

Work & Salary Report for the L&D Sector



Welcome

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Satisfaction

Your Work

Outlook

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Welcome to the 2025 Blue Eskimo Work & Salary Report for the L&D Sector.

Blue Eskimo is the leading specialist recruitment company for the L&D industry, helping clients recruit all disciplines within Learning and Development for the last two decades.

This year's Work and Salary Report is based on our 13th annual survey, conducted in the closing weeks of 2024. We collected quantitative survey data from over 700 learning and development professionals based in the UK or working remotely with UK based companies.

We have used this data combined with our observations and experience of what is happening in the industry and compared it with the results from our 2024 survey to bring you our latest findings and outline our expectations of what lies ahead for L&D in 2025.

We hope you enjoy it,

The Team at Blue Eskimo.

Where are we now?

In 2024, the Learning and Development (L&D) sector faced significant challenges amid a backdrop of economic uncertainty and rapid technological advancements. Budget reductions led to a slowdown in L&D projects, with many organisations adopting a cautious approach to new initiatives. This trend aligns with recent findings from the **Fosway Group**, indicating that L&D budgets are experiencing the most substantial constraints since their survey began in 2016.

Compounding these challenges, 2024's poor macroeconomic conditions, coupled with elections in the UK and USA, added layers of uncertainty, prompting organisations to reassess their L&D investments and strategies. It was a year where companies hedged their bets and whilst we have seen a change in government, we haven't yet seen a change in our economic circumstances.

We have seen an increase in candidates coming to us as a result of redundancy and generally firms are holding back on hiring and not replacing headcount. This is a trend we expect to see continue into 2025.

We also saw some pushback from companies on the 'new ways of working' with more companies starting to insist on, or at least encourage, a return to the office on a more regular basis. 2024 was the year that the balance of power shifted firmly back to the employer. A few years ago we witnessed the 'great resignation' with record numbers of employees moving jobs and being in a position to demand better salaries. In 2024 this is no longer the case, as fears of redundancy see less movement in the market as employees work to hold onto their current positions.

AI has become mainstream, and the swift emergence of generative AI technologies introduced both opportunities and hesitations within the industry. While AI holds the promise of revolutionising learning methodologies, it has also caused inertia, as organisations deliberate on its integration and potential impacts. A report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) highlights that 49% of individuals fear job displacement due to AI, underscoring the need for thoughtful implementation strategies.

Overall, the current situation in L&D mirrors the wider economic mood of caution and restraint, particularly in hiring. However, despite these hurdles there is optimism for 2025. The anticipated stabilisation of economic factors and a deeper understanding of AI's role in L&D are expected to rejuvenate the sector. Organisations are increasingly recognising the value of investing in employee development to navigate future uncertainties effectively. As noted in a recent People Management Insight report, enhancing L&D strategies is pivotal for boosting employee engagement and retention, which will be crucial for organisational success in the coming years.

This survey highlights how the L&D landscape has evolved over the past year, exploring the impact of budget constraints, technological advancements and economic conditions on jobs, salaries and sentiment. We also look ahead, gathering insights on expectations for 2025, aiming to provide a comprehensive overview to inform and support L&D professionals in navigating the complexities of our time.

Overall, the current situation in L&D mirrors the wider economic slowdown, however there is still demand within the sector – particularly for highly skilled and experienced candidates and we expect demand for revenue generating roles in sales and marketing to continue to grow in 2025.

2024 proved to be an exceptionally challenging year for year for many in L&D, static or even reduced budgets as predicted in our 2024 survey played out with resultant cancellation or pauses in projects. In the Learning technology sector, we saw a slowdown in new platform implementations and content projects as both providers and end clients grapple with the potential for AI technology in learning. In the digital learning space we have seen a widespread adoption of AI enabled content production capability as the use of Generative AI tools and then integrated products have come on stream. Reported redundancies have slightly declined from 15% in 2023 to 11% in 2024 which although a welcome drop is still significant.

Nick Jones, Director blueeskimo

Your



Work

In this section of the survey, we seek to discover what working in the L&D industry looks like now compared to previous years.

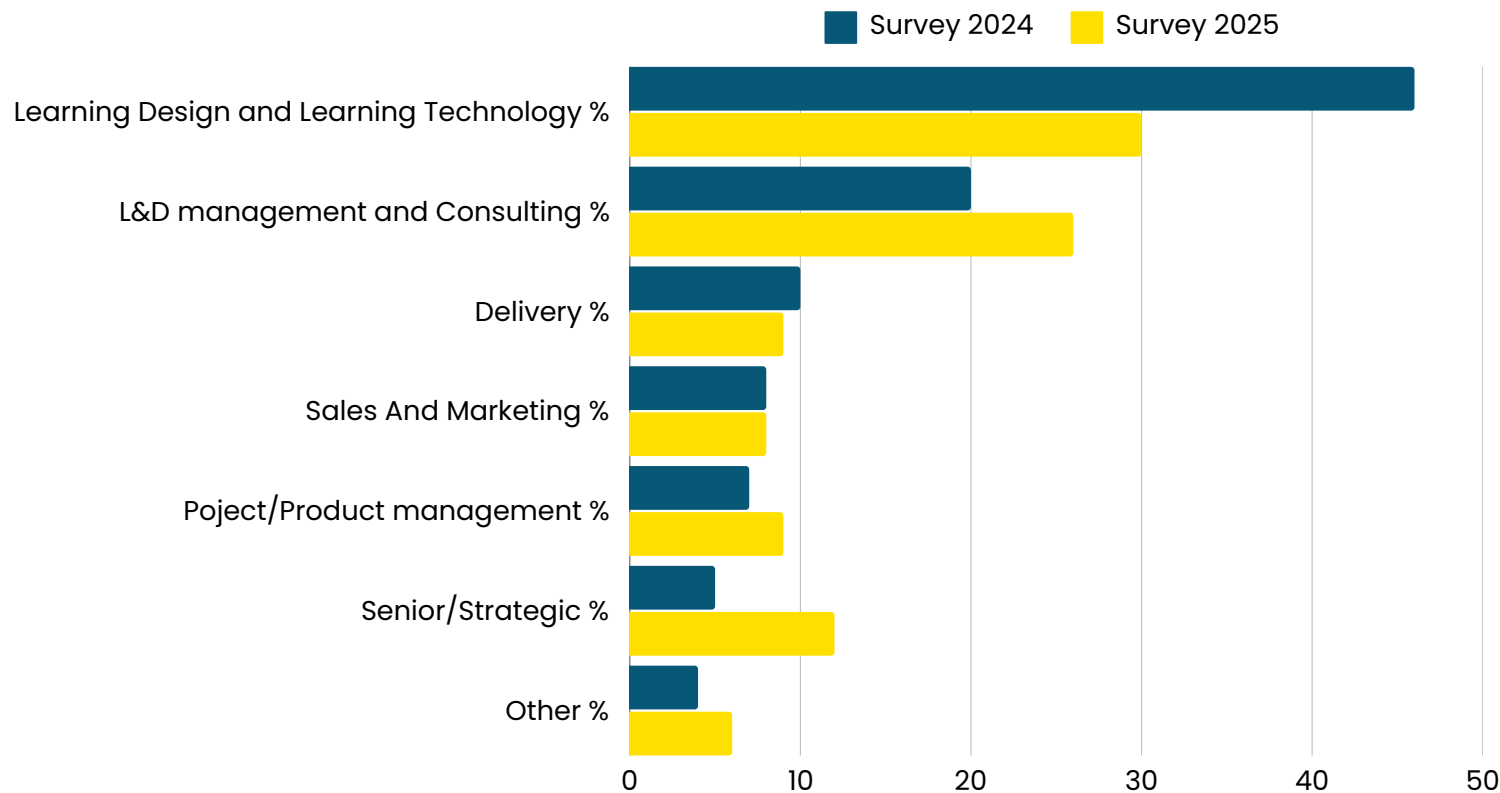
One way of getting a sense of change in a market is to look at job titles. L&D is known for its vast array of job titles but these can also indicate changes in focus within the industry. This year we saw some new titles emerge and the use of different phrases within titles as well as a clearer segmentation between different areas within L&D.

In the last few years, the way we work has changed with an increase in remote and hybrid working. Anecdotal evidence suggested to us that remote working had fallen slightly out of favour with employers now seeking a more structured working model with regular office-based time for in person collaboration and team working, and we were interested to see if our data backed this up.

In an employer led market we have seen a greater pool of candidates competing for fewer jobs, and along with the rise of AI we wondered if this had led to a change of attitude towards the value of specific L&D qualifications and reskilling.

We asked respondents about their role within L&D, their working model (hybrid, remote or office based), qualifications and how their employment had changed over the last 12 months.

Which of these job families does your role mainly focus on?



Comments

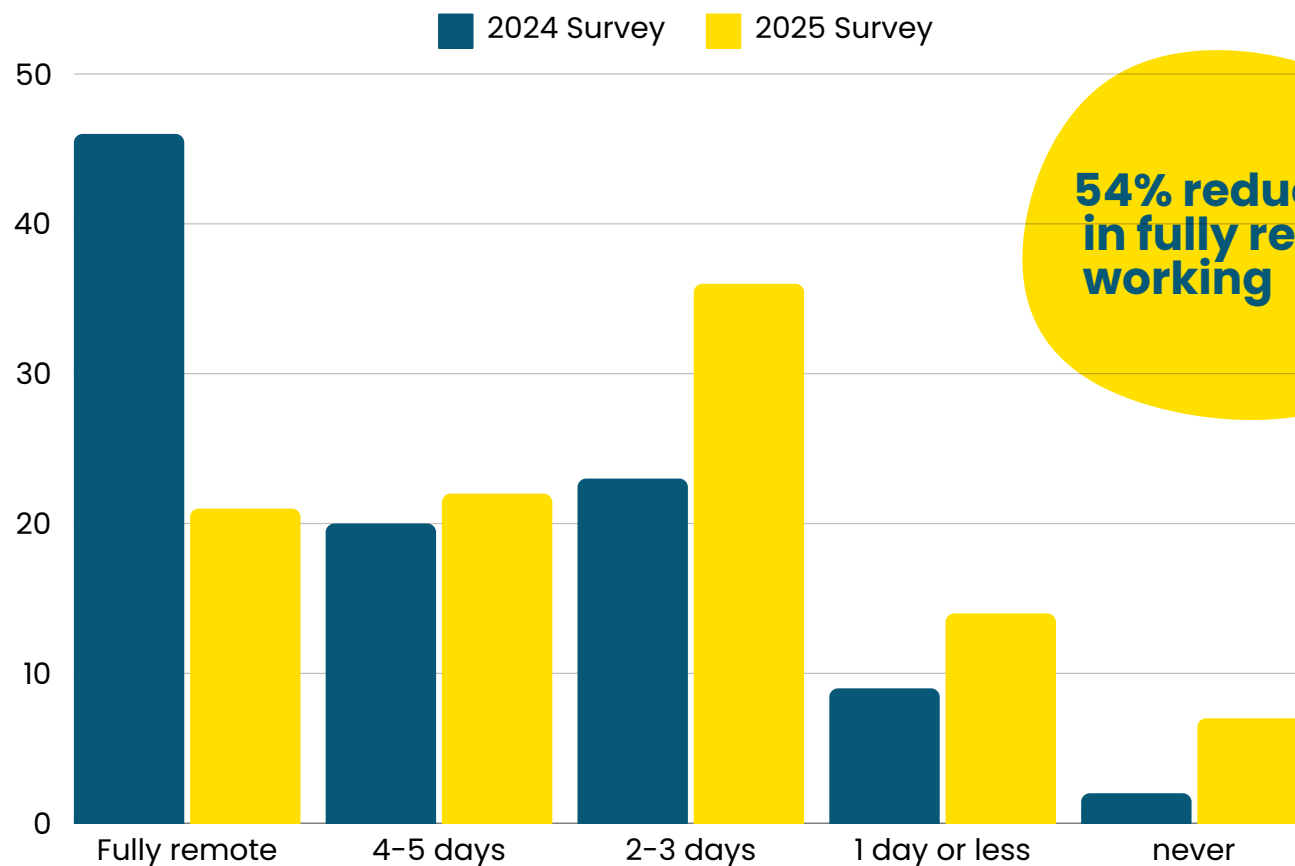
Looking at roles families we can see quite a lot of consistency between the 2024 and 2025 responses, however two areas see a marked change.

