

## SUMMARY

# Job Hunting in the Digital Age



Online tools and platforms provide easy access to career counselling, skills training, and job openings. Photo credit: ADB. *Jobseekers now have a better chance of finding work with online platforms doubling as learning providers and job matchmakers.*

## Overview

Recent studies predict that many routine jobs will become obsolete because of automation. But the good news is that people have greater access to training and job opportunities, thanks to technology.

This article is adapted from presentations at Asian Development Bank's 7th International Skills Forum in Manila in December 2017.

## Key Findings

According to a United Nations-backed study, the next decade will see the rapid growth of mobile Internet access, cloud-based computing, the Internet of Things, digital data, artificial intelligence, and an increase in computer-driven decision-making and other forms of automation.

In the meantime, job skills that are important today will no longer be needed in 2 years' time. The World Economic Forum forecasts that five million jobs will be lost by 2020. This means people need to learn

new skills in order to cope with these changes.

Courseware site LinkedIn Learning, job matching platform JobKred, and humanitarian organization Plan International offer digital citizens a means to take advantage of these new technologies, and help bridge the skills gap.

## Personalize learning

LinkedIn Learning and lynda.com, which LinkedIn bought in 2016, are evolving at a rapid pace, says Ricardo Duran, senior customer success manager at LinkedIn Learning Singapore, while the needs of learners and organizations grow even faster.

LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network, is used by recruiters and jobseekers alike.

"For the past 20 years, the world went from university-based learning to online demand curriculum, which is not as flexible, to a blended learning platform. And now we are on a micro, macro, continuous learning trend where we want to learn anytime, anywhere. The future is going to be intelligent, personalized, machine-driven learning," Duran says.

"Our overarching mission is to create an economic graph, where every [LinkedIn] member is able to know what skills they must acquire in order to land a job they want. At the organizational level, we want organizations to be able to look at a certain talent pool and understand who has the skills that they need. At LinkedIn Learning, we are pushing out content that is relevant to both individuals and organization to help fill in the skill gaps."

How? It starts with relevancy, says Duran. The learning platform has more than 530 million members across industries and functions, giving it access to the skills individuals and corporations are learning via LinkedIn Learning, and maybe even more importantly, what skills they should learn for the future. "With our insights we are able to do the heavy lifting of curation by pushing out high-quality relevant content based on the person's LinkedIn profile and their network."

## Use big data

Finding a job can be challenging, even with digital tools. Singapore startup JobKred wants to make it easier for jobseekers by using big data in matching employees with employers. It looks at publicly available datasets and uses analytics to scan people's skills, preferred jobs, and work experiences to find the best jobs for them.

"What we started to do is use big data to decode employer demand and predict future skills requirement, and consolidating all the information in one platform as an avenue for intelligence skills gap analysis and, most importantly, personalized digital career guidance," says Gary Gan, JobKred chief executive officer.

JobKred predicts trends in labor markets and advises governments and industry. It also works with universities in Singapore, and offers courses in partnership with Coursera, Udemy, and other online

platforms.

Gan touts JobKred's career counseling, noting that students can be myopic when it comes to plotting their career paths. "What happens is that everyone is fighting for the same few job openings from the same big companies and they do not know what is happening in the working world. They do not know the different paths possible for them; they do not know the skills they need to learn to get toward those different paths."

JobKred can help users with this dilemma, he says. "We are trying to show digital career guidance helps individuals see possibilities suitable to themselves and personalized to their background and their requirements so they can make easier changes and make quicker transition into the workforce."

## Track results to better serve customers

Plan International is a big believer in using technology and online platforms to help young people, particularly girls, find decent jobs. It likes to leverage technology because of its potential to scale and address an enormous problem—youth unemployment.

The organization's goal is to help one million marginalized and vulnerable young people find jobs by 2020. There are 600 million young people who are not employed, says John Trew, global head of skills and opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship at Plan International Asia. And they are not in school or in training.

Plan International has developed a range of online products and services to help young people find jobs. The Yes! program provides a set of online tools for jobseekers, including online courses. Experts develop the courses, which are designed so users can learn "what, when, (and) where they want." The program also has a networking component, where users can connect with their peers and share experiences and lessons.

Plan International also developed an artificial intelligence-powered digital assistant, Tessa, short for Training Employment Support Service Assistant, which is deployed through Facebook Messenger. Tessa provides assistance with employment queries, like resumé building and employment linkage.

Such programs allow Plan International to track users even after they leave the program. "The products are a means to an end for us. What we are really looking for is better, more accurate data, for us to design and develop programs more effectively," says Trew.

## Resources

Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development. 2017. *Working Group on Education: Digital Skills for Life and Work*.

J. Bersin. 2017. *Catch the Wave: The 21st-Century Career*. Deloitte Review.

World Economic Forum. 2016. *Future of Jobs*.

*Future of e-Learning in a VUCA World*

## Related Links

Summary: *How to Prepare Workers for Job Automation*

Explainer: *How to Enhance Skills Development with Digital Learning*

Insight: *Five Ways to Use Information and Communication Technology for Education*



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Gary Gan is the chief executive officer of job matching platform JobKred and was formerly the business development and marketing director at TradeHero.



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