Solving the Skills Paradox:
Seven Ways to Close Your Critical Skills Gaps

By David Smith, Diego S. De León, Breck Marshall, and Susan M. Cantrell
In 2012, a record number of people around the globe are unemployed—200 million, by some estimates. Yet as much as 34 percent of employers worldwide are having difficulty filling open positions. The vast majority (73 percent) cite lack of experience, skills or knowledge as the primary obstacle to recruiting needed talent.¹

In many countries, the percentages of employers facing hiring challenges are far higher: In the United States, the number is 52 percent; in Brazil, it’s 57 percent; in India, it has reached 67 percent; and in Japan, it’s a whopping 80 percent.² The situation is even worse when it comes to the skills gaps within an organization’s existing workforce. Less than half of all workers (49 percent) surveyed by Accenture agreed that they have all the skills needed to perform their job at their best.³ In another Accenture survey, only 16% of 674 global executives described their workforce’s skill level as industry leading.⁴

In short, the people are there. But they aren’t the right people—those with the capabilities, education and business skills companies need right now. When organizations once again step up their hiring efforts—and demand even more sophisticated skills essential for innovation and growth—the problem could reach crisis levels. For many companies, the skills gap has already dealt harsh blows, in the form of delayed product releases as well as eroded customer satisfaction and revenue. For some, the gap has led to the demise or sale of a business.
Managers who think that the skills gap doesn’t pertain to their company should think again. Contrary to widespread opinion, the worldwide recession hasn’t eradicated the skills crisis. Nor is the problem confined to companies losing masses of baby boomers to retirement; those operating in niche fields like science, technology, engineering or math; or enterprises competing in high-tech industries. Accenture’s interviews with 36 executives at more than 30 organizations as well as other research indicate that skills gaps are widespread across industries, geographies and nearly all types of workforces, ranging from manufacturing and purchasing to beer brewing and utility line work. According to a recent global study by Manpower, the types of employees in shortest supply include technicians, sales representatives and skilled trade workers. Every executive we interviewed across a variety of industries and geographies said that their company is facing a skills gap in a diversity of functions. And in their view, the gap is preventing them from effectively executing their business strategies (See “Missing skills”).
## Missing Skills

Skills shortages aren’t confined to just a few industries. Here are some examples of how skills gaps manifest themselves across different types of companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Skills gaps</th>
<th>Reasons for skills gaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Service staff with problem-solving capabilities, IT skills, communication and customer interaction skills, and the ability to anticipate customer needs and proactively address them on the front line</td>
<td>Service staff needs to more flexibly serve the changing needs of the business and leisure traveler (for example, help customers connect electronic devices); all employees are becoming “front office” employees to help solve customer problems; all employees who interact with customers need to deliver a “brand experience”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-cultural managerial and service skills</td>
<td>Expansion into emerging markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document handling and shipping company</td>
<td>IT skills, data and analytic skills for systems and solutions that are both digital and physical</td>
<td>Transformation from analog to digital business model—services in digital communications and analytic capabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-functional and solution selling skills</td>
<td>Customers demanding more integrated services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to work with both the mechanical and digital aspects of complex integrated products and services—both servicing them and developing new solutions</td>
<td>Need to flexibly deploy people as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Skills gaps</td>
<td>Reasons for skills gaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailer</td>
<td>Store managers: skills in strategic insight, change management, customer and results orientation, analytics, intercultural communication</td>
<td>Business model change to a more decentralized, customer-centric, integrated, seamless business penetrating new geographic markets; increased importance of analytics and modeling in retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing directors responsible for stores in a country: country-specific knowledge, retail industry knowledge, cross-functional skills (procurement, logistics, real estate etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Energy Co.</td>
<td>Nuclear engineers, nuclear plant operations staff</td>
<td>Aging workforce; fewer nuclear engineers coming out of colleges in response to drop in demand for them 5-10 years ago in the navy and energy companies; inability to attract shift workers to run a power plant as they require sophisticated technical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Line people repairing electric lines outdoors</td>
<td>More difficult to attract and train, since technology has made the job require much more sophisticated technical skills; lack of prestige; fewer people coming out of trade schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-functional skills</td>
<td>Ability to have integrated business be more adaptable and flexible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The new talent landscape

Executives tell us that today's talent landscape differs markedly from yesterday's. Navigating it to close skills gaps requires more creativity, commitment and innovation than ever before. Consider some of the forces reshaping the landscape:

Workers need a diverse portfolio of skills to stay relevant

To hold down the complex jobs making up today's knowledge-driven, technology-oriented economy, individuals must develop not just one or two key functional skills but rather a large and increasingly diverse portfolio of skills. In an Accenture survey of 1,088 US workers, over half reported feeling pressure to augment their skills portfolio with additional capabilities; two-thirds said that they had to learn new skills in the past five years to perform their job. Technology, problem-solving, communication and analytical skills top the list of the most common skills our survey respondents developed. Likewise, three out of every four workers (76 percent) reported that their employer highly values their ability to learn new skills quickly and easily (See "Workers update skills to remain relevant").

“All across our business, people need to add technology and problem solving skills to their existing skill sets. For example, the job of a person repairing electricity lines or substation relay involves more sophisticated technology and problem solving than it used to. It takes three to five years for us to train someone on the whole portfolio of skills required to perform this job. With that timeline and the aging workforce, we need to plan for and work with trade schools to ensure a pipeline of qualified candidates."

