

The future of work: The upcoming digital disruption

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Do you feel unprepared for the upcoming digital disruption? Have you ever wondered *what jobs will be there in 2030? Will your job still exist in 2030?* The future of work offers unparalleled opportunities but also very significant challenges. There are new social norms and technologies that are changing our everyday lives because we live in a rapidly changing world. Amongst these changes, the workplace is no exception. This will make one wonder *what will be future jobs, what jobs will be eliminated in the future and what percentage of jobs will be automated by 2030?* Employees and companies should look for ways to remain competitive in this shifting business landscape and adapt.

There has been a revolution not only in how people work (*technology, jobs, and the future of work*) but also in who works. Just as personal computers and tablets replaced typewriters and landlines, the workforce's make-up has changed a lot as well. Some of the reasons for these shifts include the failure of fertility rates, new economic conditions and increased immigration. In 2016, the US reported its lowest birth-rate in a century with Western European countries showing similar trends. Lifestyle changes are compounding these demographic changes with millennials making up the majority of the workforce since 2015. A study from the World Health Organization's Global Health Observatory predicts that the healthcare industry will face a deficit of 15 million workers by 2030. To meet these demands, hiring managers will have to change their approach by hiring internationally. This means sourcing more workers from the global talent pool and adapting to more flexible, remote work arrangements.

New technologies will have a drastic impact on the nature of work because of the new innovations shaking up how work is done. According to experts such as the Boston Consulting Group, we are on the cusp of a revolution called Industry 4.0. An example is the Internet of Things (IoT), which refers to the increasing ability of machines and other objects to communicate and coordinate actions without human intervention. One can wonder *why IoT will be successful in the coming years?* IoT will be successful because, in the coming decade, more than 50 billion devices will be networked through IoT technologies. When combined with the analytical power of Big Data and cloud storage, this will allow for huge gains in efficiency in sectors such as manufacturing – fully-automated factories, logistics, and decentralized production lines that can self-organise. According to the global consulting firm McKinsey at the *future of work McKinsey*, the potential economic impact of these innovations could be greater than \$10 trillion by 2025.

The *future of work trends* has shown that human skills are essential in getting the most out of new technology now that every industry is taking advantage of new automation technology. For example, in the United Kingdom, the consulting firm Deloitte replaced the work of 250 tax experts with one finely-tuned automatic tax-preparation system (*future of work Deloitte*). Nevertheless, as companies continue to expand and update their products with digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and

machine learning, this does not mean that human labour will become redundant. As MIT researchers point out, organisations still need experts to train these systems, justify their processes to others, and keep them running in a safe and ethical way. In 2017, United Airlines' logistics algorithm overbooked a flight at O'Hare airport in Chicago, requiring a passenger to be physically removed from an aircraft. When employees tried to implement the proposed strategy of the programme to remove the hapless passenger, they faced serious resistance from other travellers, resulting in a chaotic brawl and media controversy. In this case, the optimization procedure of the computer did not take into account the complex human emotions involved in its execution.

As the case of United Airlines indicates, it is unlikely that human judgement and interpersonal skills will soon be replaced by technology. Therefore, in order to remain competitive and valuable in an increasingly automated workplace, people should remain agile by fostering human skills that complement new technologies. These include qualities such as teamwork, communication, social awareness, intuition. After all, as a perceptive and knowledgeable attorney might, even the best technology for legal analysis will not be able to read a courtroom and communicate with juries. The world of work was never static. The workforce is changing faster than ever as we adopt new technologies and reorganise social norms. It is possible to imagine how a successful company would work in the coming decades by paying close attention to current trends. With some foresight and creative thinking, such as embracing more flexible career paths, recruiting more international workers, or discovering ways to enhance human capital with digital technology, any company can take advantage of and continue to thrive on these shifts. Don't forget the human touch's strength! A killer app or well-designed algorithm can make your workplace more efficient, but the people behind the programming cannot be ignored. Make sure that the use of computers complements the human abilities you already have access to and enhances them.

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