Technology impact on work

Ci Virtual Roundtable - Thursday, 13th December 2018

The roundtable brought together individuals from diverse industries and countries to explore how technologies are impacting employees and the workplace.

PART 1: INSIGHT

Participants shared details of their firms priority technology projects for 2019:

- Creation of employee portals (1-stop shops) to help navigate existing software, and to support employee up/re-skilling.
- Technology solutions that makes learning new (digital) skills or concepts (blockchain) simple and mobile. Solutions that meet diverse learning needs of employees.
- Technology to automate aspects of client/customer service.
- People and analytics solutions that give managers better access to workforce planning / recruitment related data.
- Solutions such as VideoMyJob that make the recruitment processes more innovative
- Solutions that integrate/automate business processes and services (e.g. Workday, SuccessFactors). HCM/ERP solutions such as Oracle Fusion.
- Applications that support collaboration between teams and/or with clients (e.g. Workplace by Facebook, Office 365)

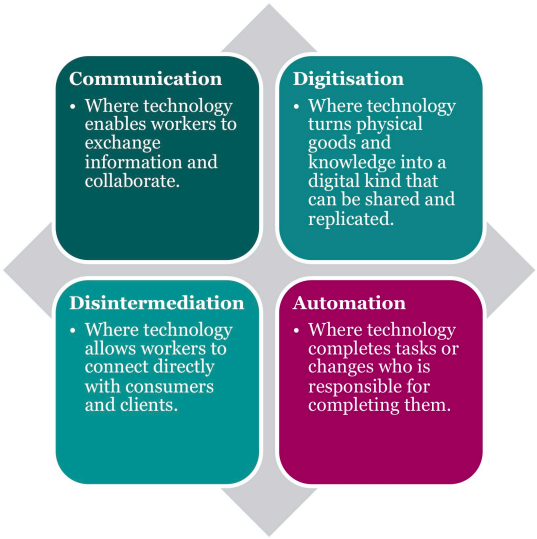
PART 2: INNOVATION

Today's provocateur was Ben Dellot who is Head of RSA's Future Work Centre.

Ben explained how his team at RSA are trying to deepen the debate around the impact of new technologies on jobs, which has been focused on the negative impact of certain technologies (e.g. automation using AI). Ben presented RSA's view of the Four Forces of Technology driving changes to both the quantity and quality of jobs (see graphic).

He suggested that the impact of automation is much more than substituting humans for machines, and should be thought of in terms of four categories - Augmentation, Generation, Transference and Substitution.

Ben concluded by explaining his team's aims - to equip policy and decision makers with the insights required to better prepare workers for the future. RSA is achieving this through scenario planning that considers multiple futures and potential impacts.



PART 3: IMPACT

Attendees shared insights from their own experiences. Themes included:

- The challenge of deploying new tech in ways that benefit organisations and employees (and limits employee change fatigue)
- Examples of organisations engaging employees in bold/innovative ways - example given of Aviva offering employees reskilling if they voluntarily identified their jobs as suitable for automation.
- Ethical dilemmas associated with the use of technologies (biased AI, sophisticated psychometric testing, smart marketing algorithms) and how HR can support business leaders with these challenges.
- Country/organisation differences in culture and rates of adoption of new technology
- Digital solutions (apps) supporting reskilling, including an app to assess digital readiness.
- Finding the balance between letting teams use differing tech vs. standardising tech solutions across a global workplace.