

Future Frontiers in Government HR

Navigating the Evolution of Work

World Governments Summit 2024
in collaboration with
FTI Consulting



**WORLD
GOVERNMENTS
SUMMIT 2024**



The World Governments Summit

SHAPING FUTURE GOVERNMENTS

The World Governments Summit is a global platform dedicated to shaping the future of governments worldwide. Each year, the Summit sets the agenda for the next generation of governments with a focus on how they can harness innovation and technology to solve universal challenges facing humanity.

The World Governments Summit is a knowledge exchange center at the intersection of government, futurism, technology, and innovation. It functions as a thought leadership platform and networking hub for policymakers, experts and pioneers in human development.

The Summit is a gateway to the future as it functions as the stage for analysis of future trends, concerns, and opportunities facing humanity. It is also an arena to showcase innovations, best practice, and smart solutions to inspire creativity to tackle these future challenges.

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE

As part of World Governments Summit 2024, a roundtable discussion under the title of **“Future of Government HR”** was held with the participation of senior public sector representatives from governments around the world. The roundtable also included private sector representatives from leading organizations, and technical subject matter experts in the fields of human capital development and technology.

The roundtable discussion examined long-range issues with respect to the evolution of work, and particularly work in the public sector (also referred to as civil service). Technological innovations such as generative AI took center stage throughout all parts of the roundtable discussion which covered skills,

productivity, and digital systems. The speakers shared innovative practices in talent attraction, development, and retention based on real experiences and learnings from futuristic applications of HR management within each of their governments.

Throughout the session, the importance of such knowledge and experience sharing amongst governments was further underlined. Inputs from the roundtable were a pivotal source of information for this report, encompassing a wide range of market insights, public sector case studies, and vibrant discussions which were integral to understanding the potential future landscape of government HR.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a world reshaped by climate change, artificial intelligence, and pandemics, the very essence of normality is undergoing a profound transformation. These forces are not only altering habits, but also the ways in which people communicate, learn, and perform tasks.

Humans and machines are gradually merging, especially in sectors where production or service delivery are heavily influenced by technology; this calls for continuous skills adaptation and training to stay relevant in the job market. Workflow dynamics are evolving, with transitions occurring both on a macro scale through the identification of new manufacturing zones, and at a micro level with a rise in remote work over conventional office settings. The increased focus on long-term sustainability is changing growth and wellbeing metrics, leading to a reassessment of human capital management and compensation policies.

As we navigate the complex intersection of societal shifts and technological advancements, investigating the trajectory of the future of human resources is critical for governments and institutions seeking resilience and competitiveness. This revolution cannot be effectively addressed only by individuals or corporate HR departments: as with every systemic change, it is key that the public sector leads the process by conceiving a general strategic vision and providing the tools to implement it in specific areas, industries and organizations.

Governments are called upon to:

- **Identify future skills**, appreciating the capabilities needed in the long term and issuing policies that enable people and professionals to fully develop them.
- **Redefine productivity**, reflecting on the new meaning of this concept and its associated indicators, while taking into consideration its sustainability over time as well as digital tools to foster it.
- **Design new work environments**, enhancing organizational agility and experience, and maximizing the potential for efficiency gains.

While global leaders chart the path ahead and deal with transformative forces, the need for proactive adaptation and strategic foresight has never been more evident. The future of work and human resources will require a forward-thinking approach that addresses evolving needs and harnesses the power of technology to drive growth.



The purpose of this report is to explore trends emerging both in the private and public sectors with projections indicating their prevalence in the future, as well as to provide clarity on the key interventions needed to shape the future of human resources and talents globally.

More specifically, the first chapter will investigate how work is changing, encompassing the shifts in the conception of operational frameworks, essential skills, and leadership paradigms. This section will highlight a transition from role-based career paths towards talent pools, the need for skill sets that merge interaction capabilities with technological competencies, and the rise of a new leadership style that transcends hierarchy and top-down management. It will then offer suggestions on talent future-proofing and organizational remodeling strategies that foster adaptability and resilience.

The second chapter will focus on the transformation of the workforce, underscoring the impact of the integration of digital tools, the role of data in decision-making processes, and a redefined understanding of performance. Moving forward, new technologies such as artificial intelligence will be increasingly considered as collaborative partners that can take on repetitive tasks and suggest action plans to deal with future events, whereas people's performance assessment will be based on outcomes rather than outputs. The interventions discussed will guide readers towards a comprehensive digital transformation that goes beyond mere adoption to real change, and the definition of metrics that can truly capture the value added by individuals.

The third chapter will zoom in on evolving work environments, emphasizing the importance of shared infrastructures, a new concept of talent experience, and the reinvention of offices. While organizations keep decentralizing their support functions and moving towards an integrated global model, employees seek new ways to be rewarded and to cooperate in spaces that link the physical and the digital dimensions. It will also propose how to enhance the employee value proposition and the future workplace to create an environment that attracts and retains workers.

Finally, the last section of the report will underline the need for a nuanced approach to the identified trends, inviting leaders to conduct a thorough examination of the local context to design a tailored strategy based on the unique conditions of their specific regions, as well as to interact with key stakeholders to enrich their understanding of potential implications.

CHAPTER 1: REDEFINING SKILLS

Reshaping work with future models and skills

FROM

Traditional org. structures

Credentials and CVs

Top-down leadership

TO

Talent clouds/pools

Skills and portfolios

Holistic leadership

TRENDS

GIG ECONOMY AND NEW WORK MODELS!

A rising number of employees are choosing flexible, gig-based job arrangements that fit their lifestyles and skill sets over the traditional 9 to 5 work model. Now a sizable portion of the global workforce, the gig economy has grown from music gigs to include a wide spectrum of temporary, project-based occupations. Online marketplaces that link independent contractors—from web developers to drivers—with consumers in need of their services are enabling this change, underscoring the size of the gig economy, which is thought to employ between 154 and 435 million people globally.¹

The gig economy offers several advantages, including independence, adaptability, and the chance to work from home. It also fits work around personal values and preferences and ensures individuals are compensated based on production. This paradigm allows for income diversification and unambiguously links labor to rewards. These benefits are confirmed by the fact that 78% of freelancers admire the flexibility and independence it provides, according to a University of Toronto global poll. Moreover, 66% link it to an improved quality of life, and 69% value the opportunity to work with a diverse range of clients.²

The issues associated with the expansion of the gig economy include variable income and workloads for

independent workers, which are made worse by market saturation and rivalry. Hiring gig workers also raises alignment, security, and compliance concerns; these are especially important when it comes to taxes, regulations, and sensitive data. Organizations should prioritize flexibility over hierarchy and encourage organizational agility and resilience in response. However, using freelancers for temporary positions may cause a conflict between the objectives of the project and the organization's core beliefs. The public sector finds this particularly challenging because maintaining impartiality and community support is essential.

By providing organizations with the ability to deploy competent personnel in accordance with current demands, talent pools serve as a strategic response to work uncertainties and changing employee needs. This strategy introduces a labor market that is predicated on abilities, placing an emphasis on essential proficiencies and capacities as opposed to traditional credentials. By identifying HR deficiencies and refining work plans, organizations can improve talent flexibility and decision-making through the implementation of a skills-first strategy. Potentially reshaping the workforce, this departure from traditional career trajectories prioritizes personal development and skill enhancement over entry-level positions.



SKILLS AS THE NEW CURRENCY

As new technologies like AI continue to take root, so do new skills. As such, the nature of work and the competencies it requires are currently in flux, necessitating a shift in how organizations approach training and development. More importantly, the opportunity is here to integrate technology more deeply with human capabilities. However, the bridge between an evolving job landscape and the hard skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow lies in understanding the often subtle and complex relationship between technological advancements and the human touch.

“According to a World Economic Forum study, over 4 out of 10 tasks will be automated by 2027”³

In other words, as workforces shift and evolve, leaders must ensure employees are trained to not only adapt to new tools and platforms but also adopt a mindset of continual learning and adaptability. Synthetic media such as virtual roles, augmented and dimensional experiences are blending more digital, social, and physical in complex interactions that evokes a deep, immersive need to be as human as possible. As the shift toward digital skills becomes increasingly pronounced, the blend of hard technology skills with an ability to apply those skills in diverse, rapidly changing, and often immersive environments will become particularly important.

