The 4 Biggest Challenges Facing Enterprise Organizations Today

cora

Introduction

Just like individuals going about their daily lives, enterprise organizations face challenges on two fronts; internally and externally. But how successfully you cope with these two sets of challenges is intimately related. Because your ability to deal with external challenges is a reflection of how healthy you are, internally.

As individuals, we need to eat and sleep well and exercise regularly, because being healthy and fit is the best way to cope with pressures from work, family, society and the economy. And exactly the same thing is true for companies in the world of business.

How a company copes with pressures from things like supply chain issues and a skilled labor shortage is an expression of how well run it is. And that will be determined by its internal structures. How smoothly its various departments and teams work together to realize their organizational goals. And how effectively it manages its resources, and is able to plan for the future.

This paper looks at four of the most pressing challenges faced by enterprise organizations today, exploring the most effective ways for them to meet those challenges.

Organizations rely on 14 or 15 different processes and systems, none of which talk to each other.

1. Systems integration

One of the biggest challenges that all enterprise organizations are constantly faced with, regardless of the industry they operate in, is that different departments operate using their own particular systems and processes.

As often as not, a company will do its cost management in one system, its risk management in another, and its schedule management in yet another. While accounts and finance are done using a different platform again, usually with some form of enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. All too frequently, an organization will end up relying on 14 or 15 different systems or processes, none of which can talk to each other or share data.

Legacy structures

Furthermore, large, complex organizations are invariably the product of continual restructuring, often as the result of mergers and acquisitions. So after, say, the merger of Heinz and Kraft in 2015, one of the business units in the organization that resulted would do things the Heinz way, while another would continue doing things the Kraft way. Even though both units might have exactly the same deliverables and objectives.

Similarly, the division overseeing, say, Sauces will have their own particular architecture and systems in place, while Dressings, or Soups, will be structured in a completely different way. And anyone working there will operate in a very different way to those working in the other divisions.

Companies end up spending a huge amount of time, effort and money fixing the problems that arise because the different systems they use produce unconnected point solutions. And in then trying to move and merge one group of data sets with data sets that live on a different system.
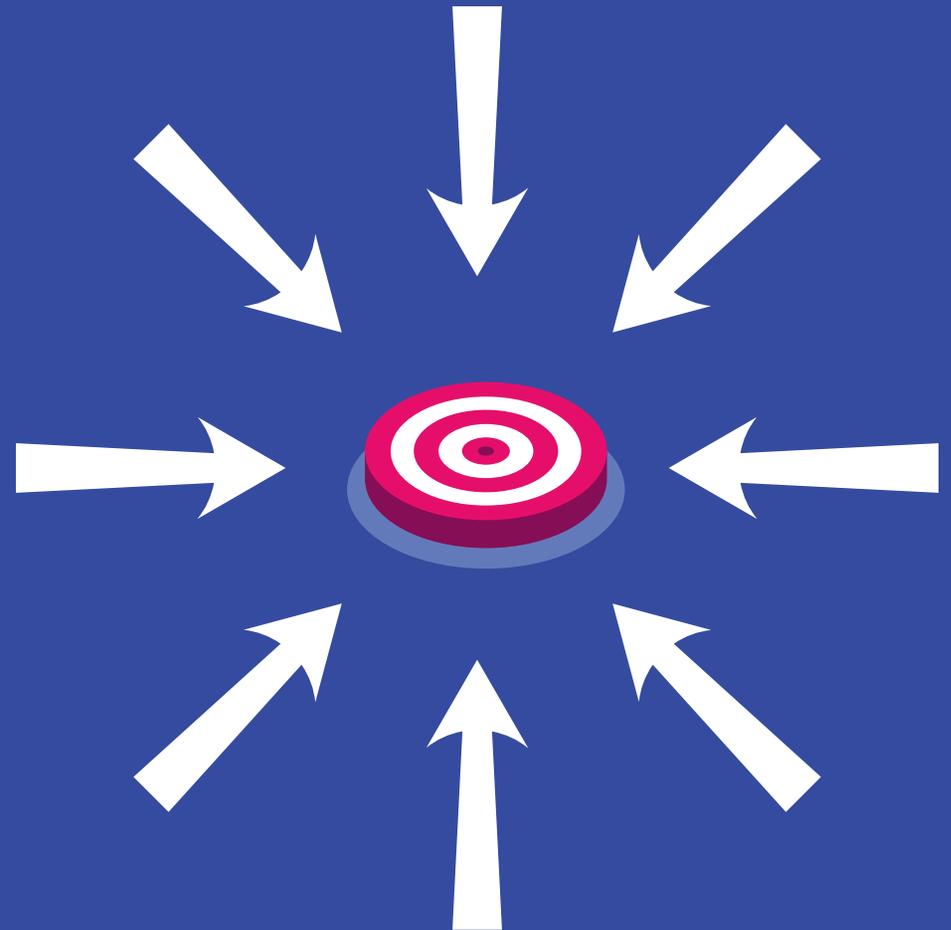
People find themselves working in different 'realities', with conflicting facts and figures
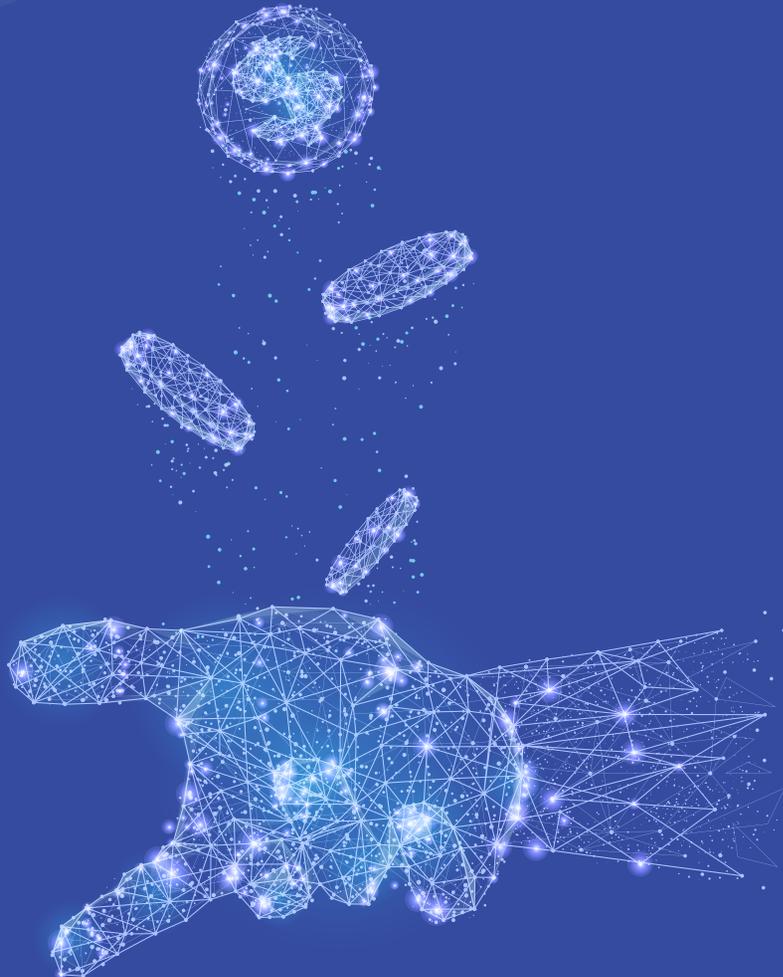
So people find themselves working in different 'realities', that are based on inconsistent and often conflicting facts and figures. When it would be far better to invest some of that money in a solution that could integrate each of those different processes into the one central system.

The right software solution will act as a golden thread, seamlessly integrating all of those disparate systems. Giving you immediate and effortless visibility into every aspect of your individual projects. So instead of being an organization made up individual siloes, each working in their own particular way, you'll have a team of units working together, in constant dialogue with one another, all working towards the same shared objectives.

Above and beyond all else, a good software solution will give you control and governance over your project's entire lifecycle, from bid to delivery. Because everyone will be working in the same standardized way, using processes that are integrated into the one, central system.

Cora Sidebar
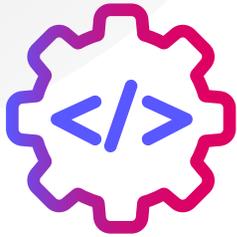
Low/no code configurability
The Cora software solution has been designed and built specifically as a low/no code suite of products. So it's very easy for us to configure it according to your precise needs. Or, indeed, for you to configure it yourself. And because it's so famously easy to use, you'll have enthusiastic buy-in across your organization.

Just as importantly, it helps you deal with those legacy issues. Because it means your internal architecture can be designed and configured around your different project archetypes and business models, instead of being designed to suit outdated legacy parameters.

You can then take the lessons learned from one type of project, and tweak your template so that the next time you have that type of project, whatever mistakes were made won't be repeated.

Role personas
What you want, ultimately, is for your architecture to be designed with the user in mind. What that means is basing it around 'role personas'.

Everyone throughout the organization will be working within the one system, and work off the same facts and figures. But the specific data that each person gets fed will be tailored to their specific role. A risk manager will see one collection of data sets configured for their role, while an HR person will see a very different collection of data sets, that are specific to what they do.

The important thing is, that all your processes are seamlessly integrated into the one central system. And that that system is designed to serve its users and the roles that they fill.

2. Strategic workforce planning

Strategic workforce planning is essentially a subset of resource management and capacity planning. But it's becoming an increasingly important element in how enterprise organizations deal with the world today, and with the challenges that are coming down the tracks.

Over the last decade or so, a constellation of factors have come together to radically change the landscape around the global workforce. The combination of the financial crash, a global pandemic and the return of rampant inflation has all led to a profound change in how workers view what they do, and what they now expect from where they work.

Companies are having to deal with the 'great resignation', and with the fact that demographics in the West mean that both the population and the workforce there are aging. So they are having to invest in upskilling programs for new recruits. And in paying their experienced workers more, in the hope of enticing them to stay on longer.

> "*Even in this digital age, people remain an organization's most valuable asset.*"[1]

Deloitte
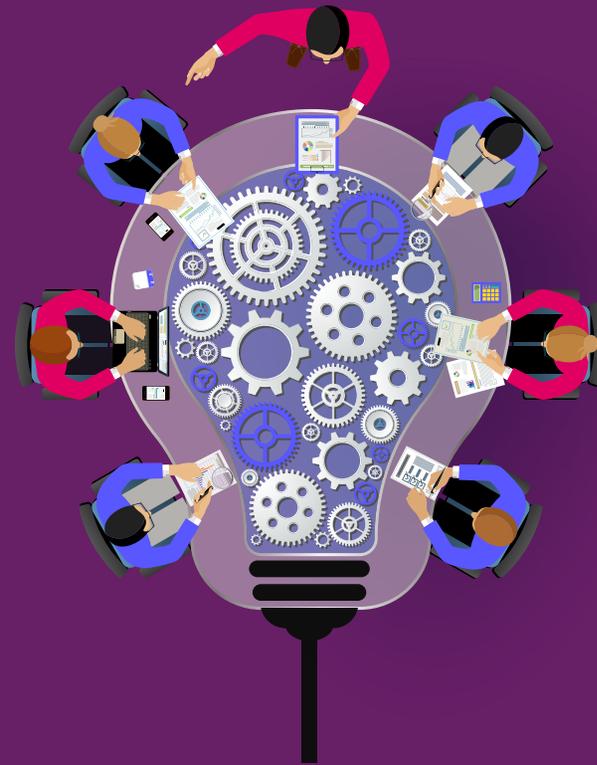
"Leaders who can reshape their workforce with the right mix of talent, skills, and assets will create the most fertile conditions for the organization to thrive and grow."[1]

Deloitte

While technology, and the digital transformation programs it's made possible, are transforming the manufacturing industry. Which requires investment in re-skilling, so workers can learn how to make the most out of all the new technology at their disposal. And in further upskilling, so that they can move into new roles, now that some of what they did has been automated.

All of which needs to take into account the increasingly hybrid way that everyone is beginning to work now. As more and more people work partly from home, and partly at the office.

Size, shape, cost and agility

So organizations are applying a much more systematic approach to how they structure and organize their workforce. Essentially, strategic workforce planning assesses a company's labor capacity based on four criteria; size, shape, cost and agility.

Size looks at on how well the number of people you currently have working in the organization reflects the amount of work you've taken on. Too many staff produce inefficiencies and complacency. So resources are wasted and staff become frustrated because their talents aren't being made proper use of. Too few staff and workers feel overwhelmed. Deadlines are missed, and divisions fail to meet their delivery dates.

Shape looks at the kinds of workers you employ, given what you're committed to doing. And what you're hoping to do in the future, in light of the bids that you're currently pursuing. Do your employees have the right kind of skill sets to enable you to meet your medium and long-term goals, and to achieve your strategic objectives?

Cost looks at the amount of money you're spending on the different sets of workers, in relation to the return on investment that those workers are generating for your organization, and for the department and division where they work.
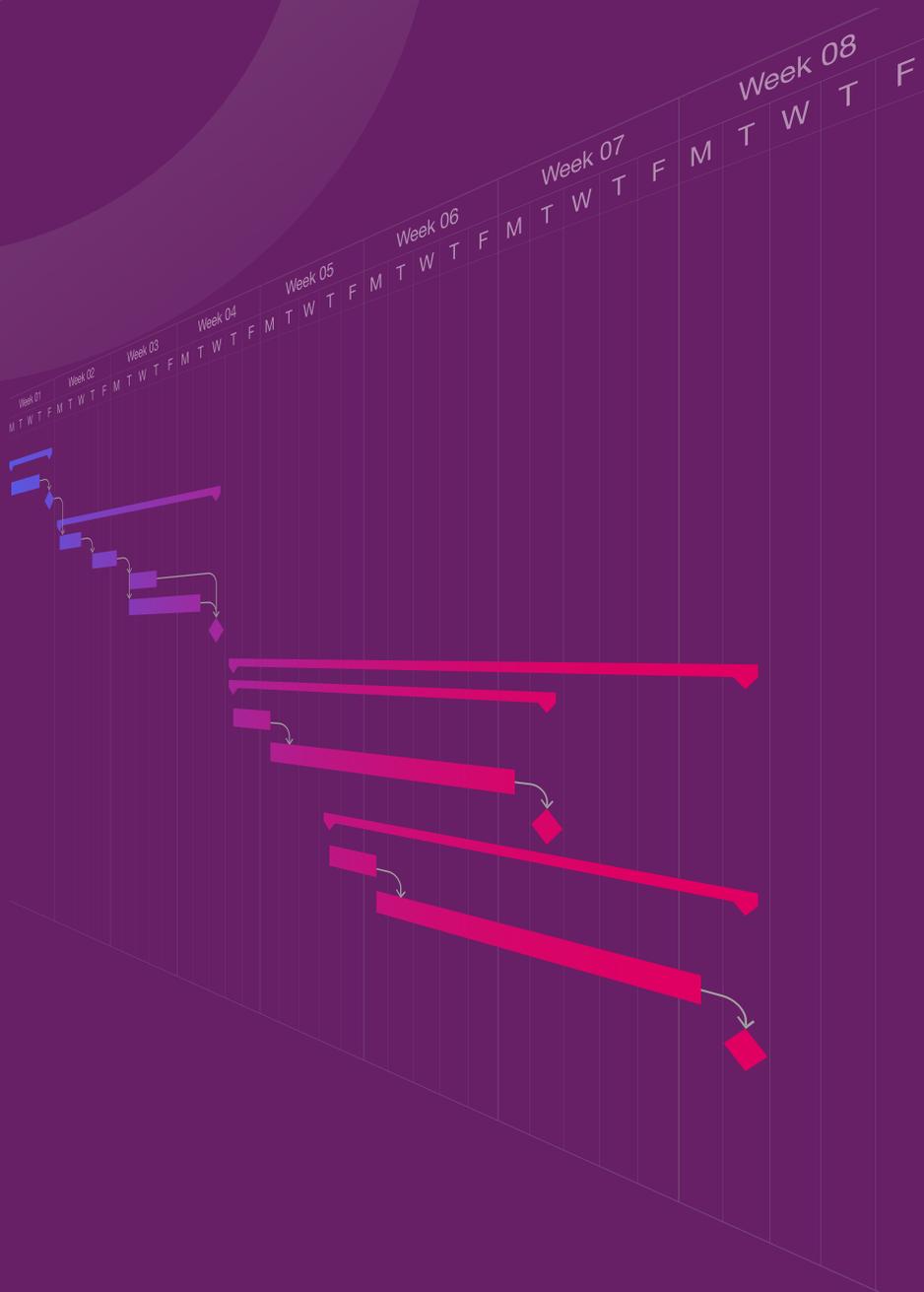
And agility looks at how easy or difficult it would be for any of those sets of workers to pivot and adapt to whatever changes that might arise in the industry where you operate. Whether that's because of technological advances, or because of 'surprise unknowns' like the pandemic we've just lived through, or the political uncertainty we're currently in the midst of.

So strategic workforce planning depends on employing the right software solution, so you can collect and organize all that data in a way that makes sense of those four criteria. Which will give you the ability to contextualize the skill sets available to you from your workforce. So your project selection and prioritization will improve markedly. And you can prevent pet projects from being green lit, to focus instead on those that will generate the best ROI.

Once you have those insights into how well aligned your workforce is with your demand, and into the value that they each bring to your organization and its strategic objectives, your ability to manage your resources and plan for the future will improve exponentially.

It's all a question of data management. And what that comes down to is employing the right software solution.

1. https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/human-capital/solutions/work-force-transformation.html

3. Supply chain issues

As has been well documented, the pandemic has produced, and revealed, a global supply chain that is no longer fit for purpose. In a word, the political forces that shape the globe have shifted, and industry has had to readjust to bring the global supply chain up to speed.

In their paper, 'Meeting the challenge of supply chain disruption', published in September 2022, Deloitte homed in on the four areas that businesses need to focus on to address their supply chain challenges. Improving how you manage your suppliers, they conclude, depends on:

- strengthening existing relationships

- engaging multiple suppliers

- combining efficiency with resilience, and

- deploying digital tools for increased visibility

The first three of which are more general and long-term. But that fourth aim, of increased visibility using digital tools, is the proverbial quick win and is something organizations can address immediately.

"76% of companies (surveyed) are relying on digital tools for increased visibility into their supply chain."[2]

Deloitte
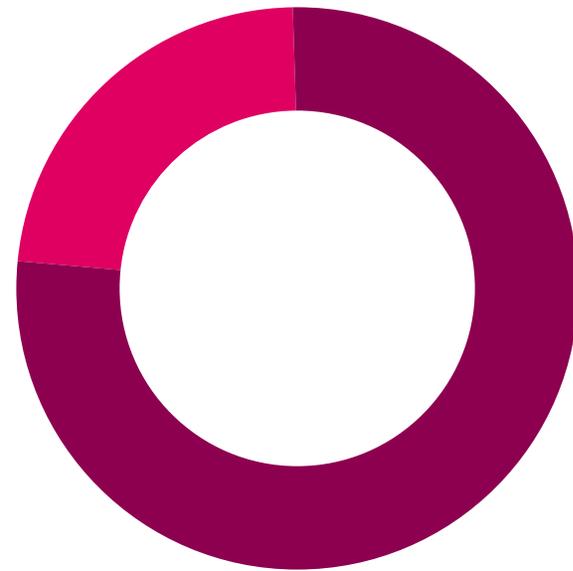
"The pandemic revealed a painful truth about managing supply chains... Operational weaknesses such as over reliance on certain suppliers, scant inventories of critical products, and overstretched production networks left companies exposed to shortages and disruptions."[3]

McKinsey

What you want from your digital tools is the efficient gathering of information, that is to say of data, and the ability to easily share that information. Both between the manufacturers and the tiers of suppliers that they all rely on, and between the different suppliers themselves.

If you're a manufacturer, you need to employ a software solution that puts you in charge of all the data produced by all the parts and materials as they move through your supply chain. What it should do, effectively, is to make you the 'control tower', so that you can precisely monitor all the data that everything is generating. That way, everything can be carefully tracked as it moves from A to B and on to C.

That kind of visibility, when it's both transparent and immediate, is invaluable. Because it means that you can react to events in real time, instead of only finding out about them days, or even weeks, later.

It's those delays which have always proved so costly as far as revenue and margins are concerned. And it was always assumed that those sorts of delays were the necessary price you paid for operating on a global scale.

But the right software solution will enable you to anticipate delays and remedy any problems. Because it will give you the ability to contextualize your data, giving you an up-to-date picture of your project and how it's progressing. And a window into your portfolio of projects, and where they all are in relation to one another.

There's very little any of us can do about the economic forces shaping the planet. But managing your data more efficiently, and in a way that they're contextualized, is something you can achieve immediately. All it takes is the right software solution.

2. https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/manufacturing/realign-ing-global-supply-chain-management-networks.html
3. https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/risk-and-resilience/our-insights/somethings-coming-how-us-companies-can-build-resilience-survive-a-down-turn-and-thrive-in-the-next-cycle
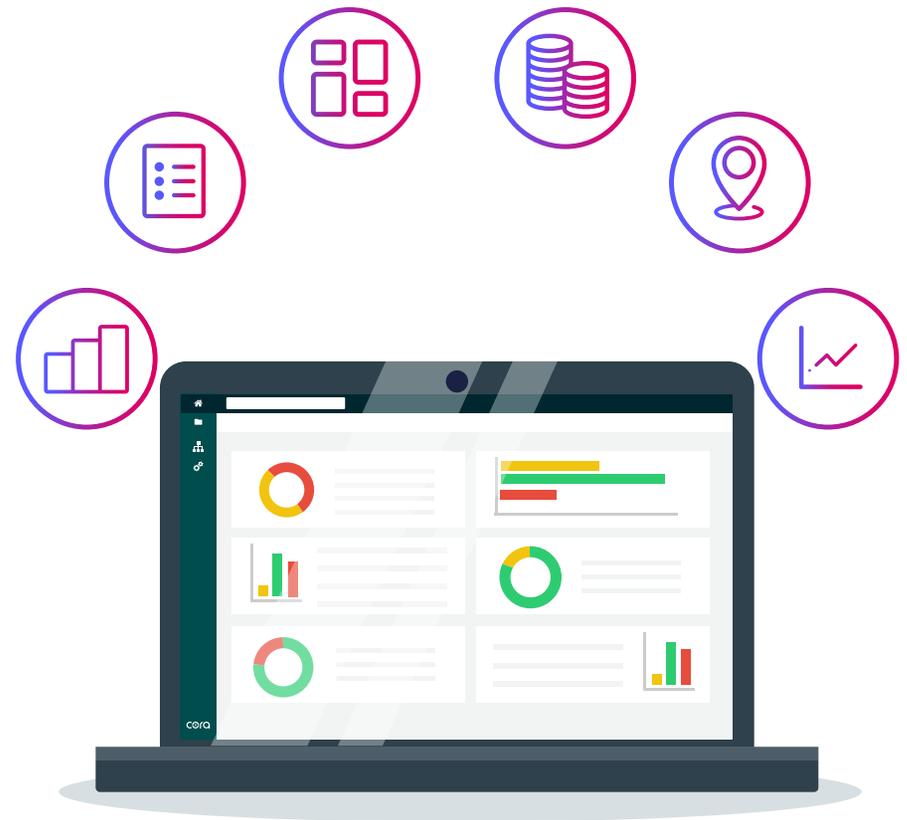
> ## *"Workers and consumers show loyalty towards organizations that do right by their employees and the wider world."* [4]
>
> PwC

4. ESG and 'stakeholder capitalism'

Like most things that everyone everywhere suddenly starts talking about, ESG (environmental, social and governance) divides opinion. On the one hand, people are beginning to scrutinize more carefully the claims that corporations make about the ESG metrics that they generate, in the course of whatever it is that they do. A recent edition of **The Economist**, from July 21st 2022, devoted a 16-page special report questioning the reliability of many of those claims.

And on the other, on a more general level, some business leaders continue to be resistant to the idea that healthy ESG metrics will generate better margins and revenue. And to see ESG as a box-ticking exercise that is more likely to reduce profitability rather than increase it.

But whether or not you yourself subscribe to the importance of ESG is irrelevant. If more and more people throughout society are focusing in on it, and they very much are, then that will necessarily have a significant impact on your bottom line.

Stakeholder capitalism

As Forrester point out in a series of posts on it, ESG is an idea that came out of the investment community in response to work done by economists like Harvard's Michael Porter. In his pioneering work on competitive advantage and value chain analysis, he concluded that,

"Businesses benefit from thinking about value generation beyond the purely economic." [6]

Businesses, he maintained, need to be as conscious of how they generate value and interact with their customers, employees and communities as they are about how they serve their shareholders.

Which was a revolutionary idea when it first emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. But with the increased focus on sustainability and inequality across the globe today, that kind of 'stakeholder capitalism' has moved from the fringes to front and center, when it comes to how successful organizations operate today.

"What consumers are looking for right now (is) reduced emissions, recyclable packaging, recycled materials, and basic workers' rights." [5]

Forbes

It's vitally important that enterprise organizations can demonstrate to their employees, customers and potential investors quite how seriously they take ESG. And what they're actually doing to address those concerns. And the only way to do that is with the metrics you generate from the activities around what you do.

You need to be able to gather and manage all the data produced from your different activities, and to be able to visualize the various ESG data sets in the form of graphs and Gantt charts.

Equally, you have to be completely confident that all the data you're working from is up to date, and had been consistently, and reliably collated, across your organization.

And the only way to be able to achieve all of that, in a seamless and frictionless way, is by employing the right software solution.

4. https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/publications/workforce-of-the-future.html

5. https://www.forbes.com/sites/jonquilhackenberg/2021/04/29/brands-you-need-to-listen-to-the-conscious-consumer-of-the-future/?sh=7d523a1e1d46

6. https://www.forrester.com/blogs/esgs-significance-to-business-leaders/

5. Cora: giving you the power of predictability

Radically reduce costs and significantly increase revenue

Cora empowers enterprise organizations operating in high-value supply chains to plan and manage their long-term projects.

What we do
We make sure that everything you do and make is delivered on time and on budget, thanks to our seamless integration of your schedules, your financial controls and any existing processes.

How we do it
By streamlining and centralizing all your data, in real time, giving you immediate and effortless visibility into every project and across your portfolio.

