



Changing World, Changing Jobs. Changing Workers

The good news is that we're slowly going back to the physical workspace. Even if we have been and are still working remotely, the indicators are clear that our economy has begun recovery. At last, we can finally exhale.

But the working world will be a far different one when we return than the one that hired us and completed our initial training. In a study conducted by the World Economic Forum to assess the world of work over the next 5 to 10 years, 84% of the leaders polled said they plan to rapidly digitize work processes over the next five years. That means that the job you know how to do today may be replaced by one you do not know how to do unless you are upskilled in the new process.

The same study cites that 50% of the world-wide workforce will need reskilling within the next five years.

Our clients at Learning Dynamics are already telling us that they need to re-train existing employees and change the way they are training new ones. While the massive world-wide shift toward digitized and virtual applications is well under way today, that technology is changing who gets the jobs and how to do them.

Not surprisingly, jobs that are now at least partially robotic, when just a year ago they were manual, have caused a reduction in the labor force. But the number of new positions centered in the realm of technology is about the same size as those lost, according to The World Economic Forum.

So, the statement and question today become, "We're back to work, but are we ready to

contribute?" Are employers focused on the upskilling and reskilling needed to remain viable in their field?

At Learning Dynamics, we can demonstrate these changes and the challenges they present. When the pandemic hit full force, classroom training nearly ended. Not only were our clients reluctant to gather their staff in one place, state and federal government added additional input to be sure that traditional training was suspended. So, we rapidly shifted to delivering training via webinars. That simple shift required specialized skills. We needed to shift our focus quickly and efficiently, simply to stay useful and viable to the clients who have relied on us for 40 years.

But our transition was far from over. While we could utilize our broad skillset to shift our capability to webinar format, we were now faced with learning new technology to deliver it. Adding complexity to that was the fact that we needed to comply with whatever systems our clients had already adapted. So, learning how to deliver our value became far more complex than simply finding one new way.

The idea of remote training has been viable for more than ten years, but the changes and expansion of that capability have exploded in the last year. Ten years ago, there were just a handful of formats for webinar delivery. Today there are many, and the number grows every day. Additionally, the complexity and breadth of these newest technologies have increased exponentially. They are no longer standalone tools for delivering training. Now they are broad-based systems for documenting virtually all aspect of the work

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process. The new technology is complex and complicated, but the payoff once it is in place and functional is unlike anything we have experienced before.

The training to meet all the rapidly changing technology so far is lagging behind the application. Upskilling or reskilling will now need to be a constantly evolving process because the advances in technology are constantly improving. With each new product, process or platform, comes the need for training the workforce to operate it.

In the World Economic Forum study, it was shown that the upskilling process is much more available to existing employees than it is to those whose jobs have been eliminated. That lag behind the need could result in a significant skilled labor force shortage. As we continue to observe the pandemic recovery unfold, we will see how the need for those who are currently unemployed (when they had been pre-pandemic) is met. Once again, we may see a shift from traditional sources to all new pathways. No matter what or how, the pace of change in our workplaces is faster than it's ever been and getting faster. Keeping up with it, skill wise, is our challenge.