—Renae Conley, Executive Vice President of HR, Entergy
Business

66% of workers learned new skills in the past 5 years to perform their job
Workers update skills to remain relevant

Today’s workers must update their skills to remain relevant in their organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ability to learn new skills is valued by my employer</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to learn new skills in the past five years to perform my job</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to change careers at least once to meet the challenges of the job market</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel pressure to develop more skills to remain viable in the job market</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel pressure to develop complex skills to remain viable in the job market</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey

Why the growing need for a portfolio of skills? Advances in technology constitute one reason. Take Hilton Hotels and Resorts. Today, housekeepers and service staff must know how to not only check in guests and clean rooms but also help travelers connect their iPads in the hotel and troubleshoot for guests using self-check-in kiosks. New management methods—such as those requiring frontline workers to solve quality or customer service problems at the point of need—are further prompting workers to develop a portfolio of skills. Automotive production workers, for example—a workforce traditionally deemed unskilled—now need sophisticated technology, communication and problem-solving skills to work advanced equipment and solve quality problems on the front line. Indeed, nowadays there seems to be no such thing as "unskilled labor."

And as companies seek to operate more seamlessly to achieve new efficiencies, boost productivity and present a unified face to the customer, they increasingly want workers who have a diverse set of skills in multiple functional areas. Joe Weldon, Managing Director and head of Global Learning at financial services company Citigroup, explains, “We need people who understand the entire suite of Citi products across all functional areas and who can bring this massive organization to the client.” Says Laura Hackett, General Manager of Commercial Learning and Development at MillerCoors, “To be more responsive to customers and make customer-relevant decisions at the front
Today’s workers have developed a range of new skills in the past 5 years.
(multiple answer choices accepted):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-specific knowledge and skills</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional knowledge and skills</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey

line, we need people with cross-functional skills; for example, sales must now have marketing skills, and marketing must now have sales skills.”

Finally, in addition to functional, technology and problem-solving skills, businesses that are stepping up their globalization efforts want industry savvy as well as knowledge of particular geographic markets. This can be a particularly hard order to fill.

For further reading, “Solving the Skills Crisis in the Automotive Industry”
http://www.accenture.com/skillscrisis
Workers need more sophisticated skill sets

Take any skill an individual already has in his or her portfolio, and chances are that the person must bring that skill to a more sophisticated level to keep up with the growing demands of business. Half of the workers Accenture surveyed commented they must develop increasingly complex skills to remain relevant. What makes a skill complex? It’s the need for more decision making, higher levels of concentration and longer attention spans to deploy the skill successfully. For example, at one document handling and shipping company, repair technicians must now advance their mechanical repair skills sets to handle more complex repairs involving digital controls.

Given the march toward increasing knowledge work in companies, the skills required to execute work no longer consist of simple, standardized repetitive routines. Rather, work has become more unpredictable and complicated. For example, an Accenture survey of 557 workers revealed that 55 percent of workers now do very different work than their counterparts with the same job title, level, and location.7 Take marketing or sales professionals at publishing companies, who may now need to market books through social media, market chapters of books that can be bundled with other services or products, or market to customers who may only want digital versions of books.

Complex skills are also critical for success in a more global, integrated world. No longer, for example, can leaders expect to use a standard Western leadership model in all regions of the world. Instead, many global organizations are finding that far more complex leadership skills are required that enable a leader to adapt his leadership style to the needs of different geographic regions.

Educational institutions and organizations struggle to synchronize skills development with skills demand

A recent Wall Street Journal article described the plight of a call-center company looking to hire 3,000 new employees in India. The company found that few of the millions of high school and college graduates who applied possessed the reading comprehension and business capabilities needed to perform at sufficiently high levels. As a result, 97 percent of applicants were turned away.8 This company is not alone; nor is the problem confined to India. Employers including Microsoft, Apple and Cisco have noted that secondary and post-secondary educational institutions in the United States need to do more to teach skills essential for knowledge work, such as creative thinking, problem solving and analysis.9

Trade work is experiencing the same difficulty. According to a Manpower survey of 35,000 employers around the globe, a lack of skilled tradesman was the number-one hiring challenge for the US and five other leading industrialized countries.10

A recent research report by the Harvard Graduate School of Education cites the loss of prestige of American trade schools and the push toward college for all as a key force behind the disconnect between the trade skills employers need and those that are available in the US labor market.11
Organizations need “just-in-time” skills

As business models, technologies, customer preferences and economic trends change at lightning speed, some jobs (like sewing machine operator and machine tool assembler) go out of existence while others (such as social media strategist) come into being. To stay competitive in the face of such change, companies must be able to pull in required skills whenever and wherever they’re needed. And workers must not only update their skills but also be willing to change careers. The Accenture US Skills Gap Survey reported that as much as 62 percent of workers have changed careers at least once to meet the demands of the job market; 35 percent said they have had to change careers at least twice.

The automotive industry offers an apt example. As gas prices rose in 2008, many manufacturers worked to acquire the skills necessary to produce more fuel-efficient vehicles, and production of hybrid vehicles ramped up accordingly. AD&D Technology, for instance—a powertrain testing and vehicle development supplier—decided to quickly diversify into batteries and electric motors in 2008, and retrained 40 percent of its workforce to do so. But then gas prices dropped again, slowing sales of such vehicles and leaving scores of hybrid and smaller vehicles languishing on dealer lots. These same vehicles started selling again as gas prices rose once more at the end of 2010. Wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline and materials that make up car components, such as steel and aluminum, can wipe out years of strategic planning. To survive, companies must find creative ways to help their workers quickly acquire new skills to meet unpredictable global demand.

"For many positions, we have broadly defined roles so that we can move people from department to department or from project to project as needed without being slowed down or blocked by the administrative barriers we would have if we had to switch people’s actual jobs. This gives us the advantage of flexibly deploying skills based on changes in demand whilst maintaining the provision of varied and flexible career paths and improving organisational learning."

