Boosting the uptake of digital careers among early career professionals and experienced professionals

The Behavioural Insights Team, 2023
Contents

1. Exploratory research: facilitators and barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers
   1. Executive Summary
   2. Background
   3. Methods
   4. Literature review
   5. Interview findings
   6. What might boost uptake?
2. Testing the impact of messages on boosting uptake of digital training and careers: Results
   1. Executive summary
   2. Key takeaways and recommendations
   3. Background and methodology
   4. Experimental results
   5. Feedback on messages
   6. Existing knowledge and attitudes
3. Appendix
1. Exploratory research: facilitators and barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers
1.1. Executive summary
1.1 Executive Summary

1. The UK has a significant digital skills gap. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has outlined its goal to reduce this gap in the government’s agenda for digital skills policy, the UK Digital Strategy.

2. DSIT and the Digital Skills Council commissioned the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) to carry out research into using behavioural insights in communications to boost uptake of digital training and careers.

3. DSIT are interested in messaging that might appeal to Early Career Switchers, aged 27-35 (ECS) and Experienced Professionals, aged 50-65 (EPs).

4. This project consists of three phases: (a) Exploratory research, (b) Message generation, (c) Message testing.

5. Based on the findings from this first phase of work, we have identified eight implications for each age group for message generation. These are summarised on slides 7-10.
Barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers

Negative preconceptions of the tech sector:
- Difficult, complex jobs
- Long & antisocial working patterns
- High levels of discrimination

Low awareness of upskilling opportunities
Financial cost of retraining and switching careers

Higher number of workers leaving the labour market:
- Early retirement
- Career breaks
Lack of entry or junior level roles in digital vacancies
### Early Career Switchers: Implications for message generation (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Message</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Highlight the availability of free retraining options</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Stress the accessibility of digital jobs</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Emphasise growth, flexibility and high-paying nature of tech</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Show them that it’s possible to switch careers</td>
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Early Career Switchers: Implications for message generation (2)

5. Avoid the term ‘cyber,’ be cautious with ‘digital’ and ‘artificial intelligence.’ Use ‘tech’.

6. Communicate simple job titles to those outside tech

7. Focus on a wide range of jobs and prosocial goals

8. Use relatable messengers from a trusted authority
Experienced Professionals: Implications for message generation (1)

1. Highlight the ‘skill’ aspect of digital skills training

2. Focus on how digital skills training fit within people’s personal lives

3. Emphasise the exciting nature of the tech sector

4. Use pensions rather than salaries
Early Career Switchers: Implications for message generation (2)

5.
Alleviate age anxiety by showing that everyone can work in tech

6.
Avoid the terms ‘tech’ and ‘cyber’. Be cautious with ‘digital’ and ‘artificial intelligence.’

7.
Emphasise diversity of job opportunities

8.
Use relatable messengers
1.2. Background
The UK has a significant digital skills gap. This gap is estimated to cost the UK economy £63 billion per year in lost potential gross domestic product (GDP).

Under half of UK employers believe that young people are leaving full-time education with sufficiently advanced digital skills. Over a third of adults between the ages of 55-64 say they lack ‘essential digital skills’.

The UK Digital Strategy sets out DSIT’s goal to work with education institutions and businesses to deliver the digital skills that the economy needs. As such, DSIT and the Digital Skills Council are investing in research and communications to encourage people to take-up digital training and careers.
Project design

DSIT and the Digital Skills Council commissioned BIT to carry out research into using behavioural insights in communications to boost uptake of digital training and careers among Early Career Switchers (27-35) and Experience Professionals (50-65). The research is split into three consecutive phases:

**Phase 1: Exploratory research**
- To identify the facilitators and barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers
- To seek feedback on early message concepts

**Phase 2: Message generation**
- To use insights from Phase 1 to generate and prioritise a longlist of message ideas

**Phase 3: Message testing**
- To test final campaign messages and make recommendations based on our findings

Research aims:

- **January-February**
  - To identify the facilitators and barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers
  - To seek feedback on early message concepts

- **February**
  - To use insights from Phase 1 to generate and prioritise a longlist of message ideas

- **March**
  - To test final campaign messages and make recommendations based on our findings
1.3. Methods
Rapid literature review

We scanned the existing evidence base relevant to the uptake of digital courses and careers amongst Early Career Switchers (27-35) and Experienced Professionals (50-65).

Our approach was pragmatic, rather than systematic, in line with the tight timelines on this project.

We focused particularly on:

1. The problem
2. Barriers to uptake
3. Potential drivers identified in the literature
Twenty-five 30-minute interviews were conducted with two distinct groups:

1. Early Career Switchers (aged 27-35)
2. Experienced Professionals (aged 50-65)

The interviews explored:

- Participants’ decision-making process for skills training
- Participant perceptions of and experiences with digital careers
- Early message testing

A breakdown of the participant sample can be found on Slide 17.
Interview sample

Notes on interpreting findings

Qualitative interviews can help us understand the range and diversity of participants’ experiences, but do not shed light on the prevalence of views or experiences.

Some responses may be subject to social desirability bias - the tendency to answer questions in a way that is perceived to be socially desirable (e.g. presenting as more open to digital training and careers than they really are) which may differ from actual attitudes.

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*There were a mix of genders in both age groups
**Not exclusive
This is not a representative sample of the UK population

Total in sample: 25
1.4. Literature review
1.4.1. The problem:

There is a digital skills shortage.

This shortage impacts workers, organisations of all sizes and the economy as a whole.

We need more people to pursue apprenticeships, training and careers in the tech and digital sectors.
Tech is the **sector with the most vacancies** in the UK

Many businesses believe their **reliance on digital skills will increase** in the coming years:

In a survey of over 1,000 businesses, 60% reported their reliance on advanced digital skills is set to increase over the next five years.
In the tech sector, the Information and Communications industry has seen the greatest growth in employment since ONS figures began.
Nearly a third of all vacancies in the labour market are due to **digital skills-shortage**

And an estimated **third** of digital skills-shortage vacancies are due to **a lack of basic digital skills**.

On top of this, **over 80%** of all advertised vacancies in the UK require **at least one digital skill**.
The digital skills and demand mismatch is already taking a toll on the economy

It is estimated that 5 million workers are at risk of becoming severely underskilled by 2030.

Moreover, between 2018-2028, it is estimated that the UK will lose 0.5% GDP growth per year as result of this skills mismatch.

UK growth and productivity is 20% lower than pre-recession forecasting and lower than G7 average.

The UK also has a lower proportion of businesses with adequate digital resources.

This amounts to £166 billion in GDP lost per year.

The lack of digital skills in the labour market has a big impact on businesses. Microsoft (2022) Unlocking the UK’s potential with digital skills. *The leader survey was composed and had 554 respondents, all from large organisations (+250)

UK leaders on their organisations digital skills gap*:

70% of organisation leaders in the UK expect to have a digital skills gap next year.

44% of UK leaders fear the current lack of digital skills within their organisation will have a fairly negative impact on their success in the next year.

What does this mean in terms of revenue?

Digital skills hold the key to a minimum of 2.4% of a company’s bottom line.

And forecasts for the skill gap aren’t good:

Microsoft (2022) Unlocking the UK’s potential with digital skills.
Over 80% of employers who have implemented digital skills training report it brought about significant improvements for the organisations.

These improvements include:

- Faster innovation cycles (80% of employers)
- Cost efficiencies (83% of employers)
- Increased revenue (82% of employers)
The gap also impacts small businesses

A survey carried out with 1000 small businesses found that:

83% of small businesses throughout the UK do not have enough support with digital skills

This is a huge missed opportunity: 54% of small businesses report having had their income grow by more than 5% due to tech

Workers who have completed digital skills training report significant benefits as a result

- 73% of non-tech workers say that digital skills training has *improved their employability*.
- 80% of non-tech workers say that digital skills training led to *higher personal satisfaction at work*.
- 66% of non-tech workers say that digital skills training *increased their promotion opportunities*.
- 66% of non-tech workers say that digital skills training *increased their ability to make career switches*.

A study carried out by Lloyds in 2022 found that workers with digital capabilities make up to an extra £442 per month than their counterparts without digital skills in similar roles.

*Amazon, (2021). AWS Global Digital Skills Study*
There is an urgency for more workers to complete digital skills training

85% of the UK organisations surveyed by the AWS Global Digital Skills Study say that the pandemic has accelerated the pace of digital adoption in their organisations.

What this means for workers who have not completed digital skills training:

- 76% of workers in the UK feel that they now require more digital skills to cope with changes in their jobs due to the pandemic.
- 70% feel that they aren’t gaining digital skills fast enough to meet future career needs.

An estimated 11.6 million more UK workers will require digital skills training to keep up with technological advancements and gain the new digital skills needed to succeed in their careers.

This represents 35% of the country’s workforce.

Amazon, (2021). AWS Global Digital Skills Study
This urgency for is particularly acute for experienced professionals

81% of workers under 55 claim to have essential digital skills

For 55-64’s, this falls to 66%

The least common digital skills among 55-64’s:

1. Ability to improve productivity using digital tools
2. Ability to set up and manage accounts on professional networks/job sites
3. Ability to set privacy/marketing settings
Data suggests there is a surge in interest in changing industries among workers.

33% of workers in the UK are at least somewhat likely to leave their current positions within 6 months.

McKinsey (2022) reported a trend among people who leave their jobs to move to different industries (48%) in the 6 participating countries.
ONS data points in the same direction: there was significant interest in sector / industry switching during the COVID pandemic

53% of employed people who changed jobs in 2020 changed major industries.

- Over 1/4 switchers (26.9%) were aged 50-64.

- The biggest increase of switchers between 2019-2020 was amongst 25-34 year olds (25%)

Covid brought about a decrease in experienced professionals deciding to switch careers relative to other years, but an increase in younger professionals making the switch.

Recent data suggests that industry switching has slowed down since the end of the pandemic but remains significant.

37% of people who have left their job admit to wanting to switch sectors:

According to Way, Pollard & Dennes (2022) the most common reason for leaving work among 50-54 year olds was stress.

Other big drivers were:

1. COVID-19
2. Redundancy
3. Desire for change of lifestyle
Career switchers are interested in tech positions…

56% of non-tech workers say they plan on switching careers/industries following Covid

28% of respondents considered switching to a tech career. Half of this group have started the process of switching to a tech career or are looking into it.

Increased availability of opportunities to train and work:
More companies e.g. Microsoft, Nationwide offering direct reskilling opportunities to transition into their tech roles.

...Including older adults who left the workforce during the pandemic

**Tech** is the biggest area of interest for reskilling among adults aged 50-65.

25% of adults aged 50-54 who left the workforce during covid would be interested in improving their advanced IT skills.
The problem: a summary

1. The digital skills shortage means that billions of pounds of revenue are left hanging, taking a toll on economic growth and productivity.

2. Besides earning lower salaries compared to their digitally-skilled peers, workers who are not engaging in digital skills training are in danger of not meeting labour market needs in the future.

3. Uptake of digital apprenticeships or training seem to be at best stagnating and at worst declining.
Opportunities: a summary

1. Tech currently has the most job vacancies of any sector in the UK.

2. More and more people are expressing interest in switching careers, especially experienced professionals aged 50-65.

3. Of those who are looking to retrain, many are interested in the digital sector.
1.4.2 Barriers to the uptake of digital training and positions
Overview: Barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers for both age groups

- **Capability**
  - Lack of awareness about availability and options for digital upskilling

- **Motivation**

- **Opportunity**
  - Misperceptions of ‘tech’ roles
  - Lack of available junior positions in tech
Tech vacancies are higher for senior roles

A lack of entry level positions makes competition for roles in tech a lot higher for career switchers.
Low awareness of the diversity in digital career opportunities

Many think ‘tech’ careers are restricted to coding, programming, or software engineering.

In reality, there is a large variety in the different roles and vacancies that need filling in the tech sector.
Barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers for 27-35 year olds

- **Capability**
  - Low digital skill levels in the UK

- **Motivation**
  - Negative stereotypes surrounding the workplace culture in the digital sector

- **Opportunity**
  - Gendered social norms and expectations for young women have knock-on effects for career and training opportunities
27-35 is the peak age for career breaks, disproportionately impacting women’s opportunities to retrain

<table>
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<th>Capability</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
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</table>

| 43%        | Of highly qualified women take career breaks. |

- 44% of which to take care of children
- 16% of which to change careers

| 24%        | Of highly qualified men take career breaks. |

- 12% of which to take care of children
- 29% of which to change careers

Career breaks affect women’s opportunities to switch careers:

- Less time to access courses / training
- Less opportunities to reskill
- Cost of career breaks presents a financial barrier to pay for retraining

Young workers can have negative preconceptions of tech jobs, including:

- Long or anti-social working hours
- Difficult workloads
- High stress and loneliness
- Lack of inclusivity
Barriers to the uptake of digital training and careers for experienced professionals

- 'Narrow users' of digital technologies
- Influence of career identity and ageing identity
  - Stress avoidance
  - Increases in early retirement
- Low awareness of training opportunities geared at their age group
- Discrimination in training and hiring
- Lack of support
**Awareness Barriers**

1 in 8 Experienced professionals are aware of the digital training opportunities available to them.

Reasons for this could include the marketing of training courses. Eg. the Digital Skills Bootcamp courses are mainly advertised via social media.

However, less than 40% of adults aged 55+ in the UK are active on social media platforms.

The ‘Hidden middle’ of advanced digital skills prevents them from re-entering the workforce

Experienced professionals are more likely to come into the ‘hidden middle’ or ‘narrow users’ of digital technologies. They often have sufficient knowledge to access and use some devices, but only do so for restricted purposes. They lack the more advanced skills necessary to work in the digital sector.

Experienced professionals tend to minimise their online activities to specific purposes, meaning they occupy a high proportion of ‘narrow users’ in tech.

### Percentage of internet users who undertake different types of online activities each week by age group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>All internet users</th>
<th>16-24</th>
<th>55-74</th>
<th>74+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General surfing / browsing</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Transactions</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>64%</td>
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</table>
Ageism in the hiring process prevents older adults from starting new careers or re-entering the workforce

- **52%** Of jobseekers aged 50+ think their age would make them less likely to receive job offers.
- **17%** Of workers aged 50+ have experienced ageism during the hiring process.
- **12%** Of workers hired in the last year in OECD countries were aged 50-64.

Negative stereotypes against older employees include:

- **Unreliability** due to declining health
- **Seen as less ‘tech-savvy’**
- **Less able or willing to upskill, retrain and respond to technological innovations.**

OECD, 2019. Working better with Age.
Lack of support for age-specific needs of experienced professionals increases the likelihood of early retirement

3 in 5 Adults aged 50+ are carers for a spouse or relative. Older working adults are also more likely to suffer from chronic health conditions.

This creates a need for better healthcare benefits and more flexible working patterns. Unfortunately, these needs are not always met by employers, prompting older adults to retire at a younger age.
Attitude & Identity changes can affect EP’s self-image, negatively impacting their motivations to take up new skills

- **Low self-belief**

  Experienced professionals tend to adopt an ‘ageing identity’. This then bleeds into their mindset, making them are less confident in their digital skills.

- **Risk aversion & fear**

  Some EPs exhibit less trust in digital platforms, which can translate into a tendency to avoid engaging with them to minimise risk.

**Ageing Identity:** As people age, they increasingly perceive themselves through the lens of social norms and expectations for their age group, eg; mental & physical incompetency, unproductivity, unwillingness to learn new things.
As their careers progress, the extent to which they identify with their professions decreases

- Evidence suggests that **Career Identity** goes down with age.

- This means older workers look to prioritise other aspects of their life, such as family, travel or hobbies.

- This also exhibits itself in a tendency to seek better work-life balance, discouraging ageing workers from taking up new skills training and avoiding career changes.

**Career Identity**: The extent to which people define themselves in relation to their job, skills, and professional achievements.
People aged 50+ were the only age group to see an overall increase in economic inactivity since the pandemic

- Pre-2019, workers aged 50+ were among the highest group of career switchers.

- After the pandemic, an additional 87,000 workers aged 50-70 moved from economic activity to inactivity compared to previous years, the highest increase since records began.

- Reasons cited for this included vulnerability to the virus (including long COVID sufferers), redundancy, inability or lack of motivation to work remotely, and desire to change lifestyle.
Stress is one of the most common drivers for early retirement among 50-54 year olds

Figure 1: Leaving their previous job to retire was more common among those aged 50 to 54 years and 60 to 64 years compared with 6% of adults aged 50 to 54 years

Proportion of adults aged 50 to 65 years who have left their previous job since the pandemic and would consider returning, by age group, Great Britain, 10 to 29 August 2022

Summary of barriers to the uptake of digital careers and training, by age

Key barriers for both age groups
- Awareness
- Negative preconceptions
- Career breaks
- Gender norms

Key barriers for early career professionals
- Attitude & Identity
- Skills gap

Key barriers to switch to industries for experienced professionals
- Health
- Discrimination
1.4.3 Facilitators for the uptake of digital training and careers
Financial benefits from switching to the digital sector

**Salary**
Salaries for tech jobs are up to 80% higher than other industries in the UK. The average salary in tech is £62,000 compared to £35,000 for other industries.

**Building financial resilience**
In the wake of the cost of living crisis and Covid recovery, the digital sector could help people build resilience to further economic instability.

**Boost Pension**
For those aged 50+ considering early retirement, extending their career by switching to tech could help them earn an extra £200k before retirement, and boost their pension pot by 50%.

Most career switchers move to tech to unlock better salary prospects

89% Of workers who switched to the digital sector did so to earn more money.

81% Of those reported earning higher salaries once they had made the switch.
Switching to tech to ‘future-proof’ careers

In the wake of economic instability, 1 in 4 UK workers are looking to move into more resilient industries.

The digital sector is currently one of the most stable and fastest-growing UK industries, making it very attractive for sector switchers.

Seeking **better job flexibility and work-life balance**

80% of tech workers agree that they value the industry’s flexibility (20% higher than the UK average in other sectors).

Flexibility in the tech sector allows for increased remote working opportunities and more adaptable working hours.

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**Location preferences for tech workers planning to change jobs, 2020**

- Want a flexible or hybrid option: 60%
- Want to work remotely full time: 40%
- Want to work in the office full time: 0%

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Older professionals are more likely to switch careers to get better job satisfaction, whilst early career professionals seek better salaries.

**Experienced professionals tend to prioritise jobs that...**
- Allow for more flexible hybrid working
- Have less professional competition
- Allow better work-life balance
- Have better benefits packages

**Early career professionals tend to prioritise jobs that...**
- Have higher salaries
- Include better opportunities for training and progression
- Are more resilient to times of uncertainty and fluctuation

Summary of key facilitators for career switching

Key driver to switch to tech for all workers
- Flexibility and resilience of the sector

Key driver to switch to tech for experienced professionals
- More job satisfaction
- Better work-life balance

Key driver to switch to tech for early career professionals
- Higher pay and better benefits
- Opportunities for training and development
1.5. Interview findings
Recap: Interview sample

Notes on interpreting findings

Qualitative interviews can help us understand the range and diversity of participants’ experiences, but do not shed light on the prevalence of views or experiences.

Some responses may be subject to social desirability bias - the tendency to answer questions in a way that is perceived to be socially desirable (e.g. presenting as more open to digital training and careers than they really are) which may differ from actual attitudes.

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*There were a mix of genders in both age groups
**Not exclusive

Total in sample: 25
1.5.1. Early Career Switchers
Early Career Switchers: Who are they?

The data that informs the findings in this section was gathered through 18 interviews with people aged 27-35 who at the time met one or more of the following criteria:

1. Were considering enrolling in digital skills training of any kind (e.g. bootcamps, apprenticeships)
2. Had recently completed digital skills training of any kind
3. Were considering switching sectors into the tech/digital industry.
4. Had recently changed sectors into the tech/digital industry.
5. Left the workforce during the pandemic.

To better understand barriers, two of the interviews were carried out with people who were uninterested in digital skills training or career switching.
1.5.1.a. The decision making process for starting training
ECS heard about digital training opportunities through **personal contacts, research, and social media advertising**

**Someone they personally know & trust**
- Eg. Friends, relatives
  - ‘It was recommended to me by my aunt who completed the same one. She had really good reviews so I thought I’d give it a go’

**Independent online research**
- ‘I found out through looking things up for myself. I have always been interested in tech but never really knew where to start’

**Social media advertising**
- Eg. Instagram, Twitter
  - ‘I usually consume a lot of that stuff on social media so I might be in some kind of bubble, but that’s the ads the algorithm is giving me!’
ECS tend to prioritise reputable delivery organisations when deciding between digital training options.

Providers such as AWS or School of Code bestow a sense of legitimacy to the training.

What convinced me about doing that training was that it had the AWS name on it and had a high rate of applicants. It lent credence to it.

ECS are very wary of scams or training that will not be relevant in the labour market, especially since they look for opportunities that are free.

Real learning opportunities are much harder to find when you turn 30. Adult education is often questionable, or feels like a scam. It's rare to find something that seems inherently good and is free.

The recruitment process at School of Code was so thorough, it just made it look more promising in terms of finding paid employment soon after.
1.5.1.b. Training: facilitators, barriers, and impact
The main facilitators for ECS to enroll in digital training were motivation to upskill, the effects of the pandemic, and access to free training.

Facilitators

The main motivator for ECS that had taken digital skills training was to gain the skills and certifications necessary to switch to the tech sector, which they saw as having better opportunities for progression.

For some, COVID-19 led to downsizing, less day-to-day responsibilities or work arrangements they could not accommodate in their current job. For others, it highlighted the need to develop digital skills to stay relevant in the job market and find resilient work to withstand changing circumstances in the future.

Availability of free training courses was an important factor. Most participants who retrained did so in bootcamps with no tuition costs (e.g. School of Code, AWS Restart), making the decision to enrol easier.

'I hit a glass ceiling in my current job and wanted to improve my opportunities. This industry is growing, and those jobs aren't going to go away'.

'I was in the fashion industry but the manufacturing, factory type work that I enjoyed disappeared during the pandemic, so I decided to look for a different industry that felt more safe'.

'Finances were an important consideration at that time, so it was very attractive to me that it was free'.
Missing out on income and lack of inclusivity were the main barriers to digital training uptake among ECS

Lack of income during the programme
Most bootcamps are full time, meaning ECS have to quit their jobs or take reduced hours. This means only those who can find a way to support themselves during the training are able to enrol. ECS have resorted to taking out loans, working reduced hours or being supported by partners or family members while retraining.

Perception that tech is not inclusive
Many ECS felt that digital training was only for exceptionally clever people or those with previous education or experience in the field. They were worried they would not be able to keep up with training or simply didn’t have the baseline abilities. Others felt that people similar to them are underrepresented in tech e.g. women of colour or people with disabilities.

‘A real concern for me was how I would pay my bills during that time. I had to take a loan to cover myself during that period’.

‘I thought tech was just for super smart people, like a very exclusive environment, but when you get there you meet people from every walk of life. I was surprised by that. It’s not just for people with a computer science degree, it’s also for me’.
Successfully switching into tech was most common impact of digital skills training for ECS, but not the only one

Started Career in Tech
The most commonly cited outcome of digital skills training was finding a new career in the tech industry. Many respondents planned for this to be a permanent change.

‘Making this switch has had a long-term impact on my career goals. Before, I didn’t have a career plan. Now, it’s become quite clear to me’.

Community building
Many ECS describe having become part of an active community of people working in the same field or looking for work in the same field during their training.

‘The bootcamp introduced me to a broader tech community. I’m not only connected with people from the bootcamp, but also others who completed training’

Increased confidence
Successfully completing digital skills training despite their initial self-doubt has increased ECS’ confidence in their own abilities and capacity to meet the requirements of any role they set their minds on.

'I'm now applying for these roles that I wouldn't have felt able to do without this training. I've now got the skills, knowledge and confidence I need'
1.5.1.c. Career switching: facilitators, barriers, and impact
Better pay, industry stability and remote work opportunities were the main facilitators for ECS to switch to digital careers

Facilitators

**Higher Salary**
Looking to secure *better pay and long term prospects for raises* is one of the main reasons why young professionals are drawn to tech from other sectors.

**Industry Resilience**
Many ECS *perceive that the tech industry will remain stable and secure*, whilst other sectors may be badly affected by external circumstances. In many cases, this stems from *negative experiences of how their previous roles were affected by the pandemic*.

**Flexibility**
ECS frequently cite the prevalence of *remote and hybrid work arrangements* in the tech sector as one of its main appeals.

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*The big advantage would be pay. The starting junior salary would be a lot higher than mine currently is*.

*‘I was in the fashion industry but the manufacturing, type work that I enjoyed disappeared during the pandemic, so I decided to look for a different industry that felt more safe’*

*‘My partner, who is also a cloud engineer, heard about the bootcamp from contacts. They told him that working in tech has better wages and more work flexibility, so that really motivated me’*.
Other key facilitators for ECS to switch to digital careers included professional development, widespread job opportunities and job satisfaction.

**Facilitators**

**Growth opportunities**
Many of the ECS perceive the tech sector as very likely to keep on growing in the future, which provides them with opportunities for professional development.

**Widespread job availability**
A perception that the tech industry job market is not only stable, but constantly expanding has been a motivation for many ECS to career switch.

**Job satisfaction**
Perceiving work in the tech sector as more ‘stimulating’ or ‘engaging’ than their current or previous role is frequently mentioned by ECS as a driver behind their decision to change sectors.

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‘I love my current role. It’s really important for me to have career progression opportunities, which I do now. Before, I had a dead end job’

‘I hit a glass ceiling in my previous job and I wanted to improve the job opportunities I could consider. This industry is growing, and those jobs aren’t gonna go away.’

‘Work as a coder is stimulating. You have a problem, think about how to solve it, liaise with people with experience about how to solve it. It’s not just mechanical like my job before’
Negative preconceptions of the tech industry and fear of taking a leap of faith were the main barriers to career switching for ECS

Negative stereotypes of tech professionals
Prevailing negative representations the tech industry workers as lonely and socially awkward can discourage young professionals from career switching or engaging with tech at all.

‘Leap of faith’ element
Some ECS were scared of leaving their previous roles and not securing a new job in the tech sector. This was especially true for those who did not personally know a successful career switcher.

‘I had already done a bit of computer science when I was younger but I didn’t want to be the smelly lonely coder, antisocial, isolated, like you’re not talking to anyone’

‘No one I knew personally had done that route. I didn’t know anyone who left their job, did a bootcamp and tried to get into the sector. I didn’t know if it would get me where I wanted to be in terms of jobs’
Other key barriers for ECS to switch to digital careers include a lack of entry level positions and skepticism about the lack of diversity in tech.

Lack of junior roles increases competitiveness:
Some of the ECS who have retrained are struggling to secure a position and are wary that the tech job market may be oversaturated with newly-trained career switchers looking for junior positions in the industry, which are already few and far between.

Perception of tech as not inclusive
Especially among those not currently engaged with the tech or digital industry, the perception that the digital sector lacks diversity discourages them from considering retraining and switching.

'The market is becoming too competitive, especially with the Bootcamp. 150 people finish the course every 4 months with the exact same skillset. Too many people are being churned through the system at once. Everyone wants a junior, but they all want a junior with experience.'

'I would not want to be the only woman in the organisation'
Greater job satisfaction, opportunities for development and better flexibility were the most common impacts of career switching for ECS

**Enjoyable & Purposeful work**
To most ECS, their new jobs are more challenging and stimulating than previous roles. Some feel they are able to have more of a positive impact on the world.

‘It’s amazing to finally have something I enjoy that I can call a career’

**Flexibility**
Respondents valued the remote and hybrid work opportunities. They felt this led to a better work-life balance.

‘I like that having this hybrid approach makes me more independent. I feel like I’m treated like an adult now’.

**Progression**
ECS enjoy the frequent opportunities for upskilling that their organisations provide them. They value the fact that the demand for people with digital skills is high and the roles diverse.

‘There seem to be millions of companies that want you at the minute’
1.5.1.d. Early message concept testing
Early message concept testing

We used the interviews as an opportunity to test the understanding of and appeal of different concepts and early message ideas. This section of the interview included asking career switchers, potential career switchers, trainees and those uninterested in the tech sector about their opinions on:

- Specific terms of interest to DSIT (skills, digital, artificial intelligence, cyber and tech)
- A range of digital job role titles
- Five early message concepts
Participants aged 27-35 understand “skills” to be actionable knowledge that is intentionally developed through effort and training as opposed to innate talents.

*Skills are something you are well versed in, have mastered.*

*Skills are things you have learned through experience and education.*

*Skills are something that you are good at intentionally, as opposed to a talent which you’re born with. A skill is something you put time into deliberately.*

*Something you learn via education or on the job. It’s learning that elevates you above who doesn’t have those learnings.*
Perceptions of ‘Tech’ are generally positive while ‘AI’ and ‘Digital’ have mixed reviews and ‘Cyber’ is seen as outdated

**Cyber**

Perceived as an **outdated term** from the 90’s and early 2000’s.

Associations are generally negative. Often connected to “cyber bullying”, “cyber attacks” and “hackers”.

“It’s a term that a dad trying to be cool would use rather than a term I believe is inherently correct”

The term is seen positively **‘if referring to cybersecurity. Can’t avoid it, that’s the name’**

**Digital**

Perceived as **vague, exceedingly broad, outdated and somewhat meaningless**. A ‘crusty educational buzzword’ for those who aren’t in the sector.

“Digital in isolation doesn’t indicate anything to me”.

“It’s marketing speak written by people who aren’t in digital. It’s the kind of thing you hear MP’s say’.

A minority of participants associate it with **exciting, fast paced innovation**.

**AI**

Perceptions vary significantly:

Some participants see the term as **‘dangerous and controversial’**.

Somewhat negative. Often connected to “cyber bullying”, “cyber attacks” and “hackers”.

Some see it as a **‘buzzword’** that is being overused recently.

Some believe it requires **too niche of a skillset**, making it unappealing in an advert.

Others view it as an exciting technology **‘that will be everywhere in ten years’**, making it more appealing in an advert.

**Tech**

Seen as the **relevant and appropriate word to describe the sector**, the term used by those working in the industry. For most, it would make ads more appealing.

“It’s the word my coder friends use’.

‘It’s the word I use to describe my role and the sector’

‘It’s the word that fits for me’

**Caveat**: A minority of participants feel it can be too vague and broad, like ‘Digital’.
The appeal of job titles varied by the level of interest and experience in the tech sector

### Career Switchers and potential career switchers

Roles that are perceived as highly technical and requiring more specialisation are **the most appealing**. For example:

- Web Developer, AI Engineer, Cyber Security Analyst

Job titles that are perceived as less specialised and technical are **the least appealing**. For example:

- Product Designer, Video Editor, Digital Marketing Manager, Digital Journalist

“Roles like Product Designer, they all feel a bit wishy washy. I want things that are the nitty-gritty, less creative”

### People uninterested/inexperienced in tech

Roles that are perceived as focused on “human interaction”, that sound “fun” and less reliant on tech skills are **the most appealing**. For example:

- Product Designer, Digital Journalist.

Roles perceived as requiring a high degree of tech specialization are **the least appealing**. For example:

- AI engineer

“AI engineer. I don’t even know what that is. It sounds scary, like you need several degrees to do it. Big no”
ECS and trainees found messages mentioning high wages, a wide range of jobs and prosocial goals appealing but were cautious of overstated claims.

**Tech is the #1 industry in the UK with the most job opportunities. Digital skills training can unlock all kinds of exciting and highly-paid opportunities.**

- Most career switchers and trainees agree it is an overall effective message. They value the reference to higher wages, as they see it as a key motivation.
- Many participants find the words "exciting" and "unlock" appealing. They make career switching and training feel like an adventure.
- **Caveat:** the message can come across as too good to be true. One participant goes as far as saying it feels potentially misleading.

**Some organisations house the homeless, some fight for equal rights, and some advocate for refugees. To do so, they all need people with digital skills. Digital careers can help you help others.**

- Most career switchers and apprentices/trainees find it appealing. They feel that regarding tech roles as not prosocial turns people off the sector. It matches their experience/goal of using their skills or upskilling to help others.
- The mention of different types or organisations makes tech feel ubiquitous, contrasts with the image of 'a bored person writing code for a fintech'.
- **Caveat:** The message can feel a bit long and “digital skills/careers” too vague.

**Even in a shifting economy and an unpredictable labour market, the digital sector is only expected to grow and need more talented people. Ensure a safe and exciting future by taking up a digital career/training.**

- Most career switchers and trainees feel mistrustful of this message, ‘sounds like a ponzi scheme’. One participant asked for a figure to back up the statement.
- Caution should be used when using words like ensure and safe. Strong guarantees make participants skeptical.
- Participants find it less attention-grabbing than other messages, 'too informational'.
- A minority of career switchers and trainees like it because it makes a switch to the tech job market feel ‘future-proof’.

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‘This is the kind of information that made me want to switch to digital. I like it’

‘Fantastic.. appeals to a large portion of people who are nervous about [moving to] tech due to preconceptions about the industry being unethical’

‘Feels like you’re being lied to. No one can ensure you a safe future’
Mentions of inclusiveness, diversity and relatable messengers make messages appealing, while well-known messengers can be divisive

“Part of what made the Apple Mac computer great was that the people working on it were musicians, poets, artists, zoologists, and historians. They also happened to be the best computer scientists in the world”
Steve Jobs

“One of the cool things about doing digital skills training is that you are then needed in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I've done sustainability, research, banking and psychology”
Ilisa, 32 years old.

- Most career switchers and trainees feel positively about it. They value how transferable tech skills appear to be in this message.
- It gives a sense of stability and security, ‘you will be in demand no matter the sector’.
- The young messenger makes it feel relatable, personal.
- Caveats: ‘Digital skills’ feels too broad and vague, ‘what does it even mean?’
- It elicits a bit of skepticism: ‘yes, you’re needed all across the board but not at entry level’.

“One of the cool things about doing digital skills training is that you are then needed in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I've done sustainability, research, banking and psychology”
Ilisa, 32 years old.

- Perceptions of this message vary significantly.
- Many career switchers and trainees agree it makes tech feel inclusive, like anyone can be involved in the industry if they want to. Furthermore, they value seeing that there is a creative element to tech.
- It highlights that when you're in tech people can be ‘incredibly diverse and interesting’.
- A few participants feel very negatively about Steve Jobs and it makes them immediately dislike the message ‘Ugh, I hate it, I don’t like Steve Jobs’.
- Some participants read it as an impossibly high bar: ‘it almost implies that you have to be a fantastic human being and also the best computer scientist’

‘I like that the skills are shown as transferable. It's encouraging for people who like to change their work regularly, and the quote makes it more relatable’

‘It’s encouraging for different kinds of people to apply and switch to digital because everyone has something to offer’
Relatable messengers, especially if they have successfully switched careers, are seen as the ideal information source, while perceptions of government vary.

**Peers**
Almost all career switchers or trainees agree they would like information about the tech sector or bootcamps to come from someone they feel has had similar experiences and represents them, e.g. similar age, ethnicity, background and, in the case of one participant, same disability.

**Someone in the tech industry**
Career switchers and trainees agree that they would like to hear from someone who has first hand experience in the sector ‘who knows their stuff’ and could provide them with the specific information they need, especially if this person has retrained and successfully career switched.

**Government**
Perceptions vary. Many career switchers and trainees distrust the government. They would perceive communications from it as disingenuous and generic, irrelevant to them personally. Others view the government as an authoritative source of information that would provide legitimacy and a sense of safety to the message.

**Reputable organisation**
Well-known companies in the sector, such as AWS or Google would ‘play well’ as they are perceived as an authoritative source of information for anything tech.
1.5.2. Experienced professionals
The data that informs the findings in this section was gathered through **7 interviews with people aged 50-65** who at the time **met one or more of the following criteria:**

1. Were considering enrolling in digital skills training of any kind (e.g. bootcamps, apprenticeships)
2. Had recently completed digital skills training of any kind.
3. Were considering switching sectors into the tech/digital industry.
4. Had recently changed sectors into the tech/digital industry.
5. Left the workforce during the pandemic.

To better understand barriers to engagement with tech **one interview** was carried out with someone in the same age group who was **uninterested in digital skills training or career switching.**
1.5.2.a. The decision making process for starting training
EPs heard about digital training opportunities through someone they knew or independent online research

**Someone they personally know & trust**

Eg. Friends, relative, colleagues

‘My manager recommended it to me because they knew I was looking for something.’

**Independent online research**

‘I found it on Indeed.com whilst job searching. It was fully remote & free so it seemed like a great opportunity’
Learning how to use reputable platforms was the main consideration that EPs focused on when choosing digital skills training.

EPs tend to prioritise digital training that focuses on the use of reputable platforms when deciding between digital training options.

Learning how to use these platforms or apps in more depth helped them gain a sense of expertise in an area which is sought-after in the industry.

‘I’d heard it was the most used cloud provider in the market right now’

This made it easier for them to meet potential employers and secure job interviews in well-known organisations that use those platforms.

‘The course advertised collaboration with industry professionals and guaranteed job interviews at the end, so I thought it would help me get exposed to employers.’
1.5.2.b. Training: facilitators, barriers, and impact
The main facilitators for EPs to enroll in digital training were motivation to upskill and finding more exciting work.

The fast-moving nature of the industry made them consider starting training so their skills were up to date.

'I thought doing the training course would help me get a good sense of what has changed in the industry'. [EP who left the workforce]

Others undertook digital training in order to switch to a more lucrative or exciting industry.

'IT was never central to my jobs before this. It seemed like a good opportunity to switch to a better, more current sector'
Lack of time and fear that it would be too difficult were the main barriers to digital training uptake among EPs

Lack of time
Most of the EPs in the sample had children or families, and thought that retraining would be too time-consuming to fit around their home life. This is especially true for respondents that were currently working full-time, or female respondents.

Fear that digital training would be too difficult
For EPs who have been working in other industries their whole life, digital skills training was ‘daunting’. They had preconceptions that the course would be very technical or difficult to engage with.

'I have been raising my family for seven years, I never had the time until now’

'I was weary at first that the more technical aspects of the training would not be for me, as a more hands-on kind of person’.
Acquiring the foundational knowledge necessary to succeed in tech was the most commonly cited impact of digital skills training for EPs

Knowledge acquisition
EPs agreed that the digital skills training they completed gave them a very useful basis of expertise to enter the tech sector.

‘It’s given me basic background knowledge to previously alien ways of working’.

Motivation to seek further training
The majority of EPs agreed that the training was a good foundation, but they’d like to get further accreditation in the industry.

‘It’s motivated me too look at what other training courses and certifications might be out there’

Sense of purpose
EPs who completed training reported having a newfound sense of direction and focus in their career.

‘I now feel focused on where I want to go, where I want to take my life from here’
1.5.2.c. Career switching: facilitators, barriers, and impact
Exciting, interesting work opportunities and better pension prospects were key facilitators for EPs to switch to tech

Facilitators

Many EPs referred to the digital sector as exciting and fast-paced. They alluded to the rapid growth of the sector since Covid that has led to a burst of job opportunities.

Pension contributions, and other benefits packages such as health insurance, were also cited as key motivators. Salary, however was lower down the list of drivers.

‘It’s amazing to have a fresh change in an exciting and innovative environment. It feels like the industry embodies the idea of agility’.

‘The older I get, the more I prioritise the pension aspect. If I switched it would have to have a better pension package’.
Other facilitators included stability of the tech sector and being up to date with the evolving labour market.

EPs valued the perceived future stability and reliability of the digital sector, as opposed to other industries.

They emphasised the importance of keeping up with the current trends in the workforce.

‘The digital industry is where everything is progressing towards these days’

‘Switching to tech seemed like a good opportunity to get a more current job’
Age and anxiety about feeling illegitimate in the industry were the main barriers to career switching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘It’s too late’</td>
<td>EPs felt it was too late in their career to start something new, and were scared that it would be too risky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety over going back to formal education</td>
<td>When you’re a bit older and coming in from outside that world [tech], it sometimes makes you feel like you don’t know what you’re talking about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of tech as a ‘young people’ industry</td>
<td>‘I’m not in my 20s anymore, I might not have the mental agility to pick things up like younger people do’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘Young people in the tech world sometimes have issues communicating things easily to amateurs like me, so there might be an understanding barrier there’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Improved workplace culture, more interesting work, and better flexibility** were the most common impacts of career switching for EPs

**More exciting work**

Mirroring the key drivers for retraining among OAs, those who have made the switch value the fact that their work is **exciting and interesting**.

‘I like feeling up to date with the current world, especially with how interesting data knowledge can be’.

**Workplace culture**

New switchers cite their newfound improved working culture as an **unexpected bonus arising from making the switch to tech**. They enjoy having **better support from managers and colleagues**.

‘I like being able to reach out to different colleagues and teams for support. It’s a very supportive environment’

**Flexibility**

Successful switchers value the flexibility of **being able to work from anywhere**, which gives them more independence and a better work-life balance.

‘I like that I can work from anywhere on my computer. My previous job I had to be in person on a daily basis, which doesn’t match my personality’.
1.5.2.d. Early message concept testing
Early message concept testing

We used the interviews as an opportunity to test the understanding and appeal of different concepts and early message ideas. This section of the interview included asking career switchers, potential career switchers, trainees and those uninterested in the tech sector about their opinions on:

- Specific terms of interest to DSIT (skills, digital, artificial intelligence, cyber and tech)
- A range of digital job role titles
- Five early message concepts

We tested slightly different message concepts with the EPs than with the ECS group.
Participants aged 50-65 understand “skills” as something you have learned to do exceptionally well, that can help you be more efficient.

A skill is something you feel confident using, that helps you to do things. Something you bring to the job.

A combination of training and experience.

A set of abilities that allow you to complete your tasks and duties. The more skilled you are, the better you can perform things.

Almost all EPs defined skills in relation to their professional experience and training.
Perceptions of ‘Tech’ and ‘Cyber’ are generally negative among EPs, whilst ‘AI’ and ‘Digital’ have mixed reviews

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tech</th>
<th>Cyber</th>
<th>AI</th>
<th>Digital</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reactions were mostly negative. EPs associated the term with complex, difficult subject matter.</td>
<td>EPs had similar reactions to this term as the ECS. They found it to be too vague and broad.</td>
<td>Perceptions vary significantly.</td>
<td>Perceptions were mostly negative, alluding to the term being too vague. Although it best encompassed the industry as a whole, it lacks specifics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It sounds more like coding to me, more complicated’.</td>
<td>‘It’s a science fiction term. It sounds more like a fantasy than a real job term’.</td>
<td>Some see it as scary and unfamiliar.</td>
<td>‘It’s abstract. It means anything and everything’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The majority of EPs found the term uninteresting.</td>
<td>They also associated it with cybersecurity, which was perceived as more complex.</td>
<td>There were also perceptions of it being a very advanced and complicated field.</td>
<td>‘It’s just not clear. What kind of work would you end up doing?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It’s a nothing word, it feels outdated’.</td>
<td>‘It’s not interesting to me, it sounds like it would be too difficult or intense’.</td>
<td>‘It’s intimidating, it seems very advanced. You need to know a lot to get involved in it.</td>
<td>One respondent liked this term as he felt it resonates well with the training he completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who had already made the switch had a less negative reaction;</td>
<td>However, one EP claimed ‘I know cybersecurity gets a lot of money’.</td>
<td>Others emphasised the fact that it’s a very exciting and fast-growing field.</td>
<td>‘Most of the bootcamps are called digital skills training in some way, so if I saw this in a job I would be drawn to it’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘12 months ago, I would’ve thought that’s not for me, but now it might be more appealing’.</td>
<td>One EP had a more neutral reaction, citing the ‘eye-opening extent to which it is used throughout the industry’.</td>
<td>‘It feels very trendy, at the top of the tech agenda’.</td>
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</table>
Messages mentioning the diversity of job opportunities within the digital sector were by far the most appealing among EPs.

The majority of respondents were pleasantly surprised by the mention of different industries within digital opportunities. ‘It includes a lot of things that people might not think of, it’s intriguing’

They particularly liked the implication that different kinds of skills and expertise could still be relevant. ‘Whatever field you work in, your current skills are already relevant’

One EP who had already switched disagreed with the idea of it being a ‘highly paid’ industry. ‘Maybe for people starting their careers it’s highly paid, but for someone my age who has been working for 30 years or so, it can be quite a big step down’.

Digital roles are #1 in the UK for most job opportunities. Whether it’s healthcare, fashion, journalism or sports, digital careers open the door to all kinds of exciting, creative and highly-paid opportunities.

This was the only message with an overall positive response.
Messages mentioning future prospects and prosocial goals provoked more mixed reactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some organisations house the homeless, some fight for equal rights, and some advocate for refugees. To do so, they all need people with digital skills. Digital careers can help you help others.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Most EPs agreed with the message, and liked the fact that it highlighted lesser-known aspects of the digital industry.  
  ● ‘It’s interesting to know there’s more diversity in your options in the sector’.  
  ● However, some said that social impact is not a key motivator in their careers.  
  ● They found this message to be appealing to a slightly younger audience, stating that it didn’t feel as ‘relevant’ to them.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tech is the #1 industry in the UK with the most job opportunities. Digital skills training can unlock all kinds of exciting and highly-paid opportunities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● Most respondents found this message too vague or ambiguous. What kind of opportunities?  
  ● Some questioned the truthfulness of tech being the #1 industry in the UK.  
  ● A majority liked that it suggested the benefits of doing digital skills training.  
  ● One respondent suggested that it could be seen as misleading, emphasising that digital training is not a golden ticket to highly paid jobs, especially for older working adults.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Even in a shifting economy and an unpredictable labour market, the digital sector is only expected to grow and need more talented people. Ensure a safe and exciting future by taking up a digital career/training.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● A majority agreed with the idea that the tech sector will likely carry on growing.  
  ● However, this message didn’t feel as relevant to their age group. They stated that financial uncertainty and planning for the future weren’t as big a concern for them compared to younger workers.  
  ● Some were hesitant to endorse the idea of digital careers being ‘safe’ in the wake of recent tech layoffs. ‘Maybe replace “safe” with “stable”. Safe seems to be overpromising’.  

‘That’s for young people. My reasons for wanting to change careers are not this selfless. I want a better pension and better pay if possible’.  

‘Highly paid is good, but it wouldn’t necessarily make me want to retrain’  

‘This doesn’t speak to me personally. It’s for younger people who don’t know what to do with their lives’
Messages highlighting flexibility in the digital sector were very divisive

Respondents who currently work from home or flexibly had a very positive reaction to this message.
‘This is definitely true, I’m surprised it’s not 100%!’
‘This is definitely great for me as a mother of three. I have the time to drop my kids at school, do household chores and still work full time’.
‘I don’t see myself going back full time to an office at my age’.

Some disagreed, stating they prefer structure and felt too isolated at home.
‘I personally find it exhausting working from home’

A few felt neutral about this message.
‘It wouldn’t convince me to switch’.
‘It’s not actually relating to anything concrete about tech.’

