



Unlocking Exponential HR Operations

The 10 dimensions that drive business outcomes

In 2019, Deloitte published [a perspective](#) on the need to break away from traditional operating models to achieve work outcomes. This perspective called for a different type of professional, an exponential HR professional. As COVID forces all organizations to rapidly adapt, 2020 has brought into sharp focus just how necessary this shift is to be able to thrive in a world with constant disruptions.

Organizations who emerge from disruption stronger than ever will have HR professionals who are adaptable, agile, architecting, and augmented (the 'four As' of Exponential HR).



Adaptable means embracing change and adjusting quickly to shifting customer, environmental, and market needs.



Agile means moving fast, iterating and being nimble and flexible.



Architecting means bringing cross-disciplinary and multifunctional skills to create truly end-to-end solutions.



Augmented means embracing a combination of technologies and solution providers to digitize work.

As the engine to the delivery of day-to-day HR services, HR Operations is both ripe for changing what and how it delivers and is a critical player in leading the function in this reinvention. Today, the ability to react to requests and anticipate unidentified business objectives has risen to the top of the list of customers' expectations of HR.

Top Takeaways:

- HR Operations services and org structure are fundamentally shifting as the work itself and how we perform the work changes
- The 10 dimensions is a framework to view how HR Operations is working today and to make targeted improvements to future operations
- Your business is unique and drives the destination on your journey to Exponential – you must actively prioritize which of the dimensions to focus on to drive right work outcomes

As the world around us and the business itself shifts, demanding HR Operations to show up in a new way, it can be overwhelming to know where to start. The 10 dimensions provide a framework to evaluate HR Operations, from which services and products you provide, to how Operations is structured, governed and teams across reporting lines.

For each of these dimensions, we will explore what it means for HR Operations to be exponential. You will reflect on key questions to evaluate if you should prioritize this dimension on your path to exponential. Remember to keep in mind your destination – which business outcomes will you drive on your journey to Exponential HR Operations?

10 Dimensions Framework:

1 | SCOPE OF SERVICES



2 | WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE



3 | FUTURE OF WORK & TALENT STRATEGY



4 | ORGANIZATION DESIGN



5 | OPERATIONAL MEASUREMENT



6 | AUTOMATION & ENABLING TECHNOLOGY



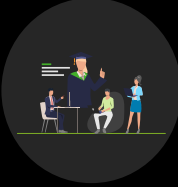
7 | CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



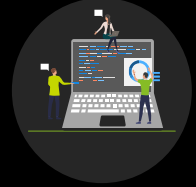
8 | GOVERNANCE



9 | PEOPLE ANALYTICS



10 | SOURCING & VENDOR ECOSYSTEM





1 | Scope of Services

The scope of Exponential HR Operations is beyond what one thinks of in a traditional shared services organization – inquiry and transaction management are table stakes.



Which emerging products and services enable your prioritized business outcomes? Can we expand our current service catalog to include them?

For example, HR Operations is in a unique position to develop emerging capabilities around Strategic Services like M&A, project management, design thinking, and change management, paving the way for HR to become more **agile** by building capabilities that can be deployed as an internal service to more quickly deploy products and services.



2 | Workforce Experience

Exponential HR Operations deliver a seamless experience to employees during moments that matter. Equipping the workforce to access critical information through multiple platforms, complete transactions with ease, and receive individualized interactions.

HR Operations must deliver an immersive and customized human experience that seeks to continuously improve. **Architecting** a meaningful Workforce Experience will be critical to attracting and growing top talent.

What can you do to further enhance your Workforce Experience?



3 | Future of Work & Talent Strategy

How do the roles, skills, and capabilities need to evolve in your HR Operations organization to support the Future of Work?

In the past, HR Operations and the jobs within it have largely been viewed as transactional and administrative. It was an area of the business where repetitive, manual work was sent and limited career growth expected; however, as the workplace fundamentally shifts, the type of talent we rely on to complete work in this space needs to evolve as well.

As the complexity and scope of work for HR Operations expands, the work demands **adaptable** talent- someone who is skilled at managing competing priorities, understands technology, can work in more than one area, and more. This is an exciting shift because roles in HR Operations are more engaging than ever before, but it also means organizations are facing a new challenge in attracting and retaining individuals with the skillsets needed to take on increasingly complex work. It is vital as an organization to focus on developing drastically different capabilities, rethink talent strategies, and broaden the traditional confines of roles in the HR Operations space to adapt.



4 | Organization Design

The structure and working patterns of HR Operations need to transform into embedded groups within networks of broader HR teams with adaptable capabilities to support everchanging business needs. HR Operations is no longer a single, separate piece of organization with a set scope of services. On your journey to scoping and sizing an **adaptable** Exponential HR Operations team, you should consider service delivery responsibilities, technology maturity, and geographic requirements. It is critical to make decisions in these areas that create **agile** structures and capabilities within HR Operations, so the organization is built to be durable against rapidly evolving business needs.



5 | Operational Measurement

How does measurement inform your governance and continuous improvement processes?

