

The Skills of Tomorrow: How Critical Roles Are Evolving

by Laura Reul

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Even the most sophisticated predictive analytics will not be able to anticipate your organization’s future skills needs — too much is changing too fast. A better way to stay ahead: position the enterprise to flex as new job requirements arise.

To do that, business leaders should develop sensing mechanisms, including an external market perspective. It’s hard, though, to keep up: With the total number of skills required for a single job increasing by 5.4% annually, and 33% of the skills that were present in an average job posting in 2019 not being needed by 2024.¹

Enter the “skills life cycle,” which leverages nearly eight million job listings to visualize how the most competitive roles in critical functions in the S&P 100 are evolving over time — which skills

are increasingly sought, and which are declining in listings.²

Interpreting The Skill Life Cycles

The vertical axis displays how often a skill appears in job postings for a certain role. The horizontal axis assigns skills to one of five categories: new, emerging, growing, core and declining.³ Skills must meet certain criteria to qualify for inclusion; an empty bucket indicates that no skills met the threshold.⁴ Review the table below for directional guidance for taking action (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Skill Life Cycles

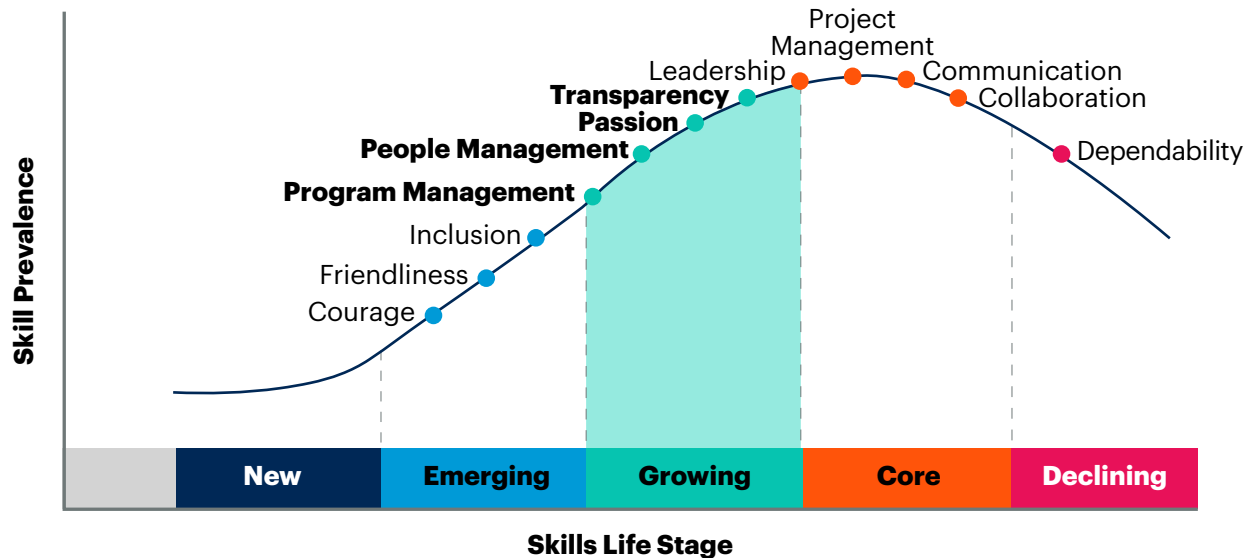
Definition	Suggested Action
<div>New</div> <div>Could become important; they are now starting to appear in postings.</div>	<div>Nothing for now. Market leaders might be exploring these skills for this role but that could quickly change (either with a jump or falloff in interest).</div>
<div>Emerging</div> <div>Found in a small percentage of job postings a few years ago but have increased enough to catch our attention.</div>	<div>Take note and set a plan to train or recruit talent with these skills in the near future. Availability of these skills is likely low, driving up competition and costs. Market leaders are more likely able to afford them and thus spur demand.</div>
<div>Growing</div> <div>On the way to become core skills. Formerly optional but increasingly important to the talent profile.</div>	<div>Adjust hiring and development strategy to incorporate these skills. Organizations not focusing on these skills for the role are at risk of falling behind.</div>
<div>Core</div> <div>Essentials for the job. Present in a high percentage of job postings and have been for a while.</div>	<div>Continue training and hiring. Organizations not recruiting these skills for a given role are already behind and should consider adjusting their talent strategy.</div>
<div>Declining</div> <div>Used to be more prevalent but now appear in a lower percentage of job postings.</div>	<div>Begin to consider deprioritizing investment — these skills are still important to the role, but primed to lose relevance in the near future. Identify talent segments at risk of becoming redundant and determine options for retraining them.</div>

Source: Gartner

Leadership

Senior Leadership Roles (8+ Years of Experience)

Skills Life Cycle — S&P 100 Employers

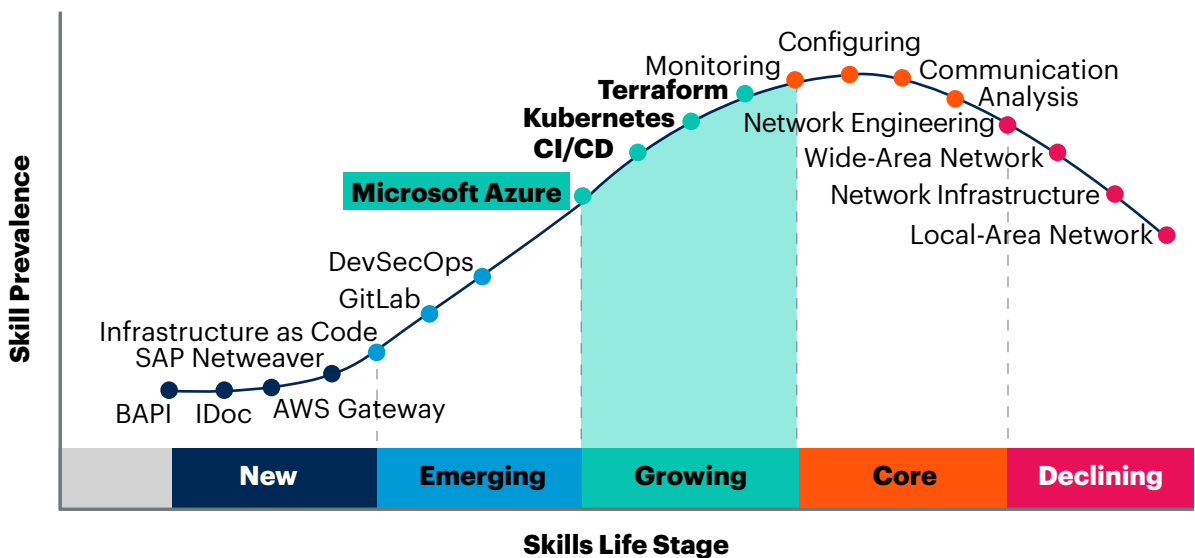


Source: Gartner April 2021 TalentNeuron

Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Security Engineer

Skills Life Cycle — All Employers



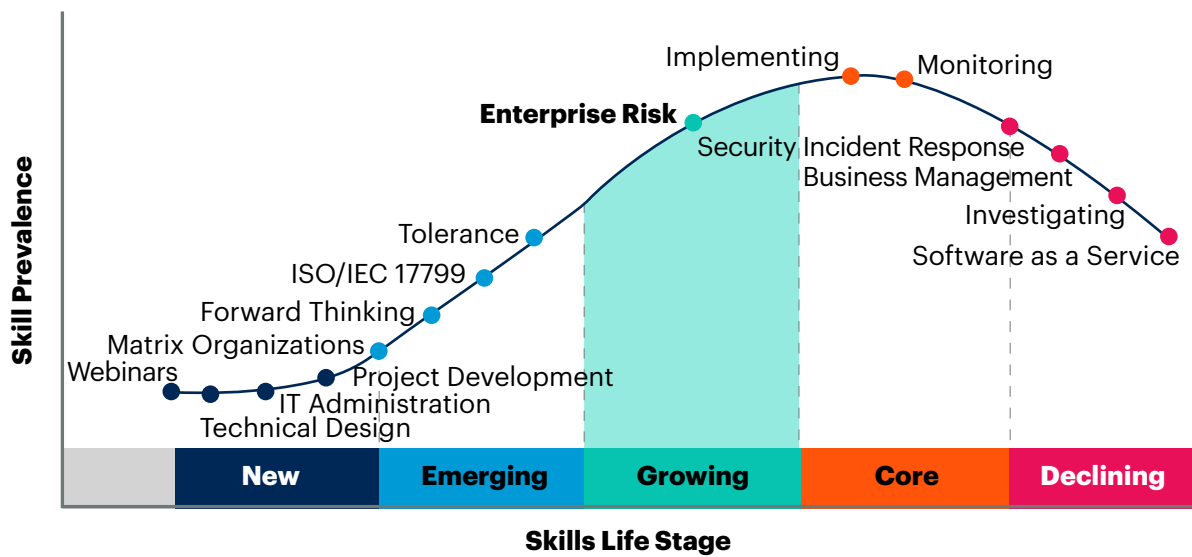
Source: Gartner September 2021 TalentNeuron

Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Cybersecurity

CISO

Skills Life Cycle — All Employers



Source: Gartner September 2021 TalentNeuron

Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Cybersecurity > Deep Dive > Microsoft Azure

Description: "Microsoft Azure" as a skill should be understood within the context of its application in the security engineer occupation.

Skill Growth: 2.3x (2017-2021)

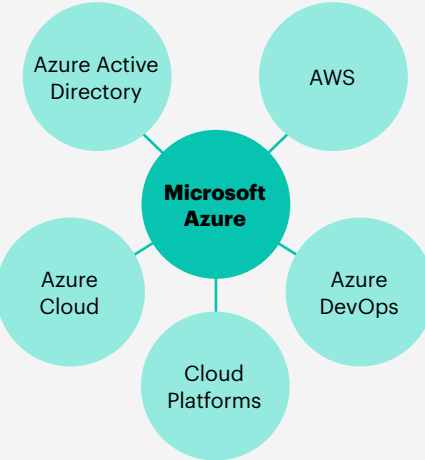
Hiring Difficulty:

Less **10** Very

Most Common Titles With This Skill

- DevOps Engineer
- Cloud Security Engineer
- Software Engineer
- Systems Engineer
- Network Engineer
- Data Engineer
- Site Reliability Engineer
- Security Engineer
- Infrastructure Engineer
- Information Security Engineer

Top Five Skill Adjacencies

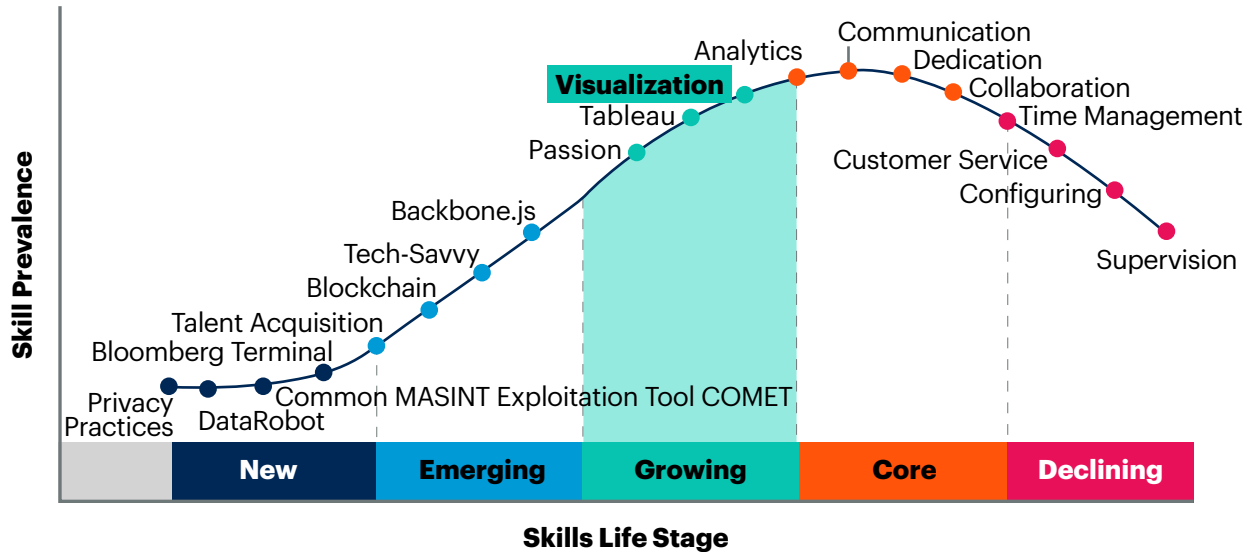


Source: Gartner September 2021 TalentNeuron

Finance

Management Analysts

Skills Life Cycle — S&P 100 Employers



Source: Gartner September 2021 TalentNeuron

Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Finance> Deep Dive > Visualization

Description: "Visualization" as a skill should be understood within the context of its application in the management analyst occupation

Skill Growth: 2.1x (2017-2021)

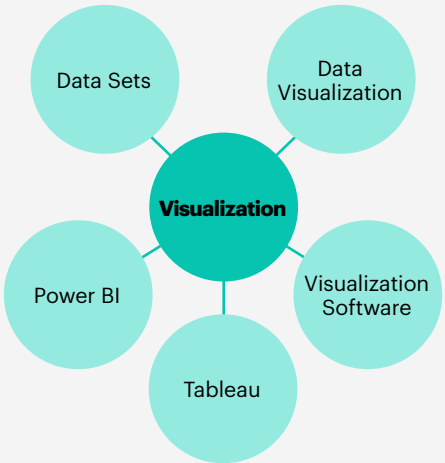
Hiring Difficulty:



Most Common Titles With This Skill

- Data Analyst
- Business Analyst
- Data Scientist
- Statistical Analyst
- Business Intelligence Analyst
- Analytic Consultant
- Associate Consultant Analytics
- Sales Operations Analyst
- Data Reporting Analyst
- Analyst

