HR's Role in Getting Value From AI: 2025 HR Symposium/Xpo Keynote Highlights

3 October 2025 - ID G00839182 - 14 min read

By: Harsh Kundulli, Katie Sutherland, Caitlyn McDonough, Ned Feuer, Rebecca Lane

Initiatives:Future of Work

CEOs are betting on AI, but it's not delivering returns. To capture value from AI, work itself — not just the workforce — must change. CHROs can use these insights from Gartner's HR Symposium/Xpo Keynote to help their organizations successfully evolve work in the AI era.

Insights at a Glance

Organizations are redesigning work to get value from AI. They're augmenting existing work with AI to boost speed and quality, reengineering entire workflows and functions for efficiency and inventing new, AI-based ways of working.

The HR function's traditional role has been to deliver a workforce that can execute strategy. That role is insufficient in the AI era. To capture value from AI, HR must also become an enterprise leader in redesigning work. CHROs should partner with CIOs and other C-suite leaders to overcome common challenges with three key types of work change:

- **Augment** — Employees aren't resisting AI, but they haven't figured out how to get value from it either. HR and IT must help employees determine how to use AI to solve business challenges and impact how the organization creates value.
- **Reengineer** — Leaders are reengineering work opportunistically as AI matures. Work becomes more efficient as a result, but there are numerous talent implications — or ripple effects. For example, using AI to complete more tasks in a workflow often leads to fewer, more senior employees, which depletes the talent pipeline. HR must plan for how work will change to get ahead of such ripple effects.
- **Invent** — Leaders believe they can reduce headcount once advanced AI becomes a reality. Gartner data shows AI isn't ready to replace most jobs yet, but job demand is already shifting. HR must help talent transition into AI growth areas where talent is scarce.

Impact Brief

Organizations are struggling to capture AI's promise amid high investments and expectations. IT and business leaders need HR's expertise to evolve the way that work gets done so AI investments translate into business outcomes. HR is uniquely positioned to help employees figure out how to get value from AI, anticipate the talent implications of AI redesigns and ensure the organization has the necessary talent to invent new ways of working.

Actions and Cautions

Actions

In the AI era, CHROs must work with the executive leadership team to:

- **Guide employee AI adoption —** Help leaders and their teams figure out how to use AI to solve critical business challenges in the flow of work. This can be done through strategies like hands-on AI workshops and role-specific AI adoption guidance.
- **Plan for the work, not just the workforce —** Align with the executive leadership team on how to reshape the organization, the top redesign priorities for each part of the organization and the most likely ripple effects to mitigate, such as impact on entry-level roles and skills atrophy.
- **Build a path for employees to move into AI growth areas —** Identify roles with declining and growing demand so you can offer meaningful development and redeployment opportunities. Without this, there won't be enough talent to create new ways of working.

Introduction

CEOs are striving for growth at the lowest possible cost. They're working with CFOs to set aggressive goals that require increasing revenue and productivity without adding any headcount. [1, 2] Organizations are looking to AI to achieve these ambitious goals. Yet, only one in five AI initiatives achieves measurable return on investment, and just one in 50 delivers disruptive value. [3]

To achieve value from AI, organizations must redesign how work gets done. Gartner data shows that business units that redesign how work gets done, rather than just deploy AI and encourage employees to use it, are twice as likely to exceed revenue goals. [4] Organizations are changing work in three key ways:

- **Augment** — Organizations are augmenting existing work to make it faster and more accurate. For example, healthcare organization Kaiser Permanente uses ambient AI listening to transcribe patient-clinician conversations during office visits and create more accurate notes. [5]
- **Reengineer** — Organizations are reengineering entire workflows and functions to make work more efficient with AI. For example, a financial services organization we spoke with is using AI to detect and investigate fraud. It now has a smaller, more senior fraud detection team to review the AI output.
- **Invent** — Organizations are inventing entirely new, AI-based ways of working that dramatically improve scale and disrupt markets. For example, over the next few years, salespeople will have AI agents working alongside them to prioritize leads, do research and analysis, and nurture prospects independently. [6]

