



Mila Semeshkina

---

# LEARN OR LEAVE THE MARKET

---

12+

---

A Practical Guide for Developing  
Your Career and Your Business

Lectera

Mila Semeshkina

---

# LEARN OR LEAVE THE MARKET

---

A Practical Guide for Developing  
Your Career and Your Business

Moscow  
2020

UDC 338.2

BBK 65.05

## Mila **Semeshkina**

Learn or leave the market: A Practical Guide for Developing Your Career and Your Business / Mila Semeshkina.— Moscow, 2020.— 160 p.

ISBN 978-5-6044386-3-3

Mila Semeshkina is an entrepreneur and the Founder & CEO of the Lectera platform. Mila is also a marketer, a researcher of the modern media market, and a producer of educational courses. She is an international expert in the field of brand creation and promotion, the author of dozens of training programs, and the creator of the “fast education” methodology.

“By creating the innovative Lectera educational platform, my team and I have repeatedly witnessed how much and how quickly the labor market, the demands of employers, and the requirements of business are quite literally changing before our eyes. We want to give people a set of practical tools that will help them stay in demand as a specialist at any age and quickly learn the skills necessary for this. This is the aim of all of our work. This book is for those who seek to remain relevant, who want breakthroughs in their life, and who are determined to achieve success in their career.

It will be useful for anyone who is trying to determine the path of their development, who wants to take care of their future career and plan for their professional growth.”

Mila Semeshkina - Lectera 2020



## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

“Learn or leave the market” is a practical guide that you can use day after day to help you up the career ladder or to build your own business step by step.

Written as simple and clear as possible, the book is designed continuous help. All eight chapters contain information to help understand the daily processes that contribute to your career and business development. It also contains specially designed materials: tips for difficult work situations, checklists, life hacks for planning, as well as helpful charts and tips.



## Contents

How to use this book	7
<b>The Labor Market Today</b>	<b>11</b>
The New Industrial Revolution	13
Employees of the Future	14
Highest Paying Jobs	18
<b>The Future of Professions</b>	<b>27</b>
Professions of the Past: How to Keep Up	28
Jobs of the Future	34
<b>Self-education And How to Organize It</b>	<b>45</b>
Outdated Approach to Learning	47
What to Learn and How to Learn It	48
How to Create Your Self-Education System	56
<b>How to Choose or Change Your Profession</b>	<b>67</b>
Where to Start Your Change of Career?	75
Competitive advantage	76
What to Do Next	79
How to Find a New Career	80
<b>ABZ Planning and Gambling on Risks</b>	<b>91</b>
Using ABZ Planning for Career Growth	94
How to Achieve Results and Profit	97

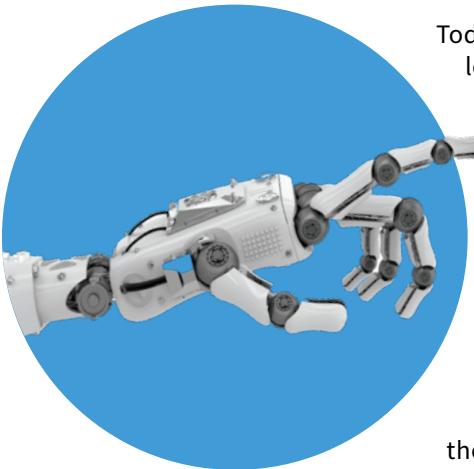
---

How Not to Be Afraid of Taking Risks	100
<b>How to Stay Sharp After Fifty</b>	<b>109</b>
It Is Never Too Late to Start a Business	115
The Silver Market as One of the Main Trends for the Next 100 Years	116
Where to Grow After Fifty	118
How to Be Proactive	120
<b>Skills of Businessmen and Leaders of the Future</b>	<b>125</b>
A New Employee Image	126
Hard Skills vs Soft Skills	129
Types of Hard Skills	130
Soft Skills for the Head of a Company	131
What Else Will Help You Remain Successful?	133
Digital Marketing: a Must-have in All Professions	135
Every Boss Has to Know Product and Project Management	136
<b>How Lectera Works and Why We Keep Doing It</b>	<b>141</b>
Principles and Methodology of Lectera	148
What Does Lectera Teach?	150
What Else You Can Do with Lectera	154

CHAPTER 1

# THE LABOR MARKET TODAY





Today's world is facing entirely new challenges. The modern age has completely transformed the labor market, and now people have to keep up with it and "make leaps forward" not to be left behind. New professions arise almost every day, and not everyone has the opportunity to learn about them in time. When school students are preparing for exams and have to choose their future professions, they do not even know what to choose from. After all, there are so many new professions, that can be confusing as well. The world has become multifaceted, and nowadays there are as many prospects as there are problems.

People have to compete with AI not only in repetitive manual jobs but also in professional and intellectual fields. Today you need to constantly master new skills, and sometimes even professions, in order to stay relevant.

To help people respond to these challenges successfully, we have created Lectera, an educational platform. It will help you remain a marketable specialist at any age, or teach you the skills you need to become one. Our entire platform is designed for those who want to be relevant, make new advances and intend to achieve success in their field.

Everybody, who is trying to find a direction for personal development, wants to take care of his future career and plan his professional growth, needs new benchmarks. I will teach you how to respond to the challenges of the modern labor market and I will explain the principles of its current development.

## THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The emergence of new technologies always led to the disappearance of obsolete jobs and the creation of new, more relevant and advanced ones.

The first Industrial Revolution took place as early as the 18th century and began with the introduction of mechanical labor in place of human labor. This change turned the very concept of labor upside down. Automation led to the emergence of new factories and companies, and to the generation of new jobs. Simplification of the production process has made factory work and its products more accessible to the public.

11

Thus, the Industrial Revolution began with the replacement of simple manual labor. Today, thanks to the use of computers, medium complex work is also already starting to lose its relevance. For example, accounting software eliminates the need for accounting departments, while laptops, calendars, and digital diaries can help you save money on hiring a secretary.

Despite the fact that technology benefits markets, allowing them to expand even further, it hurts the employment of the general population. Even though it is unlikely that robots at some point will replace us all, even today they are performing tasks that were previously only trusted to skilled workers. In the future, AI will be able to take over most jobs, undertaking the full range of responsibilities. After all, finding new ways of increasing productivity is the main priority of the labor market. We have to admit that automation always leads to higher production.

Today, the number of manufacturing jobs is declining in all economically developed countries. This can be seen even in China, which used to be known as the “workshop of the world”. In the United States, the number of workers employed in manufacturing represents only 15 % of the total workforce (which is a low figure). Therefore, most countries are facing a tough choice: if they resist the introduction of new technologies, their companies will lose competitiveness in the global

market. That is why new technologies need to be actively introduced, and people who are at risk of losing their jobs to automation should start looking for a new career.

According to some predictions, the number of jobs in professions where algorithms can be applied will be cut down to 30% by 2025. Such as the aforementioned accounting. At the same time, the use of robots at workplaces will increase from 20 to 50% in different countries. On the other hand, creative work will see higher demand and salaries. For example, a boom in IT, Big Data, robotics, space engineering, and other similar industries can be observed even today.

12

Now robotics and machine learning have every chance of at least partially replacing some professions, if not eliminating them entirely. Serious changes are inevitable, even in the industries that are seemingly not as affected by technological progress. For example, as their customers change, marketing and logistics specialists will need to acquire many new skills, which means that companies will also need to react to these changes.

## EMPLOYEES OF THE FUTURE

Education requirements for workers are changing radically. Although the education system is transforming faster than ever, it is still not fast enough to catch up with the labor market. By the time students obtain their bachelor's degree, almost half of the knowledge they received at the university becomes obsolete. Therefore, employers are beginning to pay more attention to the practical skills and abilities of their applicants. The World Economic Forum has made a list of the most important skills that all employees of the future should possess:

- ▶ analytical, critical and integrated thinking;
- ▶ creativity, originality, and proactivity;
- ▶ fast learning
- ▶ technology design and programming;
- ▶ leadership;

- ▶ emotional intelligence;
- ▶ conflict management.

In order to become a competitive specialist in the labor market of the future, you will need to undergo continuous training and learn new skills throughout your entire life. Moreover, you will need to develop these skills at an increasing pace: professions, that people used to spend half of their life studying, will now have to be mastered in just a few years. It is important to note that companies striving to become leaders will need not only to recruit those employees, who regularly take training courses but also to organize the courses themselves and train their employees with the skills they need.



# The most valuable skills according to employers

In this era of automation, employers emphasize the value of soft skills, because they indicate the ability to easily adapt to situations and remain flexible.

This particular skillset includes:

- 
- Teamwork skills
  - Ability to get along well with different people
  - Conflict resolution skills
  - Proficiency in building, maintaining, and developing relationships
  - Time management and delegation skills

5

**rare skills  
that employers look for  
in applicants:**

Ability to influence  
others

Strategic  
thinking

Vitality  
and stress resistance

Ability to analyze  
large quantities  
of data

Rapid response  
to challenges  
and problem-solving  
skills

However, changes in the labor market will not only impact employees but also companies and society as a whole.

According to the consulting company Deloitte, in terms of public policy, these changes will lead to a complete rethinking of the education system. Learning will be seen as a continuous life-long process, rather than being divided into stages and degrees. Income and health policy might change as well, as the younger generation will mix with the older generation and both will work on equal terms. More people will be engaged in what they really like; there will be a surge in the number of talents and cultural leaders.

16

Under such circumstances, it is better and easier to approach work tasks creatively. The results of an employee's work, rather than their efficiency, are what is becoming important. It benefits those specialists who constantly expand their horizons, find new trends and unusual solutions.

Employers primarily look for practical rather than theoretical knowledge in their employees. Therefore, if you are looking for training courses and ways to learn a new profession, the first thing you should consider is the convenience of the training (online courses will spare you a lot of trouble) and the practical skills that you will acquire by completing the course. The prestige of a training course is only significant if you understand exactly how its reputation can help you — for example, when only certain programs are held in high regard in the company you want to apply to.

## HIGHEST PAYING JOBS

In the modern labor market, you will still need to study and work hard in order to remain a relevant specialist, and it is always better if your work is well paid. Some of the highest paying jobs today are in management. Managing people and machines and organizing their work is a task beyond the capabilities of AI. However, to become a good manager, you need to be a professional in your field. Let's have a closer look at some of the promising areas:

**1**

**Financial managers** are responsible for the company's financial statements. Their key personal qualities include an analytical mindset and attentiveness, even meticulousness. Computers can now perform many calculations, so, in order to succeed in this profession, you need to be a truly highly skilled specialist. If you are, you will surely be well paid. However, you will require not only the ability to analyze but also the ability to get along with other people: it is important to present financial decisions to the company's management and shareholders properly. Competition among financial managers will only keep growing. People who can deal with international finance, know how to use complex tools and are well-versed in the securities market, have an advantage over others.

**2**

**Marketing managers** are involved in the development and implementation of marketing strategies. They are also responsible for team building, hiring new employees, budget management and selecting the indicators for assessing the success of their company's marketing strategy. There will be high demand for people who know how to conduct marketing research, analyze data and develop a strategy that will help the company maximize its profits.

**3**

**Business operations managers** coordinate the work of their company's various departments, as well as manage the work of its teams. They optimize business processes, as well as make decisions related to the development strategy of the company or its unit.

**4**

**Social services managers** analyze social problems to identify the need for certain services, train and manage the company's employees, as well as submit applications for grants.

**5**

**Recruitment and development managers** are responsible for working with people: they develop employee selection strategies, hire new workers, organize events for current employees to improve relationships within teams, conduct training courses, consultations, etc.

6

**Sales managers** determine the geography of sales and target indicators and work closely with specialists from the marketing department. A company's profits directly depend on the expertise of these specialists, so they will be in great demand in the labor market. Sales managers lead the sales departments and are fully responsible for their work. They often establish and maintain communication with their company's customers.

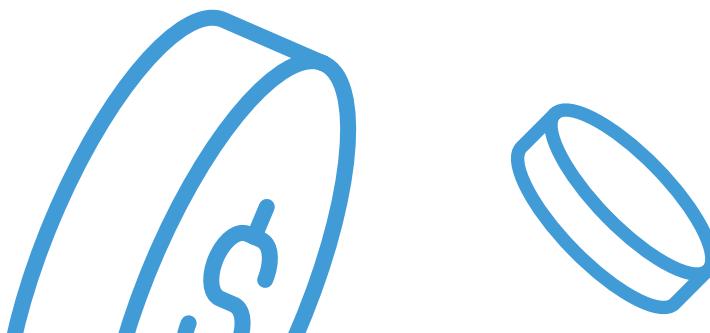
7

**Management analysts, or management consultants**, are third-party specialists hired by a company in order to increase its efficiency. They analyze the work of the company and make recommendations for changes that will help reduce its expenses and increase profits.

18

Whatever kind of manager you are, remember that leaders need to improve not only their professional skills but also the skills important to their careers — soft skills.

In sum, we have discussed the state of the labor market. It is greatly influenced by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the emergence of new technologies and AI. This poses a challenge to modern workers. Some professions inevitably disappear, but new ones take their place. Those who are willing to continuously learn new skills will find it easy to adapt to this situation. If you want to find a high-paying profession that is definitely not in danger of disappearing any time soon, consider becoming a manager. Highly qualified managers will be in demand in the labor market for a long time to come. The conversation about relevant professions and the professions that are becoming obsolete is not over.



# Assessing your value in today's labor market

Here are the three basic approaches that applicants use to determine their value to prospective employers:

1

## The comparative approach

The applicant learns about the salaries of other experts working in the same field. They can do this by studying salary surveys, consulting an HR representative, or sending a message to a person with a similar job on LinkedIn. The applicant can use these methods to collect several figures and determine their own market value based on the average of these figures.

2

## The income approach

The applicant estimates their value based on their previous income and how they have improved or progressed since. The higher the previous income, the greater the applicant's market value, meaning that they will be less likely to accept a lower salary. If the applicant has not had a raise for a while but believes that their qualifications have increased significantly, they may choose to increase their market value taking into account the improved knowledge and skills.



### 3

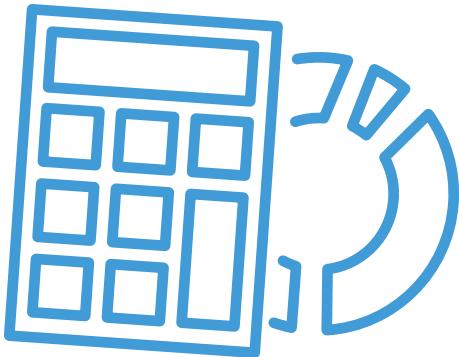
### The asset-based approach

If you are directly involved in the economic success of your company and that success can be reliably measured, you may be able to use this as a basis for determining your market value. Suppose last year you attracted new customers or reduced marketing strategy costs. The business receives tangible quantitative financial benefits from your contribution. Accordingly, applicants may promote themselves to a company based on the profits that they can deliver.

Keep in mind, however, that your calculated estimations only account for your theoretical or potential worth. When attending a job interview, two important factors will pop up and affect your market value for better or worse.

# Real value

Your real value, which you should openly state to the employer, depends on the following **two market-based factors**:



1

**Your value to this particular company**

An employer always wants your generated profit to cover the salary that they are willing to pay you. As such, your real value will differ from employer to employer. If your goal is to raise this value, you will need to convince the employer that the revenue you are going to bring in will exceed the company's expenses on you.

2

**How well you did in the interview**

Employment negotiations are essentially an attempt at haggling over financial terms. The potential value of the applicant may change in the process, but generally, this change will be between -30% and +150%.

**Indeed, it is not always easy to accept that your market worth is based more on your ability to sell yourself and your terms of employment, than on your past achievements, skills, experience, and credentials.**

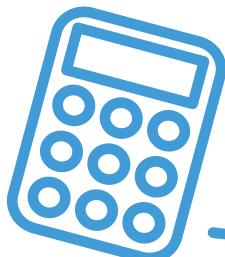
# How do you increase your value to employers?

Thankfully, using these two market factors to your benefit is easier than you might think.

Follow these recommendations to increase your future income:

**Calculate your potential market value using any of the aforementioned approaches.**

This way, you can at least get a starting point for your salary negotiation with the employer. Note that you will have to be as objective and fair as possible if you want to use this number to your advantage.



**Remember that your agreed-upon salary represents your real value.**

This value depends on your ability to present yourself and your services, as well as your ability to bring value to the company. The entire interview process is a test for communication and persuasion, so your professional negotiation skills will come in handy.

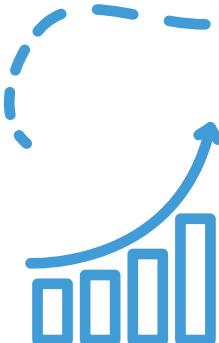


### **Study the market regularly, talk to your colleagues, network, and develop your personal brand.**

To stay relevant, you'll need to keep on your toes and be constantly on the lookout for growth possibilities, job openings, new partners, friends, etc. Your market value depends on your demand. The more companies want you, the higher your worth.

### **Remain flexible during negotiations.**

To avoid disappointment due to high expectations, set a range of salaries that you would find acceptable. The lowest salary in the range is the minimum amount that you will agree to and the highest figure is your ideal salary. Anything in the middle will be a comfortable compromise. You are free to negotiate within that range, but do not go lower or higher.



### **Determine the terms that you think you deserve.**

Do not rely solely on the figures given to you by employers. The salary is certainly very important, but you should also have a clear understanding of your working conditions, and advocate for them as well. Maybe you need your own office or want to work remotely from time to time.

CHAPTER 2

# THE FUTURE OF PROFESSIONS





Today, people perform 71 % of work in business, while machines do only 29 %.

However, by 2022, these figures will have changed: people will be left with just 58 % of the work, and machines will increase their figure to 42 %. This leads to an unexpected conclusion: even highly qualified specialists with a degree in an innovative area still need to keep developing their skills and acquire new ones.

Take healthcare, for example, AI is already able to diagnose cardiac pathologies with a better success rate than

a human. What in this case should doctors do

in order to stay relevant in this field? They should focus on the human touch in patient care, the development of interpersonal communication and the development of new technological solutions.

In addition, up to 37 % of companies are planning to replace bank employees, accountants, administrators, packers and even cashiers with robots in the near future. However, the largest share of investment is dedicated to the development of robots that would be able to perform the tasks of aviation and tourism workers. For this reason, 68 % of these workers are about to be forced to change their profession.

## PROFESSIONS OF THE PAST: HOW TO KEEP UP

McKinsey Global Institute estimated that over 800 million people will lose their jobs to robots by 2030. About 2.2 million people will be replaced by machines in retail and wholesale alone, with 1.5 million more being replaced in administration and maintenance. China plans to automate 77 % of jobs altogether.

By 2055, machines will be able to perform so many different tasks that practically half of today's occupations will be on the verge of extinction. Let's have a look at who else should consider additional education and look into new job opportunities:

1

Why do stores need **cashiers**? They scan barcodes and count out change when customers pay in cash. However, as payment systems develop, customers become capable of scanning barcodes and paying by themselves. Therefore, the need for cashiers is vanishing. Online purchasing is becoming more and more popular. For example, people are now able to order and try on clothes without even leaving their homes. For that reason, cashiers should consider retraining to become online sales managers.

2

Owning a car does not come cheap. This includes the expenses on maintenance, gas, repairs, etc. That is why many have already given up their private cars in favor of car-sharing or taxis. Entire companies now employ these services, thanks to special corporate rates. You may have already noticed new types of public transport, some of which are powered by electricity, while others no longer even require a human driver. An example of this is the subway in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. What is left for **drivers** to do then? They might want to consider retraining to become road safety risk assessment engineers, operators or technicians.

3

**Translators** are also at risk, due to the development of neural networks. Neural networks keep learning and their translations get better each day, as users upload new texts for translation, correct errors and suggest new translations. The efficiency of neural networks is undeniable: since Google first started using them for translation in 2016, the number of translation errors has been reduced by 60 %. The advantage of machine translation is its integrated approach to text processing, while people translate each word separately. Nowadays, machines can be trusted with translation, as they have access to a huge number of possible contexts and meanings stored in their databases. It is also faster than manual translation.

However, this does not mean that human translation is no longer needed: interpreting, especially simultaneous interpretation is unlikely to ever stop being an exclusively human skill.

4

Even now, many companies are already using specialized software instead of human **call center employees**: these programs are able to solve many customer problems, provide them with the necessary information, submit a service request, etc. Almost no human input is required unless a customer has a particularly complex problem. Over time, these programs will be perfected, and a machine running a call center will soon be almost impossible to distinguish from a real person. However, human call center agents will not die out as a profession completely: after all, machines are not designed to be interactive and understand human psychology.

27

A human agent, on the other hand, can take into account all of the customer's requirements while solving a problem and achieve greater understanding and trust with the help of active listening. For that reason, sales, for example, will not become completely automated any time soon. However, agents should still think about their future, especially if they work in large call centers. It is worth starting to develop your skills in sales and personal communication now.

5

**Journalists** preparing current financial statements and searching for breaking news have reasons to worry as well. Los Angeles Times, Associated Press, Forbes, and other well-known media outlets have already replaced them with machines. They can collect information faster than humans can and are even capable of requesting expert comments. According to the Narrative Science analytical company, in 15 years, AI will prepare 90% of reports. In order to keep up with these reporter robots, journalists need to be universal experts. In other words, as well as being able to write, they have to host radio broadcasts, shoot independent films and have a good understanding of the media industry. Otherwise, a journalist that possesses only one of these skills will not be able to compete with robots.

**6**

The demand for **construction workers**, as surprising as it may seem, is declining as well, and all because of 3D printing, which reduces the time and money needed to construct a building by 70 to 80 %. It is for this reason that 3D printers will soon take over the jobs of millions of people. UAE authorities have even stated that by 2039 a quarter of materials used in the construction of all new Dubai buildings will be 3D-printed. In other words, construction workers should already consider getting a degree in engineering as a backup plan.

**7**

We have already discussed how **accountants** are facing the risk of losing their relevance. This threat is quite real: more and more companies all over the world are replacing paper documents with electronic accounting. This allows them to reduce the size of their “army of accountants”, keeping only a few people, as it is now easier to deal with a pile of paperwork. On the other hand, high demand is expected in the coming years for such related specialties as a personal plan developer, auditor, financial strategy planner, etc.

28

Now that we have found out what professions are gradually losing their relevance, let's see which ones have the highest demand. These professions are also known as the jobs of the future.

# The professions gaining popularity





# The disappearing professions

## JOBs OF THE FUTURE

These include not only exotic and obscure professions, such as a robot designer or a space traveler but also mundane professions that have existed for years but that have suddenly become more relevant. These also include professions that up until recently were merely hobbies and did not even have a proper name.

The change in the structure of the labor market is primarily associated with the emergence of technological innovations, software, online platforms, and robots. For that reason, there will be a need for people who are capable of researching new technologies, implementing them into production and carrying out their maintenance.

31

When choosing a popular profession, remember that their list is constantly changing. In the previous lesson, we examined professions with high demand. Now, let's take a closer look at this topic. In addition to specialists in robotics and IT, today's labor market is in great need of:

1

**Technical project managers.** IT managers that are able to predict the development of technologies and lead the development of new technical solutions will see the highest demand. Therefore, rather than decreasing the need for leaders who are able to predict trends and make strategic decisions, the development of modern technologies increases it.

2

In today's world, **a programmer** will always be able to find work. However, you will need to continuously learn for this work to be paid adequately. Even if you have a specialist degree, there is still no time to relax as the competition among programmers is very high, and only those who constantly study are able to land a good job. However, even if you do not have such a degree, do not despair: now it is possible to acquire almost all the necessary knowledge from online courses.

3

**A successful company manager** will never be out of work. CEOs determine the development strategy of their company,

manage all of its business processes, and interact with shareholders and investors. AI is still far from being ready to undertake such tasks.

#### 4

The modern world requires a large number of **GMO farmers and city farmers**. While GMOs, admittedly, have many opponents and an undeserved reputation, for city farmers the sky is the limit. The trend of building farms on the rooftops of skyscrapers is becoming increasingly popular. This phenomenon is also known as vertical farming. The first such farm was opened in Singapore, in the very center of the metropolis. Today they are emerging all over the world.



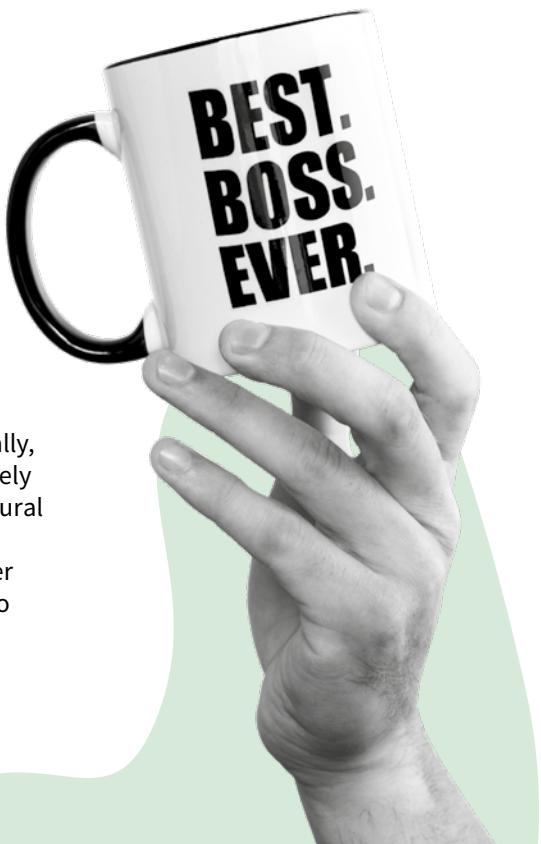
# Who are the managers of the future?

In today's world, even managers have to work to remain relevant and competitive in the job market. What skills should leaders acquire today to be successful tomorrow?

1

## Foreign languages.

Speaking at least three (ideally five) languages is a competitive advantage in any field. Considering the impact of globalization and the growing number of international companies, knowledge of foreign languages can also help managers build and lead international teams. Additionally, learning new languages is closely associated with increased cultural awareness, which broadens horizons and can make it easier to collaborate with people who have different opinions.



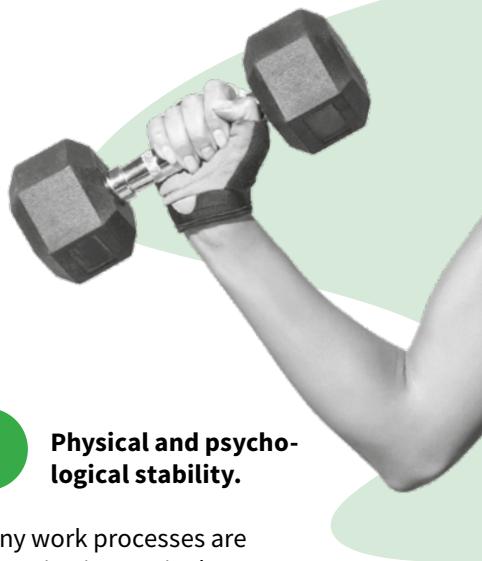
**2****Proficiency  
in self-study  
and rapid adaptation.**

People who live in cities often change jobs, or even entire career paths, once every three to seven years. Given that people in big cities usually set an example for other regions, we need to learn to adapt to these changing conditions. To do this, managers need to be equipped with the soft skills necessary to easily launch new projects and establish a good rapport with new teams.

 **DECENT EDUCATION**  
**HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM**  
**BIG PICTURE LIFE GOALS**

**3****Physical and psycho-  
logical stability.**

Many work processes are becoming increasingly automated, which often means that the responsibility for delivering results rests entirely on the shoulders of a single manager. This increases the psychological pressure and daily stress levels, not to mention the sedentary lifestyle of the average manager. This toxic combination inevitably leads to health problems and “diseases of civilization.” This is why today’s leaders must be able to self-heal, which means knowing the right methods and techniques to both conserve and replenish their energy. For example, engaging in sports or yoga, or taking up a hobby.



## 4

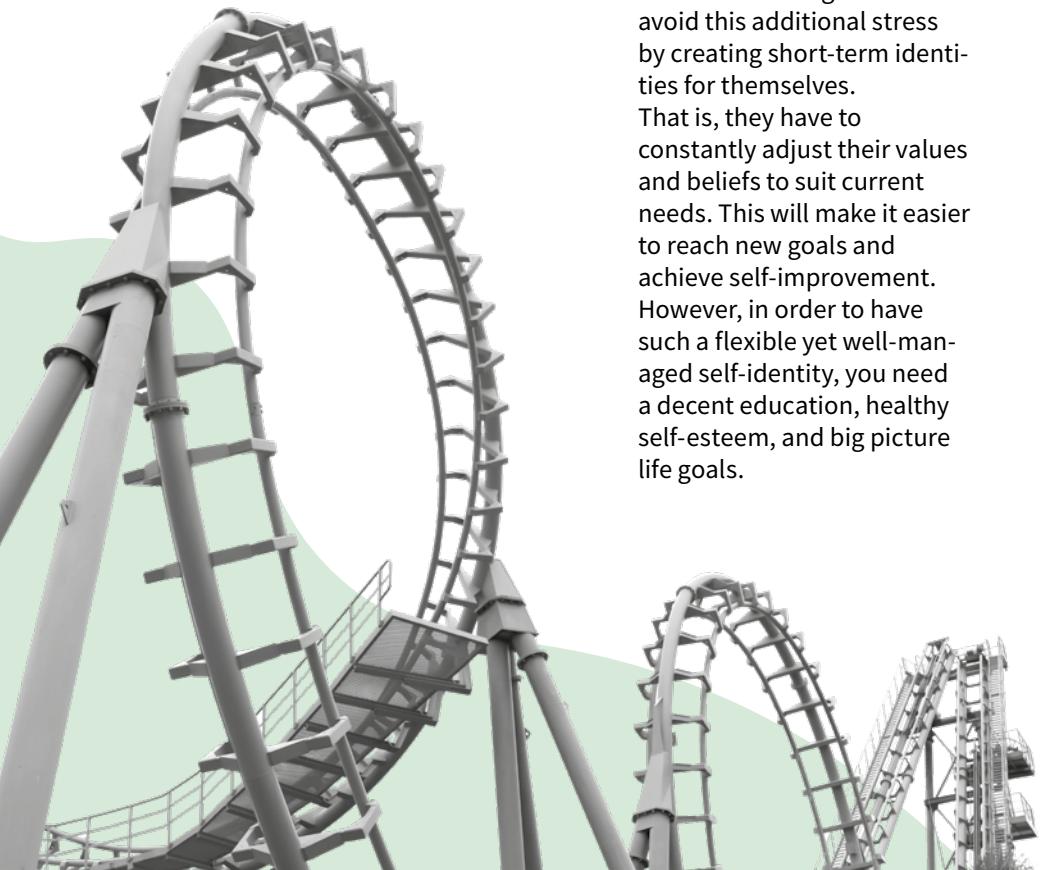
### Flexible self-identification.

A culturally diverse world, virtual workplaces (for example, online projects) and high social mobility may also lead to psychological burnout, which can sometimes result in issues of self-identification.

In these situations, people might ask themselves, “Why am I doing this? Am I useful?”

Forward-thinking leaders can avoid this additional stress by creating short-term identities for themselves.

That is, they have to constantly adjust their values and beliefs to suit current needs. This will make it easier to reach new goals and achieve self-improvement. However, in order to have such a flexible yet well-managed self-identity, you need a decent education, healthy self-esteem, and big picture life goals.



**5****Exceptional management skills.**

As relationships between employees within the company become closer over time, various departments become increasingly integrated, with constant interaction between them. In light of these changes, the management of these complex teams should be one of the key objectives of an effective leader.

Modern teams may include people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and generations, with different values and professional roles. Future leaders must rely on positive communication and conflict management skills to minimize the risks and difficulties that may emerge in such diverse teams.

**6****Proper prioritization.**

The focus has shifted from the leaders themselves to the product or idea that the company is working on. The leader's role, therefore, is now focused on supervision and decision-making. Their main goal is to contribute to the team's development and support their work to the best of their abilities, in order to obtain high-quality and full-scale results.



As you can see, job cuts are not the only result of the development of technology, so you should not take it negatively. After all, new jobs will be created in place of old ones — mainly in the service sector, which cannot be automated like others. Live interaction and human emotions will always be valued in this sector.

The development of modern technology is also expected to lead to an interesting paradox, known as Baumol's cost disease. According to this paradox, as salaries rise in industries with increased productivity, they will also rise in other industries, even though their productivity remains the same. In other words, this is good news: employees of all sectors, without exception, are going to increase their income. Take, for example, such a specific industry as art. After all, it cannot be automated. And you cannot increase its productivity. However, art will grow in price even further, since prices will increase for all products and services at the same time, which includes drawing materials, human resources, etc. In the labor market, one thing leads to another, causing a chain reaction. By the way, Baumol believed that in the end art will remain the only area of human employment. Fortunately or not, he was not entirely correct, as there are many other professions that cannot be automated, such as lawyers.

New jobs will be created in healthcare, social work, education, domestic services, the hotel and restaurant business, etc. These industries require personal contact, so robots will not be able to replace a real person in them. That is why modern specialists should focus on developing soft skills. These personal qualities allow you to interact effectively with other people. We have several units devoted to soft skills, as they, more than anything, affect your value as an employee and the success of your business if you are an entrepreneur. Indeed, professional skills are increasingly becoming secondary, my friends! Lectera understands this and is ready to help you to develop soft skills as well. We will try to provide you with the most relevant and useful knowledge of these skills in a simple and easy-to-understand way. As a result, you will have no difficulty finding your new place in this world or with taking a better hold of your current one.

Modern conditions require specialists to continuously improve their qualifications and learn a variety of new diverse skills. Today,

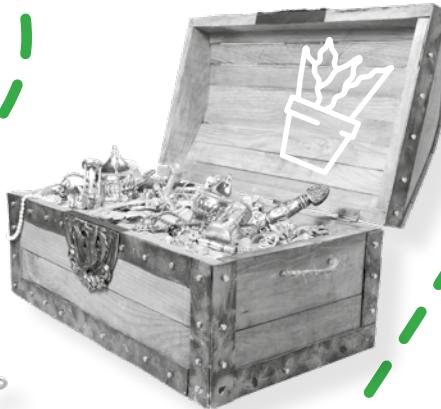
everyone's career is practically turning into a personal business, or a startup, as co-founder of LinkedIn Reid Hoffman suggests calling it. This process opens up enormous opportunities for career growth, but also demands a lot from employees: to learn new skills constantly, be creative and smart, but at the same time be able to get along with people and build relationships with them.

In some sense, all people are entrepreneurs. We do not mean that in the sense that everyone should start their own company, but rather that creativity, the essence of entrepreneurship, is part of human DNA. Every one of us is the founder of your own life.

So, in order to stay afloat in the rapids of the professional world, you need to awaken your "entrepreneurial instincts". Perhaps, at heart you are a lawyer, teacher or an artist. This instinct will show you the way. Look at it as steering a new startup — your career.

In the modern world, the career ladder as we knew it no longer exists. Now, you cannot simply occupy the same position until getting promoted based on the length of service. The tradition of companies paying for training their staff is vanishing: now you need to look for training courses and personal development opportunities on your own in order to impress your peers and bosses. Even junior-level staff are expected to be professionals in their field, with every one of them being a fast learner with good adaptability. Today, if you want to get promoted, change your occupation or just try something new, you will need to invest both time and money in your training. Investing in your growth is your main career concern. Companies are no longer willing to invest in us, partly because we are unlikely to devote our whole lives to a single company. After all, it is much easier to change your line of work now than ever before, and increasingly more people want to experience professional diversity over the course of their lives.

# How do I find my dream job?



**1** Start by identifying your interests and your skills. These are inherently connected. After all, improving your skills in areas that you find boring or tedious is extremely difficult.

**2** Next, you should identify the companies and fields of work where your skills would be most highly appreciated. For instance, if you are an avid and talented gamer, you might consider a career as a programmer, game designer, or gaming practitioner.

3

**Find out where they teach these skills, as well as what documents and prior knowledge you will need to enroll in your chosen field of study. This way, you will get the full picture, ensuring that your expectations are in line with reality and your own abilities.**



4

**Throughout this process, continue to expand your horizons as much as you can. To get your dream job in the modern world, you need a wide range of various skill sets. Take a class to learn a foreign language, work on your time management skills, improve your ability to adapt to various situations, etc. It's also important to research the top universities in your area of interest, in order to make the best and most informed decision.**



CHAPTER 3

# SELF-EDUCATION AND HOW TO ORGANIZE IT





Nowadays, we all have to perform many different tasks. There are almost no fixed roles assigned to specific professions anymore. Sometimes it seems like you need to be capable of literally anything.

This is a result of the recent switch to a new society model that happened too quickly, just in a matter of decades. This model requires specialists to possess a completely new set of skills. Many companies even create individual development plans for training their employees in all the necessary skills. Quite often, these plans determine what an employee needs to learn in order to be promoted.

Career is perceived differently now thanks to the influence of two factors: globalization and technology. Technology, as we already discussed, has automated most tasks performed by people. These tasks no longer require special knowledge or skills. The same technologies created a number of new professions and opened up new opportunities for the next generation. The rules of the labor market have also changed: we can no longer afford to start looking for a new job only when we are unhappy with our current one or when we no longer have it. Today's world is a world of opportunities and you need always to be on the lookout for them as backup plans and for personal development. This has led to constant changes in the labor market and, as a result, ever fewer stable long-lived companies.

The lifecycle of companies significantly decreased due to the growing risks. Ordinary employees find themselves in the same situation as entrepreneurs: the competition is too high. Therefore, building and developing your career today is like developing a business. Its future and results are difficult to predict. There is too much information around us, which means that you never have enough of it — it is difficult to find something valuable and reliable in an oversaturated

world. There are also not enough resources for everyone. Meanwhile, the world keeps changing, and changing, and changing... Which means that we constantly need to adapt. If we cannot do this, then we will fall behind. Continuous learning is the key to adaptation. So let's discuss this in more detail.

## OUTDATED APPROACH TO LEARNING

We have all been told that you will have a successful life if you study hard at school, enter a good university, and graduate with honors. Maybe it used to be like that fifty years ago, but not anymore. This view of education also became outdated. Many graduates face tough job market right away, since colleges still educate using old, "classical" systems that are not adapted to market changes. If you want to find your place in the new market, you first need to learn essential life skills. You should work even on your personal qualities. That is why it is no longer so important whether you studied at university at all or how many degrees you have. What really important is whether you meet the requirements of the modern market and what you can offer.

Sure, you can learn many great things at college, but they will have little to do with your future financial well-being. You can work on erudition, critical thinking and expand your horizons, but this does not guarantee employment. Moreover, it definitely won't guarantee keeping the same job for even five years. The old recipe for a successful career, where formal education was the main ingredient, no longer works. It is time to search for new ways.

The lifecycle of professions is now very short, just like the lifecycle of most companies: by the time students receive their bachelor's or master's degree, it is quite possible that their profession will have become irrelevant. Although the number of people with higher education is growing across the globe, every third specialist is facing the problem of skills mismatch (when the skills do not meet the demands of the labor market, even with college education).

Human resources development specialist Ken Robinson argues that the current education system is the result of the earlier industrial revolution. Back then, educational institutions were created following the same model as factories: a bell signaling the start of a lesson, breaks, uniforms... This was all based on standardization, but it has no place in the modern labor market, even though it continues to exist despite all logic and trends. You have to admit, marching into the future guided by the experience of the nineteenth century is at the very least odd, not to mention that it is also impractical. Due to standardization, most people do not even know what talents and abilities they might have.

44

The educational process generally resembles a conveyor belt, even in colleges: there is no place for freedom or creativity, all students are required to master a standard program and any deviations from it are unwelcome. This model was still relevant in the 20th century, it made it possible to teach people to perform obediently monotonous repetitive work that is now more and more often done by robots. The educational system of the 20th century made it possible to teach students a set of skills that would allow them to become specialists who could stay in high demand in the labor market for a long time. Now, due to the decrease in the lifespan of professions, this situation is impossible.

## WHAT TO LEARN AND HOW TO LEARN IT

The need for education today is greater than ever. Until very recently people followed the same scenario: study, work, retire. But this doesn't work anymore. For example, if you are already retired, it doesn't mean that your life is over: there are still a variety of jobs for you. Nowadays, you need to learn over the course of your entire life. This does not mean that you need to get 3 or 4 degrees and spend 30 years listening to lectures at college: the important part is trying and learning, not acquiring degrees. Your career will not advance unless you want to learn new things.

First, you need to master the skills you need to work with the latest technologies in your industry (otherwise, you won't stay relevant for sure). These skills will also help you to start your own business or work as a freelancer.

More and more companies and employees prefer a flexible and independent relationship, such as short-term contracts or freelance work. This leads to a transformation in our workplaces and work time. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, 20 to 30 % of employees work in this manner, and their number is rising.

Modern technologies allow you to establish direct contact with your customers, without having to pay a fee to middlemen. Secondly, you need to master skills that will help you expand your horizons, get new perspectives and opportunities. First and foremost, these are skills and knowledge that:

- ▶ allow you to adapt to constantly changing conditions, such as creativity and entrepreneurial skills;
- ▶ help you simplify complex systems, such as design skills, systems, and design thinking;
- ▶ make life in the world of communication technologies easier: for example, research skills and the ability to process information, digital skills, media literacy.

In particular, you should develop:

- ▶ hard skills — specialized professional skills;
- ▶ digital skills — knowledge and skills that enable you to use digital technologies in your work;
- ▶ soft skills — skills that we talked about in our previous lesson. They can be mastered during the work process and applied in social activities. For example, such skills are speed-reading, time management, teamwork, planning, etc.

Lectera will touch on all three skills. Our platform and all of its units, courses, and events, practically all our activities, are aimed at helping people acquire these skills. After all, only a combination of hard, digital and soft skills can be the key to a successful career, a profitable business, and ultimately to a happy life in the 21st century.

The development of new skills should be approached systematically. First, make a list of skills that you want to learn (no more than 10 to 15). Remember, people can usually learn no more than three new skills at the same time, and the effectiveness of your training will plummet if you try to increase this number. Therefore, you should prioritize the skills you need to master first. In order to do this, rate them on a scale from 1 to 10 on each of the following parameters:

46

**1** What is more important to you now: increasing your income, having a good time or growing spiritually? Usually, each skill helps you to solve one of these objectives. Determine which skills help you progress in the direction that matters to you most.

**2** How easy will it be to learn the skill that you are interested in: you may have an aptitude for this particular task or there may be a huge discount on courses that you have been thinking about taking for a long time? Perhaps your friends or relatives are already doing whatever it is you are interested in and will help you take your first steps in this new undertaking.

**3** Do you have enough time and energy to learn something new? Avoid overexerting yourself. For example, if you are currently swamped with work, then you might simply not have enough strength left for learning.

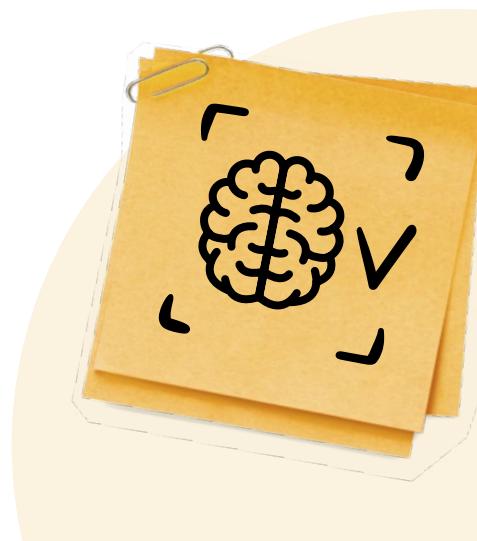
**4** Will you be able to devote enough time to develop a new skill? For example, if you need to go somewhere for training, will you will be able to do it?

It is better to learn gradually but regularly, rather than rarely but trying to absorb huge chunks of information that you simply can't digest in one sitting. Lectera provides you the opportunity to acquire

knowledge and skills in portions, by watching 3 to 5 minutes long instructional videos with the highest information density. Since you can download all our lessons, videos and additional materials on your smartphone via the Lectera smartphone app, your training is going to be extremely convenient and adapted to your own schedule and lifestyle.

Moreover, our brains are best at absorbing new information during the night. As we sleep, our synaptic connections recuperate, which is why sleep is incredibly important, and you should not neglect it for the sake of learning. It is best to revise the material in the morning, with a fresh mind. This is even more effective than re-reading it.

Pay even more attention to revising the knowledge you already acquired than studying it in the first place. You should test yourself regularly, as the most important part is not to forget anything and to be able to use your knowledge in practice. Knowledge is not worth anything without practice. We have prepared short tests and analysis of relevant cases for each lesson. This way, you will be able to assess easily your progress in the topics you are studying and see whether you need to go over the lesson again.



# A note for those who have decided to start their education



I can't decide which area of education is right for me

**Analyze recent developments at your workplace or take a look at your reports.** Reflect on some work problems that you've been facing lately or problems that have occurred repeatedly. Select the issue that is affecting your productivity the most and will significantly improve your success once it is solved.

**Determine the urgency of the problem.** How much will the quality of your work increase once the problem is solved? Will it open up new opportunities for you?

**Pick a book and skim through its contents page or find a summary on the Internet.**

This will give you a general idea of the book's main themes and its practical value. You can also read book reviews from experts and other readers.

**Ask yourself: "What do I already know from the table of contents?"** And what new knowledge could I gain from this book?"



**I get lost whenever I try to choose professional books. I never know where to start.**

**Start by exploring traditional approaches to your skill or problem by reading the most well-known authors in your field.** Then explore the most recent books that offer more modern approaches to the issue.

**Create a study plan that includes the books you have selected in order to immerse yourself in the topic.**



**I have trouble understanding the material**

**As you're reading, highlight or underline** the key words, thoughts, and quotes that you consider important.

**Get a notebook** to rewrite the main ideas from the text in your own words.

**Take notes on each chapter** as you're reading and identify the main ideas, or make a general summary of each paragraph in the margins.

**Make a reference chart or bullet plan** of everything that you have learned.

**Write down any questions that arise as you read the book.** If you don't recognize a word, look it up right away and write down the definition.



I feel like  
I can't retain any  
of the information  
that I've learned

**Follow your reading plan**  
to avoid confusion. Start with  
simpler books and gradually  
move on to more complex  
ones.

**Use various techniques** to help  
with memorization, such as the  
association method, the classi-  
fication method, or simply copy  
the material by hand.

After learning an important  
or useful piece of information,  
**try to put it into practice**  
**at once**. You have to practice  
every skill regularly, even as you  
continue to increase your  
knowledge.



You feel that your mind  
is becoming a cluttered  
mess because you are  
overwhelmed with  
so much information

**After reading the material,  
briefly respond to the follow-  
ing questions:** “What are the  
principal ideas in this text?”,

“What new things have  
I learned from this chapter?”,  
“Which of the author’s ideas and  
techniques can I integrate into  
my life?”

Before putting your new knowledge into practice, **you need to get into the right mindset**. Sit back and relax, cover your eyes with your hands, and take a deep breath. Imagine something pleasant, such as a nice dinner you will reward yourself with after your presentation.



**I have no self-confidence and I'm constantly nervous. I'm afraid of sharing my thoughts because I might look ridiculous or stupid**

**Tell yourself that everyone around you is your friend** and they will all support you. They are not your enemies. It's OK to be afraid of something or not to know every little thing.



## HOW TO CREATE YOUR SELF-EDUCATION SYSTEM

Your personal development must be systematic for it to be effective. You need to determine your learning strategy in advance. Self-education systems also include methods for remembering useful information and screening out everything that is irrelevant. That is why a systematic approach is so important. The sooner you start following this plan, the quicker you will feel the practical benefits of self-education.

52

You may have already attempted to learn something by yourself, such as a foreign language. You probably started doing it on an impulse, without giving it a serious thought. That is why you perhaps gave it up just as quickly and abruptly. You had no clear plan or strategy, just some free time and a downloaded app. The problem is that you lacked a proper system.

Any self-education system should be based on four principles:

- ▶ **Regular revision**  
(to better absorb information)
- ▶ **Associations**  
(to simplify the process of learning new material).
- ▶ **Filtering**  
(to learn only the information that is actually useful, rather than wasting your efforts on “mental junk”).
- ▶ **Breaks for rest and recuperation**

Imagine you want to write a book. Obviously, this cannot be done right off the bat without thinking out the plot or at least jotting down the names of the chapters. However, it will be much easier if you break the process down into stages. This is the main rule of fast and effective learning that you need to remember.

Here are **seven steps** that will help you master any skill:

1

### Collect information

Before you learn any information, you need to collect it first - look through all existing materials, pick those that are most useful to you. Next, categorize topics or blocks of information by their importance; this will help you decide where and when to start.

2

### Take notes

Many people believe this is a boring and pointless activity, but they are wrong. Taking notes, especially by hand, you remember the information better, so you should take notes whenever you can. Always write them down as soon as you feel the need to do so. Do not wait until the end of the article or after moving to the next one.

53

Get a set of markers — color-coding facilitates brain function when you need to quickly find some information or learn it. Colors allow you to assign a specific context to words or parts of the text. For example, you can use red to underline the most important information, blue for names of people and organizations, and yellow for cool ideas that you can use. If you come across a word you don't know, be sure to write down its meaning. Also, start a separate folder to store the materials that you have already studied. This way, you will be able to look up information if you ever need to refresh your knowledge.

3

### Review your notes

So, you have already learned the information you need and you took the notes. Now it is time to train your memory and creating associations. Regular revision (once or twice a week) will transfer the acquired knowledge from short-term to long-term memory, or, in other words, will reinforce it in your memory. It is also worth revising material the day after you read it. As we already discussed, your brain will process new information overnight, and in the morning you will see it in a new light and be able to understand it more clearly.

4

## Summarize key findings

After you read the material, find its most important points. Underline the most useful sentences or write down the key findings in your own words. This way you will filter out any “junk” and determine what has the highest priority and most use for you in the text. You can reuse such summaries later on as high-quality material for revision.

5

## Teach other people

Teach your colleagues and family what you have learned. It is impossible to explain to others something that you have yet to understand fully yourself. Thus, if you successfully explained the topic and the other person even benefited from your information, this means you have completely mastered it. Write blog posts on your topic, make educational videos or create infographics for work purposes. All of this promotes a better understanding of the information.

6

## Create a bank of associations

Thinking is not always a conscious process. Our memory largely depends on subconscious reactions as well. These reactions can be caused by different triggers, the strongest and most effective of which are associations. Even back at school, we were taught that we should find a vivid association if we are having trouble remembering something. Why not try the same method at work?

There are many ways to develop associative thinking, the most helpful of which is reading. You can read:

- history books;
- biographies of successful people;
- Wikipedia.

The more you expand your horizons, the easier it is to find appropriate associations for any subject or topic. Therefore, it makes remembering new information easier as well.

**7**

## Keep a diary of ideas

Make sure to have a place to write down all the important information. It could be your “diary of ideas”:

- ▶ a regular notepad or notebook;
- ▶ a smartphone app for taking notes;
- ▶ a text file on your computer.

You can also use any other service where you can publish quotes, photos or even PDF files. You can take screenshots of useful webpages and create a folder to store them. For instance, you can turn a notebook into a dictionary if you are studying a foreign language and trying to expand your colloquial vocabulary.

55

When you have your own self-education system, it automatically helps increase your learning speed and the volume of information you can absorb. Update your system regularly and adjust it to your liking in order to create a unique and personalized “training center” right in your pocket or just come to us to study at Lectera. We already have everything you need: more than 150 training professionals from 18 countries search and analyze the best practices and market cases to create the most effective training programs that will help you completely change your life. All you need to do is study every day! After all, everyone can find at least 5 spare minutes during their lunch break — even this will be enough to progress towards your goal. If you study every day for just 5 minutes then in a year you will become a completely different person! The important thing is to have your own learning system and always apply in life what you learned at Lectera.

# Investing in yourself and your future

**Investing in yourself is one of the most profitable decisions you will ever make.** After all, a personal resource will never depreciate. Your skills, experience, and knowledge cannot be stolen or used in any way other than to your advantage. Investing in yourself can include any investment in:



**INVESTING IN YOURSELF CAN INCLUDE ANY INVESTMENT IN:**

**EDUCATION (COURSES, DEGREES, ADVANCED TRAINING, ETC.),**

**HEALTH AND PHYSICAL REHABILITATION;**

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT;**

**APPEARANCE;**

**NEW EXPERIENCES (HOBBIES, TRAVELING, EXHIBITIONS, ETC.),**

**IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING CONDITIONS.**

Self-education is the best type of investment that can assist you in entering a new occupation. Here's how you can achieve this:

## 1

### Find out what skills you are lacking.

Look for similar job vacancies on any employment website. Find employers that offer a higher salary than what you currently receive. Find out which skills they look for in candidates.

## 2

### Create a study plan.

Identify the skills that you would like to work on or those needed to qualify for a better position. Estimate how much time per day you need to devote to studying to master these skills quickly and completely.

## 3

### Make a reading list.

Read more! Reading is also an investment because it stimulates your mind. Look up books that are recommended by professionals in your field and get them. You will find learning much easier if you start with reading. Form a habit of reading every day. It doesn't matter whether it's 5 minutes or 30, the key is finding consistency.

## 4

### Attend seminars and take part in webinars related to your topic.

Anything will do: mini or online courses, lectures, conferences, etc. This will take you to a whole new professional level. Keep in mind, however, that you need to incorporate this new knowledge into your daily life. Otherwise, everything you've learned will be quickly forgotten and you will have wasted your time.

# Other areas for growth, in addition to professional development.

You can turn personal growth into a hobby. Learn to take pleasure in educating yourself. To do this, identify priority areas that are both useful and exciting. Here are a few more areas for self-education and investment:



## Learn foreign languages.

Even if you are a programmer who spends 24 hours in front of a screen, speaking several languages is one of the best competitive advantages out there. In today's world, knowledge of at least one foreign language is essential. This will enable you to work for foreign companies and travel around the world more freely. That's a double bonus.



## Improve your communication skills.

To get to know successful people and benefit from their experience, you must be able to establish a good rapport and speak persuasively. This is especially important if you plan to work with people face-to-face.



### **Master time management.**

Self-organization skills are essential in any situation. The ability to budget your time is also useful for your studies. Train yourself to stay focused on the tasks at hand, avoiding distractions, for example, your phone. However, make sure to have time for rest and relaxation in your schedule, so that your excitement doesn't deteriorate into stress or burnout.



### **Do sports.**

A healthy person will reach new career heights more easily than someone with constant back pain or numb legs. To be active and quick in every sense, you need to focus not only on your mental growth but also on your physical well-being.



### **Work on your psychological health.**

The same goes for your mental health. You won't let negative emotions affect your productivity

if you know how to protect yourself from them. It's important to remain balanced and calm no matter the situation. Don't allow anxiety to overpower your rational thinking.



### **Appearance.**

An impeccable appearance can make you feel more confident, give your mood a boost, and help you establish relationships with others. It's always nice to work with a neat and stylish person.



### **Do not go to extremes.**

The famous investor Warren Buffett recommends investing 10% of your income in self-education. Do not waste your entire salary on courses and certificates. That's the opposite extreme and it's really no better than forgoing education altogether. Everything in moderation.



# Take a personal inventory

TO MAP OUT YOUR PATH  
TO YOUR DREAM JOB,  
GRAB A PIECE OF PAPER  
AND DO THE FOLLOWING:



1

### WRITE DOWN ALL OF THE SKILLS YOU HAVE.

It can be anything from “good at writing reports” to “excellent driver”. Make sure to write down everything, even if you think it’s strange or irrelevant.

2

### WRITE DOWN A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CURRENT GOALS

on a separate sheet.

3

### CROSS OUT THE SKILLS

that are not going to help you achieve these goals.

4

### TAKE A LOOK AT THE REMAINING SKILLS

and determine which ones you have already mastered and which might need a bit of improvement. Decide what needs to be improved and what can be left at the current level.

5

### DIVIDE THE IMPROVEMENT LIST INTO TWO PARTS

depending on the degree to which you want to develop your skills:



#### NARROW SKILLS

(you already know how to improve them with specific and small steps. For example, “learning Photoshop to improve my web design skill”).



#### BROAD SKILLS

(you plan to learn something completely new. For example, skills like “mastery of business ethics”).

Estimate the amount of money you need to invest in developing each of those skills. Consider the short-term and long-term prospects that they will provide.

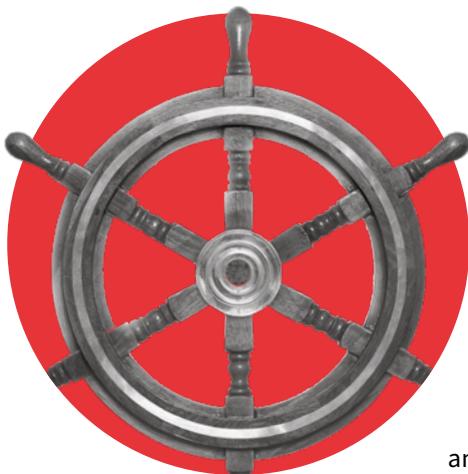
After that, all you have to do is make a schedule that allocates enough time for your learning. Now it's time to start investing in yourself!



CHAPTER 4

# HOW TO CHOOSE OR CHANGE **YOUR PROFESSION**





In today's world, intellectual capital is becoming the most valuable asset for investing in our resources. The high demand for higher-order skills and competencies is caused by the fact that it is much easier to master them today than it was before. Now everyone has access to the information they need, and free YouTube video tutorials are enough even for learning complex programming. The fact that now anyone can learn new things has increased competition.

With the growth in free access to information, the economy of many countries and the number of skilled workers have also grown. Finding a job is still possible for unskilled or untrained people, but such jobs are becoming less common. As we already discussed, machines and automation are replacing them. Now, finding a job is much easier for well-rounded individuals who can do anything from sewing to developing a marketing strategy. The more you can do, the more you earn. That is why linear development, which involves studying from primary school to graduation, is outdated. Now education is a continuous process, and you will have to keep learning new things throughout almost your entire life. If you don't study, you will fall behind.

Additionally, having certain specific skills can more than compensate for their quantity. For example, being a highly qualified IT specialist is much better than knowing a bit of everything. Therefore, it is never too late for you to move on to a new field. Perhaps you already know something that would make you invaluable in another area. If not, it is never too late to learn. After all, we already clarified that education today is the key to success for everyone, regardless of age.

# How to find your calling and change your life

**The happiest people are those who have found their calling.**

They know that they are right where they need to be and they enjoy every day of their lives. They don't need to search for ways to kill time or distract themselves from the daily grind. We all want to be like them, but not everyone succeeds.

That haunting feeling of frustration is a sure sign that you have yet to find your calling or that you have gone down the wrong path.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE OTHER INDICATIONS THAT MIGHT MEAN  
IT'S TIME TO INTRODUCE CHANGES INTO YOUR LIFE:

you are dreaming about Friday from the moment you step into the office on Monday morning.

you are dissatisfied with your achievements and feel like they are inadequate;

you don't see any opportunities for professional improvement in your current field;

you are quite certain that you do not have any skills or talents;

even though you dream of changing jobs, the right opportunity just hasn't opened up

# How to shift your mindset to search for your calling

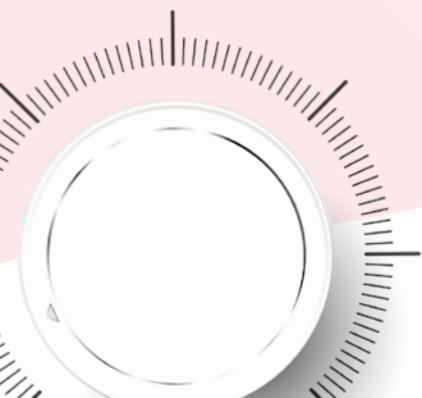
An accomplished person in the modern world may find it too difficult to change their life dramatically. They might even struggle to find the motivation to take the first step.

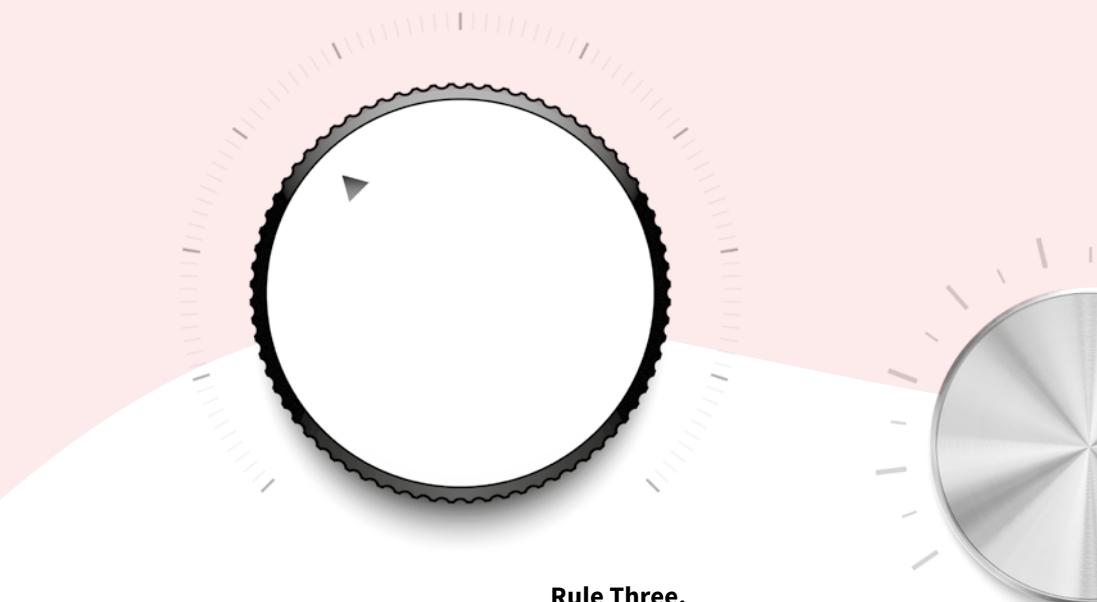
**You won't find your true calling until you shift your mindset to accept change:**

## **Rule One.**

### **Your life is unique.**

You can learn from the experience of others, but do not try to mirror your own life after theirs. Things that work for one person won't necessarily work for another.





## **Rule Two.**

---

**You're building your career every second.**  
Even watching an interesting movie after work is an act of self-care to recover from a stressful day. Your future is the result of the strength of your imagination. If you dream about success, you can achieve it. Your subconscious mind will believe it and translate your dream into reality.

## **Rule Three.**

---

**Your life journey is not linear.**  
Life is full of surprises. It's pointless to plan it years ahead. You should gratefully accept all of the experiences and people that life puts in your path. Make plans and work hard, but always remember to live in the now. Listen carefully to what the world is telling you and how it responds to you. If something feels off, change your path. To find your true calling, you have to be open to new experiences and even the most unexpected changes.

# 3 of the most important factors in finding your calling

1

Silence.

Finding your true calling requires alone time. Try to meditate for at least 10 minutes a day. If you are trapped in the constant hustle and bustle of daily life, you will not be able to truly explore your own needs and desires.

2

A different perspective.

Change is all about looking at familiar things and situations in a new light. Take care of your motivation and your “instruments”. You can make lists, draw inspirational posters, set goals for yourself, and act on these goals. Rest assured that you are already changing!



**3****Openness  
to experimentation.**

Finding your calling is like discovering yourself all over again. Sometimes you have to destroy your old ideas about the world and re-identify yourself. Don't be afraid to try the things you dreamed of doing as a child, or things deemed unusual for people of your age or status.

Everyone sees the world through a prism that depends on our upbringing, our different values, and our personal experiences. This causes many of us to believe that some things are just not for us or that we are not cut out for a particular job. If you want to change, you have to question many of your beliefs and habits. Stop telling yourself that it's too late to change your life or your career. You only live once. Your only goal should be to find happiness and take pleasure in what you do.



You will need to explore various fields to find your hidden talents. Truly immerse yourself in your search, don't just daydream about the possibilities.



# How can you discover your talents?

## **Tip One.**

**Try your hand at something that you've never considered doing before.**

Testing your limits is the best way to discover your resources and true desires. For example, if you've lived your whole life in a city, it might be a good idea to experience rural life for a week. What if you turn out to be a master gardener or a skilled builder?

## **Tip Two.**

**Take some career aptitude tests.**

Many educational centers offer tests that can help you assess your natural abilities. After all, each of us has inclinations and predispositions to particular types of work. Try it out, if not just for fun. You can search online for a "career test".

# WHERE TO START YOUR CHANGE OF CAREER?

First, you need to understand that self-searching, like any development, requires you to leave your comfort zone. Nobody has ever managed to change something in their life or succeed without encountering obstacles or problems on the way. You have to make an effort if you want to truly change your life. Going beyond your normal conditions might be uncomfortable at first, but only temporary. You will get used to it as soon as you get some experience.

There are no linear occupations in the new world, that is professions where you study something at university and then do the same work throughout your whole life, gradually moving up the career ladder. No, on the contrary, nowadays career growth depends on constantly learning something new — monotony is no longer an option. The speed of technological and social changes is increasing, and the average person will have to retrain several times over the course of his life. Modern development will also force you to move on to other areas of activity. For this reason, the ability to adapt to any work and any conditions is becoming increasingly important.

70

Analyze your strengths and weaknesses, and evaluate the situation in that part of the job market that you are considering as one of your options. Analysis of the market and occupations takes time, but it is the only way to find something that will be actually interesting to you, so do not rush and do not set any deadlines. The right choice of profession is the job that matches your skills and abilities. Whatever you choose, it will require time, emotional and financial investment, but the inspiration you get from your work facilitates the process of mastering it.

Maybe even your current career profile is diverse enough and has options to choose from. You can try changing your approach to work or applying new technologies and you will see your work in a different light. If you learn new skills, you will be able to expand your field of knowledge and transform your current job. These skills will allow

you to find something tolerable even in that work that you otherwise really dislike.

If you want to start your career in a highly competitive field, you need to understand what makes you different from other similar professionals. To do this, ask yourself, “The company will choose me over others because... Why?” What exactly are you the best of the best at? Or maybe you are the only one doing it? What are you faster, more experienced or more capable at? What can you offer a company with a thousand candidates that no one else can? What makes you unique and valuable?

## COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

71

Competitive advantage is the key to quickly building your career. You need to understand your advantage clearly in order to be able to “beat” others. Knowing your strengths will also let you to find the answer to the question: “What should I do with my life?” This way, you will understand which of your abilities you should take advantage of and where you can apply your knowledge.

Identifying your competitive advantage is not easy, especially on your first try. This becomes apparent as you interact with three different forces, which tend to change:

- ▶ our assets (what we invest in);
- ▶ our aspirations and values;
- ▶ market realities and dynamics of demand.

Only after analyzing all these factors you can understand what to focus on in your competitive struggle. A career develops best when we pursue worthy aspirations, use our assets and understand the realities of the market. In other words, you need to strike a perfect balance. Right now you are unlikely to be able to describe accurately each of these components — first you need to carefully study everything,

and the best way of doing it is to start doing something. First, let's take a look at these three components so that you understand what they each mean. Let's start with assets.

## SOFT AND HARD ASSETS

Assets are what we possess right now. To make a life plan that you can actually implement, you first need to assess what you have and what you can use. For example, there is a reason why Donald Trump took up a career in real estate. His father was a well-known property developer, and Trump had the opportunity to learn from his experience, as well as take over his network of customers and suppliers.

In a similar manner, we all possess two types of assets that can help us in our careers: tangible (also known as hard assets) and intangible (soft assets).

**Soft assets** are something that cannot be directly exchanged for money, touched or counted. Soft assets include our knowledge, information, reputation, image, brand, personal qualities, and even professional contacts.

**Hard assets** are the amount of cash in our wallet or in our bank account, as well as any other property. Even your laptop is a hard asset. The most useful hard assets are the ones that give you an opportunity to take a break from work for at least six months or a year while looking for a new job.

As you can see, soft assets cannot be easily valued. For that reason, job applicants write their resumes in general terms, such as, "Three years working in a construction company," even though it would be better to list what they learned in those three years. After all, your competitive advantage is the combination of skills, abilities, and qualities the employer requires. For instance, Joi Ito, head of the MIT Media Lab, was born in Japan, but he grew up in Michigan. At the age of 25, he returned to Japan and, using his American connections, set up his own company. This was possible thanks to a unique combination of two cultures (including the languages) he knew very

well — Japanese and American. How is this not a competitive advantage? If you believe, you are lacking in some assets that would make you more competitive, just start developing them right now!

## ASPIRATIONS AND VALUES

This is the second component that constitutes your competitive advantage. Aspirations are our goals and vision of the future and what we would like to achieve in one, five or ten years. Values are the guidelines we use in building our lives. For example, some people focus on making a profit, while others focus on the well-being of their loved ones, etc. It is rare for aspirations to coincide fully with values. Sometimes they even contradict each other. That is why you need to deal with both in order to assess your real situation. For example, someone who loves his job works better than someone who simply wants to make money. In the heat of personal development, it is important not to lose track of what you are really doing it for.

## MARKET REALITIES

The final piece of the puzzle is the conditions we live in. Skills, experience and other assets are not worth anything if the market does not recognize them as valuable or have demand for them. For example, Joi Ito would have unlikely achieved such success had he spoken Czech instead of Japanese. That is why it is so important that your knowledge and skills match the realities of the world. Sometimes this match is coincidental, and sometimes it is a planned result. To acquire the necessary assets, you first need to understand clearly which ones your future employer favors. The same applies to aspirations: is it possible to realize them in the market of your choice?

For example, before opening his Italian-style coffee chain in the United States, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz first visited about a hundred cafes in Milan and Verona. He took notes of everything he saw there because he wanted his chain of coffee shops to accurately reflect Italy. He was also guided by the needs of his future customers since he knew that without guaranteed demand his offer would be doomed to fail.

Similarly, it doesn't matter how hard you work or how much you love your job if there is no one in the labor market willing to pay you for your services.

So, we have learned that all these components — assets, values, aspirations, and realities — need to complement each other. Browse online to familiarize yourself with your market and see if there is a demand for your skills. In case there is, where exactly? What if you are passionate about a job, but not as competent as others? Each component has to be assessed with the context of the other two in mind. You should do it regularly: the realities of the market change over time, and so do your values and assets. To achieve a competitive advantage in the market, you need to work on these three components simultaneously and continuously.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT

74

The following steps will help you better understand these three components and prepare yourself for changes:

- ▶ First, update your resume. When describing your skills and experience, you should clearly indicate your competitive advantages. Use this sentence as a template: “Thanks to my strong qualities/skills/knowledge, I can do (such and such) better than other professionals in my field.” Also, ask yourself how would your competitors end this sentence?
- ▶ List your key assets that are relevant to the realities of the chosen market in your resume. Do not write in general terms, such as “I am good with technology.” Be more specific: “I can teach training courses and seminars on topics related to technology and IT developments.”
- ▶ Search for your “perfect employer” on social media. For example, the head of the company of your dreams or its employees. Follow this company’s news in order to understand how its industry

is changing. This way, it will be easier for you to find out about new opportunities and the risks you should be careful with.

- ▶ If you still have doubts about choosing your future area of activity, take a look at your calendar, day planner, diary or old correspondence. How did you spend most of your weekends last month? What about the last five Saturdays? If you are devoting all your free days to the same task, it may very well become your future profession. After all, you would only spend your weekends doing something you really enjoy.
- ▶ Think about how useful your current job is. What would happen if you disappeared from the office? How would the company handle your absence? And what about your coworkers? This will help you realize the value of your work and, perhaps, start appreciating it once again or, on the contrary, you might realize you are only wasting your time. In addition, try to recall what others, such as your boss or clients, praise you for. Most likely, things they like most about your work are your strengths. What if your colleagues asked you for help or advice, what would that be about? Talk to them and ask them to point at your advantages.
- ▶ Create an investment plan for your soft assets. Perhaps you need to attend more business conferences or take online courses in order to develop certain skills.

## HOW TO FIND A NEW CAREER

So, now you know who you are, what your advantages are and the state of the world around you. The decision to change your profession can come at any age, whether you are 25, 35 or 45 years old. However, the older you become, the harder it is for you to take this risk, as many people are still guided by prejudice. They believe it is too late for them. But they really shouldn't think so! You can change jobs at any time. Still, how exactly can you find something you like, especially if your previous experience is so different from your desired job?

When switching to a new industry, your best option is to look for areas related to your previous work, or those where your experience and existing skills can be useful. Another option is to look for work in an industry where you already have useful connections that may come in handy. For example, if you decide to get a job in journalism and you know some famous businessman or scientist who would agree to give you an interview.

In a similar manner, many successful journalists are moving into the PR industry, where their sociability and proactivity are highly valued. An IT specialist who developed a piece of marketing software can work in the department that sells his program, as he is familiar with every aspect of the product. A foreign language teacher can become a translator. This principle is the easiest way of changing careers.

Another option when you want to find a new calling in life is the time when your parental leave is over. Not everyone wants to go back to their old work and some are tempted to make changes. After all, when else could they radically change their lives, if not now? Of course, the success of such changes depends on how prepared you are.

Do not put it off until starting your job search. Pick options and look through job offers in advance. You should start your preparation right away; this will allow you to adapt to a new job quicker. After all, you will still need to brush up your skills or learn new things. Most importantly, you need to know what you want and to be confident during your job interview.

You can sign up for specialized courses a year in advance before starting your new job. In addition, you should read up specialist literature on the subject. Immerse yourself in someone else's experience by watching YouTube videos, attending seminars or talking to people who already work in this field. Write down the steps you will need to take in order to prepare for working in the new profession.

Once you have decided on the general direction, you can move on to smaller details. Start browsing available job offers six months in advance. It is enough to monitor them a couple of times a week. This will give you an understanding of the labor market: how many job

offers get published, what salaries they offer and what kind of experience you need. That way you will also learn about the aspects of the job that are specific to your city since every job is different in different regions.

First, you need to understand that this choice is only yours to make. You should not shift this responsibility to your parents, friends, children or society. Only you can turn your life into what you picture it to be.

## **STEP 1. IDENTIFY WHAT YOU ENJOYED MOST ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS JOB**

Sometimes it is hard to remember what it is exactly you loved about your old field of work before you left it or lost interest. However, it is very important! Remember the years when you still enjoyed doing what you did. In what areas did you feel the most responsibility? And in what areas did you have the most influence? Was your job satisfaction related to working with people? Or maybe you enjoyed conducting research or making deals?

77

Believe it or not, but whatever you did most naturally at your previous job and with the most ease and pleasure is actually your goal. This is what makes you valuable as a professional and what you need to use to your advantage.

## **STEP 2. DETERMINE HOW AND WHEN YOU STARTED FEELING DISSATISFIED WITH YOUR PREVIOUS JOB**

Remember your last job and ask yourself what you were missing there. When and why did you feel you were not performing well enough, that your work was not appreciated or that you were unhappy? What was it about your job that you disliked from the very start and what only after some time? Where, in your opinion, was your potential wasted?

Write down five reasons why you want to change jobs. Just make sure it's more than just "it bores me." The reasons should be more specific such as "I am bored because there are no prospects for career growth

anymore.” Then write down five qualities that your new job should have, for example, “regular change of scenery.”

### **STEP 3. THINK ABOUT WHAT COMPANY OR PROFESSION YOU WANT TO WORK IN**

Now you need to brainstorm: is your perfect company big, medium-sized or small? What kind of leadership do you want to have there? How many days a week do you want to work? What salary do you need? These details will help find out what types of organizations will suit you.

Take a sheet of paper and make a list of all the professions you know. Strike the options out one by one: first, cross out the professions that you do not want to work in under any circumstances, then those that are not available to you for health or some other serious reasons. Then eliminate the ones that you like, but are too risky. Finally, consider the options that remain and gather as much information as possible about them.

What do people working in this profession do in their workplace every day? What kind of environment do they work in? How much are they paid? What affects their income? Every profession has its pros and cons. Make a list of both. Additionally, make separate lists of skills and abilities that you will need to develop in order to move up the career ladder. Find out what kind of education the employers offering such jobs favor. Sometimes a job requires education that does not match its title.

### **STEP 4. START WRITING YOUR STORY**

Now that you know what you liked about your previous position and why you want to make changes, you can begin writing your story. Start by writing a resume and cover letters. Thanks to answering the above questions, it will be easier for you to ace your job interviews: employers are often interested in your prospects and the motive behind leaving your previous job. Learn to talk about yourself in a way that would be equally appropriate for sharing with your loved ones and during a job interview. This will help you embark on your new career path.

## STEP 5. TRY OUT THE PROSPECTIVE JOB FIRST

You don't always need to get the job in order to do it. You can watch YouTube videos on the topic or try performing one of the daily tasks associated with this occupation. For example, if you want to become a journalist, start writing articles. If you want to work as a doctor, take first aid training courses. Did you like it? Do you want to learn more and keep doing it? Then it is probably the job for you. If you have any doubts, try some other job as well, or try doing the same one until you have a more definite opinion. You need to have a clear "yes" or "no" answer. Ask yourself what you like about this profession and what you dislike? Which feeling is stronger?

You need to organize and analyze your answers to these questions in a quiet and relaxed environment.

79

Remember: no matter how old you are and what previous experience you have, your new choice of profession does not have to be permanent. You can always change it, so there is no need to worry. You achieve the best results where your inspiration and motivation lie. If you want to change your area of work, all you need is to learn the necessary skills.

By the way, your answers to these questions will help you even if you are a school graduate or a student looking for your first job. In assessing your current position in the labor market, the prospects and advantages of each choice, do not neglect critical thinking. Use these techniques to avoid illusions.

# The Wheel of Seven Questions Technique

This technique involves asking yourself a particular sequence of questions whenever you face difficulties or confusing situations. These questions allow you to reflect critically on the circumstances and analyze the situation.

Suppose you need to make a decision regarding the adoption of a new company development strategy. Here's what you should do:



## **Assess the importance of the issue.**

Is it really important enough to be worthy of consideration? What is the idea behind it? You may come to the realization that the company actually needs rebranding instead of a new development strategy.



## **Assess the clarity.**

How clear and transparent is the situation? Do you need any additional information to understand it properly? Picture this: you and your team are discussing the new strategy. Suddenly it becomes apparent that everyone perceives the situation differently.



## **Assess the credibility.**

Has all of the information been verified? Which data is definitely correct and which points may be misleading? Look at the proposals put forward by your employees and assess their arguments. Where did they obtain their numbers and graphs? Are all of the numbers verified or did they just make assumptions?



## **Assess the logic.**

See if the relationship between the cause and effect is logical. For example, the company can assume that a certain approach will result in the predicted outcome. But will it? Is there

a possibility of different results? Is it a direct, indirect, or false relationship?



#### **Assess the scope.**

Approach the issue from a different perspective, perhaps even a perspective completely opposite from your own. The solution to your problem may be where you least expect it. Could better financial results be achieved without changing the development strategy?

TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION, ANSWER THE ABOVE QUESTIONS AND EVALUATE THEM ON A “WHEEL” SCALED FROM 1 TO 5



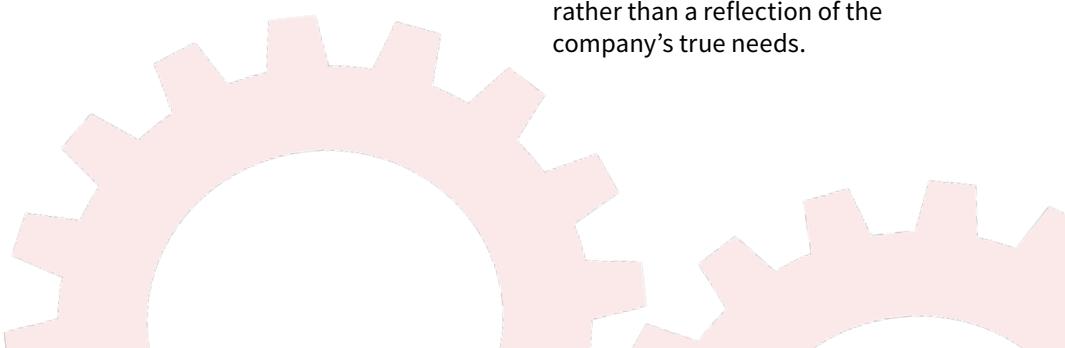
#### **Assess the complexity.**

What makes this problem difficult? Which aspects of the problem need to be resolved urgently? In other words, you need to prioritize the obstacles that stand in the way of adopting the new strategy.



#### **Assess impartiality.**

Does anyone, including you, have a personal interest in the outcome of the decision? Would you and the team be prepared to adopt an alternative decision? Once you answer these questions honestly, you may discover that the need for a new strategy is, in fact, a self-centered invention proposed by the management team rather than a reflection of the company's true needs.



# Upgrading your critical thinking skills

THE 4 C'S

An expert group from Microsoft, Apple, Cisco, and Dell came up with the concept of the Four C's back in 2002.

In the 21st century, you must possess all four of these key skills in the workplace.

THESE SKILLS ARE:

critical thinking,  
creativity,  
communication,  
collaboration.

Now, there is a reason why critical thinking comes first on this list. This is by far the most important skill for any modern-day specialist. And there are a number of reasons for this:

We live in the so-called era of “post-truth”. Verifying and filtering all the information that you receive is crucial.

Our society is oversaturated with information, and we must learn to navigate the never-ending flow.

The world around us is constantly changing. You need to adapt quickly to handle the onslaught.

# Verification Technique

When receiving new information, make sure to carefully analyze it and check for manipulation or logical errors.

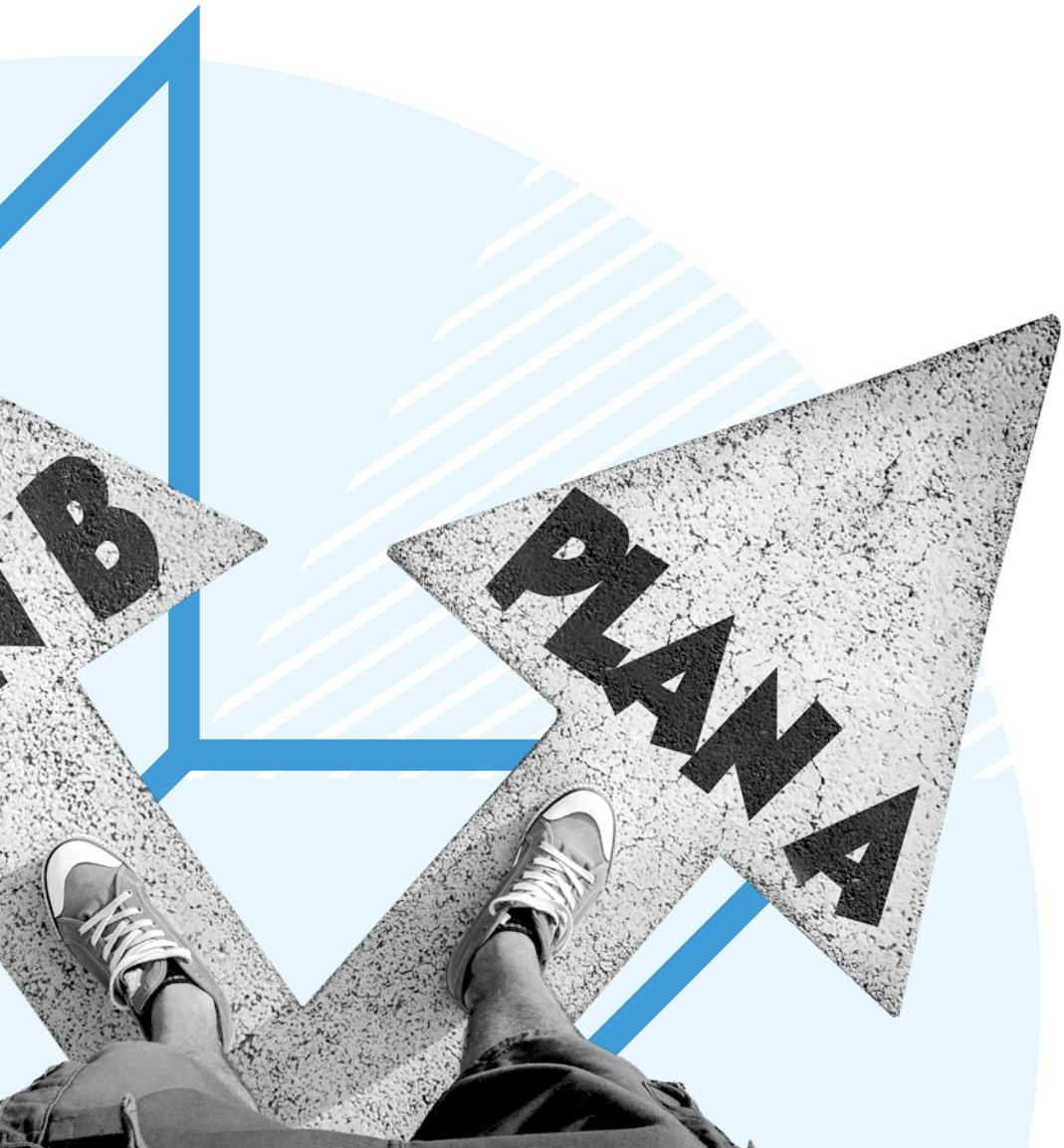
Ask yourself these seven questions as you're working with the information:

- Do I understand the subject of the discussion?
- Is there any contradiction between the arguments or pieces of information?
- Has the subject changed at some point during the discussion?
- Is there enough evidence to understand and accept this point of view?
- Do all of the arguments seem valid? It's best to double-check the information on the Internet, using several different sources to verify authenticity.
- How clear is the relationship between the causes and effects? Does the conclusion stem from the arguments given?
- Are these facts confirmed by practical examples? Are there any links to reputable research or statistics?



CHAPTER 5

# ABZ PLANNING AND GAMBLING ON RISKS



# Moving up the career ladder: risks and stages of development

**Decide for yourself if you are ready to make a breakthrough in your career right now? The answer to this question is not as obvious as it might seem. Look at the pros and cons with this list of risks.**

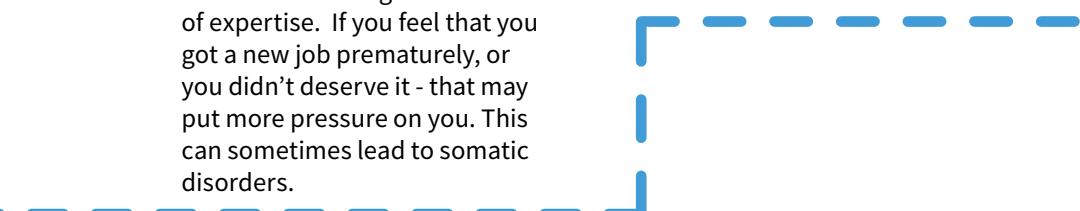
## **Conflict between role and personality.**

Some people lack a natural disposition towards leadership. They may be soft-spoken or anxious, which can make it difficult for them to lead a whole team. Sometimes, you have to invest a lot of your physical and psychological resources in order to properly adjust to your new position. This can negatively affect your health. The same goes for a lack of expertise. If you feel that you got a new job prematurely, or you didn't deserve it - that may put more pressure on you. This can sometimes lead to somatic disorders.



## **Office politics.**

Opportunities for promotions are often accompanied by competition between coworkers. A person of high status is an easy target for rumors and gossip. They face an increased risk of falling victim to office politics.





A PROMOTION CAN PAVE THE WAY FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES, BUT IT CAN ALSO BRING NEW RESPONSIBILITIES.

### Longer working hours.

New responsibilities often take up more of your time. Spending more time at work means spending less time at home or out doing something you enjoy. Therefore, it is important that your promotion doesn't clash with your values. If you tend to put your family first, you may have a hard time sacrificing family time for a raise.

### Rude awakening.

It may happen that, having taken the desired position, an employee might suddenly realize that for some reason they are not prepared for the new role.

THEREFORE, BEFORE ACCEPTING YOUR NEW JOB, IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF YOU. THIS UNDERSTANDING WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS.



As we have already found out, every specialist needs to keep learning. Because of high competition, there is progressively less room left on the labor market, and now only the best of the best can take it. Having “average” skills is no longer enough. The difference in salary between an “average” worker and someone with a higher level of skill will be like night and day, and this gap between specialists with different levels of proficiency only keeps growing. There are two types of applicants, and they behave differently at job interviews:

- ▶ The first type says: “Your company is awesome, and I want to be part of it and contribute to its development.”
- ▶ The second type remarks: “You have a great company, but I noticed that it has several weaknesses. However, I know how to fix it.”

Candidate #1 is the average employee, while candidate #2 is the one who will move the business forward. To become the second type, you must learn to think critically. This will guarantee your career growth and development. What else can help you never stop and keep moving forward? No less important is the ability to plan and calculate risks, especially in the process of finding your new calling and job. After all, you will inevitably have to come to terms with risks at some point, even if it is the risk of wasting your time rather than money. However, in such an event, you can try to foresee all possible scenarios. There is a special and effective way of planning that will help with this.

## USING ABZ PLANNING FOR CAREER GROWTH

ABZ is an approach to planning that promotes learning from trial and error, just like all people do. Using ABZ, you can quickly adapt to changing conditions and even to changes in your own decisions, confidently progress towards your goal, and be ready for whatever awaits you around the corner.

ABZ planning is useful both to someone who is just starting their career, to graduates, and even to those who are over 50. After all, a career is a life-long journey without a beginning or an end. No matter how old you are, where you work and how far up the career ladder you are, you always need to plan your next steps and adapt constantly. The ABZ method involves both planning and adaptation.

**What does ABZ even stand for?** These letters represent components of your global comprehensive plan for achieving your goals.

**Plan A** is your primary plan that represents what you are doing right now. You can adjust plan A as you learn or advance in your search for a job.

**Plan B** is what you will do if you decide to change your end goal or your path to achieving it. That is why you can have more than one plan B at the same time. For example, in case plan A fails, or you discover a new opportunity and change your priorities. Plan B involves making all sorts of changes, so you do not need to think it through so carefully. It is just an outline of your escape routes and alternatives.

As soon as you start realizing that your plan A is no longer valid and move on to plan B, it becomes your new plan A.

**Plan Z** is your backup plan, your lifeline. After all, the show must go on, even if you find yourself caught in insurmountable circumstances. This plan helps you find a way out of your problems in business or your personal life. For example, if you failed in your new project or decided to change your life dramatically. Cases like this are the reason for the existence of plan Z, which gives you confidence in the future and helps you take risks without fear of uncertainty.

During our career development, we cannot know which plan is best for us until we try different options. Planning and adaptation are also impossible without deciding how we want to see our future. If you agree to the first job with a decent salary you find, you may not get closer to your real goal at all, even if it provides you with an immediate reward. It is best to think and plan two steps ahead, which is why you need three plans: A, B, and Z.

If you do not know what your first step should be, take the one that can open the most opportunities for you. For instance, if you are interested in management, consulting is a logical place to start, since the skills and experience you acquire working as a consultant will be useful at all stages of a career in this industry.

Therefore, a good plan A is the one that allows you to remain flexible and switch to one of your plan B options if something goes wrong. For example, if you complete an internship at a pharmaceutical company only to realize that it is not the right job for you, you can move on to your next option.

To create an ABZ plan, protecting yourself from possible risks and preparing for any changes in the market or in your decisions, proceed in the following stages:

- ▶ First, make a list of your current biggest doubts and problems you may encounter while building a career. Also, list any uncertainties you have about it. How will you know that plan A does not work and it is time to move on to plan B? On the other hand, what will indicate that plan A is progressing the way it is supposed to?
- ▶ Write down your current plan A, then plan Z, which would describe your way out of the most difficult problems and doubts that you have identified. After that, outline some thoughts on what your plan B may be, based on the already existing A and Z.
- ▶ Invite for a coffee your former colleague who also changed his job. Alternatively, it could be a friend, who used to work in the same professional niche as you, but left before you did. How did they do it? Why? Did they fail at first? Have they had any success? How did they know it was time for a change of plans and their career?
- ▶ Make a plan for the development of your universal skills, or, in other words, the skills that can be applied to several different fields. List all your skills that can be used at the same time in several areas that interest you, for instance, such areas as management and video games. What skills are in demand

in both of them? Do you already have such skills? Or do you have to learn them? Universal skills make it easier for you to switch from one plan to another while avoiding unpleasant risks. Start developing the skills you have listed right now by signing up for courses or at least a conference related to the topic.

- ▶ Start a pilot project that you can work on during the evenings after work or on weekends. This project should be based on your skills and experience that can be applied in a related field. This will give you a backup plan and, if your plan A does not work, you will be able to switch to working on your project full-time.
- ▶ Contact five friends working in related areas and invite them to meet with you. Compare your career plan with theirs. Keep in regular touch with them so you can benefit from their experience and information. This will also make it easier to make a plan B, and, if necessary, try yourself at their area of activity.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE RESULTS AND PROFIT

90

Now let's talk about how you can achieve results and profit anywhere. To achieve quick results, you need to stick to the following formula: learn fast, learn the necessary skills and immediately put them into practice. In other words, the faster you complete your training and actually test your knowledge, the faster your earnings will grow. All training at Lectera is built on this very principle: quick training, quick results.

However, there is still a long way to go before gaining the necessary skills. You can say you fully mastered a skill only when you can perform it automatically, without thinking. Until then, what you have is not a skill, but merely an ability. To use it you first need to think out all the steps. As you develop your abilities they turn into skills. That is why you need to practice your abilities repeatedly.

By improving your skills and abilities, you reduce the time to complete the actions. The lines between their steps get blurred and they look like a single action. In other words, you start completing different steps without recognizing them as separate steps anymore. Then these steps merge with even more steps. Eventually, your whole work becomes a single continuous process that no longer requires any detailed examination or reflection on your part.

To turn ability into a skill, you first need a **personal development plan**. This should include an overview of your existing knowledge, skills and behavioral patterns that need to be changed or improved. To make such a plan, ask yourself the following questions:

- ▶ What information sources do you know you can use to acquire new knowledge, skills or abilities?
- ▶ To what degree do you need to develop your current skills to prevent others from surpassing you?
- ▶ What criteria should you use to evaluate your progress?
- ▶ What deadlines should be set for the completion of each separate step of your plan?
- ▶ What help can you expect from your company, management or coworkers?
- ▶ What sources of funding should you consider?
- ▶ What unforeseen circumstances may arise when implementing your development plan? Do you have any restrictions (such as a health condition)?
- ▶ What are the main goals of your plan you need to work on separately?

Your training and personal development should be a single continuous process. To do this, you need to try something new all the time, expanding your experience. You should also familiarize yourself with

different ideas and methods used by professionals working in your area, and then apply the acquired knowledge in practice. The important part is to stick to a systematic approach in your training and development. It has to be continuous — only this way you will be able to achieve truly incredible results.

The development of skills largely depends on your social circle. To learn something faster, it's a good idea to meet someone who is also developing in the same area as you. For example, join a club where you will be able to discuss regularly the experience you gained within a week or a month. This way, you will also be motivated to keep up with the others. You need new acquaintances to develop in a new area. With the old ones, you will never be able to surpass your existing skills.

As we have already discussed, self-education is one of the best ways of increasing your income. This includes not only seminars but also continuous reading. What would be useful to read? Books on the topic you want to study, articles, scientific papers, blogs, handbooks, autobiographies of famous professionals, etc. Dedicate at least 30 to 50 minutes a day to reading. You might be wondering, what could possibly be achieved in merely half an hour? However, even this will be pretty soon beneficial for you. You shouldn't shorten the time allocated to learning, otherwise, your brain will not be able to process and memorize new information well enough, and you will only waste your time. Fifty minutes a day is the perfect length of time spent reading. However, even if this is a luxury you cannot afford, you always have five spare minutes during your lunch break as well as super helpful courses from Lectera. The most important thing is to stick to a systematic approach. You must work on your self-education and personal development each and every day.

Taking notes as you learn also helps. Keep a notebook just as if you were attending university lectures. Write down everything important that you have learned during these 50 or 5 minutes a day. You can study during lunch breaks or on the subway on your daily commute. Revise the material you learned after 1-2 days as if you were reading it for the first time. When learning new things, you should not forget about reinforcing your old knowledge.

I still recommend loading your brain with new information in brief five-minute intervals. That is exactly how I work with Lectera and I recommend you do the same when planning your training on our platform. As soon as you wake up, spend 5 minutes on an educational video or audio. This way, you will instantly get yourself and your body in a productive mood, and your brain will focus on the tasks. Then study for another 5-10 minutes on your way to work and 5 minutes more during lunch. In total, you will be spending 15 to 30 minutes a day studying and developing easily! You will also be approaching your goal as quickly as possible and with minimal effort. Just try it and you will be shocked at the incredible results that you can achieve by such regular and segmented training.

Make a list of tasks for you to do. For example, trying to practice the NLP technique, you got from a book about sales. Schedule such tasks for the week to develop the skills you acquired. Gradually raise your bar: if you feel that you can read more, do it. If you think you need to watch another video lesson, go for it: listen to podcasts, read blogs, study the biographies of successful people, but most importantly be proactive and systematic in your studies!

## HOW NOT TO BE AFRAID OF TAKING RISKS

Any movement forward implies constantly encountering something new. Risks are an integral part of this. At times, all of us feel stuck in a dead-end, and problems are the only thing waiting for us wherever we go. This happens when we find ourselves in a new place, without any allies, when we run out of money or when friends stop inviting us to parties. Despair can strike you at any time, and when this happens, it is important to follow the strategy used by entrepreneurs: you need to keep moving. Just keep moving, and that's it.

In 2008, the founders of Airbnb had a small problem: they went broke. Originally, their company made money by offering everyone who had a spare sofa, or even an air mattress, to rent them out. The

founders spent all their savings on this business idea, but it was still not enough to recoup the costs. They needed to come up with a new business idea in addition to renting, and they settled on selling breakfast cereals. This was happening at the time of a presidential election in the United States. This is how they came up with Obama O's and Cap'n McCain's cereal, which they began to sell on their website for \$40 a box. As a result, the "pre-election" breakfasts even got featured on CNN and earned the founders of Airbnb \$20,000 in profit.

The guys were able to attract new customers and get a stable income because they never gave up and kept moving, no matter which direction. As a result, investors who heard about it on TV and decided to sponsor it approached Airbnb. Now, thousands of travelers are grateful for air mattresses and beds.

See what I'm getting at? We always need to be on the lookout for opportunities, especially when it seems like nothing can possibly get any better. If you do nothing, the fear and the feeling of uncertainty only intensify. Sometimes we do not want to make rushed decisions and we take too long to think it out, instead of seizing the opportunity and acting. Yes, sudden actions are always risky, but it is also possible to profit from risk.

94

Start small to learn how to take risks, while being considerate and rational in your actions:

- ▶ Set aside time for activities that do not have a specific goal. Set a whole day for reading a book that might not have any particular use, but that you wanted to read for a long time. Attend a seminar on a topic related to your profession, or invite a colleague from another department for lunch. Expand your possibilities by acting differently and sometimes aimlessly.
- ▶ Find an event or a conference on your topic that will be held six months later and in a different city. Buy a ticket and pay for your attendance immediately, so that you won't have to decide later whether to go or not.

- ▶ Choose a day that will be your “always say yes” day, like in the Jim Carrey movie. Say “yes” to everything that happens to you for 24 hours. It’s risky too, right? Well, get used to it!
- ▶ New opportunities are created by new acquaintances. Sign up for LinkedIn or Facebook and get in touch with everyone who can share their experiences or interesting information with you.

