

Glassdoor predicts the top 4 workplace trends for 2022

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Instability has been the recurring theme of the last 22 months, and that doesn't seem to be changing as we enter the third year of the pandemic.

Employers want to enter 2022 as prepared as possible to take on the challenges plaguing the workforce, including stress, burnout and financial uncertainty, as well as companies' own struggles with employee attraction and retention.

"Change is constant, and it's really important for employers to be flexible and transparent in order to actually navigate this constantly changing environment," says Daniel Zhao, a senior economist at Glassdoor. "The undercurrent of 2022 will be a hot jobs market, and that has implications for every decision that employers make, employers need to be responsive to what employees want."

Drawing from its database of employee reviews, salaries and conversations that can help employers get to the heart of how employees are feeling and what they need, Glassdoor has predicted four trends they expect to emerge next year.

Hiring will get harder

“Many of the reasons why hiring was difficult in 2021 are going to stick with us in 2022 —the most obvious reason is that the pandemic is still going on,” Zhao says. “There's this disconnect between employers and employees, because employers feel like we're not too far removed from the recession, so it should be easy to hire. But in actuality, we've sped right past that phase of the recession, and we're now solidly in the expansion phase, where demand is high. And that means that there's going to be a continuing imbalance between the demand for workers and supply of workers.”

Remote work will increase access to talent, but at a higher price point

Before the pandemic, the ability to work from home was a privilege not every employer offered. Now, employees expect their employers to offer this option, having proved their ability to perform remotely. It won't be enough to offer a higher salary in order to keep up with the competition — employees are looking for policies that will help them navigate their lives outside the office.

“Employers are going to be trying lots of different techniques and tools in order to actually access new workers, and remote work is an obvious tool to turn to,” Zhao says. “Employers have realized that they can use remote work during the pandemic. The flip side of that is, so have all of the other employers. So you're going to see more competition for those remote workers that you might not have seen before the pandemic, because remote work used to be this secret superpower for employers who could actually use it.”

Employers will prioritize DEI initiatives

Employees want to work for organizations that are aligned with their values, and they want to know how companies are taking real action to improve their communities and the diversity of their workforce. Sharing a few positive words about their commitment to DEI won't be enough.

“Some of the goodwill from setting ambitious goals is going to wear thin, and employees and jobseekers are going to expect that their companies are actually starting to make progress on DEI initiatives,” Zhao says.

The workplace community will exist beyond office walls

The relationship between workers and their organizations has evolved rapidly over the last few years, with the workplace becoming a key part of employees' social identity — and like so many other aspects of social life, this took a hit during the pandemic. In the past, companies leaned on the physical office to facilitate this sense of community, but in an increasingly remote world they've had to get more creative.

“It's not just about being physically located with their peers, — it's about being able to speak with them authentically, ask for advice anonymously, and really get an understanding of what opportunities there are both at their company and in their industry,” Zhao says. “That really speaks to something that social media can fill the need for. I think, even as companies start to return to the office, you're going to see this continued desire for connection across industries, and it will be enabled by technology. That's so much easier to do in today's context than it would have been many years ago, when you would have to build this network based on who lives near you.”