



Adobe

# Get Hired EMEA: The Importance of Creativity and Soft Skills



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empower the  
next generation  
to be lifelong  
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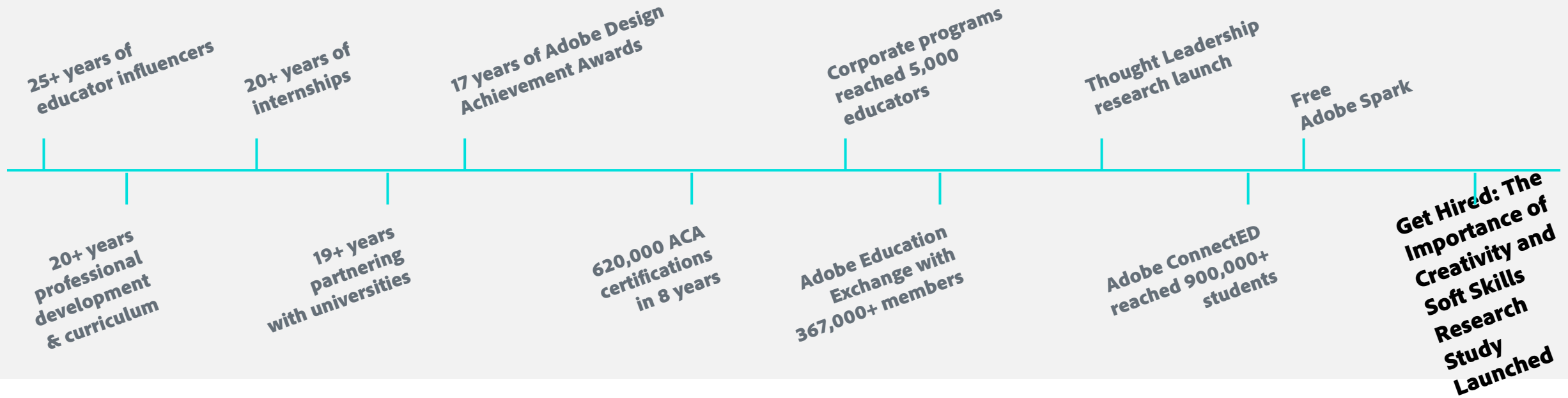


**For almost 30 years,  
Adobe has had a deep  
commitment to  
education and to the  
next generation.**

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# A brief history of Adobe's education leadership





# CREATIVITY

is a key part of many of the skills people will need.

With the avalanche of new products, new technologies, and new ways of working, workers are going to have to become more creative in order to thrive amidst change.

# Turns out, the global business world agrees that **creativity** is a critical skill for the future workforce.

Organisations around the world also find that creativity and creative problem solving are among the most critical skills for success in the future workforce:



**World Economic Forum:** Complex problem solving, critical thinking and creativity as the three most important skills required to thrive in 2020 and beyond.

**Bloomberg:** Creative problem solving, communication, strategic thinking and leadership are the most desired but hardest to find skillsets.

**The Economist:** Creative thinking and problem solving will be the #1 most valued skills for future workplaces.



# World Economic Forum


In January of 2016, The World Economic Forum asked chief human resources and strategy officers from leading global employers which skills will be required to thrive in 2020 and beyond. As the other studies suggest, creativity will become among the three most important skills tomorrow's workers will need.

Here are the top 10:

1	<b>COMPLEX PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	<b>EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE</b>	6
2	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING</b>	7
3	<b>CREATIVITY</b>	<b>SERVICE ORIENTATION</b>	8
4	<b>PEOPLE MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>NEGOTIATION</b>	9
5	<b>COORDINATING WITH OTHERS</b>	<b>COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY</b>	10

"The Future of Jobs Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution."  
World Economic Forum, January 2016, [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf)

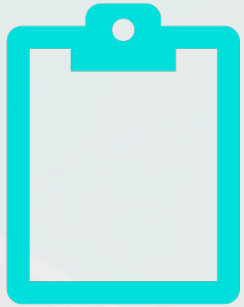




**Adobe wanted to understand just how often these creative/soft skills are showing up in today's workforce.**



# We scanned over 100,000 **job postings** and **CVs** **in the UK, France and Germany...**



**50,000+**  
*job postings analysed*



**50,000+**  
*CVs analysed*



*Gap analysis  
conducted across*  
**18**  
*diverse & in-demand  
career fields*



