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ARE YOU ROBUST ENOUGH?

Companies today are dying at an unprecedented rate. To survive in today's fluctuating business environment, organizations need a high level of adaptability and long-term planning skills. The ability to strategically manage ambiguity is one of the most important skills we can cultivate in an increasingly uncertain business environment. A paradigm shift in managerial thinking is needed. In this issue of Indore Manager, let's understand the principles that confer robustness in the complex business systems.





Editor's Message

Dear Members,

Sustainability in the face of uncertainty. Seems like a paradox, but that is what we all have to live with. Life gives us surprises when we least expect them, whether we are companies or people. So we must prepare ourselves for these, and remain relevant. On an individual level, as managers or leaders in organisations, we do this through upgrading our skills, and learning to control technology. Hopefully, humans will still be the bosses among a plethora of robots and AI software which seem to be the future of some jobs. Leadership and decision-making under certainty may be done by robots, but in an un-programmed future, skills that have helped us overcome past challenges may again be needed, with humans at the helm of affairs.

Dear Reader, you are welcome to think about what we have brought in this offering of Indore manager, and give us feedback too, about the themes we have touched on. Looking forward to your active participation in making this your periodical of choice in challenging existing norms, and thinking of a better future for all of us.

Wishing you well,
Professor Rajendra Nargundkar
Editor - Indore Manager



President's Message

My dear fellow managers,
Greetings for the New Year.

Seems as if time has got wings! It was only yesterday that we had ushered in the year 2017 with much aplomb and now we have already bid it a farewell. The year gone by was a significant one. It witnessed many disruptions on all fronts. And a looming fear of a plausible World War III made people realize the fragility of times we are living in.

I cannot help but think the pertinence of a survival kit to navigate these capricious times. Where consistent innovation, strategic thinking and robustness are some of the apropos tools.

Flashback to 10 years and the names - Nokia, Orkut, Kodak were a commonplace. Today they are nowhere to be heard of. What went wrong that resulted in a total annihilation of these behemoths? We are living in a VUCA world (an abbreviation used by American Military for Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous), where businesses are constantly facing challenges brought on by politics, economics, society and the environment.

Such taxing times demand more from the leadership of organisations to ensure their sustenance.

The gap between two generations has widened like never before. What was novelty yesterday has become a norm today. Things are changing at a break-neck pace. Organisations that are not agents of change will be victimised at the hands of those which are. In 2007, when Nokia thought it was invincible, Apple came and completely changed the rules of the game.

It's time for organisations to realise that no one is too big to fail. Keeping up with the pace of change is not going to be enough; businesses will have to be futuristic. With the advent of breakthrough technologies like artificial intelligence and machine-learning, the playing fields have completely changed. According to a recent PwC report, by 2030, 70% of manual work will be automated. Such a scenario calls for a re-skilling and up-skilling of our work forces to ensure relevance.

We cannot be completely sure of what the future has in store for us but it will definitely belong to the trailblazers...

There are many surprises at IMA International Management Conclave this year. I look forward to meeting you there on February 2-3, 2018, Abhay Prashal, Indore.

Best wishes,
CA. Santosh Muchhal
President- IMA

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WELCOME TO THE AGE OF PERSONALIZED IMPACT. HOW DID WE GET HERE?



We are living in an age of hyper-personalization - from our personal news feed to personalized content from our favourite brands, to the selfie, to our curated online profile. We know what we want as a result of the online "me" world we're living in - and we want choice. Giving and impact is no different - we want choices when it comes to where and how we give. Personal advocacy and personal philanthropy have become the centre of how we engage in causes and giving. There are three things that have led us to where we are today.

Purpose at the centre of the workplace

People don't just strive for work/life balance today, many people also expect purpose to be at the centre of their career. Fifty-seven percent of 18-34 year-olds cited either making a difference in society, or doing something that they found enjoyable, as their top priority for their first job. Making a difference through your career - either through volunteering or the type of profession - has become a minimum requirement for millennials; it's built-in when it used to be bolted-on. Eighty six percent of employers believe that employees expect them to provide opportunities to engage in the community, and 87% believe their employees expect them to support causes and issues that personally matter to those employees.

The way we give is personal

In 2016, the largest source of charitable giving came from individuals - more than corporations and foundations combined. Not only did more individuals give last year over the year before, but the way people give today has shifted dramatically. Gone are the days of writing a cheque and not knowing where your money goes.

Millennials want to see and measure how their philanthropic efforts are making an impact, and many organizations are shifting strategies to meet these demands. The 130-year-old United Way, for example, has set out to **expand mobile giving and one-click giving** options. While public school teachers from every corner of America are creating individual classroom project requests on **DonorsChoose.org**, allowing donors to give any amount to the project that inspires them.

Making global stakes more personal

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were created based on input from global citizens around the kind of world we want to live in. Businesses, organizations and individuals alike now have a powerful framework to measure impact against - our personal footprint on the state of the world can be measured. The change we want is now transparent. Whether it's investing in clean energy, standing up for gender equality, or taking small actions to preserve our climate - impact has been democratized and our day-to-day actions are rolling up collectively into something much larger.

So why does this matter? Everything else in our life today is personalized - from our online shopping habits, to our Yelp and YouTube pages - giving and creating impact shouldn't be any different. The modern workplace integrates our desire for purpose, modern tools enable us to choose how we give, and the SDGs have provided us with an important framework and giving measurement tool.

The more personal we get, the more impact we can create together.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/11/the-age-of-personalised-impact>

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK ACROSS COUNTRIES, LANGUAGES, AND CULTURES



According to a recent McKinsey Global Institute report, the number of people in the global labor force will reach 3.5 billion by 2030 - and yet there will still be a shortage of skilled workers. The result is likely to be intensified global competition for talent. Rather than assuming we'll work in one location, in our native culture, we will need new skills, attitudes, and behaviors that help us work across cultures. Our ways of thinking about careers, colleagues, and collaboration will need to become more flexible and adaptable. My five-year study of the global workforce at Rakuten, the Japan-based e-commerce powerhouse, gave me a close-up look at what will drive success for this new type of global worker.

Prior to 2010, Rakuten had been a multilingual global company. The Japanese employees in the Tokyo headquarters communicated in Japanese, the Americans in the U.S. subsidiary spoke English, and the workers in Asia, Europe, and South America spoke a mixture of native languages. Translators were employed for cross-border communications. What's more, the subsidiaries operated more or less autonomously, each with separate organizational cultures and norms. But in 2010, Rakuten mandated an English-only policy for its workforce of over 10,000 employees.

The CEO, Hiroshi Mikitani, realized that doing business in multiple languages prevented the organization from sharing valuable knowledge across the organization's existing global operations, as well as those that were being newly established. The company also aspired to raise the overseas portion of its revenue in response to the

projected shrinking of the Japanese GDP as a portion of global GDP (from 12% in 2006 to 3% in 2050) and wanted to expand its global talent pool. Above all, the company aspired to become the number one internet services company in the world. The English language, Mikitani predicted, could revolutionize both how Rakuten employees worked and how they interacted with the rest of the world.

The English language mandate, however, set off all sorts of linguistic and cultural challenges. These challenges differed depending on people's backgrounds and location. Two groups had the steepest learning curve in particular. The Japanese employees, while already fluent with Japanese concepts such as kaizen (improvement) and omotenashi (hospitality), struggled to become proficient in English. The American employees, who were fluent in English, struggled to become comfortable with new work routines and expectations from Japan.

The employees who had to adjust to both a new language and a new culture - whom I've named dual expats in their own countries - had the easiest transition when it came to working under the new conditions of the company's English-only mandate. They hailed from countries as diverse as Brazil, France, Germany, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Thailand, and all demonstrated the characteristics of what I call global work orientation. This type of orientation can be incredibly valuable to cultivate for anyone working for multinationals or in other global careers, and can also be used by managers to develop employees. It consists of five key actions.

1. Embracing positive indifference. Positive indifference.

is the ability to overlook many cultural differences as being not especially important or worthy of attention, while remaining optimistic about the process of engaging the culture seen as foreign. It's about adapting to work practices that may at first seem culturally foreign - such as having to wear an identification badge or file frequent key performance indicator reports - without becoming unduly troubled.

Positive indifference is important for two reasons. One, because global work is by definition likely to bring employees into contact with cultural differences and culturally diverse practices, the ability to adapt smartly could be the difference between success and failure. And two, positive indifference makes work life that much easier in a global firm because employees are open to learning and exploring new terrains.

2. Seeking commonality between cultures.

This enables you and your employees to draw closer to a foreign culture and become receptive to its differences, in line with characteristic number one. The commonalities you find may be different from anyone else's and not initially obvious. For example, a French employee at Rakuten found commonality with his Japanese coworkers by recognizing that both cultures are results-oriented and prone to analyzing processes for how they could be improved. An Indonesian engineer found commonality with Rakuten's requirement that employees spend five minutes per week cleaning their desks by comparing it to his practice of washing his feet and hands when entering a mosque. In his mind, both cleaning rituals demonstrated commitment and responsibility to a particular place. Seeking commonality is important to a global work orientation because it draws colleagues from diverse cultures closer, which in turn translates to more effective collaboration and teamwork.

3. Identifying with the global organization rather than your local office.

If you feel a sense of belonging with the larger organization, you're more likely to share its values and goals. Organizational identification, the term for when an individual feels at one with the organization, is crucial for fostering job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Here's how an Indonesian employee at Rakuten voiced this behavior: "From my perspective, if I'm doing my job, I'm becoming part of the globalization of the company." Identifying with the global organization, in his mind, was synonymous with the collective international company and its further expansion.

Explicit messaging from the top leaders about the company's global expansion also helped spread people's sense of belonging in the superordinate organization, as did instituting an internal social media site to promote cross-national interactions.

4. Seeking interactions with other, geographically distant subsidiaries.

The dual expats, unlike employees from Japan and the United States, welcomed and sought out increased interactions with employees at other Rakuten locations. Brazil reported the largest extent of these self-reported voluntary interactions at nearly 52%. In comparison, the U.S., which had the lowest voluntary interactions with other subsidiaries, hovered around 2%.

This behavior is important to global work orientation because, my research finds, in general, when interactions are high, there is a greater ability to develop trust and shared vision among international coworkers. Interactions are also vital for sharing knowledge across sites. As such, tacit knowledge can become more explicit; sharing information or best practices can become advantageous; and learning from one another's common experiences can accelerate the spread of business efficiencies across the global organization. As a Thai employee pointed out in discussing the implications of the rapidly expanding internet business in his country: "Learning from other countries, especially other developing countries, is very, very key."

5. Aspiring to a global career.

In some sectors, the global market demands for English-speaking workers makes a global career quite attractive. Travel, living in a new country, and the opportunities for career advancement that may come with working for a multinational firm were all reasons that dual expats gave for their global career aspirations. Some people I interviewed had entertained long-standing aspirations to work globally, while others had this dream kindled as they learned English. The desire to learn English and work abroad seemed to reinforce one another. "It'll be great for me to have the chance to go to another country, to work in another country. It's definitely something I want to do in the future - when my English is better," said a Taiwanese employee.

These five attitudes and behaviors are what make a successful global employee. Perhaps you have already adopted some, or all, in your current work role. Or maybe you're looking for ways to advance your career in a multinational. In either case, we can all learn from Rakuten's dual expats, who are a model for present and future global workers.

<https://hbr.org/2017/08/how-to-successfully-work-across-countries-languages-and-cultures>



STRATEGIES SUCCESSFUL LEADERS USE TO OVERCOME UNCERTAINTY

Our brains are hardwired to make much of modern life difficult. This is especially true when it comes to dealing with uncertainty. On the bright side, if you know the right tricks, you can override your brain's irrational tendencies and handle uncertainty effectively.

Our brains give us fits when facing uncertainty because they're wired to react to it with fear. In a recent study, a Caltech neuroeconomist imaged subjects' brains as they were forced to make increasingly uncertain bets-the same kind of bets we're forced to make on a regular basis in business.

The less information the subjects had to go on, the more irrational and erratic their decisions became. You might think the opposite would be true-the less information we have, the more careful and rational we are in evaluating the validity of that information. Not so. As the uncertainty of the scenarios increased, the subjects' brains shifted control over to the limbic system, the place where emotions, such as anxiety and fear, are generated.

This brain quirk worked great eons ago, when cavemen entered an unfamiliar area and didn't know who or what might be lurking behind the bushes. Overwhelming caution and fear ensured survival. But that's not the case today. This mechanism, which hasn't evolved, is a

hindrance in the world of business, where uncertainty rules and important decisions must be made every day with minimal information.

As we face uncertainty, our brains push us to overreact. Successful people are able to override this mechanism and shift their thinking in a rational direction. This requires emotional intelligence (EQ), and it's no wonder that-among the 1 million-plus people that TalentSmart has tested-90% of top performers have high EQs. They earn an average of \$28,000 more per year than their low-EQ counterparts do.

To boost your EQ, you have to get good at making sound decisions in the face of uncertainty, even when your brain fights against this. Fear not! There are proven strategies that you can use to improve the quality of your decisions when your emotions are clouding your judgment. What follows are eleven of the best strategies that successful people use in these moments.

They quiet their limbic systems

The limbic system responds to uncertainty with a knee-jerk fear reaction, and fear inhibits good decision-making. People who are good at dealing with uncertainty are wary of this fear and spot it as soon as it begins to surface. In this way, they can contain it before it gets out

of control. Once they are aware of the fear, they label all the irrational thoughts that try to intensify it as irrational fears-not reality-and the fear subsides. Then they can focus more accurately and rationally on the information they have to go on. Throughout the process, they remind themselves that a primitive part of their brain is trying to take over and that the logical part needs to be the one in charge. In other words, they tell their limbic system to settle down and be quiet until a hungry tiger shows up.

They stay positive

Positive thoughts quiet fear and irrational thinking by focusing your brain's attention on something that is completely stress-free. You have to give your wandering brain a little help by consciously selecting something positive to think about. Any positive thought will do to refocus your attention. When things are going well and your mood is good, this is relatively easy. When you're stressing over a tough decision and your mind is flooded with negative thoughts, this can be a challenge. In these moments, think about your day, and identify one positive thing that happened, no matter how small. If you can't think of anything from the current day, reflect on the previous day or days or even the previous week, or perhaps you're looking forward to an exciting event. The point here is that you must have something positive that you're ready to shift your attention to when your thoughts turn negative due to the stress of uncertainty.

They know what they know-and what they don't

When uncertainty makes a decision difficult, it's easy to feel as if everything is uncertain, but that's hardly ever the case. People who excel at managing uncertainty start by taking stock of what they know and what they don't know and assigning a factor of importance to each. They gather all the facts they have, and they take their best shot at compiling a list of things they don't know, for example, what a country's currency is going to do or what strategy a competitor will employ. They actually try to identify as many of these things as possible because this takes away their power.

They embrace that which they can't control

We all like to be in control. After all, people who feel like they're at the mercy of their surroundings never get anywhere in life. But this desire for control can backfire when you see everything that you can't control or don't

know as a personal failure. People who excel at managing uncertainty aren't afraid to acknowledge what's causing it. In other words, successful people live in the real world. They don't paint any situation as better or worse than it actually is, and they analyze the facts for what they are. They know that the only thing they really control is the process through which they reach their decisions. That's the only rational way to handle the unknown, and the best way to keep your head on level ground. Don't be afraid to step up and say, "Here's what we don't know, but we're going forward based on what we do know. We may make mistakes, but that's a lot better than standing still."

They focus only on what matters

Some decisions can make or break your company. Most just aren't that important. The people who are the best at making decisions in the face of uncertainty don't waste their time getting stuck on decisions where the biggest risk is looking foolish in front of their co-workers. When it comes down to it, almost every decision contains at least a small factor of uncertainty-it's an inevitable part of doing business. Learning to properly balance the many decisions on your plate, however, allows you to focus your energy on the things that matter and to make more informed choices. It also removes the unnecessary pressure and distraction caused by a flurry of small worries.

They don't seek perfection

Emotionally intelligent people don't set perfection as their target because they know there's no such thing as a perfect decision in an uncertain situation. Think about it: human beings, by our very nature, are fallible. When perfection is your goal, you're always left with a nagging sense of failure, and you end up spending your time lamenting what you failed to accomplish and what you should have done differently, instead of enjoying what you were able to achieve.

They don't dwell on problems

Where you focus your attention determines your emotional state. When you fixate on the problems that you're facing, you create and prolong negative emotions and stress, which hinders performance. When you focus on actions to better yourself and your circumstances, you create a sense of personal efficacy that produces positive emotions and improves performance. Emotionally intelligent people don't allow themselves to become

preoccupied with the uncertainties they face. Instead, they focus all their attention and effort on what they can do, in spite of the uncertainty, to better their situation.

They know when to trust their gut

Our ancestors relied on their intuition-their gut instinct-for survival. Since most of us don't face life-or-death decisions every day, we have to learn how to use this instinct to our benefit. Often we make the mistake of talking ourselves out of listening to our gut instinct, or we go too far in the other direction and impulsively dive into a situation, mistaking our assumptions for instincts. People who successfully deal with uncertainty recognize and embrace the power of their gut instincts, and they rely on some tried-and-true strategies to do so successfully:

They recognize their own filters. They're able to identify when they're being overly influenced by their assumptions and emotions or by another person's opinion, for example. Their ability to filter out the feelings that aren't coming from their intuition helps them focus on what is.

They give their intuition some space. Gut instincts can't be forced. Our intuition works best when we're not pressuring it to come up with a solution. Albert Einstein said he got his best ideas while sailing, and when Steve Jobs was faced with a tough problem, he'd head out for a walk.

They build a track record. People who deal well with uncertainty take the time to practice their intuition. They start by listening to their gut on small things and seeing how it goes so that they'll know whether they can trust it when something big comes around.

They have contingency plans...

Staying on top of uncertainty is as much about planning for failure as it is about hoping for the best. Experts at handling uncertainty aren't afraid to admit that they could be wrong, and that frees them up to make detailed, rational, and transparent contingency plans before taking action. Successful people know they aren't always going to make the right decision. They know how to absorb and understand mistakes so that they can make better decisions in the future. And they never let mistakes get them down for too long.

...but they don't ask, "What if?"

"What if?" statements throw fuel on the fire of stress and worry, and there's no place for them in your thinking once you have good contingency plans in place. Things can go in a million different directions, and the more time you spend worrying about the possibilities, the less time you'll spend focusing on taking action that will calm you down and keep your stress under control. Successful people know that asking "what if?" will only take them to a place they don't want, or need, to go to.

When all else fails, they breathe

You have to remain calm to make good decisions in the face of uncertainty. An easy way to do this lies in something that you have to do every day anyway-breathing. The practice of being in the moment with your breathing trains your brain to focus solely on the task at hand and quiets distracting thoughts. When you're feeling overwhelmed, take a couple of minutes to focus on your breathing. Close the door, put away all other distractions, and just sit in a chair and breathe. The goal is to spend the entire time focused only on your breathing, which will prevent your mind from wandering. Think about how it feels to breathe in and out. This sounds simple, but it's hard to do for more than a minute or two. It's all right if you get sidetracked by another thought-this is sure to happen at the beginning-and you just need to bring your focus back to your breathing. If staying focused on your breathing proves to be a real struggle, try counting each breath in and out until you get to twenty, and then start again from one. Don't worry if you lose count; you can always just start over. This task may seem too easy or even a little silly, but you'll be surprised by how calm you feel afterward and how much easier it is to let go of distracting thoughts that otherwise seem to lodge permanently inside your brain.

Bringing It All Together

The ability to strategically manage ambiguity is one of the most important skills you can cultivate in an increasingly uncertain business environment. Try the strategies above, and your ability to handle uncertainty will take a huge step in the right direction.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/09/11-strategies-successful-leaders-use-to-overcome-uncertainty/>



SKILLS YOU NEED TO MASTER BEFORE YOU BECOME A MANAGER.

There's no doubt that being a manager has its perks - increased prestige, recognition from upper management, and a **higher paycheck** among them. But as with anything worth aspiring to, it's not all fun and games. As a manager, there are plenty of times you'll find yourself in tough spots. Maybe you need to let someone know they're no longer a good fit for their role or smooth things over with an upset client.

Because of that, it's important that you don't simply jump into a management role without having prepared for it first. If you want to do it right, **there are a number of skill sets** that you should build up first. So before you throw your hat in the ring for a manager position, make sure that you've got these nine traits down pat.

1. An Understanding of Budget and Financials

Even if you don't work in a particularly quantitative field, understanding budget and finance is critical if you want to climb up the corporate ladder. The higher you go, the more people expect you to prove the impact that you and your team are making.

"Managers must always know what the numbers mean: how they were derived and what they may or may not

hide," says Roy Cohen, career coach and author of

The Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide. "As a manager, you cannot blame others for mistakes if you are clueless about the process by which they are reported. It is viewed as lazy and irresponsible. Even if you overlook a flaw at least you can explain why the oversight occurred."

Suffering from numbers-phobia? Don't worry - you can easily brush up your skills if you take a course in accounting, budgeting, or spreadsheet analysis, Cohen says.

2. Delegation

Control freaks, you'll want to pay especially close attention to this one. As a manager, you're tasked with not only your own projects but also overseeing others. With that added level of responsibility, you often simply won't have the time to single-handedly take on everything that needs to get done. And when that moment comes, you need to know how to hand it off.

"An important part of getting things done as a manager comes through delegation," says career coach Angela Copeland. "You have to learn to let go and rely on your team. And, most of all, you've got to trust them. The

happiest employees are those who feel they have a supportive boss who trusts them to get the job done."

3. Prioritization

On a similar note, the limited bandwidth and resources you'll have as a manager will also make **identifying the most mission-critical projects and tasks essential.**

"As a **new manager**, you will inevitably be asked to take on more than you and your team have the time or budget to do," Copeland says. "The ability to prioritize initiatives will propel your management career forward. It will allow you to set reasonable expectations for your manager, and will help shield your employees from burnout."

4. Basic Technology

If you don't already know your way around a spreadsheet or PowerPoint, it's high time that you start figuring it out.

"The ability to prepare spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations and other documents is a lifesaver for executives who cannot always rely on administrative support; particularly for those who are road warriors or who work for leanly staffed companies," Cohen says. "The same [goes] for a basic understanding of tech troubleshooting. When you are dependent on those who are junior to you to rescue you from a crisis, you lose your power and authority."

5. Communication

Strong communication skills are always a boon in the workplace, but if you're leading a team, they go from a plus to a must. You'll likely find yourself having to provide constructive feedback, navigate crises, and possibly even let people go - all of which require a delicate hand.

"Hard conversations are important as they cause growth and change. But, change is also painful, so these conversations are not easy. To be an effective manager, you have to be prepared for the hard conversations," Copeland says.

6. Emotional Intelligence

One of the traits that will help you hold these difficult conversations? Emotional intelligence.

"A huge part of developing and retaining successful employees boils down to emotional intelligence," Copeland continues. "Having empathy and an understanding of others will help you to motivate your employees to get on board with your vision. This is also a critical skill when it comes to selling your ideas to higher level executives."

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/manager-skills/>

7. Project Management

Being a manager means you can no longer shrug off the missteps of others on your team, brushing it off as not your fault since you took care of the individual items you were assigned. As a more senior employee, you'll be expected to see things through from start to finish - no ifs, ands, or buts.

"Project management represents virtually every aspect of your role as a manager," Cohen says. "No matter what your role and responsibilities as a manager [are], you will need to know how to motivate and inspire high performing teams to work together collaboratively and with a shared commitment."

Don't worry if you aren't a certified professional project manager, though, says Cohen. "You just need to understand the process and to appreciate that members of your team each bring different work styles and motivators to their job. It may be enough to read a book on effective project management and leadership. Perhaps identify a senior mentor to help you stay on track," he suggests.

8. In-the-Trenches Experience

However, just because you're spearheading a project doesn't mean you won't be expected to get your hands dirty with day-to-day execution, either.

"Be willing to roll up your sleeves. When your team knows that you can perform in the job in a pinch, they are less likely to cut corners and you are better able to establish both your authority and credibility quickly," Cohen says. "Work alongside them on occasion as a reminder that you know your stuff."

9. Backbone

Being a manager often requires you to make tough decisions and stand up for what you believe in.

"Being a manager will push your boundaries of right and wrong. Before becoming a manager, you need to develop a strong sense of your personal values and the courage to stick up for them," Copeland says. "You should be comfortable standing up for what's right, even when it's not comfortable. Your employer and future employees will thank you."

It's important to develop empathy, but still know "the difference between BS and the truth," adds Cohen. "Good managers are fair and reasonable. But they are not milquetoast. They have learned how to be assertive while identifying and addressing their own weaknesses."

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

I contemplate the future of work on a daily basis in both my professional and personal life. As a father of four children from four to 14 years old, and as a citizen of the world, I care about our future.

As CEO of freelancing website Upwork, I am witnessing firsthand not only the immense changes within our industry, but also the speed at which they are occurring. At the World Economic Forum, where I co-chair the Council on the Future of Work, Gender and Education, we have heated discussions on the future impact of artificial intelligence on work and our responsibilities to help manage the change. We see that as the workforce evolves, we must finally break free from the industrial-era habits of the past to ensure a more productive and equitable future.

Drawing on both on my experiences during 2017, and insightful books I've read, here are my four predictions for the future of work:

1. AI and robotics will create more jobs, not mass unemployment - as long as we responsibly guide innovation

Whether artificial intelligence will rise up and take over is the subject of growing debate. AI is "our biggest existential threat" to mankind, claims tech leader Elon Musk. But science fiction is full of stories about machines usurping humans. It's not a notion supported by history or data.

As I debated earlier this year, the impact of AI on the future does not spell doomsday for jobs. After all, machines don't create themselves. Rather, it's up to us to guide innovation responsibly. This means opening up new windows of opportunity, not eliminating them. Elon Musk is not the first to subscribe to a fear of the "rise of the machines". Every generation before ours has feared massive technological change. Ultimately, automation has created more jobs-not fewer-and I don't see that changing anytime soon. That said, it's true that some jobs will go away, and it's easy to conclude which ones those will be. But it's much more difficult to know what jobs will be in demand in 30 years.

As such, I predict that there will not be a shortage of jobs in the future, but rather a shortage of skills to fill the jobs. In 2018, we must finally realize that it's no longer a matter of human versus machine, but rather human and machine working in tandem to solve the world's problems. It is humans who ultimately decide the next course of action.

2. Cities will compete against other cities in the war for top talent

When Amazon unveiled plans in October to invest over \$5 billion in constructing a second HQ, it received more than 200 proposals from different cities. Metropolises across the US went to great lengths to capture the attention of Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos. They made makeshift Amazon headquarters out of cardboard boxes,

they bought 1,000 random products on Amazon and wrote five-star reviews for each, and they lit up landmarks such as the Empire State Building in "Amazon orange," to name a few.

But one city that ignored the mania was San Jose, California. Its visionary Mayor Sam Liccardo pitched talent rather than tax breaks. In an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal, "Why I'm Not Bidding for Amazon's HQ", Mayor Liccardo explained that "big companies like Amazon want to be where tech talent is". I believe this too. Luring new corporate offices like those of Amazon to cities would only perpetuate an unsustainable cycle. The talent war of the future will no longer be between companies, it will be between cities. As technology untethers society, and remote work becomes the norm, people will live in the cities of their choosing, rather than the ones that are nearest to where they work. The cities of their choosing will have a certain "vibe" by offering attractive living options in tech-friendly environments.

Are these the world's best jobs?

Ranking determined by work-life balance rating

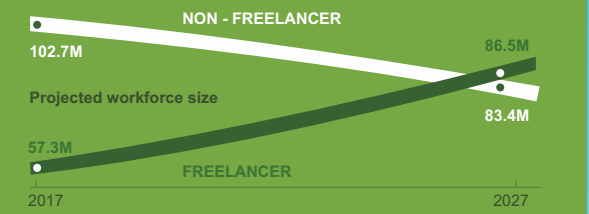
Rank	Job	Salary
1	Data Scientist	
2	SEO Manager	
3	Talent Acquisition Specialist	
4	Social Media Manager	
5	Substitute Teacher	
6	Recruiting Coordinator	
7	UX Designer	
8	Digital Marketing Manager	
9	Marketing Assistant	
10	Web Developer	
11	Risk Analyst	
12	Civil Engineer	
13	Client Manager	
14	Instructional Designer	
15	Marketing Analyst	
16	Software QA Engineer	
17	Web Designer	
18	Research Technician	
19	Program Analyst	
20	Data Analyst	
21	Content Manager	
22	Solutions Engineer	
23	Lab Assistant	
24	Software Developer	
25	Front End Developer	

Source: Glassdoor.com

3. The majority of the US workforce will freelance by 2027

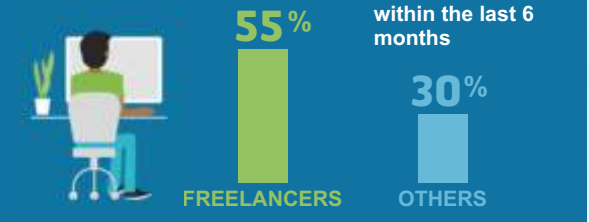
Today, more than 57 million workers - about 36% of the US workforce - freelances. Based on current workforce growth rates found in Freelancing in America: 2017, the majority of the US workforce will freelance by 2027. The youngest workforce generation is leading the way, with almost half of millennials freelancing already.

The majority of workers will freelance by 2027



Simultaneously, there will be large-scale adoption of freelance talent by companies looking to fill talent gaps. In fact, according to a report by the Oxford Internet Institute, talent platform use among large enterprises increased 26% in 2017. Companies like Pfizer and Samsung are part of this rising breed of enterprises that have turned online to find freelancers.

Freelancers are preparing for the future



4. Education breaks out of the silo

Our education system is broken. The way we educate future generations no longer prepares them adequately for the skills and jobs of today. The idea that you study math and science and art in your youth as separate disciplines, and then work to solve real world problems in today's economy, does not add up. Preparing students for tomorrow's jobs requires breaking down the silos within education.

I'm optimistic that future education will become more flexible to suit the needs of a 21st century workforce. Project-based schools, many offered by technology experts, are cropping up. Examples include Holberton in San Francisco, founded by Sylvain Kalache and Julien Barbier; Wildflower School in Boston, founded by former Google exec Sep Kamvar; and Portfolio in New York, founded by Babur Habib and Doug Schachtel. These schools set the stage for what future education will look like. We will rethink the way talent is developed and deployed, and prepare students for a lifetime of learning better paced to the rapid evolution of skills.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/12/predictions-for-freelance-work-education>



HOW INDIA IS MOVING TOWARD A DIGITAL-FIRST ECONOMY

On November 8, 2016, India's government did something that no other government had attempted before at the same scale: It decided to remove 86% of the country's currency notes by value from circulation. Over the months that followed, more than 1 billion people participated in a "reboot" of the country's financial and monetary system.

An active debate has since ensued as to how the transition unfolded. Some have seen calamity for the economy, while others, like us, see something quite different: a threshold moment in India's digital transformation. Consider, for example, a government payment system created in 2016 that was processing 100,000 transactions per month in October of that year, prior to the sudden demonetization. A year later, after demonetization, the same system is processing 76 million transactions per month. Meanwhile, according to India's Ministry of Finance, the country's economy is operating with \$45 billion less cash than it did prior to demonization. India's

digital infrastructure is coming to life, with a combination of policy and technological innovation having played an important role. The country is moving rapidly toward a digital-first economy.

One of us, Arvind, is head of technology for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP party, and has been for the past seven years. His views on digital transformations include his experience as a member of the research team that developed the first web browser (Mosaic, the predecessor to Netscape) in the early 1990s and as a technology entrepreneur. The other, Philip, is an economist whose most recent book traces processes of digital disruption over the long arc of human history. We collaborated here to describe what we see as a truly unique story of government-led digital disruption.

Demonetization isn't the only high-profile economic act India's government has undertaken recently. It has also implemented what was arguably the largest-scale tax reform ever implemented at a single time: the

replacement of a complex web of 17 different taxes with a single Goods and Services Tax (GST). Once again, predictions of dire consequences preceded the move, and critiques of the implementation of the policy have followed since. Yet the fact remains that, in the first month after the introduction of the GST, over 1 million businesses registered with the system. In only the first few weeks after implementation, the increased transparency and digital data availability that are integral to the GST began to open up new sources of lending to small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs). However haltingly, and with whatever inevitable difficulties occurring along the way, the bottom line is that a process of rationalization of the tax code is, after decades of delay, under way at last.

Digital Transformation in Government Does Not Happen Quickly

The benefits of digital transformation in the provision of government services do not occur overnight. In fact they are always greatest over the long-term, while the costs are concentrated in the near-term. That is exactly why technology-led disruption is generally resisted by status quo interests: at least some of them lose out as a consequence of change. For this reason, the debate over short-term consequences of disruption largely misses the point of this, or any, technology-led disruption.

This general point holds very specifically for demonetization and GST implementation; these were policies designed to have long-term and dynamic effects. While the accelerated uptake of digital financial services following demonetization and the increased lending to small businesses following tax code reform came as a surprise to many outside observers, neither was an unintended consequence of the policy; they were consciously intended to activate India's digital infrastructure.

The name for this digital infrastructure reflects its roots in the world of software development rather than public policy: It is referred to as the "India Stack." In the software world, a "stack" refers to multiple, interdependent layers of software services that are built on top of one another. The India Stack comprises multiple layers, but the layers in this case are defined by different categories of government services. At the base of the stack - and thus at the beginning of India's story of digital transformation - is a nationwide system of digital identity, generically termed the UID (Unique Identification) system, but more often in India referred to

by its project name, Aadhaar.

Aadhaar: The Base of the India Stack

In broad terms, digital disruption by government has not kept pace with digital disruption in business. Of the systems that have broken the 1-billion-user mark, many originated in the U.S. and are private-sector efforts - Facebook and Google being among the prominent examples. An exception is Aadhaar, which means "foundation" or "base" in a number of Indian languages, including Hindi.

To state the fact directly: Aadhaar is both the only non-U.S. technical system globally to have broken the 1-billion-user threshold and the only such system to have been developed by the public sector. Due in part to its unique public-sector origins, Aadhaar has the distinction of having reached 1 billion users the fastest; the services built on Aadhaar, through the interoperability that defines the India Stack have, in turn, built their own record of scale and scope.

India launched Aadhaar in 2009 with the then-improbable goal of giving every Indian a single digital identity in the form of a biometric authenticated 12-digit number. This National Unique Digital Identity system combined the best of open technologies to build a system that generates a unique number based upon de-duplication of the applicants' biometric information, their submitted iris scans and fingerprints. Within five years of the first registration the Aadhaar system, over 600 million people had voluntarily registered with Aadhaar and obtained UID numbers. However, during this initial period, the search for a "killer app" to prove the value of Aadhaar was elusive. While the ability to authenticate identity was now digital, bank accounts and payment systems were still paper-based - requiring separate and laborious Know Your Customer validation procedures that had the result of continuing to exclude a majority of people in India from accessing the benefits of banking.

When Prime Minister Modi assumed power in 2014, he put digital transformation at the center of his plans. For this reason, to the surprise of some, Modi not only backed the system developed by the previous government but also dramatically increased its funding, broadened its scope, and - most important - amplified its impact.

Using Technology to Go from Identity to Financial Inclusion

Among the first actions the Modi government undertook was to launch the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana

(PMJDY, or Jan Dhan) financial inclusion program on August 28, 2014. On the very first day that Jan Dhan was implemented, the government created 10 million bank accounts using existing Aadhaar IDs in a paperless manner, at a fraction of the minimum previous customer acquisition costs. Since then, the government has created more than 300 million new, no-frills bank accounts. In addition to a free, zero-balance account, the Jan Dhan provides accident insurance coverage of 100,000 rupees (about US\$1,500), along with an overdraft facility of 5,000 rupees (US\$80) available for account holders - the point being to incentivize people to participate in the formal banking system.

Having a biometrically-verifiable identity number and a bank account created the potential for adding another layer to the service stack: mobile payments. With an identity to create a bank account, and a bank account to receive funds, the hundreds of millions of people eligible for the receipt of government services in India suddenly had a way to access those services digitally, from beginning to end. In India this digital infrastructure is nicknamed the "JAM" trinity, referring to innovative interlinking of Jan Dhan (low-cost bank accounts), Aadhaar (identity), and mobile numbers. The India Stack could now have four layers: an identity layer, a documents layer, a payments layer, and a transactions layer.

To understand the human impact of these changes, consider the plight of a mother in an Indian village who is eligible for a government subsidy to send her two daughters to school. Until less than two years ago, in order to avail herself of those funds she would have needed to fill out a form verifying her daughters' attendance, get that form validated by the school, and bring that form to a government office. Assuming there were no impediments in the processing of the form - a big assumption - she would then have waited as the form traveled up the system to the point when a check would be issued to her in the amount of her benefits. To collect the check she would have needed to travel to a government office. If there turned out to be corruption in the office, she would have needed to produce a sum in cash equal to 15%-20% of the total amount before finally receiving the check. Then, of course, she would have needed to travel to a bank to cash the check. In the end, of the 2,000 rupees to which she was entitled, she would (in a good outcome) have received about 1,400 rupees, with the balance having gone to travel and corruption money.

If we consider this same situation using India Stack, the mother can use a tablet or smartphone to validate her identity using her Aadhaar number in the office of her daughters' school. Her eligibility for the program is already in the system, and her Aadhaar number is now linked to the zero-balance bank account created for her under the Jan Dhan financial inclusion program. The workflow approves her request in a batch process. Within 24 to 48 hours she gets an alert on her phone that the full 2,000-rupee amount has been transferred to her bank account.

The India Stack has had a similarly transformative impact on the provision of government services through a number of other programs, notably including pensions and the provision of cooking gas, with comparable gains in both the quality of the citizen experience and government efficiency. In the cooking gas program alone, more than 20 million people have voluntarily given up a benefit they had previously claimed, but for which they were not rightly entitled, and over 25 million households now get their cooking gas subsidy directly into their bank accounts, simply as a consequence of having government services linked to their Aadhaar number. As with the case of the school fees, the subsidy is going to the intended beneficiaries directly - not to intermediaries.

The Shock Therapy of Demonetization

As of our writing, 1.18 billion users have registered with the Aadhaar system. (For the record, these registrations are voluntary. However, the fact that an Aadhaar ID is required to link bank accounts, SIM connections, and income tax returns, among other services, has made the possession of an Aadhaar ID number a functional requirement in Indian society today, much as a driver's license or other government-issued ID is a functional requirement in the United States.) But the government of India did not - and does not - conceive of the deployment of the India Stack as a purely technical undertaking, designed exclusively to improve the delivery of government services. Rather, the India Stack is envisioned as new social infrastructure with the capacity to increase the resilience of Indian society to change, and thus to help propel India into the 21st-century digital economy. The deployment of the India Stack was one significant precondition for major structural reforms undertaken by the Modi government. This brings us back to demonetization and implementation of tax reforms.

The idea of accomplishing a dramatic shift in the nature of the economy with a set of suddenly implemented policies is not new. The "shock therapy" programs of the early 1990s, intended to accomplish the shift from socialist to market economies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, were based on a similar premise. However, where those programs created an environment in which a few powerful individuals were able to appropriate vast quantities of formerly government-held assets, India's digital shock therapy has - measurably and verifiably - accomplished the opposite: It has eliminated vast concentrations of "off-the-books" wealth, resetting the clock of development at a more equitable starting point.

When India underwent demonetization, the India Stack was suddenly and dramatically thrown into action. India's own payments corporation launched the BHIM application, a digital payments platform using the Universal Payments Interface underlying the JAM trinity. BHIM became one of fastest-downloaded financial payments applications in recent history. The Universal Payments Interface system is very inclusive, such that it serves both smartphone and non-smartphone users, so every Indian can access banking and make payments digitally.

The result? To begin with quantitative outcomes, the Indian economy is operating with about \$45 billion less cash than if demonetization had not taken place. Banks have far greater liquidity, SME lending is at an all-time high, and digital transactions have multiplied 760 times over in some cases.

When it comes to the tax system, too, the India Stack plays a big role. To appreciate the magnitude of change involved in this policy change, it is important to note that the government of India is structured as a federal system, with states having powers and responsibilities at least as great as those of states in the federal system in the United States. Prior to the introduction of the GST, companies of any size in India had to keep track of no fewer than 17 different categories of taxes on sales and transactions, including state-level value-added taxes and levies on the interstate transportation of goods. On July 1, 2017, all 17 of those taxes were subsumed into one tax: the GST.

The implication of this policy change meant an opaque and irrational system that had developed over decades, and that varied across states, was replaced by a simple, transparent system applicable nationwide. For this reason, the slogan that the government of India adopted

<https://hbr.org/2017/11/how-india-is-moving-toward-a-digital-first-economy>

for the introduction of GST was "One nation, one tax."

But as with other types of disruptive change, GST can be understood as the beginning of a long-term process. State governments must do their part to simplify and harmonize the tax code, rather than protecting treasured exceptions and localized benefits. The central government must continually use feedback to ensure its online payment system is as easy to use as possible. And, yes, businesses will need to adjust to a new reality, which will be costly in the short term. The reward will come when India truly sheds the antiquated and inefficient tax systems that built up during the first 70 years after independence, and replaces it with the 21st-century, digitally-enabled digital alternative to which the country is currently adapting.

Building a Digitally Empowered Society

India is adding almost 110 million smartphone users every year, and is on the verge of launching Aadhaar-compliant devices with biometric authentication built into phones and tablets. The power of the JAM trinity will come into full force when transactions are enabled using Aadhaar and biometric authentication, creating a system that is not only cashless but cardless. Already, a new entrant into telecommunications service in India has succeeded in using the India Stack to enroll 108 million consumers in 170 days with a totally paperless, mobile-centric manner - in the process achieving customer acquisition costs of less than \$1 (USD) per customer, compared with the prior industry standard of \$25.

The process of digital disruption - whether led by government or not - creates numerous significant social challenges. Rather than seeking to slow that process to reduce those challenges, India has taken the opposite approach: to not only embrace but accelerate digital disruption, to ensure its full potential for economic and social inclusion is realized.

India's development was inequitable and inconsistent for far too long; the country still has a long way to go. The societal challenges created by digital disruption, challenges both expected and unintended, are real. They will be addressed only with a combination of administrative humility and entrepreneurial determination. But the long-term benefits are real.

The reality is that India is moving into the future at an unprecedented rate. And the path it is taking to get there is digital.

IMA ACTIVITIES



Mind Your Etiquettes

Indore Management Association had organized "Mind Your Etiquettes" program on the topic "Dining Etiquettes" on Thursday, October 05, 2017 at State Bank Of India, Zonal Office, Indore, Facilitated by Corporate Trainer Ms. Gul Parvez.

IMA Student Chapter

Indore Management Association had organized a talk with Nobel Laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi on the topic "Surakshit Bachpan, Surakshit Bharat" on Tuesday, 3rd October 2017 at The Daly College Indore.



IMA Reader's Clique

Indore Management Association organized a book review on the book "Sunder Kand" for management professionals and students under the program IMA Reader's Clique. The program was organized on Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room, Indore. The narrator for the session was CA . Santosh Muchhal, President - Indore Management Association.



IMA ACTIVITIES

Open House Financial Symposium:

Indore Management Association organized the 1st Open House Financial Symposium of year 2017-18 in association with NSE on the topic, "WEALTH CREATION THROUGH STOCK MARKET" - on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at Sayaji Mahal. The facilitator for the session was Mr. Prakash Diwan, Expert Speaker - CNBC TV18.



Center of Excellence

Indore Management Association organized Center of Excellence (COE), an evening talk on "The Impact of Digital Technology on Consumer Buying Behavior" on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room. The facilitator for the session was Ms. Julia Cook and Dr. Deviraj Gill. Mrs. Julia Cook, Faculty at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. Dr. Gill is Lecturer, Strategic Management and Marketing at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK.



Evolution for Excellence

IMA organized Evolution for Excellence workshop on the topic "Holistic Approach to Management" November 9, 2017 at Best Western Hotel, Indore. Faculty for this workshop was Dr. Yogeshwari Phatak, Director, Prestige Institute of Management and Research.



Learning from Life of Legends

Indore Management Association organized Learning from Life of Legends on, "Maharani Ahilya Bai Holkar" on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at SBI Auditorium, Indore. The facilitator for the session was Mr. Vinay Chhajlani, Founder, Diaspark Infotech Private Limited.

IMA ACTIVITIES



A Session For Working Professionals

IMA Ujjain Chapter organized a session for working professionals on the topic "Transformation For Business Growth & Success" by Mr. Rakesh Jain "Prakhar" Chief Mentor & Trainer on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 at Prashanti Heights, Indore.

IMA Student Chapter -Ujjain

IMA Student Chapter- Ujjain had organized a session on the topic Success Unlimited - 20 Mantras from Bollywood Movies That will Change Your Life at Mahakal Institute of Management, Ujjain on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 and speaker for the session was Mr. Rakesh Jain 'Prakhar', Corporate Trainer.



IMA Mind your Etiquettes

IMA Student Chapter had organized Mind your Etiquettes session on Grooming & Body Language at IPS Academy, Indore. Faculty for the session was Ms. Claudia Joshi, Corporate Trainer.



Center of Excellence

IMA Student Chapter organized Centre of Excellence on the topic - "Preparing Yourself for Corporate World" at IIPS, DAVV Takshila Campus. Speaker for the session was Mr. Ujjesh Sinha, AGM Indore Management Association, Indore.



IMA ACTIVITIES

IMA Mind Your Language

IMA organized Mind Your Language on the topic The Winning Edge: Communication Strategies for Leaders on Tuesday, November 21, 2017, at IMA Meeting Room, Jall Auditorium, Indore. Speaker for the session was Ms. Abha Anand, Corporate Trainer.



IMA Training @ Doorstep workshop

Indore Management Association had organized Training @ Doorstep workshop on the topic "Leadership & Managing Generation 'Y'" on Thursday 23rd November, 2017 at Cipla Ltd. Pithampur. Trainer for this session was Prof. Kamal Kishore Jain, Senior Professor, IIM Indore.



IMA Student Chapter

IMA Student Chapter had organized Management Film Show on movie Kung Fu Panda on Friday, November 24, 2017, at Prestige Institute of Management and Research PG Campus. Moderator for the session was Mr. Akhilesh Sengar Vertical Head - HR at Idea Cellular Ltd.



Management Film Show

IMA had organized Management Film Show, on the Movie "Dear Zindagi" on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 at Hotel Radisson Blue, Indore. The Moderator for the session was Dr. Sandeep Atre, Founder, Socialigence.



IMA ACTIVITIES



Center of Excellence

IMA organized Center of Excellence (COE) an evening talk on "Heartfulness" on Tuesday, December 05, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room. The facilitator for the session was Mr. Anurag Mundra, Jt. Managing Director Ujaas Energy Ltd.

Animation Maestro Contest 2017

IMA Animation Maestro Contest 2017 on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at SBI Chetna Institute. Competition was conducted on the theme - Bharat Bhagya Vidhata: Innovate and Lead.



Learning from the life of Legends

IMA had organized an evening talk on Learning from the life of Legend - Alfred Nobel on Tuesday, December 12, 2017, at IMA Meeting Room. The facilitator for the session was Mr. Vijay Goyal, Immediate Past President, IMA Indore.

Management Film Show

IMA organized a Film Show, based on "Famous Bollywood dialogues - A Bunch of Punch for Crunching Times". The program was organized on Monday, December 18, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room, Indore. The facilitator for the session was CA. Navin Khandelwal.



IMA ACTIVITIES



Interaction Session

IMA had organized an Interaction Session with officers from College of Defense Management, Secunderabad and Executive Council IMA on December 13, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room.

Exclusive Session

IMA had organized an interaction with the officials of US Consulate, Mumbai regarding B1B2 visas on Saturday, 16th December, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room. Facilitator of the session was Mr. Dan Fenech, Deputy Chief of the American Citizen Services and Consular Information Units.



Evolution for Excellence

IMA had organized Evolution for Excellence workshop on the topic, "Listening Skills for the Better world" for management professionals on Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at Hotel Best Western Plus, Indore. The facilitator for the session was Dr. Vikrant Singh Tomar, Corporate Trainer.

Contemporary Learning

IMA organized its program Contemporary Learning, an evening talk on the topic UNTANGLING - DECISION MAKING on Friday, December 22, 2017 at IMA Meeting Room. Facilitator of the session was Mr. Shiv Kumar, President - Corporate Affairs & Business Innovation, Indore Steel & Iron Mills Ltd.



BRILLIANT TIPS ON HOW TO PROOFREAD EMAILS



That typo or grammar goof you just made in an email might make a bad impression. It could signal that you lack attention to detail. At worst, it could make you seem less intelligent, conscientious, and trustworthy.

Although email typos happen to everyone, they happen less frequently to those who take a little extra time to proofread. Here's a foolproof step-by-step guide to getting it right before you hit send.

1. Get your contact's name right.

Did you spell your contact's first and last name correctly? **It's important.** And, if you doubt that, think of the last time you got an email from someone who got your name wrong. At the very least, you probably groaned or rolled your eyes. We get annoyed when people misspell our names because we assume they don't care enough about us to pay attention to that basic detail.

If you're uncertain about the spelling of your contact's name, do a little research to see if you can come up with it via Google or social media. If all else fails, use a generic greeting like "Hi there" that doesn't use a first name.

Here's a tip: Make sure you've spelled business and website names correctly, too. It's even a good idea to double-check how the name is formatted. Is it Buzzfeed,

Buzz Feed, or BuzzFeed? (Hint: It's the last one.) Little details do matter.

2. Check your tone.

Does your email sound cold or terse? It might. Often, what sounds fine in our heads doesn't come across well in text. When you don't stop to review and proofread your email before you send it, **you risk being misinterpreted.**

The trick here is to apply some empathy. Clear your head and imagine you're receiving your email rather than sending it. Does anything you've written sound negative or even hostile? There's a big difference between "I'm looking forward to chatting with you" and "I'll be expecting your call." One is friendly and positive; the other sounds as though you're saying "You'd better call or else."

3. Make sure you'll be understood.

Make sure your recipient has enough details to understand what you've written. Remember that you and your recipient may not have all the same information—the things you understand aren't necessarily things your recipient will know. Reread your email with this in mind and fill in the blanks as needed.

Here's a tip: If you find yourself giving too much background information, take a step back and rethink your strategy. You may want to start with a simple "just the facts" approach that leads into a more involved discussion. For instance, instead of breaking down a multi-step plan in a long, complex introductory email, you might first write a quick summary and ask your contact whether they'd like you to share more details.

4. Check for clarity.

Make sure what you've written **reads smoothly and conveys your precise meaning.** Look for unclear pronoun references.

Scan your emails for words like it or they and then make sure your text conveys what those words refer to. If not, rewrite to replace those pronouns with something concrete.

When we hold it directly after the keynote, it always has good attendance.

Hold what after the keynote? What has good attendance?

When we hold the copywriting workshop directly after the keynote, the workshop always has good attendance.

Better. But we can rewrite to simplify the sentence and avoid repeating the word workshop.

The copywriting workshop always has good attendance when we hold it directly after the keynote.

Keep your sentences simple and direct. Emails written at a third-grade reading level have significantly better response rates. Long, complex sentences and big words can make your text more challenging to read for a busy person who's rushing through emails. Do consider your audience, however. If you're writing to a doctor of sociology to ask for an interview, go ahead and use lush language and more complex structure. Otherwise, make "simple is better" your default.

5. Watch out for wordiness.

Part of simplifying your text involves streamlining it. **Eliminate filler words and phrases.** Get rid of adverbs and **use stronger verbs.** (Instead of incredibly happy, try overjoyed, thrilled, or ecstatic. Instead of ran swiftly, how about dashed or sprinted?)

Consider George Orwell's six rules of writing:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figures of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. **Never use the passive** where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a **jargon word** if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/page/2/>

6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.*

*About Orwell's rule #6, see our rule #2.

Here's a tip: Grammarly Premium will help you find overused words and filler words. As you become more aware of your use of filler words, you'll automatically use them less often. Win!

