

The Future of Work

How business leaders should prepare
their organisations following the
Taylor Review

Portland

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This was designed by Portland's Content & Brand team.

Introduction

by SIOBHAN NEWMARCH,
DIRECTOR, PORTLAND

Matthew Taylor's Review of Employment Practices in the Modern Economy shines a spotlight on the profound changes currently transforming the world of work. We are seeing the arrival of greater automation, digitalisation, flexible contracts, and five generations in the workplace. Taylor's Review sets an important milestone for businesses, organisations and politicians prompting them to rethink their approach to work and employee engagement.

Many previous research reports have highlighted the strong correlation between engaged workforces and successful businesses. As Taylor explains in his report, "there should be a renewed focus on good employee engagement. If more employers behaved as the best do, the long tail of lower productivity in the UK would be considerably shorter."

Beyond productivity, engagement is also linked to fulfilment and people's purpose when at work. The British Social Attitudes survey reveals that more than half of the UK population feel that work is more than just a way of making money, and it is a route to personal fulfilment, wellbeing and happiness.

The increase in the number of automated roles and those that look vulnerable to artificial intelligence causes real concerns for society. However, there is an opportunity for such changes to enhance the world of work. Research by Deloitte suggests that between 2001 and 2015, automation created approximately 4 times as many jobs as were lost. By taking away some of the more repetitive, menial aspects of work, modern technology can significantly improve the variety and quality of lower-paid jobs. Human perception, creativity and social intelligence are all key components of tasks that currently lie outside the domain of robots.

This booklet showcases business examples of how organisations can try to anticipate the future of work and drive successful employee engagement, by considering the employee experience.

One change we have experienced is that the world of work has become increasingly public. All aspects of an organisation's internal processes, and often communications, now face the potential to be raised and discussed in public. Internal emails are regularly leaked, pay gaps and ratios are becoming more and more transparent and social media reveals the good and bad of corporate life for millions of individuals worldwide. Organisations that demonstrate trust, care and the ability to listen to their employees have developed a reputational advantage.

Taylor calls for the elaboration of a national statistic on good work, and Timpson's are one company leading the way on this. Timpson's use an "upside down management" approach to empower their colleagues to 'do whatever they can to amaze customers'. This focus on the employee experience has paid off, they

continue to post increased sales and are the UK's leading retail service provider. They measure the employee experience by using a 'happy index' every year, which informs colleagues about the way the business is being run and how they are being treated. The results of the index are used to make changes depending on what has been raised.

On average, we spend 90,000 hours of our life at work. Finding new ways to enhance this experience seems to be in everyone's interest. It is in our personal interest, in businesses interest, and in the national interest. As Aristotle said: 'Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work'.

Siobhan is an employee engagement specialist who works across integrated communications for Portland's clients. She previously worked for Barclays in corporate communications, including leading a global CSR communications team and spent 10 years at the BBC.

The Review of Employment Practices in the Modern Economy

Good Work

The Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices



By

MATTHEW TAYLOR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, RSA

Matthew Taylor is author of The Review of Employment Practices in the Modern Economy and Chief Executive of the Royal Society of the Arts. Prior to becoming Chief Executive of the RSA in 2006, Matthew was Chief Adviser on Political Strategy to the Prime Minister. He was previously the Director of the Institute for Public Policy Research and is a regular panellist on Radio 4's Moral Maze.

I was not the only person appointed to the Review. My fellow Review team members, Greg Marsh, Diane Nicol and Paul Broadbent have not only been an important source of ideas and wisdom throughout the process but have led in engaging with key groups of stakeholders; respectively, entrepreneurs and business, the legal profession and enforcement agencies. This project may sometimes have been referred to as the Taylor Review and I may have been the public face of our work, but we would not have been able to produce this report or to have engaged nearly as many people without the time and energy invested by Greg, Diane and Paul.

The day to day work of the Review, researching and developing the detail of our recommendations, planning and delivering our ambitious engagement process, negotiating with officials in other departments, putting up with the often unreasonable expectations of the Review Chair; these are among the tasks that have been performed with diligence and skill by the team in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. We received strong support from a wide variety of people in the department at many levels, including Secretary of State Greg Clark and his ministerial team. Officials tend to remain nameless and faceless to the public but I would like to pay particular tribute to the commitment and insight of the core team of Paula Lovitt, Jessica Skilbeck and Tony Thomas, I know that they have worked tirelessly to deliver this ambitious and wide ranging report on schedule.



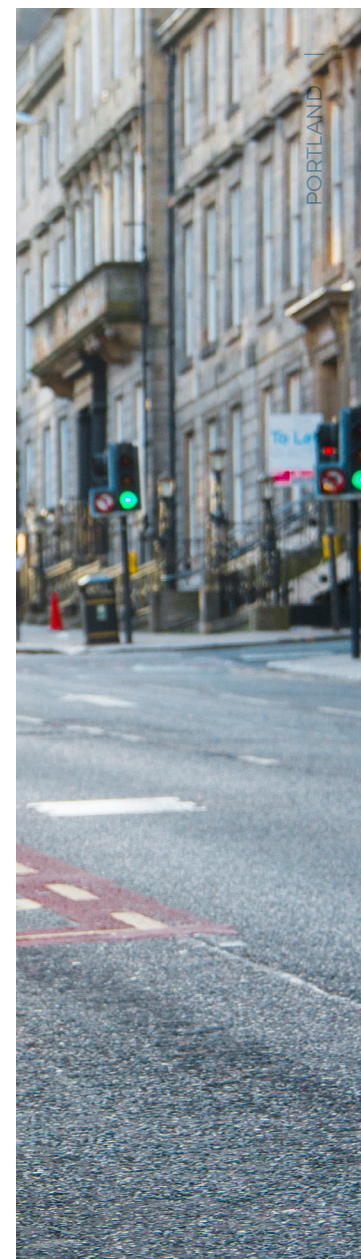
From the outset I was determined that the Review process should be open and engaging. We held public hearings around the country, Review members and officials hosted innumerable round table and small group discussions, across just about every week of the Review's ten month life I have made speeches to audiences small and large, specialist and general. At a time when we sometimes see scepticism towards policy making processes, I have been encouraged and inspired by the positive, constructive and thoughtful response our work has received from people ranging from employment lawyers to gig workers. Not everyone has agreed with our emerging ideas, but just about everyone has been supportive of our efforts and respectful of our aims. Furthermore, and, of course, this may now change, I am grateful to the journalists who have reported our work – ranging from national correspondents and broadcasters to the authors of specialist blogs – who have with very few exceptions reported and discussed the Review's progress in a responsible and informed way.

I will continue to make the case for better work as an individual and through the RSA (I should also thank the Society's Trustees and Fellows for allowing me effectively to be

a part-time Chief Executive since last October), but with the publication of this Report the work of the Review is complete. It now falls to the Prime Minister, the Government and Parliament to decide how to respond to our recommendations.

The Report includes recommendations for specific measures we would like to see enacted as soon as possible, it makes the case for longer term strategic shifts and, overarching all of this, issues a call for us as a country to sign up to the ambition of all work being good work. From time to time people have asked me what as Chair of the Review I would see as success. While I would be proud to see our recommendations enacted and our strategic proposals fully debated, more than anything I hope this Review will come to be seen to have won the argument that good work for all should be a national priority.

If policy makers and the public come to recognise the vital importance of good work to social justice, economic dynamism and civic engagement then the efforts of the Review team and all who have supported us will have been richly rewarded.





The importance of diversity in the workplace

By

ANN PICKERING

HR DIRECTOR, TELEFÓNICA

Ann was appointed to the Executive Team as Human Resources Director in 2008. She is also Chair of the Pensions Committee. Prior to joining the Telefónica Group, Ann worked for Marks and Spencer for four years, Fidelity for three years and Xansa (now Steria) for 14 years.

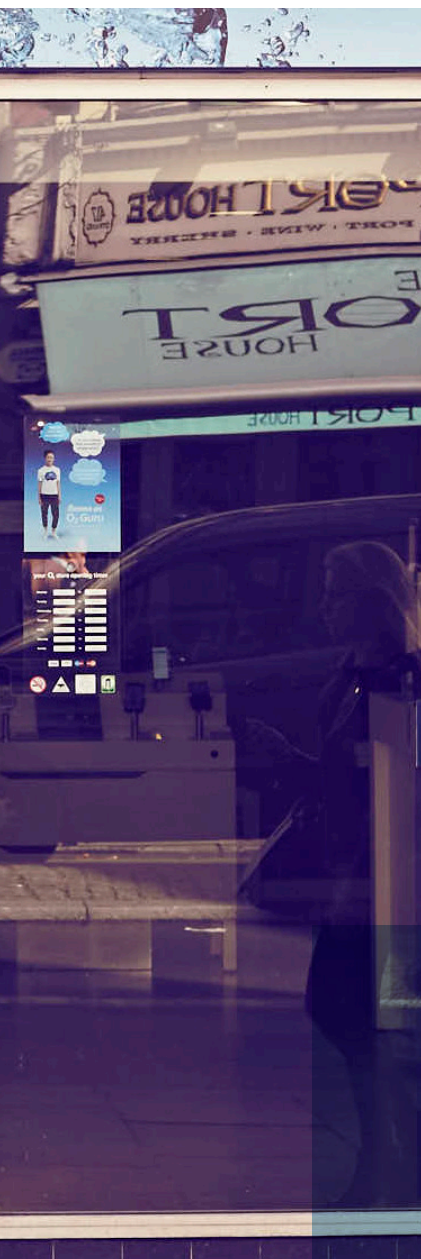
The banking crisis. Geopolitical uncertainty. Brexit. Phrases we have all used over the past few years. All of which have contributed to the challenging environment that organisations of all sizes have been facing.

It's been tough out there for businesses; hard to plan for the future combined with pressure to perform. But one promising sign that's remained has been the performance of the UK labour market.

The top level numbers paint an excellent picture: our unemployment rate is at a 42-year low and the employment rate is at the highest it's ever been, just over 75%. But while these numbers should be celebrated, it is also vital for employers to look below them and focus on exactly who we are employing in Britain.

As HR Director for one of the most recognised brands in the UK, I firmly believe it is our duty at O2 to build a workforce that reflects the people we serve. Our 25 million customers aren't one entity, they're individuals from different walks of life, and we should have a workforce that represents them.

This isn't something unique to us, it should apply right across the employment market. And it goes beyond just representing customers and attracting talent. Having a diverse workforce is about creating happier, more productive teams, where all employees are free to achieve their best.



So it is with this backdrop that I welcomed Matthew Taylor's wide ranging report, which touches on a number of important issues for employers to take notice of. And when it comes to diversity, there were three fundamentals that stuck out for me - factors that I believe will fuel diversity in UK employment going forwards.

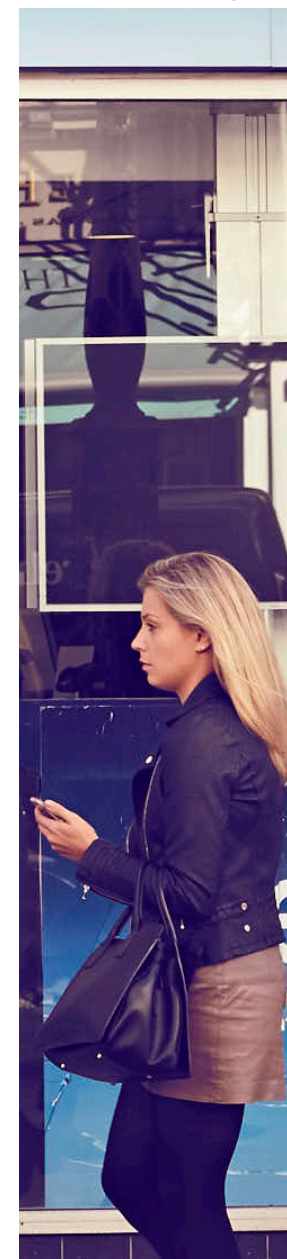
Flexibility. It's an area that's changed drastically. Flexi and home working have become the norm for many and - as Matthew highlighted - flexibility is now one of the most desired job criteria, playing a major role in candidate decision making. For me, the key is that flexibility opens jobs up to a wider pool of candidates, from a wider range of circumstances.

"Having a diverse workforce is about creating happier, more productive teams, where all employees are free to achieve their best."

And that is critical to building a diverse workforce. That's why as a mobile company I'm proud to say that flexibility - powered by technology - sits at our core.

Health & Wellbeing. Matthew discussed how a proactive approach is vital to a happy and productive workforce. I couldn't agree more. It's exactly why I prioritised mental health at a board level at O2. Mental wellbeing is championed by our Chief Operating Officer who leads a team of ambassadors across the business. Backed up by a dedicated 24/7 support service, they support employees and offer practical help to anyone in need. In the 21st century this is an area that can't be ignored and is crucial in building an accessible working culture.

Open practices. Matthew rightly identifies the importance of responsible corporate governance, saying that companies must be open about their practices. I couldn't agree more, and I think this is particularly important in hiring processes. On O2's internship, apprenticeship and graduate programmes we promote our use of a blind recruitment



process where candidates are judged on their experience and potential, not their university or school. It's open practices like this that will improve diversity.

Overall, Matthew's report speaks to an ambition: for all work in the UK economy to be fair and decent, with scope for development and fulfilment. And I believe it is the businesses that understand the benefits of diversity and a progressive work environment who will be the biggest drivers in achieving this mission.

But this cannot be achieved in isolation.

Businesses, governments and other organisations must work together to deliver a holistic strategy aimed at democratising opportunities for all, regardless of background or gender. It is only then that we will deliver the truly diverse workforce that Britain deserves.





Work is continuing to change

By

PAUL POMROY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
MCDONALD'S UK AND IRELAND

Paul Pomroy was appointed Chief Executive Officer for McDonald's UK and Ireland in 2015. He has been a part of the UK Leadership Team, driving the sustained success of the UK business, over the past decade. Passionate about people and talent development, Paul has also instigated moves on both pay and a trial around flexible contracts for restaurant teams.

McDonald's is proud to employ more than 115,000 hard-working people in the UK today. Our people come from a range of backgrounds, from all ages and life stages, from school leavers to mature workers. They are at the heart of creating our restaurant experience and are the reason why more than 3 million customers visit us every day.

So listening to them, and investing in them to cater for their needs is fundamental to keeping them happy and motivated and fundamental to our business success. It also gives us some good insights into what people want from work today and in the future.

First, high on the list for what our employees want from work is a job that fits around their busy lives. Jobs that can accommodate the demands of study, school runs, family or other caring commitments that are now part and parcel of daily life.

No-one should be in any doubt that flexibility is going to become increasingly important to the modern workforce. But giving people the choice of what works for them is key. We've also heard from some of our people that they want minimum guaranteed hours. That's why we have decided to offer fixed hours contracts to those who want them. We were particularly pleased to see Matthew's Review acknowledge our leading role in this area.



Second, the opportunity to gain new skills is also important to our people. Everyone who joins us grows in confidence and develops valuable skills like teamwork and decision-making in a fast-paced environment.

We also offer opportunities to gain formal qualifications, from maths and English to foundation degrees that might have previously felt out of reach. These qualifications make a difference to people's lives – whether they stay with us or leave to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

How far they go is up to them. Nine out of 10 of our restaurant managers started as hourly paid crew members. It's not uncommon for us to have restaurant managers in their early 20s running a restaurant and a 70 strong team. More than one in five of our franchisees also started as crew. In fact, a third of my executive team started in restaurants.

In an uncertain world, where skills needs are changing, I believe it will be more incumbent on businesses to power personal progression for the individuals they employ and, in doing so, enhance their organisations' performance.

Third, workforces will become more multi-generational, meaning better outcomes for customers. At McDonald's, our workforce now spans an incredible 75 years - we run shifts that include five generations of employees. A multigenerational workforce is a great thing for businesses, employees and customers alike. According to a recent survey of McDonald's customers, 84% said that they like to see a range of ages in the restaurant team, and 60% expect better service as a result. Where restaurants have a diverse age range of people working a shift together, employees are also up to 10% happier.

In places like the UK where there are very high levels of employment, it makes good business sense to offer an inclusive environment where you can be yourself. That way you can hire talent of all different ages. We don't put barriers in people's way. There is no insistence on qualifications at McDonald's, what matters is the qualities you bring. Put simply, we hire for attitude.

What people want from work is continuing to change, and we will continue to listen and to respond.



About Portland

Portland is an international communications consultancy trusted by some of the highest profile organisations, governments and individuals in the world.

We are pioneers in integrated communications campaigns engaging politicians, global opinion leaders, decision-makers, key stakeholders, consumers and media.

We help clients manage their reputation, improve their visibility and media coverage – and deliver global communications campaigns across multiple platforms.

Through offices in London, Doha, Nairobi, New York, Washington DC and Singapore, Portland has supported clients in more than 85 countries.





Engaged, motivated employees are more productive, efficient and loyal to their employers

Our Engagement specialists support clients in a variety of sectors to achieve their internal communications objectives. Internal and external channels are continually converging and we provide an integrated service, ensuring your message to internal audiences is perfectly aligned with your wider communications activity.

We work with our clients to develop research-led internal strategies, which target employees and empower them to support your reputation.

Whether businesses are going through a period of change, under new leadership, or launching a fresh strategy, they need to ensure employees are engaged, every step of the way.

For more information about our services and how Portland can help you, please get in touch with siobhan.newmarch@portland-communications.com, or call 020 7554 1600.

Notes

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