

# PERSONNEL NOTEBOOK

*For Your Most Important Resource*

## WORKFORCE 2020

### Part II-20 Predictions

In part I of the Personnel Notebook on Workforce 2020, we examined the original 1987 report from the Hudson Institute that forecast the unbelievable changes coming in the new workforce of 2000. The report was remarkably accurate as we find ourselves today living in those forecasts. But the world is never static, it is always in flux and we are again beginning to see signs of the coming changes in our workforce.

Authors, consultants and speakers Jeanne C. Meister and Karie Wilverd have now taken up the mantle from the forecasters at the Hudson Institute by compiling the world-wide surveys of global professionals, the case studies of hundreds of organizations and the interviews from thousands of business and HR professionals in order to prepare their book “*The 2020 Workplace*”. In their book they identified the ten forces that are shaping the new workforce. And like their predecessors they made bold predictions; 20 of them.

#### **Twenty Predictions for Workforce 2020**

**1. You will be hired and promoted based upon the value of your reputation**

Your expertise and the breadth, depth and quality of your social network will make up the sum total of your personal brand. Your ability to turn those assets into increased business value for the organization is where the rubber meets the road.

**2. Your mobile device will become your office, your classroom and your concierge**

The mobile phone is for the next decade, what the computer has been for the last two decades. It will manage our lives, our work and our social activities and will for individuals navigate the globe in their daily interactions including life-long education, training and development.

**3. The global talent shortage will be acute**

Although there will be five generations working in the 2020 workplace there will be severe shortages of certain skills as well as workers. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) predicts a shortfall of 7 million workers for the skills needed; skilled trades, sales representatives, engineering technicians, managers and senior executives, and finance and accounting professional.

**4. Recruiting will center on social networking sites**

Although already in full swing, social recruiting will expand in scope. Potential employees may have their first interview via avatar, followed by several video chats and reference checks on social networks. Both employees and employers must become develop new skill sets to be successful in finding and being employees.

#### **5. Web commuters will force corporate offices to reinvent themselves**

The term “Third Places” is already being bandied about. It refers to where you work. The first place refers to the corporate office. The second place is the home office. The third place can be any location; a coffee shop, customer site, collaboration hotel, plane etc. It’s estimated that fully 20 percent of today’s workforce are already working outside the first place.

#### **6. Companies will hire entire teams**

As teamwork becomes so much more important companies cannot always risk failure trying to develop them within. Companies are seeing the value of hiring entire pre-organized teams. So much so that teams are already forming guilds or societies composed of teams and those who want to form one.

#### **7. Job requirements for CEOs will include blogging**

The level of expertise, authenticity and concern that can be communicated through a CEO-level blog cannot be matched by press releases written by the public relations department. There are currently over four hundred executives and more than 100 CEOs registered as bloggers. The tone, character and authenticity of the CEO comes through in a blog. It will become a job requirement for the 2020 CEO.

#### **8. The corporate curriculum will use video games, simulations and alternate reality games as key delivery modes**

The corporate training classroom of today will be transformed into a nimble, social, fun and highly collaborative experience by 2020. Video games, simulations and alternate reality games will be used to emulate real world experiences.

Present day games like World of Warcraft are part of a category of game called massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs). They have the potential o become realistic simulator for contemporary leadership development training.

#### **9. A 2020 mind-set will be required to thrive in a networked world**

Just using and getting accustomed to social networking won’t be enough in 2020. And it’s not just a commitment to adapt. It’s means becoming the socially networked, cross cultured, globally aware individual who is as immersed and a part of that culture as today’s employee is in the world of the internet.

#### **10. Human resources focus will move from outsourcing to crowdsourcing**

Outsourcing traditionally means that a company contracts out some function to another individual or company who is then contractually accountable for time, cost, quantity and quality results. Crowdsourcing is broadcasting out your need to a large, unspecific group, maybe even to the world at large asking for ideas, solutions and input. The information that results becomes the property of the original broadcaster. That crowd might be your larger customer or potential customer base. It might be asking the entire workforce to define the job description of a specific position. It might be broadcasting to the scientific world a formula and asking for critique. It’s kind of like what Wikipedia has been doing for years.

#### **11. Corporate social networks will flourish and grow inside companies**

If the essence of knowledge is conversation, then internal social networks might be the life-blood of any knowledge based organization. Companies that lock down and prevent access to social networking sites will find it difficult to recruit top talent. The Millennials and Gen Exers (who will make up 47 percent of the 2020 workforce) will expect and demand access to external social networks as well as internal corporate social networks on the job.

## **12. You will elect your leaders**

Already in play today, teams are being asked to select their leaders, often from among their own team members. Members of the newest generations of workers have grown up with a collaborative mind-set in a socially networked environment. In the 2020 world of work, fewer managers will pick their subordinates while more subordinates will be picking their managers. Answers to questions like “*Who would you like to follow?*” and “*Who has made the biggest impact on the enterprise?*” will decide who the leaders will be.

## **13. Lifelong learning will be a business requirement**

For over twenty years corporations have been producing in-house corporate-sponsored universities to develop and reskill a global workforce. The next generation of this movement is to provide branded, lifelong learning centers to ensure the continual updating of one’s skills in their current and next job. Corporations will be partnering with universities offering new degree and certification programs. In 2010 the Jack Welch MBA was launched. It combines his philosophy of leadership and human resources into a twelve-course curriculum. A major increase in the acceptance of on-line degree and certification programs is developing to be a larger source of continuous education than the brick and mortar universities. Companies will develop 401(k) like programs to provide the costs of the lifelong continuation of learning.

## **14. Work-life flexibility will replace work-life balance**

AOL’s annual *Email Addiction Survey* reports that 67 percent of people check their e-mail while in bed in their pajamas. So how do you define work/life balance? Government labor laws basically forbid this practice. That will not stop the shift to flexibility rather than balance. Work/life flexibility reinforces the new view that there is no such thing as work time and home time. Rather, hyper-connected workers

will have the flexibility to manage both work time and home lives. The trick is for managers to define the end results needed very clearly and to focus on what they get as opposed to the time clock, a management skill that is still being developed today.

## **15. Companies will disclose their corporate social responsibility programs to attract and retain employees**

79 percent of surveyed 13 to 25 year-old people say they want to work for a company that cares about how it impacts on and contributes to society. More than half say they will refuse to work for an irresponsible corporation. 2020 companies will move beyond corporate philanthropy by integrating social responsibilities into their core business strategy and by setting socially related goals for employees, job candidates, suppliers and investors.

## **16. Diversity will be a business issue rather than a human resource issue**

Diversity just for legal reasons has proven to be divisive and not as effective as understanding the corporate values. Diversity broadens the scope of a company’s thinking, expands their cultural understanding, changes who they are and how they are viewed by the public and makes them more acceptable to the wider world. The new concept of diversity will be global. Is your company planning to market in the exploding economy of India? How will your company appeal to those potential clients? How familiar are you with the cultural boundaries and bridges there? How many people in your organization speak the language? How many have lived there? How many are socially networked to how many people there and who are those people?

## **17. The lines among marketing, communications and learning will blur**

Educating training, and developing will not only be for employees, but employees will be educating, training and developing consumers. And they’ll be doing it in close collaboration with the marketing and communications

departments. Collaboration and participation among employees leads to the same with all the operational departments in the company. Where does the participation go from there? It will go to the consumer. Internal corporate training programs for employees will be used by the marketing departments, developed by the communications department and used to educate the targeted public as tutorials. Articles, videos, tutorials, interactive courses on the uses and values of the organization's services and products will be adapted for that purpose. Personal computing, home entertainment, how-to videos and problem solving are already in use. It's also tech support, only the consumer becomes the tech. Corporate training programs will be reimagined as consumer education online offerings as a product of multiple departments merging on a goal.

### **18. Corporate APP stores will offer ways to manage work and personal life better**

There are hundreds of thousands of Apps in dozens of categories, including books, business, education, finance, medical and games. The iPhone App stores will be adapted for organizations and become the corporate App stores. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) already provides free Apps nationwide to employees who can report work and labor violations on the spot. For corporations these will be Apps for such things as expense reports, goal tracking and feedback. Apps will feature work team openings, travel and training opportunities and learning new languages. Corporate Apps will also be used to accommodate employee's personal lives like applying for a mortgage or arranging vacations.

### **19. Social media will be required for all employees**

As employees and the corporation build and develop this new way to work, play and learn, there won't be much room for the employee who doesn't want to become part of the socially connected. To ensure a completely networked community corporations will provide training from the very basic to the most current

advancements. Pay grades, promotions, advancement and even survivability will be based heavily on the continuous advancement and certification into the socially connected world.

### **20. Building a portfolio of contract jobs will be the path to permanent full-time employment**

During the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century most workers had three or four start-up jobs gaining experience before they settled in for a permanent job with one employer. So too will the early 21<sup>st</sup> century worker in 2020 have several jobs as an independent contractor building up a resume before obtaining a full time permanent job. Already today, qualified individuals can bid on work offered at sites such as oDesk, Craigslist and Elance where employers can test an individual's skills on short term projects. The path to full time, permanent jobs may include a series of well performed contract jobs or an unpaid internship. Rather than hire up during a good season, companies will farm out more work to such independent contractors to also test out new talent. In the 2020 workforce the sheepskin degree acquired with easy courses may not even get one a job.

We are clearly not in this new world yet. But the signposts have been read and the message is that this is where we are going to be. It an exciting vision of a future with new opportunities for those who prepare. The world of work is changing again.

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Have An Employment Question?

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