



## Dave Ulrich

### AUTHOR

HR is still organised around managing employees. The question business leaders are now asking is whether the function delivers value to customers, investors, and communities as well. The four domains that produce that answer, talent, leadership, organisation, and the HR function, are still run as separate agendas in most organisations.

HR is less about HR and more about delivering value to all stakeholders, customers, investors, employees, and communities, through human capability: talent, leadership, organisation, and the HR function. Dave Ulrich, Rensis Likert Professor Emeritus at the University of Michigan and partner at The RBL Group, has spent more than three decades giving business and HR leaders the research, frameworks, and shared language to make impactful investments across all four.

## Dave Ulrich's 2026 Biography

### Why organisations work with Dave Ulrich

- The four-domain architecture of human capability, talent, leadership, organisation, and the HR function, is Ulrich's own framework. It gives business and HR leaders a single integrated taxonomy for what is otherwise a sprawl of disconnected people and organisation initiatives, and a structured way to decide which investments will actually move stakeholder outcomes.
- The Human Resource Competency Study, now in its eighth round across 35 years, has cumulatively drawn on more than 100,000 respondents. Round 7 produced the headline finding that organisational capability has four times the business impact of individual talent. Round 8 sharpens the picture: HR department capability and the organisational capabilities HR helps build have six to eight times the business impact of individual HR competencies. Ulrich brings these findings into the room directly, not via a citation.
- Ulrich is the originator of the HR Business Partner model that most large organisations still operate today. Engaging him is not external validation of the existing model. It is access to the next-generation architecture, including the Organization Guidance System diagnostic that has now been run inside more than 500 organisations.
- The Leadership Capital Index reframes leadership quality as a measurable asset that investors and boards can rate the way Moody's rates credit. For boards under increasing pressure to disclose human capital substance, not narrative, this is one of the few frameworks built explicitly for that conversation.
- Induction into the Thinkers50 Hall of Fame, alongside HR Magazine's "father of modern HR" designation and recognition as the most

### AVAILABLE FOR

- Consultancy
- Panel Participation
- Speaking
- Training and Workshops

### DAVE'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Future of Work
- Leadership
- Talent Retention Strategies
- Workforce Transformation

### LANGUAGES: English

influential HR thinker of the decade, places him among the small group of figures who have demonstrably shaped a field rather than contributed to one.

## Biography highlights

- Rensis Likert Professor Emeritus, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan
- Co-founder and partner, The RBL Group
- Author of more than 30 books including *Human Resource Champions* (Harvard Business School Press, 1997), *The Leadership Capital Index* (Berrett-Koehler, 2015), *Victory Through Organization* (McGraw-Hill, 2017), and *Reinventing the Organization* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2019)
- Editor, *Human Resource Management* journal, 1990 to 1999; Distinguished Fellow, National Academy of Human Resources
- Inducted into the Thinkers50 Hall of Fame, 2017; HR Magazine Lifetime Achievement Award, 2012, source of the “father of modern HR” designation; named most influential HR thinker of the decade by HR Magazine
- Lead architect of the Human Resource Competency Study (eight rounds, 35-plus years, more than 100,000 cumulative respondents) and the Organization Guidance System diagnostic (more than 500 organisations)
- Active global platform: more than 400,000 LinkedIn followers and a weekly newsletter with more than 230,000 subscribers, with weekly posts routinely reaching 50,000 to 70,000 views

## Biography

HR is not about HR. The phrase is Ulrich’s own. It captures the through-line of three decades of work: that the HR function exists to deliver value to every stakeholder the organisation touches, not to perfect its own processes. Employees and executives inside. Customers, investors, and communities outside. The discipline he calls human capability is the architecture that connects them.

That architecture has four domains, each backed by its own research base. Talent covers how organisations acquire, develop, and retain full contributors, now framed by Ulrich as Talent Advantage = AI × HI, artificial intelligence multiplied by human ingenuity. Organisation treats the company as a set of capabilities: agility, culture, innovation, strategic clarity, collaboration, and customer connection. These can be prioritised through the Organization Guidance System, now deployed in more than 500 companies. Leadership draws on the Leadership Code research with more than 30,000 respondents, and on the Leadership Capital Index, which gives boards and investors a measurable framework for leadership quality. The HR function rests on the 35-year Human Resource Competency Study, with more than 100,000 cumulative respondents, and shapes the operating models, practices, and competencies HR uses today.

