

The ultimate guide to

# JOB ARCHITECTURE

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2022

# PREFACE



The echoes of changing market dynamics are ringing deep in organizations. Globalization has increased competition, digitalization brings new technologies, business models and a new generation of employees with different needs and expectations has entered working life. The volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous business environment leads to an increased speed of organizational change and highlights the need for workforce transformation.

HR leaders and business executives are busy improving their workforces by focusing on skills and competencies and are trying to bring new talent into the organization to match the future needs of their business strategy. This requires a clear visibility into the current state of the workforce in all details. But only a minority of organizations can actually claim to have the workforce transparency needed.

The unequivocally best solution to gain transparency and improve the company-wide management of skills and competencies is by building a job architecture. This whitepaper outlines all you need to know about job architecture design and the details to embark on your design journey.

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# WHAT IS A JOB ARCHITECTURE

A job architecture describes how jobs are structured within an organization. It is far more than just a list of all available jobs and their descriptions. It includes precise job titles, levels

of work, structural-organizational data and more. All this information is clustered by functions and job-families representing the value chain of an organization.

The job architecture is therefore not only a powerful tool for defining compensation and benefits programs. It is also the foundation for all other HR and talent management processes such as career planning, learning & development, skills & competency management, workforce planning or succession planning.

In short, a job architecture aligns HR activities with a company's strategy and turns HR into a driver for value creation.



# WHAT A JOB ARCHITECTURE HELPS YOU WITH

The importance is directly related to the quality, completeness, structure and usability of the data because it serves as a base for all segments of talent management, but each separately. Let's take a look at how these segments benefit individually from a job architecture.

## acquiring talent

A well-defined job architecture contains all the requirements of a job with a view to the organization's value chain. This includes job descriptions, skills, competencies, qualifications and experiences that can easily be put into a job posting. Recruiters then have an accurate basis for selecting the best candidates. It also ensures that candidates fully understand the requirements of the job they apply for. When people properly understand their tasks and responsibilities, it reduces the risk of job dissatisfaction and increases talent retention. Be aware that job postings (marketing and recruiting tool) are different from job descriptions (internal compensation tool).





### developing talent

#### ...with motivating career paths

A comprehensive job architecture will have all the possible levels of a function defined and will document the requirements to reach the next level. It therefore provides a highly beneficial foundation to define career paths. You can analyze the requirements of one job (skills, competencies, experience...), compare them with the requirements of other jobs (in the same or in a different job family), and show a clear path of what it takes to make a move.

For the sake of developing talent, it is important to define these career paths vertically (within one function) as well as horizontally (between functions). Furthermore, you can consider new career paths for specialists such as Developers, which many times climb the career ladder without accumulating responsibility for employees. This will enable a company to provide trackable and motivating career paths for employees and growth opportunities as well as promoting internal talent mobility, ultimately leading to more engagement, retention, and development.

#### ...by creating better learning content

When the job requirements are clearly defined and up to date, they enable any organization to make informed decisions about learning and development initiatives. Identifying gaps in skills and competencies, tailoring the learning content, and investing the respective budget efficiently becomes much easier. Following the same logic, performance management can also be significantly supported by a job architecture. Organizations will be able to define trackable and realistic performance goals based on actual responsibilities and levels associated with a position. It is becoming clear that it is crucial to integrate talent management and job architecture seamlessly to get the most out of both.



### rewarding talent

#### ...by providing fair compensation

Either due to the desire to be just or to fair pay legislations, compensating employees fairly is a priority for most organizations. A job architecture can greatly support that objective. How?

There are different aspects to consider when defining a compensation structure. For example, it is possible to approach each job individually and design a pay structure that is based on an individual salary benchmark. This is not unusual for growing or distributed companies. It comes with the downside that differences in pay structures and pay levels between jobs within one job family slowly intrude the organization and eventually lead to unequal pay.

Another approach would be to define pay by mapping job levels to pre-defined functions that represent the value chain of the organization. However, some job families inside a function can have market benchmarks that differ from others (e.g. machine learning engineers vs. other types of engineers). Mapping levels to functions might lead to compensating some jobs under their market value and vice versa.