In this new age of automation, two highly technical skills stand out: artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), which encompass programming; data analysis; and statistical expertise, all skills essential for spurring innovation and driving insightful decision-making; as well as technical architecture experience, ensuring that IT systems are not just up and running, but running in support of enterprise objectives. Topping the list of equally important skills is data privacy and protection, which is increasingly under fire as hackers try to gain entry to sensitive data. But despite the significance of such technical skills, the future will most likely underscore human skills as the key differentiator: everything from creative thinking to resilience and agility take front and center as professionals encounter newer challenges that necessitate preparing today’s talent and equipping them with the skills to solve problems that do not yet exist. Employers are also looking for professionals who are excellent communicators; who are willing to put themselves in other people’s shoes; and who possess the ability to hear a viewpoint that is different from their own. This confluence of diversity and human skills allows disparate perspectives to breed innovation, not dissension.

The world of tomorrow will demand a blend of the most technical human skill (empathy) and the most human technical skill (AI) as they become the most sought after in this ever-shifting dynamic work environment. Together, these skills ensure a workforce that is not only adept at technology, but one that understands how this technology and the humans using it should interact, a future in which technical and human skills can be one and the same.



HOLISTIC LEADERSHIP

Holistic leadership is a concept that emphasizes the importance of balancing professional and personal spheres and fostering a positive culture. As organizations adopt new technologies, leaders must not only understand but themselves develop technical expertise. In addition to improving their own digital literacy, leaders must identify where technology can create strategic advantages, and then ensure that it is applied in an ethical manner.

Leaders must also rediscover their responsibility for guiding people and offering psychological safety. As workers prioritize personal wellbeing, cohesive teamwork, and inclusive communities, leaders need to cultivate emotional intelligence to become more relatable and socially sensitive. Holistic leadership takes the standard hierarchical and top-down methods, and pushes them aside in lieu of people-centric, teamwork, and collaborative methods that result in advancements and satisfaction that no traditional organization could achieve.

In the future, successful leaders will focus on sharpening their style in terms of:

- **Interpersonal acumen:** being a leader will become less synonymous with giving instructions, and more of nurturing relationships with colleagues to connect on a personal level. To do so, people at the helm of teams and organizations will strengthen their ability to read the room's emotions and points of view, appreciate different dynamics, and react accordingly by interacting empathetically to ensure effective cooperation.
- **Adaptable authenticity:** employees seek leaders who are not only authentic in their actions and words, but also take full responsibility for what they communicate. Authenticity does not mean sticking to a static leadership style – true authentic leaders are those who evolve, grow, and adjust their approach by integrating new experiences and learnings into their leadership style. While being well-aware of and consistent with their own values and traits, they can tailor them to the context in which they find themselves.

- **Vulnerability:** leadership has conventionally been associated with confidence and authority, but the leaders of the future will interpret vulnerability as an acknowledgment of openness and transparency. Being vulnerable translates into revealing aspects of one's own self that are usually kept hidden, such as challenges with a task or difficult situations at home. Leaders will set the example by creating safe spaces for sharing experiences and concerns, and exchanging feedback, to lay the foundations for greater trust and continuous improvement.

Finally, it must be noted that these changes will involve leaders at every layer of the organization and will not be confined to C-level executives or top managers – underlying a shift not only in terms of a holistic approach to leadership, but also in those of a truly holistic organizational transformation.

For instance, Canada’s Free Agents program allows existing federal service employees to select the work that matches their skills and interests across many independent federal agencies. Employees are inserted into a central talent pool which managers can draw from, looping in specialists to complete specific projects that match their skill profiles. Existing employees must apply to the program and are accepted if they meet certain skill and attribute criteria.⁵ According to the Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, the job satisfaction of the participants to the program was significantly higher than that of the rest of the employees, and Free Agents felt more empowered to challenge the status quo with new ideas.⁶

Additionally, in Belgium, 21 public and semi-public organizations participate in a Talent Exchange initiative through which it is possible to request temporary employees from other organizations when specific skill sets are needed. These public sector employees are seconded to specific projects for up to 12 months.⁷

- **Cross-sector relocations:** making short-term contracts to exchange employees with private entities, thus sharing knowledge with and attracting talent from the labor market.

In this perspective, the US Intelligence Community Public-Private Talent Exchange seeks to enable its current employees to gain private sector experience with tech companies in key industries, while giving the latter the chance to gather better insights into the government landscape.⁸

Similarly, the US Department of Defense Public-Private Talent Experience gives talent the chance to complete a six-month company assignment to bring best practices from the private sector back to their original organization of employment.⁹

Embracing new work models means promptly moving employees with the needed skills where they are most needed – regardless of traditionally rigid silos – thus being able to react quickly to fast changing challenges.

Governments willing to restructure their organizations around skills are therefore called to:

- 1** **Track skills and credentials** by using a common terminology to standardize and share skill profiles across departments and institutions.
- 2** **Identify possible gaps within teams or projects,** to allocate the human resources who are most suitable and skilled for the current need.
- 3** **Facilitate collaboration** across departments, agencies and sectors to leverage a wider range of expertise, fostering innovation and efficiency.
- 4** **Involve talent** in designing their professional journey, shaping careers that revolve around value creation rather than job promotions.
- 5** **Cultivate leadership and change management** capabilities at all levels, to inspire employees and drive a sustainable transformation

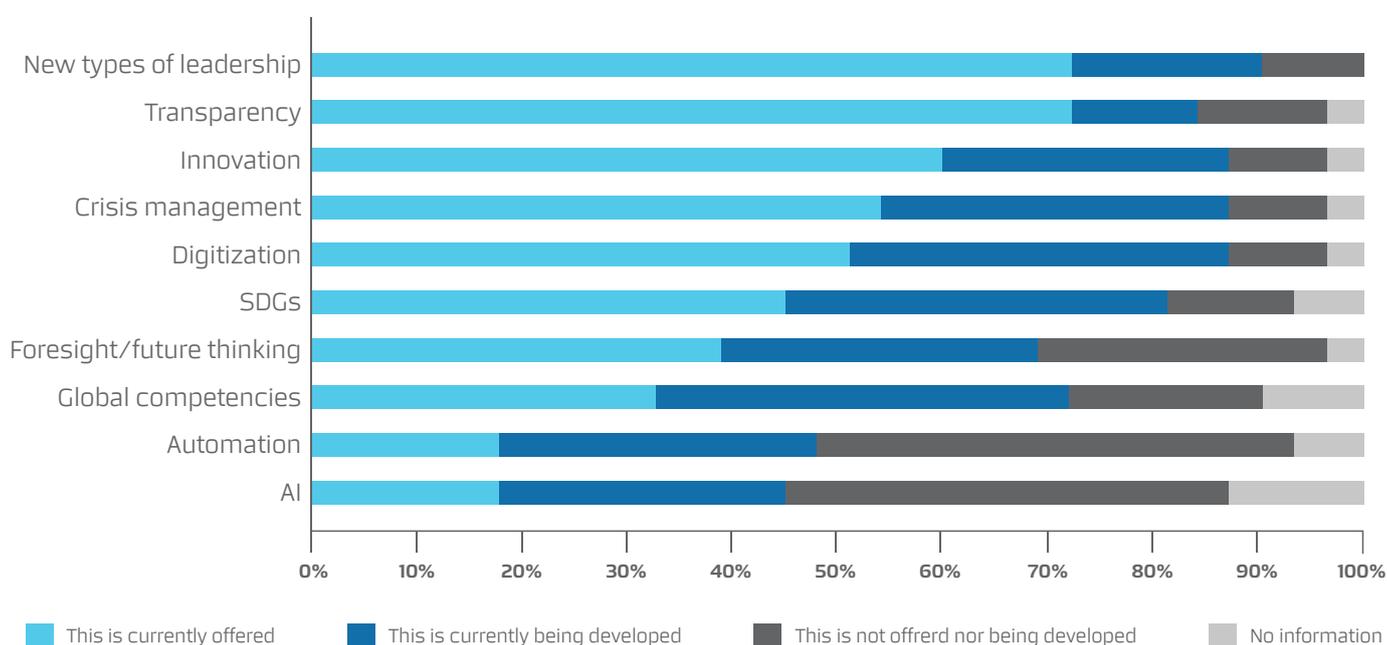
TALENT FUTUREPROOFING

Research from the OECD shows how governments around the world are designing their upskilling strategies. Among the topic areas listed, some of them are related to emerging trends such as AI, whereas others are concerned with skill sets that currently exist and are expected to grow in relevance with time – e.g., transparency, crisis

management, SDGs. As governments seek to attract, select and develop future employees’ and leaders’ capabilities, it is essential to adopt a long-term approach focusing on areas that add value not only today, but also over the next 50 years.

