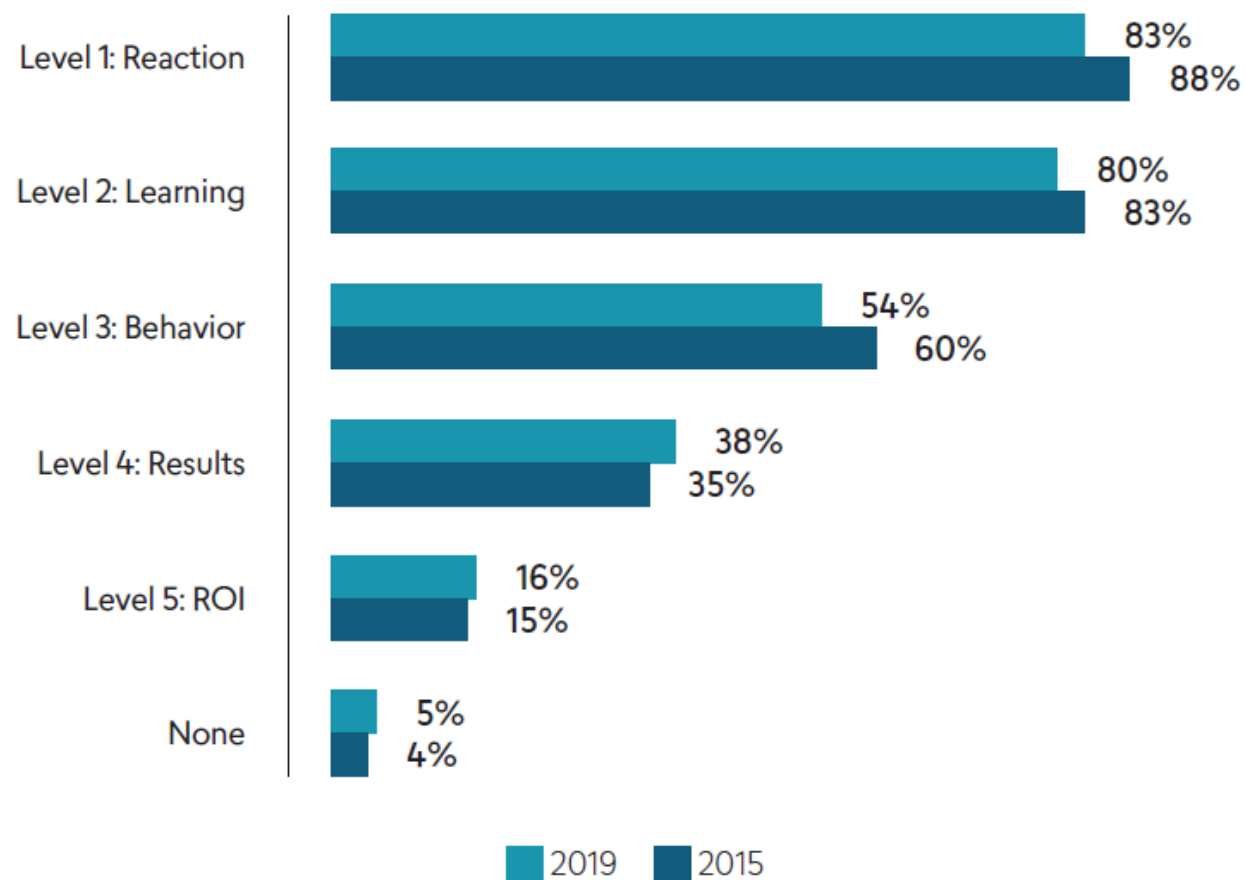# About the Study

May 2019 survey

- 779 respondents

- 50 percent of respondents were at a managerial level or above

- 69 percent of respondents were from organizations with fewer than 10,000 employees

The Five Levels of Evaluation

- **Level 1 (Reaction):** Learner reaction (for example, smile sheets)

- **Level 2 (Learning):** The skills and knowledge learners have acquired (for example, knowledge quizzes)

- **Level 3 (Behavior):** The extent to which learners are using their new skills on the job (for example, on-the-job observation or follow-up surveys)

- **Level 4 (Results):** Effects to the organization's mission (for example, sales quotas, customer satisfaction ratings)

- **Level 5 (ROI):** Return on investment (financial results)
  - Calculated as net benefit (benefit minus costs) divided by program costs, multiplied by 100

Use of the Five Levels of Evaluation

Please select all the levels of evaluation that are used to any extent in your organization.

Level	2019	2015
Level 1: Reaction	83%	88%
Level 2: Learning	80%	83%
Level 3: Behavior	54%	60%
Level 4: Results	38%	35%
Level 5: ROI	16%	15%
None	5%	4%

2019   2015

4
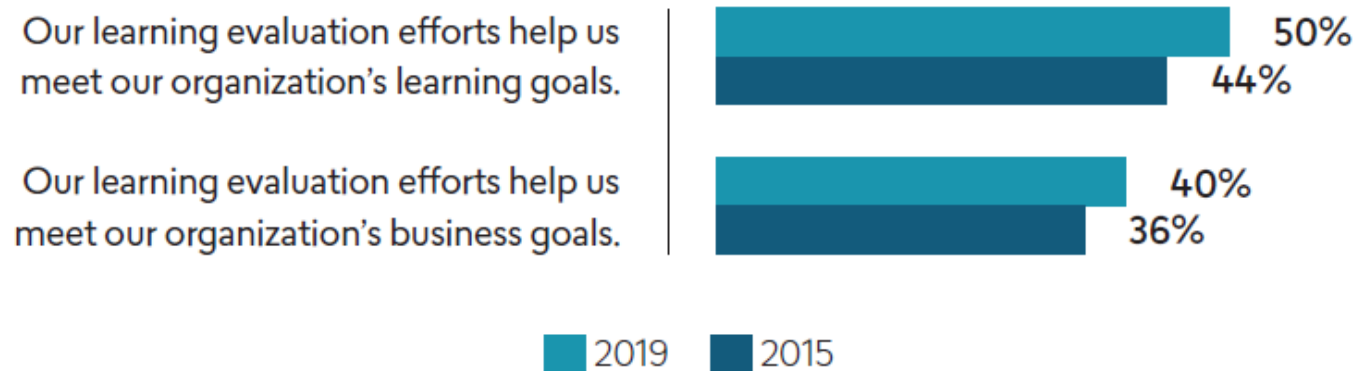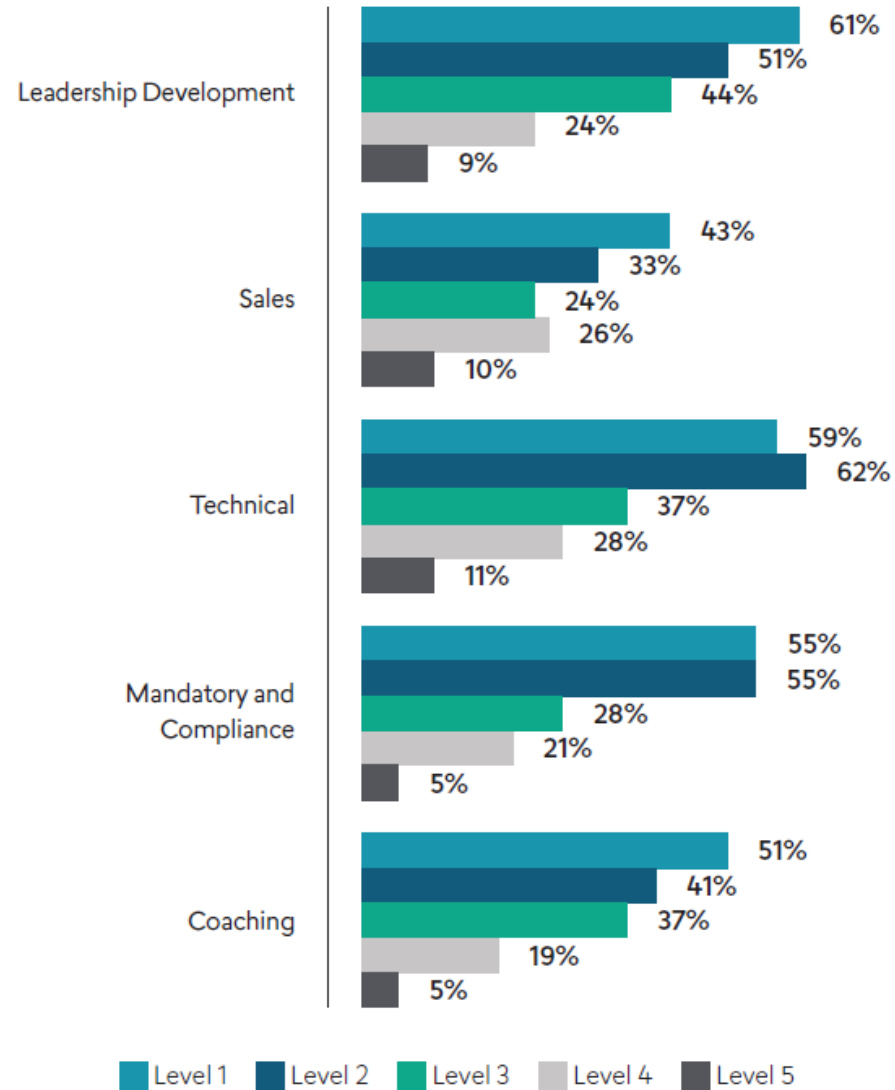
Average Evaluation Use by Delivery Method

What percentage of learning programs that are delivered using the following methods are evaluated at each of the five levels?
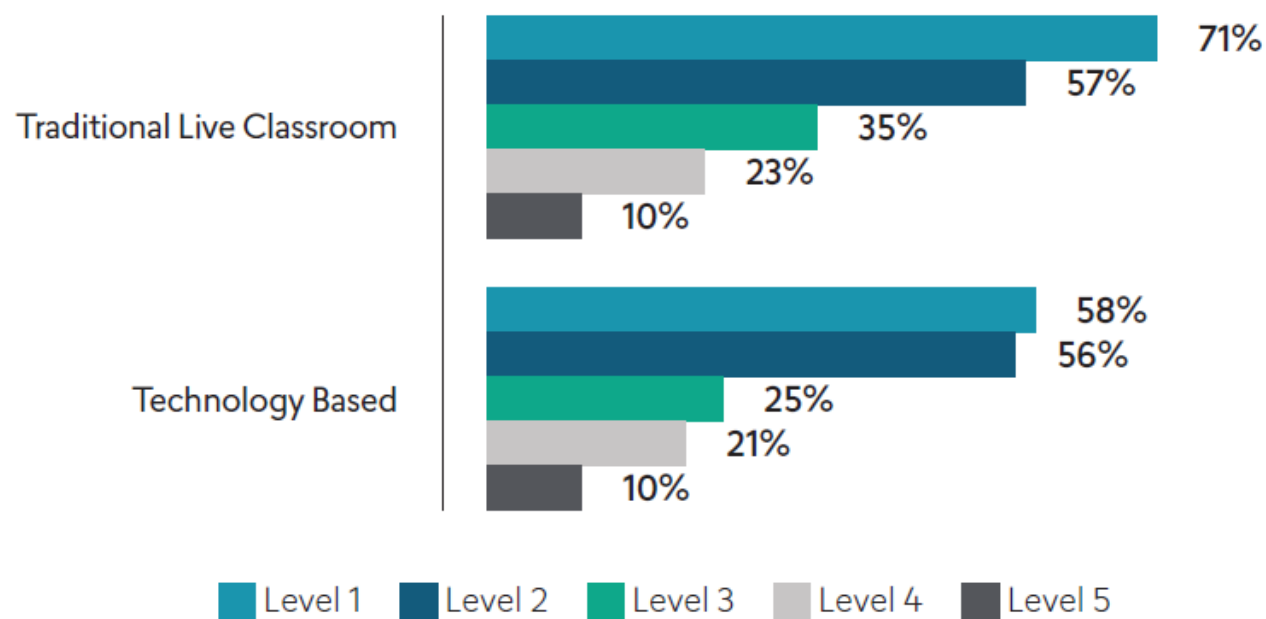
Traditional Live Classroom
- 71%
- 57%
- 35%
- 23%
- 10%

Technology Based
- 58%
- 56%
- 25%
- 21%
- 10%

Level 1 · Level 2 · Level 3 · Level 4 · Level 5

Approaches to Level 3

If your organization uses Level 3 evaluation data, which of the following approaches does it use to measure on-the-job behavior change? (Select all that apply.)

Approach	Percentage
Observation on the job	65%
Follow-up surveys of participants	60%
Performance records monitoring	45%
Follow-up surveys of participants' supervisors	45%
Work review	43%
Interviews with participants	40%

Approaches to Level 3

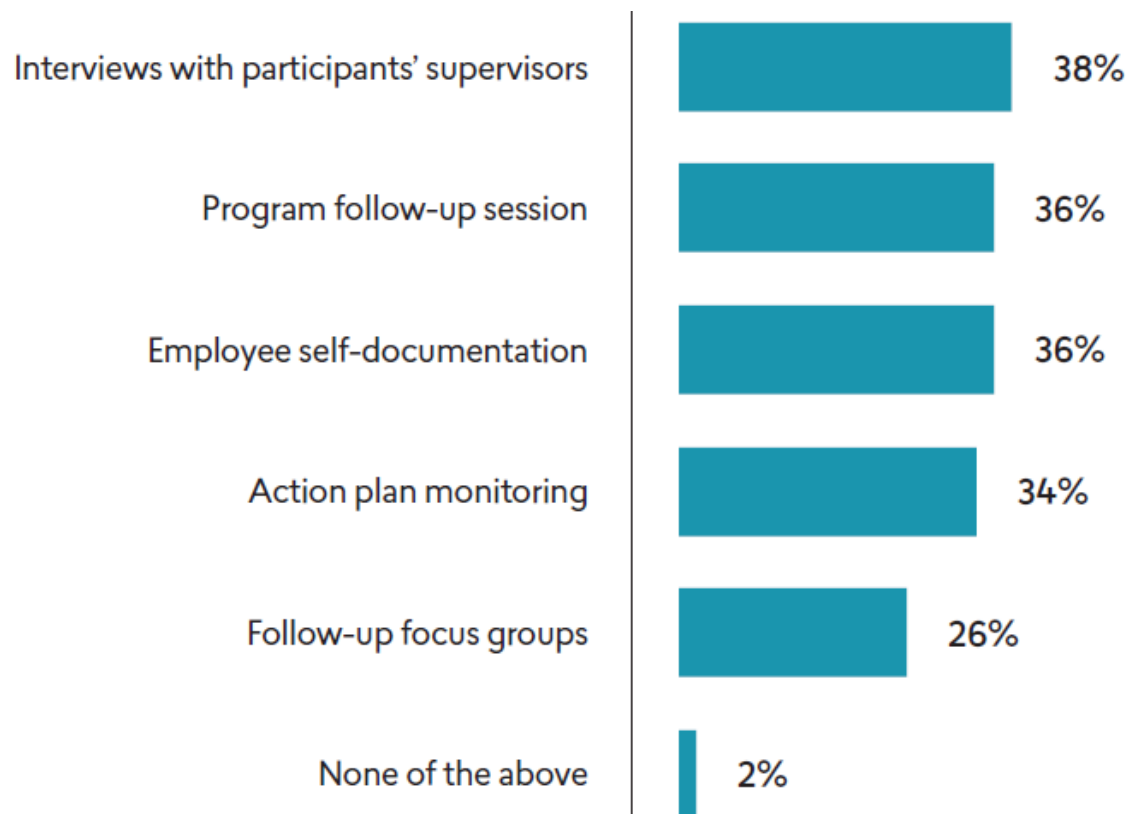*If your organization uses Level 3 evaluation data, which of the following approaches does it use to measure on-the-job behavior change? (Select all that apply.)*

Interviews with participants' supervisors	38%
Program follow-up session	36%
Employee self-documentation	36%
Action plan monitoring	34%
Follow-up focus groups	26%
None of the above	2%

Approaches to Level 4

If your organization uses Level 4 evaluation data, which of the following approaches does it use to measure results? (Select all that apply.)

Approach	Percentage
Productivity indicators	59%
Actual business or mission outcomes	55%
Business leader or supervisor perception of impact	52%
Customer satisfaction	49%
Learner perceptions of impact	47%
Employee satisfaction	47%
Turnover and promotion	43%
None of the above	5%
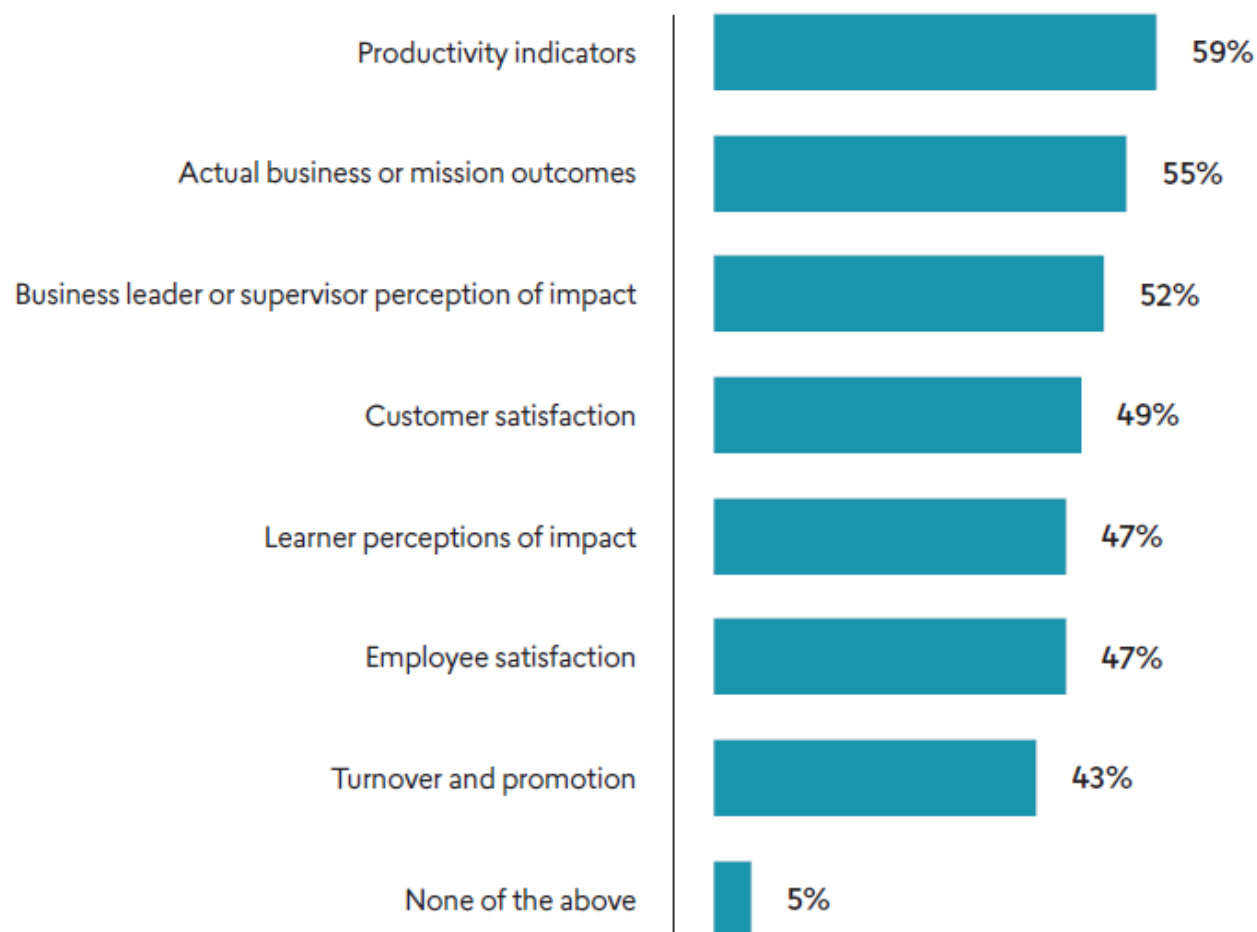
Data Sources

What sources does your organization use to collect evaluation data? (Select all that apply.)

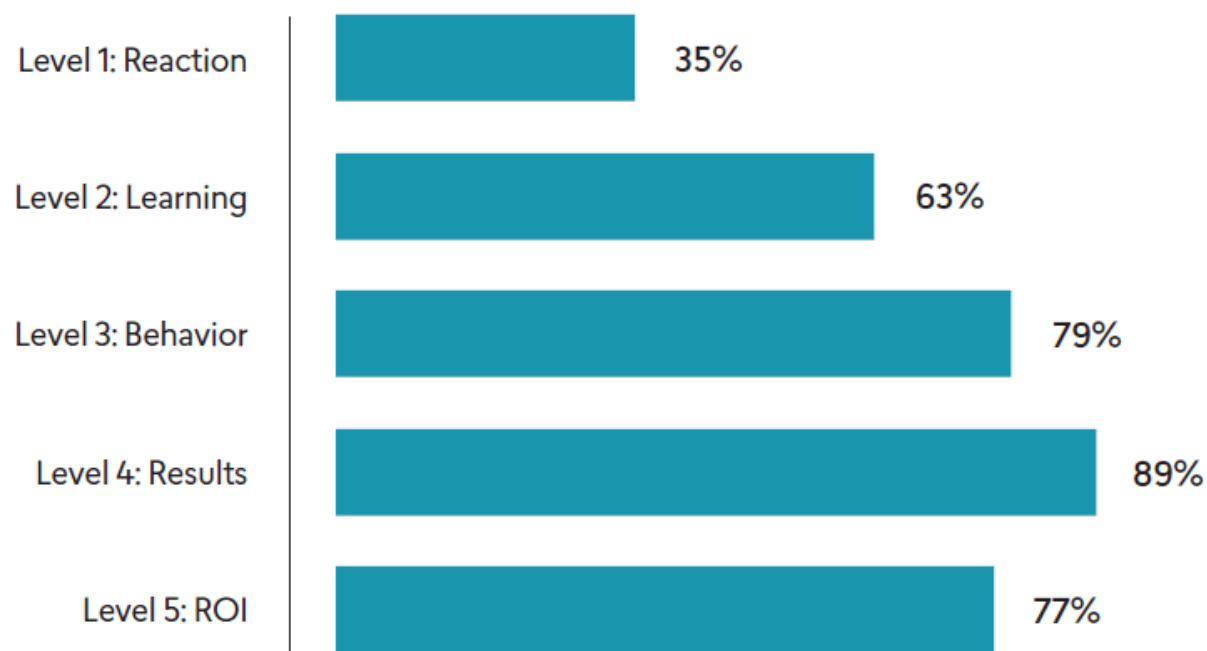| Data Source	Percentage
Online surveys	75%
Our learning management system	56%
Performance reviews	42%
Paper surveys	37%
Business data from the organization or individual units	36%
In-person interviews with employees	34%
In-person interviews with managers	31%
Emailed surveys (not online)	21%
Other	3%
We do not collect evaluation data	3%
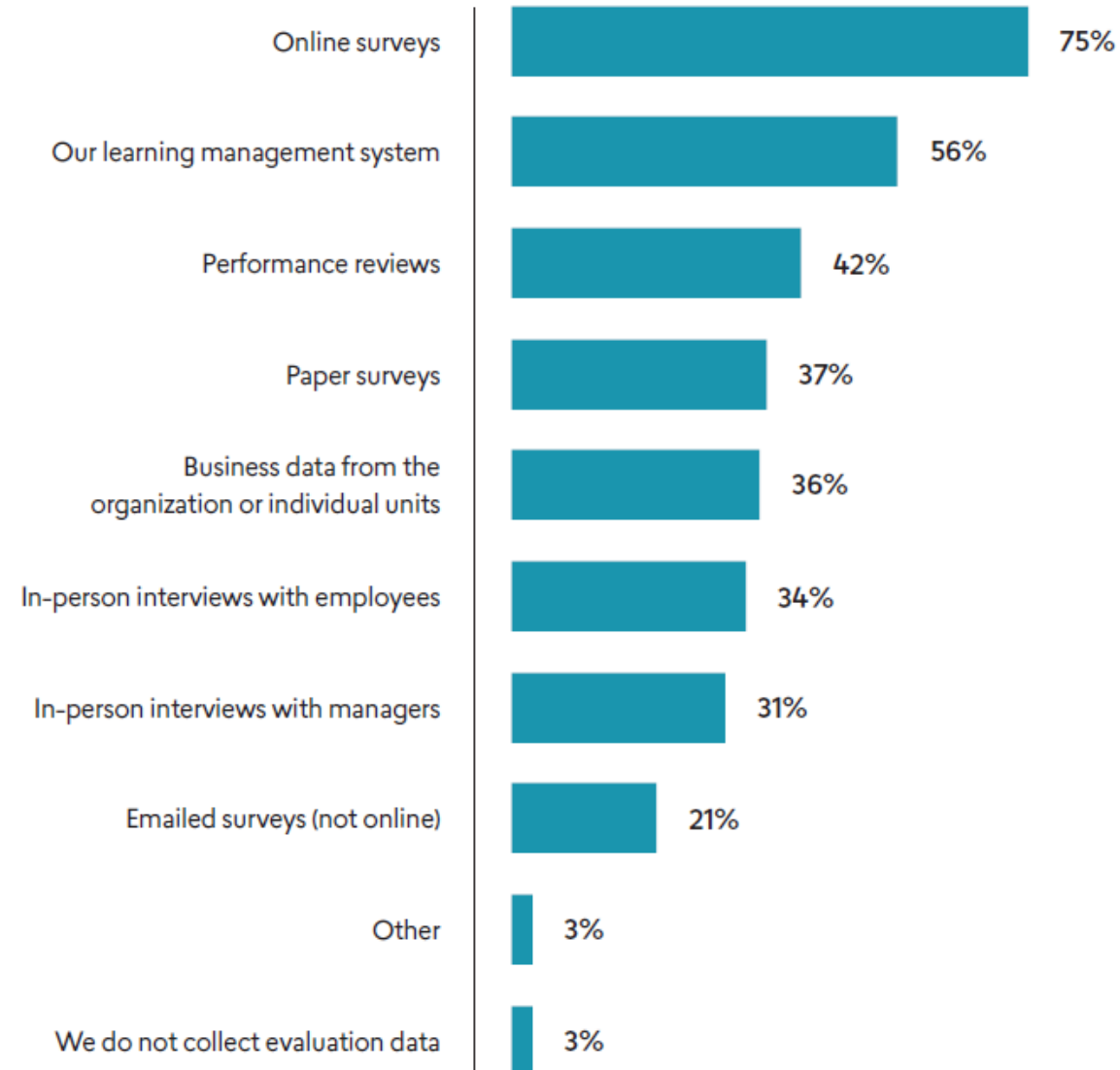
Tools for Managing Evaluation Data

What tools does your organization use to collect or manage evaluation data? (Select all that apply.)

Tool	Percentage
LMS	64%
Spreadsheets	55%
Other platform (non-LMS)	45%
Other	9%
We do not collect evaluation data	3%
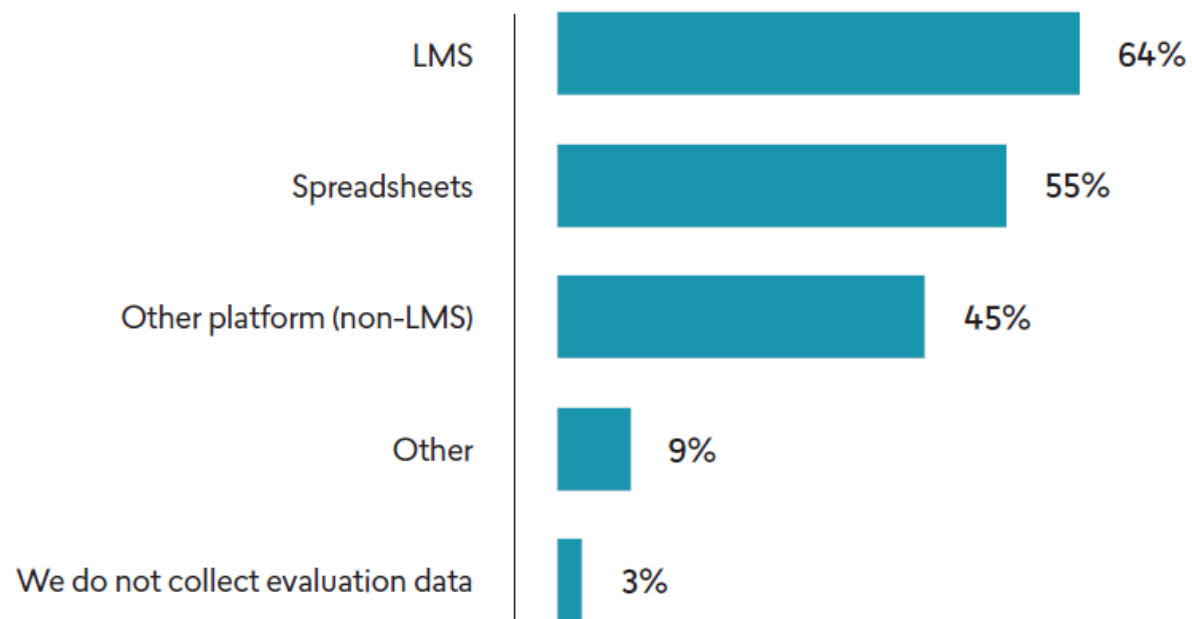
Value of Evaluation to the Organization

How much value does each of the following levels of evaluation have for your organization? (Only responses from participants whose organizations used that level are considered.)
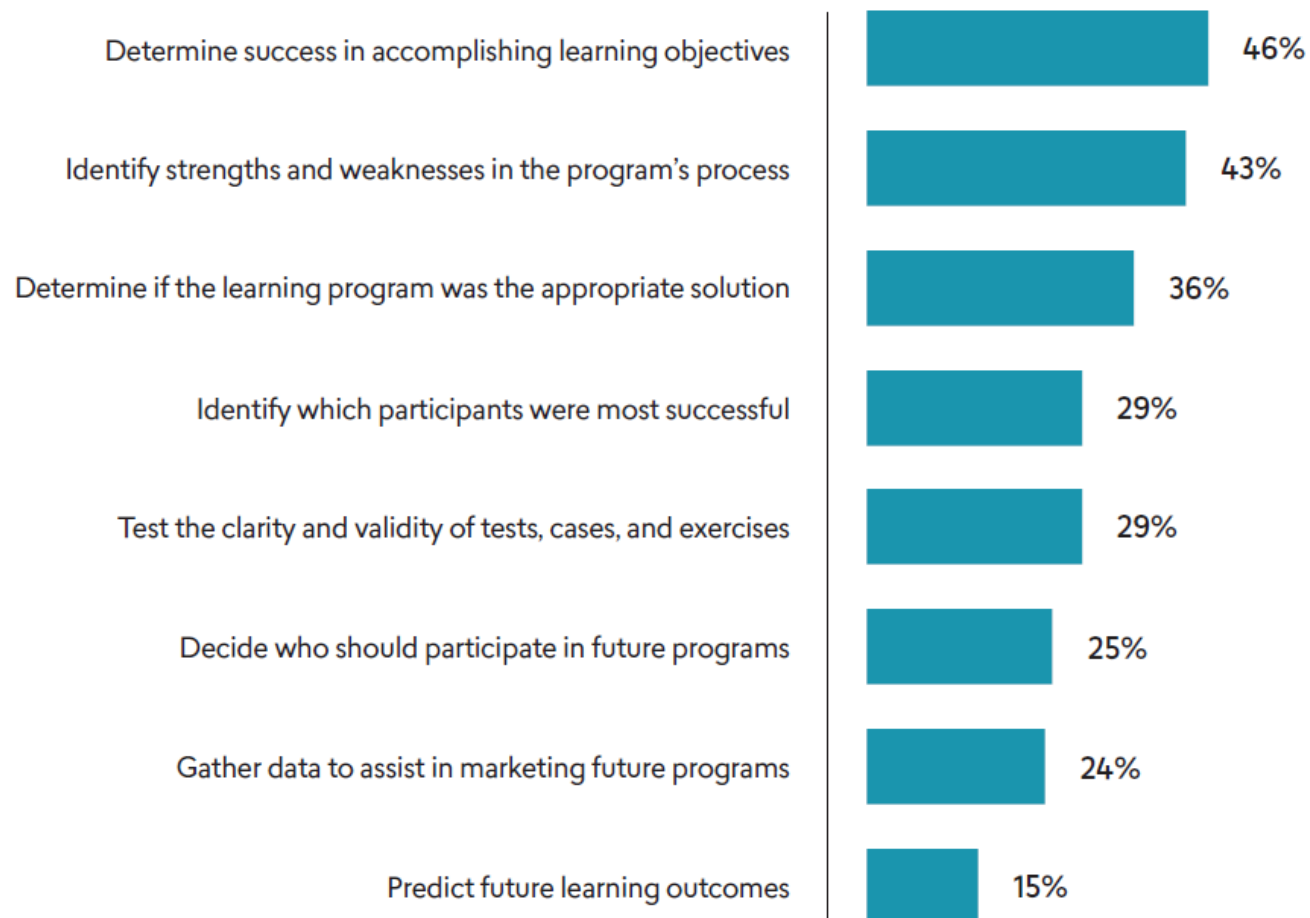
Level 1: Reaction — 35%
Level 2: Learning — 63%
Level 3: Behavior — 79%
Level 4: Results — 89%
Level 5: ROI — 77%

Percent of respondents indicating high or very high value.

Learning Objectives

To what extent do you think your organization's evaluation efforts are successful in accomplishing the following?

Determine success in accomplishing learning objectives	46%
Identify strengths and weaknesses in the program's process	43%
Determine if the learning program was the appropriate solution	36%
Identify which participants were most successful	29%
Test the clarity and validity of tests, cases, and exercises	29%
Decide who should participate in future programs	25%
Gather data to assist in marketing future programs	24%
Predict future learning outcomes	15%

Percent of respondents indicating high or very high extent.

Business Objectives
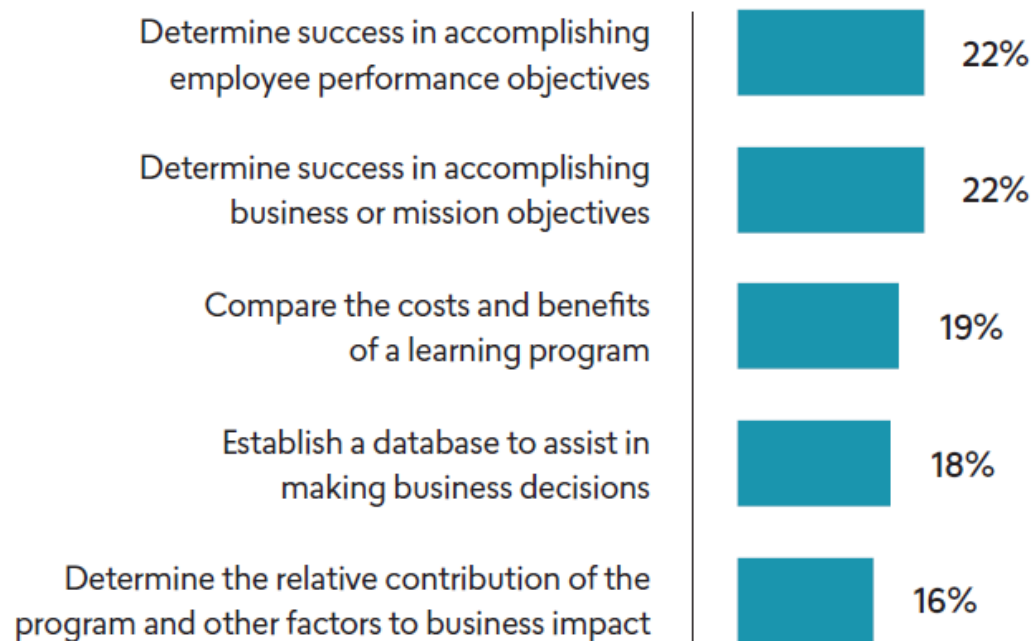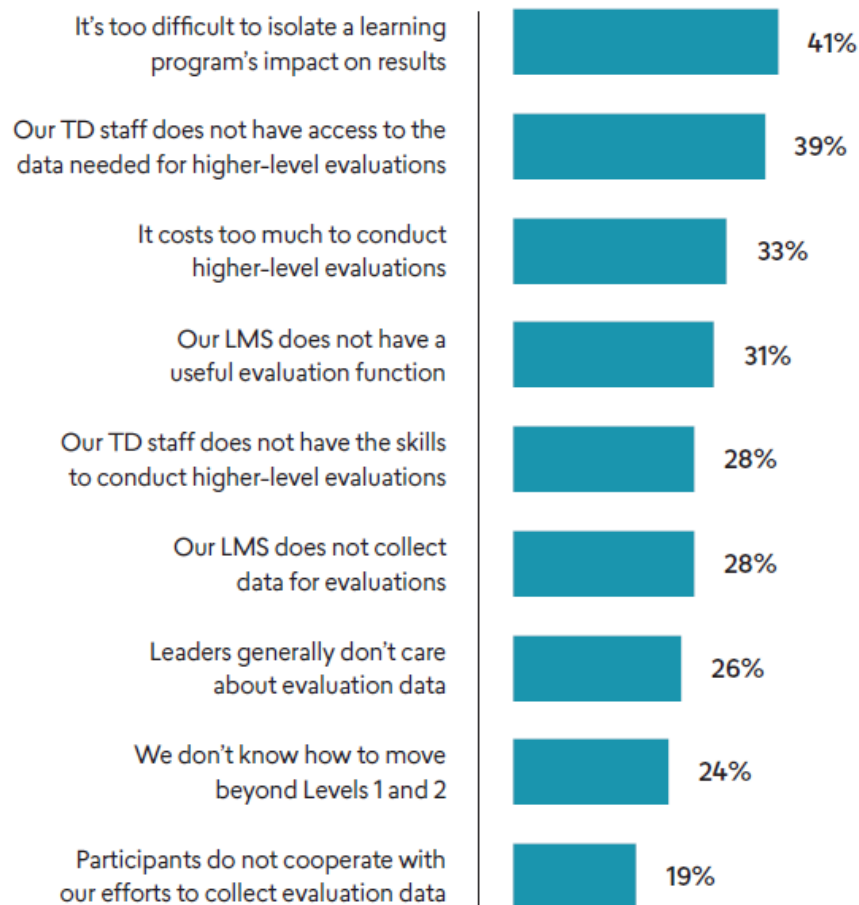
To what extent do you think your organization's evaluation efforts are successful in accomplishing the following performance and business objectives and purposes?

