

# The Great Redesign: Architecting The AI Workforce Of 2035

by Ivan Palomino



*The world of work is hurtling toward a profound transformation, with the year 2035 emerging as the horizon for a massive shift in how businesses operate, innovate, and lead. Fuelled by the pervasive integration of AI and evolving employee values, the old hierarchical and skill-set models are being replaced by something far more dynamic and human centric. For business leaders, this isn't just a technological upgrade it's a complete redesign of the organization, a challenge that will separate the thriving from the obsolete.*

### From Tools To Agent-Led Orchestration

By 2035, AI will cease to be a mere tool and become a full-fledged, embedded partner in the workforce, fundamentally redefining tasks, and roles. This integration is projected to unfold in stages, progressing from simple tool-based adoption to a final phase of agent-led orchestration, where AI executes end-to-end processes under human strategic oversight.

The upside is significant: generative AI could raise labour productivity by approximately 15% in developed markets upon full adoption. This transformation will free human teams from routine execution, allowing them to concentrate on higher-value activities such as strategy, design, and complex decision-making. Consequently, traditional functional silos will crumble, and the hierarchical pyramids of the past are expected to be replaced by flatter, more agile, AI-augmented pods where senior talent collaborates directly with AI agents.

This shift mandates that leaders become Architects. They must redesign organizations, processes, and workflows to truly harness AI's potential, moving beyond simply bolting it onto legacy systems. Failure to rethink structure will limit efficiency gains, as AI cannot optimize a poorly designed workflow.

### The Rise Of Durable Skills And STARS

As AI takes over technical and routine tasks, the value of uniquely human skills, often called durable or soft skills, will skyrocket. The World Economic Forum predicts that 40% of a worker's core skills will be disrupted by 2030, underscoring the necessity of a massive wave of upskilling and reskilling.

Future-proof skills are those difficult to automate, including analytical thinking, resilience, flexibility, systems thinking, and problem framing. The critical differentiator will be an employee's ability to not just perform a task, but to elevate the performance of the entire team. This shift mandates a move away from static, periodic training to a pervasive culture of continuous learning and adaptation. Consequently, leaders must also function as Coaches and Teachers, helping their people learn to work differently and build these crucial new skills.

The talent pipeline itself is being redesigned through the rise of skills-first hiring, which moves away from traditional degree requirements. This is opening opportunities for millions of workers Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARS), who constitute half of the U.S. workforce. AI is enabling this transformation by analysing every candidate's skill and matching them to job descriptions, breaking down the "paper ceiling" that has long held back qualified individuals without a bachelor's degree. Companies embracing this change are seeing major benefits, including a 30% reduction in cost-per-hire and a 40% cut in turnover rates.

### The Leadership Mandate: Orchestration and Cultural Transformation

Success in the AI era will hinge less on the technology itself and more on an evolved form of leadership that can guide organizational and cultural transformation.

Leaders must fill five new, critical roles:

**Boundary-Spanners:** Building diverse networks across industries and regulators to stay fluent in AI and its implications.

**Architects:** Redesigning the organization and its processes.

**Team Orchestrators:** Choreographing the collaboration between humans and AI, treating the technology as a flexible teammate, and creating psychological safety for experimentation.

**Coaches and Teachers:** Shifting from being inspectors to being developers of talent.

**Role Models:** Personally, and visibly using AI in their daily work, signalling that curiosity, agility, and learning from mistakes are part of the journey.

This evolved leadership must prioritize culture. A toxic culture is 10.4 times more predictive of employee attrition than compensation, making it the single most crucial factor in retention. Leaders must create an environment where a sense of belonging, and positive social connections are the most significant drivers of workplace happiness. Finally,

the sustainability imperative demands architectural focus. Gen Z and Millennials, who will make up 74% of the global workforce by 2030, place a high premium on environmental responsibility. 70% of this demographic considers a company's environmental credentials a key factor when choosing an employer. Leaders must integrate sustainability into their core business models, not just as compliance, but as a critical tool for attracting and retaining talent.

The future of work is not about replacing humans with machines; it's about creating a more human-centric workplace where technology empowers people to do their most creative, strategic, and meaningful work. The organizations that embrace this transformation - by redesigning their structures, evolving their leadership, and fostering a culture of trust and belonging - will be the ones to thrive.

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