



DEMANDBASE

The State of B2B Marketing Enablement: **Are You Future-Ready?**

Momentum ITSMA Marketing Skills Survey 2025

Contents



The Enablement Shift Marketing Needs Now

Talent retention and capability gaps are growing concerns – more than half of CMOs report challenges in attracting and retaining B2B marketing talent today. Our findings suggest that part of the issue may lie in how organizations are supporting – or failing to support – marketing talent.

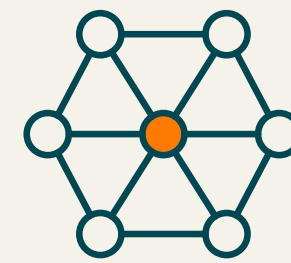
Marketing enablement is not just a training initiative or a series of ad hoc workshops. It is a strategic, organization-wide commitment to equipping marketers with the right skills, mindsets, and capabilities to execute the business strategy and deliver commercial impact.

Yet, our latest survey of over 100 CMOs across enterprise B2B organizations reveals a stark truth: while most marketing leaders recognize the value of enablement, few are realizing its full potential. Maturity is lagging. Budgets are constrained. And future-readiness is in question.

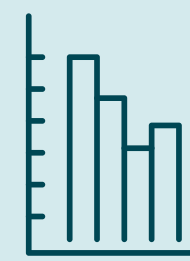
“Marketing teams are getting hit at both ends. In a growth environment, it makes sense that companies go on huge hiring sprees and that people leave in search of better opportunities. But we’re not in a growth environment, and yet marketers are still leaving and there’s still a big fight over talent.”

Brian Jochum, CMO, Virtusa

This report explores the critical link between enablement maturity and overall company performance, and what CMOs can learn from how the most effective organizations are approaching skills development. It identifies the core job functions and skills, hard and soft, critical to a high-performing marketing team, and offers a roadmap for embedding learning into the heart of marketing strategy.



Marketing enablement is the approach an organization takes to systematically equip its marketing workforce with the skills they need to perform their jobs, creating a culture of shared accountability and ongoing learning.



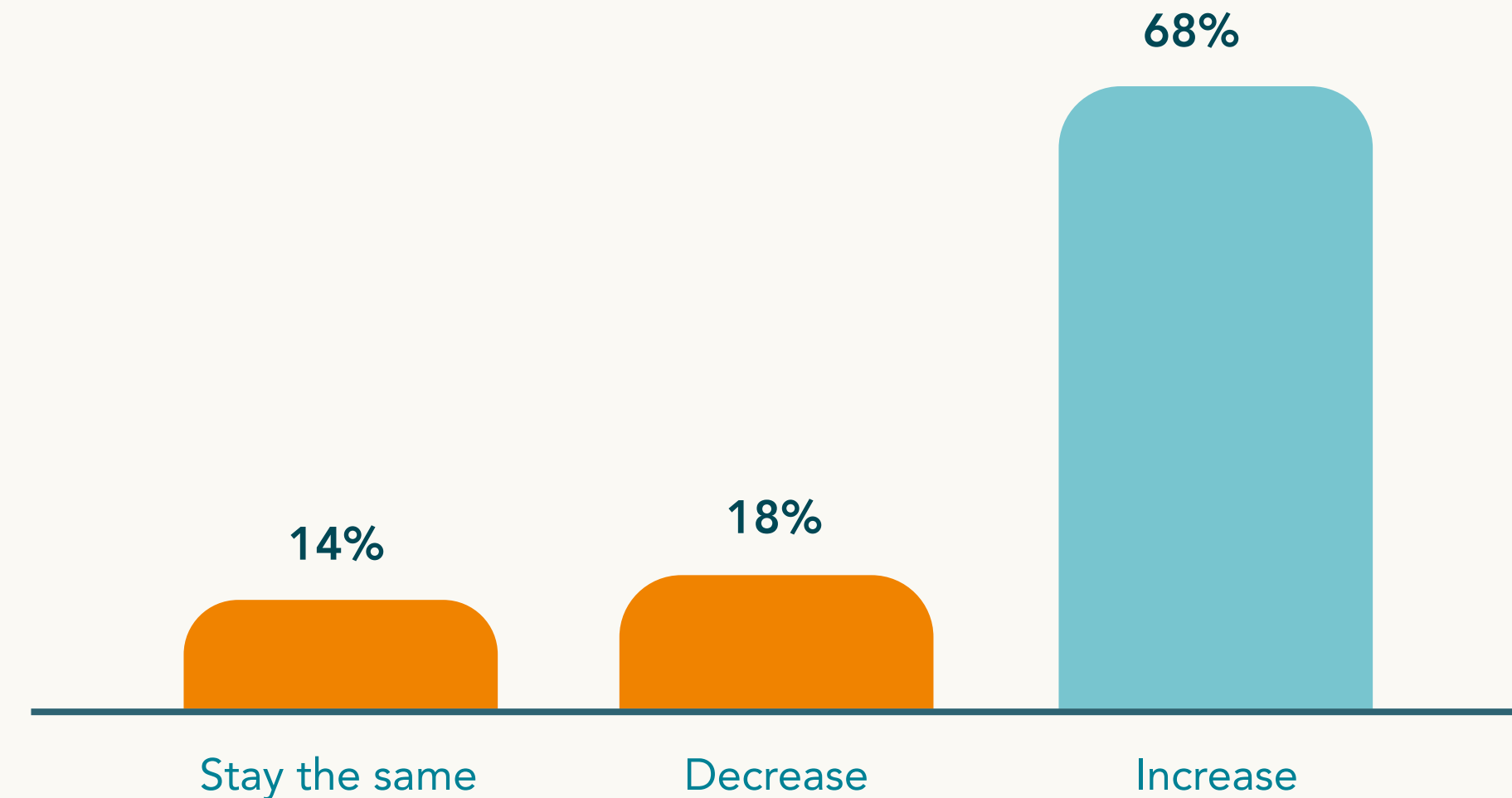
In this report, **high-growth organizations** are defined as those reporting **year-over-year (YoY) revenue growth of 6% or more**. **Flat/declining organizations** refer to those reporting **flat or negative YoY revenue growth**.

