



12 SKILLS TO FUTURE-PROOF YOUR CAREER

JACOB MORGAN



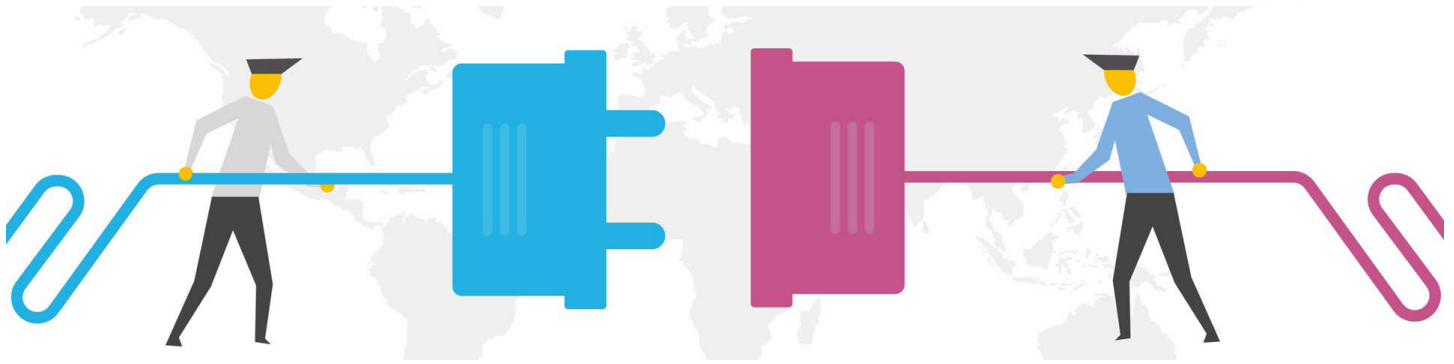
Look around your job, your office, and your company—how much has changed in the last 10 years? What about in the last five or even two years?

We're bombarded by changes every day. In today's fast-paced work world, it's either move or be moved. It can be overwhelming to know what skills to develop that will stand the test of time and help drive your career towards the future.

I've spent my entire career researching the future of work and advising some of the world's leading brands. In my last book alone I studied 252 organizations. The 40-50 speaking engagements I do each year bring me to the corners of the earth from India to Australia to France, Brazil, and everywhere in between. Each week I also make it a habit to schedule a few in-depth executive interviews where I

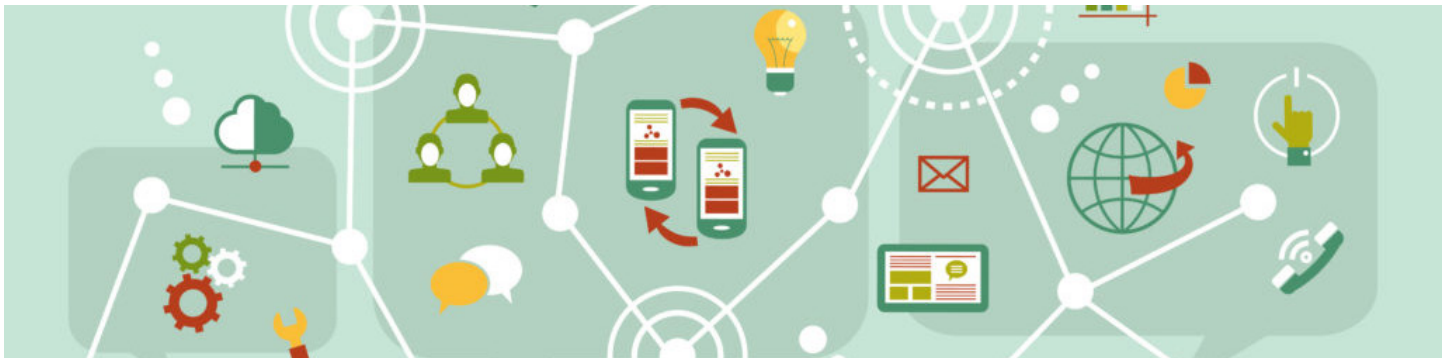


essentially get to grill executives to get their perspectives on everything related to the future of work. From all of these interactions I'm able to see various patterns that emerge and one of them is around skills, 12 of them to be exact. These are 12 skills that consistently come up as being crucial to the future of work and if you are able to add them to your arsenal you will be able to future proof your career and your life.



Collaboration

It used to be that people collaborated during set hours and only when they were in the same room as each other. You came to work, worked with your team, and then went home. Collaboration is an incredibly vital skill, but how and where it takes place has changed dramatically. In our de-centralized world, collaboration has to happen all the time with all kinds of people. Knowing how to successfully collaborate with long-distance employees, freelancers, and remote team members is a crucial skill for the future of work.



Communication

Your grandma was right—you really never get a second chance to make a first impression. You have to know how to share a message and start on the right foot. Communication and listening is the cornerstone to every relationship, both personal and professional. With so many methods of communication available today, from social media and texting to video conferencing and augmented reality, it is important to not only know the right channel to use but also the right message to share. There is noise all around us—people who can get their point across and cut through the communication clutter will be successful.



Service Oriented

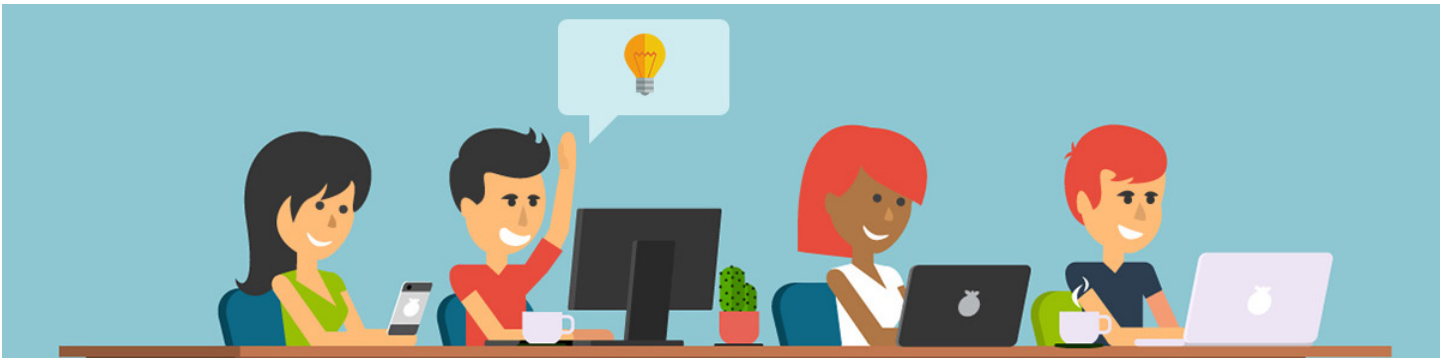
You're more likely to return to a store with employees who were eager to serve you, just like you would likely rather work with a team member who is willing to help you with a big project.

The idea of being humble and serving everyone, not just your customers, is huge. One of the best ways to build relationships is to serve people. Be constantly looking for ways to jump in and help others without hesitation. You don't have to hold a leadership position or be a manager to mentor or coach someone. This goes beyond work and is important for your personal life as well. People want to be around friendly people who are willing to help out and get the job done. Frances Hesselbein, the former CEO of Girl Scouts USA always says, "to lead is to serve," if you want to be a great leader, start by serving others!



Thinking Like an Entrepreneur

Author and entrepreneur Tim Ferriss said, "Think big and don't listen to people who tell you it can't be done. Life's too short to think small." No matter if you're growing a business or just trying to move up in your corporate career, you should always be thinking like an entrepreneur. Be scrappy and think big. So often we fall into the trap of making excuses or giving up when things get hard. Take initiative for your life and find unique solutions. Your career is in your hands alone—it's up to you to make it something great. This is something entrepreneurs do very well and so you should.



