**2018 Iowa Trends in Talent Development Survey**
Reinforces Value of Talent Development
by ATW Training Solutions

ATW Training Solutions recently released the results of its 12th annual *Iowa Trends in Talent Development Survey*. The survey, conducted in partnership with New Horizons Computer Learning Center, the Association for Talent Development Central Iowa chapter (ATD-CI), and the Iowa Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) State Council was conducted between August 13-31, 2018. The survey was completed by 138 respondents representing a variety of Iowa industries, companies, and organizations.

**Talent Development Budgets Remain Strong**
Survey results indicate that budgets for talent development, the focus on growing high-performing employees who help organizations meet strategic and operational goals and objectives, will remain the same or increase in the coming year. These responses from nearly 94% of survey participants acknowledge the importance of hiring, training, engaging, and retaining the talent in their organizations.
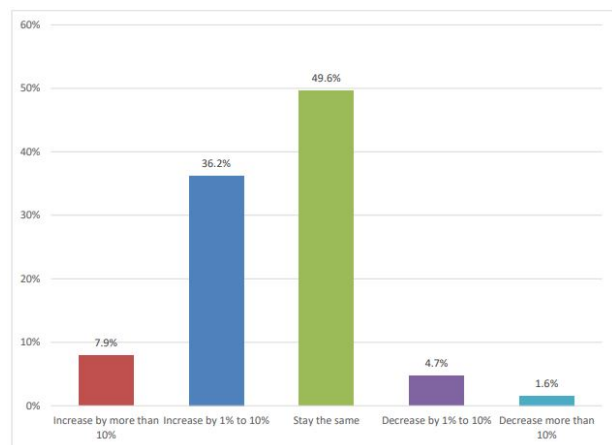
Training Focus Areas Show a Slight Shift
Each year the surveys seeks to understand which training topics will be central to organizations in the coming year. This year, survey responses show that the top three topics are the same as found in the 2017 survey, but two new topics close out the list:

1. Leadership for Emerging Leaders. The distinction of "emerging" leaders is an important focus as many organizations continue to focus on succession planning and development of future leaders.
2. Coaching. Coaching for improved performance continues to be a key area of focus for many organizations.
3. New Employee Orientation. Onboarding employees effectively and getting them up to speed faster is important in a market where unemployment is at extremely low levels and the competition for talent escalates.
4. Conflict Resolution. The ability to surface and resolve conflict is gaining in importance in an environment of increasing change and complexity.
5. Performance Management. Setting clear expectations, providing ongoing feedback and coaching, and a creating a culture of accountability are all components of an effective performance management approach.
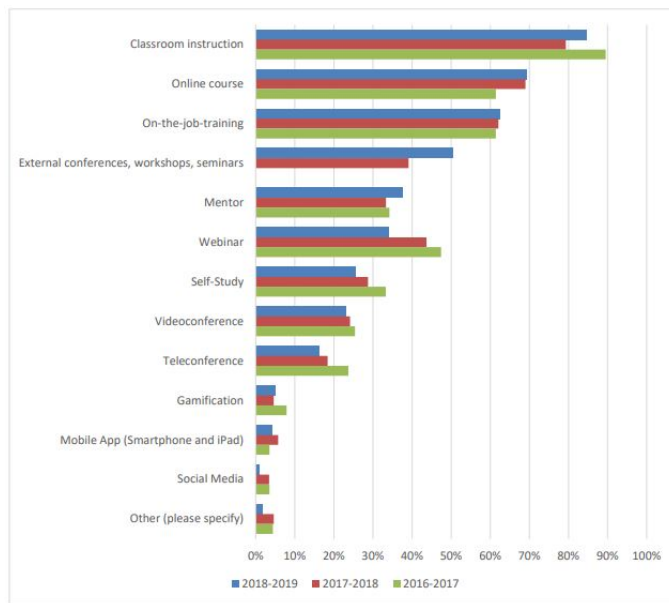
Classroom Instruction Delivery Preferred

Instructor-led classroom instruction remains the preferred delivery method as reported by respondents, with online courses and on-the-job training as the next options consistent with the previous survey and showing slight increases this year. Other delivery methods showing gains include external training conferences, workshops, and seminars, as well as working with a mentor. Delivery methods that continue to show declines include webinars, self-study, videoconferencing, and teleconferencing. Compared to national results in the annual ATD "State of the Industry" report, Iowa companies rely significantly more on classroom instruction and report using technology-aided instruction to a lesser degree.

Chart categories (top to bottom): Classroom instruction, Online course, On-the-job-training, External conferences, workshops, seminars, Mentor, Webinar, Self-Study, Videoconference, Teleconference, Gamification, Mobile App (Smartphone and iPad), Social Media, Other (please specify)

X-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Legend: ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2017-2018 ■ 2016-2017

Three Key Challenges for Talent Development Identified

Respondents answered the question, "What are the most significant challenges to implementing your talent development strategies?" Three themes reported this year are consistent with our findings over the last several years.

"Time Constraints" was mentioned twice as often as any other challenge and includes time to develop and market training, participant time away from daily work, interruptions to production, time required to implement and reinforce skills acquired, competing priorities from other important training topics (such as safety and compliance), and requesters asking for training to be created in very short time frames.

"Financial Issues" was mentioned next most often and refers to limited resources, budget constraints, insufficient budget resources to achieve the desired or expected outcomes, and tightening of budgets amidst a push for operational efficiencies.

"Leadership Support" continues to be a challenge reported by respondents and is described in a number of ways, including gaining buy in at all levels of management, determining organizational key initiatives in order to be able to align with strategic plans and leadership goals, management support for time away from "billable work", resistance to the idea that training is needed or appropriate, a belief that employees will not retain information, and lack of senior leader support and approval.

Full Survey Results Available

Detailed survey results and all respondent comments are available on the ATW Training Solutions website, www.atwtraining.com . ATW's goal is to help unleash human potential in organizations. For specific comments on the survey or observations for the purpose of print or online news articles, contact ATW at 515-727-0731.