



Telco Talent Development Global Report 2018

Report, Analytics &
Recommendations



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Executive Summary:

Digital Transformation has gained monumental stature, due to its universal impact and the fact no aspect of CSPs (Communication Service provider), have remained untouched from its wave. Talent is no longer the proverbial differentiator. Instead, it has become the single biggest lynchpin to drive the transformation towards a successful future in this competitive landscape. In tandem with operators, Huawei has been exploring, sharing, practicing and advising partners on Talent Development solutions.

In yet another similar attempt, Huawei anchored a Global Talent Development survey, involving operators around the globe, most of whom have been trained by Huawei in recent years. The results were aggregated over a month, analyzed in detail and then the feedback was calibrated into meaningful interpretations. Most of the findings resonated with earlier papers that Huawei co-published with TMForum (viz. IG1148 Ver16.5 and IG1158 Ver 17.5) on Future roles, competencies, and culture and Talent development solutions.



Survey Design, Research Methodology and Data Analytics:

Based on multiple primary interactions with CSPs, Operators and other ICT stakeholders, we designed a questionnaire with 20 themes that were structured into a logical sequence. We solicited participation from the large community that we have been interacting frequently with through various learning interventions. We also had the survey design and content validated internally with our colleagues in various regions.

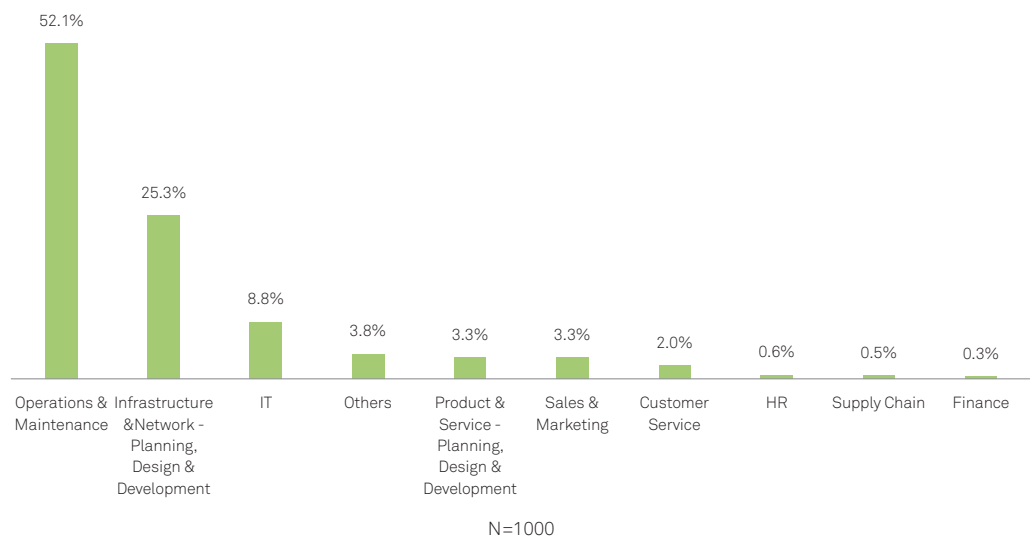
Huawei anchored the 2017 Global Talent Development survey, involving operators around the globe, comprising 20 relevant themes in 5 different languages. The survey analytics presented interesting findings on the themes of culture, leadership, most vital technical competencies and organizational initiatives for enabling future talent development. Post the analytics, the interpretations have been framed into 26 suggested recommendations in six categories of talent development initiatives.



Participation Profiling:

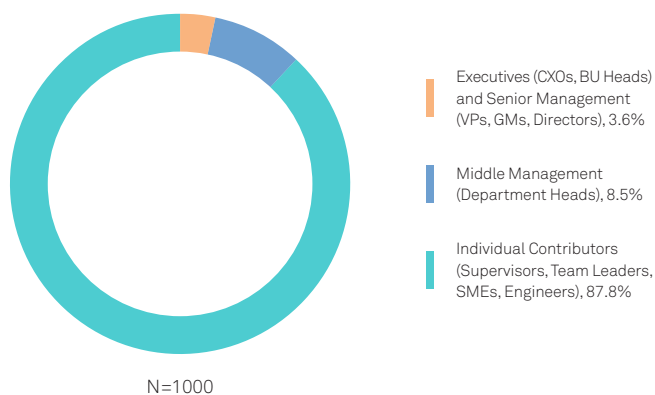
Functional representation--

- O&M occupying almost 50% of the respondents group
- ¼ of respondents are from the Infrastructure and Network sectors
- 10% of respondents are from the IT sector and others are equally distributed amongst other functional groups



