



The 360-Degree People

UPFRONT

I ADMIT TO A SERIOUS NEED FOR REMEDIATION when it comes to technology. But I know a modern marvel when I see one. My first techno moment was the FAX machine, which almost seems comical now.

That was back in the BI era (Before Internet), but it was definitely an eye-opener: insert here, comes out there. It was teleporting for the desk set, but faxing soon became passé with the advent of e-mail and the Internet.

All manner of shape-shifting, barrier-busting innovations are changing the way we live and communicate daily. My latest double take occurred at a social gathering when I came upon someone

your basic Bluetooth technology. We're not in Kansas, Dorothy. We are through the looking glass once again.

In this techno universe, it would make sense to be an expert, to speak the language that appears to be driving our world forward. Lest you fall behind, you'd better learn the ways of Bluetooth and have your iPhone at the ready. Communication is 24/7.

All well and good. At Miami Dade College we do, indeed, emphasize technological literacy, one of 10 learning outcomes for which students

ed by their third year. Today's students will have 10-14 jobs by the time they turn 38 years of age, according to a new study prepared for the Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) President's Trust.

So, what brand of expert will be able to navigate these rolling seas? Peter D. Hart Research Associates, the noted public research group, called it the 360-degree person. Their 2006 report to AAC&U noted the frustration of employers who could not find people who had both technical job-related skills and broader skills in communication and problem solving, team work and a work ethic that reflected determination and reliability. They wanted people with the capacity to drive innovation, and their experience told them that keeping pace with the changing marketplace required people with a broad range of skills, beyond technical and even beyond the particular innovation they sought.

The other side of the looking glass isn't always about the magical mystery of technology. This new

world is rooted in global interdependence and complex interactions that demand a set of cross-cutting capacities. Those who succeed will be technically savvy, sensitive to cultural realities, able to communicate in multiple languages with diverse people, conscious of their industry's impact on the environment and much more. This is the new renaissance man and woman, the 360 people.

We're also entering an era in which educators and employers, colleges and communities must function in partnership. Teaching and learning needs to be connected not only to a changing workplace but also to the particular needs of communities. It's an era of immense possibility, but one that will blow right by those institutions that fail to understand the skill set and the scope of the new marketplace. It's town and gown with a new sense of urgency.

THE TOP 10 JOBS IN HIGHEST DEMAND IN 2010 DID NOT EVEN EXIST FIVE YEARS AGO.

holding an iPhone up to one of the audio speakers, as if the two alien creatures were getting to know one another. Of course, that's exactly what was occurring. Seems that a neat 99-cent application was allowing my friend's iPhone to absorb all the songs from the host's iPhone playlist. All you had to do was simply bump the two phones together and then point the phone at the speaker. Ho hum, just

must demonstrate competency. But a certain irony exists amidst all this techno velocity. When you consider that the top 10 jobs in highest demand by 2010 did not exist five years ago, we are then preparing students for jobs that don't exist. The amount of technical data is expanding so rapidly that one futurist projected that half of what students study in their first year of college will be outdated

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