

UCT GSB, in partnership with Accelerate Cape Town, set to host Future of Work series

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The University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business (UCT GSB) has teamed up with Accelerate Cape Town to explore pressing questions on the future of work in the wake of a Covid-19 pandemic.

Will remote working become the norm after Covid-19? What should companies be doing to prepare for the new normal? What's next for digital transformation? These and other questions will form the basis of a dynamic four-part series of interactive webinars on the Future of Work hosted by the UCT Graduate School of Business (UCT GSB) in partnership with Accelerate Cape Town.

These virtual conversations will feature prominent guest speakers in academia and business, with discussions focussing on the future corporate workplace, how technology disruption has affected emerging markets, and the development and disruption of education.

"Now, more than ever, professionals and prospective students require guidance in terms of how to navigate the current crisis we have all been living through. There is a lot of anxiety naturally enough around job security and what skills will be most needed to advance their career prospects in the future, while businesses also need to know how best to prepare for the new normal," said Azvir Rampursad, corporate partnerships and careers manager at the UCT GSB.

He adds that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted almost all industries. For many this has meant a move to remote working. But businesses that could not render their services or facilitate a team remotely during the pandemic have been rendered obsolete, making way for new digital challengers to thrive in the changing economy.

According to Accelerate Cape Town CEO Ryan Ravens, the future worker and workspace has evolved considerably and there may be no going back. "White collar workers will no longer consider the four walls of an office as their operating environment – this has been replaced by the four sides of their computer screens. Employees will increasingly not be tied to a physical location but will instead have much higher levels of time freedom and the ability to choose when, where and how to work. The workplace of the future will be shaped not only by rapid technological advancement, but also by shifting attitudes toward work. This is particularly true for millennials and Gen Zers – the focus will be on efficiently meeting objectives rather than occupying time and space in an office. This, in turn, is likely to impact the manner in which HR departments function with regards to performance management, compensation, recruitment and retention of talent."

A recent survey conducted by Accelerate Cape Town, of its member companies, points to the fact that many of these shifts may be here to stay. On average, 40% of employees worked remotely before Covid-19 and 80-100% say they will continue to work remotely, post crisis.

The Future of Work webinar series will explore this startling reality in more detail, while also identifying key trends and emerging skills that will be in high demand. Speakers and topics are as follows:

1. Rasoava Rijamampianina | Corporate Culture Trends in the New Normal and Beyond
2. Sharron McPherson | The Future of Digital Transformation (within the workplace)



3. Herman Singh | Technology is Reinventing the Office
4. Richard Perez | Practical Future Innovation (Design Thinking)

Session one - [Prof. Rasoava Rijamampianina](#): Corporate culture trends in the new normal and beyond (15 September 2020)

Prof Rasoava Rijamampianina (Rija), will be discussing emerging trends in corporate culture, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. He says the companies that will thrive aren't focusing on getting back to working the way they did before, but on creating new ways of working in a new normal.

Session two – Dr [Sharron McPherson](#): Digital transformation in the workplace (6 October 2020)

Dr McPherson is one of Africa's leading experts on the impact of technology disruption for emerging market growth and development, future work and the disruption of education. She is adjunct professor at the UCT GSB and co-founder of the Centre for Disruptive Technologies, and will explore the true meaning of digital transformation (DX) and how it will continue to evolve.

Session three – Prof. [Herman Singh](#): Technology is reinventing the office (19 October)

Adjunct professor at the UCT GSB and the founder and CEO of Future Advisory, an international firm specialising in digital transformation projects in corporates and startup acceleration, Prof. Herman Singh will be sharing his views on the evolution of the office and how this will reshape the future. He says Covid-19 was the killer blow for office work, but technology has turned out to be the knight in shining armour.

Join [here](#)

Session four - [Richard Perez](#): Design Thinking – practical future innovation (4 November)

Founding director of the Hasso Plattner School of Design Thinking (d-school) at UCT, Richard Perez will discuss how design thinking has been disrupted by the lack of access to shared spaces. He will further explore how design thinking will continue to deliver its proven impact in a virtual setting as the need for fast-paced human-centred innovation is greater now than ever.

Join [here](#).

While the Future of Work is an annual event at the UCT GSB, this is the first time it will be held online. In a break with previous years, the series will also take place over several weeks instead of on a single day. "We are confident that the new format will deliver fresh, innovative and thought-provoking discussions to guide businesses, current and prospective students and entrepreneurs on how they can successfully navigate the new normal and position themselves optimally for the future, technologically-focused era," says Rampursad. "The UCT GSB has been advancing business education in Africa for more than five decades so it is only fitting that it should take the lead in hosting conversations of this nature."

To enrich the discussion, registered participants will be able to submit questions ahead of each session, which the speaker will address in a Q&A session, following the presentation.

To register please go to https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NC-hExFRScS5vFTGuxPR6w

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