

THE FUTURE OF HRM IN A WORLD OF PERSISTENT VIRTUAL REALITY

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THE FUTURE OF HRM IN A WORLD OF PERSISTENT VIRTUAL REALITY

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to pioneers and visionaries in the field of Human Resource Management who have showed great courage and innovation in embracing the challenges of the digital age.

To HR professionals who continue to reimagine a future of work through technology, and educators/scholars who advance knowledge towards excellence.

To the millions of workers worldwide whose resilience and adaptability inspire us to open new frontiers of how we work, learn and grow.

And to our families, friends and mentors – whose support and encouragement never wavered through it all.

This book is dedicated to you.

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ABOUT THE EDITORS

Dr Dinesh Kumar is a highly accomplished professional with extensive expertise in the military, academia, business and charity sectors. He holds a PhD from the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee and has received an admission offer for the Fellow Programme in Management from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ranchi that made him the first soldier in Indian history to secure doctoral admission offers from both IIT and IIM. He is also the founder of Pomento and Mission Dost-E-Jahan. He has propounded the concept of 'Lifestyle Social Work.' He is a former management faculty member at Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University. Currently, he is working in the Department of Business Analytics at the School of Business, Woxsen University, India.

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Dr Mitra Madanchian is an Assistant Professor at University Canada West and an Adjunct Professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University. She is also the Director of Quark Minded Technology Inc. and Hamta Business Corporation. Holding a PhD in Business Management from Universiti Teknologi MARA (Malaysia), a Master of Administrative Science in Human Resources from Fairleigh Dickinson University, and both Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Applied Linguistics from University Putra Malaysia, she has a strong academic background. With over a decade of industry experience, including roles in both SMEs and a Big Four firm (KPMG), Mitra has established herself as an expert in Business Management and Research and Development. Her professional career spans various international companies, covering fields such as IT, International Trade, Finance, and Education. In addition to her industrial expertise, Mitra is an accomplished academic researcher, specialising in Business Management, Leadership, Human Resource Management, Marketing Management, FinTech and IT Management. Her work has been published by reputable publishers like Elsevier, IGI Global and MDPI, comprising over 50 scientific articles in peer-reviewed international journals, seven book chapters and a book on leadership. She is a member of CPHR and has served as a session chair and speaker at international conferences, presenting numerous papers. Currently, her research interests focus on the role of AI in HR and Marketing. Additionally, Mitra is authoring a book entitled *Ethics in Human Resource Management*, which is currently in press.

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FOREWORD

As the landscape of Human Resource Management (HRM) evolves at an unprecedented pace, *The Future of HRM in a World of Persistent Virtual Reality* stands as a groundbreaking exploration into one of the most transformative developments in our field. With over 20 years of experience in HR and consulting across diverse sectors such as hospitality, manufacturing, aviation, SAS and IT, I am delighted to present this insightful work.

In my international career, I have observed firsthand how technological advancements are not just augmenting but fundamentally reshaping HR practices. Virtual reality (VR) is one such advancement that holds exceptional promise for revolutionising how organisations approach HRM. This book addresses the profound implications of VR, a technology that I have seen fundamentally alter how companies manage talent, enhance training and drive performance. The integration of VR into HRM is not merely an innovation but a strategic evolution. From my work consulting with organisations, it is evident that VR's immersive capabilities can transform traditional HR functions. For instance, VR's ability to create highly realistic training environments offers employees unparalleled opportunities for experiential learning. This not only enhances skill acquisition but also improves retention and application of knowledge in real-world scenarios. Moreover, VR presents a compelling tool for advancing diversity and inclusion. By providing unbiased, consistent experiences, VR can mitigate unconscious biases in recruitment, training and evaluation processes. This aligns with the growing demand for more equitable HR practices, reflecting a critical shift towards inclusivity that I have championed in my consulting work.

Performance management, a cornerstone of effective HRM, is another area where VR's impact is profound. Traditional performance evaluation methods often struggle with objectivity and engagement. VR's ability to simulate various scenarios and provide real-time, interactive feedback can lead to more precise and actionable performance assessments. This dynamic approach supports a more responsive and effective performance management system, something that is increasingly essential in today's fast-paced work environment. The economic implications of VR for HRM are also noteworthy. While the initial investment

may be significant, the long-term benefits – ranging from improved employee engagement to enhanced organizational efficiency – offer substantial returns. My consulting experience has consistently shown that strategic investments in technology lead to significant benefits, making VR a sound investment for future-focused HR departments.

That being said, as the possibilities of VR are explored, it is crucial to recognise its limitations and approach its integration with a balanced perspective. While VR presents exciting opportunities, the challenges associated with its implementation cannot be overlooked. I acknowledge that one significant limitation is the substantial initial investment required for VR technology. The costs associated with acquiring VR equipment, developing content and maintaining the technology can be considerable. This financial commitment may present a barrier for many organisations, particularly those with constrained budgets. Despite the promising benefits, it is essential for organisations to carefully evaluate their readiness and capacity to invest in VR, ensuring that the technology aligns with their strategic goals and offers a sustainable return on investment.

Likewise, while VR provides immersive and interactive training experiences, it is important to acknowledge that these simulations may not fully replicate the complexities of real-world interactions. VR environments, despite their sophistication, can sometimes fall short in capturing the nuanced dynamics of human behaviour and workplace scenarios. This limitation underscores the necessity of integrating VR with traditional methods of training and performance management to ensure a comprehensive approach. Another aspect to consider is the adaptability of VR systems to diverse organizational contexts. The effectiveness of VR in enhancing performance management can vary depending on how well the technology is tailored to specific needs and goals. Organisations must be prepared to continuously assess and adjust their VR implementations to align with evolving requirements and to complement other performance management practices effectively.

