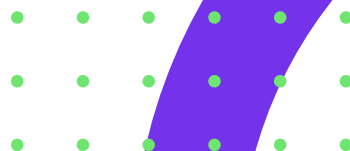edyoucated

E-BOOK

Skills Insight Report

Accelerating the transition from jobs to skills

Foreword

Our first Skills Insight Report arrives in the midst of significant challenges in the labor market.

The pandemic and other global and political events have, out of necessity, accelerated technical advancement. Changes to the way we work and availability of staff have also shifted power in favor of the employee, at the same time as companies struggle to locate recruits with the right skills to move their business forward.

It's time to get ahead of upcoming change by assessing your current capabilities against the in-demand skills that can be anticipated and planned for. We'll also look at how current and emerging trends can be used to better address future skills challenges.

We'll also tell you the three questions you need to ask before adopting a new learning approach. These demonstrate why traditional learning approaches fail, and can help you to avoid common pitfalls.

For learning to have a tangible impact, we need a revolution on three different levels.

Happy reading!

Marius Vennemann

Marius Vennemann
Managing Director │ edyoucated GmbH

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Methodology

For this report, we collected and analyzed data from more than 500.000 job adverts. Primarily, we focused on modern, tech-focused and tech-adjacent occupations. These include roles such as software engineering, product management, account management & sales, data science & engineering, marketing and recruitment.

We extracted the listed skills from the job adverts and matched them with our own skill taxonomy. Following that, we calculated how frequently these soft and digital skills were mentioned in the job postings.

The skills gap is real - and it's growing

87 percent of companies are experiencing skills gaps now, or expect to within a few years. This can be attributed to three major trends.

Firstly, demographic change and globalization have made the labor market more competitive.

Alongside this, a constant reskilling programme is necessary to enable workers to meet the changing demands of their jobs. Digitization is a major driver of change in the capabilities needed for many roles. As a result, the half-life of skills becomes shorter as time passes.

Finally, the pandemic and subsequent re-assessment of life priorities for many people, has prompted The Great Resignation.

What can organizations do to get ahead of these challenging workforce trends?
And what is the role of effective upskilling in helping them to achieve this?
Let's find out.

Three workforce trends shaping our future

Taking a closer look at this data, we can observe three trends:

Trend 1
Digital skills required in non-digital occupations

Trend 2
Soft skills required in digital occupations

Trend 3
The rise of more hybrid, cross-functional roles

Digital skills in non-digital occupations

Growth of digital skills is no longer limited to technology roles. Across most industries, there is a demand for technical fluency and capability. The sought-after skills in non-digital roles include data analysis, reporting, analytics, software development, plus a good working knowledge of tools such as Microsoft or JIRA. Percentages below show how many job postings mention each skill.

Product Manager

Analytics and Computer Science have emerged as the key skill requirements for this role. It also demands a higher data fluency than other roles, and the necessary competencies are mainly related to analytics.

| 23%	17%	14%	14%	13%
Analytics	Computer Science	Software Development	User Experience	Reporting
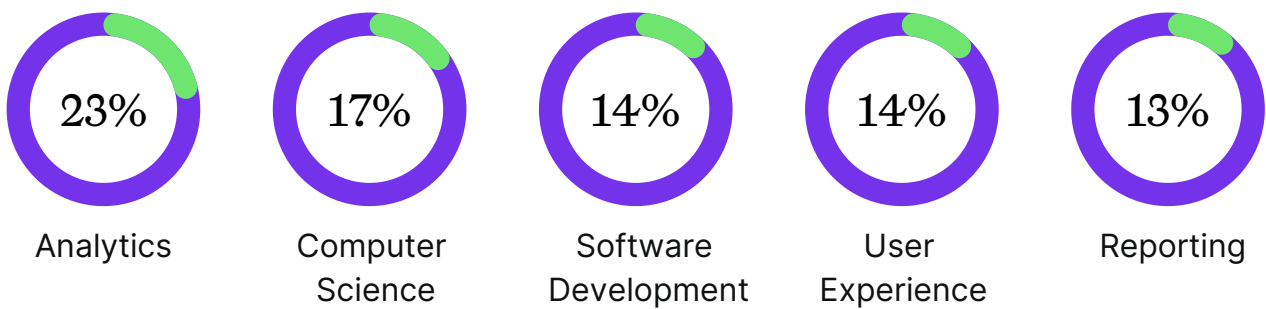
Account Manager

Across all sectors, working knowledge of tools/software such as Microsoft Office or Salesforce drives the skill requirements for this role. It also demands higher technical fluency and capabilities related to analytics.

