

Everything Is Going to Be All Right

Hello Sales Magicians,

For the past 17 years, our loyal audience has tuned in for the latest sales trends and advice on how to optimize the workplace and workforce. Our purpose is to help businesses prepare for the future and to equip workplace professionals with the insights they need to drive their organizations forward. As always, this report is packed with info—22 important trends to consider as you plan for the year.

As we speed into 2022, it's clear that we can never go back to the way we used to work. So where are we headed next? This is a year to be bold and brave in all areas of life and work. Exciting. Invigorating. And a bit daunting.

We dedicate this 2022 Trend Report to building a diverse workforce beyond DEI initiatives. Today's leaders must overcome bias, break down siloed working practices, and build a culture of true inclusion, where individuals from different backgrounds, experiences, ethnicities, genders, and generations have a voice and feel valued for who they are.

- 1 Hire More Boomers, Pleeeeeze** - In November of 2021, 4.5 million people voluntarily quit their jobs. The "Great Resignation" or "The Big Quit" is forecasted to continue throughout 2022, and companies are scrambling to become more creative in how they recruit, retain, and reskill their salespeople. How about bringing older adults back into the workforce? In January 2020, the median tenure of workers ages 55-64 (9.9 years) was more than three times of workers ages 25-34 (2.8 years.) They are self-motivated, competitive, exceptionally loyal, have a strong work ethic, and are willing to make personal sacrifices for their professional success.
- 2 Returnships** - Welcome to the land of un-retired where drive and curiosity are ageless. Americans 65 who previously retired are returning to work. It's not because they need the money but because they miss the challenges, the accomplishments, and being around peers and colleagues. And there is no age limit to learning new things. Drive and curiosity are ageless, and are powerful catalysts for acquiring new skills.
- 3 Make the Invisible Visible** - Purpose-led organizations are proving that diverse and inclusive teams are better at solving complex problems and making better decisions 87% of the time. Yet, some 50% of multicultural women are thinking about

leaving their jobs in the next two years because they believe that their gender combined with their race makes it harder to advance. Companies must strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion practices to spotlight workers who may have been left on the periphery.

4 Drop Traditional Qualifications - Ivy League, Shmivy League? What is important is how quickly a person can learn to meet the evolving needs of the marketplace—not where they studied for a degree. Hiring practices must become more human-centered. Look for talent in nontraditional places.

5 Pump Up the Perks - Employers with robust voluntary benefit offerings are positioning themselves to be the recruiting leaders of the future. They attract new hires by making the employee experience a priority and keeping their workforce intact. Consider adding new perks such as sign-on bonuses, financial planning/ counseling, tuition reimbursement, backup childcare, caregiver stipends, increased paid time-off, top-tier health and dental insurance.

6 Have a Stay Interview - One issue that the pandemic uncovered is that the voice of some employee groups has long been ignored. Companies that don't seek out or listen to their employees' feedback may struggle to retain talent at a time when workforce retention is key. Instead of exit interviews, invest time in the "stay interview," which probes deeper into why employees are leaving. Is it the pay? The benefits? The culture? The business model? The location? The employees? The managers? Learning the answers will provide insights and focus on improving business outcomes and the employee experience.

7 Do You Have a Skill Mismatch? Too often, jobs don't match the people doing them. A full 50% of all employees will need reskilling and upskilling by 2025—yet there are still 11 million open jobs in the US. As digital innovation accelerates

and economic demands shift, the skill requirements for these jobs also shift. Gartner reports we are experiencing a global talent shortage, with only 16% of new hires possessing the skills needed for their current jobs and the jobs of the future.

8 Gear Up on Skills for 2025 - Whether workers are taking some LinkedIn courses or volunteering or going back to school, investing in training has never been more important. Companies need to create an environment where employees are empowered to train, and to quickly locate and study just-in-time content and exchange knowledge with their peers. According to LinkedIn, creativity, persuasion, collaboration, adaptability, and emotional intelligence are top skills for 2022.

9 The Nomadic Workforce Is Here - The hybrid model is quickly becoming the price of admission to access today's top talent. The untethered worker who is unattached to a location and willing to explore is one example of this new emerging workforce. Think Covid road tripping. A full 60% of employees say they would resign if they were forced back into the office, but not every organization can be 100% remote. Forrester predicts 10% of the workforce will stay fully remote, 30% will go into the office again, and 60% will be hybrid.

10 Flexible Workspaces Attract Hires - Today's current and incoming workforce has permanently shifted to radical expectations of workplace flexibility. Organizations offering more choices that match candidate expectations (in terms of working at home, in the office, or both) are likely to have a distinct hiring advantage over those that are not. Widen the net further by making roles virtual, and open them up to candidates from other cities or countries. Companies will also allow their people to have greater control over when they work.



