

Title A: In Disruptive Times, Education Is a Key Asset

Subtitle A: Tomorrow's leaders need a new kind of education to meet the demands of technological disruption.

Title B: Education Must Change Before the World Does

Subtitle B: Disruptive technologies have already made the traditional educational approach obsolete.

Title C: Education for the Next Generation: Adapting to Disruptive Times

Subtitle C: We cannot prepare for disruptive technologies without changing how education works on a fundamental level.



[Image source](#)

It's a well-known (but little discussed) fact: Our education system doesn't prepare people for the

challenges of the real world.

We live in a society driven primarily by commercial interests. On its own, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. But the education that most people receive leaves them under-equipped to handle the realities of that society.

Instead of competing with commercial interests for students' attention, the education system is satisfied with occupying their time. Instead of developing and delivering personalized curricula for each individual, it feeds large groups of students the same subjects at the same speed. This makes the process simple for educators but boring and ineffective for students.

The situation is even worse for vocational schools. Automation is changing work standards so quickly that new graduates cannot possibly keep up. The technical skills a worker begins learning in young adulthood lose commercial value in only a few short years.

Young people and adults alike need an educational approach that emphasizes human talents and abilities in a radical new way. The economy of the future cannot depend on an education system that has not changed in more than a century.

Facts Are Not Knowledge

The education system of the modern world largely bases its value on the power of facts. The vast majority of public school textbooks, university courses, and executive training seminars focus primarily on relaying facts. Students who memorize these facts and reproduce them on exams pass the course and move on.

In the past, memorizing facts was an incredibly valuable skill. Now, any known fact is a voice search away – you don't even need to know how to read. In-depth understanding and contextual intelligence have become the primary indicators of true knowledge.

Fact-based education produces people who know how to fulfill the role that's designed for them. A century ago, it produced telephone switchboard operators. When telephones no longer needed switchboards, those operators lost their jobs.

Knowledge-based education produces people who use creativity and innovation to adapt to changing conditions. It enables people to develop skills that are uniquely human and fundamentally immune to automation – like teamwork, leadership, empathy, understanding, creativity, and more.

People with these skills flourish in disruptive environments. Their ability to memorize facts is secondary to the true value they offer society. Yet today's educators devote almost no attention to cultivating this kind of approach.

How to Cultivate Knowledge in the 21st Century

Education must be personalized. It must leverage technology instead of fighting against it. Today's emerging technologies can enable one-on-one education in a way that is both scalable and commercially viable.

Artificially intelligent learning systems can help maximize the learning ability of individuals on their own terms. When educators prepare students for intellectual, emotional, and adaptive challenges, those students gain valuable, relevant new skills.

One-on-one mentoring is not always practical in today's economic landscape. But today's technology gives us the closest possible thing. Communities that embrace this approach will see rapid, transformative development over the next few years, while those that stall will be left behind.

Today's best performers are not people who are great at memorizing facts. They are people who know how to interpret facts. They can critically assess the quality of facts and make ethical judgments about how best to use facts. These are the skills that tomorrow's leaders must have and that today's students are eagerly searching for.