Determine success in accomplishing employee performance objectives	22%
Determine success in accomplishing business or mission objectives	22%
Compare the costs and benefits of a learning program	19%
Establish a database to assist in making business decisions	18%
Determine the relative contribution of the program and other factors to business impact	16%

Percent of respondents indicating high or very high extent.

Barriers to Conducting Evaluation

To what extent are the following barriers to conducting learning evaluations present in your organization?

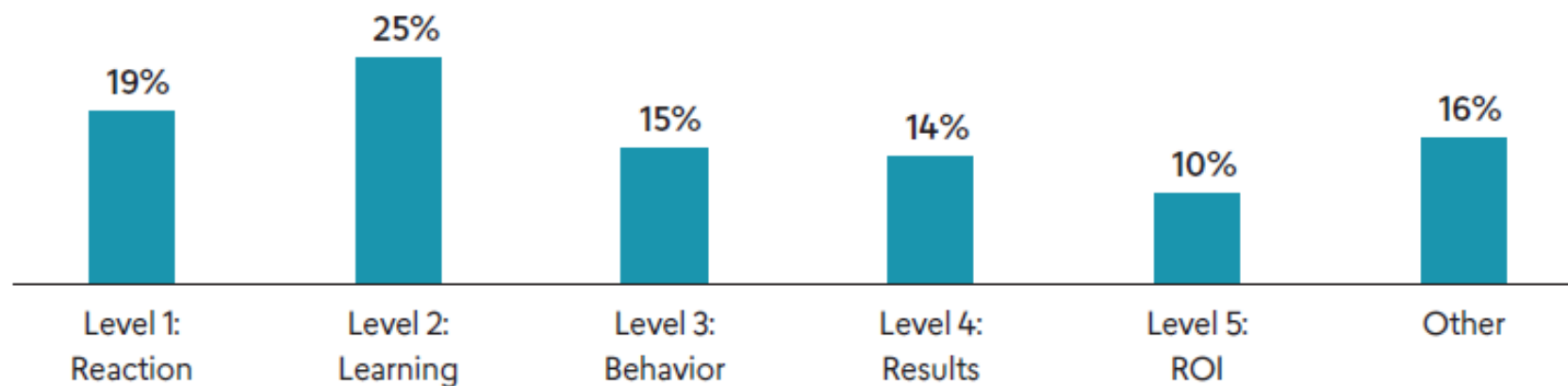| Barrier	Percent
It's too difficult to isolate a learning program's impact on results	41%
Our TD staff does not have access to the data needed for higher-level evaluations	39%
It costs too much to conduct higher-level evaluations	33%
Our LMS does not have a useful evaluation function	31%
Our TD staff does not have the skills to conduct higher-level evaluations	28%
Our LMS does not collect data for evaluations	28%
Leaders generally don't care about evaluation data	26%
We don't know how to move beyond Levels 1 and 2	24%
Participants do not cooperate with our efforts to collect evaluation data	19%

Percent of respondents indicating high or very high extent.

Funding for Evaluation Efforts

Of your organization's total annual budget for talent development, what percentage is spent on evaluation?
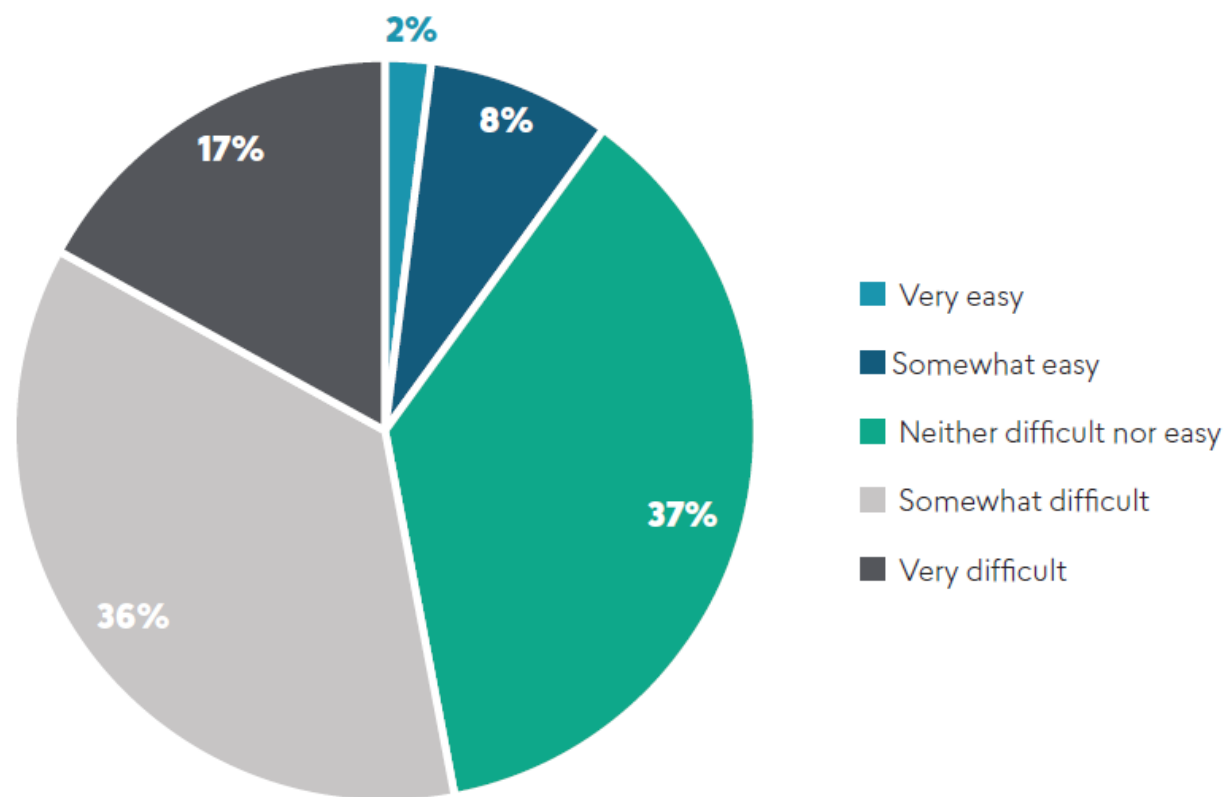
0 to 2 percent	3 to 5 percent	6 to 10 percent	11 to 20 percent	More than 20 percent
23%	26%	21%	14%	16%
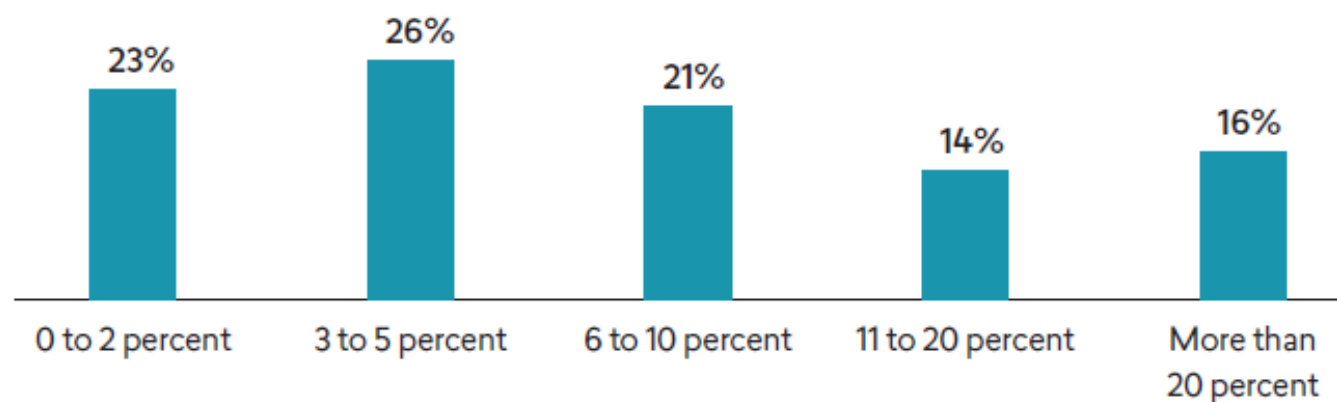
Average Distribution of Funding by Evaluation Level

