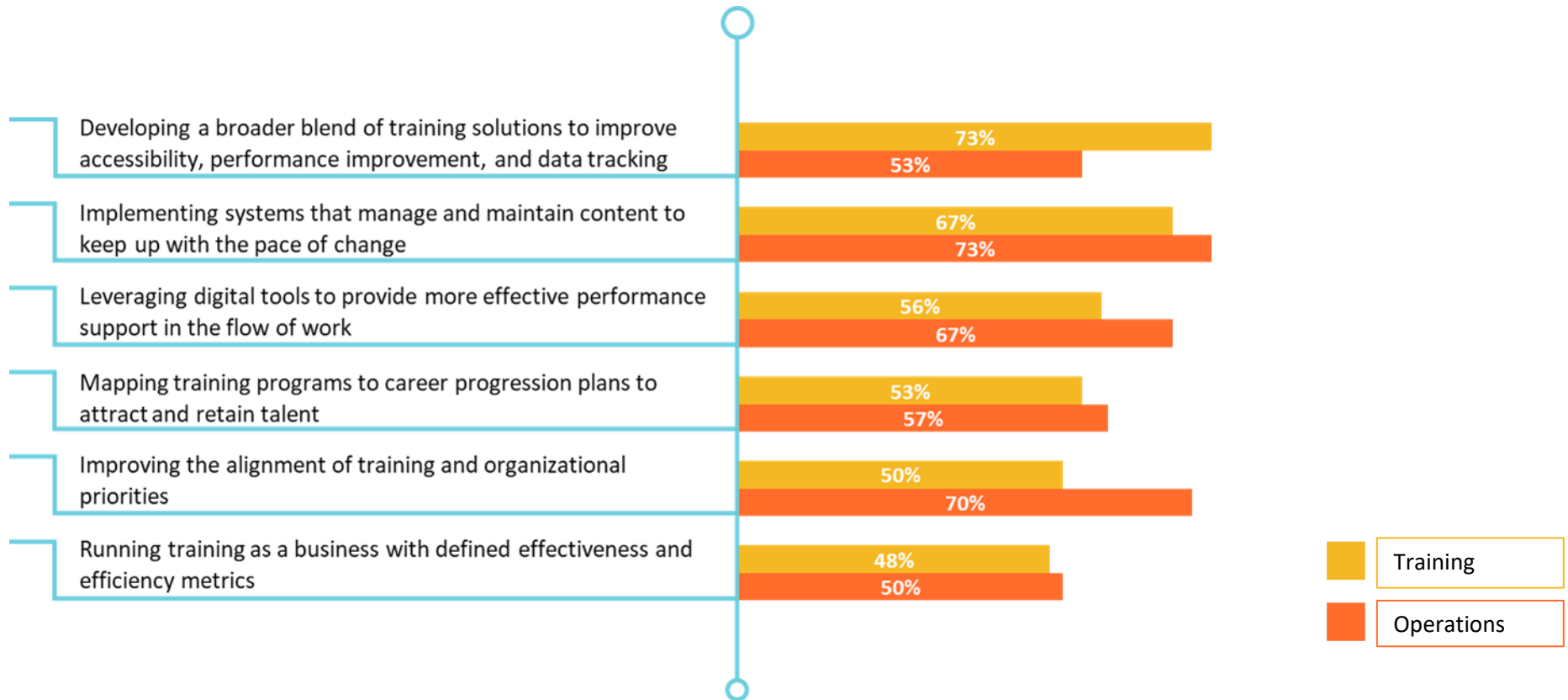
Other Responses:

- Retaining talent long-term
- Enhancing employee focus on customer service

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Ideal Future Training Strategy

Question #3: From an aspirational perspective, where anything is possible, what does an ideal future training strategy look like for your organization?

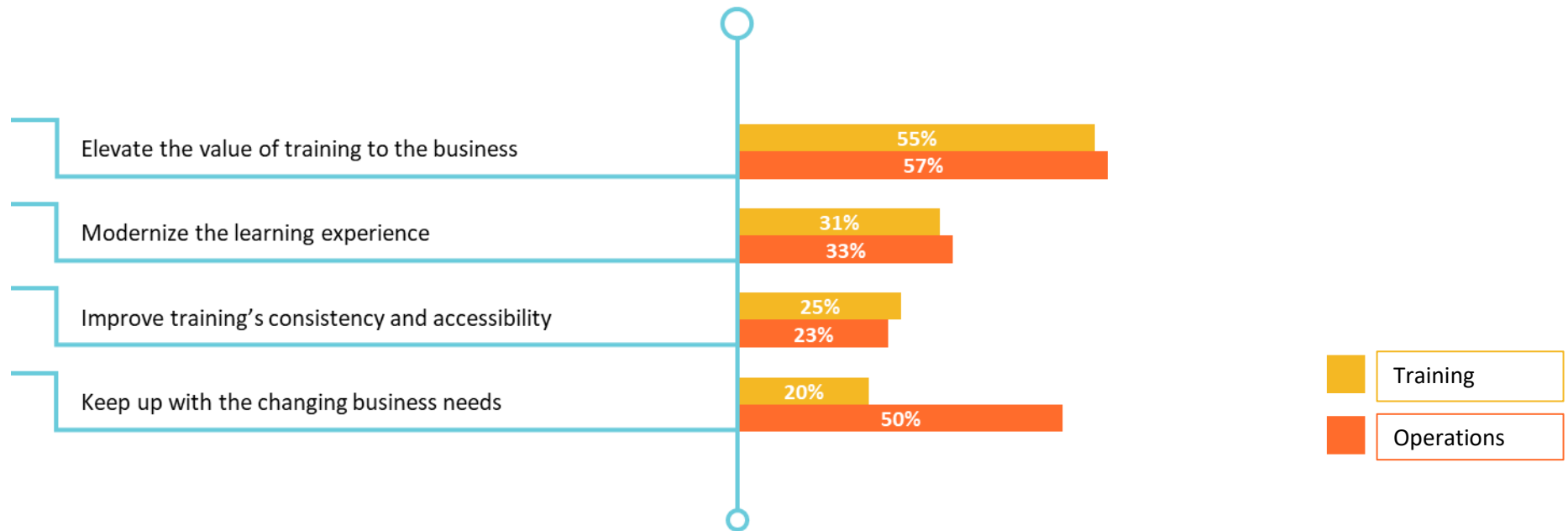


Other Responses:

- Increasing the training budget
- Separating OQ from training
- Expanding the skillsets for training resources (e.g., instructional designers, expert instructors)
- Consolidating training functions across the enterprise
- Aligning training with HR
- Expanding training availability

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Question #4: Explain why the ideal attributes you selected above would significantly impact training effectiveness within your organization.

