



BUILDING A

SKILLS-FIRST ORGANISATION

THROUGH WORK TRANSFORMATION

Case Study of Centre for Healthcare Innovation

A project partnering organisations to guide them through the process of work redesign, to enable their transition into skills-first organisations and strengthen workforce resilience.

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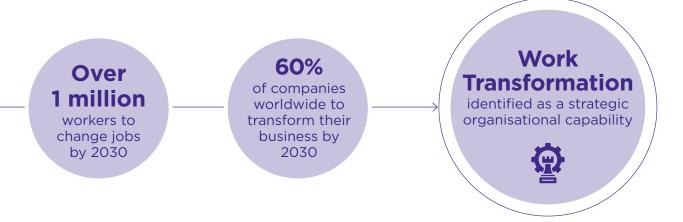
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BACKGROUND

Organisations of today grapple with challenges in the area of rising business costs, technological disruptions, increasing competition and new work arrangements (Jesuthasan & Kapilashrami, 2024). These structural shifts have intensified the imperative for organisations to modernise and strategically reposition themselves, with workplace and workforce transformation emerging as central priorities.

Global studies highlight the scale of disruption, over 100 million workers will need to change jobs by 2030 due to automation and AI with 60% of companies worldwide expect to transform their business by 2030 (World Economic Forum, 2023; Mckinsey 2023).

In response, work transformation has been identified as a strategic organisational capability, that enables organisations and their employees to adapt to evolving roles, responsibilities, and technologies, while building resilience and sustaining competitiveness.



FOCUS OF STUDY

This project is a pilot study that engages selected organisations to co-design interventions that support their transition into skills-first organisations through a structured work transformation process.

Anchored in a five-step work transformation methodology, it brings participants through a deliberate, hands-on journey to transform jobs by examining how work is structured, organised, and delivered across the organisation, while also integrating technology, workforce skills, and business strategy.

The project further aims to build organisational capability and confidence, enabling participating organisations to scale and sustain work transformation practices and apply them to a broader range of roles in the future.

The case studies as presented in this report were developed as a learning exercise to master the 5-step Work Transformation tool, applying onto the role of a senior staff nurse. The ideas presented are illustrative and exploratory in nature.



PARTICIPANTS

The **Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI)** in Singapore aims to spearhead change towards sustainable and value-based systems, by creating thought leadership; enabling workforce transformation; and effecting systems level change.

In partnership with the CHI, the Centre for Skills-First Practices (CSFP) conducted a two-part Work Transformation Workshop on 15 and 22 August 2025. Designed as an experiential learning intervention, the workshop involved participants from the Learning and Organisation Development, Kaizen, Nursing and Allied Health teams. Through guided facilitation, CSFP walked participants through the foundational principles, methodology and practical processes of work transformation, turning theory into actionable practice. Over two half-day sessions, participants reimagined the Senior Staff Nurse role, with a strong emphasis on healthcare innovation, system change, and the adoption of technology and AI to better meet evolving healthcare needs.

Beyond optimising existing roles and introducing innovative strategies for redeploying work, the workshop serves to build participants' capabilities in replicating and expanding these transformations to other job roles post pilot study.

METHODOLOGY: A 5-STEP WORK TRANSFORMATION

The project adapts the 5-step work transformation process (Mercer, 2025) which provides a structured approach to making work agile, future-ready, and human-centered. It starts by deconstructing work into tasks—examining their nature but also the pain points employees face in carrying them out, and conducting a Return on Improved Performance (ROIP) assessment to identify what can be automated, redistributed, or redesigned. The process then explores redeployment options to align employees with changing roles before reconstructing work across people, technology, and new work models. As part of this reconstruction, attention is given to the new skills employees require when additional or transformed tasks are introduced, ensuring that workforce capabilities keep pace with the newly transformed role. Finally, the process identifies priority skill requirements for staff development, reducing inefficiencies, empowering employees, and driving sustainable productivity and innovation (see Figure 1).

DECONSTRUCT REDEPLOY RECONSTRUCT the work the work the work Task classification **Automation type** Reconstruction Define the key activities and Automation opportunities, Reconstruct the remaining/ tasks, skills needed, and the augmentation new work into existing/ nature of the work new roles Robotic Process · Repetitive/Variable Automation Identifying the optimal source of work for each · Independent/Interactive Social Robotics activity (automation, centralisation/shared Physical/Mental Cognitive services, agile talent Automation pool, etc.) Return on improved performance Redefining new skills **Work alternatives** 4 Assess the return of improved for new roles/tasks Alternative work options that performance, risk, speed and can substitute/augment the value of each task; alternative Ensuring the continued work, risks and considerations work opportunities relevance of talent Centralisation/ through the mapping **Shared Services** Incremental Exponential Negative Constant of developmental interventions to Contractor/ emerging skills Gig Worker Organisational Value demand Opportunity Identifying any Marketplace constraints to deployment Outsourcing/ Third Party Level of Performance

Figure 1: 5-Step Work Transformation

OVERVIEW OF ORIGINAL VERSUS CHANGED JOB-TASKS-SKILLS

Job Role	CURRENT Senior Staff Nurse	111	REIMAGINED Senior Staff Nurse
	Current Tasks		Reimagined Tasks
Tasks	Patient Care		Patient Care
	Process & System Improvements People Development	Transforming Work with AI and Alternative Ways of Working Augmented with digitalisation (e.g., Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Process Automation, Enterprise Resource Planning System)	 Process & System Improvements People Development Customisation of Development Pathways Managing Al Project Management/ Automation Tools
	Current Skills		New Skills
Skills	 Patient care delivery core competency and complex patient case management Critical thinking & decision making Effective communications, interpersonal and influencing skills Project management Developing people & leadership skills 		 Patient care delivery core competency and complex patient case management Critical thinking & decision making Effective communications, interpersonal and influencing skills Project management Developing people & leadership skills Advanced digital fluency with data, AI, machine learning, wearable devices, telehealth and electronic health records Strategic & adaptive skills

*Note: For the purpose of this workshop, it only focuses only on tasks that require a nurse's professional license and not ward administrative tasks. This list of tasks is not exhaustive and was examined for the purpose of learning with CSFP.

The tasks highlighted in **blue** in the transformed chart represent newly added or significantly redesigned responsibilities that extend the Senior Staff Nurse's role beyond its original focus. While core patient care remains central, the role now incorporates the customisation of development pathways and the management of Al-enabled project and automation tools. These additions strengthen workforce capability development, embed digital and data-driven practices into nursing, and align the role with healthcare transformation priorities. They also signal a shift from primarily clinical and people-development functions towards a broader portfolio that integrates professional expertise with digital enablement and strategic adaptability, requiring new skills (highlighted in blue) such as digital and data literacy, Al and automation utilisation, and adaptive skills.



ENABLERS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORK TRANSFORMATION

The CHI Work Transformation Workshop brought together a cross-disciplinary group of participants from Organisation Development, Nursing, Kaizen, and Allied Health to reimagine an existing nursing role. The methodology offered a structured, strategic approach to work design. Participants found the experience innovative and eye-opening, especially in identifying opportunities to enhance job value, aligning tasks with evolving skill needs, and creating more meaningful roles within the healthcare setting.



James Ang, Associate Director, Centre for Asian Nursing Studies:

This work transformation initiative helped our nursing team develop a practical vision for evolving the Senior Staff Nurse role. The methodology showed us how AI and automation can support our clinical expertise while creating realistic opportunities for professional growth. Our partnership with the Centre for Skills-First Practices has given us a structured approach to begin preparing our nursing workforce for healthcare's digital evolution."

Key enablers of the successful adoption of work transformation included:



The participation of key stakeholders such as senior role incumbents, organisation transformation team, management



Strong alignment with the overarching management strategic direction to transform the larger NHG organisation



A readiness to explore alternative models for work redeployment, and strong alignment with overarching organisational strategy



Awareness of emerging technologies and AI solutions with potential to enhance or support transformed roles The pilot application of the work transformation methodology yielded valuable insights, but it also surfaced several areas that warrant closer attention to ensure its continued effectiveness. While participants recognised the value of the approach, practical challenges such as limited time, unfamiliarity with terminology, and the availability of role incumbents and cross-functional stakeholders shaped the depth of discussions. In addition, aspects such as navigating the Skills Framework, applying the ROIP categories, and securing skilled facilitation highlighted the importance of strong preparation and organisational support. Addressing these considerations will help strengthen future applications, build internal capabilities, and extend the methodology from individual roles to broader workforce transformation and planning efforts.



Time Constraints

Workshops were time-intensive especially since participants were new to the methodology. Based on the content of the work transformation methodology, a 2 full day workshop was planned so that participants might experience and practise key elements of the process. However, this was shortened to 2 half-day workshops as participants could not commit 2 full days for the workshop sessions.



Terminology

Participants were unfamiliar with the methodology's terminology. Additional time was required to explain key concepts especially since participants were new to the methodology.



ROIP

Participants initially struggled to differentiate between the four ROIP categories and needed clearer examples. They had trouble understanding the category on 'Breakthrough' where improved performance of a task creates exponential value, as some tasks are subjective. Their understanding improved considerably once specific, industry-relevant examples were introduced by the facilitators, which served to contextualise the categories.



Process Facilitation Skills and Mindset

As the organisation replicates the work transformation process, it is crucial that a strong facilitator equipped with process facilitation skills is present to bring the individuals and teams through this process. The ability to stay neutral and draw out responses and insights from all participants, distinguish relevant input (e.g., distinction between an ad-hoc task and a permanent task for the changed job-task-skills components) and manage the entire process will determine the eventual buy-in of participants as well as the overall quality of output.



Personnel Requirement

Participants with job incumbents were able to deep-dive into the tasks, performance metrics and pain points, while line managers would be able to validate this information. HR managers and Business Leaders are also strongly encouraged to participate as the workshop is focused on job role transitioning and performance.



Value Proposition of Work Transformation

Work Transformation should be positioned as a strategic tool that enables organisations to align roles, skills, and processes with future business needs. By highlighting its ability to inform workforce planning, guide upskilling efforts, and support transformation priorities, participants can better appreciate how the methodology contributes to long-term organisational resilience and competitiveness.



Thomas Liew, Deputy Director, Centre for Healthcare Innovation:

The application of the work transformation methodology at CHI allows us to identify future-oriented work and skills for our healthcare workers, building on their existing roles. We see this as a critical step in charting a strategic roadmap that aligns our professionals with the future models of health and healthcare, and guide workforce transformation and upskilling efforts. The pilot study was a small start in this endeavor; more extensive brainstorming and deliberations will need to be orchestrated in future to generate more promising and detailed ideas and models of future roles."

EMBARKING ON THE WORK TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN YOUR ORGANISATION

For organisations looking to implement a Skills-First approach through Work Transformation, we suggest partnering with CSFP and implementing the following action steps to get started:



Define Strategic Direction and Needs of Organisation

Define the organisation's strategic goals and the specific challenges it faces, such as technological disruption or challenges in talent acquisition and retention. This ensures that any work transformation effort is not an isolated project but a direct response to a clear business need.



Deconstruct Work and Assess Performance

Gather the key stakeholders / participants whose input are crucial for the Work Transformation conversation. Use a systematic approach to break down existing jobs into their core tasks and skills to understand what work is currently being done, the ROIP and determine which tasks can be automated, redistributed, or redesigned.



Reconstruct Work and Create Higher-Value Roles

Rebuild jobs by reallocating time and tasks from low-value, repetitive activities to higher-value, more strategic, analytical functions. This step often involves exploring potential automation options and work alternatives which align with the priorities of the organisation.



Identify and Develop New Skills

Once the new roles are defined, identify the specific skills required to perform them effectively. Develop a personalised learning plan for upskilling and training employees to bridge the gap between their current capabilities and the new skill requirements.

Support employees transition through skills development and coaching.



Pilot, Scale, and Sustain with Stakeholder Buy-in



Test the transformed role in a small-scale pilot project to refine the process and gather feedback. Ensure key stakeholders, including employees and management, are actively involved to secure their buy-in and address concerns about job redundancy. The goal is to build internal capability to replicate this process, making work transformation a sustainable and scalable practice across the entire organisation.

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Silin is Deputy Director of the Centre for Skills-First Practices at the Institute for Adult Learning, where she oversees the analytics function at the centre. With nearly 20 years' experience, she translates data, behavioural insights, and trend forecasting into strategic workforce solutions. Silin also leads transformation initiatives, working with stakeholders to strengthen organisational and workforce agility. She is both the founding editor and an editorial board member of the *Singapore Labour Journal*.



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Darrell is an analyst with over 8 years of experience in business analytics, transformation and data science initiatives. He is well-versed in innovating and cocreating with corporate stakeholders to deliver high-impact data solutions to garner insights from business and research data.



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Jessline Yap is an organisational development consultant with over two decades of experience driving business transformation through workplace learning. She partners with corporate stakeholders to co-design practical, sustainable solutions that align with strategy, optimise processes, and build internal capability—ensuring measurable impact on performance, productivity, and organisational resilience.



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Betty Lau is a global Talent, Learning & Organizational Development leader with over two decades of experience in Europe and APAC, shaping people and culture strategies in Fortune 500 and regional enterprises. She combines strategic foresight with operational rigor to drive transformation, build future-ready capabilities, and cultivate inclusive leadership across different industries.

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