

Technology Quotient (TQ) and the Digital Skills Gap

What is the Digital Skills Gap?

A growing digital skills gap is impacting worker performance and ultimately businesses success. This gap is growing due to challenges faced by the advanced use of technology and how people adjust to automation issues.

Only 1-in-10 workers feel proficient with their everyday digital tools

Technology is a double-edged sword, reducing burdens on some while creating them for others. Mobile phones are a great convenience, but tend to extend the working day into additional hours with an “always on-call” capability. Social networks can enrich our lives, but management worries employees won’t represent the business appropriately. Collaborative online games bring people together but can result in inappropriate bullying.

Some businesses successfully manage their technology but many are challenged to navigate the daily deluge of disruptive innovations raining down. Technology management has increasingly become a key differentiator leading to either substantial profits or losses. To empower the digital workforce, successful businesses must address this skills gap.

Poor digital skills lower productivity by 21% costing \$1.3 trillion a year

What is Technology Quotient (TQ)?

Most people know about IQ and more recently EQ, but now it is time to consider another key measure....Technology Quotient (TQ). TQ is our ability to assimilate or adapt to technology changes by developing and employing strategies to successfully include technology in our work and life. A high TQ includes the right attitude, capabilities and decision- making strategies to fully leverage technology.

A person with a high TQ:

- organizes work to take full advantage of available technology
- reaps a payback from taking technology risks
- takes advantage of the opportunities technology presents

An improved TQ helps people adapt to a future in which rapidly changing technology is even more central to every business function. Focusing on TQ helps to adjust our thinking about technology as not just gadgets and software but enablers of success.



How to Close the Digital Skills Gap

Develop an action plan to address the digital skills gap in your business.

Step 1: Define the necessary digital skills for the business

Identify the technology management skills required for each functional area to achieve the business goals.

Step 2: Assess individual gaps in digital skills.

Test competency against the identified professional and technical skills that are integral to the business and determine the priority areas to address.

Step 3: Design digital skills training

Create an ongoing training program to close the technology skills gap. Also develop and implement a pre-employment TQ assessment for applicants.

Step 4: Implement digital skills training

Invest in an ongoing digital skills training program and assess the results.

Step 5: Improve

Stay on top of business technology changes and the related digital skills requirements to keep the training current.



TQ Competencies for Successful Technology Management

1. Organization, Collaboration & Management

- 1.1 Project collaboration & management
- 1.2 Optimizing settings for a more productive configuration
- 1.3 Use of calendar, scheduling, organizer

2. Tool/Application Management

- 2.1 Selecting the right applications for the right task
- 2.2 Deeping applications knowledge with training, webinars, etc.
- 2.3 Use of power tools like Excel, Visio, Databases and Web
- 2.4 Developing tool mashups to improve application performance

3. Data manipulation

- 3.1 Files and documents
- 3.2 Spreadsheets and financial data
- 3.3 Databases
- 3.4 Search & research techniques
- 3.5 Documenting and using help systems

4. Change Management

- 4.1 Visualizing the final result and then making it
- 4.2 Using budgeting and ROI for technical investments
- 4.3 Knowing when technology is “ripe” vs “immature”
- 4.4 Knowing when to slowly pilot vs. fast changes



5. Communications

- 5.1 Digital etiquette
- 5.2 Use of communications tools to improve workflow
- 5.3 Attention management

6. Attitude

- 6.1 Having platform flexibility by adjusting mental paradigms
- 6.2 Breaking and reforming habitual usage patterns
- 6.3 Shaping technology and being shaped by it

7. Work habits

- 7.1 Balancing “heads down” work with “heads up” big thinking
- 7.2 Constant awareness and behaviors to protect security
- 7.3 Using authentication skills to verify identities

8. Overcoming Barriers

- 8.1 Properly using resources to help solve technical issues
- 8.2 Narrow solution options to eliminate root causes
- 8.3 Independently overcoming barriers vs using tech support
- 8.4 Patient problem solving vs. brute force solutions

