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IT Skills & Salary Report

skillsoft

INTRODUCTION

We heard you!

Once again, IT professionals across industries and around the globe wanted their voices heard. They wanted to share their opinions and experiences on the state of IT. And they did!

We asked the questions, compiled the answers, and analyzed the data in this year's ***IT Skills and Salary Report***. This global report gives an in-depth summary of the state of tech professionals at all stages of their careers.

As you read it, you'll discover the impact of all that's happened in the past year, the challenges that arose, the high points to be celebrated, and insights into how IT professionals — and the organizations that rely on them — can move forward.

This is the 19th year that we gathered opinions and provided valuable data on:

- The state of the IT industry
- Growth opportunities and where to look for them
- Wants and needs of employers and employees
- How they differ — and what it all means
- Salaries
- Certifications that affect salaries and are most in-demand
- Skill gaps: how to close them and how they affect IT
- Skilling, upskilling, reskilling. Is it worth it? (YES!)
- Data, more data, and still more data
- Thoughtful analysis with comparison to historical trends
- Future outlook

It's all here.

Thanks for reading. We hope you find this year's report an informative and valuable snapshot of the ever-evolving world of IT.

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WHAT DID WE FIND IN 2024?

AI IS HERE — BUT IT'S NOT ALL SMOOTH SAILING

Last year, everyone was talking about the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). There was more than a little confusion, as the industry questioned how to prepare for the AI invasion and what to do with it once it arrived.

That trend continues into 2024, but — fortunately — at a less chaotic pace.

Surprisingly, IT professionals are finding AI to be less disruptive than previously thought. In fact, the highest percentage (41%) of IT professionals say AI hasn't made a difference in their day-to-day work. The rest largely feel it's helped them. Many are embracing it and making concrete plans on how to best implement it into their organization. Those that have already adopted AI feel more confident. They're putting it to use to make systems faster and more effective.

However, embracing AI does present challenges. Professionals with skills in machine learning and AI are among the most in-demand, making these roles the hardest to fill. Forty-seven percent of IT decision-makers say AI and machine learning is their top priority going into next year. This emphasis will expose a gap for employers that need skilled professionals in this area.

Those who find it difficult to fill these positions may have trouble getting projects off the ground.

As with other areas of high demand and low supply, the answer lies in training. Companies that invest in training will benefit by building new competencies in-house. Gone are the days when a college education was the only key to entry. IT is welcoming skills over degrees and finding real value in the latest technical competencies, as well as soft skills (we prefer to think of them as power skills), such as critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and leadership acumen.

Quite simply, skilling, upskilling, and reskilling are imperatives. IT decision-makers who invest in their people will lead the charge in AI today — and all other innovations tomorrow.

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PRIMARY FINDINGS:

IT PROFESSIONALS ARE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC

IT has historically enjoyed tremendous growth as technology evolved. Because tech moves so fast, it opens a skills gap and often leaves companies playing catch-up. This, in turn, creates a steady demand for skilled and certified professionals — whether it's for deploying new technology, leading a team, or improving inefficiencies.

This hasn't necessarily changed in 2024. Essentially the same number of IT leaders still report a skills gap on their teams. And, over the past few years, we see a consistent trend in people who are staying in the same role and with the same employer. Does this signal stagnation? Perhaps. But bigger factors may be at work here too.

In a world with political uncertainty, machines augmenting or replacing human ingenuity, a tough job market, and many other variables, IT professionals may be using this period to evaluate their careers and hunker down while storms blow over.

In 2021, we had the "Great Resignation," spearheaded by pandemic shutdowns. According to the ***U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics***, over 47 million gainfully employed Americans took a close look at priorities, work-life balance, mental health, the lack of geographic constraints, and the lure of new opportunities and quit their jobs.

Now we have the "Big Stay," a term coined by ADP Chief Economist Nela Richardson. The Big Stay refers to a trend in which workers are staying at their current jobs longer. In a period of economic and geopolitical uncertainty, employers are cautious when it comes to budgets and employees are uncomfortable taking a leap into potentially greener — but uncertain — pastures.

IT employees can reduce their risk by staying where they are and exploring opportunities for developing both technical and power skills. They want to take control and insulate themselves from uncertainty, layoffs, and obsolescence. Employers may recognize that a less costly alternative to hiring from outside is often to train the people they have.

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DUALITY IN TECH: MANY FEEL CONTENT BUT HAVE A DIFFERENT VISION OF THE FUTURE

"I have a greater work-life balance."

"My workload is my biggest challenge."

We're hearing two seemingly contradicting statements from IT professionals. Employees seem to agree they have more balance, yet workloads continue to be an issue. Budget cuts and layoffs only add to this challenge. The ability to put power skills like teamwork, collaboration, and time management to work will be more useful than ever.

Another contradiction is the rise in satisfaction and security coupled with a still strong desire to switch jobs. Make no mistake. Contentment doesn't always mean commitment. Employees may be satisfied today but can still have an eye toward the future — one that might not include their current employer.

Future-focused employers need to look at what growth opportunities, financial incentives, and development options are available. Investment in developing potential through continuous learning can be just as valuable as earmarking budgets for innovation and technology.

THE VALUE OF CERTIFICATIONS AND POWER SKILLS

Certifications validate knowledge. Power skills increase ability. Knowledge and ability lead to innovation. And innovation can be a primary driver to increase revenue. It's a full circle that can't work when it's broken by skill gaps.

Employees with advanced certifications have a "license" that shows they are able and qualified to do a particular job. It's a calling card that gives them entry into new opportunities and says they're ready to work — and better yet, they can get the job done.

But certification has greater value than simply elevating technical skills. For the employer, certification leads to increased interest and quality in work, greater efficiency and productivity, and reduces risks of hiring untrained support. For the employee, certification increases earning potential and job opportunities.

Even the most advanced technical skills aren't always enough. Power skills are the lifeblood that keeps any enterprise healthy. It's a mistake to assume that you can just rely on "born leaders." Leadership can be learned, as can independent thinking, problem-solving, and empathetic communication.

These power skills (along with critical thinking, creativity, time management, and adaptability, to name a few more) need to be honed and developed through training and practice. Once mastered, they are the foundational building blocks that enable organizations to adapt and thrive in a changing environment.

And, if there's one thing that's certain in IT, it's change. Aligned with role-related technical skills, power skills not only improve job performance and team dynamics, but also give employees the opportunity to advance in their careers.

That's truly a win-win for everyone.

SALARY

It's hard to measure the state of an industry without knowing some of the key factors that contribute to its health. Salaries, of course, are a critical determinant.

Current salaries — and how they've changed from the previous year, five years, or 10 years — can tell you a lot about the growth or stagnation of an industry. They provide insights into the people who work in that industry, their skillsets, and the economic state of a particular geographic region. They give you a glimpse into future trends and challenges that need to be met based on current and historical data.

Simply put, salaries and salary trends are the vital signs of an industry, indicating its overall health and vitality.

The Skillsoft 2024 IT Skills and Salary Report provides employees and employers alike with comprehensive information on IT salary ranges across regions, skillsets, and experience levels.

Salary data has been compiled, analyzed, and reviewed to include the following factors that contribute to salary and compensation packages, including:

- **EDUCATION**
- **RESPONSIBILITY LEVEL**
- **CAREER EXPERIENCE**
- **SPECIFIC FUNCTIONAL JOB ROLE**
- **BONUSES**

We also conducted a global analysis to see how salaries compare across geographic regions: North America; Europe, Middle East, and Africa; Asia-Pacific; and Latin America.*

** All salaries were converted into U.S. dollars during the survey to enable relevant comparisons.*

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BASE SALARY

Worldwide, the average salary for an IT professional is $88,448, an increase of nearly 5% over what respondents reported making last year ($84,475).

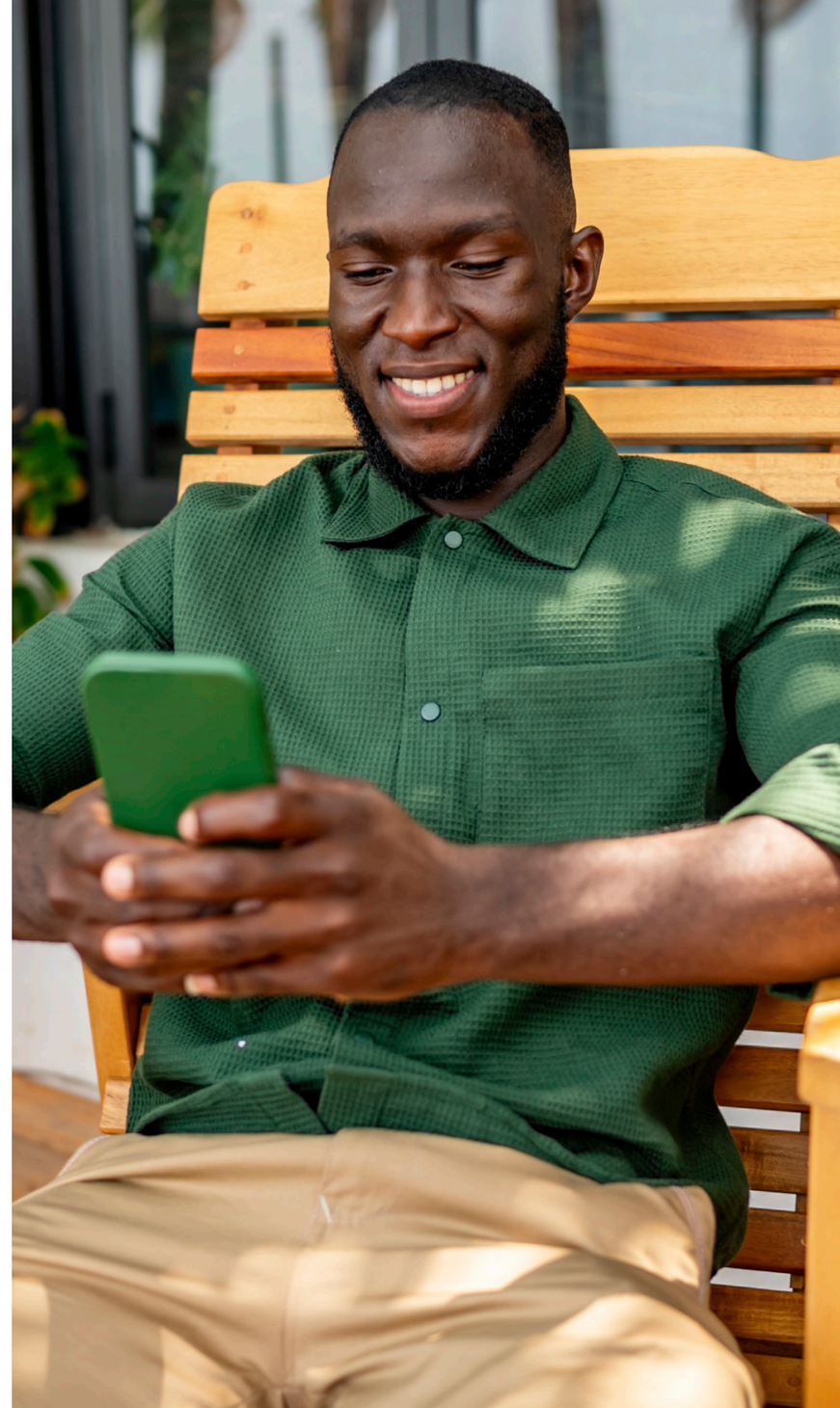
Once again, North America leads in overall base salaries. This has been the case every year that we've conducted this study. Based on the responses we received, the average overall salary in North America is $113,211, which represents a 5% increase over what respondents reported earning the previous year.

IT decision-makers are bringing in $134,235, while IT staff average $102,340. From a percentage standpoint, IT decision-makers fare better than staff with a 6% raise.

Europe, Middle East, and Africa report the second highest average salary of $70,876, a 4% increase from last year. IT decision-makers also earned 4% more on average, reporting $76,192 last year and $79,089 this year. IT staff in Europe, Middle East and Africa fared better in comparison with an increase of just under 5%.

While Latin America continues to be the lowest compensated region, it saw the highest percentage increase globally. Overall, Latin American IT salaries jumped from $52,777 to $57,724 for a 9% increase. IT staff received close to a 12% increase in salary from last year.

Asia-Pacific saw salary increases close in nature to North America. Overall, IT professionals reported earning $63,477 on average, a 6% increase from the year prior. IT decision-makers enjoyed the highest increase over last year at 7%, reporting an average salary of $68,678. Staff saw a more modest increase of just under 4%.



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RESPONSIBILITY LEVEL

Our study includes salary data from a range of IT professionals, from IT staff, who do not manage individuals or teams, to IT decision-makers, which include managers, directors, and those serving at an executive level.

Non-management IT staff, those who do not lead a team, represent 58% of the respondents for this report.

Common job roles:

- Cloud engineer
- Security engineer
- Network engineer
- Software engineer
- Technical support

Mid-level professionals (managers and team leaders) represent 31% of our respondents.

