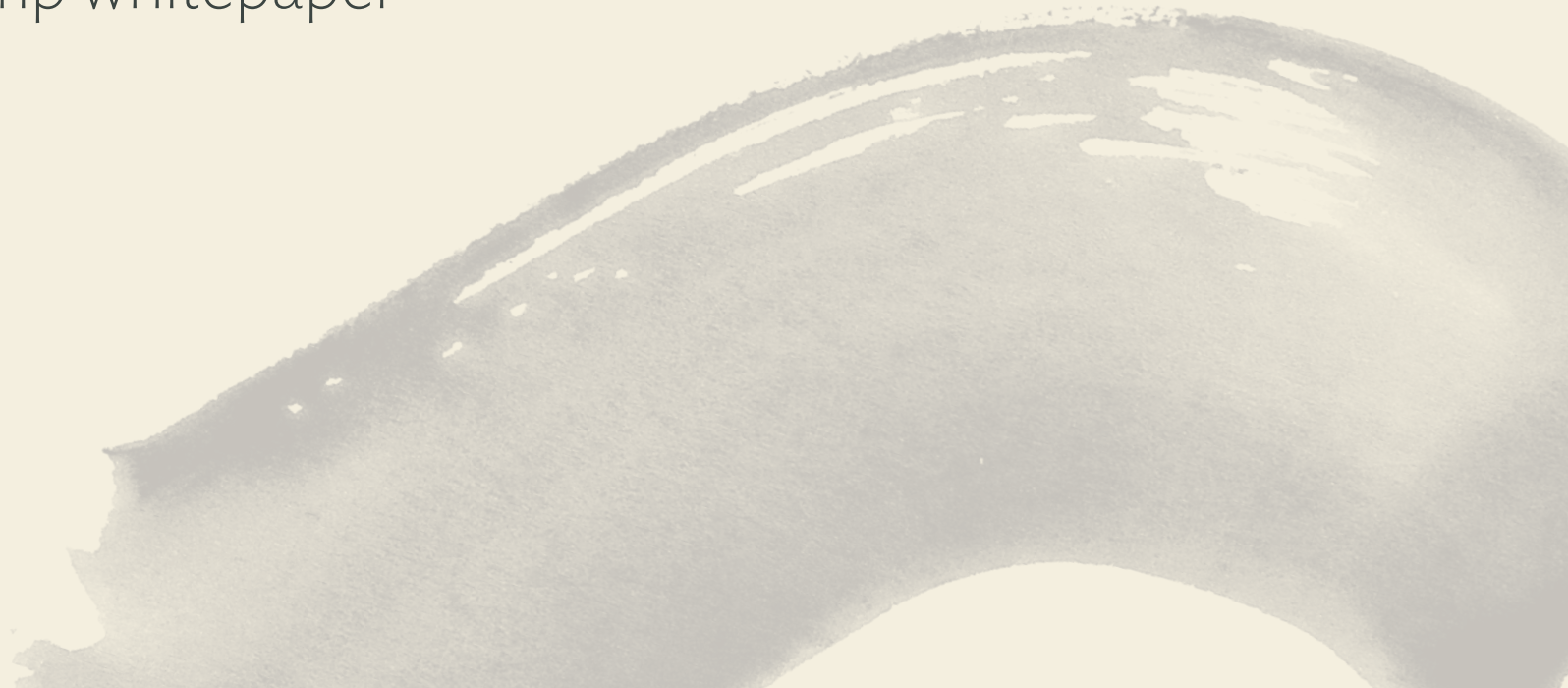




# How learning and development opportunities impact retention

A Culture Amp whitepaper



# Introduction

In this whitepaper we explore the survey questions that we use to understand how important learning and development is to people and some examples of companies who perform well in learning and development.

Learning and development consistently presents as strongly linked to engagement in our data. Using Culture Amp people can understand how their organization is tracking, take action to improve, and measure results. It's a process we call 'learn, act, repeat'.

