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A special issue from ITD World Vietnam

ITD WORLD
Your Global Coaching &
Leadership Development Partner

Letter from the Editors

Dear our valued readers!

As we usher in April, we are delighted to present to you our latest issue, revolving around the theme of "**Creating a Coaching & Learning Ecosystem**."

In this edition, we explore the transformative power of fostering a culture of coaching and continuous learning within organizations, which serves as a cornerstone for sustainable growth and innovation.

Coaching Culture: Blueprint for Organizational Growth

At the heart of organizational development lies the cultivation of a robust coaching culture. We delve into what constitutes this type of culture, its defining characteristics, and why it serves as an indispensable catalyst for organizational growth. Through exploration of its pillars and methodologies, we aim to provide you with actionable insights on how to instill and nurture this culture within your teams and departments.

The Role of HR in Championing Change & Organizational Culture Establishment

Recent crises have underscored the urgent need for organizations to adopt dynamic talent and work models. In this section, we spotlight the pivotal role of Human Resources leaders in championing change and establishing a resilient organizational culture. By focusing on identity, agility, and scalability, HR professionals may navigate uncertainties with finesse, driving impactful transformations that propel their organizations toward sustained success.

As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of work, may this edition serve as a beacon of inspiration and guidance, empowering you to cultivate environments where learning thrives and coaching flourishes. Together, let us embark on a journey of growth, resilience, and collective achievement!

Wishing you a month filled with fruitful endeavors and boundless opportunities!

Warm regards,

ITD World Vietnam team

COACHING CULTURE: BLUEPRINT FOR ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

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Coaching Culture: Blueprint for Organizational Growth

Source:
https://itdworld.com/blog/coaching/coaching-culture/
https://itdworld.com/gcce-coaching-culture-for-sustainable-growth/

Given the dynamic landscape of modern workplaces, coaching has been emerging as a pivotal force driving organizational success. Beyond a trend, building a coaching culture signifies a profound shift in how companies approach leadership, development, and collaboration within their teams.

What is a Coaching Culture?

A coaching culture is the manifestation of an organizational ethos wherein coaching becomes the cornerstone for employee development and support. In such an environment, the emphasis is not solely on managerial coaching – but extends to a collective responsibility where every individual, irrespective of their hierarchical position, actively contributes to fostering growth through continuous feedback, support mechanisms, and a commitment to learning.

At its core, coaching is a dynamic process that entails asking thought-provoking, open-ended questions, engaged listening, constructive feedback, and the cultivation of an atmosphere that encourages reflection and action.

It provides a catalyst for employees to distill meaningful insights from their experiences, refine their skill sets, and successfully pursue their professional objectives.

The depth of a coaching culture surpasses the mere presence of managers coaching their subordinates. Instead, it permeates every facet of the workplace, becoming an integral part of the organization's DNA. The principles of coaching are intricately woven into the daily fabric of interactions, shaping how colleagues collaborate, communicate, and collectively work towards shared goals.

Characteristics of a Coaching Culture

"A culture where one-on-one and team coaching is mindfully practiced formally and informally as a daily habit at all levels of the organization to empower and unleash human potential for high trust and engagement to accelerate people development that enables high performance and attainment of bottom-line results for sustainable growth and competitive advantage." – *Marshall Goldsmith & Peter Chee*

Deeply embedded coaching mindset and culture: Coaching is not seen merely as a tool for problem-solving; rather, it is a valued and positive approach to learning and personal growth. This cultural integration extends across all levels and functions, aligning seamlessly with the organization's overarching vision and values.

Structured coaching processes: The presence of clear, well-defined processes and systems is another hallmark. Regular sessions, meticulous follow-ups, and systematic evaluations become ingrained practices. Additionally, tools and platforms are leveraged to facilitate effective communication and collaboration among team members.

Leadership commitment: Leaders go beyond endorsing coaching in principle; they actively model coaching behaviors and throw their weight behind coaching initiatives.

Emphasis on a growth mindset: In a coaching culture, a pervasive growth mindset permeates every level, from top leadership to team members. Challenges are considered growth opportunities – while learning and development become intrinsic values. As such, people are empowered to take ownership of their work, make informed decisions, and navigate challenges with the guidance of their coaches – thereby resulting in enhanced autonomy, creativity, and a sense of responsibility.

Open communication and trust: Team members feel secure expressing their thoughts, concerns, and vulnerabilities without fear of judgment or reprisal. Regular, objective feedback is sought and encouraged as a means to propel individual and collective improvement.

Collaborative and supportive environment: Collective endeavors are directed toward achieving shared goals, and individuals actively contribute to each other's learning and development. Recognizing and celebrating achievements, regardless of size, becomes a norm. This celebratory culture reinforces positive behaviors, motivating team members to persist in their growth and learning journeys.

Why is a Coaching Culture Important?

"The goal of coaching is the goal of good management: to make the most of an organization's valuable resources."

Harvard Business Review

For individuals

- **Improved productivity**

A coaching culture catalyzes individual growth, providing personalized guidance and feedback that fosters clarity in goal-setting and ownership of development. This, in turn, translates into improved task performance, enhanced problem-solving skills, and the delivery of high-quality work.

Case studies:

A multinational company, Organization X, conducted a two-month coach-training pilot for a select group of managers. The pilot demonstrated positive outcomes, including enhanced communication, feedback, trust, performance, and job satisfaction. These results led to the expansion of the workplace coaching curriculum across the organization.

On the other hand, a compilation of case studies from multiple companies – including Barclaycard Business, BEA Systems, Cobbetts, Deloitte, the VSO, and West Bromwich Building Society – also corroborated the positive impact of embedding coaching into an organization's culture.

- **Enhanced engagement and motivation**

Fostering a coaching culture nurtures a sense of purpose and belonging among team members. As employees feel valued and supported in their personal and professional growth, they become more engaged, motivated, and committed to contributing to the success of the company.

- **Better well-being and resilience**

The open communication and supportive environment cultivated by a coaching culture contribute to stress reduction, the development of emotional intelligence, and the enhancement of coping mechanisms. This, in turn, promotes well-being and resilience among individuals.

- **Adaptability and career advancement**

Continuous learning within such a culture allows people to develop the skills necessary to adapt to change. This adaptability fortifies their resilience – as well as opens doors to career advancement and broader opportunities within the organization.

For teams

- **Strengthened collaboration and innovation**

A coaching culture enhances team dynamics by promoting effective communication, positive support, and clearer collaboration. As a result, team members are encouraged to explore new ideas, experiment with diverse approaches, and learn from varied perspectives – which helps stimulate creativity and innovation.

- **Improved conflict resolution**

Open communication, coupled with an understanding of diverse perspectives, facilitates constructive conflict resolution within teams. This not only builds trust but also strengthens relationships among members.

For organizations

- **Improved talent retention and attraction**

A coaching culture contributes to higher employee satisfaction and well-being, reducing turnover and absenteeism. Moreover, it becomes a compelling factor for attracting talented individuals seeking a workplace that is supportive and development-oriented.

- **Enhanced overall performance**

A study conducted by the Human Capital Institute and the International Coaching Federation (ICF) underscores the transformative impact of a coaching culture on organizational performance. Specifically, the presence of one makes a company more than twice as likely to be classified as a high-performing organization.

- **Facilitate change**

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), coaching plays a pivotal role in facilitating individual behavior changes – either through the influence of external coaches or managerial involvement. This adaptability is crucial in navigating and embracing organizational change.

- **Positive work environment**

Coaching contributes to a positive and inclusive work environment, where individuals feel heard, supported, and encouraged to thrive both personally and professionally.

- **Enhanced learning and development**

One final benefit is the establishment of an ecosystem that fosters continuous learning and improvement. Within that environment, employees actively seek and share feedback, learn from mistakes, and embrace new challenges – all of which contribute to their overall growth.

Pillars of Coaching Culture

Consciousness:

Consciousness involves heightened awareness and mindfulness within the organization – where people are attuned to the impact of their actions, words, and decisions on themselves and others. As such, it fosters a culture where every interaction is intentional and contributes positively to the growth and development of individuals and the organization as a whole.

Self-belief

Within a coaching environment, employees are encouraged to recognize their strengths, acknowledge their areas for improvement, and cultivate a sense of self-efficacy. This pillar empowers people to set ambitious goals, take risks, and persist in the face of challenges.

Trust & respect

Team members feel secure in expressing their thoughts, ideas, and concerns, knowing that they will be received with respect. The result is a workplace setting where open communication thrives – and constructive dialogue/ exchange of ideas is promoted.

Collaboration

In a coaching culture, teams are encouraged to work together, leveraging diverse skills and perspectives. This collaborative spirit extends beyond traditional hierarchical structures, promoting a sense of unity and shared responsibility.

Empowerment & autonomy

Team members are provided with the tools, resources, and support needed to take ownership of their work and make informed decisions. Being guided by a clear framework allows for the cultivation of a sense of responsibility and accountability among employees.

Pillars of Coaching Culture

Psychological safety

People are free to be themselves – they feel comfortable taking risks, expressing innovative ideas, and admitting mistakes without fear of retribution.

Equality & diversity

This pillar extends beyond demographic considerations to include a variety of skills, thoughts, opinions, and approaches. In a coaching culture, organizations actively seek and celebrate such diversity, recognizing its role in driving innovation and creativity.

Blame-free environment

Individuals take responsibility for their actions and outcomes instead of playing the “blame game”. Mistakes are regularly reflected on for improvement.

Coaching-focused leaders

At the core of a coaching culture are leaders who actively champion a coaching mindset. They invest in the development of their teams, provide constructive feedback, and create an environment where coaching is seen as integral to individual and collective success.

