When people thrive, business thrives: The case for human sustainability

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David Mallon:
Welcome back to *Capital H*, the podcast where we explore the latest trends and developments to make work better for humans and humans better at work. I'm your host, David Mallon. I'm a managing director in Deloitte's Human Capital practice in the US, and I'm chief analyst for our Insights2Action Human Capital Research & Sensing team.

Today's episode is part of our series on this year's *Global Human Capital Trends Report*. Today's focus is on the trend on human sustainability.

We are operating in a human-powered economy. Organizations are at a watershed moment, many having transitioned from industrial beginnings to a knowledge economy, and now, to an economy increasingly powered by the hearts and minds and essential human traits of our people. In short, our humanity.

Today, for many organizations, nothing's more important than its people, from workers and contractors to customers and community members. For true sustainability, organizations need to create value for all the people that they touch.

And it's not just a nice idea. It's central to their ability to create better outcomes for themselves and for humanity alike.

In our first segment, we'll be joined by Sue Cantrell, she's our US Human Capital Eminence leader at Deloitte Consulting, and Jason Cerrato, he's the VP of market strategy at Eightfold.ai, and then, of course, our leader roundtable.

Sue Cantrell:
Hello, I am welcoming you to the *Capital H* podcast. Welcome, listeners. My name is Sue Cantrell, and I lead human capital thought leadership and eminence at Deloitte and I'm also vice president of products workforce strategies. I'm joined today by Jason Cerrato, who is vice president of marketing strategy at Eightfold.ai, to discuss human sustainability. This is a trend from Deloitte's *2024 Global*

Human Capital Trends Report. Jason, welcome to the *Capital H* podcast.

Jason Cerrato:
Thanks, Sue. Happy to be here and happy to join *Capital H.*

Sue Cantrell:
So, Jason, human sustainability is the first trend in our 2024 report. And it's really a core component of the new human performance equation. What is that human performance equation? We really define it as human and business outcomes and the multiplier effect that they can have on one another. And human sustainability shines the spotlight on the human outcomes component.

So we define human sustainability as the degree to which an organization creates value for people as human beings, leaving them with greater health and well-being, stronger skills and employability, good jobs, opportunities for advancement, progress toward equity, increased belonging, and heightened connection to purpose.

Jason, from your perspective at Eightfold, why is this focus on human sustainability so crucial now and in the future of work? Why is it important to leave every human an organization touches better off, not only from the human perspective, but also to an organization's overall success?

Jason Cerrato:
It's a great question, and I think it's top of mind for so many of the HR leaders and business leaders that I talk to every day, because we are going through such a period of rapid transformation. I think it's a continuous progression. But now we're also feeling the impact of Generative AI coming into our organization as a tool. But increasingly not just a tool—a teammate.

As we think about this, there's a significant impact on what this means for the work that people are doing, and then the impact for how this reshapes the jobs that'll be in organizations, and the skills that people will need to develop, and the mix of all of that coming together. If you think about that, this is adding a whole other element to this whole relationship of employer–employee that has been changing over the last few years in organizations. This is why HR is at

the center of just about every initiative in organizations these days.

At Eightfold, what we do is we help with talent intelligence and understanding kind of a deeper level of what's happening in organizations through a skills-based lens using advanced technology to read and react to data in real time to help prepare for this fast-approaching future. And with this understanding, it helps kind of make headway around this ability to have greater agility to prepare for how both employees can help develop themselves and adapt and be agile for future careers and future development, but also how organizations can be more agile and prepare for what's happening in their industry—but also know what's happening in their organization and how their talent is evolving in real time as they're still operating for today.

So things like tracking emerging skills and maintaining market competitiveness—and all of this while still trying to keep the lights on and not get distracted with delivering day to day. So I just think with the pace of change that we have a front row seat to, this is ever top of mind for the HR leaders that I'm talking to, and we're all trying to solve this together.

Sue Cantrell:
It's such a great illustration you just painted of how Eightfold's talent intelligence enables those human outcomes, which we define as human sustainability. Jason, I think part of the challenge organizations are facing around achieving true human sustainability is that interactions with people are typically grouped under the "S" component of ESG [environmental, social, and governance]. And sometimes that can be limiting because social metrics, in comparison to at least environmental ones, are often difficult to quantify and often lack clear definitions. So I'm wondering, Jason, how can organizations start to solve this challenge, and what are you seeing organizations do to tackle this issue?