Top Five Skill Adjacencies

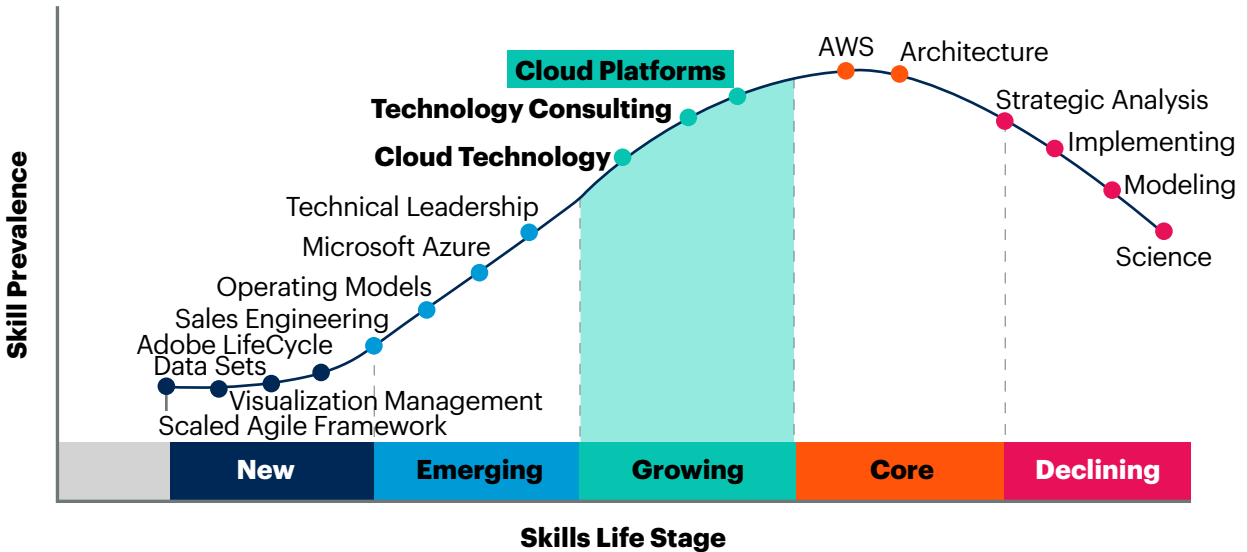


Source: Gartner June 2021 TalentNeuron

IT

Computer Systems Engineers/Architects

Skills Life Cycle —FAANG+



Source: Gartner July 2020 TalentNeuron

Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

IT> Deep Dive > Cloud Platforms

Description: "Cloud platforms" refers to the software infrastructure for a cloud computing service. Cloud platforms or "clouds" can be public private or hybrid. Sample job description language: Experience helping global customers architect SAP integration scenarios with cloud platforms.

Skill Growth: 4.6x (2016-2020)

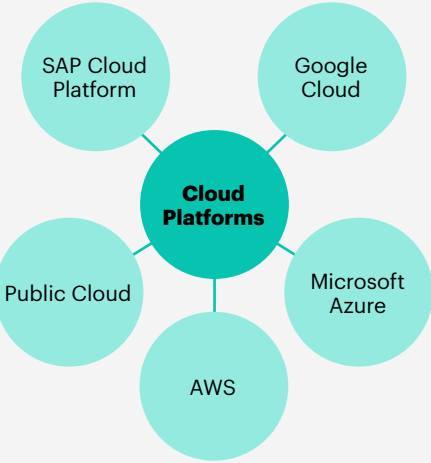
Hiring Difficulty:



Most Common Titles With This Skill

- Cloud Architect
- Solutions Architect
- Data Architect
- Cloud Engineer
- Enterprise Architect
- Azure Architect
- Cloud Solutions Architect
- Senior Manage Secop Engineering
- Cloud Salesforce Technical Architect
- Architect

