



By Dr Jaclyn Lee

DIGITIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON FUTURE OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

Digitization is now the buzz word in the new economy. We are living in a highly complex world that is more connected than before. Cross border bandwidth has grown 45 times compared to 2005. Flows of information, searches, communication, video, transactions and intra-company traffic continues to grow. There is now a staggering 5.2 billion users on global mobile phones today.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS

As a result of the growth of the internet, there is now an increasing use of digital platforms for managing international operations in a lean and more efficient way. Companies are selling in fast growing markets while keeping their virtual teams connected. New jobs are also created by the internet. For every job lost, 2.6 jobs are being created on the net. This shift towards virtual work will be an important and growing trend for the future. By 2025, online talent platforms could boost global GDP by 2.7 trillion.

What does all of these mean for the future state of work?

FUTURE STATE OF WORK

There will be more democratization of work. Workplaces will be more agile and responsive, and more purpose built networks would be available. New employment relationships will evolve and technological empowerment will transform the way we work and live. When all these happen, we will need to have a fundamental shift in how we manage our organization work culture. This will mean moving from “managing” to “organizing” talents through the use of data analytics. To prepare ourselves for this shift, effective leadership practices and new ways of thinking and re-thinking about how we organize our teams and work processes will be integral to organizational transformation. The new organization will be different by design, and the new workplace will be one in which we use Digital HR, Design Thinking and Culture Development to drive our strategies. Employers will need to learn and manage the “gig economy” where employees are engaged on projects and short term contracts. They have to unlearn traditional ways of doing things to employing new methods and ideas to help their organizations transform. HR practitioners will need to harness the power of technology to tap into talent platforms like “Upwork” to find rare and specific skills, as well as new knowledge and capabilities to fill their existing talent gaps. Efficient systems and processes are the key to success, coupled with maximum operational flexibility, lean staffing models, collaborative partnerships and minimum fixed costs. Leadership models will need to transform and HR will need to embrace the use of advanced analytics to predict future talent demands and to anticipate performance and retention issues.

The shift towards the digital economy is happening at a lightning speed. Effective Leaders and HR Practitioners who understand its impact will know how to begin the road towards organizational transformation to prepare their employees and company for the future.