Introduction to the New Work Concept

1.1 New Work: A New Concept for Transformation

Working concepts, styles and behaviour have been undergoing fundamental and structural changes for several years. New Work is the outcome of this transformation and cultural change (Bergmann, 2019). The triggers for this development of New Work are many. Digitization, connectivity and globalization as well as demographic change are among the factors that contribute to the change in the world of work. The question of how companies and societies deal with the megatrend New Work is becoming increasingly important (Bergmann, 2019). The core values of the New Work concept are independence, freedom and participation in the community as outlined by the scientist Bergmann back in the 1980s. In addition to freedom and participation, New Work also integrates elements like liberty or self-esteem, a purposeful profession, development and social responsibility as shown in Fig. 1.1.

New work means that you can experience and feel work in a completely different way than before and that you have to prepare for this difference.

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New work for the individual should only consist of work that an employee really wants (activity and work that corresponds to the individual strengths and needs of employees). The concept of New Work describes the new way of working of today’s society in the global and digital age. The term was coined by the Austro-American social philosopher Frithjof Bergmann and is based on his research on the notion of freedom and the assumption that the previous work system was outdated (Bergmann, 2019). Certain attributes like self-esteem or participation are not new and already integrated into modern concepts and motivational theories like Lean Management, however, New Work concepts go beyond these concepts (Helmold, 2020).
Bergmann’s New Work concept starts with a critical assessment of the American understanding of liberty and self-esteem. He does not consider liberty the option to choose between two or more, more or less, better or worse options (liberty to choose); his understanding of liberty is the option to do something that is really, really important (decide what you want to do because you believe in it). The core values of the concept of New Work are autonomy, freedom and participation in the working environment and community (Hermeier, Heupel, & Fichtner-Rosada, 2019). New Work should offer new ways of creativity and personal development, thus contributing something really important to the job market. In this way, real freedom of action is possible and necessary. The main idea of New Work is to create space for motivation and performance through creativity and self-fulfillment (or the Pursuit of Happiness). Bergmann considers the traditional job system to be obsolete and outdated, in which enterprises have the great opportunity to get rid of wage labour and obsolete work models (Bergmann, 2019). The early capitalistic system of wage labour should slowly be transformed into New Work. This New Work should consist of three parts:

- A third gainful employment.
- A third High-Tech-Self-Providing (self-sufficiency) and smart consumption.
- A third of work that the employee really wants.

In this context and discussion of the New Work concept, the Covid-19 situation changed the work environments and work styles tremendously. The pandemic created unprecedented working conditions worldwide. Trade fairs and events were
cancelled, employees were sent to the home office, schools, universities and day care centres closed, and entire regions and countries were undergoing shut downs. The effects of the coronavirus on organizations and companies cannot yet be assessed, but it is already becoming apparent: The virus is becoming a new work booster and has the potential to significantly accelerate the digital transformation and New Work concepts in many companies and organizations.

This is urgently needed, because the future-oriented concepts of New Work and digital transformation have still not made it into the mainstream, as astonishing as that may be in 2021. But the corona crisis has shown, that New work is a successful model for achieving a competitive advantage. Questions in the post COVID-19 times are: How can companies and organizations design their work processes flexibly? How can employees network in interdisciplinary and global teams successfully? How do companies and organizations organize remote workplaces and how can communication and processes be made more efficient? The crisis asks these questions. New Work answers them.

Entire companies, such as Twitter, Google, Siemens and Deutsche Telekom worked completely from home, meetings were held by video conference, and lessons, workshops and training courses were held in virtual classrooms. Universities changed from physical class rooms to virtual class rooms. Cancelled trade fairs allow exhibitors to get creative: Products are presented via live stream and even the book industry is making a virtue out of necessity with the hashtag #buchmesseverty and presenting new releases on social networks. The question is no longer whether concepts such as home office, agile work and virtual learning are carried out, but how. This is the great opportunity whose momentum must now be used. Will the cards be reshuffled due to Corona’s compulsory freeze? How do you work with colleagues when everyone works from home? Will we continue to integrate the new ways of working and living into our everyday lives in the future, and if so—to what extent? Are we going to be more aware of ourselves and the planet? And are we finally learning to slow down? We will probably only see the answers to these questions in a few months, but four trends are already emerging that could have a decisive impact on our future after the virus.

Since the quantity of available gainful labour (traditional work to be done) in the context of the industrial society will become less due to automation in all economic domains, advocates of New Work suggest reduced gainful employment for everyone. The time released by this reduction of gainful employment should in return create the financial basis to create things that can neither be produced through do-it-yourself work (active work?) nor by neighbour-based networks. Satisfying the needs of mankind will be supported by high tech self-providing using the newest technology. In the near future, so-called Fabbers—automated all-in-one devices—could produce goods autonomously.

Bergmann considers smart consumption that people should contemplate and decide what they really need. According to Bergmann, many products and things are irrelevant, since they consume more time when using them than they save. One example could be the garlic press where most of the time the time cleaning the device consumes more time than the “time saved” by using the press compared to
manual pressing/cutting (Bergmann, 2019). By self-supply and smart consumption, people can maintain a good standard of living even though only one-third of the entire capacity is used for wage labour.

1.2 Work, That the Employee Really Wants

This is the most important component of New Work. The idea is: work as such is endless and it is a lot more than what is and can be provided by the wage labour system. According to Bergmann, every human being can find work that is aligned with their own values, desires, dreams, hope, and skills.

Since Bergmann denies a revolutionary process to overcome the wage labour system, change can only happen slowly and this change can only be achieved through people who closely analyze their real, real desires and pursue those desires. By doing so, they become more and more independent from the wage labour system. In so-called centres for new work the idea is that people collaborate and with the support of mentors, they try to identify what kind of work they really, really want to do. This process is of course complex, demanding and time-consuming. Bergmann uses the term self-unawareness (German: Selbstunkenntnis). By the process of trying to identify what a person really, really wants to do, a general movement could begin that changes one’s life so that people feel more alive (Bergmann, 2019). The psychologist Markus Väth developed Bergmann’s theory further. Based on Bergmann’s paper “New Work, New Culture”, Väth illustrates four pillars on which a successful implementation of New Work could be based on (Väth & Vollmoeller, 2016). Väth also stresses that traditional concepts in dominating industries like consulting will change too:

• A conscious way of life (“Life Blending”) in combination with a reevaluation of the importance of work for one’s life.
• A systematic model of competencies that are relevant to work in a highly complex, dynamic world.
• A change model for organizations that enable a paradigm shift in culture and organizations.
• An intensive debate about the role of work in society and a corresponding mandate from the political world (New Work Deal).

New Work does not have a uniform definition according to Hackl, Wagner, Attmer, and Baumann (2017). New Work has definitely become a fashion-term during the COVID-19 crisis and pandemic. It appears in very different contexts throughout enterprises, literature and social networks. Sometimes it is about technology, sometimes about the free choice of workplace and time, almost always it is also about digital change. But how does this change our working world? And what can new work do for companies? We clear up myths and provide short and concrete answers to the question: What exactly does new work mean? Today, New Work mostly describes a very broad field and includes these topics:

• Flexible working hours (e.g. part-time, flex-time, trust-based working hours, job sharing).
Workplace flexibility (e.g. home office, remote work).
General flexibility of structures, thought patterns and habits (e.g. agile organizations).
Collaborative work (including team building).
Global and virtual teams (e.g. cross-functional and cross-border teams).
Diversity and equality (e.g. talent management and career prospects).
Mentoring, coaching or interdisciplinary projects (e.g. knowledge transfer).

In academia and industry, it is apparent that the topics and elements about New Work are of highly increasing significance. This leads to the question, how far New Work is or will be integrated into enterprises and organizations? Figure 1.2 outlines that 74% of German companies have the trendy topic of New Work on their agenda, but many companies are content with home office regulations and mobile work instead of developing their corporate culture (Kienbaum, 2017). The survey asked also about the specific measures with which New Work should be established in companies. The most popular measure is to give employees the opportunity to work from home (home office). This is also linked to the result of the study that ranks second with 67% among the most popular new work instruments to make new mobile devices such as smartphones and laptops available that can be used regardless of location. After all, 47% of the respondents rely on an open and flexible office concept with job-related workplaces that can be freely selected. Important culture-related measures such as democratization of decisions or new digital leadership models still too often find no way into the new world of New Work. But this is the major weakness and shortcoming. Those companies, that do not take a holistic approach towards New Work run the risk that change may fail ultimately (Kienbaum, 2017; Lauer, 2020). In conclusion, one can say that many companies are concerned

![Figure 1.2](library/image.png)

**Fig. 1.2** Implementation of New Work. (Source: Author’s Source, data adapted from Kienbaum (2017))
with New Work, but many still lack the holistic approach and the spirit to live New Work (Kienbaum, 2017).

1.3 Transformational Change as Part of New Work

If enterprises want to maintain a sustainable and long-term competitive position in future, it is necessary to be able to continuously adapt to market conditions and drive change processes faster than the competition (Väth, 2019). Experts call this concept “Organizational Health”. In line with proven innovative companies and organizations in the field of New Work, it is therefore important that enterprises have a clear understanding where they stand in terms of New Work. Therefore, they have to start from a detailed diagnosis to implementation to achieve lasting changes in the organizational patterns and behaviours. This must be accompanied by a comprehensive development of skills (Brommer, Hockling, & Leopold, 2019). During the assessment it is important to ask questions:

- What is the optimal structure of an organization?
- How is management’s viewpoint on New Work.
- How can change management been implemented?
- What is the best change management concept?
- How to transform leadership and management to change agents?
- Are the hierarchies lean and agile?
- How much agility makes sense?
- How to implement New Work?
- What steps can be implemented when?

These are questions that customers and organisations are currently dealing with intensively. With diagnostic tools and change management concepts, change agents can support companies with the very first steps of a reorganization and ensure that it creates long-term value. However, not only the formal mechanisms play a role in sustainable success. It is crucial that individual attitudes and behaviour in management and the workforce also change (Lauer, 2020).

1.4 New Work and Digitization

New Work can offer great advantages for companies because it is an important prerequisite for successful digitization (Sterchi, 2018). The new framework and environmental requirements require new structures and fundamental cultural changes in companies. Flexibility, agility and collaboration are the most important prerequisites for holistic digitization and implementation of New Work concepts (Helmold, 2020). Only companies that make lasting changes to structures and forms of work can survive in an increasingly complex digital market and will still be successful, innovative and creative in 5 years. Most companies already have everything they need to shape their digital transformation: their own employees. The required knowledge is already in the company, it just has to be activated. And this is where
new work comes in again, because it puts people (again) at the centre. Whether professions disappear completely, change or emerge, the big challenge will be how society and the world of work deal with those who are not qualified for the technological leap sufficiently quickly. How are they caught up in a society in which the individual is strongly defined by his work? How can you train them? Where do new professional doors or others open for social participation? And does it make sense to keep certain professions artificially alive? The risk is growing. If everything is predefined by technology, then there is no room for change and transformation. While some professions will not disappear, they will change significantly by eliminating previous tasks while adding new ones. Some experts in New Work believe that the cashier could continue to exist. Depending on the type of business, the cashier advises customers on products and designs or supports them in using customer-related apps. Or it grants racks if the use of a robot is not worthwhile due to the quantity of goods or if the products have to be classified variably during ongoing business. Experts also believe that the taxi driver will not necessarily disappear as quickly. In autonomous driving, for example, many legal questions, such as liability, have not been clarified. Maybe the job of a taxi driver disappears for other reasons. For example, due to business models that could benefit from the inertia of legal systems, but which can influence the medium-term willingness and ability to perform services. Uber offers an example in different ways in different countries. But wherever machines take over, people are still needed (Sterchi, 2018). What new professions will digitization bring us? For instance, those who build on the new technologies like an avatar designer. If I want to move around in the virtual world, I need a digital personality. Who do I want to be virtually? How can I make myself attractive so that I can stand out from others? An avatar designer implements my wishes.

1.5 New Leadership as Part of New Work

When it comes to success factors related to New Work, current trends and digital transformation in enterprises, the topic of transformational and new leadership styles quickly arises. Because successful change needs both digitization and the right leaders (Helmold, 2020). Impulses and signals from above and at the same time the participation and co-determination of the employees (Hermeier et al., 2019). It is very clear that leadership in times of digitalization and new work must focus on people. Digital leadership means encouraging, (free) space for new ideas and also for mistakes. Digital leaders are role models, they strengthen their employees, network them and support their own actions—and thus pave the way to establish new work in your organization. Figure 1.3 outlines the new leadership success criteria and attributes that are important for a New Work culture. In a New Work environment, it is important that leaders and employees have an orientation towards common objectives. New Work leaders have to cascade objectives smartly and wisely to their employees. In this context it is important that responsibilities are delegated, too. Enter...
models as part of the leadership team. Leaders act as coaching and training bodies. New Work requires open and transparent performance indicators and objectives. The performance measurement and management system must therefore be dynamic, flexible and agile. This agility also affects fast and lean decision-making process. Finally, it is important that New Work layouts establish also strategies for conflict resolution between employees, managers or stakeholders (Helmold & Samara, 2019).

### 1.6 Agility and New Work

An agile enterprise is an organization that responds quickly to changes in the marketplace and workplace trends. Agile companies are aware, that organizational and transformational changes are inevitable. Agile enterprises regularly assess their practices and processes to ensure they are conducive to optimal employee engagement, morale and performance (Hanschke, 2017). An agile company reacts successfully and swiftly to new competitors. They are innovative and are constantly challenging Agile companies need a clear overview and evaluation of the skills they need to be successful and competitive in the market, now and in the future. Projects can be a driving force for innovation and change. Defining and developing new projects is vital for every company. In most cases, project initiation and project staging are still implemented in a classic top-down manner. Today, even more complex problems, for which extensive expertise is necessary, have to be solved. Often it is about topics that require diverse expertise from different areas. Flash organizations can be an answer to these challenges (Hanschke, 2017). Agility should lead to a state that companies are transforming self-learning organizations, which
automatically assess the upcoming needs throughout departments and the value chain to respond to customers, competitors and other stakeholders (Moran, 2015).

1.7 Knowledge Transfer, Information Sharing and Life-Long Learning

Flexibility and collaboration are fundamental for holistic digitization. Much of the knowledge is in the minds of the employees. But how should knowledge transfer work when employees work in their silos? They need structures and ways of working that not only allow creative, innovative and free thinking, but actively promote it. In companies, their own digital transformation always begins with the successful networking of employees and the lively transfer of knowledge that this enables.

In connection with knowledge transfer and knowledge management, the topic of skill management is becoming increasingly important. What knowledge does your company already have? What skills are there? Which will organizations need in the future? And how can they be used strategically? Good skill management and the strategic use of available skills can make the difference. Employees can work more according to their needs and feel more effective. That makes employees happier and more motivated. And as a result, they become more productive (Helmold, 2020).

Another important topic for today’s new working world (and that of the future) is knowledge transfer, information sharing and life-long learning. But how does learning work today? And how can learning support more effective and collaborative collaboration? How important is learning in times of New Work?

If companies want to promote collaborative work patterns among employees in the future (and we have to), they have to introduce appropriate learning, qualification and training methods. Peer learning, for example, can be a solution for this. Peer learning means different forms of cooperative learning. It is not just about sharing knowledge, but also about sharing experiences. Peer learning is cheap, effective, sustainable and what you have learned fits perfectly into the context of the respective company. It also networks employees with each other and promotes communication within the organization. Other methods can be onboarding schemes, coaching, train-the-trainer or mentoring programmes.

The framework of New Work and New Learning must be adjusted to the requirements of companies for a dynamic, workplace-integrated competence development and the subsequent frequency and intensity with which employees have to educate themselves further and acquire new skills. As complexity and dynamics in the internal and external specialization and collaborations increase, the need for training and competence development increases as well. In terms of competence development, organizations therefore have concrete needs that are not met well by classical forms of qualification (e.g. seminar courses, continuing education courses), namely:

• Respond to the Skills needed in a dynamic environment.
• Introduce New Learning methods that fit the needs of the employees.
• Reduce the time it takes an employee to acquire the necessary competencies to do their job in the most efficient and effective manner.
• Change the learning context rapidly and in response to the real world.
• Facilitate knowledge sharing within an organization.
• Support a soft failure environment where mistakes have no impact on the real world, thus promoting a willingness to engage in measured risk-taking, focused on achieving a high level of polished performance in the real world.

With a successful implementation, the employees feel more effective. They can work more according to their needs and life phases. They can collaborate more collaboratively with their colleagues and are happier and more motivated. Flexible work opportunities lead to a high level of commitment. There is less fluctuation. Innovative power and productivity will increase. In addition, companies that live New Work seriously do not need expensive employer branding.

1.8 Lessons and Trends from the COVID-19 Crisis

As the COVID-19 pandemic resets major work trends, HR leaders and managers need to rethink workforce and employee planning, management, performance and experience strategies (Baker, 2020b). However, it is visible that many enterprises are hesitant to have a holistic approach on implementing New Work into the corporate culture of their organization. A Gartner survey reveals that 82% of company leaders and executives allow their employees to work partly from home, but fail to have a holistic approach on New Work.

The Gartner survey of 127 company leaders, representing HR, Legal and Compliance, Finance and Real Estate, reveals that the majority of respondents intend to permit remote some working opportunities. For many organizations with employees working both on-site and remotely, adapting to a new, more complex hybrid workforce is the challenge as how people work together to get their job done evolves. Nearly half (47%) said they intend to allow employees to work remotely full time going forward. For some organizations, flex time will be the new norm as 43% of survey respondents reported they will grant employees flex days, while 42% will provide flex hours (see Fig. 1.4). “The COVID-19 pandemic brought about a huge experiment in widespread remote working”, said Elisabeth Joyce, Vice President of Advisory in the Gartner HR practice. “As business leaders plan and execute reopening of their workplaces, they are evaluating more permanent remote working arrangements as a way to meet employee expectations and to build more resilient business operations” (Baker, 2020b).

The coronavirus pandemic will have a lasting impact on the future of work in nine key ways. The imperative for HR leaders is to evaluate the impact each trend will have on their organization’s operations and strategic goals, identify which require immediate action and assess to what degree these trends change pre-COVID-19 strategic goals and plans. 32% of organizations are replacing full-time employees with contingent workers as a cost-saving measure. “It’s critical for business leaders to understand that large-scale shifts are changing how people work and how business gets done”, says Brian Kropp, Distinguished Vice President, Gartner.
“HR leaders who respond effectively can ensure their organizations stand out from competitors” (Baker, 2020a).

There are nine future of trends of New Work in the post-COVID-19 times. Of the nine future of work trends, some represent accelerations of existing shifts; others are new impacts not previously discussed. And in some cases, COVID-19 has forced the pendulum of a long-observed pattern to one extreme.

1.8.1 Trend No. 1: Increase in Remote Working

A recent Gartner poll showed that more employees will likely work remotely at least part of the time after COVID-19 versus 30% before the pandemic. As organizations shift to more remote work operations, it is important to enrich critical competencies employees will need to collaborate digitally, and be prepared to adjust employee experience strategies. Gartner recommends enterprises to assess how to shift performance goal-setting and employee evaluations for a remote context.

1.8.2 Trend No. 2: Expanded Data Collection

The Gartner analysis shows that 16% of employers are using technologies more frequently to monitor their employees through methods such as virtual clocking in and out, tracking work computer usage, and monitoring employee emails or internal communications/chat. While some companies track productivity, others monitor
employee engagement and well-being to better understand employee experience. Even before the pandemic, organizations were increasingly using nontraditional employee monitoring tools, but that trend will be accelerated by new monitoring of remote workers and the collection of employee health and safety data. Make sure to follow best practices to ensure responsible use of employee information and analytics.

1.8.3 Trend No. 3: Contingent Worker Expansion

The economic uncertainty of the pandemic has caused many workers to lose their jobs and exposed others for the first time to nonstandard work models. Many organizations responded to the pandemic’s economic impact by reducing their contractor budgets, but there has since been a shift.

Gartner analysis shows that organizations will continue to expand their use of contingent workers to maintain more flexibility in workforce management post-COVID-19, and will consider introducing other job models they have seen during the pandemic, such as talent sharing and 80% pay for 80% work. “Our research finds that 32% of organizations are replacing full-time employees with contingent workers as a cost-saving measure”, says Kropp. “While gig workers offer employers greater workforce management flexibility, HR leaders will need to evaluate how performance management systems apply to these workers and determine whether they will be eligible for the same benefits as their full-time peers”.

1.8.4 Trend No. 4: Expanded Employer Role as Social Safety Net

The pandemic has increased the trend of employers playing an expanded role in their employees’ financial, physical and mental well-being. Support includes enhanced sick leave, financial assistance, adjusted hours of operation and child care provisions. Some organizations supported the community by, for instance, shifting operations to manufacturing goods or providing services to help combat the pandemic and offering community relief funds and free community services. The current economic crisis has also pushed the bounds of how employers view the employee experience. Personal factors rather than external factors take precedence over what matters for organizations and employees alike. Employing such measures can be an effective way to promote physical health and improve the emotional well-being of employees.

1.8.5 Trend No. 5: Separation of Critical Skills and Roles

Before COVID-19, critical roles were viewed as roles with critical skills, or the capabilities an organization needed to meet its strategic goals. Now, employers are
realizing that there is another category of critical roles—roles that are critical to the success of essential workflows.

To build the workforce you’ll need post-pandemic, focus less on roles—which group unrelated skills—than on the skills needed to drive the organization’s competitive advantage and the workflows that fuel that advantage. Encourage employees to develop critical skills that potentially open up multiple opportunities for their career development, rather than preparing for a specific next role. Offer greater career development support to employees in critical roles who lack critical skills.

1.8.6 Trend No. 6: (De-)Humanization of Employees

While some organizations have recognized the humanitarian crisis of the pandemic and prioritized the well-being of employees as people over employees as workers, others have pushed employees to work in conditions that are high risk with little support—treating them as workers first and people second. Be deliberate in which approach you take and be mindful of the effects on employee experience, which will be long-lasting. Address inequities if remote and on-site employees have been treated differently. Engage task workers in team culture and create a culture of inclusiveness.

1.8.7 Trend No. 7: Emergence of New Top-Tier Employers

Prior to COVID-19, organizations were already facing increased employee demands for transparency. Employees and prospective candidates will judge organizations by the way in which they treated employees during the pandemic. Balance the decisions made today to resolve immediate concerns during the pandemic with the long-term impact on the employment brand.

For example, advise CEOs and executive leaders on decisions regarding executive pay cuts and make sure financial impacts are absorbed by executives versus the broader employee base.

Progressive organizations communicate openly and frequently to show how they are supporting employees despite the implementation of cost-saving measures. Where feasible, look for opportunities to arrange talent-sharing partnerships with other organizations to relocate employees displaced from their jobs by COVID-19.

1.8.8 Trend No. 8: Transition from Designing for Efficiency to Designing for Resilience

The 2019 Gartner organization design survey found that 55% of organizational redesigns were focused on streamlining roles, supply chains and workflows to increase efficiency. While this approach captured efficiencies, it also created
fragilities, as systems have no flexibility to respond to disruptions. Resilient organizations were better able to respond—correct course quickly with change.

