

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

In the future, the role of the manager will become increasingly complex, and it will be subject to dramatic change. It is difficult to envisage management in terms of the future world of work. The purpose of this study was to gather the views of persons whom study the future in order to make recommendations to management to prepare for the future world of work. A qualitative research approach was used by sending an open-ended question to 27 futurists. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the data and inductive coding was used to code the data. People management, environmental scanning, technology, leadership, thinking, collaboration, transition preparation, laboratories and engagement seem to be crucial dimensions of which management must take note in preparing for the future world of work. Whatever the future might hold, the views offered by the participating futurists indicated that management cannot be nonchalant about the future; they must rather be prepared and also prepare their workers.

INTRODUCTION

Work is, and always has been, one of the most defining features of our lives (Gratton, 2010). Even though the future of work is unclear, organisations that study possible futures, share knowledge and inspire co-operative learning are the ones likely to survive the test of time (Van der Merwe and Verwey, 2007). Throughout the history of business, employees had to adjust to managers, and managers had to adjust to organisations. In the future, this will be reversed with managers and organisations adapting to employees (Morgan, 2014). This means that, in order to flourish and prosper, organisations must rethink and challenge all they know about work.

Changes in the economy, globalisation, national diversity and technology generate new demands for organisations, which drive managers to embark on new guidelines (Stone and Deadrick, 2015). Remarkable forces are drastically reshaping the world of work and managers must be able to make every day matter by exploiting resources reasonably. Economic shifts are reallocating power, prosperity, opposition and opportunity around the world. Troublesome innovations, radical thinking, new business models and resource scarcity are influencing every segment (PwC, 2015). Businesses across the globe are beginning to comprehend that they need a clear and meaningful purpose and a directive for the future ahead if they are to attract and retain employees, customers and partners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ever faster technology, increasing globalisation, demographic change, automation, and rise of social media, five generations in the workplace, structural labour market changes – these are just some of the tendencies that will disturb, even upset, the future of work (Reucroft and Scott, 2015). Sardar (2010) announces four laws of studying the future:

- wicked problems: problems that are problematic, perhaps impossible to resolve because of complexity, uncertainty and interdependencies;
- mutually assured diversity: the protection of humanity requires that diversity among humans and their cultures is recognised, appreciated and guaranteed by our generation as well as future generations;

- being sceptical: the resolutions projected should not be perilous for the sake of disapproval but must be doubtful of leading ideas; and
- futureless: the valuation of the official work and changes in society needs to be done in the present and not retrospectively in the future, because one can only alter the present.

According to PwC (2015), by 2022, the radical change in business models will mean that companies will be facing more issues such as:

- the need to produce ever more sophisticated people measurement methods to control performance and output;
- the cumulative importance of social wealth and relations as the drivers of business success; and
- the border between work and individual life vanishing as companies assume greater responsibility for the social welfare of their workers.

Schumpeter (1994) promoted the concept of creative destruction. Simply explained, the concept implied that, although innovations destroy jobs in existing industries, more jobs are created in the innovative industry (Ashata, 2015). As a result, people may be without a job for a period, but if they get new skills, they will be reemployed (Ashata, 2015). Recent technological growth, while moving remarkably fast, is still not on track to permit robots and artificial intelligence to do everything within the following few years better than people can (Brynjolfson and McAfee, 2015).

Dessler, Barkhuizen, Bezuidenhout, De Braine, Du Plessis, Nel, Stanz, Schultz and Van der Walt (2011:131) state that people innovation, technology, movement, employee engagement, sustainability, the aging workforce and virtual institutes are vital future issues with which managers will have to deal. Both transactional and transformation roles are necessary for organisational achievement, and managers must therefore have a joint set of knowledge, skills and abilities (competencies) for working in a competent way (Cohen, 2015:207). Cleveland, Byrne and Cavanagh (2015:150) suggest the emphasis should be on efficiency and organisational performance, as well as on the human wellbeing of members of the organisation. Ulrich and Dulebohn (2015:189) contend that in the future, the field will need to tie people management to a broader business context, and create value by aligning services and actions to meet the needs of external stakeholders (e.g. customers, investors, the community). Stone, Deadrick, Lukaszewski and Johnson (2015:218) contend that “information technology (IT) has had a profound effect on processes, and in the future, IT will continue to have a major influence on the workplace”. The question we face nowadays is how the working awareness of current and future employees will be further transformed in the age of technology and globalisation we are entering (Gratton, 2010).

At an individual level, people can learn how to adjust to changes in their personal circumstances, initially to survive and then to prosper in the longer term. At an organisational level, in theory at least, altered behaviour can permeate an organisation in answer to the external environmental trials, generating the development of a new culture consistent with a revised interpretation of the future (McGreevy, 2008). Leaders continuously take a broad perspective considering to the longer-term future. They scan the horizon, and network and influence outside the organisation so they are able to make intelligent and well-formed decisions about strategic direction. They also encourage others to do the same (Rowley and Roberts, 2008).

Automation and digitisation are less likely to replace all forms of labour than to rearrange, perhaps radically, the rewards for skills and talent (Brynjolfson and McAfee, 2015). Changes in the workforce, the hours of work, but more particularly technology, mean that fortunate workers of the future may have more choice, flexibility and certain benefits than those of today (Furnham, 2000). “Technology leapfrogging” refers to the adoption of advanced or state-of-the-art technology in an application area where immediate prior technology has not been adopted (Fong, 2009:3703). Discussions of information and communications technology (ICT) leapfrogging focus largely on

developing countries, which generally lag behind in technology adoption and, unlike the developed countries, are not inhibited by entrenched intermediate technology (Fong, 2009). New and innovative technology provides developing countries with the prospect to accelerate economic development (Hanna, Guy and Arnold, 1995).

The option of attaining important economic growth through advanced and less costly technology thus seems very attractive to developing countries. It has also been recommended that developing countries do not have any alternative in technology adoption, except to leapfrog to new and advanced technologies (Davison, Vogel, Harris and Jones, 2000). Current considerations of economic policy concentrate on how to improve workers' job and wage prospects. The greatest mode to help employees in today's climate is to equip them with valuable skills and to encourage complete economic growth (Brynjolfson and McAfee, 2015). Governments should consequently pass education and immigration reform, enact policies to inspire entrepreneurship, and increase investment in infrastructure and elementary research (Brynjolson and McAfee, 2015). The role of the manager will progressively become more multifaceted and, as a result, the interest in managerial psychology will show substantial increase (Furnham, 2000). Management should be capable to deal with all people-related issues in the future workplace (Schultz and Van der Walt, 2015). The efficiency with which the organisation plans people management for the long term will be critical to its long-term viability, ensuring the organisation has the right people with the right skills in the right places to attain its evolving objectives. As the boundary between manager and workers breaks down, a kind of quasi-self-employment may develop (Hodgson, 2016).

PROBLEM INVESTIGATED

The Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa for 2010–2030 (South African Government, 2009) stipulates that organisations must be able to supply, train and manage future workers and professionals. Managers must therefore be organised and prepared to deal with these new entrants and changes. Organisations currently struggle with the realities of skills shortages, managing people through transformation and creating an effective workforce (PwC, 2015). Technology, on the other hand, will automate existing processes, eliminate whole classes of occupation, cancel traditional sections, produce entirely novel methods of organising companies and eradicate the boundaries between industries (Van der Merwe and Verwey, 2007). It is difficult to envisage management in terms of the future world of work. Conventional management models must be replaced with leadership approaches adapted to the future worker (Morgan, 2014). Organisations must also rethink their traditional structure, how they empower employees, and what they need to do to remain competitive in a fast changing world.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research objective of this study was to gather the views of persons whom study the future, futurists, in order to make recommendations to management to prepare for the future world of work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research method was used to investigate the research objective of this study. An invitation to participate in this study was made known to on the website of the Association of Professional Futurists (APF). According to the Oxford dictionary (2016:online), a futurist is a "person who studies the future and makes predictions about it based on current trends". Futurists whom are members of this aforementioned association indicated their interest and snowball sampling was also used as a sampling procedure (Babbie, 2010). The positive effect of the snowball sampling method was that the participants gave referrals that would otherwise not been known to the researcher. Snowball samples cannot be generalised to the population because they are not selected randomly. The inclusion criteria for including respondents were as follows: university degree and a minimum of

1 years' experience as a futurist. There were 30 units (individuals) identified and 27 participants responded to the questionnaire.

**TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS**

Participant	Country	Education	Years' experience as a futurist	Membership	Discipline
1	South Africa	PhD	10	Millennium Project	Development and planning
2	South Africa	MA	9	APF	Planning and foresight
3	South Africa	BA(Hons)	14	Not applicable	Social studies
4	South Africa	PhD	10	APF, World Futures Studies Federation	Futures
5	South Africa	MA	8	APF	Financial Services
6	Did not respond	-	-	-	-
7	South Africa	MBA	8	Institute for Futures Studies	Technology and Futures
8	United States of America	PhD	18	APF, World Future Society, World Futures Studies Federation	Small, medium enterprises futures
9	United States of America	MBA	40	APF	Business
10	Canada	MA	12	APF, World Future Society	Futures
11	United States of America	PhD	10	APF	Health employment
12	United States of America	BA	5	Not applicable	Future work
13	Netherlands	PhD	18	APF	Management
14	Australia	MA	25	APF, World Future Society	Futures
15	United States of America	BA	30	Millennium Project, World Future Society	Futures
16	Sweden	M+(Lic)	20	APF	Futures
17	United States of America	MA	41	Not applicable	Economics
18	Sierra Leone	MA	1	APF	Tax
19	Did not respond	-	-	-	-
20	South Africa	MBA	20	Not applicable	Technology and strategy
21	Australia	MBA	2	APF	Technology and economics

Participant	Country	Education	Years' experience as a futurist	Membership	Discipline
22	South Africa	BA(Hons)	14	Not applicable	Psychology and business
23	South Africa	BA	1	APF	Marketing
24	United States of America	PhD	2	APF	Global and national security
25	South Africa	PhD	16	APF, World Future Society	Future of work
26	United States of America	PhD	45	Millennium Project, World Future Society	Futures
27	Kenya	PhD	10	Millennium Project	Scenarios
28	Netherlands	MA	7	Millennium Project	Sustainable future
29	South Africa	PhD	22	Millennium Project	Politics and economics
30	Did not respond	-	-	-	-

An open-ended questionnaire was sent to the participants. The following question was posed:

- Which recommendations would you suggest to assist top management and line managers to prepare for the future world of work?

Qualitative content analysis involves a process designed to condense raw data into categories and themes based on valid inference and interpretation (Berg, 2001). This process uses inductive reasoning, by which themes emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison. Generating concepts or variables from theory or previous studies is also very useful for qualitative research, especially at the inception of data analysis (Berg, 2001). The purpose of coding is therefore to understand the raw data by putting names to events, incidents, behaviours and attitudes (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2010). In the present study, this involved breaking down the narrative data into smaller units and coding and naming the units according to the content represented. The coded material was grouped based on shared concepts and meanings. The themes were then categorised and described by using Tesch (1990). Codes of the document analysis were clustered into substantive categories, and these category codes were compared across the transcripts. Inductive coding was used to analyse the transcripts and document. ATLAS.ti (Version 7.0) was used to organise the data. The trustworthiness of content analysis results depends on the availability of rich, appropriate and well-saturated data (Tesch, 1990). Improving the trustworthiness of content analysis of this study began with thorough preparation prior to the study, and required advanced skills in data gathering, content analysis, trustworthiness discussion and result reporting (Tesch, 1990). The trustworthiness of data collection was verified by providing precise details of the sampling method and participants' descriptions.

FINDINGS

For the purpose of this paper, the following nine themes, categories with accompanying quotes were identified in Table 2. All quotes are reproduced verbatim.

TABLE 2
THEMES, CATEGORIES AND QUOTES

THEMES	CATEGORIES	QUOTES
People management (management of all people-related issues in the workplace)	Invest in employees	Participant 18: <i>Top management should be able to invest in technology, education or capacity of employees as some jobs might become obsolete.</i> Participant 14: <i>Be ready to nurture members of the Millennial Generation as they move into positions of responsibility and leadership. They will eventually change the workplace, if they haven't already.</i>
	Talent management	Participant 14: <i>Constantly update recruitment promotion, orientation and other activities that both serve as a magnet for future talented employees. Also reinforce the important work of people who are already there.</i> Participant 6: <i>You will not win the talent war with a compensation/benefits focus – truly individualised employer–employee relationships acknowledge different requirements and management mechanisms.</i>
	Futuristic approach	Participant 2: <i>Managers need to adopt a more futuristic approach to planning, the design of workspaces and relationships between the employer and employees.</i>
	Workforce	Participant 9: <i>Engage in scenario planning to look at likely futures and create a workforce development plan to support organisational success in light of those possible scenarios.</i> Participant 23: <i>Management of any sort would benefit from a clearer understanding of where their company and their country stand in terms of skill, work force availability and progress.</i>
	Essential soft skills	Participant 10: <i>They should hire critical thinkers and ensure that they have the right social intelligence and emotional intelligence to play well with others.</i>
	Recognition	Participant 14: <i>Recognise each person for the positive, constructive work they do and ideas they generate. What we recognise can contribute to a self-fulfilling prophesy for the future of an organisation or industry.</i>
	Organisational structure	Participant 27: <i>It is therefore imperative that top management invests in more flat structures that allow accessibility and cooperation among all staff. This not only applies to organisational structures but also to the arrangement of physical spaces.</i>

THEMES	CATEGORIES	QUOTES
	Social responsibility	<p>Participant 22: <i>For those in industries or firms in which corporate social responsibility has been an issue, I would propose that the fact of rising transparency should be taken seriously, and that aligning good values and practices regarding employee safety, well-being, etc. is also good business.</i></p> <p>Participant 2: <i>Managers need to be sensitive to socio-economic developments that adversely affect their employees. Increased burdens at home as well as the effect of corrupt activities in government and elsewhere tend to find their way into the organisations through the stresses experienced by their workers at home. Social welfare and corporate social responsibility will have a totally different meaning and role in the future.</i></p>
	Dealing with information	<p>Participant 2: <i>Managers need to redefine their relationships with their employees as social media influences what management does and does not do. Employees are able to access company information remotely from the company. This information is used in bargaining for salaries and wages, it is used to monitor the ethical conduct of business owners and managers and allows workers to punish management and owners in the event of misconduct through multiple mechanism for whistle blowing.</i></p>
Environmental scanning (political, economic, social and technological events and trends which influence the workplace)	Contextual environment	<p>Participant 4: <i>They, therefore, need to have a holistic approach with regard to creating knowledge of the complete environment. Once this is established, the management need to pay specific attention to scanning the environment on the periphery of the contextual environment as it relates to the future of work.</i></p>
	Detecting changes	<p>Participant 2: <i>They need to conduct horizon-scanning exercises so as to monitor and detect changes in their industries, the changing needs of their customers, suppliers, distributors and the regulatory environment both locally and globally.</i></p>
	Continuous scanning	<p>Participant 4: <i>This is a continuous scanning process with regard to the future of work to determine the speed, scope and significance of change regarding the future of work as it relates to their specific business environment.</i></p>
Technology (techniques, skills and processes to	Virtual workspace	<p>Participant 27: <i>With increasing technology and automation of work, it is possible to work from any location thus limiting the need for physical contact.</i></p>

THEMES	CATEGORIES	QUOTES
produce products or services)		<i>Designing the accomplishment of work programmes virtually is the trend worth considering, particularly because of the time spent more and more due to city congestion (traffic).</i>
	Encourage technology	Participant 16: <i>Understand new values and life styles, understand technology, and use technology and communication for the company instead of restricting it.</i>
	Deploy mechanisation	Participant 1: <i>Start thinking about deploying appropriate mechanisation as part of modernisation and competitiveness.</i>
	Study artificial intelligence	Participant 5: <i>Study artificial intelligence.</i>
	Align policies	Participant 24: <i>In large bureaucracies struggling or seeking to stay relevant in arenas being transformed by new technologies, I would advise ensuring that the structures, processes, policies of the organisation are aligned with our best knowledge about how to produce efficient, productive, innovative institutions – breaking down silos, encouraging and rewarding innovation at all levels, responding to new values about job satisfaction.</i>
Leadership (the ability to influence others to reach a goal)	Resilience	Participant 14: <i>Fully understand that your organisation is not necessarily going to be there forever. Among keys to sustainability are adaptability and resilience.</i> Participant 20: <i>Obtain ... agility, resilience, self-organisation, emergence, enabling constraints and holacracy.</i>
	Bring out the best in people	Participant 15: <i>As a leader, fully understand that we will be expected to bring out the best in people across several generations, each with a variety of aspirations and work styles.</i>
	Be an example	Participant 14: <i>Model qualities you would like to see as an employee or as a client or customer.</i>
	Open and inclusive	Participant 16: <i>Be open and inclusive instead of command and control.</i>
	Vision and social impact	Participant 20: <i>Please identify your company's vision and social impact and show each worker how he/she is contributing.</i>
	Triple-bottom line	Participant 3: <i>Triple-bottom line approach [dimensions of performance: social, environmental and financial] will become more important.</i>

THEMES	CATEGORIES	QUOTES
Thinking (thought and reasoning)	Open-mindedness	Participant 25: <i>They need to open their minds to new thinking, and learn lessons from new sciences, especially complex adaptive systems and disruption.</i> Participant 23: <i>They need to be curious. Too many top leaders have actually stopped learning, and focus more on what their industry requires and their past experience. They need to open their minds to new thinking, and learn lessons from new sciences, especially complex adaptive systems and disruption. They must learn to ask better questions.</i>
	Develop critical thinking	Participant 13: <i>Corporations should stop sponsoring universities demanding a docile workforce in return because a key success factor in the future will be critical thinking, hence stimulating contrarians will be a way to guarantee out-of-the-box flexibility at all times.</i>
	Future-fit	Participant 23: <i>They need to become future-fit. More focused on what is ahead than behind, and learning the skills of thinking like a futurist and dealing with disruptive change.</i>
Collaboration (the process of working together to achieve a goal)	Partnerships	Participant 13: <i>Applied sciences will increasingly be aligned and following industry needs, therefore top management could close partnerships with academies and technical institutes, stimulating young talent to emerge within frameworks of corporate operational excellence.</i>
	Flatten structures	Participant 25: <i>Work is becoming less hierarchical and more collaborative. It is therefore imperative that top management invest in more flat structures that allow accessibility and cooperation among all staff.</i>
	Co-creation	Participant 17: <i>Employers or organisation should embrace co-creation with customers, employees, etc. to be able to develop products or services that are innovative.</i>
	Collaborating skills	Participant 19: <i>What does it take to collaborate: transparency, integrity, humility and creativity to name a few. Thus the focus of these managers should be on these soft skills.</i>
	Amend policies	Participant 19: <i>That is, if the ability to collaborate across specialist domains is the new competitive advantage then recruitment and organisational development policies should be aimed at this need.</i>
Transition preparation (groundwork for	Foresight	Participant 1: <i>Use foresight as a key part of strategy to lead or be prepared for new/changing market opportunities and disruptions in traditional value chains</i>

THEMES	CATEGORIES	QUOTES
change)		<i>(related to future of work changes).</i>
	Prepare for creative work	Participant 5: <i>Prepare humans for smart creative work.</i>
	Prepare for technology	Participant 7: <i>Prepare for a technological transformation.</i>
	Inform about change	Participant 20: <i>As far as possible, inform the workers about changes coming up.</i>
	Communicate employees' contributions	Participant 14: <i>As a leader, help both employees and clients see things in context. Perspective is essential. Unless people see their contributions to the common good, they will be confined to seeing only the lonely function they perform. That can be less than fulfilling, especially for creative people who want to contribute to the common good and a better future.</i>
	Prepare for collaboration	Participant 19: <i>With the future world of work moving to a more collaborative way of getting things done, top managers and line managers should prepare for this eventuality.</i>
Laboratories (innovation, learning and research space)	Become laboratories	Participant 7: <i>Become laboratories where people can innovate, make mistakes, learn and become invigorated as they try new and novel ways to add value.</i> Participant 12: <i>Challenge convention and think of your organization more like a lab and less like a factory.</i>
	Self-organising	Participant 20: <i>Obtain better insight ... self-organisation, emergence, enabling constraints and holacracy.</i>
Engagement (management's ability to liaise with employees)	Listening skills	Participant 14: <i>Listen to the voices of all people, including staff, community, and employees.</i>
	Encouragement	Participant 14: <i>Encourage idea sharing, individual achievement and teamwork.</i>
	Develop an engaging culture	Participant 17: <i>Develop an engaging culture through trust and a compelling mission.</i>

The following nine themes were evident in this table: people management, environmental scanning, technology, leadership, thinking, collaboration, transition preparation, laboratories and engagement

DISCUSSION

People management came out strongly due to the fact that, without people, a manager will not be able to operate effectively. Central to understanding what the future workplace will look like is knowing

who will inhabit the spaces. Automation and technology may be real but there will still be roles that humans need to fulfil. Businesses will source and engage talent in diverse work arrangements that go beyond traditional full-time employment, to include part-time, freelance, outsourced and crowdsourced workers (Boudreau, 2015). A futuristic approach to the design of workspaces and relationships between the employer and employees is necessary. Management should comprehend the new values and life styles of the employees. Managers should rethink human resources (HR) to assist with driving the future world of work (Boudreau, 2015). Management should be ready to nurture members of the Millennial Generation for they will move into positions of responsibility and leadership (Ulrich and Dulebohn, 2015). Future HR needs to have an inside–outside approach that adds value to the organisation. The inside–outside approach means that HR must make sure that the services they offer inside the company are aligned to the expectation outside the company (Ulrich and Dulebohn, 2015). The difference between an endless pursuit of fads versus a lasting organisational contribution lies in part with a future HR profession that brings evidence-based principles and discipline to assess and adopt such ideas. HR must be able to assist top managers as well as line managers to manage people at all levels in the workplace.

Top managers as well as line managers should be able to scan the environment to detect changes and trends that can affect the workplace. This will assist management to exercise better control. An open worldview is essential to interpret the scanning hits because it will influence what managers think is important, and what assumptions they hold that one is willing to challenge (Conway, 2015). This study also accentuated the ability to be open-minded as well as thinking skills. By having knowledge of the future of work as it relates to their specific business environment, management will be in an advantageous position to prepare properly for the future of work within their context.

Management should embrace technology and automation. They must also be aware of technological trends that can affect business and people issues. Artificial intelligence should be studied. Managers should assist employees to engage successfully with automation transitions (Boudreau, 2015). Technology is expected to continue to play an important role in the activities of future work, particularly in communication, but also in how organisations structure their operations and work activities (Walton, Ruwhiu, O’Kane and Cathro, 2014) and this is corresponding with the findings of this study.

It is essential that managers act as leaders who bring the best out of their workers. Openness, inclusiveness, adaptability, resilience, agility and flexibility are essential qualities that management should possess. Developing a vision and adopting a triple-bottom line approach will become more important. Leadership is the key driving force for future organisational success (Zhu, Chew and Spangler, 2005) which was also accentuated in this study.

Systems thinking as well as being open to new thinking will be crucial in the future world of work. It is important to become future-fit and embrace life-long learning as well as to adopt future research methods. In a complex, evolving, knowledge-intensive system, agents require sophisticated cognitive abilities (Hodgson, 2016).

Managers should co-operate with academics and technical institutes and co-create with customers and employees to develop innovative products and services. Transparency, integrity, humility and creativity are crucial soft skills for managers to be able to collaborate. Experts predict collaboration to be a top business objective in the workplace of the future (Bowles, 2016).

Management must prepare the workforce for the necessary transitions and technological changes by using foresight. They can assist this process by letting the employees and customers see things in context as well moving towards a more collaborative approach. Organisations will create and maintain external partnerships to augment capabilities they do not own, and use them to manage workforce transitions humanely and without hurting reputation (Boudreau, 2015) and this is in agreement with the findings of this study.

It is of utmost importance that managers should encourage innovation by developing laboratories instead of factories. A self-organising structure will assist with this approach. While workers are becoming more and more mobile, entrepreneurial, creative and free, traditional organisations are

becoming less and less appealing. Problems that modern businesses face can be solved by logic, empiricism and simulation (Danner, 2015). Corporate office locations in the future may depend to a great extent on the innovation space needed (Bowles, 2016).