Career-group representation--

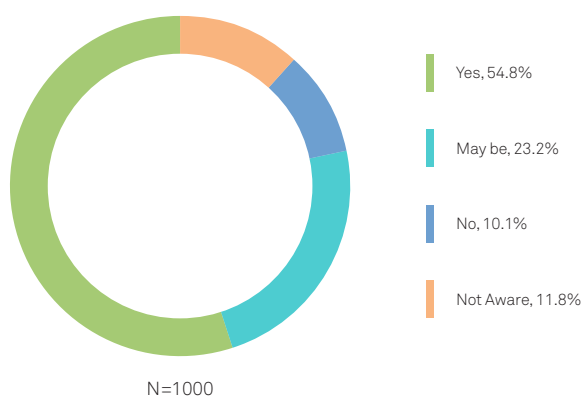
- Individual contributors (including Supervisors, Team Leads and SMEs) form the highest demographic of the respondents
- Almost 10% of the respondents are from middle management
- ~4% of the group are from the CXO level
- Such distribution gives a very realistic representation of organizational pyramid set up and thus is a reliable heterogeneous constituting group; providing multi-perspective inputs



Unfolding the Themes, Interpreting the Trends:

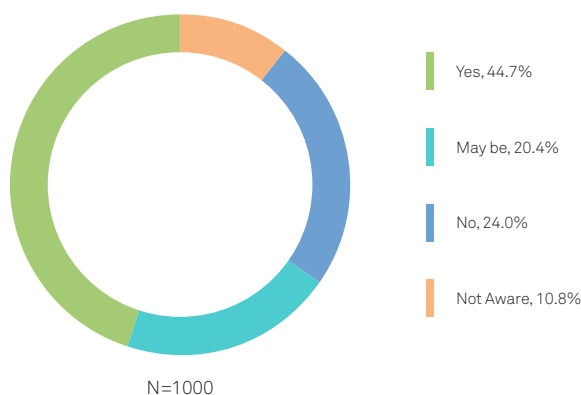
1. High cognizance of Future-readiness Business strategy, in response to the ICT Business transformation

- ~55% strongly believe in their organizations' understanding of the significance of ICT Business transformation
- Strong acknowledgement and appreciation for the need for ICT Business transformation
- ~79% also believe that there may be a conscious Future-ready business strategy in response to the Transformation imperatives
- However, ~22% feel, that there is either no such strategy OR that they are not aware of it
- Opportunity to convert "Maybe" to "Yes", calling for taking employees in confidence for such wide measures
- ~75% in the North American region believe in the existence of such strategy, while just over 40% of those in China, and are aware of it.



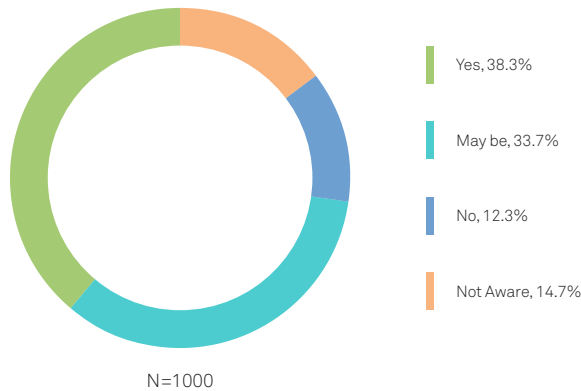
2. Tentative communication of Business strategy, throughout the organization

- 45% believe the Business Strategy (BS) has been communicated clearly. However, this implies that at least 10% of the participants believe that whilst there is a Business strategy, it has been communicated poorly.
- 20% are still unsure if BS has been well communicated or not, implying the communication has not been well articulated.
- ~35% feel that BS has either not been communicated OR they have not been interfaced regarding it.
- In the North American regions there is a sharp drop of ~30% in affirmatives responses when it comes to the strategy being communicated effectively despite having the highest awareness percentage, while in China it is almost constant.



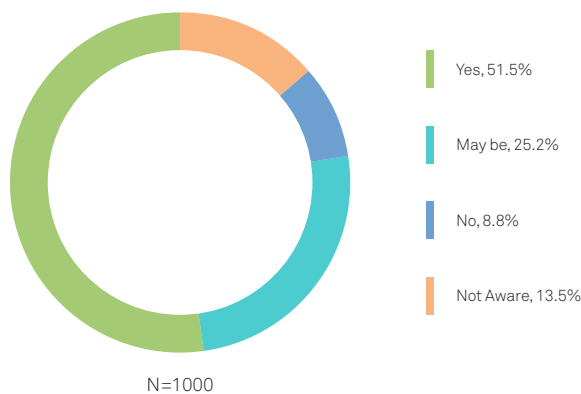
3. Strong agreement on Organization's Talent strategy alignment to the Business strategy

- 72% feel there is some degree of alignment between Business Strategy and Talent Strategy (TS)
- 12% feel BS and TS are not aligned in their organizations
- ~15% believe they are not aware of the co-relation of their company's BS & TS
- Clarity of BS & TS alignment seems to be a moderate issue, and not fully explained



