

HR Strategy & Planning

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In 2022, HR Leaders Should Think About The Collective Picture

From digitization to upskilling, personalization to engagement, trends that will shape the future of work

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The workplace looks very different going into 2022, than it did even a year ago. Employees are leaving their jobs in droves, attracting and retaining talent is more challenging than ever, people are (still) working from home, and technology is increasingly having a direct impact on the employee experience. Human Resources leaders and the workforces they represent have had to adapt, once again, to survive and thrive.

Perhaps, the most significant change has been a shift in

mindset. Instead of assigning titles, talent managers are looking at skills. Rather than setting hours, employers are establishing productivity goals, and instead of providing learning, human resources is focusing on engagement.

When it comes to training, reskilling and upskilling, existing team members will be at the forefront to fill open and niche positions in 2022, and the employee experience will be given greater attention through engagement and personalization.



The digitization of L&D programs will provide HR leaders more insight into the employee mindset, as digital immersion delivers valuable data and metrics.



Digitization and Data Will Deliver More Insight into All Aspects of HR

Technology is constantly changing how we learn. As instructor-led, in-person learning had to move online in 2020, HR leaders not only figured out how to embrace the delivery of learning in a digital format but also appreciated that it proved to be [effective and deliver cost savings](#). In 2022, company leadership will go further and explore innovative L&D technologies that provide training in scenario-based situations, and also deliver additional cost-savings by being scalable with no extra hardware costs.

From those solutions, utilizing the learner analytics from digitization will become more prevalent. Immersing people in adaptive learning scenarios provides a vast amount of data beyond surface completion rates and builds an in-depth persona of an employee. This is a relatively new concept for HR departments, but something that delivers a vital avenue of growth and enables HR leadership to become a stronger executive partner. When HR arrives at the table with data and a deeper level of insight, it makes people pay attention.

Personalization Will Heavily Influence the Employee Experience

Employee experiences have always been personal, but it has taken the pandemic to put a spotlight on it. In 2022, HR leadership will put employees at

the center of strategy rather than the company, as workers want more flexibility, less commuting, and more work/life balance. They want to feel valued. Thanks to technology and data adoption, employees' goals, such as financial ambitions and career aspirations, are easier to acquire and act on.

Personalizing learning paths vastly improve the employee experience. How many times has an employee been in a training seminar and thought, "Why am I here?" "I already know this." "Why am I wasting my time?" A movement is now underway towards making sure the right person is receiving the proper training at the right time. Moving into next year, more attention will be paid to ensure employees aren't instructed on skills they already know, allowing them to test out if they already possess the required learning.

Engagement and Immersion Will Help Prevent Training Burnout

The number one trend in 2020 and 2021 was the use of zoom and other digital conference platforms, but with that has come learning and meeting fatigue. Combatting learning fatigue is a challenge that HR leadership continues to address. Moving forward, programs that offer flexibility in training, so employees can take courses on their own terms when they don't feel rushed or overworked, will become prevalent.

Another method in preventing learning burnout and improving engagement is by utilizing time management and offering "bite-size" pieces of information instead of lengthy training classes. One such success story that used this methodology is a multinational pharmaceutical company, [which created an innovative, immersive L&D program](#). Recognizing that traditional training methodologies would be too time-consuming, they adopted a scenario-based simulation experience that allowed training to only take twelve minutes, in what would usually take three classroom hours. Not only did employees appreciate that their time was respected, but stakeholders found value in that people were able to go back to work quickly, increasing productivity.

Upskilling and Reskilling Will Close the Gap Left by the Great Resignation

The upskilling and reskilling movement has been a trend for some time, but in 2022 it is expected to become even more prevalent as HR leadership navigates the new normal and works to overcome the losses from the Great Resignation.

In earlier times of economic uncertainty, L&D budgets were traditionally slashed, but what is different now is that leadership realizes how learning directly equates to job retention, which is why [96% of business leaders](#) see upskilling of existing workers as a "top 10 priority."



Whether it is learning about new procedures, new responsibilities, or training for an entirely new position, leadership for the coming year should create career pathways and support employee advancement by investing time and resources to advance their skills.

One such area that is predicted to have substantial growth moving forward is the upskill of digital abilities such as data science, tech support, and digital literacy. As remote work is here to stay, many employees may need to learn a new digital skillset or master technology platforms; others want to open themselves up to additional opportunities within the company. Organizations like [PwC](#), [IBM](#) and [the Home Depot](#) are investing billions in

digital upskilling. This trend will continue to get more prominent in 2022, trickling down to smaller businesses.

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All of these trends work together to move HR leadership into the future. 2022 will be the year that learning becomes more focused and intentional through objective data to create more meaningful experiences. Personalized and immersive digital learning programs with corporate, situational scenarios, will, in turn, improve skills and retention, ensuring that the knowledge gained can and will be used in the employee's role, making it a win for HR and a win for the company.



As CEO, [Michael Veale](#) drives the vision and growth of ETU, the market-leading provider of immersive learning. His strong track record in growing technology-based businesses has prepared him to lead ETU to new levels of innovation. Michael enables ETU's mission of empowering organizations with simulation-based learning, maximizing their return on talent.



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