


How to Evaluate Use Cases for Generative AI in HR

by Helen Poitevin and Eser Rizaoglu

Many HR leaders feel a sense of urgency about moving forward with generative AI in the HR function, responding to market hype and demands from CxO peers. This research helps HR leaders prioritize use cases to benefit from the emerging promise of generative AI.



Rarely has interest in new technology been so intense, broad and sustained as it has for generative AI. While some CHROs and other HR leaders are patiently waiting to see what their peers learn from implementing and using generative AI, many others have been actively pursuing implementation. In June 2023, just months after the wave of hype unleashed by ChatGPT, 5% of HR leaders who participated in a Benchmark With Gartner webcast said they had already implemented generative AI. An additional 9% said they were conducting generative AI pilots and proof of concepts. Only 16% of HR leaders are not planning to use GenAI now or in the future.¹ The speed of interest and adoption is remarkable. Yet many HR teams are ill-equipped to prioritize use cases for business impact.

The easiest way to use generative AI in the HR function is to employ consumer-facing services that perform tasks like text generation — which can include generating communications, job descriptions or other content. While easy to use, these services don't have the layers of information security HR requires, nor can you be sure information in the generated responses is accurate. Moving beyond this easy use requires reflection, prioritization and implementation effort.

How should CHROs lead their teams in prioritizing AI use cases, aligning with their HR and innovation strategies? We recommend:

Evaluate Generative AI Use Cases Along With Broader AI Use Cases

Because generative AI is often combined with other AI capabilities, HR leaders should evaluate generative AI use cases alongside other AI use cases in HR.

Here is the most basic way to distinguish generative AI from other AI capabilities: With generative AI, something new is generated, something that didn't exist in that exact form before. AI, on the other hand, is a broader discipline that uses many advanced analysis and logic-based techniques to interpret events, support and automate decisions, and take actions.

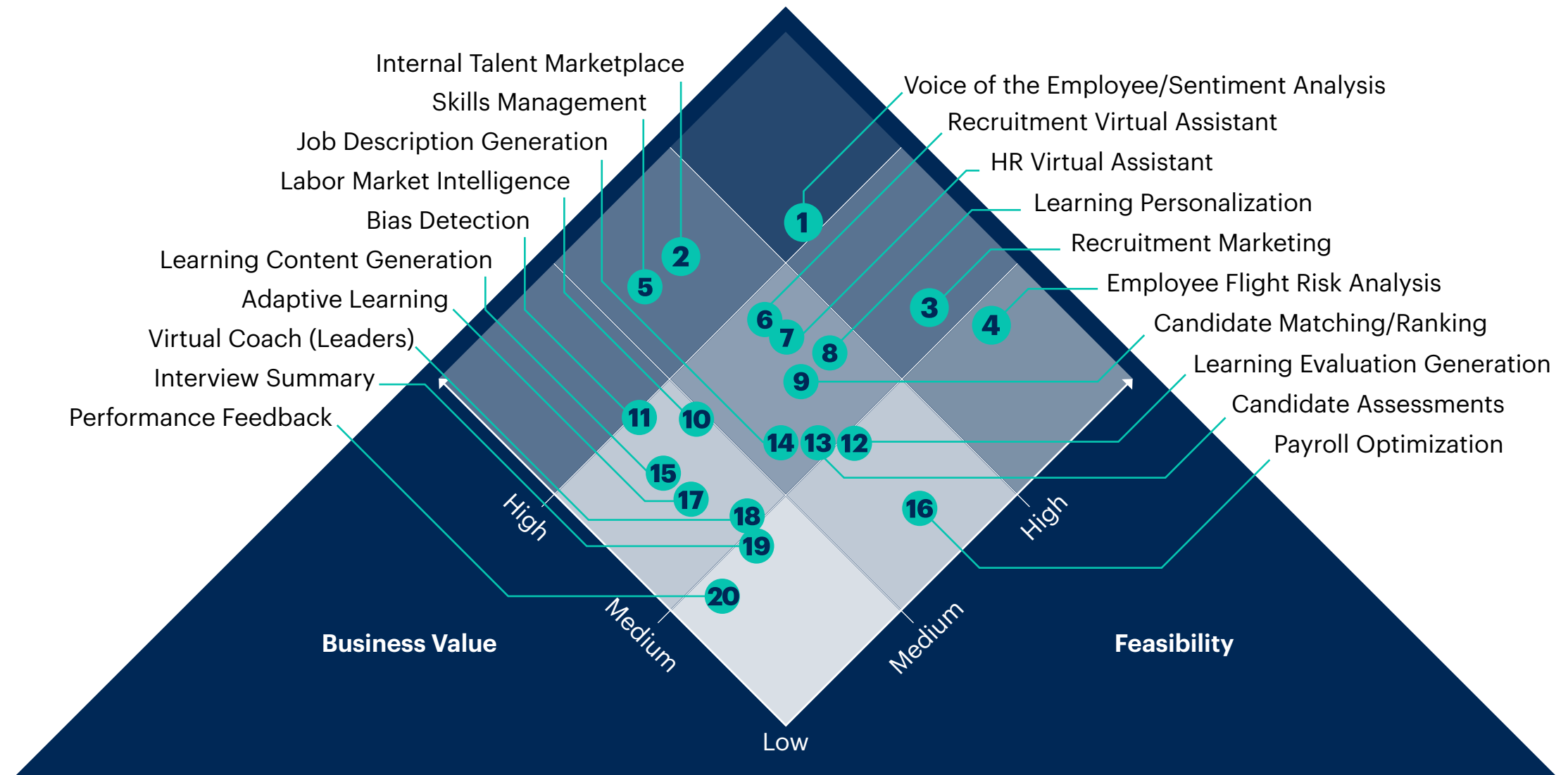
Many existing AI use cases in HR can benefit from adding a layer of generative AI. For example:

- **AI-enabled skills management** is often deployed without using generative AI. However, some providers are using generative AI with skills data to generate descriptive text about each skill or a list of typical tasks people would perform with that skill. Some might use large language models as a foundation to generate terms that will be part of their skills taxonomy.
- **Recruitment marketing** is another discipline where AI was often used to help optimize delivery of messages to maximize the value of a top-of-the-funnel recruiting pipeline. Adding generative AI capabilities enables greater personalization of messages. It can also help in the initial steps of drafting marketing campaigns or content on websites.
- **HR virtual assistants** frequently include AI features to detect the topic of an employee's request. One way generative AI is frequently deployed in conversational platforms leads to a change in the conversation flow. Instead of picking from a library of scripted answers, the AI will more commonly send a very detailed prompt to a large language model, from which an appropriate and more personalized answer will be generated. However, HR virtual assistants that include generative AI technology will continue to use other AI and orchestration technologies to function.



A growing number of use cases in HR combine generative AI with other AI capabilities. HR leaders must consider potential business value as well as feasibility when prioritizing these use cases. In Figure 1, business value includes typical HR goals like improved employee engagement, HR operational efficiency, employer brand and employee value proposition, and organizational health. Feasibility refers to technical feasibility, typical organizational readiness and external feasibility, where ethics, responsible AI and demand for legislation are considered.

» Figure 1: AI Use-Case Prism for Human Capital Management



Source: Gartner

Be Ready To Decide to Buy or Build Generative AI for HR

While evaluating AI use cases, HR leaders must decide whether they will build or buy the capability. This decision will need to be made for each use case (for more, see How to Make Informed Choices When Deploying Generative AI in HR on Page 11 of this issue). HR leaders can follow multiple paths to using generative AI by:

1. Using the features deployed within their existing HR technology stack. This scenario is common for many use cases listed in the above prism.
2. Purchasing HR technology point solutions that incorporate generative AI. In general, these solutions will be tailored to a very narrow use case, such as training managers for difficult conversations through simulations or other use cases.
3. Partnering with IT to leverage enterprisewide GenAI investments. This path will be most common for HR services use cases, such as Q&A chatbots.
4. Building capabilities directly in HR teams. This path requires the HR team to include roles for AI and application design and delivery, which will be rare.

Options will need to be compared for each prioritized use case. A common strategy and vision that can be shared within the HR team is helpful when navigating these choices. CHROs should pull together key stakeholders throughout IT, HR strategy, HR operations and HR technology teams to discuss and establish the following:

- **Vision statement** — Collect input to articulate a vision for using generative AI in the HR function. Make sure it includes statements regarding what it means for employees in HR and throughout the enterprise.
- **Innovation Priorities** — Establish which talent domains are a strategic priority. Is it upskilling and reskilling? Internal mobility? Flexibility? Cost optimization?
- **Budget** — Decide whether HR will have a dedicated budget to innovate with generative AI, or if it will need to leverage the broader IT budget.
- **Build or Buy Principles** — Agree on principles that will drive decisions to build or buy, including data, security, strategy and resource constraints.
- **Ongoing governance** — Incorporate generative AI into a broader innovation initiative for HR. Determine how the team reviews innovation quick wins and lessons learned to further prioritize initiatives. Assign roles to own the maintenance, roadmap updates, etc., as functionality is deployed.

Continue to Monitor for Generative AI HR Use Cases and Adoption Trends

New use cases for generative AI continue to emerge thanks to creative designers finding ways to tap into its capabilities to solve HR and talent challenges in previously unimagined ways. A few learning and development technology providers have started using generative AI to simulate tough conversations and provide feedback about how the learner navigated the situation. We also anticipate experiences that we could describe as “cobots” will emerge that are role-specific. For example, a recruiter cobot would detect what a recruiter is working on and propose context and task-relevant assistance.

As the innovative application of generative AI continues to evolve, the HR function must incorporate such monitoring activities into ongoing governance activities.

For now, HR leaders can look back at the June 2023 Benchmark With Garner webcast to see what HR leaders reported as the primary use cases they would be interested in using GenAI for. The areas shown in Figure 2 also represent the key areas of investment we see among HR leaders through Gartner interactions.

¹ Benchmark With Gartner: Special Edition — Navigating the Workforce Impact of Generative AI (21 June 2023). This webinar was part of a monthly series of live benchmarking sessions covering the top internal and external concerns that impact key talent decisions HR leaders need to make. These sessions enable HR leaders to discuss stands their peers are taking on timely, critical topics. Attendees represented a spectrum of industries globally with a focus on North America. Results from these sessions were compiled into a final benchmarking report.

» **Figure 2: Prioritized GenAI HR Use Cases**
Percentage of HR Leaders



n = 132 (June 2023)

Q: In the next six to 12 months, which prioritized use cases does your organization plan on using GenAI for? (Please select up to three.)

Source: Benchmark With Gartner: Special Edition — Navigating the Workforce Impact of Generative AI (21 June 2023)

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