

Beat the Talent Shortage: The Power of Predicting Future Skills in the IT Sector



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In a world that's constantly changing, one of the biggest things that separates high-performing IT teams from their low-performing counterparts is predictability. The ability to anticipate and prepare for future needs and business priorities, is what ensures you can hire the right team members, fill emerging skill gaps, and maintain adaptability.

While a future-focused mindset has always been valuable for companies striving to optimise their recruitment strategies, predictability has become increasingly crucial in recent years. After all, according to the CIPD, around two thirds of global businesses are now struggling with skill gaps that they expect to worsen in the years ahead.

Plus, in many industries, turnover rates are increasing, as employee priorities evolve. Organisations that lack the foresight to predict their future skill needs are left reacting last-minute to sudden industry changes. On the other hand, firms that invest in predictive talent strategies, position themselves to meet future challenges head-on.

It's time to embrace the power of **predictability**.



The Predictability Crisis in The IT Sector

In the IT space, the ability to predict the future needs of your company (and clients), and fill skill gaps accordingly could make or break your chances of success. The more foresight you have, the more likely you are to be able to accommodate shifting customer needs, preferences, and market trends. But defining the skills your workforce needs in advance isn't easy.

Since 2023, the pace of change in the IT industry has accelerated, thanks to the rise of new technologies (like artificial intelligence), and evolving client expectations.

Unfortunately, poor predictability has significant consequences. More often than not, companies that lack foresight are left scrambling to find the right staff for projects, or paying premium costs for last-minute temporary talent. In many cases, projects end up being delayed, or clients are left unhappy with the results - leading to financial losses.

—
AROUND
40%
OF SKILLS

EMPLOYERS PRIORITISE
TODAY COULD BE
OBSOLETE BY 2030 -
MAKING FORESIGHT
HARDER TO ACHIEVE
—

Lack of predictability also has a direct impact on employee engagement, productivity, and retention, as over-extended teams are more likely to suffer from burnout.



The Data Case for Predictability



Cultivating predictability, particularly when it comes to attracting, and recruiting the right talent, is about more than just avoiding challenges and project delays. Companies with foresight gain a massive competitive advantage.

If your IT company can anticipate staffing needs in advance, you can fill skill gaps, either with recruitment strategies, or upskilling and training initiatives, before they have a negative impact on your performance, or your existing employees.

Predictability helps you **minimise employee turnover**, **boost productivity** and **engagement**, keep **customers happy**, and **increase profits**. All the while, it allows you to take a proactive and strategic approach to navigating talent acquisition.



The Data Case for Predictability

Effective skills forecasting can:

★ **Reduce Hiring Costs:**

Proactively identifying skill gaps allows for strategic hiring, minimising the need for expensive last-minute recruitment efforts, or interim hiring strategies.

★ **Accelerate Projects:**

With the right talent in place, projects can progress without delays, enhancing client satisfaction and revenue generation opportunities.

★ **Improve Employee Engagement:**

Fewer talent gaps means fewer employees taking on additional tasks on top of their existing workloads, reducing disengagement and burnout.

★ **Enhance Client Satisfaction:**

When you're prepared to tackle any project with the right skilled professionals, you're more likely to delight and retain your clients.

★ **Lower Turnover Rates:**

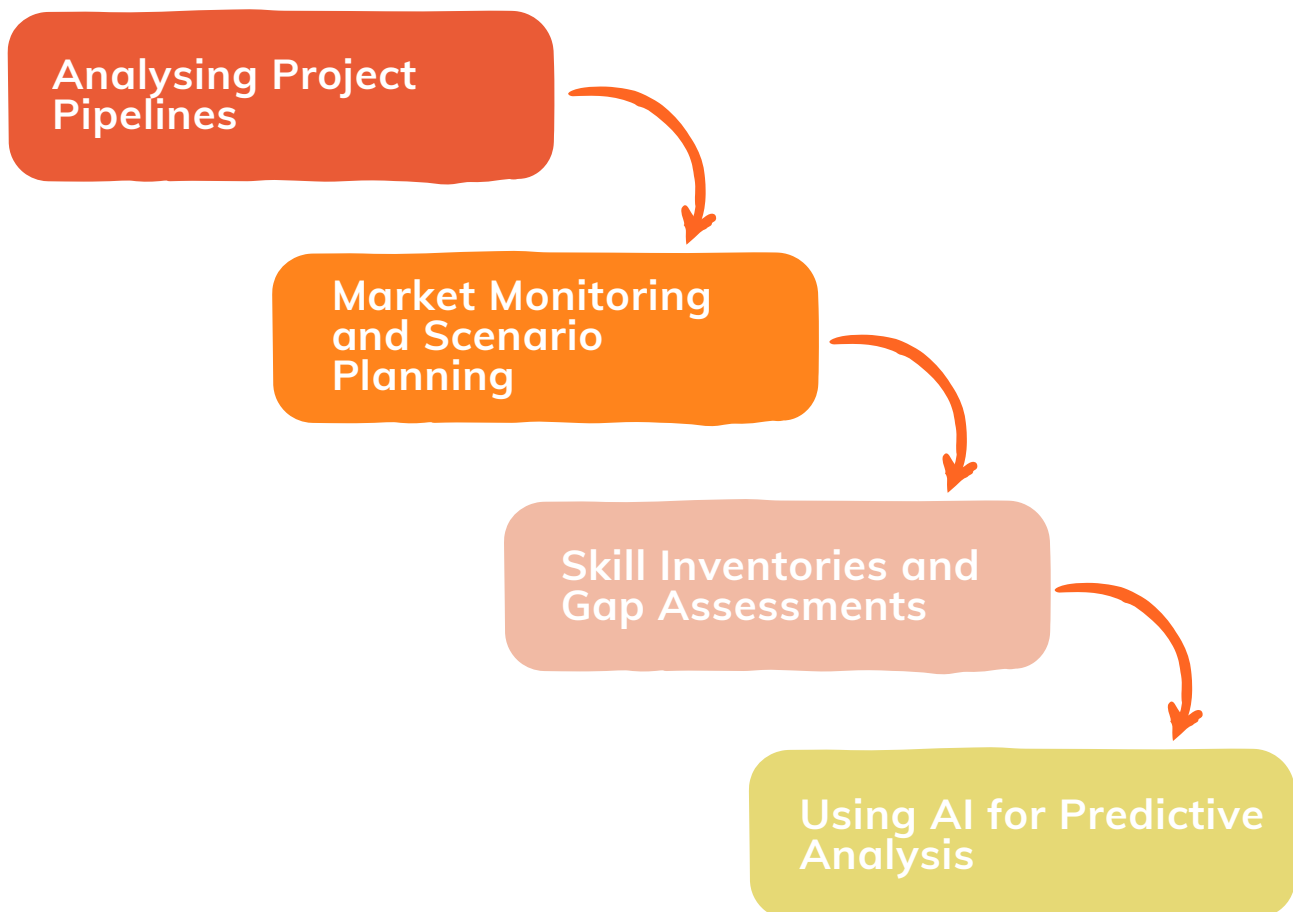
Employees that have the right skills to thrive in their roles, and aren't "over-extended" on projects, are less likely to abandon your organisation.



Predictability Methodologies for IT Firms

So, how can companies anticipate and prepare for future skill requirements effectively - particularly now that role demands are changing so rapidly? It's not an easy process. The workplace is constantly changing, with the rise of new technologies. Plus, the rise of remote and flexible working policies is leading to a shift in the types of skills IT employers need to prioritise.

However, with a careful approach to skills-based hiring - one backed by data and careful analysis, companies can achieve the right results. Here are just some of the strategies you can use to improve your skills forecasting strategy.



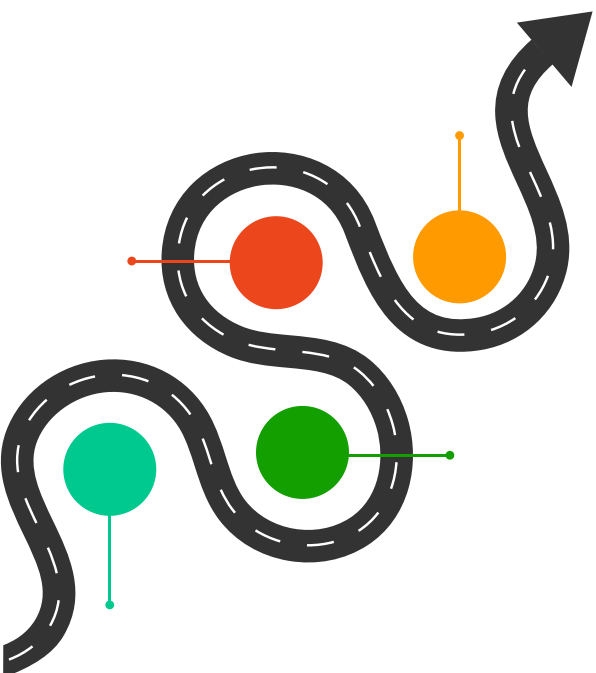
Predictability Methodologies for IT Firms

Analysing Project Pipelines

A practical starting point for predicting future skills demand is understanding the work your organisation is delivering now and what is likely to follow.

By reviewing your **current project pipeline** alongside planned and prospective work, you can identify patterns that point to future capability gaps. Changes in client expectations, service offerings, or delivery models often appear in project discussions long before they are reflected in hiring plans.

For example, if upcoming projects increasingly involve cloud migrations, security improvements, system integrations, or automation, this signals a growing need for skills in these areas. Rather than reacting once delivery pressure builds, organisations can plan ahead by upskilling existing team members or adjusting recruitment priorities early.



This approach works best when project, sales, and delivery teams share insight regularly. Reviewing pipeline data, client feedback, and project outcomes together helps ensure that skills planning is grounded in real demand, not assumptions. Over time, this creates a more resilient workforce that can adapt as technology and customer needs continue to evolve.

Predictability Methodologies for IT Firms



Market Monitoring and Scenario Planning

Staying up-to-date with industry trends is crucial if you want to anticipate trends in skill demands effectively. Monitoring **technological advancements** and **regulatory changes** in the IT industry, and market movements can help you predict what kind of skills will become essential going forward.

For instance, the integration of artificial intelligence across various sectors is currently heightening the demand for digital literacy and AI-based skills. Using the insights you gather, experiment with scenario planning - mapping out the types of skills you might need to invest in, and identifying the impact they'll have on your operations. This should make it easier to identify which skills you should be prioritising first.

Skill Inventories and Gap Assessments



The only way to identify where the “skill gaps” lie in your existing teams, is to keep a comprehensive inventory of your staff’s capabilities and competencies. Gather as much information as you can about the technical and soft skills of your existing team members, reviewing CVs, role responsibilities, and even skill assessments.

Take advantage of data from past projects, to find out what kinds of skills your team members use most often, and how they impact project outcomes. This should help you to identify patterns between specific abilities and success. Plus, your discoveries, combined with market data will help you to determine which skills you need to invest in when it comes to training, and hiring strategies.

Predictability Methodologies for IT Firms



Using AI for Predictive Analysis

Artificial intelligence has already emerged as a valuable tool for recruitment and hiring teams, streamlining resume reviews, interview scheduling, and more. These technologies can also help you understand which skills are going to be crucial to your company's future success.

AI-driven tools can **assess market trends**, **employee performance**, and **client feedback** to forecast demand for specific competencies. They can even examine the types of skills competitors are prioritising based on job descriptions, shining a light on gaps you might have missed.



Building a Predictability Culture



As the IT space continues to change rapidly, taking full advantage of the value of predictability in your hiring and training strategy will require a proactive approach. You'll need to develop a culture that makes it easier for you to align data, collect feedback, monitor skill development, and foster a commitment to continuous improvement.

This approach won't just help you to take a more intuitive approach to skills-based hiring and forecasting, it should help you to prepare for evolving trends too, such as the rise of flexible and hybrid work, or the implementation of new technologies in the workplace.

Here are some top tips for building your **“predictability culture”**:

➡ Break Down Silos:

Silos between departments and teams lead to gaps in data, making it difficult to maintain a comprehensive skill inventory, and identify opportunities. Focus on keeping teams aligned, and ensuring leaders and supervisors share information about the skills and abilities of their employees with colleagues.

➡ Create Feedback Loops:

Develop feedback loops that allow you to gather insights from client-facing and project delivery teams. Find out where they're facing challenges or struggling with inefficiencies. Pay attention to what unhappy and happy clients have to say about the level of service you provided.



Building a Predictability Culture



➡ Implement Skill Forecasting Reviews:

Regularly review your approach to skill forecasting based on your knowledge of evolving trends and industry priorities. Ask yourself whether you're accounting for changes in technology usage or team dynamics.

➡ Establish Early Warning Systems:

Monitor key performance indicators and market trends to ensure you can detect potential skill shortages, before they have a negative impact on your team's performance. Have a plan in place for implementing timely interventions - such as strategic hiring or targeted training initiatives.

➡ Develop Flexible Talent Strategies

Take a diverse approach to filling skill gaps. Don't just focus on hiring new team members every time you encounter a skill gap. Consider partnerships, interim hiring, contractor roles, and internal training and upskilling initiatives for your existing IT employees. Implement mentoring programs to ensure high-demand skills can be passed down by senior employees.

➡ Encourage Continuous Learning

Foster a company culture that prioritises continuous learning and adaptability. Actively encourage employees to pursue new technical and soft skills in a range of different ways, with micro-credentials, courses, and workshops. Ask your team members to share their own thoughts on the skills they believe they should be pursuing.



Embracing the Power of Predictability



The IT environment is dynamic and volatile. The only way to make sure you can adapt and thrive in this changing landscape, is to embrace the power of predictability. With the right approach to identifying the skills you're going to need in the months and years ahead, you can improve the **resiliency**, **adaptability**, and **profitability** of your workforce.



Don't wait for skill gaps to damage your company's progress before you take action. Embrace a proactive approach to analysing the data you have and making sure you're ready to navigate future market trends and challenges.



If you do, you'll give yourself a clear competitive edge in the IT industry, and benefit from **reduced turnover costs**, **better recruitment strategies**, and more **productive employees**.



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Our founder, **Rachel Constant-Taylor**, started in recruitment in 2006, the same year her youngest daughter was born. With a background in the IT industry since leaving school, moving into **IT recruitment** was a natural fit for her, combining her real-world knowledge of working in Tech companies with her love of people. She saw an opportunity in 2012 to create a unique recruitment agency of her own that delivered exceptional service and expertise.



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