

HSM Insights Future of People Experience



Introduction

For over ten years, the Future of Work Research Consortium (FoW) has explored the trends shaping industries, organisations and careers. The changes to the variety of experience we can have at work brought about by Covid-19's mass shift to hybrid working have required us to look more carefully at People Experience.

This FoW report provides you with a guide as you respond to these shifts, helping you develop an understanding of people experience, and how to design and enact positive experiences across your whole organisation.

Please note that the insights and case studies included in this report are not to be shared outside of the HSM FoW Research Consortium.

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Research Methodology

We interviewed people from across 12 organisations over a 6 month period and combined these insights with practical learnings from our People Experience Masterclass. In addition, we undertook a thorough literature review and leveraged insights from our HSM Pandemic Webinar Series.

Our Consortium, with current members shown on the right, is widely acknowledged as one of the most innovative and collaborative forums for exchanging insights, models and concerns about the future of work.

As a member, you have access to the very latest academic research along with practical insights for your organisation. The diversity of our membership enables us to provide you with unique cultural and strategic insights that reflect your organisations and the different locations and industries within which you operate.



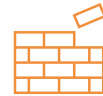
Key Insights

Here are our six key insights for consideration as your organisation navigates the future.



Consumer trends influence expectations.

Our experience as consumers has transformed what we expect from organisations. As our CX experiences have become increasingly simplified, intuitive and personalised, employees expect to have similar experiences at work.



Key moments that matter can be collective or individual.

Some of our moments at work are co-experienced or shared with others, whereas some are experienced alone. Similarly, while some experiences' designs may be highly individualised, others may be standardised and experienced similarly by many employees.



Freeing up time allows more impactful experiences.

We are increasingly making use of technology to simplify and streamline our designs of people experience. For example, by freeing up time spent on standardised routine tasks, we allow more time to have impactful, human-to-human interactions.



Consider individual needs.

Designing experience to reduce peoples' pains, meet their needs and maximise their gains allows a more positive, personalised experience. What needs to be fixed? What does the individual expect from the organisation? What can make their lives better?



Leverage your managers to connect your people.

We depend on managers for a large variety of experiences and interactions. First-line managers in particular have the most touch points when it comes to building experience, but they must be supported by more senior people to be able to enact truly meaningful change.



Balance human and machine interactions.

Technology can both improve and detract from experience. Being aware of which moments can be streamlined through human-machine interactions, but also which moments need to remain human will allow you to be more purposeful in your use of technology.

What we know about Experience

What we know about experience

We are seeing unprecedented changes in the ways we experience both our work and private lives throughout the pandemic.

For many of us, the Covid-19 pandemic may have caused a dramatic change in how, when, and where we work. The pandemic has changed how we experience work, whilst altering our expectations around safety, working location, and connection.

Expectations of employee experience have shifted, increasingly aligning with external advancements in customer experience. We expect our experiences to be intuitive, frictionless and human, remembering them not as a net sum of “good” and “bad” moments, but as a series of defining peaks and troughs, inclining towards how we felt at the time.

+ Spotlight on organisational responses to the pandemic

The way our organisations have responded to the pandemic is affecting our employee experience. Those who felt that their organisation’s responses were particularly good are four times as likely to be engaged, and six times more likely to report a positive state of wellbeing, compared to those who believed their organisational response was poor or inadequate⁵.

Four key components to building experience



Emotions

People's emotions, values and beliefs. Positive experiences, emotions, and individual beliefs and values are closely linked. Research shows that experiences that elicit positive emotional responses by aligning to an individual’s beliefs and values are more compelling⁷.



Expectations

People’s expectations. In order to have a positive experience, people need to feel that their needs are being met. ‘Agenda fulfilment’ is a baseline requirement to designing experiences². Some people may have accessibility expectations, or in the context of the pandemic, employees may expect social distancing arrangements.



Interactions

Interactions and communication. Our interactions with other people are a key component in building positive, impactful experiences. Experiences are built through social interactions with other people. Co-experience is a blend of user experience and the experience created when interacting with others³.



Memory

People’s memory and evaluations. The way we remember experiences is not related to the sum goodness or badness of what we experienced. We judge our experiences on how they were at the peak ‘goodness’ and how they ended, while net average moments are almost entirely disregarded⁴.

Experience, values and emotions

Memorable experiences are closely associated with feelings and emotions.

When asked to share their most memorable moments at work, many of our FoW members described the experiences themselves alongside how they were feeling at the time.

People shared a variety of moments with us, from both before and during the pandemic. The most resonant experiences were those related to on and offboarding; those characterised by an emotional component, like announcing a pregnancy; and role-based achievements such as delivering a difficult presentation.

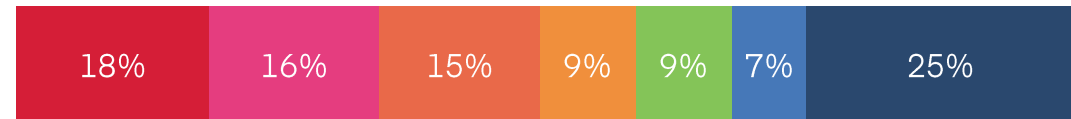
Despite the disruptions associated with Covid-19, our interactions with others remain a key factor in building experience – a component which has been particularly resonant throughout the pandemic as we have sought to support, and be supported by, our colleagues and teammates.

Your moments that matter



We asked...

What have been your most memorable moments at work?



■ On/off-boarding

■ Emotive experiences

■ Celebration

■ Other

■ Role-based achievements

■ Career progression

■ Travel


See Appendix 2 for your responses to the question, "What have been your most memorable moments at work"?

Spotlight on the Evolution of People Experience⁶

The concept of experience is not new. Although the pandemic presents a new set of challenges, experience, and its many iterations, have been measured for years.

Utility: This focuses on what job-essential equipment employees need, without much focus on employee needs, diversity or wellbeing.
Productivity: A productivity focus looks at making small improvements to optimise employee output.
Engagement: This approach prioritises making employees happy so they are more productive, and fostering a connection to organisational values and culture.
Experience - This focus prioritises ensuring employees want to (rather than have to) turn up to work, emphasising the importance of purposeful design alongside culture, technology and space.

Speaker insights on experience

 **Leanne Cutts, CMO, HSBC on what People Experience can learn from Customer Experience**

Leanne Cutts shared her perspectives on what leaders can incorporate into People Experience (PX) from Customer Experience (CX).

Balance personalisation with standardisation.


People feel it is difficult to strike a balance between standardisation and personalisation. There is a clear need for personalisation that can scale. In CX, this may be giving customers the option to “opt-in” to hear about certain types of offerings, such as mortgages, rather than asking them to consent to all forms of marketing communications. Organisations must have one or two platforms to manage this, rather than a multitude of specialised platforms.

Collect data purposefully.

We can learn a lot about customers through the data they share with us. Credit card data bolsters fraud detection efforts; with purchase history and spending habit data reducing false positives. But, when we gain permission to collect data, employees expect us to do something with it.

Crowdsource your experience data.

We can ask for customer input to inform how we create experiences for them. In the PX space, insights teams can work with HR, combining data analytics with qualitative interpretation.

 **Dave Ulrich, Rensis Likert Professor, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan & RBL Group Partner on People Experience**

Dave Ulrich discussed People Experience within the wider organisational context.

People experience can drive business results.

If employees have a positive experience, this translates into value for the organisation’s customers, investors and communities, though greater productivity, and better customer interactions.

Build experience by creating meaning to work:

Utilise abundant thinking to connect your organisational strategy and purpose to the values and expectations of your people. Abundant thinking is an attitude that focuses on building resilience and confidence.



Believe: How can we help employees find meaning at work?

- Connect employee values to organisational purpose and strategy
- Determine what values matter most and meet those values at work



Become: How can people improve and grow from their work?

- Develop a growth mindset to learn and focus forward
- Learn from setbacks to be resilient
- Anticipate the future to create what’s next



Belong: How do we build relationships at work?

- Recognise the importance of relationships for well being
- Connect with others by serving them
- Create value for others

The HSM Model for People Experience

The HSM Model for People Experience

The HSM Model for People Experience guides you through the three key stages in creating intuitive, human, frictionless experiences for your people.

By focusing on the key components of each stage in the process, you can create a people experience tailored to your organisation. The HSM model for creating people experience separates the process into three stages; map, design and act.

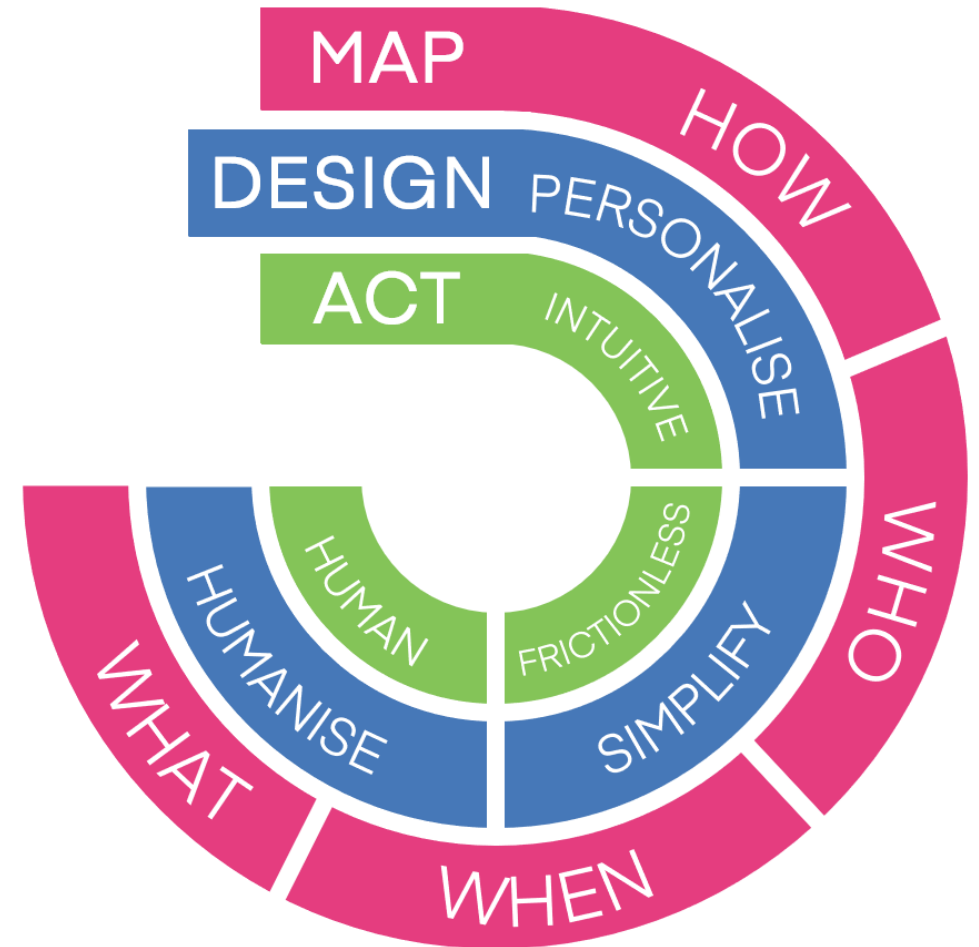
When **mapping experience**, consider **what** key factors influence experience; **how** experience is built and delivered in your organisation; **who** plays a role in building experience, and **when** the “moments that matter” are.



Developments in User Experience have shifted our expectations of experience as employees. When **designing experience**, keep **design thinking** in mind and consider how best to **personalise, humanise and simplify** moments.



When **acting** to implement your design, learn from design principles – being interventional, directional and proactive to ensure your people’s experiences are **intuitive, frictionless and human**.



Mapping Experience

To map experience, consider how external factors shape expectations

External factors influence expectations.

We now expect personalised experiences outside of work, thanks to our experience as customers. The boom in the 'experience economy' has allowed customers to be the innovator, personalising their experiences to their wants and needs⁷.

The impact of external changes in ways of working are also impacting the expectations of our people, with working from home leading to greater variety in how we may experience our roles around:

- **Autonomy and expectations;** People may expect their experiences to allow for greater freedom in decision making to better manage boundaries between home and work.
- **Energy;** People have different sources for replenishing energy – some may find working from home depleting, others energy building.
- **Human connections;** Working from home may become isolating without purposeful and deliberate effort to keep people connected, and is dependent on individual employee personality.
- **Physical environments;** While one employee's work setup may provide a dedicated focus space conducive to productivity, others may need additional support in making the best use of their available home and office environments.



Consumer trends cause us to expect experiences to be...

NETFLIX

PERSONALISED

Experiences are tailored to the individual

"Employees want to see opportunities that are tailored to them"

 **monzo**

INTUITIVE

Experiences are built to anticipate needs

"Our team has been using design thinking to make certain tools more intuitive and easy to use"

 **deliveroo**

FRICITIONLESS

Experiences are streamlined and seamless

"People are just tired of dealing with layers of approvals and decision-making"



Spotlight on Safety

People Experience is being impacted by health concerns from COVID-19, financial and employment concerns from the recession, and security concerns from increasing racial violence. Since COVID-19, widespread concern over health and wellbeing has meant that people's experiences are now about health and safety and finding appropriate workspaces at home¹⁰. These feelings of safety may pertain to physical health and safety; mental health and wellbeing; and social safety and feelings of inclusion at work.

Map experience by considering employee needs

Positive experience is built by reducing pains, meeting needs and expectations, and maximising employees' gains.

Experiences are not remembered as an average, but instead as peaks and troughs. As such, positive experience is created by maximising the peaks (gains), and reducing the troughs (pains).

Reduce pains by removing the challenges or barriers that make up part of an employee's experience.

These barriers may relate to feelings of autonomy and trust; such as a culture of micromanagement. They may relate to task variety and complexity, or underperforming or inadequate systems which affect the time and effort required to complete day-to-day activities.

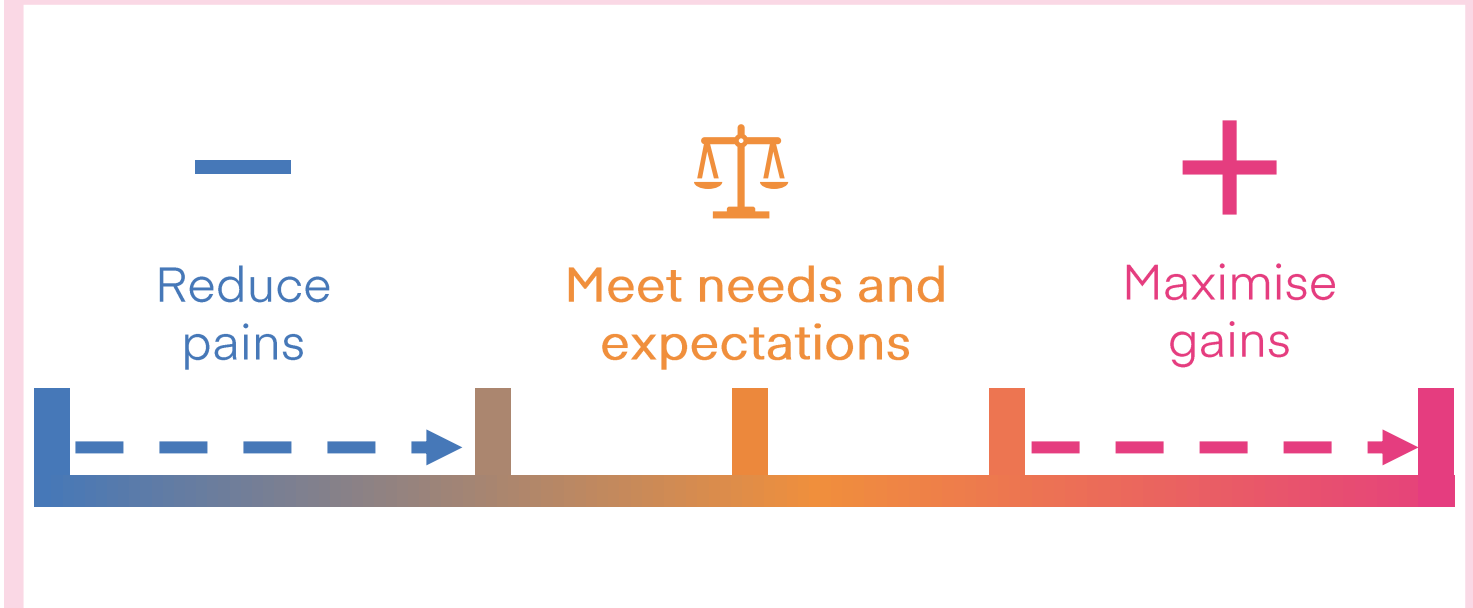
Take note of your employee's needs and expectations.

Meeting needs and expectations requires looking at what your organisation's people need in order to get their job done. Similarly, what is it that employees expect of their work experience? This may relate to working conditions, advancement and progression, learning and development, etc.

Improve employees' experience by maximising their gains.

You can heighten the "peak" of an employee's experience by considering what would make them happy, and what changes could be made to make their work lives and role activities easier.

 Experience is built through elements that...



 **Spotlight on time for slack**

Your organisation's use of time can influence employee experience. "Time for slack" allows for time to fix things, learn, talk with each other. Research shows that people who work more than 55–60 hours a week get no more work done than those who work 45–50¹¹. Retailers who have more staff per square foot far outperform their peers in profitability. This allows staff to help customers, rearrange products, clean the store, and cross-train each other to succeed¹². To help embed this time for slack, empower and enable your people to safeguard their time, e.g. through use of calendar functions.

Map when experience is delivered to maximise employee lifetime value

People experience encapsulates what people encounter and observe during their tenure.

What an employee experiences is mapped at a high-level by the employee lifecycle, which indicates the experiences that any employee will have at any organisation.

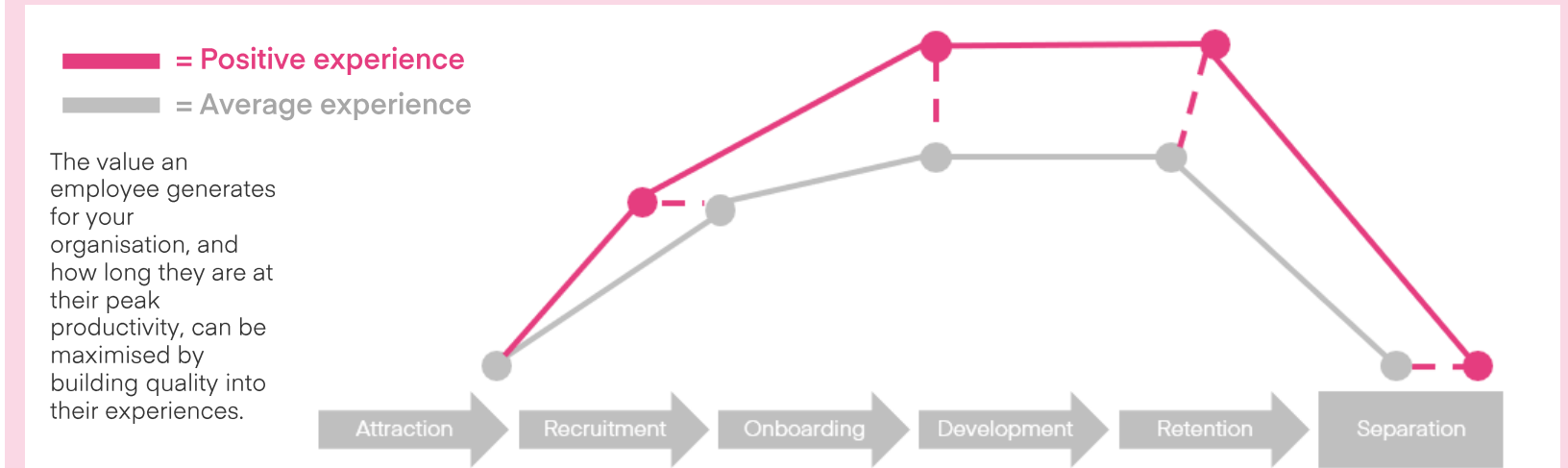
The experiences they have in their own organisations will also vary. 81% of HR leaders recognise that considering all aspects of employees' lives is vital in building positive experiences¹³.

This lifecycle starts at attraction, when someone first thinks about joining an organisation, to recruitment and onboarding, through to separation, when the employee eventually leaves or retires. Mapping out these universal moments is a good starting point for mapping out people experience.

Some key moments are standardised, such as onboarding, while others may be unique to an individual employee.

These unique moments that matter may include highly personal discussions, such as those associated with parental leave, bereavement and sabbatical arrangements, but they may also pertain to individual career and development goals.

+ Leverage moments that matter to maximise Employee Lifetime Value



+ The value of a positive People Experience

The role of people experience is to extend the period of time when employees are at their maximum value and minimise times of low value. Employee lifetime value (ELTV) is the output of people experience. The value of output an employee provides depends on the stage of the employee lifecycle they are in.

A positive experience can:

- Shorten time for onboarding knowledge transfer
- Increase the value employees can bring
- Increase how long employees are at highest productivity value
- Lengthen the time someone stays

Map who shapes experience to maximise shared and individual moments

Some experiences are individual, whereas others are shared, co-created and co-experienced with others.

Co-experience is about user experience in social contexts. Shared experiences don't always have to be positive. They can be praise or excitement for certain things, or they can be about the negative or frustrating moments.

Interactive technology systems can play a large role in supporting co-experience, through providing mediated communication channels and the possibility to create, edit, share and view content with others.

These systems enable co-experience by providing new channels for social interaction



Managers connect people through the invisible thread

Managers connect their teams, but their own experience is being affected.

Remote working has caused drastic changes over a short period of time; managing remotely/managing hybrid teams requires a different skillset, and managers have found themselves facing overwhelming priorities, complex scheduling, and facing deep issues of inequality.

Managers are under more stress owing to the pandemic.

This may be in part due to "illegitimate tasks" increasing their workload, owing to the disruptions of the pandemic and unclear boundaries between work and home¹⁴. If managers have a negative experience, this may translate into a negative experience for their teams.

The 'invisible thread' refers to the uncaptured actions that good managers do.

It acts as a connective tissue between the team, allowing for team cohesion and growth. 'Invisible thread' actions can be answering onboarding questions or acting as a champion for employees. In the world of hybrid work, where there is less visibility and interaction with the team, managers struggle to maintain the 'invisible thread'¹⁵. Connecting their people together through these actions, managers help to build community and belonging; foster trust and broker networks; and ensure meaningful work and development for their team.

Experiences are created together or shared with others through:



Actions

Experiences can be created through shared actions pertaining to one's day-to-day role, like doing similar work concurrently, or participating in moments like team building events.



Rituals

Rituals build a sense of routine into experience, alongside fostering a connection to shared values. Examples of common rituals are experiences such as morning meetings and team huddles.



Tasks

When working on tasks together, employees need to be able to effectively communicate and collaborate to have a positive experience.



Language

Shared language may not be limited to "living languages" like English or German, but acronyms and expressions, which employees often need to understand to be able to access experiences.

Designing Experience

Simplify your design

People are overwhelmed by the complex processes they have to navigate.

This is often due to the number of overlapping processes and platforms they have to navigate, the accessibility of work, and the overly complicated processes they have to undergo.

Harmonise your processes.

Business Process Harmonization (BPH) concerns the standardization of an organization's business processes while leaving room for desired variations¹⁶.

Process harmonisation allows your organisation to:

- Remove redundant processes across different teams.
- Ensure new processes are useful and aligned¹⁷.

Offer just enough resources to get the job done.

Think about creating process maps and take a 'just enough' approach to identifying processes that reach the same goal¹⁸.

Use a 'just enough' approach

"We have a few too many systems. It's hard for people to make full use of them. When we do introduce new platforms now, we make sure it's compatible and can be embedded in our existing systems"



+ Use technology to simplify experience

PepsiCo rolled out a "Process Shredder" to give employees the opportunity to communicate pain points in their processes and ways of working. Making use of a crowdsourcing platform, the organisation asked their people to answer one simple question,



"Name one process that stops you from getting things done fast."

Pepsi received over 260,000 employee responses to this question. Leaders then used this collective knowledge to pinpoint outdated processes and bureaucracy.

As a result, leaders were able to identify pain points in their performance management process and how to simplify them.

+ Spotlight on workplace interruptions

Complex and disjointed processes can create disruption and frustration for employees.

In a day, a typical employee will check their phone up to 150 times.

57% of work interruptions are due to employees having to switch between platforms.

An employee switches between 35 job-critical applications (e.g. Word/Outlook etc.) more than 1,100 times per day¹⁹.

Humanise your design

People need to retain a human element in their experience.

Whilst machines and artificial intelligence can simplify and streamline processes, reducing friction and improving efficiency, people don't want their human connections to be fully replaced.

The human-human model of communication is preferable to 40-45% of employees for tasks such as performance reviews, asking questions and getting help with difficult problems.

Employees prefer technology for routine tasks.

Often these tasks are simple, or those in which streamlining and automation reduces the burden on employees and decreases lead time.

Having superior technology is not enough: In order to drive people experience, organisations need to retain the human touch, boosting the efficiency and capabilities of the human-human model through technology²⁰.

You are already thinking about leveraging technology

At Nucleus Financial, managers and their team share a platform that enables more personalised conversations.

Employees use sliders to indicate ways they want to develop. Managers use this data to have tailored conversations with their team in a way that aligns with how employees want to develop.

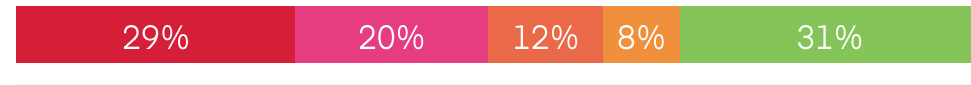


+ You said...



We asked...

What are the moments that require human interaction?

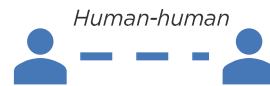


- Development & feedback
- Emotional Support
- Difficult conversations
- Onboarding
- Other

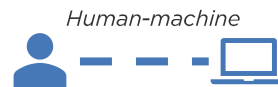
See Appendix 2 for your responses to the question, "What do you feel are the moments that require human interaction"?

+ How to balance humans and machines

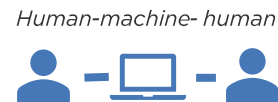
Harness different communication models



Foster belonging; enable knowledge share and build trust



Streamline processes; reduce lead time and simplify tasks



Boost human interactions and improves their quality & frequency

+ Intuitive development experiences at IBM

IBM's Myca chatbot gets to know employees through conversations and profile data.

Myca matches employees with internal vacancies, learning opportunities, or adjacent career paths. Employees can validate their skills and add new ones manually to improve career matching.

Both managers and employees are technologically enabled, allowing them to be offered personalised recommendations for career advancement in a frictionless, intuitive experience.



Personalise your design

To successfully maximise gains and reduce pains, organisations need to personalise experiences.

Consider your value proposition for different people: ²¹

Pain relievers – what can help relieve your employees' pains? Can you fix under-performing tools/processes? How can you save time?

Needs and expectations. What are the tools, processes and resources that each person needs to perform their job? What do people expect from the organisation?

Gain creators – what can increase the gains for your people? What can make their lives better? What would make a difference to their work life? What can you do to support their personal life?

Think about how to best support your managers.

You and your organisation have shared with us the challenges faced by managers. Build considerations for managers into your experience design by:

- Creating **time** for managers to invest in experience, ensuring managers can safeguard and set aside time, enabling them to set aside and safeguard time for experience.
- Being innovative about how managers are **judged**, acknowledging the value managers add to experience in your reward and recognition practices.
- Focusing on the **invisible thread**, ensuring managers have enough touch points to connect their teams and build trust.

Personalise recognition to improve experience

Accenture created a platform allowing for the personalisation of employee recognition. The platform allows for employees to flag the way they like to be recognised, such as how publicly or privately they are acknowledged, or how they are rewarded.



The platform feeds this data into the performance management and learning systems, allowing for more nuanced understanding of individuals' preferences and career goals. Employees can select if they want this to be shared publicly or only with their manager. As a result, managers have space to focus, employees are coached and mentored to grow their careers; and the business has accelerated their productivity promise.

Redesign work to support managers

Accelerating its business promise of digitization, AI and agile, Telstra separated managers' roles into Leader of People and Leader of Work, allowing greater time flexibility for managers, and giving them space to focus. Accountable for employee engagement, Leaders of People focus on how to support and develop large teams, providing opportunities for employees to be coached and mentored to grow their careers.

Leaders of Work define work and performance goals, and estimate plans and resources. This approach means managers have the ability to focus on their own role, while ensuring people's development needs are still met.



Act to Create Experience

Act to create experiences that are:

Intuitive

By making proactive use of employee data, intuitive experiences anticipate and meet emergent needs²².



Human

By ensuring experiences remain human, you foster connectedness and trust within teams.



Frictionless

Simple, seamless experiences prevent frustration and disruption to your people's roles.



+ Spotlight on Empathy

Many of you shared the resolution to foster a culture of empathy. Empathy and human connection are highly tied to positive employee experience – with 93% of employees in 2019 saying they were more likely to stay with an empathetic employer, and 82% would consider leaving for a more empathetic one²³.

Some experiences, such as an on-boarding, training, and recording absence or holiday leave need to be standardised, straightforward and aligned across the organisation.

Be **interventional**; purposefully set up boundaries to isolate experience within a set of parameters and ensure consistency.

Be **directional** – your people are facing uncertainty as a result of the pandemic, and may need reassurance to be built into their experiences. If they are aware of what happens next and how to 'get there', people can navigate the experience and feel supported and informed.

Be **proactive** – actual people experience may differ to intended experience. Much like how platforms such as Netflix proactively respond to customer behaviour patterns, when acting to create a positive experience, ensure you are adjusting your approach to experience in line with outcomes and feedback.

+ As you simplify, humanise and personalise, learn from design principles:²⁴



INTERVENTIONAL

Be clear on what are 'controlled' elements that are the same for everyone



DIRECTIONAL

Build signs and support to help people navigate



PROACTIVE

Adapt as needed based on outcomes

Concluding remarks

Significant changes to how we have experienced work throughout the pandemic mean that your people's expectations of experience are shifting:

Experience is crucial to delivering business results – you and your organisation need to ensure you are being purposeful in mapping, designing and acting as you build it.

Map the factors that build experience in your organisation:

- Understand what your people need to feel physically, mentally and socially safe at work
- Identify people's pains, gains and expectations in their roles
- Think about how time is used to build experience in your organisation – do your managers have the time for slack they need to build experience?

Design your experience to maximise the value your people can bring:

- Recognise the value of both individual and shared moments in building experience.
- Remember the invisible thread, building considerations for managers' impact on experience into your design.
- Create opportunities for shared moments and co-experience to build belonging.

Act to implement your design:

- Act to simplify your design of experience to ensure employees' moments are streamlined and efficient.
- Humanise moments to build trust and understanding.
- Personalise moments to maximise the value your employees bring, while improving their work lives and making them ambassadors of your organisation.

Our Consortium members' key takeaways for People Experience.

#1

Challenge your own assumptions around what experiences look like in your organisation, taking a data-led approach to measuring experience.

#2

Think about the soft skills or "people skills" required to help build positive experiences and ensure managers are supported in developing these.

#3

Identify which experiences need to be standardised (such as mandatory training), and which, such as feedback and recognition, should be personalised.

#4

In order to create a culture of care, role model from the top down to ensure empathy is embedded across the organisation.

#5

Use technology in the right way – technology can save time, but can't replace human-human interactions when empathy is required.

#6

Support your managers by freeing up and safeguarding time for them to dedicate to enhancing their team's experience.

#7

Shared moments play an important role in our experience – identify and create opportunities for small talk that work in a hybrid context.

#8

Be curious about ways to improve experience in your organisation, identifying ways to reduce pains, maximise gains and meet needs and expectations.

#9

Adopt a growth mindset when thinking about people experience – respond to challenges and blockers iteratively and adaptively and learn from mistakes.

#10

Create a case for experience, emphasising the impact of a positive overall PX on the business, alongside its investors, customers and communities.

The HSM Toolkit for People Experience

MAP

Ensure safety



Meet needs,
reduce pains,
maximise
gains



Make use of
time to build
experience



DESIGN

Think about
universal &
individual
moments



Remember the
invisible
thread



Create shared
moments



ACT

Simplify
design



Humanise
moments



Personalise
experiences



Appendix 1: Consortium Responses

What have been your most memorable moments at work and why?



What do you feel are the moments that require human interaction?



What actions are you going to take away to design a positive People Experience in your own organisation?



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