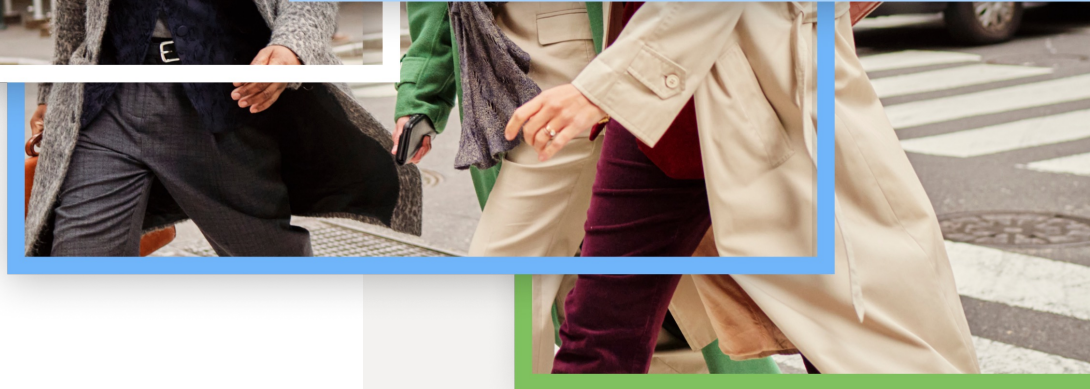




The Skills Signal

Unlocking
opportunity in a
changing labor
market

June 2025



The world of work is changing fast, and outdated hiring systems are holding us back.

Economies around the world are grappling with persistent skills shortages, slowing growth, and declining productivity — even as capable workers remain overlooked. By continuing to rely on outdated signals like degrees and job titles, employers often miss the full picture of what someone can do. This disconnect means critical roles go unfilled, economic potential is left on the table, and workers miss out on opportunities to thrive.

As AI reshapes industries and transforms the skills required across roles, the need for a more responsive, resilient labor market has never been greater. Skills-based hiring offers a powerful solution. LinkedIn data shows that workers who add skills to their profiles — especially disruptive tech and people skills — find jobs faster. For employers, using skill filters in recruiting searches can lead to more targeted hiring and uncovering hidden talent, particularly in roles with small or specialized talent pools.

Momentum is building — but unevenly. Jobseekers are rapidly adding skills to their profiles, but employer adoption of skills-based practices continues to lag behind. Many organizations are eager to adopt skills-based hiring but lack the tools, training, or confidence to do so effectively and at scale. We need a stronger ecosystem: one where skills are visible and valued. LinkedIn has partnered with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [Centre for Skills](#) on a global report that explores the benefits, challenges, and current state of skills-based hiring — and what it will take to make it the norm, not the exception.



[You can find the full report here](#)



Skills-based hiring opens new paths for workers and growth for businesses

When workers signal their skills — and employers prioritize them — hiring becomes more effective and better aligned with the demands of today's economy.

Workers who add skills to their LinkedIn profile find jobs faster.

- Adding just 10 skills to a LinkedIn profile is associated with a one-month shorter employment gap.
- Adding disruptive tech skills, such as AI, and people skills, such as communication, is associated with the fastest reemployment.

¹ We assessed quality of hire by equally weighting demand (top 25% of recruiter InMail recipients), retention (at least one year tenure at company of hire), and mobility (internal role change within one year at company of hire). For more information, see our [Future of Recruiting report](#).



It's time to flip the script — from chasing jobs to showcasing skills. Workers matched by skills, not titles, qualify for over 3x as many roles.



Skills-based hiring helps companies find “hidden talent,” particularly in emerging fields. For example, companies can grow their AI talent pipeline by 8.2x globally by focusing on skills over degrees or job titles.



Skills-based hiring helps companies make great hires. Companies using skills-based talent searches are 12% more likely to recruit high-quality hires.¹

Momentum is growing, but implementation lags

While both jobseekers and employers are showing interest in skills-based approaches, many organizations still lack the tools, systems, or confidence to fully adopt them.