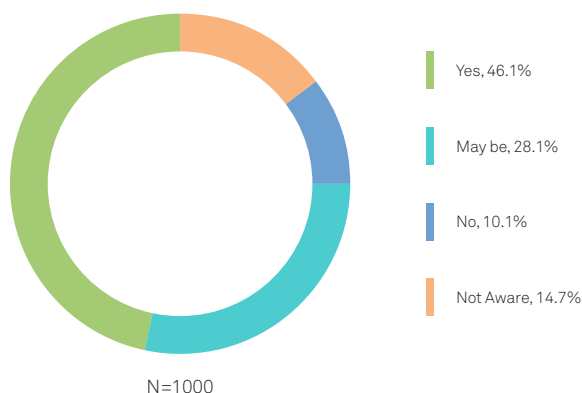
4. Confidence about advancing progress towards creating a digitalized culture and workforce

- ~77% feel their organization has made good progress for creating an enabling culture and workforce ambience
- Less than 25% feel that their organization isn't doing enough for empowering a digitalized culture and workforce
- Due acknowledgment of organization's role in shaping the internal environment for embracing the Business Transformation



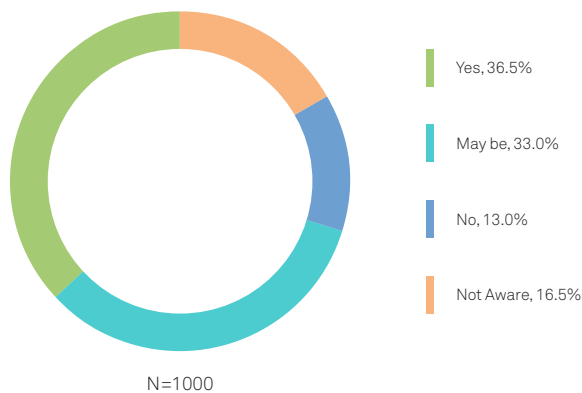
5. Wider assertion of on identifying the future roles and competencies, for future organizational requirements

- ~74% feel the necessary steps are being taken by the organization in anticipation of identifying & defining the future roles
- The Middle Management is most positive about the organization realizing future expectations.
- A clear message of future roles could be significantly different and will be shaped by the nature of future deliverables
- Almost a quarter of the respondents still believe the organization isn't being proactive in realizing the future expectations, so roles are remaining static



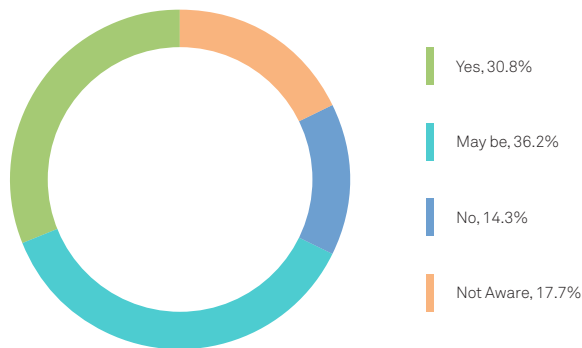
6. Low initiation of defining and migrating the Talent towards those future roles and competencies

- Majority believe in their organization's pro-active Talent migration plans towards future roles & competencies
- A significant 50% of the above 70% are unsure about actual talent mapping for the future roles
- Except for China, in every other region of operations there is a clear increase in doubts about whether such plans will be set in motion or not.
- Almost 30% believe that either their organization is not doing enough OR they are not aware of any such exercise



7. Under-prepared Talent readiness to deal with dynamics of the future deliverables

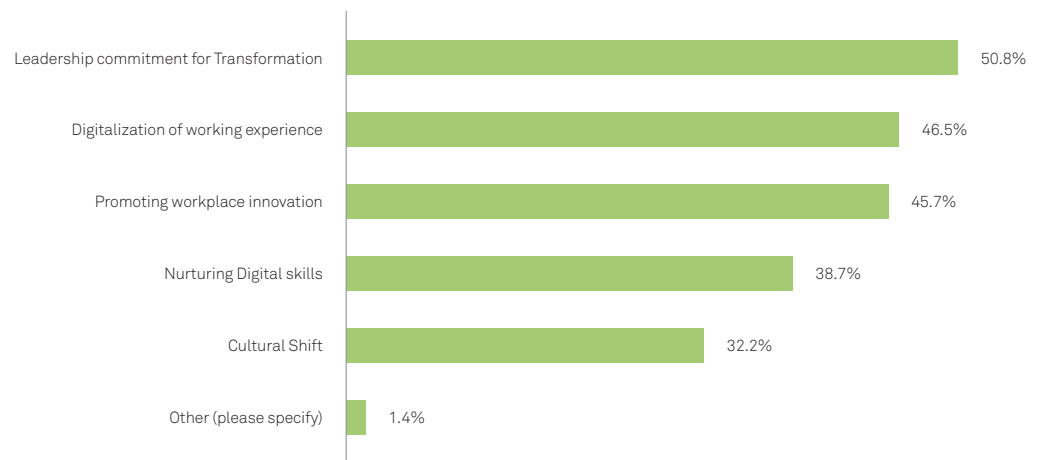
- Almost 70% do not feel confident about organization's preparations for future deliverables
- However around 67% show optimism about the organization being groomed to address the future work challenges & expectations
- A significant 31% are either unaware OR feel unprepared about their readiness for coping with the future
- There's a significant gap between general awareness about plans for future and feeling confident regarding dealing with future dynamics, especially within departments like Sales, HR and Customer Services.



