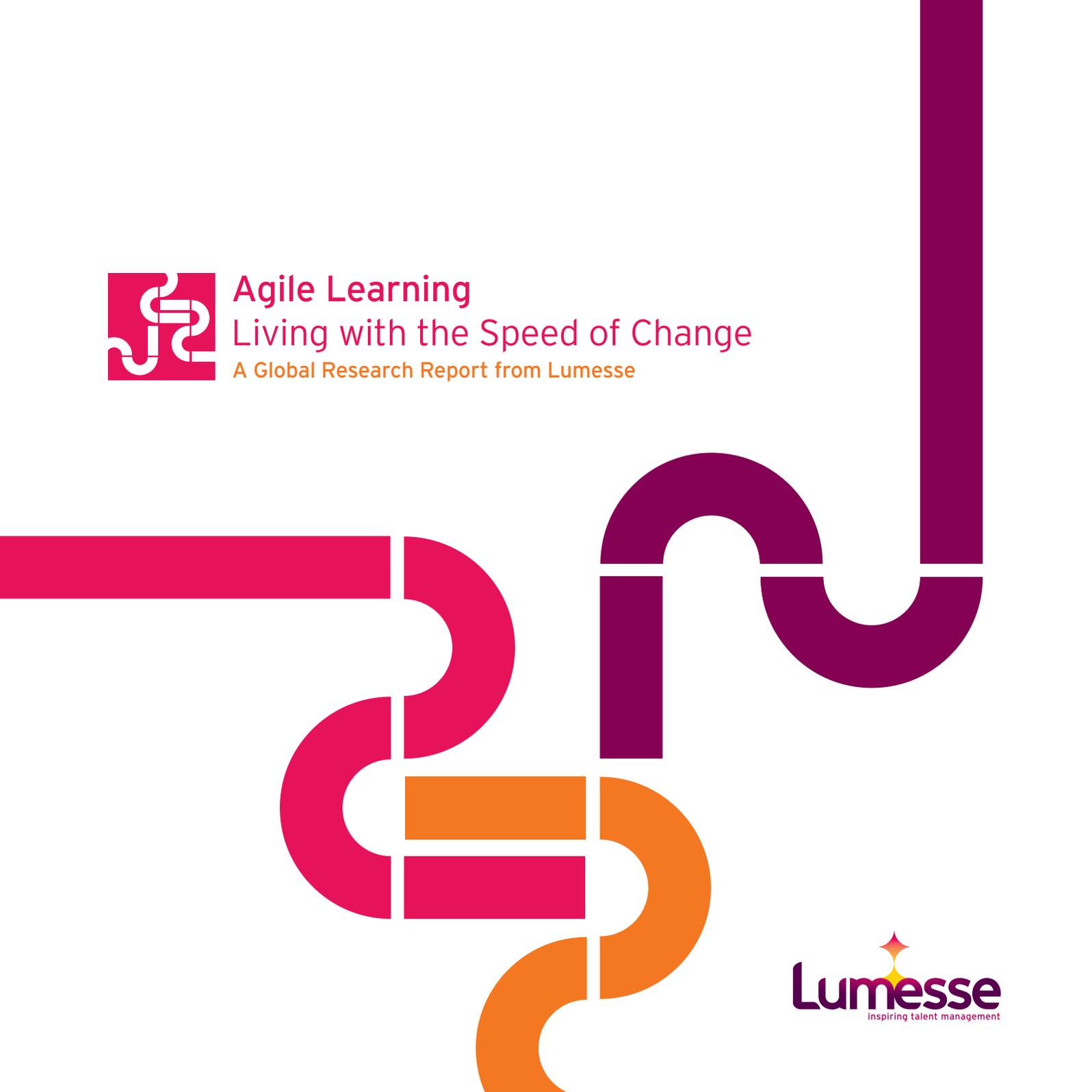




Agile Learning

Living with the Speed of Change

A Global Research Report from Lumesse



Introduction

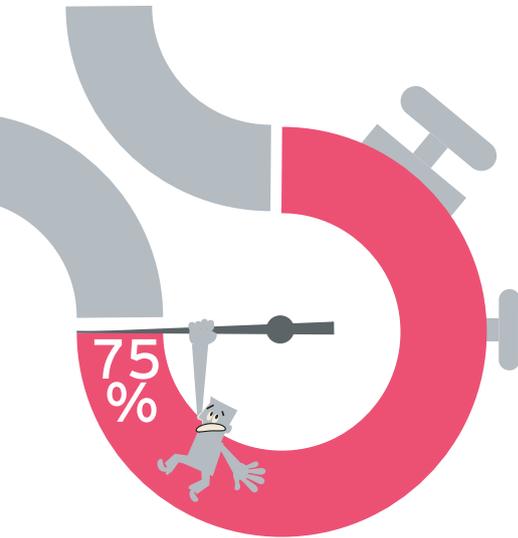
The world of work is very familiar with change - it drives innovation and prosperity, and it's an unavoidable response to competition, success, failure and the shifting global economy. But, at the moment it's a challenge which many organisations are struggling to meet and there's rarely been a time when so many businesses are running so fast just to stand still. But why?

The problem presented by rapid, on-going change is one especially in the minds of HR and Learning professionals. Not only is there the backdrop of tough economic times, but there is pressure to deliver new employee skills to the front line more rapidly, more often and with much greater impact than ever before. There is also pressure to embrace a broader range of learning styles via a wider range of technologies - in short, HR is being asked to achieve much more with much less, and to do it right now.

In order to fully understand these pressures, and the ability of HR departments to anticipate, react to and live with the speed of change in their organisations, Lumesse commissioned a global research project of HR leaders during summer 2012. The following pages summarise the responses provided, and the insight secured.

Respondent location

A total of 769 survey responses were received from 24 countries, with the majority coming from France, Germany, USA and the UK. Other countries included Australia, China, Denmark, Poland, Singapore, Spain and Sweden.



 75% of HR professionals agree that **organisational change is happening much faster than five years ago.**

Q How many employees does your organisation have?

Organisational size ranged from SMEs with under 1,000 employees (which represented just over 50% of the total received), to the opposite end of the spectrum with over 10% of replies coming from organisations with over 50,000 employees. The insight offered is relevant to organisations both large and small, and indicates the extent to which challenges are shared across the global economy.

Q Has the speed of change increased within your organisation over the last five years?

Nearly 75% of respondents noted that the speed of change had increased for them over the last five years, and given the struggling global economy, and the pace of technological change this is perhaps not surprising. In the USA, the trend was less marked but the figure still stood at 62%. It represents a considerable challenge - HR professionals are having to deal with rapidly changing circumstances, while at the same time often coping with reduced learning budgets.

