

A New Vision for the Workplace (Transcript)

Work Better Podcast Season 1: Episode 1

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Welcome to work better. The podcast where we think about work, and ways to make it better.

I'm Chris Congdon – your host and editor in chief of Work Better magazine. Both our magazine and this podcast are brought to you by Steelcase — where we help people do their best work by creating places that work better.

This is our first series and we've got a lot to talk about because the headlines just keep coming...

Return to office

Hybrid work

Quiet quitting

The Great Resignation

Our CEO recently said that she's become popular at cocktail parties because suddenly everyone wants to talk about work...because we are going through some of the most significant changes many of us will face in our careers.

People at all levels in organizations have changed. What we want in life and our relationship with work has changed. Our needs and expectations have changed.

Traditional ways of working, and old accepted practices aren't enough anymore.

The rules are being rewritten. We're in a very fluid situation. We're all trying to figure it out. While all the change can be dynamic and exciting, it's also a little overwhelming.

So let's rewrite the rules together.

That's what this podcast is all about. Each season we'll bring you into conversations with the people who inspire us. These are leading thinkers, authors, designers, and researchers whose ideas and insights can help us make sense of what's happening and navigate the massive change around us.

Everything we're learning points us to the need for a new vision for work and the workplace. We're exploring how our workplaces can be more like a great community. Think about your favorite neighborhood. They have energy and a great vibe. But they also give us a sense of belonging, and include places where we can come together and places where we can find solitude. The best communities are inclusive, diverse and resilient. Why can't our workplaces be more like that?

Over the next 7 episodes we've brought together a diverse group of thinkers to explore this idea of creating community at work. Some of our guests include:

David Rock – Co-founder and CEO of the NeuroLeadership Institute about the neuroscience of community. One of things that fascinated me was when he explained how, when we don't feel part of a group, our brains actually perceive that as danger.

We'll meet Annie Murphy Paul – the science writer and author of *The Extended Mind*. She has studied how we can use our bodies, our surroundings and our relationships to help us think better. She introduced us to the word “Groupiness” – which is a thing – a scientific term – and how hybrid is changing “groupiness” at work.

We also talked to Eric Klinenberg – whose research and book, called *Palaces for the People*, was really instrumental in getting us thinking about what makes strong neighborhoods and applying those principles to the workplace. And when he talks about palaces, he doesn't mean places where royalty lives, he's actually talking about libraries, and other places where people gather, that are essential to create a great community.

Another guest is Kevin Roose – he's a New York Times technology writer and author of the book *Futureproof*. He studies things like Artificial Intelligence, how algorithms on social media can lead us down a rabbit hole and cryptocurrency – and he does a really great job making these topics easy to understand. And as more and more companies turn to automation to help cope with talent shortages, Kevin answers the question: how do we avoid being replaced by robots at work? And his answer gets us back to our humanity and creating communities that are going to be around for a long time.

At the end of each episode, I'll be joined by Steelcase colleagues who are workplace experts to help us think about what we just learned and how that can help us make work better.

We'll release new episodes each week so if you want to be part of our community, be sure to subscribe to this podcast on your favorite platform and visit us at steelcase.com/subscribe to get our weekly email newsletter.

Thanks for joining us. Enjoy this season! And we hope your day at work tomorrow is just a little bit better.