

Press release
7 November 2025

Skilled worker shortage could slow down tech transformation plans

- 84% of Australian employers have a department participating in a major digital transformation initiative in the next two years
- Employee self-service portals (51%), data analytics, AI and Machine Learning (43%), and customer service improvements (39%) are among the most common digital transformation initiatives
- Only 47% of employers believe their current workforce possesses the right talent and skills to execute planned digital transformation initiatives
- Upskilling existing employees (57%), hiring new permanent employees (39%), and partnering with external providers (32%) are all methods employers will use to address skill gaps

Sydney, 7 November 2025 – The vast majority of employers have digital transformation plans or initiatives underway in their departments to gain operational efficiencies and data insights. However, almost one in two (47%) employers recognise that their staff need additional skills to execute the projects, according to new independent research by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#).

The research finds that 84% of Australian employers have at least one department in their organisation that will participate in a major digital transformation initiative in the next two years. They are in varying stages of readiness, while even more employers are keen to adopt initiatives if they can secure the right approvals.

- Digital transformation has a well-defined roadmap 45%
- Digital transformation is in the early planning stages 39%
- Initiatives are possible, if budget and leadership buy-in can be secured 10%
- No major digital transformation initiatives are planned 6%

*“Digital transformation has shifted, from being a competitive differentiator to a business imperative,” says **Nicole Gorton, Director at Robert Half**. “The fact that most organisations now have a roadmap in place shows that we’ve moved beyond experimentation and into a new stage where digital capabilities form the backbone of core business operations.”*

The target areas for digital transformation

HR, finance, customer experience, and data analytical initiatives are among those employers say they are rolling out to capitalise on the capabilities of digital technologies. Interestingly, many of the most common initiatives aim to improve the employee experience as well as that of customers, while generating efficiencies is also important. The top initiatives underway or in planning are:

Transformation initiative	Employers
Employee self-service portals and mobile HR apps	51%
A significant investment in data analytics, AI and Machine Learning capabilities	43%
A digital learning and development ecosystem	43%
An AI-powered HR analytics and insights platform	42%
Automation of accounts payable/receivable processes	42%
Digital customer experience improvement, such as apps/chatbots/self-service portals	39%
Cloud migration of core HR systems	38%
Accelerating cloud adoption and migration of infrastructure/applications	38%

Employee experience platforms, such as engagement apps/digital feedback tools/internal communications upgrades	36%
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Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 500 employers in Australia.

A three-pronged approach to addressing skills gaps

When asked if they believe their current workforce possesses the right talent and skills to successfully execute planned digital transformation initiatives, only 47% of employers stated their employees are completely prepared. Another 52% outlined there are some gaps to fill, whether they be minor (42%) or significant (10%).

To address these skills gaps and ensure their transformation ambitions become a reality, employers plan to leverage multiple options. While professional development is regarded as the primary focus area, seeking additional support is a preferred approach for many employers looking to roll out digital transformation initiatives.

- Upskill existing employees 57%
- Reskill existing employees for new roles 41%
- Hire new permanent talent 39%
- Hire new contract talent 35%
- Partner with external providers 32%

“The biggest hurdle to digital transformation isn’t always the technology itself, but the availability of skills to implement and sustain it. Organisations are recognising that success will come from a mix of hiring, upskilling, and leveraging external partners to ensure they have both the technical expertise and change management capabilities to deliver impact,” concludes **Gorton**.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in July 2025, by an independent research company of 500 hiring managers in finance and accounting, IT and technology, and human resources. Respondents are drawn from a sample of SMEs as well as large private, publicly-listed and public sector organisations across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management, and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Melbourne South East, Perth, and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com/au.

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