

THE FUTURE OF WORK

Two trends reshaping the future of work in 2020 and beyond!

Before we begin...

At TrendWatching, we're all about consumer trends. So at first glance the Future of Work might not seem like an obvious topic. But take a second look! Thinking about work is integral to your success in the consumer landscape.

Why?

First, because consumers are workers and workers are consumers. Second, in an era when ethical and sustainable business is high on the agenda, increasing numbers of consumers want to know that your brand is doing the right thing - and that includes how you treat your people. Third, creating an amazing internal culture will allow you to attract and retain the best talent - without which you won't stand a chance in the race to meet ever-higher customer expectations.

Welcome to the future of work...

Apply for a new position using a **biometric CV**. Measure **adaptability quotients** (AQ) instead of IQs. Work a four-day work-week, although if Jack Ma has got his way, it will be **996** (that's 9am to 9pm, 6 days a week). Consider **FIRE** (financial independence, retire early) or perhaps even **unretirement**. In short, you don't need us to tell you that the future of work is changing fast.

But here's the thing: yes, the what, who and where of work will continue to be disrupted by AI and robotics. But people are essential drivers of our economy - and that won't change. What will shift are the types of jobs available and the skills needed for them.

Many employees are more willing to adapt than managers and governments give them credit for – a survey conducted by the Harvard Business School's the Future of Work and the Boston Consulting Group's Henderson Institute that spanned 11,000 middle-skills workers in 11 countries found that 46% consider themselves personally responsible for preparing for changes, and 75% report probably or definitely seeing a need to prepare for future work trends.

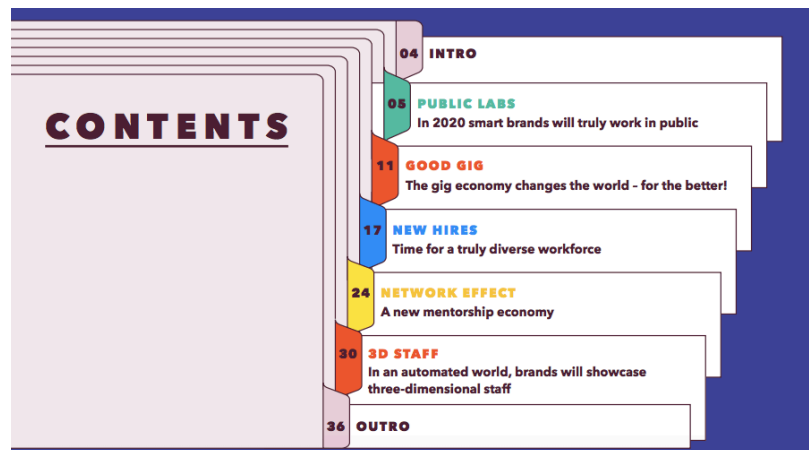
In this report, we dive into two trends that are reshaping work. You already know about the macro-trends that provide the context here: automation, growing armies of freelance workers, the rise of co-working and the gig economy, and more. But below you'll find two *actionable* trends that you can apply today to reshape the way you work, enhance your internal culture, and ultimately serve consumers better.

Ready to start your shift?

Remember, clients of our Premium Service receive the full report featuring all five trends: PUBLIC LABS, GOOD GIG, NEW HIRES, NETWORK EFFECT and 3D STAFF.

In this free version, we'll look at two of those trends, along with a snapshot of the global innovators who are already applying them.

- 1. PUBLIC LABS:** In 2020 smart brands will truly work in public.
- 2. NETWORK EFFECT:** A new mentorship economy rises!



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2020 PREMIUM SERVICE

Enjoying these trends? Want more?

Clients of our Premium Service have received a full report on THE FUTURE OF WORK featuring **five new trends** and premium-exclusive insights.

Available in multiple formats, ready to present and apply, our paid trend reports are designed to ensure that your plans remain deeply aligned with B2C consumer trends.

[Find out more here](#)

1. PUBLIC LABS

In 2020 smart brands will truly work in public

We're living through a transparency revolution. It's upending the rich, powerful and once-untouchable. It's changing what it means to be a brand. And yes, it's reshaping the expectations of consumers around the world.

No wonder we see a near-daily tsunami of brand transparency initiatives. Scan QR codes to check your hotel towels are clean! Track our beef steaks on the blockchain!

Don't get us wrong: more information is good. But taken alone it won't be enough. Consumers increasingly have zero tolerance for anything unknown or apparently secretive.

Those consumers will take access to key information on your offering as a given. But they'll also expect to be able to experience aspects of your business that can't always be neatly summed up via yet another press release, app or platform: your processes, values, and people. The atmosphere inside your organization.