N=1000

8. 'Leadership commitment' and 'Digitalized experience @ workplace' identified as the 'two biggest' initiatives for Talent transformation

- Leadership commitment has been voted as the single determinant for Talent Transformation (TT)
- Digitalized experience @ Workplace is deemed to be the second biggest determinant, enabling TT
- Promoting workplace innovation and incubating digital skills also rank high amongst the participants
- Cultural shift has been ranked relatively lower, indicating it is assumed to be an inherent outcome of the above three factors of Leadership commitment, Digitalized workplace (Tools, systems, Apps, experiences etc.) & Innovation and evolving digital skills
- Notably Cultural Shift gained higher percentage of votes American regions in comparison to other regions.



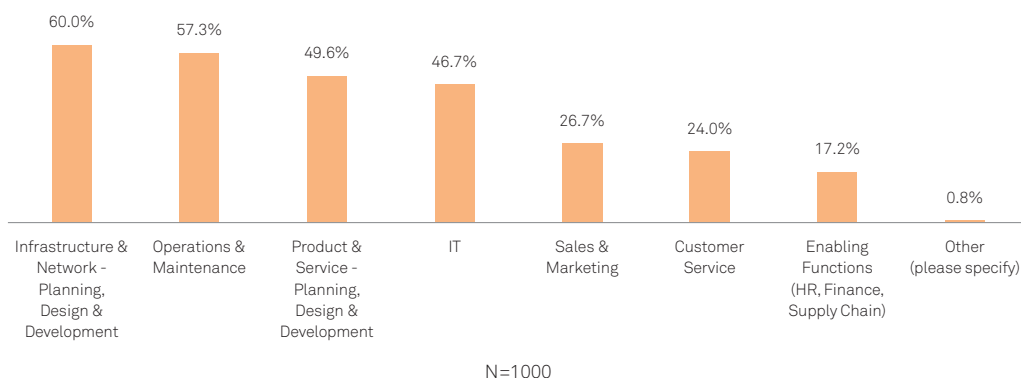
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9. Infra & Network Planning, Design & Development, O&M and Product & Services Management Planning, Design & Development forecasted as the 'top three' to be undergoing significant Talent transformation

- ~60% feel that Infra & Network Planning, Design, O&M and Products & Services planning, design and development are the 3 primary departments that will receive significant Talent Transformation (TT).
- On the other hand operational areas (OA) like Customer Services, Sales & Marketing, HR and Finances received about one-fourth of the votes that the top 3 OAs did.
- The IT department ranked around the middle of the list with ~17% of the votes.
- With respect to the previous question, the OAs that believe more in Digitalization and Promoting Workplace Innovation are expected to undergo more TT

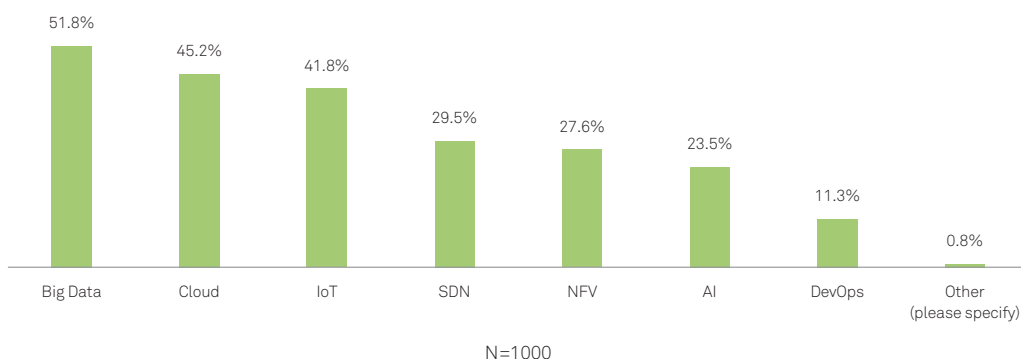
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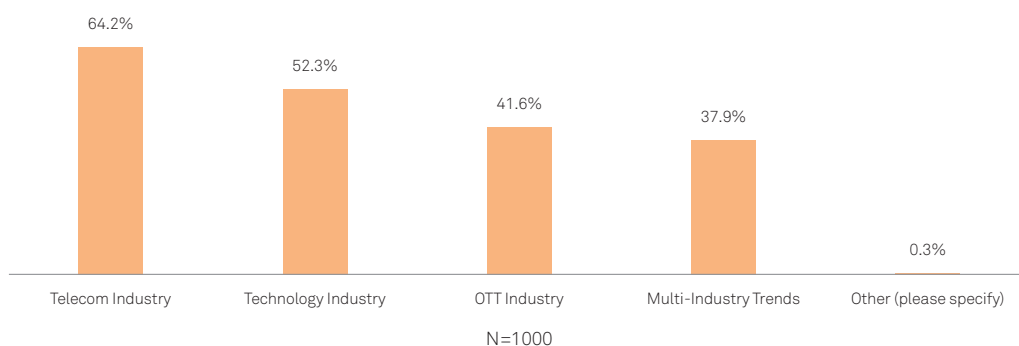
10. Big Data & Cloud score most impactful technical competencies, contributing to business growth & impact

