



# TRENDS YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR 2024

What the Modern HR Experience  
for Small Businesses Looks Like

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# MEET THE EXPERT

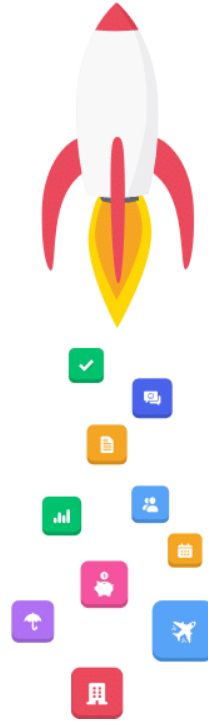


**Michelle Coussens** is a frequently sought-after speaker and business strategist for numerous types of organizations on a wide range of topics related to the workplace, including but not limited to talent management, business strategy, and operational effectiveness.

She is a resourceful, resilient, and relentless business professional with demonstrated success in building new programs, driving short-term efficiencies, and improving long-term effectiveness all through innovation, rigor, and courageous leadership.

She has direct experience with a variety of industries, as well as in consulting, education, and not-for-profit organizations.

With consistently high participant ratings, her webinars, seminars, and speaking engagements bring practical value to businesses of every size and type.



## About GoCo

Our mission is to help small businesses spend **less time on manual HR tasks**, so they can focus on growing **happier, more productive teams**



# Agenda

- Strategies for successful remote work adaptation in 2024's evolving business landscape
- What top businesses are doing differently for employee engagement and well-being in the post-pandemic era
- Direct benefits of progressive DEI initiatives in 2024
- How to leverage the latest HR technologies for enhanced decision-making and improved employee experiences
- Key strategies to stay ahead with your learning and development programs
- 2024 legal updates to stay compliant

# 10 Ways HR's role continues to evolve

## 1) HR is now a strategic partner, actively contributing to organizational strategy, decision-making, and business goals

- HR professionals work closely with leadership to align HR practices with overall business objectives

## 2) HR is placing a strong emphasis on enhancing the overall employee experience

- Designing a positive workplace culture
- Addressing well-being
- Creating opportunities for professional development

## 3) HR leverages people analytics and HR technology to make informed decisions

- Analyze workforce trends
- Predict employee needs
- Measure the impact of HR initiatives

## 4) HR embraces digital technologies, including HRIS, ATS, LMS, and other tools

- Streamline processes
- Enhance efficiency
- Provide a more connected and tech-savvy HR function

# 10 Ways HR's role continues to evolve (cont'd)

## 5) HR plays a critical role in attracting and retaining top talent

- Employer branding
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Creating a positive work environment

## 6) HR is emphasizing continuous learning and development

- Personalized learning paths
- Upskilling and reskilling programs
- Leveraging technology for efficient and effective training

## 7) HR is adapting itself to the rise of remote and flexible work arrangements

- Creating policies
- Ensuring technology support
- Addressing the unique challenges associated with remote work

# How HR's role continues to evolve (cont'd)

## 8) HR is increasingly focused on holistic well-being

- Mental health initiatives
- Stress management programs
- Creating a supportive work environment

## 9) HR is taking a proactive role in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Implementing comprehensive DEI strategies
- Fostering an inclusive culture
- Addressing systemic biases

## 10) HR is playing a key role in organizational agility and change management

- Facilitating smooth transitions during periods of change
- Fostering a culture of adaptability

# **Mastering remote work management: Essential for your success**

- **Often a significant factor in attracting top talent, especially in a competitive job market**
- **Enhances employee satisfaction and contributes to higher retention rates**
- **Empowers employees to create a work environment that suits their personal preferences, potentially boosting efficiency**
- **Can contribute to cost savings on office space, utilities, and other overhead expenses**
- **Enables your business to tap into a global talent pool, providing access to diverse skill sets from around the world**
- **Ensures that your business is better prepared for unexpected disruptions, such as natural disasters, public health emergencies, or other crises**
- **Contributes to business continuity by allowing operations to continue even when physical offices are inaccessible**
- **Reduced commuting and office energy consumption contribute to a lower carbon footprint, aligning with corporate social responsibility goals**



# **Remote work strategies you should already be utilizing**

- **Combination of messaging apps, video conferencing, and project management tools**
- **Expectations for response times and communication etiquette to avoid misunderstandings**
- **Project management tools to help teams collaborate, track progress, and manage tasks efficiently**
- **Clearly communicated (and regularly updated) goals, expectations, and priorities to ensure everyone understands their role and responsibilities**
- **Regular team meetings and one-on-one check-ins to maintain team cohesion and address any concerns**
- **Video calls to enhance the sense of connection among team members**
- **Flexibility in work hours, allowing team members to choose when they are most productive**
- **Core hours for meetings and collaboration to ensure overlapping working hours for effective communication**
- **A healthy work-life balance by encouraging breaks and time away from screens**
- **Resources for mental health support, with an understanding of individual needs and challenges**

