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CHRO Quarterly

A Magazine for Chief Human Resource Officers
and Their Teams

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Using the Talent Management Ecosystem to Drive Internal Mobility

Gartner Human Resources Practice

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CHRO Quarterly: Q3 2019

From the Editors: Ayomide Oluleye and Amanda Joseph-Little

Organizations need to keep pace with digital disruption, shifting markets and customers' quickly changing expectations and needs. Organizations that fail to move at this speed risk short-term losses to more adaptive competitors and long-term irrelevance.

Business leaders recognize this imperative as the new normal and are working to make their organizations more agile and flexible in response to the accelerating pace of change. In the most recent issue of CHRO Quarterly, we described the strategy for achieving these long-term goals as "innovation as a state of being."

The theme for this issue is implementing innovation. CHROs are looking for new ways to make strategic impacts as their organizations attract new talent, adopt new processes and incorporate new technologies. Such transformation requires constant change. That is why we believe CHROs can implement innovation at their organizations by moving to "continuous HR."

"HR's Role Supporting Agile Across the Organization" is this quarterly's feature article. It helps CHROs anticipate changes that may result from their organizations applying agile methodologies and presents three changes CHROs can make to strategically align HR with the broader organization.

We know CHROs are looking for new ways to organize HR as their organizations change roles, teams and reporting relationships. In "Piloting Agile HR Projects," we show them how they can keep pace with employees by introducing agile methodologies to HR.

Regarding changing job roles, CHROs know they can add strategic value by anticipating the talent impacts of digital disruption. In "Redefining Job Roles During Digital Transformation," we introduce a framework that CHROs and their executive peers can continuously use to categorize the new technologies' effects on job roles.

Organizations are relying more on teams to meet their goals for speed, growth and innovation. To do so, teams need a supportive enabling environment. In "Promoting Psychological Safety to Further Innovation," we introduce Dr. Amy Edmondson's concept of psychological safety and provide practical guidance for achieving it.

Psychological safety is built on a foundation of trust, particularly among team members. In this issue's Voice of the CHRO Interview, Elyn Shook, Accenture's chief leadership and human resources officer, describes how Accenture bases the co-creation of the employee experience on a foundation of trust between employees and the organization.

Lastly, we discuss how CHROs can create internal mobility strategies that maximize the talent organizations already employ. By supporting internal talent mobility, organizations can address critical talent shortages to drive innovation and growth. Together, these articles provide CHROs with timely and relevant insights for channeling change at their organizations and in markets.

As employees' needs evolve in a fast-changing environment, the insights in this issue of CHRO Quarterly are aimed at preparing CHROs to evolve with them. We hope that in reading this issue, you will take away a few ideas for changing HR to move at the speed of its customers, the employees.



HR's Role Supporting Agile Across the Organization

By Ayomide Oluleye

The need to innovate in fast-changing and uncertain environments has led technology companies to adopt agile methodologies over the past two decades. In the digital era where “every company is a technology company,” more organizations are pursuing agility and flexibility within and beyond their IT departments.

Whether their organizations are pursuing full-scale agile transformation or simply moving toward smaller, cross-functional teams, HR leaders will need to adapt HR to better support agility and flexibility. To support agile organizations, HR functions must take a new, continuous approach to three areas: recruiting, learning and development (L&D) and performance management.

Traditional Approach

Traditionally, HR structures its support approach around calendar dates. Leaders develop plans, and HR rolls out finished products to the organization at certain dates and times. For example, performance management at many organizations centers on a year-end annual performance review.

This approach makes sense in static, predictable environments, but few organizations find themselves in such places in the digital era. To compete in dynamic, uncertain environments with empowered customers, organizations are empowering teams

HR leaders will need to adapt HR to better support agility and flexibility.

within and outside IT to become faster-moving. These faster-moving teams are smaller, cross-functional and customer-centric. Because they move at the speed of customers, teams often need an L&D solution yesterday and critical talent the day before that.

In this new environment, a traditional approach that arranges formal training sessions on a fixed, future date or begins talent acquisition activities after a job opening emerges risks misalignment with the business. HR leaders can better support agile across the organization by taking a continuous approach.

Continuous Approach

In a continuous approach, HR works in shorter cycles to rapidly deliver solutions to employees as their needs arise, and certain HR activities are not organized around a calendar. Instead, they are organized flexibly around employees' evolving needs.

Ultimately, this means HR teams must become smaller, cross-functional and employee-centric — in a word, agile. A continuous approach serves as an onramp to agile HR. In the short term, the changes this approach calls for do not require HR to be agile. However, sustaining the approach over time requires constant employee feedback and frequent iteration — the crux of agile. By recognizing and acting on the activities HR should change to better support organizational agility and flexibility, HR will begin the journey to agile HR.

Continuous Recruiting

A continuous recruiting approach shifts talent acquisition activities from occurring episodically after job openings to recurring continuously. Traditionally, recruiting reacts to an event such as a job becoming vacant and develops a plan to attract a qualified pool of applicants to fill the position.

In a continuous approach, recruiters develop long-term relationships with talent, some of whom may not be

By recognizing and acting on the activities HR should change to better support organizational agility and flexibility, HR will begin the journey to agile HR.



actively job searching, to gradually build their interest in joining the organization.¹ This involves sending personalized messages that introduce prospective candidates to the recruiter and the organization, qualifying candidates with specific references to past accomplishments and mutual connections, and continuously following up with relevant and useful information.

Recruiting will source this information from teams. Continuous recruiting recognizes talent acquisition is a shared responsibility that requires buy-in by teams, as cross-functional collaborative teams are the organizing unit of agile organizations. This approach requires recruiting to continuously meet with teams to learn about their work, the skills required to perform the work and any potential gaps.

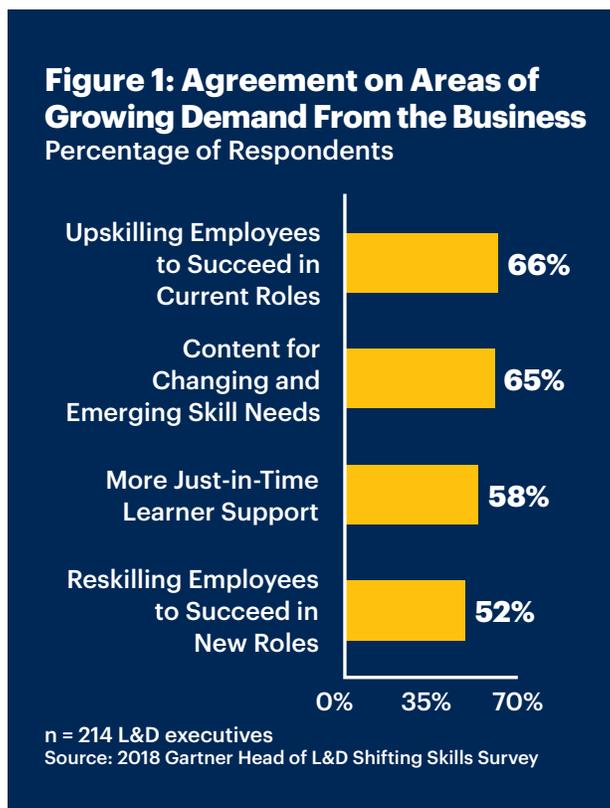
Recruiting must take and credibly communicate this information to prospective candidates, showing them how they can take on a compelling career opportunity by filling a team's need. For exceptional candidates, this may include

speaking with team members prior to the interview process to ensure cultural fit.

In short, continuous recruiting supports agile organizations by flexibly responding to rapidly evolving talent needs. It maintains a pipeline of candidates by building up the organization's employer brand and constantly collecting feedback from teams, not just hiring managers. This co-ownership of the talent acquisition process leads to better cultural fits and smoother transitions into organizations.

Continuous L&D

A continuous L&D approach shifts L&D activities from occurring episodically in formal settings to recurring continuously in informal settings (see Figure 1). Traditionally, L&D develops training programs that it releases at fixed times or requires employees to complete before a certain time. Often, employees complete trainings individually, separate from their teams.



In a continuous approach, L&D works to foster a learning culture based on peer learning. L&D shifts from corporate universities and in-person lectures to more informal, continuous types of learning.² L&D accomplishes this by embracing digital tools such as artificial intelligence (AI) and content libraries that allow teams to develop new skills by seeking out information and sharing knowledge.

L&D can build this learning culture by:

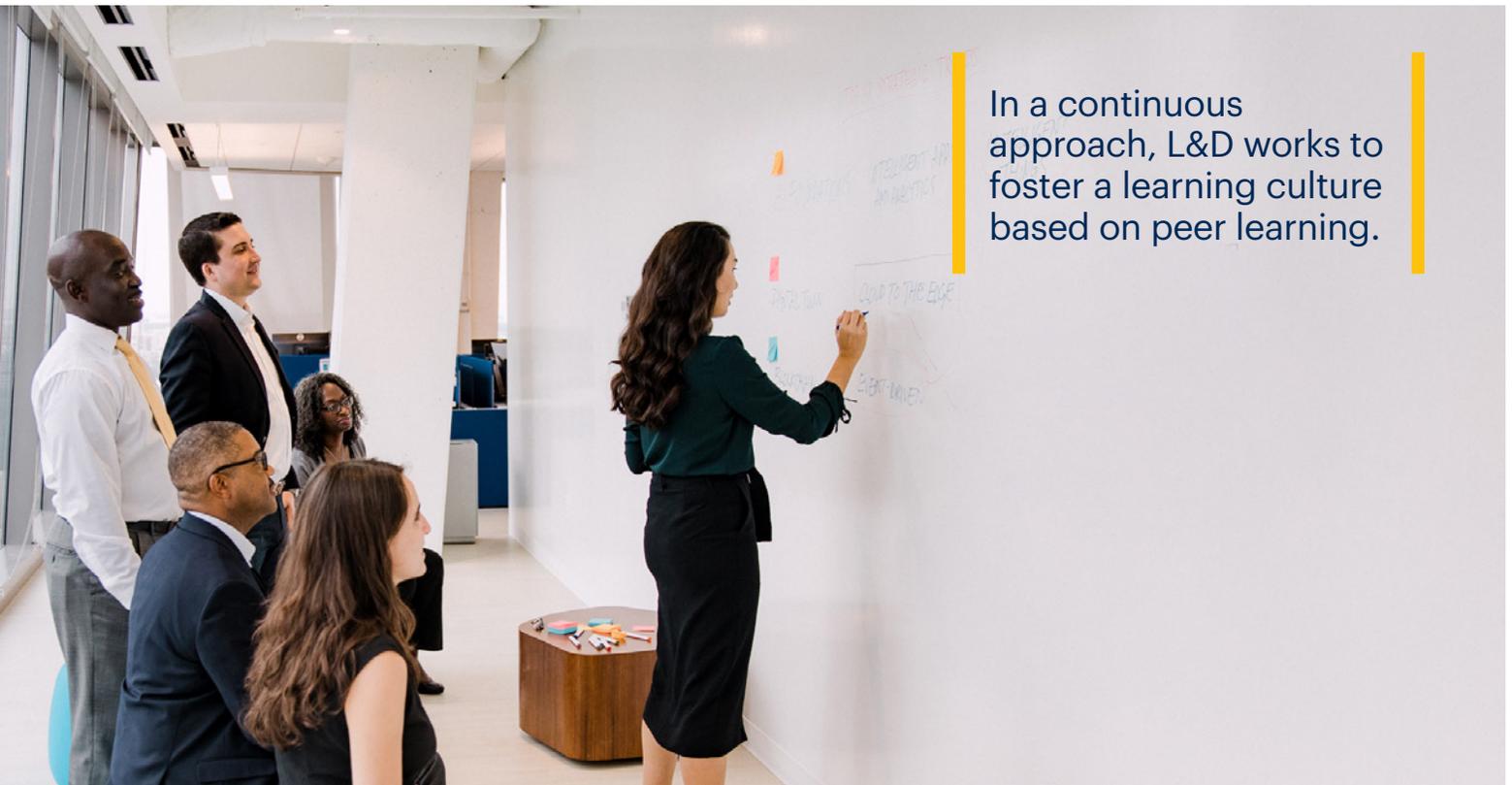
-  Providing on-demand information so teams can access information when they need it
-  Developing social networks to easily share information
-  Sharing topics and applied learning opportunities such as rotational assignments

Agile teams move at the speed of customers; to keep up with their needs, teams will need to take on unfamiliar tasks. L&D must continuously provide relevant learning opportunities

that teams can easily share. This requires L&D to constantly assess teams' needs and curate relevant online resources into easily consumable products.

To provide social networks for peer learning, L&D can engage employees to share their knowledge through wikis, blogs and forums. L&D can create expert directories that catalog employees' domain knowledge and encourage teams to tap their peers' expertise. Lastly, L&D should work closely with managers and their performance management partners to plan rotational assignments, enabling employees to better contribute to agile teams.

Continuous L&D supports agile organizations by shifting learning from a singular event to a cultural mainstay. It provides teams with tools to easily access and share knowledge and enables them to leverage peers' expertise. This learning culture enables teams to flexibly respond to changing customer needs by quickly applying new knowledge.



In a continuous approach, L&D works to foster a learning culture based on peer learning.

Continuous Performance Management

A continuous performance management approach shifts performance management activities from being time-bound and backward-looking to ongoing and future-focused. Traditionally, performance management revolves around an annual performance review and calibration sessions that segment individual employees by their performances over the past year.

In a continuous approach, HR works with managers to focus performance management more on teams while still providing individualized attention through continuous feedback. HR accomplishes this by mirroring agile's hypothesis-driven approach. Specifically, it ties performance management to overall organizational learning. Performance management becomes less a basis for rewarding or recognizing employees for what they did in the past and more a vehicle for driving the organization forward to compete in a fast-changing environment.

Again, the organizing units for agile organizations are teams. To iterate on products, they conduct retrospectives that consider how the team can apply what it learned in the past two weeks or so to improve product development. HR can support agile teams by meeting with them regularly to tap into what they've learned from their retrospectives and sharing insights from other teams who may have faced similar circumstances. This can further develop a culture of learning by encouraging peer learning and provide HR with a basis for improving overall team performance.

