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Business

Why Strategic Investment in the Future of Work is Crucial for Growth





The future of work isn't coming. It's here

Changes in workplace circumstances have seen people adapt their working patterns, businesses adopt new and advanced technology to aid everything from collaboration to administration, and the workplace become more decentralised than many thought possible.

Advances like these offer untapped value for businesses, but the pace of change has created significant challenges. Today's working patterns are far from perfect for long-term business growth – and while there are big developments in some areas, there has been slow progress in others. Plus, budgetary restrictions are leaving businesses unsure of exactly where to invest in order to tackle these challenges.

Here, we'll explore our vision for the future of work, and how organisations can make the best of transformation to accelerate growth, build resilience, and boost efficiency. We'll discuss what the future of work means for people, places and businesses. And where the value of partnerships makes itself felt.

First however, we need to explore the key challenges that have emerged as work has changed over the past few years.



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From survival to growth

Organisations have been through three significant stages since the pandemic hit: survival mode, reset mode, and resilience mode

While most are sitting around the reset or resilience stage, they lack the know-how to push forward into where they really want to be: **growth**.

In practice, that means movement into the future of work, but often without the right tools in place to support their employees day-to-day. A problem that has numerous consequences.

For example, disparate technology solutions have led to employees facing time-consuming and clunky processes – and they're leaving as a result. When you consider that on average, it costs you six to nine months of an employee's **salary to replace them**, the commercial impact of this can quickly leave your finances high and dry.

It's clear that when technology fails, is deployed incorrectly, or doesn't have the right foundation, it disrupts the employee experience, distracts them from producing their best work, and leaves them feeling disengaged. Investing in the customer experience has always been critical for success: but investing in the employee experience is now where opportunity lies, with a **recent study suggesting** businesses that do this could increase revenue by around 50%.

The next stage for businesses is to go beyond resilience and into growth mode

Something that can only be achieved with the right strategic investments



A people problem?

Employers can now add ‘the war for talent’ to their list of challenges.

64%

of people surveyed are likely to quit a new job within their first year thanks to a negative onboarding experience

53%

of employers said that they are experiencing greater voluntary turnover than they had in previous years, and...

64%

expect the problem to continue – or even get worse

36%

of employees who have quit in the past six months did so without having a new job lined up

Undoubtedly, disruption is driving unhappy employees to swiftly move on, whatever the circumstances.



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Making the future work

Exploring more strategic investment in the future of work
can help you build better resilience and fuel growth

But where should you begin?



Start by...

thinking about how you can evolve your organisation to better support your employees, building a foundation upon which your employees can in turn better support your organisation.

Microsoft's Work Trend Index report sums it up:

“Employees want control of where, when, and how they work, and expect businesses to provide options.”

Focus on these three key areas to discover where your gaps lie:

1. **Your workplaces**
2. **Your people**
3. **Your business**

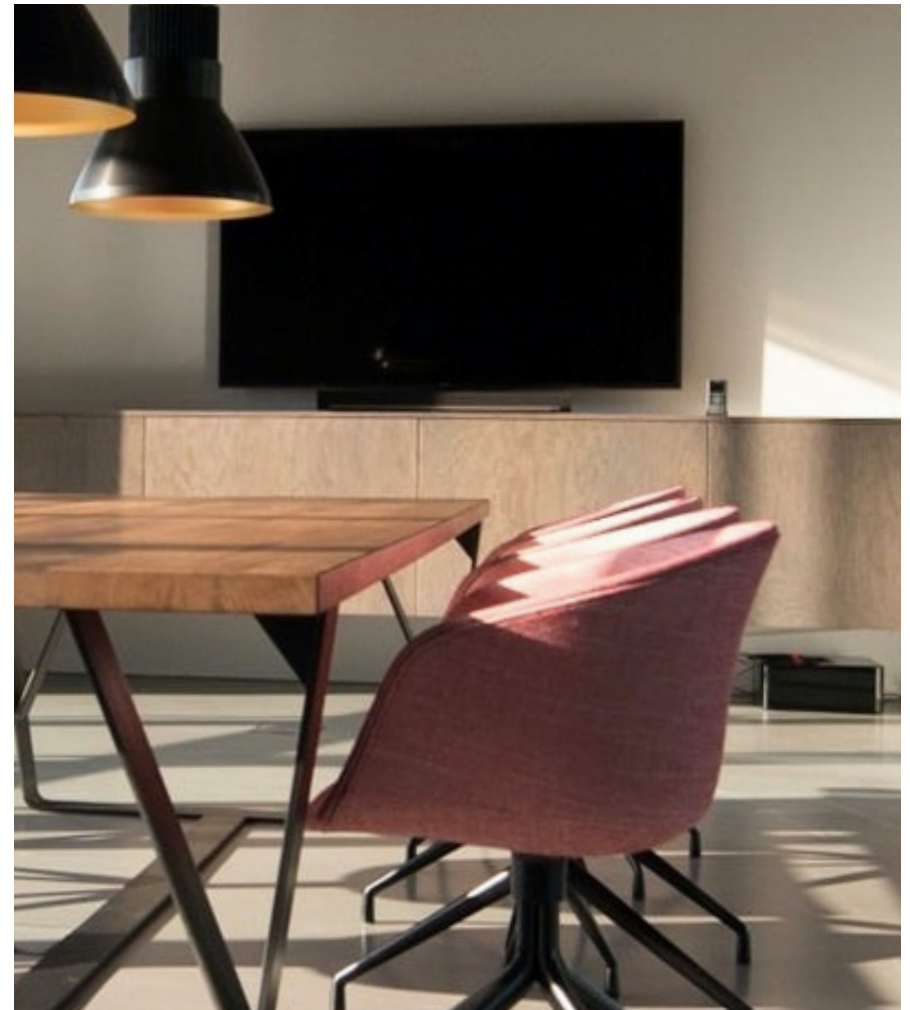
1. Your workplaces

Organisations have a once-in-a-generation chance to rethink their spaces and places.

Challenges for employers lie in combining physical and digital environments; for example, ensuring meeting rooms work for both in-person and remote attendees. Research indicates that **43 percent of employees** who work remotely say they do not feel included in meetings, demonstrating a disconnect that could hamper productivity. Plus, with **teams becoming more siloed in a digital work world**, employee disconnection could have even bigger ramifications.

But it's not just about investing in the right tech. After all, many organisations may already have costly – and not always that functional – equipment implemented as a stop-gap reaction to the pandemic. Now that they've reset, it's worth taking a step back to consider the bigger picture.

Asking where your employees want to work, how frequently they'll be on-site, and what solutions could help their day-to-day can kickstart your path to digital transformation, giving you a more holistic springboard to building a better future of work.



“Company culture is swiftly evolving, and to keep up, organisations must innovate and think progressively. We have this singular opportunity to create the culture and circumstances that will allow each employee to do their best work and to lead their best life.”

Teula Hanson,
Chief People Officer, LinkedIn

2. Your people

According to the **LinkedIn Global Talent Report**, employees are rethinking their priorities – and crucially, their relationships with their employers.

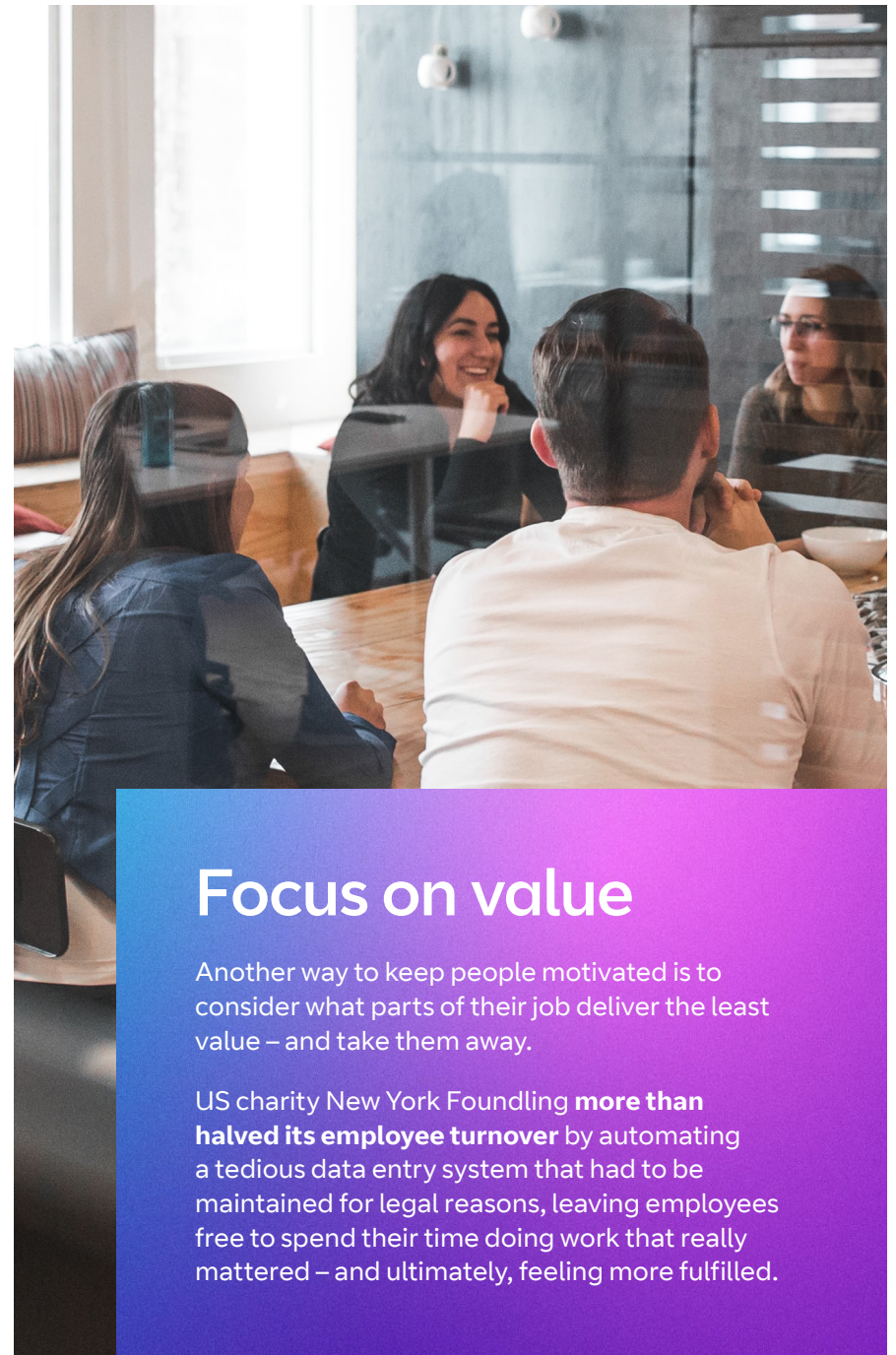
Plus, they're making these priorities well known, with **39 percent of adults surveyed saying** they would consider quitting if their employers weren't flexible about remote work.

Employee disconnection is on the rise, with **16 percent of employees surveyed** in 2021 saying they were actively disengaged in both their work and workplace. The three areas cited as needing improvement were clarity of expectations, access to the right tools and equipment, and the ability to focus their attention on what they do best.

What's more, **research by Gallup** found that when employee engagement was higher, organisations were 23% more profitable, demonstrating a solid link between the employee experience and the bottom line.

It's true that there's huge opportunity to leverage technology to ensure employees feel and perform better. But a significant part of building resilience is considering how all the moving parts fit together. Developing a broader perspective of what's needed to support the move from recovery to growth is vital for organisations wanting to invest in their future of work.

That goes beyond technology and tools and into the fundamentals of how an entire working set up – including equipment, place, and culture – helps or harms the employee experience. Naturally, getting this right is complex, and can really only be worked towards through a combination of consultancy, technology, and support.



Focus on value

Another way to keep people motivated is to consider what parts of their job deliver the least value – and take them away.

US charity New York Foundling **more than halved its employee turnover** by automating a tedious data entry system that had to be maintained for legal reasons, leaving employees free to spend their time doing work that really mattered – and ultimately, feeling more fulfilled.

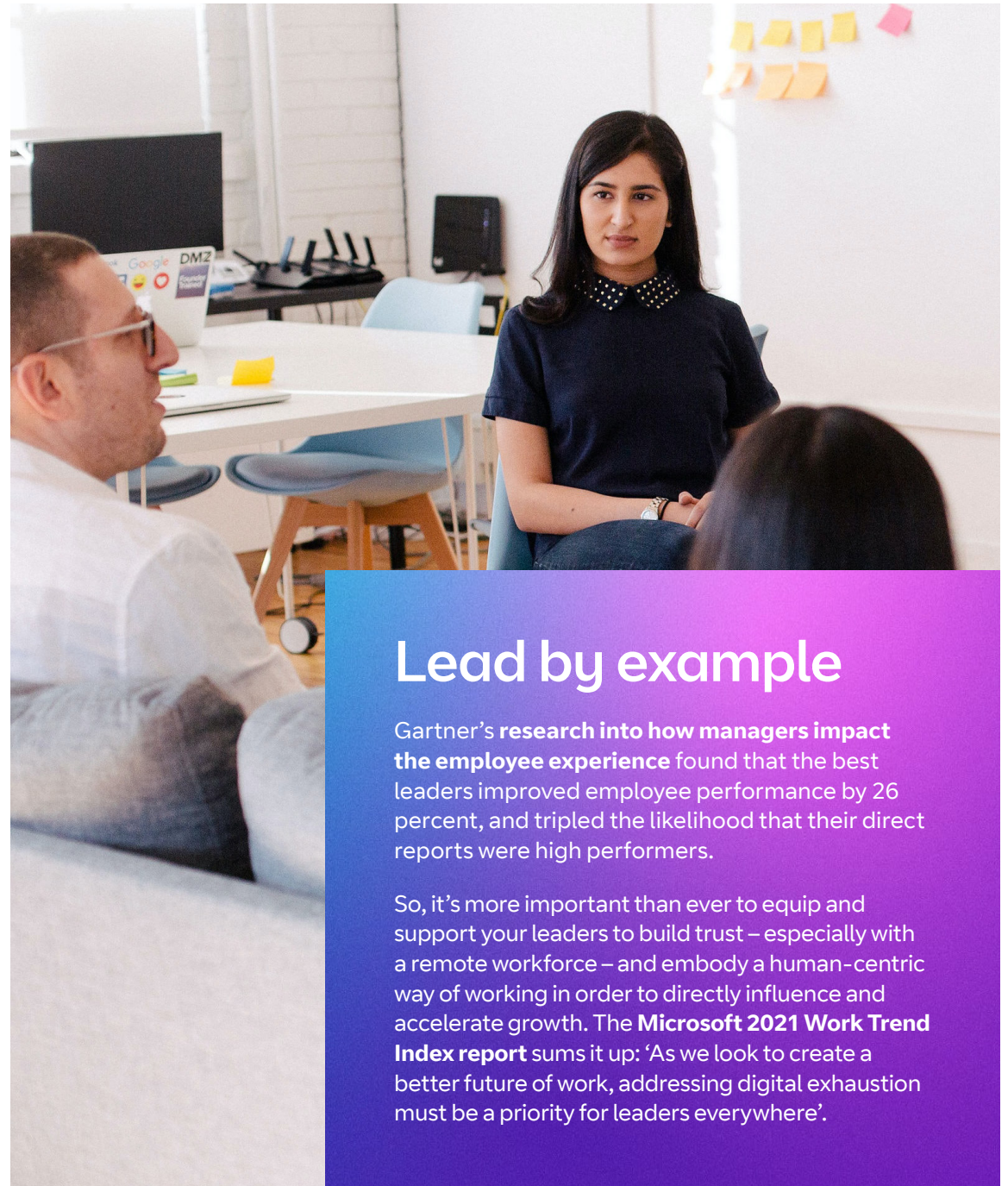
3. Your business

Ultimately, redefining and simplifying the way you work is central to boosting employee productivity.

Currently, **up to 30 percent of employees** have to grapple with six different collaboration tools to perform their daily tasks. With **research suggesting** that multitasking reduces productivity by as much as 40 percent, there's opportunity for organisations to take stock. For many, this could look like evolving technology from centrally managed tools to living digital platforms that support a more seamless way of working.

What's more, **employees feel like they're more productive at home** – while some leaders disagree. Rather than expecting people to be at their desks for a certain number of hours every day, leaders should aim to focus on what teams are actually getting done to avoid the bias that virtual work will be less productive. But to this, they need the right support in place.


Although there could be different approaches – depending on the circumstances of your organisation – putting the time and consideration into where to make strategic investment now will drive better results down the line.



Lead by example

Gartner's **research into how managers impact the employee experience** found that the best leaders improved employee performance by 26 percent, and tripled the likelihood that their direct reports were high performers.

So, it's more important than ever to equip and support your leaders to build trust – especially with a remote workforce – and embody a human-centric way of working in order to directly influence and accelerate growth. The **Microsoft 2021 Work Trend Index report** sums it up: 'As we look to create a better future of work, addressing digital exhaustion must be a priority for leaders everywhere'.



So: what
does all this
mean for
organisations
like yours?

Essentially, your places,
people, and business
need to be aligned to
build a working culture
that delivers the best
employee experience

And if one isn't done right,
it can impact the others.

But what lies at the foundation of your new future of
work is your infrastructure – and that's where you
need a helping hand.



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Find the right partner

Individual software solutions for specific problems will not give businesses the future they need

Neither will consultancy without expertise and experience in delivering technological solutions.

Rather, it's important to find each of these qualities in one holistic package, targeted at workplace transformation.

So, your entire organisation will benefit from a trusted partner who can knit complementary but often complex technologies together, and give them the confidence to transform business for the better.



When searching for the right partner, you should ensure they are:

Flexible

Flexibility isn't just for your employees. Your partner should fully understand the ins and outs of your organisation, offering a flexible and tailored service that works for your specific needs.

They should also be able to communicate simple, clear guidance that is adaptable to your desired outcomes, enabling you to rest assured knowing you're in safe hands.

Future-thinking

You need a partner that helps you stay ahead, harnessing the competitive advantage that great people – enabled and empowered to do great work – can deliver.

They should support you in leveraging and investing in new technologies to streamline operations, building stronger organisational resilience to help you cope with whatever's around the corner.

Reliable

You should look for a partner that can ensure you have everything covered across infrastructure and innovation, spanning service, consultation, and tech – and ideally with loads of experience in business. Not to mention access to selected third-party partnerships to ensure all bases are covered.

They should also be experts at managing issues at all levels, removing any barriers or complexity to deliver full support where you need it most.

Secure

With cybercriminals now able to penetrate **93 percent of company networks**, and with **84 percent of executives** saying their organisation has suffered from data theft in the last two years, there is an increasing need for advanced security protocols.

The right partner should be able to take on the complexity of managing multiple devices and IT stacks while adhering to stringent regulations: all to ensure your organisation is safe from security breaches, and that your customers' data is fully protected.



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Build your future
of work today

The employee experience is changing

From HR operations-centric to employee-centric

From fixed traditional offices to intelligent hybrid workspaces

From complex operations to a streamlined everyday

And this landscape is changing largely because of strategic investment

Where organisations have invested in both customer experience and employee experience, they're outperforming their competitors by over 147 percent.

Enabling your people, your workspaces, and your business needs is key to creating a future that works, and growth as a result. But when change is everywhere, it can be tough to find your place on the map. And that's why choosing the right partner to support your journey is crucial.

Ultimately, your partner should take a consultative, collaborative, and holistic approach to the future of work, helping you get a full picture of where you need to prioritise investment to garner the best results: for both your employees, and your organisation.

To find out more contact your account manager



Offices Worldwide

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