—Stefan Niehusmann, Managing Director of IT service, RWE

For further reading, “Creating a Just-in-time Workforce” http://www.accenture.com/justintimeworkforce
Relocating talent to where it’s needed is difficult

In today’s global economy, skilled workers may be available but located in areas other than where they are in demand (See Sidebar “Location Mismatch in the Global Market for Analytical Talent”). Legal, cultural and societal barriers—such as immigration policies and cross-cultural communication problems—can make it difficult for organizations to move talent to where it’s needed most—within a nation as well as across nations. Explains Peter LaCross, VP of HR at medical products company CR Bard, “One of our biggest challenges is the fact that we can find the skills we need, but they unfortunately reside in other locations. Getting them to move to our geography is a huge barrier. People often don’t want to relocate within the US because their mortgages are underwater or for fear of uprooting children. And globally, it is costly and difficult for us to sponsor the visas required for global relocation. Even so, we still hire a large portion of our workforce from overseas because this is where the skills are available.”

Some organizations have looked to virtual work to solve the problem. While advances in technology have enabled virtual work, numerous jobs don’t lend themselves to such work. And practical considerations can stymie efforts to conduct virtual work. Many homes in China, for example, lack the extra room needed for people to set up offices and workshops in their residences. Inconsistencies in educational standards across geographies can further complicate matters. As one executive told us: “It is difficult to determine the equivalent of a Chinese degree in engineering, for example, to an Australian degree in the same subject.”
Analytical talent—the people who can use statistics, rigorous quantitative analysis and information-modeling techniques to shape and make business decisions—is often reported to be in critical short supply as more and more companies join the hunt for these rare skills.\(^1\) However, in many cases, the problem is one of a location mismatch: talented analysts are available, but not always in the places where they are needed. This is a key finding from the Global Talent Imperative research project from the Accenture Institute for High Performance.

Analysis of expected new demand for analytical talent and fresh talent supplies in seven countries reveals significant shortages in some countries and substantial surpluses in others. For example, the US and UK will face a shortage of more than 280,000 analysts by 2015, while the surplus of analytical talent in India and China could exceed 320,000.

**Analytical Talent Location Mismatch, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surplus</th>
<th>US &amp; UK</th>
<th>India &amp; China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300,000</td>
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<td>200,000</td>
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<td>100,000</td>
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</table>

**Shortage**


New employer strategies for surviving the skills crisis

The challenges presented by the new talent landscape demand innovative strategies for closing skills gaps (See Figure 1).

Traditionally, once an organization had identified existing or projected skills gaps, it had three choices for closing the gaps: “make,” “buy” or “borrow.” That is, organizations could train their own people, hire from the outside or use temporary staffing or outsourcing to fill their talent needs.

But given the complexity of the talent challenges facing them, organizations can no longer afford to select only one of the three choices: The skills crisis is so severe that they must now make and buy and borrow. Even more critical, companies must craft strategies that go well beyond these three standard approaches.

Through research and conversations with executives, Accenture has identified seven innovative strategies that, when combined in creative ways, can help organizations close skills gaps quickly and thus sustain their competitive edge. We examine these strategies in detail.

### Figure 1: New ideas for closing the skills gap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old idea</th>
<th>New idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reactive, supply-side skills fulfillment</td>
<td>Proactive, demand-side skills fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term, static planning initiatives that determine when and where skills are needed</td>
<td>Just-in-time deployment of skills when and where they are needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long lead times for skills development, with skills relevance measured in years</td>
<td>Just-in-time development of workforces, with skills relevance measured in weeks or months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills development consists of expensive, formal, primarily classroom-based programs</td>
<td>Skills development focuses on constantly refreshing skills through learning opportunities embedded in everyday work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring decisions based on specific skills need</td>
<td>Hiring decisions based on general competencies and capabilities required, then providing learning opportunities for specific skills, if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static, traditional job design, with training and hiring to match</td>
<td>Fluid or redesigned jobs, with job design changed to match talent pools and evolving skills demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make, buy or borrow approach to skills development</td>
<td>A portfolio of solutions, including make, buy and borrow—and including alternative solutions such as redesigning work altogether or defining skills requirements more broadly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational institutions provide a pipeline of future talent</td>
<td>Actively develop a pipeline of talent yourself—by partnering with educational institutions and other companies to develop curriculums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent pools restricted to a company's industry and geography</td>
<td>Talent pools can come from any industry or geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruits are expected to look for and find a company</td>
<td>Companies actively look for and pursue the talent they need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old idea</td>
<td>New idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find and filter potential hires based on experience and education listed on a résumé</td>
<td>Find and filter potential hires using new techniques, including data-based assessments, biographical data to predict success, work simulations and competitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage with potential job candidates only when you are hiring for a specific job</td>
<td>Form rich, two-way relationships with a pool of potential job candidates before you need them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a staffing agency to find traditional contractors to fill in skills gaps</td>
<td>Use a “talent in the cloud” model to gain access to skills and without paying a middleman—or create a proprietary pool of contractors yourself or in a consortium model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employees are my employees; yours are yours</td>
<td>Temporarily borrow skilled employees from another company—and let others borrow yours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume you must look to the outside when missing skills</td>
<td>Identify and mine hidden skills in your own organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only interns or job candidates have any kind of visibility into what it is like to work at a particular job at your organization</td>
<td>Transparency is created into how work is accomplished and the skills needed to perform it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy #1:  
Look beyond specific skills

To close skills gaps, look beyond specific skills altogether. While highly specific skills may be essential for some employees (such as a chemist who conducts research on a particular class of drugs in a pharmaceutical company), they may not be necessary in many other jobs. And focusing on specific skills may cause you to exclude many promising candidates from the recruitment process. For example, if you insist on finding someone with experience implementing SAP Accounting 4.6, you may overlook candidates who don’t have those key words on their résumés. But perhaps some individuals could readily perform that job by drawing on their knowledge of accounting or other software applications. Moreover, while specific skills can be learned quickly, demand for such skills also changes rapidly depending on business conditions, turning today’s critical skills into irrelevancies tomorrow.

By developing a more open mind, you can sweeten the odds of finding people who, with a little additional learning, can meet a job’s highly specific skill requirements. For example, Entergy, Metro, and Hilton Hotels and Resorts make a point to hire skilled people considered to be generalists first, and then fill in specific skills gaps with training. This can be an especially useful tactic in emerging markets, where many candidates may lack niche skills and experience.

Likewise, research by organizational psychologists has shown that ability in specific skills is a far less important predictor of performance for most jobs than broader competencies (such as the ability to be entrepreneurial or detail oriented) as well as cultural fit with the organization. For this reason, many organizations are now assessing their employees on broader competencies so that hiring managers can better find quality job candidates.
One competency shown to have a high correlation with performance is learning aptitude. Explains Stefan Niehusmann, Managing Director of IT services at German energy company RWE, “We’ve found that to effectively close our skills gaps, one of the most important factors is to find people who are willing to learn quickly and easily. We have defined ‘learning agility’ and the types of people who are likely to be effective learners; we measure it, we hire for it, and we develop it.”

Unfortunately, few organizations look beyond narrow skills when considering people for a role. Only 31 percent of Accenture’s survey respondents reported that their employer considers all of their talents and capabilities when deciding how best to utilize them (See Figure 2). When an organization considers external candidates, the problem is only compounded, as it is much more difficult to gather reliable insights on a candidate.

![Figure 2: Workers full set of capabilities are not utilized](chart.png)

My employer only looks at my job experience and education, rather than all my talents and capabilities, when utilizing me.

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
Strategy #2: 
Mine talent hidden in your organization

Needed skills may be hidden inside your organization. To mine and deploy this talent, create a database of employees’ skills. Then design processes and incentives that encourage people to move to parts of the organization where their skills are in demand. Keep your competency and skill models up to date, and frequently test employees to ensure you understand all of the skills and abilities they can bring to work—versus what they do bring to work.

While these tactics can pay big dividends, few organizations apply them. Only 34 percent of our survey respondents reported that it is easy to move to another job within their company where their skills would best be utilized. And just 53 percent said that their employers document their skills (See Figure 3).

Hilton is one of the few companies that excels at mining hidden talent. The organization documents every employee’s skills, including languages, education, property experience, local market connections and affiliations with boards and non-profits. Skills documentation has enabled the business to quickly find and deploy employees who have talents needed to achieve specific objectives. For instance, someone who speaks the Cantonese

Figure 3: Workers face internal mobility challenges

It is easy to move to another role where my skills would best be utilized.

My employer documents my skills.

34% of workers report it is easy to move to another role within their current organization.
Chinese dialect can help the company penetrate new markets in China. Explains Matthew W. Schuyler, Hilton Worldwide’s Chief Human Resources Officer, “We’re creating an internally mobile talent market where there is a natural push and pull for skills.”

In addition to documenting employees’ skills, you can ask them to complete assessments regarding their skills, competencies, cultural fit, learning ability or intelligence. These assessments can help you determine where you might best deploy a person next to meet changing skills demands. Consider documenting employees’ career aspirations as well. Recent technology innovations like that offered by UpMo can help you capture employees’ desired work roles and locations as well as the pace at which they’d like to advance. The technology then matches employees with internal job and developmental opportunities. It also provides executives with important information about their organization’s talent supply, such as how many people are looking for which new roles and who should be considered for new openings.

But there is room for additional innovation in this area. Today, all the history that leading organizations so carefully document on an individual—his or her performance reviews, learning history, compensation packages, project and work experiences, skills developed on the job and more—gets lost when an individual leaves a company. We imagine a future where work histories become much like electronic medical records, following an individual from company to company.

Already, many companies are working to capture data related to employees’ experiences at other employers. Explains Jackie Scanlan, Vice President - HR International and Strategy at Campbell Soup, “Having employees document their skills and work experiences has helped us identify and close our skill gaps. We’ve designed our Talent Management system in a way that lets employees not only build profiles based on their Campbell career but also include skills and experiences acquired at other employers and through formal education. The key is to proactively mine this data to really get to know employees beyond just their current role or their relationship with their immediate manager.”
But a treasure trove of rich data to match employees to tasks won’t help you if individuals can’t move easily within your organization to jobs where their skills are needed most. If your organization has predictable changes in supply and demand levels in particular skill sets, you can relatively easily plan for mobility. For example, consider cross-skilling certain employee groups to work in different functions based on changing demand levels. One financial services institution did this by training administrative assistants to handle customer service calls when call-center volumes spiked.

This type of mobility may require adjustments to your talent management model. For instance, if a person is doing one job for three months and another for a fourth month, how do you reward him or her if rewards are tied to performance in only one of the jobs? You may need a more flexible model calibrated to the individual, not just the job. Some organizations are experimenting with such models—tying pay, type of work, rewards, career paths and other talent processes to an individual’s unique skill profile rather than to specific jobs.

Opening up career paths so that people can more easily move within the organization can further help skills flow to areas of demand. Metro, for example, replaced its linear career-path model with a “web” model in which people can move up, down or laterally into different functions. This approach has fostered greater talent mobility and has helped employees develop more robust portfolios of cross-functional skills.

Consider developing a free-flowing, transparent talent market as well. Citigroup, for example, recently created Citi Careers, a self-service website that helps employees understand the benefits of moving to jobs in different parts of the bank. Explains Joe Weldon, “To achieve our business strategy of providing Citi’s full capabilities to a growing client base in emerging markets, we need people with broad knowledge across the suite of solutions Citi offers. So we needed a way to rotate people across different company roles to develop a more robust portfolio of skills in each individual.”

