Building the Organization of the Future
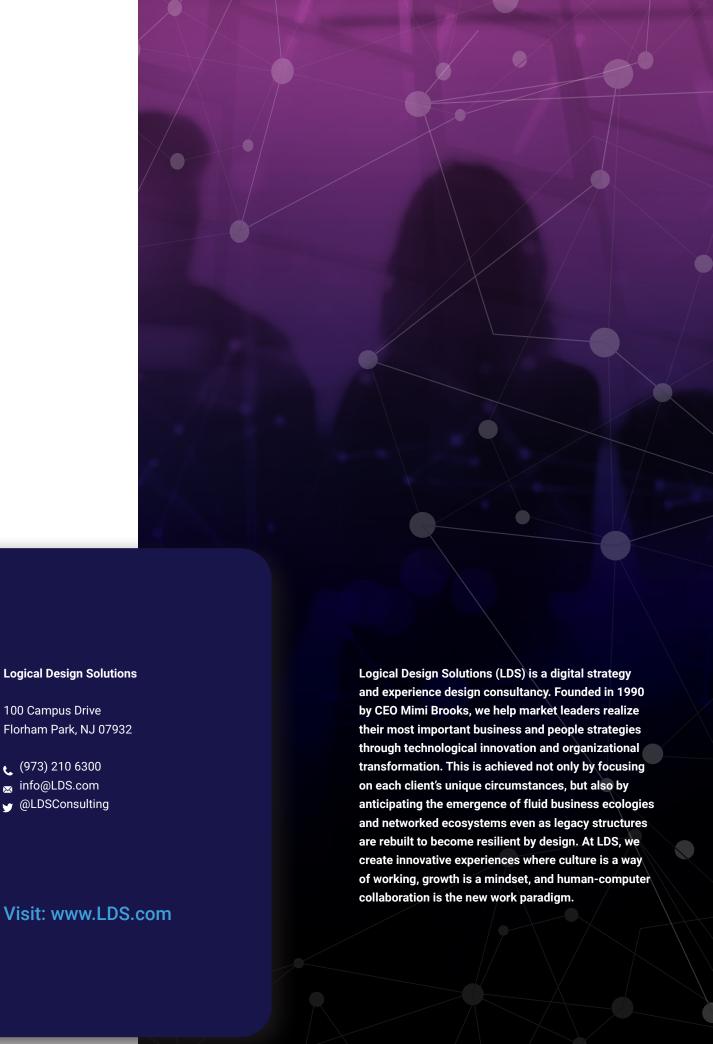
An executive brief presented by

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Logical Design Solutions (LDS) is a digital strategy and experience design consultancy. Founded in 1990 by CEO Mimi Brooks, we help market leaders realize their most important business and people strategies through technological innovation and organizational transformation. This is achieved not only by focusing on each client's unique circumstances, but also by anticipating the emergence of fluid business ecologies and networked ecosystems even as legacy structures are rebuilt to become resilient by design. At LDS, we create innovative experiences where culture is a way of working, growth is a mindset, and human-computer collaboration is the new work paradigm.

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Introduction

As we enter the second wave of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), a mixture of economics, politics, technology, demography and several other complex social and environmental factors are influencing how we think about resourcing our organizations. The speed and breadth of the 4IR have been and continue to be remarkable.
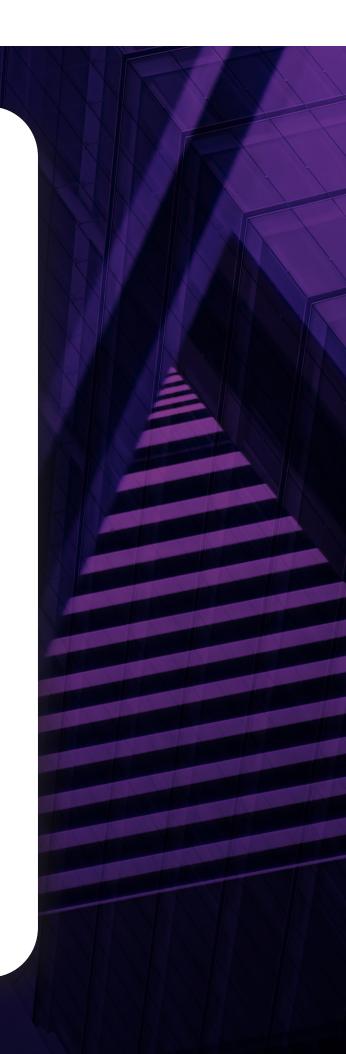
The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this innovation by at least two years, and the transition towards a more digital "everything" world is well underway. While many of our newly found tech behaviors were forced as a necessary adaption to the virus, little by little these are becoming new, ingrained behaviors by choice. In business, automation (clearly underway prior to COVID) is accelerating as robots and AI are a natural alternative to human labor. At a time when physical distancing became an obligation, robots were deployed in places from warehouses, to hospitals, to supermarkets. Beyond industrial robotics, AI/ML and IoT with predictive analytics are changing white- and blue-collar work alike by automating routine tasks, compiling and analyzing vast amounts of data, and interacting with stakeholders in human-less yet highly efficient and personalized transactions.

In this context, the worker experience is changing -- and changing fast and permanently. To be clear, work itself is changing, because organizations are changing in alignment to new, digitally driven business models. Consequently, it is no longer enough to observe workers in their current environment, work activities, and practices in order to understand their working needs. Rather, we need to look at human work in the evolving state of our organizations (in the shifting context of the world around us) and ask what we know about worker needs in the here-to-there – and the honest answer is "not much."

