

2025

SNAPSHOTS

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SERVICES



MANAGING **FRONTLINE** TALENT

FUTURE-READY
TALENT PIPELINES

EMERGING
TALENT PRIORITIES

INCLUSION
BY DESIGN

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“Wabi-sabi, a Japanese phrase, that signifies finding beauty and harmony in imperfection, impermanence, and simplicity. It’s about embracing the natural cycle of growth and decay and finding beauty in things that are simple, modest, and imperfect.”

Foreword



Bimal Rath
Cofounder & MD

This edition of *Snapshots* has been created by the team keeping two principles in mind. I will come to the principles shortly. The coverage or themes cut across three broad areas. These areas are built up from conversations with clients over the last year. Each year we pick up the themes based on what we believe are top of the mind issues of our customers, and therefore the conversations.

The first theme around *Building a Future-Ready Talent Pipeline* tries to capture different perspectives and practices. My personal view continues to be that leaders must evaluate the opportunity cost to business and the talent risk when not getting succession right. Both the risk and the loss of opportunity increasingly figure directly in succession discussions at the senior-most levels, although not yet in monetary terms, and maybe they should.

The theme of *Emerging Talent Priorities* goes deep into specific

areas and encourages concrete action by organizations. Talent in Manufacturing is critical for India and for broadening employment opportunities among other things. Getting sales talent initiatives right is another priority for companies. These conversations come at a time when AI, IoT, and automation are increasingly playing a larger role. The fundamental nature of jobs and work is changing. Many of our customers have doubled down on investing in some of these areas.

There has been much discussion around *Inclusion by Design*, our third theme this year. Maybe a step backward has been taken by global corporations recently. Our view is that these areas need a much wider understanding of the subject itself, or else we will keep going back and forth on initiatives.

The core objectives of DEI programs must encompass a direct impact on an organization's good health, well-being, and prosperity at a societal level.

Coming back to where I started, the two principles underlying this edition of *Snapshots*.

Wabi-sabi, a Japanese phrase, that signifies finding beauty and harmony in imperfection, impermanence, and simplicity. It's about embracing the natural cycle of growth and decay and finding beauty in things that are simple, modest, and imperfect.

Secondly, a quote attributed to different sources “If an egg is broken by an outside force, the life within ends; however, if it's broken by an inside force, life begins, signifying that great things often originate from within.”

For organizations and leaders, these principles are worth exploring. Of renewal, simplicity, and growth, and bringing the change from within, than being forced to.

- Bimal

“If an egg is broken by an outside force, the life within ends; however, if it's broken by an inside force, life begins, signifying that great things often originate from within.”



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FUTURE-READY TALENT PIPELINES

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Building more resilient and sustainable talent pipelines has emerged as a strategic priority for many organizations, with stronger focus from management teams and boards. However, there are some shifts in the approach—wider coverage, greater reliance on structured processes like assessment centres, and a stronger focus on future-readiness.

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Succession Planning: An Emerging Board-level Priority

A recent survey of 60+ companies across various industries highlights a sharp rise in senior leadership and board involvement in succession planning. 63% of companies report active participation from senior leaders and board members, signaling a growing focus on leadership continuity at the highest levels. This aligns with our conversations with senior business leaders, who confirm that succession planning—especially for senior management teams—has become a heightened priority.

The increasing engagement of senior leadership and boards in succession planning reflects a broader trend: top management is now central to these efforts. This shift underscores that talent strategy is no longer just an HR responsibility but a strategic imperative that directly impacts long-term growth and stability.

We identify three key factors driving this intensified focus on succession planning over the past 4-5 years:



Pandemic and the Great Resignation: A Wake-Up Call

- The pandemic and subsequent Great Resignation exposed vulnerabilities in leadership pipelines, accelerating the urgency around succession planning. Sudden talent departures and disruptions forced companies to reassess their leadership bench strength, ensuring readiness for unforeseen challenges.
- In many industries, investments in automation and evolving business models have raised critical questions about future workforce readiness. Senior leadership teams are now focusing on ensuring that their talent pool is equipped to meet these shifting needs, reinforcing the need for succession planning that aligns with the company's future direction.



Regulatory Oversight: A New Compliance Priority

- Succession planning and talent management are increasingly subject to regulatory scrutiny. Regulators such as the USFDA (Pharma) and the Reserve Bank of India (Banking) now include talent engagement and succession planning in audits.
- Traditionally a board-level concern, regulatory compliance now extends beyond financial metrics to encompass governance and talent strategy. This shift has elevated the importance of strong succession frameworks, with boards held accountable for both operational and leadership continuity.



The Global Talent Race: Strengthening India's Leadership Pipeline

- As global firms expand their presence in markets like India, they increasingly rely on local talent for leadership positions within their global frameworks. This trend is pushing Indian companies to strengthen their succession planning processes to remain competitive in the global talent marketplace.
- The pressure to develop strong leadership from within has never been greater, particularly for firms looking to integrate their India-based leadership into broader global strategies.

In Summary

Succession planning has moved from a tactical HR process to a strategic business priority. It is now driven by a confluence of factors, including the aftermath of the pandemic, the shift towards automation and new business models, heightened regulatory scrutiny, and the globalization of talent. The involvement of senior leadership and boards is critical to ensuring that succession planning is not only aligned with business goals but is also resilient in the face of an unpredictable future.

A New Approach to Succession Planning: From Stars to Talent Clusters

Traditionally, organizations have focused on identifying a few star performers and grooming them for leadership roles.

Succession planning was largely about mapping one successor to each key position, often leading to small, fragile talent pools. However, with the increasing pace of business change and talent mobility, this approach is no longer sustainable.

Instead, many organizations are now shifting toward a more resilient, scalable, and inclusive approach to succession planning—building broader talent clusters rather than relying on a handful of successors. Here are two examples of how leading organizations are taking a new approach to succession planning:

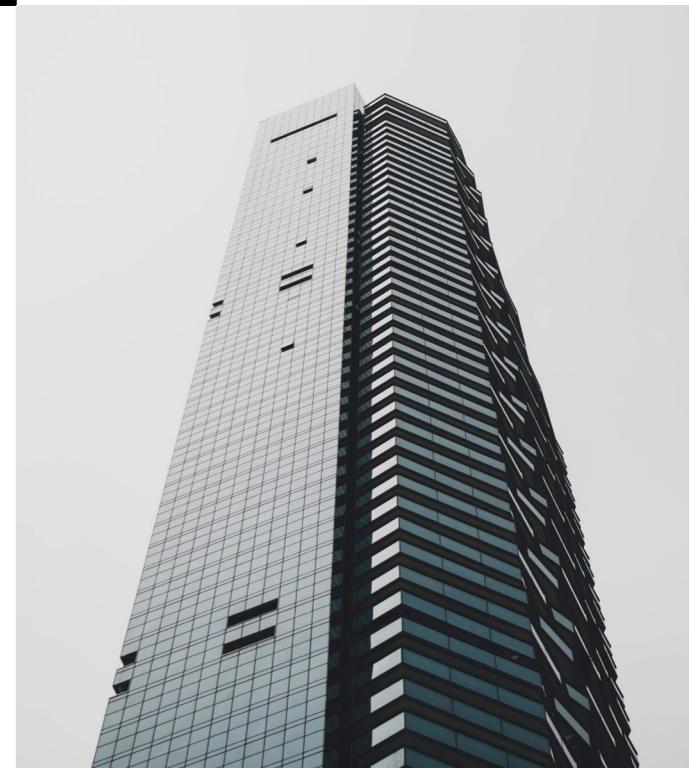


Scaling up HiPo Identification at a Leading Power & Infra Company

As one of India's largest power and infrastructure companies rapidly expanded its workforce from 7,000 to over 25,000 employees, it became clear that traditional talent identification methods could no longer keep pace.

The company's earlier approach was viewed as narrow in focus, resource-intensive, and lacked scalability. The organization has now redesigned its approach—liberalizing eligibility criteria, digitizing administration and bringing sharper focus on development.

Since the re-design, the program has evolved from a niche initiative to an enterprise-wide talent engine, with coverage increasing 10x and employee feedback on the process registering significant improvement.



Democratizing Talent Management at a Leading Private Bank

In line with its talent philosophy that “everyone is talent,” one of our clients, one of the largest private banks, launched a virtual competency assessment initiative covering all first level managers and managers of managers across the organization. The bank views this as a talent development process with each participant getting an opportunity to receive feedback and create an individual development plan. The process also provides the bank with detailed competency profile for each employee which has allowed the talent review and identification process to be made more rigorous and data-driven.

The talent landscape is going through multiple shifts – success in the new environment requires a more collaborative and inter-disciplinary approach, employees expect more opportunities for learning and growth and technology has enabled new ways of working. Evolution will be critical for succession planning and other talent processes to keep pace.

What Will a Middle Manager Really Do in 2030?

Let's start with some basic assumptions. Organizations will remain hierarchical, though likely flatter. Jobs will combine routine work, long-term goals, and short-term projects.

Measuring work will be easier, broken into defined units—except for higher-order tasks and complex decision-making.

- **Organizations will be more flexible and fluid**, capable of moving or deploying resources at the tap of a button—or through speech or eye-movement commands.
- **Career progression and development** will become messier, with crisscrossing, non-linear paths replacing traditional ladders.
- **Collaboration of all kinds**, including with machines and 'external' entities, will be key to success.
- **Individual stardom and specialized skills** will remain relevant for shorter periods. New stars and emerging skills will rise and fade quickly.
- **Top-performing leaders** will excel at navigating complexity across dimensions—without necessarily being stars themselves. Pattern recognition and leveraging these patterns will be key.

The Four Types of Team Members in 2030

Middle managers will manage a diverse mix of team members, with the blend varying by context:



Tech-Based Co-pilots



Robots or Automatons



External Experts or Partner Collaborators



Human Partners

Navigating This New Team Landscape

Managing these diverse "team members" will require a range of skills. Switching between managing different types of contributors will be essential for both efficiency and effectiveness. Leveraging a bot (automaton or robot) demands vastly different skills than coaching or mentoring a talented human.

The ability to mix and match resources, manage projects effectively, and do more with less will differentiate great managers.

While all managers will have access to similar tools and technologies, success will depend on separating the useful from the hype and learn quickly to leverage each piece and the collective.

Integrating People, Tools, and Technologies

Integrating tools, technologies, and people, and not getting drowned by the daily noise will take personal balance, confidence, humility, and learning agility.

Collaboration and Adaptability

The ability to collaborate and communicate effectively with both internal and external "bodies" and disengage and pivot quickly will distinguish exceptional middle managers.

Most importantly, depth in one or more domains will remain a must.

Sounds bold and maybe just a bit scary? Every manager still has time to invest in their own development. But in these tumultuous times, focus and thoughtful execution are critical.

