

MIND THE GAP

A Six Step Guide to
Organizational Success

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knowledge®
a skillsoft brand

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MIND THE GAP

As the world continues to digitally evolve, organizations are investing in technology where they think it will help them achieve their goals and win in the marketplace.

But for many organizations these digital transformations are simply disruptive. Why? Because the amount of transformation required has outpaced the abilities of their workforce.

Don't let this happen to you.

Success is achieved when you develop the people who orchestrate technology and business processes. In a “People, Process, Technology” world, technology plays the supporting role — it is only as powerful as the people who create and sustain it. The most effective — and sustainable — solution to the skills gap is to upskill and reskill the people you've already invested in.

When you equip your people with the right skills, they don't just fill the skills gap; they become your real advantage — your real edge.



SIX STEPS TO A HIGHLY-SKILLED WORKFORCE

1. Identify skills gaps
2. Close skills gaps
3. Select a training provider
4. Build skills with Global Knowledge
5. Success looks like this
6. Continue learning

1 IDENTIFY SKILLS GAPS

A shortage of necessary skills is currently plaguing IT. And the gap between the skills needed and the skills possessed is growing. Over 75% of IT decision-makers around the world report a lack of skills amongst their employees.

Skills gaps are disrupting organizations and professionals.

Skills gaps aren't always right in front of you, but they can be hiding in plain sight. You may be falling behind and not even know it. Once you know what to look for, you're on your way to closing them.



SYMPTOMS OF POTENTIAL SKILLS GAPS

A key indicator of success is how proactive you are in recognizing the following red flags. Don't wait for these issues to fester and make their way to you. You need to go to them.

- Project and deployment delays
- Peers or management expressing frustration about employee capabilities
- People being hired with new skills because the talent isn't in-house
- Organization is afraid to move away from legacy systems
- Unhappy, maybe even disgruntled, workforce
- Employees asking a lot of "how to" job-related questions
- A noticeable amount of preventable employee errors
- High employee turnover
- Hearing horror stories from other organizations and realizing your organization has similar issues



76% GLOBAL



75% NORTH AMERICA

Data from one of the largest surveys of IT professionals found that 76% of IT decision-makers around the globe and 75% in North America say their teams have skills gaps. Why is this a big deal? Skills gaps have consequences.



32%

IT decision-makers attribute skills gaps to a lack of training investment.¹

55%

IT decision-makers say that skills gaps increase stress on employees.¹

¹ Global Knowledge 2021 IT Skills and Salary Report

SKILLED EMPLOYEES DELIVER RESULTS

The signs of a skilled workforce are everywhere. The results delivered by skilled employees often align perfectly with organizational goals. If teams lack necessary skills, the following organizational outcomes are at risk:

- Quality objectives achieved
- Operating costs remain under control or decrease
- Revenue grows
- New products and services developed
- Happy and fulfilled employees
- Lower employee turnover

This is what success looks like. These results are measures of an organization's health and enable the business to drive forward. If skills gaps are ignored, these indicators of success will deteriorate, leading to unsustainable problems.

An organization will have to face skills gaps eventually and the longer you wait, the uglier — and more expensive — they get. You need a skills strategy. Establish goals early and work toward them.



LEARNING RESOURCES



IT SKILLS AND SALARY REPORT

Learn what's happening in IT in this comprehensive and global guide.



SELF ASSESSMENTS

Quizzes and self assessments help identify areas for improvement.

2 CLOSE SKILLS GAPS

When you need to learn, what do you do? Your answer should depend on the need and your ultimate goal. Both should be clearly defined before you move forward.

Do you need to complete a task or do you need to add a new skill set? What exactly will be accomplished with the new skill? Determining the criticality of the need will dictate your path to add skills.



YOU HAVE THREE OPTIONS TO LEARN: EXPERIENTIAL, SOCIAL AND FORMAL

Experiential (e.g., challenging assignments, learning by doing) and social (e.g., asking a colleague, lunch-and-learns) are both informal learning methods. Formal learning (e.g., training course) is more structured and instructor-led.

Think of it like this: When you need to develop a less critical skill or need a speedy skills refresher, you probably turn to search engines like Google and YouTube. We all do it. It's fast, typically easy to find what you're looking for, and it's a low investment.

But when there's more at stake, such as learning a new skill set because your job or a project's success depends on it, formal training is your best choice.

What we're saying is: Embrace the fact that informal and formal training are not in conflict. In fact, we recommend a mix of the two.

What is the best ratio of formal and informal training? The answer varies for each organization. The [OSF ratio](#) is a Training Industry concept that breaks down the three learning sources: on-the-job (O), social (S), and formal (F). While the training breakdown may differ company to company, the OSF ratio emphasizes formal training as the foundation for on-the-job and social learning.



74%

IT professionals say that “building new skills” is their top reason for training.¹

73%

IT professionals reported using “web-based, on-demand sessions” to learn new skills.

¹ Global Knowledge 2021 IT Skills and Salary Report

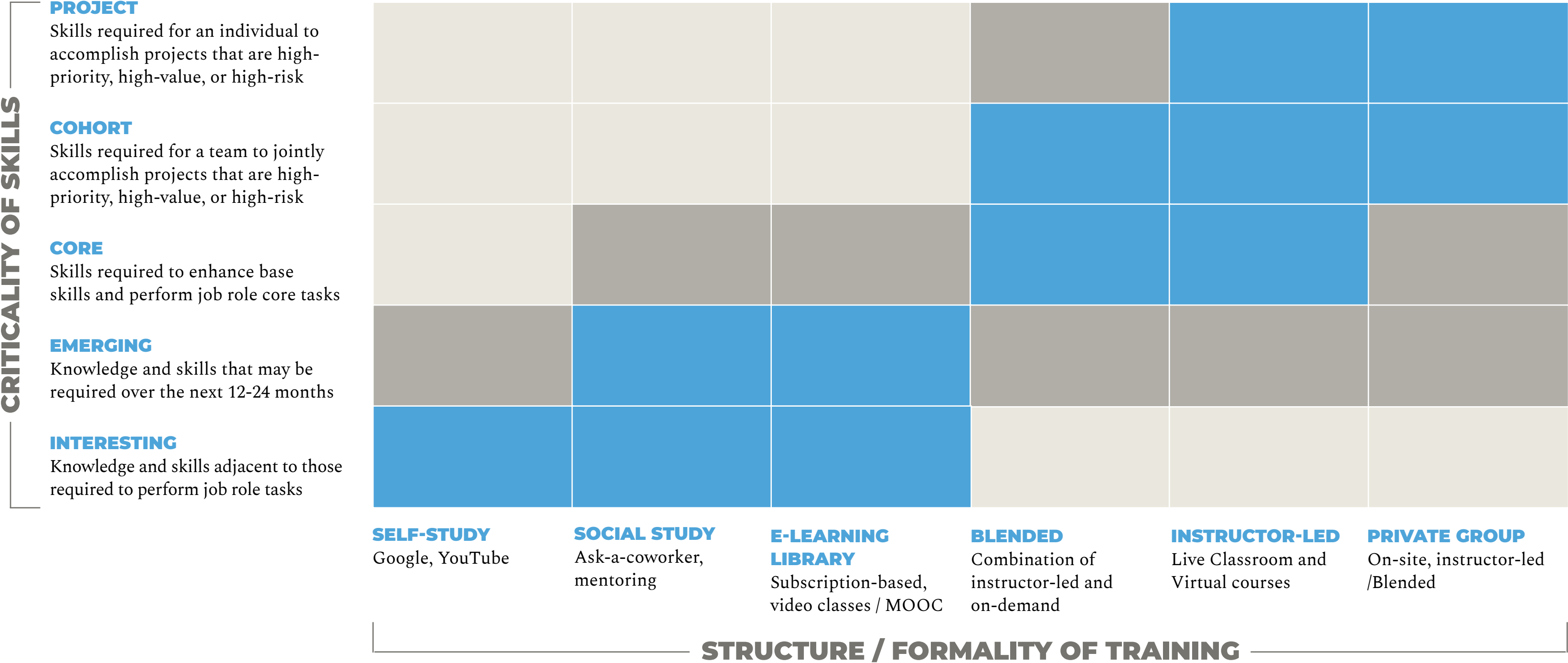
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INDEX™

The Global Knowledge Skills Development Index answers the question: What type of training do I need? Your optimal training type depends on the type of skill you need to add.

