

I hope the second full week of term is going smoothly and to the fifth formers reading this, I hope the mock examinations went well. For this week's bulletin, I am going to focus on the topic of the **'Future of Work'**. On Monday of this week, we were joined by two employees of HSM Advisory, who support global organisations in planning for this topic, with clients including HSBC, PWC, Accenture and AXA, amongst others. They certainly were well informed and for the Futures Ambassadors who attended, it was a fantastic opportunity to gain some further understanding of potential workplace trends.

Here are some of the key points that they shared:

- In the UK, 1 in 2 babies born in 2007 will live until they are 103 years old! Consequently people are living longer and will be working longer, and living what can be described as 'multi-stage lives'.
- This means that rather than having a linear pathway that certainly my parents enjoyed of education, work, retirement, pupils leaving Shrewsbury will have lives that consist of sabbaticals, freelance work, returns to education, break for travel, etc. It is expected that those in education now, when they enter the world of work will be far more fluid in terms of moving between both different employers and industry sectors.
- Some really interesting data was cited. For example, '48% of people would leave a job if it prevented them from enjoying their life in the post pandemic era' (World Economic Forum). I liked this one; 'When employees experience belonging in their profession, they are three times more likely to look forward to coming to work' (Great place to Work 2022).
- In essence, it was felt that particularly post the Covid-19 crisis, people now expect more flexibility of when and where they work, as opposed to traditional set working patterns and locations.
- AI was a hot topic. Our visitors quoted a recent paper from IBM, which suggested that 40% of the global workforce will require reskilling due to AI and automation in the next three years.
- What I found particularly powerful, in relation to AI, was the positive impact our speakers thought it would have. As opposed to concerns that AI was going to lead to mass redundancies, the focus was more on the new roles it was going to create, and that it was going to support many current roles by improving efficiency, hence creating time for key skills such as leadership, communication and collaboration to flourish.
- It was suggested that these three skills (leadership, communication and collaboration) were skills which AI cannot demonstrate or perform, so it was important that pupils considered ways to improve these skills as they progress through education into the workforce.
- Linked to last week's newsletter, the value of work experience, accessing mentoring and embracing online learning opportunities (e.g. virtual work experience, MOOCs) was cited as opportunities for students to develop some of these skills.
- Finally, the benefits of networking were highlighted. I came into contact with this organisation and staff through LinkedIn, a work based networking platform many of you will have heard of and become more familiar with as you progress into employment. For all sixth formers at the school, it is worth reminding you that all of you can use our own networking platform 'Salopian Connect', which has over 2000 members, many of whom are happy to offer some advice and guidance.

I can only speak for myself, but I came away from the talk encouraged by the content and excited for pupils about what the world of work is going to look like. There is no doubt that it is changing. There is no doubt that technology, specifically AI is accelerating many of these changes. There is also no doubt that the pandemic also accelerated many of the changes to workplace patterns and behaviours that were anticipated to become more prevalent towards the end of this decade.

Pupils at Shrewsbury School should be optimistic about meeting these changes head on. You have access to incredible resources, networks and facilities to help you develop the skills you will need to thrive in this ever changing world.

Best wishes,

Mr Wain