

Making the case for a new upskilling platform

Four ways you can show your team the benefits of upskilling investment



ProEdge

A PwC Product

Some of the biggest initiatives companies are considering in today's landscape involve upskilling. Upskilling is a critical part of overall digital transformation efforts, and two-thirds of CHROs are planning to make significant investments in that area, according to [a recent PwC survey](#). So why are some business leaders still reluctant to invest more in upskilling? Most likely, they want to be able to quantify returns on those investments.

And the great news about upskilling investments is that they can accelerate ROI across your big rock initiatives.

Digital and workforce transformation. Winning the battle for acquiring and retaining top talent. These are critical for future growth. And it starts with investing in your people's skills. Having a people-first mindset makes your company more attractive to prospective and existing employees and sets you up for success.

Giving your people opportunities to upskill pays off—[93% of CEOs](#) who introduce upskilling programs see increased productivity, an improvement in talent acquisition and retention, and a more resilient workforce.

When people are armed with the know-how that improves their job performance, and potentially advances their careers, [they're more innovative](#). They can find ways to automate repetitive tasks and spend more time on value-add activities—like formulating and executing on the strategies that can drive growth for your entire organization.

Communicating ROI on upskilling is critical to getting buy-in from leadership. They'll want to know what it takes to get results. Even when they generally advocate for learning programs, they may still need the hard evidence to nudge them to invest.

You can make the case in a way that focuses on the benefits to people, in addition to the positive impacts on the bottom line, by:

1. Framing upskilling as a talent lever
2. Sharing a real-world success story of scalable, function-specific upskilling
3. Going beyond traditional professional development platforms and incorporating experiential learning that supports digital transformation
4. Proposing a viable, out of the box solution that can also be customized to your organization's needs

1. Frame upskilling as a talent lever

Many **CEOs** have seen the impact of upskilling firsthand—productivity, culture, and loyalty all go up—and loyal employees typically plan to stay with their **employers six to ten more years** than their peers. In today's talent landscape where **more than a third of job-seekers** said they'd even be willing to sacrifice salary in exchange for skill-building opportunities, you want to be the employer who's offering that benefit.

For the post-pandemic workforce, upskilling is the **new 401(k)**. It adds a competitive perk that attracts and retains new talent—the kind who want to learn more and grow within your organization.

Upskilling also addresses CEO concerns around **social inequality**. This fear isn't unfounded, as **50% of workers** say they've faced discrimination at work, which led to them missing out on career advancement or training. Easy access to upskilling can help address these challenges. When companies invest in their employees' careers, they can create a more fair work environment and drive **diversity, equity and inclusion** efforts.



2. Share a success story of scalable, function-specific upskilling

A few years ago, PwC surveyed our leadership about internal processes that frustrated them the most. Nearly half of those processes were embedded in finance.

Many of our internal finance processes were still being conducted manually and the tech was in need of updating. Finance also lacked a unified repository for our staff to access the most up-to-date data.

We upskilled five hundred PwC finance professionals to learn how to build digital solutions that could automate their daily—and very repetitive—tasks.

In that first year of upskilling, PwC automated over **30,000 hours** worth of manual work. Over the course of five years, we've now automated **75%** of offshore transactional tasks, reduced our cash-contract cycle by **75%** and replaced over **100,000** Excel spreadsheets—all thanks to the digital tools our employees learned to create.

How do you repeat this kind of success?

In many organizations, incremental change is often the most enduring. You can see what works, where to improve and what needs to scale. For PwC that meant **a phased approach** to digital transformation that began with upskilling our finance function.

3. Go beyond traditional learning management systems

To gain the biggest benefits from your upskilling program, you need a robust upskilling platform that meets people where they are—no matter the role, learning style or time commitments. Relevant, experiential learning is what helps people grow in their jobs. Yet many executives struggle with finding a solution that sufficiently delivers and are unable to make significant progress.

This may be because many training platforms lack innovation when it comes to learning. They focus on general competencies and provide limited mediums of learning. Video courses and skills tests are only part of the equation. Unless they're relevant to someone's actual job, they won't necessarily boost engagement or participation.

The workforce of the future needs an upskilling platform that provides the right balance of job-specific skills, critical thinking and digital acumen. It should speak to all learning styles and provide opportunities for scenario-based, interactive and applied learning so workers can demonstrate their competency and transfer skills into immediate business impact.



4. Propose a viable solution

To get leadership to take the upskilling plunge, you need **a worthy solution** to bring to the table—one that can deliver the ROI. Consider ProEdge the upskilling and citizen-led innovation platform we’ve designed based on key components of workforce development and retention:



Plan helps organizations identify digital skill gaps and deploy learning pathways to close them. It also compares employees’ skills against those needed for particular roles. Uncover areas of strengths and potential challenges and use that data to develop forward-looking plans for individuals, teams, functional groups and the enterprise as a whole.



Learn helps people build the digital skills they need to drive innovation—and to give your organization a competitive edge. Highly personalized, function-specific learning is coupled with experiential learning activities to close skill gaps while increasing participation. Portable credentials give people the edge to expand their careers.



Share gives access to a cloud-based exchange where everyone can find and distribute digital assets like dashboards, automated tools and plug-ins across the organization. This collaborative approach can inspire people to improve productivity and discover new ways of working.

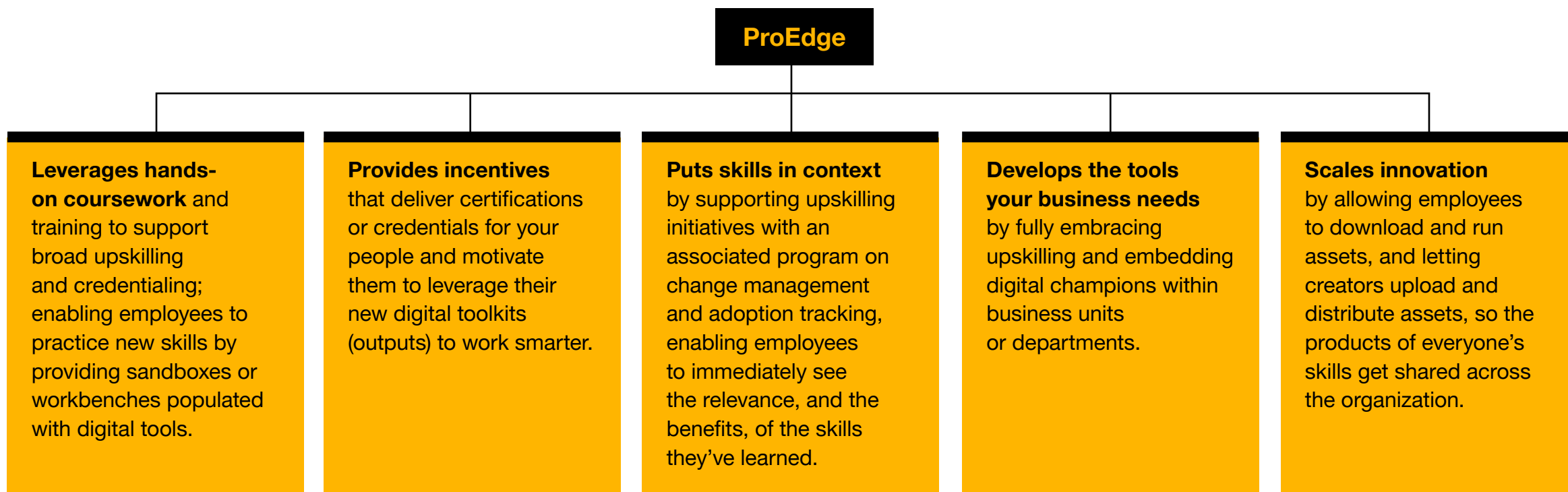
If you and your teams are considering implementing ProEdge and need to bring your cross-departmental partners along for the journey, consider focusing on the elements that are likely to matter to them the most:

- ✓ Personalized plans that develop individual skills
- ✓ Building the skills that drive productivity, engagement and innovation
- ✓ Improving retention and happiness

Personalized plans that develop individual skills

Upskilling isn't just about preparing workers for new roles in the face of automation and technologies, such as AI. **A people-first approach** helps employees grow with their jobs. That way, they do more than learn new skills—they also learn how to continue learning and growing as their work evolves.

ProEdge helps support personalized learning so you can develop needed talent and invest in your organization's future success.



