CLOSING THE FUTURE SKILLS GAP TO DRIVE BUSINESS SUCCESS

Organizations need to understand their opportunities for reskilling and upskilling their talent to build future skills.

Reshape and Optimize Your Workforce for the Future
Organizations need to understand their opportunities for reskilling and upskilling their talent to build future skills — ultimately creating a more agile and resilient workforce that supports the business strategy.

Many organizations are realigning their business models to move beyond surviving in economic and business uncertainty to thriving in a fast-changing world. Recent events have accelerated technological and workforce changes that were already underway. Therefore, those workforce skills needed for the future are changing — and quickly. Optimizing the workforce for the future must include identifying future skills that are needed among your people and a plan for reskilling and upskilling your workforce.
Introduction · Closing the Future Skills Gap to Drive Business Success

Organizations need to reshape and optimize their workforces for the future

The way people work is changing at an accelerated pace. Employers and employees have a mutual interest to ensure workers are resilient and agile to new ways of working and to those skills needed to thrive in the future.

We believe there are four issues that firms should prioritize in order to help them future-proof their business by leveraging their greatest asset — their people. In our series of Future of Work papers, we explore how and where people should work; driving positive change with diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I); enabling workplace change through rewards; and — the subject of this paper — building stakeholder value through future skills. Within each of these issues, we present a framework for addressing meaningful and lasting change.

However, the work does not end there. These areas are highly connected and, by ensuring alignment across these topics, business leaders can compound the impact and drive the future of work. Through Aon’s Accelerate Model, organizations can apply insights around rewards, future skills, where people work and DE&I through a data-driven approach. This allows them to continually assess opportunities for action with speed and scale. It is through this lens that adjusting to constant change in the workplace, no matter your firm’s unique profile, is possible.

Framework to take action and measure success

Constant change driven by remote working, fluid talent pools and technological advances has created a work environment that demands new and evolving skills and employers. Furthermore, there is growing interest in how corporations are living up to environmental, social and governance goals. Organizations are increasingly aware that they have a shared responsibility and vested interest in providing employees with opportunities to hone future skills.

Yet, it is impossible for all employees to be up to date on the latest digital skills. Consider that 59% of HR leaders told us that their organization does not have a defined set of skills needed for their digital transformation (Aon’s 2020 Digital Readiness Report). Through the digitalization of essentially all areas of society, we see a shortage of supply for certain skillsets in the labor market, such as data and technology talent. Therefore, firms are better served by first focusing on leveraging internal and external rewards and workforce data. This informs them of opportunities for reskilling and upskilling talent with an eye on long-term return on investment.

Building the future skills your business needs to deliver on its growth plans is a top priority when planning for the future of work. Consider that three-quarters of nearly 1,500 global respondents recently told us that they are improving on existing programs or adding new programs to identify current or future skills gaps as part of their implementation of future-of-work strategies. Meanwhile, the World Economic Forum estimates that 50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025 as the adoption of technology increases.

It is clear that assessing for future skills is not a point-in-time activity. Assessment must include behavioral as well as cognitive abilities that transcend some of the fast-moving digital skills in the market. Addressing your future skills gap and creating a long-term plan is critical for employers to align success with their talent and business strategies.

Tarandeep Singh
CEO of Assessment Solutions, Human Capital Solutions, Aon
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Future skills planning to enable business strategy

Organizations that identify and build future skills into their workforce are more likely to realize success in their broader talent strategy; however, failure to act now poses a longer-term risk.

Identifying future skills and which roles and people can transition to fill new jobs is an integral part of aligning talent strategy with business strategy. This exercise will integrate job planning with business planning and help leaders understand the new roles their organization needs in order to deliver on future plans. As more organizations digitalize their business, much of the future workforce skills needed will be a combination of hard technical skills and softer organizational skills — which, put together, are key attributes for working in a more resilient and agile fashion.

With half of the workforce requiring reskilling by 2025 and, according to our data, women four times more likely to require reskilling, the time for action is now.

