It's time for a *reskilling* Revolution

By CECILIA DEL VALLE, PAOLA ALBORNOZ, PAULA STOLARZ, and VERONICA SCHMILINSKY

HeavyEdition

The current global crisis caused by COVID-19 has accelerated digital transformation and has drastically shown the characteristics that distinguish the current context and which experts call VUCA: we live in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world.

This crisis has not only meant the terrible loss of jobs for many people and forced others to work from home, but has also confirmed the urgent need to transform ourselves to continue staying active within a changing job market.

In order to achieve this, we have to learn new skills; not only technological, but also the so-called "soft skills;" these are intrapersonal and interpersonal skills that allow us to perform different roles.

This process of acquiring new skills for facing new work challenges is called reskilling and, nowadays, it has to be a strategy both of people and companies to ensure the skills required today.

Even before the current crisis, at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, held in January 2019, more than 3,000 political and business leaders agreed that reskilling is one of the four major issues that must be emphasized in order to avoid the economy and the job market to be affected.

There is a clear cost for inaction: according to Accenture's estimates, in all G20 countries, failure to meet the skill demand of the new technological era might put at risk USD 11.5 billion of the potential GDP growth for the next decade. The human cost would be even worse.

Reskilling has already stopped being an option and has become an urgent necessity.

It's time for a reskilling revolution.

We want to contribute by providing ideas so that people and companies start working on reskilling. For that reason, we have chosen 10 skills key in the VUCA context and, for each skill, we include tips, advices, tools and opinions from experts.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the different contents that we have especially prepared, with paper and pen or your computer at hand, ready to set out on your own reskilling revolution.

Innovation

What does being innovative mean?

For me, innovation has to do with having an innovative attitude, which means paying attention, seeing beyond a single idea and a single place, and combining that which already existed with new things. In order to be innovative, one has to create iteratively so as to continue learning little by little how to improve what is sought to be changed, always thinking in one's incremental growth.

Innovation is for a single sector o job?

People believe that, in general, innovation is doing something from scratch and that it is more like joining two already-existing things and creating something that has higher quality. If you actually listen to your internal and external client's needs, and modify that which is causing them trouble for something useful they like, you will probably be innovating, too. You can innovate on services as well, not only products. It all begins with the client as regards the innovation perspective in companies.

What are the habits or behaviours of innovative people?

Innovative people experiment and learn in fast cycles; they do not wait until others try what they imagine, they experiment. They embrace uncertainty and expect mistakes. They also have frustration tolerance and critical thinking. You can't think of a skill without the other.

Something interesting about innovative people is that they know how to tell stories. They attract followers by telling what they want to develop, whether it is a product or service, and they also incorporate different points of view that enrich their project. And if they receive negative feedback, they are flexible to quickly cancel projects that are not going to succeed.

It implies creating something different or ground-breaking. Doing something new that improves one's own performance or that of others.

Agustina Paz in

Agustina Paz is co-founder of Red Rock Rebels and Ampermind, and current ambassador of Singularity University in Buenos Aires. She also teaches Executive Education in different programmes at UDESA (Universidad de San Andrés) and Forum Leader at Renaissance Executive Forums.

Skill in ACTION!

Innovating means creating something different. As we have seen, this skill is available to everyone. We invite you to think about how you can start innovating today, from wherever you are and with the available resources.

1 | Write down 1 project you would like to carry out but never started.

2 | Break down the project into short steps or cycles.

3 | Choose the idea that excites you the most and that you think you can do with the resources at hand.

4 | Set success goals and timeframes to achieve them.

5 | Start innovating!

Reducing the Impact of Change

When we talk about change we're talking about transformation, and to successfully achieve this deep transformation in organisations, we need people who are willing to manage it. However, we, as human beings, must also commit to becoming that change.

Words of an Expert

Everything changes in life; change is natural. So, why is it so difficult for us to change? The biggest problem is that we mentally prepare to control everything, but not to adapt to whatever comes. That is why we need to be flexible, so that we can say "I do not care if something goes wrong, if I see it as an opportunity, I absorb it and become flexible."

In this sense, the key is to unlearn in order to learn. When we apply this to the talent management sector, we are referring to putting an end to everything that comes with the known organisational model, where everyone wants to anticipate what will happen, and turn to models where resilience must be present as a pillar to build a community, and that such community is above individual needs, with the understanding that the organisation is more than the mere sum of each member.

Juan Galo **in** 🌐

Juan Galo Martínez is People & Transformation Partner at Auren Latam. He is a startup mentor and specialises in managing large results-oriented work teams.

Responding positively to change, even using change to achieve objectives and benefit customers.

Kotter's 7-step change mode

Form a Powerful Coalition

Change will not knock on your door! That's why we need people who are able to catalyse. These people may be chosen not only for the position they hold, but also for their experience in certain matters or their ability to influence others.

Create a Vision for Change

People and teams need to understand the strategic business objectives so that they can embrace and identify with them, and thus, they become an active part of the change processes.

Communicate the Vision

It is essential to properly communicate the objectives to everyone to ensure that every person is aware of the change.

Remove Obstacles

Remove (human, technical and regulatory) barriers to offer solutions and changes without obstacles.

Create Short-Term Wins

People are more motivated when they notice certain progress in the activities they do. We must create short-term goals and incentives so as to assess the achieved objectives and celebrate progress.

Build on the Change

True changes take time until to consolidate. Thus, it is necessary to stay focused on structural and deep changes and, above all, to continue moving forward slowly but surely.

Anchor the Changes in Corporate Culture

In order to make a true change, it must be incorporated into the organisation's DNA and match its values.

Skill in ACTION!

Change is not easy for us, as we prefer known environments. However, responding positively to changes is essential to succeeding in the current context. We invite you to answer these questions to start developing this skill right now.

How do I react to change? Do I respond positively or negatively? What can I start doing TODAY to improve my response to change?

Agile Reaction

Prioritising customer satisfaction through quick and assertive responses.

All companies have reacted differently to the current crisis. But one thing is certain: all companies (and people) have had to embrace agility and find new and better ways to satisfy their clients.

Below, we will analyse the case of PedidosYa to learn how we can develop this skill in our daily routine.

How has the current situation affected you?

At PedidosYa, we have a structural advantage: we are part of a global group (Delivery Hero). For that reason, we have been able to anticipate. Sharing information with other countries and knowing what was happening there allowed us to move fast.

Another key advantage is our structural agility, incorporated into our DNA and inherent to our business.

What other elements of the company's culture do you consider have facilitated this agile reaction?

We have a diverse culture, as regards people, nationalities, religion, gender, and all kinds of preferences, which enriches the company. To us, this is a value in our business. We work very closely and celebrate that. We do not perceive diversity as an issue, but we boost strengths. We also have a flat culture, in which information flows, and thus we quickly activate exception mechanisms through good communication. For example, we have created WhatsApp groups that have accelerated decision making.

What has changed in the way you work since the pandemic?

First, the way in which we work has changed. We had to move fast so that everyone could work from home. The riders (the heart of the company) are always in the street.

This agility is not only related to decision-making, but also to implementation: projection, budget and approval. Prioritising people was the main objective and the basis that allowed us to move fast.

How were these fast and agile decisions made?

Uncertainty and the information that started to circulate in December seemed to be far away. By the end of February, this tension increased, and by March we became aware that it would happen to us, too. Contemplating a realistic scenario and starting providing information helped us overcome fear and take a step forward. We are a company that is creating a culture of processes and internal order, because we had a very fast growth. But we also knew that we could not rely on the timings of a normal process to make some decisions. That is why we activated exception mechanisms and implemented things that were not ready. But through good communication, everybody understood that this had to be done as soon as possible.

What have you learned during this crisis?

Flexibility and adaptability, to work together as a team. Controlling anxiety and uncertainty. Democratic and open-minded spaces were strengthened. We were able to understand that, at this moment, focusing on the client was the most important. For me, it was focusing on the human aspect: understanding needs and fears.

Our businesses, and the decisions we made during this crisis, have been based on a question that guides us: Does this make people's lives easier? The decisions we will make will make the lives of our clients, employees, riders, and providers easier?

The question we asked ourselves is: what does each one of our four groups need right now? We have developed different initiatives to make the lives of our four groups easier. A key lesson we have learned is that all crises are an opportunity, not as short-term profit, but as long-term loyalty.

Maximiliano Brain in 🌐

Maximiliano Brain is Regional Procurement Director at PedidosYa.

He holds a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration and is a former Professor at the University of Buenos Aires. He also holds an MBA from Universidad Torcuato Di Tella.

Skill in ACTION!

Providing agile answers to the needs of our teams and clients is essential in a context such as the current one. Thinking which values must guide these decisions and how to implement them in an agile manner is a challenge that must be faced urgently.

We invite you to answer these questions to start developing this skill right now.

What do my teams, organisation, and clients need? How can I make these decisions easier from my role? How can I facilitate communication? How can I develop this skill?

A movie about change

The Theory of Everything (2014)

Based on the life of Stephen Hawking, it narrates his youth years before he became one of the biggest astrophysicists of the 20th and 21st centuries. It recounts the relationship between Hawking and his first wife, Jane Wilde, during his university studies at Cambridge and when they fought together against the degenerative disease that paralysed the scientist, which did not prevent him from contributing to science.

30 minutes about organisational learning in times of crisis

In her talk at our HRDay The New Normal, Melina Jajamovich talks about the need to change the way in which we handle learning within organisations so that it is more useful for people and business goals. Rethinking training is urgent, and Melina tells us which should be the aim of our strategies.

To watch this video, click here
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6T1blOBd8D8&feature=youtu.be

Self-control

The capacity to stay calm and collected in difficult situations in order to achieve personal or organisational objectives. It entails handling constant stressful situations with energy and motivation.

Why is it important to manage self-control in work environments?

As pointed out by Marston, as regards the emotional aspect, self-control affects the way we express our behavioural profile. This means that two individuals with the same profile can be perceived in different ways. This also applies to the work environment.

In his book Conscious Business, Fred Kofman covers this in a chapter. He believes that if you do not develop this skill, you are not going to achieve objectives the same way if you do so.

As external consultant, I have seen organisations deciding on a candidate or not due to the emotional factor, together with their capability; this results in inspiring leaders. Emotions, the ability to recognise them, and the conscious decisions made on how to act on them, are critical in a world where connection among people is essential for creating more value and growing as an organisation. Today, having a good leader is not enough if a team's objectives are not shared.

What skills are necessary for fostering emotional self-awareness?

To foster emotional self-awareness we need self-consciousness; we must be able to stand by our actions and not experience them only from our perspective, but rather stand in a way that allows us to consider and observe from the outside. The level of self-acceptance we develop is essential. Emotions cannot be denied and are neither good nor bad, they just happen. The thing is how we act on them, i.e., self-regulation, being able to control impulses. Everyone can demonstrate an emotion at different levels. Self-examination allows us to discover what triggers that emotion so we can then understand ourselves.

How do we handle self-control in complex contexts?

A Harvard study proposes the Narrative Theory when the leader talks about the change they want to see in actions. For example, a leader wants everyone to wear face masks. If the leader only uses a strategic and analytical message without explaining the 'how,' people will not pay attention to this message and will not change their behaviour. The study proposes that the 'how' is not the only aspect that matters, but that narrative is necessary, the storytelling that connects the experience with the 'what.'

This study recommends a leader to encourage action motivators and face action inhibitors (apathy, inertia, fear, isolation, and doubt). For such, it is necessary to develop emotions that overcome the inhibitory ones. If a leader is not able to recognise action inhibitors, they will not be able to encourage motivating actions. The important thing is to help others control their emotions and to make an impact. That is, that the other person listens to what you propose.

Skill in ACTION!

Nowadays, self-control is a necessary skill for dealing with uncertain and changing environments. We invite you to answer these questions to start developing this skill right now. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest): how is my self-control today? Can I identify and control my emotions? If you haven't done it yet, we invite you to complete your PDA Assessment to know yourself even better!

Malena Philpotts in

Malena Philpotts has graduated from the University of Buenos Aires.

She holds a Bachelor Degree in Communication and Social Sciences, specialised in Learning Processes.

She is certified by the Organizational Culture Inventory.

She is Director at MPH Partners.

Flexibility

The ability to adapt and work effectively in a variety of situations, with people or diverse groups.

Undoubtedly, flexibility has become increasingly necessary in the new context. Having the ability to adapt to different situations and challenges benefits us not only at a personal level, but also at a professional and organisational one.

Do you know how flexible you are? Below you'll find a checklist that will give you a hint on your flexibility development.

Please respond to each question or statement by choosing the answer that resembles your thoughts the most. Add or subtract points as appropriate. There are no correct answers!

•**Question No. 1: Do you enjoy flexibility at work?**

A. Yes, I do.

B. I'm currently looking for a flexible work model that suits my work.

C. No, I prefer following guidelines and fixed processes.

•**Question No. 2: Due to the crisis, the organisation offers you the possibility to work with flexibility and try different ways of working. You:**

a.Seize this opportunity and organise your work with autonomy.

b.Decide to try some changes you can control.

c.Feel comfortable just as you are. You don't want to try new ways of working.

•**Question No. 3: The Talent Management Department offers training on how to implement flexible work. You:**

a.Sign in without hesitation. You can always learn something new.

b.Try to participate, but you don't believe you will be able to implement it in your work.

c.Do not participate because you don't feel prepared for this modality.

•**Question No. 4: A project you are developing is directly affected by a change in the environment. You:**

a.Immediately examine the project and call a meeting to assess the crucial aspects again.

b.Worry about the project success and list all the potential risks.

c.Think that, once started, the project must be carried out anyway. The environment will be analysed later.

•**Question No. 5: Are you aware of the trends in your sector?**

a.I always keep an eye on trends and the latest news.

b.I try to read reliable information about the sector.

c.It is not necessary because my sector is quite stable.

•**Question No. 6: With which of the following statements do you relate the most?**

a.I like facing new challenges and living new experiences.

b.I believe some trends are good, but they must be implemented with time and planning.

c.I like having everything under control. I don't like change.

Results

You had more a. answers: You are a flexible sponge!

Regarding flexibility, you are a ninja learning from obstacles, and you use them in your favour. You encourage collaborative and autonomous spaces. Well done!

You had more b. answers: Flexibility is on the way!

You are close! Don't worry, we know skills develop little by little, but you're on the right track.

You had more c. answers: Junior flexibility!

This doesn't mean that you are never flexible regarding decisions. You are creating your own path. Follow it calmly!

Skill in ACTION!

1.Think about 3 aspects of your daily routine

2.Change the order/time/way in which you do each of these aspects

3.Record how you felt while implementing these changes

4.Reflect on how your day changed by doing things differently

The idea is that you embrace doing things differently. Remember, small actions prepare us for big challenges. Keep thinking ways in which you can change your routine and keep being flexible!

TEDhnical Stop

The power of vulnerability

Brené Brown studies human connections and our ability to empathise. In this famous TED talk, she shows us her research. Talking in order to share and understanding humanity inasmuch as we know ourselves.

Click this link to watch the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzlF7o

The first 20 hours... How to learn anything

In order to add knowledge and new skills, we recommend this TED Talk by author Josh Kauffman. He summarises the keys to understanding anything within just 20 hours.

Click this link to watch the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MgBikgcWnY

Dynamic Collaboration

Work quickly and in collaborati others in digital environments.

How did MURAL emerge? What does it do and what is its contribution to collaborative remote work?

Before MURAL, its founders had another online gaming development company. When they were developing video games with their foreign clients, they felt they needed to somehow collaborate better remotely, because their clients received the final idea without being able to participate in the process. Thus, due to the need for an idea exchange with clients and a more collaborative process, MURAL emerged: a virtual board to bring ideas and references together. When I joined MURAL 6 years ago, we were just 12 or 14 people, until we started to grow. Today we are about 200 people. The tool was the answer to their need to collaborate creatively along with clients.

What do you think was the key to remote team success?

We structure remote work through a three-aspect model: tools, teams, and methods.

Tools:

it is important to talk with the team about which tools are going to be used and define them together. It is essential to know which tools are needed for different kinds of collaboration. There are categories to take into account, e.g.,

real-time communication tools. Chat or Whatsapp can be used, but also more robust tools, such as Microsoft Teams. Organisational tools are also important for project management: Google Drive, Office, etc. Today, Mural supports visual collaboration; it allows viewing concepts, relationships, and content management.

Teams:

in this aspect, we think more about attitudes and behaviours. It is about how we create a culture that is functional to remote work. It is important to think about how we can build trust within the team. Culture is created while we develop new habits and processes. Everything we do daily and our behaviours are part of the culture.

What is important is to talk about all the tools and to define when, how, and where they are going to be used. Also, we have to establish social rules for their use to clearly know how we are going to interact with each other. Together with this, it is important to create clear and defined roles, as it is essential to know the part of the process that each person fulfils when working remotely.

The agile part of this is to adjust or observe what works and what doesn't, especially in a digital environment. Agile practices, such as retrospectives or check-in (usually once a day or week), to know what everyone is working on is useful for ensuring that everyone is doing what they said they would do. This is important for building confidence over time.

Another key aspect is not to waste time in unnecessary meetings, as we don't need to meet for every matter, and video calls waste too much energy. Finding balance is important. In this case, a minimum number of essential meetings can be scheduled in advance. Assessing the number of meetings scheduled once in a while is also good advice to start from scratch when we realise some practices are no longer working.

An interesting point is to define how we are going to work asynchronously: when working remotely, it is necessary to ask ourselves if we may contact people at any time and define certain work schedules. We must also have an exclusive channel to discuss urgent matters so that people can detach better from their work during their spare time and stay calm.

Methods:

This refers to the way we work together. It is important to define the purpose of meetings and to lay it out in the schedule to make sure that, at the end of them, what was agreed upon at the beginning was fulfilled. The clarity of results is essential so that we can obtain a task list based on a decision when meetings end. We have to dedicate time to organise meetings.

There are different kinds of video calls. The first one is the old conference call, where the screen is not shared and only the voice is heard. This kind of call is not quite collaborative, but it is useful for sharing ideas. The second kind involves turning your camera on: in this case, we can find more collaboration, although it is not the most comprehensive experience. The third kind comprises calls involving a presentation with other people through a shared screen. The fourth kind, which is the most advanced, is the one in which everyone has their camera on and there is also space allowed for team collaboration. This kind of meeting is quite productive because we create meaning, content, make decisions, etc. together. Here is where tools such as MURAL meet this need, as they take meetings to an unprecedented level.

What are the main skills for successful remote team work?

- **Multitasking.**

- **Effective oral and written communication.**

- **Speaking different languages and understanding different cultures. Nowadays, this is essential because, when we work remotely, we are open to the whole world.**

How did COVID-19 affect remote work?

Most of us were mainly affected by the fact that we were not prepared to work from home. Before, we could go out to switch off when we finished working, but now we finish working and we are still "in the office." It is especially difficult for parents, because before they would leave their children at school, but now everyone is at home. This makes us feel more tired at the end of the day, because we have to pay attention to several things at the same time.

From the company perspective and for several of these reasons, we cannot expect to have the same productivity levels that we used to, or when home office was an option and not mandatory. Before, remote work was an opportunity to be more productive; today, the environment has changed, and we have to keep that in mind.

In the case of MURAL, we are at a growing stage because, due to our business, we are having high demand levels. Particularly, I am working with remote work newbies. Before, most people had chosen this modality, but today it is something new for them. That is why empathy is very important in these cases: remember that they need more time for processes and adapt processes to them before, during and after completing them.

If you want to learn more about remote work, Emilia explains in detail how to start this practice to achieve better results.

Emilia Åström in 🌐

Emilia Åström is Remote Work Coach and Learning Experience Designer at MURAL.

She is a Swedish facilitator who designs and provides training and innovation processes, based on visual collaboration and design thinking.

Working quickly in collaboration with others in digital environments is definitely a skill everyone must develop nowadays. We invite you to think about and write down the strategies you can start implementing today regarding tools, teams, and methods. What tools can I incorporate or eliminate? How can I improve communication with my team? How can we improve the way we interact?

The ability to adapt the adequate virtual channel to transmit different types of information according to the target audience.

Communication Versatile

Today, the pandemic makes us resort to remote channels to communicate, and video calls are the main protagonists. However, in order to adapt the proper channel to communicate with others, it is important to understand that virtual communication does not work as in-person interaction.

Do you feel tired after a video call? It's due to the way our brain works.

Below, we will learn how to communicate digitally and brain-friendly.

Video calls are highly important to keep us together and communicated. However, communication and psychology specialists agree that they require more mental effort and more energy than an in-person conversation. That's because the human brain is not used to talking to a person through a computer.

Do you know why you feel exhausted after a video call?

Faces are closer than they should, which causes an intense reaction in the brain. Long visual contact has become the most intense facial sign available and can sometimes be perceived as a bit threatening or deeply intimate. Generally, in-person visual contact tends to be more subtle than contact through a video call.

Non-verbal language interpretation is more complex, and more energy is used to focus on gestures, tone of voice and expressions.

Screens showing many people increase fatigue. The gallery view hinders brain vision and makes us decode too many people at the same time.

During in-person meetings, moments of silence are useful to create an environment of spontaneity. In contrast, moments of silence in virtual conversations generate anxiety and discomfort. A study conducted in 2014 reached interesting conclusions about it: just 1.2-second delays in replying generate a negative perception in the other person. That delay, which in the "real world" would not pose a problem, makes people believe that the other person is less friendly or is not concentrated in the conversation.

Technological factors: sound quality is one of the aspects that greatly influence fatigue. If someone needs to make an effort to listen to people talking, the brain makes an extra effort to process the information.

Mental approach: according to psychologists, our attention is different when we are online. The pressure is on truly being present and meeting expectations. On top of that, the pressure of being in front of a camera increases stress, as we are "aware that we are being observed."

There are also concerns when we do not turn our camera on. This could make us look "absent," even if the microphone is on and we are actively participating.

And at the other end of the spectrum, we tend to get distracted when we see ourselves when the camera is on. We are not used to this, and it is difficult for the brain to process it.

Multitasking: when people participate in video calls, they usually do multiple tasks at a time. This factor also makes us feel stressed.

Social factors: we often feel forced to participate in these video calls, and so we spend more time "switched on" instead of relaxing and being ourselves.

Specialists additionally affirm that burnout caused by video calls must also be associated with the particular situation we are facing: confinement, many people's need to balance work with routine and family, and health and economic concerns (uncertain future) are also factors that add to the stress related to this type of communication.

Tips!

Skill in ACTION!

Adapting the appropriate virtual channel to transmit different kinds of information according to the target audience is as important as knowing what to communicate. However, it is also a lesson. We invite you to think about and write down: how can we adapt our communication to virtual channels? What can we do to make our communication brain-friendly?

•Limit video calls to those you truly need.

•Turning on your camera must be optional.

•Respect work schedules.

•Take breaks between calls so your brain can rest.

•Turn on your camera when you enter a meeting, then you can turn it off.

•Take some time after video calls to do another activity before you resume work.

•Avoid multitasking. Be present as in a real conversation.

•If possible, walk at the same time; this increases creativity and reduces stress.

Sensitivity Interpersonal

The ability to interpret and understand the thoughts, behaviours, feelings and concerns of others (peers, co-workers or supervisors) expressed verbally and non-verbally.

What do you think about interpersonal sensitivity?

Before we start, I would like to provide a conceptual framework from the systemic epistemology perspective, which is the way of understanding and intervening I choose, and from which I believe we can provide this concept with a more comprehensive meaning.

From the systemic perspective, when we analyse a skill practised by a person, we cannot omit the context. By context I mean the emotional, physical, and mental context as well as the relational context, wherein it appears. In my view, saying that a person has interpersonal sensitivity per se is almost a lie, because, in order to determine this, we have to see this person in a relationship, i.e., incorporate information on when, where and with whom. In systemic terms: the vision of the context in which the action took place.

In this sense, I always say that people "exist in relationships." We can act differently according to the situation; there are many possible versions of ourselves. It is no news for anyone that it depends on our relationship with our team, leader, etc., and how we are going to display our skill profile. Many times I've seen big, positive attitude changes in people within hours when they were transferred to a sector where the relationship with the leader was built with well-being, a positive environment, and mutual acceptance from the very beginning (because relationships are established within minutes)... It is true that I have also seen the contrary, but I prefer to see the silver lining!

Having set this systemic framework as a reference and in order to get closer to the proposed goal, we can say that there are some characteristics inherent to the person's profile that will create better relational contexts. I'm talking about the ability to empathise, listen, connect emotionally, recognise their personality and the impact it usually generates, all of this with self-observation and self-criticism; especially, regarding those individuals who, knowing their profile, have a personal mastery that enables them to deal with others with the best version of themselves.

I am now thinking of a distinguished leader I met, one of those people who are able to build good relationships, support and trust different people and in different situations (we could say, one that is sensitive enough to produce a very high interpersonal flow). I could notice that the most outstanding aspect of his style was his self-awareness. He was aware of his different versions (the worst and the best) and the reasons that triggered them, so he self-managed himself to be the best version he could. We could say that this leader had an enormous ability to promote interpersonal or emotionally intelligent relationships with great sensitivity.

Do you think this is important in a VUCA context?

These skills determine your ability to interact with interpersonal connection (there will always exist the need for someone else, but it is obvious that they will likely join with this invitation). They are definitely essential in a VUCA context to sustainably manage, move forward, and build.

When there is uncertainty and chaos, the context is threatening and quite volatile. Now more than ever, people who promote contact, trust, and connection will be the ones who will achieve better results in all areas. I clearly remember the 2001 scenario, how those natural and committed leaders were able not only to keep their teams and make them productive, but also to find new and innovative paths that were the answer to what seemed to be dead ends.

Today, we can also add to this the international context, i.e., the whole context is undergoing a situation with many changes where uncertainty and threats are ubiquitous. This poses a challenge to people, particularly to leaders, because the version to use must be the most people-oriented one. And if we haven't practised it recently, it will be more difficult for many.

Do you believe people can develop it?

Yes, of course! We all have an unconscious level susceptible to change. I firmly believe that people can change. As I said, I have seen quite significant changes within hours… But there is an initial, big determining factor for this to happen: the self-awareness level and the genuine willingness to make the effort. Although many people say yes, "I want to change this attitude and achieve greater interpersonal sensitivity," when we start working on that, we realise that they are actually not willing to accept what it entails.

But to answer that question, yes! The more systemic the intervention is, i.e., adding the relational context, the more likely the change will occur!

Skill in ACTION!

Listen to yourself!

Start paying attention to the way you relate with others. When you interact, identify what you feel and what the other person feels. In the next few days, try to listen carefully rather than talk, and identify the situations and people you feel more comfortable with.

You can keep a journal of your interactions and reflections. The idea is to be able to recognise the extent to which you can connect with others' emotions and react accordingly.

Marite Pereda in ⊕

Marité is a psychologist with a postgraduate degree in Systemic Epistemology.

She teaches Organisations for the Systemic Epistemology postgraduate course at Escuela Alternativa Sistémica.

Consulting Director at Puntual.

Iterative Feedback

Reflecting on the effectiveness of actions performed in pursuit of adjusting and refining behaviours that are required to achieve current objectives.

The so-popular agile methodologies mainly come from work processes within the IT world. Even though we can trace the beginning of Kanban to Japanese automotive manufacturers, the widespread of this methodology in other industries started when software companies began to use these techniques to optimise their performance back in the 2000s.

These methodologies have stages within the value production processes, characterised because they are carried out in short time frames with a mandatory result assessment at the end of each cycle. This stage provides the opportunity to quickly adjust the path and make the necessary changes to move forward in a better and more precise way to the next cycle.

At this stage, it is important to check both the product and the work dynamics in the team. Natalia Echeverri, Digital Transformation and Innovation Program Designer, insists on the importance of checking the work of the team members at a feedback stage, because the success of a product, project, or service directly depends on the work synergy of the team members. Seizing improvement opportunities and capitalising strengths will provide optimal results.

Feedback plays a very important role in the success of agile methodologies, as it makes results and the team dynamics more clear. Transforming this practice into a habit gives us a mindset of constant growth, self-awareess (of both strengths and mistakes), and on-going review before uncertain scenarios that became commonplace.

The Role of HR

Iterative feedback as a skill is mainly carried out in groups. This practice can also be done alone, but it has a social root that is hard to avoid.

As regards iterative feedback, Natalia mentions the HR Department as one of the best examples of a feedback and review facilitator, because it acts as a neutral agent that can more objectively observe the participation of each team member in the production cycle. Although, strictly in accordance with the Scrum methodology, this role corresponds to the Scrum Master, the task can be performed by the leader or an HR representative. No matter who plays this role, "the facilitator's job is to make people feel confident, to assure that things will be kept private and that it's not about punishing mistakes, but about seeing what is OK and what is not to boost that which is correct and improve what is not working."

Can skills be acquired?

Working with new methodologies has to do more with a mindset shift, with thinking about problems in different ways, and that requires training. In order to incorporate iterative feedback, it is necessary to insist, both personally and in groups, on the periodic review of the work done.

As with any skill, we cannot consider it an isolated "thing"; we need empathy (to understand the other person and the context), resilience (to advantageously adapt oneself to unexpected findings), honesty (to say what should be said at the appropriate time) and initiative (to not expect others to decide for us).

Incorporating these characteristics will enable us to see the feedback process as an improvement and learning opportunity and not as a stage for judging, blaming others, and pointing out mistakes.

Skill in ACTION!

Periodic review of our job and improvement opportunities identification always makes us be on a development path. Along these lines, we invite you to identify 3 aspects (whether individual or in your team) that you think can be improved and think about simple and small actions to start the change.

Natalia Echeverri Tamayo in

She is a Bachelor in Business Administration with a Master in Marketing and Advertising from UCES.

She designs digital transformation and innovation programmes.

Remote Team Leadership

The ability to lead and manage remote work teams.

Changing our way of thinking and acting corresponds to an evolution process derived from a change in the needs and technological skills that our environment demands, emerging as an adaptation and constant learning opportunity.

Nowadays, organisations demand a new leadership model, which is just the application of traditional leadership skills, but with the addition of the constant search for understanding how the digital world transforms their business and how the opportunities they entail can be seized.

This new model is part of the digital skills that employees and organisations must incorporate to position themselves in the current market. Taking into account that all areas of a company work in digital environments, maximum efficiency and agility are required in all processes in order to stay competitive.

This way, companies that want to improve their position over their competition need digital transformation as a constant, and, on the other hand, the organisation needs to adapt to its environment.

It is also important to mention that this cultural transition in teams does not only correspond to the infrastructure, but also, and mainly, to a mindset shift. After all, people use technology every day to achieve their objectives, and if they are not committed to digital transformation, we will only have lifeless tools.

"You have to be open-minded about decisions"

To consolidate a leadership model that fits the demands of today's world, I believe it is very important to empathise with situations and people, bring teams together even when we are apart (which is a skill related to communication), and be flexible sponges to adapt ourselves to whatever happens, making decisions based on the context.

It is also necessary to establish processes that were not necessary in the past, meetings to foster transparency to all employees, and conversations on the organisation's path. Additionally, platforms that allow viewing undergoing projects can be incorporated. We have to make people feel close to each other, not only for work reasons. These are today's leadership challenges.

Guillermo Bracciaforte
COO and Co-Founder of Workana.
He holds an MBA from IAE Business School.

Last Words

Nowadays, we are living the reskilling revolution.

The skills discussed here are not the only ones, but they are very important for the current situation and, definitely, for what may come. The more we develop these skills, the more ready we will be to successfully overcome the VUCA environment in which we are immersed.
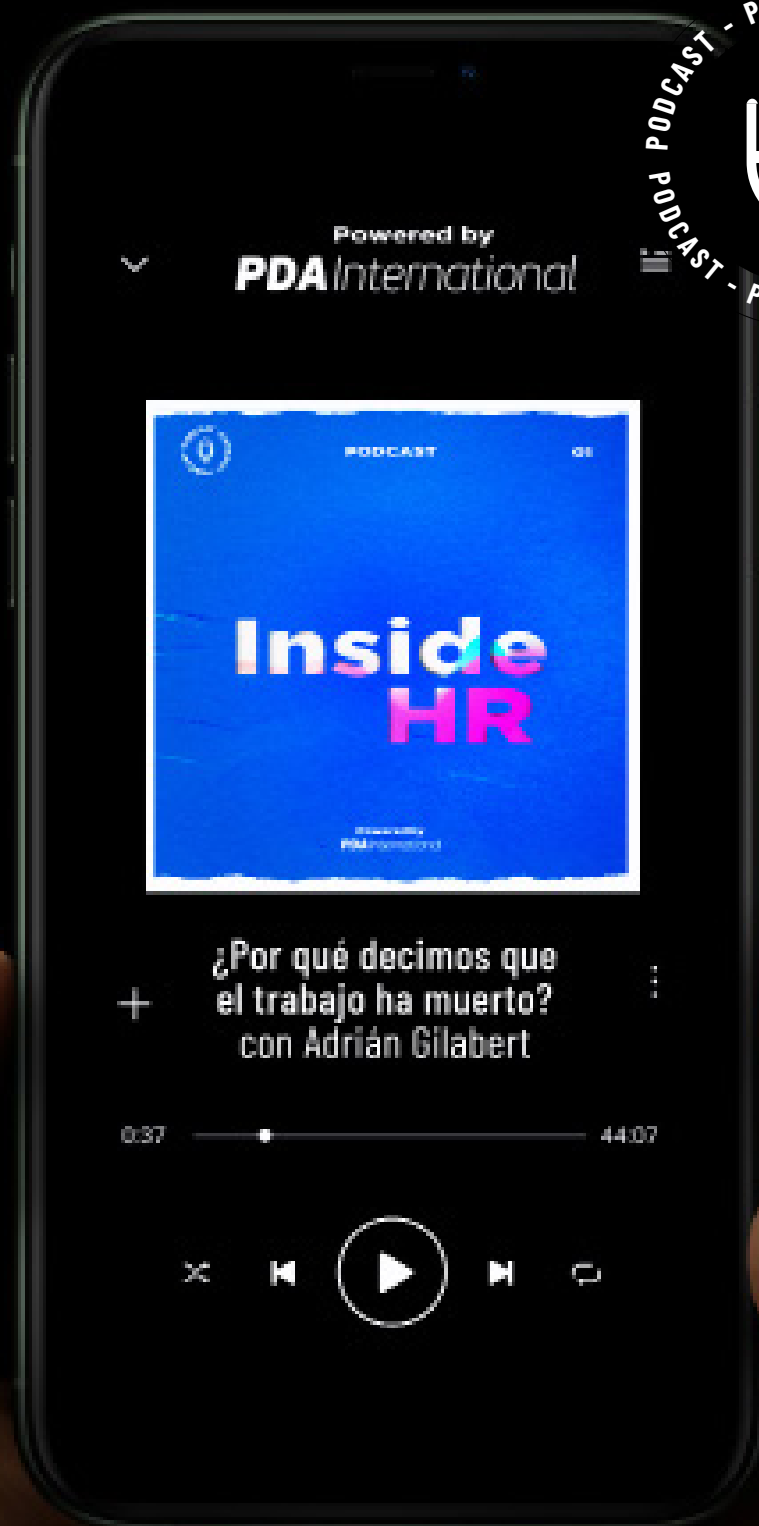
Learning in the reskilling era has to come along with experience, with learning through actions at work itself. Actively looking for opportunities to apply these skills (such as the ones we cover you in this material) is the key to start developing each skill.

We hope you can make use of this material to join this revolution.

We wish you enjoyed reading it and that you find it useful for your transformation and growth process.

Listen to it on all platforms!

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Inside HR

¿Por qué decimos que
el trabajo ha muerto?
con Adrián Gilabert

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