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A Special Message from Charlie and Jim

And now for something completely different (apologies to Month Python).

Yes, yes, we know; that's an incredibly overused phrase. But we **are** offering something at least *slightly* different this month.

In the interest of simplifying your lives (and ours) we've shifted to a new format. Here you'll find just a short synopsis of each of this month's articles; the full versions are online and just a click away. Each article is online on its own separate web page, as well as immediately downloadable in a pdf file. It's your choice.

More importantly, we are making this newsletter and our accompanying blog a much more **interactive**, conversational forum – a place to explore ideas and issues as part of global community.. We're getting a lot tougher on our authors (and ourselves) by requiring them to produce short, pithy case studies, opinion pieces, and provocative ideas. It will take you less time to read them; in return, we expect you to share your thoughts with us and your fellow readers..

Each article includes not only a request for an email comment, but a link so you can post a quick thought immediately on the blog version.

If we're successful and this approach "takes," we'll all benefit from our mutual participation in a much more active conversation – not about the *future* of work, but about what's happening – and must happen – **today**. We do try to stay ahead of the curve, but our energy is really all about what we – and you – have to do *today* – right now – to influence the future. As Peter Drucker (bless his soul) once said (in so many words), "The only sure way to predict the future is to create it."

Our passion, and our focus, is on the work *experience*: What's happening *today* that will determine our collective future? We can't divine the answer to that very big question on our own; that's where you, and your experiences and perspectives, come in.

That said, you'll see a few other format changes in the newsletter below.

We're also committing to producing reasonably coherent, single-themed newsletters, with an actual editorial calendar so you'll not only know what's coming, but will be able to contribute to it before the fact. That's right: we're actively encouraging short, pithy contributions from you, our dear readers. One thing we do know about the world of work: it's full of diversity, and the only way to make sense of it is to hear many voices.

Our feature article this month ("[Are Municipal Governments Unwittingly Hobbling the New World of Work?](#)") was written by our friend **Mim King**, whose candor and insights we value immensely. Mim's story of her experience with her home city of Lexington,

Kentucky, sets our theme for this month: the role of local governments – and local public action – in contributing to quality of life in the business world.

Charlie's thought piece on "micropolitan" areas follows ("[What is a Micropolitan Area - Why Should You Care?](#)"). It's part of our new "Compass" series – providing direction and guidance for the journey we're all taking together. Again, comments and new ideas are more than welcome.

Finally, we continue to produce a "rant" each month, and while our style may be going a bit upscale, we still intend to say what we think and to say it in ways that will stimulate, provoke, and maybe even anger you enough to talk back to us. This month ("[The Power to Tax Is . . .](#)") we ourselves were provoked by Mim's tale of her tax troubles with Lexington, so we sound off on the broader issue of public policy and the role of governments in the business world.

This experiment will only work if you jump in and engage with us. Come on in – the water's just fine.

Just one more note: many thanks to Gary Bowen of Publicom-USA, who helped us conceive of this new format, and worked diligently to shape our thinking and our writing. He also spent a good deal of time with Mim King and contributed mightily to the telling of her story.

As usual, your comments and reactions are more than welcome. And as always, please [send your thoughts to us](#) at any time.

About the Work Design Collaborative and *Future of Work Agenda*

Future of Work is a global network of resources – practitioners, thought leaders, researchers, and senior consultants – who are committed to building and implementing physical, social, and technology-based work environments that are cost-effective, socially and environmentally responsible, and personally satisfying.

We are focused on defining the future of work and helping our members and clients achieve new levels of workforce and workplace productivity. *Future of Work* produces and distributes management tools, surveys, benchmark databases, white papers and technical reports, conferences and workshops, newsletters, books and articles, and public presentations on the changing nature of work. The Work Design Collaborative, LLC, provides leadership and infrastructure services for the *Future of Work* community.

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