

The HRBP in 2025

Session 1: Understanding HRBPs'
Digital Reality

HR Business Partner Masterclass
25 September 2018

© 2018 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Gartner is a registered trademark of Gartner, Inc. and its affiliates. This publication may not be reproduced or distributed in any form without Gartner's prior written permission. It consists of the opinions of Gartner's research organization, which should not be construed as statements of fact. While the information contained in this publication has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information. Although Gartner research may address legal and financial issues, Gartner does not provide legal or investment advice and its research should not be construed or used as such. Your access and use of this publication are governed by [Gartner's Usage Policy](#). Gartner prides itself on its reputation for independence and objectivity. Its research is produced independently by its research organization without input or influence from any third party. For further information, see "[Guiding Principles on Independence and Objectivity](#)."

Let's Get Started ...

**Why is this such
a popular topic?**

DIGITALIZATION CHANGING OUR EXPERIENCE

Amazon Packages on a Colleague's Doorstep



Source: CEB analysis.

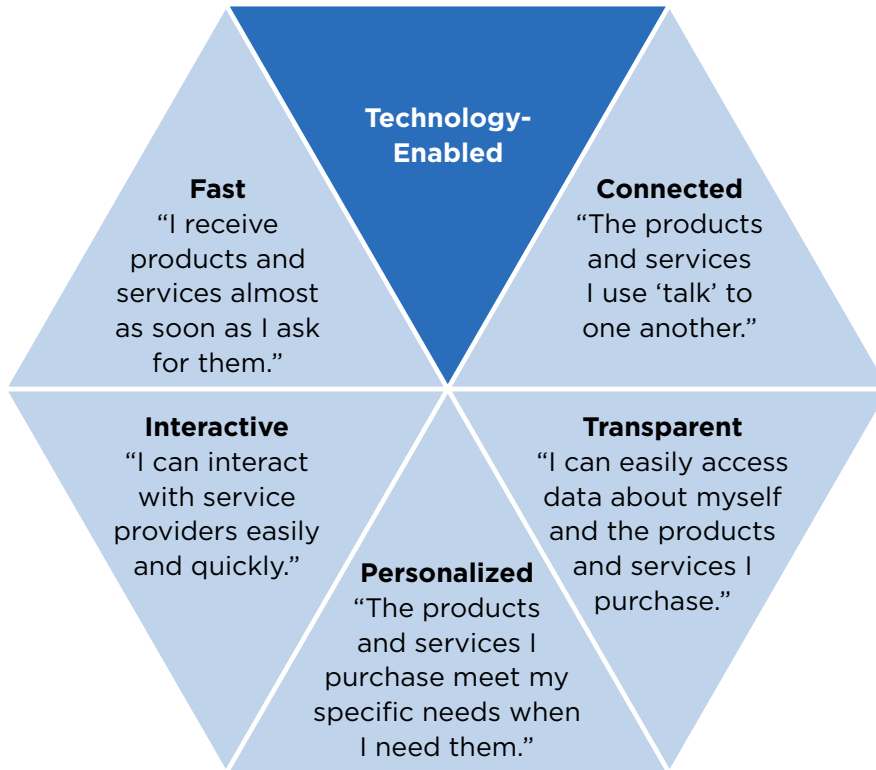
DIGITALIZATION DEFINED

Digitalization

Deploying technologies and practices to enhance the existing business model (via products, channels and operations) or to create new business or operating models.

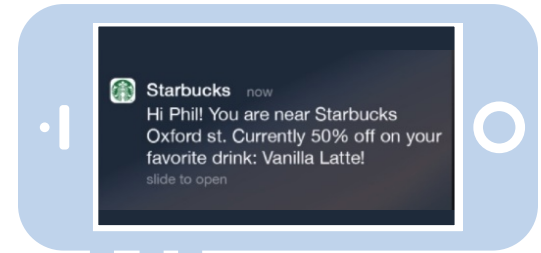
FOR CONSUMERS, DIGITALIZATION IS AN EXPERIENCE

Components of a Digitalized Experience



Source: CEB analysis.

Examples of Digital Age Consumer Experiences



Source: <https://monk.webengage.com/what-is-geofencing/>; <https://www.bankofamerica.com/online-banking/mobile-check-deposit.go>.

LEADERS HAVE HIGH DIGITALIZATION GOALS

Sample Leader Digitalization Objectives and Real Word Examples

**Increase Customer
Engagement**

Thirty-five percent of Amazon's revenue is generated by its recommendation engine.



Source: McKinsey <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/the-digital-tipping-point-mckinsey-global-survey-results>, FT, ZDnet, The Guardian; CEB analysis.

LEADERS HAVE HIGH DIGITALIZATION GOALS

Sample Leader Digitalization Objectives and Real Word Examples

Increase Customer Engagement

Thirty-five percent of Amazon's revenue is generated by its recommendation engine.



Automate Business Processes

Aviva built software to automate the insurance application approval process.



Source: McKinsey <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/the-digital-tipping-point-mckinsey-global-survey-results>, FT, ZDnet, The Guardian; CEB analysis.

LEADERS HAVE HIGH DIGITALIZATION GOALS

Sample Leader Digitalization Objectives and Real Word Examples

Increase Customer Engagement

Thirty-five percent of Amazon's revenue is generated by its recommendation engine.



Automate Business Processes

Aviva built software to automate the insurance application approval process.



Use Big Data to Improve Decision-Making

HSBC deploys AI to help employees detect money laundering.

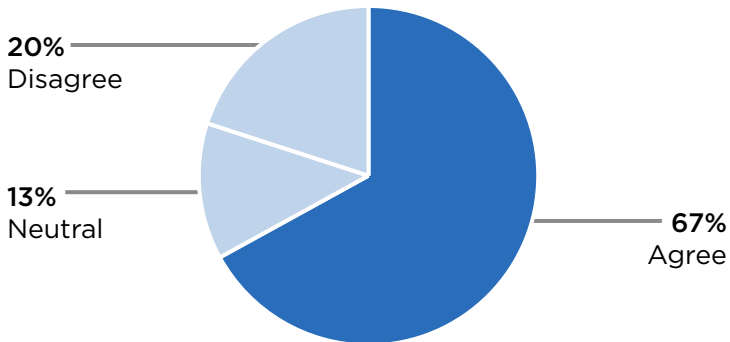


Source: McKinsey <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/the-digital-tipping-point-mckinsey-global-survey-results>, FT, ZDnet, The Guardian; CEB analysis.

DIGITALIZATION IS A TOP BUSINESS PRIORITY

Q: "If My Company Does Not Become Significantly More Digitalized by 2020, It Will No Longer Be Competitive."

