The New World of Work

White Paper
Regardless of the industry organizations serve, the products or services they offer, or where in the world they do business, organizations are witnessing a change in how they compete in today’s marketplace. The unavoidable influx of mobile devices — such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets — has given small, regional organizations the opportunity to compete on a global scale. Employees no longer need to operate in the confines of their cubicle at their headquarters during the typical 9-5 workday. Instead, companies can function competitively around the clock, from anywhere and on any device. And, it’s the accessibility and commitment to their company, customers, and partners that have caused organizations to re-evaluate how they conduct business and thus, attract a new class of employees.

Knowledge workers can be found within any industry sector — from technology engineers to auto technicians — and all are driven by what they can not only give, but also by what they can gain from the company for which they work. Employees want to feel involved and build relationships at work that stem far beyond “getting the job done.” Employees want a work environment that not only supports them financially, but also improves their quality of life. They seek a company that can offer the opportunity to hone their skills to a high level through training and personal investment from the management team. Team members want to feel they can continue to grow and expand their learning within the organization; they expect a long-standing commitment to the brand and continue to deliver top-quality work to support this growth.

Today’s knowledge workers are not motivated by just a paycheck, but also demand an environment in which they can contribute and learn.

Work becomes an extension of who we are — it’s about a work/life blend, rather than attempting to balance counter forces.
In order to address this changing landscape, organizations must adopt a more people-centric approach to the recruitment, development, and management of employees. People-centric organizations are ones in which employees view their work as additive to their personal brand and knowledge base.

Welcome to the new world of work. It’s an innovative, unique way of addressing this changing business landscape and giving organizations the tools needed to build a more competitive workforce.

Changing Business Landscape
The fundamentals of business have not changed for several generations. The economic basics — revenue growth, cost reductions, and increased return on investment — remain pivotal components to organizations’ success. What has changed, however, is the rate and environment in which organizations do business. Many companies today operate on an outdated basis of a fixed-state model, with one- to three-year business plans, periodic reorganizations, consecutive steps, and a siloed work style. Until recently, this approach worked well when a command-and-control, top-down model based on principles of operational excellence was a winning formula. It was supported by transactional business systems well suited to a static world in which processes were linear and programmatic, and people worked mainly in single models.

But those days are gone.

The majority of training happens outside the formal learning process. Nearly 80% of learning occurs in an informal setting such as through meetings, on-the-fly chats, task forces, workgroups, brainstorming sessions, cross-functional collaboration, and input/feedback sessions from peers and mentors. Only about 20% of the learning process happens within the confines of a formal learning program.

Moreover, technology advances — from the rise of the smartphone to the popularity of social networks — have increased the speed in which information is shared. Modern employees demand mobile access to their work applications and data wherever they are, and on whatever device they choose. Organizations must cater to this environmental shift, ensuring they give employees the technology toolset — devices and applications — to successfully accomplish their work.

Today, the global landscape is volatile and in constant flux. Globalization, a mobile workforce, social media, and heightened public scrutiny are changing the dynamics of work and social life. This environment places a premium on enabling individuals and groups to be constantly engaged, connected, and aligned while possessing the knowledge and expertise to tackle changing strategies and conditions.

This is the shift from information-centric business models to people-centric operations.

Historically, organizations focused on information-centric business offerings have operated by automating and reporting on processes like legacy talent management applications. However, new people-centric technologies, such as Facebook, that enable people to easily share ideas and information, are driving the change in the business landscape. This new people-centric model for driving how work gets done represents a fundamental shift in how business processes must be designed and the tools will be used.
Many of the most prevalent legacy systems do not support these people-centric models — as these new technologies enable many more options for people to communicate and work together. These technologies make an organization’s most important asset, its people, far more powerful.

Key trends driving the new world of work include:

- **Demanding customers:** Consumers around the world have raised their standards. They are accustomed to getting what they want, whenever they want it. Companies need to address this increased demand by treating work as more of a tradable commodity, rather than a job. Companies need to have more independent contractors and freelancers with “hyper-specialization,” in addition to regular employees with the generalized know-how to meet corporate objectives. Companies increasingly will rely on crowdsourcing to secure skills and services, allocate tasks, and complete projects.

- **Speed and pace of business:** The pace at which business operates is accelerating — with new positions, jobs, tasks, and more brought into the workplace daily. As a result, careers are becoming more fluid and less linear or ladder-shaped. Consumers will have more jobs during their careers — often transitioning between new opportunities quickly. To meet this new pace, employees require continuous learning, development, and acquisition of new skills to be available at any time — whether employees are traveling abroad or sitting at a desk in the company’s headquarters. Ensuring a steady pipeline of training sessions and access to materials is essential to support employees’ growth.

- **Uncertainty in the workplace:** Life does not present us with a crystal ball that outlines each step we will take; rather, it is ever-changing and uncertain. Disruption in the workplace is common and, quite frankly, what each modern professional should consider the norm. Organizations once differentiated themselves competitively based on their creativity and innovation. This, however, is no longer as relevant as it once was. Innovation in the workplace is no longer a differentiator for organizations; it becomes part of the DNA of every surviving business. Smart organizations will embrace the tools, processes, mobile access, and philosophies that institutionalize innovation. Organizations that do not will fail.

- **Social, real-time collaboration and gamification:** These applications will become the fabric and inherent capabilities of all enterprise offerings. To fully support its workforce, a company needs to embed social and collaboration capabilities into existing business processes. It’s more than real-time access to data on devices, it’s being able to analyze, collaborate, and engage with that information. For example, organizations can leverage these capabilities to better serve their customer base, engage with employees in similar areas of expertise, or connect with prospective partners.

- **Globalization:** Globalization and increasing growth in emerging markets will require companies to look for and develop international leaders. Likewise, globalization creates more competitive work environments. Competition can come from anywhere in the world and can arrive faster than companies can prepare for. Solutions, products, and services that were once launched region-by-region, now are rolled out simultaneously worldwide. To counter this competitive threat, companies will seek professionals with global awareness, fluency, corporate acumen, and cultural understanding to achieve their business success. Technology is the key to enabling organizations (regardless of their size) to perform business as a worldwide enterprise.

In response to these new demands, today’s forward-looking organizations are beginning to operate on a networked model, where work is concurrent, connected, and fluid, and where they are easily able to adapt to take advantage of new strategies and emerging opportunities. The workforce itself is now widely dispersed, often across continents, and much more broadly defined to include not only employees, but also customers, partners, suppliers, and influencers.
Elements of the New World of Work

Building today’s competitive workforce is about engaging employees and showing them that they represent more to the organization than a salary in the human resources file system. It’s about inspiring employees to do enhanced work, deliver improved results, and collaborate more effectively with their counterparts — whether internal (co-workers) or external (customers or partners).

Most applicable to knowledge workers, the new world of work can be defined by the following elements:

- **Know-how** — This is the currency of the new world of work. Know-how includes development of both the hard skills needed to perform a job — such as engineering or financial knowledge — as well as the soft skills — communication, leadership, and the like — that are needed for an organization to be successful against its objectives. Know-how not only includes this direct knowledge, but also encompasses the ability to access the organizational and outside resources that are needed to complete a specific project or function.

Additionally, the way organizations communicate has shifted dramatically during the past five years. The nature of work today is increasingly networked — everyone is interconnected, and work is more adaptive, more social, and less focused on hierarchical structures and fixed roles. Companies that do not adjust to this by providing systems to capture and enhance these interactions will be left behind. Successful organizations are moving to a performance culture that rewards individuals and teams for contributions and results, not job title. Employees want to be rewarded for the value of their work regardless of their level or project. It’s about showing employees that their work is building a better brand. At the same time, people will expect their rewards to reflect their contributions, including both past performance and potential to create value in the future.

As jobs are constantly redesigned, individuals must be offered options for continual development to fill skills gaps. Companies without a program to grow employee know-how and provide career paths will increasingly find it difficult to retain top talent. The more informal nature of this type of information-sharing is seeping into the workplace as well, with employees expecting to be “in the know” more quickly than in the past. It is imperative for companies to adopt a people-centric approach to their workforce in order to attract the best talent, spark innovation, and remain competitive in their market.
• **Agility** — The rate of change in today’s markets has accelerated, and organizations find themselves in a hypercompetitive environment. The always-on, always-connected nature of today’s communications require a workforce prepared to both act and react in real time. Employees crave environments in which they can be flexible in how they do business. They want access to resources, customers, partners, and co-workers anywhere in the world they may be. Employees understand that both their personal growth and business acumen will expand by remaining competitive with both internal and external contacts. They understand that asking questions in real time delivers faster results and keeps them one (or in most cases, several) steps ahead of the competition. Today’s employees understand what it means to be flexible.

• **Trust** — With increased communication comes an increased trust throughout an organization, which also can lead to increased transparency in activities across the extended value chain of executives, employees, partners, and customers. Employees, regardless of their position within the organization or length of service, expect the same level of transparency on all business operations. Employees crave a flat business model — one in which people are selected for a project based on their expertise, knowledge, and availability, rather than their job titles or position of authority within an organization. Employees understand that the product, service, or solution they deliver will be better, should their team be appropriately supported. Of course, traditional corporate titles will remain and junior employees still will report to senior members of their teams; however, the trust instilled in the junior staff is heightened. Any idea is a good idea. Vision, insight, and knowledge can come from anyone and together, the team will deliver better business results.

• **Passion** — The new world of work is built upon the passions of its people. An engaged workforce is one that participates across the network to share their expertise and resources with the correct people, for the correct project, at the correct time. The traditional work environment has been pushed aside; today’s workforce includes employees that want to make a difference. The modern worker is one that values how he or she can better help her team, company, partner, or customer. They carry an integral commitment to delivering the finest work possible, regardless of when and where the business occurs. Work today is more than a simple paycheck; it’s about building a brand through continued dedication to its success.

The new world of work is very apparent in today’s competitive landscape — and has no plans of receding. Organizations must address the changing business climate and ensure employees understand the value they bring each day. The modern worker blends home and work. Work happens whenever and wherever it needs to, and it gets completed because employees are steadfast in offering whatever they possibly can.

While the new landscape has emerged, legacy Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and talent management systems have failed to adapt to the way work gets done in organizations — they remain largely focused on the applications of information management and business process optimization. As a result, businesses are plagued with poor user adoption and low customer satisfaction ratings mainly because legacy systems are not designed to deliver value to the ultimate end-users of the software, the front line managers, employees, and their people networks. This poor user adoption and low customer satisfaction will get worse as younger generations grow in number in the workforce. Younger workers have a different idea about how work gets done — they prefer more social, mobile and collaborative work environments. Today’s talent management systems have been designed for top-down control of HR, learning, and recruiting processes that only really benefit HR, learning, and recruiting organizations. Solutions were not designed to empower front line managers and employees to align themselves to organizational strategies, or connect with the correct people, information, and ideas to get their job done, and take charge of their own professional development.
Organizations are witnessing a shift away from the information-centric and process-centric systems of the past, toward a new world of work dominated by people-centric systems.

Getting Started Today
To support the new world of work organizations need a people-centric organization model that focuses on the continuous development, engagement, and inspiration of everyone in the extended network, including employees, partners, and customers. Saba provides a people development platform that is built on three key components: 1) people profiles; 2) people processes; and 3) people engagement. By addressing these three pillars, organizations will better equip their staff to deliver more advanced, efficient results.

- **People profiles** — This profile is the heart and soul of a people-centric platform. The people profile needs to capture not only formal data such as performance scores, skills, and talent indicators, but also informal information such as content, expertise, experience, interests, and contributions to the people network to help everyone find what they need to get the job done. Employers need to integrate people profile data from a variety of different systems, including human resource information system (HRIS), learning management, talent management, social collaboration systems, and other ERP systems. Organizations will need the ability to model and track people and structures inside their organization. They, too, will need the ability to model people, connections, and structures outside of the organization across the entire people network of employees, customers, partners, and suppliers to understand how they work together to get things done.

- **People processes** — For a company to be successful, its employees need to implement a set of strategic and deliberate people processes, to attract, train, develop, retain, promote, and move employees through the organization. Business processes enabled by legacy talent management solutions, however, have been plagued with low user adoption because they are not designed to empower employees to get work done or take charge of their own professional development. Tools and technologies that allow companies to transform traditional talent management from a data- and process-driven HR exercise into a people-driven experience are essential to empowering managers and employees to produce results.

- **People engagement** — In order to build a better workforce, organizations need a set of social, real-time communication and collaboration tools to engage employees to adopt business processes and unleash their full productivity. Companies need solutions that cater to today’s unique employee landscape; one where employees engage with peers, customers, partners, and others anywhere and whenever they choose. Today’s comprehensive workplace offerings are not entirely about the traditional integration of learning, performance, and workforce planning solutions. It’s now so much more. It’s about providing a unified people development platform that is open, cloud-based, and incorporates the latest social and mobile technology. Saba’s unique offering gives organizations — around the world and of any size — the next-generation talent management platform to engage, develop, and inspire its people. Quite simply, it’s a new way of working for the new world of work.
The company’s mission statement, of enabling organizations to transform the way they work by providing a people-centric technology platform that focuses on the continuous development, engagement, and inspiration of their people, underscores Saba’s drive to build better workforces, by putting people first and building organizations from the ground up.

### Why Saba

Saba means a variety of things in different languages. For example, in Spanish “saba” means “knowing” or “knowledge,” which supports the company’s heritage in learning and talent management. In Greek and Arabic, “saba” is derived from the word Sheba, which means “dawn” or “new beginning,” directly speaking to the company’s continued commitment to continuous learning. Although Saba’s founding charter might have been around learning and talent management, its focus always has centered on how people work and transforming the ways in which they work.

More than 15 years ago, Saba created a new category of Human Capital Management (HCM) solutions with its Saba Education Management System that helped companies create comprehensive learning environments for the extended value chain — which included customers and partners as well as traditional employees. Since then, the company has continually remained at the forefront of incorporating the latest technologies into its learning and talent management offerings. The passion, understanding, and knowledge of helping organizations successfully compete on both a local and global scale is at the core of what Saba is.

Saba’s legacy can be identified through the following company milestones:

- **Founding of company:** In 1997, CEO and founder Bobby Yazdani transformed the learning industry with the introduction of the Saba Learning Management System.
- **Talent management expansion:** Building on its years of experience, Saba introduced its Talent Management solution in 2005. This solution included talent management applications developed to provide integrated workflows between talent and performance management.
- **Acquisition of THINQ Learning Solutions:** In early 2005, Saba acquired enterprise learning company, THINQ, to extend its leadership in the enterprise HCM market. The partnership between Saba and THINQ offered HCM solutions that leveraged customers’ existing ERP investments across the globe.
- **Acquisition of Centra Software:** In 2006, Saba continued expanding its customer portfolio and market expertise in enterprise learning through its purchase of Centra Software. By joining forces, Saba now offered the industry’s first complete, turnkey enterprise learning solution.
• **Launch of Saba People Cloud (SPC):** To address the shifting business landscape, Saba introduced its first social offering, Saba People Cloud, in 2011. Saba saw a need for organizations to be more social and interactive in order to remain competitive, and developed a solution designed to engage, develop, and inspire people at work.

• **Acquisition of HumanConcepts:** HumanConcepts, an organizational modeling and visualization provider, joined the Saba family in early 2012. This most recent purchase brings Saba’s evolution full circle, returning the company to its HCM roots. In addition to HCM solutions, HumanConcepts complements Saba’s talent management offering, enabling customers to gain a greater holistic view into their employees learning and development.

It is through these corporate landmarks that Saba built its brand and has proven itself a market leader. The company, its management team, and its valued employees are qualified to lead the industry with the new world of work vision through this long-standing legacy.

Today, Saba works with organizations of all sizes — from small mom-and-pop shops to global enterprises — and with some of the world’s most innovative brands. The company’s solutions support more than 2,100 organizations worldwide, encompassing more than 31 million users and upwards of 10.4 million cloud users. Saba’s customer portfolio extends through a wide range of industries, including financial services, life sciences, high technology, automotive and manufacturing, retail and hospitality, public sector, energy and utilities, and more. These customers deploy Saba’s solutions in nearly 200 countries and 36 languages around the world. As of January 2013, Saba has more than 850 employees and more than 200 partners across the globe tirelessly working to transform today’s workforce.

Today, Saba enables organizations of all sizes to transform the way they work by incorporating social networking capabilities and harnessing the increasingly always-on, always-connected mobile lifestyle. By leveraging these elements to empower an organization’s most mission-critical assets — its people — Saba helps organizations remain agile, relevant, and ready to pivot in today’s performance-based economy.

Saba has the pedigree, the knowledge and established credibility in learning and talent management to be best suited to shepherd organizations toward the new world of work.

From pioneering the learning market in the late 1990s to overhauling how most modern, innovative companies operate, Saba delivers solutions that implement a healthier, stronger, and sounder workplace. It also has a long history of continuous product innovation.

Saba believes that people are the center of an organization’s competitive strategy, and in the 21st century, winning companies will be people-driven companies. People will drive the ideas that define companies; people will drive the services that create value; and people will drive the insights that allow a company to adapt to the future of work.

The company pioneered learning management more than 15 years ago, and has expanded into complementary offerings such as talent management, including virtual classroom, succession planning, workforce planning, workforce visualization, and social collaboration. Regardless of the market that Saba’s customers serve, the company’s charter and dedication to its solution remains the same. It is through ongoing investment in the design, development, and innovation of its product solutions and determination to supply tomorrow’s next-generation solutions today. Saba knows the importance of constructing an improved workforce and remains dedicated to transforming the way people work and enabling the new world of work, for organizations globally.
Saba delivers a cloud-based Intelligent Talent Management™ solution used by leading organizations worldwide to hire, develop, engage, and inspire their people. Intelligent Talent Management uses machine learning to offer proactive, personalized recommendations on candidates, connections, and content to help your employees and organization lead and succeed.

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