

# The Future of Work

## A Conversation with Leading Human Resources Executives



**An Interview with Peter M. Fasolo, Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, Johnson & Johnson**

**What are your views on the future of work, and what will the office of the future look like?**

While no one can predict the future with absolute certainty, what is clear is that the world of work is changing just as fast as the world itself. At Johnson & Johnson, we have a clear mission to deliver the best of who we are to those we serve, and where, when and how we work is part of that.

With 156,000 employees in offices, the field, labs, and manufacturing plants around the world, our employees are extremely diverse in what energizes them, how they prefer to learn and get things done, and the level of flexibility that they want in their work and lives. Three years after transitioning more than two-thirds of our workforce to a hybrid work structure, we are taking what we've learned and re-imagining the workplace of the future by collaborating directly with our people leaders to define the strategies that will work best for their sites and teams.

While Johnson & Johnson has long championed policies that provide flexibility for our employees to balance personal and professional responsibilities, the pandemic pushed our thinking even further to meet the evolving needs of our employees. In 2021, we introduced our global hybrid working model, J&J Flex, which builds on an existing portfolio of Flexible Work Arrangements (remote work, compressed work week, job share, flex schedule changing when the workday begins or ends) to help meet the broad needs of our employees.

For those whose jobs require them to be on-site due to the nature of their role, we worked with site leaders to establish a framework of flexibility offerings that combines locally relevant practices with globally consistent actions. For example, our Supply Chain team was able to remotely onboard more than 30,000 on-site employees, who also remotely completed a portion of their total required training hours per year.

We recognize that the workplace of the future is only as good as the interactions we create and the systems and tools we use to enable it. At Johnson & Johnson, we're investing in more community spaces to promote collaboration among colleagues, as well as providing more Teams rooms with upgraded technology, including for hybrid meetings. We also continue to introduce amenities that ensure the best possible workplace experience for our teams, including various food-service options and fitness- and well-being-related offerings, like sports facilities and walking trails.

In addition to these updates, and to underscore our commitment to employee learning and development, we also recently transformed one of our office spaces in Orlando into a physical center of excellence for immersive learning, where teams can gather in person for instructor-led courses in well-being and other skill areas, such as DEI and digital.

**How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

Within any company, products and strategies can be replicated, but people and culture are unique. Culture is built over time, driven by the company's values, and cemented in how people work together and make decisions. Culture influences how employees feel when they "come to work" – wherever that may be – and we know that employees want to feel a sense of belonging and purpose.

At Johnson & Johnson, our culture of belonging is about uniting different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences in an environment where everyone feels valued and is working together toward a shared purpose. In our case, that is to deliver on Our Credo commitments to those we serve. In many ways, we saw the best of our culture expressed as we navigated social and environmental crises and business transformations over the last several years. This is because, with every challenging decision or situation faced, we returned to Our Credo to guide our path forward.

We have a relationship-based culture that has always valued the energy, inspiration, mentoring, and human connection that comes from being together in person. Over the last three years, we have learned how to build relationships, express our culture and deliver our work through new approaches that capture this spirit, even in a hybrid work structure.

We know that with all that has changed, we cannot go back to the way things were before, so we have re-imagined our working model in a way that empowers our employees to bring their best selves to their roles in and outside the workplace.

As we collectively face new talent and economic headwinds, companies need to consider what is right for them and their mission to ensure the fabric of their environment stays strong. Leaders need to set the tone, remind employees of their shared purpose, and embody the culture they want to see reflected back at them, whether they have returned to the office entirely or are operating in a hybrid or fully remote environment. For us, that means putting well-being first and encouraging our teams to be as present outside of work hours as they are during them.

**As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

Employee engagement is built through continuous opportunities that allow employees to be present and feel connected, whether those opportunities take place in person or virtually. In any work structure, the road map to building and maintaining employee engagement isn't linear.

I believe the best way to fully experience the benefits of flexibility is by embracing both sides of it: remote work and in-person interactions. Our global working model, J&J Flex, gives office-based employees the option to work at least three days on-site and up to two days remote per week.

Last year, we saw record-high engagement in our annual employee survey with participation from more than 92 percent of our employees. Additionally, our Global Activity Challenge engaged more than 33,000 participants across 73 countries, recording more than 7 billion steps throughout the 30-day challenge.

Both of these achievements are testaments to how providing ongoing opportunities for employees to feel connected to one another and to our company in a way that feels authentic to our culture can help maintain, or in some cases, increase levels of employee engagement. And, even when engagement results are high, it is important to remember that we are re-recruiting our talent every single day.

As we look toward the future, it is also important to listen to the feedback, experiences and evolving needs and preferences of employees to ensure we deliver the optimal systems and tools needed to stay engaged in a hybrid working environment. •



**An Interview with April Hicks, Head of Global Talent Acquisition and People Strategy and Enablement, Bank of America**

**What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

It's a really exciting time to reflect on the future of work. In many ways, the role of HR shifted during the pandemic when taking care of people and taking care of our business became so intertwined. Now, as we look forward, it's critical for employers to demonstrate how they invest in talent. At the end of the day, the role of HR is to bring in and support talent for the organization – it's about developing solutions that meet the business need. The office of the future has to support a focus on collaboration and building relationships because that's how we drive progress and innovation.

**How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

We focus on creating a “Bank of America community” where our teammates find value in coming together, regardless of location or role. We have opportunities to do this through our local market leaders who connect with employees on key priorities and activities, supporting engagement through local bank connections. Through our employee networks and Bank of America Community Volunteers, we offer teammates the opportunity to connect with others who share their passions to expand their network and perspectives.

For us, we have a range of in-office expectations based on requirements of the role. We're also a large, geographically dispersed company, so even folks in the office may not work in the same location as their team. Maintaining culture and a collaborative environment for us is about finding connectivity regardless of physical location.

**As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

When employees are in the office, there's an opportunity for informal networking, mentoring, and collaboration. It may not be one size fits all, but there's no substitute for those chats after a meeting ends that sometimes lead to great next steps and an overall sense of how we can drive progress together. From our experience, we've seen great energy as employees have returned to the office and what this means for their work relationships, their career development and moving projects forward. •



**An Interview with Kate Clifford, Chief Human Resources Officer, Accenture North America**

**What are your views on the future of work, and what will the office of the future look like?**

There is truly no one-size-fits-all or even a one-size-fits-many definition of the future of work anymore. At Accenture, we are deliberate in choosing to expand our focus beyond spaces and places – where people will work and how many days they will be onsite – because we believe the opportunity lies in reimagined experiences.

At Accenture, we're omni-connected, meaning we use technology and human ingenuity to make sure we are seen, can fully contribute and have equal quality of experience. This comes from the digital tools we use, our physical locations, our behaviors and the culture we create. Also, omni-connected isn't about always being “on” – quite the opposite. With omni-connection, human relationships are strong and people can more easily step away from work to disconnect in a good way – to recharge and remain creative and productive.

**How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

Creating human connections is key. One might think a quick fix is simply to bring everyone back to work onsite and human connection will happen. But it's not that simple. Our Accenture research found that while our devices might always be on, only 1 in 6 people feel highly connected – in a human sense – at work. Not just connected to the organization, but to the people they work for and with. Why? They lacked flexibility and the tools to be most productive and connected, and they experienced a greater sense of inequity.

Space and place are not what create culture. It's people and leadership and focusing on how people are better off as a result of choosing to work at that organization. It's about being deliberate about how you lead.

**As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

When it comes to in-person connections, it is no longer about who comes into the office, but why our people come into the office – and how we earn their commute. For example, it's a team collaborating on how to deliver value for our clients or a client innovation workshop, likely colleagues gathering for a celebration that matters. We're also creating what we call stacked experiences, for example – First Fridays in our US South region. It's the first Friday of the month when we host a variety of events people can participate in – like a community service project, hearing a guest speaker, joining an ERG event – and plan in-person team time to coincide if that makes sense for them. Being in the office just to be in the office holds no meaning at Accenture. It's about being there for a purpose. •



**An Interview with Kim Fleming, Executive Vice President, Head of Human Capital Strategy and Insights, Truist**

**What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

There are so many interesting trends that will shape the future of work. It's easy to first think about flexibility – when and where people work – and the last few years have proven many jobs can be done from anywhere. But flexibility means so much more than that – it's also how work gets done, with whom, at what time – and I believe flexibility will continue to evolve not only for corporate workers, but for frontline workers as well.

At the same time, I also think we'll continue to experience a healthy balance of in-person collaboration. Research shows a subset of workers still crave the social interactions they lost during the pandemic – particularly Gen Z. Having in-person experiences can help augment coaching conversations, mentoring, and creativity, even though they can be accomplished remotely. At Truist, we embrace interactions like these are enhanced when we're together, so we're intentional about how and when we spend our time in the office. But we also know that many of our teammates enjoy – and still expect – flexibility, so we offer hybrid and remote work as well.

Moving forward, I also think we'll see a rise in new workstyle models due to changing employee expectations – with more gig work and project-based assignments. Companies will need to reskill and upskill their workforce due to changing demographics and a talent shortage. We'll need to redesign roles around AI to keep up with changing technology. We'll see traditional requirements like degrees less important than true job experience and skills, with a heightened focus on skills-based hiring. We'll need to embrace collaborative technology tools to enhance the hybrid experience. And of course, office space will need to be reimagined – with the need for more social spaces and less traditional offices as flexible expectations continue.

**How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

At Truist, we completed a merger and successfully integrated two cultures virtually during the pandemic. That was quite a feat, but it was possible through a deliberate focus on creating and delivering a strong teammate value proposition. I believe culture is built and maintained by how you treat your teammates – what you offer them, the experiences you provide, and how they feel as a result.

For example, everything we say and do at Truist is guided by our purpose – to inspire



and build better lives and communities. All 50,000+ of our teammates come together to bring that purpose to life through an inclusive, diverse culture and an environment that's radically caring. We lead with empathy so that everyone is empowered to push beyond the expected. We listen to all of our teammates, because we believe breakthrough ideas can come from anywhere. We challenge and support each other, so we're driven to explore ideas and learn from failures. We also believe winning is bigger than an individual's success – it's how we work together to make an impact, no matter our location.

**As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

I think there are times that it is important to be physically together to build engagement and connection – particularly when establishing coaching relationships, or introducing a new employee to the team, or forming new partnerships. It helps to be in-person to get to know one another and experience those social cues you don't always catch on screen. But I don't believe it's always necessary – you also can have a high-performing and engaged team virtually.

My team currently is geographically dispersed, and we make it a point to come together once a week – some of us are in-person while others join remotely. We also make it a practice to all get together in-person a few times a year for team building, and that's always fun. We IM throughout the day, we know about each other's families, and we celebrate each other's milestones. We care about each other as people because we've taken the time to really get to know one another. And that is what truly sparks engagement – by simply showing you care. •



**An Interview with Maxine Carrington, Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer, Northwell Health**

**What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

Deloitte and others have written extensively on this and our workforce planning team at Northwell is researching and readying recommendations for our transition over time. When we contemplate the future of work, there are three main areas of focus we think about: the work, the workforce, and the workplace.

Work – In the realm of work, we know that we'll be increasingly co-creating and working alongside technology in greater ways, e.g., automation, robots, and artificial intelligence. Human-machine collaboration exists today at Northwell in our operating rooms, pharmacies, and even in areas like human resources. Members of our HR team are experimenting

with ChatGPT to generate low-risk within-team communications and we expect this practice to increase. Almost all industries will witness the phasing out of some existing roles which isn't a new phenomenon – remember token booth clerks – and the adjacent evolution and creation of roles, integrated with digital.

Workforce – We're anticipating that the future workforce will be generally and comfortably data-literate and likely less tied to a fixed job description and more flexible in learning and trying out new skills. Employees will be more diverse – in every way. For example, many employees are remaining in the workforce longer and working beyond what traditionally has been considered retirement-age for financial and other reasons. Programs that enable continued access to their subject matter expertise and institutional knowledge and support their well-being and employment needs through various stages of life will be key. The gig economy is here to stay and employers would be wise to incorporate gig workers to help fill staffing gaps. We've experienced success at Northwell with FlexStaff, a staffing agency we created a few years ago which supports internal staffing needs and our revenue diversification strategy through its commercial arm.

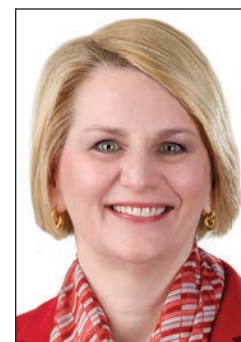
Workplace – Digitally enabled, sustainable, healthier, and more “work from anywhere.” In healthcare, that certainly means work from home, but it also means increasingly bringing care into the homes of our patients and customers.

**How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

In a remote environment, as with any type of work model, when thinking about maintaining culture and collaboration, we should always begin with seeking input from and listening to our team members. By that I mean, having ongoing conversations with your team about the realities of working remotely and what it will take to ensure that each team member feels seen, well, and continues to grow and contribute. The team has to weigh in on what the culture is and opportunities for improvement as well as what collaboration should look like and how it can be sustained. Without input from the team, our approaches might miss the mark. We know that incorporating well-being, recognition and celebration, and shared brainstorming and problem-solving are critical – and these can all be achieved virtually. In our organization, while the majority of our teammates work in person, we do have remote and hybrid working teams. Leaders of these teams are intentional about maintaining culture and collaboration. Most bring teams into the office or one of our collaboration hubs periodically as well as schedule virtual “open-door” hours where team members can pop in to connect, ask anything, get advice, and make suggestions.

**As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

It isn't absolutely necessary for teammates to work in person to ensure engagement. We've certainly all witnessed low engaged teams who work in person, right? Regardless of work model – in-person, remote, hybrid – intentionality is always key. We have to be intentional with how we communicate with team members, how we listen and welcome ideas and solutions, how we create community and collaboration, how we recognize and celebrate, how we develop and grow, and how we check in to address concerns and promote well-being. We also have to be intentional with our personal leadership development and there is no shortage of resources, many free and online, to help in this regard. If, ultimately, team members feel cared for, that they belong, that they are valued and that they are growing, you and your organization will benefit from better outcomes. •



**An Interview with Katy George, Senior Partner and Chief People Officer, McKinsey & Company**

**What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

The office of the future will be considered a natural place for both physical and virtual interactions. This is especially true as more work environments transition to hybrid working models, but the question still remains: what works and doesn't when creating a successful hybrid strategy?

At McKinsey, we've developed a science-backed approach to answer this question and better understand how to leverage the flexibility of hybrid while maximizing team performance.

Through analysis, including internal sharing of best practices, surveys, behavioral data, across our 4,000 teams working around the world at any given time, we've developed a preliminary view of the benefits and weaknesses of each working model. This has enabled us to make more purposeful choices about when teams are remote, in-person, and hybrid. Early insights demonstrate that while a hybrid working environment retains employees significantly more compared to fully remote or fully in-person working models, how individuals spend their time in-person and together affects a variety of individual and team outcomes.

For organizations in any industry, managers need to maximize hybrid work at the team level, and make better informed decisions on what employees can most productively work on at home, such as research projects, or when coming to an office is more effective, such as mentorship or creative problem-solving.

Beyond this, office experiences can lead to social and emotional connections that draw

employees in which can help employees feel the office is part of their day-to-day.

### **How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

In this new working world, successful organizations deliberately create a flexible culture by developing leaders who foster outcome-oriented performance, trust and togetherness, and team engagement and problem-solving.

Traditional methods like walking the company floor, chatting at the coffee machine, or taking employees to lunch are less readily available. In a hybrid environment, technologies (e.g., digital tools, advanced analytics techniques, and artificial intelligence), bring global capabilities together and have created unprecedented levels of collaboration.

There's also a need to rise to the occasion to actually create the time to get together as a team. Our research finds that employees who feel more connected with people in their networks are one and a half more times likely than their peers to report being engaged at work. Leaders can ensure that their employees have the right access to the tools they need to collaborate, and the right employee champions for the culture that can draw teams in together.

### **As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

Broadly, McKinsey research has found that the hybrid working environment – defined as spending roughly 50 percent of working days onsite – works better than all-or-nothing approaches. This does not mean a two to three days per week mandate – it means intentionally decision-making about when tasks or projects would benefit from in-person time or virtual.

The sweet spot is blending development and connectivity with flexibility and time for focus, which we've seen lead to better employee retention. To use this to their advantage, employers can build flexibility into traditionally inflexible roles to attract employees while also viewing flexibility as a standard way of working rather than an ad hoc benefit.

Building engagement in a remote or hybrid environment signals to employees that they are trusted to determine when and how they want to engage. One approach is to experiment with and train managers and colleagues to use new micro-habits, which are practical tips employers give employees to enable them to build a sustainable work-life balance, work productively, collaborate effectively, and connect meaningfully.

Micro-habits provide a simple way to start unlocking talent wherever it resides, strengthening organizational performance, and improving stakeholder satisfaction. Like any habit, it requires a process of trial and error, especially with new stakeholders, to discover what works best for them. Potential micro-habits can include:

- Setting end-of-day rituals (e.g., daily reflections or check-outs) to reinforce work life boundaries

- Logging and tracking emotional well-being via daily check-ins (e.g., scoring from 1-5 and noting how scores change over time)

- Building breaks into the day for people to eat, take walks, etc. with clear expectations on a timeline for deliverables

- Creating unstructured 1-1 conversations for managers to check in on their team members, and to provide informal feedback and coaching.

When productive micro-habits become the norm, colleagues often report feeling more satisfied, empowered, and resilient – both professionally and personally. •



**An Interview with Betty Thompson, Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer, Booz Allen Hamilton**

### **What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

We will continue to be hybrid, but we'll come together for purposeful engagement. Time in the office is evolving from doing work to building relationships and working complex strategic items. It's about collaboration time, not cubicle time.

### **How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

Companies need to be intentional about how and when to bring people together. There must be a shared expectation that in-person meetings will engage teams in meaningful ways and yield value. Bringing together people without a plan and hoping they get something out of it just won't do.

### **As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

You can't do it without bringing people together at some point, so the questions are how much and how to balance it. For example, if you've got new team members or relationships to build, you're going to need in person time. •



**An Interview with Joe Machicote, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Premier, Inc.**

### **What are your views on the future of work and what will the office of the future look like?**

It is important to understand that the COVID-19 pandemic created a transformational change in the U.S. and around the world. No matter how nostalgic we might be for the old days, they will never return.

I hear a lot of talk about the "return to office." It can be a polarizing topic that is difficult to implement because no matter the decision, there is likely to be a group left unhappy. So, we try to meet in the middle. Overall, the problem here really lies in fixed mindset thinking – aiming to solve for a new culture with vestiges of the old, when in fact, what we need to do is develop a new, refreshed culture altogether.

Building a workplace based on active, intentional collaboration that allows employees to experience the office and work in a way that is different from their remote set-up is key. We shouldn't be asking ourselves, "Why would I go into the office when no one is there to sit in a dark workspace and attend Zoom calls, when I can do that without the added commuting expense and wasted time?" The new workplace must go through transformational change and come out the other end as something completely new, not modified nostalgia.

### **How can companies maintain culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?**

I would like to change a couple of words in this question, which become part of the answer. The question we should be asking is: "How can companies create a new culture and a collaborative environment in a remote work structure?"

We must redefine our corporate cultures. We have to ask employees what works, listen and measure where we are in the remote environment. It is incumbent upon those tasked with managing culture and performance to work collaboratively with leaders and employees across the organization to create a shared vision for the future.

### **As an HR leader, is it necessary for employees to be in the office to build employee engagement?**

It certainly helps. One of the added benefits of being in the office is that I don't have to schedule a high five with someone who has just done a great job. It's nice to have impromptu conversations and lunch meetings. It's great to have a stop and chat in the hallway and share a good story.

However, as I have said, human resources professionals will have to think about how we create – not redefine – our new culture. Maybe a hybrid approach to high fives is the answer.

We must realize that some members of the workforce may never return to the office – and depending on a certain function or role, that may make good sense. This is where we need to have innovation and creativity – in conjunction with a healthy dose of employee feedback – to enable a journey of cultural, transformational change. ●