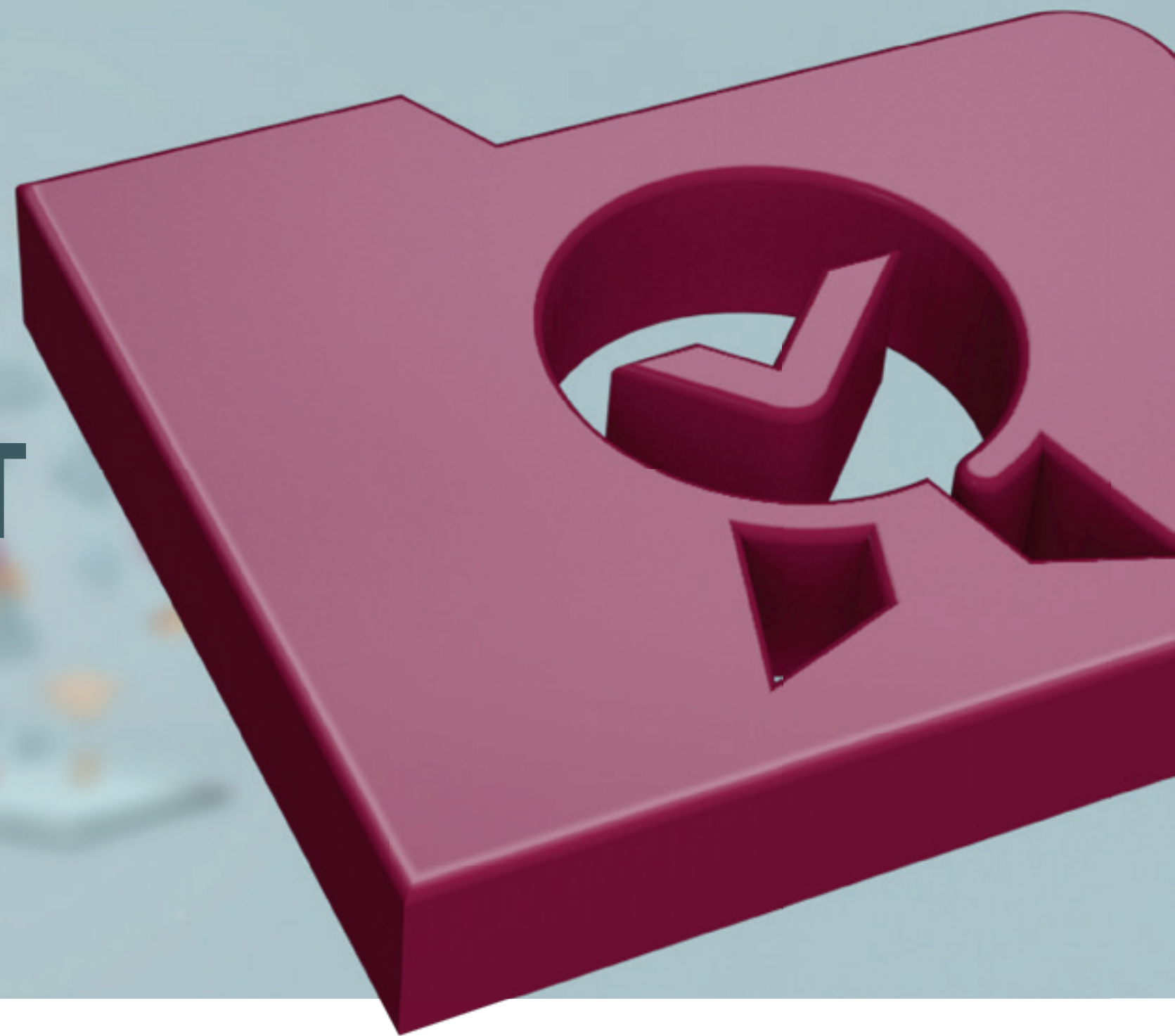


CAREER MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

In the High-Expectations Era



The information age is changing what employees expect from career development—at any stage. Nowadays, graduates quickly position themselves to become leaders early on in their careers. And that combination of ambition and rapid assimilation of new ideas is not unique to the so-called millennials.

Whether it's middle management building its own skills and learning how to work collaboratively, or fast-track executives wondering what leadership looks like in a high-velocity business environment, HR has to step up and create clear career-development structures.

In this digibook, you'll find an actionable expert guide to best practice for HR teams in managing this crucial task, from building a support system for rising stars to helping underdeveloped or poorly motivated employees create their own success.

