Artificial Intelligence facing large skills shortage: Microsoft

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The fast-emerging field of Artificial Intelligence, which has suddenly caught the attention of the IT industry and the governments across the world, is facing a large skills shortage, a top Microsoft official has said.

The Artificial Intelligence (AI) is also facing the challenge of appropriate use of data, group programme manager of Microsoft Learning Matt Winkler told.

"There is a pretty large skills shortage. Lots of folks are talking about it (AI). A lot of folks are very, very excited about it and then they want to go and make that real. And when they go to make that real, there's a really large skills shortage," Winkler said.

That's why it's so exciting to be trying to bring these technologies to more developers because it's going to bring more people into the mix, he said.

Winkler said the second challenge is really around data.

"How do you get the data in the right shape? How do you prepare the data? Because all of the AI in the world is based on data, and so what makes it interesting is the data that you have, the data that your business has, that what you understand about your customers.

So how do you most effectively use that data to go and produce models," he said.

Then within kind of any individual product project, one of the key challenges is the same thing that the industry has seen with software, which is, if one tries and do too much, the project gets much harder.

"And so we'll often times see failed projects, which are the result of trying to create just the most amazing thing having done nothing," he said.

At the recently concluded developers conference – Build 2018 – Microsoft's CEO Satya Nadella talked about how to make AI accessible for everyone.

"Our guidance to a lot of customers to pick a domain and pick a used case where you have a high, high-quality data and that it is really well understood. Start there, get some wins with that and then start expanding the use cases so far," Winkler said.

Microsoft is partnering with multiple players in both the private and governmental sectors to use AI for public good.