# **Remote work strategies you should already be utilizing (cont'd)**

- **Robust cybersecurity measures to ensure remote work environments are secure**
- **Trained employees on best practices for maintaining data security**
- **Ongoing training to enhance remote work skills and keep employees updated on the latest tools and technologies**
- **A culture of continuous learning and development**
- **Virtual team-building activities to maintain a sense of camaraderie**
- **Informal communication channels for water-cooler conversations and non-work-related discussions**
- **Regular assessment of the effectiveness of remote work strategies and make adjustments as needed**
- **Feedback solicitation from employees to understand their challenges, implementing solutions accordingly**
- **Ensuring that employees have the necessary technology and equipment to work remotely effectively**
- **Investment in reliable and secure cloud-based tools for seamless collaboration**

# Technology-Related Considerations for 2024 Remote Work

- **Integration of:**
  - VR and AR for virtual meetings and collaborative workspaces, providing a more immersive and interactive experience
  - Advanced collaboration platforms that seamlessly combine project management, communication, and document sharing, possibly leveraging blockchain for secure document handling
  - Mental health and well-being applications within the remote work ecosystem, including mindfulness apps, virtual wellness programs, and stress management tools
- **Increased use of artificial intelligence for personalized productivity tools, such as AI-driven task prioritization, time management, and intelligent automation**
- **Enhanced digital onboarding processes with virtual reality elements and interactive modules to integrate new employees seamlessly into remote teams**
- **Blockchain technology for enhanced security and privacy, ensuring secure transactions and communications in remote work environments**
- **Tools and platforms that allow employees to customize their virtual workspaces for increased comfort and productivity, fostering a sense of personalization**
- **Advancements in holographic technology for more lifelike and immersive virtual meetings, providing a sense of physical presence**

# Technology-Related Considerations for 2024 Remote Work (cont'd)

- **Integration of:**
  - Real-time language translation tools to facilitate seamless communication among teams with diverse language backgrounds
  - Ergonomic technology solutions to promote better physical health in remote workers, such as smart furniture and wearable devices that encourage movement
  - AI-powered smart assistants specifically designed for remote work tasks, such as scheduling, meeting notes, and information retrieval
- **Continued emphasis on cybersecurity with the integration of biometric authentication, advanced encryption methods, and secure VPN solutions**
- **Increased use of RPA for automating repetitive tasks, allowing employees to focus on more strategic and creative aspects of their work**
- **Introduction of gamification elements in remote work platforms to enhance engagement, recognition, and collaboration among team members**
- **Use of predictive analytics to analyze work patterns and optimize workflows, helping organizations adapt to changing demands and improve efficiency**
- **Integration of AI-powered smart assistants specifically designed for remote work tasks, such as scheduling, meeting notes, and information retrieval**

# How to better support and engage employees

- **Maintain transparent and open communication about company goals, changes, and challenges, encouraging feedback and listen to employees' concerns and suggestions**
- **Promote mental health awareness and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help**
  - Offer employee assistance programs, counseling services, or mental health days
  - Encourage an adaptive mindset and provide resources for managing stress
- **Set clear expectations for working hours and avoid creating a culture of constant overtime**
- **Support continuous learning through training programs, coaching, mentorship and other professional development**
  - Rethink performance reviews to focus on growth and development rather than just evaluation

# How to better support and engage employees (cont'd)

- **Acknowledge and celebrate individual and team achievements regularly, establishing a fair and transparent rewards system that recognizes contributions**
- **Involve employees in decision-making processes that affect their work**
  - **Foster a sense of ownership and empowerment within teams**
- **Promote a healthy workplace by providing ergonomic workspaces and encouraging regular breaks**
- **Provide training on unconscious bias and promote a culture of respect and belonging**
- **Conduct regular surveys to gather feedback on various aspects of work, including job satisfaction, work environment, and support systems, using survey results to make informed decisions and improvements**

# Progressive DEI initiatives to incorporate

- **Expand “DEI” to “DEIA” (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility)**
  - Ensure physical and digital workplace accessibility for employees with disabilities, providing assistive technologies and accommodations as needed
- **Go beyond standard efforts of establishing diversity policies and associated training**
  - Provide training on deeper topics, such as inclusive leadership, cultural competency, unconscious bias, and micro-aggression
  - Implement inclusive policies, such as flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies
  - Educate employees on the impact of language and terminology on inclusion
- **Implement blind recruitment processes to reduce bias**

# **Progressive DEI initiatives to incorporate (cont'd)**

- **Establish and support ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) that bring people together from different backgrounds to learn more about each other, rather than just meeting with people “like them”**
- **Proactively review titles, seniority, promotions, compensation structures to review associated demographics and distributions for fairness**
- **Develop and support programs that prioritize working with diverse suppliers**
  - Encourage partnerships with minority-owned businesses and enterprises
- **Tie performance evaluations to participation in and progress of DEI initiatives**
- **Engage with and contribute to the broader community, industry, and business landscape to promote diversity and equity**
  - This will also elevate your employer brand identity



# Proactive DEI benefits to you, your employees, and others

- **Diverse teams bring a variety of perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the table, fostering creativity and innovation**
  - More adept at solving complex problems as they bring varied perspectives and approaches
  - Different backgrounds and experiences contribute to a more comprehensive analysis of challenges
  - A diverse workforce is often more adaptable to change and can navigate challenges with resilience
  - Helps in avoiding biases such as groupthink
- **A diverse workforce is better equipped to identify and address emerging market trends and customer needs**
  - Reflects the diversity of the customer base, making it easier to connect with a broad range of consumers
  - The organization is more likely to appeal to a global and diverse customer market
- **Employees are more likely to perform at their best when they feel included, valued, and supported**
  - Results in higher job satisfaction and overall well-being
- **Organizations with strong DEI initiatives are more attractive to a diverse pool of talent**
  - Drives higher employee retention rates, reducing turnover costs
  - Especially beneficial in industries facing talent shortages or seeking specialized skill sets
  - Promotes a sense of belonging, which contributes to higher employee engagement and productivity
- **Demonstrating a commitment to diversity and equity can help mitigate legal and reputational risks**
  - Shows stakeholders that the organization is proactive in addressing potential issues

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
HRIS	Centralizes employee data, automates administrative tasks, and streamlines processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved accuracy in data management</li> <li>• Time savings</li> <li>• Enhanced HR operational efficiency</li> </ul>
ATS	Automates the recruitment process, from job posting to candidate onboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerated hiring processes</li> <li>• Better candidate experience</li> <li>• Data-driven insights into recruitment metrics</li> </ul>
LMS	Facilitates training and development by delivering and managing educational courses and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced employee skills</li> <li>• Increased engagement</li> <li>• Culture of continuous learning</li> </ul>
PMS	Performance management tools that streamline goal-setting, feedback, and performance reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer performance expectations</li> <li>• Timely feedback</li> <li>• Data-driven insights for performance improvement</li> </ul>
EEP	Measure and improve employee engagement through surveys, feedback mechanisms, and analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased employee satisfaction</li> <li>• Identification of areas of improvement</li> <li>• Proactive response to employee needs</li> </ul>
ARTs	Provide insights into HR metrics, workforce trends, and predictive analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed decision-making</li> <li>• Identification of areas of improvement</li> <li>• Strategic workforce planning</li> </ul>
ESS	Allow employees to access and update their personal information, request time off, and access HR resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowered employees</li> <li>• Reduced administrative workload</li> <li>• Increase data accuracy</li> </ul>
AI	Assist in resume screening, candidate matching, and chatbot-driven initial interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster and more efficient hiring processes</li> <li>• Reduced bias in recruitment</li> <li>• Improved candidate experience</li> </ul>
PAPs	Use advanced analytics to analyze workforce data, uncover patterns, and provide insights for strategic decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth understanding of workforce dynamics</li> <li>• Identification of high-performing teams</li> <li>• Data-drive HR strategy</li> </ul>
EAP	Platforms offer wellness programs, mental health resources, and other assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved employee well-being</li> <li>• Reduced stress</li> <li>• More supportive workplace culture</li> </ul>

HRIS: Human Resource Information Systems  
ATS: Applicant Tracking System

LMS: Learning Management System  
PMS: Performance Management Software

EEP: Employee engagement platform  
ARTs: Analytics and Reporting Tools

ESS: Employee Self-Service portals  
AI: Artificial Intelligence

PAPs: People Analytics Platforms  
EAP: Employee Assistance Program

**Leading HR technology tools**

**Presented by HRMorning**

# 15 strategies to consider in your learning and development plans

## **Strategy 1: Align L&D initiatives with your overall business objectives**

- Ensures that learning programs contribute directly to the organization's success and address specific skill gaps required for business growth

## **Strategy 2: Promote a culture of continuous learning**

- Encourages employees to acquire new skills, stay updated on industry trends, and adapt to changing roles and responsibilities

## **Strategy 3: Tailor learning paths to individual employee needs**

- Maximizes engagement, relevance, and effectiveness of learning programs, addressing unique skill gaps and career aspirations

## **Strategy 4: Leverage e-learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital tools**

- Provides flexible and scalable learning solutions, facilitates remote learning, and allows for real-time tracking and analytics

# 15 strategies to consider in your learning and development plans (cont'd)

## **Strategy 5: Identify emerging skills required for future roles**

- Prepares employees for evolving job requirements, enhances organizational agility, and reduces the skills gap

