



Upskilling and Reskilling: The Need for Continuous Workforce Development

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In today's constantly evolving job market, upskilling and reskilling have become essential strategies for both employees and employers. Workers who continuously develop their skills are better positioned to take on advanced roles and responsibilities, leading to higher job satisfaction and potential salary increases. Furthermore, the ability to adapt and learn new skills can significantly boost an individual's confidence and professional resilience in the face of industry disruptions.

Upskilling is the process of learning new skills to advance in one's current role, while **reskilling** is learning new skills for a different role.¹ Workers today face constant challenges in keeping their knowledge and skills current and seeking growth throughout their careers. Investing in workforce development should come from all areas: industry, employers, and public services.

The role workforce development boards play is crucial in building up local communities, fostering economic growth, and providing supportive services to help individuals from all backgrounds in their lifelong career journey.

¹ Forbes, [Why Upskilling And Reskilling Are Essential In 2023](#).

Upskilling and reskilling strategies help address the skills gap that many industries face today and will face in the future to remain competitive. With technological advancements and automation altering the landscape of work, continuous learning and development will always be critical.

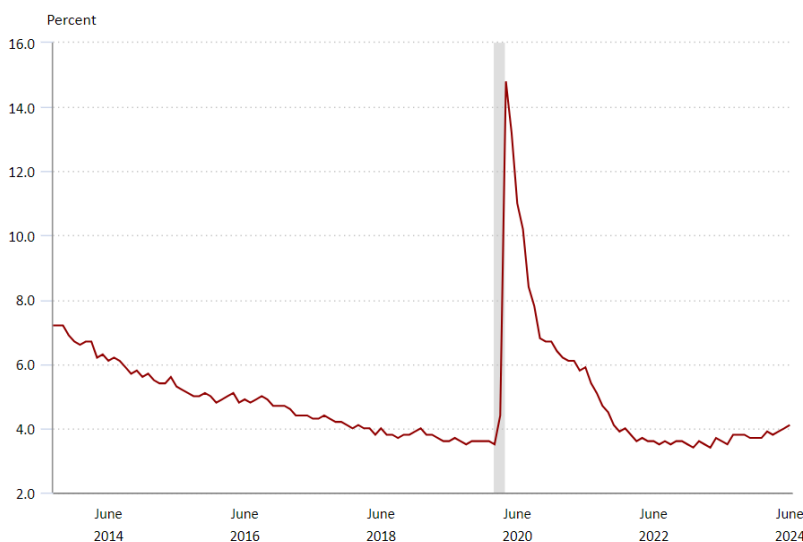
Benefits of Building an Upskilling Learning Culture²

BENEFITS TO THE INDIVIDUAL	BENEFITS TO THE EMPLOYER & INDUSTRY	BENEFITS TO LOCAL ECONOMIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually grow skills to advance in a career Build confidence Create flexibility in career pathway Higher job satisfaction Resilience in facing industry and job market shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher productivity Generate opportunities to promote from within Reduce turnover rates Ability to adapt and innovate Competitive edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivate a more competent workforce Foster creativity and innovation Attract business and industry Rise in competition and wages to boost the economy Expand viable career paths for all

Investing in Workforce Development is Essential

The national unemployment rate has hovered at 3%-4% for the past year.³ The current rate, which has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, can be considered full employment where the labor market is tight and competitive. Participation in the labor force is also down, still below pre-pandemic levels, due to an aging population and a shift in employment stability since COVID.⁴ This creates a very challenging job market where employers and job seekers must adapt.

Figure 1 – Civilian unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted³



The recurring challenge is: how do we ensure people have the skills to meet employer demand and prepare workers for the future?

The nation’s public workforce system plays a fundamental role in ensuring that job seekers and workers, including those with disabilities, veterans, and low-income individuals, have access to quality employment opportunities and that businesses have access to a skilled labor pool by funding programs that provide training, education, and supportive services.

States and governments must invest in a wide range of programs to address workforce needs. And workforce development leaders must think of themselves as the innovative CEO of a business—the business of building a skilled workforce.

² McKinsey & Company, *Building workforce skills at scale to thrive during—and after—the COVID-19 crisis.*

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Civilian unemployment rate.*

⁴ The Brookings Institute, *The U.S. Labor Market Post-Covid: What’s Changed, and What Hasn’t?*

Successfully Upskill Large Populations by Leveraging Online Learning

A collaborative approach helps create a dynamic workforce capable of adapting to technological advancements and economic shifts. The conversation in the workforce landscape today is all about AI, but the conversation tomorrow could be all about a different technology. Planning for the long-term means addressing and focusing on skills that are applicable across industries and having multiple touchpoints throughout a person's career to continually build skills.