- Big Data and Cloud are seen as the biggest focus areas amongst technical competencies
- Big Data, Cloud and IoT being the predominant choice, seems more in line with the trend and buzz around them
- Surprisingly SDN & NFV rank at 4th and 5th position, indicating, the lack of detailed understanding of these technologies



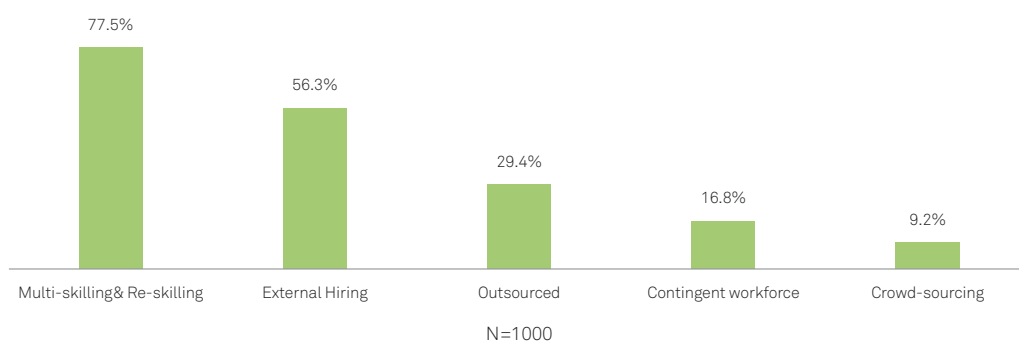
11. Telecom & Technology industries stand out as the most referred-to Benchmarks for identifying the future roles & competencies

- Within the Operators community, Telecom remains still remains the biggest reference for practice benchmarking; for identifying future roles & competencies; indicating less of unconventional approach
- Technology industries' present models, understandably, rank second, when it comes to understanding the future deliverables.
- Implies a common acknowledgement that Telecom will, in a large way, follow the Technology companies pattern for new roles & competencies towards ICT convergence
- Deviating from the popular choice, OTT industry topped the benchmark list in China, overtaking the Telecom industry by a significant margin.



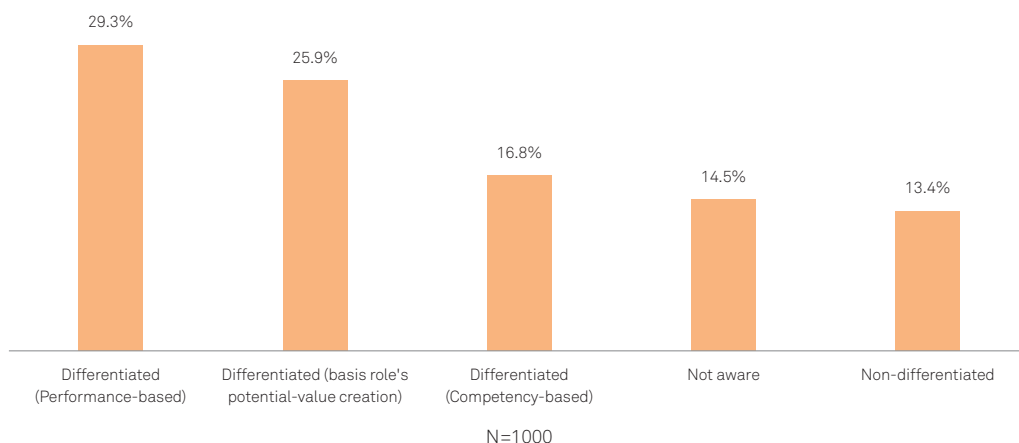
12. Re-skilling and external hiring chosen as the most sought-after sources for Talent acquisition for meeting the future requirements

- More than 3/4th respondents believe Internal skilling is most rationale for Talent planning & staffing
- This can be attributed to the fact that majority of Individual Contributors prefer Internal Skilling.
- External Hiring continues to be one of the prime sources for skill capability building and talent (&skill) acquisition
- Outsourcing, crowd-sourcing and contingent workforce model; still don't seem to be a preferred/ popular option for talent staffing



13. Mixed response to differentiated Talent development policies to identify, develop and reward Talent

- There seems to be an evenly distributed opinion about the adoption of differentiated Talent Development (TD) policies
- Existing performance remains the prime indicator for determining the TD application
- Only 25% believe that their organization proactively implements TD mechanisms keeping in view the roles' future value creation
- ~14% feel their organizations apply uniform TD policies, regardless of the incumbents performance or the role's potential
- The opinion about performance based and role's potential-value varies a lot across regions and operational areas. On one hand in China ~one-third believe that the former is practiced, while on the other hand over ~35% in the western hemisphere feel that the latter is practiced.
- The cause for the above can be the difference of opinion between the Executives & Middle Management and the Individual Contributors.



