



# Participation in Skills Training:

A Report from the Survey on Employment and Skills



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*Participation in Skills Training: A Report from the Survey on Employment and Skills* is funded by the Government of Canada's Future Skills Program.

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

**Publication Date:**

November 2023



# About the Survey on Employment & Skills

This report is based on data from the fifth wave of the Survey on Employment and Skills.

The Survey on Employment and Skills is conducted by the [Environics Institute for Survey Research](#), in partnership with the [Future Skills Centre](#) and the [Diversity Institute at Toronto Metropolitan University](#). In early 2020, the Survey began as a project designed to explore Canadians' experiences with the changing nature of work, including technology-driven disruptions, increasing insecurity and shifting skills requirements. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey was expanded to investigate the impact of the crisis on Canadians' employment, earnings and work environments. A second wave of the survey was conducted in December 2020, a third wave in June 2021, and a fourth wave in March and April of 2022.

The fifth wave of the study consists of a survey of 5,904 Canadians age 18 and over, conducted between March 1 and April 3, 2023, in all provinces and territories. It was conducted both online (in the provinces) and by telephone (in the territories). This wave of the survey includes oversamples of Canadians living in smaller provinces and territories, those under the age of 34, racialized Canadians and Canadians who identify as Indigenous, in order to provide a better portrait of the range of experiences across the country. The survey results in this report are weighted by age, gender, region, education, racial identity and Indigenous identity, to ensure that they are representative of the Canadian population as whole.

Survey reports can be found online at:

- > <https://www.environicsinstitute.org/projects/listing/-in-tags/type/survey-on-employment-and-skills>
- > [fsc-ccf.ca/research/2020-survey-on-employment-and-skills](http://fsc-ccf.ca/research/2020-survey-on-employment-and-skills)

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# Executive summary

*The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted the workplace, including access to skills training. The latest wave of the Survey on Employment and Skills, conducted in March 2023, revisits the issue to explore how participation in skills training and the focus of training have changed.*

The proportion of Canadian workers participating in training to improve their skills has increased over the past two years. Today, more than one in two people in the labour force (56%) say they have participated in some form of training over the past 12 months. Recent immigrants, racialized workers, those with higher household incomes, those who are members of a labour union, and public sector workers are all more likely than average to have accessed skills training. Those who are unemployed are much less likely to access training.

One of the major factors related to participation in skills training, however, is age: younger workers are much more likely to participate in training than older counterparts. This is largely explained by the fact that younger workers are more likely to receive training because they are starting a new job. There is much less difference among age groups in the likelihood of receiving training for any other reason.

While the proportion of workers participating in training has increased, over the past two years the training they receive has become less focused on managing changes in the workplace caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Training is also less likely today than a year ago to be delivered remotely, and more likely to be delivered in person.

The most common reason why workers say they undertook skills training is because they were required to by their employer. Other common reasons are because of the enjoyment of learning new things, and the need for career advancement. In contrast, very few say they undertook skills training because they were worried that they would lose their job unless they improved their skills.

The types of training received by Canadian workers are varied, covering issues relating to the use of technology, new procedures, interpersonal skills, and health and well-being. By a significant margin, however, the most common type of training is that which relates to workplace health and safety. The next two most common types of training are learning to use new computer software or hardware, and management or leadership training.

Among those who have received skills training in the past 12 months, one in ten said their training related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the workplace. This type of training, however, is the least likely to be delivered in person rather than wholly or partly remotely, the most likely to be delivered individually rather than in a group, and the most likely to last less than one day. In other words, compared to other forms of training, EDI training is the most likely to be taken online by an individual in a short period of time.

The majority of those in the labour force who undertook skills training in the past 12 months say their training will be helpful to them in doing their current job well, in learning to use new technologies in their workplace, and in getting a promotion or a better job. Recent immigrants and those who identify as Indigenous are more likely than average to find their training helpful. But workers with a disability that always or often limits their daily activity are less likely than average to hold the same view.

The survey also considers barriers to accessing skills training. Those who did not undertake skills training in the past 12 months are three times more likely to say that it was because they didn't need to because they already had the skills they need, than to say it was because they didn't have enough time, or because it was too costly. However racialized workers, first-generation and second-generation immigrants, and workers with a physical disability are all more likely than average to say they did not undertake skills training because it was too costly.

One other potential obstacle to participation in skills training is the fact that many workers do not see formal training courses as the best way to learn new skills. When asked about the best way to learn new work-related skills, the most common answer provided by those in the labour force is learning from co-workers on the job. Somewhat fewer say that it is through a formal training course provided by their employer.

Finally, the survey explores whether the shift to remote work for many workers prompted by the pandemic has affected participation in skills training. It finds that, as of March 2023, people who had been working from home at least some days during the previous three months – but who had not been working from home prior to the pandemic – were more likely to undertake skills training than those who were working in their usual workplace outside the home. The workers most likely to participate in skills training are those who have been working at home some days, but not every day. This group is much more likely than average to be composed of those who work as professionals or executives. The workers least likely to participate in skills training are those who were working from home prior to the pandemic and continued to do so. This group is much more likely than average to be composed of those who are self-employed, or who are over the age of 55.





## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted the workplace. Some businesses closed either temporarily or permanently. Others enabled their employees to work from home. Those that could not shift to remote work had to implement new safety procedures to prevent their employees from getting sick. Along the way, access to skills training was interrupted. In cases where training did continue, its focus often shifted to managing the changes in the workplace caused by the pandemic.

The latest wave of the Survey on Employment and Skills, conducted in March 2023, revisits the issue of access to skills training. Three years after the onset of the pandemic, it finds that more workers are participating in work-related training to improve their skills, while training is becoming less focused on the management of the pandemic. It also shows that the most common type of training is that which focuses on workplace health and safety. The survey finds that working from home does not appear to have posed a barrier to skills training to date, as those who have switched to working from home are more likely than those who continue to work in their regular workplace to access training to improve their skills.