For organizations, it is a great opportunity to leverage talent through transformation, or be left with a large pool of untapped talent.

It is an urgent call to redesign organizations and rethink the development agenda for managers.

Context

- Who are my key stakeholders?
- What are the 3 key deliverables I need to complete today, this week, this month, this quarter, and this year?
- What decision-making authority do I have? When and who do I need to influence to get my work done?



Team

- What is the mix of my team in terms of bots, co-pilots, humans, and external partners?
- What specific tasks can they perform independently or collaboratively?
- What unique skills do they bring that impact my deliverables?
- How do I get these diverse "team members" to work together?
- How do I improve their collaboration skills to enhance outcomes and ways of working?



Integration

- How do I integrate the various elements—people, technology, partners, continuous learning, and stakeholder management?
- How do I prioritize and resolve conflicts when these elements compete?
- How do I stay aware of global trends and integrate relevant insights into my context?

Skills

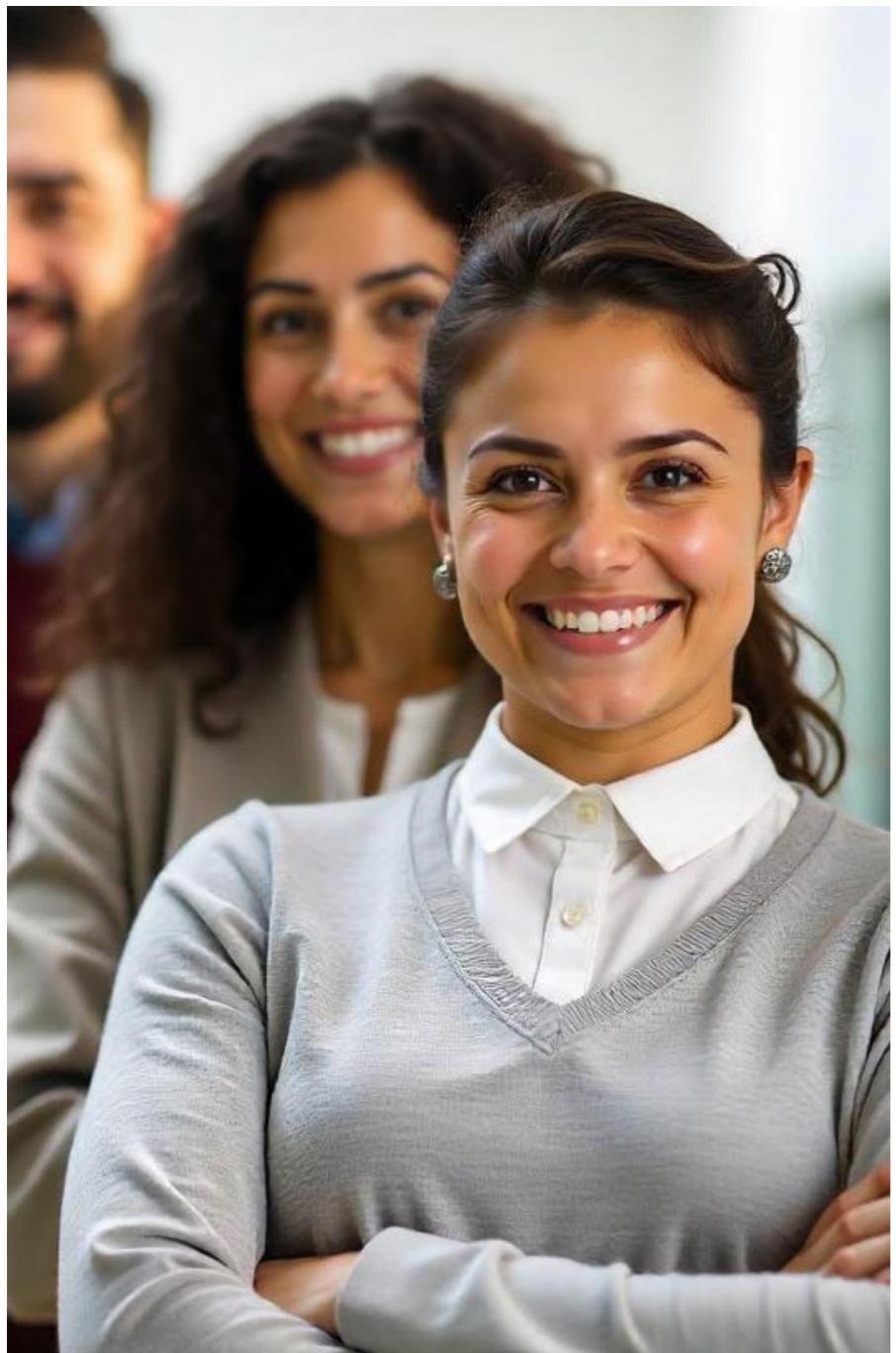
- What specific skills must I develop to manage this team effectively?
- How do I create a bundle of skills that is uniquely mine?
- How do I maintain and sharpen my domain expertise?
- Who are my role models, and how can I learn from them?
- How do I create deliberate spaces to practice and refine my skills?
- What one or two new skills can give me an edge in performance?

Trends in Promotion Assessments & Hi-Potential Identification

Evolving Trends in Managerial Promotions

Promotion assessments are shifting from traditional evaluation methods to a holistic, data-driven approach. Organizations are moving beyond simple Yes/No decision-making and adopting a Talent Profile Approach, integrating strengths, development areas, aspirations, and functional expertise to build future-ready leadership pipelines.

Based on our experience with 100+ clients last year and insights from Business & HR leaders across industries, **we have identified key trends shaping managerial promotions today.**



From Yes/No to Future Readiness:

Traditional promotion assessment processes focused on a “yes/no” decision. We increasingly see organizations looking to understand leadership potential and the future readiness of participants and focus on aspects like Agility, Managing Change, Digital Dexterity, Innovation, & Initiative.

Going beyond just Manager Feedback:

Organizations are going beyond traditional interviews & manager feedback to leverage a broader set of exercises like Case Studies, In-baskets & Role Plays as part of the promotion process.

Stronger Development Focus:

Assessment inputs are being used to plan more focused onboarding plans for newly promoted employees as well as a more focused learning calendar for the overall cohort.

Repositioning Promotion Assessments & HiPo Identification: The Think Talent Approach

We believe promotion assessments should not just filter candidates but also empower future leaders. Our development-centric approach ensures individuals receive clear, data-driven insights to support their career growth.

Adopting the Talent Profile Approach

Moves beyond a pass/fail model to a **holistic assessment of leadership potential**

Integrates assessment insights with career aspirations & functional strengths

Positions promotion assessments as a **developmental journey**, not just an evaluation

Designing Robust Promotion Centres

Validated Competency Framework: Aligned with business needs for role-specific evaluation

Multi-Assessor Model: Combining internal & external assessors for a balanced, fair assessment

Statistical Reliability: Well-calibrated exercises differentiate employees based on true strengths and development needs

Immersive & Engaging Experience: Assessment centres designed to be realistic, job-relevant, and insightful

Enabling Post-Assessment Growth

Structured Individual Development Plans: Employees take clear next steps based on their assessment results

Coaching for Managers & HR: Enabling HR and managers to guide employees effectively

Progress Tracking with Analytics: Dashboards provide real-time visibility & accountability

Quick Tips for HR Practitioners: Build a Sustainable Leadership Growth Strategy

A well-designed promotion assessment is only the first step—driving sustained impact requires structured **post-assessment development to ensure real behavioral change.**

Key post-assessment strategies include:

- Guided IDP Creation:** Employees receive structured support in setting and achieving development goals.
- Manager & HR Enablement:** Internal stakeholders receive coaching and mentoring training to support employee growth.
- Data-Driven Progress Tracking:** Dashboards provide real-time visibility into employee progress for different stakeholders.
- Defined End-Point for IDPs:** Post-assessment surveys help measure progress and competency growth over time.



EMERGING TALENT PRIORITIES



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Seeking agility and ground-up innovation, organizations are increasing their focus and investment in engaging and developing talent in manufacturing and sales—especially in the context of automation. The managerial capability of first-level managers is also being recognized as a critical factor in winning on the ground.

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Developing Manufacturing Talent: Back in Focus

Promoter of a large manufacturing firm made an interesting comment in a recent discussion. He said "Earlier, I have always believed finance to be the biggest barrier to growth. If I can secure the money for Capex, growth will automatically follow. Now, talent is my bottleneck. Funding I can find, but where do I find the right people."

The comment very well illustrates the significantly sharper focus on talent & culture in manufacturing set-ups since the last 12-18 months. A wide range of issues – from demand as well as supply – are driving this change.



Rapid Capability Expansion

Large CAPEX in greenfield & brownfield projects driving headcount expansion



Tight Supply, High Attrition

Young talent is less inclined to work in remote sites (i.e. non-ac environments). Attrition up in 2-7 years experience band

Transforming Legacy Culture

Shift from process adherence to accountability, innovation & data-led decisions

New Skill Requirements

Automation & smart factories are reshaping workforce skill needs

Across industries, we see firms reacting by introducing new initiatives to engage, retain and develop talent in the manufacturing function.

Structured Assessments - for Promotion & Potential Identification



Leading Tyre Manufacturer & Retailer

Initiative: Development Centre for 200 employees across plants

Focus: Identification of hi-pot talent, development plans for all participants



Large Indian Pharmaceutical Player with 20k+ Employees

Initiative: Assessment Centres to support promotion decisions across levels

Focus: Enhancing talent quality at middle management level, Consistency in promotion process across 10+ plants

Large Scale Skill Building Initiatives



Leading Indian firm in Electrical & Electronics Sector

Initiative: Learning Workshops covering all 1000+ employees, 25k+ man-hours of training in FY 2024

Focus: Upskilling existing employees on critical technical and behavioural skills



Leading manufacturer of Specialty Chemicals & APIs

Initiative: University tie-ups to educate large group of employees on topics like operational excellence & smart manufacturing skills

Focus: Upskilling existing employees on critical technical skills to support on-going automation efforts

Developing & Strengthening Culture of Feedback



Leading Indian firm in Specialty Chemicals Space

Initiative: An in-depth study of the current feedback processes and mind-set in the organization

Focus: Improving feedback mechanisms and strengthening the culture of feedback in the organization



Leading Indian firm in the Petrochemical Sector

Initiative: Training 200+ managers across locations and plants on feedback skills

Focus: Improving quality of feedback and promoting psychological safety in teams



As you introduce such fantastic tech into the system, comprehending the tech is one (thing), working with the tech is another. Being able to assimilate it, adapt to it and make it even better than what it is - that is the element that I find is becoming challenging.

- VGS Mani

Ex-Head, Global Supply Chain, India Microsoft

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Human capital is likely to play a more critical role in growth and sustainability in the manufacturing function than ever before. This shift toward a sharper focus on talent, culture, and leadership development will define the future trajectory of many manufacturing firms.

Strengthening Managerial Capability on the Ground

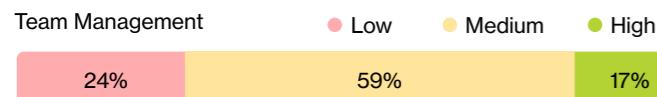
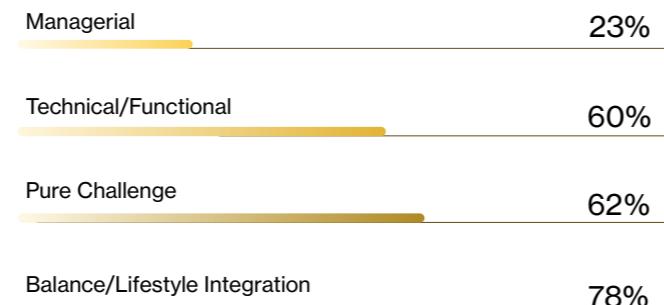
As companies strive to survive and grow in a rapidly changing business environment, agility, cross-functional collaboration, and execution excellence have become critical for success. Organizations with a more agile, disciplined, and engaged frontline workforce are better positioned to thrive. This has put the spotlight on the managerial capabilities of first-level managers in functions like sales, manufacturing, and supply chain—areas with large, distributed teams.

51% of FLMs score low on innovation and agility traits, as per Think Talent Personality Inventory data from over 10,000 participants.

Our work with hundreds of companies on assessing and developing first-level managers reveals multiple facets of this growing challenge.

Only 23% of FLMs have “Managerial” as one of their top three career anchors.

In Edgar Schein’s framework, “Managerial” career anchor indicates managing people & resources as key motivator and driver for the person.



A significant proportion of FLMs show low proficiency in key managerial competencies, including planning, execution, and people management.

(Data based on ADC scores of 5,792 first-line managers across industries and functions.)

How Organizations Are Responding

More Rigorous Promotion Process

- Going beyond interviews to Structured ADCs
- Involving senior leaders in the selection process
- Focus on step-up competencies rather than past performance

Scaling up Development Initiatives for FLMs

- Expanding reach and investment; adopting hybrid delivery for speed and accessibility
- Placing stronger emphasis on team management, development, and team culture
- Tracking impact using ongoing assessments, ESAT scores, and IDP progress

Creating Regular Feedback Mechanisms

- Moving from annual feedback to quarterly feedback
- Pulse surveys & 180 feedback to collect feedback from the ground-up
- Embedding values and culture into development—not just competencies

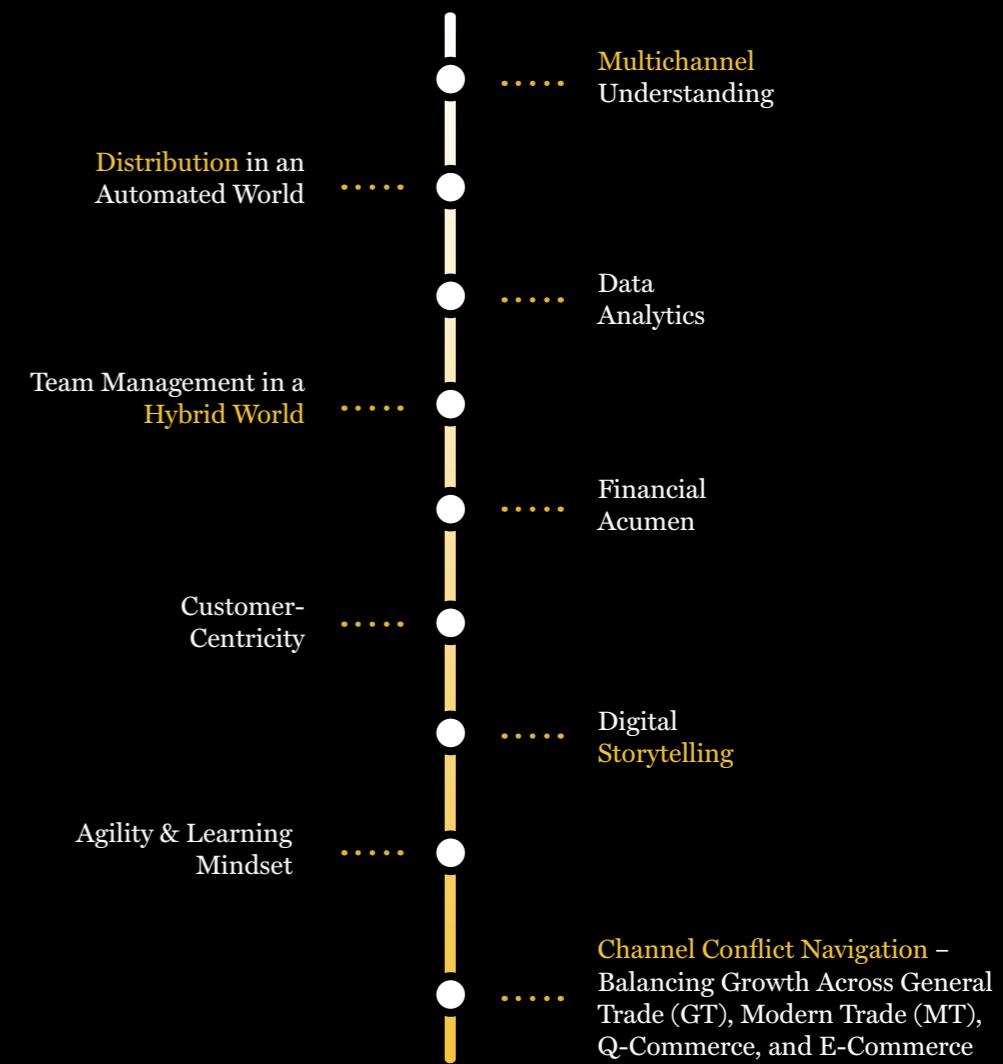
Preparing Sales Teams for a Changing Sales Environment

The sales world—especially in B2C—has changed significantly over the last few years. What worked even two years ago can now feel outdated. For instance, AI-equipped systems are now recommending outlet-specific product mixes based on buying behavior or highlighting secondary sales patterns that require quick course correction—something that was entirely manual not long ago.

New-age channels like quick commerce and e-commerce have added speed and scale—but they’ve also introduced complexity. Channel conflict is becoming a real issue. Sales managers now need to handle overlaps carefully, ensuring that brands don’t end up cannibalizing their own growth across general trade, modern trade, and digital platforms.

Most organizations have taken steps to stay ahead—new tools, new systems, new ways of working. But what’s becoming increasingly urgent now is preparing the sales team itself. This shift isn’t just about tech—it’s about capability, mindset, and leadership readiness. In our work with B2C organizations, this focus on structured upskilling and reskilling is gaining strong momentum.

Some of the Capabilities being Prioritized:



And more importantly, there’s a growing focus on frontline managers as coaches—not just chasing numbers, but enabling reps to make sense of this fast-changing environment.

INCLUSION BY DESIGN



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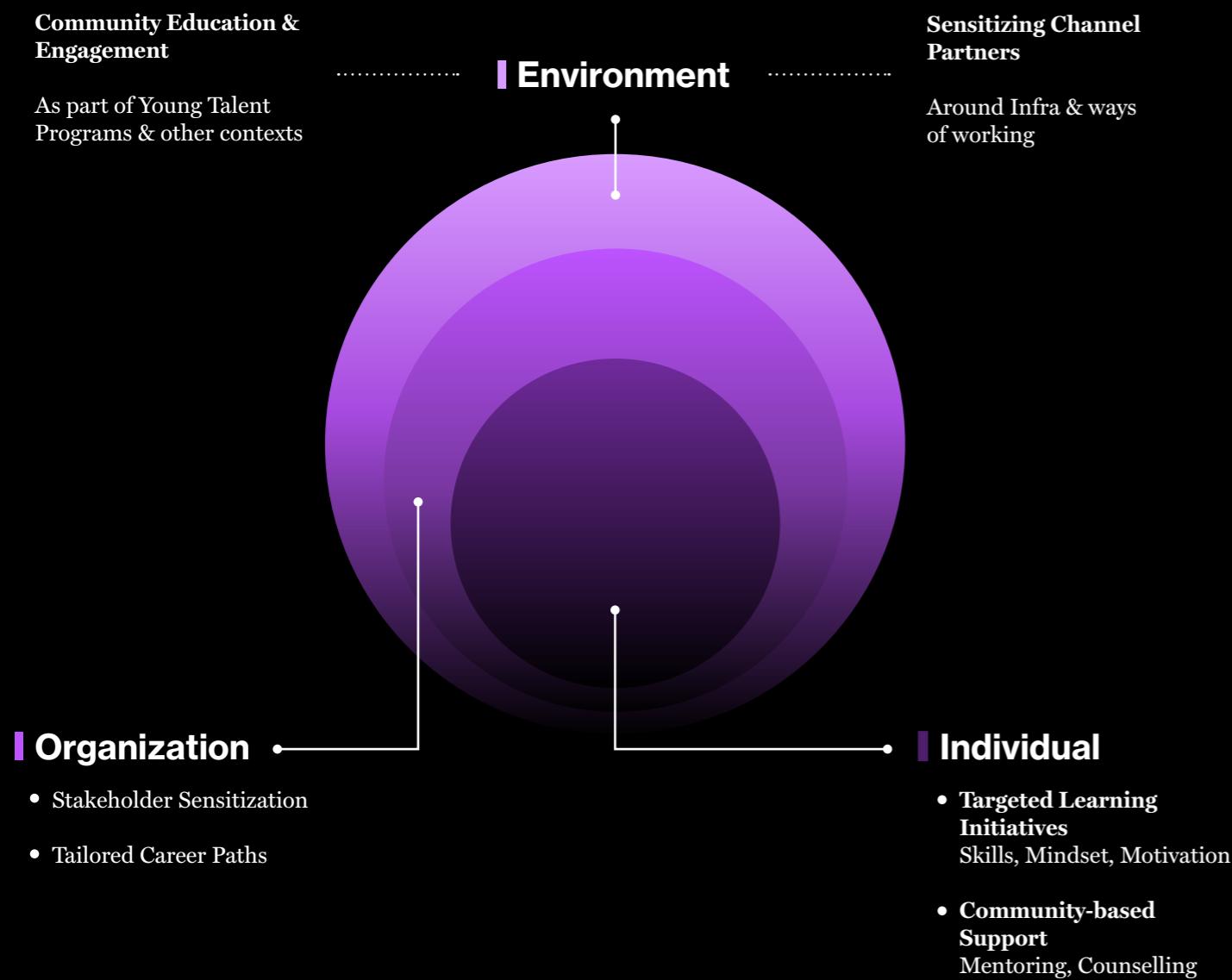
Women in Sales: An Ongoing Challenge

In FY24, we covered 2000+ participants across assessment and development interventions for sales teams. These interventions covered participants across multiple industries – Consumer Products, BFSI & Pharma. The female representation across these programs – less than 15%.

