

Follow-up Topics from 6/8/2021 Webinar

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Could you tell us more about incentives or rewards that could help motivate employees to embrace the reskilling process? Some may find it a bit uncomfortable.

Some employees value learning and training opportunities more so than job security or pay. Many organizations and countries are creating training programs and offer their employees the ability to accrue training hours in exchange for paid leave -in France this is known as *compte personnel de formation* (CPF). Other ideas are to offer coaching services to the individual participants to meet everyone where they are, but also help guide them through the process or to focus on areas of development. Another recommendation is to focus on change management and communication. Highlight the benefits of those going through the process and for the organization (e.g. impact on DEI). As part of the reskilling process, ensure there are career pathing options, continued training, new assignments that keep them engaged, and competitive salaries. Make it a part of your culture.

Are there some ways to encourage the C-Suite to share deriving skills requirements from the business vision in enough detail to be useful?

There might already be some documentation there in strategic business plans. Those often exist for multiple planning purposes (investment, real estate, financial, etc.) and are very helpful for skill planning exercises as well. The alternative is to link your request for information from the C-Suite to a business need. It might be possible that the C-Suite already perceives certain workforce gaps such as ageing workforce, need for more technology skills (Cyber Security, Machine Learning / AI, Block chain) or even wants to drive a more diverse workforce. All these acknowledged business needs would be a good reason to ask questions about the business vision/forecast because those are the key drivers of the workforce you will need.

Is there a way to monitor the upskilling process to spot employees who are taking to the new skills in an extraordinary way, so that future stars and leaders can be spotted and given extra opportunities?

Start by identifying what success looks like for the new skill or competency. Often, assessments can be leveraged to target skills so that you can track progress. Assessments can also be used to target aspects such as learning orientation and openness to trying new things which could also be beneficial. Monitoring employee engagement is an additional indicator that could be incorporated.

There's going to be so much demand for cyber-security engineers. How can companies upskill or reskill employees for that, rather than face a bidding war in the marketplace?

There is already a battle for tech talent, and cyber-security engineers is one of the most in-demand security positions out there. According to the New York Times, there is an estimated 3.5 million unfilled cybersecurity jobs this year alone. There is also a wide salary range for these roles, depending on skills. For example, you would likely pay a higher salary for individuals with abilities in application development security and cloud security compared to individuals without these skills.

Organizations need to determine how much they are willing and able to invest in the development of cyber-security engineers. Depending on this, you could incentivize individuals to pursue a degree in computer science, have individuals attend bootcamps focused on cybersecurity engineering, have individuals learn it on their own or as part of a training offered by the organization, or you could also source and pay for talent. Regardless of how you get the talent, the second part is retaining them. Be sure to offer continued education to hone their skills, career pathing, and an enticing culture and employee value proposition. There is much more involved, but these are a starting point.