Common job roles:

- Information security
- Systems architect
- Project manager
- Infrastructure manager
- IT audit manager

Senior-level professionals (vice presidents, directors) account for 8% of our respondents.

Common job roles:

- Director, Vice President
- DevOps manager
- Enterprise architect
- Security manager
- Procurement manager

Executives (C-suite) account for 2% of our report.

Common job roles:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Chief Information Officer (CIO)
- Chief Security Officer (CSO)/Chief Information Security Officer (CISO)
- Chief Technology Officer (CTO)

COMPENSATION BY RESPONSIBILITY LEVEL

	EXECUTIVE	COUNT	SENIOR	COUNT	MID	COUNT	NON-MANAGER	COUNT
NORTH AMERICA	$160,144	43	$158,101	177	$122,842	467	$101,219	1,352
LATIN AMERICA	$80,667	6	$92,295	21	$60,517	98	$46,498	146
EMEA	$104,836	27	$98,016	94	$68,330	280	$63,260	516
ASIA-PACIFIC	$155,919	6	$81,448	65	$61,492	336	$53,928	325

Please note: Throughout the report, you'll notice some respondent counts do not meet the statistical minimum (n=100). These figures are presented for continuity and subject to fluctuation with more responses.

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CAREER EXPERIENCE

Like last year, the highest percentage of survey respondents to this year's survey have one to five years of experience in the IT industry. However, IT professionals with six to 10 years were also active in responding to the survey used to compile this year's report.

Across regions, many respondents reported earning more as they accumulated more experience. However, there were some exceptions in Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region. In the table below, you can see dips for some groups — mostly for those with six to 15 years of experience.

This raises questions:

- What factors were at play when they joined the industry?
- What are their roles at work? Do they lack advancement opportunities?
- Are their skills that were once fresh becoming stale?
- What is contributing to the upwards salary trend after 10 or 15 years?
- Are employees recognizing the value in learning new technologies to increase salary?

COMPENSATION BY CAREER EXPERIENCE

YEARS	NORTH AMERICA		LATIN AMERICA		EMEA		ASIA-PACIFIC	
	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count
< 1	$54,634	95	$32,711	8	$53,136	32	$58,798	17
1-5	$78,974	582	$52,206	62	$50,294	255	$59,691	171
6-10	$113,025	424	$47,406	58	$66,984	180	$52,893	155
11-15	$126,375	245	$56,754	47	$72,295	158	$52,508	160
16-20	$128,399	196	$61,104	48	$85,767	121	$58,900	106
21-25	$140,625	224	$59,289	28	$88,298	97	$88,927	71
26+	$155,242	273	$81,650	20	$92,853	74	$77,962	52

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JOB FUNCTION

Once again, the highest salaries reported globally were for C-level IT executives. There is some disparity when it comes to other high-paying job functions across the world. North America and Europe, Middle East, and Africa report IT Architecture and Design and Cloud Computing as top-paying job functions. Latin America and Asia-Pacific report Business Operations, Business Analysis, and Project Management as their highest-paying job functions. North America is the only region to report a salary decrease for IT executives between 2023 and 2024.

The top three highest paid functions in 2024 by region are as follows:

- **North America**
  - IT Executives ($163,611)
  - IT Architecture and Design ($156,147)
  - Cloud ($142,902)

- **Latin America**
  - IT Executives ($101,571)
  - Business operations ($67,000)
  - Application Development, Programming ($65,958)

- **Europe, Middle East and Africa**
  - IT Executives ($107,742)
  - Cloud Computing ($94,921)
  - IT Architecture and Design ($88,342)

- **Asia-Pacific**
  - IT Executives ($131,864)
  - Project Managers ($76,985)
  - Business Analysis ($76,612)

North America and Europe, Middle East, and Africa report that same lowest paying job function: Service Desk/IT Support. Latin America reports DevOps as the lowest, while Asia-Pacific reports Infrastructure, Networking, and the Telecommunications. As we've stated elsewhere, these findings are subject to change with more responses to the survey.

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The table below provides salary data for each region based on IT job function.

COMPENSATION BY JOB ROLE

JOB FUNCTION	NORTH AMERICA		LATIN AMERICA		EMEA		ASIA-PACIFIC	
	Salary	Count	Salary	Count	Salary	Count	Salary	Count
Application Development, Programming	$113,195	80	$65,958	17	$61,600	47	$55,400	69
Business Analysis	$111,094	27	$46,000	2	$71,156	9	$76,612	11
Business Operations	$127,324	32	$67,000	3	$88,342	15	$52,582	9
Cloud Computing	$142,902	105	$45,997	30	$94,921	80	$54,971	77
Cybersecurity, Information Security	$120,449	419	$58,816	45	$69,088	167	$75,580	106
Data Science, Analytics and Business Intelligence	$116,463	62	$53,488	20	$59,327	47	$49,904	35
DevOps	$112,762	43	$25,997	7	$59,481	24	$56,653	33
Executive (CEO, CIO, CISO, etc.)	$163,611	77	$101,571	14	$107,742	37	$131,864	22
IT Architecture and Design	$156,147	131	$52,580	38	$87,219	89	$50,841	86
IT Auditing or Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC)	$128,355	138	$57,152	22	$79,463	78	$69,113	57
Infrastructure, Networking and Telecommunications	$108,109	362	$48,879	39	$59,850	130	$44,707	103
Other	$106,562	131	$80,899	9	$62,444	32	$54,417	32
Project Management	$129,750	63	$39,232	7	$78,993	30	$76,985	40
Service Desk and IT Support	$63,354	369	$47,915	18	$41,781	132	$53,466	52

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INDUSTRY

Industry vertical has an impact on salaries in IT. As much as we see some similarities across the globe, there are also disparities when it comes to which industry pays highest and lowest. Last year, the system integrator and VAR integrator field in North America and natural resources in Asia-Pacific were paying well. This year the top paying industry in North America is IT software ($139,887) and the lowest is education ($81,492). In Asia-Pacific, construction, architecture, and engineering takes the top spot ($121,813) and aerospace and defense are significantly lower at just $26,425.

The sample size for aerospace is statistically too low and would likely change with more responses. Construction, architecture, and engineering also ranks highest in Latin America ($156,187). Those in the mining, oil and gas industry report the highest salaries ($120,669) in Europe, Middle East and Africa.

COMPENSATION BY INDUSTRY

FUNCTIONAL AREA	NORTH AMERICA		LATIN AMERICA		EMEA		ASIA-PACIFIC	
	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count
Accounting, Auditing, Banking and Finance	$126,409	133	$58,987	24	$75,799	102	$63,112	72
Aerospace or Defense	$117,402	80	$57,500	2	$90,361	18	$26,425	4
Automotive	$103,121	23	$22,200	2	$64,111	11	$55,554	7
Communications or Public Relations or Advertising	$100,069	48	$46,000	3	$68,157	15	$87,429	7
Construction, Architecture, Engineering	$117,008	34	$156,187	4	$62,891	10	$121,813	6
Education Services	$81,492	140	$53,300	7	$64,444	39	$51,402	35
Government: Military and Homeland Security	$110,217	185	$35,778	4	$76,229	21	$83,727	15
Government: Nondefense, State, Local	$105,305	106	$67,470	10	$60,504	33	$89,672	18
Healthcare	$100,339	190	$101,958	9	$48,709	26	$56,568	36
Hospitality, Travel and Recreation	$106,402	32	$21,000	1	$36,289	7	$57,378	9
IT Consulting	$117,145	287	$49,568	91	$66,623	272	$58,865	186
IT Hardware	$122,813	83	$63,750	8	$46,571	22	$43,810	26
IT Software	$139,887	202	$66,256	35	$81,217	113	$63,756	150
Insurance, Real Estate and Legal	$122,941	52	$45,071	4	$67,284	19	$100,397	11
Manufacturing: Consumer and Industrial	$109,381	66	$67,933	3	$58,710	25	$56,911	29
Media, Film, Music	$94,022	18	-	-	$59,231	5	$42,000	5
Natural Resources: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	$112,500	8	$52,000	1	$47,934	3	-	-
Natural Resources: Mining, Oil or Gas	$126,613	26	$47,450	6	$120,669	7	$65,172	3
Other	$96,963	111	$37,490	14	$62,952	56	$72,411	20
Pharmaceutical, Medical, Biotech	$119,563	26	$35,202	2	$101,124	6	$68,333	3
Professional Business Services	$123,646	43	$65,333	9	$91,058	15	$43,616	19
Retail	$108,652	45	$42,750	8	$70,339	20	$48,616	8
System Integrator (SI) and VAR Integration	$125,000	13	$65,353	5	$59,650	15	$49,245	31
Telecommunications	$99,841	58	$36,836	15	$75,939	39	$43,183	27
Transportation or Public Utilities	$107,850	30	$52,297	4	$75,436	18	$87,800	5

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U.S. SALARIES

IT professionals in the U.S. (including the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other U.S. territories) earn an average annual salary of $113,235, as reported in this year's survey. When you drill down further, you find that states vary significantly because of the range of respondent counts. On the next page, you'll find a complete list of the U.S. states, the average salaries associated with each, and the respective response counts.

We've reported significant change over the past three years in terms of which states pay the most. Prior to the pandemic, states with large metropolitan areas and those with higher costs of living were paying more. Since COVID-19, however, anomalies have emerged.

Last year, IT professionals in east coast states like New Jersey, Maryland, and Massachusetts were compensated higher than most of the country. But we started to see some outlying states trending upward, including Montana and Alaska. This data suggested that remote work options were making it easier to move out of traditional business centers, and the work would follow.

In 2024, we find that only one heavily metropolitan area made the top five — Washington, DC. The other states in the top five are less densely populated. Again, the data suggests that work from home and remote options are making where you live less of a determining factor for the work you do — and the salary you take home. That may change in the year ahead, however, as more companies mandate a return to office.

States with the highest paying salaries:

District of Columbia	$177,100
Vermont	$156,500
Alaska	$152,857
New Hampshire	$141,077
Washington	$131,552

Montana, which held one of the highest positions last year, ranks at the bottom of the salary scale this year ($80,038). Last year, there were just four respondents in Montana; this year, there were six. West Virginia ($48,521) was the lowest-paying. According to the ***United States Census Bureau***, the largest population group in West Virginia is 60 to 64 years old, an age where many are retiring; and the median household income is $55,948 which is significantly less than the median household income in the United States ($77,719).

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COMPENSATION BY U.S. STATE

STATE	Average	Number of Responses
Alabama	$100,422	40
Alaska	$152,857	7
Arizona	$126,517	46
Arkansas	$99,688	16
California	$122,786	218
Colorado	$115,496	67
Connecticut	$130,484	24
Delaware	$98,096	12
District of Columbia	$177,100	10
Florida	$111,905	132
Georgia	$120,221	78
Hawaii	$116,000	9
Idaho	$111,674	14
Illinois	$109,427	87
Indiana	$98,968	42
Iowa	$96,534	11
Kansas	$99,348	15
Kentucky	$84,448	29
Louisiana	$94,125	20
Maine	$123,833	6
Maryland	$116,942	79
Massachusetts	$122,525	39
Michigan	$117,627	48
Minnesota	$125,263	32
Mississippi	$120,786	10
Missouri	$95,617	32
Montana	$80,038	6
Nebraska	$115,156	20
Nevada	$81,313	16
New Hampshire	$141,077	13
New Jersey	$120,386	44
New Mexico	$94,157	14
New York	$120,946	111
North Carolina	$114,907	94
North Dakota	$123,333	3
Ohio	$108,422	50
Oklahoma	$84,617	27
Oregon	$113,038	13
Other US Territories	$79,500	4
Pennsylvania	$121,918	52
Puerto Rico	$70,900	10
Rhode Island	$122,455	11
South Carolina	$104,586	31
South Dakota	$112,568	1
Tennessee	$91,744	44
Texas	$103,556	191
Utah	$109,979	28
Vermont	$156,500	2
Virginia	$121,040	127
Washington	$131,552	46
West Virginia	$48,521	7
Wisconsin	$113,558	21
Wyoming	$110,000	1

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CANADIAN SALARIES

Across the 12 provinces surveyed, the average annual salary of an IT professional in Canada is $81,892.

This year's top-paying province mirrors last year when Prince Edward Island ($170,000) took the top spot — although last year the average salary for this province was significantly higher at $250,000. It's important to note that Prince Edward Island, as well as other Canadian provinces, have a limited number of respondents, therefore, additional responses are needed to fully evaluate the average earnings in these provinces.

What this illustrates is that we need more data to make a sound judgement about the average earnings in this province. The same can be said for other areas in this report.

The other big difference this year is that Northwest Territories ($115,500) and Quebec ($102,344) moved up to the second and third spot; Newfoundland ($67,500) fell from number two to the ninth position and Nova Scotia ($44,167) went from third to tenth, just above Nunavut ($20,000), which had just one respondent.