In fact, risk awaits you wherever you go. This is the flip side of the changes that you desire so much. Asking your boss for a raise is a risk as well, isn’t it? After all, they might consider you greedy, unfit for the job or even just fire you (at least, that is how you imagine it might go). Nevertheless, without taking this risk you will never get your raise. However, the desire to keep moving forward always outweighs the fear of taking a risk. If this does not apply to you, then this is probably not the right career opportunity for you, as you are not ready to do anything for it.

Surprisingly, the desire to find a stable job and find an area you will be able to work in for a long time is nothing but a risk. By focusing on one thing, you put yourself at the risk of suddenly losing it, being out of a job and falling into the abyss of obscurity. On the other hand, others believe that their approach will be risk-free if they eliminate any possibility of failure, as their attitude will not be subconsciously set on bad results. But isn’t it the other way around? If you are ready to fail, you will always know what to do and be able to withstand it. That is why you should radically reconsider your attitude towards risks if you want to take advantage of them and not to reject any additional opportunities.

So, even the most unusual job opportunities and workplaces that might seem to be full of unjustified risks are worth considering. For example:

- ▶ Work that pays less, but provides you with many learning opportunities. People always pay too much attention to hard (tangible) assets and ignore soft assets, or, in other words, the experience this work can provide them. However, low-paid work often turns out to be the most invaluable in the lives of successful people.

- ▶ Also, consider taking part-time work or a one-off contract. These options are not as stable as permanent work and may seem less promising to you, but in fact, such work is a great way to acquire new skills and start relationships that can later help you radically change your field of work and find your place.

Opportunities can be found in more global risks if you correctly assess their advantages and specifics. For example, young entrepreneurs often hesitate to launch new products or ideas during the time of an economic crisis, since it is generally believed that it is more difficult to make profits at such times. However, experienced entrepreneurs know that in reality starting a company during a period of recession is a way to avoid excessive competition. After all, you will be a rare daredevil, the only one in your field, while others stall at the fear of taking a risk. Many incredibly successful companies, such as Microsoft, were created at the peak of an economic crisis.

Smart risk management requires you to be resilient to any shocks, especially mentally. You can prepare for sudden changes in your life or in the labor market by taking small risks, which you will gradually get used to during a period of stability. Paradoxically, short-term career risks reduce the risks in the long run.

Compare, for example, a full-time editor of a glossy magazine to a freelance editor. The first one has a stable monthly salary that does not depend on the number of articles written and the amount of work done. The second one has to constantly search for new commissions and sources of income. What will happen to the first editor if their glossy magazine suddenly closes? Being unaccustomed to risks, they might panic, while even a canceled order would not be a tragedy for the second editor: they will just go back to their search for new opportunities and are sure to find some work. It is safe to say that constantly dealing with risks makes us tougher as professionals and helps us make our life as stable as we want it to be.

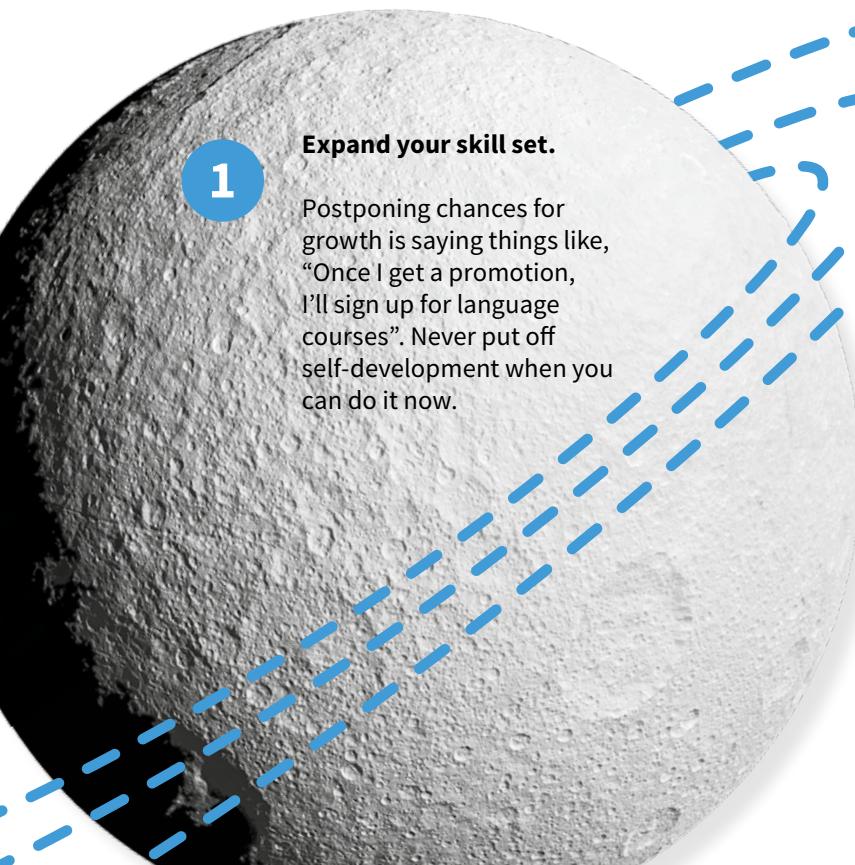
So, now you know that risks are just another way of becoming stronger and more successful. With the help of ABZ-planning, you will never find yourself stuck in a dead-end and will always know how to act in a particular situation, even if you change your mind about your choice of career.

# Achieving professional growth

1

## Expand your skill set.

Postponing chances for growth is saying things like, "Once I get a promotion, I'll sign up for language courses". Never put off self-development when you can do it now.



## 2

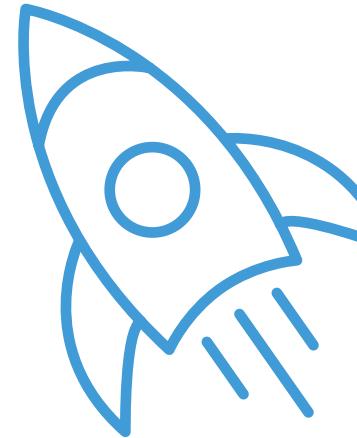
### **Ask your boss directly about possible promotions.**

Your boss should know about your intentions, but equally, you need to prove that you are doing your best to earn a higher position. The best thing to do is to find a mentor who has some authority in the company. This person should be someone who can show you what needs to be done to improve professionally. Show your bosses that you invest not only in personal success, but in the success of the entire company. Self-confidence and self-esteem are also important skills to master when seeking a promotion.

## 3

### **Keep track of your achievements.**

Document all of your accomplishments by writing them down in a special notebook or putting aside a folder for your certificates and diplomas. This will help you create a compelling and convincing argument when requesting a promotion or raise. Modesty is not going to help advance your career.



4

**Build relationships  
with your coworkers.**

The relationships you form with your coworkers are just as important as the relationships you have with your superiors. Coworkers who value you and your work have influence in the company and can also recommend you for higher positions. Moreover, good conversation makes the working day more enjoyable. You can also learn from their experience and improve your leadership skills. Your ability to cooperate with your coworkers shows that you can be a good team player.

5

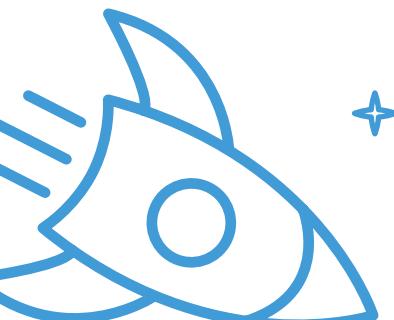
**Don't hesitate  
to suggest new ideas.**

Development is all about experimentation. Feel free to share ideas that can benefit both you and your company.

6

**Apply for the positions that  
you are qualified for.**

Don't rely on learning the ropes as you go. You must be prepared for a new working style, new responsibilities, and new duties. Even if you don't expect a promotion in the foreseeable future, that doesn't mean you should slack off at work. Remember that every minute of your current work is a contribution



to your future. Work as though your desired position is already yours and your boss will certainly notice the effort. Most organizations nowadays invest in human capital and can sometimes create new positions for specific employees.

8

**If you are not sure if your company has opportunities for career growth, start looking for a new one.**

You can always find a place where your efforts will be appreciated. After years of working at the same company, you will have grown both personally and professionally. That is an achievement, too, worthy of good compensation - at a new workplace, if not your current one.

7

**Look into the company's regulations concerning promotions.**

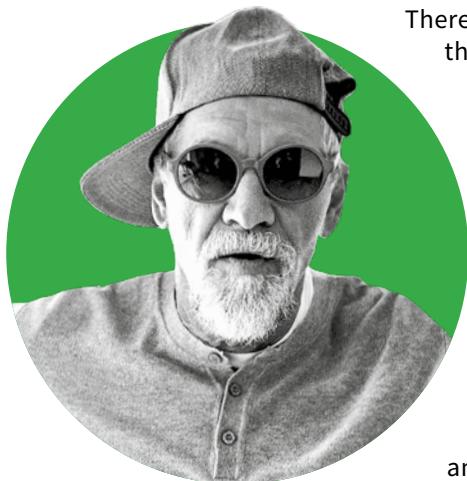
For example, the regulations may state that specific skills or education are required for a certain position. If your qualifications do not match the requirements, all of your efforts may be in vain.



CHAPTER 6

# HOW TO STAY SHARP AFTER FIFTY





There are about 300,000 people over the age of 100 on the planet and this number, according to UN predictions, will exceed 3 million people by 2050.

By that time, the average life expectancy will have increased to about 76. This will lead to older people losing their professional relevance at a progressively later age.

The share of older people among the working population is growing faster than any other age group. More and more countries are “aging” with 7% of their total population over the age of 65.

In Iceland, the employment rate among people in the 60 to 64 age group is at 82.9%, while for the 65 to 69 age group this rate is 56.3%. Finland is the current leader in terms of population aging. It has almost finished the transition from the early retirement model to the concept of a life-long career. Japan has the highest share of elderly people, with almost 25% of its population aged 65 and above. In Europe, there are currently four people of working age for every retired person, but by 2050 this ratio will change to 1 to 2.

Research by the American Association of Retired Persons showed that 40% of working retired people changed their profession after the age of 55. This gave them a boost to go back to having an active and full life.

Therefore, when approaching your “silver” age you shouldn’t consider all your main achievements are over. The time has come when 50+ employees have not just limitations, but an impressive list of advantages as well.

# The benefits of being in the labor market



Why is a mature employee sometimes a much better fit than a young one? You might not realize that there are a lot of benefits to being over 50 that can put you at an advantage over your younger counterparts. Here are a few of your key advantages:

By the time people are in their forties, most will already have teenage children. Employers won't have to worry about you suddenly taking a sick day to care for your child or going on maternity leave.

You are also unlikely to have to take your children to various activities or school, which means that you're less likely to be late, will seldom take the day off, and can easily focus on work without being distracted by thoughts like "Where can I buy the cheapest school uniform?"

You are not searching for a life partner, you probably already have a family, and you are likely well established in your life and routine. Therefore, you'll find the most value in your work, and it'll serve as your primary motivation. And motivated employees are the best employees.

Employees over 50 are more disciplined and predictable (in a good way). You probably have a well-maintained schedule and daily routine. You know exactly how many hours you need to get enough sleep, and will always arrive at work refreshed and well-rested. You are unlikely to go out clubbing the night before work and show up with a raging hangover, and you probably won't get fined for falling asleep at work.

All self-respecting people who reach maturity take care of their health, maintain a balanced lifestyle, and do not smoke or abuse alcohol. Therefore, mature people are less likely to take sick leave and will plan their schedules according to the needs of the company.

Like any mature person, you view the world differently. For example, you are likely to be more accepting of others and won't see issues as simply black and white. You might be more empathetic and find it easier to get along with others; you are able to analyze a situation, prevent conflicts, and offer sage advice. A person like this will be indispensable in any team, especially with mostly young people, where employees are often impulsive or stubborn.

Money is still important in your fifties, but relationships with your team, stability in the company, social security, and the opportunity to share your experiences with someone else are equally valued. And since today's companies rely so heavily on human capital, these kinds of employees are valued above all others.

You have a wealth of experience, both professional and personal, that have left you well-equipped to face any difficulty. You take responsibility and make decisions where others get lost in the details.

Many mature people actually enjoy going to work. They take time to choose a good outfit and apply make-up, and will be completely and consciously immersed in their work from the moment they step out of the house. If you know how to enjoy work, your team and superiors will truly appreciate the positive atmosphere that you bring to the office.

Your high level of competence will be more than enough to make up for your reluctance to take risks or slower pace of thought. According to studies, most people experience declining cognitive abilities after the age of 30. However, their knowledge and experience continue to grow even after they reach 80. And it is that knowledge that is the key to productive work. Indeed, history is replete with examples where curiosity and enthusiasm helped people get a university degree at an advanced age. Intelligence has no age limits.

Most successful entrepreneurs are mature people. Contrary to the popular belief that young people are driving progress, it is the experienced and older individuals who are more successful in business. People over 40 are 3 times more likely to set up a successful company because they strive to cooperate rather than show off their skills, as is often the case with young entrepreneurs.

Employers value cognitive diversity in a team. The best way to improve team effectiveness is by increasing the level of diversity. To do this, team members should come from different cultures and be of different ages. This was proven by a Deloitte study that found that age diversity increases the level of psychological safety in a team. Such teams also embrace innovation more willingly than teams without a diversity of age.



It was also revealed that working retired people aged 50 to 65 have certain advantages compared to the work of their younger competitors: it turns out that older salespeople are more patient. For this reason, customers more often prefer to deal with them, even in online sales and call centers. The same goes for landlords, who speak highly about people over the age of 60 more than about any other age group.

There is also a growing demand for sports instructors for the seniors. For retired people, it will be easier to turn to a peer who understands their physical condition, since many cannot trust their health and body to someone who is younger than they are. The best guides that can lead older people into the modern world are other older people.

Despite the fact that this trend is called “population aging” and, according to European studies, it could soon lead to a new economic recession, older people are making a huge contribution to the development of all industries. It is generally accepted that older people are less efficient and productive than their younger competitors, but they are still a valuable resource for a progressive economy. After all, you won’t find such a combination of experience, skills, and understanding of how our world works anywhere else. For this reason, even the labor market, which used to be focused exclusively on the younger generation, is now changing in order to fully realize the potential of retired people. But if you do not want to readjust to the needs of the labor market, it’s time to think about starting your own business!

## IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO START A BUSINESS

According to the United States Census Bureau, the average age of startup founders is 42. Young entrepreneurs are much less interested in such industries as oil, gas, and biotechnology, and the average age in those areas is even higher at about 47. That is why you should not use social media as an indication on who is more relevant on the market and has better chances of surviving in business — younger or older people. Although it is generally accepted that it is the younger people,

in practice it is the opposite. If you take look at the most successful companies, you will see that the average age of their founders is about 40, or maybe even older. Among new businesses, older entrepreneurs have a better chance to succeed — to be specific, 85 %. In addition, many people go into business once they reach fifty since this age is known to be the peak of a person's intellectual and emotional maturity. Age also provides people with great insight.

Why does it happen? It is all about the experience and contacts that give older people an advantage. Wherever you go, experience has a decisive role. People who only had one or two jobs are not as prepared for what awaits them when launching a new startup.

For example, Steve Jobs first introduced the iPhone when he was 52 years old. As you are probably aware, the iPhone has since become Apple's most profitable and well-known product. Amazon gained its popularity and became an international shopping platform after its founder Jeff Bezos turned 45. As you can see, these remarkable entrepreneurs were far from young, but it only contributed to their success.

108

You can learn to manage your own business at any age, but you need to learn it from practice and experts that are knowledgeable in your field. Another key to success is analyzing the mistakes of your predecessors. You should start by studying past results, as well as future trends. Sure, you will be supported by your strengths, which you, unlike newcomers, already know very well, feel and can show.

## THE SILVER MARKET AS ONE OF THE MAIN TRENDS FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Studies prove that different ages have their own unique advantages and shortcomings. For example, the older generation is more patient, calm and less prone to arguments. They have better control over their emotions and can more easily reach a compromise. And, amazingly, people actually become happier after their midlife crisis! It is during

this crisis that people analyze the initial results of their lives and decide to make changes and new choices. After that, they attain happiness, regardless of their choice: they either start appreciating what they have or once again strive forward to achieve something new.

Life after 50 has three distinct stages experienced by the majority of the population.

## FIRST STAGE. NEWFOUND FREEDOM

This is the stage when those, who already achieved all their career ambitions, suddenly discovered that their attitude to work has changed. The bar has been reached and the dream has been turned into reality. So, what is next? Work no longer inspires. It took too much of their strength, though gave back enough too. The opposite is also possible: newfound freedom can bring those who have devoted themselves for decades to home and family vast opportunities beyond these two aspects of their lives. Children grow up and no longer require their support. As a result, parents suddenly have a lot of free time, more free space in their house, more money and opportunities. This stumps many people who are not used to such a situation because they feel like they have lost something.

This stage causes temporary confusion. Suddenly, your priorities shift, you lose your old habits and gain new ones. This period creates a feeling of emptiness, but then it gets filled with new meaning, goals, and dreams. This is when many decide to do something new.

## SECOND STAGE. OPENING NEW HORIZONS

The second period comes when we start deciding what to do with our newfound freedom. How can we fill this vacant space in our lives? You need to focus and understand your desires to find an answer to the main question: where and how are you going to spend this extra energy?

## THIRD STAGE. NEW FRONTIERS

After some time, people suddenly start to remember hundreds of things they used to like before they started their old job or family. Everyone has something that they wanted to try for a long time but never had enough time (such as a forgotten desire to start taking oil painting classes). Gradually, this vacant space in our lives gets filled by something once again. People weed out everything that has outlived its usefulness and start visiting new places and meeting new people. They develop new habits, such as the habit of once again being able to live without worries or obligations.

Sure, not everyone over 50 goes through all of these stages. Some never find new freedom or, when they do, they still go back to their old life and work. On the other hand, some people act in accordance with these stages and rush towards new experiences.

The important thing is to understand that old age is nothing but another starting point. You can board a different ship and explore new land, where you will encounter unfamiliar cultures, environments or challenges. Once again, you become a pioneer of your own life, just as you were after graduating from school or university. Most importantly, you need to be confident in yourself and find courage, just as you did back then.

## WHERE TO GROW AFTER FIFTY

The most **profitable fields** that you can get into at this age:

- ▶ starting your own business (including multi-level marketing);
- ▶ product/project management;
- ▶ teaching the younger generation;
- ▶ taking up Digital Marketing;
- ▶ sales, communications and independent project management.

Older people will find it easier to begin a career in new and dynamic

startups. **Startups**, unlike more stable companies or public corporations, are more flexible and lenient. They are open to different ideas and people, regardless of their age. Startups are not biased towards any particular gender, marital status, let alone, age group. You should use this to your advantage! Expertise and experience are your main weapons and require constant improvement. The modern world is ever-changing and digital technologies are in every business. If you know relevant information and trends, consider yourself in business.

Other older people might not be very active users of devices in the era of automation and computers, but you will have to be. First, you will need to master mobile apps and software that facilitate work in your field.

Before you start looking for a new field of work or openings, you should **ask yourself a few questions**. Write down your answers and take your time to reread and rethink them later. You might want to change or expand some of your answers.

- 1 What do I like to do most? What could I, in theory, do even for free, and still enjoy my work?
- 2 What natural and acquired talents and skills do I have? What am I experienced at (write down your experience in all areas)? What connections do I have? What hobbies?
- 3 How much money would I like to be making in the next 3 to 6 months? A few years? Write down your answers as specific numbers.
- 4 What limiting factors do I have (health, lack of personal transport, lack of satisfactory computer skills, etc.)?
- 5 How many more years do I want to work?

No matter how you answer these questions, there is one unique skill you need to change your life. This skill is **proactivity**.

## HOW TO BE PROACTIVE

**Proactivity** is the most important skill of the 21st century. It represents your ability to control yourself, your emotions and desires, as well as your ability to act consciously. The opposite ability to go with the flow and be passive, without any control over the situation, is known as reactivity. Of course, you don't need that. Only by being proactive will you easily be able to fit into any life situation and achieve your goal, despite any obstacles or your age.

Proactivity is fostered in our everyday lives. Whenever we do something rather than putting it off for later, this counts as a proactivity exercise. It manifests itself when we take on obligations and fulfill them. It is also important exactly how you react to conflicts, unpleasant situations, and stress and how you can cope. The more responsible the approach you take to your own life and the emotions that you let yourself experience, the wider you will extend your influence. Proactivity teaches us not to use our own weaknesses or the weaknesses of others as an excuse. This ability makes you resistant to stress, be productive and fair.

112

To become proactive, you need to follow some principles both in your work and in your life:

- ▶ You should try to regularly take on small commitments and complete them accurately.
- ▶ Do not criticize the behavior and actions of others; think only how you can become a role model to them.
- ▶ If you make a mistake, admit it, resolve it and learn from it.
- ▶ Always act immediately, do not put anything off until tomorrow.
- ▶ Abandon the rule “What will be, will be.”
- ▶ Keep improving your speech and thinking; learn to think and reply faster and better.

- ▶ If there is a problem, first determine which category it belongs to (under your direct control, under your indirect control or out of your control).
- ▶ You should only concern yourself with problems that are within your reach (i.e. problems that you can influence).

The first step to becoming proactive is to change your outlook on life. Start with the way you speak. Change your typical phrases to more proactive ones. For example:

- ▶ Instead of “I can’t do anything about it”, say “Let’s see what else I can do.”
- ▶ Instead of “I am what I am”, make it “I can find a different approach.”
- ▶ Instead of “He drives me crazy!” say, “The way I feel about this person depends only on me.”
- ▶ If you think, “He will never agree to this,” change it to “I can prepare an effective presentation and at least try.”

113

If at some point, you catch yourself thinking that you are not whining, worried or annoyed with others anymore, that means you are halfway through on your way to proactivity. You are doing it!

To improve the way you speak, thereby improving yourself, remember this:

- ▶ Never complain about circumstances, never deny your abilities and never refuse responsibility just because you are afraid to take it.
- ▶ Spend at least 30 minutes a day on maintaining and building trust with other people.
- ▶ Take criticism objectively. Even if you receive negative feedback, make use of it. Ask someone else to disprove or back up this

criticism. Examine other opinions. If they confirm the criticism, correct your mistakes.

- ▶ Learn to block your annoyance by using your favorite rituals. For example, having a cup of mint tea, visualization, yoga, etc.
- ▶ Write down all cases of your reactive behavior and transform them into proactivity.
- ▶ Write down the effects of both your reactive and proactive behavior. Compare the results.

Proactivity in business and at work will improve your results significantly, leading you to success in life. This applies to absolutely any undertakings. Sure, it is much easier to leave everything to fate, but only through flight, you can discover new qualities in yourself and achieve something.

Another key to becoming proactive is to realize how valuable and experienced you are as an employee. This will not only help you find a new employer but also make them happy with your knowledge and skills.

Start by making a list of people who can point you to a better option or give you helpful advice on the area you are interested in. Talk to everyone you can, and then start preparing your resume and a presentation of your skills and experience. Remember to demonstrate that you are friendly and modern, know how to work in a team, that you can easily learn new things and know how to use different amazing computer programs. If you are a first-rate specialist and can prove it in practice, who cares if you are twenty or even seventy?

James Gaines is a great example that it is never too late to start a new career. Throughout his career, he worked as managing editor of such magazines as People, Life and even Time. Gaines also interviewed heads of state and led an editorial board of 600 journalists. Only in the fiftieth year of his life, Gaines realized that he wanted to be involved in pure creativity, without management and control. He left Time Inc. to devote himself fully to writing books. Since that

can be done anywhere, Gaines and his family moved to Paris, where he wrote a book about Johann Sebastian Bach.

By the time Gaines came back to the United States several years later, he had already published two books. With his experience in journalism, he could get any top position in this field; however, he saw his future differently, outside traditional media. Which means he changed his life twice! The second time happened when, after his career in writing, he agreed to become the editor-in-chief of a startup called FLYP, an online magazine that published video and audio reports. Both its multimedia and online formats were new to Gaines since he had previously only dealt with traditional printed publications. Therefore, he had much to learn, which he did with the help of his younger subordinates. They showed him how to edit videos, work with databases and use the Internet fully.

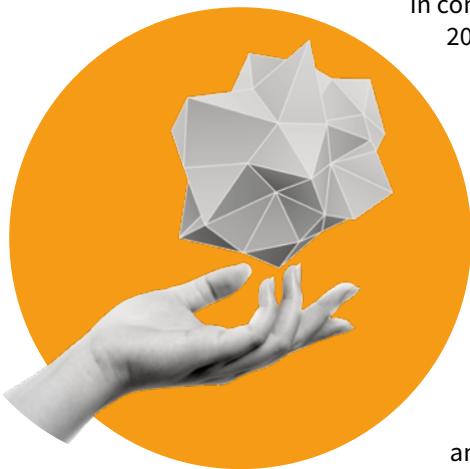
Gaines was able to master the latest media technologies at an age when many others retire. Of course, he did not forget to continue using his competitive advantage: telling people emotional stories that touch their hearts and the format did not matter.

This story should inspire you, as it proves that any person of any age can change their life and their work. Your career does not end after 50 or even after 60 — on the contrary, new prospects open up for you that are not available to young people who do not have yet the experience or resources that you accumulated.

CHAPTER 7

# SKILLS OF BUSINESSMEN AND LEADERS **OF THE FUTURE**





In contrast to the classic image of the 20th-century office worker, the quality that is most valued in employees today is critical thinking. With the advancement of technology, machines, even in the white-collar world, perform routine and repetitive tasks. Old methods and prototypes have become obsolete. The business of the future requires acute, critical and hard analysis, as well as quick and easy solutions. Employees of the future are people who can assess and plan and are **lifelong students**, always ready to learn new things.

## A NEW EMPLOYEE IMAGE

**Teamwork** has never been more valued than it is now. Given the complexity of problems and solutions in the 21st century, lone wolves and isolated geniuses are no longer as effective. The extending reach of business highlights the need for cross-cultural management.

Management in this century is based on flexibility and is carried out by small, close-knit teams. Such cooperation requires the following knowledge and skills from employees of the future:

- ▶ delegation of authority;
- ▶ active listening;
- ▶ providing feedback;
- ▶ conflict management (to resolve heated arguments)

This list can go on and on indefinitely, but these are the main skills that are the basis of teamwork. However, the most important skill for anyone is the skill of communication. Because of global outsourcing, a lot of communication is carried out between different cultures

in different languages. It is usually done via email or online, rather than face-to-face. It also requires cross-cultural sensitivity and willingness to adapt to the needs of others.

## MEDIA LITERACY IS AN ISSUE FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Technological illiteracy used to be a major problem at the turn of the century. However, nowadays, almost everyone knows how to use Microsoft Office, and millennials can even easily start a WordPress blog. That problem was solved, but another one emerged instead — media illiteracy. In the modern world, it is difficult to distinguish “confirmed” and “unconfirmed” information.

Employees of the future must be able to find reliable sources of information and assess their authenticity and reliability. Considering that even the mass media blurs the line between information and entertainment, this is becoming an increasingly difficult task. For example, employees of the future would need to be able to assess whether a blog is factual and objective, as well as to know how to verify information and spot clickbait. In other words, they should critically assess content and its source to decide whether it can be trusted or not. Sounds too simple? Indeed, it might seem so at first, however, due to the enormous growth of new media, there is more and more false and alternative news on the Internet.

118

This also involves network literacy, which is the ability to quickly analyze thousands of search results and select what is actually necessary and useful for your current task. Network literacy also includes the ability to fish out information, even from something as mundane as social media.

Having learned all this, you will forever stay in high demand — you will become a specialist of the future. However, there is more! There are more special skills worth learning as well. Let's discuss them in more detail.

Other basic skills of the 21st century include:

1

**The ability to focus and attention management.** These are necessary to endure information overload, which is the most pressing problem nowadays.

2

**Emotional literacy, also known as emotional intelligence.** This is the ability to identify your feelings and take them under control in time. You also need high empathy, or the ability to understand the emotions of others, which is especially important in your relationships with colleagues or if you work in the service industry.

3

**Creativity.** Due to the automation of routine tasks, there is now a demand for the work that computers and machines are simply unable to do. We are referring to generating fresh ideas, meanings, and concepts.

4

**Ecological thinking.** This is the ability to understand that everything in the world is interconnected and one thing leads to another. The need for this skill is dictated by modern society, which cares both for each other and for the environment.

5

**Cross-cultural sensitivity.** In the context of globalization, it is necessary to understand and respect the traditions and cultures of other people, especially if you are dealing with the international market. This applies to other age groups as well. For example, if you work with younger people or, conversely, with the older generation.

6

**The ability to learn.** We have already discussed the importance of planning your self-education system. Without constant learning, you will lose your competitiveness. No one can learn new skills for you; you need to take this process in your own hands and strive for development.

Now, let's recall what hard and soft skills are. They will be useful both for holding the same position and for reaching new heights.

## HARD SKILLS VS SOFT SKILLS

First, I would like to remind you of the meaning of hard skills. This term is used to refer to technical knowledge or abilities that are easy to identify and demonstrate. As a rule, you can learn these skills at specialist training courses or seminars, or by reading professional literature and through practice. For example, hard skills include:

- ▶ knowledge of foreign languages;
- ▶ ability to code in C++ (or another programming language);
- ▶ speed typing;
- ▶ speed reading, etc.

Soft skills, on the other hand, are not as specialized but are important for general success in life. These skills are acquired from experience and often over the course of your entire life, without any particular effort on your part. These are above-professional skills that allow you to become more productive, persuasive, etc. Soft skills are subjective and difficult to assess. Some of them could even be your innate qualities. For example:

- ▶ discipline
- ▶ sense of purpose
- ▶ patience;
- ▶ critical thinking;
- ▶ sense of teamwork

According to Fortune magazine, hard skills constitute only 25 % of the success of the richest people and companies, while the remaining 75 % depends on soft skills. However, from the employment point of view, hard skills are more important and significant. Whether you are

suitable for a particular job or not depends on your hard skills, while soft skills play a supporting role. For example, they can help you get the job if your competitor has the same hard skills as you, but you have more soft skills.

You can master programming, but what is the point if you do not know how to work in a team or cannot socialize? Therefore, soft skills affect your career growth: you can be a programmer, but you will not become a boss.

## TYPES OF HARD SKILLS

The set of hard skills you need varies from one field of work to another. However, there are specific skills that you should learn to stay always relevant and competitive. After all, in today's world, this is your key goal. So, what skills do you need?

1

Most importantly, **the ability to use a computer**. Today, almost any type of activity involves working with a PC. The basic skills include the ability to use office applications, such as Word, Excel and KeyNote. The same applies to speed typing, as well as the ability to search for information online and use e-mail. It is also worth mentioning soft skills: you definitely need business communication skills if you want to communicate with your business partners via e-mail.

2

We have already mentioned the difficulty of filtering information and assessing the situation within your team or inside the company. For this reason, you need the **ability to analyze** what lies before you. This skill is useful not only to professionals processing documents or information. We are talking about a broader approach to analysis. You need to be able to figure out anything that will be offered to you, without getting caught up in it.

3

If you **know a foreign language**, you already have an advantage over someone who does not. And if you add another

language to the one you already know, for example, German or Spanish... At the very least, it will allow you to find and understand unique foreign sources of information. At best, you will be able to communicate with foreign customers and expand your network and opportunities across the world.

4

You need to be able to manage projects, marketing, sales, and logistics (of course, depending on where you work). This includes time management as well. Meeting deadlines is not only your direct responsibility but also a skill that many find difficult to acquire. If you work well and quickly, you will always be preferred to other applicants.

## SOFT SKILLS FOR THE HEAD OF A COMPANY

If you hold or want to hold an executive position, leadership soft skills are the most important ones for you. These include the following abilities:

- ▶ The ability to persuade and motivate your employees, bring enthusiasm in them.
- ▶ The ability to take the initiative and responsibility for any situations and failures.
- ▶ The ability to solve problems and come up with logical solutions that will satisfy everyone.
- ▶ The ability to delegate your authority to people who have suitable competencies.
- ▶ The ability to plan, manage and monitor the work process.
- ▶ The ability to listen, support and provide constructive criticism.

- ▶ The ability to learn from your mistakes and stay positive.
- ▶ The ability to persistently keep trying something you cannot do yet or something you cannot do right away.

The importance of leadership skills increases dramatically if you decide to launch your own startup.

Also, as a leader, you will have to work with people, which makes sociality especially important. For this reason, you need to:

- ▶ Master the technique of active listening.
- ▶ Know work etiquette in order to excel at conducting both negotiations and business correspondence.
- ▶ Be able to express your thoughts clearly (both verbally and in writing).
- ▶ Understand the non-verbal cues of your interlocutors when they do not want to talk to you or, on the contrary, are ready to make a deal.

123

You will also have to mentor your team. Therefore, you need to be able to explain goals to them and stimulate brainstorming when necessary. Your employees will be more productive if you learn to recognize their achievements and simply thank them for their work.

In order for your business to stay afloat, you also need to form a strong team as quickly as possible. To do this, you first need to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your employees to find out what kind of person is missing from your team. Properly allocating resources and areas of responsibility is the only way to achieve the maximum efficiency of your employees.

Your team consists of living human beings, and they each have their own problems and differences. You should treat them with understanding. You need to be able to resolve conflicts and have a sense of humor, which will help you smooth things over even in the worst situations.

Employees will only be truly invested in their work if they trust you and are not afraid that you might trick or deceive them. Therefore, you need to know how to apologize and admit your mistakes, keep your word, be consistent and generally act ethically. This is why you need a highly developed emotional intelligence, which will allow you to put yourself in the place of others and understand what they want to hear from you.

If you want your business to be flexible and adaptable to changing market conditions and never get stuck in a dead-end, you must be flexible too. For that, you need to be able to compromise and be on the lookout for unexpected solutions to company problems. Being devoted to your work will help: learning new things is much easier and more enjoyable if you and your team love what you do. Listen to the opinions of other people, especially if they come from your team, and share their ideas. Alternatively, create your own — corporate values help a lot with team building!

The most important thing that you need to understand is that you cannot become a successful leader unless you want to be a role model for others to follow. For example, it is foolish to demand your subordinates not to be on their phones instead of working, if they themselves catch you playing games or using social media in your office all the time.

124

## WHAT ELSE WILL HELP YOU REMAIN SUCCESSFUL?

To determine the set of skills that you need most, ask yourself three questions:

- How important for me and my career is the ability to communicate with other people? Does this ability affect my income?
- Are there any people in my company who are advancing faster than I am? How are they different from me? What can they do that I cannot?

- ▶ How much does my ability to control emotions influence my work?

**Your sales skills directly depend on your presentation skills.** That is why knowing how to give a presentation is something that always pays off.

To make an effective presentation, you need to:

- ▶ Properly express your thoughts and avoid ambiguity. Make sure all words and terms you use are simple and easy to understand for the person you are talking to.
- ▶ Be responsive and brief; demonstrate your friendliness not only in words but also in your behavior. For example, look into the other person's eyes when you smile.
- ▶ Be able to inspire by using your storytelling abilities, which involve engaging the other person in your story. When talking about something, know how to evoke the right feelings that are beneficial or necessary for you.

If you are a team leader (or want to be one), you need to be able to direct your team. It is equally important not to interfere with their work. You are responsible for the environment for your team and your company and for how you change it.

Regardless of where you work and your position, you will always have to communicate and meet a large number of new people, places and situations. This is yet another requirement of the modern world: to be versatile and be able to adapt. Trust me, the lack of flexibility can deprive you of a lot of money.

Business requires a lot of close communication with people, and sometimes with people that you find unpleasant. The ability to resolve conflicts is of utmost importance! Companies are willing to pay a lot of money to people who can settle arguments or, even better, prevent them.

# DIGITAL MARKETING: A MUST-HAVE IN ALL PROFESSIONS

Digital skills are your ability to use digital technologies and resources to achieve company goals, such as in marketing. However, these skills include not only purely technical expertise. Digital skills are also the ability to use ready-made technological solutions such as promoting your products or content through social media.

Any specialist needs to have basic digital skills, some of which include the ability to use:

- ▶ data exchange and cloud storage services. The latter makes it much easier to provide access to the same data for all employees;
- ▶ mobile apps and instant messengers;
- ▶ virtual communication tools (e.g. Zoom for online conferences).

The most important universal digital skills that you definitely need to master include:

- ▶ Knowledge of the basics of Customer Development, understanding of specifics of different social networks and social media.
- ▶ SMO, the ability to analyze the effectiveness of a website or a marketing strategy.
- ▶ The ability to quickly find free and for a fee promotion channels and use them.
- ▶ Good knowledge of software to increase the efficiency of sales, employees or the entire company. For example, WordPress utility software for websites or the classic Google Analytics for gathering statistical information.

Being a specialist just in your own field, occasionally taking courses and building up your reputation and experience is no longer enough. Things work differently now. Business processes are becoming progressively more complicated, and the amount of information is increasing everywhere. There are even new types, ways and means of communication. All that can be automated must be automated. Digital technologies are the key to success, and you should keep mastering them.

Work no longer has strict standards that you could follow for years. Creativity is encouraged: if you are able to notice new trends earlier than others, as well as to acquire and adapt new technology that will facilitate the work of your company, consider yourself a genius!

Modern employers particularly appreciate people who can easily adapt to quickly changing conditions. The way you perform your work today will not stay the same tomorrow. Indeed, you need to be able to change like this, as well.

The demand for digital specialists is extremely high. Additional education in the field of digital marketing, e-commerce, advertising and PR is becoming increasingly popular. Keep in mind that half of university graduates have studied these areas and subjects, so they can outmaneuver you in the labor market.

## EVERY BOSS HAS TO KNOW PRODUCT AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

We have already mentioned the demand for teamwork, but now there are new forms of communities emerging that are based on the integration of different experiences, abilities and visions. Managers deliberately build teams of completely different people and specialists in order for them to see the whole picture and develop it from all angles. A new team management method called Agile is designed to make managing these new kind of teams possible.

Agile Management is an approach that involves flexible development of projects by breaking them into stages and creating prototypes (intermediate versions of the final product). Agile relies on all participants' creativity. This approach originated in IT, but eventually they began to apply it in other areas as well.

Key professional skills required for Agile Management include:

- ▶ Digital management, which is the ability to use devices and software in order to better control the work process.
- ▶ The ability to analyze and segment data, as well as use Big Data.
- ▶ The ability to use visualization tools, such as mind mapping. Mind maps are a way to graphically plan and structure ideas. Another example would be mapping a customer's path, describing the stages they need to go through in order to buy a product from you. All of these tools facilitate the work of your team.

Keeping track of your product life outside the company is also important. You need continuous feedback from your customers or testers, as well as for them to have a sense of ownership of the result.

Working in a team involves many distractions: a constant stream of messages and calls, the need to deal with conflict situations, etc. For that reason, time management and delegation of authority play a decisive role in teamwork.

128

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IS THE KEY TO STAYING RELEVANT**

Keep improving your skills and exceeding your own productivity every day. Personal development will ensure the growth of both your career and income, and speed up the development of all the skills that we discussed earlier. There are some things you will have to learn on your own for your successful personal development. They include:

- ▶ Noticing your flaws and personal limitations that prevent you from advancing.
- ▶ Objectively analyzing the work you perform.
- ▶ Constructive criticism of your own activity.

A personal development plan is a great way to organize your personal development and give it a structure. It could be just several pages long, and it is best to make a PDP for the next year. The time frame is up to you: the minimum is six months, and the maximum is several years. A PDP includes several steps:

- ▶ First, write down your current level of expertise, successes and achievements, and work indicators. Take into account your income as well.
- ▶ Then you plan your personal, educational and career growth for each month. Divide your development into these three separate categories, with each having its own tasks and steps.
- ▶ Take notes on your progress. Also, take note of your new achievements and areas that you have yet to start learning. For example: “I signed up to a three-month language course.”
- ▶ Immediately outline the results you want to achieve by the end of the month/year/several years. For example “This 3-month language course will help me reach Upper Intermediate level.”

