

The Most Sought After Professions of 2017

The HR divisions need to be a part of the overall digital transformation lifecycle.

by **Rahul Patwardhan** February, 2017



The digital revolution is transforming enterprises and disrupting industries. Leaner start-ups are hunting forerunners from all sides, challenging them to revamp themselves to become organizations of today. However, becoming a digital enterprise requires more profound changes than merely investing in, and adapting, digital technologies. Companies must rehash their fundamental thinking, business models, operations, and above all, their workforce.

Talking about the workforce, enterprises need to on board, retain, and develop digital talent, and train the existing workforce in relevant skills. While being surveyed for a recent IDT Skills Report, most respondents noted a substantial gap in digital skills across domains. For instance, nearly 73% respondents thought extensive Big Data Analytics skills to be important for digital transformation of the enterprise. However, only 39% respondents possessed the necessary skills in the domain.

Most of the companies (77%) consider missing digital skills as the key hurdle to their Digital Transformation. For employees to be relevant in this rapidly changing digital environment, they must refresh their skills frequently. But what are these skills? Let's evaluate -

1. Cloud and distributed computing

In an age where concepts such as platform as a service (PaaS) and software as a service (SaaS) run rife, the world is certainly moving towards cloud. A host of business process automation tools such as SAP, Sales force etc. are moving to a distributed architecture, being hosted on cloud. Thus, the demand for professionals adept in cloud and distributed computing skills is on a rise. In fact, in a recent LinkedIn survey, the skill ranked #1 on almost every list — including France, Germany, India, Ireland, Singapore, the U.S., and Spain.

2. Data Science

If there is anything that is progressing at a rate in sync with the increasing population, it is data. This abundance of data provides corporations with the great opportunity to decipher trends about customer spending patterns and preferences. And to make this happen, they need data scientists on board. A Gartner study revealed that data scientist job will witness a year on year growth of about 35 percent. Data scientists will be a very important part of the data intelligence and informational decision enhancement strategy of companies going forward.

3. UI Design

LinkedIn dubs User Interface skills as the new black. It ranked #14 in 2014, #10 last year, and #5 this year (second largest jump on this year's Global Top Skills of 2016 list). With startups mushrooming in every other industry, this trend is only set to increase in the years to come. A report by the Bureau of Job Statistics suggests almost 13 percent surge in UI designer jobs by the year 2020, as the demand for development of new web avenues surges.

4. UX

As the number of people using the internet grows, so will their interactions with online business avenues. Hence, the skill of a user experience designer will be key for any business. In fact, the demand is so ripe that companies are ready to offer hefty pay packages to candidates with the right skill sets. A recent report from Glassdoor states the median base salary of UX designers in the US at a whopping \$91,800.

5. Storage System

With the Hadoop ecosystem and other big data tools emerging on the scene, organizations must design data storage systems and schemas to power such data science applications. In fact, it is this very trade, if performed with diligence, that will add to bringing down the demand for SEO and SEM experts who run the age-old marketing campaigns for promotions over the web.

6. Search Engine Marketers and Optimizers

This profession has been in constant demand ever since internet took over as the primary business activity ecosystem. Although it is set for a healthy growth, LinkedIn's report suggests that only the most innovative SEO and SEM experts will see a sustained growth in demand in the times to come. This is primarily because the supply of the traditional SEO professionals has largely caught up with demand from companies.

7. Middleware and Integration Software Design

Middleware is a broader term used for application servers and the supporting architecture modules that form a bridge between the data layer and the presentation layer within any IT project design. As solutions become smarter and leaner in the times to come, it will be down to the integrating systems to enable an effective data acquisition Mechanism. Oracle's premier integration product ODI is hence becoming a great ELT platform in IT projects.

While these skills will make for a strong portfolio in 2017, targeted skill development is what will help enterprises create and retain the workforce of tomorrow. The HR divisions need to be a part of the overall digital transformation lifecycle. Besides, they'll need to implement recruitment/training programs that can help close the skill gap. Advanced training programs in skills like Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing, Robotics, and Big Data and Analytics can help the Millennial workforce to become 'hour 1, day 1' productive, and job and industry ready.