How to Create a Coaching Culture at Work

Step 1: Laying the foundation

- **Define goals and alignment**

Clearly articulate the goals of coaching within the organization. Define the benefits and outcomes you aim to achieve – making sure that they align with the overarching vision, mission, and values. Establish metrics to measure the impact of coaching, providing a tangible framework for evaluation.

Example:

– Goal: To enhance employee engagement and productivity by fostering a growth mindset and promoting continuous learning. This goal aligns with the organization's vision of becoming a learning organization that empowers its employees to reach their full potential.

– Metrics: Employee satisfaction, engagement scores, and performance metrics.

- **Craft a vision**

Develop a vision for your initiative, including the values that will underpin it. Envision the workplace atmosphere you want to create – and how coaching principles will contribute to achieving broader organizational goals.

Example: Your vision might be to build up a supportive and growth-oriented environment that values empowerment, collaboration, and continuous learning. In that dream workplace, employees feel encouraged to ask questions, share ideas, and take risks. Coaching helps employees develop their skills, enhance their problem-solving abilities, and make better decisions, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance.

- **Secure support from organizational leaders**

Leaders should not only endorse the value of coaching; they need to actively engage in coaching practices themselves. This involves understanding, practicing, and advocating coaching skills within their teams.

- **Communicate to employees**

Transparently communicate the vision and benefits of the coaching culture to all employees. Clearly explain how they can participate and what it means for their individual development – to foster a sense of inclusivity and shared purpose.

- **Invest in training and development**

The next step is to equip leaders and managers with coaching skills through comprehensive training programs or workshops. Ensure that they are well-prepared to champion and embody coaching principles in their daily interactions.

Step 2: Building the structure

- **Align coaching and performance goals**

Integrate coaching goals with broader performance objectives. Utilize coaching conversations to support individual development and address performance gaps, reinforcing a holistic approach to employee growth.

- **Establish a learning framework**

This involves setting clear expectations, providing ample training opportunities, and fostering a culture that values continuous feedback.

Example:

A marketing department establishes the following expectations for its coaching program:

Purpose

To enhance the skills and performance of marketing professionals, leading to improved marketing campaigns and increased customer engagement

Goals

To increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns by 15%, boost customer engagement by 20%, and reduce marketing costs by 10% within one year

Desired outcomes

Participants will demonstrate improved communication skills, stronger problem-solving abilities, and a greater understanding of marketing principles

Based on this foundation, various training programs are held to cover a range of areas, including active listening, questioning techniques, and feedback delivery – all of which contribute to the visualization of the defined goals. The programs are conducted in a variety of formats – including online modules to equip foundational knowledge, hands-on workshops that involve role-playing scenarios to apply what has been learned, etc.

- **Conduct mentorship and peer coaching**

Introduce formal or informal mentorship and peer coaching programs to create ongoing learning and support networks. These programs contribute to a collaborative environment where knowledge is shared and skills are honed collectively.

- **Establish feedback mechanisms**

Develop channels for regular feedback on the coaching culture and individual progress. Utilize surveys, focus groups, and ongoing coaching conversations to gather insights and gauge the effectiveness of the initiatives.

Step 3: Fostering the environment

- **Encourage ownership and decision-making**

Cultivate an environment where employees are encouraged to take ownership of their development and decision-making. Provide support and guidance while encouraging experimentation and learning from experiences.

- **Promote knowledge sharing**

Create platforms and spaces for peer-to-peer coaching, mentoring, and learning communities where team members can share expertise, insights, and best practices. For instance, consider building up an online forum, where team members can post articles, share documents, and engage in discussions. Organizing regular knowledge-sharing events (e.g. brown-bag lunches, workshops, or online seminars) where team members can present their expertise on a particular topic is also a great idea.

- **Celebrate shared successes**

Acknowledge and celebrate achievements, both big and small, to reinforce positive behaviors and motivate continuous learning. Recognition serves as a powerful reinforcement mechanism within a coaching culture.

Step 4: Continuous improvement

- **Evaluate and iterate**

Regularly assess the effectiveness of the coaching culture through data analysis, feedback mechanisms, and focus groups. Identify areas for improvement and adapt the approach accordingly, ensuring a dynamic and responsive coaching framework.

- **Share success stories**

Make it a priority to share success stories and positive outcomes of coaching within the organization. These anecdotes serve as powerful motivators, inspiring others and sustaining momentum.

- **Secure leadership reinforcement**

Continuously engage leadership in championing the coaching culture. Their ongoing support and active participation remain crucial for the long-term success and sustainability of the coaching framework.

Coaching Culture Transformation - A CEO's Story

A CEO's presentation at an appreciation celebration to recognize coaching culture transformation and achievements by the leadership team.

Dear team,

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to every one of you. As a team, we have made great strides in our cultural transformational journey these past 18 months.

I strongly believe the positive transformation we experience is based on the drive to establish a coaching culture. This strong push towards tapping deeply into human potential, developing a strong internal talent base, and ensuring accountability for results has laid the foundation for the success we are enjoying today.

To recap, our organization has significantly increased market share in a very competitive financial sector. We have grown our client base three times and overachieved our bottom-line targets by an average of 34% in all departments. What tremendous achievements we have attained in less than 2 years!

Such results are made possible with your strong commitment to achieving the common vision of becoming the top financial services provider in the next five years. Having everyone in alignment with this vision created powerful synergies to execute strategies, implement tactics, and carry out the action steps to reach our mutual objectives.

Aiding us in the journey was the implementation of the Results Based Coaching (RBC) solution which involved everyone in the organization. Thanks to your commitment to be results-oriented, we are now well on our way to reaching our vision.

Now, I want to voice my appreciation to the master coach and his team for their expert consultation in setting up the RBC to move us to massive execution. The expertise aided us in creating compelling results matrixes, rewards, and recognition schemes to accelerate our culture change towards growth. He and his team, along with the Human Resources Department, were crucial in executing the right coaching intervention for quick, big, and continuous wins.

I will not sugarcoat the journey. I recognize that there were challenges along the way. Some of these included market and other environmental factors which we have little influence. Yet we worked hard on influencing and directing the things that were within our control. These included our daily disciplines and success rituals. I practiced my every day as my accountability partner, who is the Chief People Officer (CPO), can attest.

At the organizational level, getting buy-in from all of you was an important first step. There is nothing better than top management walking the talk. The best form of leadership is leadership by example. The CEO and C-level team are great role models if they are conducting executive coaching, life coaching, strategic coaching, giving coaching, and receiving coaching. This shows the entire organization the power of coaching and everyone is encouraged to get on board. Soon enough coaching culture emerges.

I like to thank Angela for this. She was the one who introduced the Speed Agility Coaching Tool as an impromptu pilot project to get executives into the habit of coaching. Those who used the tool were happy with the results as they could get coaching sessions completed rapidly with results. The practice soon caught on. Even I use the tool to get a coaching habit, so thanks, Angela!

Subsequently, we set up learning systems to enhance coaching competencies at all levels which led to consistent contributions from all departments.

This is seen as members from different departments would coach others from another department to cover any knowledge or talent gaps. In applying coaching as part of the work process, I am pleased to note that we have created our coaching practice communities where people can meet for informal coaching sessions. I am so glad to see that people are taking up coaching conversations during breaks and lunches. Even so, we have also built our coaching systems and tools for those who prefer to establish formal coaching relationships.

And I am glad to note that we have grown our internal pool of certified coaches from zero initially, to at least one in every department. All of them are equipped to apply coaching best practices to create a high-performance culture for growth. They are our coaching champions who will continue to make this transformation sustainable.

On a related note, I am happy to share with you that our talent pool continues to get bigger. This is down to our Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) Coaching for All (CFA) initiative. Under the CFA, employees and internal coaches are encouraged to volunteer their time to coach fresh graduates, regardless of who they are working for.

Our efforts to touch hearts and build up others are now bearing fruit as we have cultivated a reputation of a caring organization. Many talented, highly knowledgeable, and skilled graduates seeking employment with us. The continued inflow of talents is sure to grow our talent to contribute greatly to our future development.

When we started the journey, I must admit I never imagined that coaching could have such a tremendous positive impact. Now I fully believe in the power of coaching. We all have experienced the change and will continue to spread the high-performance coaching culture on a bigger scale to other centers and countries in the organization.

We have experienced a shift in our culture from complacency to result-orientation, from working in silos to high-trust collaboration, from fear to

positive disruption, from downturn to upturn. I want to stress that we will not rest on our laurels. Instead, we will continue to strive for continuous improvement by working hard and creating opportunities for people to capitalize on.

I can safely say that our old culture is no more. Our culture from today onwards is innovative and progressive to chart a course for sustainable growth. Thank you for your dedication and hard work. I look forward to our continued success in all the tomorrows to come after today.

My best wishes,

Petra Chew

CEO and Chairman

Investment and Financial Service Organization

Note: The speech above is an adapted version from a client to showcase how coaching culture can be a catalyst for sustainable growth. The full story of how Angela, the human resource business partner at this organization, helped to successfully spark and implement a coaching culture transformation is available in the 5 Levels of Mastery book by World #1 Strategic Innovation Coach Dr. Peter Chee and World #1 Executive Coach Dr. Marshall Goldsmith. The names, places, and incidents in the speech are anonymized to comply with confidentiality requirements. Any resemblance to actual events in another organization is purely coincidental.

Reach out to us at www.itdworld.com for tailor-made leadership, coaching, and mentoring solutions for your organization today.

Coaching Culture: Blueprint for Organizational Growth

"High-performance coaching culture entails the crucial desire for transformation and a compelling shared vision; collaborating, engaging, and cheering the champions, advocators, and partners, ensuring accountability to massively execute strategies and plans for quick and big wins; shoring up strengths and capabilities, removing roadblocks, converting bystanders into believers and slaying the naysayers; measuring, resourcing, rewarding, and reinforcing to institutionalize the agile change systems and communities."

Marshall Goldsmith & Peter Chee

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MARSHALL GOLDSMITH

COACHING CULTURE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Marshall at the 2023 Global Leadership Team Conference

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The Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Culture Excellence Award

COACHING CULTURE EXCELLENCE AWARD honours organizations that excels in creating a coaching culture that unleashes human potential to accelerate talent development for high performance and attainment of bottom-line results, sustainable growth, & competitive advantage.

This award recognizes organizations that successfully establishes a robust **coaching culture** to enable and empower individuals, leaders, teams, and the entire organization for high performance to maximize attainment of exemplary business results.

With this award, world renown executive coach Dr. Marshall Goldsmith and Global Coaching & Leadership Development Partner ITD World celebrates the achievements of organizations around the world in leveraging on **coaching** to drive development, growth, and organizational transformation for a better world.

The award is named after Dr Marshall Goldsmith who is the patron for the Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Culture Excellence Award. He is widely acknowledged as the pre-eminent executive coach in the world and the originator of executive coaching.

This award is a collaboration between Dr.Marshall Goldsmith and ITD World and is aligned with the mission of both to transform leaders and change the world for the better.

Dr. Marshall Goldsmith and ITD World works closely together to create this award for appreciating and recognizing organizations that have contributed immensely to the development of a sustainable high performance coaching culture. Note that ITD World does not evaluate applicants. Entries are assessed by a distinguished panel of independent evaluators.

We believe firmly that coaching is capable of unleashing the potential of people for outstanding achievements, happiness and fulfilment in work and life.

WHY WIN the Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Culture Excellence Award?

A DISTINCTIVE DISTINCTION

ENDORSED	by panelists comprising global experts and gurus in coaching, culture, and leadership
VALIDATE	continuous achievements to sustain coaching culture to enable high performance for outstanding business outcomes
RECOGNIZED	by the Corps d'Elite World #1 Executive Coach Dr Marshall Goldsmith to have built, maintained, and perpetuated coaching culture in the organization

DRIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MOMENTUM

BENCHMARK	talent transformation & development interventions against the insights and wisdom of global experts and gurus
ESTABLISH	a coaching culture that aligns internal best practices, KPIs, SOPs, processes, and systems to maximize opportunities for high performance to positively impact the organisation
LEVERAGE	on the expertise, resources, and support of global coaching gurus to cultivate and strengthen coaching culture best practices for peak talent development in the organization

The Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Culture Excellence Award

PERPETUATE INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

SHOWCASE	excellent organizational culture to a wide audience to maximize brand recognition, talent attraction, and retention
INSTITUTE	a robust coaching culture as a enabler for high performance to generate sustainable growth
RECOGNIZED	demonstrates the organization uses coaching at all levels as a key enabler in driving transformation for breakthrough results and competitive advantage

AWARD PROCESS

1. Notify ITD World of the intention to apply for the Award.
2. Sign and submit the Data Confidentiality Consent (F1) and Confirmation to Submit (F2), and Application Details (F3).
3. Forms F1 to F3 should reach ITD World six months or earlier before the final submission deadline
4. Preparation of application for submission and continuous execution of strategies and plans.
5. Submit the completed application and supporting materials together with declaration form F4 to ITD World before August 31, 2024, for the October 2024 award presentation.

AWARD PROCESS

6. Applications evaluated and endorsed by distinguished panel of assessors who are eminent global coaching gurus, experts & past presidents of world #1 coaching professional body-ICF

7. Application presentation date will be only notified to the shortlisted candidate 2 weeks after the final submission date.

8. Applicant/s delivers a 30-minute online-live presentation that explains and defends why the organization should win the award. (20 &10 min Q&A)

9. Final evaluation is deliberated by the panel, winner is selected, and results communicated.

10. The Winner will receive the award at a ceremony to recognize their exemplary achievements.

The Marshall Goldsmith Coaching Culture Excellence Award

The Role of HR in Championing Change & Organizational Culture Establishment

(Credit: Asmus Komm , Florian Pollner , Bill Schaninger, and Surbhi Sikka

Source: https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-new-possible-how-hr-can-help-build-the-organization-of-the-future)

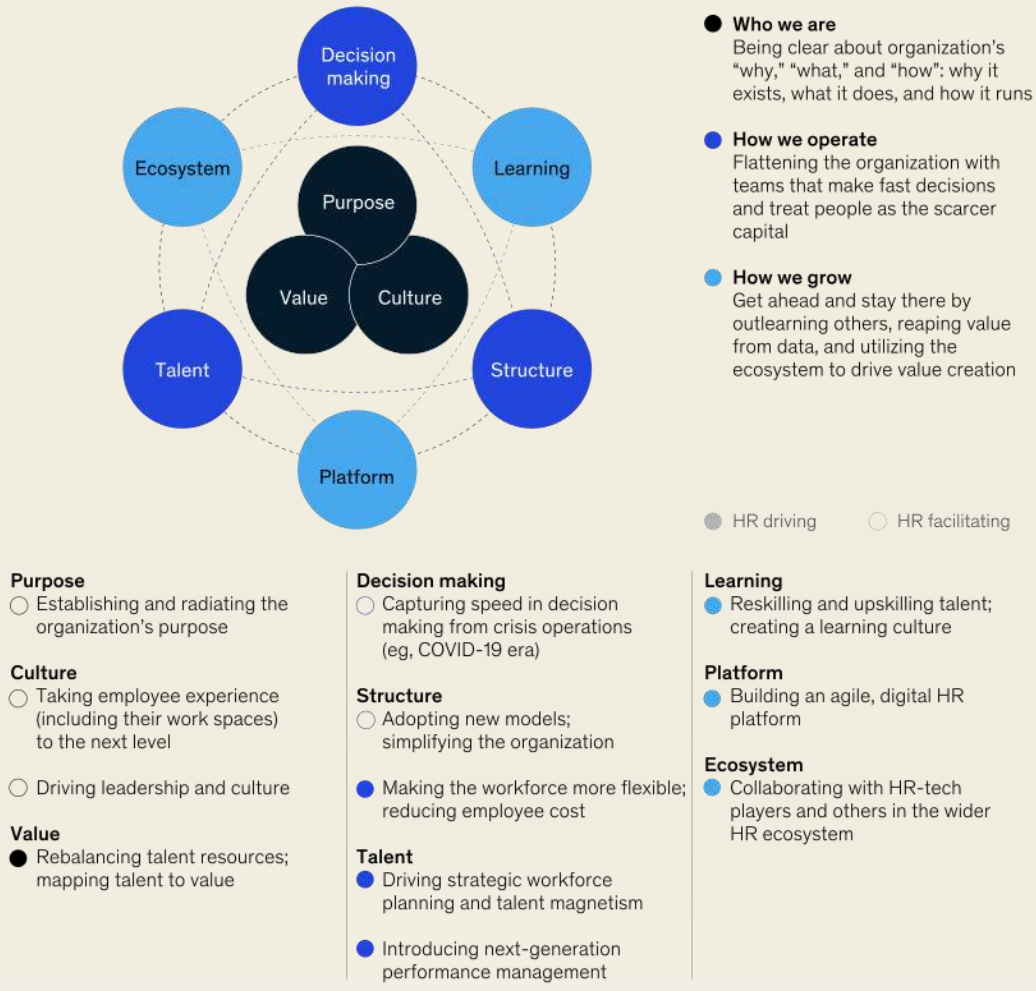
Recent crises underscore the urgency for a more dynamic talent and work model. Human resources leaders can help by focusing on identity, agility, and scalability.

We have all witnessed an at-scale shift to remote work, the dynamic reallocation of resources, and the acceleration of digitization and automation to meet changing individual and organizational needs.

Organizations have by and large met the challenges of this crisis moment. But as we move forward, a management system based on old rules—a hierarchy that solves for uniformity, bureaucracy, and control—will no longer be effective. Taking its place should be a model that is more flexible and responsive, built around four interrelated trends: more connection, unprecedented automation, lower transaction costs, and demographic shifts.

To usher in the organization of the future, chief human resources officers (CHROs) and other leaders should do nothing less than reimagine the basic tenets of the organization. Emerging models are creative, adaptable, and antifragile.1 Corporate purpose fuels bold business moves. “Labor” becomes “talent.” Hierarchies become networks of teams. Competitors become ecosystem collaborators. And companies become more human: **inspiring, collaborative, and bent on creating an employee experience that is meaningful and enjoyable**.

Nine imperatives can help HR leaders ready their organizations for the future.



McKinsey & Company

How HR fits in the big picture

Research by McKinsey suggests that future-ready companies share three characteristics: they know what they are and what they stand for; they operate with a fixation on speed and simplicity; and they grow by scaling up their ability to learn and innovate.

HR can help propel this transformation by facilitating positive change in these three key areas, as well as with nine imperatives that radiate out from them.

Identity: HR can clarify the meaning of purpose, value, and culture

Companies that execute with purpose have greater odds of creating significant long-term value generation, which can lead to stronger financial performance, increased employee engagement, and higher customer trust.

Home in on the organization's purpose

What is your company's core reason for being, and where can you have a unique, positive impact on society? Now more than ever, you need good answers to those questions—purpose is not a choice but a necessity.

CHROs play a vital role in making sure the organization is living its purpose and values. HR can articulate and role-model desired individual mindsets and behaviors linked to purpose by identifying "moments that matter" in the company's culture and translating purpose into a set of leadership and employee norms and behaviors.

For instance, commercial-vehicle manufacturer Scania holds an annual "Climate Day," during which the company stops operations for one hour to hold sustainability training, in line with its purpose to "drive the shift toward a sustainable transport system."