Some organizations are experimenting with ways to move skills to where they are needed in a just-in-time fashion. For example, top-performing employees are offered the chance to join special internally mobile workforces where they may be assigned to work anywhere in the world in any capacity at any time. These groups are typically run as their own internal departments, with compensation, rewards and career-path structures unique to them.

“Eventually, I believe we will move to a ‘pull’ talent model. Employees will flow to the work and areas where their skills and experience can lend the greatest value regardless of their title, level or location.”

—Jackie Scanlan, Vice President - HR International and Strategy, Campbell Soup
Strategy #3:
Source external talent through creative means

Innovations in recruiting and hiring (many of which exploit rich data and online technologies) can help you quickly and cheaply find skilled talent on a global basis. Consider the following examples:

Find talent instead of waiting for it to find you. Many companies post jobs on expensive job boards, hoping that skilled candidates will apply. Managers must then cull through countless applications to find a few candidates who fit their needs. To avoid this tedious process, seek external talent yourself. Mine sites like Linkedin, Branchout (a professional network based on Facebook), ZoomInfo, for example, or other sites that pool and share applicants who applied for jobs in member companies like Taleo Talent Exchange.

Traditionally, this function was handled by expensive head hunters and search firms who relied on their extensive databases and relationships with candidates to fill clients' talent needs. But thanks to the new recruitment sites, you can manage the process easily and cheaply. For instance, when gaming startup Red 5 wanted to hire skilled developers, it didn’t post a single position on a traditional job board. Instead, it identified a list of ideal candidates from sites like Linkedin and other sources. Managers learned what they could about each candidate and then created customized, attention-grabbing employment pitches and sent them to candidates’ mobile devices.14

Get to know job applicants through savvy data screening. Many managers focus on applicants’ work experience and education listed in a resume or online profile and then follow up with an interview to gauge the fit. This approach is time consuming and cumbersome. Moreover, studies have consistently shown that it’s not the most effective way to predict an applicant’s on-the-job performance. For these reasons, many companies are adopting alternative tactics. For example, to address a shortage of engineers, some high-tech companies in the San Francisco area use online developer forums to find promising candidates who wouldn’t have otherwise appeared on the radar screen because they didn’t have degrees from the world’s top computer-science programs.15 Other companies assess candidates’ core aptitude for programming then put candidates through a six-week trial period to see how quickly they can learn key skills.16
Resumes and interviews provide scanty insights into someone’s actual ability to perform at work. They leave out information on other crucial criteria too—such as how well an applicant would fit into the organization’s culture, how much drive and motivation he or she has and how well the person would work with others. To screen for these criteria, you can analyze data from a wide array of sources, including samples of a candidate’s actual work; scores from assessments that gauge a person’s skills, cultural fit, competencies, work motivators and interests; work competition results; and social media contributions. Such data can help you gain a fuller picture of a candidate and can often be highly predictive of someone’s future performance at work. Sixty percent of Accenture survey respondents said that they would be willing to make such information about themselves available to potential employers, as long as it was done in a confidential and controlled manner (See Figure 4).

A slew of recent start-ups (such as HRVision, ClearFit and Roundpegg) can help you quickly and inexpensively collect such rich information on candidates. Many of these companies enable you to gather this information on the front end of your organization’s screening process—before great candidates can be screened out and thus never considered for a job. Even more important, such companies can provide much of this rich data on passive candidates—individuals who aren’t actively looking for jobs—in searchable, shared public directories and databases. With such directories, you no longer have to rely on the more time-consuming and expensive process of collecting this data on only a few selected candidates who apply for a job.

Figure 4: Workers are willing to share personal information
I would make information about myself available to employers to help them contact me with potential opportunities.

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
“The wave of the future will be for substantially more information to be available to companies on individuals to help them find the right skills and fit for the job.”

—Matt Schuyler, Chief Human Resources Officer, Hilton Worldwide

Use online tools to build relationships with potential hires. Explains Matthew Jeffery, head of talent acquisition at Autodesk, cultivating relationships with potential hires is “all about opening up a conversation to create a talent pipeline. This doesn’t mean just posting your jobs on Facebook; it means revealing your culture, how people are having fun, what the jobs are really like, and even the silly things that go on in your office. It’s about being authentic and transparent. And it’s also about engaging your own employees to be brand ambassadors.”

Candidate relationship databases can help your company build such bonds. These work much like customer relationship marketing databases—enabling you to send periodic tailored information to interested parties and create ongoing relationships you can tap when opportunities arise.

New business models are springing up to help companies create these communities of talent. Direct Employers, for example, a non-profit organization, set up the new "jobs" domain and aims to serve as a clearinghouse for all job-posting information, in part by enabling organizations to post jobs at no fee. It directs candidates to hiring companies’ corporate career sites. Candidates can join a company’s talent community or input their information into the company's candidate relationship database to be considered for current or future job openings.

Says Ryan Cook, Global Talent Acquisition Operations Manager at CH2M HILL, “Our ultimate goal is to get people into our CRM system – even if we originally engage with people on other platforms like Facebook. That way, we can create ongoing micro-communities of talent and substantially cut down on costs associated with traditional recruitment advertising channels like job boards. Ultimately, we want highly segmented talent communities tailored to the specific types of individuals that we will need to hire and that, ultimately, help us create an exclusive supply chain of talent aligned with our future workforce needs.” He adds, “The future of corporate recruiters will be micro-community builders, marketers, and campaigners.”

