

How to select the right upskilling solution:

A quick start guide



ProEdge

A PwC Product

Getting started

You've committed to starting or expanding an upskilling program. Now what? How can you be sure the solution you're considering offers a holistic approach to meeting the goals of the company, as well as your individual learners?

Start by determining the most meaningful and effective criteria for your organization's long-term success. In addition to closing the skills gap, an ideal upskilling platform should positively affect talent acquisition and retention as employees see new paths for career advancement and professional development.

Two key factors to consider are the learning content and the integrated technology tools that can help propel your workforce forward on a scalable, continuous learning journey. You need the right options for both.

An effective upskilling solution should:

- Align individual learning and skills development to the overarching goals of the business.
- Help identify skill mismatches and skill gaps, and create customized role- and function-based learning pathways to close them.
- Provide opportunities to actively practice new skills in learning environments centered around scenario-, role- and function-based learning so employees can apply those skills directly to their jobs.
- Allow people to earn industry-recognized, portable credentials.
- Integrate with your current learning management systems and other platforms.
- Be flexible enough to give you room to grow over time, and meet your current and future needs.
- Support long-term success in upskilling.
- Offer a scalable, citizen-led innovation platform so people throughout the organization can share digital solutions they've created (or request help in building them) for a better return on investment.

Align skills acquisition with both business and individual goals

Connect your upskilling strategy to your broader business growth goals, as well as the individual goals of learners.

To help accomplish this, senior leaders in human resources, learning and development, and other departments that could benefit from an upskilling program, must understand their business' strategy and the challenges in implementing it.

The right upskilling collaborator— one that can support and enhance your personal

and corporate goals—should meet people at the intersection of role, skill level, personal learning goals and function.

Rather than view upskilling as yet another perk, like tuition reimbursement or free parking, think of upskilling as a competitive advantage. If your workforce can use technology more effectively and efficiently, your organization can see improved returns on its digital transformation investments.

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Identify skills gaps and close them

Look for a solution that can leverage employee skills data to identify where your organization falls short – against industry peers and emerging disruptors.

The right product should use that data to build the right kind of learning pathways for your employees based on where they sit in the organization. For example, workers in the research and development group would be taught data visualization differently than employees in supply chain or procurement departments.

One weakness to watch for is a siloed approach to upskilling that fails to draw on data or doesn't share achievements with other workforce or learning platforms. Otherwise, you're isolating training and missing out on opportunities for an integrated approach.

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Many companies also get stuck on the wrong key performance indicators. Stay concentrated on **growth-focused** KPIs, such as workflow runs and automated asset adoption. These KPIs often rely on data recorded outside of any upskilling or learning platform, but they are key to establishing the credibility and return on investment (ROI) of your upskilling efforts.

An upskilling solution should ingest and synthesize data from human capital management (HCM) systems and existing learning management systems (LMS).

PwC's ProEdge upskilling platform can take the guesswork out of this process.

ProEdge is an end-to-end upskilling solution for digital business transformation across the enterprise. It works well in tandem with existing learning tools or as a stand-alone system.

This platform draws from more than 250 million industry-specific data points across numerous sources to identify critical skills gaps across the organization, as well as emerging and declining skills that will reshape industries in the future. Those insights are used to complete employee role- or function-based skill profiles. Employees can also update their skills profiles themselves.

ProEdge recommends learning journeys for each individual learner to help them acquire the new skills that can help them work differently and achieve more in their function and role.

It also suggests additional learning tracks. After someone completes coursework for agile project management, for example, ProEdge may present another curriculum for writing their own code or applying agile concepts to other job functions.



Provide opportunities to practice skills

One blind spot in some training programs is that they don't offer a way for people to show they've absorbed the material and understand how to apply it to their jobs. If they can't make use of their learnings, their new skills can wither. That erodes the ROI of the upskilling program, and can lead to disengagement and disappointment among learners who may feel their efforts were wasted.

Pick an upskilling solution that does the legwork for you.

Platforms that include real-world business scenarios and project-based learning are more effective because those activities help people use their newfound skills to solve business challenges and improve their performance.

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More than a third of job candidates

say they'd be willing to take a pay cut for a chance to learn new skills, according to PwC's 2019 Future of Recruiting survey. The same percentage said upskilling opportunities are the most important factor when deciding whether to take a new job, after salary and benefits.

Opportunities to learn helps attract talent, improve retention rates and boost confidence while also helping people feel their employer is more invested in their success.

Letting users opt in and have some

choice in their learning pathways increases engagement. Managers should encourage people to take some additional coursework that interests them, even if it's not directly applicable to their current job.

