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The Reinvention of Company Culture: Why It Should Be Your Top Priority This Year

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What do job seekers care about the most about these days? If you answered a bigger paycheck, you'd be wrong.

Good work-life balance is the highest priority for job hunters, outweighing even excellent compensation and benefits, a 2021 LinkedIn survey shows.

What matters to employees — and how employers are responding — is changing in a big way. In fact, company culture is having a watershed moment that's redefining the relationship between employers and employees. It's a topic LinkedIn explores in depth in its [Global Talent Trends 2022 report](#).

After enduring the trauma and disruption caused by the pandemic, employees have a whole new set of expectations. They're demanding more work-life balance, the freedom to work where and when they want, and the support and empathy of their employer — and they're ready to walk away from jobs that don't meet their needs.

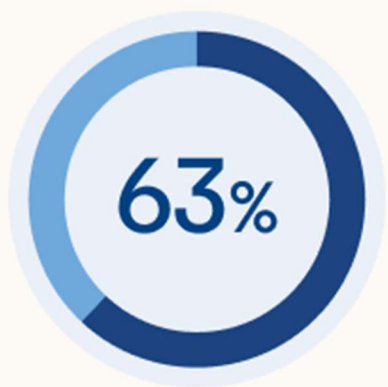
In response, more companies are offering flexible work arrangements, investing in employee well-being, and treating their workers with care and compassion. In short, they're cultivating human-centered cultures where work is built around their employees' lives and not the other way around.

"We are waking up to a collective 'aha moment,'" says [Claude Silver](#), the chief heart officer at [VaynerMedia](#). "We have been all about work-life balance. This is backward. It should be life-work balance."

Gone are the days when companies could rely on perks like endless snacks and ping-pong tables. For employers to attract and retain talent, they will need to put their employees first and ensure they feel cared for and supported.

Work-life balance trumps even bank balance for job seekers

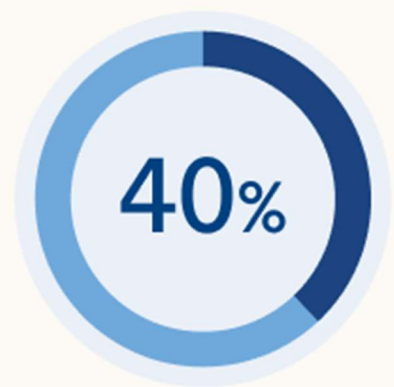
Percentage of professionals selecting these as top priorities when picking a new job:



Work-life
balance



Compensation
and benefits



Colleagues
and culture

Source: Global Talent Trends 2022

While the pandemic is playing a big part in the reinvention of company culture, the rise of millennials and Gen Z is also reshaping the workplace. Likewise, with record numbers of employees leaving their jobs in [the Great Reshuffle](#), employers are trying to better align their cultures to what employees want today.

But building a truly human-centered company culture isn't easy. It requires adopting a new mindset where workers are judged based on their output and not on how many hours in a day they work. Company leaders must become role models by working remotely, setting their own work-life boundaries, and practicing self-care.

For many organizations, this will mean shedding policies and behaviors that have been engrained for decades. The payoff: a happier workforce and a competitive edge in the battle for talent.

Read on to learn how flexibility, well-being, and the Great Reshuffle are making a major impact on company culture.

Flexibility: Rethinking when and where we work is building more equitable cultures

The old way of working where employees show up in an office and work from 9 to 5 is history. After nearly two years of remote and hybrid work, employees want to [maintain their freedom](#).

LinkedIn data shows that flexibility has become a key determinant of employee satisfaction. Workers are 2.6 times more likely to report being happy and 2.1 times more likely to recommend working at a company when they can choose their location and their work schedules.

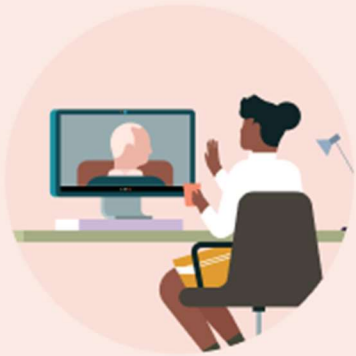
Employees' happy place is the one they choose

When employees are satisfied with their companies' time and location flexibility, they are:



2.6x

more likely to report being happy



2.1x

more likely to recommend working for the company

Source: Global Talent Trends 2022

It's no wonder a growing number of companies are offering time and location flexibility. Of more than 500 C-level executives in the United States and the United Kingdom surveyed by LinkedIn, 81% said they're [changing their workplace policies](#) to offer greater flexibility.

“Flexibility is the way forward,” says [Paddy Hull](#), VP of future of work at [Unilever](#).

But flex work, if not handled carefully, can also have a negative impact on company culture. With employees working in different locations, employers will have to work hard to nurture and sustain bonds.

Certain jobs can't be done remotely, meaning many workers will miss out on the options offered to their peers. Companies are starting to address this problem by providing frontline workers with job shares, compressed workweeks, and other scheduling choices aimed at leveling the playing field.