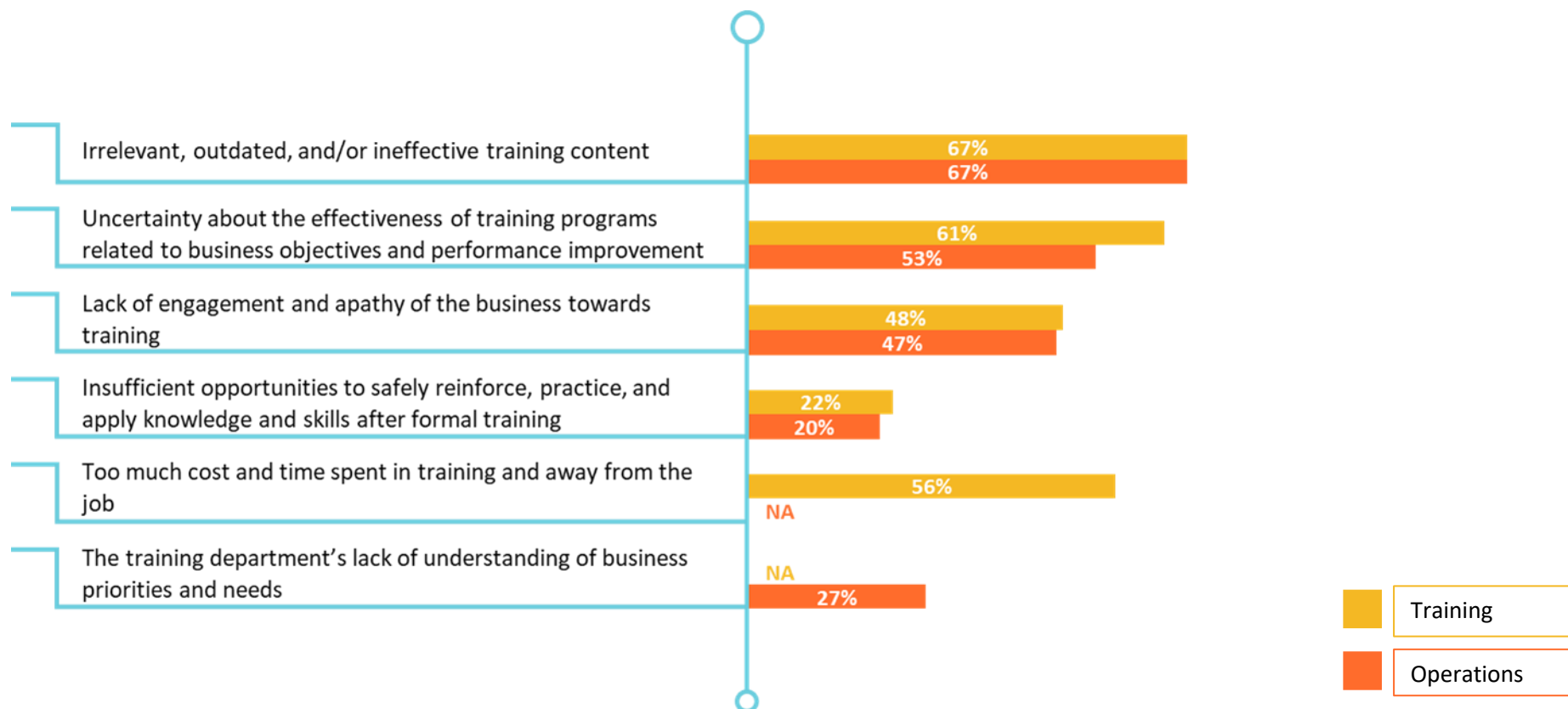


Other Responses:

- Enhance knowledge transfer
- Align with organizational goals
- Attract ideal candidates

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Question #5: What current attributes would you like to see eliminated or decreased from your organization's current training strategy?



