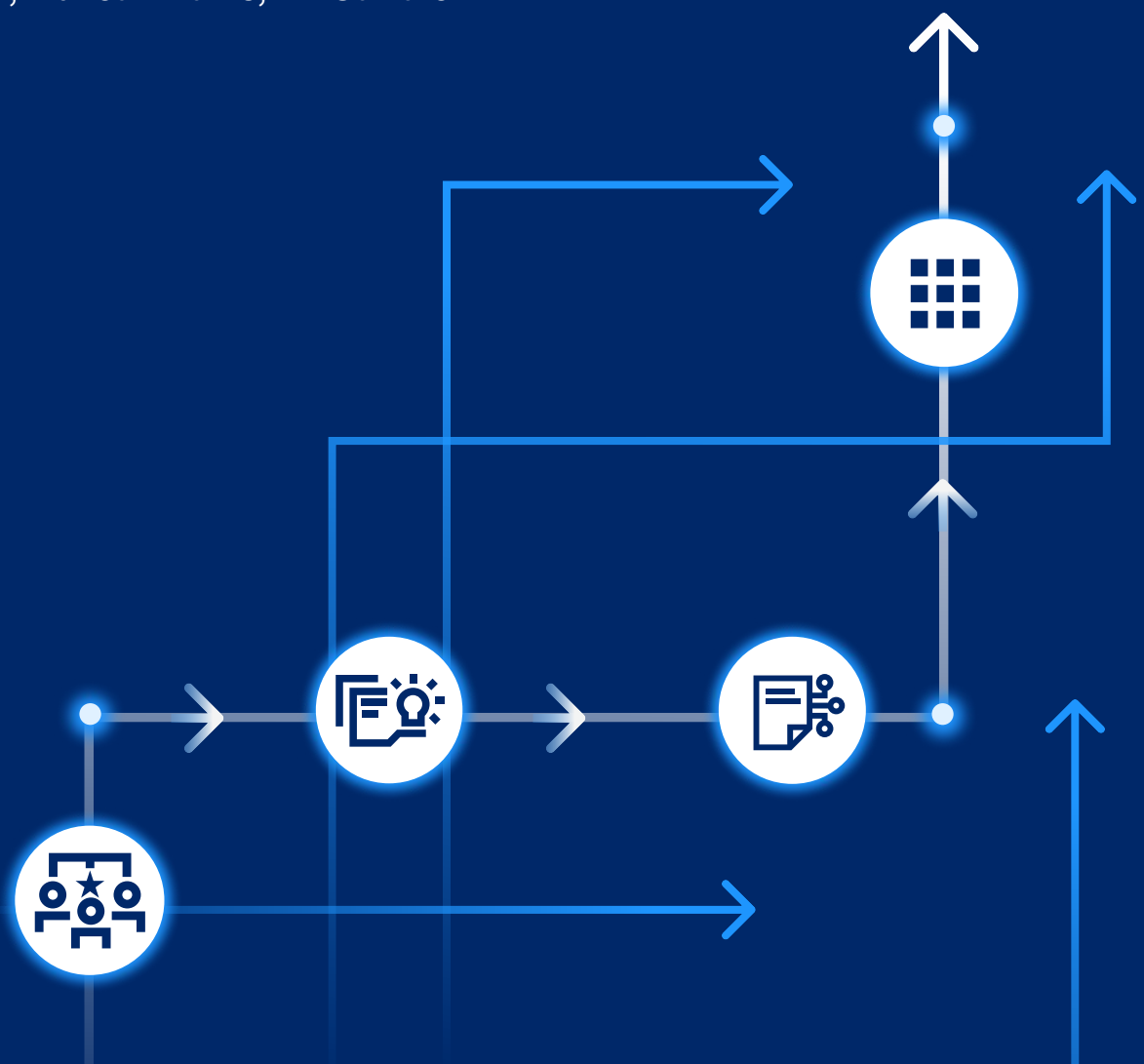
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Essential Resources for Your AI Workforce Enablement Strategy

Julia McDowell, Duncan Harris, Liz Caffarelli



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Initiatives: Strategy, Risks and Opportunities

As AI changes work, many organizations invest in AI training but fail to create the workforce conditions needed to realize value from AI. This research shows CHROs how to build a workforce enablement framework for AI that drives adoption, application, and adaptation to sustain workforce performance.

Analysis

Introduction to AI Workforce Enablement

Gartner position: *CHROs cannot train their way to AI value.*

Among employees with access to enterprise AI tools, the greatest barriers to AI adoption are lack of role and goal clarity, trust, workflow integration, and confidence in future roles, not lack of motivation. [1]

To realize value from AI investments, focus on three workforce outcomes:

- Adoption: Employees accept and use AI in their work.
- Application: Employees effectively incorporate AI into how work gets done.
- Adaptation: Employees adjust as work, roles, and expectations evolve.

These outcomes drive sustained workforce performance as AI reshapes work. For example, employees with high levels of AI use are twice as likely to be highly productive, 2.2 times more likely to produce high-quality work, and 2.9 times more likely to improve processes and procedures. [1]

Many organizations treat AI workforce transformation as a technology deployment challenge, taking a traditional change management approach that focuses on training and communications. While important, these efforts often fail to address the broader workforce conditions that determine whether employees use AI effectively and sustain new ways of working. Unlike traditional transformations with a defined end state, AI continuously and unpredictably reshapes work, requiring organizations to provide ongoing support beyond training and communications. Only about half of employees expected to use AI report receiving key organizational supports such as role-specific training, manager guidance, career-path clarity, or opportunities to learn from colleagues. [1]

AI workforce enablement is a coordinated approach to remove workforce barriers that limit AI value realization. The Gartner Workforce Enablement Framework for AI helps CHROs identify and prioritize the workforce conditions most likely to accelerate outcomes and realize value from AI investments.

Workforce Enablement Creates the Conditions for AI Success

The Workforce Enablement Framework for AI identifies six workforce conditions that influence whether employees adopt AI, apply it effectively, and adapt as work changes. Each condition is supported by workforce actions that HR can lead, influence, or enable through cross-functional partnerships.

The six workforce conditions that influence AI adoption, application, and adaptation are shown in Figure 1.

Create Understanding

Build AI Readiness Capabilities

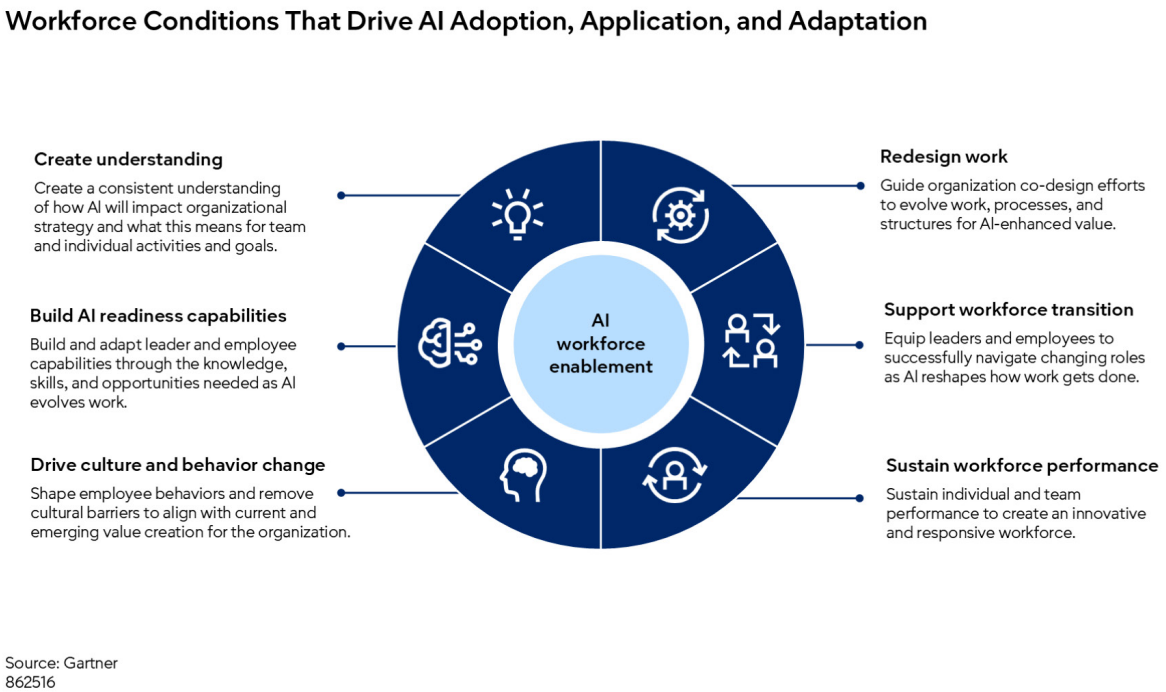
Drive Culture and Behavior Change

Redesign Work

Support Workforce Transition

Sustain Workforce Performance

Figure 1: Workforce Conditions That Drive AI Adoption, Application, and Adaptation



Rather than pursuing every action at once, CHROs should focus on the workforce condition most likely to constrain value realization and prioritize the actions most likely to remove that constraint.

Apply the Workforce Enablement Framework

Organizations can enter the framework from different starting points. Whether supporting a single AI use case or an enterprisewide transformation, the goal is the same: Identify where workforce outcomes are most likely to influence business outcomes, then prioritize the workforce actions that address the barriers most likely to impede business value.

Step 1: Focus Efforts Where AI Is Changing Work

The framework can be applied at any stage of AI maturity, but not every part of the organization requires the same level of workforce enablement. Focus on the functions, workflows, and employee populations where AI is expected to create meaningful business value and the greatest changes in how work gets done.

Use the following questions to identify where workforce enablement efforts are needed:

- Where is the organization making its largest AI investments?

- Which functions are expected to realize the greatest value from AI?
- Where are roles, workflows, or decision making beginning to change?
- Which employee populations will need to adopt new behaviors, skills, or ways of working to realize the intended value?

These areas are often the best starting point because they combine the greatest opportunity for business value with the greatest need for workforce adaptation. Within these areas, prioritize employee populations whose adoption and behavior change are most likely to influence broader value realization.

Step 2: Determine What Is Constraining Value

Once areas of impact have been identified, use the framework to determine which workforce enablement condition is most likely to accelerate or constrain adoption, application, or adaptation, and — ultimately — influence value realization.

Each workforce enablement condition is supported by a set of actions that HR can lead, influence, or enable through cross-functional partnerships. The framework helps CHROs move from identifying where work is changing to understanding which workforce challenge needs to be addressed first.

Use the framework to identify which condition is most likely to impede business value, then prioritize the actions within that condition that are most relevant to your business context. Table 1 provides examples of common workforce challenges and the workforce enablement condition most likely to require attention, helping organizations determine where to begin. Once a starting condition has been identified, proceed to Step 3 to select the workforce actions most likely to address the challenge and accelerate value realization.

Table 1: Choosing Your Starting Point for AI Workforce Enablement

When you notice …	Prioritize actions that …
Employees say AI is not relevant to their role, do not understand how it creates value, or are worried about how AI may affect their future.	Create understanding
Employees want to use AI but are not confident using it, are not getting the expected results, or struggle to apply it effectively in their day-to-day work.	Build AI readiness capabilities
AI tools and training are available, but usage remains concentrated among a small group of employees or teams.	Drive culture and behavior change
Leaders are changing workflows and introducing AI into operations, but productivity, quality, speed, or customer outcomes are not improving as expected.	Redesign work
Employee burnout is rising, engagement is declining, or managers are struggling to help employees navigate changing expectations and responsibilities.	Support workforce transition
AI-enabled improvements are delivering results today, but leaders are concerned about maintaining performance as technology, work, and workforce needs continue to evolve.	Sustain workforce performance

Source: Gartner (September 2026)

Step 3: Execute High-Impact Enablement Actions

After prioritizing a condition, use the accompanying AI Workforce Enablement Action Guide to identify the actions most likely to address that challenge and accelerate value realization. The guide identifies a “Start Here” action for each workforce enablement condition, providing a practical starting point when resources are limited.

Research Highlights

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Once CHROs have identified which workforce condition requires the greatest attention, the resources below can help them prioritize actions and accelerate progress. They are organized from workforce conditions commonly addressed early in an AI journey to those that become increasingly important as AI scales and creates greater changes to work.

Create Understanding



Help employees understand how AI will affect the organization, their work, and future expectations:

- What to Do When AI Joins the Workforce: Scenarios and HR Policy Starters for CHROs — Address HR policy gaps created by AI-enabled work before they become barriers to adoption.
- How We Talk About AI at Work Matters — Build trust in AI by shaping a narrative about how work will change.
- Employees' Confidence in the Future of Work — Not AI Literacy — Has the Biggest Impact on AI Adoption — Increase AI adoption by clarifying how roles, careers, and opportunities may evolve.Back to Top

Build AI Readiness Capabilities

Develop the knowledge, skills, and opportunities leaders and employees need as AI evolves work:



- How HR Can Build an AI-Ready Workforce With Job-Aligned Training — Target AI capability investments to the roles, decisions, and risks that matter most, replacing generic training with workforce enablement.
- Build Workforce Skills That Keep Pace With AI — Prioritize skill investments based on how AI is changing work across the organization.
- Make Social Learning a Priority in the AI Era — Accelerate capability development by using AI-enhanced social learning to expand access to expertise and strengthen peer learning.

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Drive Culture and Behavior Change



Shape desired behaviors and remove cultural barriers that support AI-enabled ways of working:

- The Cultural Conditions That Turn AI Pilots Into Enterprise Value — Build a culture that encourages employees to discover, share, and adopt AI-enabled ways of working.
- How to Use Informal Networks to Scale AI Adoption Faster — Influence behavior at scale by activating trusted voices who build momentum for AI adoption across teams and functions.
- Future of Performance Management: Evolve or Underperform in the AI Era —Align performance management with AI-enabled work by reinforcing desired behaviors, rewarding impact, and accelerating feedback and development.

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Redesign Work



Evolve work, workflows, roles, and organizational structures as AI changes how value is created:

- How to Redesign Work in the Human-Machine Era — Lead a repeatable redesign process that aligns AI investments, workforce capabilities, and business priorities to improve value creation.
- Your Employees Are Not Competing With AI: Reframing Human-AI Interactions for Adoption — Clarify how people and AI contribute to work, reducing anxiety and accelerating adoption.
- Dynamic Redesign: The Next Evolution of Work Transformation — Embed redesign, talent adaptation, and organizational learning into day-to-day operations.

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Support Workforce Transition



Help leaders and employees navigate changing responsibilities, performance expectations, and career paths:

- Unlock Workforce Resilience to Sustain Business Transformation — Build workforce resilience to maintain performance through changing roles, expectations, and demands.
- Employee Change Reflexes That Make or Break Change Adoption — Strengthen employees' ability to adapt by developing the behaviors and habits that support change adoption.
- How to Drive Internal Mobility by Addressing Talent Hoarding — Increase workforce agility by removing barriers to internal mobility and connecting employees to emerging opportunities.

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Sustain Workforce Performance



Build the resilience and adaptability needed to maintain performance as technology and work continue to evolve:

- 12 AI Value Metrics for CHROs to Drive Enterprise Transformation — Measure workforce, business, and adoption outcomes to assess AI value and guide intervention.
- Shift From Workforce Planning to Work Planning in the AI Era — Develop a strategy for changing work by aligning leaders around future workforce needs, organization design, and ways of working.

- Enterprise Strategic Workforce Planning: A New Framework for Connecting Strategy, Work, Technology, and Talent — Connect workforce planning to enterprise strategy by forecasting future work, identifying capability gaps, and prioritizing workforce investments.

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Evidence

[1] The **2026 Gartner Global Labor Market Survey** is conducted quarterly to measure employee perceptions across key labor market and talent metrics, including business confidence, engagement, employee value proposition, and others. The 2Q26 research was conducted online and includes responses from 12,080 employees across 40 different countries in 15 languages, covering multiple industries and functions. The survey questions are standardized, which ensures consistency and comparability of results over time. Disclaimer: The results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

Recommended by the Authors

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Every Enterprise Needs an AI People Strategy: Here's How CHROs Can Build One

AI Has Changed Change: Top Trends Shaping Change Management in 2026

Move Beyond Change Management to Unlock AI Value

Tool: Employee AI Readiness and Sentiment Survey

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Source: Gartner (September 2026)

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