

The Global State of Skills



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Key Findings	4
Bracing for a Skills Shortage: From Awareness to Action	5
Today's Skills vs. Tomorrow's Needs	8
Skills-Based Strategies Take Hold	11
The Goal: Accelerate the Transition to a Skills-Based Future	15
AI as a Catalyst for Change	18
Key Skills-Based Strategies	20
Start Your Skills-Based Journey	23
The State of Skills in EMEA	24
Research Methodology	25

Introduction.

As AI agents enter the workplace and shifting demographics compound existing talent shortages, organizations have realized that traditional workforce management strategies are not keeping up.

Our latest research reveals that over half of business leaders (51%) are concerned about a future talent shortage, driven by the fact that only 32% strongly believe the skills within their organization today are the same that they will need for future success.

In response to an uncertain future, leaders are embracing skills-based strategies as a way to make their organizations more adaptable and resilient. Over half of organizations worldwide (55%) have already started the shift to a skills-based approach, with an additional 23% planning to do so within the next 12 months.

Transitioning to a skills-based approach is not without its challenges, which include resistance to change, the high degree of upskilling and reskilling needed, and the challenge of connecting skills data across different systems—but the rapid rise of AI is playing a key role in accelerating this shift.



Organizing work around skills is no longer a futuristic concept but an urgent necessity.

For the doers, the doubters, traditionalists, and boundary pushers: this report is for you.

Read on to discover insights that will help to inform your strategy for long-term success and shine a light on how you can get started. Key topics include:



Global executives' perspectives on why they are investing in a skills-based strategy



The most-valued skills groups and predicted gaps within organizations today



How to get started with skills-based strategies and the way AI accelerates the transformation

Key findings.



Leaders are bracing for a talent shortage. Over half of business leaders (51%) are concerned about a future talent shortage, driven by the fact that only 32% strongly believe the skills within their organization today are the same that they will need for future success.



Skills-based strategies are taking hold. In pursuit of greater agility and resilience, 55% of businesses have started their transition to a skills-based organization, with an additional 23% planning to do so within the next 12 months.



Productivity, growth, and agility are top of mind. Key reasons for making the shift to a skills-based strategy include:

- Improved productivity and business growth (47%)
- Greater innovation and creativity (46%)
- Increased organizational agility and internal mobility (45%)



Digital skills are key to future success. The skills business leaders say they will need to accomplish their goals in the next 5 years are:

- Digital (65%), such as proficiency with software and Gen AI
- Operational (59%), such as project management and planning
- Specialist (47%), such as engineering, healthcare, and accounting



Leaders are working to overcome challenges. The top business and technology challenges to becoming a skills-based organization include:

- The time required to reskill employees (43%)
- Resistance to change (38%)
- Aligning skills strategies with broader business objectives (34%)
- Connecting and consolidating data across systems (33%)



AI has a vital role to play in the transition. 41% strongly agree that AI will help to mitigate a skills shortage with these key expected benefits:

- Increased productivity through automation of routine tasks (52%)
- Enhanced decision-making based on data-driven insights (52%)
- More personalized and effective learning and development (47%)



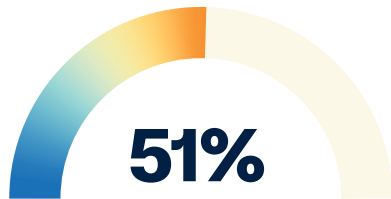
AI is reshaping the workplace, but the human element has never been more essential. Organizations that embrace a skills-first mindset will not only unlock AI's potential but also harness human ingenuity in new and transformative ways.

Chris Ernst
Chief Learning Officer, Workday

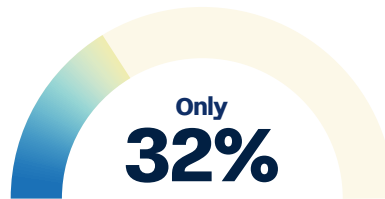


Bracing for a skills shortage: From awareness to action.

Leaders can sense a storm on the horizon, and it's motivating them to act.



of business leaders are somewhat or very concerned about a potential skills shortage within the next 3 years.



of leaders strongly believe that the skills within their organization today are the ones that they will need for future success.



of leaders say that they have a clear view of skills within their organization.

A key contributing factor for this anxiety is a lack of visibility, with only 54% of business leaders reporting that they have a clear view of skills within their organization.

Our conversations with business leaders indicate that concerns about upcoming skills shortages stem from factors such as the pace of technological change, evolving skills requirements, and competition for talent.

Even before the advent of AI, skills-based strategies captivated the imagination of business leaders as a way to stay one step ahead of the market and their competition. But the pace of disruption in recent years has organizations realizing that they are hurtling into the future without a clear idea of where they're going or the obstacles they might encounter.



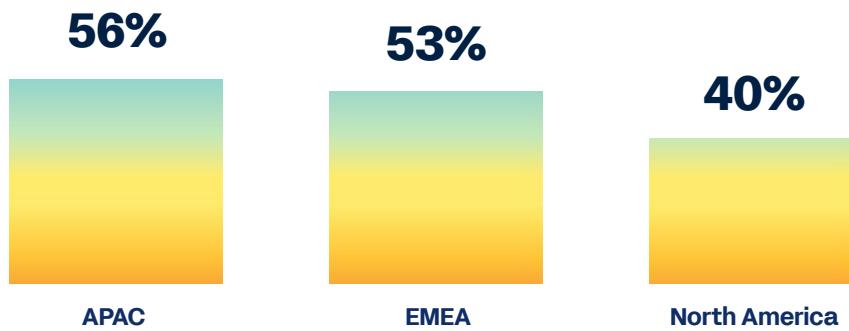
Confidence vs. concern.

Business leaders in North America are more confident than those in other regions that their current skills will meet future demands—and they are less concerned about potential skills shortages.

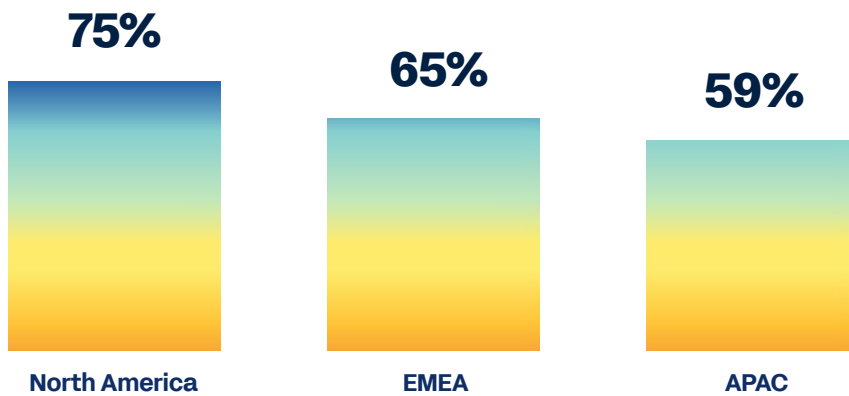
Compared to EMEA (32%) and APAC (27%), a larger percentage of organizations (35%) in North America started the transition to a skills-based approach more than 12 months ago. Similarly, 27% of organizations in North America are planning to start the transition within the next 12 months, compared to 22% and 23% of organizations in EMEA and APJ respectively.

This indicates that organizations in North America are further along in their skills journey, resulting in a higher degree of confidence that they will be able to address talent shortages.

Concern about skills shortages by region:

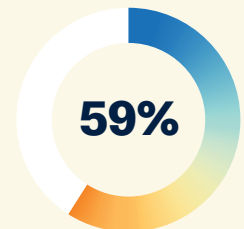


Confidence that today's skills are the ones needed for the future:

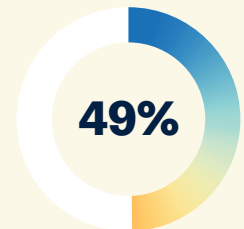


HR leaders are the most concerned about skills shortages.

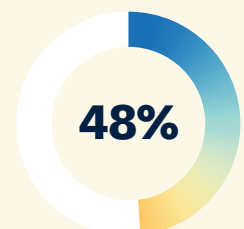
Concerns about potential skills shortages are more common among HR practitioners than other departments. With HR on the front line of skills transformation, they are likely to have a more comprehensive picture of evolving talent needs within the organization, resulting in higher levels of concern about the potential skills shortages that could emerge within the next few years.



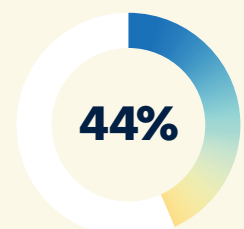
HR



IT



Finance



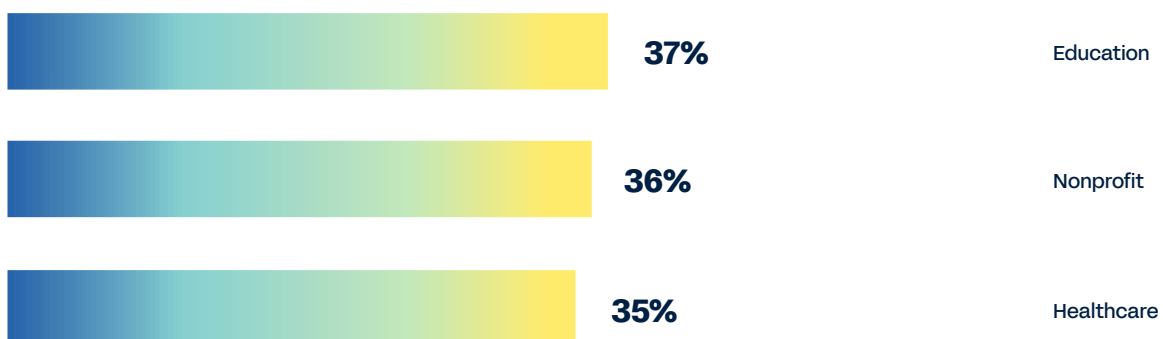
Operations

The industries most concerned about a skills shortage, which include technology, media, and retail, are also those at the forefront of the current AI revolution. By comparison, industries that rely on human-centric skills, such as healthcare and education, are less concerned—especially as the core skills required to succeed are less likely to change in the near future.

Most-concerned industries:



Least-concerned industries:



Survey question: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: I am worried about a major skills shortage in the next three (3) years. Respondents chose one (1) of the following answers: Strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. n=2,300.



Today's skills vs. tomorrow's needs.

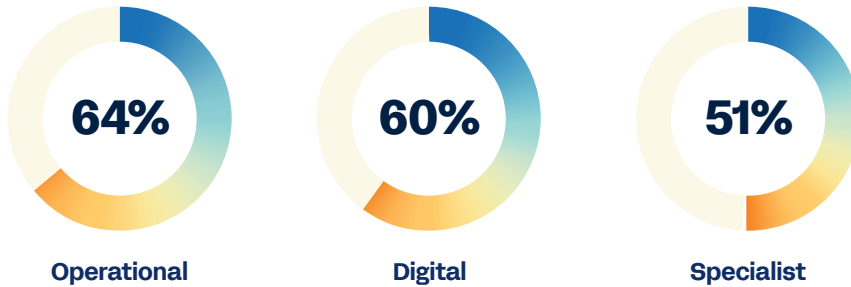
To understand how well prepared today's organizations are for the future of work, we surveyed leaders to understand which skills groups are most common within their organization today and which they think will be the most important for achieving future goals.



For the purposes of this research, skills were grouped as follows:

Skills Group	Definition	Skills Examples
Digital	Digital skills enable you to use technology effectively and responsibly.	Digital literacy, Gen AI, coding and programming
Specialist	Specialized knowledge and abilities are required in order to perform tasks and solve problems within a particular field, industry, or area of expertise.	Accounting, design, engineering, healthcare
Operational	Operational skills are needed to carry out the day-to-day activities and processes that keep an organization functioning efficiently.	Planning, project management, time management
Individual	Individual skills are the personal attributes, abilities, and qualities that make you unique and influence how you approach tasks and navigate the world.	Critical thinking, adaptability, resilience, creativity
Social	Social skills are what we use to communicate and interact with others effectively. These skills are crucial for building connections, collaborating effectively, and thriving in various social settings.	Empathy, emotional intelligence, communication, conflict resolution
Leadership	Leadership skills are the abilities individuals demonstrate to guide, motivate, and influence others toward achieving a common goal.	Goal setting, delegation, coaching, and mentoring

The top three most common skills groups within organizations today are:



Not only are these the most common skills groups within organizations today, they are also the same skills business leaders say their organization will need to accomplish its goals over the next five years. Business leaders view digital skills as the most important group for accomplishing their future goals, which will be key to infusing AI into existing business processes and ensuring that employees are able to leverage these tools effectively.

	Most common skills groups within organizations today:	Most important skills groups organizations need in order to achieve future goals:
Operational	64%	59%
Digital	60%	65%
Specialist	51%	47%
Leadership	42%	41%
Social	37%	39%
Individual	35%	36%

Survey questions: Which of the following skills are most common in your organization today? What expertise missing from your organization today due to skills shortages is most impactful? What are the most important skills your organization will need to accomplish its goals in the next 5 years? Respondents selected up to three (3) answers for each question. n=2,300.

While AI is currently unable to replicate many of the specialist skills highlighted above, there is a very real possibility that many operational and digital skills will become the remit of AI agents in the near future—putting more emphasis on the social, individual, and leadership skills that make us uniquely human.

Social, individual, and digital skills are top areas of concern.

The skills categories that leaders identified as the main areas of expertise currently missing from their workforce include:



While digital skills will be needed to reap the rewards of AI and other new technologies, soft skills are essential for managing the transition and adapting in the face of future change.

Human skills. AI support.

A separate Workday study, [“Elevating Human Potential: The AI Skills Revolution,”](#) reinforces the importance of soft skills. Our findings across studies are consistent: AI is expected to support the skills revolution, while uniquely human qualities will remain critical.

Our previous research found that the top four human-centric skills deemed least likely to be replaced by AI are also those considered the most important—both today and in an AI-driven future:

1. Ethical decision-making and moral judgment
2. Emotional intelligence and empathy
3. Human networking and relationship building
4. Conflict resolution¹

Biggest skills gaps by industry.

The most pressing skills gaps vary by sector, reflecting the unique challenges and opportunities faced by different types of organizations. For example, the need for digital skills is most pressing in higher education and healthcare where organizations have long struggled with the need to balance technological modernization with budget concerns.



Higher Education
Digital skills



Healthcare
Digital skills



Financial Services
Social skills



Manufacturing
Social skills



Government
Individual skills



Hospitality
Social and digital skills



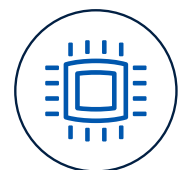
Media
Digital skills



Professional Services
Individual skills



Retail
Social and individual skills



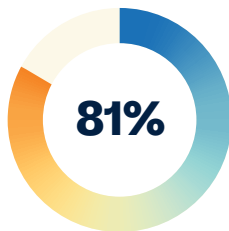
Technology
Social and individual skills

Survey questions: What expertise missing from your organization today due to skills shortages is most impactful? Respondents selected up to three (3) answers. n=2,300.

Skills-based strategies take hold.

Embracing the transition: Organizations are well on their way.

With more than half of organizations worldwide (55%) having started the transition to a skills-based model and an additional 23% planning to do so within the next 12 months, it's clear that leaders see skills-based strategies as not only a solution to looming talent shortages, but also as a way to make their organization more adaptable and resilient in the face of change.



The majority (81%) of business leaders believe that transitioning to a skills-based approach increases an organization's potential for economic growth.

What is a skills-based organization?

A skills-based organization places skills at the center of its workforce strategy, creating a new operating model to elevate humans and supercharge work. Skills-based organizations use AI and skills as the data language of work to build more resilient and agile workforces.



Working alongside forward-thinking customers and undergoing our own skills transformation, we're now seeing measurable business impact of implementing skills-based strategies. This marks a critical shift from theory to results. In the age of AI, a robust skills-based strategy is no longer a 'nice-to-have' but the foundation for sustained competitive advantage.

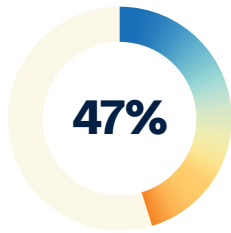
Josh Tarr

Director of Skills Based Organization, Workday

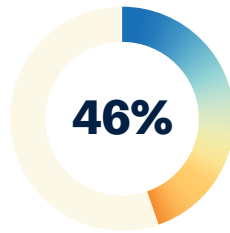


Top drivers for becoming a skills-based organization.

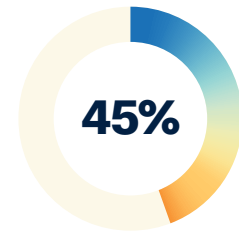
Organizations adopt skills-based strategies for a variety of reasons, but overall, top drivers reflect a shift toward building organizations that are resilient, adaptable, and high performing:



expect improved productivity and business growth



expect greater innovation and creativity

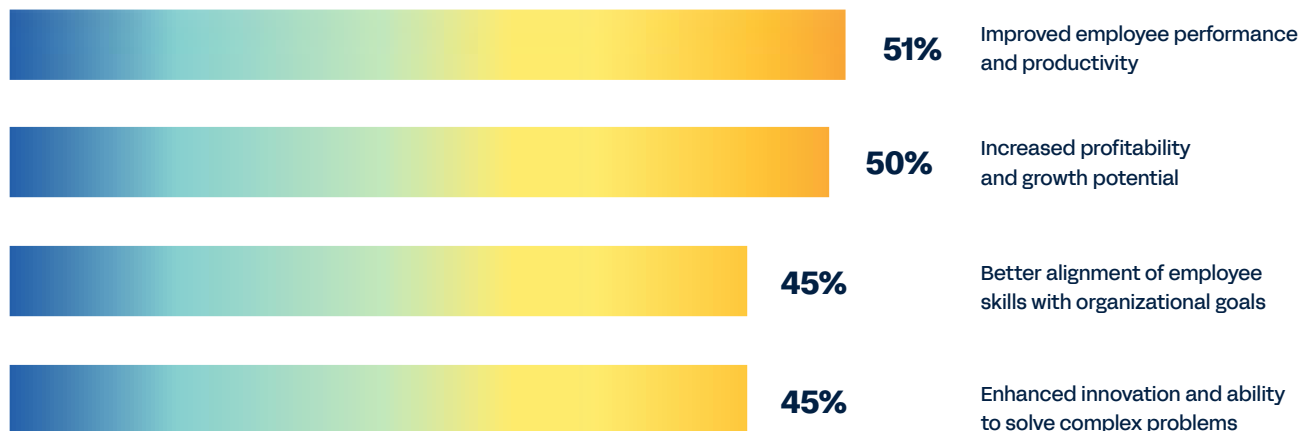


expect increased organizational agility and internal mobility

Survey question: What do you believe are the primary drivers for transitioning to a skills-based organization? Respondents selected up to three (3) answers. n=2,300.

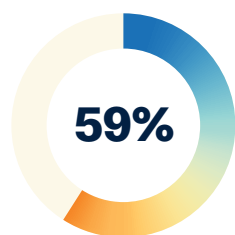
Anticipated outcomes: Aligning benefits with business goals.

The expected benefits of a skills-based approach closely mirror the drivers outlined above:



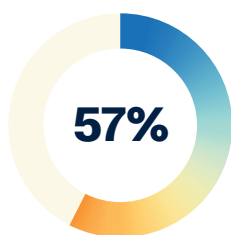
Survey question: What benefits does your organization expect from transitioning to a skills-based organization? Respondents selected all answers that applied. n=2,300.

Goals of skills-based strategies by department:



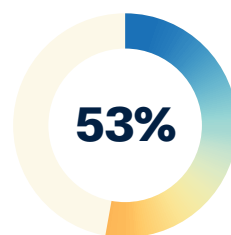
Operations:

Employee performance and productivity improvements, and increased profitability and growth potential



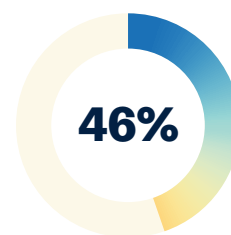
IT:

Improved employee performance and productivity



Finance:

Profitability and growth potential

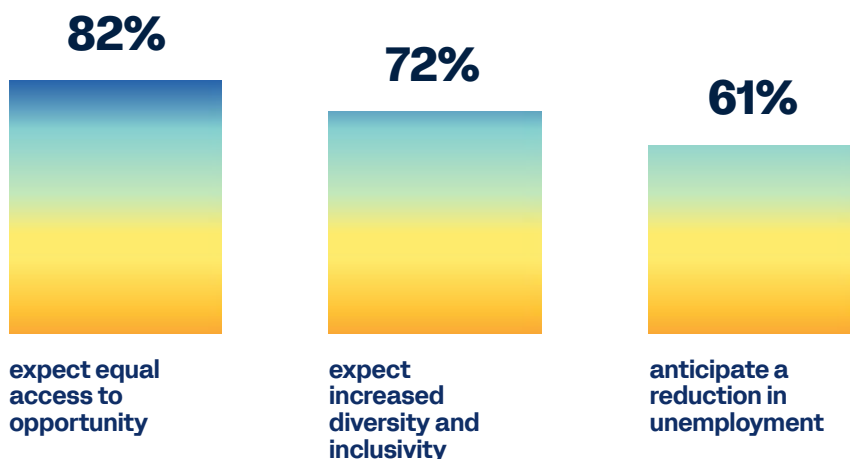


HR:

More effective talent acquisition and retention

Survey question: What benefits does your organization expect from transitioning to a skills-based organization? Respondents selected all answers that applied. n=2,300.

Business leaders also see a skills-based approach as a way to help achieve significant social impact:



Survey question: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that a skills-based organization can help achieve each of the following outcomes: close productivity gaps, decreased unemployment, equal access to opportunity, increased diversity and inclusivity. Respondents chose one (1) of the following answers: Strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree. n=2,300.

This alignment between drivers and anticipated outcomes highlights the perception among business leaders that a skills-based strategy will help to address both organizational performance and broader workforce challenges in the years to come.

How organizations are future-proofing their workforce.

Organizations are actively deploying a variety of strategies to address skills gaps and prepare for the future. Clearly, AI is proving useful in supporting skills-based initiatives, rising to the top of existing strategies in play. Mentorship and coaching remain crucial, however, and continue to be a trusted approach in the effort to solve for skills gaps.

Key strategies organizations are using include adopting AI and other new technologies, implementing mentorship and coaching programs, and increasing internal mobility to place talent more effectively.

Adopting AI and other new technologies	49%
Implementing mentorship and coaching programs	46%
Increasing internal mobility to place talent more effectively	44%
Implementing a skills-based hiring strategy	44%
Investing in employee professional development	41%
Hiring qualified new talent	37%
My organization is not doing anything to address skills gaps.	9%

Survey question: What is your organization doing to address skills gaps? Respondents selected all answers that applied. n=1,940.



To thrive in today's competitive and fast-changing landscape, Workday and many of our customers are transforming to a skills-based workforce. It's about ensuring we have the right people with the right skills at the right time to move the business forward; and it wouldn't be possible without AI.

Ashley Goldsmith
Chief People Officer, Workday



The goal: Accelerate the transition to a skills-based future.

But reskilling, resistance, and alignment struggles hold organizations back.

Transitioning to a skills-based organization is a complex process, and organizations face several challenges related to a lack of organizational and technological maturity:

43% **Time required to reskill employees**
Building new skills can strain time and resources, which can strain existing workflows.

38% **Resistance to change**
Employees and leaders may hesitate to adopt new strategies, fearing disruption or uncertainty.

34% **Alignment issues**
Many struggle to ensure skills strategies match business objectives.

Takeaway:

Investing in more mature systems and processes empowers organizations to drive smoother transitions and higher-impact outcomes.

The role of technology in solving these challenges.

- **Faster reskilling:**
Personalized learning tools reduce time needed to upskill.
- **Reduced resistance:**
Data-driven insights and clear ROI encourage buy-in.
- **Improved alignment:**
Integrated systems reduce silos and inefficiencies.



Tech troubles: Data integration and measurement remain key hurdles.

Technology barriers—mainly in data management, infrastructure, and measurability—still block the path to skills-based strategy:

- 33%** **Connecting and consolidating data across systems**
Fragmented systems hinder a unified view of workforce skills.
- 28%** **Inadequate technology infrastructure**
Outdated systems limit implementation and scale.
- 28%** **Lack of tools to measure skills**
Organizations struggle to identify gaps, track progress, and prove ROI.



Takeaway:

Accelerating a skills-based future requires integrated, scalable technologies for a unified approach to measurement and data integration.

Overcoming challenges: Effective communication and tech adoption are key to skills-based success.

Despite challenges, the momentum of skills-based strategy is clear. To accelerate success, leaders are prioritizing approaches combining leadership, communication, and technology.

The top programs thought most likely to accelerate success include:

- 48%** **Effective change management strategies**, helping organizations navigate the shift with structured plans and support
- 48%** **Clear communication of benefits and goals**, ensuring leaders and employees see the “why” behind the transition
- 45%** **Adoption of technology for skills assessment, management, and measurement**, to help act on workforce insights

Takeaway:

By aligning communication, leadership, and technology, organizations can overcome resistance and drive a smooth, effective transition to a skills-based approach.

Taking the first step on your skills journey.

