LEARNING
Envisioned Future of LEARNING

The following Future Forecasts were formulated, vetted and synthesized following input from hundreds of members across the globe who participated in this association-shaping thought leadership exercise.

1. CoreNet Global will promote a trusting and innovative culture of continuous learning, meaningful relationships and camaraderie that will legitimize the professions served by the association.

2. CoreNet Global will build a diverse community of tribal learners that will challenge traditional education models with a less-formal approach of organic learning and peer-to-peer information sharing.

3. CoreNet Global will serve as a learning incubator, providing virtual spaces and experience labs for problem solving and ideation.

4. Access to CoreNet Global’s learning opportunities will be seamless across all aspects of the association, including conferences, designations, professional development and other knowledge-sharing opportunities.

5. CoreNet Global will leverage technology to establish a learning delivery model that focuses on methodologies and solutions that can be applied immediately.

6. Learning will evolve over time to incorporate multiple delivery styles and formats including on-demand, just-in-time micro-learning opportunities.

7. The skills needed for CoreNet Global stakeholders will change dramatically as workplace automation becomes more prevalent.
The future of learning is here. And the future of CoreNet Global is learning. That was the consensus of the hundreds of members who weighed in during the FutureForward 2025 work groups that explored this vital aspect of the association’s value proposition.

Learning has always been one of the cornerstones of the CoreNet Global member experience, but consumers now have more educational choices than ever before. Therein lies the challenge for an organization steeped in traditional learning models of formal corporate real estate (CRE) designation programs and professional development offerings. Will they remain relevant in the year 2025?

Nearly every fact, lesson, or “how-to” can be found in seconds and viewed or read in minutes on a smartphone. It is tempting to think that traditional instructors and courses will no longer be required and that everyone can take responsibility for their own education. However, increased connectivity has in fact robbed many of us of the time to reflect, to step away from our daily routines and learn something new. And with so much knowledge so close at hand, how are we to know what is most important? What is true and useful? And what does that mean for the future of learning?

What Does the Future of Learning Look Like?

Learning and development professionals are grappling with the pace of change in how people seek answers and how they choose to learn, notes Treion Muller from eLearning Industry. In addition to evolving human behavior, he cites the following learning and development reality checks for those thinking beyond what’s available now:¹

1. Free: Free learning is a major disruptor to traditional learning offerings and the quality of it is improving – and fast. It used to be that the most accurate, trustworthy information came from respected institutions but that is no longer the case.

2. Instructor-Led Training: At least for the near term, instructor-led training has the most street cred, but trainers will need to provide pre- and post-digital experiences that augment the instructor content and delivery.

3. Video: This will continue to be a vital piece of the learning puzzle moving forward. Those who do it will lead in their respective learning spaces.

4. Commoditization: Solving for how to commoditize modern learning packages is a major challenge as organizations struggle to identify how a modern learner will pay for content.

5. Community: It’s the new expert. Trusted networks of peer groups and advisors are where a lot of the best learning is taking place. (Note: This is where CoreNet Global has an opportunity to shine.)

6. AI, AR, VR, IoT and Gamification: They will need to be part of a learning organization’s toolbox moving forward.

Tom Vander Ark, CEO of Getting Smart, shared similar thoughts in his June 2018 article in Forbes: “The new thing in education is working in networks,” he wrote. “And there’s good reason because the demands of the work have outstripped the toolset. We’ve (probably) reached a point of maximum complexity where more instructors are shooting for broader aims but with old constraints and inadequate tools and supports. The answer is working together in informal and formal networks.”²

CoreNet Global’s learning platform is already a peer-to-peer training network developed by practitioners for practitioners. But the future will likely require changing delivery systems that address evolving learning styles and an increased desire for personalization. This report will explore these issues along with the perceived need to broaden the definition and scope of learning and transfer knowledge to future generations.

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Professional associations across the board are already seeing some common themes driving the learning value propositions and shaping models for the future:

- The meaning of college is in flux, with traditional college models increasingly out of step with a lifelong learning orientation.

- Microlearning encourages flexible learning: as-needed timing, variable locations, and smartphone platforms. It may be able to support non-traditional learners and different styles of learning.

- For the next generation, work will mutate in ways that challenges workers, requiring repeated reskilling and continual adaptation to new technologies and work structures.

- For individuals, an online digital assistant available on any connected device will know as much about you and your friends as you do and will make individualized anticipatory recommendations and even decisions.

As we considered what learning opportunities may exist over the next several years, it became apparent that CoreNet Global is a learning organization first and foremost and that its brand may need to emphasize this over all else. Learning comes in many forms, both formal and informal, including coursework, information exploration and content networking. This document is offered in that spirit, to help identify potential new dimensions to that identity.

