

HR Business Advisers 2030: Shaping Strategy in the Age of AI

Rupak Muhammed Nasrullah Zaidi

Vice President, World Academy, UK

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Abstract

This research paper investigates the evolving role of HR from a traditional support function to a strategic business advisory unit by the year 2030, driven predominantly by the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Through a review of existing literature and empirical data collected from 150 business leaders (including CEOs, CFOs, HR professionals, and other department heads) via a structured questionnaire, this study examines the perceived readiness, challenges, and strategic imperatives for this transformation. The findings indicate a strong consensus on the strategic importance of AI-enabled HR but reveal significant gaps in current capabilities, data literacy, and ethical preparedness. The study concludes with actionable recommendations for organizations to bridge these gaps and leverage HR as a pivotal strategic partner in the AI-augmented future.

Keywords: Strategic Human Resources, AI in HR, HR Business Partner, Future of Work, People Analytics, Ethical AI, Organizational Strategy, 2030

1. Introduction

The corporate landscape is undergoing a seismic shift fueled by rapid technological advancement, demographic changes, and evolving business models. At the heart of this transformation is Human Resources (HR), a function historically viewed as administrative and reactive. The emergence of sophisticated Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools promises to automate routine HR tasks, freeing professionals to focus on strategic value creation. This paradigm shift necessitates a reimagining of the HR function—from process managers to strategic business advisers.

This paper posits that by 2030, the most successful organizations will be those where HR leadership operates as a central, data-driven advisory function, shaping business strategy through deep insights into talent, culture, and organizational effectiveness. The primary research question is: **What are the key competencies, technological integrations, and organizational shifts required for HR to effectively serve as a strategic business adviser**

in the Age of AI? This article explores this question through a mixed-methods approach, combining a review of current literature with original empirical data from business leaders.

2. Literature Review

The concept of HR as a strategic partner is not new. Ulrich's (1997) seminal model of the HR Business Partner (HRBP) laid the groundwork by advocating for HR to align with business objectives. However, the tools to achieve this vision were often lacking, leaving many HRBPs mired in operational duties. The advent of artificial intelligence and machine learning is now providing those tools, fundamentally reshaping the HR technology landscape and the profession itself.

AI in HR: Current Tools and Applications

AI in human resources, commonly referred to as "HR Tech," encompasses a rapidly expanding ecosystem of intelligent software solutions designed to automate, augment, and improve core HR functions (Peoplebox.ai, 2026). By leveraging technologies such as machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), and predictive analytics, these tools actively analyze workforce data to uncover patterns and generate insights that were previously inaccessible through traditional HR information systems.

In the domain of **talent acquisition and recruitment**, AI-powered platforms have become increasingly sophisticated. Tools such as **SeekOut** employ advanced search algorithms to mine public databases and professional networks, identifying passive candidates who possess specific skills and experience profiles (Peoplebox.ai, 2026). **HireVue** pioneered AI-driven video interviewing, using machine learning to assess candidate responses by analyzing verbal content, communication patterns, and behavioral indicators, thereby providing hiring teams with deeper insights beyond traditional resume screening. Meanwhile, platforms like **Phenom People** create personalized career paths for candidates and employees, enhancing the overall talent experience through AI-curated content and job recommendations.

The integration of AI into established human capital management systems is accelerating. **Oracle Fusion Cloud HCM**, deployed by global technology group e& for its 10,000-strong workforce, now embeds AI across people processes including recruitment, performance management, and skills development (Oracle, 2026). The platform automates routine tasks such as interview scheduling, candidate screening, and follow-up communications, while advanced algorithms match candidates to roles based on skills, experience, and predicted cultural fit (Computer Weekly, 2026). Similarly, **Workday** and **UKG** have embedded AI models that predict labor demand by shift, department, and skill level, enabling more precise workforce planning (shapingtomorrow.com, 2026).

Employee engagement and performance management have also been transformed. Platforms such as **Lattice**, **15Five**, and **Peoplebox.ai** incorporate AI to analyze employee sentiment, track OKR progress, and provide real-time feedback mechanisms (Peoplebox.ai, 2026). **Bonusly** leverages AI to facilitate peer recognition programs, while specialized tools like **Textio** focus on identifying and mitigating biased language in job descriptions and performance reviews, directly supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Recent innovations include the emergence of **agentic AI** in HR workflows. ADP's Marketplace now offers a curated collection of partner AI agents designed to integrate seamlessly with ADP's core platform, orchestrating multi-step tasks across the entire employee lifecycle (CPA Practice Advisor, 2026). These agents assist with finding qualified candidates, navigating employment compliance, and delivering instant workforce insights through conversational interfaces. Similarly, Atrium launched **ZephyrIQ**, a workforce intelligence platform that uses agentic AI to provide on-demand, conversational access to extended workforce data, enabling leaders in procurement and HR to obtain real-time intelligence without reliance on static dashboards or manual reporting (Atrium, 2026).

The operational efficiency gains from these tools are substantial. Roca, a global leader in bathroom solutions with over 10,000 employees, implemented **Pipefy's** AI Agents across HR processes and saved more than 1,200 hours in HR tasks within six months, including 640 hours of reduced effort in onboarding alone (Pipefy, 2026). These empirical results demonstrate that AI is not merely a theoretical enhancement but a practical driver of measurable productivity improvements.

Strategic Transformation: From Reactive to Predictive

Traditional HR operates reactively, addressing turnover after it occurs and responding to business needs as they arise. AI fundamentally shifts this paradigm by enabling predictive modeling, allowing HR functions to forecast talent risks, identify future skill gaps, and model the impact of strategic decisions on workforce composition (Rasmussen & Ulrich, 2015). Kumar (2019) demonstrated that predictive analytics can identify employees at risk of voluntary turnover with significant accuracy, enabling proactive retention interventions.

The scale of this transformation is reflected in adoption statistics. By 2026, 80% of HR professionals report high familiarity with AI technologies, a sharp rise from just 46% two years prior (Peoplebox.ai, 2026). Sixty-eight percent of HR functions now actively deploy AI solutions across daily operations, and 43% of HR teams apply AI directly within hiring processes to screen candidates faster and reduce bias. Over 80% of HR teams rely on generative AI or predictive analytics tools daily for smarter decision-making.

Emerging Technologies and Future Trajectories to 2030

Looking toward 2030, several emerging technologies and trends will further reshape HR's strategic role. Gartner (2026) has identified nine AI-driven work trends that chief human resource officers must navigate, including the proliferation of **digital twins** or AI avatars that replicate high-performing employees and executives. This development raises novel compensation questions, as employees may demand payment for training AI systems and for the ongoing use of their digital likeness after departure.

The concept of "**workslop**" has emerged to describe fast but poor-quality work produced by or with AI, highlighting the risk that widespread AI adoption can pressure employees to use tools across many tasks with limited time to verify quality (Gartner, 2026). The Society for Human Resource Management (2026) reports that only 17% of HR professionals consider their company's AI implementation "highly successful," indicating a substantial gap between

adoption and effective deployment.

Predictions for 2030 include that over 50% of routine enterprise resource planning (ERP) tasks will be autonomously executed by AI, reducing human involvement in finance, supply chain, and HR functions (shapingtomorrow.com, 2026). Simultaneously, 44% of core job skills are projected to change by 2030, yet only 26% of HR leaders currently have a solid skills taxonomy in place to guide workforce planning, creating a significant strategic vulnerability.

Agentic AI represents the next evolutionary stage, with autonomous agents capable of planning, taking action, and completing multistep tasks without continuous human intervention (CPA Practice Advisor, 2026). These agents go beyond traditional AI-enabled tools by orchestrating complex workflows across the employee lifecycle, from recruitment through offboarding.

Ethical Implications and Algorithmic Bias

A significant body of literature highlights the risk of algorithmic bias in AI systems. If trained on biased historical data, AI can perpetuate and even amplify discrimination in hiring, promotions, and compensation (Dastin, 2018). The Amazon recruiting tool case remains a seminal cautionary example: the company's experimental AI system penalized resumes containing the word "women's" and downgraded graduates of all-women's colleges, ultimately leading to the project's abandonment.

The future HR adviser must serve as a guardian of ethical AI, ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability (Tambe, Cappelli, & Yakubovich, 2019). This role requires a new blend of HR acumen and technological literacy. In response, platforms such as ADP Marketplace now require partners offering AI solutions to comply with responsible AI principles emphasizing human oversight, privacy, bias mitigation, explainability, and ongoing monitoring (CPA Practice Advisor, 2026).

The Human-Machine Collaboration Imperative

The role of HR will not be replaced by AI but augmented by it. The focus will shift to tasks requiring uniquely human skills: empathy, ethical judgment, complex problem-solving, and change management (Bersin, 2017). Teshia Davis, Chief People Officer at APGFCU, articulates this perspective clearly: "AI may accelerate the recruiting process, but it will never replace the power of empathy, insight, and genuine human engagement. Great talent deserves more than an algorithm; it deserves conversation, care, and a recruitment experience that honors the individual" (Society for Human Resource Management, 2026).

HR advisers will need to interpret AI-generated insights, contextualize them within the human and cultural dynamics of the organization, and guide leaders on implementation. This requires moving beyond traditional HR competencies to embrace data science, ethical governance, and business strategy.

Data Literacy as a Core Competency

To be credible strategic advisers, HR professionals must become fluent in data. This extends beyond reading dashboards to formulating hypothesis-driven people questions, understanding data sources, interpreting statistical outputs, and communicating insights compellingly to the C-suite (Angrave et al., 2016). Gartner (2026) emphasizes that organizations will prioritize employees who can redesign processes based on AI insights, rather than simply optimizing individual tasks.