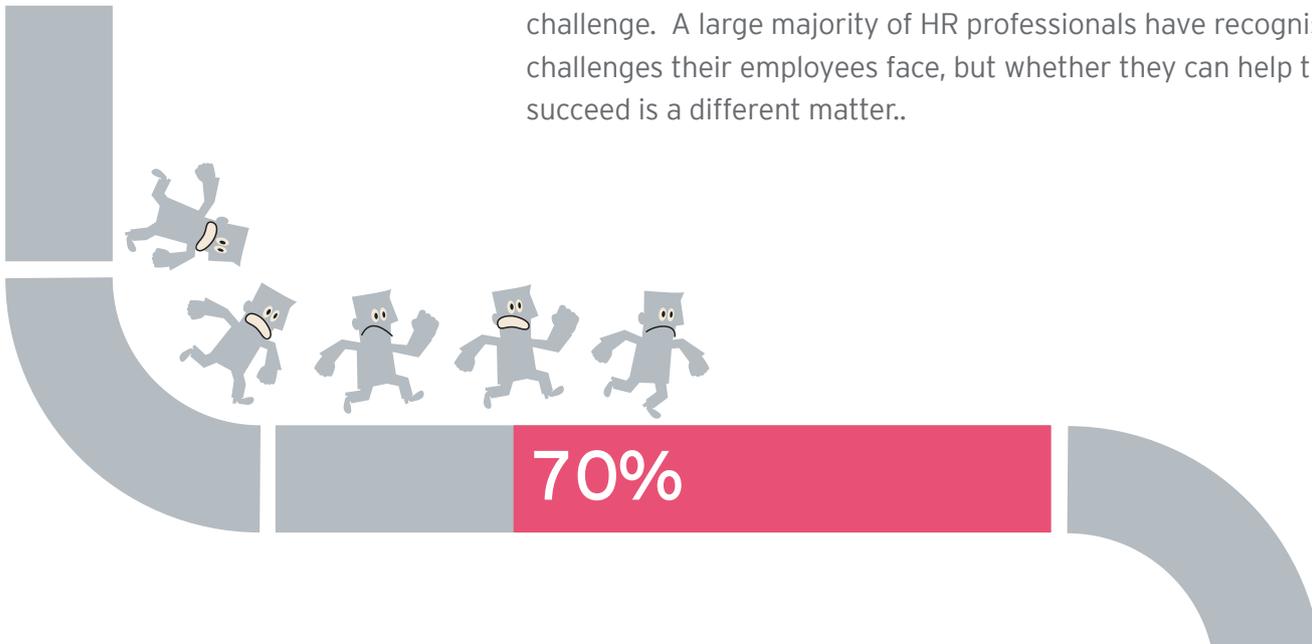
Q Do you feel your employees have to learn more and learn faster to succeed in their role than they did five years ago?

The response to this question was an overwhelming 'yes', with over 80% of HR leaders globally believing the speed of learning had to run alongside the speed of change. Only 17% disagreed. Employees are under pressure to adapt quickly and develop their skills to meet changes in their markets, demands from their customers and the innovation of their rivals.

Q Has speed of change meant that HR has to enable the workforce more quickly than ever before?

HR professionals fully understand their central importance in responding to this speed of change to deliver new skills and knowledge to their employees. A significant majority of HR managers (70%) worldwide believe they need to do so more quickly than ever before. Less than a third (30%) argue that HR is not faced with this challenge. A large majority of HR professionals have recognised the challenges their employees face, but whether they can help them to succeed is a different matter..

 70% believe HR has to enable their workforce more quickly than ever





 only 53% of large organisations can provide learning quickly enough to keep pace with change

Q Is your HR organisation able to deliver against the speed of change for the workforce, providing the training to enable the right skills and knowledge for today and tomorrow?

Worryingly, only 53% of large enterprises (10,000 employees or more) can currently provide employees with training and skills quickly enough to keep pace with how they, their markets, competitors and customers are changing, and this is a challenge which should be a shareholder concern. The picture is slightly more positive for much smaller organisations, but as the employee count grows the challenge deepens. This presents an enormous business challenge, and one with the potential to effect a huge range of issues, from employee satisfaction and motivation, to bottom-line results.

Taking the broadest possible perspective, across organisations of all sizes, some 40% of HR leaders reported they were unable to deliver against the speed of change.

Q To what extent do you believe your employees see HR as a useful partner in helping them develop the right skills and knowledge for today and tomorrow?

So, how well is learning being delivered? Just 10% of respondents worldwide (in organisations of all sizes) believe that HR is seen as 'extremely useful' by employees for skills development. In the USA, this figure was over 13%. In fact, over 22% of HR leaders globally think their employees don't see them as a useful partner in developing the right skills to succeed.