What do these shifts mean for the future of organizations such as CoreNet Global? The foundation of the CoreNet Global learning model has been to provide opportunities to CRE professionals for continuous and lifelong learning and professional development that stays up to date and agile. As technology and skills needed change, these expectations will evolve and CoreNet Global must stay nimble to meet these needs. This document, as noted above, seeks to forecast what members will value and identify new ways to meet those future expectations.

Each forecast was carefully crafted with thoughtful input, context, insights and research as noted in greater detail on the following pages.
Future Forecasts

1. **FUTURE FORECAST:** By 2025, CoreNet Global will promote a trusting and innovative culture of continuous learning, meaningful relationships and camaraderie that will legitimize the professions served by the association.

In the July 21, 2017 issue of Forbes, Maureen Metcalf, Metcalf & Associates, wrote that successful learning environments and cultures must be able to:³

1. Delight customers
2. Actively collaborate
3. Rigorously experiment
4. Accelerate decisions and learning
5. Build adaptability and resilience

It stands to reason then that CoreNet Global must build a learning platform that enables its members and customers to grow and belong to an organization that supports career-spanning, career-expanding education.

**Broader Pool of Potential Learners**

The corporate real estate field is much broader than it used to be, and this trend will likely continue beyond 2025. Many work group participants anticipate that the role of a corporate real estate manager will continue to evolve and will require skills traditionally associated with information technology, human resources, environmental health, security, and employee wellness, to name a few. The profession of corporate real estate, like many professions, will need to attract professionals with the skills to help manage big data, cybersecurity, and much more.

CoreNet Global can, and will, play a key role in providing information and learning content that will help professionals navigate these changing professional demands. Part of this challenge will lie in the importance of recruiting and incorporating knowledge workers from outside real estate.

Increasingly, corporate real estate professionals are entering the workforce with backgrounds in other areas, which means some traditional corporate real estate training requirements are likely to remain; however, if CRE roles are expanded in the future, those areas noted above will just add to the growing skills that will be required.

Lifelong learning, already an important aspect of what CoreNet Global does, will need to more deeply address those professionals who might be switching careers later in life or are transitioning into a real estate role from another part of the business. Enhancing their skill set in order to stay up-to-date/become current is a central focus. In doing so, CoreNet Global will continue to develop a reputation as a hub for professionals in and even beyond real estate, educating people who are engaged in the built environment and work enablement.

Many work group participants view this as a positive development as space and its utilization impact every other realm of a company’s operations. One participant noted: “Every time you touch real estate, you’re touching the entirety of the organization.” With a broader audience and collaboration of shared services professionals, more meaningful learning experiences are likely to result, both formal and informal, to address the additional demand for more training, including for those stepping into real estate roles mid-career.

With the aforementioned changes afoot, the existing professional designations, their value and their curriculum will need to be evaluated in the coming years for relevance and demand. The value of continuing to serve a very small subset of the association members with a designation will need further consideration about the viability of the effort and the return on investment for resources associated with it. It may well be a better solution to eliminate designations that are not thriving and growing for a new focus on the needs of the broad membership for current, relevant and accurate professional development learning experiences. Work group discussions on this topic varied with some participants expressing interest in greater program flexibility while others desired greater market recognition and prestige for the designations that already exist – and even more options for corporate real estate professionals to attain and demonstrate proficiency in their field.

**The Value of Credentialing**

Professional designations have been a vital part of CoreNet Global’s mission since its inception. The Master of Corporate Real Estate (MCR), Senior Leader of Corporate Real Estate (SLCR) and the newly offered Qualified Professional of Corporate Real Estate (QPCR), are the formal, traditional pathways to learning proficiency in their field.

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acceptance and reputation of corporate real estate designations across the profession’s sectors and disciplines. While a C-suite executive may not understand the specific skills involved in receiving an MCR designation, for example, she is quite likely to be familiar with and have respect for any degree or certification received from a major institution. This relationship could consist of anything from a co-branded certificate after attending a course or workshop all the way to CoreNet Global partnering with universities to develop curricula and designing a program of study that could result in a degree of some kind. Some participants indicated that seeing a familiar and respected university name and seal on a CoreNet Global certificate would improve its cachet.

Not everyone agreed, however, that this kind of academic credibility is required for CoreNet Global’s educational offerings to have value. Many work group members indicated that smaller-scale learning modules that teach specific skills will be in greater demand. It was expressed by many that any programs offered by CoreNet Global should be rigorous and have “a defined level of proficiency” in the material at hand. Rigor and small-scale speed and delivery may be in direct conflict, and this will be an area for further consideration in the years ahead.

It will be incumbent upon CoreNet Global – and all of its designees – to demonstrate and clarify the value of such an investment of time and money if the programs are to remain valid in 2025 and beyond.

2 FUTURE FORECAST: By 2025, CoreNet Global will build a diverse community of tribal learners that will challenge traditional education models with a less-formal approach of organic learning and peer-to-peer information sharing.

Inasmuch as professional designation programs remained a viable option in the minds of many members, so too does the prospect of more organic learning without the formality of defined coursework. Many believe that predictive learning through data analytics will help CoreNet Global and its members identify what skills and training they will need in the future – and who in the “tribe” can help them get that knowledge. Tribal learning isn’t new but the ways in which people are sharing has changed – and so has the medium. By bringing together effective communicators, creators, collaborators and learners, CoreNet Global can become a powerful knowledge broker by leveraging the power of its global network for its members and customers in the future.

CoreNet Global is made up of individuals representing various demographics and with varying levels of experience. In acknowledging that each person has specific transferable skills and experiences, CoreNet Global can create opportunities for members to develop innovative and multidisciplinary perspectives at every level of their organizations. Multidisciplinary perspectives provide opportunities for new thought leaders to emerge as they see the world from alternative views. This will provide opportunities for these thought leaders to rise in their fields, connect to one another, and share knowledge that will enable our profession to pivot and adapt to the fast-paced world.

Whether formal or informal, mentorship, internships and apprenticeship opportunities were noted by many work groups as a meaningful way to put the tribe to work. There is a skills gap in the corporate real estate profession for those who stumble into the career and for those who transition into real estate responsibilities from another part of a company. Add to this the fact that most universities have little, if any, coursework in corporate real estate, and apprenticeship programs could be a viable way to grow the pipeline of talent. In addition, these types of offerings will be increasingly valuable as the needed skills continue to evolve to keep pace with the speed of technology.

In 2025, apprenticeships will be an important component of professional education alongside traditional instruction with some predicting that it might matter more than coursework in career development.

For those starting a corporate real estate career right out of university, internships are another powerful learning tool, and an intentional and rotational training program similar to what consulting firms offer could be implemented by CoreNet Global for the benefit of its members. As an example, a class of perhaps a dozen or more students in a city could spend a week learning about building operations followed by a week looking at workplace design or leasing strategy and so on. The companies participating in this would gain an early look at young talent and CoreNet Global could establish a relationship with universities to attract students and future members.

Intergenerational Conversations Matter

Some of the work groups discussed the value in two-way learning whereby experienced professionals have much to learn from those newer to the field. Too much segmentation by age or experience level could limit the ability to transfer knowledge through reverse mentoring. Digital natives, for example, have much to teach their older counterparts, and companies are already recognizing the benefits from the increased bandwidth of both knowledge and experience.

More than ever, corporate real estate professionals understand the value of being exposed to a fuller range of the diversity of CoreNet Global’s membership – diversity of thought, geography, and experience – and attaining a better understanding of changing cultural norms and generational trends. As noted throughout the FutureForward 2025 reports, members see the need for a broad set of skills that encompass the entire lifecycle of the employee experience in the work environment. Culture, environmental sustainability, health and wellness, cyber security, safety, and of course technology skills have come to gain as much if not more importance than the technical real estate expertise members bring to their work.

Because of this, CoreNet Global must develop tools and methodologies that address these areas. One suggestion included offering multidisciplinary Capstone-like projects where diverse groups of people work together on real problems and find solutions that benefit from the broad range of expertise found...
in the group itself. This would enable professionals from across the globe to meet, work together, and develop relationships that could be useful in the future, while demonstrating proficiency in practical ways that can be taken back to each member’s company or workplace. As a result, CoreNet Global will thrive as a hub for passionate professionals in the built environment, and members will tell their peers and coworkers about the many tangible benefits of being part of such a community.

A More Level Playing Field Powered by Diversity and Divergent Thought

CoreNet Global’s learning platform will remain global of necessity, but with offerings that vary based on regional needs in different local and regional markets. Some participants noted that many key aspects of their jobs are not taught in college or CoreNet Global courses, such as permitting processes or even maintaining ethical business practices in the face of corruption. Geographies and markets have a tremendous impact on the learning that is required, so it is not logical for everyone under the CoreNet Global umbrella to take the same courses or have need for the same information. And even where the material may be universal (or near enough), regions may require an adjustment to curriculum or even delivery style. These are areas where CoreNet Global may be able to coordinate peer-to-peer information sharing in a more robust way in the future.

One of the roles of an association is to help each member make connections – with other members, with new trends in the workplace, and with needed information. Over the next few years, CoreNet Global will face choices on where to put its resources, whether corporate real estate professionals should seek greater specialization or a broader frame of reference, and whether learning should be primarily academic or more practical. These may be false choices, or CoreNet Global may find itself leaning more toward one identity than another as the association takes into account member feedback through the Future Forward reports. But the questions demand attention, and CoreNet Global’s next moves should only follow some intentional and thoughtful conversation around these areas if it is to remain a learning organization of choice.

