

Press release

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### 49% of Australian employers say employees are actively seeking opportunities to upskill

- 49% of Australian employers have been approached by employees about upskilling opportunities and 47% have been approached by employees seeking to be reskilled.
- Majority of employers prefer to upskill and reskill existing workers than hire new staff.
- 81% of employers say reskilling improves their team’s productivity.

**Sydney, 10 October 2023** – 49% of Australian employers say employees have asked for training and professional development opportunities to improve their capability in their current position, new independent research by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) finds.

The combination of constantly evolving technologies and a heightened focus on productivity means employees are taking matters into their own hands when it comes to addressing their skills development.

#### What employees want

In the past six months, Australian employers have received requests for the following:

- 49% say employees have requested training to upskill in new competencies for their current role
- 47% say they have been asked to provide reskilling opportunities so that workers can perform new roles or take on new responsibilities within the organisation
- 33% say they have been asked to introduce mentoring programs
- 26% say they have been asked to enable job rotations that cross-train employees

#### Requests made by industry

Professionals in the technology sector are most eager to develop their skills, as CIOs cite higher percentages of requests from their staff.

What employees want	All employers	CFO	CIO
To be upskilled and develop new competencies	49%	44%	57%
To be reskilled to take on a new role or tasks	47%	46%	50%
For mentoring programs to be introduced	33%	28%	38%
To enable job rotations that cross-train employees	26%	24%	27%
For contract staff to be hired to backfill vacated roles	25%	19%	25%

*Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 100 CIOs, CFOs, general hiring managers in Australia.*

*“The concept of upskilling and reskilling has gained prominence as professionals recognise the need to continuously learn and adapt,”* says **Nicole Gorton, Director at Robert Half.**

*“By investing in employee training and development, a business creates a culture of progression that is beneficial to attracting and retaining talent.*

*“We know that driving organisational transformation hinges on how well a business can engage and upskill its workforce to adopt and embrace change. A company’s learning and development program is an important differentiator to help achieve this and allows employees to feel equipped to do their best work and stay intellectually challenged.”*

## **The benefit to employers**

Employers recognise that upskilling and reskilling their staff not only benefits their business by boosting productivity and filling talent gaps, but also leads to better staff engagement and retention:

- 74% of business leaders say reskilling existing employees has increased their team’s workload capacity to perform tasks more efficiently
- 81% agree it has improved their team’s productivity

In addition, nearly three-quarters (73%) of employers say if budget constraints are not an issue, they prefer to reskill a current employee than hire a new employee.

A similar proportion (78%) of employers prefer to upskill an existing employee to expand their skill set so they can perform more functions than recruit a new employee.

*“While the chronic skills shortage continues, employers understand that investing in upskilling programs could answer their talent deficit woes. In instances where we see employers wanting to hire someone outside of the business rather than upskill, it likely comes down to the expertise being so specialised that it requires an expert in that field to execute it, or businesses wanting to expand their teams and add to headcount,”* concluded **Gorton.**

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## **Notes to editors**

### **About the research**

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in June 2023 by an independent research company, surveying 300 hiring managers, including 100 CFOs and 100 CIOs, from companies 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, Mount Waverley, Perth, and Sydney. More information on [roberthalf.com.au](https://roberthalf.com.au).

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