ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATION: STRENGTHENING YOUR JOB CATALOG WHEN MOVING TO THE CLOUD

LEAP FORWARD WITH A CAREER FRAMEWORK

A career framework is a platform on which organizations can pivot and dynamically respond to challenges in both local and global markets by linking vital HR processes, such as workforce analytics, selection and retention, performance management, succession management, rewards, and career management and development. The strategic purpose of a career framework is to define job architecture, build workforce capability, enable performance and optimize costs. When moving to cloud-based technologies, a career framework can provide a solid foundation to deliver on the objectives of the new technology system.

Today's cloud-based human resource information system (HRIS) is different than the HRIS of the past three decades. Most obviously because these newer systems are cloud-based instead of on-premise. They are configurable and not customizable. They are quickly deployed and easily updated. But several attributes that make today's HRIS different are often overlooked and can have a major impact on effectiveness for organizations seeking to implement these systems:

- In contrast to past on-premise systems, which were created with a "back-end" processing orientation, the most common cloud-based systems today were created with a "front-end" orientation in mind, to optimize on-boarding, learning and compensation systems.

- The deployment of manager and employee self-service is assumed for these systems. They were developed from the ground up, with managers and employees as the intended end users. Failure to deploy these systems in this context suboptimizes their functionality.

Configuration means accepting the community's idea of a "best practice" concept. The agility and speed of implementation comes from using accepted templates and available business processes. For organizations interested in implementing a full-fledged career frameworks model, the transition to a cloud-based HRIS will be welcome given that no on-premise system offers the level of integration, functionality and manager/employee-centered usability that the best cloud-based systems provide.
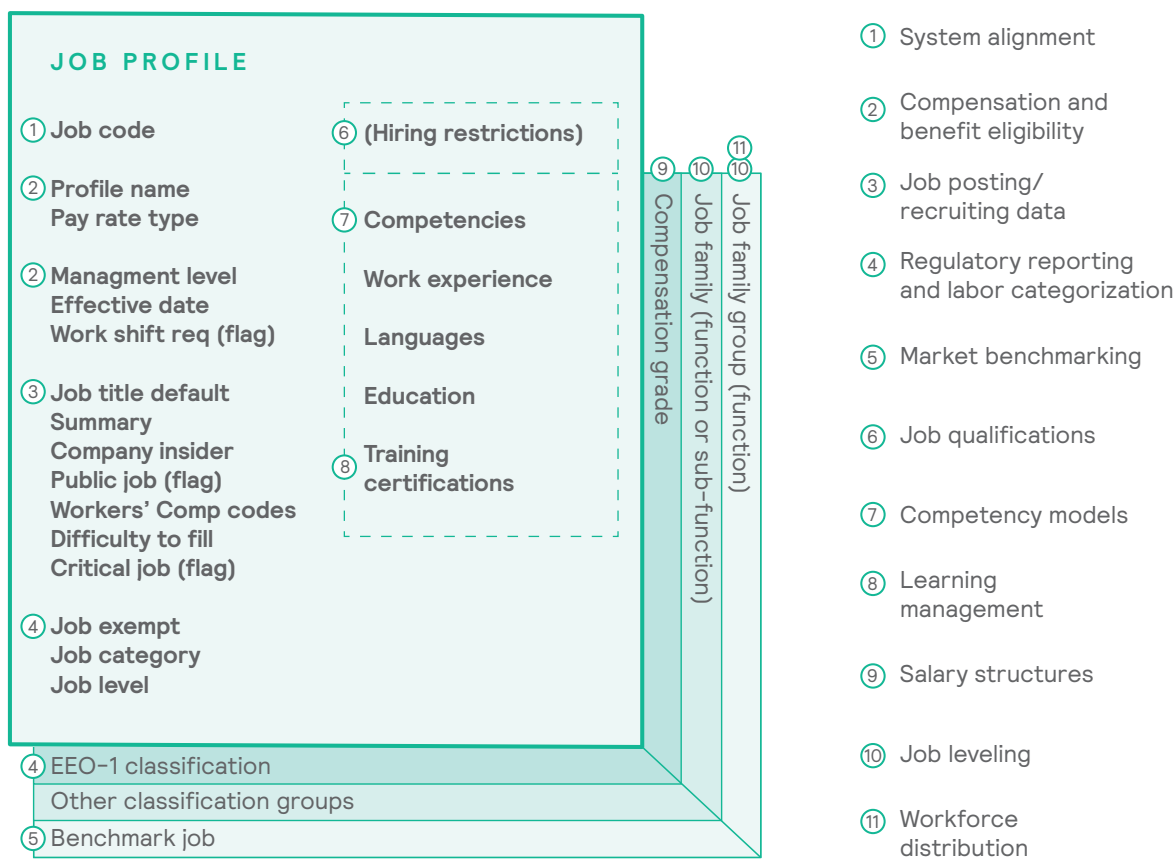
At the same time, with this superior functionality and enhanced analytics capability, there's a greater burden on getting the job catalog right. Failure to do so will at best impact an organization's ability to realize its vision for an employee-centered career framework and at worst undermine the basic functionality of many cloud-based systems.