HR can set individual performance around hypotheses regarding why it thinks a course of action will result in quantifiable success.³

It requires employees and managers to regularly state and revisit underlying assumptions about how employees' daily activities will contribute to a team's development of useful and relevant products. This goes beyond traditional goal setting; it purposely sets up conversations for why success was or was not achieved and puts it in a larger team context.

The purpose is not primarily to evaluate employees' past performance. Rather, it is to draw from employees' and managers' experiences to learn how best to drive team-based results moving forward.

In sum, continuous performance management supports agile organizations by shifting its focus away from the past and the individual, toward the future and the team. It provides teams with ways to quickly adopt good practices from peers and enables employees to base their daily activities in what they and their managers believe will make the most impact. This performance management approach allows teams and individuals to more quickly learn from their experiences and drive outcomes.

Conclusion

As the pace of change accelerates, organizations are looking for new ways to compete. Some are expanding agile beyond IT to other business areas. No matter the scale at which agile is advancing in their organizations, HR leaders can support agile teams by taking a more continuous approach to recruiting, L&D and performance management.

¹ "Agile HR With SAFe," Scaled Agile, Inc.

² "Want Your Organization to Be Agile? L&D Can Help," Fulcrum Labs.

³ "Why Hypotheses Beat Goals," MIT Sloan Management Review

In a continuous approach, HR works with managers to focus performance management more on teams while still providing individualized attention through continuous feedback.

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The Future of Work: How HR Can Reimagine Work to Drive Performance

The “Future of Work” conjures up images of robots, automation and artificial intelligence. While important, along with these conspicuous shifts come a number of underlying trends with the potential to fundamentally change how work gets done. To drive organizational success and progress toward their desired culture, HR executives must recognize and adapt to these trends.

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Piloting Agile HR Projects

By Zachary Friedman



In today's fast-paced and ever-changing business environment, HR leaders are considering new project management approaches that keep pace with rapidly evolving employee needs. HR leaders are looking to agile, a project management methodology from the world of IT, to enable HR to consistently deliver relevant and useful products to employees.

However, many HR leaders are only at the beginning stages of their agile HR journeys; redesigning the function to be more flexible and less hierarchical is a difficult undertaking. It requires HR to work collaboratively and embrace change, drive efficiency through iteration and constant employee feedback and measure success through outcomes rather than inputs — a substantial shift away from traditional HR approaches.

To make this transition smoother, heads of HR have begun piloting agile on individual HR projects. With these pilots, HR leaders hope to learn how to scale agile HR, including the necessary project management, organizational design and mindset changes. To successfully pilot agile projects, HR leaders must:

1. Select suitable agile HR projects.
2. Form diverse teams.
3. Work in shorter work cycles.
4. Embrace a “fail fast” mindset.

Select Suitable Agile HR Projects

Not all HR projects are well-suited for agile methodologies. If HR leaders select unsuitable projects, the project is less likely to be successful and won't be a helpful test case for informing their efforts to scale agile HR. Projects with standardized, predictable steps, such as compliance-driven projects, are better served by traditional approaches.

HR leaders must select projects likely to have changing conditions so they can learn the best ways for HR staff to come together and flexibly respond to evolving employee needs. For example, revamping a performance management system is a suitable agile HR project because it involves uncertainty regarding employees' needs around performance reviews' frequency, scope and transparency.

In determining what HR projects are well-suited for agile, consider the following criteria:



The most valuable resource for agile HR pilots is a diverse project team.

- **Project characteristics** — Providing a new learning and development (L&D) tool or piloting a new performance management approach are examples of projects with suitable characteristics. Such projects have uncertain requirements that can be clarified through iterations; they are limited in scope so they won't have spillover effects to other areas of the talent management ecosystem and face few regulatory requirements.
- **Stakeholder characteristics** — Suitable stakeholders are open-minded, make decisions fairly quickly and are comfortable with ambiguity and experimentation.
- **Resourcing levels** — Look for projects where the cost is reasonable (based on the potential impact), where a project team can be formed with a diverse and balanced set of skill profiles and where members of the team are willing and able to collaborate. We recommend piloting two to five agile HR projects.

Form Diverse Teams

The most valuable resource for agile HR pilots is a diverse project team. Bringing together individuals from a range of experiences and backgrounds gathers a variety of perspectives and knowledge helpful for iterating and solving complex problems. Though the optimal team

size varies depending on the project's scope and complexity, we recommend small, diverse teams of three to seven people per project.

Agile HR projects are most effective when assembling smaller-sized collaborative teams because they can work more flexibly. When teams are smaller, creating and dissolving teams becomes much easier, and HR staff become freer to move cross-functionally to provide agile support. This diversity and mobility will increase the capabilities and breadth of expertise that can be provided for each project, allowing innovation and creativity to flourish.

It can be difficult to narrow down what skills to include on a diverse team. Generally, prioritize those with strong collaboration skills open to working in a new way. More specifically, however, think about what types of skills are important to each project. Project teams are newly created for each project, so pay attention to matching the project's capabilities to individuals'. Utilizing a talent pool with a variety of experiences across HR (or even outside the function) broadens the expertise that can address employees' challenges and provides HR leaders with valuable learning opportunities about the potential for greater collaboration in their functions.

To further increase the breadth of perspectives to offer, consider involving the end user, including

employees and managers, on HR projects. Their experience as end users can help HR staff empathize with important considerations that may be missed otherwise.

Lastly, since these teams employ such diverse contributors, managing them is less dependent on traditional HR experience. Effective agile managers can come from non-HR backgrounds and should include those with strong project management skills.

Work in Shorter Cycles

Shorter work cycles allow diverse project teams to frequently iterate product development based on employee feedback. Teams deliver prototypes of the product early in the process based on their hypotheses about what could meet employees' high-level requirements. The purpose of these prototypes is to elicit employee feedback so

teams only build out the core functionality necessary for employees to assess relevance and usefulness. With each testing session, teams learn from employees, continuing to build out the product or pivoting to another solution that would better serve employees (see Figure 1).

The three most common agile project techniques that help organizations manage work in this way are:

- **Minimum viable product (MVP)** — A product or resource released to customers or employees when partially designed, then tested by its users and evolved over time
- **Design “sprint” or “hackathon”** — A short and immersive project experience designed to expedite the product design and iteration process
- **Scrum** — A project management methodology that allows a team to self-organize and

Figure 1: Common Agile Project Management Cycle

Designing Evolving Solutions



Source: Gartner



emphasizes daily communication, allowing for quick changes over short periods of time

Each technique particularly emphasizes releasing a working prototype or solution at an earlier point, even if it's not fully complete. To put these techniques into practice, try releasing a "version 1.0" earlier on, so iteration can help evolve the product to be increasingly effective. By piloting two to five agile HR projects that operate in shorter work cycles, HR leaders will learn how agile teams in their functions can constantly collect and incorporate employee feedback in the product development process.

↪ Embrace a "Fail Fast" Mindset

To capitalize on shorter project cycles, HR staff need to embrace the idea that many projects will evolve over time and some may end in different

places than expected. In other cases, the project may be terminated. Therefore, HR staff on agile pilots need to embrace a "fail fast" mindset.