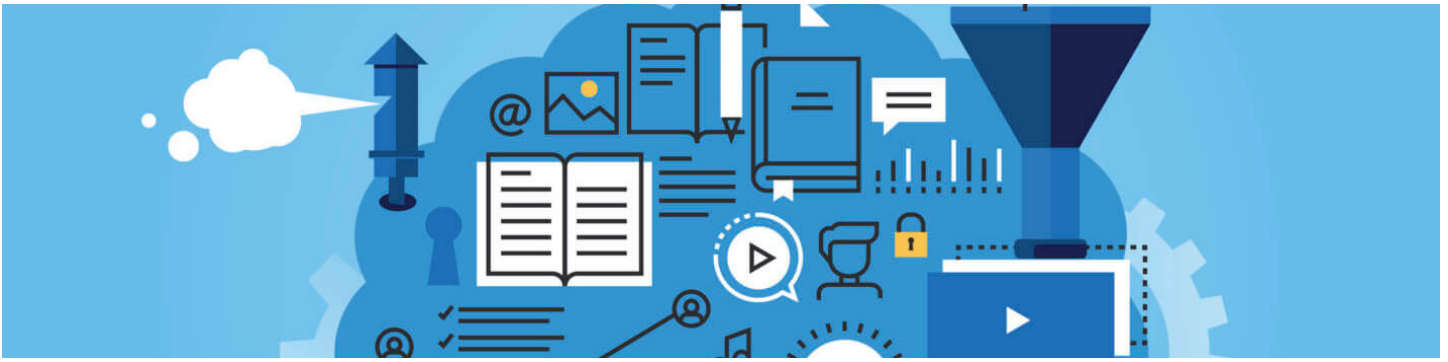
Accountability and Speaking Up

It's easy to make excuses and pass off mistakes in your work to someone else. Accountability is what makes the difference in engaged employees who care about the work they produce, but it is missing in a lot of workplaces. Get involved and help shape your work experience. Build your accountability by talking to your manager, joining an employee improvement group, and giving feedback. Anyone can sit back and complain that things aren't how they want them to be—it takes someone who is accountable to speak up and make the change they want to see. Be an active force for good within your organization instead of someone who only complains and does the bare minimum.



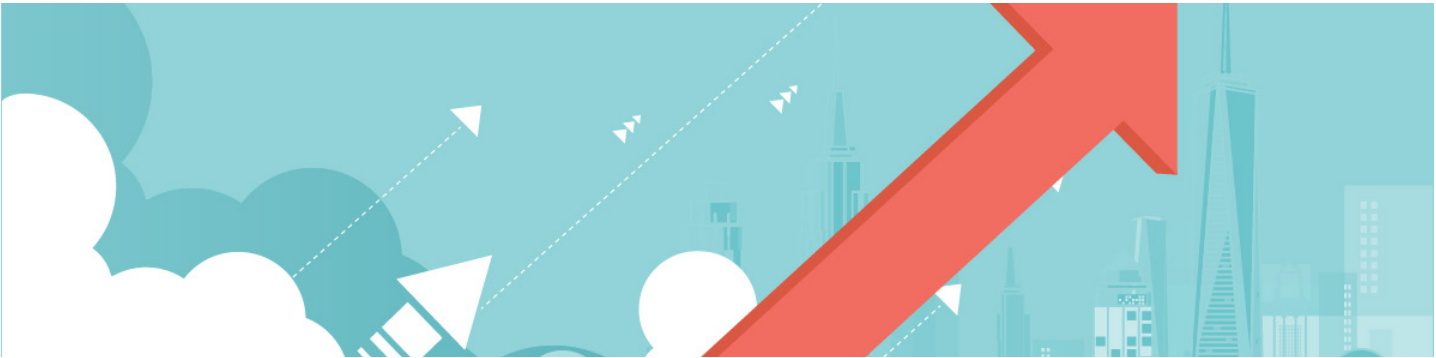
Being Friends with Technology

There are so many technological advances coming at us so quickly that it is easy to be scared or overwhelmed by technology. Instead of backing away from changes, the most prepared employees are friends with technology. Robots and AI aren't going to take over the world and steal our jobs; instead, technology will be the driving force towards innovation. Think of technology as a boost to help you learn more, do more, and grow more. With so much of the world driven by technology, if you don't embrace new developments you'll quickly get left behind.



