

# 2025 Executive Summary

## From the Conference Chair

As the demands of your role continue to evolve, embrace guidance to navigate shifting talent needs, redefine performance, and align people and technology strategies for real business impact.

We hope to see you at Gartner HR Symposium/Xpo™ 2026.

Sincerely,  
Anna Krasniewska,  
Conference Chair and Group Vice President, Gartner

## Top takeaways

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### Transform work to unlock AI's full potential

Begin by augmenting existing work, targeting your biggest business challenges to ensure you're prepared to adapt processes for AI. Next, reengineer workflows by prioritizing areas with the greatest impact and use workforce planning to identify at-risk and growth roles. Then, invent new AI-driven approaches and reset expectations about what AI can realistically deliver, building a path to future growth roles and keeping your workforce ahead of shifting demand.

"Organizations are twice as likely to exceed revenue goals if business units change how work gets done, rather than just empowering employees to use AI."

Harsh Kundulli,  
VP Analyst,  
Gartner

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### Routinize change for the workforce to thrive in volatility and uncertainty

Routinizing change demands common leadership capabilities, with HR guiding the application of development investments for maximum impact. You must clarify the value of progress, transparently share information, and persuade by emphasizing the risks of inaction. Adaptability, emotional intelligence, and coaching skills are essential for leading through any change, while revisiting competencies and re-prioritizing skill development ensures readiness for tomorrow's challenges.

"Leaders need to communicate that change is a journey, not a destination."

Kayla Velnoskey,  
Director, Research,  
Gartner

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### Drive value with an employee productivity strategy

Engage employees in shaping productivity strategies through focus groups and open conversations, while equipping managers to identify and support flight risks and underperformers. Use team exercises, recognition, and clear accountabilities to drive improvement, and regularly review engagement and compensation processes to ensure high performers are rewarded and career paths are visible - strengthening connection and collaboration across your organization.

"Involve employees in the design of productivity metrics to ensure outcomes accurately reflect their day-to-day experience."

Swagatam Basu,  
Sr Director, Research,  
Gartner

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### Cultivate an AI work environment to influence growth and performance

To stay ahead in the age of generative AI, focus on building agile structures that empower leaders to make informed decisions quickly. Prioritize developing foundational skills, streamline leadership roles, and foster a culture where human expertise guides AI-driven processes. By evolving your talent strategies and organizational design, you'll position your workforce for sustained growth and high performance.

"Organizational designs will shift from coordinating work across functional siloes in the digital era, to coordinating skills and mobility across outcome siloes in the AI era."

Cian O Morain,  
Sr Director, Research,  
Gartner

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### Shape an organizational culture that can evolve alongside work

Revisit your values to ensure they truly reflect and support both your current and future workforce. Start real conversations with employees, using pulse surveys, focus groups, and ERGs, to uncover where values aren't landing and where connections need strengthening. Audit the employee lifecycle to identify gaps, then strategically reinforce and embed values across key processes and touchpoints. Focus on realignment, not a full reset, to build a culture that evolves with your organization.

"Shift from an *endure* to an *evolve* strategy to unlock the power of your organization's unique culture."

Jessie Knight,  
VP, Research,  
Gartner

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### Focus on protected growth to help employees build new skills in times of change

Begin by identifying skill gaps and blockers to internal mobility, selecting workshop participants and filtering for volatility-ready skills. Collaborate with internal communications to share a clear, prioritized skills list aligned with strategic goals. Launch confidence-building initiatives, such as workshops and digital tools, to help employees assess strengths and explore opportunities. Track progress in internal mobility and risk-taking, then embed promise-based hiring through updated policies and ongoing manager development.

"Skills promise is an employee's willingness and ability to learn new skills from a minimum foundation. When organizations build on promise there is a potential 28% boost in skills preparedness."

Rebecca Burton,  
Sr Principal, Advisory,  
Gartner

## Save the date!



Join us October 26-28, 2026 in Orlando, FL for [Gartner HR Symposium Xpo™](#).