# LABOUR OF LOVE

- ALWAYS YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT WORK IS A CURSE AND LABOUR A MISFORTUNE. BUT I SAY TO YOU THAT WHEN YOU WORK YOU FULFILL A PART OF EARTH'S FURTHEST DREAM, ASSIGNED TO YOU WHEN THAT DREAM WAS BORN, AND IN KEEPING YOURSELF WITH LABOUR YOU ARE IN TRUTH LOVING LIFE -

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**KAHLIL GIBRAN** 



IN THE 2012 TREND REPORT WE ESTABLISHED THAT, IN THE PROJECT ECONOMY, DIGITAL TOOLS ARE ENABLING EVERYONE TO ACCESS INFORMATION. WE DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE ENGAGING WITH INFORMATION AND CREATING SMART CURATION STRATEGIES IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE (SEE STACCATO CULTURE TREND).

2

The radical democratisation of information and knowledge creates a lot of user-generated content, a cacophony of points of view. Most people can now form a general opinion about any subject without in-depth study or research. As a result, people will become savvier and pickier with regards to who generates the information presented to them and will strive to develop new knowledge themselves. In the Re-Invention Era, people will aspire to differentiate themselves by becoming specialists in a particular field. This quest for mastery is already embedded in some cultures, and digital technology will proliferate **EXPER EXPER INVISIO** 

There is already evidence that specialist knowledge is growing as a primary source of trusted information. Over the past few years, people's trust has steadily shifted toward experts in a given field and away from corporation and government leaders'. People want reliable content based on in-depth thought and investigation. There will be increased willingness to pay for specialised content, as already demonstrated by paid content from publications including the New York Times, the Financial Times, and The Economist. The proliferation of expert content will allow people to identify subjects they are truly passionate about and, in turn, differentiate themselves and increase their employment

EXPERTS WILL ENVISION THEIR PROFESSIONAL LIFE AS A LABOUR OF LOVE, WORKING RELENTLESSLY AND PASSIONATELY TO ACHIEVE MASTERY IN A SPECIFIC FIELD.

desirability. Digital technology will make it possible for people to develop a "healthy obsession" about a subject, find other like-minded people, share knowledge, self-teach, and uncover new possibilities.

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Experts will envision their professional life as a Labour of Love, working relentlessly and passionately to achieve mastery in a specific field. With the increased automation of mundane tasks, companies will rely increasingly on experts to complete specific tasks and projects. In the Reinvention Era, experts will be instrumental to the corporate world. They will raise the quality of work and often complete the job faster than non-specialists. Human capital will become the decisive competitive factor, as specialists will often be the ones reinventing the futures of companies and of their field of expertise.

Specialists will be driven by a desire to achieve recognition in their field and will find strategies to build and develop their reputation; this will be the key to monitising their knowledge.

The Reinvention Era will create a favourable context for these specialists, who will contribute to the development of new knowledge, new professions, and new possibilities for companies and society as a whole.

# SPECIALISATION WILL BE A LIFE-LONG PROCESS TOWARD ACHIEVING MASTERY

Specialists find their motivation from pushing the boundaries of what is possible in their field. In a world where information is widely available, reinventing knowledge by mastering a field will provide an incredible source of satisfaction and self-worth; it will become a much needed differentiating factor. As exemplified by the Shokukin culture in Japan (see Additional Insights), specialists will relentlessly pursue mastery of their profession or subject. They will invest their time with patient devotion, in contrast with the instant gratification and quick wins that increasingly characterise society.

For these specialists, tedious or mundane concepts of work will be replaced by a deeply rooted passion for their profession. They will define themselves through their Labour of Love, which they restlessly strive to master throughout their lives.

As they embark on their quest for mastery, specialists will create new benchmarks for their field by developing a healthy obsession about a given subject. Specialists are hyper-engaged with things that matter to them, sharing their thoughts and ideas with targeted and niche peer networks. Online niche communities – based on collaboration and input from knowledgeable peers – will proliferate due to specialists' ambition to master a specific subject.

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Research Gate (see Case Studies) is a current example of these collaborative expert communities. An online social network for scientists from different disciplines, it allows people to share their experiences and learn from other professionals from a variety of fields. These communities are not limited to the elite. They

reach the digitally obsessed, regardless of their qualifications, location, or age. Self-taught engineer Jordi Munoz developed autonomous drones via an online community. Through this specialist community, Jordi built a portfolio demonstrating his abilities and, as a result, received an offer from Chris Anderson (famed Wired Magazine editor) to partner in a new business venture at the tender age of 19. In the Reinvention Economy, specialists will be doers who are driven by self-powered knowledge acquisition. The growing number of self-teaching tools in highly specified subjects (see Case Studies) leaves no excuse for failing to specialise.

Additionally, successful specialists will learn to manage their reputation and identitfy the channels to use for achieving recognition from their peers and potential employers or clients. This will vary depending on the area of expertise, but will be essential for specialists to cut through the noise in the globally connected society. We are already witnessing the growth of vertical social networks, mostly industry-based such as Doximity (health),

IN THE REINVENTION ERA, SPECIALISTS WILL HARNESS DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO FIND, NURTURE, AND CULTIVATE THEIR TALENT, CUTTING THROUGH THE NOISE AND CREATING A DEMAND FOR THEIR SKILLS.

Learnist (education), and GovLoop (public sector). It is only a matter of time before more of these specialised social networks appear.

Education will evolve to support the growing demand for specialists, with people from all backgrounds accessing selfteaching tools for rapid knowledge replenishment. According to a recent study<sup>2</sup>, experts believe that the educational system will evolve with a "significant number of learning activities [that] will move to individualised, just-in-time learning approaches [...] Most universities' assessment of learning will take into account more individually-oriented outcomes and capacities that are relevant to subject mastery. Requirements for graduation will be significantly

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shifted to customised outcomes"<sup>3</sup>. As a result, students will be able to acquire tools that can help them develop their own knowledge.

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In the Reinvention Era, specialists will harness digital technology to find, nurture, and cultivate their talent, cutting through the noise and creating a demand for their skills.

# SPECIALISTS WILL HELP RESHAPE ORGANISATIONS AND IDENTIFY NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Three important factors will put global competition on the rise: diminishing employment opportunities (unemployment rates for 18 to 29-year-olds are at 50 percent in Spain, 22 percent in the UK, and 8 percent in Germany<sup>4</sup>), a growing pool of international talent (6.8 million graduates in China this year, and 3.4 million in the USA<sup>5</sup>), and increasing automation of mundane tasks<sup>6</sup>. As a result, specialists will be in high demand as organisations struggle to keep up with the increasingly complex and fast-paced digital world, in which competition is tighter based on quality of work, speed, and cost management. Organisations will require the support of specialists, mostly outsourced, to tap into specific opportunities and remain relevant. Human capital will become a top priority for the corporate world. Attracting the best specialised talent will be a key challenge and will require new recruiting strategies.

Companies that focus on supplying experts will thrive. TopCoder, for example, provides companies with access to a network of over 300,000 highly specialised developers in more than 200 countries (see Case Studies). These companies enable specialists to retain their autonomy while, in turn, allowing them to work on a variety of challenges and maximise their expertise.

Specialists' primary objective is to continue strengthening their knowledge base, which they will achieve by taking on new problems and environments. Assignments will be chosen based on how much they can learn and grow from a project, creating a new challenge for hiring and retaining talented employees. Organisations will need to offer

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innovative incentives - such as flexible schedules, revenue sharing models, etc. - to attract and maintatin expert employees. Additionally, organisations will have to learn to manage teams of specialists and identify how to best benefit from their knowledge. It will be necessary for organisations to understand how to cultivate an ecosystem

of specialists to have access to the talent required for specific tasks. This will continue transforming the modern office into an open, agile, collaborative, efficient, and resultdriven workplace. Traditional hierarchies will be less favorable than lateral, network-style structures.

In the Reinvention Era, organisations will base their hiring decisions on tangible demonstrations of specialised talent and achievements, not simply on résumés or references. In order to evaluate potential candidates, organisations will have to stay informed and up to date on the developments across each field of specialisation they require.