**5 in-depth**  
*interviews conducted*

...and focused on **5 creative and soft skill sets**



**Communication**



**Creativity**



**Collaboration**



**Creative  
Problem  
Solving**



**Critical  
Thinking**

# Soft Skills & Today's Workforce



Across the 18 career fields we analysed, **Communication** skills were the most highly sought out in job postings, followed by **Creativity** and **Collaboration**.

*% of **Job Postings** listing these skills*



Soft skills like collaboration, communication and creative thinking are critical to Hiring Managers in their evaluation of job applicants

*“Creative problem-solving, **creativity**, **critical thinking**, and **collaboration** are really very important in training [and] career advancement because when they are going from one service to another, they need to adapt, ready to get new challenges, a new kind of conditions. And so it's really important for us that they have this.”*



**Evan Bourguin**

Assistance publique – Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP)  
Chargé de mission - COVID crisis unit - HR Directorate  
(NURSING - France)

Q. What are the main challenges that you have in recruiting for these roles specifically?

... and these uniquely qualified candidates can be hard to find across industries begging the question, why?

*"[Data scientists] can't explain their thinking and the reasoning. So when you do something as a scientist, to be able to understand what made you make that decision and why you chose a certain way to do things, that's something that a lot of scientists struggle with, as well."*

**Mohammed Khaleed**  
NP Group  
Senior Recruiter  
(DATA SCIENCE - UK)



Q. What are some of the main challenges that you have in recruiting for those roles specifically?

# Representing Soft Skills



## CVs did not stack up on emphasizing soft skill sets.

Sought after soft skills appear far less frequently on CVs Hiring Managers review.

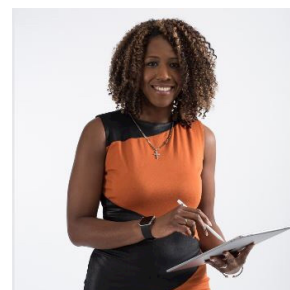
*% of CVs listing these skills*





Even though an emphasis on functional skills appears to make the most sense, like in a Data Science role, Hiring Managers are still surprised that candidates do not promote soft skills more.

*“**Creativity** is surprisingly [important for InfoSec and Data Security roles], from my perspective. It's something that we do value highly and we do look for, because you need to be able to think on your feet and **be creative** and **find a solution for a new problem** that you've never seen before.”*



**Naomi Harley**  
Publicis Sapient  
Senior HR Business Partner  
(INFORMATION SECURITY - UK)

Q. What are some of the main challenges that you have in recruiting for those roles specifically?

Hiring Managers want these soft skills showcased. In a competitive job market, this emphasis could be the differentiator among the CVs reviewed by recruiters *and* automated tracking software searching for these terms.

*"[Innovation and **creativity** are] something that can make a difference between two teachers ... because we have a lot of interesting candidates. Sometimes it's not easy to choose one or the other. ... It helps to chose the more **creative** [candidate], because it's something really important for us."*



**Guillaume Laurie**  
KEDGE Business School  
Appreciative Recruitment  
(EDUCATION – France)

Q. How much does this ring true based on your own personal experience?

Source: [Capterra](#), an online provider of business software solutions.

Just seeing the words on one's CV isn't enough. Job seekers that share a narrative on how they have used these specific skills can help them stand out.

*"Instead of saying, 'I've used these technologies and I want to work for you' – which hundreds of other people are doing – actually write down, 'This is the problem you're trying to solve. This is how I would approach it. This is what I've done that's similar. Can we have a chat about me working with you?' You need to distinguish yourself from the others ... [and] candidates aren't doing that at the moment."*



**Mohammed Khaleed**  
NP Group  
Senior Recruiter  
(DATA SCIENCE – UK)

Q. What advice would you have for how job seekers can better highlight the softer skills they possess?

Soft skills need to come through both on paper *and* in practice. Hiring Managers look for candidates that can show that they can deliver in these key areas throughout the hiring process.

