



# Skills strategies for a sustainable world of work: A guide for Chief Human Resources Officers

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# Foreword

**Work is the engine at the center of our economies and skills are its most important ingredient.** Work and skills to fuel it, lie at the heart of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's Vision 2050 where over 9 billion people live well, within the limits of the planet, and is essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Without the right skills, workers, in particular those from disadvantaged groups (women, young, ethnic minorities, low-skilled workers), will find it more and more difficult to find the work they need to live well.

New technologies, socio-economic developments and critical events like COVID-19, are placing the world of work in a state of constant flux, creating opportunities but also exacerbating inequalities.

As we begin to recover from the pandemic, many businesses will lack the relevant skills needed to be successful in the future. Even before COVID-19, business leaders were concerned about finding, keeping, and developing the talent required for the modern world. In this context, recruiting people with the right skills for current and future business needs has become

increasingly complex and the effectiveness of business-as-usual workforce strategies is progressively being challenged by these new realities.

This brings Human Resources (HR) executives into the 'eye of the storm', reinforcing their strategic role in ensuring business continuity, resilience and growth while contributing to a future where both business and society don't just react and adapt to disruption, but thrive. A future with inclusive workforces that are secure, motivated, skilled and prepared for any challenge that comes next. And where people are empowered and prosper from equal access to new opportunities.

Based on real-life experiences from a range of organizations, this guide brings to life the importance of designing and implementing comprehensive skills development strategies for creating future-proof businesses and a more sustainable future of work. It helps business leaders better understand how a strong skills development strategy creates business value while it simultaneously generates positive value for people and society.

It shares best practices and aims to provide business decision makers – in particular Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs) – with guidance and inspiration to strengthen their companies by empowering people through relevant skills and increasing decent employment opportunities.

By doing so, they can contribute to “inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities” as well as “promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all” as outlined respectively in SDG Goals 4 and 8. This is an immense opportunity for business to reinforce social cohesion, reduce inequalities and have a significant positive impact on society.

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# About this guide

**This report is the product of discussions from WBCSD's Future of Work project** – a forum that brings together businesses to shape a sustainable world of work. Our Future of Work project envisions a people-centered world of work where people prosper personally, professionally and as active members of their community. It promotes an inclusive workforce, where people feel safe, motivated, empowered, and prepared for whatever challenge they are facing or will have to face next.

Effective skills development plays a fundamental role in achieving this vision. With this in mind WBCSD's Future of Work project has established a dedicated working group for businesses to share experiences, distil best practices, develop collaborative solutions and address key issues around skills development. In this regard WBCSD's members worked closely with the **Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN Global)** a leading organization in the promotion of work-based learning to empower people and businesses.

Drawing upon these rich discussions, WBCSD and GAN are pleased to present this report that aims to inform and inspire CHROs and HR decision makers that are setting out upon the skills development journey. It presents a wide range of effective and appropriate skills strategies and pipelines, leveraging interviews with senior HR professionals and showcasing solutions from 16 leading organizations.

## Overview of the Guide:

**Part 1** provides the big-picture context describing the main factors driving changes in the world of work.

**Part 2** presents the skills mismatch as a key challenge for business and society and highlights the risks of not addressing it. It also introduces skills development as a key to a sustainable world of work. It then outlines specific actions CHROs can take to kick-start their companies' skills strategies for the new world of work based on real-life business experiences.

**Part 3** explores in detail five crucial steps to develop a forward-looking skills strategy.

The guide is further complemented by 16 case studies from organizations, each covering the business need for action, the target audience, key activities and how impact was measured.

## Questions this guide aims to address:

- Why is corporate skills development important? What are the benefits for business, for its workers and for society?
- Which types of corporate skills development strategies and programs exist?
- How can you assess which type of skills development program best corresponds to your company's organizational needs?

# Acknowledgements and disclaimer

This guide is the result of collaborative efforts by the WBCSD secretariat and executives from member companies and the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN). A wide range of members reviewed drafts, thereby ensuring that the document broadly represents the perspective of the WBCSD membership. This does not mean, however, that every member company agrees with every word. We would like to thank PwC UK for coordinating this effort and enabling the development of this guide.

On this page, we have listed the project team and the organizations that contributed to the guide. They have generously given their time, contributed their professional perspectives and skillfully pulled together this report. To all contributors – named as well as unnamed – we express our sincere thanks.

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# 1

## Context - The rapidly evolving world of work

Part 1 provides the big-picture context, describing the main factors impacting the world of work. It briefly sketches how these factors impact different demographic groups and then dives deeper into challenges related to young people as the future workforce generations.



# Factors impacting the world of work

Work is facing complex disruption at the hand of three inter-connected forces:

## Rapid technology evolution



New technologies are being developed and adopted at an unprecedented pace. A range of technologies, including robotics, artificial intelligence, video conferencing and online collaboration applications, the Internet of Things, platform technologies and blockchain are deeply changing tasks and work patterns and are challenging how companies function.<sup>11</sup>

## Global socio-economic trends



Climate change, rising inequality, shifting demographics, migration pressures as well as COVID-19 have all had an impact on the global labor market and look set to continue to do so throughout the decade ahead.<sup>11</sup>

## Shifting expectations of workers



Income security, transparency, inclusion and equity are now fundamental expectations of workers, while the ability for companies to provide meaning, flexibility and opportunity are becoming critical differentiators for attracting and retaining talent.<sup>11</sup>

**30%**

of jobs are at high risk of displacement by automation by 2030\*<sup>9</sup>

**85m**

roles will be in decline by 2025<sup>8</sup>

**97m**

new roles will emerge by 2025<sup>8</sup>

\* percentage of job activities that will be transformed or disappear within the next 15 years

# Impacts on different demographic groups

Disruptions to the world of work will affect specific groups of people at different stages in their careers differently. COVID-19 has posed additional challenges, especially for younger generations, raising concerns that the workforce of the future will not have the skills required to find employment or may see their employment opportunities curtailed as the global economy falls into recession.

## Early years and school children



UNICEF asserts that for every USD\$1 spent on early childhood development, the return on investment can be as high as USD \$13, boosting prosperity, inclusive growth and equality.<sup>14</sup> However, the development of millions of young people around the world remains susceptible to disruption. One in three young people – 463 million – could not access remote learning when schools shut down due to COVID-19, highlighting the need for enhanced investment in robust and resilient development programs.<sup>5</sup>

## Secondary, college and university students



Education plays a critical role in preparing youth and young adults for the world of work. However, a 2016 report by the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity estimated that 30% of young adults would not graduate from secondary school with the skills they need to hold most jobs.

Due to the economic recession driven by COVID-19, those leaving college during the pandemic now see their usual job prospects in doubt.<sup>7</sup>

## Early and mid-career workers



Early and mid-career workers face a series of challenges. COVID-19 has also impacted the prospects of a large number of early career workers, especially in sectors hit hard by the pandemic.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, mid-career workers are facing financial pressures and job insecurity as the economy struggles, while also feeling ill-prepared to adapt to the speed of technological change.<sup>7</sup>

## Workers close to retirement age



Workers close to retirement age may not have adequate savings or sufficiently robust pensions and may therefore need to continue working beyond their planned time of retirement. Additionally, many older, long established employees are discovering their jobs and skills are becoming obsolete, making it difficult for them to maintain their employment and income.<sup>5</sup>

# Impacts on the workforce of the future

**Hundreds of millions of young people around the world are coming of age and finding themselves unemployed and unemployable.<sup>5</sup> Organizations cannot ignore the impact this will have on their future workforce and on society more broadly.**

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020 report stated that out of 1.3 billion young people (aged 15-24) in the world, one fifth was not in employment, education or training.<sup>12</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed structural weaknesses in local, national, and international institutions and economies, exacerbated inequalities, and worsened the situation for young people. When the world moved online, vulnerable communities – including youth who live without consistent, reliable access to the internet or technology, or who lack the skills and acumen to navigate a digital world – were hit particularly hard, and they risk long-term or permanent social disenfranchisement as more facets of everyday life go or stay online.<sup>5</sup>

50% of young people surveyed in an ILO survey in 2020 reported that they were likely to complete their studies late, and 10% stated that they did not

expect to complete their studies at all. The same survey found one in six youth surveyed have stopped working since the onset of the pandemic.<sup>7</sup>

According to the ILO, nearly 77% of employed youth around the world were in the informal economy, making them particularly vulnerable<sup>15</sup> to business closures or shifts to online work.

Neglecting these challenges can result in young people becoming disenfranchised, feeling disillusioned about their prospects on the labor market, and can contribute to social unrest, creating a more volatile operating environment for business.

By equipping young people with relevant skills, businesses can support their access to employment opportunities and enable them to thrive personally, professionally and as active members of society.

Skills development is equally essential to other demographic groups. Hence, the following chapters of this guide support HR executives in strengthening their skills development strategies and supporting current and future workers across all demographics to prepare for the new world of work.



**1 in 3**  
young people  
could not  
access remote  
learning when  
schools shut  
down<sup>5</sup>

# 2

## Skills development - Key to a sustainable world of work

Building on the context analysis in the previous chapter, part 2 presents the skills mismatch as a key challenge for business and society and highlights the risks of not addressing it. Skills development is then emphasized as key to a sustainable world of work.

Addressing CHROs as the top executive responsible for driving workforce and skills strategies within an organization, part 2 closes by outlining specific actions CHROs can take to kick-start their companies' skills strategies for the new world of work.



# Understanding the skills mismatch

In recent years, the labor market has faced mounting problems related to the supply and demand of skills: too many people are finding that they do not have the skills to take up the jobs available today, much less those that will be needed in a highly digitalized world. Meanwhile, many companies are also struggling to hire the talent they require.

**This fundamental difference between the skills required by employers and the skills possessed by an organization's current or prospective workforce is often referred to as the skills mismatch.**

PwC's recent 'Upskilling for Shared Prosperity' report in collaboration with the World Economic Forum highlights that half of all employees will need to develop new skills by 2025 to remain employable.<sup>1</sup>

The rapid move to a predominantly virtual world occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed gaps in the capabilities of companies and their people.<sup>4</sup> Companies have had to ask workers to quickly acquire and master digital skills, as well as a range of auxiliary skills such as collaboration, creative problem-solving and openness to new ideas.<sup>2</sup>

In a time of extreme uncertainty and rapid digital adoption, designing and implementing a strategy to address the skills mismatch and ensure that employees have the right skills required to perform well and thrive into the future, is more important yet also more challenging than ever before.

In a series of surveys, PwC asked CEOs about their perspectives and to share challenges their companies were facing due to skills mismatches:

**52%**

of CEOs said that a lack of skills were pushing up their people costs faster than expected<sup>13</sup>

**55%**

of CEOs said skills gaps meant they were failing to innovate<sup>13</sup>

**72%**

of CEOs are worried about the availability of key skills<sup>10</sup>

# Risks of Inaction

Not taking any action to address skills mismatches and implement new skill strategies bears significant risks for business and society.

## Widening skills gaps



Organizations which do not take action to implement new skills strategies risk allowing their employees to be left behind in the new world of work.

The longer companies leave skills gaps unaddressed, the harder it will be to upskill staff and close the gap.

## Unsustainable workforce development



Companies that do not take action to proactively develop fit-for-purpose upskilling programs risk having to fall back on unsustainable short-term solutions that will drive up costs and deliver significantly reduced long-term benefits. Furthermore, companies without skills development opportunities run risk of losing attractiveness to current and future talent.

## Inability to drive business priorities



If employees do not have the skillset needed to drive business priorities, then this will prevent a company's ability to compete in the market.

## A decline in diversity and inclusion



Minority groups face unequal access to education and in workplace training. Companies not ensuring inclusive skills development miss out on the value that talent from diverse backgrounds and perspectives brings in developing new products, services and business models.

At the same time, they contribute to perpetuating social inequalities, breeding discontent, eroding social cohesion and ultimately contributing to a more volatile political and business environment.

# Buy, borrow, or build approach

There are typically three overarching approaches to drive the creation of new skills within an organization. They are known as – 'buy, borrow or build'.

**Building** the skills and competences required is the most sustainable choice. It makes good use of company resources as employees are retained and developed, boosting employee morale and sense of belonging to the organization. By investing in building the skills and competences, companies directly tackle the skills mismatch, as education and training curricula are informed by and geared towards responding to a concrete skills demand.

## Buy

Hiring resource directly from outside the organization through recruitment (permanent)

- + Enables organizations to respond quickly to a new skills need
- + Introduces new experiences and ideas to the organization
- Can lead to a growing skills deficit
- Expensive to hire new employees

## Borrow

Sourcing resource from outside for a short period of time (including part-time, freelance, contract, and temporary workers) or secondments

- + Fulfills short-term needs in specialized skills sets
- + Avoids long-term costs
- Can lead to a growing skills deficit
- Can negatively impact employee and contractor engagement

## Build

Investing in building the skills and competences required for a particular role

- + Reduces competition over specialized professionals as they are developed in-house
- + Meets continuously evolving skills requirements
- + Retains talent and boosts employee morale
- Requires investment
- Can require time before yielding results

# Skills development: key to a sustainable world of work

**Choosing the 'build' approach described earlier means an organization embarks on developing skills for their workers and for future talent, thereby creating positive value for society and strengthening their business.**

## Benefits to society

Upskilling programs and continuous learning help society more broadly by reducing the number of people that struggle to find work due to lack of relevant skills. Increasing employability of people and enabling them to access opportunities can contribute significantly to the livelihoods and wellbeing of people.

This is particularly important considering stakeholders increasingly expect companies to put people and society at the heart of their business. Those watching are not simply shareholders; the new corporate stakeholder includes consumers, influencers, policymakers, and more.<sup>3</sup>

## Benefits to business

A key business benefit of sustainable skills development is that it empowers individuals to grow and contribute to the success of the company by helping them to transform their skillset as the company and its demand for skills transforms.

In 2020, 93% of CEOs who had introduced upskilling programs said these programs increased productivity, helped attract and retain talent, and helped deliver a resilient workforce. However, only 18% of CEOs surveyed stated they had invested in upskilling; the opportunity for those who haven't yet made the investment is significant.<sup>4</sup>

Of course, 'upskilling' can mean different things in different territories or industries. For sustainable skills development to be as effective as possible over the long term, businesses need to engage with other public and private organizations including education providers, policymakers and other businesses – in their own industry as well in those with adjacent skills needs. Among others, this engagement can facilitate defining skills demands more clearly and at a relevant scale, pooling resources and developing fit-for-purpose programs.

## What is sustainable skills development

Sustainable skills development can be described as the process of building the necessary skills for an organization in a way that enables the workforce to constantly adapt to the shifting nature of work over a long period of time.

For the purposes of this guide, upskilling is defined as an organization's clear intent to develop the employability and capabilities of its employees' or potential future talent, and to advance and progress their technical, soft and digital skills.

**93%**

of CEOs who introduced upskilling programs said these programs increased productivity<sup>4</sup>

# Action points for CHROs

There are a number of actions you, as CHROs, can take to get started on developing your impactful skills strategies for the new world of work.

## 1 Think long-term about your skills development strategies

The world of work will continue to adapt and change at a much faster pace going forward, therefore building an agile workforce and a culture of lifelong learning will be crucial. Think long-term about your skills development strategies to enable your organization to be proactive rather than reactive to future changes in the market.

## 4 Build partnerships and collaborate

Work with leading players to support the implementation of your strategy. Partnerships and collaboration are essential to align supply and demand of skills, ensuring that education and training respond to real needs. This also enable stakeholders to develop systemic solutions to skills mismatches.

## 2 Analyze your company's situation and choose the best suited solution(s)

Organizations have different needs and therefore an approach taken by one employer, business unit or country office may not be suitable for another. It's important to analyze your company's needs in a specific context and use this to determine the best course of action for the business.

## 5 Develop programs that promote diversity, inclusion, and access

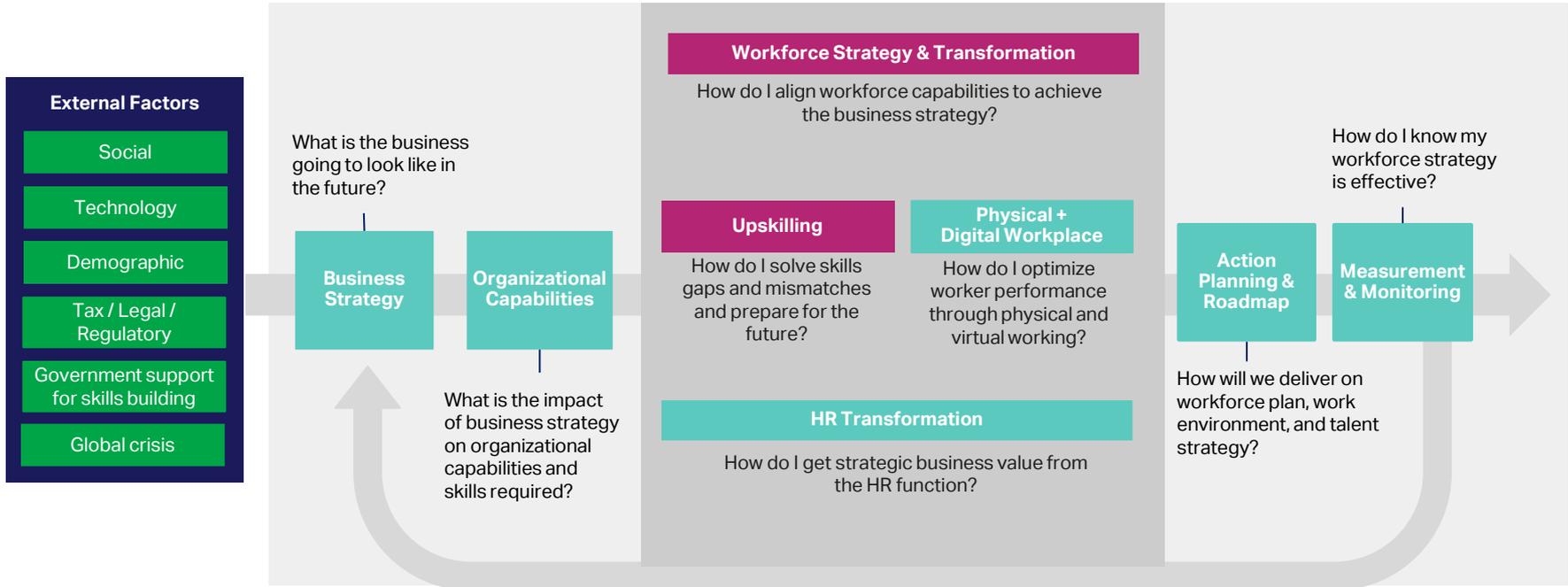
Proactively design programs which are inclusive and can be accessed by everyone. Ensure that participants include a mixture of employees, e.g. different genders, races, ages, religions, sexual orientations and locations.

## 3 Empower and engage your employee base

Empower your employees to own and continuously drive their learning. Utilize new technologies and tools such as VR to engage your workforce and supercharge their learning. Effectively empowering and engaging your employees can in turn help boost retention in your company.

# How does a skills strategy fit into the wider workforce strategy?

An organization's skills strategy is a key part of its overall workforce strategy. The diagram below illustrates the key components of a workforce strategy including how upskilling fits into the wider strategy.



# 3

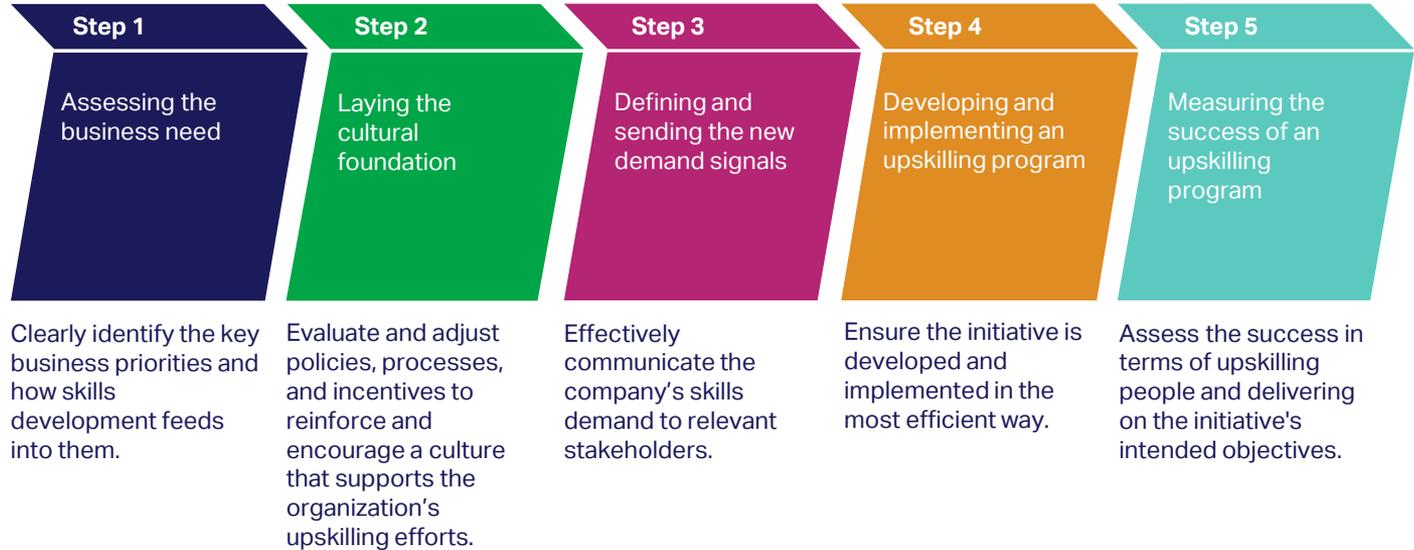
## The skills journey in a changing world of work

This chapter explores five crucial steps to develop a forward-looking skills strategy. For each step you will find a description, key questions to consider and short case studies from different organizational realities, bringing these steps to life.



