

Business as (un)usual.

2022 business & management
learning opportunities

Learn about key business challenges and opportunities sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic, and what career pathways and skills can help you rise to the occasion.



Businesses are preparing for the new normal.

You should, too.

Today's job landscape is like nothing we've ever seen. The business world was already mid-transformation with rising technological and cultural shifts, and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated trends and upturned business-as-usual strategies and practices. In a world that's constantly changing, it's normal to feel like you don't have control over what happens next. One thing you can control? Your education. With [modular, flexible learning](#) opportunities on edX, it's easy to gain the tangible skills and knowledge you need on your own time and at your own pace.

Whether you want to arm employees with valuable business skills that can be applied to a range of job functions, create business and management upskilling and reskilling pathways in key functions, or offer opportunities to pursue advanced degrees, there's a path through edX. Use this guide to:

- **Get informed:** Discover the key challenges and opportunities that today's unusual economic landscape presents.
- **Get inspired:** See how industry professionals have used data science and analytics courses and programs on edX to achieve their career goals.
- **Get going:** Identify the skills, courses, and programs that will set you apart and up for success.

In a world shaken by the COVID-19 pandemic, it's processes, not products, at the front and center of innovation.

In [a recent McKinsey survey of hundreds of executives](#) across a range of industries, leaders reported expectations of large-scale changes within their organizations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the top areas identified for drastic changes were how leaders lead day to day, use of technology and systems, and how companies are run.

Source: [McKinsey](#)

Over 70% of leaders expect large-scale changes in their company's leadership practices, technology, and operations as a result of the pandemic.

The pandemic has presented a truly unique challenge and opportunity for businesses to undergo bold transformations. From reimagining operations and supply chains to building the future of the way we work to finding real returns on investments in data and digitization, there's not only an enormous opportunity to rise to the occasion, but a critical need for people with key skills and knowledge that will drive businesses into a completely new normal.

Opportunities for Impact

Today's leaders must be agile in the face of uncertainty, and compassionate in the face of change.

At 78%, how leaders lead day to day was [the second highest area executives identified for large-scale changes](#) in a McKinsey survey. The global pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement have underscored the critical need for inclusive and compassionate leadership that builds lasting trust with employees and stakeholders. Agility will also continue to be paramount, allowing leaders to more quickly spot and respond to opportunities

and threats. A PWC report counts “decision support tools designed for speed and agility in decision-making” as [a key trait that will set leaders apart](#) in successfully planning their strategy lifecycle, from disruption through recovery to competitive advantage.

Analytics and data skills are more valuable than ever, and essential for a more effective approach to digitization.

The race towards digitization and implementing new technologies just got faster, and more complicated. There’s a critical need to restructure significantly disrupted business operations and supply chains against pandemic-induced challenges and re-strategize for a more resilient future. A McKinsey report describes this shift as finding balance between “just in time” and “just in case,” a move which requires “[robust digital systems as well as analytics muscle.](#)” Professionals who arm themselves with the ability to take a data-first approach that increases end-to-end visibility will be well positioned for success. In fact, [an MIT Sloan Management Review article](#) says “digitizing supply chain process improvements without deliberately defining, collecting, and labeling essential data computationally



codifies blind spots.” Analytical skills and knowledge will be valuable across other business functions as well, for example, in finance, [one survey of U.S. organizations](#) found that 24% of finance managers are currently using AI, and another 50% expect to use it within three to five years.

The future of work is happening now, with operations roles taking the lead.

A recent Gartner survey showed that even before the pandemic, 80% of the workforce, 92% of managers, and 77% of senior leaders [already felt poorly prepared for the future](#). In addition to the abrupt shift to remote work, the future of work will require [an unprecedented wave of reskilling](#) on top of this existing disconnect, particularly in operations roles, according to a McKinsey article. A Gartner article suggests that a prepared post-pandemic workforce will [focus less on roles, and more on skills](#) needed to drive the organization’s competitive advantage and the workflows that fuel that advantage. The good news? On the ground floor, Burning Glass Technologies identifies business operations specialists as [“lifeboat jobs,”](#) roles that don’t require lengthy reskilling and offer career advancement opportunities. For example, an administrative support supervisor has adjacent skills in customer service, budgeting, and scheduling that can help with a transition into a higher paying business operation specialist role, which could provide experience that leads to triple-digit-paying operations management roles.

“Never in our lifetimes have we seen a global pandemic like this. As incredible as this pandemic is, this is now a golden opportunity for companies and firms and individuals to transform themselves.”

David Solnet

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND LEADER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL’S [ONLINE MASTER OF LEADERSHIP IN SERVICE INNOVATION](#)

Visualize your path to success

Learn how professionals across fields have used [business management courses and programs](#) on edX to accelerate their careers.

Developing modern supply chain knowledge mid-career



Years into his career, Venkat, a supply chain consultant in California, was looking to update his knowledge. At first, he was skeptical of the impact potential of online learning, but after some experimentation, he was convinced. Upon completing a [MicroMasters® program in Supply Chain Management from MITx](#), he said he's learned more than in the past ten years.

"I knew these courses use the same material from MIT coursework and were very hard. The breadth and depth of these courses not only shook me to the core but also made me very humble and confident. I completed all five courses and the Capstone exam and earned the program certificate. What happened to me in the last 18 months was nothing short of extraordinary," Venkat said.

"Now, I am so confident about my abilities and no longer worried about my employability and job prospects. I have genuinely got my "Degree of Freedom" and am pursuing research on Supply Chain problems I am interested in. I have a better perspective of what I want to do in my career. At this stage in my career, I am not only learning faster than ever before but am also more confident about competing with younger workers."



Learning to build an innovative, inclusive, and customer-centric culture

Van, a country head of HR at a pharmaceutical company, is a graduate student in the [University of Queensland's Online Master of Leadership in Service Innovation program](#), a cutting-edge business graduate degree focused on organizational leadership, innovation, and customer experience. She's applying knowledge from the program to design HR initiatives that strengthen the engagement of her company's employees and internal customers through various touch points, including line managers, peers, culture, policy, process, access to information, and so on.

"The role of HR has changed drastically in the last few years. We are transforming from being perceived as an administrator to a business partner, who progress along with the business and contribute to the company's success thanks to the right people strategy. This program offers me the exact knowledge and tools to best serve our internal customers," Van said.

"We all know the importance of innovation. However, how to provide an environment that triggers breakthrough ideas requires endless effort and commitment of the management. This program provides students with updated research-based knowledge about Customer roll out CX successfully in our organizations. I would like to apply my learning to help our team to build up a culture that fosters diversity and innovation."



Advancing a quality management career with Lean Six Sigma Skills

After exposure to Lean Six Sigma (LSS) tools in several engineering roles, Eftychia (Efi), a process engineer in Greece, enrolled in the [Six Sigma and Lean: Quantitative Tools for Quality and Productivity Professional Certificate program from TUMx](#). Now, she's in her second semester of a master's degree in Quality Management.

"It didn't take me long to realize how these tools can improve, standardize, and simplify the work and the procedures of many departments. I had only some basic training in some LSS tools, but a big desire to learn more about the field of quality, to participate more in projects at my work, and to give my personal ideas for improvement at my workspace," Efi said.

"After I received my certification from TUM, I was really excited and inspired to take a bigger step and invest more in myself. I was able to apply the knowledge straight to my work. Even my supervisors asked me to express my opinion and ideas more often. I'm in the second semester of my MBA in Total Quality Management and I've lost count of how many times something that I learned from TUM has helped me in this degree. What's more, my profile on LinkedIn is definitely getting more hits and I'm getting some really good job offers. It's amazing how one small choice brought all of these things in my life."

New normal, new knowledge

From strategic management and modern leadership skills to an understanding of Lean Six Sigma and supply chain models, and more, [explore top courses and programs](#) and get going towards achieving your business career goals.

Key skills for a new normal in business

- Inclusive and compassionate leadership
- Strategy and business model development
- Lean Six Sigma
- Analytics
- Digital marketing
- Forecasting methodology
- Key Skills for a New Normal in Business
- Logistics optimization
- Managing remote teams
- Modern Finance
- Soft skills in communication, collaboration, etc.
- And more

“Many of these new digital technologies require skills that are not easy to acquire. So, what should we do? All of us should move out of our comfort zone and LEARN. The more we can push ourselves to learn about the new technologies, the more we can find applications for our own jobs.”

Holly Ott

PROFESSOR OF PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT AND IT SYSTEMS, ROSENHEIM UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND INSTRUCTOR FOR SEVERAL [EDX LEAN SIX SIGMA COURSES AND PROGRAMS](#) FROM TUMX

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