A brave new future of work

future worx
The future of work is here, but for how long?

The future of work is truly upon us! For years, digital advances have promised great things for the world of work, but corporate inertia and old ways of operating have delayed transformation for most organisations. Until 2020.

It’s no longer news that Covid-19 forced years of digital transformation in a matter of months. Companies everywhere proved they can survive and adapt to enormous disruption, but not without casualties. We’ve seen a “boom in bankruptcies” in sectors ranging from oil and gas, to retail and aviation. And as the dust settles it seems that prolonged disruption is the only certainty.
So, what does this mean for the future of work?

Today’s skillsets, processes, workforces and workplaces are all geared for efficiency, but efficiency has made them brittle in this era of lockdown. Companies must act now to completely reinvent the way work gets done and build resilience at every stage of operation.

For business to be resilient, operations must be adaptive and agile. But this will only happen once employees are empowered to thrive in a remote hybrid world.
The inflection point is now

The scale of change has created incredible momentum and opportunity for redefining the future of work. Your people have stepped up and shown commitment, resilience, and the potential to make a stronger, leaner, and more adaptive business. But will you seize the moment for regeneration or sink back like memory foam?

The inflection point is now: a unique opportunity to change the way your people work. Will you harness this momentum to deliver lasting change and reward your people with better ways of working? Will you seize the opportunity to transform your digital workplace and unlock huge competitive advantage?
People centric transformation approach

We have it, let's roll it out...

What can new digital tools do for us?
What must change?

We see five key transformation themes emerging for the future of work and only an ambitious programme of people-centric transformation can get you there.

Let Future Worx take you on a journey:

1. Open culture
2. Resilient organisation
3. Adaptive roles
4. Hybrid spaces
5. Nurtured people
01: Open culture

The world of work has changed for good. Hybrid remote workplaces and resilience over efficiency demand fundamental shifts in culture. Open and supportive cultures based around regenerated mission, vision, and values will be vital in the future of work.

3 key changes for open cultures

01. Regenerate purpose

02. Make culture visible

03. Over communicate
Regenerate purpose

Momentous change demands an overhaul of who you are as a company. Purpose, mission, vision, values and goals must all be regenerated for resilience in an era of uncertainty. Strike a keynote for open culture by making this process of renewal as open as possible with real opportunities for dialogue and tapping into the collective wisdom of your people.

Make culture visible

In our recent survey on remote working, the two greatest challenges experienced by respondents during lockdown were lack of visible company culture and loss of camaraderie with colleagues. The sudden shift to remote working has meant people are cut off from the atmosphere and unique culture of their workplaces. Feeling isolated will never be a recipe for success so companies must find ways to engage remote workers and keep them in touch with the pulse of the community.

Fortunately, some companies had a healthy head start to creating thriving remote working cultures - something Future Worx has been helping to deliver for years. And we’ve helped many others learn fast through lockdown. The companies who’ve acted smartest through this crisis have over communicated, reassured, and carefully explained leadership challenges and reasoning behind decisions, especially when difficult.
Over communicate

Your people need to see and hear leadership more frequently than ever before. This means video broadcasts, timely updates, working out loud, and being present to everyone. Use modern digital workplace tools and ditch email. Share your daily challenges, uncertainties, successes and failures. Be vulnerable and encourage feedback. Herein lies true openness.

We’ve also seen the other side: when leadership seemingly disappears and forgets about people stranded at home, only showing up to share bad news. Morale and mental health has plummeted. Not a culture anyone wants.
02: Resilient organisation

Process efficiency and continuous improvement were strategies for more certain times. To outmanoeuvre uncertainty, processes and methodologies must be resilient. This is about empowering individuals and teams to exercise judgement and choose different routes to the same goals. Reinvention of the way work gets delivered, especially in response to emerging disruption, is the new normal.

3 key changes for resilient organisation

01. Mimic organisms
02. Autonomous teams
03. Virtual nerve centre
Mimic organisms

Processes are strongly informed by organisational design, so now more than ever we have an opportunity to organise and reorganise ourselves into more intelligent structures that mimic the responsive systems found in nature. We are accustomed to think of companies as machines, but machines can’t learn. Living organisms do. Organisms learn by purposefully interacting with a changing environment and continuously evolving based on experiments and feedback.

Corporate structures that are geared for imaginary unchanging environments must be replaced by responsive, self-organising teams that adapt and change in unpredictable environments.

Autonomous teams

When the environment and future have many unknowns, it’s impossible to see in advance what kind of processes and performance are needed to succeed. Instead, organisations need to enable semi-autonomous, cross functional teams with a mandate to pursue critical objectives through their own intelligence and response to the environment.
Virtual nerve centre

True responsiveness demands an advanced digital workplace that creates visibility between would-be silos and enables cross functional collaboration, discovery and cross-pollination. To be truly responsive and adaptive organisms, organisations need real-time nervous systems and nerve centres. Leadership must have an automated virtual dashboard instead of untimely, subjective reports that are out of date the moment they’re written. Dashboards that provide a real time view of quality, productivity, compliance, security, intelligence, engagement, wellbeing, and more.

Open cultures must make such vital signs visible to the whole business so that everyone can sense, respond, and course correct towards common goals.
A recent Gartner survey showed that 80% of the workforce, 92% of managers and 77% of senior leaders already felt poorly prepared for the future before Covid-19. Outdated role titles and job definitions contribute to operational inability to respond to disruption. Businesses must redefine roles to focus more on underlying attributes and skills required to drive and preserve competitive advantage and adapt critical workflows to cope with disruption.

3 key changes for adaptive roles

01. Refocus on attributes + skills
02. Opportunity marketplaces
03. Digital workplace excellence
Refocus on attributes and skills

Continued uncertainty requires roles and skillsets to be more fluid to address the needs of the moment and respond to disruption. This means understanding and communicating today’s most critical workflows and objectives so that leaders and teams can rapidly redeploy and unlock people’s hidden potential through knowledge sharing and on-the-job learning.

Opportunity marketplaces

This tendency is reflected in the emergence of opportunity marketplaces in enterprises, which are systems and platforms that enable people to access business critical work opportunities while building skills and reputation for themselves.

Opportunity marketplaces shine a light on hidden talent to protect employment, build loyalty, and enable organisations to respond to shifting priorities in the short term and thrive in the long term.
Digital workplace excellence

When tasks and responsibilities change in the wake of disruption, skillsets must also be adaptive and resilient. In the midst of lockdown uncertainty and remote working, excellence with the best digital workplace tools must be a priority for every business. Merely activating Microsoft Teams, Webex, or Zoom will not drive competitive advantage. Upskilling for remote workplace excellence will. These resilient skillsets should include video collaboration, co-creation, working out loud, project coordination, and a host of people skills necessary to stay connected and engaged when working remotely.
04: Hybrid spaces

The recent acceleration of digital transformation was powered by the modern digital workplace. It will continue to be the backbone of change as we strive to design for disruption. But businesses must now achieve a seamless experience between the physical and virtual workplace as people return to the office in uncertain numbers. This will be about reimagining office spaces, but more importantly about coaching and upskilling everyone to show up and provide their best in a hybrid remote workplace.

3 key changes for hybrid spaces

01. Reimagine the office
02. Equip remote workers
03. Blended teams
Reinvent the office

Our recent survey on remote working revealed that the majority of people want a 50/50 balance between remote and office working. This presents a golden opportunity to not only reduce property footprint but also completely reinvent our office spaces to support a hybrid remote model. This means meeting rooms, huddle areas, and creative spaces that put everyone in the same place, no matter where they are, using the latest video collaboration equipment. The way such spaces are designed for acoustics, layout, camera positioning and more will be crucial for how effectively virtual and physical team mates are enabled to do their best work together from anywhere.

 Equip remote workers

The forced shift to remote working has resulted in vastly different experiences for individuals, partly dictated by the suitability of workspaces at home, but also by the ability of businesses to provide immersive and engaging digital workplaces. With a likely majority of your people continuing to work remotely, they can no longer be the second-class citizens in the room. This not only means getting office set up right but also generously equipping home workers with noise canceling headsets, ergonomic workstations, and other items that will help them to be safe, productive and connected to colleagues everywhere.
Blended teams

Employees in the future of work will want proof that you facilitate blended teams through world class digital workplaces, consumer grade app experiences, generous investment in home office set up, and attractive company offices that bring everyone together safely, no matter where they are. They will seek open, inclusive and supportive cultures where people look out for each other.
05: Nurtured people

The way top talent is attracted and retained is changing as we move into an era of resilience over efficiency. Tomorrow’s top tier employers will arise from how convincingly employees are trusted, valued, and supported as people, not just workers. It’s about outcomes not time spent at the keyboard. If you want business to be resilient, your people must be resilient too, and this means nurturing and supporting all aspects of life that make people happy and whole, not just their work and career.

3 key changes for nurtured people

01. Trust in outcomes
02. Provide a social safety net
03. Feed intrinsic motivators
Trust in outcomes

We’ve seen an unfortunate shift among some companies to introduce surveillance and monitoring measures for remote employees. We firmly believe this is a fear response springing from a “workers must be seen” mindset.

A recent CIPD report revealed that 45% of employees believe that monitoring is currently taking place in their workplace; 86% believe that workplace monitoring and surveillance will increase in the future; and 73% feel that introducing workplace monitoring would damage trust between workers and their employers. All of this is damaging to trust, autonomy, empowerment, engagement and productivity.

The only way to look at the work, is to look at the work. The work should speak for itself and it should be viewable and visible from anywhere.”

JASON FRIED, BASECAMP CEO

This is the mindset you must adopt to arrive at the future of work. Set objectives and then trust in outcomes, not how people get there or hours at the keyboard. Trust is at the heart of any successful relationship and all benefits flow from it. If you don’t trust your employees today take an honest look at how this came about.
Provide a social safety net

The same CIPD report showed that a quarter of employees say that work has had a negative impact on their physical and mental health. The crisis has put individuals and families under stresses that could not be prepared for, which has meant that many employers have stepped up to play a much greater role in emotional, mental, physical and financial wellbeing.

This has included counselling services, financial support, childcare, fewer restrictions of sick leave and other social safety nets that have helped people feel valued and protected. Other businesses have done less to support their people through these difficult times which has left them adrift, financially insecure and prone to mental and emotional illness.

Business who adopt and widen the social safety net will attract and retain talent much more effectively than competitors who don’t. The very best will be those who proactively get to know individual circumstances and offer tailored support beyond the standard benefits package.
Feed intrinsic motivators

Coronavirus has at last torn up the dusty old playbook that insisted on legions of workers commuting back and forth to offices daily to be watched over by a bloated middle management. This was a major contributor to disengagement but now that we’ve proved people and teams can be productive from anywhere, employers are realising that engagement flows from nurturing intrinsic motivators like autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

To be a top-tier attractor of talent you must give employees ownership of work, time and opportunity for growing skills, and immerse them in a culture of purpose and positive impact. In a hybrid digital workplace, this means a combination of leadership over management, increased investment in personal development, and a much greater emphasis on purpose and mission.
Digital workplace is the catalyst
At Future Worx we firmly believe that your digital workplace will be the essential catalyst for enabling these five transformation themes. Each theme is essentially people-centric, but without the right technology mindset, none of them can come to fruition.
What is the digital workplace?

The digital workplace is where people communicate and collaborate to achieve common business goals using their chosen digital tools.

Success is determined both by the effectiveness of the tools and the extent to which people have adopted and mastered them.
Anatomy of the digital workplace

Digital workplaces are increasingly complex and confusing for most employees with a proliferation of similar applications from various vendors. This complexity can create fatigue and frustration with people not knowing what to use for different tasks and an overload of messages and notifications.
Simplifying the digital workplace

At Future Worx, we help companies simplify their digital workplace by ensuring a robust and integrated capability in three key areas:

**Coordination**
Different parts of an organisation pulling together in the context of a goal.

**Collaboration**
People teaming up to deliver something of value.

**Community**
Creating a sense of shared culture, purpose and belonging and enabling serendipitous connections.
With these core capabilities established, you can apply best practice to a variety of other digital workplace factors that enhance user experience and usher in the future of work:

Future Worx can help you ensure that there are no frustrating gaps or overlaps in this picture so that everyone can do their best work together, while the technology fades into the background.
The importance of adoption

The digital workplace is a critical catalyst for ushering in the future of work and realising all of the transformation themes discussed in this eBook. But technology on its own won’t get you there. If you don’t help people to change, then no amount of technology change will make a difference. Your people need to become proficient in not just using but working smarter through the digital workplace. The key to this is adoption.

At Future Worx we live and breathe adoption and bring a people-centric mindset to change of every kind.
Our services

Future Worx’s workplace transformation services come in four phases:

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<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>01. Vision and strategy</td>
<td>We co-create a new vision for the future of work to support your overall business objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>02. Adoption and execution</td>
<td>A full range of delivery services to turn your vision of the future of work into a reality.</td>
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<td>03. Management and innovation</td>
<td>Keeping your enterprise organisation “future fit”.</td>
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<td>04. Value realisation</td>
<td>A world-class digital workplace will reduce costs, increase engagement and improve customer outcomes.</td>
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Find out more
Case studies

Take a look at how Future Worx transformed these organisations and unlocked business value - FAST.

**Tesco:** Transforming business collaboration

**Virgin Media:** Enabling flexible working

**Liberty Global:** Adopting remote working to generate change
Case Study

Future Worx saves Liberty Global €3m by adopting remote working

The Challenge
Liberty Global, the world’s largest international TV and broadband company has more than 47,000 employees in over 30 countries. With travel costs reaching more than €32m per annum, they realised that adopting a remote working culture would drive down these costs, and bring their widely-dispersed employees closer together through use of technology.

The Tool
With the support of Future Worx, Liberty Global selected Cisco Webex as the video conference solution.

The Solution
Future Worx was engaged to drive the adoption of Webex across the whole organisation, to optimise remote working and collaboration and reduce costs. This was done through tailored training, on-demand coaching and a program of ongoing learning support for all employees.

The Outcome
In just four months, over 60% of the business had adopted Webex, allowing them to fast track remote working practices and scale across the global business. This resulted in major cost savings for the organisation, €2 million per year in travel and €1 million in operational expenses.
Case Study

Future Worx saves Virgin Media over £1m by enabling flexible working

The Challenge
Virgin Media had a vast property footprint, with over 800 locations across the UK. With many employees being required to travel frequently between sites, morale was at an all time low, whilst the unavoidable cost of travel was rapidly increasing. To combat this, they needed a solution that would allow employees to collaborate and communicate whilst remote.

The Tool
Virgin Media required a video platform that would allow them to share documents and to be easily accessible over a variety of devices. Cisco Webex and Jive were selected.

The Solution
Future Worx worked with Virgin to help optimise the adoption of the tools by creating a bespoke adoption plan with tailored training whilst also embedding a remote working culture across the organisation.

The Outcome
Working with Future Worx enabled Virgin Media to adopt a “remote-first” culture, allowing them to reduce time spent travelling, increasing engagement and improving business-wide collaboration. It also led to over £1million in annual savings spent on travel and expenses.
Case Study

Future Worx migrates 7,000 Tesco employees to Cisco Webex to transform business collaboration

The Challenge
Tesco’s employees used a combination of five different collaboration tools to conduct virtual meetings and conferences with colleagues around the world. However, the operational costs were high, and many of these systems were audio only. Employee engagement was low and global collaboration was difficult.

The Tool
With the help of Future Worx, a leading digital workplace consultancy, Tesco decided to adopt a single platform for video conferencing: Cisco Webex.

The Solution
Future Worx devised and managed the migration plan to move more than 7,000 Tesco employees across 12 countries to Cisco Webex, whilst also supporting the cultural change needed for adoption.

The Outcome
In under six month Cisco Webex successfully replaced the legacy conferencing platforms. This led to a dramatic culture shift - it enabled employees to work remotely, whilst also improving global collaboration and communication. It also led to a major cost saving for the business by converting phone conferencing to free VoIP.
“Working with Future Worx has allowed Cisco to achieve game-changing results... they are the gold standard in planning, onboarding, and overcoming adoption challenges for our customers and partners.”

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