Agents of change:
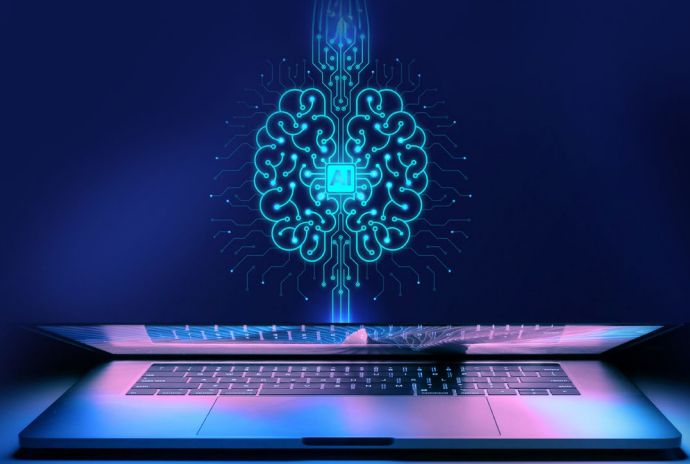# New organizational roles in the age of AI

Building the AI-integrated workforce of tomorrow

The age of AI is not on the horizon—it is already here, reshaping the very foundations of our workplaces.

The accelerating adoption of AI and autonomous agentic technologies is driving a profound shift in how we work, collaborate, and lead. AI agents will not be silent tools in the background; they will be front and center as active collaborators, capable of fulfilling complex goals and working alongside human talent. As you address these momentous changes, I encourage you to reimagine traditional job structures and organizational charts, making room for digital teammates as core members of your teams.

In this new ecosystem, leadership as we know it is being redefined. This shift demands not only decisive stewardship, but also entirely new capabilities and roles that bridge the human/digital divide. Leaders will be called upon to champion ethical AI practices, build robust oversight, and ensure technology serves everyone.

The future demands bold leadership and relentless curiosity. Those who experiment, iterate, and thoughtfully orchestrate the human/digital ecosystem will thrive. The winners will combine human ingenuity with digital efficiency, creating organizations that are more adaptive, resilient, and innovative than ever.

Are you ready to lead in this new era?

I invite you to read on, challenge your assumptions, and join the conversation about what it truly means to build and manage the workforce of tomorrow.

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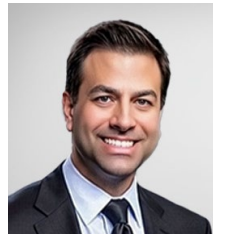
Introduction

The accelerating adoption of AI and agentic technologies is not merely a technological shift—it is a fundamental transformation of the workplace itself. As digital teammates evolve from simple automation tools to independent collaborators capable of fulfilling complex goals, visionary leadership has become imperative.

To unlock the full value of the emerging hybrid digital/human workforce, companies must establish new and evolved capabilities that enable orchestration across human and digital labor ecosystems. These capabilities will reside within new organizational roles that blend operational rigor, strategic oversight, and ethical stewardship, thereby ensuring that these digital teammates are organically integrated into the operational structure as they usher in the future workforce.

In this paper, we examine the emergence of new organizational roles and capabilities required to integrate AI agents as digital teammates, so that C-suite executives, CHROs, and transformation leaders can effectively orchestrate human/digital collaboration and understand how to build a resilient, future-ready workforce. In subsequent papers, we will dig more deeply into issues including how to direct and evolve human and digital capabilities in an AI-driven future, and how to rewire operating models to optimize this new human/AI collaboration.

> " To unlock the full value of the emerging hybrid digital/human workforce, companies must establish new and evolved capabilities that enable orchestration across human and digital labor ecosystems."

Macro-trends shaping the AI-centric workforce

AI agents are evolving from simple automation tools to independent digital teammates capable of fulfilling goals, taking actions, collaborating with humans, and operating autonomously. Traditional job structures and organizational charts are being reimagined, with digital and human teammates joining forces as core members of teams across functions. This shift demands a reimagining of the workforce operating model, which includes rethinking traditional job structures and capabilities.

Research conducted by the MIT Sloan Management Review in partnership with the Boston University Questrom School of Business indicates that 57 percent of global enterprises have introduced formal AI oversight committees or roles, such as AI Ethics Boards or chief AI officers, to manage the impact of autonomous systems.[1] Within these positions, the capacity to manage pressures inherent in increasingly complex roles is paramount, as cited by 7 in 10 of respondents to the 2025 Global Leadership Development Study from Harvard Business Review.[2]

The scale of this change is further highlighted by the Brookings Institution, whose study reveals that approximately 70 percent of large US companies are planning to restructure job roles and responsibilities within the next three years as AI capabilities become more deeply embedded in daily operations.[3] Taken together, these findings illustrate the sweeping impact of AI agent integration on the enterprise, necessitating the creation of new organizational roles and capabilities to ensure responsible deployment, strategic alignment, and ongoing management of digital workers.

> " Managing AI isn't just about technology—it's about enhancing collaboration between humans and machines to drive strategic goals. New skills, abilities, and knowledge are required to work with and manage agents."
>
> **—John Doel,** Partner, AI Workforce Transformation, KPMG US

[1] "The State of AI Governance in Enterprises," MIT Sloan Management Review & Boston University Questrom School of Business, 2024

[2] "2025 Global Leadership Development Study," Harvard Business Review, June, 2025

[3] "AI and Workforce Transformation: Trends in U.S. Corporations," Brookings Institution, 2024

Defining essential capabilities and roles for the agentic AI era

The shift from traditional automation to agentic AI systems—capable of autonomous decision-making, planning, and adaptation—is fundamentally changing how work gets done. Unlike static technology models, agents can plan, learn, adapt, and act across interconnected processes, often collaborating with other agents and systems. This can create both opportunity and complexity.

Companies must design AI agents with intuitive user experiences, map their roles as digital teammates within human resources (HR) and information technology (IT) systems, continuously monitor and evaluate their performance, reinforce them with current knowledge, and apply performance management principles—similar to HR constructs traditionally applied to human workers.

Together, these realities demand a new set of organizational capabilities in roles that span strategy, operations, governance, and oversight. This will ensure that AI agents are designed, deployed, and managed responsibly and effectively. At right are details of some of the new and evolving positions that will be essential in the age of AI, many of which stem from and/or report to the key role of the workforce planning architect.

Workforce planning and organizational design roles

Workforce planning architect (with AI focus): Drives AI strategy from the top down, including analyzing, planning, and communicating organizational changes resulting from AI. Redefines roles and models impact on structure and value.

AI architect (in each business line): Putting the workforce planning architect's vision into action, the AI architect identifies and deploys appropriate technologies for specific functions, ensuring effective AI integration and use. Supported by AI agents with insights and benchmarking to validate decision-making.

Orchestration engineer: Designs, tests, and optimizes goal instructions—structured long-form prompts that define how agentic AI systems reason, plan, execute, and coordinate tool use (including skills and MCP servers)—to achieve autonomous outcomes while maintaining optimal human autonomy and oversight.

Operational and performance roles

AI training and development lead: By ensuring that large language models and the knowledge bases that feed them are continuously improved and trained, the AI training and development lead can help ensure they are fit for purpose and aligned with business goals.

AI performance manager: Oversees AI agent performance, calibrates tasks between human and digital teammates, and manages teams comprising both. Measures impact of AI agents against business KPIs.

Governance and oversight roles

AI governance and risk specialist: Establishes and enforces procedures, policies, and mechanisms for responsible AI use, while monitoring evolving risk and compliance mandates.

AI security specialist: Manages security for both digital and human workers, protecting data and ensuring operational integrity in a hybrid workforce.

