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People First: Elevating Talent for the Future

October 6 – 7, 2026

New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge | New York, NY

DAY ONE Tuesday, October 6, 2026

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM

Registration and Networking Breakfast

8:45 AM – 9:00 AM

Opening Remarks

Barbara Lombardo, **PhD**, Program Director and Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

9:00 AM – 9:20 AM

Networking and Cross-Pollination

We will kick off our event by meeting one another to share our top priorities and the biggest changes we are tackling in 2026.

9:20 AM – 9:50 AM

How EQ + AI = The People-Led, Tech-Powered Workforce of the Future

We welcome Lorraine "Lo" Stomski, the first Chief Talent Officer of Walmart, to discuss the workforce strategies of the world's largest private employer, and why, in the age of AI, emotional intelligence and empathy are as important as ever. We will discuss upskilling and mobility for employees at every level; how Walmart is selecting for and developing both tech-fluency and people-centricity; and what leadership requires in these times of extremely rapid change. We will come away with talent insights looking to 2027 for enterprises of every size.

Lorraine "Lo" Stomski, Senior Vice President and Chief Talent Officer, **Walmart**

Moderator: **Diana Scott**, US Human Capital Center Leader, **The Conference Board**

9:55 AM – 10:20 AM

The Talent Strategy that Drives Breakthroughs

When you're in relentless pursuit of breakthroughs that change lives, unleashing the power of your talent to grow and to innovate is mission critical. We welcome Sherry Cassano, Chief Talent Officer of Pfizer, to share how Pfizer is using AI to redesign talent and leadership pipelines, and how a human-centered engagement strategy cultivates a culture of inclusion and performance that drives innovation and business value.

Sherry Cassano, Chief Talent Officer and Senior Vice President, People Experience for the US and International Commercial Divisions, **Pfizer**

Moderator: **Robin Erickson**, **Ph.D.**, Head of Human Capital Research, **The Conference Board**

10:20 AM – 10:50 AM

Meet and Connect

10:50 AM – 11:20 AM

What AI Can Do for (or Against?) Opportunity and Access

AI and other technological advances have enormous potential for enhancing opportunity and access, through initiatives including customized and democratized coaching; more sophisticated internal talent marketplaces and identification of skills; detection of pay discrepancies or unconscious bias in recruitment; advice on inclusive communications; and much more. But these advancements also pose risks, including replicating and amplifying bias in training data or prompts. We will discuss how organizations are leveraging tech to advance opportunity while safeguarding against algorithmic bias.

Lilian Ajayi Ore, Ed. D, MS Ed., Lecturer and Faculty Lead, **Columbia University SPS**; Founder and CEO, **Global Connections for Women Foundation**

CP McBee, North American AI Advertising Director, **Microsoft**

Shannon Moorman, Global Chief Talent Officer, **WPP**

Moderator: **Singleton Beato**, Senior Fellow, Human Capital Practice & Program Director, Opportunity & Access Innovators Council, **The Conference Board**

11:25 AM – 11:50 AM

Keys To Creating An AI-Skilled Workforce

For organizations to maximize the value of AI, they need workforces with the skills to use AI well, yet many enterprises lack these critical capabilities. This session will cover common challenges that undermine organizations' efforts to develop AI skills and how to develop an AI learning and adoption ecosystem that helps enterprises create tangible value with AI.

Matt Rosenbaum, Principal Researcher, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

11:50 AM – 12:20 PM

Seeing Around Corners: How Forward Thinking HR Leaders Shape the Future Workforce

In an era of nonstop disruption — from AI and automation to M&A and large scale workforce transformation — HR cannot afford to be purely reactive. This session explores how chief people officers and senior HR leaders can "see around the corner;" anticipate inflection points; and position their organizations for agility, innovation and speed to market.

We will discuss practical ways HR leaders can:

- Use data and scenario planning to spot emerging workforce risks and opportunities
- Factor AI, M&A and organizational redesign into a coherent, future focused people strategy
- Partner with the C-suite to turn constant change into a competitive advantage

Attendees will leave with concrete questions, frameworks and actions to elevate HR's role as a forward looking architect of organizational success.

Kate Miceli, COO of North America Human Capital, **Aon**

Suzanne E. McBride, Chief Operations Officer & Board Member, **Iridium**; Board Member, **Skyworks**

Moderator: **William Self**, Head of Transformation & Workforce Innovation, **Aon**

12:20 PM – 12:30 PM

Interactive Exercise: Pick Your Champion for 2030

Attendees at each table will co-create and share a one-sentence prediction on the workforce skills they will be championing in 2030, and how they will attract and develop talent with those skills.

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

Networking Lunch

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM **Concurrent Session F1**

TALENT MARKETPLACE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

From Recruiters to Strategists: Redefining Talent Acquisition for Business Impact

Organizations face growing pressure to deliver talent outcomes that directly support business strategy. Traditional talent acquisition/recruiting models are breaking down. High-performing organizations are moving fast to transform talent acquisition into a strategic function aligned with business priorities. This session opens with new research on the shift from administrative recruiting roles to "TA Strategists," followed by a candid panel with leaders navigating this transition in real time. You will hear how top TA leaders are building strategic capabilities in areas like workforce planning, market intelligence, and consultative partnership. The discussion will focus on practical steps to assess current capabilities, redesign roles, and accelerate the transition to a more strategic function.

Gabriel Anthony, Senior Director and Head of Global Executive Talent Acquisition, **Huron**

Marc Mascolo, Senior Director, Talent Acquisition, **Johnson & Johnson**

Tara Udut, Global Head of Medical Recruitment, **Neko Health**

Moderator: **Jeremy Eskenazi**, Program Director, Talent Acquisition Business Council and Talent Acquisition Enterprise Council, and Senior Fellow, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM **Concurrent Session F2**

CULTURE AND THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

An Outdated Employee Experience Won't Attract a Future-Ready Workforce

The push for greater productivity, agility, and AI fluency increases the need to attract, engage, develop and retain future-ready talent. Yet to do so may call for rethinking the employee experience, as employees seek purpose, wellbeing, and technology that reduces friction and enhances their impact. We will explore how leaders can leverage data, AI and new tools to drive innovation in the employee experience and support a workforce ready to tackle what's next.

Brandon Kolosiwsky, Director, Operational Excellence, **Schneider Electric**

Stephanie Larson, **Ph.D.**, Principal, Strategic Research, **Seramount**

Jamie Whitaker Campbell, Former Senior Manager, Culture & Engagement, **Niagara Bottling**

Moderator: **Lee E. Miller**, Senior Fellow, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**; Professor, **Columbia University**, **University of Southern California**

1:35 PM – 2:05 PM **Concurrent Session F3**

OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS

The Stakeholder Sprint: Building Access and Opportunity Champions

You have identified an opportunity to strengthen access, talent outcomes, or employee experience in an AI-enabled workforce. Now you have to influence and engage cross-functional allies and collaborators to support your plan for enterprise-wide impact.

In this fast-paced, interactive session, participants will work in small groups to sharpen their stakeholder engagement strategy for an opportunity and access initiative. They will identify what value the initiative could create, what questions or resistance might arise, and how to tailor the case for different organizational stakeholders. Designed to be practical and action-oriented, this session offers participants an opportunity to pressure-test ideas with peers and strengthen their approach to building cross-functional support and momentum for change based on the Expanding Equity strategic approach.

Talia Alongi, Associate Director, **FSG**

Chirlie Felix, Managing Director, **FSG**

Sabrina Matthews, Director, **FSG**

Jonathan Njus, Senior Program Officer, **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM **Concurrent Session G1**

TALENT MARKETPLACE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

How Vanguard Is Redesigning Development for the AI Era

Most AI in the enterprise is deployed broadly and measured by adoption. But the organizations seeing the most impact are taking a different approach — orienting around specific leadership moments and a clear theory of how individuals actually change.

Vanguard leaders Janear Sewell, Global Head of Culture, Development, Inclusion & Leadership, and Christian Shea, Head of Leadership & Executive Development, will share how Vanguard is redesigning the way leaders access development in the moments that matter most, with Valence's AI coach embedding within year-end performance reviews, supporting challenging conversations, and reinforcing new expectations. They will also share how Vanguard is looking beyond engagement and adoption metrics to assess how AI coaching is changing leadership behavior, offering a concrete view of what an intentional, focused deployment can look like in practice.

Mehwish Panjwani, Director, Client Solutions, **Valence**

Janear Sewell, Global Head of Culture, Development, Inclusion & Leadership, **Vanguard**

Christian Shea, Head of Leadership & Executive Development, **Vanguard**

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM **Concurrent Session G2**

CULTURE AND THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

The Great Manager Reckoning: Redefining Leadership for an AI-Enabled Workforce

As AI automates knowledge work, the traditional manager role—information broker, task allocator, gatekeeper—is becoming obsolete. In a world where work is highly visible and interconnected, the manager's role evolves from supervisor and arbiter to something more akin to a curator and editor. Yet most organizations haven't reset manager expectations to reflect this shift. Carta Chief People Officer Nick Avery will share how to deliberately redesign manager behavior and accountability to compete in an AI world—including the operating principles that anchor culture during disruption, the concrete expectations that replace command-and-control, and the structural moves that make flatter organizations work.

Nick Avery, Chief People Officer, **Carta**

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM **Concurrent Session G3**

OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS

Piloting Inclusive Initiatives through Legal Headwinds

Inclusion strengthens team performance, accelerates innovation, deepens client relationships, and supports talent development at every level, yet executive orders directed at federal contractor DEI programs, post-SFFA litigation testing the boundaries of race- and sex-conscious practices in employment, and a rapidly shifting enforcement environment have made designing and sustaining legally-compliant inclusion initiatives a more complex task. Designing inclusion programs for legal durability is not a retreat; it requires a clear-eyed assessment of what holds up, what needs adjustment, and what creates unacceptable risk. This session offers expert guidance on auditing programs against existing legal standards, distinguishing lawful opportunity-expansion initiatives from unlawful quota practices, building documentation habits that support business justification defenses, and aligning internal communications with legal strategy so organizations can sustain inclusive cultures without exposing themselves to enforcement action or litigation.

Camille A. Olson, Partner, **Seyfarth Shaw LLP**

Allan Schweyer, Principal Researcher, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**

2:55 PM – 3:25 PM **Concurrent Session H1**

TALENT MARKETPLACE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

How Northwell is Building a Proactive Talent Intelligence Capability

AI is no longer arriving on the horizon — it's already flowing into our organizations, reshaping how work gets done and what our people need to thrive. Yet most organizations lack the muscle to anticipate these shifts before they happen. Often organizations react to AI rather than orchestrate its integration.

In this session, we'll explore why building a proactive talent intelligence capability is the next critical investment for HR and business leaders alike. We'll discuss how Northwell is working to map the skills that exist across our workforce today, identify which will be augmented or transformed, and surface the new skills that must emerge to stay competitive. We'll go beyond skills to examine how we need to think proactively about how roles themselves will evolve and what this means for the broader architecture of our workforce — from team design to career pathways to organizational structure.

Matthew Kurth, Deputy Chief People Officer, **Northwell Health**

2:55 PM – 3:25 PM **Concurrent Session H2**

CULTURE AND THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Organizational Culture: What Really Matters?

Organizational culture has become a critical leadership priority as organizations navigate rapid change, evolving workforce expectations, and the growing influence of AI. This session shares findings from a new TCB study of employees in the US and Europe, highlighting four culture dimensions that are linked to workforce outcomes. The session offers a structured, practical approach to understanding, evaluating, and strengthening organizational culture.

Erka Amursi, Principal Researcher, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

Toni H. Lowe, Global Director of Employee Engagement – Community & Belonging, **Equinix**

2:55 PM – 3:25 PM **Concurrent Session H3**

OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS

Redesigning Work for the Age of AI: A Skills-First Approach

As AI reshapes how work gets done, organizations face a broader question than what to automate: how should work, roles and capabilities evolve to deliver the outcomes the business needs? Drawing on joint research from The Conference Board and SkillsRight, this session will examine these questions through a skills-first lens, exploring how a clearer understanding of the skills work requires can help connect business outcomes, work redesign, and workforce decisions.

The discussion will consider the actionable implications for leaders as they determine where AI can add value, where human capability remains essential, and how the two can work together. The conversation will close by grounding these ideas in how organizations are approaching these challenges in practice.

April Weathers, Chief Strategy Officer, **SkillsRight**

Moderator: **Allan Schweyer**, Principal Researcher, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**

3:25 PM – 3:55 PM

Meet and Connect

3:55 PM – 4:25 PM

Who Will Lead Next? Finding Leadership Potential in the Age of AI

As AI changes the way work gets done, what does that mean for the leaders organizations will need next? This conversation explores how leadership potential is evolving, whether traditional approaches still identify the right people, and the role of trust, human skills and new signals in recognizing and developing future leaders.

Fadjanie Cadet, Director Enterprise Capability, **Moderna**

Meisha-ann Martin, **PhD**, VP, People Research, **Workhuman**

4:25 PM – 4:55 PM

Does Any of this Happen Without a Culture of Belonging?

This is a time of incredible possibilities: a chance to leverage technology and upskilling to remake roles, expand capability, and drive growth. But does any of that happen without a workplace culture that people want to be part of, and to be themselves in – a culture of authenticity, humanity, and belonging?

In this conversation with Claude Silver, Chief Heart Officer of VaynerX and author of the new book *Be Yourself at Work,* we will explore what it means to foster an emotionally fluent, high-performing culture; why psychological safety and inclusion aren't add-ons but pre-requisites to organizational success; and a framework for leaders to engage, develop, and inspire talent in transformative times.

Claude Silver, Chief Heart Officer, **VaynerX**

Moderator: **Matthew Maloof**, Researcher, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

4:55 PM – 5:00 PM

Closing Remarks

Barbara Lombardo, **PhD**, Program Director and Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Networking Reception

DAY TWO Wednesday, October 7, 2026

8:00 AM – 8:50 AM

Registration and Networking Breakfast

8:50 AM – 9:00 AM

Opening Remarks

Barbara Lombardo, **PhD**, Program Director and Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

9:00 AM – 9:40 AM

Networking Roundtables: Small Group Discussions

Meet new people and learn from their varied perspectives while discussing experiences and challenges in talent, employee experience, and opportunity & access.

1. **AI and the Healthcare Workforce**, facilitated by Catarina Dolsten, Founder & CEO, Aktum Group; Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, The Conference Board
2. **The In-Office Experience and Why It Matters**, facilitated by Lee E. Miller, Senior Fellow, Human Capital, The Conference Board; Professor, Columbia University, University of Southern California
3. **Aligning Upskilling, Hot Skills, and Compensation Strategies**, facilitated by Rita Meyerson, EdD, Principal Researcher, Human Capital, The Conference Board

4. **The Power of (Well-Supported) Neurodiverse Teams**, facilitated by Beth Sirull, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Organization on Disability
5. **What's Next for Workforce Demographic Data**, facilitated by Camille A. Olson, Partner, Seyfarth Shaw LLP
6. **Leading Change in a Multi-Generational Context,** facilitated by Jamie Whitaker Campbell, Former Senior Manager, Culture & Engagement, Niagara Bottling
7. **The TA Transformation**, facilitated by Jeremy Eskenazi, Program Director, Talent Acquisition Business Council and Talent Acquisition Enterprise Council, and Senior Fellow, Human Capital, The Conference Board
8. **Upskilling for an AI Future**, facilitated by Lilian Ajayi Ore, Ed. D, MS Ed., Founder and CEO, Global Connections for Women Foundation; Faculty Lead, Columbia University; Author, *The Power of the Learning Mindset*

9:45 AM – 10:10 AM

Networking Roundtable Report-Outs

We will hear from each of our Roundtable facilitators on the biggest insights that emerged from their discussions.

10:10 AM – 10:40 AM

The Chief People Officer as Chief Insights Officer

To drive measurable business outcomes, HR must quantify its impact, applying the same analytical rigor as finance or product. We welcome two leading chief people officers to share how they harness data to drive meaningful change across critical domains including manager effectiveness, talent acquisition, and employee engagement. They will demonstrate how AI-powered data insights can transform HR into a strategic partner and an engine of measurable business performance.

Todd Reeves, Chief People Officer, **Zoom**

Joanne H. Rodgers, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, **New York Life**

Moderator: **Rita Meyerson**, **EdD**, Principal Researcher, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**

10:40 AM – 11:00 AM

Meet and Connect

11:00 AM – 11:35 AM

A Crunch - Or a Crisis? Filling the Skilled Hourly Talent Gap

As much as AI adoption and its workforce disruptions are making the news, many sectors of the economy are struggling to staff skilled hourly talent. Whether it be nurses, lab technicians, factory mechanics, construction supervisors, electricians, or other skilled labor, many organizations have begun multi-pronged strategies to meet this growing need. This panel will explore the causes and nature of the shortage, and discuss strategies to meet the challenge.

Shelly Hill, Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer, **Clyde Companies**

Dawn McAuliffe, President, Operational Talent Solutions & EVP, Sales and Business Operations, **Randstad USA**

Matthew Sadowski, Chief HR & Marketing Officer, **Kelso Industries**

Moderator: **Edward Stanworth**, Senior Fellow, Human Capital, **The Conference Board**

11:35 AM – 12:00 PM

Difference NOT Deficit: Disability Inclusion as Competitive Advantage

What if disability inclusion isn't simply a workplace initiative – but a blueprint for the future of leadership? As organizations navigate AI, rapid restructuring, and complex workforce needs, the capabilities that enable managers to support disabled employees are becoming baseline skills for leading high-performing teams. Drawing on research and decades of

work with leading employers, Beth Sirull challenges conventional thinking, offering a strategic framework to strengthen manager capability, unleash human potential, and build lasting competitive advantage.

Beth Sirull, President and Chief Executive Officer, **National Organization on Disability**

12:00 PM – 12:25 PM

Advice To, and From, Early Career Professionals

For our final interactive session, we will hear from three young professionals from the Columbia University School of Professional Studies on their biggest early career concerns. We will then ask attendees to offer their advice to this next generation entering the workforce – and we will hear the young professionals' advice to the employers hoping to engage them.

Nicole Arneaud, Founder & CEO, **AI in the City Solutions LLC**

Audrey Black, MS, **Columbia University**, 2025

Meredith Davis, Course Associate, **Columbia University**

Moderator: **Barbara Lombardo**, **PhD**, Program Director and Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**

12:25 AM – 12:30 PM

Closing Remarks

Barbara Lombardo, **PhD**, Program Director and Distinguished Principal Research Fellow, Human Capital Center, **The Conference Board**