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ORGANISATIONAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT COMMERCIAL ACUMEN INSIGHTS DATA & ANALYTICS
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING BUDGET MANAGEMENT SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PR ECOMMERCE
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROJECT MANAGEMENT INFLUENCING LEADERSHIP
INTEGRATION DRIVING EFFICIENCIES PIPELINE PLANNING AGILE MINDED FINANCIAL ACUMEN





Contents

Introduction	1	Retail	15
Top skill of 2020: Intrapreneurship	3	Sales	17
Finance	5	Indirect procurement	19
Human resources	7	Logistics.....	21
Technology	9	Manufacturing	23
Legal	11	Property and construction	25
Marketing and digital	13	Transferable skills.....	27

An introduction from

Nick Kirk

UK Managing Director, PageGroup



Welcome to our latest look at **the 100 most in-demand skills** across the UK employment market. Whether you are a professional looking for your next job or an employer hiring new talent to fill a skills gap, it has never been more important to understand which competencies and attributes are the most sought-after in your industry.

As we enter a new decade, there is little doubt that we are operating in changing times. Change inevitably brings challenges, but it also creates huge opportunities, particularly for those who adopt a continuous learning approach to upskilling. To arm you with the information you need for the year ahead, we have taken an in-depth look at the skills across a range of business sectors that we believe are going to have a big impact across 2020 – and beyond.

Since we published our last Top 100 Skills report in 2019, the pace of change has been phenomenal. Brexit is continuing to dominate the political and economic arena and is unarguably creating uncertainty in the market. However, as historical moments often do, Brexit creates an opportunity for employers and professionals to re-evaluate their priorities for the months and years ahead. For some, it may be a catalyst for change, reinvention, and growth.

In uncertain times, innovative solutions are increasingly needed to solve complex problems. For this reason, we have highlighted **intrapreneurship** as our Top Skill of 2020. This concept is built on

the principle of an individual operating like an entrepreneur within a larger organisation, solving problems through proactivity and business bravery. You can read more about intrapreneurship and why it is so important on the page overleaf.

Against the political backdrop, the unstoppable march of technology is another driving force of change, as innovations in AI and automation continue to evolve the scope of roles across sectors. This will only accelerate over the next 10 years. Indeed, it is exciting to imagine the types of jobs that will be created over the coming years and the types of skills we will be seeing on CVs as a result. You can see our predictions on that subject by [clicking here](#).

Having operated for over 40 years as recruiters, we are at the coalface of employment and have an unrivalled knowledge of the skills landscape. Whether you are looking for a change in your career or support in hiring top talent, our flexible teams – based in offices across the UK and around the world – are uniquely positioned to help you take your next steps.

On behalf of PageGroup in the UK, I hope you enjoy the read.



Intrapreneurship

WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

TOP SKILL
OF 2020

“It’s about adopting the mindset of an entrepreneur; you see a problem, you become a fixer”

Bianca Miller-Cole, HR guru

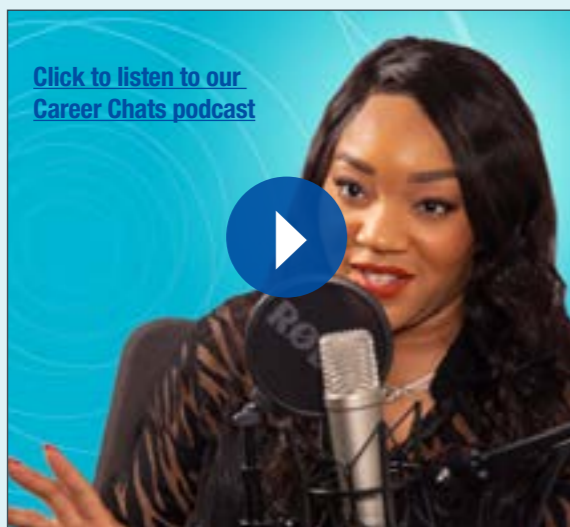
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It has been 12 months since we announced that adaptability was our Skill of the Year. Whilst adaptability still appears in our Top 100 list, given the continuing need to be flexible to changing demands in a challenging market, this year we are shining a light on intrapreneurship. For those unfamiliar with the concept, it refers to an individual operating like an entrepreneur whilst being employed by a larger organisation. Intrapreneurship could perhaps be seen as going one stage further than adaptability; that is, it refers to not just changing your style to suit what is going on around you, but actively seeking new challenges and finding solutions without being prompted. Sustainable business school founder Gifford Pinchot III is believed to have coined the concept of an intrapreneur in 1978 from his whitepaper **“Intra-Corporate Entrepreneurship”**, defining these types of people as “dreamers who do”.

What intrapreneurship means to you will depend on the parameters of your role or department. Given that it can involve an element of risk and going against the status quo, some employers will be more open than others to this brand of business bravery. However, we believe that there is always an option to innovate, whether that is how you approach problem solving, driving efficiencies or identifying a new competitor or threat. In uncertain times, where innovative solutions are increasingly needed to solve complex problems, we are seeing that this level of proactivity is increasingly valued within established organisations.

One prominent champion of intrapreneurship is HR guru Bianca Miller-Cole. She explained the concept on a recent episode of PageGroup’s Career Chats podcast, commenting: “I see great value in approaching a department or project as if it were your own business in terms of its stakeholder management and marketing. It’s about adopting the mindset of an entrepreneur: you see a problem, you become a fixer.”

You can hear more about what Bianca had to say about intrapreneurship by **clicking below**.



HEAR MORE ABOUT intrapreneurship

HR guru **Bianca Miller-Cole** talks about the key principles of intrapreneurship and how to build your personal brand in the world of work.





Finance

With the political and economic climate remaining uncertain as we enter a new decade, finance professionals in a range of roles will need to remain adaptable to changes in the market. Those with specialist knowledge will be in particularly high demand, along with experts in cross-border issues, and regulatory changes. In complex times where effective collaboration is essential, stakeholder management skills are also highly valued.

2 RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Finance professionals must build and manage strong relationships across the business.

Working with stakeholders and building strong working relationships is now key for any finance professional. No longer just a supporting or back office function, finance teams are now expected to build and manage strong relationships across the business. By boosting awareness around costs within the operational side of the business, finance professionals can help improve compliance and manage efficient processes. The proper management of stakeholders, ensuring that they are engaged with the purpose of the finance team, can also help raise the profile of the function.

3 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

To act as an effective business partner, individuals must be able to communicate clearly.

The ability to communicate effectively, negotiate, and influence, are crucial skills in finance. Explaining the more complex processes of finance in layman's terms is a skill in its own right, and one that is crucial in ensuring business functions are aligned. With finance professionals now being required to engage more with the wider business, this will become increasingly important. Effective business partners need to be seen as trusted advisors, which is why a deep understanding of their audience and an ability to deliver information clearly is so important.

4 TECHNICAL ACCOUNTING

This is key in navigating new regulations, business processes, and unprecedented challenges.

Technical accountants are responsible for many of the day-to-day tasks within the accounting function and are fundamental to the successful running of an organisation. Moving into 2020, technical accounting skills will be key in navigating new regulations, business processes, and unprecedented challenges. With Brexit in full swing, cross-border issues are only expected to rise and talented technical accountants will become increasingly sought after.

5 AUDIT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Effective project management is key in ensuring business objectives are achieved.

Strong project management skills ensure efficient commercial corporate finance delivery. Core competencies include budgeting, progress monitoring, and time management. Those who are responsible for developing and overseeing finance projects are key in ensuring deliverables meet the business needs and that all deadlines are hit. In an audit, a great deal of attention to detail and organisation is needed, and therefore it is highly beneficial for firms to employ someone to manage the process in its entirety. Professionals who are competent in managing these audits are key in determining whether a business has met the agreed goals and objectives.

6 TECHNICAL FINANCE SYSTEMS

Almost every business is now digital in some form. Finance systems are fundamental to many roles.

Today, individuals skilled in fintech software applications such as CCH, Alpha Tax, and Xero are highly employable. Such systems ensure accounts are aligned with new standards, which lowers business risks, and facilitates integrated collaboration and a real-time view of business cash flows. Whilst it is important to be on top of the programs in play today, it is also key to be adaptable to new systems and stay up to date with the latest processes and platforms.

7 COMMERCIAL VALUE ADD

Key to remaining competitive in an ever-evolving market, professionals need to prove their value add.

Sound commercial skills enable professionals to more accurately price and run projects, and truly add value to a business. This is particularly key for actuarial, retail banking, and insurance roles. These professionals not only possess a deep understanding of the business and knowledge of key competitors, they can also identify how trends in the market might impact the business. This is crucial in adapting to changing consumer demands and remaining competitive in an ever-evolving market.

8 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Business transformation projects require professionals adept in change management.

What works today may not work tomorrow, so strong change management skills are essential for creating contingency plans and strategies that are flexible enough to allow agile responses to a turn in the market. A proven track record in such endeavours will always impress a prospective employer. Those who are skilled in assessing and implementing solutions to manage both unexpected changes and large-scale business transformations will be key moving forward in 2020.

9 PRESENTATION SKILLS

How do you capture attention when presenting the complex processes of finance?

Holding an interesting and memorable presentation is a crucial skill today. Not only do professionals need to be engaging and able to capture the attention of the room, they also need to ensure they are presenting in such a way that attendees leave with a full understanding of what was being discussed. In finance this is key, particularly as professionals are now expected to adopt a business partnering approach to working across the business.





Human resources

The role of an HR professional has never been more complex. Technological advancements may be pushing forward the possibilities of people analytics and allowing for the automation of previously laborious processes, but the key challenges remain very human; these include the management of a 5-gen workforce and the ever-growing importance of policies around diversity and inclusion.

10 GEN-Z: SOURCING/RETENTION As generation-z professionals enter the workforce, it is important to know how to attract and retain them.

Although currently at the younger end of the labour market, Gen-Z is set to make up an increasing proportion of the workforce over the next 10 years. Sourcing and retaining this talent is crucial in securing the future of your organisation. Investing in perfecting your recruitment strategy and improving your culture to retain this talent, will prepare your workforce for tomorrow. Operating the newest technology and being innovative with your processes can attract new generational talent to your business.

11 PEOPLE ANALYTICS Analysing data in HR can lead to strategic decision-making that will help your people to thrive.

People analytics is the future of HR. More data than ever is gathered on employees; having professionals in your team who can make sense of the information and use it to make decisions will be key in your attraction and retention strategies. Making significant data-led decisions can directly impact productivity, revenue, and profits. In the future, AI will enable us to make better informed decisions based on data that can help our people to improve. Therefore, it is important to have individuals with skills in this area who can drive this initiative forward.

12 STRONG D&I KNOWLEDGE Professionals who champion D&I can help to drive it within their organisation.

Diversity and inclusion remain high on the business agenda as we enter a new decade. It is crucial for businesses to have a voice in this space, and be working on action plans to improve D&I in their organisation. A diverse workforce has proven to improve the bottom-line, productivity, and workplace culture. Therefore, having a member of the HR team that can embody this and champion it throughout the entire organisation will be beneficial throughout 2020 and beyond.

13 MODERN MENTORING NOUS Mentoring helps people to understand how they can tackle problems through the experience of others.

Getting the most out of your employees will mean developing them to become the best they can be within your organisation. Mentoring and reverse mentoring within the team is an important skill that will connect individuals and create a culture of cross-collaboration and continuous learning. Not only can this help individuals, but it can also reduce the reliance on managers and HR professionals to provide all the answers. Working with a senior mentor can really aid new members of staff to learn about the culture and expectations of an organisation.

14 5-GEN WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE As age diversity in the workforce increases, it is important that everyone feels included.

The HR function is at the heart of making sure that all people in the business feel included and supported in their roles and everyday lives. However, this is rarely a one-size-fits-all approach. Five generations are now active in UK workplaces, meaning that HR teams must be adaptable to ensure they are supporting each generation with their differing needs. Through the utilisation of data and analytics, you can understand demographics and formulate a comprehensive management strategy.

15 MANAGING REMOTELY As more managers work remotely, it is important to keep your people engaged in their roles.

As the workforce continues to develop, the way that we work together in teams changes as well. Managing remotely is becoming more common in business. This is new territory for most people. Therefore, the ability to keep your teams engaged, even if team members or their leader are not present in the office, is a valuable skill that mirrors the dynamic workforce of the future. Effective management is crucial to ensuring your teams are working productively.

16 DIGITAL COMMUNICATION Communicating through digital platforms is crucial, as it boosts productivity.

Communication in business has always been paramount. But as systems continue to digitise, employees must be able to communicate effectively through digital platforms. Utilising tools such as Skype, Yammer, and IBM Sametime effectively can contribute to a smooth-running strategy. Being flexible in your approach will not only open digital communication to every member of your team, but will also allow everyone to feel comfortable and prepared to communicate digitally. Clear communication in the HR function is essential to ensure productivity in the team.

17 IMPLEMENTING HR SYSTEMS Effectively managing the implementation of new HR systems is crucial for businesses today.

HR is a function that continues to develop through the implementation of new systems and technologies, and the relentless pace of change is only set to accelerate. Having members of the team that are experienced and knowledgeable in this area can help to streamline this process and implement the system in a quick turnaround time. With the amount of new and improved HR systems available to businesses, professionals who know how to involve and excite the team when these are implemented can help with the process.

96% of workers agree that employers require more skills now than ever before.*



Technology

Whilst political and economic factors maintain the ongoing uncertainty in the market for technology talent, the demand for specialist technical and management skills shows no sign of abating. However, uncertainty in the market has also meant professionals are becoming more risk averse and subsequently less active, and more selective in their search for a new job. As a result, potential employers must have a compelling vision, product, tech stack or culture to secure the top technology talent in 2020.

18 CROSS-TEAM COOPERATION

Effective communication and collaboration is essential across a wide range of business functions.

Many modern technologies have made it easier than ever to communicate and collaborate. But it is important for those developing these types of tools to not forget the key principles of successful communication themselves. Sustainable collaboration is a key driver for successful stakeholder management. With technology being a core component for most organisations, the requirement to communicate across a wide range of business functions, and persuade and translate technical solutions, is vital. In the current climate, possessing emotional intelligence is ever more important.

19 INFORMATION SECURITY

Clients want to know that their data is secure, which is why specialists in this area are in high demand.

Information security is a key business risk driver, from large enterprise clients to SMEs, resulting in high demand for talent in the area. The three security pillars of utilisation, flow, and storage of security require a specialist skill set to cope with the growing threats of external breaches, such as vulnerability scanning, IoT-centric breaches, CaaS, and potential insider threats. Those who possess talents in these areas will continue to be highly coveted by top employers.

20 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Talented people managers rally teams and run smooth processes at every level of an organisation.

With tech organisations often comprising individuals with strengths in different areas, strong people management skills remain a must-have and are necessary for the smooth running of an efficient and inclusive approach to technology strategies. The ability to apply the correct leadership style to a diverse and collaborative workforce to help empower employees, steer productivity, and promote growth within organisations, is a sought-after skill. This is especially true within dynamic working environments, where managers must deploy a range of communication methods to stay on top of progress.

21 DATA PRIVACY

The proper handling of how data is legally stored and shared is a key regulatory requirement.

Although the latest General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came in almost two years ago, companies are still falling foul of the rules. One of the most common breaches is retaining data substantially longer than necessary, although there are a range of ways companies can put themselves at risk of a substantial fine. Customers want better protection of their personal data. Hence, GDPR expertise and the need for top talent to possess commercial privacy awareness is now becoming a requirement across a variety of tech roles.

22 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The future is now – AI is implemented within the working processes of many tools and applications.

Artificial intelligence (AI) seemed like science fiction only a few years ago, but is now increasingly being implemented across a range of organisations. We are the midst of a global AI arms race, with top tech firms around the world competing to create the best applications of the technology. This, in turn, is creating a huge demand for talent in this area, with machine learning, data science, and data mining among the most sought after skills. With the adoption of the technology only set to accelerate over the coming years, there has never been a better time to be armed with AI skills.

23 COMMERCIAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership has many faces, but leading commercially lends itself well for a product-centric model.

Commentators have suggested that IT leaders need the four Cs: to be curious, competitive, coachable, and composed. Ultimately, though, they are required to bring their leadership skills into a product-centric operating model. The challenges and routine financial pressures faced means that they are expected to consider potential avenues of investment without committing to the business' return. Decisions like those require a great deal of judgement and leading the commercialisation of these business opportunities in the digital world has become a much sought-after and needed skill.

24 DATA ANALYSIS AND INSIGHT

This involves trying to find new patterns, analysing those findings, and offering insights.

Big data has continued to spread into all industries, helping to shape and inform strategies across the board. From complex geographical data, to deep-learning AI systems, a more sophisticated set of data skills are required for businesses seeking to fill their job roles. While businesses throughout the UK are looking at ways to review existing platforms, tools and strengthen the relationship with suppliers to maximise their effective use of data, the quality of data is also becoming a key essential.

25 AGILE MINDSET

An agile working environment needs an agile mindset to meet targets and objectives.

From its origins in software development back in 2001, Agile has proliferated far wider into the broader business world. Since the signing of the Agile Manifesto, organisations and teams have trialled, embraced, interpreted, and embedded the philosophy and ways of working in varying measures. Almost 20 years on, **the 12 principles of agile working** remain important for organisations around the world. As a result, the majority of employers are looking for professionals who have an agile mindset so they can adapt and thrive in the increasingly fast-paced and changing world.





Legal

Given that scrutiny and stringency are the name of the game in legal, it is perhaps unsurprising that the sector has been preparing for all ramifications of Brexit for some time. Skills around adaptability and planning will therefore continue to be key. Meanwhile, technological advances are evolving the day to day for professionals, with AI and automation taking away some traditional admin tasks. Those who can keep one eye on challenges and the other on opportunities will remain well served in 2020.

26 COMMERCIAL ACUMEN

It has never been more important to demonstrate your financial worth to a business.

Individuals who possess commercial acumen often adopt a pragmatic mindset. This involves identifying, and then balancing, opportunities and threats through analysing trends and checking on what the competition are doing. Your tolerance to risk can largely shape your level of commercial acumen. Ultimately, senior stakeholders want to know the potential ramifications of their actions - how can they get to the quickest commercial solution to legal issues whilst taking on the least amount of risk? Key in this is not to be seen as "someone who always says no" but rather to be viewed as a facilitator to achieving goals.

27 PROVABLE ACADEMIC ACUMEN

Adopting a continuous learning approach will always serve you well in this sector.

Those wishing to enter law with a 2:1 or a 1st from a Russell Group University tend to secure the paralegal roles at the top city firms. A strong academic background (e.g. As/Bs at A Level) is essential in most cases and also helps in securing paralegal and training contract roles. However, this is not where academic acumen begins and ends. Post-graduate study, for example the PG Dip in Intellectual Property at the University of Oxford, is often useful to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and professional training.

28 PRIORITISATION

Talented operators capitalise on the biggest opportunities.

Prioritisation is a particularly important skill to possess in the legal sector, at all levels. Competing priorities can quickly become overwhelming if you are not able to assess your workload with a clear head and tackle the most pressing issues first. The skill of prioritisation ties in closely with commercial acumen and communication, whereby decisions should not be made based who shouts loudest but where the biggest business opportunities lie. It is key to then communicate these decisions and get buy-in from colleagues, which is where the aforementioned skills in collaboration can become particularly valuable.

29 PROACTIVELY UPSKILLING

A proactive go-getting attitude can still take you a long way.

Talented people do not wait to be presented with tasks or hope that their next big opportunity is around the corner. They proactively solve problems and look for areas of opportunity. For example, many paralegals strive to qualify as lawyers in the future and achieve this by adopting a dynamic approach to upskilling. If they are proactive within their legal support roles, asking for additional work helps them to gain exposure to more complex and interesting work as well as possibly securing a training contract. Being proactive is good for both the individual and the broader business.

30 MARKET KNOWLEDGE

It is more crucial than ever to know what's going on in the world around you.

Success in this sector is about much more than solid account management and keeping existing clients happy. It is also important to know what else is going on in the market and reacting to opportunities to uncover new potential revenue streams. Ideally, anywhere from four years' post-qualified experience is becoming an essential requirement for solicitors to be skilled in business development. Gaining knowledge on the market is one thing; turning insight into actions is another and those who are adept at this are always in high demand.

31 VERSATILITY

One way to ensure long-term employability is to avoid being seen as a one-trick pony.

It is important for professionals to be versatile with all the changes that are happening in the legal industry and the new model that firms are starting to adopt. An often-cited example is Keystone Law, where solicitors who are not interested in becoming partners and want a better work-life balance can operate in more of a consultative role. At a time of accelerating change, those that are not adaptable to evolving technologies, pricing, and market competition, will find it harder to compete further down the line.

32 STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCING

It is not just what you know – it is who you are having the conversations with and influencing.

In the legal profession, stakeholder management is about much more than developing a wide network of contacts, although this will certainly serve individuals well over the course of their career. It is more about having the ability to communicate effectively and ensuring that the right decisions are taken when there is a fork in the road. At the senior level, this often involves simplifying a message to its basic components and ensuring that stakeholders are aware of the full ramifications of choosing to do something – and what happens if they do not.

33 FUTURE-PROOFING

Being able to balance the short and long term is always a great string to add to your bow.

Whilst making the right decisions in the here and now is always important, it also pays to have one eye on the future, both as a business and an individual. According to PwC, top legal firms see the growth of technology as the biggest challenge facing the sector over the coming years. However, advancements such as AI and automation also present huge opportunities, taking care of previously laborious admin tasks. On an individual basis, it is important to know where you want to go in your career and continually future-proof your skill set to ensure you are ready to take advantage of opportunities.





Marketing and digital

Upgrading the UK's digital infrastructure was one of the key battlegrounds of last year's general election, recognition of the sector's ever growing importance in the economy. According to eMarketer, digital advertising spend grew by 11.2% last year, topping almost \$15bn (£11.5bn). Against this backdrop, employers are facing skills shortages in specialist disciplines. Roles requiring digital skills pay 29% (£8,300) more than roles that do not (£37,000 vs £28,700) with the premium increasing with higher skill levels.

34 CUSTOMER INSIGHTS

Being able to understand and manipulate customer insights can help build a comprehensive strategy.

Professionals who are skilled in analysing customer insights are becoming an integral part of the marketing function. Having the ability to understand, translate, and manipulate customer insights can help to build a comprehensive strategy, as well as provide actionable insights to boost your business offering. Further to this, category analysis and in-depth knowledge of the market ensures that everyone across your business understands their stakeholders better, which makes for a more efficient approach.

35 CLEARLY COMMUNICATING ROI

Those able to decipher marketing metrics and report on them are valuable to business growth.

ROI is a crucial metric in the marketing department, where results and reporting are key. Individuals with the skills to analyse marketing metrics and report on trends, help drive business growth and development. This not only means being able to decipher results, but also knowing which tools are the best to use. Once the results are in, communicating back to senior leaders to get buy-in on any new ventures is critical to maintaining momentum. The delivery of ROI communications is essential to ensure marketing teams can develop their strategies successfully.

36 BRAND MANAGEMENT

A skilled brand manager should be proficient in running campaigns and social media management.

Brand managers are responsible for the management of your company brand, or your clients' brands. In today's market, where competition is fierce, these skilled workers can make or break a brand's reputation through the management of, and speed at which, they move the brand forward. These professionals should be proficient across a variety of functions, including running campaigns (sometimes multiple at once), new product development, and social media management. Brand managers are becoming increasingly important in 2020, as they are central to brand performance and success.

37 PR AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Both PR and social media are important in ensuring that your company voice is portrayed correctly.

The way your company is represented in the media and on social media platforms has become a core focus for most businesses. As brand reputation becomes ever more crucial in today's competitive market, professionals who can manage your brand image are key. Those who possess the skills to support brand messaging across social media and PR channels are important in ensuring that your company voice is delivered correctly and that your messaging resonates with your target audience. A combination of these professionals in your teams will help to identify new opportunities for your business.

38 COPYWRITING/ASSET DESIGN

Content marketing teams can develop engaging campaigns and thought-provoking designs.

Content and design teams are now a core component of many in-house marketing departments. Their output is the fuel that drives campaigns forward, through compelling copy creation and thought-provoking design. Skilled copywriters are able to both update old copy and create new digital content, keeping the key principles of SEO, readability and persuasion in mind. Meanwhile, designers bring their words to life in the form of whitepapers, eBooks, infographics and more. Talented content professionals pride themselves on creating collateral that stands out in the market and beats the competition.

39 STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

Skills in stakeholder relations will facilitate better working practices.

Working with others is integral in most business functions. However, in marketing, it could be argued that it is even more pertinent to be able to work effectively with stakeholders as there is so much cross-collaboration within teams – both internally and externally. Indeed, effective stakeholder management can be the difference between the success and failure of a multi-faceted project. Professionals skilled in stakeholder relations will enable your organisation to communicate more effectively, which will facilitate better working practices, now and in the future.

40 E-COMMERCE ANALYTICS

As the world continues to digitise, skills in e-commerce are becoming more in-demand.

As the closure of a number of prominent high-street stores in 2019 underlined, e-commerce is now the primary battleground in the world of retail. With the online retail sector growing substantially, skills in e-commerce are becoming ever more sought after. Given that e-commerce is a multi-channel operation, it is important that professionals are versatile and have a solid understanding of the digital marketing mix. They should also have a keen eye for spotting trends in data and devising action plans to drive further growth.

41 UX DEVELOPMENT

Combining UX with integrated design will mean that you can take your processes to the next level.

Creating a unique user experience that is easy to follow and satisfying for your customers is the key to repeat business and a happy client. Not only should you look for skills in UX development, but combining this with integrated design and digital skills will mean that you have a professional that can take your processes to the next level. Consistency in your user experience and brand representation in this space will keep up conversion rates and encourage completions.

42 SEO: CONTENT & TECHNICAL

Ensuring all elements of your website are built for SEO will drive more traffic to your content.

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is the process by which the visibility of a website or webpage is improved in the rankings of search engines like Google, to increase traffic. Broadly, there are three key areas of SEO: technical/onsite, content, and linkbuilding. Professionals with a proven track record in one, or ideally all, of these areas have been in ever-increasing demand over the past decade or so. As Google's rules on best practice change regularly, SEO experts need to be adaptable and ready to find new strategies to improve website visibility.

43 CRM STRATEGY & EXECUTION

CRM professionals analyse data across channels and use their findings to implement positive change.

CRM continues to be a key skill in any marketing function. Not only to ensure you are communicating with your customers effectively, but also ensuring that you are making the most out of your audiences and targeting them correctly with your communications. CRM involves the management of many systems. However, CRM professionals must be able to analyse this data across multiple channels and use their findings to implement positive change across the organisation.

Retail and fashion

The past 12 months saw some seismic changes on the high street, with some of the biggest names in retail closing their doors. Analysts have blamed this on a range of factors – it has been claimed that UK has too many shops, they are too big, and in the wrong locations. However, changing consumer habits are clearly the key instigator. Against this backdrop, it is perhaps unsurprising that e-commerce skills are in huge demand as the ‘Amazonisation’ of the retail sector continues apace.

44 MERCHANDISING MASTERY

Online and in-store range planning is important in ensuring stock and quality control are perfect.

Whilst many household names shut their doors in 2019, it is not all doom and gloom for the high street. Many retailers are still thriving and with the Government committing further funding for boosting high streets across the UK, this will remain an important area of retail. Effective merchandising and range planning ensures that once people are in a store, there is enough stock, and the right range, to satisfy demand. Professionals with these skills will be essential in navigating the retail sector through uncertain economic times.

45 NEAR-SOURCING

Near-sourcing involves setting up processes that mean customers receive products and services faster.

Like most things in today's market, retail functions are becoming more digitalised, as well as the way people shop. Online functions are more convenient for most, and it means that retailers can have a wider reach to sell their products and services. Skills in near-sourcing and the ability to help set up processes that mean customers receive products and services faster will boost businesses' credibility and help to improve the overall customer experience. Not only will this improve the bottom-line, but near-sourcing can make the supply chain leaner and more efficient.

46 BRAND DEVELOPMENT

It is important to put your business in the best position to ensure consumers shop with you.

In the retail market, brand reputation can make or break an organisation. Employing people who embody and champion your brand is important to ensure that the people they are selling to or speaking with are just as bought into the business. In such a competitive market, it is beneficial to have people who know how to develop and boost brand reputation. Consumers have so many retail options these days that it is important to put yourself in the best position possible to ensure they pick you over a competitor.

47 CRITICAL PATH EXPERIENCE

Skills in this area ensure products are being delivered to the right members of your customer base.

In a market that demands quick and measured decision making, it is important to ensure your team has the relevant skills and experience in order to do this correctly. A professional with skills in this area can help you to ensure products are in the right place and being delivered to the right members of your customer base. Adopting a project management approach means an organisation is able to plot the entire lifecycle of a product from sourcing to the end of the process. Having critical path experience can avoid delays, unnecessary costs, and potential consumer dissatisfaction.

48 IMPROVED SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

Working collaboratively with your suppliers will ensure a positive and professional relationship.

Competition is fierce in the retail sector. If you are working with suppliers, it is crucial to continuously improve the relationships you have with your key stakeholders. To achieve this, top retailers look to hire people who have interpersonal skills that can improve these relationships and identify mutually beneficial strategies. Effective operation in this area can help to improve numerous areas, such as market competitiveness, faster time-to-market, and risk mitigation, which can all affect the bottom line.

49 PRODUCT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT

Grouping products based on the analysis of data and monetary gain can give your business a boost.

Management of the product lifecycle is crucial once a product is ready to go to market. A product's lifecycle is made up of four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline, and therefore those with experience in managing each are highly coveted. Being able to group products based on the analysis of data and monetary gain can give your business the boost it needs to beat the competition, which is ever more important in the modern retail landscape.

50 E-COMMERCE CONVERSION

A comprehensive e-commerce strategy that boosts sales and creates a positive user experience is key.

Skills in e-commerce and online conversion are not necessarily easy to come by in the current market. However, it is becoming increasingly important for retail businesses to have a comprehensive e-commerce strategy that can boost sales. Today, retail businesses must keep up with the competition and have an easy-to-use, enjoyable customer journey and experience. Having an online presence is so important in a market where most shoppers choose to use online stores to purchase their products.

51 PRICE TRADING

Effective price trading can mean changing prices daily and hourly.

Professionals with experience in price trading are becoming increasingly valuable to retail organisations as the pace of technological change drives fiercer competition. Pricing continues to be a main selling point for businesses, which is why it is crucial to get right. Price trading can mean changing prices daily and hourly. This might be affected by the time of day they are trading or who has the best deal in the market. This is becoming more commonplace online but it is also a trend that can be seen in stores with electronic price tags.

32%

of people **do not know which skills** employers are looking for. This highlights the need for employers to better articulate what they are searching for in a prospective candidate. *

Sales

Sales is perhaps the best example of a profession where technology can augment processes but never truly replace them. Although digital transformation has meant that salespeople have more data than ever at their fingertips when it comes to developing leads, the real-world human skills needed to be successful remain unchanged; first and foremost, the ability to persuasively explain the benefit of a product or service and drive customers to a conversion.

52 NEGOTIATING WITH CLIENTS

A salesperson should be able to negotiate internally, as well as with clients.

Negotiation in sales is, perhaps unsurprisingly, a key skill that can take years to hone. Not only should a salesperson be able to negotiate internally, but it is crucial to have the ability to negotiate with clients successfully. Repeat business in sales is key. Therefore, negotiating with clients is a necessity that should be handled with care and consideration. Individuals that have an open and friendly personality, teamed with the ability to make a sale, develop professional relationships, and be tough when they need to be, are key in a market of uncertainty and high competition.

53 DATA & ANALYTICS

Trends and data analysis is becoming more and more commonplace in sales environments.

The world is moving to become fully digitised. This means that businesses need to change their approach to data and what they do with the information they are capturing from their clients and staff members. Trends and data analysis is becoming more and more commonplace in sales environments. Being prepared and providing your prospects with factual information is the ultimate way to win them over and will positively affect the bottom-line.

54 PIPELINE PLANNING

The ability to develop strategies that boost sales and achieve targets has always been highly sought-after.

Planning is crucial for any sales team to be successful. Professionals with skills in developing strategies to boost sales and achieve targets have always been highly sought-after in the sales sector. Planning can provide the time needed to be able to run a process with minimal bumps in the road. People that are well-versed in managing these processes can give your business the strategy it needs to be the best it can be.

55 COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Continuous competitor analysis to see where you are in the market is important for benchmarking.

Sales is a notoriously competitive market. So, it is important to be regularly tracking what your rivals are doing and to assess what the sales market looks like for your business and products. Understanding not only the sales market in general, but being able to forecast where the market is heading, is crucial for sales professionals who are on the ground speaking to clients. Proactive salespeople will be able to identify opportunities and risks in a business strategy.

56 ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

It is important to be prepared, organised, and know that you can plan.

Some sales professionals do not feel that organisation is a key aspect of their role. However, being organised is paramount to making sure workloads are managed effectively and that teams are collaborating effectively to reach the ultimate commercial objectives of an operation. Look for organisation as a trait when hiring a salesperson and you can be sure that your teams are working productively, and not over-working unnecessarily.

57 KEY MARKET KNOWLEDGE

Having specialist market knowledge specific to your role, product, and the sector helps with sales.

Whether it be experience in the sales sector, or a strong willingness to learn about the market, having specialist market knowledge specific to your role, product, and the sector will aid the sales process. This can grant legitimacy and authenticity to your team when they speak to clients. Using knowledge to provide insight and make a sale is a great way to build rapport with clients and create a positive brand reputation. The trick to building a successful sales team is often to hire people with different specialist market knowledge that overlaps in key areas.

58 EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

Utilising new technology and mastering the tools available can play to your advantage.

While sales is still a very human-led sector, the continued introduction of new technologies can help boost productivity. Many professionals across all sectors are averse to change, but utilising new technology and mastering the tools available can play to an individual's advantage, and is a desired skill when businesses are recruiting for top talent. The key here is to understand how technology can augment the principles of selling without replacing the human aspect.

59 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCING

This involves being able to steer a sale and influence upselling, or following a desired route.

Influencing your team members and clients is important for a salesperson – and the balance between the two is a daily challenge. Similarly to negotiating, your team members should be able to steer a sale in the direction they want, and influence others in terms of upselling, or following the desired strategy. Persuasion in sales is fundamental, and a sales professional who knows how to do this without coming off as hard selling is highly valuable to any sales team.





Indirect procurement

With market conditions dictating that companies evolve their offering faster than ever, procurement faces a key challenge in keeping up with the pace of change. According to Gartner, the procurement function needs to reinvent itself in 2020, moving from a focus on simply achieving cost savings and mitigating risk, to being disciplined sourcing agents with a true seat at the decision-making table.

60 CATEGORY MANAGEMENT

Talented category managers are in high demand and this is only expected to increase.

In-depth category knowledge and experience ensures that key categories are managed most efficiently. Effective skills in this area benefit organisations through lowering the cost of buying goods and services, reducing risk in the supply chain and increasing overall value from the supply base. This is why procurement teams must include individuals who are experienced in purchasing essential services, such as external marketing or professional services. In addition to this, as IT is a specialist area, those with experience working in IT are highly valuable.

61 TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Working with individuals to build learning and development plans is key.

In addition to the core skill sets required for a role in indirect procurement, leaders today must be great at effectively managing the talent in their teams. This means acquiring the right mix of skills, being able to quickly identify gaps, and working with individuals to build learning and development plans. Whether or not there are areas for improvement, to ensure top talent is constantly engaged and improving, regular conversations around personal development and interests need to occur.

62 SUPPLIER RISK MANAGEMENT

Working collaboratively with key suppliers can drive more value from the vendor's supply chain.

Ensuring that contractual terms are being adhered to, and service level agreements are being met, the effective management of supplier risks can enhance the value they are achieving. Historically an overlooked method of driving value, organisations are now increasingly investing in better management of relationships with strategic vendors. Further to this, working collaboratively with key suppliers to look for opportunities to drive more value from the vendor's supply chain can mean savings for the customer.

63 SALES AND INFLUENCING

The ability to sell the procurement agenda to stakeholders is crucial.

The procurement function is often undervalued and misunderstood by other functions within a business. Those that can adopt a sales approach when working with other functions can be pivotal in influencing key stakeholders to allow the procurement function to drive value across other areas of the business. This can be particularly pertinent at the senior level and it is imperative that leaders are able to educate and influence board members on an organisation's procurement agenda.

64 GOVERNANCE MANAGEMENT

This is pivotal in ensuring procurement has a greater voice across the business.

In order to strengthen the capabilities of procurement, strategically designed and managed processes, and governance are key. This not only ensures that the benefits of these policies are maximised across the business, but also helps drive the procurement agenda. Professionals skilled in managing procurement strategies and governance are pivotal in ensuring procurement has a greater voice across the business and can influence decision making on a strategic level. For this reason, people with these skills will continue to be in high demand this year.

65 COMMERCIAL INTELLECT

Aligning objectives to organisational goals and boosting the profile of procurement remains key.

A deeper understanding of how a business operates and how the procurement function can improve the bottom line is crucial in supporting conversations with senior executives within a business. This can be a complex process and requires knowledge of multiple areas of a commercial operation. Being able to understand the needs of key stakeholders and align objectives to organisational goals can help boost the profile of procurement – and thus skills in this area are always sought after.

66 EMPATHETIC PEOPLE SKILLS

Being able to empathise with and read other people is fundamental to building strong relationships.

Professionals in procurement that possess well-rounded people skills and a high level of emotional intelligence (EI) are increasingly coveted by top employers. EI has been a hot topic on the broader business agenda and organisations around the globe are waking up to its commercial importance. Being able to empathise with and read other people is fundamental to building strong relationships. As influencing and negotiating are core aspects of a procurement professional's role, EI is a useful skill to possess when working with a variety of stakeholders on a day-to-day basis.

67 PERSONABLE & LIKEABLE

Key to better negotiations, but a skill that is hard to define.

Personable and likeable procurement professionals can be the key to better negotiations. This is a skill that is hard to define, but one that can set the best apart from the competition. Someone who is personable will make eye contact when having a conversation, smile often and give a firm handshake, all traits that instil trust and confidence in others. They also tend to be quite enthusiastic, use people's names throughout a conversation, and are inclusive of everyone in a discussion.

Almost half (45%) of workers believe their skill set has changed significantly over the last 10 years.*



Logistics

As the closure of numerous high street big names proved in 2019, the shopping experience is increasingly moving online and away from bricks and mortar stores. This has meant that the logistics sector is under ever-increasing pressure to evolve with the times, find ways to improve efficiencies, and deal with rising demand. Professionals in this sector need to be more multi-talented than ever and adaptable to the challenges created by changing consumer behaviour.

68 CROSS-BORDER DISPUTE NOUS

Post-Brexit, effective cross-border dispute resolution will be key.

Effectively-managed disputes can mean the difference between the success and failure of a project. Professionals who are skilled in dispute resolution are highly prized within logistics for the way they negotiate to reach the desired outcome. Those responsible for managing projects are key in minimising the effects of disputes on productivity and costs, which can spiral if disagreements are not resolved effectively. Attention to detail and strong negotiation skills will be crucial in ensuring that timescales are adhered to, particularly when working with stakeholders across the globe.

69 PEAK PLANNING & EXECUTION

The focus on peak will intensify as competition grows and e-commerce becomes a core sales platform.

The evolution of e-commerce is directly affecting the way in which logistics operations need to prepare for the peak period. This is a lucrative time of the year for the industry, so it is imperative it is executed well. Data-led processes are becoming increasingly important to manage peak, which is why professionals skilled in performance analysis and forecasting are vital. In addition to this, competency in e-commerce, particularly in managing its ongoing growth, is fundamental, along with excellent forward-planning.

70 BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Crucial for continuous improvement, value-adding services, and cost savings.

Businesses of all sizes are constantly looking for ways to reduce costs and minimise waste. Logistics represents a significant cost for any organisation, which is why the effective management of these costs in line with budgets is a key skill for logistics managers. Typically, senior logistics managers hold full profit and loss responsibility and are therefore expected to positively impact the bottom line through continuous improvement, value-adding services, and cost savings. Looking forward, these skills are only set to become more crucial as businesses navigate the aftermath of Brexit.

71 CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Uncertainty is an ongoing theme within logistics, so planning for the unexpected is a key skill.

Throughout 2019, there was an air of caution surrounding the logistics sector. As the full effects of Brexit begin to unravel in 2020, there will be the potential for huge disruptions. This is why professionals skilled and experienced in contingency planning will remain highly valuable. Those businesses looking to devise a plan for all possible outcomes will need people who are on top of and fully understand potential risks. In addition to this, these people must also be able to proactively manage the implications of uncertainty throughout the year and set in place plans of action as changes arise.

72 DIVERSE TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Managing and developing individuals within a business is a key skill for managers.

Diversity is key when hiring to build a strong team that drives an efficient logistics operation. Acquiring the right mix of skills, personalities, and talent that will perfectly match either a short or long-term project is a crucial skill. Logistics managers need to be able to quickly identify skills gaps and see where individuals can improve. In addition, they need to be able to adapt their management style to get the most out of every individual. Hiring teams of diverse talent is one thing, but inclusive management to ensure effective collaboration is what propels these teams to excel.

73 DRIVING EFFICIENCIES

Road freight is the largest and fastest-growing area in logistics and is key as e-commerce grows.

Next-day deliveries are almost considered the norm today, which has seen a growing pressure placed on UK road freight both domestically and internationally. In fact, from April 2018 to March 2019, domestic road freight activity increased by 4% in goods lifted and 2% in goods moved. International road freight increased by a significant 19% in goods lifted and 12% in the number of goods moved. Post-Brexit, the need for more efficient driving transport will be key to ensuring continued lean logistics operations.

74 WAREHOUSE LAYOUT OPTIMISATION

Investigating improvements to existing warehouse infrastructure, system integration, and process design.

Today, as peak periods fluctuate and the need for efficient processes to maintain lean operations increases, utilising various layout options is key. This enables logistics businesses to optimise workflows and develop warehouse processes and standard operating procedures. Professionals who are responsible for managing warehouse layouts to optimise the value of these spaces are charged with investigating improvements to existing warehouse infrastructure, system integration, and process design. The end goal is improving long-term productivity, and, ultimately, boosting the bottom line.

75 WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (WMS) EXPERIENCE

As retail becomes more digitalised, the need for more efficient WMS systems will grow.

As part of ensuring warehouse optimisation and efficient management of day-to-day logistical operations, WMS knowhow is key. This includes the centralised management of tracking inventory levels and stock locations. As e-commerce experiences sustained growth and retail evolves to become ever more digitalised, the need for more efficient WMS systems has never been more important. Professionals with the skills to identify and implement the most effective processes for their warehouses will forever be one step ahead and thus highly sought after by employers in this sector.

Only **9%** of workers know all their skills.*
and only **6%** know how many skills to highlight to an employer.*



Manufacturing

Not a day goes by without a story around robots replacing humans in this sector hitting the headlines. However, look beyond the alarmist headlines and you will see that many experts are predicting that innovations in AI and automation will actually create more jobs and drive growth. Professionals with the skills to blend the best of humans and technology will remain highly employable in 2020.

76 SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT

Working together with suppliers will improve your manufacturing capacity and reduce costs.

Collaboration is crucial in business and working together with suppliers, whilst building positive professional relationships, will improve your manufacturing capacity and reduce costs across the board. Managing costs with a consistent supply strategy is key in the manufacturing sector. As the possibilities of industry 4.0 and innovations in AI become ever more apparent, the manufacturing sector has never been more digitally connected. In turn, this is presenting greater opportunities for real supplier development. With customer expectations rising, it is important to have skilled professionals in this area who can manage the process effectively.

77 AGILE PRACTICES/PROCESSES

If you do not have an operation that can flex, it will struggle to outperform its competitors.

The ongoing uncertainty in today's market has created the need for better agility in working practices and manufacturing processes. Today's world is constantly changing, as are consumer needs and technological advances. With this in mind, if you do not have an operation that can flex accordingly, it will struggle to outperform its competitors. This extends to the organisation's ability to build a multi-skilled workforce that can operate cross-functionally where needed. It will no longer be good enough to just go to market for the right skills, you will have to look at constantly developing your people to grow the business.

78 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

You should embed continuous improvement in the culture of the organisation at all levels.

Businesses cannot afford to believe that their current way of working doesn't need to be assessed and improved. The world is constantly changing, and it is not slowing down. You should embed continuous improvement into the culture of the organisation at all levels. Even the most efficient operations can always find ways to drive down costs and increase margins through innovation. Empower your individuals to challenge the status quo. If your teams adopt this way of behaving and operating, you will see your business thrive.

79 LEADING DIVERSE TEAMS

Leaders need to be able to manage a diverse workforce in a way that empowers them to be themselves.

There has never been such a focus on diversity and inclusion in the workforce, and it comes in many guises in the modern world. Whilst this is a huge positive across the board, it also presents a challenge to line managers and business leaders; how do you effectively manage a diverse workforce whilst capitalising on the culture it creates to drive towards commercial objectives? Strong and adaptable leaders know how to develop individuals and implement strategies that are able to evolve with the pace of technological, societal, and business change.

80 DATA-LED DECISION MAKING

The skills to decipher key data and change strategies accordingly are becoming highly sought-after.

In today's market, it isn't uncommon for organisations to work in increasingly data-rich environments. Whilst data gathering is important, the real skill comes in knowing which data is important enough to build strategies on and make key decisions around as a result. People with the skills to decipher key information and subsequently change behaviours and strategies accordingly are becoming highly sought-after. Not only is there more data available, but more of it is in real-time, which allows increased speed of change and adaptation.

81 SPEED OF CHANGE SKILLS

The ability to adapt to changes in market demand is critical to commercial success.

The speed of technological advancement continues to accelerate. However the need to shorten product lifecycles increases pressure on manufacturing organisations to improve their product development processes. The automotive sector is an example of this; after years of product evolution, the Electric Vehicle (EV) revolution is upon us. EV platforms architecture and technology are massively different from traditional petrol or diesel vehicles, and the automotive supply chain is under considerable pressure to adapt – or lose market share to more technologically-focused organisations.

82 SUPPLY & DEMAND PLANNING

Proven supply and demand planning skills are continuously sought-after by businesses.

Supply and demand is one of the bedrocks of business – and whilst technological change is radically altering the output of many modern manufacturing operations, this traditional principle remains. As the pace and variety of many manufacturing organisations continue to increase, it becomes more and more critical to balance supply and demand parameters. Economic pressure to manufacture exactly what is required promptly further increases the need to balance supply and demand, as holding raw materials/components or finished stock increases the risk of financial exposure. For this reason, professionals with supply and demand planning skills are crucial in a manufacturing operation.

83 REGULATIONS EXPERTISE

The knowledge and in-depth understanding of new, old, and any future regulations is valuable.

In the ever-changing market that we find ourselves in, your teams must keep abreast of all changes that may be occurring in their business and the wider sector. Having knowledge and understanding of IR35, potential changes caused by Brexit, and increased electrification that is bound to strike the sector soon, in terms of automotive, aerospace, and general manufacturing, will enable your business to be adaptable and ready for the future. There is now more change than ever before, at a faster rate. This means that the ability to understand and manage complex legislation is business critical.





Property and construction

Skills shortages in this sector have been well publicised in recent years and this has come into even sharper focus around Brexit. Industry groups have called on the Government to introduce a simple and flexible post-Brexit migration system to ensure that the UK can meet its housing and infrastructure targets, especially as investment pledges in these areas were a key element of the Conservatives' election manifesto.

84 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

This is important internally and externally.

This is important at all levels of the property, construction, facilities management, and social housing sectors. As client expectations grow, the ability to effectively build and manage these relationships becomes ever more important. Getting buy-in from senior stakeholders will determine whether a deal moves forward, so commercial awareness will play a big part in this. From an external perspective, consumers within every market are much savvier, and when it comes to the services that they are paying for, demand more than a simple solution. Effective stakeholder management skills will always serve professionals well.

85 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Organisation and communication are key to successful project management.

Effective project management is the bedrock of success in this sector, particularly for longer-term projects. A skilled project manager must be able to multi-task, ensuring that each phase of a project runs to time and budget. This, in turn, requires excellent interpersonal abilities in terms of liaising with key stakeholders at the right time and ensuring that customers are kept in the loop on progress. Project managers must also have an appreciation of risk and proactively assess any potential pitfalls. Although project management can be studied, ultimately there is no substitute for well-worn experience in this area.

86 COACHING/TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Instilling a culture of continuous learning can really motivate a team.

Managing a large team is difficult in any sector, and in property and facilities management, teams can be spread across various sites and are not always in contact with their managers. Despite these hurdles, it is still important to be constantly focusing on developing the skill sets of your teams, to drive efficiency and innovation. The level of service that customers receive can make or break a business. This is why team performance management is now more important than ever in ensuring consistent and high-level delivery of service, and that everyone is adhering to their agreed contracts.

87 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Winning and retaining new business is more important than ever.

In uncertain times, competition has never been fiercer for new business. However, landing a project or contract is one thing, but it is another to successfully deliver and drive repeat business. For this reason, the ability to build strong and lasting business relationships is highly admired in the sector and something that professionals at all levels should be striving to do. Skilled networkers are highly valuable in the property sector, as competition continues to grow and the expectations of the level of service delivered increases.

88 FINANCIAL ACUMEN

Knowing your numbers is key when it comes to turning a profit.

Many could be mistaken for believing that it is only professionals who spend their days working with spreadsheets who need to possess financial acumen. However, a keen appreciation of commerciality is important at all levels of an operation. Those with a comprehensive understanding of market changes, upcoming challenges, opportunities, and legislation will be in a better position to adapt quickly when required. Ultimately, the ability to increase revenue and effectively manage a deal are key skill sets that businesses are looking for.

89 CHARTERED CREDENTIALS

An MRICS qualification remains highly coveted.

While new technologies and market forces are undoubtedly transforming the sector, some fundamentals remain unchanged. An example of this is the value of an MRICS qualification. The skills of a chartered surveyor will vary according to the specific sector that they choose to qualify within, whether this is residential, planning and development, or facilities management, to name but a few. However, the quality of training and the level of their competencies will be in line with the highest of the RICS qualification standard. Therefore, those that possess chartered credentials will remain highly employable.

90 PROVEN TRACK RECORD

There really is no substitute for experience in the sector.

A good career history is always viewed positively by employers. While it can take time to build up a credible track record, even those at the junior end of the market can start building their reputation by understanding and then accurately detailing how they have helped to shape a recent project. In either case, the real skill lies in being able to communicate and demonstrate value. Whether you are applying for a new role or going for a promotion, the ability to demonstrate your track record will always stand you in very good stead.

91 ASSET MANAGEMENT ACUMEN

A keen eye for all the factors that can affect value depreciation is highly sought after.

Uncertainty surrounding Brexit has meant that there is a real need for businesses to make better-informed investment choices. In order to prepare for potential challenges in the market, we expect there to be an increase in the need for businesses to bring in talented professionals with experience in asset management, including development appraisals. To help plan for the challenges of 2020 and beyond, it is important that businesses are not overvaluing sites that are at risk of potentially negative market impacts. This is particularly prevalent in the residential market.

36% of workers have held back from applying for a new job because they didn't understand which skills were required for the role.*



Transferable skills

Although different sectors demand specific knowledge and competencies, there are some key skills that are relevant across the board. In an age of liquid skills and non-linear careers, it has never been more important to develop a bank of transferable skills, which can serve you well in any sector. These are the most in-demand transferable skills for 2020.

92 ADAPTABILITY

Being adaptable to change is an important element for a majority of businesses during uncertain times.

At a time of huge change, adaptability is an ever more important skill to possess. Employers want to hire staff that can work efficiently during times of increased workloads and pressures, or those who can easily switch to a different role when required. A person's adaptability can be developed over the course of a career as they overcome different challenges, but those who want to master it must be willing to learn. What works today may not work tomorrow, so it is essential to have a strategy for change at every turn.

93 INNOVATION

In our technological age, it has never been more rewarding to be innovative and forward thinking.

The sea-change of digital transformation has been the catalyst for the drive for businesses requiring innovative individuals in today's marketplace. An innovative person that can transform their ideas into a business case is in high demand from employers. Ideas that can save a business time and money, make a process more fluid, and energise the team, will always be welcome. Within an atmosphere that fosters innovation, professionals who know no limits and who demonstrate their ability to innovate and think strategically, will be key players. This important skill set is only expected to gain further popularity among employers.

94 PROACTIVITY

Proactive people see issues before they occur or find new opportunities without being prompted.

It always pays to be proactive. This isn't just about going above and beyond a specific job role and showing initiative, but also developing skills on an ongoing basis through exposure to a wider range of experiences. Proactive individuals do not wait for an opportunity to arise or a problem to present itself; they are already thinking ahead and are actively willing to find a solution. Dynamic and proactive individuals can easily adapt when necessary. High proactivity improves productivity, which can then lead to greater rewards for an organisation overall.

95 TEAMWORK

Team collaboration on projects and sharing ideas is a great way to get things done.

Teamwork is an essential bedrock of almost all business operations. Being a team player is a particularly essential skill at a time when speed and quality are at the core essence of business success in challenging market conditions. For this reason, it is not uncommon for assessment centres to run team activities when hiring new staff, where an individual's ability to collaborate with others is just as important as their personal knowledge and skills. A well functioning team is happier and more productive – and this applies at all levels within organisations.

96 PROBLEM-SOLVING

The ability to work swiftly and efficiently is crucial as systems and new ways of working evolve.

Every business will face challenges, therefore the ability to problem solve has become a highly sought-after skill. A new solution to a growing problem normally requires lateral thinking, as well as an innovative approach to challenging scenarios. For that reason, problem-solving is a key skill at all levels of seniority. However, adept problem solvers will need other skills too, such as emotional intelligence, research skills, and risk management proficiency. They will need to know when to solve a problem intuitively and this will cement their valuable position in the market making them indispensable.

97 RESILIENCE

Facing up to the challenges of an uncertain market requires true strength of character.

With economic uncertainty posing commercial challenges, resilience is an ever more crucial skill to possess. To truly appreciate importance of resilience to the individual, it is first key to understand its meaning. As the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche famously said, "That which does not kill us makes us stronger". One way to interpret this is that in order to be resilient and strong, accept the difficult situations and work with them, not fight against them. Those who possess resilience are more likely to find opportunities in adversity and emerge stronger for the experience.

98 CURIOSITY

Remaining curious throughout your career is the best way to solve problems.

Received wisdom suggests that curiosity starts to wane in most people when they enter adulthood. However, the complex business problems of today's market require out-of-the-box thinking. Curiosity is growing in importance, with the World Economic Forum recently recommending it as a pivotal skill for the next generation of workers. This is particularly pertinent at a time where AI and automation are growing in prominence. Ultimately, a robot will never truly be able to replicate human curiosity and when married with related skills such as problem-solving and proactivity, curiosity will serve individuals well at all stages of their career.

99 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

A key leadership trait is the ability to understand and manage your emotions.

It has never been more important to be able to collaborate effectively with colleagues. For this reason, emotional intelligence (EI), the capacity to understand and manage your emotions, is becoming an increasingly desirable skill for employers. For EI to be effective, it has to start with the individual. You cannot distil or enhance other people's wellbeing, improvement, and sense of self without first understanding how you yourself operate on an emotional level. What distinguishes leaders is usually their level of emotional intelligence and it is those skills that help to develop a more collaborative, happy, and motivated workforce.

100 EMPATHY

Displaying empathy requires you to put yourself in the shoes of your customers and colleagues.

Speaking at a Michael Page event last year, entrepreneur Belinda Parmar OBE highlighted how empathy is an increasingly integral skill at all levels within a business. In this context, empathy is defined as the emotional impact that an individual or organisation has on people – whether it be colleagues, customers, or wider society. Empathy is a learned skill and those who have developed it tend to build better working relationships, be more productive, and make better leaders. Indeed, according to The Empathy Business, the most empathic companies outperform those that demonstrate the lowest levels of empathy by 50%.

* Sources:

Opinium: Total sample size was 2,009 adults, of which all were workers. Fieldwork was undertaken in December 2018. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

YouGov Plc: Total sample size was 2,219 adults, of which 1,203 were workers. Fieldwork was undertaken between 21st - 22nd August 2018. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).



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