

Theoretical foundation of generic skills

The post-capitalist society is divided by a new dichotomy of values and aesthetic perceptions. It will be the "two cultures", the literary and scientific. The dichotomy is between "intellectuals" and "managers", the first dealing with words and ideas, the second, people and work. Overcome this dichotomy and achieve a new synthesis will be a philosophical and educational challenge of the utmost importance in post-capitalist society.

Peter F. Drucker

The theoretical foundation of this article is mainly a reflection on a number of documents taken from the Delors report (1996) *Treasure Education*, reading authors like P. Drucker, M. Castells and J. Estefania who have written on the subject and work experience.

One of the defining characteristics of the current employment situation are the constant changes in the economic, social and technological are causing profound changes in business structure and market supply and labor demand.

If I had to highlight one of the most representative that characterize these changes underline the following:

Economic sphere

The globalization of markets and free movement of capital has meant that many products do not have national identity are investigated and developed in one country to another are designed and manufactured in a third. As Castells says, "... may choose to locate businesses in a variety of locations around the world to find the workforce they need, whether in skills, costs ...".

The classic factors of production (land, labor and capital), adding a fourth factor information. "The first feature of the new paradigm (techno-economic) is that information is the raw material."

To confirm the above statements we can see that currently the center of the economy no longer hold only companies that produce and distribute products as thirty years ago but companies producing and distributing knowledge and information. Consider the value and market control exerted companies like Microsoft, Disney and CNN.

Social

The new age pyramid in most OECD countries, the level of education amongst the people, the emergence of new phenomena such as structural unemployment, labor discontinuity in the number of firms for which one pays their services and content of the trades that can be carried out during the working life, multiculturalism, the tendency to hedonism, namely, earn more, work less and have more leisure time, the cult of youth represented by the sport, leanness and dynamism as trends to follow.

Technological field

The development and innovation in the technological world, characterized by the ease and speed in creating new products and services and the explosion of telecommunications and information technologies are breaking into all areas of human life. "Now, the information technology help to get rid of those routine and repetitive work that can be coded and programmed by automatic machines. Work content will increasingly loaded with intelligent tasks requiring initiative and adaptation."

Therefore, we can say that technological changes are not revolutions but constantly changing structures.

Directly or indirectly, as discussed above, these changes have generated and are generating profound changes in the content, methods and means of employment and production systems, distribution and labor organization.

Here are some examples:

- Companies looking for new skills associated with new organizations "decentralized network as" where "workers perform a variety of tasks, instead of passing the work of one another."
- The need for greater flexibility "to deal with fluctuations in demand for their goods and services", and reliability in production processes means that production is mainly based on economies of scale, is moving into a production also continue to seek such economies of scale, is based on economies of scope and quality of products and services.
- Changing patterns of competition between companies to a "gradual elimination of barriers between product development, process development and human resource development." And "models and traditional management techniques are proving inadequate and inflexible in a workplace that requires workers and controls the opposite: the development of a new industrial and enterprise culture characterized by flexibility, trust, commitment and ability to anticipate change and reap its fruits. "

Changes in work organizations have resulted in a perceptible change in the structure and content of employment and therefore a demand for larger and increasingly diverse skills resulting in a clear imbalance between supply and demand of professionals in the call information society. "... The problem is that no new jobs, old skills. New jobs require new skills. The gap will continue to increase until governments and employers undertake a new policy, much more radical, to give people new skills and expertise related to developing new forms of work organization and the introduction of new technologies. "

Since the beginning of the 90, as a first step to reduce this imbalance, have been progressively defined professional profiles and training curricula in terms of professional skills by taking a quantum leap in this process, and passed to take into account also aspects of participatory and personal, not just those of a technical and methodological.

But in addition to the powers specifically related to a job or a given sector, needs to acquire the so-called transferable skills, without being specific to a particular job or a particular profession, and therefore, transferable to a wide range of tasks performed in different work contexts are necessary to carry out different tasks at the level required for employment, with the dual aim of promoting the employability of students and to reduce the obsolescence of workers to proportion more likely to adapt.

Further action is needed and to go deep in the identification of its contents. For this it is necessary to start the one hand, the differential analysis between the cultural contexts of education and employment and the type of skills they generate. And, secondly, monitoring and analysis of the constant changes that are experiencing labor organizations over time where the products and / or services sold do not have a stable framework to define a linear fashion in the time the type of tasks that its members should be able to develop in the future.

Some examples of the major differences between the two contexts that result in the generation, in many cases, divergent competencies fruit of the relationship established by the students regarding educational organizations and employees regarding labor organizations.

EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

Homogeneous group relations prevailed a relationship between equal relationships are more heterogeneous group level by having to work and live together different generations with common goals. In school organizations are more or less clear the contents to be learned. Structured environment in relation to the learning that must take place. Generally, the employee must explore what you must learn to remain effective for himself and for the organization. Unstructured environment with relation to learning.

The evaluation criteria are explicit. Students will be evaluated by what you know about the levels set. The evaluation criteria are multiple and less explicit, namely, ability to integrate, achieve results, to please his superiors. In summary, we evaluate more what one is, in relation to the results by what is known of the contents of your post.

The student gathers information previously structured contexts.

Much of the information collected by an employee must be removed from ambiguous contexts and often under pressure. The role of student among his peers is consistent and explicit in the teacher / student. The role of employees has a greater heterogeneity and is loaded with a number of underlying determinants that combine: the economic, social and personal ones. The relationship is clear enough effort and results autovalorable. The relationship effort sometimes results depend ambivalent of all employees. Individual goals are achieved primarily through individual performance. Individual goals are achieved primarily by all members in the process: customers, suppliers and other members of the organization. Thus, the concept of extending professional skills demand is made on workers, and in parallel, on the training they require, as they relate to various dimensions of a person related to the knowledge skills and abilities techniques and patterns and forms of individual and collective behavior.

From my point of view, the type and content of generic skills would be articulated through three categories or dimensions: cognitive, relational and personal, and each in turn, would consist of a set of specific competences.

COGNITIVE DIMENSION

Manage information. Search, sort, organize, integrate and retrieve information as needed. Knowledge of technical and scientific language general and specific. Methodological and instrumental capabilities transferable to different business situations.

RELATIONAL DIMENSION

Working with others. Communicate ideas to justify position, persuade and convince others, work together to achieve common goals ...

Social communication skills. Adequately express both written and oral communication in other languages ...

PERSONAL DIMENSION

Flexibility and adaptability. Consider the change as a challenge and not as a threat.

Creativity. Create action-oriented, interaction with the task to generate a new kind of reality (new business, new processes etc.).

Learning to learn to cope with the rapid technological change and labor.

Finally, in conclusion, I would say there is still a lack of knowledge about how these skills can be taught efficiently, how to evaluate acquisition and how to ensure their development throughout working life. Cabria continue working on design, build and implement the best methods and means to develop, evaluate and demonstrate the transferable skills in both academic organizations and in the work, whether they are nonprofit or for profit, based on seeking consensus and collaboration between the two.

Do not lose sight that a product or service arises from the application of a set of competencies conducted by a group of people and thus, development and the generation of these powers is the strategy to be followed, in turn, continue innovating and creating new products or services.