

Recruiting for Digital Change at Tesco

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Tesco Digital Transformation



Online Retail Expansion

- Expansion of Tesco.com & home delivery
- Investment in automated picking and Click & Collect.
- Clubcard app.
(Tesco, 2023).



Automation & Self-Checkout

- Self-checkout and “Scan as You Shop”.
- Tesco GetGo checkout-free stores.
 - AI warehouse technology.
(Power, 2023).



Data-Driven Operations

- Advanced analytics for pricing, stock, and forecasting.
- Clubcard data for customer insights.
(Rzechorzek, 2024).

With the shift towards online shopping since Covid-19, Tesco must accelerate digital transformation to stay competitive. Technology has become essential for efficiency, loyalty, and market leadership.

New Skills and Roles Needed

New Skills Required

- Digital literacy
- Data analysis & interpretation
- AI and machine-learning awareness
- Cybersecurity awareness
- Agile project management
- Customer-centric digital service skills

New Roles Emerging

- Digital Transformation Manager
- Data Analyst or Data Scientist
- AI Specialist
- Cybersecurity Analyst
- E-commerce Operations Lead
- Cloud Systems Engineer

Why These Roles Matter

- Support automation rollout
- Improve online retail performance
- Strengthen data-driven decision making
- Improve customer experience
- Keep Tesco competitive in the new digital market

References: (Weddle et al., 2023; Tesco, 2023; PwC, 2023 & Haque et al., 2025).

Recruitment Process Overview

1

Workforce Planning

Ensure we have the right people with the right skills, in the right place at the right time, to meet strategic goals (CIPD, 2025).

2

Job Analysis

Break down tasks, responsibilities, and digital skill requirements (Armstrong et al., 2023).

3

Job Description

Define the purpose of the job, reporting lines, and performance expectations (Armstrong et al., 2023).



4

Person Specification

Outline the knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours, and qualifications needed to perform the role (Armstrong et al., 2023).

5

Advertising

Evaluate candidate sources including online recruitment, job adverts, recruitment agencies, etc. (Armstrong et al., 2023).

6

Selection

Evaluate candidates to judge how well they are likely to perform in the role and whether they are a good fit for the organisation (Armstrong et al., 2023).

Job Analysis

Responsibilities

- Analyse and improve existing processes
- Support implementation of new digital systems
- Use data to guide decisions and optimise performance
- Facilitate change

(Bouwman et al., 2024; Safit et al., 2024).

Knowledge

- Digital systems, automation, analytics, cloud technologies
- Emerging technologies
- Change management and transformation frameworks

(Bouwman et al., 2024; Safit et al., 2024; Rêgo et al., 2024).

Skills

- Digital literacy and data analysis
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Adaptability
- Communication & stakeholder engagement

(Bouwman et al., 2024; Safit et al., 2024; Rêgo et al., 2024).

Core Competencies

- Learning ability
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Evidence-based decision-making
- Resilience and innovation mindset

(Bouwman et al., 2024)

Job Description

- Defines purpose, reporting lines, and key result areas
- Includes terms & conditions (like pay, benefits, hours)
- Defines special requirements (like travel, mobility)
- Outlines development and career opportunities
- Forms the basis for the person specification.

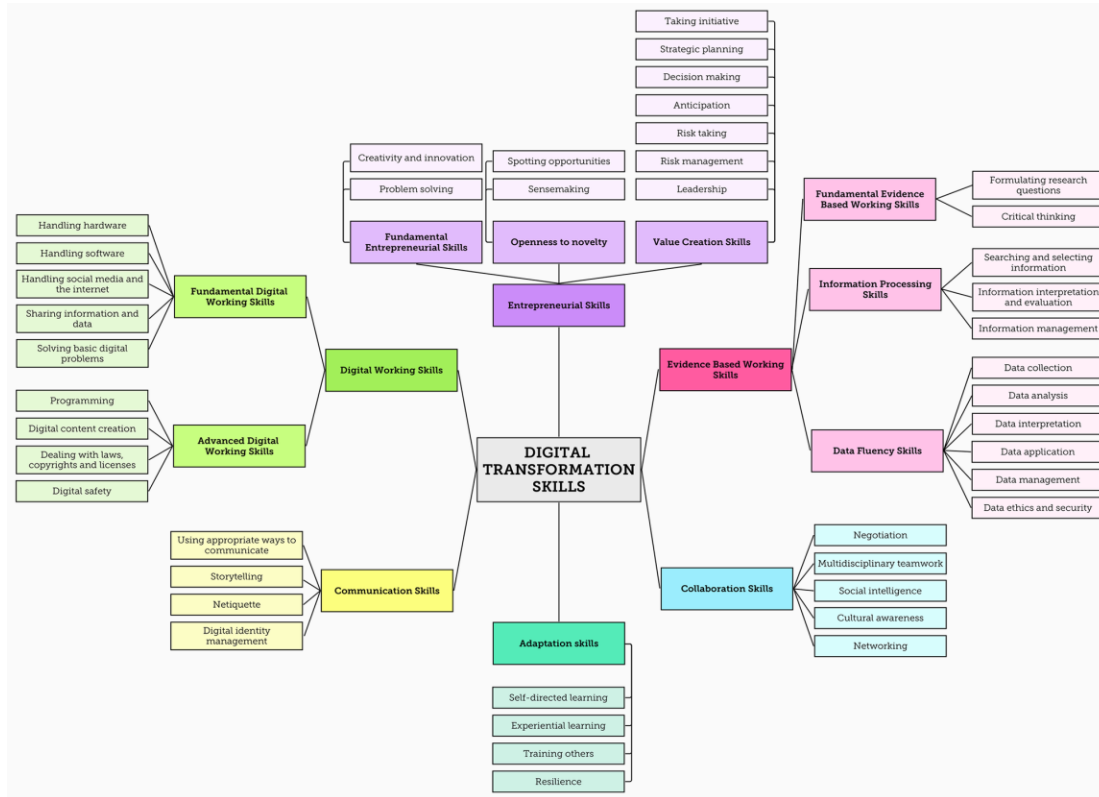
(Armstrong et al., 2023)



Person Specification

- **Knowledge:** What the individual must know
- **Skills & Abilities:** What they must be able to do
- **Behavioural Competencies:** Role-specific behaviours aligned with organisational values
- **Qualifications & Training:** Required academic, technical, or professional credentials
- **Experience:** Past achievements predicting success
- **Specific Demands:** Expectations such as improving performance, developing markets, or introducing new systems. (Armstrong et al., 2023).

Essential vs Desirable Criteria



Armstrong et al. (2023) state that essential criteria represent the minimum requirements needed to perform the role, while desirable criteria are additional qualities that differentiate between candidates.

Essential Criteria

- Minimum requirements to perform the role
- Essential qualifications, skills, or experience
- Used for objective shortlisting

Desirable Criteria

- Additional attributes that enhance performance
- Useful for distinguishing strong candidates
- Not mandatory but advantageous

The framework in figure 1 shows us some of these essential and desired skills for digital transformation roles.

Figure 1: The Digital Transformation Skills Framework (DTSF). (Bouwman et al., 2024).

Advertising Strategy

Platform	Strengths	Limitations
LinkedIn	Wide reach for professional roles; strong targeting and attracts active candidates (Hosain et al., 2020).	Higher cost and competitive market (Hosain et al., 2020).
Company Website	Cost effective and attracts candidates already interested in the organisation (Fernandes et al., 2022).	Limited reach unless the brand is strong, relies on active job seekers (Fernandes et al., 2022).
Recruitment Agencies	Pre-screened candidates; useful for roles that are hard to fill; reduces internal workload (Armstrong et al., 2023).	Higher costs; different quality across agencies (Armstrong et al., 2023).
Professional Networks	Strong for niche expertise; trusted recommendations (Armstrong et al., 2023).	Smaller reach; depends on network strength (Armstrong et al., 2023).

Structured Interview

A structured interview follows a defined framework with a set of predetermined questions. All candidates are asked the same questions, focused on the things required for the role (Armstrong et al., 2023).

How It Works

- Questions are based on the person specification.
- Designed to explore and build on information from the application.
- Answers are scored using a standard rating system.
- Ensures fairness and consistency.

Advantages

- Ensures fairness and consistency when assessing candidates.
- Reduces interviewer bias.
- Easier to compare candidates objectively.

