

Not just future skills – but identity shifts for embracing the daily dance of choice and change

By Debbie Craig and Armin Philipps

http://www.humancapitalreview.org/content/default.asp?Article_ID=1624

Every day we are bombarded with another avalanche of change - change in our roles, who we report to, what systems we use, which products we sell and what our customers are demanding. We are flooded with information about new trends, new technology, new jobs, redundant careers and new skills required. We join companies or communities, make friends, get betrayed, build relationships, fall ill and lose loved ones. Every day there seems to be more urgent demands for our time, our energy and our ideas – to assist, rescue, fire-fight, support and resolve. We also have to deal with our geyser bursting, our neighbour’s dog barking all night, a sick family member, study or work assignments, election politicking, crime and load-shedding when we get home at night.

There is much written about future skills and what is required to adapt and survive in this crazy, chaotic, shape shifting world of ours. We are encouraged to stay up to date with technology trends, develop our digital and tech savvy and skills AND enhance our very human abilities that the robots will not be able to copy, program and replace.

Google’s Project Oxygen wanting to test its hiring philosophy, found that long term predictors of success in Google’s top employees wasn’t STEM skills (science, tech, engineering, maths) but the people skills of coaching, communication (& listening), insight into others (of different values and perspectives), empathetic and supportive AND the thinking skills of being a critical thinker, problem solver and ability to make connections across complex ideas. *

This is confirmed in the latest World Economic Forum report on future skills trending by 2022 ** which confirms and adds to this list as shown in the box to the right. This is not really news!! We have been hearing this same message for many years now, and yet, our approach to education, graduate programs and corporate training has not shifted all that much and is not delivering these “future skills” in sufficient depth or scale that is shifting the quality of our leaders, the supply critical talent, the pace of innovation or our levels of stress and dis-ease in our organisations and communities.

“We define our hiring and our education system on skills. There is no skill which is robot-proof, someone can build a tool to do it better faster cheaper.” Dr Vivienne Ming

WEF future skills trending 2022

1. Analytical thinking and innovation
2. Active learning and learning strategies
3. Creativity, originality and initiative
4. Technology design and programming
5. Critical thinking and analysis
6. Complex problem-solving
7. Leadership and social influence
8. Emotional intelligence
9. Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation
10. Systems analysis and evaluation

We need shift our perspective, dig a little deeper and explore what is really needed to build the underlying mindsets and beliefs required to show up in a different way. We need to rewrite our stories, reimagine our identities and cultivate new neural pathways and daily thinking, feeling and doing habits to dance the daily dance of change and choice with confidence and grace.

We all attempt to set new goals, change bad habits and learn new skills, and yet this proves consistently difficult, with most of us returning to comfort zones of the known and easier path of distraction through entertainment, addictions, busy-ness or just withdrawing and numbing out. Learning a new skill or habit not only takes dedication and persistence but a deep and sustained shift in the way that we think and what we believe about ourselves, others and the world.

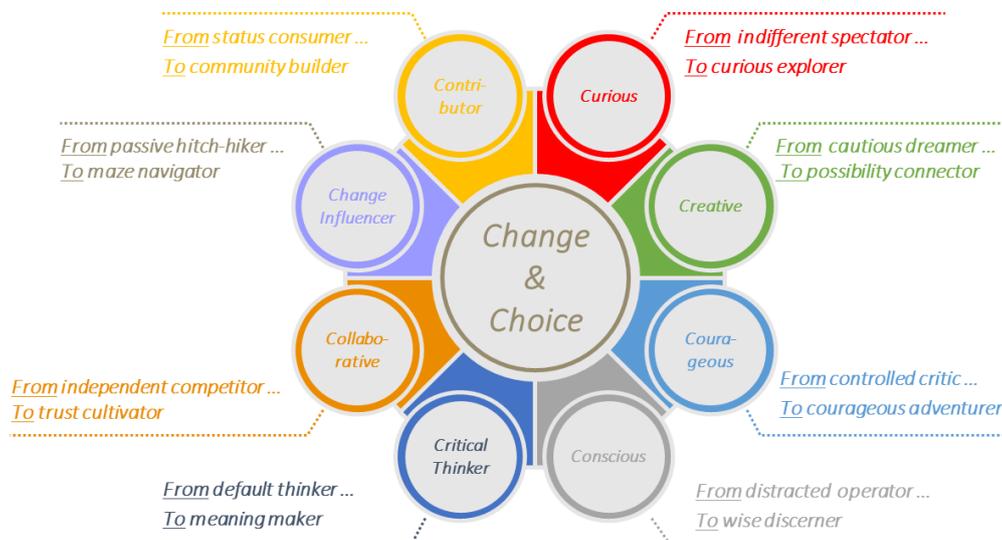
Mindset shift = a change in the attitudes you typically hold which filter how you see the World

We need to take time to examine our foundational belief systems and automatic neural pathways and figure out which of these is enabling or inhibiting our growth and our future potential. We then need to consciously and powerfully establish new neural paths and use them every single day until the newly formed path is stronger than the old one which may have been in active use for the last 20, 30 or 40 years. Imagine you believed that **change** was exciting and empowering rather than frightening and likely to result in some kind of loss. Consider the possibility of **courageously** seeing fear as your friend and adventure partner rather than the enemy to be avoided at all costs. What if we trusted that sharing our knowledge and building abundance **collaboratively** was more valuable than competing for scarce resources? What would our daily choices look like?

In the pursuit of accelerated learning and making a difference, we have done extensive research into work, jobs and skills of the future as well as into the neuroscience of learning and making change stick. We have travelled to the other side of the western world to the hub future exploration and the impact of Singularity when humans and machines converge. We have gone deep into eastern practices to examine our own personal and spiritual programs and belief systems. We have also asked our many clients, colleagues and friends for their views from their practical leadership and life experience. This has resulted in our own take on 8 capabilities, each with its own identity shift required for sustained success in our evolving world.

We believe we need people who are intensely **curious** (about themselves, others and the world), originally **creative** (experimenting, learning and willing to fail), **courageously committed** (to their vision for self, team or cause), **consciously choosing** (where to focus attention and how to show up), **critical** thinkers (who can resolve dilemmas and make meaning out of noise), trust building **collaborators** (that combine perspectives and strengths into lasting relationships and value), **change** influencers (that navigate the maze of change for positive impact) and generous **contributors** (that build lasting healthy communities.)

The identity shifts are shown below and will be explored in more detail in further blogs or articles as well as why change is so hard and how we make change stick!



Each day we have a new opportunity to dance with life. We can resist, refuse or struggle to “feel” the music of that moment or that day ... and feel frustrated, fearful or overwhelmed; **OR** we can choose to learn a new dance, or new steps to a favorite old one and find a new expression of ourselves. We can shout or blame or complain at life’s DJ **OR** we can pause, and listen, with an open mind and an open heart to find something in the music of the moment that brings possibilities for growth or gratitude. And then we can practice again and again as we bump and fall and laugh, until we move with confidence and grace between the daily change and choices we make to who and what we want to be.

RESOURCES

*https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/12/20/the-surprising-thing-google-learned-about-its-employees-and-what-it-means-for-todays-students/?utm_term=.e0d3941bdf9b

<https://rework.withgoogle.com/blog/the-evolution-of-project-oxygen/>

**<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:



Debbie Craig

Passionate adventurer, traveller, mountain climber, dolphin swimmer, philosophical dreamer, dysfunctional over-achiever, compulsive seeker & sharer, difference maker, patriotic South African, author, facilitator, yoga nut, wine snob, dog lover, guardian mom, step mom, wife and friend.

Debbie is founder and MD of Catalyst Consulting which has just turned 21. Debbie and her team are courageous, creative, collaborative Catalysts connecting people with purpose in the areas of talent, learning, change and HC transformation... with a key focus on systemic solutions and behavioural and mindset shifts. Debbie has facilitated work in 5 continents in over 12 countries and run over 50 deep personal transformation workshops. Debbie has published 3 books “I am Talent”, “I am Alive” and “Accelerated Learning” Debbie has hiked to Machu Pichu, Kilmanjaro, Everest Base Camp and done the Spanish and Italian Caminos and swum with dolphins in many places in the world. Debbie holds a B.Com, PDM, an MBA and is a registered Master HR Professional through the SA Board for People Practices (SABPP). She is also a game ranger and Reiki master.

Debbie's motto: Live, love, learn, laugh and let go. Be unique, be bold, be kind, make a difference.

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Armin Philipps

Armin is a 'fully imported German' and enjoying South Africa since 1994. He spent 14 years in the SA Motor industry, learning both not only business skills, but crafting his leadership capabilities. In 2006, he moved into the management consulting field as a senior resource, building businesses and getting exposed to many new fields within Leadership and talent development as well as innovation in the corporate context. Here he fell in love with the people aspect of business and the development of talent, learning and creativity. Over time he has led many advisory interventions for corporates, in South Africa and internationally. He is currently working on a leadership project in Papua New Guinea.

His passions are the development of people, innovation, new learning technologies, delivering life-long learning solutions and coaching. Armin loves life, mountaineering, skiing, nature, his two sons and family. In his spare-time, he is passionate about continuous learning, reading at least one book a week, listening, searching and creating meaning for himself and others. He is currently busy setting up a start-up venture to provide a continuous, personal learning experience platform for anyone who is interested in learning. Armin holds a B(Com) equivalent (Finance & Marketing) from the Fachhochschule Landshut (Germany), a MBA (GIBS) and a M(Phil) Coaching from USB.