



7 TRENDS FOR WORKFORCE 2020:

**How to Make Today's Ever-Changing
Workplace Work for You**

About This Guide

... WHAT? ...

An informative how-to on keeping up with the emerging trends in today's modern workplace.

... WHY? ...

The workplace is rapidly changing — from the way we communicate and collaborate to the benefits and perks that attract and retain generations of workers unlike any other. Only companies that embrace these differences and plan accordingly will adapt and thrive in the workplace of 2020.

... WHO IS IT FOR? ...

HR managers, learning and development (L&D) professionals, and managers who want to turn their organization into a learning environment well equipped for the workplace of tomorrow.

... WHO IS IT FROM? ...

The makers of Bridge, a modern learning and engagement platform that enables managers across the organization to expeditiously implement training according to workforce needs while measuring employee sentiment and alignment.

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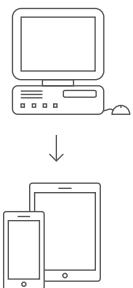
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Table of Contents

Intro	1
Out With the Old Ways, In With the New Wave of Employees (and Working Styles)	
<hr/>	
All Work and Some Play	1
Workplace Trend #1: Flexibility and Work-Life Integration Move to the Forefront	
<hr/>	
Prioritize Your People	3
Workplace Trend #2: Design Thinking	
<hr/>	
How to Train Your Dragon Employees	4
Workplace Trend #3: Training is Not Just for Onboarding	
<hr/>	
Office Olympics: The Importance of Collaborative Teams	6
Workplace Trend #4: Rise of Teams (Collaboration Versus Competition)	
<hr/>	
Running the Numbers Game	7
Workplace Trend #5: Companies See the Value of People Analytics	
<hr/>	
(Company) Relationship Status: Engaged	8
Workplace Trend #6: Employee Engagement Gains Traction as a Top Priority	
<hr/>	
Employees Feel Right at Home	9
Workplace Trend #7: Rise in Gig and Remote Workers	
<hr/>	
Conclusion	10
Key Takeaways for Tomorrow's Workplace	



Out With the Old Ways of Business, In With the New Wave of Employees (and Working Styles)

The Jetsons lied to us. Kinda. None of us are commuting to work in flying cars (yet), but the world we live and work in has changed dramatically thanks to technology. Gone are the days of punching in and out, the strict 9-to-5, and the attractive pension plan.

The workforce who will man (and woman) the workplace of 2020 are:

- › **Tech-savvy** – Younger generations grew up as digital natives, not knowing a world without the internet.
- › **Socially conscious** – Seventy-five percent of millennials think highly of companies that support social causes.
- › **Short on attention span** – Multitasking is the new norm, with some workers using an average of five devices at once.
- › **Ambitious** – Many workers expect to be promoted every year or two.
- › **Job hoppers** – Ninety-one percent expect to stay with a company for less than three years.
- › **Boomerang employees** – There's no shame in their game for leaving a company only to return to work later.

#FUTUREOFFICEEXPECTATIONS, TRENDING NOW

By 2020, baby boomers, Gen X, millennials, and now Gen Z will all be sharing the same Keurig machine — that's four distinct generations with different views, expectations, and priorities. Companies will have to adopt new methods for just about everything — from recruitment and benefits to training and advancement.

COMPANIES CAN NO LONGER (SMART)PHONE IT IN

In case you haven't noticed, consumers are in constant multitasking mode, whether at home, work, or anywhere in between. Today, smartphones are permanently attached, acting as digital Swiss Army Knives for just about everything we do (with an actual phone call thrown in on occasion). From iPhones to Uber apps, workers have become used to the sleek interfaces and speed of consumer-facing tech. And they're never looking back.

All Work and Some Play

WORKPLACE TREND #1: FLEXIBILITY AND WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION MOVE TO THE FOREFRONT

Mobile technology has changed the way we do business forever. While checking our emails before we brush our teeth in the morning can be convenient, this always-on work mentality can exhaust employees. Two out of three managers expect employees to be reachable outside of the office on their personal time (meaning something has to give, or at least integrate).

DIVIDE AND CONQUER IS DOA: ENTER WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION

At the center of work-life integration? Social media

As work and play become more integrated, companies with "No Facebook" policies will have a hard time attracting and retaining new talent. Best-in-class companies are taking social to the next level, incorporating it into their recruitment methods and their cultures. Workers at socially engaged companies are 38 percent more likely to share relevant company content with their personal networks and even customers.

Millennials are seeking work-life integration versus work-life balance. These employees are interested in careers that allow work and life to coexist and oftentimes blend together. Mobile plays a huge role in this by allowing employees to always be connected to work.

BOOST YOUR SOCIAL STREET CRED WITH EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS:

- › **Implement and communicate a solid social media policy.** Create an online training course to outline the specifics of your company's social media usage rules.
- › **Replace your old-school newsletter with an internal Facebook site, or use Slack.** Instead of sending around a stale email template with the latest company news, encourage employees to participate and contribute to the living, breathing social media version.
- › **Give props to employees on your external social pages.** If your employees are doing awesome things, share them! Just be sure to keep client info and any company secret sauce confidential.
- › **Incorporate social into online training.** Social doesn't have to be limited to "likes" and funny memes. Use elements like discussion groups and message boards throughout your online training courses to appeal to employees' collaborative natures.

GREAT 'FLEX'PECTATIONS

No one wants to be chained to a desk all day. And thanks to mobile devices and Wi-Fi, most employees can work wherever. [Oasis Outsourcing](#) found three out of five millennials expect this perk from employers. However, fewer than 5 percent consider home their primary workplace.

Rent-a-cubicle versus revolving door

According to [Bloomberg](#), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) had an expensive turnover problem. Departing employees said they would have appreciated the ability to work from home. So PwC decided to turn too little, too late into opportunity. The company [evolved](#) all of its U.S. offices into co-working spaces, and gave employees the option to book workspace as they would a hotel. Employees can now come and go from the office as they please, resulting in large financial savings for the company. (Young prospects think it's "on fleek," too.)

Don't hate, collaborate

Remote workers need all the tools they can get to ensure seamless communication. **For easy collaboration and project management consider implementing:**

- › **Slack:** Slack cuts down on clogged inboxes with easy instant messaging capabilities. It also allows employees to share files and archives all information.
- › **Todoist:** This site is like having one big interactive planner for your organization. It will also email your team when deadlines are coming up.
- › **GoToMeeting:** With this tool, you can conduct online meetings with screen-sharing capabilities even if you have employees working all over the country.
- › **Basecamp:** From message boards and real-time chat to automatic check-ins with team members and to-do lists, Basecamp is an online hub for getting stuff done remotely.
- › **Trello:** Employees can easily keep projects on track with a visual board that makes it easy to see (and stay on top of) deadlines.

Survey your own employees about the types of workplace flexibility that matter to them.

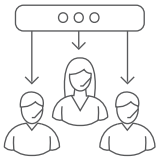
Once you know what they need, **implement fair and flexible remote-working policies.**

Clearly communicate these standards via training and readily available materials.

OFFICE SPACE (AND COSTS) ARE SHRINKING

According to [HubSpot](#), office space is shrinking. By 2020, the average amount of space per employee will decrease from 400 to 150 square feet per person. The increase in remote workers will help to eliminate overcrowding in these shrinking offices.

For those with shrinking office footprints, it's key to create multifaceted office spaces that include designated spots to lounge, as well as distraction-free places and rest areas.



Prioritize Your People

WORKPLACE TREND #2: DESIGN THINKING

Constant communication with work. More than [5,000 marketing messages](#) every day. Emails that can be checked before you get out of bed. Today's employees are stressed at home, in the office, and everywhere else.

[Work stress](#) accounts for the majority of anxiety that Americans experience. Today's L&D professionals and managers need to understand the stressors that affect employees and, ultimately, the company's bottom line.

This job is a prison

[The American Institute of Stress](#) reports that it's not necessarily the job type that has the most impact on stress but rather the work environment.

Creating an employee-centric work environment can alleviate anxiety. So get to design thinking.

EXCEPTIONAL EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES ARE NO ACCIDENT

[Design thinking](#) is a business approach that uses a people-centric method for handling problems. Daniel J. Sims, the principal designer at Procter & Gamble, defines [design thinking](#) as a way of coming up with solutions you would have never predicted. It's less design process and more point of view, where humans are at the center (and forefront) of all decisions.

Whereas the recent HR focus may have been on creating processes that boost productivity, design thinking shifts to the employee experience.

What is making your employees stressed out? Is it the constant pings in their email inboxes? The lack of control over their schedules?

Some easy ways your company can use people-centric logic to solve these problems are:

- › **Adopt non-email means of interoffice communication.** Installing a collaboration tool with messaging, archiving, and search capabilities (like Slack) can unclog overflowing inboxes and eliminate the distractions that lead to less productivity.
- › **Let employees manage their own time.** Use apps and intranet portals so employees can manage their own calendars and vacation time. [Fifty-nine percent](#) of millennials prefer schedule flexibility and autonomy to other work perks like overtime compensation.

Design your design-thinking plan:

- › **Create personas for employee types.** Employee personas are less about job title, and more about [work style](#). Evaluate

employees to find similarities. What do their current managers say about them? What are their career goals? Strengths? Weaknesses? Create training courses that appeal to how these different personas learn and what their professional goals are.

- › **Walk through the training and workday experiences.** Identify ways to improve (large and small). Then design onboarding and training processes around the ways each operates.
- › **Put yourself in the learner's shoes.** Create courses that address the employee mindset, not that of HR or L&D. Make courses easy to access, relevant to the job, and engaging. Develop training courses for each employee type and allow 24/7 access for self-directed learning.



How to Train Your Dragon Employees

WORKPLACE TREND #3: TRAINING IS NOT JUST FOR ONBOARDING

Training should never be a one-and-done process for your company. Employees at all levels expect continual learning opportunities from employers. In fact, 35 percent of millennials rank quality training and development programs as the most desirable quality in a workplace — yes, even higher than salary.

“The rate at which an organization learns may become the only sustainable source of competitive advantage.”

— Peter Drucker, Founder of Modern Management

MIND (AND MEND) THE SKILLS GAP

Are employees coming to work prepared? Most bosses think not. HR solutions company Adecco found in a recent survey of more than

Meet your new boss, Ms. Millennial

We've all had bosses who have made us shake our heads and wish for patience (or maybe even unemployment). Do your part to save your employees from poor leadership. More than one in four millennials will become a manager next year. **In addition to lessons on software or job-related tasks, provide proper leadership training to this next generation of managers, some of whom will definitely be younger than their direct reports.**

500 C-suite executives that 80 percent of employers believe the skills gap is definitely a thing. How can you help employees develop important job skills after you hire them?

- › **Prioritize training for “soft skills.”** Help develop critical thinking skills by simulating scenarios, focusing on problems employees may be asked to solve, and “what if” trainings, where employees can discuss and debate different solutions to a problem.
- › **Use the brain trust you have.** Don't let company knowledge leave when seasoned employees retire. Start a mentorship program for new employees to learn from experienced co-workers. Encourage retiring employees to document the ins-and-outs of their jobs, and use this information to create relevant training courses.

DISADVANTAGES OF DISCONTINUED TRAINING

CEOs are reporting that their companies are not developing skills fast enough. Don't be left behind. **Keep strong members of your team engaged by offering professional growth opportunities, no matter how long they have been at your company.**

UPWARD MOBILITY

Today's employees prefer flexibility in their training, too. Don't confine them to their desks.

Use mobile-responsive training technology to appeal to these new employees, [79 percent](#) of whom display symptoms of emotional distress when separated from their phones.

Retire the dusty VHS tapes of HR-yesteryear and empower employees to choose their own learning adventure. Three training tiers should be included in your learning model:

- › **Immediate: Performance support and just-in-time (JIT)/ point-of-need training**
– When an employee first begins, they will need immediate training, including job basics, company information and benefits. Produce short videos that explain job responsibilities, or [interactive PDFs](#) that walk employees through key processes.
- › **Intermediate: Courses for current role and competency expansion** – Intermediate training deepens employees’ skills for the jobs they currently perform, and begins to develop competencies for additional tasks. This training enables employees to grow within your company as they expand their skillsets. Engage employees by [gamifying your training](#).
- › **Transitional: Skills that meet long-term business goals and individual career plans** – Think of transitional training as “big picture training.” This stage goes past employees’ current roles and empowers them to meet higher level, more individualized goals, even if they aren’t needed for their current jobs. Transitional training might look like public speaking opportunities or online certifications.

Develop training programs that appeal to today’s workers:

- › **Create “snack-size” courses.** Design training courses knowing that workers have incredibly short attention spans. Break sections into bite-sized chunks, and incorporate experiential learning to keep them engaged. Keep your training interesting by using:
 - Simulations
 - Anecdotes and case studies, as stories resonate
 - Flipped roles so your employees can teach the material to co-workers
 - Social components, including a completion badge they can post
- › **Don’t reinvent the wheel.** Use available outsourced and third-party materials to expand and create individual learning programs. Online training providers like Lynda.com or OpenSesame may offer integrations with your learning management system (LMS), or you can pay for a separate subscription to save yourself hours of creating quality learning content.
- › **Make it relevant.** Do away with one-size-fits-all training. If employees feel as though the training content has been curated to meet their specific needs, they will be more engaged. Consider developing courses that are related to department, job function, and skills that could lead to future promotions.



Office Olympics: The Importance of Collaborative Teams

WORKPLACE TREND #4: RISE OF TEAMS (COLLABORATION VERSUS COMPETITION)

Workforces are more diverse than ever due to [the global nature of business](#). Technology and mobile capabilities now allow companies to interact with employees — and customers — all over the world. [Language and location](#) are no longer a barrier for doing business. But failing to adapt to what motivates and connects this lightning-fast global economy sure is.

The need to innovate ASAP is driving a new organizational structure among high-performing companies.

Banking on change

Tangerine Bank, the financial institution formerly known as [ING Direct Canada](#), has changed more than its name. This financial institution embraced a new collaborative culture where “employees don’t have job titles, there are no offices, and the CEO doesn’t have a reserved parking spot.” The proof is in the pudding. Or, in this case, the customers. [According to Forbes](#), the bank manages between 25 and 30 times the number of customers per employee as its Big Five Canadian bank competitors. CEO Peter Aceto attributes this success to a highly collaborative work culture.

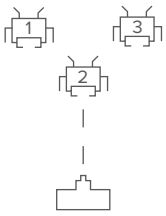
WORK, WORK, WORK, WORK, WORK, WORK (TOGETHER)

This ideal structure will resemble what [Bersin by Deloitte](#) describes as a network of teams: “Indeed, in some ways, businesses are becoming more like Hollywood movie production teams and less like traditional corporations, with people coming together to tackle projects, then disbanding and moving on to new assignments once the project is complete.”

WHAT’S A NETWORK OF TEAMS AND HOW DO YOU GET ONE?

Create a collaborative working environment:

- 1. Develop focused teams within your organization.** Instead of siloed departments, use collaborative teams to solve problems. Teams can be formed to center around customer needs, product launches, missions, or even specific markets. Traditional or generalist managers are not best suited to lead these highly focused teams. Opt for subject-matter or industry experts to lead each specific team assignment.
- 2. Give individual teams the freedom to establish their own goals and project timelines.** This doesn’t mean they can do whatever they want. Start with a clear-cut vision and mission statement from your top brass, and clearly communicate it to the team. Then give them the power to establish goals and timelines for the project. Young employees appreciate having control and flexibility over their work tasks. This isn’t a set-it-and-forget-it approach. Check in to see that pre-established benchmarks are being met, and be available to provide supportive management to these groups while still allowing them to work autonomously.
- 3. Establish a command center or real-time information network.** Use a company intranet site or cloud-based learning management system (LMS) to house all key resources and project updates so employees can quickly and independently find information they need, even from their permanently attached (emotionally) mobile devices.



Running the Numbers Game

WORKPLACE TREND #5: COMPANIES SEE THE VALUE OF PEOPLE ANALYTICS

HR technology is evolving just as quickly as your millennial employees are posting on Instagram. And while it may seem challenging to keep up, here's some motivation:

Deloitte research found companies that make use of people analytics “outperform their peers in quality of hire, retention, and leadership capabilities, and are generally higher ranked in their employment brand.”

So we meet again: Google's hiring problem

According to [Laszlo Bock, SVP of People Operations at Google](#), promising job applicants at Google would typically be subject to between 12 and 14 interviews. Those geniuses at Google analyzed their hiring process and realized that five interviews were sufficient to make a hiring decision. This “[rule of five](#)” eliminated up to 10 extra time-sucking interviews per candidate. Imagine what an HR hero you'd be if you did something similar.

Companies have the power to measure and track just about anything, and with greater access to employee data than ever before. Analytics software can be bought off-the-shelf, as integrations with existing talent management systems, or through new systems that have analytics capabilities built in. Deloitte reports that nearly 40 percent of firms around the world plan to replace their outdated HR systems over the next two years. If you are one of them, be sure built-in reporting and analytics are on your list of LMS must-haves.

DESCRIBE YOUR PERFECT (CANDI)DATE

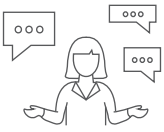
Just like everything else, data has come a long way, baby. It's now being used to determine which

characteristics make up the best employees.

Use data to discover which characteristics are keys for success in your company, and to seek out candidates who have these skills. Just as businesses are encouraged to develop [buyer personas](#), HR departments can begin to build “hire personas.”

HR analytics can be used to:

- › **Predict retention.** According to [Deloitte University Press](#), one system on the market uses social media behavior to predict employee turnover within weeks. Use social media analysis capabilities and employee engagement results to determine a timeline for when employees are at risk for leaving. Host one-on-ones to connect with these individuals about their growth plans within your organization, or to see if there are any concerns you can address.
- › **Boost engagement.** Perform stay interviews or use employee surveys to determine the behaviors or issues causing top performers to leave. Not enough flexibility? Evaluate your work-from-home policies. Are employees bored? Develop training that provides continual education. If employees leave for consistent reasons, address those concerns to increase engagement among current employees.
- › **Recruit.** Evaluate your hiring process. How many stages does it include? Are you losing a lot of quality candidates at a certain stage? Based on results, streamline your interview process to be more efficient and effective.
- › **Measure performance.** Profile high-performers and use that information to set quotas and define talent characteristics for future hiring.
- › **Identify skills gaps.** Use interactive quizzes to test for knowledge gaps in a wide range of soft and technical skills. Once you've determined areas that need help, use targeted training to close those gaps and strengthen your workforce.



(Company) Relationship Status: Disengaged

WORKPLACE TREND #6: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT GAINS TRACTION AS A TOP PRIORITY

RUNAWAY ~~BRIDE~~ EMPLOYEES

Fewer pension options and weak 401k contributions make today's employees less loyal than previous generations. What is one of the key ways to keep them around? Engagement.

The current (and dismal) estimate is that around 34 percent of U.S. employees are engaged at work. Why should you care?

ENGAGE 'EM BEFORE THEY'RE GONE

Ninety-one percent of millennials expect to stay in their jobs for less than three years, meaning they could have up to 20 jobs over the course of their careers. They are less loyal by nature, so engagement is a must to keep them around (for a little while anyway). **Focus on driving meaning, purpose, and passion among workers.**

Engaged employees rock because they:

Help their companies do better. A Hewitt Associates survey on employee engagement found that organizations with engagement scores of about 65 percent outperformed the total stock market index — even in volatile times.

Like their bosses. Forty-nine percent of employees who are very satisfied with their direct manager are engaged, while 80 percent who are very dissatisfied are disengaged.

“[When you sell employees on the importance of their roles in your company] People are more likely to generate their own ideas, to contribute with enthusiasm, to keep slogging when it becomes unpleasant, and also to experience a sense of camaraderie and togetherness.”

— CV Harquail, Scholar & Writer,
AuthenticOrganizations.com

HOW TO (RE)ENGAGE

Find a way to measure engagement, and evaluate your employees often. A few tools that can help are surveys (Likert scales and Net Promoter Score surveys are highly effective), people analytics (usually best supplemented with a survey), and online reviews (Glassdoor is anonymous and therefore telling). Remember to examine engagement from multiple levels, including organization-wide, team-wide and individually.

Use training as an opportunity to educate employees about how they are important to the company. Invest time in creating a detailed company plan that lets employees know exactly how they contribute to the overall mission. When employees feel valued and a part of a team, they are more likely to stick around when the going gets tough.

PUT A RING (OR FEEDBACK LOOP) ON IT

Today, 64 percent of organizations only measure engagement annually. That may as well be a lifetime for today's workers, who learn and thrive from frequent feedback. Companies that don't provide consistent performance reviews risk seeing employees “peacing out” for better opportunities. **Replace annual reviews with monthly one-on-one feedback sessions or quarterly “stay” interviews.**



Employees Feel Right at Home

WORKPLACE TREND #7: RISE IN GIG AND REMOTE WORKERS

TEMPS ON THE RISE

Thirty-one percent of American workers are contingent employees, working as freelancers, part-timers, or temps. Modern employees enjoy supplementing their incomes with additional opportunities, and millennials are known for their side hustles. FlexJobs found that, ideally, one-third of millennials would want to work part-time supplemented by freelancing. Moral of the story? Freelance workers have no desire to commit to a full-time gig.

HIRING TEMPS HAS ITS PERKS (AND HEADACHES)

Using freelance workers gives companies access to talent they may not be able to use (or afford) if they work with only full-time employees, thus enhancing their competitive advantage. On the flip side, managing, training, and engaging these diverse (and dispersed) employee types may prove to be a challenge.

BLURRED LINES (AND EXPECTATIONS)

On paper, freelancers, part-timers, and gig workers may be vastly different. But one thing is for certain: Your customers expect a consistent experience, no matter the employee type. To help manage and train these diverse and dispersed employees:

- › **Create and deploy training based on user roles and permissions.** Outline the distinctions between these employees, and define how their responsibilities (and benefits) differ. Then create relevant training for each worker type.
- › **Let your LMS do the heavy lifting.** To easily train an array of freelancers, full-timers, and other classifications, use a learning management system (LMS) that allows you to create custom roles and permissions, and only provide access to relevant training for employees who fall into those parameters.
- › **Grant easy, 24/7 access through a cloud-based LMS.** Teach all employees how to access these materials independently. Make it as easy as possible for them to answer questions about your company and processes by themselves, whether it's through an online knowledge base or resource library.



Conclusion

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR TOMORROW'S WORKPLACE

Today's workforce is forever changed by technology, new social norms, and cross-generational teams. For your company to flourish in the 2020 workplace, it's up to you to create an environment where boomers and Gens X, Y, and Z want to be.

- › Engage young employees with short, multimedia elements and cross-device training platforms to appeal to their tech-savvy and short attention spans.
- › Determine the types of flexibility that matter most to your employees, and implement fair and flexible policies.
- › Implement and communicate a solid social media policy to enable employees to be brandbassadors.
- › Use design thinking to create an employee-centric work environment.
- › Don't limit training to newbies. Provide ongoing training and professional growth opportunities.
- › Use networks of teams, rather than traditional office hierarchy, to solve problems and tackle projects.
- › Leverage people analytics to gain deeper insight into your employees. Enact positive change with this data by modifying hiring processes and creating "hire personas."
- › Keep engagement at your company high by focusing on meaning, purpose, and passion. Evaluate employees often through anonymous surveys and one-on-ones.
- › Grant easy training access through a cloud-based LMS so that all employees, no matter their status, have access to learning materials.

Bridge is the cloud-based, mobile-first learning platform that enables managers across the organization to expeditiously implement training according to workforce needs while measuring employee sentiment and alignment.

