Fluid Talent and Technology:
The "Secret Sauce" to Building Organizational Capability

Dates: May 9, 11, 17, 23, 31 & June 5, 2023 (Six Sessions)

In the years leading up to 2020, talent strategies already were challenged to more agilely respond to increasing labor and product market volatility. The Covid-19 pandemic showed how to quickly pivot to accommodate increased remote work. Yet the immediate wins in pandemic operational execution often came at the expense building the long-term organizational capabilities required for future success.

This virtual workshop is designed for Senior HR leaders who are focused on accelerating the transition to the future of work and more-fluid operating models. Designed intentionally with leading faculty across six modules, the workshop addresses the cutting-edge challenges of a fluid talent approach, seamlessly integrating talent and technology, succession planning in a VUCA world, leadership in the new world of work, and the role of HR in facilitating the future of work.

Questions considered:
* How do we bridge the gap between the people we hire and the capabilities needed to deliver on the business model?
* How can we reconcile deconstructing work to create more fluid talent engagement opportunities, and the demands of operating information technology systems that manage talent for scale, efficiency, and stability?
* How can business and HR leaders approach this new world of work in a way that meets the short-term-focused, on-demand needs of the business, with the longer-term focused human needs of their people?

Detailed agenda
Each virtual session has the following timing: 90 minute session, 30 minutes break, then 60 minute session
* Pacific Time (Los Angeles): 8:00am – 11:00am, with a 30 minute break from 9:30am – 10:00am
* Eastern Time (New York): 11:00am – 2:00pm, with a 30 minute break from 12:30pm – 1:00pm
* GMT: 4:00pm – 7:00pm, with a 30 minute break from 5:30pm – 6:00pm

Session 1: Tuesday, May 9, 2023
- **Building organizational capability to enable fluid talent and technology**
- Session leader: **Dr. Alec Levenson, Senior Research Scientist, CEO**

Organizational capability is one of the most talked about yet least well defined and executed aspects of business model design and strategy execution. There is no shortage of buzzwords: agility, ambidexterity, resilience, and more. How do we get beyond the buzzwords to translate the desired capabilities into specific organization design attributes? How do we make the connections tangible and understandable for a broader audience?

This session will review the research undertaken over the years, including at the Center for Effective Organizations (CEO), and feature case study challenges from the participants and action research partners of CEO.

Specific examples include innovation, agility, productization, digital fluency, platform architecture, customer-centric mindset, user experience, devolved decision making, and rapid learning implementation. Additional case study challenges from the participants will be incorporated into the session.

Session 2: Thursday, May 11, 2023
- **Considerations for "Work without Jobs" and moving towards a fluid talent approach**
- Session leader: **Dr. John Boudreau, Professor Emeritus, Senior Research Scientist, CEO**

The future of work will increasingly rest on the deconstructed elements of jobs (like tasks and projects) and demand a granular view of workers not as jobholders, but as owners of a variety of capabilities and skills. In their new book, Work Without Jobs, Ravin Jesuthasan and John Boudreau argue that leaders must embrace a new "work operating system" that begins by dismantling the idea of the conventional job and jobholder.

This session addresses:
- How organizations can achieve the agility required to thrive amid increasingly rapid change and disruption.
- How they can better adapt to a wider array of both working arrangements and workplace technologies, especially automation.
- The seven key elements of the new operating system: what they mean for workers, the work ecosystem, and management.
- How to get started by identifying trigger points and opportunities to rethink work in your organization.

Session 3: Wednesday, May 17, 2023

- **Talent and Technology: Leverage and Maximize Opportunities**
- Session leader: **Dr. Sharna Wiblen, Senior Affiliate Research Scientist, CEO**

All talent decisions start with strategy. Talent decisions, however, rarely acknowledge the potential conflicts between vendor-designed talent frameworks and the business's operational and strategic needs. Leaders and HR functions tend to adopt historic and legacy notions of talent rather than design their own strategically aligned talent frameworks because designing and executing strategic talent decisions are hard. Defining what talent really is, and how to best evaluate it is fundamentally complex. However, understanding what talent is and is not is the foundation for strategy execution, and leaders benefit from investing in designing talent decisions internally rather than outsourcing these designs to external parties.

This session explicitly recognizes the complexity of talent decisions and shares how to transition from historic-technology-driven talent decisions to integrated talent frameworks that support your various strategies:

- How strategic are your technology purchasing decisions: what kinds of hidden assumptions about and definitions of talent get embedded inadvertently in your organizational processes?

- How to move from Your Own Understanding of what talent is to a consensus across the organization and improve the quality of talent decisions.

- How to design digitalized talent management: how to embed those understandings in technology purchase and operational decisions.

- Implications for key HR processes and decision making: acknowledging processes that can suffer as a consequence and potential ways forward while accounting for operational and strategic needs.

Session 4: Tuesday, May 23, 2023
- **A New Look at Succession Planning and Fluid Career Paths**
- Session leader: **Dr. Maura Stevenson, CHRO, MedVet**

Succession planning traditionally has focused on individual leaders in high profile, key roles. Making sure we have multiple ready-to-go candidates for every critical role is a great strategy, but one that is challenging to implement effectively. With pressures to keep headcount down and productivity up, even before the pandemic, it's gotten progressively harder to think about proactively developing people to potentially step into multiple roles. And with such a tight labor market for high profile talent, your best candidates for succession may be just as likely to leave for greener pastures elsewhere.

This session will address the challenges of succession planning in today's economic environment, and the opportunities created by technology and the pandemic:

- What impact has the Great Resignation had on company's succession planning strategies? Can the tools of individually-focused succession planning be scaled up to address larger-scale turnover and retirement waves?

- How has the leader's role shifted in an era of greater remote and hybrid work? Can we pursue the same succession planning strategies as before and expect to get the same outcomes? Is the pool of potential candidates now larger if we can consider remote and hybrid leadership roles as well?

- Technology advances have greatly increased our ability to gather data easily from many different sources and voices throughout the organization and beyond. How can these be integrated into succession planning, and do they offer the promise of broader, more accurate assessments of future potential?

Session 5: Wednesday, May 31, 2023

- **Leadership in a New World of Work**
- Session leaders: **Dr. John Boudreau** and **Jonathan Donner, former leader of learning and capability development at Amazon, The United Nations, Unilever and Altria/Philip Morris**

This session explores the leadership implications of the future of work, that is more fluid, boundless, and agile. We will focus on trends including:

High-Level Leadership Roles:

- Set the boundaries and targets for the new work operating system
- Establish the guardrails for how work is coordinated in the absence of "jobs" and "reporting relationships"
- Leveraging purpose for alignment

Front-Line Manager Roles:

- From digital savvy to technological fluency
- From process execution to project guidance
- From hierarchical authority to empowerment and alignment
- From technical to humanistic work automation
- From episodic to continual focus on diversity, equity and inclusion

Session 6: Monday, June 5, 2023

- **HR's Role in Facilitating the Future of Work**
- Session leaders: **Dave Millner, HR Curator, Alec Levenson and John Boudreau**

Over the past two-plus decades the HR function and business partner roles have evolved a great deal. HRBPs today are a central design element for the entire HR function. Yet most HR functions struggle to have the types of deep engagement with the business required to easily ride the waves of technological change and digitalization.

This session addresses:

- The HR operating model, and the role of the HRBP for implementing fluid talent and technology strategies
- Sharing of new data on HR capability
- Intersections and synergies between the HRBP and OD roles and contributions in a post-pandemic world
- How leadership in both the business and HR need to approach thinking about what talent means and how to make better talent decisions