IBM **TRIRIGA**

Why the workplace matters

Six tips to discover how connected workplaces can help you unlock higher levels of employee engagement and productivity

The 21-36 year-olds now account for one out of every three Americans at work

01
The new workforce

Millennials are now the largest generation[1] in the workforce. They're bringing in a whole new set of expectations around the definition of a "great place to work." That's why the workplace matters. Especially in a tight labor market, the actual facility has a huge impact on productivity and a company's ability to woo and retain talent.

What will the incoming generation of employees, who were born with ubiquitous smart phones and AI, expect from their workplace?

As companies look to hire more digital natives, they need to understand that these new workers expect convenience from their workplace, have no patience for mundane tasks that take time away from their goals, and demand modern user experiences like the ones they get as consumers. So it's not unexpected that workplace experience has a huge impact on employee productivity and satisfaction.

In addition to a changing workforce, companies are facing a talent shortage. According to Gartner's latest Emerging Risks Survey, "staff shortages" is the top concern organizations face globally. That's why forward-looking companies are looking for ways to creatively attract and retain employees.

71% of HR practitioners think that senior leadership could be doing more to improve employees' experiences at work.

1. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/

02

More engaged and productive employees

These new environments are designed to make employees happier, but workers aren't the only ones who benefit. Employers gain, too, from a better workplace, with real productivity boosts.

Companies that rank high in employee engagement experience have 59% less turnover, 21% more productivity and 37% less absenteeism.

Facility managers often struggle to fulfill workplace "responsiveness" through the right mix of services and spaces. With success, though, comes:

- Increased productivity
- Better service quality
- Improved workplace experience

That's why today's facility managers are looking for new ways to increase productivity and optimize their services delivery — and intelligent IoT provides a solution. A connected building that also harnesses the power of AI has the ability to optimize operations and remove needless friction in employee experiences.

70% of employees report that finding a place to meet is one of the biggest time wasters and can equate to about 15 minutes per day.

03
Defining the workplace experience

Recognizing the impact experience has on employee engagement and productivity, companies are taking a more comprehensive view of how to influence it.

To improve the employee experience, adopting the employee perspective can provide an important starting point — using data and analytics to identify needs and measure impact on business outcomes. Understanding key milestones in the employee journey can further refine insights into areas where experience may be lacking and what actions can be most effective.

Employee experience is created by interactions across three spheres: their physical environments, their social connections and the work to be done.

- **The physical sphere:** Interactions employees have with the tangible environment
- **The social sphere:** Interactions employees have with others in their work setting
- **The work sphere:** Interactions employees have with their assigned tasks

During an employee's work day, these spheres of interaction often overlap, creating six facets of the employee experience. Understanding these facets is key to elevating employee experiences.

Community
Virtually all of us depend to some degree on interaction with others. It is therefore not surprising that the relationships we create and sustain can influence our individual effectiveness and our perceptions of our organizations as a whole.

The goodwill that we generate through these relationships, often referred to as "social capital," impacts a number of important factors — from facilitating cross-organizational knowledge sharing to boosting individual employee satisfaction.

Social platforms
Increasingly, companies are using internal social platforms to support organizational innovation, expertise and knowledge sharing, and to help employees connect to others across the globe. These social platforms provide a common environment where employees can find relevant insights. What's more, the analytics derived from the use of these tools can help identify hidden pockets of expertise or emerging employee morale issues.

A critical mass of users is needed, along with well-established rules of engagement, for social platforms to effectively influence workplace experience.

Physical workplace
Design of individual and team workspaces is a critical component of employee experience.

Enhance your workspaces by providing reconfigurable furniture and equipment to accommodate flexible work teams, communal spaces that facilitate information flow, quiet spaces for concentration and places where serendipitous interaction can occur.

Physical workspace design can also impact employee wellness, as properly designed ergonomics can reduce employee stress and limit physical injury.

Activities
A major component of employee experience is the extent to which individuals feel they can influence their work, build mastery and understand their work's overall purpose.

A number of factors influence successful completion of work-related tasks.

An understanding of how the task fits into the work-unit's goals and the larger organization's mission, possession of relevant knowledge or expertise, access to additional information or experts as needed, and availability of timely feedback — either from managers or automated systems — can significantly shape the employee experience.

Tools
Digital capabilities — such as mobile computing and the Internet of Things — have changed the way we access information, tap into experts, make decisions, and ultimately deliver and consume goods and services.