3 FUTURE FORECAST: By 2025, CoreNet Global will serve as a learning incubator, providing virtual spaces and experience labs for problem solving and ideation.

CoreNet Global is fortunate to have a creative, collaborative, solutions-oriented membership. Such is not always the case in every professional association, and by the nature of the very work members do, there is a natural inclination to want to “tinker” with new ideas and concepts that may get to a better way of working.

At its core, CoreNet Global should be about integrating and collaborating, not separation and silos. That’s why the concept of a “learning incubator” was so appealing to many work group participants though they may have called the concept any number of names. Whether they were inclined to focus on experiential learning, design thinking, lean or agile methodologies, to name a few, members coalesced around the idea of creating the spaces and places where the “magic” could happen. These could be informal, activity-based learning where each individual’s mindset can help reach an answer, solve a problem or create something entirely new.

A learning incubator “provides a safe place where participants are given tools for dealing with complex situations, as well as opportunities to observe their behaviors and change them, thus enhancing their delivery and team performance,” says Mandy Lebides, of Creating Learning Incubators in South Africa.4

Learning “by doing” is already replacing authoritative, centralized educational curricula and this trend will continue, some argued, or at least become the very core of the learning value proposition in many organizations. CoreNet Global will need to offer a tactile, virtual and adaptive learning platform that enables extreme customization and personalization.

According to educational publisher Elsevier, adaptive education assists in gauging “the pulse of the class to customize learning experiences. Adaptive learning systems endeavor to transform the learner from a passive receiver of information to a collaborator in the education process.” Adaptive learning is an education technology that can respond to the student’s interactions in real time. This development provides an opportunity for professionals in any discipline to learn in a more collaborative style within their teams, organization, and industry and even across industries, like never before.

Elearningindustry.com cites the following reasons why adaptive, experiential learning is the future of learning:5

1. Learning By Doing – Experiential learning has already replaced repetitive, rote learning in many learning spaces. Problem solving and critical thinking, and decision making have become the best method to accelerate learning.

2. Safe Learning Environment – Real-life scenarios can be used to create simulation exercises during a course experience. Mistakes are likely to be made, and that becomes a natural part of the learning experience. Think of it as taking kids to a playground. They are free and willing to try new things and have fun in a controlled, safe environment.

3. Putting Theory to Practice – Students are better able to retain ideas and concepts when they actually put them to use through first-hand experiences.

4. Changing mindsets – Experiential learning generally has a powerful effect on the mindset of participants. “Leadership, like swimming, cannot be learned by reading about it,” according to Henry Mintzberg, a management guru referenced by elearningindustry.com.

5. Collaborative Engagement - There is a high level of ownership when participants collaborate and learn from each other in a problem-solving activity.

6. High Return on Investment - The feelings and emotions that go along with experiential learning are effective, in part, because they are personal and this enhances skills and knowledge building beyond what occurs in a classroom experience.

7. Enables Personalized Learning - A personalized learning experience should include curriculum choice, learning strategy, teaching and assessments where participants can often set their own learning pace. When combining technology and simulations with experiential learning, in particular, learning organizations can make offerings available anytime, anywhere across multiple devices.

In addition to virtual and in-person experiential learning labs, as is the case in many other professions such as engineering, architecture or computer science, the use of competitions, contests or project-based challenges may be a way of attracting new talent to the association and a pipeline of new workers to the profession, some suggested. These business-university partnerships take a student beyond a simple case study into the stage of application. This is the kind of endeavor that often leads to universities incubating new businesses and technologies in many fields of study, and real estate can benefit from similar applications.

4 FUTURE FORECAST: Access to CoreNet Global's learning opportunities will be seamless across all aspects of the association, including conferences, designations, professional development and other knowledge-sharing opportunities.

In its present form, CoreNet Global divides its learning offerings primarily into four buckets: professional development seminars, Global Summits, resources available through the Knowledge Center and chapter programming. Work groups indicated a need to blend the offerings and better link them into a seamless learning experience. With one linked to the other, members and customers could create a customized learning pathway that fits their learning style, availability and interests. The ability for one to lead into or flow into one another could deepen the engagement of members and encourage full use of the many tools and knowledge resources.

Examples provided by some participants included Global Summit attendance or a peer-reviewed project counting toward a designation. “We’ve got good content already in place,” one participant noted, “which has already been rigorously reviewed prior to presentation. These kinds of programs would encourage members to continue to enhance their skills and offer incentives based on knowledge already attained.”

Today, CoreNet Global offerings largely exist in the physical realm – at Global Summits and chapter events, and in classrooms – with some content made available online. In the near future the possibilities should and will be wide open, as new ways of learning take hold.