Percentage of Business Leaders



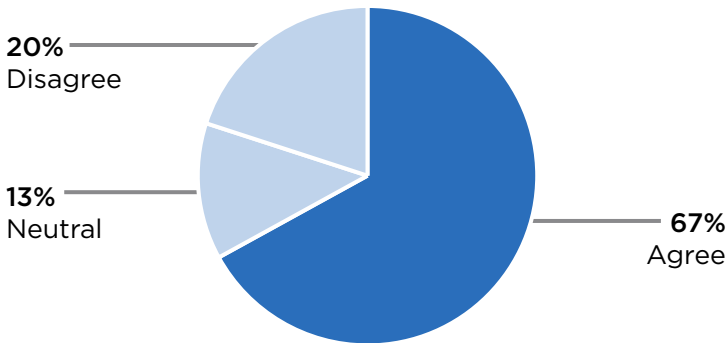
n = 578 business leaders.

Source: CEB Digital Enterprise 2020 Survey.

DIGITALIZATION IS A TOP BUSINESS PRIORITY

Q: "If My Company Does Not Become Significantly More Digitalized by 2020, It Will No Longer Be Competitive."

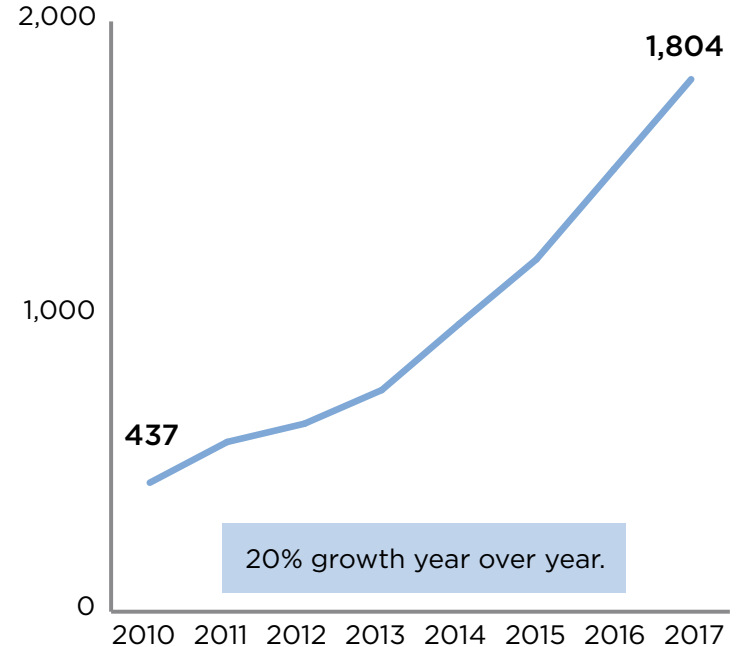
Percentage of Business Leaders



n = 578 business leaders.

Source: CEB Digital Enterprise 2020 Survey.

Earnings Calls Referencing Digital at Least Once



Source: CEB analysis.

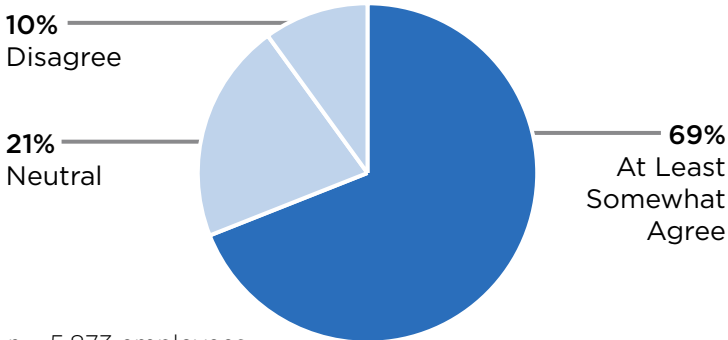
Note: Includes companies from S&P Global 1200 and S&P 400 Midcap; us.spindices.com.

Many organizations included here held multiple earnings calls each year.

**What's one way digitalization
has already impacted you?**

HIGHER WORKFORCE EXPECTATIONS

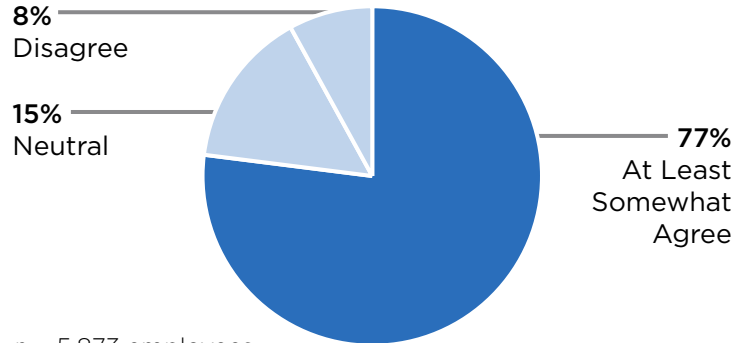
Q: “Compared to Three Years Ago, Today I Expect More Intelligent Systems That Anticipate My Needs.”



n = 5,873 employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

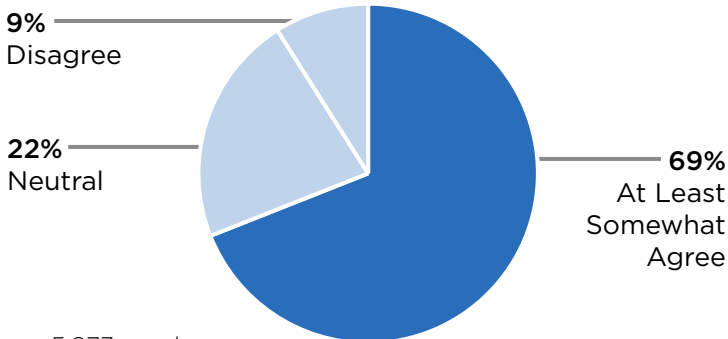
Q: “Compared to Three Years Ago, Today I Expect Easier Options for Completing Routine Tasks.”



n = 5,873 employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

Q: “Compared to Three Years Ago, Today I Expect More Personalization in Communications.”



n = 5,873 employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

HEADS OF HR AND HRBPs AGREE

CHROs: What Initiatives Will Be Most Important for Your Function in the Next Year?

Top Five Topics

1. Digitalizing HR
2. Performance Management
3. Create a People Analytics Team
4. Learning & Development
5. Employee Experience

n = 107.

Source: CEB 2018 Future of HR Agenda Poll.

HRBPs: What Initiatives Will Be Most Important for Your Function in the Next Year?

Top Five Topics

1. Digitalizing HR
2. Organizational Design
3. Employee Experience
4. Learning & Development
5. Performance Management

n = 1,188.

Source: CEB 2018 Future of the HRBP Role Survey.