# Findings

## Participation in skills training

*The proportion of workers participating in skills training is higher in 2023 than in either of the previous two years. Younger workers are much more likely than older workers to participate in skills training.*

The fifth wave of the Survey on Employment and Skills, conducted in March 2023, finds that more than one in two people in the labour force (56%) participated in at least one of three forms of skills training during the past 12 months: a training course provided by their employer; a training course not provided by their employer but that they took while they were working; or a training course that they took while they were unemployed.<sup>1</sup> The figure is higher among those who are currently employed (58%) and who are currently employed full-time (61%).

The survey also shows that the proportion of workers participating in skills training has recently increased. This is likely because of the easing of restrictions related to the pandemic.

- In March 2023, 44 percent of people in the labour force participated in a training course during the past 12 months that was provided by their employer. This compares to 34 percent a year earlier, and to 33 percent in June 2021.<sup>2</sup>
- In March 2023, 22 percent of workers participated in a training course during the past 12 months that was not provided by their employer, but that they took while they were working. This compares to 19 percent a year earlier, and to 18 percent in June 2021.
- In March 2023, 20 percent of workers participated in a training course during the past 12 months that they took while they were unemployed. Among those unemployed<sup>3</sup> at the time of the survey, the figure is 27 percent.<sup>4</sup>

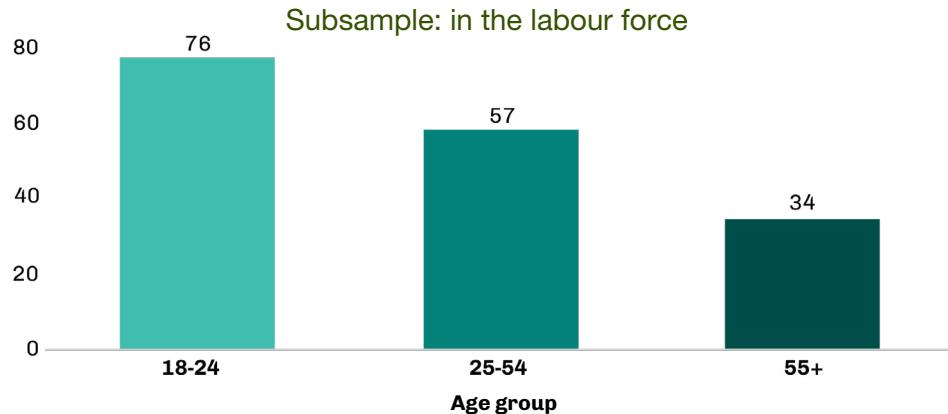
**TABLE 1:**  
Participation in Skills Training (subsample: in labour force)

	Q35. In [time period reference, see first column], have you participated in any of the following forms of work-related training to improve your skills? (% yes)		
Survey wave and time period reference:	A training course that was provided by your employer	A training course that was not provided by your employer, but that you took while you were working	A training course that you took while you were unemployed
<b>W1 (March 2020): In the past five years...</b>	51%	30%	20%
<b>W3 (June 2021): Since the start of the pandemic in the spring of 2020...</b>	32%	18%	--
<b>W4 (Mar-Apr 2022): Since the start of the pandemic in the spring of 2020...</b>	34%	19%	--
<b>W5 (March 2023): In the past 12 months...</b>	44%	22%	20%

Employer-provided training during the past 12 months is more common among those employed full-time (51%) compared to those employed part-time (43%) or who are self-employed (14%). In the case of training not provided by the employer, however, the take-up rate is similar among those employed full-time (24%), part-time (23%) or who are self-employed (20%). Only 37 percent of those who are currently unemployed and looking for work accessed any of the three forms of training. The likelihood of participating in skills training does not vary significantly by region.

One of the major factors relating to participation, however, is age. Younger workers (those between the ages of 18 and 24) are much more likely to participate in all three types of training, while older workers (those age 55 or older) are much less likely to participate.

**Chart 1:**  
Participation in skills training in the past 12 months, by age group



*Q35. In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following forms of work-related training to improve your skills? a) A training course that was provided by your employer; b) A training course that was not provided by your employer, but that you took while you were working; d) A training course that you took while you were unemployed.*

Other groups more likely to participate in skills training include: recent immigrants; racialized workers (and more specifically those who identify as South Asian or Black, but not those who identify as Chinese); those with higher household incomes; those who are members of a labour union (particularly in the case of employer-provided training); and those employed in the public sector.

**TABLE 2:**  
**Participation in Skills Training in the Past 12 Months, as of March 2023 (subsample: in labour force)**

<b>Q35. In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following forms of work-related training to improve your skills?</b>		
<b>Population group</b>	Participation in any of the three types of training (%)	Participation in a training course that was provided by your employer (%)
<b>South Asian identity</b>	74	57
<b>Black identity</b>	72	54
<b>Recent immigrants (lived in Canada for 10 years or less)</b>	70	54
<b>Employed in the not-for-profit sector</b>	70	53
<b>Annual household income is \$150,000 or more</b>	68	57
<b>Member of labour union</b>	68	69
<b>Employed in public sector</b>	68	59
<b>Any racialized identity</b>	66	49
<b>Professional occupation</b>	66	54
<b>University degree</b>	62	47
<b>Average</b>	56	44

These different factors may reinforce one another. For instance, recent immigrants in the labour force are younger than average and more likely than average to have a university education and to be racialized (this means that this group may be more likely to participate in training, not only because of their immigrant background, but for other reasons related to their demographic profile).

## Skills training and the pandemic

*The proportion of those who participated in skills training who say their training course was related to the COVID-19 pandemic has fallen significantly. Training is now also less likely to be delivered remotely, and more likely to be delivered in person.*

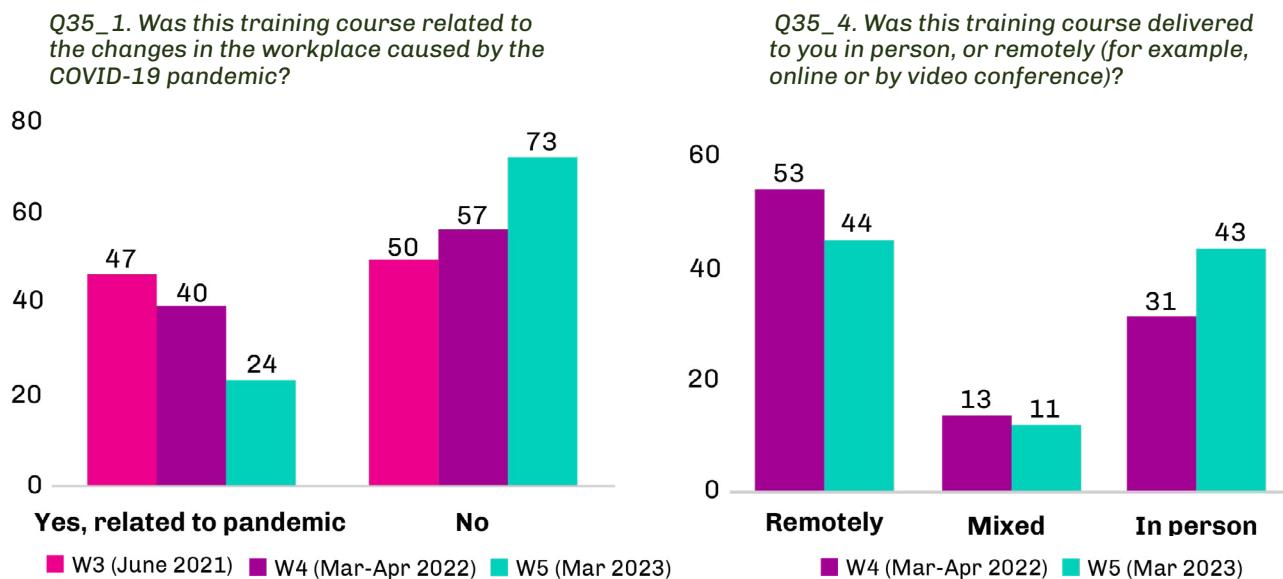


In 2021, almost one in two of those who participated in skills training said that their training course was related to the changes in the workplace caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, that proportion has fallen significantly, from 47 percent to 24 percent. The proportion saying their skills training course was not related to the pandemic increased from 50 percent in 2021 to 73 percent in 2023.

In 2023, workers with a disability that always or often limits their daily activity are twice as likely (33%) as those without a disability (15%) to say the training they received in the past 12 months was related to the pandemic.

### CHART 2: Skills training and the pandemic

Subsample: in the labour force and have participated in skills training in past 12 months\*



\* In survey waves 3 and 4, the question asked about participation in skills training since the start of the pandemic.

Training is now also more likely to be delivered in person, and less likely to be delivered remotely. In March 2023, 43 percent participating in training said their training was delivered in person, 44 percent said it was delivered remotely, and 11 percent said it was delivered through a mix of the two forms. However, the proportion receiving their training in person is 12 percentage points higher today than it was a year earlier, when it stood at 31 percent. The proportion receiving their training remotely fell by nine points over the same period.

## Reasons for participating in skills training

The most common reason for participating in skills training is because it was required by the employer. The need for training as part of the process of starting a new job explains why younger workers are more likely than older workers to undertake skills training.

People participate in skills training for a variety of reasons. The three most common reasons for undertaking any of the three forms of skills training mentioned in the survey are:<sup>5</sup>

- because they were required to by their employer (42%);
- because they enjoy learning new things (36%);
- because they want to be able to advance in their careers (36%).

Two other reasons are cited by about one in four of those who participated in skills training during the past 12 months:

- because they were starting a new job (26%);
- because they needed to learn to use new technology in their workplace (23%).

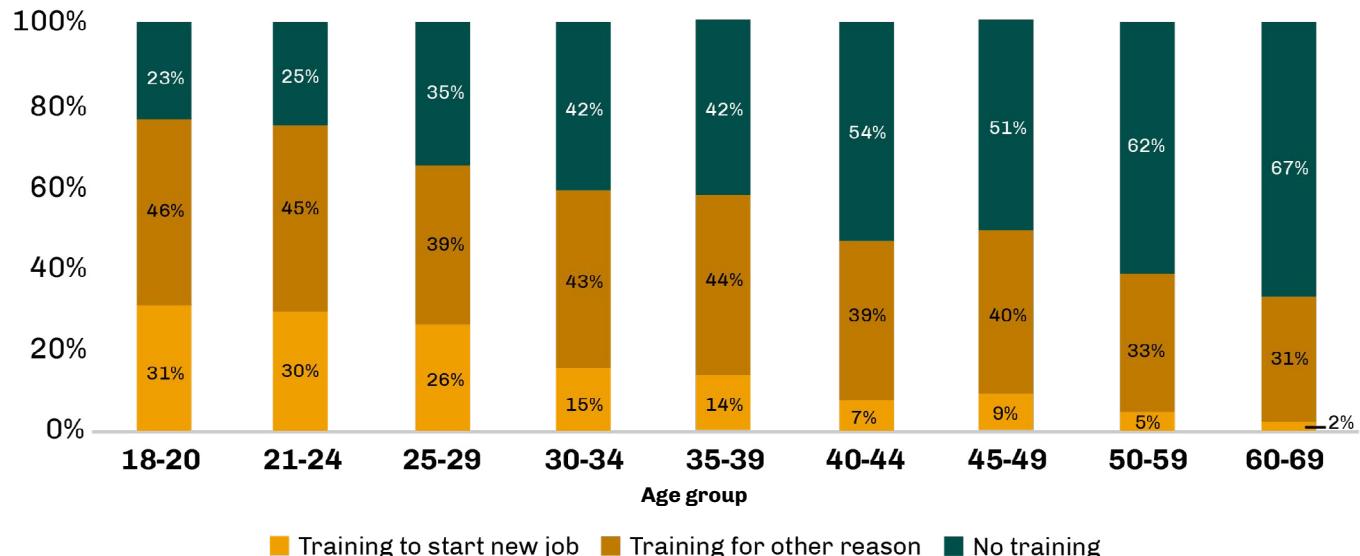
The least common reasons for participating in skills training are:

- because unless they improve their skills, they might lose their job (8%);
- because what they learned in school is not very relevant to what they do at work (7%);
- because of the changes in the workplace due to the COVID-19 pandemic (7%).

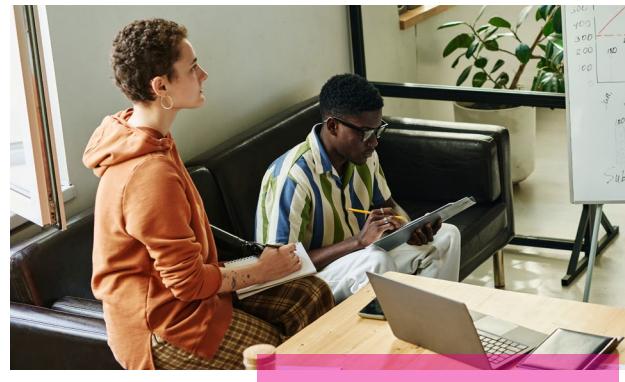
The reasons given for participating in skills training vary by age. Most noticeably, younger workers are much more likely than their older counterparts to say that they undertook skills training because they were starting a new job. This reason is selected by 40 percent of those age 18 to 24 who undertook training, compared to 24 percent of those age 25 to 54, and only nine percent of those age 55 and older.

The need for training as part of the process of starting a new job explains why younger workers are more likely than older workers to undertake skills training. While workers under the age of 30 are much more likely than those in their 30s or 40s to undertake any type of training, the real difference is that those in the younger age group are more likely to receive training as they start a new job. There is much less of a difference in the proportions who undertake training for any other reason.

### CHART 3: Participation in training because you are starting a new job, by age group Subsample: employed or unemployed (whether looking for work or not)



*In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following forms of work-related training to improve your skills? a) A training course that was provided by your employer; b) A training course that was not provided by your employer, but that you took while you were working; d) A training course that you took while you were unemployed. If yes to any training: Which of the following reasons best explains why you undertook work-related training during this period? a) Because I was starting a new job*



The reasons given for participating in skills training vary in other ways as well. For example, the most common reason among both full-time and part-time workers is because they were required to by their employer. But among self-employed workers, the most common reason is that they enjoy learning new things, while among those currently unemployed, it is a desire to advance their careers.

In addition, workers who are part of a labour union (52%) are more likely than those who are not (39%) to say that they undertook training because it was required by their employer; the same is true of workers in the public sector (49%) compared to those in the private sector (40%).<sup>6</sup> The proportion citing this reason is especially high among unionized office workers (60%) and professionals (56%), but much lower among unionized workers in sales or retail occupations (35%).

Compared to those in the public sector (18%), private sector workers (27%) are more likely to say they undertook training in order to learn to use new technology.



## Format of Training

*A majority of workers who received skills training in the past 12 months say their training course lasted one full day or less. Workers who take skills training are equally likely to say they took this training on their own or as part of a group.*

As mentioned, skills training is currently equally likely to be delivered remotely as it is to be received in person (with some receiving training through a mix of the two forms).

The survey also asked about the length of training courses. A majority (63%) of workers who received skills training in Canada in the past 12 months say their training course lasted one full day or less. This includes 23 percent who say it lasted one full day, 30 percent who say it lasted more than one hour but less than a full day, and 10 percent who say it lasted only one hour.

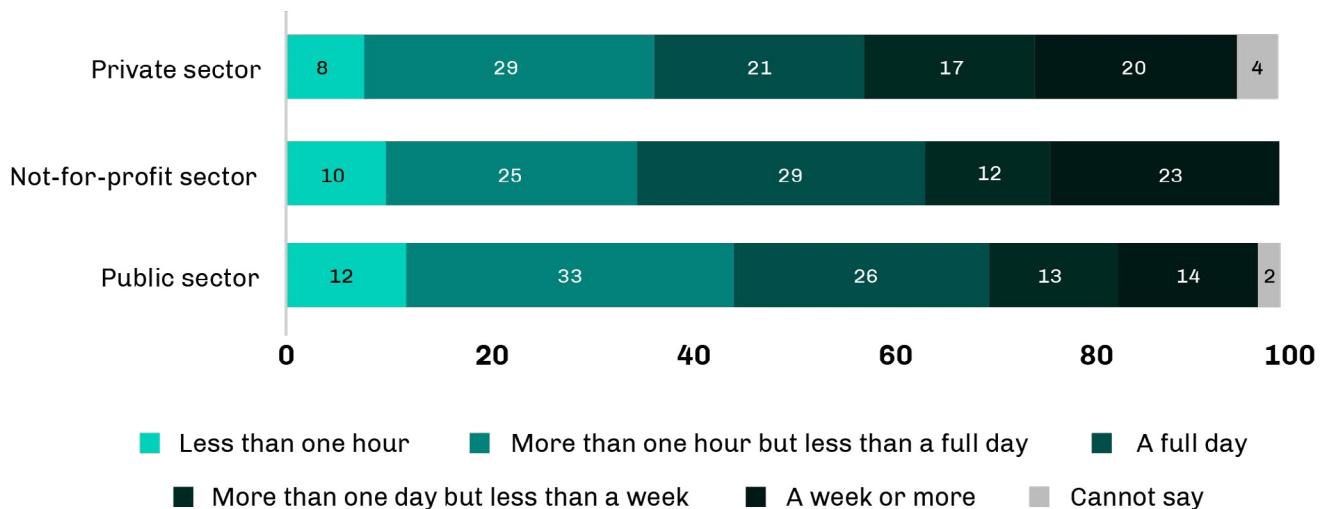
One in three say their training course lasted more than one day, including 15 percent who say it lasted more than one day but less than one week, and 18 percent who say it lasted one week or more.

Those taking training at work that is provided by their employer (68%) and those taking training because it was required by their employer (70%) are **more likely than average** to say their training course lasted one day or less. Those taking training while working that is not provided by their employer (58%) and those taking training to advance their careers (57%) are **less likely than average** to say their training course lasted one day or less.

Workers in the public sector are also more likely to say their skills training course was of a short duration. Seven in ten (71%) public sector workers who undertook skills training in the past 12 months say their training course lasted one day or less, compared to 65 percent of those in the not-for-profit sector and 59 percent of those in the private sector.

## CHART 4: Duration of skills training course, by employment sector

Subsample: employed or unemployed (whether looking for work or not) and have participated in skills training in past 12 months



*Q35BW5. How long did this course last?*

Workers who take skills training are more or less equally likely to say they took this training on their own (47%) or as part of a group (50%). Self-employed workers (66%) who undertook skills training in the past 12 months are more likely than average to have taken their training on their own.

Training that is delivered remotely is significantly more likely to be taken on one's own (61%) than in-person training (34%). It is not clear, however, whether remote delivery is chosen because it is more appropriate when training is taken on one's own, or whether instead training is shifting away from a group format in order to adapt to the need to be delivered remotely (in other words, is the use of technology adapting to the format of the training, or is the format of training adapting to the constraints of technology?).

## Types of skills training

*By a significant margin, the most common type of skills training is training related to workplace health and safety. Compared to other forms of training, training related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is the most likely to be taken online by an individual in a short period of time.*



Those who had participated in any form of skills training in the past 12 months were asked to describe the type of training that they received.<sup>7</sup>

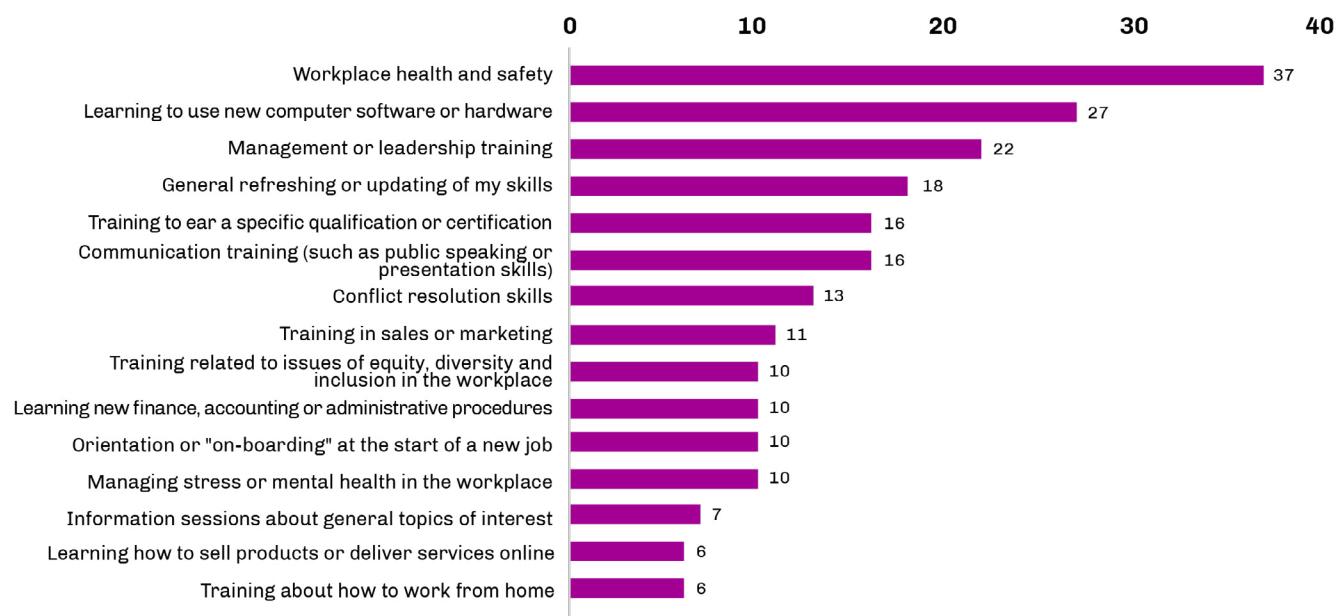
- By a significant margin, the most common type is training related to workplace health and safety (37%).
- The next two most common types of training are learning to use new computer software or hardware (27%), and management or leadership training (22%).

- Five types of training are taken by between 11 and 18 percent of participants, including: general refreshing or updating of skills (18%); training to earn a specific qualification or certification (16%); communication training (such as public speaking or presentation skills) (16%); conflict resolution skills (13%); and training in sales or marketing (11%).
- One in ten participants take training that is related to: issues of equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace (10%); learning new finance, accounting or administrative procedures (10%); orientation or “on-boarding” at the start of a new job (10%);<sup>8</sup> and managing stress or mental health in the workplace (10%).
- Fewer describe their training as information sessions about general topics of interest (7%); learning how to sell products or deliver services online (6%); or training about how to work from home (6%).

These results lead to two immediate observations. First, the types of training received by Canadian workers are varied, covering issues relating to the use of technology, new procedures, interpersonal skills, and health and well-being. Second, a significant proportion of skills training focuses on workplace health and safety: 37 percent of all participants describe the training they took in this way. In the case of skills training taken because it was required by the employer, the proportion that says their training was related to workplace health and safety rises to 48 percent. This type of training is extremely important, but at the same time it is likely related more to ensuring a new or current job can be done properly, rather than to the need to prepare for future job or workplaces changes.

### CHART 5: Description of skills training

**Subsample: employed or unemployed whether looking for work or not) and have participated in skills training in past 12 months**



*Q35EW5. Which of the following best describes the type of training you received?  
[Select all that apply]*

The extent to which training is delivered in person or remotely, individually or in groups, or in shorter or longer courses varies by the type of training. For instance, training related to workplace health and safety is the most likely type to be delivered in person (51% of this type of training is delivered this way, compared to an average of 43%). Training about how to work from home is the most likely type to be delivered in a group

(59% compared to an average of 50%). Training to earn a specific qualification or certification is the most likely type to last one week or more (31% compared to an average of 18%).

One clearer pattern, however, applies to training related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the workplace. This type of training is the least likely to be delivered in person rather than wholly or partly remotely (29% compared to an average of 43%), the most likely to be delivered individually rather than in a group (55% compared to an average of 47%), and the most likely to last less than one day (54% compared to an average of 40%).<sup>9</sup> In other words, compared to other forms of training, EDI training is the most likely to be taken online by an individual in a short period of time.



## Value of skills training

*At least 80 percent of those that participated in each of the 15 specific types of skills training mentioned in the survey say that training will be very or somewhat helpful to them in their current job. Workers with a disability that always or often limits their daily activity are less likely than workers with no disability to say their training will be helpful.*

The majority of workers who undertook skills training in the past 12 months say their training will be helpful to them. Specifically:

- 83% say their training will be very or somewhat helpful to them in doing their current job well;
- 71% say it will be helpful to them in learning to use new technologies in their workplace;
- 61% say it will be helpful to them in getting a promotion or a better job.

