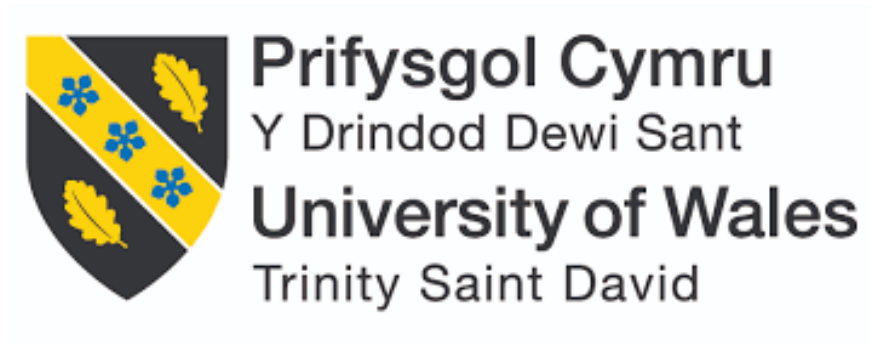




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Table of Contents

Part 1: Option 3 – Designing the Talent Ecosystem	3
1. The Current Talent Ecosystem in the Technology Industry	3
2. Strategic Build vs Buy Talent Model to Attract and Retain Employees	7
2.1 Build vs Buy Talent Strategy	7
2.2 Mentorship Programmes	8
2.3 Leadership Development Pathways	8
2.4 Lifelong Learning and Continuous Skill Development	9
Part 2: Reflection.....	10
2.1 Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle: Learning Journey	10
2.2 Reflection on AI and Future Career	12
Reference list	14

Part 1: Option 3 – Designing the Talent Ecosystem

1. The Current Talent Ecosystem in the Technology Industry

The global technology sector has undergone a significant change in its talent ecosystem, with organisations relying more on the highly skilled human capital to achieve innovation and maintain competitive advantage (Chaudhuri et al., 2022). A talent ecosystem is a network of employees, the external labor market, learning system, development programs, and organizational practices that enable each other to attract, develop, and retain talent (Shan and Wang, 2024). In knowledge-based industries like technology, employees are strategic resources since organisational success relies much on their technical knowledge, creativity, and ability to come up with new solutions (Dinu et al., 2023).

The largest technology companies such as Microsoft have developed massively organized talent systems, which have combined workforce planning, recruitment approaches as well as internal development programmes. A report by Source India (2025) indicates that Microsoft has put about three billion dollars in India to finance the process of employee reskilling and innovation by expanding cloud and AI infrastructure. These projects reveal that the large tech companies are reinforcing their own talent pipelines due to the fast digitalization.

Microsoft announces US \$3bn investment over two years in India cloud and AI infrastructure to accelerate adoption of AI, skilling and innovation

January 7, 2025 | Source India



Microsoft chairman and CEO, Satya Nadella, on stage at the Microsoft AI Tour in Bengaluru where he announced US \$3 billion investment in India for cloud and AI infrastructure over the next two years.

Figure 1: Microsoft Investment to Accelerate Innovation for Talent Enhancement

(Source: Source India, 2025)

On the same note, the tech firm Meta has established their talent ecosystem to enhance the growth of artificial intelligence. In order to encourage responsible innovation, the organisation has launched over 700 AI safety, governance, ethics, and data protection sessions (Dinu et al., 2023). These endeavors are designed to prepare the employees and developers with the knowledge and responsible practices needed to develop transparent and trustworthy AI systems. But the mid-sized technology companies like Aether Innovations have a more difficult time establishing similarly strong talent systems. Although major multinational companies are able to invest in global recruitment and development programmes, small companies are often faced with excessive turnover of employees, a lack of internal development framework, and the inability to attract highly qualified professionals (Zaidan and Ibrahim, 2024). Thus, companies such as Aether

Innovations should come up with strategic talent management to keep abreast with the global technological labour market.

