Fujitsu Uvance

Doing more with what you have

Enabling the front-line workforce through human-centric technology

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The world of work is evolving at an unprecedented pace, and technology is facilitating this great upheaval. As this transformation continues to expand in terms of scope, it becomes increasingly impactful for the essential and front-line workers who face rising expectations in their roles.

Fujitsu research found that 52% of business leaders believe the accelerating pace of technological change is creating a huge turning point for business and society.

View the FT&SV 2024 PDF >

It's apparent that front-line workers seek deeper connections to their work, a greater sense of purpose, and the ability to add value in a trust-based environment. However, progress in addressing these challenges has been slow. While hybrid working models have become commonplace for many, essential workers often feel overlooked and disconnected. This sense of isolation can drive individuals not only to leave their jobs but to abandon entire careers in search of opportunities that better align with their needs and values.

Demotivation and dissatisfaction have led many front-line workers to quit, resulting in attrition rates as high as 35% to 50% in various industries.

View the front-line survey on the Beekeeper blog >

Many front-line workers have still not experienced the benefits of remote work or hybrid flexibility, such as avoiding commuting or having an improved work-life balance. As an example, up to 58% of U.S. workers are unable to adopt hybrid or flexible working.

This lack of work-life balance compared to contemporaries furthers a lack of engagement in the front-line workforce, which in turn affects their perception as valued employees. Here, 37% of front-line workers don't feel as valued as their desk-based colleagues.

A more disengaged workforce, particularly in relation to the front-line, can further exacerbate existing problems or issues, adversely impacting productivity, efficiency, safety, customer experience, and overall workplace morale.

Instilling a greater sense of connection

For some, front-line roles – especially in sectors such as retail – can be seen as transient posts rather than rewarding career paths with opportunities for growth. This issue is particularly acute in the Public Sector, where budget constraints, governance complexities, and bureaucratic red tape add further pressures leading to high attrition as well as challenges in recruiting and retaining staff.

Public services are therefore continually expected to do more with less, particularly as they cater to an increasingly aging population. This scenario often leaves those working in the sector feeling a lack of connection to their job, making the decision to leave for opportunities elsewhere much easier should they arise.

Almost half of front-line workers in the UK are thinking of leaving their jobs because they feel disconnected from their employer.

Learn more about putting frontline workers first on workplace.com >

The individual worker's sense of identity frequently gets lost amidst Public Sector number-crunching initiatives, where they risk being viewed more as resources than people. Workforce gaps exacerbate stress and create potentially unsafe environments, where tasks that could be automated still rely on manual, repetitive input. For instance, employees having to sift through multiple systems to find critical information.

62% of front-line organizations are currently using 4-6 different front-line employee apps, leading to siloed and inefficient distribution of information

View the global survey about frontline employee experience on Workjam's blog >

In a world where advanced, next-generation technology is part of everyday life, workers expect the same level of technological integration in their professional environments. Why is it that in their private life tasks can be performed seamlessly on one mobile device, yet in their working world there are multiple disconnected processes to slog through? When this expectation of synergy is not met, the sense of disconnect is only amplified, further diminishing job satisfaction and efficiency.

Focusing on solutions that benefit the worker

Connecting front-line workers with technology is crucial for enhancing their engagement and productivity. By integrating inclusive communication channels, such as offering real-time updates through digital platforms, organizations can ensure that front-line staff stay informed about company developments and objectives.

Moreover, providing easy access to internal job opportunities, offering access to wellbeing platforms, utilizing digital channels to recognize good work, and using technology to support career progression can foster loyalty and reduce turnover. Highlighting solutions that impact front-line contributions not only boosts morale but also reinforces their integral role in achieving organizational success, encouraging a sense of community.

Furthermore, leveraging technology to streamline operational processes improves efficiency, allowing front-line workers to have more time to focus on delivering exceptional customer service or working on higher-value tasks. This dual approach not only enhances connectivity but also empowers front-line workers to feel more valued and motivated, driving overall organizational effectiveness, in turn making the role seem more attractive to both new and existing workers.

90% of companies rely in some way on front-line workers yet just 23% say they have digital tools to help them in their jobs.

View the full article about 'Frontline Statistics' on Beekeeper's blog >

Flexibility as a crucial factor

Flexibility is crucial for attracting and retaining talent. Public Sector organizations need to explore what flexibility looks like for front-line employees and how they can improve the overall employee experience.

65% of employers provide some kind of flexibility to their front-line workers. However, there's significant unmet demand from workers for more flexible hours arrangements, such as flexitime, compressed hours, and job-sharing.

[View the full report about 'Flexible Hybrid Working' on CIPD.org](#) >

The Public Sector therefore needs to consider the flexibility of the technology they are integrating, especially when it comes to the user experience. For instance, imagine a dynamic scheduling system for train drivers, police officers, healthcare providers, and other key workers that can move automatically with their needs, rather than lock a shift pattern in stone.

Normal shift rotas could be adjusted in real-time based on peak periods, or routing for deliveries could be optimized using advanced technologies like Fujitsu quantum-inspired Digital Annealer. It is through applying predictive optimization technology that we can anticipate worker demand or critical situations before they escalate and become problematic.

Supporting those on the front-line when disaster strikes

There is also a tangible impact on broader individual and collective safety that comes from supporting the front-line worker with digital solutions, especially for those working in emergency or disaster response.

With the rise in both magnitude and unpredictability of natural disasters, flexibility is important. Response and recovery both require complex logistics as even with the best laid plans, events can still take organizations by surprise.

Fujitsu is working with public safety organizations to advise on technology solutions and strategies to prevent, respond to, and recover from events impacting our communities. In this context, there are several solutions to support front-line workers in the field including:
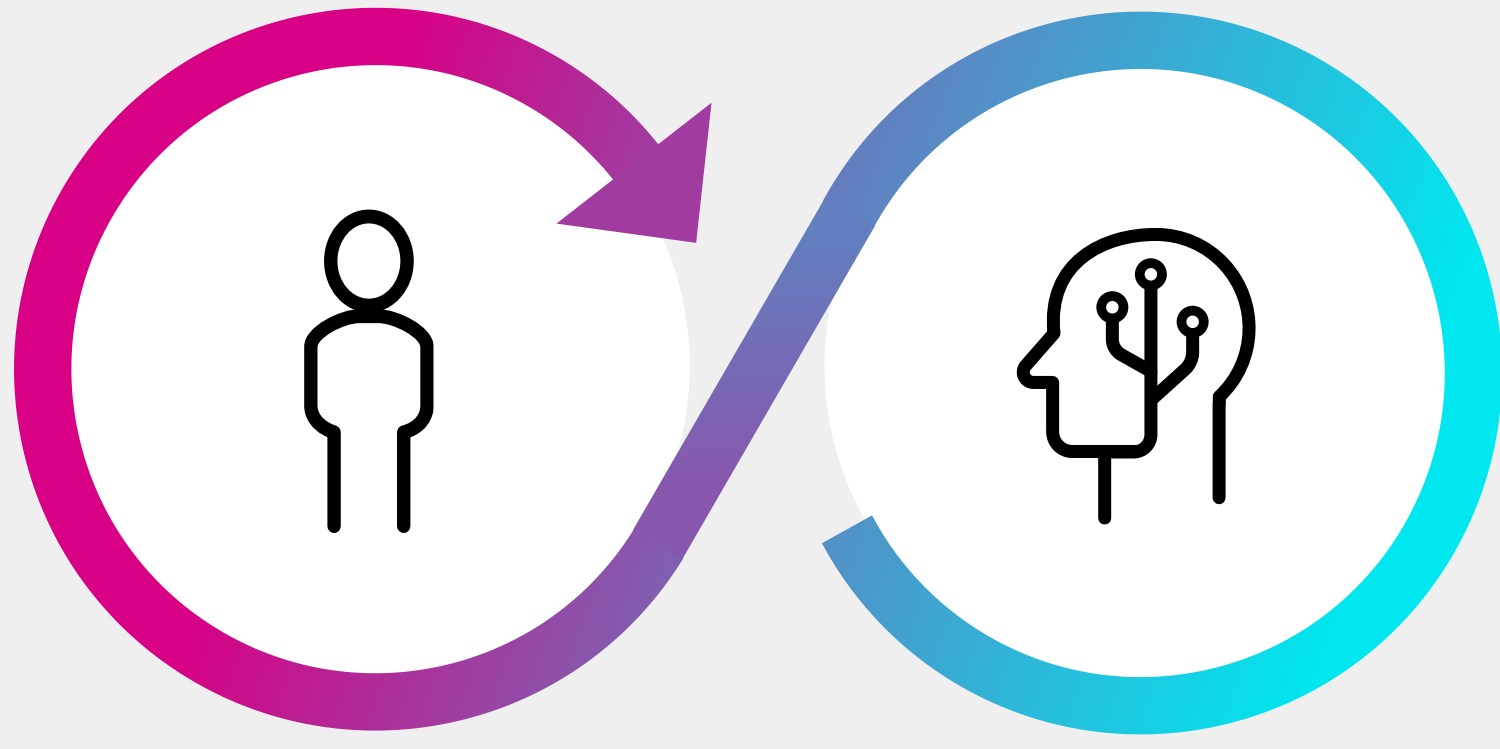
- Vehicle as a Node (VaaN) capability utilizing novel radio technologies and LEO satellite
- Next generation Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) in conjunction with our industry partners
- Video analytics for detecting fires and violence
- Data integration, analysis, and machine learning for emergency management

These technologies not only identify likely areas for disasters and devise evacuation routes but also actively support front-line workers and first responders during crises, ensuring they can deliver essential services efficiently. By integrating these innovative solutions, Public Sector organizations can enhance the flexibility and effectiveness of their workforce, making these roles more attractive, sustainable, and safer.

