Challenges of the New Work Experience

Challenges of the New Work Experience and the Future of Work

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has taught business and IT leaders that the 21st century economy requires workers to operate as dynamic and reconfigurable teams that can quickly adapt to business demands and new market requirements — anytime, anywhere, and from any device.

Because more than 40% of the global workforce became remote almost overnight, infrastructure, policy, and process gaps and deficiencies in the work world became a high priority for employees and business leaders.

The pre-COVID-19 status quo presented organizations with four intransigent sets of challenges.

Inflexible Work Environments

HyperAgility with Intelligent WorkSpaces

Hierarchical Leadership and Rigid Organizations

Empathy, empowerment, frictionless engagement and speed

FUTURE OF Work

Talent as a source of competitive advantage

Talent Limitations

Trust at core and transparent to worker experience
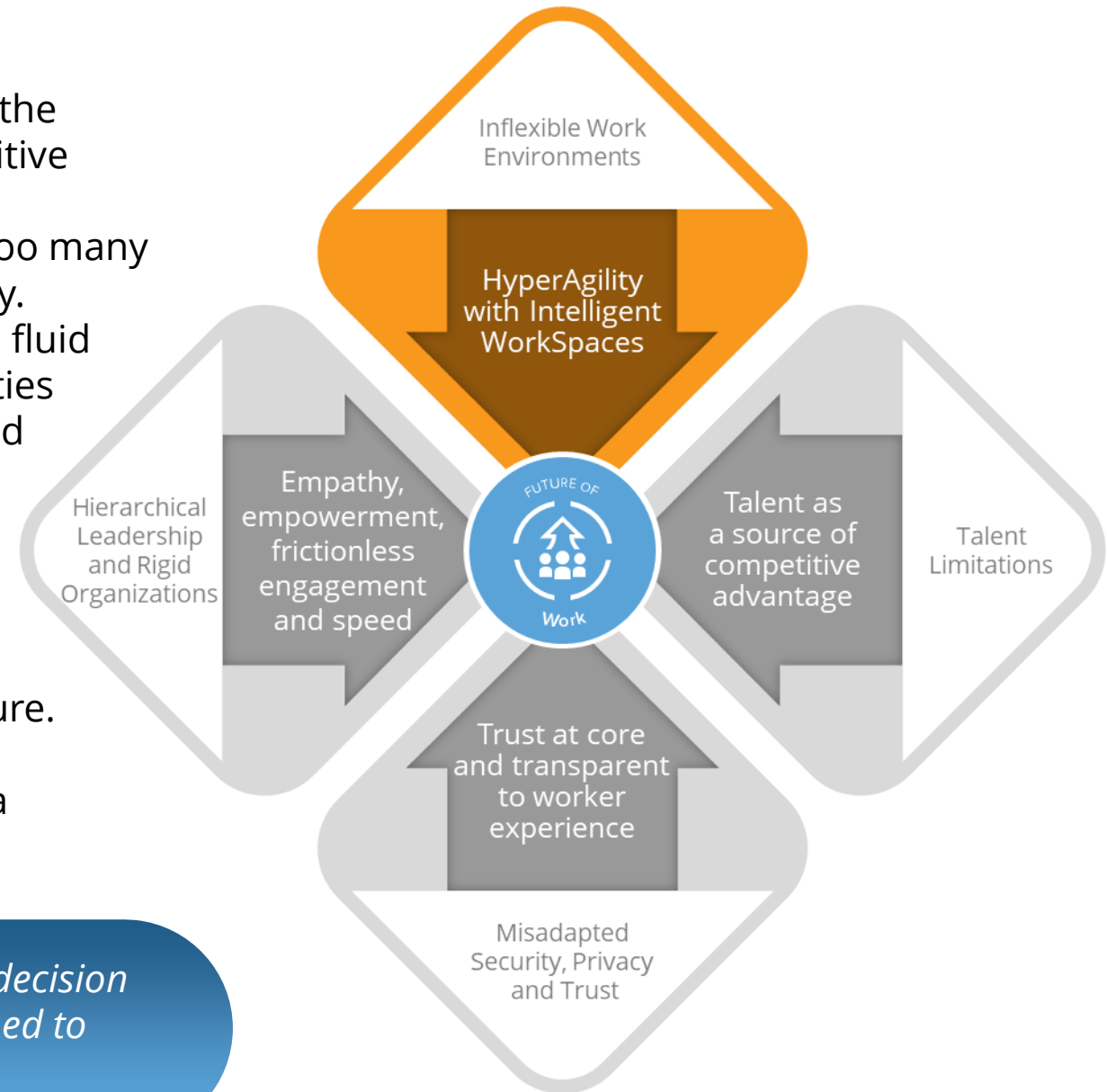
Misadapted Security, Privacy and Trust

