Brandon Hall
GROUP

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LEARNING®

What You Need to Know About

Accessibility and Inclusion in Learning Design

2022

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Introduction

While it has been on the radar for some time, global events over the few years have put Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion front-and-center for most companies. In Brandon Hall Group's annual *HCM Outlook Study,* DE&I was considered the number-two most critical business priority, second only to improving the customer experience. Additionally, 61% of organizations say it is either important or critical that they develop inclusive leaders to be successful.

Some of the key traits of an inclusive leader are:

- Being aware of one's own biases and preferences

- Actively seeking and considering different views and perspectives to inform better decision-making

- Demonstrating commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Exhibiting humility

- Being curious about others

- Demonstrating cultural intelligence

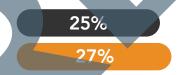- Demonstrating and championing collaboration

It is not just in leadership where these characteristics are important. They need to be integrated and flow throughout the organization and its learning culture. This is where accessibility and inclusivity meet. Every learner deserves an opportunity to have access to knowledge. While technology brings the world together in many ways and enables content delivery on a broad scale, challenges to creating inclusive and accessible content still arise.
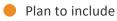
Accessibility

For many companies, making learning accessible means having on-demand content that works on any device. But it goes beyond that. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), approximately 20% of Americans identify as having at least one disability or impairment. And if one in five learners are unable to access your content, this has a direct impact on your business. When you begin to consider other disabilities such as dyslexia and color blindness, accessibility takes on a much different meaning. At a time when organizations are striving to deliver more personalized learning experiences to drive performance, it is critical to remember that a big part of personalization involves learners being able to access learning in a venue and time frame that is best for them.

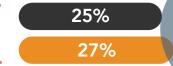**How are Organizations Developing People with Disabilities?**

Mentoring people with disabilities

25%

27%

● Already happening   ● Plan to include

Developing people with disabilities

25%

27%

Source: Brandon Hall Group 2021

Accessibility concerns the structure and containers that hold information, the way learners receive the information and the way that information is formatted and then presented. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) developed most of the current web standards such as HTML and CSS, and developed the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). These are a set of formal, global guidelines that explain how to make web content accessible to people with disabilities and within the training and development world. The broad areas of disabilities covered in guidelines are visual, auditory, physical and cognitive; and they give guidance on how to make sure content includes the following characteristics:

Perceivable. Information and user-interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

Operable. User interface components and navigation must be operable.

Understandable. Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable.

Robust. Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.