



THE LEARNING LEADER'S GUIDE TO AI SUCCESS

7 Best Practices for Driving AI Literacy

2025 - 2026



INTRODUCTION

Bridging the AI gap

Three years into the AI revolution, HR and learning leaders face a stark reality: technology is advancing faster than our ability to keep up. While tech-native companies like **Shopify** and **Duolingo** go "AI first," most organizations remain in experimentation mode or the early stages of transformation. **So if you're feeling behind, you're not alone.**

Now, AI agents are accelerating the shift. Companies worldwide are betting big and moving fast on the ability of AI agents to increase productivity and automate repetitive tasks. At the same time, security issues and a lack of trust continue to stifle success.

60%

of leaders believe their organization has an AI literacy skill gap⁸

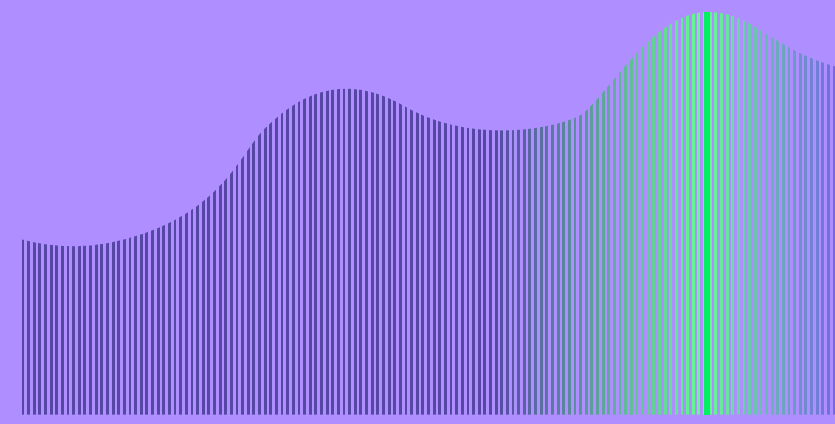
[Get the State of Data & AI Literacy Report](#)

AI TODAY BY THE NUMBERS

AI ADOPTION IS ALREADY UBIQUITOUS

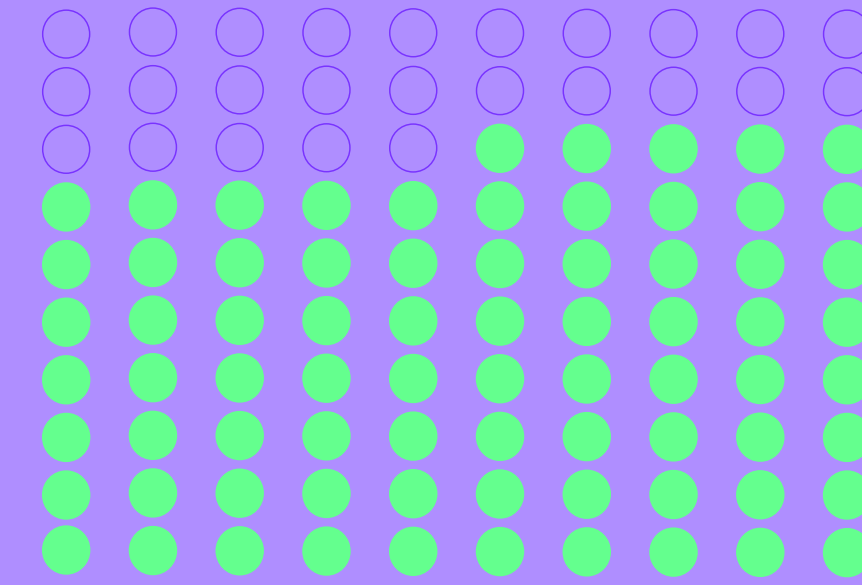
700+ million

weekly active ChatGPT users¹



75%

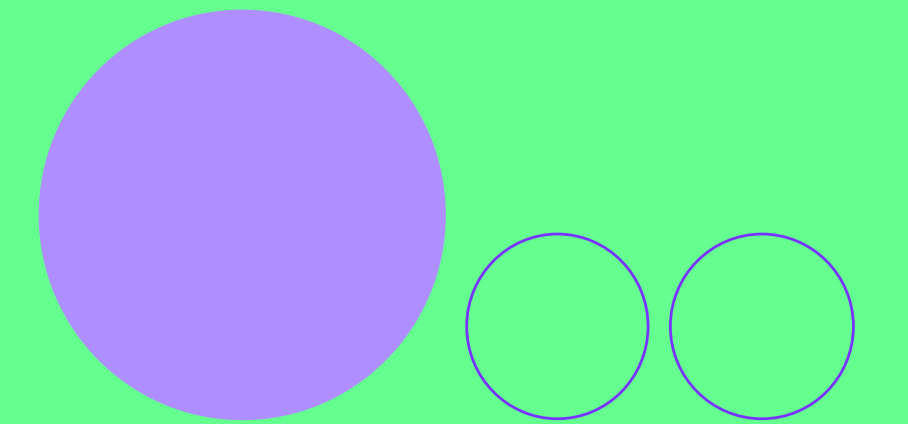
of knowledge workers report using generative AI²



AND ORGANIZATIONS ARE BETTING BIG ON AI...

1 in 3

of companies investing in AI anticipate spending more than \$10 million on it in 2026³



...BUT SCALING REMAINS ELUSIVE

<20%

of companies have scaled their generative AI efforts meaningfully⁴

...BUT SCALING REMAINS ELUSIVE

5%

of custom enterprise AI tools reach production⁵

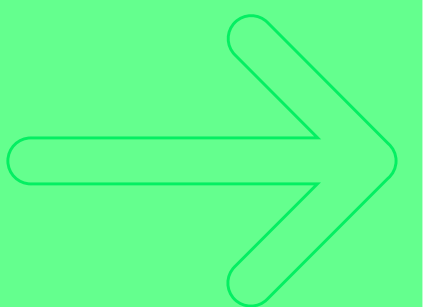
...BUT SCALING REMAINS ELUSIVE

74%

of companies had temporarily paused AI projects due to risks⁶

THE MISSING LINK: WORKFORCE READINESS

Top companies are upskilling their workforce in AI and making use of AI for digital labor.⁷



Technology won't separate winners from losers of AI; people will. And HR and learning leaders are at the center

In this guide, we'll discover:

- **What AI literacy means in 2026**, including key insights from working with 12,000+ learning leaders
- **Strategies to ensure your workforce thrives** in the face of rapid technological advancements
- **Seven best practices to drive AI skills** across your organization, starting today

"Without strong, people-centered strategies, even the best AI initiatives can fall short."

– BCG, "The Leader's Guide to Transforming With AI"⁹



How is AI literacy different from data literacy?

While this report focuses on AI literacy, data and AI literacy are deeply connected. **You can't understand AI without understanding data.** And you can't use AI effectively without strong data skills. To build the future of work, your people need both.

Data literacy → drives human decision making

Data helps employees understand, analyze, and make evidence-based choices, leading to more productive teams.

AI literacy → enables automation and innovation

AI takes it further, enabling automation, accelerating productivity, and creating entirely new ways of working.

Together → the peanut butter and jelly of upskilling

Data literacy gives employees the foundation. AI literacy empowers them to apply it at scale, responsibly, and creatively.

AI literacy is the ability to effectively, ethically, and responsibly understand, utilize, and guide AI systems.



Define learner groups and skill profiles

AI impacts every employee, from the front line to the C-suite. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work:

- **Executives must shape AI strategy**, understand and ensure compliance with evolving regulations, all while responsibly driving value with AI
- **Marketers need hands-on AI skills**, both for content creation and to act as stakeholders in building AI systems, such as powering hyper-personalized campaigns
- **Data scientists need to embed AI** into workflows, deploy models ethically, and collaborate with business teams for real results
- **Customer success reps and front-line** workers need prompt engineering skills and understand the basics of how AI systems and agents work to develop trust

DATA CAMP EXECUTIVE CURRICULUM IN THE SPOTLIGHT

TRACK

EU AI Act Fundamentals

Understand the EU AI Act and AI fundamentals. Learn to navigate regulations and foster trust with responsible AI.



Start

TRACK

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Leadership

Learn to lead with confidence with this hands-on track. You'll monetize AI, build trust with responsible and explainable AI, and start driving innovation.



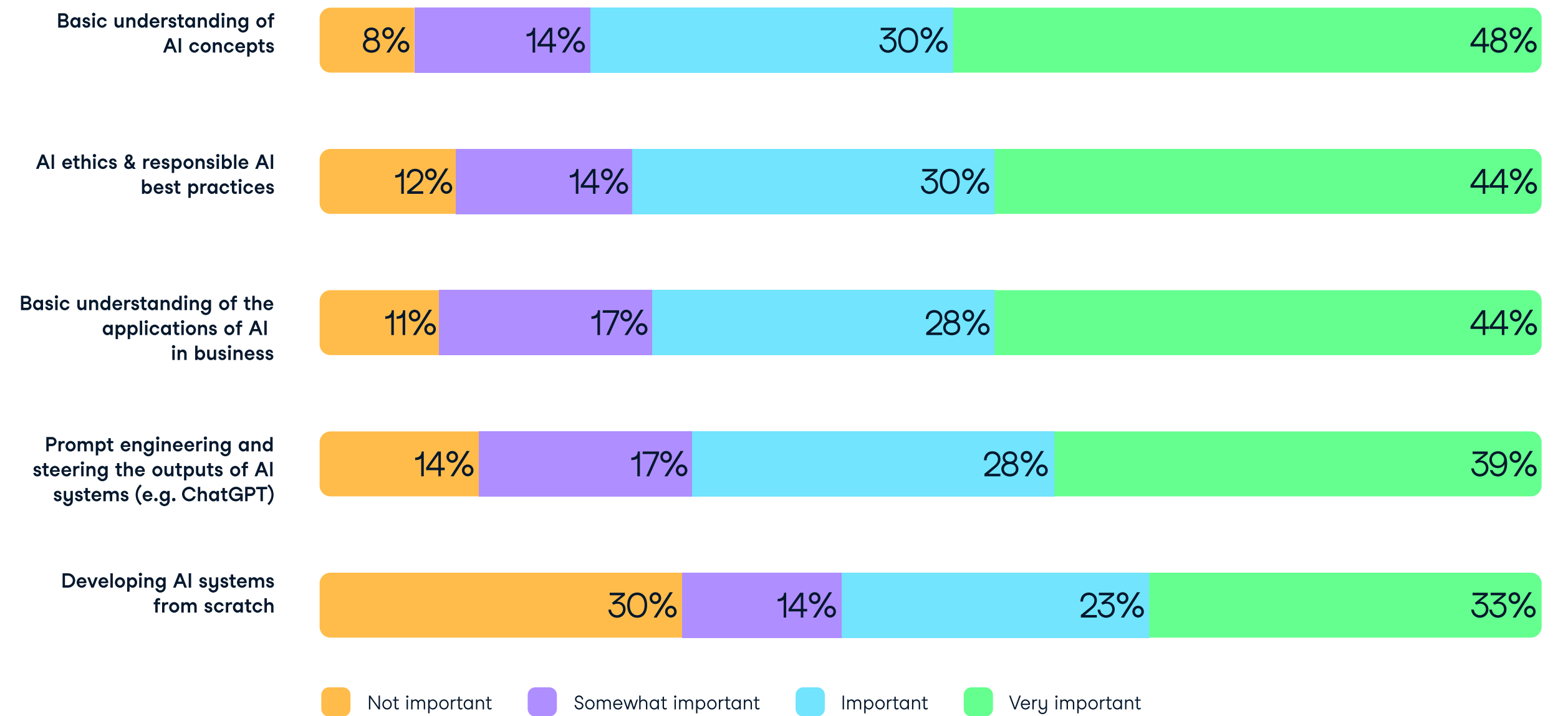
Start

The AI literacy skills spectrum

AI literacy goes far beyond knowing how to use ChatGPT. It spans a wide range of skills, shaped by the way different roles interact with AI.

Understanding this spectrum is key. It **helps you meet learners where they are**, build relevant skills, and create scalable, personalized learning paths for your workforce.

WE ASKED 550+ LEADERS HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING AI SKILLS FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY TASKS OF EMPLOYEES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?




DATA CAMP CURRICULUM FOR AI BUILDERS & FRONTLINE TEAMS

TRACK

Developing AI Applications


Learn to create AI-powered applications with the latest AI developer tools, including the OpenAI API, Hugging Face, and LangChain.

 21h [Start](#)

TRACK

AI Agent Fundamentals

From understanding to building. Discover how AI agents can change how you work and deliver value for your organization.

 4h [Start](#)

COURSE

Understanding Prompt Engineering


Transform your productivity in one hour. Learn how to write effective prompts with ChatGPT to apply in your workflow.

 1h [Start](#)

TRACK

Responsible AI Foundations

Master the foundations of responsible AI. Gain essential ethics, data management, and compliance skills to govern AI across its entire lifecycle.

 6h [Start](#)

Tips for creating learning groups and skill profiles

[Get the Framework](#)

Learning groups are role-based archetypes that reflect who you're upskilling. They make your program more relevant, targeted, and effective. At DataCamp, **we've identified four groups for data and AI literacy programs**, each with distinct skill needs.



Data Consumers & Business Leaders

These individuals need to consume data insights to make better data-driven decisions.

They tend to be individual contributors, or hold leadership roles that don't require them to produce data insights. They are casual users of AI.

Possible job titles

- HR Associate
- Account Executive
- VP of Marketing
- VP of Finance
- VP of Sales
- Chief Learning Officer



Citizen Data Practitioner

These individuals work with data daily but are usually not part of a technical or data and AI team. They tend to be individual contributors to functional teams (e.g., financial analysts, marketing analysts, etc.).

