FAQs on the ATD Talent Development Framework & Research Report

Q: Describe the new ATD talent development research report.

A: In December 2015, ATD published the findings of a research study in the report, *Building a Talent Development Structure Without Borders*. With the help of Rothwell & Associates, ATD collected quantitative and qualitative data from more than 1,500 talent development professionals from around the world. Their data provided insights about the challenges that are most relevant to organizational leaders, employees, and those working in talent development.

Q: There is a new graphic described in the report – what is included in it?

A: A part of the study included data collected from more than 300 managers, directors, and executives working in the talent development field. The respondents rated 39 functions, which were based on the ATD Competency Study and input from the ATD Forum, which is a consortium for senior training and learning practitioners and their organizations to connect and collaborate, on the centrality of each function to their talent development structures.

The resulting graphic—ATD’s Talent Development framework—is intended to be a guide that allows organizations to rearrange, remove, and add functions to fit their needs. Data from respondents in the study identified 15 functions as primary for a talent development structure. These functions include:

- Change management
- Coaching
- Compliance
- Employee engagement
- Evaluating learning impact
- Executive development
- Instructional design
- Leadership development
- Learning technologies
- Managing learning programs
- Needs assessment
- Onboarding
- Performance improvement
- Performance management
- Training delivery

(Eight of these 15 primary functions are Areas of Expertise in the ATD Competency Model. The other two Areas of Expertise from the ATD Competency Model are included in the secondary function list.)

While the remaining 24 functions are secondary based on the results of the data, because of the fluidity of talent development, these may be primary for some organizations, based on their industry or unique needs.
Q: How is the Talent Development framework different than the ATD Competency Model?

A: The Talent Development framework and ATD Competency Model have a connection to each other, though are different in purpose. The Talent Development framework is a guide that organizations may choose to use to rearrange, remove, and add functions to create a talent development structure that meets their organization’s unique needs. This framework is more of an organizational tool best suited for the learning or talent development department to use to determine which items and how many of the 39 functions are part of their organization’s talent development structure.

The ATD Competency Model helps individuals in the talent development profession understand what they need to know and be able to do to be successful in the field. It’s a tool that provides direction for individuals and teams to assess their knowledge and skills in the profession against 10 Areas of Expertise and Foundational Competencies. The Certified Professional in Learning and Performance (CPLP) credential offered by the ATD Certification Institute is based on the ATD Competency Model.

(Note: All 10 of the Areas of Expertise in the ATD Competency Model are functions in the Talent Development framework.)

Q: Where can I learn more information about the framework and the new report?

A: An archived webcast (recorded on December 1, 2015) about the report and the Talent Development framework can be accessed here. The report is available for free on ATD’s website.