First, define the criticality of your skills need. Then, use the Index to determine the formality of training you should pursue.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INDEX



Based on priority, value and risk, the Skills Development Index classifies skills in five categories: Interesting, Emerging, Core, Cohort and Project.

For Interesting or Emerging skills, informal training options (e.g., blogs, videos, paid libraries) can suffice. For Core, Cohort or Project skills, formal training (e.g., blended learning, instructor-led courses) provides your best chance for success.

FORMAL TRAINING FULFILLS CRITICAL SKILLS NEEDS

If the success of a project hinges on a particular skill, experiential and social learning won't provide the reliability required to ensure project success. When a skills need is a high priority for the business, you require a deeper training investment.

Formal, instructor-led training is essential when the skills need is critical. You don't want to be left wondering, "Did I really learn it?" And you don't want to waste too much time — weekly, monthly, or yearly — searching online for reliable answers.

Instructor-led training fulfills critical skills needs better than self-study. For larger tasks that have a team — or organization-wide — impact, formal training provides more structure and access to an expert. It's your better option.

LEARNING RESOURCES



6 TIPS FOR INFORMAL LEARNING

Ensure you're investing your time in quality and credible resources.



BLENDED LEARNING FOR IT

Get the best of instructor-led and on-demand training.



3 SELECT A TRAINING PROVIDER

When you invest in training, you expect a return on your investment. So in a market full of training companies, how do you know which one is right for you?



HERE ARE THE SEVEN CRITERIA TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING AN IT TRAINING PROVIDER:

1

Does the training provider have the skill-building courses you need?

Look for providers that offer an extensive portfolio covering your areas of focus and the tech providers you work with on a daily basis.

2

Do they provide access to subject matter experts (SMEs)?

There's an advantage to learning from experts who draw from real-world experiences when teaching and answering your questions. Not only will students learn the most relevant material, but they'll be learning directly from an expert who is still active and still working with the latest technologies in a production environment.

3

Does the training provider work closely with technology providers?

Companies like AWS, Cisco, Microsoft, Red Hat, VMware, and others are constantly evolving and investing in new technologies. You want a training provider that has its finger on the pulse to guarantee you receive the most up-to-date and accurate skills.

4

How effective is their instruction?

If you can't retain or apply what you learned, the training is not a success. Find out what other organizations and people say about the provider first. Also, look for any free courses or videos to get a feel for a provider's platform and quality of instruction.

33%

IT decision-makers say "developing stronger teams" is a key challenge.¹

38%

IT decision-makers say "the rate of technology change exceeds skills development programs."¹

¹ Global Knowledge 2021 IT Skills and Salary Report

5

Do they have multiple delivery formats to meet your needs?

Given learning preferences and specific skill needs, providers only offering one or two modalities might be limiting your success. Look for these leading formats:

- Instructor-led classroom
- On-demand
- Instructor-led virtual classroom
- Blended learning (mix of instructor-led + on-demand)

6

How do they make your life easier — whether you're buying for yourself or purchasing for others?

- Provides access to experts focused on specific technologies. It's not possible for one person to know everything — especially in IT. That's why you want an advisor within the organization who can bring in SMEs to discuss needs.
- On-demand
- Blended learning (mix of instructor-led + on-demand)

7

A proven track record with third-party validation

Providers that deliver high-quality training receive awards from tech providers and industry publications recognizing their training methods and ability to provide customers with exceptional experiences.

LEARNING RESOURCES



INDUSTRY AWARDS

Check out *Training Industry's* lists of top IT training and leadership companies.



CONVINCE YOUR MANAGER OF THE BENEFITS OF TRAINING

You may know the value of training, but does your boss? Use this handy how-to guide.

**"AN ORGANIZATION
IS ONLY AS
ADAPTABLE AS ITS
PEOPLE. WHO YOU
TRUST TO DEVELOP
YOUR MOST
IMPORTANT ASSET
HAS NEVER BEEN
MORE CRITICAL."**

MARK ONISK
SKILLSOFT CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER



4 BUILD SKILLS WITH GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

Your success is our focus.

Now that Global Knowledge is a Skillsoft brand, our customers have access to truly end-to-end, multi-modality training solutions in cloud, security, data, programming, IT infrastructure, software craft, leadership and business, and compliance.

Only a dedicated training organization specializing in technology can deliver this level of continued success — and we're ready to provide it to you.



WE KNOW WHERE SKILLS GAPS POSE THE BIGGEST THREAT

Skillsoft and Global Knowledge courses and training resources are carefully curated to focus on the job roles, industries and topics where the most opportunities for business success live. We know where the IT skills gaps exist, and it's our job to help you remove them.

From foundational to advanced, you'll find over 3,000 [instructor-led courses](#) and tens of thousands of hours of [on-demand courses](#), hands-on labs, and challenge labs covering leading technology provides, in-demand topics, and certification prep, such as:

- Amazon Web Services (AWS)
- Cisco
- Cloud computing
- Cybersecurity
- Data
- Google Cloud
- ITIL®
- IT infrastructure
- Microsoft
- Programming
- Project management and agile
- Red Hat®
- Software craft
- VMware



230,000

Number of students who train each year with Global Knowledge.

69%

Global Knowledge instructors who are active IT consultants.²

² How Workplace Training Drives Success, Global Knowledge white paper

YOU'LL LEARN FROM THE BEST SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS IN THE INDUSTRY

When you determine it's time for formal training, you've recognized that it's more advantageous to learn from an expert. Online resources aren't enough. You need to connect with someone who has real-world experience.

Global Knowledge instructors are widely considered the best in the industry. Get real-time answers to your questions and feedback in our in-person or virtual classrooms.

Our subject matter experts also have access to our free, informal resources. Our [resource library](#) is filled with hundreds of articles, special reports, webinars, white papers, and videos that are written by the same experts who teach our courses.

We understand that continuous learning is the antidote to skills gaps. After you complete a training course, the learning shouldn't stop. That's why our subject matter experts produce a variety of up-to-date resources you can reference and revisit whenever you need a little help.



WE CAN HELP ADVANCE YOUR CAREER (AND BOOST YOUR SALARY!)

It pays off financially for IT professionals to train and pursue career-relevant certifications. Our IT Skills and Salary Report reveals that certified individuals earn more annually than their non-certified peers. They also report greater productivity, they perform their job faster, and their expertise is more sought after within the organization.

WE OFFER FLEXIBLE DELIVERY FORMATS AND PURCHASING OPTIONS

We make it easier for you to train. You deserve courses that fit your schedule, not the other way around. That's why, in addition to our classroom and virtual options, we offer blended and on-demand courses, allowing you to train when and where you want. We also have [subscription programs](#) and [special offers](#) to make sure you're maximizing your training budget. [Training and vendor credits](#) are also accepted (e.g., Cisco Learning Credits).

Technology is always changing, but what won't change is the quality of instruction and skills development you receive from Global Knowledge.

LEARNING RESOURCES



GET TO KNOW GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE INSTRUCTORS

Our course instructors are subject matter experts inside and outside the classroom.



HOW ORGANIZATIONS BUY TRAINING

Maximize your budget and know your options with this complete guide to purchasing training.

**GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE
COURSES FOCUS ON
THE JOB ROLES,
INDUSTRIES AND
TOPICS WHERE THE
MOST OPPORTUNITIES
EXIST FOR BUSINESS
SUCCESS AND
WHERE SKILLS GAPS
PRESENT THE
LARGEST THREAT.**



5 SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE THIS

Revisit your goals and compare them to your actual results.

You defined what success looks like before you created a skills strategy. Now that you've completed your training, whether formal or informal, it's time to evaluate success. Do not skip this step!



SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE THIS

Often we immediately move on to the next problem or assignment and ignore the review process. It's critical to know what elements of your plan worked and what didn't. That way you can adjust future training plans to ensure a greater chance of meeting your goals.

