

Curious growth

In August 2020, McKinsey updated the concept of lifelong learning for the post Covid world. [Intentional learning](#) is the practice of treating every experience as an opportunity to learn something. Rather than being something that occurs separately, the desire to learn should be an always-on, instinctive approach to everyday situations. “Although [intentional learners] are experiencing all the same daily moments anyone else might, they get more out of those opportunities because every experience, conversation, meeting, carries an opportunity to develop and grow,” the McKinsey report argues.

Two things set intentional learners apart from everyone else: a growth mindset and a curious mindset. Although these are personality traits that people naturally have in varying degrees, it is also possible to adopt these outlooks, the report says. People with a growth mindset believe their capabilities and even intelligence can be nurtured, expanded and changed over time. “A growth mindset releases you from the expectation of being perfect,” says the report. “Failures and mistakes are not indicative of the limits of your intellect, but rather tools that inform how you develop.”

Some people are naturally more curious than others. Cultivating your curiosity can mean overcoming the fear of asking questions or of trying new things. It may mean taking on new challenges that do not relate to your day-job – learning a language, for instance, or taking up a musical instrument.

This matters because demand for new skills will be unprecedented, as detailed by the [World Economic Forum’s call for a global reskilling revolution](#). Unlike the major workplace changes of the past (industrialisation, mechanisation and so on), the Fourth Industrial Revolution will not be a single moment of change. It will be an era of perpetual change, as tools like AI and automation expand their useful scope.

“Even before COVID-19 emerged, the world of stable lifetime employment had faded in the rearview mirror,” says the McKinsey report. Instead, it has been “replaced by the expectation that both executives and employees must continually refresh their skills”.