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worldwide

SKILLS IN DEMAND FOR THE NEW ERA OF WORK

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The Covid-19 pandemic has changed ways of working, with employers considering what the 'new normal' looks like and how they can be ready for it. As part of this preparation, employers should be informed about where skills gaps are and what skills are most in demand in the marketplace. This insight, combined with an analysis of what skills are most needed within their team, will prove invaluable to help determine their resourcing strategy.

Alongside the specialist and technical skills needed to undertake a role effectively, it has become clear that, perhaps more now than ever, professionals must also be able to display a strong set of soft skills in order to thrive in the new era of work.

To help understand which skills are most sought after, we surveyed over 16,000 employers and professionals between April and May 2020 to discover which skills employers are currently prioritising for the new era of work.

WHERE DO SKILLS SHORTAGES LIE?

Our findings show that organisations do not have all the skills they need in order to thrive in the new world of work. Almost half (47%) of employers say they only have some of the skills they need to be able to meet organisational objectives, and a further 15% say they do not have the skills required, specifying either moderate or extreme skills shortages. Only 38% have all the skills they require.

Skills shortages are more prevalent within the public sector compared to the private sector, with only 34% of public sector employers saying they have all the right skills to enable them to meet organisational objectives compared to 39% of private sector employers.

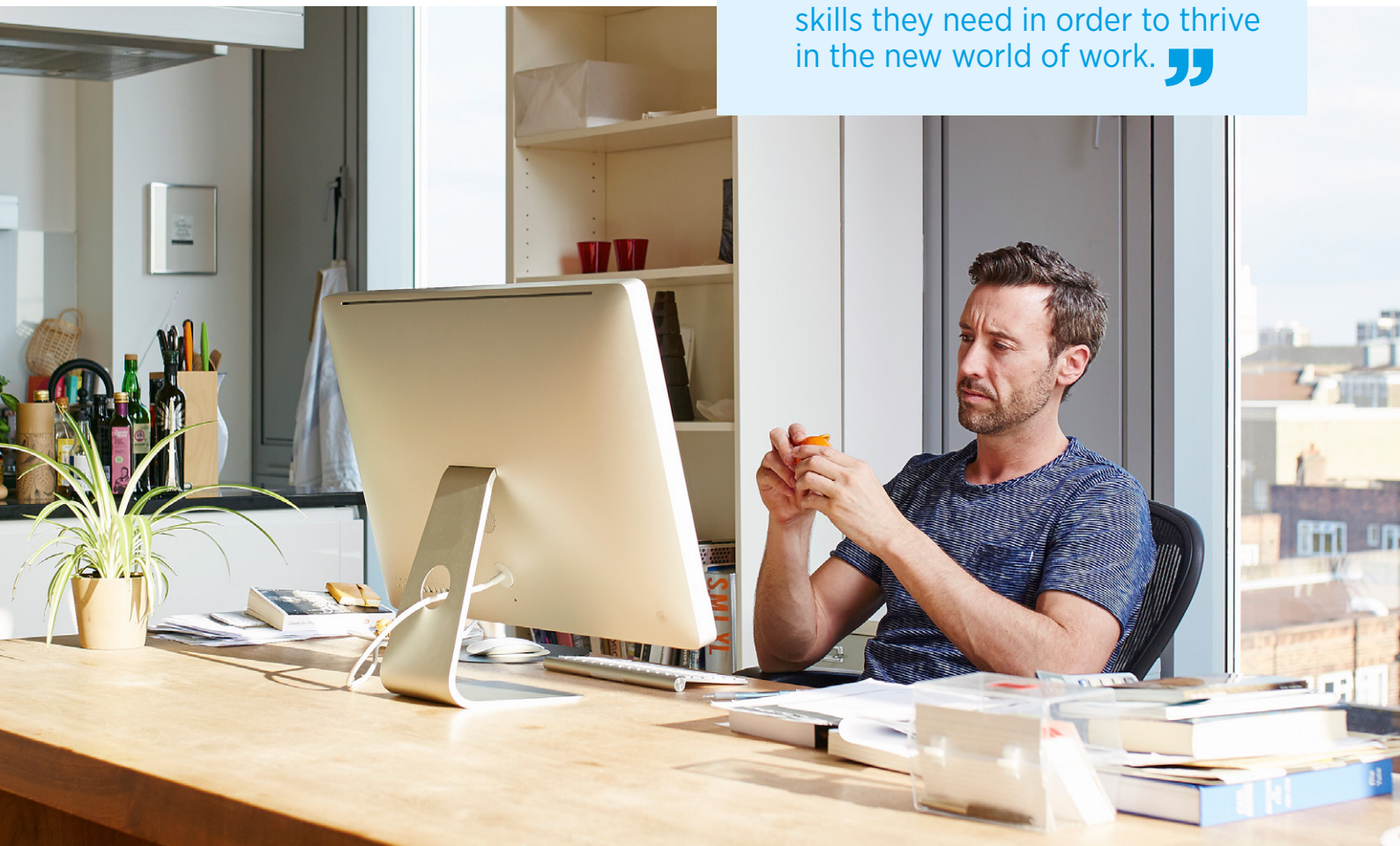
In terms of specialist areas, marketing employers are the least likely to say they have all the right skills they need to be able to meet organisational objectives, with only 26% agreeing. This is followed by engineering and manufacturing employers, with only 29% saying they have all the skills they require, and technology employers (also 29%).