Well before this is an organizational design issue, it's a business design issue. The velocity of change is extreme and often hard to grasp its exponential nature. Our emerging business systems are increasingly interconnected, interdependent, automatically adaptive, and untethered to physical assets. As a result, new business systems are naturally highly complex and the role of workers in these systems, by design, are equally complex.

We need to expect that workers will struggle with the transition. The new organizational pace, the continual and disruptive change, and the complexity of new, adaptive ecosystems will be easily confusing and overwhelming, especially under stress. New business models demand continuous real-time but ever-changing collaboration among a vast array of disciplines and digital actors – and this diversity of ideas at work is not a pattern common in our current and older models, where siloes of highly similar work and workers prevail.

In the years to come we will examine the relationship of evolving business models, driven by technological and environment change (fast-moving and slow-moving forces) across industries and platforms, and the worker experiences needed to support new work in these new models.

Building Back Better

Before the COVID pandemic, and before US President Biden's campaign, the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk reduction met in Sendai, Japan and negotiated a document that was later adopted at the UN General Assembly. This document, known as the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, outlined a holistic plan to create more resilient nations and societies.

As a result of the multinational negotiations surrounding the formulation of this plan, a concept emerged that became known as "Build Back Better." This concept includes the restoration of infrastructure, the revitalization of livelihood and industry, and the rehabilitation of the local culture and

environment following a catastrophic event, such as we have experienced within the past twelve months.

The phrase "Build Back Better" was used in 2009 by former President Bill Clinton while referring to Haiti after the political upheaval and storms of 2008. It was reiterated by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in February 2010 with reference to the same country after the devastating 2010 earthquake.

BUILD BACK BETTER

Disaster Risk Reduction	Community Recovery	Effective Implementation

Structural Resilience	Multi-Hazard-Based Land Use Planning	Early Warning and DRR Education	Psychological and Social Recovery	Economic Recovery	Institutional Mechanism	Legislation and Regulation	Monitoring and Evaluation

A recently published book by Mannakkara, Wilkinson and Potangaroa called Resilient Post Disaster Recovery through Building Back Better develops a sound framework for this concept, including indicators that have been tested in numerous countries.

In the book, the authors argue for a holistic approach that incorporates disaster risk reduction activities with community engagement, effective monitoring and implementation.

The truth is that business was unprepared for the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders had to navigate a range of issues, from keeping their employees safe, shoring-up cash and liquidity, reorienting operations, to navigating complicated government support programs.

As with previous crises, we now see the opportunity for business to demonstrate resilience by transforming and even thriving through revitalization and innovation.

Those businesses that are adaptable and collaborative will be the ones most capable of dealing with the challenges that face us all in the post-pandemic era. Building resilience in the longer-term will involve adaptations to global supply chains and areas like production, human resources, and communications, while also embracing diversification and developing more robust industry alliances.

The Mega Challenges Facing Business Today

What are the "mega challenges" that will face businesses in the post-pandemic era and how will we Build Back Better? As shown below, these include keeping up with technology and innovation, impacts to society, changes in behavior and the effects of the pandemic on globalization, where we see significant supply chain restructuring triggered by the delays the world saw at the height of the crisis, as well as manufacturing relocation and massive impacts to the workforce along the same lines:

- ✔ Workforce relocation
- ✔ Supply chain restructuring
- ✔ Manufacturing resettlement
- ✔ Worker well-being
- ✔ Global warming
- ✔ Building ecosystems

- ✔ Next-gen technologies
- ✔ Economic inequality
- ✔ Reframed learning
- ✔ Stakeholder Capitalism
- ✔ Consumer psychology

We are also seeing the need for companies to take extra steps to ensure employee wellbeing, while the societal impacts of the pandemic spur a renewed focus on corporate purpose—one that addresses environmental, societal and governanmental concerns—as global warming and limited sustainability take center stage.

The development of ecosystems to tap into rampant innovation is also bound to be high on every corporate agenda. There will be big challenges on the technology front, as we see accelerated development of next generation remote working technologies, such as Augmented and Virtual Reality, as well as exponential advances in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics.

Corporate responsibilities are expanding with a focus on economic inequality, coupled with concerns about the living wage and the growing digital divide. This is the best opportunity for companies to instigate stakeholder capitalism during what the World Economic Forum is calling "The Great Reset."

It is also clear that companies must take the initiative and regain public trust when it comes to defending our institutions. The private sector must reestablish itself as one of the pillars of society, not only by driving healthy economic growth, but also through social inclusion, environmental protection, and the building of new foundations for our economic and social systems.

The 4IR and the Organization of the Future

On the business front, McKinsey wrote in their recent article, "Ready, set, go: Reinventing the organization for speed in the post-COVID-19 era," companies must "increase the speed of decision making, while improving productivity, using technology and data in new ways, and accelerating the scope and scale of innovation."
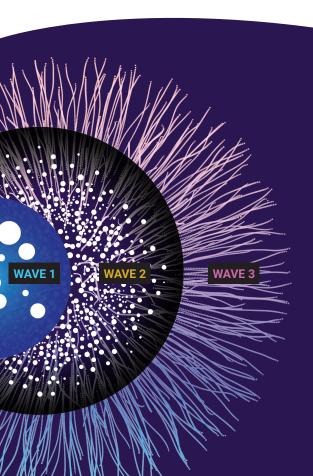
Yet well before COVID-19 became part of our everyday vocabulary, we saw the evolution of a new digital infrastructure during the first wave of transformation in what we now understand as the Fourth Industrial Revolution or 4IR.

