

# THRIVE

# The future of skills

## How to adopt an agile skills strategy from the ground up

thrivelearning.com

The screenshot displays the THRIVE learning platform interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the THRIVE logo and links for 'Learn', 'Explore', and 'Dashboard'. The main content is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'Learn', features a sidebar with 'Overview', 'Goals', and 'Skills' (the active section). Below this, a list of skills is shown with progress bars: Leadership (66%), Time Management, Interpersonal Skills, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Conflict Resolution, Mentoring, Budgeting, and Risk Management. The right column features a 'Leadership' course card. It shows the current level as 'Advanced' and a 'Set target level?' option. A progress indicator shows 66% completion. Below this, it lists the skill 'Leadership', a due date of '11 October 2023', and '16 people' enrolled. A description reads: 'Improve sales your leadership skills. Make better decisions & drive your tea'. A 'View 3 tasks' link is also present. Below the course card, there is an 'In progress' section with two video thumbnails. The first is titled 'The role of communication in effective leadership' and was posted '2 months ago' with 3,273 views. The second is titled 'Creating a visionary culture' and was posted '3 weeks ago' with 1,273 views.

# Why should you care about the skills conversation?

## Let's set the scene.

CIPD's Winter 2021 Labour Market Outlook research found 46% of employers reported 'hard to fill' vacancies, with 44% of those implementing upskilling as the solution.

However, according to LinkedIn's latest Workplace Learning Report 49% of learning professionals say executives are concerned

that employees don't have the right skills to execute business strategy.

The war for talent and the need for rapid upskilling combined with rising concern from business leaders has highlighted the immediate need for more skills transparency and a clear way to link the skills strategy to business outcomes – which employers are still looking for.



“The confusion and lack of transparency in our industry is growing; with never ending acronyms, hidden & additional costs and ongoing debates between analysts trying to bucket different vendors' empty promises.

It's time to cut through the noise and simplify the conversation to focus on more transparency and solving the problem in hand.

With the global learning lens focused on closing the ever-widening skills gap, we're turning traditional ways of thinking on its head and adding more technology to your ecosystem isn't the answer.

Our vision is one of an organic, agile skills strategy that is ever living and breathing allowing you to identify who the experts are within your business and understand the new and emerging skills that inform future L&D decisions.”

**Sean Reddington**  
**CEO of THRIVE**



# Skills are ever-changing

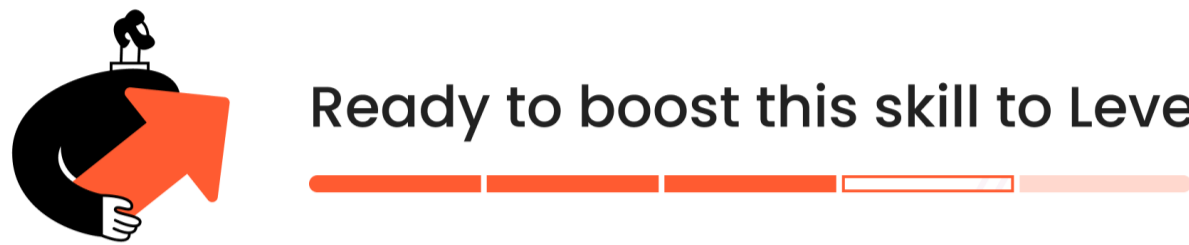
The world we live in is constantly moving. Skills are changing at an accelerating rate and businesses are in a race to keep up. But the gap keeps widening, **Gartner HR Research** found 58% of today's workforce will need new skills to do their jobs successfully by 2030.

It's true. The way we do things is constantly improving, and as that happens new tools and ways of working are introduced. How aware are businesses of the areas where skills are changing most rapidly, and how able are they to support their teams in that growth?