For instance, an employee who works on the production line at a factory might be interested in learning about finance or supply chain management. They would likely find ways to apply those skills to their job in some fashion to make better data-driven decisions and think more creatively when they encounter business problems.



Allow people to earn credentials and apply skills to their jobs

An upskilling platform should also allow learners to demonstrate competency in the specific skills they need to advance their individual careers as well as support business goals.

We've identified skills in over 20 functional areas including finance, research and development, sales and marketing that are critical for corporate growth and performance.

ProEdge Credentials are designed to help people develop those skills. They empower workers to perform better in their jobs because the coursework that leads to the credentials is specifically designed to teach them new digital skills that they can apply to function-specific tasks.



Milestones outline their progress each step of the way as the learner works toward skill mastery. Individuals must demonstrate proficiency by completing capstone projects that may include working in a safe sandbox environment where they can test their skills. These projects walk people through function-specific scenarios where they apply their new knowledge to solve realistic business problems.

This isn't a routine check-the-box exercise.

Each project is reviewed by a professional with experience in that field. It's a high-touch personalized process with constructive feedback on their performance. PwC's subject matter specialists grade the project, and if the learner's skills don't progress enough, they get specific advice on how to improve so they can work on it again and resubmit.

ProEdge's capstone projects walk learners through function-specific scenarios where they apply their new knowledge to solve realistic business problems.



Upskilling with ProEdge, a PwC product

It used to be virtually impossible to know the exact skills thousands of people across an organization needed to deliver more value to the business.

ProEdge's data-driven curriculum pathways helps make that happen for workers at every level: from executives to senior leaders, mid-level managers, team leaders and employees at the dawn of their careers.

Our content curation process automatically generates workforce profiles and presents learning pathways that are relevant to each person's role, function and industry. Data visualization will be taught differently to someone in finance than someone in sales, for example.

Because our curation process is tailored to each individual's needs, it adapts, and begins to close the skills gap, as your entire company engages with the platform. With that kind of personalization, you can meet each learner where they are, and present the right training—including differentiating skills that set high performers apart.

ProEdge delivers the specificity organizations need with curated learning pathways that reveal exactly what skills thousands of people across the enterprise must have to succeed.



Integration with existing LMS and training systems

ProEdge can integrate with existing LMS and HCM systems and can be tailored to incorporate your company's unique internal requirements.

ProEdge's easy-to-use dashboard shows progress as skills are acquired at individual, function and department levels. It also gives managers better insights into which skills are only partially developed across the organization, and which ones are still lagging.

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Your upskilling strategy should meet your current and future needs

Look for an upskilling solution that offers flexibility for your immediate and future needs, which will evolve over time.

ProEdge **can be implemented in phases** or by function so you can see the initial impact and ROI before rolling it out across the organization.

It's also adaptive, and automatically adjusts the learning pathways for individuals as they move through their personalized learning journey. Managers can set specific goals or targets to address skills mismatches for employees as well as give employees with high potential more challenging coursework to prepare them for future roles.



ProEdge provides access to a [curated library of more than 175,000 assets from content providers](#) and subject matter specialists such as The Economist, Inc., and MIT Technology Review, plus training for relevant digital tools that help people do their work better.

Employees learn to build the solutions your organization needs to solve unique challenges, and they can share their new digital assets with colleagues across the enterprise to achieve scale and create a culture of continuous learning.

ProEdge is committed to diversity and inclusion (D&I). We've deliberately curated and developed content with authorship and perspectives from people with a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences.



Determine what successful upskilling looks like for your organization

You can build confidence in investment decisions and justify the expense of an upskilling program by connecting that spending with projected improvements in skills acquisition, talent retention, more successful recruitment and competitive advantages that demonstrate ROI.

The investment is worth it.

Companies that have been the most successful in their digital transformations invested 33% more than their peers. Three-fourths of them say they're getting "significant value" from new ways of working, according to our [2020 Global Digital IQ survey of 2,380 executives](#).

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The payoffs are clear.

- Digital “Transcenders” are the winning 5% on the path to digital transformation, **and they reported:**
- 17% higher profit margin growth over three years
- 84% increase in the time their people spend innovating
- 72% of people adopt new programs and technology
- 92% of these companies gather new ideas from people at all levels of staff

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Choose an end-to-end solution that's scalable and customizable

As you evaluate upskilling solutions to help your organization achieve its goals for growth, consider the entire package and capabilities of what each platform provides.

Can it identify your current skills gaps, as well as future critical skills that your workforce needs to develop to stay competitive? Are there personalized learning pathways that can close those gaps?

Can it integrate with your existing learning programs, and can it be customized to include evaluations and internal training programs that are unique to your business?

