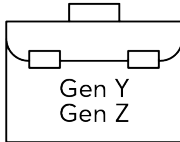


The future of work and the skills needed



The future of work is defined by more than just technological change. It is also impacted by sociological change. As of 2020 there were more Australians born since 1980 than before it, meaning that Generation Y (born 1980 to 1994), Generation Z (1995 to 2009) and Generation Alpha (born since 2010) now comprise over half of the population. Additionally, since 2019 Generation Y and Generation Z now comprise the majority of the workforce, outnumbering Generation X and Baby Boomers for the first time.



Since 2019 Gen Y and Gen Z now comprise the majority of the workforce

Diversity is a key aspect of the future of work

A key characteristic of the future of work is diversity - gender-wise, culturally and generationally. With different generations mixing in the workplace, the new reality is one where teams of diverse ages work together on a project, where older leaders give guidance across several generations and where young graduates engage with and sometimes lead older workers.

The benefits of diversity in the demographics of a workplace as well as in other differences (personal characteristics, family composition, education and tenure within a company or lifestyle) enable organisations to create a competitive advantage for themselves. By welcoming different perspectives, they are better able to connect with a wider and more global audience.

Greater emotional, cultural and generational intelligence is needed

In response to a more diverse workforce, we need workers to possess emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence and generational intelligence. In a nationally representative survey of 1,160 employed Australians conducted by McCrindle, 72% said emotional intelligence is extremely/very important for leaders to possess, above regular intelligence (71%). A critical role of leadership is to motivate and inspire people towards a common goal or outcome, thus interpersonal and human skills are needed. The uniquely human skills of empathy, ingenuity, co-operation, resilience, ethics and integrity are all contained within emotional intelligence.

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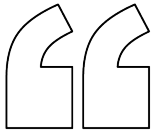
Additionally, generational intelligence is considered extremely/very important by 67% of workers, as is cultural intelligence (62% consider extremely/very important for a leader to possess). Leaders need these skills to bridge gaps and create cohesion and a common direction among diverse teams.

Transferrable skills needed for the future of work

Digital disruption and artificial intelligence is changing what jobs people will do in the future. The World Economic Forum predicts that 65% of children entering primary school today will ultimately end up working in completely new job types that don't even exist yet!

The future of work will include jobs suited to technologically savvy young people such as quantum computing, biometric programming and AI technicians. However, new jobs such as wellbeing managers, office concierges, life simplifiers and urban farmers are also emerging and are roles where experience and people skills favour repositioning workers of diverse ages and not just new, younger workers.

Although many futuristic jobs will need technical and digital skills, it is also important to remember that human beings possess certain skills such as empathy, creativity and context-dependant critical thinking skills that are difficult to translate into a language a computer can understand. These skills are also transferrable, which is a key aspect of futureproofing one's career.



Skills that are both transferable and lifelong
are in demand in more workplaces

Our own [research into the future of education](#) suggests parents believe schools should focus on ‘developing transferable skills’ and ‘future proofing students by equipping them with workforce skills’ even above ‘educating students to achieve high academic results’.

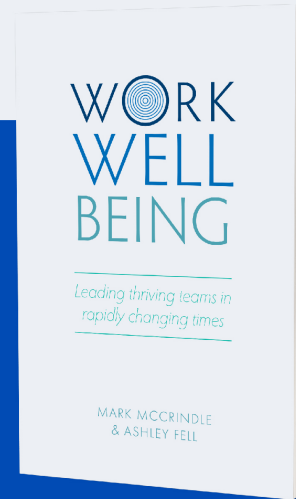
Many organisations and leaders focus on ensuring their teams are equipped with technical skills that often are relevant only for a current job. While these skills are important to a certain extent, people skills that are both transferable and lifelong and are in demand in more workplaces. To future proof our teams we need to develop people skills, as well as technical skills.

Preparing for a global world and workforce should be a key priority for all workers as the world of work continues to shift and change. Investing in transferrable skills such as digital skills, creativity, leadership qualities and critical thinking is important because these can be used across different industries and sectors. In order to remain relevant in a changing context, workers need to make a habit of continually refreshing existing skills and adding new ones.

Work Wellbeing

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