How Skillsoft® Moves the Needle

By Kieran King
Vice President, Global Customer Insight, Skillsoft
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Repeatedly, studies have found Skillsoft learning is highly applicable, delivers direct business impact, increases employee confidence and provides increased value over time. Skillsoft eLearning outperforms both classroom training and in-house developed eLearning in multiple ways. Additionally, Skillsoft learning benefits organizations regardless of size, location, industry or length of experience with eLearning.

With organizations across all markets facing a critical talent shortage, and short skill shelf lives, it is clear that the employee development practices that worked in the past will not be enough to keep critical roles filled and positioned for optimal productivity. The results clearly show that Skillsoft provides a solid answer to the global talent imperative, delivering strong ROI and business impact.
HOW SKILLSOFT MOVES THE NEEDLE

According to the 2016 PwC CEO survey, 75% of CEOs say that a skilled, educated and adaptable workforce should be a priority for the business.1 Over the last few years, talent management and employee development have become high priorities for many executives—as have data and analytics to guide business decisions. Yet IDC reports that only about half of all organizations evaluate the impact of training on employee engagement, less than 40% measure productivity or sales, and fewer than 25% measure formal ROI. In a recent Chief Learning Officer Survey, Cushing Anderson states, “To increase the impact of learning, CLOs must demonstrate — through metrics and business language — that every learning investment is helping the enterprise achieve some portion of its strategic objectives.”

Skillsoft has a passion for producing quantifiable data that demonstrates just how Skillsoft learning impacts the performance of individuals and organizations. Over 6,700 organizations and 45 million end-users trust Skillsoft to help them maintain an agile workforce and we take that responsibility very seriously.

While Skillsoft conducts individual impact studies with our customers using a proprietary method designed by our in-house ROI-certified expert, we also recognize the importance of independent research. In order to obtain a third-party perspective, Skillsoft invited the Corporate Executive Board (CEB) Metrics that Matter team to study the value that our learning provides.

To ensure the conclusions reached accurately reflect the broad spectrum of our clients, we included companies of all sizes, from a variety of industries and geographic locations. While some of the companies have been using learning tools for decades; others have less than a year of experience with eLearning. Over 30,000 Skillsoft learners from 465 Skillsoft clients were invited to participate. 7,800 responded, a 25% response rate, producing a very robust and statistically sound dataset. The study revealed that Skillsoft proved to be beneficial regardless of the size, location, industry or an individual's length of experience with eLearning.

The study's seven key findings are yet another demonstration of what we call “The Skillsoft Effect,” a business impact that boosts employee confidence, influences business outcomes and enhances workforce productivity.

---

KEY FINDING #1: LEARNERS REPORT THAT SKILLSOFT IMPACTS CRITICAL AREAS OF BUSINESS PERFORMANCE.

How does learning translate into business results? CEB Metrics that Matter asked respondents to estimate how much their performance improves after using Skillsoft, and what percent of that improvement can be directly attributed to the Skillsoft resources. Using a sound methodology to estimate, isolate and adjust the data, CEB Metrics that Matter was able to calculate the impact that Skillsoft training has on each business impact area. The results showed that Skillsoft impacts all eight areas essential to business performance:

SKILLSOFT’S BUSINESS IMPACT ESTIMATES

- Higher Employee: 11%
- Increased Customer: 10%
- Greater Quality: 9%
- Increased Sales: 8%
- Greater Productivity: 8%
- Decreased Cycle Time: 8%
- Reduced Costs: 8%
- Lower Risk: 7%

Skillsoft’s ability to drive an 8% increase in employee productivity equates to 20 additional days of output annually.
KEY FINDING #2: SKILLSOFT CLOSES SKILL GAPS, BUILDS CONFIDENCE AND INCREASES EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION.

Employees who are highly capable and confident fuel an organization's ability to execute its business goals. While technical skills are at a premium within today's talent market, 97% of employers say that soft skills are important to their current business success.³ Skillsoft raises competency levels in both technical and business skills areas.

