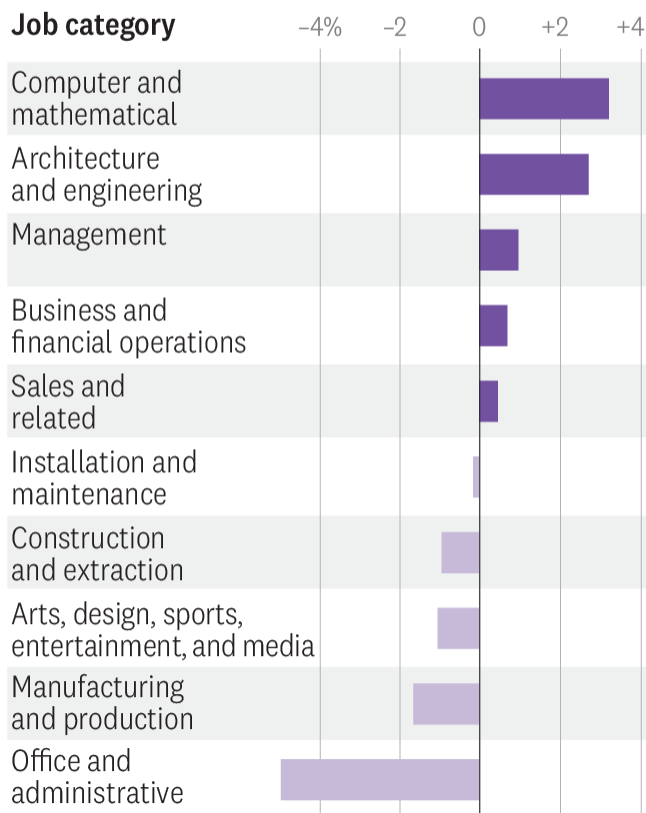


Jobs Built on Data Skills Are Showing the Strongest Growth

Average compound employment annual growth rate %, 2015–2020



Source: World Economic Forum's "The Future of Jobs" survey, 2016

HBR

So whether it's to maximize the data we play in

data-driven economic growth, or simply to ensure that we and our teams remain relevant and employable, we need to think about transitioning to a more data-skewed skillset. But which skills should you focus on? Can most of us expect to keep pace with this trend ourselves, or would we be better off retreating to shrinking areas of the economy, leaving data skills to the specialists?

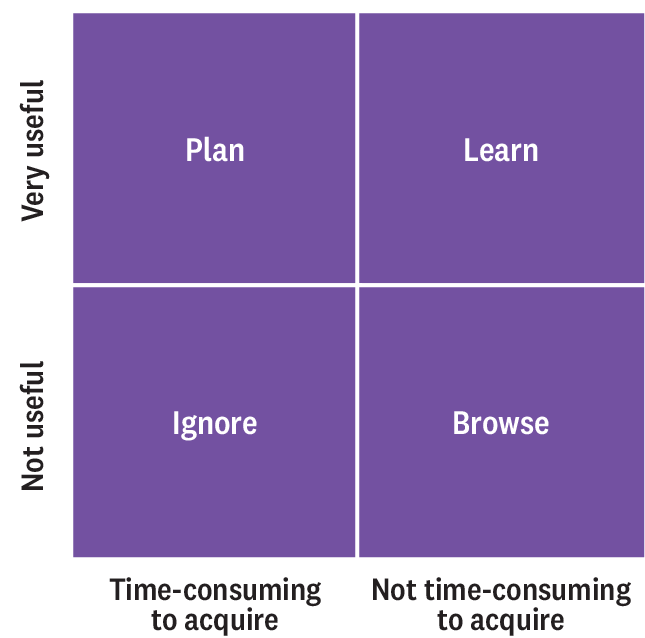
To help answer this question, we rebooted and adapted an approach we took to prioritizing Microsoft Excel skills according to the benefits and costs of acquiring them. We applied a time-utility analysis to the field of data skills. "Time" is time to learn – a proxy for the opportunity cost to you or your team of acquiring the skill. "Utility" is how much you're likely to need the skill, a proxy for the value it adds to the corporation, and your own career prospects.

Combine time and utility, and you get a simple 2×2 matrix with four quadrants:

- **Learn:** high utility, low time-to-learn. This is low hanging fruit that will add value for you and your team quickly.
- **Plan:** high utility, high time-to-learn. While this is valuable, acquiring this skill will mean prioritizing it ahead of other learning and activities. You need to be sure that it's worth the investment.
- **Browse:** low utility, low time-to-learn. You don't need this now, but it's easy to acquire so stay aware in case its utility increases.
- **Ignore:** low utility, high time-to-learn. You don't have the time for this.

Which Data Skills Should You Learn First?

Make the most of your limited learning time.



Source: Filtered



INSIGHT CENTER

Scaling Your Team's Data Skills

SPONSORED BY SPLUNK

Help your employees be more data-savvy.

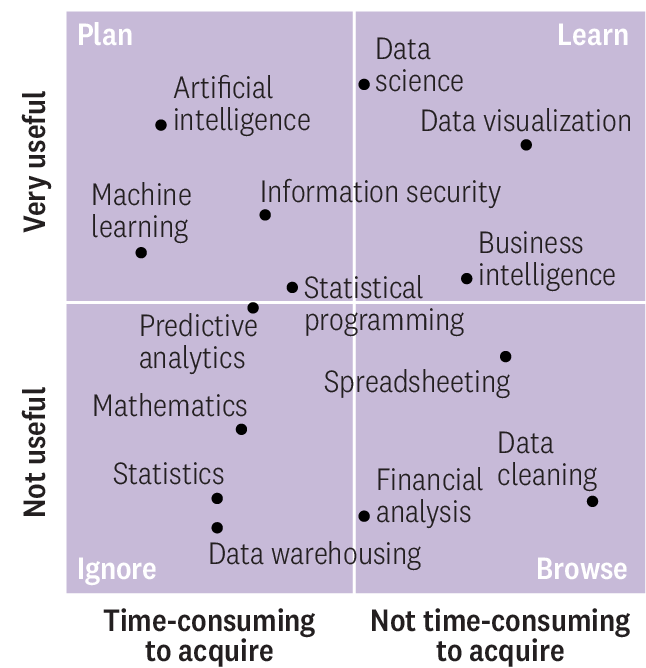
We did this for techniques, rather than for specific technologies: so, for machine learning rather than TensorFlow; for business intelligence rather than Microsoft Excel, etc. Once you've worked out which techniques are priorities in your context, you can then work out which specific software and associated skills best support them.

You can also apply this framework to your own context, where the impact of data skills might be different. Here are our results:

At Filtered, we found that constructing this matrix helped us to make hard decisions about where to focus: at first sight all the skills in our long-list seemed valuable. But realistically, we can only hope to move the needle on a few, at least in the short term. We concluded that the best return on investment in skills for our company was in data visualization, based on its high utility and low time to learn. We've already acted on our analysis and have just started to use Tableau to

An Example of How to Plot Data Skills on a 2x2 Learning Matrix

How one company mapped its own internal learning needs.



Source: Analysis of internal data learning needs by Filtered

improve the way we present usage analysis to clients.

Try the matrix in your own company to help your team determine which data skills are most important for them to start learning now.

Chris Littlewood is the chief innovation & product officer of filtered.com, an edtech company that uses AI to lift productivity by making learning recommendations. Find him on Twitter @filtered_chris.

This article is about DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES

FOLLOW THIS TOPIC

Related Topics: DATA

Comments

Leave a Comment

4 of 11

10/25/18, 2:22 PM