Critical skills
for the digital world

For many Not-for-profit (NFP) organisations, the pandemic and its economic impacts are a challenging time where survival is paramount.

Before COVID-19, technological change was already reshaping the skills required for workers to thrive in a digital world. The greatest resource a NFP has is its people, and its people typically include a wide and talented pool of volunteers. COVID-19 has accelerated the need to develop workers' capabilities so they can thrive in this new world.

Our first annual Not-for-Profit CEO Survey shows that despite the deeply challenging COVID-19 environment, upskilling for a digital world is an opportunity worth taking. As the country's second largest employer[1], NFP leaders should be asking themselves some key questions in relation to upskilling, collaboration and growth.

[1] Pro Bono News article: Growth & Change in Australian Charities

Digital upskilling in a COVID-19 context

77%

The need for digital upskilling of employees has become a **higher priority** in the context of COVID-19.

78%

Employees provided with skills and training in the last 12 months to help them adjust to the **impact of new technology.**

Upskilling

The future of work is already here. The degree to which organisations can benefit from rapid technological change will, in large part, depend on the skills of the workforce and the ability to adapt to the digital world.

NFP leaders should be asking five key questions:

What opportunities are there to assess workforce flexibility and changing roles as part of the organisational strategy?

What steps can be taken to define the (technical and transferable) skills that will be required in the future?

What steps can be taken to identify the skills gaps and mismatches?

How can leaders ensure they stay curious, embrace change and role-model technology adoption?

What steps should be considered by all NFPs to reduce the digital divide in their sector?

Collaboration

Across the NFP sector, there is a generosity to give and share. An appetite to advance each other and many government grants now require a showcase of how NFPs will collaborate in terms of funding use and service models.

NFP leaders should be asking five key questions:

What opportunities are there to collaborate on best practice around an overarching strategic approach to technology?

What opportunities are there to explore unlikely partnerships to accelerate digital upskilling (e.g. creation of shared sandboxes with vendors - using the strength of the community - inherent commonalities and organise around interest areas)?

What is the role of universities, business and government to work collaboratively with NFPs on core skill development?

How can NFPs work with technology providers and other subject matter experts to get better value from existing technology and drive deeper adoption?

How can NFPs energise a culture of open communication, internal collaboration and ongoing support on skills of the future?

42%

of NFPs are making no progress or not even considering collaborating with academic/ government institutions on the skills needed for the future.

61%

of NFPs say the greatest challenge faced in their upskilling efforts is a lack of resources to conduct the upskilling programs needed.

Growth

NFP organisations have always been smart about how they use resources. As these continue to become more scarce, they've become smarter with their limited resources.

NFP leaders should be asking five key questions:

To go after growth, are upskilling programs aligned to organisational outcomes?

Does the upskilling program address the needs of the volunteer workforce?

What benefits could be unlocked for NFPs in developing a D&I strategy?

What digital operating models and new ways of working opportunities can NFPs adopt to drive increased growth?

How can NFPs create mechanisms for early adopters to become subject matter experts to drive digital upskilling?
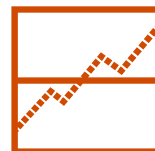
Top outcomes
from upskilling programs

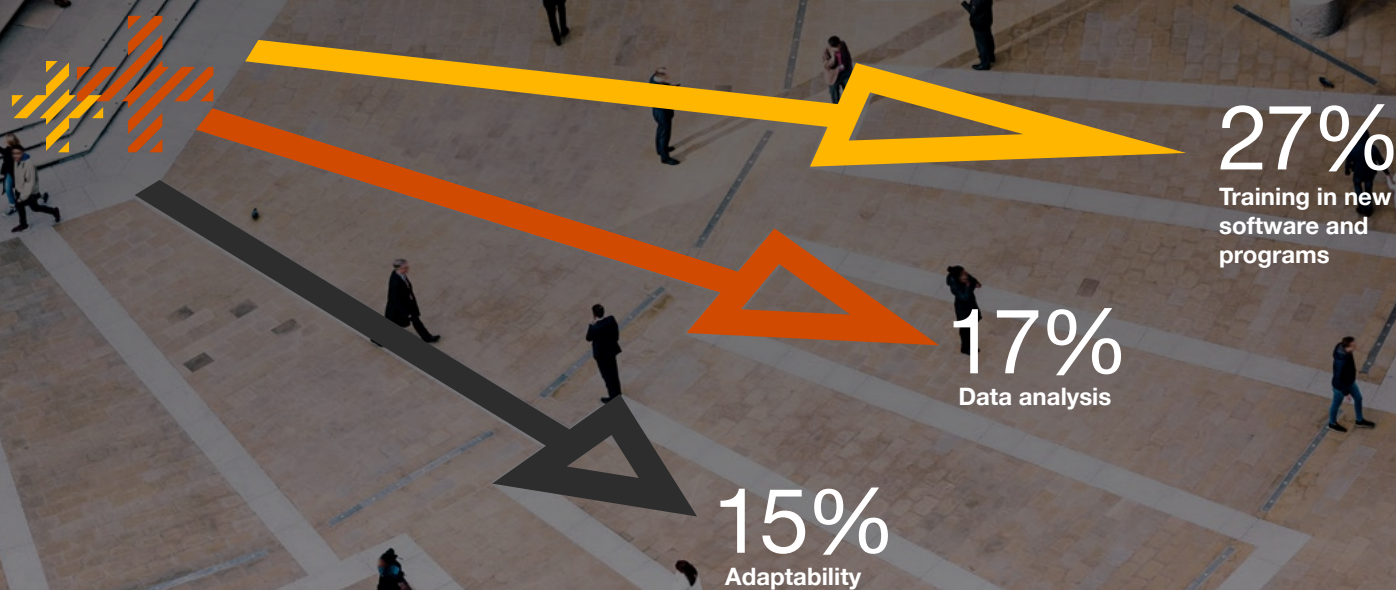**Stronger organisational culture and employee engagement**

Greater innovation and accelerated digital transformation, joint third with higher workforce productivity

Greater organisational growth

Top three skills required to prepare for the impact of technology on roles

27%
Training in new software and programs

17%
Data analysis

15%
Adaptability

Explore more

pwc.com.au/nfp-ceo-survey

Survey methodology

PwC Australia surveyed CEOs (or equivalent) of Not-for-profits[2] in Australia in June and July 2020. 162 completed responses were used in our research.

[2] ACNC definition of a Not-for-Profit

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