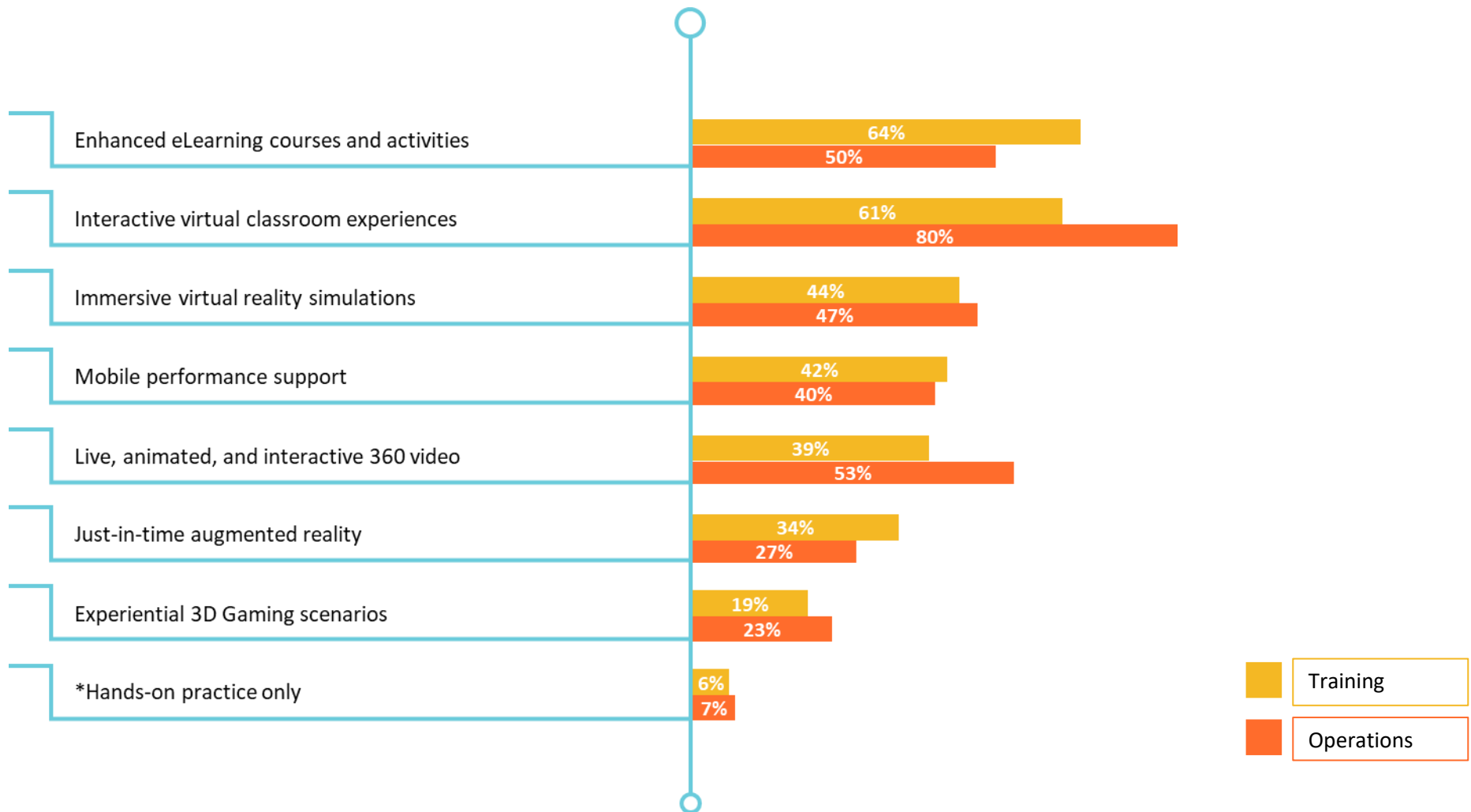
Other Responses:

- Lack of budget available for training
- Significant knowledge gaps from retirements
- Inaccessibility of training resources
- Training unavailability due to COVID restrictions

