

FROM CORPORATE CULTURE GURU

STEVE CADIGAN

COMES A DOWN-TO-EARTH GUIDE
TO CREATING A BETTER MODEL OF
WORK FOR THE POST-COVID FUTURE



AS SEEN IN:



Inc.



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MEET STEVE CADIGAN



An expert in the future of work, **Steve Cadigan** is considered a corporate culture guru, bringing winning insights from over thirty years of HR experience with industry titans like Google, Salesforce, The Royal Bank of Scotland, McKinsey, and the BBC, as well as venture capital firms like Andreessen Horowitz and Sequoia. Cadigan's inspirational keynotes, seminars, and workshops at global conferences and major universities have garnered rave reviews.

Cadigan is renowned for leading LinkedIn's first talent push and architecting its world-famous culture, now considered the gold-standard. Throughout his twenty-five-year career, he has led teams, cultures, and organizations that have been hailed as "world-class" performers by the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune* magazine, and more.

"Unequivocally, Steve is one of the world's pre-eminent experts on the future of work. He provides a unique combination of fresh, challenging concepts and practical, tangible solutions born out of his experience as a top-level HR leader. A master storyteller."

ADRIAN SIMPSON, CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF CONNECTOR, WAVELENGTH

WHO STEVE HAS WORKED WITH:



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STEVE CADIGAN



@SCADIGAN

WE ARE FACING A WORKQUAKE.

The future has never been more uncertain for both employers and employees.

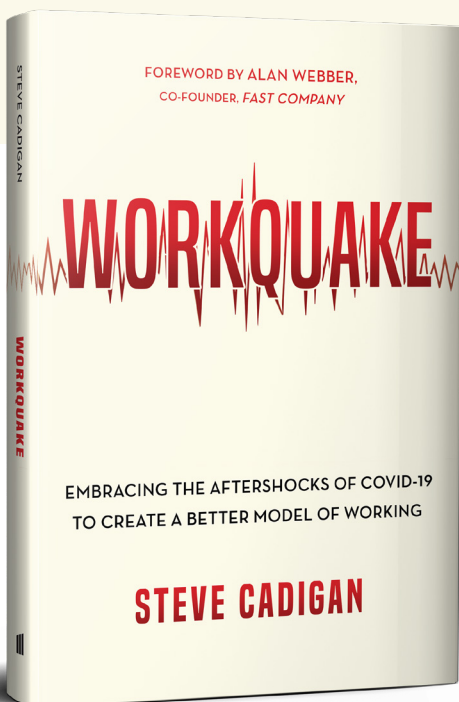
They face the same profoundly unsettling dilemma: neither knows what skills they need to develop for the future. Futurists and the media tell us that over 50 percent of jobs today will soon be replaced by automation and AI.

Turnover is higher than it has ever been. The percentage of the workforce that is actively disengaged has never been higher. The shelf lives of certain skills are diminishing rapidly. Longstanding industries and industry leaders are being disrupted. These staggering changes are challenging our concepts of what a career really looks like today and how we should build organizations going forward.

This is the workquake.

It's time we change the conversation. It's time to talk about how being human has never been more critical and how we have more agency in applying our talents than at any other time in history. We need to have more real and honest conversations about how to build a better model of the future of work, one in which both employers and employees feel safe and energized.

COVID-19 has presented us the ideal opportunity to tackle this important challenge. *Workquake* is an attempt to articulate a compelling vision for the future of work through a number of stories, case studies, and author Steve Cadigan's own experiences.



AUGUST 3, 2021



PRAISE FOR **WORKQUAKE**

“The shocks to the workplace from COVID-19 are just the latest example of an increasingly dynamic and ever-changing labor marketplace. *Workquake* shows that the companies best set up to succeed in this environment are those that play the long game by investing and building positive relationships with their employees.”

CHRISTIAN SUTHERLAND-WONG, CEO, GLASSDOOR

“*Workquake* is a must-read for all business and HR leaders.”

JANINE YANCEY, FOUNDER AND CEO, EMTRAIN

“It’s time to rip up the old playbooks and reconsider what attributes we’ll need in order to thrive professionally...*Workquake* blends considerable personal experiences with relevant research and insightful stories to create highly compelling guidelines for navigating the future of work...[Steve] hits the spot.”

LEELA SRINIVASAN, BOARD MEMBER, UPWORK

“The old contract of work is dead. *Workquake* will challenge you to pursue learning agility over job security and to paradoxically build a company culture that prepares people to leave.”

MICHELLE VITUS, FOUNDER AND CEO, SLATE ADVISERS

“An empowering book for those seeking to understand how to navigate careers and life in a rapidly changing world.”

CHARLES MOSES, DEAN, SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

“In *Workquake*, Steve Cadigan lays bare the obsolete social compact that has bound employees to employers since the Industrial Revolution...Cadigan’s writing is clear, direct, and full of stories that make the message memorable.”

**JOHN HAGGERTY, SR. LECTURER, CORNELL UNIVERSITY ILR; FORMER VP HUMAN RESOURCES,
GENERAL ELECTRIC**

“An inspirational read about the future of work—at times of great uncertainty and change.”

TOLGA KURTOGLU, CEO, XEROX PARC

“In this very refreshing and easy-to-read book, Steve provides compelling examples of how today’s most successful workers and employers embrace constant learning, change, and career flexibility. This is a must-read if you want to thrive in this fast-changing new world order!”

KIRK HERRINGTON, CEO AND BOARD MEMBER, MPLOY

“An indispensable read for those serious about the future of work.”

PETER CAMPBELL, MANAGING PARTNER, EDUCATION GROWTH PARTNERS

“Steve Cadigan guides us through this changing world with a sense of creativity and optimism that’s inspiring and invigorating, and I recommend *Workquake* as required reading for all of us.”

PATRICK CRANE, BOARD MEMBER, TECHNOLOGY EXECUTIVE

“*Workquake* reveals many of [Steve Cadigan’s] game-changing strategies and is a must-read for entrepreneurs and professionals.”

ANDREW MCLEOD, FOUNDER AND C3O, CERTN

“*Workquake* is very timely and should be a must-read for every organization trying to navigate these unprecedented times.”

BOB BAILEY, DIRECTOR, MICRON; FORMER CHAIRMAN AND CEO, PMC-SIERRA

“*Workquake* is a must-read.”

ADRIAN SIMPSON, CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF CONNECTOR, WAVELENGTH

“In the doom and gloom around the future of work, *Workquake* shines a bright, optimistic light on the opportunity for young people to navigate an ever-changing workplace. A must-read.”

ASHWATH NARAYANAN, FOUNDER AND CEO, SOCIAL CURRANT

“This is a bright light provided by one whose expertise is built on firsthand experience and the determination to grow people and companies.”

MATT BARNARD, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, PLENTY

Q&A WITH STEVE CADIGAN

1. WHAT INSPIRED *WORKQUAKE*?

I have spent the past thirty-five years of my career educating numerous companies and individuals about work, jobs, recruiting, and careers. Over the past fifteen years, I've observed a deep frustration rising in employers and employees alike, as they navigate a contract of work that feels increasingly unsatisfying and disingenuous. Data shows us that global job dissatisfaction is increasing alongside employee disengagement and turnover. Right now, the model of work is broken and in dire need of an update. *Workquake* is my attempt to understand how we got here, what it means, and what we can do about it. Using my own experiences as an employee AND an employer and taking the stories of dozens of others, I reveal some macro trends and realities that led us here and offer some suggestions of how we can build a better model for work.

2. DESCRIBE THE FUTURE OF WORK IN TEN WORDS OR LESS.

"The future of work is human-centered."

Over the past fifteen years, one repeating anxiety I heard from employers and employees alike centered around the advancement of technology. Part of the reason I was inspired to write *Workquake* was to counter the gloom and doom forecasts that obsess about how robots, AI, and automation will eliminate millions of jobs.

The more important and more inspiring conversation about the future of work should be that fundamentally the future of work is all about being more human, not less.

In a world of work that feels increasingly dominated by technological advancement, we often seek to solve our challenges through technical means. The old saying: When you've only got a hammer, every problem starts to look like a nail. This sometimes can be the right path to pursue, but more often, taking a step back to understand the real problem reveals you can solve it without adding more layers of technical complexity. While studies have shown that the best-performing teams operate within a culture of psychological safety, most companies focus on driving innovation and digital transformation with little regard for the impact on trust and psychological safety. If the people involved are the focus when attempting to solve a problem, you're far more likely to come up with a meaningful solution.

3. HOW SHOULD EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES PREPARE THEMSELVES FOR THE FUTURE?

In a world of work that is evolving rapidly, where skill requirements change faster than ever and where competition and disruption can come out of nowhere, the key ingredients to success are all human ones. The more you can adapt, the faster you can respond to and digest new information or insights. The sooner you can learn and apply new skills, the greater your chances are to thrive in the future of work.

