

A Peek into the



FUTURE WORKPLACE

2024



A Special Thanks

To the HR leaders for their invaluable insights for
The Future Workplace study.



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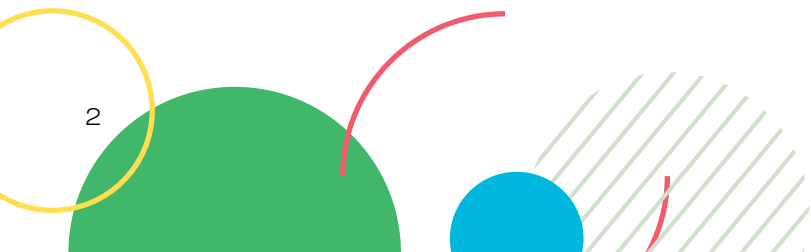
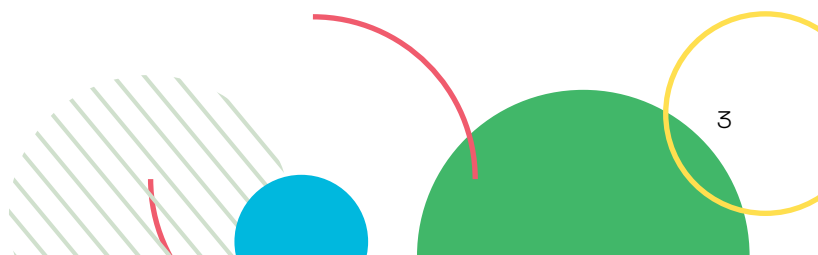
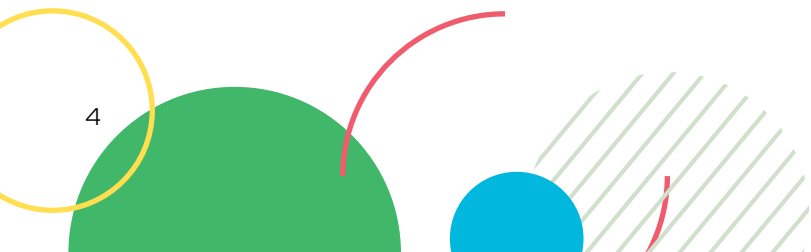


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Foreword

A Peek into the Future Workplace: A Guide to Modern Employee Experience

India's business landscape thrives on its vibrant talent pool. Attracting and retaining top performers is no longer just a priority, it's a strategic imperative and a daily challenge. **"A Peek into the Future Workplace"** endeavours to act as your guide in this dynamic environment, offering actionable insights to navigate modern talent management.

The digital revolution has reshaped employee expectations. This report delves into this shift, revealing that in today's era, competitive salaries are no longer the only factor. Employees prioritize purpose, work-life balance, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Employee Experience/ Engagement (EE): The key to success

This report looks at the role of EE vis-a-vis employee satisfaction and organizational success. We explore the transformative power of a well-defined EE framework, showcasing how comprehensive benefits and rewards programs can significantly boost engagement, reduce turnover, and unlock the full potential of your workforce. However, offering this freedom of choice and flexibility to employees comes with the risk of complexity and requires adapted digital tools and data-enabled solutions to make this Employee Experience/ Engagement seamless for organizations.

Unlocking employee potential

The research provides a roadmap for crafting programs that resonate with today's diverse workforce. Discover how to leverage both monetary and non-monetary motivators. Learn to foster an environment that fuels employee satisfaction and ultimately drives organizational success.

Building a brighter future, together

By prioritizing EE, organizations can cultivate an ecosystem where employees feel valued, empowered, and inspired to excel. This report equips HR leaders with the tools needed to build a loyal and high-performing workforce: a win-win combination for long-term success.

The study leverages data-driven insights and best practices to unlock a world of possibilities. Let's embark on this journey together, maximizing India's workforce potential and shaping a promising and prosperous future.



Sebastien Godet

Chief Revenue Growth
Officer for Asia, Middle
East, Africa and
Continental Europe

Pluxee

Introduction

Data-driven insights to building a loyal and high-performing workforce.



In today's dynamic business landscape in India, attracting and retaining top talent is critical for organizational success. This research report, "**A Peek into the Future Workplace**", surveys the evolving landscape of employee benefits, examining both employer and employee perspectives.

The Evolving Workplace Landscape

The digital revolution has fundamentally reshaped work. Innovative approaches are needed to keep employees engaged and thriving. This report explores how leading Indian organizations are adapting their talent management practices to attract and retain the workforce of tomorrow.

Empowering Leaders, Strengthening Teams

Acknowledging the pivotal role employees play is paramount. Fostering a sense of purpose, value, and appreciation is key. This report equips HR leaders with valuable insights on creating an employee-centric culture through a well-defined Employee Experience (EE) strategy.

Our Goals

Guide to Employee Benefits: This report serves as a comprehensive guide for navigating the changing landscape of employee benefits in India. You can discover how robust and ongoing Benefits & Rewards programs can significantly enhance employee engagement and reduce turnover in your organization. You will also explore diverse employee benefits techniques used by successful organizations.

Unlocking the Power of EE: This study delves deeper into how monetary and non-monetary benefits impact employee retention. This knowledge will empower you to craft an 'EE Framework' that resonates with expectations of your employees, thus maximizing satisfaction and fostering a positive work environment.

Building a Brighter Future: By prioritizing EE, companies can build a future where employees feel valued and empowered. We believe this report will help you optimize employee experiences, enabling both employees and employers to achieve their goals.

This study provides actionable insights on Employee Experience best practices, opening a world of opportunity for employers and employees alike.



Anish Sarkar

Managing Director

Pluxee India

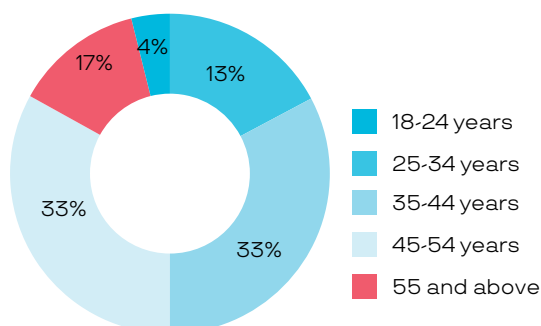
Methodology

We took a multi-step approach for understanding diverse perspectives on current practices and employee benefits trends in India.

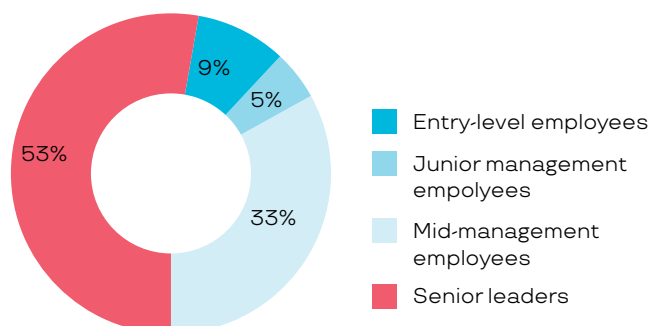


Respondents' Profile

Respondents' Profile: Age group



Respondents' Profile: Job level



This study compiled insights from a total of 230 corporate employees across India and 10 Human Resources (HR) leaders across various industry segments. The methodology involved a multi-step approach to gain insights on the future workplace practices and trends.

Survey and Data Collection

Participants: A total of 230 corporate employees from diverse industry segments such as Finance, Education, IT, Manufacturing, Telecom and Services, among others, participated in the survey, ensuring a wide range of insights. The participants included employees from different seniority levels, age groups, and job roles.

Additionally, 10 HR leaders from diverse organizations across industries were also invited to provide expert opinions and strategic insights.

Survey Design: A survey was designed to capture the preferences, satisfaction levels, and expectations of employees regarding various benefits and work arrangements. The survey included quantitative questions to gather in-depth insights.

Data Collection: The survey was distributed electronically to the selected participants. Responses were collected over a period of two months. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the HR leaders to gain deeper insights into organizational strategies, challenges, and future trends in employee benefits.

Analysis Approach

1. **Quantitative Analysis:** The quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using statistical methods to identify key trends and patterns.
2. **Qualitative Analysis:** Key insights from participants and HR leaders were extracted to provide real-world context and support the quantitative findings.
3. **Comparative Analysis:** The findings from the employee survey were compared with the insights provided by the HR leaders to identify similarities and distinctions.
4. **Global HR reports and published articles were reviewed** to contextualize the findings within broader industry trends and best practices.

Report Compilation

The report was compiled by integrating quantitative data and insights from senior HR leaders as well as Pluxee leaders.

Sections were organized to cover key areas such as career development opportunities and lifestyle benefits, flexible work arrangements, as well as workplace inclusivity.

Executive Summary

“A Peek into the Future Workplace”

emphasizes the imperative for organizations to innovate their employee benefits and policies in alignment with evolving employee expectations.



The future of workplace trends is increasingly shaped by the changing expectations and needs of employees across diverse demographics.

"A Peek into the Future Workplace" presents findings from a comprehensive research study conducted by Pluxee and Dun & Bradstreet. This study aims to explore the evolving landscape of employee benefits, highlighting the critical trends for organizations seeking to attract, retain, and empower their workforce. The key trends that will shape the future workplaces are underlined below:

Firstly, the influx of younger generations into the workforce, notably Gen Z and millennials, is driving a shift towards prioritizing education and career growth. Employees across various career stages, from entry-level to executive positions, emphasize the value of educational assistance programs and continuous skill development opportunities. This not only enhances their professional capabilities but also aligns with their personal aspirations for long-term career progression.

Secondly, the demand for flexibility in work arrangements has become dominant, amplified by the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Flexible work options are now considered essential rather than merely beneficial, enhancing employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall productivity. Millennials, in particular, value flexibility as it enables them to balance personal commitments with professional responsibilities, thereby supporting their well-being as well as efficiency.

Thirdly, there is a growing emphasis on holistic well-being, encompassing physical, mental, and financial health. Organizations that prioritize these aspects not only foster a supportive work environment but also demonstrate a commitment to employee welfare and engagement.

Furthermore, personalized and inclusive workplace initiatives are gaining traction, reflecting a nuanced understanding of diverse employee needs. Initiatives such as cultural inclusivity, expanded parental and childcare support, and benefits for unconventional caregivers are increasingly valued for their role in creating empowered and inclusive workplaces. This tailored approach acknowledges the unique challenges and aspirations of employees across different age groups, genders, and cultural backgrounds.

Lastly, while technological advancements like AI are transforming operations, there remains a strong preference among employees for human-centered approaches in addressing their needs. Human assistance provides crucial empathy, problem-solving capabilities, and trust-building opportunities that complement the efficiencies of AI-driven solutions.



As organizations navigate the future of work, adapting to emerging trends such as hybrid work models and personalized benefits will be crucial in raising the bar. By fostering cultures of flexibility, inclusivity, and continuous learning, companies can create dynamic workplaces that attract and retain top talent. Prioritizing employee well-being and effectively balancing technology with human interaction will be key to sustaining employee engagement and exceeding employee expectations, driving organizational success in the evolving landscape of work.

In summary, **"A Peek into the Future Workplace"** underscores the need for organizations to innovate their employee benefits and policies in alignment with evolving employee expectations. By embracing these trends, organizations can cultivate empowered, inclusive workplaces that thrive in the future. ■

Trends that will shape the Future Workplace



Evolution of Priorities: New Generations, New Expectations

With the influx of younger generations including Gen Z and millennials into the workforce, employee priorities are evolving. While the focus on professional growth remains, a range of societal, lifestyle and technology-led factors are influencing the attractiveness of employee benefits.

Empowering career growth through education:

Modern day organizations have recognized the importance of nurturing and retaining talent in a knowledge-based economy. They have realized that it is not enough to attract skilled talent; it is equally important to support the upskilling of their existing employees, enabling their professional development within their current organization and beyond.

Our survey reflects the strong appeal of **educational assistance** among employees, underscoring the importance of upskilling and re-skilling in today's rapidly evolving work environment. Educational assistance and career development initiatives can nurture a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, ensuring that both the company and its employees are well-prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

Employees in early and mid-career stages, including entry-level staff and those aged 25-34 and 35-44, prioritize education as a crucial investment during the initial phases of their careers. This preference is driven by the significant potential for long-term learning and development, essential for advancing their professional journeys.

61%



employees view **education assistance** as attractive and motivating for their professional growth.

33%



entry-level employees chose **education assistance** as the most attractive and motivating, above all other benefits and perks.



Sunita Rebecca Cherian

Chief Culture Officer & Senior Vice President - Human Resources
Wipro

Wipro has always been a company which focuses on growing and nurturing talent. Supporting associates in their higher education journey is an essential element of this overall career growth ecosystem. There are several modes of providing education assistance catering to different segments in the organization:

Wipro Integrated Learning Program is the company-sponsored master's program offered to graduates that the company onboards from various streams. This program gives them an opportunity to pursue higher

education, in addition to gaining industry exposure and real-time practical experience working on live projects. This is done in collaboration with premier engineering institutions and universities across India.

Notch Up is a program which offers an executive MBA program for Wipro associates, in partnership with premium management institutes across India.

Our senior leaders undergo courses at Ivy League, or equivalent, colleges on topics relevant to their roles.



Vinay Ranjan

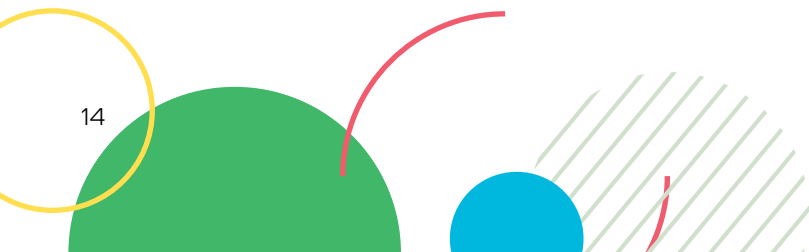
Director, Personnel & Industrial Relations
Coal India

Creating a culture of learning within an organization is crucial for fostering innovation and ensuring long-term success. Key elements include:

Promoting Lifelong Learning: Leaders play a crucial role in encouraging lifelong learning and recognizing efforts towards skill development.

Providing Resources: Offering access to online courses, libraries, and learning communities to support continuous education.

Encouraging Knowledge Sharing: Fostering an environment where employees are motivated to seek out knowledge and share insights.



Enabling learning and development

In today's rapidly evolving professional landscape, continuous learning and development are paramount for individual career growth and for organizational adaptability and success. Recognizing this, forward-thinking companies are increasingly investing in comprehensive learning and development benefits for their employees.

Employers are providing resources such as access to online courses, new-age learning tools, workshops, seminars, and conferences that allow employees to acquire new skills and refine existing ones. Beyond formal training programs, many organizations also extend benefits like Books & Periodicals that include subscriptions to industry-relevant periodicals, books, and professional publications, enabling employees to stay updated with the latest trends and advancements in their fields.

Additionally, to support these educational endeavors, companies often provide the necessary gadgets and technological tools. Whether it's a high-performance laptop to facilitate software learning or a tablet to access e-books or research papers, or access to learning programs or fully digital bite-sized learning modules, these tools ensure that employees have everything they need to engage with their learning materials effectively.

By investing in such resources, companies enhance their workforce's capabilities while demonstrating a commitment to their employees' personal growth and satisfaction. This boosts morale and helps in retaining top talent who value personal development and career advancement opportunities.

Beyond 9 to 5: Adapting to Employee Lifestyles

In addition to education support, employees are increasingly attracted to and motivated by lifestyle benefits that promote employee recognition, well-being, and work-life balance. For instance, **gift vouchers/cards** provided as rewards can be used by employees for personal spends while gym memberships enable them to prioritize health and fitness. Furthermore, Gen Z employees (aged 18-24) value **free or subsidized meals** highly, which are particularly beneficial for these young employees who have limited disposable income.

To enhance employee satisfaction and boost retention, organizations must integrate demographic insights into their benefits offerings. This approach would ensure that programs are fine tuned to meet the specific needs of their workforce, providing a crucial competitive edge for employers.

25%



find getting **gift vouchers/cards** from their employers as very attractive.

25%



chose **gym and club memberships** among their top two most attractive/motivating employee benefits.

38%



young employees (aged 18-24 years) consider **free or subsidized meals** as the most attractive benefit.



Standout attractions in employee packages

Pluxee believes that the provision of meal benefits is another standout attraction in employee packages. Covering meals during work hours through subsidized meals in cafeterias or allowances for home deliveries while working remotely, ensures that employees are well-nourished and relieved of the worry about meals. This convenience allows them to focus more intently on their tasks with increased energy and productivity.

At the same time, the power of recognition cannot be overstated. Regular and timely acknowledgment through thoughtful gifts like giving employees the freedom to choose how and where to spend their gift wallet money plays a crucial role in fostering a motivated and emotionally connected workforce. Such gestures make employees feel valued and respected, which in turn enhances their loyalty and satisfaction.



Vinay Ranjan

Director, Personnel &
Industrial Relations
Coal India

No single reward element continues to be a value driver. Employee preferences vary widely influenced by age, life stages, personal career anchors and so on. Maximizing elements that create stickiness, by meeting individual or segmented employee needs will ensure a better Return on Investment (RoI) and will help organizations achieve the objectives that they set out with to attract, retain and motivate their employees.



Shwetha Ram

Head of HR
Parle Agro

Organizations need to deliver contextualized employee benefits programs which are needed for the internal workforce and not demanded by a changing external ecosystem. There is a need to build an open mindset towards providing the required benefits to the changing landscape of employees.



Pluxee provides a hassle-free digital employee benefits solution for an IT consulting firm

Benefits administered with Pluxee  Meal  Wellness  Learning  Gadgets  Books  Telecom

Company Background

- 4,000 employees availing benefits
- IT services and consulting firm

Employer needs

Need to maintain compliance

To establish checks on bill processing to ensure 100% compliance

Operational efficiency

To avoid manual intervention in benefit administration



Employee challenges

Get away from physical bill storage

Simplified process to apply for claims



Impact of Pluxee Employee Benefits Solution



100% compliance

Automated bill screening by implementing best-in-class systematic check to screen for duplication of bills



Operational efficiency

Minimal involvement of internal teams
Digitisation of manual processes



Freedom from bill storage

Enabled digital claim management for all the benefits via feature-rich mobile app



Enhanced employee satisfaction

Facilitated introduction of new benefits & provided single platform to administer all the benefits

Integrating Flexibility and Wellness into Career Advancement

Flexibility has become a cornerstone of modern workplace dynamics, significantly enhancing employee satisfaction and productivity. The demand for flexible work arrangements has skyrocketed, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, prompting organizations to rethink conventional work structures.

Flexible work arrangement is now an expectation rather than a perk. According to an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report¹, "flexible work benefits work-life balance, productivity, and organizational outcomes, a true 'win-win' for both employers and employees". Deloitte's 2023 Global Human Capital Trends report highlights that organizations embracing flexible work options witness a 55% rise in employee engagement and a 45% reduction in turnover rates.

Our survey affirms that while flexible work arrangements resonate across age demographics, they particularly resonate with millennials (age 25-34). This generation values flexibility for its ability to support work-life balance and capitalize on technological efficiencies. Millennials are redefining workplace efficiency by prioritizing productivity without being tied to fixed work hours or locations. Embracing flexibility allows them to invest in personal well-being and also pursue personal/familial commitments.



Maya Varma
Chief Human
Resources Officer
Nilkamal

Flexibility is a fundamental requirement in today's dynamic landscape. Interestingly, not every employee cohort desires a formalized policy on flexibility. Often, the simple act of accommodating immediate needs, such as attending a school admission process or accompanying a family member to a medical appointment, suffices to meet the expectations associated with flexibility.



71%



rated **flexible work arrangements** as important.

42%



of **25-34 aged workforce** ranked flexible work arrangements as the most important initiative for themselves.

33%



of those in the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups also ranked **flexible work arrangements** as the most important for them.



Amit Kumar Das
Senior Director - P&O
Novo Nordisk India Pvt. Ltd.

We recognise that the landscape of employee preferences is shifting significantly. To meet this evolving mindset, we have undertaken several initiatives to provide flexibility in terms of working hours and working locations, while maintaining productivity and engagement.



1. Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World, International Labour Organisation, 2023



Sunita Rebecca Cherian

Chief Culture Officer & Senior Vice President - Human Resources
Wipro

Flexible work arrangements have become a higher priority for employees than competitive pay packages. Wipro has adapted to this shift in mindset through various strategies:

Hybrid work model: Implementing flexible working policies that include hybrid work arrangements, productivity and collaboration tools, and hot desking to support a blend of remote and in-office work.

Global leave commitment: Ensuring a minimum level of leaves for employees across all countries of operation, reflecting a global commitment to work-life balance.

Culture of trust and autonomy: Allowing flexibility in work hours, with managers tailoring schedules to meet team members' personal needs without compromising business requirements.

Accessible training and resources: Developing and delivering training programs and resources via platforms accessible to remote teams, ensuring continuous learning and development for all employees.



Embracing employee flexibility

Building on the flexible work foundations laid in the wake of the pandemic, organizations are exploring innovative strategies to further enhance motivation and productivity within hybrid work environments and beyond. Many organizations now extend employee benefits to include telecommunications support, covering expenses such as data cards, mobile phone, landline and utility bills. This initiative ensures seamless connectivity across teams, thereby enhancing productivity in different work settings.

For employees working from the office, companies are providing reimbursements for transportation costs. These can be managed through digital wallets that are accepted directly at fuel stations, or by submitting fuel/cab/metro receipts for reimbursement. There is also flexibility to cover expenses related to the use of personal or leased vehicles, including provisions to reimburse drivers' salaries.

These benefits reflect an evolving work culture that embraces flexibility and employee well-being as core components of organizational success. By investing in the necessary tools and environments, companies not only enhance individual performance but also bolster overall business resilience in the face of ongoing changes in the ways of work.

Career Development Priority for Majority (8 in 10 employees)

The survey reveals a near unanimous emphasis among employees on the significance of career development opportunities offered by employers. Notably, the youngest employee cohort (aged 18-24) perceives these opportunities as crucial for establishing strong foundations as they move up the corporate ladder. For youngsters, these opportunities can prove to be a valuable way for diversifying and future-proofing their skillsets, adding to their overall confidence and job satisfaction.

Beyond career development, about 3 in 10 employees express a desire for access to cutting-age technologies. The rise of transformative technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) underscores the growing importance of tech proficiency. Employees are keen on staying updated with these advancements to remain competitive in their roles.

80%



of employees emphasized the importance of **career development programs**.

50%



of employees **aged 18-24** consider career development opportunities as the most important benefit.

28%



wish to get **access to new age technologies**.





Martin Gomez
Chief Human
Resources Officer
Zepto

Our long-term HR strategy is focused on cultivating a high-performance organization that adapts to changing needs. In our high-growth, high-performing organization, we foster an environment where individuals are empowered to thrive and grow within their roles. We recognize that continuous learning and development are essential components of success, which is why we provide ample opportunities for professional growth and advancement.



Vinay Ranjan
Director, Personnel &
Industrial Relations
Coal India

In terms of career development, Coal India invests in its employees through training programs, skill development initiatives, and opportunities for professional growth. This includes specialized training in mining technologies, leadership development programs, and avenues for pursuing higher education and certifications.



Santwana Periwai
Chief Human Resources Officer
Clix Capital

Culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the success of workplace trends. This belief is prominently reflected at Clix, where our commitment to fostering a robust and empowering culture is evident. A central aspect of our strategy involves prioritizing career progression and learning opportunities for all employees, regardless of their function or position in the hierarchy. Operating in the dynamic BFSI sector, we are re-imagining the approach to traditional HR practices. This is also done by actively collecting feedback from employees through various touchpoints throughout the year, aligning our HR plan with employee expectations and the future growth trajectories within the sector.



Investing in employee growth

Investing in employee growth is one of the key steps to ensure organizations continue to evolve. Professional development plans can equip employees with new skills and experiences to remain competitive in their current and future roles. Resources such as access to online courses, new-age learning tools, workshops, seminars, and conferences allow employees to acquire new skills and refine existing ones.

Beyond formal training programs, many organizations also extend benefits like Books & Periodicals that include

subscriptions to industry-relevant periodicals, books, and professional publications, enabling employees to stay updated with the latest trends and advancements in their fields.

By investing in such resources, companies enhance their workforce's capabilities while demonstrating a commitment to their employees' personal growth and satisfaction. This not only boosts morale but also helps in retaining top talent who value personal development and career advancement opportunities.

Shift Towards Health and Well-being: Employees' Evolving Priorities

Following widespread employee attrition during the 'Great Resignation' period, triggered by slashed salaries, burnout, and strained work-life balance amidst the pandemic, employees are now prioritizing their health and well-being. Post-pandemic, there is a noticeable shift in employees' expectations regarding their work environments to better support these priorities. Moreover, with increasing awareness about mental health, employees now consider it a fundamental aspect of their workplace needs.

53%



placed importance on receiving **health and wellness benefits**.

55%



emphasized **mental health benefits** as one of the top three **most valuable benefits** for making the workplace more empowering and inclusive.



Neha Vadhera Arora
National Head HR
DB Corp Ltd. (MYFM)

MY FM not only provides education assistance to employees, but also looks to foster a happy work-culture by providing:

- Health check-ups to employees.
- Unplugged weekends where twice in a year employees are enabled to take three days off together (including the weekend).
- 'Melting Session' with the managers which happens on a weekly or fortnightly basis wherein the manager and the team members diffuse problems and make action plans.
- Work life balance by ensuring no work calls are made after 7pm.



Shalini Adhaar
Chief Human Resources
Officer
Shalimar Paints

Our holistic wellness program includes physical, mental, and financial wellness components. This ensures that our employees are well-supported in all aspects of their lives, which significantly boosts their job satisfaction and loyalty.



Vinay Ranjan
Director, Personnel &
Industrial Relations
Coal India

Coal India places significant emphasis on the health and wellness of its workforce, offering access to medical facilities, wellness programs, and health check-ups.



Amit Kumar Das
Senior Director - P&O
Novo Nordisk India Pvt. Ltd.

Employee well-being and growth are paramount for us at Novo Nordisk. Our benefit programmes are designed to support employee satisfaction and to also align with our company values and purpose. One of the benefits that has been particularly successful for our organisation is our comprehensive health and well-being initiative - NovoHealth@EmbassyManyata, a weekly 5k run club designed to promote health at workplace.



Sunita Rebecca Cherian
Chief Culture Officer &
Senior Vice President -
Human Resources
Wipro

In terms of flexible arrangements or health/wellbeing benefits, the requirement of certain employee groups may be different than others. For example, returning mothers may need flexible working hours; an associate with a stressful personal situation may need extensive support from our team of mental counsellors. Every case is different! But with support from our managers and HR partners, we support every individual, in every context.

Given our focus on the overall wellbeing of Wiproites, in addition to physical health, we also focus on the mental wellbeing of our associates through our strong **Employee Assistance Program**. This gives employees access to professional counsellors for mental health-related support, and also provides referrals for work-life services such as childcare, elder care, legal/financial services.



Taking care of employees' health and wellness

In today's competitive job market, offering attractive and motivating employee benefits is a strategic imperative. The emphasis on comprehensive benefits, including those that cater to mental health and wellness, underlines the shift towards recognizing employees as holistic individuals whose well-being directly impacts their productivity and satisfaction at work.

Health and wellness programs are particularly critical. These benefits often cover a range of needs from insurance top-ups and doctor consultations to gym memberships and even home equipment. By allocating a dedicated amount for health and wellness, companies not only enhance the physical and mental well-being of their teams but also show a committed investment in their employees' long-term health. This proactive approach can significantly boost morale and contribute to a more dynamic, engaged workforce.

Need for an Empowering and Inclusive Workplace

A forward-looking workplace fosters an environment where employees feel trusted, valued, respected, and supported to deliver their best work. In today's global work landscape, organizations that prioritize employee empowerment and inclusivity attract diverse talent, particularly from underrepresented groups. When employees feel valued and included, they are more engaged and committed, enhancing overall productivity. Moreover, inclusive workplaces are able to leverage the collective intelligence of diverse teams, leading to better decision-making processes.

Keeping this in mind, we explored employees' perspective on a range of initiatives including:

- **4-day work week:** Traditionally, a full-time work week is 45 hours in 5 days, but some companies are exploring a 4-day work week with the same workload compressed into four days.
- **Cultural inclusivity:** A workplace environment that respects and values the different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences of its employees. This may involve practices like offering religious holidays off, providing diverse food options, and having inclusive language policies.
- **Increased quantum in parental and childcare support leaves:** Providing extended paid leave to care for a newborn child or a newly adopted child, as well as to care for sick children or elderly parents.
- **Benefits to unconventional caregivers:** Providing paid time off or financial support to unconventional caregivers such as single parents, pet parents, primary care givers to senior citizen or differently-abled siblings etc.

From our survey, initiatives such as the 4-day work week, mental health benefits and cultural inclusivity emerged as the most highly valued by employees for creating an empowering and inclusive workplace. More than half of our survey

respondents supported the 4-day work week, believing it would support work-life balance. According to World Economic Forum², "giving workers an extra day off a week actually increases productivity, boosts physical and mental health and reduces CO2 emissions."

Our study highlights the importance of structuring workplace initiatives to meet the specific needs of an organization's diverse employee base. Diverse demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, marital status, ethnicity etc. shed light on unique employee needs, challenging the notion of a one-size-fits-all approach to employee programs.

For instance, our findings revealed strong expectation for expanded parental and childcare support among employees aged 25-34 and 35-44, many of whom are likely balancing careers with the demands of raising young children and taking care of elderly parents. Such support eases financial loads as well as time constraints, especially in the case where both parents are working professionals and managing the cost of living.


With greater access to information and significant cultural shifts within the workforce composition, there is a growing awareness around respecting diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. This is why, in our survey, 1 in 5 employees consider health insurance plans that encompass individuals on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum as a crucial step towards inclusivity.

Our survey also reflects a growing understanding of the importance of workplace inclusion encompassing those who are differently-abled and the need for breaking biases, with 36% placing emphasis on equal opportunities for employees with disabilities. Moreover, 23% believe that there is a need to provide benefits to unconventional caregivers like pet parents by future workplaces. As the dynamics and structures of modern families and caregiving responsibilities evolve, the traditional definition of caregivers is expanding.


2. World Economic Forum, "Four-day work week trial in Spain leads to healthier workers, less pollution," October 2023

Given the shifting dynamics of the workforce, positively, the need of creating an inclusive culture is felt the most by senior management (20%). Senior leaders, who are perhaps more aware of internal gaps in inclusion as well as current employee expectations, have greater responsibility to set the tone and direction for the entire organization.

Essentially, life stages and personal circumstances shape employee needs and expectations. To successfully create workplaces that are empowering and inclusive, employers need to adopt a personalized approach to initiatives and benefits. This will enable organizations to create a culture where employees feel cared for, adding to their sense of belongingness and loyalty.

58% 

believe that allowing employees a **4-day work week** is key to building empowering workplaces.

52% 


consider **cultural inclusivity** valuable in building more empowering and inclusive workplaces.

20% 

senior leaders felt the need for **building inclusive workplace cultures**.

36% 


believe providing **equal opportunities for employees with disabilities** is key to building inclusive workplaces.

36% 


want to get an **increased quantum in parental and childcare support leaves**. The most preference for parental and childcare support leaves was shown by those in the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups.

25% 

believe that there is a need to provide **benefits to unconventional caregivers** by future workplaces.

17% 

from the 18-24 age group expressed the need for **benefits for unconventional caregivers**; the highest proportion among all age groups.

21% 

felt **health insurance that covers individuals on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum** is valuable.



Amit Kumar Das
Senior Director - P&O
Novo Nordisk India Pvt. Ltd.

We recognise the diverse needs and preferences among our workforce. To address this, our organization-wide talent strategy is designed to be inclusive and adaptable, offering a mix of adaptable & sustainable compensation, internal parity, gender parity, performance-linked incentives, flexible working arrangements and comprehensive health and wellness programs. By understanding and addressing the diverse needs of our workforce, we can maintain high levels of engagement and satisfaction.



Martin Gomez
Chief Human Resources
Officer
Zepto

Our parental benefits allow comfortable breaks after the birth or adoption of a child, or for dealing with a medical complication (for both the mothers and fathers alike). Our childcare support goes beyond the creche facility to include day-care and at-home nanny support as many mothers found the latter more comfortable and a safe choice for their kids. Additionally, parental insurance is extended to all our employees.

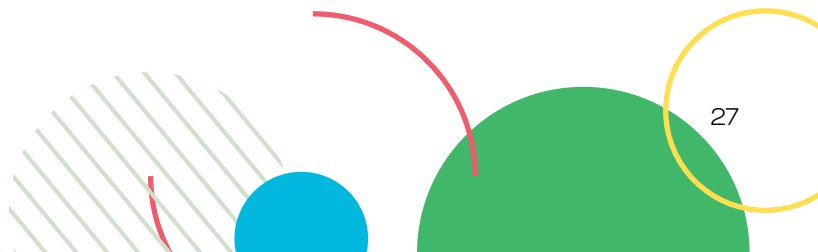


Kirandeep Viridi
Head of People & Culture
Asper.ai

What is gaining importance is the encouragement of having open conversations around changing employee expectations. There are conversations now on medical coverages for same-gender partners or for siblings who could be disabled. The post-pandemic paradigm of workplace practices continues to adapt to changing employee needs. Initially centred on the need to revive personal connections and foster a collaborative work culture, subsequently attention has swiftly transitioned towards addressing escalating health and well-being concerns among the workforce.



With the shifts in employee needs, organizations now have to think more specifically about how to take care of their employees. Managing expectations of varied employee groups across industries, generations and diverse & cultural backgrounds calls for a customized employee benefit program.



Navigating Employee Needs with a Human Touch: Human Assistance Trumps AI

As workplaces rapidly evolve with advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), organizations are transforming their operations for efficiency and innovation. However, amidst this technological shift, there's a growing acknowledgment of the indispensable role of human assistance in effectively addressing employee needs.

51%



employees would like **human assistance** for workplace communication and delivery of benefits.

32%



prefer **self-service platforms** over any other for delivery of workplace communication.

17%



prefer **AI-assisted platforms** (e.g., chatbots).

Human Assistance in this context underscores the importance of maintaining human interaction and empathy in addressing the diverse needs and concerns of employees within organizations, despite the increasing integration of AI and automation in the workplace. Employees still value human interaction for several compelling reasons:

- **Empathy and Understanding:** Human assistants offer empathy and understanding crucial in addressing sensitive issues like mental health or career concerns.
- **Complex Problem-Solving:** While AI excels at routine tasks, complex problem-solving benefits from human judgment and creativity.
- **Building Trust:** Human interactions foster trust and strengthen organizational relationships, creating a supportive work environment.
- **Effective Communication:** Human assistance ensures clear and meaningful communication, allowing for questions, clarifications, and tailored solutions.

As 71% of the respondents have rated flexible work arrangement as an important benefit that they expect, the challenge lies in harmonizing human touch with technological advancements:

- **Hybrid Support Systems:** Integrating AI with human support to provide comprehensive assistance. For instance, initial queries are handled by AI, while more complex issues are escalated to human representatives.
- **Personalized Services:** Utilizing AI for data insights, enabling human managers to offer personalized support and development plans.
- **Training and Development:** Investing in training for managers and HR professionals to enhance interpersonal skills, crucial for maintaining strong employee relationships.

In conclusion, striking a balance between human touch and technology-enhanced collaboration is key. By leveraging AI's capabilities alongside human empathy and insight, organizations can effectively meet the diverse needs of their workforce in today's dynamic work environment.

Driving mobile first experiences to employees with a global fintech firm

Benefits administered with Pluxee



Meal



Wellness



Gadgets



Telecom

Company Background

- 2,500+ employees availing benefits
- Fintech services
- Benefits administered by internal finance team



Employer needs

Maintaining records and storing physical bill copies

Reducing manual errors in the bill checking system with automation



Employee challenges

Improving awareness of additional benefits like fuel and telecom

Assistance around claim procedures with a dedicated point of contact for tracking



Transformation with Pluxee Employee benefits solution



Going 100% Digital

Employees can upload bills directly via the Pluxee India app and access digital bill records stored by Pluxee for up to 8 years



Digital Claim Management

Decreased manpower involvement in bill processing through systematic processes



New-Age Benefits

Enhanced employee well-being with the introduction of health & wellness benefits along with gadgets & equipment provisions



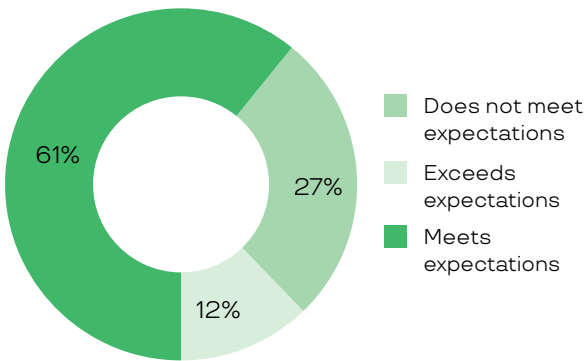
Next-Gen Mobile App

Seamless tracking of expenses and claims for employees with real-time updates through email, SMS, and in-app notifications

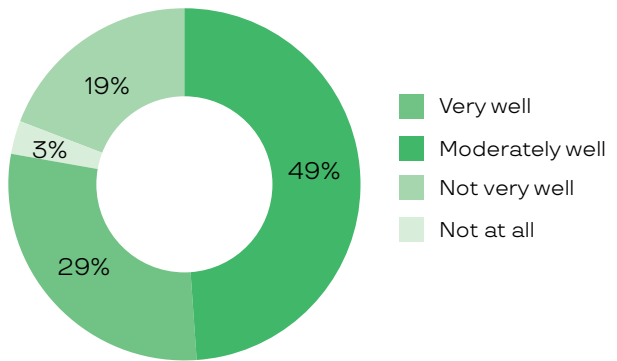
Raising the Bar: Enhancing Employee Experience

Enhancing employee experience involves meeting the basic needs of employees as well as anticipating and addressing their evolving demands. Companies that offer innovative and personalized benefits and perks are more likely to attract and retain top talent.

How would you rate the employee benefits in your organisation?



How well do employers adapt to employees' needs or requirements?



According to our survey, only **29% of the employees** feel their **current employer adapts to employees' needs or requirements very well**, while 49% believe adaptation is moderate. Additionally, while **61% of the employees believe their current benefits meet expectations**, only 12% feel these benefits exceed expectations.

These findings reveal a gap between employee expectations and their actual experience. Employees desire greater adaptability and flexibility from their employers to cater to their needs. Given the importance and appeal of these various benefits and initiatives outlined in this study, there is substantial potential to enhance the employee experience further, fostering sustained employee satisfaction and delight.

Some of the best practices that organizations follow to bridge the gap between employee expectations and the actual experience are:

- **Enhanced Communication and Feedback Mechanisms:** Establishing regular, open communication channels is essential. This can be achieved through frequent employee surveys, suggestion boxes, town hall meetings, and one-on-one feedback sessions. These channels allow employees to voice their needs, concerns, and suggestions directly to management. Additionally, implementing a transparent follow-up process ensures that employees see tangible actions taken based on their feedback, fostering trust and engagement.
- **Transparency and Inclusivity:** Ensuring that all company policies and benefits are

communicated clearly is crucial. Organizations should develop comprehensive guides and FAQs that are easily accessible to all employees. Regular updates on any changes or additions to benefits should be provided through multiple channels, such as email newsletters, intranet updates, and team meetings. Promoting an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are valued and respected can be reinforced through diversity training and inclusive policy development.

- **Tailor initiatives and benefits to the employee base:** To exceed employee expectations, organizations need to customize programs and offerings to address the specific needs, preferences, and demographics of their workforce. For instance, as seen in our survey, younger employees prioritize career development and educational opportunities, while employees with families value childcare support. By continuously assessing and adjusting these initiatives based on ongoing feedback, companies can ensure they remain relevant and impactful.
- **Regular Review and Adaptation:** Establishing a continuous improvement cycle for reviewing and updating benefits and policies is vital. Conducting periodic benchmarking studies to compare offerings with industry standards and identify areas for improvement is essential. Engaging a diverse group of employees in focus groups or committees to gather in-depth insights into their needs and preferences is beneficial. ■



Shwetha Ram
Head of HR
Parle Agro

We believe that the employee benefits are those that go beyond a written policy document. At Parle Agro, for instance, it is an intrinsic belief amongst employees that they would be taken care of. There have been several occasions when the organization addressed the specific needs of an individual. These actions not only impact individuals positively but also create a shared belief within the team that everyone's needs will be addressed when required. This innate sense of belongingness and trust is also reflected in the candidates & external stakeholders.



Conclusion

Meeting and exceeding the expectations of today's multi-generational employees requires organizations to recognize and act on diverse needs and priorities.



The comprehensive insights from our study, **“A Peek into the Future Workplace”** underscore the transformative trends shaping modern employee experiences. The study delivers a clear message: meeting and exceeding the expectations of today’s multi-generational employees requires organizations to recognize and act on diverse needs and priorities.

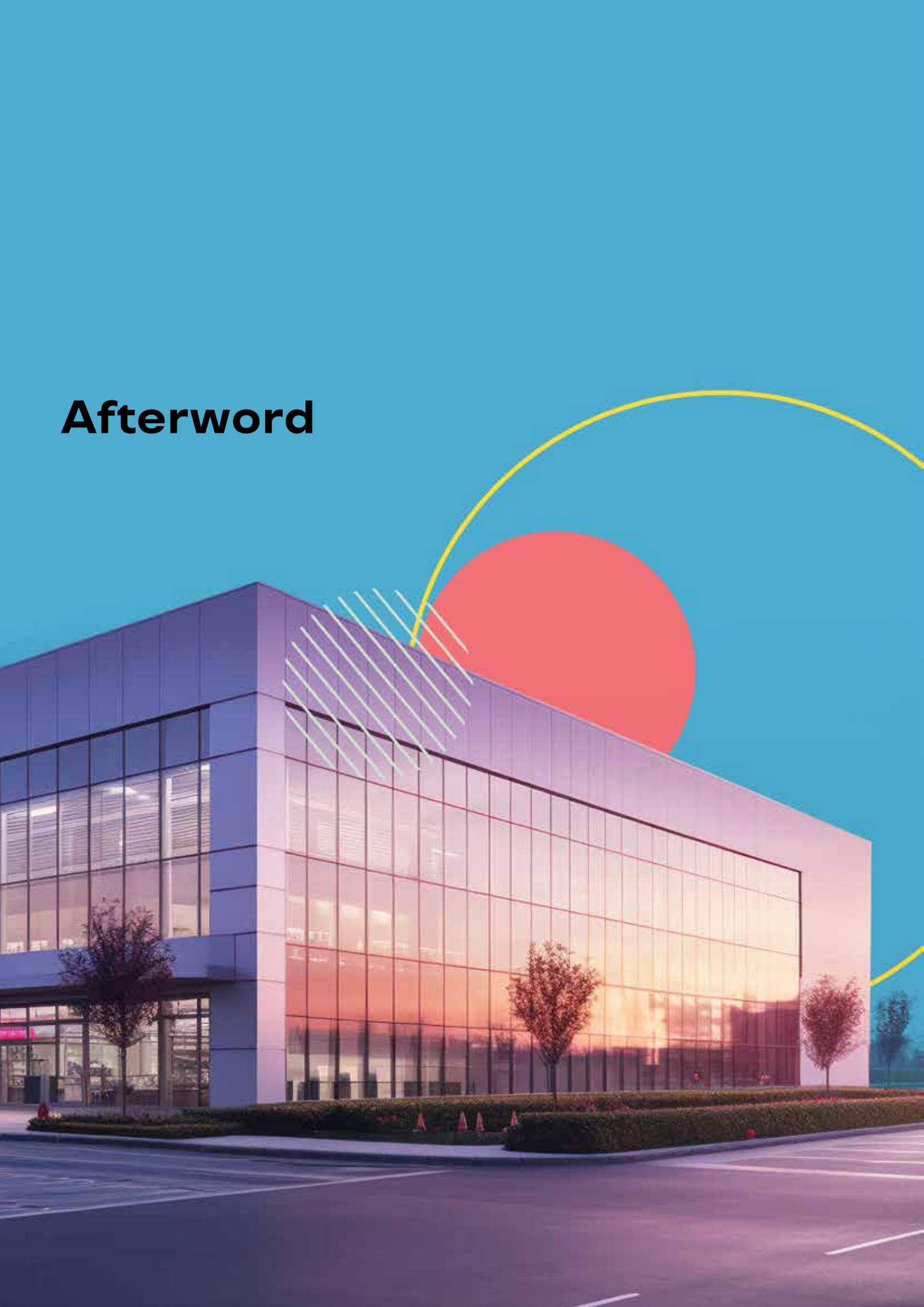
Key themes and actionable insights:

- Investment in employee growth**
 Employees, especially the younger generations, highly value opportunities for learning and development. Employers’ support towards career development is a mark of investment in the future of their workforce. This not just enhances employee skills and efficiency but also enriches their confidence and job satisfaction.
- Flexibility is Desired**
 The demand for flexibility in work arrangements has become paramount, especially post-pandemic. Flexible work options are no longer a perk but essential. Flexible work arrangements can prove beneficial in improving employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and productivity. With younger generations entering the workforce, organizations need to watch out for their preference for flexible working and adapt accordingly to capitalize on top talent.
- Holistic Well-being Matters**
 Organizations that prioritize holistic well-being encompassing physical, mental, and financial health will be coveted. Employees are increasingly focused on nurturing their health and wellness and expect employers to align with their needs. Fostering supportive work environments, by way of comprehensive health and wellness initiatives, is an important way of demonstrating organizations’ commitment to employee welfare and engagement.

- Personalized and Inclusive Initiatives**
 Tailored benefits that recognize the varied needs of employees are gaining traction. Some of the initiatives such as cultural inclusivity, insurance cover for those on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum, expanded parental and childcare support, and benefits for unconventional caregivers sit at the heart of creating truly empowering and inclusive workplaces.
- Human-Centred Approaches**
 Despite technological advancements, there remains a strong preference for human-centred approaches in addressing employee needs. Human assistance provides crucial empathy, problem-solving capabilities, and trust-building opportunities that complement the efficiencies of AI-driven solutions. Feedback from employees revealed a significant preference for human interaction in communication and support, underscoring the enduring value of personal connections in the workplace.

In the future workplace, organizations that thrive will prioritize and personalize initiatives towards nurturing their most valuable asset: the employees. By fostering a dynamic and supportive work environment, companies can not only attract top talent but also cultivate a future-ready workforce that is motivated, engaged, and drives long-term success.

Afterword



Future of Workplace Global Trends with a focus on India

At the outset I would like to express our sincere gratitude to our research partner, Dun & Bradstreet (D&B), and all the participants who contributed to the “Future Workplace” study.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to the senior HR leaders whose valuable insights are woven throughout this report. Understanding both global and local trends shaping the future of work is crucial for organizations to adapt and thrive in the years to come.

This study identified several key trends that will have a significant impact on businesses and workforces worldwide. A few key themes relevant to both Indian and global companies are:

- **Focus on Employee Well-being:** A growing emphasis is being placed on mental and physical well-being in the workplace. This includes offering comprehensive health benefits, flexible work arrangements, and fostering a supportive work environment.
- **Rise of Remote and Hybrid Work:** The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote and hybrid work models. This trend is likely to continue, with employees seeking flexibility and a better work-life balance.
- **Technology and Automation:** Technological advancements like automation are transforming workplaces. While automation can improve efficiency, it also presents challenges, necessitating continuous learning and skills development for employees.

India’s young and growing workforce is well-positioned to adapt to these global trends. The government’s initiatives promoting startups and SMEs also create fertile ground for innovation and flexible work arrangements. However, ensuring a skilled workforce through education and training will be crucial. Additionally, Indian businesses are increasingly benefiting and can leverage more from global trends like the focus on well-being to create a more engaged and productive workforce.

This study presents exciting opportunities for both businesses and employees to thrive in a dynamic and evolving work environment. Embracing these trends and capitalizing on its unique strengths, India can bolster its positions as a leader in creating the future workplace.

Having a place where flexibility, adaptability, and a commitment to employee well-being enables employers and employees to do more of what really matters!



Laure Pourgeaud,

Group Chief Human
Resources Officer

Pluxee



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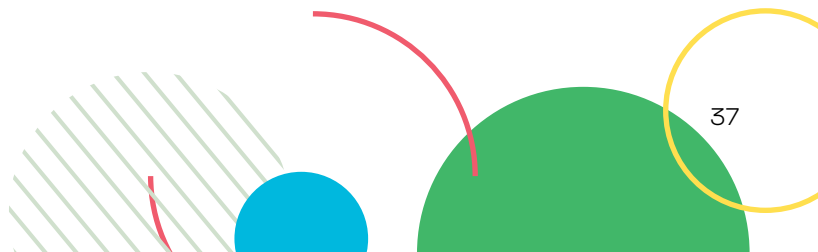
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Pluxee is a global player in employee benefits and engagement that operates in 31 countries with 27+ years legacy in India. Pluxee helps companies attract, engage, and retain talent thanks to a broad range of solutions across traditional and new age benefits including Meal & Food, Telecommunication & Data, Wellbeing, Learning, Reward & Recognition and more.

Powered by leading technology, Pluxee acts as a trusted partner within a highly interconnected B2B2C ecosystem made up of more than 11,000+ clients, 3.5 million consumers and 1,50,000+ merchants across 1,800+ towns in India.

Conducting its business as a trusted partner and an acquired know-how of more than 45 years, Pluxee is committed to creating a positive impact on all its stakeholders, from driving business to local communities, to supporting wellbeing at work for employees while protecting the planet.

Visit www.pluxee.in to know more.



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