

# Top Ten Workplace/Workforce Forecasts for 2005

---

*For additional information on any of these forecasts, call The Herman Group, Strategic Futurists, in Greensboro, North Carolina, at (336) 282-9370. These forecasts were prepared by Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia, Professional Members of The World Future Society and Founding Members of The Association of Professional Futurists.*

**1. Employment Market Turbulence.** More secure employees will stimulate unprecedented churning in the labor marketplace. This turbulence will threaten corporate stability and capacity to serve customers, particularly for employers who took employees for granted in recent years. The use of incentives such as childcare, concierge services, and other employee support programs will increase.

**2. Employment will become a Seller's Market.** Employers will face the most severe shortage of skilled labor in history. Corporations will become more aggressive to attract and hold top talent. People will change jobs to find their personal Employer of Choice®. Competition for qualified employees will intensify, endangering employers who are not able to maintain a stable, competent workforce.

**3. More Jobs and Workers will move Globally.** Economic issues and skilled labor shortages will stimulate the movement of jobs and workers across political boundaries. Offshoring, so controversial in the United States will become more of a global phenomenon. However, employers will discover that some situations are unsatisfactory and jobs will return to their home countries.

**4. Traditional Retirement will Continue its Metamorphosis.** Retirees will move into jobs in other fields, start their own businesses, and engage in other activities to remain busy and productive. Aging workers will explore lifestyle changes, rather than stop working. Employers will increase hiring of older workers to take advantage of their maturity, wisdom, expertise, and reliability.

**5. Training and education will accelerate.** Corporate development programs will reach out to new employees and existing staff. Demand for vocational education will grow. Educators will be challenged to make major changes to produce graduates ready to be productive in a faster-moving world. Graduates of four-year colleges will be in greater demand, somewhat diminishing graduate school enrollments.

**6. The Leadership Deficit will be Crippling.** As employers discover serious inadequacies, leadership development will take on new importance. Up and coming managers will be expected to demonstrate leadership skills before assuming new positions.

**7. Flexible Employment will gain Popularity.** As more people work flexible hours, work from home, and use technology to work for employers in distant locations, the traditional workday and workweek will further erode. Part of this movement will be driven by parents---male and female--who want to spend more time with their children.

**8. The Role of Women in work will Transform.** More women will rise to significant positions of leadership at the same time that other women are opting out of the workforce. A greater number of parents---mothers and fathers---will telecommute so they can spend more time supporting their children.

**9. Advantage of Strategic Agility.** Companies will re-create themselves to be more agile, nimble, and responsive to customers and employees. Relationships, resources, knowledge, and speed will become strategic weapons.

**10. Workers will become More Independent.** More people will become independent contractors, selling their services on a project, contract, or set-term basis. Specialized staffing firms and electronic communities will evolve to connect workers with employers.