

Remaining relevant in the digital workforce of the future

By [Wayne Houghton](#) 14 Apr 2016

By 2025, jobs which were common place in 2015 will no longer exist. Students graduating in 2015 will have obsolete qualifications for which there will no longer be a profession by 2025.



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Front-line military personnel will be replaced with robots. Private bankers and wealth managers will be replaced with algorithms. Telemarketers, data entry capturers, tax preparers, lawyers, accountants, actuaries, statisticians and consulting engineers will be replaced with Artificial Intelligence (AI).

New business models, like those of Uber and Alibaba, are already industry-shaping disruptors, and each day, new digital innovators are emerging to cause disintermediation and disruption across every industry imaginable.

Traditional enterprises, whilst presently successful by today's standards, are scrambling to make sense of business digitisation in order to stay relevant in the digital future. Many are attempting to create new digital business models which will eventually cannibalise their traditional business, rather than capitulating to new disruptive digital start-ups.

Companies are also digitising their products and services, along with operational processes and customer channels. Over 70% of top fortune 500 companies have plans to offer their products as a digital service by 2020. Presently, the ten most valuable start-ups globally are estimated to have a value of \$172.7bn - all embracing digital platform based business models. Around 90% of the business models in 2020 will be driven by the cloud.

Altering skills

Globally, the number of connected devices will nearly quadruple by 2025, significantly altering the skills employers hold most valuable. Increasing connectivity will change how employees choose to work (for example, remotely, part-time, independently, or dispersed), and provide employers with a spectrum of hiring options. Millennials, most of whom are digital natives, will comprise an estimated 48.3% of the global labour force in 2025, while those aged 60 and older will comprise 9.9% (compared with 7.9% in 2015).

The line between what has traditionally been business and IT is becoming more and more blurred. Largely due to the early adoption and impact of digital marketing, the chief marketing officer (CMO) now controls a bigger IT budget and influence than the CIO. This is only set to increase and expand across the organisation, as digital natives become future business leaders.

**Emerging Future Industries
and Their Required Skills,
Global, 2025**

Online B2B	  
Big Data Analytics	  
Connected Living	 
Cloud Computing	 
Urban Logistics	  
Waste to Energy	 
Mobile Robotics	 
Cybersecurity	  
3D Printing	  
Alternative Energy	 

What new skills and expertise will be required to lead and manage the digital enterprise of the future?

As robots, AI and digital algorithms continue to replace many jobs and professions; new and emerging professions by 2025 will focus more on human interaction, augmented through digital mechanisms. Jobs requiring uniquely human characteristics, such as cultural deftness, caretaking or empathy, and creative thinking, are those least threatened by automation.

Digital nomad trend

The ability to work anywhere, anytime is fueling the digital nomad trend, which is highly appealing to millennials, but will also blur political and economic boundaries, and test national labour codes.

AI, its sub-fields, and automation will create some specific reflecting trends associated with new and emerging technology advances. Career gains from AI and automation include:

- Artificial Intelligence technology and automation salesperson.
- Specialist programmers.
- Cybersecurity experts.
- Engineering psychologists.
- Robot and automation technology manufacturer, distributor, servicer, and refurbisher.
- Technology-specific trainer.
- Neuro-implant technicians.
- Virtual health care specialist.
- Virtual reality experience designer.

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The digital workforce will be largely millennial, and significantly different from today in terms of culture, leadership style and skills. AI, robots and digital algorithms will automate many professions, but jobs requiring uniquely human characteristics - or are critical to the development of digital solutions - will be in great demand by 2025.

A holistic digital transformation strategy, which considers the digital workforce along with the business model, process and customer channel dimensions, will be imperative for organisations wishing to remain relevant in the next ten years.

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