



Press Release

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As digital and STEM skills become increasingly valuable, most workers are confident they have what it takes

- Majority of workers surveyed in all countries have confidence in their digital skills
- Workers in India most likely to possess STEM skills, followed by China and the US
- Two out of three UK workers lack confidence in their STEM skills
- Open conversations needed to boost confidence and encourage innovation

With technological advances set to drastically change the world of work, most people are feeling upbeat about their digital skills. In a survey by PwC of more than 10,000 people across the UK, Germany, China, India and the US, 69% of workers agreed or strongly agreed that they possess digital skills.

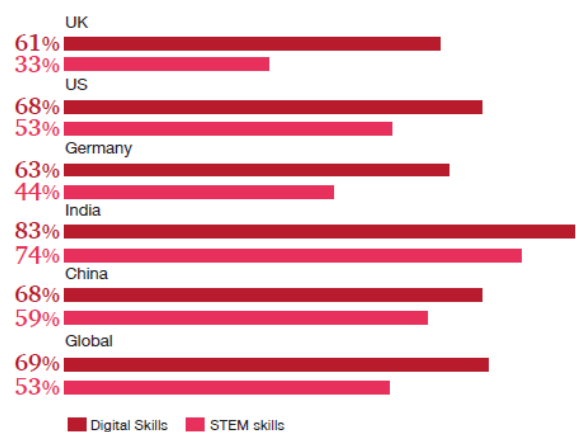
Workers in India (83%), China (68%) and the US (68%) are the most confident, with Germany (63%) and the UK (61%) not too far behind.

When it comes to STEM skills (science, technology, engineering and maths), confidence levels are lower, with the picture varying more widely by country. Just over half of all people surveyed (53%) agreed or strongly agreed they possess STEM abilities, suggesting more can be done by employers and governments to boost people's skills and confidence.

Looking at the results by country, workers in India (74%), China (59%) and the US (53%) have higher levels of confidence in their STEM skills, compared to their peers in the UK (33%) and Germany (44%), although this could to some degree be caused by cultural differences.

India most confident in digital and STEM.

Q – To what extent do you agree that you have the following skills? Digital and STEM skills. Those who 'agree' or 'strongly agree'



Sample: All respondents (2017: 10,029)

Says Carol Stubbings, Joint Global Leader, People and Organisation, PwC:

“It’s encouraging that confidence in digital and STEM skills is high in most countries. But the survey results also point to some weak spots. For example, more could be done in the UK to address the lack of confidence in STEM skills. To boost productivity, it’s paramount that companies, schools



and governments act now to equip people with the skills that will be most valuable now and in the future.”

The research suggests workers are generally happy to take learning into their own hands with 74% of respondents agreeing it is their own responsibility to update their skills rather than relying on an employer. Workers from India (88%) and the US (79%) are most likely to take personal responsibility. In the UK, the figure was lower at 56%.

Says Jon Williams, Joint Global Leader, People and Organisation, PwC:

“Low confidence, uncertainty and anxiety kill creativity and innovation. So it’s vital employers have an open and honest discussion about the future of work with their people. Organisations can’t protect jobs which are made redundant by technology, but they do have a responsibility to their people and should nurture agility, adaptability and re-skilling.

“While the future is unknown, there is much that can be done now to prepare for it. Leaders of teams, organisations and nations have a responsibility to create the right environment for success. Knowing how your people are feeling and putting in place the right communications and actions to give them the confidence to actively embrace the future is the first step on this journey.”

UK has a lower level of confidence in skills – India is very confident
Q – To what extent do you agree you have the following skills and attributes? Those who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’

	Global	UK	US	Germany	India	China
Adaptability	86%	81%	87%	84%	88%	88%
Problem solving	85%	83%	88%	78%	91%	86%
Creativity and innovation	74%	59%	77%	73%	88%	72%
STEM skills	53%	33%	55%	44%	74%	59%
Risk management skills	60%	46%	65%	47%	77%	62%
Leadership skills	69%	60%	79%	57%	84%	66%
Digital skills	69%	61%	68%	63%	83%	68%
Emotional intelligence	76%	74%	84%	75%	78%	70%
Collaboration skills	81%	69%	81%	87%	82%	87%

▲ >5% above global average ▼ >5% below global average

Sample: All respondents (2017: 10,029)

The good news for CEOs is that the soft skills they’re looking for are the most frequently claimed skills. These are the skills that businesses will need in the future as humans work alongside automation and artificial intelligence.

Three-quarters or more of respondents said they have soft skills, with adaptability scoring highest (86%), followed by problem-solving (85%), collaboration skills (81%) and emotional intelligence (76%).

Workers in India are the most confident in their soft skills, particularly problem solving (91%) and creativity and innovation (88%).

ENDS



Notes to editors:

‘Workforce of the future: The views of 10,000 workers’ is based on a survey conducted in May 2017 of 10,029 members of the general public (with just over 2,000 surveyed in each of China, India, Germany, the UK and the US). Respondents included workers, retired people, unemployed and students in each country. A copy of the report can be downloaded at www.pwc.com/people.

The research was undertaken as part of PwC’s Workforce of the Future report, which examines four worlds of work in 2030 to show how competing forces, including automation, are shaping the workforces of the future. Each scenario has significant implications for the world of work, which cannot be ignored by governments, organisations or individuals.

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