From goat to GOAT N°34

Deployed Is Not Accessible: Why Learning Access Falls While AI Use Climbs

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By treating access as an architecture and operating question rather than a launch milestone, and by bringing learning to the people who carry most of the daily work, organizations can close the gap between the platforms they pay for and the capability they actually get.

Most learning platforms are live. Far fewer are reachable.

PwC's Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2026, published on 29 September 2026 and based on 49,364 workers in 48 countries and regions, puts two numbers side by side that deserve more attention than they have received. 64% of workers say they used AI at work in the past twelve months, ten points more than a year earlier. Over the same period, the share of workers who say they have access to the learning and development resources they need fell from 59% to 51%.

Usage is going up. Access is going down. The two curves are moving in opposite directions at the very moment organizations are asking their people to change the way they work.

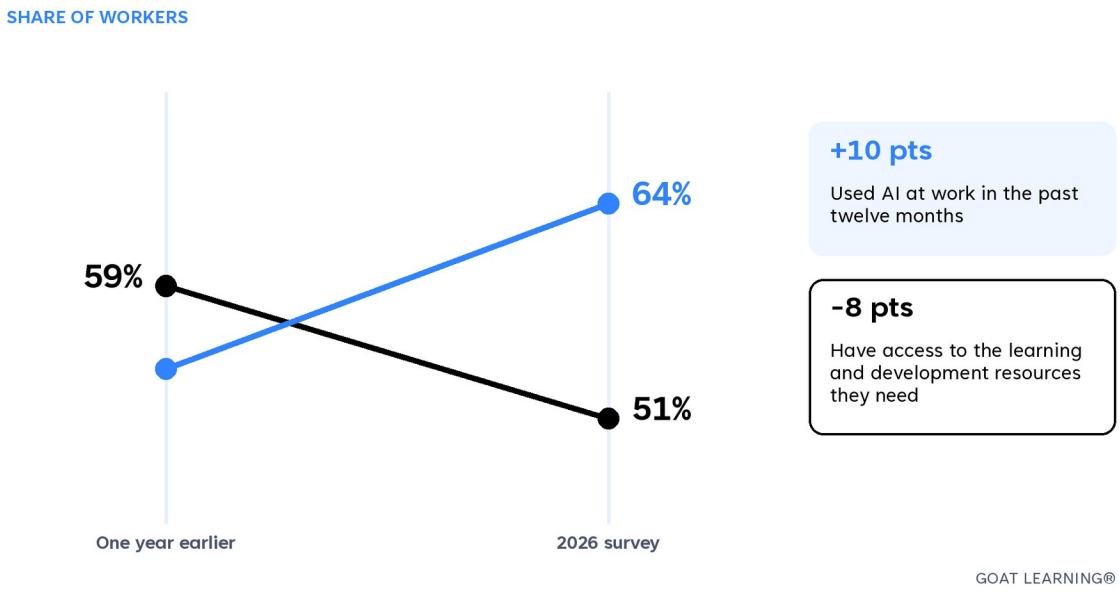


Figure 1. AI use and access to learning resources move in opposite directions. Source: PwC, Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2026.

The gap sits in the engine room

The average hides the real story. PwC segments the workforce into four groups. The largest, which it calls the engine room, represents 56% of workers: people whose skills are not scarce and

who are not far along the AI learning curve. PwC describes them as responsible for most of the day-to-day work within an organization. Only two in five of them say they have access to the learning resources they need. Among front-runners, a group that makes up 14% of the workforce, the figure is close to 80%.

The same survey shows that 51% of front-runners use generative AI every day, against 11% of the core workforce, and that the majority of that core workforce say they have never used AI at all. The people who need the most support to adapt are the ones today's learning set-up reaches least.



Figure 2. Access to the learning resources people need, engine room versus front-runners. Source: PwC, Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey 2026.

A licence is not a door

Seen from the integrator's side, these numbers rarely point to a missing platform. Most large organizations already run an LMS, often several. The problem lives between the contract and the employee.

Access breaks in places that never show up on a steering committee slide. An account that is never created because the HRIS feed leaves out temporary contracts. A single sign-on that works on the corporate laptop but not on the shared tablet in the warehouse. A mobile app that asks for a personal email address the employee would rather not give. A catalogue that is technically open to everyone but sits three clicks away from the tools people actually use all day. Each issue looks minor. Together, they decide who learns.

A platform is deployed when it is configured and live. It becomes accessible when the right person can reach the right resource, on the device they really use, in the time they really have.

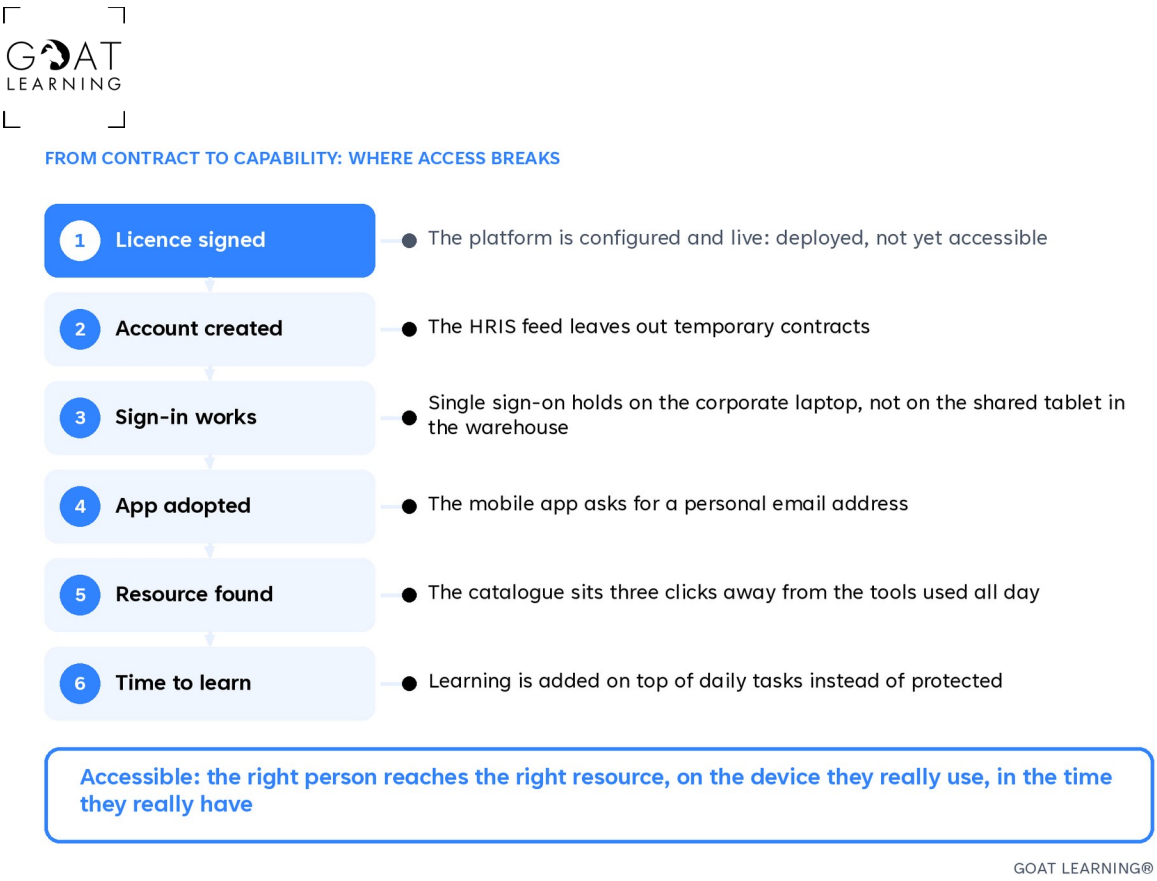


Figure 3. From deployed to accessible: the points where access typically breaks between the contract and the employee.

Time is part of access

PwC is explicit on this point. For the engine room, organizations "need to make learning and reskilling available without increasing workloads", and leaders "will also need to protect time for learning rather than adding it on top of daily tasks". That changes the brief. Access is not only about identity and devices. It is also about when learning can happen, and who is allowed to stop work for it.

This is where learning in the flow of work stops being a slogan. In "Reimagine learning and development for the AI age" (16 March 2026), McKinsey describes a next wave in which employees ask an AI assistant for help and receive support drawn from learning and knowledge sources, "tailored to role, geography, and access rights". The last words matter. Access rights are becoming part of the learning experience itself, and they are only as reliable as the identity and HR data underneath them.

Fosway Group's Digital Learning Realities 2026 shows the same movement from the market side. After a phase of consolidation, best-of-breed learning platforms are growing again, partly driven by digital learning solutions for frontline workers. More tools can mean more reach. They also mean more doors to keep open.

What closing the gap actually takes

Closing the access gap is rarely a new purchase. It is mostly work that sits outside the original project budget.

It starts with an honest picture of reach. Who is in scope, who is actually provisioned, who logs in, from which device and at what time, and who never appears in the data at all. In our Conseil engagements, this is often where the surprise comes from: the populations with the weakest access are also the least visible in reporting, because reporting only counts the people who made it inside.

Then comes the wiring, which is Intégration work. Provisioning rules in the HRIS that cover every contract type. Single sign-on that holds on shared and mobile devices. Learning that surfaces inside the collaboration and business tools people open every morning, rather than waiting for them in a separate portal.

And then it has to last. Access degrades quietly. Organizations restructure, populations change, a connector stops working after a vendor release and nobody notices for weeks. A Run-Outsourcing set-up that watches provisioning, handles first-level support and reports on reach, not only on completion, keeps the door open long after the launch team has moved on.

The question for 2027

PwC also finds that 59% of workers expect their use of AI tools at work to increase over the next twelve months. Adoption will keep moving, with or without the learning function. What remains open is whether the people who carry most of the daily work will be able to reach the support they need, when they need it.

Before adding a new tool to the 2027 roadmap, it is worth asking a simpler question of the existing one. Of everyone who should be able to use it, how many actually can?

A deployed platform is a contract. An accessible platform is a capability.

If you want to measure who your learning ecosystem really reaches, and close the gaps, reach out to us at emilie@goat-learning.com.

GOAT LEARNING® supports organizations in structuring growth and building the skills to sustain it.

About GOAT LEARNING®

GOAT LEARNING® is a consulting, integration and outsourcing firm specialized in EdTech and Learning solutions (LXP/LMS/TMS).

Backed by more than 15 years of experience working with Global 500, CAC40 and SBF120 companies, it supports organizations in the design, selection, deployment and optimization of their learning ecosystems.

Positioned as a Trusted Advisor, GOAT LEARNING® combines technology/IT architecture expertise, a sharp understanding of Learning & Development challenges and a demanding standard of execution to turn learning investments into tangible drivers of upskilling, skills development, learner engagement and sustainable performance.

Leading Skills Based Organization initiatives with its clients, it helps them better align talent strategies, business priorities and learning programs.

With an ecosystem of more than 24 strategic partnerships and 250+ content, technology and service providers, GOAT LEARNING® pursues a simple ambition: to make learning a strategic, measurable asset and a value accelerator for the business.

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