

Award-winning future of work consultant, Kevin Empey, advises companies, managers and HR teams on how to navigate the future of the workplace

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Workers are due to return to their normal workplace over the coming months - many are concerned about what the Future of Work is going to be. Award-winning future of work consultant, Kevin Empey, has never been a huge fan of the term 'Future of Work,' he believes the term has no literal meaning to speak of, it is simply a convenient label that tries to encompass multiple topics and trends impacting the world of work. It is a universal expression that refers to the profound changes impacting work and working life, driven by forces ranging from exponential digitalization and globalization to societal changes, robotics, artificial intelligence, shifts in consumer behaviour, and remote working. To assist companies, managers and HR teams navigate the future of the workplace, Kevin's book *Thrive in the Future of Work: How Embracing an Agile Mindset Will Benefit You and Your Organization* outlines how companies and individuals should navigate their future.

Endorsed by twenty-nine international workplace leaders and HR experts, including Charles Handy and David Ulrich, the book, questions how all these Future of Workforces and developments really impact us as individuals and as organisations. How can we learn to navigate and thrive in a world of work that is changing so fast? And for those of us who have a role in shaping the future of work for our organisations, or workforces, and for wider society, how can we ensure that we are making work better and making work matter for others?

What does the Future of Work mean for an individual? Once we accept there are some fundamental changes happening in the world of work, we are still left with the question: What does it all mean for me? Not in conceptual terms, but for me now, today, next week, or next year? What needs to change, and what needs to say the same? *Thrive in the Future of Work* tackles these questions and tries to reduce the clamour of information around the topic. It explores what individual leaders and employees can do in practical terms to lead their organisations and themselves through this exciting but precarious time. Throughout the book, Kevin explores the practical realities, personal realities and the implications of the changing world of work for individuals, business leaders, and HR leaders.

With a particular focus on the individual, *Thrive in the Future of Work: How Embracing an Agile Mindset Will Benefit You and Your Organization* suggests that the concept and practices associated with agility are necessary to be Future of Work ready. Simply put, if we could all shift our skillset and mindset from the traditional approach to work to a more "agile" way of doing things – on both individual and organisational levels – we would go a long way toward being prepared to navigate whatever disruption (technological, medical, economic, and otherwise) inevitably lies ahead. Over the past 30 years, Kevin has been an active participant in the changing world of work, working in areas ranging from economic and leadership development to technology, HR strategy, and employment policy. A common theme throughout Kevin's career has been helping organisations to create engaging and rewarding work environments and helping people stay in touch with the factors associated with the changing world of work and employment. The topic has received considerable attention from academia, commentators, and industry leaders in recent years. There are others, however, who suggest the organisational and individual consequences and challenges we face today are not necessarily all that dramatic or new; we are simply following a natural

evolutionary trend. While the CoVID-19 pandemic no doubt has accelerated our assumptions about where, when, and how work is done, such developments and trends were also already well underway before then. *Thrive in the Future of Work: How Embracing an Agile Mindset Will Benefit You and Your Organization* provides a journey through the realities, implications and solutions for the rapidly changing world of work we live in today. It is not trying to be the remedy for future of work success. It is a practical account of what we know so far from those who have been there - and both a guide and an invitation for you to explore what your path will be towards future of work readiness and fulfilment.

The book is presented in four parts across ten chapters. Each chapter provides a mix of case studies, research, tools and prompts to help you address the question of what you can do in practical terms to help future-proof careers and organisations in the changing world of work.

Part 1: 'The Changing World of Work' examines the shifts and trends apparent in the world of work and how they have intensified in recent years. We explore what the Future of Work means in practical terms and how can it be broken down at individual and organisational level. The case for Agility as a core capability for future of work readiness is discussed and we explore the features, benefits and challenges of Agility and how it can be managed.

Part 2: 'Future-Fit and Future-Ready' focuses on Future of Work readiness and Agility at the individual level. We explore what an agile mindset actually is, why it matters, how it can be developed and how it can help to proactively manage uncertainty and change with purpose and confidence. The research-based skillset for personal agility is also presented to demonstrate how individuals can – and already are – successfully navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by the changing world of work.

Part 3: 'The Future Ready Organisation' explores the practical realities and implications of the Future of Work at the wider organisational level. We discuss the emergence of a New Employment Deal, as well its implications, challenges and opportunities for leaders, employees and for HR. We look at the future role of the leader and of HR in shaping the new world of work.

Part 4: 'Next Steps Towards a Future Ready Society' touches on current thinking in terms of wider policy and societal choices concerning how we approach the Future of Work – and transition from a mainly 20th-century mindset and model of work. The book concludes with the overall case that all stakeholders need to be more proactive and deliberate about shaping the new world of work and a productive society where no one is left behind.

Published by Oak Tree Press, *Thrive in the Future of Work: How Embracing an Agile Mindset Will Benefit You and Your Organization*, will be available nationwide and online. ISBN 9781781194553

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Notes to editor

For additional information, request a reading copy, or to arrange an interview with the author, please contact Deirdre Roberts, deirdre@deidreroberths.com or call 00353 87 2633011.

About the Author

KEVIN EMPEY has specialised in organisation development, leadership development and people strategy for over 25 years. With a background originally in technology and business development, Kevin developed an international career in people consulting and leadership development, working across a wide range of organizations, sectors and geographies. Before establishing WorkMatters, a training and consulting firm specialising in the changing world of work, he was a Partner and Director in Willis Towers Watson, where he led the firm's HR consulting business in Ireland. Kevin is an associate leadership development faculty member with the Irish Management Institute and is Program Director of its flagship Senior Executive Program. He is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD and served on the Top-Level Appointments Committee (TLAC), which advises on the selection of senior civil service appointments in Ireland. A leading expert on the Future of Work, Kevin was also a member of the Labor Market Council in Ireland and was the founder of Worklink, an internationally recognised coaching and mentoring organisation set up to help unemployed job seekers into full-time employment. Kevin has won several national and international awards for his work in the areas of employment policy, social entrepreneurship, and Future of Work research.