

Results of a global survey identifying the 5 most important drivers for business and organisational success over the next decade. Complete with actions curated from business, HR and Learning Leaders from across the world.



BEYOND KNOWLEDGE*

The 5 Drivers to enable success now and for the 2020s workplace

2016

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A research report commissioned and authored by
Jeremy Blain, Regional Managing Director,
Cegos Asia Pacific

2016

Thank you!



We would like to thank the following industry experts who attended our 2020 LearningFuture event, on March 10th 2016 in Singapore, including those who took part in the initial research itself.

The event in March 2016 helped expand the debate on the back of the research findings and get to actions behind each of the 5 Drivers for Change identified as critical for workplace success in the 2020s. This specific activity took place with over 50 of the industry experts attending our event's afternoon session.

The outputs from the industry experts session helped us establish current best practices in place for each of the 5 drivers for successful change, actions recommended to be taken now, to start or continue the journey, and new, out of the box thinking to stir a more creative thought process around what is possible for success, across each change driver.

Across 2016 we have curated further best practices, actions and new ideas – most recently with Business, HR and Learning Leaders in the Philippines and Australia. We have added these new inputs to enhance the original paper and give you all even more options to consider, as you embark on or continue your own future-readiness journey



Sue Parsons	ANZ Banking Group Limited	Learning Consultant
Adilah Taib	ANZ Banking Group Limited	Learning Coordinator
Daniel Chua	Aonia Pte Ltd	Chief Executive
Andrea Studlik	AXA Financial Services	Regional L&D Director & Campus Head
Jimmy Wong	AXA Financial Services	Human Resource Business Partner
Ritika Sharan	AXA Financial Services	Senior Associate, Talent Development & Management
Tilo Sequeira	AXA University	eLearning / Digital Transformation Head
Howe Hoe Goh	Barclays Bank	L&D Specialist
Robyn Carlsen	Barclays Bank	Leadership, Learning & Talent
Mark Merkle	BASF South East Asia	Manager Academies & Virtual Learning
Angelo Pinto	BNP Paribas	Head of Asia Pacific Learning Academy
Cindy Koh	BNP Paribas	Programme Director
Rebecca Wong	BNP Paribas	Programme Manager
Gregoire Luthier	BNP Paribas	L&D Communication & Branding / HR Project Manager Digital
Amita Chawda	British Council	UK ASEAN Programme Manager
Malcolm Yiong	British High Commission	Trade and Investment Manager
Don Rapley	Cegos Asia Pacific	Principal Consultant
Neil Stoneham	Cegos Asia Pacific	Associate Consultant
Patrick Galiano	Cegos Group	Digital Learning Strategist
José Montes	Cegos Group	Chairman
Amy Teo	CGG	Cggu Training Center & People Development Manager
Jane Cha	CGG	VP HR - Asia Pacific
Karen Seet	CIMB Singapore	HR Director
Yam Sum Wan	Civil Service College	Lead L&D Specialist

Simon Cheong	Daimler	General Manager
Victor Tng	Dairy Farm Singapore	Head of Learning and Development
Louise Shenton	Dali Consulting	Trainer / Facilitator / Coach
Tuck Choy Tham	DBS Bank	Learning Specialist
Mohamed Rabeek Ravuthar	Eduquest	Distribution Partner India
Louise Perry	element14	HR Director, APAC
Farhan Firdaus	Family Dental Centre Singapore	Finance/HR Manager
Kristy Tan	FCI Asia Pte Ltd	HR Manager
Angela Ryan	FIS	HR Director SEA
Benjamin Loh	Flare Communications Coaching Pte Ltd	Founder
Michel Mommejat	FleishmanHillard (DAS, Omnicom)	Managing Director, Digital Engagement
Aude De Rotalier	Futuretraininglab	Founder
Samir Murgude	General Electric	Business HR Leader - aviation
Vincent Nicolier	GIC Private Limited	Vice President, Human Resource
Laura Goodrich	GWT Next	Global Workforce Innovator
Ludmila Pascual-Nodusso	IBM	Senior Strategic HR Partner
Bruce Chynoweth	IM-C	Delivery Manager (WDA Singapore contract)
Ann Verbeek	INSEAD	Director, Executive Education
Jukka Majanen	INSEAD	Director, Corporate Partnerships
Edwige Rozier	INSEAD	Associate Director
Bruna Fontes	International SOS	Talent Management Specialist
Toki Mulyanto	INTERPOL	e-Learning Police Officer
Tery Chua	Jurong Port Pte Ltd	Head, Human Resource Development
Samantha Eng	Jurong Port Pte Ltd	Deputy Manager
Tanvi Gautam	Leadershipshift Inc.	Founder
Tasha Abdul Mutalib	LinkedIn	Learning and Development Coordinator
Rebecca McPherson	Markit Communications	Director - Corporate Talent & OD
Gunjan Dhain	Marsh Singapore	Talent, Learning & Diversity
Mohd Bismillah	Mediacorp Pte Ltd	Learning & Development Manager
Benjamin Festin	Mediacorp Pte Ltd	Asst VP Talent Development and Change
Richard Kwok	Mediacorp Pte Ltd	Manager, HR (Talent Development)

Mette Johansson	MetaMind Pte Ltd	Director
Poh S. Lim	Minuteman Resources Pte. Ltd.	Principal Consultant/Director
Felicia Er	MSIG Holdings	VP, L&D
Laryn Chan	MSIG Insurance	Assistant Manager, Admin/Training/BCP
Ginny Eckblad	MUREX Southeast Asia Pte Ltd	Regional Head of Talent + L&D
Jethro Yee	NatSteel Holdings Pte Ltd	Learning & Development Senior Lead
Benjamin Cheng	NEC Asia Pacific Pte Ltd	Senior Partner, L&D
Kerryann Tomas	NetDimensions	BDM APAC
Charmaine Lim	Philip Morris Singapore	Manager HR Commercial
Penny Bongato	PowerInU	PMAP Association Director
Benjie Garcia	PowerInU	Philippines Partner
Elaine Cercado	PowerInU	Philippines partner
Paulette Lirio	PowerInU	Senior Consultant
Tai Keat Aw	Prudential Assurance Company Singapore	Senior Manager
Pong Fock Chiang	RT Advisory	Chief Operating Officer
Jaye Lee	SAPTCO	Head of Business Development
Joshua Leong	Singapore Academy of Law	Senior Manager, Curriculum Development
Celia Wu	Singapore Institute of Technology	Assistant Director
Richard Smith	SMU	Academic Director
Natacha Santos	Solvay	Deputy Zone Learning Manager
MK Liew	StarvisionIT	HR Manager
Carol Hoon	Symrise Asia Pacific	Talent Manager
Caroline Doyen-Tiger	TILLERY SACHS	Managing Director
Li Ling Ang	WDA	Principal Manager
Jason Wee	Wiley	Senior Regional Manager, L&OD
Tracy Fang	Wing Tai Retail Management Pte Ltd	Senior Training & Development Manager
Kana Ohashi	Yokogawa Electric International	HR Officer
Kelly Chua	Yokogawa Electric International	Senior HR Manager

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Introduction

HR, OD and Learning Leaders may be forgiven for believing that there are more complexities involved in maintaining an effective and persistently evolving workforce today than ever before. Changes in technology, increased diversity, changing generational capabilities and ever more regulatory demands figure high on many lists. These challenges seem unlikely to diminish anytime soon. For this reason, Cegos has run a major new survey to identify the challenges as they stand today, new challenges that may arise and how we can deal with them to ensure success for the future, now.

The Purpose of our research!

To explore the 5 drivers enabling organisational success now and in readiness for the 2020s workplace.

To further share current best practices in place, suggestions for actions now and new, out of box thinking to help you generate new ideas and progress.

The research was completed in 2016 following a survey by over 175 companies across Asia Pacific (70%), US (12%) and Europe (18%), representing almost 1500 senior level Business, HR and Learning Leaders. The focus was on the following identified 5 Drivers for change:

Driver #1: The impact of technology

Driver #2: The broadening cross generational challenges

Driver #3: Diversity and bias (both conscious and unconscious)

Driver #4: The future of work as we know it

Driver #5: Leader and manager readiness



Why is this an important survey now!

Considering the journey to significant workplace shifts in the 2020s

A storm is coming... our world is changing so fast it's difficult to understand the changes let alone keep up with them. Change is NOT constant, it's accelerating. Now is the time to prepare ourselves, because business is becoming tougher, we operate in hyper-competitive markets, our share is under threat from increasingly innovative and cost effective competitors – both existing and new on the block. Add to this the transformation to the 2020s workplace working in terms of demographic shift, geographical span, new technologies, new markets and more.

How do we really prepare our people for this? We support them through focused learning and development initiatives that are practical, grounded in their reality and experiential in nature to ensure application to the real workplace challenges. In order to create the future-focus for our learning and development, we need to understand the shifts to come, the new knowledge, skills and behaviors we need to work on and ensure our leaders and managers have the know-how to operate in a potentially very different working environment from the one we operate in today



To consider the importance of the development of our people we perhaps need to compare that to how we view the importance of educating our children.

- * Would we say education is important? No question.
- * Do we want our kids to do well at school and be prepared for the big wide world? Absolutely.
- * Can this be achieved without them learning? No.

The 2016-2026 workplace will throw up many challenges, opportunities and new ways of doing business, which we will need to remain competitive and get the best out of our human capital, whilst leveraging appropriate technologies to get in front of our customers. In some ways the blend of how we use our people and leverage technology is one of the greatest disruptors today to our businesses, our markets, our customers and our established conceptions of work & learning themselves.



Learning will be at the heart of successful organizational change as we ready ourselves for the 2020s workplace. Learning itself will need to adapt, evolve and cope with the new skills to develop, new trends that will emerge and – as change has become a constant – an ever more disruptive environment, that may unbalance how traditional organizations are structured, how they operate and how they define their human capital focus.

We truly need to unlearn how we do some things, learn anew and relearn the way we and our people operate for and within an uncertain and accelerated future workplace. If we tackle this now, it will help us all consolidate how we will do things, sooner rather than later. Waiting for the 2020s to arrive and force the change will be a recipe for disaster. Many organizations need to tackle the key drivers for successful workplace change now. The hyper-competitive environments many of us operate in and these times of great acceleration in all aspects of our life and work, mean we don't have the luxury to wait. We need to grasp the opportunity and lead the future for our organizations, now. The best opportunity yet for HR / L&OD to be at the heart of organizational and commercial strategy going forward. It's a potential game-changer!

The rest of this paper will help you focus on the 5 key drivers for successful change. We will aim to separate the truths from the urban myths where they exist and create a series of strategies and tactics to implement now.

These strategies and tactics come directly from events and workshops we have completed across 2016, always with a high level cadre of industry experts and leaders. The outputs are designed to help you shape your own strategies and on-going actions, within your own organisation.

We wish you the very best for your own journey!

Cegos Asia Pacific is geared up to help you develop your workforce now, in readiness for the challenges of the 2020s workplace.

We have specific expertise around these challenges on:

- * Leader / Manager Readiness
- * Transformation of work and learning in the digital era
- * The new skills sales organisations need to compete and win in hyper competitive environments, in the face of further disruption and uncertainty.

We would be happy to assist you and discuss your needs further. Email us directly through learn@cegos.com.sg



Drivers for change

Survey results with examples of current best practices, new ideas and suggested next steps for actions across each of the 5 Drivers.

Although the drivers for change are not difficult to imagine, their nature and significance is open to much interpretation and, even, urban myth. This paper considers each of these drivers by defining them, identifying current best practice and new actions and thinking that can be applied to minimize risk and maximize effectiveness.

Collectively, the 5 drivers for successful workplace change we considered resulted from feedback across HR, OD and L&D professionals throughout 2016. 5 Drivers in particular were identified as critical to the effectiveness of our human capital as we approach the workplace shift of the 2020s workplace. **In order of importance according to our survey respondents**, they were as follows:

1

The Impact of Technology

A clear leader in terms of drivers, in terms of the rate of accelerated change. How can we prepare for these changes? And how will it influence us and our organisations?



2

Manager and Leader readiness

The main human capital challenge we have. This is revealed in our survey as both a concern and a must-tackle item. How can we prepare Management for the future challenges, now?



3

The future of work ! office of the future

We perceive that the shape and way we work will continue to change. But what will the office of the future look like? Will there even be an office? What will work even look like?



4

Diversity and Bias

Will we need to understand new diversity challenges? Are we ignoring, purposefully or otherwise, existing diversity issues and how can we be prepared to deal with them?



5

The Cross Generational Challenges

Do we need to do more to deal with the generation gap? Or does this really mean, as the least important driver on our list, it's all just hype, and that we have a better handle on things?



The underlying linking theme through all of these is, of course, technology. This is seen by our respondents as firmly centered around the “4th Industrial Revolution” as defined below:



*“ From IT to Cyber / Physical Systems”
Characterized by a fusion of technologies that is
blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and
biological spheres.*

Source: World Economic Forum, Davos, 2015

That said, beyond the digital, the biggest opportunity is seen as a very human one – that of the readiness of our current and future **Leaders and Managers**, in terms of the future skills required to lead and manage in hyper-competitive marketplaces, the increasingly digital era and more dispersed working environments, to highlight just three areas.