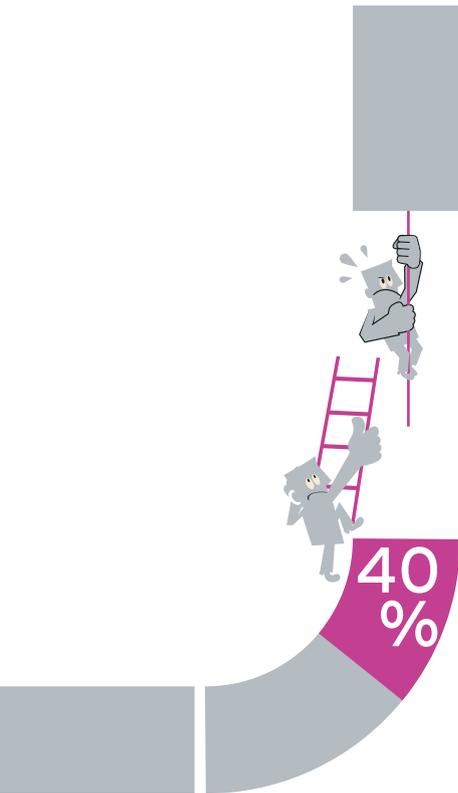
Q How do you feel your employees would evaluate the learning support they currently receive from HR?

This translates very directly to how HR rates its own value to employees as a learning partner, with over 70% of respondents globally believing employees see HR as providing little or no learning, or just the minimum skills for them to succeed. Less than a third think employees view HR as being able to 'future proof' their skills and knowledge. The speed of change has increased, but many employees are not prepared for current or future challenges.

 only 10% believe HR is seen as useful by employees in acquiring new skills

 over 70% think HR only provide the minimum skills to succeed





 40% think employees would not seek help from HR for learning

Q To what extent do you agree with the following employee statement: “If I needed to quickly develop new skills or knowledge I would not seek support from HR”.

The way employees view the effectiveness of HR in the development of their skills and knowledge has practical consequences, with 40% of HR managers worldwide claiming that employees would not seek help from HR if they needed to develop new knowledge or skills quickly. This is likely to be due to a number of factors, including previous experience or the approach to learning taken by many employers, which is often characterised by a focus on baseline skills, or at the other extreme for organisational elites.

Q If employees needed to quickly gain a new skill, or acquire new knowledge, which of the following tools/resources would employees see as most valuable?

Employees see their colleagues as a more valuable resource for acquiring new skills or knowledge than their internal Learning Management Systems. This is intuitive, but if these colleagues have not received formal or approved learning there is no possible control of quality and effectiveness. In fact, Learning Management Systems are only marginally more valuable than Google when employees need to quickly acquire new skills or knowledge.

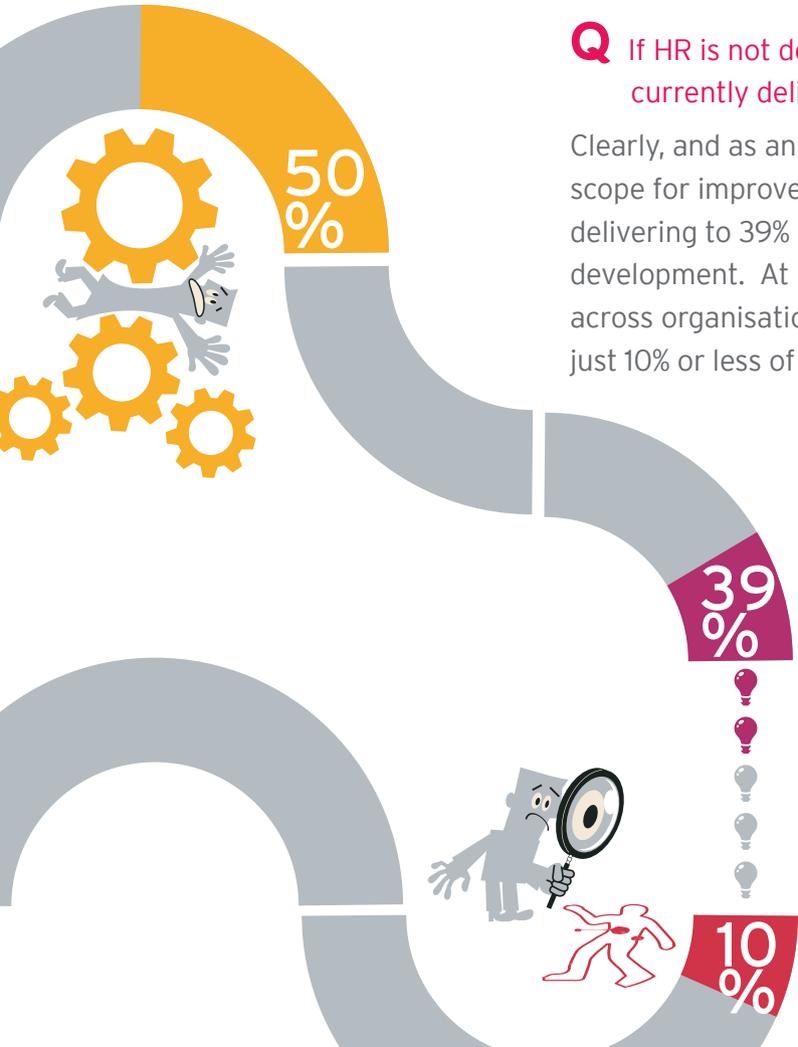
 over 50% report that HR is not delivering to its full potential

