



“Help Jane,

Stop This Crazy Thing!”

If you're old enough to remember this familiar plea from futuristic working grunt, George Jetson (or fortunate enough to have caught re-runs on retro channels), you know that we're getting very close – and in some cases, surpassing – the space age work place portrayed in the cartoon, *The Jetsons*.

There are innumerable reports claiming to foretell the fantastical workplace of the future. The website, [Fastco.exist](#), the website of the magazine, *Fast Company*, cites a lengthy article from the blog/consultancy, PSFK – an acronym representing the initials of the company's two founders – that offers a rather credible prediction of the workplace to come.

As with all predictions, much of the talk of future workplace shifts is mere speculation, but a good bit is grounded in ideas and technology that are already underway and existing just under the radar. Here are some of the featured ideas:

Office feedback will no longer come in the form of annual reviews. As with seemingly everything else today, critiques and advice will be offered up in real time as online reviews, accompanied by suggested readings as part of constructive feedback systems.

Training opportunities will begin with college students, where they are matched with startups, and are able to learn all the

programs the companies use, take part in Skillshare classes, participate in projects and serve on panels. Virtual learning libraries, where experts can share information via written text and videos, are likely to appear as well.

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These proactive types of in-the-trenches training would be particularly useful for the produce industry, where young talent could take advantage of the opportunity to be electronically immersed in a company's culture while still in school, and hit the ground running once hired.

Another prediction is that we will see the emergence of more pop-up offices, modular work pods or sound-absorbing, pink noise systems that block out nearby conversations. This would allow for hyper-focused workspaces within a more populated office. Pop-up offices will also come to mean virtual spaces for employees to connect. Nearly all the futuristic work prophecies include an advanced telepresence component. Some even include robots that will emulate the

physical nuances of the person speaking – or writing, texting, emailing, etc.

One trend that is beginning to take shape is the consideration of the health toll that sitting at a desk for long periods of time

takes on the body. So we are likely to see the proliferation of standing workstations, chair-based exercise systems like OfficeGym and treadmill work platforms.

So, we ask ourselves, what will our workplace look like in five years? Ten? Twenty? This is an invitation to imagine the best and work to make it become a reality.

Soon, instead of having to interact with the cranky Mr. Spacely, all the George Jetsons out there will receive regular, constructive criticism from their more socially sensitized superiors, through a mitigating wall of online privacy, within the confines of their own pink noise bubble as they stand on their workspace treadmills, for which they will have mastered successfully the art of starting and stopping. 🌱