+++++

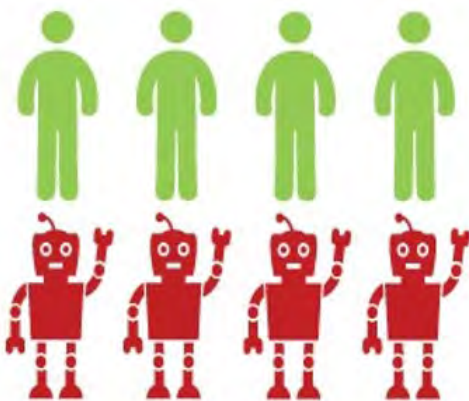
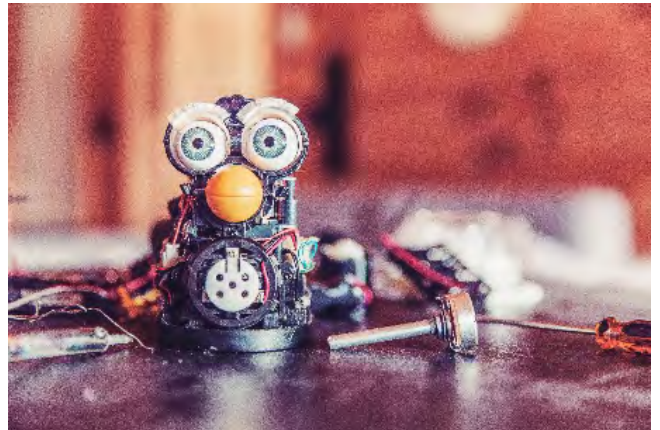
Driver 1!

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

The Impact of Technology

We've been worrying about how technology changes and affects our workplace since the Luddites ran amok in the 19th century. Each new technology brings with it more challenges. Today's pace of change makes us more accustomed to dealing with them. Indeed, one of the key findings from our survey was that our respondents are ready for this: they clearly recognize that the way we work will continue to shift as we embrace new relevant technologies. Key findings¹ included:

- * Respondents were unwilling to believe that robots will take over the world in the next 10 years – but we will witness greater automation.
- * 83% of respondents agreed that Gen Z will expect close collaboration and peer connectivity, through relevant technologies.



As always though, we can assess today's position and derive information from new data to determine how best we can leverage this.

We don't believe that robots will take over anytime soon!
But 83% believe Gen Z will use more technology to provide close connectivity and peer recognition



¹Specific data on all of the findings can be found in the Appendix of this paper.



Current Best Practice

Our follow up workshopping with over 50 industry HR and Learning Leaders and Experts established some of the key best practices for using technology in the workplace today in preparation for the needs of tomorrow. They include:



- * Using personal mobile devices (known colloquially as 'bring your own device' or BYOD) for learning and doing work. This has the benefits of being both economically efficient and pleasing for the learner, at home with their own technology. Formalizing the informal in some ways without putting too much organizational structure or baggage to get in the way.
- * Using the social online communities and any other online technology for learning and doing work; it seems the days of organizations restricting employees online activities are limited as organizations realize the benefits of accessing this constant stream of ever updated information – tremendously important in these ever accelerating times.
- * File and document sharing technology, now used by most organizations, reducing the requirements for expensive in-house multiple servers.
- * Owning a Learning Management System, still a pre-requisite for any organization with significant compliance issues to deal with and the easiest way to concentrate and measure learning success.
- * Institutionalization of learning through technology to enable both formal and informal, community-based learning. This will help to recognize the diverse mix of human capital many organizations have and the strong benefits that can be derived by some of the fascinating new technologies and tools now available.

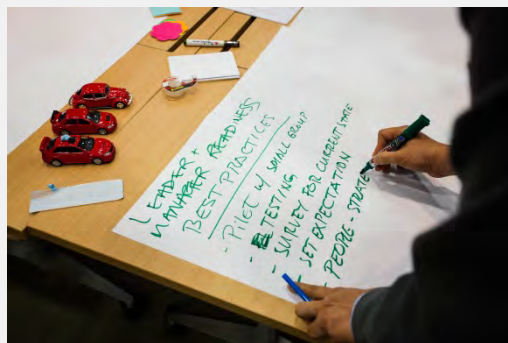




Action Now

Our industry leader workshoping also established what actions can be undertaken in the workplace to leverage better use of technologies. These include:

- * Organizations should invest in greater digitalization of face-to-face learning: the initial outlay to create effective blended or standalone digital solutions can be a disincentive but is becoming a necessity as traditional ways of doing things either go out of date or simply do not do the job effectively enough in this more dispersed, budget sensitive and globalized world we live and work in. Those organizations crossing this digital Rubicon, reinforce time and again the cost / benefit in terms of value to the organization, engagement and especially active participation in personal growth actions. This in turn impacts many different areas such as business success, recruitment attraction strategies and retention measures. Overall, a positive impact on workplace productivity can be the initial big win. Measureable, provable and inclusive.
- * Develop immersive training tools for skill building using virtual technologies; the emergence of virtual and realistic learning environments and tools is an exciting and compelling development. Many of our panel of experts are investigating these now and starting the journey – often through webinars and virtual online classes. The technology is there to make it work and feedback suggests it is a “human factor” that is the barrier to progress – not just budgetary; more importantly it is about a mindset for change to enable a ‘think and do different’ approach.
- * Determine and develop useful measurements to analyze the effectiveness of online learning to reveal useful data for future course improvement.
- * Leaders should set an example by being (and being seen to be) early adopters of technology and encouraging technology. This perhaps is the biggest single win that can be derived through an active HR and L&OD leadership to demonstrate the gap, provide options and next steps for their leaders and managers and help to create early wins.
>> i.e. some of our panel of learning leaders have initiated reverse mentoring internally to bring Gen Y tech-savvy experts into the Boardroom to help create those early wins. A fantastic opportunity from all points of view and an added benefit of bringing the whole organization closer together, or flatter, in hierarchical terms.





New Out of the box thinking

The top three ideas that emerged from the Cegos Learning Café session were:

- * Development of *real time digital engagement during face-to-face, instructor-led training, seminars, events etc.* Using widely available tools (such as pigeonhole polling / Q&A and survey technology and twitter) concurrently with group gatherings, team events, training etc. to involve, engage and drive active participation.
- * We should create unique, learner-centric learning paths based on the learner inputs of activities. *These predictive learning tools are seen as a way to both encourage learning as well as make it more relevant.*
- * We should consider using “*digital profiling*” technology to move away from a “one size fits all” approach to one that is tailored to the skills and knowledge levels of different segments of the target population.
 - Creating a map internally for the digital maturity of the organization from the very top, down.
 - Highlighting those digital champions internally to be used as educators and learning leaders internally from the bottom, up as much as top, down



Want to take your first steps!

Contact us through learn@cegos.com.sg and we can help you by creating a bespoke digital maturity profiler for your organization / group / team to help you get some initial data. This will certainly help you then prioritize actions and define a clear way forward in your continuing digitalization journey.



