

# LEARNING TO ADAPT

## Vemo CEO, Peter Louch, joins Cole Napper on Directionally Correct

### Kicking Off 2026 the Right Way – With SWP

Happy New Year to our dedicated HR, Finance, and Business leaders! We're incredibly excited to launch our next series of insights. In 2026, we want to shift to focus on what we refer to as *Preparing for "Now What?"*

### Preview: 2026 Insights

In 2026, we want to help organizations become **skills-based** by boosting **workforce intelligence** and **building more concrete goals**. Next month, you can look forward to learning about how to **arm yourself with the right questions** so you can move with the agility needed to keep up with business and market changes.


In **January's edition**, we want to prime you for *Preparing for "Now What?"* with a recap of the latest episode of the **Directionally Correct** podcast where our CEO, Peter Louch, joins host, Cole Napper, to discuss workforce planning on the **HR Tech Voices** series.

### HR Tech Voices: Workforce Planning with Peter Louch

As a part of the HR Tech Voices series, Cole Napper invited our CEO, Peter Louch, to discuss strategic workforce planning in the era of workforce transformation.

Peter and Cole begin by **defining workforce planning**, discussing how the needs of SWP leaders have changed over the years, and how AI's strategic disruption has accelerated this change. They **share strategies to help organizations** utilize effective workforce planning. **On the podcast**, you can learn more about how effective SWP can transform your organization from a cost center to a profit center.

In **Cole's Corner**, Peter and Cole have a bit of fun discussing what biology can teach us about workforce planning, rounding up their discussion by drawing out what Peter's ideal workforce planning function looks like.



Vemo has been spearheading workforce planning and people analytics technologies since 2005.

Read below to learn more about the start of Vemo and how we've adapted to the workforce transformation discussed in this podcast.

Episode featuring Vemo CEO, Peter Louch, available now!

Listen to the podcast on apple podcasts, spotify or youtube to hear more about both the evolution of workforce planning and why Peter traded astrophysics for HR Tech (and the ways they're really not all that different).

### Inventing the Workforce Planning Space

In 2005, we had the realization that talent decisions were not only taking a long time, but there was not the appropriate data and technology available to make these talent decisions.

Vemo started with the idea that HR needed a **workforce planning tool** that leveraged data-driven decisions to assist **HR managers transition into strategic HR business partners**.

### VEMO THEN TO VEMO NOW

**Early Days:**

At the beginning, Vemo was heavily influenced by the interplay of strategic workforce planning, operational workforce planning, and organizational design.

In the early days, there was a big focus on segmentation and critical jobs. **The focus on critical roles often overlooked planning for the entire workforce.**

**SWP in the Modern Age:**

From a predictive analytics perspective, we realized the **key to effective workforce planning** over time is to **speed up the planning** process.

The **ultimate goal = being able to answer questions on-demand**. While this may not be 100% possible, being able to directionally answer these questions is an achievable goal.

Vemo's **predictive modeling ecosystem** automatically and continuously builds forecasts.

**The goal of this is to:**

- Spend less time data crunching
- Allow more time to understand and manage change
- Inform organizations what they are most likely to do in the absence of intervention—not to be accurate or tell organizations what they should do

In the process, by informing organizations of what they are most likely to do, Vemo's predictive modeling ecosystem **influences the future outcome**.

### Workforce Planning – A Discussion

DEFINING WORKFORCE PLANNING

Defining workforce planning in our field can be tricky—how do you comprehensively cover:

- Talent acquisition
- Strategy
- Change management
- Organizational design

Peter and Cole begin by **distinguishing strategic** workforce planning from operational workforce planning.

- **Strategic** = the B's (build, buy, borrow)
- **Operational** = headcount

For Peter – **what truly makes an organization more strategic is making it more capability-based**. On the podcast, he discusses the **two ways to do this** (and it's often a blend):

1. Through **organizational design**, for enterprises with a leadership-driven structure
2. Through **jobs, tasks, and skills**, for enterprises with a work-driven structure

Cole suggests a **catchall definition** of strategic workforce planning to meet the different siloed needs of workforce planners. **He proposes a cartesian plane, where:**

- **X-axis** = workforce planning
- **Y-axis** = internal and external data

In this model, strategic workforce planning balances internal and external supply and demand. **Read more about Cole's take** on external data-informed workforce planning in his [article here](#).

### HOW WORKFORCE PLANNING IS CHANGING

Strategic workforce planning has transformed into such a **hot topic** because we're seeing **organizations dealing with:**

- Pressure to drive increased revenue without raising people costs
- AI strategic disruption

Organizations now want to combine **multiple perspectives:**

- Predictive scenarios
- Dynamic on-demand scenario planning for leaders' "what-if" questions"
- Top-down plans to set the size and shape of the organization
- Bottom up contribution from leaders with granular knowledge of their workforce needs
- Approval processes that include HR, Finance and Strategy

### STRATEGIZING TO MOVE WITH THE CHANGE

Peter and Cole then dive into the **latest question in workforce planning:** how do we handle this new ecosystem of planners who have different needs?

**To meet this change**, Peter shares that Vemo ensures it has an agile mindset to constantly provide **more tools** for planners to account for different organizational roles within planning. Now, strategic workforce planning, operational planning, org planning, and talent acquisition/management can **collaborate within the same system:**

- **SWP leaders**—through scenario planning and optimization tools—set the size and shape of the organization
- SWP leaders share top-down plan with **operational planners** who can review and modify plans to ensure they have the workforce to drive their business
- **HR and Finance leaders** collaborate on strategy to review plans and ensure they remain on-target

### Workforce Planning – A Success Story

When Peter and Cole discuss the difficulties of defining something as nuanced as workforce planning, Peter offers his **formula for successful workforce planning:**

- Knowing:
  - What your organization needs
  - What your organization's supply will be
  - How to modify your supply to reach what you need
- A **Gap Plan** to execute throughout the talent management process

### A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DEPLOYING SWP METHODOLOGIES

#### #1 – Identifying high-value individual-contributor roles

One of the true outputs of a truly successful workforce plan is identifying these individual contributor roles. One way to look at this is by **comparing strategic workforce planning to organizational design:**

**ORG DESIGN**

**Framework:**  
These are the executives and their pain points (heatmap of their organization).

**Current question:**  
What talent issue(s) does each executive need to work on to achieve desired business results?

**SWP**

**Framework:**  
These are the jobs and the skills gaps.

**Current questions:**  
What are the demand-supply gaps for specific critical jobs and skills?  
What gaps can AI partially solve, and which gaps will increase due to AI?  
How does external demand and supply require adjustments to build-buy-borrow to close the gap, based on our adjusted understanding of the gaps?

### The Key Theme

Throughout the conversation, one key theme Cole and Peter continuously return to is that at the heart of strategic workforce planning, **being 100% fast is better than being 100% right**.

### Cole's Corner

**Tune in to the podcast** for some fun in Cole's Corner! **Learn more about:**

- What Peter would do if he wasn't busy workforce planning
  - (**Hint:** he might be using AI to "search for alien life")
- What Peter's ideal workforce plan looks like
  - (**Hint:** what would it mean to "gamify" our workforce planning?)
- What bees can teach us about learning to adapt
  - (**Hint:** how Bee Swarm Optimization can be applied to SWP)

Book A Demo!

**"We'd like to thank Vemo for their support. Their expertise and steady guidance was instrumental in helping our team realize our broader strategic goals and cross the finish line."**

- Energy and Utilities Leader

**Ready to secure the future of your success?** Use the button above to book a Demo. Or, if you are not yet ready for a demo but would like to get organized for your future strategic workforce planning efforts, use the same link to schedule time with our experts so **we can assist you:**

- Build your business case with clear ROI targets
- Conduct a strategic risk assessment

Thanks for joining us again in 2026—**we hope to see you back next month for the start of our new series—Preparing for "Now What?"**



**ABOUT US**

Vemo combines powerful software with expert consulting to help clients tackle the unique challenges of workforce planning, workforce analytics, and resource management. [Continue Reading.](#)