They use AI to draw data insights, and perform their role more effectively.

Possible job titles

- Business Intelligence Analyst
- Business Analyst
- Marketing Analyst
- Financial Analyst
- Supply Chain Analyst



Data & AI Practitioner

These individuals are usually part of a broader data and AI team. Their responsibilities include surfacing data insights, running experiments, creating predictive models, and providing value with data.

They use AI to draw data insights, and build AI systems to be deployed internally or for customers.

Possible job titles

- Data Analyst
- Data Scientist
- Data Engineer
- Statistician
- Quantitative Analyst
- Programmer



Data & AI Expert

These professionals are top-tier data and AI talent within the organization, possessing advanced technical expertise, bridging the gap between research and engineering. Their main focus centres on developing and deploying sophisticated data and machine learning systems.

They use AI to draw data insights, and build AI systems to be deployed internally or for customers.

Possible job titles

- Machine Learning Scientist
- Machine Learning Engineer
- Research Engineer
- Research Scientist
- Staff Data Scientist

While our competency framework is a strong starting point, **every organization is different**. Use these three steps to build learning groups that reflect your people, needs, and strategy.

1. Understand your learners

Go deeper than job titles. Use surveys, interviews, or focus groups to uncover real needs, usage, and friction points. Focus on questions like:

- What is the scope of their role, and how could AI support it?
- How familiar are they with AI concepts and terms? (use self-assessments or formal evaluations)
- What AI tools are they already using, and how confident are they?
- What skills do they want to build, and how do they prefer to learn?
- What concerns or blockers do they face when using AI?
- What motivates them to learn more about AI, and how likely are they to engage in AI literacy programs?

ASSESSMENTS

Pinpoint strengths and skill gaps with DataCamp



[See All Assessments](#)

Requiring employees to re-learn skills they already have is a guaranteed path to disengagement. DataCamp's adaptive assessments cut through the guesswork and ensure you never waste a minute of your training investment.

2. Spot patterns, not just job titles

Once you've gathered learner insights, look for patterns that go beyond roles. Segment by how people relate to AI, not just an org chart. For example:

- **Strategic leaders:** governance, ethics, and ROI
- **Builders:** data scientists and engineers who integrate AI into systems
- **Power users:** marketers and analysts who apply AI in daily workflows
- **Skeptics:** who need trust, guidance, and pathways to explore

3. Build, validate, and evolve learning groups

Use these patterns to define clear, lightweight learner groups, not complex personas. Make sure they resonate: do employees see themselves in them?

Keep them alive. As **AI adoption accelerates, your learner groups will shift.** Teams that evolve their learning groups over time drive higher engagement and better outcomes.



Personalize at scale

Once your learning groups are defined, the next play is building tailored paths that meet their specific needs. Three proven tactics:

- 1. Build role-specific learning paths.** Whether using internal tools or an external partner like DataCamp, create clear, scalable journeys. DataCamp lets you design custom tracks, courses, projects, assessments, and certifications—all aligned to your tools and goals
- 2. Add real-world context.** Mix internal and external resources that match each group's skill level and use case. Showcase real applications of AI to make learning relevant and inspiring
- 3. Create communities of practice.** Spark continuous learning by bringing similar learners together. Use forums, meetups, or chat groups to share insights, tackle challenges, and build momentum across teams

The screenshot shows the DataCamp Enterprise interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Learn', 'Certification', 'Sandbox', 'Groups', and 'DataLab'. The left sidebar contains navigation options: 'DataCamp Enterprise', 'Invite Members', 'Purchase Licenses', 'Dashboard', 'Members', 'Teams', 'Settings', 'LEARN' (Custom Tracks, Assignments, Leaderboard), 'INSIGHTS & ANALYTICS' (Reporting, Skill Matrix), 'CERTIFICATION' (Overview, Certify My Team), and 'PRO SERVICES' (Live Trainings, Custom Solutions). The main content area is titled 'Custom Tracks' and shows a table of tracks.

TITLE	CREATED AT	DURATION
Org-Wide Prompt Engineering Principles	Aug 15, 2025	5hrs
AI Fundamentals in Insurance	July 26, 2025	6hrs
AI Ethics in Healthcare	June 2, 2025	3hrs
GenAI for Personalized Marketing Campaigns	May 19, 2025	8hrs 30min
AI Engineering in E-commerce	April 8, 2025	10hrs
Moving From Excel to Power BI	March 22, 2025	12hrs
ChatGPT for Sales	March 2, 2025	6hrs
Machine Learning Principles in Retail	Feb 15, 2025	16hrs 30min
Python Automation for New Developers	Feb 1, 2025	14hrs 30min
Prompt Engineering for GTM Teams	Jan 15, 2025	4hrs

Emphasize responsible AI

Every AI literacy program should increase value and reduce risk.

Upskilling without responsibility is a risk; it **creates speed without guardrails.**

Effective programs embed responsible use into every learning path, from C-suite to the frontline. Whether leaders are evaluating use cases, engineers are building systems, or GTM teams are using everyday tools, safe AI use must be non-negotiable.

88%

of leaders identified AI ethics and responsible AI best practices as “very important” or “important” for the day-to-day tasks of employees in their organization.

[Get the State of Data & AI Literacy Report](#)

TRACK

Responsible AI Foundations

Master the foundations of responsible AI. Gain essential ethics, data management, and compliance skills to govern AI across its entire lifecycle.



6h

Start

COURSE

AI Ethics

Vital for anyone working with AI. From policy-making to wider society, uncover strategies for building AI systems that minimize biases and establish user trust.



1h

Start

TRACK

GDPR and Data Privacy Fundamentals

Master GDPR, data privacy, and security to safeguard data, ensure compliance, and build trust in a digital world.



5h

Start

Embed interactivity at the core

You can't learn to swim by reading a book. Data and AI are no different.

Skills like prompt engineering, model tuning, or using tools like ChatGPT and Copilot require more than passive learning. Even when it comes to cutting-edge tools for technical practitioners—i.e., Hugging Face and LangChain—building production-grade AI takes more than reading documentation.

To build true proficiency, teams need to get hands-on. Programs fall short when there's too much theory, not enough doing. DataCamp changes that. Our hands-on learning experience helps teams move from knowing to applying. It's why our learners see **6x higher completion rates than video-only platforms.**

“DataCamp's reputation has always centered on hands-on, practical, modular, and interactive learning, with real coding examples and easy sharing. Students can track their personal progress and benchmark themselves against others, which is unique to DataCamp.”

drax

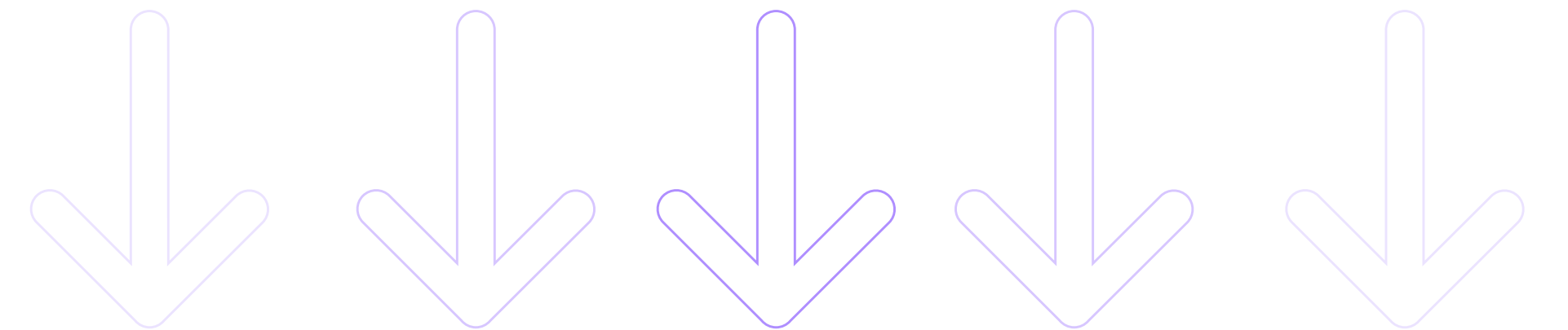
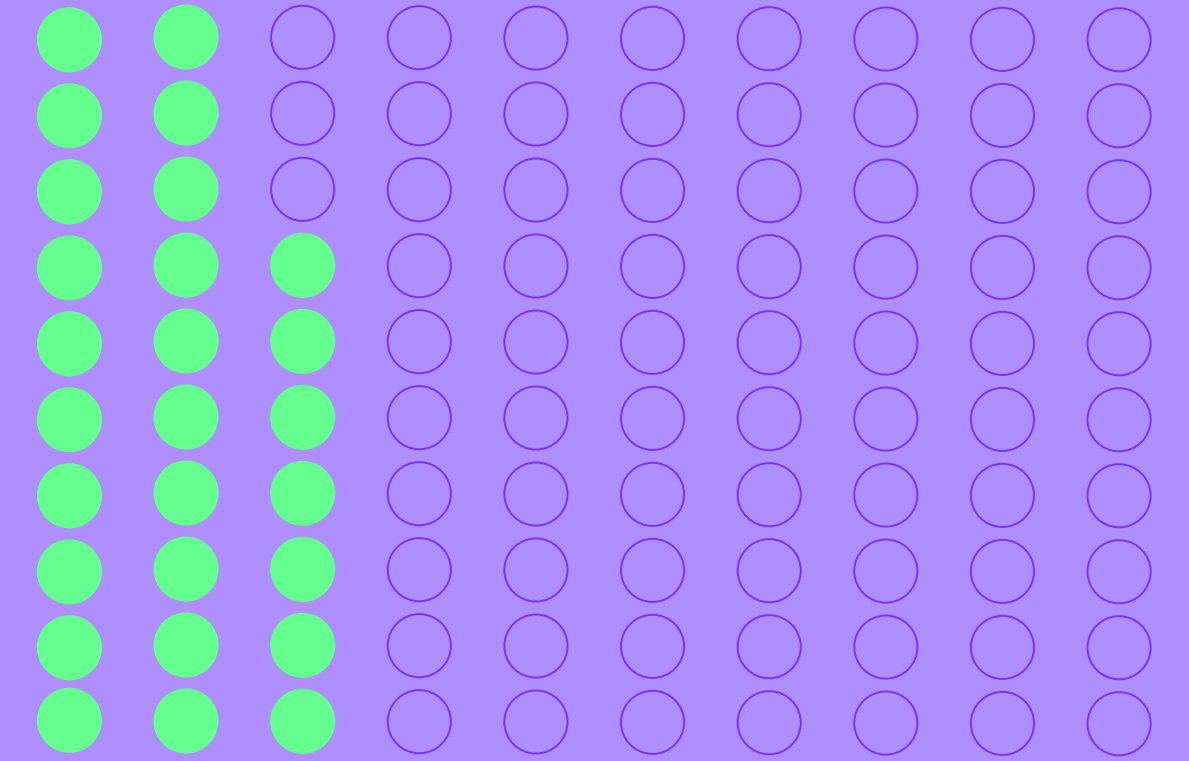
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— Bjoern Reinke, Director of Data and Data Science at Drax Group

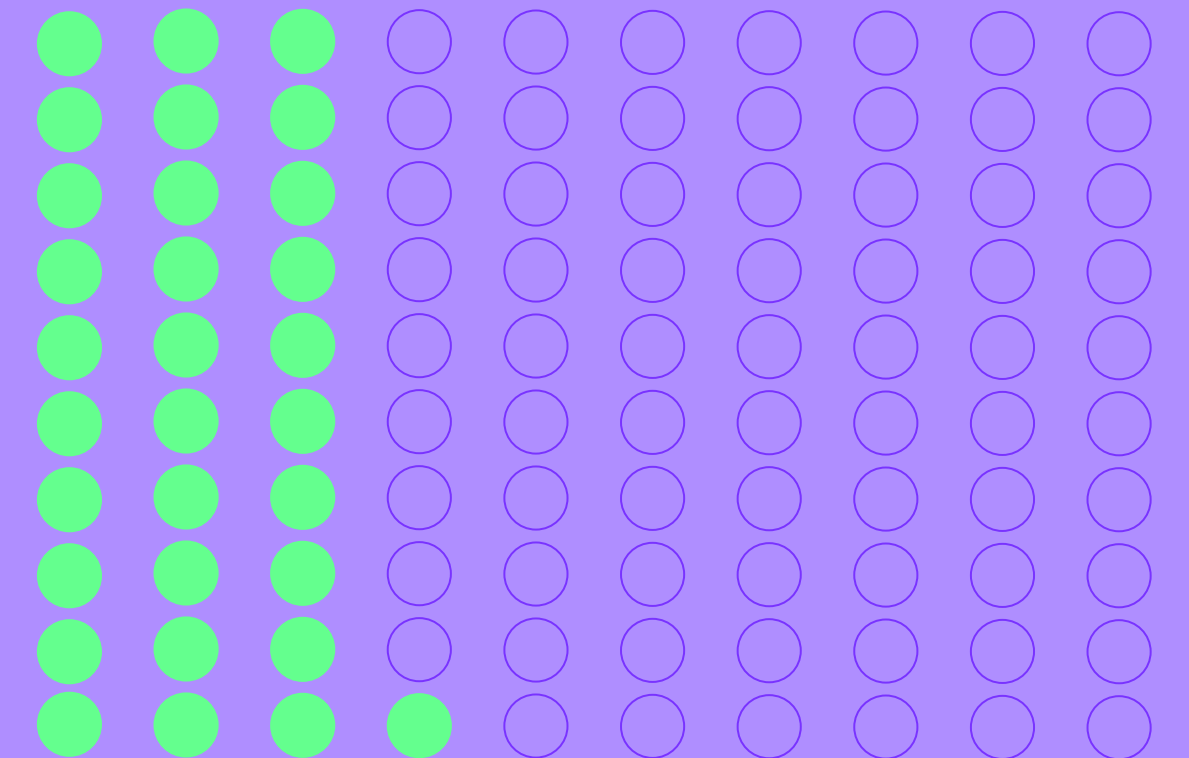
27%

of leaders identified "inadequate training resources" as the biggest obstacle to improving organizational data and AI skills



