# Scoping the Skills Gap

For many companies, people are their most important resource; and even in the workplace of the future, the right people are the key to innovation and excellence. But what are the skills that count for employers? And how easy is it for businesses to find and recruit people with the skills they need?

We wanted to understand more about this increasingly important topic, so we surveyed businesspeople to find out more about the role that HR and talent play in their organizations, and what they look for in employees.

## 86%
of businesspeople cite HR issues as a significant challenge for their organization

...but talent is much less of a concern for microsized businesses.

**94%** of businesses with 10+ staff worry about HR-related issues

**47%** of businesses with 1-9 staff worry about HR-related issues

### The Biggest Challenges for Organizations

Recruitment and retention of good people are challenges for the majority of organisations. Training staff is also a significant focus for many businesses, but only a quarter see managing underperforming staff as a challenge.

Retaining good employees — 56%

Finding and recruiting the right people — 55%

Training staff on latest developments — 45%

Training staff in soft skills (eg leadership) — 36%

Managing underperforming employees — 36%

Identifying underperforming employees — 26%

None of these — 14%

## The Skills Employers Need

**61%** Problem Solving

**54%** Attention to Detail

**52%** Critical Thinking

Nearly two thirds of businesses regard problem-solving as an important skill; more than half want critical thinking in their employees.

Less vital are digital, sales and business administration skills, each mentioned by only a quarter of respondents.

## Hiring the Right Skills

Problem solving and critical thinking are two of the most important skills in prospective hires, according to employers. But more than a third of businesses struggle to find and recruit people with these same abilities.

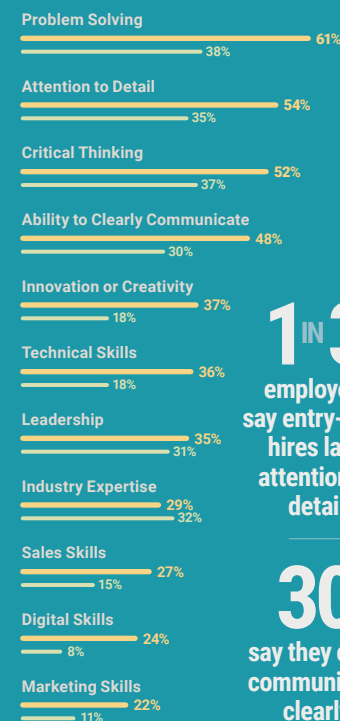**29%** of micro businesses worry about finding and recruiting the right people compared to...

**60%** of organisations with 10+ employees

**31%** see retention as a challenge, and only 28% worry about employee training in industry developments.

### Talent and Small Businesses

HR and hiring are significant challenges for medium and larger organizations; but start-ups and micro businesses are much less focused on finding the right people and skills. Less than half of businesses of 1 to 9 people are concerned about hiring or talent.

## The Skills Shortfall in Employees

Problem Solving — 61% / 38%

Attention to Detail — 54% / 35%

Critical Thinking — 52% / 37%

Ability to Clearly Communicate — 48% / 30%

Innovation or Creativity — 37% / 18%

Technical Skills — 36% / 18%

Leadership — 35% / 31%

Industry Expertise — 29% / 32%

Sales Skills — 27% / 15%

Digital Skills — 24% / 8%

Marketing Skills — 22% / 11%

**1 IN 3** employers say entry-level hires lack attention to detail

**30%** say they can't communicate clearly

● MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS IN MY ORGANIZATION
● LACKING IN ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEES