FUTURE
TALENT
IS NOW

ManpowerGroup™
Solutions

OVERVIEW

The challenges facing organisations today are intensifying. Technology continues to reshape the world of work, influencing where, when, and how work is performed. The sophistication of supply chain thinking is influencing workforce hiring and the value organisations can drive from suppliers. Demographic and economic movement is fuelling a growing talent mismatch and the pressure to find the right skills is increasing. In this ever-changing world of work, forward-thinking organisations are now obliged to evolve.

Organisations must explore actionable strategies for future talent

Skilled employees possess increasing power and choice, impacting their attitudes and expectations. However even when an organisation has the ability to attract skilled talent, many still face a talent gap, and often aren't confident they have the right people in place to become their future leaders. As the pace of change accelerates and complex challenges continue to develop, the only certainty is that nothing can be certain.

It's clear that organisations must explore actionable strategies for future talent. To gain perspective on the

reality of future talent issues for HR leaders in the UK, ManpowerGroup Solutions surveyed a number of senior HR professionals.

We asked respondents their views on the significance of future talent; future leadership skill requirements; and the extent to which collaboration is part of their organisation's culture.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

In April/May 2015, ManpowerGroup Solutions UK surveyed a selection of HR leaders who attended the 2015 Changeboard Future Talent Conference, along with subscribers to Changeboard's quarterly print magazine. Our findings are based on 246 responses from HR professionals holding positions of seniority within their organisations, including: HR Directors, Heads of HR, Heads of Learning and Development, and Heads of Talent.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE TALENT

Future talent is a widely recognised focus for HR professionals. Respondents were asked to rate the significance of a number of future talent issues in comparison to other current talent issues. 71% of those we spoke to believe it is significantly important to understand their organisation's future talent issues, rating it between 8 and 10 on a scale of 1-10, where 10 is extremely significant. This view was felt even more strongly by HR leaders, climbing to 86% for HR Directors and Heads of HR.

Future talent is a widely recognised focus for HR professionals

FUTURE TALENT REQUIREMENTS
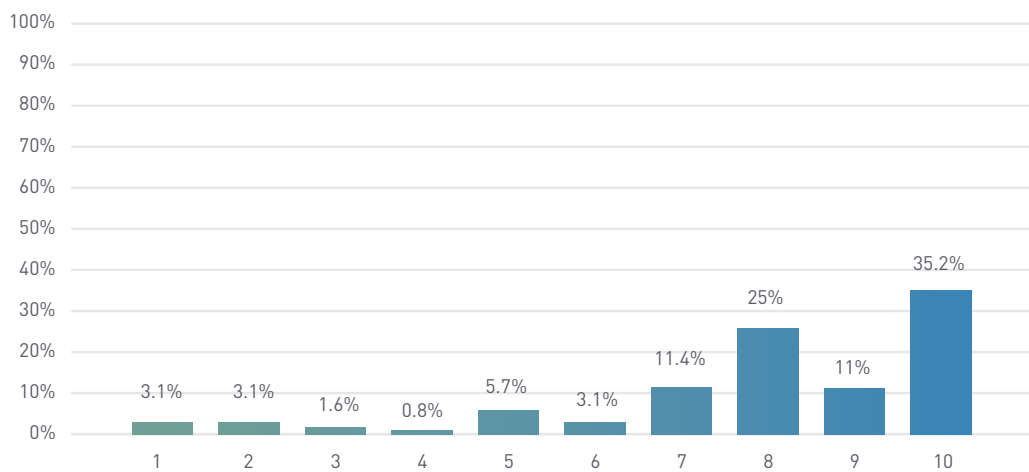
Understanding our future talent requirements: On a scale of 1-10, (where 10 = extremely significant and 1 = extremely insignificant), please rate how important the following issues are to your organisation in relation to other talent issues you are facing

THE IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE TALENT

Although the majority of respondents believed understanding future talent issues is important, some questioned whether this importance was reflected in the business strategies of organisations. One CEO noted: "Predicting talent demand is still seen by most organisations as a 'nice to have'...end[ing] up with a lack of the right talent available at the right time. Predicting what your talent needs are versus your business strategy requires discipline and vision, but can ultimately lead to some very healthy discussions around leadership versus functional talent demand and supply, and strategies to keep the bench at optimal levels."

Another respondent from the Financial and Business Services industry said: "I believe talent is a top priority for our business; however I don't think there is enough investment, either of time or money, in developing talent. I believe this is holding us back both with the internal talent we have as well as with bringing in skills and knowledge from external sources to fill gaps we have."

