



# Make Better Talent Development Decisions

Four Ways Assessments Can Improve  
Your Talent Development Strategy





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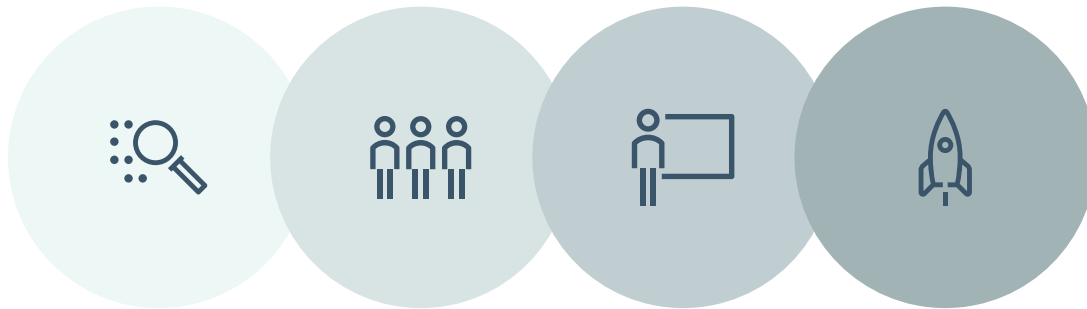
# Better Informed to Make Better Talent Development Decisions

In a world defined by complexity and change as markets, industries and strategies evolve, organizations need to build resilient workforces that are able to rise to new challenges and thrive in the face of disruption. To meet these challenges, organizations must make smarter investments in their people – infusing data and insights into promotion and leadership decisions, empowering internal talent mobility, building future skills among the workforce

and giving employees information and visibility into the possibilities of how to realize their potential.

Just as talent assessments play an important role in hiring key talent into the organization, they are also fundamental to retaining the workforce and demonstrating the commitment to your employees' career progression.

## Aon's Assessments Give You and Your Workforce Clarity and Confidence to Make Better Development Decisions By:



### Using Data

Using data to select and develop managers and leaders

### Empowering Talent

Empowering internal talent mobility

### Informing Upskilling

Informing upskilling and reskilling to build your future workforce from within

### Auditing Future Skills

Auditing future skills to build a resilient workforce

Read on to learn more about the four practical ways talent assessments can help you make better talent development decisions to protect and grow your business.



# 1

Using Data  
to Select  
and Develop  
Managers and  
Leaders



# 1

## Employees With High Potential Are Generally Promoted Faster Than Other Employees

This is despite the fact that many organizations lack a clear understanding of what ‘high potential’ means – let alone how it can be objectively identified. This can lead organizations to rely on a combination of performance data and gut instinct to identify managers and future leaders. However, leveraging assessments creates a more holistic, objective and future-facing process for spotting those with management and leadership potential.

### What it Means to be a Great Leader is Changing

Leadership skills and styles change – and will continue to change. Companies need leaders who thrive in constant and rapid shifts in opportunity and who are capable of embracing the uncertainty and challenges of a workplace characterized by constant change.

To protect and grow their business, organizations must embrace a model of leadership that identifies potential in up-and-comers that includes those leadership characteristics most needed in the future: agile mindset; leading change; and driving business.

| 8

To assess probable success in leadership roles, organizations must consider a future leader’s ability, agility and aspiration beyond the limited focus on track record. We know success in a current role does not always translate into success in a leadership role. For example, not all high-achieving front-line salespeople go on to be stellar sales managers. This is because the skills that make for a great salesperson are not the same as those that make for a great manager.





### Leaders in the Digital World

A leader in our more digital, agile and rapidly-changing era draws on the same leadership skills as the past, but now they need more. An ever-changing environment is not new; however, the speed at which job automation and market disruptors are shaping jobs and the workforce is accelerating.

Those with the most potential to succeed in future leadership roles display an agility of thought and action. They are able to learn, adapt to changes in their environment and seek new skills and experiences at work. Like all future-ready talent, future leaders require flexibility, adaptability and resilience. They know how and when to empower, support, experiment and learn – and when to switch behavior accordingly. Good leaders innovate and collaborate in new ways and are humble enough to move into the role of facilitator to empower their teams. Leadership effectiveness is a product of workstyle and behaviors.

