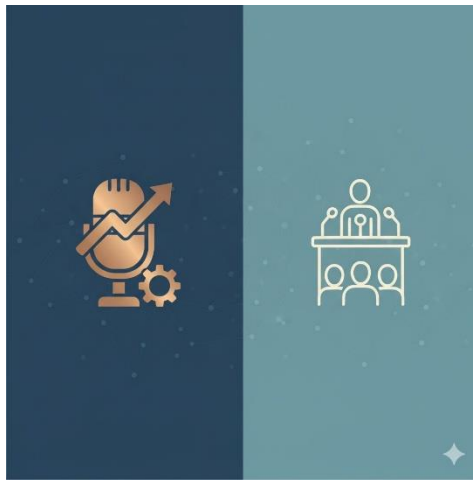




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Trinity Saint David
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Master of Business Administration International Business pathway



Contemporary employability skills

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Designing a Human Capital
Architecture for Strategic Renewal: A
Strategic Report for Helios Urban
Mobility

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1. Introduction

Helios Urban Mobility has some difficult human capital problems affecting strategic renewal, such as 54% employee engagement, high graduate attrition, and eight-month ramp-up times (Baraba and Gustomo, 2024). This report contributes to the creation of a strategic socialisation plan to ensure that the new employees become active and loyal organisational citizens, an innovative job design strategy for increasing intrinsic motivation and innovation, and a reflective plan based on AI decision support and personal capability development.

2. Task A: Socialisation, Identity & Business Activism

2.1 Critical Evaluation of Traditional Onboarding versus Strategic Organisational Socialisation

Onboarding programmes remain very transactional; the focus is on compliance with the administration and getting up to speed on the roles (Dickson and Isaiah, 2024). New hires are considered passive recipients of information; they fill out paperwork, learn the policies, and meet job requirements immediately. These are all administrative solutions to a problem and do not consider the psychological and identity aspects of organisational entry. The need for eight months to get new employees fully productive is quite evident in Helios Urban Mobility.

Strategic organisational socialisation is a paradigm shift. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) theorised socialisation as a planned process whereby newcomers move from outsiders to integrated insiders, noting that the first few weeks and months of entering the new work environment are a time of insecurity and the necessity to reduce stressful uncertainty (Tuttle, 2002). In their tactical approach, they differentiate between institutionalised and individualised socialisation strategies. Collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial and investiture can be considered to be different forms of institutionalised tactics, which help to minimise ambiguity and promote organisational commitment. Institutionalised socialisation is found to show a negative association with role ambiguity, stress symptoms and desire to quit and a positive association with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational identification.

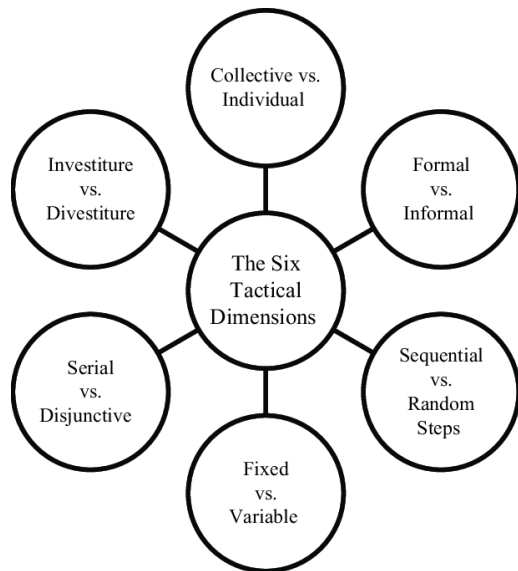


Figure 1: The Six Tactical Dimensions

Source: (Bengtson, Zepeda and Parylo, 2013)

Psychological contract theory provides further important perspectives. According to Rousseau (1995), the psychological contract is the individual's beliefs about the terms of the exchange agreement between the individual and the organisation (M.Rajalakshmi and B.Naresh, 2018). The psychological contract is formed in the socialisation process through pre-organisation experiences, recruitment promises and organisational communications (Iqbal, Tashfeen and Rizwan, 2023). Importantly, psychological contract fulfilment is linked to newcomer adjustment, whereas perceived breach has a profound impact on socialisation with consequences for trust, retention intentions and satisfaction. Traditional onboarding, which sees only a small amount of engagement before and after formal induction, does not take this psychological aspect into consideration.