Imagine a world where recruiters act much like marketers. They use data-based analytics to determine the Internet behaviors and habits of particular types of skill profiles to discover where, when and how different kinds of people spend time online. Armed with these insights, recruiters can build microcommunities targeted to each profile and determine the best sources of influence for particular types of individuals. For example, they may find that many technologists like to peruse antique cars on eBay or read particular types of books. Accordingly, they could encourage
existing employees to start a discussion on Amazon about such books. Alternatively, they could create a talent community around a popular blog, social media site or company-branded talent portal featuring interactive polls and discussions with real managers. The resulting relationships with like-minded people could later be mined for recruiting purposes.

Accenture research suggests that overall, workers support such efforts. Sixty-two percent of our survey respondents said that they were willing to engage in ongoing conversations with potential employers even if there is no current job opening or if they are already employed (See Figure 5).

Look for skills in alternative talent pools. Brainstorm creative ways to find skilled people who are off the beaten track. JetBlue Airways, for example, staffed its reservations department with stay-at-home moms who can take reservations while caring for their households. And a US energy company trains veterans to serve in positions including electricity line repair and nuclear engineering.

Foster global talent mobility. Find ways to persuade people in places with talent surpluses to move to where you need them to work. According to our survey, 36 percent of workers today are willing to make such moves. If this isn’t an option, consider establishing a location where workers with the right skills reside. Some companies are even luring workers to their location by offering to help them out of mortgages that are under water.

Figure 5: Workers embrace ongoing conversations with potential employers
I would like potential employers to engage with me before a job opportunity is open.

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
Strategy #4: Create and leverage external talent networks

Organizations are increasingly relying on external talent networks to close skills gaps. In such networks, employees work with individuals from multiple organizations—including vendors, consultants, freelancers and outsourcing providers.

Talent network mechanisms can vary. For instance, you can now tap “talent in the cloud” to gain instant access to a vast number of skilled individuals who can perform work on a transactional basis—without using an expensive staffing agency. Types of work can range from minor tasks (such as copying text from business cards through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk talent marketplace) to complex project work.

Dividing work into smaller pieces handled by a large number of outside individuals “in the cloud” can further help you solve pressing skills gaps. You can give people modules of work without sharing the complete picture with them—enabling them to accomplish the work virtually while also avoiding intellectual property concerns.

Alternatively, your organization can create its own pool of prescreened, reliable talent it can tap just-in-time on a contract basis. Such pools may comprise former employees who still want to work but in more flexible ways as they enter their retirement or child-rearing years. These individuals can hit the ground running because they already have up-to-date skills as well as existing networks in their former company. For example, Principal Financial has designed talent programs where retirees can work on a project-consulting basis, and YourEncore enables member companies to share a pool of retired scientists and engineers.18

For further reading, “Making cross-enterprise collaboration work” http://www.accenture.com/crossenterprisecollaboration
“The people leading today were brought up in an era where there was excess talent. Today, despite high unemployment rates, organizations have a shortage of the skills they need to successfully execute their business models. Today's executives need to adopt an entirely new mindset to lead their companies into the future.”

—Mara Swan, EVP, Manpower
Strategy #5:
Embed learning into everyday work to quickly develop employees’ skills

Since the start of the economic downturn in 2008, many organizations have had to tighten their belts to survive. A variety of programs, some of them training related, have been cut entirely or substantially scaled back. But because of the depth and severity of the skills crisis and today’s market conditions, companies can no longer rely on buying the talent they need to close skills gaps. They must also build talent in-house through learning and development processes. Investing in people development is as critical as investing in tools, processes or technologies to improve overall performance.

The need for individuals to possess a portfolio of skills has further driven investments in internal people development, because skills portfolios are increasingly hard to get from the outside market. Our survey suggests that more organizations are trying to reskill workers they already have when facing a skills gap rather than hiring new workers with the sought-after capabilities.

To make this approach work, companies must provide their workers with sufficient learning support. However, our survey suggests that many employers and workers alike currently believe that responsibility for learning resides primarily with employees (See Figure 6). Thus organizations will need to think through how they can build on employees’ motivation to learn by supporting their development. While employees are willing to take some responsibility for their development, their employers need to continue providing opportunities as well. Happily, today there is much flexibility in the types of developmental opportunities that an organization can offer: such opportunities don’t necessarily have to take the form of expensive classroom training.
Figure 6: Organizations and workers emphasize internal skills development

My employer fills open jobs with internal candidates and then provides learning opportunities, rather than filling positions with outside candidates who have all the required skills.

It is my responsibility (rather than my employer’s responsibility) to update my skills to ensure that I am valuable in my current role.

It is my responsibility (rather than my employer’s responsibility) to update my skills to remain marketable.

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
Accenture’s survey suggests that relatively few organizations today provide their employees with formal learning opportunities or company-mandated skill development. When asked why they chose to develop the new skills they had acquired in the past five years, only 36 percent of the employees who responded to our survey reported they had developed these skills because their organization required it. Just 21 percent said they had acquired new skills from company-provided formal training. And only 6 percent reported acquiring new skills from company-sponsored informal training (See Figure 7).

To invest in people development, your organization can make learning an integrated component of work. This approach makes it easier for employees to continuously build skills as they carry out their everyday job responsibilities. It also enables them to apply those skills to maximize their contributions to the organization.

There’s plenty of opportunity to pull ahead of rivals in the skills game by taking this approach: only about half of the employees we surveyed saw their organization as helping them develop high-demand skills so that they could remain marketable as well as effective on the job.

Workers seem motivated to take advantage of learning opportunities available in their organizations. Several forces may be driving this motivation, including the need to stay relevant in their industry, a desire for a promotion or a better paid position, perceptions of learning as enjoyable or interesting and a desire to make themselves more marketable on the job market.