There is a 16% drop in respondents from roles in Learning design, development and technologies and 8% rise in respondents from Senior and Executive roles. This is echoed later in our salary data where we see an increase in higher earners amongst our sample for 2024.

There are a few reasons for this. The market has contracted in 2024 so there are less people within the sector, those who have remained tend to be more senior or experienced, or have worked up and reskilled into a more senior/executive role.

Again, this is seen later in our questions around training and qualifications where we have seen a marked increase in the value of L&D specific training amongst this years respondents.

In **your** typical working week, how much time do you spend working remotely (typically home-based)?



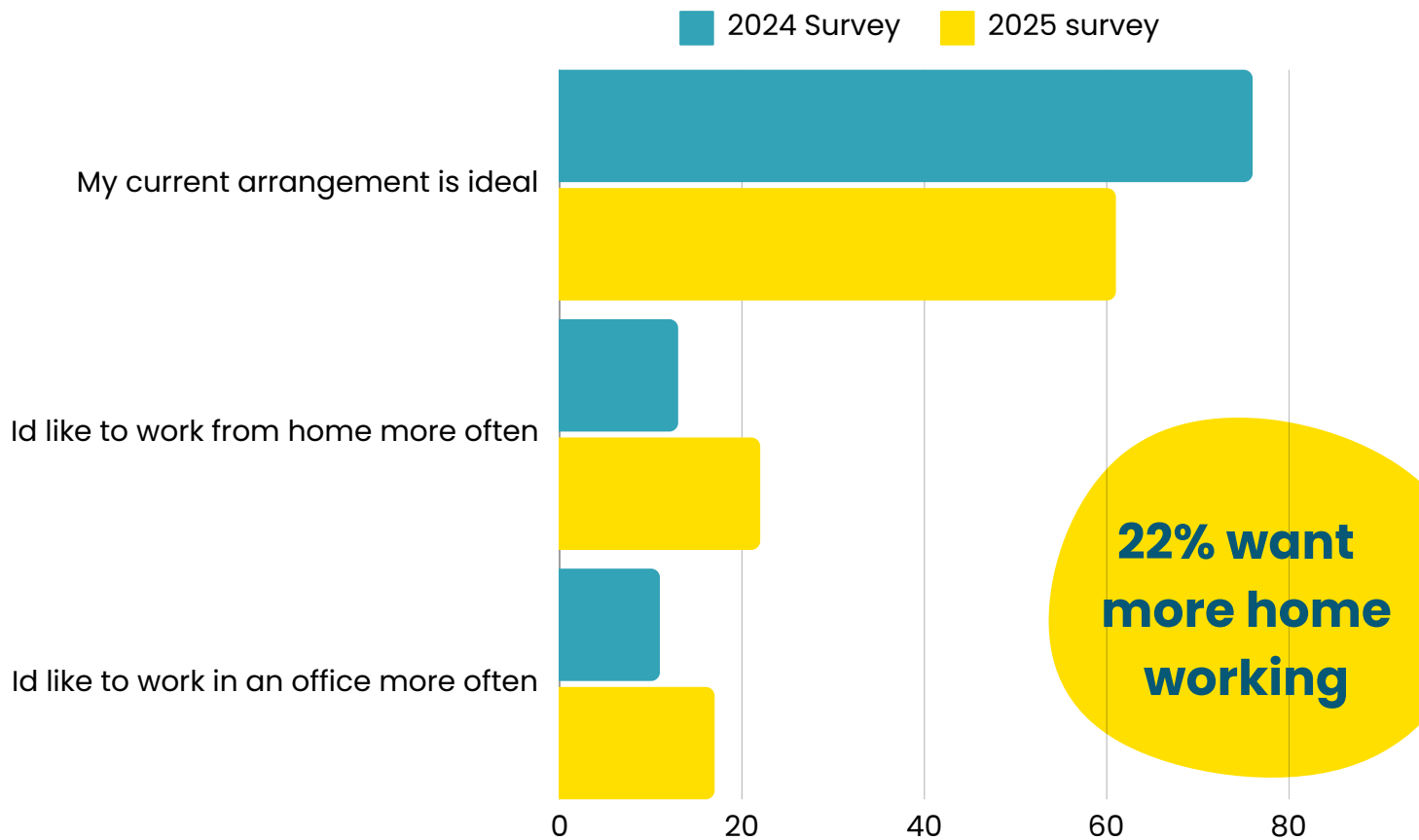
54% reduction in fully remote working

Comments

We asked respondents about their role within L&D, their working model (hybrid, remote or office based), qualifications and how their employment had changed over the last 12 months.

This data backs up what we have witnessed on the ground i.e. that remote working has fallen slightly out of favour with employers this year, with many insisting on at least a partial return to the office. This change was more marked than we had anticipated, with a drop from 46% to 21% in respondents who said that they worked fully remotely, evidenced by a shift towards office working 2-3 days a week from 23% to 36%. There was also an increase from 2% to 7% in those who are now completely office based.

What would your ideal working arrangement be?



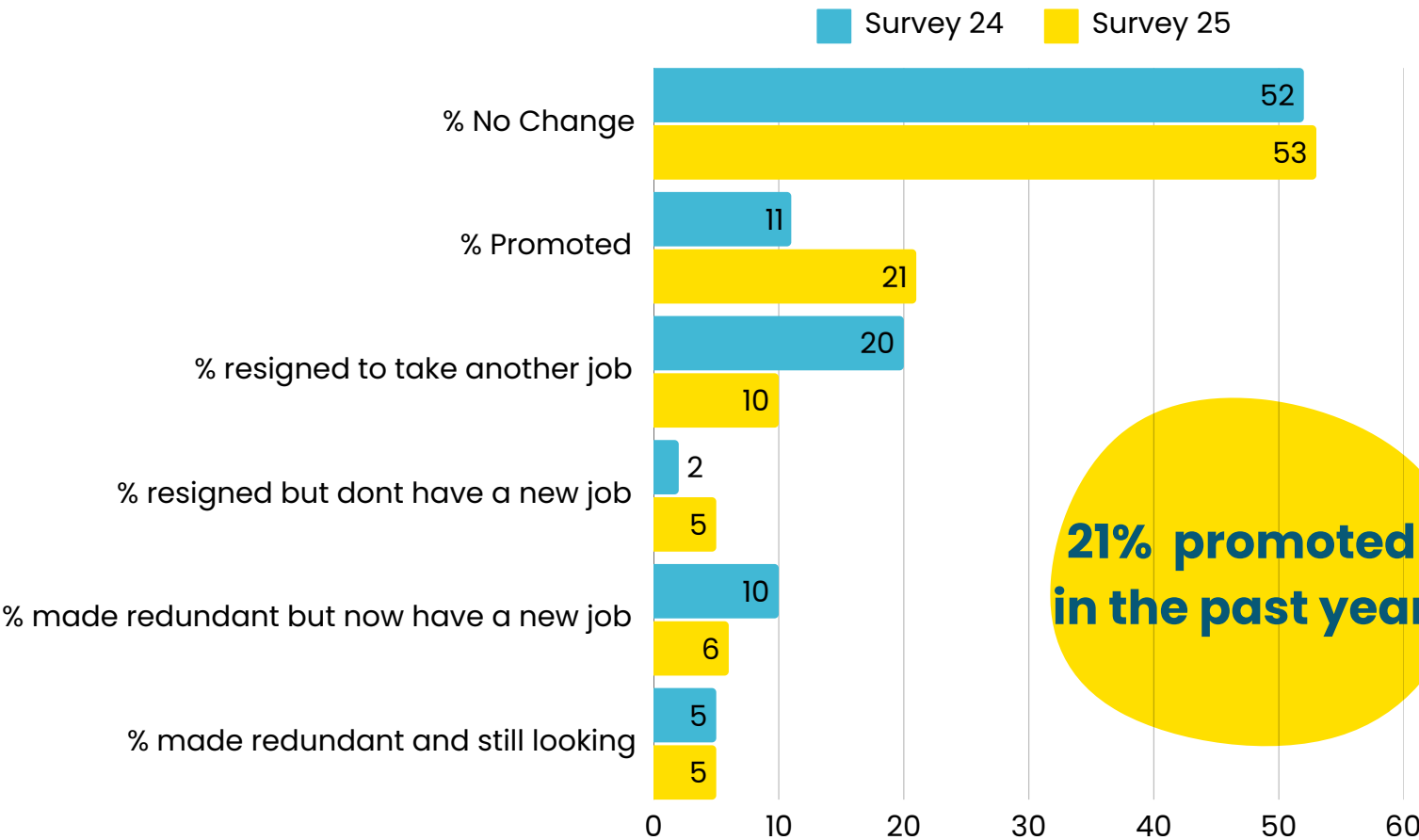
Comments

As well as falling out of favour with employers, it seems that fully remote working may have lost some of its appeal generally.

There is a 76% to 61% drop in respondents who say their current arrangement is ideal and an increase from 13% to 22% in those who would like to work from home more often. Whilst you can't please all of the people all of the time, it appears that we have at least reached a point where what works best for most businesses and employees is a hybrid arrangement that combines remote working with face-to-face collaboration and connection.

Anecdotally, the primary reasons we hear for people wishing to work from home more often relate to increased productivity and the prohibitive cost of travel.

How has **your** employment changed over the last 12 months?

