STEP 1
Understand the business and workforce issues
- Identify current and changing dynamics of key markets and customers and their impact on business strategy, brand, and workforce priorities.

STEP 2
Develop workforce and HR function strategies
- Identify workforce segments and characteristics that drive competitive advantage.
- Align people and business strategy.
- Determine HR’s priorities and how best to organize and deliver services.

STEP 3
Promote and lead change
- Identify needed changes, potential barriers, and activities to ensure effective implementation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS
1. Identify issues critical to key stakeholders and develop plans to derive immediate benefits.
2. Strive to connect goals of the HR function and the business.
3. Create a comprehensive plan for change including activities, timing, resources, and estimated returns.
4. Build and communicate a compelling, quantitative case for change.
5. Hold true to your point of view while adapting to and learning from your new environment.

MARKET CONDITIONS AND THE BUSINESS
- How would you describe the current business environment and external market conditions?
- What are the short- and long-term business strategy objectives? Is there an aligned people strategy?

WORKFORCE AND HR FUNCTION
- Which skills and capabilities does our workforce currently lack? Which are becoming obsolete?
- Are we leveraging our HR talent? Are we organized to meet business needs? Are processes streamlined and automated?

KEY QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS
1. How would you describe the current business environment and external market conditions?
2. What are the short- and long-term business strategy objectives? Is there an aligned people strategy?
3. Which skills and capabilities does our current workforce lack? Which are becoming obsolete?
4. Are we leveraging our HR talent? Are we organized to meet business needs? Are processes streamlined and automated?

ENGAGE AND EMPOWER YOUR RESOURCES
DAY 1
- Identify and document personal brand attributes in terms of substance and style. Be prepared to be challenged.

DAY 2–10
- Locate and review documentation on business strategy, culture, leadership initiatives, etc.
- Create a plan for assessment and strategy development.
- Identify global stakeholders, including executive leadership, HR team, operations/line leaders, employees, customers, and vendors.

DAY 11–30
- Initiate structured interviews with stakeholders — preferably, in person and on their turf.
- Conduct an activity-based analysis to determine where HR staff spend their time.
- Compile data. Analyze and summarize findings.

DAY 31–40
- Complete key stakeholder interviews.
- Assess data and findings and conduct gap analysis.
- Collect and incorporate benchmarking data.

DAY 41–70
- Review assessment findings and develop preliminary people strategy.
- Develop preliminary HR function strategy, including:
  - Mission and value proposition.
  - Organization.
  - Technology.
  - Sourcing.
  - Governance.
  - Business case for change (qualitative and quantitative).

DAY 71–80
- Prepare high-level one-, three-, and five-year implementation plans. (A more detailed plan will be needed once strategy is finalized.)
- Help the CFO understand the value of HR and planned investments.

DAY 81–90
- Socialize findings, recommendations, and implementation plan with additional stakeholders to gain buy-in.
- Refine and iterate.

DAY 91–100
- Prepare final strategy and action plans and gain approval from executive leadership team.
- Identify and mobilize implementation teams.
- Engage HR and bring them along the journey.

FOCUS ON LINKING BUSINESS, WORKFORCE, AND HR FUNCTION STRATEGIES
Companies are rethinking HR structure and how to service the business globally and locally. Many organizations struggle to manage HR on a global scale and to support business needs across diverse geographies.

HR departments are managing their global workforces by leveraging new cloud-based technologies. This allows HR to automate transactional processes so teams can focus on more advanced processes.

Social media has become a crucial tool for HR to attract and hire the next generation of talent. A tech-savvy HR team can leverage the power of social media to drive recruiting. Today’s high-performing teams are blurring the lines between corporate recruiting and mobile and social media.

For companies to innovate, employees need to constantly rethink how they work, looking beyond HR function capability to find new approaches through technology, social media, and the internet.

HR has a role in promoting a culture of innovation and providing the tools and technology to drive it.

HR needs to be more flexible and scalable than ever to provide the right support in today’s environment. In 2015, US companies announced more than $900 billion in merger deals, the most in any year since 1998, according to Thomson Reuters. These mega-deals are driving the need for a new, nimble HR function.

Historically, HR owned the retirement life cycle. Companies provided traditional DB plans, managing annual valuation, ERISA compliance, pension estimates, and retirement counseling. Today, less than 25% of US Fortune 500 companies have DB plans. The role of the benefits team is shifting from pension design and administration to promoting financial wellness.

The US health care system is undergoing transformation, and private exchanges — the marketplaces for selling health plans — are impacting employers. Once again, a significant amount of work once managed by a benefits team has shifted to vendors.

"Mercer has evolved its capabilities in HR transformation consulting into a holistic offering that combines HR strategy, operations, and technology services and solutions. Mercer’s integrated approach reduces the complexity of HR transformation and ensures changes to HR programs are effectively communicated and adopted."

— Kennedy HR Transformation Report