Call for Papers - Special Issue of the European Management Review

Re-imagining the Workplace of the Future

The system will open for submissions to the Special Issue on October 30th, 2022 and close on December 9th, 2022.

This special issue seeks to advance existing knowledge regarding the 'Workplace of the Future' and its impact on stakeholders across multiple levels of analysis. This special issue anticipates (1) examining the way in which new conceptualizations of the 'Workplace of the Future' will affect individuals, groups, organizations, and societies; (2) introduce a new direction of studies that look at the Workplace of the Future through various disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses; and 3) present relevant managerial and policy implications. In so doing and firmly in line with the aims and objectives of *European Management Review*, we are calling for submissions that draw from a wide range of contexts, themes, methodologies, and theoretical perspectives.

The 'Workplace of the Future' is a concept that has been discussed and envisaged for many years by both researchers and practitioners alike (e.g., Wah, 2000; Colbert, Yee and George, 2016). Much of this discourse was premised around issues including inter alia information and communication technology advancements, changing demographics, the need for greater agility and speed in decision-making. For example, digitalization has transformed the ways in which individuals interact in the workplace, their expectations from their employer and career trajectories, as well as when and where and how their work is conducted. In this context, the advancement of digitalization impacts organizations internally on many levels, as it requires the adaption and development of new knowledge and new ways of working (Bondarouk and Ruël, 2009). Digital technology is constantly revolutionizing the way organizations recruit, support, and manage people, and hence propelling the redesign and reconceptualization of the workplace of the future (Bondarouk and Ruël, 2009). While past global crises have impacted the world of work (Chatrakul Na Ayudhya, Prouska and Beauregard, 2019), the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic may bring more substantially reimagined workplaces. At a minimum, workplace flexibility will become even more of a "sine qua non" feature of contemporary workplaces (Bal and Izak, 2020) but to realise the value of this requires alignment with worker autonomy and an employment relationship based on trust (Kulik, 2022).

New challenges, such as the ability to effectively use technology, work-from-anywhere with children, care for loved ones, and a desire to safeguard wellbeing (Zacher & Rudolph, 2020), have brought to the fore the importance of re-designing the Workplace of the Future (Caligiuri, De Cieri, Minbaeva, Verbeke, & Zimmermann, 2020). What organizations are now experiencing is not just a slowdown but potentially a transformation in their overall management approach and structure, with a potentially long-term impact on their business strategy and priorities. Could such transformations see greater utilization of new organisational forms like – Holacracy – that entail high

levels of self-leadership, flat hierarchies and is purpose driven (Schell & Bischof, 2021)? While the new reality of work can not be predicted with much certainty, investing in conceptualizing the Workplace of the Future can help management seize the opportunities and address the current and forthcoming uncertainties and challenges.

A fundamental challenge, therefore, in considering the Workplace of the Future is that work may no longer be fully centered around a specific workplace thus affirming positive benefits of this form of work, such as empowerment of vulnerable social groups, activation of marginalized social groups, and environmental protection (Haddon and Brynin, 2005). However, it is also likely that through the work-from-anywhere approach, the individual could experience feelings of isolation both from the work environment socially, but also from any potential developmental and progression opportunities (Georgiadou and Antonacopoulou, 2021).

The 'Workplace of the Future' might mean that notions such as agility and resilience will gain more mainstream focus not only in managerial practices, but also social structures around which working routines are configured. We are therefore witnessing any place transforming into a workplace as the context where work is performed, and personal and professional identities are being reconstructed as roles.

An indicative but not exhaustive list of questions that we are interested in addressing through submissions for this special issue includes:

- How can the Workplace of the Future be conceptualized?
- What is the relationship to the Workplace of the Future as a construct and the wider social, cultural, and physical context of the team/organization or the location of employees?
- How can organizations and societies prepare employees for the Workplace of the Future? What is the role of ethics and the duty of care in this process?
- How does the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future vary across individuals? What new concepts, relationships or processes are important in understanding the cognitions, behaviors and/or outcomes associated with the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future by focal categories of managers (for example, immigrant managers, minority ethnic managers, transnational managers or women managers)?
- How does the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future vary across organizations? What new concepts, relationships or processes are important in understanding the cognitions, behaviors and/or outcomes associated with the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future by focal categories of organizations (for example startups, multinational companies and their operations in emerging economies, SMEs, family businesses)?
- How do cultures and institutions, such as governments, regulations, and industries, affect market and nonmarket approaches to the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future, and, in turn, how do international business activities affect cultural and institutional contexts? What institutional policies and practices impact, or are impacted by, the pursuit of shaping and designing the Workplace of the Future?
- What methodological tools can be used to better understand and design the Workplace of the Future?

- What can organizations do to help individuals at different career stages adjust to the Workplace of the Future?
- How does the Workplace of the Future influence existing theories of management?
- How does the Workplace of the Future impact the strategic role of human resource management? How do the human resource management systems of the Workplace of the Future look like? What new competences or reconfigurations of competencies are required for the Workplace of the Future?
- What are the implications of the Workplace of the Future for diversity and inclusion?
- What is the relationship between the Workplace of the Future and global employee mobility?
- Is there a 'dark side' of the Workplace of the Future and is there a risk that this will lead to negative employee outcomes such as stress, burnout and work-life imbalance?

This list is not meant as exhaustive but indicative of the types of questions that we see as relevant as we consider future workplaces. The key requirement is that the paper makes a new contribution to our understanding of the 'Workplace of the Future'. We especially encourage papers that include empirical investigations of these issues, but we will also consider strong theoretical or conceptual papers that stimulate the research agenda on the Workplace of the Future.

Therefore, in line with the broad mandate of *European Management Review* as a general management journal (Anderson, Haslberger and Altman, 2018), the special issue aims to embrace a broad and pluralist view of the 'Workplace of the Future'. We are especially interested in publishing a special issue that demonstrates plurality of perspective and paradigms (see Lee and Morley, 2021). We believe more significant knowledge gains may be realized that better address such pressing challenges like the 'Workplace of the Future' through plurality of theory, methodology and contexts. Conceptual, theory building, meta-analytical, and empirical papers are all welcome. Moreover, we are also open to critical papers which take a skeptical stance over the debate on the 'Workplace of the Future', and which emphasize continuity over change.

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