HR Operations that have achieved measuring critical dimensions of running the organization through traditional metrics such as KPIs and SLAs are expanding their scope and toolset. In addition to measuring customer satisfaction and efficiency, organizations are now measuring automation and employee's holistic experience in the workplace.

To be **agile** and **adaptable**, HR Operations are deploying pulse surveys that are integrated with HR process steps, predictive analytics to help plan for demand spikes, cognitive analytics tools, and “sensing” threshold tools to catch operational anomalies.



6 | Automation & Enabling Technology

The pandemic in 2020 has just proven how urgent and necessary it is for HR to be **agile** and be highly responsive to the needs of the business– a capability highly dependent on having an **adaptable**, user-oriented technology. Despite the rapid spread and decreased cost of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology, we haven’t seen as much traction in the HR space – primarily because most organizations don’t know where to begin, but also due to the investment of time and resources required to demonstrate the benefits of AI.

Do you have an established HR Operations technology landscape? Are you fast to adopt emerging technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence, robotics process automation, etc.)?

HR Operations, a function that presents the largest potential to benefit from automation within an HR organization, needs to view AI as a tool to **augment** or collaborate with human capabilities, rather than a substitute for human labor. Robotics and cognitive assisted services provide a personal customer experience, automate processes, and enable confident and informed decisions.



7 | Continuous Improvement

Do you have an approach to proactively identify opportunities for improvement? How do you drive these through implementation?

For leading HR Operations, Continuous Improvement (CI) is not an afterthought, but a strategic team ensuring HR is **adaptable** to the ever-changing business needs. Continuous Improvement is shifting from being treated as an individual’s role to a mindset, executed by a cross functional, networked team.

A broad set of capabilities are needed to change the way services are delivered – from process design to technology configuration and testing. The CI function within HR Operations is at the core of this networked team to lead and drive the change.



8 | Governance

In order to thrive in an environment with constant disruption, companies need to be making the right decisions with speed. For an organization to be **agile**, effective HR Operations governance enables decision-making at all levels and improves the pace of achieving business objectives. Governance needs to be connected across local, regional, and global levels, balancing autonomy with consistent process to accelerate progress while keeping all stakeholders engaged. HR governance and decision making is key to focus resources properly on strategic business outcomes.

Do you have the right teams represented as part of your governance body? Do you have clear alignment to your overall HR and business strategy?

The successful HR Operations Governance bodies empowers teams to fail fast to succeed faster, promotes pace over perfection, enables the business to have a louder voice, and better utilizes data and insights to drive decisions.



9 | People Analytics

What tools and capabilities are needed to deliver people analytics? How do you become an insights-driven organization?

Traditionally, HR Operations “own” the people data used to drive analytics but does not have the capabilities or resources to deliver full scale analytics. Organizations need to invest in the tools and technology to **augment** businesses with data-driven analytics to create faster and actionable insights. Many organizations can move from descriptive data to predictive data for a few areas of HR but are challenged by how to become predictive at scale.

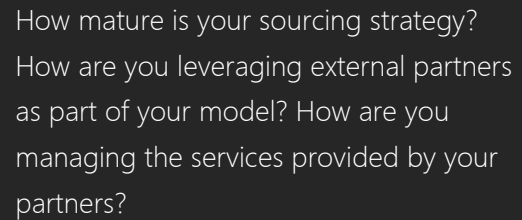
Pioneering HR Operations functions are extending scope beyond data ownership and basic reporting by building a data scientist team capable of **architecting** generating actionable insights. They invest in the tools needed to enable data quality and accessibility and expand their data insights delivery scope from a basic to broad set of HR use cases.



10 | Sourcing & Vendor Management

A transactional and hands-off approach to vendor relationship management is damaging to the workforce experience and can be costly to the business. Vendors must be active and engaged partners that understand the culture of your business and can be **adaptable** as your business evolves.

To achieve this requires an HR Operations team that is empowered and educated to manage relationships with vendors from selection and design to governance and performance management. It is key to have strong governance in place to ensure HR Leadership is involved as needed, smaller/local vendors are managed appropriately, contracts are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure continuous alignment with services provided, and clear metrics are established to indicate success for your business from a vendor's service.



How mature is your sourcing strategy?
How are you leveraging external partners as part of your model? How are you managing the services provided by your partners?

What Now?

The future demands a revolutionary change in HR to prepare organizations for a world that is increasingly marked by disruption. We know that change must be targeted and customized for each client to make the most valuable impact. The purpose of this framework is to provide a tool that maps the major shifts in HR Operations, so you can identify which areas would be most meaningful to your business in your journey to Exponential HR Operations.

A few ways to start:

- Determine the primary business outcome HR Operations is striving towards
- Conduct an HR Operations Health Check across our 10 dimensions to assess the organization's alignment to the latest leading thinking
- Develop a sprint plan with actionable projects and clearly defined outcomes to optimize prioritized dimensions of the HR Operations organization

Contacts



Mustaque Ali

US – Chicago

muhamad@deloitte.com



Mike Teska

US – Denver

mteska@deloitte.com