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New Skillsoft Research: AI and Leadership Skills Crucial to Elevating Employee Confidence and Performance

- *Employees acknowledge AI/machine learning and leadership as their biggest skills gaps*
- *Just 25% of employees rate their organization's talent development programs as highly effective*
- *Employees seek more dedicated time, new formats, and increased leadership support to meet upskilling needs*

BOSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Skillsoft (NYSE: SKIL), a leading platform for transformative learning experiences, today released new research exploring the current state of workplace skills and talent development programs. Based on a survey of 2,500 full-time employees in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and India, the findings reveal that 35% of respondents lack confidence that they have the skills required to succeed in their roles. Additionally, 41% expressed concerns about job security due to gaps in their skills.

Surveyed employees rated leadership skills as the most critical for success in today's workplace, followed by soft skills (e.g. communication, emotional intelligence), technology skills, and AI/machine learning skills. Respondents also acknowledged that their manager views leadership skills as the most important competency for team members to have, but nearly a third (31%) said this is their greatest skill gap. Over two-in-five (43%) said the same about their AI/machine learning skills.

"This data highlights a significant issue: one-third of the workforce is questioning if they have the right skills to excel in their roles," said Ciara Harrington, Chief People Officer, Skillsoft. "These skill gaps hold workers back from reaching their full potential and can hinder organizations in achieving their key business objectives. As workers face an increasingly complex set of responsibilities, ongoing change in the workplace, and disruption spurred by generative AI, it's critical for organizations to proactively build their talent's skills. A skilled, agile workforce is inherently more confident, capable, and productive."

95% of surveyed employees said their organization has a talent development program in place, but only 25% find it to be highly effective, with a lack of time (42%), learning formats (30%), and leadership support (26%) as their main obstacles. To better achieve their skill-building goals, respondents are seeking a blended learning program comprising online, on-demand courses (39%), interactive and experiential opportunities (37%), and live, instructor-led training (37%) in particular.

"Effective learning programs take a blended, multimodal approach that goes beyond building skills and drives measurable improvements in job performance and behavioral change on a continuous basis," continued Harrington. "By offering timely, high-quality learning content

and interactive experiences that allow for hands-on practice of newly acquired skills, organizations can prepare their talent to leverage emerging technologies like GenAI, adapt swiftly to emerging regulations, and develop essential leadership skills."

In-demand skills require a transformative approach to talent development.

Nearly 75% of respondents believe there are gaps in the effectiveness of their organization's talent development programs. To address these shortcomings, organizations are encouraged to adopt holistic and interactive learning solutions to empower talent and build crucial skills.

- Despite the proliferation of GenAI tools, 62% of respondents said their organization's AI training program is average to poor.
- Only 28% of respondents believe the leadership skills training provided by their organization is "excellent." Just a third (31%) said the same about soft skills training.
- Respondents cited group training (33%), mentoring (32%), and coaching (30%) as key components of a strong learning program. Tools like [Skillsoft CAISY](#)™ offer interactive coaching experiences that support in transforming leadership skill development.

Organizations are in the early stages of transitioning to a skills-based model.

In an era where adaptability is key, a skills-based talent development program where competencies are directly linked to business objectives can enhance workforce agility, employee performance, and the bottom line.

- 82% of respondents said their organization is taking steps to transition to a skills-based model.
- The most common actions being taken are providing skill- and role-based learning paths (28%), performing skill gap analyses (16%), and implementing skills taxonomies (16%).
- Many organizations are still in the early stages of this initiative, as only 19% of respondents say they receive regular skill assessments – a critical component of skills-based strategies.

To learn more about the findings from Skillsoft's research, visit [here](#).

Research Methodology:

Skillsoft's research survey was conducted online in July 2024 through the Pollfish platform. The survey yielded 2,500 complete responses from full-time workers across various industries and roles in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and India.

About Skillsoft

Skillsoft (NYSE: SKIL) delivers transformative learning experiences that propel organizations and people to grow together. The Company partners with enterprise organizations and serves a global community of learners to prepare today's employees for tomorrow's economy. With Skillsoft, customers gain access to blended, multimodal learning experiences that do more than build skills, they grow a more capable, adaptive, and engaged workforce. Through a portfolio of best-in-class content, a platform that is personalized and connected to customer needs, world-class tech and a broad ecosystem of partners, Skillsoft drives

continuous growth and performance for employees and their organizations by overcoming critical skill gaps and unlocking human potential.

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