Detailed Benchmark Findings

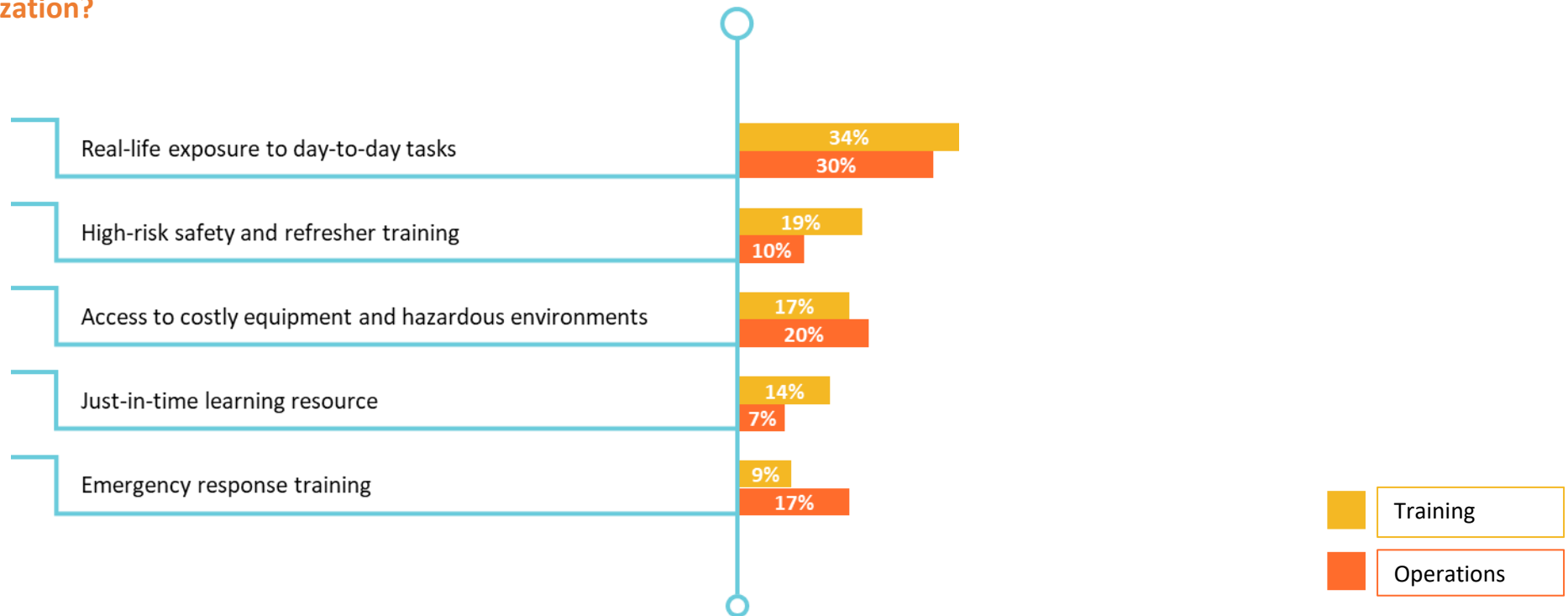
Experiential Learning

Question #6: In addition to classroom training solutions, what other delivery methods are you currently exploring or interested in to help achieve your ideal strategy?



Detailed Benchmark Findings

Question #7: Where would experiential learning solutions (e.g., VR, AR, gamification) have the biggest impact on your organization?



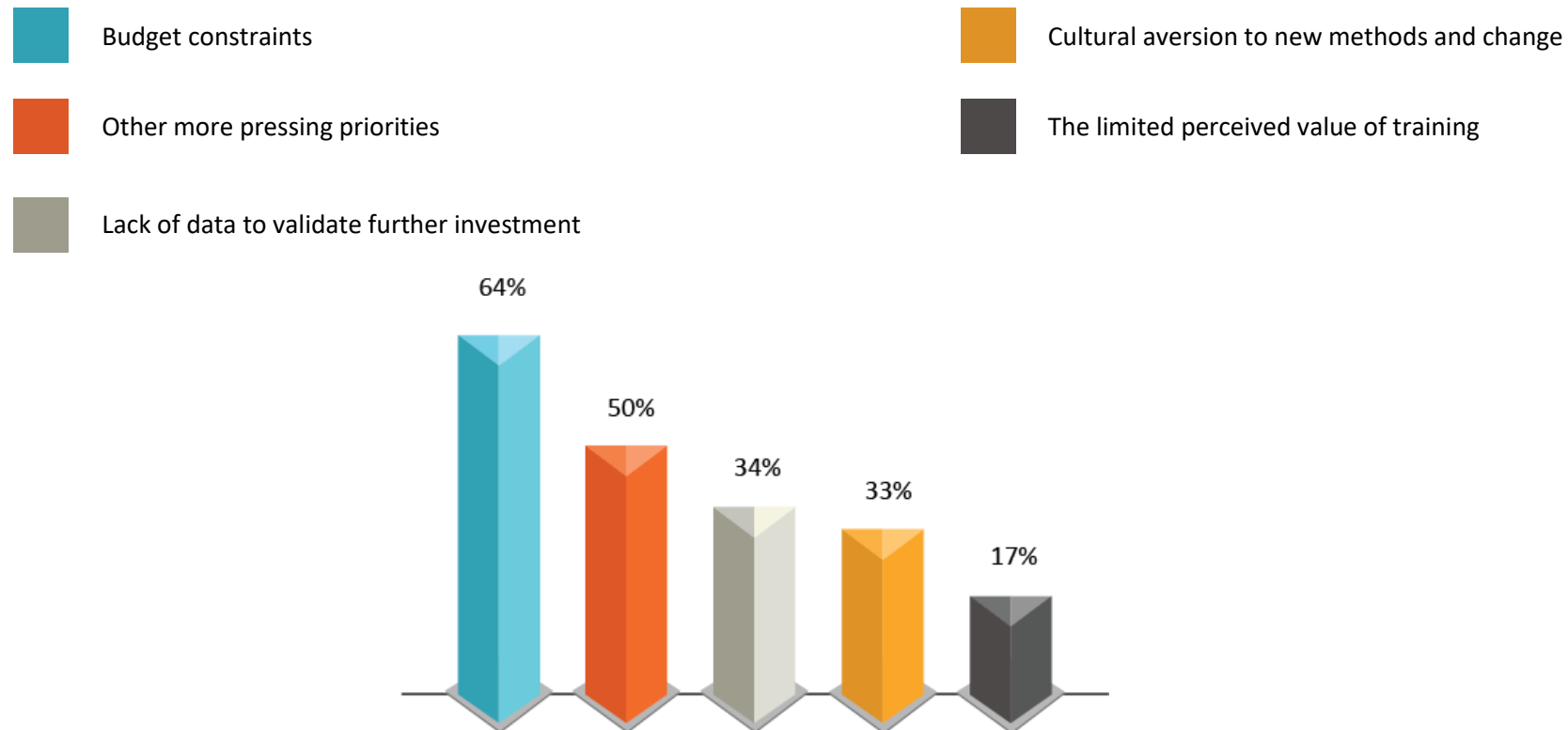
Other Responses:

- Remote learning
- Leadership skills development
- Exposure to other roles

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Roadblocks (Training Survey)

Question #8: What roadblocks have you run into from senior operations leaders when attempting to get buy-in for enhancing your training strategy and execution?



Other Responses:

- IT and technology constraints
- Time constraints for field employees (not enough SMEs, limited training time)

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Constraints (Operations Survey)

Question #8: What constraints do you perceive in the training department's ability to improve the quality and/or effectiveness of your organization's training strategy and execution?



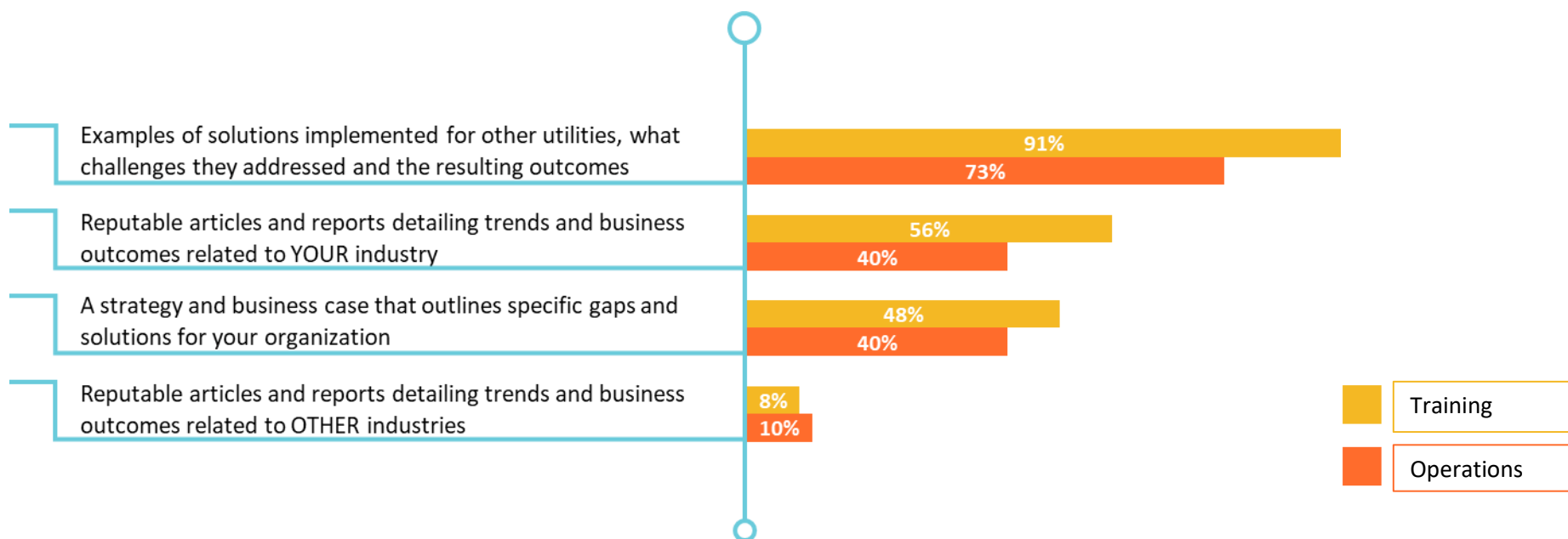
Other Responses:

- Lack of qualified candidates and experienced resources (developers and instructors)

Detailed Benchmark Findings

Making a Case for Training

Question #9: What types of information and support would help move training strategy decisions and investments forward in a meaningful way?



Other Responses:

- Vendors creating affordable VR/AR products
- A sense of urgency from operations leadership
- Data demonstrating the effectiveness of training

A Movement Toward Responsive and Flexible Training

Considering the industry dynamics and internal challenges operations and training leaders face, traditional methods for developing a competent workforce are no longer enough to address the new and expanded needs of the business.

Work is evolving, and standards for employee performance are changing with it. Developing a safe and technically effective workforce is just the beginning. The business needs employees and contractors who can:



Adopt and champion constantly evolving tools and technologies.



Maintain safety and technical performance as roles and workflows change.



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



Provide customers with increased levels of service and customization.



Apply standards and best practices to new situations every day.

Training is responsible for being aware of shifting business needs and ensuring the workforce is ready and able to perform at a level of excellence amidst persistent disruption. Training leaders need to expand their strategies from building skilled and prepared employees to sustaining an agile and ready workforce capable of responding to ongoing change confidently and competently.

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.

Preparing for an Ever-Changing Future



The ideal future state is a culture of engaged workers and self-driven learners who are ready and eager to do their jobs and evolve with the business. While training cannot prepare employees for the future of work and build a resilient workforce on its own, it can and should be a critical component of that mission.

Operations groups are undergoing long-term, transformational change. If you read this report, you probably have a vested interest in modernizing your training strategy to provide employees with the tools and learning experiences they need to respond and adapt to an ever-changing future.

Building an effective and sustainable training strategy to meet new and expanding business needs requires clearly defining your required outcomes and operating parameters before creating a compelling business case and action plan.

To make sure you have a clear vision of where the business is going and the constraints the training organization will have to work within, take some time to write out the answers to a few key questions. If you already have these questions answered, consider talking to your business partners—do they agree with your assessment?

How does the business define and measure success?

What kinds of projects are they investing the most time and resources into? What are leadership's top priorities? Collect and draw insights from a variety of sources to broaden your perspective.

What is your organization's resource allocation process? What channels or budget cycles do you need to plug into to advocate for training? Are there certain times of year or sources of funding that come up regularly, beyond traditional budgeting? Are there any capital projects that could also provide resources for related training needs?

Who are your strongest allies? Who are the primary drivers of change in your organization? Who in your organization has a vested interest in employees being ready to perform differently? Who always seems to get things done? Who seems to be able to work effectively across organizations?

Is the training organization ready to meet the challenge? Any substantial change will require a culture of problem-solving and continuous improvement inside the training organization. Who are the **training** leaders (formal or informal) who will step up? How can you work with them to plan for the future? What steps can you take with those who may be more resistant to change to create the culture you'll need?



Contact Us

For more information on how to successfully overcome the challenges identified by this benchmark survey, please read Mosaic's "Adaptive Training Systems" report. That report provides best practices and recommendations for building an adaptive training system that proactively monitors changes and continuously evolves to align with business needs.

Please reach out if you would like to speak to us about this study, learn about Mosaic's approach to learning adaptivity, or discuss how our framework can help you on your journey toward building and sustaining a competent workforce that is prepared, productive, and resilient to change.

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