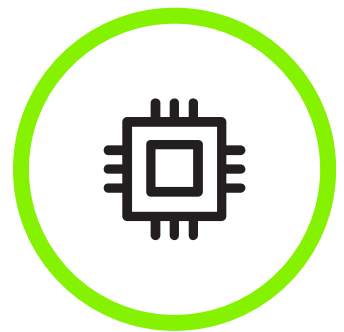




Elevating the workforce experience: The digital lens

For a while now, the digital experience in people's personal lives has long surpassed their digital experience at work. We're able to connect with others and share ideas quicker than ever (social media platforms). We have access to information and content anytime, anywhere (mobile, tablets, smartwatches). And there are an abundance of intuitive self-service applications and tools that make our lives simpler and easier every day. Individuals have now come to expect the same superior, high-touch experience at work as they do in their personal lives. According to Salesforce research, 71 percent of employees want the same level of technology at work—simple, intuitive, and easy—as they have in their personal lives.¹



But why is meeting the expectations of the workforce and closing this digital experience gap so important?

According to one study, companies with the top-rated workforce experiences generated 22 percent higher engagement among workers compared to other organizations. Furthermore, organizations with workforce experiences rated as the best enjoyed 12 percent greater customer satisfaction than other organizations, and their three-year revenue growth rate was 2.3 times greater than the average.²

In this article, we'll take a deeper dive into designing a consumer-grade digital experience in the second installment of the Elevating the Workforce Experience blog series (see here for the first installment – [Elevating the Workforce Experience: The Personal Lens](#)).³

The digital experience gap

Organizations face a host of challenges in closing the digital experience gap. According to Deloitte's 2019 Global Human Capital Trends survey, only 38 percent responded that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their work-related tools and technology. Another study reported that nearly 72 percent of employees cannot find the information they need within their organization's systems.⁴ This is likely, at least in part, due to the fact that the average number of systems employees interact with on a regular basis has risen from eight to 11.⁵ Furthermore, employees spend up to nearly 20 percent of their work week looking for information or chasing colleagues who can help with unique tasks.⁶ Clearly opportunities exist for organizations to close the digital experience gap.

Providing a high-impact digital experience requires a delicate balance between identifying the tools and technologies that will help increase productivity and efficiency while also maintaining a focus on the human experience. To do so, organizations need to look beyond the mere functionality of technology and put the people at the center of the design. In other words, not technology for technology's sake, but rather for the human's sake.



Deloitte defines the digital experience as the focus on combining platforms, tools, and processes to create compelling, consumer-grade personalized experiences that increase productivity, creativity, and foster collaboration with a digital mindset.

Closing the gap

And the experience begins the moment individuals first interact with the organization. A leading hospitality company deploys artificial intelligence (AI) technology for the entire recruitment process—sourcing, screening, and interviewing candidates—to create a more streamlined and personalized experience for both the candidate and the hiring manager that increased the speed of hiring by 85 percent.⁷ This is a crucial point in time for both the candidate and the organization. It's each's first impression of the other, helping candidates determine their next step in their career and affecting the quality of talent organizations will attract.

During one of the more impressionable moments of the employee life cycle, onboarding, a multinational IT firm leverages technology to create a personal and optimized onboarding experience. Incoming employees are provided with access to online learning and an online chat room to meet other new hires. This not only ramps up time to productivity through the learning

portal, but also empowers employees to begin connecting with one another before day one at the office.⁸

Leveraging technology goes beyond an employee's formative days as well. A satellite television company provides field technicians with a messaging app that enables them to connect with subject-matter experts, receive real-time updates on systemwide issues, and look up parts in real time, which empowers them to quickly meet customer demands and cuts down service-call time. This seemingly small tool enables a frictionless experience that helps them to be more productive, more efficient, and collaborate with others in their network.⁹

A large retail company empowers their employees with similar custom-built devices that allows them to access inventory data and training applications and enables them to communicate with their team. This device enhances productivity, enables growth, and encourages collaboration.¹⁰

At NASA, technicians working on the Orion spacecraft are now using VR headsets in place of 1,000-plus page binders of written assembly instructions. Workers wear headsets that show holograms of virtual models with instructions overlaid on each part. The models are color-coded to the role of the technician using the headset, making it easier for technicians to “quickly” find exactly which part they should work on and what they should do. As a result, technicians are quickly able to familiarize themselves with and perform new tasks.¹¹

Beyond the gap

In the above examples, we can see how digital done right meets organizational imperatives, enhances the workforce experience, and satisfies customer demands. Although not always easy, all organizations can follow a similar blueprint. While disparate back-end systems—which is often the case for organizations, given that most technology landscapes are not built from the ground up—can make it difficult, they don't have to result in a disjointed front-end workforce experience. Technologies exist to create a “unified engagement platform, a user-experience layer that can span across systems to provide a seamless digital experience.” At its core, the platform integrates systems into a single service entity that can include chatbots, enterprise social platforms, and robotic process automation.¹²

Innovative organizations are leading the way by integrating collaboration technologies and automation into their unified platforms. As we discussed in our previous insight on the [digital workforce experience](#), roughly 40 percent of large enterprises surveyed implemented cloud technology to centralize HR and payroll data, creating a transformative HR experience.

This cloud-based technology for HR systems can also help organizations access new talent sources. The Government of Canada (GC) is working toward creating a digital marketplace of prequalified individuals. Agencies that need people with certain capabilities would be able to search the marketplace, quickly finding people to fill project roles on projects of finite duration. Workers in this “cloud” would retain rights, benefits, and union representation and would be able to accept work inside or outside the government at any time.¹³

Leading organizations are taking an integrated perspective on the technological landscape by collaboratively designing and governing the digital workforce experience across functional silos that include HR, IT, and the C-suite. For example, a leading health care provider is looking to leverage a single engagement platform to house communications, content, social platforms, service-center chat, knowledge-sharing,

and access to systems. We have found that, if digital transformations occur in silos, the workforce experience tends to suffer, and the result will likely be cumbersome, disconnected processes and systems ultimately defeating the purpose of the digital transformation.

To combat this siloed effect, the State of Pennsylvania has started implementing a team-based or “cluster-based” approach to digital work by creating a chief digital officer for the state and aligning a CDO for each agency across the Commonwealth.¹⁴

Lastly, it's worth noting that the most effective digital experience is human-centric, not process-driven. Organizations that succeed in this leverage employee journeys to map out the moments that matter and pain points throughout the employee experience rather than focusing on the functional steps that the process supports. Once the experience is truly understood from the perspective of the employee, organizations can then use these journeys to design a tailored digital experience that meets the unique needs of their workforce.



The bottom line is, when technology results in an enabling, empowering, and frictionless experience, organizations are one step closer to an overall positive workforce experience. With the lines blurring between our professional and personal lives, it's about time people can say the same regarding our digital experience.



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