Companies across sectors have struggled with female representation in the sales function. The situation is slightly better for teams operating on B2B context e.g. Bancassurance in BFSI, Key Account or Modern Trade in Consumer Products & Pharma.

However, over the past two years, the issue of female representation in sales function seems to be coming back on the talent agenda, especially for larger firms. The drivers seem to be varied. In most cases, it is part of the broader push around DEI. However, many companies, especially with businesses targeting female consumers (Beauty & Wellness, Apparel), this is also an attempt to be closer to their customers.

The issues impacting female representation in sales teams are anything but simple. We see companies taking a wide range of concerted actions to make progress on this issue.



There are two key challenges related to this issue which should be highlighted:

- Given the deeply instituted issues driving this challenge, success requires a comprehensive set of actions addressing multiple facets. Isolated action or initiatives, while well-meaning, may not ultimately yield any returns.
- We see Boards setting unreasonable targets around female representation which do not reflect the realities on the ground. This is leading to sub-optimal talent decisions on the ground. This may be myopic and may cause more harm on the overall agenda of creating truly diverse sales teams.



Bringing more women into sales shouldn't be treated as an HR metric—it's an organizational goal. It's about building teams with diverse perspectives that can shape stronger decisions, deeper customer insights, and sustainable growth for the entire function.

- Roopa Prabhu

Co-Founder
Growth Amplifiers Pvt. Ltd.

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Beyond English: Designing Talent Interventions for Bharat

Organizations are increasingly investing in scaling up learning and assessment initiatives to extend coverage to frontline talent. However, what works for a more senior or corporate audience may not work at the frontline. Captured here are some learnings from supporting clients in scaling up these interventions to plants and on-the-ground sales and operations teams.

Learning 1: Thinking Beyond English

English is not the language of work for most frontline employees. To engage audiences at this level, programs must allow participants some flexibility on the language front.



At a large NBFC, 82% of candidates opted to take the pre-employment assessment in a language other than English when given the opportunity.



63% of companies where we supported ADCs for frontline talent indicated that English communication is not a focus competency and required the assessment design to facilitate participants to respond in a mix of English and other languages.

Even for employees in managerial roles, while most of them appear to “understand” English well, expressing their views in English remains a challenge.

Learning 2: Leveraging Digital

The traditional assumption has been that employees at the frontline are not tech-savvy and have limited interest in learning opportunities. With a new generation in the workplace, we see this assumption no longer holding true. People are fairly savvy in using mobile devices and apps, although access to laptops remains a challenge.



In a workshop-based intervention covering 1,000+ young manufacturing professionals, participants were required to complete multiple inventories, assessments, and surveys on their phones. The completion rate was 100%.



In an intervention covering hundreds of participants at a retail and hospitality firm, participants needed to complete assessments but did not have access to laptops or official email IDs. When allowed to complete the assessments on their personal phones using their personal IDs, the completion rate went up to 93%.



Role-play exercises in an ADC for an FMCG company were conducted on WhatsApp video since participants did not have access to MS Teams or similar platforms.



With a new generation in the workplace, we see this assumption no longer holding true. People are fairly savvy in using mobile devices and apps, although access to laptops remains a challenge.

Learning 3: Addressing WIIFM

Lack of interest and engagement in learning or other initiatives often stems from a perceived lack of relevance. Imagine a sales employee who is the sole representative of the firm in their location. Why would they be interested in a learning program on organizational culture if the focus is on typical dos and don'ts in an office setting? Contextualization is critical to engage this audience.



ADCs for promotion at an FMCG company had differentiated content (Case Study, Role Play) for employees in General Trade and Institutional Sales roles.



At a large pharma company, the Think Talent team and the corporate HR team conducted roadshows across 10+ plants prior to the launch of an intervention to communicate the value proposition and collect inputs and expectations.



In 2024, the program design phase for at least 50 interventions included a market or plant visit by a Think Talent consultant.

Contextualization requires a significant investment of both time and effort, as well as empathy and an audience-centric mindset. However, this investment can make a world of difference between the success and failure of an intervention. Tailoring strategies to the unique needs, backgrounds, and circumstances of a specific audience enhances the likelihood of meaningful impact and makes interventions more relevant and effective.



When we brought relatable scenarios into the learning program design, 98% participants engaged with the entire workshop.

- Ramnath Murali

Ex-VP & Head, L&D
DHFL General Insurance Limited

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Bias or Fact: Evaluating Some Common Perceptions

Unconscious biases and perceptions can influence selection and promotion decisions, often leading to discriminatory practices in organizations. In this section, we examine commonly held beliefs about specific talent cohorts using data from a scientifically designed psychometric instrument.

While personality is only one of several factors influencing actual behavior, psychometric data offers a strong indication of an individual's natural orientation or preferences. The intent here is to use scientifically collected data to revisit these long-standing perceptions.

For this analysis, a simple random sampling method was applied within each demographic group. In inter-cohort comparisons, sample sizes were kept uniform.

