

Not all AI is created equal

A playbook for leveraging AI for high-impact
corporate training programs




CORPORATE
LEARNING

POWERED BY *efekta*

Background

AI-powered learning tools have proliferated rapidly in recent years, often offering greater access and lower costs. However, when it comes to learning, access to and volume of content does not necessarily equate to learning impact. In addition, not all tools labeled as “AI” actually use AI in a meaningful way.

This playbook offers a framework to help HR and L&D leaders shape their strategy and evaluate AI solutions, to maximize the positive impacts from their learning programs.



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Context

Our research with 1,300 HR and L&D leaders at multinational companies shows that when it comes to corporate training, experimentation with and adoption of AI is widespread, but effective application is less common.

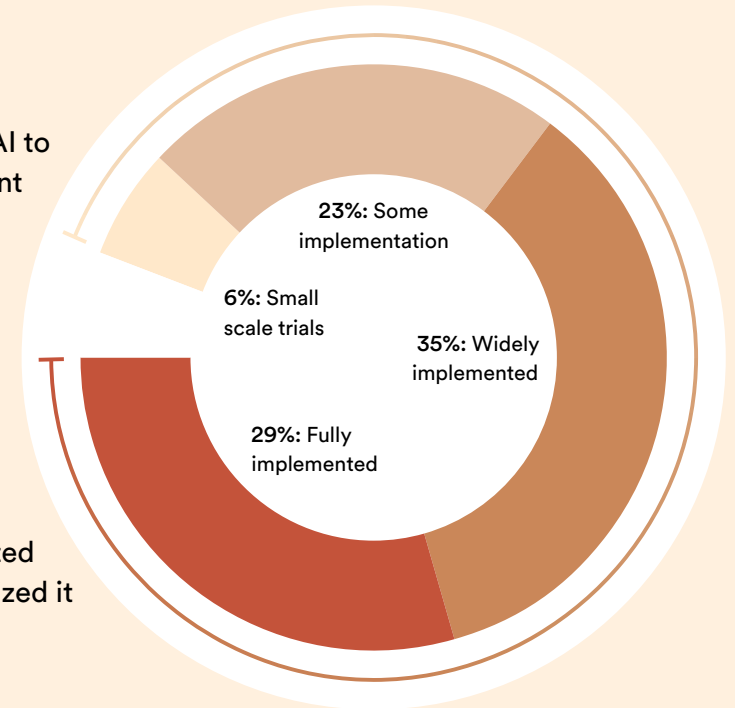
The research focuses primarily on language training, but acts as a useful test case for how AI can be applied across L&D, whether for creating learning content, skills practice or personalization.



Use of AI in corporate language training

94%
are using AI to
some extent

but only
29%
have fully
implemented
and optimized it



Source: EF Corporate Learning Maturity Report 2026

What is maturity and how does it relate to AI?

In the research, the level of development or 'maturity' of training programs is measured based on their content, personalization level, frequency of review, business alignment, and embedding in company culture.

Language program maturity level correlates strongly with business outcomes, including profit, revenue, market expansion, and employee engagement and retention.

Mature programs are also 10x more likely to have fully implemented and optimized AI, and the impacts they see from AI differ significantly.



Companies with high-maturity programs are:

2x
more profitable

2x
more likely to
experience year-on-year
revenue growth

10x
more likely to have fully
implemented AI in their
training program

Source: EF Corporate Learning Maturity Report 2026

Top impacts of AI in language programs



When it comes to learning, the strongest programs integrate AI to improve outcomes rather than to save costs

Low-maturity programs

1. Lower costs (43%)
2. Improved efficiency (38%)
3. Consistent quality (34%)
Faster & personalized feedback (34%)

Low-maturity programs focus on cost-reduction in their AI implementation

Very high maturity programs

1. Improved efficiency (67%)
Higher engagement (67%)
2. Faster & personalized feedback (61%)
3. Better outcomes (60%)
Consistent quality (60%)

High-maturity programs use AI to improve program impact

Effective AI for corporate learning

The question is no longer whether AI is going to be in L&D, but how to maximize its positive impacts. Here are some considerations for HR and L&D leaders when it comes to integrating AI in their learning strategy.

Data quality



Just as a human teacher needs high-quality training to teach effectively, AI for learning is only as effective as the data it is trained on. Many AI solutions are trained on ungoverned internet content, but the most effective AI for learning will be trained on real learning data in large quantities.

Skills-building



Many applications of AI in the workplace act as a substitute for human skills. However, the real power of AI for learning is in scaling proven methods for skills-building. In order to do this effectively, solutions should be grounded in a wider curriculum and proven learning methods.



Data privacy

Vendor-choice is critical to safeguard your organization's data. Ensure your partners have enterprise-level agreements and keep your data within a closed-loop system for sufficient data protection.



