

SIDEKICK



sidekick 2024 FORECAST

[SIDEKICKCONSULTING.CA](https://sidekickconsulting.ca)

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**Some think of us as consultants.
But we go by many names.
Coaches, change-makers, catalysts.
Sometimes even Alchemists.
Because we have found a way to
Harness purpose
Prioritize people and profit
And transform passion into progress.**

**While vision may be the manifestation of one,
We believe dreams are rarely realized alone.**

**So don't think you need to work harder. Or longer.
You need to work with a sidekick by your side.**

ABOUT SIDEKICK

We help organization realize their dreams.

We are a realization consultancy. Find clarity of focus, build momentum, and carry out your biggest and boldest objectives, with the help of a trusted Sidekick by your side.

[**Learn More**](#)

SIDEKICK

A WORD FROM SIDEKICK

As we navigate the evolving landscape of business and leadership, we find ourselves reflecting on the principles that guide us. Our commitment to strategy, people, and growth is underpinned by the belief that staying attuned to trends and seeking continuous improvement are paramount for sustainable success.

In the pages that follow, you will find our individual forecasts for 2024. We've delved into topics ranging from the transformative role of AI to the evolving dynamics of employee engagement. We've explored the art of compartmentalizing, the facilitative essence of future leadership, the significance of fractional leadership, and the imperative of efficient spending for organizational vitality.

As leaders and visionaries, it is upon us to not merely adapt to change but to actively seek ways to embrace it. In the words of Peter Drucker,

"The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence—it is to act with yesterday's logic."

Our 2024 Forecast serves as a guide to equip you with insights and tools to navigate upcoming change successfully. The ability to anticipate shifts in the business landscape is what sets exceptional leaders apart.

We're your sidekicks. We understand the challenges you face and the aspirations that drive you. In the spirit of collaboration, we are pleased to share tools and strategies within this report that we believe will empower you to not only adapt to change but to thrive in the face of it.

Thank you for having us as your sidekicks on your journey. We look forward to continuing to help you and your organization realize your dreams."

Sidekick
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GENERATION 'FREEDOM' IS COMING IN 2024



If we had to pick a color for 2024, it's Teal – symbolizing a new sense of freedom driven by self-management, embracing decentralization, and a hint of evolutionary purpose.

The shift towards teal organizations is a response to the dramatic changes in the work environment and employee expectations. The adoption of hybrid work models post-pandemic has been just the beginning of a broader transformation. This shift extends beyond the practicalities of remote collaboration to fundamentally alter human interactions and expectations within the workplace.

The teal organizational model offers numerous advantages in today's dynamic business environment:

- It fosters higher employee engagement by nurturing a **culture of authenticity** and self-expression.
- Decentralized, agile structures enable **quicker decision-making** and adaptability.
- The empowerment of employees drives innovation and efficiency, leading to **enhanced profitability**.





Distinct from the rigid hierarchies of the past, teal structures are built on principles of distributed authority, self-management, and a sense of evolutionary purpose.

An approach that is particularly pertinent considering the future composition of the workforce. The upcoming major workforce segments emphasize authenticity, freedom of expression, and a desire for meaningful work engagement, aligning seamlessly with the ethos of teal organizations.

OVER **50%**

of the workforce in 2030 will consist of millennials or Gen Z. Both generations bring unique values and expectations to the workplace.¹

What can organization do?

- 1** Create a more flexible work environment
- 2** Embrace the organization's evolutionary purpose
- 3** Be ready to respond to change quickly



Getting Started

Books to read

[Maverick by Ricardo Semler](#)

[Reinventing Organizations by Frederic LaLoux](#)

[Freedom at Work by Traci Fenton](#)

Framework to follow

[Holacracy - The Management Framework For a Complex World](#)

Leaders to follow

[Ricardo Semler](#)

[Frederic Laloux](#)

[Patagonia](#)

Videos to watch

YouTube Chanel [Reinventing Organizations](#)

[Freedom at Work by WorldBlu](#)

Article to read

[Rejuvenating & Re-Imagining Organizations](#)

COMPARTMENTALIZING WILL BE AN ART FORM IN 2024



How can businesses *actually* deliver on their plans in 2024? As the year ends and your team prepares for the holiday break, you might reflect on the ambitious goals set for 2024. However, a crucial question remains: will we accomplish all we've planned a year from now?