STOP PRESS!

Further Insights from events and conference workshops across 2016

Suggestions for action

- * Blended learning boosts skills and provides limitless opportunities for innovation – e.g., Generation X leading classroom activities for Gen Y
- * Platforms can be customised so that learners can ‘pull’ relevant topics from a bank of e-learning modules, allowing for a more relevant and engaging experience
- * Compliance or inductions can be automated, followed up with face-to-face interaction
- * User-friendliness and style of application is key to engagement
- * Employees should be encouraged to tell their stories via social media – this is an alternative form of learning that can also be pleasurable
- * Technology can be used to drive competency-based training and develop skills required for the future. Companies should enable democratic access to technology – e.g., by subsidising smartphones, etc.
- * Online collaboration tools, such as Yammar and Chatter, encourage staff interaction and can achieve faster and more impressive results

Game changers



We now have an opportunity to leverage technology to connect, innovate and integrate. This creates real value for businesses, without necessarily compromising on human interaction, providing that all generations within the workforce become ‘tech savvy’. Developments in Artificial Intelligence can be exploited to access competencies and help managers match skills to people.



Driver 2!

Leader and Manager Readiness

Leader and Manager Readiness

The driver of 'leader readiness' was revealed as being a very real pre-occupation for many participating in this survey.

A significant 65% cited this as being extremely important with two distinct challenges emerging – one focused on the 'leaders in waiting' and one focused on the heart of operational management across many organizations. Some of this may be attributed to an interesting paradox that emerged from the survey. What was clear in the first instance was that respondents felt that **Generation X must 'step up' as the leaders in waiting**. They were clearly perceived as the best generation to lead and manage the changes to come. They were perceived as being competent, flexible and agile. The paradox emerges because **Generation X themselves seem much less confident** in their abilities. Indeed in earlier surveys, they are revealed as the least confident generation in today's workplace.



"Generation X must 'step up' as the leaders in waiting."

Gen Y meanwhile emerge as the core operational Managers of the 2020s workplace. They are key to the task of integrating Gen Z into the workplace and driving performance through others. There is not enough being done in many organizations to prepare our Managers now with skills they will need for the future workplace, alongside the traditional and still no less important skills we are more traditionally focused upon.

The survey revealed:

- * 80% of respondents agreed that for their transition to management, Gen Y will have to leave the "me" behind and become the "we" generation.
- * 76% of people agree that when Gen Y take the seats of management, the challenge will be how to engage their new tech-savvy and expectant Gen Z colleagues.
- * Interestingly, more than half of respondents (52%) disagreed with the statement that Gen X are not prepared to face the new leadership and management challenges of the future workplace. What we need to do now, is focus on what Gen X leaders-in-waiting need to boost their skills and confidence to tackle the challenge and opportunity within the journey ahead.



Gen Y meanwhile may emerge as the core operational Managers of the 2020s workplace 80% agree that for their transition, Gen Y will have to leave the "me" generation behind and become the "we" generation



Current Best Practice

- * Empowering employee level actions. These might include nominating champions to drive initiatives internally. This can be done through peer identification as opposed to just top-down management style.
- * Running surveys to assess current state of operations is a tried and tested solution but should still form of part of a best practice process. Particularly if (as should be) fixed on the future focused competencies we need our leaders and managers to display
- * Some organizations have had a tough time over the continuing uncertain global financial and geo-social situation. This has meant that for some, budgets for leader and management development have suffered and we have not done enough in training our leadership pipeline. This in turn means that even basic skills may be lacking, let alone the future focused skills that many Leaders and Managers need as they look ahead to the 2020s workplace. There existed within our group of experts good examples of how budgets (particularly at first and second line manager level) had been ring-fenced and a hybrid approach to their development initiated to focus on traditional and future focused Leader / Management skills. Particularly those around upskilling technology usage, social media know-how and the development of more collaborative communities internally and externally. In fact, a previous Cegos survey reinforced these future focused skills as being required today, in preparation for the 2020s workplace. The top five skills identified by our survey set are detailed in the table below.
- * The challenge remains that many organizations still are not doing enough around the future readiness of their leader / manager cadre, or even their basic readiness for either management or leadership. A crisis in the waiting for some.
- * Above all, in an increasingly technology-enabled world, communication will be even more important using all tools and techniques at the disposal of Management. In some of the examples shared among our expert group, it was obvious that the symbiotic link between appropriate technologies and meaningful human-to-human interaction was the greatest enabler in the modern day workplace. It will become an even more important feature over the next few years.

Top 5 leadership skills in 2020

- 1st – Ability to manage change
- 2nd – Being technology capable
- 3rd – Collaboration
- 4th – Social media active & capable
- 5th – Negotiation / conflict resolution

Source: Cegos APAC, STADA, Temasek Polytechnic research, 2013, into leadership and management challenges for the 2020 workplace: 88% of the 600 respondents are currently living in Singapore, and 79% of them are Singaporeans.





Action Now

- * Encourage more leader and manager engagement – They could make more time to connect with people and encourage more on-demand feedback, both face-to-face and using appropriate technologies, particularly in their engagement of remote teams who may always feel one-step removed.
- * Place less emphasis on formal appraisals as the main interaction with employees. Look for informal as well as formal opportunities.



- * Some strategies to engage both new and existing employees can be executed e.g. by providing more ‘welcoming’ communications at the time a new hire enters the organization; encouraging communications as performance improves, recognition of challenges and isolation of internal best practice to celebrate ownership and the entrepreneurial spirit.
- * Informal sharing of social events / interesting activities which may also be of benefit to the team as a bonding exercise as much as social event. Having more informal opportunities to observe and engage with employees / team members provides unique opportunity to really know the person, learn new things and share in a more comfortable environment. It may open up some unexpected benefits that could be applied back in the workplace.

- * Define and redefine expected behaviors as much as knowledge / skills of leaders on a regular on-going basis
- * Encourage more leadership “at any level” through identification of champions and/or ambassadors – i.e. support by setting up a recognition award for these remarkable individuals who demonstrate loyalty, drive, passion and the ‘positive infection’ of others to do the same. This will make our leaders’ and managers’ jobs easier and provide identification of future leadership pipeline outside of the usual Talent tracks. Find the hidden diamonds within our own organization! How many do we miss by being more exclusive than inclusive?





New Out of the box thinking

- * Gamification and simulations: gamified technologies can be used to prepare leaders and managers to help build new skills. Leadership development will take on a new dimension by exposing learners to innovative ways to acquire skills for the future – including putting them in unfamiliar scenarios that may be a feature of the 2020s workplace to assess their capabilities now and what we need to do to build their future-focused skills for optimal performance into the medium term.



