

Automation is a big theme this year and one which has implications across different sectors. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) says by 2020 the net-loss of mid-skill administrative and technical jobs due to automation will rise to 5.1 million. And the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) estimates that 1 in 3 jobs will be lost to automation over the next 20 years.

Low skilled job in sectors such as manufacturing, retail, hospitality and transport are most at risk from automation and least able to adapt.

A new range of professions and roles will continue to emerge. STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills as well as data analysis, programming and software development are important in this new world of work. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) also suggest creative expertise and factors such critical thinking, teaching and persuasion will be in high demand – basically, any adroitness that is uniquely human and therefore difficult to automate.

Businesses will need to adapt to these requirements and must demonstrate a meaningful goal to attract and retain employees, customers and partners in the years ahead. Organisations that refuse to adapt their tools and invest in the training and development of new skills, risk being left behind.