



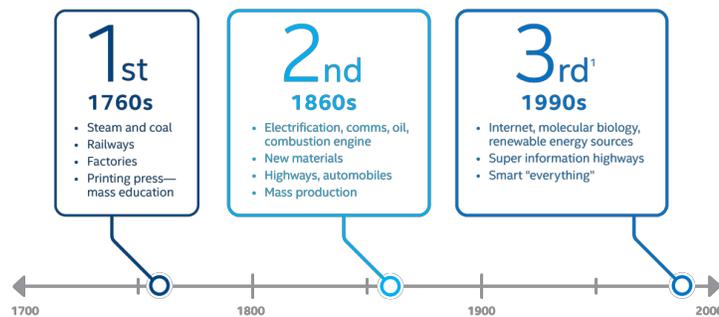
Transforming the Workplace: With Innovation Comes Challenge

Posted by [jhenrys](#) in [IT Peer Network](#) on 06-Aug-2014 20:39:46

This is part 2 of my blog series about transforming the workplace. Be sure to look for future blog posts and start with part 1 [here](#).

Undoubtedly, we're in a period of intense change on a global level, and one that's occurring at "light speed." I liken it to the next wave of the Industrial Revolution.

Third Industrial Revolution



We are still at the dawning of the third era...
...A new economic narrative is being written.

¹ Rifkin, Jeremy. *The Third Industrial Revolution: How Lateral Power is Transforming Energy, the Economy, and the World*. Palgrave MacMillan Trade (January 8, 2013). Rifkin is the president of the Foundation on Economic Trends.

Against this backdrop, businesses must transform to survive by innovating on many fronts—products, services, business models, and so on—and do so with ever-increasing velocity. Over the next several weeks, I'll be exploring how this change can happen with greater success based on the principles of workplace transformation.

And here we'll start at the beginning: Recognizing the need to transform, many business leaders have concluded that the nature of work and the way people work must change. Why? Because innovation comes from people. Across many organizations, this shift is already in flight; however, change isn't easy and it comes with many challenges—culturally, environmentally, and technologically.

Embracing a new way to work

Early last month, I talked about how [social, mobile, analytics, and cloud \(SMAC\)](#) are revolutionizing the [workplace](#). Together, these technologies have quickly gained industry consensus as the new IT architecture model. And with this SMAC platform, traditional businesses are transforming into digital businesses.

However, before jumping too deeply into IT strategies and technologies that facilitate this shift, let's take a step back to understand how this relates to the workplace. How exactly are forward-thinking organizations changing the way they work to drive innovation with velocity? What are the new methods and approaches they're embracing? My own observations include the following:

- **Agile development or "scrumming,"** where people colocate and work in a focused, collaborative, and iterative manner, such as "swarming" on a problem.
- A focus on nonroutine work, recognizing that high-value work comes from employees' creativity, market insights, personal networking, and ability to influence (whilst repetitive and routine work becomes less valued and more automated).
- **Hyperconnectedness,** which means working collaboratively with a rich ecosystem of partners and affiliates. This requires working "beyond the corporate firewall" and outside of geography constraints.
- **Talent acquisition, especially of millennials,** that goes beyond attracting to include retaining talent by providing the most effective and flexible work environment.
- **Work Space vs. Work Place** involves virtualising the workplace so people can be productive anytime, anywhere, without limitations.
- **Working with the collective** helps ensure that everyone has an active voice. This democratizes ideas to unlock hidden intelligence, and creates a feeling of inclusion.
- **Crowdsourcing,** or tapping into the "citizen developer" as a rich source of innovation.

Barriers to success

While this transformation in the way we work doesn't seem too far-fetched, it isn't without its challenges. In today's enterprise, there are numerous barriers that prevent these work styles from becoming a reality.

To start, many business processes simply aren't set up to meet the needs of a geographically dispersed workforce. If workers can't get to the right tools or collaborate easily with other team members, it slows down productivity for the entire team, and ultimately, the business.

For example, I've seen many companies trying to embrace an agile working method, yet facing a litany of challenges. They're reduced to scrawling on white boards and flip charts, taking photos to e-mail around (which, in the background, syncs your "next great idea" to a public cloud somewhere), and clambering for power sockets, with wires all about the place. And the inclusion of remote participants via phone is frustrating for all, and next-to-useless for genuine collaboration.

Without the right workspaces and technologies in place, problems can arise even for workers in the same building. A meeting room may not be available, or it may be difficult to share work on a conference room projector without the right adapter. These issues often hamper team productivity, but personal productivity can also suffer from smaller annoyances like a forgotten password or incompatible technology.



Above: The archaic reality of agile working!

Today's workers also have higher expectations. Tech-savvy employees now expect a mobile computing experience that blends from work to home and back on a range of devices. To attract and retain the best talent available, companies must support a seamless mobile compute experience that moves beyond geographic barriers.

For the next blog in this series, I'll be diving deeper into what Intel as a technology innovator is doing to address these barriers and to alleviate the issues by enabling fluid collaboration. I'll look at how we envision natural, intuitive, and accessible virtual work spaces that enable these new working styles to be adopted with great effect. Meanwhile, please join the conversation and share your thoughts. Be sure to read about how [PepsiCo achieved transformation](#) and click over to the [Intel® IT Center](#) to find resources on the latest IT topics.

Until the next time ...

Jim Henrys, Principal Strategist

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