Meta AI chief Alexandr Wang praises India's AI startup ecosystem, credits country's 'talent pool'

Alexandr Wang of Meta highlighted India's rapid emergence in AI, citing its vast talent pool and thriving startup ecosystem. At the India AI Impact Summit 2026, he said India has surpassed traditional tech hubs in specific AI sectors.

Figure 2: Talent Pool Infrastructure in Meta

(Source: Gain, 2026)

The global lack of digital skills is one of the most critical features of the contemporary technology talent ecosystem (Liang and Xing, 2024). It is estimated that in the coming five years, 44% of the core skills of workers will vary, with the booming technological innovation in different sectors (Avni 2025). Such a sudden change has led to a deficit in professionals trained in such fields as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and software engineering. Nonetheless, the pool of skilled specialists has not been able to sustain the rising demand (Applify, 2024).

Additionally, Deloitte (2024) states that over 70 percent of organisations across the globe believe that talent shortages and skills gaps are some of the biggest business risks, especially in digital industries. This scenario further heightens the rivalry between technology firms in the quest to hire and keep talent. Technology experts can get a variety of job offerings and switch organisations quite often to get a better career opportunity (George, 2023). The lecture notes of Week 3 indicate that organisations need to examine the internal capacity as well as external labour market conditions in order to determine the gaps in skills and predict future demands on the workforce. In the case of an organisation like Aether innovations, workforce planning is of special concern since it has to be able to compete with significantly larger technology firms. Consequently, the

organisation will have to put in more effort to recruitment strategy, and staff development programs (Abbasi et al., 2022).

One more significant technology talent ecosystem area is continuous learning and professional development. The fact is that technological knowledge is changing fast, so the workers should constantly refresh their skills to be productive and innovative. To elaborate, Amazon has invested 700,000 employees in a reskilling programme worth 2.5 billion USD to offer the employees skills in new technological domains like cloud computing and machine learning (Amazon, 2026).

Also, Week 5 lecture notes underline the necessity of establishing learning cultures that make employees keep on updating their skills. In the case of Aether Innovations, the structured development programmes would greatly assist in enhancing employee engagement and lower the turnover rate by giving the employees a clear chance to grow professionally.

In general, the technology talent ecosystem is marked by high competition for skilled professionals and fast technological evolution. Through analysis of practices of major technology firms and adjusting them to its organisational situation, Aether Innovations will be able to create a robust talent system to facilitate innovation and recruit highly-talented staff.

Our Upskilling Programs

We want to make it easy for employees to develop their skills to grow their careers. More than 700,000 employees globally have participated in our free education and skills training programs since 2019. We've also invested hundreds of millions of dollars to provide free cloud computing skills training to millions of people around the world with programs for the public.



Figure 3: Reskilling for Amazon

(Source: Amazon, 2026)

2. Strategic Build vs Buy Talent Model to Attract and Retain Employees

2.1 Build vs Buy Talent Strategy

Aether Innovations needs to have a strategic build versus buy talent model to help reinforce its talent ecosystem and resolve several challenges, including staff attrition and a lack of innovation. This model assists organisations in making decisions on whether they have to buy experienced professionals on the external labour market or build them internally through training and development programs (build). The combination of the two strategies is especially crucial to the technology companies that are working in the very competitive labour markets.

The usefulness of this strategy can be attributed to the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm. Resource-Based View proposes that organisations gain sustainable competitive advantage by creating important and hard-to-copy resources (Lubis et al., 2026). Human capital is one of the most important organisational assets since employees are well-skilled in their respective fields with specific knowledge, technical skills and creative abilities that

are hard to duplicate by the competitors (Armstrong and Taylor, 2023). Thus, to enhance the performance of organisations and remain competitive in the long run, it is necessary to develop human capital at Aether Innovations.

The buy strategy aims at attracting highly skilled professionals in the external labour market to address the critical skill gaps promptly. The organisations in the technology sector have frequently needed specific knowledge in fields like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and sophisticated software engineering (Joao et al., 2023). With the help of hiring skilled employees, Aether Innovations will be able to instantly enhance technical abilities and become quicker with innovation.