Does it offer project-based learning to test and apply those new skills and earn credentials after demonstrating proficiency? Can it be scaled across the organization as your needs change and new skills gaps emerge?

ProEdge can deliver these benefits.

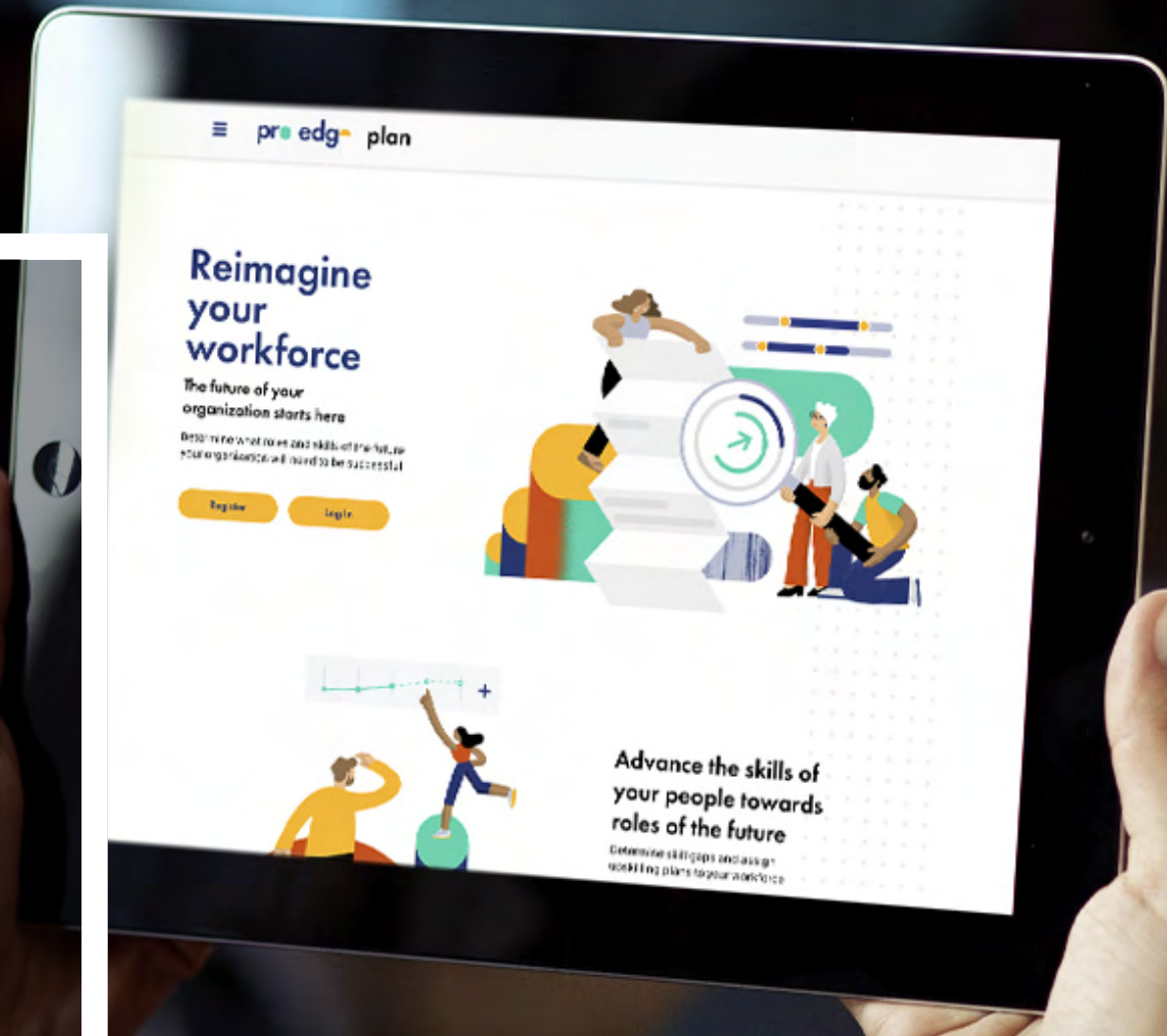
Make a stronger case for investment in an upskilling solution by choosing one that's designed to be scalable, repeatable and adaptive across the organization for employees at all levels.



Invest in Tomorrow

Stay ahead of the curve with PwC 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 empower your workforce to make an immediate impact through citizen-led innovation. Access to digital tools enables solution-building that scales across teams. This is how ProEdge helps your people to perform at their highest level—giving them the power to help transform your entire organization.

[Learn more at ProEdge.PwC.com](https://ProEdge.PwC.com)





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