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# Our Best of 2022: Making Sense of an Uncertain World



By INSEAD Knowledge

**This year's trending articles offer insights ranging from how to work and manage better to what the economy might hold in 2023.**

2022 was the year the world finally emerged from the depths of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. But the fragile recovery was soon hobbled by numerous setbacks, many of them interlinked: Russia's invasion of Ukraine; a cost-of-living crisis caused by runaway inflation; soaring interest rates; and rising tensions between the United States and China.

INSEAD professors shone a light on how we could navigate the volatility and prepare for what might come in the year ahead, while improving how we work and live.



## **A new way of working**

How should managers lead? The right answer to this perennial poser evolves with social and cultural values and norms. In the times we live in, effective leaders balance compassion with performance, create psychologically safe environments, embrace disruption and empower employees to choose their tasks under the right conditions.

### **1. How to Show Compassion Without Compromising on Performance**

*Mark Mortensen, INSEAD, and Heidi K. Gardner, Harvard Law School*

Many leaders think they have to choose between delivering results and supporting employees' needs. They don't - but doing both sustainably requires careful navigation.

### **2. How to Design for Disruption**

*Amit Chadha, L&T Technology Services Limited, and Sameer Hasija, INSEAD*

Why a structured approach can turn a volatile world into a growth opportunity.

### **3. Psychological Safety Unlocks the Potential of Diverse Teams**

*Henrik Bresman, INSEAD, and Amy C. Edmondson, Harvard Business School*

The dissimilar backgrounds of diverse team members often result in clashes unless care is taken to create a psychologically safe environment.

#### **4. Should Employees Be Allowed to Choose What They Want to Do?**

*Phanish Puranam, INSEAD, and Marlo Raveendran, UC Riverside*

The degree of specialisation is the deciding factor.



#### **Finding more meaning at work**

The pandemic triggered much soul-searching about what we do, why we do it and how to lead more meaningful lives. On this journey of self-discovery, it is important to ask ourselves the right questions and learn from the experience of those who have come out the other side with more fulfilling lives. The good news is, we can all learn to face and harness uncertainty.

#### **1. How to Find Fulfilment by Taking a Step Down**

*Winnie Jiang, INSEAD; Claire Harbour, Culture Pearl; and Antoine Tirard, NexTalent*

Three stories of professionals who bucked the trend and found greater meaning in their work life.

#### **2. Finding Meaning in Life**

*Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, INSEAD*

Create a compelling self-narrative based on the five pillars that influence the way we experience meaning.

### **3. Can We Get Better at Navigating Uncertainty?**

*Nathan Furr, INSEAD*

What innovators have learnt that empowers them to face the uncertainty of new pursuits.



### **Economic instability and rising inequality**

A war in Europe, an energy crisis, historic inflation and turbulence in China slowed the global economy down in 2022, with repercussions on talent distribution among countries and the cost of living, among others. While no one can predict what the future holds, knowing how we got here – as these articles by INSEAD professors explain – can help us prepare for the possibilities.

### **1. The World's Most Talent Competitive Countries, 2022**

*Bruno Lanvin, Portulans Institute, and L. Felipe Monteiro, INSEAD*

Mounting talent inequalities could become a significant roadblock to reaching key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **2. A Perfect (Macroeconomic) Storm**

*Antonio Fatás, INSEAD*

The outlook for the world economy next year doesn't inspire much optimism.

## **3. China's Economy: Dragon in Turbulence**

*Pushan Dutt, INSEAD*

Anaemic growth and a crippling economic war with the United States weigh on Xi Jinping even as he cements his position as China's most powerful leader since Mao.



## **Working with AI**

From powering online searches to tracking the spread of Covid-19, artificial intelligence has transformed how we live, work and play. And the possibilities continue to proliferate – in consumer and commercial realms, as well as the public sphere. The bottom line remains, though, that AI should be used responsibly and ethically.

## **1. AI: A World of New Opportunity and Risk**

*Theodoros Evgeniou and Caroline Zimmerman, INSEAD, and Kay Firth-*

*Butterfield and Arunima Sarkar, World Economic Forum*

A new toolkit for C-suite executives on how to responsibly adopt artificial intelligence.

## **2. Creating People-Centric International Organisations With AI**

*Ruth McLachlin, World Economic Forum; Katherine Tatarinov and Tina Ambos, University of Geneva; and Phanish Puranam, INSEAD*

The United Nations is both a fascinating playground for artificial intelligence applications and an exciting showcase of AI implementation problems and solutions.

## **3. How Can Managers Use AI to Find the Right People?**

*Stewart Black, INSEAD, and Patrick van Esch, Kennesaw State University*

Eight recommendations to help firms win the war for talent.



### **Responsible business solutions**

All the best strategies, technologies and indeed money in the world count for little if not properly harnessed. In fact, they could do a lot of harm in the wrong hands. To help businesses stay on the right course, INSEAD professors proposed solutions that contribute towards responsible practices. These

range from designing a circular business strategy that works; to integrating robust checks against abuses or the harmful use of artificial intelligence and technology; to ensuring impact investments achieve desired outcomes.

### **1. Designing a Circular Business Strategy That Works**

*Luk Van Wassenhove, INSEAD*

To avoid costly mistakes due to overly optimistic assumptions, a good understanding of the market and the product is needed.

### **2. 'Tech for Good' Needs a 'Good Tech' Approach**

*Theodoros Evgeniou and Ludo Van der Heyden, INSEAD*

Responsible practices using tested processes must be the focus when creating new technology.

### **3. Can Private Equity Make Money While Doing Good?**

*Claudia Zeisberger, INSEAD*

With the right tools, investors can help avoid an impact investing debacle.

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#### **About the author(s)**

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