Individuals with strong leadership potential score highly across all dimensions of leadership traits. Leadership tactics and tools can be learned, but workstyles and behaviors (especially the ability to adopt new behaviors) are what set strong leaders apart.

Data from behavior assessments can pinpoint the specific key qualities our research has proven to be linked to success in leadership roles.

**Those scoring high on these leadership behaviors are:**

30%

better at continuous improvement.

25%

better at continuous improvement.

15%

more likely to manage their own workload and self-develop.

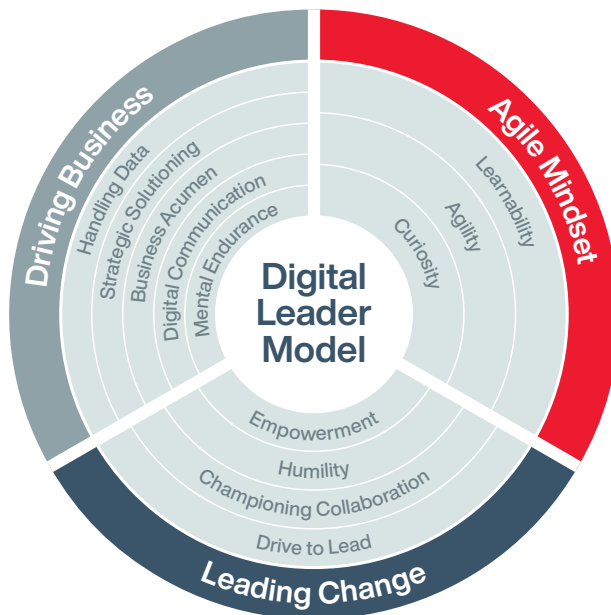
20%

higher rated on job performance.

### Aon's Digital Leader Model

Aon's leadership assessment model identifies the traits that are needed to lead right now – and those that are increasingly important in the future of work.

In addition to the core agile mindset competencies of learnability, agility and curiosity, the digital leader also needs the skills essential to leading business transformation efforts, such as championing collaboration and showing a drive to lead. However, leaders also need to be aware of their shortcomings. A sense of humility and empowerment will help ensure they have people with the right skills around them to supplement their own skill sets and will empower their people in the right ways. Future leaders also require the supplemental skills of business acumen, handling data and mental endurance.



### Leadership Assessments: What to Look For

- Assessments that measure the relevant aspects of personality, behavior, ability and motivation to provide breadth of insight.
- Research and evidence-based foundations, with clear relevance to enable participant and stakeholder buy-in.
- Accurate insight, summary of strengths and pointers for development.
- Comparison of individual's profile against a future leader's model.

### Assessments to Inform Leadership Development

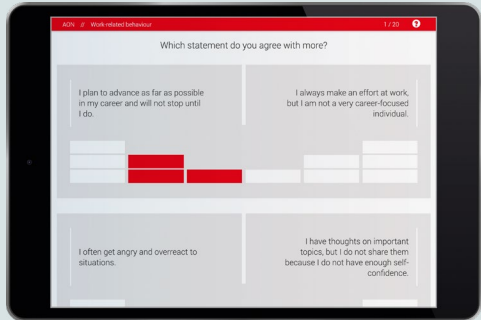
Leadership development programs can help retain and engage key talent, while growing the skills your organization's leaders will need in the future. They also provide employees with a road map for career progression and demonstrate the organization's commitment to professional development.

Assessments provide an important benchmark – to understand an individual's current skills and competencies in relation to those needed to be a successful manager. It gives leaders insight into the areas they need to focus on, whether it is first-line managers through Aon's First-Line Manager model or senior leaders needing to develop new ways to lead for the future.

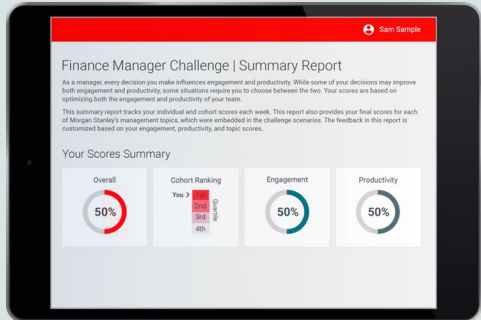


# Assessments That Enable Benchmarking, Focus and Follow-Up

**Behavioral assessments** – identify current competencies against those needed for future leadership. Inform development opportunities and activities to close the gap – and reassess at the end of a program.



