

Why Adaptability Starts With HR Strategy



The New Baseline of Work Is Reinvention

When you think about your organization's ability to adapt to disruption, are you confident that it can? If not, you're in the majority: just 27% of respondents to Deloitte's 2026 Human Capital Trends survey **said their companies manage change effectively**. That means the rigid, traditional structures most companies use to operate are holding them back, and they're leaving untapped human potential on the table.

If you're only making plans for the future of your workforce once a year, and cross-functional agility is unfamiliar territory, you're missing out on the excellent results that are possible with a fresh approach. HR can make a powerful strategic move by supporting the business with a people-first adaptability strategy — and the right tools.

There's clear proof that organizational success is the outcome when companies focus on human-centric design:

- When companies prioritize the intentional design of human-AI interactions, they're **2.5 times more likely to report better financial results**.

On the other hand, those that take a tech-focused approach to AI are **1.6 times more likely to fail** to exceed their ROI expectations.

AI is moving fast, and business is changing right along with it. But your biggest advantage isn't technology — it's your people. Human skills like creativity, judgment, and the ability to adapt are what truly set you apart.

It makes sense that 70% of business leaders say their primary strategy for the next three years is to be fast and nimble. But wanting to be agile and actually achieving resilience are two very different things. You can't just buy new software and expect your company to become instantly adaptable. You need a deliberate, people-first HR strategy.

That means:

- ✓ Rethinking how you plan your workforce
- ✓ Breaking down isolated team silos
- ✓ Building a culture that is ready to pivot and reinvent itself in real-time

Closing the 81-Point Execution Gap

There's a big difference between knowing what needs to be done and actually doing it. While 88% of organizations know that effectively orchestrating their people is highly important, only 7% have actually made progress in doing so. That means there's an **81-point execution gap** when it comes to managing talent and resources.

But what's causing this massive disconnect? The culprit is usually the fact that your company is using traditional, isolated functional silos that actively hold businesses back. In fact, 82% of C-suite executives admit that these **silos block value and stifle performance**. When departments operate in these silos, your company loses the cross-functional agility needed to adapt to sudden changes.

Your HR team must lead the charge in breaking down those walls and closing the execution gap. HR needs to champion interconnected workflows that bridge the gaps between different departments.

When you stop optimizing isolated teams and start treating your company as a single unified system, the workflow itself becomes your biggest driver of value. Connect processes across HR, finance, supply chain, and operations so that your organization can finally turn its human potential into true adaptability and success.

Pillar 1: Agile Talent Planning in the Age of AI

Talent planning used to be a fairly straightforward numbers game: figuring out how many people you needed and what it would cost to hit your business goals. But in the age of AI, looking at headcount alone just doesn't cut it anymore.

Today, effective talent strategy has to account for human-machine collaboration. Forward-thinking leaders are already making this shift. 51% of leaders now factor in the potential of human-AI collaboration when making decisions about the size and makeup of their teams.

For your HR strategy to truly support adaptability, you have to embrace job design flexibility. As agentic AI systems take on more routine and repetitive tasks, the roles of your human employees are naturally going to change. Instead of just doing the heavy lifting, your people will need to shift their focus toward the areas where human skills are irreplaceable: creativity, judgment, and the ability to adapt.

When your talent planning and role design combine the efficiency of AI with the creativity of your people, you create an agile talent base that can easily pivot and adapt to whatever disruption comes next.



Pillar 2: Fostering a Culture of Resilience and Psychological Safety

Having flexible roles and the right tech is a great start, but true adaptability requires you to empower your workforce so they actually feel secure enough to experiment and learn in real time. If your team is afraid of making mistakes, they won't try new things. And when it comes to adapting to rapid disruption, playing it safe is the riskiest move you can make.

The data backs this up. Research shows that organizational factors, like your company culture, how much managers support their teams, and your talent practices, account for more than **twice the impact on AI's actual value** (67%) compared to individual employee behaviors (32%).

That means your HR strategy has to intentionally design an environment that builds resilience.

It starts with leadership. When managers create psychological safety around experimentation, employees are **1.4 times more likely to be power users of new tools like agentic AI**. They also report much higher readiness for change.

To make your organization truly adaptable, HR needs to give managers the training and tools they need to encourage employees to try, fail, and try again. When people feel supported, they can turn disruptions into opportunities for innovation.



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Treating Disruption as Momentum

Disruption doesn't have to be a threat to your business. If you want your organization to be among those that will set the benchmark for success over the next few years, you need to treat disruption as momentum. As a CHRO, you hold the key to unlocking human potential and creativity to deliver true organizational value.

Break down isolated team silos, redesign roles for human-AI collaboration, and foster a culture of psychological safety to build an HR strategy that bends without breaking.



Turn your adaptability strategy into action?

Download the CHRO Evaluation Checklist: What To Look for in an Agile HR Platform.

Get the checklist