

MAGNIFIED
STATS**57%**

Percentage of
Gallup survey
respondents
interested in
upskilling
programs

100+

Number of
NJ programs
in Focus NJ's
database



Scan for
FocusNJ's
workforce
development
resources



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Upskilling Before Downturns

WITH CONSTANT PROGNOSTICATIONS about a potential economic recession in 2023, it's hard to blame workers for feeling uneasy about their job security.

While the reality of an impending recession is still very much uncertain, it's never a bad idea for workers and employers to consider the importance of upskilling.

"Upskilling" refers to acquiring new skills or abilities and is typically associated with workers who have already begun their career. Upskilling is usually understood to mean an advancement of skills within the same industry to propel someone within their current career tract, as opposed to "reskilling," which involves acquiring completely new skills in order to change careers.

Even when economic conditions are stable, upskilling is important for workers who want to keep up with the most recent advances

in their field, learn to utilize new technology, or need additional training to take on more responsibility in their workplace.

In 2021, a study conducted by Gallup and Amazon found that 57% of American workers said they wanted to participate in an upskilling program. Most also indicated that they wanted to seek this training for the purpose of career advancement.

Importantly, for those currently worried about the impact of a potential downturn, Gallup found that workers who had recently participated in an employer-provided upskilling program were more likely to feel satisfied with their job security, promotional opportunities, level of pay, and other "good job dimensions."

While not all employers are able to provide upskilling to their employees directly, there are hundreds of opportunities for training online and in person.

Last year, Focus NJ launched its own workforce development database and mapping tool to catalog training opportunities available in the Garden State. More than 100 programs hosted by community colleges, vocational-technical schools, community providers, and private organizations are currently included at focusnj.org/workforce-development-map. The page allows users to filter for results based on county and field(s) of interest.

Employers in need of qualified workers are also encouraged to utilize the page to identify training providers in their region who know students seeking employment opportunities, while those same providers are invited to submit their own programs for consideration on the site using a link available on the page. ●

— Kyle Sullender
Executive Director, Focus NJ