6. Proofread carefully.

Up to this point, we've been talking about proofreading in the broader terms of a developmental edit. Now, it's time to get down to the nitty gritty and **proofread line-by-line.** Have you spelled everything correctly? Did you use the proper homonyms? (Did you type "There going to the festival" when you meant to type They're?) Is your punctuation on point?

An app like Grammarly will help you catch and fix your errors. But keep in mind that it's a tool to enhance your proofreading ability, not replace the need for proofreading altogether. The advantage of using a proofreading app is that every mistake the app catches will teach you something about your writing and ultimately make you a better writer.

7. Sit on it.

Some emails need a while to simmer, especially if they're sensitive. Let's say you have to write an email to report the inappropriate conduct of a coworker, or you have to draft a performance review for someone whose performance hasn't exactly been stellar. Emotion can make you write things you'll later regret.

Draft your email in your word processor rather than your email client so you're not tempted to send it impulsively before you've given it a thorough review. If you're able to hold off for a bit, sit on that email for a day before sending it. When you reread your email in the light of a new day, you'll often find things to revise, especially in terms of tone and clarity.

Here's a tip: When it's critical to deliver an error-free email that won't be misunderstood, it may be helpful to have someone else (particularly someone impartial) look over your draft.

At the very least, make sure the unsend feature is enabled in your email client. The few seconds of time it will buy after you've hit Send will occasionally rescue you from being owned outright by a glaring typo. I once received an email with the subject line "This learning toy made my child crap with glee!" I'm pretty sure that's not what the sender meant.



PRODUCTIVITY TIPS FOR PEOPLE WHO HATE PRODUCTIVITY TIPS

"Traditional approaches to staying focused don't work for me." "I know what I should do to be more productive, but I just don't do it." I hear sentences like these repeatedly from coaching clients. Many have read articles and books - and have even been trained in productivity methods - but still find staying focused to be an uphill battle. Why do people who know a lot about what helps people focus still struggle to focus? Through my work, I've identified several reasons, as well as strategies that may help you gain control.

Assuming that others' preferred productivity strategies should work for you can yield frustration and a sense of defeat. A friend or an author may advocate their own approach so enthusiastically that it seems fail-proof if properly implemented. But if you experience the approach as inauthentic or constraining, it may not be right for you. Trying to make it work can send you into a rut where you repeat unhelpful behaviors while beating yourself up over your lack of focus.

For example, a subset of my coaching clients has an aversion to structuring their time usage with widely recommended tools like spreadsheets, planners, calendars, **if-then rules**, and **timers**. These are often the same clients who are closely attuned to the quality of their work experience, who find joy in **flow** and seek to

create more of it, and for whom the introduction of industrial productivity levers feels stifling. If this describes you, you'll benefit by paying attention to what's happening within yourself as you work and using what you observe to inform your strategies.

If you feel defeated, two things will help you move forward and feel more in control. The first is to accept where you are and have compassion for yourself. When you admit to yourself, "I'm stuck. This feels awful," and let that admission sit in your awareness without fighting it or using it to berate yourself, it loses its power to derail you. Treat yourself with compassion by recognizing your strengths, recalling challenges you've overcome in the past, and affirming your capacity to solve problems.

Then move forward by **experimenting and reflecting**. I encourage my clients to check in with how their work process feels at different points throughout the day and make adjustments to improve the quality of their work experience. Being flexible helps. If one approach isn't working, try another rather than continuing to hammer away fruitlessly. Frustrated sitting at your desk? Take your work outside or to a coffee shop for a couple of hours. Computer screen making your eyes go buggy? Switch to working on paper or using voice recognition. Perhaps you're determined to complete something before

lunch. But if frustration is building, stepping away, taking a walk, and getting something to eat may be exactly what you need to facilitate smooth and rapid completion of the task after lunch.

Leveraging the connection between mind and body is key to knowing when to make a change. For instance, I've learned that I need to get out of my chair to stretch several times a day. Tightness in my shoulders or numbness in my buttocks triggers the urge to move. If I feel myself hunching or my jaw getting tight, I'll walk to the window or go outside and breathe for few minutes. I also build in exercise nearly every day, typically towards the end of the workday or before something that doesn't require close attention as I find that it diffuses rather than sharpens my focus. Your body can provide you with important cues to optimally manage your focus.

Some people like to keep track of what they plan to accomplish by when. On the other hand, focusing on the process of work rather than the output is a powerfully facilitative perspective shift for many. For instance, my client Nora learned that if she frames her main goal for the day as "finish project," she feels increasingly stressed as time goes by if the project isn't moving along as quickly as she'd hoped - and she's ultimately demoralized at the end of the day if the project remains incomplete. She's much better served by an intention to "work on project" or "make progress on project," particularly when she identifies discrete tasks and little milestones that can serve as indicators of progress.

Staying focused doesn't have to be a struggle. While it may not be easy, managing your focus can and should be self-affirming and fulfilling. Making **progress** on work that is **meaningful** is among the most energizing and satisfying experiences anyone can have. Therefore, it makes sense to engineer your workflow for ease and progress. University of Minnesota professor **Theresa Glomb** recommends organizing your work for a "downhill start." Like parking your car on a slope facing downhill, what can you do to set conditions such that you need only lift your foot from the brake to get moving? Clear off your desk before you start a new task? Write down your two top priorities for the next day before leaving in the evening? Perhaps you're a big-picture person who gets bogged down in details. To move your big idea toward realization, you must pinch a manageable task out of your vision and perform it. Ask yourself, "What's one tiny step I could take?" For example, if I get an idea for an article I'd like to write, I know that the inspiration will dissipate if I don't convert it to action. I can do a rough outline in a few minutes (tangible progress). If I have time, I'll develop it into a more extensive outline (more progress). Outlining is much faster and easier than writing a whole draft, yet it's a

concrete step forward that feels good and facilitates the next phase of writing. Waiting for inspiration to create something big from scratch doesn't work; in fact, it slams the brakes on productivity. What does work is finding ways to take small steps and enjoying the resulting sense of progress.

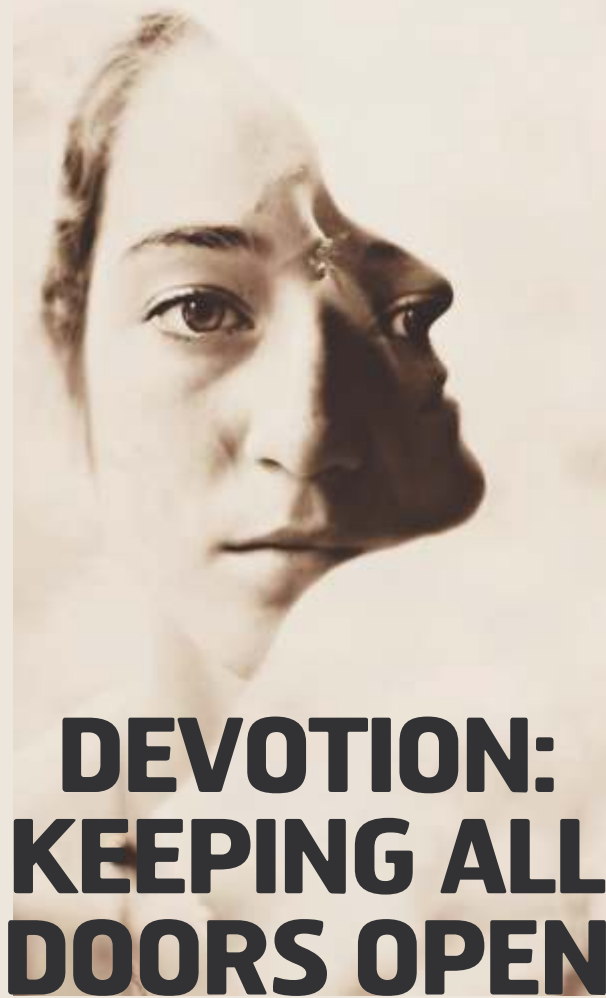
If someone else's productivity strategy feels artificial to you, it probably won't motivate you. For instance, some people can increase their productivity by setting a series of deadlines for themselves. For others, a deadline only promotes focus when it's real, interpersonally relevant, and has serious consequences attached, not when it's made up by themselves or someone else for seemingly arbitrary reasons. A real deadline for me is, for example, knowing there will be an audience waiting to hear me speak at a particular time. With that kind of deadline, I'll be ready and I will deliver an excellent talk. By contrast, me stating to myself or someone else that I plan to have my slides done two weeks in advance won't help me focus.

Productivity strategies also lose their potential to motivate when they don't feel meaningful. Try reframing something you have to do in terms of your core values for stronger and more sustained focus. Let's say I need to schedule interviews with employees at a client firm. Managing the e-mails and the scheduling process feels tedious if I consider these tasks mindless administrative details. But when I think of them as opening conversations that hold the keys to helping people grow and thrive, they become engaging.

Many people fall prey to distractions, both internal and external, in their quest to focus. A useful tool to fend off distraction is an inquiry into the costs of giving in to it. Surrendering to distraction, while temporarily soothing, will later generate feelings of regret and even incompetence. On the other hand, making progress boosts the wonderfully self-affirming sense of mastery. In the face of temptation to give in to distraction, ask yourself the following question: "What are you saying no to right now?" When you take stock of the fact that tumbling down an internet rabbit hole means letting go of the reins and giving up time for the things you really want to do, you may well find the strength to focus.

Finally, accept that focus is dynamic, a work in progress. There's no single tool that will help you develop laser-like focus that never wanders. The best response to a few hours given over to distraction is not self-recrimination, but self-compassion paired with curiosity. Regardless of whether your focus has been ideal or not, take a few moments at the end of each day to note what you accomplished and to set yourself up for a smooth downhill start on the next day's targets for progress.

https://hbr.org/2017/12/productivity-tips-for-people-who-hate-productivity-tips?referral=03758&cm_vc=rr_item_page.top_right



DEVOTION: KEEPING ALL DOORS OPEN

Devotion, Sadhguru says, means to keep all the doors and windows open, so that one is always available to grace.

Devotion, Sadhguru says, means to keep all the doors and windows open, so that one is always

Though we may try to invite the Divine into our lives in many ways, how will we know it when it does? Sadhguru reminds us that one cannot say in what form and in what way grace will reach out. Devotion, he says, means to keep all the doors and windows open, so that one is always available to grace.

Sadhguru: Once one begins to transform one's energy into a higher possibility, into a subtler possibility, one cannot say in how many ways and in how many forms that which is the source of existence will reach out. This has been the experience of all those beings who have allowed grace to be the most significant part of their life. In what form and in what way it reaches out, you can never say. So it is most important to keep all doors open, keep all windows open, keep everything open, without having preconceived ideas about, "This cannot be that, that cannot be this," because that is the greatest impediment. It may come in the form of a bee. What were

you doing all this time? You were just "bee-ing." If Divine approaches you in the form of a bee, will you say "No, come as a hornet!" Do not do that to yourself.

