

„Switch-Happens“

Switch-Column by Monica Deters

How millions of people experience the switch into a new era.



The human market gap almost no one sees!

While everyone is talking about AI, robots and new jobs, a fundamental new need is emerging almost unnoticed: people who support others when work can suddenly no longer be the centre of their lives.



A few days ago, I was driving through a business district. Office buildings, warehouses, workshops, people on their way to work. A completely ordinary scene, really. And suddenly I thought: How many of these jobs will still exist in exactly the same form three years from now? And almost more importantly: What will all these people do if their jobs no longer exist?

The Equation Used to Be Pretty Simple

Learn. Get vocational training or a degree. Work. Stay with one company for as long as possible. Eventually retire. Of course, real life was never quite as simple as this equation makes it sound. Nevertheless, for generations, work was about far more than the money arriving in your bank account at the end of the month. It provided structure.

Status. Social connections. Security. And when someone asked, "What do you do?", most people had a pretty clear answer. But that very certainty is beginning to crumble.

The Avalanche Is Already Moving

We are discussing artificial intelligence, automation and robots. Which tasks will disappear, which professions will change and which new ones will emerge. For a large part of society, the pain is not yet great enough to fundamentally rethink work. Most people still look for the next job when the old one disappears. That is understandable. But what if, at some point, there is no longer simply a new job waiting for every one that disappears? What if, in the future, people experience not just once but several times during their working lives that their

knowledge, their work or even their entire profession is no longer needed in the same form? Then we do not just have a labour market problem. We have a deeply rooted question of identity.

If machines take over more and more work, we humans will have to rethink what we want to do with our lives. And this, of all things, could become one of the biggest gaps in the market in the years ahead, because: **Who will actually take care of the person whose focus in life is shifting?** We need AI specialists, technicians, developers and people who guide companies through transformation. But on the other side of that development, someone is sitting at their kitchen table wondering: **So what happens to me now?**

Perhaps this person does not immediately need another goal, nor necessarily a coach who works with them on a clearly defined problem or a specific change in order to move towards the next goal. Perhaps, first of all, they need someone who walks part of this new path with them. A mentor who accompanies them through this difficult paradigm shift and helps them piece together the entire value system they have learned throughout their life – and to cope with, understand and accept the changes taking place in the world.

A mentor offers support that is more personal and often closer to real life than coaching. Mentors bring their own life and professional experience, provide orientation, share knowledge, open up new perspectives and are also allowed to say: “Look, here is another possibility I can see for you.” A mentor stands beside you, has your back and provides lasting strength.

Perhaps a New Profession Is Emerging Here

Above all, such a mentor could do one thing: broaden someone's perspective. Together, they could explore new professional and personal possibilities, contribute their own experience and knowledge, develop ideas, point out contacts and possible paths, and encourage people to try unconventional models. This could happen locally or online,

through one-to-one conversations as well as in groups or workshops. The central question would no longer necessarily be: Which job is right for you now? But the much bigger one: **What could your life look like from now on?** With or without a job?

Yes, we will have to learn to embrace new ways of giving our lives meaning. Perhaps with a new profession. Perhaps with several jobs. Through self-employment, part-time work, projects or periods without traditional paid employment at all. And perhaps also with the realisation that a fulfilling life does not necessarily need a dream job at its centre. That would represent a significant shift in focus: away from simply searching for a job and towards finding a sustainable, flexible model for life.

This need is not yet visible everywhere. Many people are still holding on to the old system because it continues to work for them. But the first cracks are already appearing. That is why **professions that empower people** could become one of the most important fields of the future alongside AI and robotics.

People will need people when old certainties disappear. This observation is precisely why we need mentors. Trained people who stand up for those sitting anxiously and helplessly on their sofas in the evening. Mentors who want to accompany others through this social and professional transformation. For now, this need is still comparatively small. But it is likely to grow considerably as more and more people realise that the old ideas about work and life planning no longer hold up. There it is again: the switch into a new era.

Because while we are learning what machines are capable of, perhaps we should also start building an entirely different professional field: **people who take care of what machines cannot take care of – the human being.**

The Switch Column by Monica Deters

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