Do employers currently have access to the right skills to enable them to meet organisational objectives?

■ Yes, fully ■ Yes, somewhat ■ No, moderate skills shortages ■ No, extreme skills shortages



“ Our findings show that organisations do not have all the skills they need in order to thrive in the new world of work. ”



ORGANISATIONS ARE MOST IN NEED OF MANAGERIAL AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

In terms of the specialist skills organisations are most in need of, 35% of employers overall say they need managerial and leadership skills, followed by operations skills (30%) and projects and change management skills (26%).

Demand for technical skillsets vary according to the area an employer mostly recruits in. For example, those who hire tech professionals have the highest requirement for IT infrastructure (52%), software development (42%) and cyber security (21%).

Which specialist and/or technical skills are most needed by your organisation? (according to UK employers overall)

Managerial and leadership skills are most needed by financial markets (41%), HR (40%), healthcare (39%), office support (39%) and procurement, supply chain and logistics employers (39%)

Operations skills are most needed by procurement, supply chain and logistics (48%), construction and property (40%), engineering and manufacturing (38%) and office support employers (38%)

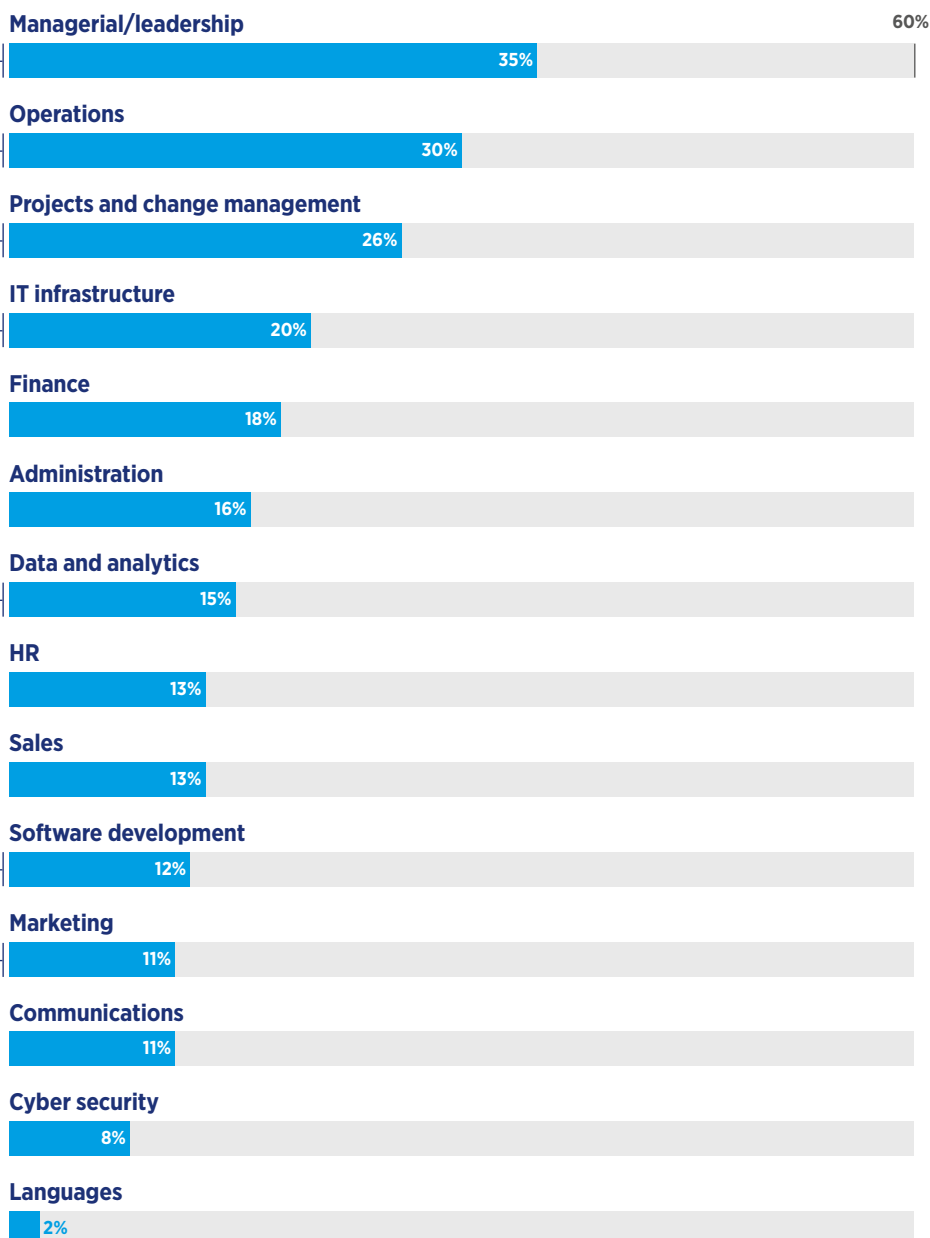
33% of private sector employers require projects and change management skills compared to 24% of public sector employers

24% of large or very large organisations need IT infrastructure skills compared to just 15% of SMEs

Demand for data and analytics skills is highest for financial markets employers (28%), tech employers (25%) and marketing employers (21%)

Those who hire tech professionals are most in need of software development skills (42%) followed by financial markets employers (17%) and marketing employers (13%)

SMEs are more in need of marketing skills (13%) than large or very large organisations (9%) with martech skills in demand such as data analytics, CRM and online



“ 33% of private sector employers require projects and change management skills compared to 24% of public sector employers. ”



COMMUNICATION TOPS LIST OF REQUIRED SOFT SKILLS

In terms of the soft skills most needed by employers overall, communication and interpersonal skills were required by over half (54%), followed by problem-solving (48%), flexibility and adaptability (45%) and people management (40%).

Which soft skills are most needed by your organisation? (according to UK employers overall)

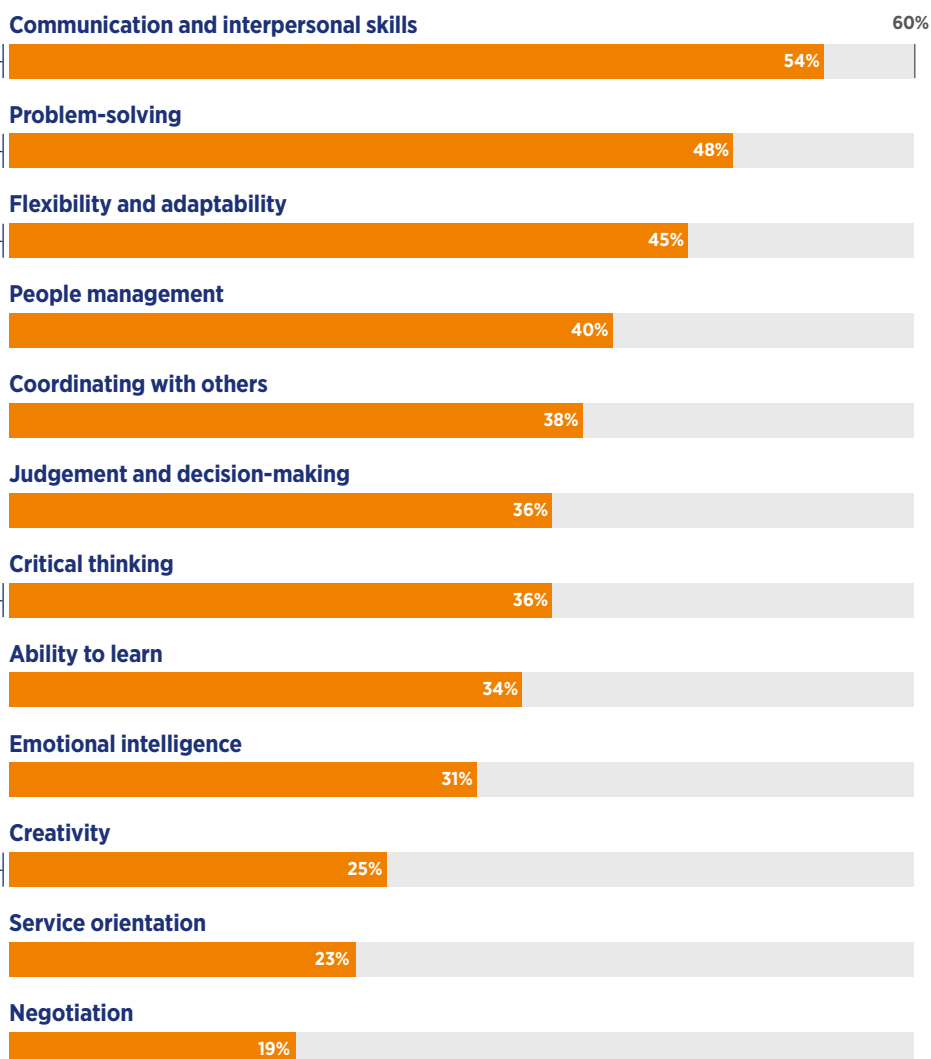
Employers within office support (60%), social care (57%), financial markets (56%) and accountancy and finance (56%) are most in need of communication and interpersonal skills