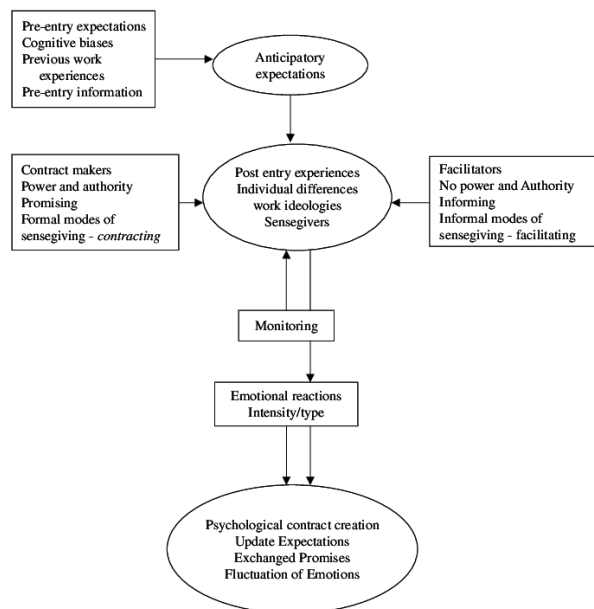


Figure 2: Psychological Contract Development Model

source: (Tomprou and Nikolaou, 2011)

Identity construction theory also helps to shed light on the limitations of the transactional approaches. New entrants do not only learn what their roles require, but they also actively build their organisational identity in interaction with socialising agents, in the interpretation of organisational culture and in their involvement in work relationships. Work relationships are a key source of social support and information, and are important for newcomer socialisation. This relational aspect is completely ignored in traditional onboarding, which focuses on procedural compliance.

Helios' approach is that the issue of the eight-month ramp-up will need to be resolved through a radical paradigm change from transactional onboarding to strategic, relational and psychologically informed onboarding, which will give clarity on role expectations and facilitate identity construction and psychological contract formation (de Oliveira Rodrigues-Marçulo and de Souza, 2026).

2.2 Structured Socialisation Framework for Helios

The proposed framework addresses Helios's particular difficulties in three steps:

Pre-boarding Phase (Offer Acceptance to Day One): This is an often-overlooked but crucial stage in forming a psychological contract. Helios should have: (1) a welcome portal with access to organisational culture content, team introduction and project overview; (2) Buddy assignment; the peer mentor should make first contact before the start date; (3) Pre-reading materials such as strategic documents, case studies and innovation showcases; (4) An onboarding app to complete administration and access socialisation

content. This stage is important because research on uncertainty reduction theory shows that information learned before entry has a significant impact on adjustment.

First 90 Days Phase (Encounter and Assimilation): Van Maanen argues that the most critical time for socialisation is the first 90 days (Tuttle, 2002), and that the following should be included: (1) a structured induction week of combined group and individual activities, such as leadership welcome, mission immersion, stakeholder introductions and technical orientation; (2) a 90-day plan for integration with structured learning objectives and milestone meetings; (3) check-ins carried out weekly involving manager and bi-weekly check-ins involving HR Business Partner; (4) social integration events and team-building activities; and (5) a reverse mentoring programme to pair a new employee with one or more senior leaders. Studies show that institutionalised strategies help with adjustment by providing clarity of roles and social acceptance.

Year One Phase (Role Management and Organisational Identification): This phase focuses on deepening commitment: (1) quarterly development conversations about career progression; (2) project rotation opportunities; (3) innovation showcase platforms; (4) socialisation pathway reviews at six and twelve months; and (5) a graduate development programme addressing the specific challenge of high-potential attrition. Career adaptability theory posits that career adaptability is related to extra-role behaviours and creativity among employees.

2.3 Mechanisms to Cultivate Identification, Ethical Professionalism, and Business Activism

Organisational Identification: Articulating a compelling organisational identity, Helios's mission to transform urban mobility with AI-enabled solutions, is accompanied by storytelling and sharing of narratives, symbolic management, employee voice mechanisms, and recognition of newcomer contributions. These interventions create psychological attachments and organisational membership.

