What Will The Future Job Market Be Like?

Today's job market is so much more complex and competitive than 20 years ago. The global labour market is expanding and as people in other parts of the world become more skilled – and are able to relocate for work more easily – the competition for some jobs is increasing.

The number of pathways into jobs has also grown, switching between different types of qualifications is much easier these days, and there is usually (but not always) more than one route into a job.

Exploring the wide range of jobs available may open up possibilities you weren't aware of so a bit of research could go a long way – and with technology creating new jobs all the time, there may be even be new roles you weren’t aware of!

What is the labour market?

The labour or job market in basic terms is the supply of labour (those available for work) and the demand for it (employers looking for workers). When employers can easily recruit people with the right skills for the job there are fewer issues but in recent years we are hearing about employers facing increasing 'skill shortages'. This means that they're struggling to find people with the right skills and qualities to fill a vacancy – in some areas this struggle to recruit is reaching critical point.

Some skill shortage roles are for brand new or emerging jobs but across all sectors, employers are looking to replace those who are leaving through retirement or because they’re moving on. Just because an industry doesn't appear to be growing, don't assume that new blood isn't needed; manufacturing, for example, has some very exciting and creative roles on offer.

Why are jobs changing?

Technology is the biggest reason for old jobs disappearing but it's worth knowing that it tends to create more jobs than it replaces. So while printers, cashiers and production line assemblers are fewer in number today, new jobs in areas such as digital marketing, special effects, artificial intelligence, information and communication technologies and product design are being created.

Other factors which can change the direction of the skills needed include an ageing population, environmental issues and an ongoing shift towards knowledge-based industries. All of these factors mean that employers are demanding more specific and technical skills and often at a higher qualification level. In fact it’s predicted that by 2024, around 54% of
people in employment are expected to be qualified at level 4 and above\(^1\). People with STEM qualifications (science, technology, engineering and maths) are also in demand, meaning that employers sometimes have to look around the world to find people with the right skills.

**Where will the jobs be?**

While it’s helpful to research the types of jobs available in your local area, being open to commuting to work, or even relocating, will open up more possibilities. Cities tend to provide a range of jobs across the knowledge-based industries such as science, finance or creative roles but across the UK there are also clusters of jobs in specific industries such as life sciences, motorsport, film and aerospace.

We can expect to see demand for jobs in sectors which contribute hugely to the UK economy. These include hi-tech engineering and manufacturing, creative and digital, information and communication technology, life sciences and tourism. ‘Green collar’ jobs – those in the environmental and low carbon industries - will be needed to help the government meet its environmental targets.

As the number of people over 65 grows, there’ll be a huge demand for care and health workers across a range of jobs. There are also skills shortages in hospitality, construction and the logistics sectors including bricklayers and HGV drivers.

**How can I make myself employable?**

Relevant work experience is rated as being a critical or significant factor by employers looking to recruit\(^2\) and any experience of work will help to build employability skills which can transfer across different jobs. This could include volunteering or temporary work. Employers also look for a good attitude, especially in young people, and will often give on-the-job training to someone who shows motivation even if they don’t have all the specific skills required.

Another way to make yourself attractive to employers in some sectors is to engage with social media on topics in the area you’re looking for work in. This can be a good way of getting your name known, showcasing your knowledge and skills (especially creative skills) and learning more about an organisation or business in preparation for an interview. A growing number of employers will screen a candidate’s social media use before offering them a job too so be mindful of what you post if job hunting.

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\(^1\) Working Futures 2014-2024
\(^2\) Employer Perspectives Survey 2014
There are some good websites out there which can help you learn more about jobs, careers and what employers are looking for. No one can predict the future but a bit of preparation can go a long way.

**Recommended websites:**

Start [www.startprofile.com](http://www.startprofile.com)

Careersbox [www.careersbox.co.uk](http://www.careersbox.co.uk)

iCould [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com)

Plotr [www.plotr.co.uk](http://www.plotr.co.uk)

National Careers Service [https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)


Get in Go Far apprenticeships [www.getingofar.gov.uk](http://www.getingofar.gov.uk)

Notgoingtouni [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)

Which Uni [http://university.which.co.uk](http://university.which.co.uk)

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