Every organization's unique strategy determines its portfolio of work changes, based on how much cost and risk the organization can afford to take on and how much return it needs to generate. It's important to understand your organization's work redesign portfolio because each type of work change has distinct barriers to success that HR leaders are uniquely positioned to solve (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: How Work Is Changing Across Organizations

Source: Gartner
839182_C

Gartner

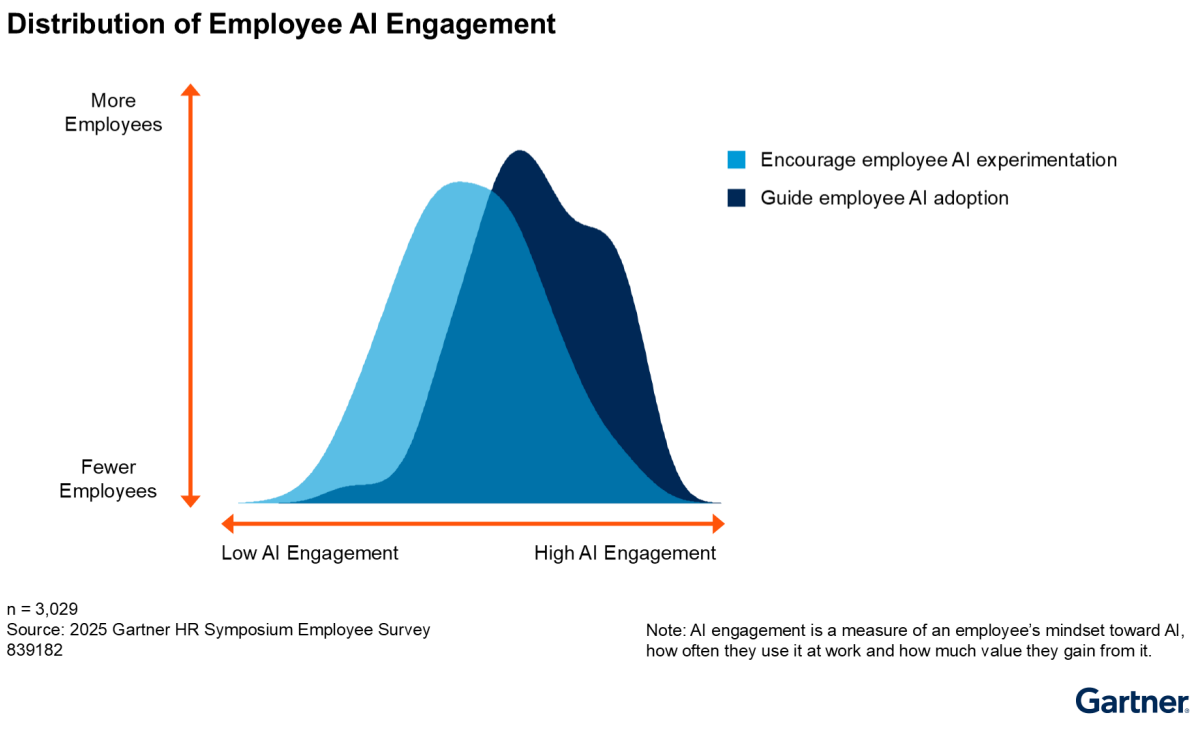
Augment: Guide AI Adoption Toward Business Challenges

Ninety percent of organizations have rolled out AI and are encouraging employees to experiment with it. [7] Many mainstream media articles assert that employees are resisting AI, but Gartner data shows this is not the case.

We analyzed how employees engage with AI — defined as their mindset toward AI, how often they use it and how much value they get from it. At the typical organization, only 3% of employees are AI detractors who actively avoid AI. Similarly, only 3% are AI superstars who consistently get value from it. Most employees are stuck in the middle. [8] They experiment with it, but haven't figured out how to get real value despite their efforts.

The key to shifting employees from AI users to AI value creators is to guide them to the highest potential opportunities. CHROs must partner with IT to help employees identify how to adopt AI in their workflows to solve business challenges. This includes HR and IT working together to create role-specific AI guidelines or co-leading AI workflow workshops. With guidance, the AI engagement curve shifts right, turning 15% of employees into AI superstars (see Figure 2). [7]

Figure 2: Distribution of Employee AI Engagement



n = 3,029
Source: 2025 Gartner HR Symposium Employee Survey
839182

Note: AI engagement is a measure of an employee's mindset toward AI, how often they use it at work and how much value they gain from it.

