

# TRENDS REPORT 2023

Oh, hello there! Dipping your your toe into 2023? We want to invite you to take a deep dive with us and swim around! The water's fine and there don't seem to be any sharks...a great start!



First, we want to take a brief moment to preach to the choir. If you're reading this, it means you care about Learning, People, and Development as much as we do. And, as you've probably heard, one of THE TOP TRENDS for 2023 is cultivating a strong learning culture. Getting this right is a key to employee well being, retention, and gaining that competitive edge.

Okay, so, 🙌 round of applause 🙌 to all of us for being ahead of that curve! Now, let's unpack this a wee bit further and then take a look at some other top trends...

## The (Ongoing) Case for a Learning Culture:

So, yes, we all know this is super duper (are we still saying that?) important. We don't want to get all soapbox-y, but we just love this stuff.

Here are a few facts and figures that blow our mind:

- ❖ The numbers are in (thanks, [Gallup](#)) and the cost of employees *who are not actively engaged* is 7.8 trillion (yes, with a 'tr') or 11% of the global GDP. \*Gasp\* One [study](#) of 3 million workers highlighted career development as a top driver of employee engagement.
- ❖ We love [Udemy's](#) breakdown of trends and one of their key takeaways: Employees are eager to learn and don't want to 'stay in their lane.' They want to expand to broader categories including soft skills (focusing on communication, teamwork, and conflict mitigation), tech skills, and operations.
- ❖ A PwC survey found that 77% of global workers are ready to learn new skills or completely retrain, and 74% see training as a matter of personal responsibility.
- ❖ The World Economic Forum knows a thing or two, and they've found that a lot of upcoming training will be delivered internally, according to 39% of employers. Founder and Executive Chairman, Professor Klaus Schwab, added that this will be supplemented by online learning platforms (16% of training) and external consultants (11% of training).
- ❖ IYKYK but we couldn't help but include this because it's SO critical: Unfortunately, all learning experiences are not created equal and diagnosing the skills gap and prescribing the right learning requires a top down approach. Leadership buy in, employee preferences, and delivery method are the details that will make or break.

## Strong Leaders: They're where it's at.

This may sound like we're singing another old tune, but the reality is that the workplace is changing at the speed of light and if we don't have good leaders to direct the spaceship...we're actually just doomed.

Here are some important trends for those leading us into the future:

- ❖ Leaders need to practice and strengthen their 'soft skills' (we call them [power skills](#)). Being emotionally intelligent and able empathize with employees, navigating change, communicating with excellence, and engaging and investing in a learning culture are top of the list.
- ❖ It's critical that leaders prioritize and pave the way for reskilling and upskilling their employees. According to [Gartner](#), over 30% of the skills required three years ago will soon be obsolete.
- ❖ The proof is in the pudding: [Leaders are responsible](#) for 70% of variance in employee engagement. So, if you want to adjust the engagement levels of your workforce, leadership is your first stop.
- ❖ Good leadership includes good project management. This means being able to work across teams and spark innovation while staying on deadlines. [Udemy](#) highlights that project management as a *practice* is the top consumed skill in the operations category.
- ❖ Glassdoor found that organizations that invest in a strong candidate experience improve the quality of new hires by 70% (whoa, that's a lot). In times of uncertainty, investing in candidate and employee experience becomes even MORE important.
- ❖ And, yes, we are shouting the importance of prioritizing a learning culture from the rooftops so all leadership can hear us: Companies with a strong learning culture and a high level of L&D maturity [are](#):
  - 2.6x more likely to exceed financial targets
  - 7.2x more likely to engage and retain employees
  - 20x more likely to help employees build skills for career growth

## Good Communication: You guessed it – It's still super important.

Is this our jam (haha, get it)? Yes, yes it is. Are we ALWAYS going to think this is important? Yes, yes we are. We've been beating this drum since we opened our doors back in 2014 and did a deep dive on our favorite topic, soft skills, in our 2021 [trend report](#). So, we won't bore you with it all over again, but here's a key takeaway we LOVE:

*Out of the top 10 consumed business skills overall,  
5 of them focus either on methods of communication or leadership:*

