

HR Leaders Quarterly

First Quarter 2025

AUGMENTED

HR



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Editor's Note

Technology has played a critical role in HR's evolution into a strategic business function. A new generation of HR technology is expanding the function's potential for strategic impact by automating the everyday operational tasks that traditionally occupied much of HR professionals' time. HR technology is also enabling employees and managers to self-serve on a broader and more sophisticated range of HR-related activities, including complex tasks such as candidate selection and workforce planning. At the same time, HR is integral to the process of adopting new technologies such as AI, and optimizing the ways employees use and interact with these technologies.

The challenge for HR leaders is to ensure that technology is fulfilling its promise of unleashing HR's strategic potential. With so much focus on freeing up capacity, it is all too easy to end up chasing incremental improvements to efficiency and neglecting the ways technology can really transform how HR delivers value to the organization. This issue of HR Leaders Quarterly delves into some of our recent signature research that makes the case for augmented HR: A bold new approach to technology

that focuses on HR doing "new work in new ways," rather than doing the same work more efficiently. Augmented HR starts with a visionary technology roadmap anchored in critical business capabilities and engages stakeholders throughout the organization in building up from foundational technologies to transformational ones.

In this issue, we explore the core principles of augmented HR and zoom in on the challenges of engaging stakeholders and overcoming manager resistance to adopting new HR technologies. We also look at another top-of-mind technology for CHROs: AI, specifically how to pace themselves in the race to deliver AI outcomes safely and at scale for their organization.

Of course, technology isn't the only thing driving HR's evolving role. Talent shortages and fast-evolving skills needs make strategic workforce planning (SWP) a critical strategic activity, yet many organizations struggle to build and execute effective workforce plans. Accordingly, this journal also presents our latest research on SWP, showing how CHROs can improve the process by making it simpler, more flexible and more collaborative. And while we're on the subject of planning for the future, that includes anticipating employee needs. With that in mind, we also look into the growing push for employers to provide support for employees experiencing menopause, being mindful that women aged 45 to 55 are the most rapidly expanding workforce demographic globally.

Jonah Shepp 

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How Augmented HR Unleashes HR Technology's Business Impact

by Piers Hudson

Despite the potential of HR technology to transform HR's business impact, most CHROs are trapped in low-value, capacity-focused technology approaches. Shifting to an augmented HR approach that enables HR to do new work in new ways can nearly double the business value of HR's technology investments.

Few HR Functions Meet Increasing Demands Effectively With Technology

Rapidly changing business contexts continue to translate into ever-growing demand on HR for strategic support: Over 74% of HR staff report that business leaders now rely on HR as a key enabler of the organizational strategy.¹ And yet, HR has not seen substantial increases in its budgets, or a step-change in the type of support it is providing the business. Technology has long been seen as a key to unlocking this HR demand-supply dilemma, and two-thirds of HR leaders agree that taking action to improve their approach to technology is necessary to maintain their effectiveness.²

Unfortunately, only 35% of HR leaders feel confident that their current approach to technology is helping them achieve business objectives.² Nearly four out of five HR leaders are taking a capacity-focused approach to HR technology,³ with the goal of freeing up time for their HR staff to spend on more strategic support activities. Despite their good intentions, taking such an approach means HR leaders are trapping the potential added value of HR technology, limiting its ability to directly deliver increased business impact.

Find the Hidden Traps in a Capacity-Focused Approach

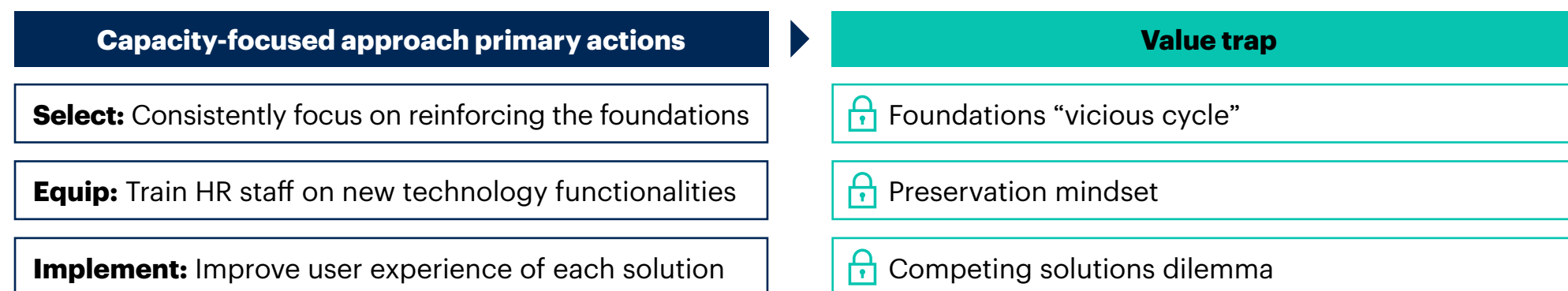
Using HR technology to free up their staff’s capacity has proven to be much harder than many HR leaders had hoped or were promised. Substandard solutions applied to unstandardized processes often replicate previous process problems in new systems and lead to stakeholder cynicism and resistance. Faced with this challenge, many HR leaders have doubled down on their capacity focus. They are trying to perfect their foundational systems to win over stakeholders, train HR staff harder on the

technology’s capabilities and hold process owners accountable for a better user experience.

The problem is, this has increasingly made the technology’s potential to free up HR capacity from transactional activities as the only goal — rather than looking at how technology must support the strategic activities that HR should be using freed-up time for. The overfocus on capacity has created three traps for the HR function (see Figure 1):

- **A vicious cycle of foundations fixing** — Faced with cynical stakeholders, HR teams continually fix and

» Figure 1: Three Common Capacity-Focused Actions and Unintended Traps



Source: Gartner

patch basic HR technology processes. This reinforces stakeholders' view of HR's administrative role and that belief that the HR technology's sole purpose is efficiency.

- **A preservation mindset** — Bombarded with information about HR technology's capabilities, HR staff feel their roles or service quality are under threat, and seek to keep the technology from encroaching on their areas of expertise.
- **A competing solutions dilemma** — Focused on the end-user experience of their individual solutions, HR process owners fail to see that their solutions are competing with one another when they reach the organization's users.

Look to Augmented HR to Unlock Technology's Value

Instead of capacity-focused approaches that trap value, CHROs should instead adopt an augmented HR approach to their technology. This focuses on HR doing “new work in new ways” with technology. Augmented HR ensures that capacity-freeing actions are in service of HR's strategic capacity — and also that technology forms an integral part of that strategic role.

Even in cases where technology has been able to free up HR's time, HR staff often remain ill-equipped to add

Augmenting HR: Enabling HR to discover and deliver new business value by doing its “new work in new ways” with technology

strategic value, while stakeholders are often unaware of their ability to do so. An augmented HR approach prevents these missed opportunities.

The augmented HR approach consists of three components:

- To overcome the foundations-fixing “vicious cycle,” CHROs need to use their technology roadmap planning processes to engage stakeholders. In particular, HR leaders must provide those stakeholders with clear transformational building blocks that show how foundational efforts build toward more transformative technologies and how these link to business capabilities.
- To overcome the preservation mindset, CHROs need to expand HR staff's viewpoints on the value they might

provide with new technologies. There are a number of reasons why HR staff often feel anxious about the rise of technology. They may not understand enough, or have the space to explore and suggest new types of value the technology could provide, or even what the business needs from HR.

- Finally, to overcome the competing solutions dilemma, CHROs need to formalize shared goals for their technology efforts and, in some cases, create new roles to actually coordinate solutions across different subfunctions. These provide an incentive for subfunctional areas to work together — but also, importantly, provide them with a common language and resources to be able to align their solutions based on the end-user's experience and needs.

Taking a “Building Blocks” View of the HR Technology Roadmap

First, HR functions must orient the technology roadmapping process toward the strategic value the organization needs from HR. This means the roadmap process must be about engaging stakeholders as much as it is about coordinating technology investments. This can be done via a building blocks approach to roadmapping. HR must work back from the organizational capability HR ultimately needs to provide, such as boosting employee productivity, and then identify the transformational technologies it needs to support this. It must then show the mix of both foundational and transformative technology “building blocks” that will achieve this. It must also show how these building blocks link up and build upon one another toward the ultimate identified capability.

This building block visualization of HR technology allows more skeptical stakeholders to sign off on smaller changes before committing to larger ones. Furthermore, it ensures more ambitious and demanding stakeholders can see the long-term intent of the roadmap, but also understand why HR may not be able to progress on everything at once.

Expanding HR Staff’s Viewpoints on Value

Second, CHROs must broaden HR staff’s views and perspectives on technology and help them understand the potential of technology as a partner in driving organizational success. These expanded viewpoints are not just about what the new technology can do, but also about new ways technology can bring value to the business.

One way CHROs can do this is by building more regular and constructive dialogue between HR staff and vendors. HR functions should expose vendors to both their longer-term goals and also the process and capability barriers that hinder technology implementation in their organization. This allows vendors to engage HR staff more directly and at an earlier stage in building solutions to technology problems, while also exposing the HR team to the vendor’s potential future technology capabilities.

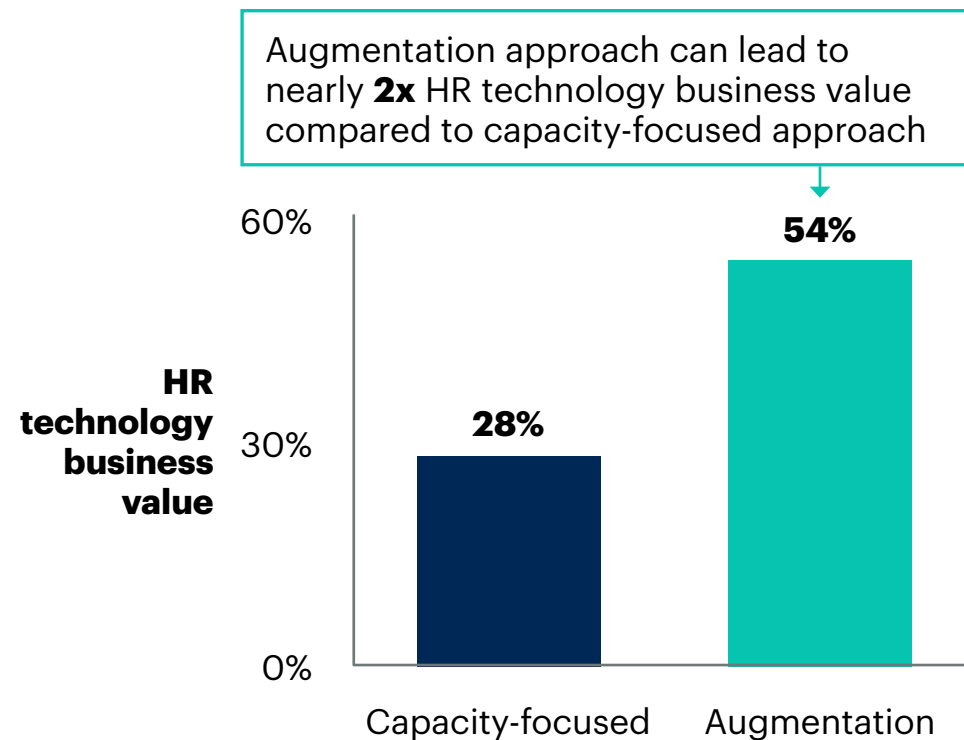
This greater exposure to the potential value encourages HR staff to embrace technology as an enabler rather than a threat.

Realigning Goals and Roles for a Coherent Technology Experience

Finally, CHROs should create a more seamless experience with HR technology by creating shared goals that enable HR process leaders to think beyond their own process areas and create more holistic technology solutions. To begin, establish simple, common metrics that focus on the end-user experience and that are consistent across all solutions. Also, measure at a level that shows the impact of the whole suite of different HR technology solutions on the end user.

However, in some cases, HR functions will need to go further than this by assigning specific roles to act as the facilitators of collaboration between different process leads. This is particularly true in spaces where the technology market is fragmented and capabilities need to be delivered through multiple technology solutions. CHROs should create formalized “product manager” roles in these areas to focus on the overall delivery of a portfolio of solutions and constantly encourage manager and employee adoption by refreshing and adding new offerings.

» **Figure 2: Maximum Impact of Capacity-Focused and Augmentation Approaches on HR Technology Business Value**



n = 602 HR staff

Source: 2024 Gartner Driving Impact Through Technology Employee Survey

Double HR Technology’s Business Value

By embracing technology and making significant contributions through augmented approaches, organizations can optimize their business value (see Figure 2). Gartner measured technology’s business value by looking for both the widespread adoption of HR technology in HR’s work, and the alignment of this technology to high-impact types of work. Organizations taking an augmented approach to their HR technology achieved nearly double the technology business value of HR functions pursuing a capacity-focused approach.²

By effectively leveraging technology and embracing an augmented HR approach, organizations can unlock the full potential of their HR technology and maximize HR’s impact on business value. This approach allows HR to harness the capabilities of technology to enhance human contributions, resulting in increased efficiency, innovation and strategic impact for the function.

¹ 2024 Gartner Driving Impact through Technology Employee Survey. This survey was conducted to understand the employee experiences, perspectives, and perceptions with current HR approaches to maximizing technology efforts and to identify the urgency drivers of augmented HR. The research was conducted online from 23 January 2024 through 14 February 2024 and contains responses from 602 HR staff and 2,035 non-HR staff, with representation across geographies, industries, and organizational size.

² 2024 Gartner Driving Impact Through Technology HR Leader Survey. This survey was conducted to understand how HR leaders were maximizing business value using HR technology. The survey was conducted online from 15 January through 9 February 2024 and contains responses from 85 HR leaders representing various regions and industries.

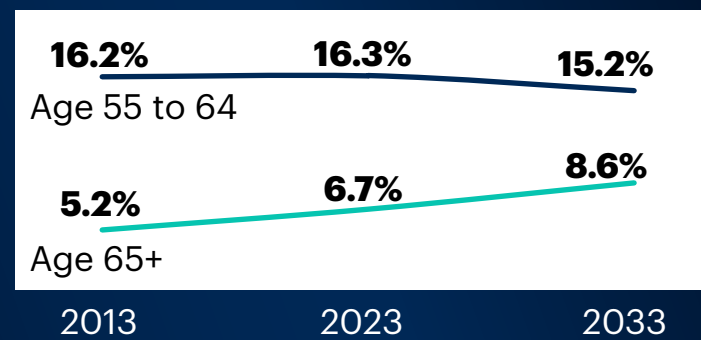
³ 2023 Gartner Augmented HR Client Poll. This survey was conducted online from 15 through 30 November 2023 to understand the goals HR leaders are prioritizing for both existing and emerging technologies in the function and the potential barriers to success. In total, 33 HR leaders participated (members of Gartner’s Research Circle, a Gartner-managed panel). Results included respondents from North America (n = 20), EMEA (n = 8), Asia/Pacific (n = 4) and Latin America (n = 1). 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.

Strategies to Prepare for an Aging Workforce

by Rashleen K. Arora and Aanya Jain

In the U.S. and other large economies, the share of the workforce over the age of 65 is growing, presenting both challenges and opportunities for organizations. HR leaders must act to address skill gaps and ensure effective knowledge transfer to retain these employees' expertise as they approach retirement.

US Labor Force Share, by Age Group



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Why is it concerning?

HR leaders foresee knowledge/expertise loss due to retiring employees (67%), difficulties in succession planning due to leaders retiring (52%) and skill gaps for aging workers due to a fast-evolving work environment (52%) as the three most common impacts of an aging workforce on their organization.¹



47% of HR leaders say the **impact of an aging workforce is a concern** for their organization over the next 3-5 years.¹

The most progressive HR leaders are investing in flexibility, employment models and technologies that extend the working lives of their most experienced employees, whilst exploring how AI can be used to capture and democratize institutional knowledge across the enterprise.

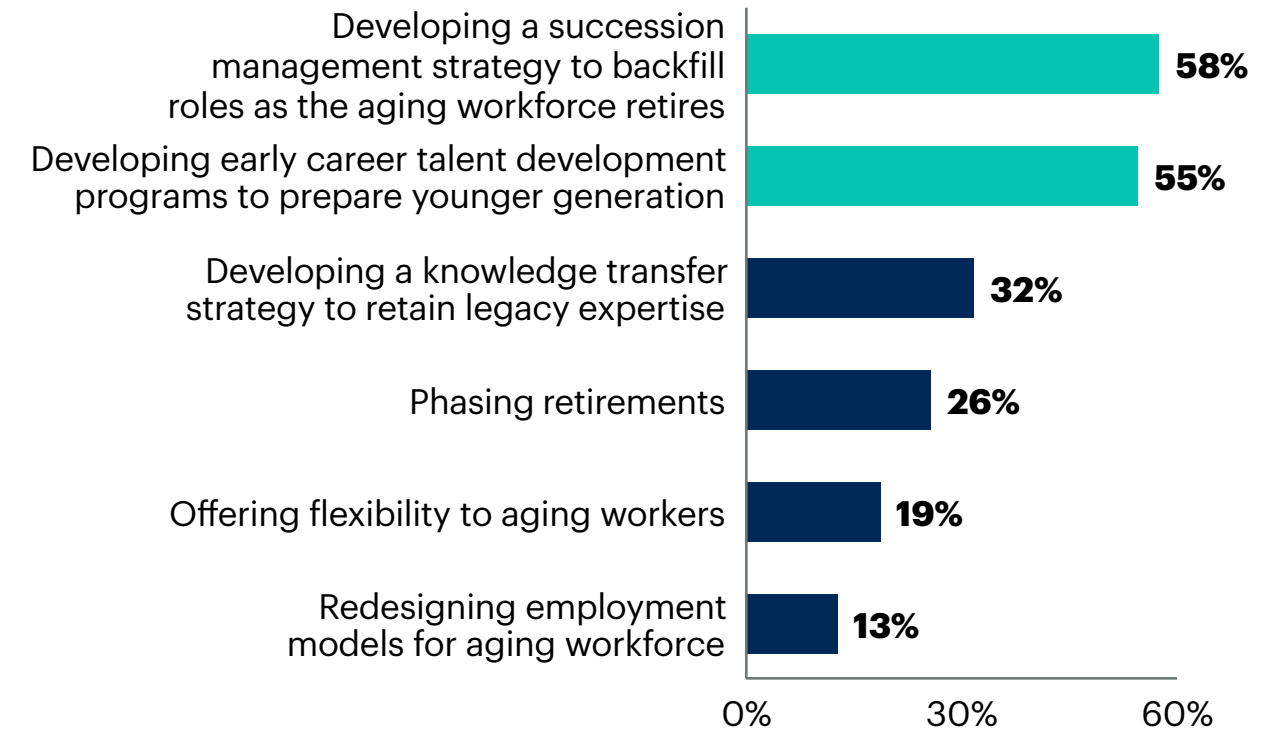


Aaron McEwan
VP Advisory,
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How are HR leaders responding?

