

THE STATE OF TRAINING IN 2018

Architecture, Engineering and Construction



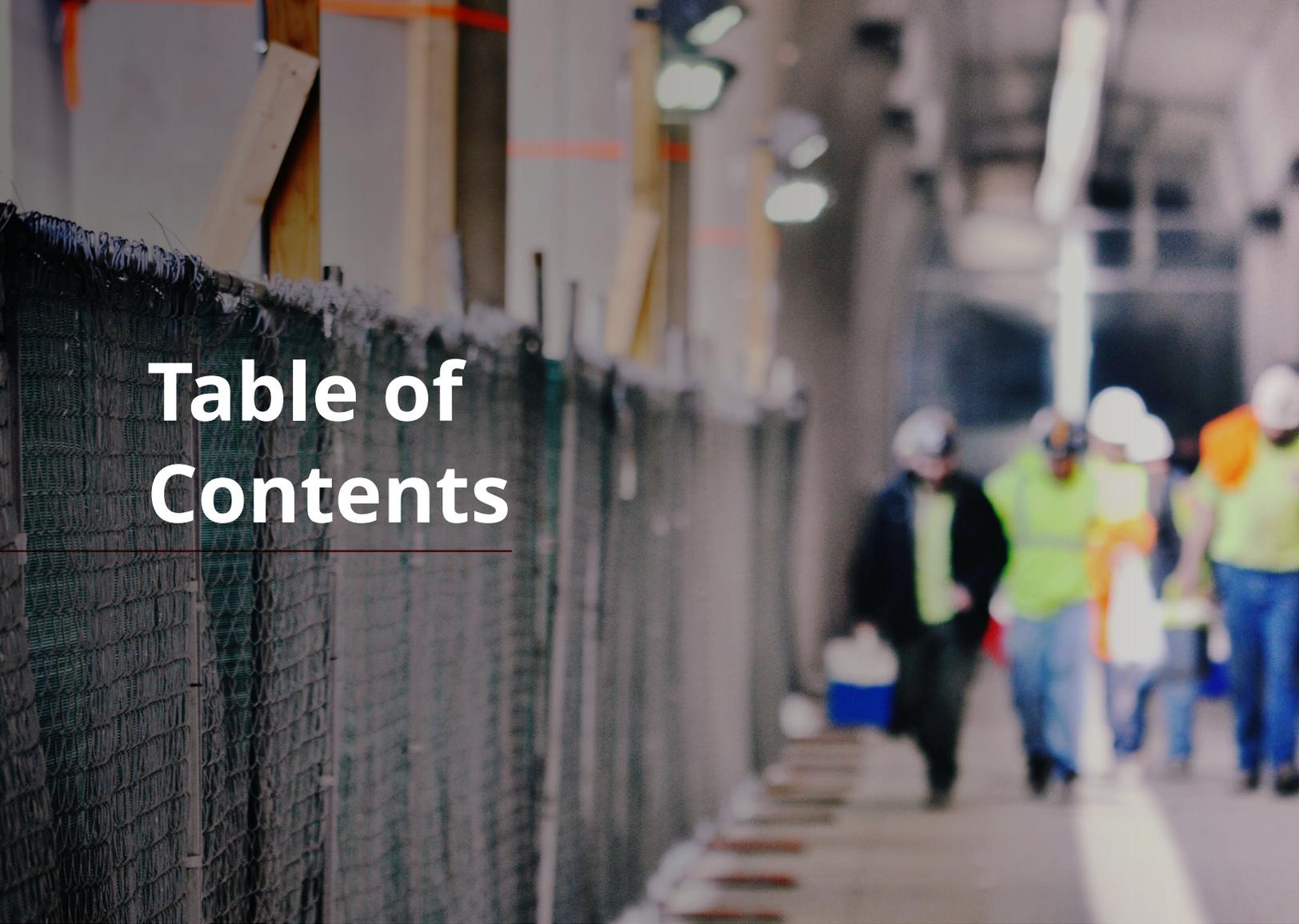


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Our survey results highlight that AEC firms are putting more resources into **professional development** (non-technical skills).

Introduction

Architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) firms face constant change in the form of new safety regulations, materials innovation and industry developments, all of which create opportunities and challenges.

RedVector, a leader in eLearning and performance support, continually tweaks training content and technology solutions to meet the evolving needs of AEC professionals and firms. To this end, we survey leadership in the AEC sector each year to stay on top of primary industry needs and opportunities.

Looking ahead to 2018, our survey revealed that many organizations are being tasked with developing skills across a wide range of disciplines. We received responses from AEC leaders representing over 200,000 employees. Respondents work in wide range of sectors, including:

- Engineering (47.5%).
- Architecture (36%).
- Construction (42.62%).
- Project/program management (39.3%).
- Construction management (41%).
- Operations and maintenance (29.5%).



