

FORGET ABOUT RESIGNING, STOP JUST SURVIVING, REDESIGN AND THRIVE!

Don't let the current world events overshadow your career potential and aspirations.

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Challenging times ahead for Many Executives

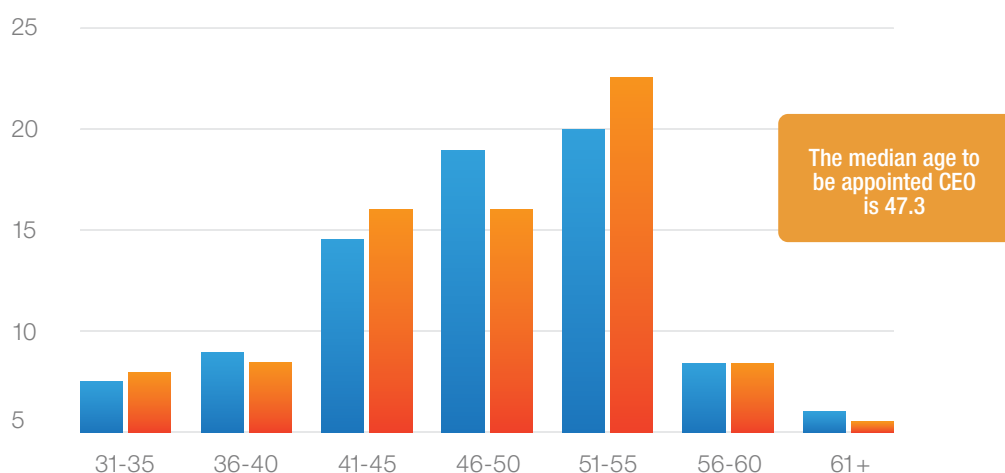
Here's three trends that are worrying middle-aged executives:

1. The average age of the executive talent is dropping, influenced by hiring policies that accommodate the current demographic shifts.

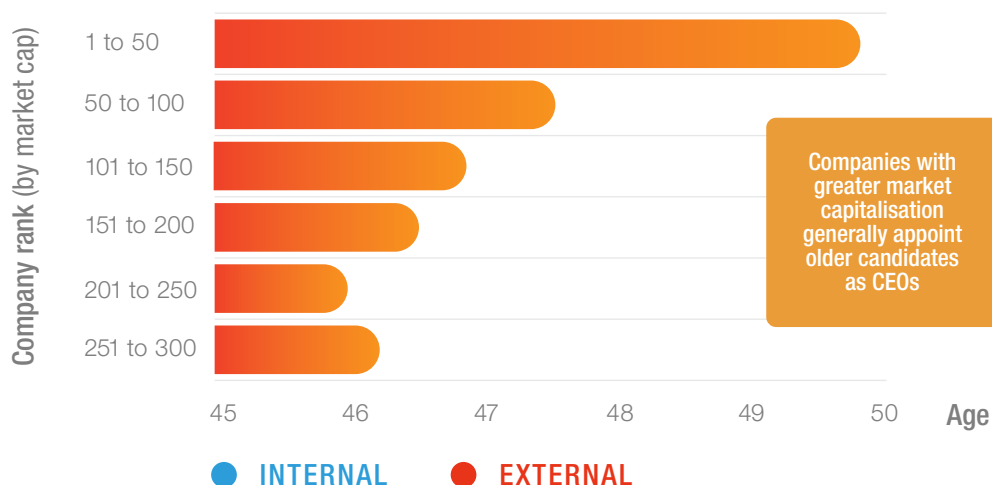
According to research by executive search firm Blenheim Partners, a review of the top 300 companies listed on the Australian Securities Exchange has revealed that the average age a person becomes chief executive is 47.

Average Age of CEOs

Percentage of current ASX300 CEOs' ages upon appointment (%)



Average age of ASX300 CEOs upon appointment by company market cap (%)



“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.”

— Lao Tzu

2. The accelerating rate of technological change is making workforce predictions highly speculative.

In 1999 futurist Ray Kurzweil made a statement about the Law of Accelerating Return which related to the speed of technological change being exponential. He predicted a time around the middle of this century (2045) where we would reach Singularity – a point where advances in AI lead to computers being smarter than humans.

“2029 is the consistent date I have predicted for when an AI will pass a valid Turing test and therefore achieve human levels of intelligence.”

— Ray Kurzweil

With this in mind, how do you know which direction to turn, little lone which online career enhancing, re-skilling program to choose? And by the time you finish will the new skill still be current?

BTW if you aren't thinking about this question then you are clearly in the minority and probably going to be left well behind.



Question: Would you prefer to work for a company that offers upskilling/reskilling opportunities?

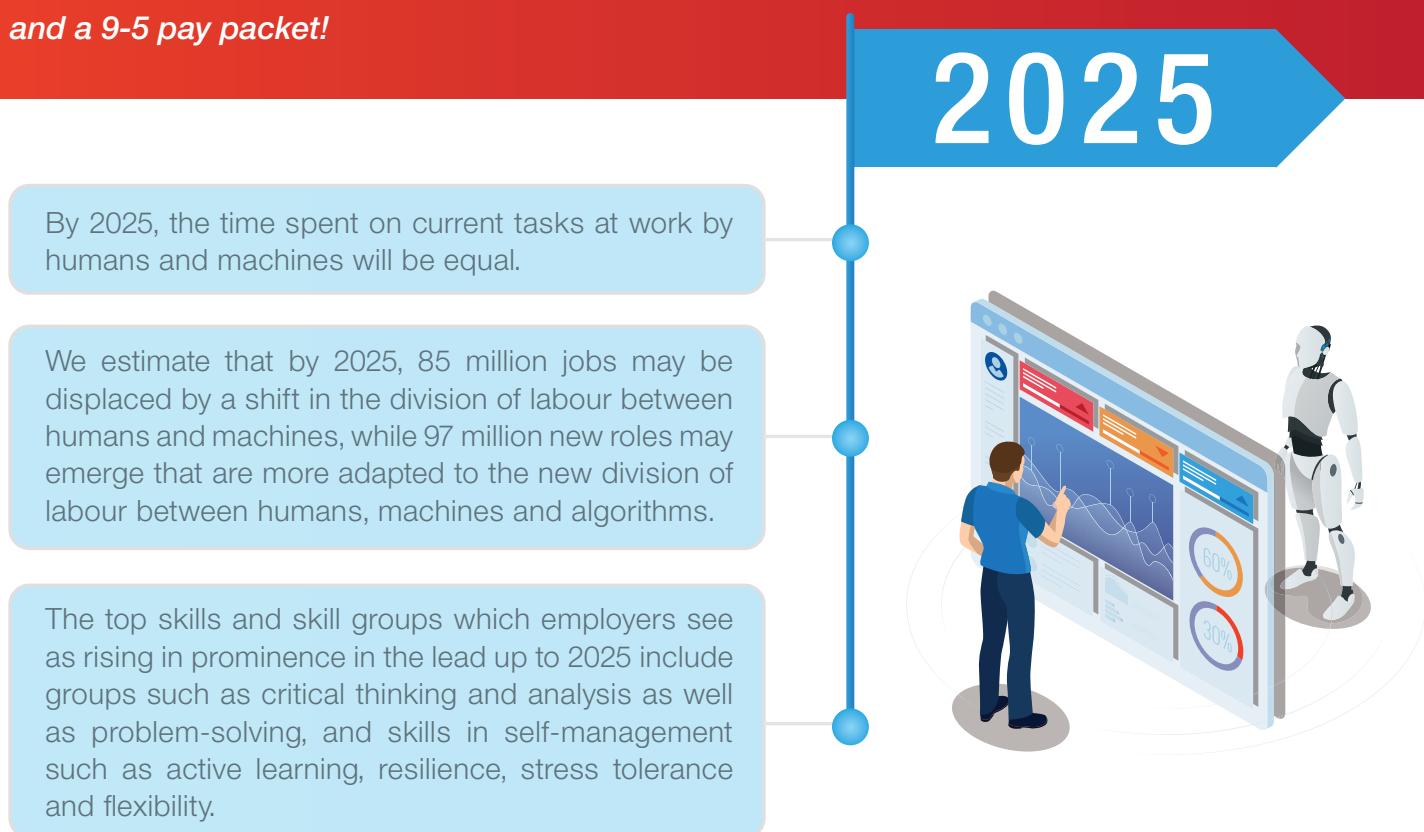
Source: The State of Upskilling and Reskilling Training Survey
talentlms.com