UNCERTAINTY STILL REMAINS FOR HRBPs

Select Quotes From HRBPs About the Future of Their Roles

There are so many emerging talent trends that are unique to the digital age. They're moving so quickly that it's **hard for me to feel like I understand what they mean, nevermind try to advise my clients** on what they mean.



HRBP
Consumer Products

It's **hard to get clarity on what "good" looks like in my HRBP role given how much is changing** around us. Even my manager struggles to highlight how I should best respond and prepare for the future.



HRBP
Financial Services

**Visualize your role in 2025.
Compare it to your role today.**

What's in?

What's out?

INVESTIGATING THE FUTURE

Our Research Process

Qualitative Research

We interviewed HR leaders and HR business partners at more than 120 organizations globally to understand their challenges and identify unique practices and solutions that can apply to other organizations.

Quantitative Research

We drew on survey data from over 400 HRBPs, 150 HR leaders and nearly 6,000 employees at all levels to identify key challenges and find solutions that lead to effective outcomes of HR digital transformation and the implications for HR business partners.

Partial List of Participating Organizations



Organization-Level Perspective

- Talent and Business Outcomes
- HR Solution Roll-Out
- HR Solution Design Processes
- HR Strategy and Priorities

HRBP-Level Perspective

- Capability Expectations
- Day-to-Day Time Allocation and Prioritization
- Development Priorities and Goals
- HR-Client Relationship

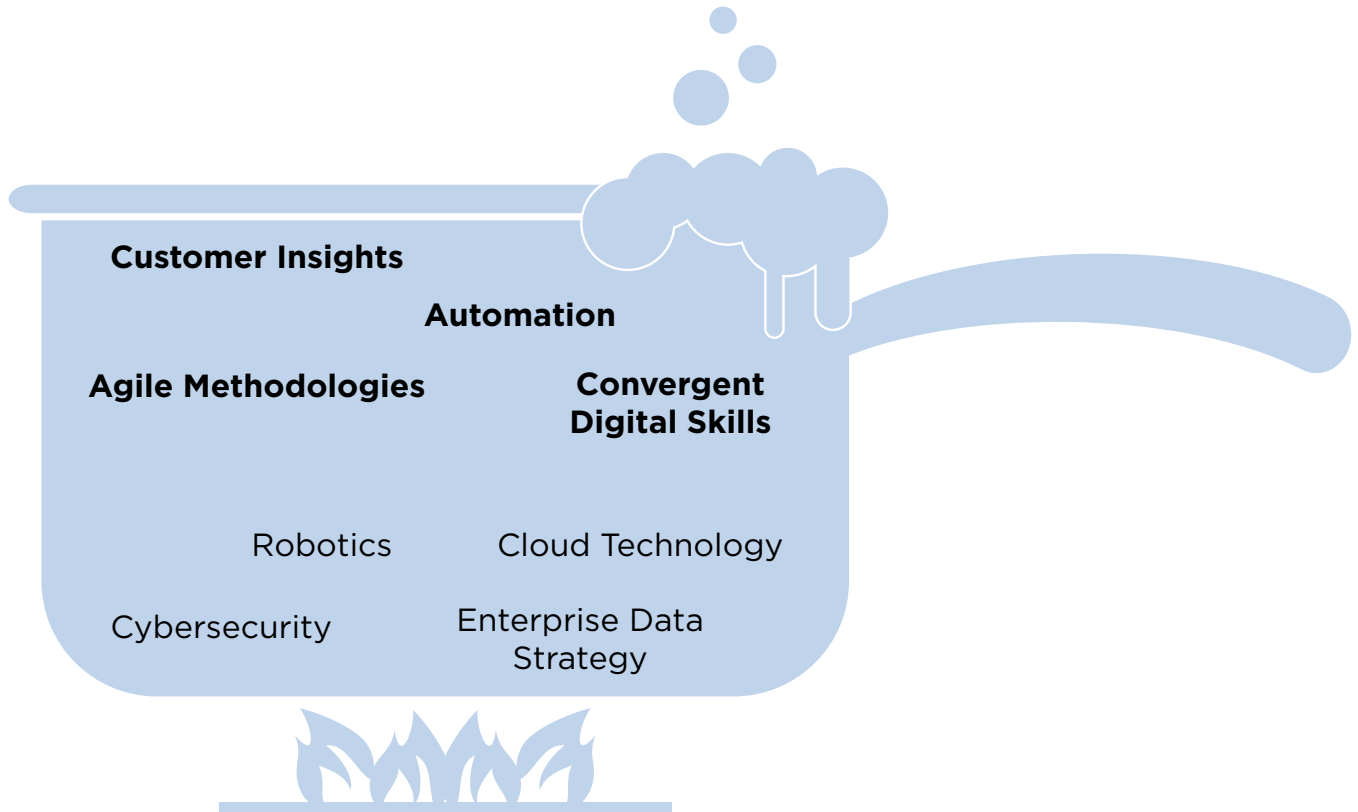
Employee-Level Perspective

- Changing Employee Expectations
- The Role of HR in Supporting Employees
- Social Listening and Transparency
- The Use of Technology at Work

Source: CEB analysis.

KEY IMPLICATIONS RISING TO THE TOP FOR HRBPs

Varied Potential Implications for the Future of the HRBP Role



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

**HRBPs Are Stewards of
the Employee Experience**



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

**HRBPs Are Stewards of
the Employee Experience**



**HRBPs Are Product
Design Experts**



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Source: CEB analysis.

WE UNDERSERVE WHAT EMPLOYEES EXPERIENCE

Comparison of Supporting What Employees Need and What Employees Experience

Supporting What Employees Need

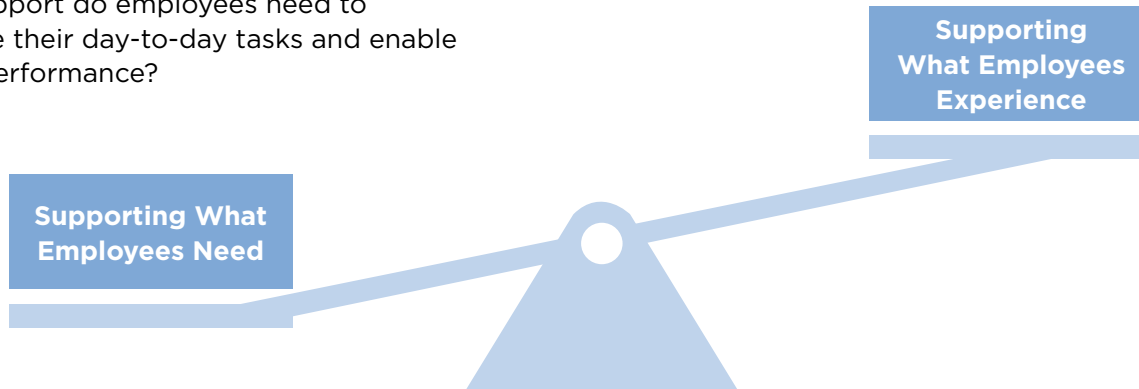
Ask:

- What are employees' functional needs?
- What support do employees need to complete their day-to-day tasks and enable overall performance?

Supporting What Employees Experience

Ask:

- What are the most memorable, impactful experiences employees have at work?
- What are employees' emotional reactions — both positive and negative — to experiences at work?



Source: CEB analysis.

WE UNDERSERVE WHAT EMPLOYEES EXPERIENCE

Questions to Support What Employees Need and What Employees Experience

Supporting What Employees Need

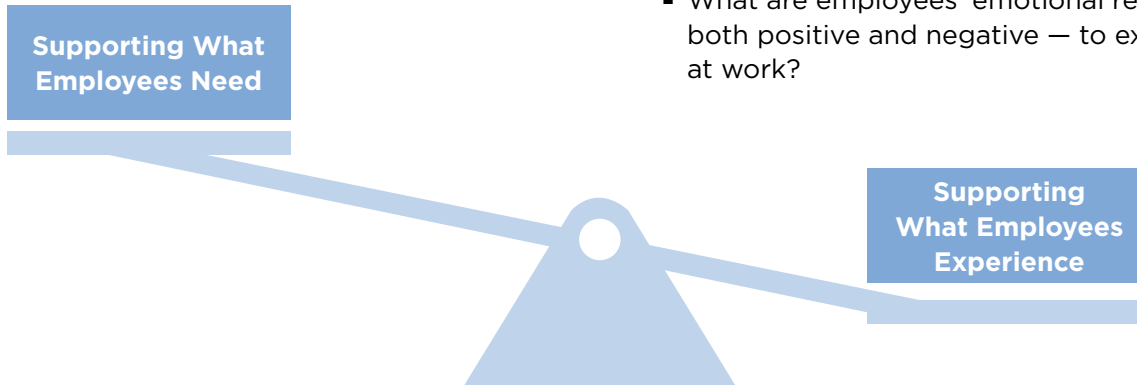
Ask:

- What are employees' functional needs?
- What support do employees need to complete their day-to-day tasks and enable overall performance?

Supporting What Employees Experience

Ask:

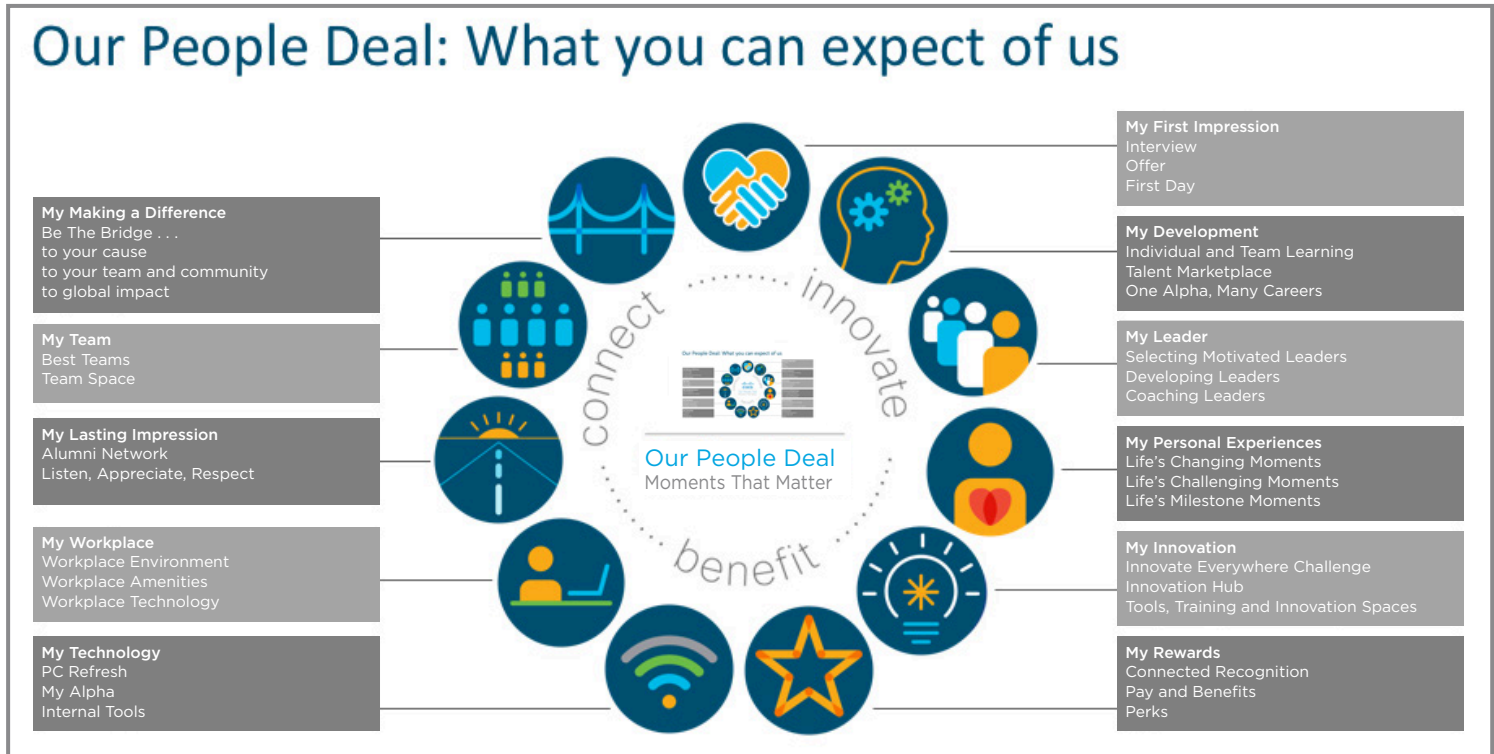
- What are the most memorable, impactful experiences employees have at work?
- What are employees' emotional reactions — both positive and negative — to experiences at work?



Source: CEB analysis.

CISCO'S LIST OF MOMENTS THAT MATTER

The Final, Employee-Validated List of Moments That Matter



Source: Cisco Systems, Inc.; CEB analysis.



FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Source: CEB analysis.