Despite the majority of organizations embracing a skills-based approach, not all are moving at speed. Some remain hesitant, with 8% planning to start transitioning more than a year from now, and a notable 13% reporting no plans to transition at all.

For organizations yet to begin their skills-based journey, it's essential to focus on creating value for a particular part of the organization. That could mean adopting skills-based hiring to address gaps within a specific department, reskilling an entire team through personalized learning and development, or improving retention by matching existing employee skills to growth and development opportunities across the organization.

Value-driven approach to skills transformation:



Focus on business needs:

Identify and solve for key business needs at enterprise and functional levels.



Solve key use cases:

Find strong use cases and partner with teams as pilots to get quick results.



Advance skills data:

Continually advance the quality and application of skills data.



Evolve talent practices:

Use talent practices as a key vehicle for delivering the value of skills.

It's vital to remember that becoming a skills-based organization is a journey. Even during the early stages of this transition, a skills-based approach will start to deliver results, which over time will begin to compound and positively impact all aspects of the organization.



We know that upskilling, reskilling, and optimizing how we leverage our teams is necessary to prepare our businesses for the future of work. We also know that our customers are grappling with these same challenges. There's no better way to ensure that we're best equipped to help customers along their own skills journey than to walk the path first.

Sheri Rhodes

Chief Customer Officer, Workday



AI as a catalyst for change: 41% believe AI can help to mitigate skills shortages.

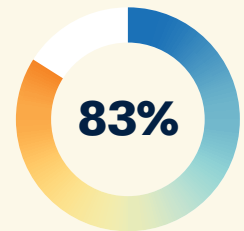
In the era of AI, skills create a common language to connect how work gets done. And AI, in turn, maps that skills language to the most important things that workers want to do—get hired, develop new skills, and advance their career.



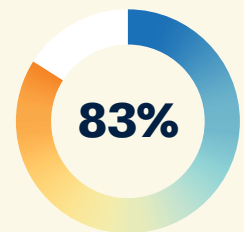
Elevating human potential: The AI skills revolution.

The importance of AI for accelerating the transition to a skills-based approach is further highlighted by the findings from our report “[Elevating Human Potential: The AI Skills Revolution.](#)” The research found that more than half of respondents (53%) agree that AI will augment human capabilities and lead to increased productivity and new forms of innovation.

The study illustrates some of the ways AI helps make a human-centric approach to business more attainable.



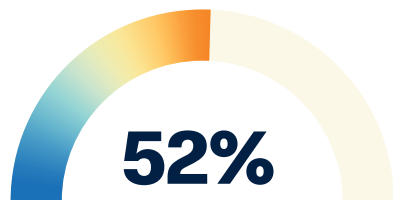
believe AI will both elevate the importance of uniquely human skills and enhance human creativity, leading to new forms of economic value²



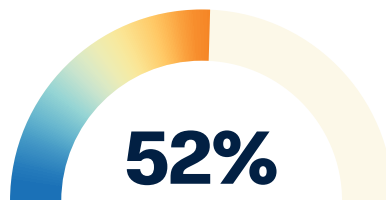
agree that AI tools support their ability to develop new skills in their role

The moment for skills is now, and skills-based AI opens up new categories of employee experience that were unimaginable just a few years ago. In addition to accelerating the transition to a skills-based approach, business leaders see AI as a way to help address current gaps, with 41% strongly agreeing that AI has the potential to mitigate skills shortages.

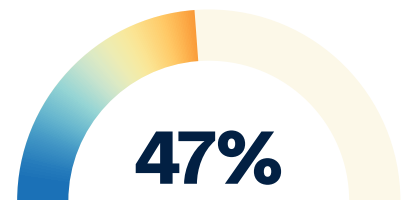
We asked respondents what they believe are the potential benefits of using AI as part of the transition to a skills-based approach. The top three include:



Increased productivity through streamlining of routine tasks



Enhanced decision-making based on data-driven insights



More personalized and effective learning and development programs

While AI has an important role to play, it doesn't offer a "silver bullet" solution. Weak consensus among business leaders about AI's top benefits means that organizations are still trying to determine the best use of AI as part of their transition to a skills-based approach. How leaders proceed will depend largely on which aspect of workforce management they plan to prioritize, whether that's hiring and retention, internal mobility, or personalized learning and development.

How Workday customers are using AI.

Based on our work with organizations worldwide, companies are currently using AI to accelerate their skills transformation in the following ways:



Inference. Advanced models, such as Workday Skills Cloud, infer skills by analyzing a wide range of data types to identify probable skills associated with a job or worker.



Curation. The inferred data is curated to highlight the highest-quality and most relevant skills, ensuring focus on the skills that matter most to a worker's role and contributions.



Matching. AI recommends matches between skills and opportunities, which can include better alignment among employees' skills and jobs within the organization, personalized learning opportunities, and career growth pathways.

By integrating AI into their skills strategy, organizations gain the ability to address today's workforce challenges while preparing for tomorrow's opportunities.



Key skills-based strategies.

Skill identification: Building an accurate picture of workforce capabilities.

Only 54% of business leaders say that they have a clear view of skills within their organization.



What it is: Skill identification is the process of identifying and confirming the skills that exist within an organization (skills supply) and the skills that are most important to the jobs and work the organization carries out (skills demand).



