



ABSTRACT
TALENT

Tackling the UK's technical skills shortage

8 practical
strategies

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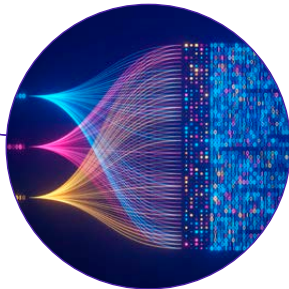
The growing technology skills gap

The United Kingdom is currently facing a severe technical skills shortage across numerous industries, particularly in critical areas such as software development, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), and cybersecurity.

This gap has become a major concern for business leaders, with reports highlighting a growing demand for these skills but a limited supply of qualified professionals (Financial Times, 2023).



Software development



Artificial Intelligence



Cybersecurity



Cloud computing

At Abstract Group, we have the talent and expertise your business needs to bridge this gap. Our headquarters is conveniently situated in the heart of Leeds City Centre, providing you with **on-demand access** to these critical resources here in the UK.

We have the talent and expertise your business needs to bridge this gap

The talent pipeline crisis

Across industries, the UK is struggling to keep up with the rapid advancements in technology.

The shortage

Numerous reports by Gartner suggests that **the shortage of technical talent is holding businesses back from fully leveraging emerging technologies such as AI, Cloud, and Cybersecurity**. According to the Learning and Work Institute, the number of young people taking IT subjects at GCSE level dropped by 40% in recent years. As this alarming trend has continues, data suggests that the pipeline of new talent is shrinking at a time when the demand for tech expertise is soaring.

A rising demand for critical skills

Software development

The rise in digital transformation over the past few years has significantly increased the demand for software developers, yet they remain in short supply, expensive to hire and this trend shows no signs of slowing down. According to Deloitte, many companies are having to **delay financially backed projects** due to this talent shortage.

Cybersecurity

As cyber threats continue to escalate, safeguarding digital assets has become more critical than ever. The GOV.UK Cybersecurity Skills in the UK Labour Market 2024 report reveals a widening shortage of professionals capable of securing systems and protecting sensitive data. This skills gap, with incident management shortages rising from 27% in 2020 to 48% in 2024, **leaves businesses increasingly vulnerable to attacks** that could cause severe financial and reputational damage.

Artificial Intelligence

AI is rapidly transforming industries, from healthcare to finance, but the lack of skilled professionals in this domain acts as a **bottleneck for innovation**. According to Computer Weekly, business leaders are increasingly concerned about the lack of AI skills which is crucial for staying competitive in a data-driven economy.

Cloud computing

Cloud technologies are crucial for business growth and innovation, but the shortage of skilled cloud professionals presents a significant hurdle. Companies are struggling to find the right talent and are having to adopt accelerated hiring processes, high salaries, and cultural fit challenges. While over 90% of IT leaders plan to expand cloud operations, 80% report that a **lack of employee skills is hindering their progress**.

Why this shortage matters

The UK is on the verge of a digital skills crisis, affecting businesses across the board.

We Are Tech Women warns that the lack of skilled professionals is making hiring competitive, driving up costs and leaving companies understaffed.

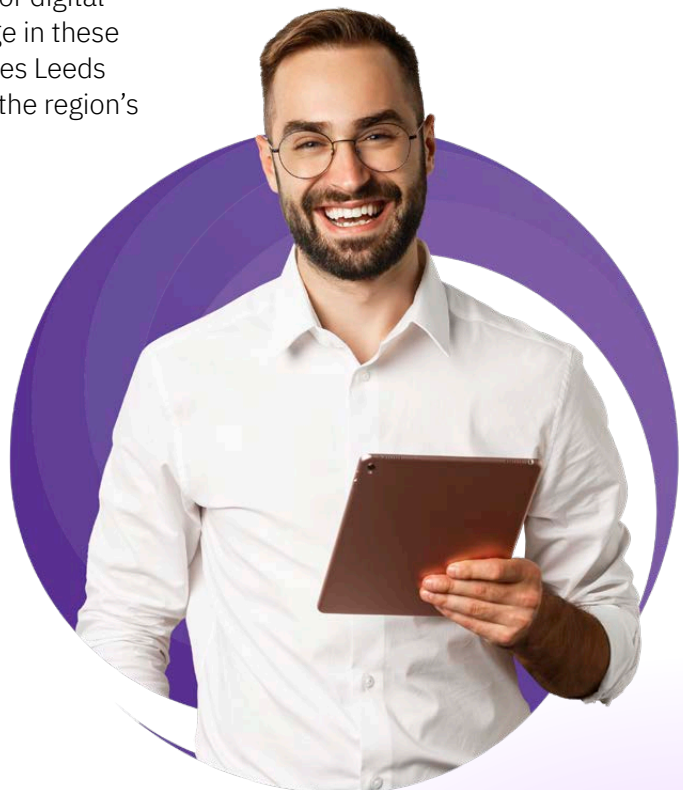
This scarcity not only impacts day-to-day operations but also stifles long-term strategic initiatives. Without access to the necessary skills, businesses risk falling behind their competitors, losing market share, and missing opportunities for innovation.

Leeds – the tech hub of the North?

Leeds is rapidly positioning itself as a leading hub for digital innovation in the UK, outpacing the national average in these key technology sectors (Data City, 2024). This makes Leeds an ideal location for businesses looking to tap into the region's growing pool of tech talent and expertise.

Solving the problem

While the UK's technical skills shortage presents a significant challenge, businesses can take proactive steps to mitigate its impact and maintain their competitive edge.



8 practical strategies

1 Invest in employee development

Upskilling and reskilling your existing workforce are one of the most effective ways to close the skills gap. Offering continuous learning opportunities, certifications, and specialised training programs in areas like software engineering, cloud computing, AI, and cybersecurity can ensure your current employees stay up to date with the latest technologies.

Internal talent development not only fills critical gaps but also increases employee satisfaction and retention.

2 Partner with educational institutions

Businesses should collaborate with universities, technical colleges, and apprenticeship programs to build a steady pipeline of future talent. By offering internships, mentorship programs, and hands-on learning opportunities, companies can help students acquire real-world skills while fostering relationships that can lead to future employment.

3 Leverage flexible talent solutions

For immediate needs, working with staffing agencies or managed service providers that specialise in technology talent can provide access to skilled professionals on-demand. Companies like Abstract Group can help bridge short-term gaps by offering contract, project-based, or full-time talent, ensuring your organisation has the resources it needs to continue growing and innovating without delay.

4 Adopt hybrid & remote models

The rise of remote work opens up new opportunities for accessing talent outside of traditional geographic boundaries. By expanding recruitment efforts to include remote workers, companies can tap into a broader talent pool, increasing the chances of finding professionals with the required skills.

Flexible work arrangements also make your company more attractive to highly skilled candidates seeking a better work-life balance.

5 Automate and innovate

As the demand for certain technical skills continues to outpace supply, companies can turn to automation and AI to reduce dependency on hard-to-find human talent. By automating routine tasks and processes, businesses can free up their existing workforce to focus on more complex, strategic initiatives. Additionally, embracing AI-driven tools can help organisations work more efficiently with fewer resources.

6 Create a competitive employer brand

In a market where top technical talent is scarce, standing out as an employer of choice is crucial. Offering competitive salaries, robust benefits packages, and a strong organisational culture can help attract and retain skilled professionals. Emphasising your company's commitment to innovation, learning, and employee well-being will make it easier to hire the talent you need.

7 Focus on diversity & inclusion

Broadening your hiring criteria to include diverse backgrounds and non-traditional candidates can help alleviate the skills shortage. Many talented individuals may not fit the traditional mould, but with proper training and mentorship, they can bring unique perspectives and valuable skills to your organisation. A diverse workforce fosters innovation and enhances your company's ability to solve complex problems.

Partner with a reputable digital services organisation

In addition to building internal capabilities, companies can accelerate their access to critical skills by partnering with a reputable digital services organisation. Working with experts in technology solutions allows businesses to benefit from advanced technical knowledge without the need to immediately hire full-time staff. Abstract Group specialises in cloud computing, AI, software development, and cybersecurity, and can quickly fill your skill gaps, ensuring your business has the talent and tools required to remain competitive in an evolving market.

The benefits of working with a digital services partner

Access to expertise

Digital services providers bring specialised skills and industry experience that can be hard to find internally.

Knowledge transfer

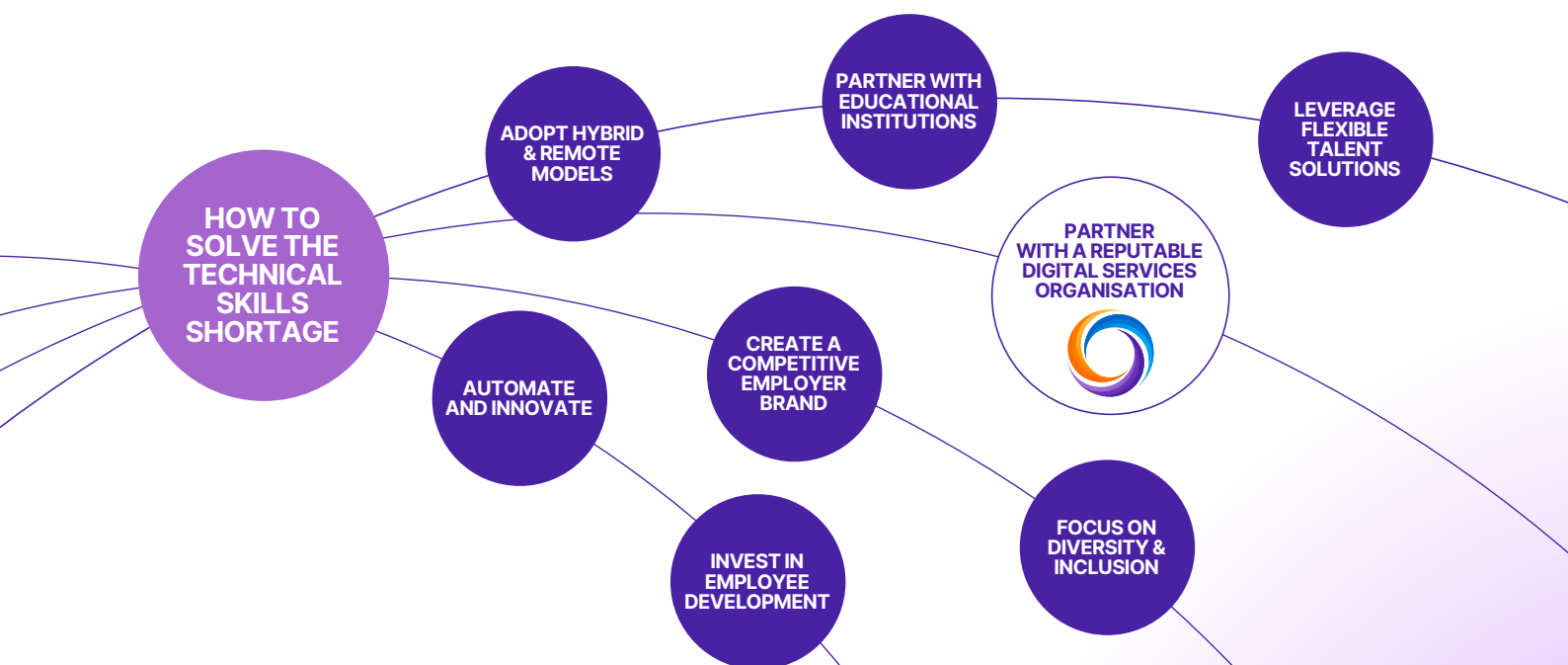
Partners like Abstract Group not only help execute projects but also ensure knowledge transfer to your in-house teams, enabling long-term self-sufficiency.

Scalability

Your business can rapidly scale up or down depending on the project needs, without the overhead of permanent hires.

Speed to market

With expert support, you can accelerate project time lines and reduce the delays caused by skill shortages.



Establishing strong technology partnerships

Establishing strategic technology partnerships can help businesses fill critical skill gaps more quickly and effectively. These partnerships allow companies to share resources, transfer knowledge, and gain access to cutting-edge technology solutions without the need to continually hire and train staff.

By collaborating with trusted partners, businesses can stay ahead of industry trends and focus on core competencies while still benefiting from the latest innovations.

A strong technology partner provides ongoing support, helping your organisation continuously evolve as the technological landscape shifts. At Abstract Group, we not only offer the talent you need but also foster long-term partnerships that drive innovation and success through continuous collaboration and shared expertise.

Your Solution: Abstract Group

We understand these challenges better than most. Our HQ, located in Leeds City Centre, gives you direct access to the technical talent you need right on your doorstep.

Get in touch today:
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**Every
interaction
matters**



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TALENT

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