Once you have understood how future skills relate to your business model, you can start developing a roadmap of the reskilling and upskilling talent journey.

**Translating business needs into future skills needs**

- **Business model**
- **Translated into talent strategy**
- **Underpinned by job architecture that combines skills and competencies into capabilities**
- **Used to match individual success profiles for hiring, reskilling or upskilling**
- **All of which integrates into existing HR technology infrastructure**
Companies face risk if they do not future-proof their workforce now

The World Economic Forum's latest Future of Jobs report concluded that **50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025** as the adoption of technology increases. For the average worker, the **half-life of technical skills has dropped to under five years**. Assessing for future skills is not a point-in-time activity and it must include behavioral, as well as cognitive, abilities that can transcend some of the fast-moving digital skills on the market.

More than **120 million workers** in the world's 12 largest economies are **expected to be reskilled over the next three years** as a result of AI-enabled automation.\(^1\) Eighty-eight percent of global survey respondents said **talent availability is extremely or very important when creating a definition for the future of work**.\(^2\) Reskilling and talent mobility are top priorities as companies prepare to implement their future-of-work strategies.\(^2\)

### Efforts Underway to Improve Re-/Upskilling and Talent Mobility

- **28%** are planning new initiatives to identify future skills\(^1\)
- **26%** are improving existing initiatives only
- **27%** are planning for new initiatives now
- **27%** are already implementing new initiatives\(^1\)
- **12%** are already implementing new initiatives
- **33%** are none or unsure
- **12%** are already implementing new initiatives
- **35%** are none or unsure

\(^1\) Source: IBM Institute for Business Value Global Country Survey

\(^2\) Source: Aon COVID-19 HR Pulse Survey #7, April 2021, with responses from 1,451 organizations
Future Skills Planning Enables Business Strategy

**Understanding reskilling and upskilling**
Reskilling and upskilling are two key strategies that can be used to mitigate a future skills gap. Upskilling involves progressing through a career ladder within the same job family. Reskilling is broader. It involves moving away from what the employee is familiar with in their role, making the proximity between old and new skills irrelevant. Out of the two, upskilling is often the preferred strategy due to its relative simplicity and greater chance of success. Understanding how current and future job families relate to one another is a key requirement for building a tailored roadmap on how to close the gap. This will require a combination of reskilling, upskilling and hiring new talent.

**Case for reskilling and upskilling**
Every organization has a digitalization strategy and, therefore, a general need for talent in technology and data. While a large amount of money is invested in technology, the impact needs to be achieved through people. In fact, employers that make reskilling and upskilling part of their value proposition and total rewards strategy have a good story to tell their employees and wider community, making it easier to attract and retain talent.

There is also a social responsibility element to this initiative. With so many jobs becoming obsolete and many more likely to disappear, reskilling and upskilling is a mutual responsibility between government, educational systems, organizations and advisors. As institutional investors place more focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG)-related issues, they are including human capital management. Companies in the U.S. are now required to disclose details on this topic and those disclosures are being scrutinized by investors in addition to other stakeholders, including employees.

“Given the limits of critical talent in technology and data-focused jobs, as well as growing recognition of employers' responsibility to invest in their people, there is a shift from the war for talent to the race for reskilling and upskilling.”

Marius Grindemann, Associate Partner for Assessment Solutions, EMEA, Human Capital Solutions, Aon

The areas of human capital management highlighted are most influenced when an organization improves the focus and prevalence of future skills in its workforce. From digital readiness to aligning pay with performance, closing the future skills gap will improve a firm’s overall talent strategy.
In partnership with our clients, we developed a Future Skills Framework that allows us to work together to develop consistent definitions and reporting standards. The framework was created by bringing together trends and research from global think tanks, research centers, client insights and our own rewards surveys, providing a sound structure and definition for future skills. Skills are organized into 18 areas and allow for diverse skill libraries, categories and models that are currently in use across organizations to be mapped onto one unified framework.

