insights

Issue 2 | 2022

on the Future@Work

THE CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER OF THE FUTURE
Data scientists and guardians of culture

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL UPSKILLING
In conversation with David Henderson, former CHRO of Zurich Insurance

8 WAYS TO REVAMP YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES
Strategy For The Great Re-Evaluation

A note from our editor

WELCOME BACK TO Insights Magazine. Before we introduce the newest issue of our magazine, we wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the events unfolding across the world. As the situation in Ukraine escalates, our immediate thoughts and concerns are with our colleagues and associates who have family and friends in the region. In light of the unfolding humanitarian crisis, we have established a core crisis team who are analysing how we can best direct our resources.

In this second issue, put together before the Ukrainian crisis, we're examining the future role of the Chief Human Resources Officer, or CHRO. This role has become increasingly important, especially as workers around the world face unprecedented challenges both in the office and at home. Over the course of the pandemic, the role of the CHRO shifted in a unique way: In many organizations, The CHRO title is becoming the CPO, or Chief People Officer. How can leaders like the CPO help support employees to do their best work while also managing the shifting world of work and even supporting the increase in employee wellbeing programs?

Chief People Officers are seeing a transformation of their role. In this issue, we're laying out some key trends for HR professionals in the coming months, the value of bringing emotions into the hiring process, the power of data and technology in people management, and more.

We'd love to hear from you and welcome your feedback and suggestions for future issues. Shoot me an email: mara.stefan@adeccogroup.com

Sincerely,
Mara Stefan, Editor of Insights Magazine

Contents

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Top
Story
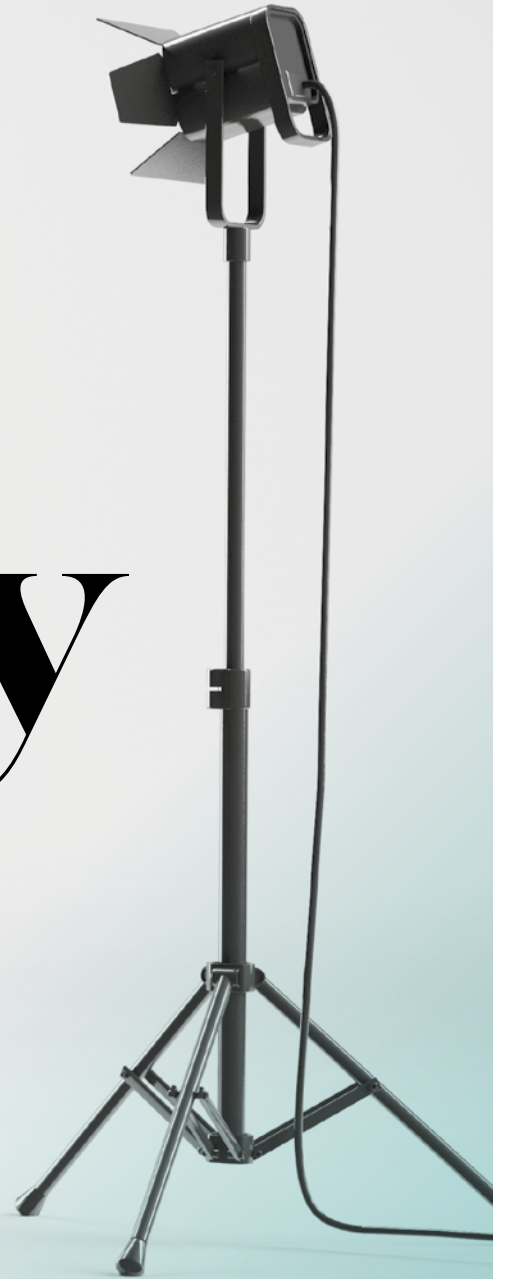
The Chief People Officer of the Future

New research shows that people management executives are moving toward a dual role as data scientists and guardians of change and culture. Chief People Officers are seeing a transformation of their role in three key areas: using data and technology while remaining attuned to fundamentally human concerns; addressing employees' emotions and wellbeing at work; and attracting skilled employees from more diverse backgrounds.

HOW CAN LEADERS support employees to do their best at work, while also creating a better world of work? Chief People Officers are seeing a transformation of their role in three key areas: using data and technology while remaining attuned to fundamentally human concerns; addressing employees' emotions and wellbeing at work; and attracting skilled employees from more diverse backgrounds.

The Adecco Group partnered with the University of Zurich's Center for Leadership in the Future of Work to explore how the evolving world of work is changing the role of the Chief People Officer, or CPO – a role also known by titles such as Chief Human Resources Officer or Head of Talent. We gathered the opinions of 122 executives for a newly published study, The Chief People Officer of the Future.

Conducted in summer 2021, our survey gathered the opinions of 122 executives in human resources from 10 countries across the globe: Australia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, UK and US. Together they are responsible for over 3 million employees in a range of sectors, from finance to retail to aerospace. Here are our three main findings.

1. CPOs are shifting from traditional managers to data scientists and guardians of culture

We asked the executives to reflect on how they spend their time now, and how they expect to spend their time in the future. The foresee spending less time in future on traditional management tasks, such as managing teams and core HR functions, and compliance and regulatory procedures.

They expect to spend more time on two areas: engaging with data; and driving organizational change and culture. To get a sense of timeframe, we randomly asked some respondents to look five years ahead, and others 20 years ahead. Those looking five years ahead anticipated data and people analytics demanding relatively more time, while those looking 20 years ahead put more weight on creativity and human skills.

These findings point to a possible source of tension for the future CPO. Companies may need to consider whether the CPO role would be better separated into two roles – one focused on data and technology, the other specialised in addressing the human concerns related to company culture. However, splitting the role could lead to missed opportunities to use data to shape people practices in a human-centered way.

