



FUTUREquipped

Meta Skills

Adaptability

UNIT

1

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Adaptability

Introduction

The skill of adapting involves showing the flexibility to modify your actions to fit new conditions.

In practice, we demonstrate adaptability by being open and resilient to uncertainty or change. By staying calm and grounded when faced with a challenge and by finding a way to keep moving forward despite experiencing a setback.

To do this, we need to be willing to reflect, see the big picture and learn, often without the guidance of others.



Why adaptability?

With the rate of change in industry and society expected to continue increasing, we must learn how to continuously adapt to new technologies, processes, challenges and opportunities. Change has become the status quo as job roles and descriptions evolve in response to emerging innovations.

No matter what job you are in, or subject you are studying, the impacts of automation, artificial intelligence, and computational technology will continue influencing our approach to work and study for years to come. We need to do our best to keep up and take an active role in this shift.

In the health and care sector – one that lags many others in terms of digital adoption - there are countless opportunities for technology to improve outcomes for patients. These require people to critically reflect on important decisions such as how we share our

personal data and the benefits and risks attached to doing so. In such cases, a degree of critical reflection is required, to make informed and considered choices about how to address and respond to these important issues.

Change is also afoot in the built environment sector, with off-site construction techniques, robotics, and digital innovations such as business information modelling (BIM) redefining construction sites as we know them. Employers increasingly need workers who can adapt to new and innovative technologies, helping them to take full advantage of the opportunities and benefits they bring.

For the computing sector, the pace of change is extremely high. A willingness to adapt skills and techniques in response to emerging hard/software and networking technologies will be a crucial requirement for those wanting to take an active role in shaping our digital future

Ways to develop your adaptability

As with all of the meta-skills discussed in this library, practising or developing one is likely to require that you use and develop others simultaneously.

For example, to develop your ability to adapt, you may need to think creatively about an alternative solution, process or method. You may also have to collaborate with others to jointly develop a response to the problem/opportunity facing you.

Meta-skills don't exist in isolation of each other and adaptability is an excellent example of this. The activities in the other modules of this skills-library will help to equip you with the supporting skills and capabilities you need to adapt to change and uncertainty.

Like all meta skills, the best way to develop your adaptability, is to practice as often as possible. In practice this could mean exploring ways to increase the boundaries of your personal comfort zone and slowly increase your threshold for change and uncertainty.

Some suggestions to help you include:

Trying new things - be it new foods, new social situations or new experiences.

Turning challenges into opportunities – when faced with a difficult situation, use techniques such as brainstorming to identify potential solutions and then plan ways to implement them.

Creating a support structure to help you adapt. Don't be afraid to ask for help! You may benefit from developing a relationship with a workplace coach, a mentor or a buddy who can share their experience and insight with you. Alternatively, sharing ideas with peers and friends can help you "sound out" ideas and capture feedback or suggestions.

References

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