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White Paper Series
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Leading the Way

*HOW HR LEADERS ARE THRIVING
IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD*

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WHITE PAPER

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The Future of Work: Capability
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In the past year, numerous surveys and reports have emerged regarding the evolving demands and priorities of the HR function, in the context of a post-pandemic world and other considerable socio-economic shifts. However, there has been little focus on the implications for HR leaders – both current and future.

01

How have they had to adapt or develop to respond to these big shifts?

02


What additional expectations do the rest of the business have for HR leaders?

03

How has their role in the C-suite changed?

In recent months, we have undertaken over 100 hours of in-depth, behavioural, and critical incident interviews with CPOs, HR Directors, and CEOs, from large multinationals to high-growth early-stage businesses, across a wide variety of sectors.

Our aim has been to identify the essential activities, behaviours, skills and qualities that HR leaders and their teams need to excel at in order to respond to these significant shifts in society, the economy, and the workplace.



Our interviews have revealed a clear trend - the past few years have brought about the most significant changes in the expectations placed on HR leaders in a generation.

While many of these challenges have been emerging for some time, they have been drastically accelerated by recent societal changes, such as the pandemic, the influx of GenZ into the workforce, a tough talent market, and the increasing digitalisation of work and products.

In many organisations, discussions at Board level and ExecCo now primarily revolve around the people agenda. Furthermore, the number of management consulting firms developing a human-centred approach to change management is a clear indication of the shifting tide.

The HR leaders interviewed have shown incredible resilience and learning agility to respond to these shifts. For many, it has been a steep learning curve.

However, concerns remain amongst our interviewees about the ability gap between the CPO and the rest of the team.

This was echoed by a curious ambiguity in a recent report published by Sage, titled, "**The Changing Face of HR in 2024**".

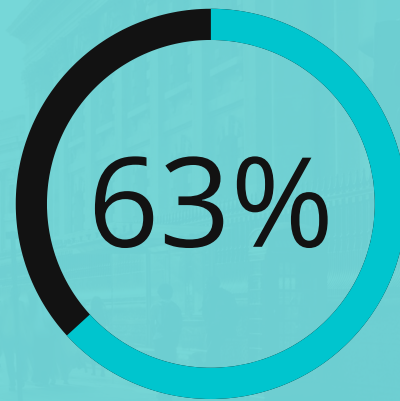
Although 95% of CEOs surveyed agreed that "Our HR leader has the right skills to become CEO," 63% of the C-suite considered the HR function's role to still be primarily administrative.

FROM CPO TO CEO?



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Sage: The Changing Face of HR in 2024



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