Employers in large or very large organisations are more in need of problem-solving skills (50%) than SMEs (45%)

More employers within the public sector say they need flexibility and adaptability skills (46%) than the private sector (42%)

Critical thinking skills are more in demand for public sector employers (40%) than private sector employers (35%)

Creativity skills are most in demand for employers within marketing (31%) and office support (29%), as well as social care, technology, and procurement, supply chain and logistics (all 28%)



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this insight, we have put together some recommendations for managers and for team members to help ensure you have the right skills required to thrive in the new era of work.

EMPLOYERS

Be clear where your skills gaps lie: Assess the skills within your current team and identify where you have gaps, bearing in mind that 'hybrid' teams will become more widespread going forward, with some team members working from home while others will be in the workplace. This makes strong communication skills even more important, and people management skills will need to be adaptable to this new way of working.

Assess and develop soft skills within your team: Analysing the skillsets within your existing team may throw up some surprises, for example, a team member who has stepped up during the Covid-19 crisis and shown strong leadership capabilities you didn't know they had. New skills requirements may also have emerged as a result of the pandemic, such as the need for team members to be flexible and adaptable to change. Look for ways you can develop the needed skills within your team and tap into online training like [Hays Thrive](#) to provide additional support.

Ensure your hiring process identifies the right skills: It has become clear that a strong set of soft skills including people management, problem-solving and the ability to learn are essential for professionals to possess to continue to be successful during rapidly changing times. You should therefore evaluate your hiring processes to ensure they are able to assess candidates for the important soft skills during the hiring process. This may be a case of tailoring the questions you ask prospective candidates either during the application process or interviews. Finding those with the right soft skills will help ensure your organisation is ready for the new era of work and is able to continue to adapt.

PROFESSIONALS

Understand your current skillset: To be on the front-foot as we move into the new world of work, you need to understand any gaps in your current skillset before you can consider training or development. One way to do so is to ask your manager for feedback on areas you should focus on going forward, especially in light of the Covid-19 crisis which may well have changed the focus of your organisation.

Seek new ways to develop your skills: Once you have identified the areas you want to improve you must now decide the best way to go about this. Ask about the training options your organisation provides, or suggest a training portal, such as [Hays Thrive](#), to your manager which offers free training to help professionals thrive in the new era of work. Perhaps you want to develop your leadership skills, are any mentoring or one-to-one coaching options available? There are also innumerable online training options, for example [Codecademy](#) teaches you how to code.

Keep adapting: The Covid-19 pandemic has shown just how important it is to be adaptable to change and open to learning new skills. Given ongoing uncertainty, flexibility and adaptability will be important skillsets to hone going forward. To be more adaptable to change, make a habit of proactively assessing your skillset on a regular basis, checking in with your manager on skills you should develop further, and taking any opportunities to develop when they come about so you are ready for new challenges as they arise.

To speak to a recruiting expert about your hiring needs or the next step in your career, find your nearest Hays consultant by visiting [hays.co.uk/offices](#). If you're an employer, our collection of resources offers insights and advice on how to manage your team, undertake interviews and successfully onboard candidates remotely as we move forward. If you're a professional looking for further advice and insights to help you navigate the evolving world of work, discover more on our [Inspire Me in the New Era of Work](#) hub.

HAYS THRIVE FREE ONLINE TRAINING TO HELP YOUR TEAM THRIVE

Help your team get prepared to thrive in the new world of work with our free online training platform, Hays Thrive. Free training packages include:

'My work transition Toolkit' to help your workforce become more agile and adaptive

Remote professional excellence to help manage workloads and increase efficiencies while working remotely

Wellbeing training to provide the tools needed to get through this challenging time

Health and safety courses to help keep your staff safe and secure when working from home

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