- The mix of new technologies and new potential situations is a powerful way to simulate the new requirements for leader and manager competence demonstration and future workplace readiness

- * Leaders and managers can acquire new skills for the future using ‘micro learning’ processes such as sharing personal experiences, i.e. thoughts, ideas or opinions, as a way to promote openness and peer sharing. These practices can be fostered through the use of common digital platforms as well as face-to-face huddles, café sessions and more.



- Using technology to facilitate and encourage new behaviors can yield new and permanent ways of doing things – these can then be ‘reused’ throughout the organization in the development of the leader / manager pipeline and to encourage ‘leaders at any level’.

- * The concept of applying a ‘Viral Change’ to provide the necessary conditions to create sustainable large scale business impact and culture change through behaviors. Many organizations focus time and energy on restructuring, resizing, and reorganization, but these measures still revolve around reinventing the same things.



STOP PRESS!

Further Insights from events and conference workshops across 2016

Suggestions for action

- * Leaders have a responsibility to own and embody the company's values
- * Gathering feedback is crucial to the management process, and technology can be utilised to make this happen
- * Programmes and workshops that promote leadership skills should be incorporated into a long-term development plan, driven by the individual
- * Some training on Emotional Intelligence and adopting new learning systems is advantageous. Identify Learning and Development metrics to measure effectiveness and relevance of training
- * Strategic planning is crucial, so put in place plans for successions and leadership acceleration
- * Branding leadership in terms of 'generalist' and 'specialist' helps define roles and creates clarity, giving managers a macro perspective of the business

Game changers

Managers who show a willingness to adapt to flexible work arrangements will reap the benefits. Modified blended learning helps to reduce physical and face-to-face discussions and can be aligned to the interests of Generation X and Y. However, it is important to strike the right balance between technology and human interaction, in a way that reflects the paradigm shift in how we do business, decision making and the use of technology. Tech skills and people skills should be separated, so that neither are diluted.



Driver 3!

The Future of
work as we
know it

The Future of work as we know it

During the 20th century and into the 21st century, the working day as we know it has been steadily evolving. This is not just because of the change in the type of work we now do. Compared to 50 years ago, on average (globally) we arrive at work later in the day. Our working week is more flexible and far more likely to encroach on our home life. These changes are, according to our survey, set to continue. As the Gen Y worldwide working population creeps over 50% in the next few years, and we welcome the new influx of Gen Z, these issues will be key.



The office of the future will be mobile, shifting and perhaps not even exist! 72% of people believed that Offices will be mobile working hubs and there will be little need for expensive offices.

Specifically the survey said:

- * 56% of people agreed that, as Gen Y and Gen Z are not trained at college or university to be ready for the new demands of the future workplace, this could be a crisis brewing. Note though this was only really significant in terms of a factor in the APAC region. Only a minority of people believe this in the US and Europe. It seems that workplace ready individuals are being better prepared by higher education in the US and Europe, than they are in the Asia Pacific region, for the challenges of the workplace of the future. An opportunity for higher education across the APAC region to tackle over the coming years as a matter of competitive priority (i.e. impact on Talent Mobility, competitiveness, early workplace impact, etc.)



Work life balances are set to blur
85% of people agreed that working hours of the future will be more flexible with little need for expensive offices



- * A massive 85% of people agreed that the working hours of the future workplace will be flexible, operating in short bursts and often remote. A move from less approach from companies will lead to a blurring of work-life balance. This of course raises the question of how we can upskill our managers and teams to operate effectively in the future. A new way to manage x a new way to work – we need to unlearn-learn-relearn how we do things and – first – be mentally prepared to do so!
- * Perhaps surprisingly, 72% of people believed that Offices will be mobile working hubs and there will be little need for expensive offices in the advent of a more dispersed and, in some cases, independent and flexible workforce per current predicted trends.



Current Best Practice

- * Offering flexible working hours and work-from-home arrangements.
- * Best possible clarity and automation of tasks which improves job satisfaction as well as efficiency
- * The use and adoption of personal mobile devices (Bring Your Own Device or BYOD).
- * Decentralized decision making and the encouragement of online collaboration tools for community-based working, sharing, socializing and more.



Action Now

- * Implement training for future readiness and a change of mindset using different learning delivery methods, so work and the processes involved can be viewed in a different way.
- * Increase the tolerance for failure comfort, unlearning-learning-relearning and encouraging future-oriented mindset e.g. using technology in more ways to facilitate improved work and better communication.





New Out of the box thinking



- * Continue to search for, try and implement new flexible work arrangements. These can be beneficial to both organization and the individual. This includes work-from-home arrangements; rotating, scheduled cross-time zone teleconferences to suit people in different locations and any new technology driven opportunities.
- * Focus on managing the mindset of the workforce as a way of preparing them for the future workplace challenges. We should aim to create a culture where workplace change and even disruption is the new normal. By being 'collectively prepared', we will be better able to face the future whatever it throws at us. Look to achieve this goal via creative learning solutions and the reshaping our existing ways of working aligning with the future in mind.

"...aim to create a culture where workplace change and even disruption is the new normal"

- * A radical idea to emerge translated as the "no more work" attitude. This preference is already emerging in the millennial generation, one that is more motivated by doing things that appeal to personal interests or passions. The shift towards "no more work" simply means that the workforce of the future would not view work as a set of activities or tasks or "hard work" but rather the positive pursuit of interests and passions, and this must be encouraged. In this scenario, work ceases to be a timed or scheduled activity, rather one which we pursue as a regular part of our daily life as eating or sleeping. It can support the supposed trend of a more independent, flexible and on-demand workforce.

For example, technologies already exist as an online marketplace for such a workforce. Randstad, one of the world's leading manpower services groups, has initiated the RIF – The Randstad Innovation Fund – specifically to invest in and encourage start-up organizations who, through a blend of know-how and appropriate technologies, are short-cutting the processes in place now, to enable rapid search, attraction and fit of appropriate resource for specified jobs or tasks for a more flexible way of working.



You can find out more here:

<http://www.randstad.com/about-us/innovation-fund/>



Here are two examples!

Technology to enable not to overwhelm



*Connecting clients
with contractors*

Twago

A multi-language online outsourcing community. With 225,000 experts in over 190 countries, it is one of the world's largest freelancer marketplaces.

<https://www.twago.com/>

Capturing cognitive and emotional traits



Pymetrics

A pioneer in using big data, neuroscience and gamification to engage users and draw personal career and job recommendations.

See more here: <https://pymetrics.com/>



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Further Insights from events and conference workshops across 2016

Suggestions for action

- * Companies must be prepared to shift traditions to accommodate new technologies
- * Always ask why new technology should be implemented – too many companies use tech simply because others are doing so
- * Everyone is a leader – all of us have technological strengths and insights to pass on to others. Need for mentoring and coaching at all levels.



