

Sample

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A. The background



Developments in IT people and organization lie at the intersection of three influences: **what businesses need** by way of systems, what **technology** is available to meet those needs, and the **workforce** and alternative resources involved.

Business needs in 2014, as in all recent years, will be strongly influenced by customers' increasingly demanding expectations in an age where mobile apps, 24-hour availability and instant access to detailed information are widespread. It is no surprise that observers agree that IT spending will increase in 2014 as companies rush to meet or beat these expectations. Business needs will also evolve as the ongoing march of globalization forces IT to provide appropriate information systems.



On **technology**, the main technical trends are Big Data, Cloud and mobile systems. We enter 2014 after a year when the remarkable potential of Big Data, i.e. truly massive data analytics, has been in the news thanks to the activities of the National Security Agency (NSA) and others. The potential of technology that can extract useful information from conversations, images, locations, and other hitherto inaccessible data will not have been lost on CEOs who know that such customer data is already on file, or may be easily accessible. So although Gartner's forecasts of the vast growth in IT jobs flowing from Big Data, made in 2012, look high, they may yet materialize.

Business requirements and budgets and the availability of technology to meet them are, of course, nothing without the **people** to make it happen. In an increasing number of sectors and companies, the quality of the IT workforce can make the difference between company success and failure. IT functions, in 2014, must not only deliver new systems using new skills; they must do so against a backdrop of capped resources, growing stacks of legacy technology needing old skills, skewed demographics, levels of engagement that are often low, and modest pools of leadership talent upon which to draw.

Against this background, wise companies will stand back from the day-to-day flow of events to consider not just business and technology issues, but IT **people and organization** issues and ask: *What might we be missing, when thinking about our IT workforce? What should we be doing that we are not already doing?* Hopefully this review will be a useful input for those who support IT functions on people and organization issues as we move through 2014.

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