

# The Future Of Work - A Perfect Opportunity For Global Mobility

The term 'Future of Work' can be a little misleading. It isn't about some far distant change to the work we undertake, it's actually something that is happening now.

## What Do We Mean By Future Of Work?

Future of Work (FoW) describes the rapidly changing environment, underpinned by exponential advances in technology, demographic and economic shifts, resulting in the need for businesses to better engage with their workers to truly understand their motivations and expectations at work.

Typically when we consider the Future of Work, we do so through three dimensions – **work** (what work is and how this is delivered), the **workforce** (who performs the work), and the **workplace** (where it is executed) (Figure 1).

Only by understanding the connections and interdependencies between these dimensions can we fully know how best to navigate the Future of Work. Organisations need to zoom out to analyse the impact to their organisation across all three dimensions in order to identify the 'art of the possible', before they zoom in to align their business strategy and define what they should do to move the conversation away from focusing on cost efficiency, towards increasing workforce value. Addressing the FoW isn't simply about tweaking talent strategies, or changing a few job roles. Ultimately, it is about fundamentally reimagining work.

Global mobility programmes are becoming aware of the strategic impact to their business that can be achieved by addressing these three dimensions and are setting this as a priority item. In a recent survey of over 40 organisations, programme leaders reported that changes in work, workforce or the workplace were having the greatest impact on the design and delivery of their global mobility programmes<sup>(1)</sup>.

The FoW is an exciting opportunity for global mobility to play a strategic role in supporting the wider organisation in terms of how work is delivered, how work is enabled, and how the workforce experience is curated.

Let's consider each dimension in turn.

## Re-Defining Work

Our perspective at Deloitte<sup>(2)</sup> is that the concept of work will be redefined in the future. Jobs are expected to become increasingly machine-powered and data-driven, however, as the half-life of skills continues to decrease, particularly in highly technical skills such as coding, it will be the human skills in the workforce, such as problem solving, communicating, listening, interpretation and design, that will drive value for the organisation. As organisations focus their intelligent automation investment in reducing and removing repeatable tasks, they need to refine the work their workforce will undertake. By redefining work at the same time as redesigning roles, organisations will be able to marry technology with human skills, and our advanced expertise in interpretation and service.

To deliver this successfully, we will need to change the way we think about developing our workforce. Understanding the role of training in specific skills, whilst encouraging learning in the flow of work by increasing enterprise-wide talent mobility. Organisations need to develop people internally to thrive, and mobility needs to be perceived as a natural progression of the individual's career. Deloitte's 2019 Human Capital Survey<sup>(3)</sup> (of over 10,000 business and HR leaders), identified that whilst 76% of leaders considered talent mobility important or very important, 56% reported it was easier for people to find a new job at an outside organisation than within their own. Global mobility teams are already proven experts at teaming with cross-functional partners to move talent across borders. As FoW evolves, business needs change and critical skill gaps across geographies may occur. Now is the time to harness this expertise to create effective internal mobility programmes across business groups. Integrated digital technologies and new data analytics methodologies have enabled a deeper collaboration between global mobility, talent acquisition and broader HR teams who collectively now have access to a greater pool of talent for secondments, as well as the benefit of operational expertise and vendor relationships that are the hallmark of an effective global mobility programme.

## The Future Of The Workforce

Workforce demographics have changed over the last 30 years<sup>(4)</sup>, resulting in a workforce with longer and more diverse careers. In addition, the social contract between employers and employees has altered dramatically; there is now a broad continuum of options for engaging your workforce, from hiring traditional full-time employees, to availing oneself of managed outsourced services, contractors, gig workers, and crowdsourcing talent.

This leads to an opportunity to optimise the organisational benefits for each talent type, whilst also providing meaningful and engaging options for a wide variety of worker needs and motivations. This also requires a rethink of talent models in a way that allows organisations to carefully align these skills, needs and motivations – and the use of digital disruption - in a truly agile way, with business need (Figure 2 on next page).

Fig 1



Fig 2



Influenced by these changes, global mobility also now encompasses a broader array of employee/mobility types than ever before. This has driven the need for closer alignment between these move types and support levels, as well as more flexible and agile service delivery models that meet the requirements of a changing, diverse population.