The study respondents provided examples of how Skillsoft has helped them contribute to business gains. Examples include:

- Quality improves because employees have better communication, processes and project management skills.
- Customer satisfaction increases because products are delivered faster, quality is higher, and communication and consulting skills improve.
- Productivity improves because employees are better equipped to solve problems and overcome obstacles.
- Sales increase because employees are better at understanding their customers' needs.

Learners also reported Skillsoft learning improved their level of employee satisfaction by:

- Increasing confidence in their own abilities
- Providing valuable development opportunities
- Improving team management skills
- Strengthening communication skills
- Making performance support references easy to access

³ “Quantifying the Value of Soft Skills.” Dina Medland, Forbes, March 30, 2015
KEY FINDING #3: RESPONDENTS OVERWHELMINGLY AGREED IT IS VALUABLE TO HAVE SKILLSOFT.

In addition to looking at business results, the study examined what employees thought of their Skillsoft experience—and if they found value in the resources that were provided. The study found:

- **Employees see the value**: 90% of the respondents valued the fact that their employer provided them the ability to use Skillsoft.

- **Employees rate Skillsoft highly**: Approximately 8 out of 10 said that they were “satisfied” or “strongly satisfied” with Skillsoft. If the “slightly satisfied” responses were factored in, the results would be even higher.

- **Skillsoft is a worthwhile investment**: Nearly three-quarters indicated that the Skillsoft training was a worthwhile investment for their employer. This was higher than the industry benchmark.

- **Skillsoft helps career development**: Approximately 7 out of 10 learners said Skillsoft was helpful in their career development. This result is also higher than the industry benchmark.

Another interesting finding was the compounding effect that Skillsoft had. The longer the Skillsoft resources were used, the more value and impact they provided learners.

KEY FINDING #4: SKILLSOFT INTEGRATES EASILY INTO THE FLOW OF WORK AND IS HIGHLY APPLICABLE TO THE JOB.

Skillsoft solutions are designed to support performance in the flow of work at a moment’s notice. Respondents applauded having Skillsoft learning “on tap” to help them nimbly adapt to the accelerating pace of change.

In addition, Skillsoft’s commitment to currency ensures a steady stream of fresh and relevant information is always available to learners.
In order to measure the application rate of Skillsoft to the job, analysts measured the amount of scrap learning reported by the respondents. Scrap learning is the measure of training that is successfully learned, but not applied to the job. When this happens, learning's impact is arrested and cannot materialize to business impact or ROI. According to a CEB whitepaper, “Confronting Scrap Learning,” the average organization experiences a 45% scrap learning rate. Skillsoft's results were remarkably better, where learners are able to apply their knowledge more often and more quickly:

- 86% of Skillsoft learners were able to apply what they learned within six weeks of the training.
- That means Skillsoft's scrap learning rate was 14%—far below the industry norm of 45%.

**KEY FINDING #5: SKILLSOFT IS APPLIED TO THE JOB AT A HIGHER RATE THAN IN-HOUSE DEVELOPED ELEARNING AND CLASSROOM TRAINING.**

As noted in key finding #4, with Skillsoft, 86% of learners stated that they could apply what they learned within 6 weeks. When comparing the Skillsoft application rate to the benchmarks for classroom and internally developed eLearning, Skillsoft outperformed them both. Skillsoft content is applied at a rate that is 8% higher than the classroom and 12% higher than in-house developed eLearning.

This means that Skillsoft produces more impact and less waste in training investment and time than classroom and internally-developed eLearning content. With Skillsoft’s low scrap learning rate, organizations experience stronger performance gains and realize more from their investment.
KEY FINDING #6: SKILLSOFT'S LEARNING IS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE COMPARED TO IN-HOUSE DEVELOPED ELEARNING AND CLASSROOM TRAINING.

The study also measured learning effectiveness using standard evaluation questions in the CEB Metrics that Matter methodology that aligns with Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation and Phillips' ROI Methodology. When rated for effectiveness, respondent ratings indicated:

• Skillsoft content consistently performs as well as or better than eLearning content developed in-house.