HR leaders are focusing on developing succession management strategies (58%) and early career talent development programs (55%) to address the effects of high retirement rates due to an aging workforce, enabling them to facilitate smooth career transitions within the organization.

Top Measures HR Leaders are Taking/Planning to Take to Mitigate the Challenges of Aging Workforce¹



n = 31-43 HR Leaders


Source: Source: Benchmark With Gartner: Workplace Implications Post U.S. Election and AI Jobs Displacement (Nov 2024)

Note: Responses not shown include redesigning aging worker roles to spend more time on mentorship (10%), redesigning L&D strategy to also cater to aging workforce (6%), we are not taking any measures nor plan to take any measures (10%)

New-Collar Jobs: Skills Over Degrees

by Rashleen K. Arora and Aanya Jain

New-collar jobs emphasize skills and competencies over traditional academic credentials. These roles, often in technology and digital fields, are more accessible to employees from nontraditional educational pathways like community colleges and bootcamps. HR leaders are increasingly integrating new-collar roles into talent strategies to widen the talent pool, address skills gaps and foster a more adaptable workforce.



The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that **between 2020 and 2030, 60% of new jobs** will be new-collar occupations that won't require any type of college degree.

Source: Forbes, February 2024

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Why is it concerning?



58% of HR leaders say verifying skills and competencies will pose a greater challenge than verifying degrees in incorporating new-collar jobs to their talent strategies.

HR leaders are increasingly moving towards skills-based recruiting and talent management, prioritizing skills and experiences over degrees. While many organizations on this journey are prioritizing their efforts within talent acquisition, this shift will require coordinated efforts across various HR workstreams like workforce planning and L&D. It will also require a mindset shift for leaders and managers to ensure the organization's needs are being met while creating opportunities for unconventional talent.

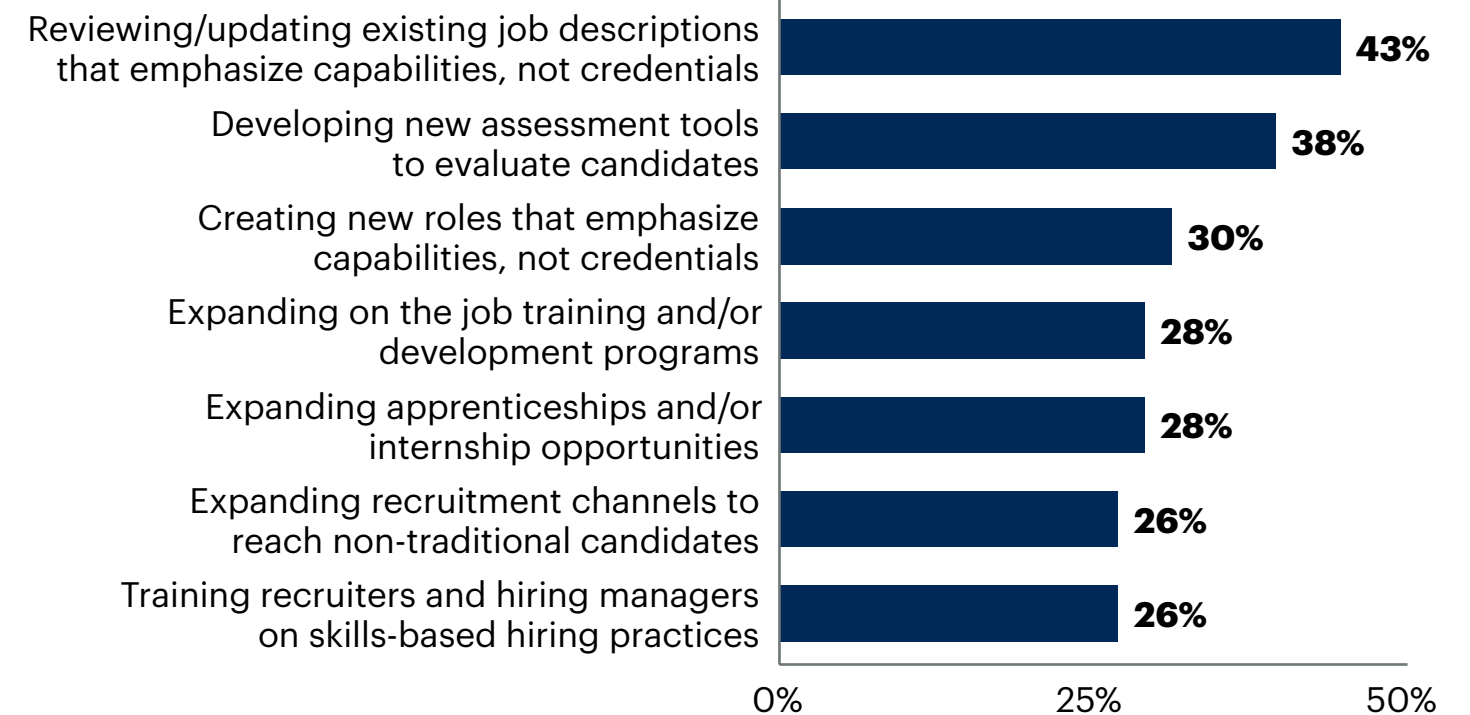


Jasleen Kaur
Sr. Principal, Advisory
Human Resources

How are HR leaders responding?

- Most organizations (67%) are exploring, planning to incorporate or already incorporating new-collar jobs into their talent strategy.
- To adapt their talent strategies to incorporate new-collar jobs, HR leaders are primarily focusing on **updating job descriptions** to emphasize capabilities and not credentials, as well as **developing new tools** to evaluate candidates on these criteria.

Top Measures HR Leaders are Anticipating to Incorporate New-Collar Jobs into Talent Strategy



n = 40-61 HR Leaders

Source: Benchmark with Gartner: GenAI Workforce Disruption and New-Collar Jobs (Jan 2025)

Note: Responses not shown include my organization is not planning to incorporate new-collar jobs (8%), my organization does not anticipate adapting its talent strategy to be able to incorporate new collar-jobs (8%), other (2%)



Drive Stakeholder Buy-in for HR's Technology Transformation

by Nini Longoria

Transformative technology is crucial, but CHROs struggle to break the cycle of maintaining and investing in only foundational technology. Learn how to align foundational HR capabilities with transformative technology to build stakeholder buy-in for more ambitious technology goals.



Despite needing to better use technology to meet increasing strategic demands,¹ only 24% of HR functions are maximizing their HR technology business value (see Note 1).² Surprisingly, HR's struggle to maximize business value from their technology is not entirely the result of how advanced their technology is. In fact, half of the HR functions that are maximizing their HR technology business value are doing so with basic technology. Rather, HR's struggle to maximize their business value is more dependent on the way HR functions are utilizing their technology.²

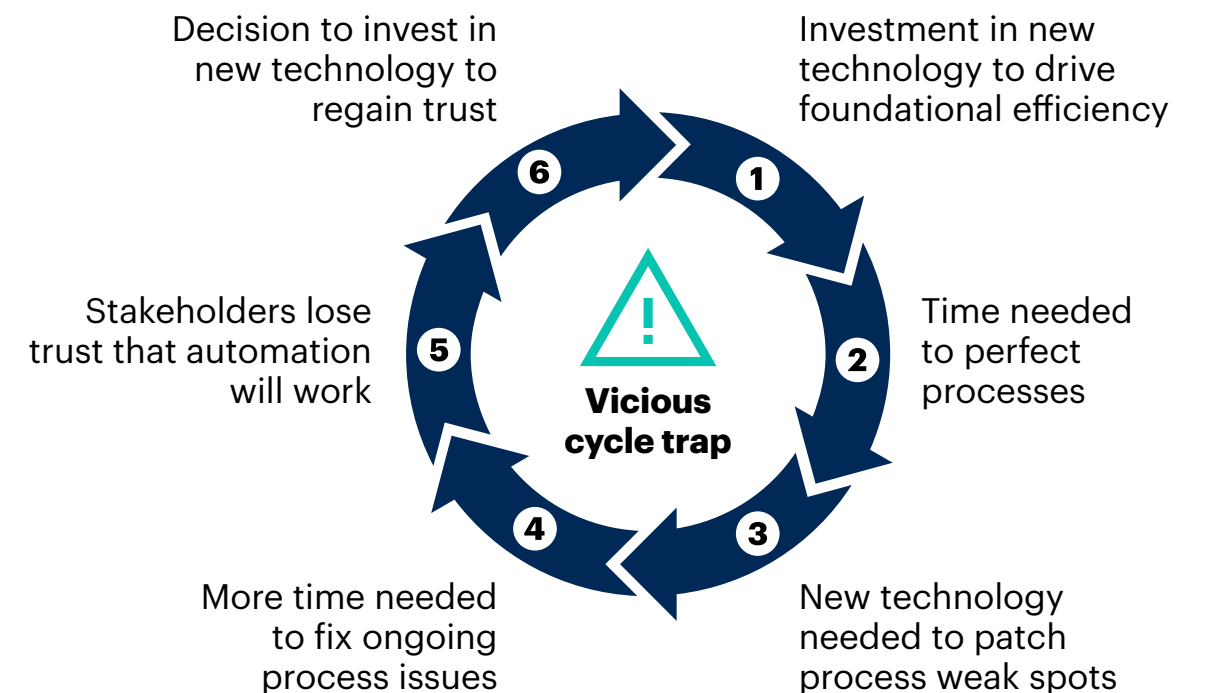
For most HR leaders, the approach to using their technology remains “capacity-focused.” Seventy-nine percent of HR leaders agree that technology’s main role is to free staff capacity for strategic work (see Note 2).³ More HR leaders select functional efficiency as their primary HR technology goal when defining HR technology strategy.¹

One critical challenge that a narrow capacity focus creates is that it limits HR leaders’ ability to engage business stakeholders to buy more transformative technology investments — transformative technologies that can add greater business value than efficiency-driven investments are likely to achieve. In fact, HR leaders responded that justifying and securing investments was one of the top three hurdles they face when it comes to HR technology.⁴

Fixating only on technology foundations (such as automation and efficiency), while important, unwittingly traps HR functions into a “vicious cycle” where they must consistently reinforce the value of these foundations with their stakeholders (see Figure 1).

» **Figure 1: The Foundations’ “Vicious Cycle”**

Trap created by consistently reinforcing technology foundations



Source: Gartner

A “**capacity-focused**” approach — automating to free up staff capacity for strategic work — inadvertently traps technology’s added value.

As HR becomes caught in this cycle of fixing its technology foundations to persuade stakeholders of their competence, it inadvertently limits stakeholders' view of what they are capable of accomplishing with better technology, damaging their reputation in the process.²

Ultimately, a capacity-focused HR technology approach creates stakeholder doubt in HR's ability to effectively deploy technology, reduces buy-in for more transformative initiatives, and causes larger-scale negative HR technology perceptions. To overcome these challenges, CHROs need to adopt an "augmented HR" approach.

Taking an augmented HR approach can help solve the vicious cycle trap that HR encounters when it tries to generate greater business value from HR technology. Augmented HR means focusing on the new work that HR might be able to do in new ways with

technology. For stakeholder management, augmented HR means using its technology roadmapping process as a tool to engage stakeholders as much as a resource planning and sequencing exercise.

Technology Roadmaps as a Stakeholder Engagement Tool

Most HR leaders use technology roadmaps to plan out which technologies they want to distribute their resources to in an effort to maximize delivering value from their technology investments.^{5,6} Yet, strategic impact remains an elusive target for HR. Despite these attempts to plan technology around value, only 30% of HR functions believe they are actually getting high impact contributions from their technology.²

Clearly, using technology roadmaps as just a planning document is a missed opportunity. To improve the impact and stakeholder buy-in of technology roadmaps, CHROs need to shift their

mindsets and begin viewing roadmaps as dynamic stakeholder engagement tools, rather than static planning documents.

To do this, CHROs should use the roadmap planning process as an opportunity to first engage stakeholders around long-term capabilities that stakeholders want HR to prioritize. Next, they should ask themselves, "What are the business capabilities that the business wants HR to bring?" Then, CHROs must align both the foundational and transformational technologies to those capabilities.

By leading with capabilities, technology roadmaps become an engagement tool that CHROs can leverage to show stakeholders how technology goals are linked to prioritized business capabilities and foundational technologies that are aligned with transformational technology initiatives.

Use Building Blocks in Technology Roadmaps for Clarity and Consumability

To escape the vicious cycle trap, CHROs need to reestablish stakeholder trust in HR's ability to drive transformative technology initiatives. Leveraging technology roadmaps for stakeholder engagement provides a starting point, but being able to communicate the roadmap to stakeholders with clarity and consumability is key. A "building blocks" approach does just that — it is all about making HR's move to more transformative technology more digestible for stakeholders (see Note 3).

When using a building blocks approach within a roadmap, there are three main technology initiative categories:

- Foundational technology
- Transformational technology
- Business capabilities



Building blocks ensure leaders have confidence in technology transformations and allow HR to establish balance between transformative goals and their foundational capabilities.

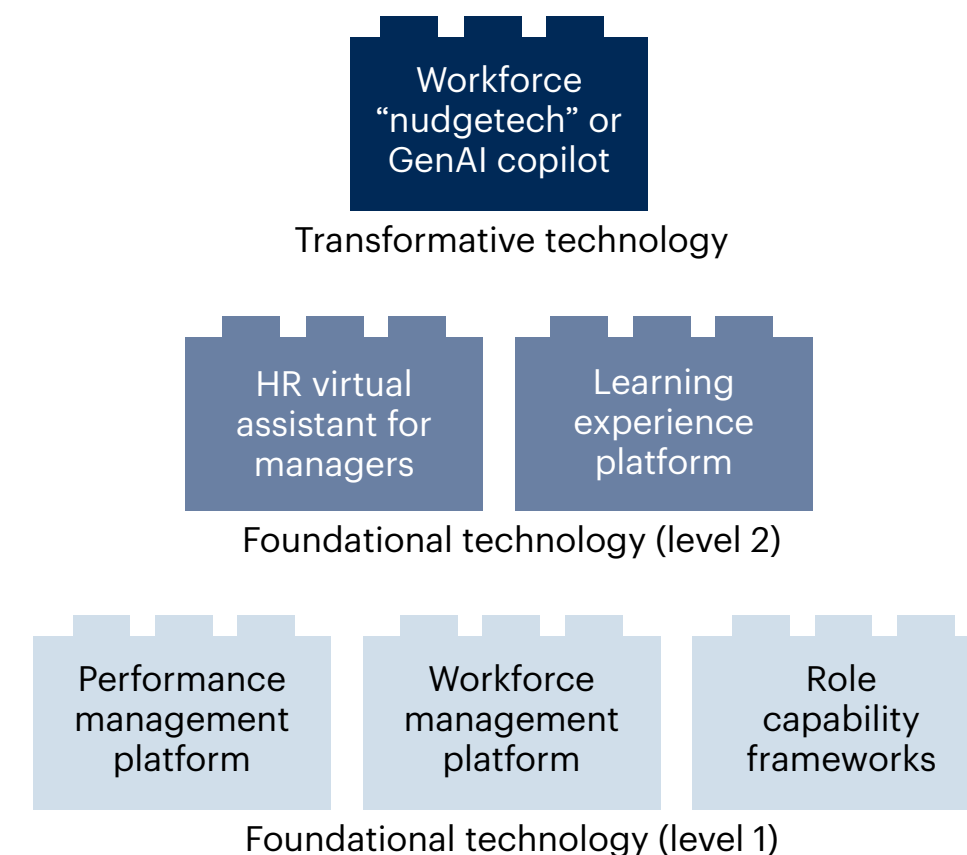
Instead of engaging stakeholders first with new technology and its functionality, a building blocks strategy begins with engaging stakeholders around the capabilities they want HR to prioritize. HR then lists all the foundational and transformative technologies and other changes that might be needed to deliver better these capabilities to the business.

This means the technology roadmap is broken down into smaller and easier-to-digest units for stakeholders — but importantly, HR needs to link these different categories of initiatives together. This shows, for example, how foundational technology can progress to deliver transformational technology changes (see Figure 2). The original categories should remain visible in the roadmap to the stakeholders, for example, by color-coding them. That way, stakeholders can see the overall balance of foundational and transformative work in the roadmap and can also see why, in some cases, time will be needed to begin on the foundational work.

Figure 2 illustrates how building blocks help stakeholders see foundational and transformational technologies working together and progressing toward transformational business capabilities.

