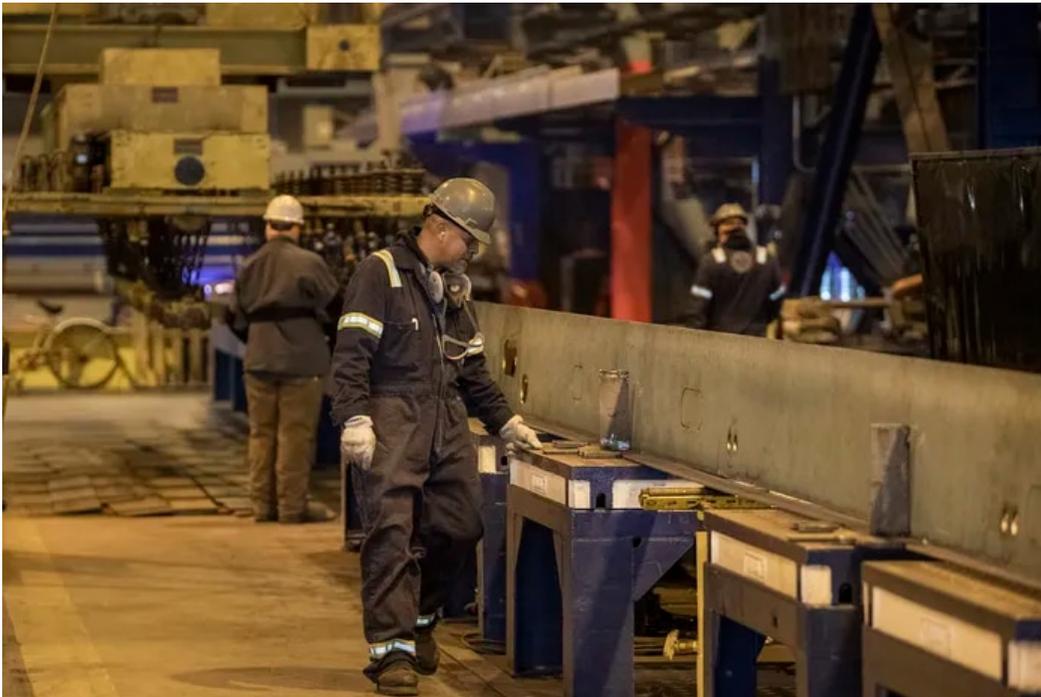


How to be irresistible in today's job market: Check out the skills in high demand

[I inquirer.com/business/jobs-skills-training-classes-tech-college-u2-coursera-20220609.html](https://www.inquirer.com/business/jobs-skills-training-classes-tech-college-u2-coursera-20220609.html)

Future of Work

Workers will now need lifelong learning, a new skills report said. The good news is that many classes are free, low cost and widely available.



Workers are shown at the sheet metal plant on Monday, Nov 16, 2021 at the Philadelphia Shipyard in Philadelphia. A workforce development program recently placed a group of new recruits in jobs as laborers at the Philly Shipyard. The recruitment, training, and job placement model that was started by the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative, is expanding to the Navy Yard. It's an example of workers upgrading their skills.[Read more](#)JOSE F. MORENO / Staff Photographer

by Christine M. Johnson-Hall, For The Inquirer

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Whether you've just graduated or find yourself at mid- or late career, you're facing a red-hot job market, with two openings for every unemployed person. Hiring managers and recruiters everywhere continue their hunt to fill roles.

So what skills would help you progress the most?

The short answer is more fluency in the digital world coupled with the old-school ability to communicate, according to two new reports.

The pandemic, by supercharging remote work, put a greater premium on technology skills. Suddenly the ability to communicate in a zoom meeting or in a graphic became paramount. So are skills for posting on social media, data visualization, and using such tools as [Google Analytics](#), to measure the return from online advertising, and Salesforce to track customers.

[Burning Glass Institute](#), an independent research center that co-authored the [Shifting Skills, Moving Targets, and Remaking the Workforce](#) report with the Boston Consulting Group and the market data firm [Emsi Burning Glass](#).

Employees will now need lifelong learning, Sigelman said. “All 160 million workers in the U.S. workforce today are going to need to have a mechanism for acquiring skills on the fly.”

The good news is that many classes are free, low cost, and widely available. See suggestions below.

Employers were already trolling for digital skills in their hires before 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic and remote working accelerated the need. Workers must obtain these skills, not only to find a job, but to avoid becoming obsolete in their current roles.

The skills report looked at 15 million job postings from 2016 through 2021 to see which new skills were in demand, and how jobs were changing, with new skills appearing, and others disappearing.

“Jobs are more disrupted today than ever before,” the report concluded, and the changes go far beyond technology fields.

“Social media is a good example of a skill growing in importance in many occupations,” the report said.

Another skill much in demand is data visualization, now needed by recruiters, tax specialists, and benefits managers.

Workers need more digital skills even in non-techy fields such as marketing, public relations, human resources and sales.

An administrator will need to create Facebook posts while sales agents in insurance and financial services must be fluent in customer relationship management (CRM) software such as Salesforce.

And a marketing associate needs digital marketing skills along with the ability to use such programs as Adobe Creative Cloud for graphic design.

Techy folks aren't spared from the disruption. Indeed, they're at the center of it, and need such soft skills as the ability to communicate, collaborate, and solve problems, job ads show.

Job sectors changing faster than others include finance, media design, business management and operations, HR, and information technology.

The most disrupted skill sets are those of data engineers, industrial organizational psychologists, chief information officers and IT directors, the report found. Recruiting managers and technical writers are next.

If you're a cook, a musician, or a mystery shopper, don't sweat it. These roles have the least disrupted skill sets.

Sigelman says front-line workers need to think about their skill building as if they were "first-step managers," focusing on written communication, collaboration, customer service, planning, and project management to move up.

Another tip: Nurses, IT roles, and construction jobs all now need project managements skills, Sigelman said, calling this training "a powerful key to greater mobility."

Community colleges remain a solid choice for skills training, he added, citing their accessibility, clear mission, and low cost.

The view from ZipRecruiter

In its Class of 2022 Job Market Outlook for Grads study, ZipRecruiter concurs with much of this analysis, saying that with so many jobs and a shortage of workers, employers are widening recruitment nets, lowering requirements, and investing in more on-the-job training.

Signing bonuses, once given to just 4% of U.S. workers, have now become ubiquitous while many more jobs offer student loan repayment.

ZipRecruiter says communication was the most requested skill in its job listings. Other big ones were time management, analytical thinking, and project management. Top tech skills: ease with CRM software, recruiting and software development, the study said.

And it's no surprise that most job seekers across all age groups prefer remote work.

Above all, if you "realize you missed out on some class you should have taken in college, don't despair," said Renata Dionello, ZipRecruiter's chief people officer, in a statement. "Find an inexpensive, engaging, self-paced online course, and ace it. Or watch a YouTube tutorial series. Then put it on your resume. Employers like self-starters who are not afraid to learn new things."

Training opportunities

There are many free traditional and non-traditional ways to gain skills, ranging from volunteering on a nonprofit board to taking a LinkedIn course or enrolling in Google training.

A big source of free training is from states that offer workforce training programs through local boards.

In Pennsylvania, there are 22 Local Workforce Development Boards offering free classes. Under the SkillUp PA program, you can take Microsoft Office, Quickbooks, and IT courses, and get industry-recognized credentials for cybersecurity, project management, HR, and more.

You can also find job openings under the PA Career link. A search for digital marketing turned up 695 jobs in Philadelphia in the last 30 days with such firms as Deloitte, Comcast, PWC, VMware and Microsoft.

New Jersey runs 17 Workforce Development Boards, and counties offer the SkillUp training program, too. You can also find apprenticeships, get resume writing and LinkedIn profile tips, or, if you're age 55+, you can find support to re-enter the workforce.

LinkedIn learning certificates are not accredited, but can tell hiring managers that you are interested in learning. Registering on LinkedIn.com, you can start with a free month, then pay \$39.99 a month.

Offerings include Social Media course for Graphic Designers (6 hours, 18 minutes), Inclusive and Accessible Product Design (60 minutes), and Building an Integrated Online Marketing Plan (2 hours, 6 minutes).

Google also offers a variety of training courses, including a handful in Spanish, plus free virtual workshops on coding and other skills.

You can also pursue Google IT certificates through Coursera, a global online learning platform: Some are free, some are \$39, and some financial aid is available.

Job seekers and workers can pay for a variety of courses, such as those offered at community colleges, including Camden County College's program for Certified Green Supply Chain Professional through the ed2go.com platform:

Computing Technology Industry Association, aka CompTIA, offers paid certificate programs in everything from cybersecurity to cloud and Web3.

Business teams can also pay for courses in Coursera, the online course provider.

Yet another option is 2U.com, which offers upskilling boot camps through partners such as Columbia University, Arcadia University, Rutgers and the University of Pennsylvania, among others. Based in Maryland, 2U is a cloud-based software-as-a-service platform that provides

schools with intensive, high-end certification courses, for online degree and non-degree programs.

Columbia University offers via [2U.com](https://www.2u.com) an 18-week, part-time [Digital Marketing Bootcamp](#) for \$8,495. The program is all virtual, nine hours of classes over three nights a week plus additional six or so work hours a week, learning marketing fundamentals, strategy, how to run campaigns, social media paid and organic on social channels including TikTok, and SEO.

Are paid courses more valuable than free? It's hard to quantify. ZipRecruiter's labor economist, Julia Pollak, said community college course completion is mentioned in just over 100,000 job postings, LinkedIn certifications in 31,661, CompTIA certifications in 12,494, and [2U.com](https://www.2u.com) courses in 32. But that does not necessarily indicate that one is more valuable than the other, she said.

The good news is that there are more than 33% more jobs available for the class of 2022 than there were for the class of 2021, according to the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#),

In the best job market in 40 years, skills-based hiring has risen, expanding the talent pool at a crucial time — allowing applicants without a college degree to compete for jobs.

But everyone needs training. “Right-brained people now need left-brained skills. Left-brained people —technical jobs — need to have business skills and other foundational skills in order to relate their findings to solve key business problems, Sigelman said. “For workers, you can't count on your experience alone to keep you safe.”

Christine M. Johnson-Hall is a former Inquirer correspondent who worked for the Today's Spirit newspaper, United Press International, the Morning Call newspaper, and the Vanguard Group before retiring after 22 years in 2020 to launch CJH Communications.

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