

Skills in action

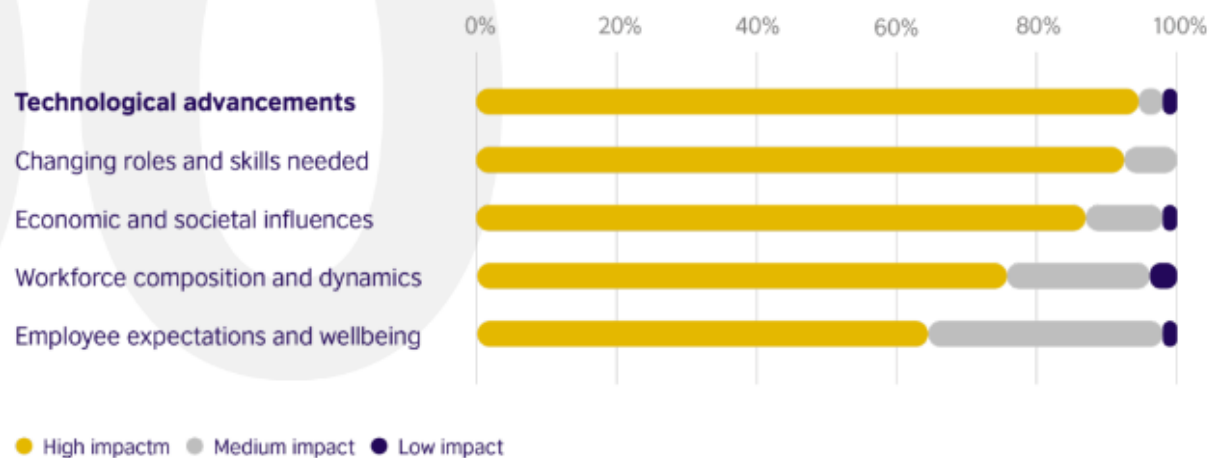
Practical steps
to build future
readiness today



Organisations, careers and teamwork will be very different



Which factors will impact the future of work?



How will organisations be different? – Anticipate and adapt



70%

- Increased agility and flexibility, transformation
- Increased internationalisation
 - Cross-border market expansion
 - Supply chain diversification
 - Hiring across borders



69%

- Alignment of organisations' goals with social and environmental impact



83%

- Creation of new role types*
 - Digital transformation
 - Sustainability experts
- Increased multigenerational, multicultural teams

How will talent management evolve? – Agile strategies

81%

- Skills-based hiring*
- Talent mobility for an agile, engaged workforce

69%

- Borderless talent sourcing
- Increasingly globalised teams
- Remote, hybrid and flexible working

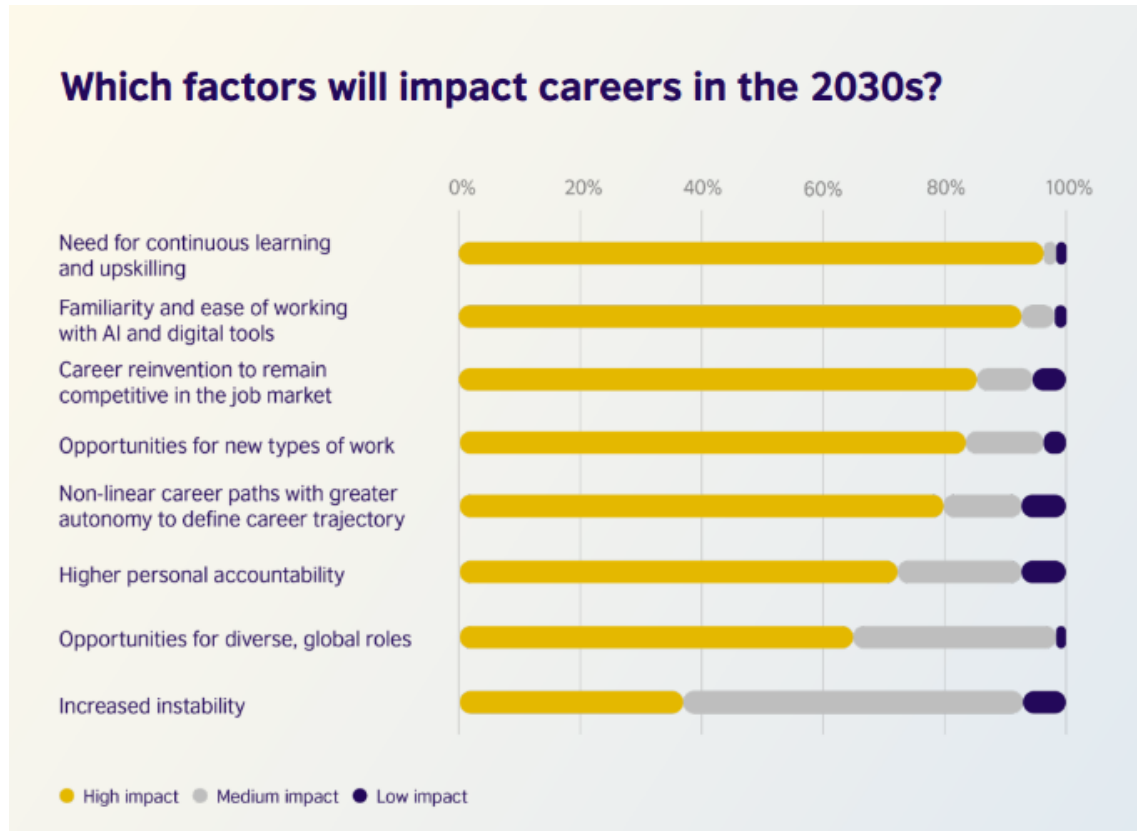
61%

- Outsourcing, partnerships and gig workers for specialist skills
- Scaling and managing costs



Source: The future of work: Developing students' skills for success, page 7

How will careers evolve? – Career reinvention



- Careers will become ‘squiggly’, no longer following a predictable path with less emphasis on traditional promotions.
- Many transitions between different employers, fields cross-disciplinary roles and locations.
- Opportunities for projects, gigs and short-term secondments.
- Technology and globalisation - access to new types of work and roles previously limited by location.

Future skills – A shifting balance



Less emphasis on technical, job-specific skills

- Technical skills (74%)
- Depends on industry or role type



Increased need for digital skills for all industries and job functions

- Digital literacy (85%)
- Human-AI collaboration (84%)
- Data analytics and interpretation (80%)

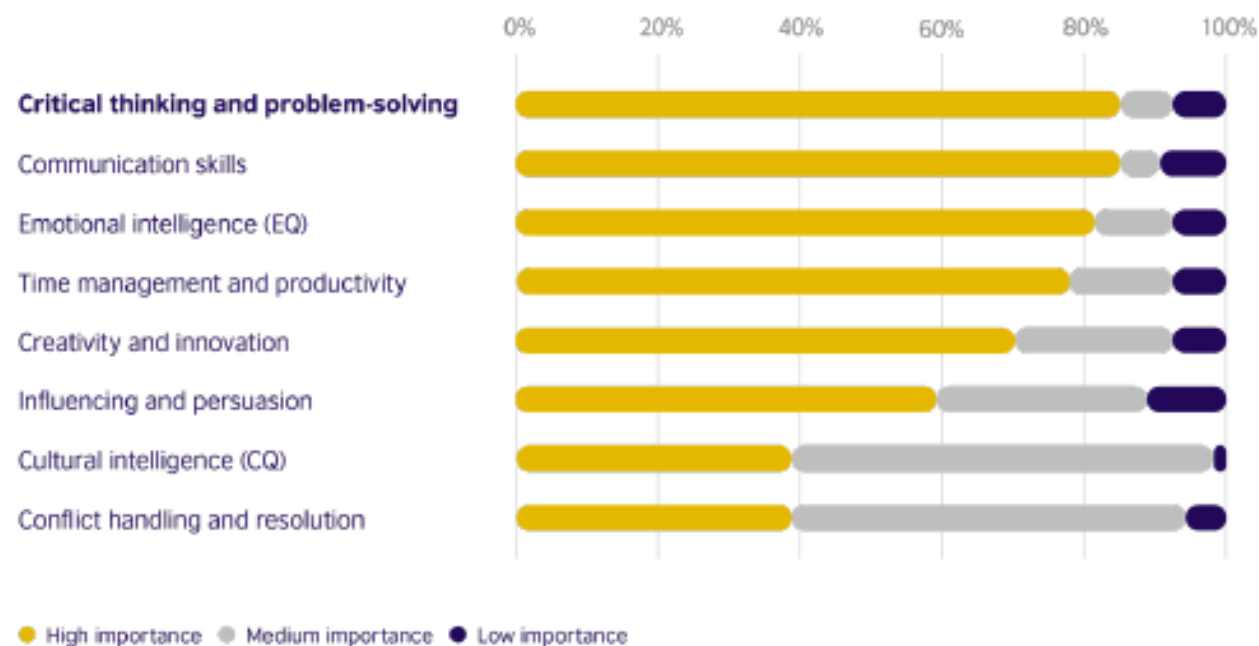


Increased need for soft skills

- 85%
- Enable communication with generative and agentic AI.
- Communication, collaboration and language skills will be essential for connection, teamwork and trust.