» Figure 2: Technology Roadmap Building Blocks

Business capability of HR: Drive employee productivity



Source: Gartner

CHROs generate stakeholder confidence through the building blocks approach because:

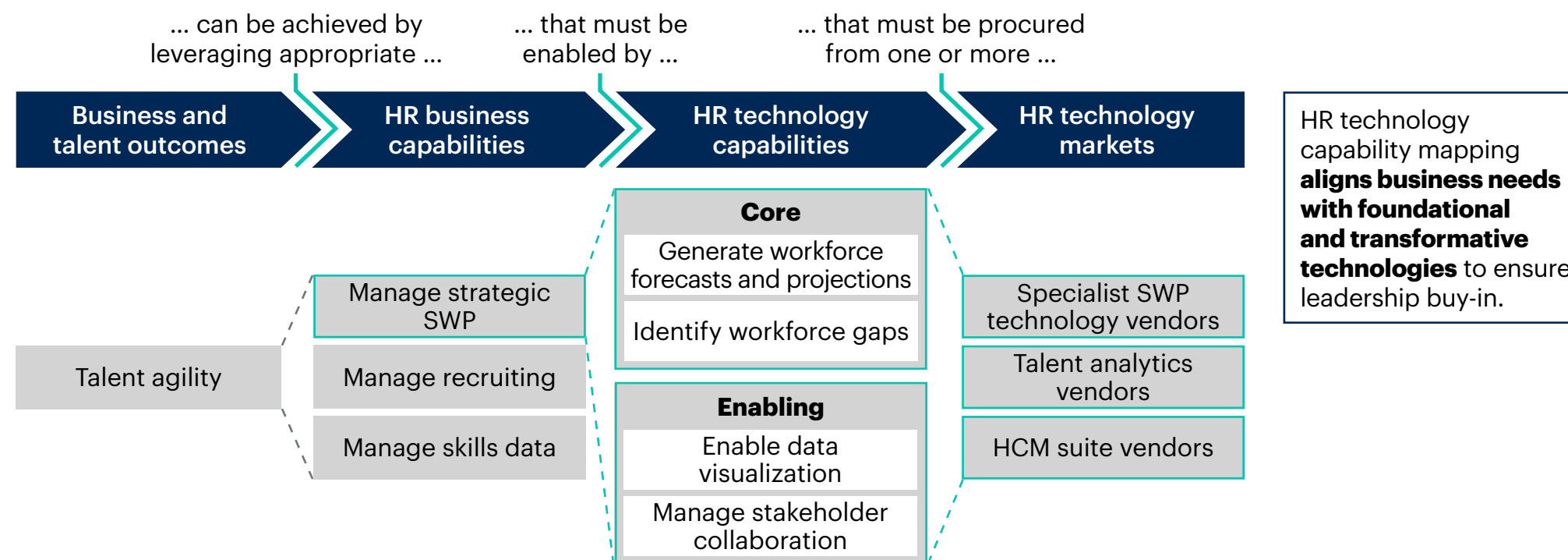
- **Small changes reassure risk-averse stakeholders.** Instead of asking leaders to sign off on larger transformative goals, CHROs and their teams should ask for sign off on smaller changes. Building blocks show leaders how foundational technologies lead to transformational initiatives and added value to drive buy-in.
- **Visualization reduces stakeholder impatience.** Color-coding and sequencing technologies allow leaders to quickly see how building blocks can lead to transformative changes. Leaders can visualize timelines clearly, understanding when technology delivery is feasible. This minimizes impatience during deployment.
- **Consumable units increase stakeholder confidence in deployment and agility.** Transformative technology is broken down into more consumable units and aligned to foundational technologies, striking a balance between transformative goals and their foundational capabilities. This also means HR can change direction more easily if conditions change.

Using building blocks ensures that technology initiatives will be aligned to business needs, and that both foundational

and transformative technologies can be deployed effectively via small changes and consumable units (see Figure 3). Embedding building blocks into HR's technology roadmap can release CHROs from the vicious cycle, increase stakeholder confidence and buy-in, and deliver business value by unlocking technology's transformative capabilities.

Simply showing stakeholders better technology business cases isn't always enough to overcome stakeholder skepticism in HR's ability to drive technology transformation efforts. One company that implemented a building blocks strategy to engage stakeholders and rollout more ambitious technology initiatives is Takeda.

» **Figure 3: Gartner's HR Technology Capability Mapping**
Illustrative



Source: Gartner

HR Technology Acceleration Building Blocks

To unify stakeholders behind its HR technology goals, Takeda embedded a “building blocks” approach within its technology roadmap to increase leadership confidence and accelerate technology transformation.

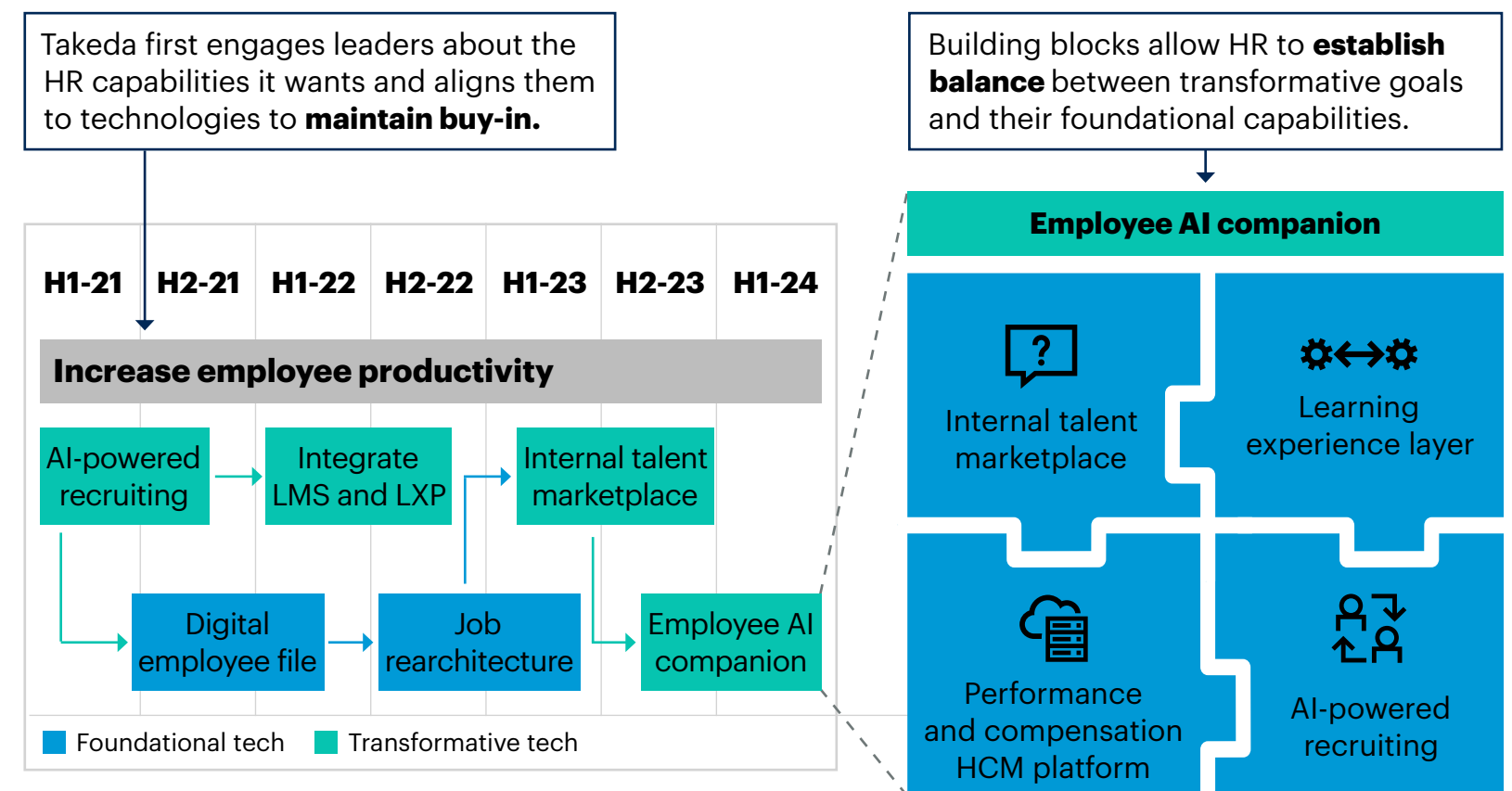
Before building a technology strategy, Takeda first engages leaders about the capabilities they want HR to prioritize. Then, Takeda maps these capabilities to technologies in its roadmap, assuring leaders that transformation efforts align with business objectives. To build leadership confidence, transformative technologies are broken down into consumable units and aligned to foundational building blocks in the roadmap (see Figure 4).

Takeda benefits from its building blocks approach in several ways. For instance, it can use the roadmap

to trial early vendor technologies that may have potential for more innovative solutions.

Before trialing new technologies, Takeda uses its roadmap to identify potential vendors and only partners with vendors that are aligned to its prioritized capabilities. This accelerates value discovery, allowing Takeda to stay agile when monitoring new technology developments and gives HR leaders a strategy to “filter” vendor solutions in the market. By taking an early-mover approach, Takeda is able to identify early technology problems, ask targeted questions and move quickly to deploy new technologies – building momentum toward more transformative technology changes.

» **Figure 4: Takeda’s Technology Roadmap Building Blocks**
Illustrative



Source: Adapted from Takeda

Bottom Line

CHROs who adopt an augmented approach to their technology strategy can deliver better strategic impact. Using a building block approach embedded in HR technology roadmaps can increase stakeholder buy-in to HR's transformative technology initiatives, and avoid HR getting stuck in the vicious cycle of foundation fixes. Breaking down HR's technology roadmap into consumable units increases stakeholder confidence, allows for more efficient technology rollouts, and ultimately helps unlock the potential for transformative technologies to increase HR's impact on business outcomes.

Note 1: HR Technology Business Value

HR Technology Business Value (HRTBV) is a time management method based on 25-minute stretches of focused work broken up with five-minute breaks.

Note 2: Explanation of Data

This datapoint was derived from summing participants' top 3 Likert agreement scores (i.e., "somewhat agree," "agree," and "strongly agree") for the statement, "The main role of technology in HR is to free up capacity to deploy higher value initiatives."

Note 3: Building Blocks Approach

Though versions of this have been similar to other past approaches, a **building blocks** approach narrows in on how to best communicate roadmaps for stakeholder engagement. It is important to note that every approach comes with limitations.

¹ 2024 Gartner Driving Impact Through Technology HR Leaders Survey. This survey was conducted to understand how HR leaders were maximizing business value using HR technology. The survey was conducted online from 15 January through 9 February 2024 and contains responses from 85 HR leaders representing various regions and industries. This survey was designed and developed by Gartner's HR Practice research team.

² 2024 Gartner Driving Impact Through Technology Employee Survey. This survey was conducted to understand the employee experiences, perspectives, and perceptions with current HR approaches to maximizing technology efforts and to identify the urgency drivers of Augmented HR. The research was conducted online from 23 January 2024 through 14 February 2024 and contains responses from 602 HR staff and 2,035 non-HR staff, with representation across geographies, industries, and organizational size. The survey was designed by Gartner's HR Practice research team.

³ 2023 Gartner Augmented HR Client Poll. This survey was conducted online from 15 through 30 November 2023 to understand the goals HR leaders are prioritizing for both existing and emerging technologies in the function and the potential barriers to success. In total, 33 HR leaders participated (members of Gartner's Research Circle, a Gartner-managed panel). Results included respondents from North America (n = 20), EMEA (n = 8), Asia/Pacific (n = 4) and Latin America (n = 1). 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.

⁴ 2023 Gartner HR Technology Priorities Survey. This survey set out to learn about the most critical HR technology issues impacting HR leaders in order to improve key initiative (KI) planning. Two surveys were conducted. The first was a client survey from 9 November through 15 December 2023, 151 responses were received. The second was a funded non-client survey from 10 November through 12 December 2023, 198 responses were received. Respondents were full-time, director or above in the HR, IT, or executive management function with authority in budget and purchasing decisions. The survey was designed and developed by Gartner's HR Practice research team.

⁵ Quick Answer: What Is HR Business Capability Modeling for Technology Strategy?

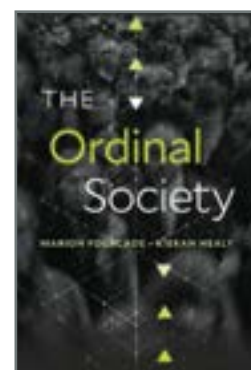
⁶ 2023 Gartner HR Technology Leader Survey. This survey was conducted to understand various aspects of the state of the HR technology function. The survey asked about things like budget, team structure, and program implementation. The first attempt of this survey was fielded in July 2022, with the second attempt launching in February 2023. The data from each are combined to achieve a total sample size of 48 HR technology leaders. The survey was designed and fielded by the HR Practice research team.



Reading List

by Alexander Kirss and Nini Longoria

HR leaders' time is precious, and the supply of literature marketed to executives is vast. With that in mind, this new feature offers a list of books, both new and old, that we believe can help HR leaders confront some of the major challenges they face today.



The Ordinal Society

Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy

Harvard University Press, 2024

HR functions are awash with workforce data and searching for ways to use it. Yet, how beneficial is this widespread “data imperative,” or “the idea that the long-term profitability of organizations depends on the collection and exploitation of data?” According to sociologists Marion Fourcade and Kieran Healy, HR leaders should tread carefully.

Exploiting the high volume of rich, personalized data employees generate, they warn, risks turning the workplace into an “ordinal society,” or “a society oriented toward, justified by, and governed through measurement.”

This warning may sound familiar. HR leaders are increasingly aware of how some HR data analysis and categorization activities (think resume sorting, skills-based role-matching or performance management) can yield groupings that are shockingly opaque and riddled with potential bias. Fourcade and Healy, however, place these known pitfalls in a novel, broader conceptual framework.

The Ordinal Society provides a creative, clear-eyed, and future-oriented map to one of today’s largest HR dilemmas: how to appropriately collect and analyze data when doing so can unintentionally – but fundamentally – reshape both the decisions leaders make and employees’ mindset.



Becoming a Talent Magnet

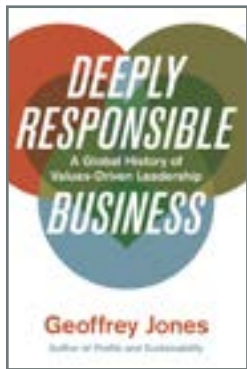
Mark Morris (editor)

Oxford University Press, 2024

The state of talent acquisition (TA) is in flux due to technological progress, shifting employee expectations and other trends. HR leaders have struggled to keep up with evolving TA practices that, given their rapid adoption, have little research to back them up.

Becoming a Talent Magnet provides research-backed, actionable steps (e.g., how to plan, execute and analyze a study to measure employee value proposition effectiveness) for HR leaders to attract talent from workforce planning to onboarding. Real-world examples from industry leaders such as Amazon and Microsoft anchor the advice in proven, practical solutions.

Morris and his contributors lay out new critiques of research blind spots, offer suggestions for future research streams, and showcase both familiar practices such as video assessments and emerging ones such as virtual simulation. Packed with checklists, phased approaches and cautionary insights on emerging technologies, this book is an excellent starting point for HR leaders to understand the current and future state of TA.



Deeply Responsible Business

Geoffrey Jones

Harvard University Press, 2023

In 2024 many organizations pulled back on their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), environmental, social and governance (ESG) and sustainability commitments. Geoffrey Jones' far-reaching history of "deeply responsible" businesses – those that "have gone beyond narrow profit seeking" – provides important context for understanding these changes.

A sincere commitment to social causes is costly, which only some businesses can offset through the positive reputation they acquire. As a result, although there have always been businesses that pursue social purpose alongside profits, Jones acknowledges that "deeply responsible businesses have never been the norm." Beyond their costs, these commitments are often driven by the values and views of individual leaders. These leaders self-select into industries and organizations where their beliefs are easier to put into practice and can be difficult to replace.

Whether they themselves are supportive of DEI and ESG goals or not, understanding how internal and external conflicts over these goals have played out in the past will help HR leaders reflect on whether – and if so how – they want to champion these goals at their organization today.



Teams that Work

Scott Tannenbaum and Eduardo Salas

Oxford University Press, 2024

Many leaders and managers have a goal this year of increasing collaboration and team effectiveness. Revisiting Scott Tannenbaum and Eduardo Salas' analysis – recently reissued in paperback and well on its way to becoming a modern classic – is a great place to start.

The body of academic and practitioner work on team effectiveness is massive, but Tannenbaum and Salas deftly summarize the most important findings. More importantly, they go beyond the trite acknowledgement that not all teams are the same to provide both a general effectiveness framework and cues for how to identify the most relevant drivers to activate on a given team.

Specifically, there are seven drivers of team effectiveness that leaders must consider: capabilities, cooperation, coordination, communication, cognitions, conditions and coaching. It's a dense framework, but Tannenbaum and Salas make it accessible by providing concise discussions of the implications of their original field research and academic meta-analyses, and by encouraging readers to reflect on their own team experience via regular thought experiments. Teams that Work is successful as both a general primer on team effectiveness and a practical guide for how leaders and managers can take action with their team.

Overcoming Manager Resistance to HR's Next Wave of Technology

by Piers Hudson

As HR technologies take on more of managers' core tasks, CHROs are challenged to overcome manager resistance to change. Use this article to help you analyze managers' predispositions toward different HR technologies and target change management efforts to their attitudes and professional context.