3. Only the best of future middle-aged executives is likely to advance their career amidst the AI advances and younger human competition.

With the “Great Talent Reshuffle” likely to accelerate rather than dissipate, it’s equally plausible that unique talent will start to materialize from unexpected global locations. Add to this the technology advances mentioned above, and...

... life is going to get a whole lot more challenging for the average middle-aged executive that is looking for job security and a 9-5 pay packet!

Heck with this much uncertainty around what does this future hold? Do we even understand what “the best” means or would look like? Here is a sampling of some sobering information provided by the World Economic Forum’s predictions from its Future of Jobs Report 2020. Now two years on we are starting to see the reality.



Source: World Economic Forum

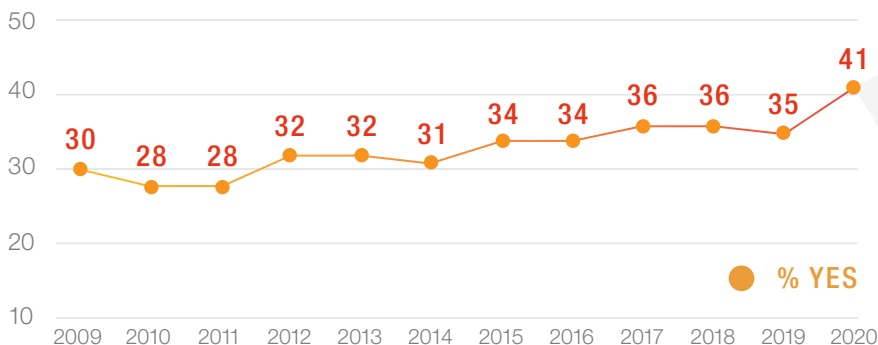
WORRY AND STRESS INCREASED FOR EMPLOYEES IN 2020.

In addition to the above trends, we are hearing the following common concerns from the Executives we coach around the world.

- ✓ A feeling of being stuck and overwhelmed by the rapid rate of changes.
- ✓ Worried about how to stand-out in a crowded pool of young talent?
- ✓ A fear of being passed over for the next promotion due to age.
- ✓ Being caught in the talent loop and questioning what to do or where to turn?

Global Worry and Stress Trend Among Employees

Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about worry?



41%

of employees experienced worry during a lot of the previous day

Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about stress?

GLOBAL

43% 

Gender FEMALE



MALE



Age < 40 YRS

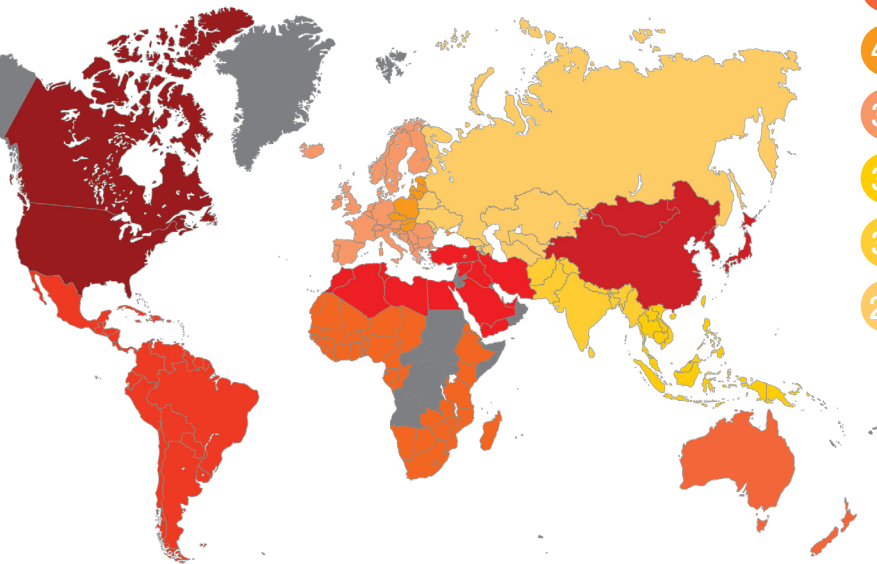


≥ 40 YRS



REGIONAL RANKING

- 57** United States and Canada
- 51** East Asia
- 50** Middle East and North Africa
- 49** Latin America and the Caribbean
- 45** Australia and New Zealand
- 44** Sub-Saharan Africa
- 41** Eastern Europe
- 39** Western Europe
- 36** Southeast Asia
- 31** South Asia
- 21** Commonwealth of Independent States



Source: Gallup - State of the Global Workplace 2021 Report P8

WORRY: mental distress or agitation resulting from concern usually for something impending or anticipated: ANXIETY

STRESS: a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary

So, we could summarize the current situation under the following three dilemmas.

1

Too many young Talents eating into Promotion Opportunities

A decade shift for career advancement – previously 35 to 45 years was the typical age bracket and there is now a transition to the 25 to 35 age bracket.

The available talent pool has grown considerably given the “Great Re-shuffle” and the potential to work from anywhere and therefore source from anywhere.

2

A shifting Workforce Demographic

We are now confronted by these two opposing dynamics. Companies are looking to hire technologically savvy talent below 35 and this group are helping re-shape the role of executives.

An aging population and subsequent lack of tax revenue is forcing governments worldwide to raise or even eliminate the retirement age.

3

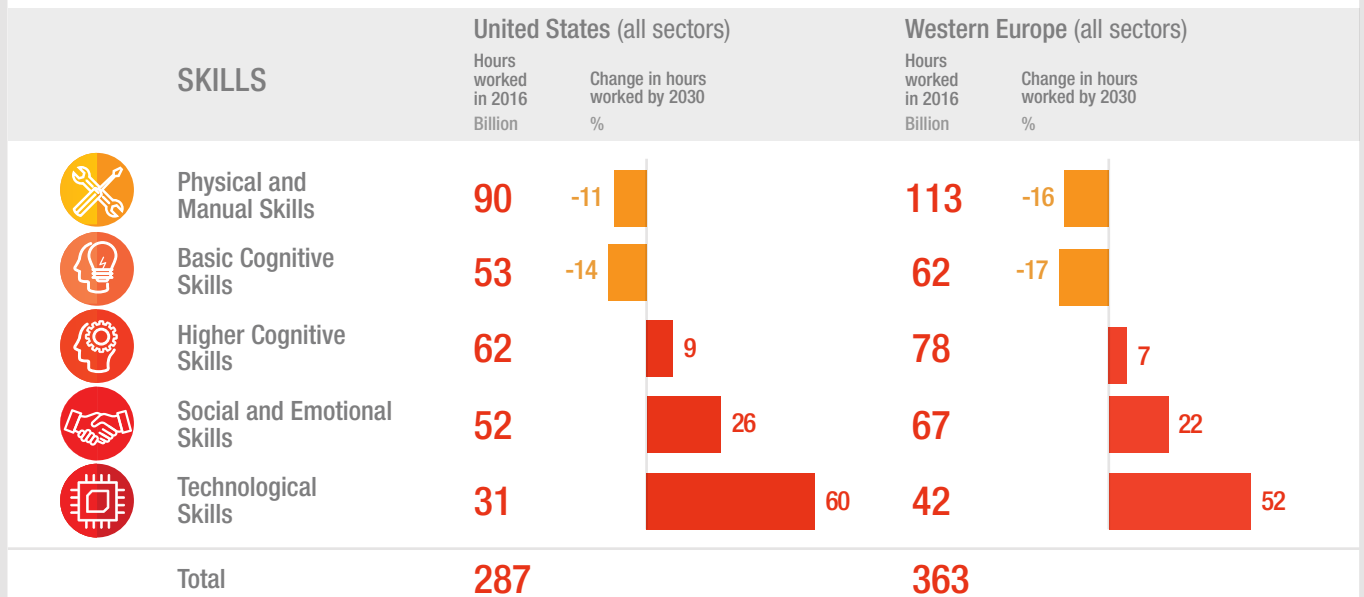
Automation, Robotics, Quantum computing, AI, Technology Convergence means Singularity edging closer

There was a time when we only had to think about doubling chip capacity and speed. Today even the experts are unclear on how best to advise on the right way to prepare for the near future workforce.

The average middle-aged executive is not equipped with the agility and adaptability to lead in today's world. Not to mention tomorrow! Re-skilling is an option, but re-skilling for what?

Workforce Skills Model

Automation and AI will accelerate the shift in skills that the workforce needs.



Note: Western Europe, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Source: McKinsey Global Institute workforce skills model; McKinsey Global Institute Analysis

Reframing a Survival Mindset into A Thriver Mindset

REDESIGN OPPORTUNITY

1

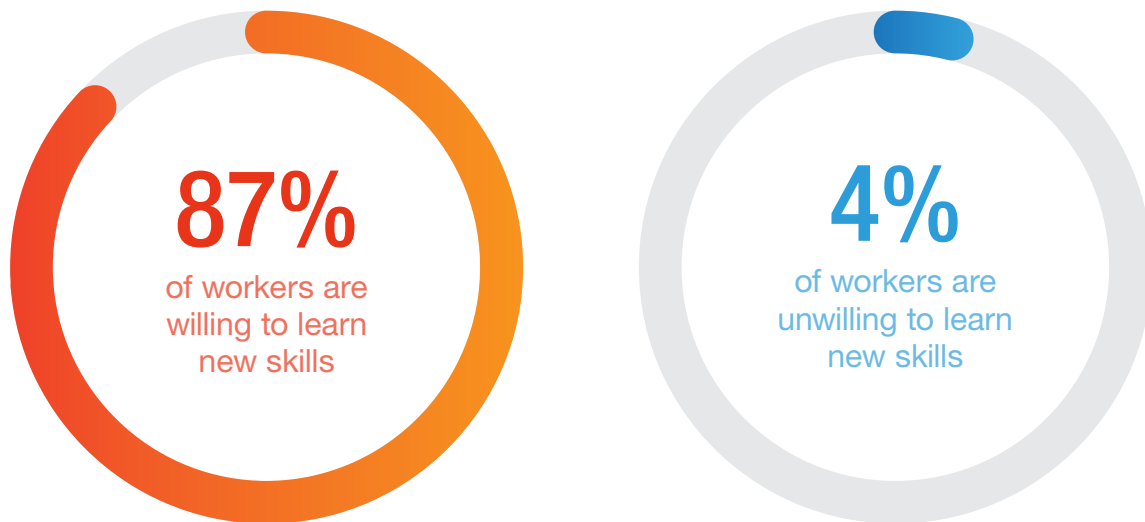
Gain clarity, self-confidence and take control

Hitting pause and seeking some alternate perspectives might be just the ticket right about now.

There are a myriad of research firms out there offering guidance on what the future world of jobs and employment will look like. Check out *Clutch*, *McKinsey* and *Pearson* to name just three of the available knowledge pool.

Look beyond the mist and hype for a dose of reality. It takes time for the changes to become mainstream and this is partially due to the forces of resistance towards change that we humans display – hence these factors are our allies. While there is little doubt that the speed of change across industries is accelerating its worth considering your own organization and exploring the speed at which they are transforming. There is a high likelihood that the noticeable changes are progressive and can be witnessed in terms of years rather than months. Particularly in the larger asset and resource heavy companies.

Take stock of who and where you are right now – the future is still yours if you want it badly enough. Pearson conducted research into what skills and employment in 2030 might look like and identified some possible trends in job roles. One that stands out is the forecast for only one in five workers to be in their current jobs by then. Hence the reason so many workers are re-skilling.



Question: How Willing Are Workers to Learn New Skills?

Not all answer choices are shown. Percent of total respondents, N=521 knowledge workers

Source: The State of Upskilling and Reskilling Training Survey

REDESIGN
OPPORTUNITY

2

It's Buzz word city – 3 key words stand out as critical to accompany your mindset shift.

These three words are also crucial executive characteristics as you prepare for the future. The challenge is in how you can develop these states and incorporate them into your daily way of doing business?

- **RESILIENCE** supported by its powerful cousins — *Grit* and *Courage*

Defined as - *“our ability to adapt and bounce back when things don’t go as planned.”*

Resilience is the psychological quality that allows some people to be knocked down by the adversities of life and come back at least as strong as before. Rather than letting difficulties, traumatic events, or failure overcome them and drain their resolve.”

...highly resilient people find a way to change course, emotionally heal, and continue moving toward their goals...

As Dr. Karen Reivich from Penn Uni cautions – “**BEWARE THE THINKING TRAPS**”

You can greatly help yourself to be more resilient by improving your awareness of negative thoughts and intentionally question and reframe those thoughts.

*I can be
changed by
what happens
to me. But I
refuse to be
reduced by it.*

— Maya Angelou

*Do not judge me
by my successes,
judge me by how
many times I fell
down and got
back up again.*

— Nelson Mandela

*We need resilience and
hope and a spirit that
can carry us through
the doubt and fear. We
need to believe that we
can effect change if we
want to live and love
with our whole hearts.*

— Brené Brown

● **AGILITY** supported by its powerful cousins — *Adaptability* and *Catalyst*

I love this statement of an Agile executive –

“they are like a camera with a zoom lens: they have the capacity to focus on an important issue, zoom out to see the larger picture, and zoom in again for the specifics and context.”

- ✓ Focus on what is important.
- ✓ Zoom out to get a broader perspective (time frame, systems, stakeholders, curiosity, self-awareness of intent).
- ✓ Zoom in again to engage and take action .

Developing this characteristic has multiple benefits in the immediate and long term. As the world around you changes, your speed and ability to match , even pre-empt those changes will set you apart.

*“Success today requires the agility and drive to
constantly rethink, reinvigorate, react, and reinvent.”*

— Bill Gates

● **HOPE** supported by its powerful cousins —
Growth and Optimism

*“Hope is the thing
with feathers that
perches in the soul
and sings the tune
without the words
and never stops
at all.”*

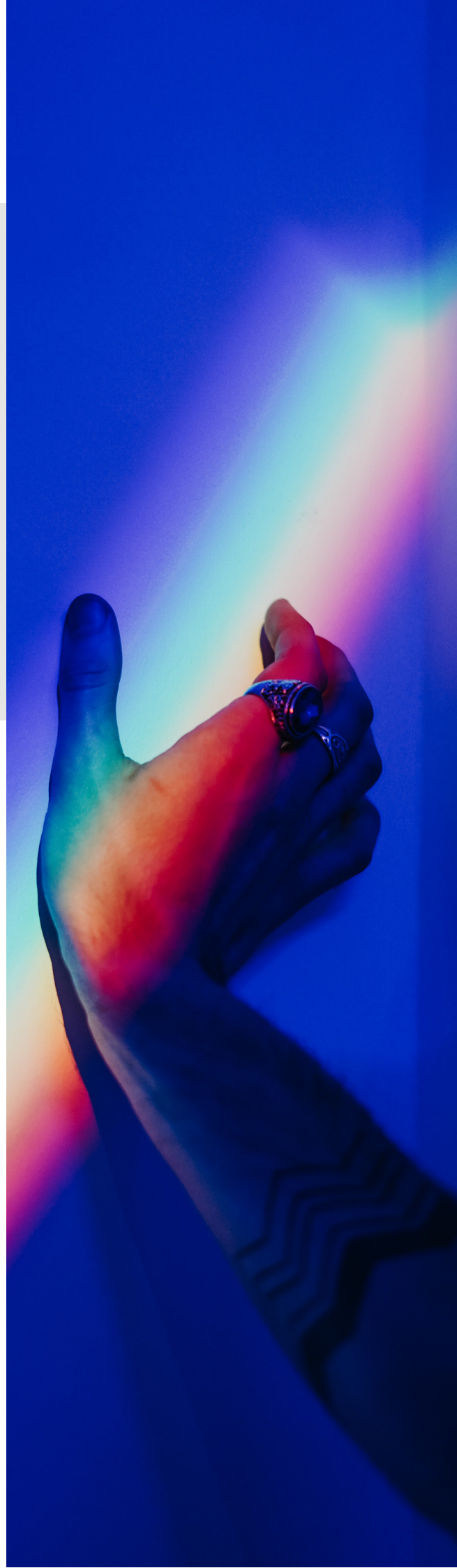
— Emily Dickinson

You may be wondering why choose the word Hope from the multitude of possible future building characteristics available? Perhaps the following goes some way to explaining our reason.

To quote from the site *V.I.A.*

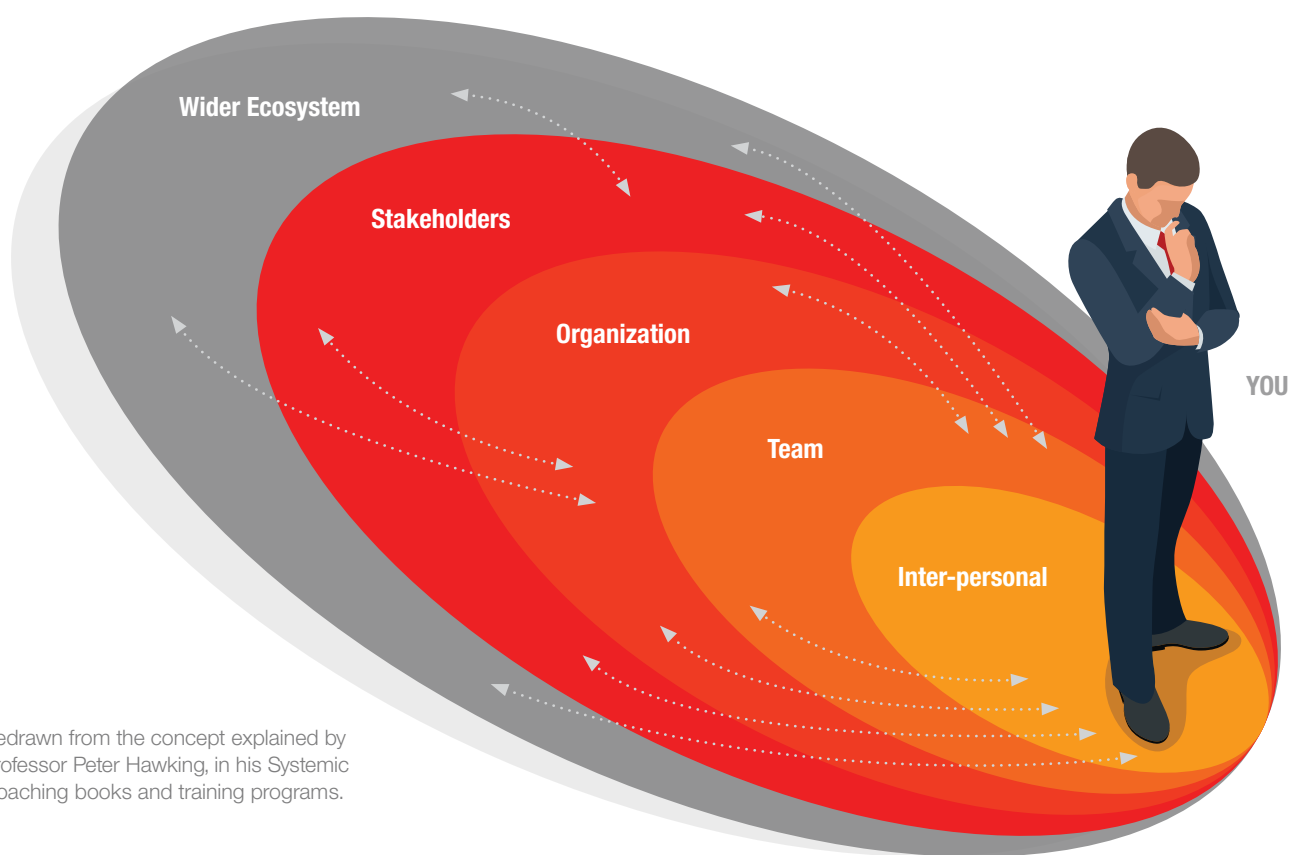
WHAT IS HOPE?

“The character strength of hope has to do with positive expectations about the future. It involves optimistic thinking and focusing on good things to come. Hope is more than a feel-good emotion. It is an action-oriented strength involving agency, the motivation and confidence that goals can be reached, and also that many effective pathways can be devised in order to get to that desired future.”



So, you are well on your way with the first two redesign actions in place. Now it's time to really set things in motion and start thriving by broadening your perspective working from the outside-in and thinking future-back.

Who and what are you in service of? Looking at your landscape through the six lenses perspective.



Seek inner clarity by being able to step back and consider your whole environment/situation looking at the interplay between the each of these groups.

And note that;

- ✓ Collaboration partners are a future success essential
- ✓ Systemic thinking and the ability to see the whole ecosystem, including your inner and outer circle stakeholders will support you in finding value creation ideas.

Prepare your own pentagonal eco-system landscape diagram with you at the center and consider the next two to three-year horizon as you map the likely drivers for each group and how you may influence and be influenced while creating value.

Conclusion and Next Steps



Now is the time for taking action.

The longer you delay
the further behind you
risk becoming!

The good news is that it's not too late to redesign your future and thrive in the abundance of opportunity that exists today and ahead in the immediate future amidst the change chaos.

The above three factors broadly provide you with the tools to make the necessary adjustments in your thinking and capitalize on the future executive workforce.

...as you tick each box, you will build sufficient awareness and understanding to get started and the necessary momentum to keep you moving forward.

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About the Author

Hi, I'm **Wayne Brown**.

I work with executives to help transform their careers by developing elite talent across four of the most critical needs for any professional today: communication, facilitation, education and coaching.

After 45 years in six companies, living on four continents and working in more than 85 cities, I've engaged with people from diverse cultures and groups, leading, facilitating and coaching thousands of executives on topics from leadership through to operational excellence.

In addition, I have experienced the rigors of starting and running businesses and companies, learning along the way through success and failure. My journey has been supported by mentors and coaches who have helped me to stay focused and dedicated to my purpose of helping others.

As a lifelong learner, I've studied through many of the world's leading institutions and have learned from incredible professors and leaders. Today, I continue to develop and grow alongside my clients as we co- create the future together. From my years of playing competitive sports, I learned early on that life is a team activity and that we cannot succeed alone. It takes encouragement, the perspective of more than one, and collective effort to reach our lofty goals.

To find out more about my personal story, visit our website, www.coaching4companies.com