The practical consequences of this work have shaped how HR is organised. *Human Resource Champions* (1997) introduced the four-role model, strategic partner, change agent, administrative expert, and employee champion, that became the template for HR business partnering inside Fortune 500 organisations. *The Leadership Capital Index* (2015) made the case that leadership quality can be rated the way credit is rated. *Victory Through Organization* (2017) was the empirical headline:

organisational capability has roughly four times the business impact of individual talent. Round 8 of the HRCS sharpens that further: the HR department and the organisational capabilities it helps build have six to eight times the business impact of individual HR competencies.

Ulrich is the Rensis Likert Professor Emeritus at the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, and a partner at The RBL Group. He has worked with more than half of the Fortune 200 across more than 80 countries. He was inducted into the Thinkers50 Hall of Fame in 2017, and was named “father of modern HR” by HR Magazine in its 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. His weekly LinkedIn posts reach more than 400,000 followers and 230,000 newsletter subscribers. That audience is how much of the global HR and business community engages with his current work in real time.

## **Key speaking topics**

- Stakeholder value through human capability
- The four domains of HR: talent, leadership, organisation, and the HR function
- HR transformation and the next-generation HR Business Partner model
- Organisational capability as competitive advantage
- Leadership Capital Index and leadership as a board-level asset
- The HR inflection point: AI, analytics, and the future of the HR function
- Culture transformation and organisational design

## **Ideal for**

- CEOs and executive teams looking for a single integrated language across talent, leadership, organisational capability, and the HR function
- CHROs and senior HR teams whose remit now spans stakeholder outcomes across employees, customers, investors, and communities
- Boards and investors who need a measurable framework for the human capability behind market value
- Transformation leads redesigning the HR operating model and the cross-functional accountabilities that sit alongside it across business leaders, HR, and employees

## **Audience outcomes**

- The four-domain human capability framework as a single integrated language for talent, leadership, organisation, and HR investment, replacing the disconnected list of HR programmes most teams are working from
- The empirical case for why organisational and capability investments outperform individual talent investments, drawn directly from HRCS and OGS findings
- A diagnostic logic for deciding which human capability investments will move customer share, investor confidence, and community standing, not just employee engagement scores
- A practical model for measuring leadership quality that can be defended in an investor or board conversation
- A clear position from which CHROs and CEOs can present HR as a leading indicator of business performance rather than a lagging cost

## Dave Ulrich's 2026 talks & topics

### **Building Your Leadership Brand through Results-Based Leadership**

Connects the quality of leadership directly to customer expectations and measurable market value, using the Leadership Capital Index framework to move leadership from a subjective judgment to a board-level asset.

#### **Key takeaways:**

- How to define a leadership brand derived from customer and investor expectations, not internal preference
  - A framework for measuring leadership quality that investors and boards can interpret alongside financial data
  - Practical steps for closing the gap between stated leadership values and measurable leadership behaviour
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### **Organizational Capability as a Competitive Advantage**

Delivers the evidence-based case that organizational systems outperform individual talent as a driver of business results, with a practical framework for diagnosing and building the capabilities that matter most.

#### **Key takeaways:**

- How to shift from talent acquisition as primary strategy to organizational capability as the competitive lever
  - A diagnostic framework for identifying which organizational capabilities the business currently lacks
  - How HR leaders can present organizational capability investment in terms that boards and executive teams act on
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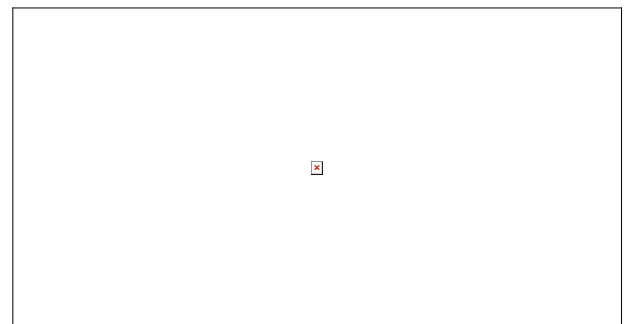
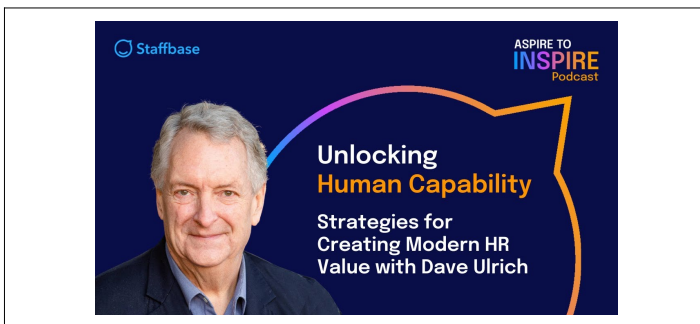
### **HR Transformation**

