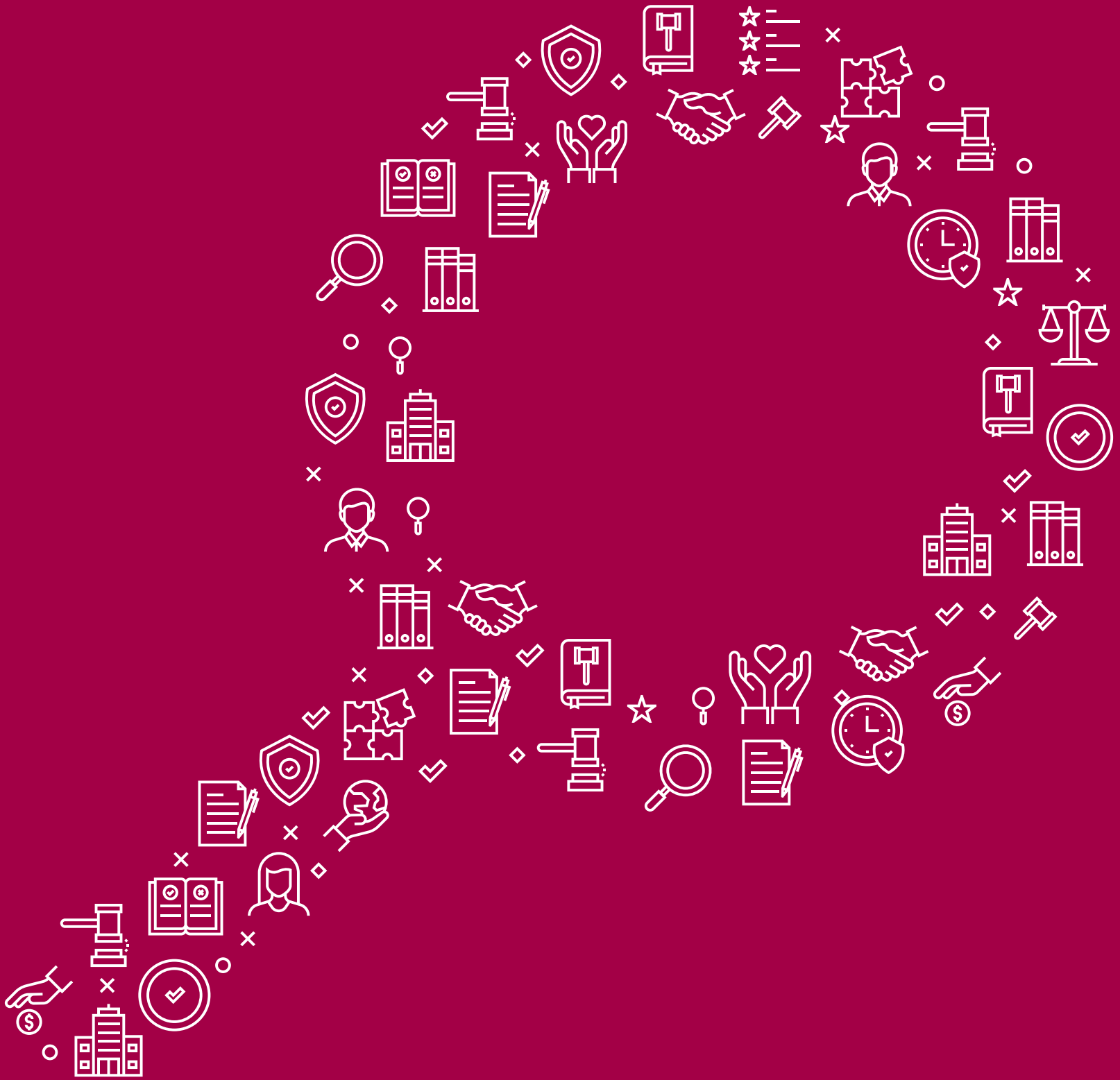


**PEOPLE
MATTERS:
UNLEASHING
THE FUTURE**

MELBOURNE
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 2021

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The purpose of this research project with private and government organisations in Australia was twofold:

1. To identify the current, emerging and future knowledge needs of corporate clients and their leaders over the next 5-10 years;
2. To identify potential future areas of opportunity for the Business School.

This paper is devoted to the first of these objectives.

Shortly following project launch, the federal government instigated a country wide lock-down and businesses were forced to evacuate offices and embark on the largest and longest working-from-home experiment the world has ever seen.

Accordingly, the project was halted whilst organisations mobilised in ways they did not think possible and achieved enormous feats of productivity to maintain business continuity during unprecedented times.

At the same time, the project parameters were adapted to include organisational response to COVID-19 and the timeline for future priorities in skills, capability and behaviour was shortened from 5-10 years to 2-3 years.

Melbourne Business School would like to thank each of the 44 Executives and their proxies who contributed their time and input to this research. It is invaluable to the School as we look to better serve the needs of organisations in terms of learning, development and capability building for the long-term future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Alexandra Lazarus-Priestley is Strategic Learning Advisor at Melbourne Business School. She draws on almost 20 years' experience in higher education, publishing and corporate leadership development to help tackle the School's most pressing questions: How do we partner with organisations to generate shared value? How do we help business find solutions for today's challenges and prepare them for tomorrow's opportunities? Where is the best skinny flat white in Carlton?

With a wealth of experience driving innovation and excellence on three continents, Alexandra also supports the Centre for Sustainability and Business in unlocking the School's capability to deliver value to organisations as they move into an environmentally sustainable future.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVES



9 OUT OF 10
COMPANIES INTEND TO FOCUS ON
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

MORE THAN HALF INDICATE THAT
INCLUSION IS THE KEY LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTE THEY
WISH TO BUILD, **WITH A THIRD** HIGHLIGHTING
THE ABILITY TO **DRIVE AND MANAGE CHANGE**



TWO THIRDS
NEED TO BUILD CAPABILITY IN
DATA INSIGHTS AND **DECISION MAKING**

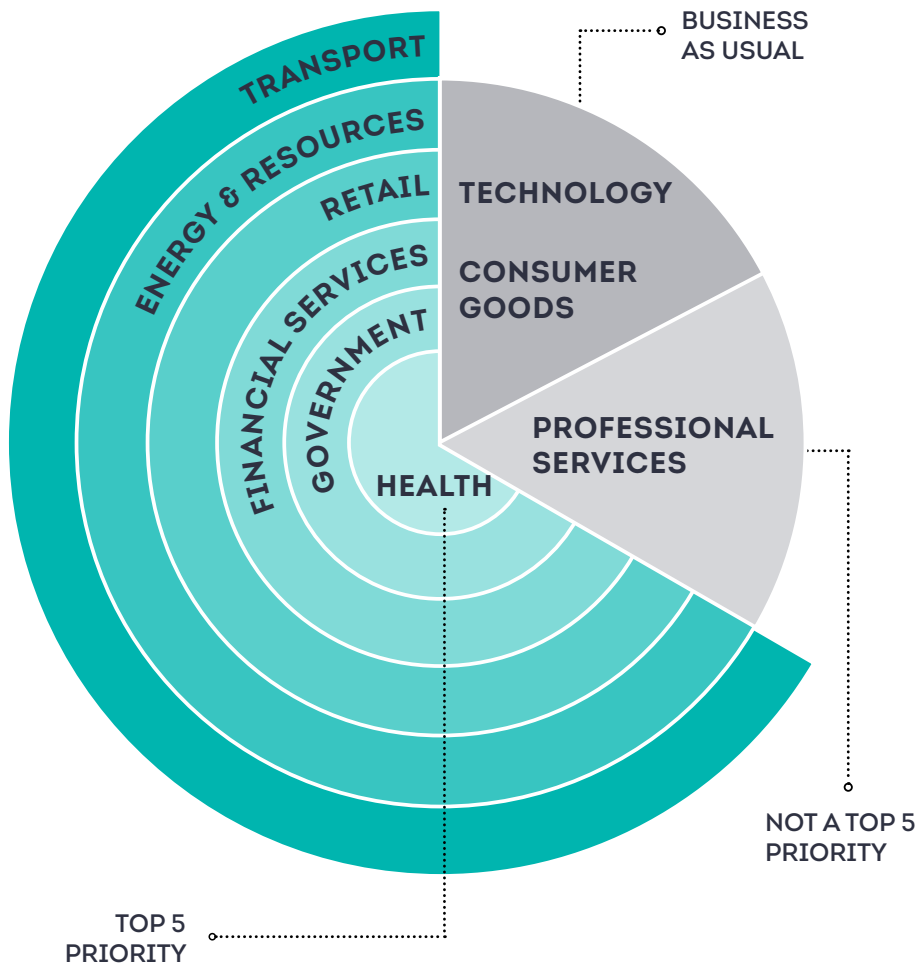


OVER HALF
OF ALL RESPONDENTS SAY LEARNING
AGILITY
IS AN ESSENTIAL SKILL FOR EMPLOYEES
TO THRIVE INTO THE FUTURE



2 OUT OF EVERY 3
IDENTIFIED
HORIZON SCANNING AND
CONTEXTUAL INTELLIGENCE
AS A CORE CAPABILITY IN
THEIR BUSINESS

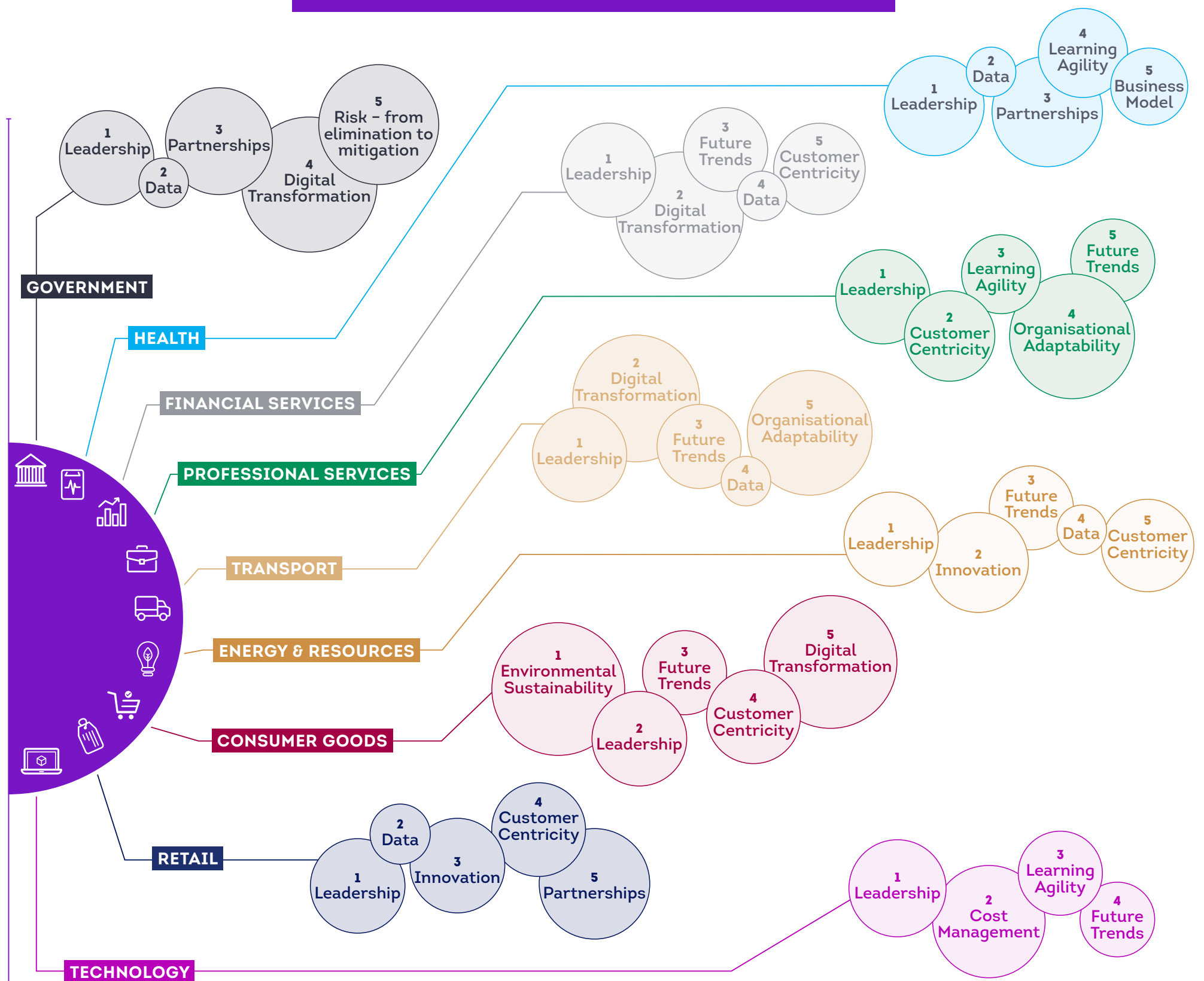
ANALYTICS PRIORITY BY SECTOR



LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES BY SECTOR



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES BY SECTOR



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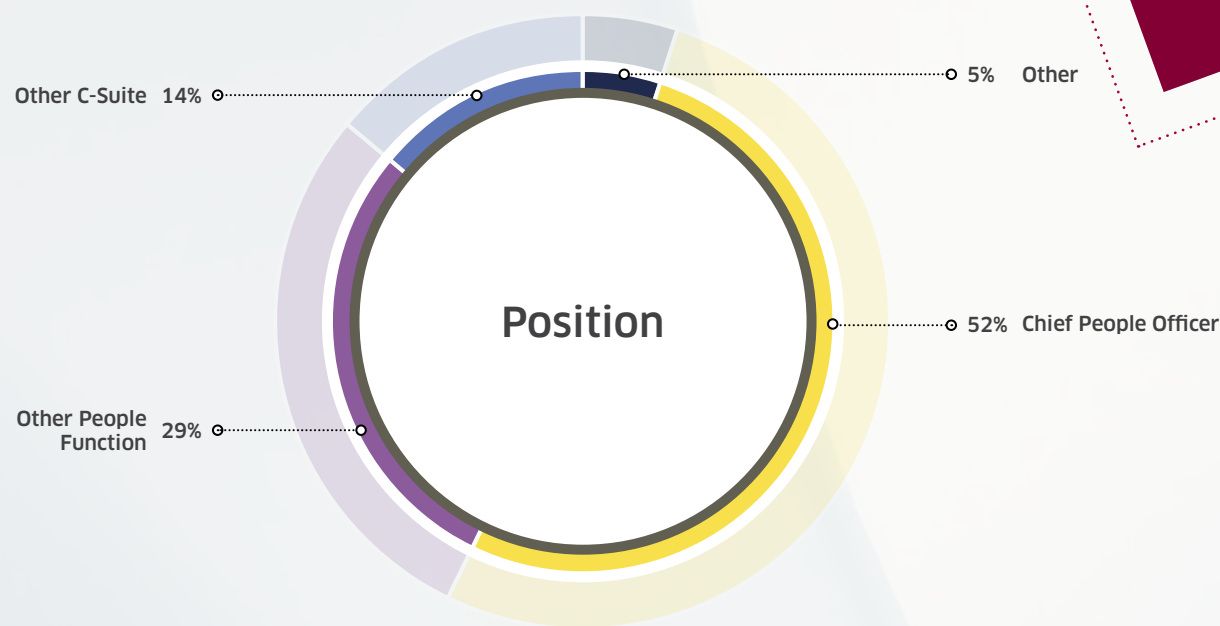
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When organisations face change as dramatic and universal as occurred in 2020, education providers must change with them to remain relevant to their executive development needs.

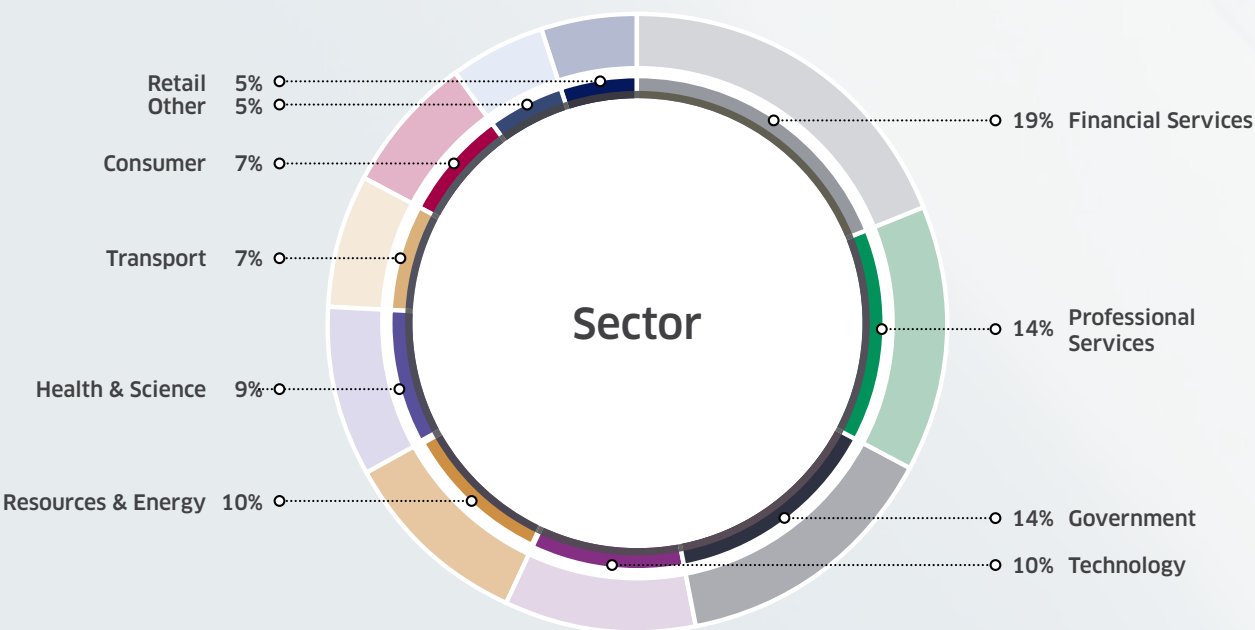
To understand the current, emerging and future knowledge needs of major Australian organisations and their leaders, we went out to 44 C-suite executives, or their proxies, from 42 ASX-listed companies, private businesses and government organisations, who generously provided their time and insights on top priorities for organisations over the next five years.

This report summarises over 50 hours of conversations held over six months in the second half of 2020. It highlights top priorities in the financial services, health and science, infrastructure, utilities, retail and consumer goods sectors over the next five years.



42 organisations surveyed across ASX 200 companies, large private businesses and public and non-profit sectors. Annual revenue: 8 organisations \$25m – \$250m; 11, \$250m – \$1bn; 6, \$1bn – \$5bn; 10, \$5bn – 50bn; 2, over \$50bn. 5 government and non-profit organisations.

Organisational size varied with 3 small businesses between 50-250 employees; 6 between 250-1000 employees; 12 businesses between 1000 and 5000 employees, 3 up to 10,000 employees, 12 between 10k and 50k and 6 with over 50,000 employees globally.



Cross-sector responses were sought to give a broad view of organisational needs and requirements.

MAIN FINDINGS

COVID-19 has catapulted us into the future of work and accelerated digital transformation across all respondent businesses. Customer centricity is a core priority as disintermediation drives a doubling down on customer obsession and creation of friction free experiences to drive retention. This is only increasing the importance of data for insight creation and decision-making.

Nearly half of organisations have used this momentum to accelerate workforce transformation efforts, both in terms of technology adoption and process and role automation. A quarter of these are preparing for transformations that will redefine their business by 2030. However, only a handful have advanced workforce transformation strategies and job corridors in place. The majority are relying on a combination of natural attrition, restructuring, and talent acquisition to fulfill future skills needs.

This is unlikely to be enough. As the push and pull between education, transition and work increases over the coming years, organisations will need to move from a model of acquisition to fill talent gaps, to reskilling of the existing workforce.

This is not an easy change for organisations or individuals who have grown up in an era of finite stages of education, career, and retirement. Organisations will need to look to job corridors, new labour models and developing employee value propositions across the generations. Individuals will need to develop human skills and learning agility as they are increasingly required to own their learning and career journey.

More than just the potential strategic and organisational shifts these trends may create, they also raise the question of the broader ethical considerations that organisations need to consider while navigating these challenges.

90 per cent of organisations are searching for ways to maintain the speed, agility, appetite for risk and bold decision-making unleashed by their pandemic response and are focusing on developing culture and leadership capabilities required to preserve it. However, there is a perceptible shift from leader to leadership development as the definition of leadership moves from a set of attributes to a function of getting results.

Focusing on strategic foresight and application of contextual intelligence to global trends was a focus for two thirds of organisations. Developing strategic thinking, an emergent and adaptive strategy, and outside-in thinking to continually reassess the baseline and shape organisations for the future.

In response to this feedback, Melbourne Business School is embarking on a series of projects to co-design and define content, pedagogy and experience with public and private sector organisations to ensure we create value into the future.

ONGOING QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

As a result of this project coinciding with a global pandemic, Melbourne Business School sought to understand the questions and concerns of senior leaders as they navigated through uncertainty.

This report does not offer solutions or have the answers to all these questions. Afterall, no-one can predict the future.

It is the start of the conversation. An opportunity for ongoing dialogue where the School, government and business define and discover the questions together.

We thank respondents for their participation and insights and invite them to continue this journey with us.

AGILITY/SPEED/ COURAGE

How do we capture the elements of COVID-19 that has made bold decision making, speed and adoption of change, and organisational clarity possible?

How do we avoid snap back?

FUTURE OF THE OFFICE

What does the shift to blended home/office working mean for equity of experience?

How do we create engagement/ belonging and build culture when work is no longer done in the office? What does it mean for our EVP?

If culture 'lives in the halls', then what is the meaning of culture and how do we define, hire and grow for cultural fit?

OUTSIDE-IN THINKING

How do we engender curiosity and an external focus to generate new ideas – to other industries, geographies or customers?

How do we unlock the whole organisation to take responsibility for innovation? What would it take to enable our culture to celebrate diversity of thought across the whole organisation to create change?

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

How will consumer comfort with e-services accelerate digital requirements for the organisation?

What type of organisation will we be in the future?

Which mega-trends are relevant and how have they been impacted by acceleration of changes caused by COVID-19?

How do we transition between now and next in terms of augmentation and full-service automation?

WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

What are the skills and capabilities required for future roles and how do we define job corridors for the organisation?

How should we incorporate role architecture, job corridors and personalised learning pathways into the employee value proposition?

What is the trajectory of our organisation past 2030?

LEARNING ORGANISATION

What does it really mean to be a learning organisation?

What is the right balance between the individual and organisational responsibility for learning?

How do we build a learning culture that resonates with every individual?

Is it possible to build learning agility in our people? Is it innate or learned?

LEADERSHIP

What are the leadership competencies required to lead organisations in the new world of work?

How do we redefine roles as a set of outputs rather than inputs, and enable leaders and employees to make this shift?

What is the right balance between developing leadership and developing leaders - between thinking of leadership as a set of attributes or as the business of getting things done?

What are the ethical responsibilities of leaders regarding automation/ augmentation of the workforce, labour market trends and climate change?

HUMAN CAPITAL

How should trends affecting casualisation of labour, the gig economy and talent marketplaces – owning, loaning, borrowing talent – influence our view of labour market opportunities for the organisation?

What is the new social contract between organisations, society and individuals?

THE FUTURE ARRIVES EARLY

While the consequences of COVID-19 challenged the ways and hows of working everywhere, a sizeable proportion of businesses identified considerable benefits from the crisis. Many of the participants in this project commented on the speed, agility and momentum created by the shift away from the known.

While most participants indicated that the thrust of their overall strategy has not changed due to the pandemic, all acknowledged that elements had been accelerated or made obsolete.

Health and Technology Organisations	Financial Services Firms	Government Organisations
Made changes to business models.	Accelerated strategies to reduce their footprint and convert to digital	Packed months of work into weeks, moving thousands of workers into different roles via rapid upskilling.

Nine out of 10 organisations are looking to bottle the speed, agility, appetite for risk and bold decision-making unleashed by their pandemic response – asking themselves “how do we maintain our agility when the environment no longer demands it?” This is not simply a case of increasing risk appetite, developing relentless accountability, and cost efficiency. It is also about unlocking collaboration

between multiple stakeholders, in partnership, to seize opportunities. It is the coming together of leadership and strategy, culture and behaviours, preparedness and managing risk. Adaptation of structure, policy, procedure, systems, and people will be required. More often and more disruptively.

TOP 10 PRIORITIES TO 2023



“
Strategic resilience –
having the capacity to
change before the case
for change becomes
desperately obvious.
”

Gary Hamel

RETHINKING THE ORGANISATION

The speed and scale of change was accelerating pre-pandemic, but COVID-19 has created a platform to springboard technology and accelerated digital transformation across 90 per cent of organisations involved in this research. In most cases, the strategies associated with systems change and process automation were accelerated by up to three years.

Nearly half of organisations have used the momentum created by the pandemic to accelerate workforce transformation efforts, both in terms of rethinking labour market opportunities and reconfiguring organisational structures alongside process and role automation. Traditional firms have been forced to embrace technology for the purposes of remote working and have used this opportunity to hasten automation and augmentation of roles. In line with global trends, three in four organisations expect roles to change within five years. A quarter of those are preparing for transformations that will redefine their business by 2030.

DATA AND CUSTOMER CENTRICITY

As organisations accelerate their digital transformation, capture and utilisation of data becomes even more important. Sixty-five per cent of organisations have capability gaps in analytics – most commonly around customer and employee data – specifically around decision-making and insight generation. However, it was an implied need across all organisations with varying degrees of priority.

The customer remains front and centre as organisations continue to align around customer needs, as opposed to moulding operations around developing and selling products and services. There is a further shift to a customer franchise model which identifies the customer as the most important asset of the organisation and as a prime asset of the business.

Disintermediation is forcing the amplification of customer obsession and creating greater need to create friction free experiences for customers to drive retention. This was seen across B2C and B2B organisations.

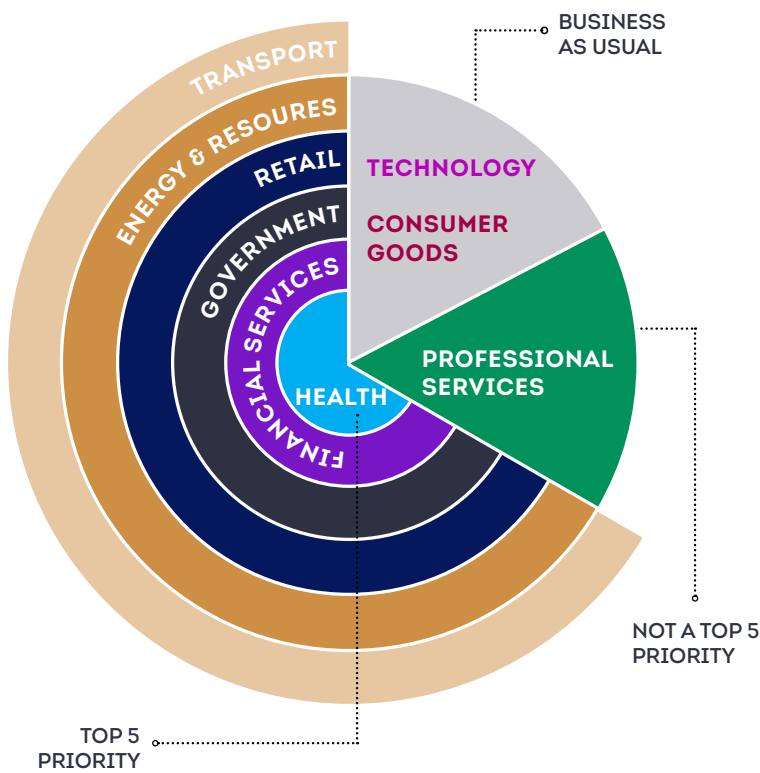
Ethical considerations regarding data privacy and the use of social media and algorithms to drive ever more targeted marketing were raised by several individuals. The increasing reliance on AI and machine learning built on data with incorporated biases was a central concern of financial services, retail, and consumer firms.

Further, this raised questions for many businesses on the ethical and responsible leadership behaviours they needed to develop to authentically manage these tensions, while maximising growth and shareholder value.

“Data driven everything. Continuing to ask the right questions, and keep asking questions, so we determine what it is we really want to know.”

- HR Director, Consumer Goods

ANALYTICS PRIORITY BY SECTOR



RETHINKING CHANGE

The technology sector found the initial transformation to remote working easier than other businesses. Those in the financial services and government sectors had the most challenges due to associated compliance and regulatory impediments. However, even there, significant accomplishments were achieved in a matter of weeks. As one senior government leader expressed it, 'it is amazing what can be achieved when you remove the impediment of "no"'.

- A learning technology project slated for 18 months of change management was delivered in six weeks in a firm with over 100,000 employees worldwide
- A financial services firm mobilised 5000 call centre staff to VPN within two weeks, when all previous requests had been denied.
- Government organisations mobilised thousands of staff into new roles.
- A professional services firm and a consumer goods organisation divested parts of their business without physical engagement.

All respondents acknowledged the incredible resilience and capacity of their people to manage often overwhelming change when clear imperatives, guidelines and cause were given. However, they were highly cognisant of taking care to identify the overuse of key talent and remove potential for overwhelm and burn out.

At the core of the stories of resilience, achievement and capacity for change may be an opportunity to rethink models of organisational change and the at-times paternalistic employer/employee relationship.

“

How do we keep the noise at bay, and slow the system? Take the bold decisions to stop doing. What are the 20 things that we can do really well?

- Chief People Officer, Health

”

“

How do we bottle this change - from the double-check, over-corrected, polished mindset of pre-COVID-19 to the scrappy, bold, and action orientation of now? When the environment motivates it, change is easy.

- CPO, Technology

”

WAYS OF WORKING

CULTURE AND CONNECTION

All organisations reported an increase in productivity and staff engagement, with one energy organisation reporting a 15 per cent rise in engagement between February and August 2020. However, more than half expressed concern about staff exhaustion and burn out, especially among women with caring responsibilities. At the recent World Business Forum, one expert cited research that the productivity increase during COVID-19 is due to employees donating an additional five hours per week to their organisation. (Lynda Gratton: World Business Forum, Sydney 2020).

Seventy per cent of organisations are grappling with the ramifications of the – likely permanent – move to hybrid working, with change needed in technology and leadership capability. While some organisations have already committed to halving their office space by the end of 2021, other businesses are “mothballing” office floors and reducing branch and retail footprints as they contemplate future ways of working and consuming.

Beyond the physical, eight out of 10 Chief People Officers are considering the impact and effects on organisational culture and on-going staff engagement and asking themselves how the organisation can relocate culture from place to values, from external to internal.

MAKING IT STICKY

These concerns about organisational culture, employee engagement and connection in a world of hybrid working raises important issues for all organisations moving forward. As consideration is given to work-from-home-or-office balance there is a need to be very purposeful about how new ways of working are conceived and embedded. The organisation needs to ask itself: What is the office for? What is home for? What is flexibility for?

New ways of working need to be embedded to ensure that corporate structures do not inadvertently create inequality of experience between those in the office and those who are not. This might be through an office-wide, mobile-first approach to meetings, or through cadences created at the team level. Without very intentional inclusion and collaboration,

organisational culture could easily regress, no matter the policies and procedures put into place to embed and encourage hybrid working. It is not enough to offer flexibility; the culture needs to adapt to ensure it supports and includes all employees, no matter where they choose to work.

If flexibility becomes the ticket to entry, all organisations need to clearly define the processes, policies and behaviours that will ensure organisational culture does not inadvertently snap back to pre-pandemic ways of working.

Further, leaders and managers will need to adapt for the long-term and be deliberate about their communication and inclusion practices to maintain and strengthen employee engagement.

“

“If culture and the employee value proposition lives in the halls, then how do you continue to create engagement and keep people coming back for more?”

CPO, Technology

”

“

“It’s just a different type of work-to-rule at the moment, but will it work so well when we have people on-site and off-site? We all need to be very intentional and pay attention to equity of experience to ensure we don’t inadvertently force people back into the office”

Executive, Energy

”

“

“When the physical space is no longer the offer, how do you create the emotional connection for people. What do they care about? How do you develop their journey?”

General Manager Organisation Effectiveness, Retail

”

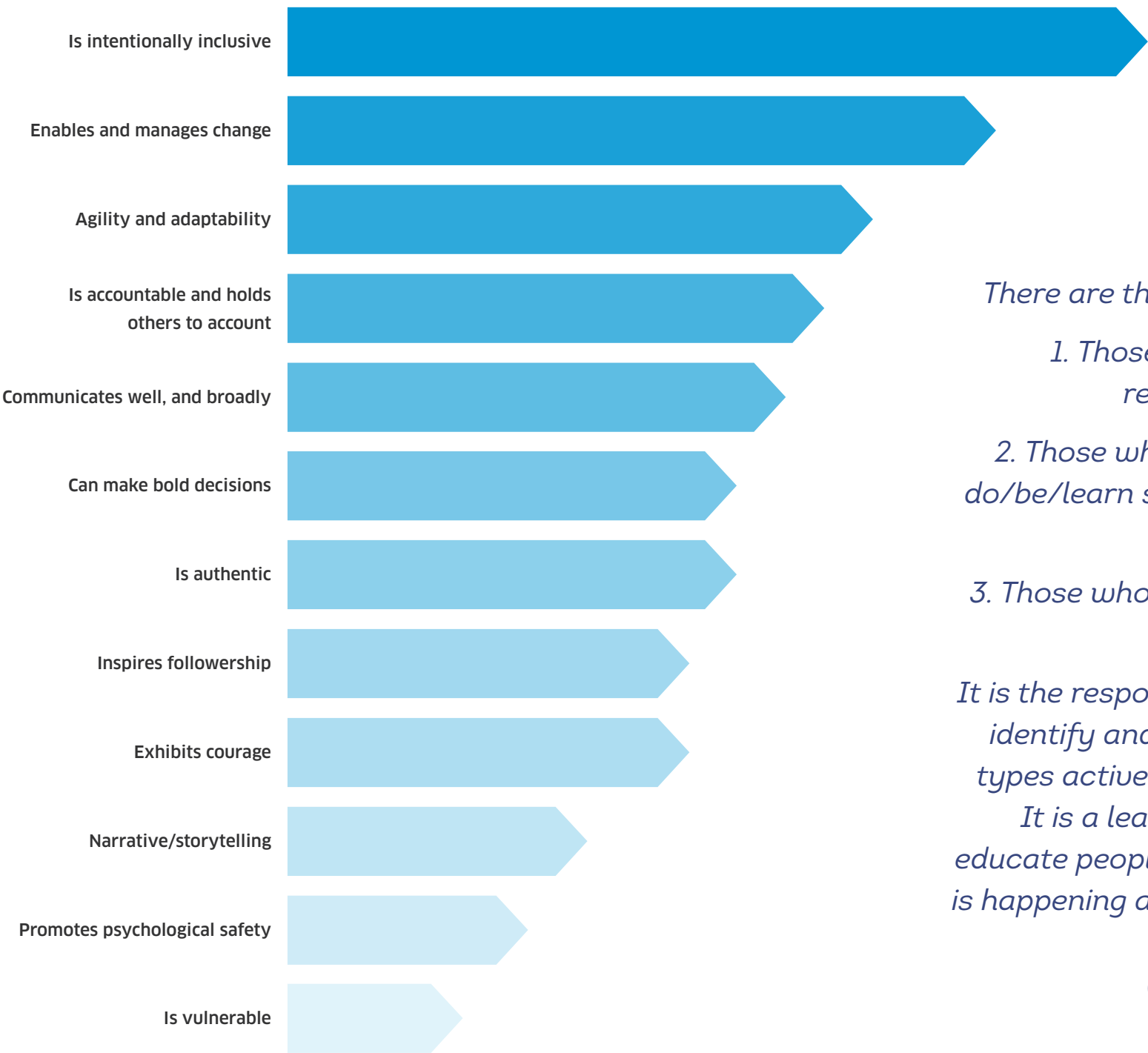
LEADERSHIP

Further to this, all respondents indicated a focus on developing leadership skills in a hybrid world, identifying managing remote teams, designing engaging online collaborations and meetings, deliberate and intentional inclusion and driving results over hours of work as key priorities in this space.

More broadly, nine out of 10 organisations signalled that developing leadership capability was their top priority, with most responses focused on leader attributes or behaviour. The priority attributes across all sectors together were:

- 1. Deliberate inclusion
- 2. Motivates and manages change
- 3. Interpersonal connectivity
- 4. Communication
- 5. Personal adaptability.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES



“
There are three types of people –
1. Those who are constantly resetting their baseline
2. Those who know they need to do/be/learn something but do not know what
3. Those who do not know or care what is coming.
It is the responsibility of leaders to identify and manage these three types actively and appropriately.
It is a leaders responsibility to educate people on the change that is happening and what they can do about it.

Chief Strategy Officer – Health

”

There was also a noticeable shift, especially in the financial services sector, in the definition of leadership from a set of attributes to a function of getting results.

LEADERSHIP NOT LEADERS

Leadership as a function of getting results needs to focus on: uncompromising accountability to outcomes; unrelenting cost efficiencies from a system perspective over narrow reduction of immediate costs; bold and decisive decision making; relentless horizon scanning to drive innovation; appetite for risk; and genuine comfort with constructive conflict in an environment where instinct tells leaders to protect their people.

This shift in focus from individual leader development to leadership as a competency is echoed in the re-emergence of a focus on management. If teams continue to be a blend of office and home-based employees, the role of manager becomes considerably more complex across character and competency traits.

Do these changes signal the coming together of management and leadership after many years of separation? Or is it just reflective of the different organisational and leadership capabilities required by economic uncertainty and recession.



LEADING ACROSS SYSTEMS

One third of organisations indicated partnerships and alliances form part of their current or emerging strategies to grant access to markets, talent or geographies not currently accessible to them. This emphasis on embedding strategic partnerships to deliver competitive advantage, mentioned across retail, financial services, resources and health organisations, requires a broader set of organisational and individual capabilities than traditionally required by hierarchical structures.

The ability to align systems, processes, and ways of working across multiple functions and organisations will become more important, as will the ability to communicate, collaborate and derive mutual value across systems.

OUTSIDE IN

Building the ability to lead across systems is echoed in the requirement to look outside of the organisation to other geographies, sectors, and organisations to disrupt internal thinking and unleash competitive advantage. Strategic thinking skills, emergent and adaptive strategy, and outside-in thinking to drive innovation, continually reassessing the baseline to shape the organisation for the future were priorities 65 per cent of the project's participants.

CONTEXTUALISING TRENDS

COVID-19 has catapulted us into the future of work and accelerated digital transformation, causing even traditional organisations, such as one transport company we spoke to, to leap-frog technology needs and look immediately to automation to drive leadership and workforce transformation.

Global trends of rapid urbanisation, technological breakthrough, demographic and social change create more than just potential strategic and organisational risks and opportunities. They also raise broader ethical considerations that organisations need to consider.

FUTURE OF WORK

Digital transformation continues to drive the need for significant workforce reskilling and upskilling. Participants from financial services, transport and professional services were particularly concerned about skills development for the future. As their businesses change rapidly, they acknowledge the potential of role redundancy, while capability gaps form that cannot be filled through acquisition alone.

Only a handful of private sector organisations engaged in this research have advanced workforce transformation strategies and job corridors in place. The majority were looking to a combination of natural attrition, restructuring, and acquisition of talent to fulfil future skills needs.

Over half of private sector and three-quarters of public sector organisations do not yet have clear line of sight of the capabilities required for the long-term future. Three organisations were proactively hiring for attributes rather than fixed technical skills. Only one organisation explicitly disclosed a focus on job corridors as a way of identifying future roles for current employees and had commenced work on pathways to deliver against these.

Beyond this, organisations are changing the way they think about the labour market.

LABOUR MARKET

Casualisation of the workforce and opportunities for organisations to utilise different labour models have both advantages and disadvantages to the future competitiveness of corporate Australia. Organisations no longer needing to own talent, and the increase in shared talent marketplaces enables motivated and

skilled individuals to take advantage of opportunities, learn at much greater speed, service clients faster and at lower cost.

However, the potential for the “uberisation” of the workforce to create greater social inequality troubled several executives included in this research.

“
What does it mean for us in terms of remote service delivery – where do we find talent? How do we rethink models to send the work to the people, rather than the people to the work?
”

Chief People Officer, Financial Services

CONTEXTUALISING TRENDS

URBANISATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

Similarly, when we look to other global megatrends around rapid urbanisation, demographic and social change, participants questioned whether the pandemic would create permanent changes to pre-2020 predictions.

Can we be confident that the current exodus to regional areas, driven by the hybrid working model, is nothing more than a blip and that ultra-urbanisation will continue unabated?

What do individual requirements for flexible working mean for Enterprise Bargain Agreements written 50 years ago?

How do we manage an ageing workforce and the increasing age of retirement?

These questions are just a few examples of the concerns raised in this research, and it speaks to challenges for organisations on their journey to 2030 and beyond.

SUSTAINABILITY

Concern for the environmental and social sustainability of the organisation was also evident among the respondents, with more than a third identifying this as an area of future need. The major drivers for sustainability are improvement in employee engagement, talent acquisition and retention, and engaging with investors and consumers.

In most cases, sustainability is viewed as a basic requirement for a social licence to operate. In a small number of organisations, predominantly in the consumer and manufacturing sectors, there is a strengthening connection between sustainability and strategy.

Sustainable innovation is driving competitive advantage, and the shifting perceptions of sustainability from risk to opportunity.

However, one energy sector executive opined that society is currently balanced on a knife edge in understanding the fallout from the pandemic. Will this global experience result in a greater sense of collective responsibility and the acceleration of renewable power and a green economy? Or will individualism prevail, ensuring failure of the Paris Agreement and increasing the risk of climate inequality and social unrest?

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As purpose, values and social licence to operate extends a company's value beyond the shareholder, what opportunities are there for business leaders to ask themselves crucial questions about the ramifications of the business decisions they are making now?

What place does corporate Australia need to take up in these societal and economic conversations?

What are the larger ethical considerations, and broader business implication in not taking a longer-term view?

Where does automation ultimately leave us?

Should social unrest, due to these factors, be considered an organisational risk?

THE LEARNING ORGANISATION

ONLINE BIG TIME

All organisations involved in this research have converted their internal learning programs to digital delivery. One resources organisation had planned an 18-month project to transfer its academy to blended delivery but saw the project completed in just six weeks, after the start of their pandemic response.

A financial services business, wanting to digitise its onboarding recruitment, which had met with internal resistance before the pandemic, delivered it in just two weeks.

A professional services organisation digitised their Global Executive Forum, resulting in greater engagement, better learning-transfer outcomes and \$3 million in savings.

Melbourne Business School too made significant moves to transfer the learning experience of its MBA and other degree programs online, while our customised leadership programs for organisations were quickly transformed into innovative digital-learning experiences, as were several short courses.

Australia's uptake of e-services still lags the leading markets, but the pandemic has ensured that individuals across all ages have become more comfortable with consuming online, whether they are shopping, banking or learning. What longer terms impact will this have on the way we choose to consume in the future?

THE TIPPING POINT?

It is too early to draw definitive conclusions on whether we have truly reached the tipping point between face-to-face and virtual relationships, and its impact on work and learning.

As the digitisation of learning accelerates, more organisations are looking to develop innovative ways to deliver learning in the business. Indications are that up to 80 per cent of learning will be delivered digitally in the future.

LEARNING ACROSS THE LIFETIME

While it is a leader's/organisation's responsibility to support teams to continually understand and adapt to changing workforce requirements, it is an employee's responsibility to identify their learning and access it at the point of need.

