Pearson

2026 Value of IT Certification Employer Report

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Contents

This report shows what's possible when certification is **a strategic priority.**

Foreword

Organizations today are making some of the largest technology investments in their history. These investments are reshaping how work gets done and how value is created. The expectations are significant. Faster growth. Higher productivity. Stronger competitive advantage. Yet across industries, a consistent challenge emerges.

Technology is advancing at speed, but workforce capability does not automatically advance with it. Companies are modernizing systems and deploying powerful tools, but the return on investment depends on whether people have the clarity and capability to use them effectively.

The issue is rarely ambition or effort; it is alignment—between strategy and execution, technology and talent, evolving role requirements, and workforce readiness.

This is why the partnership between the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) has become one of the most consequential leadership dynamics in the enterprise. Together, they form the “Power Couple” shaping modern work. HR brings expertise in skills, workforce design, and organizational health. IT brings architecture, security, and responsible deployment. When these disciplines are integrated from the outset, organizations can redesign work intentionally rather than reactively, building capability alongside systems.

The stakes are substantial. AI augmentation could add trillions to the global economy, but only if learning keeps pace with adoption. For employers and decision-makers, this creates a clear mandate. Workforce readiness must be defined, measured, and strengthened with the same rigor applied to technology investments.

Professional certification plays a practical, strategic role in that effort. It establishes a shared standard for verified capabilities as skills evolve. It gives organizations visibility into readiness across teams and geographies, and it provides employees with credible pathways to demonstrate progress as roles change.

The findings in this report reflect what we see in practice. Organizations that treat certification as a strategic investment report strengthened execution, greater discipline around skill readiness decisions, and close skills gaps more quickly, while building trust and operational resilience.

Technology investment and skills investment must advance together. When HR and IT align around shared outcomes, organizations are positioned to adopt innovation and translate it into lasting value.

Executive summary

As organizations navigate the dual pressures of accelerating technology and the need for verifiable expertise, investing in a certified workforce has become a vital strategy for competitive advantage and resilience. The *2026 Value of IT Certification Employer Report* moves beyond speculation to quantify that advantage, showing the clear return on investment certification delivers.

Drawing on insights from over 500 global IT and HR leaders, and building on the *2025 Value of IT Certification Candidate Report*, this research reveals how certification provides the proof of capability that clients, partners, and regulators demand, ultimately delivering trust. Trust that opens doors, strengthens partnerships, and provides the confidence to move with speed amid constant change.

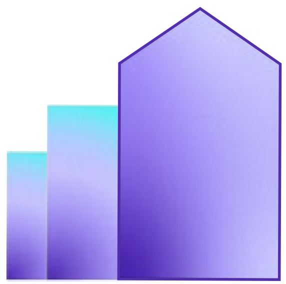
500+

IT and HR leaders surveyed across seven countries

Strategic investment creates competitive advantage

Organizations requiring certification outperform across key metrics. They report "fully equipped" IT workforces — those having the most up-to-date skills and knowledge needed to meet current role and technology requirements — at higher rates than organizations without certification requirements (**70%** vs. **48%**). They also experience clearly positive ROI more frequently and attract top talent more successfully.

The commitment to certification is widespread: the vast majority of organizations either mandate or actively prioritize certification programs, treating them as a workforce strategy rather than optional development.



The value of IT certification and a license to operate

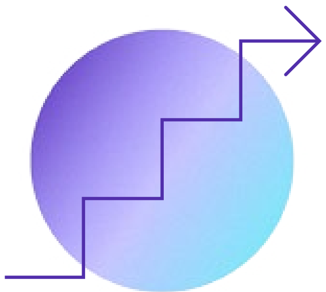
Organizations track certification returns systematically — **99%** measure ROI, and **93%** report positive results. The financial returns are substantial, with estimated per-employee value averaging approximately **$17,500** annually and reaching even higher levels when organizations achieve fully equipped workforces.

Beyond financial returns, certification determines which organizations can bid on contracts, meet regulatory requirements, and demonstrate compliance. For regulated industries and government work, credentials function as a "license to operate."

Addressing skills gaps and future readiness

Nearly half of organizations report skills gaps in their IT workforce, concentrated in AI and machine learning, cybersecurity, and cloud computing. Organizations primarily address these gaps through upskilling their existing workforce, with certification as the dominant investment — **78%** of organizations investing in upskilling choose certification programs.

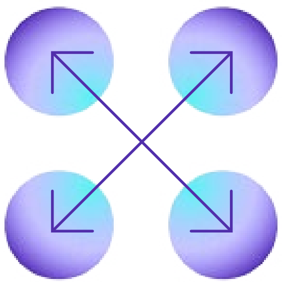
The perceived importance of certification is rising sharply. Nearly 9 in 10 leaders (**88%**) expect certifications will matter more to their organization in 3–5 years. As AI transforms work, certification validates both technical capabilities and the critical thinking and problem-solving skills that AI cannot replicate.



How organizations use certification

Organizations apply certification across multiple strategic purposes — from qualifying for specific projects and client engagements to assessing technical proficiency and establishing hiring and promotion criteria. Many build tiered certification frameworks into career development, moving from foundational certifications for new hires to advanced credentials for senior staff.

The returns scale with organizational size, with larger organizations reporting higher per-employee value. Organizations report that certification has a positive impact across operations, team performance, project completion, and technology adoption.



Key findings

1 2 3

Organizations report strong, measurable ROI from IT certification

They don't just believe certification has value; they measure it. Nearly all respondents (**99%**) measure ROI from their certification investments in some way: **55%** rely exclusively on formal metrics to track certification value, while **29%** combine formal metrics with informal assessment. The results justify that attention: the vast majority of organizations report positive returns from certification investments.

93%

of organizations report positive ROI from their certification investments

1

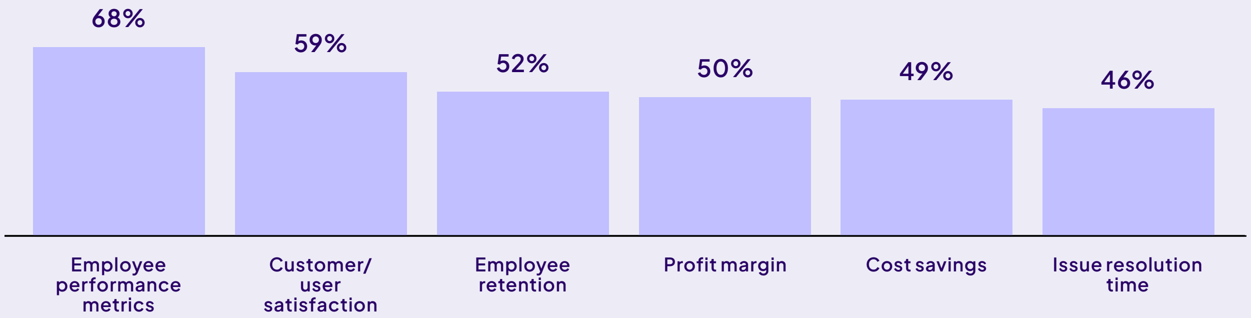
Organizations report strong, measurable ROI from IT certification

Positive ROI is nearly universal, with **93%** of employers surveyed reporting returns — more than half (**53%**) clearly positive, another **40%** generally positive.

Organizations surveyed estimate that the average value per certified employee is **$17,646** annually. Organizations with fully equipped IT workforces see even higher returns at **$19,703**, and **18%** report **$30,000** or more in added value.

How do organizations measure this value? Employee performance (**68%**), customer satisfaction (**59%**), employee retention (**52%**), profit margin (**50%**), and cost savings (**49%**) lead the list, with organizations also tracking issue resolution time (**46%**), internal promotions (**43%**), and system uptime (**35%**). Organizations take a comprehensive approach to understanding the returns on their certification investments.

Companies use a mix of employee metrics, customer feedback, and financial metrics to measure ROI
What metrics does your organization use (either formally or informally) to measure the overall ROI of employees achieving IT certifications?



$17,646

average value added per certified employee annually

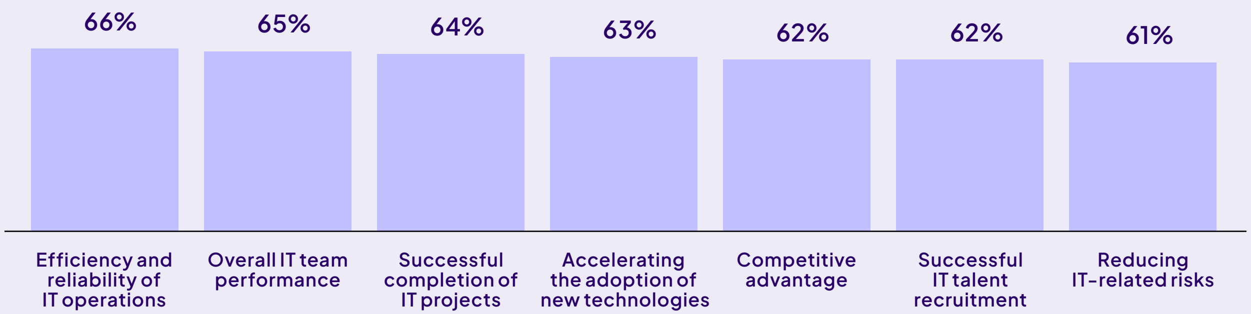
* Unless noted, all financial figures in this report relate to US dollars

1

Organizations report strong, measurable ROI from IT certification

Certification positively contributes to all areas of the business, but especially the efficiency and performance of IT teams

To what extent do you believe your organization's investment in and support for IT certification contributes to the following business outcomes?



Certification contributes to operations, project completion, and improves competitive advantage

Organizations see the positive impact of certification across multiple dimensions: efficiency and reliability of IT operations (**66%**), overall IT team performance (**65%**), and successful completion of IT projects (**64%**). It also accelerates technology adoption (**63%**), builds competitive advantage (**62%**), helps recruit talent (**62%**), reduces IT-related risks (**61%**), closes critical skills gaps (**59%**), improves employee retention (**59%**), and contributes to organizational profitability (**57%**).

The value shows up in tangible ways. Organizations report reduced consulting costs and direct revenue from winning contracts. For one organization, when a government contract required Cyber Essentials certification, a certified team made the difference between winning and being disqualified.

Certification builds trust with multiple stakeholders

At its core, certification nurtures trust. For hiring managers, it verifies candidate skills. For employees, it validates career progress. For regulators and clients, it demonstrates compliance. When organizations need absolute confidence in their partners, trust becomes the deciding factor.

> "ROI shouldn't only be measured in financial terms. It includes everything that's streamlined. It's productivity, time savings, and user experience. All of that adds up to real ROI and operational efficiency."

Kunwar Chohan
Chief Technology Officer at MKC Group

Key findings

1 2 3

Requiring certification creates measurable competitive advantages

The commitment to certification manifests in two ways: **40%** of organizations formally require IT certification for certain job roles or advancement, while another **52%** strongly encourage and actively fund certification as a key part of IT staff development. Combined, **92%** of organizations either require or strongly prioritize certification programs, treating them as fundamental to workforce strategy rather than optional professional development.

70%

of organizations that require certification report competitive advantage

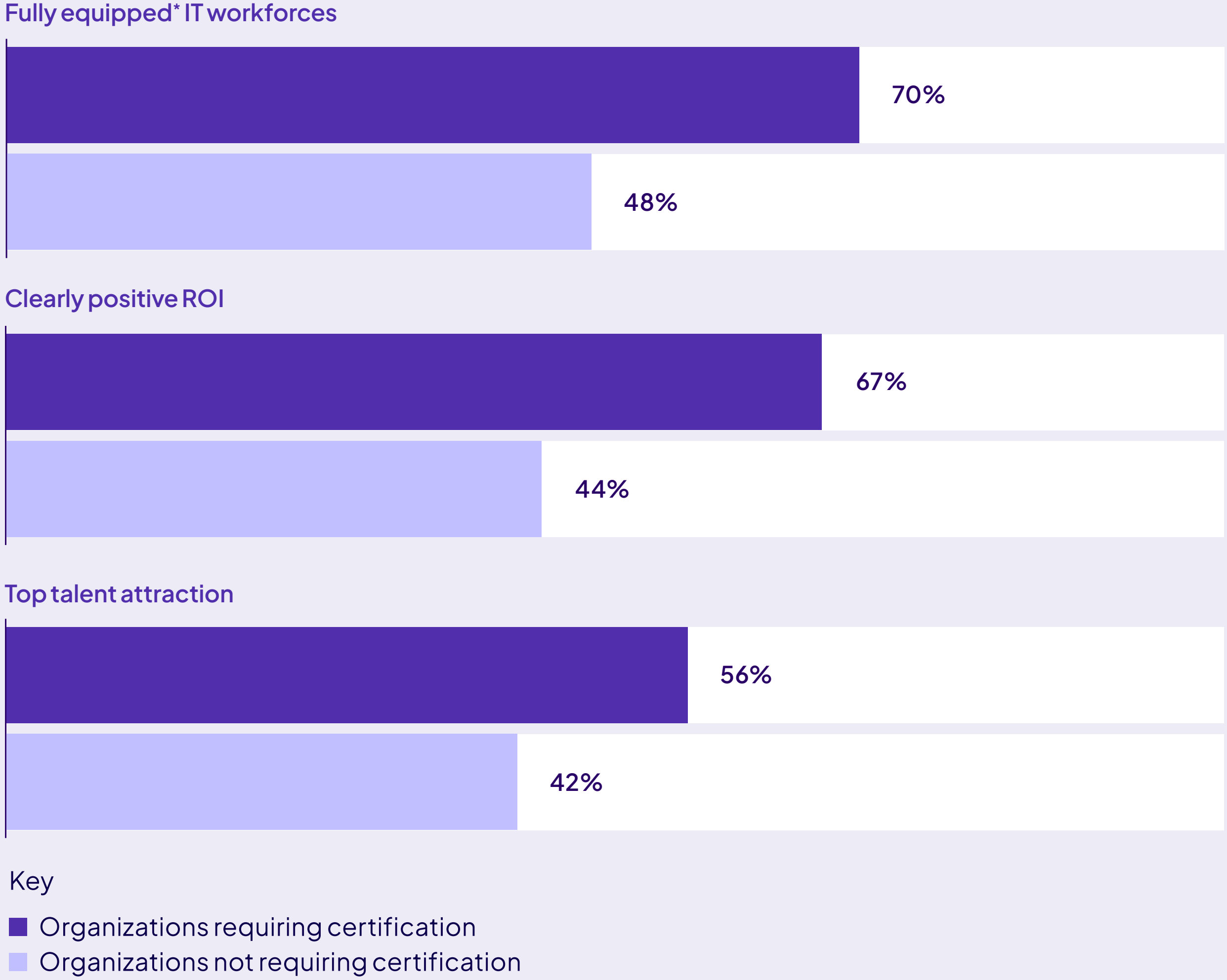
(vs. 57% without requirements)

2 Requiring certification creates measurable competitive advantages

Organizations that require certification create what Pearson's "Lost in Transition" research calls "clear skilling pathways" — transparent, industry-recognized routes to acquire capabilities as roles evolve. Certification enables teams to develop and demonstrate advancements in months, helping to keep pace with the advancement in technology. This strategic approach creates measurable competitive advantages, with organizations that mandate IT certifications consistently outperforming those that don't.

Organizations with certification requirements also report stronger outcomes in project completion (**69%** vs. **60%**), competitive advantage (**70%** vs. **57%**), and ability to close critical skills gaps (**65%** vs. **56%**).

Comparing outcomes between organizations with and without certification requirements



* Those having the most up-to-date skills and knowledge needed to meet current role and technology requirements

Key findings

1 2 3

Organizations invest in certification to close critical skills gaps

The skills gap is real, and organizations know it. Nearly half of organizations (**43%**) report skills gaps in their IT workforce — and among those reporting gaps, **60%** say these gaps have had a moderate to very significant impact on their business in the past 12 months. Employers prioritize upskilling — outpacing hiring and AI solutions — to close skills gaps, with **78%** choosing professional certification as the leading upskilling investment.

83%

plan to close skills gaps through their existing workforce

3

Organizations invest in certification to close critical skills gaps

The most pronounced gaps are in AI and machine learning (**76%**), cybersecurity (**59%**), cloud computing (**52%**), data science (**36%**), IT project management (**30%**), and software development (**29%**) — areas where certification provides trusted verification of expertise.

Upskilling is the dominant strategy, with **83%** planning to address skills gaps through their existing workforce. Of those investing in upskilling, **78%** specifically plan to invest in certification programs — making it the number one upskilling investment.

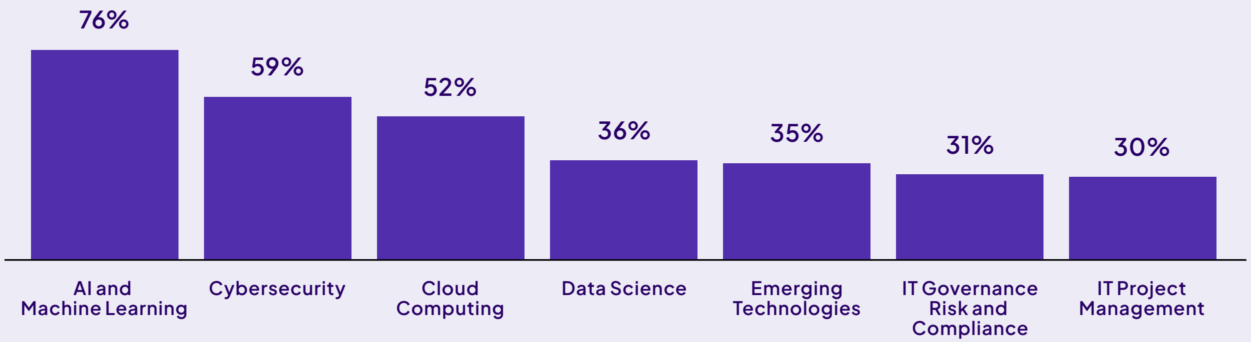
Looking ahead, nearly 9 in 10 leaders (**88%**) believe IT certifications will be more important to their organization in 3–5 years than they are today — with **62%** saying they will be "much more" important.

In fact, the report found that upskilling outpaces all other methods of filling the skill gaps, including implementing AI solutions (**65%**), hiring to fill skill gaps (**55%**), increasing automation (**41%**), and contracting 3rd party vendors (**37%**).

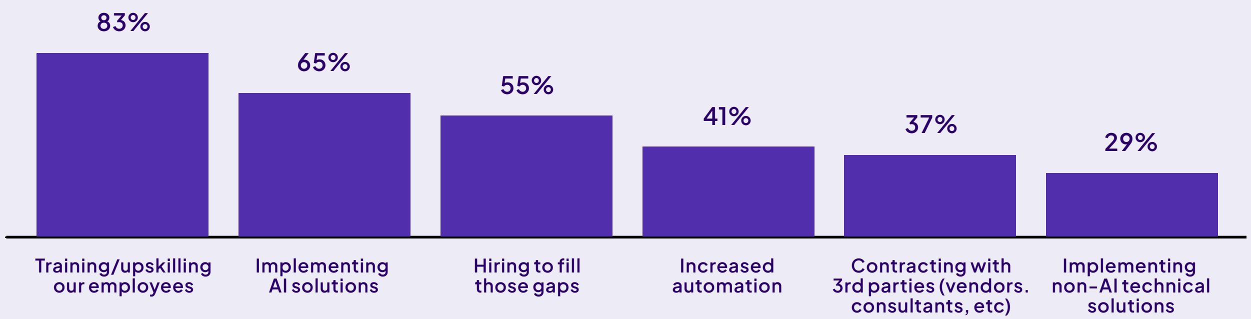
78%

turn to certification as part of the 83% 'training/upskilling our employees'

Skills gaps in IT workforces



How organizations plan to address skills gaps going forward



3 Organizations invest in certification to close critical skills gaps

AI reshapes the certification landscape

As AI accelerates technological change, certification assumes new significance. Pearson's "Mind the Learning Gap" research reveals that pairing continual learning and skill development with AI could add **$4.8-6.6 trillion** to the U.S. economy by 2034 — but only if learning keeps pace with adoption. Organizations investing billions in AI infrastructure see few productivity gains because technology alone isn't enough. Pearson's "Lost in Transition" report found that the emergence of AI will spur demand for new technical skills as well as complementary human skills, such as critical thinking, judgment, empathy, adaptability, and problem-solving.

Certification provides the industry-recognized validation organizations need to diagnose skill gaps, evaluate progress toward AI-augmented work, and prioritize learning investments. When organizations embed certification into continuous learning infrastructures, they not only reinforce levels of trust in their capabilities but also create the capability foundation required to unlock AI's productivity promise.

The employee perspective reinforces this trend. The 2025 Value of IT Certification Candidate Report found that **84%** of professionals say they're likely to pursue additional certifications in the next 12 months. Interest in AI certification has doubled since 2022, jumping from **17%** to **35%**.

Organizations and employees alike see certification as the pathway to stay current, competitive, and ready for what comes next.

> "My certifications helped me to get my first job in the IT field. My manager motivated me to earn more certifications in cloud technologies as it would help them get new clients. It was a win-win situation for me and my company."

Certified Operator Certification Holder
USA

84%

of professionals say they're likely to pursue additional certifications in the next 12 months

Analysis

Why certification matters right now

What’s driving certification investments? The answer comes down to trust and proof. As IT work becomes more specialized, certification provides a common language for what ”qualified” actually means.

Analysis

A license to operate

For many organizations, certification isn't optional. Government agencies, banking, financial services, and other regulated industries require certified IT departments. Without the right certifications, organizations can't bid on certain contracts, meet regulatory requirements, or demonstrate compliance.

In this environment, demonstrable trust has become a competitive differentiator. Boards, clients, and regulators all want the same thing: assurance that IT teams know what they're doing. When stakes are this high — with cybercrime costs projected at trillions globally — certification delivers that assurance through verified, industry-recognized standards.

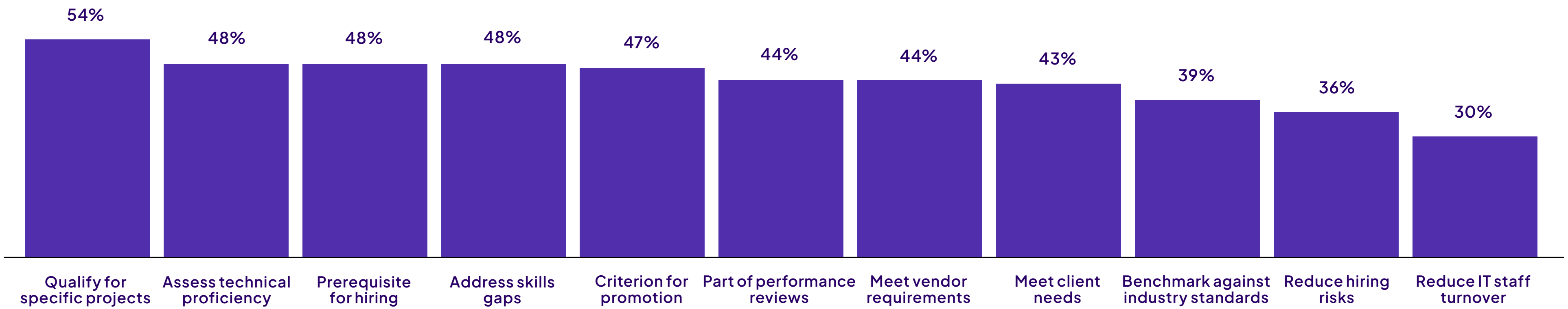
The skills gap costs are equally staggering: Pearson's "Lost in Transition" research report series found that gaps at key career transitions — from education to employment, or when workers are unemployed — cost the U.S. **$1.1 trillion** annually, the UK **£96 billion**, Australia **AUS$104 billion**, Saudi Arabia **SR196 billion**, and Canada **C$146 billion**.

Certifications serve multiple strategic purposes: **54%** of organizations use them to qualify for specific projects, **48%** to assess technical proficiency, **48%** as a hiring prerequisite, **48%** to address skills gaps, **47%** as criterion for promotion, **44%** as part of performance reviews, and **44%** to meet vendor requirements.

Some leaders shared examples with us that show the impact: An organization with highly certified staff won cloud migration bids that competitors without certified teams were unable to pursue. A team with Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) certification successfully navigated General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance audits. In each case, certification made a difference.

Beyond opening doors, certification strengthens what happens inside them.

How organizations are using certifications



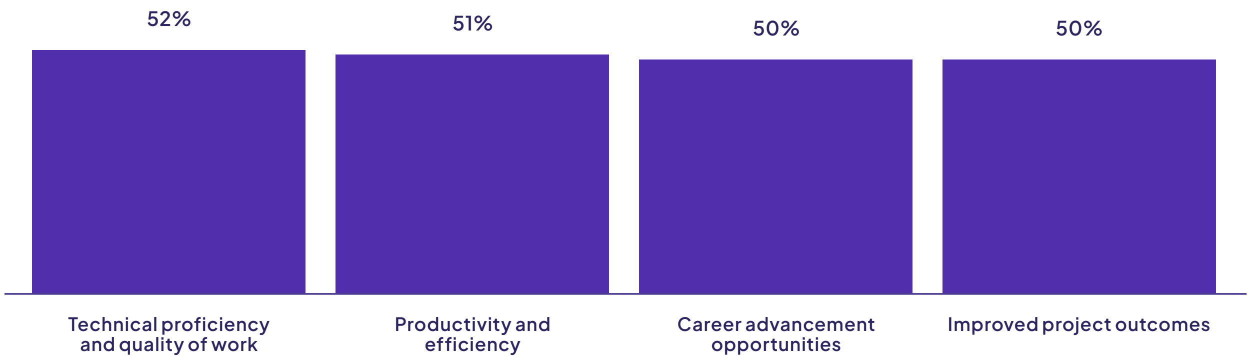
Certification signals investment and opens career paths

When organizations support certification, employees feel valued. They see a path forward.

Employers report that certification has a very significant impact on technical proficiency and work quality (**52%**), productivity and efficiency (**51%**), career advancement opportunities (**50%**), improved project outcomes (**50%**), adaptability and innovation (**46%**), confidence in their role and morale (**45%**), likelihood of receiving salary increases (**43%**), and ability to mentor others (**40%**).

Beyond the measurable outcomes, certification serves a motivational purpose. It provides clear milestones. It signals that the organization invests in people's growth. It creates tangible career progression pathways that support both engagement and retention.

Organizations report positive job-related outcomes from certification



> End of the day, it's about the people. You want to make sure that people feel that we're investing in them... it creates retention. Everything starts with the people. Teams are more engaged, they feel good about it, they understand the tech, it gives them confidence.

Atul Sethi
Senior Vice President, IT at Wissen Infotech

Certification shapes talent strategies

For hiring, certifications work like a filter. Certified candidates rise to the top of the applicant pool. There's higher confidence in the hire. Less risk that someone exaggerated their resume. As one CIO described it, certification functions as a "trusted verification marker".

Many organizations build tiered certification frameworks into career development — from foundational certifications for new hires to advanced credentials for senior staff. These frameworks integrate with performance reviews and promotion criteria, creating clear career ladders.

What employers see as business value, employees experience as career growth. Pearson's 2025 Value of IT Certification Candidate Report found that more than 70% of certified professionals report increased productivity, higher quality work, and better ability to mentor peers. **76%** saw increases in the ability to innovate and enhance work processes, **70%** experienced an increase in efficiency, and **32%** received salary increases after certification.

The future of certifications

As organizations use artificial intelligence to optimize efficiency across their operations, the significance of certification is evolving. The leaders we spoke to now expect certifications to function more like professional licenses — certain IT roles will increasingly require specific certifications in AI, cybersecurity, and cloud computing. Furthermore, to build new skills with speed and agility, organizations are adopting blended learning models that integrate formal certifications with hands-on training and mentorship.

Organizational investment is accelerating to match this imperative. Among organizations planning to upskill their workforce, **78%** specifically invest in certification programs. Employee data reinforces this acceleration: Pearson's 2025 Value of IT Certification Candidate Report showed that **71%** of professionals reported their employers increased IT training investments in 2024, up from **59%** in 2022.

Looking towards the future, certification now comprises a key component of the infrastructure for lifelong learning, enabling professionals to continuously update their expertise and organizations to stay competitive.

> Clearly they go to the top of the pile… there's a much higher level of confidence that you're going to have a good hire and you're going to have a good experience.

Gary Hegedus
Chief Information Officer & Managing Director at the Bank of New York Mellon

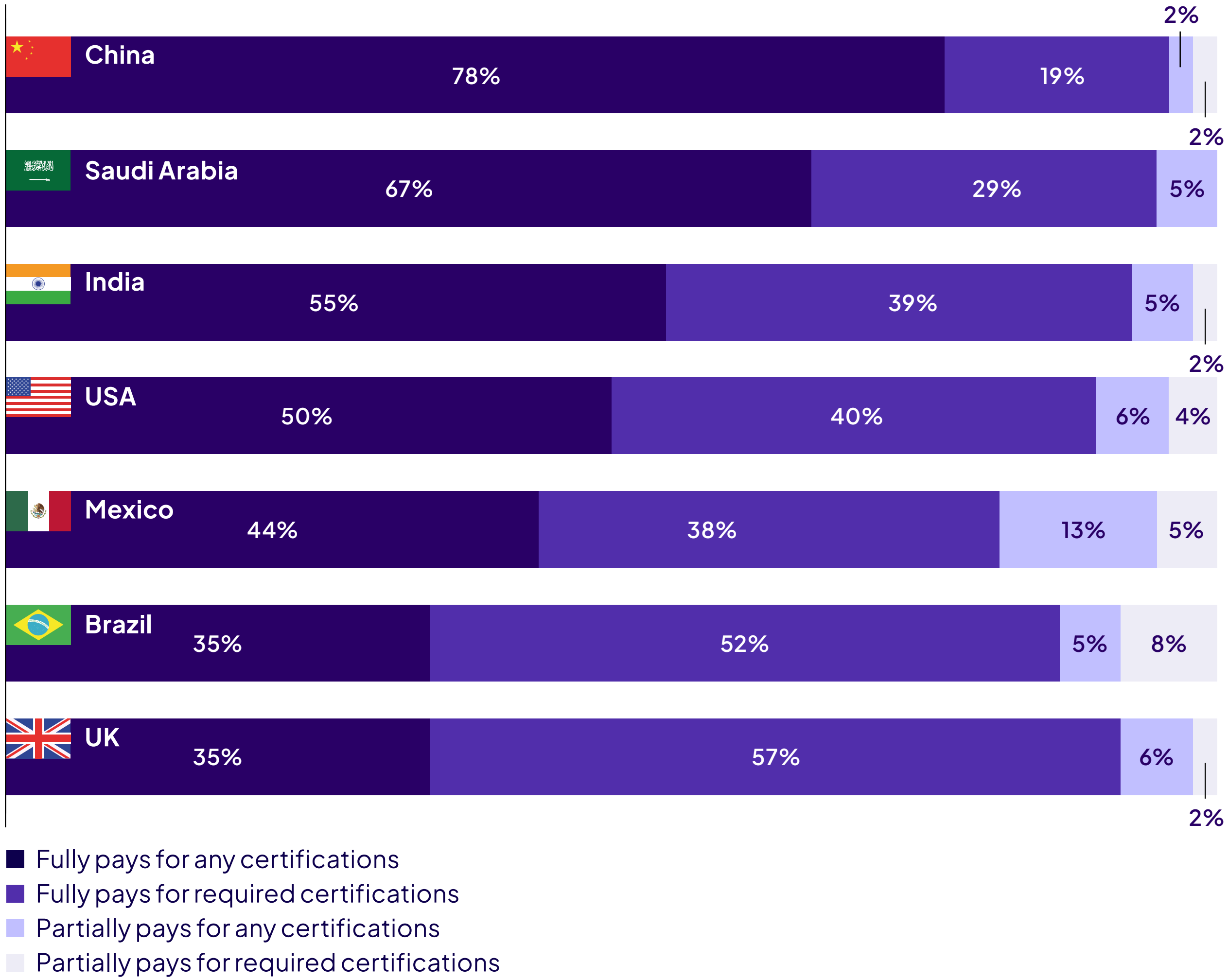
Organizational and global differences

Who invests the most

China and Saudi Arabia are the heaviest investors in IT certification for their employees, with most organizations fully paying for any certifications employees want to pursue. India and the US follow closely. The UK and Brazil also invest substantially, though primarily for certifications required for specific roles rather than any certification employees choose.

The financial commitment is substantial across regions: **71%** of organizations fully cover training costs for certification, **60%** cover exam fees, and **51%** cover exam preparation materials.

Organizational investment in IT certifications by country



Organizational differences

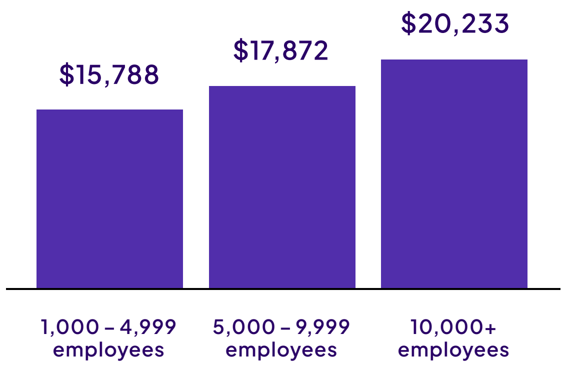
Investment patterns and confidence levels vary globally. Saudi Arabia, China, and Mexico report the highest added value per certified employee, while Indian, Brazilian, and Saudi organizations express the strongest optimism about certification's contribution to success. Saudi companies report the highest confidence in having fully equipped IT workforces, followed by India, the UK, and China.

Some global organizations build centers of excellence around regional strengths in technical expertise. For example, one organization concentrates technology work in India for its technical depth, security operations in Poland, and AI development in China.

Size and sophistication

The returns from certification scale with organizational size. Companies with 1,000–4,999 employees report average returns of **$15,788** per certified employee. That increases to **$17,872** for organizations with 5,000–9,999 employees, and **$20,233** for those with 10,000+ employees — demonstrating that as organizations build certification into their workforce strategy, the value compounds.

Average estimated added value per certified employee by company size



Conclusion

The IT and HR leaders we spoke to for this report described certification as part of how their organizations make decisions about talent, technology, and readiness. It is built into hiring, development, and how teams prepare for change.

The rewards of those decisions are measurable. Organizations that make certification a strategic priority consistently see stronger results: more equipped workforces, better ROI, and a greater ability to attract and retain talent. Leaders also described teams that became easier to staff, doors opening to work they previously couldn't pursue, and employees who were more engaged because learning was clearly tied to opportunity.

What these organizations share is an approach that weaves certification into how they operate. When technology shifts or client demands evolve, these organizations are better prepared because continuous learning is already part of how work gets done. That readiness becomes even more valuable as AI and automation reshape what work requires. Organizations that have built learning foundations can move faster and with greater confidence.

The organizations and the IT and HR professionals represented in this report show what's possible when certification becomes part of organizational strategy. Lifelong learning isn't optional anymore. It's how organizations stay competitive.

Country results

- Brazil
- People’s Republic of China
- India
- Mexico
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

Brazil

62

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

45% of business leaders in Brazil represent companies whose IT workforce is not fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

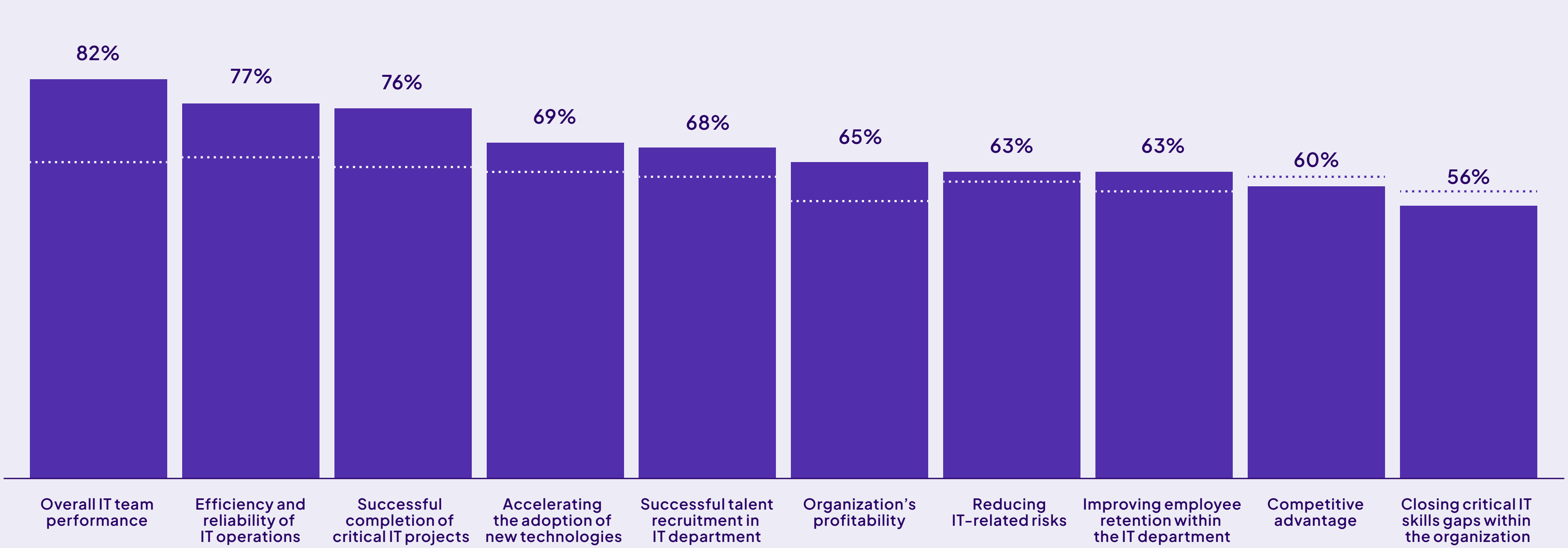
Skill gaps are most experienced in cybersecurity (**86%**) and AI and machine learning (**82%**). **75%** of companies train and upskill employees to address skill gaps.

Although it is more common for companies to fully pay only for required IT certifications, **35%** pay for certifications that are both required and desired by employees.

61% link certification with improved project outcomes and **60%** believe that certification increases opportunities for career advancement.

82% believe that their investments in IT certification have increased the overall performance of their IT teams.

How much Brazilian businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals

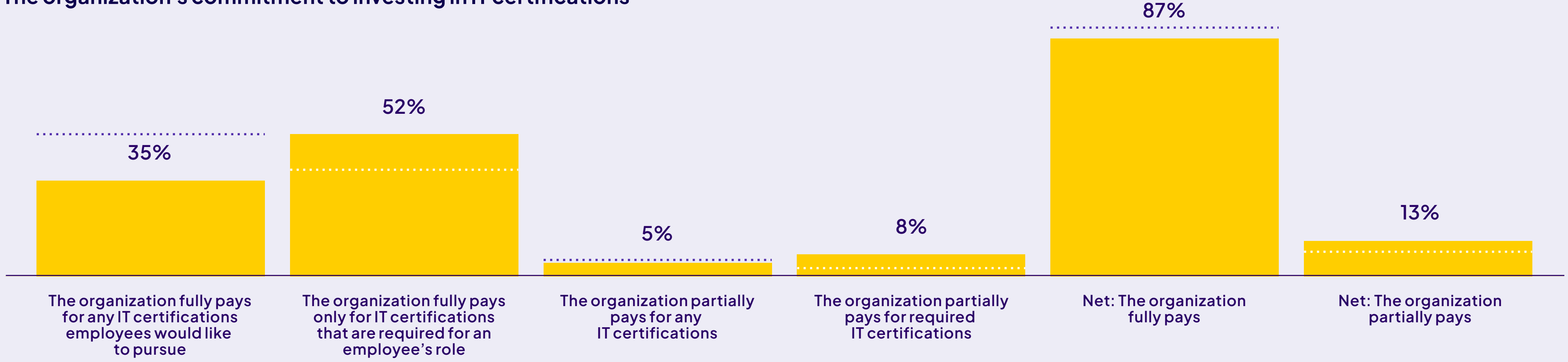


Country-level findings should be interpreted as directional due to small base sizes typical of B2B decision-maker research. Difference between countries may reflect directional signals rather than statistically reliable distinctions.