Now, we'll see rising numbers of organizations responding to these expectations by opening PUBLIC LABS. That means new, innovative spaces and experiences that expose their work - and their staff - to public view.

Once, working in public meant blogging about your progress. In 2020, it will mean opening a PUBLIC LAB.

WHY NOW

BRAND SCANDALS

A steady drip of scandalous news from inside big businesses - witness the recent **Boeing** safety scandal - continues to drive consumer demand for even more transparency. Consumers will embrace brands that truly allow them a look behind their four walls.

GLASS BOX BRANDS

Transparency is turning the walls of every organization to glass. Consumers can see right inside, and as a consequence your internal culture is an ever-more important part of your brand. The logical next step? Knock down the walls altogether, and invite consumers into your working spaces so they can feel what it's like in there.

BEYOND CO-CREATION

Crowdfunding and more kickstarted (pun intended!) a world of co-creation and pre-launch involvement. In a GLASS BOX world, consumers will expect new and innovative ways to influence how you work and what you offer. What better way than inviting them in to a PUBLIC LAB?

Examples



TORTOISE – News startup invites members to ‘open news conferences’
Can you invite consumers into your working spaces and your processes? In an era of fake news, this media startup reinvented the news conference: London-based online news and comment startup **Tortoise** is built around an ‘open newsroom’ policy. Subscribers to the platform can attend twice- monthly news conferences, called ThinkIns, during which they can talk to Tortoise editors and writers, help shape the agenda and areas of focus for the platforms in the months ahead. Tortoise say the system is part of their project to build ‘a different kind of newsroom’.

SHISEIDO – New Tokyo research hub is open to the public
How about giving consumers a glimpse of your research and development process? Opened by beauty brand Shiseido in April 2019, the **Global Innovation Center (S/PARK)** is located south of Tokyo and incorporates research laboratories and equipment, a café, a studio, and sports facilities. The center also offers a beauty bar, where visitors can create their own Shiseido cosmetics, and an experience-based museum presenting cutting-edge technologies. In the museum shop, visitors can purchase limited edition products.

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YOUR RESPONSE

TOWN HALL

One powerful way to ride this trend? Invite consumers into your discussions, decisions and strategy-setting sessions. See how media startup Tortoise is reinventing the traditional journalists’ news conference by inviting readers to attend.

OPEN INNOVATION

Want to embrace this trend with both hands? How about throwing open the doors to your innovation and development spaces? Look at the way Coca-Cola is giving B2B clients a glimpse of its innovation pipeline – and so helping those clients to plan future business models.

WINDOW TO THE WORLD

Via technologies, including livestreaming, your PUBLIC LAB can be truly global. What aspect of your work or process would outsiders love to see. The Rijksmuseum is livestreaming the restoration of a priceless Rembrandt painting.

2. NETWORK EFFECT

A new mentorship economy

You hardly need us to tell you that the landscape of work has fundamentally changed. Today, more than **one-third** of the US workforce is freelance. Around the world, **70%** of full-time professionals work remotely at least one day a week. In the UK, the gig economy has more than doubled in the last three years and now accounts for more than **4.7 million** workers.

The positive and negative implications of these shifts are well publicized. But one other lesser-discussed aspect of ‘work’ that’s also been fundamentally disrupted? Access to mentorship. In a world of independent work and freelancing, and startups full of recent graduates, how do you find a mentor? What does mentorship mean?

In 2020, remote, freelance and self-employed professionals – along with those inside startups and conventional organizations – will appreciate employers that leverage NETWORK EFFECTS. That is, provide mentorship services that help staff develop their skills and cultivate the emotional resilience needed to navigate the constantly changing world of work.

New networks – of mentors and mentees – will give workers crucial support in an era when conventional office hierarchies have been disrupted, and when ‘a job for life’ is increasingly rare. After all, embracing non-traditional work doesn’t mean overlooking everything that’s come before!

WHY NOW

NEW STRUGGLES

Freelance and remote work comes with many benefits: flexibility, freedom increased productivity. But the grass isn’t always greener: 21% of remote workers feel that loneliness is their biggest struggle with working remotely (Buffer, February 2018). Factor in that loneliness is on the rise amongst young people – those more likely to take a chance on remote work – and there’s a clear opportunity to build stronger communities and better networks.

HUMAN NEEDS

Mentorship has an impact on a worker’s career across several measures. 91% of US employees who have a mentor are satisfied with their jobs, including more than half (57%) who are ‘very satisfied’ (CNBC/SurveyMonkey Workplace Happiness Survey, July 2019). Employees with mentors are also more likely to feel well paid and valued. The desire to feel respected isn’t exclusive to full-time employees – freelancers and remote workers want the same!

