

The rise of the Independent Worker

Today 23% of the global workforce is independent. Independent workers invoice clients but do not have employment contracts. Their number is likely to double in the next 10 years as a result of ongoing automation, technology and shifting generational values around autonomy and freedom.

Industries with large numbers of employees and low rates of automation risk loss of competitive advantage, disintermediation and high workforce transition costs. The opposite is also true: newcomers can use technology to disrupt large organisations and do so, often with very few employees. As an example, Adyen (an online payment transaction provider) employs 900 people and has a market capitalisation of 20 billion USD, compared to 16 billion USD for Deutsche Bank which employs 300,000 people.

The Flex Index

The Flex Index offers an approach to a solution for organisations. It comprises of a survey that measures an organisation's capability to 'flex' its structure and policies as the result of ongoing technology influences on work and pay. The outcome is 'responsible change' input which allows the formulation of a company's workforce and business strategy.

This organisational research model was created in 2019 based upon the bestselling management book 'Flex or Fail', written by the partners of RTA Consultancy and in collaboration with IMD's World Competitiveness Centre. The Flex Index is the result of a tested and proven measurement process, through which Boards, Federations and their leadership teams gain strategic insight into their organisation/sector, set the 'responsible change' agenda and manage organisational improvement.

1. Setting the 'Responsible Change' Strategy

At Board level, the Flex Index is a highly valuable tool that provides a quantified strategic picture of the business with regard to its ability to plan and integrate new technology, alongside its approach to workforce transformation through 'Responsible Change'. The Board will gain access to a data set presented in an accessible format which will allow strategic level analysis of how the organisation compares to industry sector peers, and where key strengths and weaknesses lie.

This information will allow Board level decision-making and monitoring around key elements of its strategy that include:

- technology planning
- change management
- workforce strategy
- organisational development
- stakeholder engagement
- brand positioning
- corporate reputation and risk management

The Flex Index Model

The RTA Consultancy data model measures the organisational capacity to adjust to technology and automation. It highlights those capabilities that need to be aligned to successfully implement the business strategy and covers the design of a company's structure, processes, culture and people and communication.

It has been piloted by several multinational organisations who wish to be prepared to transform their workforce as a result of new technology. The proprietary framework for organisational agility measures an organisation's capability across 7 domains, based upon some 50 factors.

Board Focus

This management information is based on anonymous data input from selected people, inside and outside the organisation, including key managers and talent. The Flex Index focuses on those issues that matter most to the selected stakeholder groups. The Flex Index also provides hard, objective labour market facts about countries, industries and companies.

Process for Improvement and KPI's

Based on the outcome of the Flex Index, change programmes are started to prepare the company for the impact automation and technology will have on workforce strategy, brand positioning and communication. By measuring consistently over time we monitor the effects of improvement initiatives. The Key Performance Indicators make managers accountable and ensure a disciplined approach to organisational change.

2. The Flex Index Benchmarking Solution - in detail

The Flex Index generates insight about the 'flexibility' or 'agility' of the people, strategy and organisation. It measures the perceptions of your key people across the company's ecosystem, by:

- Identifying performance gaps and prioritise areas for improvement
- Highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation
- Comparing divisions, business units, country operations and exchange best practices within your organisation
- Allowing external benchmarking with peer organisations within your industry sector
- Making your managers accountable for improving their organisation based on hard 'organisational' KPI's
- Tracking the effectiveness of improvement projects over time
- Involving and committing your key people to help you make the organisation more agile
- Generating input easily, quickly and reliable through RTA Consultancy's digital platform

Five simple process steps

1. The client sets up a contract with RTA Consultancy and provides the email addresses of the selected participant groups.
2. The participants receive their login information, ID and password through a trusted service which guarantees confidentiality.
3. The participants log onto the research platform and provide their answers in about 25-30 minutes. After completing the survey, the participants see their own results compared to those of other senior managers in RTA Consultancy's database.
4. RTA Consultancy presents the results to management within 4 weeks from the word 'go'. These include 'action orientated' recommendations which management may use based on industry comparators.
5. The participants are invited back to the research platform to see their own results, compare themselves to the company results and view industry benchmark.

3. Supporting the Board's Agenda

RTA Consultancy can provide additional support to Boards when a more intense 'deep dive' is required through a short 'high impact' consultancy engagement. This will enable key areas of uncertainty to be identified.

Using the Flex Index methodology as an analytical tool, as well as a structured dialogue with key stakeholders, RTA Consultancy will provide solutions and recommendations that will enhance the Board's planning and decision-making processes.

Please contact partners@flexorfail.org if you would like to discuss our consultancy approach and benefits to your organisation in more detail.