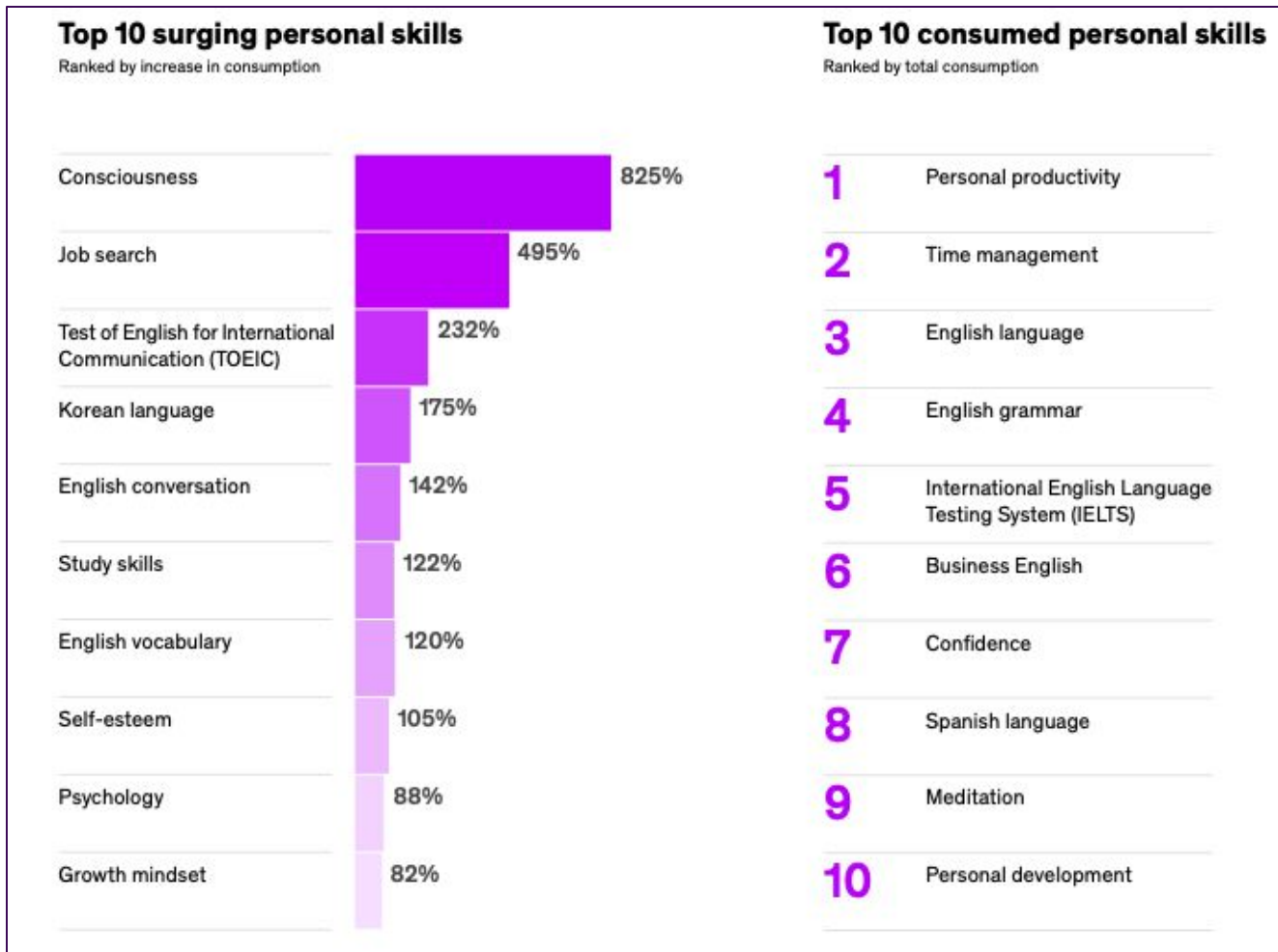
- **Communication Skills**
- **Leadership**
- **Business communication**
- **Meetings**
- **Management skills**

Source: [Udemy](#)

# Personal Productivity and Time Management

As we continue to emerge from the pandemic and workplaces experiment with updated options for work/life balance, we're seeing an uptick in the necessity of good personal management.

