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Kevin has been the Chief Operating Officer for Sword UK since 2015. Over the past 20 years Kevin has held a variety of senior IT positions having originally started his career in Finance 30 years ago. Kevin works closely with our customers and staff to deliver effective business technology solutions always with a view of ensuring value is being realised.



## CHANGE COMES FROM WITHIN

Our technology world is moving much faster than skills are being developed. With this at the forefront of our thinking, we, as an industry must move to be more creative and pro-active in developing skills to ensure we can make the most of new technologies. We sat down and spoke to Sword's Chief Operating Officer, Kevin Moreton around how they are addressing the challenges our industry are facing around changes in technology skills.

**"The truth is technology is moving faster than skills development can keep up"**

### Innovating from the inside

What resonates most in conversation with our energy customers is the desire to upskill their workforce through innovation, whilst delivering day-to-day services. When the development of knowledge and skills comes from inside, it brings additional credibility alongside a solid business case that allows measurable progress. "By valuing long-term relationships over short-term gains, organisations can engage with technology providers to support and bring confidence to their digital journey."

### A skills shortage

Some of the challenges we face today are due to a lack of consideration into how technology services are supported on a long-term basis. We see skills gaps emerging within operational support teams, catching organisations off guard before they can enhance and ready their capabilities for deploying new technology. As a result, organisations will face unforeseen expenses in requesting additional skills from technology providers. Addressing these existing skills gaps often leads to organisations making significant investments, instead of looking to lower costs by advancing the skills of their existing technology experts who can provide continual support.

Whilst a significant challenge, it is the best scenario for our experienced employees to continually develop relevant skills without the need to leave the industry, losing domain expertise.

### Delivering value

When engaging with the industry, we're often faced with business outcome questions relating to levels of innovation, increased efficiency, cost reduction and ultimately, how we deliver value.

By aligning domain and technology understanding, organisations can work to create multi-disciplinary groups. These groups offer expertise and insight, comparing experiences in adoption and deployment of technology across the industry.

We firmly believe that it is key to understanding the business needs, with the technology deployed being a secondary factor in the decision-making process. Listening to the industry provides a solid foundation for us to deliver a combination of digital skills with relevant, sector specific and domain expertise to add significant value.

### Inside innovation

Across the industry organisations are being asked to bring skills to their existing operational teams. In turn this leads us to question, whether you can swap out someone with another customer to bring in fresh skills? Yes we can, but most of your contemporaries are facing the same challenges. The truth is technology is moving faster than skills development can keep up.

### Achieving upskilling

Sword has continued responding to customer's pressures and the lack of skills through appointing a Chief People Officer (CPO) to shape our people strategy. This will encourage us to work with our customers to create space to train our workforces and will inevitably take commercial flexibility and innovation to support the solution.

In a fast-paced environment with a shortage of skills we recognise that technology investments need to work harder and smarter to enable data-driven decisions. We don't view this as a technology revolution. A modern and evolved managed service isn't about anything other than refreshing the skills of the existing competent teams that we already provide. A trained, motivated and loyal workforce is what we all strive to create. ▴



**About Sword:** As the North Sea's largest provider of Data and Digital services, Sword focuses on solving the industry's most critical business challenges by enabling our clients to capture, manage and utilise data to make informed decisions. This is supported by technology adoption and people engagement, together with modern ways of working to give confidence that the right decision is made every time

For more information, visit [www.sword-group.com](http://www.sword-group.com)