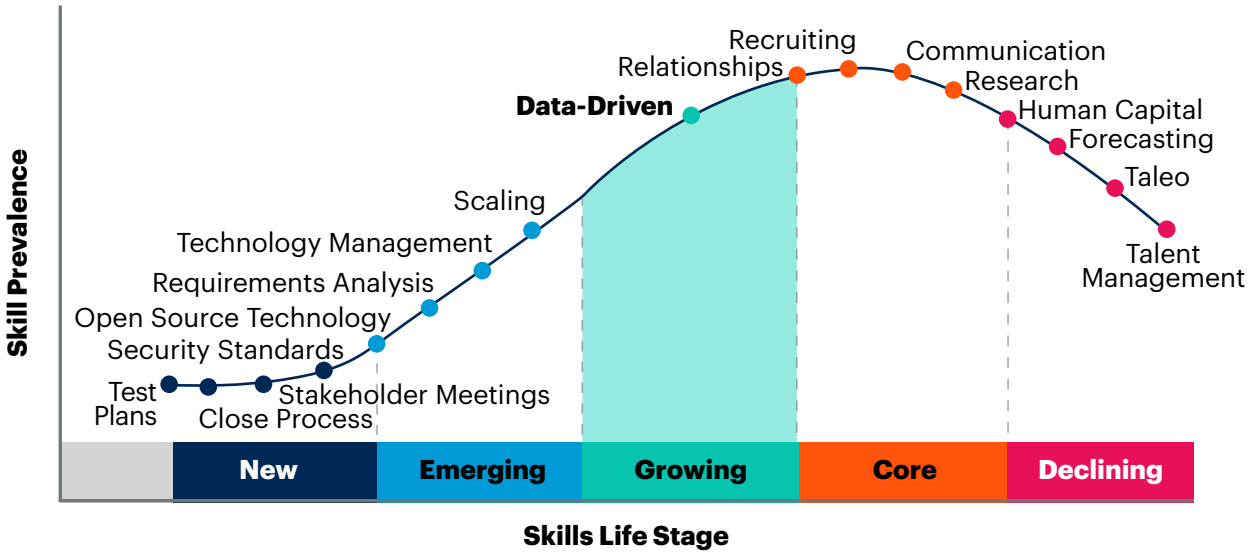
Top Five Skill Adjacencies



Source: Gartner July 2020 TalentNeuron

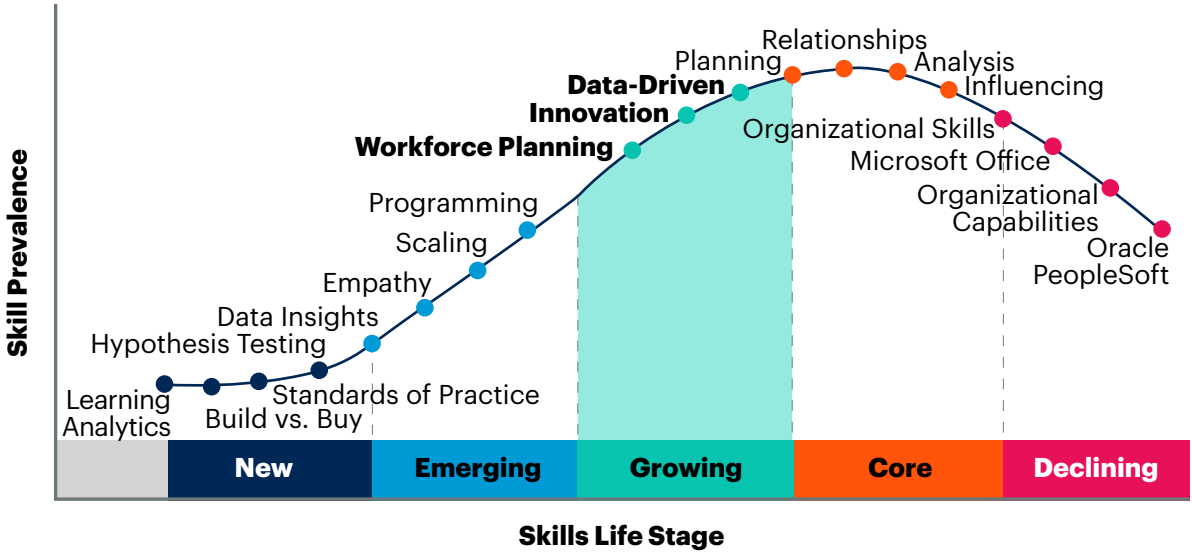
HR

Human Resources Specialists
Skills Life Cycle — S&P 100 Employers



Source: Gartner June 2021 TalentNeuron
Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

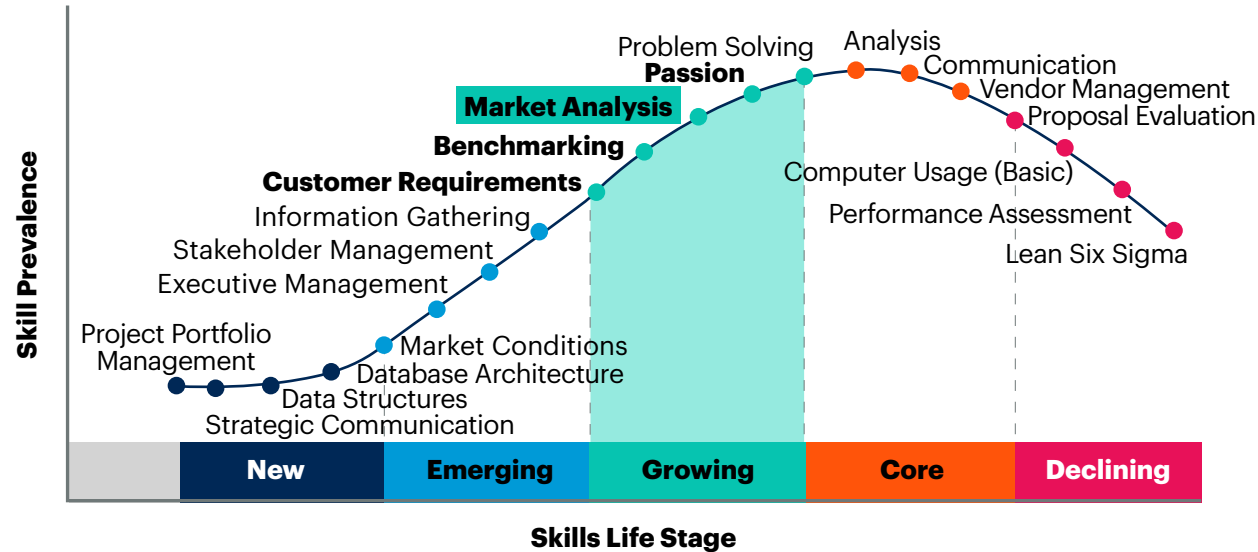
Human Resources Managers
Skills Life Cycle — S&P 100 Employers



Source: Gartner June 2021 TalentNeuron
Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Supply Chain

Procurement Professionals, Except for Wholesale, Retail and Farm Products
Skills Life Cycle — S&P 100 Employers



Source: Gartner September 2021 TalentNeuron
Note: Skill placement is a function of prevalence and growth rate over a four-year period. An empty category indicates that no skills met the classification threshold for the category.

Supply Chain > Deep Dive > Market Analysis

Description: "Market Analysis" as a skill should be understood within the context of its application in the Purchasing Agents occupation.

Skill Growth: 4.3x (2017-2021)

Hiring Difficulty:

Less **10** Very

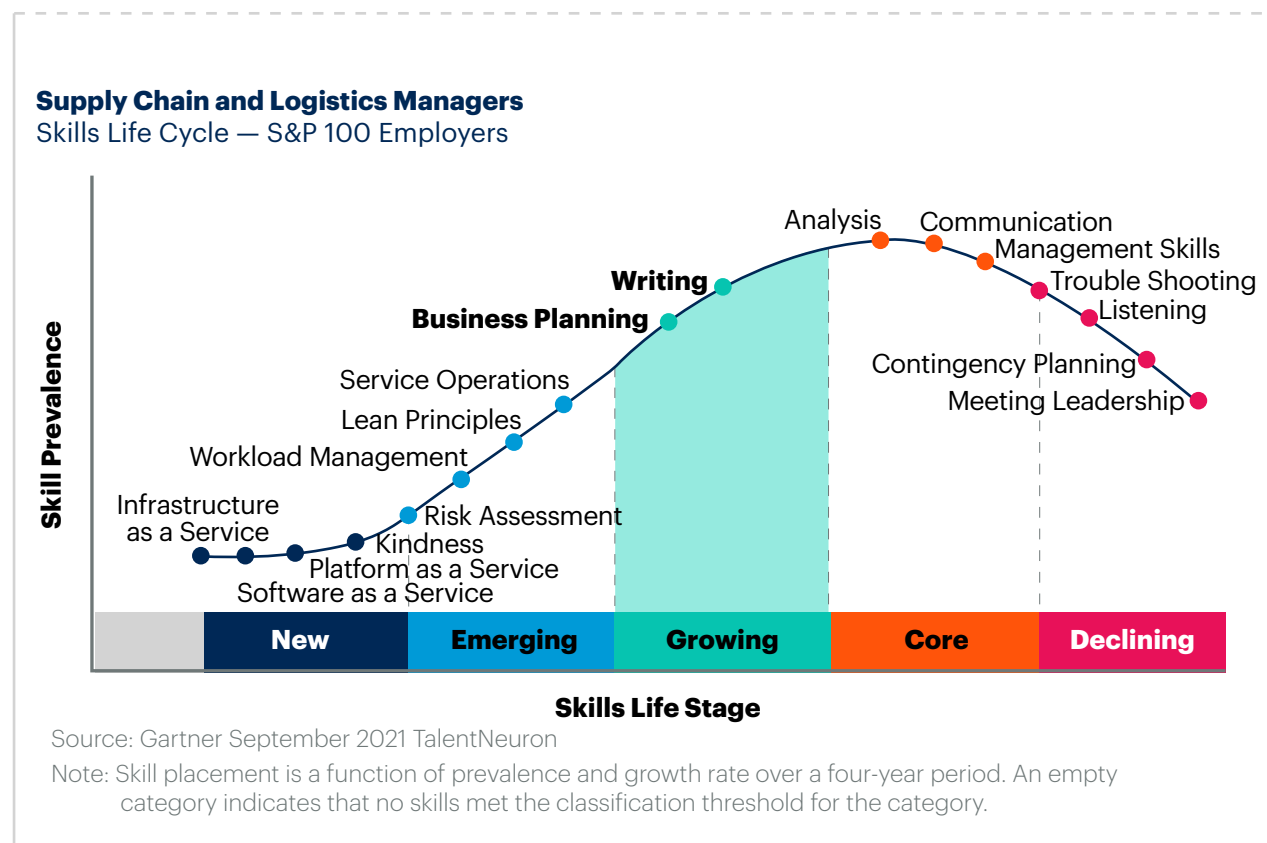
Most Common Titles With This Skill

- Procurement Professional
- Buyer
- Procurement Specialist
- Procurement Analyst
- Sourcing Specialist
- Sourcing Associate
- Strategic Sourcing Specialist
- Purchasing Agent
- Sourcing Analyst
- Commodity Specialist

Top Five Skill Adjacencies



Source: Gartner June 2021 TalentNeuron



¹ Gartner TalentNeuron, n = 7,897,507 S&P 100 full-time/permanent job postings (01-Jan-2019 to 31-Mar-2022), note: 2020 excluded from analysis due to major pandemic-induced disruption in the job market, compound annual growth rate from 2019 to 2024. This report presents a selection of roles and skills, for the full report please visit The Skills Life Cycle: 2020-2022 Reports.

² The Skill Life Cycle is built on skills data pulled from Gartner TalentNeuron. Gartner TalentNeuron is the premium end-to-end labor market intelligence solution, combining real-time insights from trusted global data sources, deep research and expert advisors to guide decisions on location, talent and competition. To identify skills, we monitor job postings from thousands of sources, including job boards, corporate sites, partner feeds, news sites, staffing websites, and applicant tracking systems. Every day, TalentNeuron processes an average of 1.3 million job postings in 22 different languages.

³ For some roles, the graphic is followed by a 'deep dive' that highlights skills within the "Growing" category. We focus these deep dives on the "Growing" category because that is likely the point at which organizations will want to start acting on a given skill. The deep dive section is intended to provide additional input as organizations consider their "build, borrow, buy" options for the skill in question.

⁴ Please keep in mind that the skills shown on the Skills Life Cycles reflect market trends in what companies are looking for in job postings and do not reflect Gartner's positioning on the skills a role should have. Reading the Skills Life Cycles also requires a level of judgment. For example, there may be instances where a common skill appears in the declining category because it has become implicit in a role so it is no longer mentioned in job postings.

Build a Better Strategic Plan for Your Function

76% of corporate strategy leaders report that significant pivots in strategic plans are happening more frequently.

For functional leaders to keep pace, they need to be agile and adaptive and consider multiple scenarios to create robust and resilient strategic plans for their function.

Use our one-page strategic planning template to clearly communicate your function's priorities and create a clear roadmap to meet your strategic business goals.

Download the strategic planning template for your function.

gartner.com/en/insights/strategic-planning