In What Form It Comes

That is what devotion means - that all doors are open. "How do I know? I may do something stupid keeping all doors open." It is possible that you may do something stupid. But keeping the doors closed is the most stupid thing that you can do. Right now, if the breeze is blowing gently from a particular direction, if you look in that direction, there are any number of industries and people and all kinds of things who may be spewing poison. Now you have no choice. Let's say you think, "If I keep this open, that poison may come and go into my nostril and kill me," and you close both your nostrils. Now you do not need poison to kill you - you yourself are enough. If your doors are closed, you will become unavailable to the process of grace. Without the nourishment of grace, for one trying to reach his ultimate nature - it would not be right to say impossible, but it is not probable. Is it impossible to put up a ladder to the sun and climb? Probably it will never happen, but we cannot say for certain because who knows what kind of a ladder maker you are.

So you do not know in what form it comes. It will not carry a board. This bee will not have written on its forehead, "I am a divine agent." It does not come like that - it just comes like a bee, as a bee should come. It will not come announcing loudly. It will come like the gentle breeze. That is the only reason why humanity has missed it, because it does not come with a label attached. Today people have become like this, that unless there is a label and content details, they will not touch anything. But grace does not come like that. It just comes like gentle breeze. It may come like a bee, or it may come like a fly. So to be in a state of devotion is a simple way to receive. To be in a state of defense is a simple way to avoid. Your problem is just this: you are too lost in your instinct of self-preservation. This instinct of self-preservation is a shield against everything. Devotion means to be devoid of that, to simply be here.

Good Fortune

A 90-year old man was given a grand birthday party in a restaurant. They invited lots of people. He was very excited and he went. When the food was served, he realized that he came without his dentures. He said, "I forgot to get my dentures, so the only thing that I can have is the soup." The man who was sitting next to him said, "No problem, Pop," and pulled out a pair of dentures and gave it to him. He tried, but it was too tight. He said, "No, this is too tight for me." The man took it back and pulled out another pair and said, "Try this, Pop." He tried. He said, "It's too big." He put that in and pulled out another

one and gave it to him. It fit reasonably well. He said, "Thank you very much," and he finished his dinner. Then he pulled out the dentures, washed them and gave it back to the man and said, "It's really my fortune today. I do not know if I will see one more birthday. It is really my fortune that a dentist was seated next to me, otherwise what would I have done with this good dinner?" That man said, "No, I'm not a dentist, I'm an undertaker."

So in what form it comes, it does not matter. At that moment, you got your dentures. That is all that matters, right? **Devotion** means you are open to the possibility of life. "Oh, if somebody cons me, what do I do?" If someone cons you, at least you can die cursing. If you conned yourself out of your own life, who the hell are you going to curse? It is like golf. If it was cricket, if it was baseball, you would have cursed somebody. But it is like golf - who do you curse? You just have to curse yourself. There is nobody else to curse. So it is better that at least you die cursing somebody rather than not knowing whom to curse. And if you conned yourself out of your own life, the chances of somebody conning you is minimal. That is a chance we have to take in life. We can be alert to a few things, but still open.

Jumping Off

The thing about taking the chance is like this - going back to the game: if you hear a tucckk and then, "Damn", that is golf. If you say, "Damn," and then you become a tucckk, that is called sky diving. Which is better? Tucckk, damn - okay, at least you did it. Ball did not go to the hole, but at least you whacked it. It is better that life happens to you, maybe not exactly the way you thought it would, but at least it happened to you. If you do not let it happen because of the fear that it may not happen the way you think it should, it is a horrible crime. In fact, if it happens in a way that you never thought it would happen, usually it is a better way than the way you think. If you know how to maintain the steadiness of your mind and the sweetness of your emotion, then whichever way it happens, it is a beautiful way. But if your mind becomes unsteady and emotions get nasty, that is when everything has gone bad. If these two things are kept, then no matter what events are happening in your life, you are very stable in your mind and very sweet in your emotion. Is it not a beautiful thing, whatever may be happening? If you jumped off and your parachute did not open, but you are stable in your mind and sweet in your emotion, is it not a beautiful experience? You will not know the tucckk. It is only others that have to suffer that, not you. But at least you still enjoy the fall; stopping, you will not know. I have been near those situations, so I know. You will not know, but with sweet emotion and a stable mind, just falling from the sky, you know what a fantastic experience it is? You never know, the planet is moving anyway - you may miss it. You are capable of missing a moving target. There

are some risks of keeping the doors open, yes, but the great risk of never allowing life to happen, that risk is gone.

A Divine Thief?

How many times in your life did you get outright conned by somebody? Maybe once or twice? If you are working on Wall Street, maybe five times. Out of thousands and thousands that you have met, if five people tried to con you, that is not a big deal, is it? I am not saying your intelligence should be put to sleep. But only if you have your doors open will it become a necessity to keep your intelligence on all the time. You will be alert to everything. But if you shut your doors, you can put your intelligence also to sleep - this will invariably happen.

You do not know in what form it will come. Divine may come in the form of a thief. There have been any number of stories where even if a thief comes, a saint or sage welcomed him and asked him to take what is there, all that kind of stuff. He is not being a fool - he just does not want to take a chance. Just in case God came in the form of a thief, he does not want to miss it. Even if he really came as a thief, if you treat him like a God, who knows, the guy may transform himself right there; it has happened any number of times. It is not that God is going to disguise himself as a thief and come - it is your ability to pull out the divine even from the lousiest human being that you see. He has got it well disguised. It is your business to pull him out, so that wherever you see him, he does not get away.

Opening All the Branches

So that is what devotion is - a suction pump. If you are a devotee, it is devoid of you. You do not exist, so you are like a vacuum. Wherever he is, he has to come out. Whether it is a tree or a bird or an animal or a man or a bee, he has to come out. He cannot escape. So if this is going well, then you can open up more. It once happened, on the streets of San Francisco there was a beggar. Every day the beggar sat outside a restaurant, and a business man would come every day for breakfast. When he came out, this beggar would always stretch out his hand, and the business man, whatever little change that he had, he would put it and go. Then one day he noticed the beggar, instead of putting out one hand, was putting out both his hands. He stopped and asked, "Every day I have seen you. For so many years, you would stretch out only one hand, now why are you stretching out two hands?" The beggar said, "The business has been so good, I decided to open one more branch." It is time you open up all the branches you can.

Right now business is good, so all the branches should open out. If all of them do not open, it amounts to you being disabled. It is time to open up all the branches.

<http://isha.sadhguru.org/blog/sadhguru/masters-words/devotion-keeping-doors-open/>

SLEEP AND RESTFULNESS



During a session of the Jaipur Literature Festival 2017, Sanjoy Roy asks Sadhguru a question about sleep and the tendency to obsess about it.

During a session of the Jaipur Literature Festival 2017, Sanjoy Roy, the managing director behind this word-renowned festival, asks Sadhguru a question about sleep and the tendency to obsess about it. Sadhguru speaks about sleep, restfulness, his personal sleep quota, and ways to optimize the "engine" that is our body.

Sanjoy Roy: In your book *Inner Engineering: A Yogi's Guide to Joy*, you talk about sleep, our obsession with the need to sleep, and so many other things we get obsessed with.

Sadhguru: The body does not need sleep - it needs restfulness. In most people's experience, sleep is the deepest form of restfulness they know, so they talk about sleep. But essentially, the body is not asking for sleep, it is looking for restfulness. When you perform lots of activity, a residue of physical stress will build up in the body. So at some point, the body wants to fall asleep.

There are so-called experts who are promoting sleep. I think there is no need to promote sleep - people fall asleep when they are tired. But people are talking in terms of putting everyone to sleep for eight to ten hours a day. Suppose you live for a hundred years - if you followed the prescription of sleeping eight hours a day, eventually, you

would have slept for over thirty-three years.

The aspect of restfulness has not been understood by people. Just try this simple thing today - check your pulse before and after food. Now if you learn *Isha Kriya*, a very simple practice that will just take you twelve minutes a day, if you do it for four to six weeks, and you check your pulse again before and after food, you will see it will be lower. This means you are going at lower RPM. If you keep driving your car at 5000 RPM, it will wear out faster than when you drive it at 2000 RPM. Similarly, if you are constantly going at a high pulse rate, you work yourself into the ground, and then you try to compensate for it with more sleep.

If you bring restfulness, you bring ease into your system. Once you sit here with absolute ease, the amount of residual stress that builds up in your physical body is very minimal. Almost twenty-seven years, I managed with two-and-a-half to three hours of sleep, on an average. These days, I am getting a little lazy and sleep four to four-and-a-half hours!

There is no need to fix how many hours to sleep. When you feel sufficiently relaxed, you must come awake. If the body and mind is kept in a certain level of alertness and awareness, you will see once it is well-rested, it is eager to come to life.

<http://isha.sadhguru.org/blog/lifestyle/health-fitness/sleep-and-restfulness/>

11 Essential Grammar Rule

incl. Examples

1 To join two independent clauses, use a comma followed by a conjunction, a semicolon alone, or a semicolon followed by a sentence modifier.

✗ The delivery guy knew he carried strange cargo, but still ventured off unafraid.
✓ The delivery guy knew he carried strange cargo, but he still ventured off unafraid.

✗ My math teacher doesn't know how to lecture, she should have remained a student.
✓ My math teacher doesn't know how to lecture; she should have remained a student.

✗ Gregory has not changed physically; but has given himself an excuse to sep-arate himself from the pain of previous experiences.
✓ Gregory has not changed physically, but has given himself an excuse to sep-arate himself from the pain of previous experiences.

2 Use commas to bracket nonrestrictive phrases, which are not essential to the sentence's meaning.

✗ My window as dirty as it is unleashes the beauty of nature on a snowy morning.
✓ My window as dirty as it is, unleashes the beauty of nature on a snowy morning.

3 Do not use commas to bracket phrases that are essential to a sentence's meaning.

✗ The man, who has too many ties, has too few necks.
✓ The man who has too many ties has too few necks.

4 When beginning a sentence with an introductory phrase, include a comma.

✗ With this he bestows the responsibility of his own happiness on his parents.
✓ With this, he bestows the responsibility of his own happiness on his parents.

5 To indicate possession, end a singular noun with an apostrophe followed by an 'S'. Otherwise, the noun's form seems plural.

✗ In a democracy, everyones vote counts equally.
✓ In a democracy, everyone's vote counts equally.