Due to their experience in handling complex talent and compliance considerations, mobility teams are increasingly tasked with solving the needs of this wider, alternative workforce – effective infrastructure, processes and policies that meet both the needs of this workforce segment and the business. Some mobility functions are also beginning to consider how mobility policies and operations may apply to this wider group.

To really gear for FoW, global mobility also needs to continue to focus on a human-centric<sup>(5)</sup> approach, with a push towards creating positive employee experiences. Central to this is providing a personalised experience for the workforce using human-centred design and the recognition that employee experience encompasses all business interactions. In our view, organisations who wish to address and improve employee experience successfully should design by looking through four experiential spheres: (i) Personal – the focus on opportunities to deliver personal connections and create a high-level of connected-ness between the workforce and the organisation, (ii) Digital – using technology that enables individuals to work and learn with the aim of increasing productivity and fostering collaboration and creativity, (iii) Physical – creating an environment that enables individuals to collaborate with others physically and virtually, increasing their sense of purpose, and (iv) Organisational – driving a positive and engaging work environment throughout their ecosystem in which individuals can thrive.

Enhancing the employee experience remains critical to success in this area, being voted the top strategic priority by mobility professionals<sup>(6)</sup>, with over 80% of executives rating employee experience as 'important' or 'very important'.

### The Paradox Of The Workplace

The advent of digital communication and collaboration platforms, immersive digital experiences, and societal and marketplace changes, have enabled the opportunity for more distributed teams to flourish. Organisations are now able to orchestrate a range of options as they reimagine workplaces, from the more traditional co-located workplaces to those that are completely distributed and dependent on virtual interactions. This implies a need

for more explicit attention to creating connections and community, as workplaces become more virtual and increasingly resourced by contingent workers.<sup>(7)</sup>

Global mobility today encompasses an increasing multitude of locations, with numerous talent traffic lanes. This, in turn, has prompted an increase in assignment diversity, including an uptick in shorter-term assignments, project work placements, inter-country commuters and business travel. As teams become more distributed, global mobility can play a critical

Fig 3

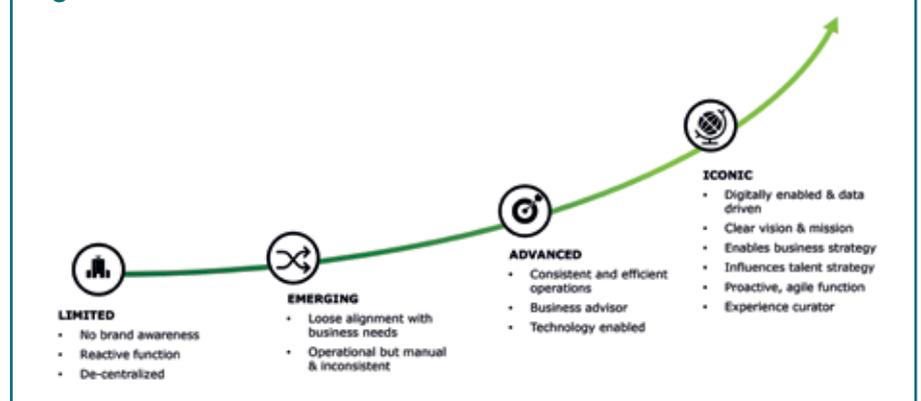
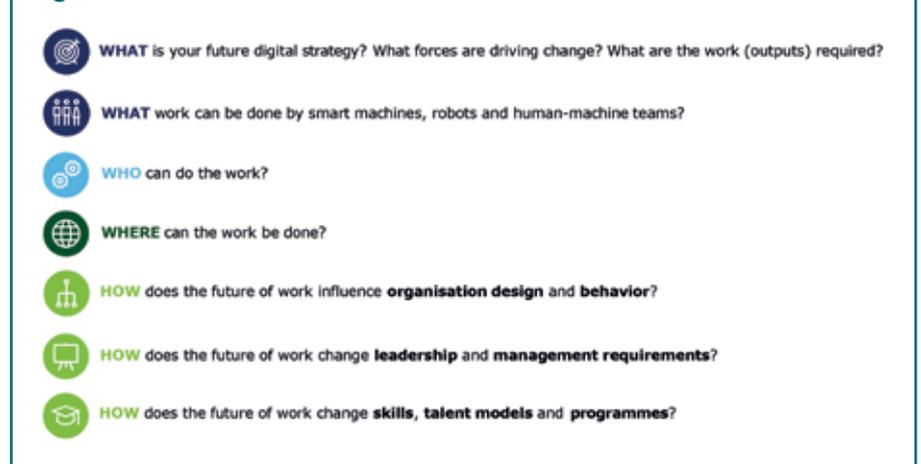


