Microsoft

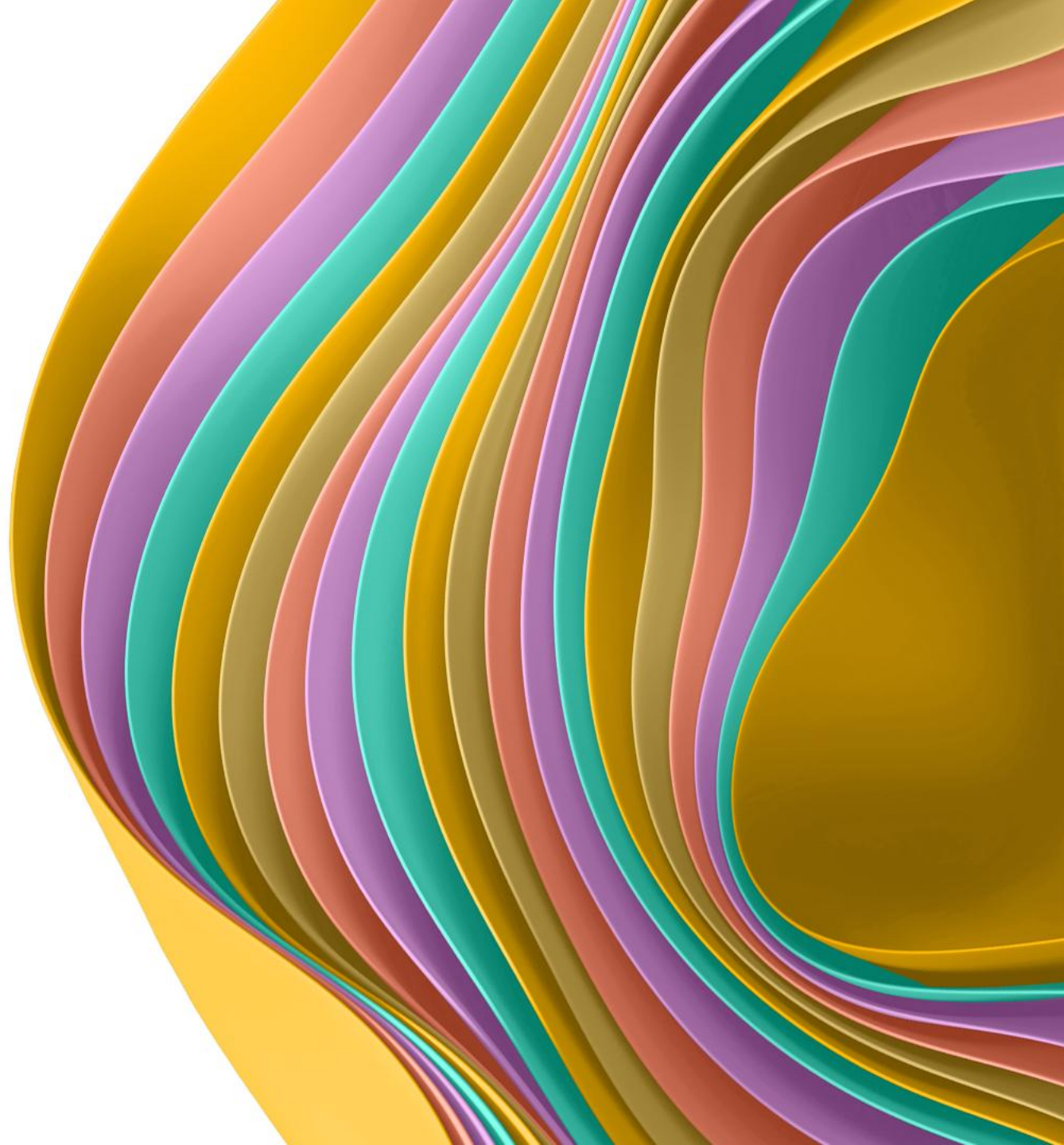# Talent Management and AI Upskilling for Canadian Small-to-Medium Businesses

Creating the AI-powered organization

April 2025

Agenda

Strategies for leveraging AI in talent acquisition, development, and retention to enhance workforce productivity.

Learn how AI can support upskilling and reskilling initiatives to address evolving workforce needs.

Understand the role of AI in creating flexible, inclusive, and engaging work environments.