Approximately **38.6%** of respondents said they plan to increase their spending on training in 2018.

These were just the top five areas covered by respondents, not an exhaustive list, highlighting just how much cross-over there is within organizations. Firms are tasked with working across multiple AEC disciplines, and they are training workers accordingly.

How is Training Prioritized in the AEC Sector?

Our survey results highlight that AEC firms are putting more resources into professional development (non-technical skills).

Budget Allocations

Approximately 38.6% of respondents said they plan to increase their spending on training in 2018. Another 38.6% of those polled said their budgets will remain the same moving into the year. Just 5.26% of AEC firms involved in the study said they expect to spend less on training next year, and 17.54% of respondents said they don't currently know what their budgets will look like next year.

Time Devoted to Training

Most respondents (53.45%) said they give each employee access to between 9 and 40 hours of training time per year. Bookending that time frame, 17% give workers just 1 to 8 hours for training annually while almost 14% empower workers to take on 41 to 80 hours of training on a yearly basis. What particularly stands out is that more than 5% of those polled said they will allow workers to pursue more than 80 hours of training annually.

Assigning Workers to Professional Development

When we asked organizations how many of their full-time employees are devoted to training, more than half said they assigned at least 1 to 5 workers to such a role. Furthermore, 10.5% of companies have



Safety training (17.39%) was the top concern for the year ahead.

6 to 10 employees focusing on training and another 10.5% have more than 10 workers focusing on training.

Spending on Training

There was a fairly balanced approach to spending, with 30% of respondents devoting between \$1 and \$249 annually per employee to training, 28.5% devoting \$25 to \$499 to each worker, each year, and 23% putting \$500 to \$999 per employee per year. With so many organizations falling within those ranges, the extremes really stood out. Approximately 7% said they won't pay for employee training and 10.7% said they'll put more than \$1,000 per worker into development annually. All told, these spending habits show that many companies are willing to invest in continued skills development among their workers.

Top Training Challenges Facing AEC Firms in 2018

We asked survey participants to identify their top challenges heading into 2018. We provided a list of major training areas and respondents ranked them. The results include:

- Approximately 32% of those polled ranked recruitment and retention as their top challenge, with another almost 23% putting it in second or third place. All told, that's more than half putting recruitment and retention of qualified workers as one of their top three challenges for 2018.
- Safety training (17.39%), budget (12.77%) and new business development (12.2%) rounded out the list of most common top concerns for the year ahead.

Blended Learning

Approximately 33.3% of respondents said live training is most effective in their organization, with 31% citing experience as the best teacher and 21.5% pointing to online training as most useful.

- While few organizations ranked compliance and regulations as a top training challenge, 25% identified it as the second most prominent challenge.
- Utilizing new technology also stood out, with almost 30% of respondents putting it in their top three challenges.

How AEC Firms Are Training

Generally speaking, organizations in AEC sectors tend to take a fairly balanced approach to training, but live events do tend to lead the way in terms of getting results. Approximately 33.3% of respondents said live training is most effective in their organization, with 31% citing experience as the best teacher and 21.5% pointing to online training as most useful. Collaboration was also favored by plenty of respondents, garnering 11.7% of the share.

When asked what they'd do in an optimal situation, respondents pointed to a balanced approach in which they would blend live instructors in classrooms, live instructors in virtual classrooms, attending industry events and using online tools. Online tools and live instructors in classrooms were ranked as the methods that would be most highly prioritized, but all four were marked as useful.

Besides performing training in a diverse range of ways, AEC companies are also using training in a variety of formats. We asked respondents what training processes they had in place. When it comes to formal and consistent processes, the leading areas of focus were:



The greatest gaps, where no processes were in place, came in such areas as:

- **New supervisor training (45.45%).**
- **Training metrics/ROI analysis (37.21%).**
- **Formal mentoring programs (31.8%).**

- **New employee orientation (62.22%).**
- **Tracking of staff's professional credentials (45.45%).**
- **Progression training and competency assessments (33.33%).**
- **Individual development plans (31.1%).**

When it came to having some processes in place, the following areas of emphasis stood out:

- **Individual developmental plans (57.78%).**
- **Formal career development paths (54.55%).**
- **Active supervisor/manager coaching (53.49%).**
- **Succession planning (46.51%).**

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- **Training metrics/ROI analysis (37.21%).**
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Moving Into Another Year

As firms work to serve a wide range of specializations, training employees in a variety of ways and running into an array of challenges and skills gaps, RedVector will be there to provide the very best in training content, technology and performance support solutions to help them meet their goals.



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