



The background image shows two industrial workers in a factory. The worker in the foreground is wearing a yellow hard hat, safety glasses, and a high-visibility yellow vest over a brown shirt. He is holding a tablet and pointing towards a control panel on a piece of machinery. The worker in the background is wearing a white hard hat and a similar high-visibility vest. The scene is brightly lit with industrial lights.

UNLOCK

THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR INDUSTRIAL WORKFORCE

Augment workers with digital technology to boost productivity, value, and employee retention

Talent is a fundamental pillar for the modern enterprise. Manufacturers that empower their people will be more likely to succeed in an increasingly digital landscape that demands a capable workforce. Fifty-seven percent of industry leaders, however, believe they lack the skilled manufacturing workers required to steer the organization forward.

Companies have understood that attracting, retaining, and nurturing talent is vital and many have focused on these areas. The problem, however, with most talent-empowerment initiatives is that they have generally overlooked the industrial workforce. Yet companies that build an augmented digital-worker experience will attract and keep the best talent and unlock the potential of their industrial workforce.

Fighting the Great Resignation

The pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital technologies and practices dramatically: companies digitized operations 20 to 25 times more quickly than before the crisis. Organizations have supported their employees with a change in operating models and working habits and continue to help them perform well in their roles.

Despite this, 41 percent of the global workforce is likely to consider leaving their jobs in the next year. Employers are responding by increasing efforts in

recruitment, onboarding, development, and retention to keep their existing people satisfied and attract new talent. Employers are starting to realize the necessity of cherishing their people, and tools have been built to facilitate these processes and employees are being trained to use them.

But to avoid the shortage of skilled workers, empowerment initiatives and retention efforts must equally extend to all employees, whether they work at an office or shop floor.

Industrial workers need not fear automation

Technology is sometimes seen as a threat to industrial workers, especially those on factory floors, who sometimes presume that the intelligent industry will replace their jobs. This fear of automation and robotics may be holding back employers from introducing helpful tools.

First, industrial workers should not feel marginalized. Some CEOs believe that, if anything, it is traditional white-collar positions that are at greater risk. Second, automation itself creates jobs. While machines have replaced

some workers on assembly lines, they have also created new opportunities. Competent machinists, welders, and maintenance technicians are necessary for smooth operations. They also know the nuances of assemblies and possess a vital factor absent in machines: human judgement.

The catch, however, is this: for workers to benefit from automation, they will need to embrace digital technologies. Employers need to raise awareness of this to ensure people see this opportunity.

Creating an augmented working environment

If industry leaders want more skilled workers, they will also need to create the conditions in which they will want to work. A good start would be to regard industrial workers with the same esteem as other employees, to ensure they are no longer overlooked.

Companies should take responsibility for creating the skilled workers they need by paying for training and education on using and leveraging technology. Manufacturers can build an augmented workforce capable of enabling collaboration between human and machine.

Consider voice recognition. Workers using a digital shop-floor solution can communicate with AI systems to quickly receive instructions or answer a query rather than sift through binders and instruction manuals, reducing downtime and boosting productivity.

Automation can also take over administrative burdens at a basic level, allowing employees to devote more of their time to critical activities. These tend to involve problem solving and stimulating work, and the sense of reward they produce drives satisfaction and meaning. Employers can benefit from increased retention by tapping into the reason employees chose their profession.

All steps of the employee journey need attention, including offboarding. When an employee quits, companies need to ensure knowledge is not lost by having it accessible on a central platform, to preserve and share it when onboarding a new worker to perform well in the same role.



A happy and productive workforce

One analyst company said in 2020 that augmenting workers with technology can boost productivity by 20 to 30 percent and unlock more than \$100 billion in value in the manufacturing industry. Having an intelligent industry framework will be vital to capitalize on this opportunity.

It all starts with the right approach to empowering talent with an augmented digital-worker experience. The employee journey can be improved and made more seamless with supportive tools to give employees flexibility and freedom to perform. Applying digital

technology for this purpose will also help them become skilled workers and reduce the perceived threat of automation, making them more eager to welcome this evolution.

The incentives for employers are clear: greater value and productivity and a happier, motivated, and more skilled workforce that can realize its potential. Companies that take action to treasure their people can withstand attrition and work towards becoming a brand of choice for the best talent in the industry.

Cappgemini has a deep understanding of the manufacturing industry with a long history of working with its major players across the globe. Our ServiceNow experts leverage strong domain and delivery expertise to support our partners and accelerate their journey to digital excellence. With our omnichannel experience and digital shop-floor solutions, we can help create an augmented working environment fit for the digital economy where all workers – corporate or industrial – can excel.



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