It was widely seen as important among members for CoreNet Global to assert its role as the industry standard for education and training in corporate real estate, which adds to the credibility and perception of each member of the association. This requires the content and nature of each learning experience offered to change and evolve alongside the needs of the profession, which in turn makes seamless, learning accessible to CoreNet Global members across the globe.

5 FUTURE FORECAST: By 2025, CoreNet Global will leverage technology to establish a learning delivery model that focuses on methodologies and solutions that can be applied immediately.

There’s no question that technology continues to improve by the minute, and the technologies available to support learning from primary school to on-the-job training have improved dramatically in the past few years. With this in mind, work group participants concurred these advances will support a broader learning model that involves information gathering, validation, virtual forums and dialogue for interaction. Technology will also help members better identify their learning styles and preferences, and the percentage of learning that takes place online will increase, owing to shifting generational preferences and growing sophistication and capability of technology tools.

Learning technology has improved to such a level that there are now many good online tools for curated education and adaptive learning techniques. In the age of Spotify and a raft of dating apps, members are increasingly expecting predictive analytics to play a part in anticipating their wants and needs as noted above. Participants noted that the creation of a collection of programs or workshops that members could get or pay for at a certain membership level might be a future direction for the association. This aligns with one membership model noted in the Belonging Forward’2025 report.

Many work groups concurred that the implementation of a customized learning platform will give CoreNet Global members the ability to learn what matters most to them on their own time and at their own pace. CoreNet Global will not only offer learning content that serves the corporate real estate profession but will include materials on related topics such as, employee
engagement, finance, contracts, tax law, and incentives. The customized platform will give members the ability to input their interests and have customized content delivered to them online. Each member can customize the information they receive and select the industries and courses that interest them. The platform will then keep track of member activity and generate material directly related to the members' clicks.

A Larger Menu is Needed

Given the technologies available or on the way, it is inevitable that learning will be customized to the individual. But what will be required for this to be effective will be a reservoir of learning offerings from which materials can be chosen. In other words, a member can only select from what’s on the menu, so the menu will need to be extensive. The training will only be as good as the material that is presented and the people and processes that determine that. Deciding what training materials are required or most helpful, building and maintaining a structure that supports members in easily finding the training materials, and developing and pricing learning platforms is a large and difficult task. This area will require thoughtful processes, committed partners, and active engagement and participation by members to curate and assess materials.

And wayfinding will be critical. Members will give up if they cannot quickly find what they need and sort out unnecessary materials. Learning materials will need to be maintained in a user-friendly fashion so that useful materials can be found instantaneously (or at least rapidly).

This cannot be centralized in a membership association without significant resource support and expense, so members would be expected to share their knowledge in forums and environments where it can be easily captured. In this way local content, for example, can be accessed globally, enabling everyone to learn from one another.

In addition, this reservoir of offerings will need attention, requiring a level of monitoring or curating on the part of a team that sets or honors criteria for value and relevance. CoreNet Global will need to exercise a level of quality control or review if the materials made available are to have the necessary credibility and objectivity. This aligns with the “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval” concept discussed in the Information and Content FutureForward report.

Crowdsourcing

New ways of learning will also allow for crowdsourced reviewing of materials and courses. Real-time data polling will enable CoreNet Global members to rate the content and delivery of educational programs. This data could be used to adapt course materials to the changing needs of members, most likely with the input of a review board to maintain the integrity of the learning process as noted above. This would also allow for improved sorting or tagging of online information for better wayfinding quickly. Courses could be tagged by topic, degree of difficulty, geographic emphasis, and length of time required. As a result, CoreNet Global members will be able to utilize technology to facilitate chunked, individualized, and experiential learning from any location.

Additionally, to further promote the engagement of members with the association, the use of crowdsourcing for development of content offers a possible way to source dynamic, relevant and just-in-time content, without additional impact to association resources. By offering a grant-based incentive for members who want to develop content for inclusion in the CoreNet Global learning experience, members may be incented to greater association engagement by serving as a Subject Matter Expert and/or faculty for delivery of the latest content. Not only does the content library benefit from this approach, but member engagement and ultimately retention are positively impacted.

Many of the expectations related to how real estate education might change in the coming years revolve around technology and its impact on how, when, and in particular where learning can take place. If learning can be digital, virtual, and online, then many of the barriers to further education can be removed and a new generation of corporate real estate professionals can gain critical knowledge from any location around the globe. This will benefit the association and its members in terms of logistics, travel and lodging expenses, and time spent away from the office. An additional benefit lies in the lessening of CoreNet Global’s carbon footprint. By minimizing unnecessary travel, CoreNet Global can promote environmentally friendly practices across the real estate industry and beyond.

Different Models will Emerge

In addition to the convenience technology is sure to bring, work groups also forecast a re-tooling of educational materials to take different delivery models into consideration. Information that is factual and concrete may be better conveyed on demand and online, potentially saving valuable classroom time for that which is best done in that environment, such as open and free-flowing debate that can lead to new solutions.