Game changers

Being mobile ready is crucial for building the right infrastructure in the modern world. An ability to adapt work-life balance when incorporating new tech is a positive.



Driver 4!

Diversity and
Bias !conscious
and unconscious!

Diversity and Bias (conscious and unconscious)

It seems reasonable to assume that during the next five to ten years, our world population and Talent mobility will increase and globalization will continue – across border, cultures, generations, social groups etc. In such circumstances, diversity and bias, conscious or unconscious, could become more central issues for organizations. It is hardly surprising therefore to discover that 52% of respondents to the Cegos survey cited diversity and bias as being an extremely important issue for their organization. There was general agreement across the survey that it is the Leader and Manager population who need to step up and tackle these issues now and potentially the greater challenges of the shifting 2020s workplace. This acknowledgement of need does not seem to be mirrored with action. Disappointingly, there appears to be little in the way of clear planning around how to tackle these issues and how to upskill Leaders and Managers to be able to deal with them.



Specifically, findings revealed:

- * A significant 75% of respondents agreed that diversity lenses, such as gender, color, LGBT, nationality, social, age and culture are common issues across organizations.
- * Equally and significantly, respondents agreed that most executives are unaware of the biases that exist in the workplace.
- * A huge 92% of people thought the future workplace will be more colorful and diverse. This means managers have to be comfortable dealing with emerging diversity issues. That said it was also observed that, although this need is overwhelming agreed, there is little obvious action surrounding the issue.



Diversity and bias challenges are common and growing

75% of people agreed that diversity issues were common across organisations. 92% of people agree that the future workplace will be more colourful and diverse.



Current Best Practice



- * Gender Diversity continues to require focus – Some organizations are getting it right. In one area particularly there appears to be more genuine support for expectant mothers in the workplace; this can be applied in a personally sympathetic way and with the provision of a supportive working environment and tools. In two notable financial services institutions their maternity coaching process supports the process prior to leaving the workplace (before giving birth) – following the birth and into preparing to come back into the workplace if that has been identified as the desired outcome and finally, on entry back into the workplace in support of the resetting and reintegration process.
- * In other organizations as part of our expert cohort of Industry Professionals, there was common experience and very positive outcomes following a cross cultural organizational venture called “Trading spices”. This has been and continues to be the sharing of cooking experience from different cultures represented within the workplace and sharing of new techniques, new ingredient combinations and co-working to produce an outstanding (and delicious) end result. This is beyond team building and into active participation in the cross cultural melee within organizations. This has the added benefit of using real experience rather than advisory, unsupported ‘beliefs’.
- * Many organizations represented cited an active internal effort to consciously create more gender mix in attraction and hiring practices. This has shifted further and been applied even to jobs which have been traditionally sex-specific (examples cited included the construction industry, mechanical engineering, hiring at certain levels for certain roles and more).





Action Now

- * Address and identify conscious and unconscious bias. This must include definitions of what constitutes bias and unreasonable behavior generally and within the organization in question.
- * Define diversity in broader terms, not just gender or ethnicity (e.g. religious, regional country differences, sexuality).
- * In Asia Pacific particularly (across Asian organizations in the main) a willingness to open up these discussions which appear to be largely 'unsaid' in many countries / cultures. Perhaps as Talent Mobility and more diverse workforces are represented in these companies, there will be a scope to do something more about it. It was believed that the current situation (for some organizations) was still a 'conscious' decision, preferring a more traditional approach, largely hierarchical in nature and with an unwillingness to discuss business or personal issues on an emotional level.



- As these organizations continue to internationalize there will be a requirement to learn from other multi-dimensional businesses who are successfully diverse and have welcomed more open discussions
- Common organizations within common countries / cultures can certainly help each other first on this journey to start the process at the very least.



New Out of the box thinking



Unconscious bias can be overcome through using data and hard facts to address issues, and this practice can be coached, encouraged and even operationalized.

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- * One organization shared a unique internal practice where they encouraged diverse community groups (young professionals, LGBT, etc.) by supporting them, providing funding on both at local, regional and even global level. These community groups gather for joint activities, events and are open to any and all fellow colleagues for networking. This promotes inclusion and involvement. The knock-on effect was an increase in employer branding awareness and attractiveness – not just within the specific communities – but wider, as the organization was seen as been generally more enlightened and willing to try a different approach. Including putting really money on the table to fund a belief that this would drive organizational-wide benefit, not just community centered. It's a strategy that appears to be working and may be worth positioning in your organization.
- * Global policies should be applied that may be transferred to employees in other countries or with employees as they cross borders. Such employee secondment or transfer policies may not be unusual but a key differentiating factor is the element of enabling employees who are interested in experiencing work in a different culture or country based on interest. In other words, while there is a financial consideration, there must be equal weight applied to the personal consideration and future benefit. Positioning it as investment versus a cost.



IBM agrees and has had this mentality for many years – very much at the heart of an enlightened Talent Mobility strategy!

“The silver lining of globalization is that the shift towards expansion will require companies to redirect their workforce to locations that provide the greatest opportunities, not just the lowest costs and at the same time re-imagine their management strategies to reflect an increasingly dynamic workforce.”

Denis Brousseau, Vice President for Organization and People, IBM, Global Business Service

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Further Insights from events and conference workshops across 2016

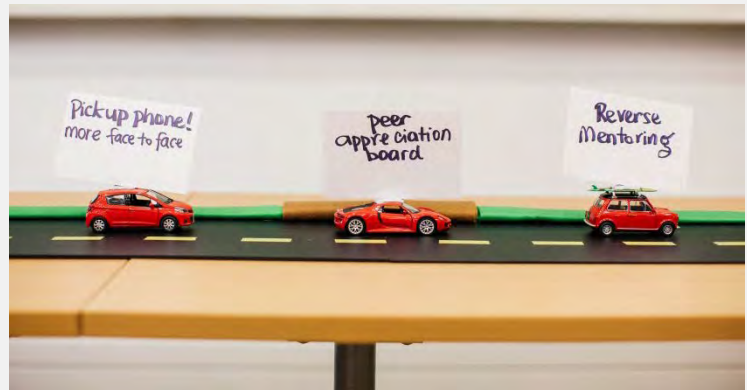
Suggestions for action

- * Avoid bias in recruiting procedure by removing names from incoming resumes
- * Measure staff diversity through surveys, and reflect on results when determining future recruitment
- * Include Unconscious Bias topic in staff training programmes



Game changers

Leaders should 'walk the talk' and demonstrate inclusiveness and appreciation of diversity in both words and actions.



Driver 5!

