



WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE

REPORT

SHARP

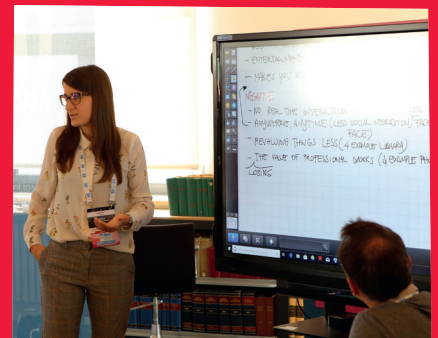
Be Original.

DISCOVER THE POWER OF PEOPLE

At Sharp we think that people are the true power of any business. And the more empowered your people are, the more successful your business can be. We believe that it is the needs of people that should define the shape and purpose of tomorrow's technology.

As a company with years of experience in developing workplace products and solutions, we know about technology, but to understand the needs of tomorrow's workforce, we needed to learn even more.

To do this, we didn't want to rely on previous research. We sat down with a group of young professionals and talked with them face-to-face about their future. We asked how they expect new technologies will change how they live and work, and what fears and opportunities these changes would create.



INTRODUCTION

The millennial generation, born between 1980 and 2000, are the workforce of the future and will shape the world of work for years to come. They already make up more than one third of the workforce, and by 2025 will account for close to 75 percent. Attracting the best of these millennial workers is critical to the future of business.

Their career aspirations, attitudes towards work, and knowledge of new technologies will define the culture of the future workplace.

This report has been built from four key pillars of research: formal research – papers, surveys and textual analysis concerning the workplace of the future, big data analysis, a focus group with Sharp dealers and a workshop with millennials.



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PEOPLE

The young adults who took part in our workshop are part of the first generation to grow up as part of a new Digital Revolution. These tech-savvy “digital natives” have grown up with increasing internet access and a proliferation of smartphones.

And it is this technology, and the internet in particular, that appears to have transformed the way they approach education, work, and social, cultural and political engagement.



“WILL ROBOTS TAKE OUR JOBS?”

To be ready for the future we need to understand the mindset, fears and opportunities that tomorrow’s workforce believe this new technology will create.

The Millennials we spoke to had fears about the impact of technology on their lives in a changing world. They told us that they were worried about being overwhelmed by technology and vast amounts of information. Their personal information was an issue too, with personal data safety being a genuine concern.

Young workers also worry about their work/life balance, with technology creating a constant connection to work. They also felt that the rise of remote working could lead to a lack of human contact and superficial relationships.

Whilst tomorrow’s workforce clearly has a close connection to technology, they are worried it might replace them over time.

PEOPLE

They see less stability in the workplace knowing that a machine may replace them over time. They believe that the more technology a company introduces, the more dependant they become on it, making people less important.

But it's not all doom and gloom. Millennials are keen to use new technology to benefit them. They're eager to learn, and to use new technology for development, learning and work. In fact, having the opportunity to develop their skills and the concept of 'life long' learning are some of the main factors that this generation consider when they examine a new job proposal.

Fortunately, when it comes to technological development our participants told us that they see more opportunities than threats. New technologies mean new jobs. It also means new relationships, with new ways to communicate and stay in touch. Millennials are incredibly positive about the flexibility that technology offers. The freedom of movement it allows and collaborative environments it creates means they can work in jobs with more of a community feel.

Though technology is increasingly impacting on the way we work today, future generations are looking for guidance that's far broader than how to use that technology. Perhaps sensing that automation can free them from repetitive and mundane tasks to focus on assignments that require a more personal touch, young professionals are especially seeking help in building confidence, interpersonal skills and ethical attitudes (Deloitte, 2018).

The young adults we spoke to felt they needed to develop creative thinking, leadership, empathy and humanity, and the ability to work more collaboratively. It is their view that tomorrow's workers should be eager to learn, be more flexible and should be able to work in a multigenerational environment.



