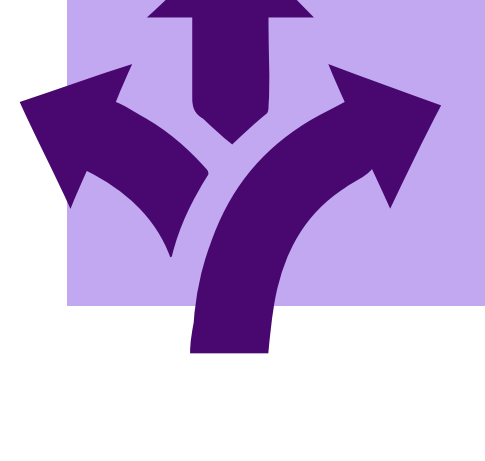


# The Skills Journey: From Exploration to Activation

Insights from WTW's 2025 Skills Survey:  
From Conception to Currency

Skills are reshaping how talent is attracted, developed and retained. But most organizations are still early in the journey. Regardless of where your organization stands on skills, a roadmap can lead you from exploration to full activation, learning from leading companies on how to build infrastructure, embed skills into talent decisions and unlock measurable business impact.



Where is your organization on its journey?

## Exploration: The curiosity phase

Skills are on the radar but not yet in motion

Step  
01



Most organizations recognize the importance of skills, but few have taken meaningful steps to activate them. At this stage, efforts are exploratory — testing use cases, gathering insights and building awareness.

Only about **30% of organizations globally** have any form of foundational infrastructure like a skills taxonomy or tracking process.

**The opportunity:**  
Move from curiosity to capability.

**Strategic tip:**  
Start with high-impact areas and expand as infrastructure matures.

## Foundation building: Laying the groundwork

Structure enables scale

Step  
02

At this stage, organizations are defining a skills taxonomy, aligning it with job architecture and establishing processes to track skills by job and employee.



Those who track skills by job are **2x as likely** to report effectiveness across talent programs than organizations who aren't capturing or tracking skills by job.

**The opportunity:**  
Build an infrastructure that supports fair pay, internal mobility and strategic workforce planning.

**Best practice:**  
Organizations that connect skills to job architecture are **more than twice as likely** to use skills effectively across multiple use cases.

## Activation: Turning strategy into action

Skills start driving real decisions

Step  
03

Organizations are beginning to use skills to inform a wide range of talent decisions across the employee lifecycle.

### Primary use cases and effectiveness

#### 1 Supply of skills

Talent acquisition and sourcing



Effective

29%

Learning, development and training



28%

Performance management



25%

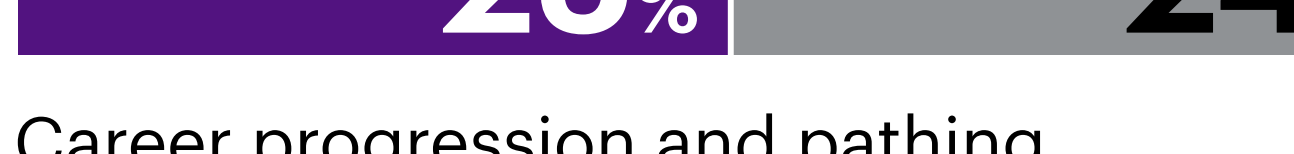
#### 2 Demand of skills

Job evaluation and documentation



21%

Career progression and pathing



21%

Note: "Effective" means it is the primary use case, envisioned to impact people programs and processes, and reported as effective in using skills to promote them.

■ We have a skills program and this is the primary use case now

■ We have a skills program and this will be a primary use case in the future

**The reality:**  
Fewer than half of organizations are using skills effectively in any of these areas.

But about **1 in 5** organizations are effective across 3 or more use cases — showing what's possible when skills are applied strategically.

**The opportunity:**  
Embed skills into decision making across the entire talent lifecycle and use skills to increase agility, retention and productivity.

