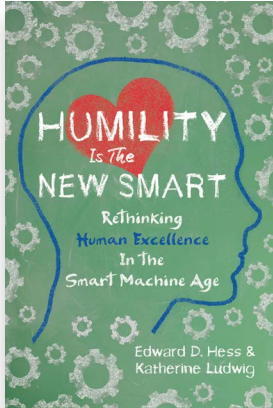


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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## Humility is the New Smart

### THE NUTSHELL

Portfolio/Penguin 2015

### Why You Should Read This Book

Society is on the leading edge of a technology tsunami. We call this next big step the Smart Machine Age, or SMA. The SMA has the potential to be as disruptive and transformative for us as the Agricultural Age and Industrial Revolution were for our ancestors. The best research to date indicates a high probability that technology will replace 47 percent of US jobs or displace as many as eighty million US workers within the next ten to twenty years.

### The Smart Machine Age: A New Game Requires New Rules

Humans can no longer add value by merely accumulating or analyzing knowledge. To be marketable and stay relevant in the SMA, humans will need to excel at the kinds of jobs and skills that either complement technology or that technology cannot do well—at least not yet. That list includes critical thinking, innovative thinking, creativity, and high emotional engagement with others that fosters relationship building and collaboration. Collectively we refer to those as the SMA Skills.

# Humility is the New Smart

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## **NewSmart: A New Definition of “Smart”**

To change our mental model for the SMA, we first need to accept a quality-based definition of “being smart”—a NewSmart—that we define as excelling at the highest level of thinking, learning, and emotionally engaging with others that one is capable of doing. Your future success will depend on the quality of your thinking and your abilities to connect and emotionally engage with other people.

## **Humility: The Gateway to Human Excellence in the SMA**

We define Humility as a mindset about oneself that is open-minded, self-accurate, and “not all about me,” and that enables one to embrace the world as it “is” in the pursuit of human excellence. That doesn’t mean thinking less of yourself, but it does mean thinking about yourself less. Humility is the gateway to human excellence in the SMA.

## **NEWSMART BEHAVIORS**

Beliefs drive behaviors, and we believe that accepting the NewSmart definitions and the Humility mindset will enable you to embrace the NewSmart Behaviors that underlie the SMA Skills.

### **Quieting Ego**

To quiet our ego is to perceive others and the world without filtering everything through a self-focused lens and to tamp down on negative or self-protective “inner talk” that is driven consciously or subconsciously by our fears and insecurities. Quieting Ego is a way of practicing and operationalizing Humility. We have found that the most effective way to quiet our ego is through practicing mindfulness.

### **Managing Self: Thinking and Emotions**

Managing Self—our emotions and thinking—aids us in engaging in the higher-level thinking and behavior required by SMA Skills. It’s necessary to remain open-minded and be willing to test our beliefs and modify our points of view if presented with better data. It’s also how we’re able to overcome our fear of mistakes in order to take ownership of them and learn from them, and it helps us more effectively relate to and collaborate with others. This is very important because so much of the value-added work humans will do in the SMA will be done in small teams.

### **Reflective Listening**

Reflective listening is important because it underlies all the SMA Skills. Your thinking and learning are limited by cognitive biases, emotional defensiveness, ego and fear. You need, then, to truly listen to others to open your mind, push past your biases and mental models, and mitigate self-absorption in order to collaborate and build better relationships.

# Humility is the New Smart

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## **Otherness: Emotionally Connecting and Relating to Others**

By now, we hope that you understand how important it is to seek the help of others to thrive in the SMA. We need others because we can't think, innovate, or relate at our best alone. To relate to other people you first have to make a connection with them. It is by building a relationship over time that you build trust, and when you have caring trust, you have set the stage for the highest level of human engagement.

## **Your NewSmart Behaviors Assessment Tool**

When you assess your strengths and weaknesses with respect to the four NewSmart Behaviors, you may find you have lots of areas that need improvement. Striving to reach your highest potential is a never-ending process that can be a meaningful learning journey in itself.

## **LEADING A NEWSMART ORGANIZATION**

Creating the kind of work environment most conducive to humans excelling at the four SMA Skills and reaching their highest potential in the SMA requires an organizational system in which the structure, culture, and processes embrace and encourage the NewSmart and Humility mental model and NewSmart Behaviors. We believe that people-centricity and high employee engagement are necessary to take an organization to the highest levels of human excellence.

## **Our Invitation to You**

All of us can be served by a new mental model and the behaviors that enable the highest levels of human thinking, learning, emotionally engaging with others, and making meaning together as we all try to navigate a volatile new world that is likely to be upon us within the decade.