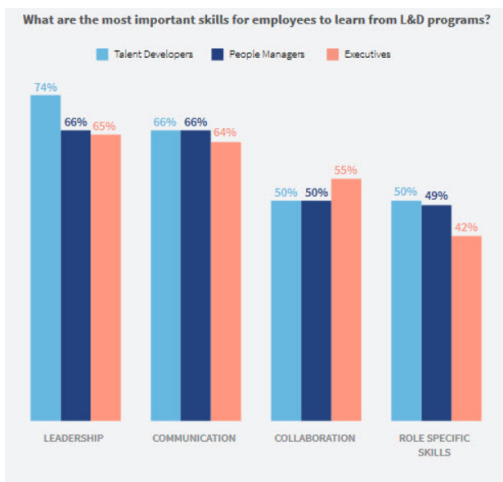


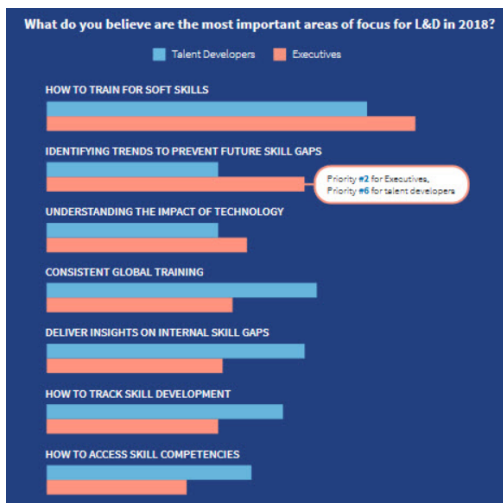
Communication & collaboration skills critical for future-readiness

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The nature of work is changing, and pretty fast at that! The pace of adoption of digital technologies is such that one can be rendered obsolete very quickly. Artificial intelligence and machine learning are taking over a lot of functions that previously relied on human beings, and very few professions can be considered immune to the conquest by technology. This raises serious questions on what skills will keep professionals valuable to their organisations and offer them opportunities to grow. Guess what: more than your technical skills, it is likely to be your ‘soft skills’ that will help you stand out and help you progress in your career. Chief among these are leadership, communication and collaboration skills, as a recent [report by LinkedIn](#) shows.



The objective of LinkedIn’s report, which was based on a survey of over 3600 professionals, was primarily to find out the focus of learning and development initiatives for talent management professionals in companies. Even though the respondents were from overseas, a lot of the learnings from the report are as applicable to the emerging Indian workforce.



The need for collaboration skills

The ability to collaborate effectively was always a highly-valued skill, because that is the essence of teamwork. However, with changing trends at the workplace with 'distributed teams' and 'remote working' becoming increasingly common, effective collaboration has become even more critical.

This involves the ability to understand the needs and wants of all stakeholders involved in any activity, the relative priorities and being able to manage these priorities as seamlessly as possible. It means that every employee has to effectively start thinking like a manager, long before their official designation says so!

To collaborate well, you need effective communication skills

Collaboration hardly works without [effective communication](#). Clarity of communication is the foundation on which any collaborative endeavour can be built.

Getting the message across to the concerned people clearly such that the recipients of the message know what needs to be done, when and by whom to achieve the desired outcome, is the ultimate aim of communication. Whether this is done verbally or in writing, the key thing is to ensure that the message does get communicated effectively. In a corporate setting, especially when it involves multiple teams across different locations or geographies, it takes both verbal and written communication to ensure that the message is delivered and reinforced. In fact, it is often considered a professional best practice to summarize what is spoken in a written message!

You don't have to be the most eloquent orator or the most gifted writer with a gigantic vocabulary to be an effective communicator. A strong vocabulary helps, but the more important element of communicating well is using the correct words, correctly. You can use very simple English words, but if you have constructed your sentence correctly and expressed your thoughts in a logical and coherent fashion so that the listener or reader understands it, you have succeeded in your communication effort!

The key message here is that improving one's communication skills should be very high on the priority list for every person looking for an upwardly-mobile career. If you haven't paid enough attention to it yet, it is high-time you did. It is neither too difficult nor too expensive to [improve your communication skills](#); all it takes is commitment to the goal.

Express yourself well and grow well!

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