COMPENSATION BY CANADIAN PROVINCE

PROVINCE	Average	Count
Alberta	$72,598	21
British Columbia	$83,123	19
Manitoba	$92,178	12
New Brunswick	$71,354	12
Newfoundland	$67,500	2
Northwest Territories	$115,500	4
Nova Scotia	$44,167	6
Nunavut	$20,000	1
Ontario	$82,076	73
Prince Edward Island	$170,000	2
Quebec	$102,344	14
Saskatchewan	$58,189	5

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EUROPEAN SALARIES

For the sixth consecutive year, Switzerland leads European salaries where the average annual salary reported is $138,286.

Last year, several countries were above the $100,000 in average earnings mark. This year, only four besides Switzerland hit that threshold: Luxembourg ($128,000), Austria ($126,397), Netherlands ($106,561), and Denmark ($100,429).

COMPENSATION BY EUROPEAN COUNTRY

COUNTRY	Average	Count
Austria	$126,397	13
Belgium	$74,403	8
Croatia	$25,779	8
Czech Republic	$56,400	5
Denmark	$100,429	7
Finland	$77,498	12
France	$69,194	45
Germany	$81,266	66
Greece	$56,900	6
Hungary	$83,250	4
Ireland	$83,619	33
Italy	$58,722	55
Luxembourg	$128,000	3
Netherlands	$106,561	25
Norway	$79,300	5
Poland	$61,201	34
Portugal	$62,474	17
Romania	$34,431	9
Slovakia	$36,750	4
Spain	$68,151	58
Sweden	$73,082	16
Switzerland	$138,286	14
Ukraine	$46,000	5
United Kingdom	$85,437	173

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RAISES

The overall percentage of raise increase fluctuated in 2024. Some regions remained steady, while others saw increases. Still, raises are largely down from what was reported in 2022.

REGION	2024	2023	2022
North America	5%	5%	8%
Europe, Middle East & Africa	4%	5%	7%
Asia Pacific	6%	3%	7%
Latin America	9%	3%	7%

If you break down figures between IT decision-makers and IT staff, the biggest impact was felt by IT staff in North America and Asia-Pacific — both earned raises at just under 4%. IT decision-makers in Europe, Middle East, and Africa had comparable raise increases.

The highest raise percentage went to IT staff in Latin America who saw an increase of nearly 12% in their paychecks. IT professionals who earned raises cited job performance and standard company increases as the main reasons. One-quarter said cost-of-living, developing new skills, and earning new certifications helped them make more.

RECEIVED A BONUS

Overall, more IT professionals are bonus eligible than not.

North America was the only region to have a greater number of overall respondents who were not bonus-eligible (52%). Sixty percent of decision-makers reported being eligible, and almost the same percentage of staff said they were ineligible. The breakdown looked similar for IT staff in Europe, Middle East, and Africa.

Those in both Asia-Pacific and Latin America fared better. In Asia-Pacific, 61% of IT professionals are bonus eligible. Fifty-four percent in Latin America reported eligibility.

COMPENSATION BY REGION

BONUS ELIGIBLE	NORTH AMERICA	LATIN AMERICA	EMEA	ASIA-PACIFIC
Overall	48%	54%	51%	61%
IT Decision-Maker	60%	56%	63%	66%
IT Staff	42%	52%	44%	54%

CERTIFICATIONS

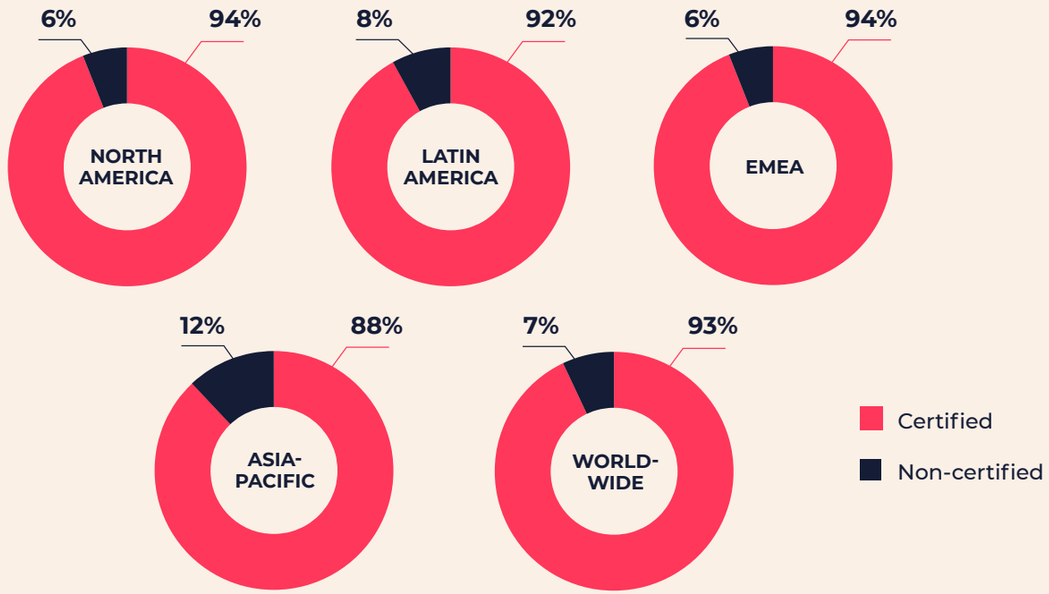
As we've reported in years past, certifications are important to overall IT job security, compensation, and professional development. Without building new skills while training for certifications, IT professionals' skills can become stagnant or, worse, obsolete. The good news is that globally IT professionals see the value in certification. Last year 88% of respondents reported that they held at least one certification. In 2024, that figure rose to 93%.

Regionally, Asia-Pacific reported that 88% of IT professionals are certified. This was the only region to dip below 90%.

In 2024, 94% of North American and European, Middle Eastern, and African IT professionals report being certified in at least one specialized field. Those in Latin America weren't far behind at 92%. It's safe to say that, universally, IT professionals recognize that certifications are a worthwhile investment of time, energy, and even money.

Furthermore, these credentials are often requirements of work. For example, to meet the ***Department of Defense's 8140 compliance requirements***, professionals must hold approved certifications that validate their abilities. Needless to say, without them, IT professionals limit their career potential.

CERTIFIED BY REGION



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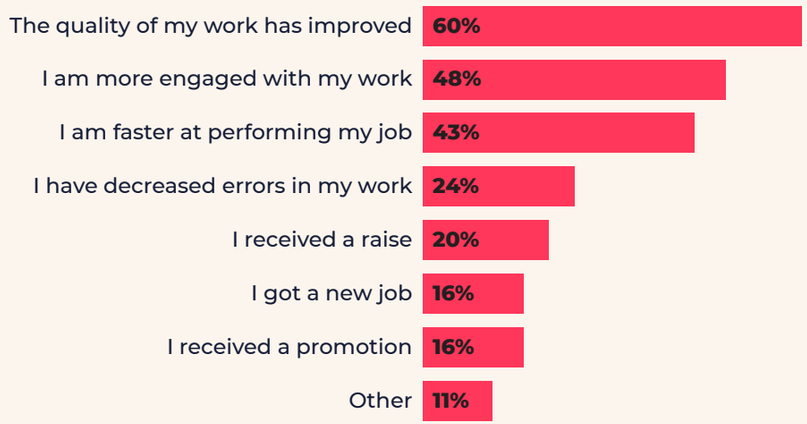
EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

The responses to our survey show that we are quickly approaching a situation where every IT professional holds at least one certification. This demonstrates that advanced training is not only valued and seen as a worthwhile investment of time and resources, but also as a necessity to remain competitive. But, what are some of the perceptions — and assumptions — that drive all this training? Do employees see value in advanced certifications beyond the impact on their paycheck? Do employers recognize measurable business outcomes that justify higher salaries?

The answer on both sides is a resounding, "YES!"

The benefits of certifications in 2024 match up closely to what we heard last year: 60% of individuals believe the quality of their work has improved (vs. 62% last year); 48% are more engaged with their work (vs. 47% last year); 43% are faster at performing their job (vs. 45% last year).

JOB EFFECTIVENESS AFTER TRAINING



HOW HAS YOUR CERTIFIED STAFF ADDED VALUE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Meanwhile, IT decision-makers report even greater benefits of certified staff than they did last year. Forty-nine percent say certified staff add value by closing organizational skills gaps (vs. 34% last year) and 49% say that certified staff spend less time on troubleshooting issues (vs. 35% last year).

These answers reflect genuine and significant benefits to employees and employers alike. The bottom line? Investing in training and certification is worthwhile — whether you're an employee or an employer.

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CERTIFICATION CATEGORIES

It's important to note that IT professionals usually have multiple certifications and having more certifications often results in a higher salary. But, how do you determine which certifications will have the greatest payoff?

We asked our respondents to tell us how much certified skills are worth in terms of salary potential. The chart to the right includes respondents who hold at least one certification in each category.

In past years, cybersecurity certifications have driven the highest pay. However, this year the top reported salaries in North America are from non-cybersecurity certification categories (Enterprise Architecture - $200,125; Citrix - $191,025; Database - $178,456). However, all other regions mostly followed historical trends in reporting higher salaries resulting from cybersecurity certifications.

COMPENSATION BY CERTIFICATION CATEGORY (REGION) - CYBERSECURITY

CERTIFICATION CATEGORY	NORTH AMERICA		LATIN AMERICA		EMEA		ASIA-PACIFIC	
	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count
AWS (Amazon Web Services)	$131,377	178	$53,320	17	$97,926	64	$89,810	65
Broadcom (Symantec)	$148,520	38	-	-	$60,000	3	$111,905	6
CSFI - Cybersecurity Forum Initiative	$161,450	40	$66,667	3	$163,333	3	$191,315	6
CWNP	$168,929	28	$136,767	3	$120,667	3	$144,472	4
CertNexus	$151,334	58	$131,000	4	$90,850	20	$112,308	13
Check Point	$147,727	33	$132,000	4	$102,329	15	$80,703	16
Cisco	$122,910	210	$51,862	21	$71,364	105	$96,487	45
CompTIA	$102,548	873	$51,398	48	$58,176	245	$62,450	98
Dell	$154,778	27	-	-	$91,115	10	$89,211	9
EC-Council	$143,365	125	$69,304	12	$84,142	44	$91,000	49
F5	$166,467	15	$25,000	1	$88,100	5	$115,519	7
Fortinet	$105,573	48	$45,560	18	$68,837	53	$60,588	23
GIAC	$148,082	74	$131,050	3	$100,615	13	$152,691	8
Google Cloud	$125,489	67	$51,854	12	$96,976	43	$56,706	50
HP	$119,609	33	$111,433	3	$103,777	9	$63,421	9
IAPP	$143,231	52	$100,000	1	$125,335	13	$82,432	9
IBM	$128,139	59	$32,213	6	$66,073	18	$97,273	17
ISACA	$147,168	284	$63,706	26	$96,636	115	$85,800	121
ISC2	$131,121	396	$52,016	32	$76,151	121	$78,506	86
Juniper Networks	$124,856	42	$43,000	1	$100,000	5	$82,854	11
Microsoft	$124,038	258	$58,278	30	$68,588	154	$75,427	79
OffSec	$166,674	34	$81,575	2	$109,067	9	$173,514	6
Oracle	$160,192	26	$25,509	5	$86,837	13	$72,960	13
Palo Alto Networks	$151,510	57	$100,333	6	$97,808	12	$68,254	12
Red Hat	$168,733	30	$46,850	4	$128,263	8	$140,535	11
SECO-Institute	$165,455	11	-	-	$153,250	4	$154,472	4
SonicWall	$152,222	18	$61,200	2	$158,000	5	$172,629	3
VMware	$152,343	44	$53,875	4	$82,818	22	$53,979	20
Web Development	$161,486	30	$97,750	4	$79,447	15	$125,818	11

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COMPENSATION BY CERTIFICATION CATEGORY (REGION) - NON-CYBERSECURITY

CERTIFICATION CATEGORY	NORTH AMERICA		LATIN AMERICA		EMEA		ASIA-PACIFIC	
	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count	Average	Count
AWS (Amazon Web Services)	$148,261	150	$46,684	28	$77,705	106	$59,889	111
Avaya	$139,042	12	$60,152	4	$107,600	4	$121,252	4
Blockchain Training Alliance	$134,538	13	$33,333	3	$87,000	7	$61,500	8
Broadcom (Symantec)	$95,200	5	$80,000	1	$88,210	9	$36,360	5
Business Analysis	$142,773	22	$120,000	4	$82,442	20	$77,274	11
Business Process	$172,047	27	$98,750	4	$92,315	20	$58,490	10
C++ Institute	$103,000	5	$80,000	1	$62,950	3	$104,547	5
Cisco	$117,671	300	$54,571	22	$66,650	107	$71,391	39
Citrix	$191,097	19	$59,929	3	$89,355	18	$36,915	5
Cloud Credential Council	$174,250	4	$50,000	1	$116,667	3	$60,000	5
CompTIA	$88,613	514	$59,286	22	$58,168	128	$43,794	29
Data Center	$127,462	13	$83,040	5	$83,346	9	$99,564	11
Database	$178,456	16	$147,333	3	$76,928	23	$96,692	13
Dell	$129,053	17	$53,096	8	$70,799	17	$54,877	16
DevOps	$153,792	12	$192,500	2	$70,902	10	$71,949	14
Enterprise Architecture	$200,125	16	$70,350	2	$109,197	17	$125,941	5
Google Cloud	$154,382	91	$53,006	55	$84,399	138	$52,437	142
HP	$118,796	28	$74,115	13	$68,570	29	$47,532	14
Help Desk	$119,000	20	$34,000	2	$39,218	9	$106,722	5
IBM	$128,052	37	$65,009	11	$68,766	25	$56,040	24
ITIL and IT Service Management	$136,878	164	$55,535	33	$71,864	92	$63,197	66
Juniper Networks	$121,244	19	$116,935	2	$106,000	16	$55,715	7
Microsoft	$127,222	239	$58,105	63	$65,826	226	$53,709	152
Nutanix	$154,585	68	$52,307	31	$76,773	96	$43,910	88
Oracle	$156,969	19	$37,195	11	$58,173	49	$62,304	32
Project Management, Agile and Scrum	$151,689	93	$65,396	14	$90,295	64	$90,236	34
Red Hat	$158,627	15	$62,567	9	$84,347	26	$39,879	20
Salesforce	$135,000	4	$40,000	2	$98,333	3	$58,188	5
VMware	$147,562	91	$65,139	23	$79,695	73	$35,532	64
Veeam	$150,200	10	$53,378	12	$80,035	38	$31,186	14
Web Development	$139,242	20	$111,813	6	$60,477	24	$105,250	8
Wireless	$122,466	17	$13,306	1	$80,572	13	$129,252	4
Wireshark	$112,154	13	$72,000	1	$81,667	6	$225,000	2

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TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS

As in years past, cloud computing, cybersecurity, data privacy, and risk management certifications continue to lead the way in terms of compensation. IT professionals who work in these fields must stay abreast of the latest regulations and laws, techniques, and developments in their respective discipline. Doing so helps them at work by staving off cyber-attacks, reducing vulnerabilities, improving operations, and far more.

However, while certifications in these fields are certainly a contributing factor for higher compensation levels, we must remember that other factors impact salary too, such as experience, industry, location, production levels, future skill development, and other power skills like leadership abilities.

TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS WORLDWIDE

CERTIFICATION	Average	Sample Size
ISSMP Information Systems Security Management Professional	$188,291	40
Microsoft Certified: Azure Cosmos DB Developer Specialty	$178,304	44
AWS Certified Machine Learning – Specialty	$171,725	59
CCSE - Check Point Certified Security Expert	$166,685	48
Certified Network Security Engineer (PCNSE)	$165,817	41
AWS Certified DevOps Engineer – Professional	$164,012	77
CDPSE - Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer	$163,852	91
CCSP - Certified Cloud Security Professional	$161,959	123
AWS Certified Security - Specialty	$158,594	100
ECIH - Certified Incident Handler	$156,658	41
AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Professional	$155,905	97
CCIE Security	$152,855	55
CIPM - Certified Information Privacy Manager	$151,676	62
AWS Certified Advanced Networking – Specialty	$151,061	65
CGEIT - Certified in the Governance of Enterprise IT	$148,573	69
CIPP - Certified Information Privacy Professional	$147,567	66
AIGP - Certified AI Governance Professional	$146,509	41
CCIE Enterprise Infrastructure	$146,372	74
CISSP - Certified Information Systems Security Professional	$146,131	333
GIAC Certified Incident Handler Certification (GCIH)	$145,967	42

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NORTH AMERICA

Last year, we saw a marked increase in Google Cloud certifications. This year, we're seeing a decrease. Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Architect, currently the second highest-paying certification, was paying $194,612 in 2023 (an increase of $40,000 from 2022). In 2024, however, respondents reported earning $174,519 for that same certification – a $20,000 decrease.

TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS NORTH AMERICA

CERTIFICATION	Average	Sample Size
AWS Certified Security - Specialty	$202,959	47
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Architect	$174,519	54
Nutanix Certified Professional - Multicloud Infrastructure (NCP-MCI) v6.5	$174,029	48
CCIE Enterprise Infrastructure	$165,582	44
CISSP - Certified Information Systems Security Professional	$164,621	221
Microsoft Certified: Cybersecurity Architect Expert	$163,246	47
CCNP Security	$162,311	45
CCSP - Certified Cloud Security Professional	$159,483	87
CRISC - Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control	$158,458	80
CISM - Certified Information Security Manager	$155,942	165
Microsoft 365 Certified: Administrator Expert	$152,692	52
AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate	$149,621	90
AWS Certified Developer – Associate	$149,337	46
Cisco Certified DevNet Associate	$149,135	47
CISA - Certified Information Systems Auditor	$147,578	143
CDPSE - Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer	$146,493	48
CEH - Certified Ethical Hacker	$145,076	96
Microsoft Certified: Azure Security Engineer Associate	$144,045	42
Microsoft Certified: Azure Administrator Associate	$143,138	74
CCNP Enterprise	$141,127	108

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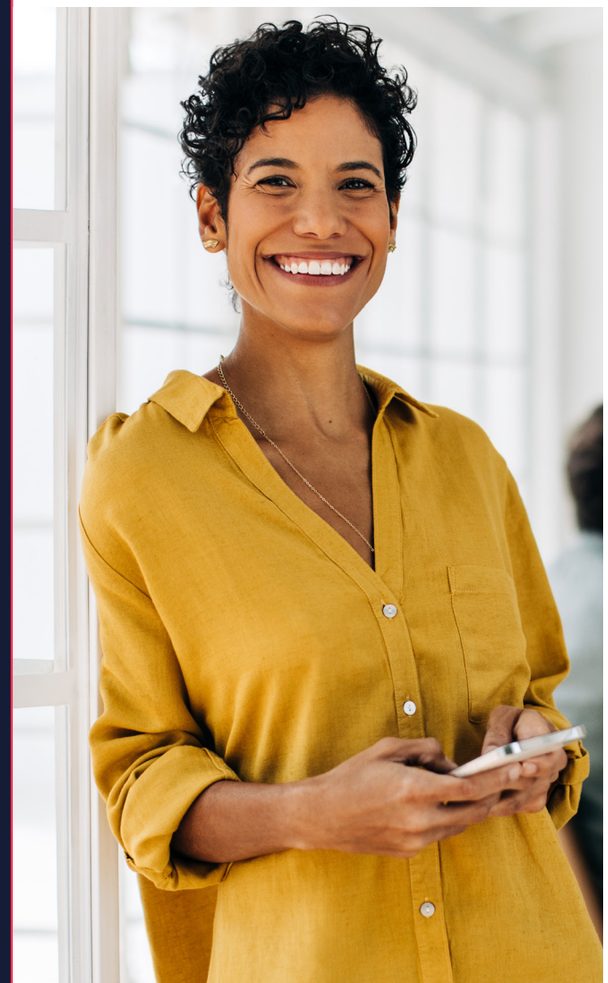
LATIN AMERICA

In 2024, CISM ($134,025) and CISA ($129,525) are the top-paying certifications in Latin America. These weren't even on the list of certifications from 2023 when Google Cloud's Professional Cloud Security Engineer certification took the lead at $119,622. The certifications from last year's list trended toward cloud computing, whereas this year, it's more about cybersecurity.



TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS LATIN AMERICA

CERTIFICATION	Average	Sample Size
CISM - Certified Information Security Manager	$134,025	15
CISA - Certified Information Systems Auditor	$129,525	14
CompTIA PenTest+ (Penetration Testing)	$126,663	12
CompTIA CySA+ (Cybersecurity Analyst)	$87,395	24
CompTIA Security+	$79,158	43
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer	$77,000	12
CCNA	$71,284	27
CEH - Certified Ethical Hacker	$67,786	11
Google Cloud - Professional Data Engineer	$60,864	21
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Security Engineer	$59,610	10
VMware Certified Professional - Data Center Virtualization 2024	$58,130	12
Google Cloud Professional - Cloud Architect	$57,120	31
Microsoft 365 Certified: Administrator Expert	$56,928	10
Microsoft Certified: Azure Solutions Architect Expert	$55,725	14
Cisco Certified CyberOps Associate	$54,608	12
VMCE - Veeam Certified Engineer	$51,353	10
Red Hat Certified System Administrator (RHCSA)	$50,760	10
CompTIA Cloud+	$50,641	11
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Database Engineer	$49,980	15
Nutanix Certified Associate (NCA) v6.5	$48,644	26

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EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, AND AFRICA

Microsoft's Azure AI Engineer Associate certification tops the list in Europe, Middle East, and Africa this year at $110,871. The credential is for highly collaborative professionals who build and deploy AI solutions using Azure.

It's followed by Cisco's CyberOps Associate ($92,229), and then Google Cloud's Professional Cloud Security Engineer ($91,669), which was ranked first last year at $172,380.

TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS EMEA

CERTIFICATION	Average	Sample Size
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate	$110,871	41
Cisco Certified CyberOps Associate	$92,229	45
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Security Engineer	$91,669	41
Google Cloud - Professional Data Engineer	$86,259	47
CompTIA Cloud+	$80,989	45
CompTIA PenTest+ (Penetration Testing)	$80,944	47
Nutanix Certified Professional - Multicloud Infrastructure (NCP-MCI) v6.5	$79,253	104
Nutanix Certified Associate (NCA) v6.5	$79,004	73
Microsoft Certified: Azure Administrator Associate	$77,204	95
CISA - Certified Information Systems Auditor	$75,308	76
Microsoft Certified: Azure Solutions Architect Expert	$71,317	58
CompTIA Network+	$70,044	144
CompTIA Security+	$65,098	243
Microsoft Certified: Azure Security Engineer Associate	$64,234	42
Microsoft Certified: Azure Fundamentals	$63,994	179
CCNA	$62,839	142
ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity (CC)	$61,648	110
CompTIA CySA+ (Cybersecurity Analyst)	$61,276	90
CCNP Enterprise	$56,881	45
Microsoft Certified: Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals	$53,593	70

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ASIA-PACIFIC

As is the case in other regions, certifications with a focus on cybersecurity top the charts in the Asia-Pacific region.

The first, CISM, earned professionals an average of $111,346. CISSP and CompTIA's CySA+ followed, earning comparable wages at $110,907 and $103,990.

TOP-PAYING CERTIFICATIONS ASIA-PACIFIC

CERTIFICATION	Average	Sample Size
CISM - Certified Information Security Manager	$111,346	73
CISSP - Certified Information Systems Security Professional	$110,907	46
CompTIA CySA+ (Cybersecurity Analyst)	$103,990	43
CISA - Certified Information Systems Auditor	$99,705	70
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Developer	$95,176	48
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Security Engineer	$87,018	50
CompTIA Security+	$82,890	93
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud DevOps Engineer	$81,855	53
Microsoft Certified: Azure AI Engineer Associate	$80,330	46
Microsoft Certified: Azure Administrator Associate	$77,168	73
Google Cloud - Professional Data Engineer	$75,859	77
CEH - Certified Ethical Hacker	$72,590	46
AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate	$72,417	103
ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity (CC)	$70,452	69
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Network Engineer	$66,071	41
Google Cloud - Professional Cloud Architect	$64,406	127
Nutanix Certified Professional - Multicloud Infrastructure (NCP-MCI) v6.5	$56,005	89
Nutanix Certified Associate (NCA) v6.5	$54,957	62
Microsoft Certified: Azure Solutions Architect Expert	$53,030	43
Google Cloud - Associate Cloud Engineer	$48,638	147

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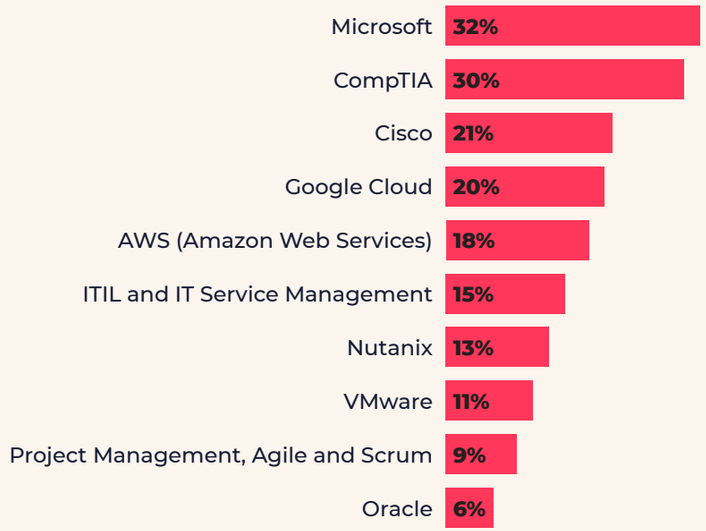
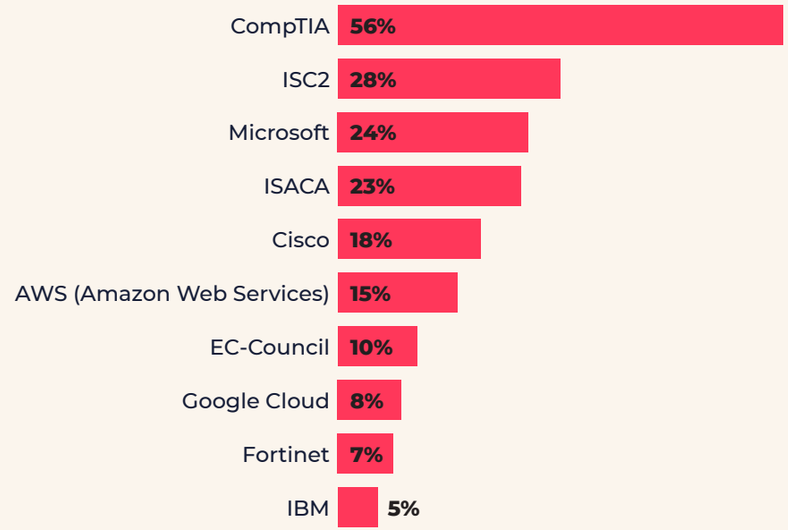
MOST POPULAR CERTIFICATIONS HELD IN 2024

TOP 10 NON-CYBERSECURITY AREAS CURRENTLY CERTIFIED



TOP 10 CYBERSECURITY VENDORS AND BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE CURRENTLY CERTIFIED



MOST WIDELY HELD

CERTIFICATION	Count
CompTIA Security+	1277
CompTIA A+	835
CompTIA Network+	769
Cisco CCNA	589
Microsoft Certified: Azure Fundamentals	533
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	502
CompTIA CySA+	456
ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity	409
CISM	347
CISA	313

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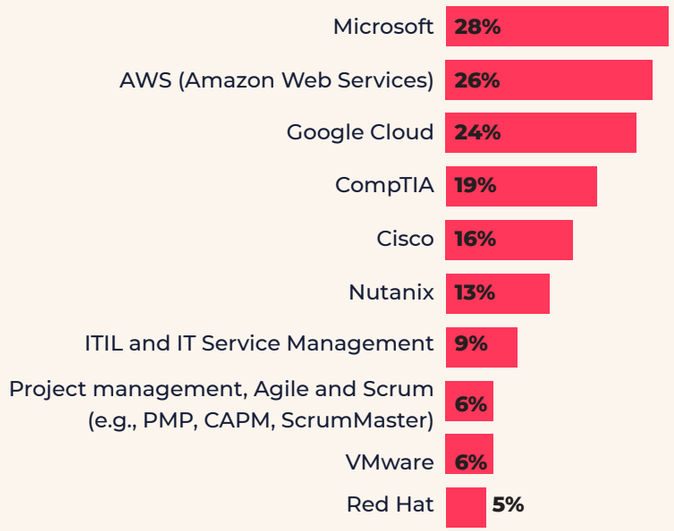
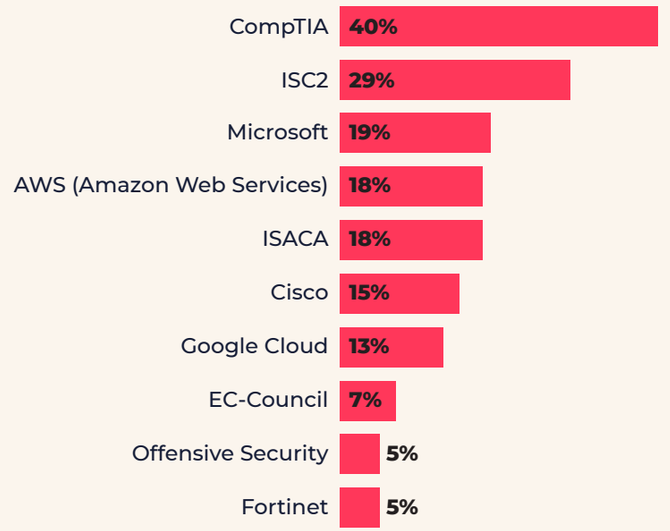
MOST PURSUED CERTIFICATIONS

TOP 10 NON-CYBERSECURITY AREAS



WORLDWIDE CERTIFICATION



THE CERTIFICATIONS MOST PLAN TO PURSUE IN 2025

CERTIFICATIONS	Count
CompTIA Security+	532
CISSP - Certified Information Systems Security Professional	435
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner	429
Network+	402
CompTIA CySA+ (Cybersecurity Analyst)	397
CCNA	308
AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate	295
CompTIA PenTest+ (Penetration Testing)	290
CompTIA A+	271
ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity (CC)	262

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CERTIFICATION RESOURCES

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF CERTIFICATIONS?

The best advice we can give to IT professionals — ***Get certified!***

With nearly every person who works in IT holding one or more certifications, the question to ask isn't, "Should I pursue certifications?" but, "Where will I be if I ***don't*** invest time and energy into my future?"

For employers, the message is much the same — invest in your people through skilling, reskilling, and upskilling. If you don't invest in your people, you risk falling behind technological advancements and your competition. There is no place in IT for obsolescence.

Not sure where to start? Where to invest? Who can help? We're here for you.

Where do I start?
Start with *How to Select the Right Certification for You*. Then read *How to Help Your Team Build Cybersecurity Skills*.

What does certification entail? Am I ready?
Get the facts on what to expect from courses, what the requirements are, and the exam prep available for the following certifications:

- *AWS*
- *Business Analysis*
- *Blockchain*
- *Cisco*
- *Citrix*
- *CompTIA*
- *Cybersecurity*
  - (ISC)2
  - EC-Council
  - F5
  - ISACA
  - Palo Alto Networks
  - SonicWall
  - and more
- *DevOps*
- *Google Cloud*
- *ITIL®*
- *Microsoft*
- *Nutanix*
- *Project Management*
- *Red Hat*
- *TOGAF®*
- *Veeam*
- *VMware*
- *Wireshark*

IT DECISION-MAKER INSIGHTS

AI is here to stay, and many leaders are already harnessing its potential, while others are still looking for ways to implement it into their organization. From the top down, some IT decision-makers are being told to do more with less — and many believe AI will help them with that.

In 2024, leaders are starting to unravel the mystery of AI, but will skills gaps hold them back? What about budgets? It's a less chaotic scenario this year, but the waters are still murky.

To learn more, we surveyed decision-makers across the globe. We asked them about their challenges and how decision-makers are addressing them, budgets and how they're allocating resources, and the big topic — skill gaps. They had a lot to say and there's a lot to learn from their experiences.

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KEY CHALLENGES

In 2023, IT leaders were mostly concerned with how they were going to prevent skilled and talented people from leaving while also attracting new professionals to fill open positions.

In 2024, concerns about recruiting and keeping valuable employees have lessened a bit as IT professionals may be more cautious about switching jobs and employers are seeing the value of investing in their own.

The biggest issues? Workloads (31%), resource and budget constraints (30%), and the skills gap (28%).

THE TOP CHALLENGES AS AN IT DECISION-MAKER

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IT DEPARTMENT BUDGETS

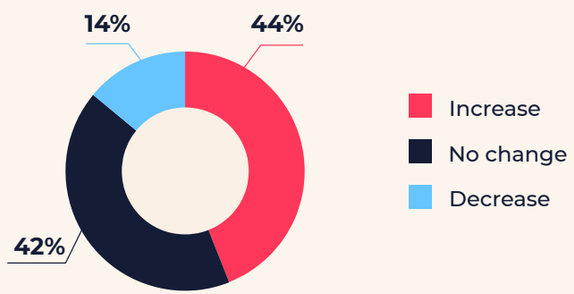
Compared to last year, more IT leaders say their budgets will remain the same in the coming year. Likewise, fewer report an expected increase.

Just like last year, a lack of resources and budget remains a top issue for this group. For those whose budgets will stagnate or decrease, the year ahead may prove especially challenging as high workloads burden their teams and hiring proves difficult.

Roughly one-third in this group say hiring will likely decrease, and nearly half say they won't add any more staff to help level out workloads.

For those who see their budgets increasing, more than half are prioritizing AI and machine learning, followed by cybersecurity, cloud computing and infrastructure. Seventy-one percent of this group say hiring will increase.

HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR BUDGET TO CHANGE NEXT YEAR?



TOP INVESTMENT AREAS

It comes as no surprise that the top area where companies are investing is AI. While 2023 was a year of hurry up and unleash AI, 2024 is the year where decision-makers are taking a step back to see how they can implement AI strategically and thoughtfully to align with company and societal expectations.

2024 gave leaders the opportunity to pause, take a breath, and see what kind of investment they need to make for best use scenarios in terms of talent and technology.

According to a recent report by ***Deloitte***, "Two of the most critical challenges for scaling are ***building trust*** (in terms of making Generative AI both more trusted and trustworthy) and ***evolving the workforce*** (addressing Generative AI's potentially massive impact on worker skills, roles, and head count)."

In that same study, three-quarters of organizations believe ***AI will impact their talent strategies*** in the year or two ahead, specifically affecting reskilling and upskilling efforts.

What's more, despite headlines to the contrary, 39% of those in the Deloitte report say the technology will add jobs, rather than eliminate them. Along the way, it'll drive up the value of some skills, like data analysis, critical thinking, and creativity, while others may be reduced.

What this signals is that AI as an investment area is nuanced and far-reaching, with varying use cases depending on the person whose role is being impacted. For technical professionals, adding to their skillset will create more value for themselves and their teams.

It will also help non-technical professionals bridge skill gaps and create new opportunities to work across lines that are quickly blurring.

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TOP INVESTMENT AREAS

However, it's not all about AI. Organizations can't afford to forget about the rest of the pie — and luckily, they're not. Our respondents are investing heavily in other areas: cybersecurity (42%), cloud computing (36%), and infrastructure and systems (33%). They're also recognizing the need for an increased investment in leadership skills (28%) as workforces grow and the need for critical thinking and creativity will help address a multitude of expectations.

Investments in these areas are imperative considering that close to 60% of decision-makers are anticipating a skills gap in the next one to two years and a greater proportion reporting that the skills gap is already here.

Nearly 35% of IT decision-makers report that their team's existing skills in AI are low to somewhat low, while only half would rate their team as having somewhat high to a high degree of existing skills in cybersecurity. That leaves a lot of doubt when it comes to the skills needed to protect the security of their systems. It's particularly concerning when those same decision-makers (38%) report that the most difficult area to hire talent is in cybersecurity.

AREAS OF INVESTMENT IN 2025

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WITHIN THESE KEY AREAS OF INVESTMENT, HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR TEAMS' EXISTING SKILLSETS?

AREAS	LOW	SOMEWHAT LOW	MEDIUM	SOMEWHAT HIGH	HIGH
AI and machine learning	11%	23%	35%	19%	12%
Augmented reality	9%	16%	41%	25%	9%
Blockchain	17%	17%	29%	21%	16%
Business process management	3%	11%	41%	32%	13%
Cloud computing	7%	13%	33%	28%	19%
Collaboration applications	3%	6%	37%	35%	19%
Containers	8%	17%	35%	26%	14%
Customer relationship management (CRM)	3%	13%	38%	31%	15%
Cybersecurity, information security	4%	12%	36%	30%	18%
Data analytics, data management, data science	7%	13%	38%	27%	15%
Data privacy (Ex., GDPR)	6%	19%	35%	27%	13%
Enterprise resource management (ERP)	3%	14%	33%	36%	14%
Governance, risk and compliance	5%	15%	34%	29%	17%
Green technology	11%	17%	44%	14%	14%
Infrastructure and systems	3%	8%	33%	34%	22%
Internet of Things (IoT)	7%	16%	37%	26%	14%
Leadership skills	4%	12%	40%	30%	14%
Mobile app development and deployment	4%	13%	40%	28%	15%
Mobility and endpoint management	5%	12%	38%	27%	18%
Networking and wireless LAN	4%	8%	34%	35%	19%
Project management	6%	12%	38%	30%	14%
Service management	4%	10%	35%	35%	16%
Soft skills development	5%	12%	32%	34%	17%
Software development	5%	11%	31%	35%	18%
Video, voice and telephony	4%	10%	37%	31%	18%
Virtual reality	8%	19%	28%	25%	20%
Virtualization	6%	10%	28%	30%	26%
Web development	5%	10%	33%	30%	22%

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Fifty-three percent of decision-makers worldwide plan to invest in Microsoft. That's slightly up from last year. The other top vendors are Amazon Web Services (42%) and Google Cloud (32%). The top three vendors have remained consistent over the past three years, though we're seeing some discrepancies with the rest of the top 10 list.

This year, Cisco, VMware, Kubernetes, OpenAI, Docker, Dell, and Splunk made the list. Apple, Nutanix, and IBM fell from the 2023 list. Last year, Docker appeared only in Asia-Pacific's top 10, but just barely at number 10. Dell and Splunk did not appear in the top 10 in 2023.

WORLDWIDE TOP VENDORS

AREAS	%
Microsoft	53%
Amazon Web Services (AWS)	42%
Google Cloud Platform	32%
Cisco	27%
VMware	24%
Kubernetes	22%
OpenAI	22%
Docker	17%
Dell	17%
Splunk	16%

NORTH AMERICA TOP VENDORS

AREAS	%
Microsoft	53%
Amazon Web Services	38%
Cisco	26%
Vmware	21%
Google Cloud Platform	20%
Dell	20%
OpenAI	19%
Splunk	18%
Apple	17%
ServiceNow	17%

LATIN AMERICA TOP VENDORS

AREAS	%
Microsoft	47%
Google Cloud Platform	43%
Amazon Web Services	40%
Fortinet	28%
Cisco	26%
VMware	25%
Kubernetes	24%
OpenAI	22%
Docker	19%
Red Hat	17%

EMEA TOP VENDORS

AREAS	%
Microsoft	55%
Amazon Web Services	36%
Cisco	30%
Google Cloud Platform	29%
VMware	24%
OpenAI	21%
Kubernetes	21%
Fortinet	20%
Docker	17%
Red Hat	17%

ASIA-PACIFIC TOP VENDORS

AREAS	%
Microsoft	53%
Amazon Web Services	52%
Google Cloud Platform	47%
Kubernetes	30%
Cisco	27%
Vmware	27%
OpenAI	26%
Docker	21%
Red Hat	21%
Nutanix	18%

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SKILLS GAPS

As noted earlier, the skills gap has very much made its presence known in IT. Nineteen percent of our decision-makers are reporting that there is a high risk of organizational objectives not being met due to skill gaps. Only one percent believe there is no risk.

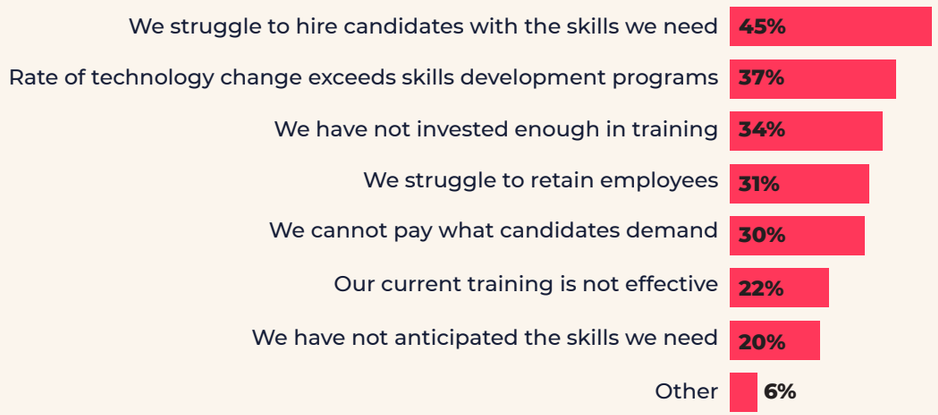
Something needs to be done to address this situation. With a greater number of employees staying in jobs longer, IT leaders have a workforce with an already established track record. It's time to maximize their potential through skilling, upskilling, and reskilling.

WHAT'S CAUSING SKILLS GAPS

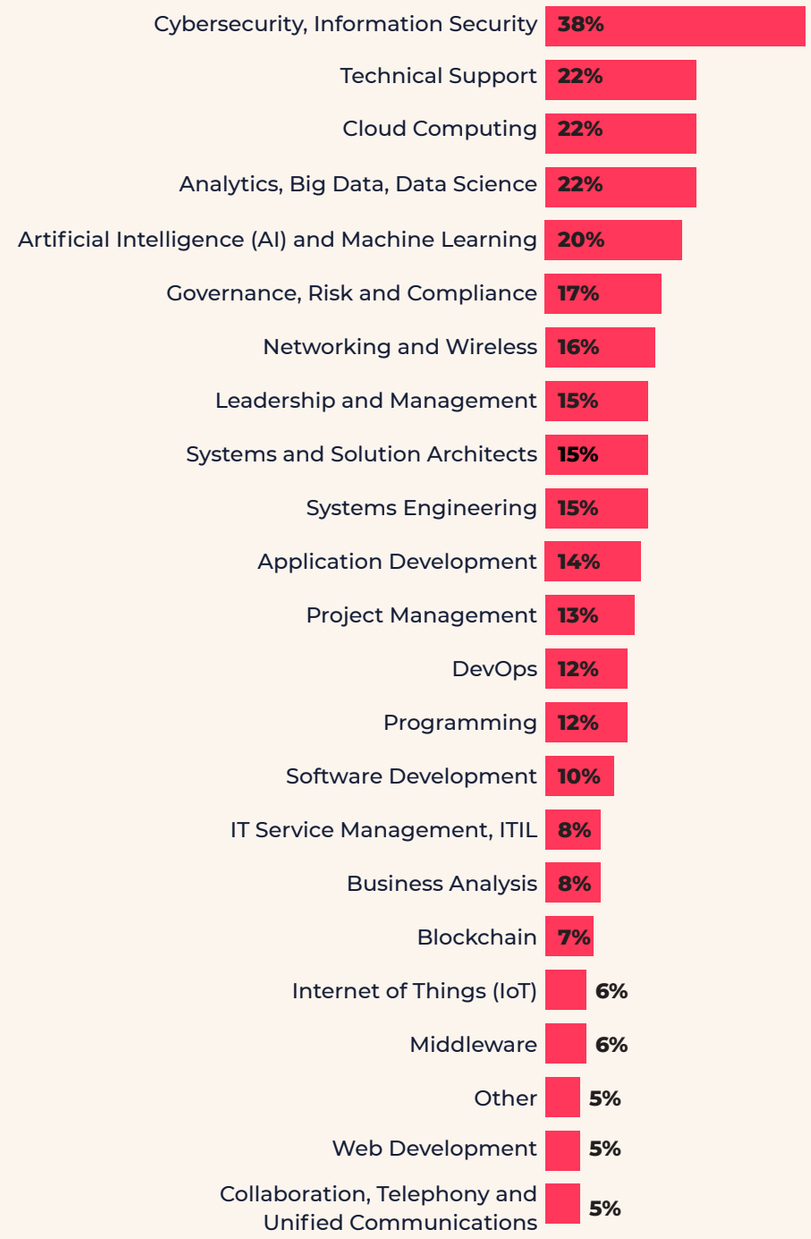
Last year, 43% of decision-makers viewed the fast pace of technology development as the number one reason for a skills gap in their organization. This year, they're becoming slightly more comfortable with innovation as only 37% cite this as a contributing factor. In 2024, the biggest problem they see contributing to the skills gap is the struggle to hire skilled candidates.

In a cyclical world, this makes sense as first you need to understand new technology and how it can impact your organization. After adoption, you are left with finding skilled people who can implement the new technology.

WHAT ARE THE TOP REASONS FOR SKILLS SHORTAGES ON YOUR TEAM?



AREAS WITH GREATEST DIFFICULTY FOR HIRING TALENT



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SKILLS GAPS IMPACT

IT leaders have three choices when it comes to addressing skill gaps: remain status quo and let technology pass them by, fill the gap from talent outside their organization, or skill, reskill, or upskill from their current employee pool.

Option one will result in a skill shortage that will impact an organization's performance. Fifty-four percent of our respondents say that skill shortages lead to increased stress on existing employees. Forty-two percent report increased project durations and slower response times, and 37% have a decreased ability to meet business objectives. In the long run, this situation becomes untenable as both employees and customers will likely jump ship.

Now let's look at what our respondents tell us about hiring new employees. Thirty-seven percent say that it is somewhat difficult to hire new, skilled talent. This is reason for concern given that 76% of the decision-makers we surveyed have two or more open positions on their teams, and 48% expect that hiring will increase.

On the flip side, when employers upskill or reskill from within their organization they're seeing positive benefits: team morale is improved (60%), greater innovation (55%), and improved talent retention and customer satisfaction (49%), to name just a few.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACTS OF SKILL GAPS

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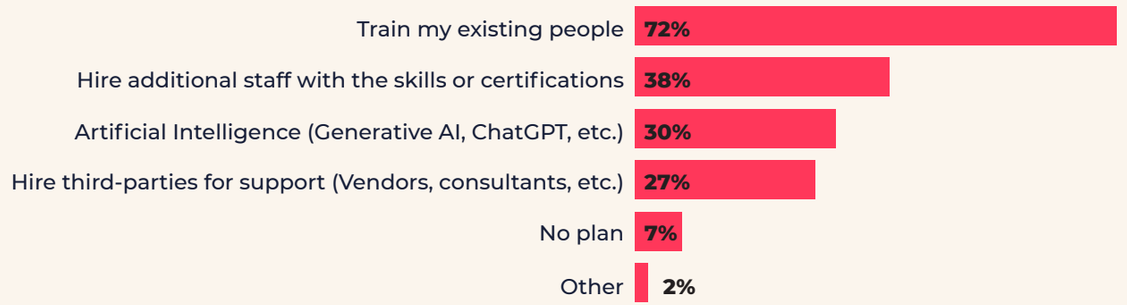
SKILLS GAPS RESPONSE

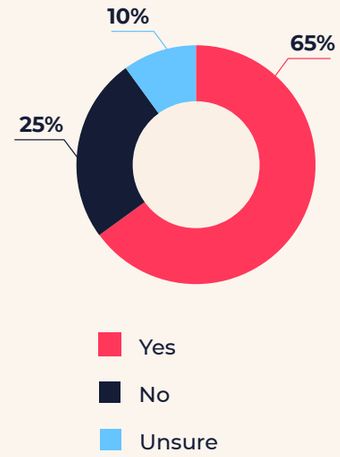
Leaders are looking very closely at closing the gap from within. Sixty-nine percent have authorized training within their team, 82% do so with the goal of increasing certifications, and nearly 100% see value in a certified staff.

Employers are also looking outside of the college graduate pool as many companies start to put skills ahead of degrees. In fact, 75% say they look for technical skills when seeking to fill a position. Work history or experience, soft skills, and certifications are viewed as significantly more valuable than a bachelor's or master's degree.

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO CLOSE SKILLS GAPS?



ARE SKILLS GAPS PRESENT?



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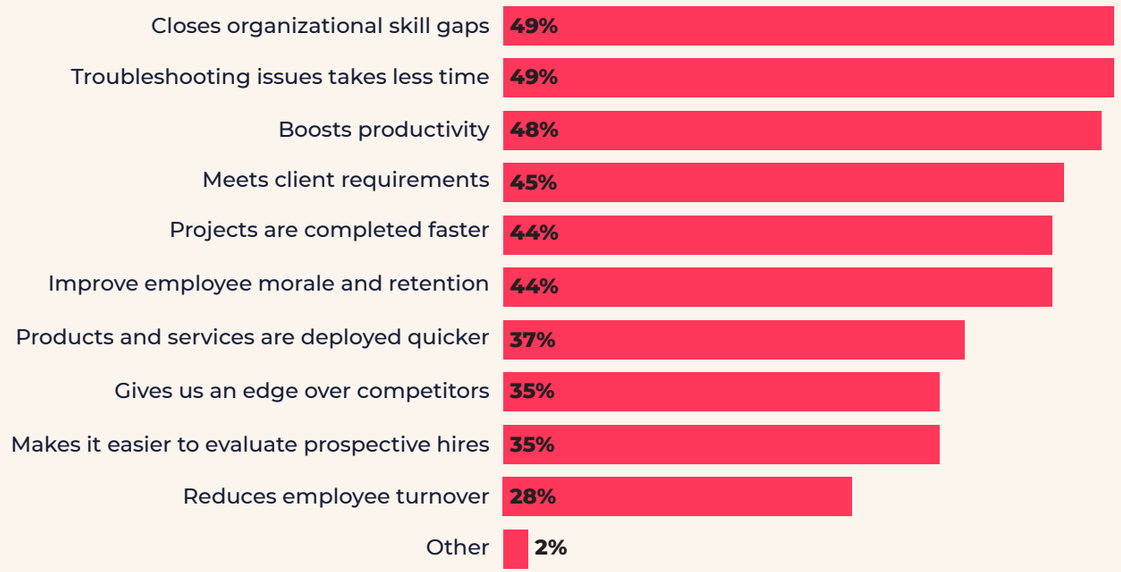
THE DOLLAR VALUE OF CERTIFICATIONS

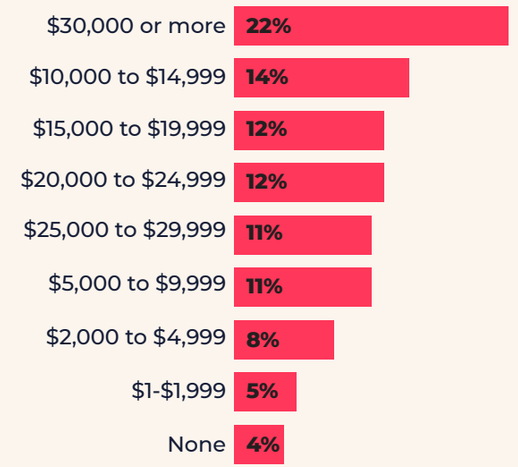
IT leaders need to make decisions based on dollar and cents — and they're paying close attention to the added value that a certified employee brings to their organization. Twenty-two percent estimate that value at $30,000 or more (that's up four percentage points from last year).

Twelve percent report in the range of $15,000 to $19,999 and 14% believe that figure is closer to the $10,000 to $14,999 range. These figures represent the dollar value from just one certified person within an organization. Multiply that by an entire IT team and the value in skilling, reskilling, and upskilling becomes exponential.

HOW HAS HAVING CERTIFIED STAFF ADDED VALUE TO YOUR TEAM?



CERTIFIED EMPLOYEE ANNUAL ADDED VALUE



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is just as important as medical benefits and paid time off to those who participated in the survey (more on that in the next section).

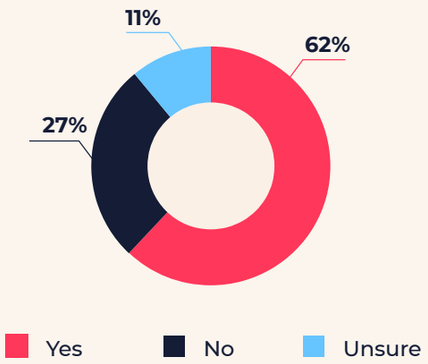
What makes it so valuable?

These professionals see building new skills or earning certifications as a way to challenge themselves, become more competitive in the job market, and improve their job security. They see continuous learning as a gateway to new job opportunities, increase their salary, and become a leader. In other words, they are an ambitious bunch.

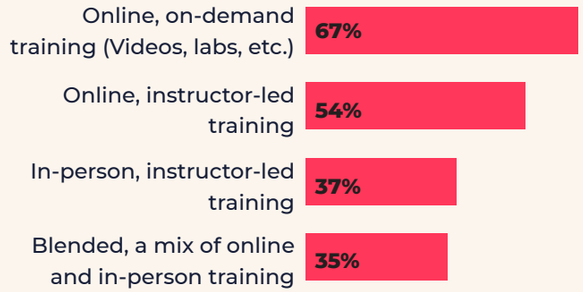
Despite these benefits — and the value that IT decision-makers place on skills and certifications — several obstacles stand in the way of professional development. What's the main reason? A lack of budget.

One-third of employers are still not providing training and 11% of employees don't even know if their employer offers a training benefit. Clearly, there is room for improvement. Still, these professionals are resourceful and find ways to fulfill their needs with or without their current employers.

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER OFFER TRAINING AS A BENEFIT?



WHAT TYPES OF FORMAL TRAINING DOES YOUR COMPANY OFFER?



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TRAINING TYPES

WHAT'S WORKING?

The most common type of training companies offer is online, on-demand training (67%) such as videos and labs. Online, instructor-led training comes in second (54%). Most often, the training offered focuses on earning certifications or building technical skills.

But, what employers offer and what employees want don't always line up. The type of training employees enjoy most is online and on-demand — which is good news since it's the most commonly offered. In-person, instructor-led training comes in second, with most saying it's an extremely effective way to build skills. Despite this, it's the least common method of training. In the past year, most professionals reported either participating in online, on-demand training or online, instructor-led training. Less than a quarter took an in-person class.

Likewise, compliance training is important for staying abreast of new regulations and developments, particularly when it comes to governance, risk management, software updates, cloud computing, and cybersecurity. Yet, fewer than one-quarter reported taking mandatory compliance training, with the highest percentage of respondents saying it's lacking.

This begs questions: Why the discrepancy? Is it budget related? (We'll get to this.) Or are IT professionals' preferences not being considered when launching training programs?

Training is only effective if employees participate. Fifty-four percent seek training as a personal choice. If it's not enjoyable, it's hard to say whether they'd continue. Conversely, 53% want to become more competitive. If training isn't helping, they may try different routes to get their desired result — even if that means leaving their employer.

For many, it won't come to that. By and large, these professionals enjoy the training they're offered and feel it meets their needs.

And what they want is high-quality content that's interactive, offers variety, and helps them gauge their progress. A program that checks those boxes will have better chances at success.

TYPES OF TRAINING COMPLETED IN THE PAST YEAR

	NORTH AMERICA	LATIN AMERICA	EMEA	ASIA-PACIFIC
Online, on-demand training (Videos, labs, etc.)	64%	71%	60%	54%
Online, instructor-led training	38%	49%	43%	49%
In-person, instructor-led training	22%	22%	25%	25%
Blended, a mix of online and in-person training	14%	10%	14%	15%
None	10%	8%	10%	13%

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LEARNING RESOURCES CONSUMED LAST YEAR

	NORTH AMERICA	LATIN AMERICA	EMEA	ASIA-PACIFIC
A certification prep guide	49%	59%	49%	41%
A white paper or technical guide	29%	27%	27%	19%
Artificial intelligence or generative AI tools (ChatGPT, etc.)	28%	33%	34%	37%
Attended an event or conference	29%	26%	27%	26%
Attended webinars	37%	39%	37%	37%
Books, textbooks, manuals	56%	55%	51%	42%
Forums (Codecademy, Stack Overflow, etc.)	28%	35%	27%	22%
Joined a group online or social media	18%	17%	19%	19%
None	2%	1%	1%	2%
Other	3%	2%	3%	3%
Podcasts	21%	19%	17%	11%
Social media	21%	17%	22%	22%
Training provided by an employer	36%	34%	31%	34%
Training subscription outside of work	37%	36%	36%	26%
Used free online learning tools	55%	45%	55%	45%
YouTube	60%	60%	63%	59%

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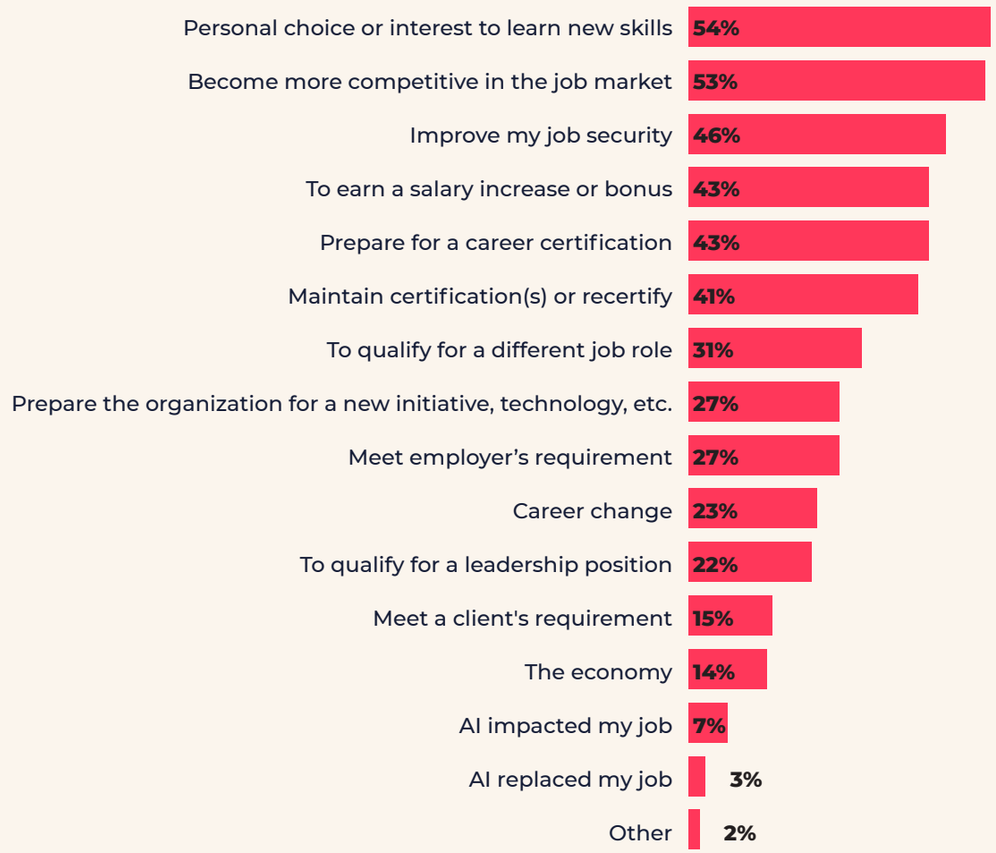
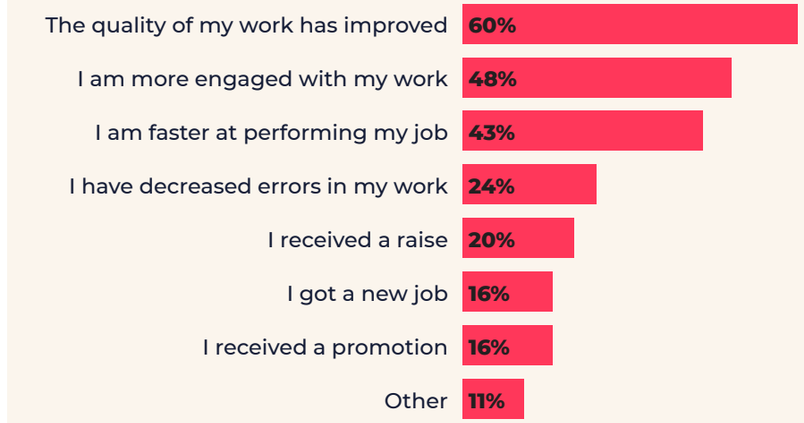
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS LED YOU TO SEEK TRAINING?



HOW HAS TRAINING TO ACHIEVE A CERTIFICATION HELPED YOU PERSONALLY?



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TRAINING FROM AN EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

For those employees who are training, their top choices for learning resources are: YouTube (60%), free online resources (52%), books, textbooks, or manuals (51%), certification prep guides (48%), and webinars (37%). Social media, online groups, and podcasts were at the bottom of the list.

Those who aren't training have varied reasons, with the greatest number citing a lack of a training budget (41%). Other popular answers include workload (28%), personal obligations (28%), the inability to travel for training (24%), and employers not offering training (20%). For the employed IT professional, it's important to look at — and take advantage of — all that their company offers in terms of training. In the same vein, employers need to offer easily accessible opportunities for employees to expand skills. Meanwhile, for the job seeker, it's time to look at current skills and fill gaps to set themselves apart from other candidates.

WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM TRAINING?

MAIN DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING

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THE IMPORTANCE OF WELL-ROUNDED EMPLOYEES

According to a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal*, companies are seeking candidates with a broader set of skills in IT. To do more with less, they need team members who possess power skills, collaboration capabilities, and a working knowledge of where the company needs to go.

In short, companies are looking for technical skills and certifications, but also versatility.

And, it seems that IT professionals are paying attention. Seventy-three percent focus their efforts on certification-based training, while 59% seek out skills-based technical training, and 28% want to learn new professional skills like leadership and communication.

Professional or power skills have become increasingly important, especially to hiring managers. Fifty-six percent of IT decision-makers say these skills are among the most important attributes when interviewing potential team members.

Furthermore, for those professionals who aspire to leadership roles, skills like team communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal communication outweigh one's technical aptitude, according to this group.

Of course, having technical skills is important. But, as the needs of organizations shift and technology changes, so too must the workforce.

Being adaptable, as well as technically savvy, will bode well for those professionals who want to bolster their job security, climb the professional ladder, or take on new roles.

WHICH SKILLS ARE MOST IMPORTANT FOR IT LEADERS TO HAVE?

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS

As mentioned, power skills are playing a greater role in IT professionals' careers today. Hiring managers and those in leadership value versatile skillsets that blend technical prowess with business acumen and good-natured professionalism.

This year and last, roughly one-third of respondents reported participating in training that focused on professional skills. This should come as good news to those in leadership struggling with employee morale, unclear roles and responsibilities, or a deficit in innovation. Leadership, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and other power skills help bring people together to break down complex problems and cohesively solve them.

Leadership, in particular, is highly sought-after but not always in greatest supply. According to **LinkedIn's 2024 list of most in-demand skills**, leadership ranks third from the top. In our study, IT decision-makers assessed their teams' abilities in this area.

The highest percent (40%) rated their skills as medium on a scale of low to high. Perhaps good — but not great. These professionals and their managers could use more help from their employers. While 58% of respondents say their employers offer a leadership development program, more than a quarter say otherwise. Further, almost one in five aren't sure if one is available.

Considering the growing importance of leadership skills in the tech world, why then aren't more organizations taking the opportunity to foster these skills in-house?

Frankly, it's a missed opportunity to address several of the top issues that decision-makers and individual contributors reported in the survey. Technical departments dealing with heavy workloads, strained budgets, and skill gaps on their teams must look within to develop their staff's skills in this area.

