



Halloween Tale Of Gig Economy Terror: Will Freelancers Take Over The World? (Spoiler Alert: Not Likely)

Insights

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A terrible horde of mindless creatures takes over civilization, rendering our world virtually unrecognizable and changing everything about it. There's nothing you can do to stop them. Every day, more and more of them appear. They'll never go away, no matter what you do. Your life is forever altered in ways you never imagined. You just wish everything would return to normal.

Is this the stale plot from yet another zombie apocalypse movie, right in time for Halloween? Nope. According to many, it's the dystopian future of employment, as many naysayers predict that freelancing will essentially replace the traditional workplace model of employment relationships and ruin the fabric of society. To them, the whole concept of the innovative gig economy is actually a horrible trap that will wreak havoc on our world, destroying the safety and security of "normal" jobs, depressing wages and compensation, altogether eliminating benefits, and creating a generation of side-hustlers who have no choice but to break their backs on a daily basis just to struggle and make ends meet.

But there's a more positive (and realistic) view out there. As described in an article posted in yesterday's Fast Company, there's no need to fear. We won't all be freelancers in the future of the work, as the title of the article says. It's written by Upwork CEO Stephane Kasriel, who might know a thing or two about this issue, as he heads the world's largest freelancing website. He points out that freelancing will certainly play a major role in work in the future, with 36% of the workforce currently taking on some sort of freelance assignment and the number continuing to increase year after year. As we just discussed last week, a brand new study contended that the majority of American workers will do some sort of freelance work within the next decade.

But Kasriel points out that the traditional employment model is fine and well, and isn't about to vanish anytime soon. He notes the obvious: freelancing isn't for everyone, as not all workers have the skills and temperament to do it successfully. He instead envisions a future where a core group of dedicated employees will work for a company and hire a revolving satellite of freelance workers to assist with specialized projects on a results-oriented basis. Rather than being scared about a mob of freelancers on the horizon coming to take over your place in society, envision a group of helpful assistants there to help complement your work, ready and willing to jump in at a moment's notice to give your project that necessary boost to make it successful before moving on to their next assignment. This is good news for everyone: for those with the entrepreneurial spirit who want a place in the gig economy, there will be plenty of work for you to do. For those who crave stability and

place in the gig economy, there will be plenty of work for you to do. For those who crave stability and security, your jobs will still be there, but with the added benefit of knowing there are many freelancers waiting the wings to help you when needed. And for businesses, you have the best of both worlds available for you, with a ready supply of people looking for traditional employment work and a growing number of innovative freelancers ready to help fill in the gaps where needed.

Kasriel's article then summarizes his view of the four criteria that he believes makes freelancers successful in their roles: a specialized skill set; a specialization in a skill set that is in-demand and fresh; a mindset that is honed to make the "solopreneur" life successful; and a high degree of emotional intelligence. I would highly encourage you to read the article (it's a quick five-minute read) to get more detail about these concepts, as it might enable you to better identify the kinds of criteria that your company should be looking for when it comes to retaining freelancers. And it might make you feel a little better about what to expect in the future, reducing the chances that you'll have nightmares as you go to sleep tonight after needlessly worrying about a zombie army of freelancers coming to steal your role in the world.

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