



Digital Skills: Need of the Hour in the Context of Global Era

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Abstract:

Technology is at the center of our lives, and as our dependence on the internet and digital communications increases, our workforce must keep up with the evolving skill demand. These days, the digital skills required in the workplace are a bit more advanced, and companies expect the vast majority of their employees to have them, not just a select few. The pandemic catalyzed an already-accelerating rate of digital transformation, where the old ways of doing things — from grocery shopping to work — changed irreversibly. The demand for digital skills was likewise impacted, as companies shifted from physical headquarters to embracing a digital HQ mentality. Now, digital adoption and the respective digital skills needed to embrace the transformation are critical to landing more secure, in-demand tech careers. In fact, those skills are essential to the survival of every field.

Digital skills are broadly defined as the skills needed to “use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information,” from basic online searching and emailing to specialist programming and development. At their core, these skills help people to communicate and to collaborate, to develop and to share digital content, and problem solve in a work-anywhere world.

Without a firm command of digital skills, there is no way to propel innovation and remain competitive. Employers realize this, so they're prioritizing candidates who can showcase their digital literacy. By developing better digital skills, employees have a chance to contribute to their communities, future-proof their careers, and explore a wide range of professional opportunities.

Some statistics showing the increasing demand for digitally literate professionals:

1. 85% of Americans believe that digital skills will be important to success in today's workplace.
2. According to a study published about digital skills for career progress, “the number of jobs requiring digital skills is predicted to increase 12 percent by 2024.

Key Words: Digital Skills, Digital Transformation, Cognitive Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Self –Leadership Skills, Professional Skills

What are digital skills?

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and to share digital content, and problem solve in a work-anywhere world.

What are examples of digital skills?

Entry-level digital skills can include:

1. Computer literacy
2. Data entry
3. Social media
4. Web-based communications and research
5. Word processing
6. Email and chat
7. Secure information processing

Advanced digital skills can include:

1. Programming, web, and app development
2. Digital business analysis
3. Digital marketing and content creation
4. Digital design and data visualization
5. Digital product management
6. Data science
7. User experience design

Digital skills are defined as the ability to find, evaluate, use, share, and create content using digital devices, such as computers and smartphones.

These days, the digital skills required in the workplace are a bit more advanced, and companies expect the vast majority of their employees to have them, not just a select few. Technology is at the center of our lives, and as our dependence on the internet and digital communications increases, our workforce must keep up with the evolving skill demand.

Why to Learn Digital Skills?

Digital transformation is on the rise and affecting every industry imaginable.

Farmers are no longer merely sowing seeds and harvesting a crop; they're using sensors and information technology to automate, monitor, and regulate their systems to become more profitable, efficient, and sustainable. Food delivery apps now help restaurants provide their menu options to hungry patrons without them having to leave their homes. This adds a complex layer of responsibilities for restaurant workers who now must manage orders through digital devices, as well as any in-person interactions.

Even real estate, a traditionally face-to-face industry, relies on digital skills. Virtual walk-throughs are available to prospects looking to relocate, and signing documents remotely with services like DocuSign is a quick and convenient way to finalize an agreement.

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Here are some statistics showing the increasing demand for digitally literate professionals:

1. 24% of employers think finding employees with the right skill set will remain their biggest challenge over the next five years.
2. 50% of all employees will need re skilling in the next five years.
3. 85% of Americans believe that digital skills will be important to success in today's workplace.

4. According to a study published about digital skills for career progress, "the number of jobs requiring digital skills is predicted to increase 12 percent by 2024."
5. 94% of business leaders expect employees to acquire new skills on the job.

What Skills Are Necessary for Entry-Level Positions?

When you stand out in the modern workplace, you improve your chances of excelling in your career. Whichever career path you choose, keep in mind that there are always new skills to learn and new technologies to master.

For entry-level positions, the bare minimum digital skills required include the ability to carry out tasks, such as:

1. Communicating via email
2. Researching information online
3. Handling sensitive information in virtual ecosystems
4. Safely using cloud-based collaboration tools like Google Drive, DropBox, and Microsoft Teams
5. Creating and managing spreadsheets and online documents
6. Basic device management like connecting to the internet or installing software updates
7. Screen sharing during a video call
8. Using online calendars and efficiently managing your schedule (and possibly others on the team)

What Are the Critical Digital Skills?

Depending on career trajectory, one may need additional skills that pertain to one's specific role. Digital skills in the workplace can include original content creation, e-commerce, network and information security, UX/UI design, digital marketing, social media marketing, and data analytics. Advanced digital skills range from data visualization and basic programming skills to data engineering. While these may be more advanced, you can obtain them with hands-on training and consistent exposure.

McKinsey research has identified foundational skills that will "help citizens thrive in the future of work," below is a sample of their findings.

