

Green skills workforce training paves the way to net zero

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By [Rehan Haque](#), CEO of [metatalent.ai](#)

Similar to the rest of the world, British businesses are suffering from a scarcity of skilled workers in the talent pool. As new workplace technologies emerge, businesses need a constant supply of trained employees able to get to grips with them. Technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the metaverse and new forms of automation are increasingly integrated into today's everyday business operations. Yet too many companies lack the skilled talent to use them effectively.

In addition to boosting efficiency and productivity, these new and emerging technologies are driving progress in environmentally conscious and sustainable business operations. As the UK moves towards its net zero goals, the skill shortages across all industries and sectors need to be filled fast. The UK government is putting intense pressure on businesses to decarbonise for the future, and this gradual transition to net zero creates new roles and economic opportunities – so long as workers have the skills to take advantage of them.

What do we mean by 'green skills'?

This scarcity additionally includes green skills – the knowledge, abilities, values, and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable society. Sectors that require the most pressing emissions reductions by 2030 face the most immediate skills shortages – most notably including housing and transport. By 2030, 80% of the current workforce will still be active, so it is imperative that workers now have access to training and upskilling tool, lest they be left behind completely as we transition towards a greener future.

Businesses must act before it's too late

The time for businesses to take responsibility for their workforce is now. Ensuring that their teams have ongoing skills-based training, particularly for green skills training, is key to both ensuring that workers can cope with the technologies needed by businesses in the transition towards net zero starting in the present and futureproofing them for even more emerging technology sure to arise in years to come.

Green skills programmes, in tandem with government reform, are key in levelling up business agendas, ensuring workers can cope with the technologies needed for efficient and effective transition, and creating a greener economy in the future.

A greener mindset throughout all businesses

Across the world, businesses have rapidly adapted to the new normal of hybrid and work-from-anywhere culture necessitated by pandemic health and safety precautions. Post-pandemic, people are ready to throw themselves into work – perhaps because of renewed feelings of freedom or maybe they are in pursuit of a new career path or changes to their lifestyle. The working mindset has evolved; workers now seek employment in places more aligned with their values and will do more to seek that out for a better, happier and more sustainable quality of life overall.

Business leaders not only need to prioritise a flexible culture of constant support, learning and improvement when it comes to creating a working environment for their teams, they should also place a much greater emphasis on developing a greener mindset when it comes to workforce training programmes. Most current workers aren't going away any time soon, so a focus on transferring skills and retraining for the green economy is key for businesses seeking to support and upskill their operational teams.

Skills are the future, not jobs

Where both employers and workers alike used to think primarily in terms of jobs, we now increasingly think in terms of skills. With green skills required across all sectors, a greener mindset is required as well as a technologically adaptable skillset. Decarbonising the highest contributors to UK greenhouse gas emissions in the UK – namely the transport, housing, and heavy industry sectors – is no easy feat. Yet a workforce with a conscious attitude towards the environment, as well as constantly evolving green skills training, helps make the steps towards a net zero economy that much more possible for our future.

Businesses with a responsible and accountable workforce, armed with technical skills training provided by AI-moderated talent upskilling programmes, are far better prepared for the demands of the future, and not only survive but thrive as the working environment continues to evolve around emerging technology and the demands of net zero.