Gartner

Case in Point: Ensure AI's Link to Business Outcomes (Axonify)

Frontline technology company Axonify offers “AI-infused workflow” workshops. HRBPs and ITBPs collaborate with business leaders and their teams to identify where they can embed AI tools into workflows to solve specific business challenges. Workshop sessions include HR introducing AI tools and use cases, leaders and teams using AI to brainstorm applications, and IT guiding decisions on the best AI solutions. This collaborative process ensures AI adoption is purposeful, directly linked to solving business problems and strengthens existing operations.

Reengineer: Plan for the Work, Not Just the Workforce

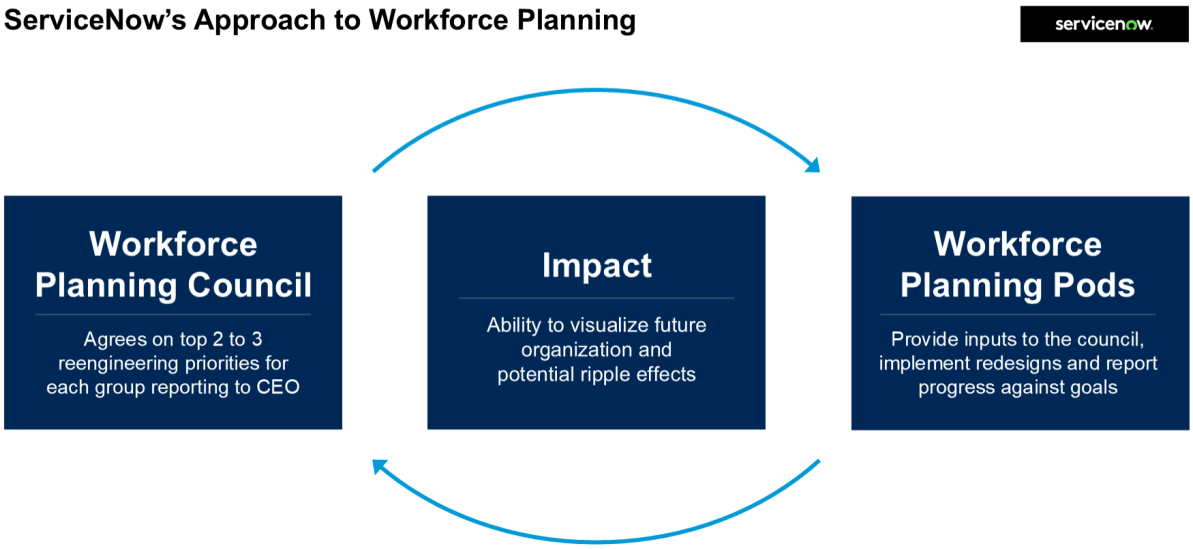
Work reengineering is happening opportunistically in pockets in many organizations as AI matures, without an enterprisewide strategy or direct HR involvement. Such uncoordinated redesigns often create lasting ripple effects, such as the elimination of entry-level roles, which deplete the long-term talent pipeline. HR must help leaders better plan for the ways work will change and anticipate talent implications as AI takes on more work.

CHROs should work with executives to establish principles that guide redesign efforts. For example, will the organization offshore work that can eventually be automated? CHROs should also evolve workforce planning to provide greater insight into how work will change across the organization. For example, workforce planning should reveal the top two to three redesigns needed for every function across the organization to provide insight into the future organizational design. Once the top changes are identified, HR should concentrate its efforts on supporting the work reengineering projects with the greatest business impact and talent implications.

Case in Point: Plan for How Work Will Change (ServiceNow)

Software company ServiceNow established a “Workforce Planning Council” at the executive level that’s responsible for agreeing on the top two to three redesigns needed in each function. Cross-functional “Workforce Planning Pods” implement the redesigns, identify potential ripple effects and report progress back to the council. Through this approach, ServiceNow creates visibility into the future organizational structure, ensures accountability for change and anticipates the talent implications of redesigned work (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: ServiceNow's Approach to Workforce Planning



Source: Adapted from ServiceNow
839182_C

Invent: Build a Path for Employees to Move Into AI Growth Areas

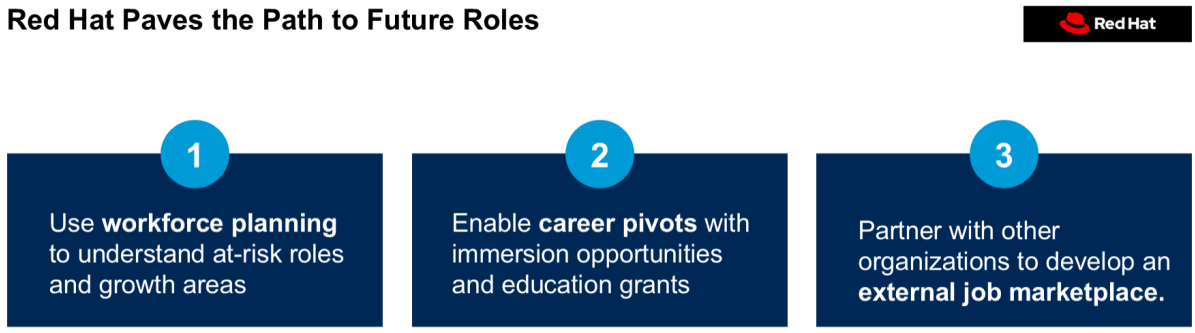
Agentic AI promises to transform who does work and how it gets done. Gartner predicts that by 2028, at least 15% of day-to-day work decisions will be made autonomously through agentic AI. [9] However, HR must balance leader expectations with the reality that AI is not yet ready to replace most jobs. In the first half of 2025, less than 1% of all job cuts were the direct result of AI productivity gains (see What's Your AI Layoff Strategy?). [10] To avoid premature layoffs, CHROs must work with C-suite peers to reset leader expectations on AI's maturity and establish ways to sense when AI is ready to take on a larger share of work.

Jobs are not going away in the short term, but job demand is already shifting toward AI growth areas. There isn't enough talent in the marketplace with the skills to fill these jobs. HR's immediate role in inventing new ways of working is to help more employees transition into growth areas. Employees need a clear pathway to transition into these roles. Otherwise, the organization won't have the talent it needs to invent new ways of working.

> **Case in Point: Building the Path to Future Roles (Red Hat)**

Software company Red Hat segments jobs based on the level of disruption expected by AI, identifying those most at-risk from mature AI today. Through workforce planning, Red Hat identifies skills needed for growth areas and offers immersion experiences and education grants to help associates transition into these roles. Recognizing that not every associate will want or be ready for internal redeployment, the company is also developing an external job marketplace. It is working with other companies to explore ways for associates to grow their careers beyond Red Hat (see Figure 4). This proactive approach will help Red Hat map the future workforce, support employees in moving to growth areas and ensure talent remains aligned with evolving business needs.

Figure 4: Red Hat Paves the Path to Future Roles



Source: Adapted from Red Hat
839182_C

Measuring The Impact of Work Transformation

Validate your organization's AI progress by tracking these key dimensions of work transformation:

- **Perceived value from AI** — Percentage of employees reporting AI improves work quality and speed.
- **Talent complications from organizational redesign** — Number of unforeseen talent issues or ripple effects that occur following a work redesign project (e.g., empty talent pipeline, skills atrophy).

- **Talent pipeline health** — Strength of the talent pipeline in functions redesigned as a result of AI.
- **Internal mobility** — Number of internal moves from declining roles into AI growth-related areas.