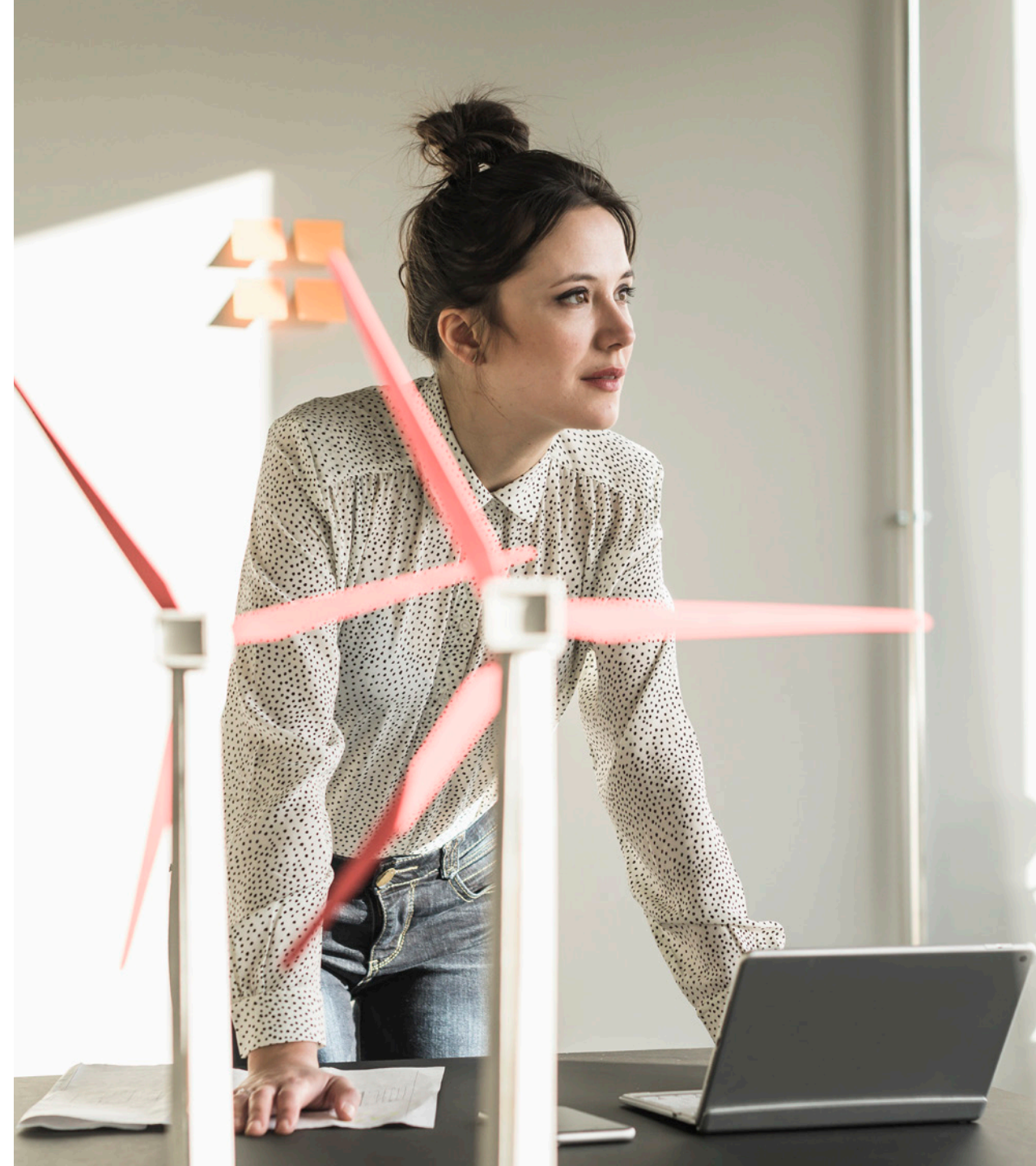
Build the skills that drive productivity, engagement and innovation

Giving people the space to experiment and apply their learning in ways that help the business can result in significant ROI—and creates an environment of sustainable productivity. This is citizen-led innovation: the ability of employees to choose the activities, including the skills and the means of learning them, that can make a difference to them and their work.

This citizen-led approach also encourages participation in **a community of innovators**. Employees are encouraged to experiment with their own ideas for innovations and to find entirely new ways of working. With the right mindset, technological literacy and community engagement, employees can bring their companies into the digital future.

When all individuals are decision-makers, they have the power to choose the projects they work on. But it's not a free-for-all.

Companies need a dedicated platform to orchestrate collaboration, propose new ideas for tools, post prototypes, recognize the value of other submissions, refine them in a transparent way and gain digital skills. It's a recipe for innovation—one that drives lasting engagement.



Improve engagement and retention across the workforce

Engaged employees can deliver long-term benefits to the business. Highly engaged business units tend to have less absenteeism and higher productivity.

Employees appreciate and respond positively when they see their company investing in their skills—and their future. This is key since even as talent shortages remain high and skill gaps emerge, **77% of workers** are ready to learn new skills or completely retrain to prepare for the future of digital.

Citizen-led innovation earns people's emotional commitment, which helps make change lasting, scalable and sustainable, rather than being a short-term initiative with limited impact.

Employees are often proud and excited to share ideas and innovations, and that enthusiasm can be contagious. When people have the right tools and support to feel fulfilled in their careers, they're more likely to spread the word outside the organization, boosting reputation and recruitment efforts.



Invest in Tomorrow

Stay ahead of the curve with ProEdge, the revolutionary way to upskill your people and prepare your organization for tomorrow. This unique platform allows you to pinpoint critical skill gaps and effectively help close them with automatically generated personalized learning pathways. Leading curated content, coursework and hands-on learning empowers your workforce to make an immediate impact at scale. ProEdge enables your people to perform at their highest level—giving them the power to help transform your entire organization.





Learn more at ProEdge.PwC.com



© 2022 PwC. All rights reserved. PwC refers to the PwC network and/or one or more of its member firms, each of which is a separate legal entity. Please see pwc.com/structure for further details. This content is for general information purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with professional advisors. 1256678-2022