

Future Skill Demands, from a Corporate Consultant Perspective

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Our perspective ...

- Consultants specializing in job analytic and competency modeling work
- 25 years studying wide variety of jobs in public and private sectors
- To identify the competencies, or skills and abilities, required to successfully perform those jobs
- Primary purpose – to create framework for developing valid selection procedures

When we look at individual jobs ...

- Full spectrum of required skill sets
- High Wage end of spectrum, with abstract task requirements*
- Low Wage end of spectrum, with non-routine manual task requirements*
- Also covering middle part of spectrum, with routine task requirements*, even though percentage of workforce this represents may be diminishing

* As described in conference paper presented by David H. Autor, entitled *Technological Change and Job Polarization: Implications for Skill Demand and Wage Inequality*

When we do corporate competency modeling ...

- Identify competencies that are most critically important for the company to have, collectively, across jobs, to compete successfully
- Use “strategic” job analysis, asking what skills/abilities are important to have in the future

Sample clients ...

- American Express
- IBM
- Boeing
- NYNEX, Bell Atlantic, GTE, Verizon
- Numerous Life Insurance Companies
- American Society for Training & Development

Key competencies we're seeing increased demand for ...

1. Creative problem-solving: employing unique analyses and generating new, innovative solutions to problems; integrating seemingly unrelated information and developing creative solutions; entertaining possibilities others may miss
2. Complex communication skills: knowing the appropriate channels for getting things done; developing and maintaining partnerships; effective negotiating and persuading skills (“influencing without authority”); teambuilding skills; understanding what form of communication is appropriate for different messages or situations (e.g., when to pick up the phone vs. sending an email, when working remotely)

Key competencies we're seeing increased demand for ...

3. **Adaptability:** ability and willingness to cope with uncertain, new, and rapidly-changing conditions on the job, to easily and effectively handle change; flexibility in approaches to work. Ranges from cognitive adaptability (creative problem solving) to interpersonal adaptability and physical adaptability to multitasking, i.e., ability to manage multiple responsibilities simultaneously (much work done in this area by PDRI colleague, Elaine Pulakos*)
4. **Self Management:** ability to work remotely, in virtual teams; ability to work autonomously; self motivating and self monitoring

*Pulakos, E. D., Arad, S., Donovan, M. A., & Plamondon, K. E. (2000). Adaptability in the workplace: Development of a taxonomy of adaptive performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 612-624.

Key competencies we're seeing increased demand for ...

5. Self Development: willingness and ability to acquire new information and skills related to work
6. Systems Thinking: the ability to understand how an entire system works, how an action, change, or malfunction in one part of the system affects the rest of the system; adopting a “big picture” perspective on work

Competencies we're seeing less demand for ...

- Mathematical ability
- Coding, sorting, filing

(in line with David Autor's thesis – see conference paper referenced earlier)