Soft skills in demand

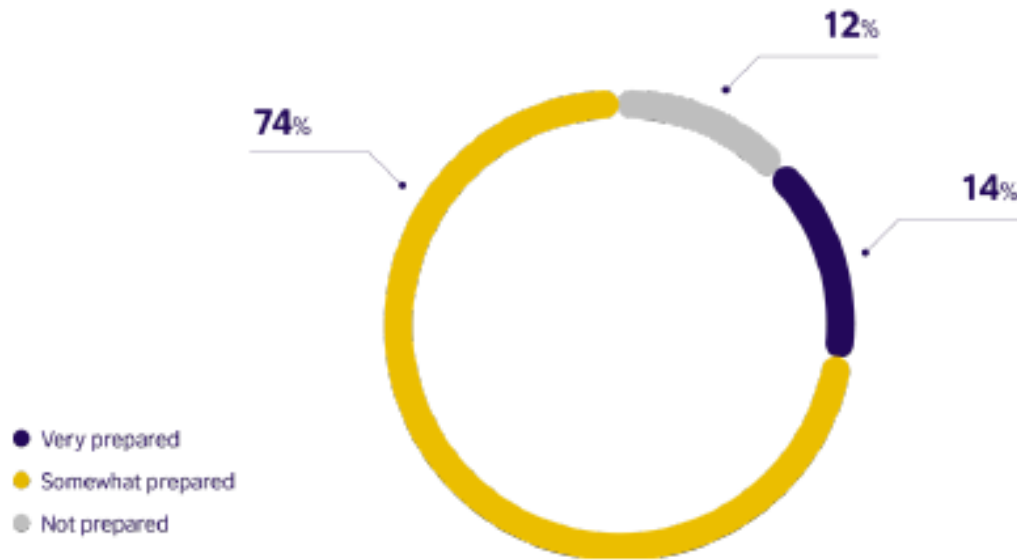
Which soft skills will be important for organisational and individual success?



‘Developing soft skills will be critical for performance, productivity and engaging diverse stakeholders in agile, flexible, digitally-enabled workplaces.’

Kate Sullivan, Global Head of Services and Talent, British Council Corporate English Solutions.

How prepared are organisations for the future of work?



The biggest drivers of this lack of readiness:

- Technology evolving faster than organisations can adopt it.
- Skills and workforce capabilities not matching future needs.
- Culture and leadership practices lagging behind new models of work.

This is not a failure, but recognition, most organisations know there is more work to do.

L&D checklist for success – Building an agile L&D function

- Align learning with evolving organisational goals
- Monitor market trends, workforce demographics and mobility patterns to anticipate future skills needs.
- Align L&D strategies with long-term workforce planning, talent management and performance enablement.
- Develop adaptable frameworks and procedures to quickly respond to emerging skills, tools and technologies.
- Restructure L&D team roles and responsibilities to stay effective as business and workforce needs evolve.



L&D checklist for success – Developing skills for diverse career paths

- Embed training in communication, emotional intelligence and cultural awareness.
- Provide learning that helps employees navigate career shifts and changing job roles with confidence.
- Offer tailored programmes and curated resources to support diverse career growth.
- Encourage employees to create learning materials and contribute to knowledge-sharing platforms.
- Ensure content meets the needs of multi-generational, multicultural and flexible teams.



L&D checklist for success – Growing skills for tomorrow's roles

- Use predictive analysis to identify AI and tech skills based on current trends and industry developments.
- Define competencies and proficiency levels for different roles and integrate into job descriptions.
- Provide practical, targeted learning in data literacy and analytics, human-AI collaboration and ethical AI use.
- Create opportunities for specialists to collaborate with generalists to develop knowledge and skills.
- Support learning with up-to-date resources, tools and social learning platforms.



L&D checklist for success – Creating engaging, accessible learning

- Create opportunities for social learning and communities of practice to build expertise collectively.
- Support structured programmes with mentoring, coaching and peer support.
- Incorporate hands-on projects, simulations and real-world contexts to reinforce skills.
- Deliver bite-sized, on-demand content to support learning in the flow of work.
- Consider diverse needs, locations and learning preferences so everyone can participate and benefit.



Download our E-book!

