

# The value of dyslexia

Dyslexic capability and organisations of the future



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# Acknowledgements and information

**About Made By Dyslexia:** Made By Dyslexia is a global charity led by successful dyslexic individuals. Our mission is to help the world properly understand, value and support dyslexia by developing campaigns and tools to explain dyslexic thinking. Our goal is to democratise support so every dyslexic is discovered and enabled to flourish.

[www.madebydyslexia.org](http://www.madebydyslexia.org)

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The authors of this report recognise that those with dyslexia will have varying cognitive profiles. For the purpose of this report, dyslexic abilities have been recognised through a typical group of skills.

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Throughout this document dyslexia is referred to independently and as part of a sub-group:

## **Neurodiversity**

Neurodiversity considers those that are both neurotypical and neurodivergent. Those who are neurodivergent are considered to have different neurocognitive functioning from a typical (neurotypical) cognitive profile<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Neurodiversity at Work, CIPD, 2018





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# Forewords



For decades dyslexic individuals have been expected to 'fit in', measured and benchmarked for the very skills they find challenging. Now, technology is replacing the need for these skills. In contrast dyslexic thinking skills are the 'in demand' skills in this changing world of work. Put simply the workforce of today and tomorrow needs dyslexic thinking, and dyslexic individuals should no longer be expected to 'fit in' but 'stand out', and focus on their strengths.

Businesses, and educators must lean in and adapt their organisations and systems to embrace this change, and fast, if we are to truly build the workforce of tomorrow.

Kate Griggs  
Founder and CEO



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The workplace of the future is hard to imagine but there can be little doubt that people's interaction with technology will be multifaceted; it will not be as simple as discrete jobs, tasks and roles being automated. Therefore in this report, we have broken down skills into their component parts, so as to understand demand, and matched anticipated needs with typical dyslexic profiles. Based on the analysis, it's clear that there is enormous untapped potential available from dyslexic individuals working within cognitively diverse teams that are necessary for successful organisations of the future.

Richard Addison  
Dyslexia Community Partner Sponsor





We talk about the world of work dramatically changing, but do we appreciate what this could really mean? When considering neurodiversity, we have only just begun to understand the potential value that can be obtained from varying cognitive profiles.

In this report, we demonstrate how dyslexic thinking could bring huge value to organisations. As automation continues to influence jobs and tasks, traditional approaches to workplace team composition will change. Social-type competencies, such as initiative, creativity, and problem-solving (associated with typical dyslexic strengths), are on the rise.

CEOs and business leaders will benefit from understanding dyslexic thinking and the changes needed to harness this value. Hiring, resourcing and performance management will most certainly need to shift, moving from a primacy of 'experience-led, generalised' to include 'cognitively-enabled, specialised'. Organisations that are able to crack the code between neurodiversity, organisational culture, and workforce augmentation, will no doubt be at the forefront of driving even greater business value. This can only be achieved if organisational approaches to dyslexia, and more broadly varying cognitive profiles, are at the front and centre of the organisational strategic agenda.

This report was a collaborative effort and would not have been completed without Richard Addison's leadership, and the great support of Kay Sullivan, Mary Buxton, Grace Bolton and Maria Baldacchino, alongside Richard Sedley and Jane Thomas for the initiatives' broader support. A special mention must go to James Nicholson and Strategy Advisory for their support of wider neurodiversity initiatives, with specific thanks to Alexander Bowditch, Muna Sunna, Joana Santos and Xander Penney for their assistance during the development of this report.

Ben Cooke  
Lead Contributor, Dyslexia Community Chair



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# Executive summary

## The big picture

In a world of technologically-enabled change, how we work is fundamentally changing. Workforce augmentation, where parts of jobs are automated to complement and enhance the workforce<sup>2</sup>, will create significant shifts in the types of jobs and competencies (skills, abilities and tasks) required for organisations. Organisations are looking to bridge the skills gap; this shift requires different minds to fulfil differentiated tasks.

## The value of dyslexia

In *The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic strengths and the changing world of work*<sup>3</sup> report, we set out how dyslexic individuals could support this technological revolution.

What is dyslexia? Dyslexia influences at least 1 in 10 people<sup>4</sup> and is a genetic difference<sup>5</sup> in an individual's ability to learn and process information. As a result, dyslexic individuals have differing abilities, with strengths in creative, problem-solving and communication skills and challenges with spelling, reading and memorising facts. Generally, a dyslexic cognitive profile will be uneven when compared to a neurotypical cognitive profile. This means that dyslexic individuals *really do* think differently.

*The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic capability and organisations of the future*, provides an updated view to the 2018 report, using the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs report<sup>6</sup> to:

- ▶ Highlight the changing demand for competencies expected to emerge by 2022
- ▶ Show how a typical dyslexic capability could support and help drive the required shift in effort

Overall, our analysis shows that competencies for a significant number of jobs in the workplace that dyslexic individuals may typically find challenging will largely be impacted by forms of automation. In their place, enhanced tasks and new jobs will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking. Dyslexia could provide an opportunity for organisations to bridge the skills gap of the future.

## Organisational approaches to dyslexia

However, the traditional approach to dyslexia in the workplace is typically directed at the remediation of dyslexic challenges. This organisational effort is well intended, but may not direct the right organisational effort towards the whole dyslexic profile or leverage the strong competencies that are increasingly trending. This could impact the ability for organisations to capture the value of dyslexic strengths, and therefore assist with bridging the skills gap.

An alternative approach based on skills, could allow for organisations to focus effort toward both the remediation of challenges and harnessing of strengths; aligning a deeper understanding of dyslexic skills with that of organisational value.

## Leading the way

For CEOs and business leaders there are three areas to focus effort:

Firstly, share best practice and insight as the most immediate action. Specifically for dyslexia organisations should be asking:

- ▶ How does our existing approach to dyslexia need to change against this backdrop of rapid transformation?

Secondly, invest in a clear automation strategy targeted at organisational goals, and a people strategy that considers the cultural and skills needs of the organisation<sup>7</sup>; give clear line-of-sight to the technological potential available and the relative impact to jobs, tasks and skills, asking:

- ▶ Are we investing in the right places from an automation and skills perspective, and providing a psychologically safe environment to ensure time, effort and resources are focused on value?

Finally, from a skills basis, seek to develop a neurodiverse capability that understands varying cognitive profiles; the alignment of automation, culture and neurodiversity could be the key to unlocking the value of dyslexia and the future organisation, asking:

- ▶ How great are gains to be had from harnessing neurodiverse teams that would unlock talent to ensure we have a diverse workforce that's fit for the future?

<sup>2</sup>The Future of Jobs Report, The World Economic Forum, 2018 p.ix

<sup>3</sup>The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic Strengths and the Changing World of Work, EY, 2018

<sup>4</sup>Better Training, Better Teaching, Dyslexia International, 2014 p.2

<sup>5</sup>Connecting the Dots, Made By Dyslexia, 2017 p.7

<sup>6</sup>The Future of Jobs Report, The World Economic Forum, 2018

<sup>7</sup>The Future Workplace: How to Automate Intelligently, EY, 2018



Dyslexic thinkers are often able to see connections that others may miss, and create narratives that can simplify complex products or tasks.