Agile teams with this mindset embrace experimentation. They believe failure is part of the process and that it is better to act fast and learn from it. They work to spot issues early on and correct them immediately. One way to help make this mindset shift among HR staff is to create guidelines for success; for example, employees intend to actually use the solution, or the project is somewhat scalable. Another way is to create guidelines for failure; for example, we're not testing core functionality with employees earlier than with the traditional approach.

These guidelines help teams evaluate a project's progress as well as signal that failure is acceptable as long as they use the agile approach and learn.

Agile teams with this mindset embrace experimentation. They believe failure is part of the process and that it is better to act fast and learn from it. They work to spot issues early on and correct them immediately.

Redefining Job Roles During Digital Transformation

By Joseph Macy

Artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, machine learning and other emerging technologies promise to change how work gets done. They present opportunities for organizations to change business models, enter new markets and work more productively.

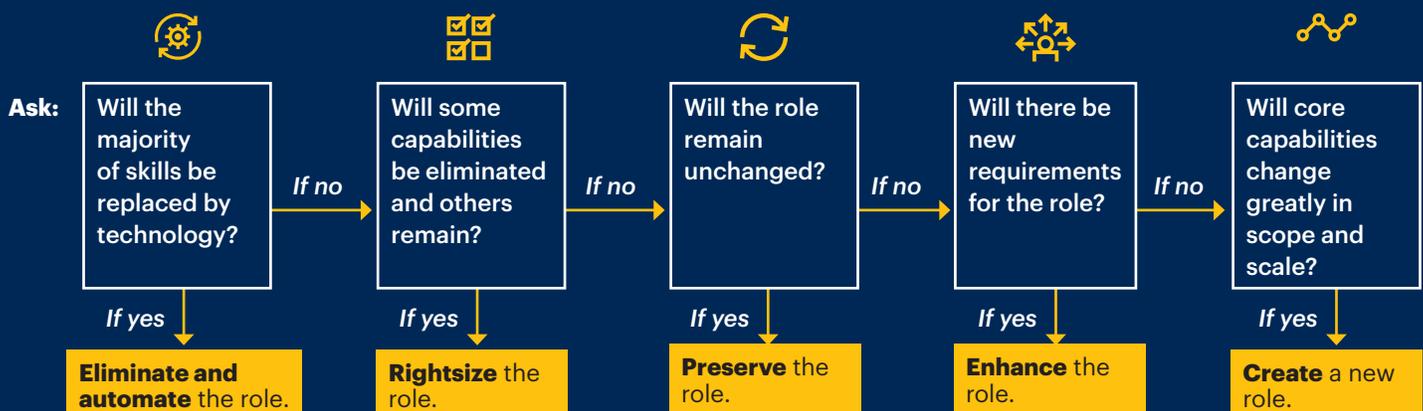
However, HR and other leaders are uncertain about how these digital transformations may impact not just how work gets done, but the job roles required to perform that work. This article prepares CHROs to

evaluate the impact of technological changes on jobs by categorizing them in one of five ways: eliminate, rightsize, preserve, enhance or create a new role.

Categorize Roles by Expected Changes

CHROs should partner with other functions — IT in particular — to gain a more holistic understanding of the opportunities and risks presented by a given technological trend. Once HR has identified the new technologies that will change how work gets done at their organizations, it should (re)define the relevant job roles into one of five categories (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: How to Categorize Roles



Source: Gartner



For each category, HR needs to consider the implications for the organization and employees. Considerations include, for example, updating compensation packages, rewriting role descriptions, updating performance criteria and communicating changes. HR can address these matters by having a comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges that may come with each decision and being transparent with the workforce.

Eliminate and Automate the Role

Eliminating roles in favor of automation is a sensitive area for HR leaders. Automation typically provides clear cost and efficiency benefits. However, before deciding to automate a role, an organization should first consider if it can train staff for other roles and whether any new roles will need to be created as a result of automation.

In situations where workers' skills are non-transferable to other roles in the company and they will be laid off, HR must be prepared to provide severance packages or other displacement benefits as well as address remaining employees' possible disengagement and concerns.

Rightsize the Role

Rightsizing a role means eliminating some of the duties the role requires and keeping others.

Organizations should do this if some jobs cannot be completely automated but can be reorganized to create sufficient value to justify keeping them. This can lead to varying levels of change for employees and will generate a spectrum of reactions throughout the workforce. Employees do not react uniformly to changes to their roles, but HR can provide support by ensuring the reason for and nature of the change is clearly communicated.

Further, ensuring employees feel they are actively part of the changes and understand their new roles' expectations will help maintain engagement and contribute to the overall success of the new role. HR must be actively involved with all aspects of these changes to ensure it properly adjusts total rewards, maintains pay equity and defines performance management standards.

HR must be actively involved with all aspects of these changes to ensure it properly adjusts total rewards, maintains pay equity and defines performance management standards.

Preserve the Role

The decision to preserve a role in its current state means the organization does not anticipate an immediate impact from technological changes, but it also means HR's job is not finished. HR should continue to proactively monitor the role to determine if emerging technological trends require the role to be recategorized.

Also, if other changes or rumors in the workforce occur prior to the decision to preserve a given role, employee engagement may be impacted, along with an increased attrition risk due to uncertainty. Proactive communication with workers is vital to minimizing these occurrences and preserving staff's trust.

Enhance the Role

The changes with enhancing a role closely mirror those with rightsizing roles. HR must be

involved in communicating changes to the staff, updating compensation and benefits packages to reflect the added responsibility and workloads, and maintaining pay equity standards. Role enhancement can be exciting for employees, but not all employees will embrace their additional responsibilities. By remaining active throughout the enhancement process, HR departments can ensure employees do not become overwhelmed and remain engaged and committed to the organization and their new jobs.

Create a New Role

Creating a new role can have positive outcomes for an organization, such as new opportunities for employees to grow and new ways for organizations to achieve business goals. It also presents challenges for HR in the form of job leveling, reporting relationships and compensation. Before creating a new role,



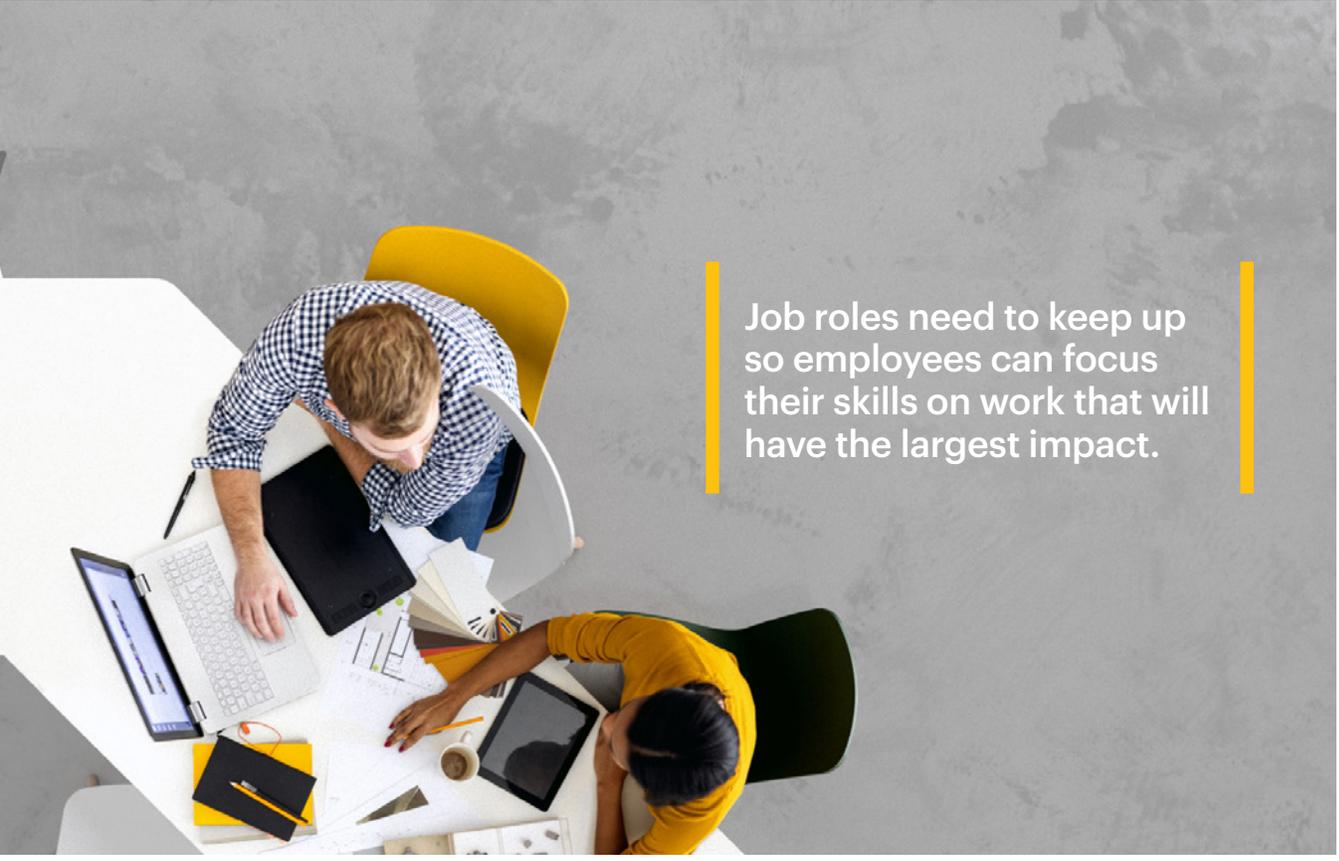
HR should ensure the role is necessary for the foreseeable future and not one that will be easily replaced by future technological developments.

CHROs should also bear in mind that creating new roles opens the door for cultural changes that can lead to reputational damage or decreases in employee engagement. Lastly, new roles will likely be competitive to hire for and thus demand not only generous rewards packages for hires but also extensive time to recruit. Taking time to define the role and communicate changes to the organization can help secure the upside of creating new roles while mitigating potential downsides.

Conclusion

Technological change is redefining how work gets done. Job roles need to keep up so employees can focus their skills on work that will have the largest impact. As responsibilities

become automated and new responsibilities emerge, CHROs should assess technological trends and categorize roles according to their anticipated impact. Each category presents a new role definition and carries risks, but by knowing and mitigating the risks, CHROs can effectively redefine job roles that continue to change with new technologies.



Job roles need to keep up so employees can focus their skills on work that will have the largest impact.



Promoting Psychological Safety to Further Innovation

By Hailey Bebel



To stay ahead of their competitors, organizations are pushing for greater innovation. Innovation requires teams to share novel — even unorthodox — ideas, make mistakes and subsequently learn from their mistakes to improve. However, innovation is as much an organizational outcome as it is a psychological process.

Better products and new sources of competitive advantage are more likely to come from organizations that promote psychologically safe environments, a construct pioneered by Dr. Amy Edmondson. HR leaders can promote a psychologically safe environment that furthers innovation by making structural changes to learning and development (L&D) and performance management and training leaders to model effective behaviors.

Dr. Edmondson's Research Findings

Dr. Edmondson finds employees are more likely to take risks and share their ideas if they feel psychologically safe at their organizations. Through her research on medical teams, Dr. Edmondson discovered that better-performing teams seemed to make more errors than those with worse performance. Continuing her research, however, she found the best-performing teams did not actually make more errors, but rather the members were more

open to sharing their ideas and admitting to, discussing and growing from their mistakes. This was due to the presence of psychological safety.

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is defined as an environment that encourages, recognizes and rewards individuals for their contributions and ideas by making individuals feel safe when taking interpersonal risks.¹

Employees in psychologically safe environments are more comfortable showing and employing their authentic selves without fear of being negatively blamed, punished or labeled as ignorant, incompetent or disruptive because they feel accepted and respected.

This creates a virtuous circle where employees feel more comfortable asking questions, seeking feedback, discussing their mistakes, experimenting, failing in their experiments, offering opposing perspectives, raising concerns and proposing novel and unorthodox ideas.

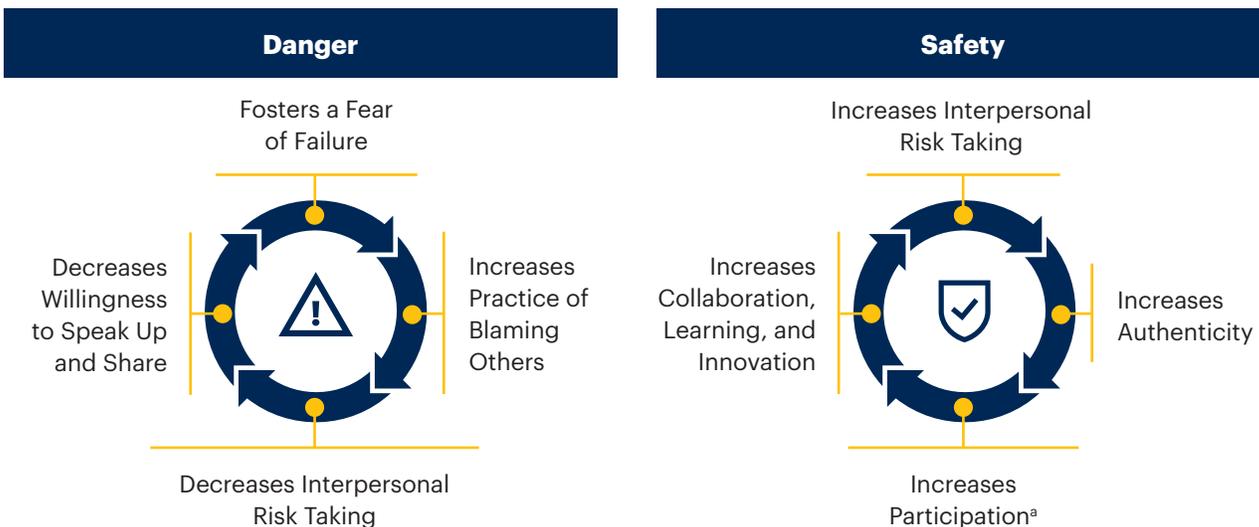


The virtuous circle continues as a psychologically safe environment creates an atmosphere of learning, collaboration and innovation.