68% of respondents felt that developing talent internally is important, with 42% recognising the importance of external talent sources

FUTURE TALENT SOURCES

Our audience were asked to rate the importance of developing talent internally within their organisations. 68% of respondents felt that developing talent internally is important, rating between 8 and 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is extremely significant and 1 extremely insignificant. At the same time, resourcing talent externally also proved a noteworthy consideration, with 42% rating the importance of external talent sources between 8 and 10.

Organisations can at times overlook the significance of an agile talent strategy, leading to a disconnect between maintaining a healthy supply and demand. Nonetheless, with talent acting as the primary source of accelerated business performance and a key competitive differentiator, agile talent strategies are essential to attract and retain the required talent to meet business needs.

By utilising external talent sources alongside providing ongoing training and development for existing talent, organisations can ensure their entire workforce is job ready and effectively skilled to meet the diverse challenges and opportunities facing businesses today.

FUTURE
LEADERSHIP
SKILLS

A balanced view of future talent includes consideration of future leaders, in particular the skills they will need. 79% of all respondents believed that the skills required of leaders in 2020 would be noticeably different to that of today's leaders. This expectancy was shared by 70% of the CEO's we surveyed.

FUTURE LEADERSHIP
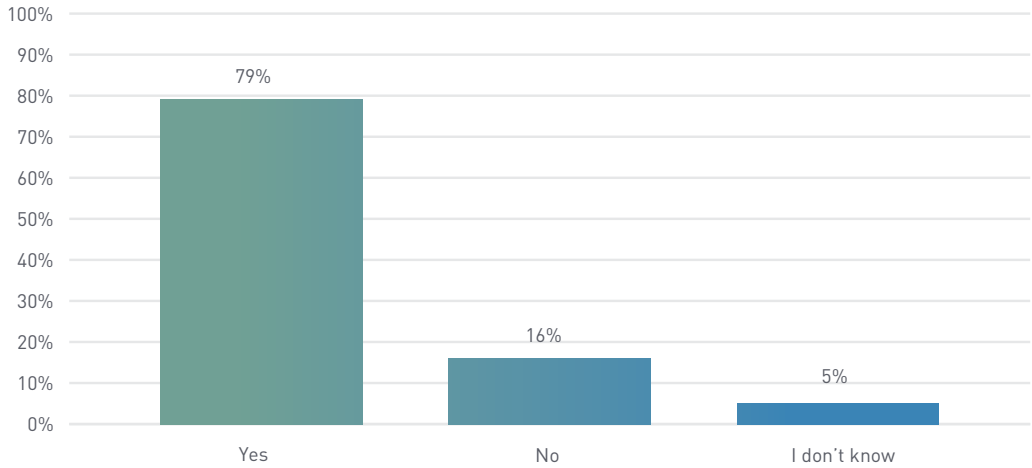
Do you think the skills required of leaders in 2020 will be noticeably different to that of today's leaders?

79% of all respondents believed that the skills required of leaders in 2020 would be noticeably different to that of today's leaders

FUTURE
LEADERSHIP
SKILLS

WHAT DO FUTURE LEADERS LOOK LIKE?

While the profile of leaders continues to develop, the majority of HR professionals agree there is a need for leaders to possess hard as well as soft skills, with much of the latter being developed through experience. It is expected that future leaders will also require the ability to analyse, understand, and put to use the vast amount of knowledge and data that exists – requiring a very different skill set to ensure leadership capability gaps don't exist.

Primarily – it's vital for future leaders to understand the nature of the *people* they work with and hope to inspire

This ongoing period of 'certain uncertainty' also requires future leaders to be resilient, agile, and possess breadth - understanding the at times complex compositions that make up their organisations. These skills are often developed over time and through exposure to the workings of the entire organisation. The ability to manage risks and stay innovative is also a priority for future leaders.

Primarily – it's vital for future leaders to understand the nature of the *people* they work with and hope to inspire. A Change Director at the NHS remarked: "We need to ensure that all those that are promoted to people management jobs, especially those promoted on technical ability, understand that the job gets done by people, and that if they do not understand the importance of managing people well; supporting their development, supporting performance, understanding their aspirations, and being interested in them, then however good their technical abilities are, they are not ready for management roles."

FUTURE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

DEVELOPING A LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Organisations are encouraged to consider the approach they are taking to developing their own high potential talent and in building a talent pipeline that will create measurable business results and sustained market leadership. If organisations wish to build confidence in their leadership pipeline, they do well to harness adequate bench strength at middle and higher management levels and develop high potentials within their organisation.

Strategically assessing the talent you have and identifying the talent you need underpins an organisation's ability to meet and exceed leadership talent requirements

Proactive organisations seek to build their leadership pipeline by identifying and developing high potential talent. Strategically assessing the talent you have and identifying the talent you need underpins an organisation's ability to meet and exceed leadership talent requirements. What's more, ongoing assessment is critical to the early identification of talent in your organisation.

ManpowerGroup Solutions have seen organisations working more closely with younger talent who are viewed as 'high potential' to begin development earlier in their careers, even applying principles from high potential programmes to their graduate schemes. Coaching and developing employees across all levels of an organisation not only leads to stronger mid and senior management levels ready to progress into leadership positions, but it can also result in improved employee engagement and loyalty.

CULTURE OF
COLLABORATION

The need for leaders to be able to connect with and effectively engage employees continues to be widely acknowledged. Collaborative technologies can transform workplace processes, strengthen engagement and offer significant increases in business performance, but require ongoing investment and commitment from leaders to be truly influential. As technology continues to revolutionise our working practices, a collaborative focus and environment is essential for future leaders and organisations who want to remain competitive and attract and retain the strongest talent.

Despite the recognition that collaboration is critical for success, 47% were only moderately positive that their organisation had a culture of sharing and collaboration

In analysing the current state of collaboration within organisations today, respondents were asked about their organisation's culture of sharing and whether their leadership team were supportive in building such a culture.

One HR Director from a business with more than 200 employees summarises the thoughts of many we surveyed: "We see collaboration as critical for future success." Despite this recognition, the majority of respondents (47%) were only moderately positive in believing their organisation had a culture of sharing and collaboration (rating between 5 and 7 out of 10). One Change Manager of a Transport and Communications organisation said: "Although stated as an essential ingredient and a key competence, collaboration is often sub-optimised or even undermined."

Progressive organisations must not only keep pace with collaborative trends but they must also understand the impact of *not* integrating collaboration into their culture. Despite the risks involved, leaders of the future must be aware of the greater risks of not moving forward and embracing new ways of working and relevant technological advances.

CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

COLLABORATION LED BY SENIOR MANAGEMENT

To create a truly collaborative environment, technology alone won't make the transformation and cultural change is needed. Organisations must go beyond a desire to collaborate, and be prepared to trust their people more and give them the capacity to make judgement calls, whilst maintaining adequate levels of privacy, security and trust.

Change led by senior leadership is vital to the successful roll out of collaboration initiatives

Change led by senior leadership is vital to the successful roll out of collaborative initiatives. Interestingly, 87% of those who strongly believed their organisation had a culture of sharing and collaboration, also confirmed their leadership team were extremely supportive of building a culture of collaboration within the organisation.

Leaders who facilitate connection, ensuring collaboration truly sits at the heart of their business will increase their chances of long-term success.

CONCLUSION

Competitive organisations do not view future talent as a future issue. While feedback from respondents did not reveal any revolutionary viewpoints or approaches to future talent – it did verify the recognition of its importance for HR professionals in the UK. As such, rather than being an impending matter to be explored at a later time, future talent has been confirmed as a *now* issue.

A combination of internal talent development and external hiring is vital to ensure the entire workforce can remain skilled and prepared to meet the diverse and ever-changing challenges and opportunities facing businesses.

The need for future leaders to demonstrate resilience, agility, innovation, and breadth as well as a balance of technical and softer skills will likely become even more important as the world of work continues to evolve. Underpinning all of the needed leadership skills, however, is the elusive yet critical skill of understanding people; including how to effectively engage, motivate and lead others.

Organisations are encouraged to consider their approach to building a talent pipeline that will create measurable business results and sustained market leadership. Actively building and developing a leadership pipeline has become more critical than ever for all forward-looking organisations.

Finally – future leaders must be aware of the risks if they do not embrace collaborative ways of working and relevant technological advances. To remain competitive and engaged with talent across their entire organisation, there has never been a greater need for leaders to actively create and support a collaborative culture.

For organisations to secure their future existence, they cannot ignore the need for a responsive, forward-looking talent strategy. To attract, develop and retain the skilled talent required to meet business objectives, traditional talent strategies can no longer be relied upon and an agile, robust talent strategy is essential.