For organisations to successfully adapt, thrive and access these dyslexic strengths, there needs to be support for and celebration of a change and growth mindset. This mindset is a skill in itself and can often be more important than specific areas of experience. This, coupled with diversity and inclusion, is key to future success.

Steve Hatch, VP Northern Europe, Facebook

We are here to pioneer a new kind of security for an ever complex and interconnected world. We need the right mix of minds to see further into the future, and to work in deeper co-operation with partners, allies and the outside world to be ever more innovative.

The skills needed to do this map closely to the strengths that dyslexic thinking can bring to our organisation, which is why we are working to attract, support and encourage new perspectives into GCHQ.

Jeremy Fleming, Director, GCHQ

We must always maintain a strong understanding of how we can enable people to do their best work. At the end of the day we create environments where all people can be successful, creating a digital culture of inclusion.

People with dyslexia bring invaluable expertise and strengths to every organisation. Weaving diverse talent into the fabric of the company, no matter the role, will create better processes, products, and services for everyone.

Jenny Lay-Flurrie, Chief Accessibility Officer, Microsoft

Dyslexia should not be viewed as a disadvantage, but a strength. The strengths that dyslexic individuals show in terms of creativity, lateral thinking and leadership are vital for businesses now and the future world of work.

Organisations need to actively recruit more dyslexic individuals into the business to complement their teams and to ensure the pressing skills needs of the future are met.

Jonnie Goodwin, Co-founder of Founders Forums and Head of Merchant Banking at Alvarium

Technology is dramatically changing the way we interact and work with each other. This means different jobs and tasks need different minds.

Dyslexia can be an important part of this picture. As this report demonstrates, dyslexic individuals exhibit a range of capabilities that are real strengths in the evolving business environment.

Steve Varley, UK Chairman, EY

Like every business, we face the challenge to digitally transform what we do. For us it means that through increasing automation, the gathering of data is being commoditised; we need to build new skill sets and look for different kinds of people who see the big picture, see patterns across multiple data sets and deliver meaningful, strategic advice.

I believe people with dyslexia have a unique advantage; their special ability to cut through complexity and find original ways to solve problems plays into what we need as a business, and the pressing business needs of today and the future.

Vanella Jackson, Global CEO, Hall and Partners

Having an inclusive company that mirrors its customers is critical for future success. The skills companies need are evolving fast with a much greater focus now on empathy, creative thinking, innovative problem solving and being able to communicate and build relationships across multiple networks. These are all areas that dyslexic people are known to excel at.

Companies need to continue extending the range of factors considered in candidate assessments in order to take a broader view on how people will perform against these future skills.

Laura Powell, Global Head of Human Resources, Retail Banking and Wealth Management, HSBC

As a creative business we are very clear on the value of our people. We are also successful because of the diversity of our people, and we actively look for different types of thinkers.

Dyslexic thinkers demonstrate particular strengths, such as creativity and problem-solving, that are vital to our business now, and the future.

Mark Lainas, Chief Innovation Officer, BBDO



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# Storyboard

## The next two pages storyboard the report in an easy-to-read summary

Software-based automation, such as Robotic Process Automation and Intelligent Process Automation (Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Natural Language Processing and Chatbots), has the potential to transform the workplace and is already doing so. As businesses invest in these areas, jobs and tasks are becoming automated; parts of human working effort are being replaced by these technologies.

To 2022, the impact on talent in the workplace from newly automated jobs and tasks will change organisational competencies (skills, abilities and tasks). Overall, processing, manual and transaction-type competencies are declining, and creative, problem-solving and social-type competencies are trending.

Organisations are looking at different ways to bridge this skills gap; as a result, non-traditional routes have taken place that cast the talent net wider; one example of this is neurodivergent hires. As part of this picture, dyslexia, a cognitive difference in information processing, has specific strengths that organisations can harness as part of an organisational capability.

From mapping a typical dyslexic capability with the change in workplace competencies, the findings show how declining demand for competencies such as reading skills, memory abilities, and coordination and time management, are associated with typical dyslexic challenges and; trending demand for competencies such as leadership and social influence, creativity and initiative, and analytical thinking and innovation, are associated with typical dyslexic strengths.

This means that competencies in the workplace that dyslexic individuals may typically find challenging will largely be impacted by forms of automation; in their place, enhanced tasks and new roles will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking (as shown on the next page).

However, organisations may not be focusing effort in the right way to capture the value of these dyslexic strengths. A different approach, focused on both remediation of dyslexic challenges and the targeting of strengths through skills, could provide an opportunity to refocus effort and assist with bridging the skills gap.

The report shows how the future of work will look fundamentally different. To create the workforce of the future, CEOs and business leaders should: firstly, share best practice and insight to capture the value of dyslexia; secondly, invest in clear automation and people strategies and; finally, from a skills basis, seek to develop a neurodiverse capability that understands varying cognitive profiles to realise a workforce that's fit for the future.



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# In the future, enhanced tasks and new roles will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking

## Top dyslexic strengths, trending competencies, all industries, 2022

At an aggregate level, there are various trending competencies that organisations can tap into from dyslexia.

### Exceptional

- ▶ Leadership and social influence
- ▶ Creativity, originality and initiative

### Very Strong

- ▶ Complex problem-solving
- ▶ Analytical thinking and innovation
- ▶ Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation
- ▶ Active learning and learning strategies
- ▶ Technology design and programming

### Strong

- ▶ Critical thinking and analysis
- ▶ Emotional intelligence

## Dyslexic strengths: skills, abilities and tasks, all industries, 2022

At an individual level, there are various skills, abilities and tasks that organisations can tap into from dyslexia.

### Skills

- Active learning
- Management of personnel
- Critical thinking
- Complex problem-solving
- Programming
- Systems analysis
- Active listening
- Writing
- Science
- Technology design
- Learning strategies

### Abilities

- Originality
- Spatial abilities
- Idea generation and reasoning abilities
- Visual abilities
- Perceptual abilities
- Quantitative abilities
- Verbal abilities

### Tasks

- Creativity
- Social influence
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Social orientation
- Autonomy
- Initiative
- Analytical thinking
- Responsibility
- Cooperation

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Attracting neurodiverse talent, including individuals with dyslexia, provides an opportunity for organisations to harness the fullest range of skills and perspectives. Our business looks to diversity of thought to remain competitive, continuously innovate and drive better business performance.

Justine Campbell, Managing Partner, Talent, EY UK&I

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1

2

3

4

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# Report methodology

The objectives of this report are to:

- ▶ Show the value of dyslexia to organisations in the context of automation-led innovation
- ▶ Demonstrate a potential approach for harnessing dyslexia in organisations
- ▶ Pose questions for CEOs and business leaders to consider next steps

The report methodology has six sections as highlighted below. The first section provides context for the impacts that automation will have on human working effort. The second section describes the impact to competencies (skills, abilities and tasks) and jobs in the workplace from automation. The third section explains what dyslexia is, the relevant challenges and strengths, and provides an overview of typical dyslexic thinking and general skills. The fourth section maps dyslexic thinking and general skills, and associated jobs with trending and declining competencies 2018 vs 2022. The fifth section maps skills and abilities to a hypothetical job profile to demonstrate how organisations could target effort towards managing both the challenges and strengths of dyslexia. The sixth section concludes and poses questions to CEOs and business leaders.