Bar chart:
- Level 1: Reaction — 19%
- Level 2: Learning — 25%
- Level 3: Behavior — 15%
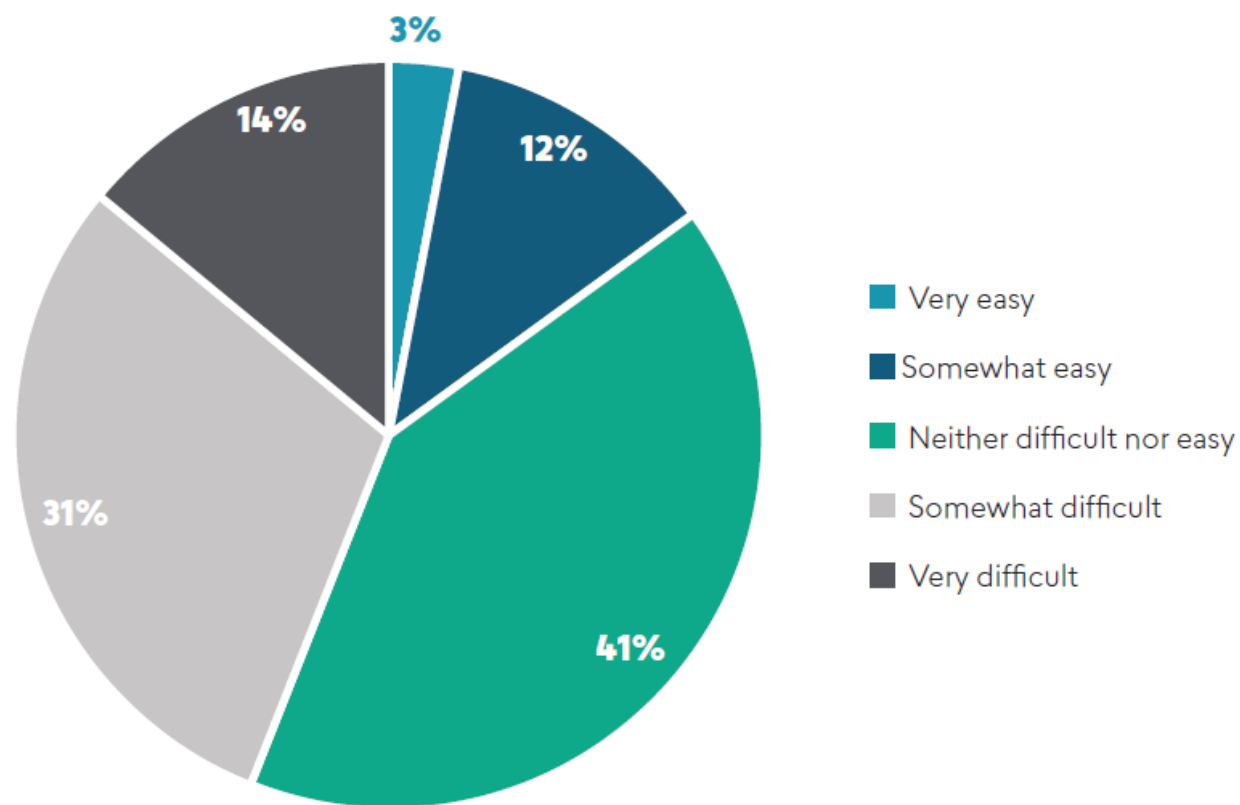- Level 4: Results — 14%
- Level 5: ROI — 10%
- Other — 16%

Attracting Staff With Evaluation Skills

How difficult or easy do you find it to attract employees with the necessary skills and competencies to conduct learning program evaluations?

Pie chart:
- Very easy: 2%
- Somewhat easy: 8%
- Neither difficult nor easy: 37%
- Somewhat difficult: 36%
- Very difficult: 17%

Retaining Staff With Evaluation Skills

How difficult or easy do you find it to retain employees with the necessary skills and competencies to conduct learning program evaluations?

Pie chart legend:
- Very easy — 3%
- Somewhat easy — 12%
- Neither difficult nor easy — 41%
- Somewhat difficult — 31%
- Very difficult — 14%

Recommendations

- Use control groups or estimates to isolate the effects of training
- Show that evaluation is valued by the organization
- Identify programs that would benefit from higher level evaluation

- Develop evaluation skills in existing staff
- Embrace new technologies and evaluation methods