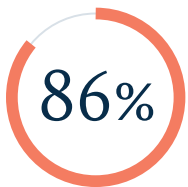




Cultivating Talent That Thrives Amid Organizational Change

The profound changes that have swept through the asset management industry in recent years can be seen in the re-shaped organizational structures of most managers. Whether it's redrawn org charts, revised reporting structures, or divisions pulled apart or merged, the magnitude of the changes has been matched only by their pervasiveness.



Indeed, according to our recently published [2025 Talent Trends Report](#), 86% of asset management leaders indicated that there had been changes to their organizational structures during the preceding 12 months.

For those seeking to wrap their minds around where the industry is headed, changes in organizational structure provide a valuable lens through which to interpret its evolution. By first analyzing how the structure has transformed, one can then work backwards to see the forces which re-shaped it.

Some drivers are the old standbys forever pressing in on almost all industries and organizations: a drive for greater efficiency and cost reductions, “right sizing”, and the predictable cycling between centralized control and dispersed decision-making.





Shifting Client Dynamics Are Driving Organizational Change

But the most notable changes – and the ones warranting attention – are industry-specific. First among them, not surprisingly, are shifting customer behaviors and preferences, which 43% of the leaders we surveyed cited as the impetus behind the organizational changes.



Sourced From: [16th Annual Talent Trends Report](#)

That restructuring didn't take place in a vacuum but rather in response to advisors' growing demand for more comprehensive and focused support. Advisors, on the hook to deliver more products, stay current on regulations, cope with margin compression and manage their practices, began demanding more of partners like asset managers. In exchange for business, managers were expected to help advisors step up their client experience offerings and counsel them on everything from prospecting to succession planning.

In response, sales organizations reconfigured themselves. Across the industry, leaders have overhauled the once-dominant "wholesaler-owning-her-territory" structure into a more team-based, specialist model. In it, the wholesaler may still be the quarterback but the offense they're running utilizes many more players than it once did. Those players are experts and specialists aligned to specific client needs and housed within cross-functional teams.





The Migration Toward Cross-Functional Teams

Another structural change driver has been the push to embed those with more specialized skills into sales teams. Nowadays, those teams don't periodically pull in marketing, data and business intelligence experts to consult on strategies. Instead, those experts ride shotgun through the entirety of the client experience journey. The impact to organizational structure? Fewer technological experts sitting in function-based teams and more situated within the aforementioned cross-functional teams.

The proliferation of products is also behind certain organizational shifts. The customer appetite for information on the expanding universe of products is partly to blame. But so is the very practical need to educate internal associates on the steady flow of newly hatched strategies coming out of product development teams. Given the volume and complexity of those offerings, it can be difficult for any one individual to master their own manager's full product lineup. This has led to a proliferation of product specialists and further expansion of the, you guessed it, cross-functional specialist teams.

Adaptability: Leaders Spot A New Superpower

Change, structural and otherwise, is nothing new. Broadly speaking, neither are the qualities that make us more adaptable to it. Yet some characteristics make certain people surer footed and thus, safer bets for thriving in today's shifting industry. So, it's not surprising that 30% of leaders in our survey named "Employee adaptability" as an attribute they're prioritizing when building their teams. Unlocking insights about employees or candidates' inclination towards adaptability is key. Test them out with some of the following conversation starters.

- Discuss a time when you identified a challenge then forged and implemented a solution. What was the outcome? What did you learn?
- What were instances in which client insights and feedback from the field caused you to adjust your processes or approach?
- Which industry changes that you've experienced over the last 12-24 months do you view positively/favorably?

Put another way, leaders must seek out those comfortable with change. But here it's important not to confuse tolerance for change with the wholehearted embrace of it. Leaders shouldn't be content to onboard stoics simply willing to grin and bear the evolution. Instead, they should target those who are able to spot and exploit the sometimes-fleeting opportunities cracked open by changing industry dynamics. Better still, are those willing to carry the flag; standard bearers who model openness to change and, in the process, may soften the resistance of the recalcitrant.



Intellectual Curiosity: The Chicken Or The Egg?

When it comes to adapting to change, the quality of intellectual curiosity presents something of a chicken/egg riddle. Is intellectual curiosity sparked by an openness to change or is it the very quality that activates that openness? Either way, it's valuable. And if you're looking to assess potential hires for how they'll fare in a rapidly shifting environment, intellectual curiosity is a key trait to probe for. Discussions surrounding levels of intellectual curiosity can be initiated through the following points of discovery.

- Provide an illustration of a business challenge you have been confronted with in the past 12 months, and how you worked to understand and solve it in an innovative manner.
- How have you invested in your own learning and development over the past 12 months? Share an illustration of how you have deployed your newfound skills in your work.
- What aspect of your business is most fascinating to you that you would want to learn more about? Why?

Candidates know better than to signal resistance to change or a lack of adaptability. So, these questions may help you unlock deeper insights into their actual comfort level when learning and confronting change.

A Desire To Understand Their Impact

Good leaders know that evaluating team members based solely on their productivity is culturally short-sighted and bound to engender ill will. But efficiency, results and impact matter. And you want team members who are open to having their impact, and that of their team, measured. Ongoing measurement is essential to continuous improvement, which itself is a marker of its close cousin, the [growth mindset](#). Indeed, those who, in one way or another, exhibit resistance to being measured and somehow view it as punitive could be telling you something. Just as those who see it as a means of quantifying their positive impact may be sending a clear signal about how they view their role.

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