In this guide, you'll find:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. To Hire or to Develop?
“Buy and build” isn’t just for the M&A team...</p> | <p>4. On-Demand Learning and Development in a Networked Enterprise
The university of work.</p> |
| <p>2. Three Ways the Information Age Has Changed All Employees
(So can we please stop talking about millennials?)</p> | <p>5. Collaboration: Career Development in the Social Age
“Feelings, nothing more than feelings...”</p> |
| <p>3. Five Ways to Help Managers Who Support Career Development
And six ways to spot the ones who don’t.</p> | <p>6. Building your Action Plan
Build your comprehensive list of next steps.</p> |

Further reading.

If we seem to be missing three big-ticket items, it's because they're covered elsewhere in this series. Check out our three digibooks on [HR data and analytics](#), [managing organizational culture](#), and [HR transformation](#).

Who will find this digibook useful?

HR leaders. Talent is impatient. So are line managers. They want to get ahead of their best people and ensure they can motivate them and build on their skills.

C-level execs. You want to move on one day, right? That means the leadership pipeline has never been more important, for succession management and for bringing new ideas and skills to the senior team. Building an HR function that spots, develops, and promotes the right people at the right time is also the best safeguard of shareholder value.

Line management. They say if you love someone, let them go. But that's no good if you need their skills and experience to keep your team running brilliantly. We say: If you love someone, have a word with HR about the best ways to make them feel well rewarded, upskilled and on a path to greatness. As Tom Peters says, “Leaders don’t create followers, they create more leaders.”

1.

TO HIRE OR TO DEVELOP?

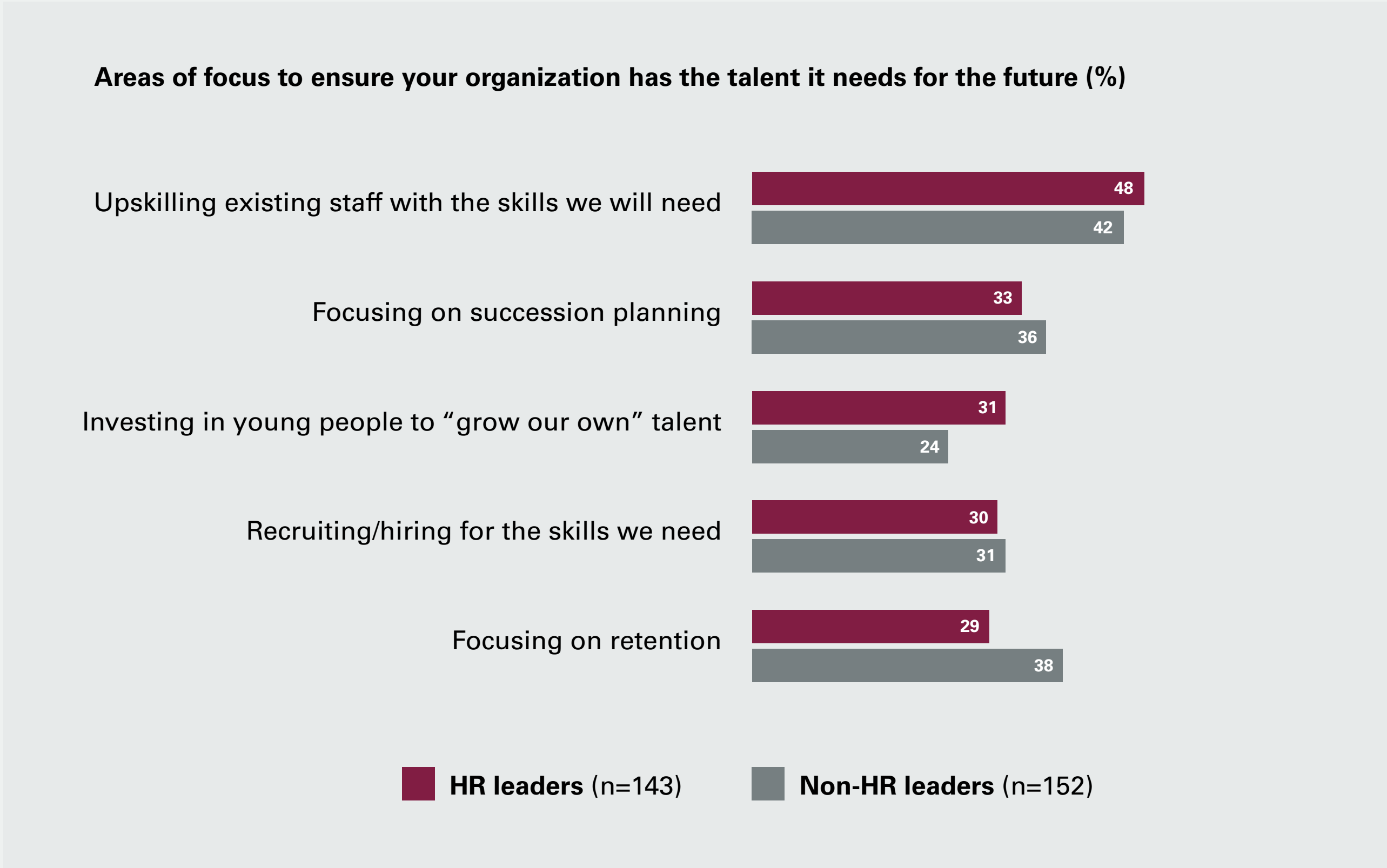
“Buy and build” isn't just for the M&A team...

