

Qualifications Look Good. But Are You T-Shaped?

(NAPSA)—To land or keep your dream job, you may need to change your “shape.”

Employers are increasingly looking to hire “T-shaped people,” according to an expert webinar on future work skills conducted by the University of Phoenix Research Institute.

To know if you are “T-shaped,” consider that the vertical line of the T represents depth and the horizontal bar, breadth. A T-shaped person has general knowledge in a variety of areas and deep competence in a specialty area.

So, for example, if you are a software engineer, you might benefit by developing related skills in graphic design, project management, marketing and even a foreign language. At the same time, you need to specialize in a specific area of software engineering.

Thought leaders from IBM, Manpower, Stanford University, the University of Phoenix Research Institute and the Institute for the Future recently comprised the expert webinar panel that discussed technical and societal shifts that will require new job skills in the next 10 years. The event, sponsored by the University of Phoenix Research Institute and hosted by The Chronicle of Higher Education, drew attention to skills for future workforce success.

To illustrate how businesses can apply these forecasts, panelist Jim Spohrer, director of IBM University Programs Worldwide, spoke about transdisciplinarity—the ability to work across multiple areas of expertise.



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“At IBM, we talk a lot about hiring T-shaped people who are both deep problem solvers (experts) and broad communicators who can work well on teams of experts,” said Spohrer. “Transdisciplinarity also implies people who can learn and adapt more quickly, who are better lifelong learners.”

Panel moderator Dr. Tracey Wilen-Daugenti, vice president and managing director of the University of Phoenix Research Institute, says many of today’s problems are too complex to be solved with one discipline. For example, a typical job at a technology firm might require knowledge of technical, financial and human-relations aspects of the business.

“Based on multiple studies by the University of Phoenix Research Institute,” said Wilen-Daugenti, “today’s workforce may not fully understand the skills they will need to be employable in the future.”

By paying attention to the future work skills identified in the webinar, workers can start to position themselves as crossfunctional contributors to the workplace.

Read the full report at www.phoenix.edu/institute.