Survey Question: Please indicate to what extent programmes on the topics below are currently delivered by your school.

Source: OECD (2022), Survey of the Schools of Government



The United Arab Emirates have introduced “Jahiz”, an interactive platform to empower federal government employees with personal and technical skills that will allow them to properly use new technologies, as well as to navigate the regulatory landscapes in which these operate. The emerging competencies addressed map to four groups:

- Digital skills, which revolve around cybersecurity, blockchain, Web 3.0.
- 10X skills, focused on boosting productivity, imagination and design, growth mindset.
- Data and AI skills, such as machine learning, artificial intelligence, data management and analysis.
- New economy skills, which regards increasingly important matters like net-zero and climate change, circular economy and sustainability.

“Jahiz” also encompasses broader objectives, which comprise raising public awareness regarding the benefits and effects of digital services or modernizing regulatory frameworks to bridge the digital gap.¹⁰ The impacts generated by “Jahiz” include the adoption by 51 UAE government institutions; the participation of 50,000 employees, 75% of which stated that it contributed to boost their performance; 500,000 hours of training completed. Thanks to the results achieved, the program has been recognized among the 2023 Resilience Pioneers by the World Economic Forum.¹¹

In Italy, “Officine Italia” was set up as a hands-on lab for innovation in the public sector aimed at offering a transformative training program for young talents. The project was developed to address a triple urgency: future decision makers not perceiving the public sector as an attractive workplace; public sector having a high average age workforce and lacking innovative approaches; society at large needing a more modern and appealing public sector. From October 2022 to January 2023, 15 young professionals coming from different backgrounds like engineering and social sciences took part in a 2-week training program and then worked on projects selected by departments of the Italian Ministries – ranging from evidence-based and data-driven policymaking to multilevel governance initiatives. “Officine Italia” then expanded its scope of action by partnering with more than 100 organizations and reaching 100,000 individuals under the age of 35.¹²

In Brazil, the “Líderes que Transformam” program (“Leaders who Transform”) was launched to establish a competency-based framework for the selection of public sector leaders. The initiative is aimed at increasing transparency throughout the process, reducing inequalities in gender and ethnical representation, and developing institutional capabilities in management. To date, 10,000 professionals were chosen and 1,000 of them were evaluated in terms of behavioral and technical skills, resulting in 470 pre-selected leaders and 74 individuals already appointed.¹³

“Create Lithuania” is another example of how governments can foster synergies around professionals’ skills and increase people retention. Launched as a collaboration between the organization “Invest Lithuania” and the national government, the initiative encourages the return of talents to their home country by employing individuals with internationally acquired experience to implement digitalization, e-governance, and other innovative projects in the public sector. The outcomes achieved underscore the effectiveness of the program: around 9 out of 10 participants credited “Create Lithuania” as essential in the success of their following job applications, and over 30% of the individuals involved continued to work within the government.¹⁴

To further improve their upskilling capacity, some organizations have partnered with private entities that deliver training programs tailored to their needs. Among these, “Apolitical” – an e-learning organization that offers courses for public sector employees – created the “Government Climate Campus”, a global partnership that boosts climate-related skills and expertise to enable the delivery of governments’ climate and nature goals. The upskilling opportunities provided focus on policy and leadership competencies to drive change and reach climate targets and have involved over 30,000 public servants until now.¹⁵

All in all, to put in place effective talent future-proofing strategies, governments should focus on five key actions:

- 1** **Identify the abilities most relevant** for and in line with the organization’s strategic development, reflecting on both hard and soft skills.
- 2** **Choose upskilling delivery modes** that are custom and personalized, peer-to-peer, and on-the-job to address competencies individuals require.
- 3** **Consider partnering** with academic institutions or upskilling providers to craft tailored programs, skills-based certification frameworks, and more.
- 4** **Foster a culture of life-long learning** nurtured by continuous feedback loops and by the conception of upskilling as a strategic priority.
- 5** **Monitor and evaluate** the effectiveness of upskilling programs regularly and adapt the initiatives to the insights and lessons learned.

CHAPTER 2: CULTIVATING PRODUCTIVITY

Paving the way for a new workforce

FROM

Human workforce

Data

Output-based performance



TO

AI-powered workforce

Insights and decisions

Outcome-driven productivity

TRENDS

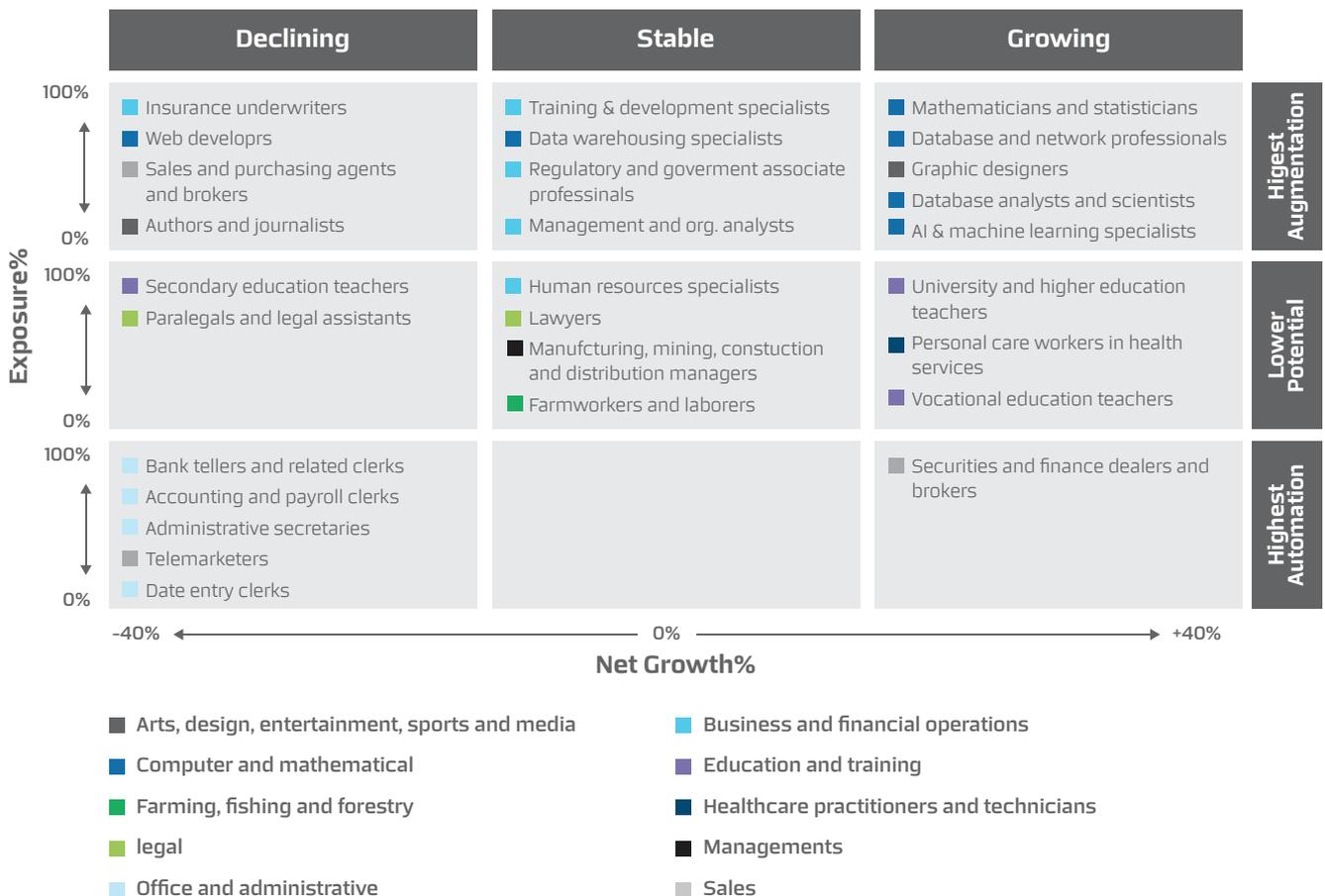
BLENDED WORKFORCE AND DIGITAL/TECH COLLEAGUES

Machines have come a long way since humans first created them. Millennia ago, stone tools helped man's ancestors to carve up their dinner. Today, people use complex machines – from cars to computers – to build and shape the world. For hundreds of years, humans

have replaced their muscle power with steam, petroleum, and electricity. Then, humans started using machines to replace their brain power too, and the computer age was born.

Job Exposure Potential vs Growth Potential

Source: World Economic Forum

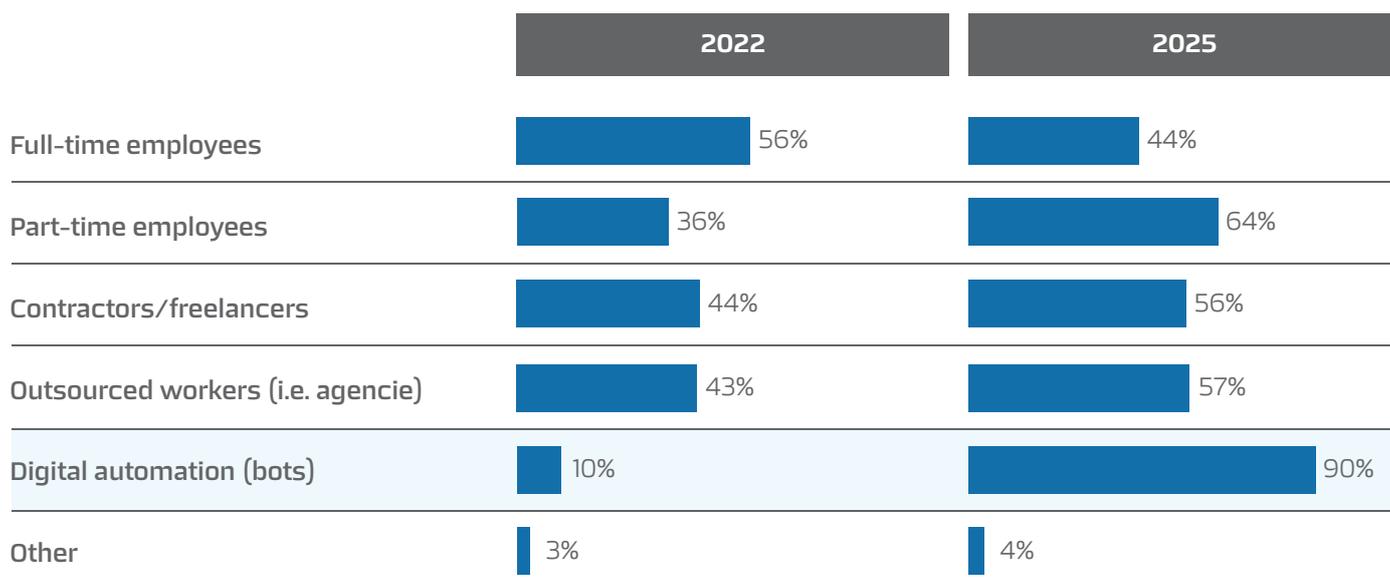


Automation and artificial intelligence (AI) blur the line between human and machine and change the way employees work. The term ‘digital worker’ has become synonymous with software robots working together with humans. Rather, automation and AI should be viewed as an enabler of human potential. As part of these shifts, 97 million new roles are expected to emerge across 15

industries in the US economy alone, as technology and markets advance. At the same time, the 2022 Executive Networks’ “CHRO of the Future” survey found that a growing share of leaders see their organizations relying on digital automation to perform tasks in the next years, with an 80-percentage-point increase from 2022 to 2025.^{16,17}

Survey Question: Think about how your organization gets work done today and how you expect your organization to get work done in 2025.

Source: 2022 Global CHRO of the Future Research



Moreover, a World Economic Forum survey estimates that generative AI will be adopted by 75% of organizations, and

around 2 out of 3 leaders believe that it will have a positive impact on productivity – according to Forbes Advisor.^{18,19}

The Positive Impact Business Owners Expect from AI.

Source: Forbes Advisor



In this context, how will the human-technology relationship shape the future of the workforce, and how will AI-powered tools influence workflows as collaborative partners?

AI and bots have the potential to optimize operations by taking on repetitive tasks such as data entry, paperwork review, preliminary interactions with individuals. This practice could generate tangible effects on employees' productivity and expertise. According to a study conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research, customer service agents who used an AI assistant managed to successfully handle 14% more chats, with this figure rising to 34% among less-experienced employees. Furthermore, considering that – for instance – public employees spend

approximately one third of their time on low-impact administrative activities, automation could allow them to refocus their efforts on more essential and value-adding tasks.^{20,21}

Blending individuals' expertise and technological innovation is therefore set to revolutionize the professional landscape. New systems will drive success when individuals fully believe in them as sources of tangible advantages and their experience as users will be highly intuitive and personalized. Through collaboration, humans and digital tools will amplify their respective complementary strengths, thus reaching new frontiers of productivity, efficiency, and value creation.

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

Data-driven decision making consists of making strategic choices and improvements based on the analysis and interpretation of information. It provides organizations with valuable insights into their operations as the quantity of data grows worldwide every day. In fact, it is expected that by 2025, the global data-sphere will have expanded to around 180 trillion gigabytes. The adoption of technological platforms capable of handling and analyzing data allows for more efficient decision making based on data.²²

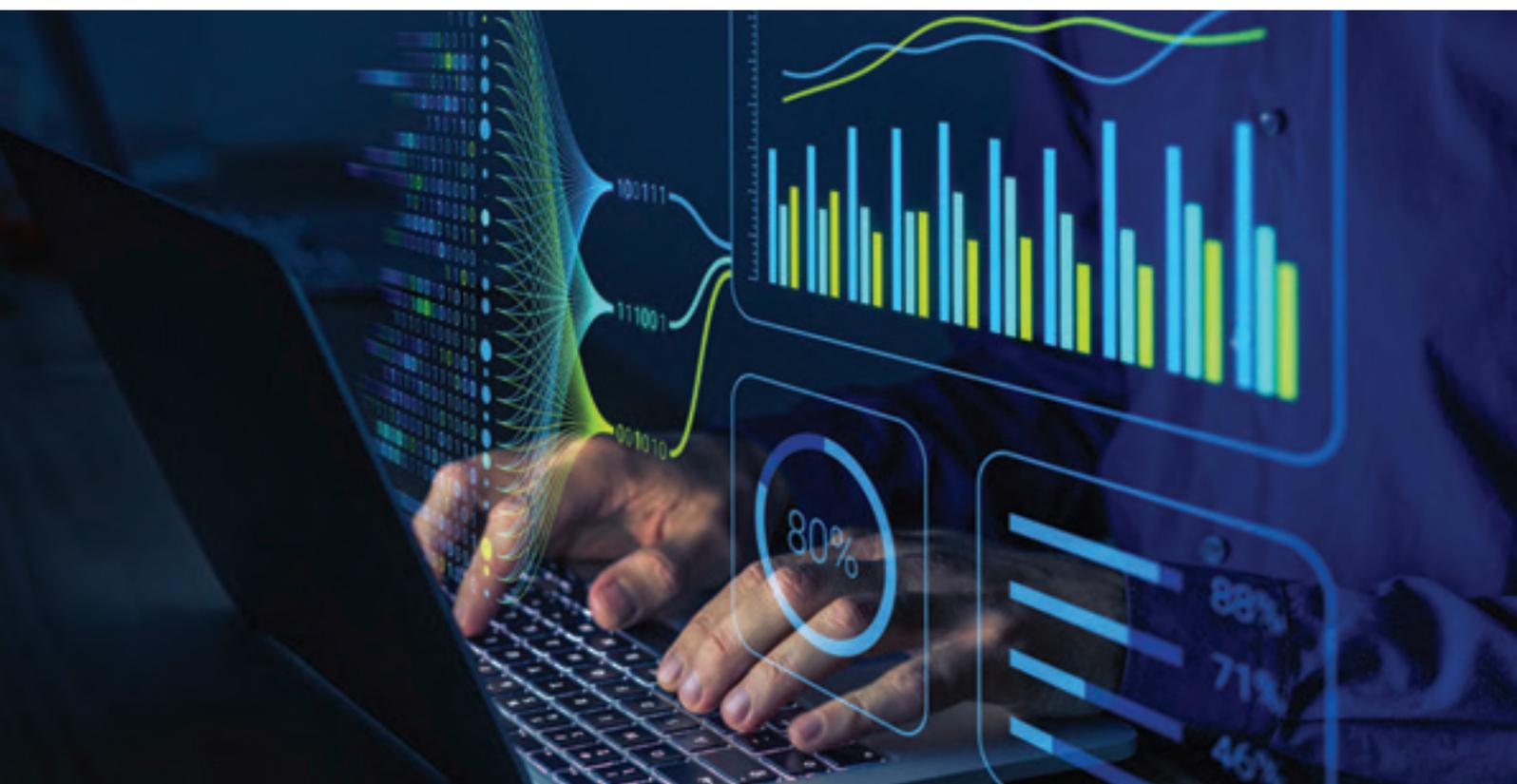
Moving forward, the integration of analytics will make a difference in and generate positive effects on the overall productivity, quality of outcomes, and individuals' satisfaction. Above all, organizations will increasingly leverage it to assess the state of the art of their workflows to improve efficiency. For instance, data coming from the digital tools used at work could provide a deeper understanding of employees' behavior, helping leaders and managers to identify productivity peaks and consequently optimal times and areas for task and resource allocation. In addition, data analysis techniques can be employed to recognize realistic targets and create effective KPIs and benchmarks, thus improving performance, motivation, and retention rate.

Additionally, from the lens of the public sector, agencies will be able to - for instance - systematically gather and evaluate the data they collect to better understand citizens' needs, and tailor specific initiatives accordingly. This can encompass data from phone calls received, feedback surveys, citizen demographics, behaviors, and more.

In the long term, the enhanced capability to recognize significant trends in data will result in a progression from descriptive analytics - which focuses on understanding past events - to more advanced predictive and prescriptive analytics. This will make it possible to formulate evidence-based recommendations for future policy-making efforts, eventually fostering trust and confidence in institutions.

“Technology will never be the end, but rather the means to continue satisfying governments’ mandate: to serve the people”.

To fully unlock the transformational potential of this revolution and reap its benefits, organizations will be called to ensure widespread acceptance and utilization of information-driven approaches by fostering a pervasive data culture. This entails not only adopting advanced tools, but also instilling the right mindset to win any possible skepticism and conveying that the collective commitment to utilizing data for decision making can lead towards sustainable success.



OUTCOME-BASED PERFORMANCE

The adoption of advanced technologies and more efficient processes combined with evolving employees' preferences and ways of working is influencing the traditional concept of performance.

Starting at the top, some countries are rethinking the use of GDP as the sole measure of national well-being, recognizing that it does not capture factors like happiness or healthcare access. Similarly, organizations are moving beyond the "assembly line" mindset to embrace a broader view of performance that reflects current work dynamics and the integration of new tools. Cascading this mindset shift to the employee level, more and more organizations appear to be shifting towards outcome-driven performance management.

To start shaping and bringing to life a new definition of performance, it is essential to appreciate the difference between outputs and outcomes. While outputs refer to what is produced and delivered after performing a certain task, outcomes are the results and impacts generated by that activity. In simpler words, the former are more short-term oriented – as they represent the direct consequences of an action; the latter reflect the long-term effects.²³

When it comes to some jobs, it is immediate to assess employees' performance as it is closely related to the outputs achieved – e.g., number of calls answered, amount of complaints processed; quantity of CVs screened. Among knowledge workers, this can be more challenging as they deal with more complex tasks, and employers will therefore be called to break down performance into different segments. These were exhaustively described by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, which classified them into three main types:²⁴

01 Task performance concerns carrying out particular tasks encompassed within one's role and is typically connected to the outputs delivered. As specified above, for certain kinds of jobs defining standard results to be obtained might be less clear, and their actual achievement could be affected by external circumstances.

02 Contextual performance is associated with the concept of "organizational citizenship behavior" and extends beyond the boundaries of one's job responsibilities. It includes voluntary actions aimed at fostering a thriving atmosphere, such as supporting colleagues with their projects, contributing to organizational welfare.

03 Adaptive performance refers to a employees' ability to face unforeseen shifts in the operational context, task characteristics, and workload. This is linked to their responsiveness in managing crisis scenarios, learning new processes, proposing enhancements to work procedures.

Even with this segmentation, overlaps could emerge. Moreover, the continuously evolving roles and skills might lead to changes in the way performance is defined. The clear takeaway from examining performance evolution trends is that there is no one definition for performance (or productivity). It is an effort that is continuous and specific to the context of each organization.

INTERVENTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT HR

The rise of generative AI as a digital colleague, the potential of data to inform decision-making processes, and the need for revamped ways to assess employees' performance underscore the importance of modernizing approaches to reap their positive implications in the public sector. More specifically, institutions and government entities

are called to follow two main strategic directions: embracing a **comprehensive digital transformation** that transcends mere digitalization efforts and implementing **new performance systems** that effectively capture the contributions of each individual.



REAL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

To fully understand the relevance of the integration of digital tools in an organization, it is fundamental to have a better view of the areas in which governments and public institutions are applying them. The public sector is already utilizing artificial intelligence and technological platforms to improve efficiencies in different capacities, such as process automation, service delivery, compliance, and decision making.

For instance, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics' Department of Occupational Safety and Health Statistics has used AI to review paperwork and reports, and code workplace injury survey responses. This led to savings of over 25,000 working hours in a year, and the tool was later found to be more accurate than a human coder, thus improving the quality of outputs.²⁵

The government of Singapore has implemented a chatbot based on a large language model that allows citizens to communicate with public agencies through a 24-hour service. The bot bases its answers on government documents and websites, ultimately reducing reliance on human agents for low-complexity inquiries.²⁶

Armenia collects the information gathered by New Generation Fiscal Machines and employs artificial intelligence to detect tax evasion among businesses and individuals by identifying cases in which accounting methods were used to illegally lower tax burdens. Thanks to this tool, the government managed to reduce the number of audit cases by 2.5 times.²⁷

In Brazil, a World Bank Team has developed an AI platform that identifies 225 potential red flags for fraud in procurement processes. The system monitors hundreds of millions in government spending as well as millions of invoices, firms, social program beneficiaries, news feeds, and more. Thanks to its deployment, billions of dollars of transactions with high fraud risk were detected and reported to government officials.²⁸

The Indonesian Ministry of Finance uses artificial intelligence to standardize budget reporting at the municipal level by tracking real-time fiscal performance. This system allows the central authority to provide local governments with more accurate benchmarking and budgeting guidance.²⁹

To support the shift towards automation and data-driven organizations, Stats NZ – the leading agency for government-held data in New Zealand – has introduced an updated data governance framework. This initiative reflects the agency's commitment to enhancing information management practices in the public sector, while harnessing data as a key asset for decision making. At the core of this framework lies the adoption of the

“whole-of-data life cycle approach”, that encourages public agencies and employees to embrace a more strategic mindset towards data governance, management, and accountability – from its creation to storage and disposal.³⁰

The importance of having robust governance frameworks will grow exponentially as governments increasingly rely on employees' data to streamline their organization and operations. For example, the Brazilian government has launched the “SouGov” app, which allows federal civil servants to access paycheck consultations, tax declaration, consigned loans, and more services. Similarly, Uzbekistan's National Digital Human Resources Management platform gathers all information on personnel, departments and units, keeps track of vacancies in the civil service, and records employees' attendance, business trips, and days off.^{31,32}

To implement a sustainable, human-centric digital transition, governments shall need to:

- 1** **Champion visibility and responsibility** by engaging stakeholders when designing and implementing AI tools and policies.³³
- 2** **Invest in building a solid data infrastructure** to guarantee reliability and security of digital and data-driven platforms.
- 3** **Issue guidelines and best practices** to ensure the correct use of data as well as to minimize potential privacy concerns.
- 4** **Reflect on ethical considerations** in the deployment of AI to guarantee alignment with organizational goals and positive impact on individuals.
- 5** **Prioritize human-centered design** principles to create intuitive platforms that are responsive to needs of the individuals interacting with them.

PERFORMANCE SYSTEM

When dealing with performance measurement, it is key to establish a common language with human resources so that they have a clear understanding about what are the factors that matter the most. In this context, organizations and employees should agree on well-defined key performance indicators (KPIs) that must be aligned with reciprocal needs. Modern ones have precise characteristics, as they are:³⁴

- Holistic in nature, meaning that they assess metrics that go beyond financial aspects and take into account also qualitative ones.
- Forward-looking and predictive, so that they can offer perspectives on future performance.
- Externally focused, considering the broad ecosystem in which the institution operates.
- Agile and adaptive, focusing on shorter review cycles rather than quarterly or annual ones.
- Collaborative, promoting cooperation across teams and functions.

Moving forward, organizations willing to adapt to the changing dynamics of the work environment will be also called to evolve their KPIs over time. For instance, the shift from outputs to outcomes will be more and more relevant and will require to take into account the contribution

of each individual to the overall strategic objectives. A stronger prominence should then be placed on soft skills and work-life balance, with KPIs addressing employee engagement and satisfaction as direct consequences of interpersonal abilities and working conditions. In addition, KPIs will likely become customized and tailored to each employee's competencies, roles, and future career perspectives, to drive retention and motivation.

Applying these concepts at the operational level might be challenging and requests a renewed approach to performance management. One of the frameworks which has gained the most traction is the OKR model (Objectives and Key Results). OKR offers a structured methodology for setting and tracking goals, aligning individual and organizational objectives, and fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. Such an approach is based on two main components: inspirational targets that define what employees are expected to accomplish, and measurable indicators that describe when the goals have been reached. Once the individual goals have been established and aligned with the general strategy, leaders and employees will constantly interact through regular check-ins and reviews to assess how everyone is contributing to the overarching targets. The continuous assessment process also helps to identify possible lessons learned and fine-tune objectives and KPIs for the next time.



The OKR model has already been adopted in the public sector. For example, the city of Syracuse (New York) used it by setting numeric, time-bound goals at the city level, and then by understanding where each department could add the most value. Every week, the Mayor's Department Head meeting addressed the progress made on the objectives, collecting updates from the departments, advice on how to enhance the workflow, and possible solutions to the issues emerged. This methodology led to fewer city employees' revisits to the same location to solve a problem, shorter permits approval time, and a reduction in budget variance of 6 percentage points.³⁵

Furthermore, OKR was also implemented by the Ukrainian National Agency on Corruption Prevention to face challenges related to transparency and coordination of the team after the department's reboot in 2019-2020. The pre-existing performance management system was replaced with the OKR method, which proved to be successful and possibly replicable in other agencies.³⁶

To enhance their performance systems and foster organizational effectiveness, public institutions are advised to consider the following recommendations:

1

Choose outcomes that matter for the organization and its employees by looking into holistic and contextual elements, resonating with personal and organizational objectives.

2

Design KPIs that are measurable and have a real-time feedback loop to leverage novel tools and data analytics, enabling continuous evaluation and insights generation.

3

Exploit multiple information sources relying on both quantitative and qualitative feedback gathered from diverse perspectives in the organization.

4

Promote transparency and accountability by clearly communicating expectations, and actively involving leaders in providing guidance and monitoring progress.

5

Embrace an adaptive performance measurement system, using technology and behavioral trends to predict future performance and constantly advance performance KPIs.

CHAPTER 3: ENABLING SUCCESS

Crafting environments
for talent to thrive.

FROM

On-premise environment

Pay-driven workforce

Physical spaces

TO

Cloud/ borderless ecosystem

Experience-driven workforce

Phyigital workplace



TRENDS

BORDERLESS ECOSYSTEMS

Traditional notions about geographic constraints are giving way to the imperative for companies to upend their strategies and offerings. The result: a wave of new shared services organizations (SSOs) that centralize back-office activities and support internal teams from a single location. A model SSO treats internal departments like customers, thereby reducing inefficiencies and cost requirements. Equally important to most SSOs is that they represent the infrastructure that can accommodate cutting-edge technologies like robotics and artificial intelligence down the road, leading to the economies of scale that come with centralized hubs.

Over the next years, this trend is projected to keep gaining momentum as organizations follow it in a more integrated way through global business services (GBS), which will manage the provision of support functions by encompassing multiple service delivery models globally and being established as a strategic partner. A 2024 study highlighted the increasing relevance of GBS – with 84% of the organizations surveyed indicating a commitment to adopting them to some degree, up from 65% in 2019 – and their effective positioning as accelerators for technological transformation – with more than a quarter of the participants to the research stating that GBS are driving their digital agenda.^{37,38}

However, to reap the benefits of such an approach, it will be essential that organizations leverage on a reliable

digital infrastructure that can be incorporated at the organizational level. Among the most important tools, cloud computing is defined as the “on-demand access, via the internet, to computing resources – applications, servers, data storage, development tools, networking capabilities, and more – hosted at a remote data center.”³⁹

Unlike traditional on-premises IT infrastructures, cloud computing represents a flexible and cost-effective alternative that allows organizations to scale up or down their computing resources depending on current needs. Furthermore, it enables data sharing among geographically dispersed teams and units, facilitating the integration of alternative models such as SSC and GBS. Its advantages include a lower environmental impact, a reduction in deployment and maintenance costs, and a contraction of technical teams from an average of 8-10 employees to 2-3 in larger firms.^{40,41}

The convergence of new organizational frameworks and transformative technologies is paving the way for a new era of efficiency that will affect how companies and institutions streamline operations and manage the workplace. Beyond the immediate effects of cost savings lies a broader opportunity to redefine the way in which departments collaborate, ultimately empowering organizations not only to adapt to change but to proactively drive it.



TALENT EXPERIENCE

Companies understand that constructing powerful brand identities involves more than merely creating a logo and tagline. It's about bringing to life their vision and values and how they interact with the individual. In a sector where capturing skilled talent is difficult – with 80% of organizations struggling to find the people they need – organizations appreciate that they need to strengthen their internal environment, offerings and unique proposition to appeal to employees over a long-term, and successfully retain top staff. ^{42, 43}

Companies are focusing more and more on their Employee Value Proposition (EVP), trying to attract and retain talent by offering unique benefits and experiences in exchange for their people's skills and commitment. There is increasing recognition that as Millennials and now GenZ gather more influence, their preferences for social ethics and a more balanced life style make it essential for organizations to ensure that their EVPs adapt to meet these changing expectations and to ensure they align with the priorities of the new generation of employees.

One of the first areas of improvement will be internal culture. When evaluating employment opportunities, 3 out of 4 professionals seek roles that contribute to shaping the future, and a similar share of them look for jobs that align with their values and generate a positive social impact. This means that organizations will have to reinforce their purpose-driven initiatives and highlight how each employee's work adds to the greater good. Moreover, individuals will also need the right amount of operational autonomy to make choices oriented at achieving that

purpose, so that they feel empowered, engaged in their roles, and trusted to support the general cause. ^{44, 45}

Another point is compensation, which comprises both financial and non-financial rewards. According to Forbes Advisor, 40% of employers report that employees leave their current positions to search for another job that provides superior benefits. As 6 out of 10 American organizations already changed their compensation schemes during last year, it is essential to reflect on employees' changing preferences to make sure they are met in the future. For instance, among the top priorities for employees, a study lists covered healthcare, life insurance, pension and retirement plans – the relevance of which can vary across geographies. At the same time, a growing share of the workforce (61%, an 8-percentage-point increase since 2015) considers work-life balance and personal wellbeing as very important. These will relate to remuneration packages that include paid time off, mental health assistance, as well as remote-work policies that also imply flexible working hours. ^{46, 47}

Organizations will progressively see these trends as strategic priorities. Those that will be able to follow them are likely to shape better employee experiences, promote positive interactions with employees, and make an employee's journey through the organization a true source of engagement – hence embracing key components of the future workplace of choice.



PHYGITAL SPACE

The foundation of work dynamics was upended by the COVID-19 pandemic - and remote and hybrid work models are here to stay. A third of full-time employees currently work remotely, while another 30% are in a hybrid model, and 98% say they'd like to have remote work options for the flexibility and work-life balance it affords. As a result, we've seen the rise of the phygital workplace - a state where technology blurs the line between physical and digital, creating seamless, interconnected work environments that drive operational efficiency, collaboration and productivity, wherever the work happens. ⁴⁸

Having a one-size-fits-all approach to the phygital office is an uphill battle, but it is possible to identify some key patterns in how organizations will adapt to this model and merge the tangible and the virtual dimensions.

From a design standpoint, the workplace of the future will draw inspiration from the collaborative environment of co-working spaces, the informal ambience of cafes, and the personalized touch of home-based work setups. People will carry out their tasks in a new atmosphere that promotes spontaneous interactions and facilitates the exchange of ideas, even from afar. The goal will be to disrupt the frameworks of conventional layouts and craft a setting that embeds a sense of familiarity and community. ⁴⁹

Offices are making sustainability a priority. As offices consider everything from eco-friendly materials to more efficient use of space to energy-efficient tech like occupancy sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) systems, it is a sign companies are committed to being environmentally responsible. Today, 22% of office tenants pay a premium for sustainable buildings, a number that is expected to rise to 34% by 2025. ^{50,51}

70% of employees are more likely to stay with a company that is environmentally responsible.

Source: IBM Survey



In future offices, ground-breaking digital tools will play a key role also in fostering cooperation. For instance, virtual reality and the metaverse will potentially enable individuals to collaborate seamlessly, transcending geographical barriers and facilitating collective efforts irrespective of physical separation. Additionally, they will open avenues for new training techniques and product development processes. Apart from real-time connections, advancements in the implementation of technological solutions will further streamline asynchronous work practices - when needed - by facilitating communication and project management through chat systems and interactive platforms.

Organizations will continue to witness and take part in the transformation of the workplace, redefining it from a physical venue to a more flexible environment. Throughout this journey, it is essential for them to embrace innovation, adapt to changing dynamics, and prioritize the wellbeing and satisfaction of their workforce, so that phygital spaces can unlock new levels of success.

INTERVENTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT HR.

To succeed, organizations are called to cultivate dynamic and inclusive work settings where employees feel valued, empowered, and motivated to excel. As they strive to create new types of environments that foster synergies

across individuals and places, governments should focus on two main intervention areas: **shaping the workplace of the future and enhancing the talent value proposition.**



PHYGITAL SPACE

When thinking about office design, organizations should take a holistic perspective that does not only consider space allocation, but the overall experience that employees live in physical contexts. The rise of hybrid working and the increased attention to wellbeing make this aspect especially true, and call organizations to imagine new workplaces that foster collaboration, socialization and comfort.

A recent survey conducted explored future real estate strategies to predict the design elements that will better accommodate individuals' evolving working habits and preferences. Among the anticipated features, organizations will have to de-densify office spaces prompting employees to use different areas throughout the day and set up rooms for informal meetings where they can have spontaneous

conversations or work on collaborative projects. In the hybrid working perspective, technological tools will play a key role as digital conferencing facilities will simplify the connection between remote workers and people in the office, merging the physical and virtual dimensions. Moreover, an optimized desk-to-employee ratio will have to be considered to enhance space utilization and flexibility in the workplace, and enclosed booths will allow employees to select the ideal environment for their tasks, minimizing distractions and maximizing productivity. Finally, natural lighting, plants, and sustainable architectural solutions will help increase employees' wellbeing while contributing to a healthier and more environmentally friendly workplace.⁵²

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory has already embraced these innovative design principles in an innovation lab. The premise's characteristics include sit/stand desks and unassigned workspaces equipped with monitors, glass walls that can be made transparent or opaque depending on the privacy level needed, telepresence robots enabling remote team members to actively engage in discussions. The workplace also has blinds that track the sun's movement to enhance energy efficiency and comfort, and a machine learning system to alert when the coffee stock is low. ⁵³

In New South Wales (Australia), a public sector office hub has been renovated to create a tech-enabled and sustainable workplace for 2,000 employees. The venue offers areas for collaboration and relax and was built using natural materials and solutions to achieve top water and energy consumption certifications. ⁵⁴

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) leveraged an opportunity offered by the U.S. General Service Administration called Commercial Coworking. This provides public agencies with fully equipped spaces in significantly less time than traditional office procurement and setup processes. The solution proved to be cost-effective and convenient, with venues located near employees' residences which also minimized commute times. ⁵⁵

To further increase collaboration and synergies across departments, the integration of technology in the workplace should also be put in place through the implementation of solid cloud infrastructures. In this sense, South Africa's State Information Technology Agency (SITA) was responsible for providing a secure private cloud to the national government that delivers interoperability across all government's departments. The benefits brought about by this centralized system include a better

intergovernmental coordination, the possibility to develop technologies like artificial intelligence and Internet of Things, higher flexibility, and cost reduction. ^{56,57}

The government's cloud is also the foundation for the application of centralized organizational models like SSC and GBS. For instance, at the time of its creation in 2016, Shared Services Canada – the organization delivering shared IT services to the government – was tasked to manage the IT infrastructure of 43 departments, which included 485 data centers, 50 networks and 23,400 servers. ⁵⁸

Public institutions aiming at adapting their workplace to promote interactions and drive efficiencies across their organization should then:

- 1** **Position the workplace as a flexible venue** in terms of accommodating in person and over the internet office presence preferences.
- 2** **Adopt technological solutions that promote seamless communication**, empowering people to work and interact efficiently and effectively regardless of their location.
- 3** **Implement collaborative workspaces** to foster teamwork and creativity, giving professionals the opportunity to socialize, exchange ideas, and cooperate.
- 4** **Embrace sustainable and green design practices** to create an environmentally friendly office that minimizes resource consumption while maximizing employees' wellbeing and comfort.
- 5** **Invest in shared cloud infrastructure** that allows for services centralization and facilitates the diffusion of innovations across departments, enabling access to data and application.

TALENT VALUE PROPOSITION

Organizational transitions regarding the talent value proposition encompass culture and reward systems, and therefore require a proactive approach aimed at assessing and refining internal dynamics and compensation structures.

As far as the culture is concerned, institutions need to collect information about how their internal values are perceived and if they are aligned with employees' preferences and ambitions. Surveys, individual interviews, focus groups, and large discussion sessions can be used to define cultural transformation targets and identify employees' motivational drivers, with the final objective of shaping a shared vision. Its implementation should be seen as a strategic goal that calls for collective efforts and commitment. In this sense, all the professionals working in the organization have to fully understand how any possible change will affect their operations and agree on a common action plan to put the transformation in place. Finally, staff's feedback on the adopted strategies holds paramount importance and should then be fostered by establishing communication channels and opportunities across hierarchical levels. Facilitating the exchange of ideas and inputs will make people feel heard, valued, and respected, and will positively affect their engagement.

In the public sector, there have been several examples of organizations pursuing cultural changes to drive employees' motivation and productivity. For instance, Belgium's New Ways of Working Initiative sought to position federal public agencies as dynamic and innovative organizations with the goal of becoming desirable places of employment able to attract and retain talent. To do so, the program addressed different action areas, including: the promotion of a more results-oriented cultural shift with a focus on motivating employees and fostering team spirit; communication and change management efforts to facilitate the transition and secure employees' buy-in; digitalization to provide civil servants with the tools they need to work and collaborate more effectively.⁵⁹

After finding that the higher flexibility induced by the pandemic did not lead to significant compromises on service delivery, the Irish Civil Service worked alongside representatives of its employees to introduce a Blended Working Policy. This allows individual departments and offices to manage their own hybrid working arrangements, supporting them with a centralized government platform and a push on a "digital first" culture.^{60, 61}



Given the growing emphasis on employees' satisfaction and wellbeing, organizations should also enrich their talent value proposition by adopting a Total Rewards Policy approach. This model encompasses various elements including financial compensation, which comprises both fixed and variable pay, as well as benefits that offer advantages in terms of – for example – health insurance, pension allowance, housing, meals. Then, the framework focuses on work-life effectiveness, ensuring that employees are supported in their professional activities both at work and at home. Moreover, talent development initiatives should be prioritized as part of the employees' journey and provide them with the necessary tools to enhance their skills and excel in their careers over the short and long term. Lastly, formal and informal recognition programs should be implemented to acknowledge and reward the efforts, behaviors and performances that contributed to the overall success.⁶²

In this regard, the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (UK) has launched a revamped benefit framework built on insights from employees about what they valued most. The scheme allows employees to save on daily expenses like childcare and groceries and offers discounts on major tech items such as tablets and computers. Furthermore, it granted incentives that promote eco-friendly commute through a cycle-to-work initiative and a green car purchase program.⁶³

In January 2024, the UK government released its future-oriented Civil Service People Plan for the 4 years to come, with a focus on pay and rewards. More specifically, public institutions will provide non-financial and social recognition, expand the access to mental health services, and link rewards to performance.⁶⁴

Institutions willing to fine-tune their culture and compensation policies to offer a more appealing talent value proposition are prompted to:

1

Recognize values that align to the current or future organizational culture could be the most relevant motivational drivers for employees.

2

Promote initiatives and discussions encouraging individuals to share their perspectives and experiences as key references to create a more engaging workplace.

3

Determine the most important factors that influence internal satisfaction in terms of pay, and design reward policies that consider financial compensation, additional benefits, and career development.

4

Monitor possible disparities in compensation, and review policies to address such differences.

5

Consider offering wellness and wellbeing programs that foster a better work-life balance and contribute to the creation of a healthier and positive environment.



CONCLUSION

GLOBAL TRENDS IN LOCAL CONTEXT: Where can government HR begin?

With technology and global tides changing quickly and marking the current paradigm, the future of work is one that poses unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Perhaps these challenges and opportunities are even further exacerbated in the public sector, where speed of change, adaptability, innovation, and employee value proposition require enhancement.

As these changes transpire, work is being revolutionized in a landscape where old jobs are getting reconstructed through the realms of the gig economy, digitization, and through a focus that prizes skills over credentials.

AI and digital technologies have been shown through plenty of evidence to increase productivity, primarily through automation and data-based decisions. However, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of human-centric approaches to technology adoption, ensuring that digital tools augment the human elements of creativity, empathy, and strategic thinking.

To bring it all together, collaborative environments have demonstrated power in unlocking the collective potential of employees. By creating spaces that encourage cross-

functional teamwork and innovation, the diverse strengths and perspectives of the workforce can be harnessed to tackle complex challenges.

Governments are, therefore, challenged to shift into an organizational paradigm that will be based on a very flexible and skill-centric HR model that taps into the full pool of talent in a dynamic human and non-human workforce. However, it is imperative for government HR leaders to not only embrace the global trends shaping our future but also to critically evaluate their relevance within the unique contexts of their own jurisdictions. Local needs will vary, in addition to cultural specifics and regulatory environments which means that a one-size-fits-all approach to HR innovation is not an option in today's world especially as we prepare for tomorrow.

The starting point for any such government HR effort must be rooted in a clear understanding of the current state, but then demands shedding all legacy strategic planning approaches and diverges into a set of actions that must be governed by clear principles:

01 | EMBRACE HR'S GROWING STRATEGIC ROLE.

Before attempting to drive or enable change across the workforce in the organization, HR leaders must start by examining their own functions first. Recognize HR's evolving role as a strategic partner in the organization as HR ceases to be an administrative function but a key player in the game.

02 | EMBODY AGILITY AND DESIGN FOR THE UNKNOWN.

To navigate the future, government HR must be agile and flexible, ready to address issues and challenges that do not exist yet. Rapid developments demand swift action ingrained in a holistic and dynamic mindset from strategy formation to implementation.

03 | GET COMFORTABLE IN THE SANDBOX.

Encourage rapid experimentation and decision-making through a sandbox approach.

For example, when attempting to re-invent the organization, government HR can start by piloting with a department housing employee with transferrable skills which could be converted into a talent pool accessible to other parts of the organization.

Moving on to the organization's digital transformation, government HR can play a crucial role in evaluating most suitable delivery models such as in-house development, co-development, outsourcing, etc. based on strategic needs.

04 | START AT THE END.

It is valuable to try and work backwards. Government HR must work with the end in mind and plan efforts and resource allocation accordingly. For initiatives that aim to redefine the employee value proposition, for example, a good place to start would be to understand employee priorities directly. This reverse engineering approach ensures strategies are grounded in real, expressed needs rather than assumptions.

05 | KEEP THE HUMAN AT THE CENTER.

Technology serves to an end, not the end itself. The goal remains to serve constituents effectively, ensuring technology enhances and augments the human.

06 | DO NOT IGNORE CULTURE.

Culture is crucial in transformation efforts, especially with the degree of change expected when it comes to work, the workforce, and the workplace. It can be a strong foundation or a significant barrier to change, thus requiring careful attention to guarantee the success of government HR efforts.

07 | LAST BUT NOT LEAST, DATA IS GOLD.

In this world, understanding that data is the foundation upon which future strategies must be built is crucial. It is vital to examine the entire HR value chain to identify key junctions for collection of data that will then be transformed into insight.

The future of human resources holds immense potential for innovation, growth, and positive impact that organizations unleash. As this report set the stage for further discussions and research, by embedding these cross-cutting principles in the organization, government HR leaders can nurture a forward-leaning government workforce that is ready, responsive, and resilient amidst growing change.

ABOUT

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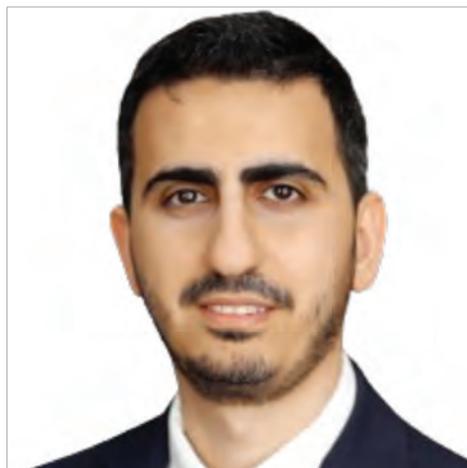


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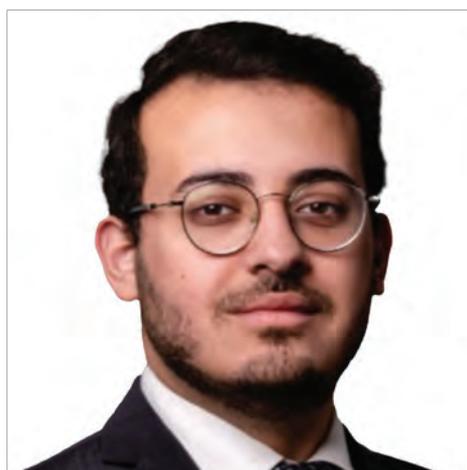
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