



Executive Interview

Building Skills Intelligence
That Moves as Fast as AI

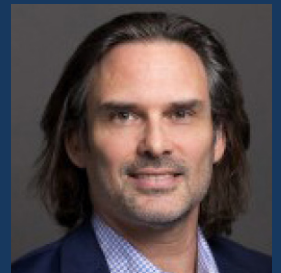
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Roman Muth
*CTO and Member of the
Executive Board
Scheer IMC*



Dr. Sabine Zander
*Director of the
Innovation Lab
Scheer IMC*



David Wentworth
*Managing Director of
Learning and Talent
Brandon Hall Group™*

About Scheer IMC



Scheer IMC is the learning technology subsidiary of the Scheer Group, a German-headquartered technology and consulting organization founded by Professor August-Wilhelm Scheer. The company's flagship product, the imc Learning Suite, is a comprehensive enterprise learning management and experience platform serving more than 340 active enterprise customers worldwide. Scheer IMC operates from more than 12 offices globally and employs more than 400 people within the IMC entity, part of a broader Scheer Group network of more than 1,300 employees and 30 offices across Europe, the Americas and Asia.

About Roman Muth



Roman Muth is CTO and a member of the Executive Board at Scheer IMC, responsible for product management, software development and enterprise architecture. He joined the company more than 25 years ago as one of its first employees and has since played a defining role in shaping its technology and long-term product strategy. An expert in enterprise software, cloud architecture, IT security and globally distributed learning systems, Roman has led international technology teams to build highly available, secure and scalable solutions for complex organizational environments. He is a leading voice within the company on secure AI, intelligent enterprise learning architectures and the responsible adoption of emerging technologies.

About Dr. Sabine Zander



Dr. Sabine Zander is Director of the Innovation Lab at Scheer IMC and a recognized expert in digital learning, skills frameworks and artificial intelligence within the corporate learning context. She leads national and international research and innovation projects, combining academic insight with the practical needs of organizations. Her work focuses on developing, testing and transferring emerging technologies and learning concepts into future-ready business solutions. Through this expertise, she plays a key role in advancing AI-enabled learning at Scheer IMC.

About David Wentworth



This Excellence at Work Executive Interview is moderated by **David Wentworth**, Brandon Hall Group's Managing Director of Learning and Talent. He works with technology providers and enterprise organizations to better understand learning and talent challenges and what it takes to overcome them. His insights come from nearly two decades of experience conducting research, interviews and data analysis in the learning and talent space. Prior to rejoining Brandon Hall Group™, he served as VP, Talent Platform Evangelist at Schoox, and before that spent 11 years at Brandon Hall Group™ as Principal Analyst. He is a podcast host and a regular speaker at talent management, learning and HR industry events.

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**Frameworks
Built to Stand
Still**

Q David

Why are traditional approaches, models and frameworks to skills no longer sufficient?

A Roman

I want to start with a technical point about these frameworks. They are static. You have a framework, the levels are described, the skills are described, and none of it updates as new requirements come into the market. With AI in particular, a lot of new skills and new

The Shrinking Skill Half-Life

job roles are emerging, and these frameworks were built years ago. They were never designed to look at this. They need to update constantly, and static frameworks have to become dynamic. There is also the skill half-life to consider. It used to be that you built a skill once and could keep it for years. Now that half-life has shrunk to two or three years before you need to change or update your skills. That is the core reason we have to rethink skill management from a technical standpoint.

A Dr. Sabine

I agree with Roman on this. The issue is not that frameworks are wrong. They simply become outdated too quickly. Traditional skills frameworks were designed for environments where jobs and required capabilities changed relatively slowly, so updating them once a year or on some similar cycle used to work. Organizations today face continuous change, driven by technological transformation and geopolitical shifts, and that means skill management frameworks and solutions need to adapt dynamically.

Q David

What is the difference between an LMS that has AI functionality built in and a truly agentic workflow?

A Roman

Every piece of software, every LMS, already has workflows, some fixed and some flexible. In a workflow you have events and functions, and now AI can sit in the middle of those functions. That is interesting because AI can do things you could not do before. It can read and understand language, and it can automate.

That means you can connect a workflow to something happening

AI Inside the Workflow

Placing AI inside existing workflow functions lets systems read, understand and automate tasks that once required a person.

No Two Companies Alike

outside the system, understand a new requirement, and bring it directly into your process inside the LMS. This is powerful for every process on the platform, especially when the LMS has a workflow engine that lets you adjust processes, because no two companies run the same process or have the same compliance requirements.

