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**Evolve
or
Become
Extinct**

EXCLUSIVE

**Interview By
KENAZ
ADNAN
ALSHABIB**

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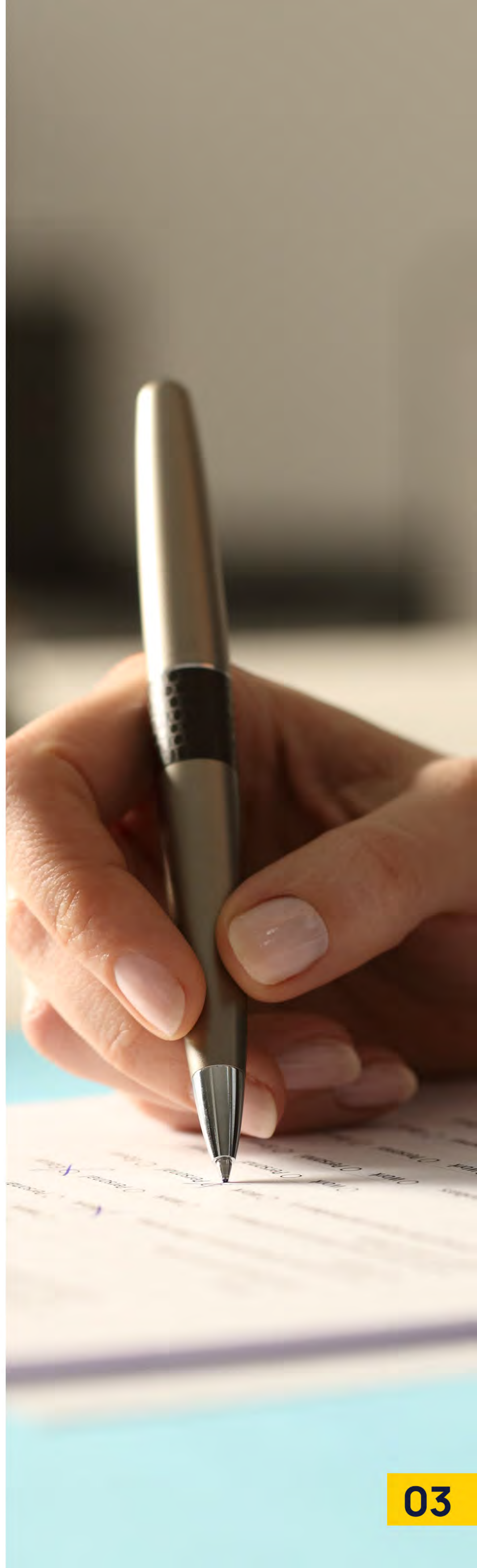
EDITOR'S NOTE

There will never be a return to what we knew as normal. Schools have evolved. Education has evolved. Everyone participating in such systems has seen personal transformation. And they're still changing, after two years of a brutal pandemic, untold economic hardships, political polarization and social unrest. No one understands this more intimately than the teachers, school leaders and students who live through it every day.

Elevating the diverse voices of educators—particularly the perspectives of those traditionally marginalized—is critical for making change. That's especially important at this moment, during what appears to be an inflection point in the history of education.

Each leader defined the new higher education a bit differently, but all recognized that the higher education we deserve cannot be created without technology. In fact, for the first time ever, most leaders spoke of technology not as a separate set of issues but as a driver and enabler of, and occasional risk to, their strategic agenda.

This month's magazine focuses on the way technology is helping to make the higher education we deserves.





EVOLVE OR BECOME EXTINCT

BELLA ABRAMS, JEREMY ANDERSON, TIFFNI DEEB, AND THOMAS TRAPPLER

Technological transformation happens, whether we like it or not, and at an increasingly rapid pace. Effectively managing the complex underlying collection of IT goods and services, and associated integrations can transform institutional operations, enabling greater efficiency and innovation. Accomplishing this requires a high level of coordination and planning by institutional leadership, including the need to integrate technology and its procurement into the associated strategic planning processes. An impediment to digital transformation in higher education is that processes, services, and use of data often have not been designed but have evolved, without structured thinking about efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes. Digital transformation entails optimizing and transforming institutional operations, strategic directions, and value propositions through deep and coordinated shifts in culture, workforce, and technology. Dx initiatives begin with a strategic outcome and entail holistic, coordinated efforts. Rather than improving operational efficiency, introducing data governance and integration, or implementing technical solutions as separate, unrelated projects, Dx initiatives may address them collectively to achieve a particular outcome. Many of today's Dx efforts focus on student outcomes and experiences.

While Dx initiatives help attain strategic outcomes, they also increase institutional capabilities, resulting in greater agility, operational efficiency, and staff knowledge and skills. The institution is thus better positioned for even deeper transformations.



CHALLENGES IN 2022

The increasingly diverse range of different technologies and IT services, and the need to integrate, will continue to present challenges. Additionally challenging is accomplishing the above while also effectively implementing new hybrid learning and work environments stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Institutions may lack the resources to fund transformative efforts. The coming demographic cliff—a steep drop-off in potential first-time full-time freshmen projected to arrive in 2025 due to the decline in the birth rate in the 2008 recession—may further erode enrollment income at US institutions. As the pandemic drags on, its impact on staff members' health compounds the problem. Staff – including leaders – may run out of the ability to reimagine, reinvent, and retool.

While the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation in many ways, some approaches and responses have been necessarily rushed and tactical, resulting in fixes that may not scale or have applicability beyond the pandemic. Institutional leaders will need to create a comprehensive strategic plan with elements that can be prioritized and addressed incrementally to balance limited energy and resources with lasting, meaningful outcomes.



IMPACTS ON CULTURE

Technology changes rapidly, often offering opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Institutional leaders will have to dismantle siloed work in order to achieve institutional excellence. Siloes reflect organizational structure rather than strategic outcomes such as student success or financial health. Processes, guidelines, tools and technologies, and data are often siloed. Shared, strategic outcomes can inspire stakeholders to understand the greater good and the need for establishing common solutions that are equitable, inclusive, and more affordable.

Such adjustments involve change. Change decisions can't be made behind closed doors. They will require dialogue across staff groups and student groups to help all stakeholders understand and agree on goals and feel that they have a hand in choices and timing. Institutional leaders will need to become increasingly comfortable with, and effective at, change agility while also maintaining focus on strategic goals.



HELPING THE INSTITUTIONAL WORKFORCE SUCCEED

Digital transformation requires a new set of skills and competencies across the institutional community. New, needed technology-related skills include strategic sourcing, contract management, supplier relationship management, user experience and design thinking, product management, and enterprise architecture. The entire workforce will need deeper data skills and a greater ability to collaborate and partner. Human resources staff and workforce managers will need to become more effective at workforce planning and talent management. If the institution continues to function as a hybrid office-based and work-from-home organization, all staff will also need to gain skills in managing, communicating, collaborating, and working productively in this hybrid work environment.



NEEDED TECHNOLOGIES AND IT CAPABILITIES

While digital transformation depends on technologies and IT capabilities, success arguably depends more on how technologies are chosen and adopted than on which technologies are chosen and adopted. Technology choices should proceed from, not precede, shared agreement on outcomes and functionality. Academic and administrative leaders understand what they want to achieve, but the most effective technology decisions take an institution-wide, rather than department-specific, perspective. Leaders must invite varied staff to the table: technologists to advise on accessibility, interoperability, security, and sustainability; equity experts to assess fairness and impartiality, and IT strategic sourcing experts to effectively manage competitive selection processes and negotiate the most favorable terms.



TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION

Digital transformation may enable institutions to break the classic "iron triangle" rule that says it is possible to maximize only two of the three desirable outcomes: cost, speed, and quality. Dx efforts often involve systems and data integrations, which can lead to both lower costs and better services and experiences. They will provide a holistic view of students, alumni, employees, resources, and more in ways that can result in beneficial outcomes. New architectures increase access to data and resources, which can offer better insights about institutional products and services and enable faster, more accurate decisions.

These changes lay the groundwork to provide students with a more affordable education as well as the skills and credentials they need to have the work and employment that they desire and to do so at a time that fits their lives.



FROM DIGITAL SCARCITY TO DIGITAL ABUNDANCE

STEVE BURRELL AND TRINA MARMARELLI

The pandemic made it painfully clear that in the United States, digital voids in both rural and urban areas most adversely affect Black, Latino/Latina, and indigenous people, as well as people with disabilities and people experiencing poverty. The digital divide is about more than access to reliable high-speed internet. Students also need equitable access to devices, software, and the skills required to be successful students and, later, to thrive in the workplace.

The same thinking that got us here won't get us there. Higher education leaders must act on a holistic strategy for equitable digital access and must invest in sustainable ways to provide access in order to avoid inadvertently widening the digital divide. Institutional leaders have a pivotal role to play in reimagining what equity means. Leaders will need to make difficult choices; in some cases, return-on-investment may not be the measure of success.

The flood of funding around infrastructure and the COVID-19 pandemic has created tremendous swirl and confusion about broadband initiatives. Ultimately, this situation will sort itself out, but until then, knowing who is investing what and where can be difficult to determine. In higher education, we need to be careful that we're investing money in areas and people where there is real need even if not necessarily a sustaining market with predictable return on investment. Another difficulty is the ongoing uncertainty about the course of the pandemic and its impact on institutional operations and on how to ensure that students have the access they need when they need it. As the pandemic has settled in and claimed another academic year, institutional leaders find themselves having to prepare for a much wider range of circumstances than in the initial phases of the pandemic.

Broadening and sustaining access requires software as well as hardware. Software is increasingly licensed annually using operational funding. Additional funding will be needed to bolster operational budgets during a period of increasingly limited resources. Hard decisions and careful fiscal planning are needed to create sustainable digital abundance. Worse than not addressing this issue may be the need to abandon investments later, leaving stakeholders disenfranchised.



IMPACTS ON CULTURE

Progress on achieving full digital access for students will be held back by existing biases and attitudes about organizational and personal productivity. The idea of working anytime, anywhere has widespread appeal and value, but not all institutional leaders are prepared to adopt it. Similarly, many faculty and academic leaders are entrenched around the idea that certain modalities of teaching and learning are intrinsically better or more effective than others. That must change to serve the "everywhere" learner (and the "anywhere" faculty).

The academic culture of high levels of autonomy for faculty over how they teach their courses, present their information, and engage with their students is in many ways a wonderful thing. But it can also impede achieving fully equitable digital access for students. When faculty are choosing their own technology platforms without considering the broader institutional context, students often have to navigate a convoluted landscape of technology platforms and tools. A shift in the institutional culture toward presenting students with a more streamlined technology toolkit, without compromising pedagogy, could go a long way toward achieving more seamless access for students.



NEEDED TECHNOLOGIES AND IT CAPABILITIES

Additional investments are needed in campus network infrastructure and the highly skilled technical staff to support it. Beyond bandwidth, technologies such as virtual desktops and access to education applications and information independent of place are now a necessity.

Institutions will need IT staff who are able to engage with students to provide them with the technology training and skills that they'll need to be successful.

Technologies such as adaptive learning and augmented reality can remove barriers to learning and open new opportunities for learning, discovery, and experiences. Investments in these technological tools must be matched with investments in people and with rethought processes. Faculty will need to learn about and adapt or adopt new pedagogical methods to make the best use of these technologies. They must be well supported by IT staff who understand not just the technology but also the concepts behind its application to teaching and learning. Collaboration between faculty and staff is also necessary to ensure that digital accessibility is taken into consideration when evaluating and selecting technological tools, so that removing barriers for some students does not inadvertently create new barriers for others.