Talent has never been scarcer or more costly, so organizations are naturally turning their attention to internal development—of skills (to meet their needs) and careers (to retain their best). This has always been the biggest opportunity for HR to demonstrate business alignment, strategic contribution, and front-line support.

Of course, there’s no real dilemma. Every organization should both hire smarter and put in place development programs to deliver the skills it needs and the progression its employees want.

But according to the latest CIPD HR Outlook survey, recruitment for skills is now a far, far lower priority than upskilling existing staff.¹

FIGURE 1: CIPD TALENT SURVEY 2016



The social dimension.

And there’s a third dimension: helping every employee to be not just the best worker, but also the best person they can be. That means:

- Reaching out to the widest pool of talent
- Supporting career progress within the employee’s lifestyle and skills needs
- Empowering them to take control

Retention is a bigger issue for non-HR leaders—a message HR must heed. But neither group is overly concerned about investing in young people. This suggests that the industry’s current obsession with millennials is misplaced. (We’ll see why that’s a good thing in the next section.)

¹ HR Outlook: Winter 2015–16: Leaders’ Views of Our Profession, CIPD, Feb 2016
cipd.co.uk/binaries/hr-outlook_2016-winter-2015-16-leaders-views-of-our-profession.pdf

2.

THREE WAYS THE INFORMATION AGE HAS CHANGED ALL EMPLOYEES

So can we please stop talking about millennials?

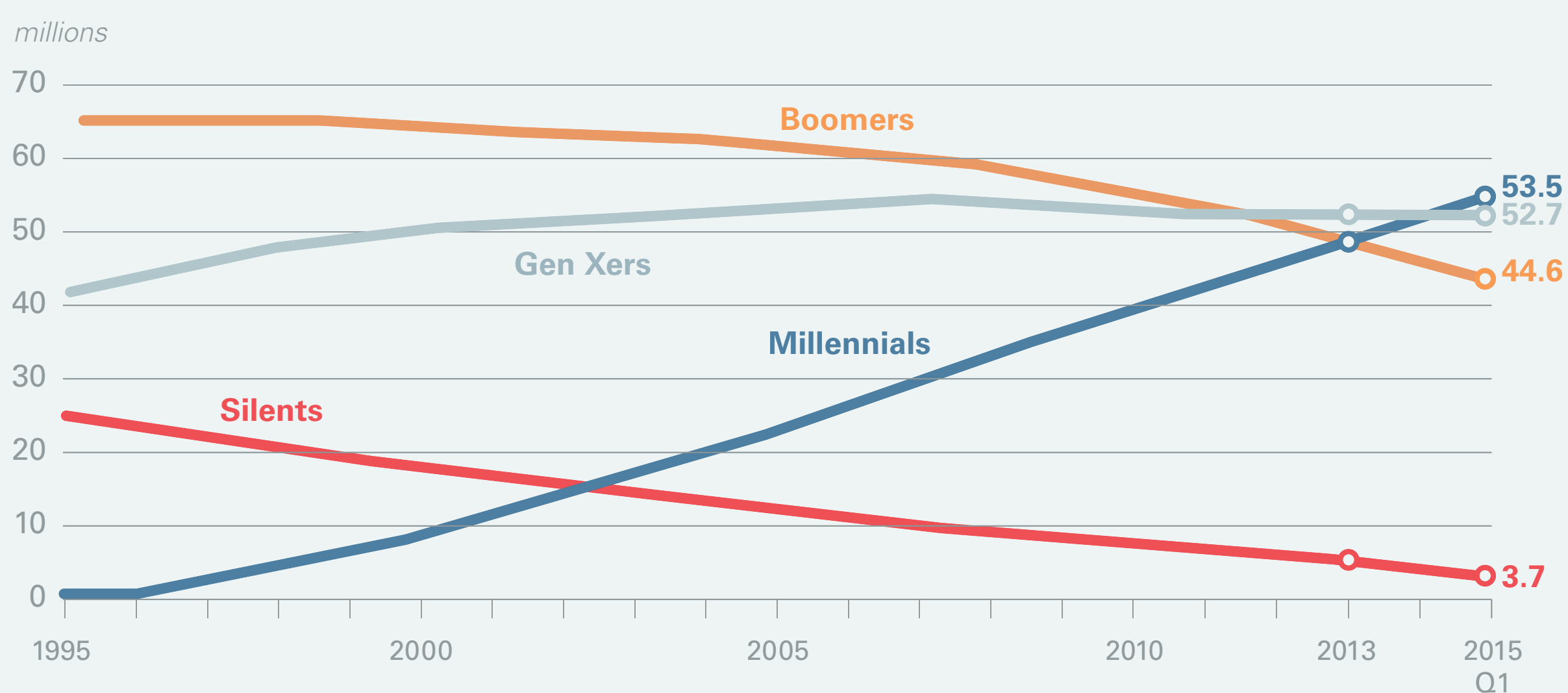
If there is something different about employees in the past 10 years, it's that they now expect to find answers a click away. They ask the hard questions—"What do I need to do to become a board member?"—and don't expect the answer to be a long-term timetable for meetings and workshops

- **They want more information.** HR needs to be set up to meet expectations for transparency, from workplace evaluations and career plans to the five-year strategy for the business.
Make clear decisions about what data should be available to employees—and remember that to keep people happy, the default position should be transparency.
- **They want to be heard.** Social media has given everyone a soapbox. That applies in your business too. The old information hierarchies are breaking down fast.
Help the people at the bottom communicate with those at the top, and find ways to prove that they are being heard.
- **They want responsiveness.** When they have problems, they want them addressed immediately. When they have successes, they want them acknowledged.
Measure your team's response time to different types of issue, and speed them up—a good answer in 24 hours is vastly better than a perfect answer after a fortnight.

This is not just about one generation.

There are more people in the US workforce born after 1980 than any other generation. But most of their senior managers still fall into the category of Generation X (defined as born 1965 to 1980).²

FIGURE 2: US LABOR FORCE BY GENERATION, 1995–2015



Note: Annual averages plotted 1995–2014. For 2015, the first quarter average of 2015 is shown.
Due to data limitations, Silent generation is overestimated from 2008–2015.
Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of monthly data 1995–2015.
Current Population Surveys, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Those who grew up with the internet are different in subtle ways. They have expectations—quick answers, information transparency, seamless service. And that's probably why managers love to throw a generational blanket labeled *millennial* over them.

² Millennials Surpass Gen Xers as the Largest Generation in US Labor Force, Pew Research
pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/11/millennials-surpass-gen-xers-as-the-largest-generation-in-u-s-labor-force/

Here's three reasons [we want you to stop using the word](#), though.

- 1 It's too broad.** The important change has been the growth of digital. A millennial who was 16 in 1996 (when most people didn't have the internet) shares little in common with a 16-year-old in 2002—who might have had an internet-enabled phone.
- 2 It blinds us to other factors.** Take two people born in 1990. One a graduate from a wealthy household in metropolitan Berlin, the other a school-leaver from rural Minnesota. They're both millennials. But the idea that their work attitude, skills, and personal drives have anything in common is ludicrous. Does a millennial graduating in 2004 (during a boom) have the same outlook as one graduating in 2010 (during a recession)? No.
- 3 It's distracting.** Once you start designing career paths, skills development, and a work environment for millennials, you're tacitly consigning people who might share the exact same values and talents (but happen to be older) to the scrapheap. That's potentially disastrous. More people are staying in the workforce longer. Helping them stay relevant in skills and attitudes (such as working for younger managers) is vital, particularly when they have valuable experience and networks.

As researcher Jessica Kriegel (the organizational development consultant for Oracle whose book³ urges companies to ditch generational stereotypes) told *Fast Company* earlier this year: "It's all anecdotal... and it's really damaging. There are a million factors that go into determining the kind of person you are when you grow up, and this arbitrary 20-year-long age bracket that is widely accepted is not one of them."⁴

But that doesn't mean we haven't all changed.

Good: Now we've stopped talking about millennials, we can focus on what has really changed—for everyone in the workforce—and how that's shifting their career-development needs.

People want attention and support to meet *their* personal expectations about *their* own career.

Getting the basics right.