# The skills strategy journey in a changing world of work

These are the five steps organizations typically take to develop their skills strategy, with approaches adapting to the specific context of an organization.





# Step 1: Assessing the business need

Clearly identify the key business priorities and how skills development feeds into them.

## Overview

Many organizations focus on upskilling that delivers business strategy. This is carried out by aligning a skills plan with the wider business and people strategy, and aiming to support learning and development across the organization in a way that drives key business priorities.

To ensure both, business and upskilling strategies are aligned, organizations can conduct a skills audit to identify the most essential capabilities needed by their people to achieve the business strategy.

Before companies can articulate how the skills of their people need to change, they must know the results they expect employees to deliver.

While there may be many skills strategies and programs a company wishes to deliver, it can be beneficial to focus on one or two. With that clarity and focus established, businesses can drive workforce transformation in key business areas.<sup>6</sup>

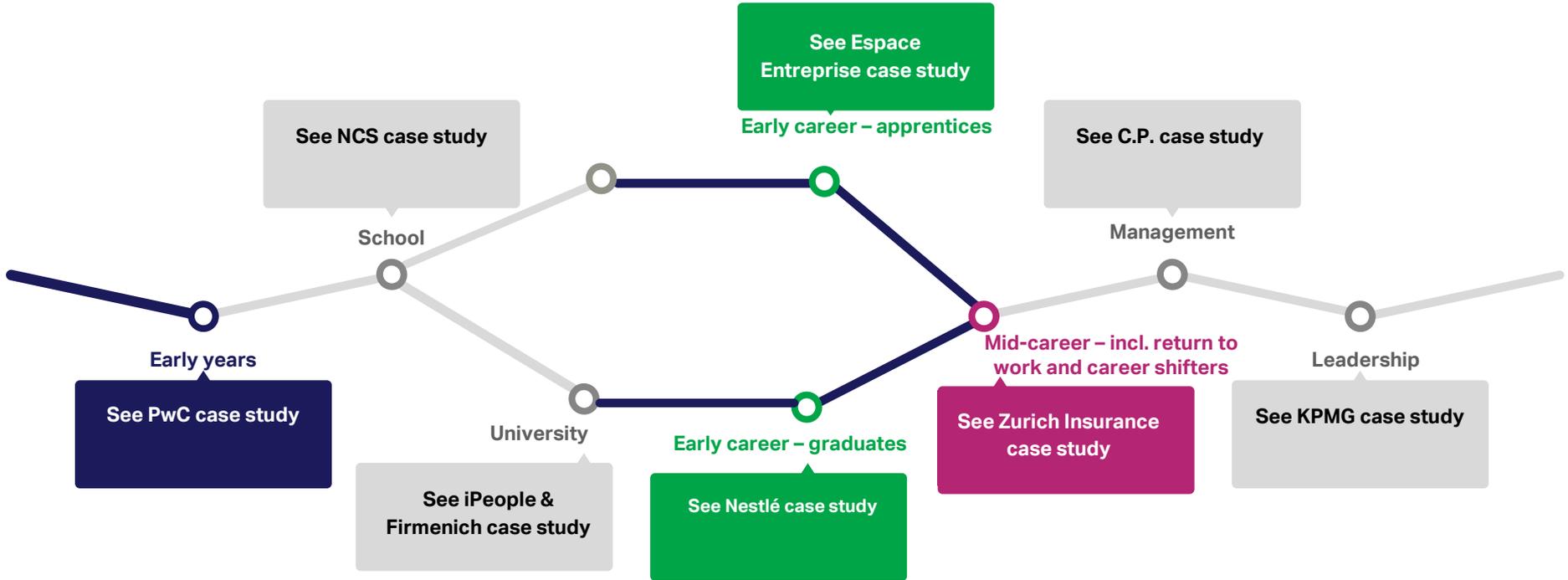
## Key questions to consider

- What are key business objectives and priorities?
- What skills currently exist within the business? How does this compare to skills that will be needed to achieve the business objectives?
- Does the business need to fill the current skills gap?
- When will new skills be required to support the new roles? In 1-3 years, 3-5 years or later?



## Selecting a stage in the learning journey

Once a skills audit has been conducted, organizations will be tasked with deciding which part of the learning journey to target their upskilling efforts. When it comes to upskilling, companies need to prioritize who they will start with and where they can deliver the most business value. The below diagram conveys the various learning journey stages which can be targeted and includes links to relevant case studies.





## Real-life examples bringing to life Step 1.

Facing rapid tech developments, shifting worker expectations and embarking on a new growth strategy,  **OCP Group** identified gaps between its current skills set and those needed to remain competitive in the market. Through strategic workforce planning (SWP), OCP Group mapped roles based on the impact they would face from these developments and identified Upskilling & Reskilling as the most appropriate strategy to respond to the Group's business needs.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

The automotive industry is facing profound technology-driven disruptions, most prominently electrification of vehicles, connected and autonomous vehicles and Mobility-as-a-Service. This scenario presented opportunities for Italian tire-producer  **Pirelli** in terms of product innovation and development of new applications, while reducing the time-to-market of new products. To stay ahead in this new scenario, Pirelli has been investing in digital tools and focusing on developing new skills and capabilities that will enable Pirelli to develop more innovative and sustainable products in the most agile way.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

**PwC** recognized huge societal changes taking place, meaning that the skills they had within the organization were not necessarily the skills the firm needed for the future. Clients expected PwC to continue delivering value and the firm's employees saw the need to have new skills to remain relevant to clients. Striving to become a digital business PwC recognized that upskilling employees was not only going to drive business benefits to clients, but it was also going to drive a much better employee experience. They also knew that they needed their teams across the world to be more comfortable with emerging technology, especially considering that the pace of technology wasn't slowing down. That required PwC to start a journey of lifelong learning. 

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)



## Step 2: Laying the cultural foundation

Evaluate and adjust policies, processes, and incentives to reinforce and encourage a culture that supports the organization's upskilling efforts.

### Overview

Upskilling efforts can benefit significantly from a corporate culture that encourages and rewards continuous learning. In order to lay this new cultural foundation centered on upskilling, C-suite executives need to clarify how much of a commitment they are making by discussing the investment in terms of money and senior management time. They must be visible role models of a learning culture in building their own skills and knowledge. Having common language built around a consistent message on the firm's upskilling approach and plans can also help facilitate a learning environment and help employees internalize the message and make it part of their 'self-guide'.

Vice versa, it is evident that upskilling can have a lasting positive impact on corporate culture. In 2020, in a survey conducted with more than 2,000 CEOs, of those who said their companies had made significant progress in upskilling, 60% reported that it had strengthened their corporate culture, compared with 22% among those who said their companies had made little progress on upskilling.<sup>4</sup>

### Key questions to consider

- What policies need to be put in place to encourage learning and development?
- Can early enthusiasts be deployed to spark interest and emotional impact?
- Has a consistent message been developed to reinforce the company's commitment to upskilling?
- Are company leaders sharing their own skills journeys?



## Real-life examples bringing to life Step 2.

Upskilling is vital to **National Citizens Service (NCS)**, a UK government funded youth program which bases its organizational culture on employees being eager to share and gain knowledge.



Continuously enabling employees to support the organization's mission, NCS provides its staff with ample upskilling opportunities and access to great learning pathways through formal training, internal knowledge sharing and strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations.

This mix of a good culture combined with access to skills development and career growth opportunities has resulted in low attrition, highly positive employee experiences and strong talent attraction.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

To achieve its business priorities Moroccan phosphate company **OCP Group** fosters a culture of continuous, lifelong learning. Having identified 'Upskilling & Reskilling' as the most appropriate strategy to achieve its business strategy and growth, OCP promotes the ability to continuously learn and develop as the most important skill for the future among its talent, and links it to career progress.



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## Step 3: Defining and sending new demand signals

Between the moment of knowing which skills are needed in a business and developing talent, it is critical to effectively communicate the company's skills demand to relevant stakeholders.

### Overview

A 'demand signal' in relation to skills can be seen as a message issued from a business to their workforce or the talent market which helps clarify the demand for particular skills. Demand signaling is an important consideration because often people may have market-relevant skills but may lack awareness or knowledge about the skills that employers are looking for.

Organizations will first need to define the new demand signal and then assess the best way of sending it. Defining a new demand starts with having a clear and consistent way of describing roles and skills across the talent marketplace.

Key audiences of a new demand signal within the organization include a company's own workforce such as at-risk or underqualified workers, but also executives and team managers who can relay the information and ensure needed skills are developed. Outside the organization the demand signal can be targeted at business leaders from other organizations, career advisors, educators or individuals who are still at school or university or looking for work.

Sending a demand signal can also be a complementary way of addressing the skills mismatch beyond developing upskilling programs. It helps businesses to clearly define and communicate what they are looking for and in turn helps potential future recruits develop in the right direction with their career paths.

### Key questions to consider

#### Defining the demand signal:

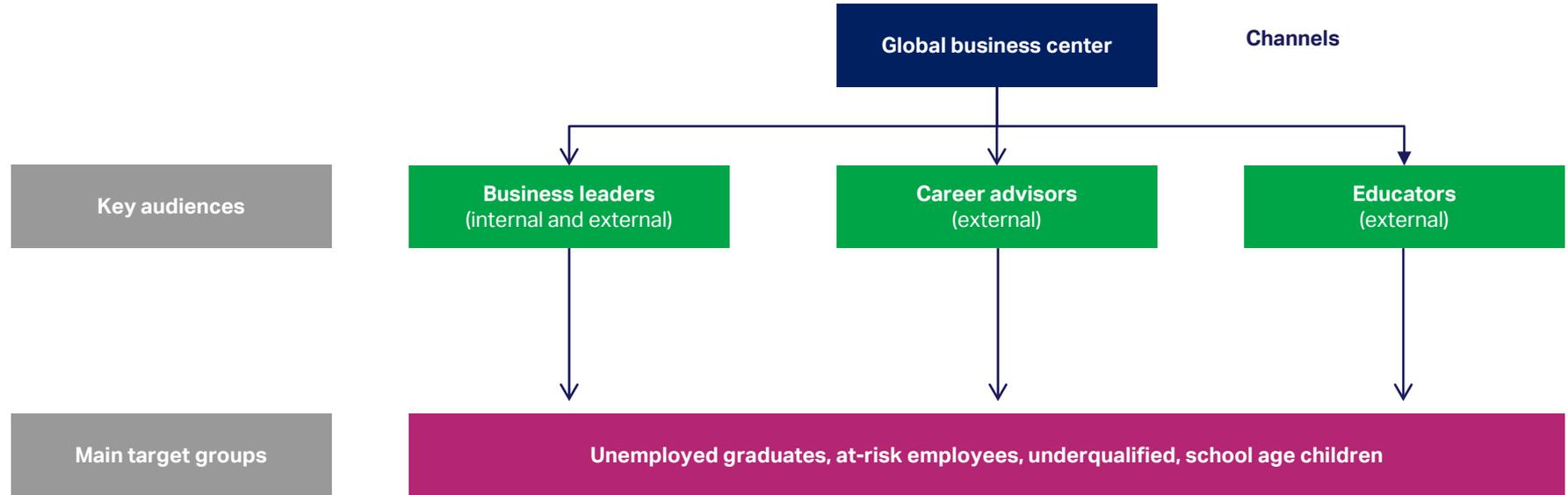
- What new and different skills are required?
- How can the skills requirement be articulated in a clear way?

