

**PUBLIC GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE
PUBLIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE****Working Party on Public Employment and Management****Draft for discussion - The Future of Work in the Public Service**

This short paper is a summary version of a longer paper under development for the Public Employment and Management working party. It is based on conversations that took place at the Civil Service Leaders' Roundtable on the Future of Work in the Public Service on November 13 2019, and aims to offer an analytical framework structured around three themes for a future of work in the public service that is: forward-looking, flexible, and fulfilling to an increasingly diverse workforce.

NSG members are invited to review the paper which may provoke discussion at the annual meeting on November 25, 2020. Any comments received by December 01 will be helpful in the development of the longer version.

Daniel GERSON daniel.gerson@oecd.org

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Introduction: The Future of Work is already on our doorstep

1. In a context of increased uncertainty and disruption, public service workforces are surmounting numerous challenges and leveraging significant opportunities. Today's COVID-19 crisis has placed the public service into the centre of the greatest global disaster response effort experienced in recent memory. Public servants are being called on to ensure the resilient delivery of health services under particularly challenging circumstances, economic relief to businesses and families, and to ensure that fundamental social services remain in place for those who count on them. At the same time, public servants are impacted themselves by the crisis, often working remotely, leveraging new technologies and implementing new ways of working. The crisis has sped up flexible working, agile and joined-up governance responses, and innovations from within public administrations. In many ways, the future of work is arriving in our public services faster than many had expected. This presents opportunities to review and renew civil service development and policies, to ensure public servants are supported in the essential roles they play in society.

2. This paper contributes to a vision of what could be possible and desirable for the future of work in the public service, so that governments can align policies with that vision, as they emerge from the crisis. It builds on discussions held in November of 2019, when civil service leaders from OECD countries gathered in Paris to explore the forces that are reshaping the way civil services structure their employment systems and workshop ways to be forward looking, flexible and fulfilling to a diverse range of public employees. No one at the time could have predicted the Covid-19 crisis and the impacts it would have on the future of work, however many of the same principles that applied then still ring true in new circumstances, and if anything have become even more pressing and relevant.

3. By way of introduction, this section explores some of the trends affecting the future of work in the public sector: digitalisation, changing career expectations, and an ageing workforce.

Automation can replace some public sector jobs and transform many others

4. **Digitalisation is driving a digital transformation of society, the economy, the government, and the world of work.** While the potential benefits of this transformation are immeasurable, many researcher also discuss potentially negative impacts, the destruction of jobs in particular, and the potential for such transformation to exacerbate growing levels of inequality.

5. **Most economists agree that new technologies will impact the way we perform many jobs.** Most economists believe that new technologies will create more jobs than they will destroy in the long-run, as has tended to happen throughout history. The OECD's research estimates 14% of jobs at high-risk of automation and 32% that could be radically transformed, with discrepancies among countries (OECD, 2019^[1]). These numbers are based on the potential of automation of tasks within broad occupations or individual jobs. More specifically, routine manual jobs will likely be replaced by non-routine jobs with a high use of ICT. This trend is not new, as clerical jobs used to represent more than 19% of the public workforce in the United States in 1985, versus 4.3% in 2017 (US Bureau of Labour Statistics), but the potential scale of the impact could be unprecedented. New technologies will become our "new co-worker", changing the way we perform all tasks.

6. **When it comes to public sector workforces, governments will choose which jobs to automate and which to transform – they are in control and set the pace of change.** The important message here is that this will not happen naturally, overnight, as the direct result of the application of new technologies. Rather, the successful transformation will depend on careful planning and work redesign, at the organisational level, as well as reskilling and upskilling strategies at the individual level. Workforce planning and digital transformation need to happen in a joined up and integrated fashion, and this further explored in the next chapters.

Diverging career paths and job expectations

7. **In many professions, individual careers diverge from traditional paths.** This may be particularly true in those high-tech professions most typically associated with the future of work, but this is also apparent in the public sector. The typical public sector career, in which public employees would climb the hierarchical ladder of a secure lifetime job, is already showing signs of erosion. Horizontal moves, pauses for learning and development, etc., will become the norm.

8. **One of the widespread myths in this area is the idea that new generations of employees have completely different expectations than previous generations – that they want more independence or more meaningful experiences.** A 2016 study (Gallup, 2016^[2]) showed that when applying to a job, millennials and baby boomers usually sought the same aspects – the quality of management and interest in the type of work. Boomers were less interested in opportunities for advancement while Millennials more on opportunities to learn and grow, which is likely a function of age rather than generation. This does not mean these generations are not different, but they often have misunderstood expectations.

9. **Considering their size, public employers are very well suited to embrace non-linear career paths** through internal mobility and the creation of flexible project-based workforces using “talent clouds” of public workers when needed, to manage in-demand skills and fluctuations of activity. However, there are also associated risks. For example, the use of non-standard forms of employment can lead to under-employment, lower hourly wages and worse working conditions. This trend is on the rise across the labour market including in public services.

An ageing public workforce

10. **Most OECD countries are experiencing an ageing of their population, translating into an ageing of their workforce.** In most OECD countries, the share of central government employees are aged 55 years or older (OECD, 2017^[3]) is significantly higher than the broader labour market; and moderate or high austerity measures prevented hiring for several years following the global financial crisis in 64% of OECD countries (OECD, 2016^[4]).

11. **The ageing population and public sector workforce present various challenges to the future of work in the public service.** In the public sector, where salary often matches tenure, the cost of retaining older workers can prove higher than the cost of hiring younger and newer workers. Another implication this trend relates to the ability of making the most of the knowledge of older cohorts. New, special roles as advisers or coaches, with flexible working conditions, can strike a balance between retaining the capacities and

knowledge of older workers and the need for younger workers to enter the public workforce.

12. **Older workers may be more exposed to the risks brought by digitalisation than younger cohorts.** Indeed, on top of lower levels of digital readiness than other segments of the population, workers aged 55-64 are less engaged in job-related training than others. This learning gap reaches almost 25 points across OECD countries with workers aged 25-34 (OECD, 2016^[5]).

Conclusion

13. Public service workforces across the OECD are facing similar challenges and trends, and much uncertainty. Taken together, these suggest a future of work in the public sector that will need to be more forward-looking – to identify the way the work will change, the skills and talents that will be needed and plans to get from a current to future state of readiness. It will need flexible workforce management to be able to access the skills it needs to meet fast emerging, often-unforeseen challenges. And it will need to provide fulfilling work experiences to attract, retain and motivate an increasingly diverse workforce. Each of these themes are explored in the next pages.

A Future-Ready Public Workforce		
Forward-looking	Flexible	Fulfilling
<i>New emerging skillsets</i>	<i>Working for anyone from anywhere at any time</i>	<i>Diversity and Inclusion</i>
<i>Coherent strategic workforce planning</i>	<i>Lifelong learning</i>	<i>Meaningful work</i>
<i>Robust data</i>	<i>Attracting and recruiting a broader range of skills from the labour market</i>	<i>Employee experience, engagement and performance</i>

1. A Forward-Looking Public Service

14. A forward-looking public service is one with a vision of the work civil servants will need to do in the future (and the work that will no longer need to be done), and the skills they will need to get it done. It's a public service that can anticipate the skills it will need and has the tools to plan ahead, so that skilled workers are ready to be deployed at the moment they are needed.

15. The COVID-19 crisis reminds us that the future is highly uncertain; so this places a special emphasis on how to plan for uncertainty and support public service resilience. Meta-skills such as the ability to learn, adapt and manage through ambiguous situations will likely emerge as essential across all disciplines.

Emerging skillsets

16. The OECD has done a range of work on workforce skills in general (OECD, 2019^[6]) and the public service skills more specifically (OECD, 2017^[7]). The 2017 report on Skills for a High Performance Civil Service distinguishes four families of skills, related to policy development, commissioning and contracting, working with citizens, and collaboration in networks. Each of these four areas requires technical skills and professional expertise, strategic orientation and innovation capabilities.

Digital skills

17. **Digitisation creates an opportunity to re-centre work around innovation and transformation through public employees and their skills.** In this context, public services will likely need to appeal to different skillsets than they had in the past. In a recent 2020 survey conducted by the OECD, the biggest challenges in attracting new skill sets were identified in digital and data and STEM areas; followed by senior level leaders and managers.

18. A forthcoming paper on digital talent in the public sector (OECD, 2021^[8]) identifies various digital government specialisations which require their own job family with associated skills profiles and career progression from an initial introduction to the discipline through to leadership roles. These are wide ranging, and suggest more than traditional ICT roles. They include:

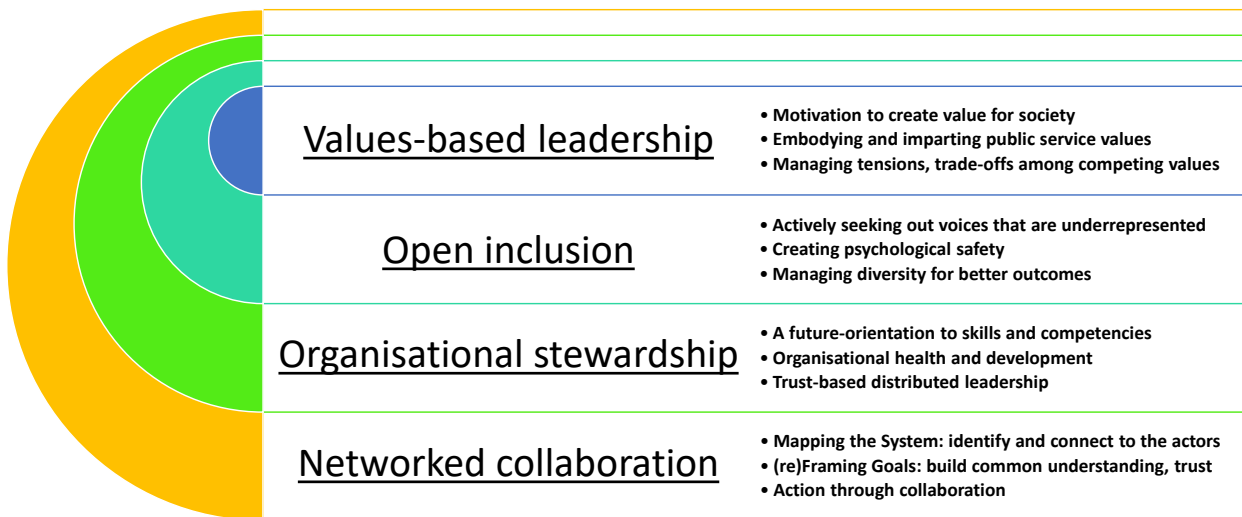
- User-centred design roles to understand the needs of users and allow for testing and prototyping
- Product management roles to link the needs of users to the technical feasibility of solutions and the broader organisational context
- Delivery roles responsible for using Agile or Lean practices to help the team keep a rhythm of delivery
- Data roles including data analyst and data scientist
- Technology professionals including technical architects and developers.

Leadership skills

19. **Technical skills will have to be complemented with behavioural and meta-cognitive skills.** Adapting to fast-changing work environments and ways of working requires different sets of emotional skills. For instance, project-based work requires strong social skills, to enable cooperation with different stakeholders over a certain timespan. It may be complicated to evaluate these skills, as they refer to emotions and can fluctuate through life - more easily at the beginning than later on.

20. **The OECD identifies four leadership capabilities that effective senior level public servants are using to address complex public service challenges** (Gerson, 2020^[9]). These skills apply not only to the senior level public servants, but are the kinds of skills required to be effective across most professional disciplines in the public service.

Figure 1. Four leadership capabilities



Source: Gerson, D. (2020), “[Leadership for a high performing civil service: Towards a senior civil service systems in OECD countries](#)”, OECD Working Papers on Public Governance, No. 40, OECD

Skills for resilience

21. **Resilience is a key capability for the future, to address uncertainty and the sense of increasing rates of change.** Arguably, there is no one skillset that makes workers resilient, managers or leaders, and resilience is not only an individual attribute, but also embedded in organisational structures and processes, and public service delivery systems. Nevertheless, at an individual level, public services can focus on developing a workforce rich in skills that could contribute to resilience. This may include the following:

- **Motivation and commitment to mission:** committed employees will be the first to find new ways of delivering the mission when the world shifts around them.
- **Creative problem solving:** uncertainty raises problems that were not foreseen. Regardless of an employee’s technical expertise, creative problem solving is something that all experts will likely need to employ to apply their skills to challenges that were unpredictable.
- **Learning as a skill:** learning to learn is at the heart of innovation, resilience and future proofing. Innovation is primarily a learning experience. Resilience is about

managing through unforeseen crises, and the changes in the future will likely require an even more constant updating of skills requiring learning.

- **Systems thinking and collaboration:** resilience requires connections across organisational silos, to coordinate and collaborate to ensure that delivery systems continue to reach their objectives. This requires public servants who understand the machinery of government and service delivery, and the broader system they operate in, and have the relationships needed to connect to different key actors in times of crisis and coordinate approaches.

Strategic workforce planning, data and uncertainty

22. **A forward-looking public service requires coherent and robust workforce planning.** In a fast-changing employment environment, with scarce skills and resources on one side and unpredictable future changes on the other, strategic workforce planning based on foresight capacities has the potential to become a cornerstone of public employment policies.

23. **A forward-looking workforce plan should begin with a solid understanding of the current workforce** – their skills, activities, potential, motivations and engagement. How much do governments really know about their workforce? Many public services are collecting more data on their public employees today than ever before, which can, and should contribute to better workforce planning. This includes demographic and employee profile data; administrative data that shows HR trends and patterns; employee surveys data to track engagement and satisfaction; and labour market data on key skills availability. (OECD, 2019^[10])

24. However, **most countries struggle with using workforce data effectively.** They lack the skills and capabilities to conduct scientific analysis, to drive insights and proactively use HR data for better management decision-making and HRM policy development. Data scientist is not yet a common job profile within HR departments.

25. Furthermore, **the recent crisis reinforces the need to plan for an uncertain future.** Effective strategic HR planning should work in two time perspectives. In the longer-term, it should be aligned to a vision of the kinds of public service needed in the future, and to all other business strategies and transformation plans. It also requires shorter-term operational HR planning tools that are flexibly revisited and recalibrated to adjust to unforeseen changes in the operating environment. Workforce data can help manage uncertainty, providing a better view of skills availability in times of crisis. Scenario planning is a well-developed tool to map various potential futures and inform plans that take these into account to manage risk. Workforce planning can also be used to identify potential flexibilities in the workforce, including talent pools for surge capacity when needed, mobility tools to link internal supply to demand in emergency situations, and the identification of essential functions, jobs that can be done at a distance, and the supports needed. Finally, workforce planning for uncertainty should include investments in resilience skills as discussed above.

2: A Flexible Public Service

26. A flexible workforce is one that can move people with the skills it needs to the places it needs them in reaction to fast changing circumstances, regardless of organisational or programmatic silos. It is a public service that can stop doing things that are no longer needed, and move that talent to places that are emerging priorities. It is a public service that is able to upskill and reskill the existing workforce to make use of new technologies and respond to new challenges, and install a learning culture that promotes reflection and improvement. It is a public service that can leverage skills from the labour market quickly and effectively. Finally a flexible public service is one that recognises the individuality of public servants – that each comes with their own sets of skills, knowledge, personal situations, and needs, and is able to provide work arrangements that reflect these – including time and place of work, and terms and conditions of employment. A flexible public service recognises that one size fits all solutions and policies are of the past.

Flexible ways of working: for anyone, from anywhere, at any time.

27. **The need to work across policy and organisational silos will only increase.** The problem of policy silos is already well documented (Hynes, Lees and Müller, 2020^[11]), however, public employment systems tend to reinforce silos, as workers' positions are usually attached to specific organisations, hierarchies, and functions. Rigid silos also present barriers to resilience in the face of unforeseen shocks and crises. During the COVID-19 crisis, those public services which already had flexible structures in place tended to fare better in terms of people management. Those governments that already had the tools, policies and practices in place for working from home, were able to quickly and easily transition to the needs of the moment. Countries that had systems in place to redeploy staff for short-term assignments across institutions also allowed for the management of surge capacity.

28. **A future-ready flexible workforce may be one not employed by any single ministry or agency, but rather one that is employed by the government as a whole, and available for the needs of the moment regardless of their physical location.** Before the crisis, there was already a trend towards an increasing individualisation of working arrangements for public servants. This included tailor-made arrangements in terms of working hours, workplaces, and even sometimes work content. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that this is not only useful for employees, but also for government response in crisis.

Developing skills in the existing workforce

29. **Developing the skills discussed in the previous chapter will not happen without deliberate attention and investment¹** in upskilling employees to keep up with new tools and developments, and reskilling for those employees whose jobs become redundant. Most public services do not use redundancies to replace their workforce with

¹ According to World Economic Forum, the 1.37 million workers projected to be displaced within ten years could be reskilled for a cost of US\$34 billion, almost US\$25,000 per worker.

the skills they need, to the same extent as private firms. Instead, they must rely to a greater extent on learning and development to prepare the public service for the future.

30. **A flexible workforce requires a culture of continuous learning.** Public servants need space for experimentation and learning how to learn. In the fast-changing landscape of work, lifelong learning will take a central role in public sector employment policies, allowing people to adapt to and enhance the potential of the future of work.

Upskilling

31. Regardless of their particular role and specialisation, **public servants will need to upgrade their understanding, skills and competencies regularly** to ensure they keep up with societal and technological change. This may mean learning to use new digital tools, making use of emerging data sets, keeping track of national and international development and best practice, and taking regular training to update their skill levels.

32. **This can be achieved by developing structured professions within the public service** that provide a career path for specific functions – HR, Data, Digital, Finance, Policy, Science, etc. Each of these professions clearly states the kinds of skills and training one should have at each level of the professional development path, including skills developed on the job and through training programmes. This can help to develop a pipeline and track skills availability across public service organisations. In this sense, the future may not be a professional civil service, but rather a civil service of many professions (united under a common set of core values and sense of common purpose).

Reskilling

33. **Reskilling aims to transition people from one job type to another.** People who are doing work that will no longer be done in the future, due to social and/or technological changes, or who wish to change the work they are doing for personal reasons, require careful consideration. Effective reskilling requires an organisational and individual approach.

34. At the organisational level, consideration can be given to the job type that is impacted and jobs at similar skill level that are potentially suitable for impacted employees. Automation replaces specific tasks, rather than whole jobs, so a fine-grained analysis is required to determine which tasks within jobs will be automated, how that job will evolve (which tasks remain and how can they be reorganised?) and what training and accompaniment is required.

35. At the personal level, it is important to consider the specific skill sets of an individual – their technical and behavioural/cognitive competencies, and their potential and desire to learn and transition. Motivation, coupled with the right learning supports, is likely more important than the technical skills they have. This is not to imply that clerks can become data scientists, but if an administrative clerk has excellent excel and organisational skills, they may well find a supportive role to play within a data-driven profession.

36. **The bottom line is that the reskilling challenge in the public sector has the potential to be significant and costly. However, the pace of change will be set by the government itself, and therefore must be accompanied by a structured and deliberate approach to reskilling that works on organisation and individual levels.**

Developing a learning culture

37. **Formal up/reskilling programmes should exist within, and reinforce, a culture of continuous learning.** The popular 70/20/10 framework, where only 10% of learning is done in classrooms, 20% through social interaction, and 70% by the experience of the work itself, is a reminder that a learning culture must extend far beyond the classroom. Experiential learning provides a great wealth of possibilities if supported and structured in a way that enables it. Often, operational demands of work reduce the opportunities to design learning into it.

38. **Developing a learning culture requires that all people managers have the skills to not only organise work, but to develop their employees.** Managers need to be role models and coaches, providing space for collective reflection, practice with new tasks and tools, frequent constructive feedback, and rewards for learning achievements. Managers also need to support an environment allowing for experimentation, iteration, and learning by doing, and provide safe spaces for group reflection on successes and errors.

Accessing skills from the labour market

39. **Recruitment in the future of work needs to be fast, and it needs to be targeted to the right skills and profiles.** The public sector across OECD members is facing growing pressure to attract, recruit and retain candidates with much-needed skills. Speeding up the generally lengthy recruitment processes is a long-standing goal for many OECD members. Slow hiring processes are less competitive – the best candidates leave the process when they are offered jobs from others first.

40. Additionally, in a context where the needed skills, competencies and behaviours are only emerging, government recruitment should be strategic and targeted. Hiring specialists for specialist positions requires tailoring recruitment processes to attract specialists and assess their skills. Recruiters also need new tools to assess transversal and meta-skills that are essential for building resilience: learning potential, management and leadership, collaboration, etc. This may mean confronting issues such as legacy recruitment systems, legislative frameworks, professionalising the recruitment function and empowering managers to act with greater discretion while still ensuring transparency and accountability.

Flexible employment modalities

41. **Traditionally, public services employ public servants through a specific legal status that emphasises stability and lifelong employment:** this generally entails high levels of job security, stable but limited (seniority-based) pay and benefits, and a decent pension at the end, based on years of employment, etc. This may work well for occupations that are specific to the public sector, that do not benefit from a high level of movement in and out. However, the future of work brings a need for a wider variety of skills and backgrounds than ever before. With this greater diversity of skills comes the need for a greater diversity of employment models. Traditional civil service employment may not be so attractive for all profiles in the labour market – for example some in-demand tech professionals may be less interested in being a lifelong civil servant. They may be more interested in taking shorter-term contracts (with higher pay options) that enable them to work on interesting projects with high visibility and impact.

42. **For jobs or situations in which this kind of employment is deemed unsuitable, governments often look to consulting contracts, and third party providers.** The

problem in these situations is that governments often lack the internal skills and expertise to be smart buyers of complex products and services, resulting in wasted spending, and lack of skills transfer.

43. **However, these options are only two ends of a spectrum** – lifelong civil service employment at the one end, and service-based contracts at another. In the middle, there is a whole range of often untapped potential for shorter-term employment, project based employment, and prestigious fellowships, that all may be utilised in cases where governments have shorter-term skills needs and want to find more flexible ways of integrating skills from the labour market. The goal is not to end traditional civil service contracts, but to define when and where they provide the most value, and expand the range of tools available to access the skills needed, particularly when they are in short supply in the existing pool of civil servants.

44. **Flexible employment modalities can also enable surge capacity to address fluctuations in demand, including in emergencies.** The COVID-19 response in many countries involved the use of more streamlined and temporary employment modalities in some countries, including the use of volunteers, students, and innovative partnerships with stakeholders, including civil society, academia and the private sector.

3: A Fulfilling Public Service for a Diverse Range of Public Employees

45. The public service of the future will attract, retain and make best use of the skills it needs by providing fulfilling work experience. One of the main themes of this paper has been the need for increased diversity across the public service workforce –not only demographic diversity, but also of skill sets, professional backgrounds, experience, and ways of thinking and solving complex problems. Therefore, the public service needs to provide fulfilling work in many different ways, to different kinds of people. A fulfilling public service is one that understands the range of employee experience by tracking data and employee behaviour. It uses this understanding to improve management and leadership to generate fulfilling work experiences in inclusive environments; to improve job design to increase autonomy and impact; and to design employment policies that enable individualised support - one-size-fits-all solutions are not the answer.

46. **Managing a diversity of skills, backgrounds and career paths reinforces the need for individualised approaches to competency-based people management.** Previous OECD work on the themes of diversity and inclusion (DI) in the public service focus on aligning four core elements of next-generation DI policies: data, behaviour, leadership and accountability (Nolan-Flecha, 2019^[12]). While there is great value in analysing under-represented groups together, a skills approach reinforces the notion that no two members of any one group are the same, and hence the need to also focus on individuals. Secondly, managing diversity requires a focus on skills and competencies more than ever before. Hiring managers, for example, tend to rely on proxies for skills, such as university degrees and/or number of years in a similar position. These are blunt instruments that often have the effect of reducing the diversity of candidates to positions. People acquire skills in different ways, through different combinations of training, experience and career paths. This suggests the need to refocus assessment tools on the existence of skills and competence.

Fulfilling work: purpose and motivation

47. **Fulfilling work takes into consideration both the purpose and impact of the work, as well as the experience of the work.** The former is by emphasising the mission, impact and values of an organisation and aligning those to develop a sense of employee pride. The latter is by looking at the working environment and aligning management tools to support employee motivation.

48. **Public sector organisations are purpose-driven, and can use this purpose to attract, retain and motivate employees by creating a fulfilling work experience.** Employees are increasingly attracted to job opportunities that align with their values and sense of purpose - to what they perceive as being a meaningful work experience. Given the mission-orientation of public sector organisations, this should be a benefit, however often employees appear to get lost in the bureaucratic requirements of their job, and express a sense of removal from the impact of their work. With increasingly sophisticated performance data, public employers will be challenged to find new ways of communicating achievements and bringing employees closer to the impact their work contributes to.

49. **While purpose is important, the everyday experience of work also matters.** Research shows that factors that motivate include a sense of achievement, recognition, the experience of the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth (Herzberg, 2003^[13]). Therefore, the future of work should emphasise these elements in the design of jobs and the management of employees. Other elements that often become the focus of HR policy, such as supervision, work conditions, salary, status and company policies have been shown to have little pro-motivational impact employees, but can be important de-motivators if not aligned effectively.

Rethinking management, engagement and performance

50. **Higher levels of employee engagement improve the quality of public services and public sector innovation.** Employee engagement is assessed and tracked through employee surveys, and can provide important tools for building evidence on employee experience and segmenting this across different aspects of the workforce (OECD, 2016^[4]). Some research suggests that engagement, performance and learning are intrinsically linked through goal setting, frequent and informal feedback from managers, and efficient performance management that can track the progress of the workforce. Goals that are clear, specific and challenging can also be encouraging and drive personal learning outcomes, creating a virtuous cycle in a learning culture (see previous chapter). As learning becomes preponderant, well-designed performance management systems will valorise performance-oriented workers as much as learning-oriented, and fulfil administrative as well as developmental purposes (CIPD, 2016^[14]).

51. **Engaging a diversity of employees also requires leaders and managers who are not just hierarchical superiors but also coaches enabling change.** Effective coaching is based on the establishment of expectations, continuous support and accountability. Such evolution in the role of managers in the public sector might require training and the development of new skillsets, to recognise the unique strengths of each employee and how to support them to achieve objectives, contribute to the success of the team, and grow. This is an intrinsic part of diversity management, and of developing a learning culture.

Conclusion: Designing a New Future of Work in the Public Service

52. The COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to act as a catalyser of change. Most of the elements highlighted in the sections above have been either developed or radically transformed to adapt to an unprecedented and unexpected situation. Sometimes almost overnight, the public sector found itself under pressure to adapt to ensure public service continuity. And the public sector has generally responded with exception agility and resilience. This crisis has, however, exposed many of the strengths and weaknesses of public services, highlighting the need for a more forward-looking, flexible public sector that can engage its public servants in times of ambiguity and uncertainty.

53. The capacity of public services to be more resilient to face both the megatrends linked to the future of work and potential unexpected crises will rely on the design of post-pandemic policies in many areas, including people management. As governments design and implement recovery plans impacting most sectors of national economies, there is an important opportunity to also reflect on the public service workforce that is needed to deliver these effectively today and into the future. The following questions could help spark this reflection.

- A forward-looking public service is one that is able to identify the emerging technical skills will be increasingly needed, and the competencies needed to ensure resilience in an increasingly uncertain future. What are these competencies, and how can workforce planning be used to recognise and embrace uncertainty?
- A flexible public service in the future will be one where difference kinds of people work from more locations and different times, contributing their skills and experience to projects, across multi-disciplinary teams, in different institutions. How can this flexibility be wired into the core of public employment systems to become the normal operating procedure?
- The public service of the future will attract, retain and make best use of the skills it needs by providing fulfilling work experience to an increasingly diverse range of employees. How can governments improve job design to increase autonomy and impact, and design employment policies that recognise employees as individuals?

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