AI at Work

1. We're in the second inning of Gen AI

2. AI Engineering skills have taken off

3. Most of us will see a shift in critical skills

4. Employers are interested but hesitant

5. Maximizing worker benefit requires training

Future of Work: AI is already shifting skill needs

9x — Increase in the number of LinkedIn members with AI skills since 2016
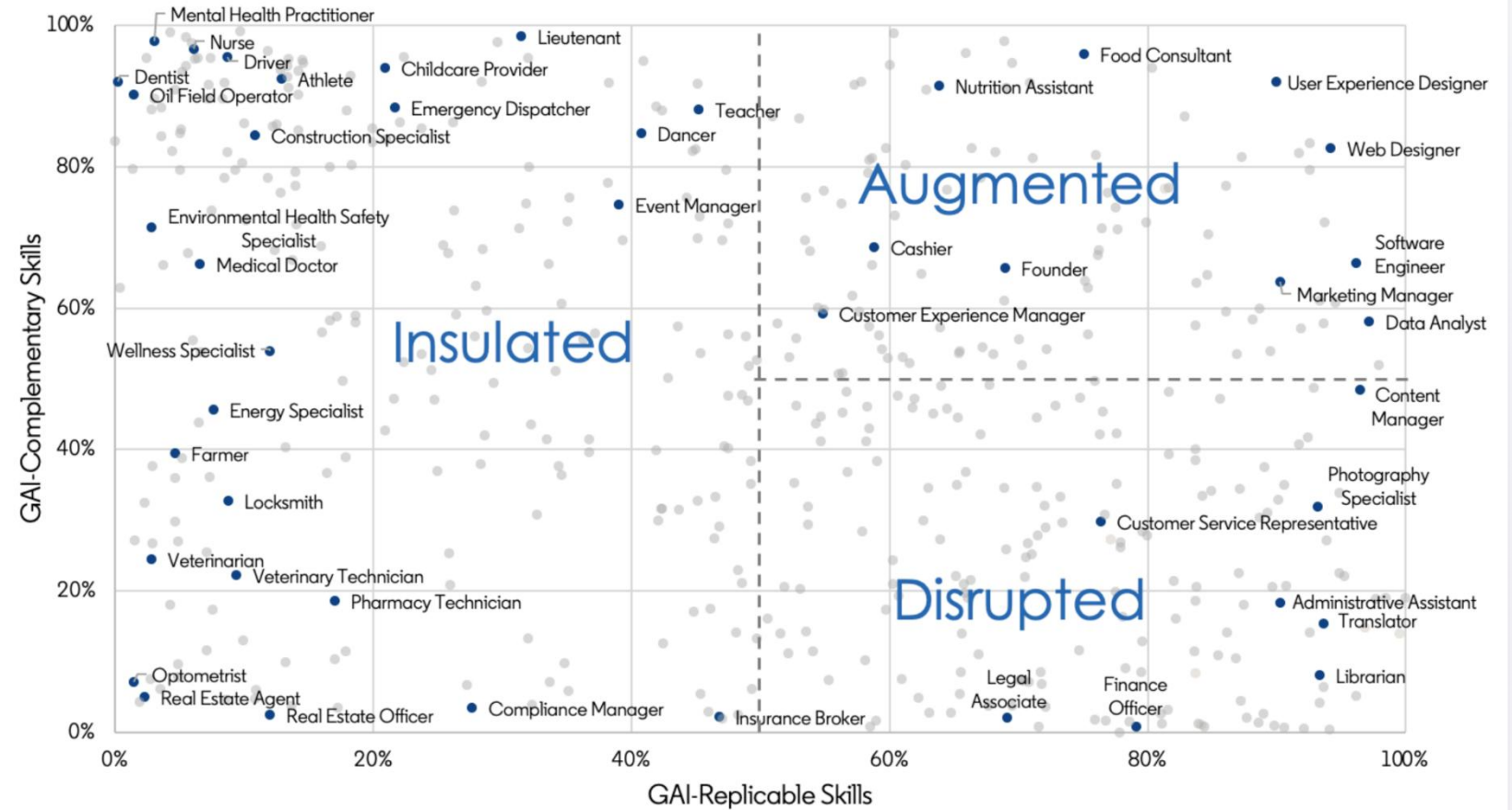
21x — Increase in job postings mentioning AI & GAI since 2016

84% — Share of LinkedIn members who will have at least a quarter of their skills affected

AI will inevitably disrupt roles and industries

Source: LinkedIn Economic Graph Research Institute

Hiring and Upskilling Your Workforces

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AI skills-based hiring has taken off

3x
Increase in the number of LinkedIn members **Head of AI** over the past 5 years
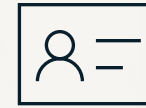
323%
Increase in hiring for **technical AI talent** over the past 8 years

The AI skill shift among non-technical workers has begun

142x

Six month increase in LinkedIn members adding **AI aptitude skills** like ChatGPT and Copilot

33%

Share of **Content Writers** that added AI aptitude skills to their profiles during 2023

66%
Of leaders would consider candidates' AI skills in hiring decisions

71%
Believe AI skills could potentially compensate for a lack of experience

39%
Of people who use AI at work have gotten training from their company

25%
Of companies plan to offer training on generative AI this year

Employers believe in the importance of AI skills... but hesitate to invest in training

Microsoft AI skills for everyone

The opportunity of AI is here and can be unlocked for every learner—at every career stage, in every role, and in every country.

Microsoft expands opportunity to people around the world by helping learners to build digital and AI skills.

Frameworks for AI Talent Creation

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AI Upskilling Framework

5 **Deeply Specializing**

For tech specialists and R&D roles. Includes DevOps, ML researchers, cybersecurity and data scientists.
Featured skills: AIOps, MLOps, LLMOps, AI security, AI cloud solutions.

4 **Training and Maintaining Models**

For engineers implementing AI/Machine Learning. Includes technical applications of AI and ML models, deep learning, and fine-tuning models.
Featured skills: Building ML models, deep learning, neural networks, NLP, AI tools and libraries.

3 **Building**

For power users and developers building AI-powered applications and solutions. Includes low-code methodologies and hands-on practice with APIs.
Featured skills: No/low code GAI, GPTs, APIs, databases.

2 **Applying**

For all professionals, including leaders/managers. Includes prompt engineering and copilots.
Featured skills: Prompt engineering, strategy, copilots & AI pair programming, AI productivity.

1 **Understanding**

For all professionals, including leaders/managers. Includes responsible AI, GAI fluency and awareness.
Featured skills: Featured skills: AI literacy, generative AI, responsible AI.

LinkedIn

Hire for Skills and Foster Specialized Talent

Screening for technical capability

Microsoft Certifications

Appropriate for AI specialists and R&D in roles including MLOps, ML Researchers, Cybersecurity, and Data Scientists. Also for students, citizen developers, and tech-savvy employees.

Key Stats

- 100+ courses
- 75%+ of this list is Intermediate/Advanced

Foundational Skills

- AIOps, MLOps, LLMOps
- AI Security
- AI Cloud Solutions, including AWS, Azure, and GCP
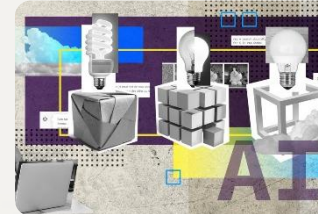- Certification Prep

Professional Certificates & Certification Prep

- Prepare for the Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals (AI-900) Certification
- SC-900 (Security)
- PL-900 (Power Platform)

EXPLORING AIOPS

MLOps/AIOps/LLMOps
Exploring AIOps
MLOps Essentials: Model Deployment and Monitoring

AI x Cloud
Azure OpenAI: Generative AI Models and How to Use Them

Security
Introduction to MLSecOps
Artificial Intelligence for Cybersecurity
Securing the Use of Generative AI in Your Organization
Leveraging AI for Security Testing

Cert Prep
Microsoft Azure AI Fundamentals (AI-900), *3 language*

Building Time through Skilling at work

Resources, Access, Learning-based culture

Audience

Appropriate for all professionals. Assign across the organization for fluency and basic skills

Key Stats

- 100+ courses
- 20+ Responsible and Ethical AI courses
- 40+ courses dedicated to Business Strategy and Business Leaders

Foundational Skills

- AI literacy
- Generative AI literacy
- Responsible AI

Industry & Role Learning Paths

- Building AI Literacy
- Building Generative AI Skills for Business Professionals
- Building Generative AI Skills for Creative Professionals
- Building Generative AI Skills for Developers
- Responsible AI Foundations
- Mastering Responsible AI: From Concept to Auditing [May 2024]

