

# RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES OF A CHANGING WORKPLACE AND WORKFORCE

## THE 2020s CREATE A WORK LIFE REVOLUTION

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### Today's Opportunity

- ❖ This change is real, nothing since WW II and Great Depression.
- ❖ Service and government sector: working in conditions established for 1950s industrialization and machinery. Static.
- ❖ Opportunity for transformational change
- ❖ Your Leadership will be tested
- ❖ You choose to meet the challenge.....  
....or be passed by
- ❖ **Redefine the future of public service, make it more sustainable for the widest possible variety of people and.....help your port function better**

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### Agenda

- ❖ The great two year 50 million person experiment. The state of 2020-2022. What happened.
- ❖ How we feel about it, managers/employees, what we are doing right or wrong. How we are all different, what that means for all of us.
- ❖ How might we return?
- ❖ Recommendations/advice, do you really want to step backwards?

Agenda

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### Three weeks in March 2020.....

- ❖ "The only thing holding back flexible work arrangements was a failure of imagination" John Williams, Director, Center for Work Life Law
- ❖ The Great Resignation (reshuffle)
- ❖ McKinsey Report:
  - > We have reset the way we live and do business
  - > Future of work arriving faster than ever expected
  - > 100,000,000 more workers worldwide will need new work rules by 2030
- ❖ Necessity is the mother of invention

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### Three dimensions of a hybrid workplace

All employees have a work site, a work location, and work hours. A hybrid workplace assumes a mix of workstyles across all three dimensions for our employees as well as within our organizations.

- ❖ Hybrid Decisions
  - > All three components
  - > Business necessities
  - > Person/organization collaboration

Hybrid

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### The Hybrid Workplace

- ❖ In Hybrid World: 98% of meetings take place with someone who is not there.
- ❖ Successful Hybrids:
  - > Gauge the "temperature" of those who are not in the room?
  - > Create environment where all are equally included in the sessions
  - > Connect and align teams in transformational ways
- ❖ Choice of how to **Hybridize**: likely to be your strategic advantage with your people (e.g., attraction, commitment, turnover, etc.)

Hybrid

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### The Hybrid Workforce However.....

- ❖ Marginalized, never fit in
  - > Office banter has always been a small annoyance for Kristen, never felt she belonged
  - > Sandy: not much point in returning to the old boys club
  - > People of color, second language, others
- ❖ Office talk: politics, religion, sports, fashion, reality TV: "I don't want to waste my time on that."
- ❖ Office spaces built for "efficiency"
  - > Cubes or tiny square offices
  - > Thermostats: 1960s model, 40 year old male, 70 kilos
- ❖ We have a fundamental need for socialization, shared by many (but not all) of us
  - > "I feel depressed when I wake at 8:00, go to my coffee table, sit there all day then close my computer and I haven't left all day."
  - > "The first few months without interruptions were great, then I discovered there was no one to talk to and I got bored."
  - > My husband comes home and turns on the TV and I'm thinking "you just turned on the TV in my office!"
  - > "I just don't have the focus and self control to work without people around me."

Hybrid

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### What about our People (II)

SHRM COVID 19 RESEARCH: SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

DESPITE IMPROVEMENTS SINCE APRIL 2021  
**AS MANY AS 1 IN 5 EMPLOYEES**  
STILL STRUGGLE OFTEN WITH SYMPTOMS RELATED TO DEPRESSION

36% OF EMPLOYEES ARE WORSE  
FOR THOSE THAT LIVE WITH A MEMBER OF A VULNERABLE POPULATION, THAN THOSE WHO DO NOT

4X SMALLER

People

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### Disconnect?

- ❖ Execs have different lives than subordinates
  - > Better work setup, office, door, etc.
  - > Fewer childcare issues, more quality time with family
  - > Employees believe that hybrid settings provide better work life balance
- ❖ What is best for the organization vs. best for the individual

# BACK TO WORK

- ❖ Belief you need to be at work for productivity, "moments of serendipity"
  - > Research shows ambiguity; nominal work group often more effective, not bogged down in groupthink or office politics

Return

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## Resilience

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- ❖ Relationships contribute to happiness
  - Our thought and emotional processes drive the body's functionality

# BACK TO WORK

- ❖ Resilience
  - How will new physical locations support employees
  - How will companies support families and individuals through EAPs, support groups, etc?
  - How will work related and non work related activities, such as book clubs, social gatherings, and sports activities, support workers?

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## Office Space

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- ❖ WA OFM has guidelines
  - Assigned workspace
  - Assigned shared workspace
  - Unassigned workspace
- ❖ Route-Fifty.com
  - States rethinking their real estate strategy
- Desk sharing, hoteling.
  - Determine the right amount of collaborative and individual space needed; talk to employees
  - Pros/cons for employees
  - Clean desk policies
- National Association of State Chief Administrators report, summer 2021 (nasca.mclms.net)

# BACK TO WORK

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## Workforce Trends: Mission Square Research Institute

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- ❖ Showcase Value (public service pride)
- ❖ Track Burnout and support staff with EAPs/wellness programs
- ❖ Reevaluate Benefits, especially retirement (Social Contract, final slides)
- ❖ Think Beyond Traditional Benefits: what else?
- ❖ Prioritize DEI (EDI) Goals (lead with Equity)
- ❖ Ask:
  - Why are people leaving
  - What is your competitive advantage
  - How can you impact retention

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## Hybrid Work: Hybrid Workplace, Hybrid Workforce

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- ❖ WorkSite, WorkLocation, WorkHours
  - Possibilities and Needs
- ❖ The model of your hybrid workplace depends on
  - Product/Technology
  - The Needs of the Hybrid Workforce
  - The Flexibility of the Executive Team
- ❖ ReImagine People, Places, Processes
  - Don't force an old model into a new situation

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## The New Social Contract

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- ❖ Based on HumanCentric Relationships
  - The woman in the gift shop, 8 month old baby
- ❖ Employees and candidates will judge leadership by the way they treated employees during the pandemic (which continues)
- ❖ The view from the top is not the same as the view from the bottom



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## My office space

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- ❖ My work group?
- ❖ Do I have my own space?
- ❖ Am I sharing? With whom?
- ❖ My computer, my cup, my pictures?
- ❖ Google's "hot desk" or "inflatable balloon"
- ❖ MW, TTh, TWTh, ??? Can I come in when it's not my day?
- ❖ Working needs?
- ❖ Other?



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## Managers, Meetings, Collaboration

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- ❖ What will success look like in a hybrid environment:
  - Flexibility/Adaptability
  - Inclusivity
  - Supportiveness
  - Technical security
  - Effective Leadership and Management

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## You....As the Leader for Today

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- ❖ Opportunity for transformational change
- ❖ Your Leadership will be tested
- ❖ You choose to meet the challenge.....
  - ....or be passed by
- ❖ Redefine the future of work, make it more sustainable for the widest possible variety of people



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Alan Cabelly, Professor Emeritus, Portland State University, is an Internationally Recognized Speaker, Teacher, and Consultant, the recipient of numerous leadership awards. Alan is a student of the human condition: his personal mission is to help individuals increase their leadership skills and find passion in their work, life. Using the DISC as an effective tool, his work focuses on Leadership Excellence in the 21st Century, the Workplace of the Future, Generational Relationships in the Workplace, and Teambuilding with the DISC. His multigenerational family includes two grandsons and three granddaughters. In his spare time he gardens, mentors, and travels the world with his wife and partner Jean Benevento.