

## 1) What is the future of 'work' and the 'workplace' as we know it?

The future of work **will not change that much, but how work gets done will**. The reason is the way work is defined: as a set of activities and processes that are required to achieve an end result, so these dimensions will always remain. There is an end result, and there is some activity, process, metrics and system that you have to go through. But how work gets done could change.

We have functions becoming companies. For example, logistics used to be a function in a company but now you have companies doing the business of logistics. So we will see, **simultaneously, both greater specialization and therefore a greater necessity to integrate different processes together to deliver a result. Work will become more specialized, complexities will increase, and therefore how [work] gets done will undergo a transformation.**

It is an obvious answer that [the future of the workplace is] most people will not come to a place of work, but that is more true of some industries like software and other processes that are location agnostic. In other industries, people will have to travel to a place of work, for example, if you've got a factory manufacturing biscuits, you will need machines and people to make biscuits. You can't make biscuits sitting in a remote location.

So different industries will redefine how work gets done, [and it] will vary by industry. Thus, there is going to be **increased specialization, because of which we will have more freelancers or specialists. No longer will a company have all full-time employees.** There will be full-time employees, subject matter experts, part-time employees, etc. Therefore, the brick-and-mortar industries will have to do a lot more of orchestration than they do currently.

## 2) Given the rampant invasion of technology in learning and education, what do you think is the future of human interaction and personal mentorship?

With an increasing reliance on technology, the value of human interaction actually increases and does not decrease. Technology can never replace human interaction—it should be seen as a tool and not a substitute [for the human touch]. **At the end of the day, technology is a facilitator and not an end in itself. As long as there are people we are dealing with, we are dealing with feelings and emotion, not just logic and rationale. So, empathy, character, leadership, etc, will continue to be important.** If we think that technology is going to do all our work, we are mistaken.

**3) Ten years from now, in your opinion, what will be**  
**(a) the most overrated and overused management principle that will lose its relevance**

[I believe this will be] management by objectives. We have to shift to management by purpose, management by thoughtful action, management by comprehensive and holistic thinking, and management by looking at issues systemically.

**(b) the single most important thing that a manager will need to know in order to succeed**

The single most important thing the manager will need to know is the significance of empathy and excellence. Excellence will differentiate the “me too” from the people, companies or products that clearly stand apart from the rest. It is only the pursuit of excellence that will deliver that. Empathy for the reasons mentioned earlier—if we think that tools, techniques and computers are going to get the job done then we are all going to be sort of disappointed.

In a world that is so connected by technology, human touch and feel and empathy toward your customers [will be important because] the customers are not going to go away. Therefore empathy or sensitivity toward people, the communities within which we operate and the environment is going to become more and not less important. We are talking about living in a world where resources will be scarce, so working in a manner which is sensitive to [the needs of] communities, environment and people at large is going to be very critical.