



Global Knowledge®

# 2019 IT Skills and Salary Report

Professional Development  
and Job Satisfaction



# Table of Contents

|                                 |          |                         |           |
|---------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>             | <b>3</b> | <b>JOB SATISFACTION</b> | <b>9</b>  |
| How to use the report           | 3        | Job security            | 10        |
| Primary findings                | 3        | Employee turnover       | 11        |
| <b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>CONCLUSION</b>       | <b>12</b> |
| Preferred learning methods      | 4        | Resources               | 12        |
| Formal training                 | 4        | Partners                | 13        |
| Informal learning               | 6        | Demographics            | 14        |
| Why professionals train         | 7        | Media inquiries         | 16        |



# Introduction

Welcome to the Global Knowledge 2019 IT Skills and Salary Report. It is the largest worldwide study of professionals in the technology community and has been conducted annually for over a decade.

Throughout the report, you'll find the data broken up by region: North America; Latin America; Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA); and the Asia-Pacific region.

IT professionals, human resources and industry leaders use this report as a guide for salaries, in-demand certifications, tech priority areas, skills gaps, professional development, job satisfaction, and future outlooks in IT.

Traditionally, we have combined all areas of study into one report, but this year we're breaking it up into smaller reports so we can dig deeper into each topic.

## HOW TO USE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION REPORT

The professional development data answers the following questions:

- Are organizations taking into account employee training preferences?
- Why do IT professionals seek training?
- How do IT professionals prefer to learn?
- What are the main training inhibitors?

The job satisfaction data answers the following questions:

- How does job satisfaction impact employee turnover?
- Does training impact job satisfaction?
- What are the main reasons that IT professionals pursue alternative employment?

## PRIMARY FINDINGS

### IT pros train, with or without manager support

Eighty-five percent of IT professionals took some form of training this year, even though only 58% of organizations offered it. Our survey respondents face a major training roadblock in a lack of manager support.

### Instructor-led training is most valuable

When given the option between classroom, on-demand, virtual or blended learning, almost 60% of survey respondents said classroom is their top choice.

### Unsatisfied staff are more likely to leave

Over 90% of unsatisfied IT professionals are likely to pursue a new job this year. This spells trouble for management, as nearly 30% of worldwide IT professionals say they are at least somewhat dissatisfied with their job.

### Growth is more important than salary

Two-thirds of IT professionals who changed employers in the last year were seeking better growth and development opportunities, not necessarily higher pay.

## THIS YEAR'S REPORTS

### PART 1

Salary and certifications

Released July 9. [Download it for free.](#)

### PART 2

IT decision-maker insights

Released Aug. 30. [Download it for free.](#)

### PART 3

Professional development and job satisfaction

### PART 4

Looking forward

# Professional Development

Professional development includes formal and informal learning—everything from researching a topic online to attending an instructor-led training course. No matter their preferred learning methods, the Global Knowledge 2019 IT Skills and Salary Report makes it clear that IT professionals are eager to learn, and are continually searching for ways to build or enhance their skill set.

## PREFERRED LEARNING METHODS

When it comes to formal versus informal learning, IT professionals favor a more structured approach. Two out of three survey respondents prefer formal training when it comes to work-related skill development. One-third prefers more impromptu, peer-to-peer learning in an unstructured setting.

It's also important to understand that professionals do not have to choose between one or the other. The most effective training strategy is a combination of formal and informal methods. All learning types have value, whether you're asking a colleague for help or attending a private group training. Just make sure you know what type of skill you're looking to add before you select your training.

### The Way You Train Impacts Your Success

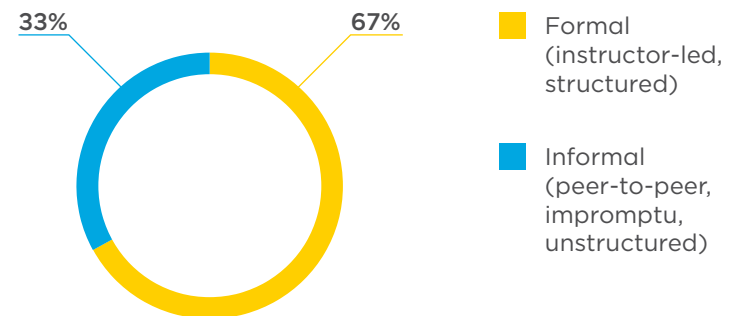
Your method of training should depend on how critical the needed skills are to your success. We've developed an index to help you select the right one.

Download the [Global Knowledge Skills Development Index™](#).

## FORMAL TRAINING

Instructor-led classroom training remains valuable and is a favorite amongst our survey respondents. When presented with four formal training options—Classroom, On-Demand, Virtual and Blended—nearly 60% of 8,194 IT professionals rank classroom training as their number one choice. On-demand is their second pick (18%), followed by blended (16%) and virtual (8%).

## PREFERRED METHOD TO LEARN



Classroom training is likely the top option for IT professionals because they deem it more effective than online or self-paced learning. Sixty-nine percent of respondents say classroom training is very or extremely effective, compared to 50% for on-demand courses.

Private Group Training, or onsite training, is also deemed valuable. Seventy percent of IT professionals say it's incredibly effective to have an expert lead a formal training session at their workplace.

We've found through customer conversations and post-class assessments that Private Group Training is particularly beneficial when it comes to high-priority or high-risk skills because it:

- Brings a subject matter expert to you
- Gathers a group of like colleagues together
- Helps the team coordinate
- Develops a common language around new terms
- Provides the freedom to openly discuss company-specific tech stacks, configurations, problems and more details you otherwise cannot talk about in a public setting

Even with the preference for instructor-led training, more IT professionals attended on-demand or e-learning sessions in the past year. This is due in large part to a lack of budget or management support for classroom training and ease of access.

And yet, 41% of IT professionals attended classroom training last year, up four percent from 2018. After a 10% drop in classroom attendance from 2016 to 2018, tech professionals are starting to realize that when critical skills are needed, instructor-led training is their best option.

Learn more about the link between skills and training type in our article, "[Rising IT Skills Gaps Coincide with Drop in Instructor-Led Training Attendance.](#)"

**41% of IT professionals attended classroom training last year, up from 31% in 2016. Tech professionals are starting to realize that when critical skills are needed, instructor-led training is their best option.**



TWEET THIS →

## TRAINING TYPES PARTICIPATED IN OR ATTENDED IN LAST 12 MONTHS

| Training type  | North America | Latin America | EMEA | Asia-Pacific | Worldwide |
|--|---------------|---------------|------|--------------|-----------|
| Web-based, on-demand session (self-paced e-learning session, subscription-based) | 73%           | 70%           | 65%  | 63%          | 69%       |
| Classroom (out-of-office) training session                                       | 39%           | 42%           | 45%  | 44%          | 41%       |
| Informal training session at work (non-organized, impromptu, peer-to-peer)       | 43%           | 34%           | 40%  | 33%          | 40%       |
| Live instructor-led online training session                                      | 29%           | 25%           | 21%  | 18%          | 25%       |
| Formal training session at work (expert-led)                                     | 24%           | 22%           | 26%  | 26%          | 25%       |
| None   | 7%            | 7%            | 8%   | 8%           | 7%        |
| Other  | 2%            | 2%            | 2%   | 2%           | 2%        |

## INFORMAL LEARNING

Informal learning is a key component of professional development. IT professionals have a wealth of informal options to help them build less critical skills and fill in knowledge gaps between formal trainings.

Researching a topic online is the preferred informal learning resource ... and we all do it. An online search is the easiest and most efficient way to gain knowledge about a skill that may be adjacent to your key job functions. Sixty-nine percent of worldwide IT professionals and 75% of North American professionals researched a topic online in the past year.

Other popular informal learning resources are white papers, webinars and seminars/technical conferences.

## LEARNING RESOURCES USED IN LAST 12 MONTHS

| Training type   | North America | Latin America | EMEA | Asia-Pacific | Worldwide |
|---|---------------|---------------|------|--------------|-----------|
| Researched a topic online   | 75%           | 57%           | 66%  | 53%          | 69%       |
| Downloaded a white paper or technical guide                             | 65%           | 65%           | 65%  | 56%          | 64%       |
| Attended webinars   | 68%           | 66%           | 60%  | 53%          | 64%       |
| Attended a seminar, luncheon or technical conference                    | 61%           | 48%           | 58%  | 53%          | 59%       |
| Read and/or contributed to a blog                                       | 43%           | 32%           | 40%  | 30%          | 40%       |
| Joined an online community (e.g., Reddit, CNET)                         | 29%           | 22%           | 22%  | 17%          | 25%       |
| Posted to or followed someone on social media (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn) | 25%           | 23%           | 27%  | 18%          | 25%       |
| Other   | 15%           | 13%           | 12%  | 9%           | 13%       |
| None  | 2%            | 2%            | 2%   | 4%           | 3%        |

## WHY PROFESSIONALS TRAIN

The short answer: skills. Globally, 85% of IT professionals took some form of training last year—79% of whom said their main reason was to “build new skills.” The days of general skill-building and the IT “jack-of-all trades” are gone. IT departments seek professionals with specific and specialized skills, so more IT professionals are seeking specific and specialized training.

IT skills gaps are having wide-ranging impacts. As documented in our report on [IT Decision-Maker Insights](#), nearly 80% of decision-makers say their teams lack necessary

skills. This number is up from 31% in 2016, illustrating how widespread and debilitating skills gaps have become.

It’s a misconception that IT professionals who train or get certified are only focused on salary, or worse, are one step out the door. Some professionals are driven by salary and train to prepare themselves for a job change, but a greater percentage are focused on attaining new certifications and learning new technologies. Managers need to set these fears aside and approve training for their teams.

## REASONS TO TRAIN

| Reason  | IT staff | IT decision-maker | Overall |
|---|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Build new skills  | 81%      | 76%               | 79%     |
| Prepare for a career certification or specialist exam                             | 46%      | 40%               | 45%     |
| Prepare organization for a new technology or product migration/deployment/upgrade | 36%      | 44%               | 38%     |
| Salary increase   | 36%      | 27%               | 34%     |
| Prepare to qualify for a different job  | 35%      | 27%               | 33%     |
| Meet employer’s requirement   | 29%      | 25%               | 28%     |
| Evaluate new technology and products for possible purchase                        | 24%      | 33%               | 27%     |
| Other   | 3%       | 3%                | 3%      |

**Managers are asking employees to do more with less and not setting them up for success by improving their capabilities through skills development.**

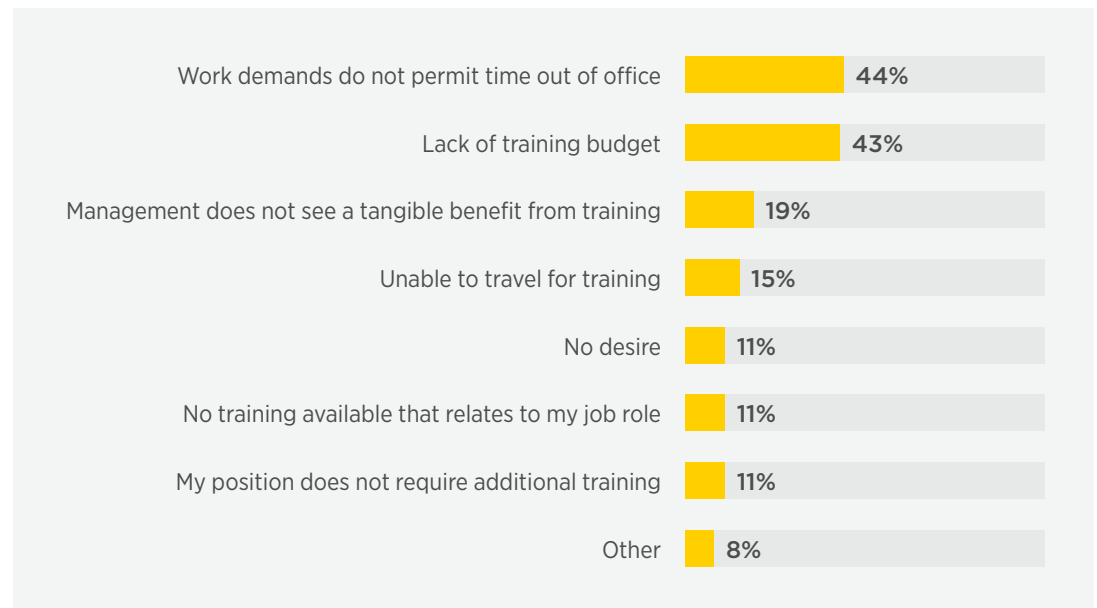


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Employees need to be set up for success. Fifty-eight percent of decision-makers said formal training is provided by their company. To make matters worse, only 59% authorized training even when it was available. These percentages are abysmal, especially considering the industry-wide spread of skills gaps. Managers are asking employees to do more with less and not setting them up for success by improving their capabilities through skills development. How does that make any sense?

The fact that 85% of worldwide tech professionals took some form of training last year shows the resilience of IT staff. They will seek training and professional development opportunities even with little or no support from their bosses or organization.

## TRAINING INHIBITORS



In fact, lack of manager support is the third biggest training inhibitor. Almost half of respondents say that work demands and lack of a training budget are the main roadblocks that get in the way of training, which again highlights the need for organizations to prioritize cultures of learning.

