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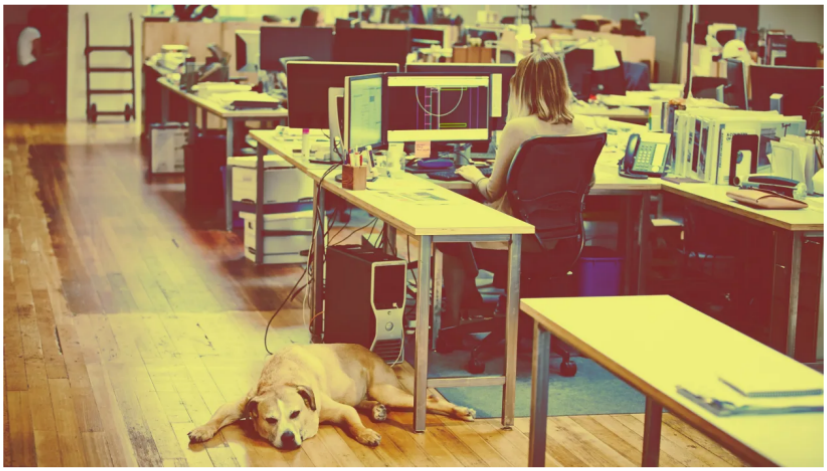
HP CEO: The world has an unhealthy relationship with work

A recent survey found that just 27% of knowledge workers feel they have a healthy relationship with their work.



[Photo: Credit: Thomas Barwick/Getty Images]

BY ENRIQUE LORES 3 MINUTE READ

As the CEO of HP, I spend as much time as possible talking with our customers and partners around the world. These days, there's a topic that seems to come up in almost every conversation I have: *What's your policy on returning to the office?*

People have very strong views on this—and that's understandable. For a long time, we all got used to a certain way of working. Over the past few years, the way we work has fundamentally changed. Every CEO I know is still trying to figure out the best path forward for their organization. And if you ask two people, you're likely to get at least three different opinions.

More often than not, these conversations have been focused on *where* people work. That's an important topic, but I believe there are larger, more profound questions demanding our attention. Specifically, how has people's relationship with work changed? And what does it mean for companies like ours?

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To answer questions like these, we recently commissioned the HP Work Relationship Index. We asked more than 15,000 people across 12 countries how they feel about their work and what their expectations are moving forward.

Some of the results will surprise you. The one that jumped out at me the most is that just 27% of knowledge workers feel they have a healthy relationship with their work. That's a big problem—for people and for business. Because no company can succeed long term without a motivated and engaged workforce.

How we work needs to change. Most urgently, I believe there are three areas demanding attention.

WE HAVE TO RETHINK PRODUCTIVITY

For starters, we must reject the false choice between productivity and happiness. Too often, these are portrayed as opposing forces. But when you really stop and think about it, they go hand in hand. The most effective teams don't simply perform at the highest level, they enjoy doing it. And now more than ever, that's what business leaders need to enable.

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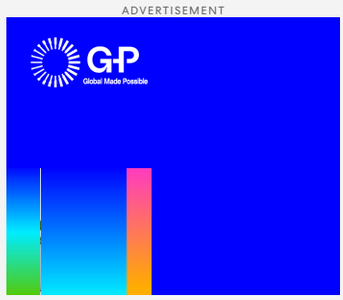

What's more, we can't create the future of work using the productivity measures of the past. This requires us all to evolve our thinking. When and where people work is just one piece of a much bigger puzzle we need to solve. By listening to employees about what they need to be successful and focusing on outcomes to meet these needs, we can better understand and deliver what matters most.

COMPANY CULTURES MUST EVOLVE

Through our research, we found that only 25% of respondents feel they consistently receive the respect and value they deserve—and even fewer experience the flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance they seek. People also told us they yearn for purpose, empowerment, and genuine connection to their work, but just 29% say their job consistently fulfills these needs.

Stats like these are alarming and suggest we may be nearing a breaking point. In fact, 83% of people say they are willing to earn less if it means feeling happier at work. No one should have to choose between earning their worth and enjoying their work. It's critical for companies to foster environments that allow people to excel in their careers while thriving in their lives.

TECHNOLOGY NEEDS AN UPGRADE

I know that may sound self-serving coming from me, but there's no denying the fact that technology has a critical role to play. Three-quarters of the people we surveyed said tools and technology are an integral part of being successful, whether they're working from home or the office. Seventy percent told us they want technology that allows them to be seen and heard from wherever they are. But only one in four say they have access to these tools today. New technology that gives people the flexibility they seek while enabling them to feel more connected, collaborative, and productive can bridge these gaps.

I'm not suggesting any of this will be easy, and there is clearly no one-size-fits-all approach. Every business has a unique set of factors to consider.

But there is one thing everyone seems to agree on. The majority of

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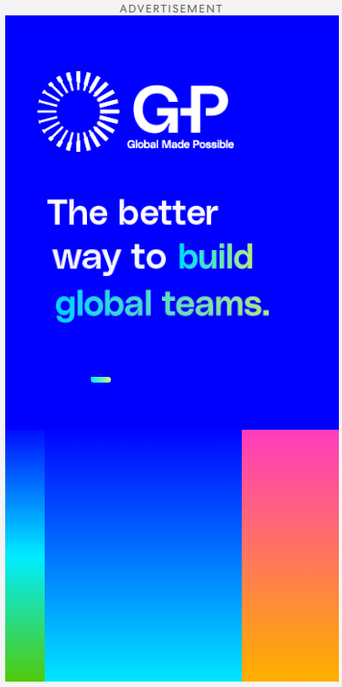

companies and their employees we surveyed said that now is a pivotal time to redefine our relationships with work. This won't just lead to happier employees, it will drive productivity, spur innovation, and create more successful companies in the process.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Enrique Lores is the President and CEO of HP. More

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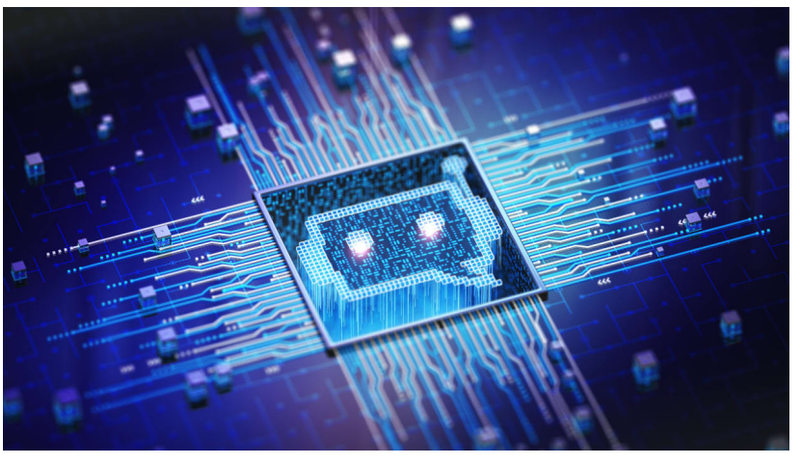
08-21-23 | ACCENTURE

How to balance the promise—and peril—of generative AI

According to Accenture's global Generative AI Security lead, the hype is real—and so are the risks. Here, he lays out what companies must do to reap the benefits in a secure and sustainable way.



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BY FASTCO WORKS 4 MINUTE READ

Companies and their leaders have long embraced the promise and potential of artificial intelligence. But with the recent emergence of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, demand for this technology has exploded. Before companies dive into the new world of generative AI, corporate leaders must address some serious questions about how to manage the potential risks of this powerful tool.

Scott Wilkie, global lead of Generative AI Security at consulting firm Accenture, spends his days working with organizations to help them realize the potential of this groundbreaking technology while avoiding its pitfalls. Here, he weighs in on just how transformative it is and why data architects and prompt engineers are the new rock

stars of the corporate set.

How big a deal is generative AI? Does it live up to the hype?
People always get excited by the hype of the next big thing. But this is different. Generative AI will be as transformative as the internet in its own way. It's the result of multiple themes colliding: The internet has 30 years of solid development and functionality underneath it, and it's supported by the fourth and fifth generations of wireless technologies that are enabling us to have 24/7 access. These connected devices and cloud computing are putting this powerful, distributed capability at our disposal at all times. These disruptive technologies have combined with this new, generative form of AI that now has the same ease of use as the first iPhone where everyone said, "I get it—I can use this thing."