Jason Cerrato:
Yeah, it's a great question. And I think part of it is we have an abundance of data, but we, in the past, haven't had places to collect that information to then connect that information. So as we now have systems, like

in Eightfold, that can track data in real time, it allows us to see a more complete picture and start to understand our talent in ways broader and more complete—and not just for what they're doing for our organization, but for what they're doing day to day in a variety of different capacities, which allows us to think beyond the job.

So what are people doing in your organization in the workplace? What skills are they developing? What training are they taking? What interactions are they having? Are they having mentoring conversations? Are they doing things in your community? Are they doing things with volunteering? What things are they doing to develop in their career? As we've been using a lot of technologies that have been built around jobs—you know, a lot of our systems were tracking what it meant for the role that they were occupying, and not necessarily all of the work that they were doing, or all of these things that may have often been perceived as extracurricular, when they're really not extracurricular, right?

All of this advanced technology and these new datasets can allow organizations to better track these things that had previously been, number one, kind of hard to visualize and hard to track or may not have had a home in previous systems, but also allows for a more complete understanding of the talent you have in organizations to then have better visibility to make better decisions through a more complete lens.

So when we talk about what does it mean to be part of that "S" in the ESG, this helps paint a bigger picture to have a more complete strategy and, again, tie it more to the individual and the human and the talent, and not just the role or the job.

Sue Cantrell:
I just love that, Jason, how tech advances, for the first time, enables us to have that visibility and to track metrics related to human sustainability. I wanted to continue to pull on this thread. So, often we see that human sustainability outcomes are additive for organizations. And it really begins with the outcomes—those human outcomes for employees. Those are really the people that the organization cares for most closely, but

then it really continues to build throughout the extended workforce.

All of those people who might not be employees, but create value for your organization, like contractors or gig workers, and even into society. So what do you think are some of the most important human sustainability outcomes organizations should be striving to achieve to make human sustainability a core focus on a broader perspective versus additive?

Jason Cerrato:
It's not just your employees; it's total talent. It's all the people that potentially walk through your doors or interact with your organization.

And through some of the capability that we have now people are not just expanding the data that they're looking at, they're expanding the audiences that they're considering. And as a result of that, it gives them a chance to look at, "Who are the talent we're interacting with? How are we engaging with them? How are we able to capitalize on that talent when we need them, and what are the skills that they're bringing into our organization? How are they able to deliver to our business in ways that align with what we want to invest in, and then how does this help provide some agility as our business may be changing or shifting?"

We're seeing the world of work change with automation and Generative AI. And when we think about this new world of work, the work that people are going to be doing is changing significantly.

So, expanding the lens to this kind of total talent audience and having this greater visibility gives business leaders and HR leaders a variety of levers and strategies and buttons to push to then have multiple approaches to deliver to the business and to customers and to their employees. So, again, as we think about it, it's not just optimizing what you're doing for today; it's building a whole new future.

Sue Cantrell:
Love that, the whole new future. And coming back to something you said earlier about how the worker–employer relationship itself is changing so much as we think about

this future—and it's fraught with a lot of disruptions, both in business and in society. So a piece from our research, for example, shows that only 43% of workers say their organizations have left them better off than when they started, adding value to them as human beings.

I'm wondering, Jason, what are some of the biggest current challenges to creating a stronger worker–organization relationship? And what do you think are some of the biggest worries for workers, or relationships, as it relates to the future of work itself?

Jason Cerrato:
Yeah, and I think part of this speaks to having this dynamic capability to understand what's happening in real time. And the better equipped organizations are to understand what's happening to their organization and what's shaping their audiences with their talent and their workforce, the greater possibility there is for those two things to come together for the future.

I grew up in an organization where there were leaders that said, "I can't guarantee you employment, but I can guarantee I'll do my best to help you maintain employability. And I'll work to develop you." And what we're talking about now is using technology and data to try to bring those things together. So maybe your employability stays at the same employer, right?