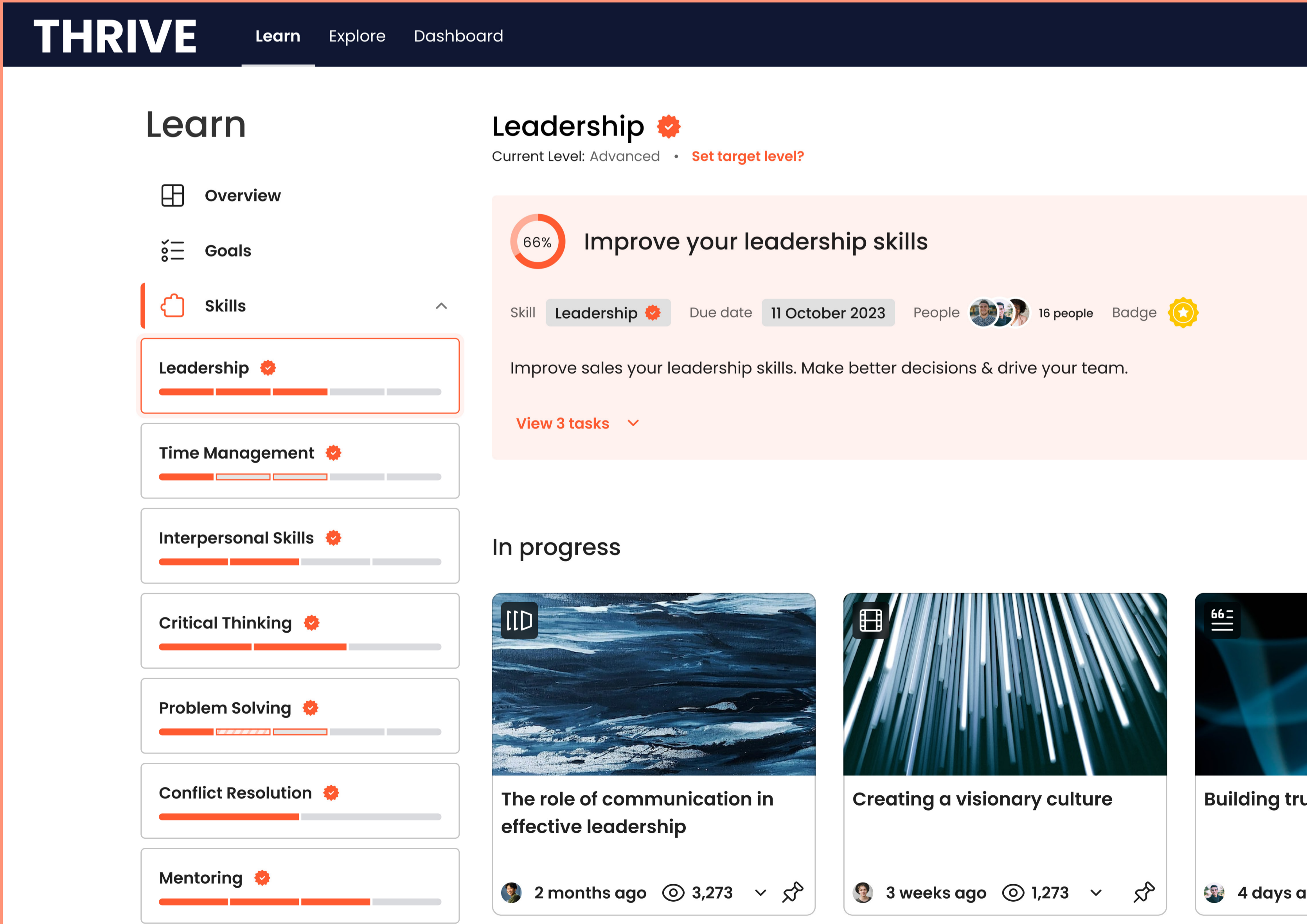
Right now, we're seeing a significant shift in the relationship between employers and employees, with the pandemic inspiring a revolution in working patterns, and a skills shortage encouraging employers to pay more attention to the wellbeing of their teams. There's an increasing awareness that caring for team members' individual needs engages great talent, contributes to more diverse cultures, accelerates innovation and equips teams with the ability to react to new opportunities.

With growing pressure organisations are beginning to move their focus away from role-based, generalised competencies and towards human, power skills. That's whatever it is you need to learn that

supports your life both inside and outside of work from mindfulness and wellbeing to becoming a parent and postnatal depression.




