

Put your career in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The world of work is a rapidly changing environment as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) takes root in society. The 4IR is characterised by the increasing capabilities of technology and its effect on work automation and artificial intelligence, greater global connectivity, wearable tech and the Internet of Things.

Prof Vasu Reddy, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities elaborates on 4IR and its implications. He says, “The future of work requires of us to mediate the big questions of our contemporary world. What will the shape and architecture of the future workforce look like? What will our role be in relation to the technological? Will we have work? Will machines replace humans?” It is believed that while technology will open up many new jobs, it will also make many traditional jobs obsolete.

[At the University of Pretoria we know that you will need more than a degree to be successful in your chosen career path.](#)

There are qualities which technology and Artificial Intelligence cannot yet replicate within the world of work. These are quintessentially human values and qualities which add value to particular jobs. Prof Reddy explains that, “I believe that the image of such a world of work depends on the context of rapid technological advancement, but that cannot exclude the joint participation of us humans. Beyond the attraction of social media, automation, artificial intelligence and digital platforms, we are presented with unbounded potential. These technological forces will determine, influence and compel us to adapt and revisit past assumptions. They will urge us, as well as compel us to rethink our role as human beings (and workers) in a way that may disrupt how we currently think about technological breakthroughs and their relevance (or not) to our future participation in the workforce”. For example, the daily work of a book keeper or accountant might be made redundant as software becomes available to automatically categorise sales, stock and expenses. This will render this information to be instantly available as opposed to collated in the traditional, manual way. However, this software will not be able to replace the oversight function of this job in which human ethics and a watchful eye over fraud prevention is necessary.

So ask yourself, what human qualities do you have that will [add value to any company that employs you?](#)

Jobs in the creative fields are exceedingly difficult to replicate or make redundant since these are jobs in which individual levels of talent, work ethic and passion are most easily evidenced and are thus far irreplaceable by technology.

Other skills which will have the highest marketability in the changing workforce will be the ability to solve complex problems, critical thinking, people skills and people management, coordinating and multitasking, ability to make quick judgements and decision making, emotional intelligence, having a sense of service, being able to negotiate and to be able to think quickly, out of the box and across multiple disciplines and fields.

Prof Reddy says, “My view is that our teaching, learning and research, whether in humanities, law, health sciences and/or the natural sciences, requires of us to engage these technological megatrends, rather than to resist. For me it is the question of not how machines could possibly replace us human beings, but rather how we can collaborate in conjunction with technology to make decisions. Human creativity, innovation, emotional intelligence and persuasion become more valuable as competencies to be nurtured in mutually beneficial ways for a future workforce”.

The traditional office environment is also changing with the rise of cloud computing, greater connectivity and wearable technology makes access to information and remotely accessing work easier. 4IR is changing the way we communicate in the business world. Does the traditional phone call still

have a place, or are text messages as official communication becoming increasingly more acceptable in office spaces?

These are all necessary skills to master within the next few years, and UP students are uniquely set for success in this regard¹. [By registering for the interactive Ready for Work programmes that you can find on ClickUP](#), you will learn the skills you need to be ahead of other graduates in the workplace. The courses will teach you how to have skills like emotional intelligence, office etiquette, professional communication skills, learning to manage your stress, and how to manage and enhance your digital profiles.

Although it can often be disheartening for students to hear statistics such as that nearly 40% of all unemployed people in South Africa are youth, there are ways to make yourself more employable and successful in the workplace. The rapid pace of change with technological advances will not wait for us to catch up, so we all need to be proactive in upskilling and retraining ourselves to benefit from 4IR and not be left behind. [Register for the Ready for Work programmes on ClickUP today](#).

¹ Ready for Work courses are free and easily accessible for UP students. Corporates can buy these courses from [Enterprises UP](#) to train graduates from other universities.