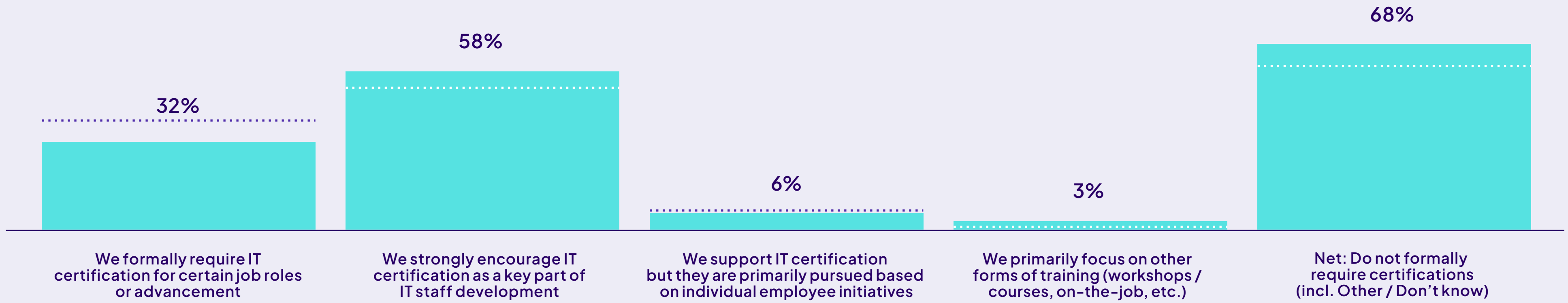
Brazil

···· Dotted line denotes global average

The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification



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Brazil

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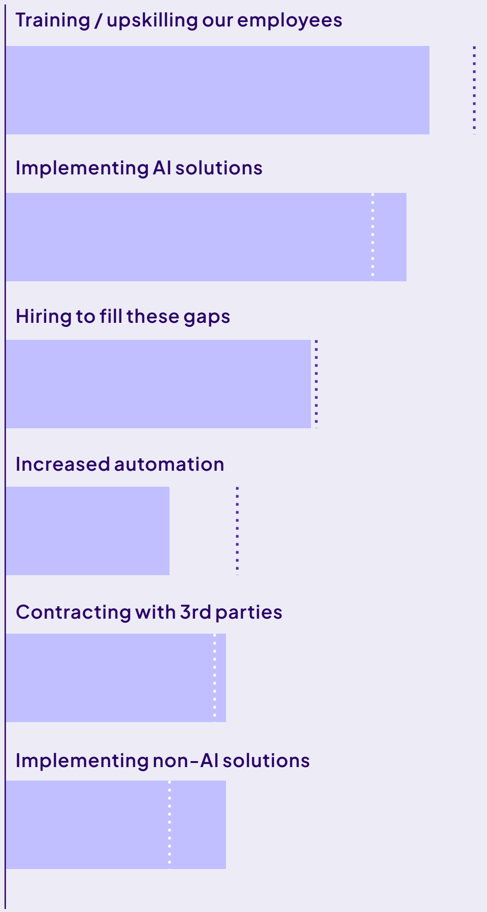
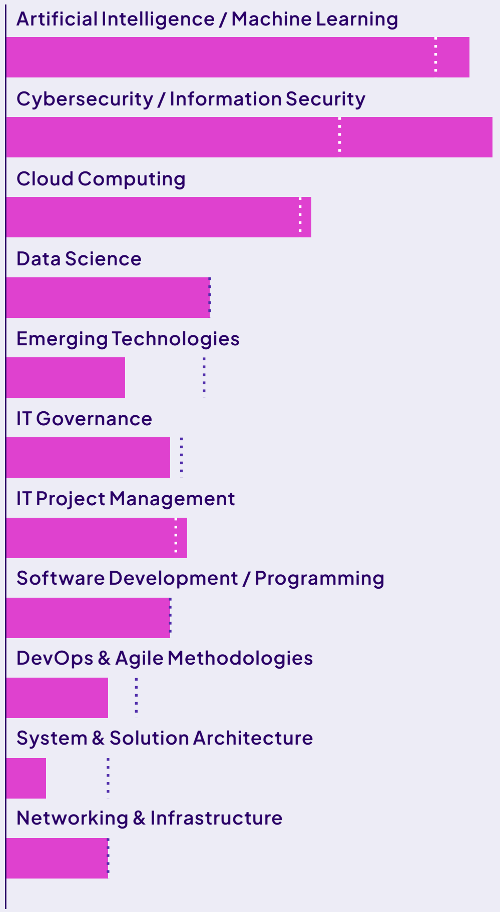
Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations



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China

64

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

42% of business leaders in China believe their IT workforce is not fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge and report the biggest skill gaps in cloud computing (**78%**) and AI and machine learning (**74%**).

81% address skill gaps by training and upskilling. The key motivators for certification are to assess the technical proficiency of candidates and staff and as a key criterion for promotion or career advancement.

78% of companies cover all certification costs for their employees, which is significantly higher than all other countries included in this research.

The most reported benefits observed from having a credentialed staff are operational efficiency (efficiency and reliability of IT operations) and profitability. **61%** also say that IT certification increases the efficiency and reliability of their IT operations.

How much Chinese businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals

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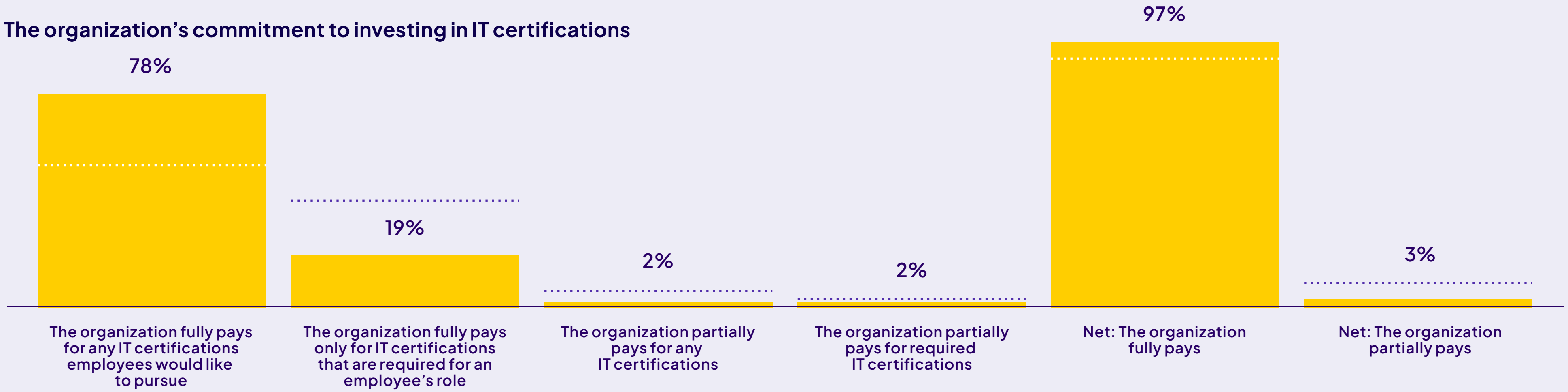
China

···· Dotted line denotes global average

The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification

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China

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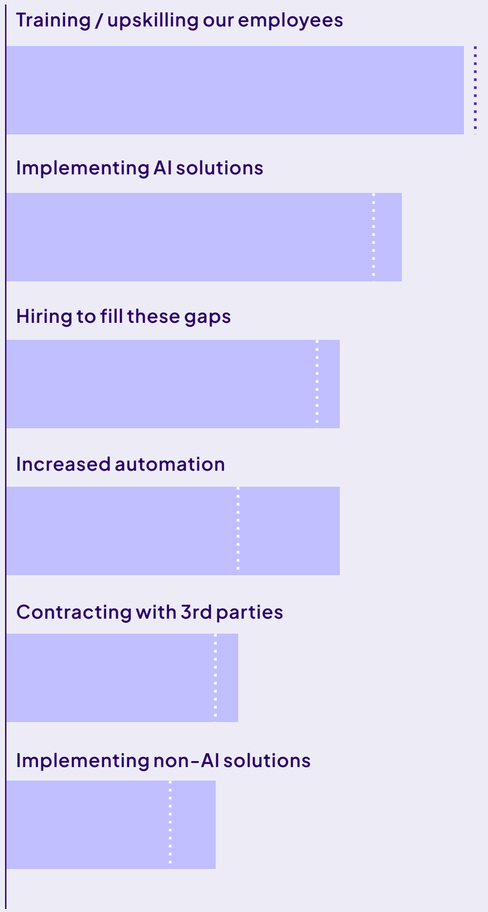
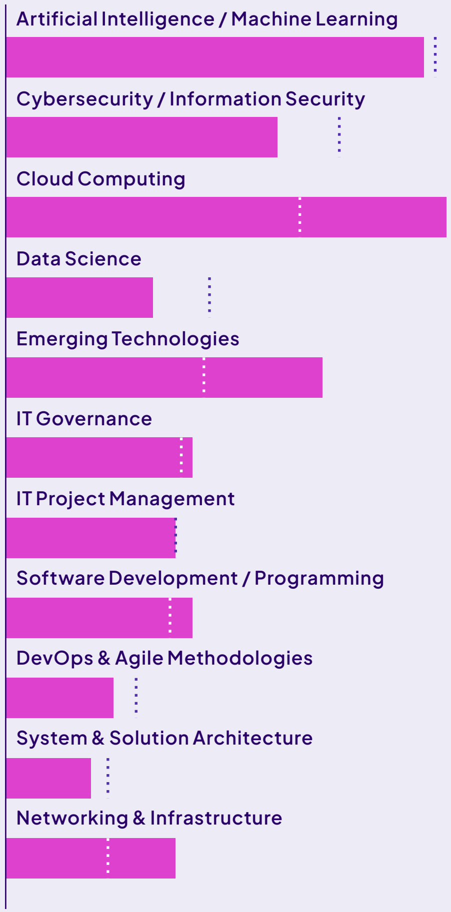
Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations



Country-level findings should be interpreted as directional due to small base sizes typical of B2B decision-maker research. Difference between countries may reflect directional signals rather than statistically reliable distinctions.

India

64

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

36% of business leaders in India do not believe their IT workforce is fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge, and **96%** see skill gaps in AI and machine learning.

Cybersecurity is the second-largest skills gap. **91%** of companies are training and upskilling their IT employees to address these skill gaps. **69%** say that certification is relied on to ensure they qualify for specific projects and client engagements.

55% of business leaders work in companies that fully pay for all IT certifications desired by and required for their staff.

Benefits of certification most often observed are increased productivity and efficiency (**63%**) and improved project outcomes (**61%**).

How much Indian businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals

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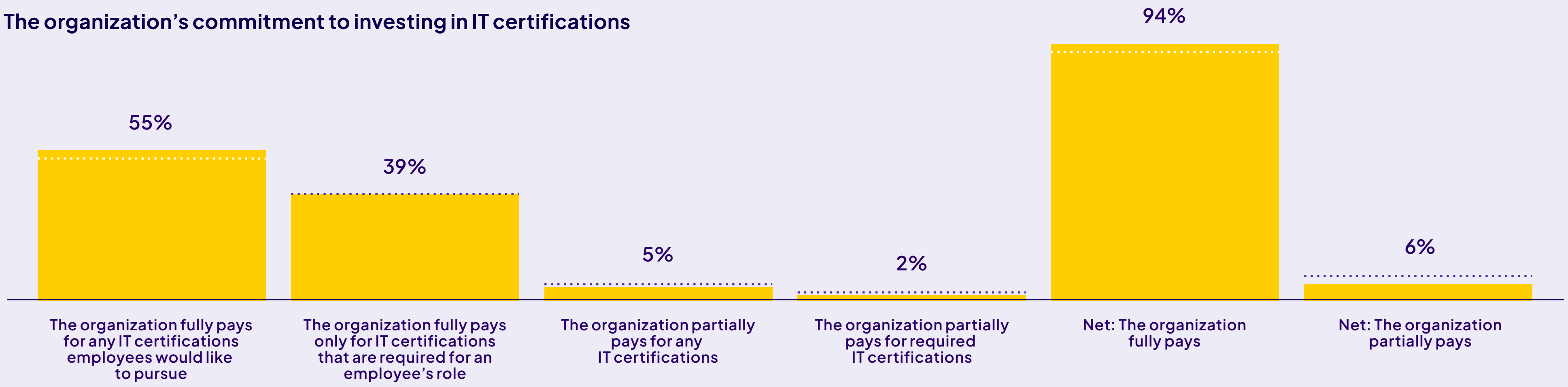
India

···· Dotted line denotes global average

The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification

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India

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Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

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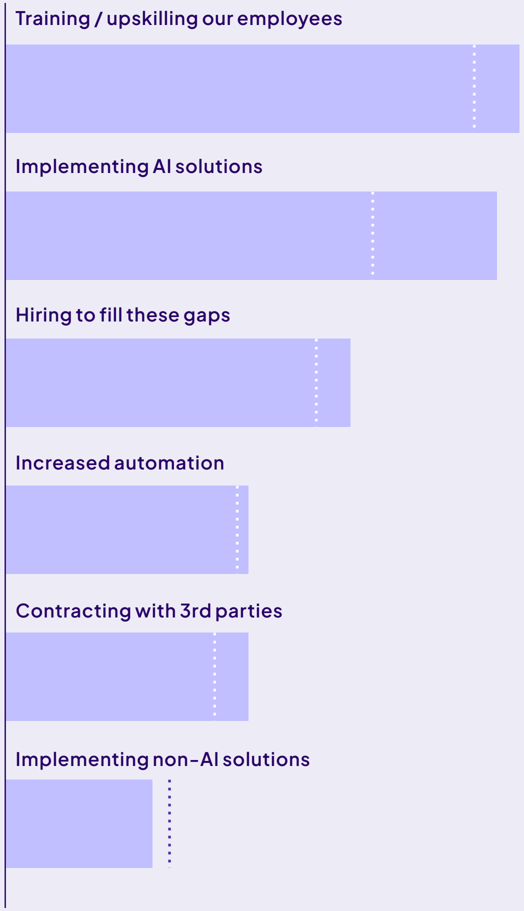


Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations

Country-level findings should be interpreted as directional due to small base sizes typical of B2B decision-maker research. Difference between countries may reflect directional signals rather than statistically reliable distinctions.