The broadening
cross generational
challenges

The broadening cross generational challenges

Cross generational challenges – the impact of Gen Z and Gen Y on our workplaces has been a hot topic in the media. We fully expected this to feature high on the list. Our survey suggests, however, that this is in serious danger of becoming a sensationalist topic, driven by media headlines, when in fact the real evidence suggests **we are more on top of cross generational challenge than ever before**, to the extent that it is not an issue to preoccupy many HR, OD and L&D professionals like it once did. There are issues to deal with of course, especially as Gen Z joins the workforce and we tackle an increasing aging population in many parts of the world. But the good news is that there is an underlying confidence we will be able to handle it and handle it well.

- ✧ We have built up experiences through the management of Gen Y
- ✧ We have developed strategies and tactics to help organizations get the best out of their Talent – whatever the generation
- ✧ We are more consciously competent in an ever changing workplace environment where issues / opportunities like this require a more agile and flexible approach as they appear.
- ✧ A more collaborative mindset (and in some cases community-minded) in many multi-dimensional organizations is already helping to promote close co-working and communication, removing a sense that “we have a cross generational or even cross cultural divide” – We have a group of Talented people are finding better and better ways to work together. Regardless of geography, age, sex, origin etc.

Perhaps this is how it should be...

...this is in serious danger of becoming a sensationalist topic, driven by media headlines



The 3 Generations highlighted within our survey

* Generation X

Born: 1966-1976: Gen X is often characterized by high levels of scepticism, and “what’s in it for me” attitudes. They are arguably the best educated generation to date.

* Generation Y, (also known as Echo Boomers or Millennials)

Born: 1977-1994: In many countries, the largest cohort since the Baby Boomers, Gen Y kids are perceived as sophisticated, technology wise, immune to many traditional marketing and sales pitches. They are much more racially and ethnically diverse and they are much more segmented as an audience.

* Generation Z

Born: 1995 onwards: Gen Z are growing up in a highly diverse environment with higher levels of technology expecting customized instruction and a constantly changing environment

Specifically, the survey demonstrated this as follows:

- * 51% said that careful management of a cross generational workforce was important to the organization though note that 36% disagreed.
- * Almost half of all those surveyed disagreed when it was suggested that, with a widening generational gap, the future workplace is in danger of creating human silos. This reinforces a conclusion that we are getting far better at integrating and driving more positive co-working across our multi-dimensional workforce.
- * 62% disagreed when it was suggested that Modern workplaces are overly obsessed with Gen Y and in danger of doing the same with Gen Z. Note that workers in the **western world are more likely to consider this statement to be true whilst eastern world organizations definitely consider this a myth**. This suggests the West has been, perhaps, the drivers of the “Cult of the Millennials” at times, with a recent epiphany that perhaps it no longer represents the issue it once did – either perceived or real.
- * However 78% agreed that we need a new approach to corporate learning and development to engage the newer generations in the workplace. This is a more obvious point and important one. Where we do need to be mindful in within our engagement and active participation strategies internally. Learning and Development is one resulting tactic and with newer, more tech-savvy generations, very willing and able (and with strong preference) to have an increasingly digital toolkit, it is challenging the more traditional ways of working and learning. This in turn is forcing a change within those in the organization who are perhaps not as comfortable or flexible in their use and application of technologies in the workplace. This is where we need to focus as the enablers of our organizational human capital, rather than being fixated on perceived cross-generational divides.





Issues such as engagement are key to Gen Z workforce
78% agreed that we need a new approach to corporate learning and development to engage the newer generations in the workplace



Current Best Practice

- * Weekly 'huddles' within small groups or wider teams are becoming more and more common. 1.5 hour high touch sessions, focused on must-have outputs. These reduce the "white noise" of distracting personal or nice-to-have agenda items that can suck productivity away from longer meetings.
- * Monthly 'happy hours' with the CEO were cited among our Industry Professional group, as a great enabler across the organization in bringing people from all levels in the business in close proximity with the leadership. This has led to more open communications, Q&A and co-working. It was cited as being a strong engagement strategy and has been welcomed positively by those employees who have experienced it.



- * Having multiple modes of learning that appeal to different generations. That might include things like 'adventure learning' to complement classroom sessions. Adventure Learning is defined as follows:

'...provides students with opportunities to explore real-world issues through authentic learning experiences within collaborative online learning environments...'

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adventure_learning

- * The use of open space and 'same size' work stations to encourage collaboration and even building a 'neighborhood' climate where people sit – regardless of generation, culture etc.
- * Put in place a buddy system in which instead of peers, an "old hand" buddy is assigned, playing a mentor/guide role.



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- * Mentoring outside the organization to workplace ready final year students / post grads etc. – to help them better prepare for the workplace, understand management realities and leadership principles (at any level) and more...
- * Reverse mentoring (i.e. companies like Citibank doing this very well) whereby younger generations are mentoring ‘up the line’ around the use and application of relevant technologies and social networking spaces to enable greater internal communication and collaboration and greater customer engagement, outside of the traditional approaches.



Citi Execs Get Schooled on Digital Strategies by Gen-Y Mentors

September 30, 2013 | Subscribe Free

Twitter 34 Facebook 11 LinkedIn 44 Email Print 1 Comments

As part of a unique reverse-mentoring program, students from the University of Miami School of Business Administration will spend the next six months schooling senior Citi execs on social media and digital technologies.

Mentoring programs in the financial industry are nothing new. Google around and you'll find plenty of banks (and even a few credit unions) talking up their mentor programs — how they adopt the young, tender, impressionable business leaders of tomorrow and help guide their futures in the right direction. Normally it's the older, more experienced bankers



Action Now

- * Persuade Leaders and Managers to work within cross generational groups to encourage more engagement through dialogue.
- * Consider reverse mentoring trial scheme within your organization. Select Gen Y / Millennial champions to engage with selected Leaders, helping to pioneer a workable approach for your organization. It can be around employment of technologies relevant to the business, engagement of a younger more collaborative group of entry level graduates, creation of internal working communities and diverse groups (per Driver #4 and much more)

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“

- ✧ Create an ‘expert mentor’ series led by your organization’s ‘silver stars’. Those Baby Boomers (and even Traditionalists in some industries) who may have extended their workplace longevity and have much to offer to those coming through the organization. They can be utilized as active coaches or informal mentors. Per point above, the obvious mirror of reverse mentoring around the use of appropriate technologies is also a strong by-product of this approach.
- ✧ A key benefit of all these actions can be to **promote greater peer recognition and appreciation** regardless of “generation” or title and position.



New Out of the box thinking

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- ✧ Despite the proliferation of new communication tools, the time-tested universal practices of enhancing communication, relationships and interaction – that is to pick up the phone and spend more time in face-to-face communication (something no generation feels challenged by) could be the simplest and most effective way to meet these challenges. Indeed another survey conducted in February 2016 by Cegos Asia Pacific revealed that 88% of Gen Z respondents still preferred face-to-face communications, way ahead of email at 54% which was the next most popular.
- ✧ Promote more peer recognition and appreciation within the organization, regardless of “generation” or title and position.
 - Create a ‘peer award series’ whereby any employee can nominate another for excellence in collaboration, communication, co-working and contribution.
 - CEO / Senior Leaders sponsor the awards and engage, champion and promote the winners
 - Desirable Certification process and lifestyle prizes
 - Creates a company-wide “next practice” mentality – new behaviors, skills, actions being modelled as the new way we do things around here.