Additonally, the growing demand for hyperspecialisation will have a positive effect on developing countries due to the emergance of new remote working solutions and hiring platforms. Countries including UAE, Australia, and South Korea are already working to build knowledge-based economies that will eventually lead to a larger supply of specialised workers<sup>7</sup>.

LABOUR OF LOVE REVEALS THE DEMOCRATISATION OF THE ELITE. ORGANISATIONS AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE WILL BENEFIT FROM THESE SPECIALISTS, WHO WILL PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION IN THEIR FIELDS.

A great example of the positive power of digital technology is the increasing ability to achieve mastery of a given subject, access new opportunities, and contribute to the knowledge base in a given field regardless of where you come from. Labour of Love reveals the democratisation of the elite. Organisations and society as a whole will benefit from these specialists, who will push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation in their fields.

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1. Edelman, Global Trust Barometer 2012, www.trust.edelman.com; "Global Trust in Institutions and Business Down, but Trust in Peer and Experts Up", by Corporate Excellence-center for Reputation Leadership, 2012.

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2. Pew Internet study about what higher education will look like by 2020, (http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Future-of-Higher-Education/Overview.aspx)

3. Anderson, Boyles, Rainie, "The future impact of the Internet on higher education, Pew Internet, Washington DC, 2012

4. Joel Kotkin, " Are the Millennials the Screwed Generation?", The Daily Beast, 2012

5. Jacquelyn Smith, What Employers need to know About the Class of 2012, Forbes.

6. http://www.voxeu.org/article/jobless-recoveries-and-disappearance-routine-occupations

7. http://www.dubaicityguide.com/site/features/index.asp?id=7017

# ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

**SHOKUNIN** is a Japanese word to describe a person who relentlessly pursues perfection through their craft. One of the essential characteristics of Shokukins is their determination to make something for the joy of making it. They work carefully and beautifully, always stretching the limits of their abilities. The Shokukin attitude is evident in Japan's incredibly delicate designs, their amazing machinery, and even in the pride and perfectionism of cleaning staff. Whether a student, designer, or technologist, the Shokunin spirit increases the drive for innovation, creativity, and perfection. READ MORE

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**FREDERICK HERZBERG** is renowned for his contributions to management and motivational theory. His philosophy focuses on two principal factors that generate satisfaction or dissatisfaction within a work environment: hygiene and motivation. Motivation is based on recognition, advancement, achievement, and

the actual work being performed. These factors create a sense of purpose - key to individual satisfiction - that keeps workers both content and motivated. Hygiene, as defined by Herzberg, includes relationships with coworkers, working conditions, company policy, security, and salary. Caring for hygiene is essential to mainaining motivation, which in turn positively impacts both the work and the organisation. When not cared for, these hygiene factors weigh negatively on motivation and create dissatisfaction in workers. As an example, salary was believed to be a key factor in selecting one job over another. However, in spite of its importance, a study has revealed that a large majority of people also value other types of motivators, including a feeling of advancement, projects that relate to their passions, and a variety of other factors defined by Herzberg. READ MORE

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## KNOWLEDGE TAXONOMY

(systems, processes, and technology for organising information) is urgently necessary based on the

explosive volume of data made available by information technology and the Internet.

A taxonomy is a structured set of names and descriptions for consistently organising information and documents (Lambe, 2007). Taxonomies can provide quick access to specific knowledge embedded in documents or information libraries. They are also useful for mapping and categorising tacit knowledge embedded in staff expertise. They promote collaboration and sharing between parts of an organisation through mapping and coordination. Additionally, they serve to convert knowledge into action by creating a common vocabulary and working methodology for an entire organisation. READ MORE

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**BLOOM'S TAXONOMY** was created primarily for academic education, but it is relevant to all types of learning. Bloom believed that education should focus on "mastery" of subjects and the promotion of higher forms of thinking rather than a simple, utilitarian transfer of facts. He demonstrated decades ago that most 9

teaching methods were focused on the transfer of facts and information recall (the lowest level of education) rather than meaningful personal development. This remains a central challenge for educators and trainers in modern times. Much corporate training is also limited to cold, non-participative transfer of knowledge (boring powerpoint presentations), which is reason enough to consider the breadth and depth of the approach in Bloom's model.