When employees do not feel psychologically safe, however, they fear failure and blame others, decreasing their desire to take risks and further fostering the feeling of psychological “danger” (see Figure 1).

When feelings of psychological safety are present in an organization, employee performance improves. Our 2017 Culture Workforce Survey found when employees feel psychologically safe, their discretionary effort or willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty — such as looking for ways to perform their job more effectively — increases by up to 24%, improving their overall performance.

Figure 1: Psychological Danger Versus Psychological Safety



Source: Gartner

* Increases desire to ask questions, seek feedback, discuss mistakes, experiment, fail in experiments, offer opposing perspectives, raise concerns and propose novel and unorthodox ideas

Psychological safety is also strongly associated with an increase in active employee learning on the job. Research has shown psychologically safe workplaces motivate employees to learn and develop their capabilities to perform better in their roles and on their teams. These learning environments also enable teams to adopt new technologies faster, adapt to new market circumstances and customer requirements sooner, identify potentially catastrophic risks earlier and develop innovative products quicker.²

Given the numerous benefits associated with fostering psychological safety, CHROs should be aware of the things they can do to ensure it is successfully fostered within their organizations.

What CHROs Can Do

Shift Focus From the Individual to the Team

We have identified two structural changes CHROs can make to promote psychological safety at their organizations.

1. Shift from individual learning to team learning.
2. Shift focus from individual performance to team performance.

Team learning is a collaborative effort to achieve a common goal within your group. The goal is to reach your objective through dialogue and discussion as well as practice within the group. Through her research on teams, Dr. Edmondson found that learning structured around teams enables psychological safety, improving overall learning and performance.¹

Shifting to a team learning structure from an individual, lecture-based process can therefore help promote psychological safety among employees. These team structures help individuals feel comfortable asking for help, experimenting on their teams and seeking feedback from their team members by making learning a collaborative, rather than individual, endeavor.

This idea will require a shift from L&D specifically focusing on helping individuals learn new skills to creating autonomous, team-based and interactive learning processes. CHROs should work with their L&D teams to create these new programs geared toward team dialogue and

discussion. Collaborative learning will also require set expectations and role assignments that managers can assign to team members to ensure active participation.

The second structural change is shifting the focus from individual performance to team performance. The shift involves evaluating individuals based on their contributions to a team and assessing whether the team met its goals. Team performance focuses less on how well employees perform relative to their individual roles' goals and responsibilities and more on how well they share knowledge and whether the team achieved its goals.

This will more reliably promote psychological safety, rather than psychological danger, since individuals are more likely to fear failure when working alone. Evaluating teams for performance encourages employees to take more interpersonal risks, improving their overall participation and authenticity and ultimately increasing their ability and willingness to collaborate, learn and innovate.

The key to focusing on team performance is to ensure teams consider themselves multidisciplinary so employees of varying titles can feel comfortable contributing to the group. CHROs should work with managers to promote this idea of team performance over individual performance to encourage collaboration and ultimately psychological safety.

Promote Leadership Behaviors Supporting Psychological Safety

CHROs can also foster psychological safety in their organizations by promoting certain leadership behaviors and subsequently training leaders and managers to employ these behaviors.

The first behavior is to have leaders and managers focus on improving employee well-being in the workplace. Our research shows that well-being at work has the greatest impact on psychological safety, over emotional, health and financial well-being.³ One way to improve employee well-being at work is by cultivating positive relationships with their managers, including through career conversations where managers meet with employees to discuss their career aspirations and check in on their levels of career satisfaction.

CHROs should also work with leaders and managers to promote open and dialogue-based communication strategies that invite input from their employees. This can involve instituting an open door policy and making time to understand the different communication styles their employees prefer.⁴ Feelings of psychological safety increase by 21% when frequent and open dialogue is encouraged between employees and leaders. Managers should also work to encourage and facilitate dialogue between peers, as research has shown peer-to-peer discussions increase psychological safety by up to 22%.³

CHROs should lastly work with leaders and managers to encourage sharing mistakes and failures rather than discourage risk taking and discussing mistakes. Specifically, train leaders and managers to better understand errors are not always associated with poor performance and not all failure is negative. Intelligent failures,

in fact, bring valuable discoveries and learning opportunities to teams. Leaders and managers should therefore promote failure sharing by responding to the good and bad with similar appreciation.

Conclusion

When successfully instituted through structural and behavioral changes, psychological safety encourages employees to bring their authentic selves to work, take more risks, communicate openly and learn from their mistakes. This not only affects individual and team performance but ultimately benefits the entire business.

¹ "Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams," Administrative Science Quarterly.

² "Psychological Safety At Work: What Do Psychologically Safe Work Teams Look Like?" Medium.

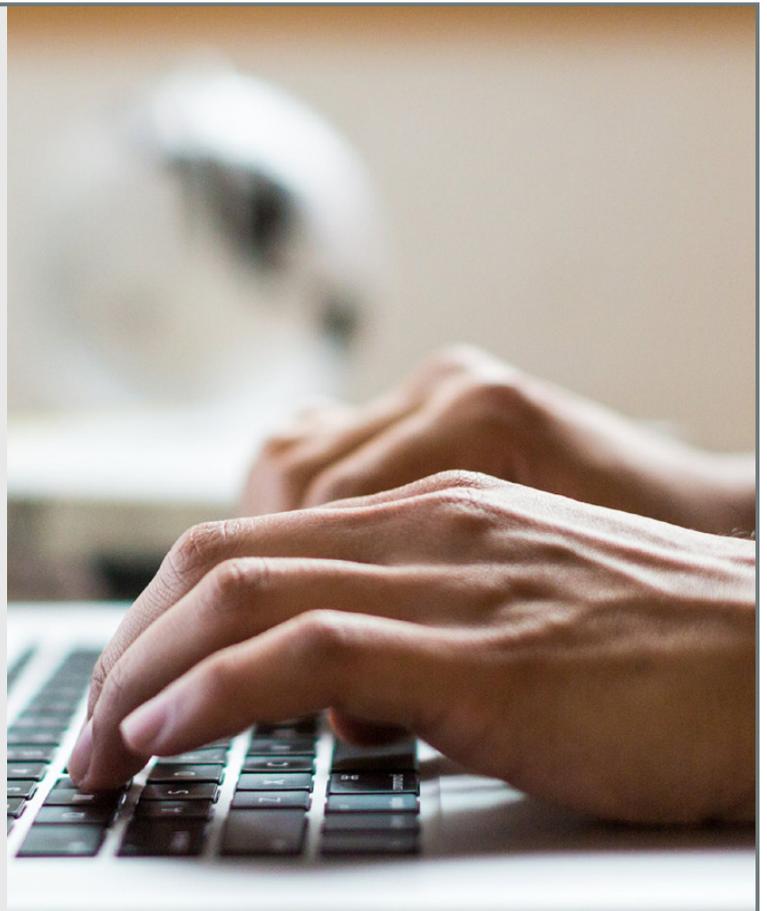
³ 2017 Gartner Culture Workforce Survey

⁴ "15 Simple Ways to Improve Team Communication," Workzone.

What type of manager are you?

Find out if your coaching approach causes more harm than good.

[Take the Quiz](#)



Voice of the CHRO

By Emily Strother

Every quarter, we interview chief HR executives to gain their perspectives on issues facing their businesses and HR functions.

This quarter, we spoke with Accenture's chief leadership and human resources officer, Ellyn Shook, about how Accenture co-creates the employee experience with its employees.





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Ellyn Shook

Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer, Accenture

About Ellyn Shook

Ellyn Shook is Accenture's chief leadership and human resources officer, responsible for helping the 477,000 people of Accenture succeed professionally and personally. Her global team of HR leaders and experts is reimagining leadership and talent practices to create the most truly human work environment in the digital age, fueling Accenture's differentiation in the market and ability to improve the way the world works and lives.

A member of Accenture's global management committee and investment committee, Ellyn is a strong advocate for inclusion and diversity, and Accenture has been widely recognized externally as an employer of choice and for its diversity efforts.

Ellyn serves on the board of trustees at Harvey Mudd College, the Women's Leadership Board of the Women and Public Policy program at Harvard's Kennedy School and the steering committee of Paradigm for Parity. She is also a member of the HR50 division of World50 and serves on the HR Policy Association Board of Directors. A 2015 article in Forbes.com named Ellyn one of the top 10 CHROs.

About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions — underpinned by the world's largest delivery network — Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With 477,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit the company at www.accenture.com.



How do you define the employee experience?

At Accenture, we don't limit the employee experience to the interactions employees have with HR services; we think of this only as part of a much broader definition of employee experience. Typically, HR designs the employee experience around "moments that matter" to employees, such as recruitment, hiring and promotion. An exceptional employee experience is dramatically different.

To foster an exceptional employee experience, our organization delivers on those traditional HR services, as well as what we refer to as living experiences. Living experiences are fluid and impact how our people experience our organization every day, whether at or away from work. Truly living experiences are defined by what ebbs and flows every day for an individual. Although HR leaders can't control these experiences independently, they can foster a culture that integrates employee perspective and organizational needs to enable a "living" employee experience.

How should HR leaders think about delivering a strong employee experience?

It is important to note that the language around who is responsible for the employee experience needs to be entirely reframed. Organizations need to listen to their people and co-create the experience with their current and future

employees. To get to this point, HR leaders need to be transparent and build trust with employees, so they feel comfortable sharing how the organization can help them be their true selves — the same person both inside and outside of work.

Additionally, HR leaders need to take advantage of their "digital age" ability to break down organizational silos and make the employee experience a cross-functional effort. HR leaders can start by asking, "What can the organization do for employees?" rather than, "What can HR do for employees?" If HR leaders focus only on what they do for employees, they won't be able to realize a truly exceptional employee experience because they will be missing the full strength of the entire organization.

For a priority that's so broad, how do you think about measuring it?

We measure employee experience in a really simple way. Large organizations tend to get bogged down in the possibility of thousands of metrics. Instead, we measure by listening deeply and regularly to our people. We seek to understand regularly how our people are experiencing life at Accenture, and then we connect those to organizational outcomes. We do this at the team level versus globally because that is where experience and engagement happens, and actions can take hold more quickly and effectively.

We're also making sure we're looking through the windshield and not the rearview — looking forward rather than looking backward. By



Living experiences are fluid and impact how our people experience our organization every day, whether at or away from work.

collecting insights through seamless interactions, such as through mobile pop-ups, Skype for business and instant messages with one question, it allows us to generate insights very quickly. We believe that if we collect information, we should feed it back quickly to our people. We have an unwavering belief that transparency builds trust, and trust allows us to accelerate the pace of change.

You mentioned trust is a crucial component of the employee experience. Can you share more about that, as well as highlight any other crucial components for ensuring a positive employee experience?

There are a couple of key ingredients I'd think of:

- **Trust:** Trust is the ultimate currency in a postdigital world. If you look at the Edelman Trust Barometer, it is very clear; one of the only institutions people trust today is their own employer. Leaders can build on this trust to create inspiring and exceptional living experiences for their people. Trust is not just an important component of a positive employee experience but also a positive customer experience and, frankly, even a positive experience as global citizens.
- **Co-Creation:** HR shouldn't be the one deciding what's important to employees, and we know our people will tell us what is important to

them. At Accenture, we never have a group of HR leaders sit alone in a room and try to design anything for our people. Everything we design for the employee experience is done through design-thinking sessions with the people that will take advantage of and live the experience: employees.

- **Progress Over Perfection:** We have a mantra in HR that is "progress over perfection." If we want to be a leader in the talent market and with our clients, we don't have the luxury of a year to design a new experience and another year to roll it out. We need to tell our people we will react and respond to them and serve them. We won't get everything right immediately, but our people will give us feedback, and we will keep moving forward and improving.

How does Accenture involve employees in co-creating the employee experience?

Our people are at the center of our business transformation or "revolution." To usher in our focus on employee experience, we decided to crowdsource the employee experience. We invested in crowdsourcing technology and invited both our current employees and individuals we aspired to hire to share ideas about their desired experience. We asked simple questions about what creates an ideal employee experience. We went to places such as LinkedIn and GitHub to invite individuals from a variety of fields — interactive marketing, data science, drone operations — into the "crowd."



Trust is not just an important component of a positive employee experience but also a positive customer experience ...

The goal was to use their perspectives to help us become a leader in digital business.

Their input created the roadmap for our employee experience strategy. Among other initiatives, we got rid of performance management and replaced it with what we call “Performance Achievement,” created an open and transparent internal “Careers Marketplace” and developed a virtual continuous learning and development environment we refer to as “Accenture Connected Learning.”

Additionally, we developed a tool called “Job Buddy,” which helps employees understand and update their skills based on what tasks might be automated. All of these initiatives were co-created with our people, based on them sharing what mattered most to them through the initial crowdsourcing.

And, what’s great is how excited our people have been to co-create their experience. Our people crave it, their creativity shines and ultimately our solutions are much more innovative.

Can you share more about how “Job Buddy” was co-created with employees?

We have a lot of core jobs involving tasks that will be lost to automation. As a company, we believe our people are our most important source of competitive advantage. So, it was important for us to keep human beings at the center and help our employees develop new skills in the midst of change. We did some short research stints to

understand employees’ needs, the jobs people would likely retain and those they would likely not. This was the beginning of the co-creation of our pilot, Job Buddy.

Our team built an algorithm to look at those in-demand skills, tell our employees what their current adjacent skills were and offer them ways to gain those new, related skills. We didn’t force anyone to learn those new skills, but wanted to give them the opportunity to develop the skills for the future. Employees told us they wanted to learn new skills, so we democratized employees’ learning. We proved that if you give people the opportunity, they will do training on their own.

To share a stat that demonstrates our people’s intellectual curiosity and desire to remain highly relevant, they’ve completed over 60 million self-directed learning activities in less than three years. As we expand Job Buddy across the organization, we will continue to evolve it to fit the needs of our people and our business.

What has the co-creation process shown you about employees’ expectations for their experience?

If you put trust in your people and then take action on the promised experience, employees won’t ask for unrealistic things. Employees aren’t going to ask for a Mercedes; instead, they will tell you what they really want and need.

We have lived by that and have sometimes had to address tough topics; frankly, it is some of the



If you put trust in your people and then take action on the promised experience, **employees won’t ask for unrealistic things.**

work I am most proud of. For example, we had a diversity and inclusion movement, Inclusion Starts With I, to help our people feel welcome and accepted just as they are. Employees shared that sometimes they felt they couldn't be the same person both outside and inside of work. People felt they needed to "code switch," or change how they act at work in order to fit in. We needed to change that. We needed to develop a culture of belonging.

If a certain priority or expectation is important for our people and helps enable them to be successful personally and professionally, then it's important for us.

From your perspective, how does the employee experience connect with the customer experience?

We are a talent-led business, so our employees' experience is directly connected to our clients' experience. Just as we help our clients innovate and succeed, we need to be doing the same thing with our employees. Our employee experience must be personalized, seamless and fluid because that is what we promise our clients.

And, at the center of it all, the more digital the company becomes, the more human connection is essential for employees and customers.

Finally, what are your biggest personal challenges as you think about the continued evolution of employee experience at Accenture?

The biggest challenge is that Accenture is a living business itself. Our Technology Vision recently published, and we are already thinking about the next horizon. For us, the next horizon means new ways of working, thinking and doing. I often hear the organization gets change fatigue, but I don't fully believe that. Often, I think HR is change-resistant; employees are more resilient than we give them credit for.

We need to create a mindset of our organization as a living organism. It goes back to the beginning: Life is very fluid. If life is fluid, life at work is fluid. We need to think of ways to keep evolving and changing. If you need a revolution, then you do that — hand in hand with your people.



We need to think of ways to keep evolving and changing. If you need a revolution, then you do that — **hand in hand with your people.**



Using the Talent Management Ecosystem to Drive Internal Mobility

By Benjamin Loring



Enterprises are increasingly looking to their own employees to address critical talent needs for several reasons:

- Enterprises face an increasingly tight external labor market, with low unemployment and acute skills shortages in critical areas.^{1,2}
- Employers benefit from the efficiencies of internal recruiting, including faster offer acceptance and greater satisfaction among hiring managers.³
- Employees also benefit: A lack of future career opportunities and lack of development opportunities at their current organizations are two of the top five drivers of employee attrition.⁴

But internal fill rates have been stagnant in the last three years at approximately 30%, despite a wide range of HR initiatives to increase them.^{5,6,7} Some common initiatives include:

- Post jobs internally.
- Create internal mobility policies.

- Provide skill development resources.
- Highlight internal career success stories.
- Create profiles of roles for visibility into available skills.
- Create career portals and career-planning resources.

Despite these efforts, employees struggle to find growth opportunities, and most managers do not encourage internal movement.^{8,9,10} As a result, employers are concerned about closing critical talent gaps and losing talent, since employees are far more likely to find their next role in a different organization than their current one.¹¹

These common approaches aren't wrong; they are just too narrow in scope.

Using the Talent Management Ecosystem

The entire ecosystem of talent management practices and solutions — not a single initiative or even a dedicated HR center of excellence — drives internal mobility. HR must adopt a comprehensive strategy to increase it.



We define **internal mobility** as the movement of employees from one role to another role (usually switching job codes) or to the same role in another department or group (usually switching cost center).

Mobility may be lateral (i.e., to a position within the same job level) or diagonal (i.e., to a position at a higher job level).

HR can increase internal mobility by using the practices and solutions it already uses within its talent management ecosystem (see Figure 1).

A successful strategy to increase internal mobility:

- **Draws on other key talent management approaches**, such as workforce planning, HIPO identification and development, total rewards strategy, performance management, skills development and succession planning
- **Involves leaders across the organization**, such as HR business partners, business unit leaders, recruiters, direct managers, L&D and the head of talent management
- **Directs talent management ecosystem efforts** toward a unified vision of internal

mobility that serves the organization's strategic goals

Prioritizing Key Talent Initiatives to Serve Business Objectives

Only with a strategy that involves the full talent management ecosystem can HR leaders embed internal mobility in the culture and practices of their entire organization.

Creating a high-impact internal mobility strategy requires linking talent goals to larger business objectives. To meet these talent goals, HR sets concrete internal mobility objectives.

After assessing current talent management practices and initiatives, HR then prioritizes those

Figure 1: The Talent Management Ecosystem for Driving Internal Mobility



Source: Gartner

that will do the most to meet these objectives. Let's break this down to see how this could work in practice (see Figure 2):

1. Define talent goals and business urgency. For example, an organization may need to execute on a digital strategy or build up its leadership bench.
2. Set internal mobility objectives. Establish the metrics that will help determine progress toward the talent goals (e.g., internal fill rate in key functions, time to productivity).
3. Assess the current state. Establish clear baselines and articulate precise definitions for critical talent metrics. Often, it is crucial to partner with colleagues in talent analytics early on to get a correct assessment.
4. Prioritize key initiatives from the talent management ecosystem. List the initiatives and practices that will turn the dial. Many of these may already have efforts underway to increase

internal mobility; coordinating these efforts will be the key. Make sure everyone has the same assessment of the current state, works toward the same talent objectives and understands which business needs these objectives will serve.

A successful internal mobility strategy that aligns key talent initiatives with strategic talent goals can do more than just meet HR benchmarks. It will harness fast-changing, fast-growing organizations' own internal labor markets to meet new challenges and achieve larger business objectives.

- ¹ Gartner TalentNeuron
- ² 2019 Gartner Future of HR Survey
- ³ 2018 Gartner Recruiting Efficiency Survey for Managers
- ⁴ 4Q18 Gartner Global Labor Market Survey
- ⁵ 2016 Gartner Sourcing Effectiveness Diagnostic
- ⁶ 2017 Gartner Recruiting Team Optimization Diagnostic
- ⁷ 2018 Gartner Recruiting Efficiency Survey
- ⁸ 3Q18 Gartner Global Labor Market Survey
- ⁹ 1Q19 Gartner Global Labor Market Survey
- ¹⁰ 2018 Gartner Shifting Skills Survey
- ¹¹ 1Q19 Gartner Global Labor Market Survey

Figure 2: Example of a High-Impact Internal Mobility Strategy

 <p>Strategic Talent Goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and retain skills required for our digital business model transformation. • Build stronger slate of successors for key positions.
 <p>Internal Labor Market Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase percentage of senior and midlevel open positions filled with internal candidates by 20%. • Increase success rate of new-to-role leaders by 50% by building critical leadership skills.
 <p>Urgency/ Current State</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO and board are concerned about our ability to execute our digital transformation. • Only 30% of senior leader positions have an identified successor.
 <p>Current State</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 30% of senior and midlevel positions are filled with internal hires. • 40% of new-to-role leaders fail within two years.
 <p>Key Initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design career paths that emphasize experiential learning through cross-business-unit mobility. • Shift talent review focus to identify three potential successors for every open role. • Develop a structured interview process for evaluating internal candidates. • Normalize internal mobility discussions through career development conversations.

Source: Gartner