Why it matters: Skill identification is a foundational step in skills-based transformation as it provides insights to make informed decisions about hiring, training, and development.



How it works: Conducting a skills inventory is typically done by using AI to infer highly relevant skills from various data sources, such as job descriptions and resumes, business processes, and labor market information, and then confirming those skills with stakeholders to build a company-specific taxonomy—or categorization of skills data.



**BEST
BUY.**

How Best Buy Canada uses an AI-based skills approach to drive career growth and retention.

The company's goal was to identify the skills available within the organization, and match employees with internal openings in order to improve retention.

Solution:

- Identify skills that exist in the organization using Workday Skills Cloud
- Partner with senior leaders to determine key roles and initiatives
- Recommend opportunities to employees who have skills that match the needs of key roles and initiatives

Results:

- 30% increase of skills listings on employee profiles
- 14% year-over-year increase in internal fills
- 16% decrease in staff turnover

Skills-based hiring: Focusing on what people can do, not their credentials.

A full 86% of leaders say they are comfortable with hiring candidates based on their skills profile.



What it is: Skills-based hiring is a method of recruitment that prioritizes a candidate's skills over their credentials or former job titles.



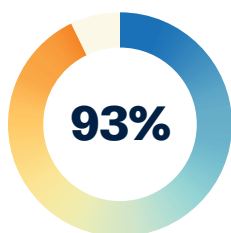
Why it matters: Qualifying a candidate based on degrees, past employers, and previous job titles doesn't accurately indicate whether or not a candidate can do the work required. Examining the skills a candidate has gained and examples of how they have demonstrated those skills provides hiring managers with a more precise evaluation and increases the pool of potential candidates.



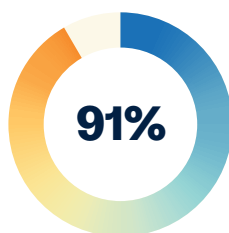
How it works: Once the critical skills for open roles within an organization are confirmed through a skills inventory, those skills are then used as the focus of the hiring process to ensure that candidates are evaluated for a consistent set of skills. Organizations often develop interview guides, craft behavior-based interview questions, and provide training to interviewers to execute a successful skills-based hiring approach.



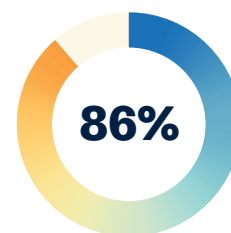
While preparing for the growing role of AI and the changing nature of technology maintains a focus on hard skills, business leaders continue to prioritize a mix of skills that includes soft skills:



Industry expertise



Role-specific skills



Interpersonal skills

Upskilling and reskilling: Elevating the workforce.

Only 32% of organizations strongly believe that the skills in their organization today are the ones that they will need for future success, which is why 95% of organizations have upskilling and reskilling efforts underway.



What it is: Upskilling and reskilling programs help to develop workers' skills and prepare them to enhance their performance as the responsibilities of their current role changes or as new roles are created within the organization.



Why it matters: Existing jobs and skills are changing so rapidly that organizations are likely to struggle with filling open roles before the requirements become outdated. Findings from the "[Workday Global Workforce Report](#)" also found that internal hires are 80% more likely to be rated as a "top performer" in their first calibration in their new role compared to external hires.



How it works: Organizations focus learning solutions on the skills they have identified as most important for job performance and then match workers to the upskilling and reskilling opportunities that both align to their growth goals and maximize their existing strengths. This personalization enables workers to focus on developing the skills critical to the organization's success while also enhancing their career prospects and optimizing costs to avoid unnecessary spend on the development of less-important or obsolete skills.



We strive to cultivate a culture of continuous learning and development, where employees can connect with new skills, opportunities, and projects that align with their ambitions. With AI-powered technology, we can now identify skills gaps in real time, enabling employees to seek out growth opportunities while helping managers connect with the right talent more effectively.

Lynn Van Oossanen

Global Head of People Solutions, Ferring Pharmaceuticals



How Ferring created a culture of continuous learning and development.

While Ferring currently infers skills from worker data, it still lacked a way to connect workers with recommended development opportunities.

Solution:

- Optimize talent mobility by matching candidates to internal jobs and gigs
- Identify critical skills gaps, particularly in key areas of research and development
- Ensure global compliance in a highly regulated industry with diverse HR legislations

Results:

- 272 gigs posted to Talent Marketplace in 8 months
- 63% increase in Talent Marketplace adoption
- 90% of gigs fully staffed

Start your skills-based journey today.

Our research reinforces the importance of a skills-based approach for addressing the challenges posed by rapid technological advancements and shifting demographics. By prioritizing skills, organizations can better adapt to change, identify and address skills gaps, and create a culture of continuous learning. This approach not only drives organizational growth but also empowers employees to develop valuable skills and embrace new opportunities.

The transition to a skills-based organization is an investment in preparing your workforce for the future and ensuring long-term success in an increasingly dynamic environment. Embracing a skills-based strategy is a necessity to foster the agility and resilience required in the age of AI.

Build a skilled workforce for the future of work.

Create better people strategies and meet your organization's needs by upskilling, reskilling, redeploying, and hiring new talent with ease.