The Challenge of Execution:

Executing ambitious annual plans is a common challenge for many organizations, often compounded by competing priorities that hinder progress. It's a known fact that focus on set priorities tends to wane after 90 days, similar to the fading of New Year's resolutions. The key to managing ambitious goals effectively lies in simplification and concentrating on essential tasks.

Multitasking or task switching can lead to a **40%** drop in productivity.²

The Solution of Compartmentalizing

Compartmentalization, a concept rooted in psychology, can be beneficial in business. Originally a defense mechanism for managing stress and conflicting emotions, compartmentalization in a business context involves segmenting tasks into distinct categories. This method helps leaders simplify their workload and maintain focus, aligning with the strategy of breaking down larger objectives into smaller, achievable tasks





Tips and Tools to Apply in 2024

1 Simplify the strategy

Describe your plan on a single page. At Sidekick, we are big fans of the plan-on-a-page approach to concisely articulate your most important ideas. Tools like OKRs (Objectives and Key Results), Business Model Canvas, and Vision/Traction Organizers can greatly assist in articulating your organization's focus in a clean, simple manner.

2 Make it SMART

Aim for 3-7 goals per quarter and year to truly enable your team to focus on what's most important. More importantly, outlining goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) will help eliminate any confusion and create a clear focus around exactly what you're hoping to achieve

3 Reset after 90 days

A 90-day approach to goal-setting can offer a more actionable and achievable framework (source). Implementing a quarterly planning process, as recommended by EOS with their quarterly pulse, allows your team to reflect on the past quarter, reset priorities for the upcoming quarter, and maintain focus on achieving those annual goals. If these goals still seem too ambitious, consider a 30-60-90 day planning approach to break down tasks into even smaller, more attainable objectives.

GETTING STARTED

Video to watch

[Compartmentalizing Your Business](#) by EOS Worldwide

Articles to read

- Fast Company's [Why compartmentalization is the key to effective leadership](#) by Adam Bryant
- Forbes' [A 90-Day Approach To Accomplishing A Rock-Solid Goal](#) by Matthew Abrams
- Beyond Words Linguistic Services' [Mastering Productivity: The Art of Compartmentalizing Your Work for Success](#)
- Life Hack's [How to Compartmentalize For Productivity](#) by Ben Willmott
- Forbes' [5 Steps of Compartmentalization: The Secret Behind Successful Entrepreneurs](#) by Ryan Blair
- Harvard Business Review's [The Leap to Leader](#) by Adam Bryant

Frameworks to apply

O/KRs

Align and track progress towards goals in a simple way.

Quarterly Rocks

Break down larger goals (aka rocks) into quarterly objectives.

30/60/90 Day Plans

Provide a structured approach to achieving short-term objectives.



AS HYBRID WORK NORMALIZES AI IS THE NEXT DISRUPTION



As we come out of three years of disruptions in employee engagement and organizational culture we need to prepare for the next seismic shift: AI.

With the remaining pandemic restrictions lifted, Gartner estimated that fully remote and hybrid workers were expected to account for 71% of the US workforce in 2023.



Gartner estimated that in 2023, **71% of workforce is remote or hybrid.**³

At a recent HR Leaders Summit, a panel of senior HR leaders shared how their organizations continue to optimize hybrid work to increase engagement. They've developed comprehensive toolkits and training for managers and updated engagement strategies to strengthen fraying team bonds and acknowledge the organic development of micro-cultures within their organizations. However, there is still a lot of work to be done with testing and learning at its core.





ANOTHER SEISMIC SHIFT IS UPON US

AI (in its many forms) is here and organizations are wondering how to manage the risks and embrace the opportunities. Where do we need to focus?

1 Closing the Skills Gap

Generative AI streamlines tasks such as drafting emails and data analysis, thereby boosting efficiency and enabling employees to focus on creative and strategic pursuits. Gartner predicts that by 2026, 100 million people will have 'robo colleagues.' In 'Radically Human,' Daughtery and Wilson highlight the importance for organizations to foster talent creation and a learning environment to adapt to evolving job requirements and emerging technologies.

2 Change Management

The transition to new tools and ways of working is expected to be rapid. Organizations need to develop an adaptive change management plan to ensure their people have the psychological safety necessary to support the changes.

- Leadership must be proactive, and open and honest communication is crucial.
- Systems of measurement are essential to understand what's working and what's not, both for the AI technology and the people.

3 Guarding Against Inherent Bias

As algorithms are built on biased human information, issues arise. A study published in the journal *Science* showed that a widely used medical algorithm, which predicts who might benefit from follow-up care, drastically underestimated the health needs of Black patients, even when they were sicker than their white counterparts. Removing the racial bias resulted in more than double the number of Black patients being deemed eligible for additional medical support. While this study ultimately improved medical care for Black patients, it illustrates how bias in algorithms can introduce substantial and harmful risks to employees, customers, and organizations.

4 Keeping the humans in the Loop

To mitigate AI risks, the 'human-in-the-loop' (HITL) concept integrates human intelligence with AI in machine learning. This involves human participation in system setup, model tuning, testing, and decision-making improvement. LinkedIn's future of work report underscores a growing need for both AI skills and people skills such as communication and flexibility.



Getting Started

Podcast to listen to

[The AI Hype Cycle 2023: Generative AI Reaches the Peak of Inflated Expectations](#)
[Azeem on AI: Where Will the Jobs Come from After AI?](#)

Reports to read

[LinkedIn's Future at Work Report: AI at Work](#)

Leaders to follow

[Ethan Millock](#)

Article to read

[What the Apple Card Controversy Says About our AI Future](#)
[Dissecting racial bias in an algorithm used to manage the health of populations](#)

THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP: FROM GOOD TO GREAT IN 2024



We cannot deny the critical role of leadership, the backbone of every successful organization, in shepherding us through this next organizational/workplace revolution. As our ways of working undergo a paradigm shift, it raises the questions: How will the requirements for successful leadership evolve?

The topic of the 'future of work' dominated headlines, panels, keynotes, and water cooler chats in 2023. It's undeniable that the 'ways of working' have undergone profound upheavals in recent years. While conversations have largely revolved around how and where we work (consider remote work policies, the return to the office, leveraging AI, etc.), it's important to acknowledge those who have been guiding these conversations.

Great facilitation from a leader can result in a **15% INCREASE** in productivity.⁴



THE EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP IN A TRANSFORMATIVE ERA

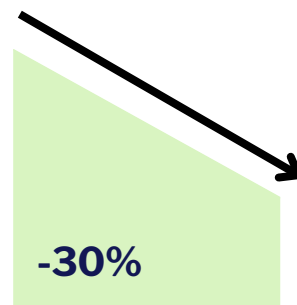
It has been effective leadership that has shepherded us successfully through each of workplace revolution. The most effective leaders are those who can navigate these tumultuous waters with grace, equanimity, and a willingness to adapt. We now find ourselves in a place where the definition of leadership is rapidly evolving. Leadership will take centre stage in the conversation of 'future of work', playing a critical role at the forefront of our latest workplace revolution. Leadership will be the make or break of the new nature of work.

Leaders will be expected to...

- ◆ Embrace digitization and the datafication
- ◆ Manage change through the power of storytelling
- ◆ Be masters of empathetic leadership
- ◆ Know when it's time to grow or time to let go

But most important is the role of Leaders to be connectors and facilitators in shepherding organizations through this revolution. As we navigate through the remote work revolution in 2024, Great Leadership will be synonymous with Facilitative Leadership.

30% reduction in the average meeting time after implementing great facilitation practices, leading to a more efficient use of employees' time, focused and productive conversations, Streamlined decision-making.⁵



5. Source: McKinsey & Company: [If we're all so busy, why isn't anything getting done?](#)



Getting Started

Article to read

Forbes' [Facilitation Skills Just Might Be The Best Kept Leadership Secret](#) by Dana Brownlee

Industry leaders to follow

- **Priya Parker:** An author, strategic facilitator, and the founder of Thrive Labs. She wrote the acclaimed book "The Art of Gathering," in which she explores the dynamics of effective facilitation in creating meaningful and transformative experiences.
- **International Association of Facilitators (IAF):** The IAF is a global professional association dedicated to advancing the art and practice of facilitation. While the IAF itself is an organization rather than an individual, it plays a significant role in setting standards for facilitation and fostering a community of facilitators worldwide.

Videos to Watch

[The Art of Re-Gathering from Priya Parker at CMX Summit](#)

TRANSFORM WITH FRACTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN 2024



In 2024, success hinges on strategically assembling teams with the right skills at the right times. Fractional leadership emerges as a key, aligning specialized talent with specific organizational needs. This approach promises agility and precision in meeting market demands, setting a course for sustainable growth and adaptability in workforce management.

The fractional approach allows businesses to...

- ◆ Stay agile and responsive
- ◆ Be financially prudent in an ever-changing market
- ◆ Adapt their workforce dynamically to meet evolving challenges

The Strategic Imperative

The cornerstone of this approach is a strong strategic plan that clearly outlines the organization's goals and the challenges it faces. This clarity is crucial in determining whether a full-time role or a fractional position is necessary. For instance, before deciding on a full-time Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), a company should assess whether the challenge at hand is about managing a large volume of work or about creating and implementing more efficient processes for scalability. If it's the latter, a fractional CMO could offer the specialized expertise needed without the long-term commitment





The Benefits

- 1** A more **dynamic and adaptable workforce**
- 2** 45% believe that an approach to permanent + contract workers **help control labour costs**⁷
- 3** **Onboarding specialized skills can be up to 40% faster** than traditional onboarding for a permanent role⁶
- 4** An increase in the **diversity of skills and expertise**

As we look towards 2024, embracing fractional leadership can be a game-changer for businesses. This approach allows for a more dynamic and adaptable workforce, perfectly suited to the needs of the organization at various stages. It's about being intentional in how resources are allocated, focusing on efficiency, and ensuring that every role and function is strategically aligned with organizational goals. By adopting this innovative approach to staffing, businesses position themselves to be agile, competitive, and well-equipped to tackle the future's challenges, making the most of their resources in an efficient and effective manner.

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6. Source: McKinsey (2023) [What is the Gig Economy](#)

7. Source: EY (2018), [The gig economy: a chance to control your costs or accelerate your growth?](#)

GETTING STARTED

Article to read

McKinsey & Company's [What is the Gig Economy?](#)

Report to read

Deloitte's Report on [Building Tomorrow's Skills-Based Organization](#) by Sue Cantrell, Michael Griffiths, Robin Jones, and Julie Hiipakka.

Podcast to listen to

The Well's [Gigenomics Podcast: The Future of Work](#)



KNOWING WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE WANTS ON SOCIAL IS VITAL IN 2024



Spoiler alert: Audiences in 2024 want entertainment, value and relatability. But let's get into it!

Social feeds are crowded, and brands are struggling to capture the attention of their audience. However, to achieve this, it is crucial to present audiences with what they want from our brands. As per Hootsuite's 2024 Trends Report, 34% of consumers hold a negative opinion of a brand that excessively prioritizes self-promotion. Surprisingly, almost half of marketers regularly share content related to their products throughout the week. And according to Hootsuite's Social Trends 2024 Survey, consumers go on social media to unwind, connect with friends and family and to be entertained, rather than to be sold to.

Entertainment can look like funny memes content, inspirational videos, and even educational content.

But what does entertainment look like for your brand's audience?

Creating entertaining content that fits your brand and audience can attract attention to foster engagement, and ultimately contribute to building loyal consumer relationships and expanding your market share. But, you need to be authentic.

56% of consumers want brands to be more relatable on social.⁸





While discussing your products or services is viable, it's crucial to thoughtfully consider how you present them. Align your priorities and strategies with your audience's preferences and expectations to ensure your content resonates with their needs. Focus on the entertainment or value your content offers beyond the product or service itself. What expertise do you possess? How can you share this knowledge?

As of October 2023, the digital population is nearly **5 BILLION**⁹ social users.

Active engagement and maintaining a consistent presence on social media are vital for building relationships with your target audience. Using your content to listen to and understand your community and consumers offers valuable insights into their overall experience with your brand. This direct connection is essential in developing relationships, fostering empathy, and ultimately enhancing both product and brand experiences – an aspect that should not be overlooked.

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Getting Started

Here are a few first steps to get you started to ensure your speaking to your audience in the ways they want to hear from you.

1 Ask your community

One of the most simple and effective ways to find an answer is to ask.

- Conduct polls on social
- Directly get in touch with current and prospective consumers through focus groups or 1:1 conversations
- Test new strategies to see what resonates best with your audience, check on it, then evolve it.

2 Look beyond social

Looking beyond your social engagement, how is your website traffic? Are you getting inbound leads or increased sales? Your content needs to be entertaining or valuable enough for people to click, stay with you and take action.

