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Quarterly review
N°2 — 2021

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**BRIGETTE
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APPROACHING CULTURE AND LEARNING AMID NEW WAYS OF WORKING



Google Cloud

Brigette McInnis-Day oversees HR for Google Cloud, with a focus on acquiring and developing talent and shaping the culture to drive business growth and transformation. Prior to Google, Brigette was the chief operating officer (COO) of SAP SuccessFactors, a cloud-based human capital management provider. Throughout her 20 years of experience, Brigette has managed board-level HR and digital transformation strategies, led global organizational change

and redesign, and consulted to senior-level executives.

The Capgemini Research Institute spoke to Brigette about how Google envisions its new ways of working and the impact on culture and inclusion.

NEW WORKING MODELS

Over the last year and more, Google has operated what is close to being an entirely distributed workforce. What have you learned from that experience and how is it helping to shape your future ways of working?

— We've learned that individual experiences with working from home vary. Our campuses have been at the heart of our Google community and many of our employees, who we call Googlers, still want to be on campus some of the time. At the same time, many would also enjoy the flexibility of working from home, spending time in another city for part of the year, or even moving permanently.

Google's future workplace has room for all of these possibilities. We're moving to a hybrid work week with most Googlers in the office approximately three days a week. We'll offer more choices for Googlers to work from different campuses, as well as the option to be fully remote based on role and team needs. And we're offering flexible benefits, such as the option to work from anywhere for up to four weeks a year. We're also building new types of



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reconfigurable indoor and outdoor collaboration spaces while working to improve technology tools, such as Google Workspace, that better enable Googlers to equally participate and contribute.

Can you share an example of how you've addressed the challenge of remote employee burnout as the line between work and home blurs?

— Our first priority at the onset of the pandemic was making sure our Googlers felt cared for. The pandemic disrupted our former work routines, but it also disrupted personal lives. We expanded our Carers Leave to 14 weeks so that our teams could take the time they need to care for their families amidst school and daycare closures. We also gave Googlers additional time off to support their well-being in light of COVID-19.

As the lines of work and home blurred during the pandemic, we also increased our focus on mental health. We provided things such as remote stretching sessions, meditation, and prompts to take breaks, and some teams even instituted “no meeting” days or “low meeting” weeks. Within my own team, we carved out non-work meetings to just connect and have fun, and created a standing time to have lunch together.

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CULTURE AND LEARNING

How have you adapted your employee learning and development?

— Our learning and development teams developed processes that allowed for our new employees (we call Nooglers) to join in from over 1,200 cities. A self-paced onboarding program enabled them to absorb important information within the time and space they need. After their introductory learning, Nooglers then go into other learning digital environments with their managers and teams, and they're connected to 1:1 coaching opportunities.

For all Googlers and leaders, we also curated training on how to build resilient leadership, grow resilient teams, and cultivate high performance mindsets. Resilience is such an important skill that must be built, practiced, and cultivated. We saw a need for this area of development over the last year, as Googlers struggled to detach, cope with stress, and get work done while maintaining their wellbeing through the pandemic.



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Can you share an example of how you have helped instill trust between employees and managers?

— We developed guides featuring tactics and advice, both from inside and outside Google, to help our managers as they supported their teams. These guides focused on supporting managers in a number of areas: navigating the

complexities of building and maintaining relationships for themselves and their teams; leaning into our technology to create an equitable, inclusive, and accessible work environment for our Googlers; adjusting workloads and meetings to help Googlers detach and model the work/life distinction; and leading with empathy. We also launched a “Manager Nudge” program to send curated emails to all Cloud managers throughout the year. These included small actions that they can take in the moment that will have a big impact for their team.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Geographic boundaries are dissolving when it comes to place of work. How might this impact your culture and talent pipeline?

— With the continued growth in the cloud business, the need to make diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) a part of our business rhythm is more important than ever. We are continuing to focus on expanding our talent pool opportunities by recruiting beyond the Bay area and placing more focus on locations such as Delhi, Warsaw, Mexico City, Atlanta, and others that broaden our available talent pool. When we hire, to keep our culture inclusive and innovative we aren’t looking for culture fit, we’re looking for culture “add.” When we look at each new hire to cloud as a culture add, we are bringing in Googlers who may not necessarily “fit” a preconceived profile, but who more importantly bring a diverse set of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences that can help us better understand and empathize with our customers’ needs, build better technology, and drive better outcomes.

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What advice would you share with large, traditional organizations on how to maintain values and culture during times of tremendous change?

— The pandemic has proven that physical office space does not define an organization's culture alone: true organizational culture is founded on the mission, values, and behaviors that unify employees. When I talk to our customers and other organizations about culture, I like to leave them with a few questions, which have served as my guiding light regardless of an organization's working environment. First, what is the one thing you want to preserve in your culture? Start there. Second, does your leadership emulate the culture you need? Finally, how have crises, such as the pandemic, tested your culture?



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