4. Learning agility: A key attribute in hiring leaders and employees

We’re working and living through an age of uncertainty and unpredictability. As the pace of change accelerates, and as disruptions continue to arise, organizations and people must adapt. Leaders and employees who are better able to remain flexible and adapt their behavior to changing situations have a high level of learning agility.

Time and again, Korn Ferry’s research has shown that a growth mindset, fueled by continuous learning, is an essential attribute for leading in a changing world. Leaders must be willing to learn constantly, consider concepts that they may not understand and embrace approaches that may not be traditional or familiar.

What do WMACs look for when hiring leaders and employees? WMACs understand that the future of work isn’t about filling positions. It’s about developing talent that can respond flexibly to new opportunities and challenges. For leaders and employees, WMACs prioritize “learning agility and curiosity” over “career history and experiences.” And the focus on what both groups can learn and apply ahead of what they have done only grows larger as WMACs look out to the future.

Tips for leaders

To stay competitive in today’s market, you need leaders and employees who are nimble, open to change and new ideas, willing to take risks, flexible and comfortable with ambiguity. All of these attributes are key to thriving in new, disruptive situations. You should start determining your organization’s baseline agility by assessing your workforce. You can use the results to determine where you need to better align your talent with your strategy by putting the most agile talent into mission-critical roles and developing potential talent to fill gaps. You should also coach leaders to encourage their teams to develop their learning agility through both training and work projects.

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