3 Define your voice

Have a consistent and authentic brand voice but remember - it's important to be authentic and relatable. Check out Hubspot's article - [Creating Your Brand Voice: A Complete Guide](#). Use this voice consistently across all of your channels and messaging.

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT IN 2024



How to succeed through effective planning and measurement

As 2024 unfolds, organizations are preparing not only for economic fluctuations but also for the critical task of effectively managing stakeholder expectations. This underscores the need for a clear strategic plan and robust measurement mechanisms.

According to a Deloitte study,

46%

of respondents face challenges in deciding on clear actions and measuring progress when it comes to stakeholder trust.¹⁰

The need for a clear strategic plan

The essence of effective stakeholder management in 2024 rests in the clarity and precision of the organization's strategic plan. A 'plan on a page' approach proves invaluable in this context. It distills complex strategies into an easily understandable format, ensuring all stakeholders clearly comprehend the organization's goals, objectives, and the roadmap to achieve them. This clarity is vital for setting and managing expectations, offering a universal reference for all discussions and decisions.





The Key to Managing Expectations

Beyond planning, the capacity for measuring and reporting progress is crucial in managing stakeholders. Stakeholders require tangible evidence of advancement toward the established goals. Regular measurement and reporting not only ensure transparency but also foster trust by showcasing accountability and dedication to the long-term objectives. This consistent approach to monitoring and communication is key to keeping stakeholders engaged and in sync with the organization's journey throughout the year.

“Don't allow yourself to be hijacked by short-termism, tactical execution plans and other check-the-box activities.”

- Jackie Wiles, Gartner
9 Steps to Successful Functional Strategic Planning



Getting Started

Articles to read

- Harvard Business Review's [How to Create a Stakeholder Strategy](#) written by [Darrell Rigby, Zach First, and Dunigan O'Keefe](#).
- Deloitte's [How boards are nurturing and measuring stakeholder trust](#) written by Jo Iwasaki, Dan Konisburg, William Touche
- Gartner's [9 Steps to Successful Functional Strategic Planning](#) written by Jackie Wiles

BEYOND PREDICTIONS: REFLECTION DRIVES IMPACT



To me, a new year is a reminder that while we plan and strategize, the true essence of business lies in its fluidity and ability to adapt. This reflection isn't about setting predictions in stone; it's about understanding our current standing, acknowledging the changes we've navigated, and preparing to continue evolving. In short, I want my reflection-based energy to result in impact.

Impact generating ideas.

Impactful new approaches.

Sustainable and measurable impact.

As we move into 2024 amidst inevitable economic shifts and operational challenges, the focus shifts to deeper engagement with our customers and clients. Therefore, we must embrace an openness to learning and evolve with the landscape surrounding us during planning.





The year of truly understanding your customer

The essence of business impact in 2024 will hinge on truly understanding how our products or services make customers feel. Consider the "lipstick index," where Estée Lauder found that people gravitated towards small luxuries like lipstick even in economic downturns. This insight isn't just about the indulgence in a product but about understanding the feelings that drive action. Our offerings create the emotional resonance that remains in the customer's memory. In 2024, let's dive deeper into these emotional connections, understanding and leveraging the feelings and experiences our products or services evoke in our customers.

Positive emotional experiences generate impact.

Intentional and focused short planning cycles

Adopting shorter planning cycles in 2024 is less about agility and more about being focused and intentional in our objectives. It's about setting clear goals, measuring progress, testing strategies, and iterating based on feedback and results. This approach allows a more concentrated effort on what matters most, ensuring that every step aligns with business goals. By regularly evaluating strategies and outcomes, we can make informed decisions aligned with objectives and customer needs.

Measuring impact on short and long-term horizons will keep you flying straight.

Evolving with our surroundings

Learning from past experiences is about evolving with the changing landscape. It requires humility to accept and adapt to change and continuously focus on delivering value to clients. Every challenge faced and every success achieved provides insights that can inform our future strategies. This learning process is about being receptive to new ideas, adapting our approaches, and always keeping our client's needs at the forefront of our decision-making.

How do the challenges of today and tomorrow impact you?



Getting Started

Insights to read everyday

Daily Reflections for Highly Effective People by Steven R. Covey

Article to read

Stratechery's Regretful Accelerationism by Ben Thompson

Leader to follow

Stoyan Yankov

Podcast to listen to

Master of Scale

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