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**SELF-LEARNING** has been shown to be more effective than traditional lecturing. (Comparative study of self-learning material and conventional method in teaching of "insurance service" unit in organisation of commerce andmanagement subject of standard 11t, Dr. Jigna Kholiya Asst. Professor, K.S.K.V Kachchh University, Bhuj. Mo:-9825830454, 8511189418)

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According to Michael Karnjanaprakorn, cofounder of the SKILLSHARE community marketplace for peer-to-peer offline classes, **"THE EDUCATION PARADIGM OF THE FUTURE IS ALL ABOUT THE DOERS**, not the academics or theorists. A paper degree will not stand a chance against actions. Start your own company, build a website, organise an event, get a side project, and you'll make it. The accreditation of today is a powerful hybrid of tangible evidence of hands-on learning and social proof. Those who 'course correct,' so to speak, and let their passion and personal interests drive their self-powered knowledge acquisition, will succeed because of the portfolios of evidence they'll naturally build as they learn by doing. Those who mentor and partner with them will endorse their credibility and provide the final link of trust." READ MORE

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# GLOBAL HOME EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2012

Homeschooling is the fastest-growing form of basic education, and parents have raised the concern that governments around the globe place heavy restrictions on homeschooled children. In fact, only a handful of democratic countries have legalised homeschooling. The GHEC is a new, international organisation of parents who advocate for homeschooling based on scientific evidence that validates the importance of this alternative form of education in society.

While many parents and teachers argue that homeschooling prevents students from participating in important social development, recent data proves this to be false. According to the National Home Education Research Institute, students educated at home are often more socially engaged in family events and community gatherings than their peers. They exhibit "healthy psychological, emotional, and social development, and success in adulthood." - Ryan Arciero, National Home Education Research Institute.

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# SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: THE NEW MASTER'S DEGREE READ MORE

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### MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES or

"MOOCs", are a new development from an increasing number of top schools and shrewd entrepreneurs aimed at teaching the world for free via digital technology. From edX at MIT and Harvard to Coursera at Stanford, these online courses are stirring up the educational sector.

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## THE RISE OF THE MICRO ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECONOMY

Throughout the USA, Europe, and Australia, discontented

workers are leaving behind the "security" of a corporate job in favor of jobs related to their passions. The media has deemed this new behaviour "the Rise of the Creative Class", or the "Freelance Economy". The new economy is defined by the empowerment of individuals through technology. Jamie Wong, "The Rise of the Micro Entrepreneurship Economy" READ MORE

# FUTURE OF WORK REPORT (2012)

Companies are changing their internal structure to allow for the rapid assembly of interdisciplinary teams that are tailor-made to solve specific problems. This style of project-oriented workflow requires a new type of relationship between employers and employees, including the ability to quickly match workers and projects by skillset. Social tools are emerging that permit workers to paint a more accurate picture of their own professional skills and personal interests. In turn, employers and like-minded collaborators can quickly identify people with the desired skills and form dynamic collaborations.

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Better peer review. Right now the peer-review system takes 12 months to complete, and surfaces the opinions of only two scientists – scientists who may be biased, uninformed about the subject matter, or just in a bad mood when writing the review. Reputation metrics will bring about a system where opinions are surfaced from the entire scientific community, and in real time. A mathematician who sees an incorrect theorem in a paper will rush to publish a refutation by 6pm in order to earn the reputation metrics related to the insight.

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- Instant distribution. Reputation metrics will incentivise scientists to share their work instantly, rather than accepting publication lags of 12 months.
- Data sets and other content formats. Historically, papers have been the standard method for sharing data, because the journal publications were the only reputation metric - and journals only publish papers. There was previously no outlet for publishing data sets, code, videos, and other types of scientific output. Seventy-five percent of the world's scientific data is never shared because there are no incentives to encourage sharing it. New reputation metrics will provide the necessary incentives.

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### **REPUTATION METRICS**

incentivise scientists to share their work openly, and will also play a role in changing science in a number of ways: