

# FUTURE OF WORK WORLD: Pathways and Perspectives on the Future of Work





# LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK MEANS ON ONE HAND CREATING A LIVING, BREATHING ORGANISM AND ON THE OTHER A HYPER EFFICIENT MACHINE.

Barry Winkless. 2020.

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# **Foreward**

There is no doubt that the Covid-19 crisis has shone a light on the why's, where's and how's of work and we should embrace this opportunity to look at things with fresh eyes. I continuously ask leaders a simple question-'What is your future of work story' as I fundamentally believe that those who consciously craft one will find new and unexpected competitive and collaborative advantages. But to do this properly means thinking holistically and joining the dots. It means straddling the challenge of creating organisations that are at once hyper efficient machines and living organisms. It means embracing experimentation and failure. In some instances, it will mean combining long held beliefs and approaches with new and sometimes 'strange' ideas.

From an Ireland perspective we have an opportunity to become a Future of Work Island- a lead innovator in new mindsets and models, integrating the best of thinking and doing from the many great indigenous and multinational organisations based here, who are already pushing the edges of the work horizon.

In this paper we have attempted a difficult task- to gaze knowingly into the future of work, albeit in the company of leading US multi-national organisations and thought leaders, utilising insights, inspirations and models gleaned from our research and projects at the Future of Work Institute. We hope you find some perspectives and principles that will act as a guide as you find your own way on your future of work journey.

I would like to thank my own team at the future of work institute, especially Dr Declan Bogan and Elysia Hegarty, and all of those who listened to our talks, participated in our survey or contributed greatly to our three collaborative working sessions over the course of this program.

Onward!

#### **Barry Winkless**

CSO Cpl & Director of the Future of Work Institute



# Introduction

Over the summer of 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Future of Work Institute joined forces to investigate what the future of work might mean to the chamber members. During this program\* we explored perspectives, challenges, and a blueprint for designing the Future of Work. Whilst Covid-19 and its impact was examined, the primary focus was the 2 year plus horizon of the future of work. To get the most from the collaboration the Future of Work Institute's 3W model (Figure 2) - was used as a framework for exploration during the sessions.

#### Workplace

 Where work takes place across physical and virtual space

#### Workforce

 How the overall workforce is designed and managed

#### Worktask

• The methods, tools and mindsets that deliver the work

#### 3W Model

The 3W's interact and are interdependent with the other. External factors may influence the design of these elements such as societal shifts and changing legislation, as will the existing strategy, maturity, internal culture, and norms within an organisation. Technology due to its pervasiveness is at once a potential disruptor and enabler across the 3 interacting elements. Within this context the future of work is a strategic mechanism that can be used to derive competitive advantages through the purposeful study and design of the 3W elements.

- North Star -**Strategy & Proposition External** Internal Factors | **Factors &** & Waves Culture (Figure 2 -Future of Work 3W Model) \*that included talks, surveys, All right reserved. collaborative working sessions and the Cpl Future of Work integration of models and insights **Technology Maturity** provided by the Future of Work Institute Institute. 2021.

In this context a workable definition of the future of work is as follows:

The 'Future of Work' refers to the purposeful study and the integrated design of workplaces, workforces, and work tasks across multiple time horizons in the context of business and society.

#### Barry Winkless.

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#### Overview of approach

A survey was circulated in advance of three deep dive working sessions. The survey asked questions in relation to the impact of Covid-19 and the 2 year plus horizon of the future of work. These results were used as an input to the working sessions and key results are presented later in this paper. The three working sessions followed the same general approach (see inset below). A provoking and reflective talk was delivered on the future of work. This was followed by a set of designed breakout sessions where pre-defined teams derived from the participating American Chamber membership explored key questions using models and insights provided by the Future of Work Institute.

#### **Sessions Overview**

#### **Perspectives**

 In session 1, outputs form the future of work survey were shared with the working group and these perspectives were explored and discussed.

#### **Imagination**

 In session 2, a series of key meta-trends across the 3Ws (Workplace, Workforce and Worktask) were explored to imagine the future of work and understand broadly what they might mean to their future or work stories.

#### Blueprint

Session 3 brought together the perspectives from session 1, and the imagination and inspiration from session 2. The participants developed a topline blueprint for the next 5 years of what an ideal future of work will look like.

In this paper we will share a curation of the key outcomes of our discussions as well as introducing important definitions and frameworks important to leaders as they navigate a changing working world.

# 1. Perspectives

This section presents some of the findings of the future of work survey circulated as part of this program. It also captures the key curated themes explored as part of working session 1.

## Participants Survey

We surveyed to gauge their personal perspectives on the key future of work in the immediate 6-12 month horizon and 2-5 years out. Specific key questions included the practical and tangible changes they perceived necessary, as well as more emotive and impact on the business, the future of work will have.

## Key questions: Covid-19 Specific – near term horizon:

- What do you think mainly when you hear the word Covid-19 as it relates to your role and your organisation?
- Do you feel hopeful or fearful about the changes, related to the Covid-19 impact, you might need to make in the near horizon (next 6-12mths)?

#### Longer term horizons:

- What will be the greatest workforce model challenge to you and your organisation during the next 2-5 years?
- What skills will your organisation need most as it prepares for the 'future of work'?
- To what extent do you believe your workplace will be 'more human' or more 'socially responsible' in the next 5 years?

54 respondents to the survey conducted gave their perspectives on key topics that are currently challenging them and their vision for the future. Full survey results are included in the appendix.

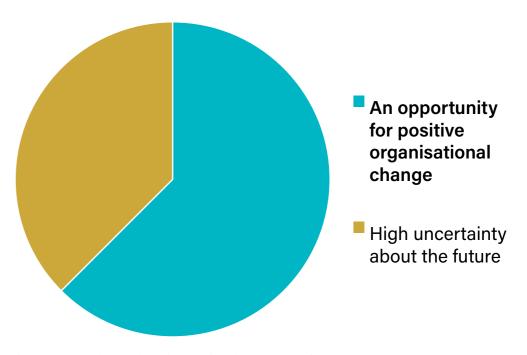
# Covid-19 and the future of work perspectives

65%

see Covid-19 as opportunity for positive organisational change with the remaining 35% voice high uncertainty about the future (Figure 3). Perspectives varied in discussion, some were surprised at the survey results stating that whilst there is opportunity there too comes many threats to businesses and perhaps even industries.

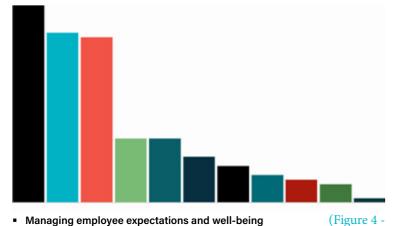
95%

feel their organisations have been proactive in reacting to the Covid 19 challenge, 53% have a centralised strategy examining the impact on their organisations, with 30% developing one and 16% with no plan as yet.



(Figure 3 Covid-19 and the future of work perspectives)

"The demands across sectors are different. Where gaming and technology sector may be booming other sectors such as retail are impacted negatively."



- Managing employee expectations and well-being
- Planning for the future & business strategy
- Adjusting to new/ revised business opperations & working models
- Managing challenging budgets, finances & cash flow
- Technology, accessing & implementing remote working strategies
- Managing the engagement with remote US based senior leadership
- Increased demand for services
- Crisis management
- Decreased demand for services
- Lay offs
- Impact on brand

Covid-19

challenges)

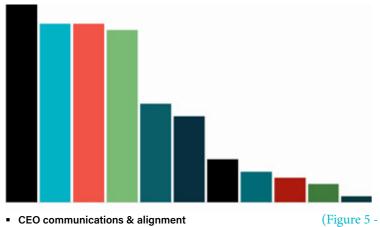
Covid-19 top

interventions)

80%

of the respondents managing employee expectations and well-being, was the main challenge that they faced due to due to Covid-19 (Figure 4).

This was followed by planning for the future and business strategy (69%) and adjusting to new/ revised business operations & working models (67%). Of lesser challenge was managing challenging budgets, finances & cash flow (26%), and technology, accessing & implementing remote working strategies (26%).



- CEO communications & alignment
- Mental wellbeing initiatives (support groups, meditation, resilience traing)
- 1 to 1s with your manager/ team leads
- Broader engagement initiatives (quizes, virtual drinks, cafes etc)
- Physical wellbeing initiatives (yoga, walking competitions etc)
- Annual leave and holidays
- Ongoing performance reviews/ feedback
- Celebratory initiatives (awards, shout outs)
- Other
- Charitable events
- None

In response to the Covid-19 crisis the HR function led on many different interventions to support employees.

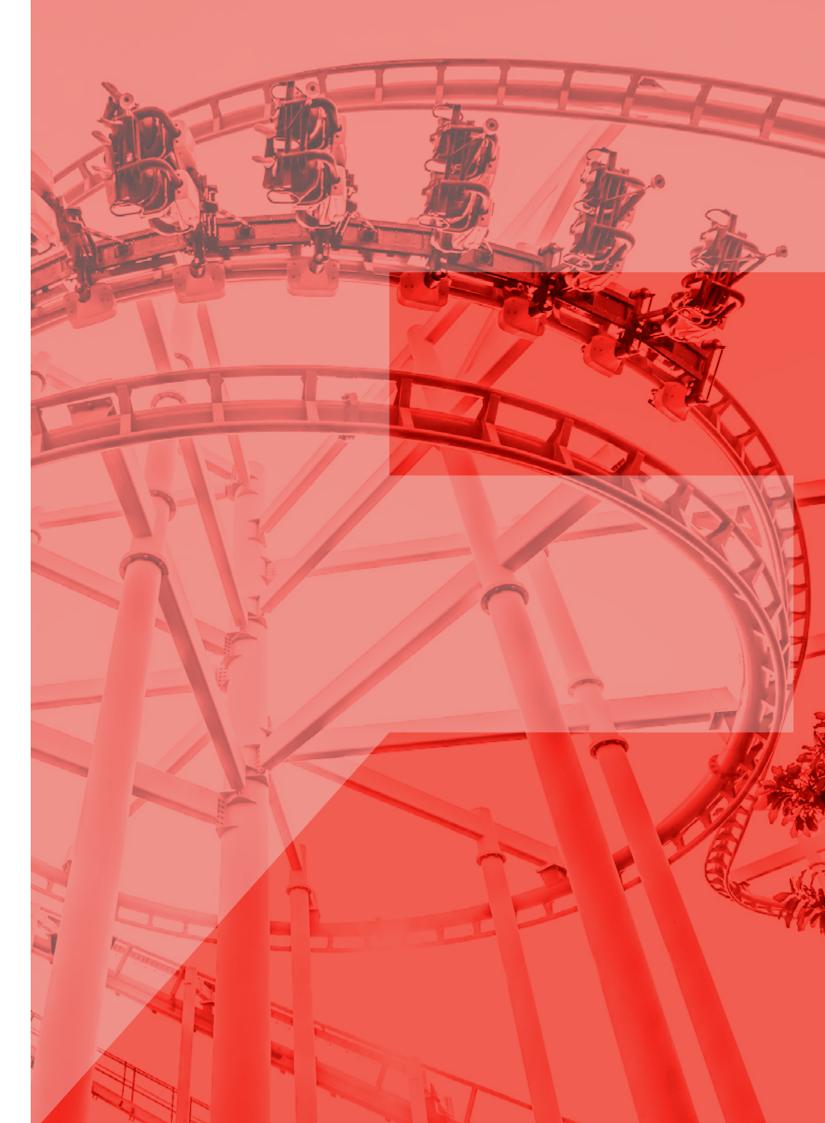
By a significant margin, the CEO

## communications and alignment, at

80%,

was deemed to have made the most positive impacts on the employee base (Figure 5).

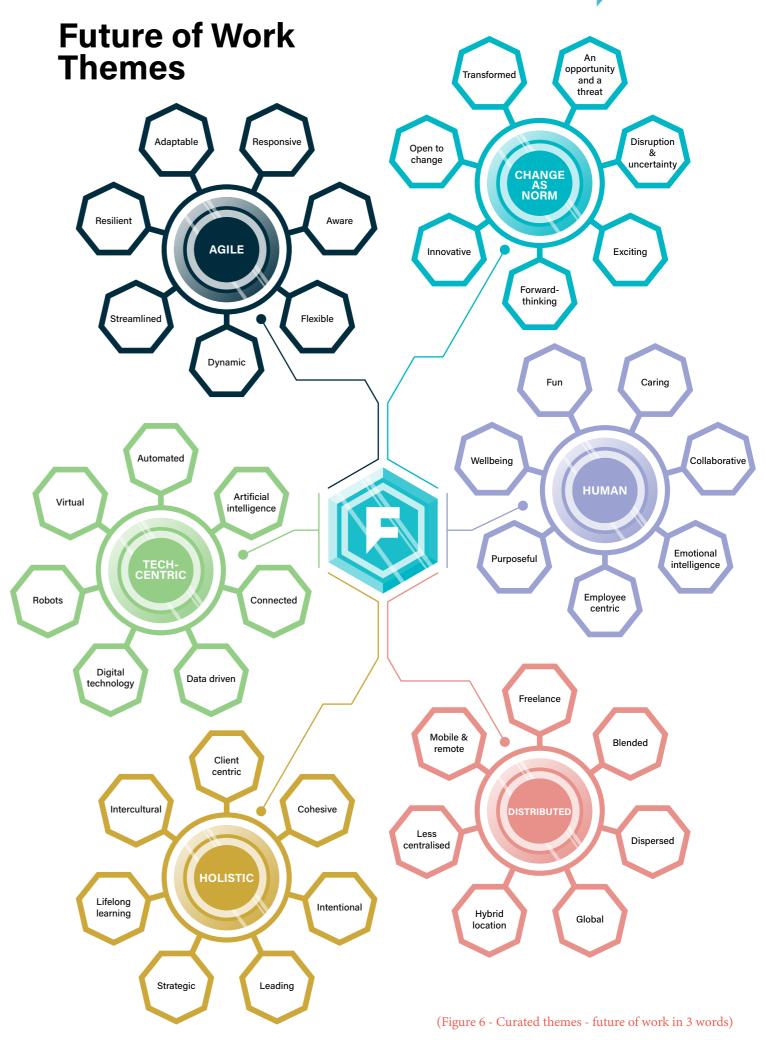
Mental wellbeing initiatives (support groups, meditation, resilience training) and 1 to 1s with a manager or team leads were both on 54%. This was followed closely by broader engagement initiatives (quiz's, virtual drinks, cafes etc.) at 52%. Physical wellbeing initiatives (yoga, walking competitions etc) was next at 30%.



# The Future of Work is...

Respondents were asked to use three words and commentary to describe their perspectives on the 'future of work'. Responses were collated and 6 key themes emerged- reinforced by the interactions during session 1. The themes were: Agile, Technological, Human, Distributed, Holistic, Change as Norm (Figure 6). The words are detailed in the mind map [see inset].

> The words and themes that evolved from the responses were echoed through further conversations, other survey responses and research at the Future of Work, included within the metatrends and in the 3W model blueprint below. Many are reflective of the current reality also for many organisations, and not just the future. The 'future' is never far away. There is an immediate need for agility, flexibility and adaptability, due to the immediate challenges related to Covid-19 and also into the future changes due to disruption, uncertainty and stake holder demands.



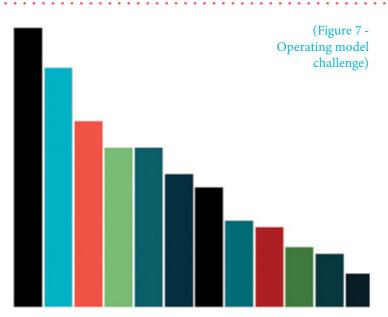
## **Operating Model Challenges**

Respondents were asked what were the greatest workforce model challenges their organisation will face during the next 2-5 years? These were their top 5 (Figure 7).

- 1. Talent attraction and retention (78% selected #1)
- 2. Designing a seamless and engaging employee experience (67% selected at #2)
- 3. Upskilling the workforce with new skills (52% selected at #3)
- 4. Deploying and harnessing a blended workforce model (44% selected at #4)
- 5. Creating a fully Inclusive and diverse workplace (44% selected at #5)

of employers identifying talent attraction and retention,

from our research and work, the employee experience is the key driver for advancing talent attraction and retention. This is underpinned by the employee value proposition (EVP). They are interdependent. The next three, skills, blended workforces and D&I are subsets of that EVP.



- Talent attraction and retention
- Designing a seamless & engaging employee experience
- Upskilling the workforce with new skills
- Fully deploying & harnessing a blended workforce model
- Creating a fully inclusive & diverse workplace
- Ensuring a healthy & well workforce
- Driving digital technology and automation adoption and use by employees
- Making an augmented technology/human workforce work2
- Harnessing HR & people analytics to drive decision making
- Cyber security
- Legislation & compliance (GDPR etc)
- Becoming a more socially responsible business

"There will be higher value placed on human skills and ability to collaborate. As well as greater focus on customer engagement. We need to unleash creativity and innovation"

#### **Critical Skills**

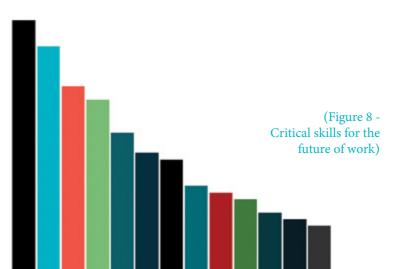
While participants agree that upskilling the workforce with new skills will be a challenge. Those ranked in the top 5 most important future skills over the next 5 years are (Figure 8):

- 1. Emotional intelligence and higher cognitive skills (74% had as #1)
- 2. Leadership and managerial skills (67% had as #2)
- 3. Creativity and innovation (56% had as #3)
- 4. Digital skills (52% had as #4)
- 5. Strategic thinking (43% had as #5)

These responses are broadly in line with research conducted by various organisations and think tanks - for example WEF \* highlight the 'top 10 skills of the future' and Forbes, the 10 vital skills for the future of work\*

Both reports focus on the increasing importance of the 'soft skills' with a focus on emotional intelligence, creativity, critical/strategic thinking and 'technological' skills.

1. There is close correlation between the survey output and global business surveys and opinions. Key to the insight are the very 'human' skills that currently automation cannot solve for including creativity, leadership, strategic thinking, and emotional intelligence.



- Emotional intelligence and higher cognitive skills
- Leadership & managerial skills
- Creativity & innovation
- Digital skills
- Strategic thinking
- Customer centricity
- Critical thinking
- Data skills
- Employee experience & engagement design
- Design thinking/ design strategy
- Intercultural dexterity
- Complex problem solving
- Social and environmental sustainability
- Physical & manual skills
- Other

\*(https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020)

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# Technology & Automation

Overwhelmingly,

95%,

the view was that technology, automation, artificial intelligence, collaboration platforms, analytics would have significant impacts to the

workplace over the next 2-5 year horizon.

According to the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs\*:

"Automation, in tandem with the Covid-19 recession, is creating a 'double-disruption' scenario for workers. In addition to the current disruption from the pandemic-induced lockdowns and economic contraction, technological adoption by companies will transform tasks, jobs, and skills by 2025. 43% of businesses surveyed indicate that they are set to reduce their workforce due to technology integration, 41% plan to expand their use of contractors for task-specialized work, and 34% plan to expand their workforce due to technology integration. By 2025, the time spent on current tasks at work by humans and machines will be equal. A significant share of companies also expect to make changes to locations, their value chains, and the size of their workforce due to factors beyond technology in the next five years."

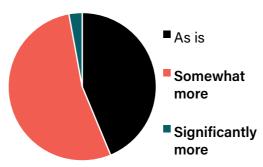
In our survey, 35% of respondents have a strategy or plan that examined the impact of automation and digitisation of the workplace, workforce, and work tasks beyond 2021, 26% didn't and the remaining 39% were in development.

Much of the discussion around the impact of technology and automation came down to productivity, trust, leadership, and human social connection. To truly embrace AI and automation we need to begin to consider the long-term impacts on the people and the organisation. How we lead and manage a team will need to change along with organisational cultural norms and expectations that allow for a high trust working environment that is focused on the human.

## Human Centricity

5700 of business will be more 'human centric' in the next 5 years

When asked in relation to their workplace becoming 'more human or more human centric' what did that mean. 57% felt that their businesses would be somewhat more 'human centric' with 40% staying as it is (Figure 9). The key themes are highlighted below:



(Figure 9 - Human centric future businesses)

According to the International Labour Organisation:

"Many companies are currently aiming at more than just the maximization of shareholders' revenue. Such companies care for people, communities, environmental protection, and the best use of resources. It is a new capitalism. This new capitalism requires leaders that are capable of compassion and imagination, as well as organizations capable of learning how to create shared value for all stakeholders. Sooner or later, further, and further, every company will need to face these objectives and reconcile short - and long-term choices by putting people first"\*

# **Key Human Centric Themes**

From respondents and workshop conversations, having a more human centric business meant focusing on 5 areas.

# Demystifying & ethical use of technology

- Develop and train people so that they can expertly lead us in terms of our technology
- Fully utilise and integrate the various digital tools and solutions to enable employees to feel a connection even at distance/People focused culture that employees feel a connection to even with greater use of digital tools and working remotely
- Use RPA (AI) to take away the mundane repetitive tasks and free people to add value to the tasks and their customers

#### 2. Flatter structures & empowerment

- Using Systems & mindsets that allow individuals to make decisions in a more decentralised manner
- Employees working together (in new organisational & flatter structures) to deliver unique human value
- Less 'HQ imposed' ways of doing things

# 3. A deeper understanding of the human experience & designing the experience

- Better understanding of the total human experience
- Understanding of employees as a "whole" person with complex life and family challenges
- Design moments, or experiences, that we can give to our employees to positively engage with then along the journey and ensure that they leave our company in a better place than when they arrived

#### 4. A 'new' approach to leadership

- Managers focused less on control, managers developing as coaches.
- Leaders and managers being more emotionally intelligent
- Real honest connection not the delivery "inspirational" messaging

## 5. Balance, inclusiveness & authenticity

- Always be human, our people are at the core of everything we do, our people are our competitive advantage so we must always listen to, develop, and grow our people so we can be the best that we can be. Business strategy that has people at its core with clear deliverables and leadership accountability
- Balanced focus on employee welfare with profit
- Becoming more human involves more cross line of business collaboration
- Building a more social culture

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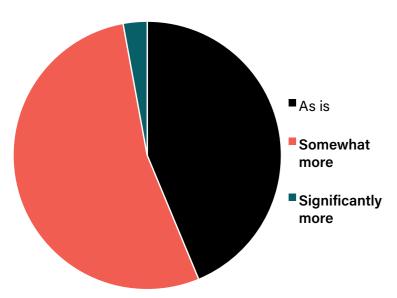
# **Society Centricity**

80%
of business will be more 'society centric' in the next 5 years

Survey respondents were also asked to what extent did they believe their organisation would be 'more socially responsible' over the next 5 years. Almost 80% felt their organisations would be somewhat to significantly more socio-centric with the remainder 20% staying as is (Figure 10). As a zeitgeist of change, being more socially responsible brings in external engagement with all stakeholders, a more caring business and economy, holistic impact, being accountable and responsible, and most importantly at a human level to be inclusive and diverse.

In 2018, Mr. Larry Fink, Chairman and CEO for Blackrock, wrote to the chief executives of the world's largest public companies\* -

"To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society." His firm manages more than \$6 trillion in investments through 401(k) plans, exchange-traded funds, and mutual funds, making it the largest investor in the world, and he has an outsize influence on whether directors are voted on and off boards. He also wrote "Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose,"



(Figure 10 - Society centric future businesses)

# **Key Society - centric Themes**

From respondents' perspectives and workshop conversations, having a more society centric business meant focusing on 5 areas.

## 1. Thrive through being inclusive and diverse

- We will deliberately create opportunities to diversify the workpace – diversification in thought, capabilities, perspectives, as well as sexuality, gender, ethnicity, abilities, disabilities, and generational
- Inclusion will be prioritised by leaders
- Leaders to implement processes and policies to harness a diverse and inclusive environment to thrive.

#### 2. Holistic impact

- Business will take greater and greater responsibility for their impact on society, and the environment across the total value chain
- Business will embrace the circular economy over the linear economy models
- Business will look to proactively reduce their carbon footprint, even move to regenerative, carbon negative operating solutions
- Business will set up sustainability KPIs and metrics
- Financing will be impacted by ESG / sustainability credentials

#### 3. Responsible business

- Leaders will be held accountable for their actions by internal and external stakeholders
- Regulations deem that leaders are transparent and need to be proactive around environmental and social governance
- Sustainability will become a core pillar of strategy, and embedded in the culture
- Social and environmental sustainability will be a key driver innovation

#### 4. Caring is a key business asset

- Business will volunteer services in the community, and ensure the health and wellbeing of those under their umbrella
- There is an appetite to give back and recognition that they are in industries that may be quite privileged
- Business will look to be a neighbour, supplier, and employer of choice

## 5. It's all about stakeholder engagement

- Stakeholder materiality will dictate the customer, employee and all other internal and external projects and programmes
- A key part of the employee value proposition
- Leaders will communicate their sustainability stories
- We will collaborate widely to solve greater societal challenges

Armed with the participants perspectives we progressed to the 'imagination' stage of the engagement where we explored the 3W model in the context of 7 key meta trends.

#### **Keynote #1**

#### "NO BLANK PAGE IS EVER TRULY BLANK -**PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE OF WORK"**

I would like you to imagine for a moment. Imagine that you have a blank page, a clean slate, or a greenfield site. What dream workplace or way of working would you design for your organisation? What team would you gather to realise it?

#### The lost weekend and the creation of Something new

When I think about the future of work I am always reminded of my fondest 'blank page' story involving one of my favourite artists- Herb Ryman. Herb Ryman started working with the Disney corporation back in Saturday morning in 1953 from Walt Disney asking Herb to come into the office and lend his expertise in supporting a special project. Disney needed a visualisation to get across his next big idea - a first of its kind- the Theme Park.

Herb was tasked by Walt Disney to literally draw on a blank page the first full artist rendering of what was to become Disneyland over the weekend to be ready in time for a Monday presentation. What was drawn onto that page represented an amalgam of ideas and projects that had been simmering in Walt Disney's head for years-ideas from obvious places like amusement parks, but also non-obvious places from his lens of experience- that of a film maker- which resulted in the application of concepts from movie development, scene making and set design techniques, the use of story and theming, and even broader ideas from urban planning and people flow. In taking a fresh perspective on an old industry and introducing new thinking from non-obvious places he created something truly new but built some of the best learning of the past.

I see the near future of work at least over the next 10 year horizon a little like the creation of the first theme park - it will fundamentally be about integrating the best of the learning's from the past and present, lets call it the previous wave of thinking and doing, and combining new perspectives and ideas from both obvious and not so obvious places and mix them to create new approaches, designs and models - let's call that the new wave.

#### The Lens we are used to

It is safe to say that we have been used to doing things in a certain way in the past 60 years in society and work (many would argue longer than that), we have looked at things through a certain lens. There has been a particular zeitgeist about western society that has focused very much on an achievement and consumer focused society. This world view has created wealth, new methods of production, significant innovation but as with all systems challenges have been created.

On the negative side we find ourselves dealing with significant environmental crises, a broadening gap between the richest and poorest of society, polarisation of political views. It is safe to say we have hit a plateau in terms of how we do things and the value we can create by looking through the same lens

#### The Inflection point

Many are talking, proposing, or commenting on the need for a new wave, or a fresh lens on how we view society and business in general. Cultural theorists and commentators call out a Meta Modern world- mixing the best of the modern and post -modern ideologies. Others call out a Post - Consumer society with a shift away from things to a rounded approach to well-being. Economists and politicians highlight the need for a 'new capitalism' - at Davos 2020, Niall Ferguson was quoted as saying 'Capitalism is the worst of all possible economic systems, apart from all the others that have been tried from time to time!

All are converging on the idea of a new wave of thinking and the need for a fresh lens that builds on what we know but integrates ideas, models, and concepts that we might consider a little bit out there, ideas that might feel strange and may not work in the short term.

#### The lens that we are not used to

How much do you know about Meta-Modernism? How much do you know about managing diverse networks? About designing social systems or crafting immersive experiences?

These are just some of the new knowledge sources we need to familiarise ourselves with in order to look at the future of work in a next wave way before we can begin thinking about breaking through the value barrier of the current way of doing things. We must adopt a beginner mindset to at least move beyond 'not knowing what we don't know (unconscious incompetence) to a place where at we know what we don't know (conscious incompetence). Creativity and imagination is given a lot of focus when it comes to the future of work debate, but we must make sure we are looking through the right lenses in order to really harness new thinking.

#### The two wave, dual lens Future of Work

The near future of work in essence will be about looking at the world through two lenses- integrating the lessons and the 'good stuff' of our current way of doing, and the new (and sometimes seemingly weird) lessons of the next wave - mixing them together in evolved ways that will solve for the challenges of meaning, attraction, retention, sustainability, productivity and beyond. It is up to us as leaders to embrace the fresh thinking of the new lens, recognise the need to adopt a beginner mindset, and embrace experimentation for us all to move forward and break through the current 'value plateau'.

The future of work does indeed start with a blank page that isn't truly blank but more importantly it really begins by looking at that page through the right lens -2 different lenses in this case!

#### Barry Winkless. 2020.



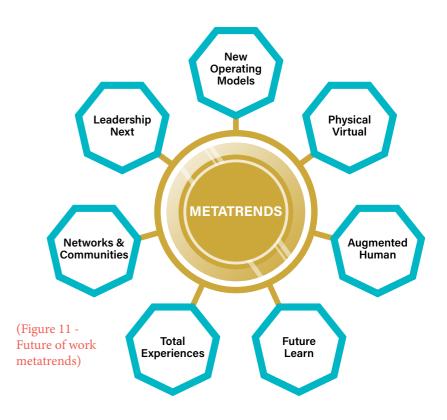


# 2. Imagination

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

**Buckminster Fuller** 

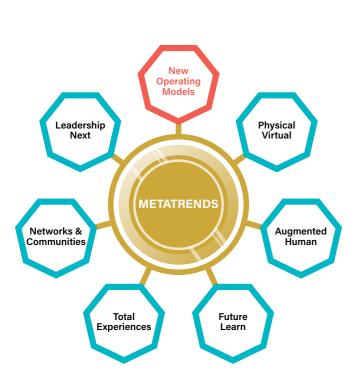
In session 2 we explored 7 key metatrends (Figure 11) across the 3 W's and conducted facilitated brainstorming explorations on each metatrend to generate ideas and imaginings for the future of work. The 7 metatrends are as follows:



We will explore these through the chapter.

#### **METATRENDS**

It's hard to imagine what a more evolved future of work looks like if we continue to view it through the same lens that we always have and use the same inputs. A metatrend is more comprehensive and captures a deeper zeitgeist of change. Through the research at the Future of Work Institute we identified seven metatrends transcending the world of work, embodied in each of the 3W's. We share definitions and examples below, in addition to the commentary during the working sessions.



#### **New Operating Models**

'Circular, Platforms & Self are three of the most important words when it comes to the new operating models of the current and near future of work'

Organisations have recognised (relatively recently) the role they must play in addressing the big societal and environmental challenges of our age. It is no longer deemed enough to do business, it has to be about doing good business in the right way and providing net benefits to society as whole. Danone\* for example have taken a lead, led by their CEO, Emmanuel Faber and have signed up to being a B-corporation\*, fundamentally changing their operating model. The traditional, linear economy has been built on a model of take-make-use-waste. A linear economy depends on a constant supply of cheap materials from natural resources, cheap energy, cheap credit and that everything is disposable. The new circular economy focuses on generating value by continuously utilising a stock of resources within the system, by recirculating them indefinitely through multiple product life cycles, in the absence of waste and environmental pollution. This circular way of doing things is here to stay and is becoming a key operating model of the future organisation.

Along with this developing broader view of organisational purpose, platform-based business models are disrupting traditional value chains.

"Organisations are not islands but are linked together in patterns of co-operation and affiliation. Planned coordination does not stop at the boundaries of the individual organisation but can be effected through cooperation between them"

These platforms create their value by connecting users (both consumers and producers) to an online network. The platform does not own the means of production but creates the means of connection. Platform businesses are known by many names- ecosystem, gig, sharing, crowd, and peer to name a few. But they all have commonalities in how a platform connects supply and demand whilst disrupting traditional barriers of entry coupled with greater levels of information and value exchange. Platform business afford both advantages and disadvantages to different player within their respective eco-systems. There is no doubt that these models are challenging traditional regulation, creating new talent network and also new complexities in terms of what a business actually is.

Examples including organisations providing services (e.g. **Uber** and **Airbnb**), to products (e.g. **Amazon** and **eBay**), to payments (e.g. **Square**, **PayPal**), to software development (e.g. **Apple, Salesforce**) and many more.

There is a definite move to enabling greater levels of empowerment and self-management within organisations. Companies like **Supercell**, **Haier** and **Buurtzorg** (see inset) have implemented deeply empowering holacratic operating models to great success with many now looking on to see what can be learned and integrated into their own businesses. Driven by a need for employees to have a greater sense of purpose and ownership within their organisations it is likely that we will see an increasing focus on implementing models of this type.



#### The Buurtzorg Model\*

Buurtzorg: the Dutch model of neighbourhood care that is going global. Their innovative nursing model cuts bureaucracy and gives nurses more freedom and time with clients. The model -Self-management, continuity, building trusting relationships, and building networks in the neighbourhood are all important and logical principles for the teams.

#### Self-managing teams

Self-managing teams have professional freedom with responsibility. A team of 12 work in a neighbourhood, taking care of people needing support as well managing the team's work. A new team will find its own office in the neighbourhood, spend time introducing themselves to the local community and getting to know GPs and therapists and other professionals. The team decide how they organise the work, share responsibilities and make decisions, through word of mouth and referrals the team build-up a caseload.

physical office space be a destination for health experience, innovation, and collaboration. We need factor in the virtual equivalent especially when we are screen fatiqued?



#### **Physical Virtual**

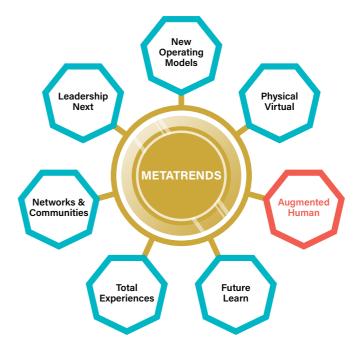
The Physical-Virtual metatrend refers to the ongoing merging, hybridisation and mixing of physical and digital. As a result, organisations are reassessing what 'place' actually means. These new models are resulting in new opportunities for interfacing with the customer, employees, processes, and technologies. These include different modes of engagement, new forms of value exchange, and as a focus for innovation. Examples such as sociometric wearable badges for monitoring employee activity and safety are being adopted. The explosion of collaboration tools for in office and out of office communications and project management. We can mix and match both the physical and the virtual in different ways for different context. This includes the emergence of extended reality (see inset).

For the workforce, healthy employees are engaged employees and engaged employees are productive. The idea of a business as a health club, a place where people can socialise, interact, collaborate, be productive and also indulge in leisure activities. In a virtual world, where more people can work from home and have flexibility, will the

#### Extended Reality (XR)

XR is an emerging umbrella term for all the immersive technologies. The ones we already have today—augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and mixed reality (MR) plus those that are still to be created. All immersive technologies extend the reality we experience by either blending the virtual and "real" worlds or by creating a fully immersive experience. We must also consider the impact this has on the physical world.

Whenever and wherever an actual experience in an actual environment presents an unacceptable risk or danger; incur exorbitant costs; is unavailable: impossible or impractical, then a virtual experience in a virtual environment is the way to go - welcome to Mersus Technologies\*, West Meath. They design and build virtual environments that can be entered, explored, interacted with, manipulated, and learned from in an experience that is as close to the actual environment as we can make it.



#### **Augmented Human**

Technologies like AI, immersive tech (AR, VR), IoT and data analytics, are enabling leaders to better understand, engage and make more strategic decisions, not just in back-stage processes, but across the employee and customer journeys. These technologies are changing how our organisations and employees can perform. Employees will continue to become augmented with these technologies to enhance overall performance. Internal and external data is available on just about everything, from how employees, and processes are performing. Leaders can use this data to find trends and create the best possible talent strategy and employee environment. We need to work more in harmony with machines and to build the solutions that are human centric (see inset). We see companies like Ekso Bionics developing technology to enhance human mobility, strength, and endurance. Their Exoskeleton technology is used for construction, manufacturing, and industrial applications.

For HR recruiting and talent acquisition are the areas where AI solutions are most effective. There is a growing

number of start-ups and service providers who target HR with artificial intelligence-based solutions for activities such as:

- 1. Sourcing (Textio) https://textio.com/
- 2. Interviewing (myInterview) https://www.myinterview.com/
- 3. On-boarding (Talla) https://talla.com/
- 4. Coaching (Saberr) https://www.saberr.com/
- 5. Employee service centres (ServiceNow) https://www.servicenow.com/

We are engaging more of our senses with haptic controls, wearables, voice control (Alexa, Siri), sentiment monitoring systems and self enhancement solutions. Take Augmented Worktask as an example; technology continues to play a key role in the customer and employee experience.

#### Augmented Worktask\*

Augmented humanity impacts everything, from how we work and travel, to how we shop and engage with our favourite brands. This has brought into focus the relationship between technology and humans. We can define this as "what happens when humans work in harmony with technology and machine intelligence to expand and enrich life, helping us to experience more, and in deeper ways, to make better decisions and to fulfil our potential as humans." Importantly, it changes the time we spend on repetitive manual tasks that can be automated, optimized, or digitized. We need think of:

- 1. The Evolving Interface
- 2. The Human Algorithm
- 3. Behave in a more fluid way
- 4. Think of the Collective Self
- 5. The Trust Paradox
- 6. The Transformed Experience

#### **Future Learn**

The look and feel of our workplaces have dramatically changed over the last few decades. We see a variety of workspaces including breakout spaces, remote offices, social areas, and quiet spaces. Computers, smartphones, and virtual meeting applications have revolutionized the world and enabled us to achieve balance and flexibility within our personal and professional lives. However, to achieve success in this flexible workplace, more sophisticated communication skills, collaborating with others, and interacting with others in more social way are all highly valued and necessary.

Technical skills aren't necessarily hard to acquire. With time, they can be easily taught and perfected. Soft skills, however, are more challenging to develop and learn since they have little to do with traditional education and training and more to do with character, relationships, and personality. A new National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) working paper, "The Growing Importance of Social Skills in the Labour Market,"\*\* suggests jobs that require strong social skills something

that has proven to be much more difficult to automate, will give

prospective job seekers an edge. The report shows that nearly all job growth since 1980 has been in occupations that are relatively social skill-intensive; and it argues that high-skilled, hard-to-automate jobs will increasingly demand social adeptness.

We saw from our survey results that 1. Emotional intelligence and higher cognitive skills, at 74%, Leadership and managerial skills at 67%, and creativity and innovation at 56% will be the skills in most demand into the future. For business to really thrive through Future Learning focus we curated a 'skills matrix' for the future. We call it the 8C Model of Future Skills (see inset). We suggest that as you evolve these skills in your business you look to holistic education platforms, microlearning, using storytelling, using play and fun. Story is how information has traditionally been passed from one generation to another. Even though facts are now available instantly and virtually for free, story will remain important because of the emotional impact. It's the emotional element that makes information stick. For a story we must 'Tell it well'. It is context enriched by emotion. Thus, storytelling is a key ingredient to telling your future of work story (see keynote #2).

"Microlearning is any brief and targeted learning object that spans between 3 to 6 minutes"

Microlearning is more than a buzz word today. It is being increasingly used by many organisations for both formal and informal learning. It appeals to the learners as it consumes less time and is available to them exactly at the time of the learning need (just-in-time).



## Honing Your Future Skills? Focus on these 8'C's to remain relevant

We are humans. We are social, we are emotional, we are functional. IQ might get us in the door, but EQ will determine how far we go. The hard skills that we honed in University and in our career are only half the story. We need the soft skills, captured in our 8C Model of Future Skills to really thrive. As we compete with technology, compete with other talent, get promoted, move into leadership we need a different set of capabilities.

Our 'skills matrix' must take a broader perspective. The 8C model is a guide for your future skills focus and development. Of course, many overlap and integrate but from a SenseMaking perspective viewing them as separate themes helps to focus the mind! The 8 C's (diagram opposite) are Craft, Chronicler, Concierge, Custodian. Community, Cultural, Creativity and Care.



#### **Total Experiences**

As humans we are social, functional, and emotional. We are living in the age of experience and are building our expectations of workplace, worktasks and our colleagues in the workforce based on the collective experiences we have every day, be them in the physical or digital realms. Employees expectations are for a productive, positive employee experience. Customer experience is a direct result of employee experience. Research shows that companies that excel at customer experience have 1.5 times more engaged employees than companies with a record of poor customer experience\*\*.

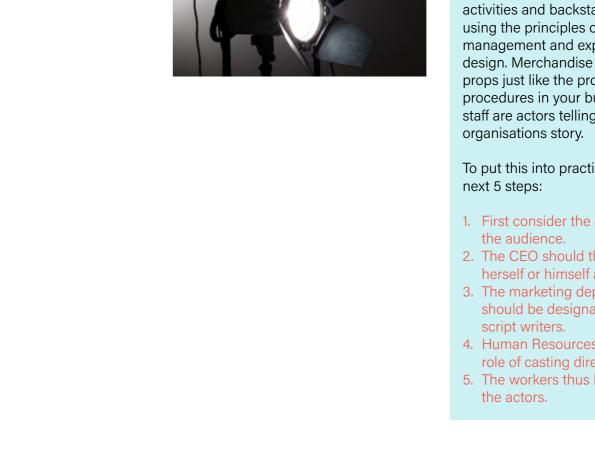
Experiential businesses spend impactful time with their employees by staging new forms of engagement, participation, absorption, and immersion. RoE (Return on Emotion) or Return on Engagement and Experience will be as important as Return on Investment (RoI). Companies are investing in journeys of greatness and creating transformations and memories in a personal way\*. Beyond the codified and formal employment contract, there is a much deeper psychological contract refers to the unwritten set of expectations of the employment relationship. The competition for talent is being more often sold based on the total experience.

Think of a trip to the theatre. The principles and processes that define the front stage and backstage. What we see, what we don't. We can use this concept to rethink the employee and customer experiences. This is built into service blueprint (see inset). As with the other metatrends, we can factor in learnings from other experiential destinations and events, like theme parks, how we blend the physical and the virtual, the 'learning' experience, and the management of onboarding to exit across the employee journey. Every step should entail purposeful design.

The employee experience is the sum of all experiences an employee has with an employer, over the duration of their relationship with that employer - before, during and after.



<sup>\*</sup>https://fowmedia.com/stats-linking-employee-experience-to-customer-experience/



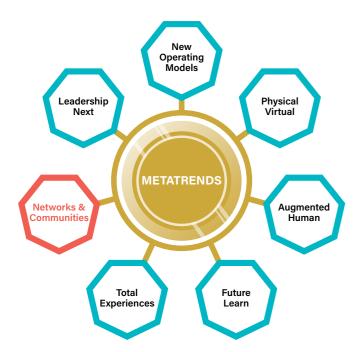
#### **Business as Theatre**

A powerful method for building effective experiences is the theatre. Managers need to view their what they do and their experience offerings within the framework of theatricality. The goal is to create an experience that can be entertaining but also highly customised for the customer or employee. The principles include a change in thinking. Consider the environment as a stage, orchestrate front stage activities and backstage activities using the principles of show, journey management and experiential design. Merchandise and fittings are props just like the processes and procedures in your business and the staff are actors telling your

To put this into practice follow the

- 1. First consider the customer as
- 2. The CEO should then think of herself or himself as the director.
- 3. The marketing department should be designated as the
- 4. Human Resources then fills the role of casting directors.
- 5. The workers thus become





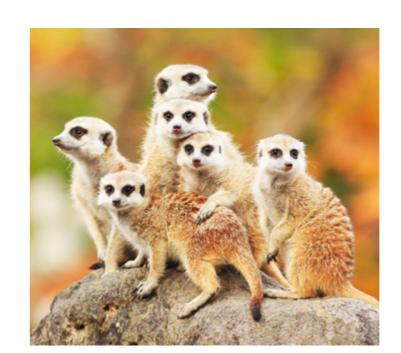
#### **Networks & Communities**

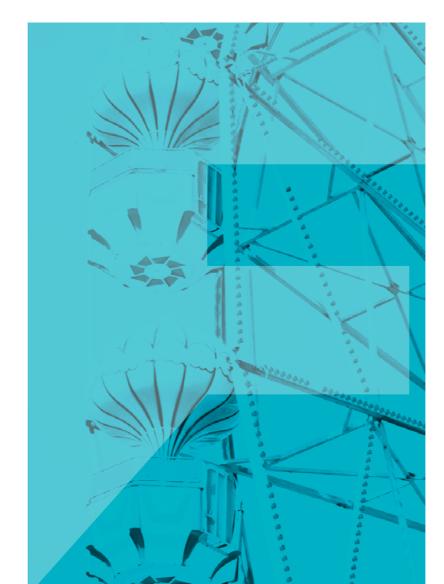
Terms, including 'on-demand economy', 'access economy,' 'sharing economy,' 'peer to peer,' 'gig economy' are all actively used and demonstrate the complexity of the new talent ecosystem and its all-encompassing reach. Beyond the Sharing Economy lies the Access Economy - a concept experts acknowledge as the next progressive arena that will make it even easier to get what you want, when you need it and for as long as you want. Thus, the organisation is more than a workforcemore like a work community, or worknet. A blend of permanent, contract, temporary, contingent, and broader supplier groups. It taps into the gig economy, crowd-based solutions, and collaborations across the ecosystem. The work community is supported by technology, designed activities and collaboration tools.

A community is built on the social capital of a business, which is in turn built on the formal and informal networks. These are supported by a foundation of interacting businesses, organisational functions, sites, and individuals - market networks, the organisms of the business worlds.

We are seeing the explosion of 'talent

on tap' platforms where organisations can access skills at scale not previously accessible. Fiverr, People Per Hour, Upwork, Toptal are enabling 24h access to various skills. As a market network, "It's a social network". Professionals use profile pages to showcase their work and demonstrate their credibility. They also connect with each other and build relationships. "It's a marketplace." Professionals come online together to find other parties with whom they can do business. And "It's a SaaS tool" Professionals use the tools on the top of the marketplace to negotiate, do the job, or manage the paperwork. Whole new businesses are enabled through this platform enabled community. HoneyBook\* is an N-sided marketplace - transactions happen in a 360-degree pattern like a network, but the users come here with transacting in mind. They provide the ability to create an event and revolves professionals around it such as the florist, the venue, photographer, and any other professional needed to pull it together. Known as a 'market network', it brings unique people (in their area of expertise and reputation) together for collaboration purposes.





#### The We-Economy

The We-Economy is all about collective, cooperation, collaboration for the greater good. We are entering a new economy with a different set of game rules. The focal point is solutions made for the particular context - not mass produced products and services. New value is created through digital platforms, which coordinate networks of co-creators not internally in companies, at factories or offices.

Robots and artificial intelligence will take over a large part of our tasks. Instead, we will deliver what only people are capable of. In the sharing economy, concepts like "employer", "employee", "professional" or "consumer" lose their meaning. At the same time, hard won rights and the norms for obligations and the distribution of profits in society are challenged. A Universal Basic Income or a new type of cooperative movement could ensure equality and inclusion and release a wave of new creativity.

We've never had better preconditions for achieving progress, sustainability and a greater focus on the values that matter most to humans. But it will only happen if we cooperate. In an intensely connected world, growth emerges through interaction and community - It is a WE economy.

#### **Leadership Next**

"When you're surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible." - Howard Schultz, Starbucks

In addition to basic good leadership, we believe there are three key aspects to leadership next -'Purposeful, Empowering and Holistic'.

#### Purposeful:

It is wrong to assume that your organisation's purpose is good enough, goes far enough, or that everyone even sees eye to eye. Purpose driven business have higher employeeengagement scores and employee retention. Global brands like Ben & Jerry's, and Patagonia are among those placing 'social' at the forefront of their enterprise - putting purpose alongside, or even ahead of, profit.

Successful leaders, in these businesses have developed the mission, vision, values, ethics and act as role models. They have developed the systems required for sustainable success and implement these via their actions and behaviours. And during periods of change they retain their constancy of purpose. Yet getting purpose right requires deep and sustained commitment. CEOs, other top executives and business owners cannot create a purpose on their own. The purpose is derived, only by enlisting the organisation's help to challenge the purpose, test it, and improve it so that everyone can shape it and be emotionally connected to it. To get to a meaningful purpose requires three acts - define, prototype, launch. In Act 1, there is an internal dialogue with all internal stakeholders starting with the CEO. The goal should be introspection, reflection, and humility. In Act 2 interact with the future. Taking a design thinking approach, prototype and test the purpose with internal teams and challenging the essence of it, and what it means and how it can deliver value. And in Act 3, live your purpose. Champion it in the marketplace - with new employees and with customers alike. This dialogue is demanding. Be transparent and commit to it publicly, get measured and show results, and be judged on your efforts - positively or negatively.

"Creativity is born of chaos, even if it is somewhat difficult to glimpse the possibilities in the midst of the confusion."

- Charles Handy



#### Creative Leaders empower their teams and think holistically

Creative leaders ideally have an artist, designer, and intrapreneurial mindset. These creative leaders have unique qualities. They have great integrity with their teams, take risks, manage contradictions, improvise, learn from mistakes, know how to nurture others, have faith in their team's abilities, have a listening ear and ingrained empowerment. These leaders act with passion and purpose. They are comfortable with ambiguity, orchestrate creative teams and have an explorative mindset. All with an eye to creating a better future. This is illustrated most recently in how leaders in Pfizer, Moderna, Astra Zeneca, Janssen and big logistics, Fedex, DHL etc. have collaborated to create and distribute their different Covid-19 vaccines. This has been through empowering their teams, technologies, global manufacturing, healthcare systems, care givers and down to injecting individuals. They manage for next in a fully holistic manner. Having defined next they then see the future through empowerment, with shared understanding and collective commitment.

Taking time out to measure your employee value proposition is a fully holistic approach to understanding and purposefully designing the employee experience in your business (see inset)

#### **Employee Value Proposition**

A key employee centric initiative is the design of the Employee Value Proposition (EVP). An EVP is the set of unique financial and nonfinancial attributes that the labour market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in a role. In exchange the employee brings their competencies, skills, energy, and experiences that creates value for customers and the business alike. It is the fundamental driver of attraction, retention and engagement and a barometer of what most people will associate with you as an employer. It will define your employer brand.

The Future of Work have deconstructed the EVP into a set of 20 employee experiences elements that enables organisations to define where effort, initiatives need to be designed and resources need to focus to ensure your employer proposition and brand remains relevant in the market and attractive to quality and skilled talent.

# **Keynote #2**

#### **"THOSE WHO CRAFT** THEIR (FOW) STORY, OWN THEIR DIRECTION"

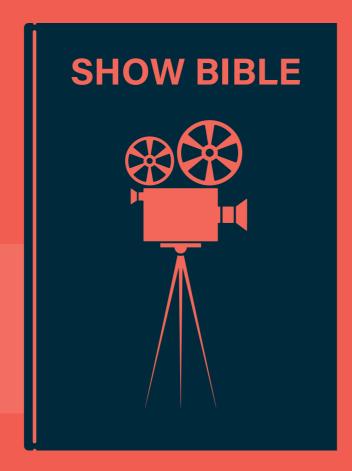
According to Guinness World Records, "Yesterday" has the most **cover** versions of any song ever written. The song remains popular today with more than 1,600 recorded cover versions. Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI) asserts that it was performed over seven million times in the 20th century alone.

There are many versions of the song - from soul, to jazz, to even arias and bluegrass versions. The best of 'Yesterday.' If that wasn't surreal enough, the cover art was drawn by Gerald Scarfe, who famously did the illustrations for Pink Floyd's The Wall.

# "What is your version of your future of work story?"

So, what has this got to do with the future of work?-There is lots spoken about the FOW out in the ether. But the truly important question business leaders defining product, services, and business modelsreams of content is written about them, but when it comes to how well defined our current and future story of our working ways- I often get blank stares. If we don't create our FOW story we run the risk of not owning our direction of travel- letting it happen to us instead of making it happen for us. It is true to say that those who craft their story own their direction.

> Where can we learn about crafting our FOW story?



One of my favourite shows on TV is Stranger things. It was created by the Duffer brothers- When they were selling the show, they made what's known in the business as a show bible- a book that gets across the story, structure, and tone of the proposed series. To quote one of the brothers - ""When we were selling the show, we made a look book that we designed to look like an old Stephen King book". Show bibles are generally used to pitch TV shows ad get across the idea behind the show, the structure, and the tone and style. You can see some of the imagery here that in a few key pictures get across an 80's tone, a sense of the story and the key group of kids that have become the central protagonists in the story.

At the core to any great Show Bible is the logline - one of two sentences that quickly gets across the key story. Loglines in general comprise an incident that antagonist. Now here my question to you- what's the logline for your version of the FOW story?

There is no doubt that a logline has been 'ghost written' for many of us over the last 5 months due the coronavirus - we have all had to rethink our ways of working due to that inciting incident- we have had to confront full on distributed working- many companies for the first time and the associated challenges that has brought whilst still trying to remain relevant and competitive. But let's park the enforced story for a moment and I would like you to imagine what your logline might be for your version of the future of work?

All great stories have a villain or number of villains think Star Wars - Darth Vader, The Emperor! Who or what is the villain in your FOW story? What are you fighting against or trying to stop, or defeat? This is something often missing in the FOW debate for companies - we speak about ramping up remote working but to minimise or defeat what?

Think about some of the antagonists you are fighting against or you need to take action against? These are only a few examples and like the great stories there are probably fighting against more than one. What is important is to identify them in order to start thinking

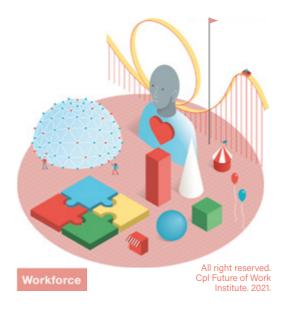
What structural elements do we need to think about for our FoW story?

Barry Winkless. 2020.



# Imagination, Discussions and Commentary

The following section outlines the conversation highlights from the working session where participants had the opportunity to explore the meta trends, within the context of the 3Ws model and their businesses.



"How we work on conveying culture and values in a virtual world will be a challenge for organisations. In the future, how we onboard and manage talent into a values driven culture will be challenging as we blend the virtual and physical world. There is so much opportunity."

#### workshop quote

The workforce imagination debate in the context of the metatrends explored resulted in 4 core reflections:

- Greater importance of culture and values
- Next level communication
- Wellbeing dial up
- Leadership evolution

There was a recognition that as organisations' workforces are likely to become more blended, distributed and more like a network that this may put an even greater importance on culture and values.

It became clear that purposefully defined cultures supported by a designed program to fully integrate that culture is a critical task as we face into the future.

Given the ever growing platforms available to organisations in creating new forms of collaboration and communication, there was a general view that we need to reimagine communication and engagement strategies to fully harness these new forms of capabilities- from mixed media, to augmented and virtual reality technologies. In general, the view was that we are only 'skimming the surface' on what is possible in this space.

There was a general view that employee wellness needs to be an even more central part of the workforce agenda. The imagining conversation focused on what this might look like and in general the broad view focused on making it part of 'people development' and building it into the leadership agenda and tying it in overall to more strategic approach. The idea of the employee experience being a critical component of an organisations USP and indeed their ability to compete was discussed at length. This view aligns with the FOWI view that new competitive advantages can be found as much by looking inwardly as outwardly.

"Wellbeing will evolve beyond EAP services and there is a strong need for this to embed in an organisations values and culture. There's no point having a wellness program if managers and HR are not including it in performance management conversations."

#### workshop quote

"People are important ambassadors that represent a company's brand so it's important to look after your employees well, if you want to stand out from your competitors."

#### workshop quote

Given the changes in the workforce the need for an 'evolved leadership' was highlighted as part of our discussions. This evolution meant a greater focus on building a high trust environment, and the broad development of leadership as both a coaching and orchestration role. As workplaces become more distributed, where less 'physical' time is available between leaders and their people, the focus may turn to new principles of creating high trust, self-managing teams. Views differed on the level of self-management that might be imagined but all agreed that a greater involvement in making decisions was a key step.

#### "High trust organisations are the future"

#### workshop quote

This evolved leadership would most likely need to use a new toolkit focused on more agile and empowered teams in order to complete Worktasks to create opportunities for teams to develop and engage on projects and feel a greater sense of ownership.

#### Holistic Reflections for leaders:

- How might we update our leadership approaches to best harness the evolving workforce?
- What does next level communication truly look like for our busines- one that harnesses the rich toolkits available?
- How can we move beyond wellness programs to wellness built into a total employee experience?
- What form of decentralised management (or otherwise) might give us a competitive advantage?

"Business ethics will drive the future. How we produce cheaply and the impact of that will drive organisations, products, and consumers. People want to see business that are ethical."



"As the virtual and physical environments evolve it will need to meet the needs of people and customers. There will be a demand for the physical environment to create experiences that enable connections."

#### workshop quote

The workforce imagination debate in the context of the metatrends explored resulted in 3 core reflections:

- The future role of the physical office
- The importance of user centricity
- The workplace as everywhere

Much discussion centred on imagining the role of the physical office in a post Covid-19 world. Some felt that the physical office and its role may stay the same-particularly for those organisations that value physical interaction and put 'a premium on real face to face collaboration.' Equally others highlighted that for many the workplace cannot change- those involved in manufacturing sites for example will see greater automation and connectivity but their workplace for the most part will still be 'physical'. Most agreed however that there is both an opportunity and a real need to evolve the role of physical

spaces within organisations and equally to adopt forms of flexible or distributed working policies appropriate to those organisations and also the business units within those organisations. The 'workplace' flexibility defined for an R&D group for example, might be very different to that for an engineering, back office services of support business unit.

Many were interested by the idea introduced by the FOWI in discussions of the physical office as a hub or clubthe focus shifted to the question, if it's a hub then a hub for what? Good discussions focused on the hub as a place for deep social collaboration, a place where the 'important meetings need to happen.' Equally others imagined the hub concept as a 'park and ride' for employees- with an ability to be there from time to time, with smaller offices possibly becoming the norm.

Others saw the physical hub potentially as a brand and cultural immersion centre where individuals could reengage with the brand, the culture and the DNA of a business or in some instances almost like a 'health club' where employees might recharge in a group or individual setting. All agreed that there is an opportunity to bring new ideas and thinking to the concept of the physical office- its integrated design and its use.

As the workplace is becoming more of a physical-virtual space another core theme was the opportunity to create user centred and personalised experiences that until recently weren't possible. The idea of being able to tap into global expertise, harness new forms of virtual collaboration, learn from other industries and better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce were discussed.

The challenge as we move beyond
Covid-19 will be how organisations
manage the impact working from home
has had on mental health and wellbeing.
As we move back into a 'more' physical
working environment many feel that
smaller in person group meetings are the
way forward. Will this be what the
workplace "hub" will look like in
the future?

There was a general view that there needs to be greater exploration on how the blend of physical and virtual can be harnessed as in some cases it is about trying to replicate the physical experience as best as possible in a digital world whilst in other instances it is about doing thing virtually that bring new opportunities to light.

Nearly all participants are utilising various platforms and internal engagement platforms to drive a greater sense of employees, but good discussion were had relating to how broadly these platforms should be opened up to the broader workforce, contractors, consultants, suppliers, and other collaborators. The overall view was the critical need for ensuring a people centred designed approach that creates the most appropriate blend of the physical virtual, that works for the type of worktasks being delivered by specific business units within an organisation.

There was a final discussion centred on the idea of the Workplace as being everywhere and how this evolution might result at last in really harnessing a global, diverse, and inclusive talent pool for organisations. The decoupling of place and where an organisation is may well mean that an organisations ability to attract, recruit, induct and develop an employee may also become an 'everywhere experience' which in turn place a greater emphasis on clearly defined employee pathways. This represents both an opportunity and

challenge for organisations- on one hand access to an almost limitless supply of talent but on the other a potential dilution of an organisations DNA and a greater effort needed to be inclusive and unleash an individual's potential for themselves and for the organisation.

#### Holistic Reflections for leaders:

- What does the Workplace now mean to our organisation?
- What is the role of our physical spaces and are they fit for future purpose?
- Are we truly harnessing the physical-virtual blend to unleash collaboration and other outcomes?
- How joined up is our thinking on the physical-virtual workplace and how people centred is it?
- Have we made the mindset shift to 'Workplace as Everywhere' opening us up to 'Infinite Talent'?

"Extended Reality could do a number of wonderful things for the workplace of the future allowing us access specialised global expertise and inserting that into organisations. Surgical coaching is going virtual as are other learning environments such as military pilot simulation. What can we learn from these industries to apply to ours?"

workshop quote

"Soft skills need to be far better as a result of automation. As people work longer older generations may struggle with AI. In contrast, we also need to be aware of younger generations who are technologically savvy and may lack some soft skills. Communication skills will still be important from both an employee and employer perspective. Without soft skills, how do we have the courageous conversations that need to be had to evolve, innovate and create?"

> The worktask imagination debate in the context of the metatrends explored resulted in 3 core reflections:

- The growing prevalence of analytics
- The increased importance of soft skills
- The new methods of delivering work

Much discussion focused on the growing prevalence of analytics and AI (Artificial Intelligence) in organisations and their likely greater use over the next 5-year horizon. There was a general

sense that currently most organisations are using analytics in pockets - and are not necessarily applied consistently across organisations. There was a general recognition of the need to apply analytics (people analytics) in better understanding workforces and their behaviours.

Many manufacturing organisations and indeed service organisations are seeing a greater use of automated technologies like advanced manufacturing and connected technologies (Manufacturing 4.0) and Robotic Process Automation in order to drive greater efficiencies. There was a good discussion centred on the challenges of ensuring that the various generations within the workforce all have a general level of 'technological understanding.'

There was a sense that more repetitive lower value add work would see greater automation (in line with the viewpoints postulated in many reports) but a good discussion focused on what 'level' was the right level of automation for an organisation and how it tied back to the purpose and the ethics of the organisation. As organisations have evolved their perspectives to include corporate social responsibility (CSR) should this now also incorporate the ethical use of technology as a means to sustain and indeed enhance the use of human beings?

Given the evolving workplace as a much more dynamic physical-virtual place, points were raised to perhaps the need for a future shift for teams to focusing on work outcomes as opposed to work activities. This in turn will put a greater focus on those work methods that drive greater and quicker outcomes- generally more team focused like Scrum. Agile, and Design centred methodologies. We see strong use of these approaches particularly in IT and Technology teams, but it is likely over the coming 5 years that we will see an increased prevalence in their use beyond those setting.

"Teams that can assemble quickly (tiger teams) and become agile will work for the future. This will be driven by a sense of purpose (work and life). The importance of human skills as we automate in future will continue to drive the human-technology evolution"

workshop quote

There was overwhelming agreement about the increased importance on soft skills as we move into a more augmented future. Overall, this seemed to equate to much stronger communication skills- 'have courageous conversations, a greater focus on self-awareness and self-management, team collaboration and an ability to adapt and understand new technologies. Some highlighted the need for a greater emphasis on probity (strong principles, morals, and decency) as we continue to work in a more distributed, flexible, and virtual workplace.

#### Holistic Reflections for leaders:

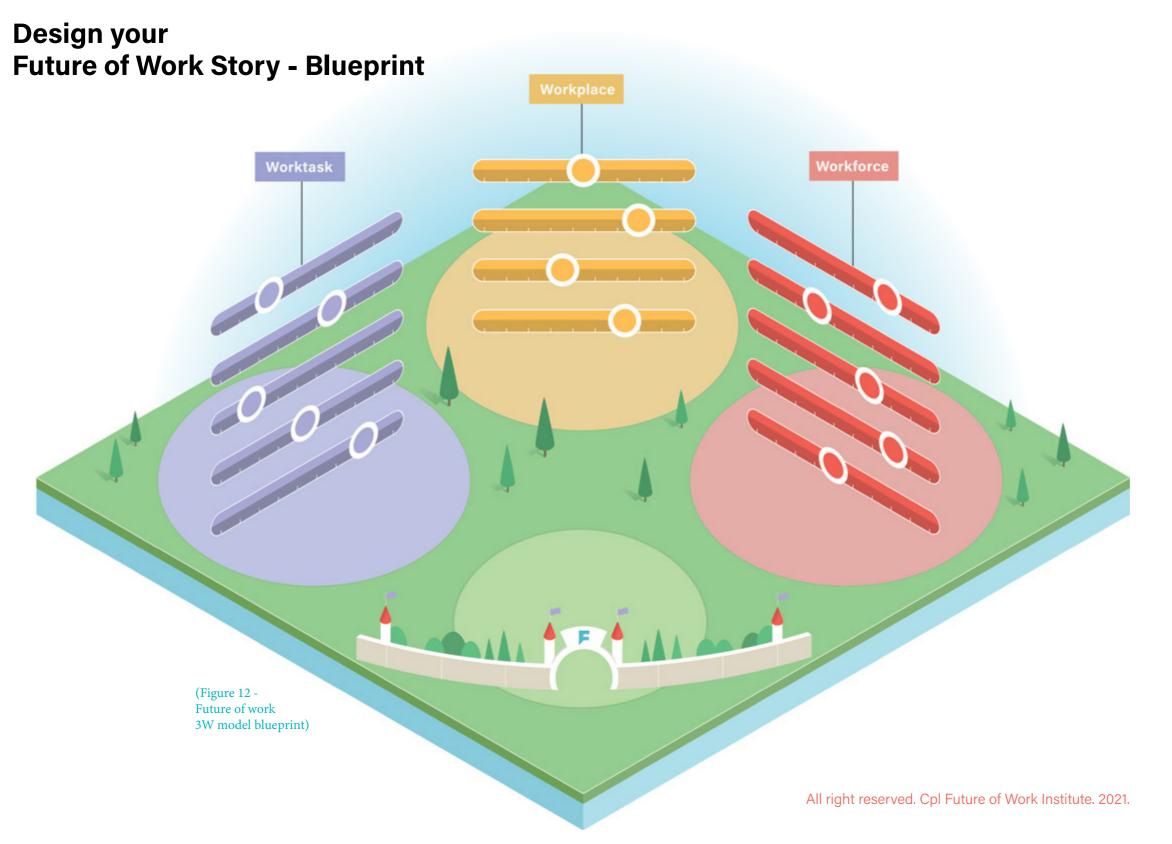
- What is the toolkit for your organisation in how it delivers work?
- What if the appropriate balance of automated & augmented in how work gets delivered?
- How technological savvy are your workforce?
- Have you identified the soft skills needed in physical-virtual workplace?



#### Future of Work World FUTURE OF WORK institute

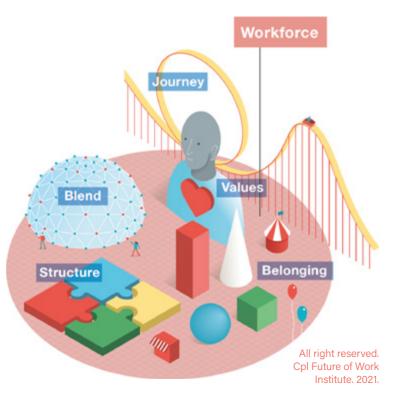
# 3. Blueprint

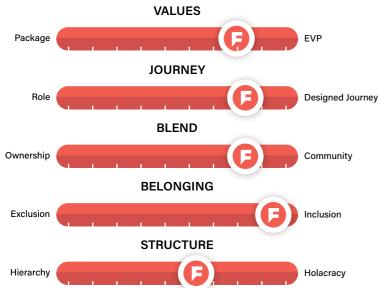
Through exploration and discussion we developed a sketch of the ideal future blueprint for organisations using the 3W model (Figure 12). Whilst there is no one size fits all when it comes to the future of work some broad directions of travel were generally agreed upon.



Using the 3W model provided, we asked the participants to consider the ideal `future of work' organisation! The blueprint consisted of 14 elements across WorkPlace, WorkForce and Worktask. These were represented as a set of continuums. A continuum is a continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, but the extremes are quite distinct. Participants were presented with a set of definitions and extremes for each of the continuums and asked to explore and define an ideal future organisation.

The participants initially were asked to reflect on where the 'As Is' might be but more importantly to propose where the 'To Be' should ideally be in 2 years across all 14. They discussed what could be dialed up or dialed down, within current business constraints and thinking and what this might entail. Detailed below are the definitions, curated output, and discussions from the working session.





(Figure 13 - The ideal 'to be' organisation in 2 years across the workforce continuums)

#### **WorkForce Continuums**

We have identified the five key Workforce Continuums (Figure 13). These are:

 Values - The value exchange between employers and employees of all types. In exchange for a set of financial and/or non-financial exchanges, employees brings their competencies, skills, energy and experiences that creates value for customers, themselves, their peers and the business alike. More dial up drives a more employee centric business built on an holistic approach to the employee experience.

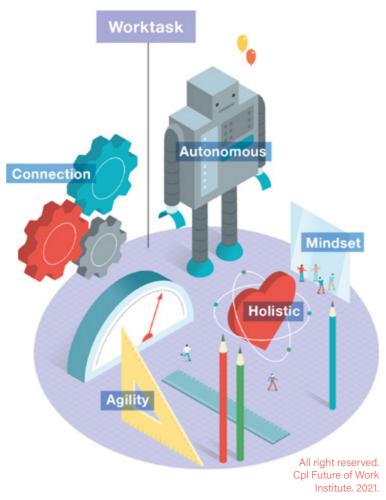
- Journey The functional, emotional and social journeys that employees go on through their entire careers. More dial up means greater focus on designed purposeful employee journeys.
- Blend The degree to which the workforce is more like a work community or ecosystem. The mix of employment types utilised permanent, contractors, suppliers, consultants, partners, SOW (statement of work), gig, pay by the hour workers used to tap into new skills, diversity, innovation. More dial up means more of a blended workforce that includes a variety of those tasked with delivering value to the business.
- Belonging Inclusion means that all people, regardless of their diverse abilities, disabilities, generational, ethnicity, gender, sexual preferences, health needs etc, have the right to:
   Be Respected, Empowered and Appreciated as valuable members of their organisation. More dial up means greater inclusivity and feeling of belonging across the entire workforce.
- Structure The level of bureaucracy, levels of supervision imposed within the organisation. The more dial up means more empowerment at a team, cell, or project level, and a more purposeful move to more horizontal structures, and decreased layers of supervision.

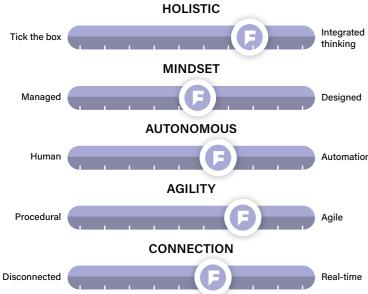
Creating experiences to motivate and empower employees was a large workforce topic of discussion. The general consensus was there would be an acceleration of purposefully designing customised talent paths and plans for employees. A more connected and holistic approach to defining and deploying Employee Propositions was also highlighted as a likely direction of travel for organisations wishing to attract the most appropriate talent for their business. The key evolving role of HR in driving both designed experiences and connected employer propositions was also discussed with the importance of leadership sponsorship and a joined-up approach seen as critical to success. What a 'workforce' is will continue to evolve and become more and more like a community or network of different types of talent - blending permanent employees, temporary, contingent, and contracting continuing to be important as organisations strive for increasing agility and diversity. Also discussed was what these developments might mean to leadership styles, and the increased complexities in ensuring the core missions of organisations filter out across these blended and networked communities.

The on-going importance of 'building diversity & inclusion' into the fabric of an organisation was discussed at length- with a broad view that the ideal blueprint will focus on fully realising the true value of diversity through more informed approaches to inclusive practices. There was a general view that the level of hierarchy within organisations will continue to evolve towards flatter structures with the removal of bureaucratic layers. In discussions relating to self-management and self-managed teams there was a sense that whilst greater empowerment is definitely part of the future of work blueprint, we will continue to see some organisations adopting strong oversight and more traditional management practices. With the advent of widespread distributed working there was a view that self-management will become a key competency for individual workers.

"Organisations that no longer offer free lunch and attractive working environments will need to rethink this as part of their attraction strategy and benefits package."

workshop quote





(Figure 14 - The ideal 'to be' organisation in 2 years across the worktask continuums)

#### **Worktask Continuums**

We have identified the five key Worktask Continuums (Figure 14). These are:

- Holistic How parts of something are intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole system. It is the balance of ticking a box on a task, stretching and challenging the box, and appreciation of the big picture. More dial up means more whole, and fully integrated thinking.
- Mindset The level of traditional management or design mindset applied to functions and tasks.
   Design is more about emotion, collaboration, problem solving, empathy, social, usability, aesthetics.
   More dial up means more design centric mindset and organisational approaches to processes and tasks.
- Autonomous The extent of adoption of emerging technologies like AI, immersive tech (AR, VR), IoT and data analytics, across the whole business. Higher dial up means more human task augmentation to fully automated/'self managed' tools.
- Agility The pace at which new programs, initiatives and ideas are planned, designed, developed and implemented. Dial up means moving from a more procedural driven to a more common sense rapid and flexible approach in the organisation.
- Connection The level of relationship, and awareness in which a person, platform or system is linked or associated with the delivery of a task. More dial up brings having more of a live pulse of the whole organisation and all its moving parts.

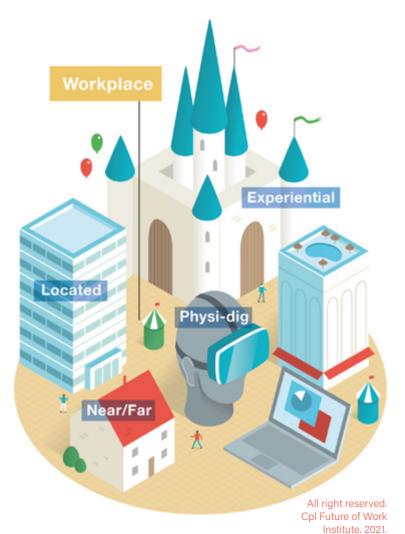
Advanced technologies will play a growing role in the delivery of tasks within organisations. The ideal blueprint was highlighted as the balance of the appropriate use of emerging technologies coupled with a clear view of the level of automation an organisation is aiming for and the impact of those technologies on workforce size and type. There was a good discussion on the impact of increasing automation and the skillsets required for employees to do their jobs. The sense was the 'ideal organisation' would need a workforce all with a base level of 'digital know how.' In relation to work practices the ideal blueprint would focus on agile approaches coupled with quick experimentation supported by technology.

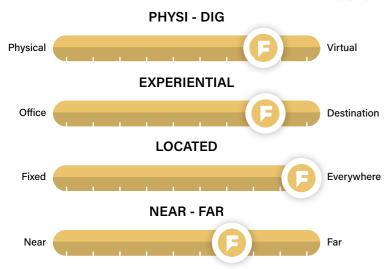
These approaches traditionally utilised within the IT/Technology sphere are finding greater use in other functions – there was a general sense that these methodologies empower a greater sense of ownership and trust for teams as they deliver work. The ideal blueprint for connection focused on the

realisation of fully connected, real time performance management at both team and individual levels. Even in the context of greater workplace flexibility (and related social inclusion challenges), collaborative and platform technologies are enabling everything from automated coaching support, to wellness advice through to real time team management and virtual group collaborations. These approaches should also enable employees to feed back to the organisation to drive bottom up continuous improvement and drive a feeling of greater connection.

There was a general view that the ideal blueprint for business was a 50/50 balance of emotion, imagination, empathy and design, coupled with a structured approach to planning, doing and managing of tasks in line with structured plans and procedures. These are all within the context of an ideal organisation blueprint where everyone takes an holistic, integrated approach where the interconnectedness of all tasks are ultimately linked to a big picture, and not just a tick box exercise.

"It's easy to automate stuff to point but if humans don't know trust or like one another it won't work Part of the future of work needs to be to design specifically for the purpose of physical collaboration, fun and the bringing of people together to create and sustain community"





(Figure 15 - The ideal 'to be' organisation in 2 years across the workplace continuums)

#### **Workplace Continuums**

"Workplace of the future will be destination based and experiential"

workshop quote

We have identified the four key Worktask Continuums (Figure 15). These are:

- Physi-Dig The degree to which the organisations' workplaces are physical and / or virtual (digital). Dial up means more of an integrated, seamless physical-virtual workplace.
- **Experiential** Experiential means that it can be seen, touched, heard, felt, and verified. It is the act of doing, being present and experiencing. Great experiences are intentional and emotional and create lasting memories. Dial up means having a more experiential destination based workplace.
- **Located** The level of centralisation or distribution focus for the organisation, physically and geographically. Dial up means a more distributed workplace.
- Near-Far The perceived physical, face to face interaction, collaboration and proximity required to complete a task. Dial up highlights the ability to complete a task at distance as well as in a face to face context.

There was an overwhelming view that in terms of work location the ideal future blueprint is very much 'work from anywhere' (with the proviso that within certain circumstances- eq. manufacturing- there will be a continuing need for people to be site based). This in turn would enable organisations to tap into a much broader and diverse workforce globallyremoving traditional barriers to attracting, recruiting and retaining staff. The workplace design will very much focus on integrating the physical and digital worlds in a seamless wayutilising best in class collaboration tools across digital platforms and the richer immersive AR/VR tools. Linked to this was a good discussion on the level of perceived face to face collaboration needed to complete certain tasks. There was a view that the ideal blueprint will move towards being able to complete some tasks aswell as (if not better) virtually but coupled with physical, face to face collaborations for deeper dive tasks.

The importance of ongoing 'physical collaboration' was also highlighted as a critical design feature in the blueprint. In order to align employee around the organisations brand and purpose, and to drive strong levels of social inclusiveness. With the more virtual nature of work the role of the 'office' will change. In the ideal blueprint the office will act more as an experiential destination or hub that will play various roles- a brand immersive space, a wellness space, a social retreat, a deep collaboration centre- appropriate to the organisation's culture. This in turn places a greater emphasis on the integrated design of these new spaces. In discussions about having 'more or less' physical locations there was a view the ideal blueprint may be about 'less but better, or even 'more but smaller' in relation to social hubs. There was no doubt that in essence the ideal blueprint for 'Workplace' is becoming radically different to previous iterations over the past 50 years.

"The 'office' may be viewed as a 'go to' for people within the organisation as 'their second home' versus viewing the office as more of a brand destination."

workshop quote

"A hub concept may exist in the future where offices are used as an incubator for innovation and creativity, brainstorming and collaboration. It will be an experience not just a destination or place of work"

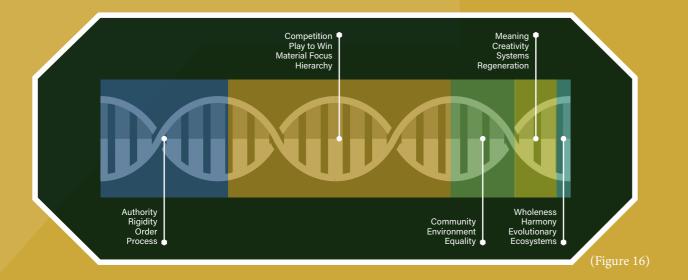
### **Keynote #3**

"THE LEADERSHIP **CHALLENGE (AND OPPORTUNITY) IN THE FUTURE OF WORK IS TO PURPOSEFULLY ALTER AN ORGANISATIONS GENETIC MAKE-UP AND IMPROVE IT** FOR THE BETTER"

16) with a predominance of blue & orange\* - a `play to

I love music- all genres- and one of my favourite 'self-managed' organisation, Orpheus has embraced for what an evolved direction of travel looks like?

Leadership for the future of work means on one hand creating a living, breathing organism and on the other a hyper efficient machine.



for the better. I believe that this leadership challenge leaders will need to embrace to face the future of work.

They are:

- Holistic
- Circular
- Polarity

#### Holistic

The philosophical definition of Holistic is `characterized by the belief that the parts of something overall workforce model design, the critical changes to gets delivered.

directing and control. There has been almost an harm created by themselves and their organisation.

#### Polarity

organisations at the same time as growing a vibrant living organism. They must gel an ever disparate, diverse, and distributed workforce around common polarities are the true 'wicked' problems that must be solved for organisations to thrive in the next evolution

And with that I'll leave you with a question, the only

'What if your organisations genetic code and how are

Barry Winkless. 2020.

\*Colours are in reference to the concepts first developed by Professor Don Edward Beck. Core Reference: Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change. Professor Edward Beck and Christopher C Cowan. 2005. Wiley & Sons. Further developed by co-authors research.



# **Summary & Reflections**

'The future of work for organisations is a story not yet fully written but there are enough plotlines to point towards a broadly defined first draft'

**Barry Winkless** 

There can be no doubt that Covid-19 has forced leaders in organisations to look a fresh at this thing called work but equally we must be aware that many have been questioning and, in some cases, implementing new ways of working over the past number of years or have been 'different' from the start as in the case of fully self-managed organisations. Two thirds of our survey respondents see Covid-19 as an opportunity for positive organisational change. There may will be organisational victims of Covid-19, but in general businesses (at least in the context of this study) have been responding in a proactive and constructive way and we hope that this level of proactivity is maintained when it comes to looking at work in new

> At the Future of Work Institute, we recognise the growing wave of new management philosophies with an emphasis on self-management, the implementation of flatter structures to enable greater sense of ownership, a broadening of a view on capitalism toward what looks to be, in some instances at least, a more socio-centric type of business. Equally we recognise that there is no one 'future of work story.' Each organisation has its own unique circumstances and from what we are seeing in industry it is likely that the coming 5 years will be defined by an evolution of existing practices and their integration is newer approaches - a hybrid approach.

There is a definite attempt to make organisations more 'human' and according to this study and from a

practical, actionable perspective this means: Demystifying technology and applying it in an ethical manner; Pursuing flatter structures and empowerment; A deeper understanding of the Human **Experience and Designing the** Experience; A 'new' approach to leadership; and a focus on Balance, Inclusiveness & Authenticity.

The broadening of an organisations purpose to include a greater focus 'beyond' profit is set to continue and in real terms this socio-centric approach means thriving through being more inclusive and diverse, embracing circular practices, being a responsible business with sustainability at core, seeing caring as a key business asset and a renewed focus on total stakeholder engagement.

From the sessions it is clear that there is an emerging broadly defined first draft of a FOW story for organisations (with the clear proviso that there is no one fits all approach). This draft looks like:

- 1. Workplace From a workplace perspective we will see a greater harnessing of collaborative platforms, new forms of mixed, multi rich engagement tools, as well as a greater drive towards appropriate forms of flexible, distributed or hybrid working. From the sessions it was clearly highlight that a formalised approach to what the workplace is and what it means for employees will be a critical design component for organisations to consider in order to get the most out of the physical virtual opportunity. It is likely also that in some instances that some parts of the physical footprint of an organisation and its role may well need to be reconsidered.
- 2. Workforce There is no doubt we will see a broadening of what the workforce actually is to include a community and network of different employment types. From the sessions it is clear that a greater focus on designing purposeful employee experiences built on a more strategic approach to employee wellbeing will continue. Leadership in the context of this study needs to evolve towards more of an empowering, orchestration and coaching style coupled with a general move towards if not complete self-managing teams then perhaps some form of 'middle ground' with a move towards giving employees a greater sense of ownership.
- 3. Worktask Automation and augmentation of people and associated tasks to deliver work is set to accelerate over the next 5 years according to this study. During the sessions on a number of occasions the importance of a conscious and ethical approach to technology was brought up. A move towards work practices that enable a greater sense of ownership, community and collaboration are likely to see greater adoption-like agile and design centred approached. As with technologies pockets of units within organisations are already well on the way to adopting these practices but as such they are not necessarily spread across organisations (in most instances).

The most critical thing for leaders is to adopt a more holistic and balanced view of work. As per FOWI 3W model it is important to consider not just where we work in digital and physical space but also how well workforces are designed within an ever-increasing network of different employment types, how people are motivated and kept well in totality at work, as well as the purposeful and conscious implementation of relevant methods, mindsets, tools and technologies that in some way enable organisations to be both hyper efficient machines and living, breathing, human places to be.

The future of work is a leadership imperative and as such it is not something owned by the HR or the People function. It is absolutely something that needs to be orchestrated and overseen by these departments but one that needs to be driven and sponsored at the very top. For leaders the future of work needs to be viewed as a genuine opportunity for inward looking collaborative and competitive advantage possibly on a par with externally focused strategies for growth.

The greatest opportunity for leaders is to purposefully design an appropriate future of work pathway for their organisations. It is not something that should happen to them but something proactively pursued. This is the opportunity for leaders - to create an exemplar of a future organisation and a beacon for the next generation of work.

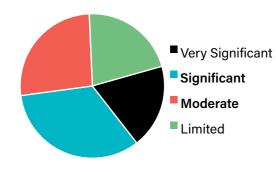
Future of Work World

# **APPENDIX**Covid-19 Era Survey

#### **Question & Insight**

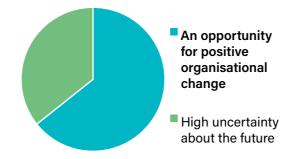
What has been the magnitude of how Covid-19 has impacted your business?

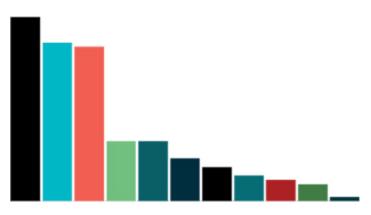
Over 50% of respondents had significant to very significant impact.



What do you think mainly when you hear the word Covid-19 as it relates to your role and your organisation?

65% saw it as an opportunity for positive organisational change, with the remaining 35% had high uncertainty about the future.





- Managing employee expectations and well-being
- Planning for the future & business strategy
- Adjusting to new/ revised business operations & working models
- Managing challenging budgets, finances & cash flows
- Technology, accessing & implementing remote working strategies
- Managing the engagement with remote US based senior leadership
- Increased demand for services
- Crisis management
- Decreased demand for services
- Lay offs
- Impact on brand

As a result of Covid-19 what are some of the challenges your facing right now?

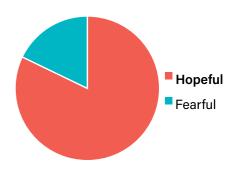
top three The top three by a log way were:

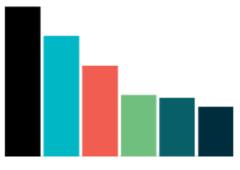
- Managing employee expectations and well-being
- 2. Planning for the future and business strategy
- Adjusting to new/ revised business operations and working models

#### **Question & Insight**

Do you feel hopeful or fearful about the changes, related to the Covid-19 impact, you might need to make in the near horizon (next 6-12mths)?

44 out of the 54 respondents were hopeful, versus 10 that were fearful.



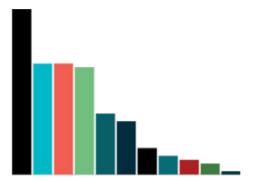


- EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)
- Physical and Mental Wellness Education seminars i.e sleep, exercise, meditation, nutrition etc
- A full well-being campaign
- Wellness app and challenges
- Mental Health First Aid
- Work-Related Stress Risk Analysis to help mitigate ongoing stress in the workplace
- None of the above

What supports are you putting in place/have in place to support the mental health of employees in their current work environment and/or when bringing them back into the workplace?

#### The top three are:

- 1. 95% had an EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)
- 2. 75% a Physical and Mental Wellness Education seminars i.e. sleep, exercise, meditation, nutrition etc.
- 3. 58% a full well-being campaign



- CEO communications & alignment
- Mental wellbeing initiatives (support groups, meditation, resilience training)
- 1 to 1s with youe manager / team leads
- Broader engagement initiatives (quizes, virtual drinks, cafes etc)
- Physical wellbeing initiatives (yoga, walking competitions etc)
- Annual leave and holidays
- Ongoing performance reviews/ feedback
- Celebratory initiatives (awards, shout outs)
- Other
- Charitable events
- None

What HR or People function led intervention has made the most positive impacts on you or your team (select top 3)?

#### The top four interventions were:

- 1. CEO communications and alignment (80%)
- 50% had Mental wellbeing initiatives (support groups, meditation, resilience training)
- 50% had broader engagement initiatives (quiz's, virtual drinks, cafes etc)
- 4. 50% had 1 to 1s with your manager / team leads

#### **Co-Authors Biographies**



Mr. Barry Winkless
Chief Strategy Officer, Cpl
Head of the Future of Work Institute, Cpl

Barry Winkless is CSO of Cpl & Head of the Future of Work Institute - a multi-disciplinary advisory team delivering real world advice and projects to clients internationally. Over the past 23 years he has worked globally with some of the world's most respected organisations. He is a thought leader, frequent author and speaker at numerous client and external events on the topics of strategy, creativity and the future of work.



Dr. Declan Bogan Future of Work Senior Lead & CSR Expert

Declan has been immersed in the world of product, people, process, sustainability, and business model innovation over the last 20 years. From the bench to the boardroom of micro businesses to global organisations, Declan has worked with senior executives and entrapreneurs at over 120 companies helping to reshape their commercial and strategic thinking and direction.

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We would like to express thanks to those who participated in the working sessions.

3W Model and associated illustrations, Tom Woolley, https://tomwoolley.com/ Layout, design and select illustrations, Alan Duffy, Creative Designer, Cpl Marketing.

# **About the Future of Work Institute**

THE CPL FUTURE OF WORK INSTITUTE EXPLORES, QUESTIONS AND HELPS DESIGN FUTURE WORK SOLUTIONS WITH OUR CLIENTS, PARTNERS, COLLABORATORS AND CANDIDATES.



Diversity & Inclusion



Talent Technology



Proposition



New Workforce Models



Creative Leadership



Government & Regulatory



Future Skills

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