Doing so will encourage employees to lead in their roles while supporting themselves and those around them. What's more, it would provide growth opportunities for employees who want to see their careers progress and lead to greater satisfaction at work.

JOB SATISFACTION

Despite some challenges, job satisfaction in IT remains status quo from last year (70%). Job seekers may want new opportunities but are cautious about making big moves. The glory days of multiple job offers for most are in the rear view, but feelings about overall job security are good (74%).

This creates ideal conditions to assess skills and explore training opportunities.

While compensation is the leading factor for IT workers looking to change job roles (44%), better use of current skills (43%), promotions (40%), and a lack of training and growth development (26%) also factor significantly into the decision.

Given that employees are exploring job changes to improve their skills, employers should also play close attention to training opportunities.

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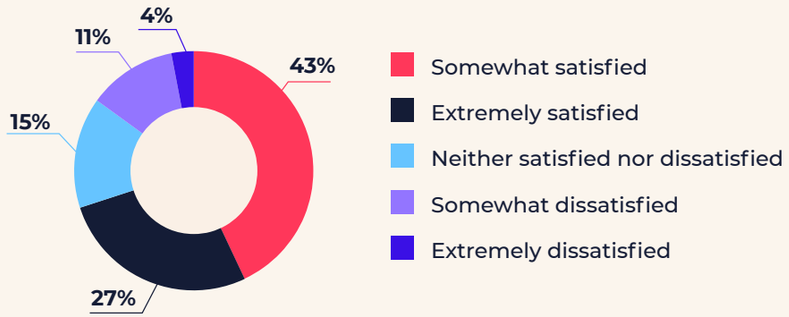
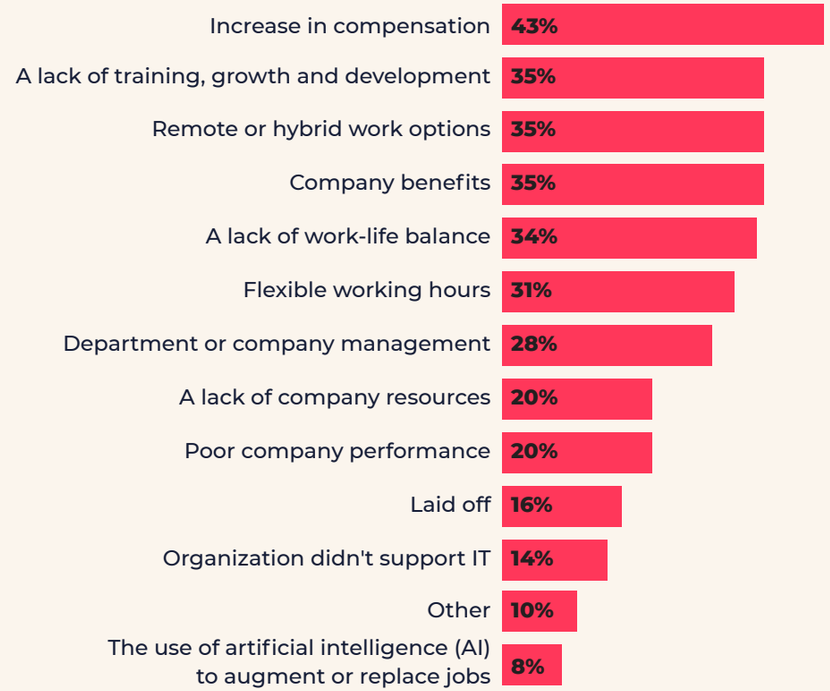
OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB?



WHAT LED YOU TO CHANGE EMPLOYERS?



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JOB SECURITY

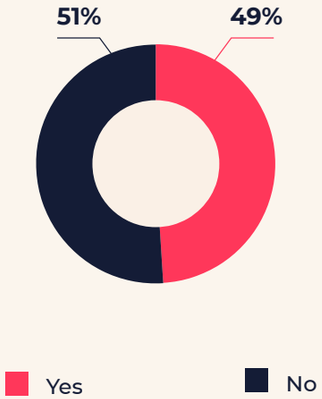
In seemingly contradictory survey results, job satisfaction and job security are high, yet 61% of respondents also report they are likely to change employers. This number has risen steadily in the last few years and represents an 11 percentage point jump from last year. In 2023, the biggest motivating factor was due to a lack of growth and development, and in 2024 job seekers are looking at new employers as a way to increase their paycheck (43%). Training, growth, and development, however, remains a driving force (35%). Another sign that times are changing is that 35% also said they want remote or hybrid work options. This didn't even make the list in post-pandemic 2023 as most were still working from home. Many employers are forcing return-to-office mandates, and some employees are not happy about that change.

Despite some dire predictions by the media, AI augmenting job roles is not yet much of a contributing factor when it comes to looking for new work. Only 8% reporting that AI has replaced their jobs.

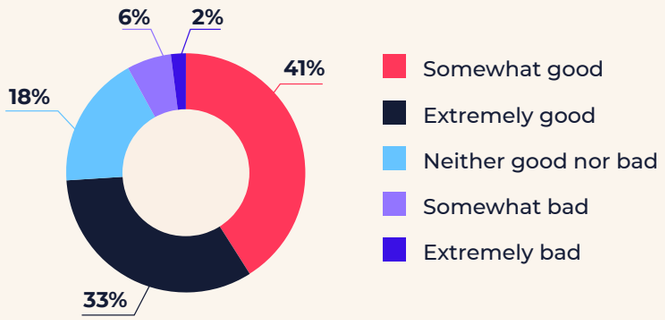
IT professionals may have many reasons for wanting to switch employers, but most aren't following through. Seventy-six percent report that they didn't move in 2024.

Last year, there was a significant rise in tech layoffs and, unfortunately, we sense more of the same this year with a five percentage point drop in job security from 2023. In times of uncertainty, employees often want to wait and see before making drastic changes. This may be a good plan given that roughly half of our respondents didn't receive a severance package after being laid off and 28% of those that did, weren't happy with it.

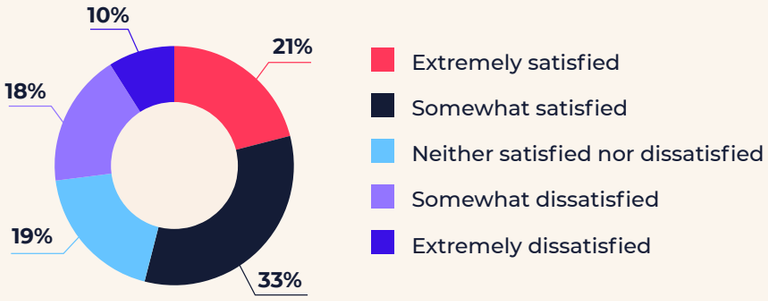
AFTER BEING LAID OFF DID YOU RECEIVE SEVERANCE?



OVERALL, WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT YOUR JOB SECURITY?



WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH YOUR SEVERANCE?



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EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

Though employees are staying with their current employers, they still face challenges at work. Workload (27%) was cited as the biggest obstacle with resource and budget constraints, skill gaps, and unclear job roles and responsibilities coming in close behind.

This suggests that employers may have high expectations of their staff but are providing fewer resources. This may lead to employee burnout.

Just as there are challenges, there are several factors that play into employee job satisfaction, including job security (63%), work-life balance (60%) and managerial support (58%). The number one benefit employees see value in is professional development (94%) (those who said the respective benefit was moderately, very or extremely important in the table on the next page). This beats out a raise (93%), paid time off (93%), and medical benefits (92%). One reason may be that professional development factors heavily into protecting job security.

Professional development is also a big differentiator when it comes to finding a new job. More than a third of our respondents found a new job in one to three months. They attribute IT or technical certifications, tech skills, and proven power skills such as communication and critical thinking as the three top reasons for landing a new job.

WHICH OF THESE ARE CURRENT CHALLENGES YOU FACE AT WORK?

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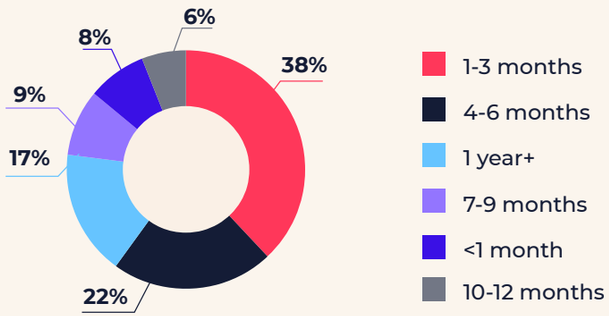
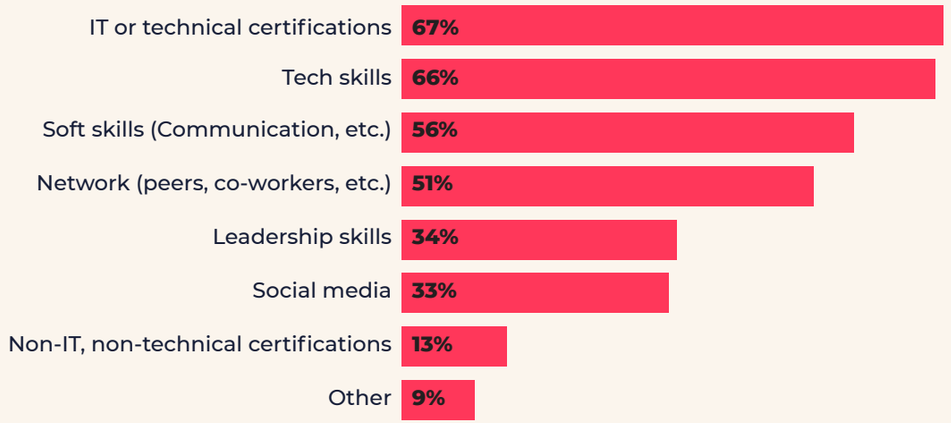
TIME TO FIND A NEW JOB



WHICH FACTORS HELPED WHEN LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB?



WHICH ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS DO EMPLOYEES VALUE MOST?

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Wellness or Mental Health Benefits	4%	8%	20%	33%	35%
Standard Raises or Bonuses	3%	4%	16%	36%	41%
Remote, Hybrid Work	4%	7%	18%	27%	44%
Professional Development, Training Opportunities	2%	4%	13%	36%	45%
Paid Time Off (PTO)	3%	5%	16%	32%	45%
Medical Benefits	3%	5%	15%	31%	46%
Flexible Working Hours	3%	6%	17%	33%	41%
Family Leave	5%	7%	20%	33%	35%
Coaching, Mentoring, Career Counseling	5%	8%	23%	36%	28%
Child Care	19%	10%	23%	25%	23%

CONCLUSION

For all its twists and turns, IT is still a thriving industry. It's not exempt though. All industries are currently dealing with the growing pains that come with transformation.

As we've found every year we've published this report, there are a number of challenges professionals face. For many, it's their workload and finding balance in day-to-day life. For others, it's thinking creatively to solve problems, old and new. And for those in leadership, it's balancing the needs of the business with the resources allocated and the capability of their teams. Undoubtedly, many feel the pressure. And with change often comes uncertainty. The silver lining, however, is that there's also a great deal of opportunity. Regardless of your role or seniority, it's time to assess current skills and take advantage of learning opportunities — whether they're offered by employers or available elsewhere. Now, amid transformation and change, is the best time to re-examine training priorities, budgets, and expectations.

It's an exciting time. The future is wide open. Embrace the opportunities!

2024 METHODOLOGY

Skillsoft's 2024 IT Skills and Salary Survey was conducted online from May to September 2024 using the Qualtrics XM Platform. Respondents encountered required and optional questions in the form of multiple choice, single select, open text fields, and Likert scales.

Skillsoft and the sponsors of this report distributed survey invitations to professionals around the world. The survey was made available in blogs, emails, social media, and Skillsoft's website. The survey yielded 5,191 responses from IT decision-makers and staff worldwide. Salaries are not normalized for cost of living or location. With respect certain year over year comparisons, please note we're comparing the results that respondents reported in the 2024 survey, not necessarily a comparison to the 2023 survey results.

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Skillsoft extends a special thank you to our partners for helping make this year's survey possible:

CompTIA. Google Cloud CQURE ACADEMY
Microsoft NUTANIX ISACA

ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft (NYSE: SKIL) delivers transformative learning experiences that propel organizations and people to grow together. The Company partners with enterprise organizations and serves a global community of learners to prepare today's employees for tomorrow's economy. With Skillsoft, customers gain access to blended, multimodal learning experiences that do more than build skills, they grow a more capable, adaptive, and engaged workforce. Through a portfolio of best-in-class content, a platform that is personalized and connected to customer needs, world-class tech and a broad ecosystem of partners, Skillsoft drives continuous growth and performance for employees and their organizations by overcoming critical skill gaps and unlocking human potential.

Learn more at ***www.skillsoft.com***

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Please contact Cameron Martin
cameron.martin@skillsoft.com

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