Ethical Professionalism: Explicit ethical induction focusing on Helios' ethical framework and values, senior leaders setting the example for ethical decision-making, case studies on ethical dilemmas to develop reasoning skills, psychological safety to raise concerns, values-based performance evaluation and including ethical behaviour in assessment (Kabeyi, 2018). Together, these mechanisms establish the building blocks of an ethical infrastructure, which integrates the concept of integrity into the culture of the organisation, making professionalism not just a compliance issue, but a value of the organisation, lived at every level, and informing decision-making.

Business Activist Mindset: This mindset is commercial immersion, with client-facing team exposure, stakeholder engagement opportunities, innovation challenges that tackle strategic problems, and structured discussions on business strategy and financial

performance, all drawing on Ulrich's HR business partner evolution and stakeholder capitalism perspectives. The Stakeholder Capitalism view is that organisations generate value for multiple stakeholders, not just shareholders, and thus the business activist needs to learn how human capital can contribute to value creation across the stakeholder ecosystem (Ifeoma, Onyeke and Iloka, 2024).

3. Task B: Innovative Job Design for Intrinsic Motivation and Innovation

3.1 Innovative Job Design Strategy Integrating JCM, Job Crafting, and Skills-Based Architecture

Helios must find a balance between motivating current employees to become more internally motivated and ensuring the innovation needed to renew the company. Fixed roles and responsibilities are not enough for a mobility start-up where agility and creativity are key in the context of AI. The proposed strategy is a combination of the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), Job Crafting Theory and Skills-Based Architecture to develop a dynamic and motivating work environment.

Job Characteristics Model Application

Hackman and Oldham's (1976) JCM postulates that five key job characteristics affect psychological states and, in turn, work outcomes (Bukth and Fatima, 2024). The job characteristics need to be systematically improved. The skill variety will be provided through cross-functional project rotation, which will enable employees to gain a variety of skills in both technical and commercial aspects. Task identity will be promoted through offering whole projects from conception to implementation and allowing employees to feel meaningful to the project. Task significance will be expressed by making clear the relationship between individual tasks and the outcomes of sustainable urban mobility, strengthening purpose and impact. Empowered decision-making within clear boundaries will be used to incorporate autonomy, allowing discretion to be given to employees. Feedback will be given via real-time performance data and through structured feedback, allowing for continuous improvement. All these improvements are geared towards solving the motivational issues that Helios faces with its engagement rate.

Core Job Characteristic	Helios Application
Skill Variety	Cross-functional project rotation; exposure to different technical and commercial domains

Task Identity	Ownership of complete project cycles from conception to implementation
Task Significance	Articulating how individual work contributes to sustainable urban mobility outcomes
Autonomy	Empowered decision-making within defined parameters
Feedback	Real-time performance data and structured feedback mechanisms

