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The 70-20-10 model for learning and development (L&D) is a commonly used formula within the training profession. The model describes the optimal sources of learning by successful managers, suggesting that individuals obtain knowledge, skills and abilities in their jobs through the following mixture of sources:

- **70 percent** from on-the-job experiences
- **20 percent** from social sources such as interactions with others
- **10 percent** from formal educational events
An OSF ratio represents the amount of learning from on-the-job, social and formal sources.

The appeal of the model is the ease with which it provides a shorthand accounting for sources of learning. We call this an OSF ratio, representing the relative amount of learning from on-the-job, social and formal sources.

The 70-20-10 model is considered to be of greatest value as a general guideline for organizations seeking to maximize the effectiveness of their L&D programs through other activities and inputs. The model continues to be widely employed by organizations throughout the world, and as such has become a cornerstone of many L&D initiatives. But could it use an update?

This report explores:

- Where 70-20-10 came from
- What it looks like today: the 55-25-20 model
- The nuances that affect the OSF ratios in the model for different types of employees, across different companies and across different countries
- How the model relates to L&D efforts
All research findings described within this report are based on Training Industry, Inc. research data collected in 2017 and 2018. The following are general demographics of participants in this research.

### Company Size

- **>50,000**: 15%
- **20,001-50,000**: 6%
- **10,001-20,000**: 8%
- **5,001-10,000**: 15%
- **1,001-5,000**: 29%
- **501-1,000**: 14%
- **101-500**: 7%
- **1-100**: 6%

### Top 8 Industries

- **(representing 75% of respondents)**
  1. Health Care
  2. Technology
  3. Durable Goods
  4. Banking/Finance
  5. Government
  6. Education
  7. Manufacturing
  8. Hospitality

### Job Titles

- **Executives**: 16%
- **Managers**: 24%
- **Direct Reports**: 60%
Dr. Tom Whelan is the director of corporate research at Training Industry, Inc., where his work focuses on learning and development research to inform workplace training practices. Prior to joining Training Industry, Inc., he worked as an organizational consultant, designing and evaluating selection, training programs, compensation assessments and data collection systems in a variety of industries including technology, military special operations and pharmaceuticals. Dr. Whelan has published in leading journals and presented at international conferences on topics such as personality assessment, survey research methods, virtual workplaces, and training evaluation and effectiveness. He holds a Ph.D. in industrial-organizational psychology from North Carolina State University.
ABOUT TRAINING INDUSTRY, INC. RESEARCH

New insights create new ways for L&D to do business. Training Industry, Inc. provides data-driven analysis and best practices for the corporate training professional by capturing the perspectives of learning professionals, learners and training companies across a diverse array of industries. Our informational resources are shared with more than 185,000 monthly website visitors and 135,000 email subscribers.

The Training Industry, Inc. research team of experienced analysts relies on rigorous survey practices, including targeted sampling and advanced analytics. These practices are based on validated principles of measurement to answer both qualitative and quantitative questions across a variety of research designs, including market research, buyer personas, learner impact analysis, competency models and organizational assessment tools. Our expertise and audience reach allow us to provide learning professionals with in-depth market intelligence and thought leadership insights to reveal where the corporate training market is now and where it is headed in the future.

Our research harnesses the collective wisdom of learning professionals and their unique perspectives on the business of training to inform our continuing professional development programs, including events, classes, certificates and the Certified Professional in Training Management (CPTM™) certification program. We circulate these insights throughout the training market using content marketing, including webinars, infographics, email marketing, and our award-winning magazine and website.

Recommended citation: