

## Will employees dream of electric sheep? The effects of technology on work and people *Call for papers*

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The evolution of technology is impressive and organizations are ever and ever reliant on it. Employees count on up-to-date data and information, which allow handling tasks in a creative way. Managers' decision-making relies on an increasing availability of shared data and analysis tools. High-tech machineries, e.g. robots, change manufacturing processes and ask for modifying collaborative and cooperative dynamics. Ubiquitous working environments (in terms of arrangements and conditions) allow employees to work from anywhere. Social media let employees share formal and informal knowledge with internal and external stakeholders. Learning opportunities through online training and provided by the high-education system expand the boundaries of the organizational learning ecosystems. However, although new technologies are enabling profound changes on work systems and, consequently, how human resources are managed in organizations, there is still little research on how this transformation is really altering the work that people do (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016). Therefore, the question of how technology is changing work and people is challenging for organizational behavior and human resource management scholars.

The special issue builds on the WOA 2020's theme "Will employees dream of electric sheep? Impacts of digital technologies within and beyond the workplace", focusing on the idea that work does not exist without people and that the new technologies may enable or thwart people at work (Coovert & Thompson 2014).

Extant research on the effects of new technologies on employees are ambiguous. On the one hand, it states that, to empower people at work, technology should foster self-motivation and well-being, enhance productivity, and promote job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and citizenship behaviors among workers. On the other hand, when technology leads to a lack of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, people may experience stress, demotivation, and counterproductive work behaviors (Cascio & Montealegre, 2016). Moreover, new technology is also changing the role of management. Technology creates new contexts for leadership. While in the past, information always represented a source of power, nowadays, due to the open access to shared data and information, employees have at their disposal more information sources, usually exclusively available to leaders. Therefore, the nature of leadership asks for changes, leading to new forms of leadership, such as e-leadership, intended as a social influence process mediated by technology. E-leadership may lead to changes in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and/or performance on the part of individuals, groups and/or organizations (Avolio, Kahai, & Dodge, 2000, p. 617).

Finally, new technologies applied to human resource management bring other changes and challenges (Parry & Strohmeier, 2014), such as the emergence of the e-HRM. On the one hand, they revolutionize human resource management practices (HRMPs), breeding new ways to work, such as remote-working/tele-working, home-based working, and agile working (Peters, Poutsma, Van der Heijden, Bakker, & de Bruijn, 2014). On the other hand, they trigger ethical challenges (Moon & Stanworth, 1997), trade-offs between increased employees' flexibility and organizational commitment (Sparrow, Brewster, & Dickmann, 2016), and potential side effects on individual well-being and work-life balance (Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, & Korac-Kakabadse, 2017). The negative side-effects of digitalization should be read in light of the cognitive and emotional perspectives embraced by employees to contextualize and understand the implications of distributed work arrangements and

conditions on organizational performance, work-life balance, and well-being (Golden, Veiga, & Simsek, 2006).

The special issue welcomes research contributions aiming at disentangling the implication of technology adoption on work and organizations from an individual level standpoint, including cognition, intuition, awareness, leadership, motivation, employees' empowerment and engagement, and interpersonal communications and collaboration. More specifically, it intends to unravel the individual perceptions and reactions to the transition towards a fully-fledged digitalization of HRMPs.

Types of topics of relevance for the special issue include, although they are not limited to:

- The “bright” and the “dark” side of HRM digitalization;
- The attributes of e-HRM;
- The strategic role of e-HRM for increasing organizational performance;
- The “cognitive” and “emotional” gears to foster the transition towards digital workplaces;
- Knowledge management and social capital in the digital domain;
- Managing the virtualization of work;
- Organizational conflicts in the cyber-space;
- Re-contextualizing organizational change in the digital environment;
- Changes in work/life balance in the era of digitization
- E-leadership and virtual team cooperation
- Emotions and wellbeing in digital workplaces
- Digitalization and meaningfulness of work
- Effects of digital technologies on organizational engagement and citizenship
- Digital workplaces and organizational trust

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Participants to the WOA 2020 are kindly invited to submit their full papers to [alessandra.lazazzara@unimi.it](mailto:alessandra.lazazzara@unimi.it) with “Submission to Prospettive in Organizzazione Special Issue” as subject. Papers will go through the standard review process of the journal.

### Timeline

March 6th, 2020 Full paper submission

March 20th, 2020 First round of decisions

April 10th, 2020 Final resubmission deadline

End of April Special Issue publication