



The Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Future of Work

Melanie Popp, P.Eng.

geoLOGIC systems

Summary

We are standing on the brink of the Fourth Industrial Revolution which, as described by Professor Klaus Schwab (founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum), the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before. The pace of this revolution will fundamentally alter the way we live and work. Workplaces are experiencing this change and rather than adopt a strategy to survive, the shift is happening in workplace culture.

Theory / Method / Workflow

The pace of technological change in the fourth industrial revolution has been exponential, as opposed to linear, and evidence is presented illustrating that fact. The unfortunate consequence of the digital age is that those businesses that do not adopt agile practices will fail. A study by McKinsey found that the biggest impediment to the adoption of agile practices is workplace culture. In the new way of working, culture eats strategy for breakfast.

Results, Observations, Conclusions

In order to create sustainability, agility must be adopted, and the shift starts with culture. There are several proven ways to accomplish this:

1. Using analytics to make business decisions
2. Creating a culture of knowledge sharing
3. Elimination of silos
4. Promote a mindset of curiosity
5. Adopt a more diverse workplace to fuel innovation

Each of these techniques is discussed with proven anecdotal evidence from businesses and sectors that have experienced and are adopting to a digital transformation.

Novel/Additive Information

Our industry is facing very uncertain times and it is a natural human response to resist introducing more uncertainty by changing business practices. However, our industry will need to be ready to adopt these practices to become more sustainable.