Work Redesign in the Age of AI:

From Holiday Reflection to Workforce Action

An HR-Led Blueprint for Redefining Roles, Tasks,

and Workforce Impact

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Work redesign is rapidly emerging as one of the most consequential responsibilities facing enterprise HR and Strategic Workforce Planning leaders in the AI era. As automation, AI, and new operating models reshape how work gets done, organizations that fail to proactively redesign work risk reactive, short-term staffing actions driven by cost pressure rather than strategy.

In our conversations with HR leaders, one signal is clear: CHROs are ready to lead this transformation. Unlike past technology shifts, today's leaders recognize that successful work redesign requires a deep understanding of technology, workflows, financial impact, and human judgment—often in close partnership with CFOs and CIOs.

Yet organizations are not starting from the same place. Some functions are just beginning to explore AI opportunities; others have pilots underway; and many fall somewhere in between, having made partial progress while still grappling with uncertainty around ROI, governance, and change management. These differences demand distinct approaches, not one-size-fits-all mandates.

At Draup, we define Work Redesign as a systematic, task-level evaluation of how work is performed, with the goal of identifying where AI can automate, augment, or amplify human contribution—while preserving accountability, quality, and trust. Importantly, work redesign is not synonymous with headcount reduction. It is equally about reskilling, upskilling, role evolution, and preparing the workforce for future-state operating models.

This paper outlines Draup's perspective on:

- Why work redesign must begin with workloads and tasks—not skills alone
- How AI-driven work redesign can be translated into CFO-grade financial outcomes
- What it takes to operationalize redesigned work across hiring, workforce planning, and talent mobility

For CHROs, the opportunity is not simply productivity—it is control, credibility, and confidence. When work redesign is done systematically, organizations reduce execution risk, align workforce strategy with business reality, and move from reactive staffing decisions to deliberate, future-ready workforce design.

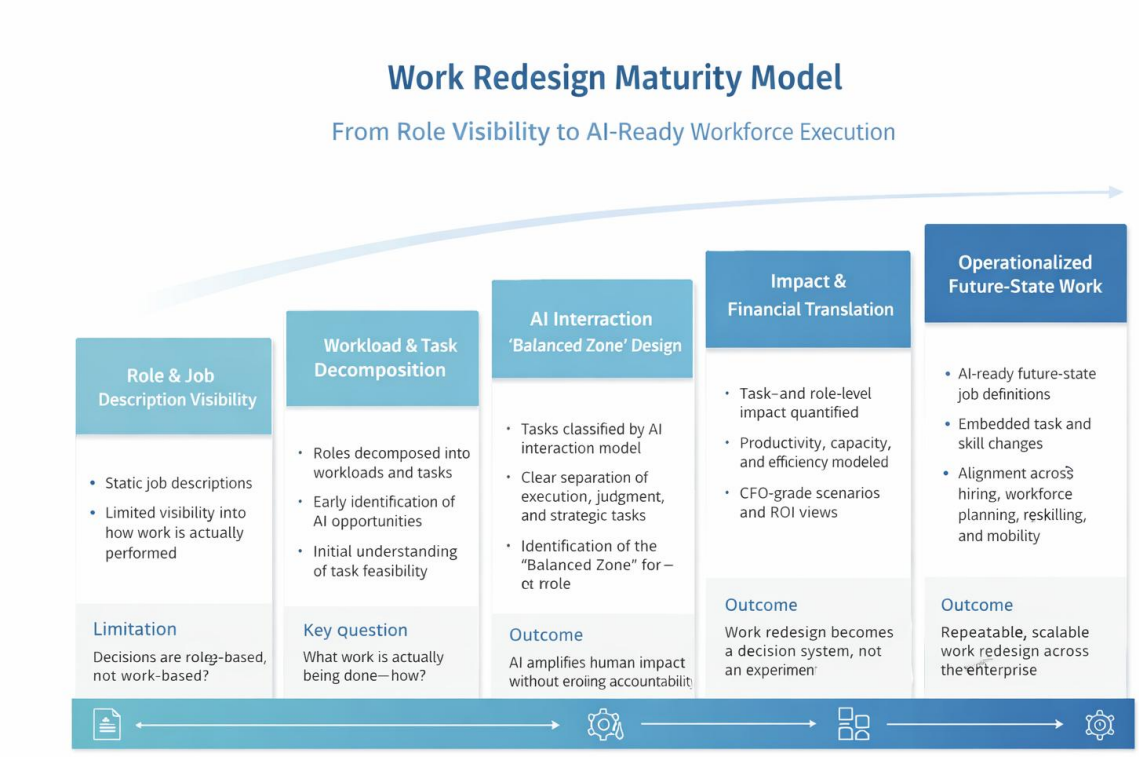
1. THE REALITY OF AI TRANSFORMATION ACROSS FUNCTIONS

While the urgency of work redesign is now widely recognized, enterprises are not starting from the same place. One of our key findings is that different functions and business units are at markedly different stages of AI transformation.