Tech offers excellent remote working opportunities: 80% of tech workers agree that they value the flexibility of their career.
Similarly to ECS respondents, relatable messengers, especially if they have successfully career switched, are seen as the ideal source of information.

**Someone in the tech industry**
The majority of EPs stated they would prefer to hear from someone who had made the same career switch to tech. They felt this group would be best placed to give them advice, or evaluate their skills.

**Peers**
EPs highlighted the value of seeing the experiences of someone their age who worked in tech. ‘Someone in a similar part of life, a similar age who would know I’m a good fit for this job or industry.’

**Government**
Most EPs claimed they wouldn’t value a message about career switching from the government. ‘It would feel less personal, like I’m being lumped together with everyone. How is this relevant to me?’

A combination of the two is seen as ideal: someone that they feel represents them and successfully took the path they are considering.
1.6. What might boost uptake?
Boosting uptake for both groups: Implications for message generation

1. Use relatable messengers
   EPS and ECs prefer hearing from professionals in the field for specific, accurate information, especially if that person has switched careers themselves.

2. Emphasise diversity of job opportunities
   Messages should explain that the digital industry is vast, and composed of more than ‘coders’.
Highlight the free nature of (some) retraining
Training communications could focus on cost-free programs to reduce the perceived financial burden of retraining. These messages should signal legitimacy as young people are wary of scams.

Stress the accessibility of digital jobs
Messages should emphasise that the tech industry is not just for those with exceptional cognitive capabilities. Further, it should be highlighted that opportunities are available to women, people of colour and people with disabilities.

Emphasise growth, flexibility and high-paying nature of tech
Messages should highlight the prospect of pay raises, remote work and industry growth, as they are major reasons why young professionals jump industries. These messages should be fact-based as some were wary of messages overpromising.

Show them that it’s possible to switch careers
Communications should focus on highlighting successful career transition stories. This will alleviate the fear that some career switchers may have about leaving their current role for the tech industry, especially for those who don't know someone who has successfully made the switch.
Avoid the term ‘cyber,’ be cautious with ‘digital’ and ‘artificial intelligence.’ Use ‘tech’.

Cyber is perceived as outdated, and connected to negative associations such as cyber bullying. Digital is perceived as exceedingly broad. Artificial intelligence elicits a range of responses from being intimidating and dangerous to exciting. Tech is generally seen as positive and relevant, though perceived by some as broad, and so should be used thoughtfully.

Communicate simple job titles to those outside tech

Messages should use job titles that aren’t intimidating. For those outside tech, jobs with less technical skills are more appealing, but for those in tech, specialised roles are more desirable.

Focus on prosocial goals

Messages should emphasise that professions in tech can be prosocial, and help others.
1. Highlight the ‘skill’ aspect of digital skills training

Communications should highlight the upskilling opportunity of training, as older adults are motivated by possessing relevant skills and feeling up-to-date.

2. Focus on how digital skills training fit within people’s personal lives

Messages should showcase how skills training can be convenient and achievable. Older adults are afraid digital skills training may not fit in their personal schedule, or that it is too hard.

3. Emphasise how exciting tech is

Participants find the sector exciting and innovative. They expressed their satisfaction with the interesting nature of their work and the supportive environment of their new workplaces. Communications should emphasise this.
Early Career Switchers: Implications for message generation (2)

4. Use pensions rather than salaries
   Messages should spotlight pension packages. While ECS were motivating by the high-paying nature of digital jobs, older participants reported being attracted by the security that a better pension package would offer.

5. Alleviate age anxiety through showing that everyone can work in tech
   Messages should focus on reassuring older adults their age does not prevent them from working in the digital sector, or learning relevant tech skills.

6. Avoid the terms ‘tech’ and ‘cyber’. Be cautious with ‘artificial intelligence’ and use ‘digital’ carefully
   ‘Tech’ is perceived as uninteresting, ‘cyber’ is seen as vague and broad, ‘artificial intelligence’ elicits a range of responses from being scary and unfamiliar to exciting and trendy. ‘Digital’, while more positive, is also seen as vague, and therefore needs to be contextualised.
2. Testing the impact of messages on boosting uptake of digital training and careers: results
2.1. Executive summary
2.1 Executive summary

BIT ran an online experiment with a sample of 2,561 early career switchers (people aged 27 to 35) and 2,513 experienced professionals (people aged 50 to 65) in England from 10 - 19 March 2023 to test how different messages influence uptake of digital courses and careers.

Key Findings:
1. 1 in 5 experienced professionals clicked to find out more about training opportunities, compared to 1 in 20 early career switchers.

2. For experienced professionals, the 'Value' messages almost doubled clicks to learn more about training opportunities, despite lower sentiment scores. The ‘Diversity’ and ‘Testimony + Passion’ messages boosted intent to consider a digital career, though this was not significantly different from the control.

3. For early career switchers, the ‘Testimony’ and ‘Job Demand’ messages boosted intent to consider a digital career, though this was not significantly different from the control, no message arm. The ‘Testimony’ message also boosted people’s intent to consider a training course to improve digital skills for their current career.

4. Over 9 in 10 in both age groups who would consider a digital career would consider retraining for it.

The messaging itself was perceived positively by most participants.

1. 6 in 10 people said the messages made them feel that digital careers were achievable.

2. 1 in 2 early career switchers and 1 in 3 experienced professionals thought it was relevant and made a career change feel more possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MESSAGES TESTED: EARLY CAREER SWITCHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ease</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I was worried that I might need to complete a degree to change career, but switching to tech was a surprisingly quick and easy process.&quot; Imogen, 33 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Impact</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td>Don't just work for a living - work for a cause. From virtual healthcare to online education, tech jobs are at the forefront of positive social change. Switching to a career in tech can help you help others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Testimony</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“One of the great things about doing digital skills training is that your skills can be useful in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I’ve worked in sustainability, research, banking and psychology” Ilsa, 32 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Demand</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent data shows that tech roles are #1 in the UK for most job opportunities. Whether it's in healthcare, fashion, journalism or sports, there are digital roles that offer all kinds of exciting, creative and highly-paid opportunities.</td>
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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testimony + Never too late</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“It’s never too late to switch to the digital sector. I did a coding bootcamp last year and had a job in tech shortly after. It's kept me up to date with the current world, and the future seems good in the industry.” Aisha, 50 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The UK digital sector needs people of all ages and backgrounds to keep on growing and innovating. No matter your age or background, there's a place for you in digital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Value</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The digital job market values experience and soft skills, making it the perfect fit for experienced professionals looking to explore new career paths.</td>
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<td><strong>Testimony + Passion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I was worried that digital skills training might not be for me, but I ended up loving it. It was really helpful to learn from people who work in the industry. I wouldn't be where I am now without it” Aisha, 50 years old.</td>
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</table>
Overall, attitudes towards digital courses and careers were positive.

8 in 10 Thought they are not boring, offer equal opportunities, and are creative. However, 1 in 2 thought they are difficult and only 4 in 10 thought they are social.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Early career switchers</th>
<th>Experienced professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are not boring</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer opportunities to everyone*</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are creative</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are rewarding</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not isolating</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not difficult</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are social</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* People of all genders, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
The top reasons for considering a digital career are: flexible working, interest, and being able to work in a diverse range of sectors.

Of those who would consider a digital career, % who would do so because... (n = 1,838 / 1,224)

Free text responses:
“AI will take a lot of other jobs”
“Digital and graphic design is something that has always interested me but I have never pursued it and I think this is a perfect opportunity to do so.”
“More opportunities for career progression”
“A new kick start”
“I enjoy working with computers”
“It would be a total change”
“I used to work in the sector but now need retraining”
“To help people with data”
The top reasons for not considering a digital course/career are: enjoying current career, not starting over, and for inactive EPs, not returning to work.

Of those who would not consider a digital career, % who would do so because... (n = 723 / 1289)

Free text responses:
“I enjoy work with my hands and not on a screen unfortunately.”
“I’m too active.”
“Would not know where to start.”
“Close to retirement and do not want to change jobs now.”
“I already do things in that field and find that the sexism and ageism is rampant.”
“I am a writer. I do that for other reasons than a career.”
“I do not want to work in an office based job.”
“I worked in IT for 25 years but changed to something entirely non-digital out of choice.”
“I’m a carer and it wouldn’t fit in with my life.”
“Unable to work.”

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Intent.

Over 9 in 10 of those who would consider a digital career would retrain.

The most popular ways to retrain are: through a **training course**, a **bootcamp** or through their **current employer**.

95% of early career switchers and 92% of experienced professionals who would consider a digital career would **consider retraining for it**.

---

% who say they would consider retraining for a digital career through…

(n = 1,838 / 1,224)

- **Training course or bootcamp**:* 47% (Early career switchers) / 59% (Experienced professionals)
- **Current employer**:* 38% (Early career switchers) / 32% (Experienced professionals)
- **Apprenticeship**: 28% (Early career switchers) / 21% (Experienced professionals)
- **University qualification** (e.g. a conversion course): 26% (Early career switchers) / 22% (Experienced professionals)
- **University qualification** (e.g. a masters programme): 24% (Early career switchers) / 16% (Experienced professionals)

---

* 'Training course or bootcamp' refers to individuals accessing digital training in their own time, outside the workplace. 'Current employer' references training opportunities accessed or offered through the workplace.

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Intent - early career switchers.

7 in 10 early career switchers would consider a digital career and 3 in 4 would consider a training course. ‘Testimony’ and ‘Job demand’ performed best in terms of intent, but this was not better than the no message arm.

**72%** of early career switchers say they would consider a digital career

**88%** think others would consider a digital career

**77%** say they would consider a training course to improve their digital skills for their current career

### Of early career switchers, % who...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No message (n = 557)</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
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<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>89%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would consider doing a training course to improve your digital skills for their current career</td>
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<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clicked a link to find out about free skills training opportunities</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was no significant difference of the messages in terms of clicking to learn more about training opportunities.

**Testimony**

“One of the great things about doing digital skills training is that your skills can be useful in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I’ve worked in sustainability, research, banking and psychology.” Ilsa, 32 years old.

**Job demand**

Recent data shows that tech roles are #1 in the UK for most job opportunities. Whether it’s in healthcare, fashion, journalism or sports, there are digital roles that offer all kinds of exciting, creative and highly-paid opportunities.
1 in 2 experienced professionals would consider a digital career. The ‘Diversity’ and ‘Testimony + passion’ messages performed best in terms of intent, but the ‘Value’ message led to significantly more clicks to find out about training opportunities.

49% of experienced professionals say they would consider a digital career

86% think others would consider a digital career

56% say they would consider a training course to improve their digital skills for their current career

20% of experienced professionals clicked to find out more about training opportunities, compared to 6% of early career switchers.

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<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
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<tr>
<td>would consider doing a training course to improve your digital skills for their current career</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clicked a link to find out about free skills training opportunities</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would consider retraining for a digital career (if they would consider a digital career, n = 1,224)</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05. All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.

The digital job market values experience and soft skills, making it the perfect fit for experienced professionals looking to explore new career paths.
Qualitative insights on the messages: ECS

"Digital career sounds great, the only issue would be the timing to learn it whilst currently working a full time role."

"It’s the right length for a general selection of people to be able to grasp and process, and finish reading to the end. The key impressive thing is located in the last sentence (about the variety of sectors and career areas) - I think this is very good because the last thing we read can generally be what we remember most clearly or take away with us."

“This survey has opened my eyes to realise I can still do whatever I want to do and there aren't many things to stop me from doing so.”
Qualitative insights on the messages: EPs

"If this is designed to encourage 50+ back into work, I think an emphasis on part time options is necessary, particularly since the pandemic."

“It says enough to get you interested and then you click on the link to look further into it.”

"Somewhat intriguing. I immediately clicked on the link to see if it was working, it was. It did make me interested in what was available, also it made it very clear the courses are free."

"Would like to have known what digital role/career the person concerned eventually took up. I am 53 and feel like I am getting left behind, and maybe too old to retrain, so to read that she is 50 is quite positive. It also appeals to me as I am interested in learning coding."

"'Perfect fit for professionals’ gives the impression that it is only for professionals fields of work like lawyers, doctors etc. I am not one of those."
2.2. Key takeaways
Key takeaways and recommendations

Consider focusing online communications campaigns / messaging on experienced professionals. Experienced professionals were much more likely to click on a link to learn more about digital skills training opportunities than early career switchers. Behaviourally informed messaging was also able to impact this behaviour, with the ‘Value’ message almost doubling clicks compared to the control group.

Do more to make working in digital not feel like ‘starting over’. This was brought up as one of the top reasons to not consider a digital career in both age groups, but especially for experienced professionals.

Continue to focus on messages that tackle the primary negative perceptions of digital careers that persist, especially for experienced professionals - that they are a) difficult (believed by more than half of people) and b) aren’t social (believed by more than a third of people).

Consider greater use of messengers / buddying interventions for experienced professionals. Experienced professionals were 6pp less likely to report ‘knowing someone with a digital career that they enjoy’ as a motivating factor to switch to a digital career, when compared to early career switchers.

Conduct further testing:
1. In the field (e.g. a social media advertising trial) - to see if the ‘Value’ message boosts clicks to learn about training (among experienced professionals) in a real-world scenario, and whether this leads to more sign-ups for digital skills training.
2. With a larger sample to pick up on small impacts that might make a difference at scale but could have been too small for this study to detect.
2.3. Background and methodology
Methodology.

We recruited a sample of 5,074 early career switchers and experienced professionals in England, who are not currently in digital careers.

BIT worked with DSIT to test the effects of messages on intent to take up a digital course or career (plus comprehension and sentiment for these messages) on an online representative sample of 5,074 early career switchers and experienced professionals in England from 10 to 19 March 2023.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>South &amp; East</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early career</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>switchers</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Mixed / other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionals</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median time spent completing survey: 5m 22s
Also collected data for all respondents for urbanicity, income, education, socioeconomic status, employment, whether they experienced a change in their employment status as a result of coronavirus and disability.

NOTE ON INTERPRETING RESULTS
1. The sample doesn’t capture the digitally excluded, or people not inclined to complete online surveys.
2. Just because people say they would do something in an online experiment doesn’t mean they always will in real life. We therefore interpret stated intent as a likely upper bound of real behaviour.
3. When we examine differences by subgroup (e.g. gender, ethnicity), we only do so when the sample size remains large enough to draw robust inferences.
Methodology.
Participants were randomly assigned to see one of four messages about digital careers, or nothing at all. They then answered questions on comprehension, intent and sentiment.

Sample of early career switchers (27-35 year olds) in England (n = 2,561)

Sample of experienced professionals (50-65 year olds) in England (n = 2,513)

Questions on pre-existing knowledge of digital careers

Participants will be randomly assigned to see one of four messages (n = ~500 each) with a call to action about free skills training opportunities or no message at all (Pure control arm, n = ~500 from each sample).

Questions on comprehension of the message, intent to have a digital career, and sentiment towards the message

Survey questions (e.g. sentiment towards digital careers in general) and demographics
Methodology - early career switchers.

**Early career switchers** were randomly assigned to see one of four messages, or no message at all (n = 557).

### Messages for early career switchers:

| Ease       | "I was worried that I might need to complete a degree to change career, but switching to tech was a surprisingly quick and easy process." Imogen, 33 years old. | n = 472  
|            | Median viewing time (MVT) = 11s. |  
| Social impact | Don't just work for a living - work for a cause. From virtual healthcare to online education, tech jobs are at the forefront of positive social change. Switching to a career in tech can help you help others. | n = 523  
|            | MVT = 12s. |  
| Testimony  | "One of the great things about doing digital skills training is that your skills can be useful in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I've worked in sustainability, research, banking and psychology" Ilsa, 32 years old. | n = 505  
|            | MVT = 13s. |  
| Job demand | Recent data shows that tech roles are #1 in the UK for most job opportunities. Whether it's in healthcare, fashion, journalism or sports, there are digital roles that offer all kinds of exciting, creative and highly-paid opportunities. | n = 504  
|            | MVT = 9s. |  

Click [here](#) to find out about free skills training opportunities.
Methodology - experienced professionals.

Experienced professionals were randomly assigned to see one of four messages, or no message at all (n = 562).

### Messages for experienced professionals:

| Testimony + never too late | “It's never too late to switch to the digital sector. I did a coding bootcamp last year and had a job in tech shortly after. It's kept me up to date with the current world, and the future seems good in the industry.” Aisha, 50 years old. | n = 524  
Median viewing time (MVT) = 20s |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Diversity                 | The UK digital sector needs people of all ages and backgrounds to keep on growing and innovating. No matter your age or background, there's a place for you in digital.                                      | n = 487  
MVT = 14s |
| Value                     | The digital job market values experience and soft skills, making it the perfect fit for experienced professionals looking to explore new career paths.                                      | n = 454  
MVT = 17s |
| Testimony + passion       | “I was worried that digital skills training might not be for me, but I ended up loving it. It was really helpful to learn from people who work in the industry. I wouldn't be where I am now without it” Aisha, 50 years old. | n = 486  
MVT = 18s |
2.4 Experimental results
Intent - early career switchers.

Overall, 7 in 10 early career switchers would consider a digital career and 3 in 4 would consider training to improve their skills. The ‘Testimony’ and ‘Job demand’ performed best in terms of intent but this was not better than the no message arm.

72% of early career switchers say they would consider a digital career

88% think others would consider a digital career

77% say they would consider a training course to improve their digital skills for their current career

Best performers in terms of intent:

- **Testimony**
  “One of the great things about doing digital skills training is that your skills can be useful in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I’ve worked in sustainability, research, banking and psychology.” Ilsa, 32 years old.

- **Job demand**
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There was no significant difference of the messages in terms of clicking to learn more about training opportunities.

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05.

All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Intent - experienced professionals.

Overall, 1 in 2 experienced professionals would consider a digital career. The ‘Diversity’ and ‘Testimony + passion’ messages performed best in terms of intent, but ‘Value’ led to significantly more clicks to find out about training opportunities.

### Intent - experienced professionals

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>clicked a link to find out about free skills training opportunities</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would consider retraining for a digital career (if they would consider a digital career, n = 1,224)</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**49%** of experienced professionals say they would consider a digital career

**86%** think others would consider a digital career

**56%** say they would consider a training course to improve their digital skills for their current career

**20%** of experienced professionals clicked to find out more about training opportunities, compared to **6%** of early career switchers.

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05. All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.

Value

The digital job market values experience and soft skills, making it the perfect fit for experienced professionals looking to explore new career paths.
Over 9 in 10 of those who would consider a digital career would retrain for it. The most popular ways people would do this is through a training course or bootcamp or through their current employer.

95% of early career switchers and 92% of experienced professionals who would consider a digital career would consider retraining for it.

% who say they would consider retraining for a digital career through…

- Training course or bootcamp: 47% (n = 1,838 / 1,224)
- Current employer: 38%
- Apprenticeship: 28%
- University qualification (e.g. a conversion course): 26%
- University qualification (e.g. a masters programme): 24%
- Early career switchers: 95%
- Experienced professionals: 92%

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.
The top reasons for considering a digital career are: working flexibly, interest and being able to work in a diverse range of sectors.

Of those who would consider a digital career, % who would do so because… (n = 1,838 / 1,224)

Free text responses:
“AI will take a lot of other jobs”
“Digital and graphic design is something that has always interested me but I have never pursued it and I think this is a perfect opportunity to do so.”
“More opportunities for career progression”
“A new kick start”
“I enjoy working with computers”
“It would be a total change”
“I used to work in the sector but now need retraining”
“To help people with data”

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
People who would consider a career were most interested in research, data or analytical or content roles. They were least interested in geospatial technician/cartographer or electrical or robotics roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 selected job roles</th>
<th>Bottom 5 selected job roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Technician roles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. user researcher)</td>
<td>(e.g. 3D printing or IT support technician)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data or analytical roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Engineer roles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. data or business analyst)</td>
<td>(e.g. network engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Robotics roles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. social media manager)</td>
<td>(e.g. robotics engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Electrical roles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. IT support technician)</td>
<td>(e.g. digital hardware engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clerical roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Geospatial technician; Cartographer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. librarian)</td>
<td><strong>6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top 5 careers that sounded interesting to either age group did vary slightly (see appendix), but there was little variation in the bottom five for ECS and EPS.

Full list of job roles in Appendix.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
For many role categories, the most favoured roles tended to be those which are better-known and less niche.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Category</th>
<th>Of those who would consider</th>
<th>Of those who would consider</th>
<th>Of those who would consider</th>
<th>Of those who would consider</th>
<th>% who said this role sounds most interesting…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>data / analytical roles (n = 1,055),</td>
<td>content roles (n = 1,023),</td>
<td>gaming roles (n = 785),</td>
<td>design roles (n = 728),</td>
<td>developer / engineer roles (n = 625),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analyst</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data scientist</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data engineer</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storyteller</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine learning scientist</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collected by BiT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Comprehension.

All messages but ‘Ease’ performed best in terms of comprehension for early career switchers and the ‘Diversity’ message performed best for experienced professionals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of early career switchers</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comprehension score</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of experienced professionals</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 487)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 454)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comprehension score</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worst performer in terms of comprehension:

Ease
“I was worried that I might need to complete a degree to change career, but switching to tech was a surprisingly quick and easy process.” Imogen, 33 years old.

Best performer in terms of comprehension:

Diversity
The UK digital sector needs people of all ages and backgrounds to keep on growing and innovating. No matter your age or background, there’s a place for you in digital.

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05. All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Breakdown by item and message in the Appendix. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
There were no significant differences between messages in terms of sentiment for early career switchers. For experienced professionals, the ‘Value’ message performed significantly worse than the other messages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of early career switchers</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall sentiment score (average of the four items below)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of experienced professionals</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall sentiment score (average of the four items below)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For early career switchers, 74% thought the message has the right amount of information. 62% thought it makes a digital career feel accessible and achievable. 59% thought it is trustworthy. 45% thought it is relevant to them. 45% thought it made a career change feel appropriate at this stage in their career. Breakdown by message is in the Appendix.

For experienced professionals, 79% thought the message has the right amount of information. 68% thought it is trustworthy. 62% thought it makes a digital career feel accessible and achievable. 35% thought it is relevant to them. 37% thought it made a career change feel appropriate at this stage in their career. Breakdown by message is in the Appendix.

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, \( p < .05 \). All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
2.5 Free text feedback on messages
Free text feedback suggests that the ‘Ease’ message wasn’t clear and some people want more information.

“Wish there was more information.”
“There’s nothing about what they did before or what they went on to do.”
“It makes me feel that I can do it.”
“”It’s not clear what they are referring to when they say ‘tech’ or what happened, it’s very unclear.”
“It could expand on what the alternative is to doing a degree, but it is quite short and to the point which makes you want to click on the link for more information.”
“Does not explain what training is needed or potential salary.”
“It’s quick and to the point but not very personal.”
“It seems gossipy or a quick opinion, it doesn’t give enough but then it’s only three lines.”
“More emphasis that you can have a career change after 30 years old. A timeframe of how long it took this person to train and get hired would be beneficial and motivational. A salary guideline for specific roles would help too.”
“Maybe more of a story to go with the message rather than just ‘tech’ - could be more specific on Imogen’s initial job role and what she changed her career to.”
“The message made me confused! It’s only a statement how can it make you feel you should change career?”
“The subject feels broad. Is she after graphic design or analytical work for a police force? Her personality is non existent so it’s lacking a human feel.”
“Very vague and ambitious. Doesn’t feel like Imogen is a real person.”

Data collected by Bit on 10 - 19 March 2023.
While people liked the ‘Social impact’ message, it was seen by some as being vague, particularly on how digital careers actually help others.

“Social Impact
Don't just work for a living - work for a cause. From virtual healthcare to online education, tech jobs are at the forefront of positive social change. Switching to a career in tech can help you help others.

“More fluent language can make the message more understandable for readers. Additionally, giving a short example of social change made by tech jobs can persuade people well.”

“It’s quite generic, still not sure it’s relevant to me but it could be.”

“It’s a bit vague and doesn’t really include pay out and if it's a reliable source of income.”

“It’s something I would be interested in.”

“It doesn’t detail anything specific. Health care could mean a number of things.”

“It looks good, I’m out of work at the moment so will consider this.”

“It’s should be more explanatory for people with zero knowledge of the digital market.”

“It has a strong message showing you can train in a digital job that can help other people as well as yourself.”

“It could use a little more on how it could help. In what way?”

“It’s a great message that more people should have access to.”

“Would like to know more about starting.”

“Digital career sounds great, the only issue would be the timing to learn it whilst currently working a full time role.”

“It’s made me think that there are careers that I hadn't even considered.”

“I think this information needs to be slightly more accessible. It’s a bit vague and I don’t personally understand what is trying to be conveyed here.”

“Work for a cause is off putting, when you have mortgage to pay, bills etc you work because you have to. The choice of working for a business that suits you morally is not always possible and put me off this message immediately.”
People said they thought the ‘Testimony’ message sounded personal and genuine. Some people wanted more information on what digital skills are.

Testimony
“One of the great things about doing digital skills training is that your skills can be useful in pretty much every sector, so you have opportunities across the board with all kinds of teams. I’ve worked in sustainability, research, banking and psychology.” Ilsa, 32 years old.

“Sounds genuine.”
“It makes me wonder what other opportunities would be available in this sector.”
“It seems honest and genuine.”
"I'd say generally the information provided is fine, but personally I would certainly want to know a lot more and be put at ease very quickly that it's trustworthy."
"It should include the all important info about costs. These kind of things usually aren't cheap and someone may get excited only to realise they can't afford this and then feel depressed."
"It's not clear to me that it's promoting digital careers. It needs to be explicit."
"A lot of jobs have some kind of computer involvement, but what careers are mainly digital based?"
"I think some brief information on any qualifications that may be needed to start, but research would provide that."

"People looking for money. Tell them how much can get."
"Anything that's mentions ‘sustainability’ is instantly made unbelievable."
"It's the right length for a general selection of people to be able to grasp and process, and finish reading to the end. The key impressive thing is located in the last sentence (about the variety of sectors and career areas) - I think this is very good because the last thing we read can generally be what we remember most clearly or take away with us."

“Short, straight to the point and very informative.”

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
While people liked the ‘Job demand’ message, some wanted to see more information on exactly what types of careers are available.

“Need more information. Need to know on how to go about getting the necessary training or qualification for the job role.”

“I think anything is achievable, the only person that's stopping you is you!”

“It's a good opportunity and there are many roles available. It should interest many people.”

“It’s short but covers a few different industries that can be relevant to a lot of people.”

“Be interesting to have a look and see what opportunities are out there.”

“Tech roles' to me sounds like any job involving technology. Technology is not just computers but the application of scientific knowledge so I think the wording is slightly misleading.”

“Besides of being UK #1, providing information regarding the job opportunities around the world as well would be nice.”

“It is a little vague; maybe mentioning pay or benefits of the role would be more enticing.”

“More information regarding suitability for age. At present it seems like it's targeted towards the younger demographic.”

“I'm actively going to challenge myself to register for more digital careers courses for up skills hence I have a degree in IT.”

“It would be good if it provided more info about how easy it is to get into a career as a beginner.”

“The message includes all the right points to me. Demonstrating the high amount of opportunities and it did highlight to me that there are multiple sectors you could work for that still fall under the digital umbrella.”

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
It was clear the ‘Testimony + never too late’ message was aimed at an older age group. Many found this encouraging; helping them understand that they could retrain too.

"It's never too late to switch to the digital sector. I did a coding bootcamp last year and had a job in tech shortly after. It's kept me up to date with the current world, and the future seems good in the industry." Aisha, 50 years old.

"It does not say that it is free and funded by the government. Some people might be put off because they think it could be expensive."
"I'm at a stage where I need to look at new career pathways and this has come at the right time."
"The problem comes when you start applying for jobs in your 50s. That's when you find out all about age discrimination."

"I'm not sure about the it keeps me up to date in the modern world sentence, could be more about how her career or skills have increased."
"It needed to define a little more what digital was, a little too broad. Good to include the age as that helps."
"It's worded simply, you either want to do or you don't. Age or experience isn't a barrier."
"This is a good message aimed at the older population."
"I think this message is really intriguing and think it could get a lot of people to apply for this type of field of work."
"Would be useful to know how long the courses are. Don't like the word bootcamp makes me think it will be very hard."
"What about qualifications and pay scales for newcomers to the industry?"
"I did not realise how many different variety of jobs you can do through having a digital career."
"It is a very interesting message, I would love to learn more about a different career, and keeping up to date with the world."
"It is very clear and makes it obvious that no matter your age you can retrain for anything."
"If this is designed to encourage 50+ back into work, I think an emphasis on part time options is necessary, particularly since the pandemic."
"You must indicate job spectrum, otherwise it is hard to see yourself moving to a nebulous career path."

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
While people liked the ‘Diversity’ message, many thought it wasn’t relevant to them, and that it was targeted at a younger age group.

\[\text{Diversity}\]
The UK digital sector needs people of all ages and backgrounds to keep on growing and innovating. No matter your age or background, there’s a place for you in digital.

“I think offering training skills are not enough. \textbf{What else is needed to explore a career change} - any real life examples?”

“Could appeal to people younger than me, but possibly up to and including middle age.”

“It says enough to get you interested and then you click on the link to look further into it.”

“It would be helpful to give \textbf{examples of careers or roles} that may open up following training.”

“Sounds very \textbf{interesting although maybe have more description} to what it actually means.”

“It might be good to have a brief \textbf{description of what digital careers are}.”

“As being the 50s I am \textbf{not sure the message is applied to me}...”

“Let’s be honest \textbf{anyone older than 30 would not get a job}.”

“I truly believe \textbf{there is a level at which an individual can enter a digital career}. Like many careers, \textbf{it’s not for everyone}...”

“The message was \textbf{fine but not relevant} to me. I’m far \textbf{too close to retirement to consider} such a move.”

“It is \textbf{not engaging at all}.”

“I think that it’s a \textbf{good lead in} sort of message. It \textbf{makes you want to find out more} about a digital career and the options available.”

“For anyone interested in a digital career the message is good. It’s \textbf{to the point and doesn’t contain too much information} to digest at one time.”

“A \textbf{list of potential careers} should be in the advert so people can relate to some of the examples given.”

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
The ‘Value’ message was seen by some as a bit vague, and some people thought it was targeted at a younger age group.

“"The message was easy to understand and straightforward making it easy reading and not boring.”

“"It suggests that you already have to have a professional career path and experience, I think it would not attract people with less confidence or experience.”

"It’s a great idea and will talk to my grandson about it.”

"The message is good for professionals, but might be off putting to people who are not professionals, and people who are just starting out." 

"It was a good incentive for people who have lost their way career wise to look into something else"

"I want a new career but it’s a bit vague. It doesn’t really tell me anything about what is required so I would be put off as I associate digital, even though I do some digital, with young and dynamic people." 

"It could explain a little more about what jobs are classed as a digital career." 

"The digital job market’ is pretty vague, I for one have absolutely no idea what kind of jobs/which industries/walks of life this phrase refers to."

"Somewhat intriguing. I immediately clicked on the link to see if it was working, it was. It did make me interested in what was available, also it made it very clear the courses are free.”

"It seems a little vague and perhaps would benefit from more context. Not clear what it means by ‘soft skills’.

"Perfect fit for professionals’ gives the impression that it is only for professionals fields of work like lawyers, doctors etc. I am not one of those."
People liked the mention of Aisha’s age in the ‘Testimony and passion’ message and thought it showed that anyone can retrain.

“Testimony + Passion

I was worried that digital skills training might not be for me, but I ended up loving it. It was really helpful to learn from people who work in the industry. I wouldn’t be where I am now without it” Aisha, 50 years old.

“The fact that Aisha is a woman is relevant to me. Mentioning her age is important when it comes to career change. I would have included information about Aisha’s current role.”

“I am past it (physically and age) but this is a fantastic opportunity for the younger generation with some enthusiasm and aspiration; wish I were 35 years younger!”

“It was short and very clear.”

“Perhaps it would be helpful if it stated where and with whom, Aisha trained.”

“It’s very personal and relevant.”

“It would be nice to understand how someone like me could pursue a digital career who has no connections / knowledge.”

“I am 51 and it has inspired me to go and have a look to see what I can find out. It is never too late to find an exciting fulfilling career.”

“No but it’s interesting to hear someone of my age say they have benefitted from learning.”

“Would like to have known what digital role/career the person concerned eventually took up. I am 53 and feel like I am getting left behind, and maybe too old to retrain, so to read that she is 50 is quite positive. It also appeals to me as I am interested in learning coding.”

“Shows no matter what age you are you can retrain.”

“I like that she is an older person.”

“I think it's a good idea that the lady's age was mentioned, as this will possibly encourage mature workers that they can still get different jobs. It does seem more difficult sometimes when you’re a bit older and might not have the confidence to start over again.”

“Including the age of the person made me think more positively.”

“Good to think the older generation may be being reconsidered as useful again, instead of being overlooked.”

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
2.6. Existing knowledge and attitudes
Existing knowledge about digital careers.

People generally report that digital courses and careers are about working with IT, computers, coding and marketing. This was similar across early career switchers and experienced professionals.

*When you think of digital careers what kind of roles do you think of?*

*Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.*
Existing knowledge about digital careers.

Web developers, content creators, data scientists and business analysts were thought to be the best examples of digital careers.

% Who think this job is a digital career

- Security guard: 6%
- Librarian: 21%
- Architect: 42%
- Business analyst: 81%
- Content creator: 94%
- Lawyer: 13%
- Product manager: 40%
- Accountant: 56%
- Data scientist: 90%
- Web developer: 98%

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Attitudes towards digital courses/apprenticeships and careers.

Overall, attitudes towards digital courses and careers were positive.

8 in 10 Thought they are not boring, offer equal opportunities, and are creative. However, 1 in 2 thought they are difficult and only 4 in 10 thought they are social.

% who think that digital careers...

- are not boring: 81%, 85%
- offer opportunities to everyone*: 78%, 85%
- are creative: 77%, 77%
- are rewarding: 70%, 74%
- are not isolating: 70%, 74%
- are not difficult: 50%, 55%
- are social: 44%, 35%

* People of all genders, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
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3. Appendix
## Exploratory research - Interview structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview section</th>
<th>Exploratory questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Background</strong></td>
<td>● What motivates you in a job?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. **Training**   | If they recently completed training or are currently completing training:  
 ● What made you want to start digital skills training?  
 ● Can you please walk me through what the training/apprenticeship was/is like?  
 ● Has this training had any other impact on your life in general?  
 If they are considering starting training:  
 ● What kind of digital skills training would you like to complete (data analysis, website design, coding, etc.)? Why?  
 If they are not interested in training:  
 ● Why are you not interested in digital skills training?  
 ● What do you imagine participating in a digital skills course or training would be like? |
| 3. **Digital Role** | If they have recently changed to a digital role:  
 ● What was your previous role?  
 ● Please walk me through the process of applying to your current role:  
 ● Now that you are in this digital/tech role, what would you say are the main advantages in comparison to your previous role?  
 If they are considering applying to a digital role:  
 ● What factors are making you consider a digital role?  
 ● Is there a particular job or role you have in mind?  
 If they are not interested in digital roles:  
 ● What are the main advantages that you look for in a job?  
 ● What do you imagine working in a digital or tech industry job would be like? |
| 4. **Message testing** | ● What do you think of the terms 'digital, AI, cyber, tech'?  
 ● Various message testing prompts |
### Appendix

#### Breakdown of people’s perceptions of ‘digital careers’ by age group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Early career switchers</th>
<th>Experienced professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security guard</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product manager</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business analyst</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data scientist</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content creator</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web developer</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix - early career switchers.

