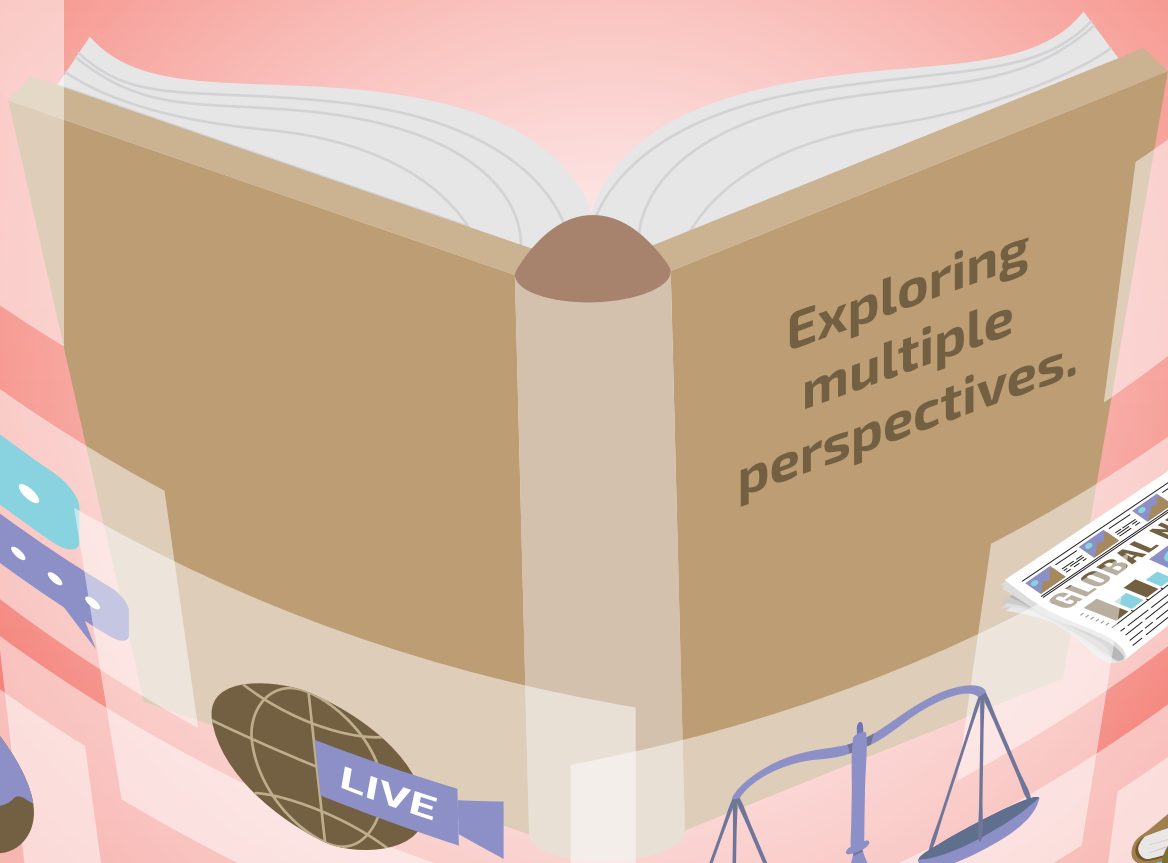


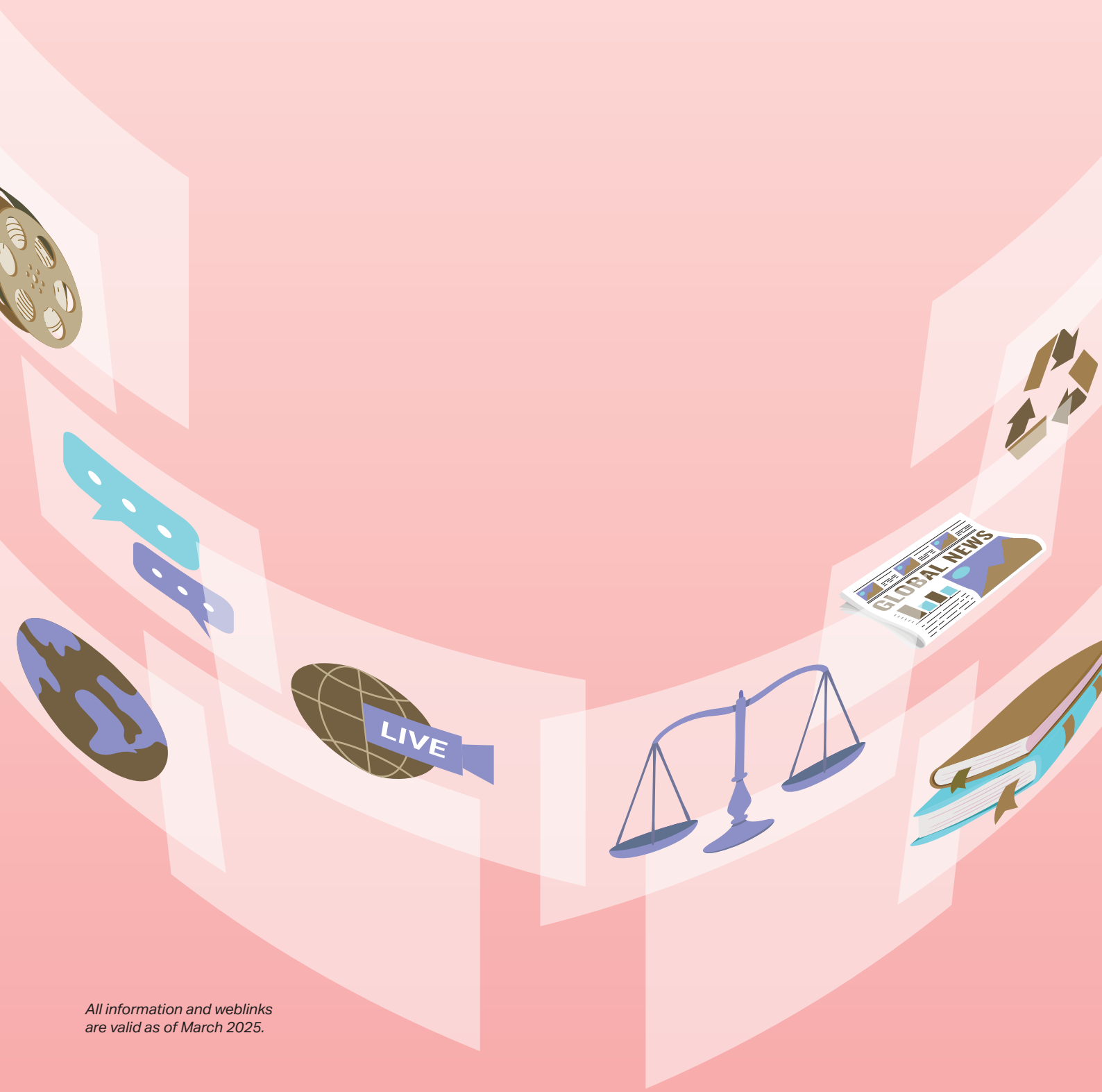
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Volume 2—2022/23



Issue 4

WORK REVOLUTION



*All information and weblinks
are valid as of March 2025.*



Revolution in Work



Work Revolution

With the rise of buzzwords like “Quiet Quitting”, “Death” of the 9-5 workday and “Humineral”, it begs the question: Is it time to overhaul the workplace?

An alarming 85% of employees in Singapore are at risk of burnout due to their overworked schedules, leading to the city state having the worst mental health record in the entire Asia Pacific. Despite the clear demand for more flexible work arrangements, only 52% of employees have access to remote work options, leaving many feeling frustrated and disconnected from their jobs.

So, what’s behind this troubling trend? Some have point to the persistence of traditional 9-to-5 office culture in Singapore and challenges of balancing organisational and employee needs. As hustle culture and quiet quitting continue to rise, the call to action for companies to prioritize employee mental health and establish work-life balance has never been more urgent. A revolution at work is brewing, and only time will tell if companies will rise to the challenge.

Fortunately, there has been some glimmer of hope on the horizon. In recent years, archaic workplace practices have been called out and there have been improvements with a push for more inclusive and

flexible work environments. Due to the pandemic, flexible work arrangement became the new norm, offering benefits such as lower absenteeism and turnover rate.

It’s not just changing attitudes towards work that are shaking things up in the workplace. The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and other advanced technologies is also causing a major impact, with some experts predicting that these developments could be a threat to our jobs. But while AI may be impressive, it’s still falling short of matching human intelligence and capabilities, which means that there is still a place for us in the workplace of the future.



The question remains: Are we experiencing a revolution in work?

Yes, the Future of Work is Radically Changing!

Automation and AI are replacing humans at work.

Computing power, data, algorithms, and automation technologies have enabled robots and AI to perform physical and predictive tasks with such accuracy and complexity—often surpassing humans. As a result, AI can potentially replace the human workforce across many industries, such as manufacturing and healthcare.

ChatGPT, for example, is a powerful tool that can perform tasks such as coding and computer programming, content creation, market research, customer service and graphic designing.

Work environments are better than ever before.

Employees today want flexibility, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Both governments and companies are responding to their demands.

Singapore's Enabling Masterplan 2030 targets a 40 percent employment rate for persons with disabilities by 2030, and many companies are embracing workplace inclusivity. Singapore is also codifying laws against workplace discrimination.

In line with global trends, some Singapore companies are offering flexible work arrangements, benefitting employees with caregiving duties and promotes better work-life harmony.

No, Work Will Only See Incremental Changes.

Human intelligence and abilities are still needed in the workplace.

Human abilities are unique and expansive, capable of imagining, anticipating, feeling, and assessing evolving situations. AI complements and amplifies human capabilities, not replaces them.

So far, there is no evidence that AI has led to overall job losses to date. While it may take over repetitive tasks, but it is not eliminating jobs altogether. On the contrary, AI has the potential to enable new industries to emerge and create new job opportunities. These new jobs will require new skill sets, highlighting the importance of reskilling and upskilling.

Workplace challenges persist; some argue they've increased.

Quiet quitting and the Great Resignation are ongoing trends that suggest a persistent problem in the workplace with no clear solution in sight.

Burnout, increased stress levels, and heavy workloads have led to almost a quarter of Singapore employees wanting to leave their jobs in early 2022. Companies are not offering sufficient mental health support or adequate training to perform effectively.

Singapore companies also lag in implementing DEI policies with only 30 percent having a formal approach in place.

The question remains: Are we experiencing a revolution in work?

Yes, the Future of Work is Radically Changing!

Flexible work arrangements are here to stay.

Working remotely increases employees' productivity, improves their overall well-being, strengthens family relationships, makes them happier and decreases their stress levels. Some global companies, including Twitter and Airbnb, have committed to allowing employees to work remotely permanently.

Companies in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and New Zealand are trialing a four-day work week. In Singapore, the four-day work week is one of the many flexible work arrangements that is encouraged, depending on the business' and employee's needs. Employees reported less stress and fatigue, improved work-life balance and satisfaction, increased productivity, and significant savings on transportation and childcare as benefits of a shortened work week.

Other benefits include lower absenteeism and increased cost-effectiveness. As employees no longer require permanent physical workspaces, companies can shrink their office sizes and expenses, making way for areas of collaboration, innovation, and community-building.

No, Work Will Only See Incremental Changes.

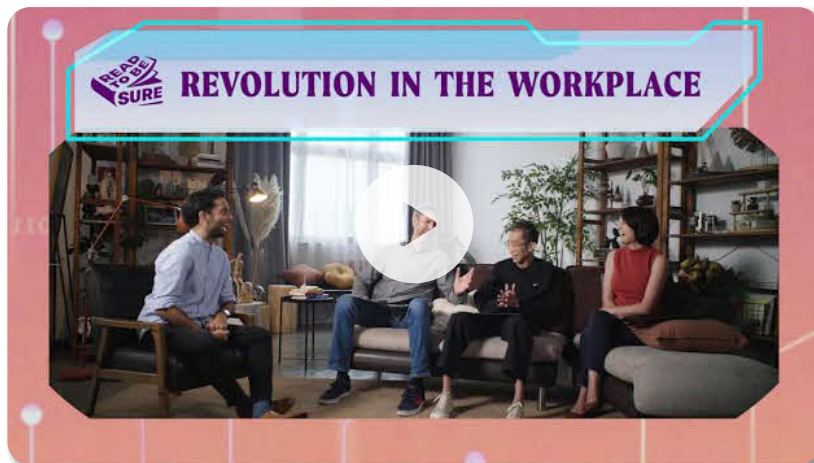
9-to-5 work culture in the office is still valued.