Are companies ready for generative AI?
Many organizations have openly said that the speed of usable functionality—and subsequent adoption—of generative AI has caught them by surprise. I must admit that it caught me by surprise too, but fortunately Accenture's investment in AI and machine learning during the last 10 years provided both the infrastructure and know-how to accelerate accordingly.

The excitement around generative AI stems from its ability to make existing tools and processes far more efficient while simultaneously developing entirely new use cases. For example, retailers are using it to engage in ways that are far more directed, specific, and relevant to an individual user or customer. It's being used in areas that are literally life critical, such as healthcare. We're also seeing it used wherever complexity is involved. Take supply chains. Many companies still struggle to have complete visibility into their supply chains because they can be impacted by so many variables that aren't easy to understand using traditional machine learning or analytics models. Generative AI will fundamentally change the nature of managing supply chains.

Apart from the huge opportunities of generative AI, what are some of the risks?
We're all actively involved in growing this industry—growing capabilities, creating new tools, and creating new revenue streams—while simultaneously thinking about how to make sure we aren't just opening a Pandora's box of new issues to deal with, particularly in the areas of trust and security.

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Twenty-five years ago, no one really thought that much about security on the internet. The collective wisdom was that security wasn't a technology problem but, rather, a "people problem." But that model doesn't work either operationally or ethically. So, what have we learned during that time? Number one, we need training, skill-building, and awareness about generative AI from day one—for everyone from the intern through to the board. Number two, people and process will always create weaknesses in the application of technology. So, while technology has a role to play in making systems safe, so do technology innovators, vendors, builders, and integrators. I support the increasing policy, regulatory, and operational focus on "Secure by Design" that requires trust and security built into technology, much like today's cars have built-in redundancy and security systems.

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The positive news is that while we are seeing cyber threats improve by scale, sophistication, and personalization, we haven't seen anything completely new or novel yet.

What are the big risks companies need to bear in mind?
There is no doubt that the bad guys are using generative AI to be more efficient in weaponizing their know-how and attacks—meaning that the concerns about more destructive malware, misinformation, and cybercrime are real, current, and material.

In response, every organization should put in place the right technical controls, governance, and "baked in" security from the start. Without doing so, organizations will not only put their resilience at risk, but also fail to fully capitalize on the innovative potential that generative AI can offer.

Next is information assurance. For a board or C-suite to ensure good corporate operations and protect their intellectual property, they need to make sure the data they're using and the information they're generating has integrity and is accurate. If you have good governance and a mature risk and security posture, you're going to be able to use generative AI in a productive and sustainable way that doesn't create additional risks.

How can companies get started with generative AI?
To sustain the value created by generative AI, you have to get the security right today or else you may have to reinvent your infrastructure, technologies, and partners in two years—which will create further disruption and even more considerable cost.

Companies also shouldn't simply outsource this work to their technology teams. The reality is that generative AI is a true enterprise-wide, income-producing activity. In the past few years, we've seen machine learning and AI mature to the point where data is now being materially monetized. C-suite leaders have a significant opportunity to create material value and competitive differentiation by engaging with and recruiting data scientists and people with real understanding of this technology into their senior ranks. It's a huge validation for our traditionally underappreciated data pros who must be central to every business strategy moving forward. I'm envious of their skill sets and grateful that I get to work with them every day.

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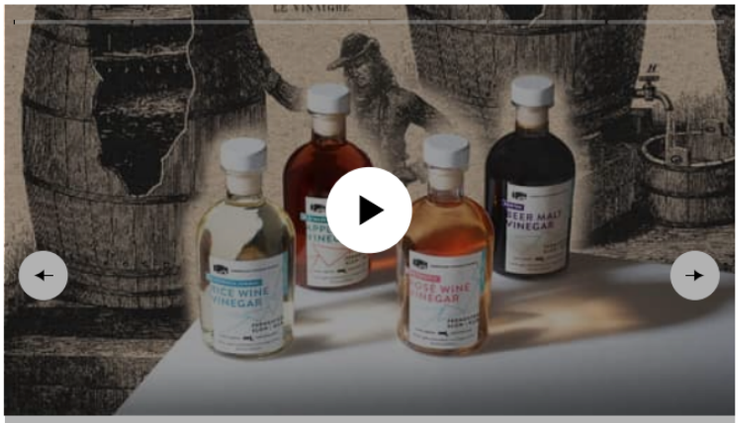

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