#### ...by maintaining competitive pay levels

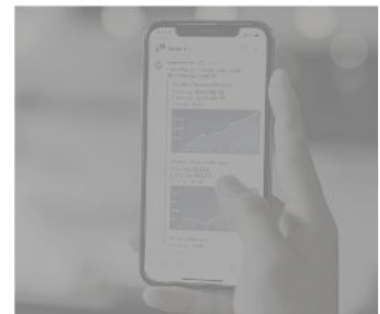
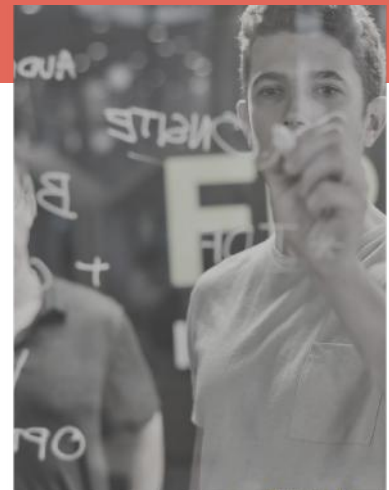
An additional use of your job architecture is to conduct external salary benchmarks, ensuring that salaries are competitive enough to attract the right talent. Salary benchmarks are usually performed with purchased market data. This however only makes sense if your individual job architecture (job, job families, grades) is comparable with market standards.

On top of comparability, it is essential to keep all your data up to date. For example, an organization might design its compensation structure based on market data at a certain point in time. If that structure is not reviewed regularly, compensation will likely differ from the market at some point and the company will lose competitiveness.

A healthy job architecture will provide a reliable and trustworthy foundation for external salary benchmarks, regardless of the chosen grading system. This is true as long as the grades are consistent, rolled-out globally within the organization and providing a picture of the current reality in your organisation.

After deciding on the approach that is best suited for your organization and fits your compensation goals, a job architecture will:

- ✓ Provide you with visibility over your jobs, functions and levels as a base for strategic decisions about compensation.
- ✓ Enable the comparison of pay for comparable jobs, thus identifying disparities in salaries. You need to have a complete, up-to-date picture of the reality in your company to reach equal pay.
- ✓ Add a level of objectivity to decisions about individual salary raises and promotions, and in a broader sense to define salary ranges for specific groups of jobs or functions.





### optimizing the HRIS investment

Many organizations decide to implement a HR Information System (HRIS) such as *SAP SuccessFactors* or *Workday* to improve their HR processes. Without exception, they will have to deal with job architecture data as part of the implementation process. The challenge in this situation is to improve the quality of the job architecture in a usually short time frame until the go-live date. Only with clean architectural job data will a company be able to take full advantage of what the HRIS offers.

Implementing a HRIS significantly improves Human Capital Management practices, which is however highly dependent on the quality of job data. Unstructured or low quality data leads to serious delays in implementation. Data conversion and migration into a format that can be exported to the new system can take up considerable time. Bad data will also make the HRIS provide less value than it actually could. Unfortunately the missing value can hardly be detected once low-quality data is fed into a new HRIS. Ideally, a job architecture is consolidated before starting implementation, the two structures match and employees are mapped to the final structure, ready to be imported into the new system.

### How to maximize the value of your HRIS investment?

The job data model fits the HRIS's structure and data fields. Converting the naming conventions and structure (job family, sub-job family) to the ones used in the HRIS can be very time consuming, often pushing the organization to get help from specialized consultants.

Job profiles need to be accurate, up to date, and consolidated. They represent the value chain of the organization to the best possible extent.

Grades need to be well-defined, consolidated, and mapped to all positions. The evaluation scheme is globally rolled-out, regardless of the chosen standard.

## dealing with periods of structural change

### ...a company growing in size

When a company increases in size, it's typical that the job architecture becomes more complex because new roles arise. This can mean new jobs, job families, functions and maybe even grades (especially when expanding to new markets or service areas).

In the best-case scenario, all the new jobs fit well into the existing job families, making the addition easy with no impact on the compensation structure. However, if there is no existing job architecture or if it is outdated, integrating new jobs will require a lot of work. It can also easily lead to inconsistencies such as adding the new jobs to a job family where they don't exactly fit or adding new job families that are defined with different criteria than existing ones. These scenarios are common - especially in international organisations where local management might not even know about structural requirements - and will slowly lead to growing pay inconsistencies between similar jobs and job families.

Dealing with growth therefore requires reviewing the job architecture to make sure it is scalable to support employee growth. Defining a structure including job families, sub-job families, grades that exist today, as well as the ones needed in the future, will ensure your ability to quickly integrate new jobs into the organizational model and compensation structure.

### ...a merger or acquisition

Neglecting HR challenges and failure to manage changes in the organizational structure are two major reasons why M&A deals still fail to achieve the intended value. Let's have a look at some typical scenarios that occur while merging the job architecture of two different companies.



#### SAME TASKS, DIFFERENT JOB TITLES

Adding up the jobs of two companies without consolidating the job titles or descriptions leads to duplications and high complexity.

#### DIFFERENT TASKS, SAME JOB TITLES

Making a comparison of jobs and grading difficult.

DIFFERENT GRADING framework and scales: leading to disparities in compensation and career progression.

HIGH VOLUME OF JOB DATA to analyse, define, consolidate, and then assign to the employees: resulting in high manual effort and increased risk of errors.

Consolidating the job architecture plays an essential role in identifying the synergy potential of a M&A deal. They will enable a comparison of jobs, fair compensation, lower turnover, and cost efficiencies.

The bottom line is: a healthy job architecture will not solve all your problems, but it's the best available place to start. Whether you have all the required information or not, the process can seem extremely daunting. But it does not need to be. Let's have a look at how the process of building a job architecture can be simplified.

# HOW TO DESIGN A JOB ARCHITECTURE

## apply different granularity levels

When creating a job catalog, there are different approaches available. It does not always mean that an organization must start from scratch and describe every detail anew. Depending on the size, complexity and need for the job architecture, a different level of granularity can be chosen.

Let's have a look at the types of job catalogs that you can consider, their advantages and disadvantages as well as how to make the best out of each approach.

## highly standardized job catalog (HSJC)

This type of job catalog combines positions in various operational functions into one overarching, generic approach. For example, "administrative clerk" (finance, facilities management, HR management, order entry) or "technical clerk" (IT support, IT testing, IT systems administration).

The major advantages are the low costs and high speed of creation. However, the descriptions of the job are limited to generic contents, which mainly refer to the assessment-relevant "how" of the job, little or not at all to the "what" of the job.

HSJC are therefore particularly suitable when it is a matter of quickly and transparently classifying jobs, rather than presenting the job content.



### standardized job catalog (SJC)

A SJC has several defined operational functions, also referred to as (sub-) job families, which fully represent the value chain of a company. For an industrial company for example, about 80 to 130 standardized (sub-) job families (or: "functions") typically describe the value chain, while about 40 to 70 (sub-) job families are needed to describe a service company. This varies depending on the industry, type of product/ service provided or complexity of organizational structure.

The content of the individual job in this case refers to both the "what" and the "how" relevant to evaluation. In such a catalog, the jobs are standardized by way of the content (the "what") being largely predetermined by market standards.

SJC are also relatively quick and inexpensive to create, they however may only fit an organization's specific value chain to a small extent. Most benchmark provider in the market offer such SJC on their respective online platforms. They are a good choice, when in addition to the classification of jobs, a generic content mapping of the individual jobs is done.

### partly standardized job catalog (PSJC)

Like the standardized job catalogs mentioned above, this catalog also contains functions. However, the functions and jobs assigned specifically describe the core value chain of a company. The functions that are the most relevant to the value chain can be defined specifically, whereas other functions can again be heavily borrowed from standards.

PSJCs adequately reflect the individuality of an organization without reinventing all jobs. They are the most common types and are often set up following major structural changes (reorganization, unification of HR systems...).

### company specific job catalog (CSJC)

Here, both the functions of (sub-) job families and individual jobs are collected and mapped in a completely company-specific way. This means that both the "how" and the "what" of a job can be described in a way that states the specific contribution to the value creation. This advantage is offset by its relatively costly creation. CSJCs are suitable when the business model of a company is unique and cannot necessarily be derived from existing typical service processes.





### pros and cons

#### standardized approach

##### **Quick & inexpensive.**

The major argument for using a standardized job catalog is cost. This method indeed requires little resources and time to implement, making it ideal for a company needing to achieve quick transparency with little effort.

##### **Comparable with other standards.**

Since the structure and content are standardized, it can easily be compared. Companies can compare their compensation and evaluation schemes in a meaningful way.

##### **Availability.**

There are many tools to edit & integrate standard catalogs.

##### **Maintaining quality.**

Quality is challenging because there is no control over necessary updates (new jobs being added, obsolete jobs not being removed, new skills not being considered...) and you can therefore find yourself with obsolete content.

##### **Releases.**

Releases have to be known and planned because changes in a market standard have to be integrated in one's own structure (e.g. removing jobs, adding skills...).

#### customized approach

##### **Value chain & process based.**

A customized approach ensures that your functions and jobs represent your individual value-chain accurately.

##### **Suitable for talent management.**

Since the content is based on actual value for the organization, the job catalog is a great foundation for all talent management practices (measure performance against goals and job descriptions, skill management based on the skills...).

##### **Company culture is better captured.**

By using your own structure and wording, you ensure that your job descriptions reflect your company culture and brand.

##### **Prepared for agility.**

Having the choice about the structure of your job architecture enables you to define it in a way that maximizes flexibility (n° of job families, depth of job descriptions, grading scheme...).

##### **Costly & time consuming.**

It requires a deeper understanding of the company's value chain and takes more time and effort to define and assign the jobs. A software managing the design is recommended.

There is no one-size fits all solution. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages. The choice should be based on an organization's needs and budget. A hybrid approach is a good solution to benefit from standard and customize where needed. A software solution made for job architecture design is beneficial with both approaches.

### make use of available software

As so often, software is your secret weapon to get things done. It will greatly speed up the process, reduce errors, enable regular changes, and provide the multi-hierarchical visibility you need. Here's what a software should be able to do for you.

### record jobs in the desired structure

Without a dedicated tool, it is not uncommon for organizations to record their job data in Excel. The HR business partners, the compensation team and other stakeholders work together to define a meaningful way of clustering the jobs (into job families, sub-job families or otherwise). They also agree on descriptions and on how to level the different jobs. But everyone involved works in different Excel sheets simultaneously.

#### why is this challenging?

- Structuring in Excel means a lot of copy & paste actions which are not only time-consuming and redundant, but also greatly increase the risk of error. The bigger and more complex the company's job structure is, the higher the risk.
- Several people working on the same document can lead to rewriting and versioning issues, leaving them struggling to know which version is the latest, containing all the relevant input, or what exactly has been modified by others.
- Document exchange might happen via Email, posing a security issue. There is no real control anymore about who gets access to which data and who can or should perform what action.

#### how can a software help?

- An editor will enable you to structure your job data freely. The overarching hierarchy can be set (e.g., job family – sub-job family – job) and users can freely work within it, i.e. creating new jobs or families and moving them around.
- A software gives you the possibility to have different views, depending on what a person needs to see or not. This way, you can avoid messing up the structure in Excel and have more flexibility when it comes to analyzing the data.
- Centralizing the work in one platform will address the versioning issue. No two persons will work on the same thing simultaneously, all changes can be included and tracked to address any issues later on.



### roll-out a unified grading scheme globally

Your job architecture will serve as a solid compensation tool because it can assign compensation grades to all existing jobs in an organization. Effective compensation however relies on fairness and alignment of practices. A software should allow for grades to be assigned to a job depending on the seniority and responsibilities. Location is also a decisive factor, as compensation worldwide often depends on the purchasing power of the country. Organizations therefore need a unified evaluation scheme (usually based on some market grading scales and benchmarks).

#### why is this challenging?

- Once the unified evaluation scheme is defined, it needs to be rolled-out to all jobs and employees globally. Without a tool that ensures that grades are assigned in the same way for all jobs, inconsistencies will arise as each country might go through the process differently.
- Comparison of jobs and grades (to make sure that compensation is fair and consolidated) will also require jumping back and forth between different sheets and going through them manually.

#### how can a software help?

- Regardless of the chosen grading standard, any tool should be able to integrate the standard and ensure that every grade assignment is done following the chosen evaluation scheme: for each job, only the defined grades are available, a specific job title and a clear description are provided.
- Ideally you can compare any jobs side-by-side and easily highlight inconsistencies. Then edit them directly in your platform.



### ensure secure access to data

One of the main issues in HR, is data security. On one hand, as the data is often highly sensitive there are many security concepts that define which rights HR users have (what data they can see, what they can change, what needs to be approved...). On the other hand, accurate data is often needed fast for making both operational and strategic decisions.

#### why is this challenging?

- Governance and data privacy rules can be a problem when HR needs to access data. For each report required by HR data needs to be reconciled and the security rights need to be configured accordingly. Especially, if the data is stored on different systems (e.g., job data in Excel, employee data in local files, compensation data in a payroll system, hiring data in a recruiting tool...). This requires effort and time from IT and can result in delays, making data obsolete when obtained, or in not getting access to the data at all.
- The use of Excel (or other non-integrated tools) often leads to exchanges of files via email, leading to a complete loss of control over data security.

#### how can a software help?

- Regardless of the chosen grading standard, any tool should be able to integrate the standard and ensure that every grade assignment is done following the chosen evaluation scheme: for each job, only the defined grades are available, a specific job title and a clear description are provided.
- Ideally you can compare any jobs side-by-side and easily highlight inconsistencies. Then edit them directly in your platform.



### ensure compliance with internal and external rules

External rules can relate to specific qualifications and certifications needed to perform a job, salary regulations, or similar. Internal rules could for example refer to employee branding standards (e.g., structure of jobs, logos, employee experience...). Within a job architecture, there are many things that should be pre-defined or that require approval (grade assignment, changes in organizational structure, requirements for a job...). This means that many processes need to be put in place and communicated to ensure compliance with those requirements.

#### why is this challenging?

- Without a way of ensuring that process steps are respected (when using Excel for example), there is a significant risk that steps are ignored. In industries that are particularly strict (e.g., pharma), this can result in serious legal consequences.

#### how can a software help?

- Usually, a good job architecture design software has integrated workflows which can be aligned with your company rules. This ensures that only the right people can view and edit the job architecture and that any critical change is subject to review and approval before being implemented.
- A history tracking all activities is useful for internal audits. This is difficult to achieve without a software. Let alone the loss of trust from your employees if their personal, sensitive data gets leaked.





### save time assigning jobs to employees

Your global job catalog has been successfully created... and now what?

Once jobs and positions are defined globally, the challenge of assigning them to employees begins. Getting this process right is crucial to making the best out of your job catalog.

#### why is this challenging?

- Some jobs must be assigned in bulk. For example, the 'working student' job will often need to be assigned to many employees simultaneously. In Excel it would be a repetitive and time-consuming task of assigning each employee individually, increasing the risk of errors.
- Other jobs contribute highly to creating value for the organization and need to be approached in more depth. All details of these jobs and employees need to be visible to make the right assignments. In Excel, that would mean jumping from sheet to sheet, copy/ pasting... again a considerable manual effort, prone to errors.

#### how can a software help?

- Usually, a good job architecture design software has integrated workflows which can be aligned with your company rules. This ensures that only the right people can view and edit the job architecture and that any critical change is subject to review and approval before being implemented.
- A history tracking all activities is useful for internal audits. This is difficult to achieve without a software. Let alone the loss of trust from your employees if their personal, sensitive data gets leaked.



### improve the employee experience

For various reasons, dealing with manual job architecture design can have considerable, negative impact on the employee experience.

#### why is this challenging?

- An unconsolidated job architecture leads to differences in compensation and dissatisfaction among employees. Why? If the employer does not provide transparency into the evaluation and compensation schemes, employees easily feel as if they are not being treated fairly. This can lead to low engagement and low retention rates.
- HR employees involved in designing the job architecture face frustration when working with Excel. The tasks are repetitive (copy & paste, switch between sheets), take time and put them at risk of committing errors. The easier the work process for them, the more likely they produce high quality data. And will be more engaged.

#### how can a software help?

- A user-friendly platform that does not require a lot of training will create great comfort in designing the job architecture. Not only can employees work faster, but they have less risk of making errors and can present better results. This is greatly motivating and engaging.
- Integrated workflows and security that give employees peace of mind when working on the job architecture.

### integrate your job architecture with your HR backend system

As described above, the job architecture is the infrastructure backbone of many HR processes. It is therefore crucial that it can be easily linked to the data in all HR systems.



#### why is this challenging?

- Some organizations might struggle to build a HR backbone from their complex legacy systems or settled for Excel.
- Others own a solid HR data core but use a variety of applications to manage HR tasks such as recruitment or performance management. If the decentralized data does not feed into an integrated infrastructure, it cannot be aggregated, analyzed, and be used to take consistent strategic decisions.
- There are many experts to turn to for job architecture design - from a content perspective. However, feeding the data back into all HR-systems requires also deep IT know-how.

#### how can a software help?

- Integration, integration, integration. It is essential to have a solution that is fully connected to either your HRIS (as a single source of truth) or to all local systems, and that can access the data whenever you need it. The job architecture data you have been compiling and the results of the employee mapping process should then be exported back to your HR system, improving the quality of all your data.
- Without a proper platform to analyze your job architecture data, you will miss out on insights that can improve the process. Such analytics should be part of any software solution and include best-practices from tracking progress of design campaigns to automatic translation. The data should be visualized in a way that makes it understandable and suitable for taking decisions. As opposed to having long sheets of data that require a lot of know-how and technical expertise to derive information from.

### ensure regular reviews of the job architecture

Finally, for a job architecture to remain an effective tool, it should be reviewed regularly. Otherwise, the compensation strategy might become outdated (e.g., not in line with the market), the career paths might not offer enough satisfying options for employees, etc... This will impact the ability to acquire, develop and reward talent. The first time designing a job architecture requires the biggest effort, but the effort will decline with every review.

#### our recommendations to keep the effort low

- ✓ A “small scope” review every one or two years. The focus should be on certain jobs that need to be looked at more closely. E.g., those associated to high employee turnover or to difficulty hiring for.
- ✓ A bigger review at least once every 4 years: involving market benchmarks, job families structure review...
- ✓ In case of particular events another review might be necessary (e.g., a large acquisition, an HRIS implementation, company growth...).

#### The good news is that the effort needed will decrease over time.

The reviews become smaller in scope over time. A regular review sets a foundation and leads to a decreasing number of problems in each cycle. The more often you do it, the more experience and efficiency you gain.

A software tool that simplifies the process will decrease the effort needed for the maintenance of your job architecture even more.

# THE LEVEL-OF-WORK<sup>®</sup> MATRIX

a value-based approach  
to job architecture  
design

We have seen that the job architecture is a crucial piece of the talent management puzzle. It can however be a complex one to solve. Yes, technology can greatly support and speed up the process of creating a job architecture. But there are also tools for creating the necessary content that can accelerate the process. Have a closer look at the Level-of-Work matrix as an example.

The Level-of-Work<sup>®</sup> approach is a pragmatic job categorization tool with respect to the complexity of the work done (for non-managerial positions), and with respect to the complexity of management (for managerial positions). It provides a common understanding of how jobs do work in an organization.

IMPACT OF WORK			Research & Create	Develop & Evaluate	Plan & Balance	Build & Design	Run & Support	Operate & Execute
LEVEL OF WORK			Functions					
Sequence Oriented	Operator	Worker						
		S1						
		S2						
Process Oriented	Coordinator	S3						
		S4						
		S5						
Target Oriented	Specialist	S6						
		S7						
		S8						
	Professional	S9						
		S10						
		S11						
	Expert	S12						

The 12 vertical levels distinguish different layers of complexity in work activities in a specific environment. On a horizontal level it describes the impact on the value chain of the organization. These levels provide a generic reasoning for any assignment of jobs in a benchmark reference system and make it considerably easier to structure your workforce. (You'll find more information about the Level-of-Work<sup>®</sup> matrix on our website.)



Easy to grasp.



Applicable to both classic & agile work environments.



Provides a valuable and insightful categorization without being complex.



Enables the use of business terms to describe work instead of HR jargon.



Compatible with any market standard evaluation schemes and benchmark references.



# HOW TO GET STARTED

## prioritize the right approach

As shown in the previous chapter about the design principles, there are different granularity levels which can be applied and should be decided upon. But there are additional aspects to have in mind when preparing your project.



Ask these questions.

1. To what extent should the job architecture represent the value chain of your organization?
2. What method will you use to ensure that the value chain is correctly represented: Vertically through work level & grades. Horizontally through work impacts & functions.
3. Is it sufficient to start out from your existing, standard processes and use them to derive levels and jobs?
4. How far can you benefit from working with internal groups of experts?
5. To what extent can you use market standards and how high is your need for customization?

### involve the right people

Designing a job architecture requires collaboration between various teams across your organization. Make sure you consider bringing the following stakeholders on board to assure a successful realization of your project.

#### HR

Compensation team: usually they are the main driver of such a project. It is their responsibility to provide the HR business partners and rest of the team with input about the structure (job families, sub-job families, job titles, grades...). They must also closely monitor the impact of a new job architecture on the existing pay structures. In addition, this team should drive the process of selecting a software for job architecture design because they are best equipped to define the right requirements.

Talent management team: to ensure that the job architecture can be used for defining meaningful career paths that are motivating for the employees and are in line with the organization's goals. They will also link the job architecture with the recruiting strategy (hiring needs, system used, job postings to be derived...).

#### Steering committee

For generating commitment and “buy-in”. This will ensure that the project has clear goals and can be delivered on budget, that the necessary changes can be implemented and that you have top-down endorsement for internal communication.

#### IT

Together with HR, they oversee the impact of the job architecture on the HR backend system. Some fields might need to be configured (e.g., addition of sub-job families in the HRIS system). They should also look out for the integration of the HR system(s) into the job architecture. Ideally the used job architecture tool integrates seamlessly into the organization's infrastructure to get the highest data quality for reporting and analytics. Some software solutions deliver integration as a standard service.



### Internal communication

To decide on internal communication activities regarding the upcoming changes. It is essential to inform all employees on time, update them regularly and make sure that there is a channel through which concerns, and questions can be addressed.

### Legal

To get advice on the necessity of having to update (some) existing work contracts. Also - in a unionized workplace - some union representatives may need to be consulted or informed about the job architecture to be implemented. Especially when it comes to changes in pay programs. The legal department can give advice about what is recommended or mandatory.

### Subject matter expert for job architecture

In many cases, organizations lack the know-how needed to design a job architecture from a content perspective. Hiring an external “subject matter expert” can improve the efficiency of the process significantly. This role would be providing expert knowledge about the specific job structure to adopt, defining the most efficient process and delivering content or knowledge about the necessary job descriptions.

To support the subject matter expert in defining the content of the job architecture better and faster, technology can be a great enabler. For this reason, “procurement” might be also a stakeholder to consider, to accompany the selection of an appropriate software solution.



## define the right scope

The specific situation of a company should be taken into consideration here. As mentioned before, there are different granularity levels that can be applied and different scopes for a job architecture design or review. The following questions help defining the scope.



Ask these questions.

1. Is there an existing job architecture? When was it reviewed for the last time?
2. What does it already include (job descriptions, skills, competencies, grades...)?  
What is needed today given the organization's business and HR needs?
3. Is the job architecture integrated into any of the other HR processes?
4. To which other HR-systems does it need to be connected to (e.g., competency model, recruiting system, HRIS...)?
5. Which jobs or job families are crucial for the organization's value chain and should be prioritized?

## project readiness checklist

### Check your boxes

- ✓ Check how business & HR goals affect the requirements for a job architecture.
- ✓ Gain clarity about the scope of your project.
- ✓ Assess the need for external support, depending on complexity and urgency.
- ✓ Decide on use of software or not. If yes, define your requirements.
- ✓ Ensure executive level support.
- ✓ Secure the budget.
- ✓ Have a realistic time frame and organizational resources in your project plan.
- ✓ Form a small but diverse working group.
- ✓ Check the need for applying change management methods.
- ✓ Make sure employees understand the benefits of such a project.





A job architecture is the backbone for the success of most HR processes such as recruiting, compensation & benefits, performance management and strategic workforce planning. Due to its complexity, it is often considered a pain point for HR teams.

But the value of having a job architecture in place is only growing as organizations face mounting pressure to be flexible and agile. This is precisely what a job architecture supports: structure and flexibility simultaneously.

Whether an organization decides to design a job architecture on their own or secure external support, the process will always need some time and investment. Software and content tools will reduce the investment significantly. But it is just as important to make the process a collaborative, transparent effort. Everyone involved will benefit from the results.

To sum it up, with...

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- ...the right approach to design,
  - ...a good mix of standard and individualized content,
  - ...a pragmatic categorization of jobs (i.e. Level-of-Work<sup>®</sup> matrix),
  - ...a software to help create a job catalog and map jobs to employees,
  - ...good communication, and
  - ...the right people on board...

... the job architecture can be quickly manageable and unleash its power in your organization. It gives you access to efficiency gains and improvement of employee experience simultaneously and once it is in place you won't want to do without it.

**Promised.**

'COLMEIA' is Portuguese for beehive. The beehives we take care of are the workforces of large organizations. We provide cloud solutions for workforce planning.

Our products improve organizational efficiency and employee experience (job architectures, job catalogs, job mapping) and enable organizations to act on the future impact of new technologies onto their workforces already today (technology impact).

For more information and product demos please get in touch:

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