1

## Workforce augmentation

EY proprietary analysis provides insight into the potential opportunities to automate at the business function, job and task level. A deep-dive into the finance function provides an example of how tasks in jobs are automatable.

2

## Changes to skills, The World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum's 'comparing skills demand, 2018 vs 2022, top ten' information formed the foundation of our analysis and provides:

- ▶ A set of trending and declining competencies that are represented across industries (see note under 4.)

Note: the term 'bridging the skills gap' encompasses the changes associated with attributes of competencies (skills, abilities and tasks), and has been used to simplify language throughout the report.

3

## Dyslexic thinking and general skills, Made By Dyslexia

Made By Dyslexia's 'dyslexic thinking and general skills' study formed the basis for our analysis and provides:

- ▶ An overview of typical dyslexic skills
- ▶ An overview of associated jobs

## 4

### Mapping a typical dyslexic capability to competency demand

Combining The World Economic Forum's 'comparing skills demand, 2018 vs 2022, top ten' framework and Made By Dyslexia's 'dyslexic thinking and general skills' we mapped by association the number of connections between each skill, job and competency. This associates dyslexic skills with that of trending and declining competency demand at an organisational level.

Notes:

- ▶ For simplicity, we have split each competency from The World Economic Forum's approach to the O\*NET classification methodology between skills, abilities and tasks by definition
- ▶ We have excluded Manual Dexterity, Endurance and Precision from the mapping due to a focus on primarily cognitive competencies

## 5

### Mapping typical dyslexic skills to a job profile

Using the split of skills and abilities from the competency mapping, we have created a hypothetical job profile, and mapped a set of selected skills and abilities to this job profile to demonstrate both a traditional approach and a potential skills-based approach for managing both the challenges and strengths of dyslexia.

Notes:

- ▶ We have assumed the job baseline performance requirement to be consistent across all competencies, and representative of a typical performance criteria across a job profile for all organisations and industries
- ▶ We have assumed that the traditional approach to dyslexia in the workplace is consistent across all organisations and industries
- ▶ We have represented both approaches through skills and abilities for consistency, presented as a skills-based approach to simplify language

## 6

### Leading the way

Drawing from the impact of automation, changing workplace competencies, dyslexic competency mapping and dyslexic job profile mapping, we conclude and pose questions for CEOs and business leaders to consider how they can best capture the value of dyslexia.

# Workforce augmentation

Driven by technology, demographic and geopolitical trends, cross-sector disruptors are transforming the working environment<sup>8</sup>. For CEOs and other business leaders, navigating the impacts of this change in the workplace must be much more than reactive initiatives; there should be proactive preparation for the exponential shifts expected in the long-term. The future world of work *will* look fundamentally different.

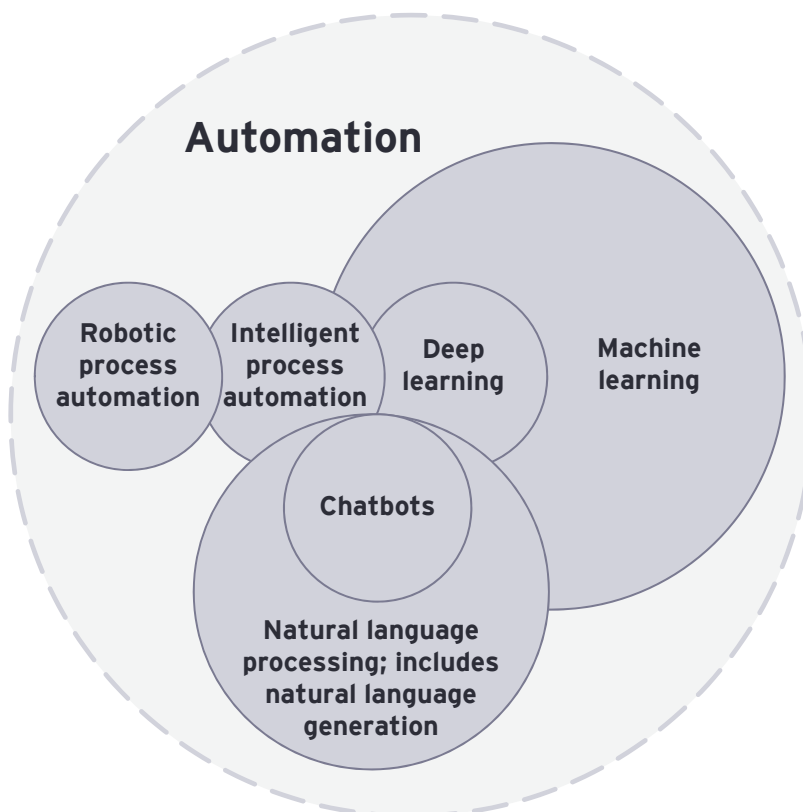
Workforce augmentation, where parts of jobs are automated to complement and enhance the human workforce, so far in the background of CEOs strategic initiatives, will soon be at the front and centre of driving greater organisational efficiency.

Software-based automation, such as Robotic Process Automation and Intelligent Process Automation (Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Natural Language Processing and Chatbots), has the potential to transform the workplace and is already doing so, as human and robot working effort becomes increasingly intertwined.

## Overlapping technologies in automation

Automation performs human-like tasks and consists of range of technologies, highlighted below:

- ▶ **Robotic process automation:** Software that mimics the actions of a human
- ▶ **Intelligent process automation:** Software that mimics human activities and learns from them to improve
  - ▶ **Machine learning:** Algorithms programmed to learn for themselves using data
  - ▶ **Deep learning:** Algorithms that learn to recognise patterns from digital sound, images and other data
  - ▶ **Natural language processing:** Software that can understand and process language and speech
  - ▶ **Chatbots:** Software that mimics conversations with humans



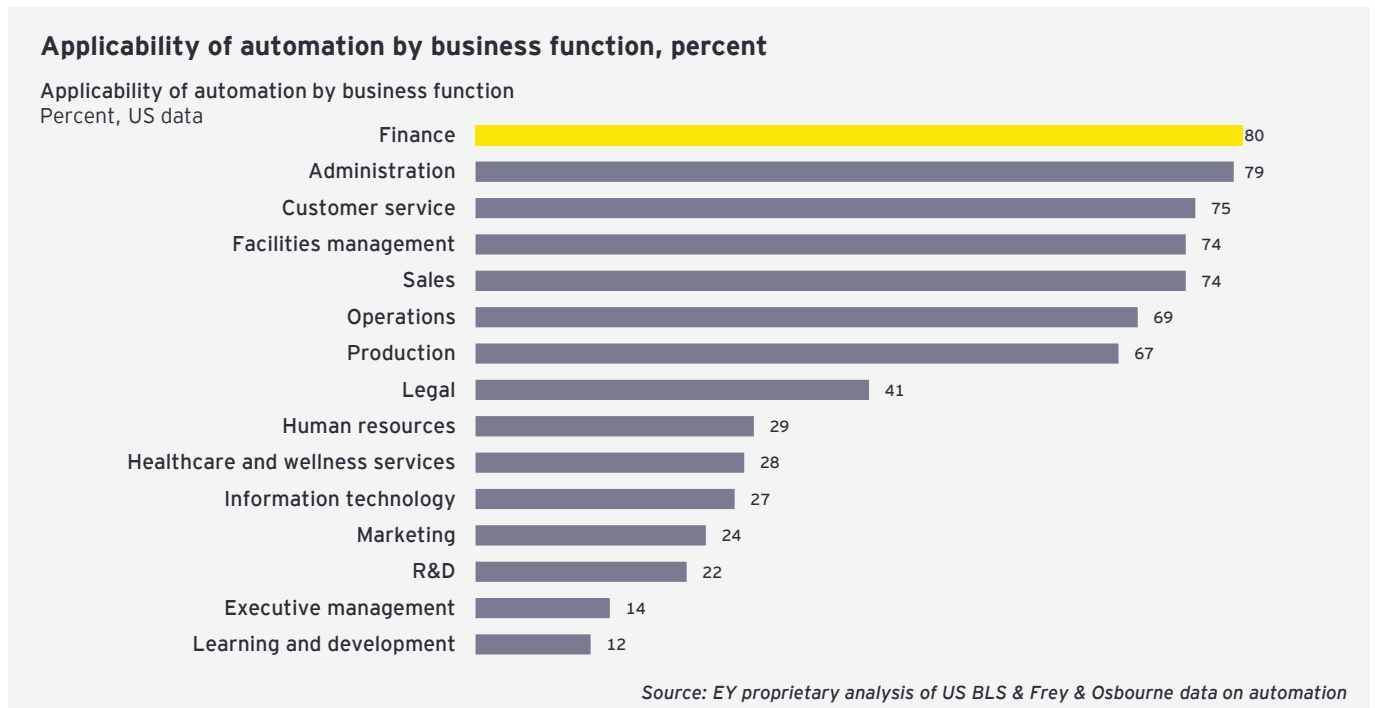
Source: *The Future Workplace: How to Automate Intelligently*, EY

<sup>8</sup>What's Next After Next?, EY, 2019

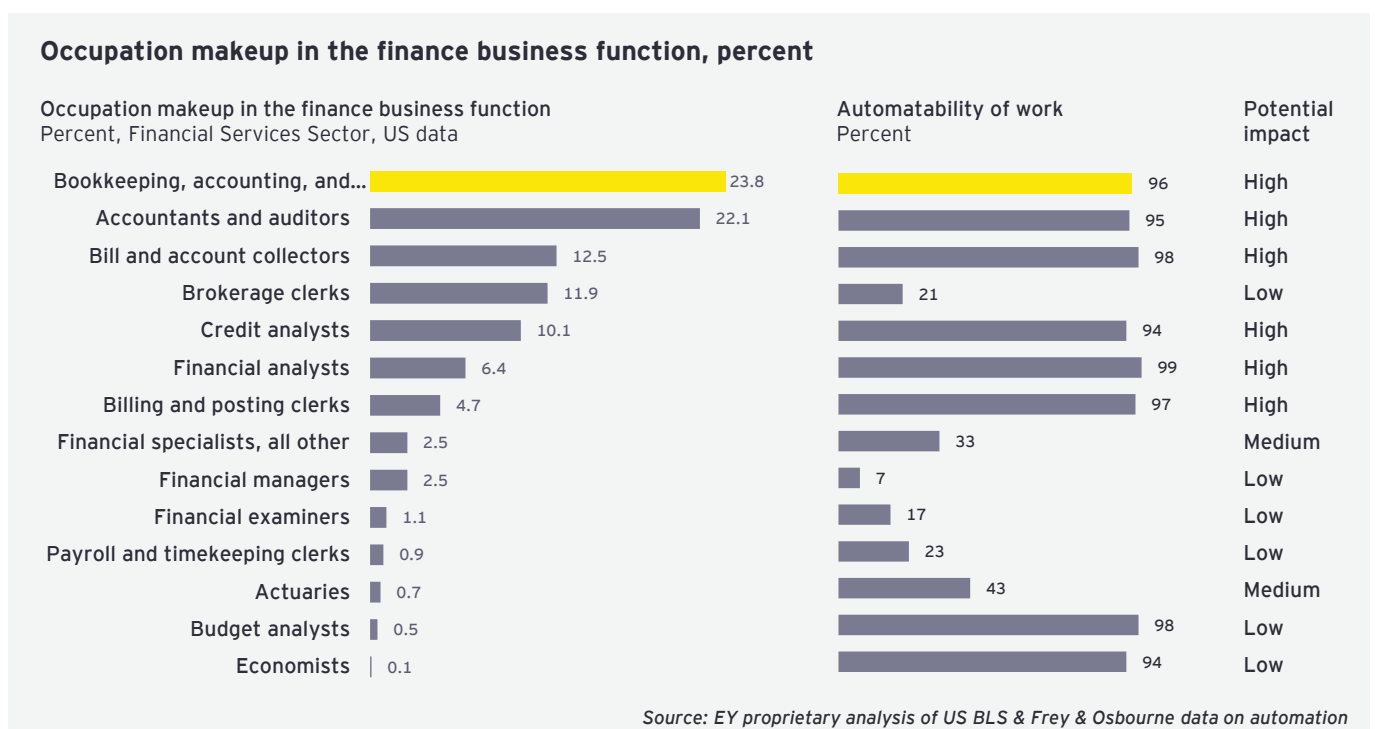
Analysing the impact of automation within organisations demonstrates how the opportunity to automate varies according to business function, job and task.

## 1. Automation will impact business functions differently

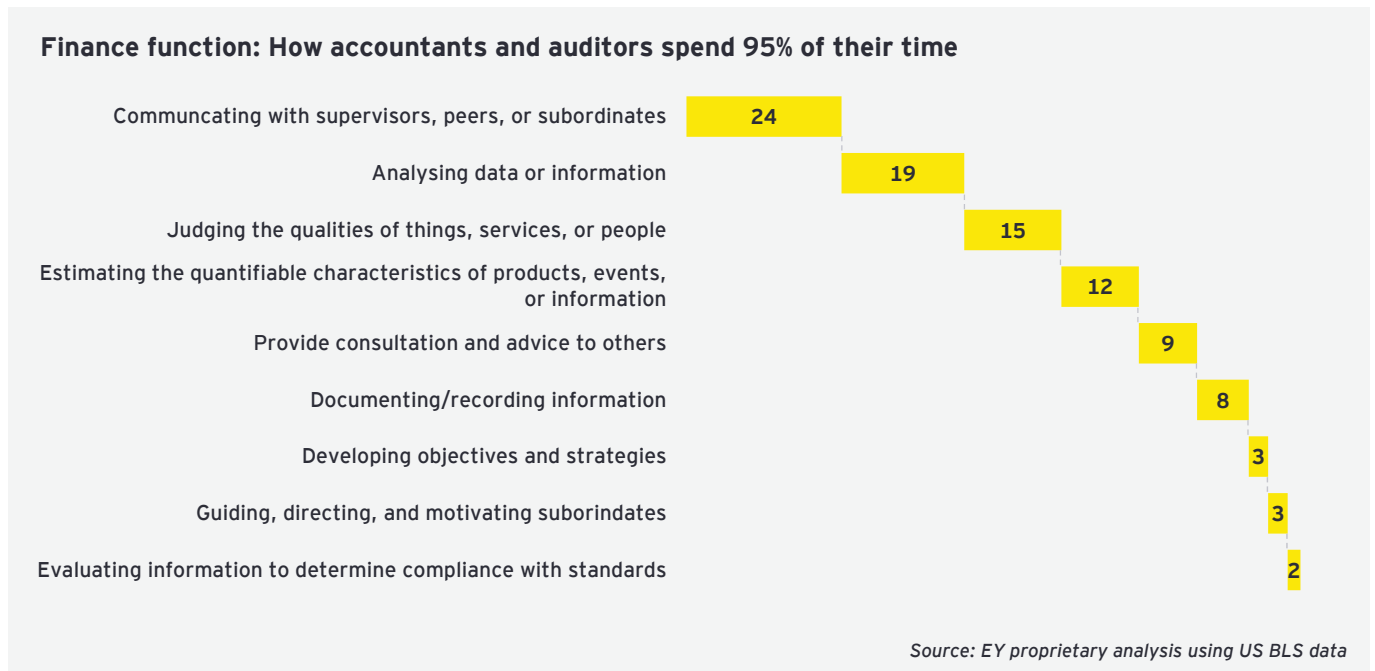
The potential to automate tasks differs by more than seven times between functions, as shown between finance (heavily rule-based, where 80% of tasks hold potential for automation) and learning and development (where 12% of tasks hold potential for automation). Below, the analysis shows the opportunities to automate in the finance function, down to the task level.



## 2. Analysis of jobs in the finance function indicates priority area for automation



### 3. Know what your people spend their time on; analyse time-use data to highlight opportunities through tasks



### Automation and the impact to talent

Whilst there are ample opportunities for organisations to automate manual and repetitive tasks, existing approaches to talent management and recruitment could create barriers for its rapid take up - delaying positive impacts.

In a recent EY survey, 87% of CEOs and business leaders said they would be investing in artificial intelligence (AI)<sup>9</sup>. In a separate study, 56% of senior leaders said they regard talent shortages as the single biggest barrier to implementing AI into their business operations<sup>10</sup>.

Overall, the direct impact to talent from automation will result in a significant change in the types of skills and abilities needed to perform the shift in human effort.

<sup>9</sup>How CEOs Can Prepare for the Unpredictable, EY, 2018

<sup>10</sup>The Future Workplace: How to Automate Intelligently, EY, 2018



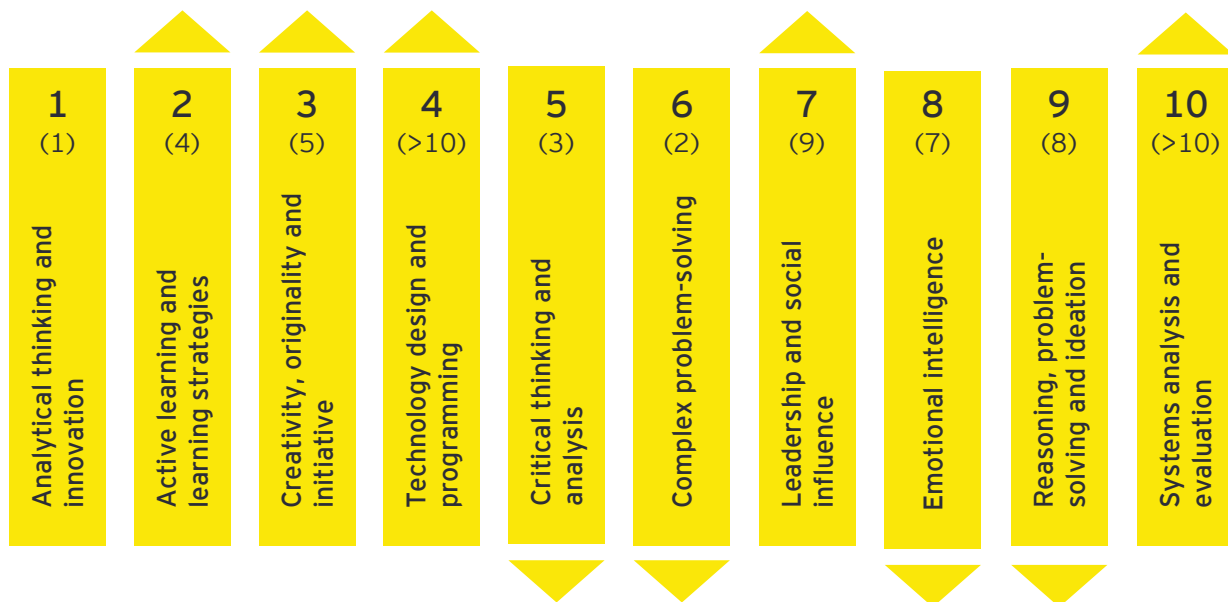
# Changes to skills

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs report, demonstrates how this change of skills, abilities and tasks, called competencies, is shifting as a result of automation, and more widely, labour force transformations to 2022.

The findings indicate across the board:

- ▶ Processing, manual, and transaction-type competencies such as coordination and time management, management of financial, material resources and reading, writing, math and active listening, are declining
- ▶ Creative, problem-solving, and social-type competencies such as analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, and creativity and initiative, are trending

Top 10 competency demand variance, all industries, 2018-2022

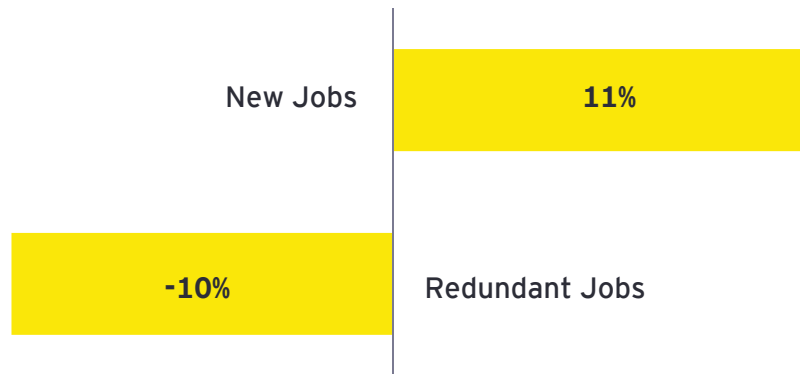


Key  
 N = 2022, Trending  
 (N) = 2018 Rating

Source: Future of Jobs Survey, World Economic Forum



## New and redundant jobs variance, all industries, 2018-2022



Source: Future of Jobs Survey, World Economic Forum

Alongside task-specific replacement and competency changes, jobs will become redundant and new roles will be created. Between 2018 and 2022, job losses will be offset by the creation of new jobs, however, these new jobs will demonstrate a significant shift in the quality, location, format and permanency required<sup>11</sup>.

### The re-skilling imperative

Based on the changes in jobs and competencies, it is estimated that:

- ▶ 54% of employees across industries will require significant re- and up-skilling<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ 38% of businesses expect to extend their workforce to new productivity-enhancing roles<sup>13</sup>

This change requires a focused organisational effort to re-train, up-skill and hire, however, this isn't simple. Re-training, up-skilling and hiring takes time, effort and resources. If not targeted correctly, it could stifle an organisation's ability to bridge the skills gap, and subsequently realise workforce augmentation.

This has meant organisations have taken non-traditional routes to bridge the skills gap by casting the talent net wider<sup>14</sup>; one example of this is the rise of neurodivergent hires<sup>15</sup>.

### Non-traditional routes to employment and bridging the skills gap

There are a range of specific strengths that organisations can seek to harness from neurodivergent hires and more broadly, neurodiverse teams. *The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic strengths and the changing world of work*, demonstrates how dyslexic strengths align to core work-related skills and abilities of the future; dyslexia provides an opportunity for organisations to capture a unique set of skills to bridge the skills gap.

<sup>11</sup>The Future of Jobs Report, The World Economic Forum, 2018 p.8 <sup>12</sup>p.ix <sup>13</sup>p.viii

<sup>14</sup>The Future Workplace: How to Automate Intelligently, EY, 2018

<sup>15</sup>Embracing Neurodiversity in the Workplace, CIPD, 2017

# What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia influences at least 1 in 10 people<sup>16</sup> and is a genetic difference<sup>17</sup> in an individual's ability to learn and process information. As a result, dyslexic individuals have differing abilities, with strengths in creative, problem-solving and communication skills and challenges with spelling, reading and memorising facts. Generally, a dyslexic cognitive profile will be uneven when compared to a neurotypical cognitive profile. This means that dyslexic individuals *really do* think differently.

There are specific skills that organisations can tap into from dyslexia as part of changes to jobs and tasks. To complement *The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic strengths and the changing world of work*, this report provides an updated view of the applicability of dyslexic strengths to organisations, mapping the Made By Dyslexia 'dyslexic thinking and general skills' framework to the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs 'comparing skills demand, 2018 vs 2022, top ten'<sup>18</sup> framework.



Source: *Connecting The Dots, Made By Dyslexia*

<sup>16</sup>Better Training, Better Teaching, Dyslexia International, 2014 p.2

<sup>17</sup>Connecting The Dots, Made By Dyslexia, 2017

<sup>18</sup>The Future of Jobs Report, The World Economic Forum, 2018 p.12

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# Competency mapping

## Exploration of an organisational dyslexic capability

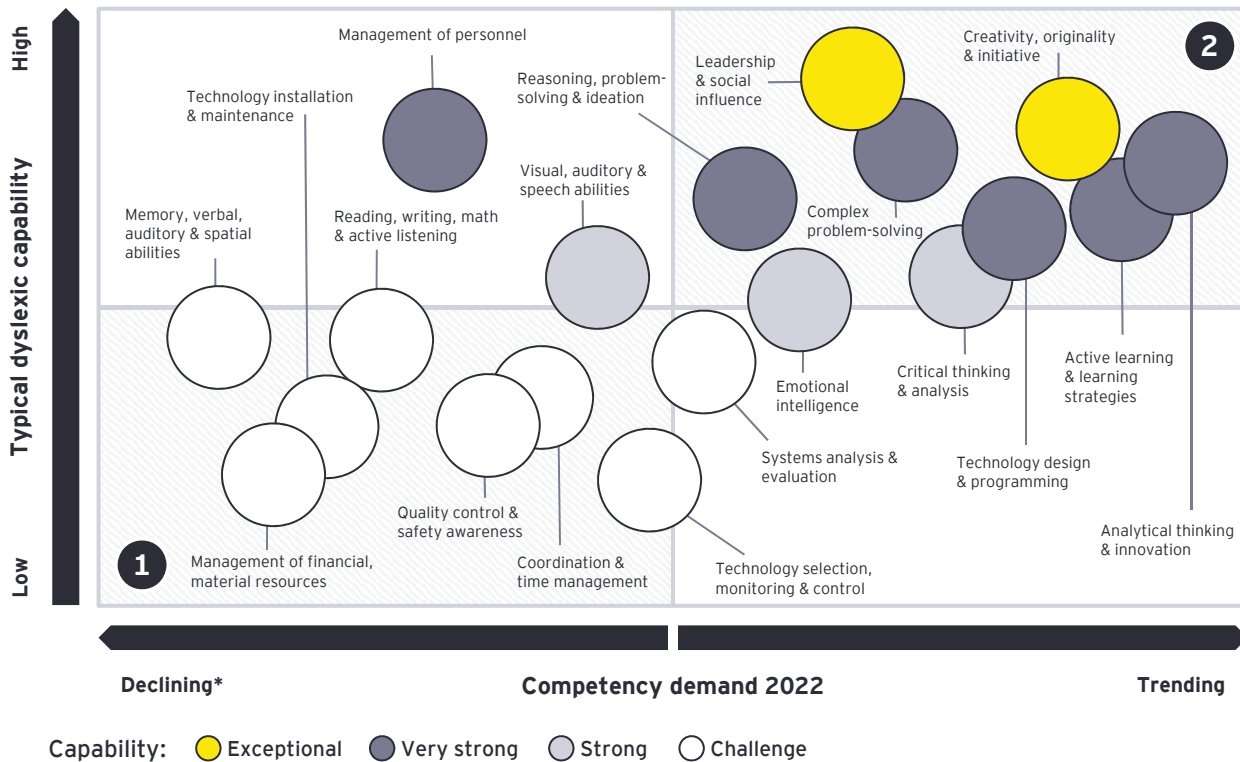
As explored in *The Value of Dyslexia: Dyslexic strengths and the changing world of work*, dyslexia can play a significant role in shaping the type of experience individuals can have in the workplace. However, for the purpose of this report we have taken an organisational view, of a typical dyslexic capability. This shows how organisations could bridge the skills gap, demonstrating the skills associations of both challenges and strengths to understand and appreciate the whole dyslexic profile.

Through a greater understanding and appreciation of the whole dyslexic profile, we hope to present solutions to working with individuals of neurodivergence more broadly.



# Dyslexia; an opportunity

Trending and declining competency demand and typical dyslexic capability association, all industries, 2022



Overall, mapping the top 10 trending and top 10 declining competencies against a typical dyslexic capability demonstrates how competencies in the workplace that dyslexic individuals may typically find challenging will largely be impacted by forms of automation; in their place, enhanced tasks and new roles will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking, specifically:

- 1 Declining demand for competencies such as reading skills, memory abilities, and coordination and time management, are associated with typical dyslexic challenges
- 2 Trending demand for competencies such as leadership and social influence, creativity and initiative, and analytical thinking and innovation, are associated with typical dyslexic strengths

To meet changes in demand to jobs, tasks and skills, and to fully adopt non-traditional approaches to hiring effectively, organisations should understand *where* to focus effort. This is needed to accommodate the challenges and strengths of dyslexia and to bridge the skills gap.

\*excludes manual dexterity, endurance and precision

# In the future, enhanced tasks and new roles will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking

## Top dyslexic strengths, trending competencies, all industries, 2022

At an aggregate level, there are various trending competencies that organisations can tap into from dyslexia.

### Exceptional

- ▶ Leadership and social influence
- ▶ Creativity, originality and initiative

### Very Strong

- ▶ Complex problem-solving
- ▶ Analytical thinking and innovation
- ▶ Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation
- ▶ Active learning and learning strategies
- ▶ Technology design and programming

### Strong

- ▶ Critical thinking and analysis
- ▶ Emotional intelligence

## Dyslexic strengths: skills, abilities and tasks, all industries, 2022

At an individual level, there are various skills, abilities and tasks that organisations can tap into from dyslexia.

### Skills

- Active learning
- Management of personnel
- Critical thinking
- Complex problem-solving
- Programming
- Systems analysis
- Active listening
- Writing
- Science
- Technology design
- Learning strategies

### Abilities

- Originality
- Spatial abilities
- Idea generation and reasoning abilities
- Visual abilities
- Perceptual abilities
- Quantitative abilities
- Verbal abilities

### Tasks

- Creativity
- Social influence
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Social orientation
- Autonomy
- Initiative
- Analytical thinking
- Responsibility
- Cooperation

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Attracting neurodiverse talent, including individuals with dyslexia, provides an opportunity for organisations to harness the fullest range of skills and perspectives. Our business looks to diversity of thought to remain competitive, continuously innovate and drive better business performance.

Justine Campbell, Managing Partner, Talent, EY UK&I

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# Organisational approaches to dyslexia

## Exploration of the organisational approach to dyslexia

To demonstrate the different approaches to dyslexia in the workplace and relative organisational effort, we've created a job, Job X, represented by a range of skills and abilities mapped against a typical dyslexic individual's cognitive skills profile.

From a skills perspective, this provides an example of how a traditional approach to dyslexia is typically executed in an organisation, alongside how a skills-based approach could be implemented, to provide a view of how dyslexic skills (and more broadly other cognitive profiles) could be aligned to particular value-adding jobs.

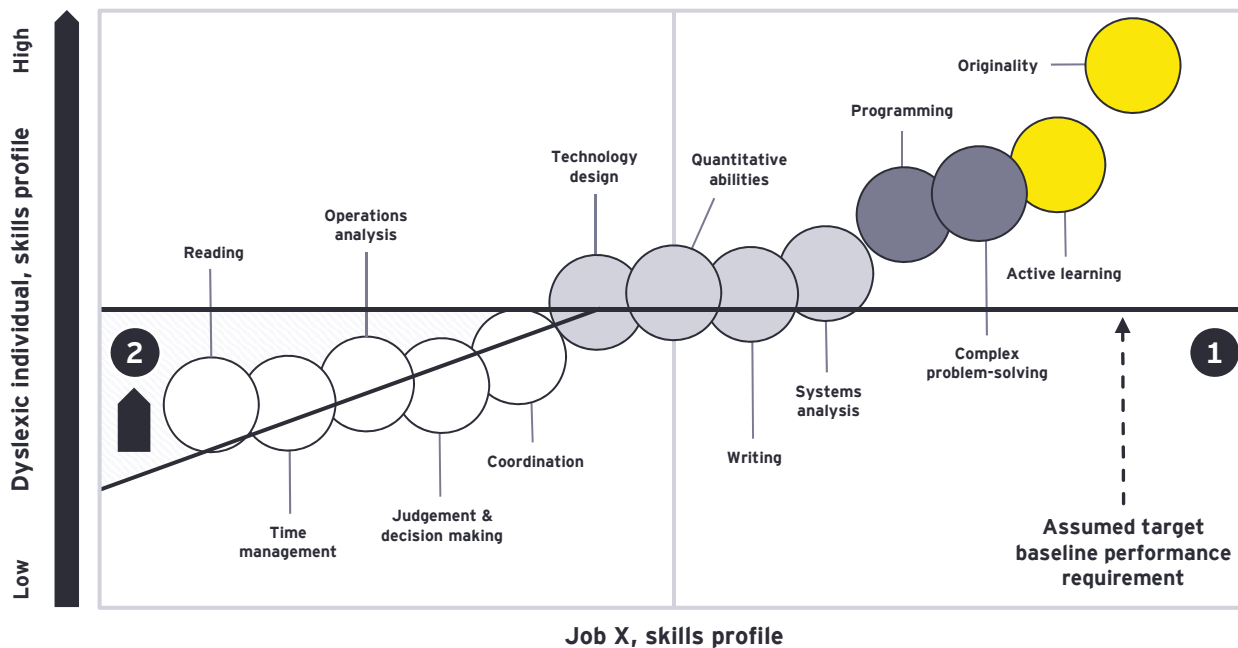
The approaches to dyslexia will vary significantly between organisations. This example serves as a demonstration, rather than an absolute representation of the current approach in the workplace.

Job X contains the following skills and abilities:

- ▶ Originality
- ▶ Active learning
- ▶ Complex problem-solving
- ▶ Programming
- ▶ Systems analysis
- ▶ Writing
- ▶ Quantitative abilities
- ▶ Technology design
- ▶ Coordination
- ▶ Judgement and decision making
- ▶ Operations analysis
- ▶ Time management
- ▶ Reading

# Organisational approaches to dyslexia

Traditional approach, Job X and a typical dyslexic profile, skills association, 2022



Capability: ● Exceptional ● Very strong ● Strong ○ Challenge

Mapping a typical dyslexic skills profile to Job X skills profile, with consideration for how a traditional approach to dyslexia is executed<sup>19</sup> from a skills perspective, shows how the approach:

- 1 Recognises a minimum baseline performance requirement across the job
- 2 Seeks to level the playing field through remediation of dyslexic challenges to reach baseline performance on the job

In a summarised view, the traditional approach typically directs effort at the remediation of dyslexic challenges, associated with achieving baseline performance on the job.

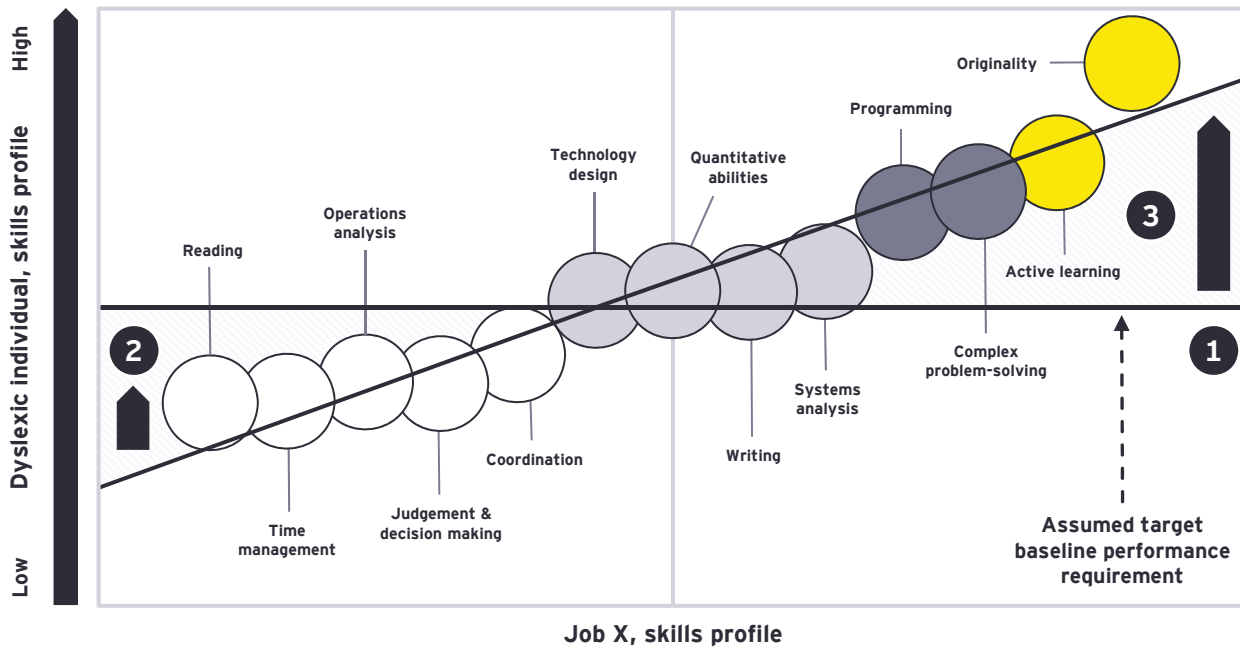
This organisational approach is well intended to support and facilitate dyslexic individuals in the workplace, however, this approach may not sufficiently direct the right organisational effort towards the whole dyslexic profile, that being typical dyslexic capability which could also exist above the job profiles' baseline performance requirement.

