Accelerating AI skills

Preparing the Workforce in Malaysia for Jobs of the Future

March 2024

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the workforce in Malaysia - from how organizations operate to how work gets done. Despite varying levels of AI adoption across sectors and organizations in Malaysia, AI will be a game-changer over the next five years.

To better understand emerging AI usage trends and where workplaces might be headed, Access Partnership collaborated with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to survey over 1,600 workers and 500 organizations in Malaysia. Findings show that having AI skills could boost productivity, salaries, and career growth for workers, but there's a lack of AI-skilled talent to harness the full potential of AI.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) taps into the power of computers and machines to mimic the problem-solving and decision-making capabilities of the human mind, such as visual perception, speech recognition, and translating languages.

Top Takeaways:

1 Most organizations will use AI by 2028 and expect big benefits

97% of surveyed employers in Malaysia expect their organizations will use AI-powered solutions and tools by 2028. While most employers (96%) believe their IT departments will be the biggest beneficiary of AI, they also expect business operations (95%), research and development (94%), sales and marketing (94%), finance (93%), HR (89%), and legal (88%) to benefit too. In addition, 76% of employers in Malaysia expect the improvement of workflows and outcomes to be the top benefit of AI.

2 Generative AI will transform how we work

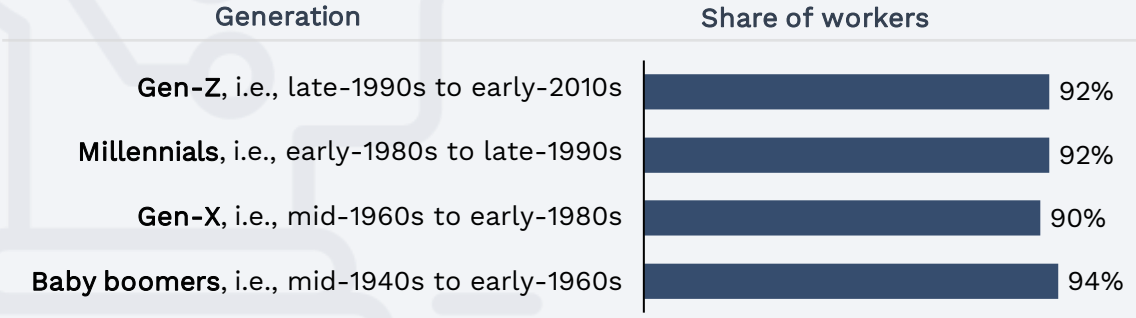
The results show a largely positive outlook on the impact of generative AI, with 98% of employers and 96% of workers in Malaysia expecting to use generative AI in their organizations in the next five years. This fast-developing technology will be used by workers of all levels of technical knowledge – 69% of 'tech-specialists' expect to use it significantly, followed by 57% of 'tech-adjacent' workers, and 44% of 'non-tech' workers.

Generative AI refers to a type of AI that can help create new ideas and content in the form of conversations, stories, images, videos, music, and more – unlike traditional AI systems which are designed to recognize patterns and make predictions.

3 Acquiring AI skills could boost pay and create other career benefits for workers

Employers in Malaysia value workers with AI skills and are willing to pay at least 40% more to hire them. Workers, on the other hand, have signaled a strong desire to develop AI skills to advance their careers, with 91% showing a keen interest. The top motivations for acquiring AI skills include increased job efficiency, faster career progression, and greater job satisfaction. Some notable stats include 92% of female respondents and 94% of baby boomers showing a keen interest in picking up AI skills to advance their careers.