• Skillsoft content achieves results that are very similar to classroom training. Classroom training is generally far more costly in terms of expense and time, providing Skillsoft customers with a compelling economic advantage.

KEY FINDING #7: SKILLSOFT SIGNIFICANTLY OUTPERFORMS INTERNALLY DEVELOPED ELEARNING AND CLASSROOM TRAINING IN KEY IMPACT AREAS.

When CEB Metrics that Matter compared Skillsoft eLearning to the internally developed eLearning and classroom benchmarks, Skillsoft was comparable in all eight areas of business performance. However, Skillsoft significantly outperformed internally developed eLearning and classroom training for its ability to build skills that decrease costs, increase sales and decrease cycle time.

Cycle time - Respondents indicated that the time it takes to perform a task (cycle time) improved 8.1% with Skillsoft compared to 4.3% with internally developed eLearning and 5.9% with classroom training. This difference is 47% and 30% better, respectively, than the other benchmarks.

Costs - Respondents indicated that costs reduced 8.2% with Skillsoft compared to 5.1% with internally developed eLearning and 5.5% with classroom training. This difference is 38% and 33% better, respectively, than the other benchmarks.

Sales - Respondents indicated that sales increased 8.2% with Skillsoft compared to 4.3% with internally developed eLearning and 5% with classroom training. This difference is 48% and 40% better, respectively, than the other benchmarks.
IN SUMMARY

The independently conducted CEB Metrics that Matter findings clearly demonstrate the positive organizational and individual impact that Skillsoft provides. With faster application, high rate of effectiveness and its award-winning content, Skillsoft has a clear impact. Organizations that leverage Skillsoft can expect to drive greater talent agility.

STUDY’S MEASUREMENT METHODOLOGY

The firm who conducted the study, CEB Metrics that Matter, is a global thought leader in Human Capital Analytics. A voluntary, web-based evaluation survey was distributed to 30,687 Skillsoft learners from which 7,817 responses were received. The CEB Metrics that Matter® system was used to deliver the survey instrument as well as house the results. The survey asked the Skillsoft learners to reflect on Skillsoft training they had. The survey structure and analysis method was based on the Kirkpatrick’s four levels of learning evaluation model and the ROI Institute’s ROI Process. Results were compared to a normative benchmark of more than a half million learning evaluations compiled within the CEB Metrics that Matter® system.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kieran King began her career in the talent field 20+ years ago. In 1999, Kieran joined CBT Systems (now Skillsoft) and participated in the evolution of the learning industry by consulting with organizations across a wide variety of sectors and geographies. She has consulted with companies to design enterprise learning programs, implement learning and talent platforms, lead strategy engagements, and advise on measuring learning’s impact on business outcomes. Kieran has authored several methodologies and white papers, she blogs regularly and she’s been featured in magazines such as Chief Learning Officer, e-Learning!, ComputerWeekly.com, Training Journal, Talent Management Magazine, ITPRO Magazine and Forbes. Kieran was also a featured on Sirius Radio’s “In the Workplace” hosted by Wharton Business School. Today, Kieran serves as the VP of Global Customer Insight for Skillsoft where she studies the composition of successful learning and talent partnerships throughout the world.
ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft is the global leader in corporate learning, delivering beautiful technology and engaging content that drives business impact for modern enterprises. Skillsoft comprises three award-winning solutions that support learning, performance and success: Skillsoft learning content, the Percipio intelligent learning platform and the SumTotal suite for Human Capital Management.

Skillsoft provides the most comprehensive selection of cloud-based corporate learning content, including courses, videos, books and other resources on Business and Management Skills, Leadership Development, Digital Transformation, IT Skills and Certification Training, Productivity and Collaboration Tools and Compliance. Percipio's intuitive design engages modern learners and its consumer-led experience accelerates learning. The SumTotal suite features four key components built on a unified platform: Learning Management, Talent Management, Talent Acquisition and Workforce Management.

Skillsoft is trusted by thousands of the world's leading organizations, including 65 percent of the Fortune 500. Learn more at www.skillsoft.com.