*“For the creative roles we hiring for, you can't see [**soft skills**] in a CV. You may see that they got an award for Best Design in their class, or maybe for a project they did, but we actually send out little tasks to those candidates ...Then we see if they fit with our design team...and evaluate those tasks more than the CV for **creative** [skills].”*



**Sabine Lang**  
Esprit Europe GmbH  
Global Recruitment Strategy & Talent  
Acquisition Manager  
(ART & DESIGN – Germany)

Q. When you're thinking through the hiring process, how do you try to pinpoint who would more effectively embody some of these types of skills?

# Closing the Soft Skills Gap



These sizeable gaps not only point to a need for job applicants to better highlight their soft skills on CVs and demonstrate these skills during the interviewing process, but it also begs the question — **do candidates possess these skills?**

**Gaps in CVs vs. Job Postings\***

1	Communication		<b>-51%</b>
2	Collaboration		<b>-42%</b>
3	Creativity		<b>-41%</b>
4	Creative Problem Solving		<b>-10%</b>
5	Critical Thinking		<b>-2%</b>

\* Gap calculated as the % of CVs listing a skill minus the % of Job Postings listing that same skill.

The problem seems to be more than just missing key words on an application. Hiring Managers are concerned that certain skills aren't being adequately developed in the first place.

*"It's a rarity to find, so it's always a great selling point. ... Candidates struggle, especially data scientists, to justify their choices and explain themselves to nontechnical people. ... A lot of candidates find that difficult. The guys that don't tend to be able to demand a higher salary."*



**Mohammed Khaleed**  
NP Group  
Senior Recruiter  
(DATA SCIENCE – UK)

Q. What is the role of educators in addressing these skills gaps?

Soft skills are not adequately emphasized and developed to prepare students for their future careers. The same need for development goes for job seekers too.

The [World Economic Forum](#) emphasizes a need for lifelong learning and personal career development for workers as worker needs shift across industries and the Fourth Industrial Revolution unfolds.

*“We prepare [students for being] professionals, but we don't prepare [them to be job] candidates ... When [they] can't find jobs, it's really easy to identify why, you can just see it in their CV. ... It's really important that when the recruiter opens your CV, that he can [envision] you in the job just from seeing your CV.”*



**Guillaume Laurie**  
KEDGE Business School  
Appreciative Recruitment  
(EDUCATION – France)

Q. How much of a priority do you think is being put around developing these types of skills for students?



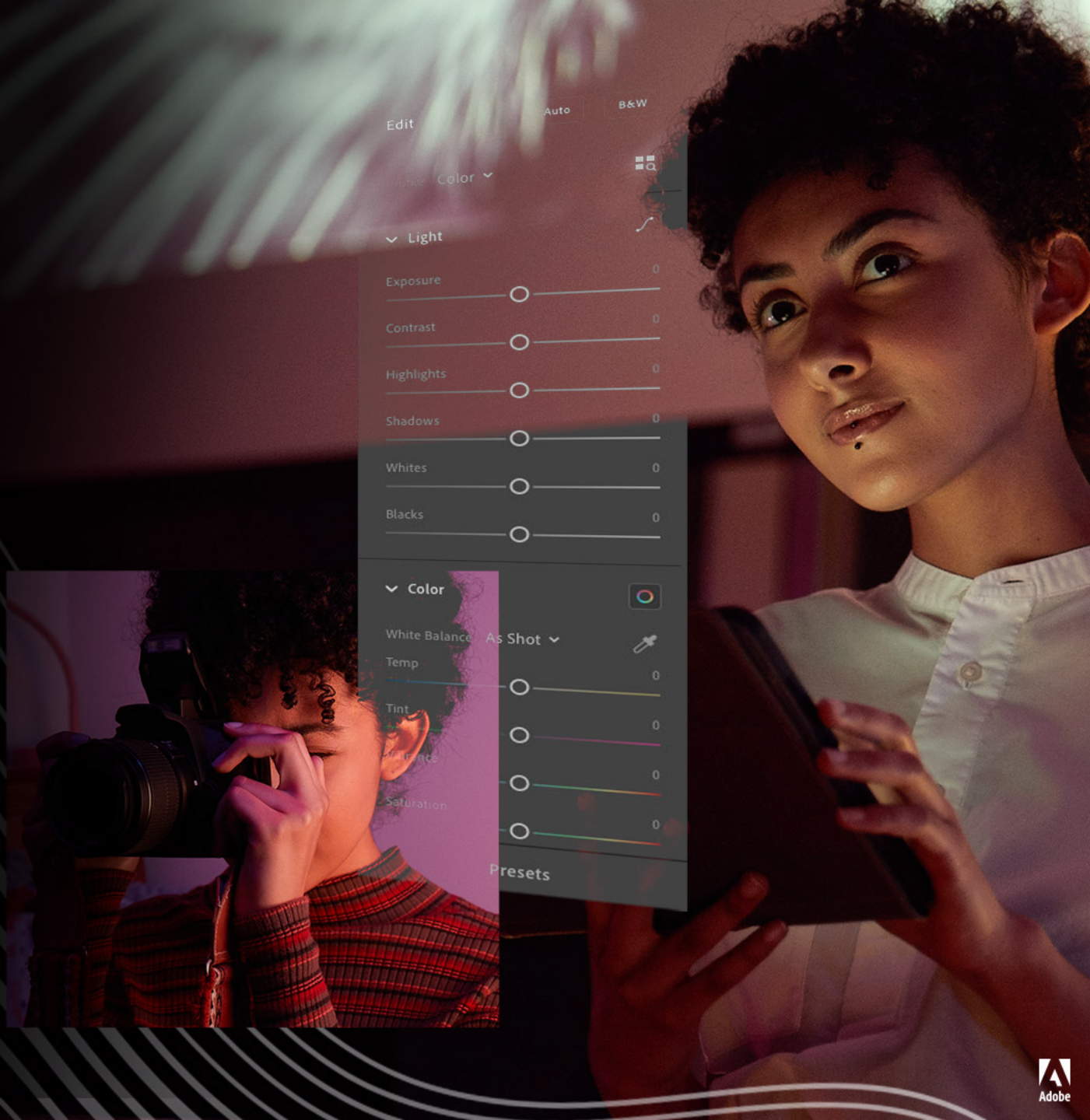
In order to close the gap, Hiring Managers believe these soft skills need to be better fostered through education and using methods and tools that promote these skill sets.

*“Education has got a massive role, especially the fact that clearly, these [skills] are ... becoming more important to organisations. Lecturers need prepare individuals to be employable at the end of the day ... I know a lot of what they teach is the technical side of the role, which the doing, so to speak, but they need to make sure that they are giving them these **soft skills** as well.”*

**Naomi Harley**  
Publicis Sapient  
*Senior HR Business Partner*  
(INFORMATION SECURITY - UK)



# Study Implications



# 1

There needs to be a greater emphasis on developing creative and soft skills so students can succeed in the future workplace

In addition to more focus on the development of these skills, students need to better understand how vital these are to their career growth.

*"[Educators] have to bring to life for the students that these **soft skills** are really, really important when you get to jobs. I know they're teaching them ... but they're not maybe pulling it out and showing them that actually by us doing this, by you working in this team, by you doing this project, you have [developed] all these really important skills."*

**Naomi Harley**  
Publicis Sapient  
Senior HR Business Partner  
(INFORMATION SECURITY - UK)



# 2

Job seekers need to showcase these soft skills throughout the hiring process and work on continual skill development

Job seekers must recognise these non-functional job skills as valuable and make personal strides towards developing and showcasing them in the application process as well as applying them.

*“To close this gap, illustrate [soft] skills. Emphasize a bit more with example that give me more factual information besides [just saying] ‘I’m able to communicate.’ Say, ‘I’m able to communicate and I have done this in the field of **communication**.’”*

### **Evan Bourgouin**

Assistance publique – Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP)  
Chargé de mission - COVID crisis unit - HR Directorate  
(NURSING – France)



# 3

More tools need to be available to students to grow and foster their creative skills

The education system must adapt to the changing world of technology and account for the need to better develop creative and soft skills necessary for their future success.

*"I really think that they miss all these [soft skills] during their initial training. I don't think we prepare [them]. ... When you have good communication, it's really easy to move within an enterprise, ... but for someone that just did his studies ... there is more work to do. ... Having this creative mind in the educative system, it's really difficult. "*



**Guillaume Laurie**  
KEDGE Business School  
Appreciative Recruitment  
(EDUCATION – France)

Q. What is the role of educators in addressing these skills gaps?

# 4

Hiring managers and recruiters need to adapt the way they evaluate and seek out candidates

Hiring managers need to adjust job posting descriptions to accommodate for their desire to find candidates that are able to communicate, think creatively and collaborate with others on top of the role's functional aspects.

*“Creative problem solving and **critical thinking** are **soft skills** that we are not asking for [in job postings], but that we are requiring in the job because we have less people in the teams, we have less money, etc. So we do not ask for it, but it's quite mandatory and part of the job.”*

**Evan Bourguin**

Assistance publique – Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP)  
Chargé de mission - COVID crisis unit - HR Directorate  
(NURSING – France)





# Adobe helps prepare students for the future

Educators learn for free on Adobe's Education Exchange: [edex.adobe.com](https://edex.adobe.com)

- Join a peer-led course
- Explore 12,000 curricular resources
- Learn from 730,000 creative educators

Adobe tools help students and teachers create and demonstrate soft skills.

- Try free, easy-to-use apps like Adobe Spark [spark.adobe.com/edu](https://spark.adobe.com/edu)
- Use Adobe Creative Cloud to create whatever you can imagine [www.adobe.com/education](https://www.adobe.com/education)



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We'd like to thank the following people for sharing their perspective and insights to help us better understand our data findings.



**Evan Bourguin**  
Assistance publique – Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP)  
*Chargé de mission - COVID crisis unit - HR Directorate*  
(NURSING - France)



**Sabine Lang**  
Esprit Europe GmbH  
*Global Recruitment Strategy & Talent Acquisition Manager*  
(ART & DESIGN - Germany)



**Guillaume Laurie**  
KEDGE Business School  
*Appreciative Recruitment*  
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**Mohammed Khaleed**  
NP Group  
*Senior Recruiter*  
(DATA SCIENCE - UK)



**Naomi Harley**  
Publicis Sapient  
*Senior HR Business Partner*  
(INFORMATION SECURITY - UK)

\*Quotes in this report are personal opinions of the interviewees and do not reflect the views of the company and organisations they work for or are affiliated with.

# APPENDIX I: Gap Analysis Market Comparison



Across EMEA markets and career fields, **Communication**, **Creativity** and **Collaboration** skills were the most highly sought out in job postings.

*% of Job Postings listing these skills*

	Overall	UK	FR	DE
1 Communication	63%	62%	54%	75%
2 Creativity	54%	51%	50%	62%
3 Collaboration	48%	33%	54%	58%
4 Creative Problem Solving	11%	11%	10%	11%
5 Critical Thinking	2%	1%	4%	1%

# CVs did not stack up on emphasizing soft skill sets in the UK, France or Germany.

Sought after soft skills appear far less frequently on CVs Hiring Managers review.

*% of CVs listing these skills*

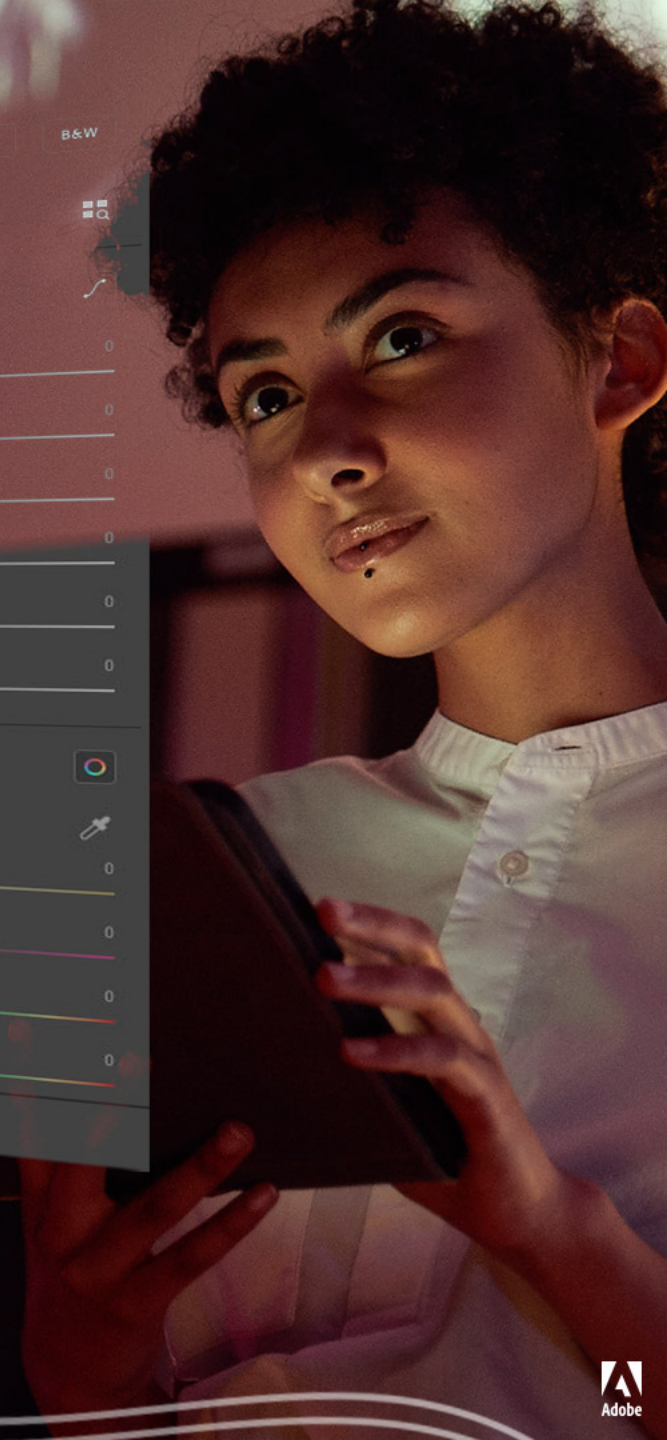
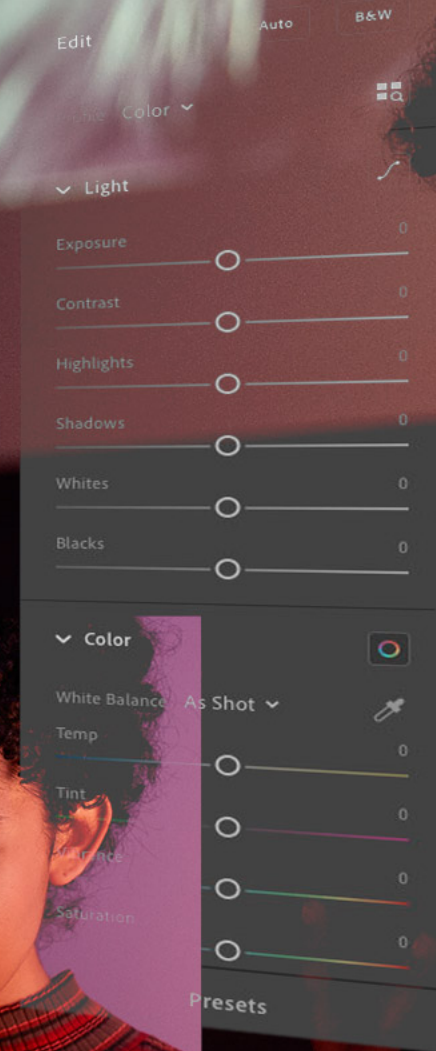
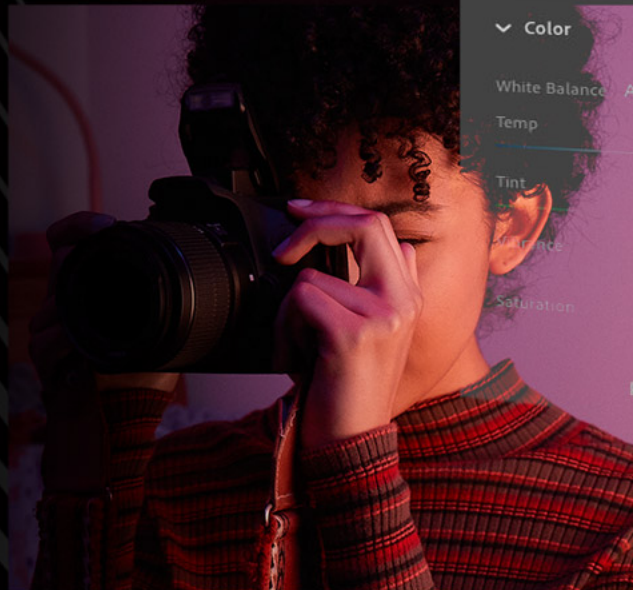
	Overall	UK	FR	DE
1 Creativity	13%	20%	6%	14%
2 Communication	12%	20%	8%	10%
3 Collaboration	6%	7%	3%	8%
4 Creative Problem Solving	1%	1%	0%	1%
5 Critical Thinking	0%	0%	0%	0%

These sizeable gaps across EMEA markets indicate a universal need for job applicants to better highlight their soft skills on CVs and demonstrate them in interviews, but it also begs the question — do candidates possess these skills?

**Gaps** in CVs vs. Job Postings\*

	Overall	UK	FR	DE
1 Communication	<b>-51%</b>	-42%	-46%	<b>-65%</b>
2 Collaboration	<b>-42%</b>	-26%	<b>-51%</b>	<b>-50%</b>
3 Creativity	<b>-41%</b>	-31%	<b>-44%</b>	<b>-48%</b>
4 Creative Problem Solving	<b>-10%</b>	-10%	-10%	-10%
5 Critical Thinking	<b>-2%</b>	-1%	4%	-1%

# APPENDIX II: UK Gap Analysis



## United Kingdom

Across the 18 career fields we analysed, **Communication** and **Creativity** skills were the most highly sought out in job postings, followed by **Collaboration**.

*% of Job Postings listing these skills*



## CVs did not stack up on emphasizing soft skill sets.

Sought after soft skills appear far less frequently on CVs Hiring Managers review.

*% of CVs listing these skills*





## United Kingdom

These sizeable gaps suggest candidates should better highlight soft skills in CVs and interviews, but it also begs the question — **do candidates possess these skills?**

### Gaps in CVs vs. Job Postings\*

1	Communication			-42%
2	Creativity			-31%
3	Collaboration			-26%
4	Creative Problem Solving			-10%
5	Critical Thinking			-1%

\* Gap calculated as the % of CVs listing a skill minus the % of Job Postings listing that same skill.

# APPENDIX III: FR Gap Analysis



## France

Across the 18 career fields we analysed, **Communication, Collaboration** and **Creativity** skills were the most highly sought out in job postings.

*% of **Job Postings** listing these skills*



## CVs did not stack up on emphasizing soft skill sets.

Sought after soft skills appear far less frequently on CVs Hiring Managers review.

*% of CVs listing these skills*



# France

These sizeable gaps suggest candidates should better highlight soft skills in CVs and interviews, but it also begs the question — **do candidates possess these skills?**

## Gaps in CVs vs. Job Postings\*

1	Collaboration			-51%
2	Communication			-46%
3	Creativity			-44%
4	Creative Problem Solving			-10%
5	Critical Thinking			-4%

\* Gap calculated as the % of CVs listing a skill minus the % of Job Postings listing that same skill.

# APPENDIX IV: DE Gap Analysis



# Germany

Across the 18 career fields we analysed, **Communication** skills were the most highly sought out within job postings, followed by **Creativity** and **Collaboration**.

*% of Job Postings listing these skills*



## CVs did not stack up on emphasizing soft skill sets.

Sought after soft skills appear far less frequently on CVs Hiring Managers review.

*% of CVs listing these skills*





# Germany

These sizeable gaps suggest candidates should better highlight soft skills in CVs and interviews, but it also begs the question — **do candidates possess these skills?**

## Gaps in CVs vs. Job Postings\*



\* Gap calculated as the % of CVs listing a skill minus the % of Job Postings listing that same skill.