Lastly, management should be able to engage with workers constantly and develop an engaging culture through trust and a compelling vision. They should also listen to workers and the community. This study concurs with the study of Boudreau (2015) in the sense that differentiated leadership and engagement approaches will address varied cultural preferences in policies, practices, work designs, pay and benefits. Organisations, both business and government, need to think about how they can create more dialogue with their key stakeholders, such as their employees, customers, suppliers and so on (Walton *et al.*, 2014). This requires a shift in attitude to open up discussions and being less closed-minded about what is going on around you.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The future workplace is seen as being hi-tech, virtual and global, diverse, competitive but autonomous, and people will be organising their own work patterns to fit their desired lifestyle. Forward-looking managers should already consider a range of different scenarios for the future as part of their business planning. The following must be done in order to prepare for the future world of work (PwC, 2015):

- Stay ahead of the competition.
- Create better leaders.
- Tap into the freelancer economy.
- Attract and retain top talent.
- Rethink management.
- Structure effective teams.

Managers must be able to manage people, scan the environment, embrace technology, be open-minded leaders, possess future thinking skills, be able to collaborate with all stakeholders, prepare for the transition in different spheres in the business, develop laboratories where employees can innovate and, lastly, engage with employees to ensure optimal satisfaction and production.

The following questions should be answered by top management and line management in order to prepare for the future:

- How will your organisation's culture respond to an environment of constant change?
- What will be the role of leadership?
- Which behaviours will be most valuable to the organisation?
- How will the organisation need to communicate with and engage all employees?
- How will managers manage in resource restricted future times?

Managers today must focus on designing environments and systems for work that inspire individuals to contribute their full imagination, initiative and passion every day, and on taking advantage of new social, mobile and digital technologies to activate, enlist and organise talent across boundaries. The reshaping of the world of work leads to the fact that managers must be able to utilise resources sensibly. This should all be done to prepare for the future of work.

In terms of future research, it is suggested that a longitudinal study be conducted to research trends over the life span of managers, workers and organisations. This could lead to a better understanding of individuals and organisations as there is movement through the different levels of work during their career as well the requirements of organisations when an 'advanced' level becomes relevant due to the increase in complexity that needs to be catered for. Trends can then also be identified to make the

necessary preparations for the future world of work. Lastly, a limitation of this study is that not enough members from the APF responded but it was rectified by using snowball sampling.

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this study was to investigate a futuristic view to assist top management and line managers to prepare for the future world of work. Work as we know it has changed, is changing and will change more. The rate of this change is simply unprecedented. One cannot predict the future. At best, one can identify some trends. People management, environmental scanning, technology, leadership, thinking, collaboration, transition preparation, laboratories and engagement seem to be crucial dimensions of which management must take note in preparing for the future world of work. We are living in a new economy – powered by technology, fuelled by information, and driven by knowledge. Ten years ago, Facebook did not exist. Ten years before that, we did not have the Web. Therefore, who knows which jobs will be born a decade from now.

South African managers must be prepared to deal with the new entrants and changes as stipulated in the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa for 2010–2030 (South African Government, 2009). Managers must also be prepared for technology that will automate existing processes, and conventional management models must therefore be replaced with leadership approaches adapted to the future employee. Traditional structures, the empowerment of employees, and what managers need to do to remain competitive in a rapidly changing world are some of the main issues that managers need to reconsider.

There is a definite need to rethink and accelerate the future world of work and evolution thereof. With the complexity and speed of change today, it is very important to keep it simple. The best way to help workers is to equip them with valuable skills and to encourage overall economic growth. The changing nature of work has enormous implications for how we structure organisations, manage people and design workplaces. Some organisations are already leveraging the new ways of working, while others are struggling to understand what the future means. Whatever the future might hold, the views offered by the futurists indicate that top managers and line managers cannot be nonchalant about the future but must rather be prepared, prepare their workers and be able to manage future resources appropriately. A major shift in management practices is essential to accommodate a rapidly changing world of work.

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