

The Year Ahead for HR Business Partners (HRBPs)

How HRBPs Can Succeed and Grow in 2017

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ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE HRBP ROLE ANNUAL SURVEY

Our 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey

We surveyed over 700 HRBPs and HR generalists from organizations around the globe to understand their priorities and expected challenges in 2017.

Key Statistics

700+ participating HRBPs and HR generalists

200+ data points collected per participant

All major industries and regions

Major Areas of Focus

- Key HRBP priorities and trends for 2017
- Relationships between HRBPs and their internal stakeholders
- HRBP workload and time allocation
- Common HRBP career paths and development priorities

Companion Resource

The hundreds of perspectives shared in this survey also informed the creation of a companion resource to The Year Ahead for HRBPs.

Review the [State of the HRBP Role and Function, 2016–2017 Report](#) for peer benchmarks on frequently asked questions related to the HRBP role, including the following:

- How many lines of business and total employees do HRBPs support?
- What do HRBPs spend the most and least time on at work, and what skills do they want to develop?
- Why do HRBPs leave their role, and what roles do they aspire to hold next?

Source: CEB analysis.

Heads of HR and HRBPs share the same top four talent management priority areas in 2017.

HEADS OF HR AND HRBPs GENERALLY AGREE ON THE 2017 TALENT AGENDA

Heads of HR: Where Do You Expect the Most Attention from Your CEO in 2017?
Top 10 Topics

1. Leadership
2. Succession Management
3. Employee Engagement
4. Change Management
5. Organization Design
6. Diversity and Inclusion
7. Performance Management
8. High-Potential Employees
9. Workforce Planning
10. HR Strategy

n = 106.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of HR Agenda Poll.

HRBPs: Where Do You Expect the Most Attention from Your CHRO in 2017?
Top 10 Topics

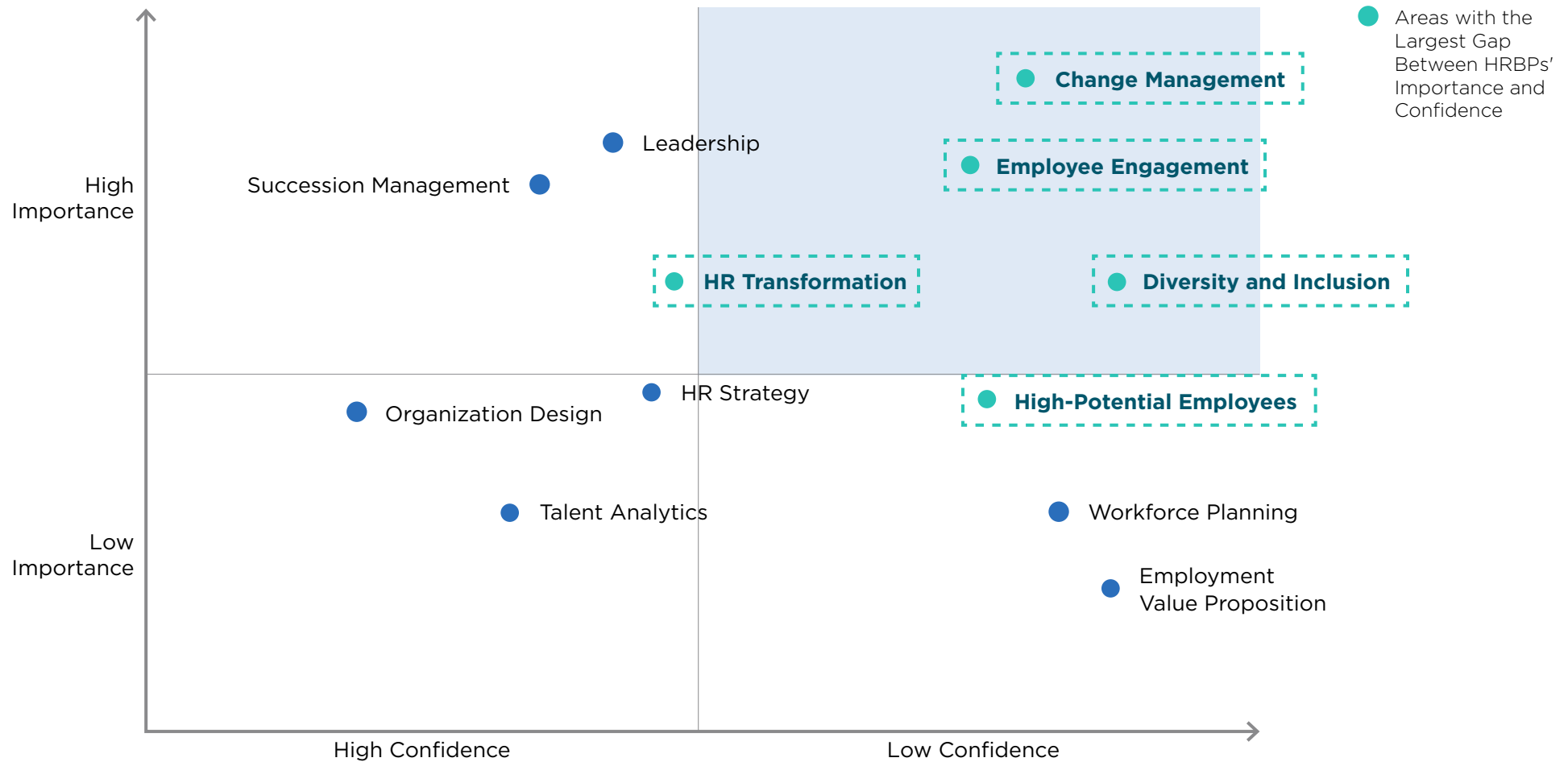
1. Change Management
2. Employee Engagement
3. Leadership
4. Succession Management
5. HR Transformation
6. HR Strategy
7. Diversity and Inclusion
8. Performance Management
9. Workforce Planning
10. High-Potential Employees

n = 718.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

HRBPs SHOULD IDENTIFY WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED MOST IN 2017

HRBPs' Perspectives on Importance and Confidence in Achieving HR Functional Objectives in 2017



$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

FIVE WAYS TO SUCCEED AND GROW IN 2017



Source: CEB analysis.

Organizations recognize that change is the new constant, and they're leaning on HRBPs to effectively facilitate much of that change.

- The average organization has experienced five large-scale organizational changes in the past three years.
- Seventy-three percent of organizations expect even more change initiatives over the next two years.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT IS FREQUENT—AND HRBPs ARE HEAVILY INVOLVED

Change Initiatives Expected in the Next Two Years



n = 305 organizations.
Source: CEB HR Change Readiness Survey.



HRBPs spend a significant amount of time on creating and managing change implementation plans; it is second only to creating and managing their business units' strategic HR plans in time spent.

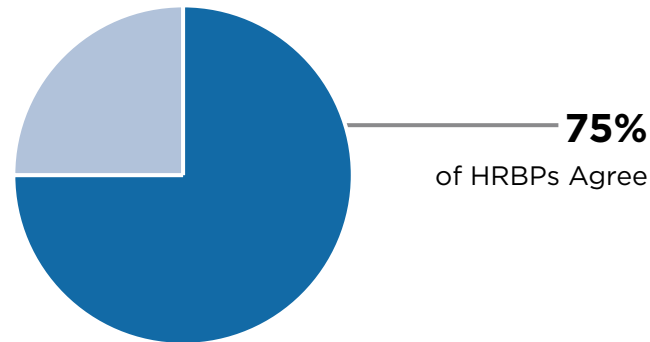
n = 718.
Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Culture change has been the most common type of organizational change in recent years and will continue to be a priority in 2017.

- Seventy-two percent of surveyed CHROs share that failing to successfully change organizational culture after a significant change would create major operational problems for their organizations.

CULTURE CHANGE SPECIFICALLY WILL CHALLENGE HRBPs IN 2017

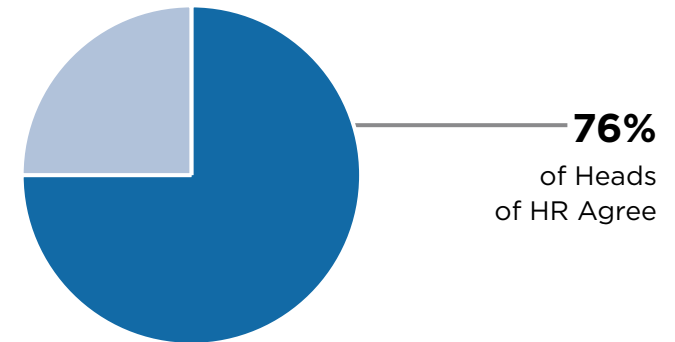
Most HRBPs Have Experienced Culture Change in the Past Three Years



n = 718 HRBPs.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Organizations Are Planning More Culture Change in 2017



n = 106 Heads of HR.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of HR Agenda Poll.