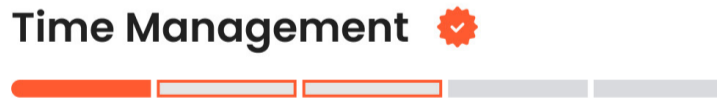


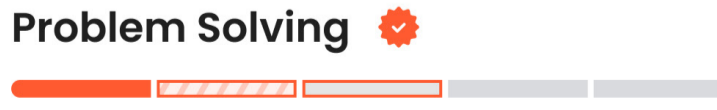


Ready to boost this skill to Level 4?



**THRIVE** Learn Explore Dashboard

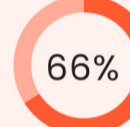
## Learn




- Overview
- Goals
- Skills

- Leadership 
- Time Management 
- Interpersonal Skills 
- Critical Thinking 
- Problem Solving 
- Conflict Resolution 
- Mentoring 


## Leadership

Current Level: Advanced • [Set target level?](#)


 **Improve your leadership skills**

Skill **Leadership**  Due date **11 October 2023** People  16 people Badge 





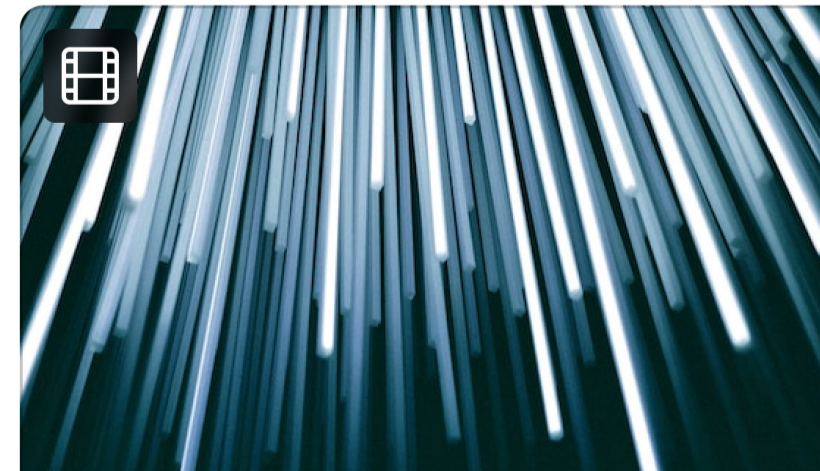
Improve sales your leadership skills. Make better decisions & drive your team.

[View 3 tasks](#) 






## In progress

- 


**The role of communication in effective leadership**

 2 months ago  3,273  
- 

**Creating a visionary culture**

 3 weeks ago  1,273  
- 

**Building tru**

 4 days a

# How do you track evolving skills in your business?

found that LinkedIn members' skills for the same role changed by 25% from 2015 to 2021. And it's expected that peoples' skills will change by about 40% by 2025. Skill sets are no longer role-based pigeon holes, and businesses are having to adapt.

Hands up if your strategy involves listing out the skills your business or leadership team think they need and using that to assess and define opportunities for growth?

My next question is; how quickly did it go out of date? We speak to a lot of businesses

that spend hours of time and resources on developing a formal skills framework, but it goes to waste because they have an expiration date. And that's because managing skills centrally is nigh on impossible.

Every business needs the transparency and agility to quickly build skills that react to evolving priorities, marketplace dynamics and ever-changing external factors.

That's what this ebook is all about; how to stay ahead of the skills game.

"We've seen many of our customers working to gain a broader understanding of the skills their teams need to work effectively. Organisations are increasingly looking beyond the formal skillsets we see listed on job descriptions.

As an organisation focused on supporting knowledge sharing and skill building within teams, we've seen great examples of front line teams being supported to meet the challenge of change.

We want to make it easier for learning teams to identify fast paced changes to the skill landscape and respond to support their team members effectively."

Mark Ward  
Co-founder of THRIVE



## Skills 3

Presentation Skills 

  16

Communication 

  11 [Give Recognition](#)

# Competency Frameworks vs Skills Strategy

## Competency Framework

A competency framework sets out key competencies and values within an organisation, organised by role-based levels. Competency models and frameworks emerged in the 1970s to demonstrate skills aligned with an organisation's vision.

Models include knowledge, skills, and behaviors, with a pre-defined list of 10-20 capability areas reflecting desired attributes across the workforce. However, teams often struggle to connect with formal frameworks due to unfamiliar terminology and different interpretations.

Additionally, these frameworks do not relate to the essential day-to-day skills required in specific roles or expected from team members. See them as an obvious part of their development.

## Skills Ontology

Skills ontology is a categorisation of skills that builds a common language of skills, defining the aspects of a specific job rather than relying on blanket terms and vague descriptions.

Competency frameworks are not good at capturing the complexity of skills required at the team level, and a matrix of capabilities is simply mapped against role types instead of individuals.

So, the next obvious step was building a more relatable skills ontology framework. A structure where HR teams conduct a talent mapping exercise and attempt to audit the skills associated with every role within the business.

Skills ontologies tend to resonate with individuals better because the language used aligns with business as usual, for example instead of a blanket term like 'communication', you might see 'microsoft teams' or 'delivering a presentation' but in practice, they aren't agile or practical either.

Trying to maintain skills from a single learning team is a scaling nightmare, especially when it comes to understanding the individuals and their BAU. That's why they usually take a ton of time and effort to create.

But for us, it comes down to; why are you guessing what existing and new skills your business has or needs? Surely there's a quicker more accurate model to measure and assess skills?

# → Enter an Agile Skills Strategy

An agile skills strategy is an ongoing, iterative plan that focuses on the language people use for development. It sets out to understand the skills a business has, the power skills that are present within the organisations culture, the future skills it needs to fill the gap and adapt to changing requirements and breaks them down into more achievable, adaptable and measurable goals.

An agile skills strategy is all about building and capturing an accurate picture of what skills look like within your organisation that's actually powered by your people. It captures the emerging skills that haven't been endorsed by the organisation yet and that's why we call it user-generated skills – the second people start to discuss it, it becomes evident.

This gives you total transparency to identify gaps, see new emerging trends and provide the right development opportunities through content.

For L&D teams this could mean; improved management training for the skills you know you need to grow, the opportunity to personalise goals to individuals instead of assuming a specific role or department will and should have the same skills and lastly, providing visible ownership and clear career progression for your people. Who doesn't want that?

Adopting an agile strategy is all about getting a picture of what's changing within your organisational skills landscape, and as this picture develops over time you'll gain a better appreciation of the skills that really matter within your organisation.

It's going to take time and work along the way. But that's the key difference. It's not about writing out a rigid plan that could take years to achieve. It's about always-on nurturing, adapting and growing what already exists within your business.

## What does that look like in reality?

### A world where people can:

- identify current and future skills
- be encouraged to recognise new and emerging skills
- develop new skills at the point of need
- recognise and endorse each other for skills
- measure skills progression
- set their upskilling goals
- share their knowledge on emerging skills

# How do you get going?

It starts with a challenge mindset. It's not about top down or one-size fits all. It's about understanding what you can get better at, putting your learners at the forefront and encouraging the managers within your organisation to look at what they've got to achieve.

It becomes easier with visibility. Your L&D team, business leaders and managers need the right tools and processes in place to collect and mine skills data that inform your decisions.

Getting this snapshot and keeping it up-to-date manually is almost impossible because it's a living, breathing strategy that's designed to change as your people do.

That's why choosing a technology which delivers a cohesive learning experience is essential to support your ongoing approach and is key to bringing this to life. You'll then be able to use the data you collect to upskill your people, create and recommend the right learning opportunities and ultimately fill the skills gap.

# Using *real data* to support your skills strategy

Understanding the supply and demand for skills is critical to the continued growth of your organisation and a key factor to positive workplace culture.

Over time many things change; the skills your business needs, the combination of skills required by individuals as well as their aspirations and interests. This gives you a huge amount of data to make sense of, so where do you start?

Think about your business or team's goals.

What's most important? Once you identify these goals, think about how skills apply and how you might track success.

Alongside metrics like skill progression and skill recognition, consider what's important to organisational success. Metrics around staff retention, the average length of service, and internal mobility are some examples of how the tracking of skill development can link directly to the wider business goals.

"Lack of career development continues to be one of the main reasons that employees leave a business. I've seen survey responses ranging from 45-70% of those surveyed stating this was a core reason for leaving a role.

Having a clear structure to develop skills and provide pathways for internal mobility will be integral for organisations to retain their top talent and ensure employees remain engaged with the business."

**Ian Blackburn**  
**Head of Analytics at THRIVE**



The screenshot displays the THRIVE dashboard with a navigation menu on the left containing options like Users, Team, Collabs, Audiences, Content, Events, and Tags. The main area is titled 'Skill Map' and includes a search bar for tags, filter controls for 'By Team' and 'Skill Level', and a funnel icon. Three skill maps are visible: one for Sarah Morton with a 'Leadership' skill, one for Jerry White with a 'Time Management' skill, and one for Jacob Smith. The top navigation bar includes 'Learn', 'Explore', and 'Dashboard' tabs, along with search, add, notification, and share icons, and a user profile for 'Alex'.

# How can THRIVE support you?

You didn't think you were going to have to go on this journey alone, did you? We're in it with you!

Evolving from our roots as a trailblazing LXP, we've developed a new Skills Platform, ready-built within THRIVE that makes identifying skills from the ground up, understanding new skills as they organically emerge and managing supply and demand a seamless reality.

**Let's take a look at the features that help you do just that...**

## User-generated skills from the ground up

Save time by organically building an agile skills strategy driven by real-time learner data and custom goals.

## Set & manage goals

Connect people to meaningful learning opportunities through custom goals made up of truly blended learning journeys that demonstrate your learner's achievements.

## Analytics to identify gaps, supply & demand

Skills analytics show you emerging skills, gaps and what's growing. So, you're clear on skill demand and what learning content needs to be created or prioritised.

## Smart skills progression

Smart skills progression uses data to connect the right people to the right learning opportunities that progress their individual or team's goals.

## Identify experts & emulate experiences

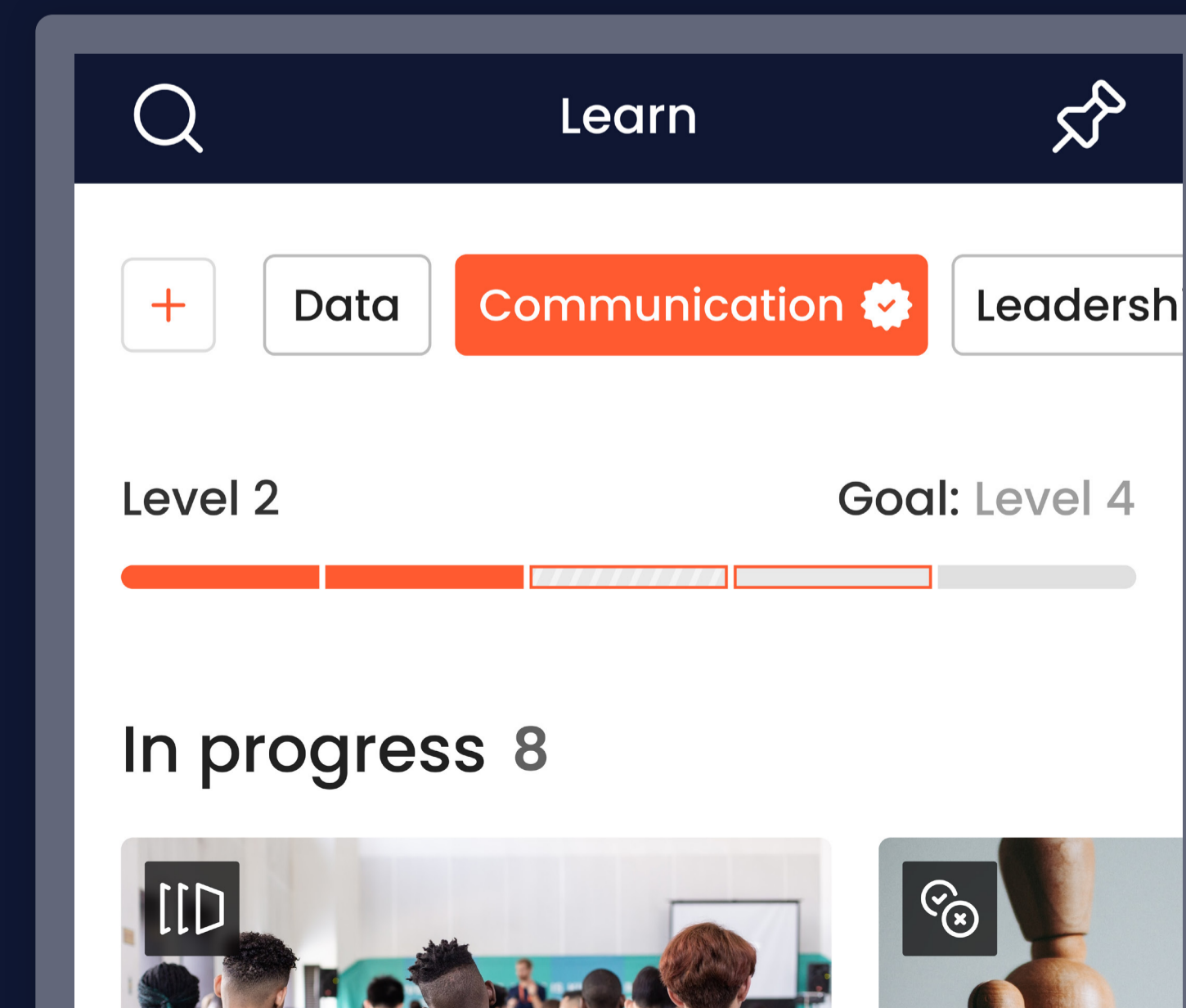
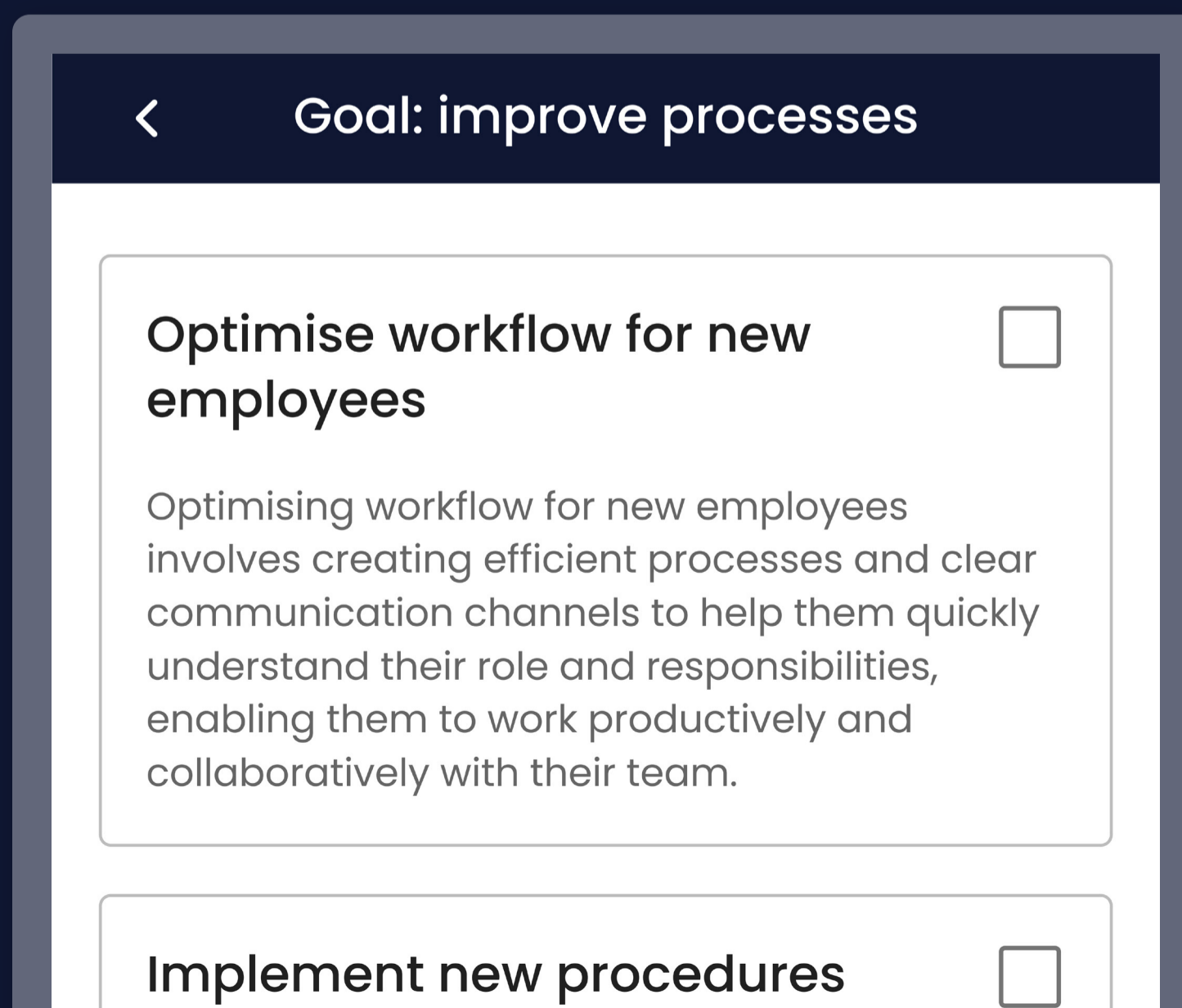
Empower your learners to explore and connect with their network by identifying subject matter experts, understanding their experiences and giving recognition to colleagues.

"No one else is tackling skills like THRIVE are. We've spent a lot of time building competencies before today but an agile skills strategy has changed the game.

It adds so much value to what we've created by putting our learners front and centre of our strategy. We have total transparency to understand what's new and trending, which is a lot in the world of gaming, and how upskilling aligns with each individual's career goals at Sumo."



**Jenny Muhlwa**  
Group Head of L&D at Sumo Group





# The skills glossary

## Agile skills strategy

An agile skills strategy is an ongoing, iterative plan that focuses on the language people use for development. It sets out to understand the skills a business has, the future skills it needs to fill gaps and adapt to changing requirements and breaks them down into more achievable, adaptable and measurable goals.

## Endorsed skills

Skills that are already part of your skills ontology, recognised by the organisation.

## Skills gap

The skills gap is when your current workforce's skill set doesn't align with the skills they need to do their jobs.

## Skills progression

Skills progression is the level of expertise with a given skill area, each level represents your ongoing progression.

## Skills supply & demand

The amount of activity against a new or existing skill and the demand for learning content.

## Trending skills

Trending skills are determined by your learners identifying what people are talking about and what's most important at any given time.

## User-generated skills

The emerging skills that haven't yet been endorsed by the organisation. User generated skills use real-time learner data from your Learning & Skills Platform to build a snapshot of what your current skills landscape looks like.

It's flipping traditional competency frameworks on the head and building a strategy from the ground up based on what's actually happening within your organisation, (what skills your learners believe they have and want to progress) instead of the top-down where the business dictates it.

# A bit about THRIVE

We deliver learning solutions that turbocharge modern businesses and the people powering them.

Say goodbye to LMS vs. LXP head-scratching, and sayonara to the eye-watering cost of a skills solution.

With **THRIVE's Learning & Skills Platform**, you'll get:

The compliance requirements of an LMS;  
The hyper-personalised, learner-led, social experience of an LXP; and an organic, user-generated skills framework that lets you build, view and develop skills across your teams.

That means all your learning is in one place, creating a slick, intuitive, addictive user experience that connects your people to each other and personalised learning opportunities so they can share knowledge and upskill collaboratively.

To make learning count, we equip you to set and manage custom goals for your learners. By plugging in data to connect the right people to the right learning needed to achieve them, and encouraging peer-to-peer collaboration by identifying subject matter experts, THRIVE creates the perfect environment for them to grow.

**CONTENT CLUB** works with you to create campaign-led content that changes behaviours and drives meaningful conversations. It's all mapped into engaging learning pathways, and if you've got any content gaps, we'll fill them for free.

An industry first, **COMPLIANCE CLUB** is the only off-the-shelf compliance solution on the market that's flexible, sector-specific, fully endorsed, and actually engaging. Bursting with 250+ courses, our diverse content is crafted with multiple formats, unique designs and cool concepts to ensure your businesscritical messages hit differently.

**THRIVE IMPACT** is the extra people power you need to boost your learning campaigns and deliver on the success you set. Bringing in masterminds from data, design and marketing for a fraction of the cost is a no brainer.

You'll get the resource to guarantee your campaigns land, the guidance to demonstrate the impact your team is having and the evidence to showcase it right back to your business.

## Want to build the future of skills for your people?

**Get a free  
demo**



[thrivelearning.com](https://thrivelearning.com)

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