



THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

PRESENTS

What's next?

THE FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

REFLECTIONS ON THE EVER-CHANGING WORK ENVIRONMENT
AND THE GEN Z LEADERSHIP



Foreword

"We live in an era of exponential change, so what will the jobs and workplaces of tomorrow be like? When, where and how will we work? Then there's the even bigger question: why we will work at all? This is challenging, when technology and AI are moving so fast, but the road to the future is being mapped out today." In their analysis they highlight 4 fundamental aspects of change and evolution in today's workplace structure, identifying paramount characteristics: the Emotional Workplace, the Physical Workplace, the Technological Workplace, the Purposeful Workplace. By 2030, workplaces will be defined by personalised solutions, wellbeing and a focus on culture, autonomy and inclusivity. Work is already being untied from space and time and, while this freedom is liberating and empowering, there are challenges ahead. In particular, how do organisations respond when walls have come tumbling down between physical and digital, the workforce is more disparate and demanding than ever and the new rule is to expect change and keep on learning? The answer is to keep the core principle of purposeful leadership at the heart of everything. Future workplaces require visionary leaders, and they will be those people who want to be not only 'best in the world' but 'best for the world'."

Kjaer Global, Future of the Workplace 2030+

The European School of Economics has investigated how the education system supports and drives change, preparing leaders up to the future work environment. A conversation with ESE Faculty and Lecturers, in an effort to gather some thoughts on the future of work, with the intention of inspiring the new generation to take the lead in the new world.

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Milan, May 2022



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GenZ and the Future

Introduction

In 2025 Millennials and Generation Z will be more than 50% of the total workforce and in the subsequent 5-10 years they will be the totality, when Builders and Baby Boomers will disappear from the working scene. But as these two old generations leave the scene, a new generation is going to appear: generation Alpha, representing young people born from 2010 on. Both Z's and Alpha's are very interesting targets for Marketers since now, but for the workplace the attention today is concentrated on Generation Z. Alpha's are too young now.

Are people belonging to Generation Z different from previous generations?

Very different from Builders and Baby Boomers, but also slightly different from Millennials (X's and Y's). Expectations from the workplace are different: Z's need to find a strong adherence between their own personal purpose (a meaningful life) and workplace purpose. Also, in the past this was a strong need. The difference now is that if Z's do not find this adherence they disengage and leave.

In addition to this “search for purpose”, is there any other expectation that companies should meet in order to engage and retain these young people?

Another important aspect is their search for Work-Life Integration. In the past, the HR Community considered it important to reach a Work-Life Balance to meet and engage Millennials, but today Z's do not consider the “balance” anymore because this term assumes that the two sides (life and work) are separate. In fact, especially after the pandemic experience and the strong push towards smartworking, they have experienced that there is not a separation anymore between the two sides, but they are fully integrated. Just to make an example, WLB assumes timetables, while Z's do not see timetables as a way of working. WLI assumes freedom, a sort of “liquid” mindset, consistent with the “liquid” organization principle that many big corporations are already adopting nowadays.

Considering this scenario, as an HR Professional, what are the suggestions you would like to share with Z's?

I think that one important suggestion is to be flexible (as they seem to be) but also to be patient: before leaving a workplace only after a very few months from the hiring for a new opportunity and then change again and then again (recent statistics say that in one year Z's tend to move about 3 times from one company to another one) think about that. Workplaces as quickly rethinking their ways to manage Z's, in order to stimulate their engagement. For instance, many companies do not ask employees anymore to “stamp the card” at specific timetables but just once a day and, for remote working, they support the management by objectives policy, that focus on results and not by “hours of connectivity”. This stimulates accountability and empowerment for Z's. Organizational mindset is also quickly changing to give Z's the sense of purpose to adhere to. So, before leaving, it is important to give a deep look at the cultural side and, maybe, to be part of the changing mindset. If they leave, they could lose this opportunity. And, as last consideration, recruiters start to think that hiring people that have changed workplaces so many times, they could run the risk to receive their resignations as well. So, Z's and Companies are experiencing an important challenge, considering that the so-called Great Resignation phenomenon is quickly spreading in many parts of the world.