HELPING THE INSTITUTIONAL WORKFORCE SUCCEED

Implicitly or explicitly, focusing on digital abundance for students puts students, rather than the institution or faculty, at the center of the institution. For that to happen, leaders must focus on creating a student experience that's well thought out, equitable, and cohesive.

Both faculty and staff will need to become more flexible and adaptive in order to respond rapidly to changing circumstances and students' needs. Faculty will need to become adept at remote teaching, learning, collaboration, and advising so that they can confidently revise and improvise in the moment.



TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION

The biggest transformation that institutional stakeholders are seeing now is a much broader collaboration between teaching faculty and the staff who support the curriculum, including academic technologists, instructional designers, and librarians. The most equitable level of access for all happens when faculty and staff are working together to improve the learning experience for students. As a result of this collaboration, faculty understand what other staff at the institution bring to the table, and staff become more involved in the classroom experience, physical or remote, and better understand what that experience is like for students and for faculty.

Increasing access and digital abundance for all students could help differentiate institutions in ways that could increase enrollments. The institutions that can achieve full and equitable digital access for students, often by forging new partnerships and taking prudent risks, will be more likely to survive—and succeed.

Academic Life

Q: Could you please walk us through your academic background and achievements? Your extensive and varied experience can be a source of inspiration for many; please share the highlights and milestones of your professional journey.

My name is Kenaz ALSHABIB, my psychology specialist, this has greatly helped me to create a whole training curriculum based on software and psychology, which I worked on for years until we announced today on social media.

The journey of our academy started two years ago in 2020, where I decided to start building a team of trainers from different nationalities because in my personal opinion the training profession is one of the most important and prestigious occupations in the world so the person who wants to train others has to be a real trainer so I needed to train the trainers (Basic Training Staff of the Academy) 2 years through daily

After ending this trip, I took the decision to open the academy so that it would be strong, universal and credible. Based on a fixed base, starting with the training staff and ending the training curriculum.

We have conducted many free volunteer courses to help others develop their abilities and knowledge of the correct information. This has, of course, led to the fame of the name of the Academy due to the trainees getting the benefit of its educational programs.

We are honored to receive today's accreditation of IAO, because this will certainly increase the value and credibility of the Academy.

Experience

Q: Currently heading the institute, what are some of your long-term and short-term goals for the education system?

Short Term Goals Plan for our Academy has been set up for up to five years now:

- First objective is to check and focus constantly on the training curricula we teach so that trainees always know the right information.
- Created a large team of trainers around the world to spread the science of human development and human resources, as well as to give everyone with a desire to train a chance to become a real trainer.
- Work on obtaining cooperation agreements with other academies in order to standardize our educational standards and be at one level of higher education.
- Are working to create new training materials that have never been taught before.

Long-term goal plan for our Academy has been set up to ten years from now:

- The opening of an Arab Parliament at the Middle East level, our Academy will preside over this Parliament in order to agree on universal educational standards and unify these standards among members of the Parliament.
- Innovate new learning methods in order to reach students' needs quickly and simply.
- Educational book costs and publish them for the continuity of our educational message anytime, anywhere.
- Innovation of new applications is of interest to students in their distance education.

We have a lot of goals, but we just mentioned what is important right now.

Interest & Opinions

Q: Recently, there have been many reports and trends of students opting for alternate methods of education such as distance learning, diplomas, short-courses, etc. instead of traditional degrees. What's your view on this?

I think this is also very good because the ultimate goal of the student is to learn, today the CV is the most important property of the individual. It expresses it directly to that distance education and training courses have greatly helped individuals to fill their CVs with achievements and useful certificates that enable them to open their own enterprise or get a prestigious job.

It also helped to fact

Q: Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions for IAO Accreditor. Do you have any parting words of wisdom for educationists and students?

The wisdom I want to mention

(Love yourself until it develops)

Because human beings, if they don't like themselves, it's hard for them to realize themselves.

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