**First-line management assessments** – interactive assessments that measure the skills needed to succeed in first-line management roles and provide opportunities to practice with common scenarios faced by this level of manager. Data from the initial assessment informs the six-week program to develop essential skills, checking on progress and customizing the experience.



# 2

Empower Career  
Mobility and  
Development





## Employee Development Is Most Successful When Employees Are Empowered

Employees want to own their progress and career development plans. Careers rarely follow a traditional linear path. More often, careers involve taking sideways steps to acquire experience and exposure in new areas and business units. A better analogy may be a climbing wall with no set route mapped out to the top, rather than a ladder.

The challenge for the individual and the organization is how to imagine and realize the breadth of career possibilities.

With roles open to those with potential for learning – rather than solely those with traditional prerequisites and experience – how can individuals see the available options so they can plan career routes that align with their skills and preferences?

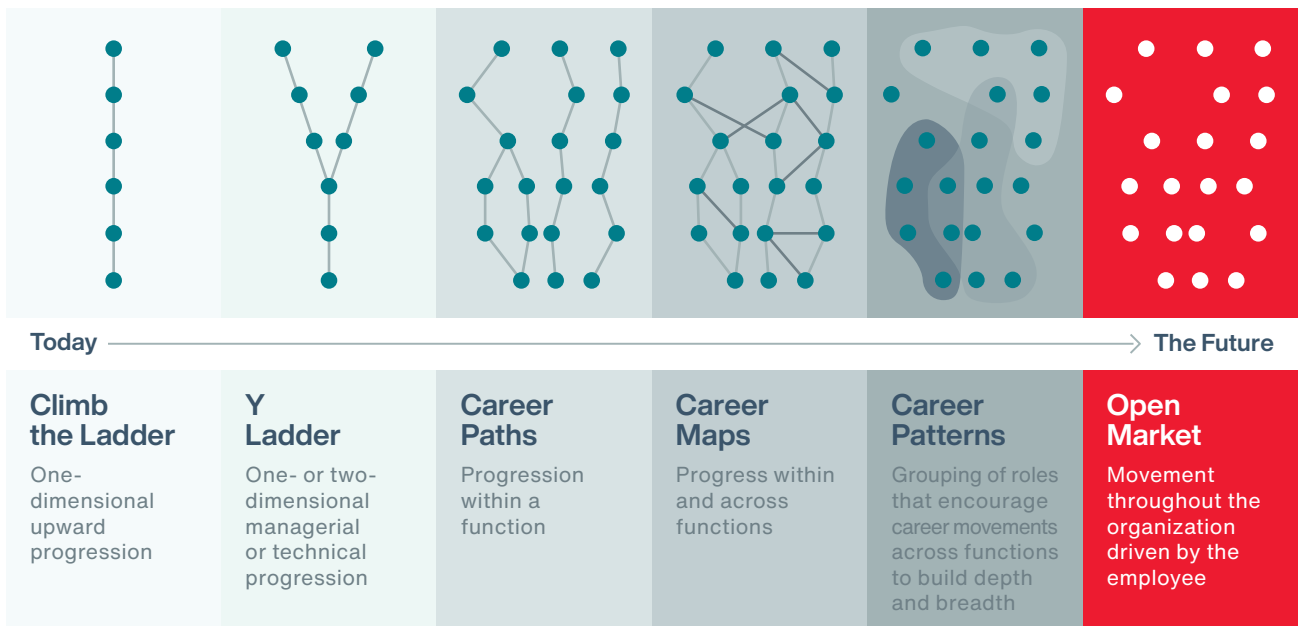
How can organizations give clarity around the possibilities to encourage individuals to remain in the organization and chart their own career path?

How can you convey creative, non-linear career paths to your workforce?

### Power of Job Neighborhoods

Building job neighborhoods showcases the competencies – and the groupings of competencies – that are relevant in your organization. It means that all employees can understand how the skills and competencies they have right now intersect with those required in roles in other parts of the organization.

Link this to career pathways and the individual begins to imagine how they can map their future career path with reskilling or upskilling. Armed with insights into their skills and abilities and clear reskilling paths outlined, employees are empowered to own their professional growth and development plans.





## 2

## Five Steps to Empowering Development

### Step 1. Understand Current Talent Skills Profile

Gain insight into abilities, preferences and competencies using talent assessments. The skills required to become future-ready likely already exist within your organization – at least in part. With a clear understanding of what these skills are and the ability to articulate how the organization will use them in the future, you can begin to share and promote them. An audit of current skills will give individuals valuable insight into their own strengths, as well as providing you with a snapshot of where your workforce is now.

### Step 2. Isolate and Identify the Skills Needed in the Future

Once you understand the skills your organization will need in the future, you can replicate them across your workforce.

### Step 3. Map out Job Neighborhoods

Create job neighborhoods by building skills maps and highlighting career paths and patterns. Certain competencies and behaviors needed for success in different parts of the organization can be grouped together.

### Step 4. Ensure Your Workforce Has Visibility Into Available Opportunities

Give employees the tools to plot out and try different career paths. Help them see a developing career, not necessarily up the traditional ladder, but by making sideways moves or venturing onto a new path entirely. Show them the possibilities and reskilling options – and provide a significant degree of control over their training and development route.

### Step 5. Start the Career Conversation

Create space for career conversations regarding mobility, interests and reskilling and upskilling. People who work with their managers to determine their own career trajectories are more likely to buy in to reskilling initiatives and contribute to the growth of the organization's internal talent pipeline.

### Five Steps to Empowering Development

#### Step 1: Understand

Understand current talent skills profile

#### Step 2: Identify

Isolate and identify the skills needed in the future

#### Step 3: Map

Map out job neighborhoods

#### Step 4: Ensure

Ensure your workforce has visibility into available opportunities

#### Step 5: Start

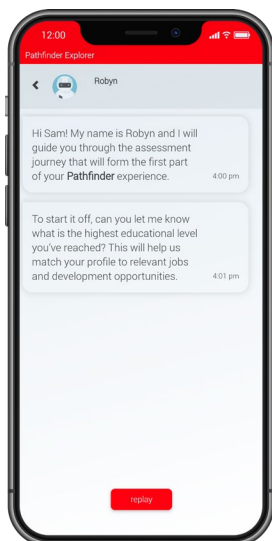
Start the career conversation



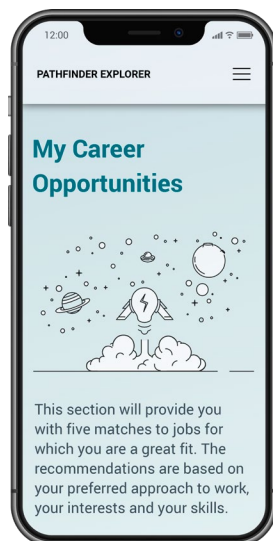
# In Practice: Empowering Mobility at a Multinational Leading Technology Firm

## Scaling Career Pathing

Aon's Pathfinder is a career-pathing tool that profiles the strengths and highlights the development areas of employees. It then uses this to present their 'fit' with potential roles across the organization. It helps boost career ownership, supports internal talent mobility and encourages a more agile approach to career pathing. It pushes past the traditional career support tools of interest and preference questionnaires and suggests the fit between an individual and job role or family – Pathfinder then highlights areas for learning and development.



Aon's Pathfinder: gather more insights about employees' experience, motives and work-related behavior.



Aon's Pathfinder: assessments result in a combined feedback report, providing insights into strengths and development opportunities, and matching employees to job roles.

A multinational leading technology firm calculated that, within five years, 30% of its current workforce skills would be obsolete. Following extensive and in-depth work and job analysis, it realized it was time to rethink and invest in the skills needed for the future and to support its workforce to make the shift.

The firm worked with Aon to bring together a new combination of fully mobile-enabled assessments of vocational interests and abilities, attitudes, learning styles and cognitive abilities, as well as an indicator of 'willingness to change'. Aon developed a complex matching algorithm that combines an individual's assessment results with biographic information to highlight the top three best matches between the individual's interests and a future-facing role at the organization, offering development actions, suggestions and ideas to help close skill gaps.

The individual is then encouraged to apply for support and funding to learn and develop into a new role with new skills.