STOP PRESS!

Further Insights from events and conference workshops across 2016

Suggestions for action

- * Provide ownership of training to interns and new graduate recruits
- * Recruit and promote staff based on merit, rather than experience
- * Engage middle management and reduce culture of 'control' in favour of a more open management hierarchy
- * Adopt a change mindset to accept different ways of working



Game changers

Leaders should work as capability facilitators. Abolishing caps on retirement age encourages motivation of older workers, and those with vast experience and good health bring many benefits to the workplace.



Summary

One of the overriding aspects of this paper is the continued importance new technology will play in shaping the future of our workplaces. This could have been reasonably predicted. But less obvious is the challenge of our most important human driver – that of management and leadership readiness. The issue of who takes over the reins and their readiness to do so (from their own perspective as much as that of others) emerges as a genuine concern. Our survey suggests that organizations should focus on this going forward to avoid later challenges. In other words to do far more to build a) essential management skills as a solid base and b) to rapidly focus on the future competencies leaders and managers will need within the next 5 years, assertively implementing a plan to develop them year-on-year.

Of less concern were the cross generational issues, here revealed as more continuing media-hype than something that remains a genuine issue. We have a much better handle on it and we are far more comfortable in handling the broadening cross generational mix to come within the 2020s. We must be mindful of it of course; there is no room for complacency.

Diversity issues, conversely are not overhyped. It emerges as a positive that new generational workers appear to be better equipped to deal with these issues but it is still something managers need to both understand and be able to execute in better ways than they are doing now, particularly in many Asian organizations according to our survey.

Overall perhaps the underlying message is the sheer breadth of the challenges we are facing as we look towards 2020. The future of work has some surprises for us all. Organizations need to develop and embrace a more agile and flexible mindset now, to prepare for what remains an uncertain future for many.

The magnitude of the changes any organization will need to go through will depend on how quickly they start the journey. The pace of change and disruption should be the alarm call to start the journey now. We cannot afford to wait for the 2020s workplace to appear and then act. It is the more enlightened organizations who will succeed in the future through their preparations and activities today, not tomorrow.



About Jeremy Blain



Jeremy Blain is a Managing Partner of Cegos Group, one of the world's largest professional skills training companies operating today, and Regional Managing Director of Cegos Asia Pacific, where he heads up the Cegos operations and activities from the company's Singapore hub, covering India in the West to the Pacific countries in the East.

Jeremy is a **Fellow of The Institute of Directors, London (FloD)**, holds a **Masters of Management in International Business** from the Australian Institute of Business and a **BA (hons)** from Sheffield University (UK)

Jeremy has a wealth of International experience being previously responsible for Cegos' strategy for international expansion through a value adding Global Distribution Partners Network and before that as Managing Director of Cegos U.K.

A commercially minded, award-winning L&D entrepreneur Jeremy has 14 years' experience in the industry as a managing director, partner, trainer, coach, author and program creator. In previous roles at Procter and Gamble, PepsiCo and as Managing Partner of his own point-of-sale software business, Jeremy's roles have included marketing, sales, operations, Executive Board duties, and General Management.

As one of Cegos' senior executives, Jeremy is a frequent international conference speaker and media commentator on topics related to the global L&D market. Themes include: the leadership and management challenges for global organizations as they head to the next workplace shift in the 2020s, the integration of emerging and informal learning technologies; the importance of performance measurement and proving ROI; developing 'core' commercial skills to achieve competitive business advantage; and more.

As a result of his work in the field of Training and Development, Jeremy has been recognized by Stanford Who's Who since 2013. In their words "Jeremy has consistently demonstrated the dedication, vision and skills required to be considered among the best"

For more details, debate or discussion, you can find Jeremy on LinkedIn <http://sg.linkedin.com/in/jeremyblain> and also on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/learntheplanet>

Jeremy has also published a series of over 20 industry white papers on issues relevant to L&D, the future of work and more. <http://www.slideshare.net/JeremyBlain>

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List of some of Jeremy ' s papers



- *Blended Learning 2.0 - Tomorrow's solution today, September 2015*
- *2015 Workplace Learning Trends across the Asia Pacific Region, March 2015*
- *The rise of informal learning practices across the Asia Pacific, September 2014*
- *2014 Workplace Learning Trends across the Asia Pacific Region, March 2014*
- *Skills Shortages in the Asian Workplace, Challenges and Solutions, November 2013*
- *Technology Enhanced Learning in Asia Today – Benefits & Challenges, September 2013*
- *Leading & Managing in the 2020 Multi-Dimensional Workplace, August 2013 (a joint report with Temasek Polytechnic and the TP-THT Centre for TransCultural Studies)*
- *Blended Learning – Truths, Mistakes and Vast Potential of Multi-Modal Learning, May 2013 (a joint paper with TP3 Australia)*
- *Getting the Best out of Your Talent – Whatever the Generation, March 2013*
- *Major Learning Trends & Indicators towards 2013 within the Asia Pacific Region, September 2012*
- *Communities of Practice – A Guide to the Business Benefits for Asian Companies, May 2012*
- *Blended Learning and its Applications for Asian Companies Today, March 2012*
- *Developing Multicultural Leadership and Management Skills in Today's Increasingly Globalized Workplace, November 2011*
- *Global Themes & Trends – European, US and Brazilian Comparisons on the Key Drivers and Issues in L&D Today, October 2011*
- *Learning in the Cloud – Opportunities & Threats, September 2011*
- *Cegos/ASTD global learning trends research: A comparison between what is happening among learners today and the perceptions of learning professionals, July 2011*
- *'Training Today, Training Tomorrow - An Analysis of Learning Trends Across Europe and Global Comparisons', May 2011.*
- *'Corporate Philanthropy: How Strategies are Changing and How Cegos is Helping to Make an Impact', May 2011*
- *'The Rise of Virtual Learning', April 2011*
- *'What has L&D Learned from the Economic Slowdown', March 2011*
- *'Informal Networks – How They Are Changing the World of Work', December 2010- 'Exploring and Interpreting the Most Important Learning Trends across the Globe', May 2010*

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Cegos Asia Pacific Pte Ltd

📍 152 Beach Road, Gateway East, Level 28, Singapore 189721

☎ +65 6827 5632 ✉ learn@cegos.com.sg 📘 www.facebook.com/cegosapac

www.cegos.com.sg | www.cegos.com.cn | www.elearning-cegos.com