Did You Know? Culture change is the most frequent type of large-scale change organizations have recently experienced (relative to restructuring, market expansion, leadership transitions, and M&A).

Noise surrounding corporate culture is exploding, but varied (and even conflicting) recommendations on culture prompts many HRBPs to hesitate on how best to get involved.

- As a result, many HRBPs underestimate their familiarity with the cultures of the business units they support.
- However, given HRBPs' direct, client-facing roles, they are very well-qualified and well-positioned to advise on business unit culture.

CHATTER ABOUT CULTURE MAKES HR UNCERTAIN ABOUT HOW BEST TO SUPPORT CULTURE CHANGE



HRBPs underestimate their understanding of corporate cultures.

Only 22%

of HRBPs strongly agree that they understand the cultures of the business units they support.

n = 718 HRBPs.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

HRBPs have a different vantage point from central HR and experience firsthand how corporate culture shifts at the business unit level.

- As they support culture change, HRBPs should help proactively identify and avoid culture change “blind spots” by paying specific attention to how and where organizational culture and business unit culture differ.
- There are specific aspects of business unit culture that line leaders are unable to see.

THIS UNCERTAINTY CAN LEAD TO CULTURE CHANGE BLIND SPOTS WHICH HRBPS CAN HELP AVOID

Assessing and Defining the Culture in My Business Unit

Does our organization’s description of its new culture match our business unit’s culture?

Preparing for the Culture in My Business Unit

Do our employees have the skills they need in order to act in accordance with our new culture?

Embedding the Culture in My Business Unit

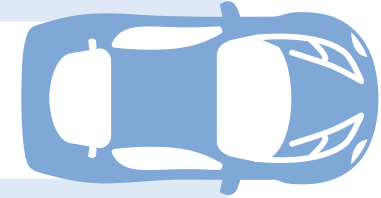
Is this new culture aligned to or at odds with our current business and talent processes?

Communicating the Culture in My Business Unit

Do our business unit’s employees have all the information they need about what the new culture means for them?

Adjusting the Culture in My Business Unit

Do we have processes in place to collect feedback on the new culture from employees, managers, and leaders?



Source: CEB analysis.

The most effective corporate cultures aren't created in a vacuum—they're inextricably linked to business processes and priorities.

- To effectively support culture change as an HRBP, trust your existing familiarity with business priorities and your line clients, and use it to anchor your guidance.
- Common stages of the business planning process include defining goals, allocating resources, analyzing threats, and communicating.
- With each stage of the business planning process, challenge yourself to identify the corresponding cultural implications.

YOUR EXISTING UNDERSTANDING OF BUSINESS UNIT STRATEGY IS THE PREPARATION YOU NEED

Common Stages of the Business Planning Process

Define Strategic Plan Goals

HRBPs Should Ask: How would you describe our top two to three business goals? Do they prioritize speed, innovation, customer centricity, or other values?

Allocate Resources Throughout the Strategic Plan

HRBPs Should Ask: What business priorities, projects, and people are receiving the most and least amount of investment? Are those the elements our culture also values most?

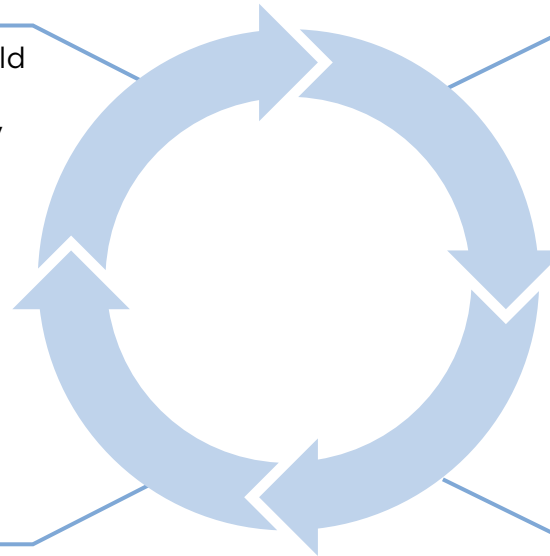
Communicate the Strategic Plan

HRBPs Should Ask: What do employees need to know about business goals in order to perform their jobs well? How well does this communication match what we're telling employees about our culture?

Analyze External Threats to the Strategic Plan

HRBPs Should Ask: Where are we as an organization losing out on our strategic goals? What do those business weaknesses tell us about where our culture may not be strong?

Source: CEB analysis.



As you translate this priority for your role this year, reflect on these key takeaways and outstanding questions.

GETTING STARTED

What We Know

- Change management is the talent management area where HRBPs expect the most attention from their heads of HR in 2017.
- Culture change is already the most common type of change—three out of four HRBPs have experienced a culture change initiative in the past three years—and 2017 will bring even more culture change, as 76% of heads of HR are planning a culture change initiative in the next year.
- With so much chatter about culture change, many HRBPs underestimate their potential impact and are hesitant about how they should get involved.
- HRBPs, however, are in a unique position to help central HR manage common culture change blind spots and accelerate culture change at the organizational level by helping to define their business units' unique, authentic cultures.

Where to Go (Next)

Use these questions for your own reflection and discussion with your team about what work is left for you to do in 2017:

- How would I describe the culture of the business unit(s) I support? Do we see any differences in culture across business units within our organization?
- What does our organization's current or recent culture change initiative say about our business priorities?
- How do my business unit's line leaders and managers interpret their roles in culture change? What additional help do we need from them to execute culture change successfully?

Changing workforce demographics and work environments have significant implications for HR.

- Heads of HR and their HR organizations globally cite continued trends, such as the growing gig economy, artificial intelligence, digital talent, and others, as influencing their workforce strategy in 2017.

CHANGES TO THE GLOBAL WORKFORCE REQUIRE CHANGES TO ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Trends Within the Global Workforce

24% of American adults report earning money from the digital platform economy in the past year.

Up to 162 million people in Europe and the US (20%–30% of the working-age population) engage in some form of independent work.

Nearly 140 private companies working to advance artificial intelligence technologies have been acquired since 2011, with over 40 acquisitions taking place in 2016 alone.



Changes to Workforce Strategy in 2017

57% of heads of HR plan to prioritize attracting and retaining digital talent in 2017.

71% of heads of HR plan to increase available flexible working arrangements in 2017.

Source: Aaron Smith, "Gig Work, Online Selling and Home Sharing," *Pew Research Center*, 17 November 2016, <http://pewrsr.ch/2fZliKs>; James Manyika, Susan Lund, Jacques Bughin, Kelsey Robinson, Jan Mischke, Deepa Mahajan, "Independent Work: Choice, Necessity, and the Gig Economy," *McKinsey Global Institute*, October 2016, <http://bit.ly/2e8bmCy>; "The Race for AI: Google, Twitter, Intel, Apple in a Rush to Grab Artificial Intelligence Startups," *CB Insights*, 6 December 2016, <http://bit.ly/1oO5UEC>.

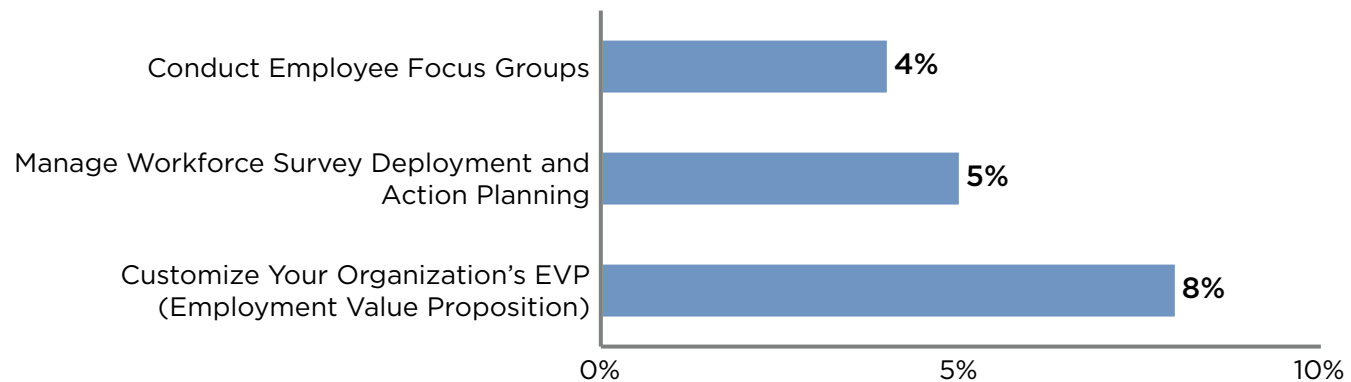
HRBPs report spending significantly less time on dedicated engagement activities relative to other responsibilities.

- In place of these traditional engagement activities HRBPs are spending more time with talent data.

AS A RESULT, HRBPs' DELIVERY OF ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT IS ALREADY LOOKING DIFFERENT TODAY

Which of the Following Activities Do You Spend the Most Amount of Time on at Work?

Percentage of HRBPs Selecting Within Their Top Five of 26 Total Activities



n = 718.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Note: Top three responses included: create and manage your business unit's strategic HR plan (42%), create and manage change implementation plans (37%), and implement and manage an organizational redesign (35%).

...And Will Spend More Time Analyzing New Sources of Talent Data to Drive Engagement

Percentage of Heads of Engagement Starting/Stopping Source Usage in the Next Two Years



n = 177.

Source: CEB 2015 Head of Engagement Survey.

HRBPs today should look for opportunities for on-demand, or just-in-time, data-based support instead of waiting for formal engagement surveys.

- As your line clients share engagement-related challenges and feedback with you, aim to reflect immediately on what data is currently available that could help you formulate an answer to the question.
- Use your existing relationships with internal stakeholders, such as talent analytics teams or recruiting partners, to deliver just-in-time data support.

USE JUST-IN-TIME DATA TO SUPPORT THE UNIQUE AND CHANGING NEEDS OF YOUR BUSINESS UNIT

Common Examples of Just-in-Time Data Application



You Hear: *Do we anticipate turnover will increase in our business unit this year?*

Right Away, You Can:

- ✓ Track year-over-year changes in seasonal turnover trends,
- ✓ Analyze the impact of past environmental events on turnover, and compare to planned future events, and
- ✓ Review competitors' press releases to identify potential competition for talent.



You Hear: *Why are we seeing an increase in productivity in our business unit across the past six months?*

Right Away, You Can:

- ✓ Analyze employee feedback on recent training and development programs,
- ✓ Review business unit employee tenure levels, and
- ✓ Identify business unit initiatives that received more recent investment.



You Hear: *I'm not sure if retaining diverse talent is really the challenge, or if we need a whole new engagement strategy.*

Right Away, You Can:

- ✓ Compare turnover rates of roles and segments to the business unit average,
- ✓ Summarize survey feedback on employee satisfaction with D&I, and
- ✓ Gather feedback through focus groups with different employee segments.



You Hear: *Why can't we find a person to fill this open position?*

Right Away, You Can:

- ✓ Analyze feedback on external employer review sites and from internal exit surveys,
- ✓ Review historical time to fill for this type of position, and
- ✓ Compare this role's evaluation criteria against other similar roles.

Source: CEB analysis.

Employees who apply their own judgment to data, or “informed skeptics,” are the best decision makers within organizations.

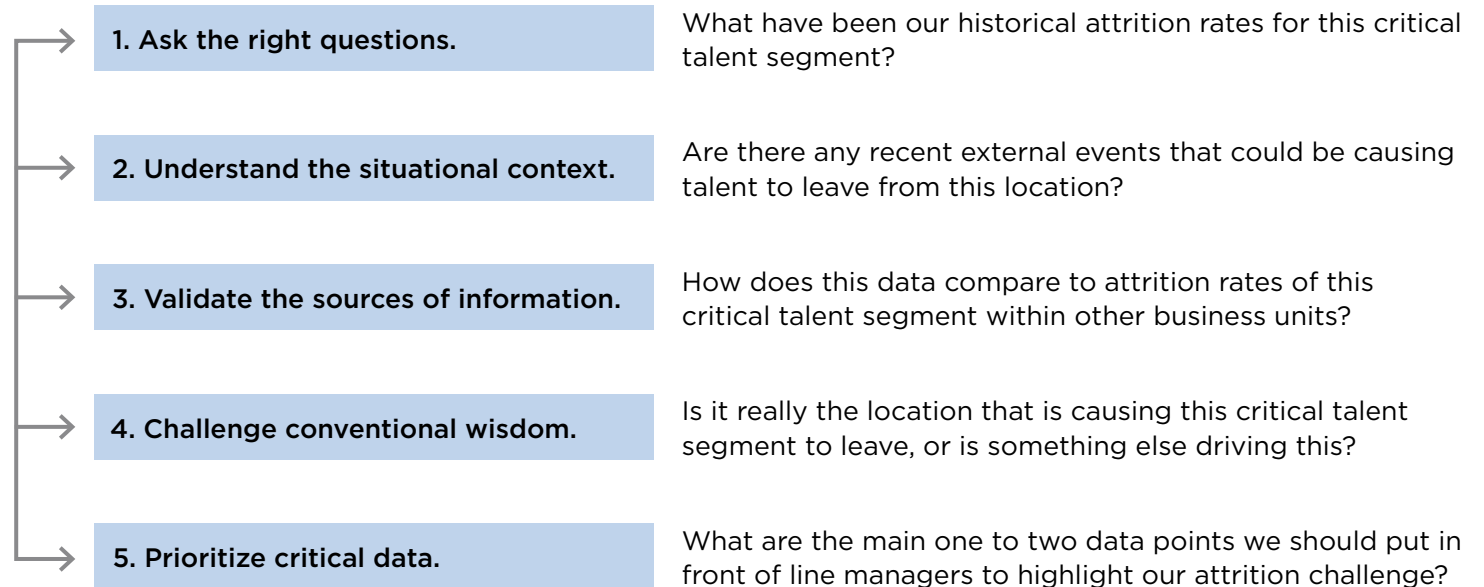
- HRBPs who effectively apply data judgment and act as informed skeptics use five techniques to apply judgment to talent data.



“Informed Skeptic”

- Applies judgment to analysis
- Listens to others and is comfortable with dissent

Five Methods for Applying Your Judgment to Engagement Data



Source: CEB analysis.

As you translate this priority for your role this year, reflect on these key takeaways and outstanding questions.

GETTING STARTED

What We Know

- The workforce of 2017 is significantly different—it's more on-demand, digital, and diverse—and requires different-in-kind engagement support from HRBPs.
- HRBPs are already spending less time on traditional engagement activities, such as survey deployment and focus groups, and more time on newer engagement activities, including ongoing engagement data analysis.
- In 2017, HRBPs should determine how to identify, analyze, and apply just-in-time talent data in order to deliver the right support for the right talent segments at the right time.

Where to Go (Next)

Use these questions for your own reflection and discussion with your team about what work is left for you to do in 2017:

- Is my time spend on engagement-related projects also shifting in this way?
Am I giving myself credit for the more nontraditional engagement support I'm providing?
- Are line managers and leaders within my business unit engagement champions, or do I still need to build a case for focusing on engagement?
- Where and when do my peers and I believe talent data is most helpful to introduce to line clients within our organization?

Even with consensus on the importance of D&I, employees globally haven't been satisfied with the D&I progress made.

- A majority of current CEOs highlight that stronger talent attraction, innovation, customer satisfaction, and more have come from D&I improvements.
- Since 2012, however, employee satisfaction has remained consistently low.
- If not addressed in 2017, employee dissatisfaction with organizational progress on D&I could have many negative impacts for organizations, including turnover of diverse talent segments, inability to recruit diverse talent, and limited levels of innovation.

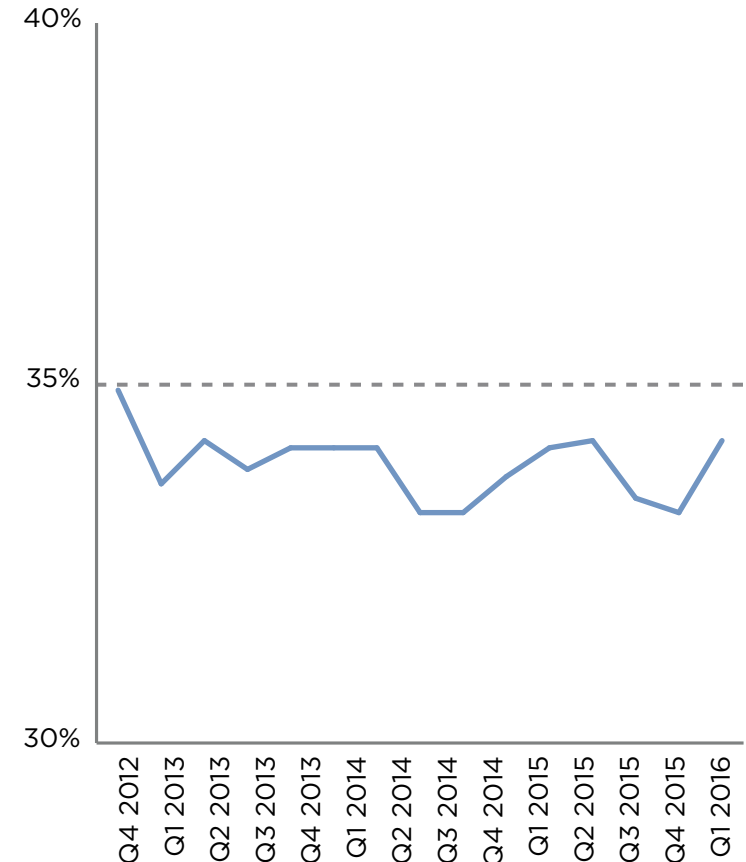
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRESS HASN'T KEPT UP WITH ITS PRIORITY LEVEL—AND IT'S HURTING US

Percentage of CEOs Who Have Identified Improvements Due to Their D&I Strategy



n = 1,322.
Source: PwC, *Annual Global CEO Survey*, 2015.

Percentage of Employees Who Are Satisfied with D&I at Their Organizations 2012-2016



n = 272,160.
Source: CEB 2012-2016 Global Labor Market Surveys.

Heads of D&I cite three main enablers of D&I progress: accountability, business alignment, and day-to-day relevance.

- To support their organizations' D&I strategies, HRBPs should prioritize reducing the everyday occurrences of unconscious bias, which actively undermines all drivers of D&I progress.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS UNDERMINES THE THREE MAIN DRIVERS OF D&I PROGRESS

Main Drivers of D&I Progress

1. Accountability

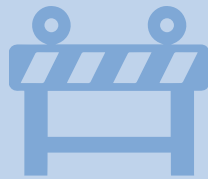
Employees are certain of how they can contribute to D&I efforts, and any D&I-related expectations are successfully reinforced.

2. Business Alignment

Employees recognize how D&I efforts connect to the organization's business strategy and corporate values.

3. Day-to-Day Relevance

Employees clearly understand steps they can take each day to build a diverse and inclusive work environment.



Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias is an unintended, or subtle judgment made by any individual that could be influenced by his or her background, culture environment, and personal experiences. At work, unconscious bias manifests both in formal processes and informal, day-to-day interactions, such as performance evaluations, pay decisions, and recruitment processes.

76%

of HRBPs believe that unconscious bias influences decisions about talent in some way at their organizations.

n = 718.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Given that unconscious bias is difficult to recognize, HRBPs should prepare to identify common bias warning signs and to act once bias is detected.

- Ask probing questions during core talent management processes, such as talent reviews or performance calibration sessions, to more comfortably prompt line clients to consider different perspectives.

EQUIP YOURSELF TO DETECT AND REDUCE UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN 2017...

Sample Unconscious Bias Warning Signs



Limited participation in team meetings or events by a minority group



Teams composed by a majority of like-minded or similar individuals



Higher turnover or dissatisfaction levels for a minority group



Easy (and early) dismissals of bias as an important discussion topic

Source: CEB analysis.

Sample Discussion Questions for HRBPs to Mitigate Bias in Everyday Talent Management



- **HIPO Identification:** What information do you feel is missing or preventing you from making a decision about this individual? Could we realistically get this information on this individual?
- **Performance Evaluation:** What peer group are you comparing this individual to? Are you evaluating this person relative to their true peers?
- **Performance Issue:** Have you considered any potential confounding factors that could have influenced this individual's strengths or weaknesses?
- **Promotion Decision:** To play devil's advocate, what would your argument be in supporting or not supporting this individual for this project or promotion?
- **Promotion Decision:** What attributes, skills, and experiences make this individual more or less qualified for this position than his or her peers?
- **Stretch Opportunity:** Have you considered how this individual is similar to or different from past individuals you have supported for this project or promotion?

Source: CEB analysis.



Resource Spotlight

Read our [Empowering HRBPs to Combat Bias report](#) to learn more about day-to-day steps you can take to reduce unconscious bias.

Employees globally overestimate the extent to which they can remain unbiased.

- People process most information they're confronted with unconsciously, which leaves all susceptible to influence by potential biases.
- As a result, HRBPs' efforts to mitigate bias requires both self-reflection and discussions with their line clients.
- Sharing ready-made reflection questions with your line clients is a great way to begin building awareness among employees about their potential biases.

...AND COACH YOUR LINE PARTNERS TO RECOGNIZE THEIR OWN INHERENT BIASES

People Largely Process Information Unconsciously

We receive 11 million bits of information every moment, but we can only consciously process 40 bits, which means **99.9% of our mind's processing occurs unconsciously.**



Source: Richard Feloni, "Here's the Presentation Google Gives Employees," *Business Insider*, 11 February 2016, <http://www.businessinsider.com/google-unconscious-bias-training-presentation-2015-12>.

Unconscious Bias Reflection Questions for Line Leaders and Managers



- ☐ To what extent are other individuals on my team like me (e.g., of a similar background, ethnicity, gender)?
- ☐ With whom do I feel closest on my team? What do I have in common with that individual, and what don't I have in common?
- ☐ Are there certain professional experiences or backgrounds that make me more inclined to recommend individuals for promotions or other opportunities?
- ☐ How would I define a successful individual on my team? Does that definition prioritize certain characteristics over others?
- ☐ How do I articulate my hiring needs to my HRBP and recruiters?
- ☐ What language does my team use to communicate about our different types of customers and stakeholders?

Source: CEB analysis.

As you translate this priority for your role this year, reflect on these key takeaways and outstanding questions.

GETTING STARTED

What We Know

- Over the past three to four years, employee satisfaction with D&I progress at their organizations has remained low, even with more business leaders buying into its importance.
- While prioritizing D&I within your business unit(s) and organization may feel like victory, the far greater challenge for HRBPs in 2017 will be actually taking action on that priority.
- In 2017, HRBPs should direct their focus to combating unconscious bias (the root of stalled D&I progress) in two key ways: train yourself to detect and mitigate unconscious bias, and equip your line partners to recognize their inherent biases.

Where to Go (Next)

Use these questions for your own reflection and discussion with your team about what work is left for you to do in 2017:

- To what extent do I face resistance from my line clients when talking about the need to prioritize D&I?
- Where (e.g., processes, business units, levels) do I believe unconscious bias is most strongly influencing talent outcomes within my organization today? Do my peers agree?
- How can my manager help me feel more confident identifying and combating bias?

Changing leadership requirements will require renewed focus on talent management.

- Sixty-six percent of HR leaders believe more than 40% of their leadership roles will change significantly within the next five years.

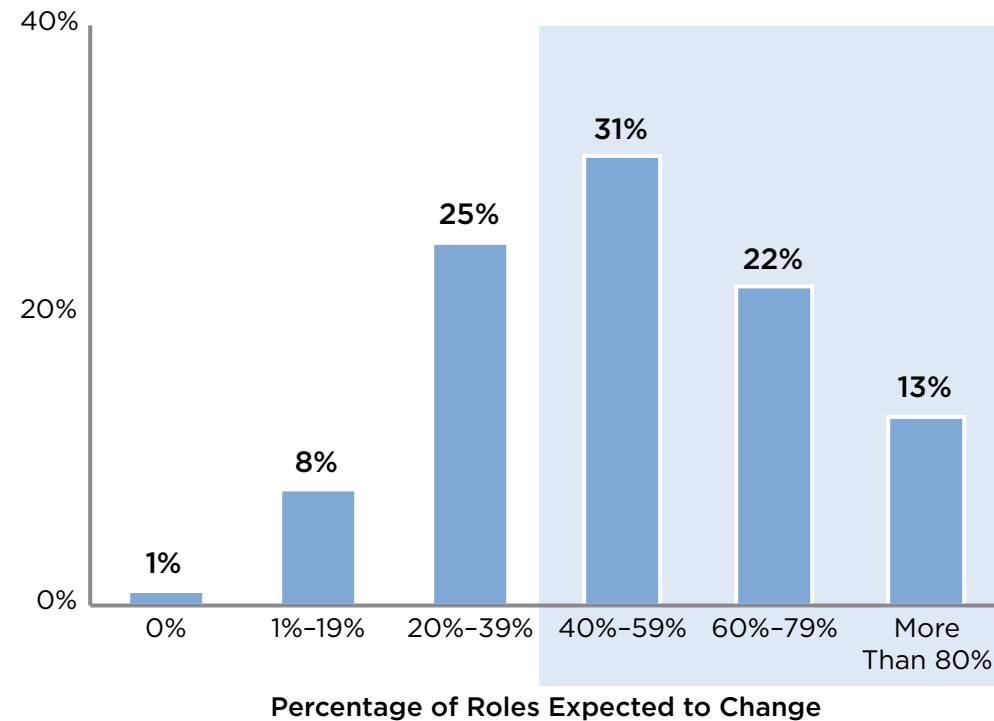
LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS ARE CHANGING

Word Cloud of New Leadership Titles Emerging in 2017

Culture Evangelist On-Demand
First Impressions Director Executive
Creator of Opportunities Scrum Master

Leadership Roles Changing Rapidly

Percentage of HR Leaders Expecting Different Amounts of Leadership Roles to Change Significantly Within Five Years



Most organizations expect more than 40% of their leadership roles to be significantly different within five years.

n = 173 CEB Corporate Leadership Council™ members.
Source: CEB 2016 Quick Poll.

Leaders aren't changing despite changing leadership needs, resulting in weaker leadership benches.

- Business leaders recognize that the business environment is changing but haven't yet recognized the talent implications of those changes.
- For example, only 17% of CEOs think their successor should have a different profile.
- The percentage of organizations with a strong leadership bench decreased from 17% to 13% in the past three years.

LEADERS AREN'T CHANGING DESPITE CHANGING LEADERSHIP NEEDS

CEOs Don't Think Their Successors Need a Different Capability Profile

Only 17%

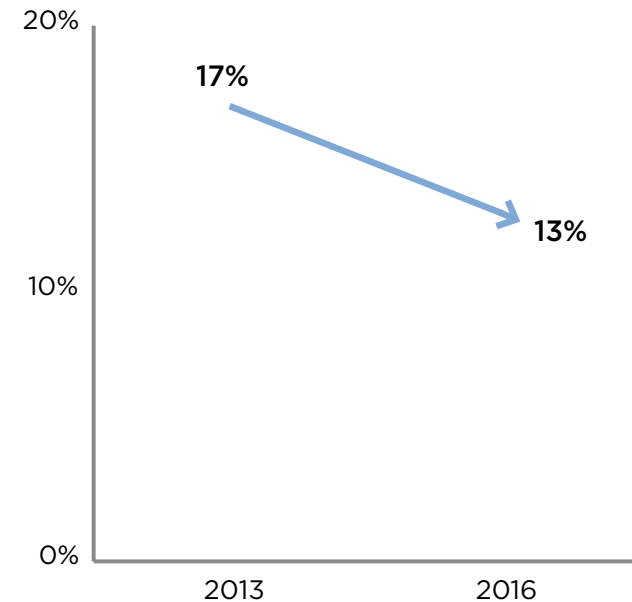
of CEOs Think Their Successor Should Have a Completely Different or Somewhat Different Capability Profile.

n = 106.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of HR Agenda Poll.

Confidence in Rising Leaders Has Gone from Bad to Worse

Percentage of Organizations with a Strong Leadership Bench^a



n = 142 HR leaders.

Source: CEB 2016 HIPO Survey.

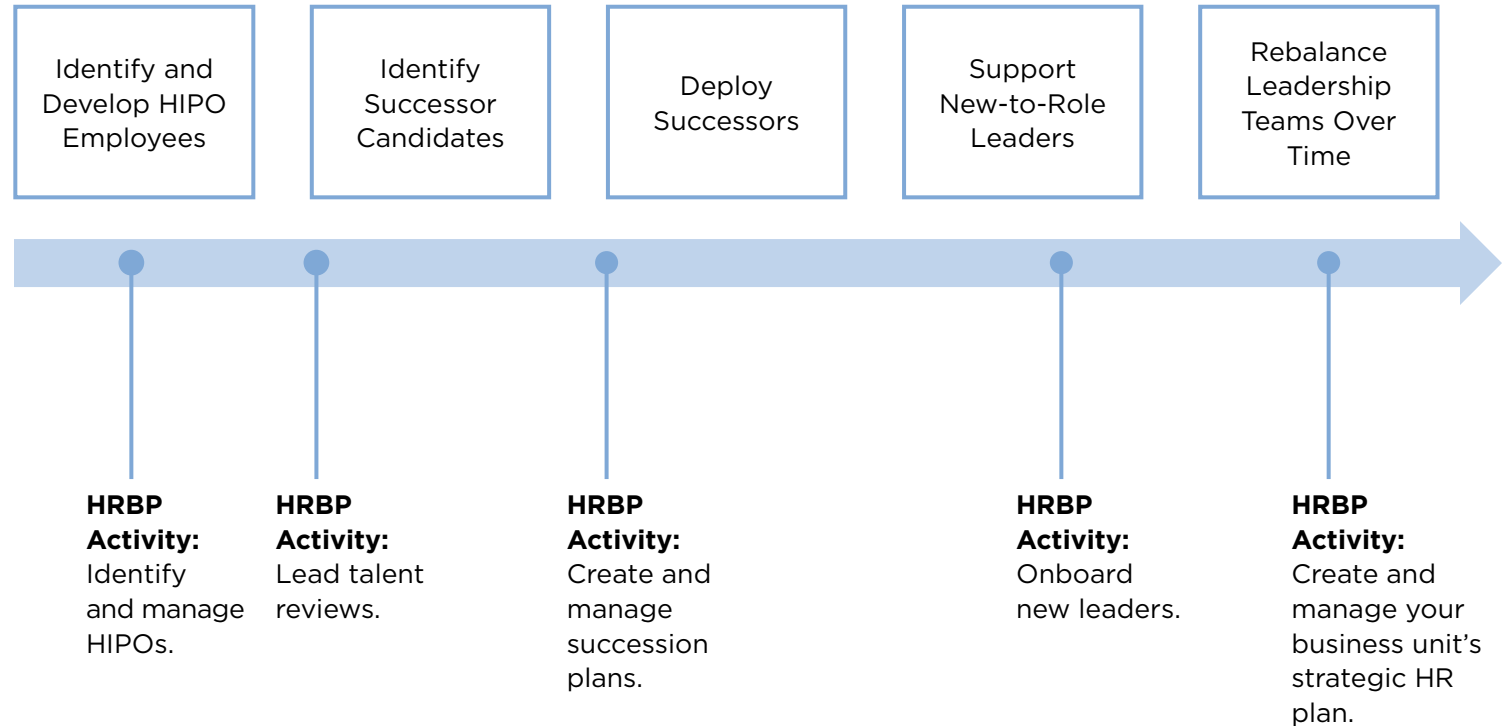
^a Bench strength refers to organizations' confidence in the capability of the leadership bench to fill current gaps and evolve to fulfill changing needs.

HRBPs are already influencing leadership outcomes across key leader-focused talent management activities.

- For example, HRBPs should use their role in HIPO identification and management, talent reviews, succession management, strategic talent planning, and onboarding new leaders to evolve the leadership bench.

HRBPs CAN ENSURE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE THE LEADERS THEY NEED FOR THE FUTURE

HRBPs Influence—If Not Own—Common Leadership Touchpoints



$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.



Resource Spotlight

Use our HRBP Guides for Delivering [Leadership Strategy](#), [Succession Management](#), and [HIPO Management](#) Initiatives to clarify the role you want to play in each of these areas.

Challenge your partnered line leaders to think differently about future leadership needs in all leader-focused talent management activities.

- When sharing future leadership needs, many leaders are biased by what was successful in the past, including their own rise to a leadership role.

CHALLENGE YOUR CURRENT LEADERS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT FUTURE LEADERS

HRBP Guide for Challenging Leaders on Future Leadership Needs (Excerpted)

- How do we typically define high performance in the leader population at this organization? Indicate specific skills/capabilities and experiences.
 - **How do we typically define high performance in the leader population in this business unit? Indicate specific skills, capabilities, and experiences.**
- How is the business strategy of the business unit changing accordingly? **What do we expect the business unit to be doing differently from a business strategy perspective two to three years from now? Indicate two to three changes in business unit-level business strategies.**
- **Identify one to two external and internal pressures on your business strategy,** such as changes to consumer preferences, changes to the regulatory environment, or changes in competitors, that lead to the change in business strategy defined in section 2 above.
- How does the profile of leaders at our organization need to change to support changing business strategy? List three to five skills/capabilities and experiences that are different than those in section 1.
 - **How does the profile of leaders in this business unit need to change to support changing business strategy? List three to five skills, capabilities, and experiences that are different than those in section 1.**

Source: CEB analysis.

Review the [full HRBP guide and discussion questions](#).

As you translate this priority for your role this year, reflect on these key takeaways and outstanding questions.

GETTING STARTED

What We Know

- Leadership roles are changing dramatically—most organizations expect more than 40% of their leadership roles to be significantly different within five years, which is driving a decrease in leadership bench strength globally.
- HRBPs are already heavily involved in leader-focused talent management processes, which puts them in a position of influence in 2017.
- Given their involvement in these activities, HRBPs can help head off many future leadership challenges by challenging their line leaders to think differently about leadership needs.

Where to Go (Next)

Use these questions for your own reflection and discussion with your team about what work is left for you to do in 2017:

- How would I evaluate my line leader's understanding of our business unit's future leadership needs?
- To what extent are my business unit's (and/or organization's) talent management processes actually working to provide the organization with the leaders it needs for the future? Where are we especially weak?
- Which particular internal—and potentially external—stakeholders should I speak with to provide some additional insight on how my business unit's future leadership needs may change?

Transformation of the HR function continues to be a priority in 2017 according to both HRBPs and heads of HR.

- HRBPs identify HR transformation as the 4th out of 13 areas in which they expect the most attention from their heads of HR in 2017.
- More than two-thirds of heads of HR plan to prioritize innovating on new approaches to HR service delivery in 2017.

HR TRANSFORMATION AS A KEY PRIORITY WILL CONTINUE INTO 2017

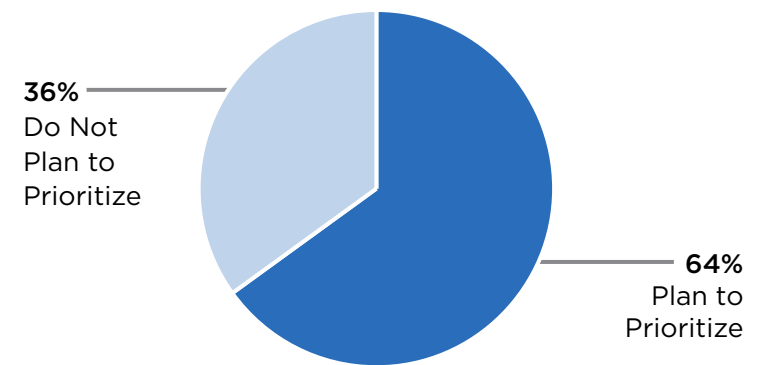
HRBPs Anticipate a Focus on HR Transformation in 2017

1	Change Management
2	Employee Engagement
3	Leadership
T4	Succession Management
T4	HR Transformation
6	HR Strategy
T7	Diversity and Inclusion
T7	Performance Management
T9	Workforce Planning
T9	High-Potential Talent
11	Organization Design
12	Talent Analytics
13	Employment Value Proposition

n = 718.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Heads of HR Plan New HR Service Delivery Approaches in 2017



n = 106.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of HR Agenda Poll.

The most effective HRBPs support HR transformation by spending more time on strategic activities.

- HRBPs who effectively influence the line spend more time on strategic activities that influence business unit-level talent outcomes, such as creating business unit HR plans, managing organizational redesigns, and leading talent reviews.
- These same HRBPs spend much less time on tactical activities that influence individual talent outcomes, such as managing employee misconduct, terminations, and advising on HR policies.

THE BEST HRBPs HELP HR TRANSFORMATION BY SPENDING THEIR TIME ON STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

HRBPs Influential with the Line Spend Their Time Differently
Difference in Percentage of Very Influential and Non-Influential HRBPs Reporting Time Spend Across Common Activities

Common HRBP Activity	Difference in Percentage of Influential HRBPs and Non-Influential HRBPs Spending Time on Activities
Create and manage your business unit's strategic HR plan.	+13%
Implement and manage an organizational redesign.	+10%
Lead talent reviews.	+9%
Create and manage change implementation plans.	+7%
Create and manage succession plans.	+6%
Manage employee misconduct.	-4%
Prepare for and conduct employee terminations.	-8%
Support recruiting efforts.	-9%
Advise employees on HR policy.	-14%

Influential HRBPs spend more time on strategic activities and less time on tactical activities.

n = 718.
 Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

Time constraints prevent HRBPs from being effective strategic partners.

- One in three HRBPs wants to spend more time on strategic tasks.
- Nineteen percent of HRBPs want to spend more time on different talent management activities.
- Fourteen percent of HRBPs want to participate more actively in peer coaching and training programs.

HOWEVER, EVEN STRATEGIC HRBPs ARE FEELING DAY-TO-DAY TIME CONSTRAINTS

Overwhelmingly HRBPs Want More Time for Strategic Activities

Word Cloud Representing Top Responses from HRBPs About the One Thing on Which They Would Like to Spend More Time at Work



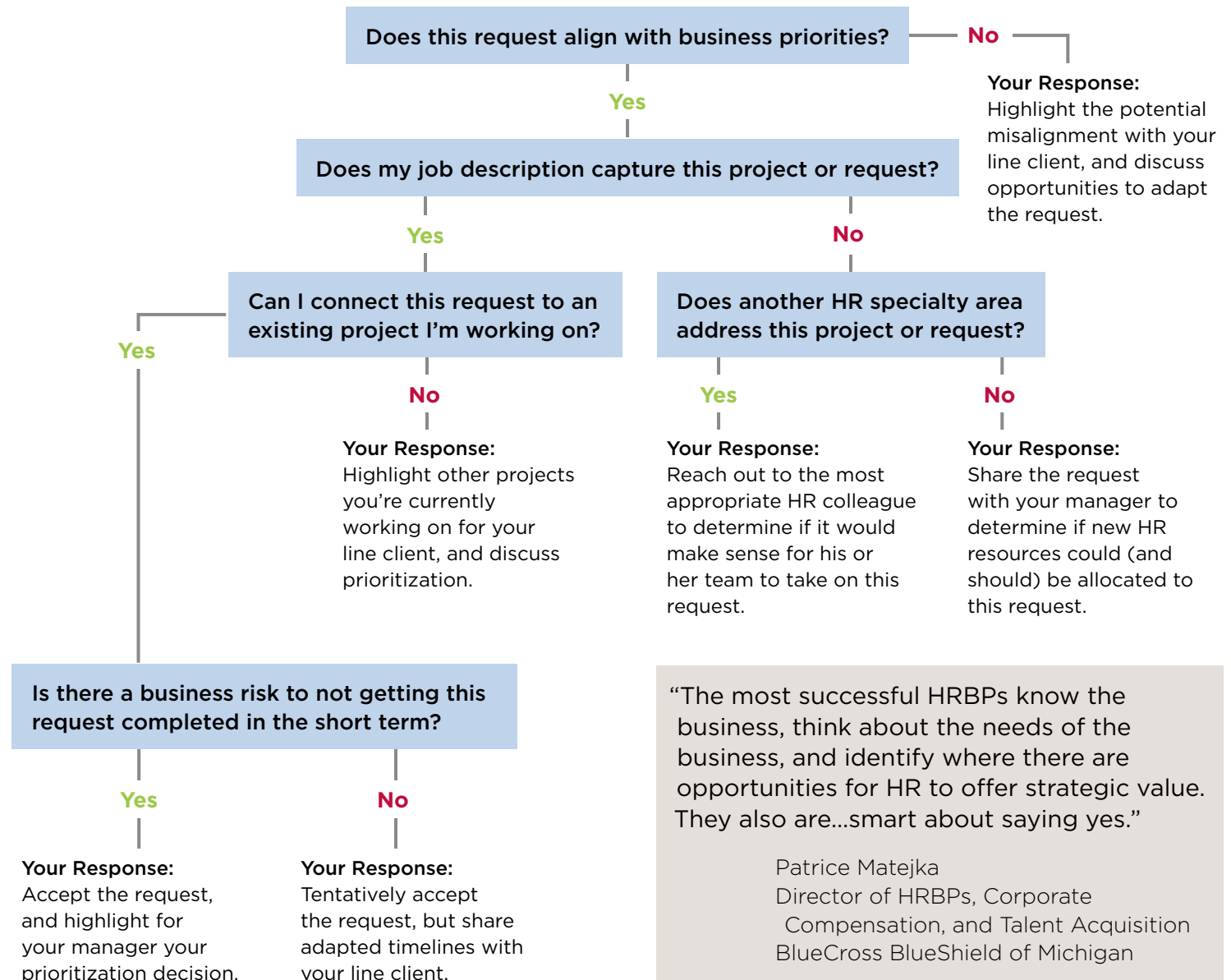
$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Agenda Poll.

To effectively steward their own time and transform into a strategic partner in 2017, HRBPs should establish “guard rails” for declining tactical work.

- Use a decision tree, for example, to evaluate incoming line requests, and prioritize those that establish HRBPs as strategic partners.

ESTABLISH GUARD RAILS TO HELP YOU DECLINE TACTICAL WORK AND TRANSFORM YOUR JOB



Resource Spotlight

Read our [full conversation](#) with Patrice in the **Q3** edition of the HRBP Quarterly Magazine.

Finance business partners at Borealis created a checklist to define criteria for evaluating incoming work's value to the business.

- Borealis' Nimblicity checklist was created to align with their corporate value of the same name, which prioritizes fit, fast, and flexible employee contributions.
- This checklist evaluates projects against a few main criteria:
 - ☐ Alignment with organizational values
 - ☐ Ability to positively impact business unit and organizational goals
 - ☐ Ability to innovate and capitalize on new opportunities
 - ☐ Feasibility of Implementation
 - ☐ Cost savings or other efficiencies

BUSINESS PARTNERS EVALUATE AND ELIMINATE LOW-VALUE WORK



Borealis's Nimblicity™ Index Tool

Nimblicity™ Checklist		
Flexibility Questions	Answer Choices	
	v	Disagree
1) Are you ready to adjust your plans and priorities to changing situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Does this change enable Borealis to respond to a fast-changing market?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Does your project team have access to the right information to make fast decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Do I understand how my customers prioritize speed versus perfection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Once the change is implemented, can we easily adapt it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smartness Questions		
6) After the change, will authority be delegated to the lowest possible level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) This change will take too long to implement!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8) Do you, through the project, challenge the way things are done to stimulate improvement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9) Did you eliminate other work to free up time for this project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10) Is training planned for end users?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11) Does the change reduce the number of interfaces within the process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12) During the change, are you monitoring your own and team performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13) This change is reinventing the wheel!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14) Have you run pilots or experiments before defining the final concept?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15) Are process steps removed and/or shortened once implemented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Captured Opportunities Questions		
16) Does your project open a new business opportunity for Borealis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17) Is the change supporting the company strategy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18) Has the change been triggered by an external customer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19) Does the change add value to the external customer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20) Are all affected areas in your cross-functional project team covered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21) Does the change make Borealis more competitive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FTE Impact		
Estimate the number of persons involved/affected by the project.	<input type="text"/>	
Project Training		
Estimate the average number of training hours per person.	<input type="text"/>	
Project Costs/Benefits		
Estimate other project costs.	<input type="text"/>	
Estimate the benefit of the project.	<input type="text"/>	
Is this a yearly benefit or a one-time saving?	<input type="text"/>	
Calculate Nimblicity™ Index		

Review the [full Borealis Nimblicity™ Index Tool](#) and discussion questions.

As you translate this priority for your role this year, reflect on these key takeaways and outstanding questions.

GETTING STARTED

What We Know

- Not surprisingly, the most influential HRBPs spend more meaningful time on more strategic activities and less time on more tactical activities.
- However, even the most influential HRBPs want more time for strategic work.
- It seems counterintuitive, but to prioritize your strategic impact in 2017, you should be intentional about saying both yes and no. Early in the year, focus on creating your own criteria for evaluating the projects that you should—and shouldn't—be spending time on.

Where to Go (Next)

Use these questions for your own reflection and discussion with your team about what work is left for you to do in 2017:

- If I audited how I'm spending my own time, what would be the activities I'm spending the most and least amount of time on? Would my manager and/or partnered line leader agree with that prioritization?
- On what projects do I feel I have the most and least amount of influence? Are there other teams or stakeholders within HR who could take on more tactical activities that I typically manage?
- What are two to three recent projects I've worked on that I should have said no to initially?

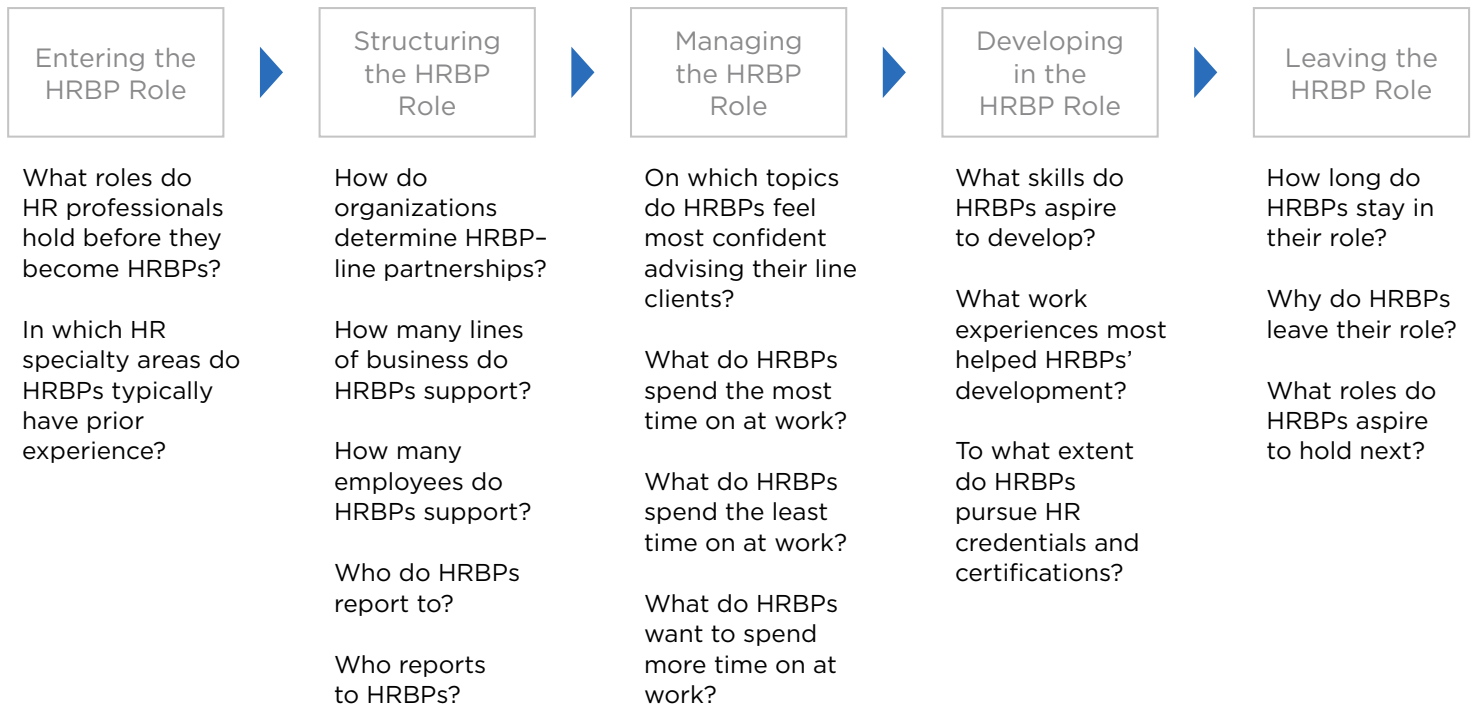
GET QUICK ANSWERS TO OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HRBP ROLE WITH OUR NEW REPORT

The State of the HRBP Role and Function

2016–2017

Benchmarks

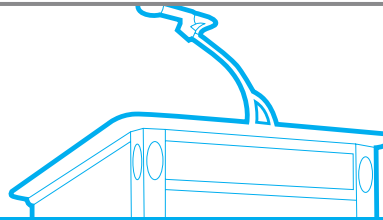
THE STATE OF THE HRBP ROLE AND FUNCTION



JOIN OUR NEXT HRBP MASTERCLASS STARTING ON 21 MARCH

Learn with Our Next HRBP Masterclass Series

CEB Corporate Leadership Council™



Join thousands of your peers for a three-part virtual learning series on how you can create and influence HIPO strategies that keep pace with your organization's needs and further your professional and personal goals as an HRBP.

Dates for HRBP Masterclass: HIPO Strategies That Keep Pace

21 March 2017
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET
25 April 2017
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET
6 June 2017
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET

Your Next Steps

- Reserve your spot, and register today for each session via our member website.
- Share the series with your colleagues. Each session will jump-start valuable discussion for global teams.
- Still have questions? Don't hesitate to reach out to your CEB account team.

What Is the HRBP Masterclass Series?

Thousands of HRBPs have come together in the past year to participate in our **HRBP Masterclass Series**, an ongoing virtual learning series for HRBPs, HR Generalists, and other strategic HR professionals.

As you continue your development, join our next HRBP Masterclass Series on a topic that is core to HRBPs' support of their line partners and organizations: high-potential employee (HIPO) identification, management, and development.

Each session will draw on our best practice research, tested member practices, group exercises, individual reflection, and member testimonials to highlight opportunities for HRBPs to strengthen their performance and perspective on the job.

What You Will Learn in This HRBP Masterclass Series

Three sessions will address the unique role HRBPs play in creating and influencing HIPO strategies that keep pace with their organizations' evolving leadership needs.

Session 1: How HRBPs Can Identify the Right HIPOs for the Future (21 March 2017, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ET)

We will discuss:

- How well today's traditional identification and selection criteria are working to measure HIPOs' ability,
- How leading organizations are changing their HIPO identification processes to deliver greater flexibility and accuracy, and
- How to make recommendations to your line clients and internal stakeholders about opportunities to adapt your business unit's identification and selection processes.

Join us for our next HRBP Masterclass Series on **HIPO Strategies That Keep Pace**.

■ Session 1 | 21 March

How HRBPs Can Identify the Right HIPOs for the Future

■ Session 2 | 25 April

How HRBPs Can Sustain HIPOs' Aspiration to Rise in the Future

■ Session 3 | 6 June

How HRBPs Can Help Engage and Develop HIPOs for the Future

HRBP Masterclass webinars combine research presentation, live discussion, online polling, and practical exercises to bring together thousands of HRBPs to learn about our newest research on a topic of interest.

You can see all of our upcoming and past Masterclass sessions on [our website](#).

OUR HRBP SUPPORT IS ALWAYS ON FOR YOU

Key HRBP Support Includes

Your Everyday Updates

Stay Up to Date

HRBP E-Briefing
Newsletter

Download Ready-Made Tools

HRBP Portal On-the-
Job Support

Identify Talent Trends

- CHRO Quarterly
- HRBP Quarterly
- Global Talent Monitor
- Talent Analytics Quarterly

Network with Your Peers

- HRBP Discussion Forum
- Members-Only HRBP LinkedIn Group
- HRBP Advisory Council

Your Evolving Project Needs

Manage Projects Step By Step

- CEB Ignition™ Guides
- Project Support Library

Learn About Key Talent Initiatives

HRBP Guides for
Delivering Critical
HR Initiatives Library

Discuss Leading Talent Strategies

- In-Person Staff Briefings
- Masterclass Webinars

Build a Business Case Benchmarking Center

Your Ongoing Development Support

Create Your Development Strategy

HRBP Competency
Workbook

Assess Your Performance

HRBP Career
Diagnostic

Build Your Development Plan

HRBP Individual
Development Plans

Leverage Development Tools

HRBP Portal
Development Tools
Library

Source: CEB analysis.

Appendix

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey Participants by Industry

Industry	Percentage
Manufacturing	15.2%
Technology	14.6%
Financial	11.3%
Consumer Goods	6.2%
Retail	5.7%
Health Care	5.0%
Pharmaceuticals	3.9%
Oil, Gas, and Mining	3.6%
Professional Services	3.5%
Insurance	3.3%
Government and Nonprofit	2.9%
Utilities	2.7%
Travel and Transportation	2.4%
Aerospace	2.1%
Education	1.7%
Construction	1.0%
Media	0.5%
Leisure	0.4%
Real Estate	0.2%
Other	13.9%

$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Agenda Poll.

Note: Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

Survey Participants by Region

Region	Percentage
United States	31.6%
Europe	21.1%
Asia	19.3%
Mexico, Central America, South America	8.3%
Australia, New Zealand, Oceania	6.9%
Middle East and Africa	5.8%
Canada	4.1%
Other	2.9%

$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Agenda Poll.

Note: Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

Survey Participants by Organization Size *Total Revenue*

Organization Size	Percentage
Less Than \$2 M	6.4%
\$2 M–\$4.9 M	6.0%
\$5 M–\$9.9 M	17.1%
\$1 B–\$4.9 B	17.8%
\$5 B–\$9.9 B	11.0%
Greater Than \$10 B	18.8%
I Don't Know	23.0%

$n = 718$.

Source: CEB 2017 Future of the HRBP Role Agenda Poll.

Note: Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

Challenge your partnered line leaders to think differently about future leadership needs in all leader-focused talent management activities.

- When sharing future leadership needs, many leaders are biased by what was successful in the past, including their own rise to a leadership role.

CHALLENGE YOUR CURRENT LEADERS TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT FUTURE LEADERS

HRBP Guide for Challenging Leaders on Future Leadership Needs

Create a summary document that defines the future leadership needs of your organization and business unit by answering the five sets of questions below. Before finalizing the document, discuss it with your line leader to challenge his or her thinking about future leadership needs. Then, refer to the one- to two-page document during all leader-focused talent management activities (e.g., HIPO management, succession management) to challenge other stakeholders to evolve the leadership bench.

- How do we typically define high performance in the leader population at this organization? Indicate specific skills, capabilities, and experiences.
 - How do we typically define high performance in the leader population in this business unit? Indicate specific skills, capabilities, and experiences.
- How is the business strategy of the organization changing? What do we expect the organization to be doing differently from a business strategy perspective two to three years from now? Indicate two to three changes in organization-level business strategy.
 - How is the business strategy of the business unit changing accordingly? What do we expect the business unit to be doing differently from a business strategy perspective two to three years from now? Indicate two to three changes in business unit-level business strategy.
- Why is the business strategy of the organization changing? Why is the business strategy of the business unit changing accordingly?
 - Identify one to two external pressures on your business strategy, such as changes to consumer preferences, changes to the regulatory environment, or changes in competitors, that lead to the change in business strategy defined in section 2 above.
 - Identify one to two internal pressures on your business strategy, such as changes to the makeup of the workforce or changes in profit and revenue, that lead to the changes in business strategy defined in section 2 above.
- How does the profile of leaders at our organization need to change to support changing business strategy? List three to five skills, capabilities, and experiences that are different than those in section 1.
 - How does the profile of leaders in this business unit need to change to support changing business strategy? List three to five skills, capabilities, and experiences that are different than those in section 1.
- What outcomes do you anticipate the new leadership profile will help the organization and business unit achieve? List two to three outcomes for the organization and two to three outcomes for the business unit.

Source: CEB analysis.

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 - ☐ Cost savings or other efficiencies

The tool provides the proof business partners need to decline or terminate low-value projects requested from the line.

BUSINESS PARTNERS EVALUATE AND ELIMINATE LOW-VALUE WORK



Borealis's Nimblicity™ Index Tool

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Project Training		
Estimate the average number of training hours per person.	<input type="text"/>	
Project Costs/Benefits		
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Estimate the benefit of the project.	<input type="text"/>	
Is this a yearly benefit or a one-time saving?	<input type="text"/>	
Calculate Nimblicity™ Index		

Source: Borealis AG.