Fig 4



role in supporting organisational strategy on how to foster cultural connectivity, whilst also navigating the complexity of global compliance requirements resulting from this diversity of move types and new locations.

### What Next?

The role of global mobility is evolving from an operational service, with somewhat limited advisory opportunity, to a truly integrated strategic partner delivering business-aligned, data-driven, insight.

Global mobility functions are undergoing a rapid and profound change and need to adopt an agile mind-set for continuous experimentation and innovation. Technology typically plays a critical role in this shift, supporting the evolutionary journey – from the existing, often operational, state towards the nirvana of an iconic digitally-enabled function (Figure 3).

Staying close to business strategy and asking key questions will enable global mobility to ascertain what the FoW means within their organisation, and allow them to determine the specific actions required to support this ambition, strategically and operationally (Figure 4).

The Future of Work will ultimately have a significant impact on mobility. Greater flexibility and agility will be required, and digital platforms will be prerequisite as the importance and use of robotics, AI and immersive virtual realities become standard.

We will witness seismic changes over time, but this change will evolve organically around us step-by-step. The landscape in one sense will become ever more complex, but also ever more fluid and interesting. It provides a unique opportunity for global mobility leaders to truly lead from the front, using innovative digital, personalised technologies to support their employees, promoting engagement, enhanced collaboration and communication, and encouraging and monitoring employee wellbeing.

The Future of Work is now. Embrace it!

### References:

- (1) *Deloitte Global Mobility Survey, June 2019*
- (2) *Deloitte Insights, What is the future of work? Redefining work, workforce, and workplaces*
- (3) *Deloitte Human Capital Survey, 2019*
- (4) *Deloitte Insights, What is the future of work? Redefining work, workforce, and workplaces*
- (5) *Deloitte Back to the Future, Global Mobility trends, January 2019*
- (6) *Deloitte Global Mobility Survey, June 2019*
- (7) *Deloitte Insights, What is the future of work? Redefining work, workforce, and workplaces.*

We will witness seismic changes over time, but this change will evolve organically around us step-by-step. The landscape in one sense will become ever more complex, but also ever more fluid and interesting. It provides a unique opportunity for global mobility leaders to truly lead from the front, using innovative digital, personalised technologies to support their employees, promoting engagement, enhanced collaboration and communication, and encouraging and monitoring employee wellbeing



#### RUMI DAS

Director, Global Workforce, Deloitte LLP  
2 New Street Square, London, EC4A 3BZ  
D: +44 20 7007 0433  
rudas@deloitte.co.uk  
[www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce](http://www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce)



#### DANNY TAGGART

Director, Global Workforce, Deloitte LLP  
2 New Street Square, London, EC4A 3BZ  
D: +44 (0)20 7007 1447  
dtaggart@deloitte.co.uk  
[www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce](http://www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce)



#### CHIARA PALMISANO

Analyst, Global Workforce, Deloitte LLP  
2 New Street Square, London, EC4A 3BZ  
D: +44 20 7303 8141  
cpalmisano@deloitte.co.uk  
[www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce](http://www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce)

### DELOITTE'S GLOBAL WORKFORCE PRACTICE

Deloitte's Global Workforce team partners with organisations to establish future-proof global workforce strategies, tailored to client specific business and talent objectives. We embrace design thinking and are data driven to help clients reimagine and transform their approach to talent mobility, focusing on areas including policy and process design, strategic and operational transformation, global talent strategies, digital innovation, planning and deployment, and workforce analytics. Find out more here [www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce](http://www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce)