



Identifying the Revolution Skills and Skill Revolutionaries

Steve Doerflein, Ph.D.
Senior Consultant, Talent Management

Three practical suggestions on how leaders can invest their resources to ensure their workforce has the skill sets needed to achieve the organization's strategic priorities.

In today's fast-paced world of work, companies are navigating change both in terms of how and where they compete. In this new environment, we are seeing the emergence of a Skills Revolution.

"In this environment, helping people upskill and adapt to a fast-changing world of work will be the defining challenge of our time. Those with the right skills will increasingly call the shots, create opportunities and choose how, where and when they work. – Jonas Prising, Chairman & CEO, ManpowerGroup

Jonas Prising has called on leaders to work to increase their employees' resilience and on individuals (employees) to cultivate the ability to learn new skills. Recognizing the need to acquire and build the skills required to stay relevant and employable is important for all workers.

Here are three practical suggestions on how leaders can invest their resources to ensure their workforce has the skill sets needed to achieve the organization's strategic priorities.

1. Identify skills that align to your strategic priorities

There are many resources for advice and opinions regarding the most critical skills needed in the Skills Revolution. Right Management has developed a framework—the P3 Leadership Model—for identifying and cultivating those with needed leadership skills. We also have a "curriculum" of workshops as well as development suggestions for building the P3 skill set.

However, many organizations want to select and develop employee skills that align to the organization's specific strategic priorities. Many have their own success profiles or competency models for key groups of jobs and/or levels. Using our Competency Library, Right Management facilitates half-day competency modelling sessions with an organization's

subject matter experts (SMEs) to identify competencies required to meet the strategic priorities for the next one to three years. Some organizations also want to have a technical competencies model for key roles. Developing an organization-specific competency model requires more than a half-day session with SMEs. Success profiles or competency models allow the organization to target and focus skill development of existing employees and the selection of prospective employees.

2. Prioritize resilience and open-ness to change

Once the “skills target” is in place, the organization has to set priorities about who will receive skills development. In an emergency department, the patient with the most critical need goes first. The skills development “triage process” is different. Instead, the organization should make decisions about development priorities based on roles that are mission critical—those having the greatest impact on achievement of strategic priorities. A second criteria should be to select individuals who are more likely to be open to applying new knowledge and experiences in the changing world of work, and who will be more resilient and respond quicker when circumstances and the environment do not go according to plan.

Individuals demonstrate resilience and openness to change across a broad spectrum. Some are more resilient than others. Some seek change while others do not welcome change. These two characteristics are easily measured by personality assessments and other psychometric instruments. In short, we can identify who in a current workforce and among job applicants is more resilient and who is more open to change. It makes sense to start building critical skills in those employees who are more likely to accept the need to change, build skills, and jump back in and tackle a problem that didn’t get resolved on the first try. From the employee’s perspective, the knowledge of his/her level of resilience and openness to change is the first step to becoming more resilient and change agile.

3. Give great weight to “fluid intelligence”

Finally, we know that some individuals are better able to perform tasks that require the ability to think logically and without the benefit of prior skills or knowledge. This ability has been called “fluid intelligence”. Despite any organization’s best laid plans and efforts to develop critical skills in key people, the unforeseen will happen. Having employees who are adept at handling new and unplanned situations is an advantage for an organization. We use cognitive ability instruments to identify an individual’s level of “fluid intelligence,” as well as the ability to draw on prior knowledge, experience and learned skills to solve problems. The goal is to identify individuals whose intellectual capabilities make them more effective and successful when moving into fast moving and uncharted territory.

To succeed, organizations need aggressive workforce development to address the widening gap between the Haves and the Have Nots. Now is the time for leaders to be responsive and responsible: we cannot slow the rate of technological advance or globalization, but we can invest in employees’ skills to increase the resilience of our people and organizations.

About Right Management

We are global career experts. Established in 1980, we have over 35 years of experience in career management and talent strategy. In that time, we've put 40,000 people to work every day, conducted over 12 million interviews per year and successfully transitioned more than three million people into new roles.

Right Management is the global career expert within ManpowerGroup (NYSE: MAN), providing tailored global workforce solutions that identify, develop and transition talent to optimize business performance. As career experts, we enable companies to win by helping employees build successful careers in the Human Age.

We drive better outcomes through our expertise in organizational effectiveness, career management and individual development. Right Management has offices in more than 50 countries and partners with companies of all sizes, including more than 80 percent of the Fortune 500.

Milwaukee
100 Manpower Place
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Phone: 1.800.237.4448
www.right.com