This is a common approach of leading technology companies like Microsoft and Meta, who hire seasoned engineers, data scientists, and technology experts from universities and other competing organisations (Mayer et al., 2025). In the case of Aether Innovations, such an approach would enable the organisation to recruit high-potential employees who can introduce new perceptions, technical skills, and innovative ideas.

2.2 Mentorship Programmes

Structured mentorship programmes are one of the most effective methods that will help Aether Innovations develop internal talent. Mentorship is when senior employees coach and assist the junior professionals in their career progress (Hryshchenko et al., 2025). This strategy helps organisations to share knowledge, acquire technical skills, and establish more professional relations at the workplace.

Mentorship programmes are also supported by Social Learning Theory, which implies that people develop new behaviours and skills when they observe and interact with more experienced people (Astrove and Kraimer, 2022). Mentorship enables employees in the junior ranks to acquire on-the-job experience, learn organisational operations, and acquire problem solving skills in technology organisations (Lawani, 2025). In the case of Aether Innovations, mentorship can be influential in enhancing employee engagement and retention.

2.3 Leadership Development Pathways

A build strategy can play an important role to play in ensuring that Aether Innovations creates clear leadership development pathways. High-potential employees are motivated by career development and more responsibilities (Kehoe, Collings, and Cascio, 2022). In

case organisations fail to offer proper promotion opportunities, employees can end up moving to organisations offering good career opportunities. Leadership development programmes provide employees with systematic ways of advancing into managerial and strategic positions (Avolio and Drummey, 2023). Such programmes usually provide exposure to leadership, cross-functional project work and exposures to strategic thinking. Week 6 lecture notes indicate that to achieve stability in the long term, organisations ought to have succession pipelines that will bring more future leaders. In case of Aether innovations, leadership development programs will allow them to retain the talented employees as well as to equip them as future leaders of the organisation.

2.4 Lifelong Learning and Continuous Skill Development

Lifelong learning is one of the fundamental elements of the build strategy of Aether Innovations. Technological innovation is a fast-paced industry, and, therefore, staff need to constantly upgrade their competencies to be efficient in their positions (Li, 2022). Organisational learning is improved when organisations promote constant learning, which is more likely to help them to keep up with the changes in technology and hold on to a highly skilled workforce (Vizjak, Paulisic, and Misevic, 2024).

Aether innovations can enhance lifelong learning by making online learning channels, technical qualifications, and professional development programmes available to employees. Such initiatives enable employees to gain knowledge on new technologies like artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and data analytics.

According to the lecture notes of Week 5, organisations need to establish learning cultures that promote continuous professional development. As they have a chance to acquire new skills, employees will become more motivated and involved in their work (Geopani et al., 2024). Furthermore, having strong learning opportunities also means that Aether Innovations can become a reliable employer in the competitive technology labour market.

Part 2: Reflection

2.1 Gibbs' Reflective Cycle: Learning Journey



Figure 4: Gibbs Reflective Model

(Adapted from Gibbs, 1988)

Description

In the Human Capital Management module (LCMB7023), I learnt the different HR strategies, workforce planning, talent management approaches, and organisational development approaches. The module merged both theoretical material and practical case studies, such as workforce design, talent ecosystems, and how learning and development can be used to encourage innovation. I learnt the impacts of having an effective human capital management through lectures, discussions, and assessment activities like designing the Aether Innovations HR strategy on organisational performance. As well, I have understood how important organisational culture and employee involvement are to the functioning of high-performing teams.

Feelings

First, I was devastated by the scope of HR concepts and strategic choices to be made in managing talent in complex organisations. I was especially worried about the application of abstract theories of the Resource-Based View, Social Learning Theory, and Strategic HRM into real-life situations. Nevertheless, I started to value the need to combine theory and practice as I studied lecture materials and case studies. The process of planning a talent ecosystem in Aether Innovations made me feel that I have achieved something since I was able to envision how the strategies, such as mentorship, career paths, life-long learning, and performance feedback loops, could be turned into a reality. I also became more confident in my ability to relate theoretical information to the practical interventions in HR.

Evaluation

The module was extremely effective in showing my strengths and areas of weakness in my knowledge. On the positive side, I gained more appreciation for workforce planning, talent acquisition, and development strategies. The practical applicability of theories that were presented in the classroom in relation to a mid-sized technology company like Aether Innovations was made evident through these concepts. On the other hand, I also realised that I initially underestimated the complexity of the implementation of HR strategies in a dynamic technology environments and especially striking a balance between external recruitment and internal capability development. The reflection enabled me to realise that human capital management requires strategic alignment, allocation of resources, consideration of organisational culture, and constant monitoring to make changes to the interventions according to the changing business needs.

Analysis

With the help of the framework developed by Gibbs, I studied how the module has influenced my perception of methods of learning and development. As an illustration, high-potential employees can be developed through mentorship programmes and leadership pathways, and retention encouraged, which is in line with Social Learning Theory (Lestari, 2023). On the same note, a decision in reskilling and lifelong learning reflects Human Capital Theory, which underlines that employee training is a plus to organisational performance (Amayreh and Arshad, 2024). The module also helped to

reaffirm the need to create an innovative and growth mentality culture that is essential towards keeping up with the swiftly evolving technological environments. The combination of theory and practical tasks helped me to conceptualise the way learning and development initiatives assist in individual and organisational development. Additionally, I realised that alignment of HR strategy with organisational goals is a sustainability and long-term assurance strategy.

Conclusion

The module has equipped me with a good foundation in planning my personal and professional development plan. I have also learned to combine the strategic HR ideas with continuous learning to develop a growth mindset. The ideas of talent ecosystems, workforce planning, and leadership development have helped me become more critical about the assessment of organisational requirements and matching them to the individual development programs. Notably, the module has highlighted that human capital strategies cannot be fixed and that they have to be constantly evaluated, modified, and stakeholders involved so that they do not go out of date or become irrelevant in the changing workplaces.

Action Plan

Going forward I will be more organized in my personal learning and development. This will include the establishment of both short and long term targets, mentoring of old professionals, cross functional projects and attending of continuing professional education courses. I will also be working on the growth mindset through introspection, feedback, and seeing problems as learning opportunities. Moreover, I will keep track of my progress in terms of quantifiable results and change the development strategies in accordance with new discoveries and experiences. Such measures will allow me to develop the skills needed to make a positive contribution to innovative HR practices and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement in the future.

2.2 Reflection on AI and Future Career

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is gradually able to do this, including data analysis, payroll processing, and even predictive workforce planning, which are performed by humans (Vrontis et al., 2023). When AI is used as a sign of efficiency and accuracy, it also brings up the issue of job loss in the HR and management processes (Murugesan et al., 2023).

I understand that to be relevant, I need to be concentrated on those spheres where human judgment, creativity, and emotional intelligence are important, and AI fails to reproduce these skills. To give an illustration, mentoring workers, building organisational culture, and designing strategic workforce programmes demand subtle knowledge, compassion, and interpersonal skills.

Meanwhile, AI will be able to support my work by supplying automatic routine processes, analysing HR data to detect skill shortages, and offering predictive results to managerial teams. The use of AI tools will enable me to invest more in strategic decision-making and employee interaction. Moreover, responsible adoption of AI will need to be mindful of ethical factors, data security, and prejudice reduction to have fair and transparent HR practices. The possibility of incorporating AI in my work process allows for increasing productivity and precision without reducing the humanity of HR management.

As a strategy to make my career future-proof, I would develop both technical and soft skills. This consists of being knowledgeable of AI applications, data analytics, and emerging HR technologies, and being well-rounded in leadership, communication, and problem-solving. AI as an assistant but not a substitution will allow me to make more efficient decisions, but allow the strategic human capital decisions to be made based on ethical judgment, organisational values, and innovation. Another goal I have is to keep up with the changing trends in AI and be a part of the debate on the responsible use of AI in HR, so that I can strike the right balance between the use of technology and human-focused management practices.

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