Key Finding 1: Enablement Maturity is Linked to Business Performance

On the surface, marketing leaders have made strong progress: 91% of CMOs now report having a dedicated marketing enablement function. That's a huge improvement from what we've seen in the past.

But dig deeper, and the picture becomes more complex. While most CMOs expect their annual investment in training to increase over the next 12-24 months (*Figure 1*), marketing enablement budgets remain modest – typically less than half the size of sales enablement investments reported in other industry studies. Beyond the question of budget, our research also suggests that many CMOs are not yet approaching enablement in a way that fully unlocks its strategic potential.

Figure 1: Expected annual investment changes in upskilling over the next 12-24 months



Six in 10 CMOs describe a fragmented, reactive approach to skills development – training is triggered by specific initiatives or short-term needs, rather than embedded in annual planning or linked to defined competency frameworks (Figure 2). Crucially, 61% of organizations with this ad hoc model also reported flat or declining revenue growth year on year (YoY).

“We’re seeing a correlation between business performance and enablement maturity. When skills development strategy is plugged into business planning, marketing teams are literally being built to succeed.”

Jo Connolly, Director of Learning and Development, Momentum ITSMA

In fact, over half of the organizations operating at Level 5 enablement maturity – fully integrated with business planning and tailored to team needs – saw revenue growth of 6% or more YoY. Despite that, just 41% of CMOs report operating at the highest level of maturity today.

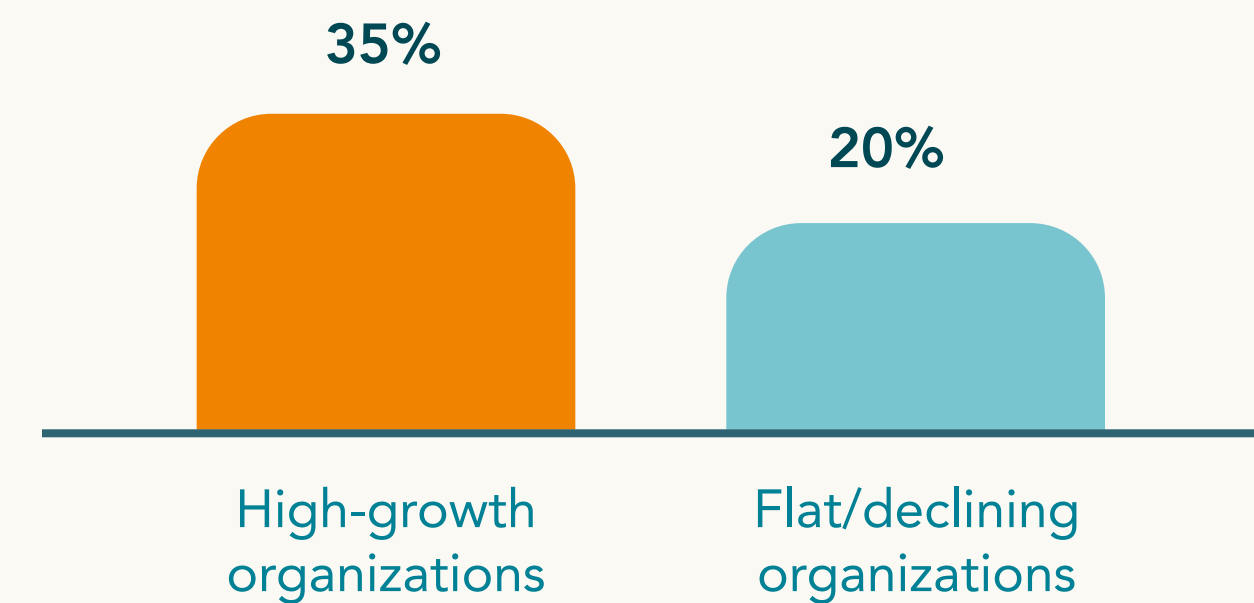
Figure 2: Maturity Level Description	
Level 5 41%	Training requirements are identified as part of the annual marketing planning process, and ongoing training is aligned to the needs of various marketing teams and skill maturity levels.
Level 4 27%	Training is identified ad-hoc and not yet integrated into annual planning, but tailored training is offered based on skill maturity and team priorities.
Level 3 21%	Training requirements are defined, and training efforts are delivered as part of specific initiatives (e.g., improving customer experience).
Level 2 9%	Training is identified on an ad-hoc basis without a system for identifying overarching skill gaps or strategic requirements.
Level 1 1%	No formal marketing training efforts are in place.
Don't know 1%	

The takeaway is clear: just having an enablement function is not enough. In the face of rapid shifts in buyer behavior, technology, and go-to-market complexity, CMOs must evolve their enablement approach from fragmented to a fully embedded, outcome-based growth strategy.

Key Finding 2: Disconnected Enablement is a Broken System

Without ownership, strategy, and business alignment, enablement is fundamentally broken. High-growth organizations are nearly twice as likely as their flat/declining peers to have a dedicated function within marketing that defines and leads their enablement strategy (Figure 3). In contrast, 56% of low-growth organizations reported that enablement sits outside of marketing and is often managed by HR or L&D. Although partnering with these functions to design and deliver enablement is not only desirable but also critical, the direction and strategy of marketing enablement must be owned by marketing itself, must be connected to the marketing strategy, and embedded in the annual planning process.

Figure 3: Our marketing enablement team/role is within marketing



When enablement is decoupled from marketing strategy, it becomes fragmented, disconnected from outcomes, and easily deprioritized. The impact is clear in the numbers: 40% of flat/declining growth organizations cite a lack of business support as a key barrier to developing the skills they need – compared to just 6% of high-growth firms.

“If you’re not owning marketing strategy, and that direction isn’t there, training becomes a waste of money,” says Guy Phillips, Partner at Momentum ITSMA. “There’s often a significant gap between enablement initiatives and what marketers are actually expected to do.”

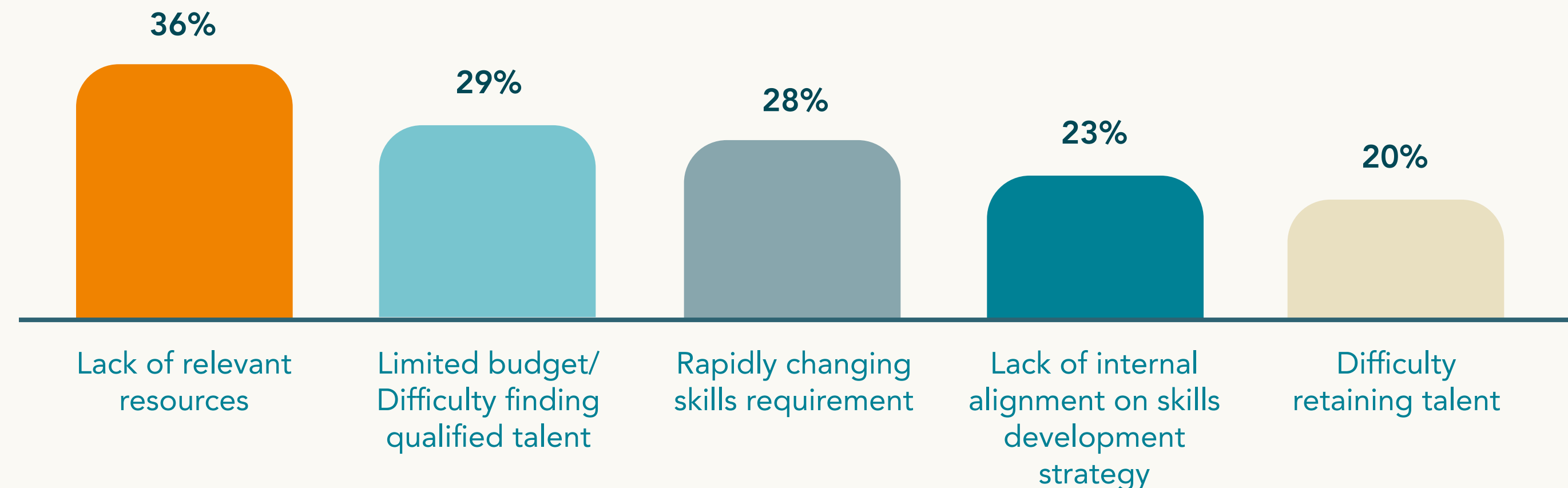
The top barriers all CMOs face in building the right skills (*Figure 4*) expose how quickly the enablement cycle can spiral: fragmented efforts produce irrelevant or ineffective training, which erodes impact, weakens the case for investment, drives budget cuts, and stalls talent development– only for the cycle to begin again.

Whether enablement sits within marketing or across functions, CMOs must take the lead. Without ownership and alignment, impact is impossible – and enablement risks becoming just another box ticked, rather than a driver of competitive advantage.

“If you’re not owning marketing strategy, and that direction isn’t there, training becomes a waste of money.”

Guy Phillips, Partner, Momentum ITSMA

Figure 4: Top 5 barriers to developing B2B marketing skills

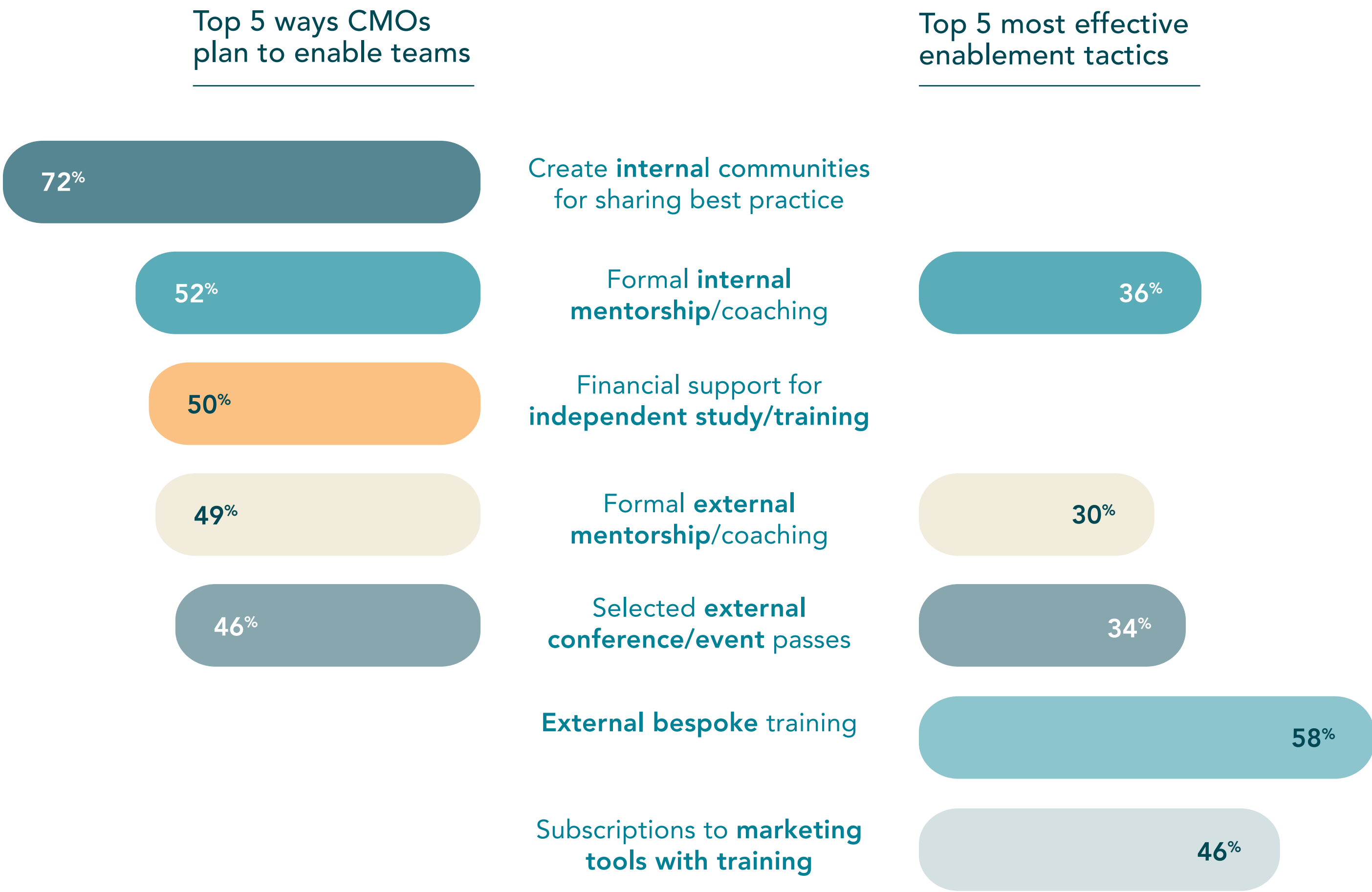


Key Finding 3: The Most Effective Enablement Strategies Are Often Overlooked

Our research also highlights a mismatch between what CMOs say is effective and what they’re actually investing in. External bespoke training is among the most impactful enablement approaches, yet only 49% of CMOs plan to use it. Instead, many organizations are funnelling budgets into lower-effort, lower-value activities – the ones that are easier to execute or defend in a budget conversation, but far less likely to deliver meaningful performance gains (Figure 5).

The contrast becomes even sharper when we compare high-growth and flat/declining growth organizations. CMOs in high-growth firms are far more likely to invest in bespoke, tailored training, formal external mentorship, and internal SME coaching supported by peer learning. These approaches are tailored, ongoing, and deeply embedded in day-to-day execution.

Figure 5: Enablement methods: usage vs effectiveness



By contrast, flat/declining growth organizations tend to rely on off-the-shelf content, conference attendance for a select few, and loosely structured self-directed learning. These activities may be easier to arrange and less resource-intensive, but they rarely connect learning directly to the work that drives results.

The best leaders focus on building capabilities in ways that are customized, continuous, and tied to business outcomes. Underinvesting in high-impact enablement risks leaving substantial performance gains untapped. Shifting investment toward approaches that connect learning to execution is not just a training decision – it's a growth strategy.

Key Finding 4: Future-Ready Marketing Starts with Building Strategic Capabilities

CMOs are under mounting pressure to deliver measurable commercial impact – fast. Our findings reveal an important nuance in the skills CMOs are prioritizing. While improving execution and measurement remains important, CMOs are placing greater emphasis on capabilities that drive client-centric growth – namely, strategy development, insights, and analytics.

When asked which job functions would require the most development over the next 12–24 months, three areas consistently rose to the top:

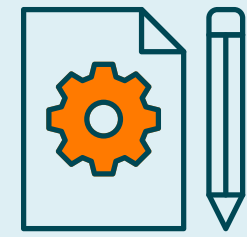
- 1. Content Strategy & Operations – 36%**
- 2. Performance & Demand Marketing – 35%**
- 3. Marketing Strategy and planning – 25%/ Field Execution – 25%**

“The focus on buyer insights, strategy development (e.g. marketing strategy, go-to-market strategy, ABM and demand strategy, campaign and content strategy) reflects CMOs’ need to navigate increasingly complex B2B buying behavior, strengthen alignment, and better optimize target audiences and growth strategies; not just the channels and the tactics we deploy.”