Evidence

[1] **3Q 2025 Update Gartner CEO & 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. This survey was fielded between March 20 and June 30, 2025. Half of the survey sample was collected from March 20 through April 7, 2025, and half was collected in June 2025. In total, 217 actively employed CEOs and other senior executive business leaders qualified and participated. All respondents were screened for active employment in organizations greater than $50M in annual revenue. The sample mix by role was CEOs (n = 172); CFOs (n = 20); COOs or other C-level executives (n = 14); and chairs, presidents, board directors (n = 11). The sample mix by location was North America (n = 86), Europe (n = 65), Asia/Pacific (n = 54), Latin America (n = 6) and the Middle East (n = 6). The sample mix by size was $50 million to less than $250 million (n = 18), $250 million to less than $1 billion (n = 49), $1 billion to less than $10 billion (n = 83) and $10 billion or more (n = 67). 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 CFO Planning Assumptions Survey.** This survey sought to provide CFOs and FP&A leaders guidance on critical assumptions for building annual operating budgets going into 2026. It covered the assumptions organizations are making for revenue growth, cost of goods sold, overhead function budget changes, profitability, compensation, and investment prioritization. The survey was conducted from August through September 2025 among 142 CFOs and senior finance leaders across multiple industries and geographies. Survey respondents were required to be full-time finance employees to be included in this research. 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] **Gartner analysis; 2025 Gartner AI Survey — CIO and Technology Leader View; 2024 Gartner AI Survey — CIO and Technology Leader View.**

2025 Gartner AI Survey — CIO and Technology Leader View. This survey was conducted to understand CIOs' and technology leaders' views on the enterprise's status in their AI journey, investment and technology priorities for 2025. It also captured their sentiments toward their enterprises' response to and effectiveness in dealing with disruptions. The survey was conducted online in May 2025 among CIOs (n = 224) and other technology leaders (n = 282). The total sample was 506 respondents, with representation from North America (n = 211), Europe (n = 141), Oceania (n = 54), Asia (n = 41), the Middle East (n = 30) and Latin America (n = 29) across all industry sectors. 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.

2024 Gartner AI Survey — CIO and Technology Leader View. This survey was conducted to capture CIOs' and technology leaders' sentiment toward AI and to better understand what organizations are doing as a result of recent changes and announcements about AI. The survey was conducted online in June and July 2024 among CIOs (n = 314) and other technology leaders (n = 394). The total sample was 708 respondents, with representation from North America (n = 329), EMEA (n = 253), Asia/Pacific (n = 89) and Oceania (n = 37) and across all industry sectors. Disclaimer: Results of this study do not represent global findings or the market as a whole but reflect sentiment of the respondents and companies surveyed.

[4] **2025 Gartner Growth Ready Workforce Manager Survey.** This survey was conducted to understand the manager perspective on team adoption and use of AI tools, as well as the effectiveness of leveraging technology on employee contributions. The research was conducted online from 24 June to 28 July 2025 by 1,973 managers from different geographies and regions. The survey was designed and developed by Gartner's HR practice research team. 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] Lessons learned from the Kaiser Permanente rollout of ambient AI scribes, Kaiser Permanente

[6] 19 Artificial Intelligence Use Cases for B2B Sales

[7] **2025 Gartner HR Symposium HR Leader Survey**. This survey was conducted to understand approaches and challenges related to AI implementation in the workforce, redesigning roles and teams, and the future of work. The research was conducted online from July 21 through August 26 2025 among 114 HR leaders with representation from various geographies, industries, and functions. 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.

[8] **2025 Gartner HR Symposium Employee Survey.** This survey was conducted to understand employees' experience using Artificial Intelligence (AI) at work, how it's affecting their jobs, and their perceptions of culture, leadership and change at their respective organizations. The survey also explores employees' current jobs, the technology they use in their work, and changes they are experiencing at work. The research was conducted online throughout July 2025 among 3,029 employees from different geographies, industries, and functions. The survey was designed and developed by Gartner's HR practice research team. 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.

[9] Top Strategic Technology Trends for 2025: Agentic AI

[10] What's Your AI Layoff Strategy?

Disclaimer: The organization (or organizations) profiled in this research is (or are) provided for illustrative purposes only, and does (or do) not constitute an exhaustive list of examples in this field nor an endorsement by Gartner of the organization or its offerings.

Recommended by the Authors

Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

What's Your AI Layoff Strategy?

HR in 2030: Plan Now for HR's Future Roles

The Impact of AI on the HR Operating Model

Executive Insight Series: Build a Growth-Ready Workforce for the AI Era

Benchmark the Use of Generative AI in HR and the Workforce

AI's Ripple Effect on Jobs and Organizations

How HR Can Build AI Literacy to Realize ROI