

Executive Summary

This paper is a summary of the researchable question drawn from personal managerial experience. What will be the manager role when the employees are Robots? The entrepreneurial role of a manager and the decision-making involved in their work becomes essential in light of the technological changes that are currently impacting the global business world and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0). The IR4.0 will change approaches to managing, both due to the application of technological developments to enhance the productivity of work and due to a higher demand for creative decision-making. Contemporary managers have to prepare to work in an environment with high uncertainty and where the theories and research they have learned may become irrelevant as the landscape of work changes, and managers engaged in research have to apply their skills to find new ways of navigating the business world led by the IR4.0.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary..... 2

The transformation of the Manager’s role..... 3

Creativity and entrepreneurship..... 3

Interpersonal communications and collaboration..... 4

Employee motivation 4

Understanding the technology and entrepreneurial thinking..... 5

Conclusion..... 5

References 6

DO NOT COPY

The transformation of the Manager's role

The meaning of the IR4.0 and its impact on the industries and the management theory and practice cannot be overlooked. According to Ndung'u and Signé (2020), IR4.0 is characterized by "the fusion of the digital, biological, and physical worlds, as well as the growing utilization of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, robotics, 3D printing, the Internet of Things, and advanced wireless technologies, among others" (para. 2). These are new technologies that change the way many products and services are produced or delivered to a consumer, which creates a new challenge for the manager because they must get acquainted with these technologies in order to make adequate decisions.

Inevitably, such large-scale changes in how industries function will lead to a transformation of the manager's role. For one, the use of technology will enable managers to replace some positions with AI and robots, and a habitual part of their work agenda will be overseeing the cooperation between the human employees and the technological aids. Another aspect is the potential of using technology to enhance the productivity of work of the top-performing employees. Again, with these changes, managers will have to adjust and find ways of working effectively while using technology and new methods of production.

Creativity and entrepreneurship

Since many low-skilled jobs will be replaced with robots and AI over the course of the IR4.0, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit will become integral for a manager. Moreover, from the viewpoint of decision-making, creativity will become one of the central aspects of a manager's work since algorithms, AI systems, and Big Data will help simplify routine decision-making.

Interpersonal communications and collaboration

Evidently, even some managerial tasks will be replaced by technology, and the focus of work will shift towards tasks that only a human can complete. Akihito et al. (2017) state that in their research, sales managers from the United States and Japan alike cited interpersonal communication as one aspect of their jobs that cannot be replaced by AI. Notably, the managers working in the United States strongly believe that their positions can be replaced with AI. Another factor that the respondents of the Akihito et al.'s (2017) survey found important was the management of the subordinates, which the majority also cited as a responsibility that cannot be replaced with AI. Hence, with the IR4.0 the tasks and responsibilities of managers will shift towards the ones that involve more interpersonal communication and collaboration with the employees.

Employee motivation

The final aspect of the reflection regarding the changes that the IR4.0 will inflict upon managers and their decision-making strategies is employee motivation and approaches to enhancing it. Currently, motivation theories and research on motivation account for a large percentage of the managerial theory since this is a direct way of affecting the productivity of work. Over the course of my work as a manager, I gained a particular interest in understanding the difference in motivation for workers who receive an hourly based wage and those who have a fixed salary. Since the world is currently on the verge of the IR4.0 and the technological developments will eliminate and change many job positions, it is important to understand the difference in approaches that a manager can adapt to this new environment. A manager has to be a deciding maker and an entrepreneur, which implies that they are capable of addressing unique challenges that the current work environment presents to them. In light of the IR4.0, a manager's failure to take advantage of innovation and technological developments will impose serious risks on the business since the latter will fall behind. In this sense,

innovation can help enhance the motivation of employees because some tasks will be automated, leaving more space for creativity and work that is not routine.

Understanding the technology and entrepreneurial thinking

This reflection highlights some of the key changes that the managers will experience and the need to adapt the decision-making strategies to the new environment where technology leads the production of goods and services and aids in the decision-making process. Hence, it is imperative for managers to understand how these new technologies work and to employ entrepreneurial thinking. This is because, without the latter, one will be unable to respond to the challenges that the IR4.0 brings into the workplace. Moreover, for a while, managers will have to act as researchers and find answers to their practical workplace problems on their own because the peer-reviewed studies on how to address the challenges of the new technological era will not be completed right away. Hence, by employing the entrepreneurial approach, managers will be able to navigate the new environments that the IR4.0 creates.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper is a reflection on the topic of managerial issues drawn from personal experience of the author. The global businesses are on the verge of the IR4.0 that will change the way the workflow is managed since technological aids such as robots and algorithms will replace many jobs and will be applied to aid people in different positions. Hence, the existing theories of motivation and workplace productivity may become redundant as people will live and work in a different environment. From a managerial perspective, this means that professionals will have to become creative in their decision-making to address the challenges that arise with little theoretical or research background.

References

- Akihito, T., Hiroyuki, Susumu, & Koichi. (2017). Role of managers in the fourth industrial revolution: From the viewpoint of comparing Japan and the United States (Japanese). *Discussion Papers (Japanese)*. Retrieved August 23, 2021, from <https://ideas.repec.org/p/eti/rdpsjp/17062.html>
- Ndung'u, N. & Signé, N. (2020). The fourth industrial revolution and digitization will transform Africa into a global powerhouse. *Brookings*. Retrieved 23 August 2021, from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-and-digitization-will-transform-africa-into-a-global-powerhouse/>

DO NOT COPY