As readers delve into the pages of this book, I encourage you to approach it with both curiosity and critical thinking. The *Future of HRM in a World of Persistent Virtual Reality* offers valuable insights into how VR can reshape HR practices, but it is equally important to explore the limitations and challenges discussed. Understanding the full spectrum of VR's impact will enable you to make informed decisions about how to leverage this technology effectively in your own organizational context.

In examining the transformative potential of VR, this book provides a balanced view that considers both the opportunities and the constraints of this technology. As you explore its chapters, you will gain a deeper understanding of

how VR can be harnessed to drive innovation in HRM while also recognising the need for careful implementation and integration. *The Future of HRM in a World of Persistent Virtual Reality* is an essential read for HR professionals, business leaders, and technology enthusiasts. It is a thought-provoking resource that will help you navigate the complexities of VR in HRM and inspire you to consider how this technology can be strategically applied to meet your organisational needs. I trust that this book will not only inform but also challenge you to think critically about the role of VR in shaping the future of HRM. Embrace the insights it offers, consider the limitations discussed and explore how VR can be strategically applied to drive innovation while being mindful of its constraints.

With best wishes

Gifty Parker

Faculty at University Canada West | Founder, CEO at
PARKER HR Solutions

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PREFACE

The digital age has heralded an epoch of disruptive change where the tangibility of the physical and intangibility of the virtual world are blurring further and further. Virtual reality (VR) stands right at the threshold of this change, where it has already started to redefine the topography of HRM. As organisations grapple with both the challenges and opportunities presented by VR, it becomes paramount to explore ways in which this technology can be harnessed in various HR functions ranging from recruitment and onboarding to training, development, and employee engagement.

These leading scholars and practitioners come together to examine the many dimensions of how VR impacts HRM. This edited volume provides comprehensive exploration in terms of how VR is going to transform HR practices, offering insights into theoretical and applied issues.

The book opens with a review of theoretical perspectives on VR in HRM, thus setting the ground for an in-depth understanding of the impact that immersion technologies may have on organisational practices. In this work, consecutive areas will be reviewed, among which is virtual academic entrepreneurship – where VR assumes a lead role in developing soft skills and fostering entrepreneurial mindsets. It also deeply explores the very critical process of virtual onboarding with a model that charts the phases necessary to create an immersive and effective onboarding experience.

The following chapters, therefore, deal with the strategic integration of VR in HRM, both opportunities and challenges. This book will show how VR can change the game with respect to recruitment, training and engagement but highlight also that managing the process of change well will be necessary if its full benefits are to be realised.

The contributors to this volume articulate quite clearly that the integration of VR into HRM is not without its challenges. These are from cultural alignment and development of digital organisational culture to complexities involved in implanting and implementing VR-based training and development programmes. These chapters provide very important insights for HR professionals, organisational leaders and scholars who would like to navigate the complexities of VR in the workplace.

The book not only mirrors current tendencies but looks into the future of HRM in a VR-enhanced, pervasive world. We truly believe that this volume may prove helpful for those intending to understand the potential of VR and help in facilitating its use within their human resources practice so that organisations will be better suited to thrive in the digital age.

-Dr Dinesh Kumar, Dr Nidhi Suthar, Dr Hamed Taherdoost
& Dr Mitra Madanchian
Editors

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bringing this book to reality has been a collective journey, and we are deeply grateful to all those who have contributed to this project.

First and foremost, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the esteemed contributors of this volume. Your experience, commitment and ingenuity have made up the spine of this book. Your willingness to plunge into uncharted territories at the intersection of virtual reality and human resource management has produced a work that we believe will become a leading resource among scholars and practitioners alike.

We are deeply indebted to our colleagues and fellow members of the academic and professional communities who offered valuable comments, advice and encouragement during the preparation of this book. We are highly indebted to Dr Sanjeev Kumar, Department of Economics, Hansraj College, Delhi University; Dr Nitin Bisht, Department of Sociology & Social Work, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University; and Dr Abhishek Singh, Department of Human Resource Management, Indian Institute of Management, Rohtak, for their very valuable inputs that most certainly furthered the depth and scope of this piece of work.

Special thanks go to Nick Wallwork of Emerald publishing who considered this book for publication and offered all the necessary support in bringing it out. Gratitude is also due to Aimee Wright for helping at various stages. We acknowledge also the help and dedicated efforts of Ms Sheena Reghunath of the Emerald publishing team during the post-editorial work. Only through their combined efforts could this book meet the highest standards of quality and relevance.

We also would like to extend our gratitude to the editorial and production team, whose tireless efforts behind the scenes saw this book to press. Your high level of professionalism and commitment has been the vital key to making our aspirations real.

We would like to thank our talented, dedicated and professional team Hamta Business Corporation, and Q Minded | Quark Minded Technology Inc for their support throughout this journey. We will also be most grateful to acknowledge support by our respective institutions, whose resources and

encouragement were invaluable in creating a conducive environment for our research and writing.

Lastly, to our families and loved ones – thank you for your patience, understanding and unwavering support. Your belief in how essential this work is having been our greatest motivation.

To everyone who played any role in the making of this book, whether through direct contribution or quiet support, we extend our deepest gratitude. This book would not have come into being without you.

-Dr Dinesh Kumar, Dr Nidhi Suthar, Dr Hamed Taherdoost
& Dr Mitra Madanchian
Editors