Cognitive		Interpersonal	
Critical thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Structured problem solving ● Logical reasoning ● Understanding biases ● Seeking relevant information 	Planning and ways of working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work-plan development ● Time management and prioritization ● Agile thinking 	Mobilizing systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role modeling ● Win-win negotiations ● Crafting an inspiring vision ● Organizational awareness 	Developing relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Empathy ● Inspiring trust ● Humility ● Sociability
Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Storytelling and public speaking ● Asking the right questions ● Synthesizing messages ● Active listening 	Mental flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creativity and imagination ● Translating knowledge to different contexts ● Adopting a different perspective ● Adaptability ● Ability to learn 	Teamwork effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fostering inclusiveness ● Motivating different personalities ● Resolving conflicts ● Collaboration ● Coaching ● Empowering 	
Self-leadership		Digital	
Self-awareness and self-management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding own emotions and triggers ● Self-control and regulation ● Understanding own strengths ● Integrity ● Self-motivation and wellness ● Self-confidence 		Digital fluency and citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Digital literacy ● Digital learning ● Digital collaboration ● Digital ethics 	
Entrepreneurship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Courage and risk-taking ● Driving change and innovation ● Energy, passion, and optimism ● Breaking orthodoxies 		Software use and development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programming literacy ● Data analysis and statistics ● Computational and algorithmic thinking 	
Goals achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ownership and decisiveness ● Achievement orientation ● Grit and persistence ● Coping with uncertainty ● Self-development 		Understanding digital systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Data literacy ● Smart systems ● Cybersecurity literacy ● Tech translation and enablement 	

¹Distinct elements of talent.

How to Develop or to Improve Digital Skills

Almost a third of the workforce lacks the foundational digital skills employers are looking for, meaning a large population of professionals need reskilling. According to [weforum.org](https://www.weforum.org), those who are unemployed have placed a greater emphasis on learning digital skills, including information technology and data science.

Whether you're looking to sharpen your digital skills or you're hoping to enter the

workforce with a strong resume, you can benefit from further training. Here are some methods for developing digital skills that don't include attending a traditional four-year program.

Self-Learning: We've talked all about how technology is part of our lives, so we must acknowledge how critical it is in helping us learn. There is a vast amount of information on any topic you can think of online, making basic skills easier to acquire. Connecting with professionals in your field is another

great way to supplement your self-learning and understand which skills need more refining.

Free Online Courses: For a more structured experience, you may want to explore free online courses that let you learn at your own pace at a slightly deeper level than self-learning. You may not get all of the advanced material you need to land your dream job, but it's a step towards gaining basic knowledge and essential digital skills.

Certificate Programs: Universities, like UNLV, offer dedicated certificate programs that deliver intense, in-depth instruction to ensure students are equipped with the digital skills and training to get them hired in today's workforce. Our cyber security bootcamp and software development boot camp offer accelerated courses led by industry experts and help you find the right job for you with professional career coaching. You can even increase your professional visibility with our exclusive hiring partner network.

The need for digital skills will only increase, so if you need to gain skills fast, there's no better time to get started than now! Learn more about the UNLV Digital Skills Boot camps by getting in touch with our admissions advisors. They'll walk you through your options as you discuss your career goals and educational needs. You don't have to commit right away. You can test-drive our program for 30 days to get a feel for our learning environment before making up your mind. The future is here. Let's conquer it together!

Which Digital Skills Do I Need?

According to Investopedia, "many of the highest-paying jobs are positions that require a significant amount of education, professional training and advanced skills." If you want to cover your bases as quickly as possible, here is how you can determine which digital skills you should focus on building.

1. Research the industry or profession you're curious about and read through job descriptions to understand which skills you already have and which you will need to build.
2. Understand how you can add value outside of automated systems and AI. As automation becomes the norm, our roles must adapt to the digital environment.
3. Join LinkedIn groups in your desired industry to keep tabs on trends and what

skills professionals are talking about. LinkedIn groups are also a great place to build your network and ask real professionals your burning questions.

It's a digital-first world: Today's kids learn coding before cursive. We call this expertise "digital skills," but to the next generation, they're simply "skills."

But what exactly *are* digital skills? How do people view the rise of digital skills? What can companies do to bridge the gap between current skill level and what the future demands?

To answer questions like these, Sales force spoke to experts and conducted global research on digital skills.

This article gives an overview of digital skills, answering some common questions and sharing related research.

Digital Skills are the Need of Hour in the Context of Global Era:

The pandemic catalyzed an already-accelerating rate of digital transformation, where the old ways of doing things — from grocery shopping to work — changed irreversibly. The demand for digital skills was likewise impacted, as companies shifted from physical headquarters to embracing a digital HQ mentality.

While this trend had been gaining momentum for decades across all industries, today's acceleration is unprecedented. Now, digital adoption and the respective digital skills needed to embrace the transformation are critical to landing more secure, in-demand tech careers. In fact, those skills are essential to the survival of every field.

Digital skills have never been more critical to business and the workforce, as demonstrated by the universal shift to digital-first interactions like remote work, online commerce, and virtual collaboration. While this change has produced many benefits, like greater flexibility for workers and removing geography as a barrier to hiring new talent, it's also resulted in the widening of an already-large skills gap.

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