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Exponential HR

Break away from traditional operating models to achieve work outcomes

The human resources function as we know it will hit a wall—if it hasn't already. The Future of Enterprise, Workforce, and How Work Gets Done have rapidly shaped a new Future of HR. A digital mind-set, relentless focus on the customer, advanced enabling technologies, and simplified, nimble ways of working are musts to achieve positive business outcomes.

HR operating models have evolved over decades with a trajectory of increasing business impact marked by changing brands from "personnel department" to "human resources" to "people function" and "employee experience." The function has advanced from necessary administrator to a supporting function with a seat at the table, to business partner, and—in some cases—to trusted adviser.

HR's evolution has generally progressed at the pace of business and largely met the needs of enterprises along the way—or has been close enough for organizations across industries to thrive. Yet, the future demands something different from enterprises—and their HR teams—with tremendous urgency.

Today, enterprises are swimming through nearly constant change. Disruption is simultaneously affecting the enterprise and its workforce with increasing demands from customers, constant productivity pressure from competitors, and threats from unexpected entrants to their markets. Digitization and personalization of our daily lives coupled with the introduction of enabling technologies in the workplace at an unprecedented pace and scale create wholesale changes in the landscape of business.

Top takeaways:

Revolutionary change is a must for HR to drive tangible work outcomes

Reimagining the work of HR is paramount and demands dynamic and digital ways of working, HR superjobs, and new capabilities

Traditional HR operating models are inadequate for the future

Exponential HR professionals and the enterprises they are part of will be adaptable, agile, architecting, and augmented

Our research and pragmatic experience with the world's leading enterprises create a window to the rapidly unfolding imperatives that every HR team should explore as part of navigating the route to the Future of HR and we share those key insights here.

All eyes are on the enterprise. Changing workforce demographics and demands from the communities and society in which enterprises operate further complicate matters. Enterprises must quickly anticipate, adapt, maneuver, make decisions, and shift course in agile ways more than ever before to brave the never-ending disruption.

HR is uniquely positioned to lead enterprises to thrive in the new world of work, playing a new and vital leadership role in shaping the way enterprises compete, access talent, and curate experiences, and show up in the communities where they live and work. Yet for many HR teams, this new leadership role remains a futuristic idea and it seems a heavy burden to catch up with the pace of change—the new realities of business.

Evolution then . . . revolution now

Nearly five years ago, Deloitte recognized that traditional HR operating models, skills, and technologies were ill-equipped to meet the needs of enterprises that were undergoing massive change—in technology, in the structure of the workforce, in the very way work gets done. It became clear that the human resources function would get stuck—if wasn't already, as traditional practices lost pace with enterprises' true business needs. Advancing beyond long-standing tradition required a shift to customer-centric models and practices with a recognition that enabling digital technologies would elevate the workforce experience forever.

The Future of HR is inextricably linked with the futures of the enterprise, the workforce, and how work gets done. To effectively address disruption in these arenas and to achieve positive business outcomes, human resources will need to further develop expertise and make fundamental shifts in five areas:

- From doing digital to being digital
- From center-driven to human-centered solutions
- From compliance and control to trust and empowerment
- From integrated systems to a platform for unified engagement
- From minimal analytics to data-driven practices for decision-making and design

Through that effort five years ago, we explored real-world work with leading enterprises across industries and geographies. We saw a clear trend that the classic, mostly unquestioned, standard way HR had been taught to operate was failing to deliver the impact their enterprises needed to excel. In combination with that hands-on experience, we conducted extensive research. A collection of characteristics emerged, shaping a completely new construct: The High-Impact HR Operating Model, which we've continued to evolve each year since through experience and the rapidly changing shape of businesses today. The High-Impact HR Operating Model challenged the traditional, enabling many HR functions around the globe to break from the way things had always been to become more fluid, agile, and workforce-centric. Looking ahead, core elements of High-Impact HR will remain imperative in the future. However, they now simply function as table stakes—the minimum for HR to deliver meaningful impact. Just as efficiency and effectiveness are basic expectations, so too are elements of High-Impact HR, such as:

- Keeping HR's customers (leaders and workforce) at the center of focus
- Breaking down silos through communities and intentional, cross-function interactions
- Embedding HR in the business
- Creating scalability with wide scope of leveraged services
- Governing with a partnership of business and HR leaders
- Measuring impact—beyond activities, cost, and efficiency
- Positioning internal and external collaborators as an extension of the HR function
- Moving from reporting HR information to providing insights that drive real business decisions

Exponential HR

The future brings exponential expectations of HR beyond its roles of supporter, partner, and adviser to the business. Exponential HR professionals will spearhead workforce strategy, access talent, foster team collaboration, curate personalized human experience to drive engagement and productivity, and lead the enterprise's readiness for the constant disruption of the future, through a relentless focus on driving work outcomes.

Innovating faster, beating the competition, and improving productivity are the sort of work outcomes Exponential HR professionals will drive. Traditional measures of HR value will continue to decrease in relevance for leaders. In the Exponential HR world, long-standing, old-school measures like "time to fill an open position" will shift to "time to productivity"; "number of learning course enrollments" will shift to "net-new workforce capabilities mastered." These are work outcomes and they are what truly matter in the future of enterprises while process and operational measures are table stakes for keeping the trains running.

Exponential HR professionals will infuse advanced, digital solutions that automate, simplify, ease the workforce experience, and—most importantly—elevate the role people play across the enterprise and within HR, all toward creating value for customers and stakeholders.

Clearly, becoming Exponential HR requires far more than tweaking HR's existing operating model or tacking new roles, structures, or technology on old frameworks. It forces an approach well beyond redesigning processes or even experiences, to work outcomes that matter.

Reimagining work

Exponential HR demands reimagining work—within HR and across the enterprise. Just as across the full sense of every enterprise, HR must closely examine and reimagine its work by unpacking it, augmenting with technology and alternative talent, creating new channels, and elevating the role people play by refocusing on driving measurable outcomes.

Exponential HR teams will help their enterprises look at work in new ways and beyond traditional operating model boxes. Perks, rewards, and development will be given new meaning to create environments focused on role fit, capability growth, and enabling the workers across the enterprise to answer the most personal question that can exist in the workplace: "Am I making a difference?"

To accomplish this ambitious and necessary future, Exponential HR organizations will be:

- Adaptable
- Agile
- Architecting
- Augmented

Adaptable

Connected to the human instinct for resilience and reinvention, Adaptable Organizations embrace change and adjust operating and management models in response to shifting customer, environmental, and market needs. Adaptable organizations avoid the traps of fixation on scarcity, structure, and control by operating within an ecosystem that learns and pivots to help ensure survival of the overall system. Adaptable organizations attack disruption with continuous innovation.

Adaptable organizations are living and breathing enterprises organized around networks based on how people work and behave, distributing and maximizing human potential across five layers:

1. **Ecosystem**—Adaptable organizations succeed in purpose-driven ecosystems with defined customer-focused missions. They continuously analyze and adjust to shifts in the needs and demands of the workforce, customer, and market.
2. **Organization**—Adaptable organizations function through a flexible network of people, processes, and systems that interact with each other to deliver what their customers need. Rigid hierarchies and silos are replaced by multidisciplinary networks.
3. **Team**—Adaptable organizations develop a culture that supports high-performing teams connected through adaptable networks that band together to achieve shared goals, before being disbanded and reformed where their skills are needed.
4. **Leader**—Leaders of adaptable organizations are orchestrators who unlock the full potential of the diverse skills of teams that feel connected and empowered. These teams will function in an environment that embraces creativity and inclusion while respecting vulnerability.
5. **Individual**—Adaptable organizations develop talent programs that are responsive to the different ways in which individuals learn, grow, and develop. They support resilience in the face of ongoing uncertainty and change.

The path toward Exponential HR by becoming adaptable requires taking bold approaches to succeed even in the face of intense disruption, nudging the enterprise forward to change behaviors and ways of working, and empowering autonomous teams to work with purpose.

Financial services giant gets tribal

Recognizing the need to shift HR to become more customer-centric, flexible, and fast, a mega financial services company moved to an Adaptable Organization model and began by forming a series of networked teams.

The first type of team created was a "squad": A self-managing, autonomous unit with end-to-end responsibility for designing, delivering, and optimizing a specific customer-focused outcome aligned to agreed-upon objectives.

When more than one squad was involved in a grouping of related efforts, a "tribe" was formed. Objectives, planned outcomes, priorities, and efforts were well coordinated among squads and within the tribe.

Finally, "chapters" of subject matter experts that were not fully immersed in the day-to-day initiatives were created. These chapters contained a small circle of professionals with specially needed skills that worked across boundaries by helping squads and tribes. Through this formation, chapters were able to provide economies of scale without sacrificing autonomy of the squads.