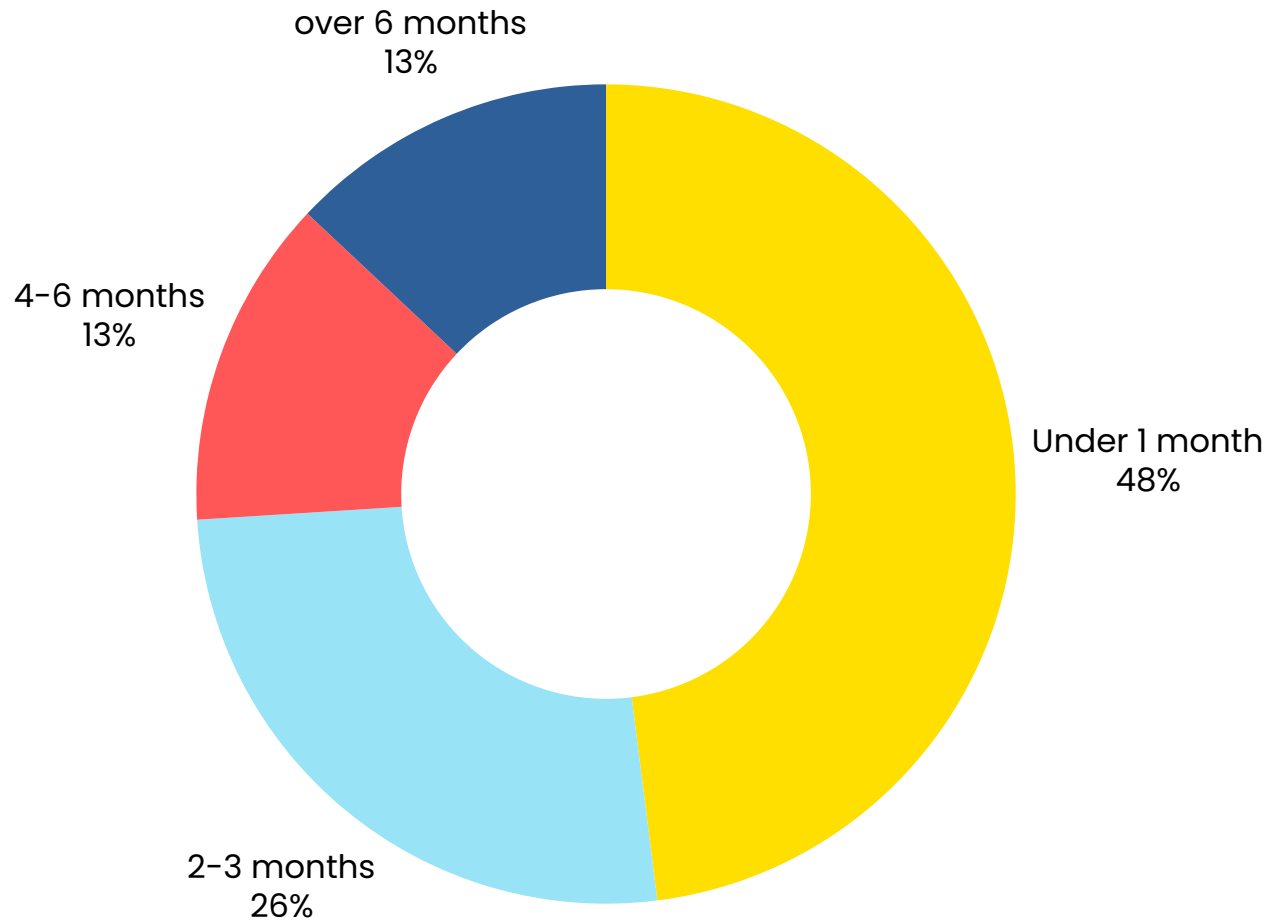


Comments

Consistent with last year, 53% of people remained in the same job, just a 1% increase.

This year saw our highest ever proportion (21%) of respondents achieving promotions, compared to 11% in the previous year – and thankfully a slowdown in redundancies, down from 15% last year to 11% this year. We can see retraction in the market reflected in increases around those who resigned/were made redundant and are still looking for a new job. This is something we explore further in the next section, which examines how long it is taking for people to find new jobs.

How long did it take **you** to find a new job?



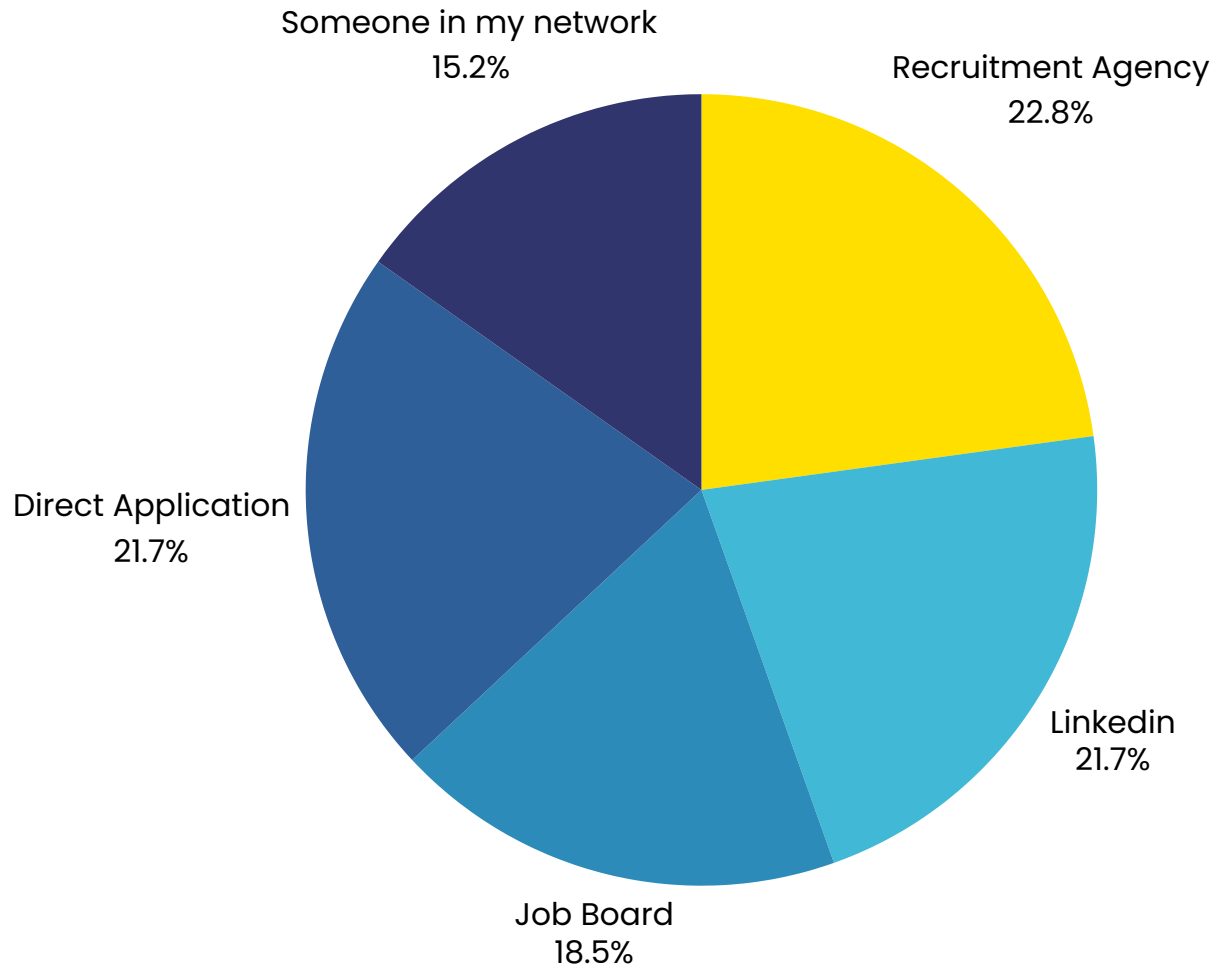
Comments

The pace of redundancy might be slowing but if you are facing redundancy our data shows you should allow 6 months to find a new job.

87% of our respondents who had been made redundant found a new job within 6 months, but 13% are still looking over the 6-month mark.

Early last year redundancies were starting to rise, but the job market was more buoyant and candidates could reasonably expect to find a new position of equal or better standing within a few months. However, as the year progressed, we observed a sizeable increase in the proportion of jobseekers versus available vacancies, which extended the time it took for candidates to secure new roles and increased the numbers having to accept roles that were not their ideal career moves.

How did **you** find your current job?

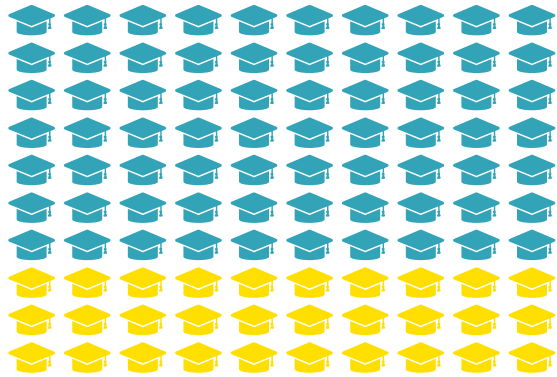


Comments

Of those people who secured a new job in 2024, the largest proportion (23%) did so with the help of a recruitment agency.

This was closely followed by direct applications and via LinkedIn (both 22%). We also see the importance of personal networks, with 15% of respondents getting their current job through someone they knew. As the job market gets tougher, personal networks and recommendations can clearly make a difference.

Do you have any L&D related qualifications?



70% Hold at least one L&D qualification up from 52% last year

Comments

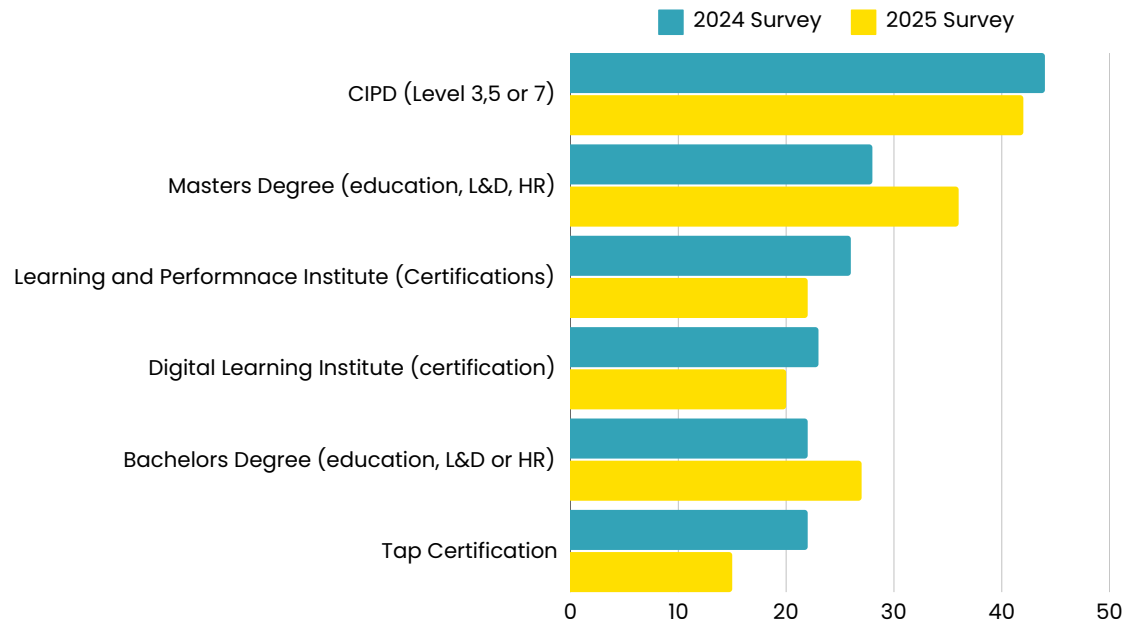
This year we saw a marked increase in those who had an L&D qualification and also the perceived value of that qualification in how they felt it had contributed to them working in their current role.

This year 70% of respondents had a L&D qualification - up from 52% last year

The biggest increase in type of qualification were seen in bachelor's and master's degrees. The perceived value of these qualifications also increased with 87% of this year's respondents believing that their qualifications had helped somewhat or a lot with their career, compared to only 71% of last year's respondents.

