

MIT Sloan
Management Review

WORK // 25

THE WAY FORWARD

Event Agenda

Virtual summit on the
future of work

May 8, 2025

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Speakers



Daron Acemoglu
Institute Professor, MIT,
and 2024 Nobel Laureate in
Economic Sciences



Marvin Boakye
Chief Human
Resources Officer
Cummins Inc.



Karen Brown
Author of *The Leaders You
Need: How to Create Diverse
Leadership Teams for a More
Dynamic, Resilient Future*



Lynda Gratton
Professor of
Management Practice
London Business School



Elizabeth Heichler
Editorial Director, Magazine
*MIT Sloan
Management Review*



Ravin Jesuthasan
Senior Partner & Global
Leader for Work, Skills and
Transformation Services
Mercer



Thomas Kochan
George Maverick Bunker
Professor of Management,
Emeritus at MIT Sloan School
of Management



Hila Lifshitz
Professor of Management
Warwick Business School



Abbie Lundberg
Editor in Chief
*MIT Sloan
Management Review*



Sharon K. Parker
John Curtin
Distinguished Professor
Curtin University, Australia



Donald Sull
Professor of the Practice
MIT Sloan and
Cofounder, CultureX



Nick van der Meulen
Research Scientist
MIT Sloan Center
for Information
Systems Research



Kaushik Viswanath
Features Editor
*MIT Sloan
Management Review*

Sessions

10:00 A.M.

Welcome

Abbie Lundberg, Editor in Chief, *MIT SMR*

Elizabeth Heichler, Editorial Director, Magazine, *MIT SMR*

10:05 A.M.



AI and the Future of Work: The Promise and the Challenge

AI's transformation of the workforce ecosystem and the way managers and teams create and capture value create major opportunities as well as significant challenges. Prof. Lifshitz will share insights from her pioneering field research into AI's application to knowledge work processes and discuss how to avoid the risks derived from using AI in the workplace while adopting it to enhance productivity and creativity.

Hila Lifshitz, Professor of Management, Warwick Business School, and faculty associate at the Harvard Laboratory for Innovation Sciences

Artificial Intelligence

Digital Transformation

10:35 A.M.



Redesign Work to Prevent Burnout

Burnout is running rampant. This hits organizations hard both in terms of lower productivity and higher talent churn. "Fix-the-worker" strategies do little to resolve stress caused by long hours and unreasonable workloads. Explore a new model for improving work design that can help you make real change.

Sharon K. Parker, John Curtin Distinguished Professor, Curtin University, Australia

Work Design

Workplace Culture

11:05 A.M.



Why Building Mastery Is Critical to Talent Management

Rapid changes in technology and business conditions will require many of us to reinvent ourselves over the course of our working lives. But as we pick up new skills and discard outdated ones, what valuable core competencies are we building over time? This session will explore the concept of mastery and how to better support it for your team.

Lynda Gratton, Professor of Management Practice, London Business School

Skill Building

Talent Management

11:35 A.M.

10-Minute Break

Sessions

11:45 A.M.

Presenting Sponsor



Leading the Skills-Powered Enterprise

By focusing on skills over jobs, leading companies are reinventing themselves to ensure a more agile, resilient, and flexible AI-ready future. In this session, Jesuthasan will share ideas from his recent book, *The Skills-Powered Organization*, including how to optimize human-machine teaming with work design, and how to get value from a skills-powered approach today.

Ravin Jesuthasan, Senior Partner & Global Leader for Work, Skills and Transformation Services, Mercer

Work Design

Skill Building

Transformative Leadership

11:55 A.M.



Most Diversity Programs Don't Work — Here's What to Do Instead

Too many executives approach diversity, equity, and inclusion as a set of programs designed to target underrepresented populations rather than as a method for discovering and capitalizing on the talent they need to achieve business outcomes. This session will present a field-tested framework for unlocking leadership and management talent in your organization while achieving improved diversity outcomes.

Karen Brown, Author of *The Leaders You Need: How to Create Diverse Leadership Teams for a More Dynamic, Resilient Future*

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Talent Management

12:25 P.M.



Lessons From the Culture Champions

In research involving more than 1,000 large U.S. employers, Don Sull has identified the key ingredients that go into building a culture that produces both exceptional business results and a world-class employee experience. Companies that achieve such results are culture champions. In this session, Sull and Marvin Boakye, CHRO of culture champion Cummins, will share insights and actionable advice.

Donald Sull, Professor of the Practice, MIT Sloan and Cofounder, CultureX

Marvin Boakye, Chief Human Resources Officer, Cummins Inc.

Workplace Culture

12:55 P.M.

10-Minute Break

Sessions

1:05 P.M.



Bring Your Own AI: Harness Business Value

Employees increasingly rely on Bring Your Own AI (BYOAI) to boost their individual productivity. But to get organizational value, leaders must transition from ad hoc GenAI tool usage and grassroots innovation to scalable GenAI solutions that address strategic objectives. Explore how to navigate the GenAI innovation process, development decisions, and vendor partnerships to realize business value.

Nick van der Meulen, Research Scientist, MIT Sloan Center for Information Systems Research

Artificial Intelligence

Digital Transformation

1:35 P.M.



Effective Approaches to Managing Organized Labor

Interest in unionization has surged among U.S. workers, and a growing number of strikes and strike threats have affected operations in several industries. Management has traditionally adopted an adversarial approach to organized labor, resulting in work disruptions and months-long standoffs that benefit no one. In this session, we'll explore constructive approaches to managing organized labor that can yield better outcomes for all stakeholders.

Thomas Kochan, George Maverick Bunker Professor of Management, Emeritus at MIT Sloan School of Management

Transformative Leadership

2:05 P.M.



The Impact of AI on Work and the Economy

As companies wrestle with AI investment decisions and implementation strategies, understanding the technology's true economic potential is crucial for effective planning. Drawing from his groundbreaking research, Professor Acemoglu will help separate AI hype from reality, offering practical insights on where the technology can deliver genuine value in their organizations. In this fireside chat with an *MIT SMR* editor, he'll discuss why current AI applications may yield more modest returns than expected, how leaders can identify the most promising use cases for their workforce, and why focusing on reliable, task-specific AI tools for key professionals like technicians, health care workers, and customer service staff may be more valuable than pursuing broader AI initiatives. Leaders will learn how to avoid common pitfalls in deployment and identify the kinds of problems and contexts that are best suited to tackle with AI.

Daron Acemoglu, Institute Professor, MIT, and 2024 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences

Artificial Intelligence

2:20 P.M.

Closing Remarks

Abbie Lundberg, Editor in Chief, *MIT SMR*

Elizabeth Heichler, Editorial Director, Magazine, *MIT SMR*