

# Top five considerations to implement upskilling in data analytics and drive value in 2021

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**ProEdge**

A PwC Product

# The digital skill gap problem and the need for upskilling in data analytics and automation

Unlocking the power of your organization's data can enable you to discover trends that help inform better decision making, increase speed to insights and provide a quantifiable basis for defining business goals. Additionally, combining automation with data analytics can decrease time spent on manual tasks and data prep. But many employees lack the digital skills needed to wrangle big data and put it to work for their organization. Upskilling can provide a solution, and it's top-of-mind for many organizations—with 74% of CEOs saying the lack of key skills is a major concern.

The need for upskilling, reskilling and automation technology has never been higher—and 75% of CEOs believe this shift toward automation will continue. But in order to upskill in data analytics in ways that apply to the business, organizations need a holistic approach that provides hands-on learning that sticks—and scales. ProEdge, PwC's new digital workforce transformation platform, can fit the bill.

ProEdge identifies your organization's skill gaps and formulates learning pathways to help close those gaps. It also gives employees access to tools they can use to practice newfound digital skills as well as a social exchange where they can find and distribute automation and data analytics solutions to scale the upskilling benefits across the enterprise. Alteryx is one of the powerful automation and data analytics tools ProEdge users can leverage to automate workflows, create predictive models and increase speed to insights.

Let's examine five ways you can implement data analytics upskilling to drive value and set you up for success in 2021 and beyond—and how ProEdge and Alteryx can support your efforts.





# 1. Align individual learning with organizational goals

Upskilling works best when it benefits both individuals and organizations. Giving your workforce engaging, interactive ways to learn new digital skills can encourage a culture of continuous learning, reshape roles across the organization, design and deliver career paths for employees and move the company closer to achieving its goals. When employees know they're being invested in, and have opportunities to practice skills in ways that can prepare them to contribute to a company's growth, they feel relevant, valued and part of a shared success.

A workforce empowered by continuous learning can lead to increased productivity and reduced churn. When more of your people are equipped to put data to work in their everyday tasks, they'll have the know-how to become true innovators. They find ways to integrate data analysis,

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automate tedious tasks, improve customer experiences and even apply AI to analyze data faster and more accurately.

Upskilling in data analytics gives employees opportunities to use new digital skills to help solve the business problems they're closest to. This upskilling can be most effective if it's targeted by role, function and skill level and gives people the right combination of skills, tools and training that transfers knowledge to business impact.

## 2. Invest in targeted learning programs and user-friendly digital tools



Upskilling has a better chance of success if the programs and tools you use are learner-centric, easy to use and easy to roll out company-wide. When your employee's personalized learning journey meets them where they are with the right tools and content, they are set up for success. The right tools can help organize and analyze data, increase speed to insights, reduce errors and decrease time on repetitive tasks. In short, they're the kinds of tools that can make a significant business impact. They also empower employees to work more efficiently by arming them with the relevant skills they need for the problems specific to their roles, functions and industries. It empowers the citizen-led innovation that can drive transformation.

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What does this look like in practice? We can look at PwC's approach to digital transformation as an example. The firm's people wanted skills development so they could remain relevant and be leaders in their field. PwC's response was to invest in tools and technologies that would get them there in ways that also aligned with organizational goals.

The Alteryx Analytics Process Automation (APA) Platform was a component of how they transformed themselves, allowing them to deliver greater value and insights to clients.

Alteryx APA is an example of a user-friendly, code-free and code-friendly, easy-to-roll-out automated analytics tool with drag and drop data preparation that anyone can learn. Alteryx APA enables employees to tap into the potential of data analytics to drive decision-making and uncover deeper insights into market trends, customer behavior and even customer intent—and get there faster.

Alteryx tools can also streamline data wrangling by gaining the ability to efficiently collect, clean, structure and validate data from various sources so it can be analyzed. No more poring over spreadsheets—APA can automate the sorting, calculating and other tasks to help reduce time spent preparing data so you can get to insights quicker.

Once you have the right tools in play, then you need a means of training employees across an organization. This is where ProEdge and Alteryx work together. ProEdge was built by the people who powered PwC's digital transformation. Platform packages can also include access to automation and data analytics tools from Alteryx, UiPath, Automation Anywhere and others.

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Once people learn how to use these tools, ProEdge Share gives them a way to share the Alteryx solutions their new skills enable them to build. This cloud-based, internal social exchange empowers everyone in your organization to find and distribute digital assets—contributing further to a culture of continuous learning, ownership of work and citizen-led innovation. This is where the enterprise can realize the benefits of upskilling in data analytics at scale.



### 3. Solve for working from home




A major factor in employee ownership of work that can drive both productivity and satisfaction is increased flexibility. At the start of the pandemic, many companies transitioned to working remotely, while others had to scramble to reinvent their business models. Tech-enabled organizations that had already invested in upskilling before the pandemic adapted more quickly to supporting a remote workforce because they'd already empowered their people to work from anywhere. This included those who had employed data analytics and automation tools to optimize tasks. Performing those tasks remotely was easy because they were already automated.