Inflexible Work Environment

The way we worked for decades was upended during the pandemic. Business leaders found that manual, repetitive operations limit scalability and growth; monolithic, nonintegrated applications hinder effectiveness and too many tools and data types depressed speed and productivity. Challenges related to security and connectivity limited fluid access to corporate resources, resulting in work activities (including collaboration and innovation) that are bound by physical structures and timelines.

The rise of new business and operating models has redefined how work environments are being transformed. The work environment must adapt to support the new hybrid workforce and new work culture. The digital environment itself must be intelligent and dynamic, connected and secure, and independent of a physical place or specific time of day.

In IDC's 2020 biweekly global surveys of over 600 senior decision makers, 38% indicated that work models will be redesigned to support a hybrid workforce (onsite and at home).

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Prior to the pandemic, organizations focused on skills shortages in the face of rapid technology advancement. The dramatic social, health and work challenges of the pandemic has exposed not only new ways of building technical skills into the flow of work, but the need for human skills to lead teams.

Organizations lack modern, intelligent, agile, and adaptive learning systems required to align and assess talent potential and reskill employees – including managers. The shift to a hybrid workforce is requiring entirely new workstyles and skill sets for both workers and their managers. Human resources (HR) transformation is just as important as IT transformation.
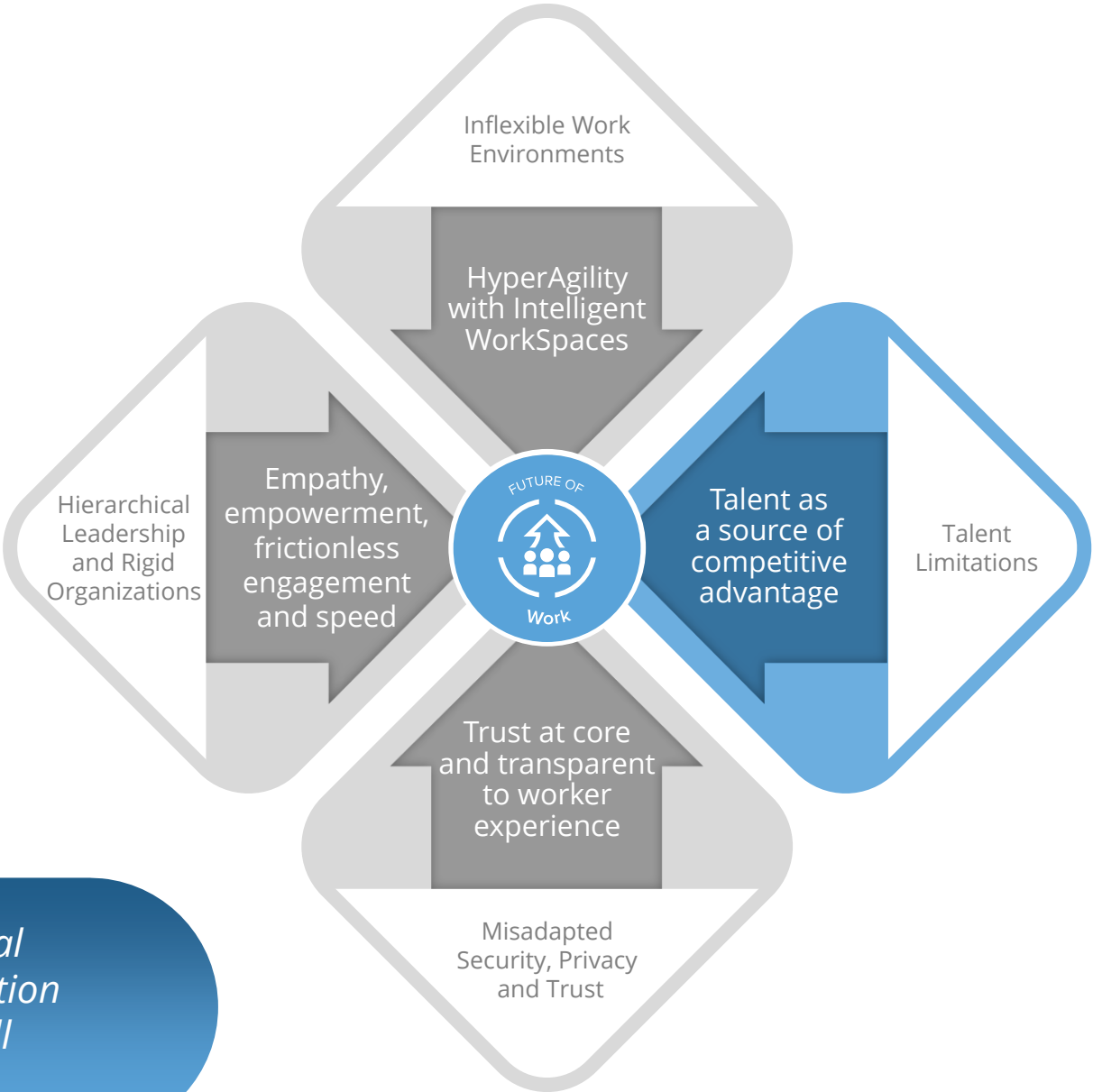
By 2023, G2000 companies that deploy embedded artificial intelligence (AI)–driven dynamic learning and digital adoption platforms that support adaptive, reconfigurable teams will achieve 20% increase in productivity.

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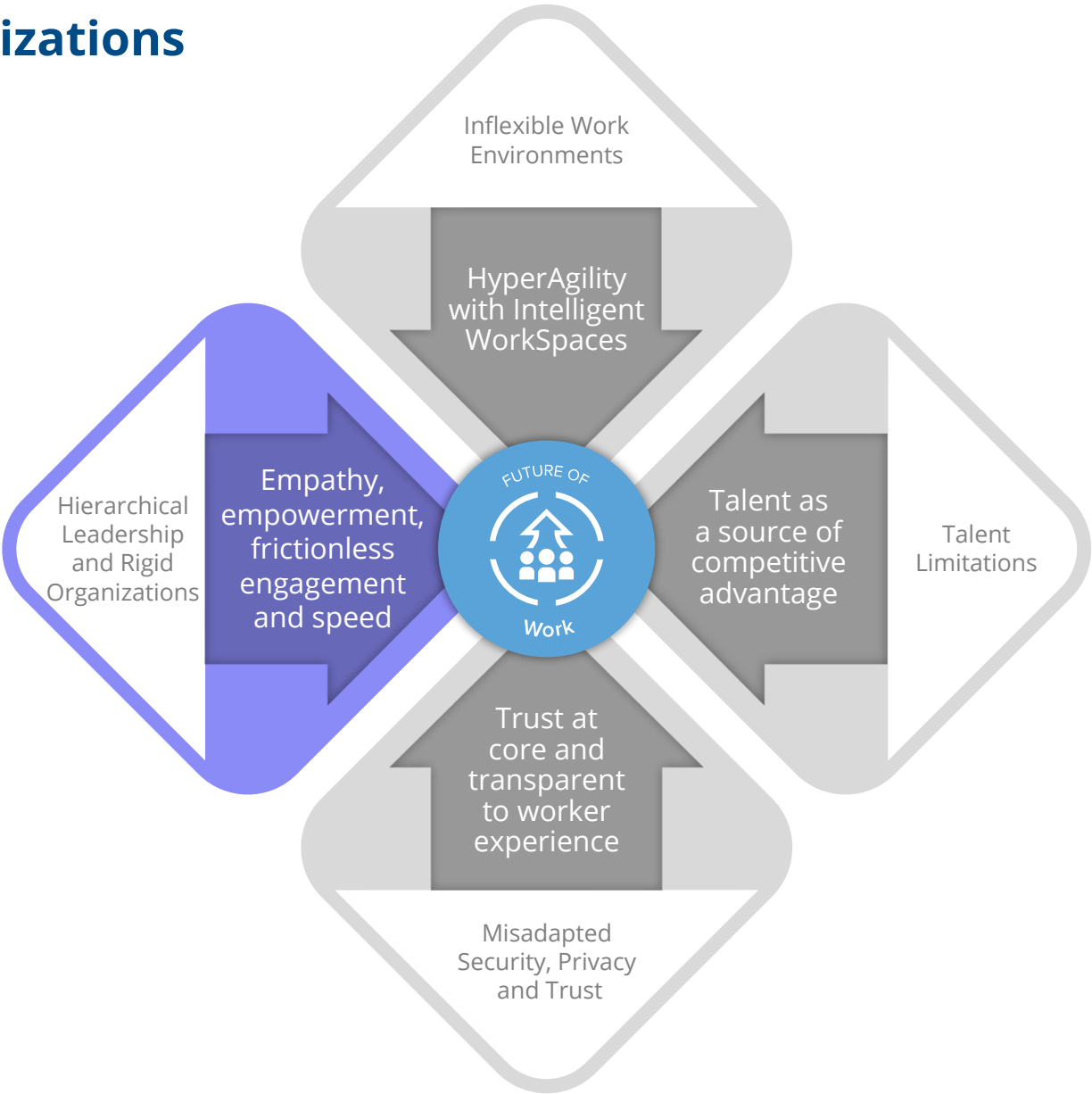
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Employee experience has emerged as a key component of building resilient organizations of the future. Those organizations that retain traditional static, siloed organizational structures that are function focused rather than outcome focused will be less competitive.

Lack of cross functional collaboration in turn hampers process and product innovation. Hierarchical decision making and top-down mandates no longer align with current business needs for adaptability and agility.

Empathetic leadership that seeks to empower workers to accomplish key business outcomes with self-service tools and processes will define organizations who can attract top talent.

The "future enterprise" has the capability to deliver agility, empathy, intelligence, resiliency, and empowerment at scale.
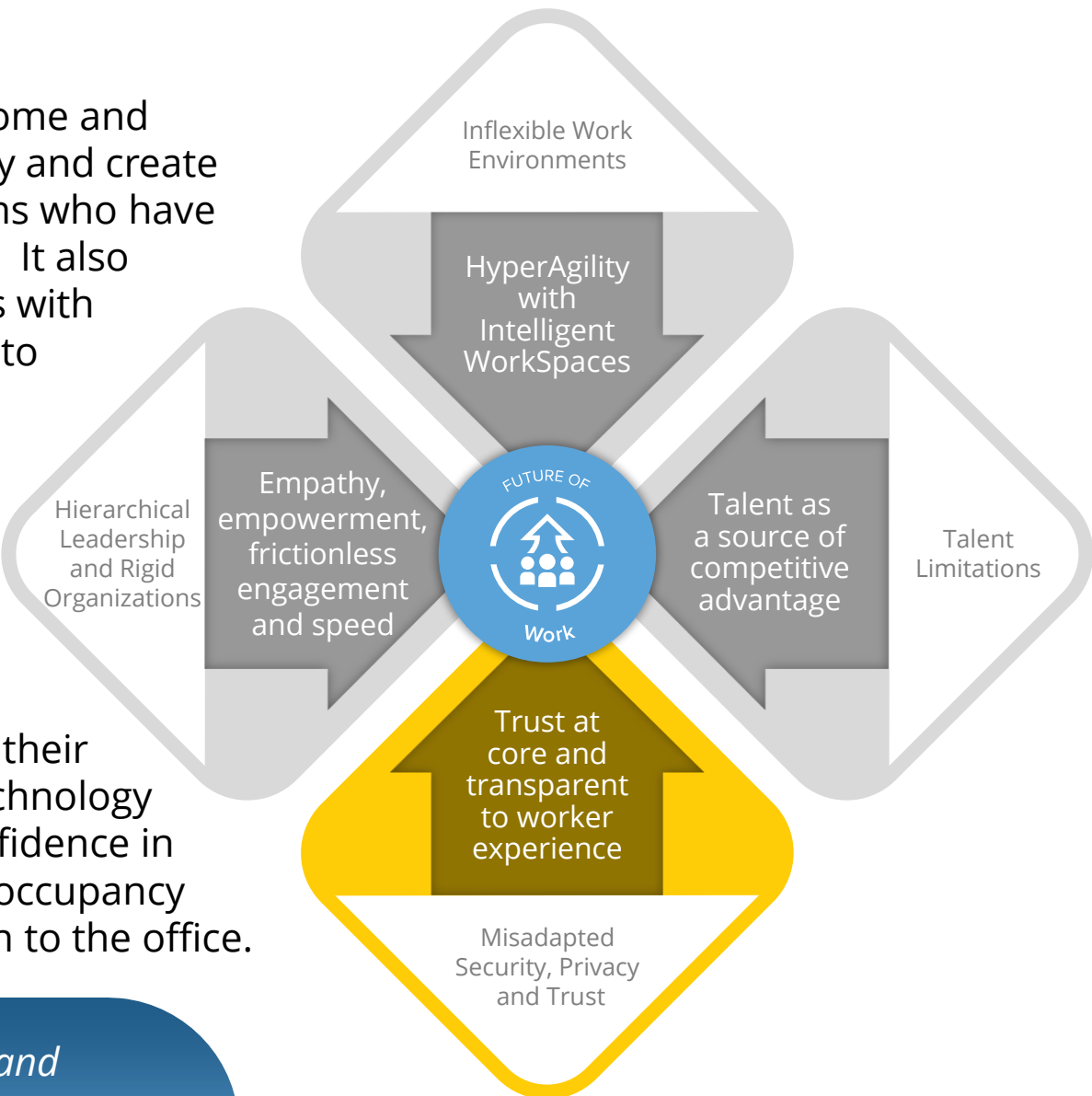
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The rise of remote work has underscored the cumbersome and repetitive security protocols that can hinder productivity and create a suboptimal employee experience (EX) for organizations who have yet to invest in a more embedded approach to security. It also exposed less technical but no less important challenges with building a culture of trust that enables remote workers to be seen as equally productive working from anywhere on any device.

A new paradigm for authentication, security, and compliance is required to balance the organization's mandate to meet regulations, provide data trust, and drive innovation.

In high-performing organizations, trust is at the core of their DNA, with brand equity directly linked to it, from the technology to the culture. Finally, employees will need to have confidence in health protocols and a frictionless experience meeting occupancy and social distancing requirements when they do return to the office.

By 2022, an additional $2 billion will be spent on desktop and workspace as a service by the G2000, as 75% incorporate employee's home network/workspace as part of the extended enterprise environment.

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Recovering from the global pandemic demands a new level of agility, including embracing the new "normal" of a hybrid workforce. Traditional work models aren't nimble enough, adaptive nor scalable. The future of work is about the rise of humanism as the new driver of value — with skills such as imagination, creativity, and empathy gaining prominence. All of this requires entirely new work environments, organizational structures, and metrics for success.

To learn more about the new work experience, read our white paper "Embracing the Hybrid Workforce with an Intelligent Digital Workspace" (https://bit.ly/317sIoN).

To learn more about the Future of Work or IDC's other "Future of X" practices, visit our website at https://www.idc.com/FoX

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