These technological innovations will also allow learning to be customized to each member’s needs and circumstances, such that even if a classroom environment is considered to be ideal for a particular component, other options can be made available for the member who cannot participate in person. It is difficult to imagine an obstacle to learning that could not be overcome.

Some of this is already being made available in some quarters, as we have seen elsewhere in this report. The rise of technology has enhanced online learning to levels unimagined just a decade ago. From the ubiquity of the smartphone to AI, VR, AR, and machine learning, in theory anyone can access any data at any time from nearly anywhere. The dream of immediate access to knowledge is now largely a reality. Much of what is highlighted in this section of the report mirrors what was addressed in the Information & Content FutureForward 2025 report as well.
Security and Accountability

However, immediate access and customized learning is not a purely utopian ideal. This revolution brings challenges, such as ensuring that valuable resources are made available to those who should have them, while not endangering the value they possess or reducing the perceived value of a designation or credential. One concern about online learning is the sure and certain knowledge that most we have, at one time or another, “phoned it in.” If a corporation offers, for instance, a mandated IT security or workplace safety training course online, it is likely that many employees will simply click through and pay minimal attention to the video presentation offered. Even a short quiz at the conclusion is no guarantee of real learning. As a result, some CoreNet Global members express reservations about the association’s ability to keep standards high in this environment. While ready access to learning materials frees participants, some instructors wonder if it is possible to lose too much structure. This is a balance that CoreNet Global must seek to achieve and maintain, partly through instructional design and learning standards that are applied to ensure quality consistency.

Online vs. In Person

There was much discussion about whether one form of learning is objectively better for absorbing certain kinds of information. And what of the value that comes from people with different backgrounds and experiences sharing their knowledge in an interactive setting? “Just because it’s a digital age doesn’t mean face-to-face interaction has no value,” noted one Young Leader who said there was much to be learned from the mentoring aspect of a classroom experience. The answer will likely come down to choice and giving members and customers options while still ensuring the learning opportunities meet clearly defined learning objectives and instructional design standards.

Most participants favored a “both/and” approach to learning, in which material can be addressed in a variety of ways that benefit all learners. A multi-delivery system would likely include a variety of options under each of the three current primary delivery methods. In addition, as technology evolves, there will be new emerging opportunities.

1. Face-to-face or relational learning
2. Online/eLearning [includes self-paced videos and microlearning modules]
3. Distance education/Virtual classroom experiences
4. Other nontraditional means

In all instances, distance learning and classroom-based learning is significantly enhanced when instruction is augmented by calls before and after the course, with follow-ups and assessments offered remotely. This approach was popular with many work groups. In this way, the time spent together in a classroom or virtual classroom can be utilized most effectively, while anything that can be accomplished online outside the classroom or virtual classroom, is done so. In this way, what was once a four-day course that might require travel and a multi-night hotel stay might now become a two-day course with only one night required away from home. Virtual learning continues creation of a networked conversation with instructors and others, the value of which cannot be overlooked as part of the value of the CoreNet Global learning programs. Instructors perform a valuable function in the classroom, enhancing and contextualizing the experience and facilitating thoughtful and productive conversations among members, each of whom is intelligent and has something to contribute. In this way, relationships can be formed that are much less likely in absence of face-to-face or live virtual events. Well-designed learning may offer the most advantageous mix of both face-to-face and virtual classroom environments.

Of course, advocates for eLearning and other digital experiences also hold strong views. While some point out the lack of consistency in educational offerings around the world, the larger focus is again on learning styles. Several members expressed a preference for learning that is made available to them at any location or time that is most convenient to them. In many professional settings this kind of availability is now expected, and some members question why corporate real estate education should not offer the same convenience. Indeed, several Chapters referenced the ubiquity of phone apps and raised the idea of CoreNet Global offering learning modules in this way, including the “gamification of learning,” and other innovative methods.

There is little doubt that new forms and delivery systems for learning will be under consideration, and soon. CoreNet Global will need to determine which methods offer the most opportunity for the required investment and pursue those venues.

Unpredictable Technologies

It is widely presumed that artificial intelligence will change the way we work and learn. In fact, Technavio anticipates healthy growth for the global augmented reality market for education, which it predicts will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of more than 82 percent by 2021. Further, the value of the AR education market is expected to reach $8.017 billion USD by 2021.6

The Singapore Chapter work group participants pointed out that as machine learning makes some tasks easier and others redundant, other demands will likely be placed on the real estate professional. This could free up more time for learning while at the same time increasing the need for more and newer information.

According to ASAE Foresight Works “Drivers of Change,” Blockchain technology is another emerging technology that has implications and applicability to learning. Blockchains can be applied to credentialing by simplifying the verification of degrees and certifications. If associations were to participate in blockchain-based certification platforms, new approaches to microlearning, distance education, or continuing education could have enhanced credibility.7

The information and skills needed by members will only make an association like CoreNet Global more valuable, assuming that it can continue to keep members abreast of new technologies and trends in their fields and rapidly adapt to the changing environment. In fact, one imagines that it would be easier to quickly update the information available on a website or app than to write a new textbook or update course materials. In this way, technology will enhance CoreNet Global’s ability to react to market and technology forces more quickly and to aid members in keeping up with the changing requirements those forces are likely to create. CoreNet Global will be able to leverage technology to rapidly deliver content that can, in effect, turn on the proverbial dime and adjust in nearly real time to changes in the economy, business, and technology itself.

By 2025, the percentage of learning that takes place online is likely to increase, owing to shifting generational preferences and the growing sophistication and capability of technology. Virtual learning will become more important, and the online availability of materials will be increasingly expected as people demand access to learning on their own schedules. But work group participants seemed convinced that the value of face-to-face interaction will not go away. The challenge will lie in determining how to provide a multiplicity of options for a changing membership, but the increased footprint of technology will help to bring costs down, and investments made to infrastructure early on will pay dividends for years to come.

**FUTURE FORECAST:** Learning will evolve over time to incorporate multiple delivery styles and formats including on-demand, just-in-time micro-learning opportunities.

According to the American Society of Association Executives Foresight Works “Drivers of Change,” there are some trends occurring at the university level that associations like CoreNet Global should pay attention to for cues on how it can service members with lifelong learning.8

“Traditional educational models are under tremendous pressure as changes in work, technology, and student expectations demand both new curricula and new modes of instruction,” the ASAE report notes. “Higher education is facing new threats of disintermediation by online education and alternative credentialing systems. While the knowledge economy places a premium on analysis and thinking, it is also creating new alternatives to the university that threaten to transform how students receive postsecondary instruction.”

ASAE forecasts that massive open online courses (MOOCs) could be a college alternative for those not in top-tier educational programs as companies are becoming more accepting of these alternative credentials. If traditional college models continue to remain out of step with the desire for lifelong learning, the value of a college degree may be questioned further in the years ahead.

While work group participants did not discount the purpose and value of higher education, they did point to what they expect to be an ongoing demand: more easily digestible “chunks” of micro-learning for those already in the workforce that keep pace with the rapid pace of change.

**Micro-learning Flexibility**

As noted previously, many expressed the hope that CoreNet Global’s professional designations would offer greater flexibility in curricula. One key idea that supports this concept is similar to a merit badge in a scouting organization. “Micro-certificates” could provide very specific credentials tied to individual skills and proficiencies not unlike the range of applications or software certificates an IT professional might attain.

Attaining a number of these “micro-certifications” might or might not roll up into some kind of designation if enough of them were acquired, but the component parts would be clearly identified and easily understood and could stand on their own. These would have the benefit of being more easily attainable than larger certifications or designations, and therefore could be more attractive to someone looking for an identifiable measure of achievement, mastery, or accomplishment in her career.

It should be noted that none of these ideas have been suggested as replacements or even necessarily redefinitions of the MCR or other designations; they could form the foundation of a new or different level of designation or, as noted, serve as individual credentials. Also, these ideas arise from an interest on the part of CoreNet Global members to make education both more available and more relevant to the career paths each member is pursuing.

This could address some of the limitations in the number of MCR courses available outside the US as a viable alternative or augmentation to demonstrate mastery of a specific area. In addition, while the MCR designation can signify to prospective employers that a job candidate is serious about enhancing his career, it doesn’t necessarily clarify what specific skills the candidate possesses. Micro-learning could help address that in the future.

Further, some participants noted that micro-learning opportunities could take a different approach and not include certificates

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whatsoever. They could involve professional development as just-in-time understanding of a concept or process made available through learning videos, for example, and as noted in the previous future forecast above.

This revolution in learning is important, because most people now report they have less time for formal training and development than they once did. One unintended consequence of the past decade’s advances in technology is the expectation employers and clients often have of 24/7 access to workers and resources. While professionals in many fields have gained some measure of flexibility in their daily activities – including where and when they work – the other side of the coin is that there are fewer opportunities to get away in any meaningful sense, and this includes conferences and educational courses.

One response to this time crunch lies in “microlearning,” which is commonly understood as the breaking down of knowledge into bite-sized nuggets. Microlearning allows the harried professional to take the time available, whether 30 minutes or five, and learn more about a topic of interest in a smaller module. This is often done by video, but short interactive digital modules, articles, blog posts, and infographics can do the job as well. The learner can often decide the order in which these nuggets are consumed. While microlearning is not new, it has grown in popularity in recent years precisely due to the value of time, as well as shorter attention spans. Workers are demanding shorter learning periods so that they can get up to speed much faster. Learners may not have the patience, desire, or even time to sit through even a 30-minute online course. And of course, technological advances and improved bandwidth speeds make it more possible than ever to take advantage of learning opportunities that occur throughout the day, such as during a subway ride or while waiting for a meeting to begin.