What your employees need to know:

- The goals of the business, now and over the long term
- The goals of their team
- The scope of their own role
- How success in that role will be defined
- Their potential: What they might shoot for and what they need to do to get there

What HR and line managers should give them:

- Mentors and coaching—don't wait for them to reach out
- Investment in internal and external training
- Time and budget to visit conferences and expos
- Regular feedback and assessment cycles
- Career-advancement roadmaps, including personal objectives

³ [Unfairly Labeled: How Your Workplace Can Benefit From Ditching Generational Stereotypes](#)
jessicakriegel.com/news/

⁴ [The Problem with Generational Stereotypes at Work](#), *Fast Company* March 2016
fastcompany.com/3057905/the-future-of-work/the-problem-with-generational-stereotypes-at-work

3.

FIVE WAYS TO HELP MANAGERS WHO SUPPORT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

And six ways to spot the ones who don't.

Many managers feel burdened by the tasks associated with talent development, but they don't think they're getting enough help from HR. In a 2016 survey,⁵ 59 percent of managers said HR is able to address recruitment needs in their business. But only 37 percent said that HR could deliver on training, coaching, and guidance. *Ouch.*

Managers who are active in employee career- and skill-building are seen as highly engaged by their direct reports. That makes them more valuable to their businesses. So HR needs to help them manage teams effectively while at the same time empowering employees to request development opportunities and articulate their ambitions.

The line manager problem (and how to fix it).

"When divergence between HR and line management is bridged, and where deep understanding of each other's roles is shared to create real collaboration, business performance is considerably stronger."

But, warns Michael O'Leary, CEO of consultancy HRM,⁵ all too often line managers don't fully understand their HR duties. And that hurts talent development.

So here are five ways HR can bridge that line management gap. It's not about supplanting line managers; it's about supporting them in the career development of their people.

- 1 Define the skills** and behaviors needed in line managers. Being explicit about, say, the ability to work with others, managing employee output, or developing talent helps everyone. Help them engineer and respond well to feedback.
- 2 Give them the right tools.** That means training and coaching them for those skills—as well as nontechnical skills like decision-making or strategic thinking.
- 3 Build careers around people's strengths.** Multidirectional career progression is key for smart ambitious employees—and management is not for everyone. Line managers tend to see their own role as the route for their best people. Teach them that's not always true.
- 4 Don't micromanage the managers.** Set them clear goals for performance and for people, and then ensure they're engaged. Line managers should be clear: HR is here to help, not have an argument.
- 5 Be clear: Managers manage.** Employee engagement is their top task—and that means their people should feel they're developing and upskilling. (Bonus: managers with employees who are engaged, productive, motivated, and developing new skills are, themselves, all those things.)

⁵ Why HR and Line Managers Look in Different Directions at HR Practices, HRM hrmrecruit.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/HRM_Report-2016-Final-March.pdf

Six signs you have a talent hoarder in your midst.

The worst line manager? The talent hoarder. They spot good people, but are paranoid about losing them from a task or role. So they keep them under wraps—and keep them from developing. Who are these monsters? Let's look at the features:

- **No publicity!** They hog the limelight so rivals don't get wind of their bright subordinates.
- **Don't mention the war (for talent)!** Their employees stop asking about skills or career progression.
- **Live for today!** Succession planning? It doesn't exist for them, much less for their key people.
- **Training's for wimps!** The team isn't getting training because "they're too important to spare" or just plain busy.
- **Please don't go!** They get desperate when someone does try to leave. Look out for generous counteroffers: They're rarely a good idea, but it's a classic panic play.
- **They're all so loyal!** They argue talented people would be unsuited to work outside their department.

Empowerment for employees.

The HR function has to guard against these hoarders, then, as well as other kinds of line managers who miss the grade on development for their people. Help them change—or manage them out.

But HR must also provide the tools and the culture where individual employees feel they can take responsibility for their own development regardless of a supportive manager. As HR guru Keith Ferrazzi put it⁶ in *Harvard Business Review*: "Highly structured, one-size-fits-all learning programs don't work anymore. Individuals must own, self-direct, and control their learning futures. Yet they can't do it alone, nor do you want them to."

⁶ 7 Ways to Improve Employee Development Programs, *Harvard Business Review*, July 2015
hbr.org/2015/07/7-ways-to-improve-employee-development-programs

4.

ON-DEMAND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN A NETWORKED ENTERPRISE

The university of work.

With growing longevity, employees are more likely to need to develop new skills or even to build new careers. And the velocity of change in business models and technology means not only they, but also their employers, need to evolve their skills and knowledge.

Traditional learning programs help talent achieve academic and program-specific credentials. For many employees, the two-year development program or residential course remains a must (especially when high-performing managers are on the track to executive roles). But with the rise of contextual learning in digital and social environments, short bursts of information delivered in the moment, often peer to peer, has become a pragmatic approach to learning.