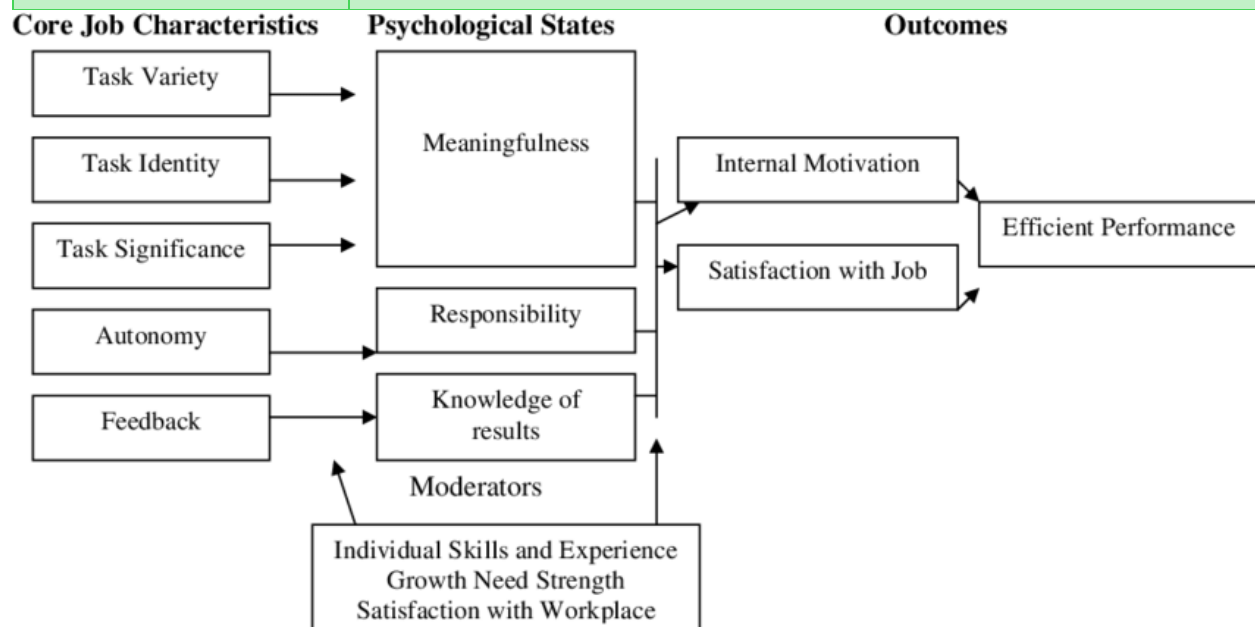


Figure 3: Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model

source: (Mayrowetz *et al.*, 2007)

Job Crafting Theory Integration

Job crafting theory is based on the premise that workers have the discretion to redesign their jobs in ways that play to their strengths, interests, and values. Wrzesniewski & Dutton's Job Identity Model has three dimensions of crafting (Olson and Shultz, 2019). Task crafting is the process of altering the content and/or boundaries of tasks to allow workers to focus on areas of work that are most important to them. Relational crafting involves altering relationships and interactions in the workplace to encourage more motivating relationships. Cognitive crafting means changing the way work is thought of and understood, allowing staff to see the value of their work.

The Job Demands-Resources model also identifies increasing job resources (structural and social), decreasing hindering demands, and increasing challenging demands

(Roczniewska and Wojciszke, 2021). Job crafting helps Helios' employees to proactively design their work to be more intrinsically motivating and innovative. Helios can help to solve the engagement issues revealed in the latest survey by enabling employees to redesign their work.

Skills-Based Architecture and Internal Talent Marketplaces

Traditional Job Design is based on the concept of fixed roles with prescribed responsibilities. A skills-based architecture, on the other hand, builds work on capabilities and competencies, which allows flexibility and responsiveness. A study of internal talent marketplaces provides evidence of the potential of technology to facilitate self-initiated talent management, where employees are able to discover, develop and proactively manage their talents (Sakka, Ghadi and Goldman, 2022)

A skills-based architecture for Helios includes the following: skills inventory, a comprehensive mapping of employee skills, capabilities, and interests; skills-based project allocation, matching employees to projects based on their skills, development needs and preferences; a technology platform called an internal talent marketplace that allows employees to identify projects and express interest; skills development pathways, structured programmes to develop in-demand capabilities; and skills recognition and credentialing a formal validation of skills development.

Internal talent marketplaces provide an opportunity for self-initiated talent management, allowing employees to try out and shape their work personas as they evolve with needs and desires. This is in line with Helios' agility and innovation requirements.

The integrated approach involves both the structured approach of job enrichment by JCM and the recognition of the proactive employee agency of Job crafting, along with the flexible talent management of skills-based architecture. This blend is especially suitable for a multi-national, innovation-driven company where fixed job roles would hinder flexibility and innovation.

3.2 Stimulating Intrinsic Motivation and Supporting Innovation

Intrinsic Motivation

This strategy has multiple motivational aspects and encourages intrinsic motivation. Autonomy and empowerment, which are facilitated by skills-based architecture and job crafting, allow workers to influence their work and meet the basic psychological need for autonomy as described in Self-Determination Theory. Task significance in JCM and cognitive crafting are the aspects that recognise the need for purpose and contribution in meaningful work. By developing their competence through mastery and growth, skills development pathways and project rotation allow for continuous learning. Relational crafting and internal talent marketplaces help to create relatedness, which helps to meet

the need for social connection (Çınar and Basım, 2022). Self-determination, which is a combination of autonomy and skills-based opportunities, provides employees with an opportunity to own their career development.

The results of the research show positive relationships between job crafting and personal resources, as well as job crafting and career adaptability, which show a positive relationship with work engagement and proactivity. Helios' engagement issues are directly addressed by employees redesigning their jobs to fit with their strengths and interests, which results in greater meaning, satisfaction and involvement.