At least 80 percent of those that participated in each of the 15 specific types of skills training mentioned in the survey say that training will be very or somewhat helpful to them in their current job. Not surprisingly, however, some types of training were more likely than others to be seen as helpful to getting a promotion or a better job. These include management or leadership training (73% of those that participated in this type of training said it will be helpful in getting a promotion or a better job), communication training (72%), training in sales or marketing (72%), and learning new finance, accounting or administrative procedures (70%).

Workers from certain backgrounds were **more** likely than others to find their training helpful.

- 89% of recent immigrants say their training will be helpful to them in doing their current job well, and 67% say it will be helpful to them getting a promotion or a better job;
- 77% of those who identify as Indigenous say their training will be helpful to them getting a promotion or a better job.

However, workers from other backgrounds were less likely than others to find their training helpful.

- 76% of workers with a disability that always or often limits their daily activity say their training will be helpful to them in doing their current job, compared to 86% of those with no disability. Those with such a disability are also less likely than those with no disability to say their training will be helpful to them in

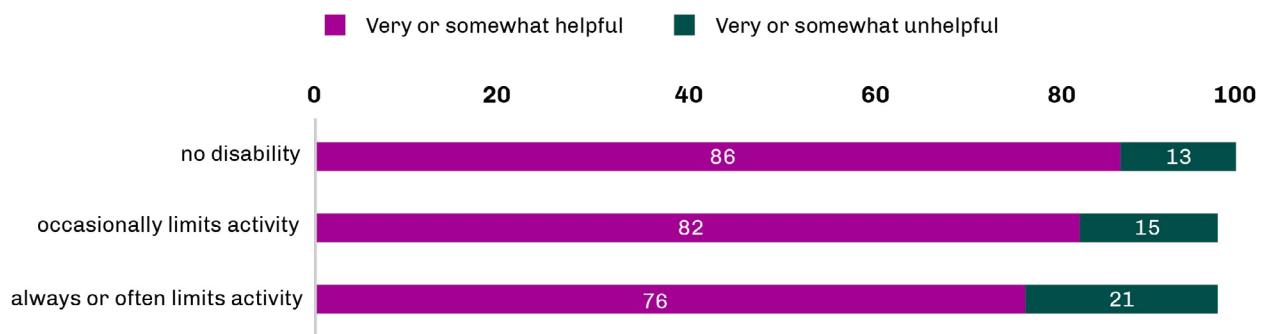
learning to use new technologies in their workplace (62% compared to 71%), or in getting a promotion or a better job (51% compared to 63%);

- 65% of workers in the not-for-profit sector say their training will be helpful to them in doing their current job, compared to 86% of those in the public sector and 85% of those in the private sector. Those working in the not-for-profit sector are also less likely than those in the public or private sectors to say their training will be helpful to them in learning to use new technologies in their workplace, or in getting a promotion or a better job.

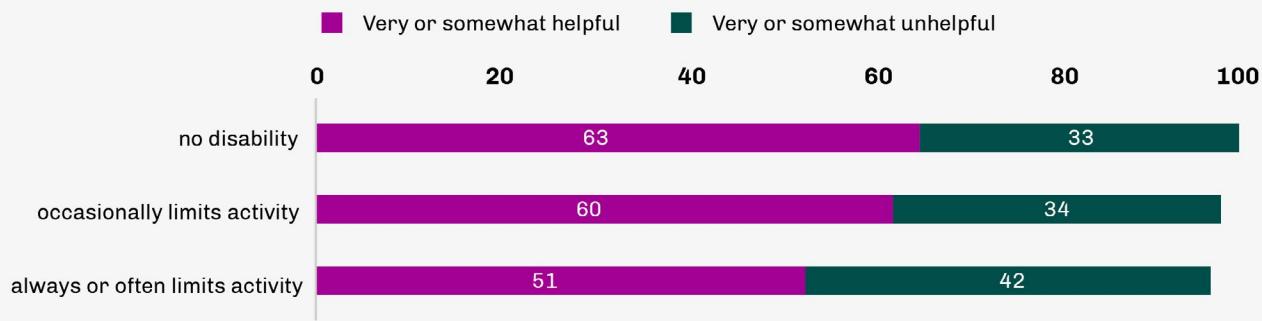
### CHART 6: Assessment of training, by disability status

Subsample: employed or unemployed, whether looking for work or not and have participated in skills training in past 12 months

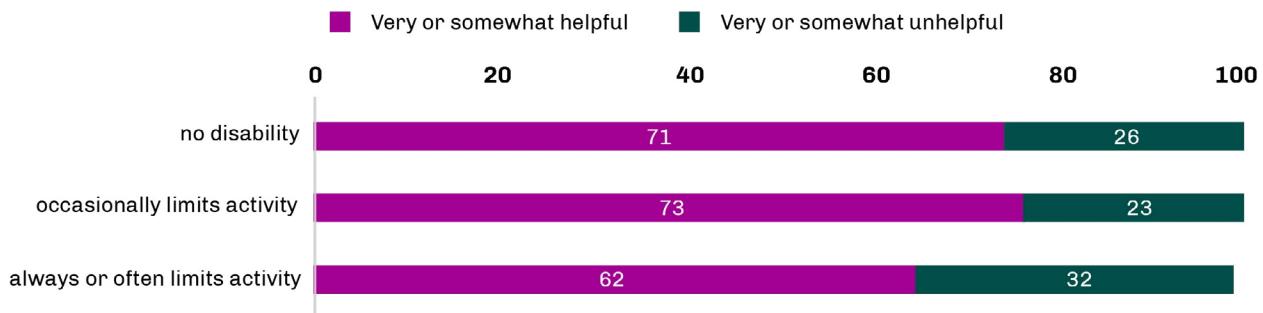
#### **In doing your current job well**



#### **In getting a promotion or a better job**



#### **In learning to use new technologies in your workplace**



*Q36AAW5. How helpful do you think the training you received will be in each of the following?*

