

# The Skills Imperative:

## Building the Workforce of the Future with Workday and SkyHive

### Accenture Talks Platforms

North America



**Chaired by Accenture's Gloria Samuels—Senior Managing Director and Accenture's lead for the Workday Business Group—our recent “Accenture Talks Platforms” roundtable convened experts immersed in the realities of today's talent demands—including Accenture, Workday, SkyHive and a variety of other participating companies. They all shared ideas and insights about the kinds of responses needed to help translate leading-edge talent and skilling needs into approaches to support a growth agenda.**

In setting the context for the roundtable, Gloria Samuels noted the many interesting and deep conversations she's having with clients about today's business and talent needs. The pandemic and global economic slowdown have meant that the pace of change has picked up dramatically—both from a technology perspective and a people perspective. What skills do we need immediately? What skills will we need in the future? It's going to take a great deal of creative thinking and new mindsets—how to find new sources of talent, and how to build, borrow or buy the skills that are needed to compete long-term.

### Skilling and a full penny jar

Nicholas Whittall, Accenture's Global Talent Lead, noted that if he had a penny for every time he's heard or talked about skills as the “new currency of the business,” his penny jar would be overflowing. Organizations are coping with a pace of change that is now blistering fast—whether that involves technology or the skills that companies need to drive productivity and growth. It's not so long ago that it was hard to get the average CEO's attention to talent demands. Today, they are an eager and even anxious audience.

That “attention” has both a general and a specific meaning. Of course, everyone needs to understand what skills they have and how they can develop or acquire skills needed for today's and tomorrow's challenges. But companies also need to get a lot more surgical: how can they determine the skills an individual has, then the skills they need, and then analyze the gap. How can they close that gap at an individual level while at the same time personalizing things like the candidate experience? By doing so, they can help to connect people to this future of work that's rapidly emerging.

### “Skills passports” and “decoder rings”

The session touched on a phenomenon called the “democratization of talent.” In what appears to be a world of talent scarcity—a difficulty in matching the supply and demand of talent—how can companies respond? One way is to search in a wider variety of places. For example, could a cashier ever become a medical worker? The answer is, “Yes.” Analysis shows that, for example, there is a 70% match in the skills needed to perform well at either job.<sup>1</sup> Skills are becoming more

democratized. The jobs have what is being called, “skills proximity.” Then the question gets more specific and again, “surgical”: How can we quickly offer interventions that support the other 30%? If we plan for this, we can better understand the steps needed to accelerate people on their reskilling journeys.

Sean Hinton, the CEO of SkyHive, introduced a concept he calls the “skills passport.” It's a personalized characterization or listing of people's skills so they can see how they might be appropriate for available jobs. The passport also offers organizations a specific understanding of how the available skills match up to current talent needs. This can create a kind of “decoder ring”—one unique to every person and every need. In real time, that ring's ability to match skills with skill needs can support organizations and communities with the re-skilling requirements and changes that are happening.

### Screening in and screening out

Cristina Goldt, General Manager of Talent Products for Workday, expanded on several important talent themes under discussion. Wearing the lens of talent acquisition, for example, companies are moving to more skills-based practices to personalize the candidate experience. Companies can do things like recommend people for jobs they might not have considered. Or, as noted earlier, they might understand that a person's skill base can match them for jobs the organization itself might have overlooked. This then broadens the talent pool. More traditional hiring practices have tended to eliminate or screen out certain groups or people. Now we can talk more about screening in people as opposed to screening them out. Maybe a qualification in a job description could be at fault. If you require a university degree, for example, might you then be screening out a lot of people that hold those 70% skills in their skills passport but don't have a degree? Can you increase talent mobility within your organization with this mindset?

All in all, the discussions that took place during this Accenture Talks Platforms session stirred interesting, stimulating and helpful dialogue. Approaches and available offerings around talent are heating up to meet today's business needs. Fortunately, technology is now at the point where it can help do the matching that organizations need to reach their business goals. There is also now a broader network of organizations to partner with—pooling advanced capabilities to drive for a positive business impact.

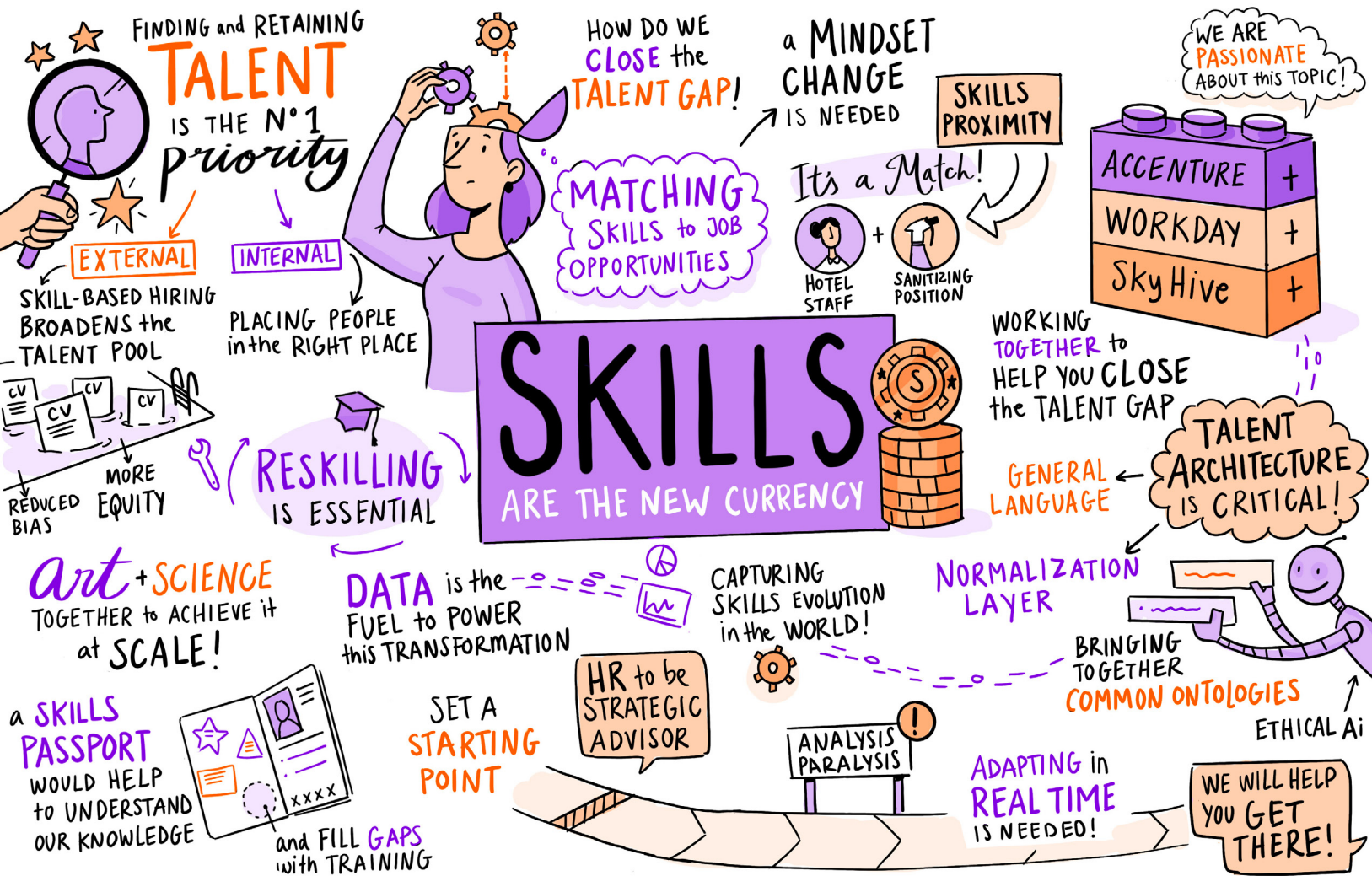
For more information visit: [Accenture](#) | [Workday](#) | [SkyHive](#)

**1 “Future Skills Pilot Report: Thinking outside the box to reimagine talent mobility,” 2021.**

[https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-149/Accenture-Future-Skills-Case-Study.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-149/Accenture-Future-Skills-Case-Study.pdf)

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Europe



## Potential vs. pedigree: New mindsets for solving the jobs crisis

**Our recent roundtable in the “Accenture Talks Platforms” series convened leading experts immersed in the realities of today’s talent demands—companies including Accenture, Workday and SkyHive, along with a variety of other participating Europe-based organizations. They all shared ideas and insights about the kinds of new strategies and technologies needed to fill talent gaps in creative ways to support companies’ growth agendas.**

The event was chaired by Accenture’s Gloria Samuels, Senior Managing Director and Accenture’s lead for the Workday Business Group. In setting the context for the roundtable, Gloria noted the many interesting and deep conversations she’s having with clients about today’s business and talent needs. Many organizations feel a real sense of urgency about filling talent gaps as quickly as possible. What can we be doing differently? How, for example, might we consider candidates based on adjacent skills and experiences, helping us tap into hidden sources of talent? How can we use automation and AI to match open jobs to available talent? More broadly speaking, what can we all be doing to unlock human potential within our organizations and around the world?

### Competitiveness at risk

Tim Good, Managing Director and the Accenture Talent & Organization Lead for Europe, noted that his conversations and work with clients indicates that a major CEO priority today is to find, inspire and retain top talent. Everyone looks at the work dynamic in Europe—millions of jobs unfilled while millions are looking for jobs—and wonders how to make new kinds of candidate-and-job matching available. Accenture, Workday and Skyhive are united in their efforts to break down and then solve that supply and demand imbalance. Without being able to find people with the right skills in the right places, companies’ competitiveness and growth are at risk, and people can be thwarted in their efforts to take part in the exciting economy we’re all creating. What’s happening to respond to today’s talent crisis is the rise of so-called “skills-based” hiring practices.

### Skills passports and the democratization of talent

How is better candidate-job matching possible? Sean Hinton, the CEO of SkyHive, introduced a concept he calls the “skills passport.” It’s a personalized characterization or listing of people’s skills, based on advanced technologies, so candidates can see how their skills might be appropriate for available jobs. From an organizational perspective,

when labor pools appear to be running out in a particular area, the passports offer organizations a richer understanding of how skills available match up to their current talent needs. The passport concept can help companies avoid the missteps of automatically overlooking fertile grounds for talent. For example, if you were filling a life sciences job, would you think to look at grocery cashiers for candidates? As it turns out, you should. Using better data analysis, it turns out that 70% of the skills needed in the life sciences role overlap with the cashier’s role. This is an incredible opportunity to broaden the hiring reach.

### Potential vs. pedigree

Ed Miller, Accenture’s Workday Business Group Strategy & Offerings Lead, provided a new phrase to describe the talent and skills revolution happening today: Its focus is on “potential instead of pedigree.” Based on close, data-based skills analysis, how can companies look forward to a candidate’s potential rather than be limited by the past? That’s a massive mindset shift, though, so creative talent leaders must take seriously the kinds of pushback they might get. Strong change management programs will need to be in place, and executives across the company (not just in talent and HR) should be tapped who can support and sponsor the change.

Cristina Goldt, General Manager of Talent Products for Workday, noted that this paradigm shift also implies a different kind of candidate screening. More traditional hiring practices have tended to eliminate or screen out certain groups of people. Now, using the concepts of skill adjacencies and skills passports, we can talk more about screening people in as opposed to screening them out. Is it really appropriate anymore, for many types of jobs, to automatically screen out candidates without university degrees? Or, to use the example cited earlier, cashiers? This approach opens up more possibilities for companies and, at the same time, increases talent mobility within your organization. It can assure people that you’re helping them think about the skills they need to advance their career progression. A failure to do so is one big reason cited by workers for leaving their current employment.

All in all, the discussions that took place during this Accenture Talks Platforms session stirred interesting, stimulating and helpful dialogue. Approaches and available offerings around talent are heating up to meet today’s business needs. Fortunately, technology is now at the point where it can help do the matching that organizations need to build the workforce they need to reach their business goals. There is also now a broader network of organizations to partner with—pooling advanced capabilities to drive toward a positive business impact.

For more information visit: [Accenture](#) | [Workday](#) | [SkyHive](#)



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# TRANSFORM

