



WORKPLACE TRENDS FOR 2025

HOW THE FUTURE OF WORK HAS
CHANGED SINCE **COVID-19**

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic of 2020 has fundamentally shifted how we work, accelerating trends that were shaping our companies and creating lasting changes for the workplace of the future.

Prior to 2020, companies were working to address an accelerating pace of change in just about every facet of business, from the globalization of markets to increased speed of technology, diversity of competition, changing customer demands, and shifting employee requirements.

Overnight, what we thought we understood about the workplace was turned on upside down. While we've worked through the chaos, early indicators show that change is just getting started.



*WE MUST SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY
TO PREPARE NOW*

WORKPLACE TRENDS FOR 2025



Companies who succeed in the future will be those who build a culture of innovation & agility.



LOCAL GLOBALIZATION



OMNIPRESENT WORKFORCE



ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSE



MANAGEMENT RESKILL



REPUTATION OVER REVENUE



CAREER PATHING RESHAPED



ANALYTIC CAPACITY



WHOLE PERSON EMPLOYMENT



DIVERSIFIED POWER



INNOVATION & AGILITY



LOCAL GLOBALIZATION

While globalization connections continue to be important, companies have slowed expanding their footprints around the world. They are looking more toward partnerships and collaborations than expansion, while the pandemic has recentered companies on their local market.



- What do local customers need?
- What do local employees expect?
- How do we positively contribute to the local community?

Over the next few years, we will see this focus on local over global continue, as each industry, ecosystem and community work to determine the best path forward into a new way of working.

“Technology will accelerate companies’ ability to get closer to their markets, to understand the needs and wants of their customers, partners and employees.”





ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSE

The pandemic accelerated to trend of industry ecosystems collapsing and changing from their once, relatively steady state.

Given the shift to smaller, leaner, and more agile employee groups working with large amounts of data, companies will find value in partnering closely with competitors to deliver a unique, yet superior product or service.



TOYOTA | Uber

Toyota, for example, could see Uber as a competitor in the development of the self-driving car. They have partnered to bring the best of both companies to the market and develop an electric, driverless shuttle that will support companies like Amazon, Pizza Hut and more.



America's pharmaceutical companies are partnering in unprecedented ways, at an unprecedented speed, to develop therapies and vaccines in response to COVID-19. At the same time, those companies continue to compete fiercely in other pharmaceutical arenas.





REPUTATION OVER REVENUE

Over the past several years, we have seen reputation growing in importance as a leading indicator sales, revenue and profitability. The global pandemic and social movement of 2020 have accelerated the pace of that change, with more and more companies realizing the importance of proactively managing their reputation.



VALUES STATEMENT



PAPRIKA SAUCE



Unilever

FAIR & LOVELY

Employees, customers and investors want social responsibility, environmental accountability and increasingly social activism before they associate with a company. With the increase in social media use, online activism and a growing realization in the power of an individual's voice, companies who proactively manage their reputations will be best positioned for the future.

*"76% of CEOs said they had a personal responsibility to be a leader for change on societal issues."
(KPMG 2020 CEO outlook)*



ANALYTIC CAPACITY

In 2020, every industry was challenged to quickly and efficiently gather, analyze and make sense of disparate data from a range of sources.

While this trend has been developing, it has been accelerated and companies in industries who have felt isolated from the need for internal analytic capacity were revealed.

Companies who quickly gather information, test new ideas, track effect, learn from failures and generalize successes will shorten scalability curves and increase customer intimacy. Analytic capacity will be a differentiator across industries broadly in the future.



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77% of CEOs say they're worried they won't have the inhouse creativity needed to face future disruptions. (paycor)

Data scientists have been the fastest growing in demand & salaries in the last 2 years.

(<https://insights.dice.com/2020/02/13/fastest-growing-tech-occupations-data-scientist-engineer/>)





DIVERSIFIED POWER

With the majority of office employees working remotely, and expected to continue working remotely, at least part of the time, the questions that used to indicate power in the organization no longer matter.

- Do you share a coffee pot, or cafeteria, with key leaders?
- Do you have a cubicle or an office with a door?
- How close to the executive floor do you work?



Virtual work, coupled with the social movement of 2020, have leveled the playing field. Employees closest to the customer, who understand how to interpret customer data and needs, have been elevated in importance. The need for sharp, fast insight to be agile and adjust to the ever-changing situation around you, has created a need for companies to reduce layers of unnecessary people who can create delays, mis-characterize the data or worse spin it to their own narrative.



*EMPLOYEES ARE ASKING
FOR MORE POWER —
AND COMPANIES ARE
SEEING THE VALUE IN
GIVING IT TO THEM*





OMNIPRESENT WORKFORCE



Employees who leverage technology can work anywhere, anytime, reducing their reliance on any one company and increasing the competition for their skills.

Further, they've proven they can do it effectively in 2020. The once small group of early adopter employees who were curious about virtual work, and willing to test it out has now grown into a population of employees who know they can do it successfully. Companies have been propelled 5 years in the future and need to directly address employee desires to work in more flexible ways.

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PRE-COVID 19

Remote workers comprise 18% of U.S. workforce, a figure projected to rise to 30% by 2025. (10)

POST-COVID 19

94% organizations utilize remote workers, with 62% believing they will be even more remote. (Upwork)

60% respondents want some flexibility in where and / or when they work in the future. (BCG)



MANAGEMENT RESKILL

For decades we have witnessed the unproductive practice of companies promoting their best and brightest technicians into management roles. While the practice is unproductive on many levels, it has been slow to evolve — at least until 2020.

In many cases, 2020 has forced managers into the future. Overnight, they took on a role of leading diverse, remote teams across a range of priorities. As we continue into the future, the manager's role will continue to look different with less formal power (*see Diversified Power*) and a greater need to support a diverse, fluid, intertwined group of employees working on discrete projects in rapid succession (*see Omnipresent Workforce*). Companies who adjust and reskill their managers will lead the pack.

As Hay states, "They (leaders) will need to be tuned to their employees' needs... a single rallying cry to the workforce will no longer suffice." (14)

"In the future, companies will need to identify and staff superstars into their mission critical roles — changing the path of career development and leaving management work to 'expert managers'." (3)



CAREER PATHING RESHAPED

For many employees, development and advancement in their career will require learning new skills, shifting roles and learning to work with machines. People development and engagement will take place before, during and after employment.

Companies who see talent as the greatest risk to growth, increased from 2% in 2019 to 21% in August 2020 (KPMG CEO outlook).

Just in HR alone, HR executives expect HR roles to fundamentally change (Source: Paycor: The Future of HR 2020 Report).

- 47% expect HR to become more strategic and more data-driven
- 82% expect soft skills to become more important



70% of executives expect to use more temporary workers and contractors within 2 years. (Mckinsey)

Simultaneously, shifts in employee demands and desires foreshadow that employees will be more comfortable demanding that they continue to work where and how they get most satisfaction, as money, prestige and title will no longer be essential factors in viewing individual self-worth. Thus, companies will need to attract, train and retain a diverse, loose network of highly skilled, highly adaptable employees, contractors and alumni with strong interpersonal and analytical skills.





WHOLE PERSON EMPLOYMENT

Just as healthcare has become more patient-centric, the workplace is becoming more employee-centric.

PRE-COVID 19

85% of respondents believed work and life will become enmeshed by 2030. (11)

POST-COVID 19

Work-life balance, and managing the home environment remain challenges for employees. (Aspirant)

2020 caused many employees to rethink how, and why they work. The pandemic and social movement amplified a longing by many employees to find greater balance (in many cases working from home forced this reflection).

Employees want to work on exciting and rewarding projects, choosing happiness over money. [11] Soft factors like recognition, self development, self direction, values-driven engagement and work-life balance take precedence over pay and promotion. [14]





INNOVATION & AGILITY

The speed of change requires us to not only meet it quickly but to be in a perpetual state of agility or 'readiness for change'. We learned that lesson in 2020, in the importance of being able to pivot how we work overnight and in the ability to remain focused and productive as heightened uncertainty swirls around us.

Technology will continue to drive innovation. In a recent survey, CEOs revealed they are choosing to accelerate technology related initiatives post COVID (Source: mckinsey).

- 85% accelerating Digitization efforts
- 67% accelerating automation & AI projects
- 71% accelerating climate change initiatives



Companies who succeed in the future will be those who build a culture of innovation & agility — where employees regardless of function or department test and experiment with new ideas, continuously seeking a better, more efficient way.

2 out of 3 CEOs believe agility is the new business currency. (Upwork)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

The issues of today are loud and unyielding, however, it's important to carve out time to plan for the future. As the uncertainty of the pandemic carries on, employees are becoming increasingly concerned about what the future holds for them. They are seeking clarity on a path forward, they are ready to learn new skills and excited about the possibilities of new ways of working.



The longer employees stay in the dark — unclear of the future and unable to control their roles in it — the more likely top performers look for more prosperous, stable alternatives.

Gather your leadership team, develop a plan for building internal capability and a roadmap for future success.

THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO TOMORROW

1

Strengthen your leader team's transformation leadership skills

2

Build a culture of agility across the organization to support future shifts

3

Develop a roadmap to shift HR process and management system of support the future of work

ASPIRANT CAN HELP YOU



LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- 3-factor Transformational Leadership capability assessment
- Modular, customized leadership training & coaching
- Capability development progress scorecard

CULTURE OF AGILITY

- Culture assessment
- 8 element culture building plan
- Culture listening strategy & pulse surveys

OE ROADMAP

- Holistic OE assessment
- Visibility to actions and progress across all OE elements
- Interactive OE dashboard for progress tracking and planning

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ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



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If you would like to learn more about Aspirant's expertise in organizational effectiveness that improves workplace performance and business results, visit us on the web at www.aspirant.com/oe-resources.

ABOUT ASPIRANT

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