HR can also ensure that clear changes are made to recruitment and capability-building processes by determining the characteristics of a "purpose-driven" employee and embedding these attributes within recruitment, development, and succession planning.

HR can also incorporate purpose-driven metrics into compensation and performance decisions. Companies across industries have embarked on these metrics lately.

For example, Seventh Generation, a maker of cleaning and personal-care products, recently built into its incentive system sustainability targets for the company's entire workforce, in service of its goal of being a zero-waste company by 2025. Shell has plans to set short-term carbon emissions targets and link executive compensation to performance against them.

Think deeply about talent

Organizations that can reallocate talent in step with their strategic plans are more than twice as likely to outperform their peers. To link talent to value, the best talent should be shifted into critical value-driving roles. That means moving away from a traditional approach, in which critical roles and talent are interchangeable and based on hierarchy.

Getting the best people into the most important roles requires a disciplined look at where the organization creates value and how top talent contributes. Consider Tesla's effort to create a culture of fast-moving innovation or Apple's obsessive focus on user experience. These cultural priorities are at the core of these companies' value agendas. The roles needed to turn such priorities into value are often related to R&D and filled with talented, creative people.

To enable this shift, HR should manage talent rigorously by building an analytics capability to mine data to hire, develop, and retain the best employees. HR business partners, who articulate these staffing needs to the executive management team, should consider themselves internal service providers that ensure high returns on human capital investments. For example, to engage business leaders in a regular review of talent, they can develop semiautomated data dashboards that track the most important metrics for critical roles.

Create the best employee experience possible

Companies know that a better employee experience means a better bottom line. Successful organizations work together with their people to create personalized, authentic, and motivating experiences that tap into purpose to strengthen individual, team, and company performance.

The HR team plays a crucial role in forming employee experience. Organizations in which HR facilitates a positive employee experience are 1.3 times more likely to report organizational outperformance, McKinsey research has shown. This has become even more important throughout the pandemic, as organizations work to build team morale and positive mindsets.

HR should facilitate and coordinate employee experience. Organizations can support this by helping HR evolve, and strengthening the function's capability so that it becomes the architect of the employee experience. Airbnb, for instance, rebranded the CHRO role as the global head of employee experience. PayPal focused on HR's capability and processes to create a better experience for employees, including coaching HR professionals on measuring and understanding that experience and using technology more effectively.

Strengthen leadership and build capacity for change

Culture is the foundation on which exceptional financial performance is built. Companies with top-quartile cultures (as measured by McKinsey's Organizational Health Index) post a return to shareholders 60 percent higher than median companies and 200 percent higher than those in the bottom quartile.

Culture change should be business-led, with clear and highly visible leadership from the top, and execution should be rigorous and consistent. Companies are more than five times more likely to have a successful transformation when leaders have role-modeled the behavior changes they were asking their employees to make.

To strengthen an organization's identity, HR should ask the following questions:

- How can we develop an energizing sense of purpose that has a tangible impact on our strategic choices and ways of working?
- How can we identify key talent roles and focus them on creating value?
- How can we build a data-driven, systemic understanding of our organizational health?

Agility: HR's role in flattening the organization

Organizational agility improves both company performance and employee satisfaction. HR can be instrumental in shifting an organization from a traditional hierarchy to a marketplace that provides talent and resources to a collection of empowered small teams, helping them to achieve their missions and acting as a common guiding star.

Adopt new organizational models

For instance, as a part of a multiyear agile transformation, a large European bank worked to establish an in-house agile academy led jointly by coaches and the HR function to drive capability building for the transformation.

To be successful, a transformation should touch every facet of an organization—people, process, strategy, structure, and technology.

HR can help create an iterative approach by developing core elements of the people-management process, including new career paths for agile teams, revamped performance management, and capability building. It should lead by example as well, by shifting to agile "flow to work" pools in which individuals are staffed to prioritized tasks.

Create a flexible—and magnetic—workforce

Because many roles are becoming disaggregated and fluid, work will increasingly be defined in terms of skills. The accelerating pace of technological change is widening skill gaps, making them more common and more quick to develop. To survive and deliver on their strategic objectives, all organizations will need to reskill and upskill significant portions of their workforce over the next ten years.

According to a 2018 McKinsey survey, 66 percent of executives said that "addressing potential skills gaps related to automation/digitization" within their workforces was at least a "top ten priority." HR should help prioritize these talent shifts.

In a more recent survey, McKinsey conducted with global executives about the post-pandemic workforce, more than a third of respondents said that their organizations were unprepared to address the skill gaps exacerbated by automation and digitization. The shift to digitization has accelerated during the pandemic: 85 percent of companies have picked up the pace of their digitization (including a 48 percent rise in the digitization of customer channels). In light of these trends and the need to shift skills, there is a clear business rationale behind workforce strategy and planning.

HR should be a strategic partner for the business in this regard, by ensuring that the right talent is in place to deliver on core company objectives. HR can also drive workforce planning by reviewing how disruptive trends affect employees, identifying future core capabilities, and assessing how supply and demand apply to future skills gaps.

Moving to a skills focus also requires innovative sourcing to meet specific work-activity needs (for example, the gig economy and automation), and changing which roles companies need to source with traditional full-time-equivalent positions and which can be done by temporary workers or contractors. In the survey with global executives, about 70 percent said that two years from now they expect to use more temporary workers and contractors than they did before the COVID-19 crisis.

During the pandemic, we've seen how organizations have come together to utilize talent with transferable skills. For instance, McKinsey has supported Talent Exchange, a platform that uses artificial intelligence to help workers displaced by the crisis.

Make better decisions—faster

Companies that make decisions at the right organizational level and that have fewer reporting layers are more likely to deliver consistently on quality, velocity, and performance outcomes and thus outperform their industry peers. The pandemic has trained the spotlight on the power of fast decision-making, as many organizations have had to move dramatically more quickly than they had originally envisioned. For example, one retailer had a plan for curbside delivery that would take 18 months to roll out; once the COVID-19 crisis hit, the plan went operational in just two days.

HR can help with strong decision-making by empowering employees to take risks in a culture that rewards them for doing so. McKinsey research revealed that employees who are empowered to make decisions and who receive sufficient coaching from leaders were three times more likely to say that their companies' delegated decisions were both high quality and speedy.

Introduce next-generation performance management

Companies are experimenting with a wide variety of approaches to improve how they manage performance. According to a McKinsey Global Survey, half of respondents said that performance management had not had a positive effect on employee or organizational performance. Two-thirds reported the implementation of at least one meaningful modification to their performance-management systems.

There are three practices—managers' coaching, linking employee goals to business priorities, and differentiated compensation—that increase the chances that a performance-management system will positively affect employee performance. HR plays an important role in embedding these practices in performance management by supporting the goal-setting process, decoupling the compensation and development discussion, investing in the manager's capability building, and embedding technology and analytics to simplify the performance-management process.

To strengthen an organization's agility, HR should ask the following questions:

- Can we enable more effective decision-making by pushing decisions to the edges of the organization, creating psychological safety that empowers people, and building capabilities?

- How do we accelerate the shift to a more diverse and deeply motivated talent base, one that is supported through a human-centric culture that enables outperformance and superior experience?
- Which organizational areas or end-to-end value-creation streams would most benefit from a shift to new ways of working and organizing?

Scalability: How HR can drive value creation

The new normal of large, rapidly recurring skills gaps means that reskilling efforts must be transformational, not business as usual or piecemeal.

Lean into a learning culture by reskilling and upskilling

Effective reskilling and upskilling will require employees to embark on a blended learning journey that includes traditional learning (training, digital courses, job aids) with nontraditional methods (enhanced peer coaching, learning networks, the mass personalization of change, and "nudging" techniques).

For instance, Microsoft shifted from a "know it all" to a "learn it all" ethos, incorporating open learning days, informal social learning opportunities, learning data for internal career paths, and new platforms and products for its partner network.

Memo to HR: Look in the mirror

To drive and facilitate these workforce initiatives, HR must transform itself first. Talent is consistently ranked as a top three priority for CEOs, yet many lack confidence in HR's ability to deliver.3 The HR function is often overburdened with transactional work and not well-equipped to create value for the enterprise.

Yet people-first organizations look at business problems from the perspective of how talent creates value, and HR is well positioned to bring data-driven insights to talent decisions. HR can arm itself with data-driven insights and people analytics to support talent-driven transformation, and HR business partners can then consistently make talent decisions based on data.

Create a value-enhancing HR ecosystem

McKinsey analysis has shown that a preponderance of executives recognize how much external partnerships help companies differentiate themselves. Increased value can be created through ecosystems where partners share data, code, and skills. Success now requires "blurry boundaries" and mutually dependent relationships to share value. The need of the hour is for HR to collaborate on and leverage the landscape of HR tech solutions across the employee life cycle—from learning, talent acquisition, and performance management to workforce productivity—to build an effective HR ecosystem.

To strengthen an organization's scalability, HR should ask the following questions:

- How can we set up platforms spanning multiple players in the ecosystem and enable new sources of value and employee experience through them?
- How can we become the best company to partner with in the ecosystem? How can we set ourselves up for fast partnering and make the ecosystem accessible?
- What are the critical skills that drive future value creation and how can we upskill our talent base accordingly?

Looking ahead: How transformation happens

As the organization of the future takes shape, HR will be the driving force for many initiatives: mapping talent to value; making the workforce more flexible; prioritizing strategic workforce planning, performance management, and reskilling; building an HR platform; and developing an HR tech ecosystem. For other initiatives, HR can help C-suite leaders push forward on establishing and radiating purpose, improving employee experience, driving leadership and culture, and simplifying the organization.

Given the magnitude of the task and the broad portfolio of value-creating HR initiatives, prioritization is critical.

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