We're still (and always will be) refining our approach to learning and development. Ensuring people have the resources and opportunities they need to succeed is a challenge and a priority. I hope this whitepaper proves useful to you. If we can ever be of service in gathering feedback and analytics on what motivates your employees, please don't hesitate to reach out.

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CEO / Culture Amp

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# The questions that matter

## What makes employees stay, and what makes them leave?

Understanding the levers behind retention of employees can be challenging. Because Culture Amp captures both engagement surveys and onboard and exit surveys, we can investigate the engagement scores of people who left jobs in New Tech companies. We can analyze the relationship between how they answered certain questions and their likelihood of leaving.

We've taken a look at what people who left a company were saying in surveys before they left.

# 5 learning and development essentials

Looking into why people leave, we can see that there are a few areas where dissatisfaction with access to learning and development is most likely to result in an employee leaving.

We can take a look at the top five learning and development areas that, if not satisfactory, result in employees leaving:

1. Career opportunities
2. Access to learning and development
3. Role expectations
4. Contribution to development
5. Reward and recognition

## 1. Career opportunities

People who left were **38%** more likely to feel there was not a career opportunity for them at the company.

Whilst not every company can provide career opportunities, there may be potential for people to swap jobs or be mentored. Other organizations may be so fast-growing they overlook hiring from within. In any case, whether you can only offer moves sideways, or there is potential for development and promotion, it's important to communicate to your employees what's available, and discuss their aspirations. Once an employee's decided to leave, it's often too late to offer them that promotion or development opportunity you had in mind.

## 2. Access to learning and development

People who stayed were **24%** more likely to say they had access to the learning and development they needed.

This question is intentionally framed to put the onus on the employee to take advantage of learning and development opportunities offered to them. A response that they don't have access to what they need could indicate that the opportunities don't exist, that their availability hasn't been communicate to the employee, or the employee's expectations of what they need to do their job well doesn't match what is offered.

Often a program which makes budget available to employees of a certain tenure to complete training can address some of the need for learning. As for other learning and development, working with employees to plan their career path and providing opportunities is essential to keep talented employees.

### 3. Role expectations

Those who were happy with their current role relative to how it was described to them are **46%** more likely to stay.

This question presents one of the largest gaps between employees who stayed and those who left. One way to frame this conversation is to ask employees why they originally joined the organization, and why they're leaving. Often we'll find it's the same reason. For example, a person who joined a company thinking there would be good career opportunities might subsequently leave if they think there are no career opportunities for them.

Often, in our rush to secure a talented candidate, we paint a picture of the role and opportunities which isn't quite realistic. Walking the line between making a job appealing and setting unrealistic expectations is challenging, but an essential balance in retaining employees long-term.

### 4. Contribution to development

People whose job contributes to their development are **21%** more likely to stay.

Many of our survey questions have long histories and evolve as workplaces and workforces change. This question was originally asked by consultants to ascertain whether employees felt they had made a contribution to their craft or profession. As more and more people used surveys whose employees didn't have a clear profession, the question changed to measure whether people felt their company enabled them to contribute to their own development.

One way to look at this question is to consider it in terms of: "My time at this company will give me better career prospects afterwards." For some people that is tied up with whether they are seen to make a difference at the company, for others it's more individual. Either perspective is ok.

## 5. Reward and recognition

Those who perceive that the right people are rewarded and recognized at their company are **39% more likely to stay.**

Research into reactions to fair or unfair treatment reveal that people are sensitive to fairness and respond intuitively when they feel something is unfair. Matthew Leiberan and colleagues' research revealed that people will forgo reward themselves if it means someone else will be unfairly rewarded on an unacceptable level. This goes some way to explaining why someone would leave their job in response to reward and recognition being distributed in a way they disagree with.



# Demographic insights

Even if an overall score for learning and development is good, we can find that there are groups of people who have a different experience - so it's important to cut data by demographics to ensure we're not missing anything.

We took a look at the scores of our our learning and development questions cut by age, tenure and gender.

# Demographics

## Age

People under 24 are significantly more optimistic about their career opportunities than any other age group. This reflects an overall trend in younger people being more optimistic across most questions in the learning and development set.

Looking specifically at the question about access to learning and development, people under 24 are the most positive. We can consider here whether we are more inclined to mentor younger people, and if we provide enough learning and development opportunities for people at certain skill levels.

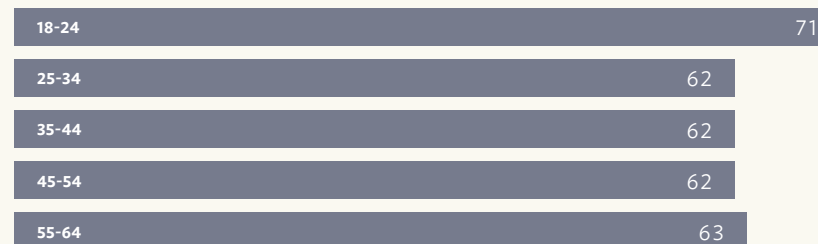
## Are we offering more to younger people?

I believe there are good career opportunities for me.



New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well.



New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

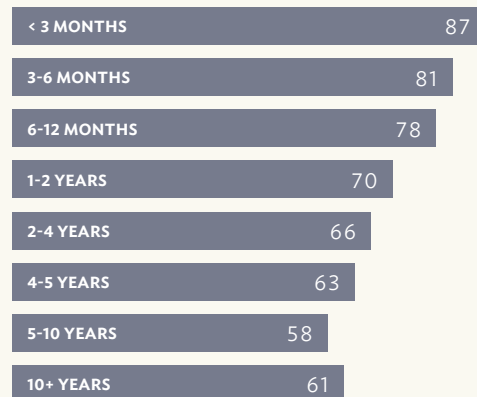
# Demographics

## Tenure

We see consistent patterns in how a person perceives their workplace depending on how long they have been with a company. A person usually feels the most engaged in their first three months at a company, and engagement declines each year up until about six years tenure when it often increases again.

As you'll see – this pattern is reflected for some, but not all, learning and development questions. The scores for the belief that good career opportunities were available did not significantly improve for people once they had been with their company 6 – 10 years. As part of our focus on retention, it's important to provide opportunities for people to develop – even if they aren't promoted, there may be opportunities to move 'sideways' and become more engaged.

This is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development.



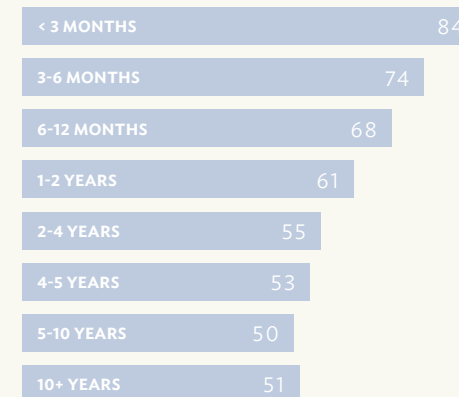
New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well.



New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

I believe there are good career opportunities for me here.



New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

I am happy with my current role relative to what was described to me.



New Tech 2016 | Age Band Scores

# Demographics

## Gender

Women are 8% less likely than men to perceive that there are good career opportunities available to them.

In line with generally accepted bias towards women, we found that women are 8% less likely than men to perceive that there are good career opportunities available to them. There is also a pronounced gap on the question of whether the right people are rewarded and recognized – women are 16% less likely than men to believe this is the case. On questions where bias is less likely to occur – like job ads, the scores reflect this, as we can see with the score of 70 for women and 72 for men regarding whether they are happy with their role relative to what was described to them.

Generally, the right people are rewarded and recognized.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

This is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

I believe there are good career opportunities for me.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

I am happy with my current role relative to what was described to me.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

I am given opportunities to develop skills relevant to my interests.



New Tech 2016 | Gender Scores

# 10 companies with great learning and development programs

Workplace learning and development programs empower people to gain new skills and grow professionally. Employees are more likely to be engaged at work when companies offer learning and development opportunities. Since every company has its own values and culture, there are many ways to make learning and development programs successful. To gather inspiration for a new program, here are ten examples of companies that have successfully provided learning and development for their people.

# 10 companies with great learning and development programs

## 1. Yelp

Everyone at Yelp has stretch roles. Giving people responsibilities just beyond their current capabilities creates an engaged workforce and a culture of mentoring. People are promoted from within, incentivising both personal development and nurturing others.

## 2. Pixar

Pixar University offers required training as well as optional classes for different disciplines. They support their directors by empowering them to make decisions and take care not to undermine their authority. Directors take development into their own hands by asking for help from a “creative brains trust” of filmmakers, a pillar of their peer-to-peer feedback.

## 3. Airbnb

Fireside Chats are one way that Airbnb shows its dedication to learning. These internal events bring in industry leaders who share their insights on a certain topic. Airbnb says, “From CEOs to musicians, these leaders always have something invaluable to teach us.”

## 4. Earls

The Visions + Goals program helps people at Earls create life visions and communicate goals that help them be their best self. It also involves occasional company retreats. Guest experience training takes place through a combination of face-to-face training and eLearning.

## 5. Etsy

People are empowered to learn from others at different levels within the company. At “Etsy School” employees both teach and learn in classes on a wide range of topics like tap dancing or how to navigate a difficult conversation. The Etsy learning and development team helps people find a focus for their career development.

## 6. OverDrive

Employees are provided with a Professional Growth Planner at OverDrive. This guide showcases opportunities available for learning and development, and helps people decide what is best for them. Employees and managers are encouraged to work together and track progress throughout the year.

# 10 companies with great learning and development programs

## 7. 1800 GOT JUNK

1800 GOT JUNK created the A-Player Development Program for professional development. They offer a series of workshops taught by employees that cover a variety of topics like franchise development and strategic planning.

## 8. Culture Amp

Each employee has access to a professional coach through the Coaching for Everyone program. Employees are provided with sessions at 6, 12 and 24 months and they can choose to focus on personal or professional goals. Coaches help assess where a person is and where they want to be, then guide each person through a strategy to reach their goals.

## 9. Digital Ocean

Individual development planning and ensuring that everyone has a career they can grow into is important at Digital Ocean. People map out what they want to accomplish each year, looking at how their professional objectives tie into business strategy along with their personal goals.

## 10. Optoro

People at Optoro are given a budget to spend as they choose on learning and development opportunities. After they participate in their chosen programs, they present what they learned to their team.

# Tools

At Culture Amp we create tools to allow people to give and receive honest feedback about their work and workplace. Our platform is designed by organizational psychologists and data scientists so that it is easy to use and delivers robust, powerful insights.

## Employee Engagement

Culture Amp makes it easy for you to design and launch surveys that are informed by the latest research in psychology and data science. The result is reliable detailed data, and fast succinct insights about engagement at your company, ready for you to action. As well as overall engagement surveys, the tool includes custom surveys for capturing engagement at lifecycle stages including candidate, onboarding and exit.

## Employee Effectiveness

360 reviews have been reinvented by Culture Amp organizational psychologists and data scientists to provide insights to shape your learning and development decisions. Easy to use for people giving feedback and with succinct, actionable reports for coaches and people receiving feedback, Effectiveness will help you supercharge your teams.

We're here to help. Whether you're just starting out measuring engagement and effectiveness at your workplace, or you're looking to evolve how you approach workplace culture, we'd love to chat.

Visit [cultureamp.com](https://cultureamp.com) to find out more.





# Let's chat

[www.cultureamp.com](http://www.cultureamp.com)