Agile

Agile HR teams fail fast yet learn faster. This means testing quickly through experimentation and eliminating the pressure to achieve perfection. They deliver proactively, iteratively, and frequently, stressing collaboration over individual contributions, promoting frequent and focused team connections to identify issues, and making rapid decisions with democratized data. Being agile includes frequent reflection and refinement to create and realize solutions that empower workers and leaders to innovate, collaborate, and deliver for customers.

Agile HR teams adopt an operating philosophy that breaks from the long-standing quest for "perfect" solutions borne from an understandable mind-set that every policy, process, and program must be flawless before launching. Enterprises today must move at unprecedented speed, forcing faster workforce programs and solutions. HR can become agile—and promote agility across the wider enterprise—by meaningfully shifting in four areas:

1. **Technology**—Applying mobile, social, and workplace tools that promote working together at speed and enable 24/7 access to knowledge, insights, actions, and real-time collaboration by equipping teams at work with tools that mirror the ease of technology in their personal lives.
2. **Development**—Fostering leadership development and learning for all members of the workforce to grow new and needed skills to advance their careers and change how they work.
3. **Products**—Reinventing the way HR constructs programs to adopt a product management mind-set, connecting previously disparate programs into end-to-end, human-centered, and personalized solutions that drive value for the enterprise and its people.
4. **Process**—Simplifying and streamlining to enable faster decisions, iterative creation, and empowering leaders and workers in the business to drive work outcomes and productivity.

The path toward Exponential HR by becoming agile requires sensing workforce trends and needs, sprinting through short-term efforts to iteratively progress new solutions, and democratizing data to enable fast prioritization and decisions.

Global household brand company flexes

Operating across many countries throughout Europe and Africa, the HR leadership team of a consumer products company knew they had to operate at an exponential pace to enable the need for speed of its business. Focused on remaking HR into an agile, flexible, and simple organization, the CHRO and team established two key priorities for reimagining HR:

1. Revitalize the HR operating model and include the use of flexible pools and adaptive organizations.
2. Transform the way HR plans, prioritizes, and delivers work through the use of agile cultures, mind-sets, and frameworks.

In response to their challenge, the company, they chose to create "flexpools," individuals with specific knowledge and resources who can be part of initiative-focused teams that can be rapidly assembled and dropped in to address project-specific issues or problems. Flexpool members are drawn from across HR—whether in traditional roles like CoEs, Business HR, or HR Operational Services or in other, newer kinds of roles. In this way, the company is realizing a hybrid blend of roles in their move to become agile.

Architecting

Exponential HR professionals orchestrate the human experience to achieve meaning with productivity, and architect holistic, end-to-end solutions that yield relevant, measurable value for the enterprise.

Solving for the business world of today and tomorrow is more complex than ever. Yet, the best workforce solutions simplify the complex. Accomplishing that lofty goal requires intensely cross-disciplinary skills, multifunctional perspectives, and advanced digital tools connected with an intuitive experience we call a "unified engagement platform," which stitches together a growing array of technology solutions into a connected experience.

Exponential HR, therefore, means architecting human-centered solutions by applying design thinking, prototyping, and connecting the many elements needed to create solutions that work, can flex, and sustain over time. Architecting HR professionals break through the familiar approach of functionally focused program, solution, and process development to create human-centered and truly end-to-end solutions.

The path toward Exponential HR by architecting requires unlocking value and productivity through the workforce experience, enabling data to guide solution design and measurement, orchestrating a multidisciplinary team (beyond and within HR—including external partners) to create human-centered solutions.

Global consumer products company is fast to action

A global consumer products company with a long, successful, and rich history began to experience an ever-growing pressure to innovate for differentiation with its customers in a highly competitive product space. The business had to move much faster to bring new ideas to market, and HR recognized the importance of its role in helping to lead the way.

The CHRO and team created a "Fast-to-Action" (F2A) team in cooperation with other business functions. A consultative group, the team comprised experienced HR professionals who were upskilled through rigorous agile method training and certification. The F2A team drives enterprise initiatives that create value, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and enhance productivity. The F2A teams have a strong foundation in a varying blend of both hard and soft skills and strategic capabilities and tools to drive results. F2A was defined by:

- Fluidity and relevance—shifting resources and scaling models to work effectively; by tapping into a pool of flexible global HR resources they can now address critical business initiatives.
- Demand-based model—employs dedicated, decentralized HR talent focused on the needs of the business.
- Solution and business orientation—leverages relationships, enterprise knowledge, and cross-functional HR skills to devise effective business solutions.

While all of HR is driven by strategic business priorities, the following triggering criteria was used to determine which projects are addressed by F2A teams:

- Accelerated execution of critical business priorities with the right level of sponsorship.
- Projects that strengthen competitive advantage that require an enhanced ability to make critical business decisions.
- Initiatives that mitigate loss of market share and have outcomes and metrics that can clearly define success.
- Projects with a definitive start and stop date with measurable deliverables.

Success for F2A is measured by business impact, customer satisfaction, utilization, spending on external firms, and playbook development. To date, these F2A teams have grown to 27 members that have freed up capacity by leading business-critical projects in partnership with other HR professionals across the enterprise, accomplishing:

- Seventeen projects completed in less than 12 months, 34 current projects underway, and 15 projects in the pipeline.
- $5.6 million in savings.

Augmented

Exponential HR professionals embrace the combination of technologies and solution providers to augment their roles and work.

Cognitive tools amplify organizational intelligence by delivering real-time, actionable insights through pattern detection and analysis from multiple data sources. They can drive engagement by using intelligent agents and avatars to deliver personalization at scale and create smarter, more relevant insights to improve the end-user experience. AI can replicate rules-based human actions for the purposes of automating transaction processing. These applications are already being used and continue to evolve. They can be deployed in new ways to perform higher order activities beyond the transactional.

Exponential HR teams are elevated by their collaboration with new machine co-workers. They embrace the advantages humans, far from being replaceable, gain by partnering with the machines to rise up and perform new roles and derive new insights to benefit the workforce and the enterprise. Equipping leaders with insights through the human-machine partnership can accelerate decision-making on some of the most complex challenges enterprises face today, ranging from inclusion to equity to performance and well-being.

Augmented HR isn't strictly about augmenting with technology. Solution providers—both technology and service—are integral. External partners can powerfully augment HR teams with targeted expertise such as research and benchmarks, enable scale through operational delivery capabilities, and provide access to flex workforces such as crowdsourcing. While some HR teams have considered use of external solution providers a sign of weakness, thoughtful partnering with external collaborators can unleash potential beyond the capability—or cost curve—any single HR team can accomplish on its own.

The path toward Exponential HR by becoming augmented requires seeking opportunities to enhance quality and speed through human-machine collaboration, leading the use of cognitive tools in ways that advance the enterprise's values and ethics, and enhancing the workforce experience through personalization and interaction with a consumer-grade feel.

Global retailer augments HR

Leaders at a top global retailer with continued scaled growth knew the business needed HR professionals focused on creating the best possible workforce experience to enrich the customer experience in the hotly competitive and highly disruptive world of retail. HR's role needed to elevate to place focus on accessing the right talent for its business and growing capabilities within the workforce to innovate faster than competitors and deliver on the company's mission for its customers.

In response to this challenge the company augmented professionals with a virtual assistant that supports workers digitally 24x7 to find information and access support when needed. Additionally, robotic process automation (RPA) enabled the equivalent of 30 HR practitioners to be reinvested in efforts with far greater value than routine, repetitive administration. As a result, continued automation and the introduction of machine learning to elevate the complexity of automations are collectively on track to unlock an additional equivalent of 150 more HR practitioners.

Reimagining HR operating models and roles: The superjobs of Exponential HR

Many aspects of the familiar roles in Deloitte's High-Impact Operating Model will remain important and necessary for the future, drawing from:

- HR leadership, joined closely with the enterprise's business leadership
- Business HR partners and advisers
- Community of expertise specialists
- HR operations specialists

However, the way HR operates and organizes is radically and rapidly changing. The classic "three-legged stool" HR operating model, in which HR business partners, CoEs, and HR operations worked in primarily siloed teams on "their" parts of HR's work, is quickly moving to history books. A static operating model in any function, especially HR, is wildly out of place in a dynamic world. HR's moves to become adaptable, agile, architecting, and augmented cannot happen under the classic operating model approach.

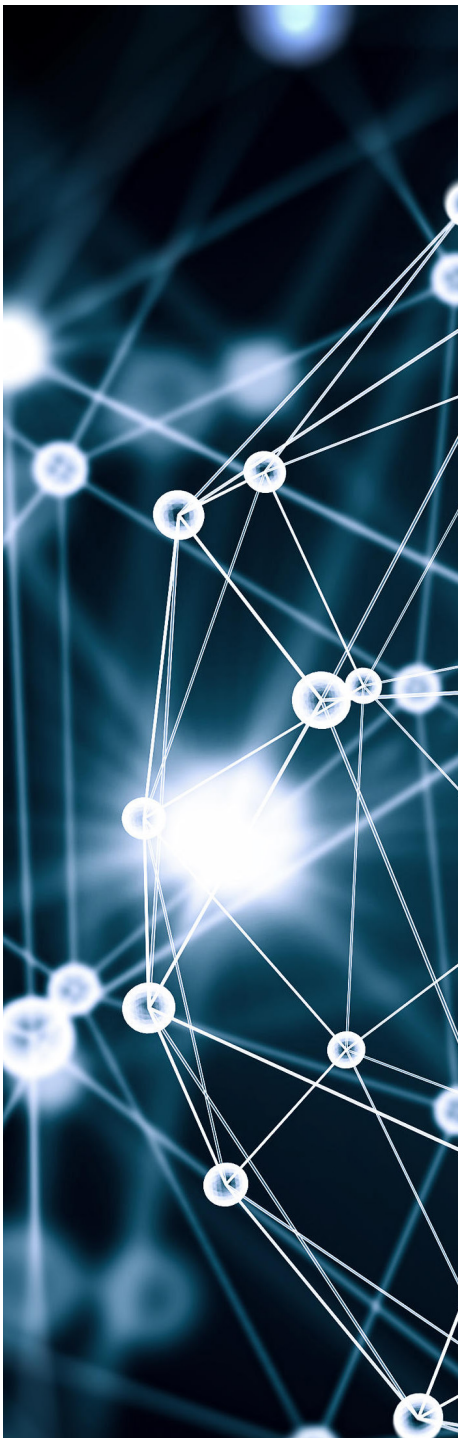
The comfortable organizing construct grounded in HR processes or functions is also obsolete in a world where all eyes are on enabling a productive workforce. Instead, cross-functional HR teams are organizing around the workforce experience and bringing together resources to develop, manage, and deliver solutions that advance the experience. They are applying digital mind-set, data, and technologies to iteratively reimagine the workforce experience and, as a result, the work of HR.

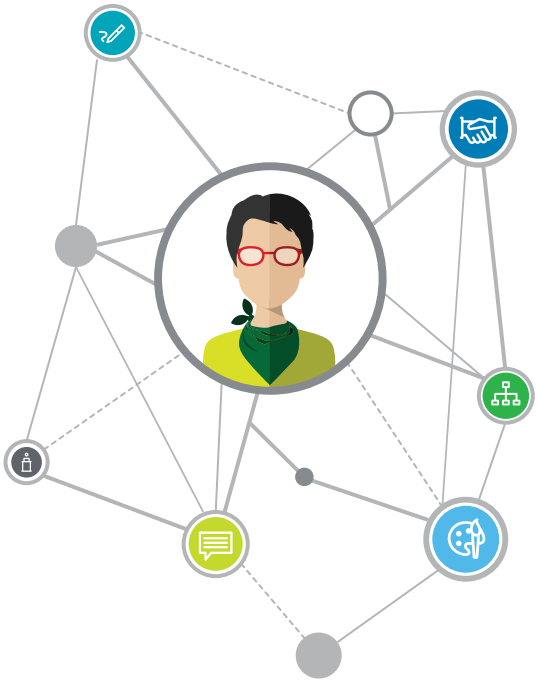
HR organizations leaning into the future are introducing completely new roles and operating constructs that break away from yesterday's HR operating models. Collaborative teams of HR and non-HR professionals are being formed as "flexpools." HR professionals are growing new capabilities to become consultative, analytical, and solution-oriented—breaking from the all-too-familiar and nearly singular focus on cost and efficiency. In addition, the rising partnership of humans and machines in HR is enabling completely new HR roles that combine previously discrete jobs into what we call "superjobs"—the newest job category that changes the landscape of how enterprises think about work.

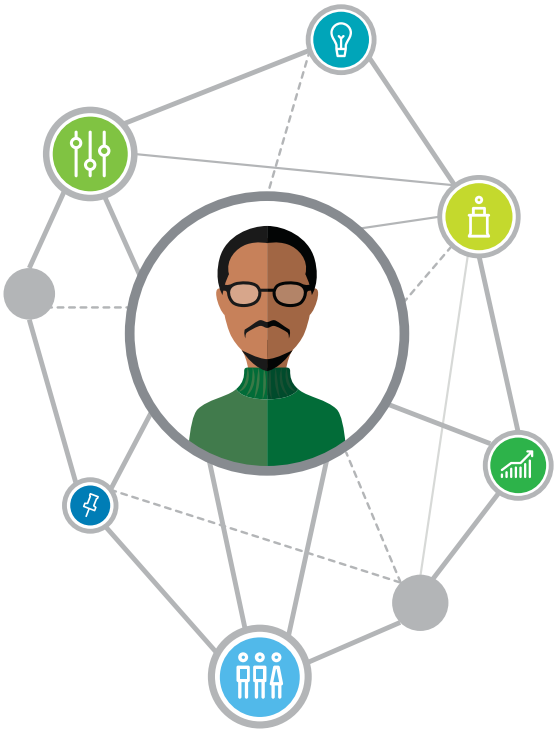
When parts of jobs are automated by machines, the work that remains for humans becomes more insight-focused and service-oriented and uses the output of machines to interpret data and solve problems. The work benefits from unique human capabilities such as imagination, curiosity, self-development, and empathy. This very empowering shift enables a move toward more flexible and evolving, less rigidly defined roles.

Further, just as with all roles of the future, Exponential HR roles must enable professionals to find meaning in their work. They must be able to see the impact of their efforts in advancing important priorities and initiatives—ultimately to achieve the enterprise's ambition.

Standout examples of emerging Exponential HR superjobs below demand new capabilities as well. While some capabilities will be important across multiple superjobs, each of these emerging roles is distinctively important to consider as part of taking your HR organization into the future.



Exponential HR superjob	New capabilities
Workforce experience architect *Orchestrates collaborative effort across the enterprise internally and externally to develop and curate the workforce experience to drive productivity, engagement, and positive employer brand.* 	• **HR customer driven**—Architects and deploys the highest quality of workforce services, using data and feedback to generate creative, advanced, and original solutions designed with the customer at the center to delight the workforce and ensure efficiency and effectiveness. • **Influencer**–Gets others excited about and committed to furthering the organization's objectives; can translate the vision in tangible and meaningful outcomes; addresses issues head-on and promotes creation when problem-solving. • **Organizational navigator**—Uses knowledge of the organization and internal climate to identify and prevent conflicts; understands how the roles, products, and services of HR relate to and impact each line of business. • **Decision-maker**—Delivers timely, informed decisions that consider data, goals, constraints, and risks; finds solutions that are acceptable to diverse groups with conflicting interests and needs; can explain the rationale for a decision. • **Relationship curator**—Shapes constructive working relationships characterized by a high level of acceptance, cooperation, and mutual respect; builds rapport by listening to, discussing, and negotiating with, and rewarding, encouraging, and motivating others. • **Creative & innovative thinker**—Develops fresh ideas that provide solutions to all types of workforce and workplace challenges; connects seemingly unrelated ideas, events, and circumstances to find global solutions to individual problems. • **Coach**—Enables teams to grow and succeed through feedback, instruction, and encouragement, including repeating and building upon areas of strength; and dissects areas for improvement.

Exponential HR superjob	New capabilities
Solution architect *Brings together cross-disciplinary teams to create end-to-end solutions/products that meet workforce and enterprise needs, solve challenges, and drive value for customers and society.* 	• **Innovation leader**—Brings creative vision and ideas; has good judgment about which creative ideas and suggestions will work for the end-to-end experience; has a sense about managing the creative process of teams; can facilitate effective brainstorming and design; can project how potential ideas may play out in the organization. • **Digital advocate**—Promotes a digital mind-set (e.g., values, principles, and practices) across the organization to utilize tools and technologies that enable the workforce and create value for the business. • **Design thinker**—Designs HR solutions/products that are customer-centric and desirable by focusing on the HR customer perspective, deeply and empathetically understanding his/her needs, obtaining input from multiple resources, rapidly creating potential solutions, iteratively testing and refining the solutions until arriving at the preferred future state. • **Agile strategist**—Sees ahead clearly, anticipates future trends accurately, provides broad perspectives, draws credible pictures and visions of possibilities and opportunities. • **Relationship manager**—Builds and sustains a comprehensive network of internal and external relationships to provide continuous feedback, ideas, and information about trends, needs, leading practices, and intelligence. • **Storyteller**—Uses stories to clearly and effectively communicate insights and/or recommendations to a diverse set of audiences in a way that moves them to action. • **Business outcome & continuous innovation focused**—Uses data and formal measurement channels to track the performance impact of workforce solutions on business outcomes and continuously improve and adapt services/offerings to meet the changing requirements of the business. • **Inclusive facilitator**—Enables a culture of inclusion and develops and maintains internal and external communities of knowledge where multidisciplinary resources with different perspectives can collaborate on the design, development, and deployment of HR solutions and services.

Exponential HR superjob	New capabilities
Product manager *Creates and sustains policies, programs, and processes, typically integrating HR functional areas that have historically been discrete and siloed (e.g., product manager for total rewards & performance, creating end-to-end leadership for HR "products" across this integrated suite of functional areas).* 	• **Dynamic innovator**—Uses defined outcomes, data, and formal measurement channels to track the performance impact of workforce products/solutions on business outcomes; identifies opportunities for change; and continuously improves and adapts solutions/products to meet the ever-changing needs and requirements of the business. • **Teamer**—Mixes and blends the right skills of people into teams; creates strong team performance through defined outcomes, team roles, norms, and plans; and creates positive chemistry in the team to build, deploy, and manage products/solutions. • **Product sherpa**—Gathers and analyzes product/solution requirements; creates product road map; develops use cases to drive product activity; oversees product/solution development; and manages change and communicates activities related to product releases. • **Marketing champion**—Develops product launch and marketing plans; leads campaigns to generate product awareness and demand; develops and conducts product presentations and collateral materials; and implements changes in marketing plans in conjunction with all stakeholders. • **Project manager**—Provides the primary interactions to create a positive worker experience to inspire, coach, and guide workers to engagement, productivity, and purpose. • **Domain knowledge expert**—Produces deep functional expertise, insights, and components that are leveraged to develop, deploy, and manage workforce solutions that produce a return on investment in worker productivity and engagement, and hits business targets.
Sprint lead *Launches and manages cross-functional teams that quickly and effectively solve business challenges.* 	• **Agile coach**—Quickly mobilizes work, assembles teams, and provides direction to achieve outcomes. • **Researcher**—Demonstrates subject matter expertise in a specific HR knowledge area(s). • **Data examiner**—Formulates hypotheses, builds prototypes, pilots, tests, and conducts statistical analysis to make recommendations on the validity and reliability of given workforce solutions/products. • **Credible activist/knowledge aggregator**—Achieves trust and respect required to be viewed as a valuable resource for information, analysis, work, and recommendations. • **Designer**—Seeks to understand the end user and business needs, generates a variety of options, tests potential solutions, and refines solutions/products and work outputs with data and feedback. • **Collaborator**—Performs well in team environments, leveraging the perspectives and work of others to solve problems and drive the right results.

Exponential HR superjob	New capabilities
Digital HR integrator *Reimagines the work of HR and the solutions it provides by infusing advanced, digital technologies that change what HR delivers, how it delivers, and who (including machines) delivers the work.* 	• **Organization & workforce information steward**—Deploys a strategy and suite of technology tools to ensure accurate, efficient, integrated, and effective management of employee and workforce data, records, and transactions. • **Digital mind-set**—Leverages traditional and digital technologies to become more synchronized and less siloed – with more advanced changes to current operating and talent models that are leveraged for digital, and profoundly different from prior operating and talent models. • **HR consumer grade tool expert**—Designs & provides digital solutions that keep a quality customer experience at the forefront of development. • **Solution iterator/tester**—Formulates hypotheses, builds prototypes, pilots, tests, and conducts statistical analysis to make recommendations on the validity and reliability of a given workforce service. • **Insight storyteller**—Synthesizes a variety of disparate sources to statistically detect, predict, and act on trends that impact workforce performance.
Augmented HR specialist (e.g., augmented recruiter, augmented rewards specialist, augmented learning specialist) *Deploys integrated solutions and continuously improves HR services through a variety of channels that provide a positive HR customer experience. Leads and manages the design and deployment of advanced technology tools that deliver services for HR customers.* 	• **Ethics and compliance dedicated**—Interprets employment law and policies, applies compliance knowledge and management offerings to protect organization, mitigate people-related risks, ensure ethical standards and behavior are upheld and practiced. • **Business outcome & continuous innovation focused**—Uses data and formal measurement channels to track the performance impact of workforce solutions on business outcomes and continuously improve and adapt services/offerings to meet the changing requirements of the business. • **HR customer experience driven**—Deploys the highest quality of workforce services, using data and feedback to generate creative, advanced, and original solutions designed with the customer at the center to delight the workforce and ensure efficiency and effectiveness. • **Automation integrator**—Identifies opportunities, designs approaches, and deploys solutions using automation, robotics, cognitive, and AI to augment effectiveness, efficiency, and data leverage of services and solutions. • **Internal/external partner**—Develops and maintains a cohesive system of internal and external relationships to provide continuous feedback, ideas, information, and access to HR leading practices and intelligence.