AI ethicist: Guides organizations on the ethical deployment of AI, helping balance innovation with responsibility and social impact.
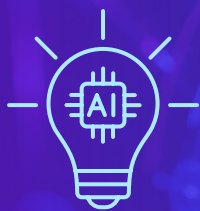
How to get there

As companies embark on the journey of reimagining their organizational structures to incorporate agentic AI, it is essential to recognize that the integration of digital teammates should parallel the established practices of traditional human resource management. Much like the employee lifecycle—encompassing onboarding, training, performance management, and offboarding—the successful incorporation of these teammates requires a well-defined framework that mirrors these familiar and important HR processes.

Implementing the agentic workforce

The following steps outline how this transformation can be approached. Those organizations that successfully complete this process will need to implement leading practices of human talent management and extend them to encompass digital collaborators.

1. Define the role
- Structuring the agentic lifecycle

2. Activate the role
- Change management and human/machine collaboration
- Technology enablement and integration

3. Optimize the role
- Upskilling, learning, and career pathing
- Measurement, governance, and risk oversight

1. Define the role

Structuring the agent lifecycle

To ensure effective integration of digital teammates into an organization, it is essential to mirror the established employee lifecycle with a structured framework tailored for AI agents. This approach promotes accountability and seamless interaction between human and digital teams.

- **Conduct a landscape or situational assessment:** Before implementing new roles and capabilities, complete a comprehensive situational assessment to understand where AI agents can be integrated and to inform strategic decisions about workforce transformation.

- **Prioritize agent lifecycle management:** Define a structured lifecycle for digital teammates (onboarding, training, performance management, continuous learning, and retirement), analogous to the human employee lifecycle.

- **Define the digital teammate system of record:** Determine the appropriate platform and attributes to collect and maintain the digital teammate workforce data elements.

- **Add agents to the organizational chart:** Assign AI agents a defined identity in HR systems and reflect their roles within organizational charts. Ensure reporting lines and responsibilities are clearly delineated.

- **Define ownership and accountability:** Designate leadership and operational teams to oversee agent performance, compliance, and value alignment to maintain clarity in management.

2. Activate the role

Change management and human/machine collaboration

Transitioning to a hybrid workforce requires intentional strategies to manage change across knowledge, skill, and mindset dimensions, which are all critical aspects to foster cultural acceptance and encourage productive collaboration between humans and AI agents.

- **Commit to a personalized change-management program:** Drive the acceptance of AI integration through structured change programs and transparent communication that are specific to the individual.

- **Support the culture and mindset shift required for human and digital teammates collaboration:** Cultivate trust, psychological safety, and a culture of experimentation to support successful collaboration between human and digital workers.

Technology enablement and integration

Leveraging advanced HR, IT, and workforce technologies and dedicated agent-management tools ensures operational efficiency and provides a system of record for digital teammates.

- **Leverage new capabilities within traditional workforce management tools:** Enhance traditional workforce management systems by leveraging new capabilities, including those offered by leading HR platforms and emerging agent operations tools. With features now designed to serve as the system of record for all talent, organizations can efficiently oversee digital labor resources alongside human employees, reflecting a significant step forward in unified workforce management.

- **Engage an AI business integrator:** Collaborate with expert partners to align workforce strategies, technologies, and roles, accelerating the adoption of agentic solutions.

3. Optimize the role

Upskilling, learning, and career pathing

Without focusing on the human aspects of agentic AI integration, organizations will miss out on the full value of hybrid teams. Organizations should empower their workforce with ongoing, targeted learning opportunities to ensure the AI strategy is human centered, in compliance with ethical and governance mandates, and, most important, connected to the employee value proposition in this new landscape. As a result, the workforce will find that they can anticipate developing essential skills for the future and chart career paths into new and expanded roles as AI capabilities evolve. A truly human-centered AI strategy means investing in the career pathing, upskilling, and transitioning into the new roles AI creates for humans, as in digital teammate technology.

Upskill employees to oversee agent management: Equip teams to train and maintain AI agents, reinforcing knowledge and adapting to new capabilities.

Provide continuous learning and knowledge reinforcement opportunities: Offer upskilling pathways, ensuring alignment with evolving business requirements.

Evolve career planning and pathing models: Adapt career trajectories to empower employees to transition into emerging, future-focused roles alongside digital collaborators.

Communicate the value: Emphasize that these opportunities will often arise by evolving existing positions, prioritizing upskilling and reskilling current talent rather than external hiring. Make career pathing an intentional development of internal talent for the workforce of tomorrow.

Measurement, governance, and risk oversight

A well-defined system of measurement and oversight is critical to sustain trust and maximize the value of agentic AI. By embedding robust governance, organizations can ensure adherence to ethical, security, and compliance standards.

Establish OKRs, performance metrics, and KPIs: It is critical to measure agents' outcomes (across reliability, accuracy, compliance, and value contribution) and integrate these metrics into performance dashboards.

Continuous governance and risk oversight: Implement ongoing monitoring for ethics, security, and compliance as agents gain autonomy and influence within the organization.

The future belongs to the agile

The age of AI calls for fundamental rethinking and transformation of workforce roles and capabilities. By proactively creating and evolving new positions—ranging from AI architects and trainers to governance and ethics leaders—organizations can unlock the full value of digital teammates while enabling and empowering human talent to excel in strategic, creative, and oversight functions. Success will depend on clear planning, continuous adaptation, and a commitment to responsible innovation—ensuring resilience, agility, and a sustainable competitive edge in an AI-driven future.

How KPMG can help

KPMG LLP plays a pivotal role in guiding organizations through the transformation required to accommodate hybrid AI and human workforces. By acting as a business integrator for AI, KPMG helps companies orchestrate the evolution of roles that blend human talent with digital agents. Our approach centers on integrating AI into workforce planning and organizational design, while also emphasizing robust change management and upskilling strategies. We advise clients on every phase of the talent lifecycle—from onboarding and training to performance management and offboarding—addressing the complexities of managing both human and digital workers. Leveraging advanced technology platforms, such as evolving HR systems capable of tracking digital agents, KPMG can customize solutions to help ensure thorough adoption and alignment with specific organizational needs. Through these initiatives, KPMG can enable organizations to reimagine responsibilities and create new roles, unlocking the full potential of collaborative, agentic work environments.

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Swami leads and executes the firm's AI strategy across Tax, Audit, Advisory, and other functions, serving 200,000 knowledge professionals worldwide. He directs and oversees various R&D efforts and initiatives covering AI architecture, advanced knowledge assistants, AI agents, domain-tuned small language models (SLMs), synthetic data, enterprise discovery and search, and hardware-optimized solutions. He also chairs the KPMG AI Technology Review Board to help ensure trusted and scalable AI adoption.
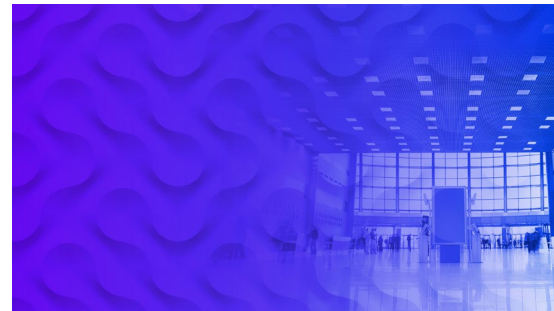
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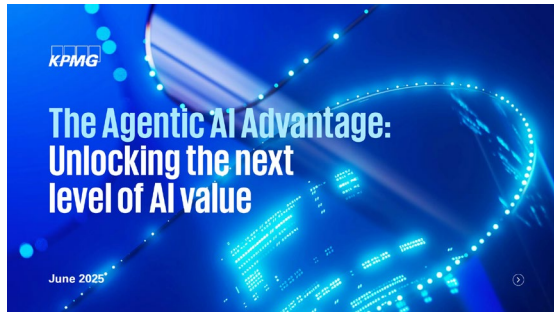
[The Agentic AI Advantage: Unlocking the next level of AI value](#)

[Shadow AI is already here; Take control, reduce risk, and unleash innovation](#)

[AI Quarterly Pulse Survey](#)

[AI Agents: Shaping the Future of Workforce Strategy](#)

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