

Talent, experience and next-gen work:

DXC LEADING EDGE

How to be ready

DXC Leading Edge explores how to take new, end-to-end approaches to help attract, onboard, engage and retain talent



Millions of words and dozens of **catchphrases**

have been deployed to describe the current state of work and the workforce. We've heard about how workers view their employers, and about employers' distress regarding the shortage of workers. Evocative catchphrases like the "great resignation," "quiet quitting" and the "big quit" have been used to describe a global talent crisis as insidious as fog spreading across myriad sectors.

We need to call things out for what they are: employee disengagement.

The situation points to a power imbalance, and policies that are often out of sync between workers and "the work." This conflict may have become more apparent to both employers and employees during the pandemic. Once recognized, there's no returning to business as usual.



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The changing nature of business dictates changing the way we view talent. Leadership must radically improve the processes of talent sourcing, acquisition, management and retention. That’s how they will achieve and sustain the greatest value from the convergence of flows of people and their talent, expertise and positions.

That’s just one part of the equation, however. It’s the first step on a journey to reshape human resource (HR) processes to be “next-generation” ready.

Understanding how, why and where employees work optimally is equally important. Employers who can rethink the way people contribute to every part of their work can aim for a “flow” state where both the work and workers are excellent. Think about flow this way: It’s a state of mind where a person becomes fully immersed in “the work.”

What happens when employers work to enable flow in their organizations?

People flow

Talented employees are engaged, skilled and effective. They are challenged, and their work shows evidence of creativity and excitement. The flow of people, along with their talents and expertise, needs to be continuously curated.

Process flow

When talent processes are managed from the moment talent is noticed until it is recruited, onboarded, developed and retained, it drives a continuum of learning and growth. Even the process of separating talent from the organization can be well managed and supportive. Yet, these processes can only flow effectively when they are regularly evaluated, challenged and disrupted.

Value flow

The talent flow must add value for the organization, its employees and its partners. Organizations are shifting the types and locations of the work they do, driving toward platforms and more autonomous working units. This requires that new and valuable skills must surface. Value will emerge in the organization by proactively developing an employee’s talents and fusing these with the existing organizational foundation of talent and expertise. This requires creating both engaging and desired opportunities for workers to contribute. They need to do so in ways that demonstrate their expertise and are aligned to the organization’s value agenda.

Developing these flows is not a trivial task. Organizations must get beyond the forces driving change, navigate around the potholes that trip up workers, managers and HR professionals, and define the nature of the changes they need to make. This work becomes transformational for the organization. In this paper, we define the emerging state of work and flow, and talk about the forces shaping the changes and how to prepare for them. We include five specific areas to focus on during 2023.

While we've seen a spurt in layoffs — particularly in the tech industry — the [2023 Monster Work Watch report](#) finds that 92% of employers have plans to hire this year, consistent with 2022. Additionally, 62% of employees report they are quiet quitting or thinking about it.

In a word, it's complex out there

There is a lot of noise right now around the workplace and talent management. But one statistic that should rise above the din comes courtesy of Gallup.com's State of the Global Workplace: 2022 Report.ⁱ "Employees who are not engaged or who are actively disengaged cost the world \$7.8 trillion in lost productivity..... That's equal to 11% of global GDP."

So, companies are testing multiple paths to find and to engage talent. The UK has tested the idea of a 4-day work week, which has proven hugely popular. In the United States, Amazon raised their base minimum wage to \$19. Those are simple concepts, yet recruiting new employees is not. Another thing it is not: cheap. Current data from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) shows cost-per-hire clocking in at \$4,700.ⁱⁱ Remember, that's an average. The total costs, hard and soft, can be triple or quadruple each new hire's salary.

Companies can help turn on people, process and value flow by engineering workforce talent complexities into opportunities. We've seen the benefits of exactly these sorts of complexities translating to benefits when myriad employees moved to remote work as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns. Many pundits expected that employees working from home would be less effective. But objective measures now show the opposite to be true.

A study by Stanford of 16,000 workers over 9 months found that working from home increased effectiveness by 13%.ⁱⁱⁱ

It's a matter of separating out the noise in the market to determine where change will count.

Redesigning for talent flow

Ultimately, we need to renovate — if not flat-out reengineer — a virtuous cycle around talent including how we enable and manage it. This new baseline should include a new definition and processes that cover more than just the core interactions during hiring and onboarding.

Companies must consider a significantly broader set of competencies to deliver better talent management and human resources. From discovery and acquisition to application, hiring and development, and right up to separation, talent processes need to take the people, process and value flows into consideration.

Ultimately, we need to renovate — if not flat-out reengineer — a virtuous cycle around talent and how we enable and manage it.