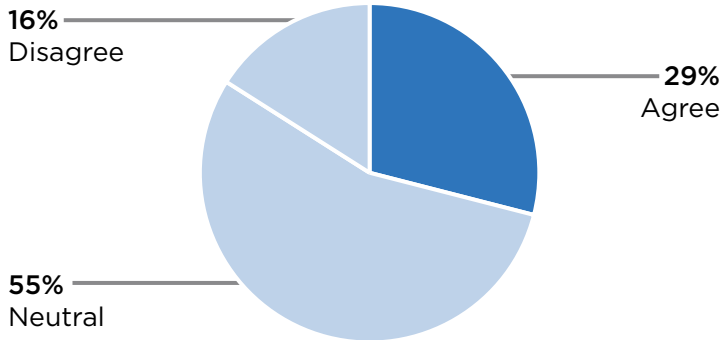
HR SOLUTIONS NOT MEETING EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Two Challenges Caused by the Typical Design Approach



HR Solutions Aren't Relevant Enough to Employees' Needs

Q: "HR Really Understands What People Like Me Need and Want."



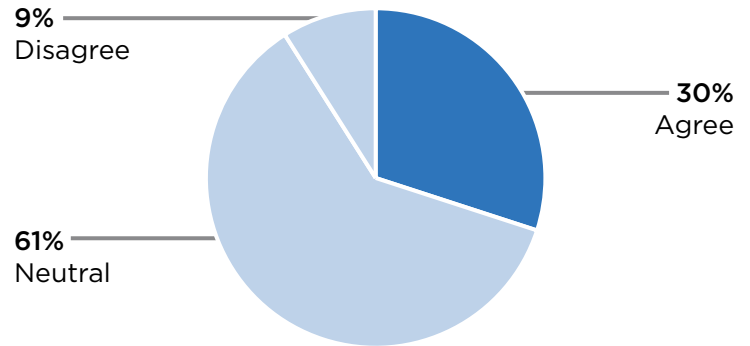
n = 5,873 employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.



HR Solutions Aren't Responsive Enough to Employees' Changing Needs

Q: "The HR Function Has Evolved Its Products and Services to Accommodate Changes in My Organization."

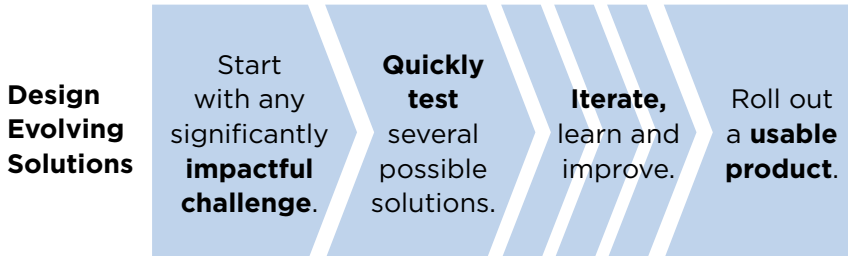
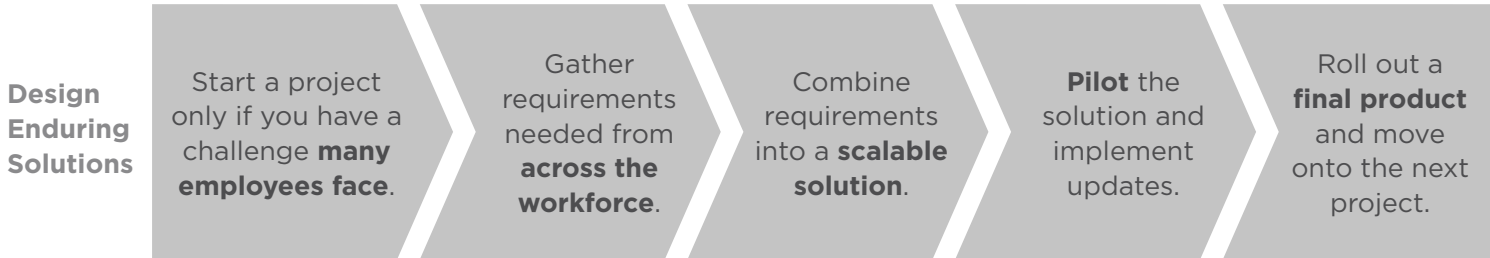


n = 5,873 employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

DESIGN TO EVOLVE, NOT ENDURE

Shift From Designing Enduring Solutions to Designing Evolving Solutions



Source: CEB analysis.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”

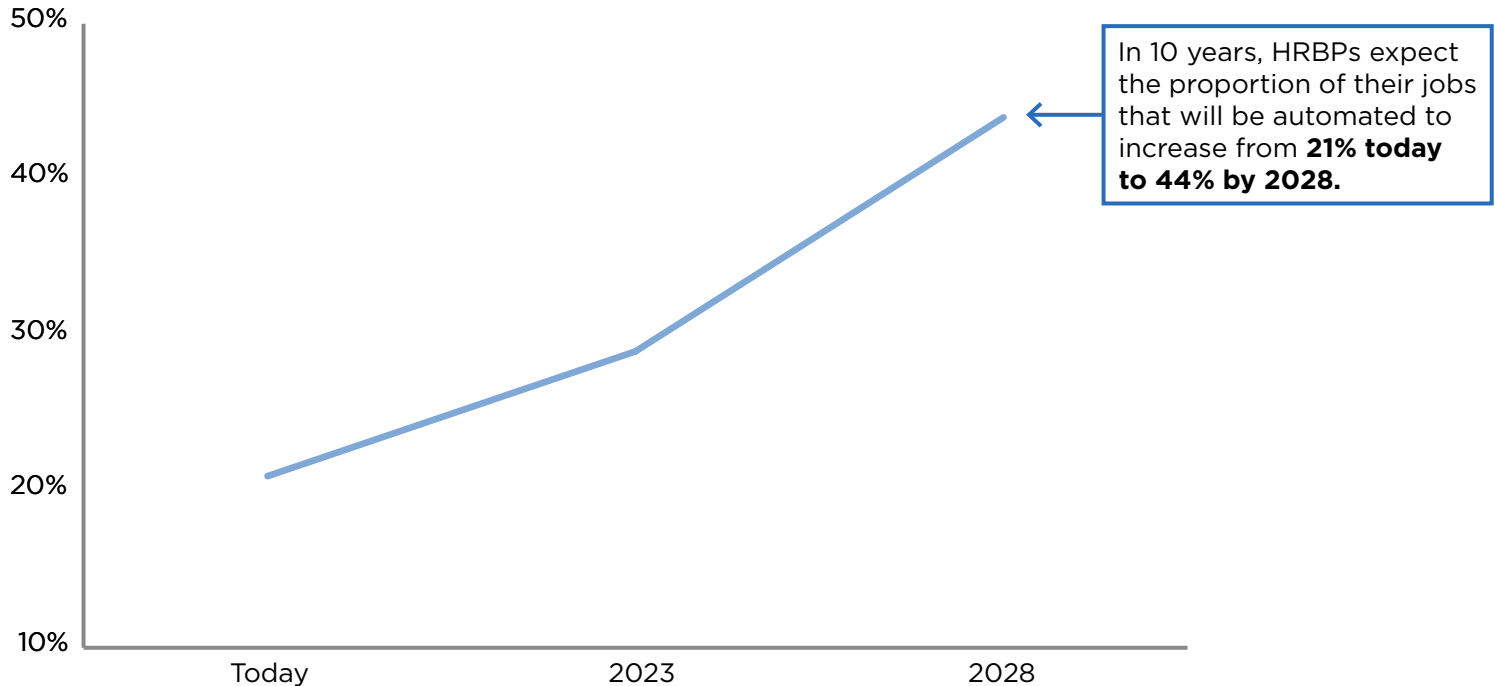


Source: CEB analysis.

CHANGE IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE

Anticipated Impact of Automation Over Time

Proportion of HRBPs' Day-to-Day Responsibilities They Expect to Be Automated Over Time, On Average



$n = 436$.

Source: CEB, now Gartner HRBP in 2025 Survey.

SET YOUR PERSONAL DIGITALIZATION PLAN

HRBP Imperatives



Anticipate What
Work Technology Will
Automate in the Future

Source: CEB analysis.



Anticipate What
Work Technology Will
Augment in the Future



Specify How You Will
“Get Paid” for Your
Greater Impact

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”

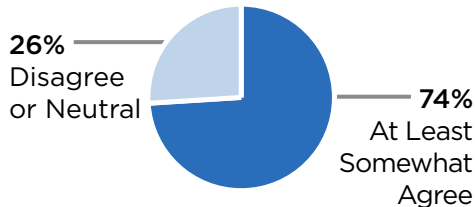


Source: CEB analysis.

EMPLOYEES NEED VERSATILE HRBPs IN DIGITAL AGE

Q: “I Expect HR Service to Be More Timely and Personally Relevant.”

Percentage of Employees



n = 7,502 employees.

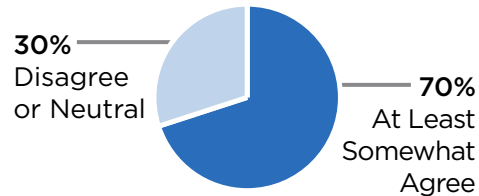
Source: CEB 2017 Culture Workforce Survey.

HRBP Call to Action:

- Understand how employees’ contexts could impact their expectations for support.

Q: “Work Happens at a Much Faster Pace Now Compared to 5 Years Ago.”

Percentage of Employees



n = 7,502 employees.

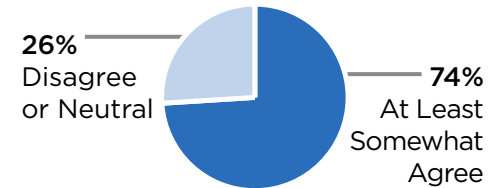
Source: CEB 2017 Culture Workforce Survey.

HRBP Call to Action:

- Understand the business(es) you support to keep up with employees’ changing circumstances.
- Break down silos within HR and between parts of the business to enable faster response time.

Q: “I Expect the Organizations to Have Many More Cross-Functional Projects by 2020.”

Percentage of Leaders



n = 2,419 business leaders.

Source: CEB Digital Enterprise 2020 Survey.

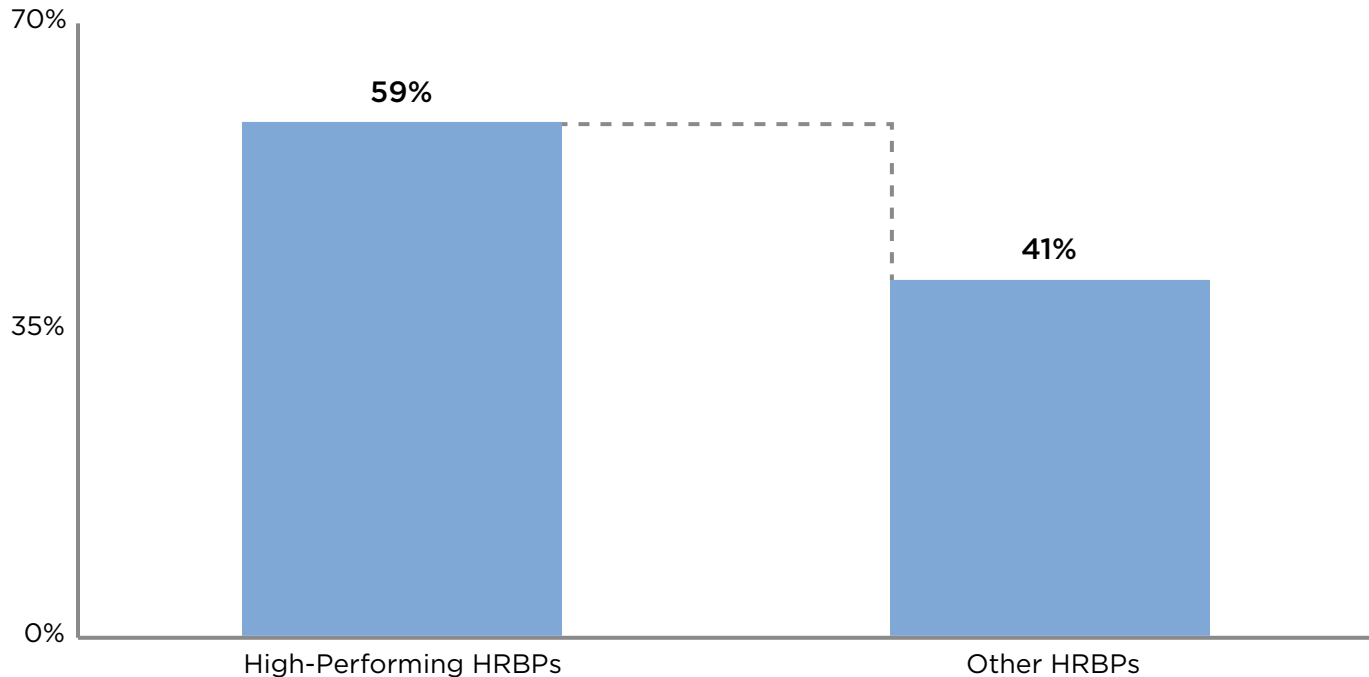
HRBP Call to Action:

- Work on more cross-functional projects as an HR representative.
- Understand a breadth of business areas so you can better support clients on cross-functional projects.

TOP HRBPs WILLING TO PURSUE NON-HR ROLES

Q: "I Am Willing to Pursue a Role Outside HR If It Improves My Likelihood of Earning an Eventual Promotion in HR."