Again, there was much discussion around what CoreNet Global could or should make available for free to members versus what would require an additional fee for access or per use charges. In addition, the development, maintenance and pricing of such a large but dynamic portfolio presents new challenges. Determining the right pricing model, whether it is an individual buy-as-you-go model, or a subscription model based on consumption of a set number of hours or specific content from a cafeteria menu or a passport model that provides unlimited access for a specified time before requiring renewal, or any of a multitude of other models, is a challenge that will require additional discussion and consideration.

**FUTURE FORECAST:** By 2025, the skills needed for CoreNet Global stakeholders will change dramatically as workplace automation becomes more prevalent.

As technology and other forces change the corporate real estate profession, some have wondered if it will still be important for real estate professionals to learn new skills, or if machines will do all of the heavy lifting. But there is a wealth of knowledge and human intelligence that will be difficult for AI to completely replace, so it

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will remain important for knowledge to be shared across regions, generations, and skill levels for the foreseeable future. In fact, for corporate real estate to grow and evolve as a profession, the intentional transfer and exchange of knowledge will become even more important to CoreNet Global’s future. There is a real value, members noted, in the association helping corporate real estate professionals figure out what’s next for them and how to prepare for it.

FutureForward 2025 work groups around the world opined that learning will need to address the skills that are less likely to be automated, including human creativity and empathy.

The New York City Chapter’s work group noted that the World Economic Forum predicted that by 2020, creativity will be ranked third in the skills most desired by employers; in 2015 it was ranked 10th on the list. The most recent World Economic Forum Future of Jobs report says that creativity will be ranked third in trending skills in 2022 as well. New ideas, new approaches, and new skills focused on strategically integrating knowledge from various sources in order to create innovative solutions will drive business and career decisions across all professions, and corporate real estate will be no different.

CoreNet Global is well positioned to provide “soft skills” training such as leadership training, management, empathy, and negotiation skills which are critical to the success of many corporate real estate professionals. However, some work group participants questioned whether CoreNet Global could or should compete with other soft skills training providers. There was consensus that at some level the choices in education should become less exclusive and thereby serving a wider audience with greater choice that gives context to broader business issues and requirements.

It was suggested that one way to address this is to partner with other organizations or share education credits with other associations to enable better, easy access for members. Skills needed by CoreNet Global members and stakeholders will change dramatically as workplace automation becomes more prevalent.

While some of those skills are difficult to predict with precision, CoreNet Global learning content will need to address these areas among others:

- Other business functions, such as HR, IT, etc.
- Design thinking
- Physical and digital security
- Data analytics
- Management of teams
- Project management
- Newer technologies that impact corporate real estate, such as blockchain and IoT

Most work groups anticipated that new jobs will be created when old jobs go away, noting that many professionals will go through a transition period of “where do I belong?” Some predict greater specialization will be needed; others predict more generalization in skill sets will be in demand.

**Conclusion**

No one knows exactly what the world will look like in 2025, but CoreNet Global recognizes the importance of planning and visioning for possible scenarios to help members prepare for an uncertain future. No one industry or profession can completely future-proof itself, but preparedness for a band of possibilities (not just the most likely events) is the next best thing in an imperfect world. Everyone understands that technology, the global economy, and uncertain geopolitics are all bringing disruption to the business world, so it is more important than ever to think ahead.

The fast-paced business environment in which most of us operate is not compatible with a static, unchanging program for learning. CoreNet Global will need to explore a fuller range of options for members to access, from evolving professional designations like the MCR to microlearning in a variety of media. The association will need to take advantage of new technologies and new understandings about the ways people learn so that learning can be personalized to each member’s needs. These approaches will allow members to acquire the skills they need to be successful.
CoreNet Global may also consider expanding collaboration with universities and other associations to bring newer skills into the CoreNet Global fold and to validate the skills developed by CoreNet Global. Members in the future will not have as much time or patience for traditional in-person classroom learning if there is only a one-way transfer of knowledge. In-person formats will need to provide more value to justify the cost and effort required by allowing more intimate learning via mentorship, or other formats which allow for interaction between members with subject matter experts.

At the end of the day, CoreNet Global is for most members extracurricular, a free time activity, or a source of professional education. But members reminded themselves that association membership is like a gym membership where you only get out of it what you put into it. It will take active engagement from the corporate real estate community to help the association evolve.
Thank you to the many individuals and organizations that participated in this important initiative.

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