Mexico

52% of companies have less than fully equipped IT workforces with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

The biggest skill gap areas are cybersecurity (**64%**) and AI and machine learning (**55%**).

76% of companies represented rely on employee training and upskilling to address skill gaps. In Mexico, **49%** of companies believe IT certification reduces staff turnover.

44% of the companies represented fully pay for all IT certifications and report benefits such as increased productivity and efficiency (**57%**), improved project outcomes (**52%**), and greater efficiency and reliability of their IT operations (**71%**).

63

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

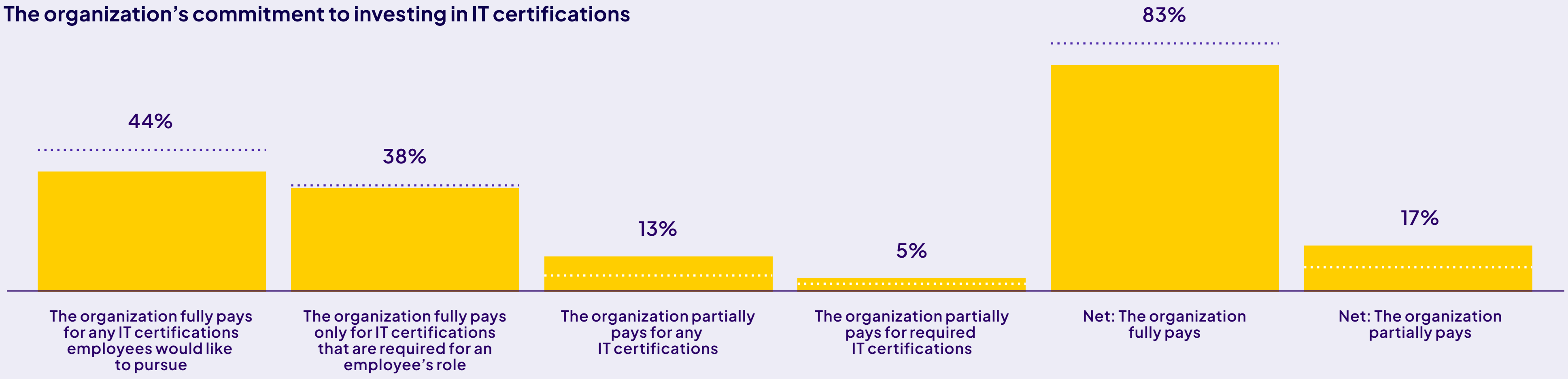
How much Mexican businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals

Country-level findings should be interpreted as directional due to small base sizes typical of B2B decision-maker research. Difference between countries may reflect directional signals rather than statistically reliable distinctions.

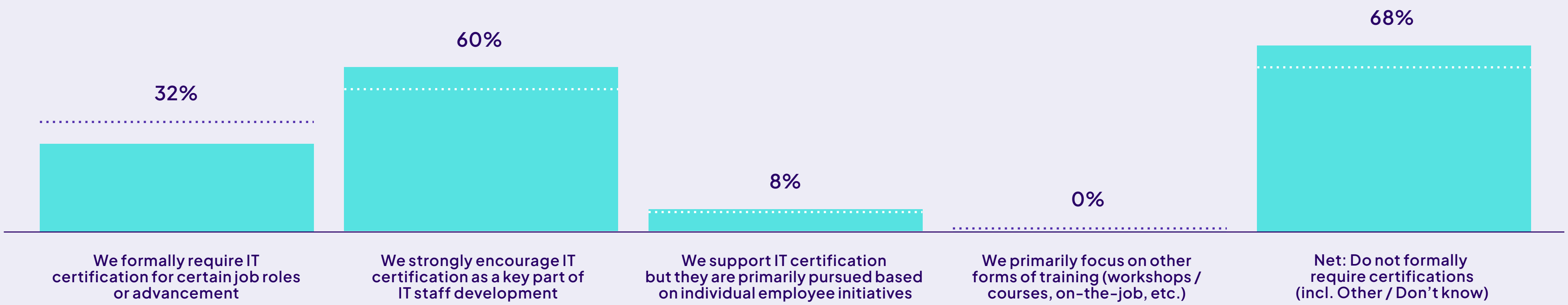
Mexico

Dotted line denotes global average

The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification



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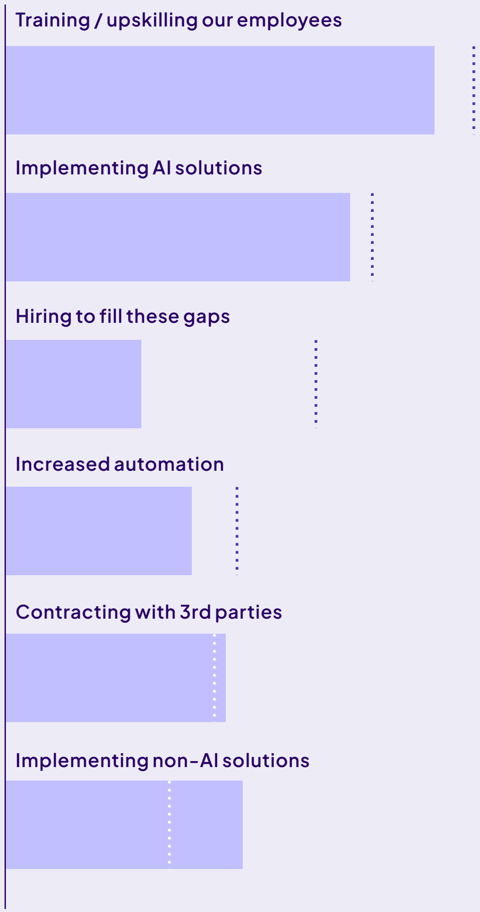
Mexico

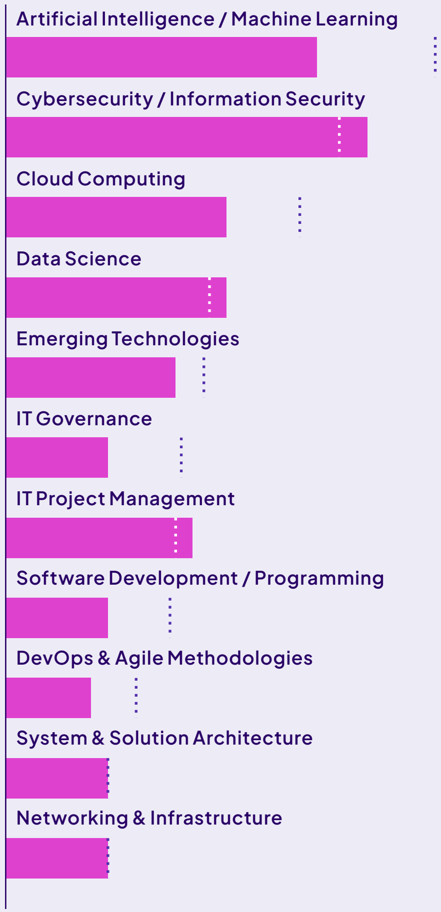
Dotted line denotes global average

Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations



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Saudi Arabia

63

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

30% of business leaders in Saudi Arabia believe their IT workforce is not fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

Their biggest skill gaps are in AI and machine learning (**53%**), as well as cybersecurity (**47%**). **84%** address skill gaps through employee training and upskilling.

More than half (**56%**) of business leaders view certification as a core component of individual development and as a key criterion for promotion or career development (**52%**).

67% of business leaders work in companies that fully pay for all IT certifications desired by and required for their staff.

73% report increases in technical proficiency and quality of work because of certification, and this is significantly higher than other countries.

How much Saudi Arabian businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals

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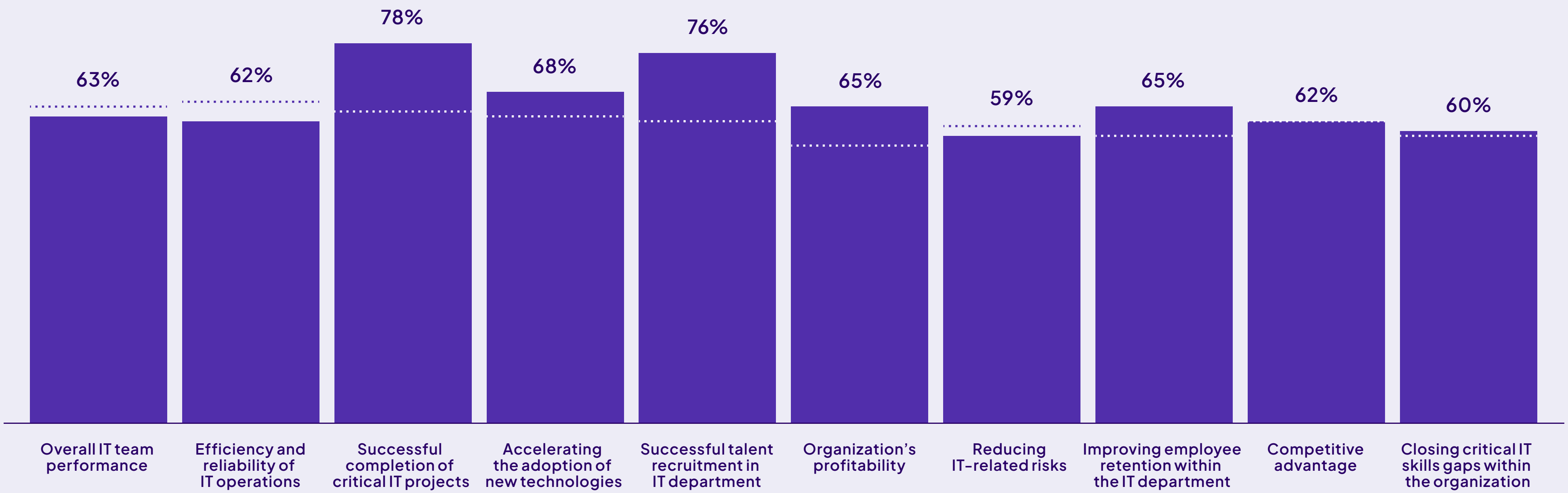