Learning and development (L&D) in the high-velocity information age is a fine art. HR must help balance information overload with the need to stay current. Setting up lower-cost, higher-impact digital development tools designed to create a constant learning environment is a must, especially when traditional L&D programs often suffer when economic headwinds increase.

How is your 70/20/10 ratio shaping up?

This rule of thumb for learning and development was developed 20 years ago. It states that, for any individual, learning comes:

- 70 percent from doing their work (especially challenging assignments)
- 20 percent from people around them (the manager, but also mentors and skilled peers)
- 10 percent from courses (from reading books to residentials)

The good news? This model adapts well to career progression (it's a reminder that senior managers need mentoring and formal training too), and focuses HR on maintaining a strong learning culture in the workplace.

The bad news? As organizations strive to be more agile, there's less time to absorb new skills on the job. And the latest research⁷ says that the ratio is looking dated. Among high-performance leaders, for example, development falls 52:27:21. People need to be encouraged (and have time) to be inquisitive about their work and their industry, and HR must work with managers to free up time for structured training.

Middle management also needs more-structured career development, especially as their promotion frequency lengthens. Young, new managers need coaching and mentoring on their evolving roles. Those heading for roles in executive leadership have more experience under their belts. They require more ongoing conversations about softer skills, networking and leadership, not just "fire and forget" training.

Four questions for formal training.

Mentoring, on-the-job skills development, eLearning—all great stuff. But HR shouldn't forget about employee opinions. You need to be able to answer these four questions, says HR specialist DDI:⁸

- **"Will this be worth my time?"** Modern workplaces are high-pressure environments, and training is always going to stop someone getting something urgent done.
- **"Is this training widely accepted?"** Employees hate going back to their desk to find their manager doesn't understand the new skills they've acquired.
- **"How can I make a difference?"** When you upskill people, you raise their expectations. Help them become leaders and role models using their new skills.
- **"How do I find time to implement this?"** Training doesn't instantly make people better at a given job. New skills, techniques, or responsibilities take time to soak in. Pressured staff will revert to familiar ways if they don't have the chance to live their lessons.

⁷ 70:20:10 The Right Ratio... or so We All Thought, DDI Global Leadership Forecast 2014/2015
ddiworld.com/DDI/media/trend-research/au/GLF14_AU_702010.pdf

⁸ Questions from the Classroom, GO! magazine
ddiworld.com/go/archive/go-magazine-2016-issue-1/questions-from-the-classroom


A multichannel experience...

Career and skills development, then, needs the kind of attention most organizations are lavishing on customers. KPMG Nunwood’s Six Pillars of Customer Experience⁹ map well onto HR’s handling of employee development:

- **Personalization:** Ditch the one-size-fits-all approach to progression and skills.
- **Time and effort:** Make it easy for employees to see future opportunities and acquire new skills.
- **Expectations:** Be accurate and realistic about when and how they’ll progress.
- **Integrity:** Employees want to know you’re investing in them, not just a machine part that needs upgrading.
- **Resolution:** When things go wrong, how will HR put it right? This, of course, bleeds into the full range of employee/manager/HR interactions.
- **Empathy:** Listen to employee needs and frustrations; they want HR to offer them guidance and steering for new opportunities.

...requires better digital tools.

In addition to all the traditional HR tools for learning and development, most large organizations (and increasingly, smaller ones) deploy eLearning. This can be as simple as desk-based tutorials or a full-suite portal with employee self-service and social tools to aid mentoring and coaching. Here’s what to look out for in terms of features.

	Interactive communities	Build dynamic learning communities to promote the creation, sharing, and collaboration of know-how across your organization. Encourage employees to continuously invest in their own learning and development.
	Contextual learning	Dramatically transform learning by embedding it in the context of your business process and making it relevant to the person. Utilize business or HR metrics to drive learning initiatives that impact organizational success.
	Unified & easy to use	Learning needs to be easy to use and a part of an employee’s life. Learning delivered in daily tasks will help employees be more productive and engaged by consuming bite-sized learning where and when it is needed.
	Broader talent or HR initiatives	Using a suite solution, broader HCM processes can be enhanced by seamlessly leveraging a richer personal profile into talent or HR actions—such as internal mobility opportunities, career development discussions, performance reviews, or compensation rounds.
	Mobile	Support for mobile devices takes learning out of the office and into the world. Mobile designs should be easy to use and must adapt to different bandwidths, or support learning in a disconnected mode.
	Standards support	A modern learning management system (LMS) must be interoperable with other sites. You need elearning technical standards such as SCORM 1.2, 2004 or AICC to leverage different content and content providers that are reusable or adaptable.
	Cloud	Modern LMS solutions are running in the cloud so they can benefit from continuous improvement and innovation. Use business analytics to drive effective learning programs to meet the evolving needs of your business.

⁹ Customer Experience Best Practice: A Checklist for Six Pillar implementation
[nunwood.com/customer-experience-best-practice-checklist-six-pillar-implementation/](https://www.nunwood.com/customer-experience-best-practice-checklist-six-pillar-implementation/)

5.

COLLABORATION: CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIAL AGE

“Feelings, nothing more than feelings...”

Social and emotional intelligence is often as important as qualifications, experience and niche skills when matching talent to a particular role or initiative. It’s hard to hire for soft skills. Even a thorough interview process won’t reveal the depth of someone’s relationship-building or communication skills. But the longer people are in the organization, the easier it is to assess their personal traits.

Often, organizations will focus on skills development and miss the awkward yet essential discussion on how to develop soft skills such as collaboration, teamwork, communication, and leadership.

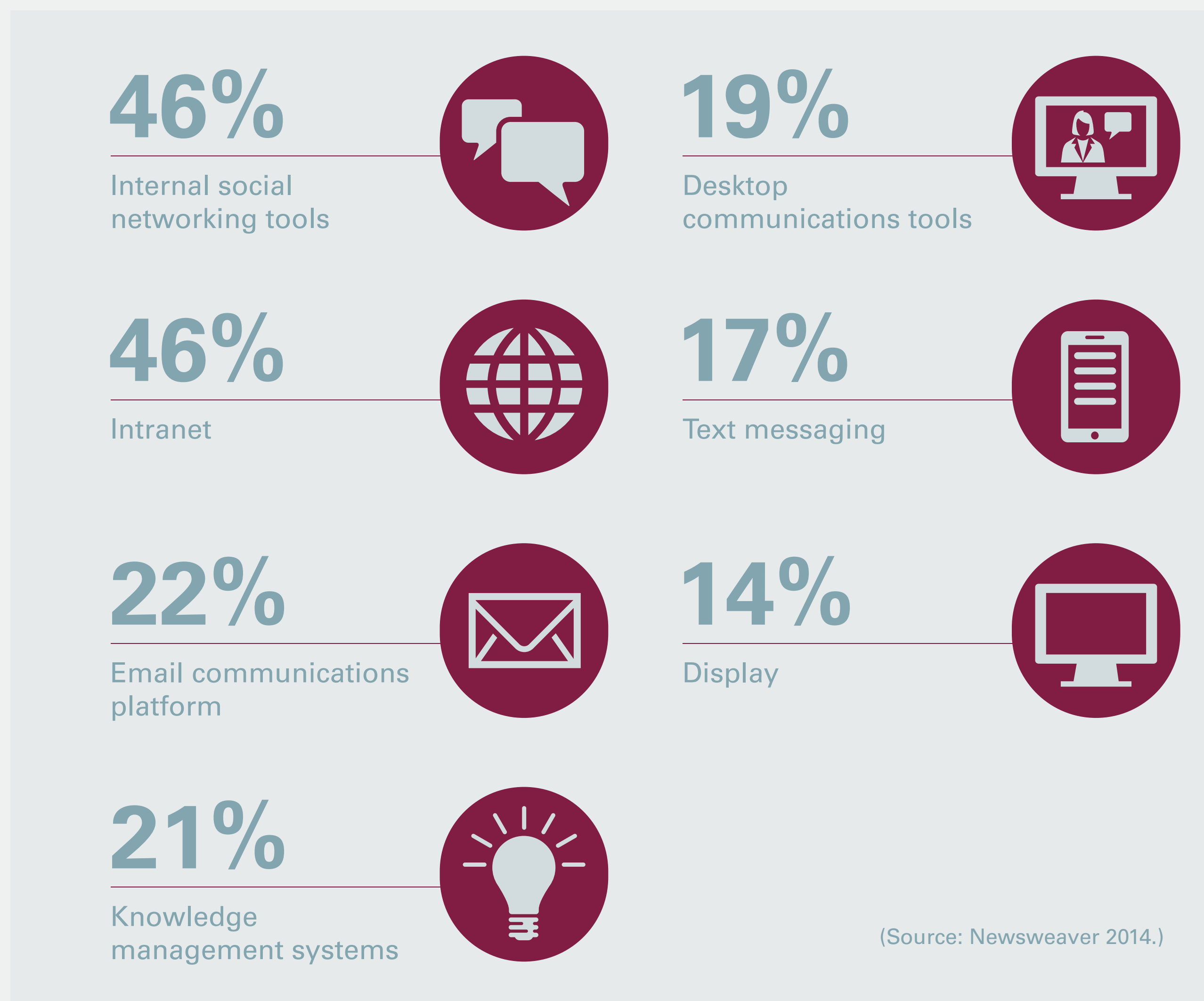
[New tools and approaches](#) could address this problem.