With this greater reliance on software-based tools comes a host of issues that, left unaddressed, can increase employee frustration and reduce productivity. Software design can also have a lasting impact on satisfaction and productivity. Employees expect frictionless and intuitive technology. They want to spend their time doing their work, not figuring out how to use the technology behind it.

Environment
Not only do organizations need to focus on the design and configuration of workplace furniture, but they also need to consider other environmental factors. Ambient lighting, temperature control, noise, ventilation and even office location can notably impact employee productivity and experience. For example, research has shown that human error rates increase when ambient temperatures are set too low or too high for comfort levels.

Strategy and culture

An organization must consider each of these six facets of employee experience in light of overall business goals and culture.
The business goals and objectives of a software company may be quite different from those of a retailer, while the culture of an entrepreneurial startup may differ from that of a large multinational corporation. For a hospitality company, the need to provide high-quality guest services may serve as a guiding principle in the design of employee experience; for an oil company, the emphasis may be on occupational safety. Clearly defining these underlying tenets is necessary to designing experiences that not only match the needs of the individual, but are aligned with organizational priorities.

Likewise, once a company defines its strategy, it must help ensure that leadership behaviors, people practices and management systems — formal drivers of organizational culture — consistently support the employee experience. Informal practices matter too; if the culture is fear-based or hierarchical, employees may struggle to collaborate on open, social platforms.

04
Influencing employee experience

Organizations are using five strategies to improve their overall employee experience: personalization, transparency, simplification, authenticity and organizational responsiveness.

Personalization
Work is rarely a one-size-fits-all proposition. Many companies recognize the importance of balancing the needs of the organization with the unique characteristics of individuals and work groups. Therefore, they are looking for ways to tailor employee experience.

From a social perspective, this could include enabling employees to develop profile pages on a collaborative platform. At the physical level, this could include empowering individuals to configure their work areas and their tools to match both their work requirements and their personal tastes.

Transparency
Much as individuals are looking to gain a greater understanding of what goes into their food, clothing, and other goods and services, they are also seeking to understand their own organizations' workings. They want to know how their efforts contribute to larger goals.

Social platforms give individuals a forum to raise concerns, contribute innovative ideas and maintain an ongoing dialogue with leadership. Social platforms can also reveal informal networks and identify influence leaders. We are even seeing organizations increase transparency of physical interactions, using the Internet of Things to observe collaboration patterns and interactions with customers.

Simplicity
Many individuals in large organizations struggle with two forces that make the flow of work increasingly challenging. On the one hand, years of mergers, acquisitions and technology changes have turned work processes into convoluted sets of procedures and regulations that contribute to frustration and poor customer responsiveness.

At the same time, organizations are bombarded by new sources of information that often conflict and lack the necessary context to improve decision making. Simplification efforts, like removing non-value-add process steps and providing easier access to effective knowledge bases, can create a more positive work environment.

Authenticity
The importance of aligning employee experiences to an organization's culture and value system is becoming increasingly evident. Organizations can express corporate values in numerous ways, from the physical design of corporate headquarters and local offices, to the establishment of corporate events.

Responsiveness
Feedback is quickly becoming ubiquitous in our consumer and professional lives. Not only do individuals want to provide input into their working environments, they expect companies to respond to their ideas and concerns.

Companies are beginning to incorporate responsiveness into their ongoing performance management systems. They are also gathering input about individuals' perceptions of environmental conditions. Example, employees may report issues on demand from anywhere on campus. Information would be visible to all employees, as would resultant actions taken by management, facilities staff and others.

05
A typical workday for Sarah

Meet Sarah. She is a project manager at a large company with a global footprint. Let's see how IoT and AI come together at her employer's facilities to make her day go smoothly.

1

Everybody loves Sarah. Always cheerful, knows how things work in the office and makes sure we get our job done on time.
- Books meetings
- Tracks progress
- Finds time to set up team lunch

At the meeting room
- She has the room for 3 hours. Kiosks outside display the schedule of the room for reserving on the fly.
- There is coffee, tea and biscuits in the room. Sarah requested catering and specific equipment through her app.
- Rates the service 5/5. The virtual assistant asks for feedback to maintain and improve service standards.

Typical morning at work
- Arrives at 8:30 AM. The building ensures adequate parking and her virtual assistant guides her a convenient space.
- Badges into the side entrance. The building recognizes Sarah and gives her access.
- Makes a cup of coffee. The building ensures a supply of warm beverages and other items in common spaces.
- Reserves a workstation on her app. The building seamlessly handles room reservations from any device.

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Quick lunch
- Checks what's good at the cafe on her app. Food services can predict demand based on real-time occupancy data.
- Decides to continue product planning after lunch. IoT with AI can adjust facility services on demand and in real time.
- Asks her virtual assistant to find her a room immediately. It recognizes her voice and reserves another room.

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Where is that meeting room?
- Locates the room on her app. An interactive floor plan helps employees to find people and spaces
- Heads to the meeting room. When she stops at the washrooms, she notices a leak.
- Reports the issue to her virtual assistant. It understands her voice and submits the service request.

Time to go!
- It's time to wrap up and leave. The virtual assistant relays a thank you from the facility team.

Another busy day!

06
How to design a better workplace experience

So how does an organization decide on the right mix of services and spaces to elevate the workplace experience and improve productivity?

Tune in to the voice of the employee with analytics
Enhancement efforts should start with analytics. Your organization can apply similar techniques to gauging employee experience as those you use to measure and evaluate customer experience. Traditional employee HR information and unstructured comments from internal and external social platforms can provide insights into potential solutions to challenges. IoT can generate useful data about working conditions and personal wellness. Analytics can help you develop insights, identify changes, amplify employee voice and address issues.

Invest in key touchpoints where employee experience has the greatest impact
Think about the points in the employee lifecycle that truly make a difference — for employees and the organization as a whole. For some, particularly those in traditionally labor-intensive industries, recruiting and on-boarding processes have a significant impact on attracting and retaining top talent. For others, experiences related to project assignments and career development will more notably impact retention and productivity. Understanding the relevance of different experiences, and taking into consideration your organizational strategy and culture, will help you better target investment.

Build an employee experience coalition that crosses traditional silos
Designing integrated experiences around the physical, social and task spheres requires a multi-functional perspective. In addition to tool design and development, IT needs to provide the hardware and help desk support. Facilities and real estate services need to deliver workspaces that enable individual productivity and collective innovation. Marketing must help consolidate the connection between employee and corporate branding. Most important, leadership at the line-of-business level must oversee day-to-day activities and the overall work environment.

Design employee experiences using rapid, iterative design principles
Apply agile design principles to enhancing employee experiences. First, develop an understanding of your user population based on quantitative as well as observational data. Second, document the stages of the employee journey, highlighting physical, social and task-related interactions, as well as approaches for addressing limitations or bottlenecks. Third, rapidly develop solutions that solve parts of the puzzle over short time periods rather than creating one larger solution that may take much longer. Finally, capture feedback and refine the original solution on an ongoing basis.

Applying these principles to the design of employee experience can generate quick successes and prevent larger, more costly challenges in the future. By 2020, 30 billion annual investment in smarter buildings is rising, as business leaders are investing to scale and taking full advantage of this potential.

Ready or not? Ask yourself these questions:

How does your current employee experience affect the attraction and retention of critical job roles within your organization?

How could improving your employee experience increase productivity within your organization?

To what extent does your employee experience influence your customer experience?

Who has primary responsibility for designing employee experience within your organization?

What types of analytics are you using to evaluate the effectiveness of your employee experience?

07
Conclusion

With AI and IoT, leaders can drive greater operational efficiency and engaging workplace experiences across all aspects of their connected facilities.

Imagine the full potential of all your connected facilities fueled by IoT and AI.

IBM offers AI and IoT driven capabilities that drive real business outcomes for connected facilities across the lifecycle.

IBM TRIRIGA Real Estate and Facilities Management
Make every square inch count with a comprehensive solution for your facilities maintenance, lease accounting, capital project and space utilization.

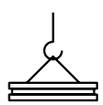
IBM TRIRIGA Building Insights
Use IoT and real-time insights to gain a complete understanding of occupancy and usage across your entire real estate portfolio.

To learn more about facilities management in the age of IoT and how it can elevate workplace experiences for your organization, visit ibm.com/internet-of-things/solutions/facilities-management

Here is how the solutions apply across the lifecycle of your facilities.

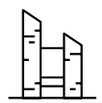
Design

Contextualize building data for complete lifecycle



Construct

Manage activities and risks for on-time, on-budget delivery



Operate

Exploit data to reduce cost, maximize use and engage occupants

Optimize

Connect, analyze and visualize data for next generation services

- IBM TRIRIGA Real Estate and Facilities Management
- IBM TRIRIGA Building Insights

Next Steps

Facilities management

Watch the video

Read the Verdantix report

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