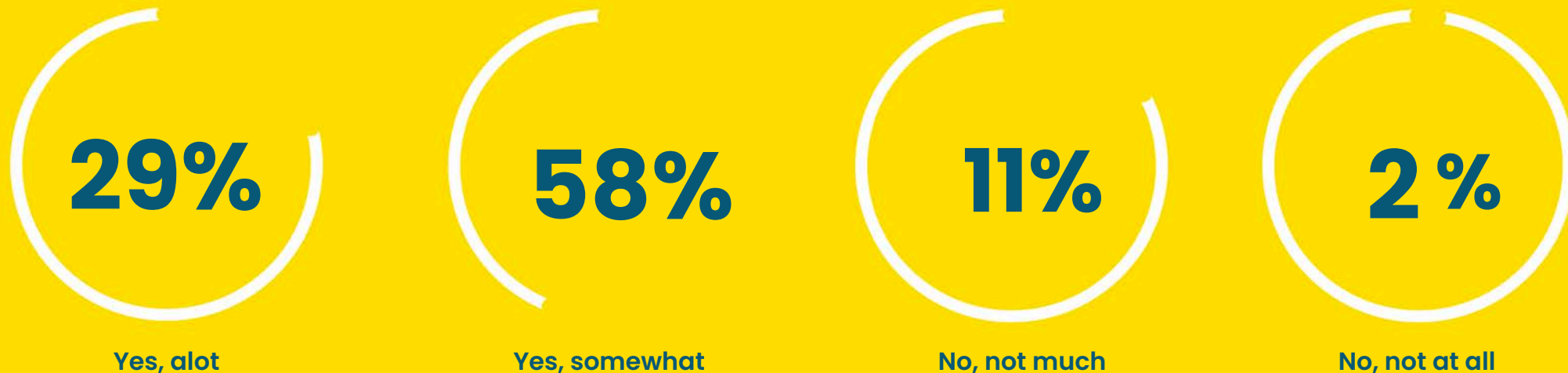
As the market cools, we would expect more people to seek out education and training to improve their skills and differentiate themselves. New technologies like AI are also fuelling the demand for professional and personal development.

If yes, what sort of L&D qualifications do you have?



Have these qualifications helped **your** career?

There is a positive attitude to education with 87% feeling L&D specific qualifications helped somewhat or a lot in their career and just 13% with less positive views.



Summary



Job titles and roles:

Consolidation in an array of job titles - more clearly defined roles.



Working arrangements:

Move to structured hybrid working rather than fully remote with more people based in the office for a least some days per week.

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Qualifications:

More focus and perceived value given to obtaining a L&D relevant qualification to progress career . An increase in the number of respondent's holding a qualification in L&D.



On the move:

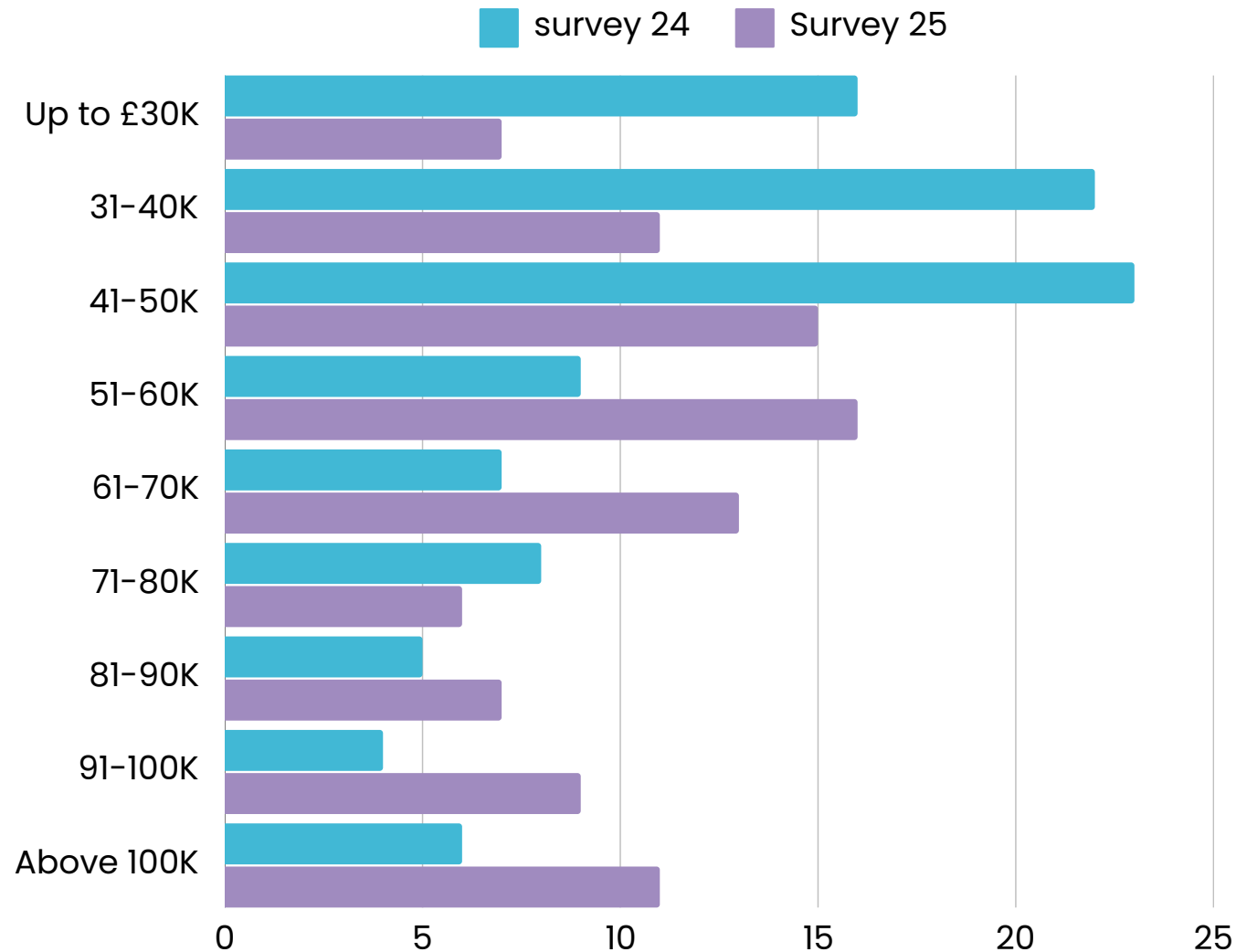
Redundancy is slowing, but it is taking longer to find a new role. More people are staying in their jobs.

All about the money?

This is the salary section of our survey. We asked respondents how they felt their salary compared to the industry average, what their salary was, and if it had changed in the last 12 months.



What is *your* current basic annual salary?

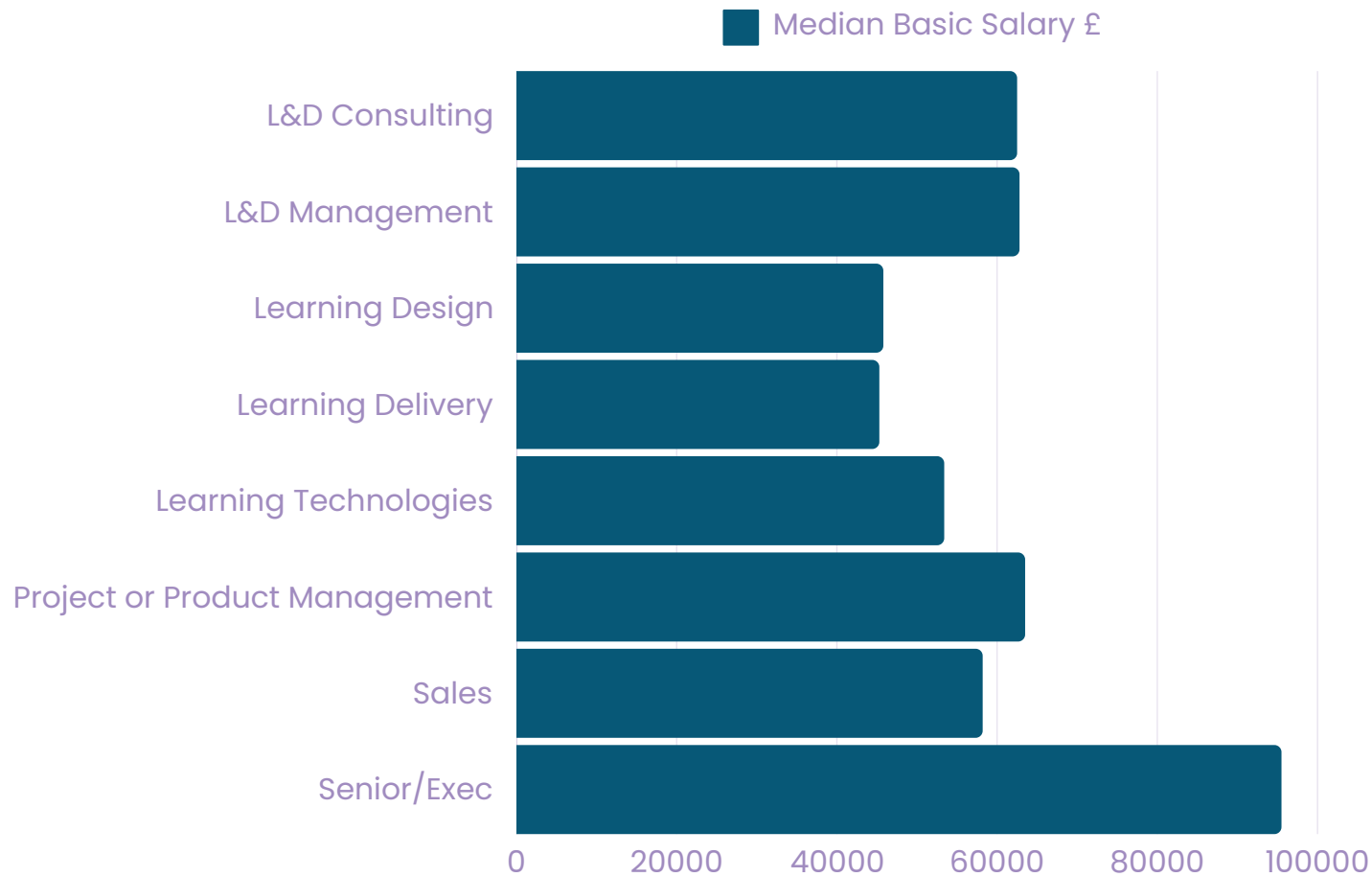


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Comments

A large proportion of respondents (31%) receive a salary of between £41,000 and £60,000, although this is down from 42% last year. The largest growth segment were those achieving above £110,000, up from 4% last year to 11% this year.

What is the Median Salary for L&D job families?