Stretching HR capabilities to Exponential heights

Traditional HR capability models and old-school competencies need fundamental restructuring to progress toward Exponential HR and create the ability for HR to lead the business forward. The Exponential HR teams will continue to anticipate, develop, and implement workforce solutions based on customer intelligence and a deep understanding of the business. Yet, decision-making will be far more grounded in data, which will be gathered, organized, synthesized, and analyzed to detect issues, predict trends, make recommendations, and direct actions to improve productivity and performance.

An Exponential HR team will be digital. It will embrace a culture of digital immersion by continually testing, applying, and distributing technologies that facilitate work integration, offer new ways of working, and resolve challenges. These activities will take place among networked teams that will share ideas, information, and access to leading best practices, trends, and intelligence.

Historically, organizations would accept that capabilities must shift in waves and over extended periods of time. For example, many HR transformation programs accepted that roughly one-third of HR professionals already held the capabilities needed for the future, while another third would get there over time, and the final third would never adjust. In the Future of HR, however, the measure of success must be far more aggressive and aim to elevate the capabilities of all HR professionals.

Each HR team's path to Exponential will be different, shaped by the starting point, and gated by how quickly you can grow the new capabilities required for the Future of HR. In addition to the capabilities above aligned with emerging Exponential HR superjobs, HR professionals of the future must all pivot to the Top 10 Exponential HR Capabilities—that require a new, bold attitude:

1. **Meaningful**—Ensures that every team and individual on the team understands the purpose, desired outcome, and—most importantly—meaning of everything they do, encouraging, empowering, and coaching teams to achieve their shared ambition.
2. **Customer-centric**—Focuses on customers and their needs as the starting and end points for every initiative and solution—with a broad definition of customers (e.g., extended workforce).
3. **Team ignitor**—Assembles and knits together network teams that rally around a cause and deliver business solutions.
4. **Innovative thinker**—Constantly considers and investigates new ways to perform work and deliver value, with openness to creative ideas and experimentation.
5. **Integrator**—Operates with the complete story in mind, understands connections, creates bridges, and seamless experiences by linking people, ideas, and initiatives to common goals.
6. **Entrepreneur**—Relentlessly explores opportunities, tackles problems, and discovers and implements new ways of working to achieve better results through an ownership of outcomes.
7. **Action-oriented**—Leans into execution with accountability, tests, and learns, and pushes iterative design and development.
8. **Digitally literate**—Embraces a digital world with the capability to envision and build new business models, tools, and ways of working informed by digital.
9. **Data-obsessed**—Feels passionate about, understands, and uses data to anticipate issues, identify opportunities, diagnose, test ideas, and design and improve solutions.
10. **Ambidextrous**—Applies practices to engage and motivate a blended team—full-time, part-time, gig, contract, multi-generational, robotic, or AI—in distributed locations—local, regional, global—to accomplish goals with heightened flexibility.

Exponential HR capabilities form the foundational prerequisites for Exponential HR. These capabilities are the jumping-off point for the new roles—or superjobs—of Exponential HR.

Navigating your route

Every enterprise will have a unique route to its Future of HR. Becoming Exponential is a crucial part of that journey. Navigating your route should follow an iterative approach that realizes a series of defined "minimal viable products" that build on each other and create the progressive shift from traditional HR operating models to Exponential HR, including:

- Conduct early sensing through myriad channels by engaging with the workforce and leaders to directly understand how solutions can improve their work and overall experience.
- Create your aspirational vision of how HR will drive work outcomes in the future.
- Chart the series of thoughtful sprints to achieve the aspiration.
- Drive change through near-term shifts in the work of HR itself and how it delivers by testing, learning, and rewarding both failure and success.
- Prototype key elements of the vision to experiment and drive buy-in.
- Enable cognitive and automation step-changes to create faster, smarter, and more efficient ways of working.
- Create, train, and launch progressive champions to advance the Exponential HR organization of the future.

As we recommended in our perspectives on The Future of HR, navigating the best route requires a See-Think-Do approach. Moving to become Exponential HR is part of that path to the Future and you can make moves in this direction now.

Each HR organization's journey is uniquely its own. In today's disruptive world, it may be the path less traveled that leads to the ultimate destination.

What will be your route? Are you ready to get Exponential?

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