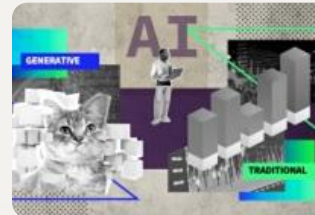### Professional Certificates & Certification Prep

- Career Essentials for Generative AI by Microsoft and LinkedIn

For All Professionals
What is Generative AI?, *8 languages*
Gen AI: The Evolution of Online Search, *6 languages*
Ethics in the Age of Generative AI, *6 languages*
Foundations of Responsible AI, *English*

For Leaders and Managers
Generative AI for Business Leaders, *7 languages*
Artificial Intelligence and Humanity, *German*
AI and the Future of Work, *English*
Generative AI and Workplace Transformation, *English*

For Business Professionals
Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, *available in 7 languages*
Artificial Intelligence and Business Strategy, *English*
Gen AI: The Evolution of Thoughtful Online Search, *available in 6 languages*
Navigating AI Through an Intersectional DEI Lens, *English*

For Creative Professionals
Gen AI Imaging: What Creative Pros Need to Know, *English*
Foundations of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0), *avail in 3 languages*
Understanding the Impact of Deepfakes, *English and French*
Learning Photoshop Compositing, *English*

Small to-Medium Business Leaders should also think about developing skills in-house

Business Skills

- Leadership & management
- Professional development
- Business software tools
- AI for Business Professionals
- Diversity, equity, & inclusion
- Teams & collaboration
- Mental health & well-being
- Creativity
- Business strategy/analysis
- Career development

Function-Specific Skills

- Project management
- Marketing
- User Experience Design
- HR, Recruiting & L&D
- Sales
- Customer Service
- Product management
- Graphic Design
- Finance & Accounting
- AI role-based content

Technology Skills

- Generative AI
- Software development
- Cloud computing
- Data science
- Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity
- IT
- DevOps
- Network & system administration
- Testing & methodologies

*Note: Not a comprehensive topics list

Factors to Consider for Upskilling a Global Organization

Industry Vertical

Does my organization fall under a specific industry that has unique requirements?

Job Function

What job functions am I trying to upskill? There are different AI skills needed for marketing professionals vs product managers vs developers.

Job Level

Are you upskilling IC's, aspiring managers, middle managers, senior managers, C-Suite?

Specific Skills

Does your organization have access to specific tools like OpenAI's ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot? Are there tools rolling out every employee needs to learn? Are there specific skills employees are assigned to upskill?

Successfully Adopt General-Purpose AI Tools

Creating the AI-powered organization

Universal tasks

Write emails — **Analyze data** — **Create content** — **Summarize meetings**

Departmental tasks & KPI's

Customer Service
- Customer retention
- Resolution time
- CSAT

Sales
- Opportunities pursued
- Win rate/ Close rate
- Deal size

Finance
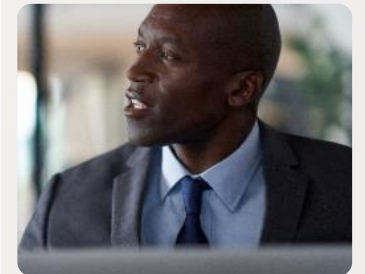- Deal review time
- Forecast accuracy
- Cost per analysis

Marketing
- Leads generated
- Agency spend
- Leads conversion rate

HR
- Onboarding time
- Hiring costs
- Employee retention

Legal
- Outside counsel spend
- Contract error rate
- Compliance

Copilot Chat: A free, company AI chat tool

Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat (Web) is an AI chat tool built specifically for SMBs. It uses the latest AI models and data from the web to answer your questions, generate content and ideas, and find information. It also protects your data so information from your chat conversation does not get exposed to the public.