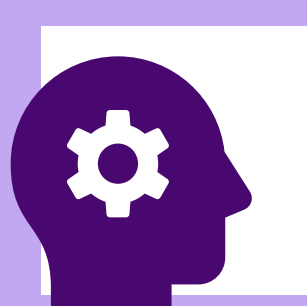
### The impact of using skills effectively

Organizations that effectively use skills in 3–5 use cases are:



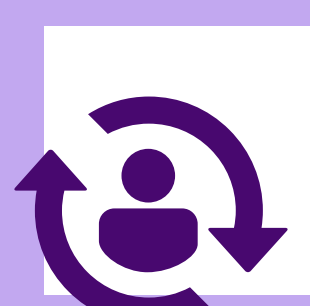
1.7x

as likely to report having significantly higher financial performance



2x

as likely to report having higher employee productivity



33%

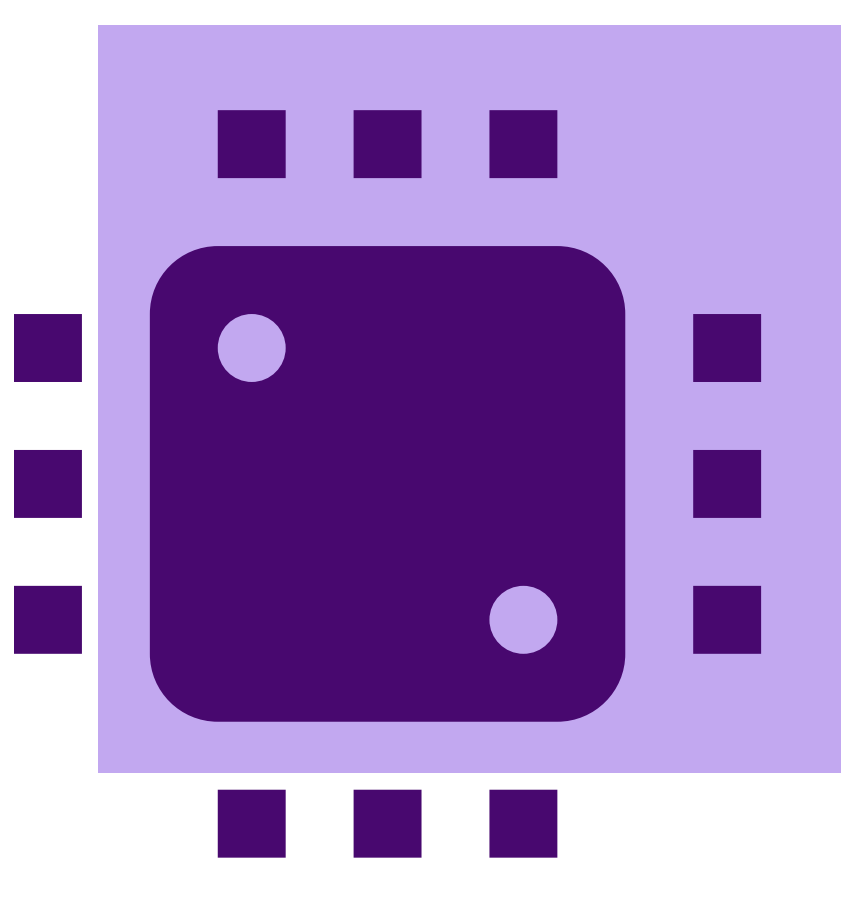
less likely to report having difficulty retaining key talent

## Optimization: Scaling for impact

Use technology to unleash potential

Step  
04

Organizations at this stage invest in technology and fine-tune compensation strategies to reflect the true value of skills.



Only **1 in 5 organizations** use AI to support skills initiatives

Only **30% have the technology** needed to support a skills-based environment

Effective organizations are nearly **3x more likely** to have enabling systems

**Why it matters:**  
Technology is the engine that powers scale — enabling visibility, assessment and activation of skills across the enterprise.

**Strategic tip:**  
Invest in technology that makes skills **visible, measurable and actionable** to create a future-ready workforce aligned to business goals.