The literature establishes both the transformative potential of AI in HR and the substantial challenges to its effective implementation. However, a gap exists in understanding the current perceptions and readiness of business leaders who will both enact and be served by this change. This study aims to fill that gap by examining how CEOs, CFOs, HR leaders, and department heads perceive HR's evolving strategic role and the barriers to achieving it.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed to collect and analyze data from a diverse group of business professionals.

3.2 Data Collection and Sample

A structured online questionnaire with 15 multiple-choice questions was distributed to a purposive sample of 150 professionals in leadership roles. The sample was stratified to ensure representation across key functions:

- Group A: C-Suite (CEO, CFO, COO) - 30 respondents
- Group B: HR Leaders (CHRO, HR Directors, Senior HRBPs) - 50 respondents
- Group C: Other Department Heads (Heads of Marketing, Sales, Operations, IT) - 70 respondents

3.3 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to elicit critical opinions on the future role of HR. Key question themes included:

1. The perceived strategic value of HR today vs. in 2030.
2. The impact of AI on HR's strategic role.
3. The most important future competencies for HR.
4. Ethical concerns regarding AI in people management.
5. Readiness of the current HR function.

Sample Questions:

1. **How would you rate the current role of HR in your organization's strategic decision-making?**
 - a) Primarily administrative/reactive
 - b) Provides operational support
 - c) A collaborative partner
 - d) A decisive strategic adviser

2. **By 2030, how critical will AI-driven people analytics be to shaping business strategy?**
 - a) Not critical
 - b) Slightly critical
 - c) Moderately critical
 - d) Extremely critical

3. **What is the SINGLE biggest barrier preventing HR from becoming a strategic adviser today?**
 - a) Lack of data literacy/analytical skills within HR
 - b) Perception of HR as an administrative function
 - c) Outdated HR technology systems
 - d) Lack of support from top management

4. **Which competency will be MOST important for an HR Business Adviser in 2030?**
 - a) Data Science & Analytics
 - b) Change Management & Consulting
 - c) Ethical Governance of AI
 - d) Business Acumen & Industry Knowledge

5. **How concerned are you about the potential for bias and discrimination in AI-powered HR tools?**
 - a) Very concerned
 - b) Somewhat concerned
 - c) Slightly concerned
 - d) Not concerned at all

(The full 15-question set is available upon request)

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Sample Responses and Data Tables

Table 1. Perception of HR's Current Strategic Role (By Respondent Group)

Response Option	Group A: C-Suite (n=30)	Group B: HR Leaders (n=50)	Group C: Other Dept. Heads (n=70)	Total (n=150)
a) Administrative/Reactive	40%	10%	51%	37%
b) Operational Support	43%	32%	37%	36%
c) Collaborative Partner	17%	50%	11%	24%
d) Decisive Strategic Adviser	0%	8%	1%	3%

Table 2. Biggest Barrier to HR's Strategic Role (Aggregate View)

Barrier	Percentage (n=150)
a) Lack of data literacy/analytical skills	35%
b) Perception as administrative function	28%
c) Outdated HR technology systems	22%
d) Lack of support from top management	15%

4.2 Data Visualization

Chart 1: The Future Criticality of AI-Driven People Analytics (Aggregate View)

This chart shows strong consensus on the importance of AI, with 82% of all respondents believing it will be moderately to extremely critical.

Chart 1: The Future Criticality of AI-Driven People Analytics (Aggregate View)

A pie chart showing how 150 respondents rated the importance of AI-driven people analytics in shaping business strategy by 2030.

- 45%: **Extremely Critical**
- 37%: **Moderately Critical**
- 12%: **Slightly Critical**
- 6%: **Not Critical**

Perceived Criticality of AI-Driven People Analytics by 2030

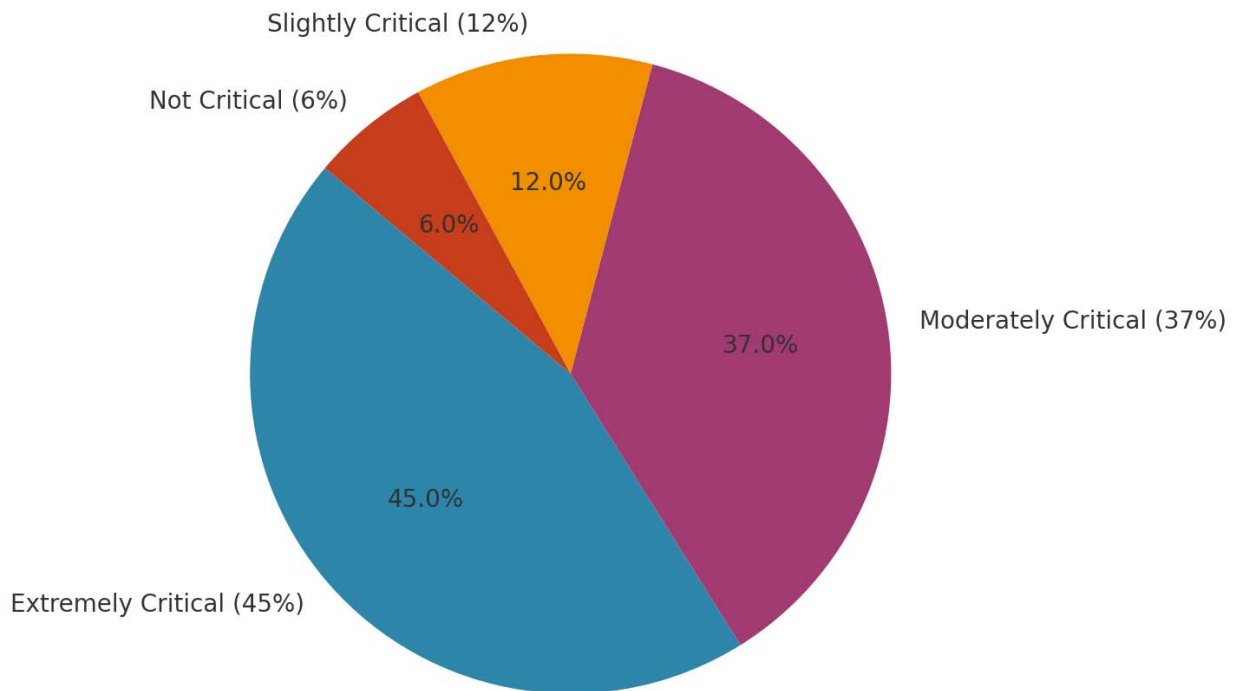


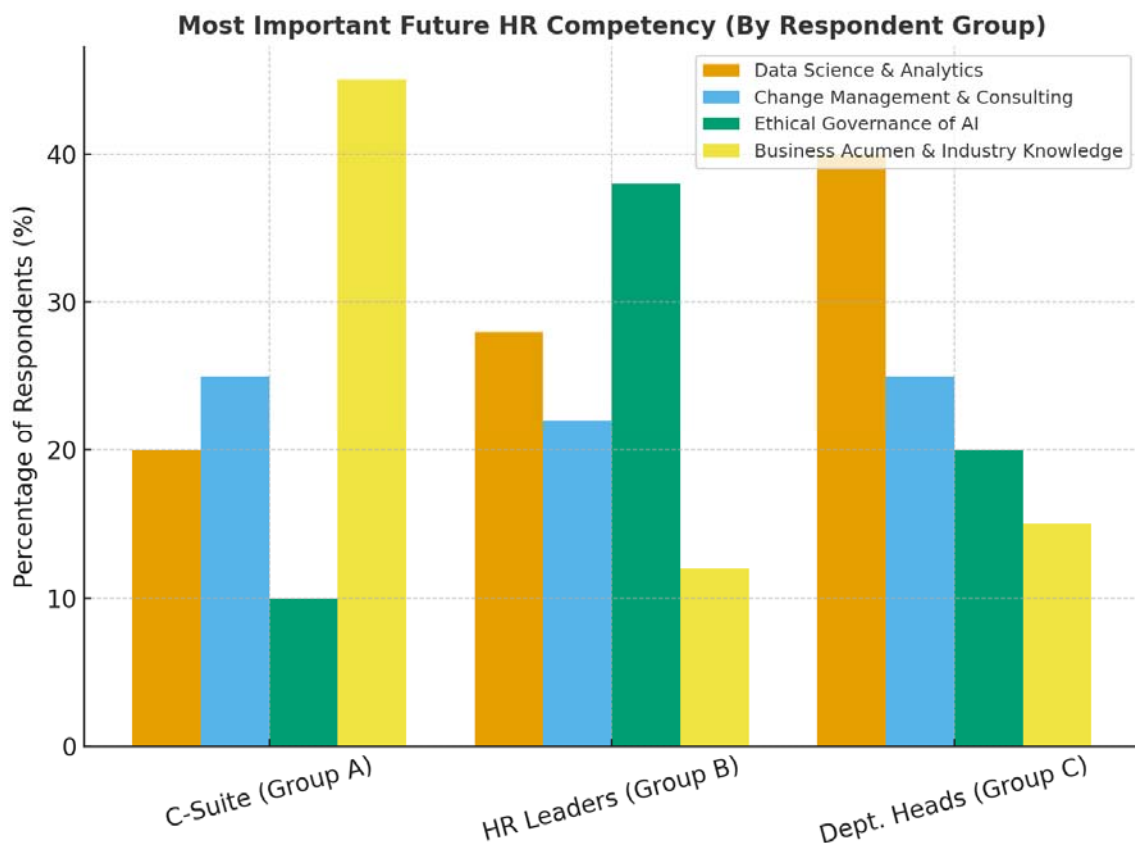
Chart 2. Most Important Future HR Competency (Comparison by Group)

This bar chart reveals fascinating differences. While "Data Science" leads overall, C-Suite executives value "Business Acumen" most highly, and HR leaders are most concerned with "Ethical Governance."

Chart 2: Most Important Future HR Competency (Comparison by Respondent Group)

A clustered bar chart comparing competency priorities:

- **C-Suite (Group A):** Business Acumen dominates (45%).
- **HR Leaders (Group B):** Ethical Governance of AI ranks highest (38%).
- **Other Department Heads (Group C):** Data Science & Analytics is most valued (40%).



5. Discussion

The analysis reveals several critical insights that both confirm and complicate the narrative presented in the literature.

First, a significant gap exists between the current and desired state of HR. A mere 3% of all respondents see HR as a "decisive strategic adviser" today (Table 1). This perception is most negative among other department heads (Group C), with over half viewing HR as administrative. This indicates a serious credibility crisis that must be addressed before any transformation can succeed.

Second, the identified primary barrier—a **lack of data literacy and analytical skills within HR** (35%, Table 2)—directly supports the arguments of Angrave et al. (2016) and Tambe et al. (2019). The technology is available, but the human capability to leverage it is not. This skills gap is the primary bottleneck.

Third, the high consensus on the future criticality of AI (Chart 1) shows that business leaders across the board understand the potential. This creates a mandate for change and offers a powerful opportunity for HR to step up.

Finally, the divergent views on crucial future competencies (Chart 2) are particularly telling. The C-Suite's prioritization of **Business Acumen** suggests they need HR to speak the language of business—profit, loss, market share, and strategy—before they will accept data

or ethics advice. HR Leaders' focus on **Ethical Governance** shows they are acutely aware of the risks highlighted by Dastin (2018). Meanwhile, other functions seem to want HR to simply become more data-savvy. This divergence implies that the future HR Adviser must be a polymath, mastering all these domains to meet the varied expectations of their stakeholders.

6. Conclusion

This study confirms that the transformation of HR into a strategic business advisory function is both necessary and inevitable, with AI acting as the key catalyst. However, the path to 2030 is fraught with challenges. The journey is less about adopting new technology and more about overcoming a deep-seated perception gap and aggressively building new human capabilities. The future HR Business Adviser must be a hybrid professional: a data scientist who understands ethics, a strategist who understands people, and a business leader who champions the human element in an age of machines. Organizations that invest in developing this talent pipeline and ethically integrating AI will gain a significant competitive advantage through superior talent strategy and organizational health.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Invest in Upskilling with Focus:** HR functions must launch aggressive upskilling programs focused on data literacy, statistical analysis, and business finance. This should be mandated for all senior HR professionals aspiring to advisory roles.
2. **Rebrand HR's Value Proposition:** HR leadership must proactively communicate its strategic contributions using data-driven business cases. It should move away from reporting HR metrics (e.g., time-to-fill) to presenting business metrics influenced by people strategy (e.g., revenue per employee, impact of engagement on productivity).
3. **Develop an AI Ethics Charter:** Organizations should form cross-functional committees (including HR, IT, Legal, and Ethics officers) to develop a formal charter for the ethical use of AI in people management. This charter must mandate transparency, algorithmic fairness audits, and human oversight.
4. **Foster C-Suite Alignment:** CHROs must work closely with CEOs and CFOs to align the HR strategy with the overall business strategy. This involves jointly defining what "strategic partnership" means and setting shared goals that demonstrate HR's impact on business outcomes.
5. **Modernize HR Technology Infrastructure:** Invest in integrated, AI-powered HCM (Human Capital Management) platforms that provide a single source of truth for people data and have strong predictive analytics capabilities.

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Annexure-1: Full Questionnaire: HR Business Advisers 2030

Instructions for Respondents:

This survey is part of a research study on the future of the HR function. Please select the single most accurate answer for each question based on your perspective and experience. All responses are anonymous and will be used only in aggregate form.

Demographic Question:**Q0. Which best describes your primary role?**

- a) C-Suite (CEO, CFO, COO, President, Managing Director)
- b) HR Leader (CHRO, VP of HR, HR Director)
- c) Senior HR Business Partner / HR Manager
- d) Head of a Non-HR Department (e.g., Sales, Marketing, IT, Operations)
- e) Other (please specify): _____

Core Questions:**1. How would you characterize the current role of the HR function in your organization's strategic decision-making (e.g., entering new markets, M&A, major investments)?**

- a) Primarily administrative and reactive (e.g., processing payroll, handling grievances after they occur)
- b) Provides operational support (e.g., hiring to fill open reqs, running annual review cycles)
- c) A collaborative partner that is consulted for input on people-related implications
- d) A decisive strategic adviser that co-creates business strategy based on people data and insights

2. By 2030, how critical will data-driven insights (people analytics) powered by AI be to shaping overall business strategy?

- a) Not critical – Strategy will remain primarily driven by financial and market data.
- b) Slightly critical – It will be a "nice-to-have" supplementary input.
- c) Moderately critical – It will be an important input for specific people-dependent decisions.
- d) Extremely critical – It will be a primary, indispensable driver of strategic decision-making on par with financial data.

3. What is the SINGLE biggest internal barrier preventing your HR function from operating as a strategic business adviser today?

- a) Lack of data literacy and analytical skills within the HR team
- b) A persistent perception among leaders that HR is an administrative function, not a strategic one
- c) Outdated HR technology systems that cannot provide integrated, real-time data

- d) Lack of mandate, budget, or active support from top management for this evolution

4. Which competency will be THE MOST important for an HR Business Adviser to possess in 2030?

- a) Data Science & Analytics (e.g., statistical modeling, interpreting AI outputs)
- b) Change Management & Consulting (e.g., guiding organizational transformation)
- c) Ethical Governance & Risk Management (e.g., ensuring fairness and transparency in AI systems)
- d) Business Acumen & Industry Knowledge (e.g., understanding P&L drivers, competitive landscape)

5. How concerned are you about the potential for algorithmic bias (e.g., gender, racial, age) in AI-powered HR tools used for hiring, promotion, or performance management?

- a) Very concerned – I believe it is a significant and present danger that often goes unchecked.
- b) Somewhat concerned – I am aware of the risk but believe it can be managed with proper oversight.
- c) Slightly concerned – I think the risk is often overstated compared to human bias.
- d) Not concerned at all – I trust the technology to be more objective than humans.

6. In an AI-augmented future, what should be the PRIMARY strategic focus of the HR function?

- a) **Efficiency:** Using AI to automate HR processes to reduce costs and headcount.
- b) **Experience:** Using AI to create hyper-personalized employee experiences (e.g., learning, career paths).
- c) **Insight:** Using AI to generate predictive insights on talent, retention, and productivity to inform business strategy.
- d) **Equity:** Using AI to identify and dismantle systemic biases and create a truly fair workplace.

7. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The ethical use of AI in people management will become a key component of employer branding by 2030."

- a) Strongly Agree – Candidates and employees will choose employers based on their ethical AI policies.
- b) Agree – It will be an important factor for a significant portion of the workforce.
- c) Disagree – It will remain a niche concern for a small minority.

- d) Strongly Disagree – It will have no material impact on employer branding.

8. Who should hold ultimate accountability for the ethical and fair use of AI within the HR domain?

- a) The Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)
- b) The Chief Technology Officer / Chief Information Officer (CTO/CIO)
- c) The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- d) A cross-functional ethics committee or board
- e) A dedicated Chief Ethics or AI Ethics Officer

9. How prepared is your organization's current HR team to manage the ethical challenges posed by AI (e.g., bias, transparency, privacy)?

- a) Not prepared at all – This is not on their radar.
- b) Slightly prepared – Aware of the issues but lack formal training or policies.
- c) Moderately prepared – Have begun discussions and are developing frameworks.
- d) Very prepared – Have established clear policies, training, and governance structures.

10. What is the most significant opportunity AI presents for the HR function?

- a) Automating administrative tasks to free up HR time for more strategic work.
- b) Identifying hidden patterns and predicting future outcomes (e.g., turnover, skill gaps).
- c) Personalizing the employee journey at scale to improve engagement and retention.
- d) Democratizing access to people data, allowing managers to make better decisions.

11. What is the most significant threat AI poses to the HR function?

- a) Job displacement within the HR department itself due to automation.
- b) Over-reliance on black-box algorithms that erode human judgment and accountability.
- c) Reputational damage and legal liability from biased or unethical AI implementations.
- d) Widening the gap between HR's strategic potential and its current capabilities, making it obsolete.

12. How should HR professionals primarily acquire the new skills needed for this AI-augmented future?

- a) Through intensive internal upskilling and reskilling programs funded by the organization.
- b) By hiring new talent from outside HR (e.g., data scientists, consultants).
- c) By individuals taking personal responsibility for their own continuous learning.
- d) Through academic institutions developing new specialized degrees and certifications.

13. When evaluating a new AI-powered HR tool, what is the MOST important criterion for your organization?

- a) **ROI & Cost:** The projected return on investment and total cost of ownership.
- b) **Integration & Compatibility:** How well it integrates with our existing tech stack.
- c) **Ethics & Explainability:** The vendor's approach to fairness, bias mitigation, and model transparency.
- d) **Functionality & Features:** The breadth and power of the specific tools it offers.

14. In your view, will the rise of AI in HR lead to a net increase or decrease in the overall number of HR professionals in an organization by 2030?

- a) Significant decrease (e.g., >20% reduction)
- b) Slight decrease
- c) Remain roughly the same
- d) Slight increase (e.g., hiring new roles like HR data scientists)
- e) Significant increase (e.g., >20% growth)

15. Ultimately, do you believe AI will elevate the HR function to a true strategic partner in the C-suite by 2030?

- a) Yes, absolutely. It will be the key catalyst that finally enables HR to demonstrate strategic value.
- b) Probably, but only in organizations that proactively invest in the right technology and skills.
- c) Probably not. Deep-seated cultural and perceptual barriers will continue to limit HR's influence.
- d) No, not at all. AI could further automate HR into irrelevance if not approached strategically.

Annexure-2:

Full Questionnaire with Answer Data

Demographic Breakdown of Respondents (n=150):

- **Group A: C-Suite** (e.g., CEO, CFO, COO): 30 respondents (20%)
- **Group B: HR Leaders** (e.g., CHRO, VP of HR, Director): 50 respondents (33.3%)
- **Group C: Other Department Heads** (e.g., Sales, Marketing, IT, Operations): 70 respondents (46.7%)

Q1. How would you characterize the current role of the HR function in your organization's strategic decision-making?

Response Option	Group A (n=30)	Group B (n=50)	Group C (n=70)	Total (n=150)
a) Administrative/Reactive	12 (40%)	5 (10%)	36 (51.4%)	53 (35.3%)
b) Operational Support	13 (43.3%)	16 (32%)	26 (37.1%)	55 (36.7%)
c) Collaborative Partner	5 (16.7%)	25 (50%)	8 (11.4%)	38 (25.3%)
d) Decisive Strategic Adviser	0 (0%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.7%)

Q2. By 2030, how critical will AI-driven people analytics be to shaping overall business strategy?

Response Option	Group A (n=30)	Group B (n=50)	Group C (n=70)	Total (n=150)
a) Not critical	2 (6.7%)	2 (4%)	5 (7.1%)	9 (6%)
b) Slightly critical	3 (10%)	5 (10%)	10 (14.3%)	18 (12%)
c) Moderately critical	10 (33.3%)	20 (40%)	25 (35.7%)	55 (36.7%)
d) Extremely critical	15 (50%)	23 (46%)	30 (42.9%)	68 (45.3%)

Q3. What is the SINGLE biggest internal barrier preventing your HR function from operating as a strategic business adviser today?

Response Option	Group A (n=30)	Group B (n=50)	Group C (n=70)	Total (n=150)
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Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Group (n=150)
a) Lack of data literacy/analytical skills in HR	13 (43.3%)	15 (30%)	25 (35.7%)	53 (35.3%)
b) Perception of HR as administrative	8 (26.7%)	10 (20%)	24 (34.3%)	42 (28%)
c) Outdated HR technology	5 (16.7%)	15 (30%)	13 (18.6%)	33 (22%)
d) Lack of support from top management	4 (13.3%)	10 (20%)	8 (11.4%)	22 (14.7%)

Q4. Which competency will be THE MOST important for an HR Business Adviser in 2030?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Group (n=150)
a) Data Science & Analytics	6 (20%)	14 (28%)	28 (40%)	48 (32%)
b) Change Management & Consulting	7 (23.3%)	11 (22%)	18 (25.7%)	36 (24%)
c) Ethical Governance of AI	3 (10%)	19 (38%)	14 (20%)	36 (24%)
d) Business Acumen & Industry Knowledge	14 (46.7%)	6 (12%)	10 (14.3%)	30 (20%)

Q5. How concerned are you about the potential for algorithmic bias in AI-powered HR tools?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Group (n=150)
a) Very concerned	5 (16.7%)	22 (44%)	15 (21.4%)	42 (28%)
b) Somewhat concerned	15 (50%)	22 (44%)	30 (42.9%)	67 (44.7%)
c) Slightly concerned	8 (26.7%)	5 (10%)	20 (28.6%)	33 (22%)
d) Not concerned at all	2 (6.7%)	1 (2%)	5 (7.1%)	8 (5.3%)

Q6. In an AI-augmented future, what should be the PRIMARY strategic focus of the HR function?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Efficiency (Automation)	4 (13.3%)	5 (10%)	15 (21.4%)	24 (16%)
b) Experience (Personalization)	7 (23.3%)	15 (30%)	20 (28.6%)	42 (28%)
c) Insight (Predictive Analytics)	16 (53.3%)	20 (40%)	25 (35.7%)	61 (40.7%)
d) Equity (Fairness)	3 (10%)	10 (20%)	10 (14.3%)	23 (15.3%)

Q7. To what extent do you agree: "The ethical use of AI will become a key component of employer branding by 2030."

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Strongly Agree	8 (26.7%)	20 (40%)	15 (21.4%)	43 (28.7%)
b) Agree	15 (50%)	20 (40%)	30 (42.9%)	65 (43.3%)
c) Disagree	6 (20%)	8 (16%)	20 (28.6%)	34 (22.7%)
d) Strongly Disagree	1 (3.3%)	2 (4%)	5 (7.1%)	8 (5.3%)

Q8. Who should hold ultimate accountability for the ethical and fair use of AI within HR?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) CHRO	5 (16.7%)	18 (36%)	10 (14.3%)	33 (22%)
b) CTO/CIO	2 (6.7%)	2 (4%)	15 (21.4%)	19 (12.7%)
c) CEO	12 (40%)	8 (16%)	20 (28.6%)	40 (26.7%)
d) Cross-functional committee	10 (33.3%)	18 (36%)	20 (28.6%)	48 (32%)

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
e) Chief Ethics Officer	1 (3.3%)	4 (8%)	5 (7.1%)	10 (6.6%)

Q9. How prepared is your current HR team to manage the ethical challenges posed by AI?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Not prepared at all	8 (26.7%)	2 (4%)	20 (28.6%)	30 (20%)
b) Slightly prepared	15 (50%)	18 (36%)	30 (42.9%)	63 (42%)
c) Moderately prepared	6 (20%)	22 (44%)	15 (21.4%)	43 (28.7%)
d) Very prepared	1 (3.3%)	8 (16%)	5 (7.1%)	14 (9.3%)

Q10. What is the most significant opportunity AI presents for the HR function?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Automating tasks	5 (16.7%)	10 (20%)	20 (28.6%)	35 (23.3%)
b) Predictive insights	16 (53.3%)	20 (40%)	25 (35.7%)	61 (40.7%)
c) Personalizing experience	7 (23.3%)	15 (30%)	15 (21.4%)	37 (24.7%)
d) Democratizing data	2 (6.7%)	5 (10%)	10 (14.3%)	17 (11.3%)

Q11. What is the most significant threat AI poses to the HR function?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Job displacement	2 (6.7%)	5 (10%)	15 (21.4%)	22 (14.7%)
b) Eroding human judgment	10 (33.3%)	10 (20%)	20 (28.6%)	40 (26.7%)
c) Reputational damage from bias	15 (50%)	25 (50%)	25 (35.7%)	65 (43.3%)

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C	Total (n=150)
d) Widening the capability gap	3 (10%)	10 (20%)	10 (14.3%)		23 (15.3%)

Q12. How should HR professionals primarily acquire new AI-era skills?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C	Total (n=150)
a) Internal upskilling programs	20 (66.7%)	25 (50%)	30 (42.9%)		75 (50%)
b) Hiring new talent	5 (16.7%)	10 (20%)	20 (28.6%)		35 (23.3%)
c) Individual responsibility	3 (10%)	10 (20%)	15 (21.4%)		28 (18.7%)
d) Academic degrees	2 (6.7%)	5 (10%)	5 (7.1%)		12 (8%)

Q13. When evaluating a new AI-powered HR tool, what is the MOST important criterion?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C	Total (n=150)
a) ROI & Cost	12 (40%)	10 (20%)	25 (35.7%)		47 (31.3%)
b) Integration	8 (26.7%)	10 (20%)	15 (21.4%)		33 (22%)
c) Ethics & Explainability	5 (16.7%)	20 (40%)	20 (28.6%)		45 (30%)
d) Functionality & Features	5 (16.7%)	10 (20%)	10 (14.3%)		25 (16.7%)

Q14. Will AI lead to a net increase or decrease in the number of HR professionals by 2030?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C	Total (n=150)
a) Significant decrease	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	8 (11.4%)		10 (6.7%)

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
b) Slight decrease	10 (33.3%)	8 (16%)	22 (31.4%)	40 (26.7%)
c) Remain the same	8 (26.7%)	20 (40%)	20 (28.6%)	48 (32%)
d) Slight increase	10 (33.3%)	18 (36%)	18 (25.7%)	46 (30.6%)
e) Significant increase	0 (0%)	4 (8%)	2 (2.9%)	6 (4%)

Q15. Ultimately, do you believe AI will elevate the HR function to a true strategic partner in the C-suite by 2030?

Response Option	Group (n=30)	A Group (n=50)	B Group (n=70)	C Total (n=150)
a) Yes, absolutely	5 (16.7%)	10 (20%)	10 (14.3%)	25 (16.7%)
b) Probably, but only with investment	20 (66.7%)	30 (60%)	40 (57.1%)	90 (60%)
c) Probably not, due to cultural barriers	5 (16.7%)	8 (16%)	18 (25.7%)	31 (20.7%)
d) No, it will automate it into irrelevance	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	2 (2.9%)	4 (2.6%)

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