Companies that may have been slow to adopt technologies that support remote work—or to create clear rules and a secure structure around working from home—are still playing

catch-up. This will most likely continue even as more traditional offices open for in-person work. And as that happens, many employees will still want the flexibility of remote work, even if it's only one or two days a week. Optimizing a hybrid workplace that allows for working from home requires accelerating investments to support virtual collaboration and creativity, as well as for scheduling and safety. It also means upskilling, and over 60% of executives expect to raise spending on virtual collaboration tools and training.

Employees at all levels, in all functions, need the digital skills required in an ever-changing business environment, including remote and hybrid working models. Workers also need the confidence to apply their newfound skills in bold new ways that improve ways of working and add value to the business.

## 4. Focus on upskilling that leads to credentialing



Substantiating skills acquisition with credentials adds value to individual career paths and gives people know-how to apply learning to business. The ProEdge platform offers learning pathways that culminate in credentials. To earn ProEdge Credentials in data analytics, employees complete projects using digital tools like Alteryx APA to create and integrate data roadmaps for business processes and acquire, cleanse and synthesize data in order to build visualizations that can drive decision making.

ProEdge also seamlessly integrates with Alteryx content. People can access Alteryx learning modules for beginners through advanced levels. Your employees can learn about spatial analytics, macros and predictive modules, using Alteryx to automate analytics processes, map data and more.

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## 5. Get function-specific in upskilling with a focus on finance and supply chain



Relevance is key when it comes to implementing an upskilling program. Learning experiences tailored to employees in the context of their functions, roles and skill levels can help solve the transfer gap people may have when trying to apply what they learn in training to their everyday work. This kind of targeted, customized training can help people more readily apply their skills to everyday business problems, especially when it comes to data analytics.

Digital trends projected for 2021 call for investments in data analytics to support the finance and supply chain functions. Let's take a look at how ProEdge and Alteryx can support function-specific upskilling in these areas.

In the finance function, trends for 2021 show a need for data scientists and predictive risk analysts with the skills to carry out tasks in those roles, like AI, RPA and intelligent automation, cloud ERP and data visualization. Upskilling people to take on these roles will complement parallel investments in data analytics, automation, cloud, customer experience and product and service transformation. These strategies can work together to help reduce costs, improve forecasting and reporting insights, as well as increase efficiency and data transparency.

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ProEdge can provide access to Alteryx tools and the function-specific credentialing in Finance and Tax to prepare your people to support these kinds of efforts. For example, to earn the ProEdge Credential for Decisions with Data Insights in Finance, users are required to complete a scenario-based project where they demonstrate their ability to acquire, cleanse and explore financial data using tools like Alteryx. Then employees build a dashboard that conveys trends and insights to better inform decision-making across business units. Upon successful completion of the project, users earn the credential, having proven their ability to apply data analytics to their role in the finance function.

In the supply chain function, trends for 2021 also show a need for data scientists with skills in Machine Learning (ML), AI and predictive analytics. Upskilling supply chain employees can help support the prioritizing of supply chain transformation (e.g., updating legacy systems, innovating with cloud, AI, analytics and Internet of Things technologies). These efforts can work together to help reduce supply chain costs and environmental impact with initiatives like smart logistics, automated warehouses and next-level transportation management systems.

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Other innovations in supply chain can make huge strides in speed to insights that improve decision making, such as data transparency, real-time data gathering and tracking. Technologies like AI can also be leveraged to simulate and predict supply chain scenarios.

Again, ProEdge and Alteryx can work together to make sure your employees are equipped with the training and the tools to accomplish these tasks. ProEdge learners will be able to earn credentials in supply chain by completing scenario-based projects where they have to acquire, cleanse, explore and synthesize unrelated data into actionable insights. They can use Alteryx data analytics tools to do this and earn ProEdge Credentials such as Driving Decisions with Data Insights in Supply Chain and Creating and Integrating Data Roadmaps in Supply Chain.

# The takeaway

Harnessing the power of data analytics arms your business with the tools and insights to drive quick decisions and efficiencies. Upskilling your people in ways that enable them to contribute to digital transformation can create lasting change and achieve significant return on your upskilling investments.

With powerful industry-leading technology workspaces, you can help your employees learn and grow their abilities.

With powerful industry-leading technology workspaces, you can help your employees learn and grow their abilities. You can also help your organization see the benefits of upskilling faster. When individual learning is aligned with organizational goals, you equip your people with the skills that contribute to growth. Digital tools like Alteryx APA and learning experiences, like those available in the ProEdge platform, enable your people to perform at their highest level—empowering them to help transform your entire organization.





To learn how Alteryx APA combines with PwC's digital transformation experience to help accelerate digital transformation, read about our [\*\*alliance relationship here\*\*](#).

## About Alteryx

As a leader in analytic process automation (APA), Alteryx unifies analytics, data science and business process automation in one, end-to-end platform to accelerate digital transformation. Organizations of all sizes, all over the world, rely on the Alteryx Analytic Process Automation Platform™ to deliver high-impact business outcomes and the rapid upskilling of their modern workforce. For more information visit [\*\*alteryx.com\*\*](https://www.alteryx.com).

## About ProEdge, a PwC Product

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 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).