1

The average number of skills added to profiles **rose 75% between 2019 and 2024** — from 5 skills in 2019 to 9 skills in 2024.

2

Workers are increasingly adding digital skills — including AI skills — and green skills to their profiles, **reflecting a shift toward more future-ready capabilities**. On average, the probability of adding digital skills and green skills in 2024 was 1.5 and 2 times higher, respectively, than in 2019.

3

Skill signaling is growing fastest among women, Gen Z, and people in customer-facing roles. For example, from 2019 to 2024:

- Women in the US increased the number of skills on their profile by 80.6% — compared to 67.3% for men — and have now reached parity with men in terms of total skills listed.
- Gen Z workers in Germany added skills to their profile at nearly four times the rate of Baby Boomer workers.
- Customer success and support workers in France added 78.1% more skills to their profiles, while workers in Business Development only grew their skills by 56.2%.



4

Costa Rica (23%), Colombia (19%), and Lithuania (19%) have the **highest percentage of recruitment searches** that filter solely by skills. In contrast, the Netherlands (7%), the UK (8%), and Italy (8%) show a lower proportion of searches that filter exclusively by skills.

5

Mid-sized companies (501-1000 employees) are leading the shift away from degree filters, with notable YoY reductions in Ireland (degree-based searches down 45.5%), France (down 29.3%), and Germany (down 25.8%).

Building a skills-based future together

Creating a more inclusive, resilient workforce starts with all of us. When we each take steps to prioritize skills — policymakers, workforce development professionals, business leaders, *and* jobseekers — we open doors to opportunity. Here's how each group can lead the way:



Policymakers: Create the conditions for skills-based hiring to thrive

- Lead by example. Review public sector hiring practices and remove unnecessary credential requirements where possible.
- Encourage employers to adopt skills-based approaches by tying funding or procurement to in-demand skills.
- Champion cross-sector partnerships that connect education, workforce development, and employers to scale what works.



Workforce development professionals: Align training with market demand

- Prioritize programs that build practical, job-ready skills, not just formal credentials.
- Use real-time labor market data, including LinkedIn insights, to ensure training aligns with employer needs.
- Embed skills-first practices into employer partnerships — from program design to job placement.



Business leaders: Grow with skills at the center

- Consider removing degree and tenure filters where they're not essential and focus on what candidates can do.
- Bring skills-based practices into every step of hiring — from writing job posts to training hiring managers.
- Support your teams in learning and growing. Investing in upskilling today helps your business stay ready for tomorrow.



Jobseekers: Showcase your skills

- Regularly update your LinkedIn profile to reflect newly acquired skills — especially in-demand disruptive tech skills like AI and people skills like communication.
- Use platforms like LinkedIn Learning to build capabilities that align with today's fast-changing job market.
- Be specific. Tie your skills to real experiences, such as projects, roles, or measurable accomplishments.

Resources



Build in-demand skills

LinkedIn has created [a list of skills on the rise](#) in 2025 to understand the fastest-growing skills across regions and job functions.

At opportunity.linkedin.com, you'll find free learning paths mapped to in-demand roles.

Check out our [AI Skill Pathways](#), with over 150 AI Professional Certificates, certification prep, and learning paths.



Target the right job opportunities

Create a list of open positions you'd like to apply for, and the skills needed for those positions. If you look at jobs on LinkedIn, the AI-powered [job match feature](#) will let members know how well they match with any job on LinkedIn in just seconds, helping you target jobs where your skills and experiences match what hirers are looking for.



Explore new opportunities through a skills-based lens:

Use LinkedIn's free [Career Explorer tool](#) to help you find possible job transitions, based on insights into skills similarity.



Empower hiring with skills-first strategies

Employers can expand their talent pipelines and improve hiring outcomes by focusing on what candidates can do, not just where they've been.

[Learn how leading organizations](#) are making real progress by focusing on capabilities over credentials.

To ensure your interviews align with this strategy, explore how to [conduct effective skills-based interviews](#).

And for a forward-looking perspective, learn [how AI is accelerating the shift to skills-first hiring](#).

