

# New Robert Half Research Reveals Severity of the Technology Skills Gap Amid Rapid Change

- 48% of tech leaders feel the impact of skills gaps is more apparent today compared to a year ago
- New report highlights factors contributing to the skills gaps, tech leaders' top priorities, and strategies for building future-forward tech teams

TORONTO, May 8, 2024 /CNW/ - Rapid change, evolving business priorities and the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) have created a significant challenge for today's tech leaders: critical skills gaps on their teams. This is according to a new report, [Building Future-Forward Tech Teams](#), from talent solutions and business consulting firm Robert Half. More than half of technology leaders surveyed (52 per cent) said they have a skills gap within their department, and 48 per cent feel the skills gap has a greater impact today compared to a year ago.

## Skills Gaps Threaten Business Priorities

According to the research, the top priorities for technology leaders this year include:

- Security of IT systems and information
- AI, machine learning and automation initiatives
- Cloud projects
- Digital transformation projects
- Remote/hybrid work programs and technologies, and ERP/CRM system implementation or improvements

A [limited pool of available talent](#) and significant technology skills gaps could place these projects in peril and risk negatively impacting business needs. Nearly all tech leaders (92 per cent) report challenges finding skilled talent, and nearly six in 10 (58 per cent) predict a significant hiring challenge will be the lack of applicants with the skill sets needed to support essential initiatives.

"Having a vision and talent strategy in place to ensure you can meet long-term business needs is critical", said Deborah Bottineau, managing director for technology talent solutions at Robert Half. "Businesses require thoughtful and deliberate hiring and retention strategies to achieve goals amid ongoing technology skills gaps."

## AI Brings Skills Gaps into Focus

The need to solve skills gaps has accelerated with the emergence of new AI capabilities. As shown in the report, 79 per cent of tech leaders plan to implement initiatives involving AI this year, and 47 per cent cite a lack of staff with AI skills as the biggest barrier to success. In fact, AI and machine learning topped the list of skills where tech managers said gaps are most evident, with more than half (52 per cent) reporting this for their department.

Depending on their role in the company, the knowledge and experience a technology professional may need to work effectively with AI can include:

- Programming
- Data analysis and statistics
- Machine learning
- Software engineering
- Ethics and responsible AI
- Big data technologies
- Deep learning frameworks
- Computer vision

## Building Future-Forward Tech Teams

To help hire, retain and advance high-performing tech teams, Robert Half recommends the following strategies:

- **Support upskilling.** Implement programs that encourage innovative thinking and ongoing learning, such as cross-training initiatives and specialized training workshops, to help prepare your employees and organization for the future.
- **Seek and develop high-potential candidates.** Focus on recruiting technology candidates who have an eagerness to learn new skills that support business priorities and offer training to promising candidates with high potential even if they

don't currently meet all your desired criteria.

- **Embrace a scalable talent model.** Adopting a mix of permanent, contract and consulting professionals can help bridge skills gaps quickly and efficiently, allowing your team to access professionals with specialized expertise, keep projects moving forward and stay agile.

Bottineau added: "As the technology landscape continues to evolve, technology professionals need to ensure they are growing their skill sets too, continuing to develop their capabilities alongside rapid change. Tech leaders need to provide training opportunities and initiatives to ensure their teams and their businesses remain as efficient and effective as possible."

### About the Research

The data from the report is from a survey developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm in October and November 2023. The survey contains responses from more than 180 technology leaders at the director level or above at companies with 20 more employees in Canada.

### About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialized talent solutions firm that connects opportunities at great companies with highly skilled job seekers. Offering contract and permanent placement solutions in the fields of finance and accounting, technology, marketing and creative, legal, and administrative and customer support, Robert Half has more than 300 locations worldwide. Robert Half is the parent company of Protiviti®, a global consulting firm that provides internal audit, risk, business and technology consulting solutions. Robert Half, including Protiviti, has been named to the *Fortune*® Most Admired Companies™. Explore our comprehensive solutions, research and insights at [RobertHalf.ca](https://roberthalf.ca).

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