LEAD

Talent executive insights and learnings Fall 2021

Work today is dominated by a phenomenon we call The Great Reshuffle. Many people are rigorously examining their relationship with work and changing jobs at an unprecedented pace. While employer demand is on the rise, talent has become more selective, holding out for opportunities that meet their needs and align to their values. Over the past few months, the LEAD community has discussed what employees want most, and how companies can win and retain top talent while planning for future growth.

This season, we also premiered Why of Work, a new series examining the root causes of The Great Reshuffle, and in October we hosted LEAD Forum: Succeeding Together, a week of networking, keynote sessions, and workshops that explored the future of work, DEI, candidate engagement, and more.

Read on for expert insights and the highlights of what today's talent leaders are keeping top of mind.



The economy and the Great Reshuffle

The U.S. labor market has bounced back at nearly five times faster than the Great Recession recovery, according to LinkedIn Economic Graph data. In 18 months, 70-80% of people ages 25-54 returned to work. Time to hire is shorter and job transitions in the U.S. are 50% faster and higher compared to a year ago. Skills are evolving, too —within a given occupation, required skills have changed by roughly 15% since 2015 and are becoming more digital for new and traditional roles alike, according to LinkedIn Chief Economist Karin Kimbrough.

Retaining top talent today

As companies scramble to keep up with high turnover during The Great Reshuffle, recalibrating the recruitment process can provide new opportunities to win and retain top talent. Instead of screening candidates out, think about screening them in. If a candidate isn't a fit for the role they've applied for, consider other open roles they might succeed in.

Don't forget about recruiting internally. Designing a system for employee growth, upskilling, and leveraging transferable skills can help fill positions more quickly, boost retention, and create an internally regenerative workforce.

Do work to ensure equity between external and internal candidate experiences.



"Internal associates cannot receive a third-class experience compared to external candidates, who are getting the red carpet. If the focus on external talent is too great, there is strong potential to lose great internal talent."



Binh Nguyen
VP Talent Acquisition at Walmart

What talent wants

As talent holds the upper hand in this competitive hiring market, companies are tailoring their offerings to what's top of mind for candidates. Here's an overview of what talent wants most in this new era of work.

Employee happiness + well-being

According to the latest Glint Employee Well-Being Report, employee happiness, engagement, and loyalty have decreased, while burnout has risen again, up 9%. Work-life balance is the top consideration for candidates, followed by great compensation and benefits. When surveyed, 77% of employees said they'd prioritize their well-being over their careers. By keeping the following "buckets" full, employees are less likely to experience burnout and consider searching for other roles.

Six elements of employee happiness

1. **Well-being** - Are they experiencing equity, safety, and security at work? Can they attend to outside responsibilities?
2. **Empowerment** - Do they have the necessary resources, information, and trust to succeed?
3. **Clarity** - Are priority lists clear and reasonable?
4. **Growth** - Do they have opportunities to learn and grow?
5. **Connection** - Do they feel belonging and meaningful connections to colleagues?
6. **Purpose** - Do they find their work meaningful?



> "As we continue on in the Great Reshuffle, employees are craving two foundational components of well-being — the space they need to live their lives and financial security."



Ia Ko
Principal People Science Consultant, LinkedIn

What talent wants (continued)

Returning to the office flexibly



Rather than defaulting to pre-pandemic work models, involve employees in designing new flex-work policies and let them guide what hours and days may work best for them and their teams. According to Glint data, 87% of workers want to work remotely several days a week. When such options align with employees' needs, people are more than 2.5x happier with their job and more than twice as likely to recommend their employer to others. Company leaders must model adoption of flex work opportunities in order for others to feel comfortable doing so.

When planning in-person gatherings, make them purposeful and offer virtual options to create equity for remote employees. Approach this as a try-and-revise process.