As we transitioned from the first to the second wave, most companies were recognizing the need for organizational and work transformation. New human work started blending with machine-driven interactions, as organizations transformed into business-digital ecosystems that were bonded by shared purpose and culture.

The essential outcomes of organizational transformation of the the second wave include:

- new organizations as business-digital ecosystems, driven by human value and purpose;
- the worker as central, by design, to the organizational ecosystem through new work practices;
- human workers becoming comfortable with their machine counterparts and the evolution of a collaborative human-machine approach to problem solving;
- the organization learning on multiple timescales as a competitive necessity and a source of economic value; and
- knowledge flowing rapidly within and among ecosystems as the "edges" of digital become the "core."

On the horizon is Wave 3: Institutional Innovation. Here we see business ecologies being redefined as the digital age matures and organizations realize their potential to mobilize larger and more diverse groups of participants to innovate and create new value.

WAVE 1

The evolution of digital infrastructure via disruptive digital natives and the essential industry response through new digital strategies.

WAVE 2

New human work blends with machine-driven interactions as organizations transform into business-digital ecosystems that are bonded by shared purpose and culture.

WAVE 3

Business ecologies are redefined as the digital age matures and organizations turn the diminishing-returns experience curve into an increasing-returns collaboration curve.

A Model for Building the Organization of the Future

Allied to the evolution of the Second Wave, we see three key organizational transformation principles that dovetail with the Build Back Better concept and pave the way for corporate resilience and recovery in the post-pandemic era. As depicted below, these are leading with purpose, systems thinking, and acting in the interests of humans.

The Organization of the Future

Thinking in Systems

- Defining Human-Machine Interactions
- Activating Ecosytems via Platforms
- Directing Technological Influx

Acting in Human Interest

- Operationalizing New Models for Jobs
- Designing Hybrid-Virtual Workplaces
- Building Cultural Cohesion

Leading with Purpose

- Managing Organizational Complexity
- Embracing Continual Transformation
- Advocating Resilient Designs
- Acting for the Common Good

PRINCIPLE 1

Leading with Purpose

As Mark Twain famously wrote, "The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why."

A clear business purpose provides the foundation for institutional value. Purpose is stated as an intention, but it is evidenced through the actions, decisions, and rewards that become culture. In 2019, the influential Business Roundtable redefined the purpose of a corporation when a group of 181 influential CEOs committed to lead their companies for the benefit of all stakeholders, to include customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and shareholders.

According to Jamie Dimon, Chairman and CEO of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Chairman of Business Roundtable, "Major employers are investing in their workers and communities because they know it is the only way to be successful over the long term. These modernized principles reflect the business community's unwavering commitment to continue to push for an economy that serves all Americans."

This commitment to purpose is also where we see the early foundations of third-wave institutional innovation, as leaders seek to redefine the rationale for their companies and develop new relationship architectures within and across the organization to break existing performance trade-offs and expand the realm of what is possible.

Leading with Purpose

Managing Organizational Complexity

Embracing Continual Transformation

Acting for the Common Good

Advocating Resilient Designs

The Organization of the Future

Thinking in Systems

Acting in Human Interest

Leading with Purpose

Managing Organizational Complexity

In the first dimension of leading the organization of the future with purpose, we must look at increasing organizational complexity, as geographic diversification, investment in secondary markets, and expanding mergers and acquisitions become commonplace for competitive companies.

Managing Organizational Complexity

Leading with Purpose

Acting for the Common Good

Embracing Continual Transformation

Advocating Resilient Designs

If we accept that to survive our business must create new products and services, find new markets, or develop novel ecosystems, then we must also acknowledge that we need to address growing complexity, even as our structures evolve, our workers need new skills, and everyone finds it more difficult to get value-added work accomplished.

This highlights the problem that if our time, energy, and resources are spent on activities and interactions that do not create value, then the complexity that accompanies growing the company becomes problematic and even detrimental to the workforce.

In his article "Taming Complexity," published in the Harvard Business Review, Martin Reeves writes, "Managers may prefer simplicity over complexity, but the truth is that complexity is increasingly necessary for viability and competitiveness in today's dynamic, unpredictable business environment. If your industry is prone to technological change and rapid obsolescence, then the package of resilience, adaptability, coordination, and inimitability becomes more attractive than the package of efficiency, understandability, manageability, and predictability."

INVESTMENT IN SECONDARY MARKETS

EXPANDING MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSIFICATION

Simplification, then, becomes an increasingly important idea, especially to Human Resources, because helping the business to untangle and remove the organizational complexity associated with low value work is important to strategic plans and designs, and is felt in the services offered to employees and workers.

Case in Point

In February 2020, a major bank began an initiative to reshape underperforming entities through geographic diversification and investment in secondary markets. This was intended to assuage competitive threats to the domestic market while increasing returns for investors, thereby creating the capacity to invest in the future and build a sustainable platform for growth. A subsequent case study showed that this initiative while increasing organizational complexity, was one of the key reasons for the continuous business growth of the bank throughout 2020.

Embracing Continual Transformation

The second dimension of leading with purpose pertains to embracing continual transformation in the post-pandemic era.

Moving forward, organizations need to embrace and manage a continual and fluid portfolio of always-on change initiatives. This requires not only a transformation to agile ways of working, but developing an agility that is built right into the operating model and reinforced and executed through everyday leadership.

Managing in a perpetual state of transformation, by design, means leaders must inspire the workforce to live this emerging culture by empowering individuals and teams to embrace growth mindsets. They need to support a dynamic, self-directed learning environment that includes a facility for on-demand learning, virtual training, and experiential learning. The resident workforce must also be given opportunities to upskill to meet new talent demands.

INSPIRE CULTURE IN ACTION

SUPPORT SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

UPSKILL THE WORKFORCE

ENGENDER A GROWTH MINDSET

While leaders do not need to be futurists, they should be future-sensing and capable of establishing momentum even as the essential steps are being learned along the way. This is the essence of the idea that change becomes an organizational capability; it must be deeply embedded and become part of the very DNA of the organization.

We see Human Resource leaders playing a pivotal role in continual transformation, particularly as it relates to attracting and developing the right talent, fully engaging the organization around the overarching business strategy, and helping to build a cohesive culture that supports transformative change.

Case in Point

An enterprise cloud application that provides administrative and operational support teamed up with a people experience platform to address a common tension between growth and culture. The strategy was to offer personalized coaching to people leaders with the goal of aligning the growth and development of these leaders to the company's culture. This partnership gave continuous insights into how leaders were responding to their coaching experiences and revealed which leaders could benefit most from coaching.

Advocating Resilient Designs

The third dimension of leading with purpose looks at the contemporary movement from efficiency to resiliency.

We can expect to see more resilient corporate designs as companies adapt to the fact that it may be necessary to correct course quickly. Companies are transitioning from designing for efficiency through streamlining roles, supply chains, and workflows–which exposed fragilities as there was no flexibility to respond to disruptions–to designing for resiliency by moulding roles and structures around outcomes, thereby increasing agility and formalizing how processes can flex. This will also provide employees with varied, adaptive, and variable roles so they will need to acquire cross-functional knowledge and training.

EFFICIENCY

• **Streamlining roles**

• **Supply chains**

• **Workflows**

RESILIENCY

• **Roles and structures based on outcomes**

• **Increased agility**

• **Flexible processes**

A good example of resilient design is found in the nuclear power industry, which relies on a safety philosophy known as "integrated defense in depth." According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, this framework requires consideration of not just reactor design and hardware performance but also the human and organizational elements necessary for safe reactor operation by assessing overall design resilience, while at the same time recognizing the need to consider a variety of complex, interconnected variables.

In today's business world, resilience from a Human Resources perspective means that we must develop agile and instantaneous responses to innovations or events that promise to reshape careers, change cultural norms, or transform our technological frameworks. We must pay close attention to the effects of these changes on worker wellbeing, workplace design and other factors, and take steps as necessary to support the human factors that are an inherent part of any business transformation initiative.

Case in Point

A 600-person insurance software provider implemented a business continuity plan at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This cloud-first, people-focused company already had a work from home policy in place that pre-empted the government-imposed lockdown by two weeks. The company's resilience policy was to be as adaptable, scalable, and available as possible, no matter what the circumstances. The company was able to switch swiftly to remote working at scale and operate as normal for its customers. Additionally, the company managers used a self-reporting plugin to reach out to employees proactively to discuss childcare challenges, stress, holidays, and general illness issues, thereby promoting a sense of well-being and care amongst the working population.

Acting for the Common Good

The fourth dimension of leading with purpose looks at the emergence of ESG and stakeholder capitalism.

Leading with Purpose

Managing Organizational Complexity

Acting for the Common Good

Embracing Continual Transformation

Advocating Resilient Designs

Here we are referring to the theory that the social responsibility of every organization counterbalances the firm's traditional responsibility to obtain the greatest possible profit for its shareholders. This idea has become increasingly important not simply because of the pandemic, but also due to issues like increased economic inequality, racial injustice, and climate change.

Pressure is mounting on companies to disclose targets on environmental, social, and governmental issues, such as carbon emissions, responsible water use, and health and safety. As such, the organization's ability to meet these goals becomes a strategic priority.

ENVIRONMENTAL
- **Resource Management**
- **Emissions Reduction**
- **Environmental Accidents**
- **Risk Mitigations**

GOVERNANCE
- **Executive Compensation**
- **Shareholders' Rights**
- **Accountability of Board Leadership**
- **Vision**

SOCIAL
- **Health and Safety**
- **Human Rights**
- **Community Relations**
- **Supply Chain Monitoring**

ESG ISSUES

Also, the private enterprise economics that have driven business for the past fifty years are being seriously challenged by the reemergence of stakeholder capitalism. This concept is becoming increasingly important to companies' financial performance and resilience, and many are shifting their business models to create new value by engaging all stakeholders in a purpose-driven organization focused on the common good.

Human Resource executives are at the forefront of the organizational response to deliver new business models, thinking through the skills, structures, and culture required. Even as organizations increasingly advocate their adherence to environmental, social and governance targets, demands have risen for Human Resources to effectively contribute to solving today's sustainability challenges by applying ideas from a common good economy perspective. For some companies this could mean replacing financial rewards with incentives such as social recognition and employee ownership programs.