Chat data is not saved
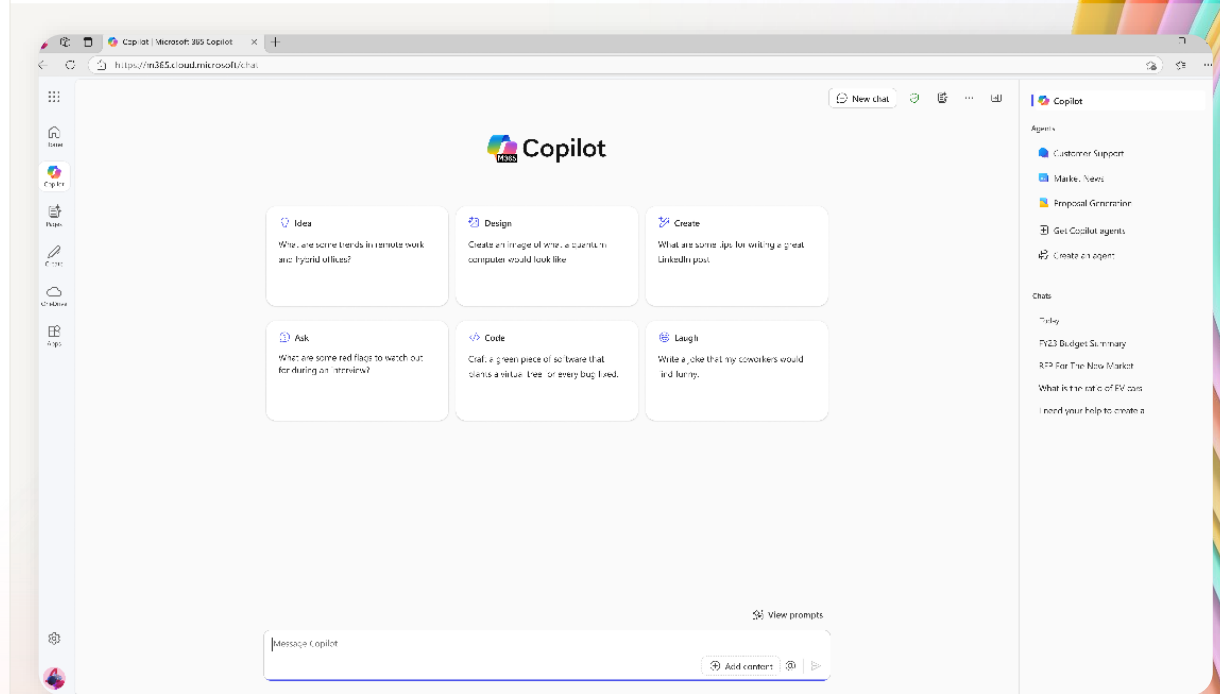Chat prompts and responses are discarded.

No eyes-on access
No one at Microsoft can view your data.

Data is not used to train the model
Chat data is not used to train the large language models used by AI.

Get started by going to M365Copilot.com

Top 10 to "Try First" with Copilot for Microsoft 365

Foundational skills for new users

1

Recap a meeting

Let Copilot keep track of key topics and action items so you can stay focused during the meeting and avoid listening to the recording after.

➡️ Draft an email with notes and action items from meeting

2

Summarize an email thread

Get quickly caught up to a long, complex email thread.

➡️ Click on the Summarize icon

3

Draft email

Personalize the tone and length.

➡️ Draft an email to [name] that informs them that Project X is delayed two weeks. Make it short and casual in tone

4

Summarize a document

Get right down to business by summarizing long documents and focusing on the relevant sections.

➡️ Give me a bulleted list of key points from file

5

Tell me about a topic/project

Provide insights and analysis from across multiple sources to get up to speed quickly.

➡️ Tell me what's new about topic organized by emails, chats, and files?

6

Give me some ideas for ...

Boost your creativity with ideas for your work such as agendas, product names, social media posts, etc.

➡️ Suggest 10 compelling taglines based on file

7

Help me write ...

Jumpstart creativity and write and edit like a pro by getting a first draft in seconds.

➡️ Generate three ways to say [x]

8

What did they say ...

When you vaguely remember someone mentioning a topic, have Copilot do the research.

➡️ What did person say about topic

9

Revise this content

When you've got a rough draft of an idea, turn it into usable text and then vary the length and tone.

➡️ Rewrite with Copilot

10

Translate a message

with business becoming increasingly international, it's important to be able to read or write messages in other languages.