These processes will need to become more fluid and autonomous as the contemporary workforce itself becomes more fluid and autonomous. Where individual human talents and organizations come together for "the work," all stakeholders should benefit in meaningful and measurable ways. That's true whether the work lasts a day or a decade.

To achieve that outcome, close attention must be paid to every aspect of the talent cycle so as to ease bottlenecks and reduce friction.



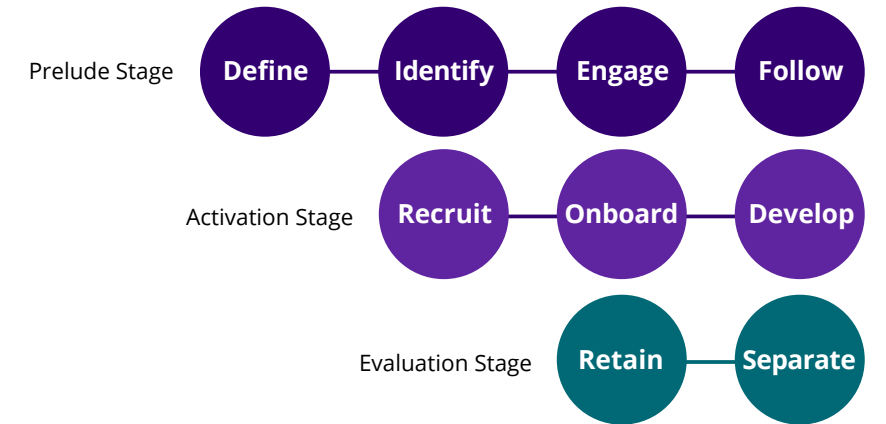


The nine steps of talent flow

The ability of the enterprise to take full advantage of its people and their expertise is a prerequisite for business success, more so in this time of accelerated change. In what DXC Leading Edge calls the Accelerated Now — where organizations are in harmony with technology and how it is used to deliver growth and agility — businesses must redefine the processes around the discovery, acquisition, application, development and separation of talent.

There have been few transformative disruptions in recent decades to the sequence of recruiting, onboarding, managing and separating talent. Now, companies must take a deeper look at how they manage the flow of talent. To succeed at continually increasing agility in our radically digitized era, companies must think about the work to be done. In a market increasingly driven by knowledge work and service delivery in digital value streams, candidates and employees are seeking paths to find meaning in their organizations and their work.

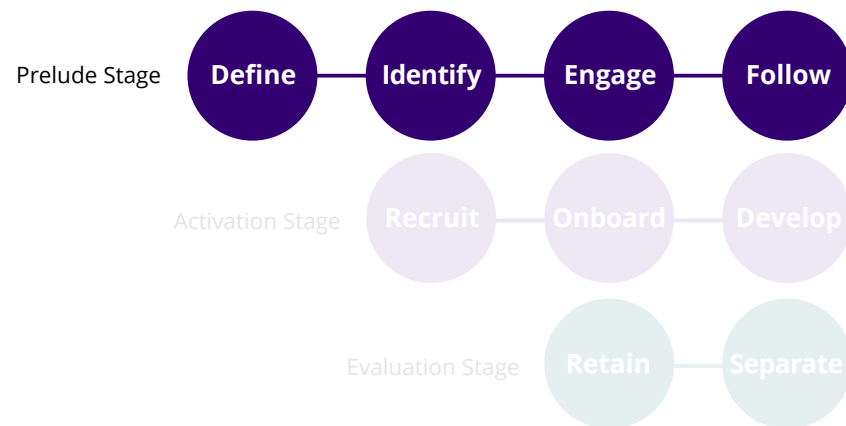
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The talent life cycle is a series of processes to be planned, actively managed and continuously curated. This will ease bottlenecks, reduce friction, drive organizational capability and enhance the human experience. Reengineering talent flow requires increasing velocity. It also requires eliminating wasted time and building breadth by seeking other talent pools and operating models. And, it demands extending engagement by introducing multiple touchpoints inside and outside the work environment.

The Prelude stage

A critical part of the transformative disruption is what we term the Prelude stage, which consists of four steps:



Define.

Today's business should manage its talent flow well in advance of the need to acquire or deploy specific skills. Rather than waiting for a need to arise, the organization should look ahead to its growth objectives and strategic goals. It should plan — as much as possible — what expertise will be required to fulfill them.

Identify.

Apart from episodic headhunting and some informal networking, the active tracking of potential recruits seldom, if ever, occurs. We don't know where to find the people today whom we might want to employ in the future.

As a forerunner to instances of specific engagement, businesses need to identify appropriate people with desirable talents and track them through their careers. So much information is freely available online about potential employees, from LinkedIn profiles to freelance marketplace platforms with tested talent pools. This makes it easy to build a knowledge-base of potential hires.

Engage.

Having identified individuals of interest, businesses should reach out to these potential recruits. This is not just a means to assess their talents and how they align to the business strategy. It's also a great time to examine organizational and cultural fit, as well as the intangible benefits an individual might bring.

By targeting profiles to areas of expertise, both the recruitment team and candidate are able to assess where the candidate brings demonstrable value. They can also evaluate what potential career paths are available and even which skills gaps to address.

Follow.

Now that the candidate and company have embarked on a new relationship, the follow phase is an appropriate stage for learning more about each other. Candidates are spending more time understanding where and how they fit into the organization, their potential career track, and their interests and professional activities.

Engagement during the traditional life cycle, from recruiting to retention, may transform in conjunction with — even as an outcome of — the Prelude stage steps.



Going social

The maturing of social media has allowed more people — including candidates, employees and alumni — to be a part of your online communities.

In this environment, it's vital to have a social strategy designed to support talent flow.

What to know

- **68%** of millennials, **54%** of Gen Xers and **48%** of boomers visit an employer's social media properties specifically to evaluate the employer's brand.^{iv}
- **86%** of employees and job seekers research company reviews and ratings to decide where to apply for a job.^v
- Nearly half (**48%** each) of Gen Zers and millennials with work experience have applied to jobs they found via social media.^{vi}

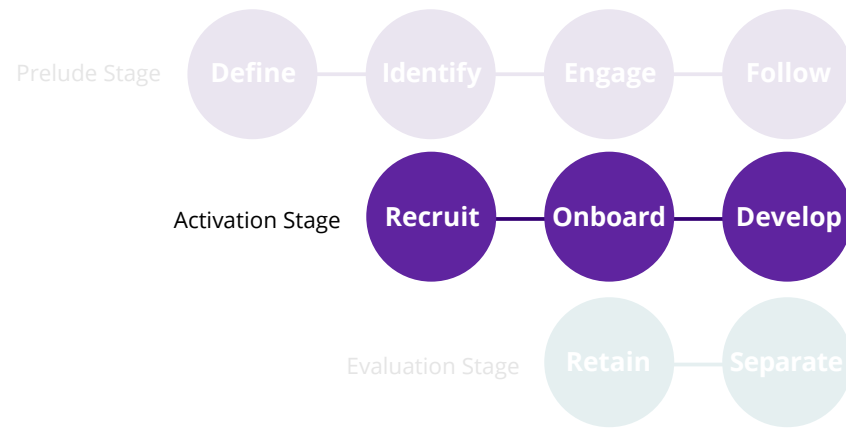
What to do

Social media can bring organizational values to life.

- Use social media posts to their fullest for your organization to become a talent magnet. Reflect on your organization's values; focus on environmental, social and governance policy and success.
- Monitor how candidates and employees view the company from the outside in. Quickly elevate areas of concern for remediation.
- To attract the broadest talent pool possible, optimize recruiting tools for mobile devices. Candidates with a LinkedIn profile, for example, should be able to apply for a position right within the application.

The Activation stage

The Activation stage steps are focused on formalizing a relationship with the candidate, working toward an offer and employment.



Recruit.

Recruiting needs to be faster and more effective.

When the time expands between key steps such as interview and offer, costs increase. The number of people involved also goes up. What matters most is that the longer the delay, the less likely the business is to get acceptance from its first-choice candidates. Assuming that the business has followed the Prelude initiatives, it may be possible to go from a defined employment need straight to a successful offer, putting candidates on a fast path to hiring.

Yet, it's clear that many companies don't follow that track. In a UK study of HR decision makers,^{vii} more than a quarter of respondents noted a sizable gap within their organizations for cybersecurity, architecture and analytics talent. This makes it even more confounding that only a third are willing to spend

more than \$10,000 on recruitment, learning and development for cybersecurity. Over two-thirds would not spend more than \$10,000 on architecture and analytics roles.

There are two choices: building or buying talent. And that choice is complicated, but it is not optional.

People with valuable, hard-to-find skill sets are being courted and recruited across industries, as a recent McKinsey study noted: "Vitality, companies can no longer assume that they can fill empty slots with workers similar to the ones who just left. Globally, just 35 percent of those who quit in the past two years took a new job in the same industry. In finance and insurance, for instance, 65 percent of workers changed industries or did not return to the workforce. In the public and social sector, the exodus was even greater, at 72 percent."^{viii}

To attract the right talent, organizations will need to put their values and commitments out there, along with their expectations for skills and other requirements.

Recruiting differently

Forward-thinking HR executives are moving the needle on hiring and maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce. Companies like Qualcomm, Microsoft, JP Morgan Chase, IBM, DXC Technology and others are opening the aperture for talent recruitment.

Such organizations are considering more flexible and engaging methods to attract talent:

- **Remote strategies** allow engaging diverse talent pools that might be less prevalent in some markets. DXC has been a remote-first, or virtual-first, company since 2020.

- **Neurodiversity recruitment programs**, such as Microsoft's longstanding program, can attract creative thinkers and analysts who don't fit a standard approach. DXC also hosts a program to move neurodiverse people into IT careers (see page 9).
- **Returnship programs** create bridges that assist workers who took time away from work, allowing them to reengage in ways that remove challenges. These challenges include resume gaps, experience gaps and lack of understanding around new ways of working. PepsiCo, Amazon and PayPal all offer this option.
- **Removing 4-year degree requirements** and offering skills development programs is something that IBM and Google are pursuing. The Grow with Google program has 300,000 graduates.

Onboard.

Mind the gap: Why is onboarding underwhelming?

During the pandemic, we learned how to originate mortgages online, dramatically retool retail and upend a model for medical office visits at scale.

Despite these digital advancements, the onboarding of employees is still fraught with gaps, broken experiences and misdirected processes. The existence and use of HR software modules has exploded during the pandemic. And yet, the digitally savvy — regardless of age — have seen these processes and judged them as nothing to get excited about.

Any doubts regarding the truth of this might be dispelled by the title of a recent Fast Company article: *How not to suck at onboarding.*^{ix}

There's also a limbo state — a sort of externalized potential purgatory that many candidates encounter. The cause: third party services and vendors who are providing services that are important for the recruiting organization. Think of services like background checks, document verification and security clearances. Clearly, the scale of these services makes them better situated with a vendor. But this also makes them highly likely to break even the best post-hire, pre-start experience.

One of the only ways a company can get the feedback it needs is to ask the new hire for it, while going through the pre-start checklist with them. Be clear with vendors that you'll be seeking feedback and sharing it. Accountability may not make this perfect but will at least put it up for discussion.

Ensure that onboarding is not off-putting

The challenge isn't simply in finding the talent. Once that's done, the organization must be made accessible.

Consider this: Most organizations offer just one standard laptop configuration. The simple act of asking for a different system forces an employee to declare from Day 1 that they are different. Mike McDaniel, president, [Modern Workplace for DXC Technology](#), points out the broader problem: "When organizations don't provide an effective employee experience from the get-go by not satisfying the technology choices and experiences employees want, it feeds discontent early on." Trying to offer a Mac user a PC is a recipe for failure right up front.

DXC connects neurodiverse people with employment opportunities

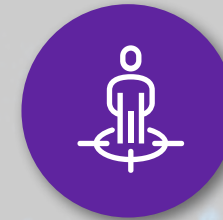
Nearly a decade ago, DXC launched the DXC Dandelion Program in Australia with a focus on creating employment pathways and careers for neurodivergent individuals within the IT industry.

Dandelion's approach to creating a sustainable program includes: a proven framework that draws on ongoing, evidence-based research and practical experience; a specialized recruitment and selection process; initiatives tailored to suit the employer and employees; and an ongoing neurodiversity curriculum for learning and development. The program leverages state-of-the-art technology for learning and support. In 2021, in collaboration with Untapped, BHP, Splunk, La Trobe University and Curtin University, DXC co-developed Genius Armory. This gamified online learning environment is designed to attract and train cybersecurity talent from the neurodiverse community.

The program's success is evidenced by:



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
CREATED FOR MORE THAN
200
INDIVIDUALS, TO DATE



92%
EMPLOYEE
RETENTION RATE



30% – 40%
INCREASE IN THE OVERALL
PRODUCTIVITY OF TEAMS THAT
PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM

Following the program's success in Australia and New Zealand, DXC recently announced that it is launching the initiative across European and Asia-Pacific countries, starting with the UK.

Here's another issue: Open plan workplaces can be vastly unfriendly to the neurodivergent. Actually, they're unfriendly overall, if you ask the New York Times' David Brooks. He provides myriad examples in a recent article: *The Immortal Awfulness of Open Plan Workplaces*.^x

Changes to workplace setups may be coming. Organizations can start making their own by better accommodating remote workforces. [IDC notes](#) that by 2025, we'll experience a blurring of space and place. Sixty-five percent of G2000 companies will consider online presence to be at parity to "in real life" across their engaged workforce. By 2024, 55% of C-suite teams at global enterprises will use intelligent space and capacity planning technology to reinvent office locations for gathering, collaborating and learning. In many cases, this is a new hire's first experience with the organization at full strength. Make it a good one.^{xi}

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Onboarding remote employees poses special challenges. In an office, many bonding tasks are easier and more intuitive to do. For remote employees, consider using the buddy system or hiring cohorts. In the remote world, this must be a specific and direct action; it can't occur naturally while employees grab coffee or tea in the break area.

That does not diminish its importance. Buddying up gives a new hire someone to ask questions so they needn't go to their supervisor. Allowing new hires the time to work at their own pace when configuring new systems or learning new software — instead of forcing them into group activities — can address the reality of individual learning speeds. One other area of note: Don't stint on security training during onboarding, as you'll never have a better opportunity to make your security stance clearer.

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The rise of flexible working conditions

Ecosystems bring more change, not only in the work required and the way it is undertaken, but in where it can be done.

Work-from-keyboard enables work-from-anywhere.

Working without any organizational office space is proving viable and preferable for many organizations.

The building-less operation.

This model provides infinite office space. Building services costs are replaced by lifestyle services investments.

Technology creates new ways of working and new work, and that creates demands for new talent, perhaps augmented with new technology.

Develop.

Developing expertise, deepening connections

The vitality of the talent flow comes not just from how streamlined the recruitment processes are, but how successful and sustained the working interaction is. People and their expertise are a gift that keeps on giving. To enjoy that gift, organizations must nurture employees' talents, and activate these as expertise. One of the keys to doing so is developing purpose in the work. Certainly, employees work to earn a living. But they become engaged and purposeful when they can choose a position tied to their values as well as their wallet. That means connecting the work to the company's mission and removing the tedious to make the work as interesting as possible. It means relentlessly focusing on opportunities for employees to learn and apply knowledge.

DXC Leading Edge raised this point in its paper [Committing to the human experience](#): "Organizations need to begin recognizing expertise as a process ... Nurturing experience and expertise proactively is key to unlocking the potential of each business domain."

Let's be clear on a definition for "expertise" as we move forward. Expertise is an active, interconnected and progressive state, operating at an individual and an organizational level. Expertise management is required to drive organizational capabilities and to address many of the human experience and capability areas.

Often, however, businesses lack a renovated framework to assess, measure and design learning processes that support and further develop today's employees and their expertise.

The [Knowles Andragogy](#) principles provide a respected paradigm for adult education. However, they address the inputs to a learning management system, not necessarily how to measure its outcomes. Traditional learning KPIs are diminishing in value. Hours completed and even "badges earned" are not comparable to meeting specific business objectives. *HR leaders need new approaches and metrics that marry skills, roles and employee needs.*

Having employees be able to demonstrate mastery of new skills and techniques is essential. This logically leads to developing approaches that place employees on teams requiring those new skills. Then, having an expert, client or other means to validate those skills leads to shared accountability. It is also helpful when mastery leads to recognition for the employee and alignment to potential promotion goals. Companies that provide the opportunity and rewards for this joint investment, where the employee invests time and the company provides the reward, will see greater results. Prioritizing high-demand paths is job number one.



To learn more about gaining a critical advantage by improving expertise around the human experience, see our paper: [Committing to the human experience](#)

A tenuous balance: Employees and next-gen expertise

It is so often said that employees are the lifeblood of any business' success. But with gains in robotics and automation, fewer and fewer employees may be needed in multiple roles across the organization. According to Forrester's Future of Jobs Forecast, for 2020 to 2040, workers with little bargaining power are at greatest risk of displacement. That is especially the case in countries where many are subject to casual employment contracts. That includes zero-hour contracts in the UK, which require no guaranteed working hours, or part-time jobs with low wages, such as "mini-jobs" in Germany.^{xii}

This will be acutely felt across Europe; however, no geography or industry sector will be left out. Jobs and automation will require realignment wherever wage and availability pressures encounter each other: retail, hospitality, food service and transportation, to start. Yet, new opportunities will arise from different quarters: Nine million new jobs will be created by 2040 by the Euro 5 emissions standards, with a focus on clean energy, clean buildings and smart cities. These roles will evolve in the coming years, needing different types of expertise, and that is where new approaches to talent and education will be needed first.

Many roles will require more human and technology interaction. They may require knowledge of data science or cybersecurity, or the ability to work in 3D virtual spaces and/or alongside machines. The heavy-industrial sector — including manufacturing, warehousing, energy and utilities,

and automotive — has for nearly 20 years been focused on reskilling. You would think we'd be ready. But precious few HR departments were as attuned in the early days as they are now to the fact that the technologies reinventing these industrial processes would progress with impressive speed. Catching up to the technology side with the hard people skills is only half the battle.

One needs to ponder so much new ground, as well. Consider these questions: As a leader, is your management team prepared to manage the creation and flow of value through resources that are more decentralized, distributed and remote than ever before? How are you courting your next generation of leaders? How are you helping them find examples, develop guidelines and make decisions that bring organizational value?

The expertise education challenge: The new skills that pay the bills

A disproportionate part of this challenge is around the speed with which specific skills are morphing into new, desired competencies. These skills are often forms of tacit expertise and knowledge. They're hard to teach and even more difficult to measure. It may seem wise to build online learning for these skills to customize as needed. But it may be wiser to consider starting with publicly available online courses, such as those from universities, Coursera or other learning collaboratives. Make minor tweaks to the curricula, as needed.



How are you courting your next generation of leaders? How are you helping them find examples, develop guidelines and make decisions that bring organizational value?

Top 10 skills you will need to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: World Economic Forum

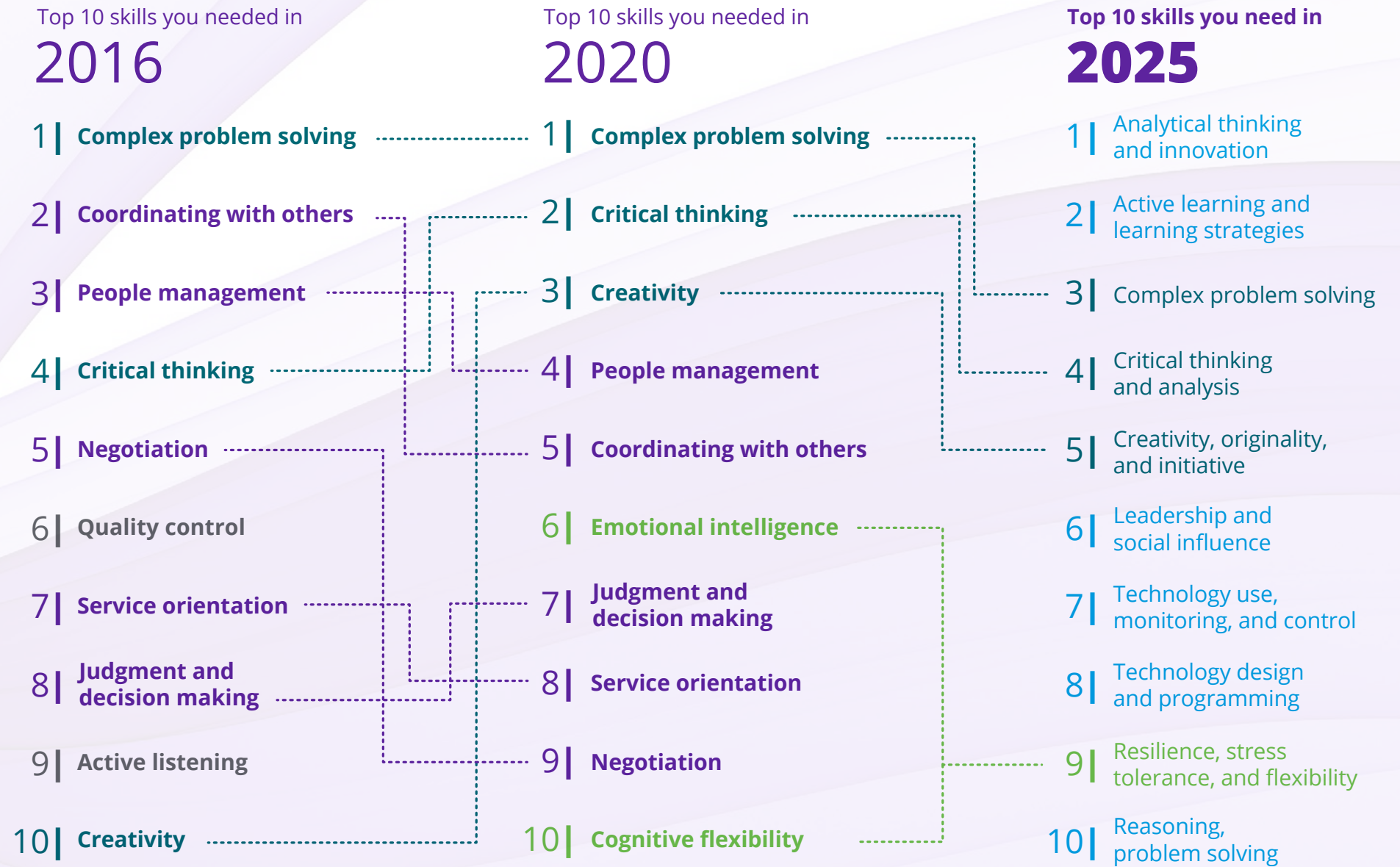
We aren't there yet.

Part of the skills education challenge is the technology. However, a disproportionate part of the challenge is around the speed with which soft skills are morphing into new desired competencies.

The skills that organizations will need are not only technological but also softer skills around topics that are very hard to teach, and even more difficult to measure.

We're observing skills we thought were vital falling away (in gray) and some traditional skills (in purple) diminishing now. As we face 2025, two skills compress into one — emotional intelligence and cognitive flexibility (in bright green). Three skills around problem solving, creativity and complex problem solving remain (in dark green). The other six (in blue) are deemed as different enough to be considered new.

HR executives seeking a jump start on a new curriculum might find this a good place to begin.



Source: World Economic Forum: [The Future of Jobs Report 2020](#)

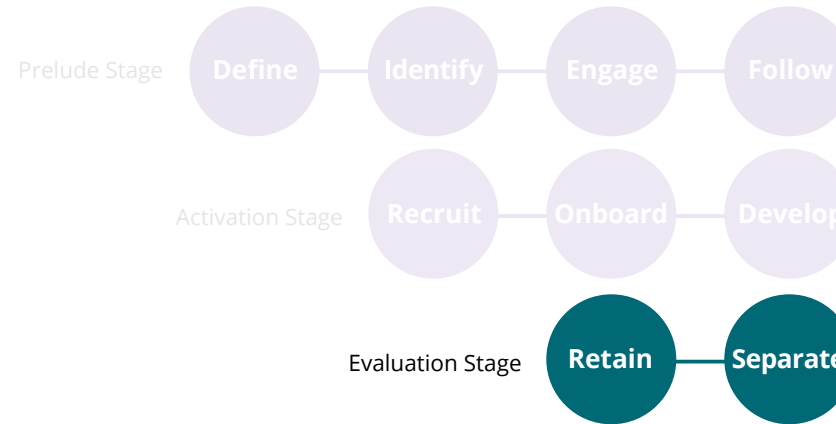
The WEF estimates that by 2025, 85 million jobs may be displaced by a shift in the division of labor between humans and machines.

But even more jobs — 97 million — may emerge that are more adapted to the new division of labor between humans, machines and algorithms.

World Economic Forum, The Future of Jobs Report 2020



The Evaluation stage



Retain.

Retention as a hedge against risk

In many organizations, decision authority is spreading out as organizational agility and responsiveness are on the rise. Simply put, to respond quickly — to customers, to other parts of the organization — smaller teams with specific scopes of engagement are being created. They're often prevalent in development and design teams, among designers, marketing and IT. These roles can be very rewarding for employees who value a rapid continuous feedback cycle.

Similarly, when teams get smaller, each employee is more critical to that team's success. It is not easy to find people with high-value skills to replace a person who voluntarily resigns. Unlike a baseball team that might have a stable of pitchers, most organizations don't have a surfeit of full-stack developers, cybersecurity professionals or IoT engineers.

When employees in critical roles are lost, the potential exists to derail product development roadmaps — especially in companies that are digital and transitioning-to-digital. In competitive marketplaces, where employees are assessing what they think is valuable and what they consider rewarding, retaining top talent is crucial. Even when the organization may be limited in how it can reward employees, HR leaders should consider who the organization must continuously woo and how much the company is willing to spend to do so. (See the point earlier about how much it costs to recruit and onboard, as well as the amount of time needed to invest.) This is especially true when the value that diverse talent brings is at a premium.

Developing a list of high-priority roles is important. Define which roles are unfailingly at the center of achieving the organization's current and future business goals. It's not always obvious. For example, often we think about designers or data scientists as being the critical roles. However, in airlines, it's the team that hedges fuel prices. Just ask airline KLM, who found this to be worth about \$1B to the airline in 2023.

HR teams must work assiduously with their stakeholders to assess the risk to a particular project or workstream if one vital employee is lost. What about more than one? This is what we mean by considering retention as a hedge against risk. HR departments need to find ways to encourage high-priority talent to stay. While high-level retention metrics exist, defining more granular metrics and response plans is definitely in order.

Planned retention goes with planned attrition

HR executives also need to design transformation and transition approaches for attrition. Large organizations will likely need a talent plan to shift — or develop new skills and shift — its human resources into new areas.

That means assessing moves in, around, up, down and out. Each role should have a current skills profile attached to it. It's important to share the needs of roles and profiles with current "seat holders" and candidates. Each role should also come with course recommendations and transition paths. This may initially be challenging for employees. It increases feelings of uncertainty. It certainly puts the word "candid" in "candidates," but it's exactly this type of honesty that allows people to make better decisions. Ask individuals key questions to help both sides make a good choice.

Clearly, this is not a comprehensive list. This is also a highly sensitive topic, for which each organization will have its own policies.

But being willing to have an honest dialogue with employees before they're being "walked" shows and sows good faith.

There's an algorithm for that

It goes without saying that AI and machine learning are also being leveraged for retaining key talent. HR data is a treasure trove, but that data becomes supercharged when exogenous data is combined into potential ratings. The organizational data includes salary, performance and position history for each employee, and more data can bring a new richness to algorithms.

Direct employee research that yields data to help assess engagement, purposefulness and connectedness to the organization can be a fast path to seeing challenges. If employees are taking on learning or seeking new roles internally, this data helps paint a picture of their state of mind. Salary data is becoming more public in some geographies, enabling more direct comparisons against the market. Employees are taking notice. HR executives should examine the benefits stack of comparable roles, which provides rich data for comparison. Ditto for including external reviews through websites like glassdoor.com, which can increase the predictive quality of retention algorithms.

Squads, connections and the value of work

The term "squad" is often used with developers, garages and agile teams. Yet, as explained in the DXC Leading Edge report [Platform culture: A field guide to mastering the art of information flow](#), the term extends to more of the organization as companies focus on smaller, more autonomous working groups with greater decision authority.

More work shifts from traditional methods of working to fit-for-purpose teams that are transient and come together for the purposes of delivery. The ability to forge a bond and understand the value of the work comes to the fore. Once the product is finalized, the squad can be disbanded, and members can select a new team with a fresh remit. This focus on the value of the work enables people to regularly move between teams. Additionally, this approach also increases organizational connectedness and information sharing as squads re-form. It also maintains momentum as skills become accessible as needed and even locked into place on one team or long-term project.

Questions for HR personnel to ask ...

... themselves

Is the employee a good cultural fit for the organization?

Has the employee shown progress in obtaining skills?

What potential educational paths and remediations are available?



... the employee

Do you feel you're able to contribute your best work in this role?

How has your learning experience been as you've taken on this role?
How are your skills advancing?

Is this role the right fit for your skills? Is there an area where we can put your skills to better use?

Separate.

Separate, don't alienate

Separation happens, so it should occur as efficiently and as productively as possible. Make officially checking out as easy as possible for employees, but collect the right intelligence to inform potential retention efforts.

It is in everyone's best interest for a mutually positive and fulfilling relationship to be sustained within the organization for as long as possible. But separation between employee and employer can mark the start of another beneficial relationship for both.

As long as the separation isn't the result of undesirable activity on the part of the employee, it can be treated fairly, favorably and in a way that encourages keeping in touch. While it's a drop in the bucket, 5% of hires were "boomerangs" or rehires, according to research by LinkedIn.^{xiii}

Alumni networks — where former employees congregate — are becoming popular. General Motors has a sleek alumni experience, as do Walmart, IBM and British Petroleum. The [McKinsey Alumni Center](#) is described as "the firm's official platform to help our global network of former consultants remain engaged with the firm, our knowledge, and each other." Apparently, employees can leave a company and still be friends.

Today's more fluid workforce quickens the cadence of the talent flow life cycle. HR has the equally challenging and rewarding role to place the right person in the right role and then develop their talents, help them realize their expertise, encourage their best performance and retain them for as long as possible. It's vital to organizational and human success.

About the metaverse ... beyond the hype

The metaverse is still in its nascent phases, but applications do show real promise. In a hybrid or remote working model, for example, the [metaverse acts as a digital watercooler](#) to create a more cohesive team and culture. And it will increasingly be used by organizations to [connect with candidates](#) in enticing ways.

Chris Cornelius, global offering manager for Immersive Collaboration at DXC Technology, [told UNLEASH](#), "Many of today's younger recruits have grown up socializing and gaming online, so businesses must be able to engage them in an environment which feels familiar."

Here are three examples of areas in which the metaverse is showing early promise:



[Carrefour recruits in the metaverse](#)



[Wunderman Thompson onboards new hires in the metaverse](#)



[Boeing wants to build its next airplane in the metaverse](#)



5 WAYS

to do more with and for your talent in 2023 — **making it flow**

Committing to talent flow

HR officers and their teams have been through a staggering amount of change and demonstrated great commitment to their employees and their companies.

The pressure is not off yet. Expectations abound around where, when and how work happens. When we open the aperture on talent, we need to continuously tune our models.

Here are five areas to focus on in 2023:





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