Innovation Support

There are a variety of mechanisms to support innovation. Job crafting and skills-based architecture foster psychological safety to allow employees to try and try again without fearing failure. Cross-functional project rotation creates cognitive diversity and thus creates a variety of ideas for problem-solving. The internal talent marketplaces and project allocation facilitate knowledge sharing, which helps transfer knowledge across teams. Job crafting allows for creative autonomy, which means that employees are more likely to solve problems in a way that makes use of their specific skills (Afnek and Khadem, 2026). Challenge and stimulation (focusing on skill variety and task significance in JCM) bring about mental stimulation and thus innovation.

The serial mediation model, which posits job crafting to be a mediator for the link between career adaptability and creativity, is especially applicable. People who shape their jobs create career adaptability resources which help them to propose innovative solutions to problems in the organisation.

This virtuous cycle is realised for Helios by the combination of JCM, job crafting and skills-based architecture: enriched job design, job crafting, career adaptability, innovation, new job opportunities and further job crafting. It is an active approach to tackling the challenges and developing the capability for strategic renewal of Helios.

4. Task C: Reflective Report

4.1 AI as a Decision-Support Tool without Eroding Critical Human Judgement

AI can revolutionise Human Capital Management by providing better data analysis, predictions and decision-making support. But when it comes to HR decision-making, there is a need to pay attention to the critical human judgment aspect (Agwu, 2026).

AI has also been demonstrated to be effective and efficient in analysing structured data that can be utilised for technical competency assessment and workforce analytics for

prediction. AI can handle mundane tasks, identify patterns in employee data, and make suggestions for talent identification and development. But AI can't go far without humans and soft skills like emotional intelligence, adaptability, and cultural fit. Algorithmic methods can be used to quantify subjective qualities, but these would likely be biased, or contextually nuanced subjective qualities may not be captured. Amazon isn't the only company to get things wrong, such as the biased recruitment tool, which demonstrates how discrimination can be inadvertently perpetuated by using historical data.

A hybrid evaluation model that combines AI-led analytics with human judgement is the right way to go. The use of AI must be limited to decision support and not replace the evaluative human capability by delivering data, insights and recommendations. It is crucial that algorithmic transparency, human oversight, bias mitigation and ethical governance frameworks, such as the EU AI Act, are put in place to prevent unfair and unaccountable outcomes in this model (Kenzie, 2024).

To identify talent, to predict performance and map skills, AI can be a valuable asset, but Helios needs to take into account the human element, including cultural fit, leadership potential, adaptability, etc. HR professionals need to achieve a level of AI literacy to critically assess the outputs of AI systems, stay sceptical when AI systems make recommendations, build their own professional judgement through experience and reflection, balance the data-driven aspects of AI with understanding the context, and consider the ethical implications of using AI (Naoum, Szakadáti and Balogh, 2026).

4.2 Personal Capability Development Plan

As HR decision-making is becoming more AI-driven, so must the personal capabilities. The following plan responds to the following areas of capability.

- **Data Literacy:** Complete CIPD Data and Analytics for HR within 6 months; Become proficient in Power BI and Tableau within 8 months; Do a data analytics project in the current job within 12 months.
- **AI Augmentation in HR:** Certification in Complete AI for HR Professionals in 9 months, webinars and workshops on AI in HRM, and AI deployment projects with tech teams.
- **Strategic Influencing Skills:** Take a strategic influencing and stakeholder management course, get mentored by senior HR Business Partners, work on projects that require influencing, and get immersed in business.
- **Global Mobility Awareness:** Research employment laws in Helios' locations (London, Berlin, Singapore); have contact with colleagues in international locations; consider CIPD International HR qualifications; volunteer to take up an international project/secondment opportunity.

This development plan helps to bridge the gap between operational HR and strategic human capital management, ensuring effective AI utilisation without compromising on human judgment and professional skill.

5. Conclusion

Human capital is the key to Helios Urban Mobility's strategic renewal. The socialisation framework proposed takes care of the ramp-up challenges and builds organisational identification, ethical professionalism and business activism. Intrinsic motivation and innovation are stimulated by the integrated job design strategy. Together with AI-powered decision-making and individual capability development, these interventions help propel Helios to maintain its edge in the AI mobility market.

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