



## AI Meets EQ: New Udemy Research Shows Enterprises Balancing Tech Mastery with Human Skills

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*2026 Global Learning & Skills Trends Report finds surging demand for AI fluency and adaptive skills as companies chase operational efficiency and competitive edge*

SAN FRANCISCO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 18, 2025-- [Udemy](#) (Nasdaq: UDMY), a leading AI-powered skills acceleration platform, today released its annual [2026 Global Learning & Skills Trends Report](#). Rooted in learning data from over 17,000 Udemy enterprise customers, the report explores the top themes and in-demand skills shaping the future of work. AI adoption is accelerating, but [McKinsey research](#) reveals only 1% of employers feel ready for its effects. Udemy's data shows leading companies like [Prodapt](#) are investing in both AI fluency and adaptive skills (often called soft skills or power skills) like leadership and communication to reskill employees, redefine roles, and empower leaders to guide teams through AI-fueled change.

"AI can automate tasks once considered impossible with traditional workflows," said Hugo Sarrazin, president and CEO of Udemy. "This creates urgency for enterprises to build AI fluency to stay competitive, but that alone isn't enough. The organizations winning today are those treating AI adoption as both a technical and a human transformation. AI is driving efficiency, but humans are driving effectiveness with skills like leadership, adaptability, and judgment that machines can't replace."

Udemy identified four key areas of opportunity for companies assessing skills acceleration priorities for 2026:

### 1. AI fluency must become table stakes.

Professionals who use AI fluidly while thinking critically about its risks, outputs, and impacts will drive the biggest business gains. AI fluency skills are in demand: Udemy has seen 11 million GenAI course enrollments to date. Microsoft Copilot content consumption surged 3,400% year-over-year across business use cases and GitHub CoPilot content consumption skyrocketed 13,534% for technical applications. AI agents and agentic AI emerged as the top-consumed net-new AI skill, showing fluency goes beyond basic prompt engineering.

### 2. Adaptive skills are critical to successful transformation.

Hard-earned skills like critical thinking, communication, and creativity remain essential as professionals navigate AI-driven disruptions and other innovations. Adaptive or soft skills learning has grown 25% year-over-year on Udemy Business, with critical thinking consumption up 37% and decision-making skills increasing 38%. These fundamentally human competencies provide the strategic foundation that no algorithm can replace.

### 3. The new norm: learning in the flow of work, where skills actually stick.

Embedding learning into daily workflows transforms "just-in-case" training into "just-in-time" upskilling, delivering transferable skills precisely when needed. Tools like [Udemy's AI Role Play](#) exemplify this, offering context-specific scenarios with instant AI-powered feedback for immediate improvement. Udemy's AI Role Play has seen remarkable adoption, with 3,300+ Role Plays published within three months of launch and 38+ new Role Plays created daily. This momentum aligns with [ATD research](#) showing 85% of talent professionals find retrieval practices, or actively recalling information, effective for improving learning outcomes.

### 4. Scaling leadership and ethics supercharges AI adoption.

Leadership empowers employees to reimagine their roles and workflows while using AI responsibly within cultures that prioritize both permission and purpose. Leadership is the 6th most consumed business skill on Udemy Business, while AI ethics and governance course consumption has increased 98% year-over-year. This combination ensures AI adoption happens with both strategic vision and ethical guardrails.

"Change is a constant in the world of work, but what's more unpredictable are barriers, the impact of uncertainty, and whether or not we are agile enough to withstand them," said Paul Kent, Senior Learning and Development Manager, [PepsiCo](#). "By prioritizing business outcomes, professionals' goals, and company-wide best practices, we're developing the skills our teams need today and tomorrow to thrive in the AI era."

[Top organizations](#) are already acting on the report's insights, using Udemy to address the urgent reskilling needs brought on by AI. To read the full report and learn how Udemy's AI-powered capabilities can accelerate AI fluency, adaptability, and leadership skills development, visit: <https://business.udemy.com>.

#### Methodology

For this report, Udemy analyzed data from more than 17 thousand customers around the world. The team calculated total consumption by Udemy Business learners across all course topics for the year from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. The team calculated the percentage growth in consumption compared to the year from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. The total consumption ranking for the AI topics is also drawn from the July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, time period. For the growth of the AI topics, Udemy included topics showing a significant percentage growth in consumption compared to the previous year. We also listed new AI topics showing significant surges for which there is no previous year comparison. These topics are simply labeled as "surging."

#### About Udemy

[Udemy](#) (Nasdaq: UDMY) is an AI-powered skills acceleration platform transforming how companies and individuals across the world build the capabilities needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving workplace. By combining on-demand, multi-language content with real-time innovation, Udemy

delivers personalized experiences that empower organizations to scale workforce development and help individuals build the technical, business, and soft skills most relevant to their careers. Today, thousands of companies, including Ericsson, Samsung SDS America, On24, Tata Consultancy Services, The World Bank, and Volkswagen, rely on Udemy Business for its enterprise solutions to build agile, future-ready teams. Udemy is headquartered in San Francisco, with hubs across the United States, Australia, India, Ireland, Mexico, and Türkiye.

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