- ❖ Okay, so, what is 'personal management'? It means we all have a boss that lives inside our head and we want her to be efficient, realistic, compassionate, and trustworthy.
- ❖ Know thyself! If you are not sure what your work style is, get curious! You might like to explore how you break up your work time and breaks throughout the day, how you set daily and long-term goals, and how you keep track of your to-do list. It's also super important to know how you decompress - what actually works for you? If you're eager to explore this, you're not alone! Personal productivity is the number one most consumed personal skill. Check out some of the others:



## Walk the Walk: A company must have strong lived values to stay competitive.

Employees care more than ever about a company's values, often reflected in their DEI programs, investments, and initiatives. Having decent benefits and free lunch Fridays isn't enough to create employee commitment and belonging, which are the key indicators of an employee's likelihood of staying the course. Coupled with this, we see that a company's activism and transparency drives organizational investment.

Let's look at some important trends:

- ❖ Many companies are jumping on board to initiate more company-wide DEI programs. That's great! However, we know that nothing actually changes if these elements aren't present: Buy-in from the top down, accountability (what are the goals and who is overseeing their implementation), and we think it's also imperative to offer compensation to those who are organizing and leading ERGs.
- ❖ In a [survey](#) of HR and DEI practitioners, 81% reported that the vast majority of people believe that DEI initiatives are beneficial to their organizations. Yet, very few people (34%) report having enough resources to support their DEI initiatives. Furthermore, nearly 60% of companies reported not having any DEI specialist role, 40% said they are investing in building out the specialized expertise needed for successful equity & inclusion programs. These roles also tend to be new: 80% of DEI roles have been hired in the last 18 months.
- ❖ On the whole, while strides have been taken, companies can do more to support caretakers and working parents
- ❖ Nearly half (48%) of organizations [surveyed](#) have at least one employee resource group (ERG), and they are most often centered on identities like race/ethnicity, gender identity, and LGBTQIA+ status. There is much further to go to hit necessary inclusion marks.

## GoldJam Snapshot: Our 2022 Trends

Now that the eggnog is finished and the constant holiday music has stopped (#grateful), we've been making a different list and checking it twice:

We want to share some of our internal trends:

- ❖ Our hottest workshop topics of 2022 were *Public Speaking & Presentation Skills* (including *Pitching*), *Bias & Inclusion* (including *Male Allies* and *Women In Leadership*), and *Storytelling*. Our runner up umbrella topic was Internal Communication (sessions like *Effective Communication*, *Feedback*, and *Difficult Conversations*).
- ❖ We brought our *Male Allies* and *Bias & Inclusion* workshops to more leadership groups than ever before. Also, of note, the topic of *Male Allies* spanned a wider range of industries this year, signaling that more companies are ready to have open conversations about gender bias and its impacts at work. We're very heartened by this!
- ❖ We noticed an increase in all types of training (from internal communication and inclusion practices) for junior and aspiring leaders. We love working with these ambitious, open-minded, and information-hungry cohorts!
- ❖ *Public Speaking & Presentation Skills* and *Storytelling* were wildly popular this year, featuring customized sessions such as *Speaking With Influence & Authenticity* and *Selling Your Ideas*. We also had unprecedented interest in *Storytelling*, including a thrilling session with Olympic and Paralympic athletes at Team USA's DC Experience Week about telling your story to potential sponsors. Our hunch is that as that the post-pandemic trend to build a more sustainable, compassionate, and emotionally intelligent workplace allows space for our human need to share and listen to stories. This fosters true connection, commitment, and ultimately creates that x factor, that je ne sais quoi, that competitive edge.



# THANKS FOR READING!

We're as hungry as ever to help you dig into your company's communication challenges and we always love to hearing from you! Don't hesitate to contact us with questions, reactions, or your Wordle score. You can reach us by email at [jen@goldjamcreative.com](mailto:jen@goldjamcreative.com) or give us a ring at 347-903-5679.

You can also keep in touch by [signing up](#) for our bi-weekly newsletter to get topical tips and tricks, follow us on [IG](#) and [LinkedIn](#), or take a peek at our [Forbes Column](#).



*~Happy New Year~  
from us and ours  
to you and yours!*