Social tech in skills and career.

Communication consultancy APCO conducted research that shows that internal social media “has the potential to ease collaboration, make employees feel closer to their employers, aid in employee recruitment and retention, and engage employees.”¹⁰

Collaboration and connection are the building blocks of good career development, especially around mentoring and coaching. These are particularly important for developing employees from underrepresented minorities who might struggle to draw mentors from their own networks.

FIGURE 3: NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES COMPANIES ARE LOOKING TO DEPLOY



¹⁰ The Benefits of Internal Social Media? Engaged Employees., APCO Forum Jan 2016
apcoworldwide.com/blog/detail/apcoforum/2016/01/25/the-benefits-of-internal-social-media-engaged-employees

How to build social tools for career development.

Ask the EU. It's putting €3 million (US\$3.3 million) into a new project, DEVELOP,¹¹ in Ireland to do just that. And its project objectives are an ideal HR shopping list for in-house IT and HCM solutions providers:

- **Use social network analysis** to assess social capital that has been built among colleagues
- **Assess competencies** such as leadership and collaboration using game-based assessment techniques combined with social-network analysis
- **Apply artificial-intelligence planning techniques** to recommend career development and learning opportunities for individuals
- **Create interfaces** for employees and HR to aid career awareness and talent management
- **Support mobility** of employees and better skill-matching to increase engagement
- **Build nonintrusive, ethical data analysis** of enterprise social networks, email and self-reporting tools
- **Gain end user trust** by providing clear informed consent and transparent data privacy

Using social to drive careers.

We're seeing some great examples of companies using social tools for career development—and not just for younger "tech natives." In some cases,¹² these tools are targeted at mid- and late-career workers seeking to redefine their career trajectory.

Social tools are ideal ways to help employees build up their own career narrative and engage in both structured and unstructured interactions that reflect their own aspirations rather than a fixed idea from HR or line management about their potential path. For example, employees can be encouraged to:

- Design a vision for their whole life, fitting work aspirations into a broader context
- Discuss their career with informal networks or through formal mentors and coaches
- Develop their career by seeking new roles, accessing information on training options, or simply getting to know what other roles in their organization are like

The beauty of this more collaborative, self-defined and networked approach is that for many later-stage employees, promotion is a much less likely career development than lateral moves. As researchers put it, the corporate lattice is more effective for increasing experience and exposure in a shorter time versus becoming stuck on the corporate ladder.

¹¹ Developing Careers Through Social Networks and Transversal Competencies
cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/200142_en.html

¹² Career Development in Corporations, Rich Feller and Ruth Pankratz,
Career Planning and Adult Development Journal, Fall 2015,
docplayer.net/1009248-Journal-volume-31-number-3-issn-0736-1920-fall-2015.html



BUILDING YOUR ACTION PLAN

Use this checklist to build your action plan. As you select each item, they will build into a comprehensive set of next steps for you.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU NEED TO DO?

1. Focus on skills, career development and retention.

- Unearth talent from every corner of the organization.
- Create an environment where HR supports the “whole employee”.
- Use career development as a way of motivating and retaining talent.

2. Don’t get distracted by the “millennial myth”.

- Design career planning and development for everyone, not just people who “look different”.
- Shift away from role-based career planning to personalized approaches.
- Design systems and management processes around transparency and agility.

3. Support line managers in supporting their people’s careers.

- Develop a clear set of requirements for line managers and their (twenty-first-century) HR duties.
- Use analytics (and old-fashioned common sense) to address talent hoarders.
- At the same time, empower employees to define their own career development and upskilling goals.

4. Design learning and development around personal demands and available tech.

- Ditch quotas for formal training at all levels (it probably needs to be a greater part of the mix!).
- Find ways to tailor learning—using on-demand online modules and peer-to-peer mentoring.
- Communicate more clearly with employees around training—treat them like you would customers, with personalized, trusted programs.
- Commit to a coherent yet multichannel learning approach.

5. Exploit social technology to create consultative and collaborative career networks.

- Use internal social media as a key platform for learning and development.
- Create learning communities where employees can learn from function experts, and highly experienced staff can become valued subject-matter experts.
- Work with external providers to bake career-development functionality into systems—and explore the potential for new development technologies such as machine learning and predictive analytics.
- Use social to encourage employees (especially older staff) to think laterally about career development rather than assume progression is “up or out”.