- **Median Salary data is based upon survey respondents for 2025 combined with additional Blue Eskimo Vacancy data, a total of over 900 data points.**

Comments

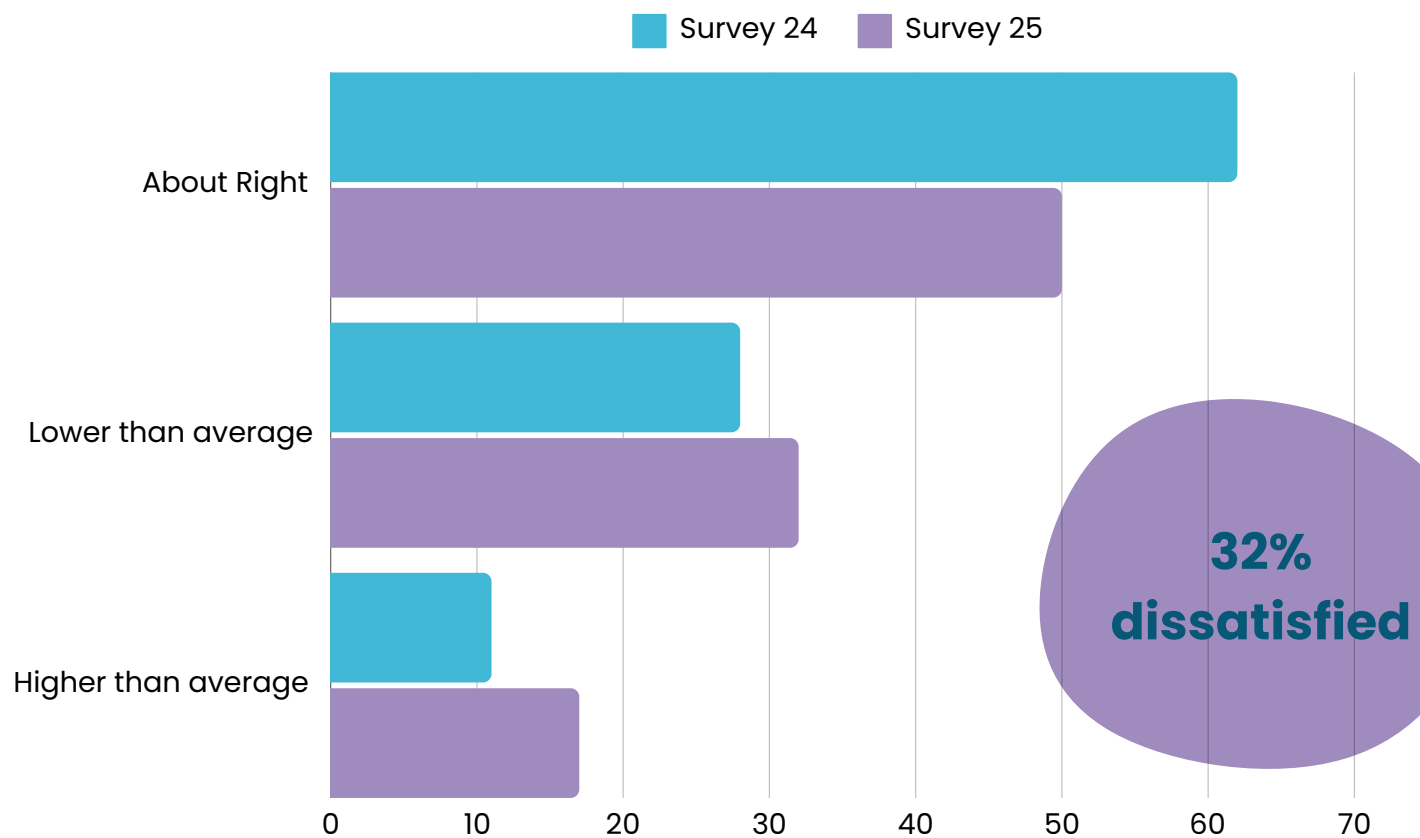
The salary data highlights significant variation across L&D job families, with Senior and Executive roles leading at £108,000.

Learning and Development Consulting (£62,500) and Management (£62,800) are closely aligned, reflecting their shared strategic importance. Sales roles, with a median salary of £58,200, underscore their revenue-driving value for L&D service providers.

Tactical roles like Learning Design (£45,800) and Delivery (£45,300) sit lower on the scale, despite their importance in creating and delivering learning experiences. Learning Technologies (£53,400) and Project/Product Management (£63,500) occupy the mid-tier, reflecting growing reliance on technology and project-focused approaches.

Senior and Executive roles unsurprisingly attract higher median salaries (£95,500), however it should be noted that those selecting the Senior and Executive category is likely to consist of leaders who do not solely focus in one or other category.

How do you feel your salary compares with the industry average?



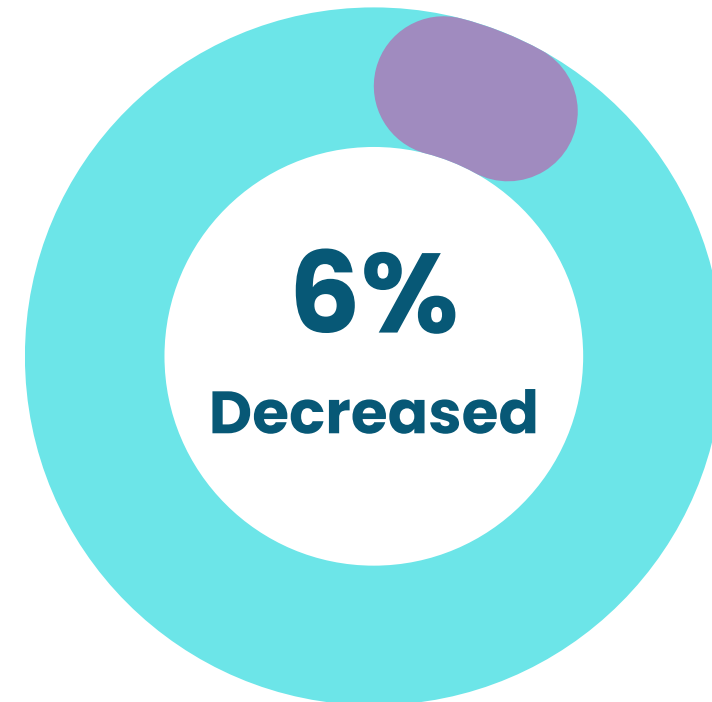
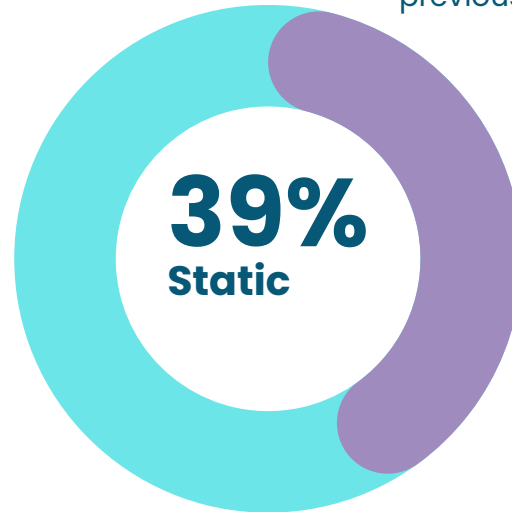
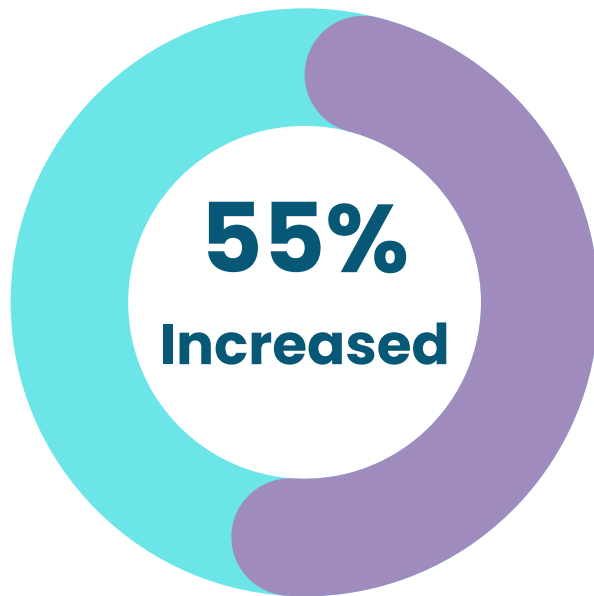
Comments

Salary satisfaction dropped for the third consecutive year, with 32% of respondents feeling that their salary is lower than the industry average, compared to 28% last year

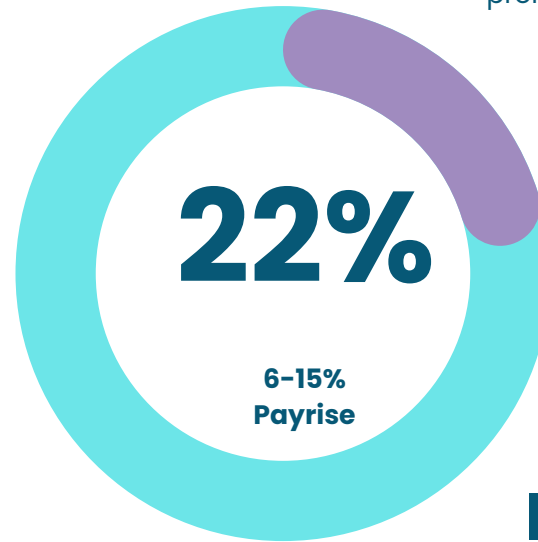
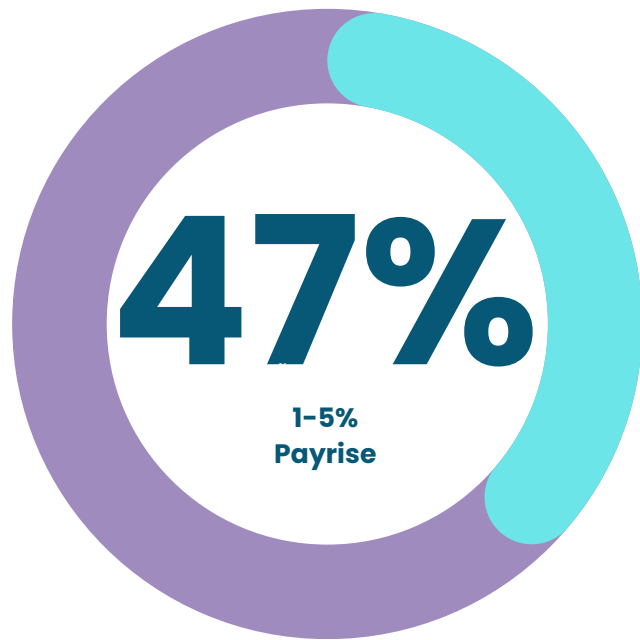
Given the relative economic turbulence of 2024, there hasn't been the pronounced drop that we anticipated, with an improved 17% of respondents feeling that they are paid more than the industry average - and 50% believing that they are paid about the right amount.

Over the last 12 months, has **your salary increased, decreased, or remained the same?**

This section is also more optimistic than we might have expected with the percentage of those surveyed reporting an increase in pay remaining a steady 55%, However, this should be taken in the context of a year with relatively high inflation, when many people effectively felt a pay cut if they didn't get a pay rise. Thankfully only 6% of people saw their salary decrease, albeit up from 5% the previous year. *Inflation CPI was in the region of 2.4% for 2024.



If **your** salary increased what was the percentage increase in salary?



The bumper pay rises of 2022 look to be largely over. This year only 2% of respondents received a pay increase of 31% or more, compared with 9% back then. This tallies with a significant increase in comparatively modest pay rises of up to 5%, which nearly half of our respondents received. Salary increases it should be noted may also occur when changing roles or through promotion combining additional responsibility.

If **your** salary decreased what was the percentage decrease in salary?

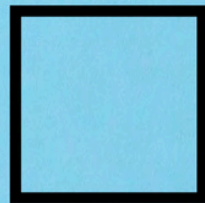
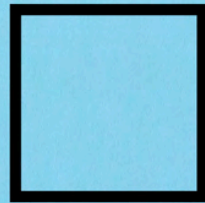
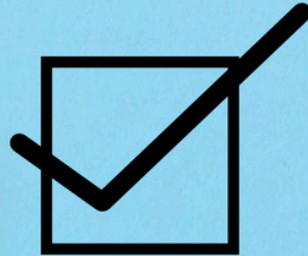


*5% of respondents reported a decrease

Summary

Most peoples' salaries remained static and if they did increase, were in the 1-5% range either below or keeping pace with inflation.





