

**A**MID UNIVERSAL UNEASE AND UNPRECEDENTED global challenges, business leaders everywhere are asking, “How do I build a resilient organization?”

Empowered customers switch brands in a second. Competition and category disruption can come out of the blue from startups. Product commoditization and technological change happen at breathtaking speed.

At Workplace, we’ve been thinking long and hard about the future, and we’ve identified six attributes we believe will be at the heart of successful organizations. One factor that unites all six: people.

Many businesses assume that the future of work will be rooted in technology. And it’s true that technology – from cloud-based software to AI, 5G and the Internet of Things – will play an important role. But when we at Workplace think about the future of work, we’re doing it through the lens of people. More important than technology will be our ability

# WORKPLACE

## by FACEBOOK on the FUTURE of Yours

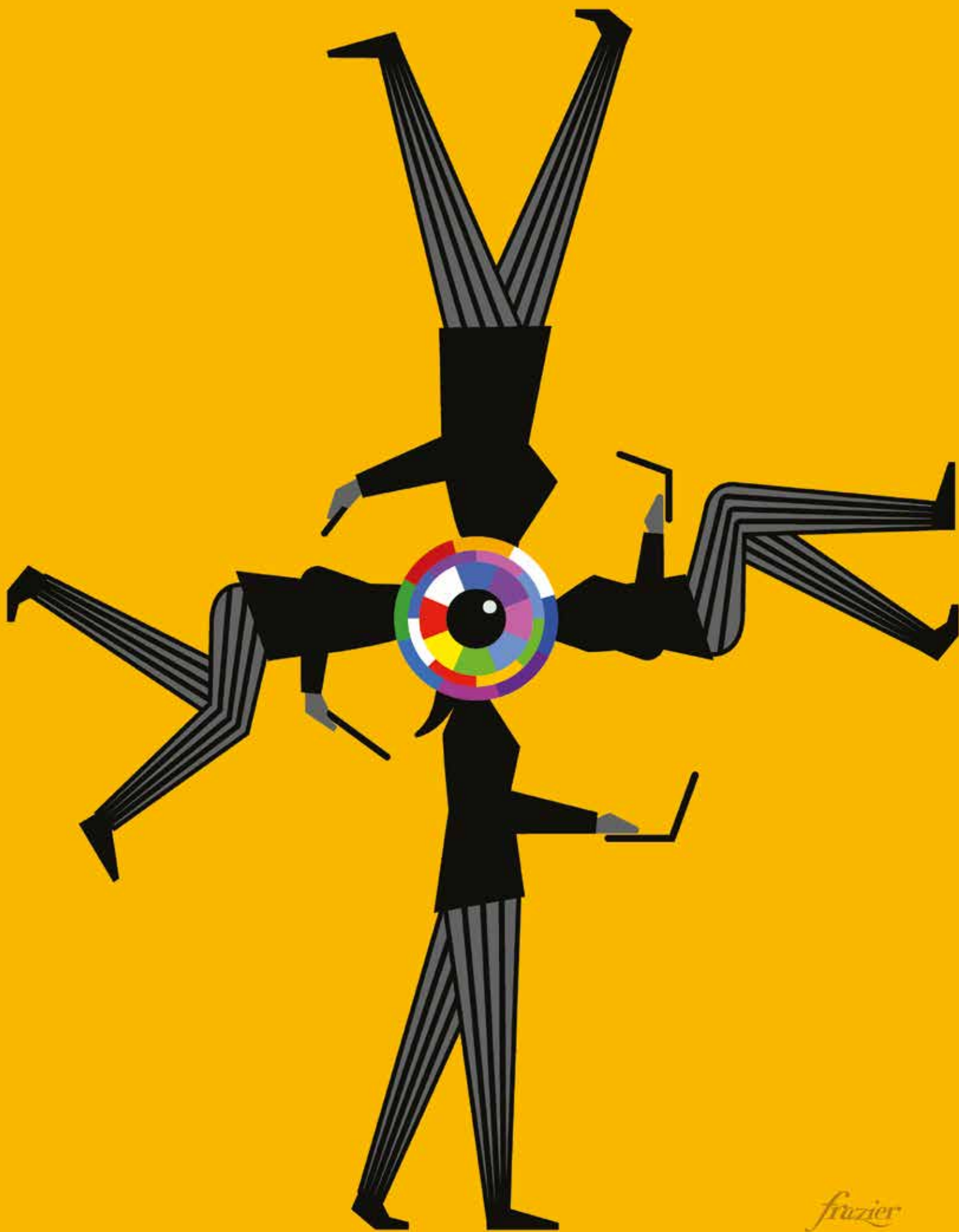
to unlock human potential by putting the needs and expectations of people at the heart of all we do.

One reason technology alone won’t create future-proofed organizations is that much of what we use at work today is rooted in the past. Look at email. Over three-quarters of companies think email is ineffective for communications. But it’s still the most ubiquitous tool in most offices – despite some strange properties.

Like the “Cc” line. “Cc” stands for “carbon copy,” which refers to a type of inked stock placed between sheets of paper that responded to the pressure of writing or typing, producing copies. You could stick the copies in a box, have your secretary pick them up, and circulate them around the office.

Carbon paper was invented in 1801. So what’s it doing in the modern workplace? It’s there because the tools we use today trace back to the 1970s, when pioneering computer scientists built the earliest pro-

**SIMON CROSS**, Product Manager of Workplace by Facebook, describes the six principles that will allow businesses to succeed in a future fraught with rapid change and uncertainty.



*frazier*

42  
PERCENT

of Gen Y-ers believe companies should always adopt the latest technologies irrespective of cost.

53  
PERCENT

say they'd be more likely to accept a job if the employer used the same technologies they do.

45  
PERCENT

believe the most important cultural factor of a workplace is that everyone is heard and their opinion respected.

They are willing to take a pay cut of \$7,600 on average for an improved quality of work life.

ductivity software for the personal computing era. They took the world they knew, a world of ink and printing and out-trays, and they made digital representations that we carry with us today.

But while we've been typing our professional thoughts into digital representations of paper, the communication-and-connection tools that people use in their personal lives have undergone some well-publicized changes. A new generation has grown up with Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Messenger, not just email. They've grown up with mobile, not just PCs. They've grown up with video, emojis, and Reaction GIFs, not just text.

They've grown up in a world more open and connected and faster moving than any we've ever known. As they enter the workforce, they won't just demand tools and technology as sharp as what they use in their personal life – they have a completely different expectation of work itself. They expect to be able to connect and communicate with anyone in their organization without having to seek permission. They expect to have a voice and be heard.

And here's the thing: By 2020, this younger generation will account for 35 percent of the global workforce. Your workforce. Any attempt to understand what the future of work will look like has to begin with the needs, expectations, even the demands of this younger generation.

### 1: OPEN BY DEFAULT

The average Gen Y-er juggles four different social media accounts. Young people share more of their lives than previous generations could have imagined. They see instant access as a right – one that might mean access to things like media and games, but also to information and corporate hierarchies.

Young people expect the workplace to be *open by default* – 81 percent say they'd choose an employer that values open communication over one that offers perks like free food and gym memberships.

Open by default is our first principle for the future of business. Not only does being open help break down organizational silos and boundaries, providing quicker access to needed information, it also better connects us to our mission and our co-workers.

At Facebook, we've seen this first hand. Back in 2010, like many others, we ran on email, IRC and distribution lists. We thought this was great. Nothing seemed to be broken so nobody thought to fix it.

Then in 2011, one enterprising engineer had the idea of creating Facebook Groups accessible only to others inside the company. This was a new idea – and it changed everything for us.

Almost overnight, Facebook moved from a closed culture of email threads and one-on-one conversations to a radically open culture of transparency.

Consider what happens when a senior manager uses an email memo to communicate to his or her team. Who in their right mind would hit "Reply All" to that note? No one. It would probably be career suicide. What message does that send to employees? It says, "Do not reply." Do not share your ideas. Do not share your voice.

That same memo posted to a Group on Facebook – and now on Workplace – has a little box below it that says, "Write a comment." Or, even easier, it has a "Like" button: the most simple and universal method of engagement we've ever known. It invites you by default to be heard, to share, to have a voice.

Why does this matter? Nearly 85 percent of Gen Y-ers say they'd feel more confident if they could have more frequent conversations with their managers. Also, 62 percent of people say their perception of a company improves if an employer responds to both positive and negative feedback online.

So Facebook started using Facebook to build Facebook. The result was an incredible acceleration of the speed at which the company moved. We make smarter decisions faster. Teams collaborate more easily. Senior management communicate more transparently. Even as we grew to 1,000 then 10,000 and soon 40,000 employees, that open-by-default nature continued to allow us to think and act with the speed of a much smaller company.

### 2: MOBILE FIRST

Also inherent to the future generation of workers is the concept of *mobile first*.

Sixty-one percent of all time spent online in the UK happens on a mobile device (versus 71 percent in the US and 91 percent in Indonesia); mobile penetration is at 85 percent in Europe, 84 percent in the US and 67 percent in Asia Pacific. The next billion people to come online in Africa will probably never set eyes on a desktop PC.

The next generation of workers will be tied to phones, not desks. In fact 88 percent of highly engaged employees say they can choose where to work depending on what they're doing. That means we need to design experiences that are incredibly simple to perform on the go. Workplace Chat, for instance, makes instant text, voice and video communications totally intuitive whether you're in the office, the factory or the field.

Mobile-first instant messaging tools are increasingly essential to getting work done – 45 percent of



employees say that instant messaging in the workplace helps increase productivity; 49 percent say it helps increase collaboration.

Younger employees are social animals. They want to work closely with others, and this collaborative impulse can fuel innovation and growth. Thirty-eight percent of Gen Y-ers and Gen Zs say their best work happens in environments that enable collaboration. Yet 71 percent say they face challenges using their company's collaboration tools. That's why using Facebook's own tools as a foundation was such a win for us – like millions of other users, our workers were already with these platforms.

While keeping people at the center of everything we do, we're also conscious of building a next-generation IT platform. That means integration of people with automation tools.

Over 100,000 bots were built in the first year after Facebook opened Messenger to developers in 2016 – everything from customer service automation to media outlets sharing headlines, weather updates or football scores. Bots have taken what used to be tricky, time-consuming or just boring tasks on mobile and made them lightweight, interactive and fun.

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Bots in groups are great for sharing information among teams in different countries or time zones. Bots in chat can facilitate real-time interaction among groups or for specific individuals. For instance, a chat bot can be used to send important reminders or notifications to someone based on an upcoming event like an interview or a meeting.

### 3: EXPRESSIVE

The third principle is the shift toward *expressive communications*. The mobile revolution has gone hand in hand with a giant shift in the way people communicate. In recent years, we've moved from the written world of email to a multimodal world where video, text, emojis, photos and GIFs all have a role to play.

When Facebook's News Feed launched in 2006 it was dominated by text-based status updates creating a wall of words. Now Facebook is the biggest photo-sharing platform in the world.

In the last couple of years, the explosive rise of mobile video has led to a more fundamental change. Mobile now accounts for 50 percent of all digital video plays in North America, 54 percent in EMEA, 56 percent in Latin America and 61 percent in Asia. Year-on-year, the amount of video uploaded to Facebook has tripled; time watching video on Instagram has increased 150 percent.

Video is the language of the mobile era and live video is transforming the landscape. One in every five videos on Facebook today is a Live video, which allows virtually anybody in the world to share what they're doing in an immediate, authentic way.

Enthusiasm is similarly high in Workplace, with senior leaders using Live to reach an entire company for town halls, weekly business updates or breaking news. At least one CEO broadcasts Live from a morning jog. Meanwhile, Group Video chat, allowing up to 50 members of a team to communicate face to face, is also proving popular.

### 4: INTEGRATED

The fourth principle we've identified is the expectation that the tools we use for work will be *integrated*, not isolated. Enterprise software is exploding. The average marketing department in a large organization already uses over 90 different apps to get work done. But at the same time, we are witnessing a critical failure of innovation.