Adding AI and agents lets you automate work that used to be manual, like reading a CV and understanding it, even though people write CVs differently and use different words for the same job or the same task. AI can normalize that language to match how your company describes roles. Sabine has done good research and built a nice prototype around exactly this kind of job profiling work.

Q David

What decisions can and should be automated, and what needs to remain with a person so someone stays accountable?

People Stay in the Loop

AI can prepare decisions about careers, performance and learning, but people should make the final call.

A Dr. Sabine

AI can identify patterns, generate recommendations and orchestrate workflows, connecting building blocks that already existed but were not connected before. What we should aim for is autonomous preparation of decisions. Decisions about people's careers, performance or learning priorities should ultimately remain with humans.

That means paying attention not just to the technical side but to the data itself, understanding data governance, and being clear about which decisions need to stay in the loop with a person.

Low Confidence in the Data

Q David

Brandon Hall Group™ research has consistently found that companies have fairly low confidence in their own data. If you are heading down this path, what technology and data foundations need to be in place first?

A Roman

There are processes where you genuinely need a human in the loop. AI can automate, but it does not always need to execute. It can make a proposal instead. The technology here is really a workflow engine with agents, where you can see what an agent did and why it made a particular decision.

When an agent is helping automate something, you need the ability, whether in real time or after the fact, to see why it took a certain path. That gives you the chance to improve your process and your prompts, not just your data.

You can also add a second agent behind the first as a quality gate, and you need guardrails along with a log file and retrieval so you can trace how a decision was reached. That visibility is what lets you improve the whole system.

Can Your Data Work Together?

Skills information is often scattered across HR, learning, project and performance systems, plus external labor market data.

A Dr. Sabine

Clients often ask what data they need and how to get started, and a really important question is whether their data can actually work together. Skills information is spread across HR systems, learning systems, project data, performance data and external labor market intelligence.

Two Foundations, Not One

Without interoperability and common standards, even the best AI cannot produce reliable skills intelligence. That is why you need to separate the technical foundation from the organizational foundation. As an organization you need a shared understanding of what skills actually mean, and that understanding has to be shared across HR, L&D and the business.

Q David

When clients come to you for this kind of AI work, have they usually already figured out their approach and just need the right tools to execute, or are you helping them work through the data and technology foundation as well?

A Roman

We really have two kinds of customers. Some already have AI in place and an AI team, and they are less concerned with the basics of using AI. Their struggle is getting data out of their systems, connecting to other systems in a headless scenario and interpreting the data, because something that is called a course in one place might be called an event somewhere else. They need a clear definition of their data.

Two Kinds of Customers

Some clients need help connecting and defining their data; others are just starting and need a faster way in.

Other customers are at the very beginning. They know their L&D team has a lot of repeatable work, always doing the same searches and pulling the same lists, and they come to us and ask if AI can help. That is a cold start problem on the skill management side, and we help them start faster, not to make everything perfect right away but to get them moving.

The Why Is Already Clear

A Dr. Sabine

Across our pilot partners and clients, most companies already have a good understanding of why they need a skill management solution and what it could strategically do for their business.

What has always been missing is a clear path to get started without becoming overwhelmed. A lot of companies have skill strategies sitting in spreadsheets and PDFs, and the first step is getting that into a system so they can begin applying AI to it. That is where we usually start, and from there companies can keep experimenting with us to solve their specific business problems.

Q David

How can companies be sure that once they turn an agent loose, they are not reinforcing outdated, inaccurate or biased skills data?

Guardrails, Not Blind Trust

Because AI is still a large language model with the same risks, guardrails and logic checks are becoming standard, and the EU AI Act now requires them.

A Roman

It is a good point. AI is still a large language model, and it carries the same risks that come with that. We need guardrails, and those guardrails can themselves be agents or AI, or simple logical checks on the input and output of an agent before anything is passed along to another system or person.

This is becoming standard, and in the European Union the AI Act requires us to think this way and build it in.

Would You Trust It?

A Dr. Sabine

I always think back to trying an autonomous taxi in San Francisco. It was an adventurous 10-minute ride, but there was still a voice in my head asking whether I could really trust it.

That same question applies to corporate learning. Helping employees, HR and L&D professionals build trust in AI starts with knowing there is a solid foundation behind it, including the human experts and guardrails Roman mentioned. Trust requires education, and education requires strong data governance, because AI itself does not create bias.

Bias comes from the data, like job profiles that already reflect structural bias. Making sure we do that homework early, both as a company building the tools and as companies using them, is what lets people trust the output enough to want to use it.

