



The New Currency for Your Future Career Success: Relevancy

Speaking with our clients, we often emphasise the importance of staying relevant. We strongly believe that “relevancy” will become one of the most often-used words in management areas, including HR, marketing, sales, finance, operations, and others.

Consider this concept: The biggest challenge we all face in business and our professional careers involves change and its speed. Today’s acceleration of speed is at a mind-boggling level. It is becoming very difficult to notice not only the velocity of change, but also the impact of the transformations happening every day. Consequently, many organisations struggle to remain relevant in their business sectors, as do many people in their jobs.

Wherein Lies the Problem?

The source of that shortcoming is what we call, “learning capability deficit.” In 2017, we published *The Coming Age of Accelerated Learning*. Our purpose was to explain the reality that if people and organisations did not accelerate their learning capability, they were doomed to stay irrelevant and lag behind future competition.

Our proposed framework and model for accelerated learning ensured readers that accelerated learning is only achievable through learning about one’s self. Any other attempt would result in wasted resources and unnecessary pain, with tremendous hidden costs to the individual, the community, society, and employers.

Fast forward to 2020, only a three-year leap. It is astonishing to see how the importance of “relevance” is even more accentuated. The idea of remaining relevant, anchored, and driven only by one’s past successes will accelerate to lose its significance in 2020 and beyond.

There are already many widely accepted warnings to not depend on past successes, because they do not necessarily predict future accomplishments. Yet, this awareness is missing for many people and organisations—not because successful companies or individuals forget what made them successful and they are unable to repeat the experience. Rather, future success is increasingly becoming dependent on learning new things, faster and in an environment that changes at lightning speed. If this premise holds true, it is



safe to think that we should not expect the same outcomes in the future.

In other words, if we stop learning or do not accelerate our learning capability, success is unlikely to occur as it had in the past. The reason is that we will not know how to become successful if we do not learn how to do so in a fast-changing future. As they say, “you don’t know what you don’t know, especially if you stop learning.” And, consequently, if you stop learning, or choose to remain static, you lose relevancy.

A Simple Framework for Change and How to Remain Relevant

The future, however, is not bleak for anyone who is willing to learn. Whether as an individual or organisation, one can be progressive by making an effort to remain more relevant through this simple framework for change:

- Move your focus to what you want more of, and do more of it.
- Identify and eliminate the main source for what you no longer want.
- Establish and secure the sustainability of the future environment that you want.

Within this framework, you can take practical steps to ensure that you become, and remain, relevant:

1) Make Learning Your Biggest Investment. Ensure that education, whether through formal study or hands-on experience, is the most significant portion of your personal and organisational investment budget. Typically the most neglected area for the majority of people and organisations today, learning is an invaluable asset that will determine how relevant you are within your own domain(s).

2) Focus on the Source of Your Problems, Not the Symptoms. Only hire and work with people who are hungry to learn. Forget about the rest. The experiences, skills and knowledge acquired in the past should only serve to assess how much the individual you are hiring or working with is eager to learn new things—not how much that person already knows or is good at performing a specific task. If you don’t modify the input, don’t expect to change the output.

3) Eliminate Waste to Build a More Sustainable Environment for Growth. Eliminate and avoid the leaders, managers, and employees who have no interest in learning and cultivating others. If one does not want to learn, one cannot help others to do so. The simple reality is that you

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cannot build an intelligent and sustainable organisation with ignorant people. To ensure real change, be ready to alter anything that is under your control. The rest is just about making excuses.

4) Empower and Guide Others Without Telling Them What to Do. Rather than telling employees or colleagues what to learn, ask them to tell you what they think they should learn. If employees are incapable of knowing what they should learn, the organisation has a much larger problem. That is the time to request help to evaluate the situation rather than wasting time and going around in circles. Don't be pretentious and tell others what they should learn without making sure that they actually think about what they should learn. Everyone needs to take ownership of their own improvement.

The Bottom Line: Relevancy

The key message is simple: Employers and clients will consider you to be simply irrelevant, if you stop learning new things and do not accelerate your learning capability. Irrelevant people or organisations think they know

everything by “only” repurposing what they already know and refusing to learn new things. Individuals and organisations that demonstrate an urgency and enthusiasm to continue their education and self-development, without depending on past successes, will increasingly own the future. It is time to participate in this new future. Don't wait until it is too late.

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