Shifting culture toward trust & self-care

The increase in flexibility brought on by remote work has led to people working more hours, not less. Employees are looking for companies to create a culture centered on trust and enabling self-care. Here are tips for tackling the unintentional "always-on" nature of remote work:

- **Establish clear rules of engagement.** Let employees know if they're expected to respond to messages on nights or weekends.
- **Create ways to reduce meetings.** Set rules for when a meeting is necessary and when decisions can be made through asynchronous tools, like shared cloud documents.
- **Encourage employees to set healthy boundaries** and create working hours.

Actionable tip:

Keep the 3Cs in mind when thinking through how hybrid employees might benefit most from in-office activities: community, collaboration, and coaching.

What talent wants (continued)

A new kind of L&D

Many companies are revamping and expanding their learning investments as workers increasingly view upskilling as a required benefit and skill-building as different from standard training. This shift from traditional L&D models means designing personalized content in a way that fits into the busy lives of eager learners who often work remotely.

Josh Bersin, founder of Bersin by Deloitte, shared tips for creating an L&D program using an on-demand approach, and bite-sized learning.

A semi-synchronous approach, designing content so employees can learn independently when it is convenient for them, is a promising option. Leadership can bring employees together later for a joint discussion or Q&As.

Microlearning, described as sharing small chunks of information, is favored and incredibly useful, especially in hybrid environments. Gone are the days of the 90-minute workshop.

Mentorship is still king. People learn well through mentoring, coaching, and developmental assignments. The number one skill people want to learn is how to be a mentor.

Reframing mobility

While progression has traditionally been synonymous with promotions and upward movement, employees have a growing appetite for exploring lateral shifts through different departments in line with their interests. Helen Tupper, co-founder and CEO of Amazing If, calls such journeys "squiggly careers." This can be project-based, allowing employees to spend part of their time in a different department for a specific task, or a more complete transition. Encouraging squiggly internal mobility and offering visibility into relevant opportunities can help companies retain top talent.

The key isn't mapping a path for someone to follow, but instead allowing a path that employees would like to craft. Dani Johnson at RedThread Research, outlines five mobility models:



Dani Johnson
Co-founder and Principal Analyst
RedThread Research

- **Ladder** - Promoting employees vertically
- **Lattice** - Moving both up and around
- **Agency** - Allowing movement based on knowledge, skills, and preferences
- **Outside In** - Creating mobility opportunities for gig workers so you can hire them again
- **Reset** - Reskilling employees and transferring them to other roles

Managing for new growth strategies

In a workplace that embraces non-traditional mobility models, managers must have the skills to lead coaching conversations with employees. Helping others believe they can grow, identify transferable skills, and discern which roles may best fit with their interests is a departure from standard management duties. To mend the gap, companies are considering creating two different management teams: developmental managers and day-to-day managers. Whatever you choose, managers will need extra support to succeed here.

One quick tip is to adjust company language around growth.

Instead of	Try
What's your next step?	What's your next move?
What promotions are you interested in?	What career progression do you have in mind?

"We is bigger than me"

Julie Foudy, Olympic gold medalist, World Cup Champion, and former captain of the US Women's National Soccer Team, experienced the ultimate crash course in transferable skills. Now retired from the sport, leads the Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Academy, an organization leveraging sports to foster leadership among girls and young women. Here are a few leadership insights from her fireside chat:

- ***We* is bigger than *me*** - Understand the strength of the collective drives success.
- **Inclusivity builds chemistry** - Connect with everyone on your team and express appreciation for their contributions. Big or small, everyone's work matters.
- **Find motivation in serving your team** - Create an environment where you're motivated to be the best version of yourself because of the people around you.
- **Celebrate the journey** - Make space to have fun in your work and with your team. "The process of the everyday is what we live in, and you have to love that," Foudy said.

> It was less about the outcome or wins, but more about celebrating each other and celebrating the journey. The process of the everyday is what we live in, and you have to love that.