87%

of people management executives believe that **HR tech, data and people analytics** will be a **crucial competency** for **Chief People Officers** in the future

If companies expect the executive role to continue to combine data science with culture guardianship, they may need to identify in which of these two areas their leaders fe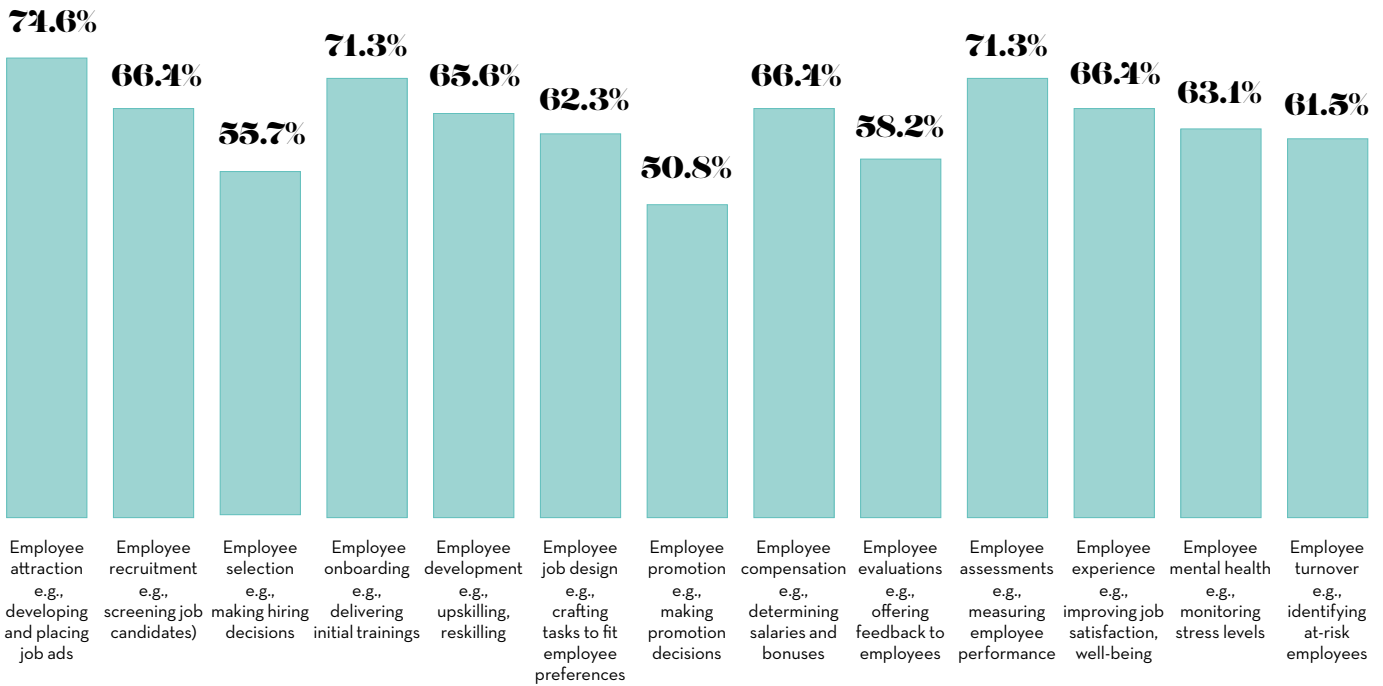el that their skills need the most improvement. The more long-term the perspective an organization takes, the more it may prioritise developing the role in a more human-centric direction than focusing on data and tech.

We also asked the executives where they feel most and least comfortable with deploying technology. They were most willing to automate decisions in areas such as advertising vacancies, screening applicants, onboarding, salary decisions and skills development. Areas where they foresaw being less willing to rely on technology include hiring, evaluation and promotion. The importance of human interaction in such areas also underpins our second lesson.

Chart showing the different parts of the employee life cycle with the average percent of Chief People Officers who said that this part of the life cycle would be "very likely" or "extremely likely" to be automated

Category	Percent
Employee attraction e.g., developing and placing job ads	74.6%
Employee recruitment e.g., screening job candidates)	66.4%
Employee selection e.g., making hiring decisions	55.7%
Employee onboarding e.g., delivering initial trainings	71.3%
Employee development e.g., upskilling, reskilling	65.6%
Employee job design e.g., crafting tasks to fit employee preferences	62.3%
Employee promotion e.g., making promotion decisions	50.8%
Employee compensation e.g., determining salaries and bonuses	66.4%
Employee evaluations e.g., offering feedback to employees	58.2%
Employee assessments e.g., measuring employee performance	71.3%
Employee experience e.g., improving job satisfaction, well-being	66.4%
Employee mental health e.g., monitoring stress levels	63.1%
Employee turnover e.g., identifying at-risk employees	61.5%

2. The importance of employees' emotions is widely recognised, but not yet acted on

For decades, it was commonly considered that emotions were best left out of business. This is changing, as researchers find a gap between how employees say they would like to feel about their work (e.g. excited, appreciated, satisfied, proud) and how they actually feel (e.g. bored, stressed, frustrated, tired). CPOs are increasingly held responsible for employees' mental health and emotional well-being.

Our survey found that CPOs recognise the value of addressing employee emotions. They see the most important benefits as being in productivity and performance, followed by creativity and innovation – while other recent research points also to benefits from reducing absenteeism to enhancing loyalty and retention.

Yet how leaders should address emotions at work largely remains a black box. We asked the CPOs what they do to improve employees' feelings. *"Regularly measuring and providing feedback on how employees feel"* was the most common answer – still, this was done in only just over half of

the companies. Only 30% said their companies track how employee feelings affect results.

The next most common answers were holding managers accountable for how employees feel; shaping office spaces with emotions in mind; and running programs focused on well-being. Less common but interesting examples included "mental health champions" trained to foster well-being. Nobody said their company trains employees on emotional skills, despite many studies attesting to the benefits.

These findings show how much room there is to improve employees' emotional well-being. How employees feel at work needs first to be measured, to enable emotions to be embedded in organizational processes – from how people are hired and trained, to what kinds of jobs they are asked to do. This notion of "organizational emotional intelligence" can guide companies to become more human-centred – and more welcoming for employees who have experienced career breaks, the subject of our third lesson.

Top benefits of improving how employees feel at work.

Increased productivity and performance	68.9%
Promoting employee health and well-being	53.3%
Creativity and innovation	51.6%
Increased loyalty and retention	44.3%
Decreased absenteeism	16.4%

3. Returnships can be a way to improve diversity, though their benefits are under-appreciated

CPOs are increasingly concerned about ways to recruit talented workers, especially from diverse groups. We asked about one concrete solution: returnships that integrate different social groups who have taken career breaks back into the workforce. This is especially relevant after the pandemic disproportionately pushed women out of the workforce to care for family members and children during school closures.

