

WHITE PAPER

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO JOB ARCHITECTURE

2021

Preface

The echoes of changing market dynamics are ringing deep in organizations. Globalization has increased competition, digitalization brings new technologies and business models and a new generation of employees with new needs and expectations is entering the market. 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 bringing skills and competencies into the foreground and bringing new talent into the organization which matches the future needs of their business strategy. This requires quick response and a clear visibility into the current state of the workforce in all its details. But only a minority of organizations can 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 enables you to embark on the design journey yourself.

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1. What is a job architecture?

A job architecture refers to how jobs are structured within an organization. The job architecture is more than just a list of all available jobs and their descriptions. It also includes precise job titles, levels of work, organizational structure data and more. All this information is classified in a way that represents the value chain of an organization, by clustering functions and jobs into job families and eventually sub-job families. The job architecture is a great tool for defining successful compensation and benefits programs. But it can also be considered the foundation for many other HR and talent management processes such as career planning, learning & development, skills & competency management, workforce planning or succession planning.

2. Why is a job architecture important?

The importance lies in 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 have a look at how these segments benefit from a high-quality job architecture.

Acquiring talent

A well-defined job architecture contains all the requirements to perform a job that is valuable 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 thus increases talent retention. It should be noted though that job postings (marketing and recruiting tool) are different from job descriptions (internal compensation tool).



Developing talent

...by providing motivating career paths.

On the other hand, a job architecture where all the possible levels of a function are clearly defined, with clear documentation about the differences and requirements to reach the next level, will provide a highly beneficial foundation for defining career paths. Indeed, a job architecture can be used to analyse the requirements (skills, competencies, experience...) of a job, comparing them with the ones of other jobs (in the same or in a different job family), thus showing a clear path of what it takes to make a move from one job to another. For the sake of developing talent, it is important to define career paths vertically (within one function) and also horizontally (between functions). Also, to consider new career paths for specialists such as Developers, which many times climb the career ladder without having any responsibility for employees. This will be helpful in providing motivating career paths for employees and opportunity to grow as well as promoting internal talent mobility, ultimately leading to more engagement, retention, and development.

...by better targeting learning content.

Clearly defined and up to date job requirements enable any organization to make better decisions about learning and development initiatives. By identifying gaps in terms of skills and competencies they can better tailor the learning content and make the best out of their investment.

Following the same logic, performance management can also greatly be supported by a job architecture. Organizations will be able to define realistic performance goals based on the actual responsibilities and levels associated to a position.

At this point it's becoming clear that in order to get the most out of a job architecture, a seamless integration with the talent management infrastructure is crucial.



Rewarding talent

...by providing fair compensation.

Whether due to fair pay legislations or the desire to be just, compensating employees fairly is a priority for many organizations. The 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 danger that differences in pay structures and pay levels between jobs within one same job family slowly intrude the organization and lead to unequal pay.

Another approach would be to define pay by mapping 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.

It is important to think about which approach is best suited for an organization and fits your compensation goals. The job architecture can:

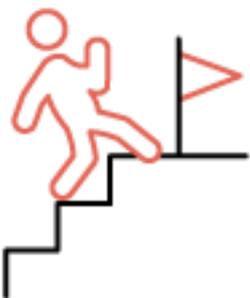
- Provide you with visibility over your jobs, functions and levels which in turn enables strategic decision making about compensation.
- Enable the comparison of pay for comparable jobs, thus identifying disparities in salaries.
- Add a level of objectivity to decisions about salary raises and promotions, if you use it to define salary ranges for certain jobs and functions.



...by maintaining competitive pay levels.

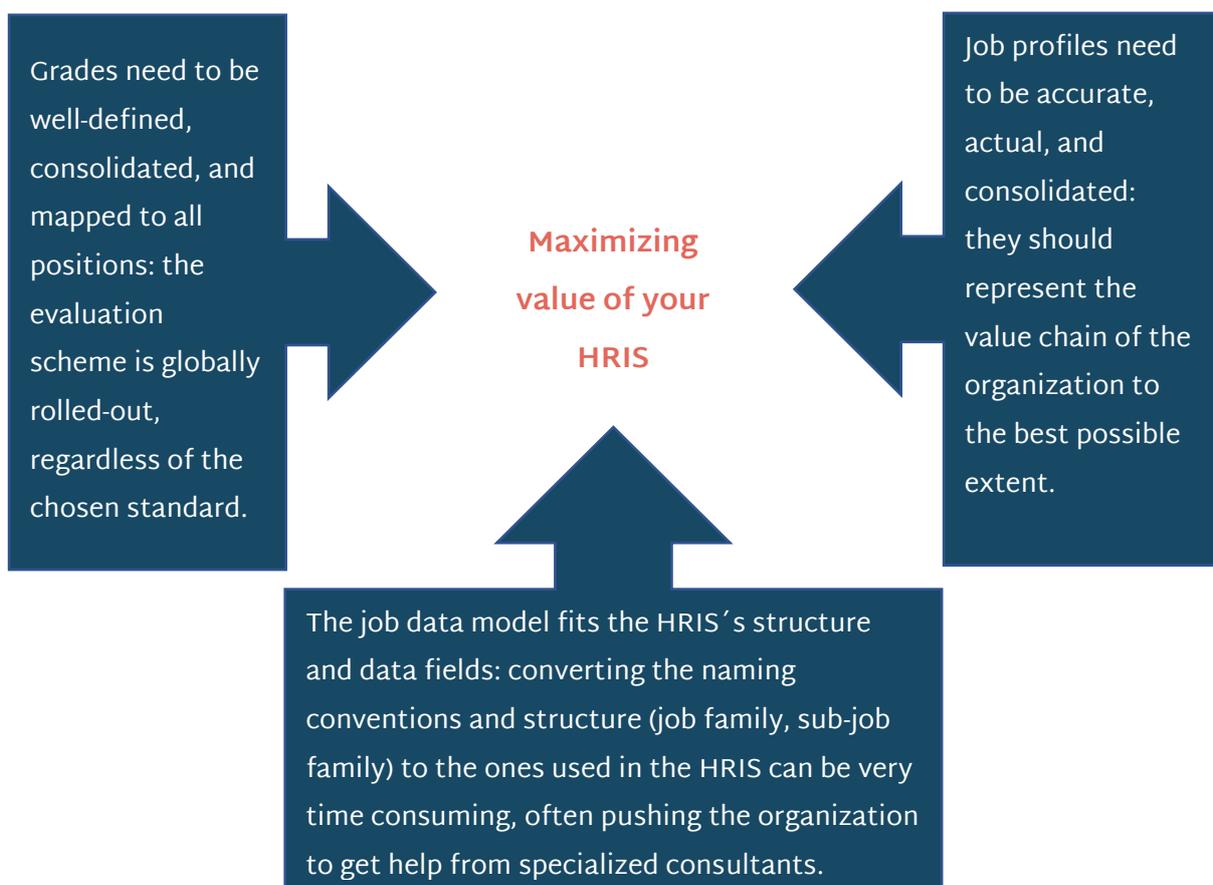
A major use of the job architecture is for external salary benchmarks and for making sure that salaries are competitive enough to attract the right talent. The salary benchmarks are usually performed using purchased market data. This however only makes sense if the defined job architecture (job, job families, grades) are comparable with market standards. Not only the job architecture needs to be structured in a way that makes it comparable and consistent, but it also needs to be kept 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.

The point is, a healthy job architecture will provide a great foundation for external salary benchmarks, regardless of the chosen grading system, as long as the grades are consistent and rolled-out globally within an organization.



Optimizing the HRIS investment

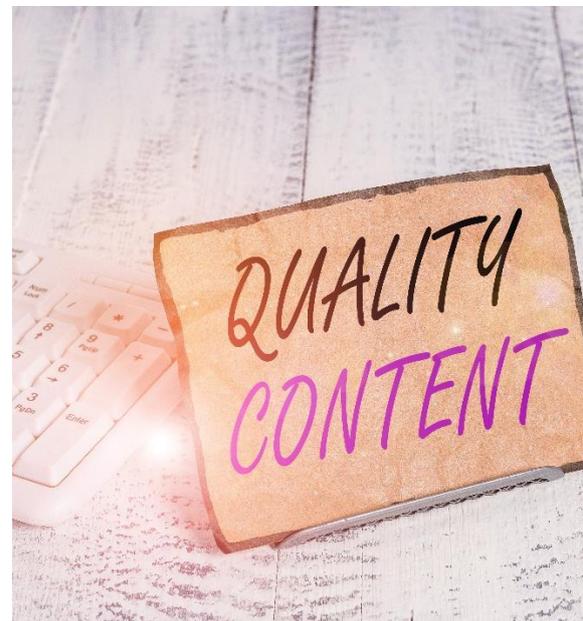
Many organizations decide to implement a HRIS (HR Information System) such as *SAP SuccessFactors* or *Workday* to improve their HR processes. They will always find themselves dealing with job architecture data as part of the implementation project. The challenge then is to improve the quality of the job architecture in a short time frame until the go-live date and be able to take advantage of what the HRIS offers.



Implementing a HRIS can be a chance for greatly improving HCM (Human Capital Management) practices, that is however highly dependent on the quality of job data. Failing to fulfill those requirements can lead to a delay in the implementation project due to the lengthy process of data conversion and migration into a format that can be exported to the new system. It can also lead to the situation that the HRIS provides less

value than possible. With the additional problem that it can hardly be detected once the low-quality is fed into a new system.

Ideally, the job architecture is consolidated before the start of the implementation project, the structure matches the one of the chosen solutions and employees are mapped to the target structure ready to import in the new system.



Dealing with periods of structural change

...a company growing in size.

When a company increases in size, its job architecture often becomes more complex because many 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 will also require quick decision making, often leading 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 others. These scenarios are not uncommon (especially in international organisations where local management might not even know about structural requirements) and will slowly lead to growing pay inconsistencies between 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 you are able to quickly integrate new jobs into the organizational model and compensation structure.



...a merger or acquisition.

Neglected HR challenges and failure to manage changes in the organizational structure are 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.

<p>SAME TASKS, DIFFERENT JOB TITLES adding up the jobs of one company to the other without consolidating the job titles or descriptions, leads to duplicated jobs in the job catalog.</p>	<p>DIFFERENT TASKS, SAME JOB TITLES making a comparison of jobs and grading difficult.</p>
<p>DIFFERENT GRADING framework and scales: leading to disparities in compensation and career progression.</p>	<p>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.</p>

Consolidating the job architecture with the right tools therefore 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 absolutely the right place to start. Whether you already have all the needed 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.



3. How to design a job architecture

Apply different granularity levels

When creating a job catalog, there are different approaches to consider. 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 granularity level 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. HSJK 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)

In this type of job catalog, there are 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 functions typically describe the value chain, while about 40 to 70 functions 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. They are a good choice, when in addition to the classification of jobs, a generic content mapping of the individual jobs is done.

For both the HSJC and the SJC types, the focus is clearly on benchmarking.

Partly Standardized Job Catalog (PSJC)

Like the standardized job catalogs mentioned above, this catalog also contains functions. However, the functions and assigned jobs 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 completely "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 describes 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 typical service processes on the market.



Pros & Cons

The Standardized Approach

- **Quick & Inexpensive.** The major argument that speaks 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 some transparency quickly with little effort.
- **Comparable with other standards.** Since the structure and content are standard, it can easily be compared. Companies can compare their compensation and evaluation schemes in a meaningful way.
- **Many tools are available** to edit and integrate standard catalogs.
- **Maintaining quality** can however be **challenging** as the company using it has not much control over it. Some standard catalogs are not regularly updated (new jobs being added but obsolete jobs not being removed, or new skills are not being considered...) and you can therefore find yourself with obsolete content.
- **Releases** are also something to keep in mind when using a market standard. If there is any change in the catalog, how can you integrate it into yours (e.g., mapping employee to new jobs, removing/adding job families or skills...)?

The Customized Approach

- **Value chain & process based.** As mentioned before, having a customized approach to job catalog design can ensure that your functions and jobs accurately represent your specific value-chain.
- **Suitable for talent management.** Since the content is based on the actual value of the organization, the job catalog can be a great foundation for other talent management practices (measure performance against goals and job descriptions, skill management based on the skills linked to an employee's job, better overview for succession planning, fairer compensation, clearer career paths...)
- **Company culture is better captured.** By using your own structure and wording, you can ensure that your job descriptions reflect your company culture and employer branding, resulting in more employee engagement as opposed to standard content.
- **Agile structures can be set up.** By having the choice about how to structure your job architecture (job families, sub-job families, length, and complexity of job descriptions, grading scheme, skills and competencies recording) you can define it in a way that maximizes flexibility.
- **Costly & time consuming.** It requires a deeper understanding of the company's value chain and processes, thus it takes more effort to define and then assign the defined jobs to your employees in an efficient way. A software to manage the design is highly recommended in this case.
- **Doesn't have to be a large effort.** Different granularity levels can be chosen, for example individualization can be done only on a job/sub-job family level instead of going deeper to the individual job level.

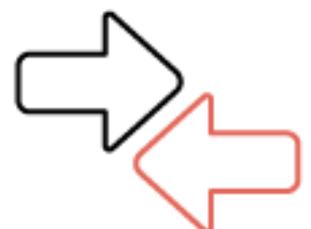


The bottom lines

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. Ideally 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.

For the standardized approach, using an editor to maintain the job catalog, adapt it to some extent to the organization when changes arise, assign grades to the jobs and most importantly to map employee to the jobs, is recommended.

For the customized approach, a software solution can greatly support the process in a way that relieves most pain points. This is what the next part will be about.



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 else). They also agree on descriptions and how to level the different jobs. Everyone involved works in different Excel sheets simultaneously.

Why is this challenging?	How can technology improve the process?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structuring in Excel means a lot of copy & paste actions which not only are 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 could lead to overwriting and versioning issues, leaving employees struggling to know which one is the latest version, containing all the relevant input, or what exactly has been modified by others. ▪ Document exchange might happen via Email, posing a real security issue. There is no real control anymore about who gets access to which data and who can perform what action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 the users can then work inside this structure by creating new jobs or families, moving them around, removing some... ▪ Ideally the software gives you the possibility to have different views, depending on what a person needs to see or does not need to see. 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 on one platform will also address the versioning issue. You can ensure that no one works on the same thing at the same time and that all changes are always included at any time. A tracking of all actions in the background is a huge plus for being able to trace the history of changes and address any issue.

...roll-out a unified grading scheme globally.

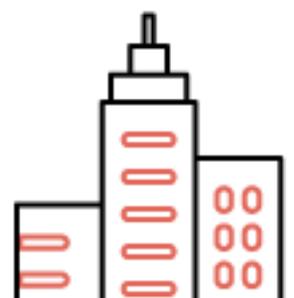
As previously mentioned, the job architecture is a great compensation tool because it can assign compensation grades to all existing jobs in an organization. Effective compensation however relies on fairness and alignment of practices. A software should allow for grades to be assigned to a job depending on the seniority and responsibilities. Location is also a deciding 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 the 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 technology improve the process?

- 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 also can compare any jobs side-by-side and easily highlight inconsistencies. Then edit them directly, all in one platform.



...ensure secure access to data.

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

Why is this challenging?

- Governance and data privacy rules often come in the way of HR getting access to the data it needs at the right time. For each report required by HR the data needs to be reconciled and the relevant security rights need to be configured accordingly. Especially, if the data needed is stored on different systems (e.g. job data from Excel, employee data from different local systems, compensation data from the payroll system, hiring data from the recruiting tool...). This requires effort and time from IT and can often result in delays in receiving data, making it obsolete when obtained or even worse no access to the needed data at all.
- Also, as mentioned before, 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 technology improve the process?

- This is where the emerging trend of cloud software finds its reasoning. Using a cloud solution could ensure that HR always has access to all the data it needs at anytime and anywhere.
- A security model should be included to give users the needed rights and assign them roles. This way you can ensure that the data is not being exchanged outside of the system and that everyone only sees and does what they are supposed to.

...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 on the other hand could for example refer to employee branding standards (e.g. structure of jobs, logos, employee experience...).

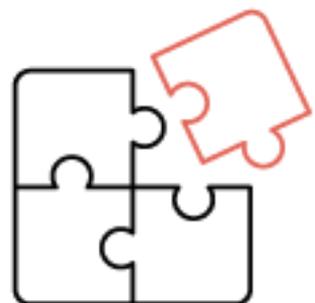
The point is, within a job architecture, there are many things that should be pre-defined or that require approval (grade assignment, changes in org. structure, requirements for a job...). This means that many processes need to be put in place and communicated to ensure compliance with those requirements.

Why is this challenging?

- Without a way of ensuring that the process steps are respected (when using Excel for example), there is a big risk that some steps are ignored. In industries that are particularly strict (e.g. Pharma industry), this can have grave legal consequences.

How can technology improve the process?

- 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 of all activities performed will be useful for internal audits. This anyhow is difficult to achieve without a software. For not speaking about the loss of trust from your employees if their personal, sensitive data might get 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 to many employees. For example, a working student job will often need to be assigned to several employees at the same time. Doing this assignment in Excel means a repetitive and time-consuming task of assigning each employee individually, increasing the risk of committing errors.
- Other jobs that contribute highly to creating value for the organization need to be approached more strategically. The details of these jobs and of the respective employees need to be accessible for making the right assignments. This can prove difficult if there is no tool that provides you with all the information you need and the possibility to assign. With Excel, that would mean jumping from sheet to sheet, copy pasting... again a high manual effort, prone to errors.

How can technology improve the process?

- Doing this assignment (also called mapping) on a specialized platform will ensure invaluable time gains. A good tool should enable bulk assignments of jobs to employees.
- Displaying the needed information (coming from your integrated HRIS) and enable quick access while working on the mapping will also be a game changer as it will enable working speed and better data for decisions.



...improve the employee experience of HR users.

For different reasons, dealing with manual job architecture design often leads to a negative employee experience.

Why is this challenging?

- The differences in compensation that can arise from an unconsolidated job architecture, could lead to high levels of dissatisfaction among employees. Why? If the employer is not able to provide transparency about the evaluation and compensation schemes, employees easily feel as if they are not being compensated fairly and feel dissatisfied. This can lead to low employee engagement and ultimately low retention rates.
- HR employees who are involved in designing the job architecture face many frustrations when working with Excel. This is due to the repetitive tasks (copy & pasting, switching between sheets...) that take a lot of time and puts them at high risk of committing errors. The easier it is for them to work on the job architecture, the more incentive they will have to maintain it and thus lead to a better quality of data on top of having more engaged employees.

How can technology improve the process?

- A user-friendly platform that does not require a lot of training will enable great comfort in designing the job architecture. Not only can employees work faster, but they have less risk of committing error and can present better results. This can be 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 we have previously seen, 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 still struggle to build a core HR backbone from their complex legacy systems.
- Some have settled for error prone Excels.
- Others already have a solid HR data core but are using many applications to manage the different HR processes such as talent acquisition, performance management, succession planning... and have missed out on creating an integrated infrastructure. This means that the data is not stored centrally and therefore not aggregated, leading to inconsistent strategic decisions and initiatives.
- Generally, there are many experts that organizations can turn to for job architecture design - from a content perspective. However, exporting that data back into all the systems is often time consuming and requires deep IT know-how of the system and the job architecture.

How can technology improve the process?

- Integration, integration, integration! Having a solution that is fully connected to either your HRIS (as one single source of truth) or to all local systems, and that can access the data whenever you need it, is key! The job architecture data you have been compiling and the results of the employee mapping - process should then also be exported back to your HR system, improving the quality of your data there as well.
- Without a proper platform to analyze your job architecture data, you will miss out many insights that are necessary for strategic decisions. Such analytics should be part of a good software solution. They include best-practices KPIs to look for (e.g., anything related to tracking progress of design campaigns, translation tasks, open approval tasks ...). The data can often be visualized in a way that makes it understandable and suitable for making decisions, unlike 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.

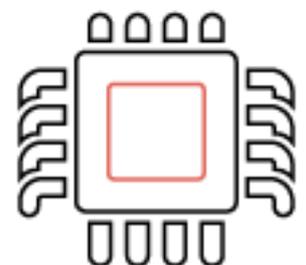
Last but not least, for a job architecture to remain an effective tool, it should be reviewed regularly. Otherwise, the compensation strategy might become outdated (e.g. not in line with the market), the career paths might not offer a sufficient number of satisfying options for employees, etc... This will impact the ability to acquire, develop and reward talent. The first time designing a job architecture requires the most effort, just as the effort needed for a review grows with the time since the last 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 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 will become smaller in scope over time. A regular review and setting up a foundation will ensure good quality to start with and less problem in each review.
- The more often you do it, the more experience and efficiency you gain.
- A software tool that greatly simplifies the process as mentioned above will decrease the effort needed for the maintenance of your job architecture even more.



4. The Level-of-Work matrix: A value-based approach to job architecture design

We have now established that the job architecture is a crucial piece of the talent management puzzle. It can however often be a complex and daunting one to solve. Yes, technology can greatly support and speed up the process of creating the job architecture. But there are also tools for content creation that can accelerate the process. We gave our proprietary methodology the title “**Level-of-Work Matrix**”.

What is it?

It is a pragmatic job categorization tool. It ensures that all jobs represent the value chain of an organization. It helps saving time while ensuring high-quality.

12 layers of complexity in work activities

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

18 layers of impact on the value chain

It captures and reduces complexity.

- 12 levels that distinguish different layers of complexity in work activities in a specific environment. This is the general reasoning for any assignment of a grade or pay level. They 12 levels are split into levels for managers and for staff.
- Grades or pay levels which group similar positions (using criteria such as skills, competencies, qualifications or experience) in order to assign compensation rates and/or grant any additional benefits to a specific group.

It captures and represents the impact of a job.

- Through the work impact. This basically refers to the job functions representing the value chain of the organization.

Each job can be categorized in the matrix based on its work level and work impact.

The Level-of-Work matrix is...

- ✓ Is easy to grasp.
- ✓ Is applicable in both classic and agile work environments.
- ✓ Provides a valuable and insightful categorization without being too complex.
- ✓ Enables the use of business terms to describe work instead of HR jargon.
- ✓ Is compatible with market standard evaluation schemes.

We used the **Level-of-Work matrix** and our own SaaS-tools to support German KION Group in building a job architecture in just three months. Read the story in the blog on our [website](#).

KION GROUP
BUILDS FIRST HIGH-QUALITY
JOB ARCHITECTURE
IN JUST THREE MONTHS
BEFORE GO-LIVE OF WORKDAY




Project Challenge

- High-quality, global job architecture
- Including job descriptions, mapping & career planning
- In under 3 months

Project Results

3 months
100 countries
36,000 employees
mapped into a solid, future-proof job architecture.
On time to go live with Workday!



“While having a basic job catalogue structure in place, we still struggled to adapt it to our future needs. We were looking for an easy and globally applicable leveling structure for our jobs, and for a service which helps us in the process of mapping over 35 K people, in a short time frame.” – KION Group

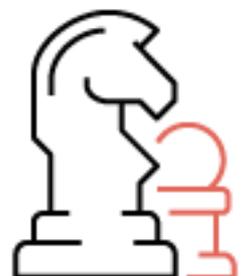
5. How to get started

Prioritize the right approach

As shown in chapter III, there are different granularity levels which can be applied and should be decided upon. But there are more aspects to have in mind when preparing your project.

Ask yourself these questions.

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



Involve the right people

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

Steering committee

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

HR

Compensation team: usually they are main drivers 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 that are in line with the organization’s goals. They should also link the job architecture with the recruiting strategy (hiring needs, system used, job postings to be derived...).

IT

Together with HR, they are in charge of considering 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) with 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 about internal communication activities regarding the upcoming changes. It is essential to inform all employees on time, update them regularly and to 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 - it could be the case that some union representatives 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 is recommended and mandatory.

Subject Matter Expert 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 greatly improve the efficiency of the process. This role would be in charge of giving 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, in order to accompany the selection of an appropriate software solution.

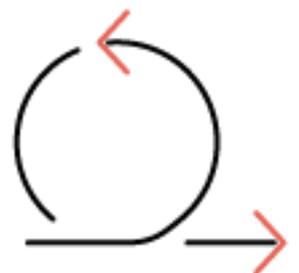


Define the right scope

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 yourself these questions.

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



Project Readiness Checklist

Check your boxes

- Have the business goals and the goals for HR ready. Be clear about the resulting requirements for the 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.
- Include 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.



Closing thoughts

The job architecture is the backbone of many HR processes such as recruiting, compensation & benefits, performance management or strategic workforce planning. Due to its complexity however, it is often considered a big pain point for HR teams.

The need for a regular review of the job architecture is increasing as organizations face mounting pressure to be flexible and agile. The value of working with a job architecture is growing.

Whether an organization decides to design a job architecture on their own or get external support, the process will always need some time and investment. But there are software and content tools available to greatly reduce the investment of time and money and create valuable content quickly.

To sum it up, with...

...the right approach to job architecture design,

...a good mix of standard and individualized content,

...a pragmatic categorization of jobs (i.e. the Level-of-Work matrix)

**...a software to support the creation/ editing of a job catalog
and the process of mapping jobs to employees,**

...a carefully defined project scope and timeline,

...good communication, and

...the right team...

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

Promised.



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