31%

specifically mentioned that video courses make applying learned skills in real-world scenarios difficult



Even if you don't use DataCamp (yet!), you can still embed interactivity into your learning program by adopting these tactics:

Incorporate real-world projects and capstone exercises

Create capstone modules with practical projects centered on real tasks, such as prompting or building an AI model. Engage your internal experts to help craft the content.

Facilitate peer learning and group activities

Similar to building communities of practice to drive up personalization, facilitating group activities and peer learning, such as collaborative problem-solving or peer reviews, makes learning more interactive and social.

Organize hackathons and competitions

Host hackathons or competitions focused on AI and data challenges. These events foster creativity, encourage experimentation, and allow learners to apply their skills in a fun, competitive environment.

SPECSAVERS' HACKATHONS DROVE ENGAGEMENT,
SAVING LEARNERS FOUR HOURS PER WEEK ON KEY TASKS

“The learning I have done on DataCamp so far has brought immediate benefits to my everyday work.”



– Martin Adamski, ML Reporting Developer,
Commercial Finance at Specsavers

Specsavers

“We've begun to build a ‘ritual’ using DataCamp to set fun challenges followed by presentations for our internal data community ... to generate some real energy for data learning.”



– Lorraine Pocklington, Data Community
Manager at Specsavers

Specsavers

Be proactive about change management

Most AI initiatives fail not because of technology, but because employees don't buy in. Let's face it: change IS intimidating, especially when it involves a powerful technology. Leaders must be proactive in addressing concerns, including "Is this a risk to my role?" or "Why should I invest time in learning data and AI?"

Leaders need to get ahead of these concerns by clearly answering **"What's in it for me?"** for each learning group. Here are three proven angles from DataCamp clients:

1. Empowerment and innovation at Colgate-Palmolive

Position data and AI as tools for impact, not replacement. At Colgate-Palmolive, **80% of nearly 15,000 learners reported applying new skills** on the job, accelerating decisions and driving improved business outcomes.



2. Increased efficiency at Rolls-Royce and Essex Property Trust

Demonstrate how data and AI can simplify work, reduce manual effort, and improve results:

- Rolls-Royce automated manual processes, **achieving a 100× speed-up** in engineering design
- Analysts at Essex Property Trust **boosted productivity up to 24×** in data processing tasks

3. Career growth and opportunities with Autodesk

Highlight how data and AI skills can lead to career advancement. Damian O’Farrill, Director of Data Science and Revenue Analytics at Autodesk, specifically looks for team members who have a portfolio of learning and projects.

“When people reach out to me, asking how they can improve their chances of being hired on my team at Autodesk, I tell them to go and do some learning on DataCamp and build an amazing portfolio and profile. This is a clear indication of commitment and passion for data, and it makes it easier for me to identify star candidates. I can’t say I feel the same when they tell me about learning they’ve done through other platforms.”

 **AUTODESK**



– Damian O’Farrill, Director of Data Science and Revenue Analytics at Autodesk



That said, spreading these messages throughout your organization requires doubling down on the next best practice...



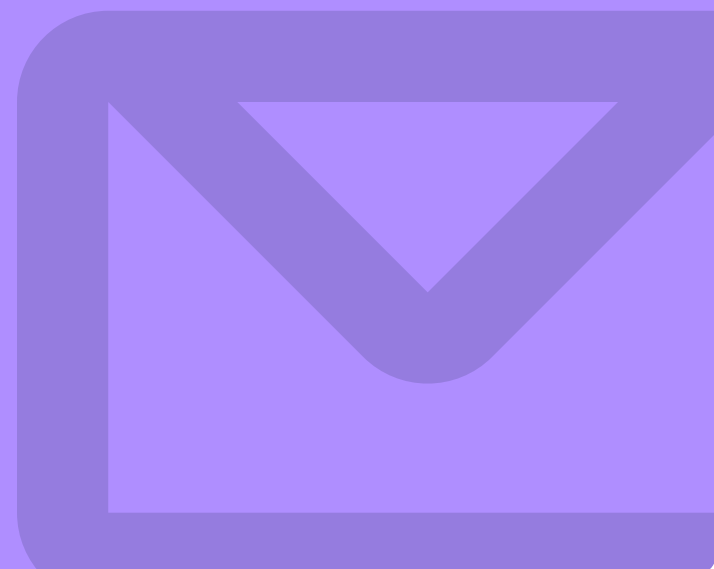
Communication, communication, communication

Change won't stick without consistent, engaging communication. The goal: keep AI upskilling visible, relevant, and personal, reinforcing the **“What's in it for me?”** at every step.

