

Editorial

Javier Bajer

Let's not go back to work

Everyone's talking about going back to work. Leaders are wondering what is the right mix between a return to properly sanitised and protocol-compliant offices versus exhausting back-to-back zoom meetings taken from our blurred bedrooms.

But the question is: Do we really need to go BACK to work? Whether we work from an office or WFH, do we need to go *back* to so many questionable practices that defined and organised how people worked? For example, do we really need to go *back* to "managing performance" twice a year by setting objectives for the next Q, while already knowing what will happen with those metrics? Or do we need to go *back* to townhall meetings (in person or online) where new changes are announced (with their corresponding slogan, pillars, principles, foundations, values, behaviours, etc.) in the hope that, this time around, people will seriously focus on creating customer value, working as one team to innovate using digital and analytics?

Let us be honest: What we had before the pandemic was not working that well (and we should not just move it online because everyone is doing so). Global indicators for employee engagement, productivity and innovation have been plummeting for years. In addition, we are now struggling with a war on talent (again), where we do not seem to be able to get people excited enough to join us despite our expensive and unsustainable propositions.

However, I believe that we are facing the biggest opportunity we have ever had. We can make work "work", for people, for clients, and for investors this time around. Do not waste this opportunity arguing about how to implement your version of hybrid, creating rules for how many days per week people should work from home once restrictions are lifted.

Whatever you do, please do not go *back* to work. This is the time to go *forward* to work, creating a new deal in which the WHY matters a lot more than the WHERE FROM or the HOW.

Going forward to work means truly creating cultures where your profit entirely comes from the value your organisation creates for your clients. Trust me, you will not need to worry about retaining talent or loosing market-share, wherever you end up working from. Let us go #forwardtowork.

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