

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 270 Job Skills That Will Drive the Future

Managers, business owners, HR directors, and all folks who are looking to get ahead...would you like to know what workplace experts say will be the most in-demand skills over the next several years? I'm Jerry Roberts and I think you may be surprised as we get into that, today, on The Extra Point.

Every so often business and workplace experts consult their crystal balls and try to predict job trends and in-demand skills for the years ahead. They look at both hard skills, generally falling under the technical and professional category, along with soft skills, otherwise known as people skills. This year the results were very interesting.

Among the hard skills, high level computer talents such as user interface design, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence were high on the list. In the case of AI, this is a field that is absolutely exploding and if the world of driver-less cars, cook-less kitchens, and employee-less convenience stores tickles your fancy, your time may be now.

For Guam, in the years ahead with a lot of jobs going into the contracting field, I think project management skills will be highly regarded. The ability to deliver top notch customer service will also be sought after.

So far, so good. All of those skills are valuable, no doubt. Then, the conversation switched and I got excited, because seven of the top ten skills — that's two of the hard skills and all five of the soft skills — match up to what I've been preaching and teaching for many years.

Included into the hard skills category is people management. Employers will pay a premium for people who can lead teams and coach people to higher performance, while retaining their best workers. Then, analytical reasoning was cited as a critical skill to have. What is

that? Another name would be decision making, and problem solving. Moving to soft skills, in order, time management, adaptability, collaboration, persuasion, and the number one soft skill is creativity. We've spent time on The Extra Point on just about all of those.

Let me say this in no uncertain terms. You will always — and I repeat, always — have value in the marketplace if you can optimize your time, adapt to change, work well with others, persuade people to your point of view, and be able to add a dash of creativity to the mix, turning imaginative ideas into reality.

Scott Hartley, a venture capitalist who has worked at Google and Facebook, agrees. In his book, *The Fuzzy and The Techie: Why the Liberal Arts Will Rule the Digital World*, he wrote that the business world is heavily reliant on the human touch that soft skills bring. He said machines will continue to get better so humans must become better versions of themselves. Then I read the line that stopped me cold. Hartley wrote: "Being a techie is not the antidote to redundancy in tomorrow's economy; being more human is." Why is that? As all this tech builds around us, we'll hunger more and more for the human touch, quality interactions with people that automation will never be able to duplicate.

People and organizations that want to guarantee their position in the marketplace of tomorrow, will build up their people skills today.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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