

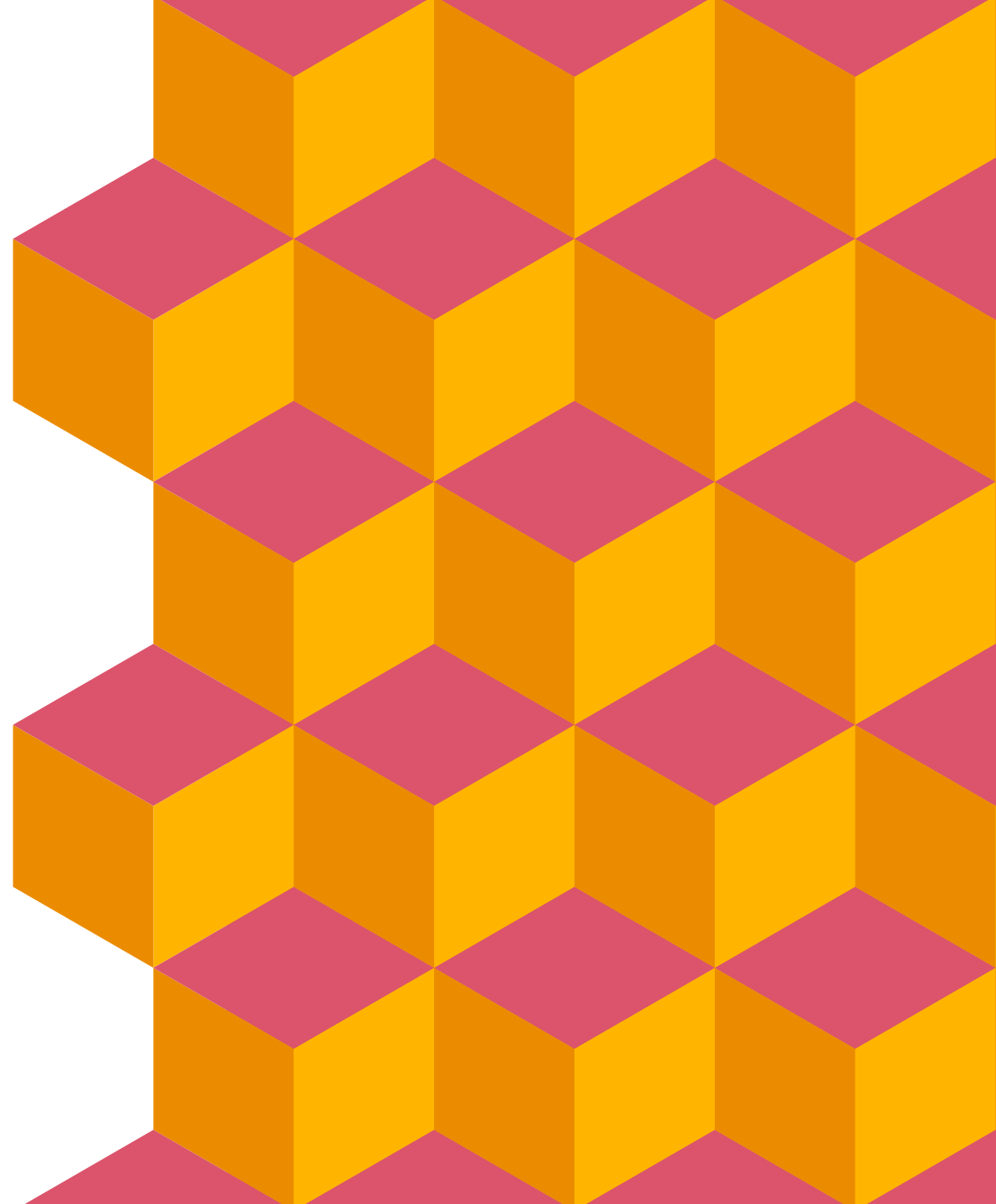
# Digital upskilling at scale

GenAI, data analytics, automation  
and other skills you should develop  
across your enterprise



