

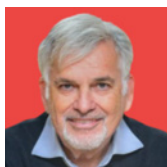
# NAVIGATING THE NEW FRONTIER: EMBRACING TALENT 5.0 WHILE PAVING THE WAY FOR TALENT 6.0<sup>1</sup>

## AUTHORS



**Iolanda Triviño** is a Futuristic Strategist & Talent Transformation Specialist. Her approach to collaborating with teams and organizations is driven by three key pillars: **Creativity, Technology, and Community**. With nearly 30 years of experience in the business sector, Iolanda has successfully led teams and managed projects, combining a strategic vision with agile and humanistic execution. Since

2014, she has served as the President of the Talent Commission for 22@Network, the IT and Innovation business association in Barcelona. In 2012, she founded **Valkiria Hub Space**, an innovation hub in Barcelona, and the **International Open Innovation Community**, focusing on the Future of Work and the Talent Transformation Institute for Futures (IFF). She is the co-author together with Simon L. Dolan and others, of a forthcoming book titled *The Future of Work & Talent 5.0*, due to be published in Spanish by McGraw Hill in Madrid.



**Simon L. Dolan** is full professor, senior researcher and Director of Programs at Advantere School of Management (affiliated with Comilla, Deusto and Georgetown Universities). He is the former Future of Work Chair at ESADE Business School. He has published 85 books (in multiple languages) and over 150 articles in referee journals. He is also the co-founder and President of the Global Future of

Work Foundation ([www.globalfutureofwork.com](http://www.globalfutureofwork.com)). His work, consulting, and research is about values, leadership, coaching, stress management, and resilience, as well as issues connected to the future of work. He holds an MA and PhD from Carlson Graduate School of Management at the University of Minnesota. He is a former editor of cross-cultural management and member of the editorial board of half a dozen scientific journals. His full CV can be found at: [www.simondolan.com](http://www.simondolan.com)



**Pedro Cesar Martinez Moran** is the Director of the Master's in Talent Management at Advantere School of Management. He teaches at Universidad Pontificia Comillas and is also a member of academic research groups. In addition to his academic work, he has held various roles as a senior executive and consultant. Currently, he serves on the executive board of the Global Future

of Work Foundation ([www.globalfutureofwork.com](http://www.globalfutureofwork.com)).

**In the changing world of employment, it's more important than ever to understand the shifts in talent dynamics that are defining our future as organizational models evolve to attract, develop, and retain talent. Here we explore the evolution of Talent 5.0 and discuss the imminent arrival of Talent 6.0.**

**T**he dynamics of workplace talent are in a process of profound change. As we transition into Talent 5.0 and soon even to Talent 6.0, it is essential to recognize not just the technological advancements, but also the human experiences and emotions that shape our workplaces.

This article aims to reassure and empower you, whether you're an employee navigating career changes, a leader seeking to nurture your team, or a curious individual contemplating the implications of these shifts. Together, we can embrace a future where human potential is prioritized alongside innovation, fostering environments that support collaboration, creativity, and compassion.

As we inch closer to the concept of Talent 6.0—where innovation transcends more skills to embrace creativity, empathy, and adaptability—it's essential to create environments where



individuals feel supported and valued. Companies must prioritize upskilling and reskilling initiatives that not only enhance technical capabilities but also strengthen interpersonal connections. By investing in people and encouraging continuous learning, organizations can create a narrative of progress that resonates with employees at all levels.

Talent 5.0 emerges in a context of radical transformation of work, driven by advanced technologies and the need for key humanistic skills. The evolution from Talent 1.0, focused on efficiency and mechanization, to Talent 4.0, with a focus on digitalization, has given rise to a new era where the integration between humans and machines is fundamental, but with a deeper purpose: to achieve human well-being. Talent 5.0 and Talent 6.0 combine advanced technology and human skills in a work model that not only responds to the needs of the present but shapes the future of organizations.

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## THE MEANING AND ORIGINS OF TALENT 5.0

Talent 5.0 marks a turning point in the evolution of human talent in the digital and globalized era. Unlike previous versions, which focused primarily on technical skills or specialized knowledge, Talent 5.0 emphasizes the convergence between technology and human skills. This concept is aligned

with Society 5.0, which seeks a balance between technological advances and human well-being, placing people at the center of development.

Talent 5.0 is characterized by its ability to adapt to rapid changes, learn continuously, and collaborate with emerging technologies. This talent is nurtured by values such as inclusion, creativity, and transformational leadership, driving the transition towards more agile and flexible organizational models in the context of the Future of Work.

In addition, Talent 5.0 is not defined exclusively by technical skills, but also by a shift in the mindset oriented towards opening up to change and the ability to combine human skills (empathy, creativity, leadership) with technological tools. The professionals who embody this model are prepared to face uncertainty and generate innovative solutions in a constantly evolving world<sup>2</sup>.

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## DEFINING THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN THE NEW ERA OF TALENT<sup>3</sup>

### PRINCIPLE 1:

#### **Adaptability and Continuous Learning.**

In a rapidly changing environment, adaptability and the ability to learn continuously are critical. Organizations must implement reskilling and upskilling programs so that their employees

remain competitive in an ever-evolving market. This is one of the keys to ensuring continuous innovation in Talent 5.0. Google, for example, has established a model where its employees can use up to 20 percent of their working time to work on personal projects that also support their professional growth. This approach fosters a culture of innovation and allows employees to develop new skills that can be useful to the company.

#### PRINCIPLE 2:

##### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring and empowering teams, rather than just managing processes. This type of leadership is key in the era of Talent 5.0, as it allows for the integration of empathy, a long-term vision, and the use of new technologies. Transformational leadership fosters innovation and adaptation to change. During the pandemic, Microsoft took a transformative leadership approach. Under the direction of Satya Nadella, the company promoted a culture of empathy and encouraged its employees to adopt new technologies such as Teams to maintain remote collaboration. This type of leadership has been crucial in maintaining motivation and productivity in uncertain times.



#### PRINCIPLE 3:

##### **Inclusion and Diversity as Drivers of Innovation**

Inclusion and diversity are fundamental pillars to promote innovation in the Talent 5.0 environment. Diverse teams, in terms of gender, culture, and thinking, tend to be more creative and effective at solving problems. Companies that prioritize diversity experience better performance and higher financial performance. A report by Deloitte shows that companies with more diverse teams consistently outperform those that don't prioritize diversity. Teams that value different perspectives and experiences are more innovative and resilient.<sup>4</sup> The same message was echoed recently by Dolan *et al.*, who showed the principal features of a resilient organization.<sup>5</sup>

#### PRINCIPLE 4:

##### **Comprehensive Employee Well-Being**

Well-being is a key component of Talent 5.0. Companies that create comprehensive programs that encompass the physical, emotional, mental, and financial health of their employees are more successful at retaining talent. Holistic well-being not only improves productivity, but also contributes to creating a stronger and more cohesive organizational culture.

Salesforce has implemented wellness policies that include mental health coaching and support services. In addition, the company offers work flexibility to help its employees achieve a healthy work-life balance, which has significantly improved engagement and satisfaction levels.

#### PRINCIPLE 5:

##### **Technological and Human Partnerships**

Technology plays a key role in Talent 5.0, but its true value lies in how it enhances human capabilities. Artificial intelligence, automation, and big data unleash human potential, allowing employees to focus on more strategic and creative tasks. It is crucial to invest in technology that amplifies creativity and collaboration, without losing sight of the importance of human skills such as empathy and critical thinking; Unilever, for example, uses AI to streamline its hiring process, but maintains final interviews with people to ensure that key decisions are empathetic and human.

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## THE EVOLUTION OF TALENT 5.0

The evolution of talent has gone from being a simple physical workforce (Talent 1.0) to becoming a key human capital for innovation (Talent 5.0). In Talent 5.0, the integration of technology with human skills creates a necessary balance to meet the challenges of the Future of Work. This model puts the human being at the center, leveraging technology to increase its impact while promoting well-being, diversity, and adaptability.

**It is crucial to invest in technology that amplifies creativity and collaboration, without losing sight of the importance of human skills such as empathy and critical thinking.**

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**TABLE 1** Description and comparisons of different versions of Talent

TALENT VERSION	DESCRIPTION	PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS
<b>1.0 The Industrial Age and the Standardization of Work</b>	Placing ourselves in a historical context, Talent 1.0 emerged during the Industrial Revolution, when work was standardized and organized into production lines. Companies focused on efficiency and productivity through repetitive, highly specialized tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Focus on manual tasks:</b> Employees were primarily labor, and the skills needed were focused on physical labor.</li><li>• <b>Strict hierarchies:</b> Centralized supervision was key, with hierarchical structures focused on employee control.</li><li>• <b>Standardization of work:</b> Standardization was promoted to maximize efficiency. The worker was considered one more "resource", easily replaceable and enduring.</li><li>• <b>Taylorist type management:</b> Frederick Taylor was one of the pioneers in work management, with his focus on "scientific management," which sought to optimize each task to improve production.</li><li>• <b>Employee-company relationship:</b> It was a transactional model, based on strict contracts, with few opportunities for personal or professional growth.</li></ul>
<b>2.0 The Age of Automation and Process Improvement</b>	With the rise of automation in the post-war period and the emergence of new technologies, Talent 2.0 focused on improving organizational efficiency. This period saw the birth of the first formal HR strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Automation and process improvement:</b> Although work was still mostly physical, machines and tools began to reduce manual loading.</li><li>• <b>Technical training:</b> Automation increased the demand for employees with technical skills to operate the new machines.</li><li>• <b>Emphasis on efficiency:</b> Methods such as "just-in-time" (JIT) and continuous improvement (<i>kaizen</i>), coming from the automotive industry, optimized processes.</li><li>• <b>Emerging Human Resources:</b> Human Resources departments began to professionalize, focusing on personnel management and regulatory compliance.</li><li>• <b>Employee-company relationship:</b> Although it continued to be with long-term job stability prevailing, there was a greater focus on the formation and fulfillment of organizational processes.</li></ul>
<b>3.0 The Era of Globalization and Human Capital</b>	During the 1980s and 1990s, globalization and the expansion of information technologies transformed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Human capital as a competitive advantage:</b> Employees were no longer just operators, but they provided cognitive skills and creativity.</li><li>• <b>Growth of the service sector:</b> As the</li></ul>

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the world of work. Talent 3.0 emphasized human capital as a strategic resource, with innovation and knowledge at the center.

- **Technology and digitalization:** Digital technologies, such as computers and the internet, transformed work, with the emergence of new areas such as digital marketing, IT, and data analytics.
- **Flatter organizations:** The structured hierarchical organizations gave way to more collaboration, with greater capacity for decentralized decision-making.
- **Employee-company relationship:** More investment was made in talent retention and professional development, with training programs and benefits to retain key employees.

#### 4.0 The Digital Age and Skills-Based Work

From the 2000s, the surge in internet use and social networks also fostered a rise in new technologies. Elements of AI began to be embedded and cloud computing became commonplace during that time. The capacity to adapt to new technologies became a differentiating critical factor. From the 2000s onwards, the rise of the internet, social networks and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing gave rise to Talent 4.0. Technological adaptability became a crucial differentiator.

- **Advanced digital skills:** Digital skills became a necessity. Employees with knowledge in data analytics, AI, programming, and cybersecurity dominated the market.
- **Remote work and flexibility:** Remote work emerged, allowing tasks to be carried out from anywhere, changing work dynamics.
- **Continuous innovation:** Companies demanded employees who were able to adapt quickly to new tools and technologies. Continuous learning and reskilling were promoted to stay competitive.
- **Emotional intelligence:** Soft skills, such as communication, leadership, and emotional intelligence, began to be more valued, as they could not be replaced by technology.
- **Employee-company relationship:** There was a shift towards greater work flexibility, where employees could choose when and where to work. In addition, concern for well-being and work-life balance grew.

#### 5.0 The Convergence of Technology and Humanism

Talent 5.0 is the next step in the evolution of talent, marked by the convergence between human skills and the advanced use of technology. In this scenario, the technology does not replace talent, but amplifies it, while human skills such as creativity, leadership and empathy are more valued than ever.

- **Collaboration between humans and technology:** Talent 5.0 involves a symbiotic relationship between people and emerging technologies such as AI, automation, and blockchain. Employees are not replaced by technology, but work alongside it to increase their productivity and capacity.
- **Focus on holistic well-being:** Beyond productivity, Talent 5.0 focuses on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of employees. It is recognized that happier and more balanced employees are more creative and productive.
- **Diversity and inclusion as key drivers:** Companies that promote diversity in their teams – in terms of gender, ethnicity or perspectives – are more innovative and successful.
- **Adaptability and flexibility:** In an environment characterized by rapid and frequent changes, employees must be agile and able to adapt quickly to new technologies and circumstances.
- **Continuous learning:** Continuous learning and training are the norm. Employees must be willing to constantly acquire new skills to stay competitive.
- **Employee-company relationship:** The relationship becomes more collaborative, where employee well-being and satisfaction are just as important as business outcomes. Companies that value authenticity and purpose will attract and retain the best talent.

**The evolution of talent has gone from being a simple physical workforce (Talent 1.0) to becoming a key human capital for innovation (Talent 5.0).**

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## ENVISIONING TALENT 6.0

The concept of Talent 6.0 would represent the culmination of these emerging and disruptive trends, where work will not only be more flexible, digital and collaborative, but also more personalized, ethical and symbiotic with technology. Organizations will need to prepare for a future where talent will not simply be a resource, but a collaborative partner in the constant transformation of society and the planet.



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**TABLE 2** Characteristics of the emerging Talent 6.0

THEME	CHARACTERISTICS
<b>Hyper-personalization of work</b>	Talent 6.0 could focus on the hyper-personalization of the work experience. With the advancement of artificial intelligence and data analytics, companies will be able to create work experiences that are completely tailored to each employee's skills, preferences, values, and needs. By using advanced AI and biometrics, organizations could adjust workloads, schedules, and roles almost instantaneously, providing conditions that maximize individual well-being and performance.
<b>Human-machine co-creation</b>	In a Talent 6.0 scenario, collaboration between humans and advanced machines will be even deeper. Employees will work alongside advanced AIs, which will not only execute tasks, but also help solve complex and creative problems. Creative processes could evolve in such a way that generative AI will assist employees in creating new ideas, designs, and solutions, which will be reviewed and adapted by human talent.
<b>The metaverse and immersive work</b>	With the advancement of technologies such as the metaverse and augmented / virtual reality, Talent 6.0 could be characterized by a fully immersive work environment. Employees will be able to collaborate in three-dimensional virtual spaces, removing physical barriers and creating entirely new work experiences. Teams could meet in virtual offices within the metaverse, with more immersive interactions and three-dimensional collaborations, which would completely change the way we understand remote and collaborative work.
<b>Sustainability and global responsibility</b>	In the Talent 6.0 version, companies will be much more oriented towards social and environmental responsibility. Talented people will not only be valued for their technical or digital skills, but also for their ability to positively impact the world, contributing to sustainable and ethical solutions. Organizations will be able to measure the impact of each employee in terms of sustainability, incentivizing behaviors that reduce the carbon footprint or contribute to social causes.



**Dynamic and decentralized skills economy**

In place of traditional roles and careers, Talent 6.0 will be driven by a "skills economy". This means that individuals will be valued and rewarded not for their diplomas or positions, but for the dynamic skills that they can bring in real time to different projects. Decentralized blockchain-type platforms could register and certify workers' skills and experience real time. Facilitating the creation of "digital reputations" that the employees will take with them to any project or company, doing away with traditional career structures.


**Brain-machine advanced integration**

The integration between humans and advanced biotechnology will be another characteristic of Talent 6.0. Implants, wearables, and other forms of advanced biological technology will expand employees' physical and cognitive capabilities, enabling them to overcome human biological limitations. With the advancement of brain-machine interfaces, employees will be able to control complex devices and systems with thought alone, significantly improving their ability to react, problem-solve, and make decisions.

## CONCLUSION

Talent 5.0 and Talent 6.0 represent a new era in talent management, where technology and human skills must coexist in a balanced way. Organizations that adopt this approach will not only improve their productivity, but also create more humane, inclusive, and wellness-oriented work environments. As the world of work continues to evolve, Talent 5.0 will be key to continue in the form of Talent 6.0 and both will contribute to building a more equitable and prosperous Future of Work.

We argue that the transformation of organizational culture is one of the fundamental pillars for new organizational models to be successful in the era of Talent 5.0 and Talent 6.0. Structural and operational changes within an organization cannot be implemented effectively without a company culture that supports and empowers them. In other words, the shift in organizational culture is not just a necessity, it's a vital cornerstone for thriving in the age of Talent 5.0 and Talent 6.0. As we navigate this transformative landscape, it's clear

that mere structural or operational changes are insufficient without a nurturing and supportive culture to back them up. Organizations that integrate the harmonious coexistence of technology and human skill will find themselves not only enhancing productivity but also cultivating workplaces that prioritize humanity, inclusivity, and well-being. As we embrace this evolution in how we work, it's crucial to recognize that Talent 5.0 holds the promise of a more just and prosperous future, a future where every individual can thrive. With empathy and understanding at the heart of this journey, we can collectively foster an environment that empowers each member of the workforce, ensuring that we move forward together toward a brighter tomorrow. 

## REFERENCES

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**Organizations that integrate the harmonious coexistence of technology and human skill will find themselves not only enhancing productivity but also cultivating workplaces that prioritize humanity, inclusivity, and well-being.**