Case in Point

In the belief that sustainability and growth are not in conflict, a multinational consumer goods company committed to help create a world "where everyone can live well within the natural limits of the planet" by putting sustainable living at the heart of its operational model. This included brands and products, standards of behavior, and partnerships and advocacy efforts that drove transformational change across the entire value chain. By adopting a multi-stakeholder approach, the company was better able to understand the challenges preventing society and ecosystems from thriving, and to find ways to begin addressing them.

PRINCIPLE 2

Thinking in Systems

While design thinking is a people-centered process that embraces emotions and the human connection, systems thinking is about non-linear relationships, where certain core concepts and practical tools can be applied to better understand the complexity of the organization, such as identifying value through business ecologies and activating business ecosystems via platforms.
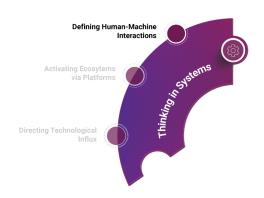
Thinking in systems gives us a good foundation to start the journey to design for a better tomorrow in the new workplace. This allows for the organization to build on its ability to transform by developing, improving, and reinforcing employee experience strategies, as well as novel structures and processes.

Systems thinking also enables organizations to better consider the influx of ever more sophisticated, game-changing technologies and applications—such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics, and even new employee experience offerings, like Microsoft's Viva—to weave these together with common business applications while simultaneously construing human-computer interactions that will define new ways of working.

Defining Human-Machine Interactions

Activating Ecosytems via Platforms

Directing Technological Influx

Thinking in Systems

The Organization of the Future

Thinking in Systems

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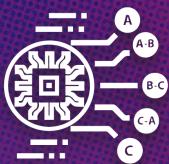Leading with Purpose

Defining Human-Machine Interactions

The first dimension of thinking in systems involves a definition of human-machine interaction, especially as this pertains to advances in artificial intelligence.

Defining Human-Machine
Interactions

Activating Ecosytems
via Platforms

Thinking in Systems

Directing Technological
Influx

For many organizations, the amount of fully automated work will be small compared to the amount of work expected to be performed in a hybrid partnership. As humans increasingly take their hands off and on the wheel at work and rely on machines to do as much as possible, this area will be a critical focus for both organization and work design. We are quite unprepared for this challenge, with issues ranging from ethical design to social and economic policies to ready leadership and an equipped workforce.

AUTOMATOR

AI quickly reaches a conclusion

A

A-B

B-C

C-A

C

EVALUATOR

Humans generate scenarios for AI to evaluate

DECIDER

AI decides and humans implement

RECOMMENDER

AI recommends and humans decide

ILLUMINATOR

Humans leverage AI-generated insights

Artificial Intelligence Will Augment the Employee Experience in Myriad Ways

To elaborate, increased human-machine interaction in artificial intelligence is having a profound effect on the employee experience. We can imagine at least five distinct human-artificial intelligence interaction modes emerging.

As an Automator, artificial intelligence has all the context and can decide without human intervention. As a Decider it reaches a conclusion but leaves it to humans to implement the solution. Artificial Intelligence as a Recommender relies on humans to provide the business context, while as an Illuminator it means that the machine can inform at least some of the creative process. Finally, Artificial Intelligence as an Evaluator means that it can take hypothetical situations and assess these to provide insights to human operators.

Understanding which interaction model applies to which tasks helps us to understand the optimal human-machine work across reconstructed jobs and processes and, therefore, the requirements for a superior worker experience.

Human Resources may find it useful work to create a view of to-be worker segments, profiles, and personas representative of the future workforce. As a common asset for business units and functions, these profiles can be a foundation for implementing the intelligent interface design best fitted to the future users, as well as task and workflow design, productivity, and learning period minimization.
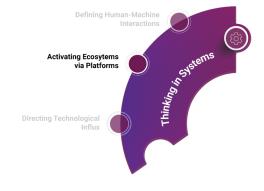
Case in Point

Automated personal assistants are becoming more prevalent throughout both the business and domestic environments. These often use natural language processing, speech recognition, and other artificial intelligence and machine learning techniques in order to interpret voice or text inputs from humans. The AI systems pattern match in order to retrieve information from online sources. Such systems may interact with users and learn over time, better understanding context cues offered and returning more accurate and fluid responses to queries.

Activating Ecosystems via Platforms

New value for the business ecosystem will emerge from three broad platforms.

Defining Human-Machine
Interactions

**Activating Ecosytems
via Platforms**

Thinking in Systems

Directing Technological
Influx

Here we see platforms activating complex business ecosystems and leveraging the combinatorial power of progressive digital technologies to facilitate frictionless interactions among workers, partners, suppliers, and customers – while creating new value for businesses, such as efficiencies in maximizing asset utilization, reduced transaction costs, symbiotic relationships in new work, trust and transparency, and growth in dynamic markets, while leaving learnings behind for all.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

WORKER EXPERIENCE
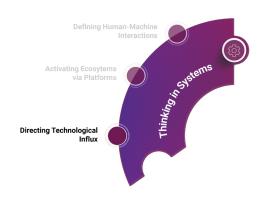
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Bear in mind that the employee experience, worker experience, and customer experience are all platforms in their own right – built increasingly on the value of give-and-take relationships of platform participants across a flat, democratic, social, and fluid ecosystem. The combination of these three experiences combine technology, operations, and culture to drive cost efficiency, productivity and growth.

These platforms are the street-level view of emerging business ecosystems from the vantage point of the people who most need to believe in the organization's purpose and mission, and new operating model. HR's interest, broadly, in offering compelling digital platforms and experiences that customers, partners, and employees crave is significant as these experiences accelerate transformation by empowering the organization to "be digital" at its core.

