

Press release
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Education is primary solution to Australia's IT skills shortage, say tech leaders

- To alleviate the IT skills shortage, 29% of Australian CIOs think increased collaboration with education providers is the primary solution, while 23% refer to promoting IT as an attractive career among millennial and Gen Z professionals.
- 88% of CIOs respectively say it is more challenging to find qualified IT professionals compared to five years ago and will become more challenging over the next five years.

Sydney, 31 May 2019 – Australia is at risk of falling behind in the global technology race unless companies can secure top IT talent, with the latest ACS Australia's Digital Pulse report forecasting Australia will need 200,000 technology workers by 2023 to become a global ICT leader¹. In light of this, a survey of 160 Australian IT employers commissioned by specialist recruiter [Robert Half](#) reveals what Australian CIOs identify to be the key solution to help alleviate the IT skills shortage.

Education is the solution

According to the survey, almost a third (29%) of Australian CIOs think increased collaboration with education providers and universities is the primary solution to alleviate the skills shortage in the technology field. This finding coincides with a report by Accenture which highlights that education and new learning techniques will be integral to closing the skills gap as technology reshapes the nature of work².

The second method to alleviate the skills shortage – as identified by 23% of Australian CIOs – is promoting IT as an attractive career among millennials and Gen Z, followed by 16% who refer to increased collaboration initiatives from the business community and 12% who identify increased in-house training initiatives.

The skills shortage in five years

As technology continues to evolve at a rapid rate, skills shortages are not only likely to continue in coming years, but the skills gap is at risk of widening unless effective measures are put in place to upskill the workforce. Indeed, almost nine in 10 (88%) CIOs, respectively, say it is more challenging to find qualified IT professionals compared to five years ago and will become more challenging over the next five years.

The top five functional areas within IT where it is most difficult to find skilled job candidates include IT security (53%), IT management (40%), technical support and operations (20%), software/application development (19%) and data/database management (17%).

Andrew Morris, Director of Robert Half says *“Australia's current IT skills shortage is a risk to business success and innovation. With technology evolving at a rapid pace, education systems and providers play a key role, not just to guarantee a continuous flow of skilled IT professionals into the employment market, but also to help upskill existing staff. For Australia to become a global technology leader, it's crucial education providers ensure their STEM qualifications, courses and degrees evolve at a similar speed technology does.”*

¹ <https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-publications/aadp2018.pdf>

² <https://www.accenture.com/au-en/insights/future-workforce/transforming-learning>

“As the IT skills shortage continues to grow, many IT leaders are ready to drive change through a series of dynamic education and training initiatives. By instigating greater collaboration between education providers, the business community and government initiatives, Australia’s future workforce will be better equipped with high-calibre IT talent to help manage and implement new and ground-breaking technology opportunities as they arise, thereby enhancing its position in the global technology race.”

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About the research

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted in June 2018 and January 2019 by an independent research firm, surveying 160 CIOs from companies across Australia. This survey is part of an international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world’s first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy and member of the S&P 500. Founded in 1948, the company has more than 300 offices worldwide providing temporary, interim management and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting and finance, financial services, technology, and administrative professionals. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com.au.

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