Q Is HR delivering to its full potential when it comes to providing employees with the right training and knowledge for their role?

Over 50% of HR leaders globally think that HR is not delivering to its full potential in providing employees with the right training and knowledge for their role, and this figure rises to over 60% for large enterprises. HR leaders are clearly seeing the current situation as presenting both a threat and an opportunity.

Q If HR is not delivering, what percentage do you feel HR is currently delivering to?

Clearly, and as an understatement, HR professionals see considerable scope for improvement - their average assessment is that HR is only delivering to 39% of its potential for employee skills & knowledge development. At its most extreme, some 15% of HR professionals across organisations of all sizes feel HR is only delivering learning at just 10% or less of its full potential.



 On average, respondents think HR is only delivering 39% of its potential

 15% of HR professionals even believe HR is delivering as little as 10% of its potential for learning

 32% think employees feel insecure about their job because of their lack of skills and knowledge



32
%

Q Based on how well you believe your company is keeping its employees' skills and knowledge up to date, how secure do you think they feel in their job today?

The impact should be as worrying for senior management as it is clearly becoming for employees. Given the shortfall in timely learning delivery and the difficulty both HR practitioners and employees have in keeping pace with the pace of change, HR managers report that 32% of their employees feel insecure in their jobs because their skills and knowledge are not up-to-date.

Conclusions

The trends and opinions revealed by this research are broadly consistent, irrespective of where the respondent is based, or what size of organisation they are working in. There were no instances where data from any territory or organisational size ran against the overall global trend.

There is clearly a shared appreciation among HR leaders that the speed of change - and their ability to deliver learning against it - is a key challenge for employees, and in consequence, an important responsibility for HR. What many appear to lack is the ability, or sometimes, the mindset to deliver the right kind of learning to the right people at the right time.

To bridge these gaps, learning strategies will need to become much more agile, and respond far more quickly to change in organisational need, with the minimum gap between 'need identified and learning deployed'. This 'Agile Learning' approach moves away from a reliance on formally designed central learning to a greater emphasis on the enablement of front-line staff who can deliver strong learning content in a compelling format using the new generation of tools, with a close understanding of what works at a local level.

Critically, it will need to support the continual measurement and fine-tuning of deployed learning to quickly establish which types of learning content and strategies are working and which aren't. It requires the appetite to experiment with the knowledge that the learning can be refined and improved - without the cost and challenge encountered in the past. It requires not just a change in toolset, but changes in mindset and skill set. Ultimately however, it's an approach which can help organisations respond to the speed of change they are facing, both now and into the future.

The Lumesse approach

To learn more about how Lumesse can help your organisation develop an agile approach to learning, our products and services, please [click here](#).

