

KEY FINDINGS

Borrowing from Tomorrow How to Fight the Hype and Design the Future of Work on Purpose

The future of work is being built right now.

Organizations are under extraordinary pressure to transform. Across sectors, many are redesigning workflows, restructuring roles, reconsidering job architecture, and experimenting with new combinations of human and technological capability.

Artificial intelligence is amplifying the pace and intensity of this transformation race.

Is your organization designing its future or allowing one to emerge by default?

“Every morning I wake up wondering if today’s the day our business model is rendered obsolete.”

– Multinational Executive

Transformation can create value today while borrowing from tomorrow.

Transformation does not have to look like failure today to weaken an organization tomorrow.

We call this **Extractive Transformation:** creating value today by eroding the conditions required to create value tomorrow.

One way Extractive Transformation can surface is a **Human Talent Deficit:** the gap between the human capabilities an organization will need to create future value and what its current operating model enables people to develop, sustain, and contribute.

That deficit can emerge when people aren't developing the capabilities the organization will need, when existing capabilities are depleted or lost, or when the conditions of work prevent people from fully contributing what they know and can do.

Today's gains can come at the expense of tomorrow's judgment, expertise, discretionary effort, relationships, trust, and leadership pipeline.

A human lens is often absent from consequential decisions.

Organizations have never had more workforce data or greater technological capacity to gather it. Yet human perspectives do not consistently inform consequential decisions about how work is being redesigned.

Different vantage points reveal different information about how an organization functions. In conditions of radical uncertainty, perspective is organizational intelligence.

1 in 2
LEADERS

say a broad range of human perspectives, experiences, and needs are **never, rarely, or only sometimes intentionally considered** in AI governance or workflow redesign.

“When you have a group of people in the same room who think pretty much the same way, you’re bound to make catastrophic mistakes.”

– Tina Opie, PhD, Chief Vision Officer,
Opie Consulting Group LLC

Inclusion leaders have skills this moment needs.

Decades of inclusion work developed ways of seeing differentiated experience, widening perspective, working across silos, examining access and opportunity, and tracing human consequences through systems.

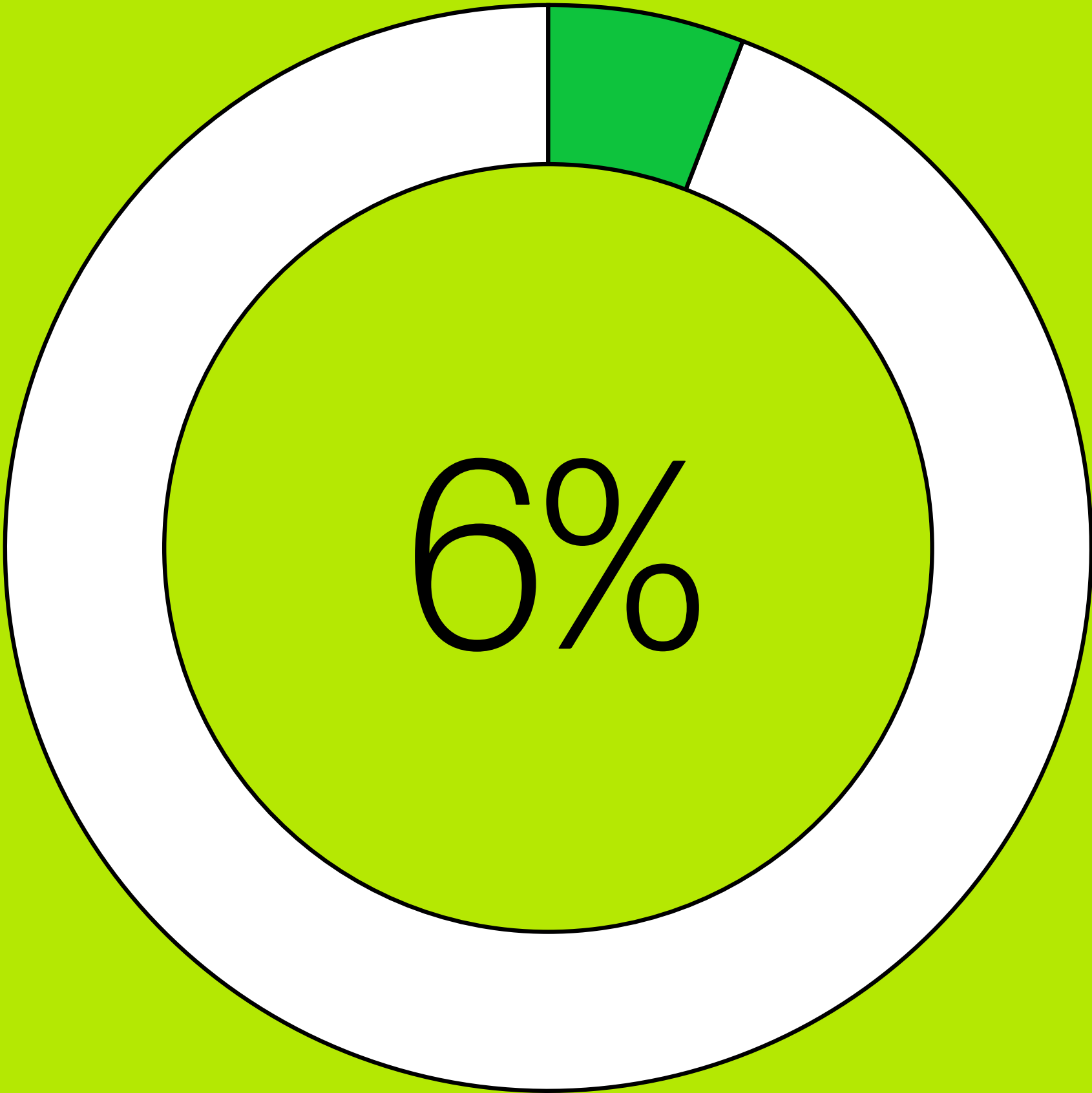
Those capabilities are necessary for transformation.

Yet our data suggests that the connection between inclusion and transformation is not clear, not yet consistent—or nonexistent.

Inclusion work must connect clearly to business strategy and the decisions through which that strategy becomes real.

There is a larger opportunity, right now, to carry into how the organization itself operates—and transforms.

The future of inclusion is being built inside the future of work.



Among leaders who name AI transformation as a top strategic priority, just **6% strongly connect it to their formal inclusion work.**

What will you build—and leave behind?

The future of work is being built through thousands of choices being made right now, but it is not predetermined.

We do not have to preserve yesterday's workplace. And we do not have to accept whatever future arrives fastest. **We can design something better.**

What will you carry forward?

What will you leave behind?

And how will you build for tomorrow rather than borrow from it?

Borrowing from Tomorrow is an invitation to design the future of work on purpose.

To learn more about the research or bring these ideas into your organization, visit **talentinnovation.org** or contact us at **info@talentinnovation.org**.

Methodology

For this project, we combined:

A **survey** of **173 organizational decision-makers** in the United States, administered by Alchemer under the auspices of Coqual.

Semi-structured **interviews** with **50 organizational leaders**, inclusion practitioners, consultants, and subject matter experts, plus ongoing deep listening across the Coqual Task Force.

Scholarship spanning organizational behavior, leadership, systems thinking, psychology, sociology, economics, management, and design.

This report was developed primarily through interviews with leaders working in multinational organizations. Nearly all were based in the United States and United Kingdom, although several held global roles. We also drew on scholarship and perspectives from around the world.

As part of this project, we used generative AI tools for tasks including exploratory research, project planning, thematic synthesis, and editing. Human researchers remained responsible for interpretation, validation, and final conclusions.

We authored and proudly stand behind this work.