



Basis Points – May 31, 2022

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Above the Fold

Has Our Work-Life Reality Changed Forever?

With the vast majority of pandemic-related restrictions lifted from most American cities, employers and workers are now focusing on the future ... and the consensus seems to be that hybrid-work models will become the norm. In what's been a contentious debate, corporate leaders used the recent Davos Summit to promote more flexible work environments to attract and keep talent during the Great Resignation and beyond. Just ahead of Davos, a poll from [Microsoft's 2022 Work Trends Index](#) revealed that half of corporate leaders still plan to require full-time, in-person work within the next year. But that may be a mistake, for as long as labor markets and sentiment remain, traditional work schedules might trigger even deeper turnover. Even though the economy is slowing, 64% of workers recently surveyed by ADP Research Institute said that they would look for a new job if they were required to come back full time.

The bottom line is that our workforce and society have already evolved and adjusted to a hybrid system. Long-term strategy and technology such as augmented reality are already rolling out to cater to this new normal in the workplace. Leaders will have to retool and find ways to effectively manage distributed workforces with efficiency and efficacy. There's still much to be learned, but the American workforce is unlikely to regress to its pre-pandemic state.

Three Things

Robots Getting Hired on the Spot

No resume, no problem! As companies struggle to hire enough workers to complete tasks on factory floors and assembly lines, they are turning to costly automation. Orders for workplace robots surged 40% in Q1 compared to the same period in 2021. Up until 2021, robot orders had been stagnant or declining, but surged 22% last year for a total of \$1.6 billion, according to the Association for Advancing Automation. Rising wages, worker shortages and a declining work ethic overall have all forced the hand of some companies to automate.

As Ford's First Electric F-150 is Delivered, Electric Vehicle (EV) Batteries Could Be in Short Supply

Although Rivian was technically the first all-electric pickup truck to market, its R1T was more of a custom built "beta" version. Ford's F-150 Lightning, the first of which was delivered last week, is polished, heavily tested and ready for mass production. Unfortunately for Ford and its competitors, Stellantis CEO Carlos Tavares expects EV demand to trigger shortages of EV batteries by 2024-2025 and a global dearth of raw battery materials by 2027-2028.

Tech to Help Prevent School Shootings, but How Effective Will It Be?

As school districts seek ways to prevent violence in the classroom, an increasing number of them are turning to monitoring software from companies such as Gaggle, Bark and Lightspeed Systems. These software systems dynamically scan school-issued devices and networks, including Office 365 and Google Docs, for language or phrases that could preface a student's intent to harm themselves or others. And while there is no panacea to prevent every incident, the software may be helpful. A 2021 study conducted by the [U.S. Secret Service](#) found that 94% of would-be attackers (last year) shared their intentions verbally, through messages, or in online posts.

In the Know

How June Brings a Midsummer Day

Although the first day of summer officially starts on June 21, Midsummer Day is just a few days later on June 24. While this might sound confusing, the day was named for the halfway (mid) point between the planting and harvesting season, and is usually celebrated on the night of June 23 as Midsummer Eve. The holiday is celebrated around the world by a myriad of cultures, and festivities include everything from hiking to the top of Mount Olympus in Greece to feasting on bacon pie and sweet beer in Latvia.

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