Workday supports businesses worldwide with their transition to a skills-based organization. We deliver an open, intelligent skills foundation combined with an enterprise-wide skills platform. We provide rich insights into workforce skills that inform workforce management decisions. And our data is clean, secure, and comprehensive so you can make decisions with confidence.

- 2,500+ Workday customers are using our skills products.
- Over 30% of the Fortune 500 are using Workday Skills Cloud.

[The future is skills-based. Let's build it together.](#)



Skills in action: Lessons from the field.

Our experience working with customers on their skills journey has given us a much clearer understanding of what it takes to make the change. Here is our winning formula for a skills-based organization—the three key principles that can make all the difference:

1. Create a shared vision: Our skills strategy was built based on employee feedback and business needs. Acting on a shared vision helped take skills transformation from an HR project to an organizational movement.

2. Invest in quality skills data: Skills data is the fuel that accelerates skills transformation. Without quality skills data, it won't be possible to drive quality outcomes. We used internal and external sources, and collaborated with people leaders to build a comprehensive and reliable skills data framework.

3. Iterate early to learn fast: Progress over perfection is the key to early wins and helps drive the enthusiasm needed to carry the project to maturity. We start most of our skills initiatives by running pilots with business teams who have compelling use cases that drive toward a business outcome. This enables us to learn quickly and make improvements before scaling the initiative to the wider organization. Skills transformation is an exciting journey—don't forget to have fun along the way and celebrate every win.

Focus on EMEA: The state of skills in EMEA.

I am worried about a major skills shortage in the next three years.

Sweden ●

70% of respondents agree

I see the potential in transitioning to a skills-based organization.

France ●

72% of respondents agree

The skills in my organization today are what we'll need in the future.

Netherlands ●

48% of respondents agree

Transitioning to a skills-based organization increases an organization's potential for economic growth.

Germany ●

73% of respondents agree

How comfortable would you feel hiring someone based on their skills profile?

South Africa ●

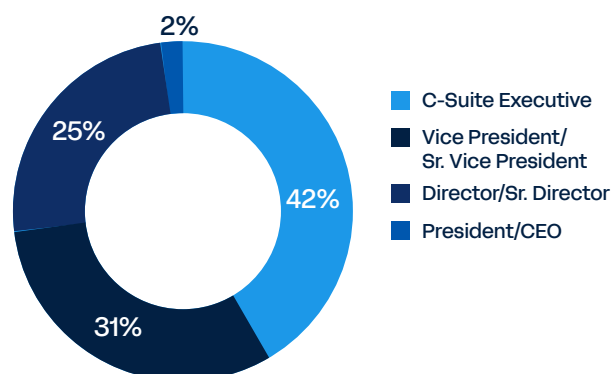
96% of respondents



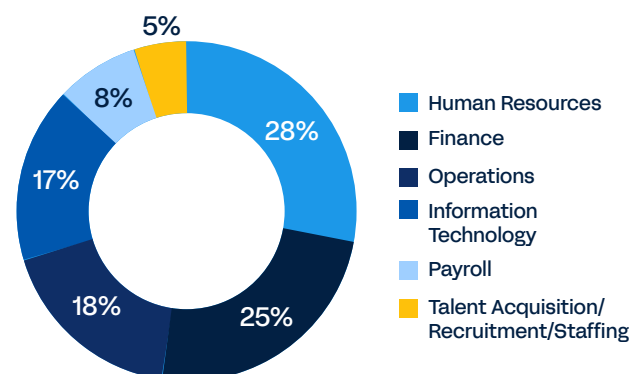
Research methodology.

These findings are based on a global study of 2,300 business leaders in director-level positions or higher from organizations employing at least 100 people worldwide. The survey was administered by Hanover Research on behalf of Workday in November 2024. All respondents were employed full time across the following regions: North America, EMEA, and Asia Pacific and Japan. Workday leaders and employees were not included in the survey set.

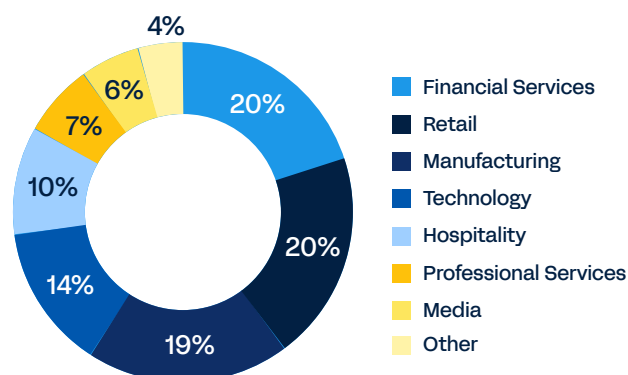
Results by role.



Results by department.



Results by industry.



Sample size by country.

Australia	151	Japan	150	South Korea	100
Austria	75	Luxembourg	26	Spain	98
Belgium	26	Mexico	99	Sweden	50
Canada	100	Netherlands	100	Switzerland	75
France	150	New Zealand	50	United Kingdom	149
Germany	150	Republic of Ireland	50	United States	301
Hong Kong	100	Singapore	149		
Italy	100	South Africa	51		

Sources:

¹ [Workday, "Elevating Human Potential: The AI Skills Revolution"; 2025.](#)

² [Ibid.](#)

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