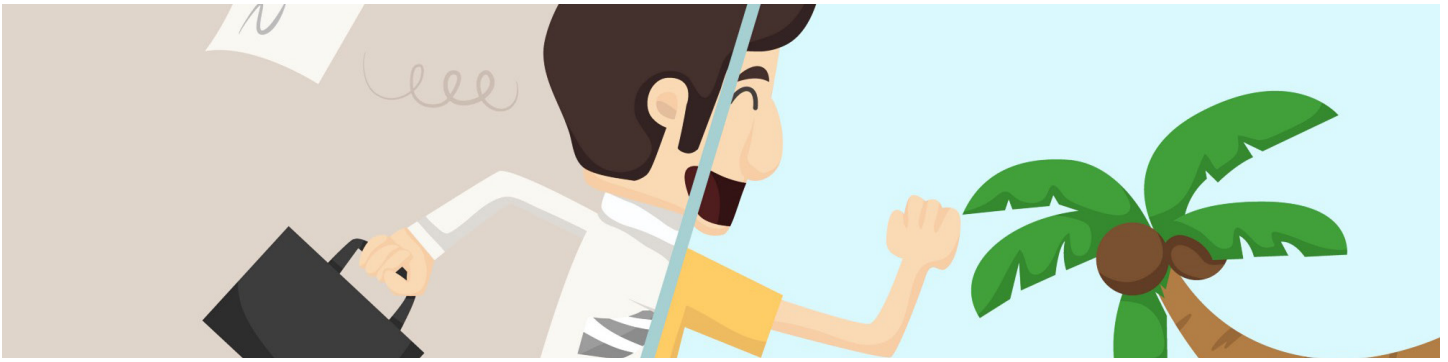
Learning to Learn

What you learned in school and the diploma you earned is important for getting a job, but it isn't everything you need to know. Become a perpetual learner and take control over what you learn and how you learn it. There is so much information out there—things that can help your current job, your career, and even your personal life. Don't rely on your school or company to teach you everything you need to know to be successful. Step up and find the right information. Be constantly learning, and you'll be one step ahead of the pack.



Having a Growth Mindset

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you've peaked in life. There is always room for growth and improvement. It's easy and common to feel stuck at work if you aren't progressing and don't know what your next step will be. Don't sell yourself short thinking where you are is where you have to stay. Get out there, learn something new, and keep growing. Think of your life as a card game—you aren't stuck with the hand you are dealt, but can always trade in and improve your cards throughout the game.



Disconnecting

If you're like most people, the first thing you do when you get up in the morning is check your smartphone, and it's also the last thing you do at night. We live in a world where we are always connected. Notifications pop up all the time, but how much are we really paying attention? No matter how much technology we have, human relationships will always be at the core of everything we do. For your own sanity, take a step back every once in a while, to disconnect and live in the real world.



Learning to Say No

More isn't always better. There are opportunities everywhere to take on a new project, help a friend, join a new group, or lead a new team. It's ok to say no to things. Don't spread yourself too thin that you end up doing everything but not actually doing a good job at anything. It can be a difficult balancing act to know when to say no and how to do it tactfully. If you learn to master saying no, you can focus on what really matters and move your life forward to meet your goals.



Self-Awareness

It is easy to go through the motions of life without actually realizing how you feel and think. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses and being aware of your mental state helps you make decisions about where to work, who to work with, and where to take your life. Being self-aware has a huge impact on your ability to solve problems, communicate, and lead. It's like the old airline adage—you must have your own oxygen mask attached before helping the people around you. Likewise, you must be aware of yourself before you can help and lead the people around you.



Empathy

Modern society has built sympathetic organizations where it's encouraged to feel bad for people. We often say we are sorry for something someone is experiencing without taking the time to think about how they must really feel. Empathy goes beyond that to put yourself in someone's shoes and experience their sorrow, joy, and pain as they are. Developing empathy helps us connect on a deeper level as we build strong interpersonal relationships.

These skills may sound relatively simple on paper, but putting them into practice is a different story. It takes hard work and diligence to truly develop these skills. But if you do, you'll be on the path to success in the future of work.



SHORT BIO:

Jacob Morgan is a three time best-selling author, keynote speaker and futurist who explores the future of work and employee experience. His latest book is, **The Employee Experience Advantage: How to Win the War on Talent by Giving Employees the Workspaces they want, the Tools they Need and a Culture They Can Celebrate** (Wiley, March 2017) which is based on an analysis of over 250 global organizations. His previous books are, *The Future of Work* and *The Collaborative Organization*.

Jacob's work has been endorsed by the CEOs of: Cisco, Whirlpool, T-Mobile, Best Buy, SAP, Nestle, KPMG, Schneider Electric and many others. He is regularly featured in business publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *Harvard Business Review*, CNN, NPR, USA Today, Forbes and others.

Jacob has a popular podcast and YouTube series where he explores various themes around the future of work. You can learn more and get access to all of these resources by visiting: TheFutureOrganization.com.

Jacob is also the founder of "The Future If," a global community of business leaders, authors, and futurists who explore what our future can look like IF certain technologies, ideas, approaches and trends actually happen. We look at everything from AI and automation to leadership and management practices to augmented and virtual reality, the 4th industrial revolution, and everything in between. Visit TheFutureIf.com to learn more.



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