At a basic level, the framework helps clients understand:

• prevalence of current future skills;
• how their prevalence stacks up against their peers;
• how to value future skills through rewards;
• the opportunities for reskilling and mobility to develop the skills of the future; and
• bringing this work together to ultimately create value for organizations.

The work steps involved in the very first phase of our roadmap for closing future skills are illustrated in the following case study. These include assessing current future skills and what an organization’s needs are, then benchmarking to determine the gap against peers. In order to drive a successful reskilling and upskilling journey, it is fundamental to understand the organization’s status quo and clearly define the future direction.

**Aon’s roadmap to closing the future skills gap**

1. **Data Benchmarking**
   Build a data baseline to understand your gap and formulate a holistic reskilling strategy. Includes data on:
   - Future skills prevalence
   - Workforce mix
   - Automation risk
   - Future skills pay gap

2. **Define Future Requirements**
   Assess, define and structure future skill requirements through a capability model for the entire organization and different business lines on the basis of your business strategy. This enables a clear direction on reskilling.

3. **Total Rewards**
   The first step of data benchmarking will reveal information about any pay gaps. Our process looks not only at current market rates, but rewards based on the role’s future skills profile. A rewards strategy needs to be developed to ensure high-potential employees are being valued for their future skills, not only present-day contributions.

4. **Reskilling Process Design**
   All information gathered helps inform the structure of the upskilling and reskilling process by linking skill requirements to job architecture, workforce planning and learning, and development measures.

5. **Roll-Out**
   Engage employees during the build-out of career pathways and development. This ensures your workforce understands required reskilling areas and enables individual ownership of their reskilling path.

6. **Progress Measurement**
   Measure progress by analyzing ongoing data to ensure you keep abreast of, and adapt to, talent and workforce changes. To track progress, continuous benchmarking analysis is needed based on defined KPIs.
Understanding future skills needed at a FMCG company

We were able to implement a reskilling and upskilling program that saved money and improved the employer brand.

Workplace automation and increased digitalization is accelerating how work is carried out across all industries. One multinational fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company appreciates the significant impact that will come from greater production automation and e-commerce operations. The firm knows these business shifts call for a workforce with a different skillset than it has traditionally possessed. Our client approached us to define the skills it needs for success and the degree to which it can reskill and retain current employees to move into those new roles. The starting point is to evaluate the skills profile of its current job roles and benchmark those against the skills that are likely to be needed going forward.

Using our Future Skills Framework, we can determine the prevalence or shape of future skills currently within the organization. While this provides valuable information, no firm operates in isolation. An organization needs to understand how it compares to competitors, both traditional and non-traditional peers that the firm is increasingly competing with for talent. Obtaining this information allowed our client to embark on its reskilling and upskilling program for those currently in roles most likely to change or disappear. This ultimately provides cost savings to the organization, compared to a pure talent acquisition strategy. Reskilling saves money, improves the employer brand and ultimately increases employee retention.
Aon's Future Skills Framework in Action

Our framework allows us to work with clients to develop consistent definitions and reporting standards. The framework was created by bringing together trends and research from global think tanks, research centers, client insights and our own rewards surveys, providing a sound structure and definition for future skills.

Skills are organized into 18 areas that map into 6 core skills.

Business leaders can use these profiles to connect the core business, technical and agile attributes of individuals identified with this skill to reskilling and upskilling opportunities.

The profile lists the top three job roles associated with digitalization which can help companies identify where to start to begin assessing their current workforce for future skills.

Aon's assessment capabilities integrate psychometric abilities and domain skills that are critical for effectively reskilling and upskilling. The results include a report that evaluates talent on their capabilities across a multitude of skills to succeed in their current role, what is needed for how that role is expected to evolve and areas for employee development.
Understanding current gaps to inform progress

Evaluating the current prevalence of future critical skills within your organization and how it compares to your talent competitors is the first step in closing the gap.

Benchmarking against Aon’s future skills framework helps an organization understand the current shape of its future skills profile and the optimal future shape. This gives organizations the opportunity to build future skills into its workforce — and redeploy heads from elsewhere in the workforce.

In many cases, organizations already have many employees that possess the type of future skills they need to be successful into the future. Future skills include behavioral competencies just as much as the harder technology skills. Employers need to identify and harness these future skills for the way people will work (e.g. agile and cross-functional teams, remote work) and type of work (e.g. digital transformation, reaching new customers). This work will lay the foundation for a resilient and agile workforce and create a compelling employee experience for current and prospective talent. It is also a virtuous cycle. Reskilling and upskilling helps close the future skills gap while improving the firm’s reputation for prospective employees and boosts retention for high-impact talent.

“In order to drive an impactful reskilling and upskilling initiative, it is fundamental to understand the status quo and clearly define the future direction.”

Kathy MacKay, Associate Partner, Assessment Solutions, North America, Human Capital Solutions, Aon
Future skills prevalence
Using our Future Skills Framework, we infuse our data along with an organization’s human resources information system (HRIS) data to identify the prevalence of future skills at an organization, measure the gap between the current and desired future state and how best to close it. For example, we can use benchmark data from U.S. technology firms on the prevalence and pay for data application roles (mapping to the six future skills categories – see diagrams below).

We can then look at a client’s internal data to compare it to custom benchmarks and come up with a score to assess the shape of the firm’s future skills based on that particular role. This process is easily replicated for various jobs in each of the six categories of future skills.

An analysis of the future skills prevalence within job descriptions of an organization’s HRIS can be benchmarked to global peers. Results show that technology development is a trending future skill for one organization we worked with — having increased from 10% to 13% of the job descriptions; however, it still lags behind its peers.

![Global Peer Group Comparison](image1)

![Tech Peer Group Comparison](image2)

Client’s current skills profile versus peer groups
“By bringing together multiple reliable data sets, we can unlock the exponential value of data. Our approach transforms how talent strategy can be built by combining data that is typically looked at in isolation.”

Stefan Gaertner, Partner, Performance & Analytics, North America, Human Capital Solutions, Aon
Understanding Current Gaps to Inform Progress

Workforce mix and automation risk
While seeing the gaps is interesting for any organization, the real value comes from interpreting the data and exploring the opportunities and implications. The workforce can be split into different groupings to understand what a future best mix should look like. In one example, we analyzed (see chart above) a client’s technology workforce into three areas, finding that the organization has a higher proportion of technology workers developing products or capabilities. This indicates that the firm places a lower investment in transformative technologies that can automate processes. The findings were helpful in building a roadmap for boosting investment in those types of technology roles that would become more common in the future.

Rewarding future skills
After determining where gaps exist, a firm can measure the value placed on future skills through compensation and how the skills are being paid within the organization compared to the market. If there is a pay gap, this indicates that the organization may be undervaluing (or overvaluing) a certain skill and is vulnerable to turnover based on the higher premium competitors are placing on the skill. In our experience, where there are future skills pay gaps, it is typically because a firm is undervaluing a skill when compared to the market. The firm may overemphasize current output without placing commensurate value on the future skills the talent has that are critical to the organization’s growth.

With one particular organization, we identified 78% of its future pivotal talent roles as having a possible flight risk. Many of these jobs were found in mid-career levels, which are more costly to replace than entry and support level roles. The client had an above-market net growth rate in technology heads, suggesting that it would benefit from greater internal mobility to control costs. One of our key recommendations was to revise the client’s rewards strategy for technology roles in the local market as pay was found to be 30% below peers.
Understanding Current Gaps to Inform Progress

Our process looks not only at current market rates for compensation, but rewards based on the role’s future skills profile. Such analysis can inform rewards strategy and ensure that organizations recognize and properly value job roles with future skills. Our analysis flags areas of flight risk should pay levels be below market rate.

There are multiple ways to reward future skills in the market. One way to think about it is through rewarding skills in the short, medium and long terms through a combination of reskilling and organic growth.

**Comparing average salary for indirect revenue support roles versus different peer groups**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Local</td>
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<td>Fintech</td>
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<td>Tech</td>
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**Rewarding future skills for the short, medium and long terms**

- **Short term: Pay a premium for scarce skills**
  Paying a bonus or salary premium for employees or job candidates with hot skills can help a firm acquire hot skills quickly. However, it poses a risk that the firm will be stuck paying a premium long after the skill is no longer scarce (remember: technology skills can be outdated in less than five years).

- **Medium term: Invest in high potentials**
  Improving competitive benchmarking and targeted retention-based pay for key roles and high-impact employees is also investing in future skills. Employees that make outsized contributions to the business are more likely to be more agile and adaptable to learning new skills.

- **Long term: Hire for mindset, train for skills**
  Employees and job candidates should be assessed for their mindset and behavior competencies (e.g., agility, ability to learn, curiosity and digital leadership) just as much as technical skills that can quickly become outdated.

More information about reimagining rewards

Read more in our report The Future of Pay – Enabling Workplace Change with Rewards at: humancapital.aon.com/future-of-pay
Closing the future skills gap

To close the future skills gap, firms need to assess their employees for reskilling and upskilling potential, as well as plan for some level of external hiring.

When possible, reskilling and upskilling your talent is preferable. This is because it typically will save costs in the long run and create more value for an organization. A few years ago, the Society for Human Resource Management estimated that it took companies in the U.S. more than $4,000 and 42 days to hire a new employee. Employers can expect that to be much higher and longer for roles that require in-demand skills. However, not all employees will be able or willing to reskill or upskill; therefore, a combination of hiring and reskilling is necessary. The real risk lies in doing nothing.

Risk in failing to plan for the future
Traditional enterprise risk management processes failed to identify the full scale of the pandemic as its impacts materialized into multiple key risks, including liquidity, credit and human capital. There is overwhelming evidence that companies taking an enterprise-wide approach to their pandemic response plan was one of the most valuable lessons for organizations and one they are likely to carry forward. With existing and emerging risks converging, future shocks on organizations’ radars and heightened risks associated with the pandemic response, organizations have to take steps to reprioritize risk and resilience. People are at the heart of business resilience and strategy success.

There is a clear and consistent theme from Aon’s global pandemic response surveys in topics of health, human capital and risk: organizations across industries and regions say protecting their people is a top priority. To that end, 45% of the 1,451 global respondents we surveyed in April 2021 said they have, or are considering, assessing their employees for agility, adaptability and digital skills.
Supporting a global bank on its digital journey by reskilling and upskilling talent

The Future Skills Framework showed that the bank was significantly behind fintech and technology firms – against which it was competing for talent.

Comparing current jobs at the bank to its peers using our Future Skills Framework, we found the client was broadly in line with other global, regional and local banks for its future skills set. However, it was significantly behind fintech and technology firms – against which it was competing for talent. Redeploying employees from obsolete roles could be difficult, given the relatively low current future skill score. Aon calculated mobility scores for the bank’s current job roles. It looked at both the specificity of skills and the generally more transferable behavioral skills to determine which of the current roles have incumbents with a skills profile that could be deployed elsewhere in the firm into more future-focused roles.

Based on the analysis, our recommendations were clear and well received by leaders who were eager to implement changes backed by data analysis:

- **Align the workforce structure** to reflect investment in a digital banking model.
- **Address the future skills gap** through development and career support to help redeploy talent in the future.
- **Explore rewards strategy** for technology roles in line with the market to reduce any future skills pay gap.
Closing the Future Skills Gap

Building a lasting structure
In the past, employers approached planning for future skills through more one-dimensional activities, such as a skills library, job descriptions and learning and development catalogs. These activities were not inherently unproductive, but they were insufficient because the activities were not fully linked to talent and business strategy. Today, we see many clients that are more sophisticated in their future skills strategy. However, they still have competencies and skills separated and emphasize hard technology and data skills over behavioral skills such as adaptability and having a growth mindset. We envision the ideal future state as one that looks at future skills as a holistic exercise, tied to the business strategy and including skills and competencies together.

Evolution of capability management
If you have 35,000 skills in your library, you need a way to structure and align these to the business

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<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
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<tr>
<td>Competency model</td>
<td>Competencies and skills are separate</td>
<td>Build future-driven, holistic capabilities (skills &amp; competencies) framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership value model</td>
<td>Skills library</td>
<td>Future-proof structure, providing direction while allowing for rapid change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and development catalogs</td>
<td>Goal is career ownership and transparency</td>
<td>Evolution of skills underpinned by behaviors emphasizing adaptability and growth mindset</td>
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<td>Job descriptions</td>
<td>Self-service learning</td>
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<td>Success profiles</td>
<td>Peer learning</td>
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<td>Emphasizes digitalization and data</td>
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Partly connected |Disconnected | Connected |

Static |Partly flexible| Ever-changing & flexible |
“Companies that identify people with the potential to develop future skills — and then design rewards around present-day contributions as well as future skills — are likely to benefit from reduced turnover of key talent and a smaller future skills pay gap.”

Tzeitel Fernandes, Partner, Rewards Solutions, Asia Pacific, Human Capital, Aon
Building an agile workforce at a worldwide investment bank

A worldwide investment bank needed to change the way its technology team worked in order to swiftly bring new products and services to market and meet fast-changing consumer preferences. The bank still relied on a linear, waterfall product development model with teams separated by function. This traditional approach did not allow the company to be agile. The firm wanted people in technology roles that could envision the project’s end result and not just the code they were delivering. One of the biggest challenges in this transformation was communicating to employees that the firm wanted to invest in their people and that it was a positive change and not a headcount reduction exercise.

“We wanted to help our people transform. They knew how to do their jobs, we just needed to work in a more collaborative nature,” remarked the firm’s project leader. Aon partnered with the firm to create a development center to assess employees for behavioral competencies and agile knowledge. Following the assessment, participants received a tailored report and follow-up courses to develop their skill sets. This component helped achieve buy-in from employees who better understood the value-add for their own career development. The assessments provided managers with critical information on how to focus their personalized coaching and ongoing development conversations with employees. For business leaders, the results were rolled into a dashboard that provided a high-level view of where to focus efforts. Initial findings pinpointed areas of strengths and development opportunities based on geography, employee tenure, business unit and functional alignment. With the transformation well underway, the firm is celebrating initial success. This process has “truly transformed the way we work” noted the project leader. “There is a lot more ownership and the technologists see the end product in the delivery.”

To read the full case study, please click here.
Practical tools for assessing aptitude and interest in reskilling

Case study: future jobs finder by Vodafone and Aon
Aon and Vodafone jointly developed a platform to offer guidance to young people on the digital jobs they are suited for and provide better access to learning and employment opportunities. The tool is based on a scientific approach and provides young, often unemployed or underemployed people with career guidance and new learning opportunities. Using psychometric tests, the platform identifies the user’s aptitudes and interests, mapping these to the most appropriate digital job category. The output provides users with a better idea of the roles they would likely enjoy and be well suited for, as well as specific digital career recommendations and free learning opportunities. Since its launch, the platform has supported more than 539,000 people worldwide and has won many awards, amongst others the HR Innovation Award in 2020 from ZP Europe.

To read the full case study, please click here.

Case study: matching development opportunities with future skills at Siemens
Our client, German multinational conglomerate, Siemens, knew that the skills it needed in the future were scarce in the external hiring market. Facing stiff competition for talent from other technology companies, car manufacturers and digital firms, Siemens embarked on a project with Aon as a partner to reskill its internal talent. Siemens worked with Aon to bring together a new combination of mobile-enabled assessments of vocational interests and abilities, attitudes, learning styles, cognitive abilities and an indicator of ‘willingness to change’.

The results from these assessments, together with biographical information from employees, pass through a complex matching algorithm developed by Aon. The employee receives a report highlighting the top three best matches between their own interests and those identified as a future skill for Siemens. It also offers development action suggestions and ideas to acquire new skills.

To read the full case study, please click here.
Taking action now

After the analysis, comes the action. Using our Accelerate Model for making better workforce decisions at speed, we can identify the opportunities to take action and close the gap.

The prevalence of future skills at each organization will signal different strategies to close any gaps through a combination of reskilling, hiring and rewards strategies. Whether providing solutions for the whole organization or just a part of the business that requires immediate action, Aon is a trusted partner.

• **Solutions to manage complexity and fast-track strategy**: We can manage complexity through research-driven models, libraries and approaches. With future skills that are fast moving and not easy to capture, our solutions expedite a firm’s reskilling and upskilling strategy.

• **Data**: Through solutions built into our taxonomy and structures, we have data across industries providing insights into how skill requirements are translated into roles and linked to skills. This captures the speed of workforce transformation and provides a comparative analysis with peers.

• **Advisory**: We help firms understand their status quo, design frameworks, define strategy and measure progress with our deep industry expertise.

• **Practical transformation**: We have tools and solutions for data benchmarking, job architecture design, talent sourcing, career development and retention.

“The future is here. Assessing your workforce for the necessary future skills it has and where gaps exist is critical to navigating and thriving in an environment of constant change.”

Tarandeep Singh, CEO of Assessment Solutions, Human Capital Solutions, Aon
Categories of Future Skills in Aon’s Future Skills Framework

The six future skills categories we identify in our framework are based on scientific research, client insights and data from our human capital business. It provides a classification that allows companies to map diverse skills libraries, categories and models across their organization into one unified framework. This allows for benchmarking and tracking the progress and ROI of change.

**Resilience**
As companies need to build a more resilient and flexible workforce, agile mindsets and drive to learn become more crucial. In addition, mastery of change as well as balancing risk taking and risk mitigation.

**Leadership**
A shift towards inclusive leadership skills and people empowerment is happening. In addition, it becomes about driving digital adoption and fostering idea generation through creativity and thought leadership.

**Interconnection**
A new world requires new approaches in connecting people and communication in order to achieve success. Skills around virtual working, communicating with impact in a digital world, as well as cross-functional collaboration, are key to thriving in the new normal.

**Digitalization**
As business models become more digital, the demand for tech skills is rising rapidly. This also requires an acumen of digital business models and using agile methods in working.

**Insights**
As more data is available, skills around data and analytics, business intelligence and interpretation of complex information become increasingly important.

**Excellence**
Being aware of customer demands and being able to quickly iterate innovations around them in order to deliver superior added value remains key for most organizations. An additional uptake in demand for digital marketing and sales approaches is evident, as well as automation and efficient process design.
For more information on the topics discussed in this paper, please see these references:

- How Assessment Supports Organizations’ Increased Diversity
- How to Assess Digital Competencies in Three Steps to Build Your Future Workforce
- Understand Your Workforce’s Digital Readiness
- Finding Future Leaders
- Aon’s Digital Readiness Model Explained
- Identifying Potential from Within
- The Six Steps of Digital Talent Evolution for a Future-Ready Workforce
- Leveraging Assessments to Build an Agile Workforce
- Aon’s Pathfinder Tool
- Assessing for Transformation and Agility
“The future is here. Assessing your workforce for the necessary future skills it has and where gaps exist is critical to navigating and thriving in an environment of constant change.”

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Aon plc (NYSE:AON) is a leading global professional services firm providing a broad range of risk, retirement and health solutions. Our 50,000 colleagues in 120 countries empower results for clients by using proprietary data and analytics to deliver insights that reduce volatility and improve performance.

About Human Capital Solutions
Aon’s Human Capital business provides leaders with a powerful mix of data, analytics and advice to help them make better workforce decisions. Our team, spanning 2,000 colleagues in more than 30 countries, includes the firm’s rewards, talent assessment and performance and analytics practices.

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