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New Technologies Generate New Adoption Challenges

Nearly half of HR technology leaders identify manager and employee adoption of new technologies as one of their top three hurdles for success.¹ HR functions often try to drive adoption by promoting the features and functionality of new systems — but these efforts can fail to address more context-specific barriers that managers face for adopting HR’s newer generation of technologies.

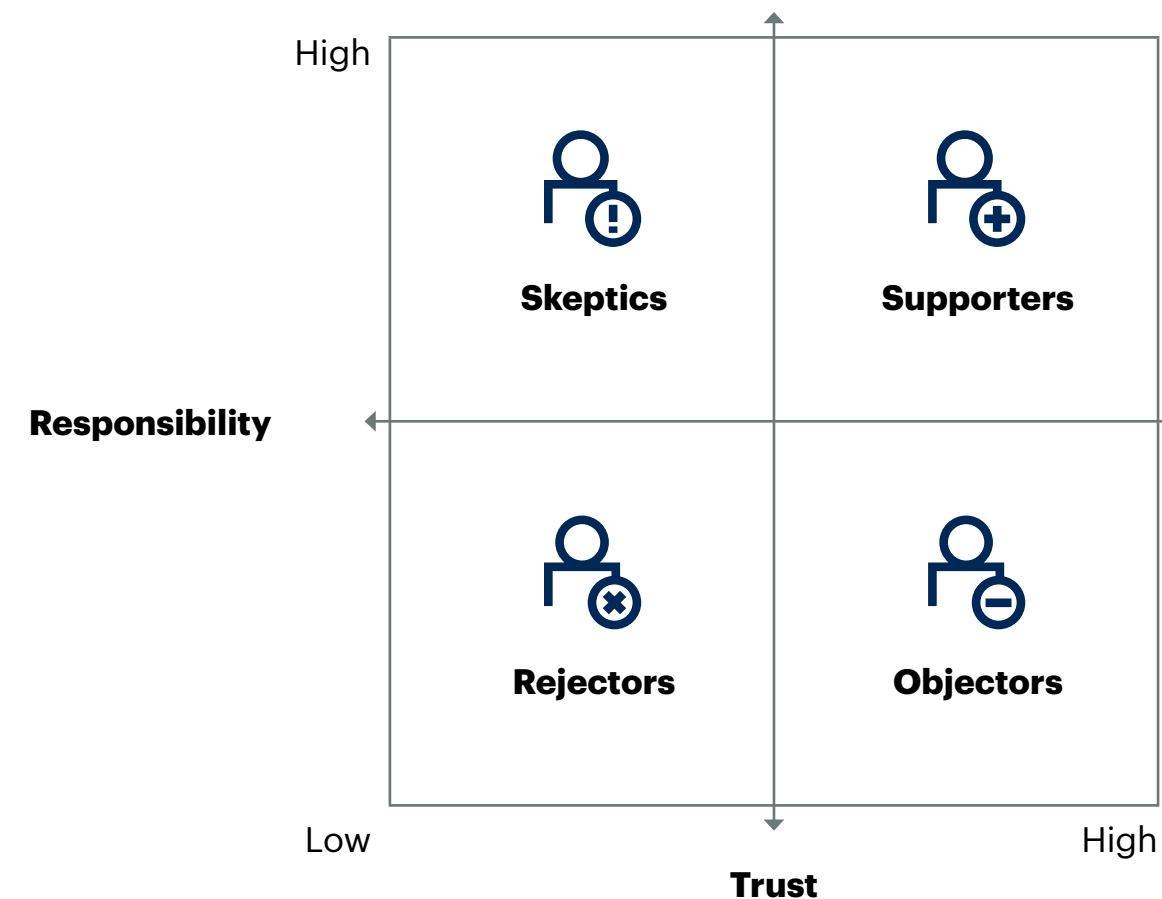
Past HR technologies predominantly moved transactional HR tasks, such as registering employees for benefits or adjusting their shifts, to managers to allow them to self-serve. New HR technologies support tasks that have a greater impact on a manager’s team and their own role. Using technology to complete a task like choosing between two candidates for a role, recommending a career direction to a team member or deciding on bonus levels between team members, will raise new questions for managers. They will wonder about how responsible they should be for these “HR-related” tasks, and how much they trust a system to do a good job helping to perform them.

The good news is that by analyzing managers’ sense of responsibility for the tasks and their likely trust in the technology’s capabilities, it is possible to tailor change efforts toward managers’ profiles (see Figure 1):

- **Supporter or rejector profiles:** These managers will feel either high or low on both sense of responsibility for the task, and trust in the technology.
- **Objector profile:** These managers may trust the technology but not feel responsible for the task.
- **Skeptic profile:** While some managers may feel responsible for a task, these managers may lack trust in a system’s capabilities to do it.

In all cases, CHROs should engage with managers to better understand their likely profiles, then target change efforts accordingly to ensure they do not waste time and resources.

» Figure 1: Manager Profiles Toward HR Technology



Source: Gartner

Overcoming Objectors’ Low Sense of Responsibility

Managers already feel a mixed level of responsibility for tasks that HR has asked them to complete in technology systems, from registering employee moves to recording performance assessments and employee goals. Overall, 45% of managers say that they only feel responsible to “some” or “a little” extent — or “not at all” — for the tasks HR has already put into self-service systems.² However, responses vary considerably by industry, level and function.

Several factors influence how responsible managers feel for these tasks. Managers are more likely to feel a lower sense of responsibility if the task has to be done separately from other job tasks, owing to the structure of the manager’s workday or workplace. Managers are also likely to feel a lower sense of responsibility for HR tasks if they are particularly rewarded for expertise that is not reliant on their people management abilities, such as specialist scientific or legal knowledge.²

Importantly, these factors are also mediated by how roles are structured. Even if a manager’s physical context does not lend itself to completing HR-related tasks (for example,

a foreman on a construction site), these managers can still feel responsible, if their roles are clearly structured, to make these tasks their responsibility. How HR behaves will also influence this: 61% of HR employees say they will do a task a line manager asks them to do, even if they know it should be part of the manager’s responsibility.³ This creates a challenge to driving adoption among objector managers. The evidence shows that most important for their technology adoption is that managers can see how the task is relevant to their other day-to-day work. Managers want to be sure they won’t be duplicating HR’s work, and that the task fits with other systems they use.

Communication to objector manager profiles therefore needs to highlight how completing tasks in HR technology systems contributes to their primary job responsibilities. Managers are more likely to accept responsibility for these tasks if they can see a clear connection to their teams’ day-to-day work and understand how engaging with HR technology systems can make them better operational managers. Global pharmaceutical company GSK embodied this in the rollout of a new internal talent marketplace system by ensuring business areas tailored initial pilots to different distinct business needs.



Case in Point
GlaxoSmithKline

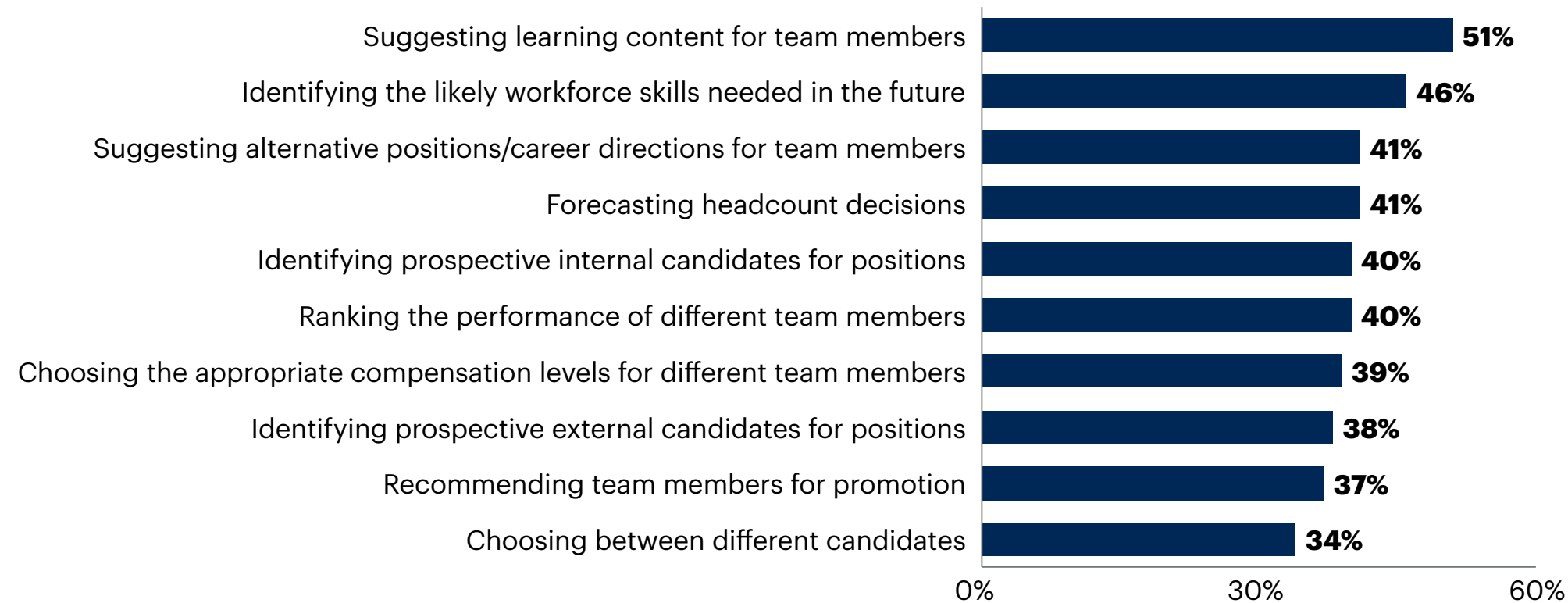


Tailoring Technology Pilots to Business Goals at GSK

GSK’s talent management team recognized that rollout of an internal talent marketplace would require a high level of commitment from managers — both to adopting the system and to practicing the right supporting management behaviors. Knowing this, it would not allow a pilot to take place until the HR business partner and managers in an area could identify the business challenge the technology would help solve for them. This led to a diverse set of pilots with different aims — for example, manufacturing focused the new tool on building “manufacturing 2.0” skills through giving employees exposure to specific technology projects, whereas a data analytics team focused on retaining analytical capabilities cross-business by showing different career path options.

» **Figure 2: Manager Trust in Technology for Different Tasks**

Segmented by different technology use cases



n = 1,159 managers

Source: 2024 Gartner Driving Impact Through Technology Employee Survey

Spotting and Acting on Sceptics’ Lack of Trust

Like managers’ sense of responsibility — managers’ trust in the technology varies considerably for different use cases. Figure 2 shows managers’ overall feelings of trust in technology for different people management-related

tasks. Importantly though, these also vary based on a manager’s specific context — managers in a specific industry or in a particular function can show much higher trust for particular technology uses than those in another industry or another function. For example, managers in the manufacturing, materials and heavy industry sector show significantly higher trust in technology’s ability to rank the

performance of their team members than managers in other industries.²

Why should there be this variation in trust in the technology across both different tasks and different work environments and what can HR do about it? Three “C” factors in the manager’s working context influence their likelihood of being a skeptic:

- **Consequence** — Does the task have a long-term impact on the manager’s success?
- **Confidence** — How confident are managers in their own ability to do the task without technology?
- **Correctness** — Is the data the system is using to make recommendations reliable?

These factors can interact. For example, when the consequence is high, but the confidence low, managers may actually be more likely to engage with a system to help them. The key then, for HR’s change efforts with skeptic managers, is not necessarily how robust or functional the system is, but whether HR can show that it knows how the technology will fit into the manager’s workflow. HR needs to show that it knows the practicalities of completing the task for managers: the sequence, the timing, the convenience and availability of data to put into the system.

Helping Rejectors Understand the “Why”

What is needed to encourage HR technology adoption for managers who feel a low sense of both responsibility and trust? This requires a combination of the focus points for skeptics and objectors, because rejector managers want to understand how the overall outcome of the technology will make them more effective and efficient people managers. CHROs need to focus on the process of engaging managers in these outcomes — not just messages within communications. Unity Health Toronto illustrated this well in its rollout of an Intensive Care Prediction model to doctors — in particular, how it sought to move from explainability to credibility around the model.

HR should take a similar approach with managers: Engage them in the actual results of the system or tool and look at how, when and why they can use them in different circumstances. As rejector managers understand this “why,” they begin to adopt the technology more readily.

Targeted Efforts for Different Manager Objections

The unfortunate news for CHROs trying to drive adoption in newer HR technologies is that there may be greater



Case in Point
Unity Health Toronto

Unity Health Toronto’s Intensive Care Prediction Model

Unity Health’s data science team developed a model to help doctors to predict one of the most important elements that drives patient outcomes and healthcare costs: whether a patient will need to be admitted to intensive care. Unfortunately, despite having gone to great lengths to develop and test the model, initial usage by doctors was low. Many doctors felt they either did not need it or were not willing to follow it, often due to concerns about the added cost of intensive care referrals.

Unity Health’s data science team therefore started by trying to explain the model better to doctors — for example, detailing the data included and how the algorithms worked. However, this just generated more questions and limited improvements in adoption. Next, Unity Health’s data science team began small

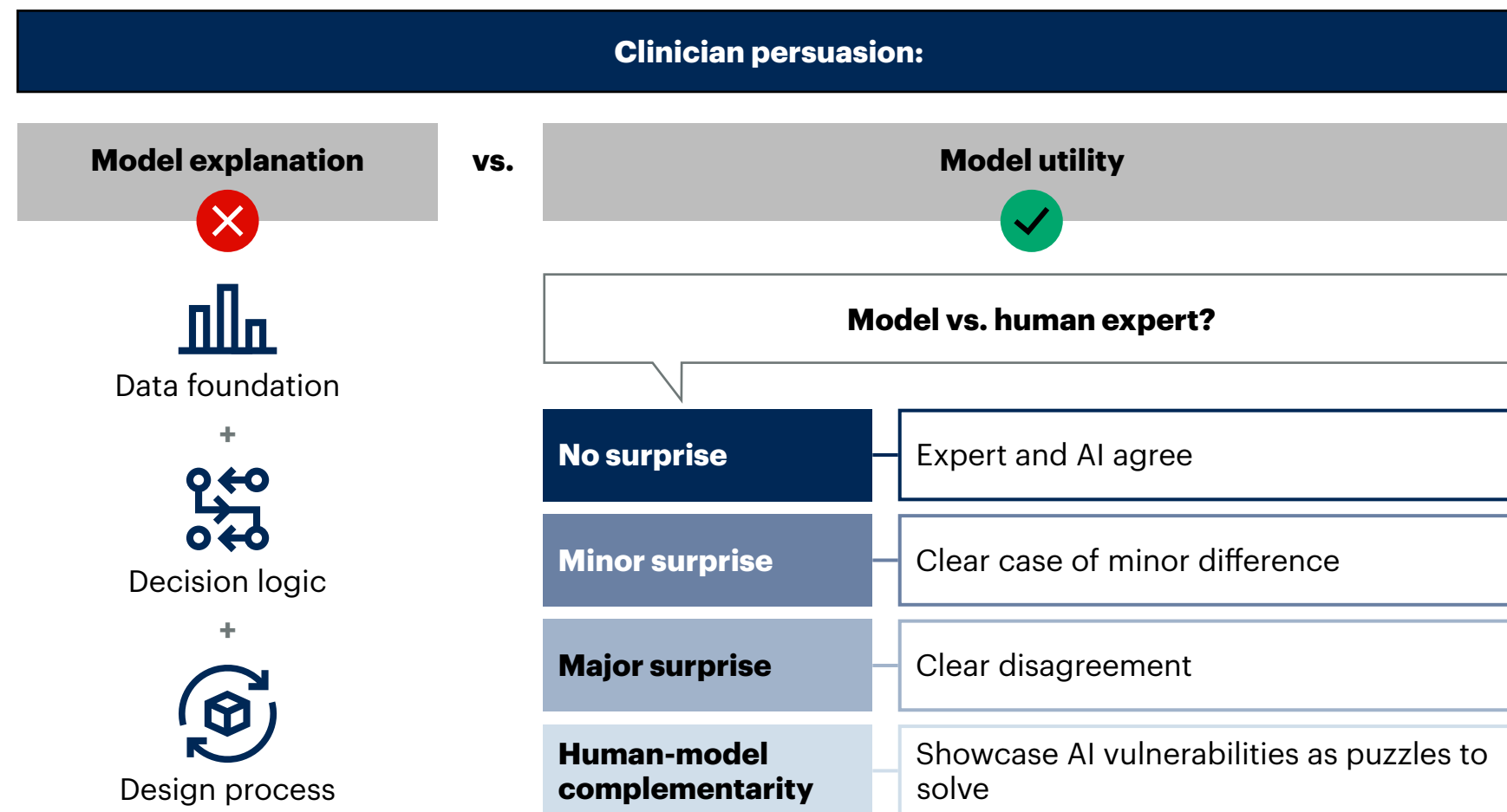
group work with doctors looking at previous patient cases and understanding when and why the model differed from the doctor’s judgment (see Figure 3). The team did not shy away from times when the model was wrong, instead using this as a chance to engage a wider community of doctors to help solve the data “puzzle.”

This active engagement — including showing that they understood what data the doctor would have been working from at the time — led the data team into many more influential discussions with doctors. Doctors began to better understand the utility of the model and understand conditions when it would likely be more accurate than their judgments. Unity Health’s data science team has since built much of this active engagement into its intake process for any new model that is requested. This process now seeks to understand elements like the current performance without a model, and the availability of levers to act on any model’s recommendations.



