



Excerpts from an interview with

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What are the current challenges for HR?

Technology and societal changes are dramatically impacting our business environment. The sudden shift in work culture has brought new challenges for Human Resources. While the pandemic has changed the way HR functions, it also gave some great opportunities to unlearn, relearn and test our capabilities and value systems. While there are several aspects to consider, the key ones to focus on are:

- **Managing remote work:** HR managers are constantly working towards building seamless strategies to overcome obstacles that employees face while working from home. Identifying the issue and providing timely solutions to the employees is the current focus.
- **Employee mental health and wellbeing:** The shift to remote working took a toll on overall employee health and wellbeing. Organizations are now even more concerned about the mental wellbeing of their employees along with their physical health. Various initiatives, support mechanisms and health benefits are being provided to the employees to safeguard against mental health problems.
- **Employee recognition:** The virtual work culture has made it important for organizations to recognise the efforts of their employees. These recognitions not only motivate them to work diligently but also put their best effort and think more creatively. HR managers are making such recognitions a regular event by sending messages/emails or a shoutout through various channels.

What are the biggest opportunities for HR to add value in the future of work?

As the HR function will continue to evolve in the new normal, I see three areas where it could add value from a future of work perspective:

- **Create roles of the future** – Organisations are recognising that the existing workforce structures have been disrupted by new technology and business models. These changes are enabling them to reshape the structure where humans and technology can work together. HR managers are constantly working towards enabling evolving job architecture to create futuristic opportunities for employees.
- **Enabling the workforce to be future-ready** – Once the job architecture of the future is defined, the subsequent step will be to link the learning programs required to equip employees with the required capabilities to make them future-ready. Some of these programs may not be readily available, so this will require close partnership with the business to build out the learning curriculum. This needs to be HR enabled and business-owned. This followed by a capability assessment of the incumbent workforce will help determine the efforts required to build a future-ready workforce.
- **Building career architecture of the future** - While we build the jobs of the future, it is important to provide employees with an understanding of what their in the organization could be. Hence, building a career architecture that provides guidance to employees on what could be their growth paths is going to be a critical component for engaging employees to help transform organizations.