Percentage of HRBPs Who Agree or Strongly Agree



$n = 436$.

Source: CEB, now Gartner HRBP in 2025 Survey.

Note: The "high-performing HRBPs" segment includes the responses from HRBPs who scored their performance within the top 30% of performers.

FOUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE HRBP ROLE IN 2025

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Source: CEB analysis.

LOOKING AHEAD

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Session 2:

Prioritizing and Designing HR for a Workforce of Consumers

16 October

Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Source: CEB analysis.

LOOKING AHEAD

HRBPs Are Stewards of the Employee Experience



HRBPs Are Product Design Experts



Session 2:

Prioritizing and Designing HR for a Workforce of Consumers

16 October

Technology Accelerates the Shift to Strategic Partner



“Careers in HR” Become “Careers With (Some) HR”



Session 3:

Developing for the HR Function of the Future

13 November

Source: CEB analysis.

Appendix



METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW


Deployed HR Leader, HRBP and Workforce Surveys

- 1. HR Leader Survey:** We surveyed 171 HR leaders across 23 industries and 26 countries. 
- 2. Workforce Survey:** We surveyed nearly 6,000 global employees across 26 industries and 23 countries.
- 3. HRBP Survey:** We surveyed 436 HRBPs across 24 industries and all major geographic regions.

Source: CEB analysis.

Conducted In-Depth Interviews

Sample Contacts



- HRBPs
- Heads of HR
- Heads of Culture
- Heads of Talent Management
- Heads of Organizational Development

Source: CEB analysis.

Generated Key Hypotheses

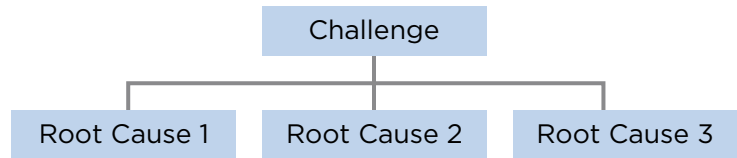
Illustrative



Source: CEB analysis.

Assessed Primary Root Causes

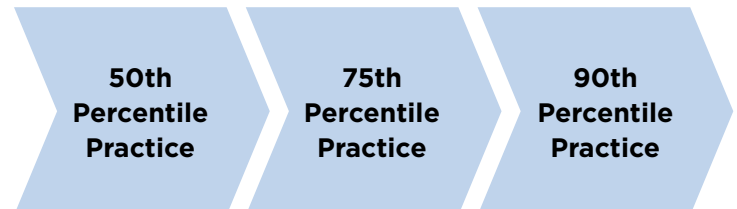
Illustrative



Source: CEB analysis.

Evaluated Organization Practices Against Best Practice Standard

Illustrative



Source: CEB analysis.

HRBP IN 2025 SURVEY

Demographics

We surveyed 436 HRBPs.

| Organization Level | Representation |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Executive | 15% |
| Senior Manager | 21% |
| Mid-level Manager/Supervisor | 16% |
| First-level Manager/Supervisor | 9% |
| “Senior” Individual Contributor | 32% |
| “Junior” Individual Contributor | 6% |
| Other | 2% |

| Geography | Representation |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| United States and Canada | 44% |
| Latin America | 7% |
| Europe | 18% |
| Australia and New Zealand | 9% |
| Middle East or Africa | 6% |
| Asia | 13% |

| Organizational Head Count (FTEs) | Representation |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1,000 Employees or Fewer | 12% |
| 1,001 to 5,000 Employees | 15% |
| 5,001 to 10,000 Employees | 17% |
| 10,001 to 50,000 Employees | 26% |
| 50,001 to 200,000 Employees | 22% |
| More Than 200,001 Employees | 7% |

| Industry | Representation |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Aerospace and Defense | 2% |
| Construction | 2% |
| Consumer Goods | 5% |
| Education | 1% |
| Financial Services | 10% |
| Food and Beverage Services | 4% |
| Government | 5% |
| Healthcare | 7% |
| Insurance | 6% |
| Leisure/Hospitality | 2% |
| Manufacturing | 12% |
| Media & Entertainment | 1% |
| NGO and Nonprofit | 1% |
| Oil and Gas/Mining | 6% |
| Pharmaceuticals | 5% |
| Professional Services | 1% |
| Retail | 4% |
| Technology | 11% |
| Telecommunications | 2% |
| Transportation | 2% |
| Utilities | 3% |
| Wholesale | 1% |
| Other | 9% |

$n = 436$.

Source: CEB, now Gartner HRBP in 2025 Survey.

Note: Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

HR EXECUTIVE SURVEY

Demographics

We surveyed 171 HR leaders.

| Role | Representation |
|--|----------------|
| Chief Human Resources Officer/ Head of HR | 30% |
| HR Operations or Shared Services Leader | 11% |
| Head of Talent Management | 11% |
| Head of Strategic Planning or OD | 10% |
| Head of Employee Experience (or similar) | 10% |
| Talent Analytics or HRIS Leader | 10% |
| Other | 19% |

| Geography | Representation |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| United States and Canada | 61% |
| Latin America | 21% |
| Europe | 11% |
| Australia and New Zealand | 4% |
| Middle East or Africa | 2% |
| Asia | 1% |

| Organizational Head Count (FTEs) | Representation |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1,000 Employees or Fewer | 13% |
| 1,001 to 2,500 Employees | 18% |
| 2,501 to 5,000 Employees | 14% |
| 5,001 to 10,000 Employees | 22% |
| 10,001 to 25,000 Employees | 22% |
| More Than 25,000 Employees | 12% |

| Industry | Representation |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Aerospace and Defense | 0% |
| Construction | 2% |
| Consumer Goods | 6% |
| Distribution, Delivery and Storage | 1% |
| Education | 2% |
| Financial Services | 18% |
| Food and Beverage Services | 2% |
| Government | 3% |
| Healthcare | 4% |
| Insurance | 11% |
| Leisure/Hospitality | 1% |
| Manufacturing | 8% |
| NGO and Nonprofit | 1% |
| Oil and Gas/Mining | 6% |
| Pharmaceuticals | 1% |
| Professional Services | 2% |
| Retail | 4% |
| Technology | 8% |
| Telecommunications | 1% |
| Transportation | 2% |
| Utilities | 2% |
| Other | 14% |

$n = 171$ HR leaders.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Experience Benchmarking Survey.