6 Use proper punctuation to integrate a quotation into a sentence. If the introductory material is an independent clause, add the quotation after a colon. If the introductory material ends in "thinks," "saying," or some other verb indicating expression, use a comma.

✗ Tumbling down the hill, peter yelled: "Damn, I'm sick of this."
✓ Tumbling down the hill, peter yelled, "Damn, I'm sick of this."

7 Make the subject and verb agree with each other, not with a word that comes between them.

✗ The cart, as well as its contents, were gone.
✓ The cart, as well as its contents, was gone.

8 Be sure that a pronoun, a participial phrase, or an appositive refers clearly to the proper subject.

✗ Filled with bad gas, he drove his car to L.A. despite the knocking.
✓ Although it was filled with bad gas, he drove his car to L.A. despite the knocking.

9 Use parallel construction to make a strong point and create a smooth flow.

✗ I was glad to be departing for Japan but I was nervous when I left my apartment.
✓ I was glad to be departing for Japan but nervous to be leaving my apartment.

10 Use the active voice unless you specifically need to use the passive.

✗ A box of chocolates and a dozen roses were presented to the girl by her boyfriend.
✓ The boyfriend presented a box of chocolates and a dozen roses to the girl.

11 Omit unnecessary words.

✗ I would like to assert that the author should be considered to be a buffon.
✓ The author is a buffon.

GrammarCheck

Correct your grammar online:
www.grammarcheck.net/editor

12 COMMON WRITING MISTAKE EVERYONE MAKES

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

1 Using quotation marks to add emphasis

When you want to highlight or emphasize something, make sure to use italics, not quotation marks.

INCORRECT: *Quotation marks are "only" used to cite exact words used by someone.*

CORRECT: *Quotation marks are only used to cite exact words used by someone.*

2 Who vs. That

if it's a person or an animal with a name use **who**.
if it's an inanimate object or animal without a name, use **that**.

INCORRECT: *The woman that just came into the office is my freind.*

CORRECT: *The woman who just came into the office is my freind.*

3 There vs. Their vs. They're

There is a location, physical or otherwise.

EXAMPLE: *The apple is right there.*

Their is possessive.
EXAMPLE: *Their house.*

They're is the contraction of "they are"
EXAMPLE: *They're very nice.*

4 Towards vs. Towards

In American English, you use **"towards."**

EXAMPLE: *She moved toward the exit.*

In British English, it's **"towards."**

EXAMPLE: *She moved towards the exit.*

5 Was vs. Were

When talking about hypothetical situation or something you hope for, you've got to use the subjunctive. However, things tend to get confused when the subject is oneself

INCORRECT: *If I was rich, I'd fly first class.*

CORRECT: *If I were rich, I'd fly first class.*

The same goes for other singular subjects:

INCORRECT: *I wish she was more helpful.*

CORRECT: *I wish she were more helpful.*

6 This is her/him vs. This is s/he

If someone calls you and says, "Is this Francesca?" then:

INCORRECT: *Yes, this is her.*

CORRECT: *Yes this is she.* (assuming you are actually Francesca).

The trick is to remember that you'd never say "Her is answering the phone" -it would always be, "she is answer the phone."

7 Using a hyphen (-) instead of a dash (—)

Hyphens connect two words into one, usually foeming an adjective.

EXAMPLE: *state-of-the-art, freindly-looking*

A dash is used within a sentence to demonstrate that you're switching temporarily to a separate thought.

EXAMPLE: *Unbelievably, Tom-the unluckiest guy at the company-won the office pool.*

8 Comma splice

You can't connect two separate thoughts with just a comma. to avoid a comma splice, either use a semicolon to connect the two phrases, or use a conjunction. The full list of conjunctions can be remembered by acronym **FANBOYS**, which stands for: **for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so.**

INCORRECT: *Sarah left the conference room, she couldn't stand the speaker.*

CORRECT: *Sarah left the conference room, for she couldn't stand the speaker.*

9 Missing a comma after an intro phrase

This mistake leaves the reader feeling breathless, like there is no natural break in the rhythm of the sentence:

INCORRECT: *After she left the office she ran into John.*

CORRECT: *After she left the office, she ran into John.*

The easy fix for this is to read your work aloud (quietly to yourself). Places you pause naturally usually take a comma. The other common mistake associated with this is sentences that include a subject at the end, such as:

INCORRECT: *Thank you for attending ladies.*

CORRECT: *Thank you for attending, ladies.*

10 Putting punctuation outside of quotation marks

This is another regional difference. In British English, punctuation goes outside quotation marks, while in American English they always go inside. Thus:

AMERICAN ENGLISH:

The CEO said, "The company is slowly recovering from the setback." but employees were less than convinced.

BRITISH ENGLISH

The CEO said, "The company is slowly recovering from the setback". but employees were less than convinced.

// Semicolons

Semicolons are used either to connect two separate independent clauses, or to help list a group of items.

INCORRECT: *I like to spend time with the team; which means I can't stand not being in the loop.*

CORRECT: *I like to spend time with the team; I can't stand not being in the loop.*

If each half of the sentence can from complete sentences on their own, you can use a semicolon. If not, they must be connected by something other than a semicolon. Semicolons are also used to make lists when items have punctuation within them.

/2 Spelling

Even though technology now reviews much of our spelling for us, one of the top 12 most common errors is a spelling error.

That's because simple spell checkers cannot identity many misspellings, and are most likely to miss homonyms (e.g, **presence** / **presents**), compound word incorrectly spelled as separate words, and proper nouns, paticularly names.

GrammarCheck
www.grammarcheck.net

<http://sda.sadhguru.org/blog/sadhguru-masters-words-devotion-keeping-doors-open>

IS THE OXFORD COMMA GOOD OR BAD? 8 PROS AND CONS



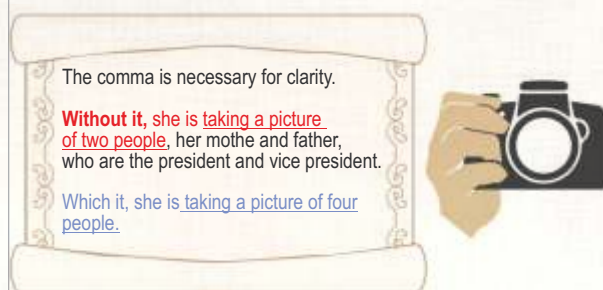
The **Oxford comma**, so-called because the Oxford University Press style guidelines require it, is the comma before the conjunction at the end of a list.

Un the US, book and magazine publishers are generally pro, while newspapers are anti, but both styles can be found in both media.

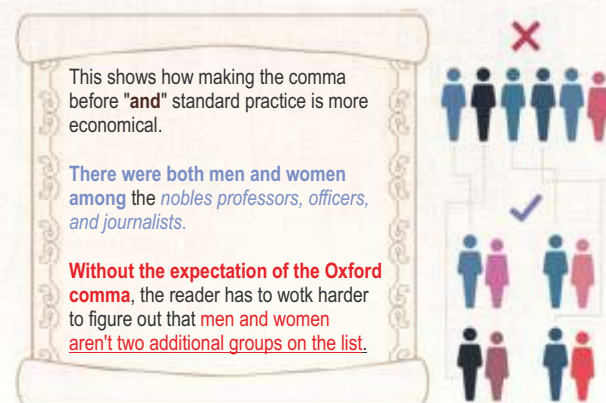
The two main rationales for choosing one style over the other are clarity and **economy**.

PRO:

She took a photography of her parents, the president, and the vice president.

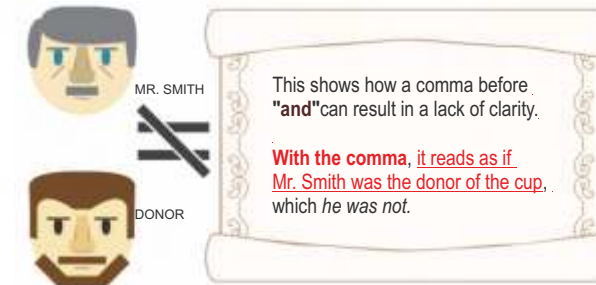


PRO:



CON:

Those at the ceremony were the commodore, the fleet captain, the donor of the cup, Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones.



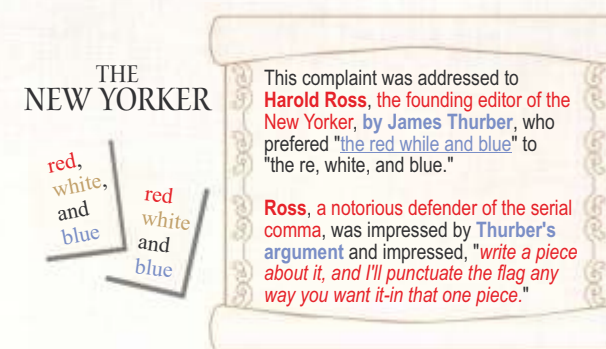
PRO:

...use the comma between all members of a series, including the last two, on the commonsense ground that to do so will preclude ambiguities and annoyances at negligible cost.



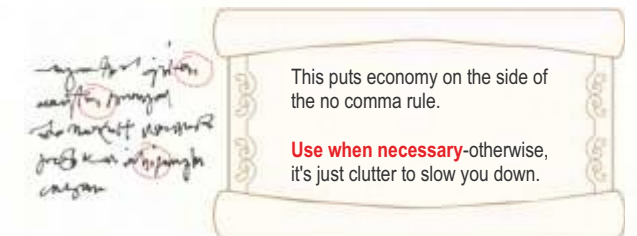
CON:

All those commas make the flag seem rained on. They give it a furled look. Leave them out, and Old Glory is flung to the breeze, as it should be.



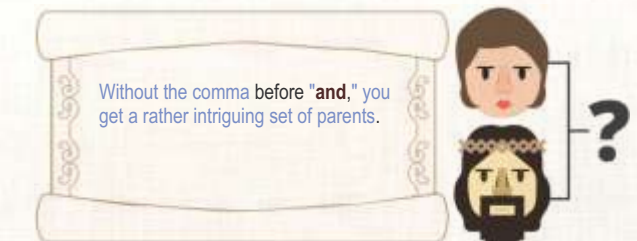
CON:

There are certain places where for the sake of clarity and good form the presence of a comma is obligatory, but on the other hand a too liberal use of this form of punctuation tends to slow up the pace of the reading matter and to create confusion and hesitancy in the mind of the reader.



PRO:

This book is dedicated to my parents, Ayn Rand and God?



CON:

The English are rather more careful than we are, and commonly put a comma after the next-to-last member of a series, but otherwise are not too precise to offend a red-blooded American.

