



ERICSSON

# THE NEXT GENERATION WORKING LIFE

A SURVIVAL GUIDE





# THE VOLCANIC LANDSCAPE

Today, cultural changes and rapid technological progress are transforming the rules of working life as we know it, paving way to uncharted organizational territory.

There are several drivers to this development. Constant connectivity, digitalisation of products and services, automation of manual work, increased globalization, higher education levels and changed personal values and attitudes towards work are just some of the factors fundamentally changing the way we work.



### CULTURAL CHANGE

- Globalization
- Education levels
- Values and attitudes
- Information and communication access



### CHANGES IN THE WORKFORCE

Unrestricted to time/place  
Diversified/specialized



### CHANGES IN THE MARKET

Disruption  
New entrepreneurship

### TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

- Connectivity
- Digitalization
- Automation
- Cloud

The new business landscape emerging out of these changes could be described as a volcanic environment: a place where there are no safe positions and where anyone can be overtaken or disqualified. In this rather harsh new world you have to learn how to adapt to the new rules in order to survive.

And the number one challenge is to embrace change, rather than perceive it as a threat.

“Hardware, software, and networks are only going to get more powerful and capable in the future, and have even bigger impact on jobs, skills and the economy”

—Erik Brynjolfsson

# WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

The new rules of this volcanic environment do not apply to all working people in the world at this point. But for many white-collar workers it is more or less already a reality today. And the transformation is taking place in progressive as well as in more traditionally structured industries.

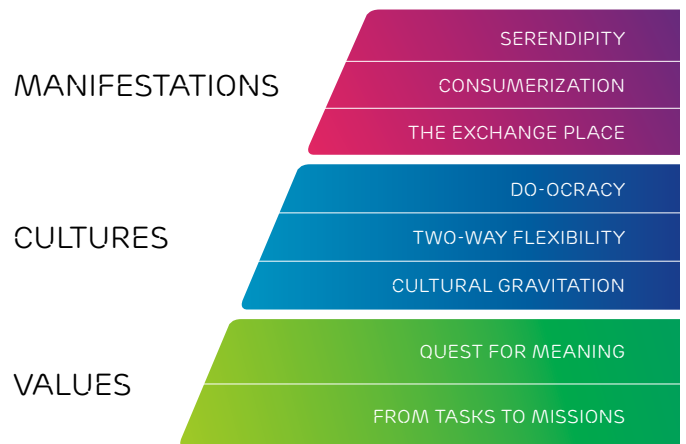
In the years to come, many people's working days will change dramatically. For instance, new and improved computers will be able to go through vast amounts of data, scan hundreds of thousands of similar cases, compare facts and the latest scientific research in any area from all over the world in just a few seconds, making highly educated predictions about a specific topic or case.

This will of course greatly impact, let's say, a teacher. The teachers' role, ways of working, pedagogical approach and relationship with students will change rapidly as the classroom gets more and more connected. So how does the teacher stay on top of this and in the same time keep on doing a great job?

## 8 THEMES OF CHANGE

In order to help businesses, organizations, employees and individuals navigate this volcanic landscape, we have identified eight themes that are likely to have fundamental implications from both an employers and an employee's perspective.

Starting from the bottom of our theme pyramid, we will now take a look at some hands-on tips how to handle the future of working life.



For more information about the eight themes: <http://www.ericsson.com/working-life/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/12/next-generation-working-life.pdf>

Read more about change in education <http://www.ericsson.com/res/docs/2012/learning-education-in-net-worked-society-report-201121022.pdf>



# HOW TO SURVIVE AS AN EMPLOYER

As an employer you have several challenges to address regarding your employees and the work climate that they will face in the future. Structures and incentives that are working today might perhaps not work tomorrow.

## SURVIVAL TIP #1: DEFINE A VALUE-DRIVEN AND CREDIBLE MISSION

Value-driven change is spreading, manifested by people's growing need for a deeper-level meaning in their work. The two themes **Quest for meaning** and **From Tasks to Missions** are standing out as main drivers. These trends represent a significant shift where personal values, purpose and goals become more important than money, titles and tasks.

People will be less inclined to evaluate employers based on what tasks to do and for how much money. Instead, they will look for organizations that share their set of ideals and vision about the world, finding reward in contributing to an

ethically greater cause rather than material compensation. This is what the theme **Quest for Meaning** is all about.

From **Tasks to Missions** is the game plan for how employers and employees can work together in order to put more focus on the actual end results and value of contributions, rather than on exactly where, when, and by which methods the job is done.

VALUES

QUEST FOR MEANING  
FROM TASKS TO MISSIONS



# THE CREATIVE ELITE

The small portion of the workforce that could be labeled the “creative elite” is an attractive group for any business or organization - a resourceful clique who helps organizations remain relevant in a constantly changing environment. They are the people who employers will compete for and incentivize in new and creative ways. And a key motivation for this highly educated and motivated group will be to make a difference in society at large. They are truly driving the shift from “Where can I fit into the workforce” to “What type of job keeps me motivated and interested, and what is my purpose?”

In a future working life, general corporate values will just not be enough to provide this kind of personal motivation and passion. Employees will be more driven by their own passions and beliefs, and connecting with these will make them devoted to their task.

## Specific actions speak louder than words.

Organizations have to ensure that there is a higher, and relevant, meaning beyond the corporate clichés. Moreover it has to be supported by specific tasks and initiatives in order to attract and hold on to the right competence.

**In a nutshell: Provide the reasons why your organization is the place to be.**

**Define and internally declare the ultimate reason for the organization to exist.** Every organization has to work with their reason for being. In what way is your organisation “there for your customers”? Or if the mission is to make the world better somehow, be specific on exactly how that is going to happen.

**State how individual contributions matter beyond organizational boundaries.** It will not be enough to have nicely worded corporate views about the company’s reason for being. The words have to be translated into something that makes sense for each individual regardless of position in the organization.

“ We don’t hire people that can just do the job at hand. The mission has to resonate with our employees personally, which is why we need to engage the whole individual.”

—Noom Inc., New York City



## SURVIVAL TIP #2: ESTABLISH AN OPEN AND INCLUSIVE JOB CULTURE THAT ACTUALLY WORKS

Growing emphasis on the culture that glues the employees of organizations together and makes them committed to each other will be a mark of our future working life.

Our next three themes revolve around what exactly are driving this change. **Do-ocracy**, **Cultural Gravitation** and **Two-Way Flexibility** are the driving, but also quite dependent, trends. They all represent a cultural shift leading to a new mindset where the individual and his or her informal network are in focus. People will not expect to be handed information and tools by their employers; they will pro-actively take action themselves. They will cultivate their networks and define suitable working methods based on their own experiences and preferences.

**Do-ocracy** is a growing phenomenon in society at large and also an emerging workplace culture characterized by entrepreneurship and DIY-mentality. Employees are taking a greater individual responsibility for solving problems and achieving goals, not only focusing on their specific part in the problem-solution chain. They actively seek involvement in other tasks than what is exactly their own, in order to stay motivated and engaged. Having flexible working hours gives a freedom which is appreciated by many, but which also poses challenges, as it tends to lead

to longer working hours than scheduled. Employees can work in the evenings and weekends, but at the same time they are still expected to be available at traditional working hours. Future employees are more likely to expect a new type of working life flexibility: They are willing to work outside of office hours – but in return they might also want to take time off in the middle of the week. That is what we call **two-way flexibility**.

Future employees will expect and choose organizations with a strong sense of community and internal culture that they and their peers can identify with. The working culture will become an increasingly important way of managing and motivating the organization. This change is what we call **cultural gravitation**.

An open, inclusive and democratic working culture is about creating a culture where everyone's views are valued and respected and where people are allowed to proactively take action themselves. Creating a strong community is not only important in order for employees to enjoy the time they spend in the office. It is also something that is a differentiating and strategic way of attracting the best employees that is a differentiating and strategic way to attracting the best employees.



## CULTURE

DO-OCRACY  
CULTURAL GRAVITATION  
TWO-WAY FLEXIBILITY

“ The culture of the company really produces the DNA of the product. If you launch a product, of course strategy is important and you need to plan, but the company culture will be reflected in how other people receive the company and who will want to work there. Culture always beats strategy”

—Alex Martini, Co-working space entrepreneur

In a nutshell: Create an open corporate environment which employees can believe in.

- Embrace culture to motivate people to stay with the team and remain committed to the task.
- Help your employees achieve working life happiness. Change focus from satisfaction to employee happiness management.
- Encourage individual initiatives and incentivize innovative thinking.
- Share the responsibility for moving forward.
- Stay realistic about employees. The future employees will be more committed to ideas rather than brands, and they will always be on the look-out for something better.
- Support your employees strive towards constant development.





## SURVIVAL TIP #3: TEAR DOWN THE ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS

**Enabling Serendipity, The Exchange Place and Consumerization** are three themes that drive organizational change. These trends are all highly dependent, and they are all organizational or physical expressions of our previously mentioned trends. In short, they all point to the fact that future workspaces will be more flexible, dynamic and optimized for opportunities.

Adapting to ever-changing market conditions will require exposure to different thoughts, environments and unexpected solutions to problems, coming both from within and outside the organization. Organizations will therefore have to develop strategies for handling unexpected and random encounters between people with different backgrounds and interests.

**The Exchange Place** is about the future physical working environment. In an era where work can take place anywhere, the meaning of the office has to be redefined. The office will be a place for exchange, designed to optimize the quality of the interaction that takes place there.

Employees who expect their work environment to be adjusted to their individual needs drive **Consumerization**. They have a set of preferences from the private life that they will want to apply at work in order to be able to perform as effectively and friction-free as possible.



## MANIFESTATIONS

SERENDIPITY

CONSUMERIZATION

THE EXCHANGE PLACE

**In a nutshell: Enlist employees in the fight for freedom to work better.**

- **Embrace transparency.** Keep all sources of collaboration and interaction open and acknowledge the fact that groundbreaking initiatives and ideas can emerge from anywhere.
  - **Strive for constant exposure.** Optimize organization for cross-function exposure and develop a strategy for maximize exposure to the outside world.
  - **Establish a work environment strategy.** HR and IT and Facility Management are areas of responsibility that need to cooperate and define joint strategies in order to create a working environment where everybody is both effective and motivating. A key challenge lies in making the three areas of responsibility work together in a visionary and forward-thinking way.
- Defining a shared vision for the workplace experience.
  - Making sure that strategies and policies are aiming at the same overall objectives.

# HOW TO SUCCEED AS AN EMPLOYEE

As the environment for the employer evolves, employees will also have to adapt to a new environment. Developing new skill sets will be required in order to remain relevant and to be attractive enough to be coveted.

## ADVISE #1: RE-CONSTRUCT YOURSELF CONSTANTLY

The skills and knowledge that are needed and attractive on the job market are in constant change. This concerns everything from coding language to leadership. Many of the most popular jobs today did not exist 10 years ago. The general education level is rising globally but to get a degree will not be enough. To succeed you need adopt the philosophy of constant re-construction. Life is about learning!

### Smart moves:

- Put yourself in a state of constant learning.
- Start perceiving work as a key source of personal development. If that development is missing maybe it is time you move on.

## ADVISE #3: FROM ONE PROJECT TO NEXT, FROM ONE JOB TO ANOTHER

Future working life is not about settling for a job that is safe or easy. Those who are successful in the new environment are always on the lookout for other options that could potentially be more rewarding, developing or challenging.

### Smart moves:

- Stay in touch with your network of past and future co-workers.
- Always be active on online recruitment networks.

## ADVISE #2: MASTER THE AREA OF SELF-MARKETING

Your experience, your learning and your goals have to be expressed. Very few people will have the same job within the same company for a full career. Working in transient networks accentuates the importance of describing and promoting personal skills in a convincing way.

### Smart moves:

- Initiate projects and create micro-hubs for knowledge exchange or engage into such initiatives by others.
- Convincingly sell your own contribution to a specific process.
- Start becoming your own talented personal brand manager.
- Work with, and develop, your network.

“ Everyone will have to have a sales mentality, whether they are engineers, teachers or something else – everyone will be in sales in some way”

— Anders Perulf, Manpower Group

# EPILOGUE

This report has defined eight themes which together point to a direction in which working life is likely to develop in the coming 10 years. What specific impact they will have in different environments remains to be seen.

We have focused our research on organizations within the service sector in the Western world. But in an increasingly globalized business environment a major challenge will lie in creating organizational strategies that can be translated to different cultural contexts. How can an organizational culture be maintained in situations where there is a clear conflict with traditions and social protocols of society at large? It is also likely that different types of industries will be affected to varying degrees. Traditional industries are for instance likely to find it more difficult to adapt to the new rules of working life than those who are progressive and less defined by formal structures and processes. This will also be true for those people seeking employment in different industries.

The subject of working life also raises some fundamental questions about future life in general. An increasing level of automation is likely to leave a profound mark on how our everyday life is structured. What activities can create meaning in a future where a larger part of the population is not working? However intriguing, these questions are beyond the main objectives for this report, and remain to be addressed.

To summarize, there are many reasons to keep a close eye on how the dynamics of working life will continue to change in the years to come. The concept is about to be redefined, or as the Greek philosopher Heraclitus put it: “The only constant is change”.