

A man in a light blue shirt is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. He is looking at the screen with a slight smile. The background is a blurred office environment with a desk, a cup, and other office equipment.

Scale your way to digital upskilling success

How to roll out enterprise-wide learning using a phased approach



ProEdge

A PwC Product

Researching, acquiring and implementing an enterprise-wide upskilling initiative can seem like an intimidating task. That's probably why so many companies decide not to start, or they put off the decision until some imagined future when time and resources are abundant.

While business leaders agree that digital upskilling is a must, only 18% of global CEOs in [PwC's 2020 Talent Trends survey](#) said their company has made "significant progress" in establishing an upskilling program.

Upskilling can be a huge undertaking and investment, but it doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing proposition. It can be implemented in phases, over time, starting with a single department or a functional team. And while the transformation itself may be incremental, you can see benefits along the journey—and the overall impact your enterprise and business strategy can realize can be enormous.

How do you find the starting place for enterprise upskilling? And what does it take to continue building on it successfully?

In many organizations, incremental change is often the most enduring. You can see what works, where to improve and what needs to scale.

When you make smaller, more gradual investments, you're demonstrating the return on investment in one department or group, which can then help you make the business case to expand elsewhere. Each phase can provide proof points that demonstrate small, but significant, successes in your organization.



Assign clear roles and implement a change management strategy

Allocating the necessary resources to embark on an upskilling program can be difficult. And it's not just about the budget it takes to invest in a learning platform. There's also the time—time spent by the people who manage the change and administer the program—and time employees commit to engage with the program as learners.

Bringing about change in an organization is challenging. Institutional inertia often means that even a small shift in strategy or operations can cause a big disruption.

Assign clear roles and map out a solid change management strategy, so you can fully understand, plan, implement and communicate any changes in a way that brings everyone along.

There are several important questions to ask and key decisions to be made, including:

- What does it take to **develop a culture that prioritizes learning**?
- How will you get people to dedicate time to run the program?
- Who implements the overall digital upskilling strategy?
- Who owns change management and mandates and tracks the time for training?
- How will you **communicate the details** of the program to the people involved in a way that boosts adoption?

Finding the answers to these questions, and identifying program owners within your functional areas, can help make the rollout of learning programs more likely to succeed.



How do you decide who owns what? It depends on the organization. Usually it's learning and development (L&D), human resources (HR), or some combination of these groups. But it can also be expanded to involve departments across an organization.



Learning and development (L&D) teams oversee training for many businesses—everything from mandatory courses on operations and safety, to education that helps support corporate culture as well as career development.



Human resource (HR) groups are often in charge of—or heavily involved in—learning and development. That makes sense since upskilling programs can be essential to attract new talent, retain existing employees and keep them all engaged and productive.



All functional areas in an organization can take ownership of parts of the rollout. If one function adopts a learning program independently and sees success, they can be ambassadors for wider application of digital tools—like automations and data visualizations—to help solve problems and streamline work. Sharing success stories generates excitement and contributes to building a culture of continuous learning and innovation.



No matter which team manages it, the results are clear: 93% of CEOs who introduce upskilling programs see increased productivity, improved talent acquisition and retention and a more resilient workforce, according to a [PwC survey of Global CEOs](#).

To start seeing that kind of return on a learning investment, it may make sense to make implementation a joint approach between L&D and HR. But strive to think outside the traditional avenues. See if it might

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be possible to share responsibility across all departments and create more of a grassroots movement within your organization. Give your company permission to tailor the approach to your organization's needs.

The businesses that readily succeed at this have been called ["Transcenders" by PwC researchers](#). These resilient companies have set a clear direction for their digital strategy, and 84% mandate collaboration and cross-

84%

of Transcenders mandate collaboration and cross-functional work, while also providing the upskilling tools and forward-looking leadership

functional work, while also providing the upskilling tools and forward-looking leadership to make it happen.

The results of being a Transcender? They've seen 17% higher profit margin growth over three years, and 76% get significant value from the new ways of working they've developed. The good news is that you can create this big, bold vision for your organization while starting small and scaling up. The most important thing is to lay the groundwork and get started.

76%

of Transcenders get significant value from the new ways of working they've developed



Find a right-sized solution

To set the foundation for an enduring and effective learning strategy, start at the group or departmental level and then scale across the organization. Learning and Development can join forces with Human Resources to find a right-sized solution (like a scalable upskilling platform) that works within the company's budget. Or you can seek their assistance in finding the right platform to support the upskilling goals of your department. Since training resources are often decentralized, this can be a smart way to put a stake in the ground and get the process started.

Leaders across both L&D and HR must also connect the skill strategy to the overall business goals. That requires an in-depth understanding of the business strategy and its implementation challenges. It also usually entails collaboration across departments with functional leaders, with cross-functional teams working together to identify the skills they need.

To start:

- Define what the future looks like and identify what skills and capabilities you need to get you there.
- Determine the strategic training and development objectives that address those challenges and make sure the purpose is clear.
- Support continuous learning with targeted upskilling initiatives that focus on those goals.
- Monitor progress and measure results to confirm upskilling initiatives are on track.



With a phased approach, you can roll out the learning strategy one group or function at a time. Have checkpoints along the way to measure and demonstrate the ROI each team realizes. As adoption continues, each phase of the implementation should **align learning to business goals**—as well as your company culture—with increasing accuracy.

By prioritizing certain skills to target first, you can keep the program focused on what's most clearly beneficial to your business. Not only will this demonstrate value, but it will also keep the scope narrow and the level of learning within employees' reach. The last thing you want to do is overwhelm people—and potentially burn them out—by trying to upskill across too many gaps and knowledge areas at once.

Skills prioritization is a win for both the individuals and the enterprise.

Leaders want to understand the **return on their upskilling investment**, especially since tracking ROI on learning investment has historically been tricky. But measuring those returns is tricky. Estimating participation and engagement in traditional learning programs is just that—an estimate. More accurate details can be gleaned from content consumption data. But are people getting anything out of the learning content they engage with?

These factors further make the case for homing in on needed skills tied to specific business initiatives—and make the learning relevant to the work your employees actually do. Communicating that clearly to staff can also boost adoption. It's an approach that aids in change management and improves ROI.



Define what success looks like at every stage of the rollout

How do you measure the success of a learning solution? It depends on your organization. If you're just getting started with digital upskilling, small, incremental wins are key. After all, even something that sounds simple, like gaining an accurate view of the skills your organization already has, can be a big achievement.

If, by contrast, your organization is already on the path to digital transformation but has required a more disciplined, unified approach to upskilling, your success metrics will be multifaceted. One size does not fit all.

84%

of Transcenders see an increase in time their people spend innovating

Key metrics should be driven by your business goals. If you want to increase automation capabilities, for example, you might want to start upskilling employees on how to develop automations (or "bots"), using tools that don't require coding expertise. This might then lead to having them explore data extraction, visualization or artificial intelligence.

You might measure success by looking at how many people complete the training. A more significant indicator would be how many

92%

of Transcenders gather new ideas across all staff levels

automations have been created and how much time they saved, because your people aren't having to do the manual, repetitive parts of their job.

For benchmark comparisons, look to the Transcenders for inspiration. If you go all-in as these trailblazing organizations do, you can start to see big payoffs. In fact, 92% of the companies that become digital leaders **have remarkable success metrics**:

72%

of Transcenders benefit from widespread adoption of new programs and technology

Transcenders are better able to attract and keep the best talent, which is essential in today's increasingly competitive marketplace.

Find a solution that can start small and scale up to an enterprise-wide implementation with consistent levels of quality and reliability.