To this end, organisations are gradually developing digital content on a pull rather than push basis, and responsibility for seeking learning opportunities is increasingly passed to the person who requires them.

This change is not easy for organisations or individuals who have grown up in an era of finite stages of education, career, and retirement. However, it will become an increasingly important obligation as new generations hungry for development enter the

workforce, and the requirement for vast swathes of the employed population to develop new skills in the path of automation, augmentation and atomisation of work.

Further, as this push and pull between education, transition and work increases over the coming years, organisations will need to adapt their acquisition and retention strategies to take advantage of talent across the generations. As demographic shifts limit future talent pools, and roles change from depth to breadth in the new wisdom-based economy, organisations will need to adapt from an acquisition model to one of upskilling and reskilling the existing workforce to fill future capability gaps.

“

Content and learning strategy is self-generating – leaders need to learn and own the content, creating exponential growth in the creation of learning moments.

Vice President Organisational Capability, Resources

”

“

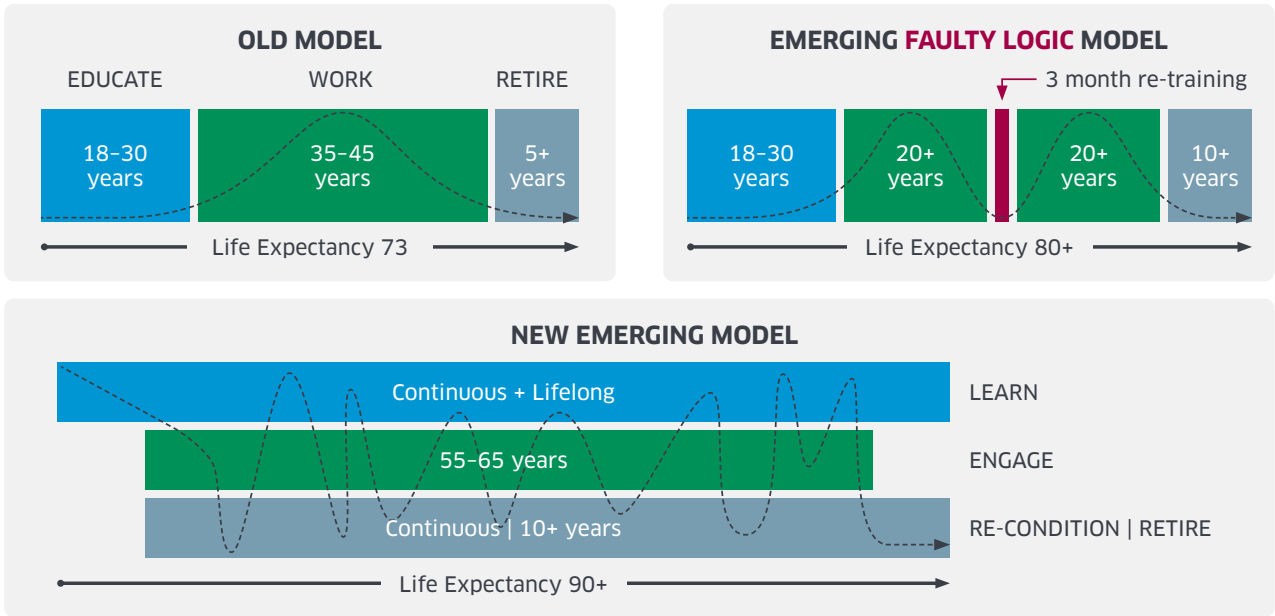
How do you create learning capability – how do you empower people to take charge of their own learning? While it is a leader's role to identify talent and help it to develop, everyone needs to own their own learning, capability building and career.

Chief People Officer, Resources

”

THE LEARNING ORGANISATION

FUTURE OF WORK: SHIFTING LIFE BLOCKS



Adapted from Heather McGowan

TRANSFORMING THE WORKFORCE

Organisations need to start thinking holistically about reskilling, upskilling and job transitioning for tomorrow, today.

Ultimately, workforce transformation will involve significant organisational investment into role architecture, job corridors, learning partnerships and personalised learning pathways to enable employees to build required skills. Learning will no longer happen to employees; it will be pulled at the point of need.

Although the organisation needs to identify the strategic skills, capabilities and behaviours it requires from its employees as the organisational identity changes, it is up to the individual to identify their pathway and choose how and when they will develop. It is a learning partnership.

In the meantime, the work for organisations will be in creating a shared vision of a learning culture – the golden thread between where the organisation is today and where it needs to be tomorrow.

“
Things are moving too fast for people to take a year out to learn something. Everyone wants bite sized, stackable content at the point of need.
”

Chief People Officer, Government

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Through this project, Melbourne Business School sought to understand current challenges and future strategic priorities of government and private sector organisations in the medium-to-long term. By engaging in this way, Melbourne Business School can better serve the market in terms of learning, development and capability building for the future.

In the process, we also sought perspectives on, and possible future spaces for, the School as identified by past, current and future partners.

FUTURE SPACES

The School as a creator of business-relevant, stackable, modular programs, including sector and industry expertise, with greater emphasis on higher order cognitive and interpersonal skills was desired by Financial Services, Health and Professional Services firms.

In the longer term, the establishment of short course partnerships with organisations are needed to build accredited learning pathways to reskill their people as roles are increasingly augmented with technology. The resulting short courses may carry micro-credentials that could ultimately lead to an award. Further exploration of partnerships with organisations to support individuals to transfer learning to practice and ensure that both the individual and the organisation benefit from investment through supporting social contracting.

In the custom education space, much of the work is in developing and delivering a modern sense of what the business school experience can offer. Three quarters of

respondents indicated a need for Melbourne Business School to create and articulate a unique sense of the offer from a content, pedagogy, and experience perspective.

There was desire for the School to take up space in the market as a provider of cutting-edge, industry relevant content that could disrupt thinking at the highest levels of business – to work with an organisation's 'messy reality' to define and solve challenges in iterative ways, where the School learns while the organisation learns. This desire extends to developing a different and deeper relationship with the School to derisk the business, to build the leadership capability to ask questions of itself, scan the horizon and think differently about its own challenges.

This desire provides an opportunity to bring the outside in and build organisational capability by engaging with accessible research and faculty to stimulate innovation and thinking about and with the business.

“

I'm not sure the model fits the 21st Century... Corporates won't continue to fund executives to learn outside of the organisation that which would be more valuable learned on the job.

Chief People Officer, Financial Services

”



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