

Gartner for HR

Case Study: Enable Effective AI Use Through Work-Based Learning

McDermott Will & Schulte

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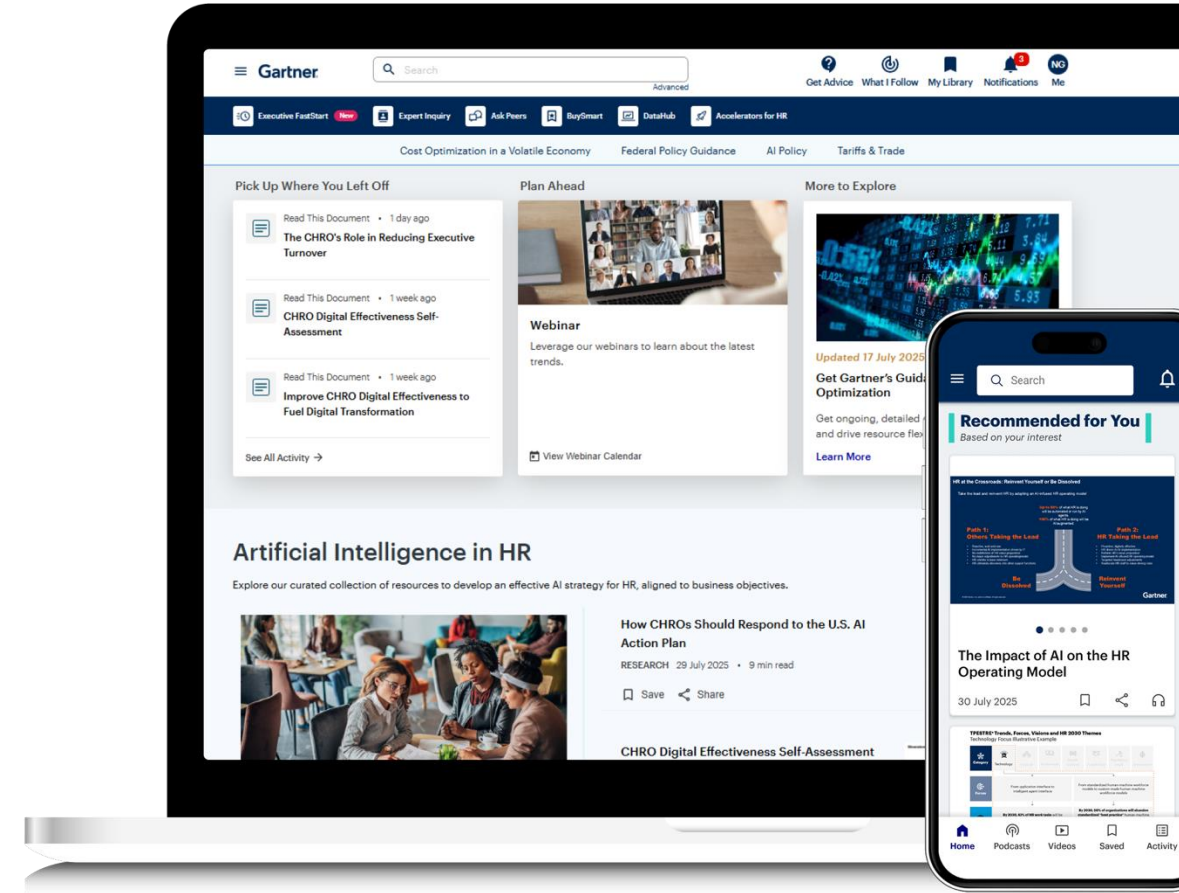


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Case overview

Summary

CHROs struggle to enable employees to apply AI in their work despite heavy investment in learning content from vendors and IT. Learn how McDermott Will & Schulte uses a work-based learning event to support AI experimentation before it is needed on the job to enable effective use at scale.

About the company

- Company name: **McDermott Will & Schulte**
- Industry: Legal Services
- Headquarters location: Chicago, Illinois, U.S.
- Revenue: \$2.2 billion (2024)
- Employees: 3,000 (2025)

Case overview

Problem	Actions	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR leaders have to balance the organization's need for scalable learning solutions with employees' need for instruction relevant to their work. This struggle is heightened with AI learning as AI is essential for all employees and has an almost infinite variety of ways it can be used.• Due to limited technical expertise, HR relies on the business to bring AI knowledge from vendors and IT solutions to life on the job. However, this typical trial-and-error approach comes too late in the learning process, leading to poor or nonexistent AI integration into workflows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employee-defined AI-ready challenges: Engage employees in reflection exercises to identify work challenges that could benefit from AI solutions, helping them recognize the tangible value AI can bring to their roles.• Maturity-informed peer skills sharing: Establish employee learning teams with varying levels of AI maturity to facilitate productive skills sharing and build sustained networks for ongoing AI integration support.• Design principles for AI practice: Empower employees to think critically and overcome initial setbacks by collaboratively solving real work problems, rapidly iterating on AI solutions with support from peers and IT professionals.• AI solution showcase: Make employees accountable for integrating AI into their work by facilitating solution share-outs that help employees see the varied ways AI can be applied outside of discrete learning events.	<p>McDermott Will & Schulte's implementation of structured work-based AI practice through learning events has led to more effective AI use by employees on the job. The CHRO estimates the following impacts post events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 85% of employees have increased their AI maturity.• 80% of employees have a greater understanding of how to apply AI to their workflows.• 80% of employees feel better supported by their peers in using AI on the job.

Recommendations

To help employees seamlessly integrate AI tools in their workflows, CHROs and their teams should:

- Partner with IT leadership to design and deliver hands-on AI learning events, where employees bring real work challenges to discuss and solve using AI, supported by both technical experts and peers.
- Collect employee AI maturity data to foster collaboration that enables mutual learning across all experience levels and builds networks of peer support, extending skill development beyond individual events.
- Facilitate broad sharing of AI solutions to work challenges among employees, empowering them to select and adopt the most effective AI applications for their roles.

Maturity-informed peer skills sharing

Illustrative

1 Employees identify their AI maturity

○ AI novices ● AI intermediates ○ AI maestros



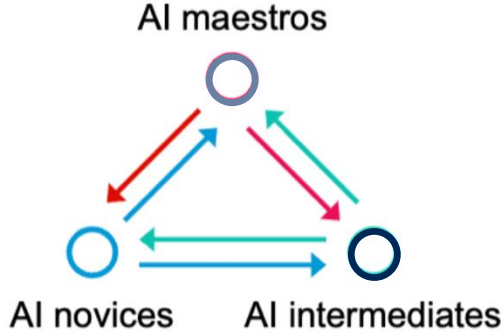
Employees share what AI tools they've used so HR can verify maturity designations.

2 HR creates groups with varied maturity levels



3 Peer-to-peer learning supports AI skill building

More advanced AI users are challenged to teach peers, turning unconscious habits into conscious skills.



New AI users bring more creativity to solutions practice and help their peers be unrestrained by past experiences in their experimentation.

Less advanced AI users see firsthand the benefits of using AI and build a relevant peer network to go to when they encounter obstacles using AI at work.

AI solutions practice

Illustrative

Prioritize iteration and broad experimentation over perfection

I wonder if a similar AI prompt I use for statute tracking would work?



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Schedule Now

Employees brainstorm solutions aligned with the workflow problems previously identified. Teams practice with and test various solutions by creating tailored AI prompts and AI agents.

McDermott Will & Schulte empowers employees to think critically and overcome initial failure with AI practice, ensuring they can apply AI to different-in-kind work tasks over time.