“TECHNOLOGY TAKES THE DIRTY WORK”

When talking about skills necessary for a future worker, participants of the Workshop emphasised the importance of a mentoring community. Young professionals are especially seeking help in building confidence, interpersonal skills and ethical attitudes.

Personal responsibility coupled with the shared accountability of communities will help people to embrace changes equitably and sustainably. But even with the best technologies, available for free, it can be very hard to do this alone. People need to harness the power of communities and data science. Peer-to-peer skill sharing can help people discover themselves, and then build careers that have purpose and meaning.

FLUID ENVIRONMENTS

PLACES

The impact of technology on the future of work doesn't just affect the people at work, it affects where they work too. Millennials see two types of workplace in the future: virtual and physical. The virtual space is all about remote working. With the development of tools that allow for virtual face-to-face meetings, like Windows collaboration display from Sharp, there's no need to have to be in the office every day.

Cloud based technologies also mean you can share documents with anyone, anywhere in the world instantly. The next generation are extremely comfortable using this remote technology and working in the virtual office.

Their idea of the physical space is more traditional, but still not conventional.



**“CREATING COMMUNITY
IN THE WORKPLACE IS
IMPORTANT”**

They told us that physical workspaces should include a meeting point or a community space for social interaction and developing ideas.

It could involve a mix of open, semi-private and private spaces in which to enable employees to meet where they are in the moment, not forcing workers to accomplish their tasks in a specific non-ideal space.

In this scenario, workers still retain their own private desk but also have the option to move freely between their personal workspace, a private conference room or more casual spaces as needed.

Technology has transformed the business world by unleashing unprecedented levels of productivity and enabling communication across the globe.

PLACES

But for many, technology has also weakened those interpersonal connections which can only really be created through face-to-face interaction.

This has led to increased levels of workplace isolation. The workforce of the future may well be comfortable using email, text, social media and instant messaging to communicate but they told us they feel the lack of face-to-face communication.

Our participants also told us they felt it was important for businesses to create shared spaces such as office cafes/snack bars, lounges and recreational rooms.

When people are given a chance to talk freely in a more casual setting they become more likely to bond, despite the barriers of age, hierarchal level and gender.

Millennials expect the workplace to remind them of home, so it should be an informal and comfortable place.

They also want to feel more connection with nature, either by working in places that bring nature into the office with plants or by working more outside.

Young professionals believe companies require an innovative workplace environment to produce innovative work. They see technology as key to creating a better working environment.

This generation says that technology helps them to learn more effectively, simplifies the learning process, and assists creativity. Technology, they feel, helps them to share and improve their knowledge, and makes them feel connected to people and the wider world. They use technology for fast access to information, entertainment, communication, learning and improving their skills.



CONTINUOUS GROWTH

PROGRESS

For Millennials, finding the right place to work is only part of their ambition. Not only are they looking for the right environment, but they are also looking for somewhere to develop their skills.

But, as technology changes the way people work, it also changes the skill set people need in the workplace.

A study by the McKinsey Global Institute predicted that, by 2025, automation could jeopardise between 40m and 75m jobs worldwide. Some jobs will disappear and others will grow. And the technology will create new jobs that don't even exist today.

According to the survey carried out by the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on the Future of Software and Society, negotiation and flexibility were high on the list of skills for 2018. As we move towards the future those skills will begin to drop in importance as machines, using masses of data, begin to make our decisions for us. Similarly, active listening, will disappear completely from the top 10. Whereas active learning is set to become a skill that everyone will need in the future.

Creativity will become one of the top three skills workers will need to develop. With the vast amount of new products, new technologies and new ways of working in the future, workers will need to become more creative in order to benefit from the changes. Robots may help people get to where they want to be faster, but they can't be as creative as humans (yet). Unfortunately, most schools and colleges of today do their best to standardise creativity. So how is the workforce of the future supposed to follow their passion without any institutional or cultural encouragement, career support or mentoring?

Technology is already impacting on the way we work. Artificial intelligence, 3D printing and advanced materials are still in their early stages of use, but the pace of change will be fast. Business leaders, educators and governments all need to be proactive in up-skilling and retraining people so everyone can benefit from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Davos, 2018).



**“EVERYONE HAS A VOICE
WITH TECHNOLOGIES.”**

CONTINUED: CONTINUOUS GROWTH

PROGRESS

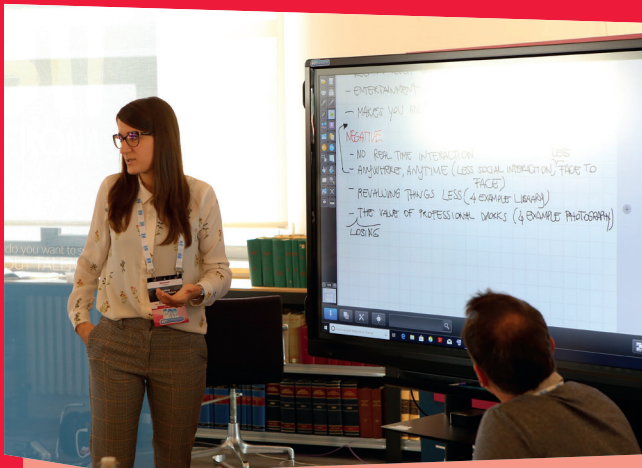
Our participants told us that technology helps them to learn more effectively. It simplifies the learning process, and assists creativity. They feel that technology helps them to share and improve their knowledge, and makes them feel more connected to people and the wider world. Millennials use technology for fast access to information, entertainment, communication, learning and improving their skills. They also believe that technology has a positive impact on society and could be a tool for promoting diversity and inclusion.

They say that “With technologies everyone has a voice”. At the same time, they also see there could be a downside of a lack of face-to-face communication and personal interaction.

During the workshop it became clear that this generation craves the chance to contribute creatively to the workforce and have their ideas heard. They feel this will help them grow professionally in any given post. And, since personal development is important for these workers, they’ll be more likely to stick around longer.

Millennials care about the diversity in the workplace: the forms of differences in age, culture, gender, language and physical health. Workplace should allow individuals who may have special needs to modify their workspace as necessary with minimal administrative hassle and maximum discretion, thus advancing inclusiveness organically.

There is also a need for workplaces to prepare for a cross-generational environment. As younger members of the workforce come on-board and the older generation continues to work past their retirement age, there will be a need for these differing generations to collaborate. These shifting demographics mean diverse teams are essential to staying afloat, and that managers and leaders will need to be inclusive and sensitive to everyone.



ALIGNED VALUES

PURPOSE

The group we spoke to told us that they want closer relationships with their managers so they feel comfortable with expressing opinions and highlighting issues. They told us they don't see their job as just a job, but rather as an important part of their lives. And because of that they believe that finding employers that reflect their values and personal identities is one of their top priorities.

Millennials want to work with organisations that reflect what they believe and who share their passion. Tomorrow's workforce wants to make more of a difference to society. They want to make bigger contributions, to do their best work, and to be a part of something noble and purposeful.

Participants of the Workshop believe that their employers are able to help employees become more attuned to ethics, be more creative, develop talent more effectively and nurture emotional intelligence. Perhaps the most important characteristic to understand is that tomorrow's workforce wants to work for companies that reflect their personal values.

More than 50% of the people we spoke to said that finding an employer who matched their values was a higher priority than financial reward, while 90% said they wanted to do something positive with their skills. 75% of the group felt that businesses are focused on their own agendas rather than improving society. Worse still, in a study by Deloitte in 2018, they found that only 29% believed that their current firms make full use of their skills.



“WORK IS NOT JUST ABOUT MONEY, IT’S ABOUT PASSION”

Millennials don't just want to work for money, they want jobs with purpose and meaning.

