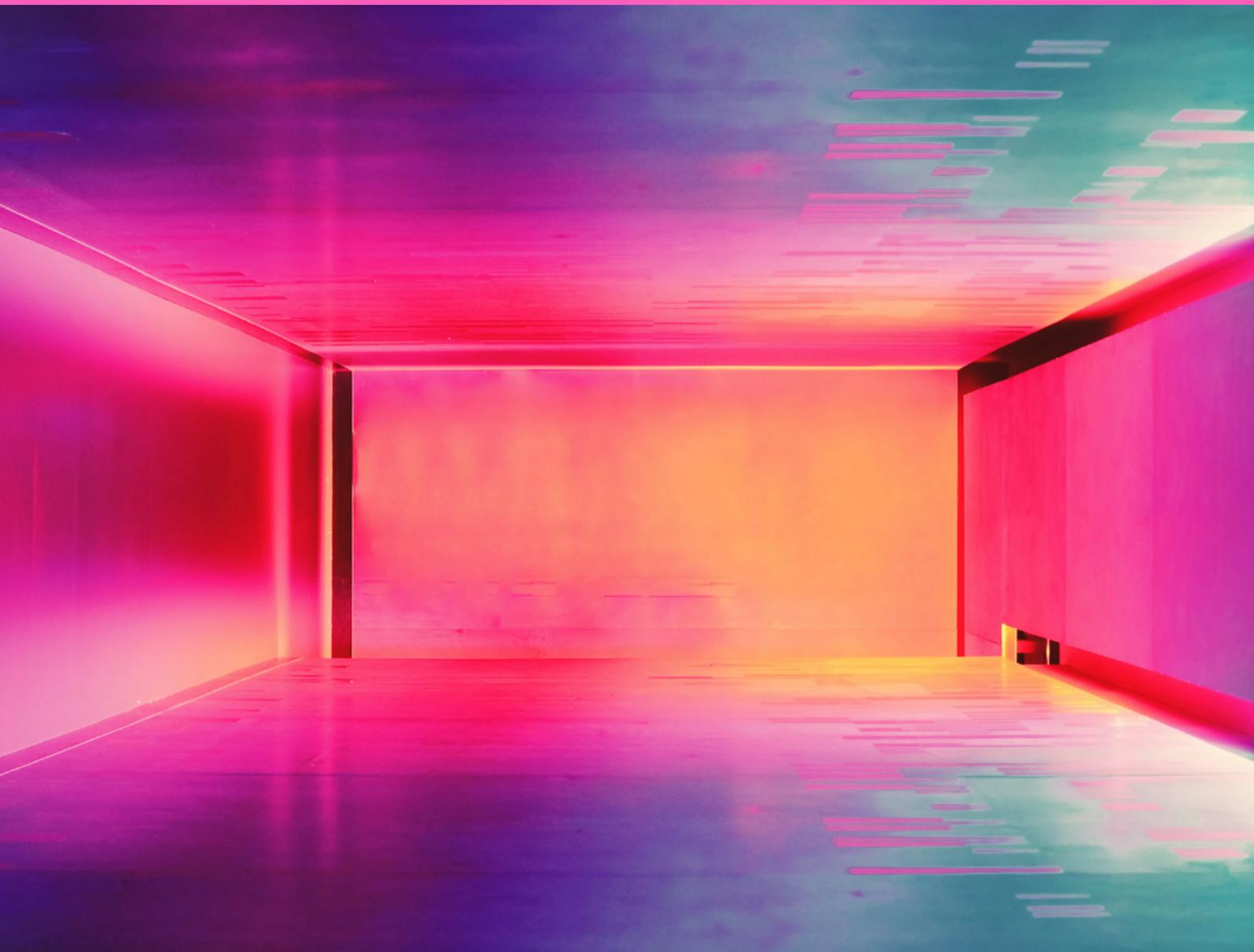




Reskilling Employees is a Top Priority – But Do We Really Know What We’re Doing?



Executive summary

A recent survey of over 3,000 L&D professionals identified reskilling and upskilling employees as the number one L&D priority for 2021. Does that concern you? It should.

 **The fact is, even though a lot of people think of reskilling as a top priority, they have no idea how to actually do it. That's because most people's ideas of reskilling sounds a lot like recycling.**

The term 'reskill' implies that you look at people like robots you can update simply by pushing the right buttons. Our people have the wrong skills, so let's reboot and recycle them into something better. This is a dehumanizing idea. Don't believe us? Consider this: the term 'reskilling' is seldom used to talk about individuals; rather, it's used to refer to workforces of thousands.

Reskilling is a popular concept in the learning and development world. But it's an old-fashioned concept, and it's disconnected from the reality of how people actually learn. Sure, it's the right goal – a skilled workforce ready and able to take on the challenges of a new era – but it's not the right way of getting there. As a learning technique, it's too top-down, and too generic.

In this ebook, we'll explore what it takes to prepare a global workforce to be ready for tomorrow's challenges. This is far beyond just investing in slick software or a 'Netflix for Learning' interface. It's a serious undertaking that requires a dedicated budget, a lot of focus, and at least three to five years' worth of work. In contrast, reskilling is just another 'quick fix' idea with no basis in reality.

 **The only way to move forward? Build a new corporate culture that prioritizes Collaborative Learning.**



Estimated reading time for this ebook: **10 minutes.**

About

360Learning

👉 **360Learning** empowers Learning and Development teams to drive culture and growth through Collaborative Learning. Our Learning Platform combines collaborative tools with the power of a Learning Management System, enabling high-growth companies to unlock learning based on collective expertise instead of top-down knowledge. 360Learning is the easiest way to onboard new employees, train customer-facing teams, and develop professional skills - all from one place.

360Learning powers the future of work at 1,200 organizations, including Toyota, Criteo, and Airbus. Founded in 2012, 360Learning has raised \$41 million with 180 team members across New York, Paris, and London.

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Want to see how Collaborative Learning
can help your organization?

Request a demo with 360Learning today.

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Chapter 1

The dream of easy reskilling

🔑 Right now, companies across the world are undergoing significant technological shifts.

Take the insurance industry, for example. Insurance companies were built on the **COBOL (Common Business Oriented Language) programming language**, and have continued to use it for the last thirty years. Now that they're shifting to a greater reliance on big data, their COBOL infrastructure needs to be replaced with Python.

So, what does this mean for all those COBOL experts? Now, insurance companies might find themselves with thousands of programmes who all need to upgrade their outdated technology skills with something new.

For a lot of companies, the solution the C-suite comes up with is reskilling. It all sounds so easy – like installing an updated OS on your iPhone, right? Just install new knowledge in your workforce! Just buy the right software – [Netflix for Learning](#), sounds great! After all, people go crazy for Netflix. We'll just replace Game of Thrones with Intro to Python, and boom! Reskilled!

The only problem?
That's not how people really learn. 



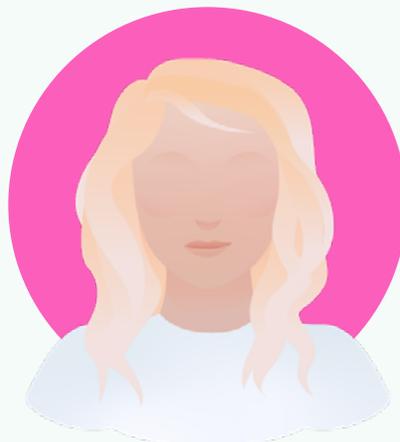
Mass reskilling sounds perfect in the abstract: you can imagine it might work with a group of 10,000 willing participants

Zoom in on reality – why reskilling doesn't actually work

Using the term 'reskilling' implies thinking of people as skill profiles we can update with the click of a button. Mass reskilling sounds perfect in the abstract: you can imagine it might work with a group of 10,000 willing participants.

But what happens if we zoom in to the individual level? 

Let's think of one of your real-life co-workers. A specific person.
Meet Jane. 



Like all of us, Jane is probably really good at some things and less skilled at others. Maybe if Jane worked on those areas, she would be able to advance through the ranks and achieve great things.

This is an everyday situation we can all relate to. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. The problem is, your co-worker, Jane, probably doesn't know exactly what those weaknesses are yet – and neither does a faceless computer program.

Can a piece of learning technology transform Jane into a perfect person? A person without her current blind spots and weaknesses? A person with all the skills you believe she needs?

Probably not. It's going to take more than that to get Jane to work on her blind spots, conquer her knowledge gaps, and advance through the ranks. And that's just one person. If reskilling won't work for only one person, how can we expect it to scale to 10,000 people?

Most companies are still struggling to map the skill sets of their workers and find better ways to do a [training needs analysis](#). **So, how can anyone expect 'reskilling software' to actually upskill your workers when they all have different skill sets and degrees of need?**

As eLearning guru [Ulrik Juul Christensen](#) says, "Inevitably, reskilling is a 'one-size-fits-none' approach that may leave some people behind, while others are forced to sit through instruction on what they already know."