Perception: Sales professionals are naturally charismatic and persuasive

Distribution of Sales People on Sales-specific Traits

Achievement Orientation n = 5753



About TTPI

Think Talent Personality Inventory (TTPI) is an online self-rated Psychometric Personality Test.

Based on 'Big Five Personality Theory'

10 Years

Ipsative Questionnaire

2 Lac+ Participants

200+ Organizations

30 Quads

20 Traits

Available in 12+ languages

Perception: Drive for Results and Innovation Orientation decreases with age

Distribution of Young (<35 Years) & Old (>45 Years) People on traits related to Drive for Results and Innovation Orientation

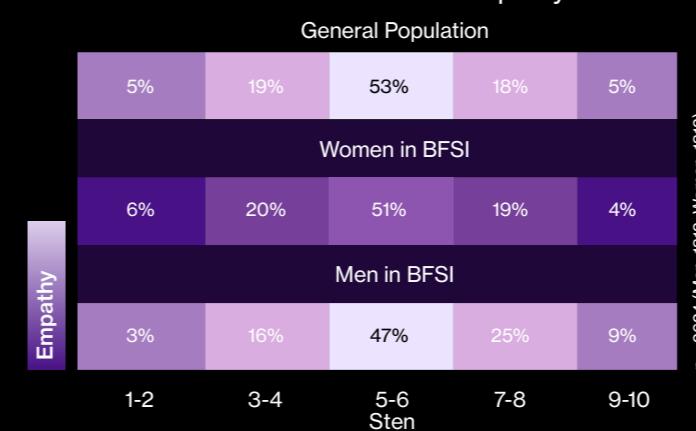


n = 5102 (Young: 2551; Old: 2551)

distribution between younger and older cohorts. We believe older professionals may not project the same energy as their younger counterparts—but that doesn't mean they lack drive or creativity. Perhaps it's time we do more to help them reconnect with that energy.

Perception: Women Are Too Soft and Empathetic to Manage Difficult Conversations

Distribution of Men and Women on Empathy in BFSI Organizations



The belief that women are "too soft" for tough business decisions is rooted in outdated gender stereotypes. It's often used to justify limiting their roles and reinforce biased assumptions about emotional strength and decision-making ability.

In reality, data from 2,500+ professionals in similar roles at a private bank showed the opposite—a higher percentage of men scored high on empathy, while more women scored low.

Ultimately, the ability to make tough calls isn't about gender—it's about qualities like critical thinking, confidence, strategic insight, and emotional intelligence. Women are just as likely to possess these traits as men. Period.

Key Takeaways

As organizations navigate automation, evolving skill needs, and inclusion, managing and empowering frontline talent has become mission-critical to driving resilience and long-term growth.

Future-Ready Talent Pipelines



Talent Pipelines: In Focus

Developing robust talent pipelines has become a key priority for companies, with increasing involvement from boards, regulators, and leadership teams.

A more Structured Approach

Organizations are taking a more structured, transparent, and data-driven approach to promotion and talent review processes.

Focus on Future Readiness

In defining talent and competency frameworks, organizations are looking ahead—broader trends and shifts in the market.

Emerging Talent Priorities



Manufacturing Talent: Not available on tap

With greater automation, skill requirements in manufacturing have increased. However, talent supply and retention remain a challenge. In response, organizations are ramping up investments to engage and retain manufacturing talent.

Sales teams: Striving for Continued Relevance

Organizations are reorganizing and reskilling sales teams with new capabilities to better leverage automation and respond to evolving market dynamics.

Magic formula for attrition: Better Managerial Capability

Companies are boosting managerial capability by scaling learning initiatives and strengthening selection and promotion processes for frontline leaders.

Inclusion by Design



Understanding Frontline Employee Persona

Traditionally held assumptions—such as frontline employees being less educated or less digitally savvy—may no longer apply. Proactively recalibrating these personas can unlock significant value.

Ensuring Relevance

Programs designed for a corporate audience often miss the mark with frontline teams. Language, context, and delivery methods must be tailored for better engagement and effectiveness.

Harder than Expected

Scaling up for the frontline isn't just about content or platforms—it's about building trust, emotional connection, and long-term credibility with employees on the ground.

About Think Talent

Established in 2010, we at Think Talent Services have partnered with hundreds of organizations across several industries through our digitally-enabled key offerings, that are completely focused on people development across levels. Our partnerships with organizations extend over several years, are deep and have been built on trust and value delivery.

Today, we are a team of 60+ employees and 125+ partners, to help us seamlessly deliver services to our clients.

Our offerings allow extremely personalized experiences for participants while enabling the scaling of interventions for rapid and consistent deployment.

Deep customization and content expertise allow us to deliver highly contextual offerings.

We partner with several global players, bringing their IP and methodologies to our work and developing our intellectual property through research focused on talent.

Some of the fundamental themes around which our work has evolved over a period of time include:

- Developing futuristic leadership capabilities
- Providing modern integrated solutions to manage talent at scale
- Democratizing learning in the modern workplace
- Empowering organizations to build resilient talent pipelines

We have tried to better understand the world of talent and leadership through our experiences and insights, often garnered from interactions with various individuals from different walks of life.

What We Do

Talent Assessments

Solutions to help organizations add rigor and scale to selection, promotion and development processes

360° Feedback & Development Planning

Scale up feedback and development planning for employees using digital platforms

Learning Journeys

Scalable learning programs to build leadership and develop talent clusters at all levels





Helping Organizations Build Stronger Talent Pipelines

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