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Demand for emotional intelligence skills soars six-fold in response to the rise of AI and automation

However, fewer than one in five businesses are investing in emotional intelligence training for non-supervisory employees

Paris, October 17, 2019 – As new technologies automate more traditional and routine tasks, executives and employees recognize that emotional intelligence (EI) skills – such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management – will be a key requisite for success in the years to come.

While demand for EI skills is set to increase by six times in the next 3-5 years, recruitment and training in this area has mostly failed to adapt. This is set to leave many companies unable to reap the benefits EI offers in terms of employee satisfaction, revenue generation, lower attrition and cost reductions. The "[Emotional intelligence – the essential skillset for the age of AI](#)" report from the [Capgemini Research Institute](#) provides a global look at how companies view EI and recommends that they combine technology with talent to develop relevant skills among their employees.

Key findings from the study include:

As AI and automation accelerates, emotional intelligence is becoming a must-have skill

As more traditional and routine tasks become automated, organizations are placing a premium on EI skills, from self-awareness to relationship management and communication. Executives said employees need to develop EI skills so they can adapt to more client/person-facing roles (76%) and take on tasks requiring EI skills that cannot be automated (also 76%) such as empathy, influence and teamwork. Sixty-one percent of executives surveyed said emotional intelligence will become a "must-have" skill in the next 1 – 5 years, and 41% of employees in non-supervisory roles echo the sentiment. Overall, 83% of organizations said that a highly emotionally intelligent workforce will be a prerequisite for success in the years to come.

Employees are nervous about the impact of automation and AI on the relevance of their skills

The share of employees who believe that their skills are or will become redundant due to automation and AI has increased by 10 percentage points in two years. Overall, the percentage of employees who believe their skills are or will be redundant in the next two to three years has increased from 30% to 39%. In addition, the share of millennials who feel this has increased from 40% to 50%. Evidently, millennials are aware of the impact of automation and AI and are getting more anxious because they realize that they will absorb the maximum impact of automation.

Organizations with an emotionally intelligent workforce are reaping the benefits

Organizations that do have employees with high emotional intelligence are realizing significant benefits. On average, 60% of the surveyed organizations realized more than 20% benefits by having employees who display high EI. The top quantitative benefits include enhanced productivity, higher employee satisfaction, and increased market share.



The research calculated that organizations making a sustained investment in EI will see between a 2.2x and 4.4x return-on-investment when the impact on revenue, productivity, costs and attrition are taken into account.

"Consider math ability. Each of us is born with some capacity to work with mathematics. But if we don't take the courses in school that are devoted to teaching subjects like algebra, we will have little capacity to come up with ways of manipulating variables and equations by ourselves. Similarly, with emotional intelligence there is a certain amount of teaching and tutoring that can be helpful. We can acquire knowledge in the area which will increase the effectiveness with which people use their intelligence," says John Mayer, Professor of Psychology, University of New Hampshire.

People processes in organizations have not been adapted to tackle the age of the machine, especially for non-supervisory employees

While 75% of organizations said they can develop EI skills in their employees, far fewer are providing relevant training to help achieve that goal. Just 42% of organizations provide training for senior management and leadership, falling to 32% for middle management and just 17% for employees in non-supervisory roles. Despite employees in non-supervisory roles being the most likely to be impacted by automation, less than 40% of organizations test for EI skills while hiring or assess these skills in their existing employees in non-supervisory roles.

The research concludes that companies need to embed EI into their various people practices and take both bottom-up and top-down approaches to build a high EI workforce through modifications to existing processes. Organizations will also need to create a culture that values EI and strives for continuous improvement. It highlights four key areas on which organizations should focus to build a more emotionally intelligent workforce:

- Customize existing learning programs to integrate EI and make them accessible to all
- Modify recruitment processes to include the evaluation of EI
- Apply an EI lens when promoting and rewarding talent
- Use technology and data for building a high EI culture

"Companies are increasingly aware of the need for emotional intelligence skills but are not moving quickly enough to invest in them," said Claudia Crummenerl, Global Practice Lead, People and Organization at Capgemini Invent. *"This new research shows both the necessity for EI as routine tasks become automated, and also the benefits companies can gain through having an emotionally intelligent workforce. The experience of the most successful companies in this space shows that organizations must prioritize EI in recruitment, training and culture to build a resilient team in a changing world."*

For further information, please access the full report [here](#).

Research methodology

The research surveyed 750 executives from large organizations in the Consumer Product and Retail, Retail Banking and Insurance, Automotive and Utility sectors and also conducted in-depth interviews with several industry experts. In addition, 1,500 employees in Consumer Product and Retail, Retail Banking and Insurance, Automotive and Utility sectors were surveyed. Both studies took place during August-September 2019.



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