To build a more responsive organization, design roles and structures around outcomes to increase agility and flexibility and formalize how processes can flex. Also, provide employees with varied, adaptive and flexible roles so they acquire cross-functional knowledge and training.

“D&I leaders will need to be involved in role design and creation of flexible work systems to ensure that employees of all backgrounds and needs are considered when the organization designs new workflows”, said Ingrid Laman, Vice President, Advisory, Gartner.

1.8.9  Trend No. 9: Increase in Organization Complexity

After the global financial crisis, global M&A activity accelerated, and many companies were nationalized to avoid failure. As the pandemic subsides, there will be a similar acceleration of M&A and nationalization of companies. Companies will focus on expanding their geographic diversification and investment in secondary markets to mitigate and manage risk in times of disruption. This rise in complexity of size and organizational management will create challenges for leaders as operating models evolve. Enable business units to customize performance management, because what one part of the enterprise needs might not work elsewhere. As organizational complexity complicates career pathing, providing reskilling and career development support—for example, by developing resources and building out platforms to provide visibility into internal positions.

1.9  Critical Viewpoints on New Work Concepts

New Work’s flexibility in terms of time and location can also have its downsides. Practitioners and Academics fear a time limitation of work, which from a competitive point of view urges to be approachable and competent to provide information at any time. However, the increased expectations regarding the flexibility of employees in terms of time make work processes more difficult to plan and may ultimately also reduce productivity (Helmold, 2020). With all the changes brought about by Industry 4.0, agility and lean management, employees should not be forgotten, warn various Springer authors in the book on current studies on the future of work (Wörwag & Cloots, 2020).

Because striving to make work more flexible, to break down hierarchies, to realize oneself personally and to better reconcile work and private life is about the basic needs of employees. New Work, it shouldn’t just be about optimizing work processes, but rather reacting to the new developments from an HR perspective, because New Work is a central adjustment screw for the future success of companies and the long-term satisfaction of employees. For this, however, the personnel work must
also be redesigned—and all of this in the interest of mental health (Hermeier et al., 2019).

1.10 Case Study: Deutsche Telekom (DT) Offers Virtual Trade Fair Avatars

The corona pandemic has largely brought public life to a standstill for a long time. Trade and trade interactions were suspended as many countries had lockdowns and restrictions. Almost all trade fairs were cancelled. However, since they are hardly indispensable for business, companies are looking for crisis-proof options. Nothing is as valuable for business as personal relationships in B2B and B2C activities. Until the Corona crisis, trade fairs and conferences were popular and lively meeting places for product presentations and customer discussions or for interesting lectures and discussions. According to Statista database the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Germany postponed or cancelled more than 620 trade fairs. The question is whether trade fairs or conferences really have to be cancelled during pandemic times? What companies need in these times is a crisis-proof alternative. Again, digitization can help companies here. And in this case, in particular, the 3D technology. Rooom AG, a young, internationally active company has come up with something here. It offers various complete solutions in the area of 3D, virtual and augmented reality (VR & AR). 3D technology can also be used to create virtual trade fairs and events. For this purpose, Rooom created its own EXPO-X, a platform for virtual trade fairs, on which companies can continue to be present virtually and

![Fig. 1.5 Virtual Avatar of the Telekom for Trade Fairs Solutions. (Source: adapted from Deutsche Telekom (2020))](image-url)
without contact. In this way, companies can continue to offer their customers information and advice digitally but very personally. The young company from Thuringia has won numerous awards and received the Digital Champions Award East 2020 in the Innovative Digital Services category. The award is presented jointly by Wirtschaftswoche and Telekom. The good thing: virtual trade fairs or events set no limits to creativity as shown in Fig. 1.5. Exhibitors can communicate with customers in the form of a 3D avatar at the exhibition stand. Live chats, video conferences, readings and even lectures provide the interactive and personal factor. Even lively discussions are possible thanks to integrated communication software. Hybrid events in which real and virtual content flow together can also be designed. Another advantage that exhibitors will enjoy: the virtual exhibition stand has significantly shorter production times and is of course, more cost-effective.

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