Think about it. Two years ago if you wanted to order food or play music or check the traffic, you went into separate apps on your phone. Today, if you have the right technology, you just ask and it happens.

Gradually, we're peeling away the layers. Refining and distilling, ridding ourselves of superfluous apps and devices until only the most powerful and necessary remain. We're in the middle of a profound moment of convergence in consumer technology.

But the workplace is going the opposite way. It's splintering into dozens of different parts that exist in isolated gardens. Reconsider those 90 marketing cloud services. Far from getting better, faster, and easier, the workplace is becoming more atomized, complex and unwieldy. It doesn't have to be.

Yes, people are always going to want to use multiple tools to get work done. But it's important that those tools work together so we enable flexibility rather than locking people into a walled garden. There's nothing worse than the realization that you can't access a link or file from somebody on a different team because the software they're using isn't compatible with your own, as can often be the case with legacy IT systems.

As one of our six principles, this compatibility is at the heart of Workplace. In 2017 we announced integrations with some of the world's leading cloud services – from OneDrive, Office 365 and G Suite to Box, Dropbox, Salesforce and Okta – to make it easier than ever to share and discover documents in Workplace.

In 2018, we've accelerated this focus, launching an Integrations Directory with over 50 popular enterprise tools so organizations can work faster. This includes best-in-class SaaS apps like Jira, Zoom, Sharepoint, ADP and ServiceNow. So we can confidently say that Workplace works #better-together with the leading apps and service providers in the industry.

### 5: CONNECTED

The fifth principle we've identified is the expectation that the workplace of the future will be *connected*. In fact, in the workplace of the future, everybody will be connected to everybody.

Today, communication inside companies is often restricted to people who have an email address and a computer. But we know that this desktop-based way of working no longer reflects reality for millions of people around the world.

It's estimated that by 2020, 50 percent of the US workforce will be freelancers with no fixed "place" of work; 40 percent of Gen Y-ers say they'd take a pay cut if they could travel the world while working. As we noted earlier, 88 percent of highly engaged employees are already able to choose where

to work depending on what they're doing. In addition, there are millions of people working not in wired offices but in factories, shop floors, out in the field, even at sea.

With mobile, we finally have the power to connect everybody across an organization. The beauty of platforms like Workplace is that the same product that works for the globe-traveling CEO works for the marketing team back at HQ, the regional team in a satellite office, and the on-the-move buyer, salesperson and field agent.

By connecting companies from top to bottom we can transform culture. According to Deloitte, 69 percent of C-level executives say company culture – especially transparency in internal communications – is critical to realizing their vision and mission.

We can also connect teams across different companies. Multi-Company Groups dramatically increases the speed and ease of collaboration between media agencies and their clients, between lease holders and facilities managers, between Groups of every kind that form from different companies for a common purpose.

### 6: PERSONALIZED

The final principle we've identified is the expectation that information in the workplace of the future will be *personalized*. This matters more than ever as the volume and the velocity of information hitting employees accelerates daily. The need to make sense of information quickly and prioritize it effectively is going to be a critical competitive skill.

The "everything, everywhere, anytime" culture of mobile means we now have access to an almost infinite quantity of news, films, games, books, music and more at the touch of a button. Yet the time we have to consume it remains the same.

Facebook's well-known solution is the News Feed. News Feed is essentially a personalized newspaper. Facebook uses an algorithm based on a series of signals derived from people's real behavior. Signals include the friends that you follow, the family you're connected to and the pages, brands or things that you identify with a "like." The aggregate of all these influences and connections is known as the Social Graph.

At Workplace, we're building the Work Graph in the same way that Facebook built the Social Graph. Eventually, we'll use contextual signals like the connections between people and teams, the documents you download, the messages you reply to and even the meetings you attend to understand not just what you do but who you are at work. ♦

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**SIMON CROSS** is an engineer and Product Manager for Workplace by Facebook. He has also mentored startups and hosted hackathons for Facebook, the BBC and other organizations.