

What can we expect from the new normal at work?



Thoughts from Anthony Thompson, Regional Managing Director, PageGroup Asia

“ The “new normal” at work was approaching us long before COVID-19 and has just been advanced by the current situation. With the onset of this pandemic, what we are seeing is a forced experiment in dynamic working, which includes working from home. For most organisations, we have seen that this has turned out to be more productive than expected. We anticipate some lasting changes from pre-COVID-19, but not the revolutionary shifts others have forecast. ”

Harnessing the Gig & Grey economy

The further emergence of the gig economy with temporary/contract professionals will continue to be a viable workforce option. This flexibility to switch resources on and off where required will be needed in dynamic new workplaces. Linked to that is the emergence of the ‘grey’ economy which utilises the expertise of experienced professionals on a specialist project basis.

Dynamic working

There will be some lasting changes from COVID-19 on the way we work from offices and at home. We do not expect to see extreme change in most sectors, but certainly a move towards greater flexibility now that there is more confidence that WFH can still be productive to an extent. Clear strategies and communication will be important.

Returnees to Asia

We have already seen increased demand for returnees across ASEAN. Candidates who have international experience and the local perspective will pursue opportunities to come home and advance their careers when international travel resumes. Companies often view these professionals to have an advantageous background.

Flatten the company curve

An increase in the number of data-based decisions and organisations adopting flatter and simpler corporate structures. Professional career paths will become less linear as agility and flexibility gain more importance.

What the best candidates will look for

Quality candidates will continue to be discerning and now prioritise other factors of the employee experience. They will want more clarity on an organisation’s digital strategy, dynamic working plans, identity and purpose, diversity and inclusion, well-being as well as overall Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives.

Hiring for potential, not just past successes

We will continue to witness the creation of new roles particularly in areas such as AI, robotics and machine learning, but across many other segments as well. Employers will be unable to find candidates with many years of experience, and will have to adapt hiring criteria to focus on scope for development and capacity to learn. In many of these instances, potential and outcomes will take priority over tenure and formal qualifications.

Seven skills to survive the new future of work

“ We will no doubt see many changes in the future of work. Similarly, our workforce has to rise to the challenge by **being adaptable and resilient**. Here are 7 skills that will enable you to stay ahead. ”



Digital literacy

The ability to make best use of available technologies and social media – digital literacy is a term we now often hear.

Customer is key

Use customer relationship management tools and effective customer engagement overall to stand apart in a very competitive world.

Sales and influencing

Develop genuine sales and negotiation skills that allow you to influence stakeholders to ‘buy-in’ to you.

Data based decision making

With the great volume of information now available, it will be increasingly important to know how to use the right data to make the best decisions.

Innovative thinking

Innovation is not always about technology and is often more about how we think. It may simply be about stopping old practices and looking at new approaches.

Never stop learning

Have an appetite and capacity to keep learning and adapting. Continuous learning will be essential.

Building brilliant relationships

Managing relationships with agility which allows for collaboration, and ultimately be able to influence across different cultures and demographics – despite the many advances in technology, this will be vital and will probably be the difference between success and failure for many.