



WORKFORCE OPTIMIZATION

Building an Agile Workforce in a Post-COVID-19 World

Executive Insights on a Modern Business Model

June 2020

INTRODUCTION

The world today is in a near-constant state of change. While we are not yet in full post-COVID-19 territory, organizations are beginning to reopen and navigate what the future looks like. There's no question that the pandemic accelerated the implementation of new workforce strategies for many businesses—whether they were ready for it or not—and in March of 2020, organizations had to quickly adjust their structure and shift workflows. Major changes like transitioning to a fully remote workforce were done by necessity, but as we return to work in this new normal environment, organizations will need to have a more active say in how they adapt their business models to remain profitable and competitive.

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES OF RESTARTING

While running a company during the COVID-19 pandemic is far from easy, positive changes have emerged. Many organizations have noted a rise in productivity¹ from their remote workers, while others have adjusted their operating models to win new types of customers.

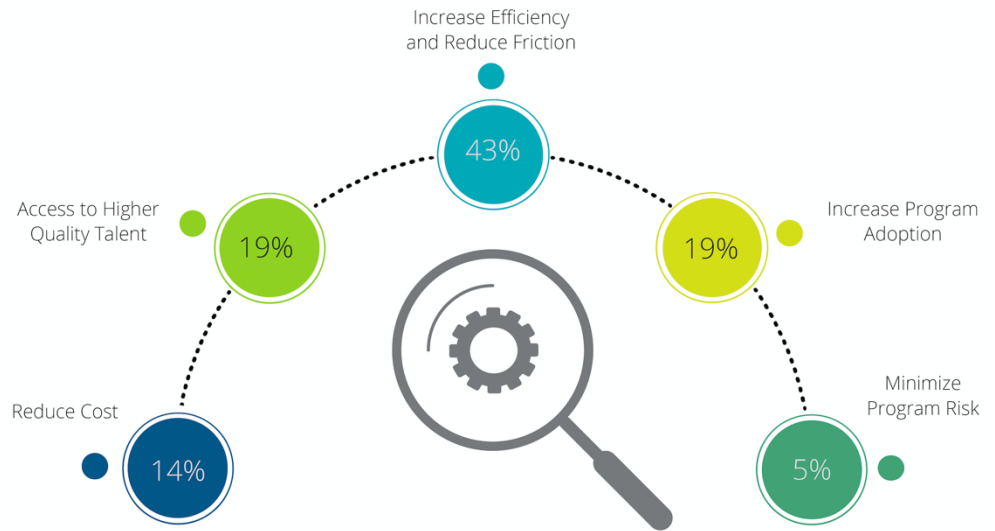
In a recent survey of MBO clients and client prospects, 43 percent of respondents indicated that reducing friction and increasing efficiency were top priority. Access to high quality talent, or better adoption of existing talent management programs were also key concerns, as well as cost reduction.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/09/magazine/remote-work-covid.html>

“During the current crisis, businesses have worked faster and better than they dreamed possible just a few months ago. Maintaining that sense of possibility will be an enduring source of competitive advantage.”¹

In order to develop a business model that will thrive moving forward, companies must identify the right revenue opportunities and embrace a nimble attitude. Even large companies will likely benefit from adapting a start-up mentality where they react quickly and personally to customer needs, explore new lines of business based on demand, and invest in collaboration tools that

WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE?



prioritize transparency. Organizations that are able to quickly scale operations up or down based on the market will be more resilient and ultimately find themselves on safer ground.

RETHINKING HOW WORK GETS DONE

There were a [number of important forces](#) changing the world before COVID-19 hit, and these trends aren't going away any time soon. We continue to live in an agile world with a high rate of change and this reality will have a big impact on organizations moving forward.

By striving for a frictionless business model, companies can adapt to this environment and readily transform ideas into reality to create value for customers. In response to the pandemic, we are already seeing organizations re-evaluate legacy roles and assess the titles and skillsets that are truly necessary for effectively running their business. Many companies are also operating on shorter cycle times and project-based work rather than fixed, five-year-plus plans.

EMBRACING A FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE

The independent workforce is a critical part to the success of achieving a frictionless business model. In order to build an agile workforce, organizations must consider how to access a wide array of talent using multiple modes of engagement. Some of this talent will be captive W-2 employees, while another part will be independent professionals who offer in-demand skills sets when and where they are needed most.

In a [recent survey of enterprise organizations](#), 22 percent of respondents indicated that they still “don’t know” or were “unsure” of what their post-COVID extended workforce would look like, but fully 70 percent expected that the workforce would either stay the same size or grow².

Independent workers offer a myriad of benefits to organizations including cost management, increased speed to market, and the ability to develop and improve products and services. It comes as no surprise that nearly three-quarters of hiring managers are continuing or increasing their usage of independent professionals. A further 59 percent of hiring managers agree that organizations not currently adopting a flexible workforce risk falling behind³.

Workforce models are shifting to align with new strategic business priorities, driving direct engagement with external talent. By using their own employment brand and candidate pool of referred and vetted talent, organizations can directly source highly skilled professionals, placing them within the company as temporary employees or independent contractors.

² Virtual survey of MBO client organizations and client prospects, June 17, 2020.

³ <https://www.upwork.com/press/2020/06/11/fourth-annual-future-workforce-report>

CONCLUSION

The time for change is now. New technology platforms facilitate an exchange of value—enterprise managers can search for and engage the talent they need, and independent contractors can put their skills to use and work the way they want. This technology also provides program management support, streamlines administrative processes, and increases overall efficiency.

By identifying challenges and solutions to reopening, assessing internal talent demands, and working with leadership to strategically incorporate independent talent, organizations can increase their agility and develop strategies that are able to adapt with an uncertain future.

ABOUT MBO PARTNERS®

MBO Partners delivers solutions that make it safer and easier for enterprise organizations and top independent professionals to work together. Through its proprietary platform, MBO has built a comprehensive workforce ecosystem that fuels both sides of the independent economy. MBO strengthens relationships, minimizes risk, and maximizes value for its clients. Its unmatched experience and industry leadership enable it to operate on the forefront of the independent economy and consistently advance the next way of working. For more information, visit mbopartners.com or email enterprisesolutions@mbopartners.com.