

Employee Transformers – Can Your Staff Change and Adapt?

Perhaps one of the most daunting challenges that currently faces both employers and employees are those posed by the ever-increasing influx of new and rapidly changing technologies. Technology changes faster than the latest runway fashions. Whether it's preparing a presentation from your cell phone while you're riding the train to work, or discussing a contract with overseas clients on Skype while sitting at home in your pajamas, technology changes are on a one-way track. Miss your chance to hop on, and you'll be left behind.

For the majority of today's employees, the days of learning a set of routine tasks for the duration of their day (let alone their career) has long since become a thing of the past, yielding both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, it means freedom from boredom as a result of a greater variability of tasks. It means that a lot of people have become a "Jack-of-all-trades", with more a diverse and extensive repertoire of skills thanks to additional training in the latest technologies. On the other hand, an increase in technology can also be a cause for added stress. More resources like money and personal time are devoted to learning and upgrading job skills, and the uncertainty of whether a job position will be taken over by 15 kilograms of



hardware that thinks and computes twice as fast as we do is definite cause for concern.

For employers, the process of assessing which employees are best suited to a position has turned into a complex jigsaw puzzle. Along with trying to find the right "piece" to fit the short and long-term vision of their company, employers must now try to predict potential technological changes for a given position as well as determine whether a candidate will be able to adjust to these changes. It's probably a safe assumption that most jobs will undergo some form of technological advancement that will

require learning, training, and adapting on the part of employees. As a result, it has become increasingly important for HR personnel to find an accurate way of evaluating both existing and potential staff's ability to adapt to change, particularly as it relates to new technologies in the workplace.

IT positions are a perfect example of jobs where technological changes are on the fast track. New software, hardware, programming languages, frameworks and so on seem to be an almost daily occurrence. While choosing the perfect IT worker is often dependent upon the amount of prior knowledge the person brings to the job, this should not be regarded as the sole factor, or even the most important factor when selecting among various candidates. Some pre-knowledge is definitely necessary. However, in the long-term, openness towards continued learning and the ability to deal with stressors that may arise because of this is often the overriding factor in determining how suitable the person is for the job.

Mister "three university degrees and president of ABC fraternity" may have an impressive résumé and a high degree of technological expertise, but if he has very little desire to undergo more training or learn new skills, he, as well as his expertise, can easily become outdated.

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Conversely, another candidate may display limited technological knowledge, but his passion for learning and strong willingness to acquire new skills on-the-job makes him a better choice in the long run. He's more likely to be able to adapt to whatever technological advances the company chooses to adopt. And this can often mean the difference between success and failure of a new technology to deliver the anticipated return on investment.



PsychTests' **ARCH Profile** offers a **Risk-Taking Test** to uncover a candidate's risk-taking profile, as well as a **Work Accident Likelihood Assessment**, in order to identify individuals who may be a liability in positions with a degree of physical danger. While hiring a risk-taker may in and of itself be a liability, doing so without a clear understanding of a person's personality may be an even greater hazard. 🛠️

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