



# Are You Hiring the Right Way? The Future Is All About Mindset Hiring

Many organisations continue to hire individuals who possess a specific set of skills, competencies, or knowledge. The basis for this methodology—traditional management practices, business models, and organisation designs—made sense in the past because the aim was simply to fill a specific gap in the “compartmentalised workforce.” Such employers ask their employees to perform a very precise role within a certain function, unit, or location. These specific roles are reminiscent of Aristotle’s concept that “the whole is not the sum of its parts.” [1] The parts (the specialised skills) do not always add up to the whole entity (mindset) that the organisation requires to be successful and viable. That is, the mindset is not the sum of a person’s competencies and skills and knowledge, but something more, something different, something broader.

While many organisations continue to transform their business models in almost every sector, there are still too few companies undergoing a truly transformative approach to the workforce itself to parallel this evolution. The most common reason for this outcome is because the change in workforce models has always lagged behind the

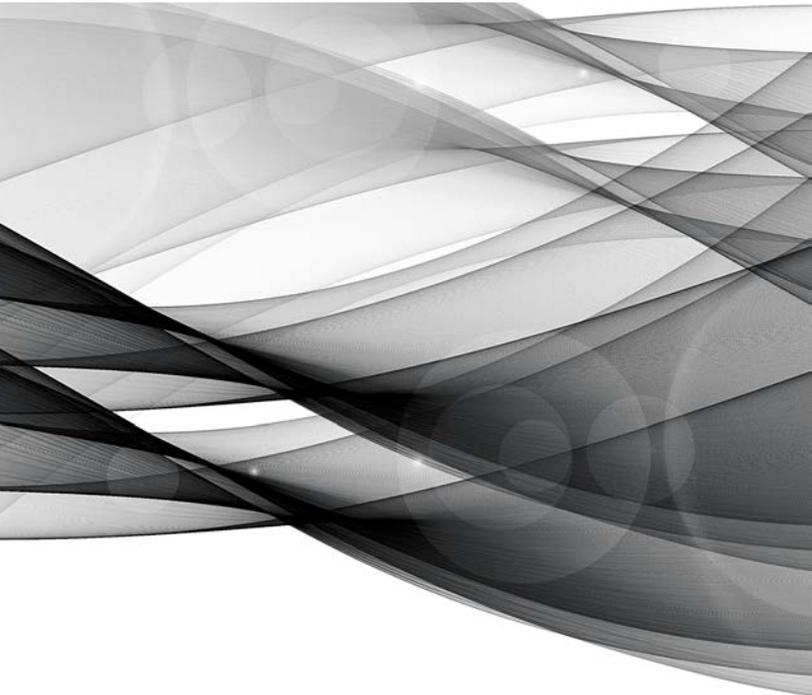
rise of innovative technology and ways of learning. Unfortunately, the gap between business and workforce models will continue to grow for years to come unless organisations shift their perspective to a more future-ready approach. And that approach involves a mindset (a whole), not the parts (specific skill, competency or knowledge), of individual employees, as well as the managers and recruiters who are responsible for hiring the right mindsets.

## **The Neglected Impact of Technology**

The signs of this continued gap between business and workforce models are evident in the many restructuring efforts underway. The typical response to workforce redesign has always been single-handed and narrow in its scope and biased in its nature—concentrating mostly on workforce cost mitigation.

Many organisations overfocus, overspend, and, at times, over-estimate the impact of promising technology on their operations, as well as service and product offerings. So, while they overspend on systems that are inappropriate or

**”While many organisations continue to transform their business models in almost every sector, there are still too few companies undergoing a truly transformative approach to the workforce itself to parallel this evolution.”**



ill-matched to the company's needs, they also overestimate the capability of their workforce to cope with the changes that take place during their business transformation initiatives. This short-sightedness, in return, almost always, results in miscalculating and underspending the costs required to support the workforce during any change initiative.

While it is true that technological advancement and digital transformation allow both technology and individuals to better perform many specific skills that organisations need, that is not the sole answer. Technological and digital transformation are nothing new, and, traditionally, the majority of individuals more or less have always kept up with technology in the end. However, what is new is the speed of change with which the transformation occurs today. And that speed of change is accelerating at an unprecedented velocity, with many individuals finding it difficult to cope with the transformations taking place in and outside the organisation. But the most under-looked and critical point for future success is the lack of speed in human learning capabilities.

### **Transforming the Workforce Starts with the Right Mindset**

Organisations of today and the future must have—in place now—a workforce that possesses multi-talents, hyper-creativity, and a hunger for learning, with broad mindsets so that leadership can manage and grow their businesses. It no longer matters if employees lack a specific skill, competency, or knowledge (the parts) in any field or domain because technology is the key. Technology, in whatever form, has become an undisputable and formidable tool, “always available” to upgrade those skills or acquire new ones very rapidly if so desired. That said, it certainly does matter if an organisation does not have the leadership with the right mindset to redesign a workforce who also possesses the right mindset (the whole).

So, how should organisations begin to prepare their workforce for the future?

#### **Step 1. Stop using lazy hiring practices.**

Today, very few companies hire new employees based on future potential because they conduct a lazy, careless form of hiring. Evaluating the future potential of a candidate is



not possible with traditional CVs, archaic assessments, tricky interviewing techniques, or narrowly defined position descriptions that become obsolete the moment they are written down. All these tools reveal is one thing: the individual's past experience and performance based on specific skills, competencies, and knowledge they have acquired in the past. They do not reveal anything about their potential performance in a future that will be drastically different than the past and the present.

In a world where yesterday seems like a century ago, what is only relevant is the future and people's mindset about the future. Organisations must stop hiring employees based on the past and start hiring them with a view toward their future potential. The only way that it is achievable is through mindset hiring.

### **Step 2. Implement the right technology to support mindset hiring.**

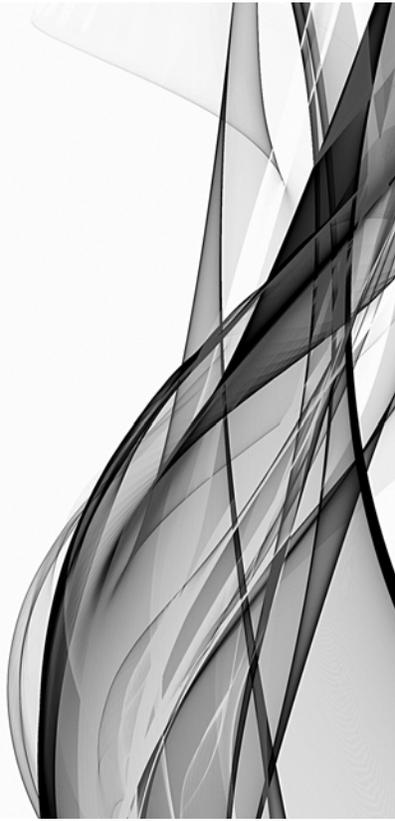
Although numerous solutions promise advanced hiring capabilities based on the latest technology in artificial intelligence and machine learning, the foundation for many such tools relies on basic matching and data harvesting techniques. To implement the right technology to support

mindset hiring, employers need to go beyond quick-win thinking and cost mitigation.

Employers must be able to translate their vision into reality by recognising that the organisation of the future will have these characteristics:

- Fewer full-time jobs at all levels
- More virtual internal and external collaboration
- Enhanced personal leadership
- Increased transparency in operations
- Sustainability engrained at its core for survival

Acknowledging these traits will allow employers to discover the type of people (employees) with which to collaborate (hire). The traditional meaning of the word "hiring" requires a redefinition. Employers will not hire people to work for them, but rather will find the right people with which to "collaborate" in the future.



Further, leadership will look more and more for validated proof that such individuals possess the potential to solve the challenges faced when growing the business. The traditional method of validating that proof depends on the candidate's words (the CV) and references linked to those words, as well as hiring managers' personal preferences and capacity to validate those proofs with a limited vision of their own. Occasionally, employers might use different assessment methods to ascertain whether a candidate fits into a preconceived box of personality, leadership style, strength, or weakness.

But today's organisations no longer need those old approaches. The majority of people provide a more authentic and truthful trace of information, whether intentional or not, online and ready to be discovered by a multitude of tools. That comprehensive, deeper, and richer view of collaborators (candidates) offers employers the potential to be the real and significant source for mindset hiring. Employers will be able to determine how collaborators truly interact with others, the point of views they actually value and share, the type of contribution they are ready to provide, whether others have validated their performance and willingness to perform, and so on.

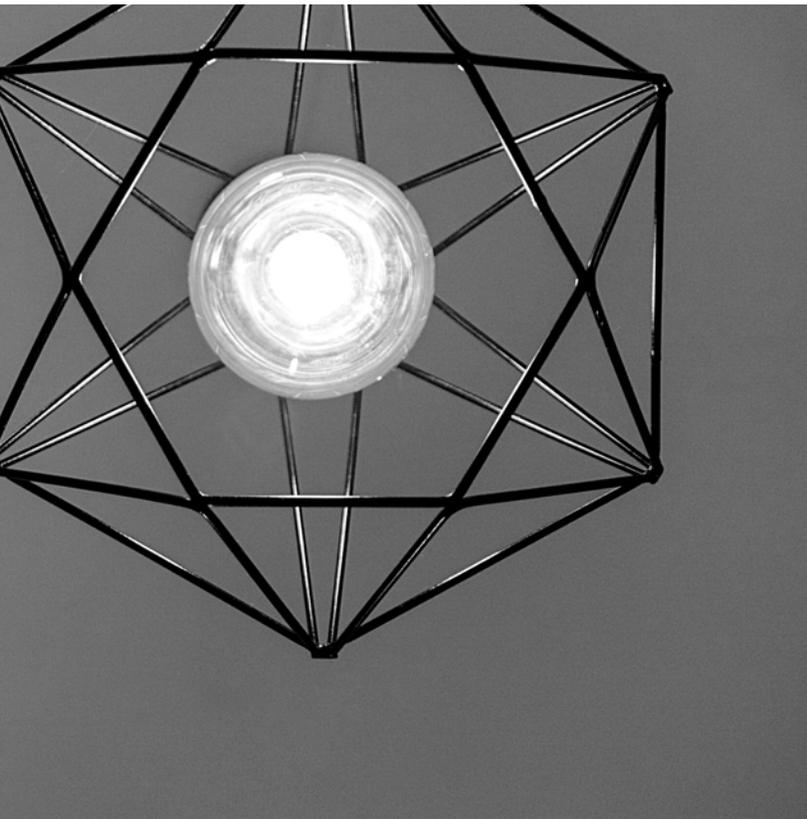
All these points and many others are useful as key indicators for hiring the right mindset. Obviously, every organisation has its own required indicators, based on industry context and market expectations. However, once the overall framework is designed and the right technology applied, there will be no room for doubtful decisions or personal bias when finding the right mindset with which to collaborate.

### **Step 3. Cultivate the right mindset at all levels.**

Leadership is not the sole segment of an organisation that requires a broad mindset for growth and development. Every level of employee, from entry-level to CEO, should have the opportunity to strive for, and achieve, the thinking that is required for personal and career success.

To move forward, leadership needs to start asking—and answering—the right questions:

- What and how can we change to encourage full participation in our workforce to increase awareness of what is necessary to survival?
- What actions can we take to strive for ultimate efficiency and productivity overall, with maximum engagement of all stakeholders?



- What measures do we need to consider so that whatever solution arises is sustainable in the long run?

### **The Crystal Ball Is Clear**

The future is all about mindsets, not specific skills, competency, or knowledge. An individual can acquire any specific talent through training or can enhance it through technology. But a broad mindset is more difficult to develop and takes more time to evolve. To successfully transform and prepare the organisation for the future, leadership must put a stop to hiring people based on specific skills, competencies, or knowledge (parts) and start hiring people on the basis of their mindsets (wholes). The whole is so much more than the sum of its individual parts, and it is actually something different. Organisations that are able to find, attract, develop, and retain such individuals will be the ones that will successfully evolve.

[1] *Who said “The whole is greater than the sum of the parts”?*  
(<http://se-scholar.com/se-blog/2017/6/23/who-said-the-whole-is-greater-than-the-sum-of-the-parts>)



### **About the Author:**

*Ali Kursun is a Managing Partner at sparkChief & Co., a consulting firm that helps clients develop sustainable workforce and talent strategies, change management, organisation transformation, and career solutions.*

Copyright © 2020 sparkChief & Co.



EMPOWERING BUSINESS LEADERS THROUGH  
THE POWER OF CREATIVE THINKING.

## sparkChief & Co.

---

25 Route de Lullier  
1254 Jussy, GE, Switzerland

Tel +41 22 346 24 05  
[inquire@sparkchief.com](mailto:inquire@sparkchief.com)  
[www.sparkchief.com](http://www.sparkchief.com)

Copyright © 2020 sparkChief & Co.