



HBS Global Networking Night Presents:  
The Future of Work—and Managing the Impact of COVID-19  
October 20-21, 2020

**Discussion Topics, Questions and Recommended Podcasts for GNN events**

**Topic 1 – The Gig Economy**

***Recommended MFW podcast episodes***

[Braintrust takes aim at the gig platform middleman](#) – AUG 2020

[Handy's CEO clears up the gig economy](#) – OCT 2019

***Discussion questions***

1. How has the pandemic changed the value of gig work for *employers*?
2. How has the pandemic changed the value of gig work for *employees*?
3. COVID-19 has caused many companies to consider a more permanent shift to remote work. Should they also be considering what work at their company can be made contingent?
4. What impact has increased automation and digitalization had on the gig economy?

**Topic 2 – Polarization of Skills**

***Recommended MFW podcast episodes***

[How the next recovery can revive upward mobility](#) – JUN 2020

[How Catalant helps align workforce and work](#) – MAY 2020

[Tightrope: Working-class despair and the seeds of hope](#) – JUL 2020

***Discussion questions***

1. How has increased digitalization contributed to the polarization of the labor market?
2. What impact will COVID-19 have on the polarization of skills? Will this be a long-term impact?
3. Can better education and skills training fill the middle, or is this purely a demand-side issue?
4. What role should policymakers play in helping to ensure workers have access to quality jobs?

***[Continued on next page]***

### **Topic 3 – The Changing Contract Between Employers and Employees**

#### ***Recommended MFW podcast episodes***

[Werk-ing the angles: how mapping work to real life can boost productivity](#) – NOV 2019

[Tulsa Remote: Live here, work anywhere](#) – AUG 2020

[Covid-19 Dispatch: Tim Rowe](#) – AUG 2020

[Unilever's workforce transformation: hard truths and help with change](#) – AUG 2020

#### ***Discussion question(s)***

1. Which workers are in a position to call the shots? What gives workers leverage?
2. How will businesses have to adapt to a post-COVID workplace?
3. How would union representation change these conversations between employers and employees when considering a return to work post-COVID?
4. Will the shift to remote work remain after the pandemic? How will this impact the workforce and the economy as a whole?