IMPORTANCE OF THE JOB CATALOG

The job catalog is the library of jobs available within an organization. In most cloud-based systems, it's foundational to securing the core and extended functionality of the HRIS. The image below reflects exactly how much depends on the way the job profile is structured and the amount of content provided.

- *Reporting, Querying and Analytics.* The job profile (in Workday, as an example) contains most of the attributes required for impactful querying, reporting and analytics, such as job family group, job family, employee group, career level, grade and the like. How well these key attributes are defined will be critical to the ability of employees and managers to query the job database and of executives to extract meaningful workforce reports and analytics. Simply being able to implement one's current job catalog in the new HRIS doesn't guarantee being able to take full advantage of the available functionality.

- *Job Information.* The job profile also houses most of the key descriptive content that employees and managers need — job responsibilities, competencies, skills, certifications, etc. Organizations seeking to make this information available to managers and employees for career planning, performance management, succession planning and recruitment will want to populate these fields with robust, meaningful data.

- *Business Process Linkage.* Compensation, career management and succession processes are tied to the job profile, providing the opportunity to centralize and integrate all HR processes and the potential to implement a true career framework.

JOB PROFILE

① Job code

② Profile name
Pay rate type

② Managment level
Effective date
Work shift req (flag)

③ Job title default
Summary
Company insider
Public job (flag)
Workers' Comp codes
Difficulty to fill
Critical job (flag)

④ Job exempt
Job category
Job level

⑥ (Hiring restrictions)

⑦ Competencies

Work experience

Languages

Education

⑧ Training certifications

⑨ Compensation grade

⑩ Job family (function or sub-function)

⑪ ⑩ Job family group (function)

④ EEO-1 classification
Other classification groups
⑤ Benchmark job

① System alignment

② Compensation and benefit eligibility

③ Job posting/ recruiting data

④ Regulatory reporting and labor categorization

⑤ Market benchmarking

⑥ Job qualifications

⑦ Competency models

⑧ Learning management

⑨ Salary structures

⑩ Job leveling

⑪ Workforce distribution

A useful metaphor for understanding the importance of a rationalized job catalog may be your local bookstore. Imagine a bookstore that looks like this:
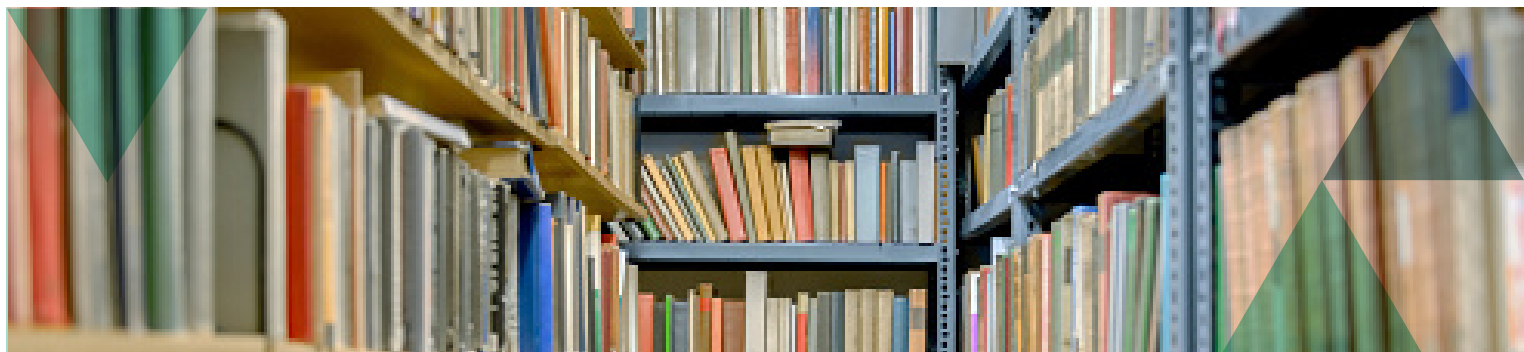
If you were a customer in this bookstore, what would you do? Would you buy a book? How long would you look before you walked out in frustration? If you were an employee in this bookstore, how much time would you spend looking for just one book for each customer? How meaningful would your sales data be? If you were the owner of this bookstore, what do you think your customer satisfaction ratings might be?

Contrast this with the experience of customers and managers of a well-organized bookstore, where customers can find exactly what they want within minutes of walking in and are able to browse the shelves for additional purchases. Better yet, data on buying history enables store managers to push out personalized book selections.

These differences are similar to those Mercer is seeing between organizations that implement a cloud-based HRIS with little attention to their job catalogs and those that implement a cloud-based HRIS with more robust, rationalized job catalogs.

Unfortunately, recognizing this too late in the process can result in post-implementation reconfiguration and delays in realizing value.

UNDERSTAND YOUR NEED

For an organization seeking to deploy a career framework and everything this entails, the importance of the job catalog should be evident, but not all organizations have this aspiration now or for the foreseeable future. The objectives may be more tactical. This doesn't mean a job catalog is less important, it simply means the organization's investment in the job catalog may be different.