# 3

Inform Upskilling  
and Reskilling to  
Build Your Future  
Workforce From  
Within





# 3

## Retaining and Developing Talent Enables Your Organization to Build a More Resilient Workforce

To protect and grow your business, your future workforce will need to be more agile, adaptable and curious – characterized by the enthusiasm to acquire new and necessary skills.

Organizations must also build more diverse and inclusive workforces that recognize the value of difference and realize individual potential.

To develop new skills, starts with an understanding of the current skillset and a clear articulation of what is needed for the future. Skills gaps can then be bridged through upskilling and reskilling initiatives.

To secure mission-critical skills to remain agile and adaptable, organizations are increasingly focused on identifying and nurturing existing talent. Aon is helping lead the way.

### Assessments as the Foundation for Upskilling and Reskilling

The starting point for reskilling the workforce must be to gain a solid understanding of the current behavior and skills profile and prevalence. Assessments provide data to inform reskilling initiatives by measuring employees against future-facing skills and competencies.

Also you need to understand the skillsets the organization will need in the future. This insight comes from an analysis of the business and people strategies – and modeling the talent and business data you have.

The result is a clear picture of your organization's skills gap. This information provides the foundation for reskilling your workforce. Understand the skills of your current roles and get to know what is needed in the future. Bridge the gap by empowering your people to see their strengths, where they can develop and how they can progress.





## In Practice: Smarter Reskilling at a Financial Services Firm

A financial services firm had a longstanding, traditional, waterfall approach to project management. However, this approach left the firm behind its competitors, operating with more nimble and iterative product development processes.

In response, the firm chose to rethink its processes and reconsider the roles and skills it required. This reconsideration led to a shift toward new and more agile ways of working, with the traditional project manager role being replaced and three new agile roles being created.

This is not a story of redundancy. Aon partnered with the firm to give project managers the opportunity to participate in an assessment process, not just to learn more about themselves and their strengths but also how they could develop into the new roles with confidence.

The firm successfully and radically reshaped its workforce by providing the tools and empowering its people to make the change needed to match the agility of its competitors.

### 90 days

after introducing the Aon-designed development assessment center, 30% of project managers had either moved into or were well on their way to transitioning into a new agile role.

# 4

Audit Future Skills  
to Build an Agile  
and Resilient  
Workforce





## 4

## Retaining Key Talent Is Critical

Retaining key talent is critical as business leaders look to evolve the organization for future success. Organizations cannot afford institutional knowledge to be lost in periods of disruption and transition.

The specific skills and technical expertise that will be needed in the future are largely undefined. While some skills are on the decline, others will become increasingly important – and many have yet to be created. Organizations can build resilient workforces by encouraging employees to continuously develop, learn new skills, take on different roles and move into positions that are created as the organization shifts.

For most organizations, new future-focused skills are needed. Some skills may already be within the organization. Some may be hidden and not currently used and some may need to be developed. Regardless of the starting point, organizations need to understand the following three areas:

- To succeed what for future skills are required by the business?
- What is the current future skill prevalence in the organization?
- How can the organization bridge the gap?

**Aon's Future Skills Framework** provides the structure to work out the roles your organization will need – and the skills that will be required. It highlights the current prevalence of these future work skills and subsequent talent assessments to benchmark the skills of individual people, highlighting who to reskill and upskill.

Aon's Future Skills Framework offers structure to enable organizations to identify and build the skills demanded in future roles.

- Define the roles and areas of skill needed.
- Benchmark current talent and future skills prevalence across the firm.
- Examine the impact on rewards and retention.
- Close the future skills gap through reskilling, upskilling and hiring.

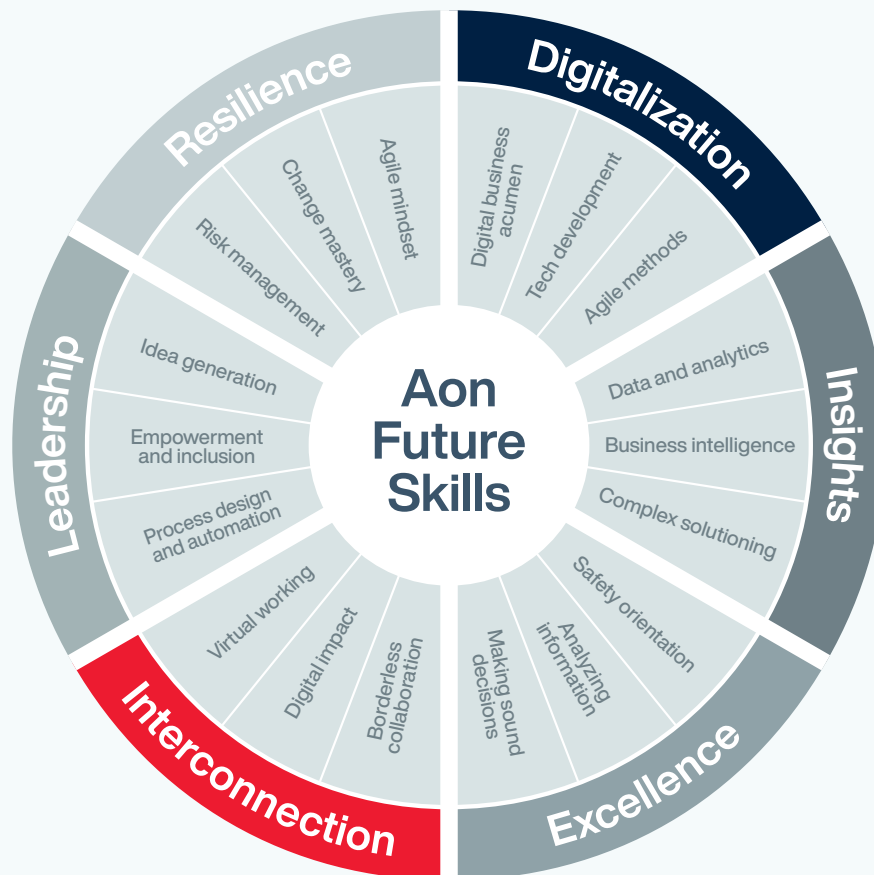
### Business Case for Uncovering Potential and Developing Future Skills

Aon's Future Skills Framework brings together key digital skills – agility, comfortable with change and the acceptance of reskilling that will be needed going forward. Hiring for these skills can be difficult, costly and slow as attracting, assessing, hiring and onboarding require significant resources and coordination across the organization.

A much more workforce-supportive and efficient approach is to consider the talent already in place, understand its capacity for internal mobility and support its development and reskilling to progress into the jobs of the future.



## Aon's Future Skills Framework



### Resilience

As companies need to build a more resilient and flexible workforce, agile mindsets and drive to learn become more crucial. In addition, mastery of change as well as balancing risk taking and risk mitigation

### Leadership

A shift towards inclusive leadership skills and people empowerment is happening. In addition, it becomes about driving digital adoption and fostering idea generation through creativity and thought leadership.

### Interconnection

A new world requires new approaches in connecting people and communication in order to achieve success. Skills around virtual working, communicating with impact in a digital world, as well as cross-functional collaboration, are key to thriving in the new normal.

### Digitalization

As business models become more digital, the demand for tech skills is rising rapidly. This also requires an acumen of digital business models and using agile methods in working.

### Insights

As more data is available, skills around data and analytics, business intelligence and interpretation of complex information become increasingly important.

### Excellence

Being aware of customer demands and being able to quickly iterate innovations around them in order to deliver superior added value remains key for most organizations. An additional uptake in demand for digital marketing and sales approaches is evident, as well as automation and efficient process design.

# Take the Next Step





## Assessments Will Help to Stay Ahead

Assessments provide data and insights that can transform the shape of a workforce, support internal mobility and optimize employee capability to stay ahead in a rapidly-shifting environment.

Jobs are changing beyond our current knowledge. Roles are being created every day and the skills needed in the future are being defined right now.

All employees benefit from understanding their strengths, capabilities and the next steps in their career to reach their potential and fit with future roles. Potential leaders need to be identified and advanced in the business.

With the right assessments, your organization can support and develop employees and shape a dynamic, adaptable, empowered and resilient workforce of the future *before* you start to lose traction.

## Contact Us

**if you are ready to explore how assessments can help you make better investments in your people to protect and grow your business.**



### **Book a Free Consultation Now**

Are you ready to rethink how you select, hire, develop, retain and reward talent?

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