Meta Karagianni, Chief Consulting Officer, Momentum ITSMA



Across these job functions, CMOs identified the skills that matter most.



Content Strategy and Operations

- Content strategy and planning
- Content localization
- Content measurement and optimization



Marketing Strategy and Planning

- Marketing strategy development (3–5-year horizon)
- Go-to-market strategy
- Marketing and competitive research and intelligence



Performance/Demand Marketing

- Program measurement and optimization
- Demand program strategy and planning
- Opportunity/lead management



Field Marketing

- Account-Based Marketing
- Program localization
- Budget management

But technical skills alone aren't enough. CMOs also recognize the importance of soft skills – personal attributes that contribute to a harmonious, productive work environment. “This is where I see the biggest gap for marketers in general,” says Sydne Mullings, General Manager, Americas CMO, Microsoft. Sydne says that as businesses are more pressed for resources and headcount, marketers are under pressure to justify ROI, which requires soft skills.

“I’m investing a lot of time in enabling my team to explain what we do, why it matters, what the payback is to the business, and also better understand how it fits in with where the business is trying to go.”

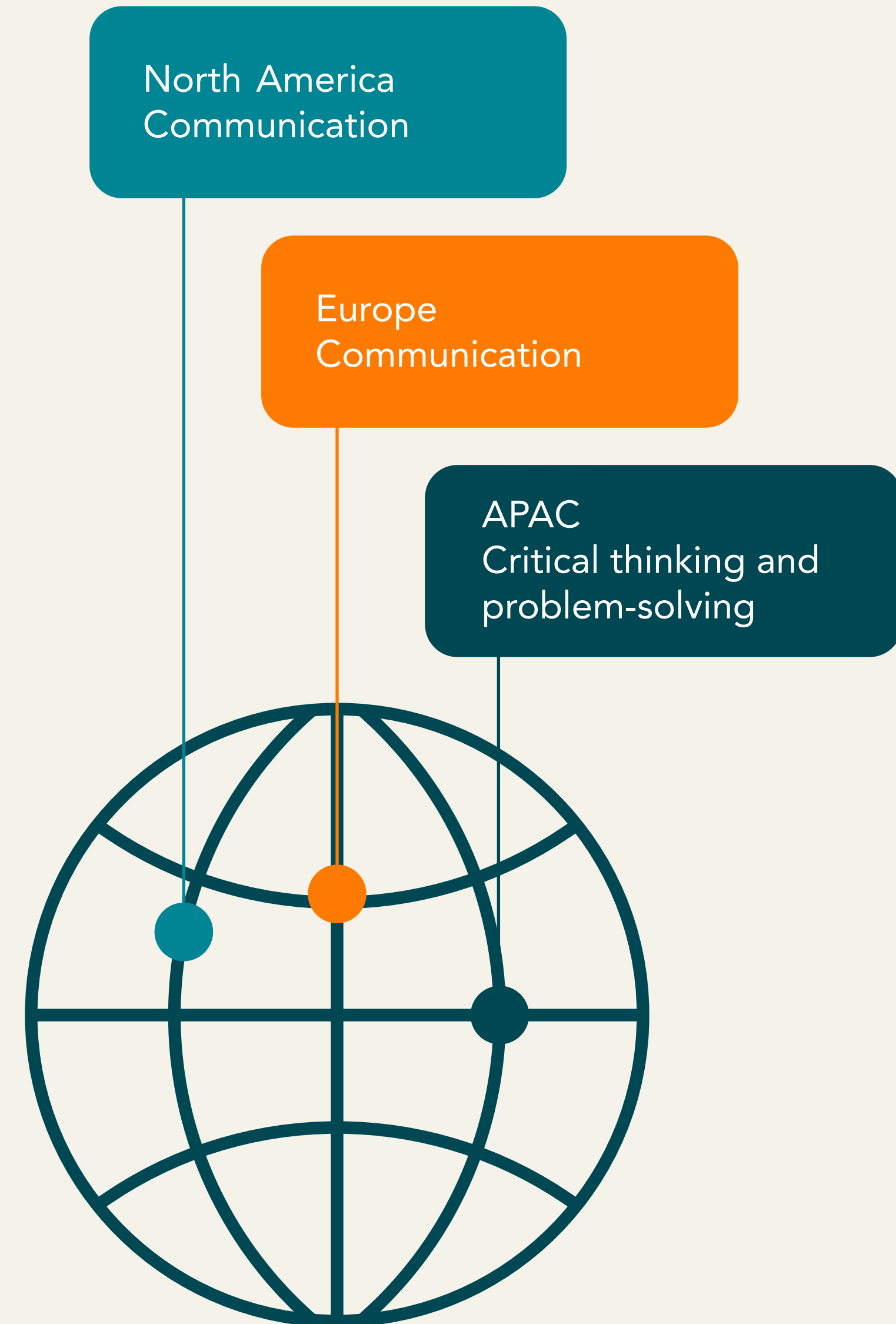
Sydne Mullings, General Manager, Americas CMO, Microsoft

The top global soft skills for future success?