| 16%	13%	7%	6%	4%
Microsoft Office	Reporting	Salesforce	Analytics	Database
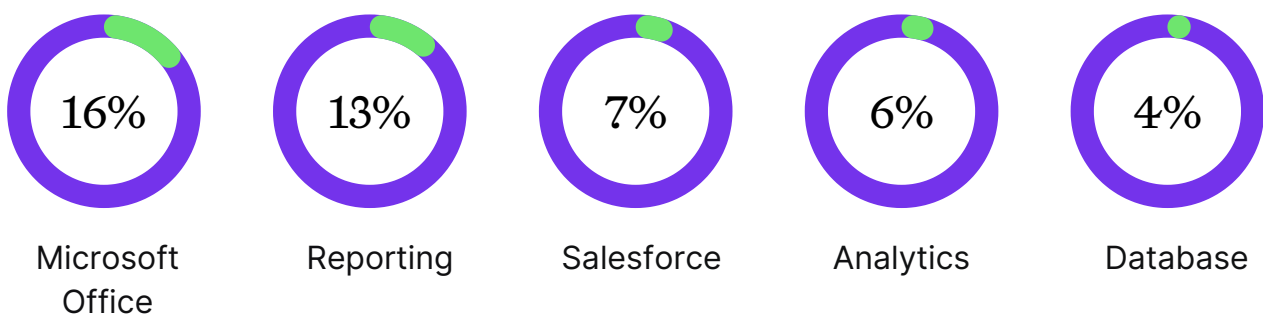
Sales Manager

In this role, working knowledge of tools/software such as Microsoft Office or Salesforce is essential. Again, this role expects a higher than average technical fluency and capabilities related to analytics.

| 10%	10%	5%	5%	4%
MS Office	Reporting	Salesforce	Social Media	Database
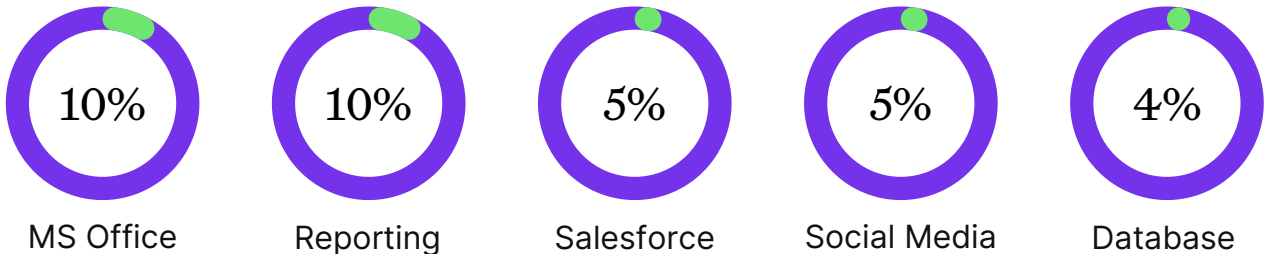
Marketing Manager

Marketing roles are moving further toward digital, and increasingly, data skills. Social media proficiency is the biggest requirement, including the ability to manage platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. These roles might also typically expect candidates to be fluent across Google's application suite or Salesforce.

27%	16%	14%	12%	9%
Social Media	Reporting	Analytics	MS Office	Automation
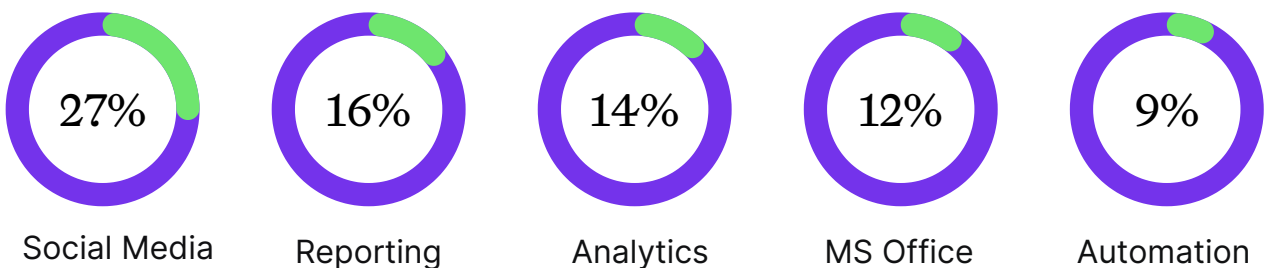
Talent Acquisition Specialist

Recruitment is evolving, with new tactics needed to uncover talent. This role now requires a high level of social media expertise to keep pace. LinkedIn is generally used but specific professions will have their own subreddits or use even more specific channels. Plus, this role will need proficiency in tools such as Applicant Tracking systems (ATS), which have become a necessity.

39%	38%	22%	22%	13%
ATS	Social Media	LinkedIn	MS Office	Reporting
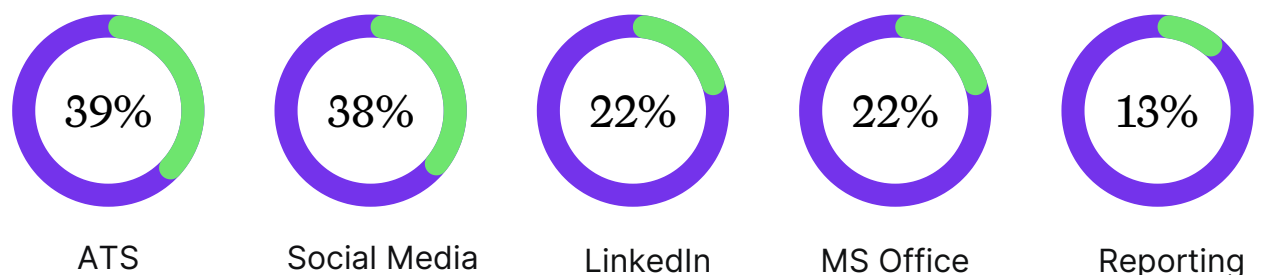
To keep ahead of changes in the market, you must constantly evolve your strategy and the specific initiatives and technology you use. However, if the workforce lacks the right skills, none of these interventions will matter.

When a company launches new digital tools, employees must be able to use them or the tools won't have the desired impact. Technology investments must always be accompanied and supported by corresponding investments in recruitment, upskilling, and reskilling.

Soft skills in digital occupations

Vice versa, as the way we work changes we're observing that technical roles increasingly demand more soft skills. Hybrid working and a greater focus on mental health and flexibility requires better team working, planning and support. Not just at management level, every team member needs good communication, organization skills and agility. Percentages below show how many job postings mention each skill.

Software Developer

Technical skills will determine the development of your software product, but quality is usually an indicator of a healthy, functioning development team. As this fact becomes more widely accepted, skills such as agility, communication and management are moving to the top of the list for software developers.

| 38%	33%	28%	20%	15%
Agile	Communication	Management	Organization	Planning
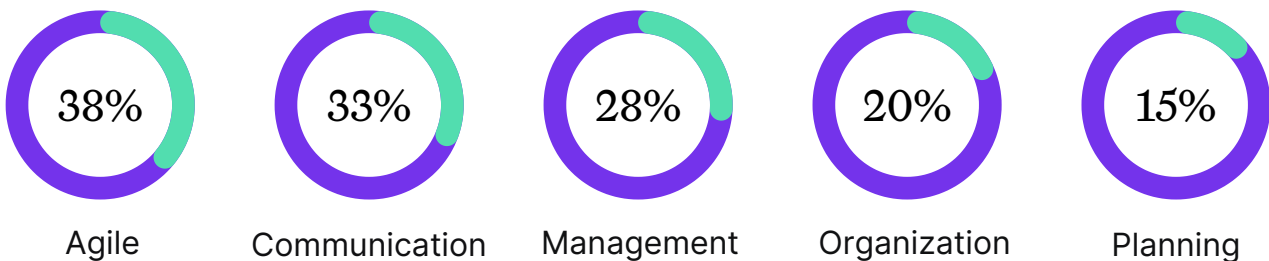
Software Engineer

Similarly software engineers, whilst highly technical, are no longer limited to the hard skills we traditionally associate with this role. As business integration increased, the expectations of developers evolved in tandem. Agility and communication are common requirements, but this role will also generally require management and leadership skills.

| 38%	32%	26%	22%	15%
Agile	Communication	Management	Organization	Leadership
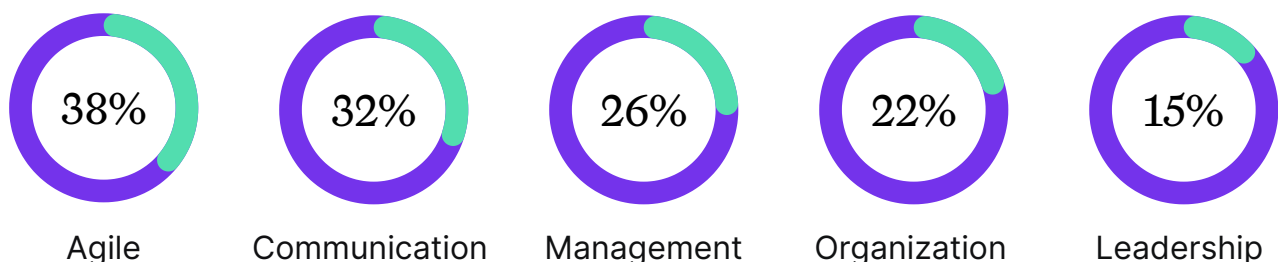
Data Engineer

Like other technical professions, this role is now increasingly driven by communication and management skills, as a result of closer team working and cross-functional collaboration.

| 21%	21%	11%	11%	8%
Communication	Management	Collaboration	Organization	Leadership
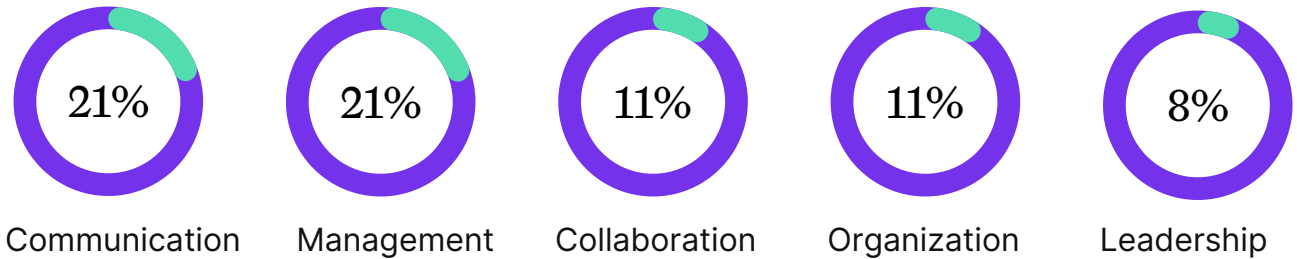
DevOps Engineer

DevOps has always been a role that facilitates closer working between people, teams and departments. Management and agile skills continue to drive the skill requirements to succeed in this role.

50%	35%	34%	28%	26%
Management	Agile	Operations	Communication	Organization
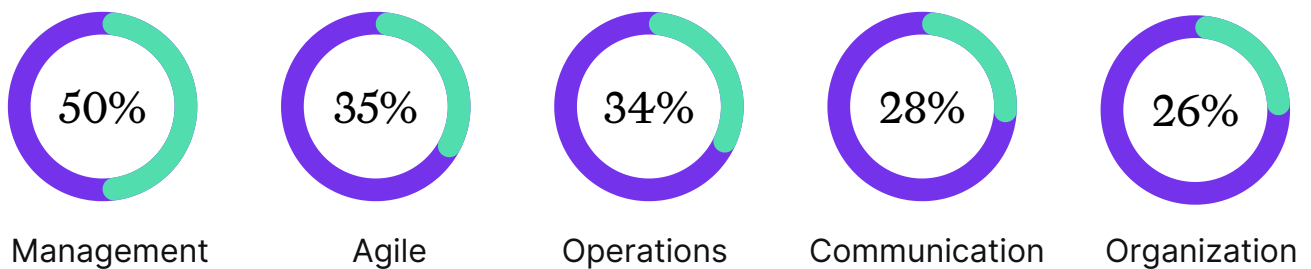
Data Scientist

A data scientist uses large amounts of data to develop hypotheses, make inferences, and analyze customer and market trends. They often act as internal consultants within a business, needing to connect data with business sense and explain their findings in an accessible way. This has also led to a specific requirement for Data Translators.

21%	10%	7%	7%	7%
Management	Consulting	Feedback	Operations	Agile
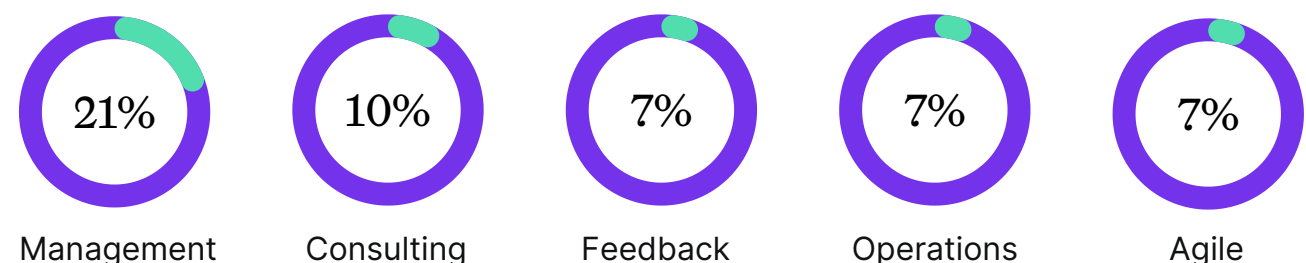
Taking an overview of the skills currently requested for these technical professions, we can conclude that agile, communication and management skills are now playing an increasingly important part in roles that were previously believed to be purely technical. We predict that this trend will continue and escalate further in the coming years.
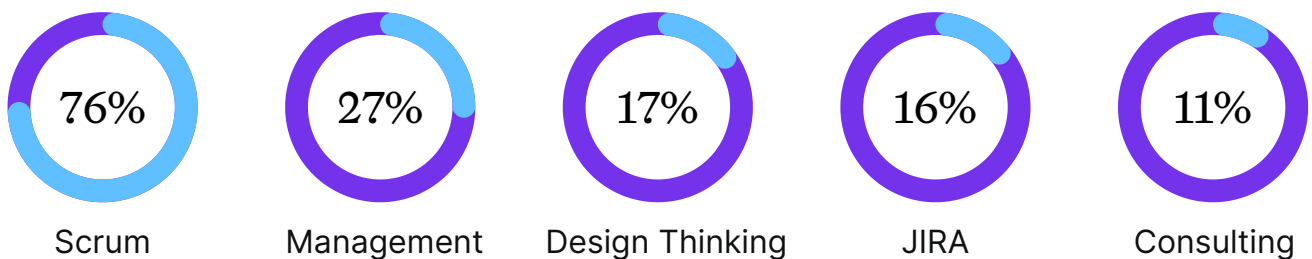
The rise of more hybrid, cross-functional roles

Roles such as Agile Coach, Product Owners, Data Translators or Project Managers have emerged athose best placed to manage cross functional teams and get the best out of collaboration. Demand is rising drastically for these roles within most organizations.

The existence of these roles is already a consequence of teams becoming more agile and working cross-functionally. They have long served as the liaison point between multiple departments and teams within an organization. It's a logical consequence that these roles need a particular mix of skills - spanning frameworks such as SCRUM, technical skills, soft skills and project tools such as JIRA.
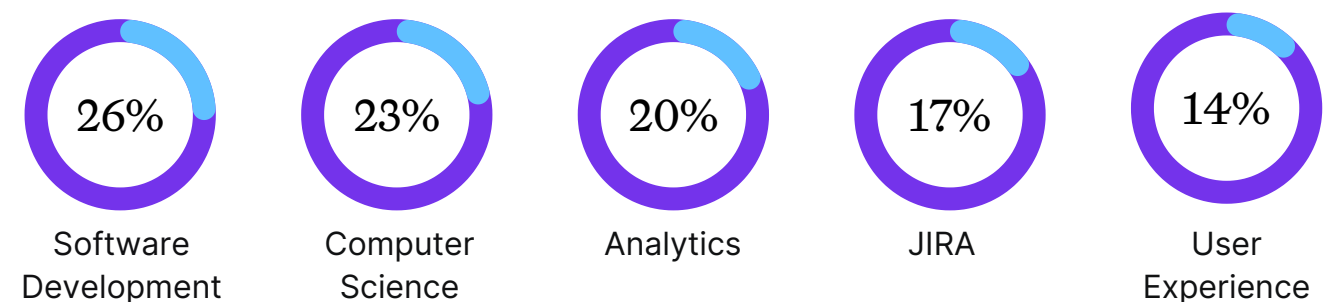
Agile Coach

76%	27%	17%	16%	11%
Scrum	Management	Design Thinking	JIRA	Consulting

Project Management

52%	47%	37%	23%	21%
Management	Project Management	Communication	Planning	Sales

Product Owner

26%	23%	20%	17%	14%
Software Development	Computer Science	Analytics	JIRA	User Experience

Shifting Gears:
the transition from jobs to skills

Jobs are evolving and teams are moving closer together. Compartmentalizing tasks into individual job descriptions will be insufficient to support the future workplace models. For many decades, jobs have been the dominant structure for assigning work and carrying out general HR activity, including feedback, hiring, promoting, and organizing teams around those with specific roles and skill sets.

