

Skills are the new coin of the realm

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Forget bitcoin—skills are the global currency for 21st century economies. Lori Foster, professor of Psychology at North Carolina State University and the University of Cape Town, says, "Without proper investment in skills, individuals languish on the margins of societies, technology does not convert into economic prosperity, and it's difficult if not impossible for countries to compete in an increasingly knowledge-based global economy."

"So, an investment in [skills](#) is important for companies or organizations," she continued, "But scale that up; it's also important to enable prosperity

at a national and at a global level."

The key questions are how and where to make those investments. Tara Behrend, associate professor in the Department of Organizational Sciences and Communication at George Washington University, says, "The general business population and the broader community of policy makers and educators are all wondering what the future is going to look like, because they need to prepare people to enter that future."

Foster and Behrend, along with Fred Oswald, professor and Herbert S. Autrey Chair in Social Sciences at Rice University, are the three co-editors of the book, *Workforce Readiness and the Future of Work*. Oswald is a past president of SIOP and a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and Association for Psychological Science. Foster was an Obama-era White House Fellow and a behavioral science advisor to the United Nations. Behrend was a 2016 Cyber Initiative Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University.

Workforce readiness involves change readiness on the part of job applicants, employers, educators, all the way up to federal policymakers, and therefore, the editors of the latest edition of this SIOP Organizational Frontiers Series brought together more than 30 international authors representing a wide range of expertise that contributes to agile, healthy workforces and economies in the digital era.

"There are people contributing to the chapters who are working in a wide range of industries, and disciplines, but all thinking about this topic of the Future of Work," says Tara Behrend, "And so they're talking about issues like apprenticeships and re-skilling, and how we help people whose jobs have been replaced by automation, but they're doing so from really different perspectives."

Fred Oswald notes that, "The sections of the book address issues pertaining to education, policy, technology, and the [workforce](#), helping the reader really understand the science, research, and expertise behind workforce and future of work issues in a broad, integrative way that tries to get beyond the hype."

Workforce Readiness and the Future of Work can serve as both a reference and a guidebook. Behrend says, "There is something in here for educators, for policy makers, but also for corporations and organizations who need to make decisions about which skills will be most valuable in the years to come." Individual chapters address such diverse subjects as the concept of decent work, employer perspectives on workforce readiness, using the O*NET occupational database in addressing workforce issues, AI in talent management, assessments, apprenticeships, credentialing, and more.

More information: Workforce Readiness and the Future of Work: https://www.routledge.com/Workforce-Readiness-and-the-Future-of-Work/Oswald-Behrend-Foster/p/book/9780815381419?utm_source=SIOP&utm_medium=Website&utm_campaign=FOWpage&utm_content=FOWpage

Find more resources related to the Future of Work on the SIOP website: ow.ly/fl5D50uRHLo

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