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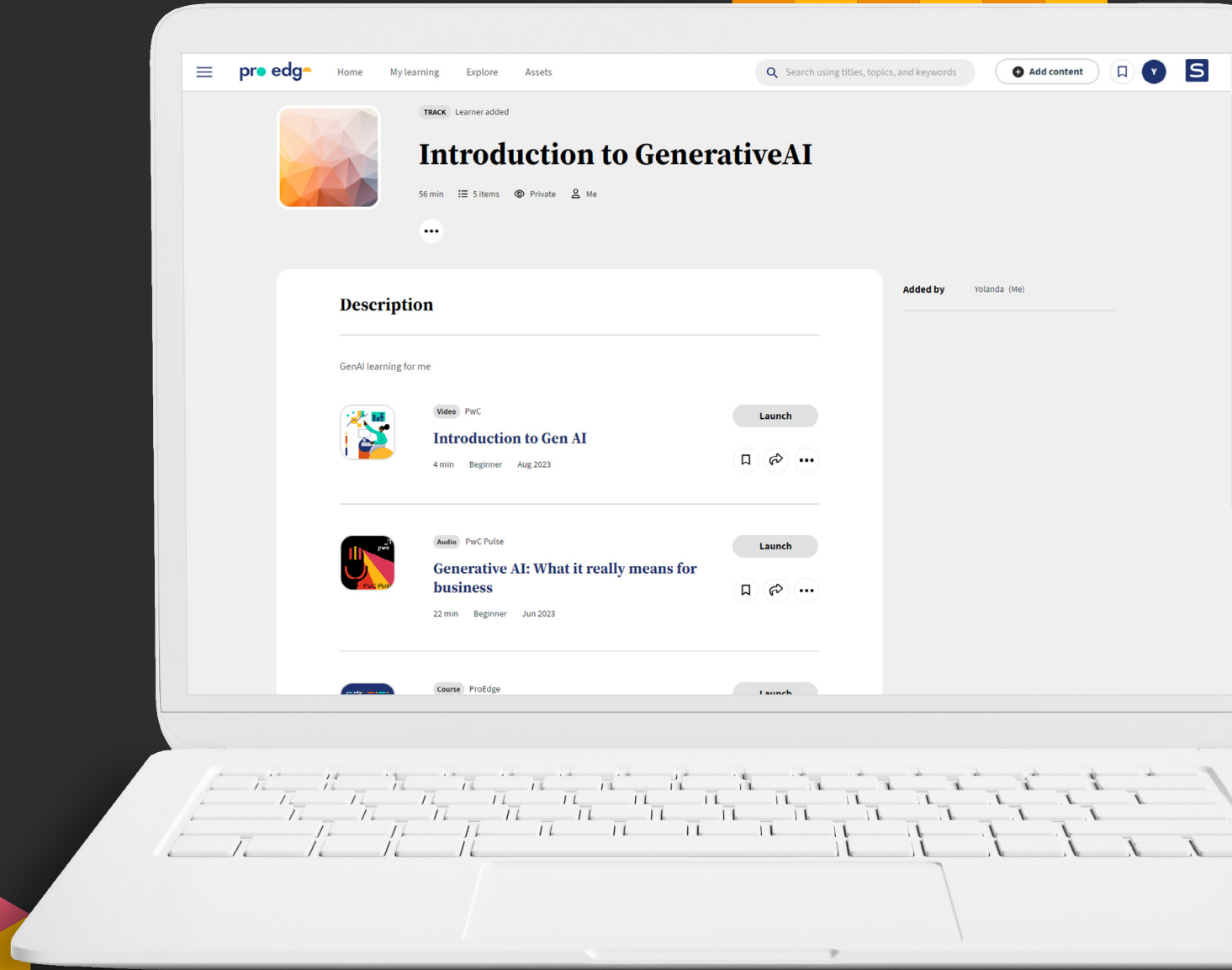


Staying relevant and gaining competitive advantage are often top of mind for businesses—but what does it take to accomplish these goals in today’s digital landscape? With the advent of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), digital upskilling is likely to become an imperative.

**Our 27th Annual Global CEO Survey found that 69% of CEOs agree\* that GenAI will require most of their workforce to develop new skills in the next three years. As digital transformation changes how people work, business leaders should make significant training and upskilling investments to help stay competitive and develop talent.**

To help gain an advantage from training their workforce in new technologies and tools, leaders should act now, especially as GenAI continues to advance at a rapid pace.

\*Source: [PwC's 27th Annual Global CEO Survey](#)



It's increasingly clear that technologies such as GenAI will likely force certain jobs to change or disappear in the next five to ten years. Inaction shouldn't be an option, and businesses that don't invest in digital upskilling risk falling behind, failing to innovate, missing out on productivity improvements and losing talented workers. Empowering employees—throughout the organization—with new digital tools and skills can be key. These efforts can help your workforce work more efficiently and be more productive. Additionally, GenAI and its capabilities help create entirely new business models and processes. These gains can move the needle on a company's larger goals to improve growth and productivity. Employees can benefit when learning programs align with the business' goals.

**Developing a digitally capable workforce requires more than an investment in technology. You should understand what skills are needed in, and beneficial to, your company and industry. Creating a culture of continuous learning includes teaching, testing and certifying those critical skills at scale.**



# Disruption can accelerate change

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Rapid technology-driven change has been underway for decades, and employees have become increasingly aware that they likely need new skills to help them do their jobs more strategically and efficiently.

The COVID-19 pandemic, cloud services, 5G, and other disruptions have contributed to the hastening of digital evolution of many companies. Now, technologies such as GenAI have evolved at even faster paces, further cementing digital skills as a crucial piece of many workforces.

Meanwhile, competing demands from work colleagues and customers sparked a stronger desire in many to learn to use digital tools to help make better decisions and dispatch routine tasks more efficiently. The technologies behind these tools include robotic process automation (RPA), artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, and data automation and visualization. When GenAI emerged in late 2022, the disruption continued to escalate workforce transformation.



# An adaptable workforce

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The challenge of creating a tech-savvy workforce doesn't rely on technology alone. It's knowing where and how to invest in the right digital tools and training platforms to help you get there. It's also fostering a culture of continuous learning and embracing disruptive change that encourages people to keep building new skills for the rest of their careers.

Alongside digital skills, organizations should teach “soft” skills and related concepts through workshops or scenario-based learning modules, including:



**Design thinking**



**Service design**



**Change management**



**Agile project management**



**Leadership development and team management**



**Empathy, ethics, and inclusion**



# Rely less on shared services by growing talent and innovation from within

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Many companies rely on shared services to meet their workforce needs, which can lead to silos and shortages of skills and can make it harder to deliver value to the enterprise. It can also impact productivity. For example, employees often wait to get help from IT to generate a piece of code or build a bot that automates certain processes.

Relying on shared services may also deprive an organization of opportunities for functional specialists to apply knowledge gained from years of experience to help solve problems or improve processes.



Encouraging a citizen-led approach to innovation can empower employees to take charge of their learning journey and creatively apply new skills to their work. Giving employees ample opportunity to learn how to use applicable tech tools such as GenAI to automate or reduce manual, time-consuming tasks helps drive adoption and can contribute to a company-wide culture of innovation and business model reinvention. It also helps people learn to apply technologies and concepts to future challenges in repeatable ways. Seeing colleagues approach their jobs with new energy, focus, and methods often motivates other employees to start their own digital learning journeys.

**A holistic approach to upskilling also includes learning new technologies and better ways of working that can help create a new digital mindset, propelling the company toward a culture of continuous innovation.**



# Five key upskilling areas

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Business leaders should invest in upskilling their workforce in these five areas:

## 1 Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)

GenAI can automate or speed up tasks that require human cognition, such as fraud detection, creating maintenance schedules for equipment or valuation of other physical assets. It can help with human decision-making, project oversight, customer retention, and go-to-market strategies for new products and services. For example, marketers could use GenAI to help identify leads earlier in the sales process. Then, they could use algorithms to forecast what customers will likely do next by collecting the right data and testing it in predictive models.





## 2 Data analytics and visualization

People can often process visual objects more easily than trying to analyze reams of spreadsheet data. Easy-to-use, impactful data visualization tools can identify new patterns and convey complex concepts to help people make decisions more quickly—with confidence.

For example, an inventory management team could use data visualization tools as part of their cost-benefit analysis. They can more easily compare variables such as just-in-time purchasing, warehousing and staging costs, expedited shipping expenses, customer satisfaction, and departmental growth goals to help improve how they handle products with the highest margins.



### 3 Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

RPA software can be easy to deploy and can perform time-consuming, rules-based tasks. It works with existing systems and processes, so it can reduce the need for resource-heavy specialty skills, like custom software development.

For example, finance, operations, maintenance, and sales departments could use RPA software for data cleansing and normalization tasks.



## 4 Agile project management

This value-driven approach helps organizations create and introduce new products and services in a highly flexible and interactive way. It can increase time to market and improve the quality of work while also encouraging collaboration among stakeholder groups across departments.

Understanding agile approaches can empower employees to manage smaller projects within departments more effectively.

It can also give them a deeper understanding of how to improve processes and performance on larger projects. For example, if a telecommunications company is implementing a major equipment upgrade in a metropolitan area, field service workers could use agile project management to streamline route planning. Employees could pinpoint efficiencies, then analyze results, make adjustments and find more ways to save time.



## 5 Design thinking

Design thinking is an approach to product design that prioritizes users, taking an iterative approach that encourages improvement through testing and incorporating user feedback. It is not, however, limited to product design and can be applied to problem-solving, collaboration, and decision-making.

