

Hot topics for the future of Career Development

John Ambrose

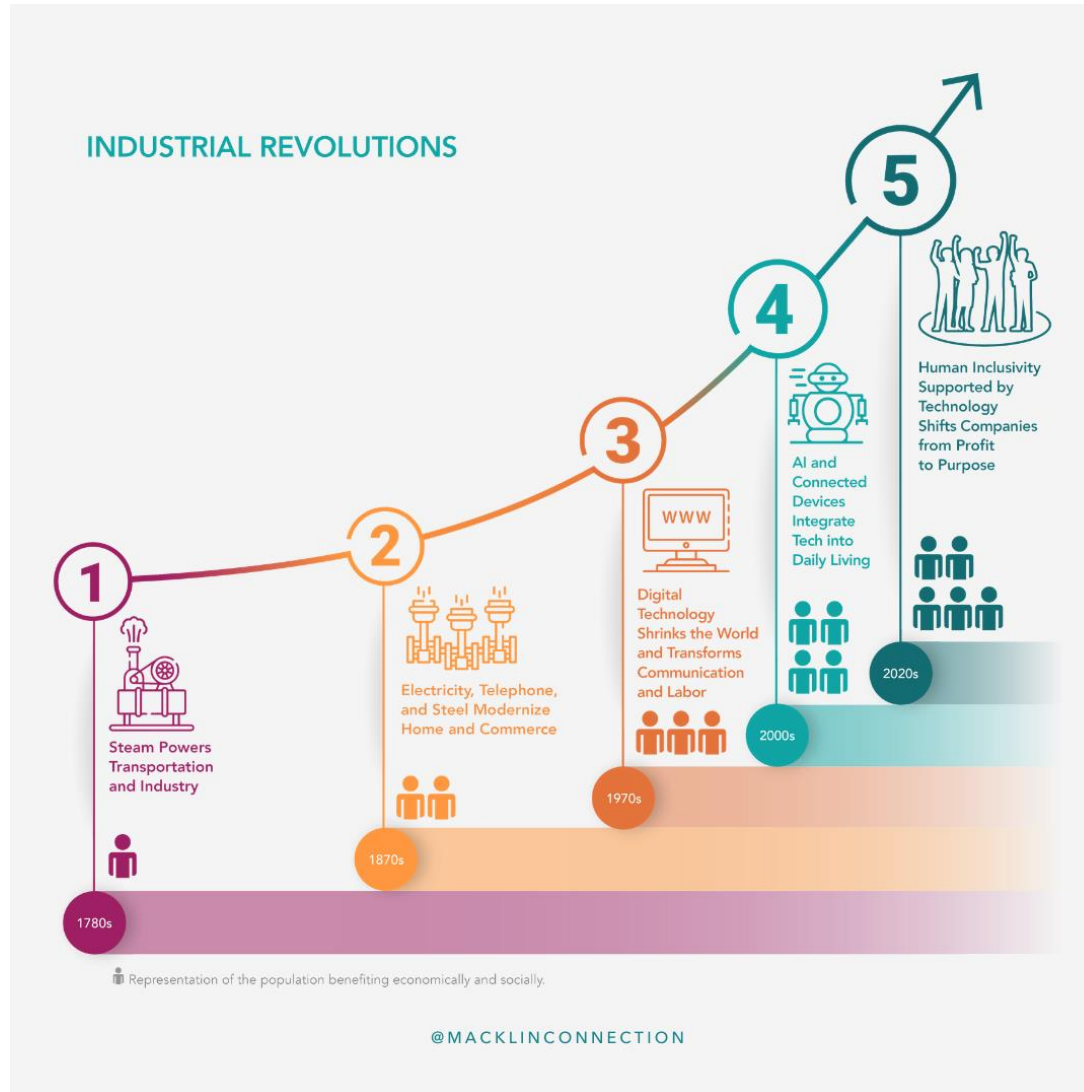
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Session content

- Introduce conference theme
- Highlight the challenge, and what we can do to support learners to navigate their future
- Help Careers Leaders/Practitioners to recognise that arguably Career Development is becoming more important than ever before

Context



- AI
- People
- Purpose
- Green/sustainability
- Planet

Question: How do we prepare learners for an uncertain future with a constantly evolving world of work?

Employers are from Mars, young people are from Venus



Source: CIPD 2013 in identifying the mismatch between young people and employers

Generations in the workplace

Baby Boomer

59-75

Gen X

44-59

Millennials

28-43

Gen Z

12-27

Traditionalists

75+

Adapted from Statista 2022

Quick fix or long-term solution?

Quick fix: ‘When is a skill and essential skill and who gets to decide?’

FEATURE “ Since the introduction of the English National Curriculum in 1988, questions have been raised about whether we are adequately preparing young people for the world of work. ”

WHEN IS A SKILL AN ‘ESSENTIAL SKILL’ AND WHO DECIDES?



JOHN AMBROSE REFLECTS ON WHETHER FOCUSING ON EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS ALONE WILL BEST PREPARE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE WORKPLACE

Essential/employability skills are topical. In 2023, the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) highlighted six skills it deemed most ‘vital’, while their current initiative, *The Skills Imperative 2025*, aims to identify the skills needed for the future labour market. In this article I want to reflect on the current focus on skills. Where has this interest in employability skills come from? Who decides they are essential and why isn’t there a collective understanding of what they are? Are skills alone actually enough, or do learners also need career-related knowledge and attitudes?

Since the introduction of the English National Curriculum in 1988, questions have been raised about whether we are adequately preparing young people for the world of work. There have been various attempts to address this over the decades by defining what skills they might need.

In 1993, six key skills (Communication, Application of number, Information and communication technology, Improving own learning and performance, Working with others and Problem solving) were identified as essential for a person to function confidently and successfully in learning, work, and life in general. Three functional skills (English, Maths and ICT) were later introduced in 2007 as part of the 14-19 reform. Between 2009 and 2013, the Qualification and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) introduced six Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) (Independent enquirer, Creative thinker, Reflective learner, Team worker, Self-manager and Effective participant) for learners to develop throughout secondary and post-16 education. PLTS were widely used until the curriculum was squeezed in 2012/13 as part of the GCSE reform. More recently, The Skills Builder Framework (2018) was launched, focusing on eight ‘essential skills’ (Listening, Speaking, Problem solving, Creativity, Staying positive, Aiming high, Leadership and Teamwork), spanning early childhood to employment. Although there is some crossover with the PLTS areas (above), the skills overall are quite different.

The Skills and Productivity Board 2022 report *Understanding Current and Future Skills Needs* adds more confusion. The Board was established in December 2020 by the then Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, and was asked to explore three areas:

- The mismatch between aspiration and jobs
- Skills shortage areas over the next 5-10 years
- Skills and economic development.

It concluded: ‘The analysis identifies a set of ‘core transferable skills’ that are currently in high demand across many occupations [...] and are likely to continue being in high demand in the future’ (DfE, page 3).

The five skills groups (Communication skills, Digital and data skills, Application of knowledge skills, People skills, and Mental processes) identified by this report differ from the eight identified by Skills Builder, which the current Statutory Guidance for careers in schools and colleges endorses.

There have been several policy initiatives to define and redefine essential/employability skills over the past two decades. Each has had similarities and differences in their approach, creating uncertainty regarding what can be considered the most important.

To add further confusion:

1. Various reports (e.g. NFER) and organisations (e.g. CBI) present further differing skills as ‘essential’ or needed for ‘employability’.
2. Recent research from a national review of Local Skills Improvement Plans highlights new skills (green and digital) that have not featured before in policy.

A recurrent issue throughout this process has been that a considerable gap exists between education and employment, but no one seems to want to take the responsibility for filling it. The CIPD highlighted this issue in the 2013 report *Employers are from Mars, Young People are from Venus*, addressing the gulf between young people’s expectations and those of employers in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Historically, careers education and guidance services have received the most central funding when policy makers have identified the connection that career development services can make between education and employment. Careers education is more complex than a list of skill-related buzz words, however. The CDI Framework outlines 36 learning areas for each Key Stage to ensure effective career development for young people. Career Guidance Practitioners have been supporting learners for decades to develop their career management competencies. Good guidance requires a strengths-based approach to support clients to develop these.

In Wales, *Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE)* is a cross-cutting and statutory theme in the new Curriculum for Wales for 3- to 16-year-olds. The new curriculum introduces a CWRE Toolkit, highlighting the knowledge, skills and experiences Welsh young people should develop throughout their schooling.

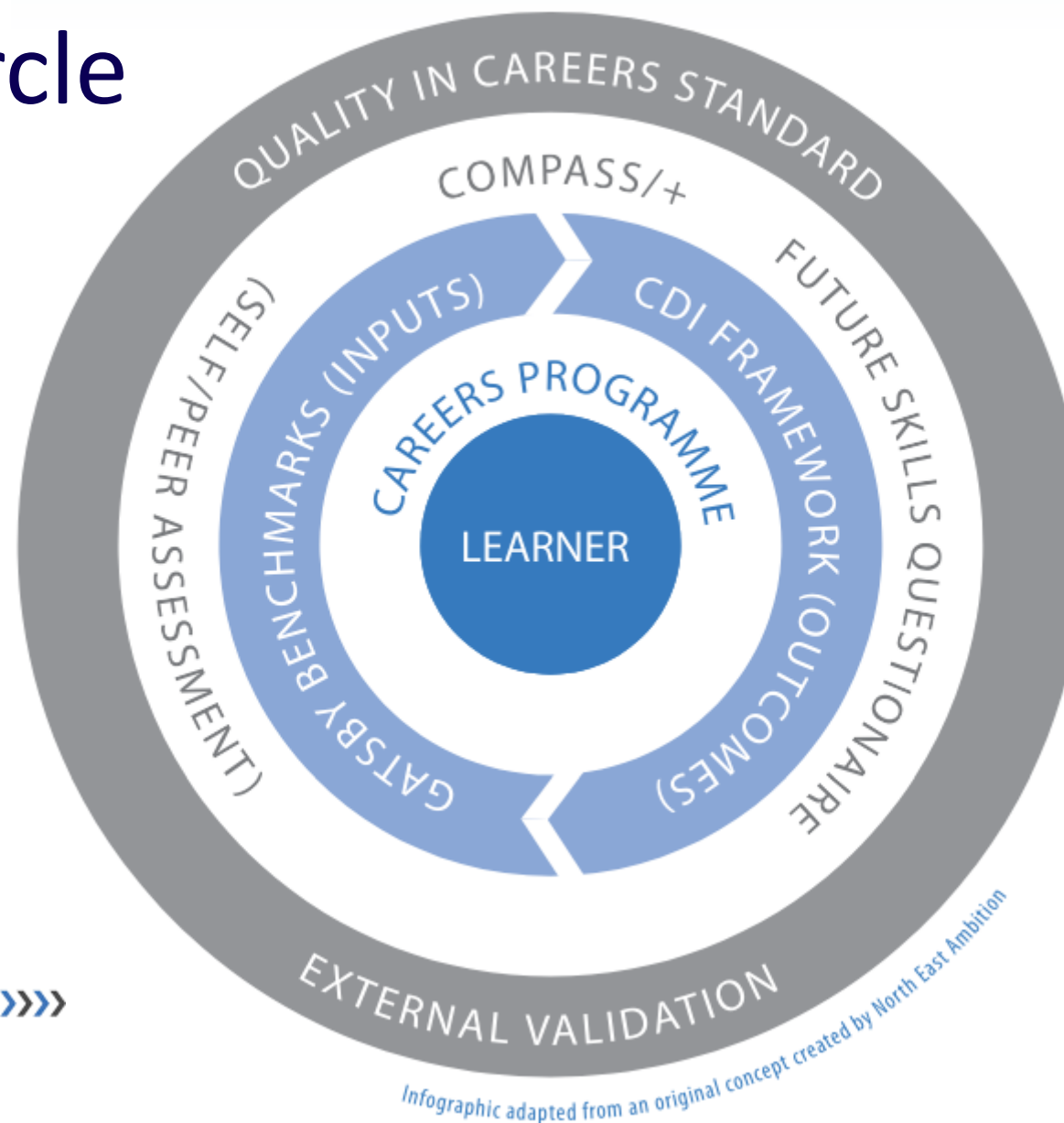
08
Career Matters
April 2024 / Issue 12.2

- Not a new initiative
- Conflicting messages

Three themes:

1. Employability to career readiness
2. Prescription to empowerment
3. Paper over the cracks or rebuild the wall?

Careers Circle



Careers Guidance

Career Management Skills

Career Readiness

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How much is enough?

- *We currently spend £68 per person, per year on the delivery of career guidance to young people. The equivalent figure in 2009 (adjusted for inflation) was £159 (page 5)*
- *For schools, the majority of studies estimated a ROI of between £1.20 and £4.10 for every pound spent. The average was £2.50 (Page 19)*

Investing in Careers, Hooley, Percy & Neary 2023

‘research by PwC in 2014 which estimated that it would cost between £173 million and £207 million, or between £38,000 and £76,000 per school (depending on school size and location), to deliver the Gatsby benchmarks; by contrast, the Minister told us that the £30 million funding for the CEC translates to around £5,000 per school. (page 20)

*House of Commons Education Committee:
Careers Education, Information, Advice and
Guidance, June 2023*

How do we prepare learners for an uncertain future with a constantly evolving world of work?

You strive to go beyond the quick fix and towards best practice within the means you have available

Speakers

- Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE, DMH Associates - Artificial Intelligence in Career Development
- Rebecca Turner (IEMA) and Oli Hallam (CEC) – Green Careers and Green Skills
- David Morgan, Career Development Institute – Skills Imperative 2030
- Claire Sealey, Reed Recruitment – AI, Green, Skills and Resources in Student Work-Readiness
- Panel discussion

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Thank you for listening.
Hope you enjoy the conference!



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