Foundational

At minimum, every organization will need a foundational job catalog to provide an organizing principle that's rational as well as easy to understand and use. The job catalog should be able to support back-end processes, like reporting and metrics, and to serve as a hub for aligning HR business processes. To maximize value, it should harmonize the structure across regions and businesses. It should also be expandable, allowing the organization to easily modify and add jobs as changes are need. Organizations may consider starting with any of the existing catalogs available from consulting organizations that offer digital career pathing solutions.

Transparency to Employees

Organizations seeking to push employee and manager self-service to another level — especially for recruitment, development and compensation — will want to optimize the job catalog to provide transparency to employees. They'll want to take advantage of the fields available on the job profile and populate the job responsibilities, certifications, market data and compensation opportunities.

Developing and providing meaningful job content will enhance the manager and employee experience and ensure the "browsability" of the content. To carry the bookstore metaphor one step further, the objective is to put books on the shelves that have meaningful content endorsed by the organization and not just books with blank pages. In Mercer's experience, this content is seldom created all at once but rather is developed over time and selectively.

Career Framework

Finally, organizations seeking to implement a full career framework experience will want to expand the content available to employees, perhaps to include competencies and skills. They may also want to migrate away from the common market practice job catalog that might satisfy foundational and transparency needs and move toward a unique framework that reflects the organization's employee value proposition in terms of career and developmental opportunities. They'll certainly want to take full advantage of all manager/employee-centered HR business processes offered, ensuring an integrated suite of solutions that can be pushed out to the organization.

FOUNDATIONAL

## TRANSPARENCY TO EMPLOYEE

CAREER FRAMEWORK

- Create using a basic organizing principle with back-end focus
- Ensure structure supports:
  - Desired metrics
  - Planned business processes, especially in HR
- Harmonize catalog across businesses and regions
- Make it expandable without need to redo
- Consider acquiring/utilizing vendor job catalog

- Tweak vendor library to reflect needs of key business stakeholders
- Extend content to include information valuable to employees — definitions, responsibilities, certifications, etc.
- Ensure "browsability" of content by employees and managers
- Develop meaningful job content to enhance the manager and employee experience
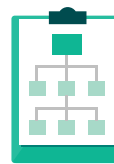
- Use highly configured structure/content to fully leverage manager/employee self-service functionality
- Expand content to include competencies/skills, etc.
- Deploy full array of manager/employee-centered HR business processes

Organizations planning on implementing a new cloud-based HRIS should understand their needs in both the short and near term. For those planning on taking advantage of their new HRIS to implement a full career framework value proposition, it's not necessary to do it all at once. It's possible to build toward it over time. However, it's necessary to establish a strong foundation — one that can be built upon without redoing what's already been implemented in your HRIS. This job catalog should be easily implemented in whatever system you select and should align with the organization's current and future strategic needs to ensure it:

- Supports the organization's employee value proposition
- Is sufficiently flexible to support an organization that will evolve — perhaps rapidly — as the industry and the future of work evolve
- Takes market practice into consideration

- Supports stakeholder needs
- Is appropriately robust to support total rewards, talent management, recruitment and all other HR processes
- Gains key stakeholder and executive support

LEAP FORWARD

Many HR leaders know that implementing a career framework can provide a platform to achieve HR transformation and deliver the necessary infrastructure to make business strategy more effective. Leading companies around the world understand this premise and act on it. For them, a career framework provides a valuable platform for the execution of their talent management models to accelerate current and future business success. When built well, a strategic career framework delivers many tangible benefits for the organization as well as for its managers and employees. Leap forward with a career framework and start building for that unknown future.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

We have many resources on important career framework topics to help accelerate your business performance:

- **Executive Summary:** *2020 Is Coming: Is Your Career Framework Ready?*
- **Point of View:** *Building for an Unknown Future: Leap Forward With a Career Framework*
- **Article Series:** *Leap Forward With a Career Framework*
  - *Whose Role Is It?*
  - *Managing for Change*
  - *In Pursuit of Functional Excellence*
  - *Leverage More Effective Analytics to Inform Talent Decisions*
  - *Empowering a Thriving Workforce With Digital Career Pathing*

Download the articles: https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/career/2020-is-coming-is-your-career-framework-ready.html

THRIVING IN AN ERA OF DISRUPTION

What distinguishes exceptional organizations? They have thought carefully about how to create work environments that meet the full range of their employees' needs to unlock the potential of their workforces — one employee at a time. Career frameworks can amplify the effects on employees' perceptions about how committed a company is to their growth and contribution. Although many organizations are still searching for ways to merely survive in today's complex world, these exceptional organizations have learned how to thrive.

Mercer's recent research solicited responses from more than 800 HR and business leaders across 57 countries to learn "what it takes to thrive" in their workplaces. This is what we learned:

THRIVING ORGANIZATION

Success redefined

Resilient and agile

Positive societal impact

THRIVING WORKFORCE

Diverse and adaptive

Inclusive and growth focused

Committed to well-being

THRIVING INDIVIDUAL

Growing and contributing

Empowered and connected

Healthy and energized

Learn more: https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/thrive.html

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