

UK Workforce Unprepared and Unskilled for Future of Work

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Survey shows workers underestimate the challenges that face them

24th May 2022 – 30% of UK workers believe they lack the skills needed in today's workplace.

Questionmark (<http://www.questionmark.com/>), the online assessment provider, surveyed the UK workforce against the skills identified by the [World Economic Forum (WEF)

(<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/>)[ii].

The survey identified the disconnect between the skills needed in the future and the current confidence levels amongst UK workers. It also highlighted the areas where inadequate training and support are holding workers back.

Out of the top 10 skills that businesses will need by 2025, only three were confidently possessed by over half the UK workforce – problem solving, critical thinking and resilience. Some of the skills are particularly low:

- Only 13% of respondents believe that they are capable in technology design and programming
- 35% have sufficient 'leadership and social influence' skills
- 37% are confident in technology use, monitoring and control
- 45% have 'creativity, originality and initiative'

According to the WEF Future of Jobs report, half of us will need to reskill in the next five years, as the "double-disruption" of the economic impacts of the pandemic and increasing automation transforming jobs takes hold. Technology skills have been identified as crucial to the future job market, yet this is an area where the UK is performing badly, according to the survey. Alongside the low confidence in technology, the terms that most confused respondents were often tech-related: Big Data (31%) and Digital Transformation (21%).

John Kleeman, Founder of Questionmark, said: "Do we think we're better than we are, or are we better than we think? That's the question that we need to help businesses to answer so that we can see what skills we've got and where training and development is needed. It's clear there is work to be done."

The survey also highlighted some differences between workers. Women are far less likely to consider they have leadership skills (38% vs 44% of men), while those aged 18-24 are far less passionate about their work compared to all other ages (33% vs 47% of 25-55+).

Given the skills gap, organisations need to commit to relevant training and development programmes for employees. Yet the survey found that 66% of respondents felt that training was not relevant to their role, 13% even said it seemed random and unplanned. More worryingly, 24% of respondents said they were too embarrassed at work to ask for support, while 42% preferred to find out how to do something for themselves, which point to cultural changes needed to help employees be more effective.

Questionmark's report into the priorities and barriers to skills development shows that organisations need to implement a cycle of training and assessment to reinforce the skills, give employees

opportunities to put them into practice and then assess how they are performing and what future training is needed.

You can read the Questionmark report “Solving the skills crisis: how training and assessments equip the workforce with skills for the future

(<https://www.questionmark.com/resources/whitepapers/download-uk-skill-crisis/?>) today.

i About the research: We commissioned research agency YouGov to conduct omnibus research among a panel of 2000 adults in the UK. All people who participated in the research were either in work or looking for work.

ii
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/>

About Questionmark

Questionmark unlocks performance through reliable and secure online assessments.

Questionmark provides a secure enterprise-grade assessment platform and professional services to leading organizations around the world, delivered with care and unequalled expertise. Its full-service online assessment tool and professional services help customers to improve their performance and meet their compliance requirements. Questionmark enables organizations to unlock their potential by delivering assessments which are valid, reliable, fair and defensible.

Questionmark offers secure powerful integration with other LMS, LRS and proctoring services making it easy to bring everything together in one place. Questionmark’s cloud-based assessment management platform offers rapid deployment, scalability for high-volume test delivery, 24/7 support, and the peace-of-mind of secure, audited U.S., Australian and European-based data centers.