#### Sending the demand signal:

- Who are the key audiences to take into consideration when sending a skills demand signal?
- What are the key messages to the stakeholders involved?
- Which channels, mechanisms or tools can you use to ensure an effective communication of your skills demand?



When planning to send a demand signal, a number of factors must be considered, such as which are the channels and mechanisms best suited to reach target audiences. The below (non-exhaustive) diagram illustrates channels that could be used.





## Real-life examples bringing to life Step 3.

**ABB** is a leading global technology company. In 2012, the company's subsidiary in Colombia launched its Sharing Knowledge Program (SKP), offering free courses on technical knowledge for existing and new products, processes and technology advancements.



To communicate this opportunity to its target audiences – including engineers, programmers, technicians and technologists, maintenance and operations personnel and university students - ABB Colombia publishes a call for interest on social media and networks.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

**Pfizer's** Scientific Institute Pfizer Colombia (ICPC for its acronym in Spanish) is a program primarily aimed at strengthening the technical skills of future health professionals, and the quantity of high-quality medical research in the country.



The ICPC targets young doctors and health professionals via three cornerstones:

- **Knowing Pfizer**, focused on showcasing Pfizer as option for internships and residencies for professionals and students.
- **Promoting education and medical research** through events and programs in alliance with government and academia.
- **Recognizing excellence**, which supports outstanding professionals and seeks to retain great talents in Colombia.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)





## Step 4: Developing and implementing an upskilling program

Most learning programs require significant financial investment, time and resources to organize. Therefore, ensuring the initiative is developed and implemented in the most efficient way is essential.

### Overview

The quality, value, and efficiency of the learning experience affects every aspect of the upskilling initiative, from its costs (which rise dramatically if employees can't meet their new job requirements) to employee outlook and motivation.<sup>7</sup>

An effective model is continual learning: learning that is happening regularly, integrated with the rest of a person's professional life, and oriented toward his or her own long-term aspirations. When learning takes place through day-to-day experiences, it is far more relevant; employees can see the connection to the work they are already doing and the goals they (and their enterprise) already have.

This integration of work and learning means deemphasizing carrot-and-stick incentives such as bonuses for those who excel and poor performance reviews for those who don't participate. Those incentives may be effective in getting people to take part, but they rarely generate interest or commitment. Many corporate learning and training efforts fall short because they stop at delivering knowledge – giving employees new information about digital trends and tools, for example – but no opportunities for using them. Companies can consider implementing various techniques to support learners including the use of technology tools such as virtual reality (VR), social learning environments and role models.

### Key questions to consider

- How can the program be implemented in the most cost-efficient way?
- Which skills provider should be used?
- Is mentoring and coaching required to support the implementation of the program?
- Will the program be delivered virtually or in-person?
- Can employees be engaged early on in the design phase to test the approach?
- What are the quick wins? Can early progress be demonstrated to build confidence with leaders and the workforce?



Below, we outline some elements that have the potential to boost employee engagement in upskilling programs.

**Blending learning** combines online learning opportunities with traditional place-based classroom methods. Post COVID-19, organizations will need to consider whether they will move back to in person learning or if they adopt blended models.

**Learning in the flow of work** refers to the sequencing of learning opportunities in a way that strengthens the right cognitive circuits and builds new habits and capabilities.<sup>6</sup> This can make learning become seamless rather than a separate, formal activity.

**Diversity and inclusion** Integrating diversity and inclusion considerations when setting up upskilling programs ensures everyone can have access to these opportunities.

**Social learning** fosters collaborative experimentation, mutual support, and collective intelligence.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, coaching and mentoring can be used to be embedded in social learning.

**Employee-led innovation** gives employees the ability to choose the skills, activities and means of learning that will make a difference to them and their work.<sup>6</sup>

**Data and AI** allows a much faster turnaround of real-time data collection and analysis for both employees and the organization itself. This enables employees to pursue a more personalized learning pathway.

**Technology tools** and platforms such as apps, chatrooms and virtual reality can be used to engage employees. COVID-19 accelerated the online delivery of learning, however there is a difference between moving learning online and embracing digital learning.

**Early enthusiasts** - of a new skill, upskilling opportunity, technology, or strategy - can be deployed to spark interest and emotional impact within the organization's culture.<sup>6</sup>



## Real-life examples bringing to life Step 4.

**The Adecco Group (TAG)** is the world's second largest Human Resources provider. Following the vertical integration of the company in 2017, TAG identified and defined new critical skills for their business leaders. They included: digital skills, building a business case, pricing, agile working, Lean 6 Sigma, PMO skills. TAG established International Future Leaders (IFL) – a program designed to build these skills with a global lens and facilitate participants in building a network at the global level.



The IFL runs for 18 months, with each intake comprising approximately 30 delegates drawn from Adecco businesses from across the world. Applicants are nominated and selected on the basis of their experience at TAG, demonstrated management and performance criteria. The program is based on face to face training, delivered in partnerships with internal & external SME's, with participants receiving relevant qualifications (e.g. Design Thinking, Agile Change Management).

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

Through its Future Leaders Program, Thai conglomerate **C.P. Group** enables young leaders to switch from their day-to-day work to a 6-month upskilling program where they can take part in real business projects, work with team members from various companies and functions, and can be guided by CEOs and other top executives as coaches. Assessment of their leadership, business management, and people management skills are conducted along the way, as well as their understanding of the Group's values. After finishing the program, participants experience greater opportunities to pursue their career across different business units.



[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

**Espace Entreprise (EE)** is a Swiss Government company which trains and develops apprentices and connects them with local businesses to work on various projects from marketing, social media, and website creation to other commercial activities. The program lasts three years and EE works with various clients to engage apprentices in real life working scenarios.



EE adapted their programs in response to COVID-19 by incorporating future of work elements into their curriculum such as AI, gaming, virtual reality and video apps, allowing apprentices to develop skills with these technologies.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)



## Step 5: Measuring the success of an upskilling program

Measuring the success of an upskilling program is imperative to assess its success in terms of upskilling people and delivering on the initiative's intended objectives.

### Overview

The success of learning and development programs can be assessed through measuring a variety of metrics such as inputs, outputs and impact. Metrics depend on specific context, but for a measurement system to provide useful insights, it should include different elements

#### Measuring Inputs

Measuring inputs includes assessing metrics such as the number of staff who participated in the program and the number of sessions that have been run.

#### Measuring Outputs

To gain a deeper understanding of how successful the program has been, organizations should go beyond measuring inputs. Indicators can include measuring outputs such as what skills participants have built as a result of attending the program and what knowledge has been gained. These measurements can be discovered through survey results, online learning community activity and the number of downloads of materials which have been shared.

#### Measuring Impact

Measuring the longer-term impact will help an organization to understand if the upskilling program has helped to drive business priorities. Examples of the impact that some learning and development programs can have include boosting productivity (e.g., savings in contractor spending) and driving employee progression (e.g., internal promotion rate).

Metrics on 'brand health' or social media commentary can indicate whether employees' skills translate into better quality and influence customers' perceptions of a brand.

Last but not least, companies can adopt a skills audit that helps continually track and analyse progress. PwC studies indicate that just one-third of companies today use analytics to predict and monitor skills, there is scope for more businesses to take advantage of this.<sup>6</sup>

### Key questions to consider

- What types of skills and competencies are now evident in the work of trained staff?
- How do employees feel about the initiative?
- How assured do employees feel about their career opportunities?
- Have the business priorities been achieved?



## Real-life examples bringing to life Step 5.

One of the most important obstacles in upskilling is measuring the success of these programs. 

According to **KPMG** – a professional services network and one of the Big Four accounting firms - one way to measure success is by looking at the wider macro-objectives of the organization rather than the performance of individuals. Upskilling programs are designed to meet a business need, be it increased customer satisfaction or even increased revenue. Therefore, when measuring the success of a program, it should be these metrics which are measured as they show whether the initiative achieved its desired outcome.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

**iPeople** is an education business based in the Philippines. Its Professional Employment Program (PEP) aims to improve the readiness of learners for the labor market. KPIs to measure PEP's success include:



- How many learners are employed and how soon after graduation
- The wage of jobs secured compared against the average monthly wage (minimum) of non-PEP participants; education is an investment into someone's future – the higher the wage, the faster the return for the student.
- Acceptance rate of BPO (business process outsourcing) for PEP graduates.

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

At **Zurich Insurance**, the number of employees engaging with re-skilling, upskilling and redeployment opportunities indicates how successful the organization is in developing new skills internally rather than recruiting externally. Success is further measured in a number of ways, for example by analyzing how automation augments staff members' ability to deliver services to customers. 

[Click here for a more detailed case study >>](#)

# Appendix: Case studies

The following case studies from 16 organizations share additional and more detailed insights aimed at informing and inspiring your thinking and action. Each case study is structured along a set of key questions. Additionally, using the color coding of the skills strategy journey described in Part 3 of the guide and featured below, we mapped which steps are addressed by the information provided.

## Five steps of the skills strategy journey

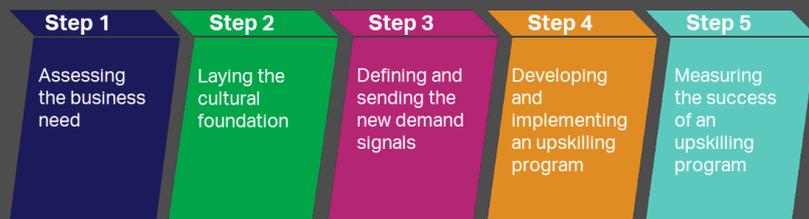




ABB Colombia is a subsidiary of the Swedish-Swiss leader in industrial automation company ABB.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Colombia	100 – 500 employees	Industrial Products	University



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>In 2012, ABB Colombia started its Sharing Knowledge Program (SKP) – a free courses program - because it is committed to the education of Colombians and the transfer of knowledge, resulting from more than 100 years of the company's global research.</p> <p>SKP's main objective is to bring industry knowledge to different Colombian universities, complementing their current educational offers to promote technical skills needs relevant to the company. Its courses provide current technical knowledge for existing and new products, processes and technology advancements. They can be delivered at ABB facilities, at universities or online and are taught by experts from ABB.</p> <p>The initiative is part of ABB Colombia's corporate responsibility program that establishes promoting and participating in community activities that encourage economic, environmental, social and educational growth as part of the commitment of the organization with the communities where it operates.</p>
<p><b>What was the target group / audience?</b></p>	<p>ABB Colombia regards knowledge as engine of productivity and continued market growth in a global environment. Its comprehensive training courses offered through SKP are aimed at engineers, programmers, technicians and technologists, maintenance and operations personnel. Courses of 2 to 3 hours are given on site and virtually by company experts to university students and the general public, and attendees can earn certificates of attendance issued by ABB.</p>
<p><b>What were the key activities?</b></p>	<p>To register, ABB Colombia sends a call for expression of interest through social networks. Participation is free and the first ones who sign up have the opportunity to join the training.</p> <p>The courses facilitate understanding of concepts such as energy efficiency, the electrical industry, automation and how it can be applied through equipment to the industry, helping to increase the productivity of processes and therefore, considerably reduce costs. The participants have learned about the latest technological advances in the electrical and automation industries. Technology trends addressed in the courses include: Selection of electrical motors, speed control in electrical motors, electromagnetic conversion, power electronics, robotics, energy efficiency, automation applications, infrastructure for electric vehicles, machine design and power transmission.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>In 2018, 6 courses were taught in 4 universities, reaching more than 200 attendees. 6,000 people were reached through posts in social networks.</p>

The Adecco Group (TAG), based in Zurich, Switzerland, is the world's second largest Human Resources provider and temporary staffing firm.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Switzerland	10,000+ employees	Human Capital Services	Management



<b>What was the business need?</b>	<p>Prior to 2017, TAG was the holding company for different country level entities, with each country having their own HR program. As the company embarked upon a transformation to a vertically integrated multinational, it became clear that for company-wide training and development programs were required. One of the primary gaps was a leadership program to accelerate talent through the organization – the company was missing a pipeline of talent with the skills needed at leadership levels. In response, TAG conducted an exercise to identify and define the critical skills for leaders in the new organization, resulting in: digital skills, building a business case, pricing, agile working, Lean 6 Sigma, PMO skills.</p>
<b>What program was implemented?</b>	<p>The International Future Leaders Program (IFL) was established to build these skills amongst the potential leaders in the TAG organization. It is designed to develop skills with a global lens and facilitate participants in building a network at the global level.</p> <p>The IFL runs for 18 months, with each intake comprising approximately 30 delegates drawn from Adecco businesses from across the world. Applicants are nominated and selected on the basis of their experience at TAG, demonstrated management and performance criteria. The program is based on face-to-face training, delivered in partnerships with Internal &amp; external SME's, with participants receiving relevant qualifications (e.g., Design Thinking, Agile Change management). Additionally, there are two project elements: (1) groups of 4-5 delegates are allocated a real business problems or potential business ideas by the Executive Committee (ExCo) for which they develop a solution using the skills that they have learnt on the program. Following a selection panel and a presentation to the ExCo, the final winner is presented at the group-wide Global Leader Conference and the idea is subsequently implemented; (2) an in-market project where the delegates independently deliver a project with the objective of creating business improvement in their own area of work. With the global restrictions due to the pandemic the program continues to operate virtually.</p>
<b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b>	<p>The IFL program coordinators quickly realized that it is important to involve the delegate's manager and their local HR director in the process so as to ensure that they understand the nature of the program, its benefits, and the commitment that it entails on the part of the participant. To this effect, there is a kick-off call with the manager and the local HR staff, and invitations to events and training are shared with managers so that they know the time commitment and can adjust workload.</p> <p>The development of the IFL was internally driven. This reflects the philosophy that while inspiration can be drawn from other training and development programs, a business has its own needs, circumstances and objectives, which are best met by making specific programs.</p>
<b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b>	<p>The IFL incorporates an extensive feedback process, which allows the organization to capture delegate's experience of the program and to identify gaps and potential for improvement. Participant engagement is captured as part of this, and scores are generally high. The delegate's manager and the local HR business are also surveyed at the mid-point and the end of the program and asked for their experience of the IFL and whether they see the delegate bringing new skills to their job. Based on this feedback, there is a constant cycle of adjustment reflecting the feedback received.</p> <p>Key indicators collected include internal promotions (since the program aims at progressing talent) and cross-country moves (since the program also aims at talent rotation within the group). Additionally, the retention rate of participants is also monitored, and this is higher than the company average.</p>

iPeople is an education business created as partnership between Ayala, founded in the Philippines and the country's oldest and largest conglomerate, and Yuchengco Group of Companies (YGC), one of the oldest and largest conglomerates in Southeast Asia.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Philippines	10,000+ employees	Education	Early career



<p><b>How does iPeople identify the business needs of employers?</b></p>	<p>Predicting future demands is a challenge, as simply asking employers does not work and the future is usually just viewed in short time frames of a few months, making it extremely difficult for academia and education providers to react. Therefore, iPeople meets regularly with employers to learn about their emerging challenges and forecast future skills requirements. For instance, a skill employers in the Philippines constantly look for is English speaking skills, particularly for high paying jobs in the finance, banking and accounting sector.</p> <p>Additionally, company and industry or sector information is captured, enabling the organization to understand evolution and emergence of business needs and to prioritize high demand capabilities in their learning and development programs. As a result, iPeople can clearly identify gaps and adjust programs to the skills needs of employers.</p>
<p><b>What program was implemented?</b></p>	<p>iPeople has five higher education schools and two basic education schools which offer a range of employability bridging programs, one of which is the Professional Employment Program (PEP), which acts as bridge between academia and industry. The goal of the program is to increase the labor market participation readiness and thus employment speed and average wage accomplished. In an oversupplied labor market, one key objective of PEP is to help graduates stand out. PEP graduates undergo five months of rigorous training focused on both getting a job and retaining that job. Also, iPeople's classrooms are tech-enabled and designed to emulate the workplace. Consequently, there are no lectures, homework or tests and the professors act as employers. Students are put into real work situations where they are given work-related projects to complete and problems to solve. iPeople then evaluates their students' outcomes against work standards and if they do not reach industry standard, they are asked to attempt the task again. Teachers are partners in each learner's journey and work alongside them to achieve their goals. Importantly, the students are not driven by a grade, but by the potential of being offered a job.</p>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic required adjustments in iPeople's way of working. Following the upgrade and acceleration of its systems through technology, the organization recognized the need to pay more attention to the different contexts of students, for example by simply identifying if all had access to the internet and a computer. The goal was hence to enable all students enrolled in the program to benefit from all learning opportunities.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>iPeople uses the following KPIs to measure the success of its program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many learners are employed and how soon after graduation; the standard for PEP is 90% employment in 90 days.</li> <li>• Wage of the jobs secured compared against average monthly wages (minimum) of non-PEP graduates; education is an investment into someone's future – the higher the wage, the faster the return on investment for the student.</li> <li>• Given the high demand for strong English language skills, BPO (business process outsourcing) acceptance rate for PEP graduates is used as proxy measurement to evaluate the strength of these skills. Even if other companies prefer strong English-speaking skills, they usually don't employ the same stringent language tests as that of BPO firms.</li> </ul>



The Charoen Pokphand (C.P.) Group is a Thai conglomerate based in Bangkok. It is Thailand's largest private company and one of the world's largest conglomerates.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Thailand	10,000+ employees	Industrial Products	Mid-career



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>C.P. Group is a conglomerate which employs more than 400,000 people worldwide, across eight business lines and is moving into new industries while increasingly working in fields which use AI, robotics and other technical innovations. The Group's CEO hence launched the digitalization of the entire organization to integrate and synergize various companies within C.P. Group, giving impetus to large-scale workforce upskilling efforts.</p> <p>Direction, strategy and investment of the company are driving a focus on tech skills. The Group's definition of tech skills includes soft skills such as 'resilience', a necessary part of risk-management and an essential part of C.P. Group's Future of Work strategy. Equally, they are focusing on health and wellbeing skill sets and how employees can effectively work off-site, in light of the COVID-19 crisis. A third soft skill of interest is leadership. While each business unit has its own priorities and approaches in training its workforce, the overarching theme employed throughout the group is 'Action Learning' or learning by doing.</p>
<p><b>What program was implemented?</b></p>	<p>At business unit level, each company regularly reviews its training needs via diagnostic assessments to define the baseline and prioritize short-, medium- and long- term business needs. These chosen skill sets are reviewed at least yearly, or earlier, in case of new strategic priorities, new tech or a skills gap. The need for new skills moves quickly and the companies prioritize upskilling their current workforce, rather than recruiting. This retains organizational knowledge and talent, whilst keeping skill sets relevant to the role. At group level, C.P. Group's Learning Team identifies relevant areas for employee development that will strengthen the organization's ability to grow strategically. Two major undertakings include the implementation of the 'Action Learning' approach for leadership development, and the development of skills to support the group's digital transformation.</p> <p>On the digital front, the Group has partnered with Bangchan General Assembly – an automobile assembly company – to launch the "True Digital Academy", providing digital skills training for companies within the Group as well as the general public. Training is offered both online and in-person and emphasizes interaction and collaboration to provide participants real hands-on experiences.</p> <p>Last but not least, the C.P. Leadership Institute, through its Future Leaders Program, enables young leaders to switch from their day-to-day work to a 6-month upskilling program where they can take part in real business projects, work with team members from various companies and functions, and can be guided by CEOs and other top executives as coaches. Assessment of their leadership, business management, and people management skills are conducted along the way, as well as their understanding of the Group's values. After finishing the program, participants have greater opportunities to pursue their career across different business units.</p>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 has had unexpected benefits for upskilling within the C.P. Group, as it has been an important driver towards digital transformation. Whilst it is preferable to do technical learning in a classroom setting, there was an increase in the amount of time employees had available to learn virtually. There was also an increase in the number of online resources available. Content is easier to disseminate, allowing C.P. Group to provide learning to a much wider audience.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>To measure success, KPIs include how much was learnt at the time, do learners have and do they apply new skills after the training and do they make an impact with them. C.P. Group use pre and post assessments to measure progress, while measuring the financial impact of its upskilling programs is still work in progress.</p>

Espace Entreprise (EE) is a Swiss Government company which trains and develops apprentices.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Switzerland	100 – 500 employees	Education	Early career



<p><b>How does EE assess their clients' needs?</b></p>	<p>EE has been operating for 10 years and over that time their apprenticeship program has evolved continuously to meet clients' needs. The market is changing rapidly and EE recognizes that organizations need to be flexible in adapting their skills strategy. Every year, EE uses research such as the World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs" report to complete a business review of their current strategy and assess the future skills apprentices will need such as digital and soft skills. EE also engages with associations working on the future of jobs, such as Impact IA, Nomads Foundation, Virtual Switzerland and the International Labour Organization (ILO).</p>
<p><b>What programs have been implemented?</b></p>	<p>EE delivers hands on training to young apprentices and connects them with local businesses to work on various projects from marketing, social media, and website creation to other commercial activities. The program lasts three years and EE works with various clients to engage apprentices in real life working scenarios. Every team is composed of 12 people, rotating daily; 6 apprentices working remotely and 6 working in house. This challenges apprentices to utilize workplace and collaboration tools such as Trello and video conferencing to maximize their work. Importantly, apprentices are not in a simulated environment. From the onset of the training, they are in established workplaces which really aids the learner journey. EE adapted their programs in response to COVID-19 by incorporating future of work elements such as AI, gaming, VR and video apps into their curriculum, allowing apprentices to develop skills with these technologies.</p>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 meant that EE had to rapidly adjust their ways of working in order to deliver effective training online. This was not difficult from a technical perspective but EE found that working remotely, for many, was not easy. The apprentices faced practical issues which affected productivity, such as working across different time zones. More importantly, EE found that teaching and coaching was more difficult; it is much harder to coach virtually than physically, especially when the learning space is hybrid, with some learners in person and others online. In a world that is increasingly digital, human contact and 'soft skills' become even more important and it is difficult to teach these skills. EE believes that soft skills should be taught in conjunction with emotional skills. For example, how can someone work on communication without empathy?</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>EE assess the program's impact in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional mechanisms such as the number of apprentices that pass the final exam</li> <li>• Surveys are conducted amongst apprentices to understand how many were able to secure a job after graduating from the program</li> <li>• Call center: every year, current apprentices are asked to reach out to graduates of the program to find out about their experiences and how they benefitted from EE. 50-60% of alumni are reached through this method, and it is a good way to understand the impact of the program.</li> </ul>

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Various	90 companies / 10,000+ employees	Various	University

## Innovative partnership between the Groupement des Entreprises Multinationales (GEM) and the Geneva School of Economics and Management (GSEM).



What was the business need?	In recent years, business analytics – at the intersection between data science, statistics and management – has become an increasingly sought-after skill in many companies. Nevertheless, as a relative new discipline, it is often hard for companies to find people with the skills that they need in this area. This skills gap affects companies from a wide range of sectors, including manufacturing, banking and finance and industry.
What program was implemented?	<p>The Groupement des Entreprises Multinationales (GEM) – represents approximately ninety multinational companies located in Swiss Romandie. Many of the member companies are affected by the lack of business analytics skills. To address this gap, the GEM has cooperated with the Geneva School of Economics and Management (GSEM) at the University of Geneva (UNIGE) to develop and implement a Master of Science in Business Analytics (MaBAn).</p> <p>This Master's program combines a first year of academic studies at the university followed by an optional yearlong corporate internship, thus allowing students to develop skills that are in demand in the work-place as well as providing a talent pipeline for individual businesses and the economy more broadly. The program is open to students who have completed a bachelor's degree in a scientific discipline.</p>
Did the organization face any challenges?	<p>The establishment of an advisory board which includes members of the GSEM as well as the university has helped to foster and maintain a close link between academic theory and business practice, bridging the gap between university education and professional needs.</p> <p>While the program has immediate benefits for those companies that recruit students, it also serves to widen the talent pool for all those companies with business analytics and thus had longer term indirect benefits.</p>
How has the impact of the program been measured?	The program started with a cohort of 16 students in 2017, with 13 of these passing to a second-year internship in a GEM company. In 2020, 231 applications were received, 45 students eligible for admission and 18 students finally started the program in Fall 2020. In 2021, 264 applications were received and 40 students eligible for admission. The sponsoring companies have maintained a significant commitment - not only do they work to secure intern placements within their company, but they also make a financial contribution of CHF 20'000 for each intern they receive, which goes to support the program to enable a continuous improvement of its contents to suit the professional needs. Additionally, the feedback from students and participating companies has been very favorable.

**Acknowledgement:** Special thanks to Firmenich who has contributed with the GEM and GSEM in the establishment of the case study as one of the participating companies.



Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Switzerland	10,000+ employees	Professional Services	All career stages

KPMG International is a global professional services network, and one of the Big Four accounting organizations.



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 has accelerated and changed the upskilling landscape. Not only are programs now delivered online, but the skills that businesses need are evolving. This is why KPMG advocates a discipline it calls <i>Workforce Shaping</i>: a way to dynamically keep track of and deliver the changes needed in the workforce, including how to define the new skills for the workforce of the future and then go on to build the skills in a timely way.</p>
<p><b>What approaches can organizations take to identify an appropriate upskilling method?</b></p>	<p>As KPMG is one of the biggest learning providers in Europe, they have to be creative in how they deliver learning to such large client populations. Through partnering with Microsoft, they deliver learning programs based on Josh Bersin's principle of 'Learning in the flow of work'. Microsoft technology like Teams and Cortana understand what an individual is working on and suggest ('push' to the employee) upskilling opportunities such as seminars, videos, blogs, and of course, courses. Through the KPMG Learning Platform the firm creates a rich learning eco-system whereby individual workers, or even their managers, are invited and inspired to learn based on their current and emerging needs.</p> <p>Arising from <i>Workforce Shaping</i>, one approach is to identify 'no-regrets bets'. Take the example of an insurance company, it is clear that workers will continue to be needed for complex claims, anything simpler can be automated. Therefore, it is a 'no-regrets bet' to invest in skills to handle these more complex areas and reskill those employees doing the basic level of claims handling.</p> <p>There is no right answer to how many contingent workers an organization should hire versus how much they should automate. By identifying those 'no-regrets bets', an organization can inform and prioritize their skills and training agenda. The most important insight is that there is not one set of decisions with the same level of certainty or risk; the learning agenda needs to be constantly updated. It is through the identification of the level of certainty or risk that learning and development programs can be identified and mapped to the organization's emerging and ever-changing strategic business needs.</p>
<p><b>How can organizations measure the success and impact of a program?</b></p>	<p>Finally, one of the most important obstacles in workforce upskilling is measuring the success of these efforts. One way to measure success is by looking at the wider macro-objectives of the organization, not the performance of individuals; for example, net promoter score or customer satisfaction. Upskilling programs are designed to meet a business need, be it increased customer satisfaction or even increased revenue. Therefore, when measuring the success of a program, it should be these metrics which are measured as they show whether the initiative achieved its desired outcome.</p>



Microsoft is an American technology company with operations across the world.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
United States	10,000+ employees	Technology	Various



<b>What was the business need?</b>	Microsoft’s mission statement is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. The organization recognizes that delivering against this mission statement and serving their customers and partners globally is only possible if their workforce is sufficiently diverse in terms of race, sex and experience. Additionally, with the acceleration of digital transformation, many digital employability skills are required in an immediate term vs via a four-year higher education.
<b>What was the target group/ audience?</b>	Microsoft recognized that there is a large untapped pool of talent with some IT background, but often not a formal computer science degree or significant IT experience. These people would not be able to access traditional recruiting pathways (such as university recruitment), but nevertheless they may possess valuable skills such as problem solving, tenacity, growth mindset, and unique life and professional experiences, which make them a good potential fit for Microsoft. Additionally, the target group includes returning parents whose skills are outdated, individuals who are changing careers, or students with IT qualifications other than a traditional computer science degree.
<b>What programs have been implemented?</b>	The Microsoft Leap Apprenticeship Program (Leap) is based on recruiting these people with non-traditional career pathways - but with some background in IT (e.g. from a coding academy) - and upskilling them rapidly for a career in IT. The sixteen-week program comprises a three week on the job-training to build skills and social fabric followed by thirteen weeks of hands-on projects with a team. Originally, the program focused on three technical pathways, but has since broadened to recruit into: Technical Program Management, Business Program Management, Customer Support Engineer, Data Analyst, Software Engineer, Software Support Engineer, UX Designer). Each apprentice is sponsored by a partnering organization in the business (for example, Azure, Xbox, Bing, and Office365).
<b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b>	In March 2020, COVID-19 led to the shutdown of the training campus, just after a new cohort of Leap apprentices joined, forcing the program to shift online. This has changed how Microsoft think about apprenticeship schemes and revealed the potential of global classrooms; the organization now plans to continue with virtual cohorts joined by global apprentices sharing similar time zones. There have been learnings – for example, the program leadership recognizes the opportunity to encourage apprentices to expand their network through virtual connections, to connect, engage and grow, and that this is an important factor to address.
<b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b>	After program completion, total employment in the technology sector is 98%, with the remaining 2% of graduates going back to education or back to full time caring work. To date, 68% of graduates have taken up a full-time role in Microsoft. The program has expanded to a wider range of technical pathways, to more countries (Kenya, Nigeria, Canada, Mexico) and is extending internally so that Microsoft full time employees who are not in a technical role can participate. Leap fulltime alumnus at Microsoft have demonstrated continuous career growth, significant contributions to engineering innovations, and inspire talent from all walks of life to pursue their career aspirations.



Multiverse is a mission driven company, creating a diverse group of future leaders by building an outstanding alternative to university and corporate training.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
UK	250 - 500 employees	Edtech	Early career to leadership



<b>What was the business need?</b>	<p>Multiverse supports its 300+ UK and US clients, including Facebook, Morgan Stanley and KPMG, to achieve three common goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Diversity:</b> Many organizations find it difficult to find and attract diverse early talent. Multiverse’s outreach program finds these young people, over 50% who are people of color, and 52% women, matching them with roles in clients and providing training pathways for both these new starters and existing diverse employees to access leadership positions.</li><li>• <b>Future Proof Employees:</b> 74% of CEOs are concerned about the availability of key digital skills, while wanting high quality learning and development to increase retention and employee engagement. Multiverse provides exciting development opportunities for employees at all levels to gain recognized qualifications and skills throughout their careers, focusing on skills that will be relevant for 2030 and beyond.</li><li>• <b>Bridge Digital Skills Gap:</b> Companies have made significant investments in technology and need to get a return. However, there is often a significant skills gap, with technical skills having a ‘half-life’ of as little as two and a half years, forcing investment in external hires. Multiverse provides on the job upskilling opportunities in digital and data skills, from data literacy for business users and leaders to degree-level Data Science qualifications.</li></ul> <p>Multiverse raised USD\$ 44m in its Series B round in February 2021, the largest venture round of any UK EdTech company. This was led by General Catalyst, Google Ventures, Index and Lightspeed and unlocks both the opportunity to change the model for training in the UK and to power US expansion.</p>
<b>What program was implemented?</b>	<p>Multiverse shuns traditional lecture-based education in favor of applied learning, where apprentices are trained through immediate application and testing in the workplace. Each apprentice benefits from one-to-one coaching from industry experts, which bridges the gap from their content sessions and their particular role, projects and outputs. They also have access to the vibrant Multiverse Community of over 3,000 apprentices, with socials, mentorship and leadership schemes. Multiverse focus on digital skills (such as data analysis and science, software engineering and digital marketing) and key business skills, including project management and people leadership. These programs are continuously developed to include the latest methodologies and technologies.</p>
<b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b>	<p>Multiverse had to make a rapid move from 100% face-to-face to a remote delivery model during March 2020. A thorough training program on remote delivery for their coaching team in fact increased participant completion and engagement levels, despite tripling the number of apprentices on program. This was recognized by UK’s Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (OFSTED) following a visit in March 2021, judging that Multiverse had made “significant progress” since their last visit - the highest grade available for a monitoring visit.</p>
<b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b>	<p>Multiverse has always carefully monitored the success of individual participants: 90% complete, 68% achieve the highest grade and 87% stay long term at their employer. They have recently expanded their Customer Success team to measure the aggregated impact of upskilling the increasingly large number of employees on their programs, using a structured ROI approach. Key tracked benefits include reduced employee churn, consultancy spend, time saved through automation and process improvements, plus revenue generation through improved insights.</p>



National Citizen Service (NCS) is a UK government funded youth program for 16-17 year-olds, with a commitment to improving social mobility, social inclusion and social good in the country.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
United Kingdom	10,000+ employees	Government and public sector	School

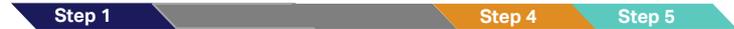


<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>NCS exists to engage, unite and empower young people, building their confidence so they can go out there and achieve their dreams, no matter where they're from or what their background is. From the life skills they develop to the friends they make, NCS' ambition is to give teenagers an opportunity to unleash their potential, build their self-belief and prepare them for life after school. NCS was founded in 2009 to help young people achieve their potential and build bridges between communities. Their first program had only 158 participants, but, since then, over 600,000 young people have taken part.</p> <p>Upskilling is vital to NCS, particularly due to the organization's culture which consists of employees that are eager to share knowledge. However, upskilling is also carried out through formal training and strategic partnerships with organizations who buy into NCS' mission. Moreover, NCS is hoping to bring more graduates from the NCS program into the organization as staff. It is possible to build great teams that have technical capabilities even when they're not paid the highest salaries and one reason for this is the attractiveness of upskilling opportunities. It is critical to focus on the culture of the organization and how NCS can equip both program participants and team members with the skills needed to grow their careers and continue to support the organization's mission.</p>
<p><b>What program was implemented?</b></p>	<p>NCS offers a range of services to support young people in developing skills for work and life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socially mixed residential programs and project-based learning</li> <li>• Skills focused activities and session that can be delivered in school to support co-curricular goals</li> <li>• Year-round community based social action and volunteering that deliver impact, and build social capital and teamwork</li> <li>• Online engagement and digital experiences that complement and deepen the impact of NCS</li> <li>• Essential skills and employer support packages to enhance how young people are engaged and brought into the workforce</li> </ul>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>During COVID-19, NCS repurposed their business having historically been primarily focused on residential experiences. Their 'Staying Connected' hub had 290,000 unique visitors and their 'Keep Doing Good' initiative amassed over 200,000 volunteer hours. Moreover, they had 16,500 people take part in their autumn program which was higher than ever, and over 50% more than in 2019. Finally, NCS also supported 500 schools and colleges with NCS content benefitting over 87,000 young people. All of this shows that it is possible to be successful when transitioning a business in the face of COVID.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>As a government funded program the ROI is looked at in terms of economic benefit of the activity, which is calculated based on a mixture of assessing impact of essential skills such as teamwork and leadership development, as well as the number of hours spent delivering volunteering and social action. The latest evaluation shows that for every GBP £1 invested there is a return of up to GBP £3.49. They also invest in qualitative research and evaluation and draw this out in case studies that they seek to make engaging and relatable to young people as well as other key stakeholders.</p>



Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Switzerland	10,000+ employees	Consumer Products	School / Early career

Nestlé is the world's largest food & beverage company.



What was the business need?	As a Swiss company, Nestlé has a long tradition of recruiting young people into the workplace and equipping them with the skills they need to build a career. The world of work is rapidly changing as a result of technological innovation, demographic shifts, globalization and climate change, but Nestlé has seen that traineeships, internships and apprenticeships continue to be key in equipping youth with the skills they need and bridging the gap between school and employment. As a result, these schemes can help address youth unemployment while simultaneously contributing to the well-being of those communities in which Nestlé operates and helping secure the skills and competencies that the business needs. Nestlé noted that apprenticeships improve the employability of young people and prepare them for jobs that companies need.
What program was implemented?	<p>The Nestlé needs YOUth initiative was first launched in Europe in 2013, with the aim of equipping young people with the skills they need to thrive in tomorrow's workplaces. Since then, Nestlé has transferred its experience with the Swiss dual education system to several countries where there is no tradition of integrating dual training programs in their day-to-day activities as well as working with governments and other business partners in many countries to support the development of dual education systems. The program has three focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employment and employability:</b> helping youth secure fulfilling jobs and careers by providing apprenticeships, traineeships and job opportunities around the world</li> <li>• <b>Entrepreneurship:</b> giving support to kickstart and grow businesses, including business mentorship with senior executives from Nestlé, and facilitating access to Nestlé R&amp;D and innovation experts across the world.</li> <li>• <b>Agripreneurship:</b> training and enabling young farmers to develop knowledge and skills and support them in the sustainable management of their farms.</li> </ul>
Did the organization face any challenges?	COVID-19 had a massive impact on Nestlé's ways of working: it has been a challenge and an opportunity at the same time. As a consequence, Nestlé has accelerated the digital transformation of the Youth Initiative, in particular, the scaling up online training and digital solutions to ensure the continuity of internship and apprenticeship programs.
How has the impact of the program been measured?	<p>In 2017, Nestlé relaunched the initiative, and set a target to help 10 million young people access economic opportunities by 2030; success is clear through the quantitative data of young people given work opportunities through this program. To date, and against the three focus areas, the initiative has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employment and employability:</b> provided 25,000 jobs annually for those aged under 30; offered more than 30,000 apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities worldwide; provided training sessions to more than 2 million young people worldwide and collaborated closely with over 300 partners worldwide.</li> <li>• <b>Entrepreneurship:</b> provided CHF2.5 million of funding, supported over 100 entrepreneurs with training and mentoring, and engaged over 100 employees in mentoring</li> <li>• <b>Agripreneurship:</b> provided training to more than 400,000 farmers and identified 20,000 young farmers as potential agripreneurs</li> </ul> <p>Nestlé have made reports publicly available measuring the value of the initiative for Nestlé and for society, including in its <a href="#">"Creating Shared Value"</a> report.</p>



The OCP Group is a Moroccan state-owned phosphate rock miner, phosphoric acid manufacturer and phosphate fertilizer producer.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Morocco	10,000+ employees	Chemicals	Early career / Mid-career



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>Technology is forcing industries to adapt to digitization, automation and advanced analytics as well as changing customer needs and regulations. Ways of working are changing, meaning expectations are shifting on ideas of flexibility, autonomy and continuous growth. Finally, OCP Group is embarking on new growth focused on proximity to farmers, product diversification and complexity and internationalization of the business. In this changing context, OCP aims to maintain their diverse and dynamic workforce whilst also remaining competitive in the market. Strategic workforce planning (SWP) enables OCP to identify and predict gaps between current skills and those needed for the future and to anticipate required actions to close arising gaps. Based on workshops, analysis of automation and other efficiency drivers and OCP's strategic business priorities, OCP mapped impacted roles and categorized them in three lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Disrupted:</b> Roles highly impacted by automation and efficiency drivers by 2030, with declining demand in terms of volume and expecting a high skills shift</li> <li>• <b>Rising:</b> Current or new roles that are likely to grow in importance and will likely require new hires</li> <li>• <b>Neutral:</b> Roles facing a relatively limited impact from growth, automation or workforce moves, hence requiring ad hoc upskilling</li> </ul> <p>Assessment of these lists is dynamic and takes place at least once a year, enabling OCP to continuously monitor the skills gap and modify assumptions based on real use cases.</p> <p>Through upskilling, OCP further hope to leverage green &amp; sustainability imperatives, R&amp;D/ Innovation, advanced automation, artificial intelligence, farmer intimacy, digital services and advanced analytics. To do so, they foster a culture of lifelong learning, promoting the ability to learn continuously as the most important skill for the future.</p>
<p><b>What program was implemented?</b></p>	<p>OCP identified 4 key options to address skills mismatches: (1) Upskill &amp; reskill, (2) redeploy, (3) recruit and (4) outsource. With upskilling &amp; reskilling as strategic priority, OCP launched its own university, the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, as a vital long-term investment in the business and in the human capital of Morocco. The Group also partners with other leading educational institutions and offers on the job training and other forms of upskilling to suit each learner. Current and retired employees can transfer their expertise through OCP's "Peer to Peer Learning" program. "Beyond" is a 2-year curriculum for young talents to develop skills of the future and support OCP's strategy, growth and commitment to progress of employees and the ecosystem.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>Learners and trainers participate in regular employee feedback and development conversations to assess progress and ensure constant improvements. Employee engagement is also tracked using pulse surveys, annual (and more regular) assessment of employees' development and the OCP Group's initiative '1 Pacte', a collective intelligence initiative to involve OCP employees and ecosystem in shaping the company's strategy.</p>



Pfizer is a premier innovative biopharmaceutical company, discovering, developing and providing medicines, vaccines and consumer healthcare products.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Colombia	100 – 500 employees	Pharmaceuticals	Early career



What was the business need?	Medical education and research work carried out in Colombia is fundamental to Pfizer. The company launched the Scientific Institute Pfizer Colombia (ICPC for its acronym in Spanish) in November 2012 to support new generations of doctors and health professionals by creating means and opportunities for the development and innovation of science and knowledge as Colombia still has a lot of room for growth in terms of educating R&D skills, which are important for pharmaceuticals such as Pfizer.
What were the key activities?	Overall, through ICPC, Pfizer Colombia's medical area has the objective of strengthening the technical skills of future health professionals, and the quantity of high-quality medical research in the country, through three cornerstones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Knowing Pfizer:</b> focuses on showcasing Pfizer as a suitable option for internships and residencies for medical professionals and students.</li> <li>• <b>Promoting education and medical research:</b> includes events and programs in alliance with the government and academia.</li> <li>• <b>Recognizing excellence:</b> supports outstanding professionals and seeks to contribute to the retention of great talents in Colombia to avoid brain drain.</li> </ul>
Who was the target group / audience?	The Program is primarily aimed at young doctors and health professionals. For instance, for cornerstone 1) Knowing Pfizer, the company has agreements with certain universities to accept internships at Pfizer as valid in their academic program, and to enable spaces for students that are in their last semesters of medicine or clinical pharmacology to know about Pfizer and consider it as an alternative to the usual internships. In the case of cornerstone 2) Promoting education and medical research, the events' audience is the health sector in general. For the program named "Young Researchers and Innovators in Medicine" which grants scholarships/internships in specialized research centers, the target are young researchers up to 28 years of age. For the last cornerstone 3) Recognizing excellence, the ICPC hosts an award that recognizes outstanding students and professionals, however, the selection of recognitions is carried out independently by the scientific associations and educational entities to which health professionals belong.
How has the impact of the program been measured?	Since its opening, the ICPC has impacted more than 50 entities and has benefited 27,600 health professionals. Just in 2020, 6,904 health professionals benefitted from the Initiative. Since 2012: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Knowing Pfizer beneficiaries: 24 medicine students, 10 pharmacology residents.</li> <li>2) Promoting education and medical research: 150 health education events impacting 27,143 health professionals.</li> <li>3) Recognizing excellence: 62 internships, 298 educational scholarships, 34 authors from 6 publications recognized, 29 graduated medicine students recognized.</li> </ol>



PwC UK is a professional services firm, and one of the Big Four accounting organizations.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Global	10,000+ employees	Professional Services	Various



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>PwC recognized that there were huge societal changes taking place meaning that the skills they had within the organization were not necessarily the skills the firm needed for the future. Disruption was happening all around PwC – in the firm and within their clients. PwC’s clients expected the firm to leverage technology to deliver more value and the firm’s employees understood the need to have new skills to remain relevant to clients. PwC wanted to become a digital business and understood that digital businesses develop products and use different tools. The firm recognized that upskilling employees was not only going to drive business benefits for clients, but it was also going to drive a much better employee experience. They also knew that they needed their teams across the world to be more comfortable with emerging technology, especially considering that the pace of technology wasn’t slowing down. That required the firm to start a journey of lifelong learning. This wasn’t about making data scientists of everybody; this was about a different way of working, changing the culture and changing the way that people work and interact with each other.</p>
<p><b>What program was implemented?</b></p>	<p>The firm’s first steps in upskilling were to launch a program called “Digitising the Network”. The program started with 55,000 people in the US, and then expanded to all 284,000 employees around the world. PwC ensured the program was inclusive and reflected the diversity and the culture of its global workforce.</p> <p>To keep it interesting and fun, the approach to learning was multi-faceted, including: bite-sized learning, classroom learning, a digital fitness app, social learning and gamification. PwC believed if they could give high quality learning in small bites, they could deliver a remarkable experience for employees, which would translate into a great experience for the firm’s clients.</p> <p>PwC employees now use their skills to upskill youth around the world. PwC and UNICEF are collaborating to help upskill millions of young people around the world. The collaboration supports Generation Unlimited, a multi sector partnership aimed at helping 1.8 billion young people transition from school to work by 2030.</p>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the Digitising the Network program went from premise-based digital academies to virtual digital academies in four weeks. It was clear to PwC that their investments in digital upskilling made them well prepared which was evidenced through the results. The feedback scores from the virtual academies were higher than the scores received from the previous physical academies. It was clear the workforce had become more agile as they were able to quickly respond to new and changing technologies. Furthermore, PwC has created financial performance opportunities that give them investment capacity to keep growing the technical capabilities of their people and the technology services of the firm.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>The program has unlocked the power of innovation in the hands of PwC employees. PwC’s people were opting in because it enabled them to change work on the ground. The firm started to see: improvements in processes, hours being saved, and perhaps most importantly in the energy of the workforce. In the first 18 months, PwC went from zero employee-led assets to over 6,000 assets, which have been downloaded more than 3 million times by employees around the world. A really important outcome of this activity was that the firm saw people automating work they didn’t really enjoy doing and didn’t create value for their clients anyway. As a result, PwC has been able to redirect over 7 million hours of work to higher value activities. The organization has built on the skills, mindset and behaviors that enable employees to adopt the next generation of technology and to improve their ability to adapt to new situations. At the same time, PwC has embraced data driven decision making. The firm is making smarter decisions for themselves, bringing better insights to their clients and has embedded a culture of lifelong learning.</p>



Pirelli was founded in Milan in 1872 and today stands as a global brand known for its cutting-edge technology, passion for innovation and production excellence in high-end consumer tires.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Italy	10,000+ employees	Automotive	Early career to leadership



<p>What was the business need?</p>	<p>The automotive industry is facing an unprecedented evolution triggered by key technology-driven disruptive trends: electrification of vehicles, connected and autonomous vehicles and Mobility-as-a-Service. This scenario presented opportunities for Pirelli in terms of product innovation and development of new applications, while also bringing challenges in terms of reducing the time-to-market of new products. To stay ahead of changes coming with this new scenario, Pirelli has been investing in digital tools and developing new skills and capabilities in the organization, that enable development of more innovative and sustainable products in the most agile way.</p>
<p>What programs have been implemented?</p>	<p>Pirelli has established a method for constantly updating the requirements of employees' key competences and quickly ensuring its wide deployment throughout the company. After dividing the organization into roles and professional families, every year the key competences of each professional are reviewed and updated with respect to the company's main strategic guidelines.</p> <p>The company's key competences are then distributed and trained via the global learning framework which is composed of four pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Academies:</b> these handle technical training for professional families. There are 10 Professional Academies which all have a central design and a local delivery system, through a network of certified internal and external trainers.</li> <li>• <b>School of Management:</b> focuses on developing behavioral and managerial skills. This also has a central design with central deployment for executives and local deployment for middle management. The School focuses on a set of key behaviors which the company links to performance.</li> <li>• <b>Local educational initiatives:</b> address specific local needs, e.g. compliance and compulsory training.</li> <li>• <b>Global activities:</b> these activities respond to international and cross functional needs and promote awareness of global guidelines with respect to local differences.</li> </ul> <p>In case of significant discontinuities in terms of new competences required by employees, a specific inter-functional and strategic Project Team is set up to analyze and design changes foreseen for a process or system, define new roles involved and make changes to existing ones, and to identify new sets of competences. The relevant Professional Academy is involved by developing an appropriate and specific new learning action plan.</p>
<p>Did the organization face any challenges?</p>	<p>The initial impact of COVID-19 brought great discontinuity for Pirelli. Nevertheless, even an emergency as big as this brought significant outcomes. For example, the deployment of digital workplace applications (e.g. Microsoft Office 365) for all employees, originally expected to last two years to cover all countries, was dramatically accelerated and carried out globally in five weeks. Throughout the process, employees were supported with a dedicated training campaign.</p> <p>When discontinuities such as this one happen, the Pirelli Global Learning Model provides strong support while all the Professional Academies are highly involved in adapting to the change, reshaping the learning offer and relaunching it in an accessible way.</p>
<p>How has the impact of the program been measured?</p>	<p>Pirelli measures learning effectiveness using the globally acknowledged Kirpatrick method, which establishes 4 levels of learning measurements depending on the objectives of the learning program. Level 1 ("satisfaction") and Level 2 ("learning") are applied to all programs. Level 3 ("impact on performance") and Level 4 ("impact on company results") are applied only for programs on a wide scale and/or impactful on roles or company processes and/or linked with a specific formal competence certification.</p>

Zurich Insurance Group (Zurich) is a leading multi-line insurer that serves its customers in global and local markets.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
United Kingdom	4,000+ employees	Insurance	Mid-career



<p><b>What was the business need?</b></p>	<p>Eighteen months ago, Zurich in the UK analyzed its workforce utilizing AI analytics platform Faethm to understand the potential impact of technology on the future of its workforce. It identified the skills that would be in demand and where roles - predominately in areas such as robotics, data and cyber – could potentially go unfilled over the next five years. This exercise helped Zurich plan its strategic response to ensure it has the skills and capabilities needed to continue delivering for its customers. Through understanding the impact of technology on skills gaps, along with a commitment to work sustainability and developing its people, Zurich has created a 5-point strategy centered on building its workforce needs for the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upskilling for the whole organization</li> <li>• Intensive reskilling for in demand roles</li> <li>• Mobilization of internal talent to enable greater career mobility</li> <li>• Targeted graduate, intern and apprentice early career programs</li> <li>• Focus on skills and potential in the recruitment process</li> </ul>
<p><b>What programs have been implemented?</b></p>	<p>Zurich in the UK has developed a number of skills academies including an Automation Academy, a Data Academy and DevOps Academy. Its Data Academy launched 15 months ago was an industry first and was followed more recently by an Automation Academy. Zurich's Continuous Improvement and Automation team deliver the Automation Academy. It's a powerful proposition combining participants knowledge of their business area, processes and importantly customers, with automation skills. The overall aim is to reduce time spent on repetitive tasks, freeing up people to focus on more value added and enriching activities. People are encouraged to sign up if they are interested in taking part in one of the academies and will be able to apply their learning in their day-to-day role. The Automation Academy is funded by Zurich's education budget, while the Data and DevOps Academies utilize part of the apprenticeship levy as the learning is aligned to apprenticeship standards.</p>
<p><b>Did the organization face any challenges?</b></p>	<p>One challenge Zurich faced has been putting in place effective measures to support people working at home and learning in isolation during lockdown. Despite this, Zurich has been successful in delivering all of its usual programs and apprenticeships virtually. This has involved providing coaching and mentoring support to complement what already delivered by teams and managers.</p>
<p><b>How has the impact of the program been measured?</b></p>	<p>Zurich measure success in a number of ways. For the Automation Academy for example, Zurich assesses how automation has improved service for the company's customers. Other indicators include the number of employees engaging with re-skilling, upskilling and redeployment opportunities, which indicate how successful Zurich is in developing new skills internally rather than recruiting from outside.</p>

## About WBCSD

WBCSD is a global, CEO-led organization of over 200 leading businesses working together to accelerate the transition to a sustainable world. We help make our member companies more successful and sustainable by focusing on the maximum positive impact for shareholders, the environment and societies.

Our member companies come from all business sectors and all major economies, representing a combined revenue of more than USD \$8.5 trillion and 19 million employees. Our global network of almost 70 national business councils gives our members unparalleled reach across the globe.

Together, we are the leading voice of business for sustainability: united by our vision of a world in which more than 9 billion people are all living well, within planetary boundaries, by 2050.

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**WBCSD's Future of Work project** brings together businesses to shape a sustainable world of work. The project provides a space for members to share experiences and learn from one another, pinpoint practical steps to address key issues, distill best practices and develop collaborative solutions. Areas covered by the Future of Work project comprise skills development, responsible deployment of technology, diversity and inclusion and worker's health and wellbeing. To get in touch with our Future of Work team, contact [James Gomme](#), Director, People & Society, WBCSD or visit <https://futureofwork.wbcسد.org>.

## About GAN

GAN Global empowers people and businesses by promoting and advocating for the uptake of WBL, including apprenticeships, to address the mismatch between the skills people have and the skills employers need.

The goal is to accelerate the acquisition of skills and capabilities of all segments of the workforce and build a robust talent pipeline for business that can match the pace of change in the world of work.

Our members are trailblazers and thought-leaders from leading multinational corporations and international organizations, who are setting examples for others to follow and shaping global and community policies and approaches. GAN has established networks in several countries across the globe.

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<https://www.gan-global.org/>

GAN Global's primary role is to encourage businesses to implement work-based learning programmes, including apprenticeships, and to support the creation of an enabling policy environment. We do this by: Policy Analysis and Advocacy; Peer-to-Peer Learning; Thought Leadership; and Private Sector Leadership.

To get in touch with GAN, contact: [Nazrene Mannie](#), Executive Director, GAN or visit [www.gan-global.org](http://www.gan-global.org).

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