

5 WAYS

EMPLOYEES CAN PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK



The world of work is changing at a rapid pace, with emerging technologies fundamentally changing not just how work is done, but also the scope and nature of work itself. According to the “The Future of Jobs” report by the World Economic Forum, the adoption of new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and automation could potentially drive business growth, lead to new job creation and also the enhancement of existing jobs.

However, this depends on the availability of a motivated and agile workforce equipped with the future-proof skills needed to survive the digital age. It is also worth noting that skills gaps may significantly hamper new technology adoption and consequently, business growth.

If Malaysia is to successfully navigate the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is critical not just

for businesses to actively support the development of their workforce, but for workers themselves to take responsibility for their own lifelong learning and developmental needs.

From mastering essential “21st century skills”, to inculcating lifelong learning habits, the following are five ways to future-proof your career and help you better prepare for the future of work.

01

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS ARE NO LONGER ENOUGH FOR EMPLOYABILITY

According to a report published in 2017 by Dell Technologies, over 80 per cent of the jobs that today’s students will be doing in 2030 have not been invented yet. Many of these jobs will spin off from technologies that are emerging today, like cryptocurrencies and blockchain developments. Not only that, many of today’s employers look for skills and experience rather than focusing solely on degrees or certificates.

What this means for jobseekers and those entering the workforce is that the development of 21st century skills are as important as pursuing academic achievements. This term refers to a broad set of knowledge and abilities – such as problem solving and technology literacy – that are integral to success in today’s world, particularly in modern-day careers and workplaces.

Those seeking to develop their 21st century skills may do so through several different platforms. This includes enrolling in courses offered by tertiary education providers and educational organisations, or taking advantage of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) which provides courses via online either free of charge or at an affordable cost.



MASTERING THE RIGHT SKILLS IS ESSENTIAL

Acquiring and mastering the right skills aligned to your job role is crucial, especially in fast-changing industries like healthcare, electronics, and financial services. In today’s constantly evolving work environment, employees must keep abreast of the latest developments in their chosen careers in order to maintain a competitive edge.

Although the unpredictability of the future of work can lead to uncertainty regarding what skills to acquire, a good place to start is to explore employer-offered training and development opportunities. And in line with the Government’s commitment to inculcate lifelong learning among Malaysians of all ages, employees would also do well to take charge of their own development and become independent learners (self-directed learning).



SOFT SKILLS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE

Also known as “people skills” or “interpersonal skills”, soft skills are important not just because of their central role in key areas of business. They also have positive effects on a company’s culture and in increasing productivity in the workplace.

Soft skills not only help set you apart during the interview process or on the job, they are vital to facilitate career progression and promotion. In fact, a report by iCIMS Hiring Insights found that 94 per cent of recruiting professionals believe an employee with stronger soft skills has a better chance of being promoted to a leadership position than an employee with more years of experience but weaker soft skills.

Given that technological advancements will continue to change the way work is done, a highly valued employee’s key differentiator will be their mastery of skills – like people management, empathy and creativity – which cannot be automated.



VIRTUAL COLLABORATION SKILLS WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY CRUCIAL

Technology has made work significantly more flexible, where employees can work anytime, anywhere. By using virtual project management and online collaboration software, virtual collaboration not only helps companies create a more innovative and integrated work environment, but such work practices are also reported to improve employee experience, productivity and well-being.

Although not all companies currently practise virtual collaboration, it is expected to experience an upward trend particularly as companies seek to leverage technology to support new ways of working, while still remaining steadfastly committed to their business goals. Due to this, the ability to use virtual tools will be more important than ever in the coming years.



ADAPTABILITY WILL MATTER IN THE FUTURE WORKPLACE

Technology has democratised the ease of access to training and education, enabling workers to access the knowledge they need when they need it. Workers can acquire new and updated skills for their current job roles and also keep up with changing skill requirements in their chosen industries.

This adaptability to change in the workplace greatly improves an employee’s ability to contribute to business goals, deal with challenges and help their organisation stay ahead of the competition and innovate – all of these being highly sought-after attributes by employers today.

Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad (TalentCorp) helps top talent in the country to equip themselves with the skills they need for the future. For a full list of TalentCorp’s initiatives for professionals, graduates and employers, visit:

www.talentcorp.com.my/our-work