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PUTTING TRUST TO WORK

**Decoding Organizational DNA: Trust, Data and
Unlocking Value in the Digital Workplace**

 **INTO
THE NEW**

Businesses are waking up to a rich new source of growth: vast amounts of data on work and the workforce that have the power to unlock the true potential of their people. This new data can unleash higher levels of business performance—including greater agility, productivity, innovation and growth—as well as improve the lives of employees.

But collecting data—from a range of sources such as wearable devices, work applications and smart sensors—carries risks. The misuse of data could compromise privacy or individual rights. It could result in incorrect decisions or a misapplication of skills. Ultimately, it could result in losing the trust of employees.

Our research reveals that

62%

of businesses are using new technologies and sources of workforce data extensively,

but only 30%

of business leaders are very confident that their organization is using the data in a highly responsible way.

The good news, however, is that although employees have their concerns, they are overwhelmingly in favor of the practice if data is collected responsibly and in ways that benefit them.

92%

of employees are open to the collection of data on them and their work in exchange for an improvement in their productivity, their wellbeing or other benefits.

12.5%

revenue growth at stake. The difference in growth rates between losing and earning employee trust through the use of workforce data. It equates to U.S.\$3.1 trillion globally.



As people interact with intelligent machines, they leave an ever-expanding digital trail of data in the workplace that can help businesses understand the quality of an employee's work, the way they collaborate and how they are best engaged. Such data can be combined with other sets of information to give a vivid and real-time picture of the workforce—from the quality of a developer's software code, to the accuracy of a reporter's news article, to the efficiency of a courier's route.

Armed with this data, CEOs can improve business performance. Of the 1,400 C-level business leaders we surveyed across 13 countries, 91 percent recognize that new technologies and sources of workplace data can be used to unlock value that is currently "trapped" in the enterprise. But many are struggling to achieve that.

While more than half of organizations are using these technologies and data to a large or significant extent, most have yet to put in place the right frameworks, practices and systems to ensure that they use this data in a responsible, ethical and truly human way. Less than

one-third of leaders are very confident that their organization uses workplace data responsibly.

That may be largely due to the concerns of their people, many of whom harbor serious misgivings about fairness, ethics, personal privacy and the impact on society. For example: will employers use the data the right way? Will employers "spy" on their every move? Will the data collected about them accurately represent their performance—or turn them into a commodity or a mere number? Will algorithms in the workplace perpetuate bias?

It's no surprise that, if employees believe their organization is not responsibly using new technologies and workplace data in a way that

builds trust, 63 percent of the 10,000 we surveyed would refuse to give permission for their data to be collected on themselves or their work.

But in fact, 92 percent are open to the collection of data on them and their work in exchange for an improvement in their productivity, their wellbeing or other benefits. In particular, they are keen to exchange data for customized compensation and rewards and more personalized learning and development opportunities.

This finding presents an opportunity for business leaders to proactively engage with their people as they develop workforce data strategies. However, we have found that some companies are moving too fast and taking risks that are dangerous for their business. Others are moving too slowly and risk leaving value on the table.

If companies build trust in the workforce, they will create value—for the business and individuals. Our research has identified the factors of workforce data practices that employees say most influence their level of trust

in their employers, and have modeled these to reveal the financial impact of failing to decode organizational DNA responsibly.

If businesses adopt irresponsible data strategies, they risk losing more than 6 percent of future revenue growth. (See *Figure on page 6*).

But if they adopt responsible strategies that elevate employees' confidence in them, the trust dividend would be worth more than a 6 percent increase in future revenue growth.

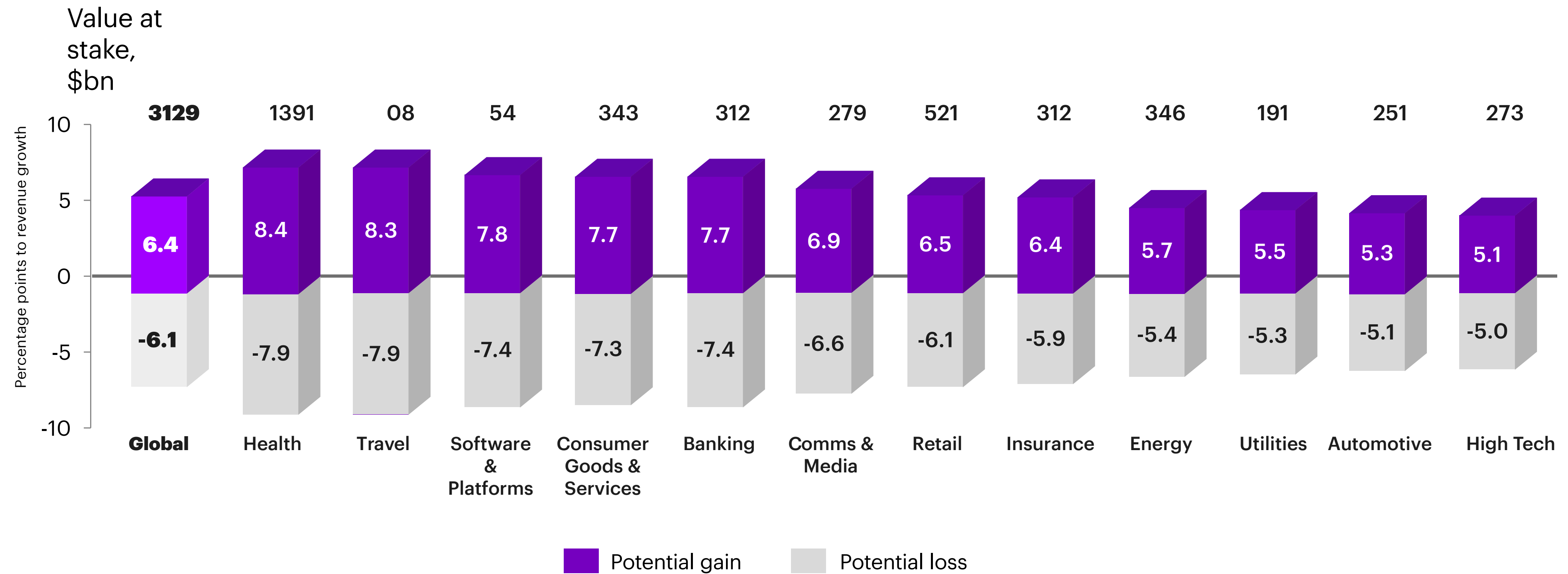
49%

of business leaders, faced with a lack of regulatory guidance, would use new technologies and sources of workplace data as they see fit, without taking any additional precautions.

31%

are holding back from investing further in new technologies that enable the collection of workforce data out of concern for what their employees think.

This 12.5 percent difference in revenue growth equates to value at stake of more than U.S.\$3.1 trillion.



Note: the potential gain is the additional percentage points to annual revenue growth for an average company when using data responsibly in a way that strengthens employee trust. The potential loss is the percentage points lost from annual revenue growth for an average company when using an irresponsible data strategy in a way that diminishes employee trust.

Source: Accenture Research analysis based on the C-suite and employee surveys conducted for this report, and S&P Capital IQ.

A Framework for Responsible Businesses

Give Control. Gain Trust.

Empower people with greater control of their own data.

Share Responsibility. Share Benefits.

Involve people in designing systems and put in place accountable executives.

Elevate People. Use Tech Responsibly.

Use technology in responsible and creative new ways to elevate people and fix its own unintended consequences.



**GIVE CONTROL.
GAIN TRUST.**

Give Control. Gain Trust.

Empower people with greater control of their own data.

People are more conscious than ever of how personal data is used and misused. Laws and regulations are evolving to give the consumer more control over their data: They can opt in, opt out, cancel their service and even pursue legal action when a company violates the terms of a contract. Yet this isn't the case in the workplace.

Give to Get.

One key to earning trust by providing more control is to let employees choose if they want to “give” data to “get” particular benefits.

70 percent of employees say that in return for their permission to collect data, employers will have to give them more control over how it is used and offer benefits like customized compensation and learning and development, improved productivity and performance, safety at work and fairer pay, promotions and appraisals.

Co-own Data with Employees.

73 percent of people want to own their work-related data and take it with them when they leave. **56 percent** of business leaders are open to employees owning their data.

Employers should consider using new technologies like blockchain to help employees make greater use of their data.

Protect Privacy.

58 percent of employees are unwilling to let employers collect data if they did not keep it private when the expectation was that they would.

Companies must agree with employees which data should be shared and with whom, and they should aggregate and anonymize data when it is shared beyond the individual.



**SHARE
RESPONSIBILITY.
SHARE
BENEFITS.**

Share Responsibility. Share Benefits.

Involve people in designing systems.

It's one thing to earn employee trust. It's another to maintain it over time. This requires sharing responsibility across the C-suite and even beyond the organization—as well as involving employees in the design of the systems themselves.

Create a System of Checks & Balances.

A single C-suite executive should be accountable for ethical workplace data initiatives. Today, **only 19 percent** of business leaders say that is the case, but a further 48 percent plan to appoint one. One option is to hire a Chief Ethics Officer.

Co-create Systems with People.

This includes training people how to use data and AI, and encouraging them to challenge these systems and give feedback.



**ELEVATE PEOPLE.
USE TECHNOLOGY
RESPONSIBLY.**

Elevate People. Use Technology Responsibly.

Use technology in responsible and creative new ways to elevate people and fix its own unintended consequences.

Technology is a double-edged sword. It has unintended consequences that impact individuals and society. But used creatively, it can itself help fix these downsides, including addressing bias and helping workers control and share their own data securely.

Open Opportunities. Don't Constrain Them.

94 percent of business leaders agree that AI can help identify people's hidden and adjacent skills, which eases reskilling and helps retain workers whose roles are displaced by automation.

Reduce Bias—Everywhere.

For example, AI can identify gender bias in job postings and rectify them. **80 percent** of employees say having reliable, factual data gathered by new technologies would improve fairness in hiring decisions.

Grow People, Don't Penalize Them.

Resist the temptations of surveillance, and use data to improve how teams work, or to personalize training. **57 percent** of employees say that the use of workplace data will improve their lives and business performance.

Decode Human + Machine DNA.

The new relationship developing between machines and people generates a wealth of data. **70 percent** of business leaders say measuring the joint performance of people working with intelligent machines would be extremely or very important to improving organizational performance.

About the Research

The Accenture Research program was built on four proprietary research initiatives:

A **workforce survey** of 10,000 workers across skill levels and generations.

A **business leader survey** of 1,400 C-level executives.

Both surveys covered 13 countries (Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA) and the following industry sectors: Automotive, Consumer Goods & Services, Healthcare Providers, Public Services, Software & Platforms, High Tech, Retail, Banking, Communications & Media, Travel (hospitality and airlines), Utilities, Energy and Insurance. These were carried out between October and November 2018.

In-depth interviews involving 31 Accenture clients, experts in the field and vendors. Interviews were conducted by Accenture Research.

Econometric modeling to determine the relationship between employee trust and financial performance.

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Accenture Strategy combines deep industry expertise, advanced analytics capabilities and human-led design methodologies that enable clients to act with speed and confidence. By identifying clear, actionable paths to accelerate competitive agility, Accenture Strategy helps leaders in the C-suite envision and execute strategies that drive growth in the face of digital transformation.

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