

THE FUTURE OF CREATIVE WORK

for the people doing it...

Creative work is undergoing a transformation. Across creative agencies and production environments, roles are blurring, skillsets are stretching, and career pathways don't look as linear as they once did. But it's the people, not the tools, who are carrying the weight of that change.

As the first phase of our wider industry research, we reached out to our network to get a pulse check on how these changes are playing out in day-to-day creative work, and what they mean for the people and teams navigating them.

We heard from designers, editors, engineers, producers, and creative directors across agencies, studios, and production environments, and here's what the data is telling us.

key findings:

how does creative work feel right now?



confidence for the year ahead?



perceived risk to traditional roles from AI?



perceived risk to future skill gaps?



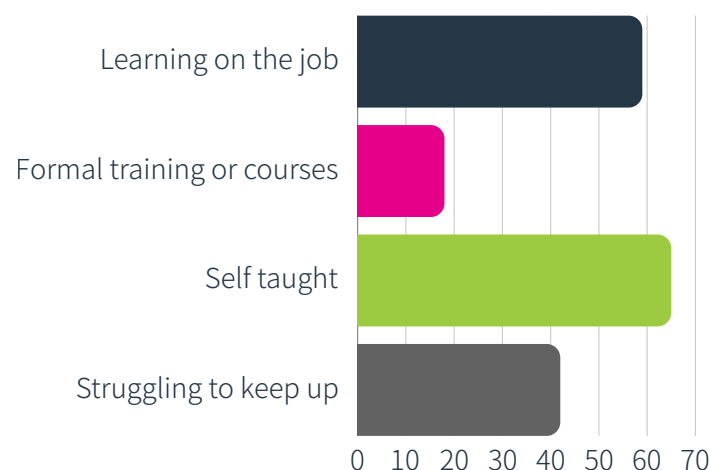
the training gap:

One of the clearest themes in the research is that companies are rapidly adopting new tools and workflows, but formal support for the people implementing those changes isn't keeping pace.

Nearly two thirds are self-teaching through experimentation, around 60% are learning on the job, and only around 20% have access to formal training or courses. More than 40% say they're simply struggling to keep up.

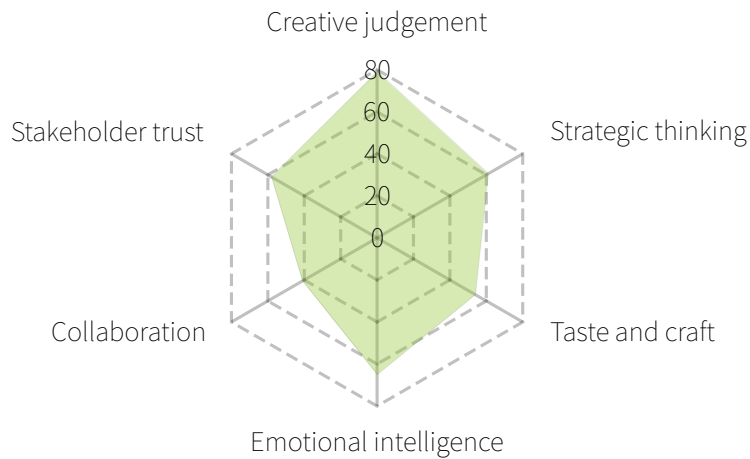
Often with smaller teams and without the structure to support this change, this leaves many creatives upskilling through self learning or on-the-job experience.

How are creative professionals adapting to the changes in the industry?



Human skills still matter the most

In your opinion, which human skills will remain critical for the creative industries, regardless of AI capability?



Despite the pace of technological change, the skills respondents identified as most critical weren't technical. Creative judgement, craft, taste, and emotional intelligence consistently came through as the capabilities that matter most. The findings reinforce a clear view that creative success depends as much on human insight and discernment as it does on technical capability. The tools are changing, the fundamentals of great creative work are not.

What this means for creative leaders...

Creative roles are becoming more layered. Technical fluency matters more than it used to. But it sits alongside, not instead of, the human skills that have always defined 'good' creative thinking. Hiring for that combination, and building teams that can genuinely do both, is where the real challenge lies for many organisations right now.

What the data reinforces is that there's a gap between the pace of change at an organisational level and the experience of the people living it.

Bridging that gap, through clearer role design, more intentional onboarding for new tools, and realistic conversations about workload and expectation, is increasingly part of what good leadership in creative environments looks like. Not to slow the adoption of new tools, but to be more deliberate about how creative roles, teams, and careers are built around them.

up next...

This research is ongoing. We're bringing together senior creative leaders for a roundtable to explore exactly this, how to scale without burning out, where AI genuinely multiplies capability, and what intentionally designing the future of creative work could look like in practice.

We'll be sharing more findings as the picture develops. If any of this is something you're working through, we'd be glad to be part of that conversation.

facilitated by



Suzanne Boast

Senior Manager
Creative Services

