



Soft Skills and Technology Certification Preparation Courses Are Surging as Organizations Shift to Skills-Based Talent Management Practices

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Latest data from Udemy highlights the continued interest in soft skills and IT skills validation alongside core topics such as AI and diversity and inclusion

SAN FRANCISCO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 8, 2024-- [Udemy](#) (Nasdaq: UDMY), a leading online skills marketplace and learning platform, today released its [Q2 2024 Global Workplace Learning Index](#). This quarterly report provides insights into which skills are growing in demand and helps organizations stay ahead of the competition worldwide.

According to the World Economic Forum, [many companies](#) face mounting skills gaps hindering business growth. Coupled with the rapid rise of generative AI (GenAI), skills gaps are becoming [more pressing and costly](#) than ever before. Udemy's *Index* analyzes quarter-over-quarter course consumption data based on its 16,000 Udemy Business customers. By comparing course consumption with emerging trends, the *Index* signals critical knowledge gaps for leadership to address through skills-based talent management while enabling employees to learn skills they're eager to develop.

"[Udemy's research](#) shows that most organizations have begun implementing skills-based processes, but employees and leaders still need help knowing which skills to focus on first," said Greg Brown, President and CEO of Udemy. Soft skills, like teamwork and problem-solving, are critical to enabling the success of key tech trends like AI, which have the potential to shift the trajectory of many industries, so it's encouraging to see these themes trending in this quarter's *Index*."

"With technology like Generative AI and the shift to hybrid work models, constant change is all around us. Adapting to this change can be tough, but it's really about understanding and guiding how people think and behave," says [Sivakami S.](#), a Udemy instructor and change management expert. "All change is rooted in human behavior, making it crucial for leaders to draw insights from psychology and behavioral economics. By developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, leaders can build trust and motivation, guiding employees effectively through complex changes."

Udemy's Q2 2024 *Index* highlighted several emerging themes in corporate learning, including:

- **Soft skills are a must-have asset to effectively lead through change.** The top three emerging professional skills in Q2 were problem-solving, which saw a 51% increase in course consumption, teamwork (27%), and change management (24%). While tech skills continue to see demand, soft skills are becoming increasingly crucial for navigating change in a tech-driven environment. As companies transition to skills-based organizations, developing soft skill sets will enable leaders to address the growing pains of change and build employee trust when communicating the impact of these shifts.
- **Organizations are investing time to ensure their teams' skills are validated.** IT certification preparation courses have seen robust demand, with 11 million learner enrollments in Udemy courses over the past 12 months. Organizations in the technology industry increased their consumption of AI-900: Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals courses by 104%. Manufacturing organizations saw an increase in courses related to CompTIA A+ (46%), and government entities prepared their employees for CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+) exams (40%). These certifications empower employers to evaluate professionals based on proven skill sets without relying solely on traditional benchmarks like college degrees – a critical step in transitioning to skills-based talent management.
- **There's an appetite to use GenAI for next-level capabilities.** GenAI is a trending topic quarter-over-quarter in the *Index*; in Q2, GenAI course consumption increased by 37%. In tandem, ChatGPT courses increased by 40%, and courses on Natural Language Processing (NLP) increased by 48%. With more familiarity with GenAI and its applications for the workplace, companies are now investing in courses that help employees implement GenAI into daily tasks, allowing them to supercharge their work.
- **Organizations are putting a premium on belonging and inclusivity.** In Q2, consumption of Diversity and Inclusion courses increased by 12%. Organizations in the manufacturing sector showed particular interest in Diversity and Inclusion courses, with a 31% increase in course consumption across the industry. This uptick in Diversity and Inclusion comes when organizations and trade groups face [DE&I backlash](#), with some rolling back diversity policies in response. [Udemy's research](#) found that 67% of employees believe investing in a skills-based approach will significantly improve fairness in the workplace, and 66% agree it will foster a more diverse and inclusive work environment overall. With many companies redefining their approach to diversity, inclusion, and belonging, investing in belonging-centric skills development remains imperative to creating more accessible, equitable, and inclusive workplaces for all employees.

"Diversity and inclusion is at a turning point in the corporate world. Leaders are rethinking how they can foster inclusive practices without adding risk," said [Monika Rawat](#), a Udemy instructor and expert in Diversity and Inclusion. "For companies, diversity and inclusion aren't just about doing the right thing; they're crucial for boosting productivity and sparking innovation. When leaders train their teams on these key concepts, they can implement practical strategies that lead to broader perspectives, better teamwork, and a more inclusive culture throughout the organization."

To learn more about how organizations can partner with Udemy Business to upskill for the future, visit: business.udemy.com.

Methodology

The Udemy Global Workplace Learning Index uses data from thousands of Udemy Business customers worldwide. Location data is based on the country associated with the company. The skills data compares the consumption of courses in the Udemy Business collection from Q1 2024 to Q2 2024. Courses are associated with one or more topics, with a maximum of five topics per course. The trending skills that you see in the report are based on these topics. If a course covers multiple topics, consumption minutes are divided equally across all topics associated with the course.

About Udemy

[Udemy](#) (Nasdaq: UDMY) transforms lives through learning by ensuring everyone has access to the latest and most relevant skills. Through the Udemy *Intelligent Skills Platform* and a global community of diverse and knowledgeable instructors, millions of learners gain expertise in a wide range of technical and professional skills — from [generative AI](#) to [leadership](#). The Udemy marketplace provides learners with thousands of up-to-date courses in dozens of languages, offering a variety of solutions to achieve their goals. Udemy Business empowers enterprises to offer on-demand learning for all employees, immersive learning for tech teams through Udemy Business Pro, and cohort learning for leaders through Udemy Business Leadership Academy. Udemy Business customers include Fender®, Glassdoor, On24, The World Bank and Volkswagen. Udemy is headquartered in San Francisco with hubs in Austin and Denver, USA; Ankara and Istanbul, Türkiye; Dublin, Ireland; Melbourne, Australia; and Chennai, Gurugram and Mumbai, India.

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