Businesses now need to act fast to respond to rapid changes in the economy and business environment. Standardized work designed for scalability no longer accurately reflects the underlying skills needed to progress and diversify, as reflected in our data collection.

Deloitte recently surveyed hundreds of business leaders, HR managers and executives on whether their organizational structure and its roles were fit for the future, and found:

- Only 42% of respondents believe that their company's job descriptions are "excellent" at describing the work that needs to be carried out.

- 89% of executives agree that skills play an increasingly important role in defining work, managing talent and evaluating employees.

- Only 18% of executives strongly agree that their employees are fully utilizing their skills and abilities.

Why most learning solutions fail

According to Deloitte, only between 15% and 30% of companies are adopting skills-based approaches to a significant or noticeable extent.

However, to meet today's and tomorrow's workforce challenges, companies must transform into skills-based organizations.

But where is it going wrong?

Many companies are investing heavily in L&D in response to the need for new skills and rapidly changing requirements. Unfortunately, most learning solutions still fail to answer three strategic questions. It is for this reason that most upskilling initiatives fail and fail to develop skills in line with the company's future trajectory.

Where do we want to go?

Most solutions do not provide guidance on how to bring structure to skills that we know will grow in relevance in a fast-changing labor market. Employees and companies alike need a universal language for skills, or a skills map that brings to life the classic competency model and makes it more actionable. A map that is flexible enough to empower staff at all levels. Organizations will be able to "zoom out" of the map to answer wider, strategic skill development questions. Individuals will "zoom in" to locate specific skill assessments and locate the next skill they want to acquire in their 30-minute lunch break.

Where are we starting from?

It's a fact: we all learn in different ways. This is why it's so surprising that most solutions follow one-size-fits-all strategies and fail to take into account the different qualifications, needs and learning goals of their learners. They provide standardized learning content because they can't accurately assess individual learners' current skills. If we refer back to the skills map, these can't accurately position where each individual learner stands today.

What is the most effective and engaging way to get there?

We have our skills map. We have accurately positioned each learner on that map. We have set a goal of where we want to go. So what's next?

We need to find the most effective way to reach our desired outcome of an adaptive and personalized learning experience. But solutions which fail at the initial steps are simply unable to provide personalized, engaging learning routes that address individual learner needs.

The three interventions that move skills forward

A revolution needs to take place on three levels in order to successfully build a skills complement that meets strategic goals.

So, if traditional systems fail at effectively upskilling employees, what do we need?

In short, in order for workforce development to become more strategic and effective, a revolution needs to take place on three levels.

Firstly, we need a "Skill Mapping Revolution".

Organizations need to start building a common language and a solid foundation for skills – a skill taxonomy. This will allow companies to move away from traditional job roles and think in terms of skill profiles instead of rigid job descriptions. Plus, it will empower employees to strategically develop skills and learners to set measurable learning goals.

Secondly, we need a "Skill Positioning Revolution".

Modern tools need to be able to accurately assess the current skill levels of each individual learner and identify their skills gaps. So, how can we actually figure out the knowledge state of our learners? The key is smart skill assessments.

Lastly, we need a "Skills Navigation Revolution".

Using the data and information about each learner to provide more guidance at an individual level, plus a tailored journey to meet that goal. In short: we must strategically guide learners to their next skill acquisition. The solution? Adaptive learning paths.

We could fill an entire book about these topics. It's a rapidly evolving issue, and we are seeing companies of all sizes starting to use and develop their skill maps. So, right now we are just getting started, and you have time to jump on board.

How is your company using skills today?

We have helped many clients implement skills-based learning to make their training more engaging, effective, and measurable. If you'd like more information, we are happy to help!

Any questions?
Get in touch
contact@edyoucated.org

Marius Vennemann

Managing Director
edyoucated

edyoucated

edyoucated is an AI-powered, adaptive learning platform empowering people, teams and organizations to build the skills of the future.

How? By transforming one-size-fits-all into personalized, engaging and measurable learning experiences. edyoucated unlocks a multitude of benefits to teams including better guidance for managers, smarter skills assessments, highly customized learning paths, and a blended learning approach to anchor knowledge long-term. Plus, the solution is modular and integrates seamlessly with existing learning systems. Empowering teams of all sizes to provide more strategic, faster, and successful training than mainstream learning solutions.

The result? An uplift in productivity, employee happiness, and employee retention.

Do you have questions or need an advice?

Contact us!

contact@edyoucated.org

www.edyoucated.org