



6 essential activities
to future-proof your
workforce.

 randstad

human forward.

introduction.

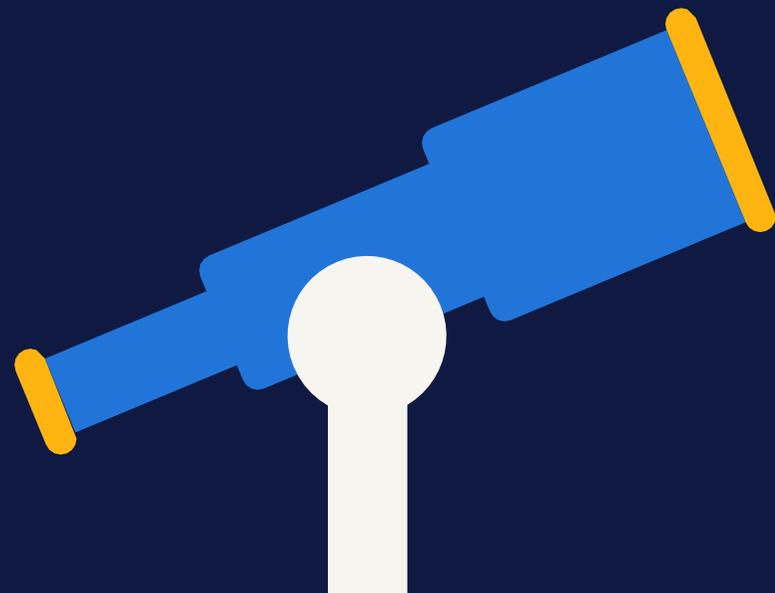
One of the few certainties in business is that market conditions, industries and working methods will never stop evolving.

Companies of all sizes have seen the pace of change accelerate in recent years, owing to a combination of factors including digital transformation, developments in how people want to work and external events over which businesses have little control.

To give yourself the best chance of achieving lasting success, you need to future-proof your business, and the best way to do that is through your workforce. Your people are your most important asset, so you need to take a proactive approach to workforce planning.

The [Society for Human Resource Management](#) describes effective workforce planning as 'essential' to high-performing organizations, but also warns that, in many businesses, this process is 'not carefully planned, measured or optimised'. Randstad research has shown that half of employers [fail to plan for workforce changes a year in advance](#), and only 13% make two-year plans.

In this guide, we highlight the key areas you should be focusing on to future-proof your workforce, and consequently your organisation as a whole.



build an agile and flexible workforce.

[Recent trends in HR](#), and indeed business as a whole, have made it clear that flexibility will continue to be one of the driving trends of the future of work. This is a concept that applies to various aspects of employment and modern company operations, including the practicalities of how people want to do their jobs and the sort of freedom and control they're looking for.

[Randstad research](#) has shown that a substantial majority (85%) of organisations expect their commitment to an [agile workforce](#) to increase dramatically by 2025.

Increasing flexibility in your labor force - by increasing your use of contingent talent, for example - can give you the control required to scale your resources up or down, based on trends in your industry and your unique needs. This is vital during times of economic adversity or when you're facing challenges in your sector. In these uncertain periods, an agile workforce can shield you against the potential consequences of unpredictable market conditions.

People who work on a temporary, freelance or contract basis can benefit from gaining experience in a range of roles and having the freedom to go wherever their skills and knowledge are most needed.

A good way to start the process of increasing your workforce flexibility is by assessing your current roles and thinking about which ones can be made more flexible. It's worth considering if jobs that are currently done by permanent staff can be transferred to contingent workers, for example, to ease the burden on the workforce as a whole and to free up people's time.

3 critical questions to build an agile and flexible workforce:

- do you speak with your management team monthly to stay ahead of their resource requirements?
 - are you considering how contingent talent, SOW services, freelancers, gig workers and other flexible resources can help you achieve greater agility?
 - does your infrastructure enable rapid conversion of talent to alternative work arrangements to address changing business need?
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work on your

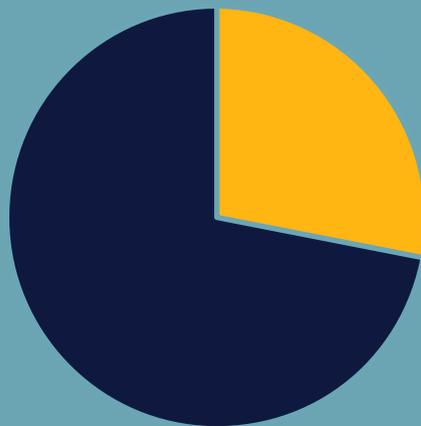
employer brand.

