A New Talent Landscape

Among the many workplace shifts produced by the COVID-19 crisis are a substantial move to remote work arrangements and a reevaluation of what will define talent management in the future. According to McKinsey, the post-COVID workplace will experience disruption via changes caused by accelerated automation, digitization, and other trends within the workforce itself. When Willis Towers Watson discusses what the pandemic may mean for the future of insurers specifically, it suggests that this year, companies' operating models should evolve to revisit how and where work is done. It also notes that employee roles may be either reinvented or reskilled. Deloitte also references the need to update past conceptions of talent management to embrace a holistic workforce strategy — with productive, resilient employees ready to pivot and add value in any situation.

The word "skills" comes up more often than not when considering how to equip employees and leaders to thrive in tomorrow's world of work. For instance, Gartner finds that human resource leaders' top priority this year is building critical skills and competencies among their employees. It recommends that companies adopt a "dynamic approach to reskilling and redeploying talent." According to BenefitsPRO, Mercer states that the pandemic has heightened companies' sense of urgency around training programs designed to upskill and reskill workers. It notes "demands in the workplace continue to shift and employees require different skillsets to adapt." McKinsey also explores how organizations can "close the capability gap" despite the challenges presented by the crisis. To succeed, they should focus on three areas: advancing digital delivery to develop capabilities remotely, "bridging distance" in virtual training, and reinforcing behavior change.

Beyond what may be considered traditional areas of proficiency and growth, "soft skills" now also have emerged as non-negotiable. Gartner suggests that, especially for leaders, emotional intelligence and related capabilities will play an even greater role in success. What's more, an ERE article claims that "it took a pandemic to prioritize soft skills." It cites a Lever survey of talent leaders who agreed they would seek to hire individuals with skills that may not have been as necessary pre-crisis. Topping the list were adaptability, communication, technology proficiency, resilience, and change management.

While the post-pandemic reality will look different for every workplace, it is safe to assume that each company will face tremendous change, requiring a fresh perspective on what it will take to move forward. A key element in an organization's ability to persist lies in the skills and grit of its current and potential workforce. Leading players will find ways to not only assess and evaluate gaps, but also to offer meaningful approaches to address them.

Build long-term success with your remote workforce with RemotePRO. Contact talentsolutions@limraloma.com to learn more.