Some functions may not have done anything; some may have decided on the technologies and results they want to pursue, with a concrete plan; and some may fall somewhere in between.

Draup has highlighted the questions that HR should strive to answer across all these scenarios. HR leaders and SWP planners must act differently across these scenarios.

Before we dive into these questions, let us explain a few background parameters.



2. DEFINING WORK REDESIGN

Work Redesign is a process of systematically evaluating all aspects of work within a function and business unit and identifying a holistic set of opportunities for optimization. By optimization, we do not mean just FTE reduction; we also emphasize reskilling and upskilling, and preparing for future skills and roles that may be emerging. As a result, FTE reduction may also be a consequence of work redesign. By going through Work redesign processes , we can be more planful

3. DRAUP'S FIVE-COMPONENT APPROACH TO WORK REDESIGN

The approach that Draup uses for work redesign has five elements.

Component1: Understanding the True Shape of Work

Tracking the evolution of the job description across the specific customer and its peers.

But this is only part of what actually happens, so Draup pushes for reading process maps, standard operating procedures, and other elements that define the true shape of work.

Component2: Decoding Work into Workloads and Tasks

Second Draup's etter works on decoding the true shape of work into workloads and tasks. Workload is the sum of similar tasks that are coded, whether AI, Human plus AI, or Human alone can perform them. The relevant Tech stack models are considered at this stage.

Component3: Financial Simulation

The Financial simulation provides an opportunity to evaluate FTE optimization and consolidation. We have long held that SWP planners and HR leaders must be very familiar with financial terms. This module helps you do that

Component 4: Future of Work and AI Readiness

This component focuses on the future of work, mapping the reskilling and upskilling components. Really get the workforce AI-ready. This AI readiness involves many aspects of foundational and job-specific skills (The Root and Core Skills in Draup Terminology)

Component 5: Translating Work into Workflows

Finally, translate the Workloads and Tasks into workflows to represent how the business views work.

(Example: if we are modeling Marketing, look at workflows like SEO, Brand Compliance, and similar workflows). This component helps bring HR closer to business.

4. KEY QUESTIONS ACROSS DIFFERENT STAGES OF AI EVOLUTION

4.1 Functions that may not have done anything

- What are my total AI Opportunities across various job roles?
- What are my immediate optimization opportunities?
- What roles can I combine?
- Are there any immediate sets of skills I can start training my function on?
- How can I start thinking about the future of work and get there?

4.2 Functions with an Initial Head Start

- What are the new job profiles of the future?
- What are the skills that are not in our job profiles today that will be in the future profiles?
- Where do we go from human to human in the loop?
- What does QA/Verification look like in the future, and what skills are necessary?
- What are the levels of individuals needed for these new job profiles in the future?
- Where will be the best place to find the skills in the future?
- Do you have a sense of the time horizon for going from human to human in the loop to fully AI?

4.3 Functions in Between or Facing Doubts

- What is the concrete evidence of ROI with AI Transformation?
- Automation vs AI
- Can you provide an AI Blueprint?
- How are we going to communicate the impact of change?
- (as you could see, as they have may have done it partially and may even failed, there will be a lot of doubts with these functions)

5. TACTICAL STEPS FOR AI-DRIVEN WORK REDESIGN

From Work Visibility to Measurable Workforce Impact

Purpose

To systematically redesign roles, tasks, and skills for the AI era by combining task-level work decomposition, AI feasibility analysis, and financial impact modeling—ensuring productivity gains without eroding judgment, quality, or trust.

STEP-BY-STEP WORK REDESIGN METHODOLOGY

Step 1: Establish the Work Baseline (Role → Workload →Task Decomposition)

Objective: Reveal the *true shape of work* beyond job descriptions.

Key Activities

- Ingest existing job descriptions as-is (no rewriting upfront).

- Add additional documents informing the shape of work, such as process maps and presentations around the future vision
- Map each role into:
    - Core responsibilities
    - Underlying workloads
    - Discrete tasks
- Normalize roles against a standardized role taxonomy to enable comparison and benchmarking.
- Outputs
- Baseline workload distribution
- Role- task-skill inventory
- Traceability from role → workload→ Tasks → Skills (Mapping Tasks to Skills is critical)

Why it matters

Work redesign fails when it starts at the *skill* level. It must start at the Workload and *task* level, as this informs how you use a given skill.

Step 2: Classify Tasks by AI Interaction Model

Objective: Determine how AI should interact with each task, not whether AI replaces the role.

Task Classification Framework

Each task is categorized into one of the following:

1. Directive – Fully automatable, minimal human input
2. Feedback Loop – Automatable with human review
3. Learning – Requires contextual understanding
4. Validation – AI assists; humans verify
5. Task Iteration – Continuous human-AI collaboration
6. Negligibility – Not suitable for AI automation

Outputs

- Task-level automation and augmentation map
- Clear separation of:
    - Execution tasks
    - Judgment tasks
    - Strategic tasks

Why it matters

This avoids two common failure modes:

- Over-automation (speed without judgment)

- Under-utilization (manual effort where AI adds value)

Step 3: Identify the "Balanced Zone" for Each Role

Objective: Define the optimal operating model where AI amplifies human impact.

Three Risk Zones

- Under-Utilization: High effort, low scalability
- Over-Automation: Speed with elevated risk
- Balanced Zone: AI handles routine and analytical work; humans own judgment and accountability

Balanced Zone Design Principles

- Automate volume, not responsibility
- Augment analysis, not accountability
- Preserve human decision rights for:
  - Ethics
  - Trade-offs
  - Communication and deeper analysis
  - Stakeholder impact

Outputs

- Target operating model by role
- Clear division of AI vs. human ownership

Step 4: Quantify Impact at the Task and Role Level

Objective: Translate work redesign into measurable outcomes.

Impact Metrics

- Automation Coverage (% of tasks touched by AI)
- Efficiency Gain (Metrics Impacted)
- Productivity Multiplier (output amplification)
- Human Expertise Focus (% time on high-value work)
- AI Quantification Score (composite readiness & impact score)

What is quantified

- Capacity released
- Work shifted (not just eliminated)
- Stability of gains as automation matures

Outputs

- Role-level AI impact profiles
- Prioritized roles for transformation

Step 5: Scenario Modeling & Adaptive Planning

Objective: Test different futures before committing to an investment.

Scenario Levers

- Degree of automation vs. augmentation
- Technology maturity assumptions
- Changes in operating model or demand
- Skill availability constraints

Scenario Outputs

- Comparative automation mix
- Efficiency and capacity deltas
- Workforce sensitivity analysis

Why it matters

Work redesign is not a one-time decision—it is a continuously adaptive process.

Step 6: Financial Translation (From Productivity to ROI)

Objective: Convert work redesign into CFO-grade metrics.

Financial Modeling

- Cost savings from automation
- Capacity redeployment scenarios
- Headcount impact over time
- Productivity-driven value creation

Key Principle

- Productivity without financial translation is insight—not impact.

Outputs

- Multi-scenario ROI projections
- Decision-grade investment views

Step 7: Skills & Capability Recomposition

Objective: Align skills to redesigned work—not legacy roles.

Approach

- Anchor skills analysis to future-state roles
- Segment skills into:
    - Root Skills
    - Core skills

    - Digital / Tech stack skills
    - Soft & judgment skills
- Identify:
    - Sunset Core skills
    - Sunrise Core skills
    - Skill adjacency opportunities

Outputs

- Dynamic skills architecture
- Role-based skill evolution maps
- Targeted upskilling pathways

Step 8: Operationalize Through Future-State Job Definitions

Objective: Make work redesign executable across HR and business systems.

Deliverables

- AI-ready future-state job descriptions
- Embedded task changes and AI enablement
- Explicit skill requirements aligned to redesigned work

Why it matters
Work redesign only scales when it is embedded into:

- Hiring
- Workforce planning
- Talent mobility
- Reskilling programs

What This Methodology Delivers

- Clarity: How work actually gets done
- Precision: Where AI helps vs. where humans must lead
- Speed: Early efficiency gains without structural risk
- Trust: Human judgment preserved where it matters
- Scale: Repeatable across roles, functions, and geographies

6. WHAT THIS METHODOLOGY DELIVERS

- Clarity: How work actually gets done
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CONCLUSION: WORK REDESIGN AS An HR-LED OPERATING CAPABILITY

The defining workforce challenge of the AI era is not whether work will change—but whether organizations redesign work deliberately or react to it under pressure.

For HR leaders and SWP Planners, work redesign represents a fundamental shift in accountability. It moves HR from responding to workforce outcomes to designing how work, technology, and human judgment interact. When approached systematically, work redesign enables organizations to unlock productivity gains without eroding trust, quality, or decision integrity.

Organizations that succeed treat work redesign as:

- A continuous operating discipline, not a one-time transformation
- A task- and workload-driven process, not a skills-only exercise
- A financially grounded decision system, aligned with CFO expectations
- A human-centered approach, preserving accountability where it matters most

When work redesign is embedded into workforce planning, hiring, reskilling, and job architecture, CHROs gain something more valuable than efficiency: control over the pace, shape, and impact of AI-driven change.

At Draup, our mission is to help HR and workforce leaders move work redesign from experimentation to execution—creating AI-ready organizations where technology amplifies human potential and workforce decisions are made with clarity, confidence, and foresight.