Make a separate **list of directions** in which you would like to develop: career, finance, relationships, controlling your emotions, spirituality, character traits.

Break your PDP down into small weekly plans. Always keep it nearby. You can adjust any plan as you go if a goal requires more time or additional resources.

**Distance education** is an excellent way of learning for professionals who want to keep up with the rest of the world and its technologies. You can improve your skills and learn new things without even leaving your own house. It can save you both time and effort.



CHAPTER 8

# HOW LECTERA WORKS AND WHY WE KEEP DOING IT





When we first conceived this project, we did a lot of extensive research and we can confirm that the standard of living today is determined by access to the latest information and technology, which keep changing, improving and becoming more complex all the time. New professional and everyday skills are emerging, skills that no one had even heard of just a decade ago. Businesses are run by Big Data, blockchain and other new sophisticated technologies, accurate analysis, and targeting tools, as well as new process management methods.

The ability to use modern technology and the latest information is an opportunity to improve your well-being, grow as a professional, pursue careers and get an education. People that do not have time for this will inevitably fall behind and fail badly. Once we realized that, we literally saw faces of our parents, friends, people we know flashed before our eyes.

It was painful to think that all these people, still full of strength and energy, would soon have to face serious difficulties. They received their professional education more than 10-20 years ago, and since then the business world has completely changed. Now they have families, loans, long-term plans, and at this point, they just can't start studying all over again. There are also those who realized they picked the wrong profession and would like to learn a new one. There are young women who dream of making a career, but while they stay at home raising their babies, their degrees and professional skills become obsolete. What are all these people supposed to do?

Spending a few weeks or months, let alone 2 to 4 years, studying would be a luxury for absolutely anyone. Especially considering

the fact that the institution of traditional higher education is very outdated and is unable to keep up with technological development.

Understanding that long-term and medium-term education is no longer an option, we came up with Lectera. We want everyone to have access to the latest knowledge on the most relevant and important topics, so that people can learn the skills they need here and now, and then almost immediately be able to apply them and earn much more than they did before.



# How to increase the effectiveness of learning by 100%

1

**Don't just sign up for every online course you come across.** Only choose the programs that seem interesting and will help you achieve your goal. Before you click that Sign Up button, ask yourself: "How exactly will this help me fulfill my dreams?" You should be extremely conscious of the way you approach self-education. Ideally, this education should eventually be converted into income. If you are simply studying without an end goal, you will lose motivation quickly and give up.

2

**Channel the resources of your mind into one focal point.** According to research, a person can only effectively study four subjects at once. Any more than four subjects will undermine the learning process by reducing the amount of concentration dedicated to each area.

IF YOU ARE SIMPLY STUDYING WITHOUT AN END GOAL, YOU WILL LOSE MOTIVATION QUICKLY AND GIVE UP.



3

**Learning should be structured rather than spontaneous.** When registering for an online course, familiarize yourself with the program in advance. Analyze the materials that you will be using (textbooks, tests, assignments, topics, etc.) and then create a study schedule. You should decide when and how much time you will devote to studying, what subjects you are going to begin with, what you are going to read in your free time, etc.

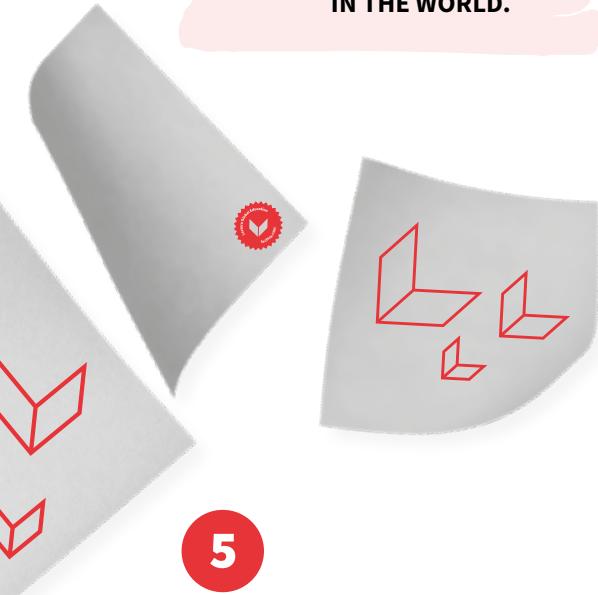
Let's say you decide to spend 40 minutes a day on your studies after work or four hours on the weekends. Make sure that this will not get in the way of your other plans, such as family holidays or household chores.

4

**Focus on understanding the material**, not just memorizing and cramming facts.



**ONLINE COURSES  
ARE AVAILABLE AT ANY  
TIME FROM ANYWHERE  
IN THE WORLD.**



**5**

**Don't set impossible goals. Your goals should be realistic.** Always make sure you finish the courses that you have started. Incomplete tasks will open the door to self-criticism and dissatisfaction. Learn to prioritize. If you are swamped at work, you should probably postpone your studies instead of trying to transform your stress into productivity.

**6**

**Take good care of your health.** If you feel that you are exhausted after work and can't study, you should change your schedule. You should never feel like you're forcing yourself. Constant exhaustion may lead to chronic fatigue syndrome and you may feel like giving up on your studies. Also remember to take care of your eyes, which can be seriously affected by online learning. Buy a pair of glasses or moisturizing drops if you also spend a lot of time on the computer at work.

**7**

**Set up a nice study space.** Choose a comfortable spot that won't make learning feel like a chore or punishment. Online courses are available at any time from anywhere in the world. You only need a computer, tablet, or phone, and access to the Internet.

# An Effective Learning Plan Template



## PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGY OF LECTERA

To provide people with such an opportunity — an opportunity to learn fast and get quick results, especially in monetary form,— it was necessary to develop a completely new approach to education, as well as a new methodology.

I would like to tell you more about them so that you will better understand what Lectera can give you, how you can use it most effectively and how to achieve your goals faster and easier. After all, this is our main goal — to help you fulfill your dreams, put your big plans into practice and increase your income.

So, we proceed from the premise that in today's world we cannot afford anymore an education that takes years and is overloaded with unnecessary theoretical knowledge. Instead, we offer the Fast Education principle. Fast Education is a kind of education that you can get as easily as buying and drinking up a cup of coffee on your way to work.

Another principle, related to the first one, is Money Education. We do not believe that money is the most important thing in life. However, we are convinced that it is necessary to secure those things that are important to all of us: the well-being of our loved ones, their health, their leisure time and a decent standard of living. Everyone needs to be able to earn enough to have these things. That is why Lectera teaches how you can increase your income and earn more, give your business a greater momentum, move up the career ladder faster, become the best among your competitors in the market and start earning passive income.

Our quick training courses do not require any major changes in your life. You can watch our short lessons wherever and whenever it is convenient for you. Completing tasks allows you to develop your skills even further, and, unlike fast food, fast education is very good for you. Each new skill you learn can immediately be applied

to achieve your goals in work and your personal life. Therefore, your education becomes as effective as possible. It is facilitated by:

- ▶ short memorable lessons,
- ▶ only the most essential knowledge,
- ▶ integrated exercises for skill development,
- ▶ the option to apply these skills right away.

This allows you to save time and actually get quick results. To make it possible, each course is developed by an entire team of methodologists, experts, editors, designers, camera operators, and translators. Do you want to take a look behind the scenes of Lectera and see how our educational programs are created? Let me show you.

So, our **first step** is selecting a topic. Our methodologists study the demands of the market and the needs of people in order to determine the topic for a new course.

For **the second step**, our team of experts has to approve the topic. If, for example, it is related to marketing, then the marketing expert must be someone with great international experience and authority in that field. For topics related to psychology, experts in psychology must approve them.

In essence, a team of international-level specialists guarantees the quality of our educational programs. You may have noticed that, unlike most other online education platforms, we do not have courses that are prepared by a single author. This is because we prefer not to rely on the experience of one person, no matter how famous he is. Each of our courses is the result of the collaboration of more than 40 experts working in our company. This gives you the opportunity to receive comprehensive knowledge and see it from all angles, clear of any subjective bias — from the name of the lesson to the skill development exercises at the end.

139

So, if a topic is approved by our experts, methodologists begin work on **the third step**. They determine what kind of users this program is for and what tasks it will help them solve.

In **the fourth step**, our methodologists develop the structure of the future course by making lesson plans, selecting additional materials and preparing exercises. At this stage, their task is to work out the kind of knowledge and skills that users will receive and practice in each lesson of the course.

**The fifth step** is the responsibility of experts, who verify and approve the structure of the course.

We then start creating content for the lessons: editors search for new comprehensive information and then relay it in the most accessible way possible. This is **the sixth step**.

At the seventh step, experts check all the content that has been prepared for the lessons. As you can see, three of the seven steps involve strict verification processes. Our experts are truly uncompromising. They can send a course back for revision at any of these three stages.

Only the content that passes all three levels of verification goes into production, with its materials getting turned into videos. We work with great designers, camera operators, and presenters. In total, there are about 80 people involved in the production of new courses. All of this is necessary to make each of our lessons really useful and understandable for you.

140

## WHAT DOES LECTERA TEACH?

Remember the very first step I mentioned earlier. Lectera methodologists study the market demands and people's needs to find out which courses you need most: what you want to learn, what kind of knowledge and skills will help you fulfill your dreams, how you want to earn money and build your career. These are the requests that we tried to satisfy in the first place.

Studies show that business management, team leadership skills and effective organizational problem solving are the most important for people who dream of advancing their careers. In addition to this set

of skills and knowledge, those who want to permanently quit working in an office and start an independent business also need to learn specialized business skills. Other people, who are looking for a new job, need information on how to properly write their resume, how to act during a job interview and where better to look for vacancies for a specific job, such as secretary, office manager, programmer or marketing expert. Moreover, those who just want to increase their income often need information on where to find and how to master a more promising profession.

In the Digital Marketing section, you can find courses that will offer you all the knowledge and skills you need to be successful in such occupations as SMM manager, content manager, SEO specialist or targeting expert. These professions are in high demand, so finding a job in them should not be difficult at all.

Sales are probably the most popular area of knowledge and skills today. The ability to sell anything, from an idea to a finished product, is one of the most important skills for building your career. In our courses, you will learn how to sell anything to anyone, how to successfully prepare answers to possible questions and objections, how to find an approach to any customer and successfully go through the entire process from presenting a product to closing a sale.

The courses in the Business section are directed primarily at those who want to start their own project but do not know where to start. They teach how to choose the best professionals for your team, calculate your estimated budget, take everything into account and successfully complete all stages on your way to turning a plan into a profitable enterprise. These courses have a lot of new and useful information, even for those who already have their own business but need some inspiration, a new breakthrough or help with optimization.

Leadership and communication, courses on searching for jobs and successful employment, creating and promoting your own brand, time management and developing good habits – you can find all of this in our courses that will help you improve your so-called soft skills, as well as help you be more efficient and successful, no matter what field you work in.

**New professions of the digital age** are appearing in all segments of business: project manager, product manager, direct marketing manager, etc. They are becoming popular and highly paid before universities start preparing first specialists in these fields. Courses that provide the necessary knowledge and skills in these professions are an excellent opportunity to quickly become a specialist that will be in demand for decades to come.

The **Women's Leadership** program is the answer to one of the important challenges of our time. The role of women in modern society is changing, now they have more career opportunities, better chances to reach a leadership position or open their own business. However, traditional domestic chores haven't gone away and there are many women who are not ready to give them up yet. Career, family happiness, femininity, management and leadership positions in traditionally "male" areas of business somehow need to be all combined. We have courses that will teach you how to manage this by properly distributing the resources available to you.

Courses from the **Traffic** section will be useful to both professional marketing experts and independent entrepreneurs. When starting your own business, promoting your own brand or a company brand, you will inevitably realize that you need to think of better ways to attract new customers. In the digital age, the best way to solve this task is by using online channels and social media. Lectera has prepared courses that will teach you step by step how to attract traffic from social networks and other online channels.

**Financial literacy** is definitely one of the most relevant topics in online education. We teach people how to earn money, build the best future they can and find new sources of income, and, of course, we want our participants to learn how to manage properly everything they earn. For this reason, we offer separate courses on how to handle money, investments, loans, taxes and security in the context of the digital economy, as well as other aspects of financial literacy.

Another aspect of business that is the subject of our several courses is **Multi-level Marketing**. The reality of our time is that increasingly people from all over the world want to work for themselves, without

any bosses or deadlines. They want to be able to set up an office in any part of the world they want, rather than in the place their company rents. They'd much rather spend their weekdays working in beach shorts or pajamas, than having to follow the office dress code. These people are ready to work hard to earn a lot, but they prefer to do it on their own terms. What would you advise them? To start their own business? Great idea, but what if they do not have the initial capital?

Such people often find their calling in MLM. This business model is becoming increasingly popular among large companies as an alternative to more traditional businesses. However, like any other alternative, MLM has its advantages and disadvantages. Opponents of this model focus on its downsides. MLM experts often only tell beginners about the advantages when inviting them to cooperate. We approached the topic of multi-level marketing in the same way as any other topic: we studied all the available information, analyzed it and organized it into lessons that can help you understand all its aspects and quickly learn the skills you need in order to succeed. Our experts on the subject checked the course for accuracy. This is how we made our multi-level marketing courses, that can be useful to participants of all levels:

- ▶ To those who want to understand how MLM actually works and whether it is possible to succeed in it.
- ▶ To beginners who are taking their first steps and want to avoid making rookie mistakes.
- ▶ To experienced MLM experts who already earn a good living in this field, but would like to earn even more.

143

So, anyone has the opportunity to get a unique education and become an MLM professional.

Our multi-level marketing courses are truly one of a kind. It is an absolutely unique and powerful platform, which will help you develop your own MLM business. We discovered that there are over 100 million MLM specialists in the world, but no decent platform for training

them. We decided to fix that. And yes, we would like our MLM training to be named as the best in the world. At least, this is what our goal is—to create such an education.

Our courses include everything that modern MLM entrepreneurs need to know: we teach team-building skills, how to become a leader, how to recruit new employees, how to use the latest digital marketing tools, how to attract traffic and, of course, how to effectively and vividly communicate your ideas in public and be a charismatic speaker. We have it all.

## WHAT ELSE YOU CAN DO WITH LECTERA

Lectera already functions as an educational platform that helps people around the world learn new skills and information in the areas that are most important to them. Because we want your dreams to come true. We are happy to play a part in your victories and success. We also believe that together we can help many people achieve their long-awaited success. However, this is just one part of a larger platform—a module we call Lectera Education.

144

Our second module is **Lectera Business**, which offers a business automation system, or simply “turnkey marketing”.

Our third module **Lectera Affiliate** is a comprehensive package of innovative products and solutions geared towards a single goal of teaching you to make money while offering the right instruments to help you achieve this goal. The Lectera platform is entirely geared towards teaching users to make money quickly and effectively. The Lectera Affiliate module offers users the opportunity to instantly apply their skills and receive a substantial supplementary or core income by recommending the platform and the learning programs available on the platform.

Here is how our partners can make money with Lectera:

- ▶ Discounts **up to 90%** on affiliate products.
- ▶ **Up to 88%** of all sales are paid out to affiliates in the form of bonuses and additional income.
- ▶ Marketing Tools — an automated marketing system geared towards sales, promotion on social media, creating and developing the personal brand of each partner.
- ▶ **A product in high demand** — high-quality learning programs developed by an international team of experts and professionals.
- ▶ **Business Machines** — a unique set of instruments for attracting new partners, which any partner can use to build their own team and business, without issuing their own invitations or making any personal sales.
- ▶ **World Pools** — an additional earning tool that provides incentives for our best sellers — people who want to make even more money.

What's more, we provide special training for our affiliates, empowering them to boost their earning power and efficiency. Our events are free for affiliates — including exclusive events with special training sessions for top sellers.

145

Lectera follows the principle of 'Learn and earn'. You can start applying your new skills from the very first lesson. We don't just tell you how to make money — we give you the opportunity to start earning. That's why Lectera Affiliate is an affiliate program for everyone who wants to receive an additional income. By recommending our learning programs, you bring value to others, giving them an opportunity to discover new earning opportunities and improve their lives — and you get to make money while doing this! That's how the Lectera Affiliate module implements the principles of Money Education, which allows all users to increase their earning power.

**Lectera Corp** is the fourth module and is designed to train teams of small, medium and large businesses. Our “quick training, quick results” principle, along with the principle of money education, is what every business needs in order to be more efficient and profitable. We have developed unique “smart algorithms” for assessing the skills of your staff; we know how to measure the level of involvement of your staff in the company operations, as well as their level of motivation. In addition, we have AI training courses on our platform, which completes Lectera Corp as a unique tool to help senior and HR managers train their teams. The pilot version of the Lectera Corp module will be launched in the third quarter of 2020 and will become fully operational in the fourth quarter.

Our fifth module is **Lectera Events**. We regularly hold live events for our students from cities and countries around the world. These include both small-scale seminars for 50 to 100 people, as well as large several-day-long boot camps with several thousand people. We believe that it is extremely important for us to go offline and arrange live meetings with our students. In this way, we not only help like-minded people to meet each other and share their ideas but also eliminate cross-cultural obstacles, which means that we are helping our knowledge reach whoever requires it.

**Lectera Shop** is the sixth module. It is a marketplace where anyone can buy branded Lectera products, as well as helpful books recommended by our experts.

Our **seventh module...** Well, it is still too early to talk about it. However, I promise that you definitely will not miss its launch. Once we are ready to present this project to the world, many countries will hear about it.

Anyway, I can already tell you that Lectera is a permanent member of a number of international nonprofit organizations, including Women One, Shared Interest, and The Hunger Project. Our business is socially responsible and based on high ethical principles, the basis of which are equal rights and equal opportunity.

We create courses that will help you succeed when you need it most. We help people who cannot get what they want due to old age or lack

of educational qualifications, due to the absence of necessary skills or information, or because they doubt their own abilities. Lectera platform has a special section offering free courses to help people in difficult life situations obtain basic skills.

We also do not want to waste our lives in vain, which is why we offer our participants everything they need so that together we can make our world a kinder and happier place. Lectera gives you the opportunity to do this every day. I believe that everyone needs such an opportunity.

Never forget about the habit of learning! Cultivate it in yourself. New technologies, techniques or processes are emerging every day. Regardless of your goals, you should always keep up with them. Be persistent in following the new rules of the game is your only way to become a winner. And the only rule of the modern world is to always keep moving and learning. We wish you the best of luck in all of your future endeavors!



Lectera

Mila Semeshkina

## **LEARN OR GET OUT OF THE MARKET**

A Practical Guide for Developing your Career  
and your Business

Project manager

Kristina Gevorkian

Executive editor

Ekaterina Belan

Art director

Anton Milin

Layout designer

Ekaterina Budnik

Illustrations:

Adelina Anisimova

Valentin Starilov

Copyright © 2020 by Semeshkina.

All rights reserved.

1000 copies

Printed in April 2020 in Moscow, Russia by Kniga-Memoir.

Dmitrovsky per., 4 build. 2, Moscow, Russia, 107031

ISBN 978-5-6044386-3-3



A standard linear barcode representing the ISBN 978-5-6044386-3-3.

9 785604 438633



**Mila Semeshkina**  
is an entrepreneur  
and the Founder&CEO  
of the Lectera platform  
**@ mila\_lectera**

**Mila is also a marketer, a researcher of the modern media market, and a producer of educational courses. She is an international expert in the field of brand creation and promotion, the author of dozens of training programs, and the creator of the “fast education” methodology.**

“By creating the innovative Lectera educational platform, my team and I have repeatedly seen how much and how quickly the labor market changes, the demands of employers, and the requirements of business are quite literally changing before our eyes. We want to give people a set of practical tools that will help them stay in demand as a specialist at any age; and quickly learn the skills necessary to do this. This is the aim of all of our work. This book is for those who seek to remain relevant, who want new breakthroughs in life, and who are determined to achieve success in their career field.

It will be useful for anyone who is trying to determine the path of their development; who wants to take care of the future of their career and plan for their professional growth.”

Mila Semeshkina

**Lectera**

FAST EDUCATION. FAST RESULTS