

## The Future of Work and what it means for the Not-for-Profit Sector

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For most people when they hear the 'Future of Work' mentioned, they tend to think about the future impact of technology, robotics or artificial intelligence and many organisations believe that it is something that won't have to contend with for another five to ten years. However, accelerated by the pandemic, the Future of Work is very much upon us, and it is something that all organisations, including those in the not-for-profit sector need to consider.

There is a consensus that automation and digitisation is transforming and changing jobs and how we work, particularly in certain sectors. This has instilled a sense of vulnerability that somehow technology will take over their jobs. However, the reality is that organisations need to examine the roles within their own sectors and look closely at how people and technology integrate now and in the future.

### **What is the Future of Work?**

The Future of Work is more about an evolution of the society in which we all live and work. What we're experiencing right now is being called The Fourth Industrial Revolution and it is driving change in various aspects of our lives. We can't ignore how technological advances are influencing our lives, from our personal interactions to how we do our jobs. But this must be taken in context of the overall evolution in work and society.

### **Future of Work – People and Organisational Trends**

At Adare Human Resource Management, we have identified some significant trends that all employers and organisations need to be conscious of; some will not necessarily impact every organisation, particularly in the Not-for-Profit sector. But we will look at those trends that will impact the sector.

#### **Purposeful Organisations**

Before the pandemic, we were already seeing a trend in people looking to work with purpose-led organisations; businesses with a genuine societal conscience and whose vision is a better society for all. This has been accelerated during the pandemic, with more people reflecting on the impact they are having on the world around them.

As humans, we want to make the right decisions for ourselves, our family and society and we want to work for and engage with organisations that have the same vision. People want to be part of a greater purpose, and this includes working for an organisation and becoming more selective in who they work for. This is certainly the case for the younger generations of Millennials and Gen-Z who are far more conscious of their impact on global society.

## **Equality, Inclusion & Diversity**

Various global movements, such as Black Lives Matter and Sustainability, have highlighted inequalities across the world and put pressure on society to enforce rights, justice and equality for all with younger generations leading the way.

These movements are important as they create an environment of inclusivity for all, regardless of gender, race, background or ethnicity. The objective is to create an environment of inclusion, where everyone feels respected for who they are, what they stand for – this highlights the role for many of the not-for-profit organisation who work in this space and help amplify what they contribute to society.

## **Resilience & Adaptability**

Experts are predicting that we face disruptions, such as Covid-19, more frequently, both globally and more locally; something that is very difficult to plan. So, it's crucially important that organisations prepare themselves as much as they can in terms of high-level risk planning. Given the impact that Covid-19 has had in terms of fundraising, donations and delivery of services to clients, the Not-for-Profit sector is more sensitive to any further disruptions so planning is important; reimagining how the organisation will operate if faced with another pandemic and how those dependent on the services provided by those in the sector will not be negatively impacted. We need to take the learnings from the pandemic and build for the future.

## **What's next for the Not-for-Profit Sector?**

The above are just three of the People and Organisational trends that have been identified. Others are Human Experience, Network Organisations, Leadership of the Many, New Jobs & Skills, New War on Talent, Diversification on Ways of Working and People Empowerment & Innovation. Every Not-for-Profit is different and therefore, the evolution of their organisation and its work will be influenced by a number of these trends in varying ways. But change is inevitable, and preparation is key. Now is the time for HR departments within the sector to commence planning, developing and implementing their strategy on the Future of Work journey to ensure they are laying the groundwork now for these changes, as those who don't risk getting left behind.

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