

Gartner Group

By Jordan Turner | 4-minute read | January 03, 2024

These nine future of work trends will factor into workforce and talent decisions over the next one to five years

To succeed in 2024 and beyond, Gartner recommends you evaluate how these trends will impact your organization so you can get ahead of the challenges your organization is bound to experience.

Each of the trends is critical to navigating talent challenges and aligns with one of four themes: managing the shift in the employee value proposition (EVP), augmenting critical skills for managers, evolving career assumptions, and experimenting with and implementing [artificial intelligence](#).

9 Future of Work Trends for 2024

1

The Cost-of-Work Crisis Reaches a Breaking Point

2

AI Creates, Not Diminishes, Workforce Opportunity

3

Four-Day Workweeks Go From Radical to Routine

4

Employee Conflict Resolution Is New Must-Have Skill for Managers

5

GenAI Experiments Will Yield Hard Lessons and Painful Costs

6

Skills Overtake Degrees as the Paper Ceiling Crumbles

7

Climate Change Protection Becomes the New In-Demand Employee Benefit

8

DEI Doesn't Disappear, It Becomes the Way We Work

9

Career Stereotypes Collapse in the Face of Workforce Change

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Theme 1: Shifting EVP

- **Four-day workweeks go from radical to routine.** A talent shortage is making it more difficult to attract and retain employees, and organizations are evaluating whether shifting toward a condensed workweek will meet growing employee expectations for flexibility as well as the organization's objectives. In fact, 63% of candidates rated "four-day workweek" as the top future of work offering that would attract them to a job.

- **The cost of work crisis reaches a breaking point.** Employers are mandating remote employees return to the office, but after years at home, these employees now have a sharper awareness of what coming into the office costs — in terms of time and money. Without a resolution regarding who will bear the cost of work and why, return to office will remain contentious.
- **Climate change protection becomes the new must-have employee benefit.** As severe climate change-related events become more widespread and persistent, organizations will seize the opportunity to make their response and employee support plans more transparent.
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Theme 2: New manager necessities

- **Employee conflict resolution is the next must-have skill for managers.** With upcoming elections, geopolitical crises, labor strikes, climate change and pushback to DEI efforts, the environment is ripe for differences of opinion. Managers who manage, rather than silence, interpersonal conflict among employees will have an outsize positive impact on their organizations.
- **DEI doesn't disappear; it becomes the way we work.** After a flood of corporate attention in 2020, there has been a growing sense of disillusionment with DEI efforts. Given the leadership commitment to these programs and initiatives, companies will begin to pivot from DEI existing solely in a silo to embedding it throughout the organization.

57% of managers say they are fully responsible for resolving their direct reports' conflicts.

Source: Gartner

Theme 3: The collapse of career assumptions

- **Skills overtake degrees as the “paper ceiling” crumbles.** College degrees are the top requirement listed in yesterday's job descriptions. In response to the tight labor market and declining undergraduate graduation rates, organizations are shredding the “paper ceiling” and welcoming workers with alternative credentials.
- **Career stereotypes collapse in the face of workforce change.** Atypical career paths are going mainstream with rising retirement ages, midcareer breaks, shifts across industries, and embracing contingent work and other nontraditional employment models. In light of this, the assumptions and heuristics that underpin

many organizations' talent management strategies will prove a growing barrier to acquisition and retention.

71% of millennial workers say the pandemic made them “rethink the place that work should have in their lives.”

Source: Gartner

Theme 4: AI reshaping work

- **AI creates, not diminishes, workforce opportunity.** Despite anxieties that [AI will result in workforce cuts](#), we foresee AI actually enhancing workforce opportunity. Not only will implementing [GenAI](#) create the need for new roles, but it will also allow employers to reduce time to proficiency with new technology and specializations, easing the need to hire talent already skilled in these areas.
- **GenAI experiments will likely yield hard lessons and painful costs — at least without sufficient risk management.** GenAI outputs are hardly error-free, creating a strong need for data governance, quality control and good employee judgment. To avoid reputational, regulatory and legal issues, ensure your teams have access to training to develop judgment around not just information validity, but also how and when to use GenAI.

Trend Number	Trend Name
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9.	Career Stereotypes Collapse in the Face of Workforce Change

The story behind the research

From the desk of Emily Rose McRae, Gartner Senior Director Analyst

“2024 brings another wave of challenges and opportunities for the future of work. Organizations face unprecedented uncertainty with global talent shortages and the mandate to control rising costs and measure risky technology’s productivity returns. They will need to tackle these nine trends to set and achieve strategic workforce and technology goals.”

3 things to tell your peers

1

Gartner’s annual future of work trends research helps you prepare for the talent challenges your organization will face in the coming years.

2

The trends for 2024 cover four key themes: shifting EVP, new manager necessities, crumbling career assumptions and AI reshaping work.

3

Recognize, analyze and prioritize these trends as you set strategic workforce and technology goals.

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Emily Rose McRae advises CHROs and other c-suite executives on the future of work and workforce transformation. While Ms. McRae works across all issues that can lead to the future of work, her core areas of focus include emerging technologies (such as GenAI) and their impact on work and the workforce, new employment models, evolving employee expectations, flexibility for frontline workers, and the aging workforce. She also helps executives with workforce planning to anticipate and prepare for these changes, creating an enterprise-wide future of work strategy, and creating and iterating on hybrid work strategies and the role of the office.

