

HRD

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*THE KEYS TO THE RETENTION OF
SHIFT-BASED 'DESKLESS' WORKERS*

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THE GREAT WORK TRANSITION

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TACKLING ATTRITION

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HYBRID/FLEX THE PROS & CONS

Duty of care
Previous models that used to support employee wellbeing are outdated and need to continually evolve, placing wellbeing at the core

Recalibration
Manage bias, think integratively and build complex relational skills

Tightrope
Achieving successful hybrid working requires ongoing conversation within the workplace

Peacocks
A busy workplace was the traditional environment in which to learn discipline, respect and to build bonds

TACKLING ATTRITION

Symptomatic departure
People are often promoted because of performance, not their ability to manage

Captivating
As budgets tightens, teams are reduced, workload rises, work-life balance is affected and stress levels increase, leading to lower job satisfaction

Fractures
Deny someone the opportunity to vent and process their emotions and thoughts

Mind over matter
More than 19 million Americans have resigned since April 2021. We have arguably been working towards a culture of burnout for years

TO THE POINT

Four billion reasons
Women are unsure about when to ask for help and most start the journey into menopause totally unsupported

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Who is going where at the top of the HR profession?

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OUT OF THE FUG OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, INTO A BROILING CAULDRON OF POLITICAL TURMOIL, FOLLOWED BY A PLUNGE INTO AN ECONOMIC ICE BATH. TO TOP IT ALL, UNPRECEDENTED, DYNAMIC CHANGES TO WORKFORCE OPERATIONS AND THE THREAT OF SLASHED BUDGETS ACROSS ESSENTIAL CRITERIA.



JASON SPILLER, EDITOR

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Still, right skills at the right time are demanded - amongst many other things - and this will require some pivoting, adapting, developing creative approaches, collaborating and partnering with business leaders across the organisation. This is not just about productivity through efficiency, it's about finding sustainable balance that keeps employees well, happy and engaged. Resilience, agility and creativity are vital skills, as critical staffing decisions are made and keeping essential talent and skills close will be even harder, going forward. In so many respects, this is not a blunt call to arms, it is essentially about pragmatism, understanding and managing expectation, to ameliorate the added pressures that "doing more with less" presents.

That hybrid working is some panacea to work/life balance, health and wellbeing - at the same time as achieving unprecedented levels of productivity - is bordering on fantasy for the majority. For a few businesses and industries - in which hybrid was and is the de facto way of operating - it really is business as usual, with a transient, project-based workforce that comes and goes, as and when required. For the majority, stuck with more rigid and traditional business norms and frameworks, muscle memory keeps inflexing and exposing old traits - such as presenteeism and burnout - whilst kicking against the direction of travel towards essential real change. This is causing stress, unrest, is impacting on health and absenteeism and causing unintended inequality across the workforce.

Since the pandemic, statistics from many sources are drawing similar conclusions, that employees are leaving the workforce or switching

jobs in great numbers. A typical example is a Microsoft survey of more than 30,000 global workers, which showed that 41 percent were considering quitting or changing professions this year. In the US alone, April saw more than four million people quit their jobs - according to a summary from the Department of Labor - the biggest spike on record. The phenomenon has even been encapsulated by the now clichéd label the "Great Resignation". But as has been often said, the pandemic has presented an opportunity to rewrite the world of work away from the hot mess of stress, burnout, absenteeism and uncontrollable attrition.

Right now, interpretation, approach and intention are fundamental to the outcome of this time of transition and historic catalyst, that no business can ignore. For years, many employers misread the room and either didn't believe or failed to act upon their own statistics, that intense focus on productivity and profits masked an inexorable rise in workplace stress and burnout, leading to an exhausted workforce, driving a wedge between employees and employers. In short, trust broke down and that is why the essential elements of the future of leadership and the basis of organisational values are seen as; trust, transparency, authenticity and empathy, as if those were not critical components in bygone times.

LEGAL UPDATES

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THE WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AND REACT TO THE FAST CHANGING WORLD OF WORK. HERE IS THE LATEST ROUND UP OF VERDICTS FROM THE COURT, PLUS NEW AND ADAPTED LEGISLATION.

COURT CASE REPORT

In Mrs R Bonney v Medway NHS Foundation Trust and Mr D McLaren
a hospital trust wrongfully ousted an under-pressure project manager from her role after implying she was incompetent and "not up to the challenge". Employment tribunal judge Daniel Dyal ruled Medway NHS Foundation Trust constructively dismissed Rosemary Bonney and that former bosses gave "factually untrue" evidence. Rosemary Bonney joined Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham in April 2019 as a project manager, initially in acute

medicine. At this time the trust had just come out of special measures but was still operating in a state of "general chaos" and "partial dysfunction", the tribunal heard. This led to mistakes and confusion in the role that Mrs Bonney was told she was appointed to and asked to perform.

Her claim for constructive wrongful dismissal against former bosses was upheld at a hearing held in London last month but separate claims for race discrimination and a redundancy payment were dismissed. The trust has since accepted the findings and apologised to Mrs Bonney.

It comes after a merry-go-round of roles were initially offered to the claimant at interview who joined the hospital on April 15, 2019. In her evidence to the tribunal, Mrs Bonney said she was relaxed about which role she undertook but was more pleased to be working in acute medicine rather than therapies and older persons (TOPs) as it would help her career development. But in September 2019 a decision was taken to swap her with another staff member in the TOPs team. The tribunal found no evidence of performance issues to warrant the criticism. Both parties will seek to remedy.

EMPLOYMENT LAW

FLEXIBLE WORKING CONSULTATION - GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The Government has published its response to last year's consultation on updating flexible working laws. Here is a summary of its response: The right to request flexible working will become a Day One right (it is currently only available to employees with 26 weeks' continuity). The Government emphasises in its response that this remains a right to request, not a right to have flexible working. Employees will be allowed to make two requests (previously one request) within a 12-month period and the response time for employers will reduce to two months (previously three months). There will be a new duty to discuss alternatives to the request (so that if the employer intends to reject the request,

it must discuss whether there are alternative forms of flexible working available).

It is not clear whether this will be a statutory requirement giving rise to a cause of action, or just soft guidance. The procedure for requesting flexible working will be simplified by removing the requirement for employees to set out how the effects of their flexible working request might impact upon the employer. The consultation response is silent on removing other aspects of the red tape surrounding requests, for example making sure the application is dated and expressly stating that a request was made under the flexible working legislation. There will be no change to the list of eight reasons the employer has to refuse a request for flexible working.

LEGAL DIARY

- *March 2023:* Gender pay gap reporting deadlines need to be met by those organisations with a headcount of 250 or more employees.
- *March 2023:* The Vento Bands: The Presidents of the Employment Tribunals in England & Wales and Scotland are due to conduct the annual re-evaluation of the Vento bands.
- *April 2023:* The National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage: The new rates will be announced in the Autumn Budget and will come into force on the 1st April 2023.
- *April 2023:* Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Paternity Pay, Shared Parental Pay, Adoption Pay, Maternity Allowance, and Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay.



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TÜNDE TÓTH GROUP HR DIRECTOR MET GROUP

INTERVIEW BY JASON SPILLER
& PHOTOGRAPHY BY REMO HAJNI

IN A TUMULTUOUS WORLD, ALL SECTORS ARE UNDER PRESSURE. BUT FOR THE ENERGY INDUSTRY, THE IMPACTS ARE UNPRECEDENTED. EUROPE IN THE GRIP OF WAR SERVES TO HIGHLIGHT OUR INSATIABLE NEED FOR FOSSIL FUELS AND WITH SIGNS OF GLOBAL WARMING IRREFUTABLE AND MANIFEST, THE PRESSURE IS ON PLAYERS LIKE MET GROUP, TO BOTH DELIVER ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES NOW AND DELIVER A CLEAN NEW DAWN.

"WE CREATED A TRULY MERITORIOUS SCHEME WHICH BRINGS OUR TOP PERFORMING EMPLOYEES INTO THE OWNERSHIP OF THE GROUP"

TÜNDE, TAKE US BACK TO YOUR EARLY LIFE AND HOW YOU FOUND THE PATH TO A CAREER IN HR? I studied for my masters at Corvinus University of Budapest, the leading university in Hungary for Economics, Management and Social Sciences. I chose to major in management and organisation, because I wanted to keep my studies as broad as possible and we focused on financial controlling, business strategy and HR, which I started to get very interested in. Parallel to the main masters degree, I also did a second degree, the CEMS Masters in International Management and part of this involved placements at the world's leading business schools, which in my case was a semester spent at the University of Cologne in Germany. An element of this involved collaborating on real business projects with top tier companies and for me, this was with

McKinsey. A graduation requirement was also to complete an internship abroad. I then applied to the German consumer goods company, Henkel, for an HR internship, as I knew of Henkel from my high school days, as I used to work in the factory in Hungary as a summer job. I was selected and this was my first HR job in Düsseldorf in their headquarters in the Global Learning and Development Department. This experience kindled my passion for HR, I loved it and I have stayed in HR ever since. Shortly before I graduated, there was a job fair at my university in Budapest and although I was not looking for a job, by chance, I recognised a friend of mine and I didn't even look at which company he was working for. I went over to say "hello" and he was representing British American Tobacco (BAT). He told me about its HR management trainee programme and

before I knew it, I was in the middle of its selection process. I was quickly invited to the assessment center for a very challenging and long day and I genuinely didn't feel that I performed that well and so was really surprised that at the end I received a job offer. So I joined BAT and embarked on a whirlwind of rotations in recruitment, employee engagement, training and development. Then after I finished the programme, I was offered a business partner role.

TELL US WHAT BAT THE ORGANISATION WAS LIKE, IN TERMS OF ITS CULTURE, THE PEOPLE AND THE LEADERSHIP. It was a very supportive culture in which HR held a very important place. The nature of the industry provides HR challenges and, in some ways, that made BAT a great school to learn the profession, because you have to be extremely creative, innovative

and attentive to attract, engage and retain employees. It was a great grounding for me as BAT had state-of-the-art HR practices and was very international, with a presence in close to 200 countries. I always felt there would be extremely good development and career opportunities worldwide and this proved to be true as in 2012, I had an opportunity to move to BAT's global hub, its headquarters in London. I worked there as a global marketing talent manager on a short-term assignment that also involved working with colleagues from all over the world, starting from Australia then Japan and onto Brazil. This eventually led to my first appointment as an HR Director, after I was seconded to Serbia's capital Belgrade - a country that I didn't know much about - but accepting the assignment turned out to be one of my best decisions. Initially I was heading the HR department for Serbia and Montenegro and then my role extended to Bulgaria, to support the cluster merger process of the units in these three countries.

THAT MUST HAVE BEEN AN ABSOLUTELY HUGE PROJECT. Yes, it was. But my overriding memory was that there was this genuine desire in the teams to join together and achieve better business results together. Directly after this, I had the opportunity to move to Switzerland to lead the HR activities of the global travel retail - duty free business - of BAT headquartered, at that time, in Zug, Switzerland. But with employees in ten different locations worldwide, from Chile to South Africa, the workforce that I had HR responsibility for was so internationally diverse, with 35 nationalities represented. During this time, one of the key tasks in my tenure was to act as the HR support for moving the business from Switzerland to the UK and it was exactly this time when I was approached by the energy company MET. It was at the end of 2016 and what interested me was the incredible growth story and the people behind this growth. I joined the company six years ago as Group HR Director and today, MET is now one of the top 20 largest companies by revenue in Switzerland.

WHAT REALLY INSPIRED YOU TO BE A PART OF THIS ORGANISATION - AND YOUR EARLY EXPERIENCES. I found here a great team and an inspirational leader, that really valued people as their foremost asset. I was particularly impressed by the smartness of the people, many of whom have grown internally and others had come from top-notch consulting firms like BCG or from the big energy players like GE or Shell. MET was founded in 2007, in Hungary and was a carve-out from MOL Group. Originally, the company's main business activity was

"PART OF OUR STRATEGY IS TO NURTURE YOUNG TALENTS THROUGH A TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, SO OUR WORKFORCE CAN GROW INTERNALLY, PUTTING YOUNG TALENT INTO MEANINGFUL ROLES"

natural gas wholesale and trading, which has been extended over the years and now it is an integrated energy company, with activities in power and with focus too on multi-commodity wholesale, trading and sales, as well as energy infrastructure and industrial assets, with a particular focus on green energy production. Ambitious international growth plans existed already at the time of the foundation and, in order to realise them, the whole business was relocated in 2011 to Switzerland, due to its central location for commodity trading hubs, its financial, regulatory and political stability and its access to an international talent pool. I thought I was working in a fast-paced environment in consumer goods industry, but the tempo at MET was even higher. The dynamism of the business - especially in energy trading and sales - is frenetic and with the energy transition happening now, this fast pace is set to continue. But what also inspired me is that here, I could set up

processes and systems from scratch. It requires a lot of hard work, but at the end it is very rewarding when you see that you create something, you launch a new system, or a new process and it's working and supporting the business the best way possible and you know you have made a real difference.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WERE YOUR KEY OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES? The first and foremost requirement for the CEO, Benjamin Lakatos - who is also the founder and today the majority owner of the company - was to recruit a strong international management team. MET really is an HR success story and part of our strategy is to nurture young talents through a talent development programme, so our workforce can grow internally, putting young talent into meaningful roles at a very early stage of their career. For example, we already have a country CEO who is a former graduate of the programme. Another key area of focus for me was to help with the HR aspects of the management buyout in 2018. As a result of this process, our CEO and the management became the majority owner of the Group. It's a reflection of the value that MET sees in its people and giving them a meaningful stake in everything they do. I was also tasked with creating an employee share programme, with the aims to increase the key employee ownership stake at the company - to really align their interest with the Group's long-term objectives - and to reward them both their performance and their long-term loyalty to the company. We created a truly meritorious scheme which brings our top performing employees into the ownership of the Group. It's a powerful tool to motivate our colleagues to perform at their very best, because if they can become part of it, they can directly benefit from the growth of the Group. We now have selected managers and key employees from the majority of the 13 countries in which we operate, participating in the programme and are now part of our ownership structure. Even our youngest colleagues can join the programme if they show that they can significantly contribute to the business results.

Looking at our compensation schemes more broadly, besides the launch of our employee share programme, I also designed and implemented a new annual bonus system. When I joined MET, the annual bonus distribution was on a discretionary basis, but now - especially as the company has grown so incredibly - we have constructed a scheme that works across all of our four different business divisions and all the countries, based on the financial performance of the entity and the individual performance. This is more complex than it may seem, as our units are vastly different in business activities, focus, skillsets, cultures and outputs. For example, the skills and type of contributions of our people who work on the energy trading floor, are very different to the skills and contributions of those colleagues who work in power plants, in a gas storage or in our fast-growing green assets (renewables) division. Importantly, our asset divisions require more engineers, with wholly different skillsets to our traders. Aside from bonus and incentive schemes to address these differences, we also need to keep our focus on attracting the world's best business school graduates as well as engineers and, of course, there is huge competition on the market for this talent. With many energy companies switching to green energy, the external talent pool is quite limited in renewables. Of course, we're still focused on recruiting from the market, but we are increasing the focus on developing people internally, to upskill their capability, so that they can manage the growth of the green assets division.

GIVE US AN IDEA OF WHAT HAPPENED AT MET GROUP WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT?

We always say that at MET, when a crisis hits, we come out stronger - we call ourselves an "anti-fragile organisation" - and this was as true during COVID as it is now with the energy crisis. During the pandemic, our people felt a huge responsibility to overcome the challenges that it threw at them and teams, in many ways, worked even better together. We supported employees in many ways and I recall at the beginning, it was the real basics such as shortage of masks and gloves

and we sent packages to everyone's home. We called it a MET care package and along with masks and gloves, there were also vitamins and disinfectant. We also continued to provide online training opportunities as well, introduced so-called "METED" sessions - which were like TED talks - hosted by internal and external speakers, to support and inspire people. We also gave access to LinkedIn Learning to our employees, who could benefit from reaching several thousands of state-of-the art and relevant courses anytime and from anywhere, tailor-made to their learning needs.

"WHEN A CRISIS HITS, WE COME OUT STRONGER - WE CALL OURSELVES AN "ANTI-FRAGILE ORGANISATION" - AND THIS WAS AS TRUE DURING COVID AS IT IS NOW WITH THE ENERGY CRISIS"

In fact, LinkedIn recognised our efforts and awarded us with the LinkedIn Talent Award, as one of the top three companies in the Best Culture of Learning category in Switzerland. We even introduced a bespoke and fun online team-building activity, a gamification solution, which used methods similar to "escape rooms" to increase engagement! In our case the "escape room" location was one of our power plants and colleagues had to solve in virtual teams different exercises together which fostered their creativity and strengthened bonds among them. We also had yoga classes, workout classes online, regular CEO communications and we moved our Talent Development Programme online and organised its development center and graduation ceremony online. All in all, it was an experience it made us innovative and adaptable. Nevertheless, we're a company with a very personable culture and we always kept a focus on coming back to

our offices - whenever it was possible or safe - in order to meet in person for business and team building activities. We very much believe in the power of personal touch and exchanges and see value in bringing people together. So we recently massively upgraded our offices in our major sites - like the Swiss headquarters or the Hungarian and Romanian offices - to provide a modern and energising working environment.

THE PANDEMIC SHONE A LIGHT ON A LOT OF THINGS THAT WERE WRONG WITH THE WORLD OF WORK. HOW DO WE USE THAT INFORMATION TO MAKE SURE THAT WE'RE THE ARCHITECTS OF A MUCH BETTER TOMORROW?

I think the pandemic has had a different impact on each individual - some thrived working from home and some did not - it so depended on the family situation or other personal circumstances. But we really saw a big boost once we were out of lockdown and able to meet again. However, what definitely changed was that it all showed remote work was possible and this is something that we have taken forward from the pandemic and included it in the "new normal". We introduced a Remote Work Guideline and part of that was providing opportunities for full, partial or ad-hoc remote work, depending on each employee and line manager needs. We believe that it can help to organise work for certain employees more efficiently and harmonise work and private life needs in a better way. As a result, we've seen that it increases employee wellbeing and satisfaction. To support this, we have also raised the awareness of line managers, who now have an even bigger responsibility, to manage remote teams - or partially remote teams - whilst retaining that feeling of being "one team", mindful that without parity and voice disengagement and disconnect is never far behind.

DO YOU FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THIS MOVE TOWARDS A HYBRID AND FLEXIBLE WAY OF WORKING?

I see that it is more an individual dialogue with each employee, because every person has a different life, a different background and even different working style. That's why it's so key for



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line managers to have open-minds and the capacity to listen and know what degree they can be flexible. We still need some guidelines on remote work and a need to retain quality and productivity, but overall, I do feel positive about it. But we need to be cognisant of the current labour market situation. Despite challenging political and market circumstances, the unemployment rate is still low in most European countries. So you need to have this dialogue and understanding of people's needs, in order to be able to keep them engaged and retain them.

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE ON MET GROUP AND THE WIDER ENERGY MARKET? This presents a key challenge to our business, with record-high energy prices and volatility. In January 2020, the gas price at the Dutch TTF - which is the main gas stock exchange in Europe - was €3 per MWh. In August 2022, it was €340 per MWh and three months later (end of November) it was €120 per MWh. This volatility is extremely difficult to manage, for everyone - not only for the energy traders and companies - but also for respective governments. This impacts on household winter energy bills of course, but for us, the number one priority at the moment is to manage this volatility in pricing and the related credit risk and financing needs, in order to manage the huge insecurity of supply during this war. For HR, of course, we need to understand what our people are going through and try to support them the best way possible. Also, this crisis is accelerating the energy transition, so investment in renewables is exponentially growing. In HR, for example, we had to recruit many new people to the Green Asset Division and deploy a dedicated HR manager for the division.

FINDING THE RIGHT TALENT AND SKILLS IS EVEN MORE CHALLENGING IN YOUR INDUSTRY, HOW ARE YOU OVERCOMING THIS? Two years ago, we did not yet have the scale in the renewable segment or the reputation - we were not yet known in this field - and of course we were widely known as a gas and power trading

company. Because of that, it was difficult to recruit the first, senior renewables managers, because there were so many other alternatives for experts in this area and a shortage of highly qualified leaders. But now we have a renewables CEO on board, we are winning more projects, the industry has started to take notice of us as a serious player in the renewables field and our reputation is continuing to grow. In order to ensure that we have the talent pipeline we need, we are partnering up with universities and focusing on graduate recruitment. We are a global corporate partner of the CEMS Master in International Management programme

"THERE ARE MORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS IN YOUNGER GENERATION AND, AS THEIR REPRESENTATION INCREASES IN GLOBAL POLITICS, MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY-ORIENTED DECISIONS WILL TRIGGER SIGNIFICANT CHANGES"

and participating in various activities with the students in our focus universities, such as the University of St Gallen in Switzerland, Bocconi University in Italy or the Corvinus University of Budapest. We attend job fairs and rotation dinners, offering business project opportunities, skill seminars and we are able to select the best ones for our internships and entry-level positions.

Through our internal Talent Development Programme, we invest in the professional and leadership development of our selected colleagues, with the aim that they can fuel our leadership pipeline and that within a few years after their graduation, they can take over business critical and senior management roles. During the

one-year-programme, we provide them several training sessions, internal and external coaching, exposure to different functions and areas to the company, exposure to top management and a chance to work on an international project to build intercultural and managerial skills. When they complete their programme, our graduates are automatically brought in as shareholders and we take steps to proactively help them drive their careers even after that.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE, IN TERMS OF GREEN FUELS AND INITIATIVES AND WHAT IS MET GROUP WORKING TOWARDS? With the recent changes in the world, the green transition is accelerating, but it will take time and I think that we still need transitional energy sources. That's why at MET we have a dedicated division - our Flexibility Asset Unit - to bridge to this new green world. The amount of electricity generated by renewable energy producers is expected to increase in the future, however in order to maintain supply, the energy sector will need to address flexibility issues as well and will need alternative energy production units which are less weather-dependent. Flexibility assets are therefore an integral part of MET Group's strategy for supporting the energy transition and we consider flexibility to be the "new renewable". Hence, we are operating and constantly looking at new assets that we believe we can operate efficiently, creating synergies with our existing positions. These assets include power plants, gas storages, batteries and aggregator platforms, which provide a solution to boost the flexibility of the energy market. Regarding green assets, we have a dedicated division which creates and operates a financially sound green portfolio, consisting of mainly wind and solar parks. We aim to build a one-gigawatt portfolio by 2026 - across several European countries - investing in both ready-to-build assets as well as developing greenfield and brownfield opportunities. Our newly-formed JV - with our fellow shareholder, Keppel Infrastructure - targets to build at least an additional one-gigawatt capacity on top of that.

WHAT ABOUT AREAS OF THE WORLD THAT SEEM TO BE WEDDED TO OLD METHODS OF FUEL AND ENERGY? In our geographical focus continent, Europe, I think there is a high sense of urgency for the energy transition. In response to the hardships and global energy market disruption caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Commission presented the REPowerEU Plan focused on saving energy, producing clean energy and diversifying our energy supplies. It is backed by financial and legal measures to build the new energy infrastructure and system that Europe needs.

FROM AN INDUSTRY POINT OF VIEW, DO YOU THINK THAT THE MOTIVATION IS THERE TO MAKE THE CHANGES? The younger generations have been brought up with climate change and global warming clearly on their agenda. They are more socially and environmentally responsible than previous generations. There are more environmental activists in younger generation and, as their representation increases in global politics, more environmentally-oriented decisions will trigger significant changes.

TURNING BACK TO HR, WHERE DO YOU THINK YOUR PRESSURE POINTS ARE? We have just announced the five-year business strategy, which we started in 2022. Our key priorities are driven from this business strategy and because we are still focused on continuous, ambitious growth, our number one priority is to support this growth. Just to give you an indication in numbers, in 2007 the company started as a start-up and over the past 15 years it grew its annual turnover to over 18bn EUR and is very ambitious to further grow. To support this growth, we need to recruit the right talents fast, without compromising quality. We have a very big focus on recruitment and an equal priority is to keep our existing workforce engaged, to provide them with a positive and engaged experience, so that they can perform at their very best. To serve this, we in HR started a journey to digitalise our processes and systems, to be really state of the art and ensure user-friendly and innovative solutions.

WE'VE BEEN THROUGH A CRISIS OVER THE LAST PAST COUPLE OF YEARS WITH COVID, WE HAVE WAR IN EUROPE AND WE'RE FACING A DEEP AND PROTRACTED RECESSION. HOW DO YOU THINK HR SHOULD SUPPORT PEOPLE THROUGH THIS CRISIS TIME? In times of crisis, transparent and frequent communication is essential, as extending care to people is crucial. You have to react quickly and adapt fast to new situations, but you also have to acknowledge people's feelings and try to support them in the best way possible. On the other hand, you have to keep focus on the business results, risks and opportunities. On the Ukrainian war,

"IF THE BUSINESS IS DOING WELL, OUR PEOPLE KNOW THEY HAVE BEEN CONTRIBUTING TO THAT AND THE BUSINESS SUCCESS STORY IS THEIR SUCCESS STORY"

we were directly impacted because we have a Ukrainian office with employees there. When war broke out, we immediately reacted and within 24 hours we had contacted all of our Ukrainian employees and families with the offer to get them out of the country if they wanted, with all expenses covered. Not everybody wanted to leave, or some families wanted to leave later. We worked closely with our security team, took all families who wanted to leave and placed them in different countries under safe conditions. We also implemented over special communication channels to directly impacted Ukrainian colleagues and provided ongoing guidance on different escape routes. Also, we closed our Ukrainian office which was in Kyiv. We stayed in touch with colleagues who couldn't leave the country and we continue to do so. Crisis unites people. Our employees were deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of the

Ukraine crisis and genuinely wanted to offer help. MET Group cooperated with several charity organisations and jointly with our colleagues provided donations to them. We had to take care, not only about the directly impacted population, but also about our own employees. In order to support their mental health and wellbeing, we invited an award-winning former war correspondent - with partial origin from Syria and who worked in many conflict zones worldwide, such as Afghanistan, Libya and the Gaza strip - to hold a lecture on how you can cope with your fear in a war situation and how you can turn fear to your advantage.

IT SEEMS THAT THESE SERIES OF CRISIS ARE PULLING PEOPLE TOGETHER, THERE SEEMS TO BE GREATER EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING. Absolutely, I think we need to continue practicing what we learnt, the need to personalise the connection with employees and to continue individual dialogues with them. The crisis helped us humanise business a little more. For example, in all the video calls, when cameras were showing the real home of employees and senior executives, that gave a personal touch. We even made a movie out of the home office experience across the company and we showed it to our employees. It has connected people and this connection, remains important to us.

FINALLY, TÜNDE, DO YOU FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE? Absolutely yes! I am a positive person in general and I'm very confident that MET Group will continue with its growth and diversifications successfully in the future. Looking ahead, the growth will continue and whatever challenges lay ahead, this will have a positive impact on our workforce, because if the business is doing well, our people know they have been contributing to that and the business success story is the their success story.

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THE KEYS TO RETAINING SHIFT- BASED 'DESKLESS' WORKERS

EMPLOYEE RETENTION HAS BEEN A KEY FOCUS THROUGHOUT THE PAST FEW YEARS FOR ALL BUSINESSES, BUT ESPECIALLY THOSE DEPENDENT UPON SHIFT-BASED, OR SO-CALLED 'DESKLESS' WORKERS. EMPLOYERS MUST MEET THE EXPECTATIONS OF THESE LATTER-DAY NOMADS OR FACE AN ONGOING EXODUS OF STAFF - FURTHER EXACERBATING ACUTE TALENT SHORTAGES ACROSS INDUSTRIES - JUST AS BUSINESSES ARE TRYING TO BRING PLANS BACK ON TRACK.

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KAREN TOWNSEND PEOPLE DIRECTOR - (PREVIOUSLY AT SAGE)
DONOVAN CHAPMAN SENIOR PEOPLE PARTNER - OLIVER AGENCY
NICOLE WARD - INTERIM HR LEADER

WHAT ARE YOU EXPERIENCING IN THE AFTERMATH OF COVID-19 IN TERMS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, WELLBEING AND RETENTION?

Jonathan Parsons: The Government wanted public transport to continue running during the pandemic and so we continued to run trains. For our organisation, it highlighted that essentially, we were two workforces, whereas we have always maintained the mantra that we are one family. Some, like myself, could work from home and other parts of our organisation were out and in contact with the public. Of course, we put all the appropriate health and safety measures in place, but it did reveal how lucky we were to have such a committed workforce.

Vinny Chauhan: I would describe our business as having three types of workforce; pure office-based, pure shift workers - the operational employees, who have to do our processes in our plants - then there is the middle group of professional workers, desk-based but based at the operational sites, in our refineries. We managed to keep operations going, but there are issues surrounding the three groups around remote and hybrid working, as we go forward. There are some cultural challenges that we have around the operators working shifts and rosters. Therefore, to keep the operation going, we need support to be on site - such as safety, planning and engineering, for example - to help support all of those activities. That means that we do offer less flexibility to them in reality. On paper, they have the same level of flexibility, because they're desk-based, but in reality, because of the nature of the operations and some cultural challenges that we have, they don't have the same access to flex. The challenge is not to let this influence our capacity to retain and recruit skills.

Karen Townsend: As a technology-led business, we were very lucky that people were able to work remotely. However, we did maintain the offices so that people could come in if they needed to, for example, for a safe space. Lockdown revealed that there are more people with domestic problems at home than we knew of. We also gained a greater appreciation of our graduates and younger workforce, many of whom were house sharing - maybe a group of five or six sharing a straining wifi capacity - sitting at kitchen tables or on beds. So the

issues around wellbeing were raised. Unquestionably, those organisations with multi-generational workforces are managing a wide variety of needs and expectations. The pendulum is swinging.

Donovan Chapman: The concern within the frame of this change is disconnection and people not creating relationships and building cooperative partnerships. That can lead to people feeling isolated, disengaged and unmotivated. We're a rapidly growing company and even during the pandemic, we recruited 1,500 employees globally and with another 300 planned, our main focus is unifying, supporting communication and making sure that isolated groups don't become siloed.

Nathan Miller: No question, employee expectation is a major issue and with more widely dispersed workforces, meeting needs is a major concern. In Humanforce, we have developers in multiple countries, so global collaboration is fundamental and that means regular virtual get-togethers. That means we have to optimise those meetings and all concerned really need to work flexibly, due to different time zones. In most businesses, there will be people that just have to be in the office more frequently for collaboration that needs to be accommodated. The businesses I think that are grasping this as an action and not a "sit-and-see" exercise, are moving to having an ever-evolving regular feedback loop on their workforce needs. They are actually having that feedback process as a standard action that is looked at regularly, so that they can see the changing needs in time. Delegates have mentioned already the two or three different types of workforce profile and the disparities in flexibility, but that's not just from the pandemic, it's the impacts of Brexit and change in operations, such as a large movement towards agency work and so-called gig economy workers. All in all, employers have had to start thinking more strategically about attraction, retention and sustainable workforce resourcing.

ARE YOU USING DATA AND ANALYTICS TO SEE TRENDS IN WHY PEOPLE ARE LEAVING AND ARE YOU ABLE TO SEE WARNING SIGNS ACROSS ROLES?

Jonathan Parsons: This is an area perhaps that as an organisation, we could do more. Typically, HR teams look at some rudimentary attrition analysis and spot the hotspots and pinpoint whether there is influence from a particular leadership style or if there's a competitor in a particular location that is overtly recruiting at a particular time. As for the science of being able to future predict vulnerable attrition, we're not there yet. We are working on our level of competence, in terms of data analytics.

Doug Tabor: At our board meeting every quarter, top of the agenda is attrition. Being a global business, we have a very dispersed workforce in a wide variety of countries, especially in India. The big challenge is, what might work in one territory may not in another and so we have to be alive and adaptable to a widescale, ongoing resourcing issue.

"HISTORICALLY, EMPLOYERS HAVE POSTURED WHY CANDIDATES WOULD WANT TO WORK WITH THEM ON A CAREER OR REWARD LEVEL, BUT THAT'S SHIFTED NOW AND THE FOCUS IS NOW ON A SENSE OF PURPOSE AND BEING PART OF A GREEN AND VALUES-LED ORGANISATION"

Karen Townsend: It's a complex and dynamic situation for sure. Take the generational perspective, where post-COVID, our most experienced and upper management colleagues - the 55-plus bracket - are looking to manage their careers differently and are considering changes to work and retirement plans. There's an uptick on exits for certain - perhaps not a mass exodus - but definitely obvious in the older, more experienced workforce and that is guaranteed to increase pressure on the skills shortage and a real concern of course is knowledge transfer. We data mine constantly and we can all draw assumptions from that deep data, but in terms of immediacy, it's those face-to-face conversations that cannot be completely superseded by cold analytics and that is important data on a more human level.

Vinny Chauhan: In terms of attrition, we had the classic V, whereby, 2019 attrition was up, 2020 during the pandemic went

down and then post-COVID, it has gone back up to the same level. I don't particularly have massive concerns around the so-called great resignation, but as others have said, there is a noticeable spike in 55-plus early retirees. Right now, we are asking some big questions around, how can we refresh our business and can we go in a slightly different direction? In terms of the data piece, we do obviously report on things like sickness and attrition, but we have some really great business partners that are on the ground, so they spend quality time with people and that is where you gain the richness of information around what people's intentions are, what they're feeling and the general mood.

Donovan Chapman: Data is considered really critical to our business - it's a huge and continuous topic of discussion, especially from the top - because it enables us to quantify the service delivery

that we do and balance the numbers. One of my own KPIs is about improving the EMEA scores and, at the moment, it's eight percent and I think there is still a way to go. The pandemic caused us some inertia, whereby we were sidetracked by a lot of firefighting, but now it's centre stage in our people plan.

Doug Tabor: The difference between the managers perception of what is an acceptable retention rate has changed over the past few years, because of what they've been experienced. What we now find is that what we're expecting from a Western or UK bias, is ten percent in voluntary turnover rates, whereas in India, the rates are around 20 percent. Compare that to the USA, where the highest job quits rate is about three percent and so the differences are clear, depending on geographic location. In terms of metrics, an attrition rate of between ten and twelve percent, I believe, is healthy and sustainable.

Nathan Miller: The hybrid framework is adding to the dynamics, beyond what we typically see around the more desk-based and regular rotoed workforce. Looking at the deskless worker space, we see a rapidly evolving picture, in terms of that roster availability. Some companies are starting to push their data analysis agenda and I know of some that want to make sure that the data outputs can be API shared into giant data lakes. They are also doing a lot of work on Power BI, to slice and dice that information. Some of the key metrics they're looking at in the shift-based environment is, for example, days people are most likely to accept as shift opportunities to work - and how frequently they engage with the platform to take work. This enables them to look for early warning signs and gaps in the ability to fulfill the shift demand that they know is coming up. This also influences the amount of output they will then push to agencies, because they are starting to want to analyse the agencies that they're using for third-party resourcing. So, the finer detail is, what is the propensity of that person to take work or the likelihood of them to take work and the frequency with which they do it? This is because, unlike having attrition rates, as a hard and fast measure, these people can sit as 'available' within a resource pool for an extended period of time and dip in and out of their ability to take work. If someone who regularly takes work every two or three days within their legal requirements or restrictions starts to drop off, they might start to see that they need to recruit to refill that resource pool.

WHAT ARE THE CORE COMPONENTS OF YOUR EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION AND IS IT FIT FOR PURPOSE?

Nicole Ward: The core component has to be, is it received as a value? A lot of these things, they're really good, but how it's received speaks to the skill of how this is translated to your employees, which is essentially your target audience. Do your data analytics that measure uptake support this? The employment lifecycle is changing very rapidly and so it's very hard to stay static on something like EVP,

because the value of what is being offered can change or becomes 'less valuable', due to external factors that drive employee engagement and behaviours. The current trend has been that change has been drastic, unexpected and ill-prepared for. One of the key things may be for leaders to learn how to look at things in a more agile way - in terms of putting EVPs in place - that are able to respond to changing employee needs and how that may affect the employee lifecycle within your organisation, as opposed to something static that may be inflexible or difficult to adapt to the speed of change.

Vinny Chauhan: The classic thing is to ask the questions, come up with suggestions and then implement. When we initially did this, we didn't consider the differences in localisation enough. So, in the next iteration, we surveyed across the business and then passed it right back down to the ground to each location, so that the emphasis was more focused and gained greater ownership, because of localised input. There were some big things - like increasing the pension contribution and the big ticket items of course - but there was also more subtle and nuanced issues such as, "can we have a vegetable patch"? Or, can we have our communal areas freshened up? We've also carried out some events and activities around the teams locally. These are the types of things that can make a difference. I would also encourage localised ESG, supporting employees to work with local charities for example, which builds relationships in local communities.

Jonathan Parsons: The way that we position ourselves as employers matters, as does the built environment. In terms of position, I'd say the way that we do that has really morphed over the past few years. Historically, employers have postured why candidates would want to work with them on a career or reward level, but that's shifted now and the focus is now on a sense of purpose and being part of a green and values-led organisation.

Nathan Miller: I am surprised that more organisations have not revisited or articulated their current EVP, in view of the massive recent changes. If we look at

today's focal point, deskless workers, it could be argued that they are the harder group to articulate an EVP to. The firms that are doing it successfully are really looking at three key areas - fun, money and learning - and everything else falls underneath that. What I mean by fun - others would term enjoyment - principally is, is it a good place to work and are you treated nicely? Money is more a binary issue, but the last criteria, learning, is fundamental to EVP. The BCG global survey in March 2022 said that 46 percent of flexural or deskless workers, don't really feel like they have the opportunity to learn new skills. We've been under a lot of good pressure to try and work, integrate and make available microlearning from a software perspective, so people can actually take on some educational pieces, while they're on the move, through their mobile device. Unquestionably, workers are dictating the ability to communicate, so they feel part of that community, take control over their ability to take work and then the learning piece enters the fun-money-learning triangle.

DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE OFFERING A HUMAN-CENTRIC APPROACH TO PEOPLE MANAGEMENT?

Karen Townsend: The human side has absolutely been brought back to the fore and it aligns with the wellbeing agenda. People are human beings, not robots, we don't just come to work to deliver and leave. We all have life challenges and pressures outside of work. The pandemic enabled people to have unprecedented flexibility and that has to figure in how we recalibrate, going forward.

Doug Tabor: From a very global perspective and working over a 24/7 operation that follows the sun, we have a tendency to have very integrated teams internationally, in different time zones. Not surprisingly, that's always been quite a challenge to synchronise teams and workloads. When the service is running from India through Europe and the US, days become extended and compressed, depending on the situation at any one time. That's where I see this going, whereby the working week as we knew it,

is no more and time is more fluid and the work/life boundaries are erased. I believe this is what the phrase “a hybrid first organisation” will come to mean more broadly.

WHAT METHODS ARE YOU USING TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT WORKERS REALLY WANT FROM THIS NEW RELATIONSHIP?

Nicole Ward: Organisations must take responsibility and have active listening manifest to reality and action. There are so many words, but without any action, it reduces internal credibility, which may influence employee behaviours. I think leaders have problems in translating that into tangible actions that people actually value. To move forward, we must step away from this paternalistic type of employee/employer relationship, so that

"THE HUMAN SIDE HAS ABSOLUTELY BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO THE FORE AND IT ALIGNS WITH THE WELLBEING AGENDA. PEOPLE ARE HUMAN BEINGS, NOT ROBOTS, WE DON'T JUST COME TO WORK TO DELIVER AND LEAVE"

people are empowered to take positive actions of their own. That in turn may reflect on active engagement and participation by employees. Lest we forget, low engagement is an active employee response. We've emerged from a pandemic, we have been listening and now is the time for action, from all stakeholders.

Vinnie Chauhan: Agreed, we need to act on the feedback and focus on how we can make it practical on the ground. It doesn't have to be perfect - you can waste a lot of time and effort chasing the immaculate solution and no such thing exists. There is a phrase which neatly applies now; “deliver fast, learn quickly, roll out and adjust. That is the attitude and mindset, that we are trying to empower.

Nathan Miller: I have a personal belief system, that if you can find the daily repeatable action, that's what drives your ability to affect the business. We are from

the tech space and our own business experience is about output, not just ours, but across those global timeframes. That's really important to understand.

Vinnie Chauhan: Increasingly, it's about reaching a working audience that is not sitting at desks in an HQ. It can seem like they are asking for a lot, but that can be out of frustration, because their perception is that they are not being listened to. The new reality is this way of working and we must adapt to that and support people with physical, mental, financial health and wellbeing benefits and make EVP work for the remote and deskless workers. We must also be mindful that different generations want different things and while one-size doesn't-fit-all has become a cliché, it is true. The big question is, how do we initiate things more locally for discrete groups?

Jonathan Parsons: We have a Darwin platform, which allows us to run a fairly sophisticated flexible benefit system. To an extent, that enables us to offer a pretty broad range of benefits. One of the interesting elements we have observed, is that the choices that people make are shifting and indeed have been changing over the last couple of years. There are parts like the virtual GP-type services, which just never were on the radar before, plus we've seen huge spikes in take-up of those sorts of services, our EAP are used probably more than ever before, along with services like financial counseling. I guess that what we are seeing in the media narrative, in terms of the cost-of-living crisis and the macroeconomic pictures we see are borne out in the benefit choices that our employees are making.

Donovan Chapman: When it comes to wellbeing you have to give access to support 24/7 and that's critical and I think that's really something we're very

much focusing on now. One of the big challenges is being able to apply that inclusively across the EMEA. For example, the UK obviously has many suppliers and people who will be driving the benefits packages, especially with EAP. It's just really finding those equivalent suppliers further afield, in order to achieve equity.

Karen Townsend: From a benefits perspective, there's definitely a move towards more flexibility in enabling people to select the benefits they want and need, as and when. I remember the “cafeteria” system as it was called, but it seems to be coming back, so that it's offering a more tailored options for individuals and particularly targetted for particular points in life. That will have to adapt to changes as people progress in life and career and in this frame, I think the wellbeing app will really have its day, where people are able to access something at a time of their choosing. The other piece coming to the fore - and will continue to do so, given the state of the economy - is financial wellbeing, which needs to be considered with the same importance as mental and physical support.

Nathan Miller: Any business seeing an increase in deskless workers must move beyond the gated benefits provision and be more a gateway, less paternal and more towards individual responsibility for mental, physical and financial wellbeing. It's about real choice and flexibility and we are currently carrying out a really good piece of work around earned wage access, to avoid that payday loan scenario. For those that aren't aware, this is where you have access to up to 50 percent of your authorised wages. In our business, that works really well - we've partnered with an organisation and done the integration - so a worker can literally work a shift, have that digitally signed off and the notification is made and that money is available to draw down, up to 50 percent of it in real-time, which is massive. This creates control and flexibility and is a more holistic view of financial wellbeing. Similarly, we're looking at partnering with physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing providers in a similar way, as it just reduces the

anxiety and stress. There is a recent statistic that the Government announced - that we're shouting about as part of the economic gloomy outlook - is the number of adult workers in the United Kingdom with less than £100 in savings. It's a stark realisation and flexible workers sit right in the middle of that storm. There is no doubt that financial wellbeing really must sit at the top of the agenda.

ARE YOU LOOKING TO OFFER MORE AUTONOMY ON WHEN YOUR DESKLESS WORKERS MUST BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT?

Nicole Ward: Companies are going to have to offer more autonomy, because it's

space. What we can do is listen to them more - including through union representatives - and make sure there is good feedback.

Nathan Miller: The irrefutable fact is, flexible working and the era of the deskless worker is upon us. The reality is, people will tell you when they don't want to work. The platform that we operate has a shift swap capability and autonomy for people to be able to move around their workload around other life commitments. I'm really excited about the potential in the deskless worker space, but we all need to be prepared to adapt and develop a mindset to accommodate the significant changes ahead of us.

"IT'S STILL VERY MUCH AN EVOLUTION FOR MANY, BUT I SEE THE DEPLOYMENT OF MICRO-LEARNING AND JOB-BASED DEVELOPMENT FOR DESKLESS WORKERS AS ABSOLUTELY KEY"

already proven that people can work this way and that has set an expectation. Buildings have been empty for months and targets are still being met and, for many, it's been business as usual. I think leadership and managers are going to have to be smarter in how work and outputs are measured and put a standard on what good quality output looks like. That is the hard part - especially if it is not necessarily a target-driven standard that must be measured - as in sales. That is key for the deskless worker and equally to ensure operational efficiency and staff costs. It's a new era and the mindset needs to move away from fearing this change, to capitalising on it. Deskless working is here to stay and it's going to have to be offered as part of the digital transformation of an organisation and so this is the climate that the traditional workplace needs to quickly adapt to.

Vinnie Chauhan: The differences between more conventional office-based employees and deskless workers is the core of our discussion today and I believe that the fundamental question is, how do we give them more autonomy safely, as there are safety-critical activities in our operations, so there isn't that much scope in that

Donovan Chapman: This is really topical for us at the moment and above all, we require creative thinking approaches to include people with the greatest equity possible and that comes back to voice, surveys and polls and being sensitive to changes in attitudes and expectations. Key to this is to take a blended approach.

HOW MIGHT TECHNOLOGY ALLOW DESK-LESS WORKERS TO LEARN IN THE FLOW OF WORK?

Doug Tabor: A lot of the roles in our business are shift-based and deskless and, amongst many things, we are involved in security services worldwide. Our people are highly-skilled tech workers, but the work is fairly transactional, investigating threats to customer systems, for example. We are looking at the levels of autonomy within the confines and structure of the job itself and as to whether we have the right technologies and channels in place to support this. So, you have to think about the autonomy piece from all angles, but the work is still the work and the autonomy is within giving people the ability to train, to re- and upskill, to specialise and to change career direction and so the skills matrix is key.

Karen Townsend: From the technology side, the bite-size training and development model is the most effective. I've always been a huge advocate of trying to put everything L&D on smart phone, because that's what people carry around with them most of the time. I recall that I sat in on a very compelling presentation, which recalled the times gone by, when we joined a company and were introduced to our desktop PC terminal and telephone and so the culture for lunch at desks was born. But now, people walk around with this amazing tech potential in their pocket and it's the center of their worlds, both work and personal and that increasingly that includes having access to a lot more influences outside of work. In general, employees have occupied the margins of this phenomenal potential, but we must facilitate a great user experience that actually encourages and compels L&D, to increase uptake. For me, it is about making it small and making it accessible, logically this means on a phone and the bite-size element to it is absolutely key.

Nathan Miller: I think it's still very much an evolution for many, but I see the deployment of micro-learning and job-based development for deskless workers as absolutely key. It's about how we have that content delivered and accessed through the system. Bite-sized chunks - as has been discussed today - is the right approach, but that's not the revolutionary part. What is new is developing and supporting a mindset that there is no strict timeframes and that learning and reskilling is personally beneficial and can be carried out in the flow of work and life. What is really interesting for us - in the research that was carried out on deskless workers specifically - is that 46 percent of the people surveyed globally, don't feel that they have access to learn new skills. That really exemplified the long-standing problem of L&D engagement and the related issues of the skills deficit across sectors, but particularly in digital lag skills. It's almost where the root cause of the skills deficit resides. That access to the wide library of learning is available for the majority on just about any digital device and it is an opportunity too good to waste. In fact, we're having those live

conversations now with e-learning providers, to be part of that ecosystem. Certainly, I don't think we have the perfect answer, but it's definitely encouraging that we're moving further towards a library of resources, which is a perfect solution for deskless workers.

WHAT ROLE CAN TECHNOLOGY HAVE IN RESHAPING THE DESKLESS WORKER EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE?

Vinnie Chauhan: In order for technology to have that impact and to provide equity of access to L&D, there needs to be universal access for people on whatever device and platform they choose, be that; tablets, mobiles or laptops. Surprisingly, for many organisations - including those that are reporting increasing difficulties in finding skills - this is still something of an aspiration and is not likely to be a reality for a couple of years, even considering the changes that remote working has presented. There is definitely going to be a bigger shift to applications which can empower our employees, particularly those who already have mobile devices. We've seen how the digital shift - even a rudimentary application, such as accessing payslips - has been revolutionary and just about everyone across the demographic, regularly download apps. So, the scene is set for the future way of working, it just requires grasping the technology nettle and modifying operations in line.

Doug Tabor: As a tech company, as you would expect, technology is a dominant entity, but it's going to be mostly software-driven. I think one of the things that we have been increasingly challenged with over the pandemic is more around the environments that people are in, even more so than the tools that they need. Things like making sure people have appropriate desks and chairs and all of the issues surrounding wellbeing and a general health perspective. For us, it's not about a new piece of technology that's going to replace a conventional computer, because tech is second nature. So whilst tech is of course important, if businesses become fixated with digital platforms over wellbeing, that could be a distraction that has consequences. Essentially, it's about supporting people

to operate under different circumstances. For example, we have sales teams that will be doing presentations and so we have implemented webcams that will focus on them as they stand up and move around during a team or client presentation and enables them to be a bit more dynamic, using digital tools that are more impressive than the traditional flip charts. So we have been thinking about the changes in the way we work in a more humancentric way and worrying less about what the next technology might be. A mindset around, how can we use technology to enable the things that we were already doing, is the key. Leaping at the next technology is more a kneejerk reaction, because businesses are worried about falling to the back of the curve.

Nicole Ward: I do agree with that sentiment inasmuch as, I don't think it's just about the technology, it's more about the employer psychology that needs to change, in order to try to marry up with the technology. It's more about giving greater empowerment and making the employee confident and competent in using that technology to enjoy, say for example, the EVP on offer. For instance, learning & development is only as effective as the people who use it and the absolute reality is, we simply do not need to teach in a classroom anymore. As has already been visited today, people can access all of this on their own devices and they can go at their own pace, in their own time. But still the challenge remains, how do we engage with them in order to make this a self-motivated and sustainable reality? For me, the here and now is about agility in all aspects of work and particularly surrounding transferrable skills. The question is, in the eye of the storms that we have had to contend with these past few years, how many organisations have even assessed what the value of transferable skills, let alone communicating the importance to employees? We have often heard that, many job roles now will not be relevant in a few years - that may be a subject for another debate some other time - but it points towards action that needs to be taken now, as change continues to re-shape not only the employee/employer relationship, but the entirety of work as we know it.

Donovan Chapman: Agreed, this is a time for action, to capitalise on what is really a great opportunity, as opposed to something that is feared. I also agree that the human in human resources has to come first and in doing this, support the autonomy and confidence that we have been talking about today, in order for our people to drive the changes. But I would advocate that there is no destination in technology it's a continuous and infinite journey that needs to be invested in. But it's people that will be applying the new tech to the job and so the two must be aligned and that is fundamental to engagement and attrition. Because better engagement leads to better involvement and the sense of unity and belonging when we are apart, which is a reality now.

Nathan Miller: There is absolutely no doubt that the now and future motivation of technology is that of driver of change. But it cannot be the dictator of that change, against human beings' wishes and capability. People will continue to be the most important element of any business and that means engaging and exciting the disparate and deskless workforce is a fundamental priority. Our job as professionals in HR - whether that is in wellbeing or software development - is, as has been said constantly in today's discussion is to keep listening, adapt and take action and never to assume a status quo. For now and in the future, those organisations that can evolve and adapt, will be the companies that the world's deskless talent will gravitate towards. We just need to make sure that our technology supports the needs of that worker - in what is really quite a simple process, whether in an HQ or scattered in a myriad of locations. One thing is for certain, the deskless workforce is irrefutably the direction of travel.



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ARTICLE BY MOLLY BOLDING, RESEARCH EXECUTIVE - CORPORATE RESEARCH FORUM

MIND BLOWING DECISIONS

THERE ARE A HUGE RANGE OF CHALLENGES TO CONTEND WITH THIS YEAR - A COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS, GEOPOLITICAL INSTABILITY, AUTOMATION, HYBRID WORKING AND SUSTAINABILITY - TO NAME JUST A FEW. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, SOME BUSINESSES WILL HAVE UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS AS THEY RISE TO THE CHALLENGE OF BEING AGILE AND ADAPTABLE - OTHERS WILL NOT.

More efficient decision-making can help every area of HR's connection to the business, from supporting line managers to have better conversations with direct reports, to developing more effective HRBPs. Despite our established 'new normal', we need to accept that we will continue to encounter uncertainty, complexity and insecurity. There also needs to be an emphasis on effective decision-making at speed. Behavioural science can help this effort, not by somehow revealing the right decisions to make, but by recognising that at times of uncertainty, how we approach decision-making can make a real difference. If we are not careful, we can end up relying more on heuristics and biases, which can affect how we assess risk and perceive costs and benefits. After all, any organisation is only going to be as effective as the decision-making of its people. Using scenario planning, separating the discussion from the decision and increasing psychological safety are just some of the tactics - formulated and backed by decision science expert Dr Grace Lordan from LSE - that can be adopted to help businesses to cut through complexity.

Using scenario planning: When we face unexpected challenges, it is natural to rely on familiar tools and devise solutions based on experience. Traditional decision-

making models that aim to maximise expected utility and return are best suited for 'small worlds', where that experience can be used to make strategic and economic decisions, but not where the

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future is unpredictable or uncertain. By contrast, a scenario-based approach can help businesses remain agile. Indeed, scenarios can explore the key sources of uncertainty and evaluate their potential implications. The psychologist Gary Klein coined the term 'premortem', where teams come together to suggest reasons why a strategy might fail, finding weaknesses and identifying risks.

Allocating time more effectively: There is also an urgency to equip leaders to understand when to bring their team together and employ a scenario-based

approach. Lordan recommends trying the 5:95 rule - prioritising the five percent of things that are the highest stakes for the business - like product development or hiring. For the remaining 95 percent of day-to-day activities, leaders can increase transparency around how decisions are made and who the decision maker is. This allows leaders to leverage the diverse perspectives in their team for the important decisions, while building trust in the overall process and saving time. *Increasing psychological safety in diverse teams and groups:* Group dynamics will also play an important part in decision-making. Deliberation by diverse groups acts as a positive force, but it depends on being able to have a breadth of views in the room. This will not happen, Lordan warns, if colleagues around the table feel they need to conform to personally advance. Now, more than ever, leaders need to hear diverse perspectives, encourage dissent and not force consensus-based decision-making. Collective intelligence improves a group's capacity to deal with uncertainty, but the value is not in the average or maximum knowledge. Instead, group performance is correlated to the equality of opportunity to speak and be heard.

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ARTICLE BY HARVEY FRANCIS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER - SKANSKA UK PLC
& THEHRDIRECTOR EDITORIAL PANELLIST

A WIDER LENS

"HR SEEMS TO BE CONSTANTLY IN SEARCH OF THE NEW AND SHINY AND
WHILST I'M A BIG FAN OF MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENT, THERE ARE HR STAPLES
WHICH WE KNOW THAT IF WE DO WELL, WILL BRING GOOD RESULTS"

There is no doubt that society and industry has witnessed a greater degree of turbulent change in the past four years than in any other period of time in my working life. I don't believe it's over yet and nor do I believe we know with any certainty what is yet to come, or where the final 'resting place' will be. Business and HR functions generally like certainty and dislike ambiguity, but uncertainty and ambiguity is the new name of the game.

We have to resist the temptation to box and label everything prematurely. The Great Resignation, where did that come from? Was it a real phenomenon, or was it simply the market catching up from a time of very little movement during the peak of the pandemic? As for quiet quitting, is this any different from the lack of engagement and productivity seen and tolerated across organisations for years and years? My point here is that whilst we chase these new headlines, something else will bubble up whilst we are distracted, which we risk missing and so we must maintain the objectivity to differentiate between certainty and uncertainty. What is reasonably sure is that the current financial crisis is unlikely to ease any time soon. Some analysts are saying that energy prices may well stay at these levels for years to come and that we may now be in a new age of persistently

higher inflation and interest rates. Of course, as and when inflation does start to fall, inflation is only a measure of change, so higher prices may well remain long after inflation drops. When considering impactful HR in a financial crisis, my belief is that we need to look at this through a wider lens, because issues don't exist in isolation and life is becoming more and more complex and difficult to navigate. So, here is my straight eight for contemplation - not gospel and certainly not exhaustive - just eight, top-of-mind considerations.

1. Maintain and embed what we learned about our organisations and our people during COVID: With many organisations pushing their people to come back to the office, we should ask ourselves 'why' rather than just bringing them back to the way things used to be. From my own

experience we've definitely seen the benefit of teams being back together, for relationship, social and learning reasons, but that doesn't need to be five days a week. Asking 'why' remains one of the most powerful questions we have to make sure we're doing the right things.

2. Consider what practical help we can provide to people: This could, at its simplest and cheapest, be signposting what help is available externally from the likes of Government or Citizen's Advice, through to the middle ground, such as re-iterating what's already available. At Skanska we have recommunicated the savings available through our 'myRewards' web pages, highlighting examples to show, for instance, how much can be saved over a year on the weekly shop at Sainsbury's. Of course, there's the 'extra' approach if it can be

afforded. We decided we would make a cost-of-living payment to our lower paid staff, which seemed the right thing to do, in line with our purpose and values.

3. Focus on wellbeing: If people are experiencing stress due to financial concerns, it's also likely this could be on top of other stresses. We've had good feedback from the few webinars which we've run with mental health support organisations, along with articles and workshops on resilience. Our mental health ambassador network has also been very helpful to many people through the stresses and strains of the past few years. If you don't have one, it's well worth considering.

4. Recognise and talk about the things that are on people's minds: With organisations now being trusted to a greater extent than Government, NGOs and the media - according to the latest Edelman trust barometer - this sets out a clear mandate for organisations to play a role in societal leadership as part of their business activities. Over the course of the last three years there have been a number of issues where our own employees have expected the company's leaders to take a position including *Black Lives Matter* and *Wade vs. Roe*. This would not have been the case even five years ago, but the role of companies in society is changing and people want to trust their leaders.

5. Prepare for the unknown: Prior to 2020, many of us had cyberattacks, ethical breaches and the like on our enterprise risk registers, but what about a global pandemic which to all intents and purposes would lock down the modern world? I'm guessing not so many. If we don't know exactly what's coming and I would argue we don't, then in addition to the training and re-skilling plans we have in place, perhaps the best thing we can teach our leaders and managers is how to lead through change and ambiguity. This makes it more critical than it's ever been to put them in unfamiliar situations as part of their development, rather than just developing in a more 'vertical' fashion.

6. Climate change is not a tomorrow issue: Our organisations contribute to global warming but given the responsibilities I've already suggested we have to society, we have to play an increasing part in reducing our carbon emissions. This could include; cutting down on travel to meetings which could be hosted on Teams or Zoom, being clear on which part of our operations cause the most emissions, ridding company car fleets of combustion engine vehicles and progressing to hybrids or EVs. We did just this at the end of 2020 and it has been very well received and it would be even better if there were not so many issues with the supply of new vehicles.

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7. Make the important things the important things: HR seems to be constantly in search of the new and shiny and whilst I'm a big fan of meaningful improvement, there are HR staples which we know that if we do well, will bring good results. I'm not going to list them, but you'll know what they are. Dave Ulrich's original work on the HR model - and the four key roles for HR - have been reinterpreted and repackaged many times. But for me, the original premise still stands - people champion, strategic partner, change agent and administrative expert. These simple four roles remain a north star for the work of HR functions across any industry and the closer we stay true to these, the more effective we will

be. Most strategies, change initiatives, transformations fail - not because the idea was wrong - but because not enough time and energy was spent on the hard yards of implementation. So perhaps it's better to focus on doing a great job of implementing well the things we have which we know are good, rather than reinventing and creating.

8. Salary inflation is hard wired: Material prices will return to more normal levels once supply increases, but salary inflation once absorbed never leaves. Clearly this a tough act to balance - salaries have to be competitive - but a bidding war for talent based on purely money just leads to the market overheating. An inclusive culture, values, opportunities for personal development and growth - as well as retention and engagement discussions, focus on flexibility, wellbeing and being part of a wider purpose - can all help with retaining good people in a more sustainable way than money. Anyone can complete on money, but very few can compete with a truly inclusive employee experience.

I'm pretty sure that complexity and ambiguity will continue to be the hallmark of modern times and the issues these bring will cause more difficulty for people and organisations. But if we stay true to our purpose and make the important things the important things, then we stand the best chance of managing through. The financial crisis will pass, as all things do. But we need to be ready for what comes after, whatever that may be.

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GRIP

It's all too easy for business leaders to make kneejerk reactions in a crisis, without fully accounting for the current situation or the long-term ramifications. There is, of course, a place for swift, decisive action - understandable if a business is facing an existential threat - and yet reports of employers reducing their workforces to save costs in the economic downturn are increasing. It's likely these are the steps they have always taken and, although it's a quick route to save costs, it's incredibly damaging.

"A MAJOR AIRLINE'S REACTION TO COVID WAS TO MAKE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE REDUNDANT. A YEAR LATER, THEIR NEXT CRISIS BECAME A LACK OF SKILLED STAFF AND AN INABILITY TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN PEOPLE FAST ENOUGH"



ARTICLE BY CHRIS HORTON, DIRECTOR - LACE PARTNERS

There is no doubt that the pandemic left scars in business and on people. We know too that individuals are only just managing - engagement is dipping as they battle to balance their mental wellbeing with financial worries and the psychological pressure of living through difficult times. The overarching mood in many organisations is less than stellar, so how can HR positively impact change to support the organisation and its people? Data-led decision making is not an art form, however it does take interpretation and experience which not everyone in HR or the broader business has. Rather than business leaders pushing to reduce recruitment and other budgets for short term cost savings, HR's role can be to provide modelling that shows alternatives of how the future could look in different scenarios, finding the best way to navigate challenges so that the organisation has strong footing to move forward decisively.

HR leaders can use its learnings to build a strategy for effective management during the downturn and beyond. In fact, the pandemic gave us key examples of exactly what not to do when faced with an apparently insurmountable crisis. A major airline's reaction to COVID was to make thousands of people redundant. A year later, their next crisis became a lack of skilled staff and an inability to recruit and train people fast enough. This directly contributed to record losses in 2021. It's not surprising to see this kind of reaction when faced with recession. Business leaders can gravitate to 'what's worked before' or 'what we did last time' - and none are blessed with a crystal ball. Many automatically assume that cutting costs associated with employees' and their employee experience, not least their reward, should be the first action. Stifling salary increases, cutting benefits - and compromising the emotional contract with their workforce - is far too familiar.

Instead of kneejerk reactions, it's HR's place to model all scenarios to clearly demonstrate the choices in front of the organisation. This includes the value of supporting employees, the EVP and associated costs to the company, so rather than immediate cost savings - which like

the airline can backfire - there's strength in a strategy of workforce and business protection, where short-term pain is avoided and long-term resilience is built. Flexible and remote working is another example of a lesson that can be learned yet easily ignored. Although it is suitable for many segments of a workforce, we're seeing major brands reverse their policies and demand in-office working. Going backwards in this way, on the basis of feelings and assumptions, is a costly error, not least to employees' emotional contracts. If the workforce demands it and it's working for the industry sector, there can be no benefit - cost or otherwise - to scrapping it. There is, however, no silver bullet. Different companies will have different situations and requirements, so the recommendation should be to encourage line managers and employees to have discussions relevant to their situation.

"DATA-LED DECISION MAKING IS NOT AN ARTFORM, HOWEVER IT DOES TAKE INTERPRETATION AND EXPERIENCE WHICH NOT EVERYONE IN HR OR THE BROADER BUSINESS HAS"

Talent attraction is still one of the most pressing dilemmas for organisations, even in a potential recession. That and how and where people work, point directly to having the EVP right. But convincing decision-makers in times of duress could be more difficult than ever. HR in many cases, is now a conduit for effective people data analysis, modelling and curated communication, so it can meaningfully impact the kind of culture that will pay off longer term. It can bridge this understanding gap and provide the piece of the puzzle business leaders need to deal with a crisis. C-suite executives statistically have lower data literacy that might be expected, according to research from Profusion. So clear modelling can help business leaders understand a future

roadmap, seeing impacts on the bottom line, business reputation and employees' wellbeing and productivity. A fundamental part of this is to decide what metrics are necessary. For instance, when it comes to productivity, a Microsoft survey showed that 87 percent of employees feel more productive working remotely. However, at the same time, 85 percent of senior leaders don't have confidence in employee productivity.

HR needs to understand their own organisation's gaps - perhaps between perception of the leadership and that of the employees - and address them in a useful way. Given there is no blueprint for HR to manage this fundamental shift, it has to be about finding new ways. Modelling revolves around asking the right questions and deriving a clear understanding of the product, service or purpose at the heart of the business. Modelling starts with knowing how to ask the right question, to make it specific and targeted and measurable. It's all about using data from HR technology and bringing in other sources of data to complement or advance the company's understanding. The next step is to have strong data teams that can run the appropriate analysis to understand and gather any insights. Data-led decision making is not an artform, however it does take interpretation and experience which not everyone in HR or the broader business has. All organisations need strong skills in this space - key people who can look at the data and tell a story to take insights to action. People analytics needs investment across most organisations. It is not enough to rely on senior leadership acting based on hunch or previous experience. The world economy and the range of external factors is creating a level of complexity that most leaders cannot accurately interpret, without the help of this modelling and analysis. Right now, HR can make the difference by considering the investment case for the short, medium and long-term - and to steer leaders away from those quick decisions that can cause more damage.

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ARTICLE BY ALAN SLOTHOWER, SURFACE BUSINESS GROUP LEAD - MICROSOFT UK

ADJUSTMENT BUREAU

WORK, *NOUN*, 'AN ACTIVITY, SUCH AS A JOB, THAT A PERSON USES PHYSICAL OR MENTAL EFFORT TO DO, USUALLY FOR MONEY' (CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY). NOW, WITH EXPERIMENTS IN HYBRID MODELS AND EMPLOYEES FLEXIBLY DECIDING WHERE, HOW AND WHEN THEY WORK, THE CHALLENGE IS BALANCING THE NEED FOR CONTINUED PRODUCTIVITY, ALONG WITH REACHING EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS THAT THE OFFICE WILL PROVIDE A FLEXIBLE AND INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE AND, MOREOVER, IS WORTH THE COST AND TIME SPENT COMMUTING.

With four-in-five UK workers stuck in pre pandemic office spaces, a lack of investment in sociable and collaborative workplaces may be holding UK employees back from returning to the workplace. By leaning into what is valued most about the office, common ground can be found. Gone are the days of going to the office, return home and repeat. As work culture shifts to a flexible, hybrid working model, organisations are having to rethink their office space to accommodate new norms. What will that look like or, more importantly, are businesses listening to their employees on whether they even want to return to the office? Research shows that 65 percent of respondents see the office as a place where they can strengthen relationships with colleagues - rising to 72 percent for those under 35 years. More than half (55 percent) say they had a better sense of belonging from working in the office - again, rising to 59 percent for under 35-year-olds - and 53 percent say working from the office allows them to better connect with their organisation's purpose and culture.

Here are three key steps which business leaders and change managers need to take to make the reimaged office a reality.

1. Make employees' needs central to business strategy: There's a new way of working for

everyone - and the workplace needs to facilitate it. The future of work is not about fitting new ways of working into old workplaces. A change management

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strategy that considers employees' needs and their reasons for using the office is a clear first step that can not only ensure devices deliver on what they need to, but also enhance the employee experience and improve how they view their employer.

2. Accept and address the hybrid paradox: As UK organisations examine their physical footprint, leaders have the opportunity to build the true hybrid workplace of the future. If employers

want to encourage a greater in-person presence, it starts by understanding that people value flexibility whilst also craving human connection.

3. View devices as a productivity powerhouse, not just as a technical necessity: Devices continue to be the beating heart of operations, fuelling workforce productivity and 81 percent now think of their device as their personal 'anywhere office', keeping them productive wherever they are thanks to core fundamentals of power, performance and ease of use. The devices people use have a significant impact on their morale, leading to greater productivity and business outcomes. The right devices can also enhance accessibility and create more inclusive experiences for people with disabilities and those working from remote locations.

The way in which we work and live has changed irrevocably. When it comes to the office, trying to fit back into an 'old house', when style and form have all evolved simply won't work. It's time to recognise why employees want to come to the office, the work that's best suited for when they are there and the tools and technology that make it all possible.

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ARTICLE BY GRAHAM WHITE - HR DIRECTOR (RETIRED)
& THEHRDIRECTOR EDITORIAL PANELLIST

FALL OF BABYLON

"WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, JUST LIKE BELSHAZZAR, HISTORY
IS TELLING US THAT MANY EMPLOYERS HAVE BEEN 'WEIGHED IN THE
BALANCES AND FOUND WANTING'"

In the old days, meetings were held behind closed doors and protected by an unambiguous sign demanding 'DO NOT DISTURB'. This was convention and it was sacrosanct. When forced into lockdown, virtual meetings were, as they say, a game changer... not to mention, an eye opener. The sight of a senior colleague in full flow, snapping their head around as a truculent toddler bursts in - pursued by a pyjamaed, sleep-deprived partner - has become the viral clip cliché of our time.

What have we, as senior people managers, really learned from this catalyst event? A few very special people were already watching, interpreting and making plans for the future approach of HR and a new world of work. Meanwhile, we recoiled as erstwhile visionaries like Musk, demanding a return to convention, with draconian intent. My take, I'm afraid, is that far too many traditional-leaning HR experts misread the room and either refused to believe or were simply unable to throw off the prejudices of outdated value sets. Concurrently, a new order of HR professionals has emerged, bringing to the strategic table a new and very exciting understanding of the future of work, that is no longer constrained by preconceptions. The concept that "work

is a chore" has ruined generations of employees. It has destroyed decades of employee/employer relationships and created an environment that has been a breeding ground for unhelpful quasi-political activists, weaponising the absence of job satisfaction, to drive a deep wedge into the crevasse-like gap we now call employee relations.

Historically, the natural reaction of HR to a crisis is to hunker down. In an attempt to protect the organisation, quickly pull down the shutters and state that, "it's not the right time" or "we need to put on the brakes." The simple fact is, that it doesn't matter what the context of our role or job is, what matters is that each employee understands the part they play and feel valued in the contribution

they make. Instead of avoiding investment in the future out of fear and uncertainty, the reality is that work should never have been seen as a chore. Humans are hardwired to contribute and to participate in collective activity, we can't live without one another. Connecting and supporting each other, both professionally and socially, is part of what makes us human.

I accept it was always going to be hard to know exactly what to expect in the world of work as we advance into 2023, especially with turmoil now originating as much from political and economic crisis, as it is from biological crisis. However, even I can see that the great transition to a brave new world of work is already underway and there is absolutely no possibility of a full-time

return to omni-location-based working. Whether we like it or not, just like Belshazzar, history is telling us that many employers have been “weighed in the balances and found wanting.” So, whilst it might be a little difficult to pin down where we might find ourselves specifically in the next twelve months, there is far too much empirical evidence staring us in the face to suggest, we cannot join with this new order of HR professionals and make credible plans. A number of significant trends are already giving shape to this brave new world of work and HR leaders need to grasp the nettle and make sure we have access to a view through this window onto the future of working life.

As I see it, the key trends follow a logical pattern, that starts with a need for HR to help their employers wise-up to the reality that a full-time return to location-based working is a completely unrealistic expectation, as hybrid working has stolen the hearts and minds of the global workforce. With fluidity in start and finish times and attendance flexibility now becoming an almost automatic employment right, HR needs to be sure they future proof their organisations with effective and supportive control measures, that will manage this new hybrid world of work that is here to stay. Biting at the heels of hybrid working - in a world that knows it needs to shake up the structure of when we work - is the equally expected move to a shorter working week. Whether it is less hours or condensed hours, the murmurings that could occasionally be heard on the margins of employee engagement have been gaining traction around the globe and we now see not only organisations, but also entire governments exploring this exciting new cultural alternative. It is clear this offers a major tool for HR to assist in the provision of wellbeing care as, it offers to employers a potential mitigation to the over-burdening of staff whilst still maintaining productivity levels. Right now, the world of work is considering the potential as we investigate the potential that condensed hours may provide better mental health and work/life balance for many workers top the list.

As labour shortages continue to cripple a number of professions across the UK - and the final cadre of enhanced final salary pensioners take advantage of early departures from the country's working population - I believe another key trend shaping the brave new world of work, is the need to move away from the “one-size-fits-all” approach to rigid and holistic terms and conditions. In its stead should be a new type of job personalisation, that provides for the specific needs of individual employees, their changing demographic needs and career expectations including; help with student debt, home purchase, parental

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MIDDLE MANAGERS”

leave, personal development plans and protection from work influenced stress. With the new label of “Bespoke Benefits Modelling”, HR will have its hands full protecting the organisation from equal pay claims, yet will need to invest time and effort to accelerate this approach if they want to not only retain a satisfied current workforce but also attract the best talent from elsewhere.

A final trend worth attention at this initial planning stage of our brave new world of work, will need to be a revisit of the workspace. As workers finally return to their original employment location and others see their temporary pandemic arrangements removed and enhanced working arrangements terminated the workforce will not be minded to simply accept a reversal of what has been a set of

arrangements, logistics or working practices that have enhanced the employee experience and many found to be much more acceptable in terms the job satisfaction and personal preference. Everything from availability of lounge-style relaxation areas to sound-proofed video-call cubicles, will be expected in future as will less crowded lifts, airier offices and expansive bathrooms. HR needs to take the lead on any workspace reshaping or remodelling to ensure it is clearly understood that the future workforces want their workspace to also be social space and creative space.

It would be both arrogant and fool hardy to suggest a level of personal omnipotence that claims my suggested trends are absolute. Despite my best efforts to research and predict trends, I must be honest and say, I don't know what I don't know and more importantly, if we have learned anything from the experiences of the last three years, it must surely be that we need to continually review, gather information and evidence and build plans and strategies that adapt, develop and change as they are informed. In simple terms, we need to create a brave new world of HR that is capable of effectively supporting a brave new world of work. To do this we will need to understand that the future operating model for HR will see us start, pause, review and once again restart. The HR wizards of a bygone age have no place in this brave new world of work. There is no place for mysterious HR crystal balls that impress senior leaders with ten-year strategic people plans, whilst planting fear in the hearts of middle managers. The future guarantees from HR to their employers will need to be based on a mix of assumptions, good planning and regular fact gathering, analysis and replanning. Add to that a generous dose of pragmatism and hope.

FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/GRAHAM-WHITE-508230A

PARTICIPATION, NOT HOPE

IN THIS GREAT WORK TRANSITION, WE HAVE TO REBALANCE AN UNHEALTHY OBSESSION ON 'WHAT' THIS IS, TO *HOW* WE ENABLE IT. HOW CAN WE EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MODERNISE OUTDATED WAYS OF WORKING? IN A PAINFUL EVOLUTION FROM PRODUCTIVITY, SHORT-TERMISM AND GRAPPLING COMPETITIVE RELEVANCE, A NEW DAWN BREAKS, WITH CHOICE THE STRONGEST LEVER OF ALL. WHILST PIONEERS ARE WAKING UP TO THE PERILS OF BEING ALL THINGS TO EVERYONE, THE TRADITIONAL LEADER IS STUCK, AFRAID TO MAKE CRITICAL CHOICES AND TRADE-OFFS.

ARTICLE BY CHRIS FURNELL, GLOBAL CONSULTING LEAD & SENIOR ORGANISATION DESIGN CONSULTANT AND EMMA JENNINGS, ORGANISATION DESIGN CONSULTANT - ON THE MARK

Every business must do more with less. 'Restructures' continue, yet cutting staff simply drives others to work harder and burnout. It's as if we've learnt nothing from this disastrous approach. The harder choice is outside-in - stopping or adapting a product or service of an organisation. This needs ruthless scrutiny of what adds value to customers, making clear and systemic choices. Amongst these difficult dilemmas, line leaders are observing a power shift, employees now have choice. If there is a mismatch between what staff care about and how the organisation conducts itself, then they move on. No amount of HR heroics can solve this business problem... it demands a different approach.

We can't rely only on philosophical ideas. Recently, fixations on "what" needs to be done has hindered progress. You must hold greater scrutiny on "how" to make it happen. Frankly, hope is not an effective strategy. If you think you've heard it all before, ask yourself if recent changes were designed with the whole ecosystem in mind. Or if it was point solutions, solving one problem while creating down- or upstream complications. Staff engagement has broadly remained the same for 30 years. Symptoms include change fatigue, silo working, 'us and them', over-specialisation to the point that no-one knows - or cares - about downstream impacts of their decisions. Meanwhile, your brightest employees exit stage left. "It's a culture thing", right? We argue that poor organisation design eats desired culture for breakfast.

For 60 years, behavioural and social sciences tell us that genuine involvement from a wide cross-section of a business, not only builds a fit-for-purpose organisation but drives personal

responsibility and change stickability. In the process, new understandings are born perspectives enhanced and assumptions tested. It's energising for employees to participate, and it builds significant social capital. Recently, the SVP of a global retailer was puzzled that within a highly talented team, work felt clunky and slow. Using a structured, inclusive approach, 90 team members collectively identified 23 problems and co-created high-impact solutions. Significantly more than the three pre-conceived solutions that leaders had initially assumed. Change is often cosmetic, like rearranging furniture. Push tactics might be convenient for leaders, but they do nothing towards real hearts-and-minds commitment. Push based, tell-and-sell drives consent-and-evade behaviour. Leaders must trust in the process, unfailingly believing that, finding the right mix of brilliant minds and harnessing that genius to work through the key decisions affecting the organisational DNA, will deliver amazing things.

Here are three principles to aid your quest: People support what they help to create. People don't change because someone tells them. It's not how humans are wired. To achieve lasting change, your people must own it. Focus on joint optimisation. Separating technical and social change is a recipe for disaster. Involve people systematically from the outset and you jointly optimise both technical and behavioural systems. Nothing changes until behaviour changes and patterns die hard.

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III

HYBRID/FLEX THE PROS & CONS MANIFEST

SOME OF THE WORLD'S PROFILE BUSINESS LEADERS HAVE SAID THAT HYBRID WORKING IS ALL FROTH AND NO SUBSTANCE. THEIR OPINION IS, ACHIEVING UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY IS BORDERING ON FANTASY. BUT FOR A FEW BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES - IN WHICH HYBRID IS THE DE FACTO WAY OF OPERATING - IT REALLY IS BUSINESS AS USUAL, WITH A TRANSIENT, PROJECT-BASED WORKFORCE THAT COMES AND GOES, AS AND WHEN REQUIRED. FOR THE MAJORITY, STUCK WITH MORE RIGID AND TRADITIONAL BUSINESS NORMS AND FRAMEWORKS, MUSCLE MEMORY KEEPS INFLEXING AND EXPOSING OLD TRAITS.

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#HR #Polls | Is hybrid and flex working in your organisation?

Yes

81.8%

No

18.2%



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ARTICLE BY DR. RODRIGO RODRIGUEZ-FERNANDEZ, GLOBAL HEALTH ADVISOR,
WELLNESS & MENTAL HEALTH, EMEA PRACTICE, CONSULTING & SOLUTIONS - INTERNATIONAL SOS

DUTY OF CARE

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO BEGIN ON THE FUTURE OF HYBRID AND FLEXIBLE WORKING WITHOUT REFLECTING ON EVENTS AND INFLUENCES THAT LED TO THESE SEISMIC CHANGES IN WORK. WHO COULD HAVE ENVISAGED LOCKDOWNS AND ENFORCED HOMEWORKING, LET ALONE THAT MANY BUSINESSES WERE ABLE TO CONTINUE, LARGELY WITHOUT DISRUPTION?

We are just coming to terms with the significant and nuanced changes that the past three years have caused - not least a shift in terms of employee expectations - as we navigate towards the future. The job market picked up and tightened and employee expectations of their employers subsequently increased. Many re-evaluated their priorities in their current employ, whilst others coveted benefits offered by competing firms. This is by no means a conclusive list of influencing elements, but the result is, we are now contending with attracting and retaining talent in a new non-traditional working environment. This heavily relies on meeting duty of care expectations which have also grown significantly.

Recently conducted research titled *Managing Duty of Care for Wellbeing Within a Hybrid Workforce**, draws on data from workers across the world to investigate the impact of hybrid work on wellbeing and duty of care. Some of the findings of the report are stark, showing that on average, workers put in 20 percent more hours than they are expected to per week and that working hours are the most significant contributor to stress and mental ill-health. Additionally, 60 percent of workers are reporting lower than generally expected levels of wellbeing and with many reporting challenging working conditions, it isn't surprising that some employers have experienced the trend of 'quiet quitting'. We have also learnt that the issue of burnout isn't exclusively

associated with a traditional working environment. Findings also show that, as many as 40 percent of all workers reported experiencing burnout.

"ALLOCATION OF SUFFICIENT RESOURCE TO ADDRESS EXCESSIVE WORKLOAD AND WORKING HOURS IS A NECESSARY ACTION, AS IS TAKING THE TIME TO MONITOR AND PROPERLY UNDERSTAND EMPLOYEE NEEDS"

Support and duty of care for employees has had to evolve to meet the needs of a hybrid world. Previous models that used to support employee wellbeing in a traditional working environment are outdated for many and new work life designs need to continually evolve, placing wellbeing at their core. Research shows that tailored support is needed, but ultimately what is key is that employers provide workforces with both a sense of autonomy and flexibility. This does not simply refer to the freedom for employees to choose where they work, as hybrid working does come with certain flaws. Instead, employees largely thrive in

environments which are autonomous as well as flexible. But to really drive change in employee wellbeing, organisations must ensure supporting employee health and wellbeing becomes and remains a strategic priority at board level. Allocation of sufficient resource to address excessive workload and working hours is a necessary action, as is taking the time to monitor and properly understand employee needs and expectations.

Informed by the research, here is a set of guidelines, to help organisations counter burnout and low levels of wellbeing. The guidance is built on four key principles, ABCD. Adapt to support the health and wellbeing of all employees as a strategic priority. Build solutions to address working hours and workload. Create an environment where time is taken to understand employee needs and expectations before actioning practices and processes. Develop a system to closely monitor the needs and satisfaction of employees who are unable to choose hybrid working. Action is needed now to ensure wellbeing becomes and remains a strategic priority.

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FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.INTERNATIONALSOS.COM



ARTICLE BY DR DEBBIE BAYNTUN-LEES, PROFESSOR OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE -
HULT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL (ASHRIDGE)

RECALIBRATION

"LEADERS AND MANAGERS WILL NEED TO LEARN TO BE 'AMBIDEXTROUS'
TO NAVIGATE ACROSS THE VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT WITH
EASE. THEY WILL NEED TO MANAGE BIAS, THINK INTEGRATIVELY AND BUILD
COMPLEX RELATIONAL SKILLS"

Hybrid working is here to stay, but many leaders are tussling with employees for control and still trying to apply old work practices to a new working model. Even those able to imagine the hybrid workplace as a thriving, energetic and engaged community, where employees feel a sense of purpose and belonging, struggle to make it work. Our businesses and institutions are part of a global experiment with leaders and managers often looking to HR professionals for guidance and clarity.

Increased freedom and flexibility are seen as beneficial for most people. However, there are always unintended consequences. Some leaders are uncomfortable with increased employee autonomy and point to inconsistencies across the organisation and the potential for perceived unfairness. There are also concerns that as time goes on, disconnected working patterns and preferences will lead to worsening productivity and team effectiveness. Despite the apprehension however, most of the organisations in the study, titled; *Rethinking Leadership for the Hybrid World of Work* were striving towards a hybrid model of working, believing in the importance of the workplace to bring people together, balanced with the flexibility that comes with virtual working.

The research suggests that the key to establishing successful hybrid working practices and cultural norms lies with

leaders and managers at all levels being able to develop new skills and navigate different conversations with their employees. They will need to understand and care about the real needs of employees and step into their crucial role as 'connectors' - connecting the needs and preferences of employees with those of the organisation and business. This requires aligning or integrating the purpose and passions of their people with the mission, purpose and productivity requirements of the organisation. It means leaders need to finely hone their relational and facilitation skills to enable a different type of relationship and a shift in patterns of workplace conversations. The study found that whilst many leaders are natural facilitators, many must learn and practice these skills before they feel comfortable.

The connecting leader works with employees and teams to co-design and

evolve the hybrid workplace. This doesn't mean there are no rules, or that employees have everything they want, but it does mean that leaders and employees must share responsibility for building trust and relationships and establish new agreed ways of working. Leaders must share their power and responsibility to evolve working models, spaces and cultures that support productivity and brand image, as well as employee engagement, health and wellbeing. Whilst evolving hybrid working toolkits can assist leaders and teams in their conversations and decision making going forward, there is also a clear need for development. Leaders and employees alike will need to develop the skills to share these responsibilities and be accountable for hybrid success. Being comfortable with the concept of 'hybridity' is also key. Employee

development, for example, needs to be aligned to hybridity competence and work performance. Leaders and managers at all levels will need to become more focused on enabling employees to perform at their best, with outcomes, not activity, being the primary focus. The criticality of connecting with employees regularly to 'check-in' and to ask what support they need, must come to the fore. This also mean connecting accountability with recognition and rewarding the achievements and individual recognition preferences of employees.

An organisation's culture is the most influential enabler of employees to do their best work. In this new world of work, reshaping culture must be everyone's responsibility and every interaction must be used as an opportunity for culture making. This means that organisations must find ways to recognise and reward managers, leaders, teams and employees for culture-making work. In other words, those who are intentional about creating positive cultures. Those who role model the desired values and behaviours and encourage others to take responsibility, build quality relationships and set an example. Organisations will need to consider carefully which aspects of culture are worth preserving and which need to be recreated to ensure the resilience, engagement and satisfaction employees need to do their best work.

Leaders and managers will need to learn to be 'ambidextrous' to navigate across the virtual and physical environment with ease. They will need to manage bias, think integratively and build complex relational skills to work skilfully with difference and balance the needs and aspirations of individual employees, teams and the organisation. This won't always be easy, but without these new conversations leaders run the risk of making uninformed decisions and putting team engagement, employee well-being and productivity at risk. Leaders will also need to develop the facilitation skills necessary to navigate connection-focused conversations. This is important for ensuring employees are in

tune with work expectations, but equally, that leaders are connected to their people's aspirations and wellbeing. This ability to facilitate discussion both among teams and with individuals is the key skill for hybrid success. Leaders need to be comfortable with holding difficult conversations and managing employee expectations on issues, such as flexible working options or pay increases during today's cost-of-living crisis. They also need the skills to enable an inclusive dialogue, in which everyone is given a voice, not least on how hybrid working might work for their team. Addressing power differences and potential conflict

"GOOD FACILITATION
MEANS LEARNING TO
APPLY STRUCTURE
AND PROCESS TO TEAM
INTERACTIONS TO
MAXIMISE THE COLLECTIVE
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE
GROUP"

are other important considerations whilst remaining mindful of the need for a compassionate, collaborative approach.

Good facilitation means learning to apply structure and process to team interactions to maximise the collective contributions of the group. It is crucial that differences of opinion are aired, ideas are shared, options are critiqued and everyone works together to reach agreement. This requires a managerial mindset that is able to learn, share power and responsibility and to collaborate with people. But it additionally requires leaders to be visible, to develop rapport, build trust and create psychological safety. Leaders will also need a strong grasp on DEIB and wellbeing and social sustainability. These are top priorities as leaders navigate 'the great resignation' and a very competitive talent market. Organisations need sustainability

strategies that give employees purpose, wellbeing strategies that are equitable and inclusive of diverse employees, as well as comprehensive DEI initiatives that deliver a consistent employee experience for everyone. At the same time leaders need to recognise that diverse employees experiences and needs in relation to wellbeing can differ dramatically. These strategies need to be in synchrony.

How will we know if hybrid working is a success? The skill is to identify the benefits and unintended consequences of hybrid working and focus on the measurable indicators that will let you know when you are well balanced. The following framework - adapted from Johnson 1998 - can act as a scorecard to help the organisation assess how well it is doing. HR professionals are well placed to help organisations create their own, tailored version. *Step 1:* List the benefits and unintended consequences of face-to-face working. *Step 2:* List the benefits and unintended consequences of virtual working. *Step 3:* Identify the measurable positive indicators (things you can count that will let you know that you are reaping the benefits of hybrid working. *Step 4:* Identify the measurable early warning indicators that will let you know that you are experiencing the downside of hybrid working. *Step 5:* Align on a dashboard of metrics that you can use to monitor whether hybrid working is in balance or starting to wobble off course. Hybrid Working is an opportunity to achieve the best of both the face-to-face and virtual working worlds. However, embracing the challenges and navigating the tensions so organisations can realise all the benefits will require focused tenacity. Successful leadership in a hybrid workplace will depend on the ability to think outside the box and look for opportunities.

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*Hult International Business School

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WWW.HULT.EDU

TIGHTROPE

That more than three quarters of UK organisations have embraced hybrid working, suggests this new working world is permanent. But making hybrid working really work for all is complex and lived experience already suggests that, whilst it can be a dream for employees, it can equally be a nightmare for line managers. It still feels experimental for most as they evolve and adapt in real-time, walking the line between trying to keep both employees and business leaders happy.*

"EVERYONE KNEW WHERE THEY STOOD WITH THE OLD WORKING PRACTICES AND NEW RULES MUST BE AGREED AND UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYONE IF EMPLOYEES AND LEADERS ARE GOING TO BE ON THE SAME PAGE"



ARTICLE BY AMIRA KOHLER, DIRECTOR OF PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE - APPRAISAL

The old rules have gone out the window, but nothing new has replaced them. Everyone knew where they stood with the old working practices and new rules must be agreed and understood by everyone if employees and leaders are going to be on the same page. Research shows that the perspectives of employees and managers on the effectiveness of hybrid working can differ greatly. Microsoft recently surveyed 20,000 staff across 11 countries which revealed a major disconnect between managers and employees' views about productivity when working from home. While 87 percent of workers felt they worked as, or more efficiently when working from home, 80 percent of managers disagreed. The degree of the discrepancy is striking and prevalent in many companies sectors, as they evolve their performance management processes. It is a dilemma, because whilst hybrid working brings many benefits, it can nevertheless be extremely difficult to manage. The CEO of Yelp, Jeremy Stoppelman, has branded hybrid working "the hell of half measures" and "the worst of both worlds". In response, Yelp has adopted a remote-first approach rather than trying to juggle with a blend of home and office working.

The trick is to find a balance that works for both parties without compromising on company results. Finding a way to achieve this balance is complex, because the work itself varies, some work is best completed alone, in the quiet, whereas some work requires and thrives on collaboration - and also because people themselves are different and want different things from the office. But finding a good balance is possible and as hybrid working seems set to stay, finding such a balance is critical for organisational effectiveness and a healthy, productive and engaged workforce. A hybrid charter checklist will help guide towards a balance, by agreeing the ground rules for hybrid working, ensuring alignment between the needs of employees, the team and the company. There are many different perspectives for a manager to consider when setting the ground rules for hybrid working, including their own style as a manager, the company's overall strategy to hybrid

working, the style of work the team undertakes and the views of the individuals within the team. A checklist should cover all considerations and involve the full team in creating a hybrid charter, to ensure collective agreement and shared ownership across the entire team. Taking a partnership approach is critical to ensuring all team members buy in to the hybrid ground rules and approach.

"ACHIEVING SUCCESSFUL
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REQUIRES ONGOING
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ABOUT COLLABORATION,
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TRUST ON BOTH SIDES"

Many organisations have adopted a hybrid approach and found that it has worked well for them. This is especially true of companies that rely heavily on technology to conduct their business. A case in point is Maze Theory, a video game producer has found that by embracing hybrid working they have been able to look further afield for talent and now have employees up and down the country. Duplo International, who specialise in high-end printing technology, had embraced hybrid before the pandemic. They already knew it was an approach that worked for them so have supported it further with new processes and technology to ensure employees remain focused and connected. Then there is Clarity Travel, which has adopted an evolutionary approach to hybrid working to ensure they are continually listening to and learning from employees and managers, making appropriate policy changes along the journey. Neil Wainwright-Farrar, Head of Learning and Development has explained how vital ongoing communication is within Clarity Travel, which has led them to adapt both their performance management and training approach. They have altered their check-in

template to add in wellbeing prompts which vary according to the needs of different teams and departments. Check-ins between managers and their employees take place frequently, usually monthly, to ensure an ongoing dialogue is maintained. To respond to the fluid business environment, goals are now set in the near-term, usually with a three-month timeframe, rather than a six- or twelve-month duration. In leading the Clarity Travel Learning team, Neil has responded to a hybrid working environment by moving to a far more blended approach to development. Maximising their new LMS (Learning Management System) they have brought in more eLearning, with a greater emphasis on short 20-to-30-minute courses and bite-sized, 'TikTok' style micro-learning, which those working remotely find easier to digest.

With the world of work in an ongoing state of flux, achieving successful hybrid working requires ongoing conversation within the workplace. It's about collaboration, adult dialogue and trust on both sides. The post-pandemic merry-go-round has not stopped yet, so the workplace conversation must not stop either. The world of work is still evolving and if hybrid work is going to work for everyone, organisations need to take a step back and consider what form of future working strategy will best work for them. This will be different for each business and may well be different for each department or team. To find the right balance and a sustainable future, managers need to keep talking to their employees and they will need a structured framework to follow. Ongoing healthy dialogue and monitoring will ensure hybrid working still works for all concerned, regardless of shifting sands.

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FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.APPRAISD.COM

PEACOCKS

BUSY OFFICES ARE THE TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH TO LEARN DISCIPLINE, RESPECT AND TIMEKEEPING AND TO BUILD BONDS, THROUGH CORRIDOR CHATS, COFFEE BREAKS AND DRINKS AFTER WORK. BUT MANY GRADUATES IN RECENT TIMES HAVE NOT HAD THAT EXPERIENCE AND MAY NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NAVIGATING THE PROS AND CONS OF THIS NEW WAY OF WORKING. WHERE BALANCES LIE ARE BEING TRIALLED IN REAL-TIME.

ARTICLE BY MARIELLA JACOBS, MARKETING ASSISTANT - IBEX GALE

The pros are, of course, that remote or hybrid models allow huge flexibility for time management, which increases the opportunity to keep active. Being at home can make it easier to achieve those recommended 10,000 daily steps. For younger people the money saved on gym membership is a bonus with cost-of-living pressures. Dragging yourself away from your laptop may be challenging, but walking regularly has been proven to increase energy, improve sleep and reduce stress. The hybrid model allows flexibility and has a positive effect on your cognitive and emotional state.

The headlining pro is, of course, work-life balance and the hybrid model can provide more control to find that. Working remotely a couple of times a week allows for catch up on “life admin”, for example deal with that washing pile or preparing a meal. Being able to do these small jobs can reduce stress. Younger people may need help with what is expected and it is important to set some boundaries, but with trust and support, it should benefit everyone on many different levels. Also as the cost-of-living bites, for recent graduates whose salaries are stretched, this is a significant help, with days working from home reducing spend and reducing stress of paying bills.

As for the cons, socialising - or lack of it - has to top the list. Working from home can be quiet, with little face-to-face interaction and we thrive on socialisation and when this aspect is removed from our daily routines, the world can seem a lonelier place. For young adults, this is a sudden shift as they will have recently been removed from family life and education, where there was the hustle and bustle of daily life, until pandemic disrupted, of course. Sitting at home alone all day can be strange and many will need support with daily structure is

important. It makes sense for managers to check in with younger employees first thing, to support them with planning their day, invite them to video meetings even where they are just an observer and debrief at the end of the day. These things might naturally happen in an office, but they need more proactivity in a remote environment.

Aligning people’s schedules in a hybrid team to enable collaborative working can be challenging. In our company we all share calendars and it works. But studies have shown that some people find the scheduling consequences of hybrid working more emotionally draining. Young people might need more training to help them be organised and to understand that it can be a juggling act. Of course, communication and collaboration issues are inevitable and knowing how to read a room on a video call or when to contribute. Times like these can be frustrating, but challenging situations encourage our cognitive and problem-solving parts of the brain and are excellent for growth and development. These are just a few pros and cons and the caveat is, of course, that all experiences are unique. It seems the hybrid model is here to stay and graduates and young adults entering business are the demographic that arguably requires more guidance on how to navigate this new norm. Overall, it can be a huge positive. The flexibility allows more balance and can save money too and with 97 percent of workers in the UK wanting to work remotely for the remainder of their career, it can’t be that bad, right?

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IV

TACKLING ATTRITION

THE CHIPS ARE DOWN, THE STAKES ARE HIGH. BLAME FOR WORKPLACE STRESS, BURNOUT AND ABSENTEEISM IS INCREASING ATTRITION AND EMPLOYERS ARE EITHER FAILING OR REFUSING TO CHANGE WITH THE TIMES. COVID FORCED THAT CHANGE AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MANY BUSINESSES HAVE BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY A TURNING OF THE TABLES, THE RISING VOLUME OF EMPLOYEE VOICE, RISING EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT WORK HAS TO OFFER - NOW SET AGAINST A BLEAK ECONOMIC FUTURE - AND, ABOVE ALL ELSE, AUTONOMY AND CONTROL OVER CAREER AND DESTINY. THE OLD CONVENTIONS OF CAREER STAGES AND LINEAR PROGRESS ARE RENDERED TO HISTORY.

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#HR #Polls | Do you think your organisation is doing enough to keep attrition under control?

Yes

36.4%

No

63.6%



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ARTICLE BY THOM DENNIS, CEO - SERENITY IN LEADERSHIP

SYMPTOMATIC DEPARTURE

COVID TAUGHT US, AMONGST MANY OTHER THINGS, THAT WHERE THERE IS A SUFFICIENTLY PERSUASIVE IMPERATIVE, THINGS CAN CHANGE VERY QUICKLY AND THAT SACRED COWS CAN BECOME UNCONSECRATED BARRIERS WITHIN DAYS. ENFORCED OR JUST BOLDY UNDERTAKEN CHANGE, WAS REWARDED WHEN SEIZED WITH CREATIVITY, LEAVING LEADERS WHO WERE RISK-AVERSE OR SLOW, EXPOSED.

Toxic corporate culture is by far the strongest predictor of industry-adjusted attrition, ten times more important than compensation in predicting people leaving. Follow-on research showed that numbers one and two on the list of defining factors of what constitutes a 'toxic corporate culture' are disrespect and non-inclusion. It goes on, three is unethical, four is cut-throat, five is abusive and so on. Also, retaliation for speaking up about wrongdoing is at an all-time high. So, what are the main things to focus on, to keep people and to attract the best to join?

Foster psychological safety: Only 26 percent of workers felt psychologically safe during the pandemic, according to a recent Workhuman report - most organisations are still not taking psychological safety seriously when it should be a strategic priority, essential for enabling organisational resilience and growth. Create performance metrics that measure psychological safety, diversity, equity and inclusion. *Give diversity and inclusion the right standing:* This means vesting in whoever has been charged with this responsibility, the resources, accountability and authority to actually do their job. Many organisations have a tick-box attitude to DE&I, but one-off efforts will not cut it, indeed they are almost always a waste of investment.

As Aiko Bethea said: "Stop demanding the business case for investing in diversity, equity and inclusion work. Just do it!"

"PEOPLE ARE OFTEN PROMOTED BECAUSE OF THEIR PERFORMANCE, WITHOUT EXAMINING THEIR ABILITY TO MANAGE AND LEAD"

Listen to retain: Take the time to walk about and listen to your people - if there is a problem, it's the people closest to it that often know how to fix it - if only management listened to them. Think hard about the office of the future, a place where workers want to be, to see friends, explore ideas and find meaning. *Improve leadership through self-awareness training:* People are often promoted because of their performance, without examining their ability to manage and lead. At the same time, attrition is equally often attributed to people leaving their manager. So, we must be more focused on interpersonal skills and self-awareness. This calls for an exploration of values, beliefs and biases - we all have them -

so let us be deliberately aware. *Show gratitude:* A Glassdoor survey found that 80 percent of employees say they'd be willing to work harder for an appreciative boss - a simple but really powerful way of doing this is hand-writing - not typing - a thank you note. Focus on solutions rather than blame and always give credit where credit is due.

Take advantage of the job market flux: Will there be a crash this year? Job cuts in the tech world are mounting, as companies that led the ten-year stock bull market adapt to a new reality of economic slowdown. We are entering a new world and the best are learning how to adapt to it through education, community and flexibility. *Be more culturally intelligent:* CQ is a globally recognised measure of how good we are at understanding cultural differences such as gender, age, nationality, ethnicity and location and assesses beyond simple sensitivity and awareness. It is a skill that can be developed, so practice, in order to understand better how decisions are influenced by beliefs, attitudes and values. Inclusion, combined with high CQ lead to deeper trust and stronger values, which in turn lead to increased productivity as well as reduced bias, conflict and loss of talent.

FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.SERENITYINLEADERSHIP.COM



ARTICLE BY SUZIE WALKER, FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR -
SUZIE WALKER EXECUTIVE SEARCH

CAPTIVATING

"AS BUDGETS ARE TIGHTENED, TEAMS ARE REDUCED, WORKLOAD RISES,
WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS AFFECTED AND STRESS LEVELS INCREASE, LEADING
TO LOWER JOB SATISFACTION AND EVEN LESS OUTPUT"

Attrition is defined as, 'the process of reducing something's strength or effectiveness through sustained attack or pressure'. For the workforce, this is a gradual wearing away and, for teams, this erosion of resource and structure puts an enormous amount of pressure on the people left behind. If attrition and the reasons behind it are not addressed, its slow creep impacts on the entire organisation, its culture, its output and its competitiveness.

With a looming recession, organisations would ordinarily expect attrition to slow down, but this assumption is a risky move. Over the past few years, workforce priorities have changed and talent shortages remain, so now is the time to act. As a backdrop to attrition, the current economic climate is complex and does not provide a clear picture on how attrition may be affected. Arguably, a forecasted recession will help to reduce attrition, as people may decide to stick with their current employers in times of uncertainty, even if they do want to change jobs in the future. As redundancies increase elsewhere, there could be a concern of having to settle for lower salaries and increased competition for roles. However, for most sectors and functions, the reality is that a talent shortage is still very much an issue - the competition for candidates remains fierce

and employers often find themselves outbid in the final recruitment stages. In addition, by failing to look carefully at corporate culture, the risk and impact of quiet quitting - a new and much-publicised phenomenon - is just as damaging. While people choose to stay in roles, quiet quitting reduces their engagement and willingness to overperform. If widespread, this could lead to a gradual disengagement of the workforce at large and a steady reduction of overall organisational output. For the less risk-averse, or for those in genuine need of an increased income, the cost-of-living crisis may actually force their hands, with a need to move where opportunities for greater rewards and remuneration are readily available.

So, whilst the current economic climate does not provide an accurate assessment of things to come, there is

a clear need for internal analysis and resolution to reduce rising levels of attrition now. If not, a combination of recession, cost-of-living concerns and attrition could create a perfect storm for many organisations. As budgets are tightened, teams are reduced, workload rises, work-life balance is affected and stress levels increase, leading to lower job satisfaction and even less output. This negative cycle will continue if left unchallenged and, in a competitive job market, the risk of attrition will increasingly jeopardise job retention for the remaining workforce. The trouble with attrition is this slow weakening of the teams in place. While mass redundancies and large staff cuts are, of course, more brutal in size and initial impact, they are arguably easier to manage from a cultural point of view, when compared with the gradual

reduction of teams by ten-to-15 percent. It is hugely important for employers to look quickly and carefully at causes to stem the tide of talented people heading out of the organisation.

So, what does the workforce actually want? Firstly, all people want to have their say and to feel heard and so providing opportunities for the workforce to feedback - and to see that feedback used when developing new policies and procedures - will help to make a difference. What the workforce wants also very much depends on personal circumstances right now, so there is not a quick fix. Gaining intelligence through feedback opportunities, including regular and consistent one-to-ones, team meetings and workforce questionnaires, will enable informed decision-making for senior leadership teams. While remuneration is likely to be a growing concern for many, there is still a need for purpose and belonging, which cannot be ignored. People work best in a culture where organisational values are genuine and align with their own. An increased focus on environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG), will help to support this, as organisations fight to prove their environmental and social credentials to win business and attract customers. However, the power of these policies in practice, when genuinely embedded in the business culture, help to create a happier and more productive workforce too. Additionally, a sense of belonging is now consistently highlighted as essential for a positive workplace culture. Deloitte, reports that 'belonging is not only good for workers, but for business too. Belonging can lead to a 56 percent increase in job performance and a 50 percent reduction in turnover risk'. Belonging is supported by shared purpose, which leads to strong inter-personal connections and, while remote working has challenged this sense of belonging - particularly during the onboarding process - providing a sense of trust and autonomy will also help to strengthen team bonds. Indeed, finding a corporate culture that combines all these ingredients will ensure long-term success.

Undoubtedly, the past few years have highlighted a need for considerable organisational change and transformation and for employers to embrace this change, even if it feels uncomfortable. Organisations that have adapted, forged ahead with ESG policies and practices and created modern and flexible workplaces have flourished. By welcoming diversity of thought and feedback - truly listening to the workforce and implementing ideas - they have delivered new practices that reflect how people want to work, motivating teams and increasing output in the process.

"IT IS NO LONGER
POSSIBLE TO IGNORE
THE KEY DRIVERS OF A
GREAT WORK CULTURE -
ORGANISATIONAL VALUES,
BELONGING, FLEXIBILITY,
COLLABORATION,
OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN
AND GROW AND SUPPORT
FOR WELLBEING"

This, of course, includes hybrid working and flexible hours, with specific time dedicated to in-person and collaborative working - working in a more intentional and effective way and reducing unnecessary meetings. Frankly, flexible working requests can no longer be ignored - indeed employees are likely to soon be given the right to ask for flexible working from day one. So with legislation underway, plus a well-publicised six-month experiment of a four-day week, involving 70 UK companies concluded, it's safe to say that the traditional nine-to-five, five-day week will be history.

So let us look at the key levers for controlling attrition and maintaining retention. Learning and development is, of course, a known long-term strategy for

retention and continues to rank highly in importance for the workforce. In fact, the *LinkedIn 2022 Workplace Learning Report* highlighted that opportunity to learn and grow, is now the number one factor that people say defines an exceptional work environment. In addition, people who rate their corporate culture highly are 25 percent more likely to be happy at work, with 31 percent more likely to recommend working at their organisation. While technical skills will always be essential for career progression and will help to futureproof an organisation, soft skills are also in demand to ensure effective leadership and to foster a positive corporate culture. In addition, the looming recession and cost-of-living crisis is an opportunity for employers to support their workforce with financial education and accessible advice, so they do not feel the pressure to find alternative employment. Understandably, we have also seen a rise in anxiety and other mental health issues over the past few years too, which has impacted working life. Wellbeing policies and professional support, including coaching, are ways in which employers can help.

There is much to be done and for organisations that have been slower to react to changes over the past few years, time is of the essence to embrace and make the changes necessary to attracting and retaining talent. With attrition on the rise and talent pools reduced, it is no longer possible to ignore the key drivers of a great work culture. Organisational values, belonging, flexibility, collaboration, opportunities to learn and grow and support for wellbeing - will ensure that talented people stay for the longer-term, without the need to rely on inflated salaries which, in the current economic climate, is no longer feasible in many sectors.

FOR FURTHER INFO
SUZIEWALKEREXECUTIVESEARCH.CO.UK

FRACTURES

The saying “people join a company but leave a manager”, points to the importance of the manager/employee relationship and how essential it is to engagement and performance. During a time of continuing uncertainty and increased attrition, maintaining workplace morale and wellbeing is essential. But the after effects of the pandemic - along with economic uncertainty and a re-evaluation of what people now expect - has created an environment of increased conflict.

"IF WE JUMP IN WITH A SOLUTION WITHOUT LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING THE MULTIPLE SIDES OF A STORY, WE DENY SOMEONE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VENT AND PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS"



ARTICLE BY ALEXANDRA EFTHYMIADES,
DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER - CONSENSIO

Unresolved workplace conflict is one reason why people leave their employment. This article will explore some of the techniques used by workplace mediators and conflict coaches that can help managers support team members who are experiencing conflict in a more helpful way. It's natural for HR or managers to want to step in and "fix" things when they see members of their team in conflict. It's a natural reaction to have - we see that someone is in difficulty and we want to help them out. We may have been trained or socialised into believing that this is the right thing to do, but this tendency can do more harm than good, with the unintended consequence that it takes away the opportunity for the individual to explore their situation, understand it better and then come up with a solution over which they feel ownership and accountability.

When an employee approaches HR or a manager with a problem, they're not necessarily looking for someone to find and impose a solution. Often, employees are looking for a sounding board to talk through what is going on for them, or they want their views and feelings to be validated. Venting is a healthy way for us to let go of some of the emotion of conflict and it allows us to process our feelings in a more useful way. If we jump in with a solution without listening and understanding the multiple sides of a story, we deny someone the opportunity to vent and process their emotions and thoughts. There are practical steps that HR and managers and indeed all of us, can follow to support people who are experiencing workplace conflict.

Self-awareness: The first step is to become aware of the tendency to step in and "fix" things. When we understand why being a "fixer" is not helpful, we are less likely to do it. We can then become more intentional in how we interact with people and adapt our attitudes and behaviours accordingly. In practice, this means that next time someone comes to us with a problem, we will consciously resist the urge to tell them what to do.

Listen: When someone comes to speak about a challenging issue they are facing,

we often take over the conversation and give advice rather than simply listen. This may be because we want to "help" them, or because we don't have the patience to listen to them. Everyone has a desire to be heard and when we are experiencing difficulties, we want someone to simply listen to us. The mere act of listening will allow the person to explain what they are experiencing and thereby process their feelings about the situation more constructively. *Show empathy:* Put simply, empathy is the ability to understand the feelings of others. We can show empathy through non-verbal and verbal communication and both are useful. When we show empathy, people feel heard, understood, respected and validated. We don't have to agree with someone to show empathy, but it builds connection and trust, which are important to all workplace relationships.

"AN EMPLOYEE IN
CONFLICT, WHO COMES
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DECISION"

Remain impartial: It can be tempting to take sides, especially if we have ambivalent feelings towards one or more people involved in the conflict. Remain impartial and open-minded and cognisant of the fact that there are always multiple and often contradictory sides to a story. In practice, this means avoiding statements that sound critical or judgemental. There are certain questions that can help, such as "What might be going on for them that makes them speak with you like that?" or "Could there be another way of interpreting the tone of that email?" *Ask questions:* Open-ended questions help people in conflict to better understand their situation, why they feel the way they do and what kind of support - if any - they need to reach a resolution.

Useful questions include: "What triggered you to feel so upset? What feelings are underneath your anger? How did you expect your colleague to behave in that tough team meeting? If someone came to you with the same issue, what would you tell them?" Guide them to their own solution. When we try to fix a situation of conflict, we usually base this solely on what one person has told us. However, there are always multiple perspectives and perceptions of what actually happened. By imposing a solution, we may end up making the situation worse, because we haven't explored the wider context and the feelings and perceptions of everyone involved. In practice, this means asking people what they would like to do about the situation they are in. You could ask questions such as: "What would help you in this situation? What choices do you have? How would the other person react if you came to them with that idea? Do you feel able to speak with them about what happened in that team meeting?"

An employee in conflict, who comes to a self-determined outcome, will feel empowered because they will have ownership of the decision, they have reached to resolve their conflict. Organisations will do well to invest in building a culture where there is psychological safety to speak up about conflict, to discuss challenging issues with colleagues without fear of repercussions and to support them to come to a resolution - increasing engagement and reducing attrition in the process. It's hard to tackle our tendency to go into "fixing" mode when this is so ingrained in how most of us support people who are experiencing conflict at work. Recognising our tendency to do this and understanding that this will not lead to a self-determined outcome, is a helpful way of framing this issue. The steps outlined above will strengthen the manager-employee relationship, which is a key driver of wellbeing, engagement and productivity.

FOR FURTHER INFO
WWW.CONSENSIOPARTNERS.CO.UK

MIND OVER MATTER

MORE THAN 19 MILLION AMERICANS HAVE RESIGNED SINCE APRIL 2021 AND WHILE WE HAVE ARGUABLY BEEN WORKING TOWARDS A CULTURE OF BURNOUT FOR YEARS, THE PANDEMIC IS CREDITED AS A CATALYST FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS ACROSS THE U.S. WITH REPORTS OF 76 PERCENT OF WORKERS EXPRESSING ISSUES - INCLUDING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION - UP 17 PERCENT IN JUST TWO YEARS.

ARTICLE BY MICHAEL GOLDBERG, BOARD MEMBER - COUNSLR

We have continued to witness the consequences of deprioritising the mental health of employees across a myriad of industries, from the frontlines of healthcare to the corporate setting. The recent report from the U.S. Surgeon General calls on leadership to take action that includes; prioritising workplace psychological safety, as well as normalising and supporting a greater focus on mental health, amongst other initiatives. While many leaders will nod along and genuinely desire to bring in solutions to minimise the risk of attrition, many struggle for solutions, even though the answers could lie right at their fingertips. In 2021, mobile-phone users in the U.S. sent roughly two trillion SMS or MMS messages. By tapping into what employees already own - a smart phone - and using a means that they are well acquainted with, texting, employers can remove a myriad of barriers of accessing mental health support and furthering the opportunity for people to address feelings of stress, anxiety and burnout, which can directly lead to increasing attrition.

It is estimated by the Association of American Medical Colleges that in the next several years, the United States will be short by 15,000-30,000 of psychiatrists, further supporting the fact that the solutions of the past will not adequately serve the needs of employees today and into the future. When seeking out solutions, the more convenient the option, the more potential there is for the employee to use and benefit from it. Like a rising tide lifts all boats, employers who help their employees, also help the business. Empowering employees with a means to navigate their concerns and emotions can help them avoid the road to burnout. This not only allows a company to keep its top talent, but can help employees stay on the road

to success. For example, offering an employee a way to meet with a mental health professional through modern options, removes the need for an employee to choose between booking a session with a counselor after work - in-person or even virtually - instead of focusing on non-work matters and family. In addition, if a counselor is available any day at anytime, people are no longer required to carry the burden of a meeting that went poorly on a Friday, all the way to Tuesday, simply because that is when they were scheduled for a session.

In many cases, it is not one isolated incident that led an employee to attrition. It often stems from a buildup of situations and disappointments - both personally and professionally. Therefore, it is worth considering that if an employee could have had instruction to know how to diffuse and manage these concerns and challenges along the way, attrition could have been avoided altogether. The idea of baking mental health solutions into employee benefits may not seem novel with Employee Assistance Programmes, but reports show that EAP usage remains low - despite one-in-five adults in the U.S. experiencing mental illness - which begs the question, do we need to go about providing access in a different way? In fact, studies show that text-based support can lead to significantly less missed work and can result in increased overall work productivity. This underscores the value in offering solutions such as this, alongside other options, such as; online, n-person therapy and webinars, for example. With the right solution, employees and employers can reap benefits - including employee retention and a positive work environment - that can foster a healthy bottom line.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[COUNSLR.COM](https://www.counslr.com)

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FOUR BILLION REASONS

UNSUPPORTED MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS CAN DECIMATE WOMEN'S ABILITY TO FUNCTION AT WORK AND REMAINS STUBBORNLY MISUNDERSTOOD. PRACTICAL MEASURES THAT CAN HELP THESE SYMPTOMS NEED TO BE DISCUSSED AND ACTIONED. BUT TALK TO MOST MANAGERS ABOUT THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF MENOPAUSE AND FEW WILL BE ABLE TO CITE ANYTHING BEYOND HOT FLUSHES. INDEED, WOMEN THEMSELVES ARE UNSURE.



ARTICLE BY HELEN LETCHFIELD, CO-FOUNDER - PARENT & PROFESSIONAL

Most women start the journey into menopause totally unsupported. Menopause is officially defined as having had no period for over a year, meaning many women don't realise the years leading up to this - the perimenopause - is when they are most likely to need support. Because they are still menstruating, they often mistakenly assume they shouldn't talk to their GP until their periods stop and this means unnecessarily delaying access to treatment, leaving many to struggle alone: "I just don't feel like myself", is the comment women entering into this phase without realising it are most likely to say. Although everyone's journey is unique, common symptoms include, feelings of anxiety and depression, loss of confidence, memory issues, fatigue, mood swings, weight gain, hot flushes and sleep problems.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) is now lobbying for the menopause to be treated as a "core employee health issue". Among the recommendations are that hormone replacement therapy (HRT) prescriptions be made free in England because, for most women, menopause symptoms can be easily treated. Another recommendation is

a Government co-ordinated and employer-led campaign, to raise awareness and help tackle the taboo. This is to be welcomed because even when women know how best to support themselves, it's also essential that they feel supported by their organisations. This starts with their manager. Younger managers might have no comprehension of what it feels like to experience menopause symptoms. This means it can be helpful to encourage open and honest conversations between managers and those who have already gone through menopause.

Being open about such a personal topic can feel very uncomfortable for both the manager and employee. It can therefore be helpful for the woman to talk to a coach or mentor about what they're going through and how best to talk to their manager about it, in much the same way that women are given maternity transition coaching to support the impact of starting a family on working life. Once the employee has identified challenges they're struggling with in the workplace, they can then discuss practical ways to overcome this with their manager. For example, the chance to work more flexibly if they're feeling particularly fatigued.

Overarching all this should be clear policies for how to support women going through the menopause. These should cover a mission statement about how the employer intends to become a menopause-friendly workplace and an overview of the practical solutions in place to support individuals. The policy also needs to integrate with wider diversity and inclusion objectives and have success measures put in place. It's also important to clarify the role of HR and managers for supporting employees experiencing menopause symptoms. As well as explain the official pathways and communication channels women can use to discuss any reasonable adjustments to working conditions they might need, be this the introduction of a desk fan, opportunity to wear cooler clothing or work more flexibly. The more clarity employers can provide the better. Menopause doesn't have to be a taboo or shocking thing for anyone to experience, it's a natural life transition that half the population can expect to experience.

FOR FURTHER INFO
[PANDPCOACHING.CO.UK](https://pandpcoaching.co.uk)

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WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE'S ROUND UP OF THE PEOPLE AT THE TOP OF THE
 HR & PEOPLE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION, WHO HAVE MOVED TO NEW JOB ROLES



Tamsin Vine

ROLE CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER
COMPANY TATE & LYLE

Tate & Lyle PLC, is pleased to announce the appointment of Tamsin Vine as Chief Human Resources Officer and a member of Tate & Lyle's Executive Committee.

In her new role, Tamsin will remain based in the UK and will lead Tate & Lyle's global HR team and continue to focus on evolving the organisation's new culture, driving talent development and creating a diverse and inclusive place to work. Tamsin joined Tate & Lyle in November 2021 as Vice President, HR, responsible for corporate functions and organisational development and talent. Prior to joining Tate & Lyle, she spent 12 years in global roles with Sodexo in Paris, covering all aspects of people development, from recruitment through to learning and leadership development, performance and talent management.

Sam Woosnam

ROLE HR DIRECTOR
COMPANY COVERAGE CARE SERVICES

Shropshire's largest independent not-for-profit care provider, Coverage

Care Services has appointed Sam Woosnam as HR Director, as the sector continues to face mounting recruitment challenges.

Sam has 20 years of experience in HR, leading up to this promotion to the role of HR Director at Coverage Care Services. She joined the team eight years ago as a HR officer and has since worked her way up. Sam has overall responsibility for the HR, payroll and recruitment, setting the strategic direction across all 12 of the homes in an organisation that recognises and embeds care as a career. She will be responsible for continuing to provide excellent training and offer a programme of development for those looking to advance and develop their skills, to build and support a driven, resilient and compassionate workforce that delivers a high level of care to residents.

Rachel Mooney

ROLE CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER
COMPANY PETS AT HOME

Rachel Mooney has been announced as the new Chief People Officer at pet supplies multi-chain, Pets at Home.

Rachel previously held the same role at Monzo Bank and, prior to that, held senior positions at Snow Software, Vodafone and Google, as well as several board roles, including a non-executive board position at Vodafone Group Services. Rachel has experience in leading best in class people functions, across

globally recognised brands, as well as smaller, agile and digitally-led organisations. She had previously been Chief People and Culture Officer at IT management firm Snow Software and before then, HR Strategy Lead for Citrix Systems in Ireland and EMEA.

Laura Hagan

ROLE CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER
COMPANY GYMSHARK

Fitness brand Gymshark has announced the appointment of Laura Hagan to the role of Chief People Officer.

Laura is the latest in a series of senior appointments at the company, following former Asos exec Mat Dunn as Chief Financial Officer, Burberry's John Douglas as Chief Technology Officer and Carly O'Brien to VP, Marketing. She will be joining Gymshark after over four years as Tate & Lyle's Chief HR Officer, where she oversaw the transformation across its food solutions business. Prior to that, Hagan served in a number of key roles over 11 years at Dyson, one of which included Global HR Director. Laura's first key responsibility is to ensuring the retailer attracts the "right talent at the right time", ultimately enabling growth in a considered, structured and sustainable way, as the firm looks ahead to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

FOR FURTHER UPDATES

To see full updates, movers & shakers and much more, please visit our website thehrdirector.com

NEWLY APPOINTED



NEXT MONTH
ISSUE 221

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www.linkedin.com/company/thehrdirector

INTERVIEW

Helen Charles-Smith - Chief People Officer - Medivet.

EXCLUSIVE EXTRACTS

From recent book releases, *The art of brainstorming* and *Four factors of Trust*.

UP/RE-SKILLING

The skills and talent crisis is arguably the most prolific prognostication of recent times and typically summed up with the clichéd "perfect storm" scenario.

REMOTE WORKING

The rapid transition to remote working was just the short, sharp shock we needed.

INCOMING GENERATIONS

There needs to be clarity on how to meet the changing EVP for the younger generation workforce.

MENTAL & PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Mental wellbeing, a taboo subject, most often goes unreported until it is too late.





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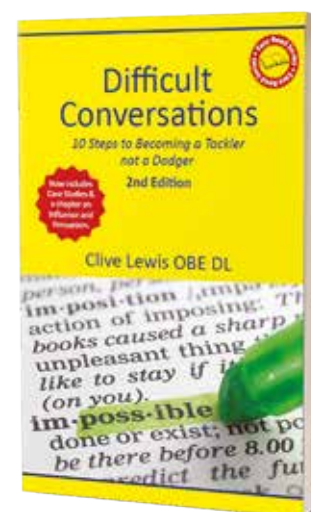
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