HOW MICROCREDENTIALS CAN FUTUREPROOF US AGAINST THE CHANGING REALITIES OF THE WORKPLACE

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Abstract

With new technologies changing the workplace at such a rapid pace, never before has the need for upskilling, reskilling, and continued professional development been quite so pronounced. Add to this rising life expectancies in the western world, meaning we are working longer, and a culture which expects us to change careers multiple times within a lifetime, and the need for lifelong learning becomes greater still. The answer lies in microcredentials: short stackable courses designed to develop specific skills — often to help us perform better at work or upskill to meet new demands.

FutureLearn research, which spoke to 600 employers from the UK, US and Australia — who held either recruitment or learning and development responsibilities — shows employer demand for such upskilling is clear. The research revealed that nearly three quarters (73%) of employers believe evidence of online learning is a valuable asset when considering the promotion of an existing employee; over two-thirds of employers believe a candidate’s ability to evidence taking an online course is a ‘differentiating factor’ when hiring mid-management and junior staff; and an overwhelming 92% of employers say online courses are a valuable learning and development tool.

In this talk, we hear from FutureLearn, Europe’s leading online social learning provider, about what they’re hearing from their conversations with both employers and universities, more about the employer research they commissioned, including the finding that employers would value a shared international standard for short course, and about what they’re doing in the microcredential space and how this way of learning could hold the answer to the changing work landscape.

Keywords: Microcredentials, employers, upskilling, reskilling, CPD, research.