Provides the strategic case and four-phase model for redesigning HR from an administrative function into a business-facing architect of organizational capability, based on research across more than half of the Fortune 200.

#### **Key takeaways:**

- The four-phase transformation model and where most organizations stall in applying it
- How to identify which HR investments have the greatest demonstrated impact on business outcomes
- How CHROs can position HR as a leading indicator of business performance rather than a lagging cost centre

## Dave Ulrich's Videos



## What Dave Ulrich's clients say

Review for his book 'HR from the Outside In': This book is a crucial blueprint of what it takes to succeed. A must have for every HR professional

**Lynda Gratton**

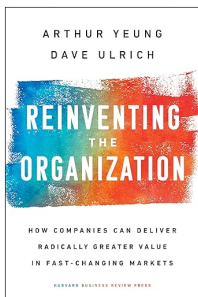
*Professor, London Business School*

Review for his book 'HR from the Outside In': Packed with facts, evidence, and prescriptive advice. It is about being a business leader first, and an HR professional second.

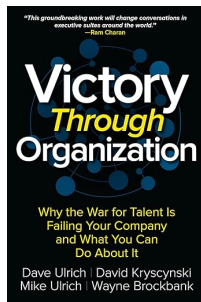
**Randy MacDonald**

*Senior Vice President, Human Resources, IBM Corporation*

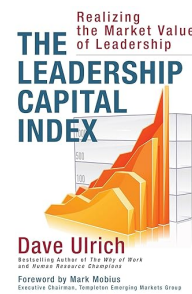
## DAVE'S LATEST BOOKS



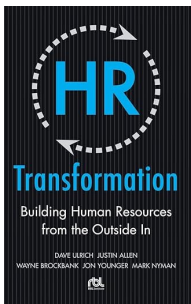
**Reinventing the Organization: How Companies Can Deliver Radically Greater Value in Fast-Changing Markets**



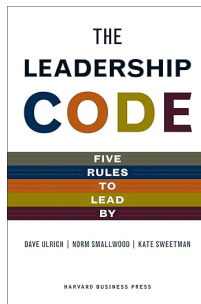
**Victory Through Organization: Why the War for Talent is Failing Your Company and What You Can Do About It**



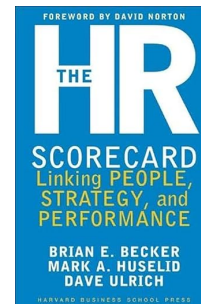
**The Leadership Capital Index: Realizing the Market Value of Leadership**



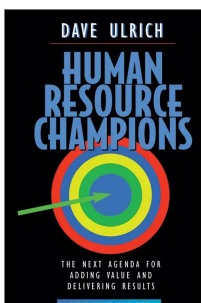
**HR Transformation: Building Human Resources From the Outside In**



**Leadership Code: Five Rules to Lead By**



**The HR Scorecard: Linking People, Strategy, and Performance**



**Human Resource Champions**

## Dave Ulrich's 2026 speaking fees

Specific fees fall within the ranges shown. These are presented as a guide only and are subject to change without notice.

	<b>EUR</b>	<b>GBP</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>Home Country</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>Asia Pacific</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>Europe</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>Middle East &amp; Africa</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>South America</b>	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
<b>US East Coast</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>US West Coast</b>	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
<b>Virtual</b>	Under €12000	Under £10,000	Under \$15000