To succeed, **think like a marketer**. Build a communication plan that meets learners where they are and resonates with their needs. Try these tactics:

Weekly newsletter

Share success stories, learning tips, and upcoming events to keep momentum high.



Slack or Teams channels

Create dedicated spaces for discussion, resource-sharing, and updates.



Internal podcast

Feature leaders and learners sharing their AI upskilling journeys.



Testimonials

Spotlight learner and champion stories to inspire peers.



Lunch and learns

Host informal sessions with experts or internal leaders to spark conversation and curiosity.



Use AI to your advantage

Upskilling in AI has obvious benefits. But you can also use AI itself to speed up your literacy program. It streamlines processes, accelerates results, and makes rollouts faster.

Four ways AI can support learning leaders:

- 1. Persona definition and mapping:** Use AI to design surveys and cluster learner personas from collected data
- 2. Content curation and creation:** Leverage AI to suggest updates to pathways and materials with fresh, relevant content
- 3. Accelerated communication:** Draft and personalize learner for consistent comms at scale
- 4. Learner analytics:** Analyze learner data and surface insights to refine your program

NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN? START FROM SCRATCH AND BUILD JOB-READY AI SKILLS ON DATACAMP'S CURRICULUM

TRACK

AI Fundamentals

Discover the fundamentals of AI, dive into models like ChatGPT, and decode generative AI secrets to navigate the dynamic AI landscape.



[Start](#)

TRACK

AI Agent Fundamentals

From understanding to building. Discover how AI agents can change how you work and deliver value for your organization.



[Start](#)

Build data and AI literacy with DataCamp

DataCamp's vision is universal data and AI fluency. That's why we're redefining data and AI upskilling, helping people do their best work in a changing world.

We are the only platform uniquely engineered to advance data and AI skill building through:

- ✓ Tailored, AI-powered learning for everyone. From analyst to executive, casual data and AI explorer to experienced practitioner, everyone builds the skills they need with DataCamp.
- ✓ Data and AI learning that spans the full journey. Our expert-curated curriculum covers foundations as well as state-of-the-art skills. Everything is rigorously reviewed, updated, and customized, so you're not overwhelmed with content.
- ✓ An engaging, hands-on experience that makes learning feel more like play than work while remaining practical. Every course, challenge, and project is designed to build real, applicable skills learners can use immediately.
- ✓ An all-in-one learning experience. DataCamp isn't a course library; it's a full learning engine, from skill discovery to certification and everything in between.

17M+ learners and 6,000+ organizations trust DataCamp to teach the data and AI technology that matters.

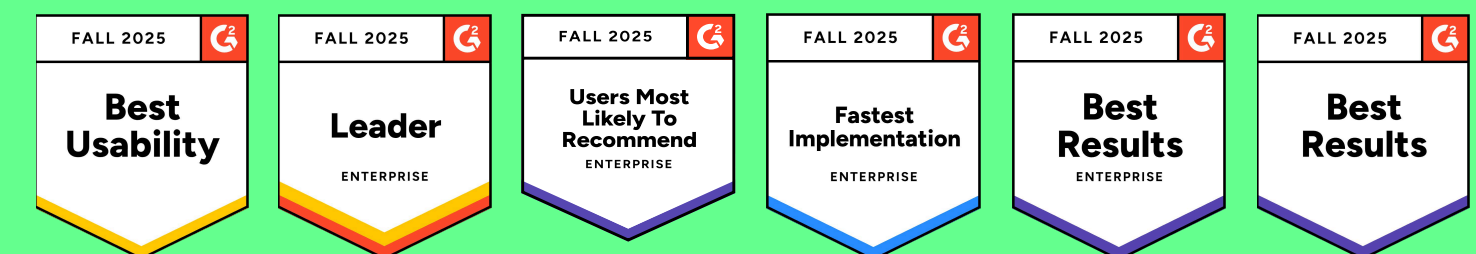
TOP GLOBAL COMPANIES, INCLUDING 80% OF THE FORTUNE 1000, USE DATACAMP:



EXPERT COVERAGE OF EVERY DATA AND AI SKILL:



CATEGORY LEADERS, VOTED BY OUR CUSTOMERS:





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