#### Comprehension breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of early career switchers who correctly recalled...</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comprehension score (average of the two items below)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the message was about digital careers</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the benefits* of considering a digital career mentioned in the message</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who didn’t see any message, the top benefits for digital careers were job opportunities (63%), transferable skills (53%), and helping people (51%).

* Benefits mentioned:
- There are many available job opportunities that use digital skills (Job demand)
- Digital skills can be used to help people (Social impact)
- Completing digital skills training gives you skills that are needed in pretty much every sector (Testimony)
- It’s easy to start a digital career (Ease)

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05.

All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Overall comprehension score by subgroups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall comprehension score</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 674)</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,328)</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 440)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 756)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 460)</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 348)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 566)</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,282)</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 134)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, comprehension was lower for people of lower socioeconomic status.
### Appendix - experienced professionals.

#### Comprehension breakdown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of experienced professionals who correctly recalled...</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall comprehension score (average of the two items below)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the message was about digital careers</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the benefits* of considering a digital career mentioned in the message</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who didn’t see any message, the top benefits for doing a digital career were that there are many job opportunities (70%), skills are needed in all sectors (64%), and that skills can be used to help people (51%).

---

* Benefits mentioned:
- Digital careers are for everyone (Diversity, Value)
- It’s easy to start a digital career (Testimony + never too late)
- Digital careers are fun (Testimony + passion)

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, \( p < .05 \).

All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Overall comprehension score by subgroups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall comprehension score</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 844)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,106)</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 465)</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 829)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 461)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 196)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 725)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,637)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 173)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05.

All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Appendix - early career switchers.

### Intent to consider a digital career by subgroups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of early career switchers who would consider a digital career</th>
<th>No message (n = 562)</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 862)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,696)</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 565)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 954)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 612)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 430)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 725)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,637)</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 173)</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, $p < .05$.

All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
Intent to consider a digital career by subgroups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of experienced professionals who would consider a digital career</th>
<th>No message (n = 562)</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 1,103)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,409)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 589)</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 1,093)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 578)</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 253)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 725)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,637)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 173)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05. All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status. Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Reasons why people would consider a digital career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of early career switchers who would consider a digital career, % who would because...</th>
<th>No message (n = 412)</th>
<th>Ease (n = 308)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 366)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 386)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 366)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They could work flexibly</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sounds interesting</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They could work in a diverse range of sectors</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They’d like to try something different</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would challenge them</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It pays well</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sounds important</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They know someone who enjoys their digital career</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s similar to what they do now</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Reasons why people would consider a digital career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>No message (n = 289)</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 237)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 241)</th>
<th>Value (n = 204)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 253)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They could work flexibly</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sounds interesting</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They could work in a diverse range of sectors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They’d like to try something different</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would challenge them</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It pays well</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sounds important</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They know someone who enjoys their digital career</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s similar to what they do now</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Reasons why people would not consider a digital career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>No message (n = 145)</th>
<th>Ease (n = 164)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 157)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 119)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 138)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They enjoy their current career</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t want to start their career over</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t think it would interest them</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are not good enough at maths</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t have the right education for it</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t know what it would be like</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be too difficult for them</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s not for people like them</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t involve working with people</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be boring</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t involve helping others</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There aren’t many jobs where they want to live</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Reasons why people would not consider a digital career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of experienced professionals who would not consider a digital career, % who would not because...</th>
<th>No message (n = 273)</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 287)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 246)</th>
<th>Value (n = 250)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 233)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They enjoy their current career</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t want to start their career over</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t think it would interest them</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are not good enough at maths</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t have the right education for it</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t know what it would be like</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be too difficult for them</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s not for people like them</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t involve working with people</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be boring</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t involve helping others</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There aren’t many jobs where they want to live</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Descriptives only, not tested for significant differences.*

*Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.*
### Careers people find interesting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Role Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Research roles (e.g. user researcher and operational researcher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Data and analytical roles (e.g. data scientists, business analyst, data analyst, forensic computer analyst, information scientist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Content roles (e.g. social media manager; vlogger; web content manager or editor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Support roles (e.g. networking, IT support technician, database administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Clerical roles (e.g. librarian, library assistant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
<td>Computer games developer or tester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Product roles (e.g. digital product manager, digital delivery manager or digital product owner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Design roles (e.g. web or user experience (UX) designer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Security roles (e.g. cyber intelligence officer, IT security coordinator, security service personnel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Business roles (e.g. systems analyst, solutions architect, technical architect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Writing roles (e.g. technical author)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Developer or engineer roles (e.g. software engineer/developer, app developer, AI developer, web developer, robotics engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Scientist roles (e.g. AI research scientist, research software engineer, AI healthcare researcher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Technician roles (e.g. 3D printing or IT support technician)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Engineer roles (e.g. network/ IT support or robotics engineer, database administrator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Robotics roles (e.g. robotics engineer, mechatronics &amp; robotics engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Electrical roles (e.g. Digital hardware engineer, electronics engineer, semiconductor engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Geospatial technician; Cartographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>Other (e.g. “Data input”, “Music production”, “Graphic designer”, “Sales”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Don’t know (exclusive)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Careers people find interesting by age group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Research roles</th>
<th>Writing roles</th>
<th>Developer or engineer roles</th>
<th>Scientist roles</th>
<th>Support roles</th>
<th>Technician roles</th>
<th>Engineer roles</th>
<th>Robotics roles</th>
<th>Electrical roles</th>
<th>Product roles</th>
<th>Design roles</th>
<th>Security roles</th>
<th>Business roles</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early career switchers</td>
<td>32% Research roles (e.g. user researcher and operational researcher)</td>
<td>20% Writing roles (e.g. technical author)</td>
<td>22% Developer or engineer roles (e.g. software engineer/developer, app developer, AI developer, web developer, robotics engineer)</td>
<td>19% Scientist roles (e.g. AI research scientist, research software engineer, AI healthcare researcher)</td>
<td>18% Support roles (e.g. networking, IT support technician, database administrator)</td>
<td>18% Technician roles (e.g. 3D printing or IT support technician)</td>
<td>15% Engineer roles (e.g. network/ IT support or robotics engineer, database administrator)</td>
<td>14% Robotics roles (e.g. robotics engineer, mechatronics &amp; robotics engineer)</td>
<td>11% Electrical roles (e.g. Digital hardware engineer, electronics engineer, semiconductor engineer)</td>
<td>28% Product roles (e.g. digital product manager, digital delivery manager or digital product owner)</td>
<td>26% Design roles (e.g. web or user experience (UX) designer)</td>
<td>19% Security roles (e.g. cyber intelligence officer, IT security coordinator, security service personnel)</td>
<td>22% Business roles (e.g. systems analyst, solutions architect, technical architect)</td>
<td>&lt; 1% Other (e.g. “Data input”, “Music production”, “Graphic designer”, “Sales”)</td>
<td>3% Don't know (exclusive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced professionals</td>
<td>42% Research roles (e.g. user researcher and operational researcher)</td>
<td>21% Writing roles (e.g. technical author)</td>
<td>18% Developer or engineer roles (e.g. software engineer/developer, app developer, AI developer, web developer, robotics engineer)</td>
<td>19% Scientist roles (e.g. AI research scientist, research software engineer, AI healthcare researcher)</td>
<td>36% Support roles (e.g. networking, IT support technician, database administrator)</td>
<td>18% Technician roles (e.g. 3D printing or IT support technician)</td>
<td>17% Engineer roles (e.g. network/ IT support or robotics engineer, database administrator)</td>
<td>15% Robotics roles (e.g. robotics engineer, mechatronics &amp; robotics engineer)</td>
<td>13% Electrical roles (e.g. Digital hardware engineer, electronics engineer, semiconductor engineer)</td>
<td>19% Product roles (e.g. digital product manager, digital delivery manager or digital product owner)</td>
<td>35% Design roles (e.g. web or user experience (UX) designer)</td>
<td>25% Security roles (e.g. cyber intelligence officer, IT security coordinator, security service personnel)</td>
<td>19% Business roles (e.g. systems analyst, solutions architect, technical architect)</td>
<td>&lt; 1% Other (e.g. “Data input”, “Music production”, “Graphic designer”, “Sales”)</td>
<td>3% Don't know (exclusive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Intent.

For many role categories, the most favoured roles tended to be those which are better-known and less niche.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Category</th>
<th>Of those who would consider data/analytical roles (n = 612 / 443),</th>
<th>Of those who would consider content roles (n = 727 / 296),</th>
<th>Of those who would consider gaming roles (n = 525 / 260),</th>
<th>Of those who would consider design roles (n = 486 / 242),</th>
<th>Of those who would consider developer/engineer roles (n = 409 / 216),</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data analyst</td>
<td>59% (50% Data analyst)</td>
<td>39% (40% Content creator)</td>
<td>41% (45% Computer game tester)</td>
<td>55% (55% Web designer)</td>
<td>35% (30% Software developer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data scientist</td>
<td>19% (20% Data scientist)</td>
<td>24% (20% Social media manager)</td>
<td>22% (21% Computer game developer)</td>
<td>13% (17% Web architect)</td>
<td>24% (22% Web developer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data engineer</td>
<td>11% (11% Data engineer)</td>
<td>12% (16% Content strategy specialist)</td>
<td>20% (18% Game play tester)</td>
<td>12% (9% UX designer)</td>
<td>23% (22% Software engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storyteller</td>
<td>8% (12% Data storyteller)</td>
<td>13% (9% Influencer)</td>
<td>11% (6% Professional gamer)</td>
<td>12% (8% Interface designer)</td>
<td>15% (15% Programmer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine learning scientist</td>
<td>3% (5% Machine learning scientist)</td>
<td>10% (11% Social media specialist)</td>
<td>5% (8% Computer game programmer)</td>
<td>7% (9% Front end developer)</td>
<td>15% (8% Software artisan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>1% (4% None of the above)</td>
<td>&lt; 1% (2% None of the above)</td>
<td>1% (3% None of the above)</td>
<td>1% (3% None of the above)</td>
<td>1% (3% None of the above)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
### Appendix - early career switchers.

#### Sentiment breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of early career switchers, % who think the message...</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall sentiment score (average of the four items below)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... is trustworthy</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... is relevant to them</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... made them feel that doing a digital career is accessible and achievable</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... made a career change feel appropriate at this stage</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... has the right amount of information</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05.
All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Overall comprehension score by subgroups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall sentiment score</th>
<th>Ease (n = 472)</th>
<th>Social impact (n = 523)</th>
<th>Testimony (n = 505)</th>
<th>Job demand (n = 504)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 674)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,328)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 440)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 756)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 460)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 348)</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 566)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,282)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 134)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Sentiment breakdown

The ‘Value’ message performed significantly worse than other messages on all sentiment outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of experienced professionals, % who think the message…</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall sentiment score (average of the four items below)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… is trustworthy</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… is relevant to them</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… made them feel that doing a digital career is accessible and achievable</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…made a career change feel appropriate at this stage</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… has the right amount of information</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green shading identifies statistically significantly highest (or joint highest) value within row, p < .05.
All regressions are controlled for gender, region, ethnicity, socioeconomic status.
Data collected by BIT on 10 - 19 March 2023.
## Overall comprehension score by subgroups - Experienced professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall sentiment score</th>
<th>Testimony + never too late (n = 524)</th>
<th>Diversity (n = 487)</th>
<th>Value (n = 454)</th>
<th>Testimony + passion (n = 486)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n = 844)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n = 1,106)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North (n = 465)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; East (n = 829)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands (n = 461)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (n = 196)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (n = 725)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (n = 1,637)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (n = 173)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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