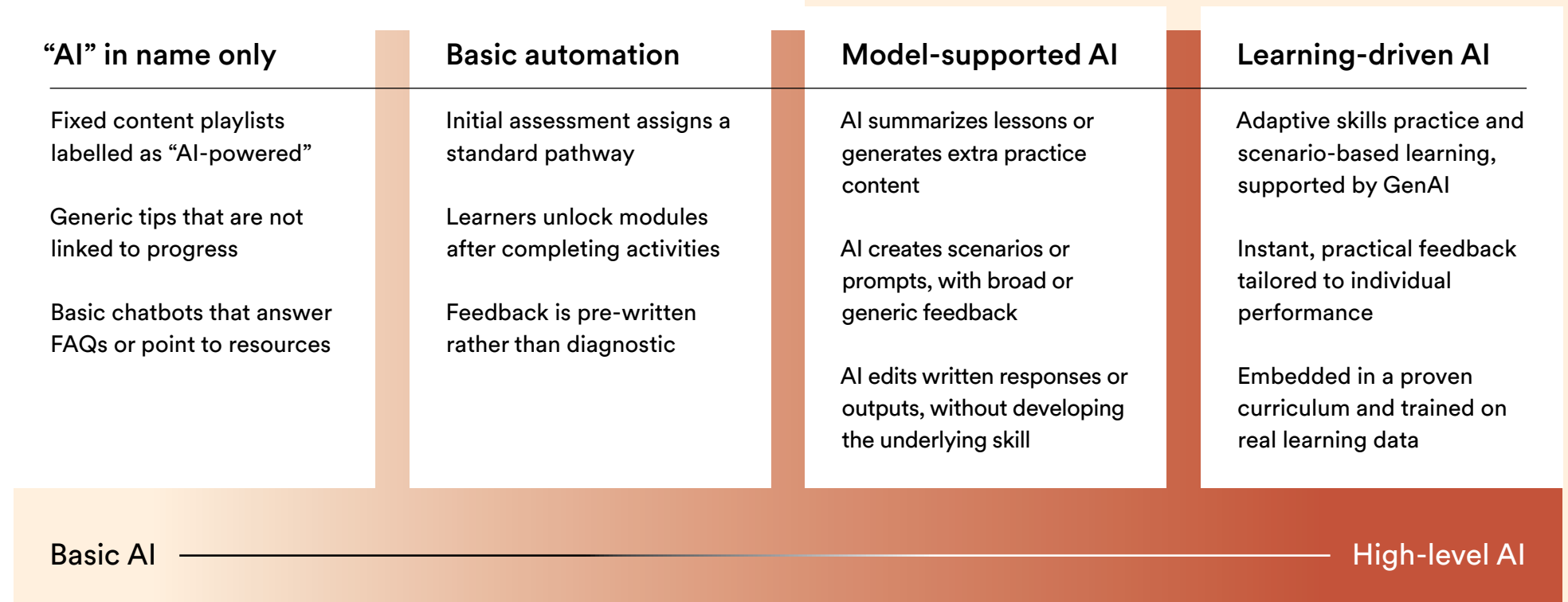
“AI does not change what works in language learning – it makes proven methods scalable, personal, and measurable for every learner.”

– Dr. Christopher McCormick, Chief Academic Officer, Efekta Education



AI capability spectrum

As AI becomes a default feature in learning technology, it is increasingly important to recognise that not all learning solutions labeled “AI” offer the same level of capability, particularly when it comes to learning impact.



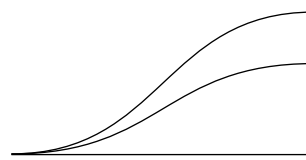
Evaluating AI solutions

Six key dimensions for a holistic assessment



#1

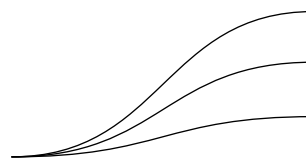
Personalized insights & feedback



- Does the AI tailor training to individual skills, goals, and performance?
- Can it adjust content dynamically based on learner engagement or assessment results?
- Is it curating up-to-date, role-specific, culturally appropriate content?

#2

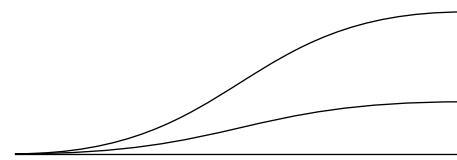
Analytics & impact measurement



- Can the system identify current and future skill gaps across teams?
- Does it link learning outcomes to job performance or business KPIs?
- Does it support structured evaluation frameworks (e.g. learning, behavior, results)?

#3

Automation & efficiency



- Does it automate repetitive tasks like course assignment and reporting?
- Can it support global teams and diverse learning needs efficiently?
- Is it compatible with existing HRIS, LMS, or LXP platforms?

Evaluating AI solutions

Six key dimensions for a holistic assessment



#4

Ethical use & transparency

- Are there safeguards against algorithmic bias in recommendations or assessments?
- How is employee data handled, stored, and protected?
- Is there a clear role for HR to supervise and intervene when needed?

#5

Strategic alignment

- Does the solution help map current workforce capabilities and align them with future needs?
- Can it guide internal mobility and succession planning?
- Does it align with your company's culture, values, and strategic goals?

#6

Change management & adoption

- Is the interface intuitive for both learners and administrators?
- Does the vendor offer onboarding, training, and ongoing support?
- Does it help employees build confidence in using AI tools themselves?

What to do next

Put this into practice with three simple steps to leverage AI for high-impact corporate training programs



Define the outcome you want to improve

Improving learning outcomes should always be the main priority when it comes to implementing AI in learning. Cost savings may follow, but when they become the main objective, quality can suffer. Define a clear AI strategy and keep the focus on scaling effective learning methods and skill-building.



Evaluate the solution's approach to learning impact

Use the evaluation framework and key pointers in this playbook to assess whether the AI is likely to improve learning quality in practice.



Confirm it works in practice

Many learning providers describe similar AI capabilities, but the experience can differ significantly in reality. Where possible, test solutions for yourself and compare the same use cases across providers, such as roleplay practice, feedback quality, and how the learning journey adapts over time.

EF Corporate Learning is the world's first and largest corporate language training provider. Delivering language training for organizations since 1965 and with 20+ million learners trained online since 1996, our legacy and global scale are unmatched. Many of the 3,000+ multinational organizations we serve have partnered with us for over 15 years, reporting 3x higher engagement and learning progress than other providers.