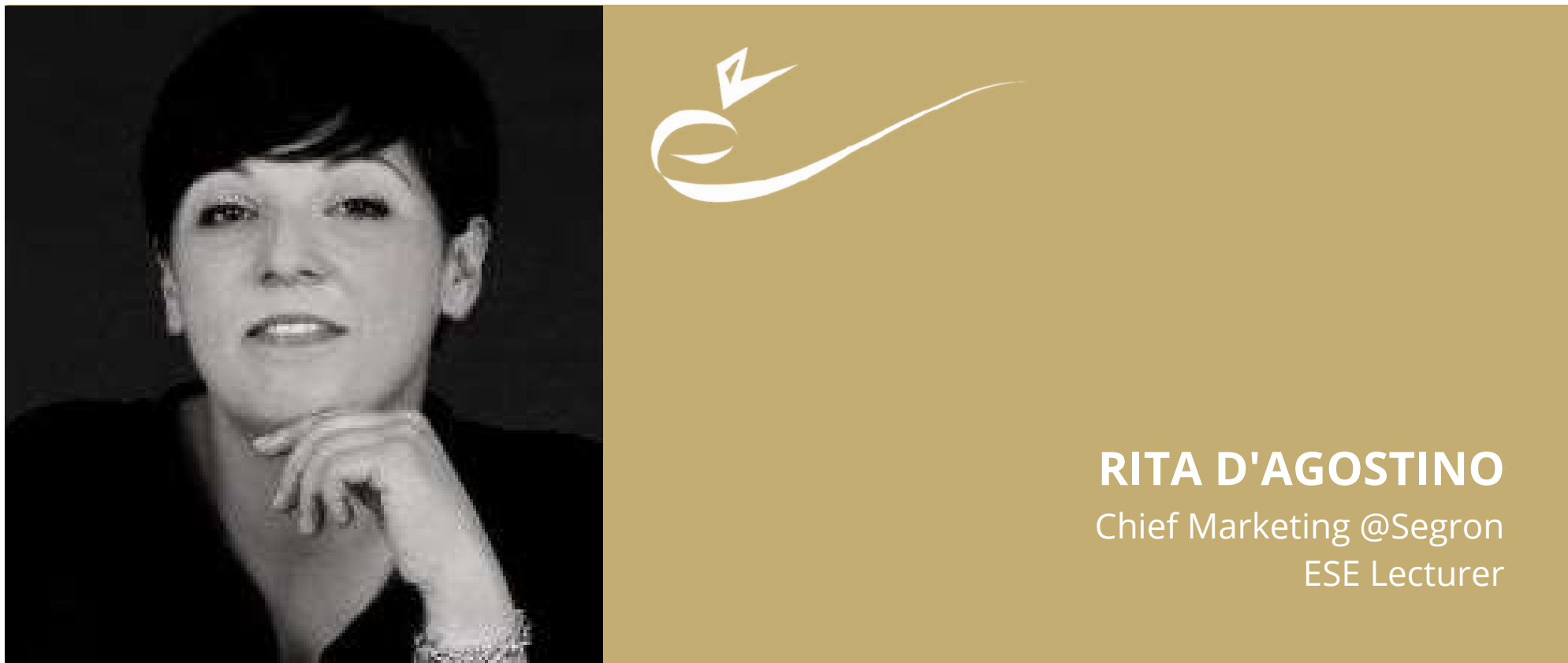
Marketing Communication & Branding

What are the main competencies that a professional must acquire to be competitive in the market?

An entry level skill necessary to enter the field of marketing communication and branding, for the culturally intensive sector as I operate in, is definitely the use of consumer insights, obtained through an array of analytical and research tools, because successful brands today are those able of curating a narrative that resonates intimately with consumers. However something even more relevant in my opinion is to develop sensitivity towards the market and its changes. The market is a hybrid system shaped by consumers' wants and needs yet influenced by economy and political forces, social and cultural phenomena. Gaining consumer insights, yet being blind to how culture affects consumption behaviours and value attribution, would undermine business development. Although branding and marketing fields require specialisation, a well rounded culture and interdisciplinary attitude helps shape the "Renaissance person" ideal for these positions, which are involved with other collateral tasks with which they should be integrated: such as product, distribution, positioning. These professions imply a scientific approach and a creative attitude, a happy marriage between art and science. I would say that beside cultivating the most up to date competences in the field through pursuing specific university degrees and masters, future professionals should escape narrow-mindedness by exposing themselves to different cultural environments, various forms of art, ... well basically become an omnivorous. My last suggestion is to work on personal branding at regular intervals, to be able to master at best the impression on others and optimise opportunities, which are never granted.

How can this professional acquire these skills you have mentioned?

Training is fundamental through the right choice of educational institutions and mentors. One must find the correct environment where learning is fostered and tailored to one's learning needs, finding a good balance between theory and practice. It continues though an initial stage, perhaps interning for larger companies, where one has the possibility to observe others, to learn by measuring oneself with frightening endeavours and also, why not, by making mistakes (an opportunity which is often disregarded or frowned upon, which instead leads to incredible transformations). From my experience, I highly value investing in continuing education and re-skilling, because this can play a fundamental role as this historical moment is literally shaped by a social, political and economic turmoil. "What's next" in my opinion is a very accurate title for this publication, because it prompts us to look at the future instead of sitting within the present moment, which may be good in yoga but not appropriate within the professional field. What I find the market is requesting us at the present moment is to brand ourselves, to be able to change with historical changes, holding strong to our competences but open to cultivating new skills.



Digital Marketing in a Global Environment

What are the hard and soft skills that young professionals need to acquire or strengthen to work in digital marketing?

There are a number of difficult skills that are fundamental in digital marketing. The most critical thing, in my opinion, is not only being able to use a tool. The greater ability of those who want to carry out this type of activity, especially from a global perspective, is to always be updated. This is a world that runs at a faster speed - the way digital marketing moves isn't the way all advertising or all industries were used to. Today working in a certain way on a digital perspective may not be the right thing in six months. So, my recommendation is to build a solid reference foundation on understanding digital metrics, digital tools, digital capabilities, that goes hand in hand with technology. But the most important thing, even if I don't know if it can be defined as soft skills, is the fact of not stopping, believing in it and always learning, because it will probably not be enough in a few months. So, keep up to date and stay informed on what's new out there. Also, I think it really depends on what you want to do, due to the fact that there are a lot of technology stacks, therefore software and processes, that you need to be aware of. Whenever you talk about digital marketing, whether it's the website or it's a performance analysis, it's an app or it's social media, there's always a technology stack behind it that you need to be aware of. Always bear in mind that you always need to know something new or updated and you need to be ready for it. So soft skills would likely translate into a great ability to stay updated and flexible to understand and predict upcoming things, for an international manager to be a good international manager. A manager is not just someone who knows what is good to do today, but is always the one who leads the company or brands he works for already in the position of being ready for what comes next. This is the main difference between being a good manager who does the job and a good manager who drives change. So let me say a little more about this digital marketing. When we talk to management, when we talk to the CEO, when we talk to the board, we expect everyone to understand what digital is, that everyone understands what you are talking about, that everyone understands your language, but it's never true. I happened to have the people in the room looking at me like I came from a different planet and were "can you say it again?" "can you explain what you mean". This is because the digital process is also a cultural change in the company. So, if you're lucky enough to work for an international brand that's born digital, then it might be easier. But if you got this job as an international manager with the assumption that you are bringing into the company that already exists in a non-digital world in the digital world, you have to make everyone in the company aware of the changes in the same perspective, in the shared vision and at the same speed.

Digital Marketing in a Global Environment

We know that you have a long experience in a competitive and rapidly changing global environment. What does it mean (to work in a competitive and rapidly changing global environment)? What do you think is essential to become an international strategic manager? What are the challenges to be faced and the skills to have?

The main challenges to become a strategic international manager are, first of all, making sure that the people you are talking to understand what you are saying, what you are doing and the benefits you can bring. Sometimes people believe that digital marketing is just having a website or digital property online, they don't understand that there are a number of benefits these operations can actually bring to the brand. So we must always try to translate this attitude and this vision into practical results. Then, in order to carry out your activities, you need a budget, when you decide how much you want to spend you will always have to go to someone and ask for money to do what you want and if you try to explain it to them on the technological side, why it is important, you will probably fail in most part of the times. So, my recommendation is to always translate into actual benefits and results you are trying to achieve. The other thing you need to have is to always be aware of the differences and peculiarities between the different regions. We can summarize it in three elements, but it can probably be bigger than that. The first is behavioral: people act differently in different markets. So, what you are doing to put in place in the United States will not work in Japan, it will not work in Australia, it will not work in Europe, because people consume digital content and activities differently, act differently and expect a different experience of the customer online. Therefore, again starting from the analysis, the key requirements of the behaviors of the specific region in which results are to be obtained are essential. The second element is the technological landscape, so which are the favorite tools of consumers and which tools they use most often (pc, laptop, smartphone). Finally, the third element is the level of digitization of this region. Hence, behavior, technology landscape, and level of digitization are the three main factors you need to consider if you want to be successful in a competitive and rapidly changing global environment.

How do you think the workplace will change in the next 5/10 years? What challenges will young professionals face?

The first thing that comes to mind is patience, because we shouldn't expect everyone to understand what we are doing. So the ability to make yourself understood within the company is very important. Sometimes it can get frustrating because people will ask you to say the same things 10 times to be able to understand it, so be patient with the speaker or other people or departments. When I say this it is because digital has a different speed and we expect everyone to run at our speed, which usually doesn't happen. You will have to deal with difficulties with the finance department to get budget approval. You will face difficulties with the purchasing department to choose your suppliers. You will face the working environment, there will be many obstacles, natural obstacles and it would make your life not so easy. Arm yourself with patience, helmet on and fight when you have to fight to get your approval and the green light to go. The second is to always be open, open to new things, don't stop and sit on what you know because it may be out of date in a few weeks. So, always be careful to keep up and face the competition, there are many young professionals who are coming out of university and claim they can do a lot of things. So once again be clear, clarify your point, substantive points with results, with concrete results and don't speak a language that no one can understand: this is the key message I can give you, because I have spent a long time avoiding English terms, avoiding acronyms, avoid jumping from place to place because I was just losing people during the meeting and you can see from their faces that you are losing them and you think "I'm saying all right, why am I losing them?" and the reasons just because the coding of languages is very different. So don't lose your passion for that, fight for that. Hence, behavior, technology landscape, and level of digitization are the three main factors you need to consider if you want to be successful in a competitive and rapidly changing global environment.



Innovation Technology and the IGEN

Innovation Technology looks like the key to the future in terms of working possibilities. What are the main soft skills the iGen should develop to be competitive in the incoming scenario?

Be like a chameleon. Be fluid. Be imaginative. As the current technological revolution is fast, always-evolving and challenges the common way we approach and think of reality, such skills may be a great resource for candidates who wish to actively participate in this revolution. Think of the metaverse, the crypto culture, of the new schemes of shared and global property we are being proposed in our present. Minds need to fluidly metabolize such revolutions, master them, and employ them in their professional and human practices. Think of the now-popular 'digital properties' and assets such as NFTs. For instance, through the formula of the so-called 'asset tokens' these digital assets can be divided into sub-pixels and be sold as such – i.e. instead of selling the whole work to one owner, more investors can just buy either one or more pixels of that same work, thus making art collection more democratic, accessible, and yet challenging. It is indeed a challenge to understand these new forms of collecting, investment, and property. And this is just one example. This is the reason why new generations need to adapt, be fluid, and imaginative, as society, as Zygmunt Bauman defined it is "liquid," a property we need to metabolize to be actors of this current hic et nunc.

What are the specifics of your industry that makes it stand out as "the right choice" for future professionals compared to other sectors?

Throughout history, art has been, by definition, an anticipator, a pioneer. This has often implied the demonization of our world – which is still often regarded as too abstract, intangible, and non-concrete by many. Nevertheless, art has a natural courage and vocation to dare, experiment, progress. Think of photography – that from a technological device and experiment patented in the 1800s – later became a proper form of art that now has universal use and access. The same applies to robotics, gamification, AI, data, metaverse, and all the technological phenomena we may have heard of. They have all become art expressions, performances, or art movements even. While there are many examples I may cite, I shall maybe start with Nyan Cat by Chris Torres, the small fluctuating cat sold as an NFT for \$ 600,000 in 2021 by Christie's. Despite its unconventional design and visuals, this cat opened a global conversation – and awareness – on the newborn realm of NFTs and crypto culture – although NFTs were very well present in yet other realms, such as sport, the advertisement industry, and social media. The same applies to robotics; recently, a British robot by the name of AiDA – who categorizes as an artist – was kept in jail by the Egyptian authorities as her participation to an international exhibition raised questions of privacy, national security, and spying. While the case may sound bizarre to many, it actually anticipates conversations on the world of robotics and their interaction with our world and vulnerabilities. Art, therefore, can really serve as the catalyzer and anticipator of global and complex conversations. That is why it may really be "the right choice" to empathize with, reflect on, and control our future lives. Art is an intellectual asset humanity has been benefiting from for centuries, millennia, and maybe we are not aware of it.

The young generation is facing a moment of great uncertainty. As a Professional, what are three suggestions you would like to give them?

Throughout history, humanity has demonstrated a great sense of resilience after crises. In art, which is indeed my expertise, crises have always been a source of inspiration, reflection, and cogitation. Think of some of the world's most famous art operations, they mostly originated upon conclusion of a war, a famine, a personal crisis of the artist – like Picasso's Guernica, Frida Kahlo's paintings, Van Gogh's self-portraits. What I would suggest is self-exploration, daily, therapeutic acts for the self. Writing a diary, travelling, going to museums are acts for the self. They reward it. I would therefore recommend time for the self and an approach with/to the arts that is therapeutic, self-exploratory and corroborating.



GIOVANNI DI TOMASO
F&B Consultant @MFB Consulting
ESE Lecturer

The Hospitality Industry: Insights & Trends

In which ways new technologies and software have changed the Hospitality Business scenario in the last few years and what are the future perspectives?

Technology it has been cyclically changing the industry. Software helped managers to collect and analyze data. Internet accelerated communication, promotion, and, not less important, research! And the two above mentioned revolutions touched every single area of the hotel and restaurant business. Today it is also very important to monitor the tangible tech. Every year new game-changing equipment is presented to the market (check the KI Awards) and every professional and every business can really find what it will make a difference in terms of cost saving, products diversification, higher quality of the workplace and much more that can help a hospitality business or someone's career to reach success.

What are the specifics of the Hospitality Business that make it stand out as "the right choice" for future professionals compared to other sectors?

During the last economic World crisis (except this covid pandemic) the hospitality Industry suffered less than other industries. And restaurant business, despite the high number of yearly closures and the short life span (3,74), generates higher revenue every year and, in some cases, breaking revenue record like in Italy in 2018 and 2019. In other words, it's a safer industry than retail and others. Secondly, Hospitality often gives life to hybrid businesses, belonging to both manufacturing and service industries. That means an incredible number of different disciplines and opportunities involved, where anyone can find a career that somehow respects his own nature. Or even diversify his own income. Personally, I went to hotel management schools and worked in 5 stars structures, but I wasn't happy. Today, I am still operating in the Hospitality universe, but I teach, write, do consulting, developing software, and risking some entrepreneurship adventure. In other words, Hospitality can and should be experienced as an ice cream shop, where you can find many different flavors to try before choosing your favorite ones.

The young generation is facing a moment of great uncertainty. As an HR Professional, what are three suggestions you would like to give them?

They are the same that I would have given if we were in 1990:

1. Take time to know yourself and what you like.
2. Never stop studying.
3. Do not pursue money.



MARIO MONTANUCCI

Compliance Officer @Christof Global Impact
ESE Lecturer

Managing Compliance

What is your business based on and how would you explain the role you cover?

Christof Global Impact's end-to-end business is based on a model capable of supporting customers in delivering solutions for their specific waste stream and CO2 reduction requirements. These include Advisory, Technology Packages Supply, Circular Economy solutions, any related Construction and Operation, and Co-Investments. I am their designated Compliance Officer and I have been involved in the realization of the entire compliance function in collaboration with other connected functions, with particular reference to any Legal dept, the ESG, the HSEQ and the ITQM functions, which are delegated to as many people, in staff with the Company Board.

What are the entry level skills necessary for a well prepared ESG and general compliance professionals of today?

As in all managerial jobs, apart from the obvious necessary knowledge of the subjects dealt with, are of particular importance the ability to work in a team, to know how to delegate what you cannot manage directly, and, as well as formal, also an informal leadership approach are necessary aspects to ensure that your team is successful, both for the ESG coordination function and for that of Compliance Officer which, as in our case, may not coincide. Then, both, with regard to ESG in particular and the compliance function in general, it is evident that multisectoral knowledge is absolutely necessary. Because both of these roles encompass the planning and the control of any related strategy implementation and compliances of almost all company activities, from a technical-legal point of view and from a technical-economic point of view.

How can these professionals acquire these skills you have mentioned?

