

The New World of Work: From the Cube to the Cloud

By William McKnight on December 27, 2012

I spoke with my friend – and holder of the record for hitting a golf ball closest to my head – Tim Houline, CEO of Working Solutions and co-author of the forthcoming book “The New World of Work: From the Cube to the Cloud.” We talked about the big picture of work, how it was changing and the implications on employers and workers in the years to come.

One of the important points about work is that it is becoming fractionalized. “Like an assembly line, work is moving to the cloud. Talent is now globalized with the world as the recruiting pool” said Tim. I have many times said that the cloud is going to impact information technology more profoundly than anything else in our careers. It is interesting that Tim believes the cloud is most profound in all areas of work and is ushering in a new world of work.

The cloud has enabled jobs to change to more knowledge-based and more specialized. The authors claim there are many open positions and jobs are “hiding in plain sight” and that the workforce needs to change their expectations about work, and how it is procured, in order to be successful at it.

Workers need to monetize their skill sets. Jobs will increasingly be done anywhere, not just in the corporate office. Everything is more mobile. Tim said “There will be more freelance jobs, less W2 fulltime jobs and more independent contractors. Many will need to freelance their specialized skill set.”

I asked how workers used to a different model of work could succeed in the new world of work. Tim said workers need to wake up. “Understand what is happening around you right now. Do not be asleep at the wheel. Understand virtualization and fractionalization and embrace the opportunities.”

Down the road, Tim sees a new form of innovation with business models created on top of business models, much like eBay and Amazon business models have created new industries.

To find your way, embrace change. Do not be opposed to it. Don't get left behind.

I observed that it appeared the new world of work would leave many doing highly specialized jobs for their entire career. Tim pointed out the need for continued leadership and the need for everyone to make their contribution complex, not simple, transactions, which may or may not involve others.

So there you have it – the new world of work – from an expert in how we work. I look forward to the book coming out and embracing the new world.