- . **Communication**
- . **Collaboration and teamwork**
- . **Business acumen and active listening**

Regional nuances highlight the complexity of modern teams. In EMEA, cultural awareness and emotional intelligence rise to the top, while in APAC, critical thinking and active listening are highly valued. And yet, few enablement strategies address this in a structured, targeted way.

Top 3 soft skills regionally

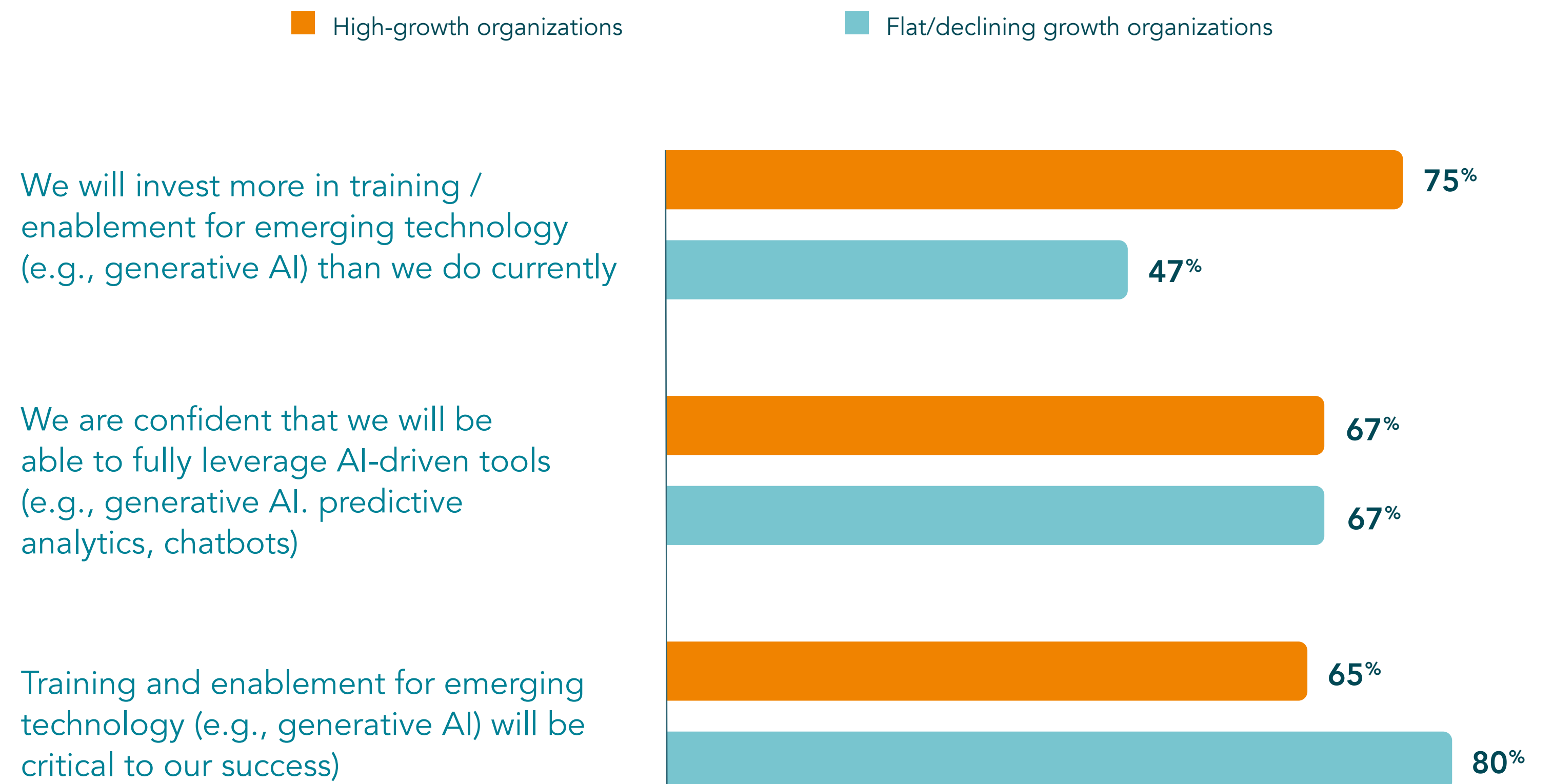


Key Finding 4: Leaders Must Address the Emerging Tech Readiness Gap

Artificial intelligence, including generative AI and agentic AI, is already reshaping how B2B marketing teams operate. CMOs know this, but our data reveals awareness isn't translating into action.

Nearly 1 in 3 CMOs cite rapidly evolving skills requirements as a primary obstacle to building a future-ready team. Yet, the companies that need upskilling the most are the least likely to invest (Figure 6). 80% of CMOs in flat/declining growth organizations agree that training in emerging tech (e.g., generative AI) is critical to success over the next 12-24 months, yet fewer than half plan to increase investment.