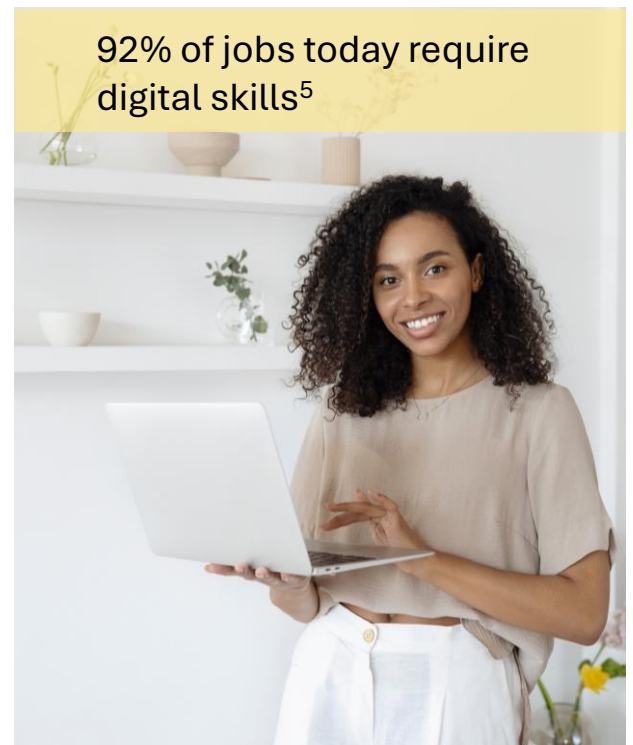
This involves providing access to continuous education and training programs, leveraging technology to offer flexible learning options, and encouraging a mindset of growth. While traditional training methods like college degrees and classroom training have their place, **online learning is key to expanding and creating an accessible pathway to upskilling across an entire community**, delivering high-quality content at a fraction of the cost.

Online learning can be leveraged as a foundational resource for:

- ✓ **Providing a digital skill foundation for all**
- ✓ **Assessing and remediating skill gaps**
- ✓ **Ongoing upskilling through thousands of courses and learning opportunities**
- ✓ **Building a pathway from basic, entry-level skills to advanced classroom training and industry skills**
- ✓ **Reskilling to address rapid response needs**

Online learning is an efficient, cost-effective, and scalable approach to workforce development. Workers can acquire skills and knowledge at their own pace and on their own time. Online learning easily provides training pathways tailored to meet the specific needs of various industries and job roles. By leveraging online learning, workforce boards can optimize their budget and resources to provide more comprehensive and up-to-date training programs to a larger number of individuals. This investment ultimately leads to a more skilled and adaptable workforce, better prepared to meet the evolving demands of the labor market.

⁵ National Skills Coalition, [Closing the Digital Skill Divide](#).



Statewide Skills Enhancement Program – Texas

In July 2020, Texas Workforce Commission launched a statewide initiative to provide free skill training and certifications to help individuals upskill and reskill. In a challenging period of high unemployment, the mass training initiative was designed to support job seekers in upskilling and increasing employability to rejoin the workforce. Metrix Learning was made available for any Texan to self-register and receive immediate access to thousands of online courses in workplace skills, business, technology, health care, manufacturing, and more.

The 28 workforce development boards across the state, their local American Job Centers, and community partners had access to manage learners, view course progress and reports, and enroll participants to receive industry certifications with the program fully funded by the state. Since 2020, more than 220,000 Texans have taken advantage of the program completing over 421,000 courses.

28	220,000+	421,000+	43,000+
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS	TEXANS TRAINED	COURSES COMPLETED	SKILL BADGES EARNED

“WITH INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY CHANGING RAPIDLY THESE DAYS, IT’S A GOOD IDEA TO THINK ABOUT HOW WE CAN ADAPT OUR SKILLS OR ADD TO THEM. TWC HAS A LOT OF RESOURCES TO HELP WITH UPSKILLING. METRIX LEARNING IS ONE.”

- BRYAN DANIEL, CHAIRMAN AT TEXAS
WORKFORCE COMMISSION

Contact Metrix Learning for a solutions-based meeting:
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