Employers will have to confront the potential inequities of flex work and find solutions that treat all workers fairly.

Well-being: To nurture healthy cultures, companies should provide care and compassion

While employers had been devoting more attention to worker wellness in recent years, the pandemic put well-being at the top of their agenda.

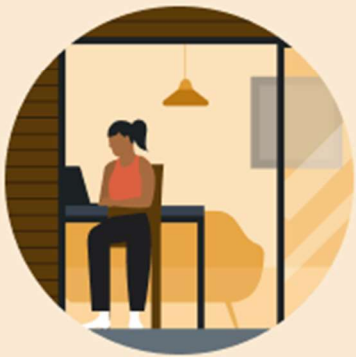
Forced lockdowns broke down the walls between work and home life, giving employers better visibility into their employees' lives. With [stress levels rising](#), employers are concerned about worker burnout.

"The fact is, we are in each other's homes now and there's no longer this separation between work and home life," says [Becky Garroch](#), the VP of people and places at [Digital River](#). "You get the whole human, and you need to think about how you work with, support, and engage the whole human."

At the same time, employees have come to expect more than health insurance and yoga classes. Millennial and Gen Z workers are demanding that their bosses focus on their mental health. Workers overall want to feel like their boss cares about them: LinkedIn data shows when employees feel cared about at work, they're 3.2 times more likely to be happy at their job and 3.7 times more likely to recommend their company as a place to work.

Employees want a care package

If employees feel cared for at work, they are:



3.2x

more likely to be
happy at work



3.7x

more likely to recommend
working for the company

Source: Global Talent Trends 2022

This increased focus on physical and emotional well-being has led to major changes in company culture. Employees are being treated to mental health therapists on demand. Employers are giving employees the gift of time in the form of no-meeting days and company-wide shutdowns. Eager to show they care, companies are going the extra mile and encouraging their managers to check in with team members.

Most important, forward-thinking organizations are moving toward a culture that no longer celebrates workaholics and the 1 a.m. hero. “We shouldn’t value and celebrate the people who stay up

all night and burn the midnight oil, because that doesn't really produce great results for the person or the organization," says [Jen Fisher](#), chief well-being officer at [Deloitte](#).

Gen Z wants a culture built on mental health and wellness



66%

of Gen Z say more investment in mental health will improve company culture

Source: Global Talent Trends 2022

The Great Reshuffle: An epic talent migration prompts companies to reconsider their values and employer branding

For companies that fail to reinvent their cultures, much is at stake.

A record number of workers are walking away from their jobs. In the United States, close to [39 million](#) resigned in the first ten months of 2021, the highest number since 2000, while more than 40% of workers globally are thinking about [quitting their jobs](#), according to a Microsoft survey.

Meanwhile, job hunters are pickier than ever: Job seekers viewed nearly twice as many job posts before applying in 2021 than they did in 2019, LinkedIn data shows.

Organizations that cling to their old ways, are “going to struggle to hold talent,” says [Lars Schmidt](#), the founder of human resources consulting firm [Amplify](#). “They’re going to struggle to recruit talent.”

Culture can be a selling point for picky job seekers

This shows in the way professionals browse LinkedIn:



2x

increase in job posts viewed per application (in 2021 vs. 2019)



+67%

engagement boost when company posts mention culture

Source: Global Talent Trends 2022

But while the Great Reshuffle presents risks, it also presents opportunities. Companies that build a human-centered company culture have a chance to lure talent in a way that may not have been possible in the past.

To gain a competitive edge, employers will have to refine their employer branding messages to ensure they match workers' current priorities. Job postings that advertise *challenging work*, *hypergrowth*, and *unicorn ambitions* are becoming less of a draw, while those that pitch *flexibility*, *inclusive benefits*, and *internal mobility rates* are becoming more attractive.

“If employees are saying, ‘I want balance, I want to be taken care of, I want to have a life,’ then your messaging has to change,” says employer brand and employee engagement consultant [Marta Riggins](#).

At the same time, employers must ensure that as they bring in new hires at scale, they protect the company culture they have worked so hard to build. One way to do that is to have a strong set of values and communicate them clearly during the onboarding process.

Final thoughts

As we spoke to talent professionals around the world to understand the current state of company culture, we kept hearing the phrase “once in a generation.” It’s clear from our research that company culture is being reinvented to a degree and at a pace not often seen in the past.

“This shift isn’t just about tools and technology,” Lars says. “It’s about mindset. It’s about desires. It’s about expectations from both employees and employers. It impacts so many different things and it’s happening in such an accelerated time frame.”

The changes are complex and can be tough to navigate. The [Global Talent Trends 2022 report](#) offers not only a deep dive into the shifting landscape, but ideas that can help employers build a healthy, human-centered company culture. As culture shifts dramatically, so does talent. The roles companies are looking to fill are quite different today. If you’re interested in seeing what kind of positions have the fastest-growing demand, check out our annual [Jobs on the Rise report](#).