Figure 6: Enablement activity around emerging technology

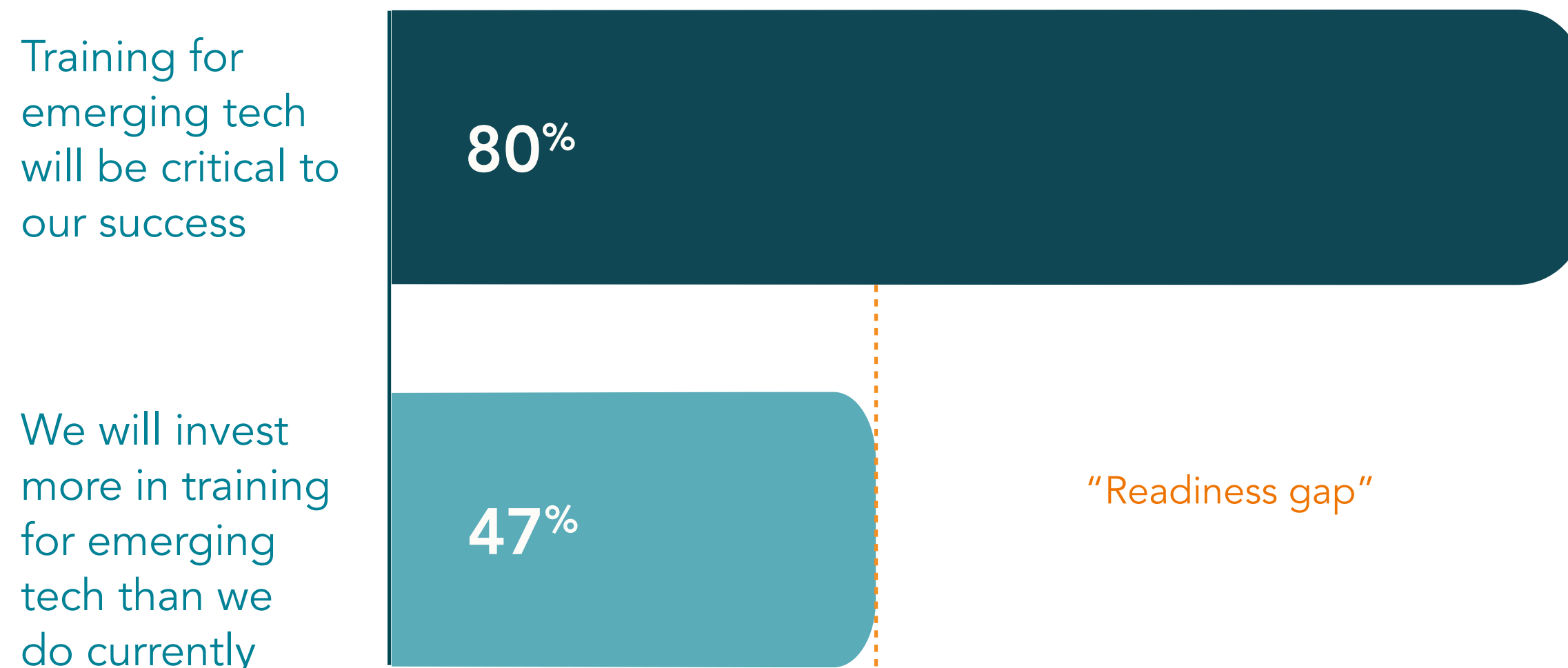


In contrast, just 65% of CMOs in high-growth organizations see emerging tech training as critical – but 75% of them plan to increase investment. This is the “readiness gap” in action: the organizations at the greatest risk of being disrupted are the least equipped to respond, while the most competitive organizations continue to invest ahead.

“Start treating AI as core, business-critical infrastructure. Name an owner, give them a mandate, and set 90-day deployment targets. Move now and the advantage can be huge. Hesitate and your readiness gap becomes someone else’s advantage gap.”

Adam Bennington, Principle Consultant and Head of AI Practice, Momentum ITSMA

Tech readiness gap in flat/declining growth orgs

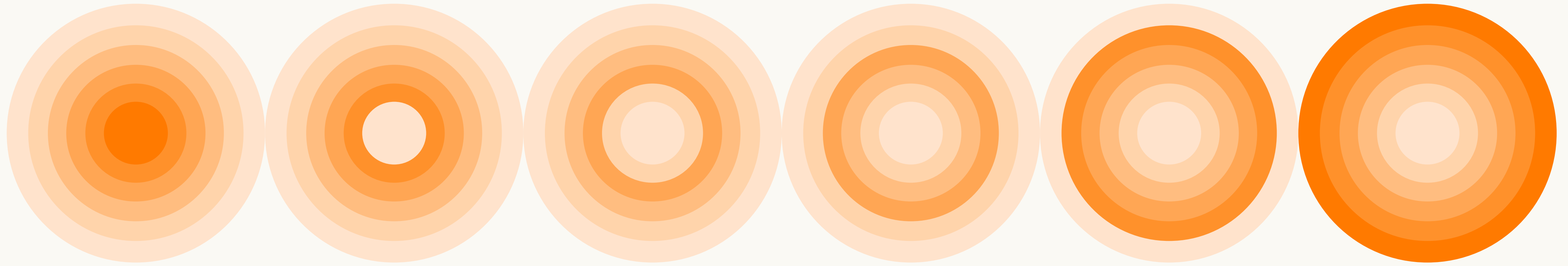


“Over the last year marketers have got more comfortable using gen AI, but now we’ve got to figure out how it gets integrated into the workflow effectively and safely. It’s necessary but extremely difficult to do across a large marketing organization.”

Karin McEwen, Senior Director of Worldwide Marketing Programs, MathWorks



CMOs who act now will shape the new operating model – those who wait will struggle to catch up.



From Awareness to Action

Most B2B marketing organizations are not yet future-ready – not because they don't see the need, but because their enablement strategies haven't caught up with the pace of change.

Despite growing pressure to deliver commercial impact, many CMOs still face fragmented enablement, underfunded training programs, and a widening gap between what's needed

and what's delivered. And while high-growth organizations are closing that gap by aligning enablement with strategy, owning it within marketing, investing in effective enablement approaches and in the skills that matter most, the majority are still stuck in reactive mode.

What separates leaders from laggards isn't access to resources. It's how decisively they act.

To future-proof the marketing function, CMOs must:



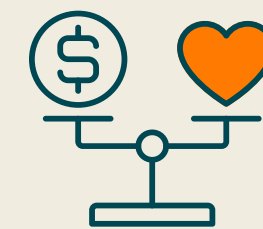
Take ownership of enablement strategy and collaborate closely with HR or L&D.



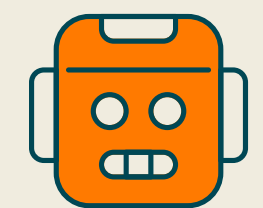
Embed enablement into planning cycles and align it with business outcomes.



Invest in both functional and strategic capability including skills in content strategy, marketing strategy and planning, ABM, and demand optimization.



Invest in soft skills like business acumen and communication; they matter as much as functional fluency.



Close the readiness gap in emerging technology, especially in AI and analytics.

Marketing enablement is no longer a peripheral concern. It is a strategic lever – one that determines whether your team can adapt, perform, and lead in an increasingly complex market.

The organizations that recognize this – and act on it – will be the ones that thrive.

Close the awareness gap and dive deeper into the full research to understand where your marketing team stands – and where the real opportunities lie.



Benchmark your team's skills against industry leaders



Identify critical capability gaps with a client-led diagnostic



Audit and align your current enablement strategy with business outcomes



Access our Marketing Enablement Framework to guide next steps

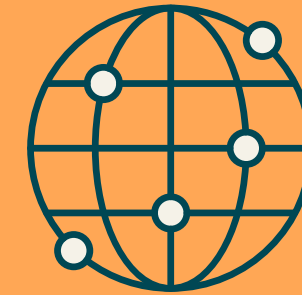
About This Report

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RESPONDENTS GLOBALLY

43%

\$1BN+ REVENUE



Leaders with ownership and accountability for marketing strategy and execution at a:

- Regional level
- Business Unit level
- Global level

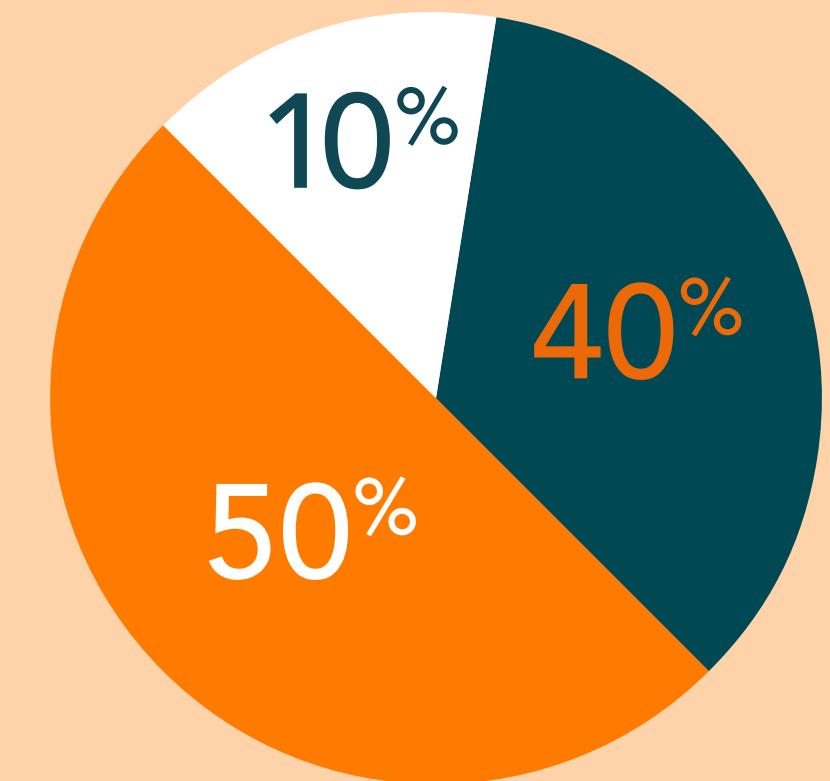
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INDUSTRIES

B2B

MARKETING LEADERS

Regions



■ North America ■ Europe ■ APAC

Thank you to the members of our CMO Advisory Board for their contribution to this report:

Brian Jochum, CMO, Virtusa

Karin McEwen, Senior Director of Worldwide Marketing Programs, MathWorks

Sydne Mullings, General Manager, Americas CMO, Microsoft

The background of the slide is a light gray color, decorated with numerous concentric circles in various shades of orange. These circles are of different sizes and are scattered across the top, bottom, and sides of the slide, creating a dynamic, organic pattern.

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