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Saudi Arabia

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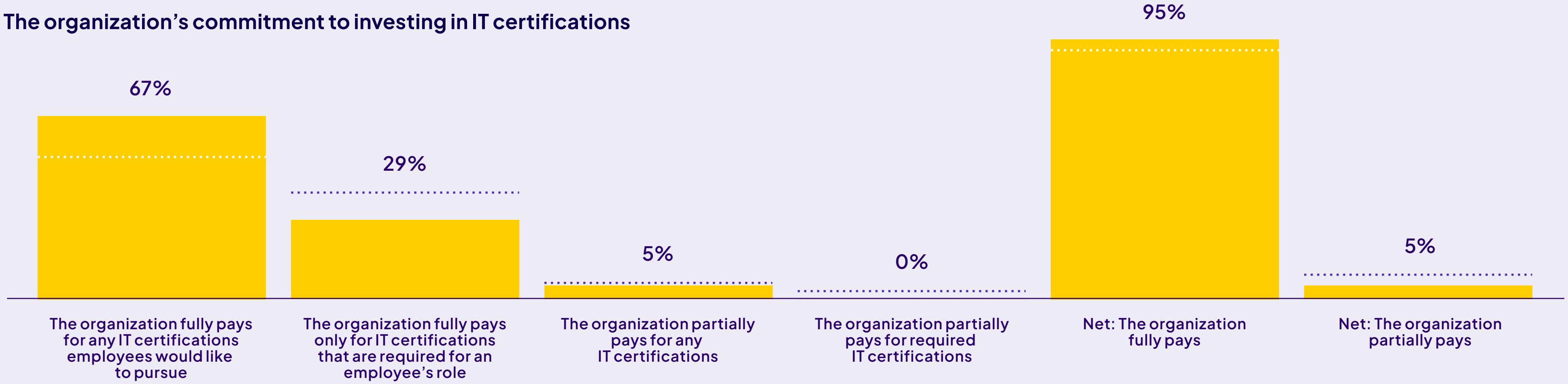
The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification

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Saudi Arabia

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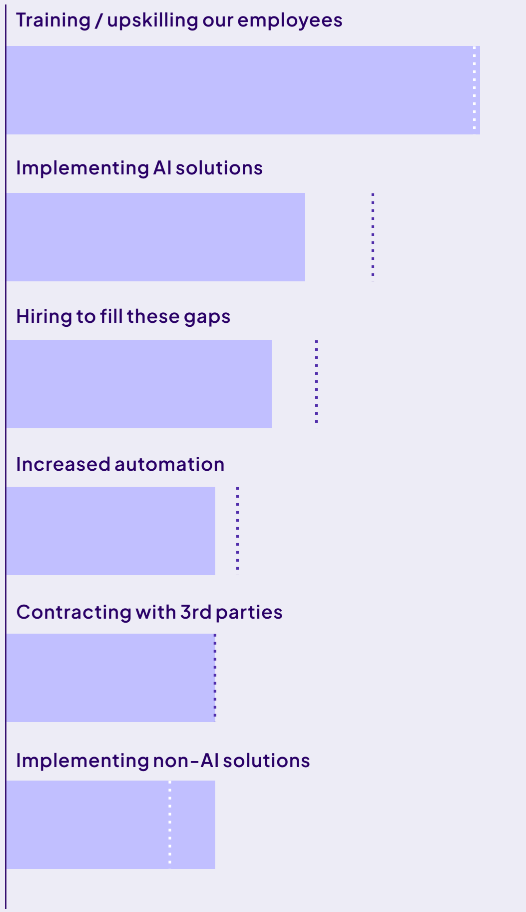
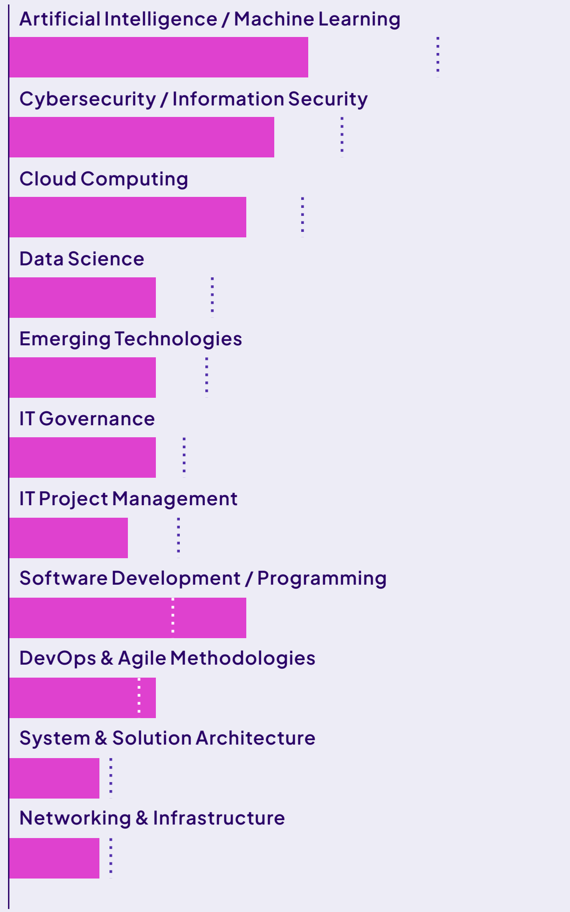
Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations



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United Kingdom

63

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

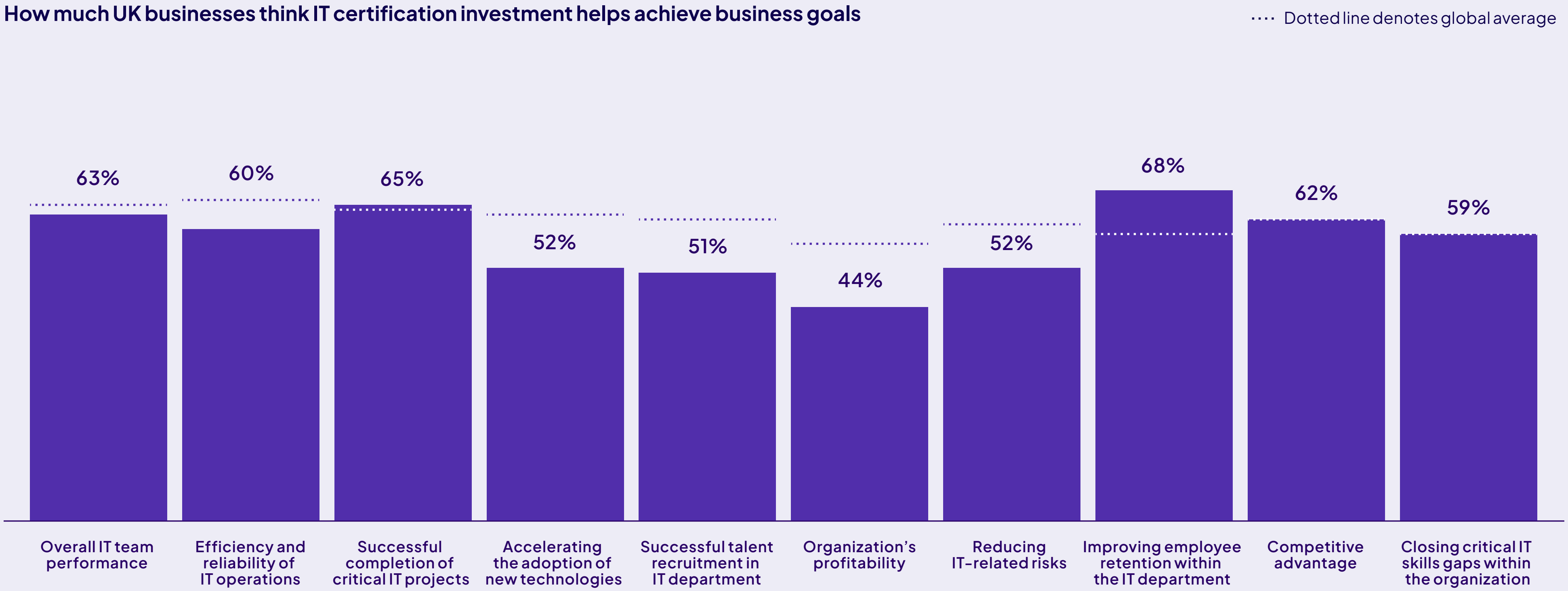
41% of the companies represented in the UK describe their IT workforce as less than fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

Companies experience the biggest skill gaps in AI and machine learning (**85%**). **92%** address skill gaps by training and upskilling their employees.

Although companies are more likely to fully pay for required IT certifications, **35%** pay for any certification desired by or required for an employee's role.

The most mentioned benefits of certification include increases in productivity and efficiency (**48%**), increased opportunities for career advancement (**44%**), and improved employee retention (**68%**).

How much UK businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals



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United Kingdom

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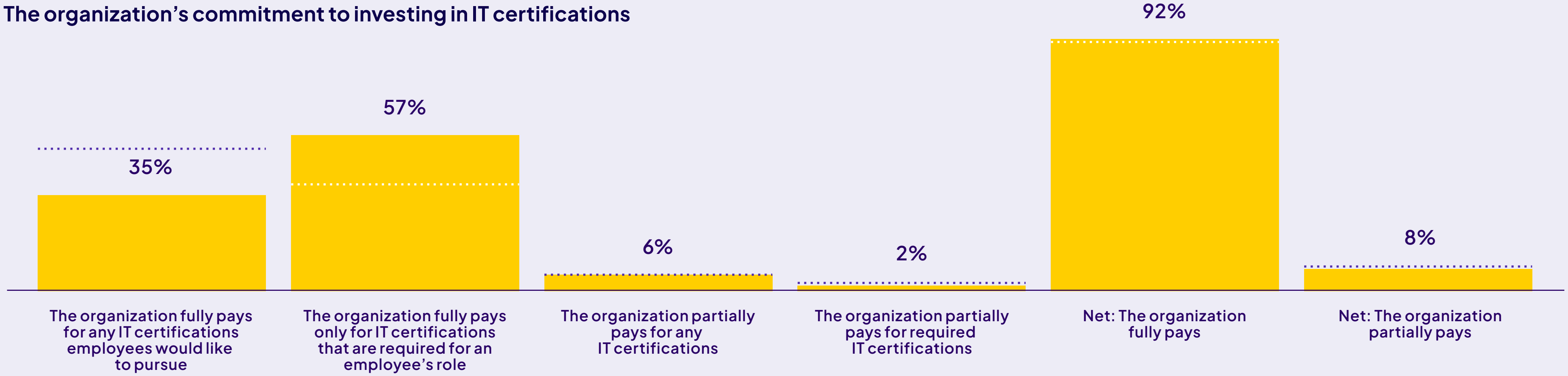
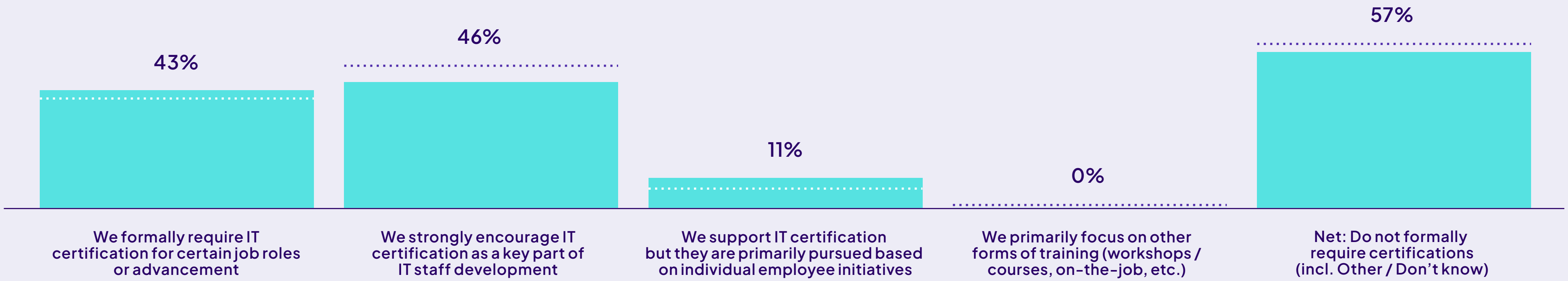
The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification



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United Kingdom

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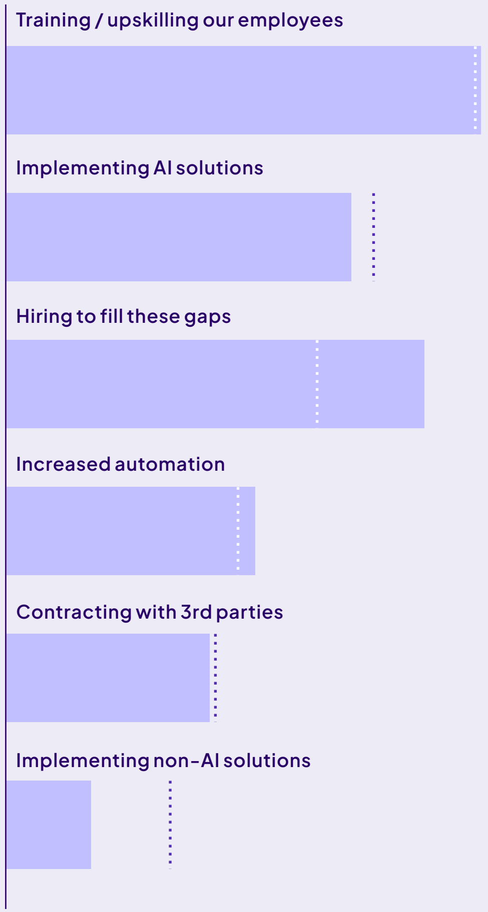
Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations

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USA

126

IT/Tech and HR leaders interviewed

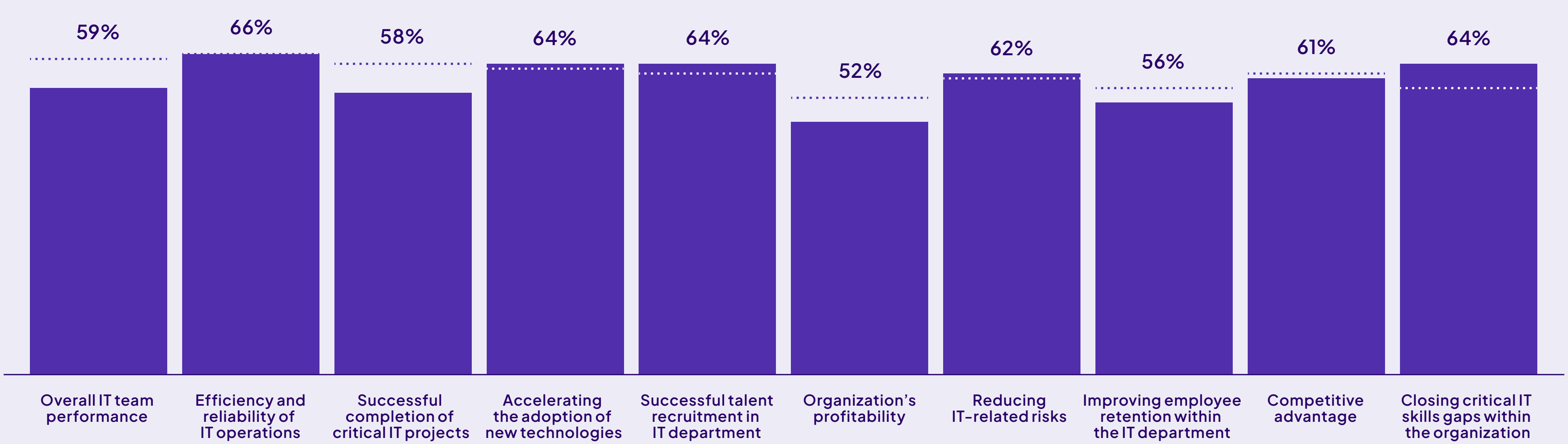
48% of the US companies represented feel that their IT workforce is not fully equipped with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

The most prominent skill gaps are in AI and machine learning (**80%**) and cybersecurity and information security (**54%**). **84%** of companies address skill gaps with employee training and upskilling initiatives.

The biggest motivations behind investing in certification are to qualify for specific projects or client engagements (**54%**) and to help address skills gaps (**53%**).

50% of the US companies represented fully pay for any IT certifications pursued by team members, and mention increases in technical proficiency and quality of work (**52%**), increased career advancement opportunities (**48%**), and increases in the efficiency and reliability of their IT operations (**66%**) as key benefits.

How much US businesses think IT certification investment helps achieve business goals



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USA

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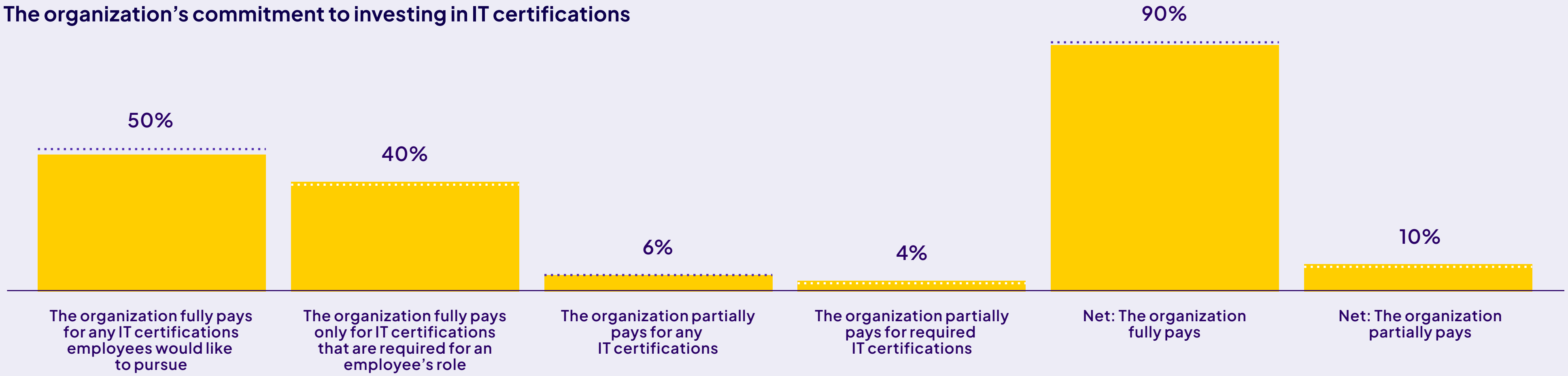
The organization's commitment to investing in IT certifications



Organizational approach to IT certification

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USA

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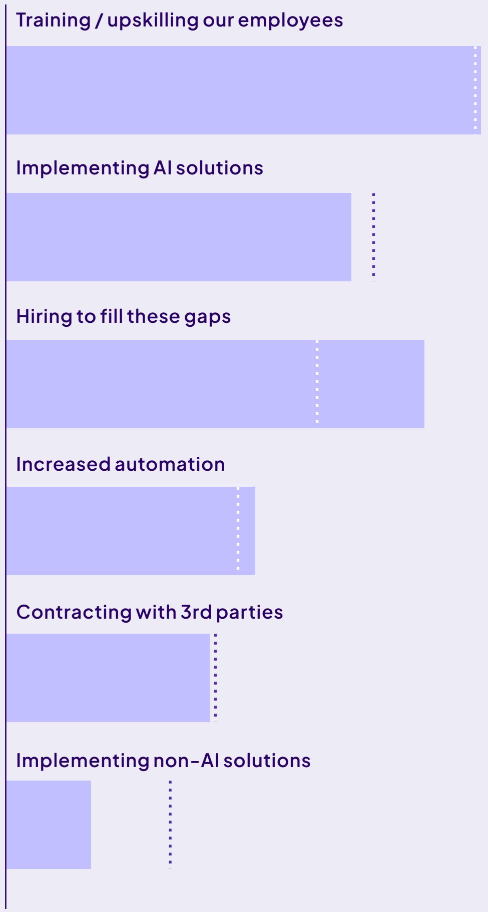
Types of training methods organizations plan to invest in

How organizations plans to address these skills gaps going forward



Areas where IT skills gaps are most pronounced in organizations

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Methodology

The Pearson 2026 Value of IT Certification Employer Report draws on both quantitative and qualitative research conducted in 2025.

An online survey was fielded from July 23 to August 10, 2025, with 505 IT and HR leaders at organizations with 1,000 or more employees. Respondents included 402 IT leaders and 103 HR leaders across seven countries: the United States (n=126), the United Kingdom (n=63), China (n=64), Brazil (n=62), Mexico (n=63), Saudi Arabia (n=63), and India (n=64).

All survey participants manage, are involved in hiring, or handle development planning for IT teams. All have experience managing, hiring, or interviewing staff with IT certifications, and work at organizations that at least partially pay for employees to pursue IT certifications. The survey was conducted online via Cashew.

To complement the quantitative findings, the Pearson Customer Research & Insights Team conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with three senior IT leaders at medium to large organizations from September 2–5, 2025. Interviews averaged 45 minutes in length and were conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams. These interviews provide context and real-world examples that illustrate the survey findings.

Due to rounding, some results may reflect totals slightly higher or lower than 100%.

Pearson

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