## Barriers to skills training

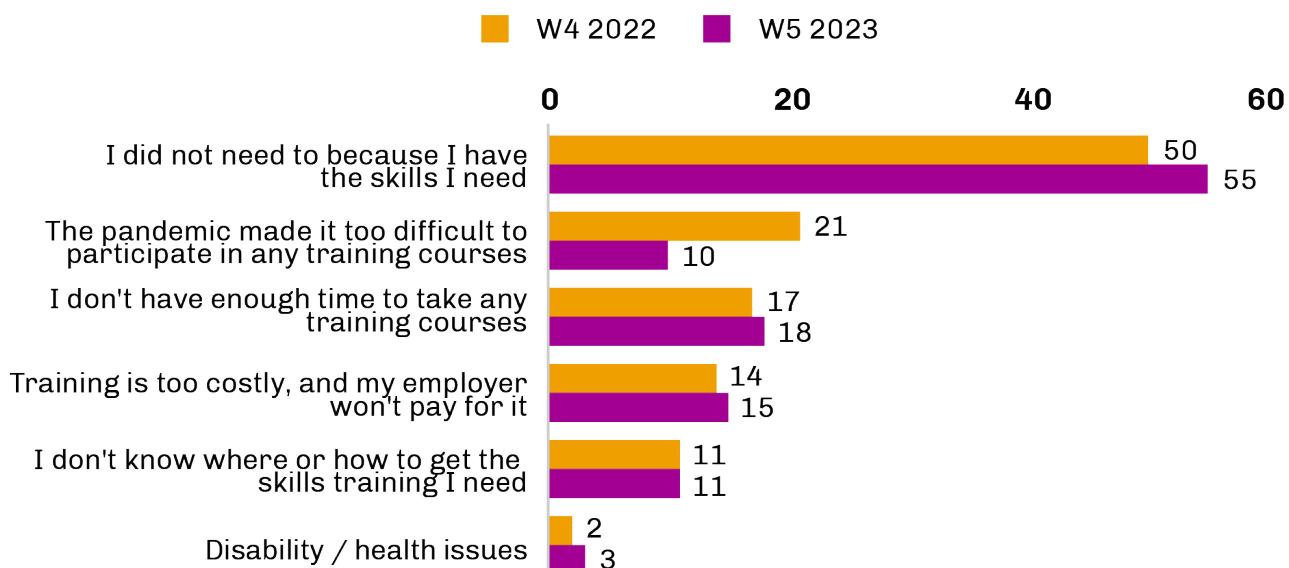
The most common reason given for not undertaking skills training in the past 12 months is that it was not necessary. Younger workers and recent immigrants are much more likely than average to say they did not participate in skills training because they didn't know where or how to get the skills training they need.

The time or money needed to participate in skills training may pose a barrier for some workers, but in fact, the most common reason given for not undertaking skills training in the past 12 months is that it was not necessary. Among those who did not undertake skills training, 55 percent say it was because they didn't need to because they already had the skills they needed. This is three times the proportion that says they didn't undertake training because they didn't have enough time (18%) or because it was too costly and their employer wouldn't pay for it (15%).

Compared to a year earlier, workers in March 2023 were much less likely to say the reason they did not participate in skills training was because the pandemic made it too difficult (10%, compared to 21% in March-April 2022).

**CHART 7:**  
**Reasons for not participating in skills training**

Subsample: those who have NOT participated in skills training since the start of the pandemic (W4)  
/ in the past 12 months (W5)



Q35A. Why did you not undertake any work-related training during the period?  
[Select all that apply / specify if other reason]

Overall, about one in ten (11%) of those who did not participate in skills training say this was because they didn't know where or how to get the skills training they need. But this figure is much higher for younger workers age 18 to 24 (32%) and for recent immigrants (22%).

Some types of workers are also more likely than average to say they did not undertake skills training because it was too costly. This includes racialized workers (27%), first-generation (22%) and second-generation (21%) immigrants, and workers with a physical disability (22%). Not having enough time to take skills training is more likely than average to be mentioned by those who are Indigenous (32%), who are first-generation immigrants (27%), and who are racialized (24%).

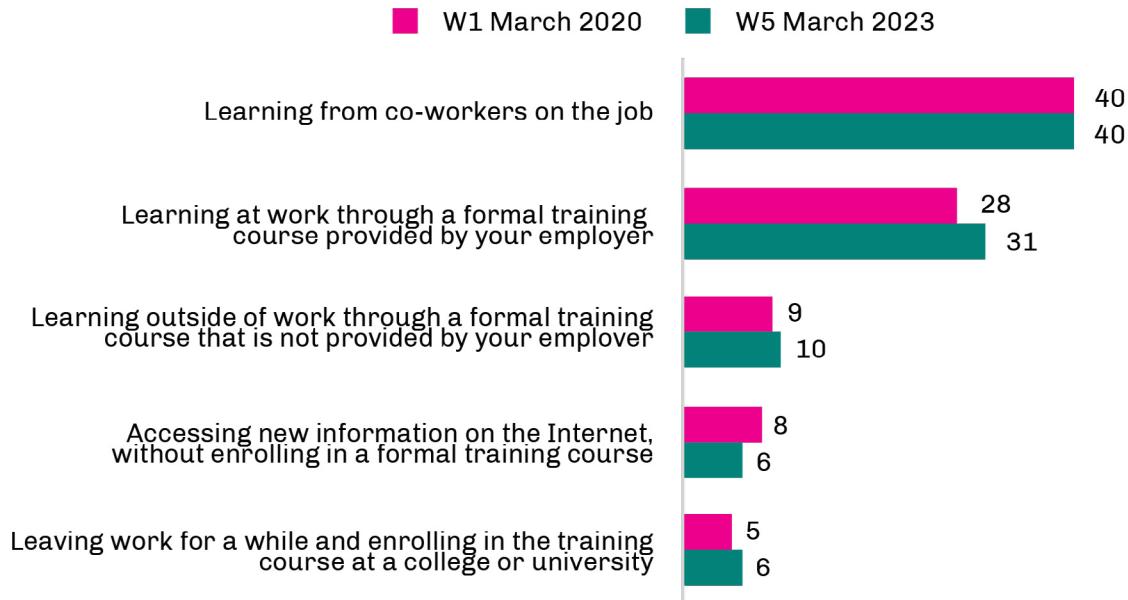
## How do people like learning new skills?

*Workers in Canada are more likely to say that the best way to learn new work-related skills is learning from co-workers, than to say it is through a formal training course provided by their employer.*

One other potential obstacle to participation in skills training is the fact that many workers do not see formal training courses as the best way to learn new skills.

When asked about the best way to learn new work-related skills, the most common answer provided by those in the labour force is learning from co-workers on the job (40%). Somewhat fewer (31%) say that it is through a formal training course provided by their employer. This finding underscores the importance of employers facilitating peer to peer learning in the workplace.

**CHART 8**  
**Best way to learn new work-related skills**  
Subsample: those in the labour force



*Q37. In your opinion, what is the best way for you personally to learn new work-related skills?*

While most types of workers are more likely to say learning from co-workers is the best way to learn new skills than to say a formal training course is best, there are some exceptions. These include:

- Workers age 55 and older: 39 percent choose a formal training course compared to 37 percent who say learning from co-workers on the job is best.
- First-generation immigrants: 37 percent choose a formal training course compared to 30 percent who say learning from co-workers on the job is best (in the case of recent immigrants, the figures are 38% and 29% respectively).
- Racialized workers: 34 percent choose a formal training course compared to 31 percent who say learning from co-workers on the job is best (the corresponding figures for workers who identify as white are 29% and 44%).

Among all those in the labour force, relatively few (6%) say that accessing new information on the Internet, without enrolling in a formal training course, is the best way to learn new work-related skills. But this way of learning new skills is more likely to be selected by self-employed workers (17%) compared to full-time (4%) or part-time (3%) employees.

### *Skills training and working from home*

How has the shift to remote work for many workers prompted by the pandemic affected participation in skills training?

As of March 2023, people who had been working from home at least some days during the previous three months – but who had not been working from home prior to the pandemic – were more likely to undertake skills training than those who were working in their usual workplace outside the home. Specifically, 65 percent of those working from home as a result of the pandemic undertook training, compared to 55 percent of those who were not working from home, and 37 percent of those who were working from home prior to the pandemic and continued to do so.

The workers most likely to participate in skills training are those who have been working at home some days, but not every day. This group is much more likely than average to be composed of those who work as professionals or executives. The workers least likely to participate in skills training are those who were working from home prior to the pandemic and continued to do so. This group is much more likely than average to be composed of those who are self-employed, or who are over the age of 55.

*Table 3: Participation in Skills Training and working from home*

	<b>Q35. In the past 12 months, have you participated in any of the following forms of work-related training to improve your skills? (%) yes)</b>		
<i>Q24d. Which of the following best describes your work situation during the past three month:</i>	<i>Any of the three types of training mentioned in the survey</i>	<i>A training course that was provided by your employer</i>	<i>A training course that was not provided by your employer, but that you took while you were working</i>
I have been working from home; or I have been working from home on some days, but not every day <sup>10</sup>	65%	53%	29%
I have been working from home	60%	47%	29%
I have been working from home on some days, but not every day	71%	59%	29%
I have continued to work from my usual workplace outside my home	55%	45%	20%
I was already working from home before the pandemic, and this hasn't changed	37%	18%	26%

Training taken by those who were working from home at least some days is twice as likely as that taken by those not working from home to be related to the changes in the workplace caused by the pandemic (34% compared to 17%).<sup>11</sup> But at the same time, only nine percent of those working from home say the training they received was specifically about how to work from home. The most common types of training for those working from home are: learning to use new computer software or hardware (34%); workplace health and safety (33%); and management or leadership training (25%).

Compared to those who are working in their regular place of work outside the home (84%), those who are working from home (84%) are equally likely to say the training they received will be helpful to them in doing their current job well. However, those working from home are more likely to say it will be helpful to them getting a promotion or a better job (67%, compared to 57% for those working in their regular place of work outside the home), and in learning to use new technologies in their workplace (76%, compared to 67%).

Finally, while those working from home are more likely to access skills training than those working in their regular place of work outside the home, the reasons given by those in each group who do not access skills training are slightly different. Among those who did not participate in any skills training in the past 12 months, those who work from home (58%) were less likely than those working in their regular place of work (66%) to say it was because they already have the skills they need. But those who work from home (18%) were more likely than those working in their regular place of work (6%) to say it was because they don't know where or how to get the skills training they need.

# Endnotes

- 1 In Wave 5, this question was asked to adult Canadians who are employed or unemployed, including unemployed people who are either looking or not looking for work. However, results presented here are restricted to those in the labour force (either employed, or unemployed and looking for work).
- 2 The question in March 2023 asked about training in the past 12 months. The question in June 2021 referred to training since the start of the pandemic (roughly 15 months earlier). The question in April 2022 also referred to training since the start of the pandemic (roughly two years earlier).
- 3 This question was not asked earlier during the pandemic.
- 4 Some people employed at the time of the survey may have been unemployed at some point in the previous 12 months.
- 5 In this and the following sections, results are presented for those in the labour force (whether employed or unemployed) as well as those who are unemployed and not currently looking for work.
- 6 However, it appears that union membership is the more important factor. Unionized workers in both the public (51%) and private sectors (53%) are equally likely to say that they undertook training because it was required by their employer; non-unionized workers in the public (45%) and especially the private sector (36%) are both less likely to give this reason.
- 7 Participants were shown a list of 15 types of training and could select all that applied. In the previous wave of the survey (Wave 4), a similar question was asked in an open-ended format, meaning that participants could describe the training they received in their own words. The 15 categories used in the Wave 5 survey was informed by the answers provided in Wave 4.
- 8 The proportion that says they participated in training because they were starting a new job is higher than the proportion that describes their training as “on-boarding.” This is because some of those who are starting a new job could describe their training as focusing on workplace health and safety, or the use of computers.
- 9 Information sessions about general topics of interest are just as likely as EDI training to be delivered individually rather than as part of a group.
- 10 This row combines responses given in the following two rows. These three rows exclude those who say they were already working from home before the pandemic.
- 11 Results in this section exclude those who were working from home prior to the pandemic and continued to do so.



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