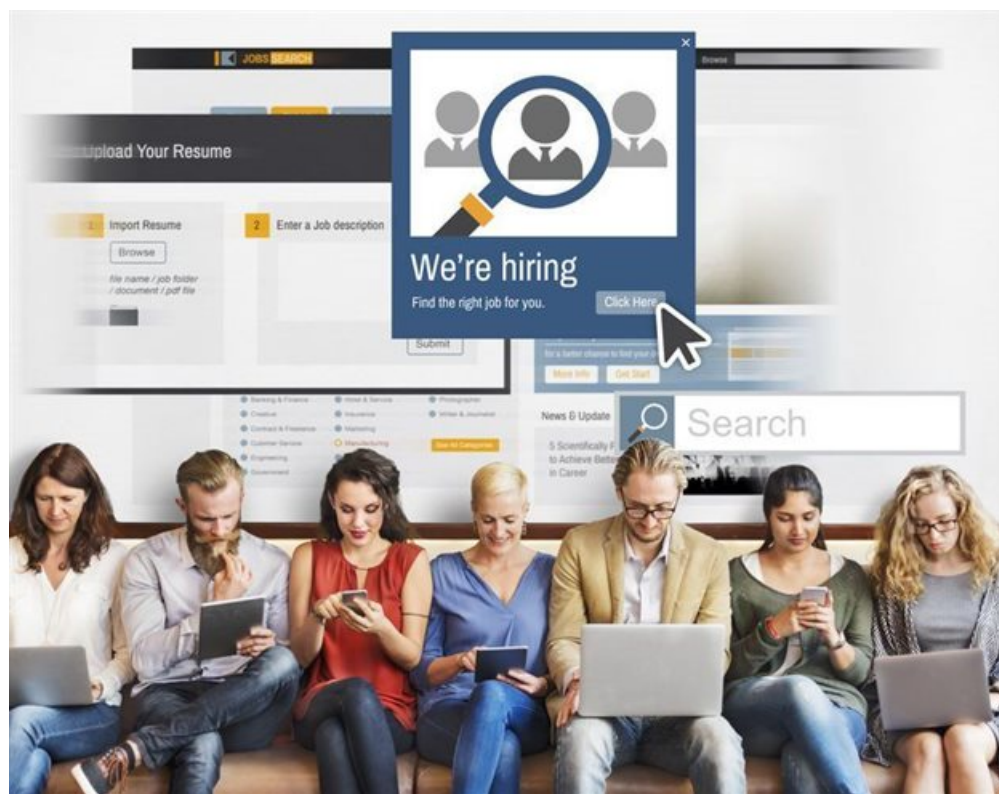


# The most in-demand skills and how to find them

According to ManpowerGroup research, the most in-demand skills in the world currently include sales representatives, project managers, information technology professionals, office support and financial analysts, among others. Yet these roles differ within the modern business environment compared to what they looked like a decade ago, and continue to change, requiring new skills and training.



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“The world is in the midst of a skills revolution, and this means that it can be challenging to stay relevant as a professional in terms of skills and competency within a certain role. The lifespan of skills continues to shorten, which means professionals are having to focus on filling in-demand skills and constantly upskilling themselves to remain in this position,” explains Lyndy van den Barselaar, managing director at ManpowerGroup South Africa.

## Test the market

According to a survey of global employers, the single biggest driver of the talent shortage is simply a lack of applicants. For employees, this is a signal of the possibility to test the market, and actively apply for relevant positions.

Given the demand for talent, employers are more willing to pay a premium to hire; but first they need the right applicants.

## Acquire necessary training

Nearly a fifth (19%) of those employers surveyed said that those who apply lack the hard skills they need to fill a role. The reality of today's fast moving economy is that employees need ongoing training and upskilling, which could be online tutorials, short courses or other certification programmes.

“Learnability is a key differentiator to keep hard skills relevant, and is becoming even more important than experience in the skills revolution,” explains van den Barselaar.

## Don't neglect soft skills

Hard skills are currently in higher demand, but soft skills will pay off in the long run. About 1 in 10 of employers surveyed blamed a lack of soft skills for driving their talent shortage. The ability to project manage, relate to colleagues, speak in public and other human skills will be consistently relevant over time.

According to the ManpowerGroup's *Digital Workforce Transformation: Skills Revolution 2018* report, about 65% of companies planning to increase headcount say communication is the most valued soft skill. "The good news is that soft skills can be nurtured and developed," says van den Barselaar. "Most often soft skills can be the key factor in equipping employees in their transition from one role to another – so they should not be neglected."

## Look in-house

In response to shortages, employers are responding to the talent shortage by providing training to current employees. More employers are investing in learning platforms and development tools to build their talent pipeline within their organisations.

In the digital age, employment will rely on skills development as even the most traditional roles are augmented with new technology. Savvy employees will continue to observe what roles are in high demand, and then make plans to target them.

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