

# Mapping Your WORKFORCE GENOME

**W**hat if you could plan out your workforce needs with the precision that we see in well-crafted R&D protocols and personalized medicine? And what if you could look at your human capital engagements and the available “talent supply chain” in the way science has started to look at sustaining health and patient outcomes?

Our modern approach to healthcare in many ways started with the work of pioneering scientists James Watson and Francis Crick. Their work can uniquely inform new ways of looking at your workforce, too.

This famous duo’s discovery of DNA, the building blocks of life, led to the mapping of the human genome and new insights into heredity. It was a scientific milestone that launched decades of genetic research that would eventually lead to targeted, personalized medicine based on genetic factors. Prior to their discovery, our understanding of disease states was not as comprehensive as it is today.

Those of us who have dedicated their careers to the life sciences can certainly appreciate this journey in unique ways. We understand the importance of the discovery of DNA itself, but we also understand the investment and dedication it took to apply this knowledge using a rigorous, tried-and-true scientific methodology.

By applying some of the same principles behind the scientific method of mapping your workforce genome — that is, developing a workforce plan by considering all of its possible building blocks — you can do the same for your critical projects, allowing them to run in a healthy, productive, and sustainable way both now and for decades to come.

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## Cracking the Genetic Workforce Code

And yet, life-sciences companies, which are understandably concerned with their core capabilities and quality of talent, are still not consistently using the same methodologies with their workforce. Unlike Watson and Crick, they haven’t been able to devote their time to cracking the genetic code of a comprehensive workforce plan that would work in harmony with their human resource needs. Indeed, it is ironic that an industry so rooted in the scientific method — one that must rely on proper analysis and execution from the bench to the marketplace — has struggled to apply the same rigor to the largest investment a company can make: human capital.

To a certain extent, the current state of the drug development industry may be driving this continued trend of companies not always devoting time and resources to strategic workforce planning. Despite the economic recovery, there is still tremendous insecurity about the future. According to the Big Pharma Recession Report of 2013, over half of the survey’s participants worry that their jobs will be eliminated in the coming year. A majority say the pharma industry is being restricted by more stringent regulations.

And more than 70% say profits are in flux.

By no fault of their own, life-sciences companies are also following the accepted way of applying workforce solutions and engaging human capital for their clinical trial or drug de-

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velopment projects as they’ve done for decades. This is perhaps because the cottage industry that has always supported them has waned in producing new and innovative solutions. There is also a continued gap in data analytics that could validate strategic direct and benchmark trends while adding value to the process.

## Addressing a Fragmented Market

Contract Research Organizations (CROs), for example, have been around since the 1970s. As of 2009, the top 10 CROs controlled 55% of the market, leaving the rest of the industry very fragmented. Then, in the early 1990s, there was a shift to another point solution that is often still used by the life-sciences industry. The functional or flexible service provider (FSP) model performs functions within the research process and provides flexible solutions. FSPs are especially effective in situations where the study size requires flexibility, start/stop/start prioritization, fast-tracking of

certain studies, and more visibility into the study's progress.

Another point solution called business process outsourcing (BPO) continues to be used for the outsourcing of defined functional areas where process optimization or redesign is required. Advantages include the leveraging of domain subject matter expertise and best practices from multiple industry verticals to lower overall cost delivery to better meet or exceed improvements based on agreed key performance indicators (KPI) and service level agreements (SLAs). BPO is a work force solution that is used across many industries and disciplines.

These solutions all have merit and have suited the needs of our industry for a long time. But could there be a more efficient way specifically for a life-sciences workforce? Could there be a great discovery on the horizon for your own company that could help you better map and plan your workforce, just like the discovery of DNA helped us all lead more healthy lives?

In today's marketplace of consolidation, rationalization, and mega mergers, the competition has become intense and the needs for high-quality talent are greater. Instead of applying a one-point solution only when a client needs it, the top workforce consultants are providing expertise armed with analytics that is allowing life-sciences companies to map their own workforce genome.

### Unravelling the Mystery

We encourage life-science companies to treat their workforce needs like the next great scientific discovery. By changing the thought process when it comes to talent, they have the ability to eradicate the "mystery" of how it all works. They wouldn't simply react when they need the right people. Companies would be able to utilize predictive analytics in these instances because they have the right genetic code at their disposal to map out the optimal mix of talent for core projects in their portfolio. They would have the right tools to not only plan out a workforce, but also

diagnose problems before the launch of a project. And they would have the testing and proof behind these tools to know that the solution is going to work every time, saving money and giving the company more freedom to concentrate on core capabilities.

So who will be the Watson and Crick of the future when it comes to the science of employing the right people at life-sciences com-

panies? With our holistic approach to talent acquisition and management, Kelly aligns workforce planning with your business strategies to enable greater workforce insight and flexibility. We're constantly looking at ways to organically synthesize all the diagnostic tools at our disposal to solve the mystery of the individual workforce genome. And we're linking it all to talent supply chain management (TSCM), which directly addresses continuing talent acquisition needs and candidate care in order to give clients a competitive edge within their industry and to develop workforce solutions that withstand the test of time. After all, there's no one-size-fits-all workforce solution, just as in medicine there's no one cure-all pill.

To get to a better workforce state, start with an in-depth history and physical of your past workforce habits and solutions to identify what hasn't been working. Too often companies will seek expert advice only after it's reached the point where it will be a painstaking process to fix a workforce ill. That's a retrospective solution — and companies tend to repeat it again and again instead of taking action to get to the heart of the problem.

Once a company goes through an in-depth workforce diagnosis, it can start to work to prospectively and more accurately analyze its workforce needs. The customized solution will manifest itself de-


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pending on what area in the industry the company works, whether it be pharma, biotech, or diagnostic device.

Our talent supply chain expertise and analytics can be applied in every individual situation, ensuring clients are ahead of the curve in accessing the critical talent available at the right cost and lowest risk. Our differentiators include a bench of industry-leading TSCM subject matter experts, aggregators of the niche supplier approach, a vertically

aligned focus, experience to create customized solutions across regions, and shared governance capabilities. Additionally, we are able to provide increasingly complex solutions that adjust based on market, economic, and client factors.

Within this comprehensive approach, something like a FSP (or any other single point solution) becomes so much more powerful for our clients. In fact, utilizing an FSP model is becoming more popular than ever to meet the demands of life-sciences companies that have fluctuating talent needs to better align with the peaks and valleys of the drug development continuum. And once a company has established its overall strategic workforce plan, it can better understand how a FSP methodology can help.

Ultimately, mapping the genetic code of any company's workforce needs is a unique journey that requires deep insight, knowledge, and expertise to get it right. Like Watson and Crick, who toiled to discover those elusive building blocks of life, your own journey will be challenging as well — so you need the right experts by your side. Organizations that have the ability to apply a sustainable, methodical approach in their processes can help you sustain the life of your company through the talent you employ. 

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