The rapid rise of flexibility and other workforce trends

The world of work is constantly evolving. Emma Luyt, managing director of Tétris South Africa, unpacks five workplace trends that are transforming the office environment and the people who work in it.

Eight-to-five is so last season

Nobody in a modern workplace sits at their desk, staring at a computer all day. Flexibility today is non-negotiable, with employees requesting control over when, where and how they work.
In fact, it's a perk more people will be asking for in 2019. And the spinoff is good - companies with remote working policies report increases in productivity and motivation. What it does mean is that voice, data and video solutions need to be on-point to promote seamless contact. Apart from offering a range of spaces from which to work, employers must ensure there are systems and processes in place to enable the connectivity that supports the ability to work from anywhere.

Why do you want to work there?

The rivalry for getting the right people for the job is fierce. The war for talent continues to place enormous focus on creating an optimal employee experience at work. With the freedom to work from home or anywhere else, people make the choice

to come into the office to connect and collaborate. It's called the human factor – and can be very powerful in communicating your company culture. It's how you blend three essential ingredients - physical space, experience and technology - to create a place that people want to work in.

Again, it's providing a variety of workspaces for a range of tasks that meet the needs of people throughout the day. It's important that the incorporation of these spaces is authentic and embraced from the top down. It's about creating an atmosphere that says it's okay to be agile, it's okay to be brainstorming sitting cross legged on the floor. It's also about taking the personal wellbeing of your people seriously (think great coffee, healthy food options and a natural environment), while providing integrated and accessible technology that can determine how engaged people are at work.

Data is the new currency – but can we trust it?

Data security and privacy is essential to doing business in a connected world. However, restricting user access to certain channels and systems can hamper productivity and innovation, and cause frustration.

Today, with remote working and a digital solution for almost everything, digital trust must be the new foundation for security. The trend is for IT departments to build behavioural profiles for each user, with detailed information that gives insight and allows access to various applications and systems. Easier access and reduced authentication requirements will enhance the employee experience.

Work smarter with better communication

Corporate communication is still key, and it's getting a whole lot more sophisticated. From staying in touch with agile workers to creating meaningful employee experiences, the role of internal communication is critical in the modern workplace in 2019. Increasingly, employers are integrating all internal communications channels into one holistic platform to connect with their workforce. By making important information easily and centrally accessible, companies can significantly impact the efficiency of their communication and workflows, with positive results for productivity and work flexibility.

Keep training our brains to stay relevant

The modern workforce must be prepared for digital transformation. New technologies are changing the way we work, innovate and interact and to help employees keep up to speed, constant learning and development is indispensable. With the rising influence of AI, people will be required to reskill to switch to alternative roles. There is a new trend for workers to expand their skills sets cross-functionally. Employees are considering making horizontal career moves to learn something new, and ultimately position themselves for improved job security and flexibility.