Your employer brand has a crucial part to play in the mission to future-proof your business. It's your opportunity to provide a compelling account of what you can offer to employees - not just permanent staff, but also temporary and flexible workers, who will continue to play a key role in the future of work.

According to LinkedIn, 72% of recruiting leaders worldwide believe employer brand has a significant impact on hiring, while 75% of jobseekers consider an employer's brand before applying for a role.

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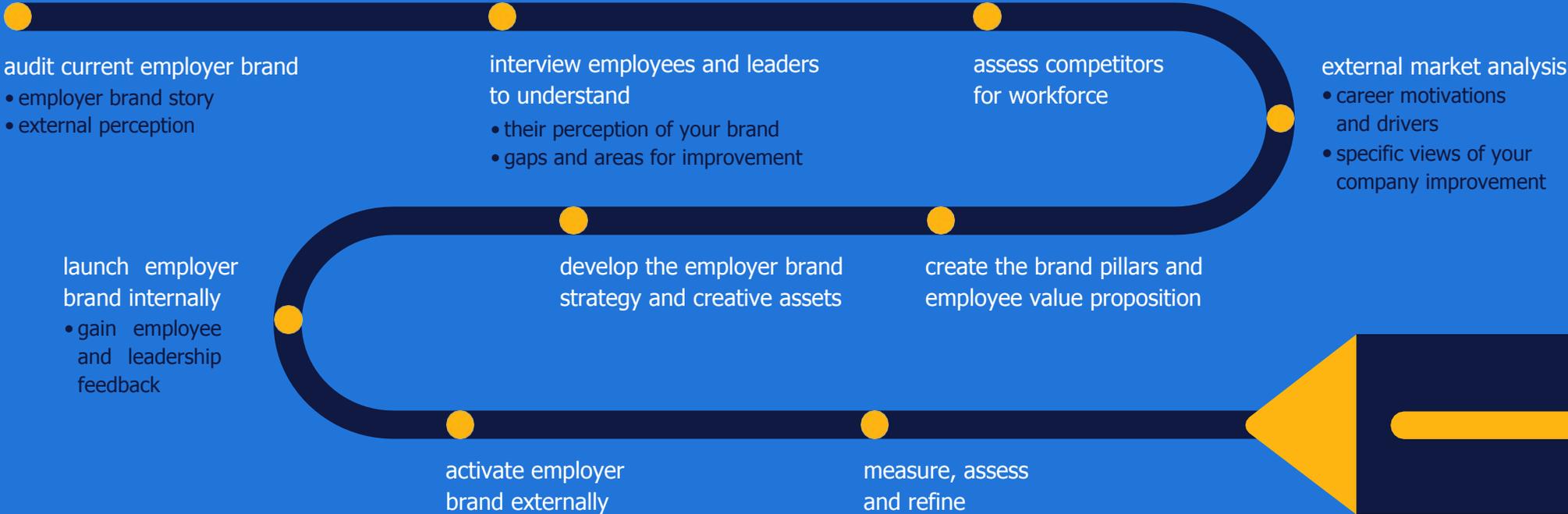


Clearly defining and constantly improving your employer brand should be one of your top priorities if you want to attract the sort of talent that will help you adapt and thrive in the future. Succeeding here can help you acquire in-demand skills that could prove critical to future success, particularly in roles such as:

- cyber security specialist
- cloud solutions engineer
- UX designer
- AI/natural language processing engineer

If you're able to get this aspect of your recruitment function right, you can differentiate yourself from competitors in the labor market and present a compelling case for why people should want to work for you.

the employer brand roadmap.





The process of reviewing and optimising your employer brand should start with an audit of your brand in its current form. This can be informed by interviews with employees and leaders, to find out how they perceive your brand and where they think it can be improved. Other key steps in the process, as detailed in Randstad's [2020 Employer Brand Research](#), include:

- assessing competitors
- creating brand pillars and an employee value proposition
- developing an employer brand strategy and creative assets

A key part of building a powerful employer brand is understanding modern workers and what they want from an employer. According to our employer brand research, the top reasons to choose an employer after salary and benefits are:

- work-life balance
- job security
- pleasant work atmosphere
- career progression

Our findings also showed that what workers want varies significantly based on factors like age, gender and region. It's vital, therefore, to do some targeted research into what really matters to your ideal employees and how you can deliver on these expectations.

focus on reskilling.

Reskilling will be a vital concept in the coming years as businesses prepare their workforces for future challenges and opportunities.

The importance of this concept became clear during the COVID-19 pandemic, when 40% of global workers struggled to learn new skills to adapt to different ways of working, according to the [Randstad Workmonitor December 2020](#) report. This was a particular challenge in the Asia-Pacific region (52%).

Businesses in some particularly hard-hit sectors demonstrated just how important and valuable reskilling can be in challenging times. Scandinavian Airlines, for example, retrained cabin staff to work as assistant nurses, while Malaysia Airlines launched a dedicated program to redeploy pilots, flight attendants and staff in customer-facing roles.

This shows how reskilling and redeploying workers enables businesses to maintain an effective, productive workforce, while helping individuals to expand their capabilities and sustain their employability.



Here are some practical steps [Boston Consulting Group](#) recommends to reskill and upskill your workforce for the future:

- quantifying talent gaps by mapping employee skills against current and future needs
- launching targeted upskilling programs that cover the reskilling of existing staff and recruitment of new employees
- adopting the latest learning technologies
- building a continuous learning culture

Working with a partner like [Randstad Risesmart](#) can help you ensure you're harnessing talent in the right way to steadily transform your business and adapt for the future.

embrace diversity.

Making a genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion can help you engage valuable talent and prepare for the future of work. By focusing your recruitment and retention efforts on diverse workers and seeking applications from a broad range of job candidates, you give yourself a wider selection of talent to choose from. This could prove vital in industries where key skills are in short supply.

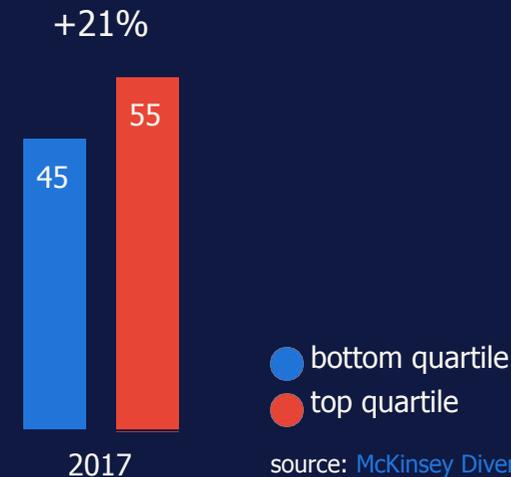
A study by [McKinsey](#) found that organisations in the top quartile for gender diversity were 21% more likely to outperform on profitability. The top performers on ethnic and cultural diversity were 33% more likely to have industry-leading profitability.

Encouragingly, in our Workmonitor December 2020 survey, more than a third of workers said building a diverse workforce is one of the most important initiatives their employer could pursue to be more inclusive. Overall, the three most important aspects of workforce inclusivity identified by global respondents were:

- employee training (38%)
- nurturing elements of inclusivity (36%)
- building a diverse workforce (35%)

One of your first steps towards creating a more diverse and representative labor force should be to focus on your job descriptions and whether they're tailored to appeal to the widest possible range of applicants. This is just one of several [things you can do to improve diversity and inclusion](#) in your workplace.

likelihood of financial outperformance by gender diversity



source: [McKinsey Diversity Matters Report, 2017](#)

7 ways to increase diversity at work:

1. reword job adverts
 2. raise awareness internally of a diverse culture
 3. create employee forums
 4. advertise in minority publications
 5. encourage blind applications
 6. showcase diversity on your company website or career pages
 7. health checking culture at a senior level
-



use workforce tools to support new ways of working.

Rapidly evolving HR technology has steadily transformed the world of work in recent years and will continue to do so in the future. To stay relevant and keep up with the fast-moving trends that will define the future of work, you need to identify the innovations that offer the greatest value for you and your people.

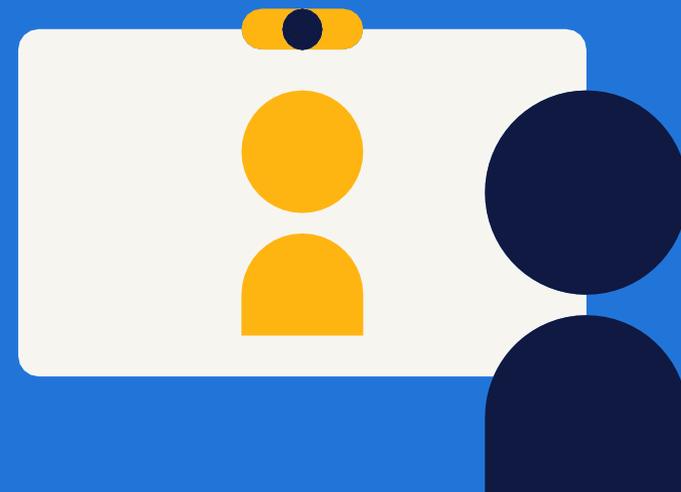
This could be anything from **robotic process automation** that saves time for your HR team and boosts your overall efficiency, to cutting-edge recruitment solutions like video interviewing or **virtual reality** systems.

There are many examples of workforce tools that have steadily grown in value for employers in recent years, such as Slack, which is used by some **600,000 organisations** around the world. Other apps and services that **proved particularly popular in 2020** include:

- Google Workspace
- Zoom
- DocuSign
- Zendesk

Randstad's **Talent Trends Quarterly Q4 2020** report, which focused on the impact of COVID-19 on employers, showed that 57% of companies felt their technology investments had supported remote workers during the pandemic. The top ten HR technologies implemented during this time included:

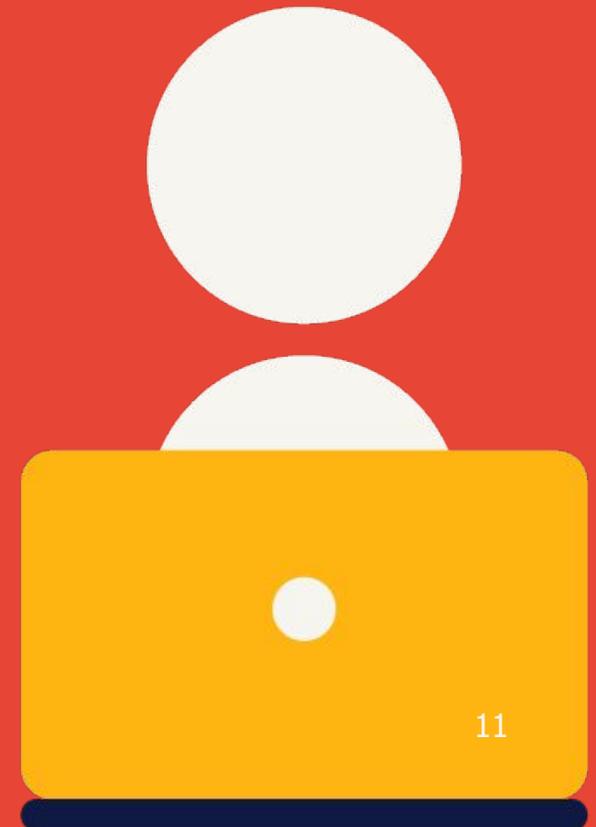
- video and online interviewing (68%)
- workforce collaboration tools (39%)
- training and development platforms (31%)
- workplace culture, employee feedback and engagement systems (30%)
- virtual recruitment events (29%)



3 ways to optimise HR tech investments:

According to [Randstad Sourceright Talent Trends Report](#), these are some considerations you need to keep in mind to maximise your HR tech investments.

- 1. don't just apply in-person processes to remote work environments**
If you want to help your workforce stay at the top of its game, assess how adjustments in project management, talent acquisition, collaboration and technologies can empower your teams and accelerate results.
- 2. ensure training is readily available**
Rolling out new technologies and doing it quickly has been a necessity during the COVID-19 era, but don't underestimate the importance of taking the time to provide comprehensive training so you can maximise your investments long term. Make sure to budget time to get your workforce up to speed on the tools you will be launching in the next phase of your crisis response.
- 3. reassess current and future investments**
Long-term thinking around how your company spends on its technology portfolio will need to be adapted to COVID-19 realities. That means you should be agile in your decision-making around workforce tools, whether it's video interviewing technology, virtual onboarding or AI that minimises unconscious bias when hiring. Make sure you have a good grasp of where your business is headed in the months and years ahead, and determine where to invest to optimise performance and management.



work with an

Teaming up with a specialist HR partner like Randstad is one of the most effective ways for any business, regardless of your size or industry, to prepare its workforce for the future.

We can support your workforce planning and give you access to a large and diverse talent base, to help you find the optimum mix of resources to achieve your business goals. The right combination of permanent and flexible labor will also ensure you can always access the staff and skills you need, with maximum cost efficiency.

Furthermore, close contact with the labor market will keep you in tune with what really matters to jobseekers right now, helping you to build a strong and relevant employer brand.

HR company.

Our expertise and experience in HR also means we can keep you up to date with the latest **innovations and technologies**, which is simply essential if you want to future-proof your organisation and your workforce.

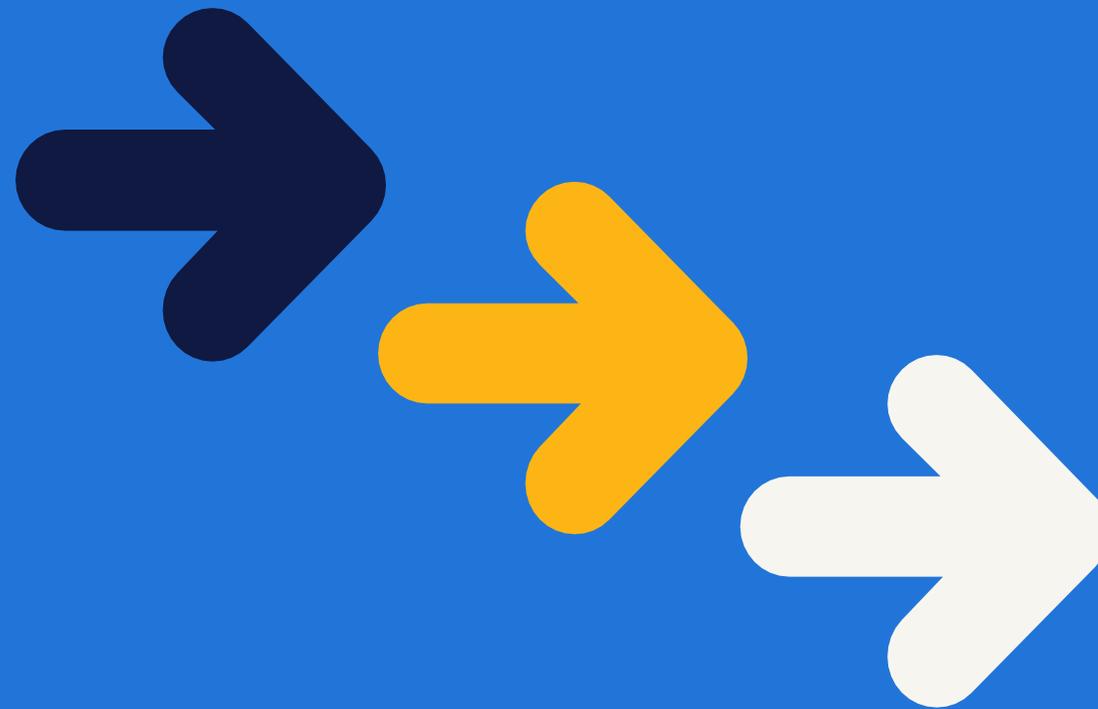


future-proof your workforce today.

As employers and employees alike look ahead to an exciting future of work, businesses that have been the most proactive and prioritised the areas explored in this guide will be the best-placed to succeed.

You can refine your understanding of where you are now, and where you want to be in the future, by thinking about:

- how upskilling, reskilling and recruitment can support your efforts to acquire talent
- your employer brand and whether it's strong enough to attract the talent you need
- if you're placing enough emphasis on flexibility and agility
- if you're sufficiently committed to workforce diversity
- your HR tech and whether it's fit for the future
- how teaming up with an HR specialist can help you be ready for future challenges and opportunities



Contact Randstad to discuss future-proofing your workforce.



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