Share of surveyed workers interested in developing AI skills to advance careers, by generation

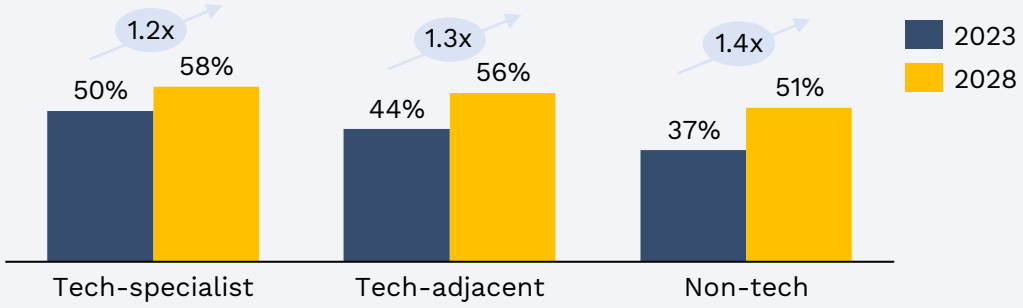


4 The productivity payoff from an AI-skilled workforce could be immense

Surveyed employers and workers in Malaysia find that AI can boost productivity by **57%**. The full extent of AI productivity gains is expected to be felt in 2028, with workers across all levels of technical knowledge[1] anticipated to contribute. In particular, the use of AI solutions and tools by 'non-tech' workers is projected to increase **1.4x** by 2028.

Use of AI solutions and tools by non-tech workers expected to increase 1.4x by 2028

Expected share of job tasks completed using AI-powered solutions and tools by type of tech worker in 2023 and 2028

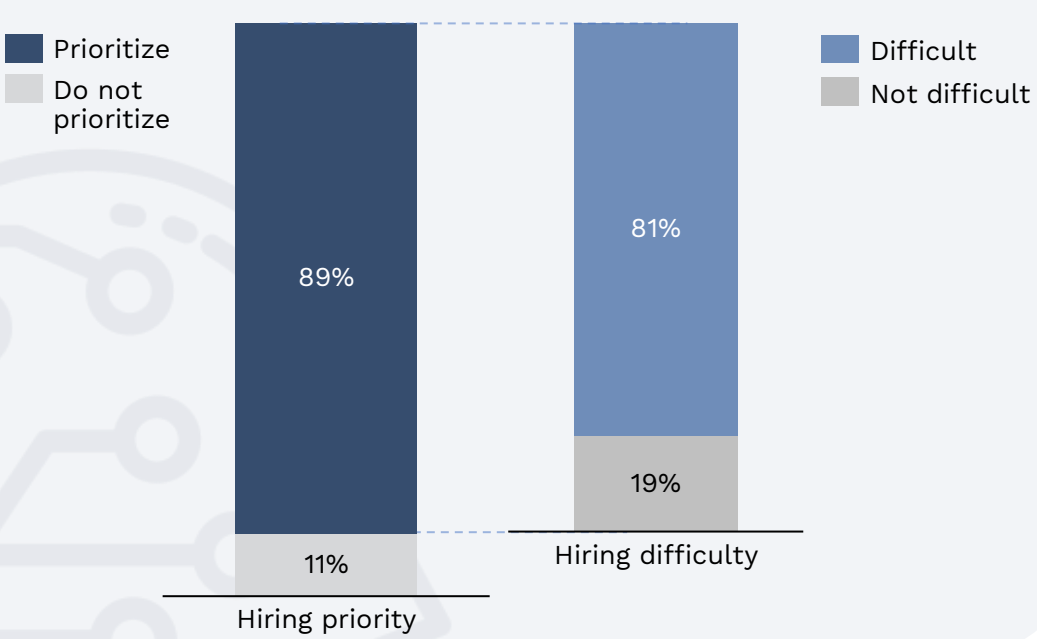


5 The AI skills gap can be reduced through more awareness of training programs

Hiring AI talent is a priority for nearly **nine in 10 (89%)** employers in Malaysia, of which **81%** can't find the AI talent they need. The research also uncovers a training awareness gap, whereby **88%** of employers don't know how to implement an AI workforce training program. And **83%** of workers aren't sure about the relevant career paths where AI skills would be useful.

81% of surveyed employers who prioritize hiring AI talent find it difficult to hire skilled workers

Share of surveyed employers responding to each option



SOURCE: Survey of 516 employers and 1,657 workers in Malaysia (Access Partnership analysis)

1. Three types of workers were surveyed: (1) Tech-specialists: those who develop new technologies and use specialized tech knowledge, (2) Tech-adjacent workers: those dealing with technological products and services, (3) Non-tech workers: those who do not require advanced tech knowledge and skills.