- 11 Consider the Bias Against Remote Workers** - The hybrid model has a few drawbacks. One issue that's already emerging is a strong bias *against* remote workers, who may not be treated fairly compared to their office counterparts. According to SHRM reports, 6 out of 10 HR leaders say that office employees are more likely to get promoted and receive regular raises because they're seen as harder workers and more valuable.
- 12 Step Up the Empathy for Post-Covid Stress** - Life may be normalizing, but many professionals are still grappling with grief, depression, and anxiety. Even the clinicians and therapists are burning out and not as available. According to KPMG research, 94% of workers say they're stressed. Companies have addressed post-Covid stress disorder by stepping up on the empathy scale. They are expanding their mental health benefits to include therapy voice bots to community groups, and encouraging self-care.
- 13 Show Sales Reps Some Love** - If anyone stayed on the frontlines during this pandemic, it was the salespeople who worked hard to keep their companies alive. As we begin a new sales quarter, companies that are diving right back into stressful quotas and revenue goals without any recognition for the hard work of sales teams are at risk of losing good sales talent. Leaders will gain another two years from their reps by creating an atmosphere of encouragement and appreciation.
- 14 Beware of Work/Life Balance Burnout** - While productivity is up due to more energy and focus from employees working at home, many leaders tell us that company culture, team dynamics, and depth of relationships are suffering. The pandemic has left many people fried from trying to juggle work, parenting, caregiving and other responsibilities without enough support. Small, deliberate acts of compassion toward yourself and others can help reduce feelings of burnout, whether it is short-term or chronic.
- 15 Get a Digital Detox** - Over the past few years screens have taken up residence in every corner of our homes. Unfortunately, screen time of more than 6 hours per day is linked to depression, and this extra toll on our mental health is wearing us down. Investing more in real-life face time, cutting down on mindless scrolling and replacing video with audio are great ways to ease you into some relaxing down time.
- 16 Trust seems to be in Short Supply** - Micro-managing is definitely out and so are jerky bosses who fire their employees over Zoom. But leaders are wondering if their remote people are actually working. While some employees respond by saying, "What does it matter how I do my job, as long as I do it?" their bosses want more. Managers, it is time to set clear expectations with frequent check-ins, continual feedback, and firm deadlines.
- 17 Patience Is the Vibe** - With the global supply chain clogged, we've had to slow down our expectations of having anything on time anymore. It isn't just people who are in short supply. Becoming patient and empathetic and understanding are the keys to survival.
- 18 Dust off Your Social Skills** - College grads who entered the workforce during the pandemic are accustomed to a remote set-up and might need to re-learn how to sell in-person. Real-life relationships can be disorienting and intimidating. Relearning to be together with small achievable goals while accepting their responses might be different. Try reaching out to a friend you've lost touch with or strike up conversation with a stranger or sit quietly next to someone.
- 19 Don't Play Favorites** - Managers need to create an inclusive decision-making process that encourages open dialogue and a culture in which all generations and power levels can be vulnerable and learn from one another. During meetings, go the extra mile to make sure every voice is heard and considered.



20 The 4-Day Work Week Has Arrived -

According to CEO Ryan Breslow, who made the four-day workweek a permanent perk, "A lot of companies operate with a lot of work theater, which is people caring more about the appearance of working than the actual work." A growing number of talented, motivated people are interested in doing a great job in less time. Companies that offer 50 extra days of freedom a year will have an easier time attracting and retaining the most talented and efficient workforce.

21 Buying Committee Gets Larger -

According to Gartner, the new B2B Buying journey has gotten a lot longer and includes more decision-makers. Convincing up to 15 to 20 people from various departments (sales, marketing, solutions architect, customer success) will be the new norm for enterprise sales. Remember, according to Forrester Research, many will say they don't need you. If you tried building a relationship during tough times but they are still not biting, let go and move on.

22 Be the Chief Climate Officer -

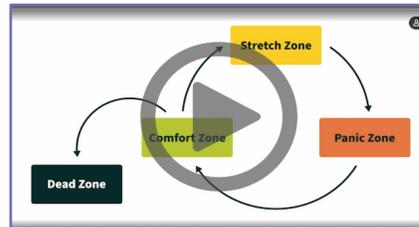
If you are considering moving out of sales, into an innovative role supporting climate change efforts. Climate change is an undeniable threat, and companies are acting by introducing this new role to implement everything from resiliency centers (where residents can go cool off) to planting trees and educating city dwellers on climate action.

"We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us."

- Joseph Campbell

Last Year's Predictions is downloadable [here](#).

Whether you are an SDR, BDR, Coach or Inside Sales Manager, Josiane's newly released **LinkedIn Learning** courses will give you great coaching tips. Watch [Managing Sales Rep Personas](#) and [Inside Sales 2022](#).



By Josiane Chriqui Feigon
January, 2022

Josiane Chriqui Feigon is a Sales Futurist, pioneer, maverick, and visionary in the inside sales community. She is the founder of TeleSmart Communications Inc. and the author of *Smart Sales Manager* and *Smart Selling on the Phone and Online*. For conducting a training on building a multi-generational salesforce that will make your teams stronger, more united and improve productivity, contact [TeleSmart](#).