What that means
Those gaps between planned and actual costs and delivery are eliminated, so your costs and waste go down and your margins and revenue soar.

We make you the 'control tower'

Where all your data and documents are collected and organized. Everything is constantly updated and immediately accessible.

So you get to effortlessly orchestrate each and every one of your projects.

Finance

Customer Satisfaction

Sales & Estimations

Engineering & Design

Delivery

Manufacturing

Raw Materials & Logistics

Prioritize the right projects

Consistently recognized by Gartner™ in its Magic Quadrant for Strategic Portfolio Management, Cora gives you that bird's-eye into your portfolio. So you can visualise and evaluate how they each fit in with your strategic objectives.

Integrate processes

Bring any existing processes into the one, central system, so everyone is working in the same, standardized way, and off the same facts and figures.

Sync your supply chain

Track and monitor all the data that your parts, materials and assets generate as they move through your supply chain.

Centralize your project data

Get immediate and granular visibility into everything, wherever you are. It's all there on your dashboard.

Reduce deviation

Minimize those gaps between planned and actual costs and delivery, so you can be confident of continually maximizing your margins.

No/low code configurability

We've designed all our products so that they can be easily configured to meet your precise needs, both for you and by you. And because Cora is so famously easy to use, you get immediate buy-in across your whole organization.
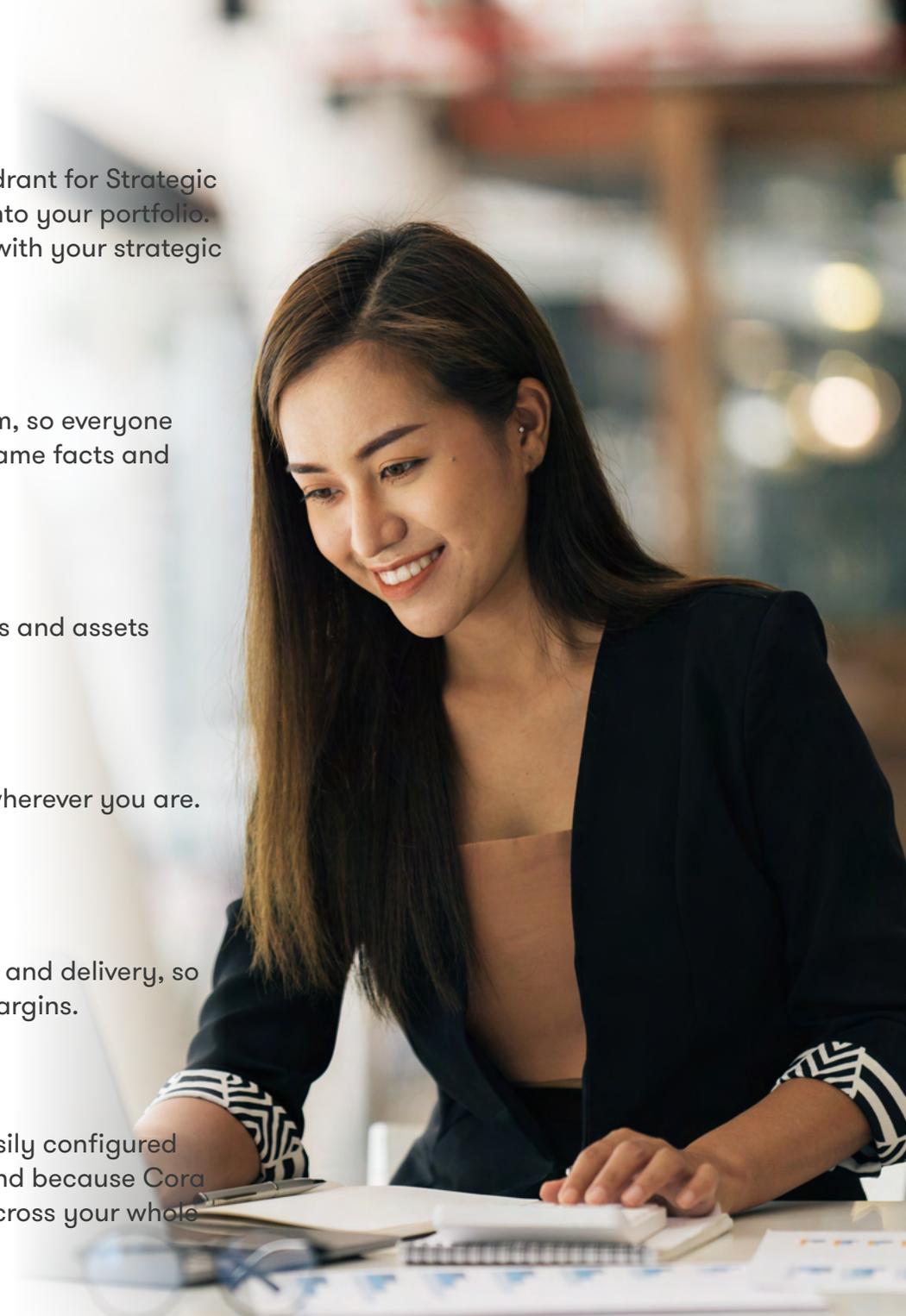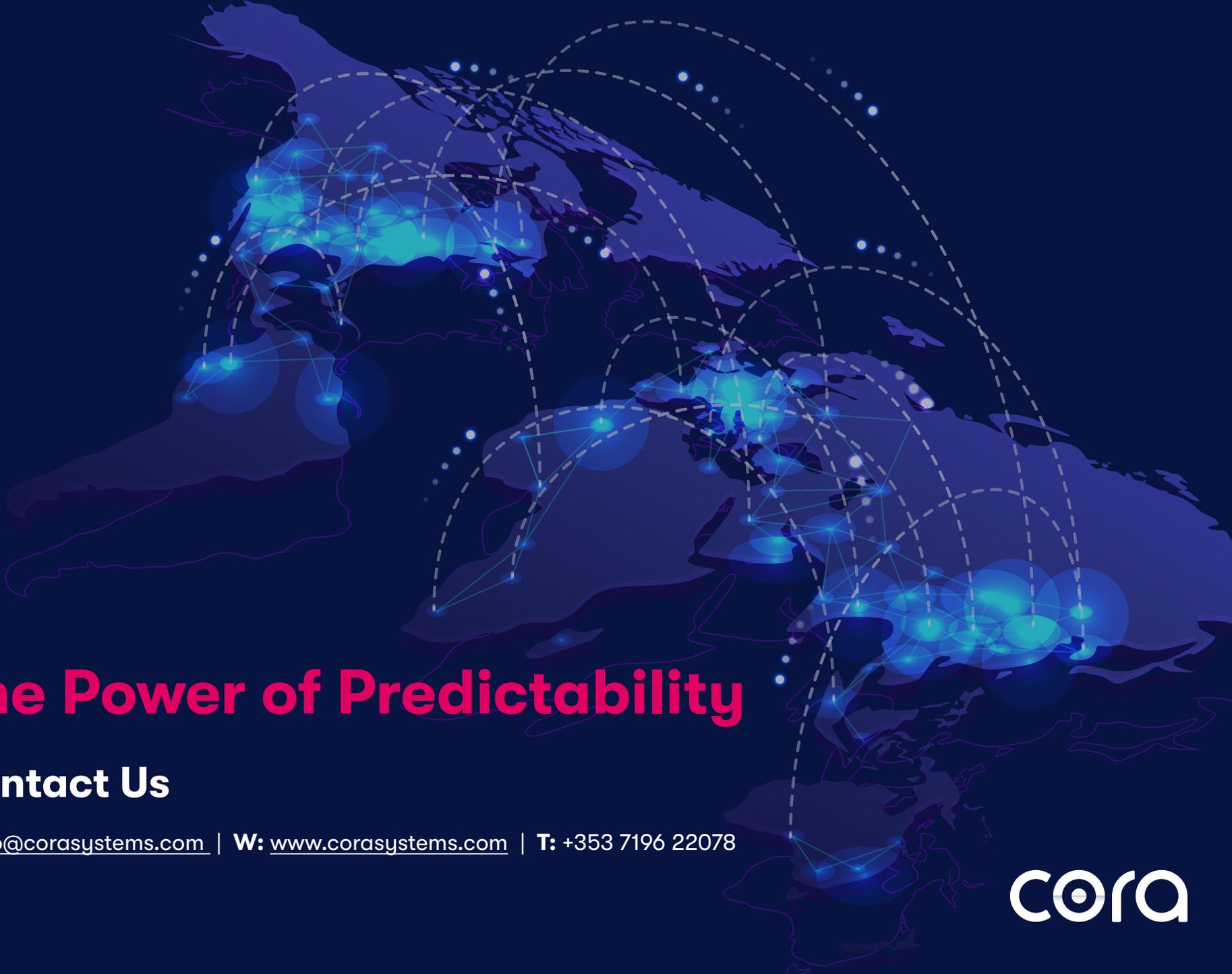
The Power of Predictability

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