

Canadian Executives Anticipate Significant Workforce Reskilling And Shifting Employee Expectations As They Adopt Artificial Intelligence



- *Canadian executives believe 42% of the Canadian workforce will need to reskill as they adopt Generative AI in their business over the next three years*
- *58% of Canadian executives are investing in reskilling internally as opposed to hiring from outside (43%)*
- *Canadian executives rank technology illiteracy as a top talent issue*

TORONTO, Aug. 23, 2023 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Canadian executives estimate that 42 per cent of their workforce will need to reskill as a result of implementing artificial intelligence (AI) and automation over the next three years, according to a [new global study](#) by the IBM (NYSE: IBM) Institute for Business Value. The study, [Augmented work for an automated, AI-driven world](#), surveyed, 3,000 global C-suite executives across 20 industries and 28 countries.

"Canada continues to face serious workforce shortages and AI is our best opportunity to tackle this challenge as we reimagine how work gets done," said **Dave McCann, President, IBM Canada**. "As AI becomes more pervasive and adoption accelerates across business, it is critical for leaders to set a plan which leverages people as a core competitive advantage. Taking these steps now in Canada is critical to ensure our industries and organizations maintain leadership and are not left behind."

Canadian business leaders keen to prepare for AI in business

- Canadian executives surveyed ranked technology illiteracy as a top talent issue, which was ranked second among global executives.
- Canadian executives surveyed also confirmed building new skills for existing talent is another important challenge to the organization, closely aligned with the top global challenges.
- 58 per cent of Canadian executives are investing in reskilling internally as opposed to hiring from outside (43 per cent).
- Canadian executives report people skills like time management and the ability to prioritize (44 per cent), analytics skills with business acumen (41 per cent) and ethics and integrity (39 per cent) are most important today.

Massive Opportunity for HR leaders as Canadian businesses embrace AI

The study provided recommendations for leaders to address talent challenges in the era of AI and help their organizations transform for the future, including a focus on skills and operating models. Top recommendations included:

- **Put skills at the center of workforce strategy—for today and for tomorrow** . Leaders should be thinking about how to increase the overall technical acumen of the workforce. That can serve as a broad foundation upon which employees build new skills, such as how to work creatively and responsibly with AI. It's very important for employees to have a basic understanding of AI and its capabilities so they can be both critical thinkers and users of the technology. The future pipeline of talent is an important consideration too. The global AI skills gap is an urgent need facing many companies today across industries, and this will require strategic investments.
- **Invest in talent as much as technology, preparing the workforce for AI and other technology disruption.** HR leaders will drive workforce planning, design, and strategy, like defining higher-value work, identifying the critical roles and skills of the future, and managing hiring, shifting people into new roles, retention and more. Including reviewing roles, identifying, and eliminating repetitive tasks that can be handled by AI, merging roles to create new roles, expanding roles to include tasks like applying or managing AI tools, and creating targeted skill development for the higher-level tasks driven by people.
- **Redesign the work, leading with the operating model.** Re-think and re-engineer how work gets done, identifying tasks where AI or automation can be applied to free up employee time for higher value tasks where their touch is critical. For example, [IBM's HR team](#) re-examined the highly manual and data-intensive quarterly promotions process, applying a custom Watson Orchestrate solution to automate data gathering and thereby empowering human staff to devote more time to high-value tasks.
- **Give jobs more meaning by putting the employee in the driver's seat** . AI has the potential to transform the employee experience. It can automate repetitive tasks, letting people focus on what they are passionate about, freeing up their time for skills development or work-life balance, and potentially create exciting new job roles and career paths. It's important to engage employees in this process.

To view the full study, visit <https://www.ibm.com/thought-leadership/institute-business-value/en-us/report/augmented-workforce>

***Study Methodology**

The IBM Institute for Business Value, in cooperation with Oxford Economics, surveyed 3,000 global C-suite executives across 20 industries and 28 countries from all major regions in December 2022 and January 2023 about job roles, skills and how work gets done.

The IBM Institute for Business Value, IBM's thought leadership think tank, combines global research and performance data with expertise from industry thinkers and leading academics to deliver insights that make business leaders smarter. For more world-class thought leadership, visit: www.ibm.com/ibv.

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