

# WHAT THE FUTURE: WORK

How the future of work could  
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stronger PAGE 16

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**+** Experts from Amazon Web Services,  
Darden Restaurants, Gensler and the Non-  
Obvious Co. share how people, life and  
business will shift in the new work era

GAME CHANGERS





# How work and life will blend in a more flexible future

Imagine it's 2030. The future of work has been totally upended. Former office workers now perform their duties from wherever they like, whenever they like, with endless vacation and four-day workweeks. Or ... maybe the future looks a lot like the present.

How will changes to how we work affect how we live? That's the central question of this issue. This is less about human resources topics like upskilling or labor shortages, or about how artificial intelligence will automate us all out of our jobs. It's more about what all those topics mean for us as consumers, commuters and brands trying to create a consistent experience.

That said, let's talk about the future of work itself for a moment, because that's an important starting point. It's easy to look at the tensions in this issue, like flexibility vs. consistency or privacy, or commuting vs. not and see a very divided workplace. Ipsos data shows nearly 50/50 splits on those topics, which leads us to a future we can agree on: a hybrid and flexible workplace. Why? Because if it's truly flexible, one worker can have the flexibility they want, while another can have the consistency of hours or pay or structure they need, right? If the system itself is flexible, everyone can get what they need.

The question is, of course, can we get there? I think the answer is "Yes," as we'll discuss with some of our experts along the way.

I spoke to workplace expert, author and futurist Alexandra Levit. She described a future where your work and your life coexist. "There really won't be a boundary," she says.

In other words, the future will be less about work-life balance and more about work-life *blending*. This will require many things to happen, all of which are in progress and plausible. Levit thinks immersive realities are poised to break out of the gaming world into the business world in a big way, either when the tech improves or when we have another pandemic. "The only reason it's been as slow as it has is because [video conferencing] has worked well enough for what we've needed for now," she says. "The second time this happens, we're going to see an explosion in the usage of metaverse technology."

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt and VR goggles, is gesturing with his hands towards a futuristic cityscape model. The model features tall, white, angular skyscrapers and a network of glowing blue lines representing data or connectivity. The background is a dark, textured surface.

# 41%

of working Americans describe their current job as an office job.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,110 employed U.S. adults.)

Amazon Web Services' Jon Izenstark thinks the next thing we need to do is to evolve the systems and cultures at the office. He says that the pandemic was less transformative than people gave it credit for. All that really changed was the mediums by which we accomplished the same tasks in the same cultures. Now is the time to adapt the workplace to doing things differently — with a big tech assist.

In order to transform to a more hybrid and flexible future, we're going to need empathy. Anna Tavis, a professor at NYU's School of Professional Studies and author of "Humans at Work," sees empathy as "a foundation for human-centered design." Empathy is needed because, she says, "You listen, you look and see what people are doing and walk in their shoes. Do you know how many work-related issues could be solved if we paid attention to whether people are trusting [each other] and enjoy working together?"

Most workers (74%) feel trusted by their employers, according to the Ipsos Future of Work survey. And managers overwhelmingly (82%) say they trust their employees. There's a sizable gap, however on empathy. Just 55% of non-managers say they feel their employer is empathetic, whereas 81% of managers say they have empathy for their staff.

## Empathy is an unguaranteed extension of consumer research. To put it one way, research is about listening, and empathy is about hearing.

As the future plays out, the extent to which we lean into hearing vs. listening will determine how much our flexible future works for the humans and how much that spills over to benefiting the organization, too. As Darden Restaurants' Ali Charri told us, these goals should align. "Happy team members will lead to happy guests and happy guests will lead to strong business performance and happy shareholders," he says.

We're seeing some experiments in the future of work that would play into new ways of structuring our lives and how we pay for them. Many nations and employers are experimenting with four-day workweeks and universal basic income. There's key tension between the desire to emerge from the pandemic, and as some say, build back better, but also a strong desire to "return to normal." So, the future of work could indeed look much like the present.



*Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.*

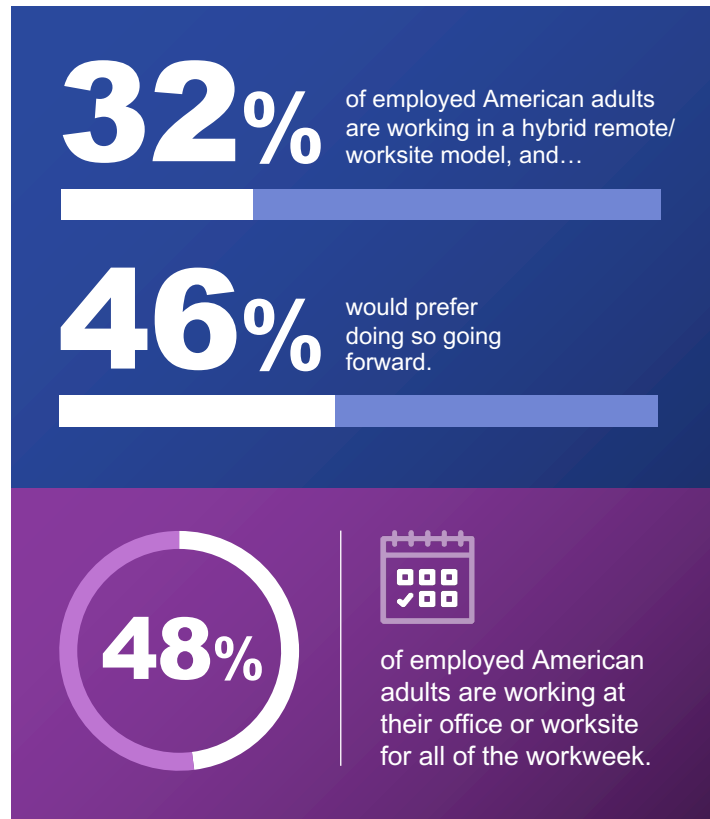
# 81%

of managers say they have empathy for their employees.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,110 employed U.S. adults.)

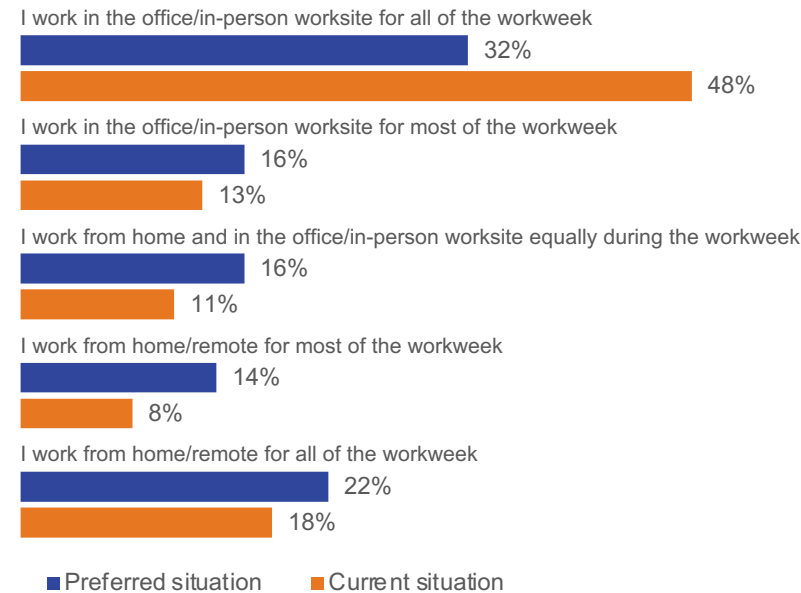
# How business can reinvent work for good

There's no time like the present to change the future



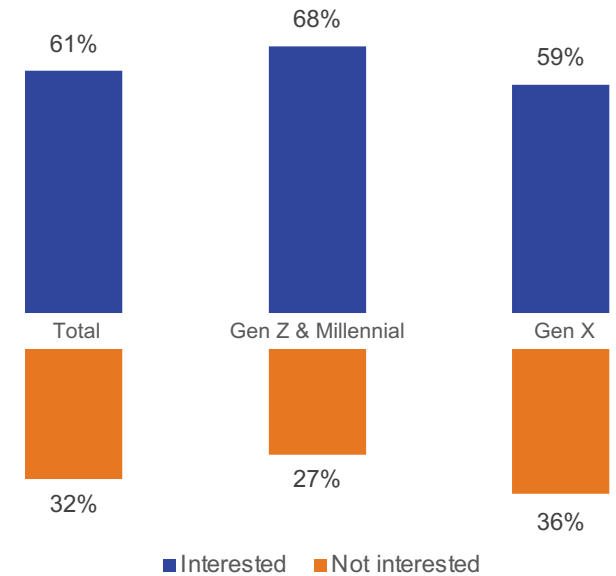
## Most people want to work hybrid-mode

Q. Which of the following describes your working situation/ Regardless of your current work arrangement, how would you most prefer to work moving forward? (% Total)



## How generations desire remote work

Q. If technology exists or existed to allow you to work remotely some or all the time, how interested would you be in working remotely? (% Interested among daily onsite workers)





# Contents



## 1. Territory map

The future of work will be driven by forces coming from six directions. We map them out.

## 2. The lay of the land

We talk with experts from Amazon Web Services, Darden Restaurants, Gensler and the Non-Obvious Co. about how the way people work in the future will influence how and where people live, eat and shop.

## 3. Tensions

Flexibility or consistency? Commutes vs. remote work? Privacy or flexibility? Where people lean in these positions in the future could reshape the power balance between workers, employers and customers.

## 4. Future destinations

Based on our data and interviews with experts, we plot out a potential future — a plausible port in our future journey. Then, thinking of our tensions, we consider what happens if one of them shifts. We use that as waypoint to ponder how that might send us to a different scenario, plausible port two. Finally, we outline the Future Jobs to Be Done, giving you a new way to think about the future.

## 3. Appendix

Want more? We show our work, including the full text of our expert interviews, our contributors and links to what we're reading today that has us thinking about tomorrow.

# Territory: What will drive the future of work?

The future of work will depend on the power balance between employers and employees. Whether companies revert to historical work models or invent new ones will be determined by leaders' appetites to redefine the workplace, corporate culture and success in a tech-enabled society where everything is becoming less anchored to the physical world. What is the best path forward?





# How the future of work could look like the present



Jon Izenstark

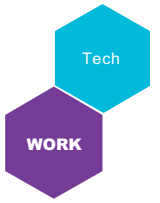
Head, worldwide business development and solutions, HR and workforce transformation, Amazon Web Services

It's easy to think that the pandemic changed everything about work and accelerated or altered the future course we were on — at least for a lot of knowledge workers. Not so fast, says Jon Izenstark, who works with human resource clients for Amazon Web Services. He suggests that we haven't really changed much ... yet. But he argues that now is the time to make the changes we need.

# 61%

of American workers would be interested in working remotely if technology existed to allow them to work remotely some or all of the time.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 365 employed U.S. adults who report working in the office or worksite for all the workweek.)



When the pandemic shut offices around the globe, we didn't have a choice but to go remote. And it worked, because as Izenstark says, it had to. But it raised hopes that the future of work for all could be remote or at least hybrid. He thinks remote is unlikely to stick long-term unless office cultures evolve to support it.

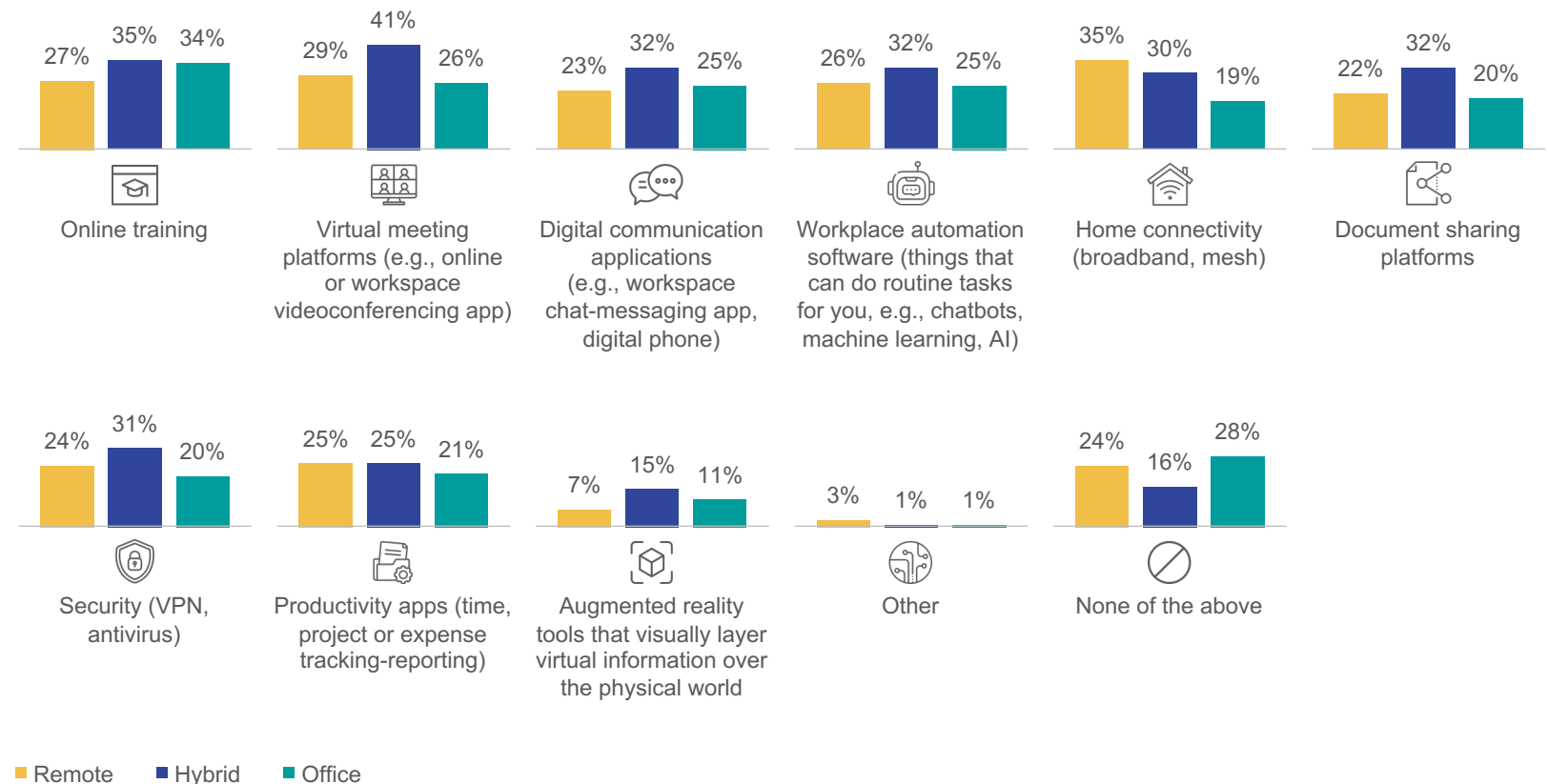
**“People talk about how the pandemic increased cloud transformation. I would argue that’s not what happened. We increased the use of the cloud to keep things running — but we didn’t actually transform anything. We just pushed it all into the cloud and hoped it would work.”**

If thoughtful transformation is just starting. What will that mean for workers and their customers?

[Read the full Q&A on page 29.](#)

## The technology workers want varies by their working mode

Q. Which of the following technologies, if any, do you want your employer to invest in to do your job well or better?



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)



# Why empathy is the answer to shifting customer expectations



Ali Charri

Senior vice president, strategy and insights, Darden Restaurants

In the new world of work, service industries have to navigate customer and staffing shifts related to remote work, labor shortages and the rise in delivery. Darden Restaurants, the largest full-service restaurant company in the U.S. with eight brands ranging from Olive Garden to The Capital Grille, has faced these issues firsthand. While technology has driven many changes, Ali Charri, Darden's senior vice president of strategy and insights, believes the key to winning in this era of flexibility is human empathy.

# 43%

of employed Americans have experienced staffing shortages at restaurants, hotels, travel services or stores in the past three months.

(Source: Ipsos Coronavirus Consumer Tracker conducted Sept. 27-28, 2022, among 1,120 U.S. adults.)

How customers define convenience is changing, especially as life is increasingly lived through screens and more meals are ordered digitally and delivered to homes.

As people look to balance virtual and real life, service companies — including restaurants — must balance their customer experiences and their staffing. Technology is certainly one solution. But to Charri, the industry should double down on service anchored in humanity and empathy.

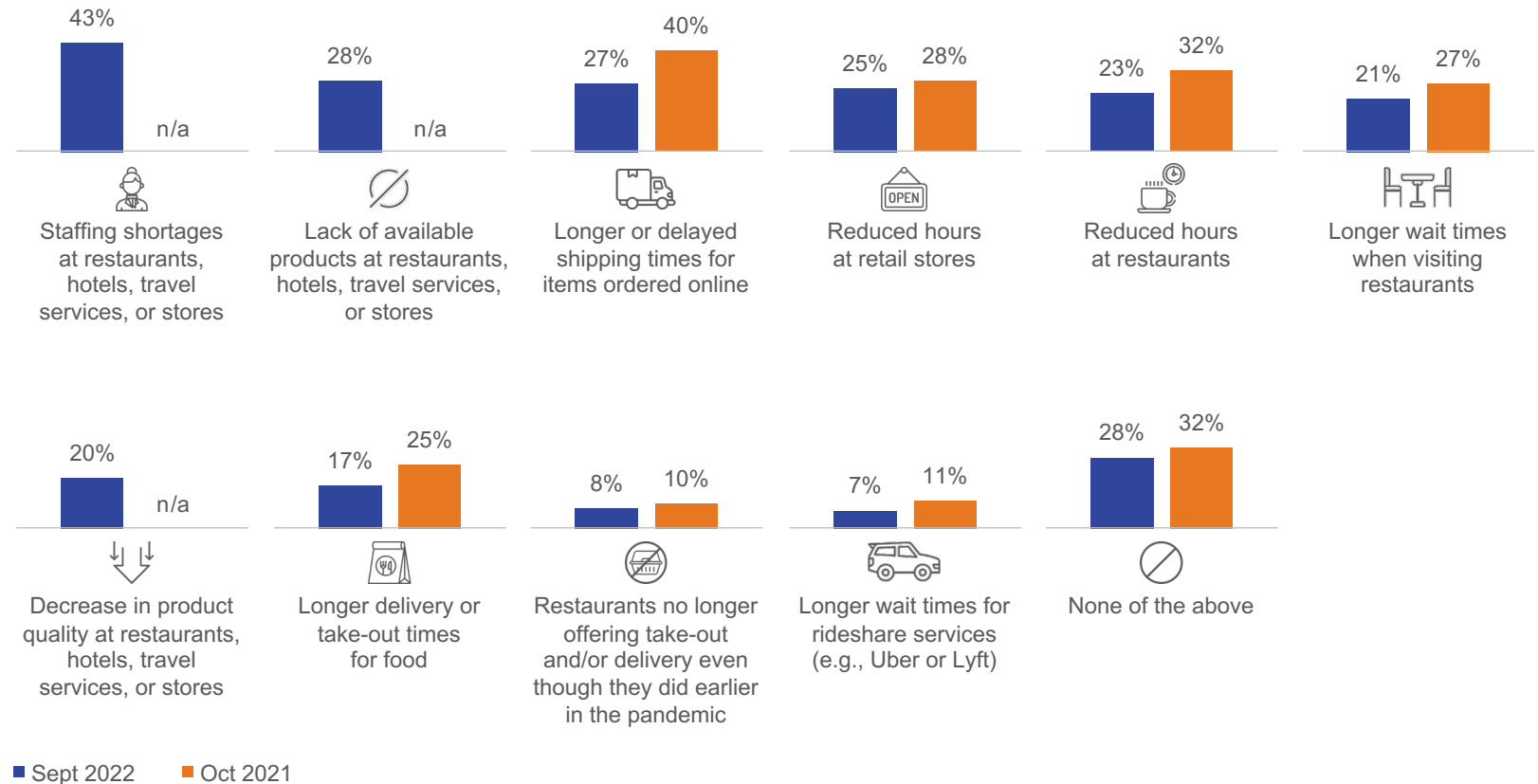
**“That’s the challenge, and the key word here is balance. Technology is wonderful as long as it’s used properly. At least in the full-service segment, we want technology to enhance the service experience, but not replace it.”**

The question is how do you do that effectively?

[Read the full Q&A on page 31.](#)

## Service gaps are improving, but staffing is a notable challenge

Q. In the past three months, which of the following, if any, have you experienced? (% Total)



(Source: Ipsos Coronavirus Consumer Tracker conducted Sept. 27-28, 2022, among 1,120 U.S. adults; and Oct. 26-27, 2021, among 1,160 U.S. adults.)



# Flexible work could shift how and when people retire

Retirement is becoming a fuzzier concept as remote work and work-from-anywhere policies let people phase their exit from the workforce. This shift creates implications for how people prepare financially for their post-career lives as well as how companies manage talent.

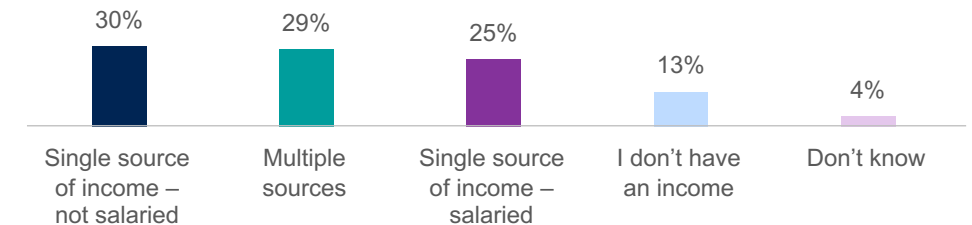
Gig work and flexible work policies could make it easier for senior workers mulling second homes or moves to retirement-friendly communities and states. Flex work also could help bridge retirement fund gaps. Ipsos research for Country Financial found that 63% of Americans think they'll be able to retire comfortably, with 13% not likely at all to be able to, says Jennifer Berg, a director in Ipsos' U.S. Public Affairs team whose expertise includes personal finance.

**“Flexible work helps companies retain knowledge and mentoring from people who otherwise would leave entirely, and helps workers build more secure futures.”**

If workers are managing flexible income streams, multiple residences or nomadic work, they will need more support from financial services experts.

## People have more diverse income streams

Q. Do you have a single source of income, or do you earn income in a few different ways or through different jobs? (% Total)



Source: Ipsos Coronavirus Consumer Tracker conducted Oct. 11-12, 2022, among 1,120 U.S. adults.)



# How the future of work will shape where we live



Andre Brumfield

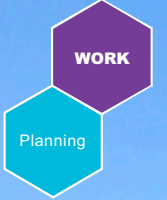
Principal, global leader, cities + urban design, Gensler

With shifts in the way people work come changes in how they live in their homes, work in offices and define cities. These new demands create a fresh opportunity for urban planners to rethink development, transportation, business districts and neighborhoods, says Andre Brumfield, principal, global leader for cities + urban design at architectural firm Gensler. The question is how to plan the built environments of the future when work and life are more portable.

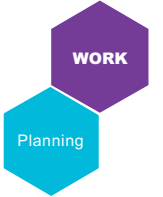
84%

of employed American adults work on a computer during the workday, and 55% shop online during the workday.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 employed U.S. adults.)







In the coming years, employers, cities and neighborhoods will grapple with how to plan for populations in flux. This creates a challenge for planning how people will work, eat, shop and commute within their cities, says Brumfield.

**“If anything, we’ve learned over the last two-and-a-half years that we have to design to be more flexible in the spaces that we work in, more flexible in the spaces that we live in.”**

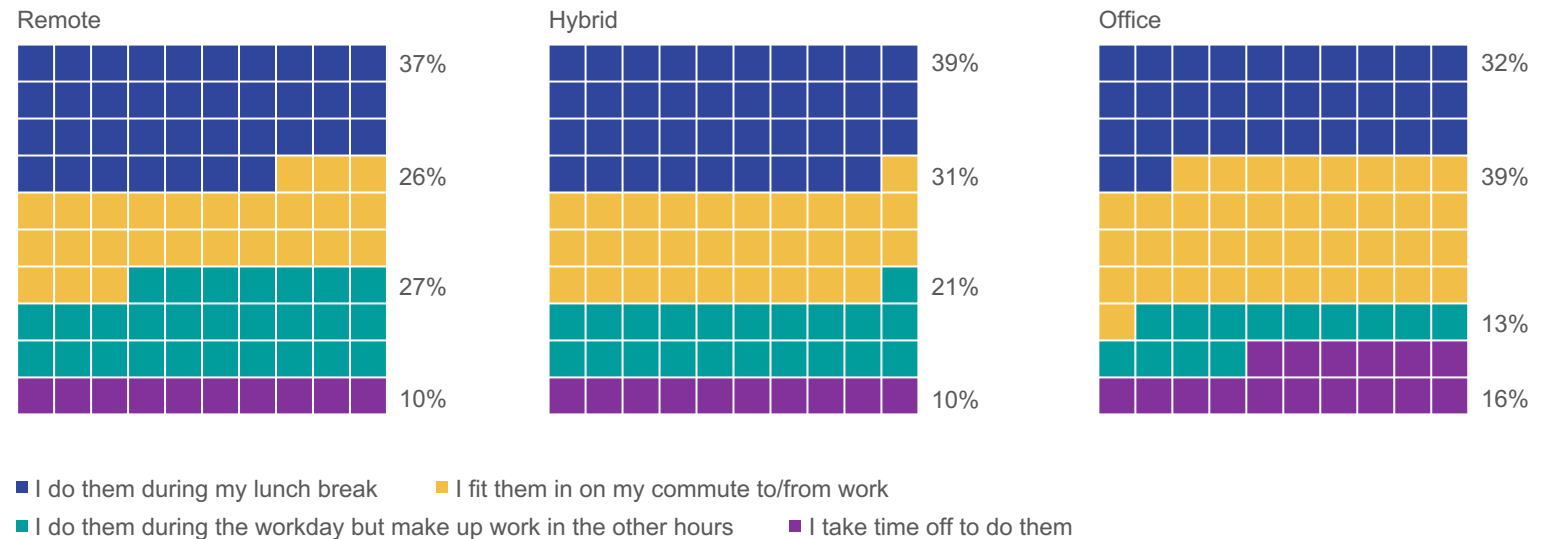
Another planning issue is capacity, whether in offices or public transportation. Both are below their pre-pandemic levels.

Brumfield believes that cities will need to continue their long-range planning and investment in things like transportation with an eye on the next decade rather than the recent past.

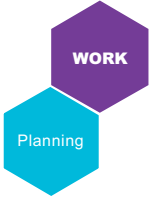
[Read the full Q&A on page 33.](#)

## Flexible workstyles blur work-life balance

Q. Thinking of when you run personal errands or schedule personal appointments during the workday, which of the following best describes how and when you most often get those done?



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 857 employed U.S. adults who often, sometimes or rarely run errands or schedule personal appointments during the workday.)



# How flexible work drives on-demand rides

Over the past two years, most workers have experienced a shift in the flexibility around where and when they work. And 25% of employed Americans ages 50-plus no longer commute at all, per fresh Ipsos data.

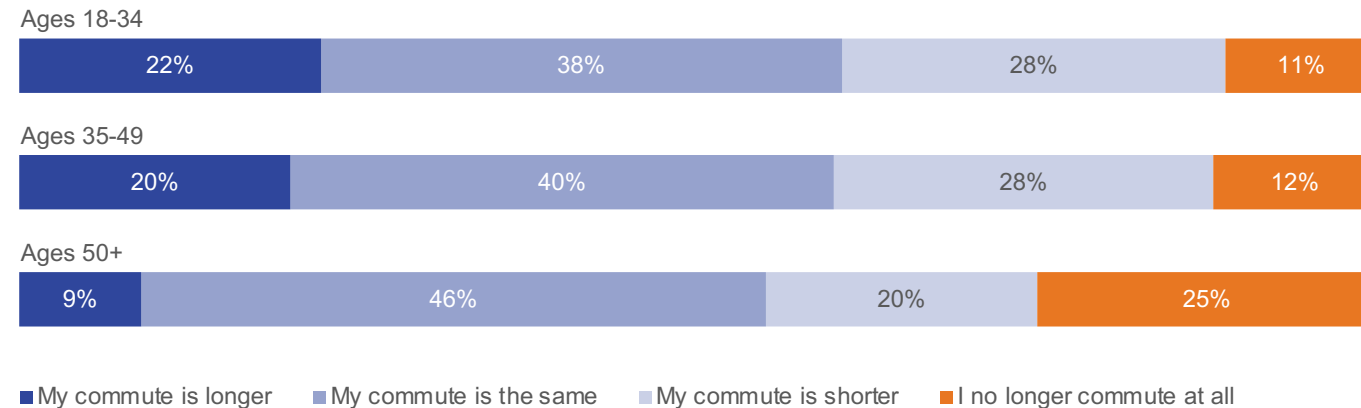
Even if the frequency of peoples' commutes varies, they will always want reliable, efficient and safe ways to get around. More flexibility means people will want more choice in their rides, says Kacey Muccino, a vice president in Ipsos' Automotive practice.

**“Whether leasing, ride-shares, vehicle subscriptions or peer-to-peer shared ownership, people are increasingly seeking alternatives to owning a single vehicle.”**

If flexible work has this much impact on commutes, what happens if employers shorten the workweek?

## How work flexibility shapes commutes

Q. How, if at all, has increased flexibility affected your commute?



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 679 employed U.S. adults whose work flexibility has increased in the past two years.)



# How a four-day workweek could change everything

**A four-day workweek might seem like a faraway dream, but it might be closer than you think. A 70-plus company pilot study in the U.K. is already showing no loss of productivity for most participants. It's easy to forget that the five-day workweek is a relatively new invention. It was a response by early 20th century Christian factory workers who were offended that religious Jews were making up their Saturday work on Sunday, the Christian sabbath. The solution was to give the Jewish workers a two-day weekend.**

Prior to this movement, workers in the then largely agricultural economy labored six or seven days a week. Two-day weekends quickly spread to everyone because, as entrepreneur and author Rohit Bhargava discusses later in the issue, that which is a good idea for some often winds up a good idea for many. With technology and culture shifting allowing flexibility for some, and efficient automation of many tasks, a four-day workweek could take off. Before it does, companies will need to plan for multiple scenarios, says Oscar Yuan, president of Ipsos Strategy3.

**“Of all the future workplace trends we are tracking, the four-day workweek could easily be the most transformative.”**

Think about the role work plays in our schedules, our personal lives, where we live and where we shop, even how we entertain. Even our popular culture is often set in the workplace, where office romances are a trope. A change in how much time we spend working vs. how much time we have for leisure would be a sea change. It's hard to imagine an industry that wouldn't be impacted.



**9.9** million

people reported as self-employed in 2021, about 6% of all occupations.

(Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.)



# Why diversity makes companies stronger



Rohit Bhargava

Entrepreneur, co-author, “Beyond Diversity”

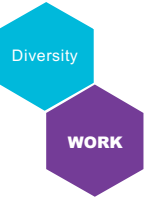
Given a choice, workers want a future that works for everyone, according to Ipsos data. That means creating workplaces and conditions that work for the entire employed population. Rohit Bhargava is a former advertising executive who now runs his own consultancy called the Non-Obvious Co., among other projects. One could argue that making workplaces great for everyone is the right thing to do. But there are business implications as well.

# 79%

of employed U.S. adults say their workplace is diverse enough vs. 21% who say their workplace is not diverse enough, when asked to choose the statement closest to their view.

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)





Bhargava asserts that if companies want to have a future, issues of diversity, equity and inclusion should be top considerations. In some industries, employing women is progress toward diversity. But these efforts need to include all backgrounds, identities, ages and abilities. Not all companies are getting it right yet, he says.

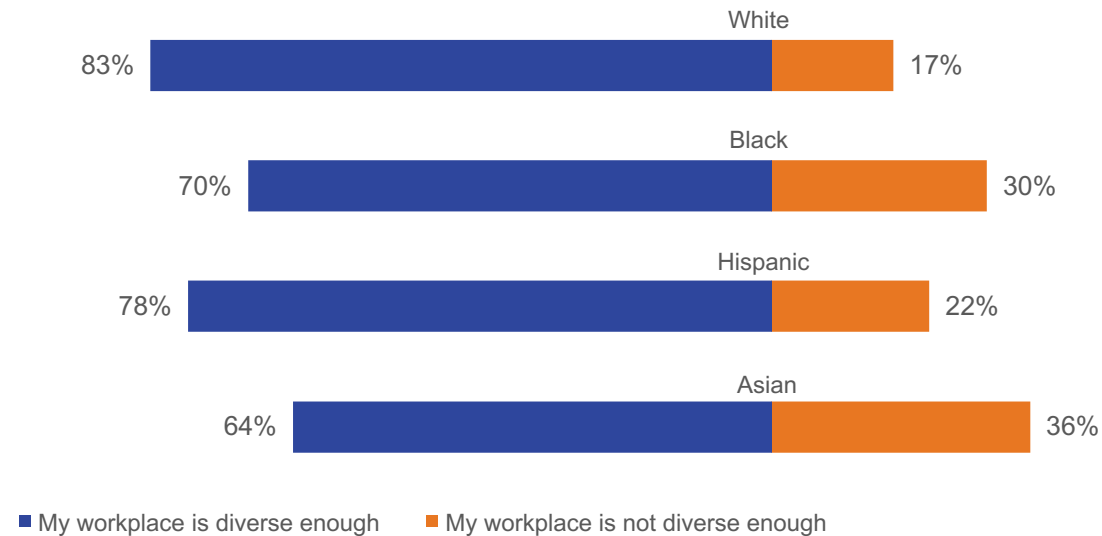
**“Those companies tend to miss the next big market opportunity. They leave out large groups of consumers, so they limit their own growth. They are places that people don’t want to work at long-term, so they have a major talent crisis. Eventually all those things combine, and they die.”**

The challenge is then to define “diversity” properly, and staff accordingly. The insights team can be a good place to start.

[Read the full Q&A on page 35.](#)

## Who thinks their workplaces are getting diversity right

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Selected)



(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)

## Five tensions that will drive change:

# 1. Flexibility vs. consistency

Work was changing before the pandemic. That change has accelerated, of course. But now, says Amazon Web Services' Jon Izenstark, it's time to really transform the way we work. While it's easy to look at this tension line and see a majority prizing flexibility, the 41% who value consistency cannot be discounted. But when you think about it, "consistency" should absolutely be achievable in a structure that is flexible. If we are intentional in the solutions we create, they could easily work for all workers, regardless of their situations and preferences. "The digital transformations that are helping the hybrid employees are also going to help the on-premise employees," says Izenstark.

### Flexibility trumps consistency for most workers

I prefer flexibility in where and when I work

59%

41%

I prefer consistency in where and when I work

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)



## Five tensions that will drive change:

# 2. Benefits make me stay vs. make me go

Benefits are a big part of what keep people in a job. In the pandemic, the power pendulum swung to workers as labor shortages pushed up wages and incomes and employers tried to lure and retain staff with new benefits. But inflation is already starting to swing the power back to employers. The other side of what keeps employees in place is engagement and humanity, and if benefits erode, employers will have to lean on those even harder. Darden Restaurants values both sides of the equation because it understands that everyone wins when it does. “Happy team members will lead to happy guests, and happy guests will lead to strong business performance and happy shareholders,” says Ali Charri, Darden’s senior vice president of strategy and insights.

### Twice as many workers are satisfied with their benefits

The benefits my employer provides are sufficient to keep me satisfied at my job

68%

32%

The benefits my employer provides are not sufficient to keep me satisfied at my job

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)

## Five tensions that will drive change:

# 3. Commute vs. no commute

Pre-pandemic, the action in urban planning and real estate was about the growth in downtown living. In the pandemic, that pivoted to the idea that we'd need more space, which made the suburbs more attractive. Will we return to pre-pandemic urbanization? The financial stakes are high to get people downtown. Hybrid work, coupled with a chance to skip the commute, will be a lure. Companies could subsidize city dwellers as many now offer commuter benefits. Maybe instead of the office FOMO you read about today, office workers will have FOMO of folks working and commuting more flexibly. Gensler's Andre Brumfield sees a need for transformation. "It's thinking about the future of our downtowns and our central business districts in a much different way that allows for a broader mix of people."

### Workers are evenly split on commutes

Commuting is an acceptable part of the workday

51%

49%

I would prefer a job where I don't have to commute

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)



## Five tensions that will drive change:

# 4. Diversity settled vs. a goal

Most people think their workplace is diverse enough already. But how they define “diversity” might be part of that. At least, that’s one spin. Diversity, equity and inclusion are increasingly baked into company purpose statements and HR initiatives. But entrepreneur and author Rohit Bhargava thinks it’s time that companies expand their thinking. Companies should lean in, “not just because it’s the right thing to do, but because it actually makes us stronger as a company. I think that message got lost for a long time,” he says. If more examples emerge of how the bottom line could be helped in myriad ways with a more diverse workplace, will that cause this tension to shift? And if shifts and changes are made, will these changes also at some point shift back?

### Most say their workplace is as diverse as needed

My workplace is  
diverse enough

79%

21%

My workplace is not  
diverse enough

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)



## Five tensions that will drive change:

# 5. Privacy vs. flexibility

Today we are divided on the issue of workplace surveillance if it's a clear trade-off for more flexible working situations. But this tension could easily go either way in the future. Surveillance technology is maturing rapidly and could plausibly get much more (or less) intrusive depending on how a combination of development, ethics and regulation plays out. That could turn into a world where workplace surveillance is welcomed. Or a world where it is reviled. And the worker may or may not have a choice about which world they get to live in. Losing that choice could lead to a negative reaction that drives the tension more toward flexibility. How this plays out will be pivotal to the future of work as these trends collide.

### Workers are split between flexibility and privacy

I would allow my employer to monitor my online activity during the day if it meant greater flexibility in where I work

52%

48%

Knowing my employer is not monitoring my online activity is more important than flexibility in where I work

Q. For each of the pairs of statements, please select the statement that comes closest to your view, even if neither statement is exactly right. (% Total)

(Source: Ipsos survey conducted Sept. 23-28, 2022, among 1,093 currently employed U.S. adults.)

## Plausible port one:

# We lean more toward privacy, and the future looks like the present

**It's 2033. You're at the office. Your bosses, used to double-digit growth coming out of the pandemic, didn't trust that employees could keep up that productivity at home. Employee pushback on monitoring, coupled with complex legal issues around privacy meant it was just easier to bring everyone back. Once enough major companies did it, it was easy for others to follow and hard for employees to have any sway as the recession of the mid-2020s dragged on.**

The pandemic and working from home was a nice break from commuting. There was less traffic, less pollution, gas prices were low, and everyone mostly managed to get their jobs done. Your kids liked that you could coach their softball team in your newfound evening time.

But as Amazon Web Services' Jon Izenstark says, we hadn't really transformed our office culture and processes. When we eventually tried, bosses were sold on tech that watched workers with webcams and used all kinds of new AI and machine learning to watch every keystroke you made. No one liked it. The managers didn't enjoy having to be Big Brother and the workers didn't enjoy being spied on. Trust eroded. Conflict ensued.

This, coupled with a perception that people who had returned to the office were getting the needed facetime with the bosses to get ahead, and general fear of missing out created a perfect rationale to maintain the status quo. Folks who went back to the office regained some privacy, oddly. Other trends accelerated such as automation of increasingly complicated tasks, pay disparities between bosses and workers, greater diversity in the workforce, working longer and retiring later. This led to an older, more diverse, more financially dependent workforce competing for scarcer jobs against the AIs. But workers aren't being watched ... as much as they could have been.



# Waypoints

**Now imagine a different future where people become even more willing to make the trade-off of surveillance and monitoring in exchange for flexibility.**

In this future, the tension between privacy vs. flexibility moves from essentially evenly split, as it is now, toward the flexible side. But that freedom comes with a cost. Perhaps we were conditioned for it. Perhaps all the times we thought, “What do I care if the government or whoever knows my search history. I don’t search for anything bad,” got us used to trading our privacy for other conveniences. And what could be more convenient than the ability to have more control over when and where we work? These freedoms become available to more workers thanks to advances in technology and changing workplace needs.



# Plausible port two:

## We lean more toward flex, and the future transforms

**In this future, flexible workforces remake our cities, our habits, our routines, our jobs and our lives. This future features an incredible amount of workplace surveillance. Many good things could come from that. But a transformation this large upends many other things.**

On one hand, we see better, specific and in-the-moment training when the AI senses employees need it, or leadership interventions as managers misstep, or coaching for interpersonal challenges, habits and routines. Some workers get a “platinum executive” package that includes a variety of virtual assistants, dashboards and concierge services — and dialed-back monitoring.

However, down the corporate ladder, more use of scoring algorithms “at work” that evaluate productivity to interpersonal and communication skills lead to burnout, churn and frustration but is an accepted tradeoff for greater freedom and flexibility to work from home. We settle into a normal where we can’t imagine commuting life.

The pandemic-era thinking that hybrid and remote workers would have office FOMO turns out to be flipped as on-site employees read social posts of coworkers in scenic locations or cooking wondrous meals or spending time with their kids. Cities struggle to revitalize into live/work lifestyle centers without the core of downtown workers creating a daytime economy. Public transit also suffers, and automakers pivot to battery electric vehicles even faster in hopes of renewing their fleets to sell cars to meet new consumer needs. The mid-2020s turn into a period of massive socio-economic and political flux that leads to a great reckoning in all corners of the economy.



# Future Jobs to Be Done

The traditional “Jobs to Be Done” framework focuses on the tasks and outcomes that people are trying to accomplish and why they hire products and services to help them achieve that outcome. We don’t buy an Uber; we hire one to get us back and forth to work. We don’t buy a personal computer; we hire it to help us work and be productive.

Ipsos takes this theory forward with *future* Jobs to Be Done (fJTBD). We envision powerful and plausible future scenarios through strategic foresight. These scenarios help us define the circumstances in which people may find themselves, like working from anywhere. What will their new needs be? Then we use fJTBD to tie these scenarios to actions that organizations can take today and tomorrow to help people meet those future needs.

While many needs are enduring and do not change over time (e.g., food and shelter), the context of that job (e.g., eating and working from home) will change that job space and the potential solutions and alternatives. Because of this, we often create fJTBD clusters that are higher-order and needs-driven. Within each, we can envision more granular fJTBD to illuminate opportunity spaces to meet human needs in new ways.

*Sophie Washington is a senior consultant with Ipsos Strategy3.*





# Potential Future Jobs to Be Done related to work

1

## Help me avoid surveillance

The rise of VPNs and apps like Tinder creating undercover “work mode” desktop versions have turned the work surveillance landscape into a mess for both employers and employees seeking both different and similar solutions.

### Potential fJTBD:

- Help me control my work performance data
- Help relieve my anxiety over being watched
- Help me keep track of remote employees in a humane way

**Imagine a world where** ... the security and surveillance-freedom sections of employment contracts are evaluated like a benefits package.

2

## Help me feel valued

Some remote employees prefer their home office but worry about getting lost behind the screen. Others stress about the slow growth of salaries compared to the increasing cost of living. And others desire recognition for their tireless hours.

### Potential fJTBD:

- Help me find a job that values who I am as an individual
- Help me survive and thrive, financially
- Help me be recognized for my work ethic when I’m “less visible” when remote

**Imagine a world where** ... state-based salary disclosure laws are federally mandated, leading to employer competition for workers.

3

## Help me create work-life balance

Parents struggle with going fully back to the office while other remote workers crave the 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. time limits that an office brings. But all employees crave the flexibility to choose *when* and *where* they work.

### Potential fJTBD:

- Help me connect with my colleagues in a meaningful and authentic way
- Help me feel in control of my emotional and physical well-being
- Help me improve my lifestyle

**Imagine a world where** ... an AI named Alex alerts you when your weekly work life is “overstepping” the bounds of personal life responsibilities like Apple’s weekly screen-time notifications.



# Appendix

In this section,  
we show our work  
and our workers

1. Full Q&As
2. Signals
3. Contributors



# How the future of work could look like the present



Jon Izenstark

Head, worldwide business development and solutions - HR and workforce transformation, Amazon Web Services

**It's easy to think that the pandemic changed everything about work and accelerated or altered the future course we were on — at least for a lot of knowledge industry workers. Not so fast, says Jon Izenstark, who works with human resources clients for Amazon Web Services. He suggests that we haven't really changed much ... yet. But he also argues that now is the time to make the changes we need.**

## **Matt Carmichael: What did the pandemic change?**

Jon Izenstark: The pandemic pushed forward our knowledge of how people work by about 10 years in an uncontrolled, haphazard, almost terrifying way. No one was sure how it was going to work. We just knew it had to work. People talk about how the pandemic increased cloud transformation. I would argue that's not what happened. We used the cloud to keep things running, but we didn't actually transform anything. We just pushed it all into the cloud and hoped it would work. Now that the pandemic is starting not to be prohibitive in our ability to experiment, we're starting to figure out what worked and what didn't and integrate that into a long-term future of work.

## **Carmichael: Did hybrid impact all workers evenly?**

Izenstark: If you think about how marketers segment their customers, HR thinks about employees the same way. Customers aren't just men or women or college

educated or living in the Midwest. They're a combination of those things, but they also have drivers behind the decisions they make. In HR, it's not just someone who's got a STEM background or someone who is a particular gender, it's why do they come to work? What we're trying to understand is how hybrid work impacts those personas of employees, and how we design programs that are going to help attract and retain the personas that are really more valuable to the organization's long-term growth and future.

## **Carmichael: Is it plausible that we'll get more tailored workplace solutions for those personas?**

Izenstark: That will happen as we get more sophisticated on how we identify and measure those personas. We've been doing that in HR to some extent for a while now. Companies will design programs that, while they're available to everybody, will be more impactful to one persona over another.



**Carmichael: Is work from home here to stay?**

Izenstark: Elements of flexibility are probably here to stay, but I don't believe the office is dead. And not everyone wants to hear that, by the way. It might be good for an individual, but not always for the organization. Employment brands today demand as much flexibility as possible. You have people who say, I worked fine during the pandemic at home, so I should be able to WFH all the time. But it's not necessarily about the individual. It is about the organization — how people build networks at work, how they innovate, etc. We're looking at the entire employee life cycle of how those personas are attracted and selected and hired, how they're onboarded, how they're engaged.

I think that the future of work is going to adapt to the needs of the business and the employees simultaneously, and you'll just become used to it.

**Carmichael: How will technology enable that?**

Izenstark: Communication tools you see today are a stopgap. You're going to see more use of machine learning to help nudge managers and employees into using best practices and recommending developmental activities and exercises based on the work you do. And companies are

experimenting with ways to analyze that data, to help you become more engaged with your colleagues

**Carmichael: How will organizations balance work and life for their employees?**

Izenstark: It's going to come down to being really open during the hiring process about what people want from the work experience and coming to some sort of consensus between the employer and the employee. A major driver of early service turnover is when an employee starts a new job and they realize that the employee value proposition and the employer value proposition don't mesh. That usually happens in about the first 90 days.

**Carmichael: And what about jobs where you can't be hybrid or remote?**

Izenstark: The digital transformations that are helping the hybrid employees are also going to help the on-premise employees, too. For instance, there will be ways to interact with developmental tools that didn't exist before for either by phone or by tablet or if you don't have a smartphone, you can do it by text.

*Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.*

**“Elements of flexibility are probably here to stay, but I don’t believe the office is dead. And not everyone wants to hear that, by the way. It might be good for an individual, but not always for the organization.”**

# Why empathy is the answer to shifting customer expectations



Ali Charri

Senior vice president, strategy and insights, Darden Restaurants

**In the new world of work, service industries have to navigate customer and staffing shifts related to remote work, labor shortages and the rise in delivery. Darden Restaurants, the largest full-service restaurant company in the U.S. with nearly 1,900 locations across eight brands, ranging from Olive Garden to The Capital Grille, has faced these issues firsthand. While technology has driven many changes, Ali Charri, Darden's senior vice president of strategy and insights, believes the key to winning in this era of flexibility is human empathy.**

## Kate MacArthur: What do people value now in a service experience and going forward?

Ali Charri: We've been talking about convenience for years and the convenience trends are here to stay. When you think about flexibility and you talk about convenience at the same time, they go hand in hand.

The reason we've seen an explosion in demand for delivery is driven by convenience. The reason we've seen an explosion in the growth and adoption of technology is driven by convenience. And it was the driver of the growth in demand for off-premise [takeout and curbside].

## MacArthur: How does that change peoples' expectations for service?

Charri: It changes a lot of things, not just our expectations. We've separated products from experiences. In the past, when you wanted to go

and buy a pair of shoes, you would go to the mall, and you would get excited about it. It was an event. Now all you do is go online and order three pairs of shoes from somewhere and you try one at home and you return the other two.

That excitement has been stripped out of that experience. As a result, technology has made many experiences more transactional. Tech is also changing the customer service model. It's impacting how we deliver service to the customer.

## MacArthur: How do you get the human factor right in services, and particularly dining?

Charri: As an industry, we should double down on the concept of real human service or service anchored in humanity. We are in the people business. Food has always been the basis for social life.



**MacArthur: How do service providers balance experiences to be how and when people want services?**

Charri: That's the challenge, and the key word here is balance. Technology is wonderful as long as it's used properly. At least in the full-service segment, we want technology to enhance the service experience, but not replace it. Unfortunately, you're seeing some operators out there starting to use technology as a complete replacement for human service. And the reason why in the long term is it's more economical, more efficient. And in the short term, given the labor challenges, it's a solution. Delivery is doing well but that model is difficult to navigate. The third-party delivery providers are not making money, the restaurant operators are not making money, and the consumer is paying a premium for a less optimal product. I don't know how sustainable it is.

**MacArthur: How can brands prepare for uncertainties like labor shortages and tech issues?**

Charri: You're always going to face challenges. This is not rocket science. Happy team members will lead to happy guests, and happy guests will lead to strong business performance and happy shareholders. Our team members take pride in serving our guests, and they'll do whatever it takes to make sure that they're satisfied.

**MacArthur: How can any service brand learn from those things like team service to provide maximum service?**

Charri: We leverage technology to enhance the experience. For instance, settling the check at the end of the meal. People don't want to wait 10 minutes for their check to show up and then another five minutes for the credit card transaction to be done. In some of our restaurants and some of our brands, we have pay-at-the-table devices where you don't even need to ask the server for the check. On the subject of training, what we try to emphasize is to teach our team members to serve with empathy. Empathy is about being nice and understanding. We want our guests to feel that they are being acknowledged, feel like somebody is actually thinking about them, and somebody wants to know them and ensure that they get what they need. Those are the kind of feelings we want to grow within people. There's another avenue to this.

**MacArthur: What is that?**

Charri: We are not just competing against other full-service restaurants or against delivery. We're competing for people's time. So, everything is being redefined unless we remind people of the specialness of being together and having real connections.

*Kate MacArthur is deputy editor of What the Future.*

**“We are not just competing against other full-service restaurants or against delivery. We’re competing for people’s time. So, everything is being redefined unless we remind people of the specialness of being together and having real connections.”**

# How the future of work will shape where we live



Andre Brumfield

Principal, design director, global leader, cities + urban design, Gensler

With shifts in the way people work come changes in how they live in their homes, work in offices and define cities. These new demands create a fresh opportunity for urban planners to rethink development, transportation, business districts and neighborhoods, says Andre Brumfield, principal, global leader for cities + urban design at architectural firm Gensler. The question is how to plan the built environments of the future when work and life are more portable.

**Kate MacArthur:** There have been a lot of changes in how and where people work in recent years. How do you think this will look in the future?

Andre Brumfield: One thing is clear: It's going to be much different. There is going to be hybrid work for the foreseeable future, if not permanently. How companies preserve their cultures while responding to hybrid work is going to be the challenge. It's going to be a case-by-case situation.

**MacArthur:** How do you design spaces and homes and cities for this fluctuating environment?

Brumfield: If anything, we've learned over the last two-and-a-half years that we have to design to be more flexible in the spaces that we work in and more flexible in the spaces that we live in. Both our homes and workplaces need to be as flexible as possible to balance the needs for life, work and how our children are educated at home.

**MacArthur:** How can you design cities to be adaptable for changing demand for services like transportation, food or entertainment?

Brumfield: What does it look like when you have a population that may be downtown three days a week? Some cities are already experiencing this. Which days are those peak days during the week that they can adjust their businesses and make sure they're still going to be successful, but also serve a population that is not as consistent as it was in March of 2020?

Public transportation has the same challenge when ridership levels may be topping off at 60% capacity from pre-pandemic numbers. We need to stay the course in our commitment to public transportation in the long run and find ways to continue to invest and think about where we want to be as a city in 2030 and 2035, and not react to where we have been in ridership over the past 18 to 24 months.



**MacArthur: What signals are you prioritizing as you consider how to plan for the future?**

Brumfield: We're always trying to understand what drives the people's decision-making in terms of the quality of life they want to have, and, more importantly, what are those amenities that the built environment offers for them to make their decisions about where they want to live.

**MacArthur: What will home mean when it comes to having a hybrid or flexible or adaptable work situation?**

Brumfield: Sometimes it's not just having an office. Not everyone has the luxury of being able to have space for their family to convert from a bedroom to an office.

What are the ways we can think about our living environment that allows our spaces to transform over periods of time, whether it's during the school year or during heavy workload periods where parents are working from home, or as it relates to couples who may be living in a smaller space in a very dense urban environment? The more that we're able to provide flexibility and think about what we want our home environments to be to have that balance is a must moving forward.

**MacArthur: How might a central business district evolve in the future based on the way people work?**

Brumfield: There's a clear disconnect between the ideal 21<sup>st</sup> century office space and the current aged office stock that dominates many of our downtowns. As a result, there's a high vacancy rate in some of these older buildings.

So, central business districts are now exploring ways to convert aged office buildings into new uses. Office-to-residential conversion seems to be the most popular option and could be a way to repopulate some of our downtowns that have been losing population. It's thinking about the future of our downtowns and our central business districts in a much different way that allows for a broader mix of people.

**MacArthur: Will those planning factors be more based on life stage or some other demographic breakdown?**

Brumfield: It's about creating neighborhoods of choice throughout the city. Ideally, each city should have an offering for all residents for all stages of their lives from ages 8 to 80.

*Kate MacArthur is deputy editor of What the Future.*

**“It’s about creating neighborhoods of choice throughout the city. Ideally, each city should have an offering for all residents for all stages of their lives from ages 8 to 80.”**

# Why diversity makes companies stronger



Rohit Bhargava

Entrepreneur, co-author, “Beyond Diversity”

**Given a choice, we want a future that works for everyone, according to Ipsos data. For the future of work, that means creating workplaces and conditions that work for the entire employed population. Rohit Bhargava is a former advertising executive who now runs his own consultancy called the Non-Obvious Co. among other projects. One could argue that making workplaces great for everyone is the right thing to do. But there are other reasons as well.**

**Matt Carmichael: Nearly 80% of workers think their workplace is diverse enough. Is that a problem?**

Rohit Bhargava: I guess it depends on what they think is diverse. In different industries, diversity means something different. In banking and finance, diversity has to mean bringing more women into the workplace. But gender diversity also means hiring more male elementary school teachers. What's interesting is sometimes people don't exactly know what someone else means by diversity so they put their own lens on it.

**Carmichael: Age diversity is part of it, too, right?**

Bhargava: I think it absolutely needs to, and I think that some industries have a terrible reputation of doing it very badly. I come from marketing and advertising, and it would be almost impossible for you to find a significant number of people over 40 who are at any level except for maybe the top.

**Carmichael: What does a diversifying customer base mean for how we hire for customer service?**

Bhargava: For people who interact with customers on a frequent basis, the training that they really need is in empathy. No matter how diverse or evolved we consider ourselves, it's hard to imagine someone else's situation when you've never experienced it. What people who are great at customer service do is put their own experiences aside and empathize with someone else's experience, not by saying, “I understand what it's like to be a black female consumer going into a retail environment and being followed by a gaze of someone who's working in that environment.” No, I don't understand that. So, to appreciate that and empathize with it and say, “Look, we're going to try and do what we can to speak up when we see it because now you've spotlighted it for us.” That's big.”



**Carmichael: In the future more customer experiences will likely be through AI. If the AI knows that you are a Hispanic female and then takes on a Hispanic female persona what issues does that create?**

Bhargava: The first place that needs to shift is indicating to someone that they are dealing with something that is artificial. That doesn't mean it can't help you. It could be a better experience, but only if the development included Hispanic females. You could create an experience that would be culturally appropriate and relevant and not minimizing, but you'd have to involve people from that culture in order to do it.

**Carmichael: What happens if we improve diversity and inclusion in future workplaces?**

Bhargava: First, innovation serves more people and so your market becomes bigger. Who doesn't want that? That's a real business benefit. Second, your products become better. A team at P&G added tactile bumps or dots to shampoo bottles so people who had visual impairment could tell the difference between shampoo and conditioner by the bumps. It ended up being useful for anyone else who had their eyes closed in the shower, which is everybody. Sometimes we create things that seem like they're only useful for a small subset, and they become useful for everybody.

**Carmichael: And what if companies fail to create better workplaces in the future?**

Bhargava: Those companies tend to miss the next big market opportunity. They leave out large groups of consumers, so they limit their own growth. They are places that people don't want to work at long-term, so they have a major talent crisis. Eventually all those things combine, and they die.

**Carmichael: How should we think about this for the insights teams of the future?**

Bhargava: I talk all the time about non-obvious thinking, and what I mean by that is seeing what other people don't see. The only way to do that is by either asking people that other people don't ask or by building your ability to empathize with and see things from a perspective that isn't your own. Doing that is really difficult, but possible. The way that it's possible is by not shutting down the one thing that we were born with and have had for our whole lives, but could become really good at burying, which is our own curiosity.

*Matt Carmichael is editor of What the Future and head of the Ipsos Trends & Foresight Lab.*

**“Sometimes we create things that seem like they’re only useful for a small subset, and they become useful for everybody.”**

# Signals

What we're reading today that has us thinking about tomorrow

**Worker productivity scores** via the [New York Times](#). Is having your online activity monitored a fair trade for remote work? Employees have mixed feelings.

**Software robots are gaining ground in white-collar office world** via [Bloomberg](#). AI programs are increasingly effective at completing simple office tasks. Will this increase workers' productivity, or will it put them out of a job?

**Nearly 70% of Americans are looking for extra work to combat inflation** via [CNBC](#). Between inflation and fears of a recession, more and more Americans are adding side gigs to make ends meet.

**The return-to-office debate is maybe only happening in big coastal cities** via the [New York Times](#). This debate is less universal than it seems from reading, well, the New York Times.

**The future of pay transparency in tech** via [Protocol](#). California and other states have passed laws mandating pay transparency for job listings.

**Top Performers Have a Superpower: Happiness** via [MIT Sloan Management Review](#). This large-scale study found that well-being predicts job performance.

**The pivot to remote work accounted for 60% of the US home price surge, study says** via [Business Insider](#). A new study from the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco found a close link between pandemic-era work-from-home policies and home valuations. What will happen if workers return to the office?

**Quick take on the workforce** via [Ipsos](#). This white paper from Ipsos Public Affairs distills today's workplace landscape into five key insights for business leaders.

**Four ways to future-proof your brand during inflation** via [Ipsos](#). How can your brand navigate an inflationary climate? Ipsos Strategy3 shares a series of insights for future-proofing in difficult times.

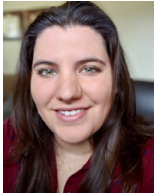
**Seven tips for putting your artificial intelligence to work** via [Ipsos](#). In 2022, AI is nothing new — but how can businesses leverage it? Ipsos Synthesio explains.

**Black Business Month: Innovation, inclusion and insights** via [Ipsos](#). Listen to Ipsos' Black Business Month-themed webinar, featuring tips and insights from a dynamic panel of researchers, DEI specialists, small business experts, and Black business owners.

Scanning for signals is a type of research that is foundational to foresight work. These signals were collected by the staff of What the Future and the Ipsos Trends Network.



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GAME CHANGERS

