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FU.SE DIGITAL 2020

THE FUTURE OF WORK IS BRIGHT – IF IT INCLUDES
NEW ATTITUDES, SKILLS AND INCLUSIVITY



THE ADECCO GROUP



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Creating tomorrow's workforce will require cultivating human-technology interactions, life-long learning, and diversity and inclusion, according to 270 leaders and experts at the FU.SE Digital 2020 Global Summit

More advanced automation in the workplace. A mismatch between existing skills and what's needed in the future. Long-standing workplace inequities. On top of it all, a pandemic that's affected the global economy and jobs everywhere.

There's a lot happening that could justify being pessimistic about the future of work. And yet, people are mostly positive about the direction that work is heading. That was the consensus of the top global decision makers and C-level executives who took part in [Future Series \(FU.SE\) Digital 2020 Global Summit](#). The 24-hour virtual summit was hosted by The Adecco Group, [Boston Consulting Group](#), and Microsoft, and supported by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations' International Labor Organization (ILO), and AIESEC, a global youth leadership development group.

A full 74% of the experts and leaders said they feel "optimistic" or "very optimistic" about the future of work, despite the challenges, according to a poll conducted during the event. And they don't just feel good about the future, they are ready to collaborate to make it happen, according to participants' comments during the event.

With the future of work a top concern for leaders across government, business and civil society, the FU.SE Digital 2020 summit took up practical solutions for

turning that mostly optimistic view into reality, including where changes need to start and the direction they should take.

The key, according to summit speakers and attendees, is getting multiple stakeholders to look beyond their own daily challenges to collaborate with each other and people in or entering the workforce. They must create opportunities that support people of all ages to acquire skills needed for the jobs of the future and change perceptions and behaviors around how and when work gets done, participants said.

In the next two decades, 52% of all jobs will change dramatically and 14% will disappear completely, according to the OECD. It's a mistake to think that any one company or person knows exactly how to prepare employers or employees for that, said BCG Chairman Hans-Paul Bürkner.

The key is to experiment. Some things will succeed and some will fail, Bürkner said. "Embrace this as an opportunity and challenge. We need to change and adapt rather than protect the status quo because the status quo is gone in the next second."

"We need a tripartite alliance between companies, governments and individuals to ensure that we are building the right skills for the future," The Adecco Group CEO Alain Dehaze said at the event.





EXPLORING THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN THE WORLD OF WORK

The FU.SE 2020 audience participated in live panel discussions, fireside-style chats with thought leaders, demonstrations of new workplace technology, and interactive design thinking workshops. All of the activities were designed to help them explore three major challenges facing employers:

- Human-machine collaboration
- Solving the skills mismatch
- The inclusion imperative

Activities also explored how COVID-19 emphasized or accelerated specific workforce trends.

Human-Machine Collaboration.

When polled, 89% of participants said they see automation technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning a threat to people's jobs to some extent (See Exhibit 1).

It's important to demystify AI, which Dehaze likened to electricity. When electricity was first available, many feared it because it took people's jobs away. Eventually it became widespread and regulated, with unions forming to prevent factories from misusing it to make people work longer. AI is poised to become ubiquitous in coming decades, Dehaze said. People need to understand the opportunities that it presents and

how it can amplify their work. But it also needs to be regulated "in a positive way," he said.

The impact that automation will have on jobs will depend on the industry, said Iris Marechal a French graduate student who helped represent the next generation of the workforce at the event and attended as a finalist in the "Adecco CEO for One Month" program. "For jobs where social interactions are key, such as psychologists and politicians, there will always be room for people who do not want to or can't collaborate with machines," she said.

The Skills Mismatch.

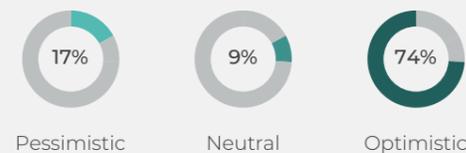
More than three-quarters of summit attendees (76%) believe that the skills of today match the jobs of tomorrow "somewhat" or "slightly well." At the same time, 22% feel current skills do not at all match future demands.

To start closing the skill gap, "We should not try to guess what the exact jobs of the future will be, rather think about the nature of these jobs and help people prepare for them," said Richard Baldwin, an international economics professor at the Graduate Institute of International

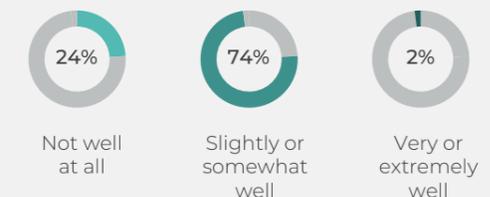
Exhibit 1: | People are Generally Optimistic About the Future of Work

Percentages based on respondents participating in the FU.SE Global Summit poll

How optimistic or pessimistic are you about the future of work in general?



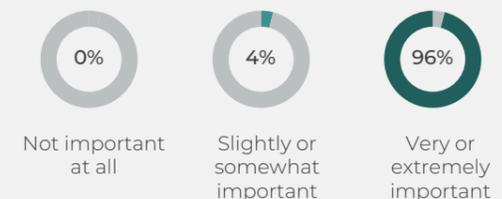
How well do you think the skills today match the jobs of tomorrow?



How much do you see automation as a threat to human jobs?



How important is diversity and inclusion for business performance?



Source: FU.SE 2020 Digital Global Summit

and Development Studies in Geneva, and author of "The Globotics Upheaval: Globalization, Robotics, and the Future of Work."

Speakers on a young-leaders panel said they believe that they need both hard and soft skills to be attractive as a job

The Inclusion Imperative.

The vast majority of attendees (96%) believe that workplace diversity and inclusivity is "extremely important" or "very important" for business performance. People feel so strongly about the need to cultivate an equitable workplace that 60% of the audience said they would be willing to take a 10% pay cut if it led to a more diverse environment. Younger workers feel even stronger - all six youth leaders on a panel on younger workers said they would take a pay cut if it resulted in a more equitable workplace.

Education is a "big equalizer," so efforts to improve inclusivity need to include providing better access to learning to produce the talent that the

The COVID-19 Effect.

It's hard to overstate the effect the COVID-19 crisis has had on the global economy. It brought existing inequalities to the fore, and increased the need for and speed of change, according to multiple thought leaders who spoke at the invitation-only event.

At the start of the pandemic as governments instituted quarantines and businesses shut down to keep people safe, "It only took one month to wipe out 10 years of labor-market reforms," Vestergaard Knudsen said.

Low-wage workers and others whose lives are marginalized in some way have borne the brunt of the crisis. Among those most affected have been workers ages 18 to 24. One out of six in that demographic stopped working because of the pandemic, and continue to feel shut out, said Alexandra Robinson, AIESEC's global president. "There's a burden on organizations to bring young people in," but if skills programs are created without young people's input, they won't work, Robinson said.

candidate. Younger workers also believe that it's up to them to take responsibility for learning new skills to be ready for job opportunities. "You'll need to understand how to reskill yourself so no matter what change will come, you will be prepared," said Sara Ettiss, a Swiss graduate student and "Adecco CEO for One Month" finalist.

world will need in the future, said Mercer CEO Martine Ferland.

Access is also a key component of inclusion. Microsoft is working on one such initiative, to bring online learning to underserved families in rural areas in Africa, Asia and the United States, according to Jean-Philippe Courtois, president of Microsoft global sales, marketing and operations. The company is creating Wi-Fi hubs and hotspots in those areas by tapping into unused broadband network capacity, Courtois said, with the intention of strengthening access to education and ultimately provide people in those areas with better options for participating in the workforce.

The pandemic accelerated other trends and innovations. It led to an unprecedented increase in people working remotely. But one unintended consequence of remote work for some has been longer hours. In addition, it exposed a growing divide between mainly white-collar workers who can do their jobs remotely and those who cannot, including blue-collar and service-industry workers, many who have front-line roles. "It's our responsibility to ensure that this will not continue, that flexibility will not result in repressibility", said Jean-Philippe Courtois.

In the future, it's likelier that employers will offer people a combination of office- and remote-based work, experts and attendees said. Younger workers especially are eager to gain from the advantages that working in a physical office offers, including access to networking and mentors. Getting face-to-face experience is so important that the majority at the event disagreed that the next generation of workers won't want to work in a physical office.



INSPIRING BETTER WORKPLACE PRACTICES THROUGH DESIGN THINKING

Beyond listening to experts and panel discussions, attendees participated in facilitated design-thinking workshops to come up with new approaches to address major workplace challenges. (See Exhibit 2.)

Exhibit 2: Innovative Ideas For Better Ways to Work Through Design Thinking

Selection of solution ideas crafted by participants to three major challenges

		
<p>Human-machine collaboration</p> <p>How might we empower and encourage individuals to shift toward large-scale adoption and positive behaviors related to human-machine interfaces?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Build AI familiarization touchpoints throughout an employee's career 2 Change the stories we tell when we talk about machines 3 Develop new career paths to ensure buy-in for future job roles 	<p>The inclusion imperative</p> <p>How might we shift institutional decision-making power by giving authentic voice to diverse communities?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Create a safe social platform to provide diversity and inclusion signaling and feedback 2 Define and deploy human-centric KPIs instead of traditional business metrics 3 Develop regulatory requirements for employers to be more diverse and inclusive 	<p>The skills mismatch</p> <p>How might we help businesses see value in life-long learning and invest in and try new approaches to learning and skilling?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Create an index to measure companies' life-long learning performance 2 Ensure everyone has learning goals and incentives to achieve them 3 Make skill gaps transparent and calculate the ROI of closing them

Source: FU.SE 2020 Digital Global Summit

Using Design Thinking to Innovate Solutions to Pressing Workplace Challenges

How do you respond to the changing world of work? The FU.SE Digital 2020 Global Summit took an approach to solving for change that is as innovative as the solutions it was hoping to inspire.

Leaders and experts at the 24-hour virtual summit were invited to participate in hands-on design-thinking workshops. The goal: to create prototypes for solutions to three of today's toughest workplace challenges – the skills mismatch, improving diversity and inclusion, and the human-machine interface.

Each 3.5-hour session was conducted on an online "whiteboard" collaboration platform and led by a team of facilitators. All of the workshops were divided into three phases of design thinking:

Empathy and immersion

Attendees listened to expert-led presentations to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying needs of various segments of the workforce and of the full scope of the challenge to be addressed.

Ideation

Attendees then brainstormed potential solutions to the challenge, and narrowed their focus to interventions that they believed could have the most impact.

Prototyping

In a final step, participants created a prototype of one potential solution, which was presented during the summit's closing session.

The prototypes created in the workshops – explained in detail in the accompanying article – can serve as an example for how other organizations can innovate to navigate the new future of work, according to FU.SE organizers.

Human-Machine Collaboration

People still view AI, machine learning and other advanced technology as both an opportunity and a threat. Even if employees aren't afraid of it and think that it could help them do their jobs more efficiently, [they don't understand it completely or feel comfortable working with it](#). "People fear things they don't know about," said one participant in the design-thinking session on human-machine collaborations.

In the short-term, automation technologies may displace jobs, but there are solid reasons to be optimistic about the future, because "the jobs of

the future will be filled with things that AI can't do," said Richard Baldwin, author of "The Globotics Upheaval: Globalization, Robotics, and the Future of Work."

To counter employees' concerns, workshop attendees proposed that organizations take the initial step of changing the way they talk about advanced technology to make it less intimidating. They also suggested developing clear career paths so people can see what future roles their current positions could lead to, and how those positions would interact with advanced technology.

As a more long-term action, they suggested that companies create onboarding workshops to familiarize people with AI and the impact it could have on their jobs, and to fill in any gaps in their capabilities. Companies could offer touchpoints throughout a person's career to help them keep up with AI-

The Skills Mismatch

As existing job roles disappear or change and new ones materialize, society has to figure out how to help people navigate the changes and emerge happier on the other side, said Anand Chopra, vice president and managing director of General Assembly, a corporate training firm. One way to do that is to encourage people to become life-long learners, so they stay open to picking up new skills well after they enter the workforce, Chopra said.

To foster life-long learning, design-thinking session participants suggested making changes to early education, including teaching so-called soft skills such as empathy and creativity that students – and everyone else - need

The Inclusion Imperative

For workplaces to be more diverse and inclusive, employers need to make people – not programs – the focus of their attention, said Brian Gallagher, president and CEO of United Way Worldwide. It's in a business' best interest to care about all the people in their communities "because those are their customers and employees," Gallagher said.

Companies' diversity and inclusion efforts have to include hiring and employee development, but also to removing inherent biases in their systems, Gallagher said. "We have to focus on gender and pay parity, and more equitable ways of promotion," he said. "We're leaving so much talent behind, and so much innovation because of our biases."

Because employees feel like they don't have a voice in the process, the success of employers' diversity and inclusion

related knowledge and skills, and share examples of how some individuals use it as best practices. Companies also need to embed a better understanding of AI into their corporate culture so that over time, attitudes and practices involving human-machine interfaces become part of the norm.

in order to communicate, collaborate and perform tasks that AI or advanced technology can't do well. Governments, companies and individuals have to be invested in making changes happen, they said. In particular, employers need motivation and support to appreciate the value that they would gain by investing in learning practices.

To that end, the participants proposed creating an index to measure a company's progress toward reaching life-long learning goals. They suggested that government, companies and employees collaborate on the index, which could be tested by a handful of employers before being rolled out on a large scale.

practices should be measured by the people that they help, according to the participants. In addition, individuals need to have a hand in creating the changes they want to see, according to participants in the design-thinking session on the topic.

To provide individuals with a stronger voice, the group proposed creating an AI-based social platform where individuals could safely share their experiences with an organization's diversity and inclusion behaviors – similar to how Glassdoor aggregates anonymous reviews of what it's like to interview or work at a company. As the session participants envisioned it, anyone who's interacted with an organization could use the platform, including employees and customers. Such a platform could create a voice for the voiceless, and drive change at organizations, they said.





COLLABORATING FOR THE WAY FORWARD

In the long run, jobs will be more human, more local, and eventually richer. But the path to get there might be tumultuous, according to participants of FU.SE Digital 2020.

Changes that help people prepare for the future need to be inclusive. Achieving that will require shared accountability between institutions, employers and workers. Furthermore, people have to be at the center of any activity to humanize AI, give people more voice or build a culture of life-long learning.

In order to continue navigating this new future of work, the FU.SE community will continue to engage through digital events and take some of the inspiring ideas from the summit forward.

“We don’t have to protect jobs but we need to protect people,” Vestergaard Knudsen said.

“People have had to change jobs for decades,” Baldwin said. “This time, the change will simply be faster.”



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