➡️ Translate the following text into French

For more prompts, visit Copilot Lab at: aka.ms/CopilotLab

Resources to Create Your Own AI Upskilling Strategy

AI Upskilling Content Mapping

Scan the QR Code to access the Content Mapping
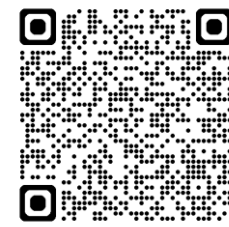
Practical Guide

Scan the QR Code to access the Guide

Framework

Scan the QR Code to access the Framework for AI Upskilling

LinkedIn Learning Content Corner

Scan the QR Code to view all resources available

3 essentials for user enablement

Leadership

Develop leadership capabilities to leverage AI for business outcomes

- ✓ Executive sponsorship
- ✓ Align AI to business strategy
- ✓ Providing clarity and prioritization
- ✓ **Best practice:** AI Council or Steering Committee

Scenarios

Define business objectives, target scenarios, and measures of success

- ✓ Identify Flight Crew team
- ✓ Communications and community
- ✓ Skilling and training
- ✓ **Best practice:** Scenario Library, use case materials, planning worksheet

Enablement

Leverage training and onboarding materials to upskill users

- ✓ Provide onboarding materials
- ✓ Check in regularly
- ✓ Encourage peer-learning
- ✓ **Best practice:** Copilot Lab, onboarding email templates, Community of Practice

Responsible AI principles

Build your Community of Practice

Connect and empower employees

Create a community in Microsoft Teams or other community chat tools to generate excitement, share learning, and support Copilot Champions and experts.

Give employees a place to:

- Share best practices, such as prompts
- Share success stories of Copilot saving time and driving productivity
- Access company announcements on AI usage, direction, and mission
- Facilitate peer to peer learning and Champion engagement

Get ready   **Onboard & engage**

Deliver impact   **Extend & optimize**

Favorites

Company News & Ev...   Sales Best Practices   Leadership Connecti...

Copilot Adoption   Future of Work   Diversity and Belonging

Upcoming events

MAY
30
THU

Rear View: What's new with Copilot!
2:00 PM - 2:30 PM

View

Copilot for Small and Medium Business resources on Microsoft Adoption

One site for all your Copilot needs

https://adoption.microsoft.com/copilot/smb

- Resources by role

- Product announcements and news

- Links to all other Microsoft sites

- Extended links for Microsoft Teams for SMB, Microsoft Viva, and more

Leverage External Assistance for SMBs

At Microsoft, we are dedicated to your success with Microsoft Copilot for Microsoft 365 and our suite of cloud services. We have created the Copilot Success Kit for Small and Medium Business with the reference guidance we believe will help you to be successful. Combined with your own staff, this guidance will allow you to safely and successfully embark upon your journey to AI transformation. You are not alone – we are also here to help. For assistance you can:

- Ask questions in the Copilot for Small and Medium Business forum on the Microsoft Tech Community
- Leverage FastTrack if you have 150 licenses or more
- Engage a Microsoft Partner here

Start assembling your team, taking foundational training, and diving into both the **User enablement** and **Technical readiness** sections with our prepared materials. Additional templates, tools, and guidance for each phase of your initial journey are detailed throughout these primary resources. Slides labeled as **"Shared Activity"** in the top right indicate they are worksheets intended for you to use and modify as you plan your rollout and user enablement. These resources, compiled based upon our experience, research, and feedback from customers, can also be customized to meet your own unique situation.

Your AI journey will be an iterative experience with continuous improvement, learning, and discovery. Microsoft is only successful when you achieve your goals. Your feedback, both within our products and through our communities, help to shape the future of our services and is essential to our improvement. As you and your organization use Copilot, we encourage you to provide feedback and input using the thumbs up/down icons.

Copilot and Microsoft 365 SMB Community

The **Copilot and Microsoft 365 SMB Community** is for small and medium business members will get exclusive and direct access to Microsoft product teams.

- Members' feedback will contribute to the prioritization of our engineering efforts this upcoming fiscal year.

- Attend our monthly calls, where we will share tips and tricks to help accelerate your business.

- Members are nominated to exclusive NDA insider programs within Microsoft and invited to experience features before they're released to the public.

Visit **https://aka.ms/SMBCommunitySignUp** or scan the QR code to join the Copilot and Microsoft 365 SMB Community

AI presents a new landscape of opportunities and challenges for *everyone*

aka.ms/aiskillsnavigator