Job Satisfaction & Happiness

In this section we look beyond salary expectations to examine other factors that indicate job satisfaction and happiness including length of tenure, employer treatment and working hours.

Do **you** regularly work longer hours than you are paid for?



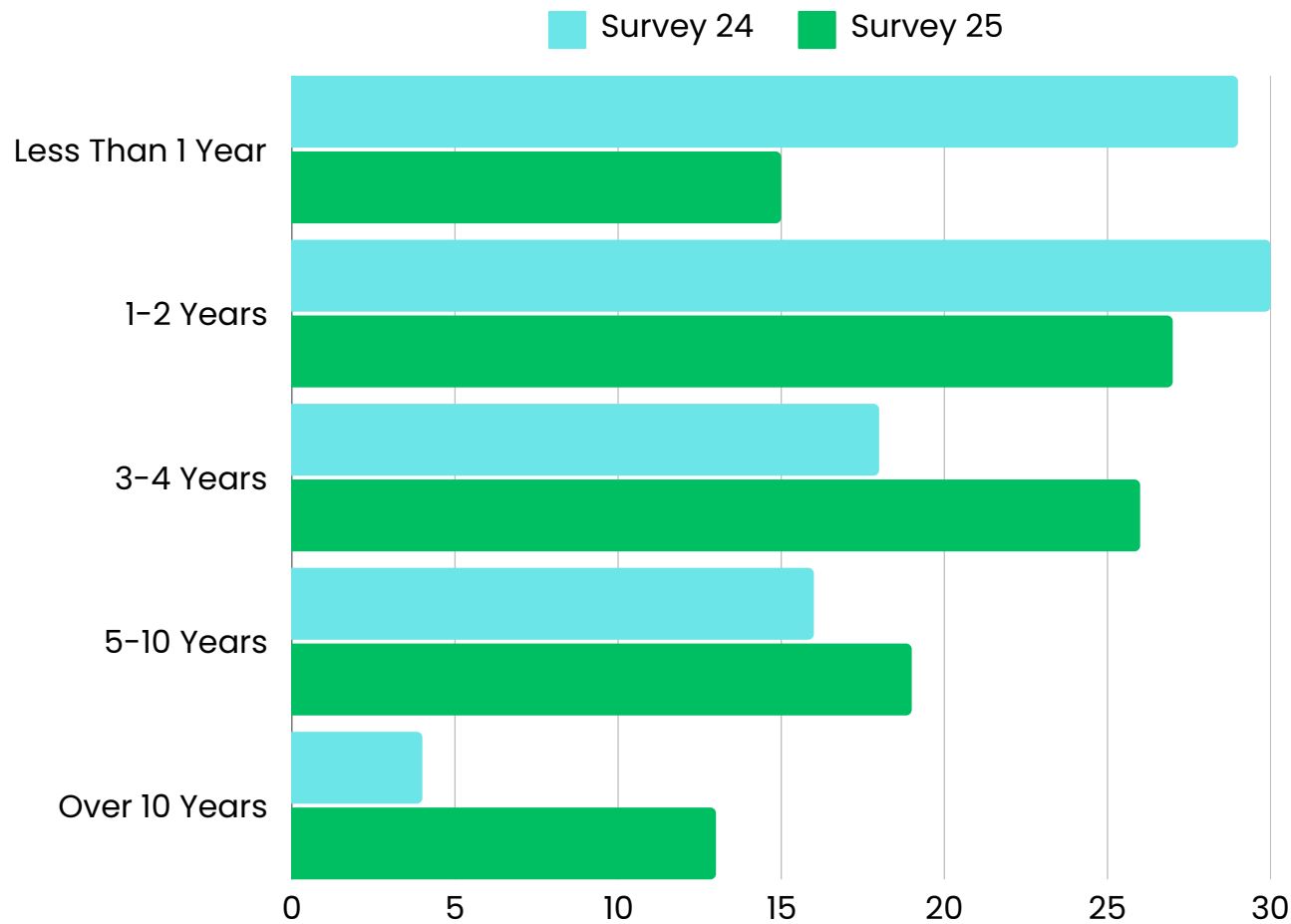
50% of respondents said they worked longer hours than they were paid for compared to 53% in last year's survey.

Comments

The last three years of the survey has seen a slightly improving picture in work-life balance.

In 2022, when asked if they worked more hours than they were paid for, 56% of respondents said yes, this dropped to 53% last year and we have an even split this year with 50% reporting that they worked more hours than they were paid for.

How long have you been at your current company?



Comments

This year saw a marked increase in the number of people remaining at their current organisation for three years or more, up from 41% to 58%. This could be due to a number of factors:

Unprecedented volumes of resignations and job moves in 2020 and 2021

A more risk averse approach to moving jobs following a previous period of volatility

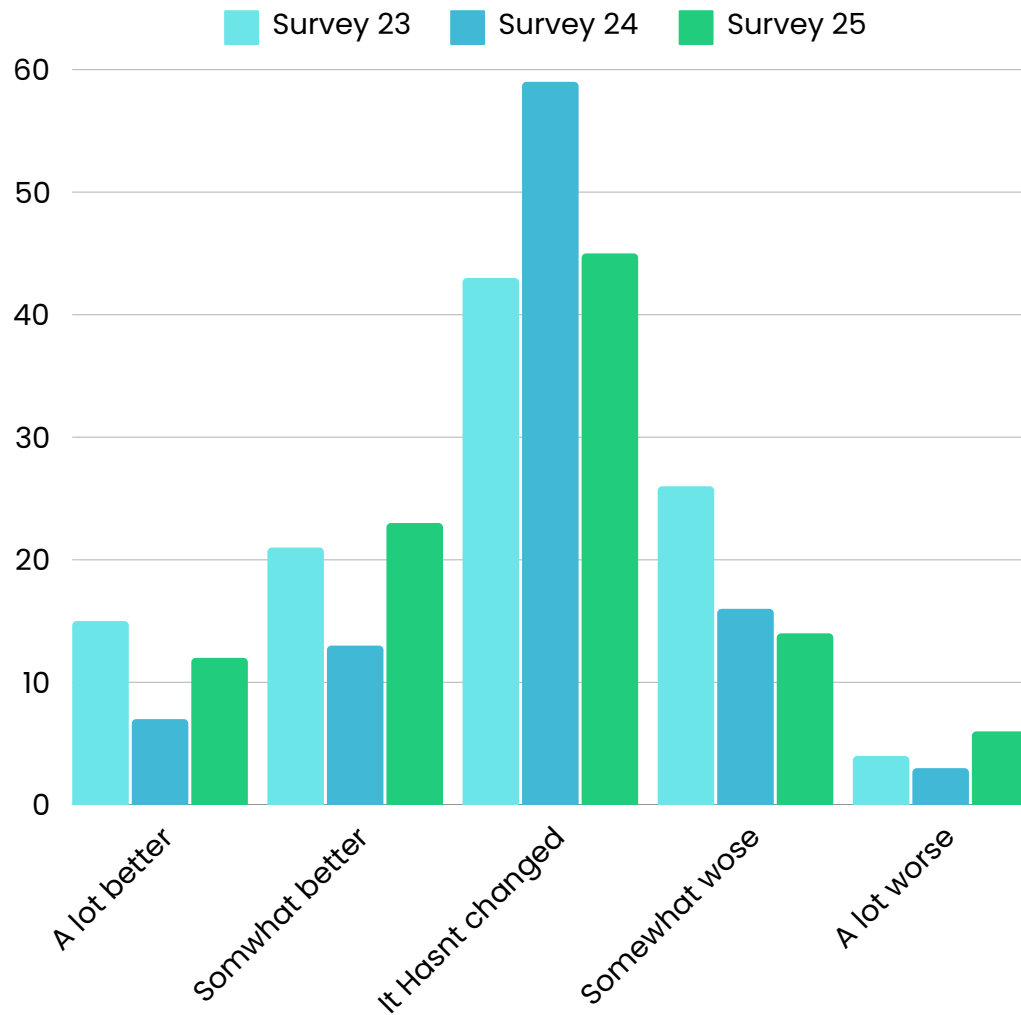
A decline in vacancies resulting in a smaller number of attractive job opportunities

Short Tenure (Less than one year):
Dropped Significantly from 29% to 15%
Indicates a reduction in new hires

Medium Tenure (1-2 years):
Slight decrease from 30% to 27%

Longer Tenure (5+ Years)
Grew significantly from 20% to 32%
signalling improved long term retention

Has the treatment from your Employer changed over the last 12 months?



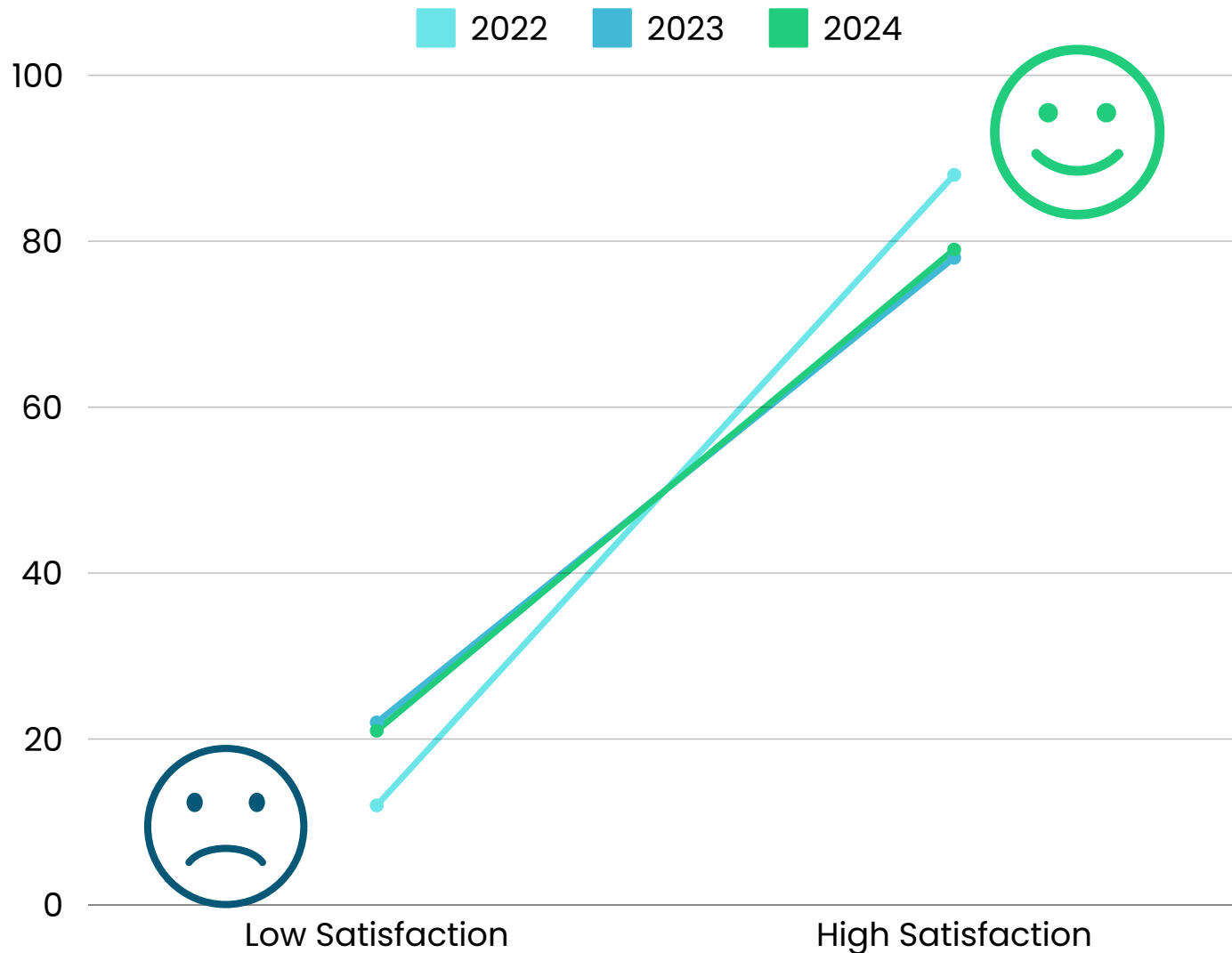
35% Improved a lot or somewhat

Comments

This year's survey saw a significant improvement in the treatment of L&D professionals by their employers, with 35% stating that it had improved a lot or somewhat in the last year, compared with just 20% in our previous survey.

However, this was offset by a negligible change (just a 1% decrease) in the number of employees who felt it had got a lot or somewhat worse. The remaining 45% felt that the treatment they received had not changed.

How happy are you in your current role?



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Comments

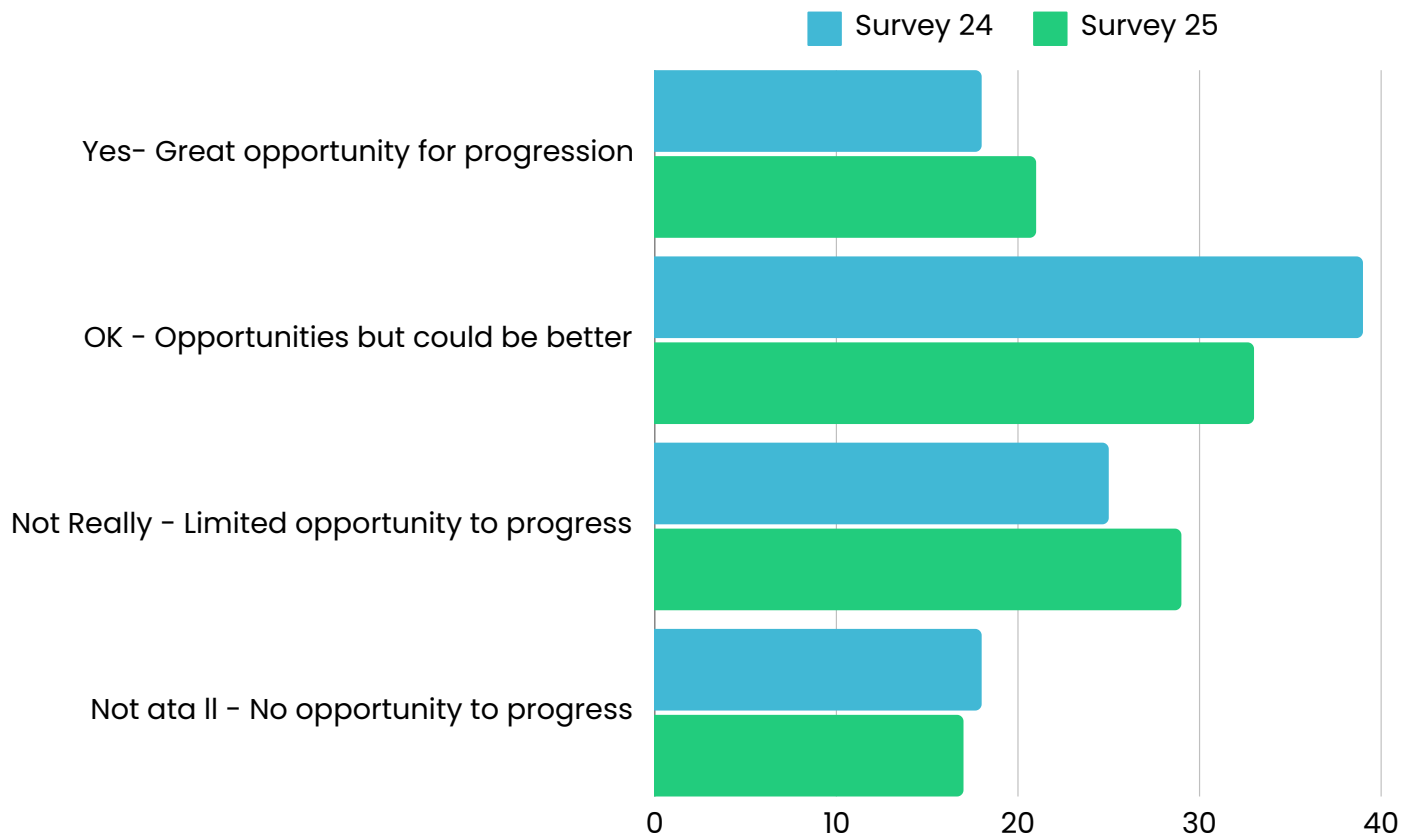
We saw a slight upturn in job satisfaction this year, which given the tough economic situation, is a pleasant surprise.

There was a sharper downturn in job satisfaction from 2022-23 which coincided with the end of a boom period in L&D and also working through Covid restrictions.

The rise in job satisfaction this year is very welcome and along with the improving trend over the last few years in work-life balance.

Overall the L&D industry seems to have high levels of satisfaction at 79%. [The CIPD Good Work Index](#) is an annual benchmark of good work or job quality in the UK, which puts the UK average at 70% so the L&D sector is performing above average.

Are you satisfied with career progression?



Comments

Satisfaction levels regarding opportunities for career progression have always been a key factor.

Historically in our survey, career progression has always been viewed as one of the main factors in determining a job move, along with salary and a more interesting role (See question 31).

This year saw a slight drop in overall satisfaction scores on this subject, with 54% stating that career progression opportunities at their current employer were either 'great' or 'OK but could be better' compared with 57% last year. However, this was offset somewhat by a minor increase in those who thought their career opportunities were 'great' - rising from 18% last year to 21% this year.

Summary



Improved work life balance



Increased long term retention



Improved satisfaction and employer treatment.

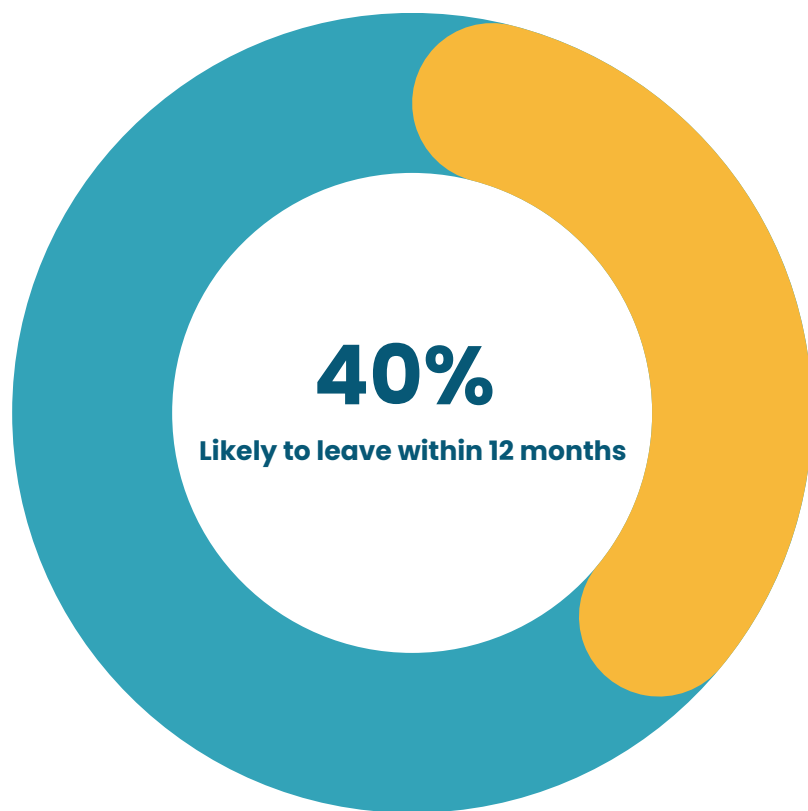


On the Move?

In this section we asked respondents if they were likely to change jobs in the next 12 months and if so, what would be their primary reason for changing jobs.



Are you **likely** to change jobs in the next 12 months?

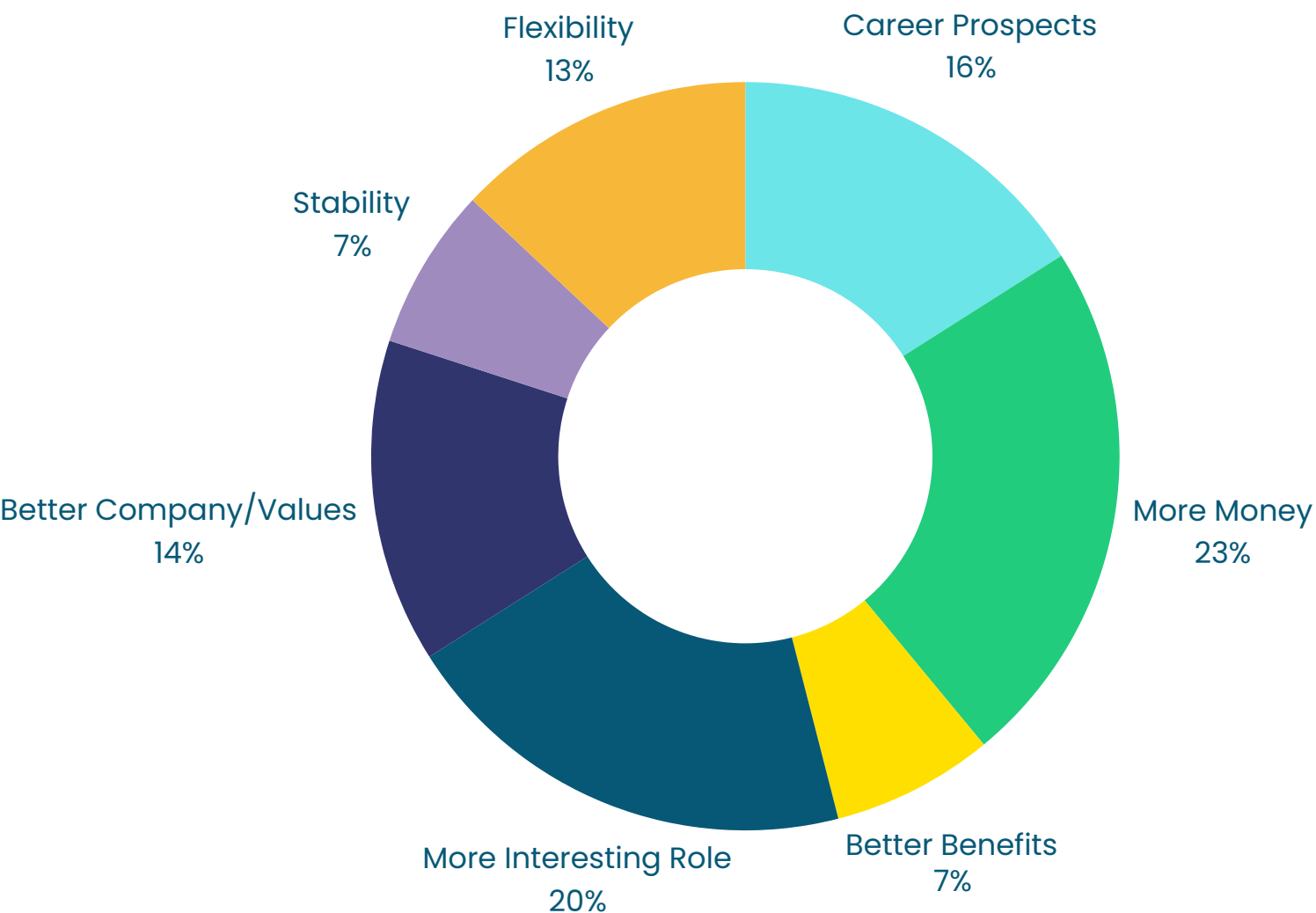


Comments

This is a slight slowdown in change from previous years but generally this 60/40 split is quite consistent.

Whilst the majority are intending to stay where they are there is a note of caution for employers; it's a slim majority, with 40% of your workforce likely to leave in the next 12 months. This highlights the need for employers to focus on retention strategies alongside hiring initiatives.

What would be **your** primary reason for changing jobs?



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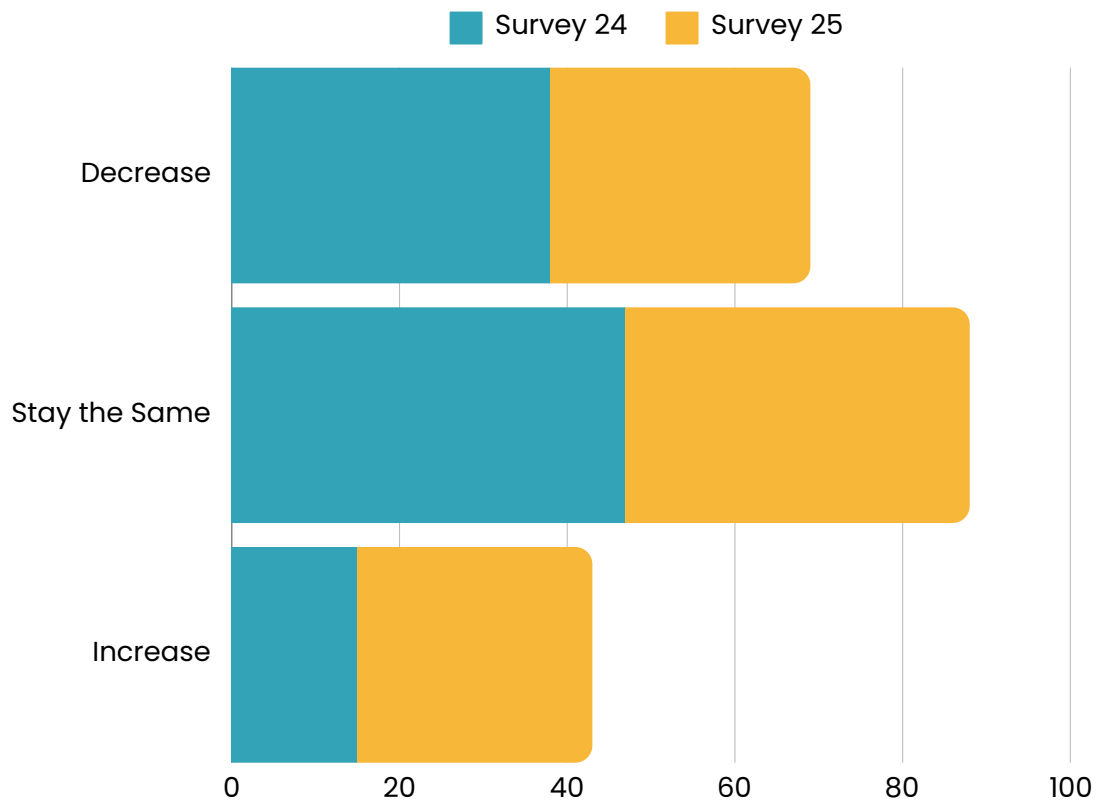
Comments

The results to this question are interesting because although 'more money' is often cited as the reason for moving jobs, in reality the reasons are more nuanced and due to multiple factors.

In this question when asked about the most important reason for changing jobs the results were more evenly split than might be expected. Money still came out top at 23% but was closely followed by seeking an interesting role (20%) and better career prospects (16%).

For employers this data shows that although 'money talks', it isn't enough in isolation, and to retain the best people employers also need to offer exciting, challenging roles with good career progression as well as a supportive culture.

Over the next 12 months do you think that L&D budgets in general will decrease, stay the same, increase?



Comments

We see a note of cautious optimism emerging for the year ahead, as 28% of respondents feel that L&D budgets will increase compared to only 15% of respondents last year.

The majority (41%) feel that budgets will remain the same and 31% feel that they will decline. So, whilst it's not overwhelmingly positive, most respondents (69%) believe that budgets will hold or improve over the next 12 months.

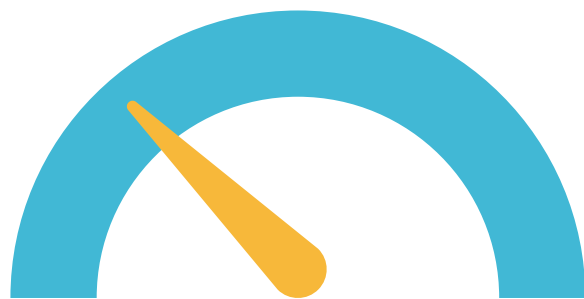
What **impact do** you think Generative AI will have on your job?



It will help me in my job, and I don't see AI as a potential Threat



It wont help me in my job, I see AI as a potential Threat



It will help me in my job but I see AI as a potential Threat



It wont help me in my job, but I do not see AI as potential Threat

Comments

The survey results reveal an increasing optimism among L&D professionals about the role of generative AI. In 2024, 62% of respondents believe AI will help them in their jobs without posing a threat, up from 59% surveyed in 2023. This trend perhaps highlights growing confidence in AI's potential to enhance creativity, streamline processes, and improve learning outcomes.

Despite this optimism, a consistent 27% to 28% of respondents view AI as both a helpful tool and a potential threat. This cautious stance reflects ongoing concerns about challenges such as job displacement, ethical issues, and the need for effective governance of AI's use in the workplace.

Resistance to AI is notably declining, with only 2% of respondents in 2024 seeing it as both unhelpful and a threat, down from 5% in 2023. This suggests that as L&D professionals gain more familiarity with generative AI, scepticism and fear are giving way to curiosity and openness.

A small but steady proportion of respondents (9% in 2024, up from 8% in 2023) feel AI neither helps nor threatens their roles, indicating that its impact is still perceived as limited in certain contexts, or perhaps remains to be fully explored.

Overall, the findings underscore a shift toward broader acceptance of AI in L&D, tempered by a recognition of its challenges and complexities.

Conclusions

The 2025 L&D Work and Salary Report highlights a sector navigating significant transformation amidst economic uncertainty, rapid technological advancements, and shifting work patterns. Despite challenges such as budget constraints, increased redundancy risks, and concerns over career progression, there are clear opportunities for both individuals and organisations to thrive.



L&D Budgets are under increasing pressure

Our data reveals that 72% of L&D professionals expect budgets to decrease or remain stagnant in the coming year. While this is a significant figure, it marks an improvement from 2024, where 85% anticipated no budget growth or reductions. Optimism is growing, with 28% now predicting budget increases compared to just 15% in the previous survey. [Fosway Group's](#) recent findings echo this cautious shift, noting a slight uptick in investment towards upskilling and reskilling initiatives. While economic challenges persist, the increase in budget optimism and AI adoption signifies a turning point for L&D as it transitions into a technology-driven future.

L&D Qualifications: Leading by example

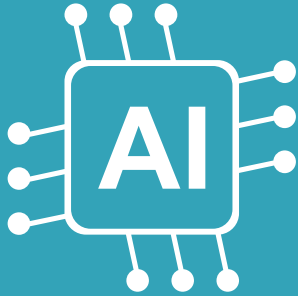
In a time of change, job losses, and macroeconomic challenges, the focus on personal development within L&D has never been more relevant. As recruiters, we are frequently asked about the importance of qualifications in this field, and this year's survey provides some compelling insights.

The percentage of respondents holding specific L&D qualifications has risen from 52% to 70%, with 87% stating that these credentials have helped or somewhat helped their career—a slight but meaningful increase from last year. This trend aligns with broader industry data, such as a recent ICF study reporting a 54% global increase in qualified coach practitioners.

The [2024 LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report](#) also highlights a growing focus on career development, with helping employees advance now ranking as the third-highest priority for L&D teams—up from ninth place the previous year. These findings suggest that L&D professionals are prioritising their own growth and leading by example, reflecting a commitment to personal development even amidst challenging times



Is Generative AI reshaping Decision Making?



The impact of Generative AI in L&D is a nuanced topic. Research by [Donald Taylor and Egle Vinauskaitė](#) shows that while adoption is growing—rising from 5% in 2023 to 9% in 2024—extensive use remains limited. Interestingly, data analysis to support decision-making has emerged as the third most-anticipated benefit of AI, a notable addition to priorities from previous years. This reflects the rapid evolution of AI technology and its gradual integration into L&D strategies.

Our survey echoes this trend, with a majority of L&D professionals (62%, up from 58% last year) viewing Generative AI as a positive and helpful development, though 28% still see it as a potential threat. The perception of AI often varies by role, with those focused on creative design and content development more likely to feel its disruptive potential. Taylor and Vinauskaitė's findings reinforce this, highlighting faster content creation, improved efficiency, and reduced costs as the top two expected benefits of AI in L&D.

The recent [LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report 2024](#) adds another dimension, revealing that 4 in 5 professionals want to learn how to use AI in their roles. This suggests that, whether or not AI becomes widely adopted within L&D as a function, the onus will fall on L&D teams to equip other business areas with the skills to harness AI effectively. Investing in targeted upskilling, especially in AI-related competencies, can help future-proof L&D strategies.



Focus on Career Progression.

Nearly half of respondents feel there is limited or no opportunity for career growth in their current roles. Organisations must prioritise structured career pathways, mentorship programs, and upskilling initiatives to retain talent and foster professional development.



Work-Life Balance and Hybrid Models

While many respondents are satisfied with their working arrangements, achieving a sustainable work-life balance remains a work in progress. Hybrid work models are becoming the norm, but organisations must continue refining these arrangements to balance productivity and employee satisfaction.



Leveraging Professional Networks

With 15% of respondents securing roles through personal connections, the value of a strong professional network cannot be overstated. Building and nurturing relationships within the industry remains a vital strategy for job seekers and career development.



Upskilling and adaptability

Staying competitive in a rapidly evolving market demands that L&D professionals keep their skills relevant. Embracing continuous learning and obtaining up-to-date qualifications are crucial for career advancement



Opportunity for Growth

As optimism around L&D budgets grows and AI integration becomes more widespread, there are significant opportunities to innovate and enhance learning strategies. Organisations that invest in emerging technologies and align with market trends will be well-positioned for success.

In summary, while the L&D sector faces its share of hurdles, it remains resilient and poised for growth. By focusing on upskilling, networking, and creating meaningful career opportunities, professionals and organisations can navigate these challenges effectively and shape the future of learning and development.



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