## **Strategy 6: Foster a collaborative learning environment**

- Promotes knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and the development of a learning community within the organization

## **Strategy 7: Implement robust metrics and analytics for learning**

- Allows for the measurement of the effectiveness of learning programs, identifies areas for improvement, and demonstrates the impact on business outcomes

## **Strategy 8: Prioritize leadership development initiatives**

- Develops a pipeline of skilled leaders, improves succession planning, and contributes to a more resilient and adaptive organization

# 15 strategies to consider in your learning and development plans (cont'd)

## **Strategy 9: Encourage employees to gain skills outside their immediate roles**

- Creates a more versatile and adaptable workforce, fosters collaboration across departments, and breaks down silos

## **Strategy 10: Incorporate gamification elements into learning programs**

- Increases engagement, motivation, and retention of learning materials through interactive and competitive elements

## **Strategy 11: Involve employees in the design and development of learning programs**

- Enhances relevance, ensures that programs address real-world challenges, and increases employee buy-in

## **Strategy 12: Nurture a culture that values and supports continuous learning**

- Boosts employee morale, attracts top talent, and creates a dynamic and adaptive organizational culture

# 15 strategies to consider in your learning and development plans (cont'd)

## **Strategy 13: Provide access to workshops, conferences, webinars, and other external learning opportunities**

- Broadens exposure to industry trends, fosters networking, and encourages a proactive approach to professional development

## **Strategy 14: Tailor learning programs to the global nature of the workforce**

- Ensures that learning content is culturally relevant, accessible to diverse teams, and addresses regional or global challenges

## **Strategy 15: Embrace agile methodologies in learning development**

- Enables quick adaptation to changing needs, rapid deployment of learning solutions, and iterative improvement based on feedback

# There are a lot of legal aspects of HR to keep tabs on...

In 2023, we're tracking:



1,700+

Labor law postings  
across the nation



130

Jurisdictions with a minimum wage rate  
higher than the federal minimum wage



45

Jurisdictions with their own  
paid leave laws

- Source: <https://www.govdocs.com/> (as of 12/1/23)

# Areas to monitor

- **Labor Laws:**
  - Changes in minimum wage laws
  - Updates to overtime regulations
  - Revisions to family and medical leave policies
- **Anti-Discrimination Laws:**
  - Amendments to existing anti-discrimination laws
  - Expansion of protected classes
  - Changes in accommodation requirements for individuals with disabilities
- **Remote Work and Flexible Scheduling:**
  - Regulations related to remote work
  - Guidelines for flexible scheduling and work arrangements
- **Privacy and Data Protection:**
  - Updates to data protection laws affecting employee information
  - Changes in regulations related to employee monitoring
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):**
  - New regulations or guidelines promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace
  - Requirements for reporting on DEI initiatives
- **Employee Benefits:**
  - Changes to healthcare laws and regulations
  - Updates to retirement and pension plan requirements
- **Immigration Laws:**
  - Changes in immigration policies affecting the employment of foreign workers
- **Unemployment Insurance:**
  - Updates to unemployment insurance regulations and requirements
- **Workplace Safety:**
  - Changes in occupational safety and health regulations
  - New guidelines for maintaining a safe workplace



# Examples of hot legal topics to keep up on

- **Return to work policies**
  - Pay careful attention to requests from employees for exemption or variation from a return-to-work policy as a reasonable accommodation for a disability
- **Undue Hardship**
  - After seeing employees work productively when remote, it may be more challenging for an employer to assert that an employee's request for remote work is an "undue hardship"
- **Artificial Intelligence**
  - Use of AI in the workplace has the potential for unrecognized racial and gender bias in the software's output. The Biden administration has issued a framework for an "AI Bill of Rights"
    - Ensuring that the AI systems used by employers are safe and effective
    - Having safeguards in place to prevent, test for and identify unintended discrimination in the system's algorithms
    - Making sure that candidates' and employees' personal data is safeguarded
    - Requiring disclosure to employees and candidates that AI systems are being used
    - Requiring a human "fallback" to the system, both to monitor the outputs but also to assist any employees or candidates who run into trouble accessing the system

# Additional resources

- Regularly check official government websites for labor and employment laws and regulations
- Subscribe to legal updates from reputable law firms specializing in employment law
- Attend webinars, seminars, or conferences focused on HR and employment law updates
- Consult with legal professionals to ensure compliance with the latest regulations
- **Additional resources:**
  - 2024 HR Compliance Calendar: <https://www.goco.io/blog/annual-hr-compliance-calendar/>
  - HRMorning: HRMorning.com
  - SHRM: Society of HR Managers
  - U.S. Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/>
  - Equal Employment Opportunities Office: <https://www.eeoc.gov/>
  - State-specific websites

# Let's stay in touch!

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for you*

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**THANK YOU  
FOR JOINING US!**