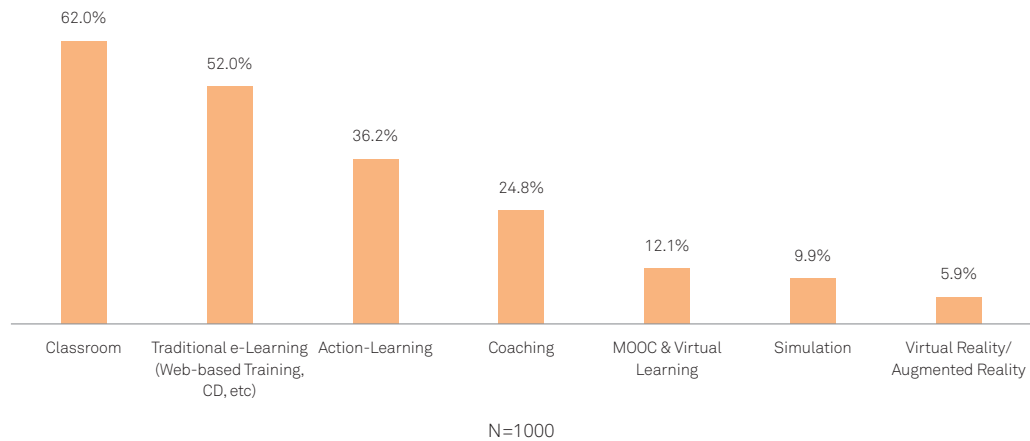
14. 'Project-based training' and 'Formal Training' emerge as top two mechanisms for internal multi-skilling and re-skilling; to prepare for the future competencies

- Most Telcos focus on Re-Skilling internally and live project-based learning, seems to be the effective source
- Formal Training and OJT represent a high section of commonly adopted learning mechanism for Re-Skilling
- Role of formal academics as a source of Re-Skilling seems to be diminishing



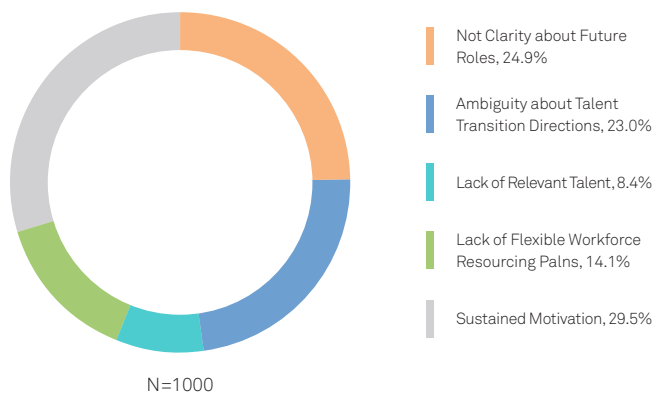
15. Classroom Training and Traditional e-Learnings are recognized as two most practiced forms of formal learning

- Classroom Training continues to dominate the most commonly learning delivery medium
- Traditional web based and e-Learnings are the second most practiced channel for Training mode
- The new learning mediums have still not attracted attention by the larger masses; either due to skepticism, impact or cost-effectiveness.
- MOOC, Simulation and AR have not yet gained traction, as a sustained learning medium
- E-Learning is slowly gaining popularity and edge over classroom learning with some areas like South East and Central Asia, IT and P&S departments already substituting the later. This is the result of the conventional system not proving to be as effective as desired particularly in these regions.



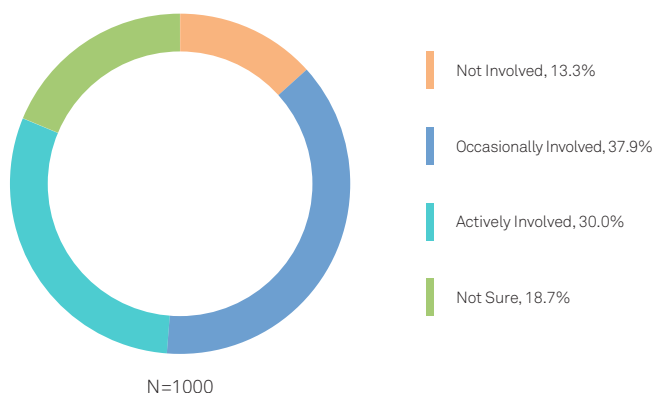
16. Multiple factors constrain Talent Development initiatives

- 30% believe they lack motivation and that limits the progress of Talent Development (TD) initiatives
- Almost 50% believe that the future roles and direction remains elusive and ambiguous, constraining the TD plans
- The participants, feel there is no lack of relevant talent within the organization
- Senior and Middle Management tend to believe that Not-Clarity and Ambiguity are more responsible for constraining TD initiatives which is quite different from the opinions of the Individual Contributors who feel it's due to lack of motivation.
- Similar contrast is seen between the Eastern and Western parts of the globe and between Tech, Planning and Operation based departments.



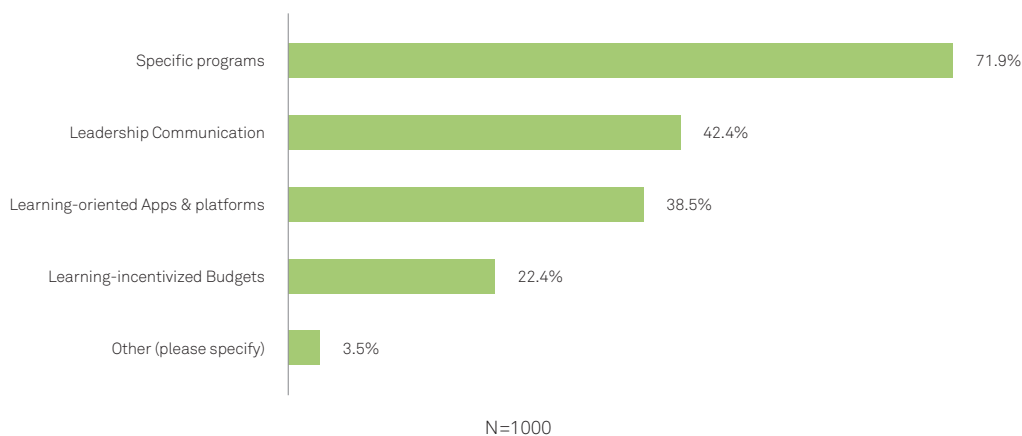
17. Lack of confidence in Leadership support in defining, building and developing a future-ready Talent

- Only 30% believe that their leadership is keenly involved in the building Talent for the future
- 38% believe their leadership is only involved on selected occasions or needs; implying future talent identification and development is not a strategic agenda for them
- 32% either believe that their leadership is surely not involved OR their involvement remains unclear
- As per the previous data, about a quarter (majority) feels leadership is of paramount importance for TT. Still though, over a half of them don't think that their organization's leadership as deeply involved as it should be



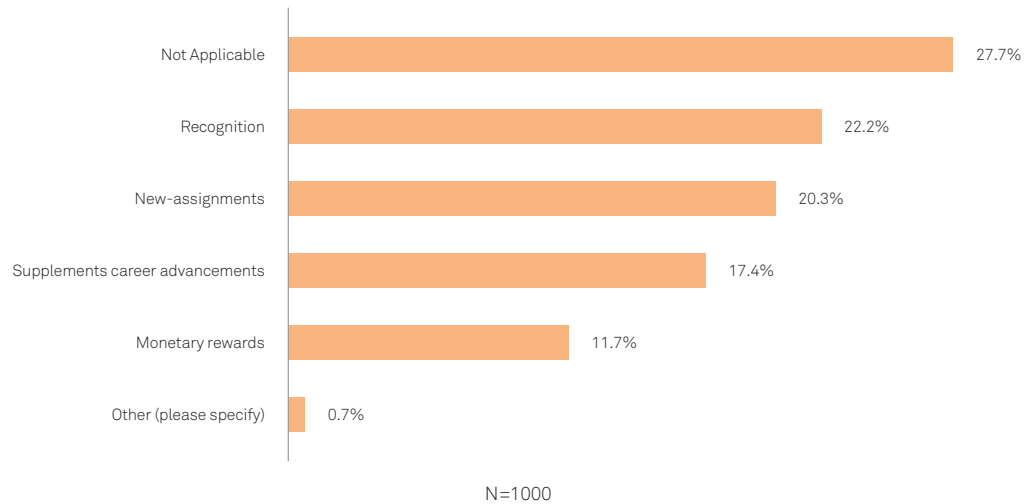
18. Through clearly dedicated programs, Leadership is promoting a culture of Learning

- 72% of respondents concur with the fact that their leadership promotes learning culture through specific learning oriented programs
- Direct leadership communication, though at 42%, comes second in the list of initiatives for encouraging learning culture
- Almost 39% of the respondents cite Apps and platforms being used extensively by the Leadership, with a view to enable learning. It contrasts with the fact that Apps have not yet been popular as Learning medium. However it implies Leadership is applying them and so it will eventually permeate through the organization too
- ~60% of Individual contributors feel that learning is promoted by specific programs and communication from their leaders given the fact that they profoundly believe that leadership is deeply involved in TT as hinted by previous set of data.



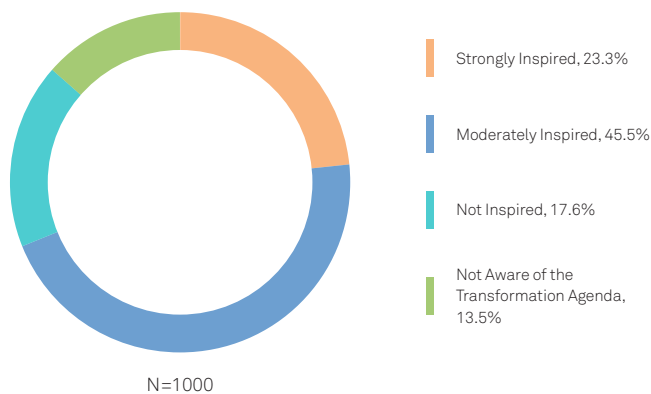
19. Insufficient incentivizing mechanism for encouraging employees for acquiring new & relevant skills