In terms of likelihood to attend training, skills-based and certification-focused training are the clear frontrunners. Nearly half of our respondents are likely to attend professional skills training (e.g., leadership, communication skills) and 30% are likely to attend business process skills training (e.g., project management, ITIL®).

## LIKELIHOOD TO ATTEND TRAINING

| Training type   | Extremely likely | Somewhat likely | Neither likely nor unlikely | Somewhat unlikely | Extremely unlikely |
|---|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| IT training (skills-based)  | 25%              | 33%             | 23%                         | 8%                | 11%                |
| IT training (certification-focused)                                   | 20%              | 28%             | 27%                         | 12%               | 12%                |
| Professional skills (leadership, management and communication skills) | 16%              | 31%             | 24%                         | 16%               | 13%                |
| Business process skills (project management, ITIL®, Six Sigma, etc.)  | 9%               | 21%             | 34%                         | 17%               | 19%                |

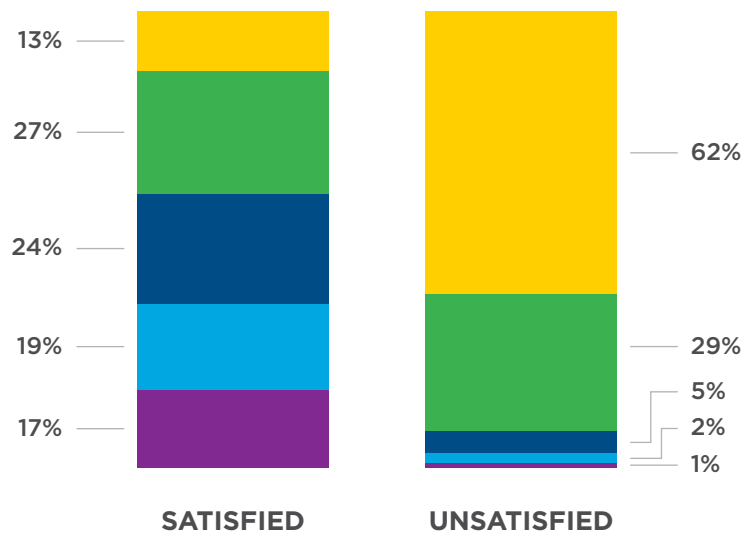


# Job Satisfaction

IT decision-makers told us the number one reason for skills gaps is an inability to hire qualified job candidates. They also told us the most damaging impact of skills gaps is increased stress on their employees. This creates a vicious cycle, as a stressed and unsatisfied workforce often seeks alternative employment.

Ninety-one percent of unsatisfied IT professionals are likely to pursue a new position this year, compared to 40% of those who are satisfied with their current job. Our survey respondents have made it abundantly clear—they will not wait out a bad work situation. If they are overwhelmed, unhappy or believe their company isn't investing enough in their development, they will pursue other opportunities.

## JOB SATISFACTION AND LIKELIHOOD TO PURSUE A NEW POSITION

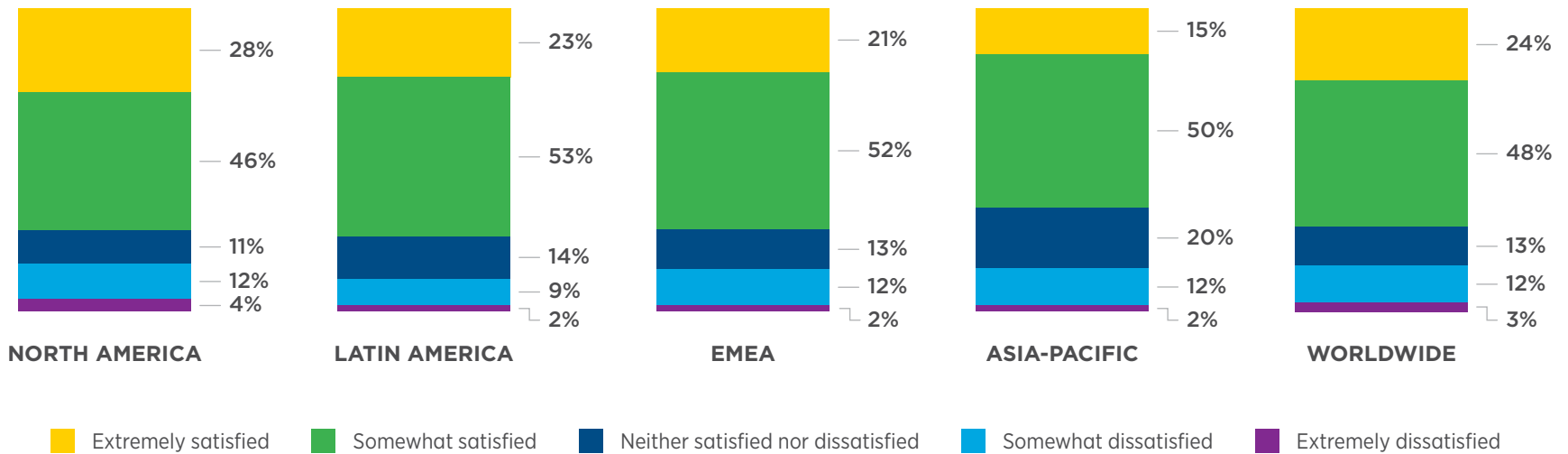


IT pros will not wait out a bad work situation. If they are overwhelmed, unhappy or believe their company isn't investing enough in their development, they will pursue other opportunities.



Globally, 72% of IT professionals are either somewhat or extremely satisfied with their job. Latin American respondents have the highest rate of job satisfaction (76%) while North American tech professionals are the most dissatisfied (16%). Thirteen percent of worldwide respondents say they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

## JOB SATISFACTION



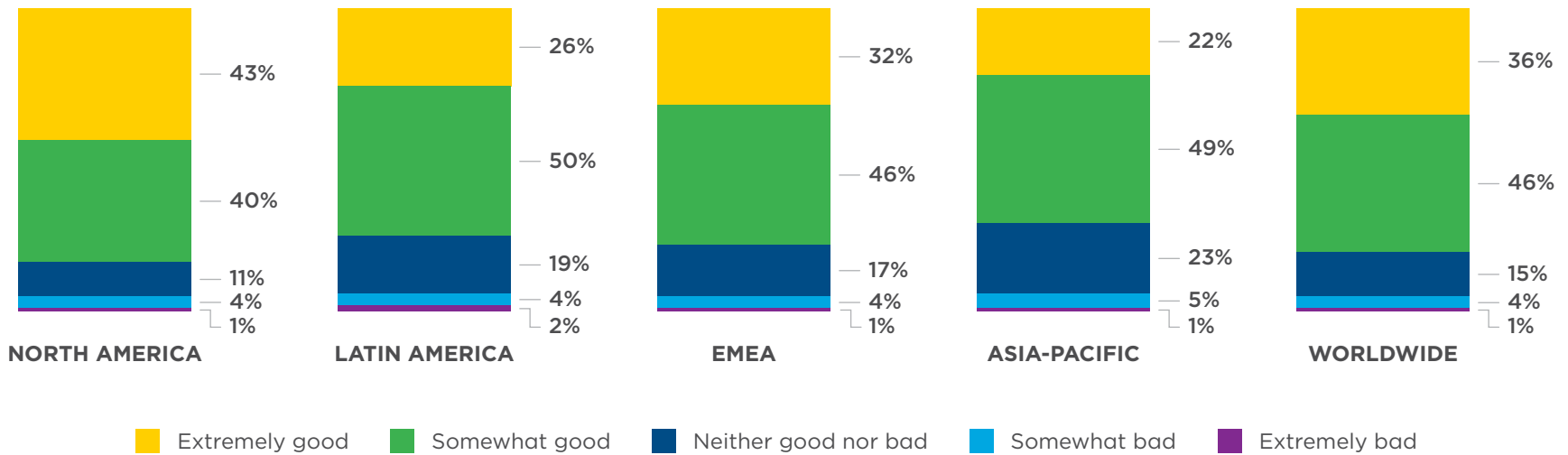
The satisfaction gap between IT decision-makers and staff is smaller than past years. Seventy-six percent of decision-makers are satisfied with their job, compared to 71% of their staff. In 2018, the satisfaction disparity between staff and managers was as high as 35% in the Asia-Pacific region.

## JOB SECURITY

Over half of IT professionals will contemplate a job change this year, but not because they fear they'll lose their current job. Our survey respondents are unfailingly secure in their jobs. Worldwide, 82% regard their job security as either somewhat good or extremely good. North American IT professionals are the most confident in their job security (83%).

Only five percent of IT professionals feel at least somewhat bad about their job security. If IT professionals change employers—and 21% did last year—then it's likely a decision by the employee, not management.

## JOB SECURITY



## EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

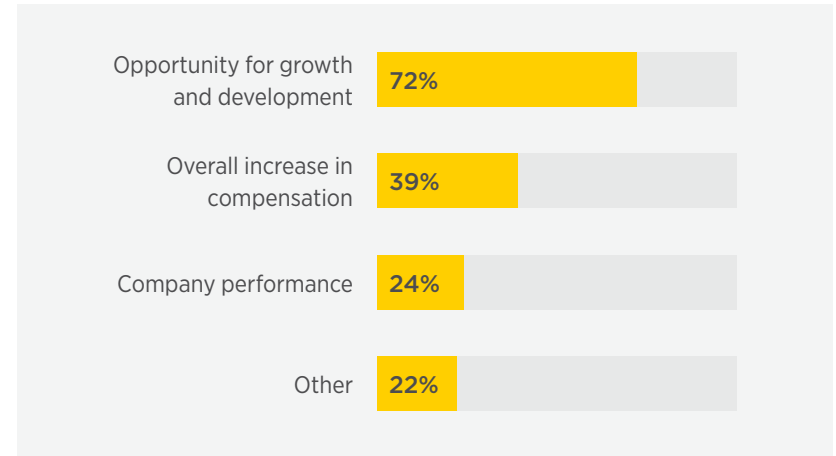
One out of five survey respondents changed employers last year. That's a huge deal for IT managers who are struggling to hire qualified professionals to fill open positions. But something can be learned from the reasons *why* IT professionals leave.

Nearly two-thirds said they wanted more opportunities for growth and development. Higher salary was the No. 2 reason, while company performance was third.

IT professionals are constantly learning. That's part of the excitement of working with technology. They want to use it to its fullest, not fight it. If managers are hesitant to approve training, their employees will see that as a lack of investment, or commitment, from the company.

It's not always about salary. This report shows that growth opportunities are more important than just about anything else for IT professionals.

## FACTORS FOR CHANGING EMPLOYER



# Conclusion

IT professionals have a strong desire for growth. They will seek both formal and informal methods to strengthen their skill set and enhance their career. The fact that 85% of survey respondents took some form of training in the past year illustrates the drive of IT professionals. Unfortunately, it also highlights the lack of support from decision-makers, of whom only 59% approved training for their staff even when their company provided it. Leadership is often hamstrung by budgets, workloads and lack of a strong learning culture, but they would be well served in the long term to find ways to secure continual training for their employees.

When it comes to learning preference, IT professionals place the highest value on live, instructor-led training, but more often participate in on-demand training. This is likely due to the flexibility of this type of web-based e-learning, but too much flexibility does more harm than good. Still, a greater percentage of IT professionals attended a classroom training session this year compared to 2018, which likely illustrates the increased need to fill critical skills gaps throughout the industry. The expert interaction baked into the fabric of classroom training can't be replicated in other hands-off learning methods.

While IT professionals feel secure in their jobs, more than half will take a peek around the industry to see if better jobs are available. This is a serious dilemma for IT managers who are already struggling to hire qualified individuals. Our survey respondents are most interested in growth opportunities, so decision-makers are advised to make this a top priority. Set time aside for staff training. Map out a certification path. These are the investments that can both improve job satisfaction and build needed skills amongst personnel.

IT professionals want to learn and grow their careers. If they're not getting support from their manager or organization, they will seek training on their own or look to grow their career elsewhere. IT professionals have shown that they will not sit idly by as the technology around them advances at a rapid pace. They want to move forward in unison.

Success is achieved when you develop the people who orchestrate technology and business processes. In a "People, Process, Technology" world, technology plays the supporting role—it is only as powerful as the people who create and sustain it.

Invest in your people by giving them chances to grow with you and you will position yourself for the greatest chance of success.

## RESOURCES

- [IT Skills and Salary Report Resource Hub](#)
- [Why Instructor-Led Training is More Critical Than Ever in a Distraction-Heavy World](#)
- [Mind the Gap: Six Steps to a Highly-Skilled Workforce free eBook](#)
- [6 Tips for Informal Learning](#)

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 2019 IT Skills and Salary Survey was conducted online from September 2018 through November 2018, using the Qualtrics Insight Platform.

Global Knowledge and partner companies and organizations emailed survey invitations to recipients from their databases. Links were also provided in online newsletters. The survey yielded 12,271 completed responses, with 54% coming from the United States and Canada and the remainder from countries around the world. The online survey was tabulated using IBM SPSS and Q Research software.

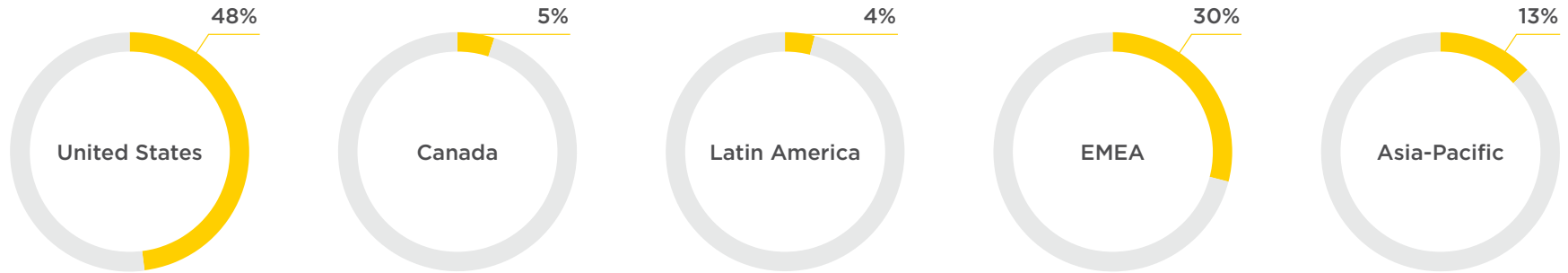
## THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Global Knowledge extends a special thank you to our partners for helping make this year's survey possible:



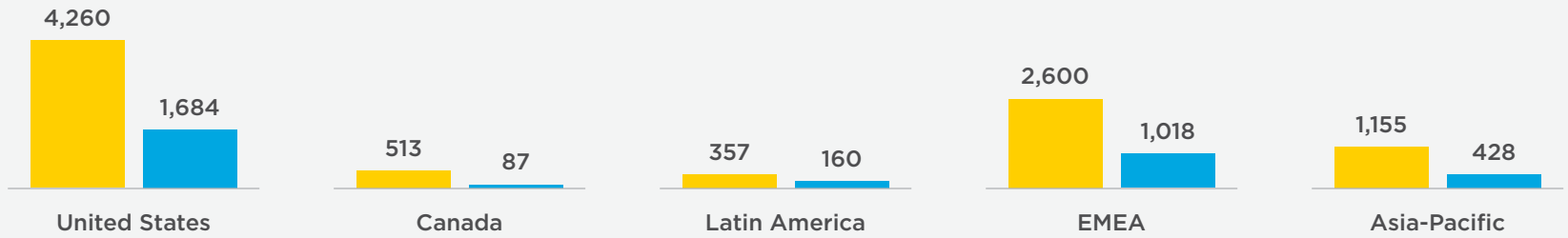
## DEMOGRAPHICS

### RESIDING COUNTRY OR REGION



### JOB ROLE

IT Staff IT Decision-maker

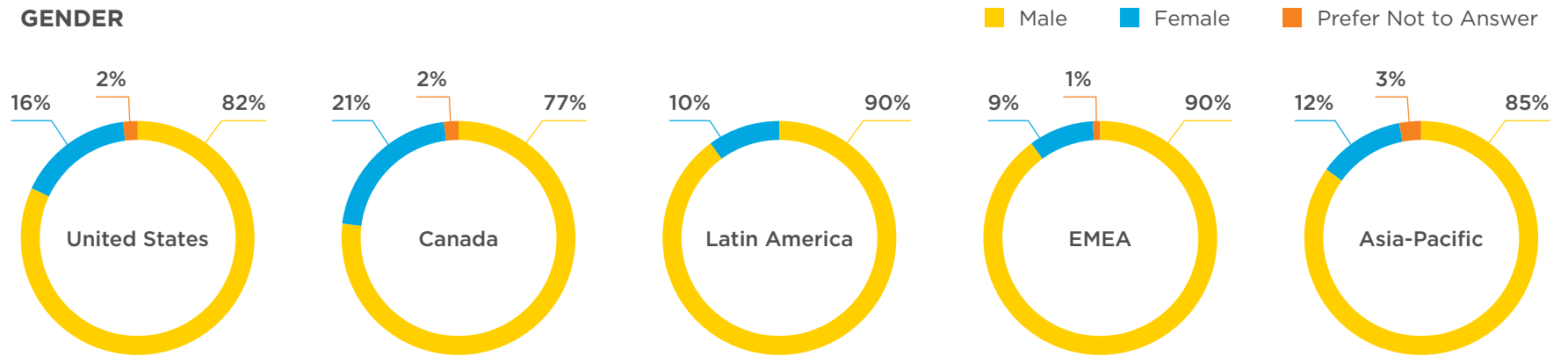


### AVERAGE AGE

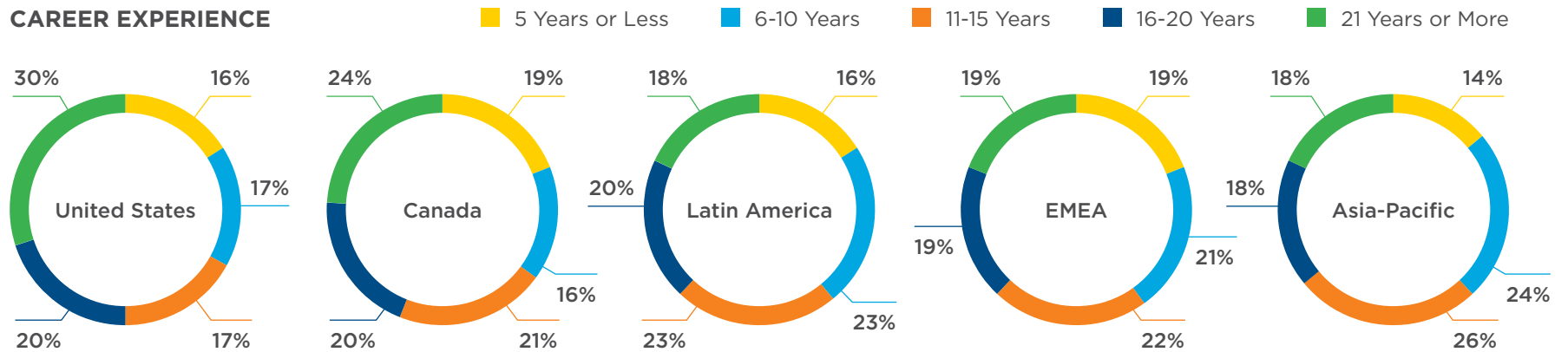


## DEMOGRAPHICS

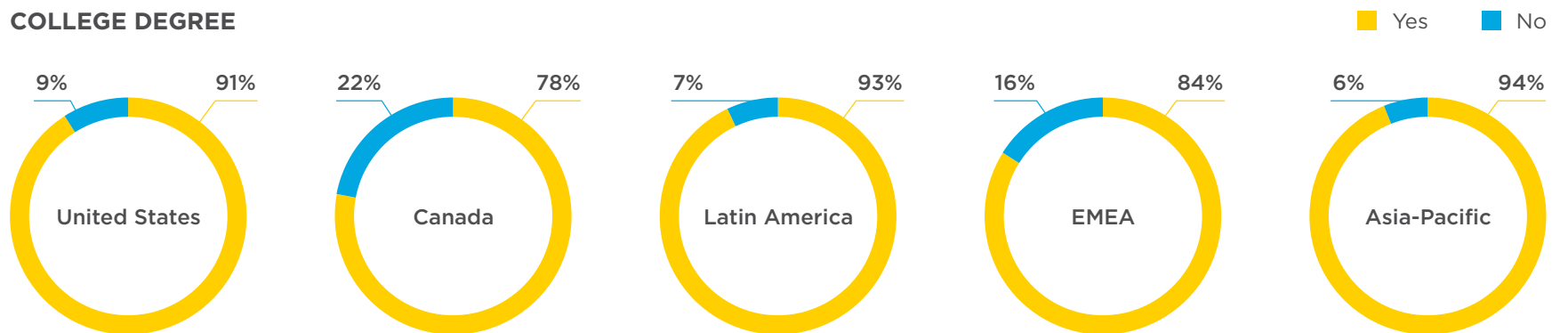
### GENDER



### CAREER EXPERIENCE



### COLLEGE DEGREE



# About Global Knowledge

**Global Knowledge builds skills that enable success.**

Global Knowledge is the worldwide leader in IT and professional training, helping develop the skills individuals and organizations need to succeed in the ever-changing world. To meet customer needs, Global Knowledge is located in 15 countries, and has the unique flexibility to deliver a broad portfolio of courses in over 100 countries in classrooms, online, and through a worldwide partner network.

Since 1995, Global Knowledge employees and its award-winning subject matter expert instructors have been committed to enabling the success of more than 230,000 professionals each year.

[www.globalknowledge.com](http://www.globalknowledge.com)

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