

**When bots are  
GBS co-workers,  
how do you manage  
change?**



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**Digitalization actually creates higher-value work for Global Business Services (GBS) employees. At the same time, there will be higher expectations of both employees and machines - and this change needs to be managed carefully and collaboratively.**



## **Getting people and intelligent technology to work together.**

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People are still a valuable resource in the digital era. Because GBS will increasingly orchestrate an ecosystem of technology vendors and other suppliers, human collaboration and networking is key. And there's satisfaction too: an end-to-end view of the organization's processes and performance helps employees see the importance of their own role.



Technology is, of course, at the heart of the digital transformation - but that's only part of the story. The interface and "feel" of that technology to employees, the interaction and how easy it is for them to adapt, is just as important.

### **Employee consumerism**

Employees are also consumers - and as digital natives, many of them will have higher expectations about the overall convenience of services. They are used to AI-infused technology such as smartphone personal assistants and smart speakers. They use apps to manage many aspects of their private lives and expect seamless connectivity and nothing but stellar user experience. But at work they face the "Sunday-Monday" problem: they are often forced to use outdated and laborious company systems, and complicated, neglected process design can negatively impact the overall organizational work experiences.

### **Hyper-localization**

Globalization has triggered an acute awareness of localization. Employees in China experience technology, for example messaging services or online payment options, quite differently from employees in Europe. So large-scale, global standardized change and communications approaches tend to leave the employee with mixed messages and a lack of clarity. More than ever before, organizations will need to utilize the most relevant digital tools and technologies available to serve the needs and preferences of specific employee groups instead of using a one-size-fits-all approach.

These trends underpin the fundamental people changes that GBS organizations across the world will need to embrace, because digitalization is not just something to adapt to, but it is also transforming the shape and character of teams and the nature of work itself.

## Lean teams, redefined roles

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The evolution of the GBS setup is toward a lean model with skeleton staff, and employees need to have the right tools to do more with less.

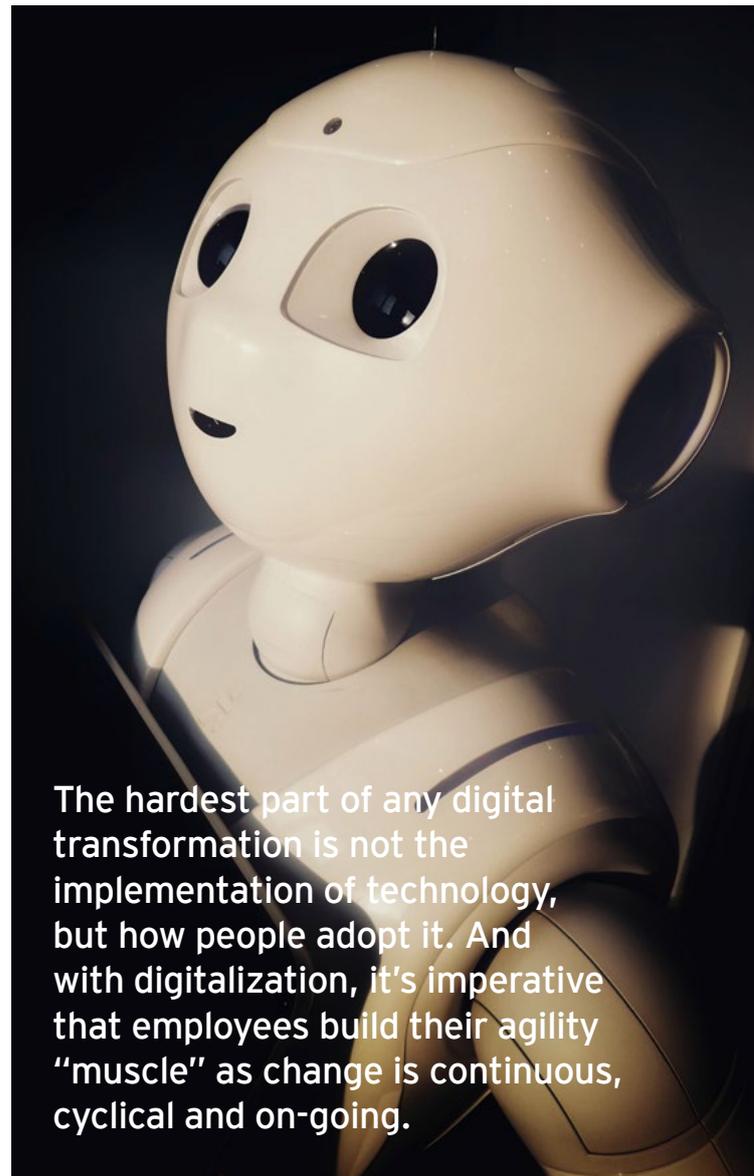
Digital solutions and services such as smart analytics and intelligent automation will give GBS a critical role in delivering value to the wider organization, in an expanding ecosystem of stakeholders.

Historically, on-premise ERP systems have not been particularly customer-oriented. Now, people at all levels of the retained organization want analytics on demand - they want to be able to access dashboards on their tablets and see specific datasets immediately.

This democratization of insights is in itself a revolution that GBS can help realize: some organizations already offer bespoke data dashboards to thousands of non-technical employees globally. And this demands user-centric front end design for every single person that touches it.

This will become universal, and the underlying systems and ERPs will have to be transformed to make it happen. Some new ERPs such as SAP S/4 HANA are offering some integration with IA. For example, the availability of employee self-service (ESS) and manager self-service (MSS) tasks and processes will be a core part of daily activities within functions on such ERPs; increasingly GBS organizations will customize with ERPs, and even co-create with vendors, to develop bespoke functionality to meet business needs.

And all this will mean individual GBS roles will have to transition.



**The hardest part of any digital transformation is not the implementation of technology, but how people adopt it. And with digitalization, it's imperative that employees build their agility "muscle" as change is continuous, cyclical and on-going.**

## New ways of working

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Data-driven solutions and decision processes (especially ones involving bots) require specific skills and employee mindsets to understand not only that data is important, but what kind of data is relevant, how to interpret that data and come to the right conclusions. Data mining, analysis and presentation, pattern identification, code writing and design for the relevant dashboards - these are all human skills that will be at the center of future GBS.

To drive this, GBS must become an ecosystem of solution-oriented people.

The organizational setup of GBS will also become more agile, with significant working groups collaborating on fast-moving projects. This evolution of roles redefines how locally retained GBS employees operate and collaborate in day-to-day activities, how they use technology and continuously improve the performance of the overall organization.

This does not simply ask for new ways of training, it is the advent of a completely new workforce that is co-working with bots - the "digital workforce".

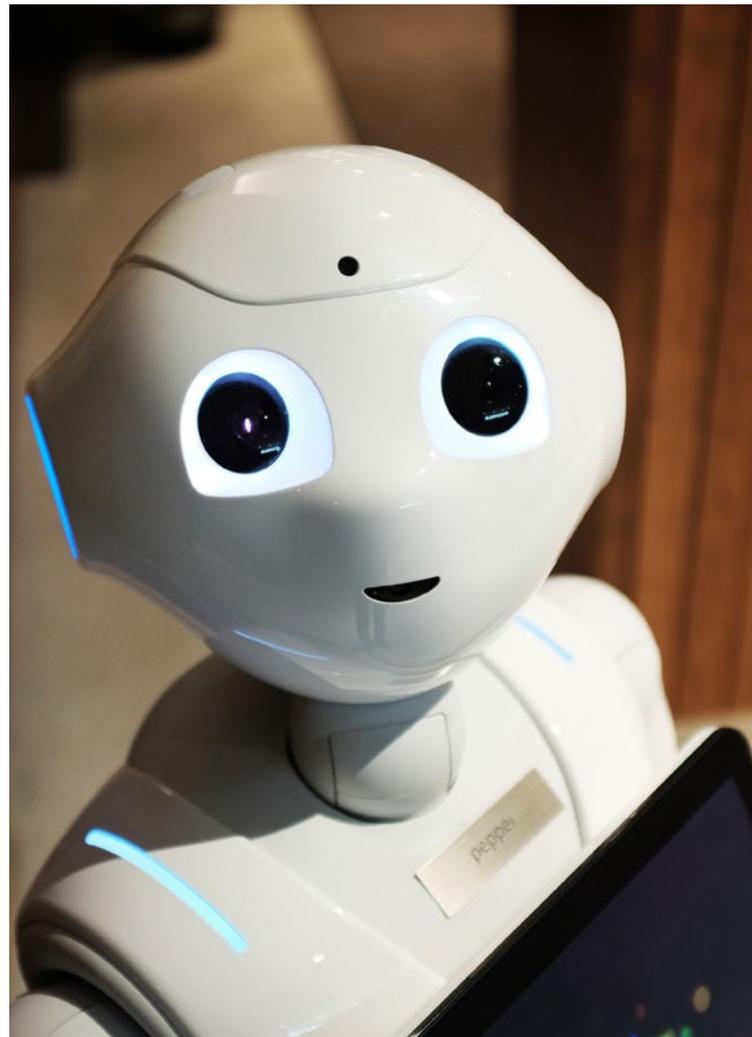
# Managing the changes of a digitalized GBS

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Such a revolution calls for new ways of performance management and recruitment, greater avenues for mobility of the human workforce and above all a new way of thinking - a change in mindset.

Digital transformation is reality and leadership needs to act as cultural designers and architects. The task is to set up the organization for the future, planning the skills around each new wave of innovation, and having a plan for how to develop and sustain them.

Getting the culture, behaviors, processes, business capability and operating model set up right (while embracing hyper-localization) is crucial and takes time. Organizational change management has traditionally been a leadership-driven "top-down" process. But now change management should combine the standard top-down method with a forward-thinking and collaborative bottom-up approach, not only to daily problem-solving, but to defining the shape and scope of GBS services in the future. This spurs creativity and innovation at the grass roots level, while enabling affected stakeholders to personalize and hyper-localize the change.



## Digitalized change management principles

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The new top-down and bottom-up approach to change management in the digital age should be based on the following principles:

1. Change is the constant, stability the exception.
2. Managing change with agility - fail fast and fail forward, supported and enhanced by data-driven solutions.
3. Everyone is an adopter and a change navigator, equipped with the digital tools and support to thrive in disrupted times.
4. Change cannot be standardized, instead it is hyper-localized. There is a customized change approach for each region, each function - adjusted to needs and requirements yet globally aligned towards common goals.
5. GBS employees are positively empowered to shape and develop not only their skills, but their roles and the evolution of GBS itself.

GBS organizations need to adopt a culture of change, where a constantly evolving mindset is needed. People must be open and receptive to change and leaders must consequently empower the organization to live that culture. This is how future GBS organizations will thrive in the digital age.

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