Note: Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

WORKFORCE SURVEY

Demographics

We surveyed 5,873 employees.

| Geography | Representation |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| United States and Canada | 40% |
| Europe | 37% |
| Asia | 14% |
| Latin America | 5% |
| Middle East or Africa | 2% |
| Australia and New Zealand | 2% |

| Organizational Head Count (FTEs) | Representation |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1,001 to 2,500 Employees | 19% |
| 2,501 to 5,000 Employees | 22% |
| 5,001 to 10,000 Employees | 19% |
| 10,001 to 25,000 Employees | 9% |
| 25,001 to 50,000 Employees | 9% |
| More Than 50,000 Employees | 23% |

| Industry | Representation |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Aerospace and Defense | 2% |
| Construction | 3% |
| Consumer Goods | 2% |
| Distribution, Delivery and Storage | 2% |
| Education | 6% |
| Financial Services | 10% |
| Food and Beverage Services | 2% |
| Government | 10% |
| Healthcare | 10% |
| Insurance | 3% |
| Leisure/Hospitality | 1% |
| Manufacturing | 8% |
| Media and Entertainment | 1% |
| NGO and Nonprofit | 1% |
| Oil and Gas/Mining | 2% |
| Personal Services | 1% |
| Pharmaceuticals | 1% |
| Professional Services | 3% |
| Real Estate | 1% |
| Retail | 8% |
| Technology | 11% |
| Telecommunications | 3% |
| Transportation | 3% |
| Utilities | 3% |
| Wholesale | 1% |
| Other | 5% |

$n = 5,873$ employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

Note: Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

WORKFORCE SURVEY (CONT.)

Demographics

We surveyed 5,873 employees.

| Age | Representation |
|-------|----------------|
| <20 | 0% |
| 20-29 | 21% |
| 30-39 | 37% |
| 40-49 | 23% |
| 50-59 | 14% |
| 60+ | 4% |

| Generation | Representation |
|------------|----------------|
| Boomer | 12% |
| GenX | 33% |
| GenY | 52% |
| GenZ | 4% |

| Highest Level of Education | Representation |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Completed Secondary or Less | 9% |
| Some College; Less than Bachelors | 26% |
| Bachelor Degree | 35% |
| Post-Graduate | 31% |

| Organization Level | Representation |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Senior Leader | 32% |
| Manager | 29% |
| Employee | 32% |
| Other | 6% |

$n = 5,873$ employees.

Source: CEB 2018 Digital Employee Experience Survey.

Note: Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding.

© 2018 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. CLC182348

| Employment Status | Representation |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Full Time | 93% |
| Part Time | 7% |

| Employment Class | Representation |
|------------------|----------------|
| Salaried | 84% |
| Hourly | 16% |

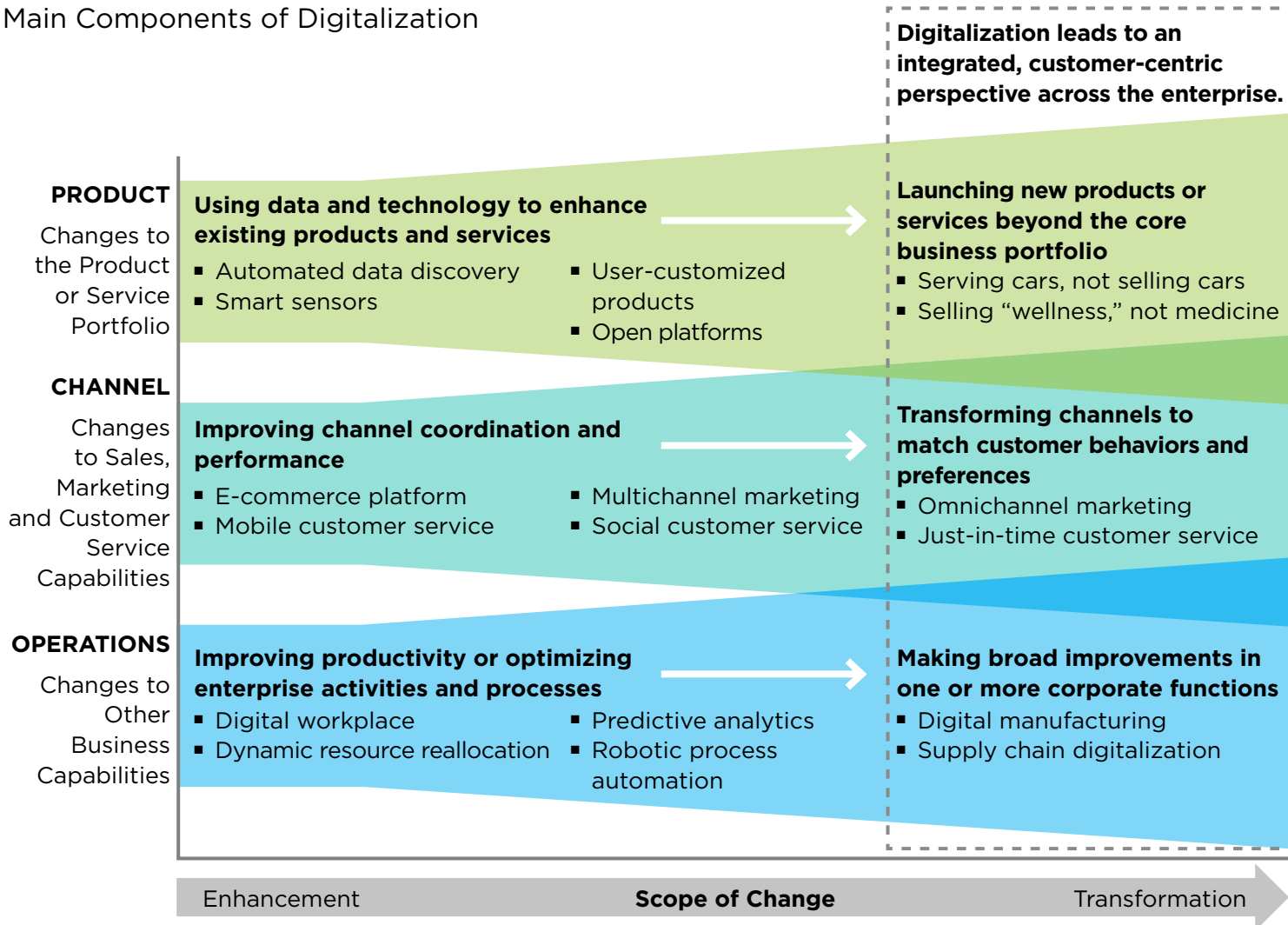
| Organization Tenure | Representation |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Up to 2 Years | 11% |
| 2 to 5 Years | 25% |
| 5 to 10 Years | 28% |
| 10+ Years | 36% |

| Main Work Location | Representation |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Headquarters | 35% |
| Local Office | 46% |
| Client Location | 5% |
| Home | 8% |
| Other | 5% |

| Access to Digital Technology | Representation |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 79% |
| No | 21% |

THE MEANING OF DIGITALIZATION

Main Components of Digitalization



Source: CEB analysis.