As pandemic restrictions lift, the future of remote work remains uncertain. While some have lauded the benefits of working from home, others debate the impact of remote work on employee communication and collaboration. A 2022 Gallup survey found "less access" to work resources and equipment and less "connection" to organisation's culture are top challenges in a hybrid work model.

Several companies are tightening their flexible work arrangements, such as Disney mandating the return to office four days a week citing the importance of in-person collaboration, camaraderie and mentorship. In Singapore, nearly half of the workforce has resumed working full-time at their offices post-pandemic.

A physical working space provides a focused environment, and fosters connection, collaboration, and innovation, creating a sense of belonging. Working remotely blurs work-life boundaries, increases social isolation risks and there may be implications for career progression or salary growth.

Let's hear our guest speakers weigh in on this issue:



Recommended Resources

Explore the resources below to learn about current work trends and consider whether we are experiencing a workplace revolution.

Videos

Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Singapore. *Singapore Perspectives 2023 "Work" — Future of Work*. Retrieved 2023, February 15.



CBS News. (2023, February 1). *The Rise of AI: Could ChatGPT Take Your Job?* Retrieved 2023, February 15.



Websites

What is the Future of Work?

What is the Future of Work? (2023, January 23). McKinsey & Company. Retrieved 2023, February 14.

What if your Colleague is a Bot? Harnessing the Benefits of Workplace Automation Without Alienating Staff

Waizenegger, Lena & Angsana A. Techatassanasoontorn. (2023, January 9). *What if your Colleague is a Bot? Harnessing the Benefits of Workplace Automation Without Alienating Staff*. The Conversation. Retrieved 2023, February 14.

Podcasts

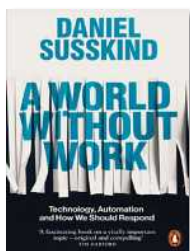
What Makes an Office Worth Coming To?

reworked. (2022, June 21). *What Makes an Office Worth Coming To?* Retrieved February 14, 2023.

Four Days' Work for Five Days' Pay: Does it Work?

Financial Times. (2022, December 8). *Four Days' Work for Five Days' Pay: Does it Work?* Retrieved February 14, 2023.

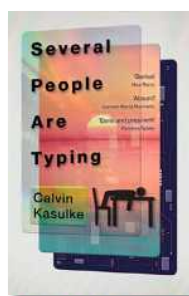
NLB eBooks



A World Without Work: Technology, Automation and How We Should Respond

Susskind, Daniel. (2020). *A World Without Work: Technology, Automation and How We Should Respond*. Penguin Books Ltd.

Retrieved from OverDrive. ([myLibrary ID](#) is required to access the eBook).



Several people are typing: A novel

Kasulke, Calvin. (2021). *Several people are typing: A novel*. London: Hodder Studio.

Retrieved from OverDrive. ([myLibrary ID](#) is required to access the eBook).



The Future of the Office: Work from Home, Remote Work, and the Hard Choices We All Face

Cappelli, Peter. (2021). *The Future of the Office: Work from Home, Remote Work, and the Hard Choices We All Face*. Wharton School Press.

Retrieved from OverDrive. ([myLibrary ID](#) is required to access the eBook).



The Future of Work: The Insights You Need from Harvard Business Review

Harvard Business Review. (2021). *The Future of Work: The Insights You Need from Harvard Business Review*. Harvard Business Review.

Retrieved from OverDrive. ([myLibrary ID](#) is required to access the eBook).