» **Figure 3: Engaging Doctors in the Intensive Care Prediction Model at Unity Health Toronto**

Illustrative



Source: Adapted From Unity Health Toronto

variation in manager’s objections. This variation will be based on their sense of responsibility for the tasks, and their trust in the technology’s capabilities. However, the good news is that by engaging managers around these factors, it is possible to identify a number of manager profiles — and to target specific change efforts to each. These targeted change management efforts can ensure higher adoption and less wasted effort for the HR function, but also begin to drive better workforce outcomes from HR’s newest technologies.

¹ 2023 Gartner HR Technology Priorities Survey. This survey set out to learn about the most critical HR technology issues impacting HR leaders in order to improve key initiative planning. Two surveys were conducted. The first was a client survey from 9 November through 15 December 2023, 151 responses were received. The second was a funded nonclient survey from 10 November through 12 December 2023, 198 responses were received. Respondents were full-time, director or above in the HR, IT, or executive management function with authority in budget and purchasing decisions.

² 2024 Gartner Driving Impact through Technology Employee Survey. This survey was conducted to understand the employee experiences, perspectives, and perceptions with current HR approaches to maximizing technology efforts and to identify the urgency drivers on Augmented HR. The research was conducted online from 23 January 2024 through 14 February 2024 and contains responses from 602 HR staff and 2,035 non-HR staff, with representation across geographies, industries, and organizational size.

³ 2023 Gartner HR Functional Excellence HR Employee Survey. This survey was conducted to understand HR employees’ experiences and opinions regarding their HR functions. The research was conducted online from 27 January 2023 to 6 February 2023 among 531 respondents from various geographies, industries and functions. The survey was designed and developed by Gartner’s HR Practice research team.

Future of Work Benchmark: Prevalence and Impact of Emerging Technologies

by Nayanika Pande

Organizations are increasingly adopting transformative technologies to revolutionize business operations, yet less than 25% of HR leaders understand these technologies' impact on the workforce.¹ Figure 1 highlights the prevalence of the top five emerging technologies in the five largest industries, along with employees' perceptions of their impact on jobs. Generative AI (GenAI) is the most widely adopted emerging technology, and

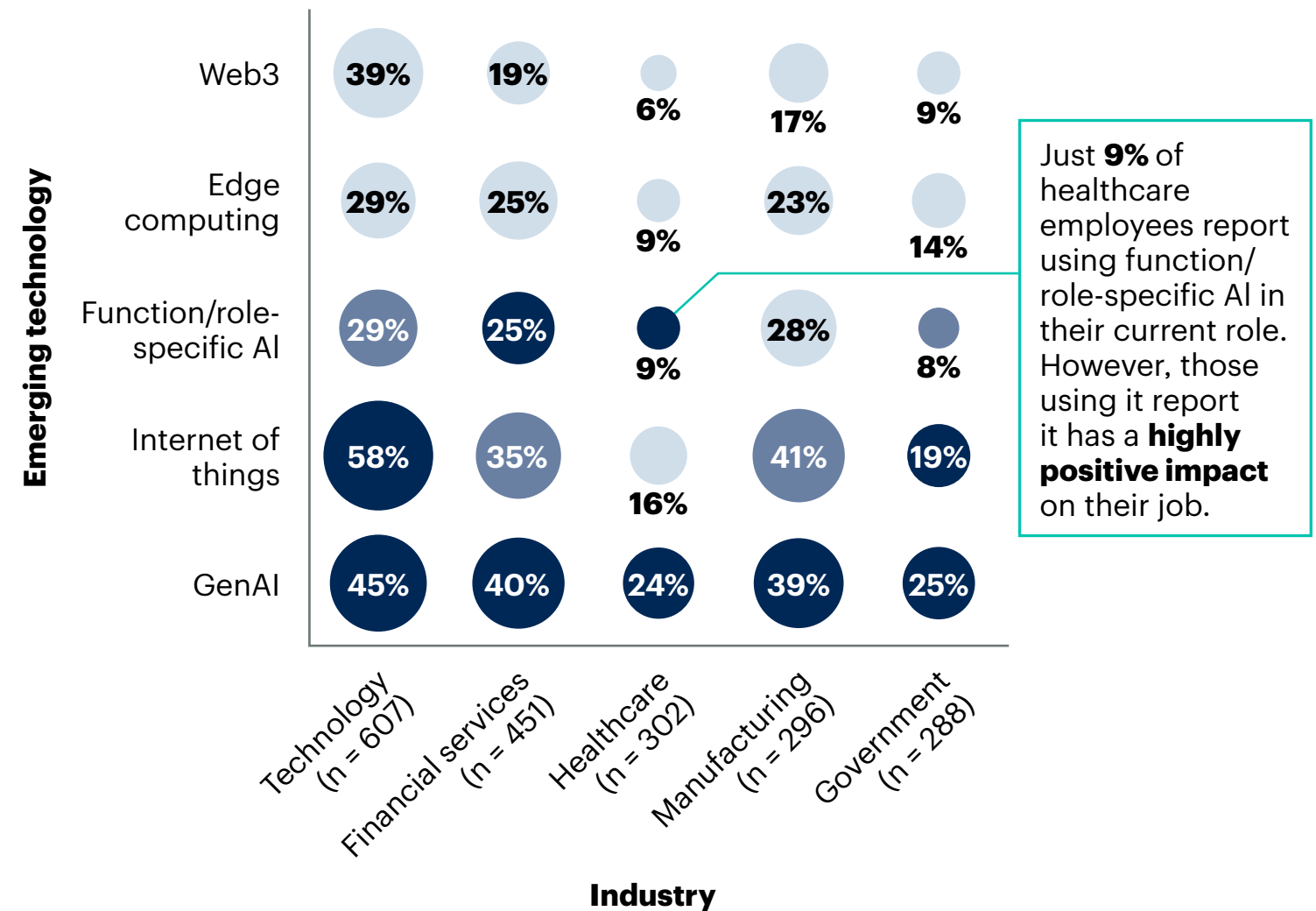
employees from all five industries said GenAI had a highly positive impact on their jobs today. Some less prevalent technologies also have a strong positive impact in specific sectors. For example, while just 9% of healthcare employees report using function or role-specific AI, those who do say it has a highly positive impact on their job. In contrast, other technologies such as Web3 and edge computing are prevalent in some industries, but employees report only a marginally positive impact.

These insights underscore the importance of strategically assessing the integration, utilization and perceived usefulness of emerging technologies by industry. By understanding the varying levels of adoption and impact on the workforce, HR leaders can work with other key stakeholders to identify opportunities to further leverage these technologies, ensuring their organizations remain competitive in an increasingly digital world.

¹ Source: 2024 Gartner ReimagineHR HR Leader Survey (n=182 HR leaders)

» Figure 1: Use and Impact of Emerging Technologies on Jobs Today

Impact on employees' job today: ● Highly positive ● Moderately positive ● Marginally positive



n = 3,496 employees

Source: 2024 Gartner Employee Perspectives on the Future of Work Survey

Note: The size of the bubble represents the percentage of employees who report using the emerging technology. The color of the bubble represents employee reported extent of positive impact the technology has on their job today.

3 Steps

to Initiate a Strategic Workforce Plan

by Maggie Schroeder-O'Neal and Jonah Shepp

CHROs are under increased pressure to provide their organizations with the skills needed for the future, but struggle to initiate a strategic workforce plan. This article offers three steps to address this challenge: enhance collaboration, narrow the plan's scope and practice adaptability.

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CEOs cite talent shortages as the top damaging factor for the business outlook,¹ leaving CHROs under increased pressure to resource their organization effectively with the skills it needs. Consequently, HR leaders plan to prioritize strategic workforce planning (SWP), making it one of their top five priorities over the next 12 to 18 months.² However, as of 2024, only 15% of organizations are engaged in strategic workforce planning.³

Unfortunately, HR faces myriad challenges when it comes to initiating and executing a strategic workforce plan. Items such as establishing a clear process, aligning talent needs with strategic business objectives, securing buy-in, demonstrating ROI and adapting workforce planning beyond a one-year planning horizon all come up when looking at SWP challenges.^{2,3}

CHROs can take three steps to successfully initiate a strategic workforce plan:

1. Define roles and responsibilities for enhanced collaboration.
2. Narrow the plan's scope to reduce its complexity.
3. Promote flexible plans by practicing adaptability.

Each of these strategies will help CHROs overcome their barriers to initiating a successful plan.

1 Define Roles and Responsibilities for Enhanced Collaboration

Initiating a strategic workforce plan requires effective collaboration between HR and the business. However, only 44% of CHROs agree that their function effectively partners with business leaders for workforce planning initiatives. This is concerning, considering 72% of CHROs report that business unit leaders share responsibility with HR for initiating and executing the workforce plan.³

Create Process Transparency

With many different stakeholder groups involved in creating a strategic workforce plan, successfully executing it can be challenging without a clear understanding of each group's responsibilities. To initiate a successful strategic workforce plan, CHROs must identify the necessary stakeholders and ensure transparency throughout the entire process. This includes outlining key milestones, the timeline and how the strategic workforce plan connects to the operational workforce plan.

Delineate Partnership Responsibilities

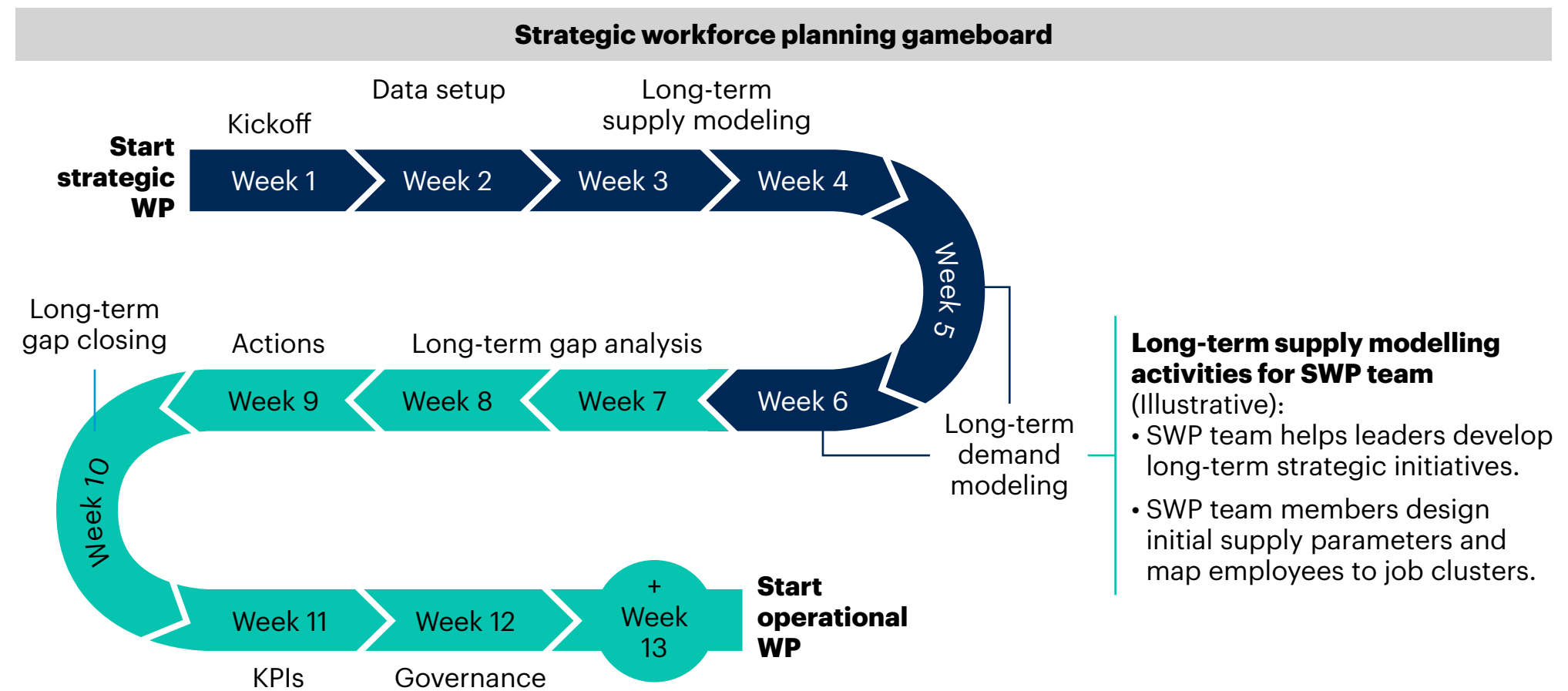
Once stakeholders understand the SWP process from end-to-end, CHROs must clearly define partnership responsibilities. This means explicitly communicating who is responsible for each component of the planning and execution process. For example, CHROs must specify which inputs the business is responsible for managing and the corresponding outputs and actions required. Clearly delineating responsibilities among all partners helps ensure stakeholder alignment and collaboration.

FIS's Visual Roadmap for Process Transparency

FIS is an example of an organization that successfully overcame these challenges. The company established a core group of stakeholders and provided them with an SWP gameboard to visualize the entire journey. For FIS, this group includes representatives from finance, the business and HR. Once the key stakeholders were identified and engaged in the process, FIS created a visual tool similar to a game board to illustrate the SWP journey. The game board illustrated how the strategic workforce plan is distinct from, yet connected to, the organization's operational workforce plan. On this game board, FIS outlined the timeline to execution in weekly milestones, ensuring stakeholders had the transparency needed to understand the status of the SWP exercise and the work being done at each stage (see Figure 1).

In addition to the game board, FIS clarifies responsibilities by outlining the data each stakeholder must provide and the actions stakeholders must take

» Figure 1: Create Transparency for Your SWP Journey



Long-term supply modelling activities for SWP team
(Illustrative):

- SWP team helps leaders develop long-term strategic initiatives.
- SWP team members design initial supply parameters and map employees to job clusters.

Source: Adapted from FIS

after meetings. This approach allows the FIS SWP team to clearly define each stakeholder’s responsibilities at every phase of the plan (see Table 1).

Depending on the SWP stage, FIS invited stakeholders with varying levels of seniority from three key groups — business, finance and HR — and assigned them specific partnership responsibilities. For example, the business was responsible for managing change, finance assessed how the change impacted open positions and HR ensured proper resourcing.

» **Table 1: Partnership Responsibilities of Different Stakeholders**

Responsibilities	Business lead/delegates	Finance analyst	HR business partners (HRBPs)
Planning	Updated business drivers: Org changes, capacity needs, priority areas	Budget/forecast: Revenue and expense actuals, cost targets	Talent/workforce actions: Attrition, open positions, recruiting
Executing	Own talent plan: Communicate plan to leaders	Validate talent plan costs: Financial modeling of talent plan vs. budget	Implement talent plan: Guidance on HR processes (hiring, M&A, RIF)
Inputs	Expected business changes: Material changes to upcoming demand	Revenue/expense actuals: Compensation risk and attrition in forecast	Workforce metrics: Current open positions, workforce analytics
Agree upon priority positions/upcoming hiring needs; model out timing actions and cost impacts			
Outputs and actions	Cascade adjusted plans to managers to execute	Verify talent actions and open positions are captured in forecast	Connect with HR enabling partners (TA, M&A, OD)
SWP facilitated trifecta meeting follows a consistent agenda and establishes role responsibilities to improve communication across stakeholders.			

Source: Adapted from FIS

2 Narrow the Plan's Scope to Avoid Complexity

SWP often stalls because the scope is too broad, making it time-consuming to identify and gather all the necessary information and inputs. To avoid this trap, CHROs should narrow both the scope of their strategic workforce plan and the number of inputs to simplify the process and enhance its effectiveness. They should prioritize potential problems to solve with SWP based on relevance and actionability, and establish shared ownership of inputs and outputs. This approach eliminates unnecessary complexity, allowing teams to streamline SWP projects.

Assess the Need for SWP Based on Relevance and Actionability

Twenty-one percent of CHROs report that selecting the correct business priority for an SWP initiative is among their biggest challenges when executing

a strategic workforce plan.³ Typically, CHROs get lost in effectively identifying the goal of a strategic workforce plan because they are trying to either tackle too many problems or solve problems they are not equipped to answer. Instead, CHROs should set SWP up for success by prioritizing potential problems that a strategic workforce plan can effectively address.

Promote Shared Ownership on Inputs and Outcomes

Twenty-three percent of CHROs report that collecting relevant internal data is one of the biggest challenges when executing a strategic workforce plan.³ CHROs often struggle to communicate the necessary inputs for launching a strategic workforce plan, leading stakeholders to overcomplicate the process. Instead, CHROs should lead discussions to evaluate the minimum inputs and decisions relevant to the project's focus, fostering shared ownership of outcomes and next steps.