"Offering flexibility in front-line work roles is crucial to attracting top talent to your organization. Providing workers with the ability to choose how and when they work can significantly enhance job satisfaction and productivity. Embracing technology that supports this flexibility is not just a benefit—it's a game-changer for both employees and employers alike."

Andrew Davis, Head of Global Digital Workplace Strategy, Fujitsu

Human-centricity as a core element of design

Our [Co-creating Program](#) leverages collaboration to drive unique digital transformations. Developed over decades of experience, our approach fosters focused, purpose-driven innovation. By engaging multiple perspectives, involving key decision makers and creative thinkers who understand your strategic needs, we can develop solutions that are genuinely human-centric.

According to a Fujitsu study, 70% of business leaders think the skills of people and AI will complement each other as partners, enhancing each other's capabilities.

[**View the FT&SV 2024 PDF**](#) >

"At Fujitsu we integrate various technologies seamlessly while prioritizing human needs. We possess the essential pieces of the puzzle: exceptional technology, engineering expertise, extensive capabilities, and a human-centric approach. This combination enables us to deliver solutions that truly meet and exceed the needs of the front-line worker."

Nick Herbert,
Head of Government & Public Safety, Fujitsu

However, despite all the perceived advancements, technology can only be effective if it is designed to support people, which means involving workers in discussions from the earliest opportunity. This approach prevents feelings of replacement and promotes overall buy-in for next-generation solution integration.

When workers recognize that a solution has been specifically built for them and is designed to help them do their jobs more effectively, it improves adoption, limits any fear of change, and ultimately, reduces workload and burnout levels.

This principle is at the core of a human-centric approach towards technology. It's about understanding problems from the workers' perspectives, rather than just perceiving what they might be. Fujitsu experience highlights that when engaging with front-line workers, their feedback often reveals different issues than initially expected. These conversations are crucial for co-designing, co-creating, and co-implementing solutions.

This matters as workers will always seek ways around technological shortcomings. If organizations do not work with them to provide adequate technology, employees will find their own solutions, which may not be optimized, secure, or even legal. Involving workers in the development process ensures that the technology meets their needs and fosters a more efficient, secure working environment.

The problem may be more common than first thought. While everyone aims to be compliant, adherence to security conventions can be intermittent. Studies show that 67% of workers fail to fully adhere to cybersecurity policies at least once, with an average failure-to-comply rate of once out of every 20 job tasks.

[**View the full article about cybersecurity in Harvard Business Review's blog**](#) >

Case study:
Making train journeys a fuss-free experience for all

Northern Trains Limited, a publicly owned train operator in England, partnered with Fujitsu to create a mobile app for debt recovery, reducing ticketless travel, and enhancing the experience for both customers and staff.

The train operating company sought to extend financial protection activities and offer better customer and staff experience with one device that could perform all the necessary tasks quickly and efficiently.

Fujitsu used the Zebra hardware device to first integrate Masabi software for barcode scanning, followed by The Raspberry Tips application for penalty fares and travel incident reports. Northern employees offered their input throughout the process and contributed to the final look and feel meaning that 2,500 staff can now pass through the trains quickly, as well as issue and scan more tickets.

The new solution doesn't only affect customer care and employee efficiency. The data availability helps with advanced fare and bookings management as well as supporting the digital fraud team. The new devices also give Northern the ability to further its sustainability agenda as everything is digitized, making paper-based reporting obsolete.

"Our fraudulent refund rate used to be 11%. Now, it's down to 2%. We can attribute lots of this success, particularly scanning, thanks to having the right tools on the right device. Having the direct relationship with developers and architects at Fujitsu allowed us to get into the nitty-gritty details and create this perfectly happy path for us."

Nick Laycock,
Retail Operations Delivery Manager,
Northern Trains Limited

More than just providing solutions

Fujitsu understands that merely throwing technology at a challenge is not a viable solution. It's about incorporating the right technology to address specific challenges effectively. If not done thoughtfully, technological implementations can become more complex and create a more convoluted environment for front-line workers. A human-centric approach to technology therefore focuses on people's needs, designing solutions, and applying them while considering the "whole-life" experience of the employee, rather than just the digital experience.

Fujitsu has the experience, the technology solutions, and breadth of capability to deliver an environment where workers and technology operate harmoniously. Technology should be seen as empowering people, not replacing them. Often, discussions about technology overlook human empathy, but it's essential to remember that behind every system is a person using it. Involving employees in the design process ensures that the technology fits their needs and adds value, fostering the connectivity that many front-line workers are actively asking for.

By prioritizing sustainable transformations that focus on the well-being of employees, as well as businesses, organizations can cultivate a more adaptive, agile, and resilient culture. Technology, when thoughtfully integrated with empathy and a human-centric approach, holds the potential to transform the front-line worker experience, making their roles more connected, efficient, and fulfilling.

Ready to start your front-line workforce transformation?

Contact us to discover how Fujitsu technology solutions can help you to create connected, efficient and satisfied workers.

Learn more about our solutions:

Connected Front-line Worker >

Work Life Shift >

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