Case in Point

An automotive manufacturer wanted to break into the burgeoning business of autonomous vehicles. The manufacturer partnered with an existing, successful online platform and an insurer to create and implement entirely new business markets. These three disparate partners teamed up in a business context in which traditional boundaries between industries and companies still existed, yet they were able to develop shared products and services that they each could not have supported on their own.
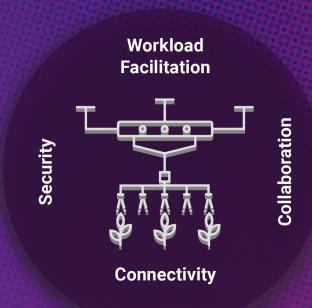
Directing Technological Influx

Technologies for connectivity, collaboration, security, and workload facilitation are all rising to prominence today.

An influx of new technology is having a significant impact on the employee experience. This will continue unabated, as wearable devices, virtual and augmented reality, online learning, expanded data collection, analytics, increased cloud computing, and 5G activity, as well as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics, become ever more commonplace. All these assets can combine to have a significant impact on the employee experience and bring us closer to the point of work in terms of experiential value.

Right now, the market space for technologies that power employee experiences is expanding and transforming in significant and exciting ways.

HR cloud platform providers, like Workday, are innovating through their acquisition of Peakon, folding in employee listening and employee engagement capabilities.

Defining Human-Machine Interactions

Activating Ecosystems via Platforms

Thinking in Systems

Directing Technological Influx

Workload Facilitation

Security

Collaboration

Connectivity

Wearables and new technology are impacting the employee experience. These assets include:

- Wearable Devices
- Virtual Reality
- Augmented Reality
- Online Learning
- Expanded Data Collection
- Analytics
- Cloud Computing
- 5G
- Artificial Intelligence
- Machine Learning
- Robotics

Microsoft has announced a new portfolio of offerings in their Viva platform that will weave together communications and culture, productivity and wellbeing, organizing and exposing enterprise knowledge, and elevating learning by improving discoverability and sharing.

These increasingly powerful technology enablers are becoming a part of every progressive employee experience. We're at a place and time where the kinds of smart, seamless, engaging experiences we've dreamed about enabling people with are increasingly within the realm of possibility.

Case in Point

As an example of connectivity, security, and workload facilitation, edge computing is a rapidly evolving distributed computing paradigm that brings data storage much closer to the location where it is needed without the need for a localized data center. This vastly improves response times and saves massive amounts of bandwidth. In 2021, it is predicted that new business models will emerge with AI and 5G facilitating the expansion of edge use cases as more cloud strategies seek to capture this innovation and become more connected.
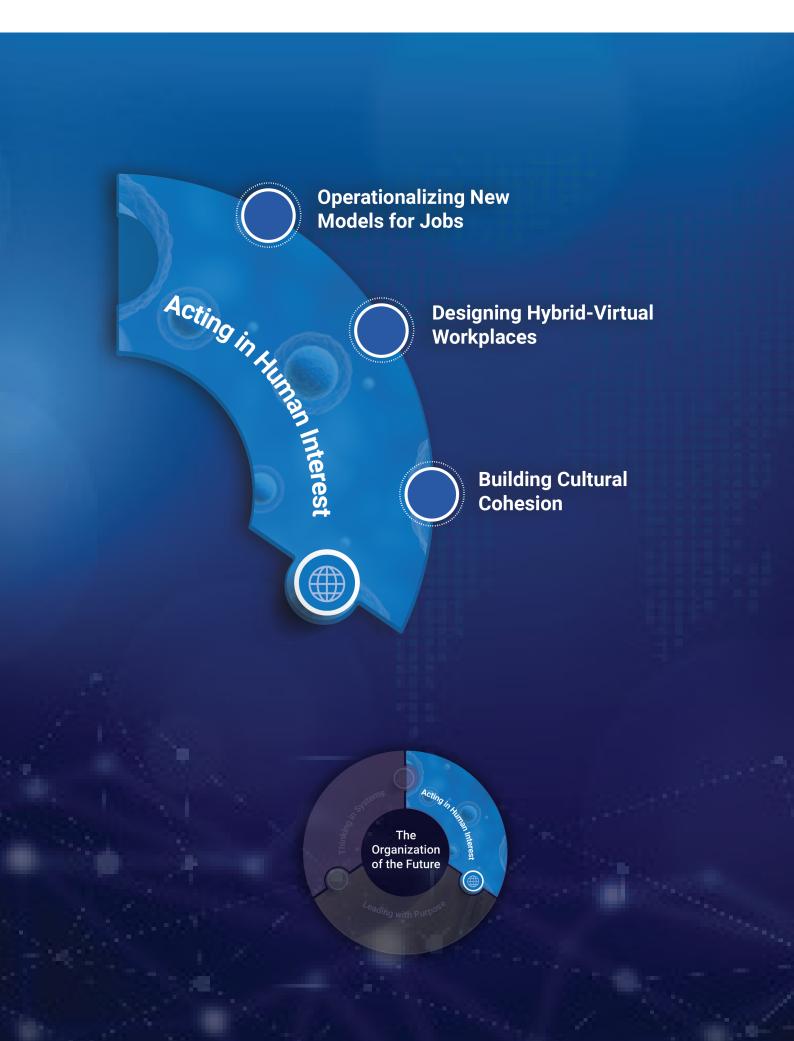
PRINCIPLE 3

Acting in Human Interest

The American chocolate maker and philanthropist Milton S. Hershey put it bluntly more than a century ago when he said that "business is a matter of human service."

