

Book Review - ISS 2020 Vision : New Ways of Working - the workplace of the future

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The white book, 'ISS 2020 Vision: New Ways of Working - the workplace of the future', is developed in close cooperation with Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies, and is based on in-depth research and a global survey among more than 600 Facility Management experts. ISS is based in Denmark. This book has been printed in October 2013.

This book builds upon the findings from the ISS 2020 Vision: Scenarios for the future of the global Facility Management industry, which concluded that future workplaces will change significantly over the coming decade. The findings of New Ways of Working were developed through surveys in partnership with IFMA, subject matter expert interviews, and multiple workshops with customers. The study also presents external expert assessments from the Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies of the strategic themes shaping the future work, the workforce and the workplace towards 2020.

This book is written to give the futuristic view to make people imagine what will be the future ways of working and the workplaces. This white book, has very well portrayed the new ways of working, which could be seen towards 2020. It has shown what will be the paradigm shift in terms of work force, nature of work and work places. This will surely help the Human Resource Management folks to get an idea or guide them about the nature of work and workplaces that will be in future and how it will be required to be handled by using different strategies. The book comprises of 144 pages, and could be used as a hand book for the Human resource Management.

It is divided into two parts : Part I describes the context in which future organizations will operate and provide a framework for discussing and understanding the challenges posed by eight strategic themes, with their consequences for core organizations' and the Facility Management industry. These themes are sorted according to the nature

of work, the workforce, and the workplace.

While Part II focuses on providing a structure through which customers and FM providers can define the role that FM – in collaboration with other support functions (HR, IT, FM, finance, and corporate real estate) – should play in shaping the workplace towards 2020.

The book has an excellent research approach comprising of pie charts and bar diagrams, which has analytical representations of factual data, giving the global scenario of future workplace. This presents the futuristic approach. It is a good guide to analyze the future work, workforce and workplaces.

The author helps us to visualize the workplaces, which will be quite qualitatively different as compared to today's way of working and the way the workplaces will be built. It well explains the reasons for the paradigm shift e.g. Globalization and its competitiveness, the inventions in the Technology, the battle for attracting and retaining the skilled talent, etc.

The book has well put up, in simple words, that the workplaces will be increasingly global, smart, collaborative and sustainable. Workplaces will no longer just be the places where people come to perform work tasks. The boundaries will be extended beyond the physical walls of the organizations. These will have people working from home, there will be virtual teams, satellite work stations, etc. The employees will not be physically present in the organization to achieve his/her deliverables or the task.

The survey gives a clear picture of the advanced inventions in technology that will provide facilities like cloud computing, mobile broadband enabled laptops, tablets, smart phones and other devices, thus helping workers to work from anywhere, at any time, without experiencing a decrease in performance. Cloud technologies will allow more productive and flexible ways for companies to manage their IT, disrupting entire business models, giving rise to new approaches that are asset-light, highly mobile, and flexible.

The study states that such ways of working will create the



importance of the Facility Management (FM) where the workplaces will have to be well equipped with facilities for the employees to perform their work at their best. The book gradually takes us to the future ways of working which will make people adapt to new ways of working. This may lead to different implications on the FM industry, new office designs will be needed to take new skills and work processes into account.

The book also highlights on the following Strategic themes affecting work towards 2020 like Paradigm shift towards innovation, technology as the enable of increased collaboration and change in the workplace, better leveraging of urban areas by companies and workers as well as, polarization of labor force and workplace amenities there off, workforce diversity, growing need to focus on employee health and well-being, sustainability etc.

Following will be the competitive challenges for companies for the next decade:

Create relationships of higher value that produce more benefits or reduce the number of sacrifices for customers

Define where value is being created

Identify who is capturing it.

All in all, the book well defines the future work places with virtual workers, thus different HR strategies will be needed to be framed for managing these workers and also the Facility management providers will have to be more and more innovative, well equipped to provide the necessary facilitates for on and off job sites. Also, the FM providers will have to take utmost care for the data security as the workers will carry their own devices to the workplaces. Towards 2020, it will also be observed that more women will be found working in the organizations. Research shows that women typically outperform men in team-building,

displaying emotional intelligence, setting clear expectations, and exhibiting other traits often associated with effective knowledge work.

Virtual or remote working could be considered as the cost cutting tool, by saving on the infrastructure, the commuting cost of the employees, etc. The operating cost, to some, extent will be reduced. The most important aspect is that the worker is more in the midst of his/her family. So, achieving work life balance is easy for the remote working employee.

Finally, the book summarizes that there will be more virtual work, decreasing office space, increasing demands for flexibility. Companies will be adapting their workplace strategies to these changes while balancing between costs reduction and the ability to attract talents.

This book certainly will be a great help for the Indian HR fraternity who can make the best use of it for their reference. The language used in the book is quite simple and easy to interpret. A very good read.

Some of the findings could not be suitable to the Indian style of working. The Indian culture is such that most employees live in joint families in small houses. Thus, having limited space while working from home. Today also, there are many professionals who are not that technology literate to be equipped to work virtually. Even today the Indians are facing the power cut during day time, which is not at all desirable while working virtually. Hence, there is no sound infrastructure to make it viable to work from home or virtually. Nevertheless some of the IT company employees have started adopting to such way of working and slowly will be absorbed in the Indian society to some other industries. There is scope to develop such research in Indian context.