Figure 7: How workers learn new skills
How did you acquire the skills you learned in the past five years? (multiple answer choices accepted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did you acquire the skills you learned in the past five years?</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the job experience</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company provided formal training</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training I attended on my own outside my company</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal means (e.g. reading books, speaking with friends, etc.) outside my company</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadowing others</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company provided informal learning programs (e.g. corporate versions of YouTube, Facebook, etc)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey

Some organizations are responding. Consider the US Army’s acquisitions unit, which wanted its entire purchasing workforce to develop analytic problem-solving skills to reduce costs associated with purchasing decisions. The unit cut classroom training by 50 percent and replaced it with hands-on learning projects, substantial coaching and mentoring, and the application of skills in the context of everyday work. Each supervisor was asked to identify a problem that needed solving, scope it into a project, designate a project lead and have the lead attend training on analytics and continuous improvement methodologies. Then the supervisor and project lead rotated project team members so they could master the requisite problem-solving and analytic skills in the context of a real project that delivered measurable results. One project identified $113 million in cost avoidance by standardizing the management of a purchasing contract and helping supply chain vendors work together in a more integrated fashion.

Another way to embed learning in everyday work is to take the best of what happens when people learn informally and put some structure and consistency around it. At Citi, for example, investment bankers, traders and other financial services professionals traditionally developed their skills by apprenticing with more senior professionals. Instead of letting this happen
in a haphazard way, the organization now identifies senior professionals who are taking on the mentoring role, what and how they are teaching, and how apprentices are learning in each given area. Citi can then drive the same kind of learning more quickly through simulations, cases and virtual assignments where global teams can be apprenticed with an identified mentor. The organization also uses “action learning” to develop more generalists in its global markets, where individuals are tasked with devising innovative solutions to a real business problem in global, cross-functional teams.

With the advent of social media, learning is increasingly shifting to primarily self-initiated, informal learning embedded in the course of everyday work. For example, a social learning solution developed by Microsoft—called Academy Mobile—is an internal platform employees can use to share knowledge by creating and posting audio and video podcasts.

Other organizations build specific skills in a short timeframe and on a global scale by creating a “learning academy” focused on delivering relevant, action-oriented content for specific segments of their workforce. For example, brewer and bottler SABMiller has used the Accenture Supply Chain Academy to strengthen the skills of its supply chain professionals. The academy approach appealed to the company because it goes beyond traditional training programs that too often teach only generic supply chain concepts. Jaime Ochoa, SABMiller’s Director of Supply Chain for Latin America, notes, “We are using the Supply Chain Academy to identify specific maturity gaps, fill them with tailored content and measure the impact of that training on the business.”

29% of workers report employers do not provide opportunity to learn new skills in their current jobs
Strategy #6: Redesign work

Consolidate highly skilled tasks into fewer positions. When AltaMed Health Services Corp. faced problems recruiting registered nurses, it concentrated the most highly skilled portion of the work into fewer critical jobs. Specifically, instead of having registered nurses interact directly with patients, for example, the organization placed them in leadership and teaching roles to oversee licensed vocational nurses and certified nursing assistants. Those positions require significantly less training and skill levels, but there is a greater supply of talent for them. Through this tactic, the organization has addressed an important workforce issue without compromising the quality of patient care.

Replace or support lower-skilled work with technology. Some work that has been standardized and routinized so lower skilled people can perform may then be carried out by or at least heavily supplemented by technology (for example, by providing real-time data to support employees’ decision making). As MIT economist David Autor pointed out, this is the natural progress of economies and is a key reason why the demand for creative, highly skilled people will never cease. Lower-level, highly standardized jobs all but disappear because they can be easily replaced with technology. This fuels a continual need for more people to work in positions that are less structured, highly skilled and more creative.

Break monolithic jobs into smaller skills-based projects. Experiment with making work more project-based so you can deploy people fluidly to meet rapidly changing business needs. For instance, Microsoft lets its core engineers “moonlight” on special projects within the company that lie outside their core jobs. Thanks to this approach, the company can quickly tap seasoned, skilled workers as needed for specific aspects of major projects. This tactic also benefits the engineers by providing them with variety in their work and the possibility of picking up extra income.

Define jobs more broadly. You can also define jobs so broadly that individuals can flexibly apply their skills based on changes in demand. A job could be defined broadly as a marketing specialist, for example, instead of a marketing specialist for a particular product or geography—thereby enabling the company to more easily apply the person’s marketing skills in any number of ways without the person changing jobs based on the shifting needs of the business.
“The skills gap is much deeper and more complex than it looks on the surface. Sure, we have many of the hard skills we need in aggregate across our entire workforce, but if you ask whether we have the right combinations of hard skills in individuals, the answer would be no. And even if we did, it’s the soft skills—like an entrepreneurial mindset or the ability to drive change—that are often missing.”

—Kef van Helbergen, Head of Executive Development, Staffing, Succession at Metro AG
Strategy #7:
Create transparency into your organization’s talent needs

To develop the skills your company needs, employees must know what those skills are as well as where and when they’re needed in the organization. This in turn requires employees to understand the strategic direction of the company—which is what drives the organization’s skills needs.

Accenture’s research suggests that many organizations don’t provide this transparency into their talent needs. Only 49 percent of the employees we surveyed agreed that their organizations provided clear visibility into skills required in different roles and career paths (See Figure 9).

How to foster greater transparency into your organization’s talent needs?
Leverage online technology. Metro does this by posting all jobs on a centralized site accessible by employees, along with interview guidelines, desired behaviors and skills for each job, and evaluation methods for appraising each candidate. Executives believe that once employees understand which skills are in demand in which parts of the organization, they will want to move to areas within the company where the demand is highest, as well as develop those skills to augment their portfolio.

Figure 9: Workers don’t understand employers’ skills needs
My employer provides visibility into the skills needed in different roles and career paths in the organization.