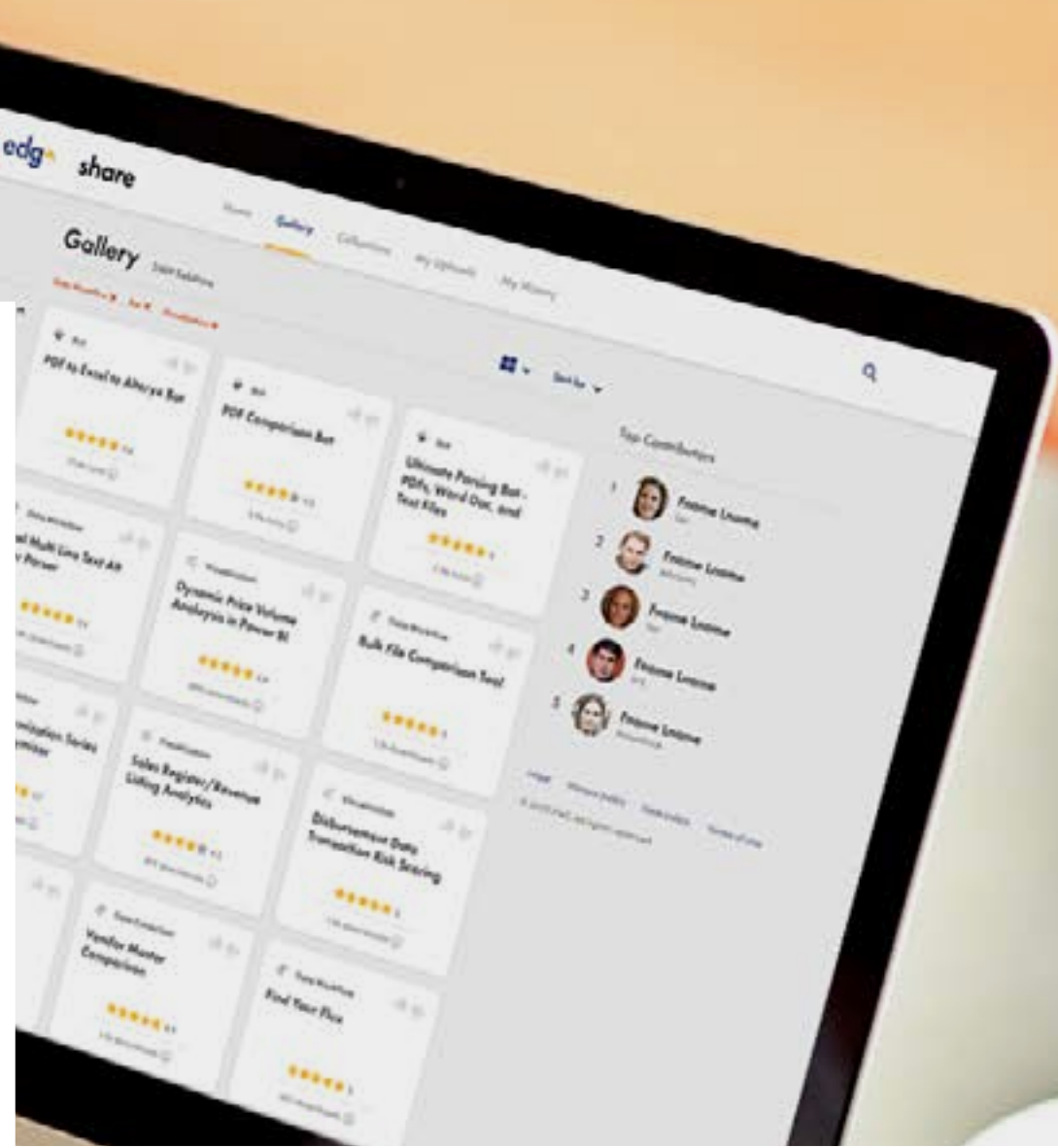
Understanding the **KPIs for corporate learning platforms can help** you find a solution that works for your business. You'll see how to go beyond basic usage metrics, like time spent learning, course completion rates, and user satisfaction, to find the KPIs that drive successful learning outcomes and have business impact.

Remember to treat your company's upskilling journey, and its KPIs, as a continuously evolving effort—one that progresses and gets fine-tuned over time. No matter where you are on your path, a good way to start seeing results quickly is to find a solution that's customizable as well as scalable. Ideally, it should also make upskilling engaging, social and even fun—providing the kinds of experiences today's workers demand.



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.





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