CHALLENGING TIMES

For employees in more traditional employment, mentorship isn’t guaranteed. In the wake of #MeToo, 60% of male managers say they’re uncomfortable participating in regular work activities with women, including mentoring – that’s a 32% increase on 2018 (LeanIn.org & SurveyMonkey, May 2019). Yes this will impact workplace interactions, but it could also stop women learning valuable skills and break into senior positions often held by men.

Examples

BUMBLE – Dating app adds networking and mentorship mode

What networking (or in this case dating!) apps consumers are already using? Could these offer a new way to connect with potential mentors, or one's fellow remote mentees? **Bumble Bizz** is a separate mode within the women-lead dating app that focuses on job seeking, networking and mentoring. Launched in the US, Canada, the UK, France, and Germany in 2017, users' Bizz profile can include a digital resume, skills and work samples. In 2019, Bumble launched Women in Bizz, a new feature that allows women to limit their professional networking to other women.

KRONOS & IBM – AI career coach designed for hourly workers

Mentorship doesn't always have to be provided by a human. When it comes to having tricky personal conversations, an AI could be a good alternative! November 2018 saw US-based workforce innovation firm **Kronos** partner with IBM to create an AI career coach for hourly workers. Using IBM's Watson technology, the partnership provides employees with personalized advice on training, promotions and raises, and switching positions within their organizations. The chat-based platform is accessible via a smartphone and designed for large companies that can't provide every employee with a human career-path advisor.

ELLEN – AI across large organizations
What about and mentees
December that match
organizational
developed
processes
mentorship
mentees to
over 90% of
three meetings
had 218% increase

YOUR RESPONSE

NO-ONE LEFT BEHIND

At its heart, mentorship taps into a fundamental human need: the desire to progress. So look at your own company critically: what resource offered to higher-level employees could trickle down and allow all employees to tap into the needs for progress and opportunity that everyone has? And think about how progress can be a two-way street. What skills could your older employees learn from younger staff? To counter charges of racial discrimination, lecturers at **Cambridge University** are being mentored by black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) colleagues and students.

POINT OF DIFFERENCE

As we approach the tipping point where remote or freelance work feels like a necessity and not a perk, employers will have to work harder to attract the very best talent. A mentorship scheme could be one way to stand out! Think broadly about what that could look like: is it a digital service, similar to the one provided by Kronos and IBM? Or is it using tech to facilitate real-world interactions, as Bumble Bizz does?

OUT OF ISOLATION

The isolation and loneliness that's often a by-product of freelance and remote working doesn't have to be solved by mentorship. It could be as simple as finding new ways for these tribes to connect with each other (see Quilt) or even with your existing employees. If you have spare space in your office, how about turning it into a communal shared space that can be used both by your employees and from those outside your organization?

Get Going!

The changing nature of work will impact everyone. But simply knowing about these trends isn't enough. You need to act. Easy for us to say; tougher for you to do. So here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Take these trends back to your team. Unless you have complete control over hiring and internal culture in your organization, you can't act on these

trends alone. So, step one? Take these trends back to your team and use them to spark a discussion. What would it look like if *you* opened a PUBLIC LAB, or built a NETWORK EFFECT?

2. Context, context, context. Applying a trend well is all about (yep, we'll say it again) *context*. That means thinking carefully not just about the trend, but about your organization, the direction you want to head in, your industry, and the expectations of your customers. For example, if you want to apply the trend PUBLIC LABS: which aspects of your working processes would *your* customers most like to see?

3. Start a movement. If you work inside a large organization, you can't make real change to working practises or internal culture without buy-in from the very top. But you *can* start a movement for change. Bring people together, give a presentation (use the insights and examples in this report!) and make your case. Or start small: establish a NETWORK EFFECT mentorship scheme in your team, for example, and then communicate the results to the rest of the organization.

4. Think people power. In an era when automation will replace many roles, tap into the talent you already have and use employees' unique skillset to supercharge the experience and services you offer. Let your staff shine!









Good luck!

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IT TAKES A TEAM

This Trend Briefing has many hands on it. A huge thanks to the team that pulled this together with such positivity and enthusiasm, especially: Vicky Kim and Nikki Ritmeijer (for design!), and also Maxwell Luthy, David Mattin, Henry Mason, Alida Urban, Harry Metzger, Harvey Gomez, Jareth Ashbrook, Jonathan Herbst and Lisa Feierstein, Livia Fioretti and Rosie Toumanian. THANK YOU!

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