Source: Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
Organizations shouldn't stop short at providing this kind of visibility to just their employees; they should also provide it to educational institutions and their students, job seekers, and the broader community. Currently, many people have little or no visibility into employers’ skills needs. This can have significant ramifications for the overall labor market and organizations in general. For instance, only 20 percent of workers we surveyed developed new skills in the past five years based on the needs of the job market. And when choosing their current career, only 28 percent understood the skills required in that career (See Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Workers choose careers without understanding them**
Before you chose your current career, did you have: (multiple answer choices accepted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An understanding of the demand for employees in this career</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An understanding of the skills required at all levels in this career</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(junior positions through senior positions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An understanding of what everyday life would be like in this career</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to mentor or shadow someone in this career</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ability to talk to someone about this career</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in this career through an internship or other simulated task</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Accenture US Skills Gap Survey
To feed the future pipeline of skilled workers, organizations can partner with educational institutions and governments to communicate their needs and design strategies for developing people who can meet those needs. For example, high-tech companies can work with engineering colleges to review curricula and provide ideas for revising them so students acquire the skills and knowledge needed by the businesses. Through these collaborations, companies can also define and communicate the skills required in an industry overall, including the levels of demand and supply.

But organizations must do more than simply define skills requirements. Explains Laura Hackett of MillerCoors’ Commercial Learning and Development group, “Educational institutions may produce someone with a specific hard skill like financial modeling, but they fall short in giving enough opportunity for a student to work on applying it to real-world problems with real data. Doing an internship in graduate school where you are applying financial skills to managing a P&L is huge for us, for example. This is where we as businesses need to step in and help educational institutions make changes, and also open our doors to letting students work with us in more internships or other more scalable experience-based learning programs to further develop their education.”

In addition to partnering with educational institutions, your organization can also work to provide visibility into employers’ skills needs to the broader community and job seekers. For example, consider offering realistic job previews, video tours, simulations of actual work and video interviews of employees describing their work. L’Oreal’s Brandstorm program, for example, allows people to compete in teams to help them assess and try out their potential marketing skills.

Your organization can also communicate its talent needs to the broader community by contributing to a global map of skills that are in demand. Your company along with others can then use the map to determine where best to source skills, and workers can use it to identify the best places to apply for jobs. Some countries have already launched such initiatives. Australia, for instance, communicates its needs for skilled workers to other nations. When organizations work with governments to communicate skill needs locally and globally, talent can better flow to demand.
Conclusion

To compete in today's fast-paced knowledge economy, organizations that have the skills they need—where and when they need them—can achieve and sustain a formidable advantage over rivals. But companies need to move swiftly to close skills gaps, or risk losing business to their competitors. The critical questions are: Will your enterprise have the skills it needs to successfully execute its business strategy? Can you afford to wait until someone else says there's a problem?

To get out in front of the skills crisis, businesses should put together an arsenal of altogether new strategies. That's because many traditional strategies, including investing in formal classroom training, can become vulnerable during times of economic uncertainty. The most recent recession, for example, has put more pressure on organizations to reevaluate investments they're making in training programs in general. Organizations, by necessity, are becoming more strategic about where they focus their people-development investments.

Talent strategies that rely heavily on outdated tactics will put their organizations at risk, as will only incremental improvements on old models. The seven strategies we've laid out in this report—drawn from our skills gap survey and interviews with progressive companies—can help your organization close its most daunting skills gaps through decidedly fresh approaches. Whether it's broadening your view beyond specific skills, mining talent hidden in your organization, tapping external talent through creative means, leveraging external talent networks, embedding learning experiences in everyday work, redesigning work or helping workers understand your company's skills needs, these strategies—especially in combination—can help your company achieve a true talent advantage.
About our research

We conducted our US Skills Gap Survey research in four parts. After carrying out an extensive literature review and interviewing more than a dozen Accenture senior executives who are working with clients, we interviewed 36 company executives at more than 30 organizations about the scope of their skills problem and solutions they were developing to solve it. Finally, we surveyed 1,088 US workers regarding how they ensure that their skills are relevant to the market, including solutions used by their employers to close skill gaps in their workforces.

This research effort has benefited from the contributions made by other people, whom we would like to thank for their generous support and insights: Anthony Abbatiello, James Arnott, Philippe Boncy, Norbert Büning, John Campagnino, Christine Campbell, Helena Chung, Nicole Dessain, Cathy Farley, David Gartside, David Smith, Matthew Kraus, Andrea Nagy, Terrence Nulty, Paul O’Keefe, Tammy Phan, Kevin Singel, Ranjit Singh, Jill Smart, Katherine St John, Carolina Vilca, and Joshua Weston.

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Footnotes


3. The Accenture US Skills Gap Survey was conducted in 2011 with 1,088 US workers. Answers to many of the questions were provided on a five-point scale, with choices including “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neither disagree nor agree,” “disagree” and “strongly disagree.” When percentages for each answer choice in this report are reported on a five-point scale, they are always rounded to the nearest whole number. Occasionally, rounding in this way means that not all five answer choice percentages equal 100, but rather total 99 or 101.

4. Accenture High-Performance Workforce Study, 2010


About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with more than 246,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world’s most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US$25.5 billion for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2011. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

About the Accenture Institute for High Performance

The Accenture Institute for High Performance creates strategic insights into key management issues and macroeconomic and political trends through original research and analysis. Its management researchers combine world-class reputations with Accenture’s extensive consulting, technology and outsourcing experience to conduct innovative research and analysis into how organizations become and remain high-performance businesses.

About Talent & Organization

Accenture Talent & Organization helps clients drive enhanced organizational performance and more effective execution of business strategy by improving the performance, productivity and collaborative power of their workforce talent.

This group of skilled professionals has extensive experience across a range of talent, organization effectiveness, human resources, talent management, change management, analytics, learning and collaboration capabilities, backed by a comprehensive research program, global resources with deep knowledge and insights and unparalleled tools and assets.