

BETTER THAN A SECRET WEAPON

5 STEPS TO A WINNING TECHNOLOGY SKILLS STRATEGY

Responsible for their organization's speed, growth, innovation and efficiency, CIOs are tasked with more today than ever before—in a market that isn't all that forgiving.

With the rate of change driving new competitive dynamics, new business models and new markets, CIOs must focus on making sure teams have the capabilities to execute on all of these opportunities fast.

Technology skills development is the key to succeeding in this.

A mature technology skills strategy will separate the leaders from the laggards at an increasing pace going forward. Leaders winning at this today understand that without the right skills in place—and a system to keep them finely tuned—they risk having delayed projects and excessive spending, and they'll be unable to adapt to the market.

The consequences of failure will be hefty, and widespread. IDC believes that by 2020, lack of tech skill development will impact 90% of all organizations with adjusted project plans, delayed product/service releases, incurred costs or lost revenue totaling \$390 billion annually, worldwide.

5 mistakes laggard companies are still making

With the rapid pace of technology change comes the need for an organized but adaptable skill development strategy—a practice that didn't exist until recently, leaving tech leaders to guess what success looks like.

With outdated practices carrying a bigger price tag than ever, your organization will benefit from taking inventory of “the way things have always been done.” Consider this your starting line in the race for a strategic tech skill development strategy.

In your org:

1. Are individual technologists or HR departments still responsible for “training”?
2. Are learning tools limited, outdated or nonexistent? Have you moved beyond LMS-only methods?
3. Is course completion your only measure for skill proficiency?
4. Is individual learning dictated by skill gaps or broad-based, mandatory training needs?
5. Does skill development across the company lack organization or alignment to strategic initiatives?

Evaluate the maturity of your organization's technology skill development

TECH SKILLS MATURITY MATRIX

	UNSTRUCTURED	ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL	REACTIVE	PROACTIVE	STRATEGIC
WHO'S THE CHAMPION?	Individual technologists	HR	Tech team managers	Tech VPs & directors	CIOs/CTOs
WHO'S EXECUTING?	Individual technologists	A centralized L&D team	L&D aligned to the technology business unit	L&D embedded within technology business unit	A Director of Technology Skills Development
WHAT'S THE TOOL?	None	LMS	LMS + other tools	LMS + designated online learning library	Technology skills platform
WHAT'S MEASURED?	Nothing	Course completion	Course usage/view time	Skill proficiency	Skill and role proficiency
WHAT'S IT ALIGNED TO?	Skill gaps	Broad-based training	Technology training needs	Technology project goals	Strategic tech & business objectives
WHAT'S THE CHALLENGE?	"We need some organized training"	"Training isn't tailored to the needs of the tech org"	"Do we have enough of the right skills?"	"We need more talent in these key roles"	"Are we preparing for what's next?"
WHAT'S THE IMPACT?	There's no organized focus on tech skills	The unique needs of the tech org aren't being met	Tech skills aren't measured or aligned to objectives	Skills are quantified and developed with purpose	Tech skills are a competitive advantage and driver of business outcomes

75% of the market



Forward-thinking practices to borrow from leading companies

75% of the market today doesn't even qualify as having a proactive skills development strategy—and without action, the gap between you and your competition will only widen.

Incorporating a technology strategy doesn't happen overnight. Here's what you can do to accelerate your success, according to the framework we've developed based on best practices of companies that use Pluralsight.

1. Start at the top

Technology skill development has to evolve from a fringe effort to the forefront of an organization's strategic initiatives. And that only happens when CIOs and CTOs get involved. They have to champion it. They have to embrace continuous skill development as a competitive advantage and the key to driving business outcomes.

2. Hire a skill development leader

Gone are the days of leaving skill development decisions up to a person or team who doesn't understand the technology strategy or business needs (L&D and HR for instance). A new role is emerging—the technology skill development leader. They have a deep understanding of the organization's business and technology strategy combined with best practices to execute a skills strategy aligned to your goals.

3. Understand the skills at your disposal

First things first, you need to know what you're working with. You can't organize your teams to be efficient without indexing the skills you have, identifying the skills you need and shining a light on the gaps.

4. Grow the right skills to meet your goals

With skills mapped to your strategic initiatives, you can begin to upskill your teams into the roles you need. With the help of a technology skills platform, each team member can have a custom skill development plan based on their proficiency level, so they can focus on the skills they need and not waste time on material they already know.

5. Evolve with the pace of change

As expertise grows, business needs change and the market continues to evolve, technology skill development leaders will continuously tinker with their skills strategy. They'll leverage skills insights to measure progress and deliver quantified impact on the business. It's their job to ensure employees are always preparing for what's coming next and building the capabilities to capitalize on it.

Few things in business are predictable, but one thing is for certain: Your tech strategy is your business strategy—and you can't have a winning tech strategy without a mature skills strategy.

Source: IDC FutureScape: Worldwide Services 2019 Predictions (Doc #US43253918 / Oct 31, 2018)

Want to increase the speed of innovation at your organization?

Talk to us about starting a pilot.

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