Being able to communicate quickly, deeply and clearly is essential in a high velocity environment. In a profound way, success in the future of work will be based as much on what you can learn as what you know. Organizations will need to increasingly recruit for high learning velocity. Requirements and skills are always going to change so organizations must employ people who can learn and apply skills quickly—and the organizations must take on the responsibility for designing a workplace that cultivates quick learning and adaptability.

In a world where staff turns over faster than ever, it is imperative for organizations to curate and nurture relationships with their alumni. Organizations need to embrace a longer term view of their relationships with staff—it's the difference between building lifelong relationships and connections versus the common “out-of-sight out-of-mind” attitude when an employee departs the firm.

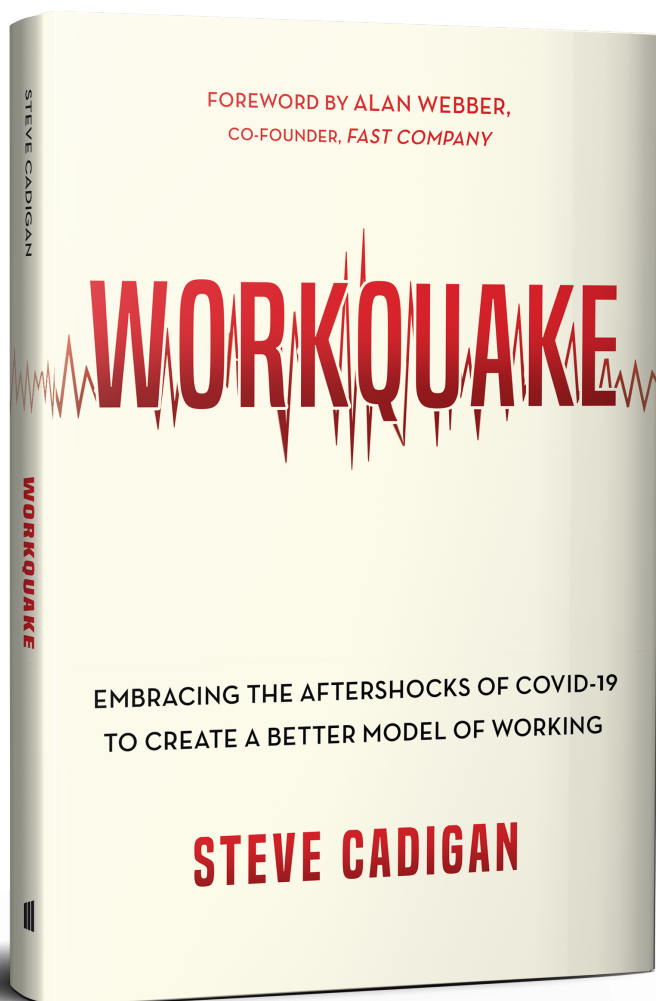
4. WHY SHOULD BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES SEE LEARNING AS A TOP PRIORITY?

Having recruited staff for over thirty years I can tell you that the jobs you recruit someone into today are changing faster than ever before. A job description's accuracy today has a shelf life of maybe two months. In order to stay relevant, you need to prepare for high learning velocity. There are two pieces to learning velocity: 1) as an individual, you are more valuable to a firm if you can learn and apply new things quickly; 2) the more people at a firm who can learn, adapt, and apply new skills quickly, the better off they will be to handle the next workquake, the next recession, the next new competitor, and so forth.

This is the power skill of the future. Chasing a specific hard skill to master today is short-sighted. The more you can learn new skills, the more confident you become that you can weather any inevitable storm you will face in the future. I believe in the near future organizations will place a higher value on what you can learn and how fast you can learn it than on what you know. They know your job will change, the business will change—the market will change. And, hence, your ability to learn is critical.

5. WHY IS CREATING A NEW MODEL OF WORK MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN EVER?

Here are some facts. Job turnover in the US is rising—people just aren't staying in jobs as long as they used to. Job satisfaction has been on a continual decline, while cases of stress, anxiety and depression are on the rise—so much so we have our first unicorn (a company valued at a billion dollars) founded upon helping people reduce stress, the software company behind the meditation app Calm. The shelf life of the value of a hard skill to you in your career is declining. Fifty years ago, you learned a hard skill and that was what you did for decades. The base that we built the old model of work upon has shifted and broken apart. I feel we are stuck using an old model of work that does not reflect new needs and realities for employers and employees. It's time to build a new one that satisfies and inspires both parties. Let's begin by acknowledging that the current model is flawed, broken and that the needs for all parties have changed—that will be the first step forward for us. And there's no better time than now.



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