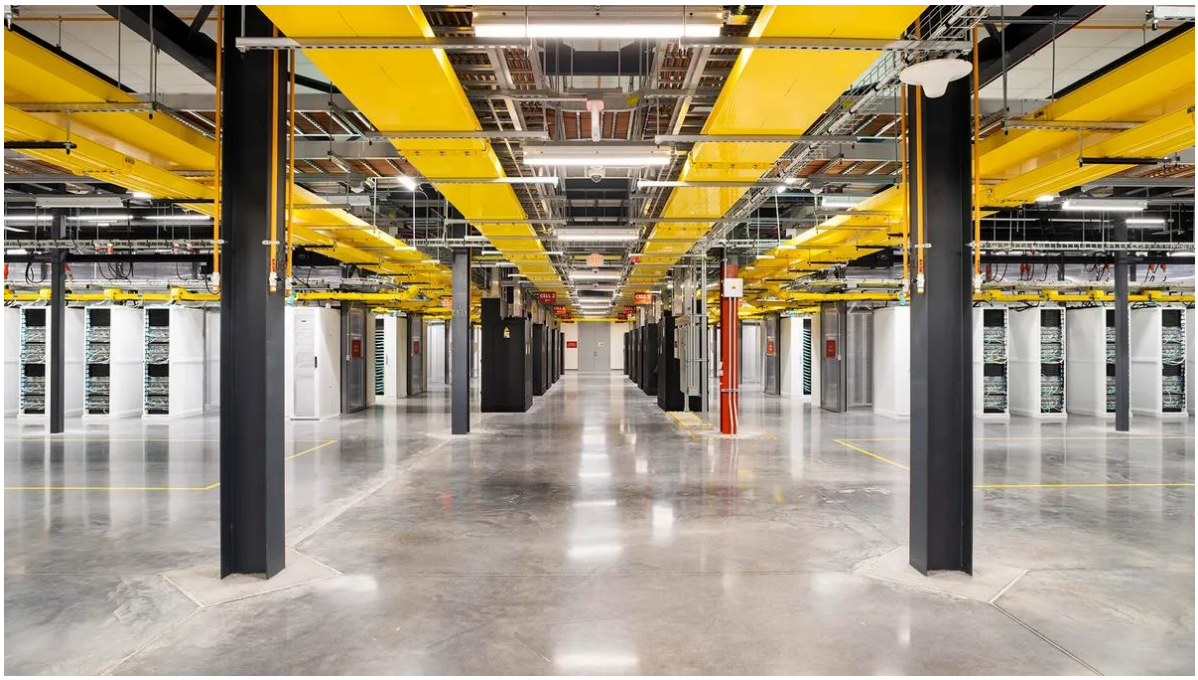
Employee Skill Growth is Too Slow — And it May Drive Some Managers to Quit, Survey Says

HR Dive | Kathryn Moody | June 17, 2024

The tech skills gap has troubled employers for years, a problem that the emergence of AI has only worsened.



The interior of a Microsoft Azure cloud data center in Iowa. Almost two-thirds of respondents to a SoftwareOne survey said their workloads have increased because of the lack of cloud or digital skills. Permission granted by Microsoft

Dive Brief:

IT managers are concerned that employee skill growth will not match the digital transformation's "rapid rate of innovation," according to a June 13 report from SoftwareOne, a global cloud platform.

Nearly two-thirds of the 500 IT decision-makers surveyed said their workforces have inadequate skills to leverage AI, and 41% said they struggle to find AI-skilled workers.

This broad skills shortage may be worsening workloads, the survey posits; 62% of respondents said their workloads have increased because of the lack of cloud or digital skills, and nearly a quarter of those surveyed said they are contemplating quitting because of it.



Dive Insight:

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Employers have said in various surveys they are concerned they cannot train workers quickly enough to keep up with tech developments even just in the next three years. But AI is far from the only culprit. Cloud (mentioned by SoftwareOne), cybersecurity skills and software development make up the skills with the worst skills gaps, a Pluralsight report said in April, while AI and machine learning were far lower in priority to address.

This skills gap is also costing employers huge amounts of money. According to IDC market research, tech talent shortages could cause upwards of $5.5 trillion in losses by 2026, prompted by product delays, the inability to compete and the loss of business.

AI is but one part of that skills problem, but it has pressed the urgency of the issue, other reports have shown.

"Rapid advancements in AI and generative AI offer exciting prospects for companies worldwide, but organizations are sitting on a ticking talent time bomb if they don't upskill and retrain their workforces now to fulfill the potential of AI," Brian Duffy, CEO at SoftwareOne, said in a statement.