Limitations

- Less flexible.
- Can feel rigid



Competency-Based Interview

Competency-based interviews focus on assessing the behaviours, skills, and attributes required for effective performance. They have become essential as organisations increasingly value soft skills, adaptability, and behavioural excellence alongside technical ability. (Sukmara., 2026).

How It Works

- Evaluates candidates against defined competencies
- Uses structured, behaviour-based questions
- Requires candidates to provide evidence of past performance
- Supports objective scoring and consistent assessment

Advantages

- Improves the quality of selection outcomes
- Leads to better job fits
- Enhances long-term employee performance
- Strengthens organisational core competencies

Limitations

- Requires competency frameworks
- Interviewers must be trained to assess behaviours reliably
- Can be time consuming to develop and implement

During the interview, the interviewer uses planned behavioural questions to gather detailed examples of past behaviour linked to the competencies required for the role. One of the most used frameworks is the STAR technique where candidates must answer them based on their prior work experience (Archana, 2022):



Figure 2: Star Technique (Case Interview, 2026).

Panel Interview

A panel interview involves multiple interviewers assessing a candidate together, providing a broader and more balanced evaluation (Levashina et al., 2014).

How It Works

- Conducted by two or more people
- Each panel member evaluates different aspects (technical, behavioural, cultural fit, etc)
- Uses a shared scoring system to increase reliability
- Allows cross-functional perspectives which is essential in transformation positions

Advantages

- Reduces individual interviewer bias
- Provides a more holistic assessment of candidate fit
- Useful for roles requiring stakeholder engagement and cross-team collaboration

Limitations

- Can feel intimidating for candidates
- Requires more coordination and scheduling



Questioning Techniques

Questioning Technique	Definition	Why It Suits Transformation Roles
Behavioural	Uses real examples of past behaviour.	Past behaviour can predict how a candidate will perform in the future. It tells if they are resilient can adapt to changes work well with others and solve problems in changing situations.
Situational	Asks how candidates would respond to hypothetical scenarios related to the role.	Tests judgement in uncertain and changing situations
Competency-Based	Assesses specific skills, knowledge, and experience gained in previous roles.	Directly evaluates the behaviours needed for digital transformation and ensures alignment with organisational competency frameworks.
Probing	Follow-up questions used to further clarify initial responses.	Helps uncover the depth of experience and ensures detailed, evidence-based answers which is essential for transformational roles.

References: (Armstrong et al., 2023; Gearty, 2024; Sukmara., 2026).

Face-to-Face Interviews

A structured interview conducted by trained interviewers who follow a standardised set of questions and scoring procedures. It takes place on site, usually within the organisation (Jennings, 2005).

Cost

Higher cost due to potential travel, room booking and time away from operations.

Accessibility

Limited to candidates who can attend physically and may exclude remote or international talent.

Candidate Experience

More personal interaction, body language and dialogue and clearer sense of organisational culture. Information is kept anonymous.

Assessment Quality

Richer behavioural cues such as body language, presence and interpersonal skills.

Virtual Interviews

An interview conducted remotely using digital communication tools, allowing candidates and interviewers to connect without being in the same physical location (Ramachandran et al., 2023).

Cost

Significant cost savings by removing travel, flights, and accommodation expenses.

Accessibility

Highly accessible and increases the talent pools.

Candidate Experience

Greater time efficiency. Reduced stress for candidates due to familiar environments and fewer logistical pressures, however, can feel less personal and more formal.

Assessment Quality

Good for structured and competency-based assessment, but fewer non verbal cues and potential tech issues. Immediate transcription options.

Recommendations

- Adopt structured and competency-based interviews to ensure fairness, consistency, and alignment with the role requirements.
- Use multi-channel advertising, including LinkedIn and the company website to reach diverse talent pools.
- Prioritise essential digital skills for digital transformational roles such as advanced digital skills, adaptability, AI awareness and cybersecurity in job analysis and person specifications.
- Integrate behavioural questioning to assess adaptability, resilience, and problem-solving in transformation contexts.
- Use a blended approach combining virtual interviews for the initial screening and face-to-face interviews for final assessment. This will cost saves and access to a wider talent pool.



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