Returnships offer professionals a path back into the workplace after a career break, through a mix of paid placements, skills refreshment, networking, coaching and mentorship. While so far typically focused on highly qualified women in finance and professional services who have taken a break to start a family, they also have potential to benefit other groups of professionals.

We asked CPOs about what kinds of worker, if any, they address through returnship programs: 69% have programs to help integrate mothers returning after childcare; 57% for fathers returning after childcare; and 40% for employees returning after time off to care for adult dependents. Only 13% mentioned any other group, such as those returning from extended sick leave, military duty or sabbatical.

Executives were more likely to agree that returnship programs benefit wider society than their own organization or the returner themselves. However, women executives – who are more likely to have had personal experience of such programs – are more likely to offer them. This suggests there may be a need to shift mindsets more widely about the potential for returnships to benefit core company objectives.

Only
21.3%
of people management executives said that their company assesses employees' emotional skills — and 0.0% said that their company trains employees on emotional skills

A powerful opportunity to reshape the world of work

The pandemic has created both the opportunity and the urgent need to reshape the world of work in a more human-way. Every organisation needs to think about how the role of the Chief People Officer is shifting, what concrete actions they can take to better support employee well-being, and

how they can create a company culture that fosters greater diversity and inclusion. Leaders in people management can pave the way to a future of work that is empathetic, caring, inclusive, diverse, flexible, adaptable, evidence-based, and – above all – people-centric.

Download the whitepaper here

Future of work conversations

In conversation with...

David Henderson, Former CHRO of Zurich Insurance

On the second episode of our Future of Work Conversations series, Former Zurich Insurance Group's CHRO David Henderson talked about the importance of digital upskilling, understanding the role of artificial intelligence in your organization, and using data and analytics to drive human resources.

EVERYTHING STARTS WITH employee experience, especially in this new era of work. That's one of the key messages that Zurich Insurance Group's CHRO David Henderson told Gordana Landen, the CHRO of the Adecco Group, during the *latest episode* of our *Future of Work* Conversations.

Employers need to start looking at their employees as the essence of their competitive advantage, Henderson told Gordana Landen, the CHRO of the Adecco Group. In the conversation, Henderson also talked about the importance of digital upskilling, understanding the role of artificial intelligence in your organization, and using data and analytics to drive human resources. Watch the full conversation above.

Listen to the full conversation on our podcast.

Dive deeper into the second episode of our Future of Work Conversations series featuring David Henderson, the former CHRO of Zurich Insurance. In this episode, Henderson speaks with our CHRO Gordana Landen about the importance of digital upskilling, understanding the role of artificial intelligence in your organization, and using data and analytics to drive human resources.

C-suite voice

8 Ways To Revamp Your Human Resources Strategy For The Great Re-Evaluation

In a turbulent time, these trends for the future create opportunities for HR leaders

Jalie Cohen, Group SVP Human Resources,
The Adecco Group Americas

THE GREAT RETHINK. Employees leaving their jobs in record numbers. *Automation* displacing human workers in ways unimagined a few years ago.

Welcome to 2022. Some call it a challenging time for the Human Resources field. I prefer to see it as a year of unprecedented opportunity. Now more than ever, your organization requires your leadership to attract and *retain top talent*.

These are eight trends HR leaders must capitalize on this year. They all provide focus on pivoting HR strategies and being agile enough to adapt to the changing needs of workers. These are not individual trends that HR leaders can select, but pieces that make up the new world of work and our role as leaders of talent.

1: Listening is your secret weapon for retention

Listening to people continues to be a critical skill, and one that somehow escapes too many executives. In 2022, focus on developing a feedback loop with both management/leaders and employees. People analytics, and data-driven feedback methods, such as tracking retention or engagement survey data, are vital — but not, on their own, sufficient. HR leaders need to leverage this data to drive actual conversations, understand the needs and expectations of the current workforce, agree to ways of working or other aspects, and commit to actions to sustain change.

"Investing in a diverse and inclusive culture is no longer an ask, it is an established expectation." Jalie Cohen

2: Digital transformation is here

Digital transformation was a vague buzzword, a "nice-to-have," in past years. Not anymore. It's a reality, a key transformational driver throughout the enterprise, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has resulted in a significant increase in remote working.

This year, HR leaders must _connect leadership and business needs with employees' capabilities_ through effective digital platforms as hybrid working now dictates a balance between in person and virtual working. That entails helping to create virtual internal talent marketplaces that foster

inclusion, understanding modern technology, all while ensuring better online collaboration in the new hybrid era of work. It's aboutweaving purpose through the organization's business culture and activities through virtual communications and prioritising more data-driven decisions.

It's not all about data, though. It's just as important to include an understanding rooted in empathy. That context and data combined should drive decisions. Going forward, HR will need to own many of these essential processes.

3: New world working

The brave new normal of hybrid and remote working has been written about widely — including on _our Future of work insights_, where we've explored _helping new hires adapt, maximizing remote teams,_ and more. It's absolutely vital that HR stay on the leading edge of this long-term trend. Companies have turned to their HR teams for advice on every topic relating to their people. This ranges from remote onboarding to navigating a scarce talent market heavily driven by the needs and expectations of the worker to increasing diversity at the leadership level to how to create the workforce fit for the future.

It's imperative that leaders take the time to **reset their base understanding of the needs of their employees** as the new way we work involves more than only physical location and it is more about _introducing flexible work models_ that

consider all aspects of what your people need. HR must act as the conduit between the employee and the company in order to create a model that works in their company. People have begun to reassess where they want to spend their time and energy both personally and professionally.

As an example referenced in _this flexible working models guide,_ the Adecco Group has developed its own New World Working Guiding Principles to support our people. In addition to considering hybrid working, we also are reviewing productivity metrics—to better consider how our workers are being rewarded for results. Smart planning and agile working are also important, as employers leverage technology to maximise effectiveness and provide ongoing training opportunities while still putting employee wellbeing at the forefront.

4: Wellbeing to the forefront

The pandemic has prompted many employees to re-prioritise their wellbeing and even take a more holistic view of their wellbeing. As _Gordana Landen, Adecco Group's CHRO, pointed out recently,_ it is time to put a spotlight on wellbeing _"and talk openly about how companies can better support their people, their wellbeing, and their mental health — especially as companies begin shifting to a post-pandemic future."_ This remains true and provides an opportunity for HR to lead the way.

Wellbeing should be considered holistically as one aspect of wellbeing can impact the other. For example, physical health and social wellbeing are linked. _Studies_ have shown that exercises, from dancing to aerobics to swimming and beyond, can help alleviate depression and anxiety. As such, the _Workforce Vitality Model, created by the Adecco Group Foundation,_ is a good starting point for any company when considering a holistic approach to employee well-being that unites both top-down management and bottom-up feedback.

5: Diversity and inclusion

Investing in a diverse and inclusive culture is no longer an ask, it is an established expectation. HR leaders must focus on understanding their employee populations and client groups to build programs that improve employee engagement, support non-traditional employees, and incorporate inclusive policies that reflect generational differences while driving retention and cross-functional collaboration.

This will mean reviewing the recruitment process and employee career development from the ground up — traditional views on how to leverage people, technology and processes must evolve to allow a person's true skills to shine through. Aspects like accessibility, blind CVs and gender-neutral messaging, pronoun consideration, to name a few, must be integrated throughout the employee experience.
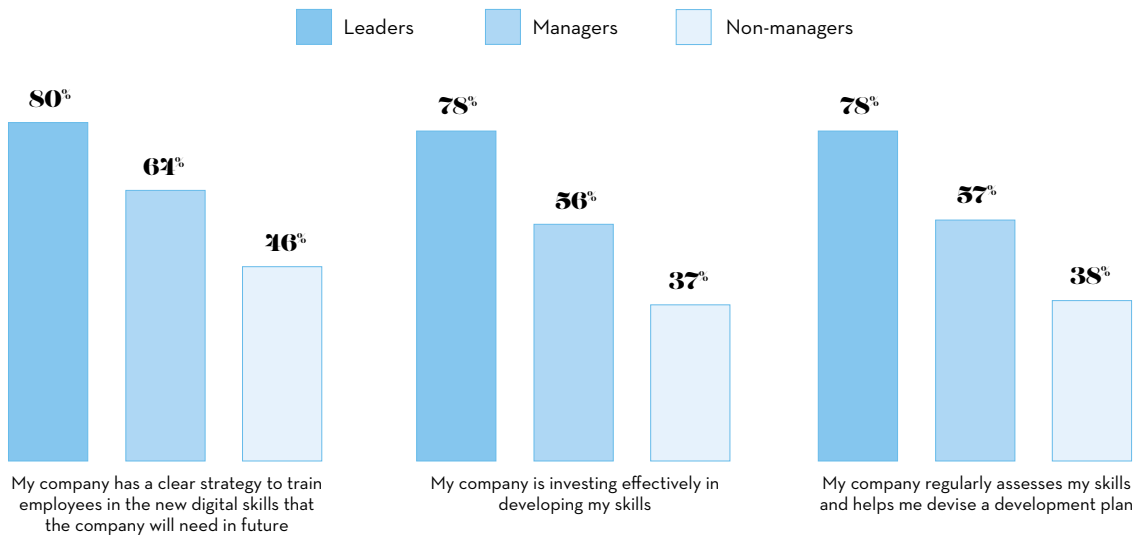
6: Learning never stops

According to a Boston Consulting Group _study_, more than two-thirds of workers globally are willing to retrain for new jobs. And yet in _our latest workers research_, just 58% of respondents said their company has a clear strategy to train employees in new digital skills that the company will need in the future. And only 37% of non-managers feel their company is investing effectively in developing their skills. That gap is a problem that HR leaders will need to address.

% Who say their company is doing the following (NET Agree)

Leaders | Managers | Non-managers

80% 64% 46%
My company has a clear strategy to train employees in the new digital skills that the company will need in future

78% 56% 37%
My company is investing effectively in developing my skills

78% 57% 38%
My company regularly assesses my skills and helps me devise a development plan

Q7. Thinking about how well-equipped you currently are for work, how far would you agree or disagree with the following? (NET Agree) Q19. How far would you agree or disagree with the following statements about the future of work after the pandemic? (NET Agree) Base: Leaders (1,427), Managers (6,978), Non-managers (6,171)

Our current workforce is comprised of four different generations, each with their own learning styles and their own needs. Employers need to consider upskilling and reskilling workers a priority when looking to attract and retain top talent. It's much more efficient to train a worker for current skills they need.

HR staffers will need to steer employers to include hiring people for skills – not just their degrees. Hiring managers need to look beyond conventional candidates (educated, employed workers) and consider applicants with transferable skills from other industries and other jobs. Skills-based hiring will become increasingly prevalent and a necessity for many employers looking to widen their job pool – and access non-traditional candidates.

Expect such concepts to advance in 2022 due to sheer necessity; according to the _OECD_, more than a billion jobs will be transformed by technology in the next decade, and in the very short term, 42% of the core skills required to perform existing jobs will change.

7: Rollin' on a river

Talent pools are out. Talent rivers (the philosophy was developed by _Pontoon Solutions_) are in. The difference? Talent pools are static, even stagnant, while rivers are always in motion. Candidates no longer sit in talent pools, hoping to be selected, but instead are constantly moving. HR leaders must adapt to these new waters, if they are to capture the right talent at the right time and place.

That means adopting the same "lean" principles that have upended software development to design a faster, more agile, more responsive hiring process.

But it also means looking at non-conventional sources of talent, such as creating returnship programs to bring populations back into the workforce.

8: Corporate empathy and true leadership

As Adecco Group CEO Alain Dehaze has _said_, the Great Re-Evaluation has empowered workers in new ways. One trait increasingly insisted upon by these employees — especially up and coming generations — is an organisation in which discussing one's emotions and personal life is not only permissible, but encouraged. This new attitude is often called emotional intelligence or corporate empathy. It is about understanding people's emotions in work situations and being able to talk openly about those emotions, whether they arise from a personal situation or a work situation. For example, say a team is under a great deal of stress, and this results in displays of emotion during team calls. Rather than ignoring the situation, a leader might ask what is causing the emotions, listen to answers, and make an adjustment to reduce stress and improve team wellbeing.

"Investing in a diverse and inclusive culture is no longer an ask, it is an established expectation."

This empathy is especially important given the myriad changes for workers and leaders in the ways we work: remote and hybrid employment, automation, etc. Executives and managers who may have been brought up equating emotion with weakness need to adapt, and HR leaders will play a key role here. The focus should be on training leaders and providing them with access to coaching to lead in a new era that demands emotional intelligence and effective remote communication.

Trends

Top 5 trends
from the world of work

The pandemic has left many workers feeling disenchanted and burned out. Now, employers are unveiling a new benefit to help workers: paid sabbaticals. One UK company is now giving its 2,200 staff the right to take a three-month sabbatical for every four years they work at the firm.

The move is part of the global shift towards a more flexible way of working. Would you take a sabbatical from work, if your company offered it?

What made headlines this month?

The high-tech nanotechnology revolution is already here – *we just haven't noticed*.

Meet the *CEO taking action on workplace policies* for women.

By 2030, the world could be *short of 13 million nurses.*

Major firms like Amazon, Ikea, and Unilever may be *overstating their climate efforts*, according to a new watchdog report.

Nissan Motor will *gradually sunset their development of combustion engines* in all major markets except the U.S., another *green-fueled* move in the shifting *automotive industry*.

Eurozone inflation reached a record *5.1% inflation in January*, fueled by the rising cost of energy and food.

German automotive supplier Bosch is spending *2 billion Euros on reskilling and upskilling* programs as the electric car revolution powers on.

Nestle, the company behind countless pantry items around the world is opening their Institute of Agricultural Sciences in Switzerland. It aims to *decrease environmental footprints of farmers* across the globe.

We've got a full breakdown of all the top headlines you can't miss this month.

#1. Sabbaticals are on the rise.

Monzo, a fintech company in the UK, is now giving its 2,200 staff the right to take a three-month sabbatical for every four years they work at the firm. The move is part of the global shift towards a more flexible way of working. It comes as several companies in the UK, US, and Ireland have announced *four-day work week trials*.

Previously, employees at Monzo could *only take one month of holiday every year*. However, research by the Sabbatical Project suggests a rise in people taking an extended break from work, especially during the pandemic: mid-career sabbaticals *have tripled in the past four years*. It's prompted many to *reassess their priorities.*

Photo by Maik Kleinert from Pexels
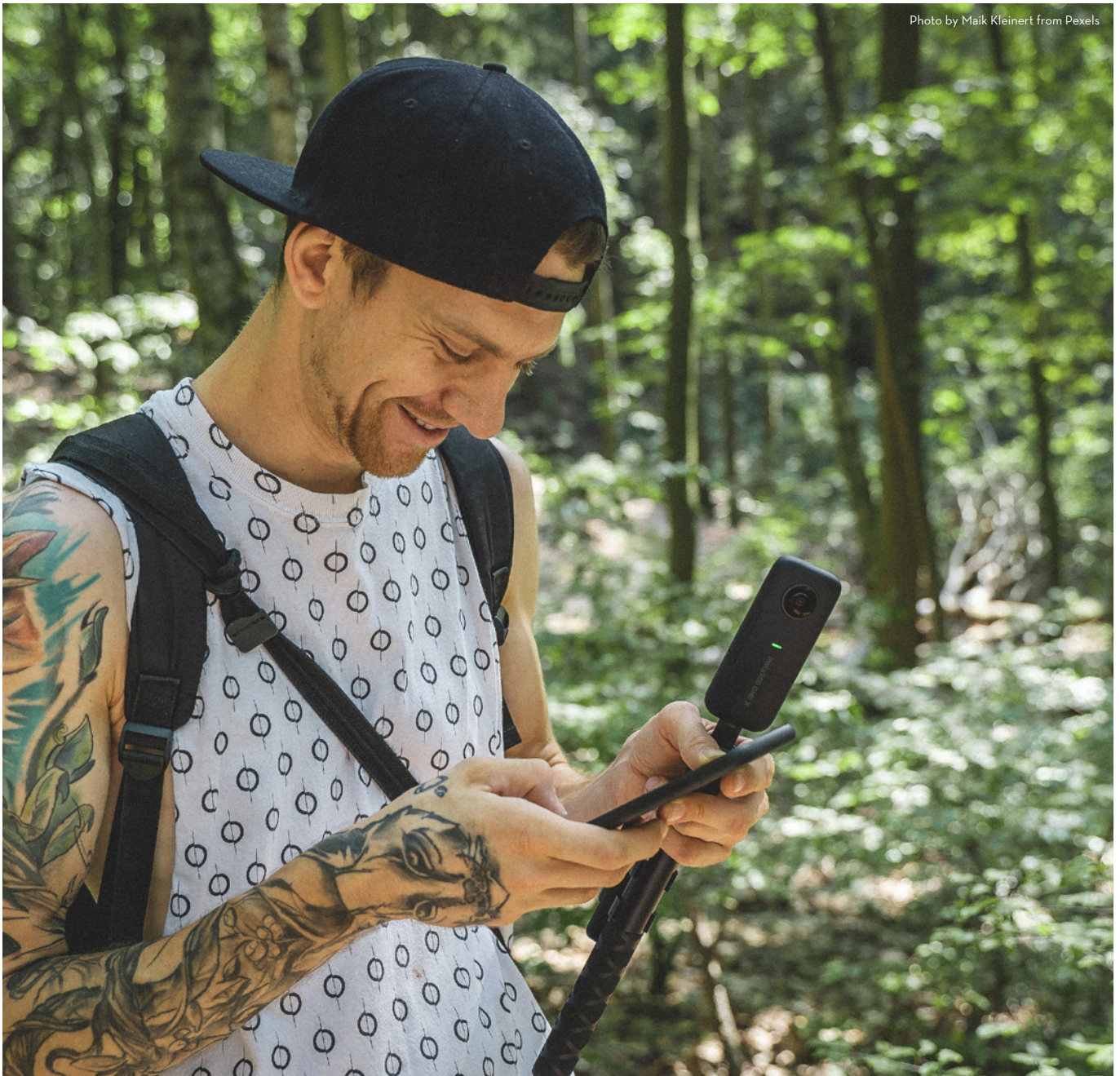
#2. "Bleisure" is here.

The lines between business and leisure are being blurred as people work from home.

And now there's a name for those looking to mix business and leisure: "bleisure."

It's been a huge saving grace for the travel industry amid flight cancellations and staffing shortages. The technology enabling more remote work is disrupting the travel industry.

What does it mean, in practice?

• More trips
• More business travel
• More long-term accommodations
• Less true rest and relaxation

Planning more trips (where you work) inevitably presents new challenges. These blurred lines may lead to increased burnout, and employees may lose the ability to truly disconnect from work Read more _here_.

Photo: Alex Green from Pexels

#3. Companies rethink bereavement policies.

Around the world, millions of people are struggling to cope with waves of grief over the past two years. Since the start of the pandemic, more than _5.85 million people have died from COVID_. That's on top of other tragedies, which continue to march on: accidents, illnesses, chronic illness, and more.

Conversations about grief are increasingly becoming more common and socially acceptable. Those conversations are also seeping into work.

Jess Mah, an executive at software firm inDinero Inc. in the U.S., experienced her own loss during the pandemic. At the time, when her boyfriend died of suicide, she logged onto Slack and told everyone she would take two days off. In hindsight, she told the Wall Street Journal, it was _"ridiculous."_

She ended up canceling weeks of meetings. In the end, she took three months off.

"Until it hit me directly, I didn't think, 'OK, wow this needs to be a bigger conversation," she _said_. _"Bereavement is a part-time job in and of itself."_

Organizations around the globe are rethinking their bereavement policies in light of COVID, expanding their grief policies. For some, that means allowing people to take time off following a miscarriage or failed infertility treatment. For others, it means expanding the definition of family. If a cousin, or even a pet, was close to them, shouldn't they be able to take time to grieve? _Read more._

#4. Companies need to manage remote work or risk burnout, WHO warns

We're approaching the two-year anniversary of the first Covid-19 lockdowns – and the start of a new era for the world of work. Many people with desk jobs have been working remotely for almost two years, on and off, now. These workers are worn out, physically and mentally.

Work-from-home burnout is a global phenomenon, so much so that the World Health Organization (WHO) has issued a _new warning for companies, lawmakers, and employees_ this month. If companies and employees don't collectively manage remote working, a work-from-home model can create _hazardous conditions_, putting employees' _health at risk._

"Which way the pendulum swings depends entirely on whether governments, employers, and workers work together," Maria Neira, director of the department of environment, climate change and health at the WHO, said. Read more _here_.

Photo: Kristin Wilson via Unsplash

Photo by Tara Winstead from Pexels

#5. **Your next job interview could be with a robot.**

Chat bots and AI-led video interviews are coming onto the scene to help employers assess job candidates – before a human recruiter even meets them. For years now, recruiters have been relying on AI to automate candidate searches and screen resumes.

But AI-led video interviews take the process a step further. Automated interviews will vastly expand the job candidate pool, _Axios argues_, and recruiters hope they can ensure consistent hiring practices by rooting out the ways bias seeps into interviews.

Candidates, on the other hand, say that these AI-led video interviews and chat bots make the process stressful, dehumanizing, and impersonal.

"You're at a tremendous disadvantage as a candidate when it's a one-way street," one candidate said. _"I'm used to reading people, and there was nothing there for me to read."_ Read more _here_.

Editor's picks

Adecco

Supporting Black Workers During The Hiring Process – And Beyond

It's important to check your bias during the hiring process.

Photo by Godisable Jacob

A RECENT STUDY shows that applicants with Black names are 2.5x less likely to be called for an interview than an identical resume with a "white-sounding" name. With James more than twice as likely to get a callback than Jamal, in order to support Black workers and close the Black employment gap, changes need to start at the beginning of the hiring process.

How can you confront your bias? Our Adecco team offers some insights.

#1. Understand, don't ignore, your biases

Unconscious biases can cloud our judgment, yet they're impossible to control. Harvard Business professor Francesca Gino writes that these biases "cause us to make decisions in favor of one person or group to the detriment of others," posing a real threat to the hiring process.

And biases dis-proportionally affect Black Americans during interviews. One _study_ found that Black workers were rated lower on soft skills like motivation and work ethic regardless of work experience. With _soft skills becoming increasingly important_ since the COVID-19 pandemic, this leaves the average Black American unemployed or underemployed. To correct this and make more Black hires, managers and HR professionals need to educate themselves on their own biases through awareness training. By crafting an organizational conversation about bias, your managers can think of their own solutions to minimize their effects – solutions they can actually enforce.

#2. Offer objectivity with skills testing

Incorporating a skills test or work sample test into the interview process allows your hiring managers to be objective rather than forming opinions about applicants from just their interview answers and appearance. This gives Black Americans a better shot at a position in your company.

Changing your hiring approach to be skill-based can also encourage more minority direct hires. With white candidates _14% more likely to have a bachelor's degree than Black candidates_, by dropping educational requirements in favor of skills assessments, companies like Google, Apple, and IBM have increased their numbers of Black workers. Follow _Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines_ to develop your own job-specific tests – some off-the-shelf tests can actually be biased against minority groups.

#3. Work with a recruiter

It's a recruiter's job to find the right person for a job – regardless of race. By partnering with a recruiter who works with resumes and job candidates every day, you can be sure that the right person is recommended for a position based on skills and not bias. Recruiters can also help with diversity pledges, combing through extensive databases to find the right minority workers to diversify your workforce.

Recruiters aren't just for temporary jobs anymore. With *Adecco's SEARCH team*, we'll help you find diverse direct

hires for permanent placements in your company. With seven areas of expertise and a catalog of skilled talent, we're making long-term commitments to increasing diversity and opening doors previously shut by racial biases. By working with a recruiter to fill permanent placements, you'll not only add to the number of minority workers in your company but diversify your working environment, allowing every voice to have a real impact on your organization and advance to leadership positions.

How to support Black workers in your organization

Checking your bias doesn't stop once you hire Black talent – you'll need to offer unbiased support and guidance throughout their careers just to have them be on an equal playing field as their white colleagues. To keep direct hires in your company for the long haul, you'll need to create an environment that promotes diversity and tackles specific problems that plague Black workers.

#1. Fight the urge to be "color-blind"

Have you or a colleague declared they "don't see color" in diversity talks? While well-intentioned in theory, the notion

of failing to recognize differences in race is more harmful than helpful in reality. It perpetuates the idea that diversity is bad while suppressing individualism.

In a study comparing a *color-blind approach to a multicultural approach in offices*, researchers found that color-blind environments lead to decreased engagement from minority employees. They also concluded that a color-blind approach increases their perceptions of bias, ultimately leading to increased distrust and *eventually higher turnover*.

#2. Encourage a multicultural environment

During the hiring process, many Black workers feel the need to "whiten" their resumes for a better chance at landing a job. The pressure to "whiten" themselves doesn't end there.

Nearly half of all Black college grads in the US feel the need to code-switch, or talk, act and dress differently when interacting with people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. From using whiter-sounding nicknames to refusing to speak in African American Vernacular English (formally known as Ebonics) and Black slang,

Black workers are hyper-vigilant on how they present themselves, and how they eliminate their Black identities, in the name of being more "professional."

This hyper-vigilance comes at a cost. The constant need to conform to White ideals _leads to emotional exhaustion and burnout_, causing Black workers to underperform and prevent career advancement. It's bad for business too. When workers feel the need to conform, they're less likely to contribute original ideas and propose creative solutions to grow your company.

Encourage _individualism and inclusivity in meetings_ and other public forums to let everyone know it's not just okay but welcome to share diverse points of view. To promote inclusion and the notion that all cultures are important to the office, hold diversity days where all workers can share their backgrounds (White workers can share their backgrounds such as being of descent from European countries). The idea that all workers can be individuals and all differ from each other will help Black workers feel more comfortable

with their differences when compared to White workers – and embrace these differences instead of suppressing them.

H2: #3. Make mental health matter

Multiple studies have shown that Black workers face more anxiety and more burnout due to bias in the workplace. They're also less likely to prioritize their mental health. One study revealed that 63% of Black Americans believe that _a mental health problem is indicative of personal weakness_, not a medical condition.

With suicide being the _second leading cause of death_ among young African Americans, the conversation about mental health needs to be normalized. By having these conversations in the office, managers can instill trust between them and their team members while helping to prevent worker burnout. Take the time to meet your Black employees one-on-one to discuss their mental health while directing them to your c_ompany's Employee Assistance Program_ (EAP) for more help. Don't have an EAP? Involve external Black psychological resources such as the _Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective_ in corporate trainings and encourage workers to reach out to mental health organizations like _Black Men Heal_ and _Therapy for Black Girls_.

Read the full whitepaper _here_.

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The Need for Speed in Tech and IT Recruiting

This article was originally published by Modis

Photo: Andre Hunter on Unsplash

When making hiring decisions, hiring managers, especially those in the Tech industry, look for employees with the right set of technical and soft skills. However, that search may take too long.

ACCORDING TO EMPLOYMENT expert Alison Doyle, the average time it takes to hire a new employee, from the first interview to an official job offer, is approximately 24 days. This gives candidates plenty of time to accept a position elsewhere – maybe even with a competitor. Of course, that time will vary by profession and demand, and tech and IT hiring trends can make this much more challenging.

While the desire to take your time is certainly understandable – after all, a bad hire can cost thousands of dollars and set projects back for months — delaying a hiring process or decision can cost you, too. So how can you accelerate the tech recruiting process and connect with better hires more quickly? Read on to find out.

Revise your hiring criteria.

Hiring managers are usually given a set of criteria to work with in order to find talent. However, the data your hiring manager receives may not accurately reflect the needs of your team or the skills required for a particular project.

What about your current top performers?

Perhaps their qualifications and backgrounds differ from the data you're currently using to find new talent. You already have great employees, why not have a closer look at their profiles? After all, you want more employees like them.

In light of this new information, it may be time to revise your job description. Creating a compelling and thorough job description will go a long way in finding and hiring the right talent. This will help a hiring manager or recruiter be more selective about the candidates they bring in for an interview, thus accelerating the hiring process and securing top candidates for the position faster.

Test-drive top candidates.

It is now common practice for companies to impose a paid test-drive or probation period to ensure the new hire is a good fit for the position and works well with the team. Some organizations will also call this a freelancing period. This allows companies and teams to gain hands-on experience and work directly with an incumbent.

Smaller businesses may balk at the potential costs, but freelancers or temp-to-perm employees are great options that can help you bring candidates aboard quickly, see them in action, ensure that they are a good fit, and make a more informed long-term decision at a later date. This technique may seem somewhat unorthodox, but remember that it also allows prospective employees to test-drive your company. You are looking to hire amazing talent, but candidates are looking for the perfect company, one they will not only feel comfortable working for, but one that gets them excited to work for and that they can see themselves having a long career with.

Engage your team in the hiring process.

Tech and IT recruiting is not only about finding someone with the right set of technical skills. The perfect candidate also needs to understand and agree with the company's mission and feel comfortable working with your team. A great way to ensure you're interviewing only the best candidates is to get managers and other team members involved in the hiring process. Your employees can make the best candidate assessments, so have them meet with applicants to determine if they would be a good fit.

Getting more of your team engaged in the hiring process will ensure better compatibility and reduce the length of time between the initial interview and the official job offer. Your team members and current employees might even suggest people they know that have the right set of technical and soft skills for the position you're seeking to fill, reducing the wait time even more.

Hire within the organization and up-skill.

Every organization has employees that perform better than others. In many cases, announcing a job opening internally is a good strategy. It provides your employees with the chance to move to another position that might better fit their skills. Everybody wins: you get a more productive employee and better results, and your employee enjoys the work more. Keep in mind that it's not uncommon for employees to accept an entry-level position while they study or take some classes to perfect their technical skills. Why let those employees accept a job offer elsewhere when you could simply offer them a position that is better suited to their recently acquired skills?

Use tools and streamline the process.

Hiring the right talent requires a streamlined process. Make it primordial to follow-up with candidates after an interview. There is no reason to lengthen the waiting time. If your company's HR department or recruiter doesn't use an applicant tracking system, it may be time to look into getting one. Your organization needs a complete tracking solution. Using multiple tools to cover only portions of the recruitment and hiring process will inevitably cost your company time and money. While your hiring manager is wrestling with a myriad of tools to manage candidates, applications, profiles, and follow-ups, your competitor may have a streamlined system and may be courting your candidates and get them an official job offer sooner.

Photo by Daria Shevtsova from Pexels

Is the four-day workweek the silver bullet for burnout?

By Jessica Conser, Ph.D.

The four-day workweek may indeed be an idea worth examining. Particularly if a modified work schedule not only alleviates burnout, but also helps you attract new talent in a market where there is a huge appetite for flexibility in where and when people work.

COULD THE FOUR-DAY be the silver bullet for combating burnout? The whole concept of paying someone the same amount of money for working fewer hours, or working a non-traditional schedule that might see more hours per day but fewer days per week, is an idea that more and more companies, in an increasing number of countries, are starting to investigate. And while there are many potential benefits from adopting this kind of work schedule, a boost to overall wellness is certainly at the top of the list given the increase in employee burnout.

Image: Desigual employees approved the adoption of a 4-day work week by a large majority

Increased wellness was arguably the strongest finding in arguably the biggest experiment with shortened workweeks.

Between 2015 and 2019, Iceland engaged in two large-scale *pilot projects* that saw about 2,500 workers engage in workweeks of between 35 and 36 hours with no decrease in pay. Studies on the pilot projects showed that productivity and customer service improved, and wellbeing – defined by metrics such as levels of stress, burnout and work-life balance – improved dramatically.

The pilot projects were so successful that currently, more than 80 percent of Icelandic workers enjoy a shortened workweek. The Icelandic experience, and other bold experiments in other countries, are convincing more and more employers to at least dip their toes in the four-day workweek pond.

Belgium, on the other hand, is taking a somewhat different approach. In February 2022, the Belgian government announced a policy that would allow employees to work four 10-hour days to enjoy a three-day weekend. Workers can also choose to work more hours during any one week, and fewer the week after. Employers and unions must agree on the new work schedule.

Another pilot project sponsored by _4 Day Week Global_, a consulting and advocacy organization that is promoting shortened workweeks, involves 50 companies and about 2,000 employees who are now working four days without any reduction in pay. Although the impacts of the pilot projects are still being gathered, individual case studies show dramatic improvements in productivity and wellness.

The companies involved in 4 Day Week are not the only companies embracing this innovation. Himalayas, a remote-work job board for tech workers, has actually created an _app_ that tracks companies with reduced workweeks. At last count, Himalayas had documented 98 companies with four-day workweeks, including 71 that have adopted the schedule permanently and 24 companies involved in trials.

After decades of discussion and debate, could it be that the four-day workweek is an idea whose time has finally come?

The pandemic has lengthened the workweek, not shortened it

Prior to the pandemic, many working people had long coveted the opportunity to work more from home, on a non-traditional schedule. However, a growing impetus on productivity and globalization stalled further progress.

Rather than shorter work weeks, the world seemed to be trying to wring more hours out of working people, often to their detriment. In 2019, the World Health Organization _classified_ work-related "burnout" as a distinct health syndrome and called on employers to take steps to ease the burden they were putting on employees. The International Labour Organization, a WHO agency, _estimated_ that excessively long working hours contributed to 2.8 million deaths – mostly due to heart disease and stroke – in 2016.

In the spring of 2020, just as the global pandemic was taking hold, a Gallup survey found that only five percent of American workers enjoyed a four-day workweek; 84 percent worked five days and 11 percent spread their work over six days.

And then came COVID-19, a public health threat so grave that it required us to board up the office and unleash the power of a VPN internet connection.

And then came the moment when everyone realized that the reality of remote work was much different than the reality.

How will I know if my company is a good fit for a reduced workweek?

The impact of a four-day workweek will be different for companies depending on industry and how they manage their workforces. Companies that predominantly rely on salaried employees face different challenges than, say, companies in industries that employ mostly hourly wage earners. It is largely because of the different variations on a reduced-hour workweek, and different workforce structures, that it may be difficult to estimate the precise impact on profitability.

However, when you look at the broad array of companies embracing the ideas of a reduced workweek, you can see a clear pattern: increases in productivity and boosts to workplace wellness are winning over more and more companies. And as the sheer number of organizations using a reduced workweek grows, so does the research around its net positive benefits. In a recent U.K. _study_, two thirds of companies utilizing a four-day workweek said it had helped them attract talent.

A 2021 survey by the Adecco Group of nearly 15,000 workers found that 43 percent were and would likely continue to work more than 40 hours a week to meet employer expectations. Not surprisingly, two-thirds of respondents (63 percent) suffered from burnout.

In the _United Kingdom_, for example, companies employing 32-35 hour workweeks run the gamut from technology and software development, to government offices, financial services and even the hospitality industry.

The Landmark Hotel in London, for example, became the first major hotel in the U.K. to institute a reduced workweek. The idea was the brainchild of Executive Chef Gary Klaner, who felt that a reduced workweek and expanded workforce in the hotel's multiple kitchens and bars could ease employee burnout, increase productivity and improve overall customer service. The plan involves hiring additional staff to cover the hotel's seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day schedule, and increased pay for chefs. "It shows The Landmark London's serious investment in our employees and the commitment to providing a healthy work-life balance for them," Klaner said in a news report.

Remember, longer hours do not necessarily translate into greater productivity, but flexibility can

Surveys of professional workers have shown that nearly two-thirds admit to wasting time – some up to five hours per week – at work, often by indulging in personal tasks or visiting their favorite social media platform.

The four-day workweek may indeed be an idea worth examining. Particularly if a modified work schedule not only alleviates burnout, but also helps you attract new talent

in a market where there is a huge appetite for flexibility in where and when people work.

But like all great workforce transformations, the greatest benefits are going to accrue to the organizations that view the four-day workweek issue as an opportunity to help their employees navigate an increasingly complex life, both at work and at home.

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