About Lumesse

Lumesse is the only global company making talent management solutions work locally. We help customers around the world to implement successful local talent management initiatives that identify, nurture and develop the right people, in the right place, at the right time. Our multi-cultural background and presence means we understand how to deliver talent solutions that work the way our customers work, as individuals and as teams, because no two people, organisations or cultures are the same. We regard differences as strengths, not as obstacles. 2,000 customers work with us in over 70 countries because they recognise that commitment, innovation and value only come from people. We help customers to unlock and inspire that human potential in their businesses. Our integrated talent management solutions are comprehensive, intuitive, secure and fully internationalised into over 50 languages.

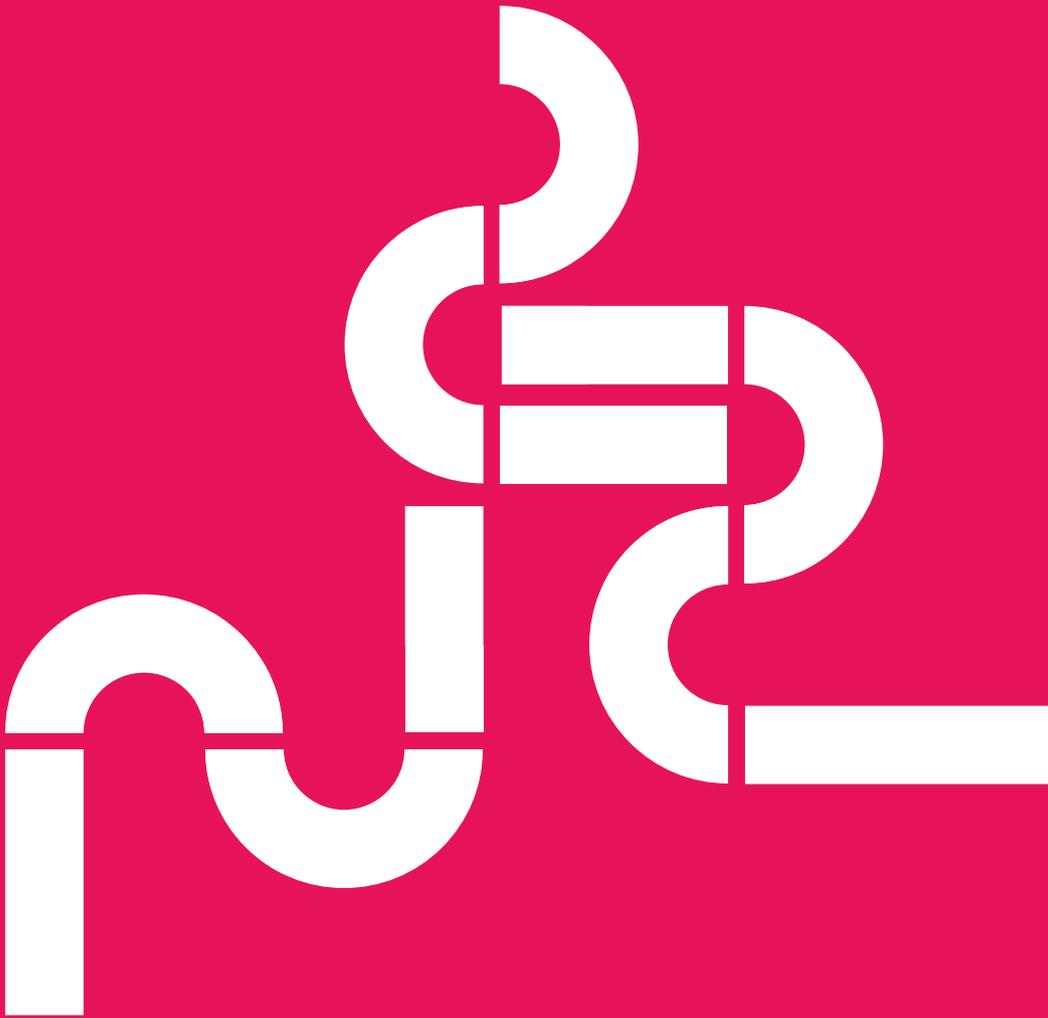
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