Q David

Do you see particular industries, or particular parts of an organization, that are better positioned to benefit from agentic workflows first?

Compliance Leads the Way

Industries with well-structured compliance processes are best positioned to benefit from agentic AI first.

A Roman

Compliance is a good example, because any company that has to meet compliance requirements already has well-structured processes, and agentic AI can take that a step further with more tailored, more reliable processes and a clear log of what an agent did and why.

But honestly, I do not see one specific industry that stands out. Every part of L&D has processes and workflows that are tailored to

Where Data Goes In

that organization, and wherever people have to put data in before they get something useful out, agentic AI can help.

Q David

Beyond the general idea that AI can help, can you walk through specifically how agentic workflows let companies use the skills intelligence they already have?

A Dr. Sabine

Imagine a company wants to understand whether generative AI or data governance are becoming strategically important skills. Instead of manually reviewing its framework once a year, an agentic workflow could continuously analyze external labor market signals, internal project data, employee learning activity and business priorities. It could identify emerging skills, highlight capability gaps and suggest updates to job profiles, learning paths or development priorities, always keeping a human in the loop.

A human expert still decides whether something like generative AI should become part of the strategy, whether that means a small learning recommendation or a bigger investment in developing a new area of skill.

People Still Decide

Agentic workflows can surface emerging skills and gaps continuously, but a human expert still decides what becomes part of the strategy.

Q David

Is there an opportunity here to also connect this work to learning measurement and business outcomes, an area that has always been difficult, especially between Kirkpatrick levels three and four?

Still a Conceptual Problem

A Dr. Sabine

I see real potential here. My own background is in education economics, so I came to this field through questions about learning and skill development and what interventions actually work, not through technology.

Skill assessment itself is still a conceptual problem. We have to keep asking how we actually measure what we think we are measuring. But we now have many more tools available to connect what we do on the learning side to business outcomes, because we can connect data and run analyses that were not previously possible, especially for small and mid-sized organizations.

A Roman

Agents give you the ability to connect other systems, which is really the opportunity here. In the simplest case, you train a salesperson and expect a fifty percent increase in sales. You connect the training system to the CRM or whatever system tracks results and watch whether sales go up over the following months.

Of course, selling is not only about training, other factors play a role too, but the same idea applies to developers. You could train people to use AI for development and then see whether they ship faster or with better quality. With an event driven workflow behind it, you can react to an event, create another event, and track results over time.

From Training to Results

Connecting learning systems to business tools like a CRM makes it possible to track whether training actually moves outcomes.

Q David

As more of this skills challenge becomes automated, what does it mean for L&D as a profession?

Finally Looking Ahead

A Roman

For L&D, it means getting a much better overview of what is actually happening across the company and what the real requirements are. It also means they can finally look toward the future.

Right now, L&D rarely gets the chance to do that because there is so much daily work involved in just keeping things running. AI can take over a lot of that documentation and administrative work, freeing L&D to watch how job profiles are changing in the market and help the organization plan for what comes next.

A Dr. Sabine

I fully agree. This is a real chance for L&D, and for HR, to become less administrative and take on a more strategic role. That is a significant opportunity for the field.

Q David

For L&D and HR teams who already have a full plate and now feel this new wave of AI pressure coming at them from every direction, what is a good place to start?

Start With Automation

Automation is the first practical step for an L&D team. It frees people to focus on the talent development they actually want to do.

A Roman

Whether or how you can use AI needs to be answered within your own company, since some organizations are more restrictive than others. Within those limits, automation is the first practical step for an L&D team. Automation makes daily work run better and frees people to invest their time in the talent development they actually want to be doing.

Like Cloud Adoption, Again

Start by finding out what automation and AI you are allowed to use, and automate the parts of your work that are easiest to automate. Even if bigger agentic use cases are not approved yet, be ready for them. It will play out the way cloud adoption did, with first movers, then a wave that becomes normal, and then a group of last movers held back by compliance or other constraints. It is coming regardless.

A Dr. Sabine

I would also say start by identifying the manual processes that consume the most time or create the biggest bottlenecks, and automate one workflow end to end so you can learn from it.

Room to Experiment

Employees need the mandate and time to test and try again — most prototypes won't become productive, but every one teaches something.

For that to work, employees in L&D and other departments need to be enabled to use AI. They need room to experiment, test and try things again, and the mandate and the time to do that. That safe space is what makes it possible for people to work together and figure out what actually works, because it is not going to work the first time.

A lot of prototypes will not become productive, but you learn from every one of them. There is no magic wand that instantly figures this out for you, and I think that is understood pretty widely at this point.



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