For example, a group of revenue management employees can apply the design thinking when they analyze the price elasticity of a new product. They could model the effect of offering coupons or discount programs that may entice new customers to buy. These concepts could also help determine the price or breaking point.



# Middle management's role

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Direct supervisors should incentivize and motivate their teams by showing they value a culture of learning and supporting a citizen-led approach. Managers can do this primarily by letting employees take ownership of their own educational journey and encouraging them to take courses that interest them. Time-sensitive new skills like GenAI prompting and department-specific use cases should be included in the employees' regular workload.

It's important to carve out time for employees to gain new skills. Someone who's already working late into the night and on weekends just to stay on top of their current job responsibilities isn't likely to have the energy or bandwidth to add upskilling courses to their workload. Reassign projects or rebalance work among your team if this is the case.



Look for opportunities to apply the new skills and tools your team acquires in training to help improve processes and solve challenges they encounter in their day-to-day work. Make time to reflect as a team on what's successful and whether or how they can apply those ideas to other projects. Give employees the freedom to test their new skills in a sandbox environment and acknowledge their achievements when they earn certifications or reach milestones on their learning journey.

Managers should also lead by example and participate in learning programs themselves. They can act as change agents and talk with their teams about what courses they've taken, what they learned, how they're applying new skills or tools and discussing how upskilling has improved their work lives.



# Upskilling in recruitment and retention

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A holistic learning platform and a commitment to investing in upskilling can be valuable recruiting tools with prospective employees, including workers gained through acquisitions, joint ventures, mergers and vendor relationships.

Holistic upskilling programs can also help your organization retain your top-performing employees by opening new career paths for them within the company.



# Focus on outcomes

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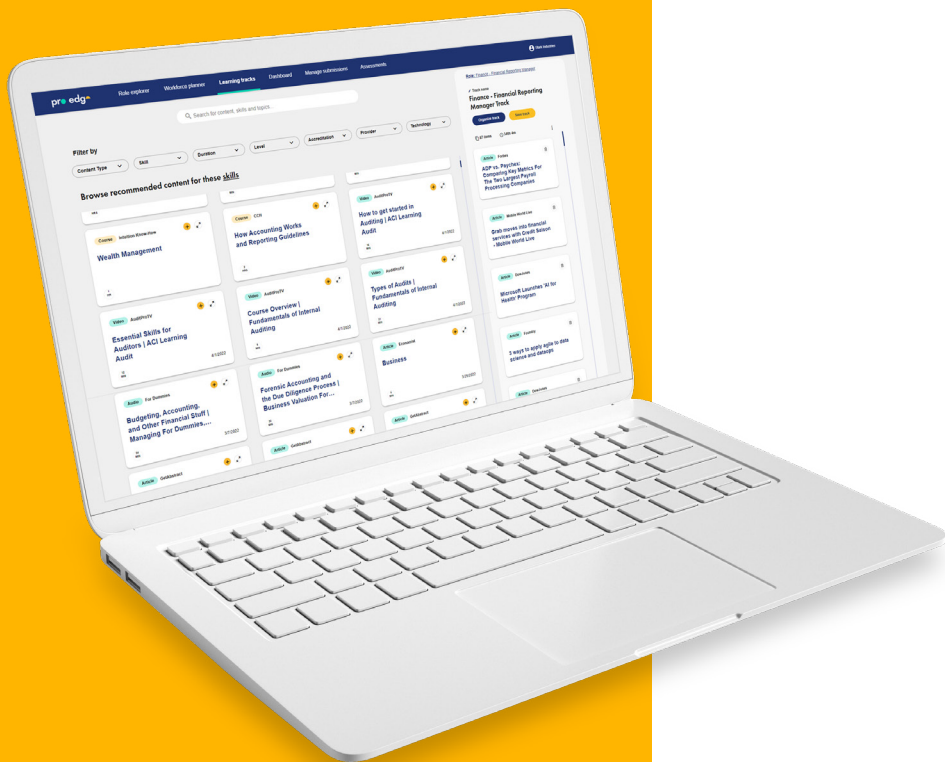
One way to measure corporate learning success is to look at the outcomes and progress toward business goals. Here are a few questions to consider:

- **Are employees saving time on repetitive, manual tasks using automation or GenAI?**
- **Are teams delivering projects more quickly and within budget?**
- **Does data visualization help leaders make decisions that bring in more revenue or reduce costs?**
- **Are there new career paths for employees?**
- **Has attrition declined?**

You can create an enduring innovation mindset and culture of learning as part of your upskilling strategy, which should include employees across levels of the enterprise. If you haven't started, it's not too late. But the longer you wait, the more time your competitors can reinvent the future.







## Invest in Tomorrow

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