- Majority respondents (28%) feel there is no defined incentive mechanism in their organization, for gaining new and relevant skills
- There is an even distribution (~20% each) amongst Career progression, Recognition programs and New Roles; as perks for learning new skills become pertinent to their roles
- Monetary rewards seem to hold little value for motivating employees towards self-learning



20. Inadequate inspiration from the leadership, seems to be lagging the pace of Talent transformation activities

- Only less than a quarter of the participants are strongly inspired by their leadership towards the Talent Transformation (TT)
- Almost half of the respondents' feel they have little inspiration from their respective leadership, when leading the TT agenda
- Almost 30% are either not aware of the TT agenda OR not inspired by their Leadership's TT efforts.
- The needle points more towards the negative side in China while the rest of the regions feel inspired. This shows the state of leadership for TT in different regions.
- Despite significant support for organization's leadership's role, numerous methods of promotion of TT and a range of incentives for employees by the leadership, around ~40% feel that they aren't inspired sufficiently or have no knowledge regarding such agenda.



The Writing on the Wall - Recommendations from the Survey:

i. Strategy Alignment: Business & Talent

- a. Deeper need to rationalize the implications of aligning Business strategies in response-to/anticipation-of the ongoing ICT Transformation
- b. There remains a major gap in communicating the dynamics of the Transformation agenda & objectives and its actual implementation from the top leadership to the rest of the organization
- c. Very crucial to link Talent strategy with the Business strategy

ii. Future Directions, Internal reflections

- a. Digitalized workforce needs constant industry inputs & practices and contemporary & future-oriented training
- b. Organizations' sincerity about defining the future of work, roles & competencies indicates that the success depends on identifying & developing the future talent
- c. Organizations are willing and sincere about Talent migration. However a lot of efforts need to be invested in defining the roadmap of **As-Is** to **To-Be**
- d. Whilst 70% feel positive about organization's talent migration plans, this is contradicted by almost 68% not feeling confident about its actual readiness. Thus, talent transition plans have to be translated from Need to Action
- e. Futuristic competencies and skill-build programs will be crucial for Talent Transformation
- f. Gain more insights from the leading technology companies and mobilize its value for Telecom industry's momentum

iii. Emerging Technologies and Learning and Development (L&D) Investments

- a. Organizations need to continue more L&D investment in O&M, Network and Products & Services
- b. Need to continue focus and L&D investment in Big Data and Cloud respectively, for facilitating more awareness & implementation projects around these two domains
- c. There is definitely a need for directional education & awareness about SDN and NFV technologies. It has emerged as an area whose significance has not been duly internalized for the lack of subject Information

iv. Talent Development and Capability Building

- a. Multi-skilling and Re-Skilling, being the most sought after solution; offers wide opportunity to organizations for internal skilling programs for the future competencies
- b. Scope for internal skilling across the levels, for substantiating organizational future talent readiness
- c. Addressing Talent Development (TD) policies & planning, on a differentiated basis is in its Infancy stage. Organizations need to get more creative in designing differentiated approach for TD based on future competencies & relevance, instead of only past performance.
- d. To leverage on perceived effectiveness of the Project-based Learning, organizations need to focus more

- developing simulation based projects for SOJT learning programs
- e. High impetus of continuing the traditional class room trainings; while also advocating higher frequency and reach, for learning cloud
- f. Interest, rationale and value for alternative, effective and far-reaching learning medium; needs to be well positioned

v. Culture & Leadership

- a. Committed Leadership and creating a digitally-conducive workplace is crucial
- b. Organization's internal cognizance can be duly leveraged for reinforcing the role of culture
- c. The survey findings also corroborate the role of Climate & Culture for enabling an empowered workplace and affecting a higher motivation
- d. Adequate rationale for focusing more on the leadership programs, sensitizing leaders to the criticality of Talent Development for the future
- e. Visibility of leadership involvement & participation also demonstrates strong communication connect
- f. Organizations need to invest more in promoting Learning culture, creating Engaged Leadership and other design learning-specific programs

vi. Motivation & Rewards

- a. Get more creative in developing non-monetary incentives and reward systems; linking Learning, Career advancements and Incentives (also benchmark with multi-industry practice sharing)
- b. HR needs to engage more with Leadership and mobilize them for creating higher industry awareness and inspire for more engagement on the Talent Transformation agenda



The Way Forward:

Huawei is committed to the mobilization of emerging technologies, practices and trends across the ICT ecosystem. Global Talent survey is one of the initiatives to carry forward this agenda. We shall continue designing relevant themes and collecting insights from real stakeholders, to present an industry wide analytics which we hope will help CSPs to review their Talent development strategies and directions.

We seek wider participation from all the participating organizations to increase the coverage of the survey making it a more meaningful exercise, providing larger data-points & exposure.

Huawei will extend its outreach to more entities even beyond traditional CSPs to bring more practices and trends from the larger ICT ecosystem.






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