Julie Foudy
Former US Women's National Team Captain

Trust and its impact on the workplace

Through Professor Frances Frei's research, she discovered that mutual trust is established when others have a clear sense of a person's authenticity, logic, and empathy, or the "three pillars of trust." If someone doubts one of your pillars, it may be more difficult for you to earn their trust. Rebuilding trust requires strengthening the area where you are weak. Think through which area you excel in (this is your anchor) and where you can improve (this is your "wobble").

Authenticity fosters inclusion

People from underrepresented groups are more likely to struggle with authenticity at work, which can have far-reaching effects. A perception of inauthenticity negatively impacts trust, which can limit promotions or other opportunities in the workplace. It's up to leaders to create an environment where everyone feels safe enough to bring their full selves to work, welcomed in their differences, and celebrated. Silence is a key indicator that someone doesn't feel safe or welcomed.



"Those who feel celebrated at work hold the responsibility to champion diversity. Every room you are in where you feel you belong, proactively work on behalf of those who don't feel safe and welcomed...By unleashing the minds of everyone, we contribute to innovation and excellence at a far greater level than any new technology."



Frances Frei
Professor of Technology and Operations at Harvard Business School

Actionable tip for boosting authenticity:

You're better at being you than you are at being anybody else. Commit to something that reminds you of your whole self, whether it's wearing something special or keeping a special object in your pocket.

Global digital recruitment with Dr. Parag Khanna

Workers across skill levels are more mobile than ever before. Advances like online education, car-sharing, co-working spaces, digital nomad visas, and more have accelerated geographic flexibility and are intensifying global competition for talent. Dr. Parag Khanna, managing partner at FutureMap and bestselling author, explained how companies can best prepare for this new digital labor market.

Gen Z & Gen Alpha: The future of the workforce

Sixty percent of the world's population is under 40. Gen Z is the largest generation in history, and declining birth rates indicate it will likely remain that way. Understanding Gen Z and the next generation, Gen Alpha, is imperative to winning talent long-term.

Today's youth are less likely to own homes or have kids, two trends that have historically prompted rootedness. Many young people are moving to cities or countries with lower costs of living and co-working or co-living spaces, transforming second-tier markets into prime locations. This offers an advantage to remote, cloud-based companies, which young talent will prioritize over jobs that require relocation.

60%

of the world's population is under 40 years old.

Six key filters for global digital recruitment planning

Now's the time to rebuild your recruitment strategy to be more global. Use these six filters to stay ahead of where talent may be moving to next:

Demographic imbalances between the number of older and younger people is widening at an unprecedented rate. Zero-in on where younger talent resides.

Political upheaval and conflict impact where people want to live.

Economic instability spurred by the pandemic drives changes.

Technological disruption like remote work, enables people to move to areas with lower costs of living.

Climate change has caused people to move to more resilient geographies.

Connectivity allows people to collaborate while being dispersed.

Prioritizing the Latino community

Research indicates that Latino employees experience more slights at work than their peers and are hindered by exclusionary standards of professionalism. Embracing Latino workers means tuning into their experience and demonstrating that diversity commitments have resulted in tangible change.

Refining high-growth operational planning for talent executives

In a remarkably busy hiring season, shifting from reacting to strategizing is key for TA team success and minimizing burnout and turnover. Create regular interdepartmental check-ins to establish clear, specific recruiting goals, which can ensure alignment across teams. This can also better enable you to regularly share your progress with executives and help shift teams from constant, frenzied hiring. Additionally, when recruiting is viewed as a revenue driver rather than a cost center, companies can prioritize long-term capacity planning and recruiting teams can be proactively staffed to weather business growth.



Leading with humility

As our relationship with work continues to evolve, listening and centering humility in our communication is crucial. Whether you're creating a new flex work plan, tackling burnout among your teams, strategizing for winning new talent, or building a more inclusive culture, accept that it's okay not to know everything at once. Admitting that you don't have all of the answers right now humanizes your organization, which builds trust with your employees and helps create a sense that we are all in this together.

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Leadership Foundations
Coaching and Developing Employees
Supporting the Whole Self at Work
Building Trust