This effort could also be focusing effort on primarily a declining skills base, which could impact the ability for organisations to capture the value of dyslexic strengths, and therefore assist with bridging the skills gap.

<sup>19</sup>Disability and Employment, CIPD, 2018



## Skills-based approach, Job X and a typical dyslexic profile, skills association, 2022



Capability: ● Exceptional ● Very strong ● Strong ○ Challenge

Mapping a typical dyslexic skills profile to Job X skills profile, with consideration for an approach that focuses on the whole skills profile, shows how the approach:

- 1 Recognises a minimum baseline performance requirement across the job
- 2 Seeks to level the playing field through remediation of dyslexic challenges to reach baseline performance on the job
- 3 Identifies and targets above baseline performance to the job, associated with dyslexic strengths

In a summarised view, a skills-based approach, could allow organisations to re-focus effort toward recognising both the remediation of challenges, and the targeting of strengths which could exist above the job profiles' baseline performance requirement.

Overall, this organisational approach to 2022, could allow for the opportunity to refocus effort on trending skills associated with dyslexic strengths and assist with bridging the skills gap.

Observationally, when skills are understood at an individual level, the need to label individuals based on their capability, becomes irrelevant.



# Leading the way

The future organisation will look fundamentally different.

In the search for greater efficiencies, organisations are looking to automation as an opportunity. There are significant benefits that can come from replacing various routine and transaction-based tasks. This opportunity varies according to the business function, job and task.

Workforce augmentation, whereby automation can enhance and assist humans with performing various tasks, will become part of the normal routine, with a direct impact to organisational competencies, replacing processing, manual and transaction-type competencies, with that of creative, problem-solving, and social-type competencies at their core.

As part of this picture, dyslexia could help organisations bridge the skills gap; there are a range of trending competencies that dyslexic individuals demonstrate as key strengths; such as leadership and social influence, creativity and initiative, and analytical thinking and innovation.

Competencies in the workplace that dyslexic individuals may typically find challenging will largely be impacted by forms of automation; in their place, enhanced tasks and new roles will be created that match closely to the strengths of dyslexic thinking.

However, the traditional organisational approach for dyslexia is typically focused on challenge remediation. From a skills basis, there is potential to expand this approach to encompass the full dyslexic profile and the targeting of specific trending workplace skills. This could help with the potential realisation of dyslexic strengths in the workplace and bridging the skills gap.

CEOs and business leaders should now consider taking a skills-based approach and place it front and centre of the organisational strategic agenda, aligned to business value generation. There are three areas to focus effort:

## 1. Share best practice and insight

Firstly, share best practice and insight as the most immediate action. Specifically for dyslexia organisations should be asking:

- ▶ How does our existing approach to dyslexia need to change against this backdrop of rapid transformation?

## 2. Invest in clear automation and people strategies

Secondly, invest in a clear automation strategy targeted at organisational goals, and a people strategy that considers the cultural and skills needs of the organisation<sup>20</sup>; give clear line-of-sight to the technological potential available and the relative impact to jobs, tasks and skills, asking:

- ▶ Are we investing in the right places from an automation and skills perspective, and providing a psychologically safe environment to ensure time, effort and resources are focused on value?

## 3. Develop a neurodiverse capability

Finally, from a skills basis, seek to develop a neurodiverse capability that understands varying cognitive profiles; the alignment of automation, culture and neurodiversity could be the key to unlocking the value of dyslexia and the future organisation, asking:

- ▶ How great are gains to be had from harnessing neurodiverse teams that would unlock talent to ensure we have a diverse workforce that's fit for the future?

<sup>20</sup>The Future Workplace: How to Automate Intelligently, EY, 2018

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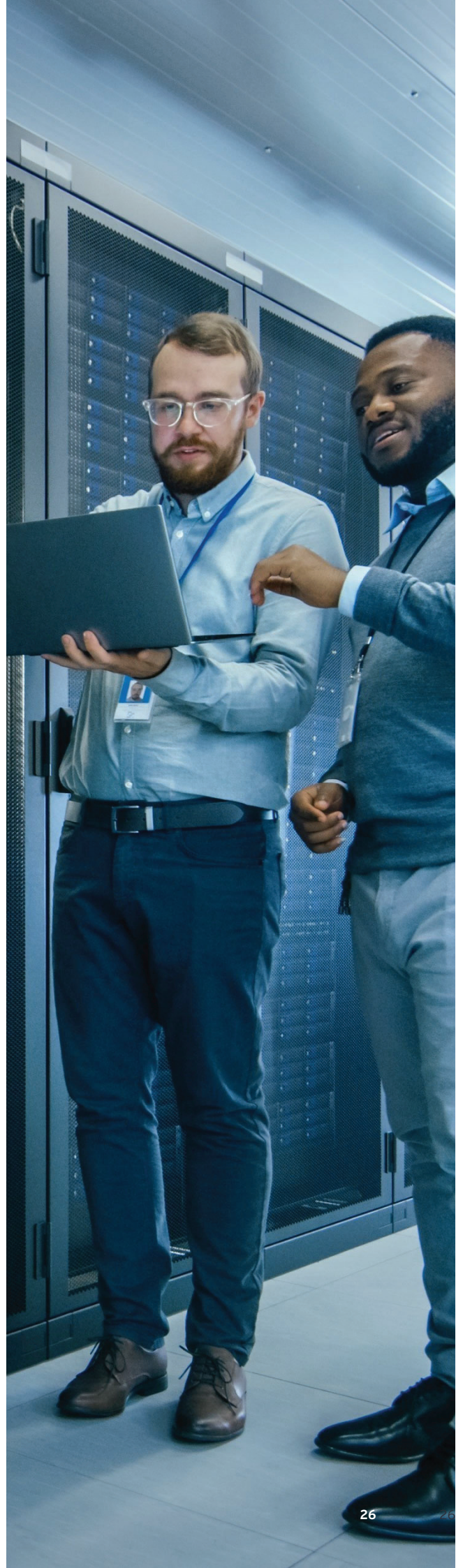
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