As we examine the post-pandemic "next normal," we have a profound opportunity to reimagine ways of working and reassess the norms of human interests and interactions that help create a cohesive culture, generate social solidarity, strengthen purpose, boost resilience, and build shared trust and cooperation.

While we rightly refer to "The Great Reset" at an organizational level, we must also consider that society—and our workers therein—are also hitting the reset button due to multiple tipping points, not least the current pandemic, which have caused us all to rethink our old ways of behaving and to reevaluate our chosen pathways.

Moving forward, while few businesses may be able to fulfill worker demands for stability in this age of uncertainty, what we must be able to promise is their continued relevance in a rapidly changing world.

Operationalizing New Models for Jobs

Designing Hybrid-Virtual Workplaces

Building Cultural Cohesion

Acting in Human Interest

Thinking in Systems

Acting in Human Interest

The Organization of the Future

Leading with Purpose

Operationalizing New Models for Jobs

As jobs are displaced, disrupted and deconstructed, greater organizational agility is essential.

Redesigning work – mapping out the human dimension in future, automated work – is an iterative process of deconstruction and reimagination based on new work models.

We can anticipate the impact of emerging "work everywhere" models where work comes to people, and people operate outside of rigid job and organizational structures. With machines lifting more repetitive work and predicting operational performance and future work, worker experiences focus on augmenting people in their new, human work. Customer-centricity, judgement, risk mitigation, and creativity become the experience focus in work

environments where people engage in a wide range of projects that flow in fluid cycles as customer needs and operational priorities dictate.

In its latest Future of Jobs report, the World Economic Forum estimates that 50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025. The forum also predicts that 85 million jobs may be displaced by a shift in the division of labor between humans and machines, but that even more jobs – almost 100 million – may emerge that are more adapted to the new division of labor between humans, machines, and algorithms.

DISPLACED JOBS
Skills are deemed obsolete and value delivery is totally changed

DECONSTRUCTED JOBS
Skills remain safe, but the form of value delivery changes

DURABLE JOBS
Both skills and form of value delivery are deemed too costly to automate

DISRUPTED JOBS
Skills are highly standardized, but customers like the way value is delivered

MIT Sloan Management Review - "Four ways Jobs Will Respond to Automation"

This parsing of jobs into discrete tasks allows companies to identify specific areas of need based on metrics like frequency, complexity, and duration. Consequently, options like sourcing, engaging and rewarding workers for each task can be comingled with considerations of the relative opportunity for automation or human-machine interaction.

Put into the context of the rapid evolution of work due to major influences such as the pandemic, task breakdown is an essential component of the need for greater flexibility and agility in the hybrid-virtual workplace. This agile approach prioritizes individuals and interactions over processes and tools, which allows workers to swarm by collectively working and engaging on tasks that typically are allocated to certain job titles.

Starting by breaking down current and potential future tasks into their component machine and human allocations, work is assigned based on specific competencies, rather than fixed job titles. This may involve upskilling of the existing workforce or the engagement of new resources, possibly through temporary contractual arrangements as necessary to fulfill a particular task. Once this is achieved, many of the necessary tasks may be bundled into a job, while others are undertaken individually.

In summary, while traditional jobs will continue to handle the majority of work in an organization, these new operating models will gather momentum as more tasks become organized by using alternative ways of engaging with both humans and machines. This is especially true where companies need to apply the most agility, as the available talent can swarm to specific challenges as necessary.

Case in Point

When a multinational technology company acquired an online pharmaceutical firm for just under $1 billion, it signaled the pending disruption of pharmacist jobs and caused sharp falls in the share value of market-leading pharmacy chains. The online pharmaceutical, which was a little-known startup, had obtained a license to sell prescription drugs in every US state. It was a service designed to be digital, a situation with which major chains could not compete.

Designing Hybrid-Virtual Workplaces

Combining office work with working from home or some other location.

Operationalizing New Models for Jobs

Acting in Human Interest

Designing Hybrid-Virtual Workplaces

Building Cultural Cohesion

The pandemic accelerated the evolution of hybrid-virtual workplaces exponentially by necessarily combining office work with working from home or any other remote location. We now see companies considering three different models. The first is to have some employees working in the office while others work remotely, the second is to have all employees spending part of the work week in the office and part of the week working remotely, and the third is a combination of the first and second models.

Notwithstanding the model chosen, hybrid-virtual workplaces are here to stay, and leadership must address challenges such as maintaining human connections, offsetting the absence or diminished impact of office culture, addressing potentially lower levels of focus, and supporting the heightened need for time management skills, leadership challenges in managing in these new models, and technological security threats.

MODEL 1:
Some employees work in the office while others work remotely

MODEL 2:
All employees spend part of the week working in the office and part of the week working remotely

MODEL 3:
Combination of model 1 and 2

Human Resources can help equip leaders to manage remote teams over the long haul and preserve company culture with a more distributed workforce. Also, by fostering employee engagement through scheduling regular virtual events, setting fair benchmarks and payment practices, allowing workers to have a voice in hybrid-virtual work policies, and being open to change, Human Resources can become an active driver of progressive remote working experiences.

Case in Point

A 200-person fleet management service contact center specializing in accident management was faced with the challenge of transitioning its contact center agents to a remote work setting. With little time to waste, it had to act quickly to comply with the government's social distancing guidelines to ensure it could continue to provide vital support services to its customers' fleets. Having already implemented an integrated voice, video, chat, and analytics app at the brick and mortar service center, the company had the cloud platform and capabilities in place to implement a remote working mandate for its contact center agents in less than 24 hours.

Building Cultural Cohesion

When we look at acting in the interests of humans, one of our considerations must be building cultural cohesion within the organization.

Operationalizing New
Models for Jobs

Acting in Human Interest

Designing Hybrid-Virtual
Workplaces

**Building Cultural
Cohesion**

Entirely new ways of working are highlighting the need for purpose and cultural evolution as topics like diversity, human-centricity, and inclusion are emerging to inspire and motivate the workforce. A carefully scripted and credible purpose provides the workforce with a tangible and compelling reason for its existence in the first place. Purpose must be viewed as the cornerstone that provides alignment, clarity, guidance, and cohesive energy in a dynamic environment driven by an ever-changing business model. Culture then liberates and empowers people to act in support of purpose by focusing on values, behaviors, and growth mindsets. It encourages and provides context to the work practices of collaboration, agility, continuous learning,

and innovation. It must also engage and empower people by enriching on-the-job experiences and giving workers the chance to make a real difference in their daily contributions.

A cohesive culture starts with core values that must be integrated within every aspect of the organization and, critically, modeled and led by 21st century leadership practices that are more collaborative and less directive. These include the ability to navigate through ambiguity, tension, and paradox, while exemplifying a growth mindset.

DIVERSITY
Multiple identities represented in an organization

HUMAN CENTRICITY
Engaging the full potential of the individual

INCLUSION
Thoughts, ideas, and perspectives of all individuals matter

New ways of working that highlight the need for purpose and cultural evolution.

Closely allied to cultural cohesion and a trend that has accelerated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is that of worker *eudaimonia*, more often referred to as worker well-being or happiness. Many companies recognize the need to prioritize both the mental and physical health of their employees. Ensuring workers safety and keeping them healthy has been thrust into the corporate spotlight as remote work continues to flourish and social isolation becomes a very real issue.

Business leaders are seeking to equip their employees with the emotional and social skills necessary to cope with these sea changes in the working environment. Beyond subsisting, the key question is whether a sense of caring and, hence, well-being can be infused at the individual, team, and organizational levels to build a sustainable future as part of the work transformation process itself.

Case in Point

A major payments company needed to move from a relatively small and highly networked culture to a larger and more structured organization, but without losing the benefits of creative, entrepreneurial, and flexible behaviors. The company introduced a "peak performance" process focused on helping each worker to recognize how their own values and aspirations could relate to those of the organization in a mutually beneficial way. By realizing their own potential, these individuals could therefore contribute to the achievement of the organization's vision and purpose. This process had a beneficial impact not only on key business metrics, but also resulted in much higher levels of employee engagement and individual achievement.

Employee Experience Strategies

Employee experience strategies are the river that runs through the entire model. Purpose and culture are the starting point for all transformational employee experiences, while technologies that power employee experiences are expanding and transforming in significant and exciting ways.

In summary, we must design innovative and engaging experiences that enable our growth strategies: where peer-to-peer participation, networking in platforms, real-time and shared learning, the free flow of ideas across business units and divisions, the incentives that motivate people, and the opportunities to contribute their very best are all available and encouraged. People should be able to bring their personal brand to work and become known or found and tapped for a wide range of expertise and interests beyond their immediate job skill requirements.

Moving Forward

We have briefly highlighted three key business principles: leading with purpose, systems thinking, and acting in the interests of humans. From those vantage points, we can look at some of the underlying dimensions that encapsulate what we see as the critical areas of focus for the post-pandemic era.

Driven by the concept of Build Back Better, we can use these fundamentals to address the restoration of infrastructure, the revitalization of livelihood and industry, and the rehabilitation of the local culture and environment following a catastrophic event, such as we are experiencing with the ongoing pandemic.

As we know all too well at this point, the current situation has impacted the lives of over 7.5 billion people on this planet in ways that none of us could ever have imagined. It has confronted us with the challenge of redefining the role of business as usual by elaborating on the purpose of the corporation through advocating resilient designs, demonstrating dynamic leadership, managing complexity, and acting for the common good.

It has also inspired us to bring systems thinking out of the realm of machines and algorithms and into the physical world, showing us how to develop the strategic approaches to business that thought leaders across the globe consider critical for post-pandemic recovery.

While the pandemic has confronted our way of working and reminded us of the need to live responsibly and sustainably while focusing on our well-being as a society, we now need to define the optimal way for companies to act in the best interests of humanity moving forward, while bearing in mind that COVID-19 has forever changed the experience of being a customer, an employee, a citizen, and a human.

Even as we strive to build cultural cohesion, operationalize new models for jobs, and find ways to teach new skills to our hybrid-virtual workforces as part of acting in the interests of humans, we must also listen acutely and sharpen our abilities to react to changes in behavior on a scale unlike anything we have ever seen before. We must monitor, collect, analyze, and act on signals that suggest sea changes in the experience of our employees.

In short, the successful organization of the future will be the one that can adapt more quickly to the post-pandemic world order by demonstrating resilience and the ability to transform in the face of adversity.

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