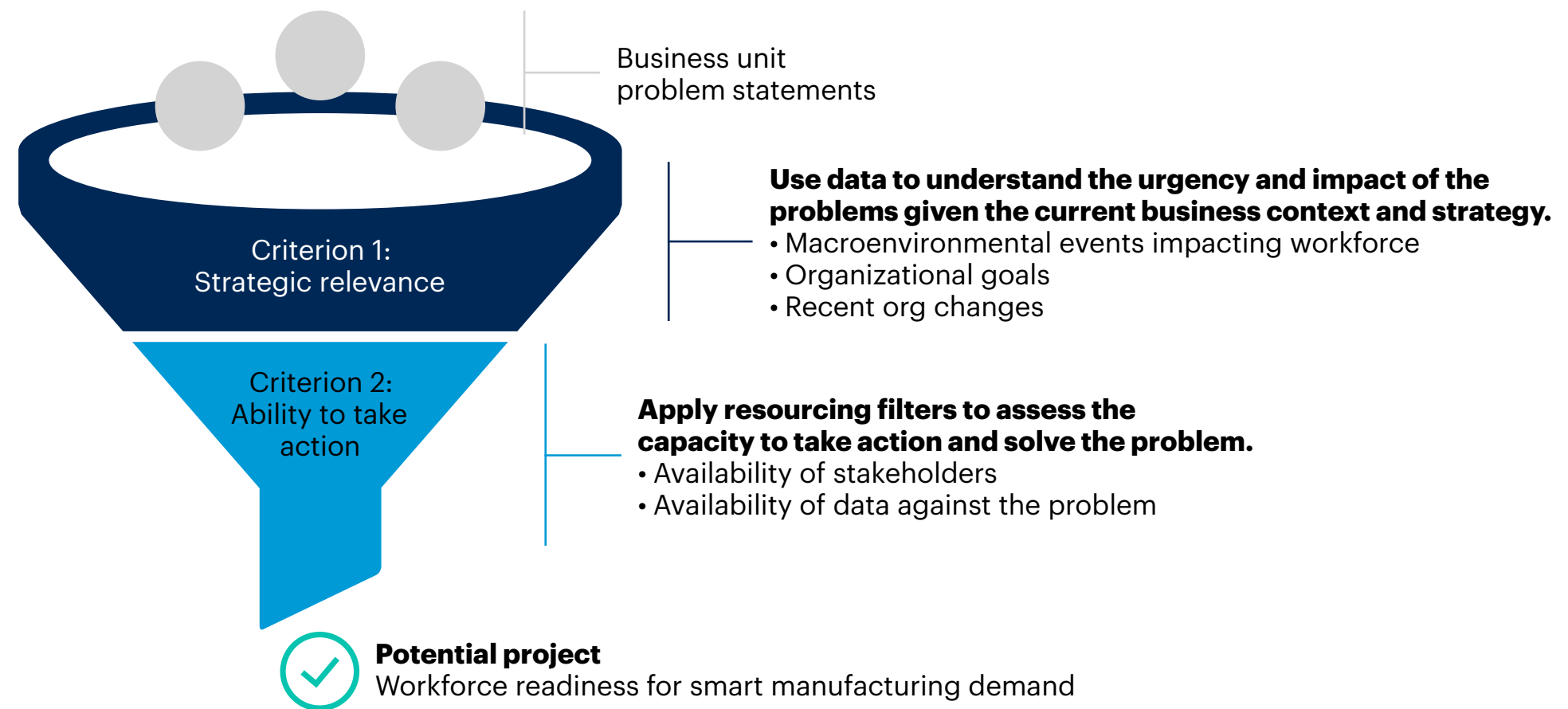
How Merck Prioritizes SWP Needs Based on Relevance and Actionability

Merck's SWP team invites business unit leaders to submit problem statements. The statements are filtered by two criteria: strategic relevance and the SWP team's ability to act against the problem (see Figure 2). The first criterion investigates the urgency and workforce impact of the problem. It also filters problems by how closely they are aligned with the organization's strategy. Priority is given to problems that align well with the top business goals for the year. The second criterion further filters problems by the availability of data, technology and people to solve the problem.

These criteria enable Merck's SWP team to determine where in the organization SWP is needed. Once a problem has been identified that can be solved through SWP, the SWP team at Merck moves forward by having a conversation with stakeholders on who owns inputs and outcomes for the remainder of the process.

Once Merck's SWP team identifies the problem its strategic workforce plan aims to address, the team curates the project's focus. Team members consider three primary workforce goals: sizing, effectiveness and readiness. Based on the identified problem and workforce goal alignment, Merck's SWP team reviews the minimum inputs needed to create and execute a strategic workforce plan that helps the team achieve its goal.

» Figure 2: Filter SWP Needs by Relevance and Actionability



Source: Adapted from Merck KGaA

3 Promote Flexible Plans by Practicing Adaptability

Many organizations revisit their workforce plans annually,³ often aligning with the budget cycle finance provides. While a routine schedule for updating a workforce plan is beneficial, doing so only once a year fails to account for short-term needs. Successfully executing a strategic workforce plan requires more frequent maintenance. CHROs should establish regular checkpoints to review the strategic workforce plan, prepare for different scenarios and adjust the plan to meet evolving business needs.

Engage in Regular Reviews and Adaptations

Many CHROs continue using the same strategic workforce plan after it is initially established. However, with constantly changing business needs, talent requirements shift rapidly, which makes an annual review insufficient. Once CHROs

prioritize talent needs, it is essential to review them regularly. Frequent audits at shorter intervals allow for better adjustments to changes and stronger alignment with business context.

Use Scenario Planning to Adjust SWP

To create a flexible and adaptable strategic workforce plan, CHROs must embed scenario planning into the SWP process. To do this successfully, CHROs must identify the trends that are most relevant to their business, have the potential to be highly disruptive and are somewhat likely to occur. It is also important to consider the timing of this exercise — ideally after a CHRO has decided on a build, buy, borrow or bot strategy. For example, CHROs should consider the potential for major changes in their industry, the trajectory of the broader economy and the impact of new technologies such as AI.

Ultimately, it is crucial for CHROs to keep scenarios straightforward and focus

on the most common and disruptive trends, as well as the three or four biggest adjustments needed for their workforce plans in those scenarios.

Although SWP can be challenging to initiate, it is not insurmountable. CHROs can overcome these challenges by:

- Being transparent about ownership and responsibilities
- Prioritizing a narrow scope for SWP initiatives
- Promoting flexible plans to be more responsive to business needs

¹ 2023 Gartner CEO and Senior Business Executive Survey. This survey was conducted to examine CEO and senior business executive views on current business issues, as well as some areas of technology agenda impact. The survey was fielded from July 2022 through December 2022, with questions about the period from 2022 through 2024. One-quarter of the survey sample was collected in July and August 2022, and three-quarters was collected from October through December 2022. In total, 422 actively employed CEOs and other senior executive business leaders qualified and participated. The research was collected via 382 online surveys and 40 telephone interviews. The sample mix by role was CEOs (n = 277); CFOs (n = 95); COOs or other C-level executives (n = 19);

and chairs, presidents or board directors (n = 31). The sample mix by location was North America (n = 169), Europe (n = 105), Asia/Pacific (n = 102), Latin America (n = 29), the Middle East (n = 11) and South Africa (n = 6). The sample mix by size was \$10 million in revenue to less than \$50 million (n = 3), \$50 million to less than \$250 million (n = 51), \$250 million to less than \$1 billion (n = 102), \$1 billion to less than \$10 billion (n = 190) and \$10 billion or more (n = 76). Disclaimer: 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.

² 2025 Gartner HR Priorities Survey. This survey was conducted to understand senior HR leader perspectives on their priorities and challenges for the coming 12 to 18 months. The survey was conducted online from 13 June 2024 through 15 July 2024 and contains responses from 1,403 HR leaders with representation from various regions and industries. 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.

³ 2024 Gartner Q2 CHRO Survey. This survey was conducted to gather insights on how CHROs approach workforce planning, their understanding about how HR leaders collaborate in their organization and assess the current state of leadership development in their organizations. The research was conducted online from 29 April through 3 June 2024 and contains responses from 117 HR leaders representing various regions and industries.

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How to Implement **Menopause Support** That Drives Talent Outcomes

by Sarah Marblestone and Jonah Shepp

Despite menopause being a regular life event, few organizations offer menopause-related benefits. CHROs can use this research to learn how to better support women during menopause, improving talent outcomes such as retention and productivity while lowering absenteeism and healthcare costs.



Despite menopause being a regular life event, the topic is often considered taboo, especially in the workplace, and few organizations offer menopause-related benefits. Ignoring menopause has negative outcomes for businesses and employees alike: A 2023 study from the Mayo Clinic estimated that menopause symptoms cost \$1.8 billion annually in lost productivity in the U.S. alone.¹ Lack of support during menopause can also result in women quitting their jobs and hurt their promotion and succession opportunities. Conversely, employers that implement policies to address menopause in the workplace can achieve favorable outcomes, such as increased retention and productivity, while lowering absenteeism and healthcare costs.²

Women aged 45 to 55 are the most rapidly expanding workforce demographic globally, and workers aged 50 to 75 will be the largest demographic by 2050.

CHROs may be reluctant to explore new employee benefits at a time when many of them are under pressure to control costs, but the business case for menopause benefits is compelling. Women aged 45 to 55 are the most rapidly expanding workforce demographic globally, and workers aged 50 to 75 will be the largest demographic by 2050.³ Despite the significant number of women in the workforce who are going through menopause or will do so in the coming years, menopause-related support continues to be overlooked in most organizations' well-being strategies. To attract, retain and maximize the well-being of this growing workforce cohort, CHROs should consider a variety of ways to better support women in menopause. This support includes three key elements described in the following sections.

Genentech's Mental Health Stigma-Reducing Communicators

Genentech created a program to combat stigma around mental health issues in the workplace by establishing a multilevel team of volunteer mental health communicators. Leaders share their mental health experiences to create a safe space where employees feel at ease discussing the topic of mental health. Additionally, employee mental health champions communicate about their own mental health experiences and available support resources, showing struggling colleagues they are not alone.

Because Genentech's mental health stigma-reducing communicators hold different levels of seniority, they can address a more complete range of incorrect assumptions employees have about mental health issues.

Normalize Menopause by Combating Stigma

Menopause remains a largely stigmatized topic both in and out of the workplace, and it generally occurs at a life stage when women are in the prime of their careers. During menopause, women experience serious physical and psychological symptoms such as brain fog, anxiety, depression and decreased confidence, which create barriers to productive work.⁴ Many women refrain from openly discussing their symptoms with colleagues or managers out of fear of discrimination or being perceived as less capable. This fosters an environment of silence that further exacerbates the challenges they face.

To combat this issue, organizations must focus on reducing stigmas and normalizing menopause. Just as the COVID-19 pandemic sparked a greater need to destigmatize mental health in the workplace, the increasing presence of menopause-aged women in the workforce should prompt HR leaders to raise employee awareness and education. This should be a collaborative effort, with CHROs partnering

with their diversity, equity and inclusion leaders to help break the silence and leveraging employee resource groups to establish a productive dialogue. CHROs should also work with total rewards leaders to spread awareness of the relevant benefits, which employees might be unaware of or afraid to ask about.

Genentech and Vodafone are two organizations that have successfully established programs to destigmatize taboo subjects in the workplace.

This approach to destigmatizing mental health can easily be adapted to address the taboo around menopause, and indeed, Genentech has since embarked on a similar project to normalize the discussion of menopause. When the company rolled out a new menopause benefit in 2023, its Chief People Officer, Cori Davis, shared her own struggles with menopause when presenting to employees, sending a signal to them that it is not shameful or stigmatizing to talk about it.⁵

Another example of an organization breaking the silence around menopause is Vodafone, which created a Menopause Toolkit that focuses on individuals, managers and colleagues, emphasizing psychological safety. This toolkit includes a framework for “how to have a conversation,” which prepares managers and colleagues to have compassionate and informed discussions. It addresses both the physical and emotional dimensions of menopause, while fostering psychological safety and overall well-being.⁶

Expand Offerings to Be More Inclusive

Given that menopause-related symptoms and experiences vary among women, there is no one-size-fits all treatment. Therefore, organizations should offer flexible and inclusive benefits to meet the needs of their workforce. Providing diverse offerings allows employees to choose the best option for their own unique and evolving needs. Organizations should apply an equitable approach to health benefits and reevaluate their offerings to ensure they are inclusive of all the stages of the employee life.

CHROs should start by conducting an internal analysis of the current offerings and run a gap analysis to determine the offerings they should stop, start or expand on. By soliciting employee input, they can identify and select the specific offerings that are most relevant to their workforce.

By gathering feedback through employee listening sessions, Genentech identified a critical need for menopause support and gaps in its offerings. In response, Genentech implemented unlimited access to educational materials, webinars, provider led-sessions and same-day admittance to medical appointments.⁷

Create a More Accommodating Work Environment

In addition to health and well-being benefits, supporting employees in menopause can also mean designing work to better accommodate their needs. In the Mayo Clinic study, 13% of women said they had experienced an adverse work outcome related to menopause symptoms, and about 11% had missed days of work due to these symptoms.¹ The authors also noted that less-than-ideal work conditions can exacerbate the burden of menopause symptoms and make women less likely to disclose their menopause status.

CHROs should consider ways to make the work environment and schedule more accommodating for these employees. This could include supportive sick leave policies, for example, or flexibility in work hours and location to allow for women to attend to their symptoms and alleviate stress. It might also include giving employees more control over the temperature of their workspace because hot flashes are a common physical symptom of menopause.

At organizations with limited flexibility options, or where leaders are pushing to mandate in-person work and traditional schedules, CHROs should focus on building the business case: Weigh the costs of creating a more supportive work environment for women in menopause against the cost of lost work time and productivity when employees don't receive this support. Particularly at organizations where the employee population skews older or is predominantly made up of women, these policies can more than pay for themselves.

Key Takeaways

The need for menopause-related workplace support is already outpacing what employers provide, and because women aged 45 to 55 are the most rapidly expanding workforce demographic globally,³ this need will only increase in the years to come. Furthermore, it can't be met with a simple, one-size-fits-all benefit. To fully support employees experiencing menopause, CHROs must:

- Destigmatize menopause, create a safe environment for discussing it, and raise awareness among employees and managers.
- Design a benefits package that is flexible and customizable enough to meet the varying needs of employees who experience menopause differently.
- Establish a work environment that gives employees the flexibility and control to manage menopause symptoms without having to miss work or fall behind.

Creating this support at a time of economic uncertainty and budget constraints may be

challenging, but in a competitive market for skilled talent, ignoring the issue of menopause is a costly choice in itself. Providing for women employees' well-being as they experience this inevitable life event can reduce the risk of attrition, stalled careers and lost productivity among a valuable cohort of experienced employees. In this light, menopause support is not just a nice-to-have benefit, but rather it is a business necessity.

¹ [Impact of Menopause Symptoms on Women in the Workplace](#), Mayo Clinic.

² [Menopause benefits at work: An overlooked need for your employees](#), Maven Clinic.

³ [Empowering Women: The Business Case for Menopause Support in the Workplace](#), Ph. Creative

⁴ [Menopause and the Workplace](#), The Fawcett Society.

⁵ [Now's The Time to Bring Up Menopause At Work](#), Time.

⁶ [Menopause Toolkit](#), Vodafone.

⁷ [Breaking the Silence on Menopause](#), Genentech.

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[6 Ways to Create a Human-Powered Enterprise](#)

How CHROs Can Pace Themselves in the AI Race

by Eser Rizaoglu

As a member of the C-suite, the CHRO is part of the enterprise race to deliver AI outcomes safely and at scale. Use this article to understand your role and how to set the right pace for your AI race by focusing on desired business, behavioral and workforce readiness outcomes.



Two AI races have begun. In one race, tech vendors are relentlessly innovating and flooding the market with highly hyped AI-embedded technologies, with a new generative AI (GenAI) frontier model being released every 2.5 days on average.¹ In the other, you and the C-suite are racing to deliver AI outcomes safely and at scale both for your enterprise and your individual functions, including understanding the impact on jobs and ensuring a human-centric approach to AI.

The reason why you're in this race is because there are high stakes for AI outcomes, and CEOs believe the AI hype is justified. In the Mid-2024 Update Gartner CEO and Senior Business Executive Survey, 74% of CEOs said AI is the technology that will most affect their industry. This is a significant leap from 59% in early 2024, and 21% in 2023.² Fortunately, you play a key role in setting your enterprise's pace in this race:

- **AI-steady pace** — Your enterprise has modest AI ambitions and your industry is not yet being disrupted by AI, you will go at a more measured pace and your individual functions each have 10 or fewer AI initiatives. This pace is suitable for risk-averse organizations and small and midsize organizations with limited resources to spend on AI.
- **AI-accelerated pace** — Your enterprise ambition is to be AI-first or your industry is being reinvented by AI, you will go at a faster pace and your individual functions each have more than 10 AI initiatives. This pace is suitable for larger organizations or innovative enterprises that are seeking to gain a competitive edge with AI.



As a CHRO, you're not in that tech vendor race. You don't have to adopt all the latest AI to get ahead. But, **you are in the second race** to help deliver AI outcomes safely and at scale — both for your enterprise and your function.



However, to date, C-suite members are realizing that delivering productive AI outcomes is tough. The highly touted productivity and business benefits of using AI don't always materialize. What's more, AI can even create serious risks, unpredictable costs and negative behaviors that harm your organization. That's where you play a critical role in defining the enterprise's and your function's AI ambitions by focusing on three sets of outcomes (see Table 1).

Assist in Delivering AI Business Outcomes

Achieving productivity gains from GenAI is challenging. According to the 2024 Gartner Impact of GenAI in the Digital Workplace Survey, 98% of surveyed technology leaders noted employee eagerness to use Microsoft 365 Copilot, while 72% report that employees struggled to integrate Microsoft 365 Copilot into their daily work.³

Consistent use of GenAI tools is key to boosting productivity, with digital workers saving an average of 3.6 hours per week by using everyday AI tools or applications for work purposes as per Gartner's 2024 Digital Worker Survey.⁴

» Table 1: Three Set of Outcomes to Enable Your Enterprise's AI Ambition

Outcomes	 AI-steady pace	 AI-accelerated pace^a
Business	Maximize employee productivity gains from GenAI.	Manage numerous GenAI benefits like a portfolio.
Behavioral	Put people at the center of your change management.	Prepare for the rise of AI agents.
Workforce readiness	Deliver AI literacy programs.	Continually monitor employee readiness through business champions.

Source: Gartner
^a In addition to AI-steady pace.

AI-Steady Pace: Maximize Employee Productivity Gains From GenAI

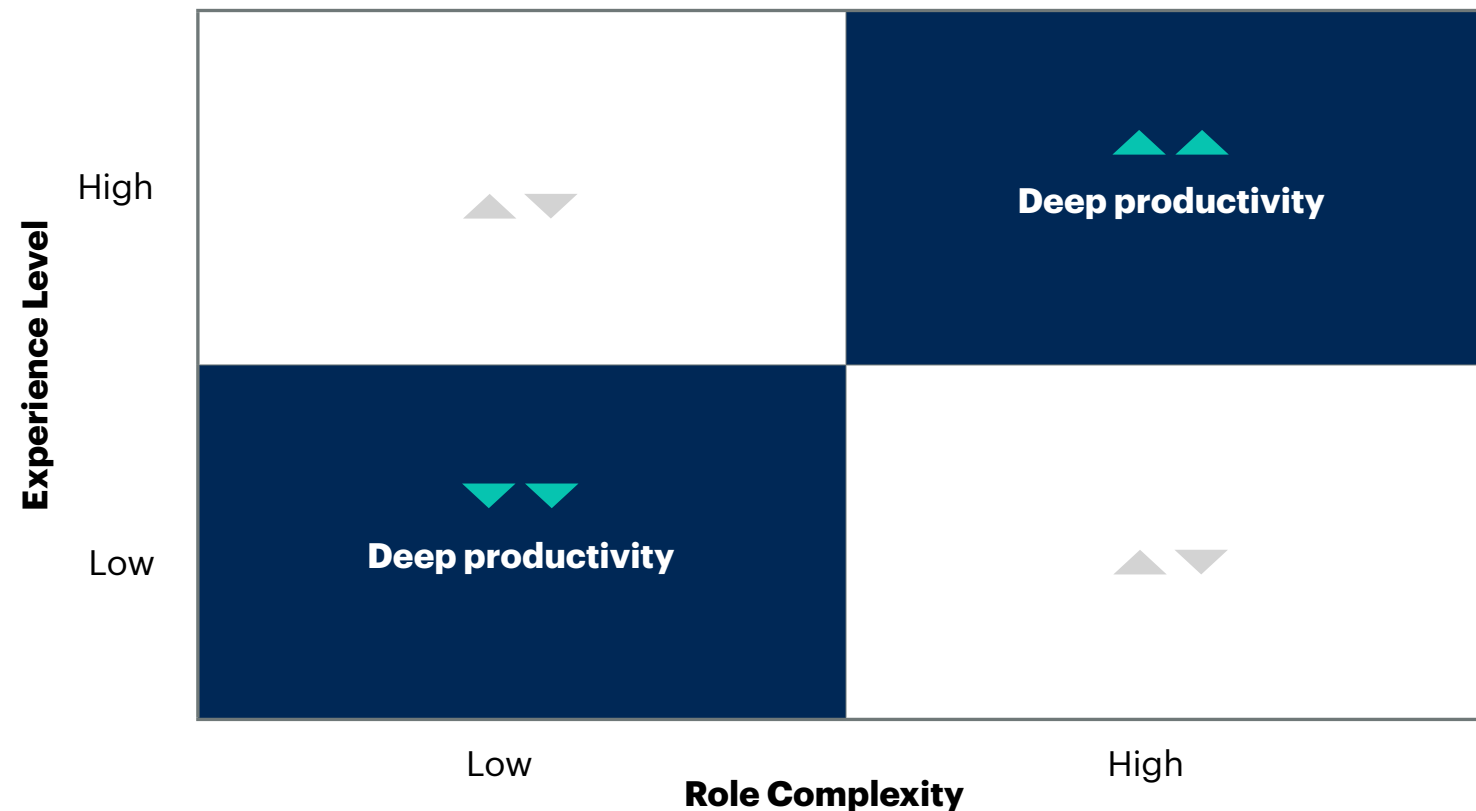
Productivity gains from GenAI vary depending on the role's complexity and the employee's experience level (see Figure 1). In low-complexity roles, such as call center agents, less experienced employees benefit the most from GenAI because it helps them perform routine tasks, decreasing the scope of learning needs and improving time-to-full-performance. Highly experienced employees in these roles get little benefit because they already know the nuances of the job.

Conversely, in high-complexity roles, like software engineers or lawyers, focus on augmenting more experienced employees to gain the most from GenAI because they can effectively validate and use AI outputs. Less experienced employees are still learning what good looks like in their role. They struggle to get much value from GenAI because they may be more susceptible to errors such as hallucinations, which require in-depth knowledge to identify.

AI-Accelerated Pace: Manage Numerous GenAI Benefits Like a Portfolio

In addition to the approach highlighted in the AI steady pace, focus on using GenAI to go beyond productivity and pursue a wider range of benefits. These can include transforming HR service delivery and improving employee experience, to name a few. CHROs should manage GenAI benefits like a portfolio.

» Figure 1: Deep Productivity MatrixAmbition



Source: Gartner

Within HR, direct up to 50% of your GenAI initiatives at HR staff work augmentation to drive productivity and up to 30% of initiatives at operations and process-level improvements that help transform HR service delivery.

Direct the remainder of your efforts — up to 20% — to ensure that the enterprisewide workforce is upskilled. That involves working with business leaders to identify skills and role requirements that effectively use GenAI for business level, game-changing improvements that create new revenue streams or redesign the enterprise value proposition.

Managing Behavioral Outcomes of AI

Humans and machines working together produce better results than when either is left on their own. However, as AI transitions from a tool to a “teammate” over the next few years, CHROs will have to lead change management efforts that minimize risk from intense employee reactions across the enterprise. Left unaddressed, these could negatively affect aspired outcomes.

AI-Steady Pace: Put the Employee at the Center of Your Change Management

Be intentional about who owns which behavioral outcomes. Otherwise, you’ll often get accidental ownership of these outcomes. As part of your change management approach, collaborate with your employees to co-create and redesign their work affected by AI in the new human-machine partnership.

As you redesign work, focus on using AI to remove drudgery from your employees’ jobs or reduce their unenjoyable work processes while increasing their capacity for things they enjoy and areas where they want to stretch their experience. By removing tedious tasks, you’ll see more than just productivity increases. You’ll also see an improvement in employee engagement, product quality and customer experience.

AI-Accelerated Pace: Prepare for More AI Agents

With more AI agents coming into the organization, i.e., the rise of “agentic AI,” new human-machine partnerships will emerge. AI agents won’t just remind you of your upcoming meeting; they’ll attend it with you. AI agents won’t just

present you with options; if you let them, they’ll make decisions for you. In your business, you might eventually have AI agents creating RFPs and procurement agreements, evaluating responses or taking a host of other actions.

In this type of augmented workforce, CHROs will have to ensure that they take a human-first approach toward AI to prevent any negative outcomes for employees. If you are moving at an AI-accelerated pace, add human experts to your team, such as behavioral scientists, ethicists, neuroscientists or social psychologists. This will ensure that you achieve the right behavioral — and business — outcomes in a human and AI agent-augmented workforce.

Enable Workforce Readiness for AI

Preparing and upskilling the workforce can help mitigate the potential for strong adverse employee reactions to emerging human-machine partnerships. AI training programs and strategic deployment of AI champions across the organization can effectively complement broader change management efforts.

AI-Steady Pace: Deliver AI Literacy Programs for Your Workforce

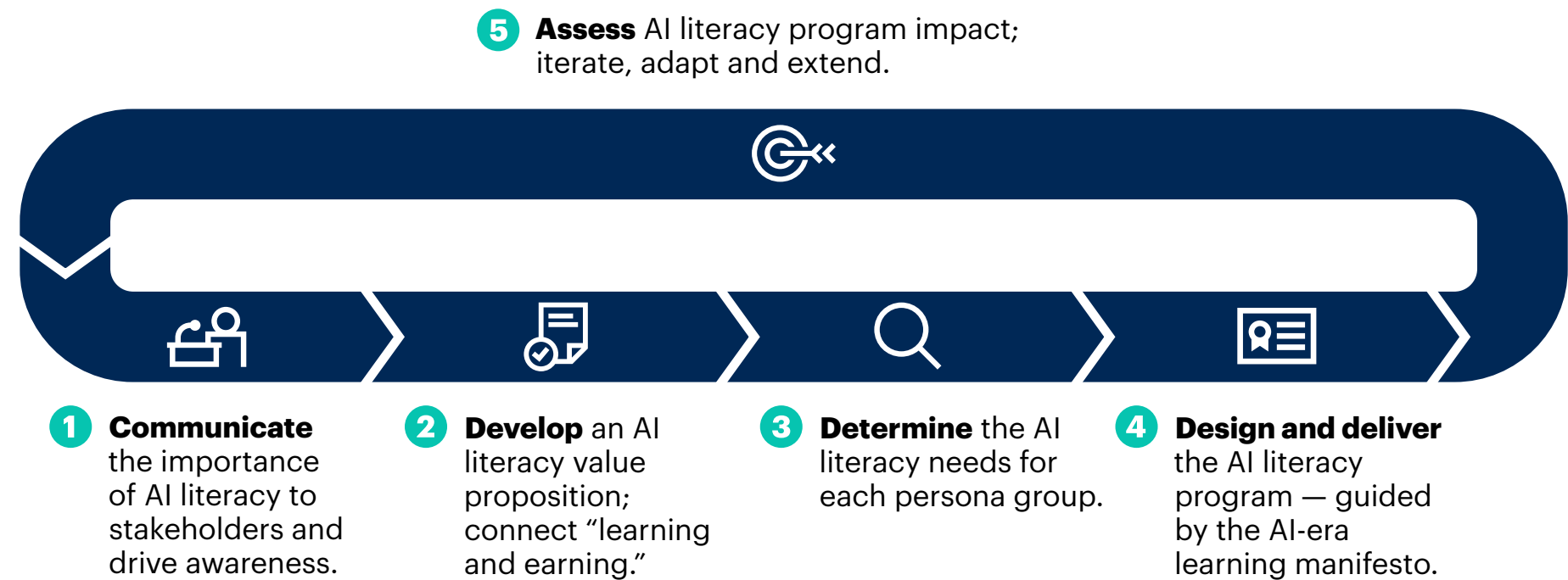
Before organizations can reap the benefits of AI, they must first help their workforce learn how to use it effectively and responsibly, with all its possibilities and limitations. However, when implementing AI, a lack of AI talent and skills is the second top barrier reported by respondents to the 2023 Gartner AI in the Enterprise Survey.⁵

Therefore, CHROs and their HR teams should develop AI literacy programs for the general employee workforce to successfully scale up their use of AI. A roadmap to proactively initiate, design, execute and monitor an AI literacy program requires an iterative series of activities, organized in the five steps shown in Figure 2.

AI-Accelerated Pace: Monitor Employee AI Readiness Through AI Champions

In addition to setting up a workforce AI literacy program for AI-steady pace organizations, CHROs within AI-accelerated pace organizations will have to monitor and enhance AI literacy for the workforce segments most affected by AI.

» Figure 2: Roadmap for an AI Literacy Program



Source: Gartner

To achieve success, instruct your HR teams to:

- Identify the relevant workforce segments most directly affected by AI and build empathy maps to understand how it will affect them.
- Work with representatives from each segment to understand how AI can reduce certain tasks and give more time to others.
- Define and track leading indicators for each employee segment to monitor employee readiness.

To ensure ongoing success, instruct your HR teams to:

- Build a community of practice of individuals from different parts of the business who are early AI adopters, have a good understanding of and are enthusiastic about AI, and have the influence to drive change in their respective areas.
- Formalize the part-time “AI champion” role by codifying a set of responsibilities. These could include identifying AI use cases, educating their respective areas, driving AI adoption, promoting AI tools and sharing success stories.
- Monitor the champion program, improving and expanding it to more areas of the business as it achieves traction.

¹ Gartner analysis of [Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem Graphs Database](#) data downloaded on 25 July 2024, for the period of 1 January 2023 through 25 July 2024.

² Mid-2024 Update Gartner CEO and Senior Business Executive Survey. This survey was fielded in June through July 2024. In total, 110 actively employed CEOs and other senior executive business leaders qualified and participated. All respondents were screened for active employment in organizations greater than \$50 million in annual revenue. The sample mix by role was CEOs (n = 88); CFOs (n = 9); COOs or other C-level executives (n = 7); and chairs, presidents or board directors (n = 6). The sample mix by location was North America (n = 42), Europe (n = 37), Asia/Pacific (n = 24), Latin America (n = 3), the Middle East (n = 1) and South Africa (n = 3). The sample mix by size was \$50 million to less than \$250 million (n = 10), \$250 million to less than \$1 billion (n = 25), \$1 billion to less than \$10 billion (n = 46) and \$10 billion or more (n = 29).

³ 2024 Gartner Impact of GenAI in the Digital Workplace Survey. This survey sought to understand the value of generative AI (GenAI) assistants embedded in popular digital workplace productivity applications in the digital workplace, assessing their ability to enhance employee productivity and efficiency. The survey was conducted online from 16 May through 12 June 2024. A total of 152 IT leaders participated, with 61 who were members of Gartner’s Research Circle, a Gartner-managed panel, and 91 who were contacted through survey links via LinkedIn posts and outreach to clients. Respondents were from EMEA (n = 94), North America (n = 46), Asia/Pacific (n = 10) and Latin America (n = 2). Of the 152 respondents, 132 were primarily responsible for Copilot for Microsoft 365. They were highly involved in the decision-making process or management of Copilot and were required to be currently piloting or finished with the pilot of Copilot in their organizations. The remaining 20 respondents were primarily responsible for GenAI assistants apart from Copilot, such as Gemini for Google Workspace, Salesforce Slack AI and Zoom AI Companion. 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.

⁴ 2024 Gartner Digital Worker Survey. This survey sought to understand workers’ technological and workplace experience and sentiments. The research was conducted online from April through July 2024 among 5,141 respondents, who were from the U.S. (n = 1,121), Australia (n = 1,086), India (n = 996), the U.K. (n = 973) and China (n = 965). Participants were screened for full-time employment

in organizations with 100 or more employees and were required to use digital technology for work purposes. Ages ranged from 18 through 74 years old, with quotas and weighting applied for age, gender, region and income, so that results were representative of countries’ working populations. We defined “digital technology” as including any combination of technological devices (such as laptops, smartphones and tablets), applications, and web services that people use for communication, information or productivity. 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.

⁵ 2023 Gartner AI in the Enterprise Survey. This study was conducted to understand the keys to successful AI implementations and their impact on the broader AI that has been brought by generative AI. The research was conducted online from 19 October through 21 December 2023 among 703 respondents from organizations in the U.S., Germany and the U.K. The main sample consisted of 645 out of the 703. Organizations were required to have developed or intended to deploy at least two AI initiatives within the next three years. Respondents were required to be part of the organization’s corporate leadership or report to corporate leadership roles. Fifty-eight out of 703 are the business intelligence (BI) sample. Organizations were required to have developed or intended to deploy at least one AI initiative within the next three years. Respondents were required to be part of the organization’s corporate leadership or report to corporate leadership roles or below (senior manager and above) and to be primarily responsible for BI in their organizations. Both the main sample and the BI sample respondents were required to have a high level of involvement with at least one AI initiative, and they were required to have one of the following roles when related to AI in their organizations: determine AI business objectives, measure the value derived from AI initiatives, or manage AI initiatives development and implementation. Quotas among the main sample were established for company size and for industries to ensure a good representation across the sample. No quotas were established for the BI sample. 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.

Impact of Policy Changes on Talent Attraction and Sourcing Opportunities

by Bhakti Laul and Sahil Thakur

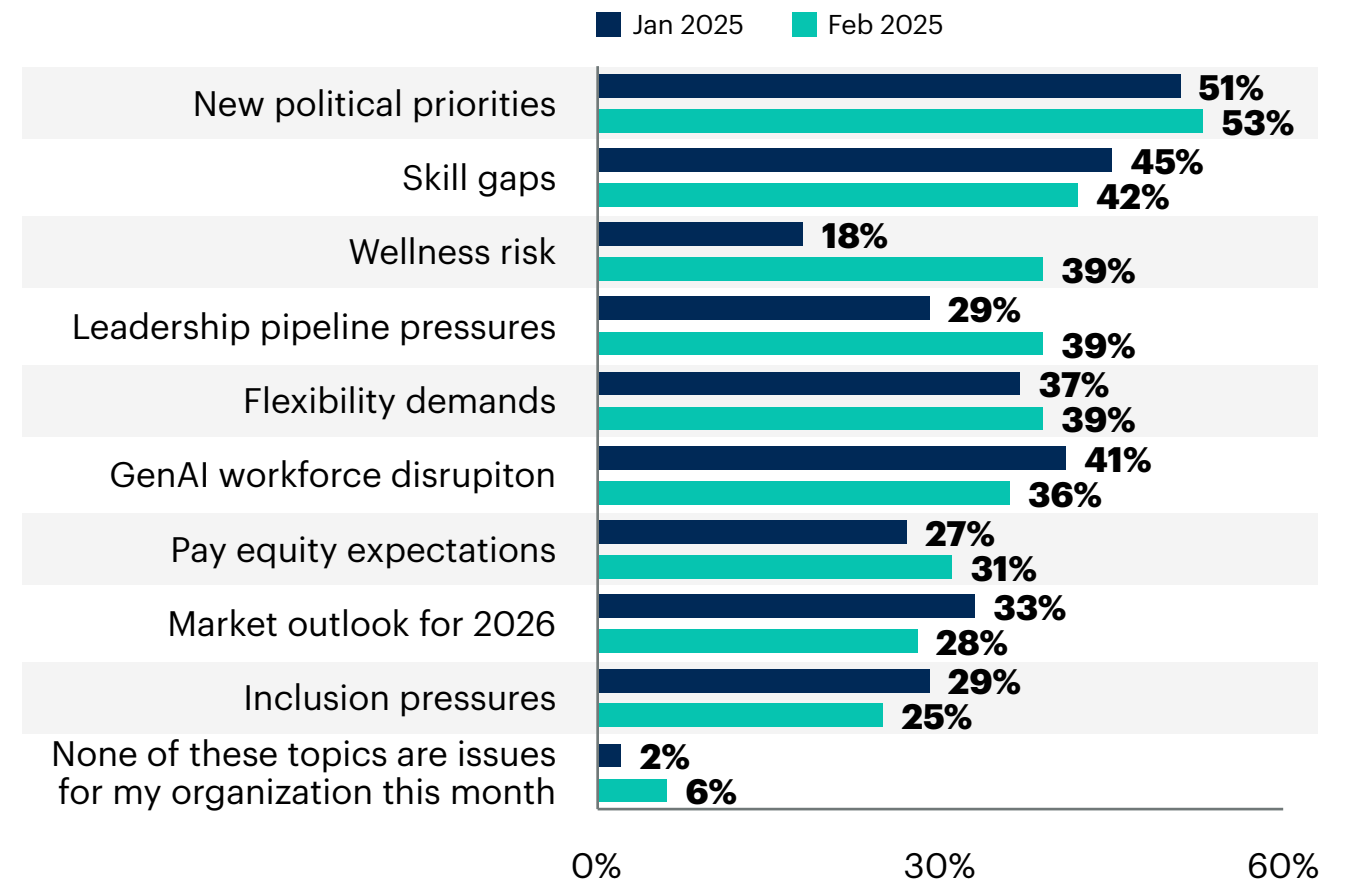
In February's Benchmark with Gartner webcast, new political priorities and skills gaps remained the most common issues HR leaders said were currently affecting their organizations (see Figure 1). However, participants also noted the growing impact of wellness risk, with 39% saying wellness risk was a current issue for their organization, up from just 18% in January.

Trends in reported job postings have held relatively steady since December, possibly reflecting HR leaders' uncertainty about the future (see Figure 2). HR leaders also report fewer employees quitting their jobs.

Private sector HR leaders in the U.S. anticipate both risks and opportunities due to the impact of the new administration on the labor market (see Figures 3 and 4). Nearly half expect to face difficulty when hiring visa-sponsored talent (45%) and diverse talent in general (42%). Meanwhile, 38% anticipate increased recruitment prospects from U.S. federal employees and 27% anticipate less competition for talent from the federal government.

» Figure 1: Current Issues of Concern to HR Leaders

Percentage of HR leaders

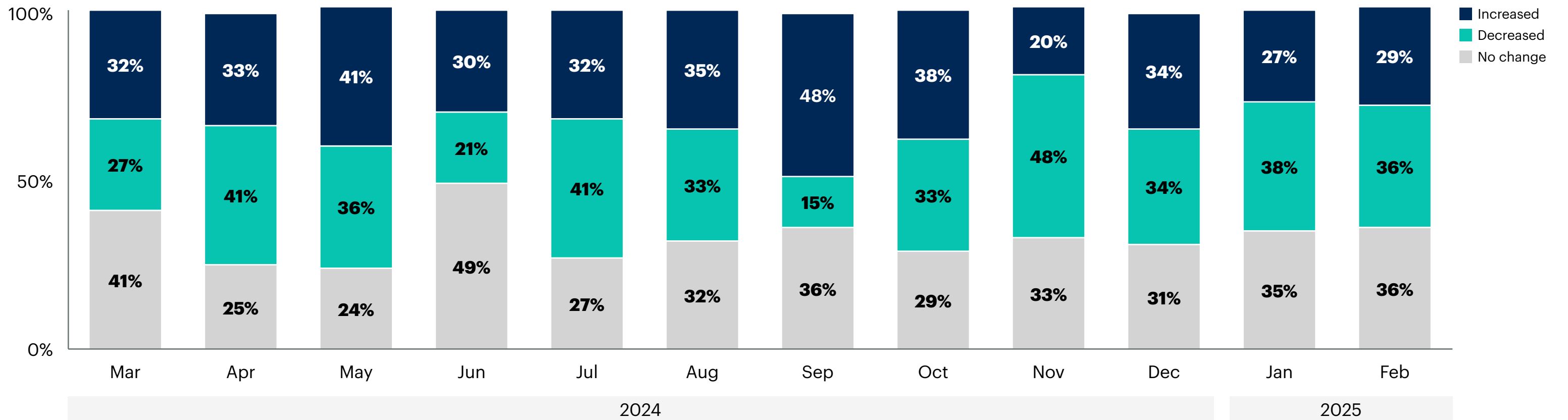


n = 36 (Jan 2025), 49 (Feb 2025)

Q: Which of the following topics are current issues for your organization this month? (Select all that apply)

Source: Benchmark with Gartner: Gartner Political Priorities Change Impact and Wellness Risk (Feb 2025), GenAI Workforce Disruption and New-Collar Jobs (Jan 2025)

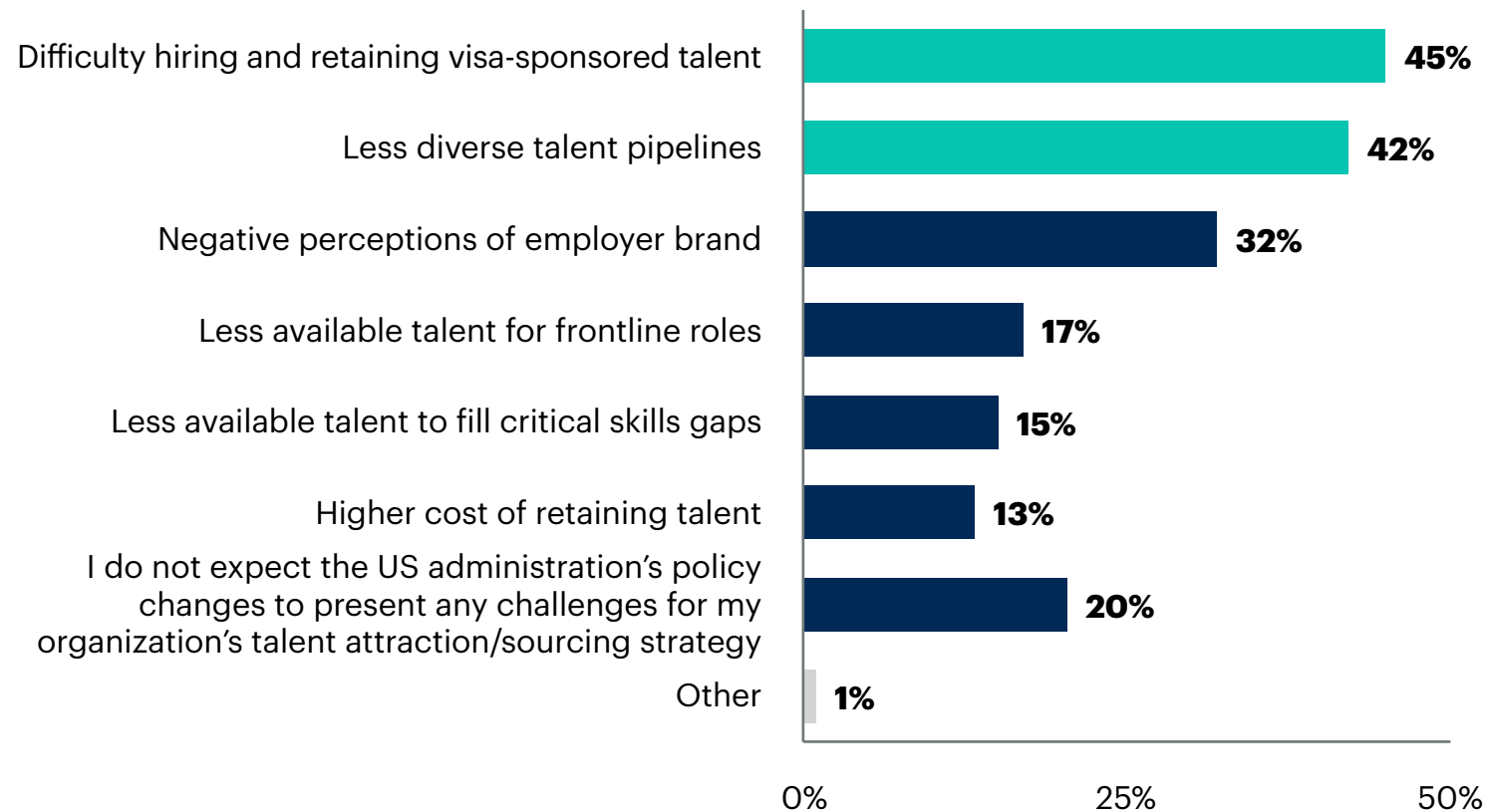
» Figure 2: Trends in Job Postings
Percentage of HR leaders



n = 56 (Feb 2025), 88 (Jan 2025), 58 (Dec 2024), 46 (Nov 2024), 45 (Oct 2024), 33 (Sep 2024), 63 (Aug 2024), 63 (Jul 2024), 53 (Jun 2024), 59 (May 2024), 75 (Apr 2024), 44 (Mar 2024)
 Q: How have your organization's job postings changed this month compared to the average of the last three months? (Select one)
 Source: Benchmark with Gartner

» Figure 3: Expected Talent Attraction and Sourcing Opportunities

Percentage of US private sector HR leaders*



n = 71 (Feb 2025)

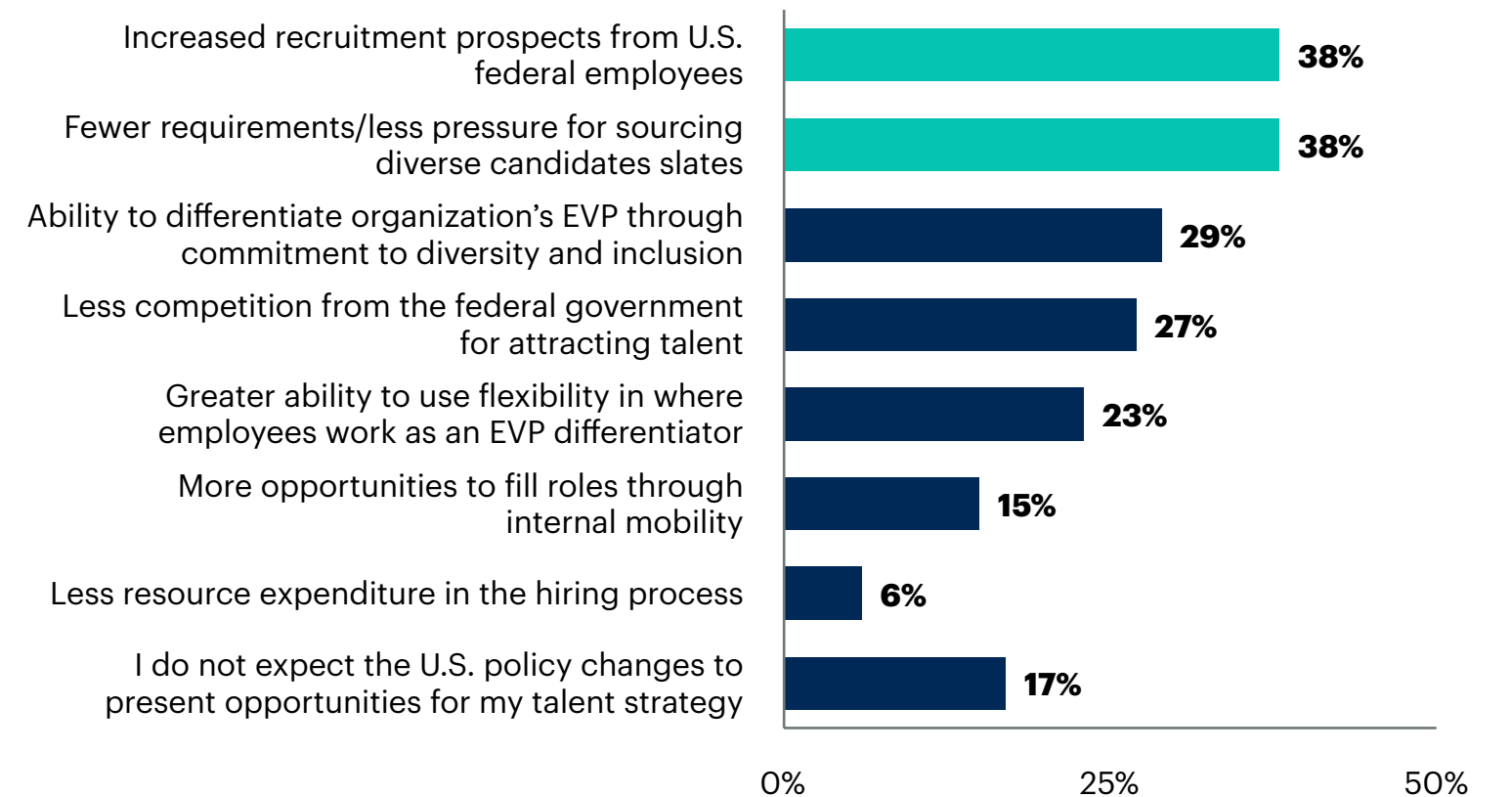
Q: What challenges, if any, do you anticipate the US administration's policy changes will present to your organization's talent attraction/sourcing strategy? (Select all that apply)

Source: Benchmark with Gartner: Political Priorities Change Impact and Wellness Risk (Feb 2025)

*Section on Navigating US Administration Policy Changes only includes US private sector HR leaders

» Figure 4: Talent Strategy Changes in US Private Sector

Percentage of U.S. private sector HR leaders*



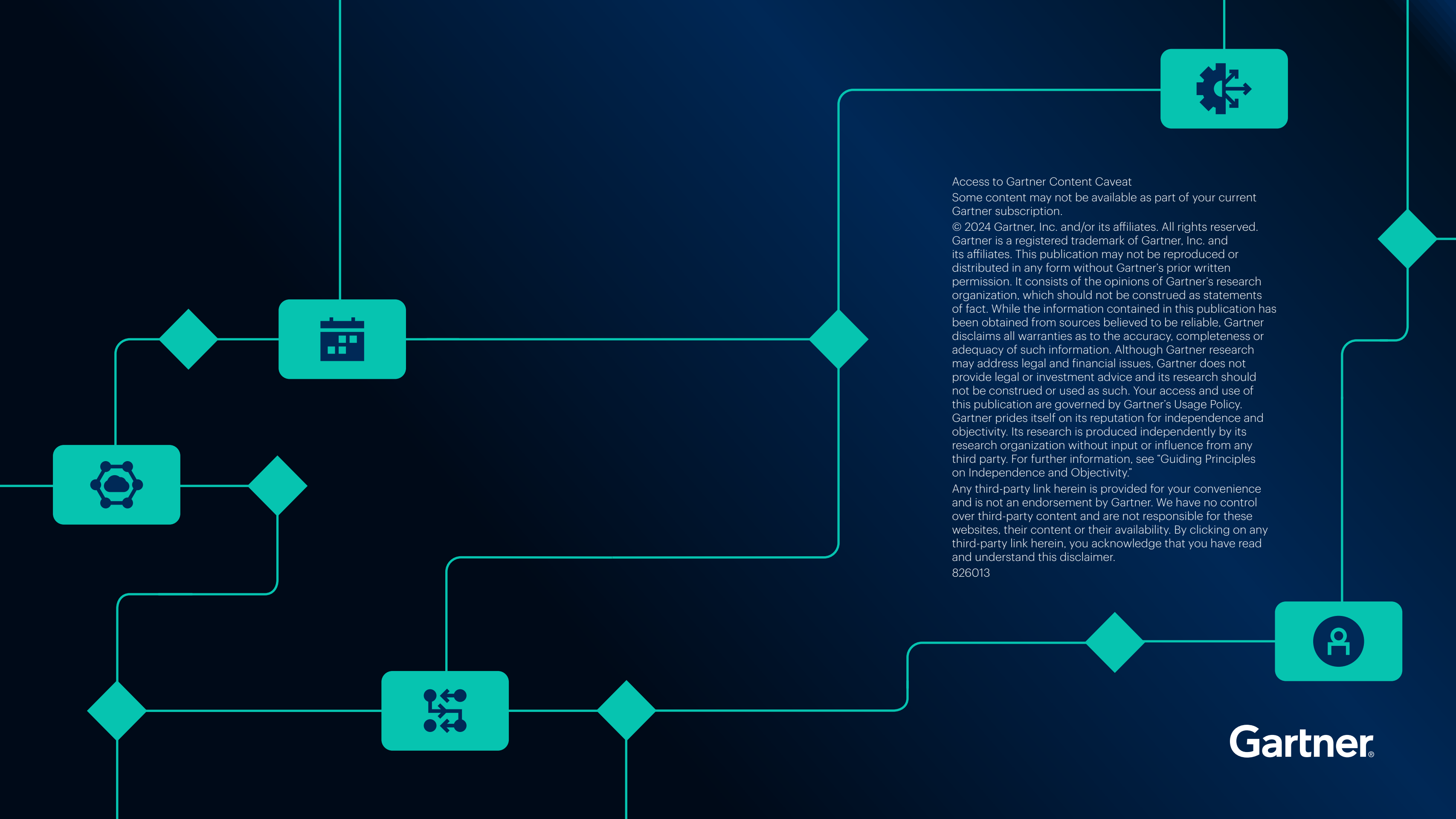
n = 52

Q: What opportunities, if any, do you anticipate the US administration's policy changes will present for your organization's talent attraction/sourcing strategy? (Select all that apply)

Source: Benchmark with Gartner: Gartner Political Priorities Change Impact and Wellness Risk (Feb 2025)

Note: Other was also a response option but not shown above since no respondents selected this. Some answers have been shortened to fit the chart.

*Section on Navigating U.S. Administration Policy Changes only includes U.S. private sector HR leaders



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