



What's the plan?

How HR strategy will change for 2022

How HR strategy will change for 2022

As planning begins for what will be another unusual year, we sat down with ADP leaders and veteran HR experts to learn what businesses should prioritize — we spoke with: Kristen Appleman, senior vice president; Lori Hardwick, market general manager; and Cristian Orihuela, vice president of insurance and strategic initiatives.

The team is predicting that talent strategy, employer branding, and the hybrid workplace will all be key focus areas for HR planning and strategy.

Businesses will also need to explore new approaches to how and when they plan and communicate HR strategies, and increase their focus — and definition — of worker safety.

Take an agile approach to HR strategy and planning

What we know about the world of work has changed drastically in the last 18 months, and all signs indicate continued, rapid transformation as we head into 2022.

That continued upheaval can make it incredibly hard to plan, because businesses can't know what they don't know. To keep pace, organizations will need to be flexible, adaptable, and willing to expect the unexpected. You can plan and hope for best-case scenarios, but it will be absolutely critical to create contingency plans for any eventualities. Plan for various possibilities, and accept that your contingency plans may become irrelevant.

How do you plan for the unknown?

Real-time communication will be key. In the past, presenting your annual strategy once a year may have been sufficient. However, in 2022 and beyond, companies should be prepared to revisit, change and re-share their HR strategy on a quarterly or monthly basis.

In the face of uncertainty, successful businesses will persevere, embrace an agile approach, and create contingency plans. The ability to pivot and respond quickly to unknown obstacles will be key.

Meet the authors:



Kristen Appleman,
Senior Vice President



Lori Hardwick,
Market General Manager



Cristian Orihuela,
Vice President



Prioritize worker safety and health

As employees return to work post-pandemic, mental and physical safety have become key business priorities. While health and safety have always been vital parts of any HR strategy, their increased importance for employees means that in 2022 they'll carry additional weight.

This means that, in an increasingly competitive landscape, mental health benefits could be key to improving your talent acquisition and retention strategy.

As mental health rises in priority – according to Ginger, just [69% of employees think their workplace is doing enough to support mental health](#)¹ – companies should prioritize both proactive and reactive initiatives. Mental well-being programs and business resource groups anchored in values such as diversity, equity and inclusion, are there to help keep employees mindful and engaged. Employee assistance programs (EAP) are offered for those who struggle with a variety of mental health issues, like depression or addiction.

To ensure proper physical safety, organizations will need to clearly communicate their policies around vaccine requirements, social distancing guidelines and mask use. However, the pandemic isn't the only concern for your employees. As stories involving disgruntled employees and customers dominate the headlines, your team wants to know your safety protocols. Employers have an obligation to keep their employees safe from physical threats and harm.

69%

OF EMPLOYEES THINK
THEIR WORKPLACE IS
DOING ENOUGH TO
SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH

¹"The State of Employee Mental Health in 2021." Report: 2021 Workforce Attitudes Toward Mental Health, Ginger, go.ginger.io/third-annual-workforce-attitudes-study.



Put talent at the center of your strategy

Unquestionably, the number one challenge facing employers is talent — from recruiting and hiring to engaging and retaining.

Economic and societal shifts have resulted in the need for a talent strategy that covers more than compensation and benefits. People are now considering where, when, and how they work when assessing potential employers or new roles.



As some companies return to work onsite, prospective and existing employees are expecting employers to make assurances about their personal safety.

As a result, your talent strategy must be both more ambitious and expansive. Employers will also need to get creative. A lot of the new demands employers saw in 2021 — from work-life balance changes to time-off plans — will become the status-quo in 2022.



In an employee's market, employer branding is pivotal

What is important to you as a company? To attract and retain talent, companies should redefine their offerings to account for significant workplace shifts, and the increased bargaining power of the employee. Employers need to be clear about what they offer to prospects and their existing people.

If being in the office is important to your business, be ready to communicate that. If your acquisition strategy is to increase salary and expand benefits, yell this from the rooftops. Or, if your approach to flexible work is what sets you apart from your competitors, put that front and center.



Many companies have put off conversations about branding and culture in the past. But 2021 showed us that employees want to understand how a business aligns with their own values.

To succeed in 2022 and beyond, employer branding is absolutely necessary. It will also help you retain the top people you already have. Those people are already well-trained and have a good understanding of your culture--they know your customer base, your client base, and what's needed for your business to thrive. Be ready to sell that culture to them knowing that, in today's market, they are more likely to be exploring other jobs than in the past.

Last, remember you're already competing with other companies who are branding themselves as employers of choice. You'll need to not only monitor what others are doing, but communicate your offer, your culture, and your values better than they do.

Do you know what others are offering in pay and benefits? What extra perks are drawing in new talent and retaining existing people? How are other companies communicating that?

Solidify your offer and make sure the way you communicate it to prospective and existing talent is clear, bold and concise.



Be ready for “the great shuffle”

If 2021 was characterized by “The Great Resignation” – [15.5 million workers quit their jobs](#) in April, May, June and July² according to the latest DOL statistics – then 2022 will be the year of “The Great Shuffle.”

2021 was a year of rethinking priorities and reconsidering what work means and its role in people’s lives. 2022 will be the year when those who left the workforce return to it with new expectations.



This is different from anything we’ve seen in the past. 2021 has taught companies around the world that what worked before will no longer be as effective, and if people don’t get what they’re asking for, they will leave.

At the same time, the host of people who left the workforce will ultimately need to return — and the companies that are ready to listen to what people want will win the war for talent.

The pandemic opened employee’s eyes, ears and hearts to doing things differently. As we move into a post-pandemic world it’s absolutely essential that employers keep their eyes, ears and hearts open as well. It’s a shuffle and a shake out. People have learned a lot about themselves and what they want, and they’re ready to apply it to a new world of work. Employers must be ready as well.

²According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Job Openings and Labor Turnover reports.



Have a specific plan for the hybrid workplace

Every employer knows that, try as they might, their people don't switch off the moment the workday ends — and they don't stop thinking about their personal lives the moment work begins either. This has only intensified during the remote work era.

Work-life integration is therefore a key piece of the puzzle for HR leaders. However, as more businesses welcome employees back onsite, and a larger portion of the workforce continues to work from home by choice — rather than by necessity — both employers and employees will need to reframe their expectations.

According to ADP's remote work survey, 66% of employees will perform a combination of remote and onsite work. So what does an employer do when a portion of its workforce wants to return to the office and many have grown accustomed to the flexibility that remote work offers? And what if still more want to enjoy a combination of both?

In those circumstances, how does a business provide the same working environment to remote workers and those reporting to a work site? How can leaders ensure performance management is equitable when different workers may be working in different ways?

Organizations will need answers to these questions and more in 2022. With different portions of the workforce beginning to walk different paths, businesses will need to develop policies that accommodate varying preferences, but remain fair and consistent across cohorts.

66%
OF EMPLOYEES WILL
PERFORM A COMBINATION
OF REMOTE AND
ON-SITE WORK



2022 will look very different from 2021

What's clear is that 2022 will actually be very different year from 2021. Not only will companies need to be ready to pivot but they'll also need to prepare, carefully and comprehensively, for the hybrid workplace.

The cornerstone of HR planning and strategy for 2022 will be talent strategy. Businesses that focus their HR planning on enhancing their talent strategy in order to acquire — and more importantly, retain — talent, will survive and thrive.

Get ahead of change
with the latest insights
from ADP HR Outsourcing:
gettheplan.adp.com →