While a reasonable financial package is important to attract and retain this generation, it doesn't appear to be the motivating force it was for previous generations. They want to take pride and joy in their work and the organisation they work for, with motivation that comes from within and is more likely to lead to employee engagement.

CONTINUED: ALIGNED VALUES

PURPOSE

This generation cares about causes larger than just themselves. Static job satisfaction will not be enough for them, they want to grow and develop. They expect companies to invest in their continuing job growth and personal development well beyond just sending them to seminars and conferences.

They want to be challenged with new opportunities, they expect to be involved early on in complex projects and they want to be given a chance to make more of a contribution.

Because mentoring and equality are important to them, Millennials want coaches rather than bosses. They want to work for a manager who will be their coach, guide, and mentor. They want a manager who will care about them, both as a person and an employee.

This generation has the lowest corporate loyalty currently in the workforce, which makes them the most likely to switch jobs. So the more traditional view of a “command-and-control” style boss is clearly at odds with their view of what they expect from their manager. The boss for the workforce of the future is someone they can talk to, ask questions of, seek advice from, and who will give counsel. They want to feel free to ask questions, accept feedback, report mistakes, disagree, or propose new ideas and be heard – ‘bottom up’ approach is important.



NEXT STEPS

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the feedback given to us by the participants of the workshop, there's a great deal that businesses and organisations can begin to do in order to evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of tomorrow's workforce.

NEXT GEN MINDSETS

PEOPLE

It's clear that, in order to attract tomorrow's work force, organisations need to put the needs of people before the needs of business. Business need to work on creating more collaborative environments. The workplace should have a greater community feel where people can come together and share ideas.

The attitude of 'this is the way we've always done it' is obsolete. Businesses need to offer far more flexibility in the way their day to day processes – and invest in technology that makes this easier to achieve. Employers also need to focus on the personal development of their staff. The more they learn and grow, the more likely they are to stay loyal.

FLUID ENVIRONMENTS

PLACES

Millennials blur the line between work and home life, so organisations need to look at creating an environment that's more aligned to their expectations of work/life balance.

By creating dynamic virtual workplaces, employers can give the next generation of workers the freedom to work more efficiently. Organisations need to give their future workforce more ways of communicating, as well as better tools and the technology to collaborate remotely.

The physical environment needs to change too. This younger generation thrive in shared spaces that allow them to socialise and have fun, as well as work. Something as simple as adding a few plants to the office can help employees feel more connected to nature and can have a positive impact.

CONTINUOUS GROWTH

PROGRESS

Millennials are looking for a workplace environment where they can develop their skills. During the workshop it became clear that this generation craves the chance to contribute creatively to the workforce and have their ideas heard. With the vast amount of new products, new technologies and new ways of working in the future, workers will need to become more creative in order to benefit from the changes. Allowing them to be more creative and making them feel like their views and opinions are important is a good way to increase loyalty in the workforce of tomorrow.

It also became clear that they care about the diversity in the workplace. Organisations with a workforce comprised of individuals of different ages, cultures and genders have a great appeal to them. Workplaces should allow individuals who may have special needs to modify their workspace as necessary with minimal administrative hassle and maximum discretion, thus advancing inclusiveness organically.



ALIGNED VALUES

PURPOSE

Millennials care about causes larger than just themselves. They want to work with companies that reflect their personal values and who share their passion. Having a strong ethical or responsible company ethos can be a stronger attraction to the workforce of the future than the offer of a fat pay check.

Mentoring and equality are extremely important to them too. Businesses need to offer them coaches rather than bosses. They want to work for a manager who will be their coach, guide, and mentor. They want a manager who will care about them, both as a person and an employee. The boss for this generation is someone they can talk to, ask questions of, seek advice from, and who will give counsel. They want to feel free to ask questions, accept feedback, report mistakes, disagree, or propose new ideas.



If you have any questions, or would like to find out how Sharp can help your business be a successful workplace of the future, don't hesitate to call a member of our team on XXXXXXX

Find out more

Contact us **@Sharp_Europe** on 

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