



# Work Matters



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WELCOME

## The Tech Issue is Here

In this issue of *Work Matters*, we're focusing on the overwhelming impact of technology on businesses. There's no denying that the pandemic accelerated technology adoption in all facets of work. What we're left with is supercharged operations—without a playbook.

For our featured WorkFlow article, we interviewed Matthew Barrett, one of our trusted RPA experts in the CPG industry, on the importance of viewing automation technology as a digital workforce vs. a tool. It's a must-read for any business leaders who are struggling to adopt automation in meaningful, scalable ways. His thoughts on framing tangible, understandable conversations for department leaders seems obvious, yet it's not something often addressed in other articles about automation.

We know there's an enormous amount of pressure on leaders to “get it right” when it comes to tech. We hope the rest of this issue brings some clarity to how tech can drive a competitive advantage for your company.



# Do You Have a Digital Workforce Strategy?

We contemplated using the term “automation” in the title of this article, but instead decided to call it what it really means to your business: a digital workforce. If you don’t think of your automation strategy in this way, you could be setting yourself up to fail.

Automation technologies, like business process management (BPM) platforms and robotic process automation (RPA) solutions, are a big enabler of the move to a digitally driven workplace. The problem? Everyone is doing it, but no one is doing it well.

## McKinsey & Company

conducted the same surveys on automation in both 2018 and 2020. In comparing the findings, they found that while the percentage of companies that had begun their automation journey jumped from 57% to 66%, those who had successfully scaled an automation program dropped from 16% to 15%.

Why do most companies fail to scale beyond a pilot program or handful of departments? We recently spoke with Matthew Barrett who leads the RPA strategy at one of Catena Solutions’ top clients in the CPG industry. He shared some insights on the company’s three-year automation journey.

Barrett talked about a few key best practices that helped his company get further along in its automation journey. His suggestions included things like establishing a center of excellence (COE) for program oversight and strategy, executing pilot programs to help manage change, and having a consistent, standard process for choosing processes to automate.

Our biggest takeaway from Barrett? Framing automation as an investment in a digital workforce vs. a technology solution. It seems simple, but it will help you establish a more strategic corporate mindset around your strategy and achieve a more significant and meaningful ROI.

### Actions organizations have taken to automate business process, % of respondents<sup>1</sup>

Have set up an automation program and are scaling automation technologies across multiple parts of the business

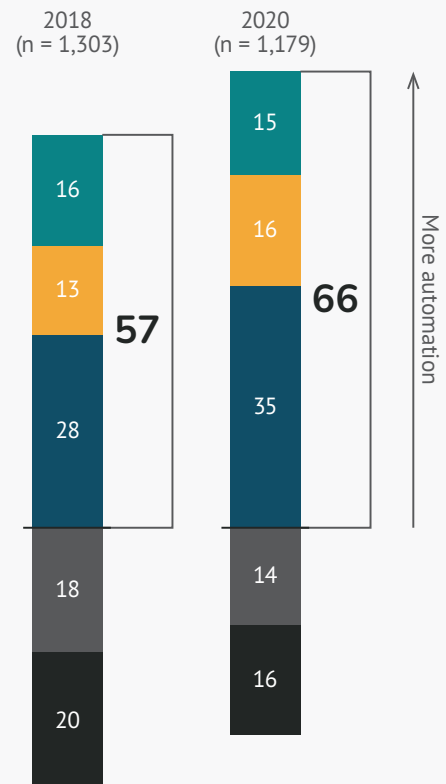
Have fully automated a process in at least 1 function or business unit, but have not scaled automation technologies across multiple parts of the business

Piloting the automation of business processes in at least 1 function or business unit

Have not begun to automate business processes but plan to do so within the next year

Have not begun to automate business processes and have no plans to do so

<sup>1</sup>Respondents who said “don’t know” are not shown.





## Getting on the Same Page as Your Department Leaders

Many companies initially deploy automation tools in order to optimize their operations for efficiency, achieve cost savings, eliminate process redundancies and decrease data errors.

Essentially, they're looking to get work done better, faster and more accurately by automating various tasks that make up their complex internal processes.

On a tactical level, this is all sensible. Focusing on these benefits will get your business case approved, but it will only take you so far in terms of execution. How does this change when you think of automation as a digital workforce instead of a technology? It allows you to speak the same language as your department leaders, and their buy-in is critical to scaling automation.

Your department leaders have a talent strategy. They know their employees' strengths and weaknesses and what are their individual career

growth plans. Based on that information, they have a wish list of future talent needs necessary to improve their department performance overall.

Chances are they haven't taken stock of nor mapped out their processes in the same way. Do they know which processes are effective and which ones are inefficient? What about future-state goals? Do they know how their processes need to change in order to be more competitive in the market? Managers should be strategic about not just who's doing the work, but how it's getting done.

If they aren't invested in this way, automation technology is going to be a hard sell. Tap into their "workforce" mindset. Encourage them to think of bots as digital workers who can accelerate their talent goals, and ensure they have a post-automation strategy for employees. RPA bots only take away jobs if managers don't have a vision for how to elevate their roles when a digital workforce takes over the tactical work.

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We don't use the term 'bots' when talking about our RPA tool to our managers and employees. We think of our RPA tool as our digital workforce.

Matthew Barrett, Leader of RPA Strategy in the CPG Industry

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## WORKPLACE

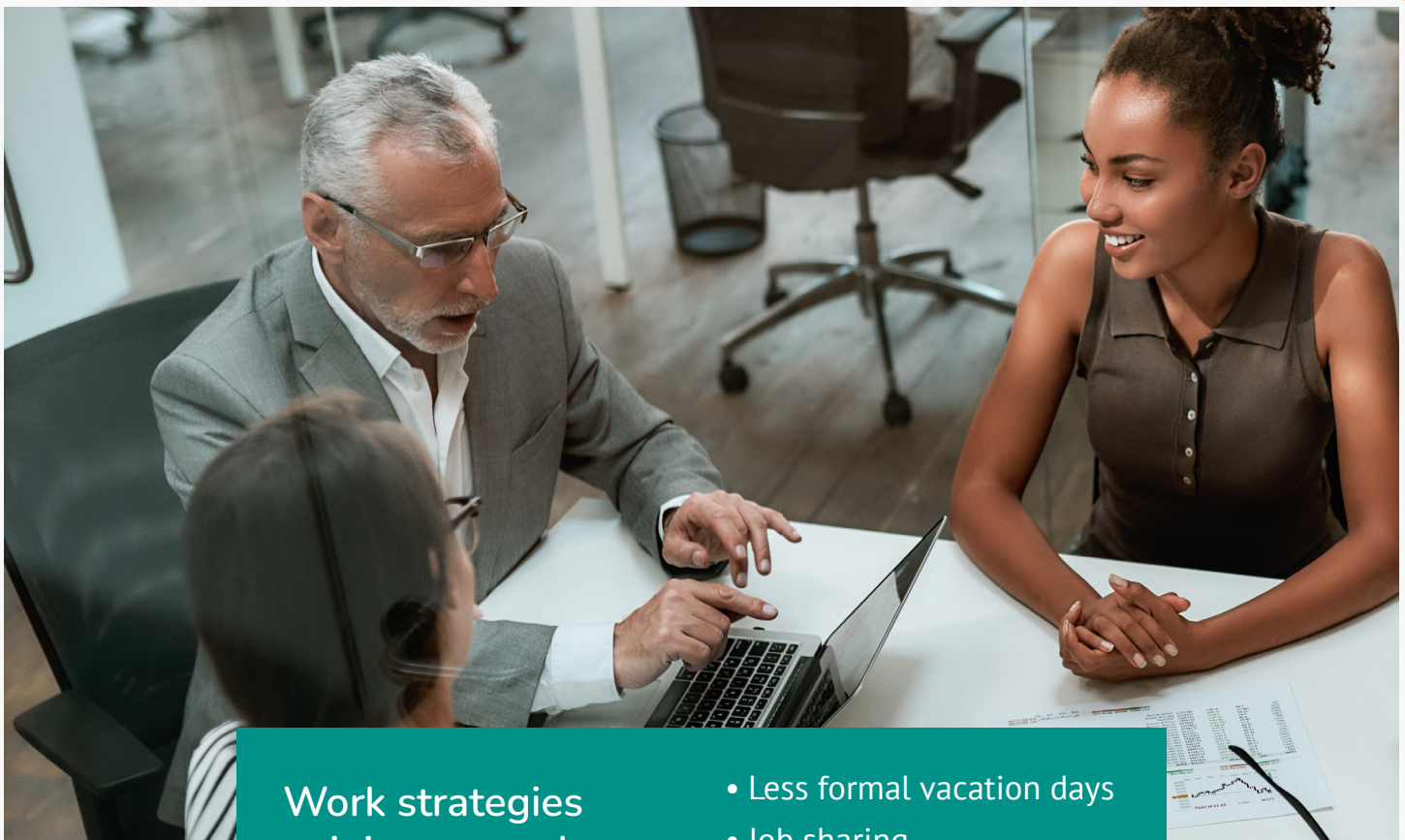
# Employees Want Options, Not New Policies

The pandemic took everything we thought we knew about how and where employees work and flipped it on its head. Employees of non-essential businesses packed up their offices and headed home to set up makeshift desks. Essential employees stayed onsite, but completely changed their processes to meet ever-shifting safety protocols.

What then transpired over the course of the next year was a giant experiment of sorts. Could employees still be productive at home? How could processes be efficient AND safe? What steps could be taken to alleviate the stress on working parents and caregivers?

For the most part, companies figured out how to make things work for them. This was done not with a formal playbook, but through a healthy dose of trial and error that included listening carefully to employees and customers.

We can't return to the old, traditional model, but we can't simply redline and update it for 2021 either. During the pandemic employees were given the space to design a work model that suited them and their needs, and they want to keep it that way.



Work strategies  
gaining ground:

- Less formal vacation days
- Job sharing
- Flexible shifts





Here are some of the top ideas that employees are bringing to the table.

### **Work From Anywhere (WFA) Days Vs. Vacation Days**

While taking vacation days is important, some employees are looking for the flexibility to work during some of their days away from the office. Across our client base, we've seen a rise in demand for replacing some of the allotted vacation days with WFA days, giving employees the opportunity to travel AND stay plugged in (if they'd like).

### **Job Sharing**

For some employees, especially parents, working 40 hours a week during the pandemic just wasn't possible. Working between the hours of 9 am - 5 pm, or even just eight consecutive hours, was tough. But job sharing allowed them to continue earning money and providing value to their company and still manage personal responsibilities. Leaving this as an option on the table for qualifying roles could allow companies to retain experienced employees whose bandwidth has changed.

### **Flexible Shifts**

Related to the above challenge, eight-hour shifts or having the same shift each day can be challenging for some employees who need more flexibility. While it's not possible if your company needs to keep their team members consistent for certain projects, offering split shifts or the ability to trade shifts could bolster employee satisfaction and productivity.

The common denominator? Flexibility, of course. And the power to choose what's best for them, instead of blanket company decisions.

## Is Your People Analytics Strategy Stuck on the Ground Floor?

[McKinsey](#) reports that 70% of executives cite people analytics as a top priority, yet the majority of companies are still in the early stages of building out their people analytics strategies, capabilities and teams. What's most pressing?

### Hiring Data

The job market is flexing like never before. We've experienced everything from record employment to record unemployment in just a few months' time and massive differences in talent availability by market, by industry and by geography.

The biggest real-time data need is figuring out where the talent is, requiring some daily heavy lifting from your sourcing team. This is especially true in certain industries where work must be completed in person, such as manufacturing, CPG and logistics.

### DE&I Data

After big proclamations over the last six months, many companies are just now trying to figure out how to measure and report on diversity, equity and inclusion progress. There are a number of categories that these metrics can fall into beyond typical demographic tracking.



“By 2025, manufacturers commit to taking 50,000 tangible actions to increase equity and parity for underrepresented communities, creating 300,000 pathways to job opportunities for Black people and all people of color. In doing so, manufacturing will reflect the diversity of the overall U.S. workforce by 2030.”

[The Manufacturing Institute](#)





[This article](#) dives deep into how to more meaningfully examine DE&I and uncover ways to improve by tracking metrics beyond demographics. It shares additional types of metrics, including:

- Ranked method, which quantifies employee sentiment
- Initiative-focused, tracking against progress on set goals
- Company-wide, which shows the impact of DE&I on the business
- Correlational metrics, telling the bigger picture of your metrics
- Outside-of-company metrics, understanding your metrics in context

### Now hiring: HR data roles

Vibe Manager? Adventure Coach? Whistle Blowing Coordinator? These may sound like fake job titles, but they're real. We came across [this article](#) on trendy HR job titles, and we couldn't help but share.

When it comes to roles related to HR data, the job titles get a bit more serious. If you're looking to hire in this field, here are some job titles worth considering:

- Director Human Capital Analytics
- Director People Analytics
- Director People Systems
- Director Workforce Analytics
- Global Master Data Manager
- Head of Business Behavior
- Head of Workforce Intelligence
- HR Data Analyst
- HR Data & Process Specialist
- HR Tech Lead
- Lead People Data Scientist

## Don't Be a Statistic: Avoid the Classic SAP HANA Implementation Missteps

ERP implementations aren't for the faint of heart. There are many, many examples of projects gone wrong. For a stroll down memory lane, check out [CIO's](#) round up of the 16 biggest ERP disasters.

Many of our own customers are in the early stages of implementing SAP HANA. We went straight to the source, asking Bill Luecker, an experienced IT consultant, for his take on all things SAP HANA.

**Is there anything that makes implementing SAP HANA more challenging than other tools?** The key thing to understand with implementing SAP HANA is the extensive integration across system modules. Changes in any area will quickly impact other areas of the system.

**What does a successful change management strategy look like?**

Change management is critical so that stakeholders are aware of the integrated nature of an SAP HANA system as compared to many legacy systems, which may be more flexible. All business stakeholders and day-to-day users should have a clear understanding of as-is vs. to-be operational functionality as they migrate to SAP HANA.

**77% of organizations migrating to S/4HANA will rely on a partner to do so.**

Source: IDC, SAP Customers on the Move to S/4HANA, 2019

### Here are Luecker's four keys to success:

1. Allow enough time for thorough testing and training.
2. Implement in phases.
3. Focus on master data accuracy.
4. Address issues in a warranty phase prior to additional rollouts.

**What's something that's often overlooked?** One of the areas that companies get wrong as they implement SAP HANA is understanding the need for clean and accurate master data. If the master data is not accurate, it is going to make operating with SAP HANA very difficult.

**What should companies expect after go-live?** Although companies will build a diligent and extensive testing strategy, things are bound to go wrong after go-live. Make sure to build in a pilot phase for implementation and validation, and a reasonable warranty period to address post go-live issues prior to rolling out further implementations.

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### CATENA SOLUTIONS' TAKE

In my experience, tech initiatives fail due to (1) ineffective change management, (2) internal politics or (3) the loss of a key stakeholder. Project managers need to monitor implementations closely to ensure none of these issues derail their efforts.

Matt Wessels, Leader of Human Capital Transformation at Catena Solutions

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## Removing Risk by Automating Data Sets

### The Challenge

One global medical device company discovered some configuration issues between their HRIM and payroll systems. Due to incongruent data sets, much of the data was outdated or incorrect. The process to audit the data between the two systems was manual and time consuming. When discrepancies were identified, oftentimes two to three months' worth of data had to be corrected. The company was experiencing overpayments, non-payments, and was at risk for an upcoming audit.

### The Solution

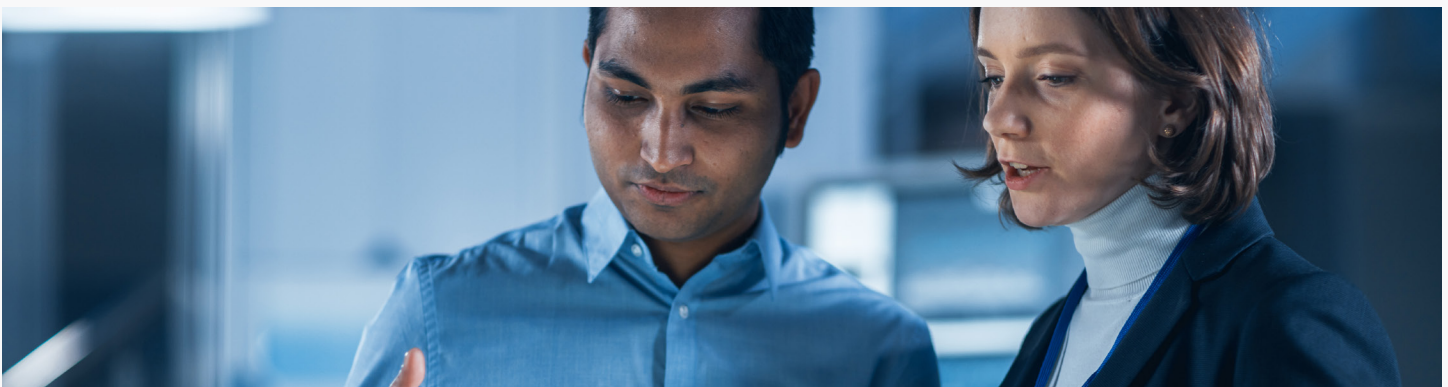
The company recognized the need to automate the data reconciliation between the two systems. Based on prior experience, they knew this could be accomplished with a bot. The team decided to partner with Catena Solutions to access the right consultant to deliver a fully automated solution in a short timeframe.

The Catena consultant met with the client's project team to understand the impact this challenge had on the team as well as downstream across the organization. Catena was able to quickly scope out the project and identify both the discrepancies and opportunities for automation. Our consultant was nimble, as always, so even when data sources changed throughout the project we were able to adjust and remediate quickly. The bot is now up and running, and the consultant provided the team with the tools they needed for any future maintenance.

### The Benefit

- The company is now in compliance and the two systems are in sync.
- The bot allows our client to proactively find errors instead of reacting to employee complaints, providing an increase in reputation value to employees.
- The company now has confidence in a clean audit and has a platform to address future areas of automation/process improvement.

Regular data comparisons  
minimize payment errors and  
corrections, saving upwards of  
\$10,000 in amendment fees  
each year.



[Contact us](#) to learn how we can support your transformation initiatives.