Answer the following questions when determining the success of training:

- Did it provide noticeable results?
- Did you reach your goal(s)?
- How does the result compare to your initial definition of success?
- How do you plan to maintain the skills?
- For managers:
 - Is your team overcoming obstacles or finding more efficient ways to deliver results?
- For students:
 - Are you more productive following training?
 - Are you completing tasks more quickly?
 - Are you more fulfilled by your job?

It should be apparent whether training has been successful. The results should be impossible to ignore.

57%

Global Knowledge students say that training increases employee retention.²

3.04

Hours saved per week by Global Knowledge students following training.² Each day of training is repaid to the organization in less than three weeks in the form of productivity gains.

² How Workplace Training Drives Success, Global Knowledge white paper

In our white paper, How Workplace Training Drives Success, we surveyed IT professionals who trained with Global Knowledge to see how training impacts skills gaps and business goals. Our findings indicate that Global Knowledge training delivers positive results on an organizational, professional, and personal level.

97%

Students already use — or will use — their new knowledge in their current job.

93%

Students applied their course learning within four weeks of training completion.

94%

Students said Global Knowledge training improved the quality of their work.

LEARNING RESOURCES



TRAINING IS AN INVESTMENT, NOT AN EXPENSE

Learn how training views have evolved.



TOP-PAYING IT CERTIFICATIONS

Looking to boost your salary? Check out our annual list of highest-paying certifications.



6 CONTINUE LEARNING

Technology doesn't stop. Neither can you.

You closed a skills gap today. But what about tomorrow?

In IT, skill-building should be continuous. You have to keep moving to keep pace with technological changes, and you do that through continuous learning. Continuous learning is your ally in this constant evolution. And that's the fun of IT, right? IT professionals are always learning innovative skills and solving problems. There's always something new to discover — and that's exciting.



Learning should never end. Initial and ongoing training are solutions for skills gaps. After training is complete, celebrate your success (we don't do this enough) and continue to pay attention to the changing world around you.

Maybe you can already see what your next goal is. Think about what your specific need is, and where successful training might get you.

Think about a skill or set of skills — what training and resources do you need to fulfill your job function? You'll likely need an array of formal training, informal resources, expert access, and a distinct path to follow to accomplish that goal.

A Global Knowledge training course is only part of the solution. Skills need to be learned and kept fresh so they are second nature. Without continuous learning, your skill set will be outdated before you know it. Whether you require formal or informal training, let us be your continuous learning guide. We've got you covered.

We are invested in your success. When you need us, we'll be here. In the meantime, we'll be developing new content so when your organization has critical skills needs, you can trust you'll receive the best possible experience and measurable results.



92%

IT professionals
took some form of
training last year.¹

60%

Loss of a team's
capabilities after
three years without
training.²

¹ Global Knowledge 2021 IT Skills and Salary Report

² IDC, Market Analysis Perspective: Worldwide and U.S. IT Education and Certification Services, 2018, Doc #US42761218, Sep 2018

LEARNING RESOURCES

Global Knowledge provides a wealth of informal training resources to help you when you need a quick fix. The following content is written and continually updated by our subject matter experts:



ARTICLES



QUIZZES



SPECIAL REPORTS



VIDEOS



WEBINARS





WHITE PAPERS



ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft (NYSE: SKIL) is a global leader in corporate digital learning, focused on transforming today’s workforce for tomorrow’s economy. The Company provides enterprise learning solutions designed to prepare organizations for the future of work, overcome critical skill gaps, drive demonstrable behavior-change, and unlock the potential in their people. Skillsoft offers a comprehensive suite of premium, original, and authorized partner content, including one of the broadest and deepest libraries of leadership & business skills, technology & developer, and compliance curricula. With access to a broad spectrum of learning options (including video, audio, books, bootcamps, live events, and practice labs), organizations can meaningfully increase learner engagement and retention. Skillsoft’s offerings are delivered through Percipio, its award-winning, AI-driven, immersive learning platform purpose built to make learning easier, more accessible, and more effective.

Learn more at www.skillsoft.com.

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