So if you think about it, dynamic talent combined with dynamic technology creates this development tech. And what's happening now is we're shifting the mindset and expanding this concept of talent management to talent enablement. And leaders are thinking, "How can I enable employees versus enforcing programs or driving compliance?" And I think part of this is helping address this misalignment of skills and work. There will be jobs impacted by AI and automation, but there will also be jobs created and discovered by AI.

You know, increasingly hybrid roles that are mixing skills in new ways. And when you're using technology like ours—talent intelligence—there's the ability for employees to develop skills and see how their skills map to potential career paths, but there's also the ability for organizations

to plan for future business strategies compared to what's happening in their industry. And as these two things are happening in the same environment, there's a greater likelihood that these two futures can potentially meet at the same place.

Again, you have this combination of talent intelligence creating a win-win for both the worker and the organization. I think it really speaks to that human outcomes and business outcomes coming together to create human performance.

Sue Cantrell:
You know, you mentioned this misalignment of skills and actual work. You know, how can organizations solve for this issue? What's happening that we can bring those into alignment now?

Jason Cerrato:
I think, we touched on it a little bit, but moving beyond this historical focus on the job to use technology like AI to take a closer look at how talent is moving through their organization and how work is evolving as a result. You and I have talked about the HR trends report, and one of the pieces of the report is how work is increasingly decoupling from some of the historical benchmarks and fence posts that we've used to organize jobs in organizations.

Job descriptions have always been a lag of how the work has been done. They've always been lagging data compared to leading data, but today with the rapid pace of change, that lag is getting broader faster, right?

So if you use technology where it's more focused around the talent profile and leading data, you can understand skills and how skills map to other opportunities and how people can learn adjacent skills. "And then what can I learn based on my current skills?" And this opens up opportunities to include broader audiences, potentially removing barriers that may have previously been in place. So ultimately, this has other compounding effects for opportunity and equity and inclusion and diversity.

So again, I think all of this is what a lot of organizations are trying to wrap their head around and put into operationalization, but

it's the promise of technology. There's a lot of people that are saying, "We've never had technology this good in the HR space." But it also requires thinking differently, managing differently, and measuring differently because this is built for a future that looks very different than the way we've operated historically.

Sue Cantrell:
Yes. I just love that focus on the future should be looking at business outcomes and human outcomes together and how they multiply one another. Business outcomes like agility you mentioned; human outcomes like equity and growth and development. So I think what you're doing at Eightfold is really helping us pave our way to that future. Jason, I want to thank you for joining me today. Any final parting thoughts you'd like to leave with our listeners?

Jason Cerrato:
I appreciate the work that you do at Deloitte, and I love the trends report. I've read it over now a couple of times. I know we've had some ongoing discussions. I really think it's important for people to come together and have these discussions because "what got us here won't get us there"—it's a common phrase in this space. I spend a lot of time at executive round tables and conferences and webinars, and we're building the future of work together. So I appreciate the opportunity to join you on the podcast and look forward to continuing the discussion.

Sue Cantrell:
Thank you, Jason, for your partnership in building the future of work together.

PART 3 INTERVIEW/ROUNDTABLE

David Mallon:
Thanks, Sue and Jason, for joining us. Now, in part three, our last segment for today is our roundtable. I'm joined by a few of my Deloitte colleagues and co-authors for this year's Global Capital Trends study. Let's dive in.

Welcome back to *Capital H*, listeners. Let's get started. I'm joined by two of my Deloitte colleagues, Alexandria Younossi and Jason Flynn. Alex is a principal in our Human Capital Workforce Transformation practice, focused primarily on the health

care industry, and she assists life sciences organizations with large-scale business and talent transformations. She's also newly our Human Capital Purpose and DEI leader. And Jason Flynn—he's in our Workforce Transformation practice, and he is one of my fellow lead authors for Deloitte's *2024 Global Human Capital Trends Report*. Alex and Jason, thank you so much for joining us today.

Today's topic is human sustainability. Jason, why don't you get us started with why we need to focus on humans and human sustainability?

Jason Flynn:
Yeah, David, certainly an interesting and important topic right now. To start, I think it's important to acknowledge we've been starting to see this emerge over the last few years. If I go back to our 2023 trends report, we introduced the boundaryless world of work, where the work, the workforce, the workplace—all the traditional organizing constructs around each of those dimensions—was starting to fall away in a very dynamic environment.

And as part of that report, we kind of called on both HR and other business leaders to adopt some new fundamentals, as we called them. And one of those new fundamentals was basically elevating human outcomes. If you fast-forward to 2024 in our report and the research we did, we certainly saw this boundaryless world just continue to accelerate, right? We've had Generative AI burst onto the scene and continue to disrupt this world of work.

As we dug into things and looked at some of the trends this year, this focus on the human factor emerged even more strongly as one of the key factors for organizations to be paying attention to. And obviously it comes through in the title of the report this year, where we talk about human performance in a boundaryless world. So, we've started to see this theme emerge here. I think it comes back to we're operating in a human-powered economy, at this point, right?

Organizations have gone through a lot of change. We've transitioned from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy. And now, it really comes down

to an economy that's really powered by the hearts and minds and essential human traits of people—our humanity. And so, I look at the clients I'm working with, and nothing is more important than its people, right? It's the human element that's going to drive the worker and business relationships going forward.

That includes revenue and innovation and intellectual property, and it drives things on the other side—of efficiency and productivity and risk management. So again, this human element is just so important right now. And yet we see organizations' efforts to really prioritize these connections are often falling short. Part of that, we saw, is they're focused on some legacy mindsets, looking at old metrics and old proxies, and really still focused on more of extracting value from people rather than really working together to create a mutually better future for both them as an organization and the individuals they serve. The good news is we saw organizations are aware of these working realities. They know they need to adjust and pivot, but they're struggling to do that.

And we talked about this gap of knowing versus doing, and it's really that focus on the human factor that I think we see as the key to bridging that gap. As we said in the report, it's humans more than physical assets that are going to be the business drivers going forward. And so we have all that context. And then, on the other side, we see what's going on in the environment today is oftentimes leaving workers worse off, right? That relationship between the worker and the organization is more strained than it ever has been, right?

We continue to see rampant worker burnout continuing to hit all-time highs. We see legitimate [laughs] concerns about what does AI mean for work going forward? We have workers who are concerned about the impact on their jobs and what did that mean for them going forward. And it's forcing an ever continuous kind of evolution of the skills needed. And so, again, there's more concerns with workers about long-term prospects. Where do they fit into this highly tech-enabled environment and very dynamic work environment?

So there's a lot of concern out there, and we see a gap between what executives see that's going on in this space and what workers see. Nearly 90% of the executives we spoke to this year said they thought they were focusing on this idea of human outcomes, but only about 40% of the workers agreed. There's a disparity between what executives and workers are seeing and feeling, but overall these human outcomes and this human element of work is really emerging as a key area of focus.

David Mallon:
Thanks for the context. Focusing on human outcomes makes sense. Do we have a relatively short definition for exactly what we mean by human sustainability?

Jason Flynn:
So first of all, it's our anchor trend this year. It sets the stage for the rest of the trends that we speak about throughout the report, and it really helps define that human outcome part of the human performance equation. In the report, we set out to define it as the degree to which an organization is creating value for people as human beings: leaving them with greater health and well-being, stronger skills and employability, the opportunity for advancement, progress toward equity better and increased belonging, and finally heightened connection to purpose.

I think fundamentally, it really is about a mindset change, right? Replacing that kind of extractive, transactional thinking about people and putting more focus on kind of the mutual value that needs to be created for both the business and the humans it both employs and serves. And it's really important, right?

This is going to be absolutely critical going forward for organizations to really bolster their access, to the workforce they need going forward, building that pipeline of talent, creating a rewarding and productive environment for work and innovation to happen. And really, I think in many respects, managing the workforce risk that all organizations see going forward. So, again, I think it's a very expansive view of how we see organizations having to take care of the humans within their organizations.

David Mallon:
So definitely an expansive view and a lot about how organizations evaluate themselves

and some of the things that they set out to accomplish in the world around them. And it makes me think of a similar concept, which is ESG. Alex, from your point of view, what we're talking about as human sustainability, how much does this relate to ESG? Are they connected? Are these overlapping circles?

Alexandria Younossi:
Yeah, absolutely, David. There's definitely a connection here that calls for us to really redefine the "S" in ESG in order to really achieve human sustainability efforts. So why is that? Well, our research is really showing that ESG is becoming increasingly unclear, unpopular, and definitely polarizing. It's attempt to encompass all facets of sustainability that can really make ESG both vague and an easy target for demagoguery—likely the reason organizations are increasingly avoiding it on earnings calls. They're staying away from it.

While many countries in Europe are actually setting a high bar for ESG compliance, other countries are really experiencing an ESG backlash with investors pulling out of ESG funds entirely. And for some organizations, ESG may be considered more of a means to an end, like a framework or you know, a means of classification or reporting, rather than really driving toward the end goal itself. So part of the challenge here is that interactions with people are typically grouped under the "S"—the "S" component of ESG—which can be limiting because of social metrics in comparison to environmental ones.

They're really difficult to quantify and often lack clear definitions. According to our research, only 19% of leaders say they have very reliable metrics for measuring the social component of ESG, and only 29% strongly agree they have a clear understanding of how to actually achieve it. So we're also seeing this disconnect. And Jason, you sort of mentioned it, this disconnect between what leaders are saying and workers are saying. So 89% of executives believe their organization is advancing human sustainability in some capacity, but only 41% of workers agree with that.

You know, many organizations also are just focusing on short-term risks right now—for example, like a public relations issue. Really

undervaluing efforts that make a positive impact on broader society—for example, investing in worker training or financial inclusion. So fundamentally, people-focused metrics tend to sort of be rooted in that extractive transactional mindset. For example, metrics that expend for their organization's benefit. Is high employee engagement a good thing? It really helps the organization, but whether it helps employees is definitely less clear.

But human sustainability isn't just another name for stakeholder capitalism—simply delivering a wider range of outcomes for a wider range of stakeholders. A focus on stakeholders alone tends to obscure the fact that organizations rely on more than positive stakeholder relations for their long-term organizational success. Being a stakeholder focused organization is not the same as being a sustainable organization whose success demands long-term collaborative efforts to create shared value. An organization is actually sustainable when it addresses the complex problems of the underlying structural and systemic issues that stand in the way of creating value for humans at the systems level.

David Mallon:
So I think we have a decent sense then of what we're talking about with human sustainability and what's behind it. And to be fair, as Jason called out, we've been focusing on this fundamental changing and changed relationship between the workers and organizations for a few years now. So much of what you're getting at Alex, these systemic issues that are in that relationship for the humans in the organization. Maybe give us a sense of what some of those issues are. What are some of these main challenges that workers would say they feel the human sustainability side of things is threatened?

Alexandria Younossi:
We're seeing a number of challenges that workers are facing as we experience just constant disruption through technology, climate change, shifting marketplace landscape, and so much more. I was really startled at what our research found that only 43% of workers say their organizations have left them better off than when they started. That's shocking, right? With workers identifying increasing work stress and the

threat of technology taking over jobs as their top challenges. So if we dig even deeper, we know that workers are experiencing increased work stress and burnout, as I just mentioned—53% of workers identifying this as a major concern. This challenge is really amplified due to the shifts in working models, such as our move to remote or hybrid work, which often blurs the boundaries between our professional and our personal lives.

And that can leave some workers really feeling a lack of connection or belonging based on their work model. Workers are also really feeling a looming threat of technology and automation replacing human jobs— with 28% of workers identifying it as a significant concern, coupled with 25% of workers anxious about the rising number of new skills and jobs needed as a result of technology or business model changes. So employees really trying to figure out "how am I going to keep up with what's going to be required of me now and in the future?"

Another topic is wellness. And as our trend report reports on, this goes well beyond just benefits. It's really marked by greater health among workers stronger skills, and greater employability. It's about good jobs, opportunities for advancement, addressing mental well-being, and really the psychological safety at work. We're also seeing the progress related to diversity, equity, and inclusion [DEI] is another area of concern, and, among the workforce, this is a topic where they're holding their employers accountable for advancing DEI internally.

But not only within the organization, they're asking their employers, "What are you doing broader marketplace and society?" They want to feel a sense that their organization feels a sense of purpose, and that they feel aligned with their organization's purpose, and they want to make sure that their organizations are combating inequality across their entire business model. They're working for an organization; they want that organization to stand for something.

You know on the topic, just to keep going on purpose, this is really a critical lever that organizations can use to reach and engage workers. From our research, we know

there's a purpose premium. That purpose-driven strategy is really good for business all around. And it's about brand and reputation, and it's definitely for attracting and retaining top talent. Seventy-eight percent of consumers are more likely to remember companies that exhibit a strong purpose, and 78% of people also indicated they would prefer to work for a purpose-driven company. We know that around 50% of workers and 75% of millennials would take a pay cut to actually work at an environmentally responsible company.

These are really important insights for organizations to be aware of. By connecting the purpose and human sustainability areas, organizations can really take on these challenges faced by workers. And as we already sort of touched upon, a human sustainability mindset replaces that extractive transactional thinking about people. It's really about the focus on creating a greater value for each person connected to the organization. And at Deloitte, we do talk about a purpose quotient [PQ] with a high PQ being the intersection of what you are good at, what you are paid to do, and what you believe in. So human sustainability is the enabler to a high PQ. It really addresses head-on the challenges and anxieties of our modern workforce by investing in the individual to be successful anytime and anywhere.

David Mallon:
So let's ground this for our listeners. How can leaders embrace human sustainability? What can they do today and in the future? Do you have real-world examples that actually showcase some of the actions they might take? I'll go to both of you quickly, but Jason, kick us off.

Jason Flynn:
I guess, there's no playbook here, but I think [there are] a lot of different things we see organizations can do. I think one thing that comes to mind first is really focusing on metrics—and new metrics that measure human outcomes. So we talked a lot about these old mindsets and old approaches just aren't working anymore. So, I think it starts with starting to think about some of these metrics that really help us latch onto and pay attention to the human side of the

equation. So that's a great starting point. We see a lot of that in some of the examples where, for example, using AI-driven analysis of how quickly people are learning new skills. And so that can enable your whole approach in organizations around skills development.

One of the large insurance companies we spoke to during the research talked about their use of AI-enabled audio analytics with their call center employees—and certainly trying to improve customer satisfaction and responsiveness there, but also using it as a way to coach and build the skills of their employees and measuring that skill building through those efforts. So I think that's absolutely important is getting some of those new metrics.

And that feeds into kind of this broader need to look at what's the business case for human sustainability, and how do you tie some of these metrics back to how you're rewarding and incenting your employees? So a couple of examples there, we highlighted in the report Hitachi, who was having some productivity challenges and instead of pulling out the old similar playbook there, what they did is they set out to focus on worker happiness. So they offered workers some AI-based suggestions for increasing feelings of happiness throughout the day.

They monitored and saw how this happiness metric was going over time, had some interventions to try to improve worker happiness, and they saw that, over time, they could tie improvements here to improvements in profits in sales per hour and other business metrics as the happiness of the workforce went up. Another example that comes to mind that really gets into linking this to pay is Genpact. So Genpact they use a suite of internal tech tools and a chatbot to regularly check in with workers to see how they're doing and essentially measuring their mood. They have a mood score that these tools help to aggregate and evaluate and monitor over time.

And [for] the top 150 leaders at the organization, part of their bonus is influenced and impacted by how they're doing against that mood score. So again, we're setting some new metrics and measures that bring that human outcomes

into the equation and really measuring how our leaders are doing in driving those. The other thing, what we're certainly seeing, some of these broad non-financial metrics heavily influencing executive pay, right? So, top of the house. Pretty much most organizations these days have some form of bonus modifier for how organizations are doing against some of these non-financial metrics.

Some of those are broad environmental or sustainability, but many of them include some of these human outcomes or [are] increasingly including some of these human outcomes. And some organizations are taking that much lower down into their workforce, such as Mastercard, who's adopted kind of a bonus program that has a modifier based on how the organization's doing against hitting some of these key non-financial metrics that are really important to the humans that work there and the humans they serve. So that's a few different examples of some things we're seeing in practice that are working.

David Mallon:
Alex?

Alexandria Younossi:
I think it's really about involving workers, co-creating human sustainability initiatives together, as opposed to it being a top-down effort. In order to create that value for individuals, you really need input from the individuals. That would be the first thing, and then I really think it's elevating managers in this equation and really empowering them. So research definitely is showing us that jobs are the biggest factor impacting workers' mental health today, and managers have more impact on mental health than spouses. That is incredible.

But if that's the role that managers are playing, we really need to prepare them with the resources to support human sustainability. One example is PayPal. They launched an initiative to improve the financial well-being of their entry-level and frontline workers after recognizing that approximately two-thirds of their workers were living paycheck to paycheck, despite being paid at or above market rates.

So to justify the cost of this program, they made a business case that estimated that for every 1% reduction in attrition, it would save $500,000 a year from reduced recruiting, onboarding, and training costs, through improved productivity. So that's pretty incredible. Now, almost five years into that program, PayPal workers report far less financial stress, and the organization has reduced their absenteeism. The organization is also seeing higher capacity to meet customer needs and innovate, as well as all-time highs in employee engagement scores, productivity and retention, and in net promoter scores among customers. So a really positive story with PayPal there.

David Mallon:
Yeah, definitely a positive story. What I appreciate about all these examples is that I think it strikes me that most of the activities, most of the actions on the part of these companies, are actually not that terribly new. They're not that terribly different, but there's a shift in perspective—as Jason and Alex, you both have talked about this—moving away from simply viewing the workforce as something to extract value out of but instead as the humans in the organization that we also have to provide value to. And so it's that shift in perspective that sort of matters, I think, most in all those examples. Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts today and for joining us and our listeners. We're going to wrap up now, but before we go, any final parting thoughts you'd like to leave with our listeners? I'll let you, Alex, go first.

Alexandria Younossi:
I was reflecting on a recent conversation I had with an executive, and in the spirit of so much of the technology changes that we're experiencing and a lot of that fear we talked about earlier, he wanted to really prepare his workforce for any possible scenario of the future. And his greatest motivator was to prepare them for whatever may happen. Whether these individuals stayed in his organization or not, he really wanted to help them build their skill sets to be transferrable and to be used well beyond his organization.

And he was just all about building resilience and really not viewing his investment in

his people as a transaction just to deliver value to his org. That mindset shift? It was encouraging. We know human sustainability is really a long-term strategy that requires leaders to really act as stewards of human thriving. When humans thrive, businesses can thrive, and we really need to start that work now. So thank you.

Jason Flynn:
I love that. And it actually reminds me of a quote when we were interviewing—and obviously we interviewed a number of folks during our research—one of the CHROs we spoke to. And he said, "Companies cannot offer you employment forever, but they should make you employable forever." So that mindset of really taking that broad view of taking care of the humans in the workforce, I think, really resonates with me. This is a long-term play. This is about a mindset shift. I think as you said, David, it's not about doing anything necessarily revolutionary.

If we can just put business outcomes and human outcomes together and start to focus on and measure the results of both of those things together. Again, we're really seeing there's an incredible uplift to be had, if we can prioritize those two things together. It doesn't have to take these broad new programs. A lot of it can be done with some simple tweaks in getting teams and managers to really recognize and have this human sustainability mindset. So I think there's a lot of work to do, but a lot can be done without too much investment.

David Mallon:
And we'll leave it there. Thank you both.

Alexandria Younossi:
Thanks, David.

David Mallon:
That brings us to the end of this episode of *Capital H*. I want to extend my thanks to our guests, for joining us and sharing their own perspectives on the crucial role of human sustainability in the future of work.

I also want to thank my Deloitte colleagues and co-authors of this year's report for their contributions to the conversation. As we

move forward, we all need to remember that human sustainability should be a core focus for all organizations, not just an add-on. It's essential for creating value for all the people that organizations touch as human beings, ensuring health and well-being, enhancing their skills and their employability, and fostering a sense of belonging and a connection to purpose.

Thank you, listeners, for tuning in today. We hope that you found today's conversation valuable and maybe picked up an actionable strategy to navigate your own shift toward human sustainability. We look forward to continuing this conversation with you in our next episode.

To learn more about our Human Capital Trends study, you can find the full report at deloitte.com/hctrends. Let us know what you think of *Capital H*. Rate us on whatever service you used to find us, and look us up on social media. We'd love to hear from you.

Thanks again, and we hope that you continue to join us in future episodes as we explore the topics and trends that focus on putting humans at the center of work. Until next time.

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