The problem here isn't just that the process of reskilling can't be tailored to suit the needs, strengths, and capabilities of individuals; it's also a wider problem of company culture. 🌟

Chapter 2

The real problem isn't skills, but culture

You can't solve your reskilling problem with traditional 'reskilling software' because your problem isn't related to employee skills at all.



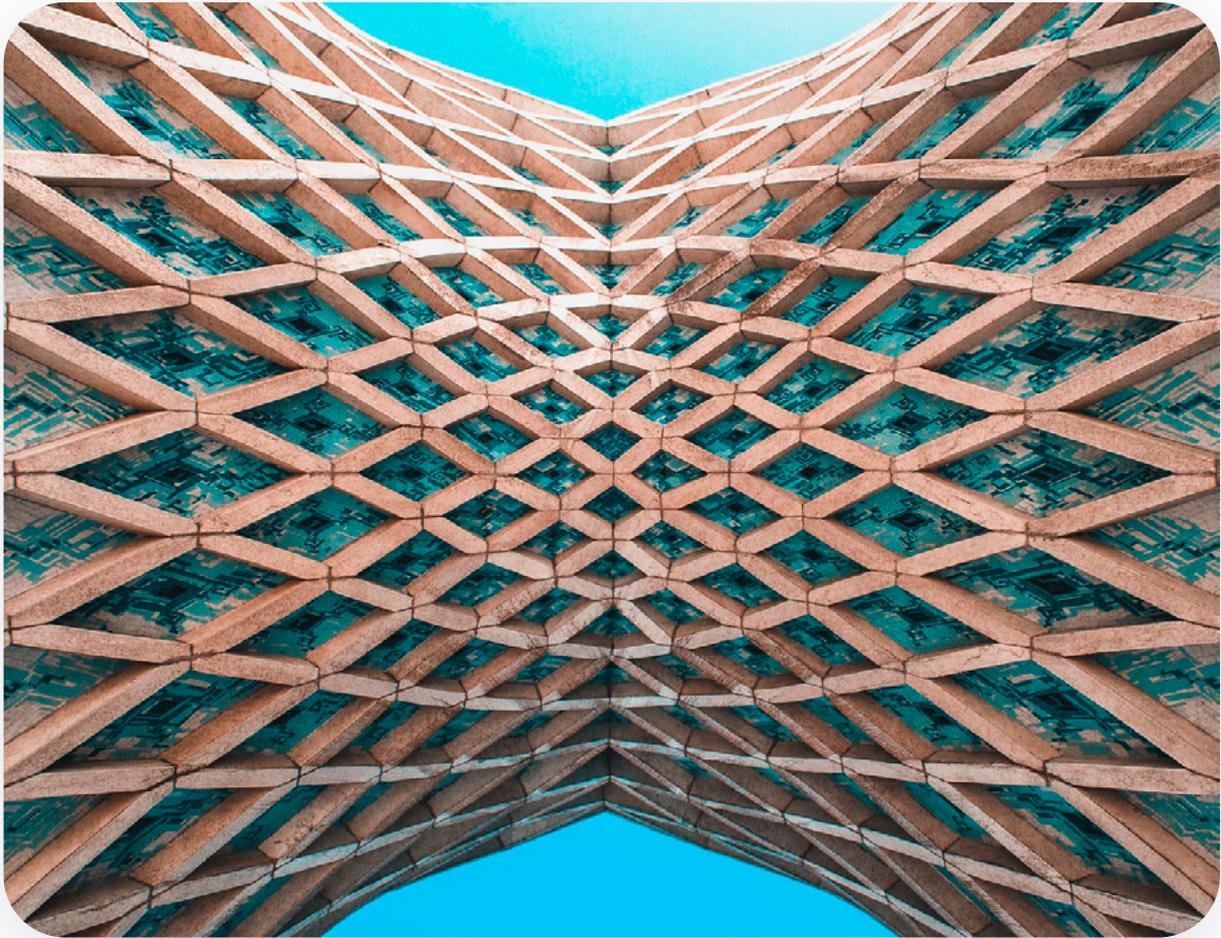
The real problem is that we need to adapt company culture to suit the demands and challenges of a new era.

And we don't just mean your learning culture. We're talking about the entire corporate culture that exists within most companies today.

Most of us work within a **culture that is top-down**, lacking in transparency and flexibility, and which doesn't have a clear motivating mission. Instead of looking for ways to support employees to apply their skills and do their best work, leaders simply ask people to execute tasks as quickly as possible. Management focuses only on results, not on people exercising their initiative.

This culture results in a workforce with stagnating skills and limited motivation, which in turn leads to companies missing key business pivots and market innovations. If a culture like this is tolerated for too long, companies won't just need to retrain certain workers; they'll need to reset their entire workforce.

This poor corporate culture is precisely what leads to a skill deficit, and the need for reskilling. Instead, we need to invest in a **democratic culture of collaboration and peer learning.**



Why a democratic culture of collaboration is the answer



The ways in which we enable our teams with the right corporate culture will define our employees' ability to develop new skills and capabilities in priority areas. It doesn't work the other way around: reskilling software and quick hacks won't fix a poor underlying corporate culture.

In the best case, when companies turn to reskilling, it's out of desperation. *We've already lost on the people front, and now we're hoping for a magic bullet.* In the worst case, it speaks to a more fundamental lack of understanding. *I don't understand how to help people learn, stay motivated, and work at my company over the next 10 years.*

Alternatively, if we develop a democratic culture of collaboration early on, the company enables people to learn from each other continuously. A low-authority leadership model allows people to make their own mistakes and learn from them. A culture of empowerment encourages employees to own their learning goals.

Get this right, and you'll never need to reskill anyone ever again. That's because they'll be continuously learning every day.

Need a real-life example? During the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Scandinavian Airlines retrained its cabin staff to act as nurse assistants. This nimble step saved the company from bankruptcy, thanks to the [environment of Collaborative Learning](#) that already existed in the company culture.

Strategic pivots like this are the opposite of reskilling; they're adaptation. 🙌



Conclusion

Banish reskilling and invest in people instead

The idea of reskilling is a relic of the old corporate world. It's a popular idea with the same executives who might pay an HR consulting team millions of dollars to create a skills matrix that becomes obsolete after just a year or two. Or in the case of a tumultuous year like 2020, every few months.

👉 **Instead, you need to invest in people.**

Employees who are continually learning will never need reskilling. They're motivated to obtain marketable skills and achievements that help them advance their careers. People want a mission, to make a positive impact, and to jump in with all their energy and individual strengths. By giving them the resources and tools they need to learn every day, you do away with the need for a skills matrix at all.

Once you implement a [culture of continuous learning](#), your reskilling problems will fade away. To be clear, we're not saying this is easy; shifting your learning and corporate culture to fit into this new area is much harder than turning to the reskilling gods and hoping for a magic spell. But in the end, it'll drive the kinds of results you can be proud of.

You might have a lot of employees, but they're still individuals. Companies that want to reskill for the post-COVID world need to rethink their learning culture instead. A great place to start? Implement a culture of [Collaborative Learning](#), and give your teams the support they need to share their expertise and grow together.

Over 1,200 companies love us already! ❤️

360Learning is already helping over 1,200 clients to transform their organizational culture through Collaborative Learning.



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360Learning is much more than a Learning Platform. Every single company needs a platform like this.

Josh Bersin

But don't just take our word for it: take a look at organizational learning guru Josh Bersin's exploration of [why Collaborative Learning makes such a big difference](#) – and how companies of all shapes and sizes can put it to work.

- See how our Collaborative Learning platform can help your business keep up with the trends, opportunities, and challenges identified in Gartner's [2021 transformation report](#).
- Take a look at how we stack up against other organizational learning solutions at Gartner's [peer insights page](#).
- For a deeper look at 360Learning in practice, read about how we helped [AI consulting firm Appen save \\$240k in annual training costs](#) with our Collaborative Learning platform.

What's next?



It isn't hard to see why the idea of reskilling employees is a top priority. After all, it promises a quick fix for companies wanting to stay prepared for tomorrow's challenges and opportunities.

The only problem? It doesn't work in reality.

Instead you need to adopt a culture of Collaborative Learning and support your teams to share internal expertise and grow together. At 360Learning, we want everyone to join the Collaborative Learning movement, which is why we're the Learning Platform that combines collaborative tools with the power of a Learning Management System.

To do this, we:

- Make it easy for people to declare their learning needs
- Empower enablement teams to make and ship courses quickly in response to these needs
- Free up subject-matter experts to contribute their skills and iterate content over time
- Enable L&D teams to build programs by curating courses from 3rd party platforms
- Use a continuous feedback loop to keep your learning content current and accurate
- Foster a sense of connection and belonging through making every step of the learning process as interactive as possible

Want to see how Collaborative Learning can help your organization?

Request a free demo today!



Experts Engagement



Projects Tool



Discussion Forum



Authoring Tool



Reactions



Video Pitch Assessment



Relevance Score



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To Save It, We Must Change
What It Means

Blog



How COVID-19 fired up the
transition to Collaborative
Learning at work

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Why Collaborative Learning is the next phase
of LMS e-learning

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