There are many ways to acquire these skills. Many prefer to start with a deep technical knowledge of the sector in which they operate. Many others have a general knowledge set on the general aspects of compliance to be managed, ready to "drop" them in any sector. In any case, regardless of these two different approaches, however and always it is important that, in order to fill certain top positions, one feels moved also and above all by a great passion and sharing of the ethical and moral values that lie above the aspects of compliance that you intend to manage. In my case, based on my passions and inclinations, I have "created" for myself, with no little effort, the chance to reach both, a personal growth set on the general aspects of compliance to be managed, and some specific experience in any field of the company I work for. All this with a totally bivalent training: on the one hand thought the economic and business management studies that I was able to carry out, in various phases of my life, also and mostly thanks to the European School of Economics and, on the other hand, via any available advanced management studies and training in specific areas such as the training necessary to become a designer of ISO management systems and standards for the Environment, Safety, Quality, Ethics and Anti-Bribery, with a specific and parallel training and professional experience with reference to Personal Data Protection.



SONIA PALCHETTI

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ESE Professor

The Evolution of the Digital Landscape

Digital looks like the key to the future in terms of working possibilities. What are the main soft skills the iGen should develop to be competitive in the incoming scenario?

Today we see a great emphasis on the digital. Pandemic has accelerated an already established trend so the deep understanding on how to use digital channels to reach new audience, engage, acquire and maintain customers is imperative. As a consequence there is an increasing demand of Digital Marketing professionals and youngest generation is getting prepared taking specialization in SEO, SEM and Social media marketing. However digital landscape is in fast evolution so that modern marketers need to be able to rapidly evolve, quickly grasp which channel better fit with their objective at each step of the customer journey and realize that any channels may become obsolete while new tools appear in the field. The main soft skill required remains curiosity: you have to develop the ability to keep learning and adapting to ever changing landscape. Technical skills on channels are now a commodity, while ability to analyze data, trends, customer intention, the business value chain remain pivotal. On this I would recommend the students looking for a career in marketing and communication to not underestimate the need to develop sound economic and academic background and use the technical and communication skills as the natural complementary element. In short, mastering channels is not enough if they are not able to develop critical analysis of the context, using commercial awareness to understand the business objectives and develop a sound strategy which is ultimately aligned with it.

What are the specifics of your industry that makes it stand out as “the right choice” for future professionals compared to other sectors?

Experian is the leader of Information technology industry, which is a future proof, in continue evolution and operates without borders. Someone said that “data is the new oil”, but I feel that more than oil, which is a scarce and not sustainable resource, data are everywhere and always available. What is still rare is the ability to convert data into insight. We generate trillions of data every single moment of our life. In the past only few were available to be collected and analyzed, but today we are able to capture so many information that the real challenge is how to interpret them and get valuable insight. Who is able to understand the data can definitely understand the world, make prediction and be prepared to the Future. This is in essence the reason why our industry is becoming more and more important. The challenge we face is how to use data for Good. Without being invasive of individual privacy today we can predict if a person, a city or a country may face economic, social or environmental challenges and help community to take preventive actions that help everybody to have a better tomorrow. Future professionals should be prepared to work with data, get a sense from them, understand which are the trends and how those may impact our life. It is like a big book with so many pages and being able to read and understand it will provide incredible competitive advantage.

The Evolution of the Digital Landscape

The young generation is facing a moment of great uncertainty. As a Marketing Professional, what are three suggestions you would like to give them?

Now more than ever the only constant is change. On 1962 Edward Lorentz posed the question “Does the flap of a butterfly’s wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?”. We all can see today that as we live in an iper-connected world the answer is “Yes, it does”. World is changing every moment and the change rapidly spreads in days or hours across the world impacting everybody’s life. In this scenario, now more than ever we need to accept that "change is the only constant in life." This is very distressing for new generation which is struggling to find external points of references. My strong advice is: Find your dream and focus on it: it is impossible to predict what the future will look like but if you are pursuing your big objectives and focus on what you value more you will be able to capture any opportunity the ever-changing conditions will bring to you. And, more importantly, you will remain passionate on what you do. Be prepared: take any opportunity to learn more and develop your skills, no serious study and engagement is going to be wasted. I spent part of my life studying ancient Greek, Latin, Literature and History, then I got post academic studies in economy. Very little of what I learned has a practical use in my day-by-day job but the skills I acquired in critically analyze various sources and my sound ability to deep dive across disciplines are pivotal in my current role. Do not be scared from the change: Every crisis brings new opportunities, all crises bring progress. Someone so much better than me (Albert Einstein) said that “creativity is born from anguish. It's in crisis that inventiveness is born, as well as discoveries made and big strategies. He who overcomes crisis, overcomes himself, without getting overcome.” So be prepared, be brave, follow your dreams.



Performance Marketing and Technology Solutions

What are the Competencies that the Market requires?

Modern marketing is a very different world from the marketing of even just a few years ago, with digital strategies playing a significant role and traditional methods (such as print) becoming less relevant and less effective. That means that while certain skills associated with the field (such as creativity and communication) are certainly still important and applicable, there are a whole host of other, newer skills that employers are now looking for in their marketing hires. Key marketing skills can be broken down into two categories - soft skills and hard skills. Soft skills are broader and more widely applicable, and are useful (or necessary) in many different career paths. Hard skills are more focused on technical abilities and familiarity with specific tools and strategies. Top marketing soft skills are communication, creativity and problem-solving, attention to details, Leadership and adaptability. Top marketing hard skills are writing, data Analysis & Analytics, project management, research, Seo/SEM, email marketing, website management.

How do your professional develop competitive skills?

Skills can be built through dedicated training and education. A marketing degree is a great way to learn the most important marketing skills today's employers are looking for. Furthermore, there are several ways a professional can develop professional skills such as find a mentor that can reach out for informal meetings; take advantage of company training; join a professional association in the same fields or a training course: on-the-job training, Webinars & Youtube. What I consider really important is learn from other people's experience and from expert. Study the expert is a relevant field, and it's important to use their tricks, tips, experience and knowledge to expand skill set.



Risk Management: Competences and upskilling

What are the entry level skills necessary for a fledging professional of today?

- Ability to work under pressure: even though the Risk Manager is not a trader, still he is always with the traders in the trading room. When the market exhibits dramatic (and totally unexpected) swings, you have a few seconds to decide what to do: unwind the open positions, scale them down or simply wait and navigate the turmoil. You need to hold nerves and to support traders, so as to make sure their act in the best interest of the firm, even when things go wrong.
- Curiosity: rules change, technology evolves and new trading approaches are developed. A Risk Manager shall always be eager to learn new things
- Reliability: the integrity and the reputation of the firm are in the hands of the Risk Manager (e.g. what if the company engages in illicit activities? What if losses become too big to be sustained?...)
- Strong quantitative skills: Risk Management deals heavily with financial modelling (e.g. how would you set up a stress testing model?). Statistics and mathematics thus need to become your best friends
- Flexibility: by definition, you never know where the market will go, how the traders will react, which regulatory changes will be adopted...you just need to adapt to an ever-changing environment as rapidly as possible.

How can this professional acquire these skills you have mentioned?

If you want to become a Risk Manager, you need to be proactive, willing to learn and open-minded: every single day is different from the previous one when you operate on financial markets, so you have to be open to changes (and this is not easy at the beginning, believe me!). Having said that, I think my very first boss was right the day he told me that, in order to succeed in the world of finance, there is only one thing to do: study, study, study!



ZENA BATOCCHI

Global Sales & Social Media Manager @Carrani Tours
ESE Lecturer

Digital Tourism

How and to what extent do you think the Digital World has helped the Tourism Industry in the past decade?

We need to differentiate the complex world of Tourism: the airline led the change with e-distribution 30 years ago, then the hotel industry came. The world of tours & activities entered into digital distribution in the last 10 years and it made an incredible difference! There's still room for a huge improvement...The pandemics can be considered as a massive turning point and, incredibly, we don't know how the marketplace will look like, yet. I believe in the power of digital to get to the future travelers!

Which digital skills would you suggest a student passionate about Tourism should develop today in order to be successful in this sector?

It really depends on the interests you have: there's definitely need for specialized content creators with SEO background, if you feel talented there is a huge need for visual creators (fotos & videos), if you want to go deep into digital marketing, you would suggest an internship in a Web Agency to learn how to run ads campaigns. Few companies in the Tours & activities sector have an in-house team with these hard skills!

What Sales instruments would you always put forward in order to have a winning strategy and which ones do you think are nowadays obsolete?

To escalate in sales volumes, you must be API connected with partners, have a responsive website and there's need to get the most from data, in order to understand what the market wants (which is not always clear at all...). This might seem obvious...but you should consider that in Italy, where tourism had around 7% on the GDP before the pandemic, the marketplace is composed by micro to medium sized companies. If you want to work in this fun industry there's really a lot to do about digital transformation! The Sales instrument that I hope is going to disappear is the old-fashioned paper brochure: in some markets it's still a must...but we have been striving to avoid paper waste and, in terms of products offer, it's just silly to print a brochure today for products that will "travel" next year...unsustainable & meaningless!



NICOLE CETRUFO

Program Manager @Carrani Tours
ESE Lecturer

Thinking "Global"

How do you think Guest Experience has evolved and will continue changing after 2 years of pandemic in order to still provide the audience with a great service?

I think that the Guest Experience has been tremendously impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic but in a “good” way, for some aspects, because we have seen more people engaged and connected online and living a smoother and faster digital transformation compared to the world that we have been living in before the 2020 pandemic breakout. So, I really think that we are seeing a transformation with regards to what users are seeking and looking for online but also the way people are visiting attractions, museums, experiencing their hotel and their trip as a whole and has made them become digital-savy.

How important do you consider having international professional experiences to deepen one’s skills and mindset and which one do you believe are critical to have.?

I think it is so important! I always mention the example of Mary Poppins as being a role model for me as an international professional. Whenever you go abroad you live the culture, the people, of a new destination. You bring home an incredible knowledge, an incredible experience that stays so close to your heart for a life-long time. So, I really think that living and studying abroad is so important in order to have broader visions, horizons, and also an understanding of different needs of different cultures, different ways of living life, and making sure you always bring back your voice to any table you will be having the chance to seat at and share what you have learned along that journey. I think it extremely important!

What should a professional know and be ready to face when dealing with an international public that has so many different needs and ways to communicate?

I think listening is very important! Listening means like “seeing” what people are writing online, seeing what is being shared and, most important, listen to make sure you adjust whatever service or experience you are providing to that X type of customer or target. Be willing to listen and make sure that you learn from that listening experience which, in our days, is so hard! We go so fast, we have a limited attention span and it is crucial to listen to the needs and pay attention to behaviors of people. For example, in marketing, let’s just think about how important is it to understand what specific targets really want from an experience rather than think that what you are offering is relevant to them!



ANTONIO DELLA MALVA
Economist @European Commission
ESE Lecturer

Strategy and Social Media

What are the characteristics that a good international strategic manager must have for you?

I believe that a good international strategic manager nowadays must be first of all passionate about her job, acknowledged about her business and determined. This may not sound new to most of you, eventually redundant, but in the current situation, with fast changing conditions, “back to the basics” seems to me the most effective answer to navigate this uncertainty. Some former colleagues of mine are international managers themselves; we regularly talk about their business: they experienced how the pandemic has affected their business (i.e sales have dropped, business frozen, supply chains interrupted), and how the response from their companies has been prompt and very actual: shorter and more reliable supply chains, eventually at higher costs, newer focus on the workforce (these days labour is a scarce resource), attention to pricing are a few measures taken during and after the pandemic. To be able to introduce these measures in a short time span, you must know in advance your potential suppliers, know the challenges that your workforce faces to simplify and ease their job, know what your customers are really willing to pay for your goods and services. To do this, you must have passion for your job, know your business and be determined to introduce the necessary measures when it’s time to do so. Another aspect I would like to spend a few words on is corporate politics. Too often I hear stories of people not being able to deal with colleagues: bosses too demanding, colleagues not collaborating, initiatives opposed are just a few of the typical office stories. And often I realize that people only associate their job to the tasks that are associated to it and not to the extent to which these tasks are intertwined with the tasks of colleagues. And seldom they seek for a collaborative yet assertive approach to conflict resolution: everybody wants their goals to have priority on the team’s list. This is a major source of disappointment. It is important to be able to be clear with colleagues and bosses on what has to be achieved and how in order to maintain a healthy relationship in the workplace.

Strategy and Social Media

How can social networks be used to enter the world of work? What are the advantages of using them to look for work?

It is a fact that the web has eased the search for jobs. There are specialized platforms to look and apply for jobs which I think are very useful: LinkedIn, Indeed, Monster and many more. Some are conceived as social networks, where employers can leverage on the power of connections and references; others are traditional job search websites with features to speed up the application process. All in all it is very important to have and update a digital professional profile, an account where the latest professional and curricular information is uploaded and interests and expertise are shown through the sharing of pertinent articles and contributions, preferably with a concise opinion. This helps employers to identify motivated and knowledgeable candidates in the first place for interviews, where the real challenge is. Indeed, social networks, and the web in general, do not substitute the face-to-face experience of the job interview; they rather ease the search process. After all, you want to personally know the people with whom you will be spending a third (best case scenario) of your day. Next to dedicated social networks for job search, other social networks can also be useful, although the mechanism is not as straightforward as it is with the former. Keeping up a page where you regularly post articles, personal contributions on your interests and expertise can be a way to cultivate and build up a certain expertise (theoretical and eventually practical if you aim at positions in marketing for instance). The advantage of pages on more generalistic social networks is that they allow more freedom in the form and type of content to publish, enabling for instance the experimenting of video making techniques or more flexible communication strategies. However, it is very difficult for the page to receive the visibility of a similar page on dedicated networks. So, better have both. Despite the importance of social networks and the web, traditional mechanisms for job search are to me still relevant and shall not be underestimated: word of mouth is still there, and the larger and cultivated is your real network, the more relevant information about job positions you will have access to.

In your opinion, what were the impacts of Covid-19 on the world of work and how can young professionals face these transformations? And what suggestions would you give to these young professionals to enter or establish themselves in today's world of work?

This is a very pertinent and difficult question to answer. I was a teacher at the university until 2018, had students who entered the job market and had an educated opinion of how the job market for newly graduated students was before the COVID. What I see nowadays is that companies offer higher salaries yet struggle to find personnel; and unemployment claims are at pre-covid levels. This means that a not trivial number of people have left the job market to work on their own. This has put pressure on companies to find substitutes: therefore companies now more than before search for people who are already qualified and ready to start from day one. In this scenario, which opportunities are there for newly graduated students? My advice, even before covid, was to complement the curricular education with hands-on experience in the job market: internships, external collaborations, summer jobs, they all offer an overview of what companies actually look for in employees and collaborators and can help equip a freshly minted graduate with a set of tools to be immediately deployable. In this regard, small companies can be a great opportunity for training: small companies are less structured than larger organizations and allow people to work on a wider range of tasks. So my advice is: get as much hands-on experience in the workplace, “don't be choosy”, the right opportunity will open up if you are in, don't wait for it while standing by the side.



VALENTINO CECCHARINI

EU Credit Portfolio Manager @Quaestio Capital SGR
ESE Lecturer

Portfolio Manager: Future Perspectives and Challenges

In this challenging moment of international crisis, how is the daily work of a portfolio manager changing?

In this phase of very high volatility, attention is paid to all risk hedging measures, their correct functioning with respect to the exposure of the portfolio and the opportunities that can be opened in the credit market. There is also a much greater exchange of information with customers for updates on the market situation that we know is constantly evolving pari passu with Eastern Europe events.

Commodities price explosion, interest rate rising, inflation strong increasing; how to manage such risks in a portfolio?

As portfolio managers we have a duty to govern the volatility and risks that arise from each exposure in our book. The concept of duration is closely connected with the expectations that the market has towards the central bank and its next steps. This is why we try to keep an exposure to this leverage very low and to monitor it against market expectations. In the credit book we do not have direct exposures on commodities but we are also aware that the companies in which we invest always have a more or less close link to market prices, especially of energy materials. The management of this risk is no different from that of credit or interest rates, it must also be monitored and hedged with adequate safeguards.

Finance and trading are still fascinating young students; how do you think this sector is changing in the last decade and which are the most demanded skills?

It is a very interesting question and I believe that during the pandemic we have had proof of how many people, in the solitude of lockdowns, have approached trading, thinking that they can use their time as if they were playing money at horse bets. Unfortunately, this approach is very dangerous, and even the crypto world has helped to convey a message that without the appropriate technical knowledge and with very high risks it is possible to profit from trading. Finance, and even more specifically financial markets proper, must be studied, understood and approached with the necessary knowledge, otherwise the consequences will never be positive. I believe that a high and growing financial culture of the population is necessary and desirable but at the same time I am convinced that improvising as an expert trader is harmful. Having said that, the characteristics still and always sought are those strictly technical combined with the will, humility and the ability to learn from those who have more experience.

Bridging the gap between Education and the Workplace

CHIARA GAIDO, *Lawyer & ESE Professor*

I believe that the attitude the students have at the university is the key. Being proactive, being able to work with colleagues of different backgrounds and different cultures it is essential. It is important to learn to work with people who think differently from you, being able to communicate even opposite ideas without trying to predominate at all costs but trying to achieve a compromise solution. Finally, I would say that students should always be curious, they should keep questioning themselves all the time because, at the end of the day, each of us keeps learning every day regardless of the age we have.

MATTEO ORLANDI, *Freelance Marketing Manager & ESE Professor*

University is 60%. In the academic field, you need to understand basics of marketing, economy, strategy. Probably this is compulsory in the first 3 years. Without a strong background, you cannot generate efficient ideas. Starting from the masters, studies should move from training to creating; the purpose needs to change from learning to suggesting, inventing, organizing. Individual passion and interest is 40%. In my teaching experience, I see more and more students passionate by new subjects they are not fully covered by studies: NFT, Crypto, AI, Multiverse, sustainable energy. These issues cannot be in university courses because the academic field is under construction. Moreover, as marketing manager, they need an environment supporting these incoming arguments where they can discuss, exchange ideas and ask for literature. The final aim of any university should be to cover this 100% by teaching the correct basis and encourage the incoming requests from students.

LUCA CETARA, *Senior Researcher at Eurac Research & ESE Professor*

Most of the skills can be fruitfully developed out of study, observation and daily practice with research problems. Research is typically a combination of sound knowledge of theory (a sort of unavoidable background) and creativity: you are constantly expected to introduce something new to the existing body of knowledge. By applying critical thinking, setting clear goals for her career, discussing with colleagues and partners from Universities and research institutions worldwide, keeping constantly updated on the evolution of her field of investigation, and showing intellectual openness and humility, a professional can obtain the skills to successfully work in the research sector. A significant degree of motivation is needed, but results can pay back.

DOMENICO UVA, *Innovation Manager at Startup Geeks & ESE Lecturer*

First of all, it should be normal to have a dream. It should not be normal to know exactly what our next step will be. It is right to specify this because many people believe it to be the opposite. The second piece of advice is to do what you like: we need to get the idea out of our heads that doing one job is more "valuable" than doing another; in a world that is changing so fast and at the same time increasingly global and connected, we need to invest as much time as possible in figuring out what motivates us and what we are good at, working hard to become the best at it.

Bridging the gap between Education and the Workplace

GIANLUCA BORGNA, *GM, Executive Board Member at Talassio Collection & ESE Lecturer*

Be curious. Every day. Read a lot of books. Don't use your mobile too much. Don't scroll your Instagram feed for 2 to 3 hours per day. It's wasted time. Listen to the others. The power of listening is underestimated, but on my experience, it's the most important power you can develop in your career. Be bold, but always think about a plan B. As Neil Diamond said, if you do nothing, then when the day is over, nothing is all you will have gained.

MARINA BARUFFI, *Merchandising Manager WRTW at Marni & ESE Lecturer*

I would suggest, sir, to be passionate and to inform before doing interviews about the company. That's what the recruiters appreciate most, that you know everything about their company, their business figures, and and their organizations in general. You always need to think out of the box and to try to find new ideas to improve the existing processes

ATTILIO AZZOLA, *Founder, Corporate Marketing at The Cocoon Collection & ESE Lecturer*

The new generation, rightly lost, due to the circumstances of their time, must navigate the world with a broader yet slightly short-sighted gaze. They must be able to see where they want to go in the long term, while at the same time not being afraid in the very short term to confront their professional role and the steps they have to take for a growth even if they do not think they are up to it.

MARCO VITELLI, *Marketing, Sales Manager at Castello Tolcinasco Golf Resort & Spa & ESE Lecturer*

I would like to tell the young generation not to quit and not to give up on their dreams, because at a time like this those who have the skills and those who are ambitious are much more appealing to companies than other individuals. Secondly, I encourage them to always learn something new; finding a new hobby, learning a new language, joining a course, anything that stimulates them by opening up their views. And lastly, to always remain humble, because that is the characteristic that will always help to challenge them even when they do not feel fully qualified.



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