

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

# The CHRO's guide to agentic AI in HR

How CHROs are shaping the future of tech and talent with intelligent, autonomous AI.



Discover how HR leaders are transforming their teams with talent intelligence and agentic AI to close skills gaps and build an agile workforce ready for change.



Attempting to quantify the massive shifts happening in the business world may seem impossible, yet the World Economic Forum has managed to poignantly capture this moment.

In its “[Future of Jobs Report 2025](#),” the WEF surveyed 1,000 global employers, cumulatively representing more than 14 million workers, and found some eye-opening results:

- **39%** of workers’ core skills will change over the next five years.
- **86%** of companies expect AI and information processing technology to have the biggest transformative effect on their businesses.
- **85%** of leaders say upskilling is their top priority by 2030.

In the age of AI, the need for upskilling is so essential that if the world’s workforce were made up of 100 people, 59 would need training by 2030.

As an HR leader, how do you navigate this seismic shift?

In this brief, we explore how you can turn AI’s promise into real value by embedding agentic AI directly into your HR workflows to empower teammates, close skills gaps, and build an agile workforce ready for anything.



## From generative to agentic AI

In the span of months, gen AI has transformed how we work: how we source information, communicate, code, and so much more. The next technological leap is already here — a shift from reactive, prompted tools to independent, intelligent agents that boost productivity, reduce costs, and drive competitive advantage.

The future of gen AI is agentic AI.

According to [research](#) from Microsoft, the majority of leaders (81%) expect AI agents to be deeply integrated into their company's AI strategies in the next year and a half. And [KPMG](#) reports that the majority of organizations are moving beyond pilots with 90% past experimenting with AI agents, and 33% achieving some kind of deployment with agents.

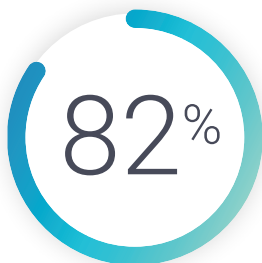
With the rise of AI agents — digital workers that can “reason, plan, and act” — organizations can now effortlessly scale their workforces. This comes at a time when [eight out of 10 workers](#) report not having enough time or energy to do their work. Digital workers will bridge that gap.

But with high-speed, high-stakes transformations, there's always risk.

Many AI projects fail because organizations [lack the right skills](#). Another reason these fail, according to [Deloitte](#), is unrealistic business use cases. The result?

“Many leaders sink considerable time and capital into buying and implementing new technologies, only to change direction later or realize they have invested in redundant technologies.”

The race is on for CHROs to adopt agentic AI. But for CHROs to make the most of their AI investments and build an agile workforce ready to tackle change, they must invest strategically.



**of leaders say they're confident that they'll use digital labor to expand workforce capacity in the next 12–18 months.**

– [“2025: The Year the Frontier Firm Is Born,”](#) Microsoft



## The cost of getting agentic AI wrong

Before investing in agentic AI, it's critical to vet vendors and ask questions to ensure you're purchasing a true agent. Failure to differentiate between true agentic AI and false agents could lead to:



Systems that require constant oversight and reconfiguration.



Escalating costs from inefficiencies, redundant work, and continuous patching.



Losing trust from systems that overpromise and underdeliver.



Security and compliance gaps from mishandled sensitive data.



Falling behind as competitors deploy adaptive, self-improving systems.

## The role of talent intelligence

Talent intelligence platforms are dynamic, always-on platforms that use deep-learning, generative, and agentic AI to distill billions of global data points, helping your team make better, faster, and more strategic talent decisions.

Why does that matter today?

Because [in the next five years](#), 70% of workers' core skills will change. Your organization needs the best talent with highly valuable technical skills to realize — and maximize — AI's value.

**With talent intelligence platforms, you can:**



**Identify, hire, and upskill talent** with the skills needed today — and the potential to learn the ones you'll need tomorrow.



**Inform data-driven succession planning** based on merit, skills, and potential.



**Make informed hiring decisions** based on real-time data and an expanded talent pool — not just keywords — while improving the candidate experience.



**Create personalized learning pathways** for employees complementary to the organization's goals.

Without agentic AI, talent intelligence platforms can tell you who to hire, but they won't help you *run* the hiring process. With a talent intelligence platform and agentic AI, your talent teams can deploy autonomous agents that help:

- **Schedule interviews** based on hiring managers' and recruiters' preferences.
- **Write, adjust, and send communications** based on real-time candidate engagement (or lack of engagement).
- **Learn and adapt** through every interaction.


## Benefits of agentic AI and talent intelligence for CHROs

### 1 Empower HR to do more, faster and smarter

The most immediate benefit of these platforms will be for your HR team, the masterminds behind every hire. Unfortunately, false agentic AI applications are rampant. These are tools that rely on predefined workflows and single-shot prompts and run the risk of draining your budget while not delivering what your organization truly needs.

On the other hand, developing your own agentic AI requires significant investment and coordination, including developing complex systems that reconcile dozens of specialized processes and evolve as they work.

Talent intelligence platforms with embedded agentic AI deliver the promise of AI right out of the box — which is good news for your HR team, as they're the ones who need to urgently find skilled talent.



**"Within the next 12 to 24 months, AI agents are expected to revolutionize how businesses operate, enabling companies to make strategic moves at a pace and magnitude previously unimaginable."**

— ["AI agents can reimagine the future of work, your workforce and workers"](#) PwC

Here’s an easy chart to compare the fundamental differences between true agentic AI and false agents.

	Rule-based systems	Traditional automation	Agentic AI
Decision-making	Follows rules as written. No ability to adjust.	Follows a set list of steps. Can’t skip, reorder, or choose a better path if something changes.	Continuously reasons through shifting inputs and goals.
Adaptability	None.	Limited to known scenarios.	Dynamically adjusts paths mid-task, reflects on outcomes, and redirects without manual intervention.
Product & data usage	Runs tools in a fixed way — no matter the task or outcome.	Sends the same request to a tool every time — can’t adapt to what’s needed at the moment.	Selects, orchestrates, and switches tools autonomously based on task evolution.
Memory	Doesn’t learn from past interactions — treats each input in isolation.	Doesn’t remember past interactions — treats each input in isolation.	Works in context, tracking past actions, decisions, and preferences.
Proactiveness	Only acts with direction and needs a specific input to start a task.	Watches for preset moments then responds, but can’t anticipate needs or prep ahead.	Monitors, identifies gaps, and takes initiative, even across long-running tasks.
Transparency	Decisions and actions are baked into code that doesn’t change.	Exact steps are clear, but there is no explanation or reasoning behind the steps	Provides clear, easy-to-read reasoning behind decisions.

For talent teams juggling complexity and high volume, true agentic AI goes deeper than automating clicks or sending reminders. It runs entire workflows, adapts as things change, and applies human-like judgment across thousands of moving parts.

This is more than offloading busy work. True agentic AI expands your HR team's *thinking powers*. That means handling not just tasks but decisions, adjustments, and reflection. Real agents lift both the manual and mental weight by spotting issues early, keeping processes healthy, and giving your team more space to focus on strategy.

False agents trap teams in endless patchwork: constantly rewriting prompts, overseeing brittle workflows, and manually correcting what the system failed to catch.

Global power management company Eaton used an AI-powered talent intelligence platform to [transform recruiting processes](#), as Deloitte reported. The company saw:

- **4x increase** in talent network size.
- **30-40% boost** in candidate velocity.
- **Double-digit improvements** across all recruiting metrics, including time to market, time to present, and time to offer.

Many other businesses are seeing [similar results](#) with talent intelligence platforms.





## 2

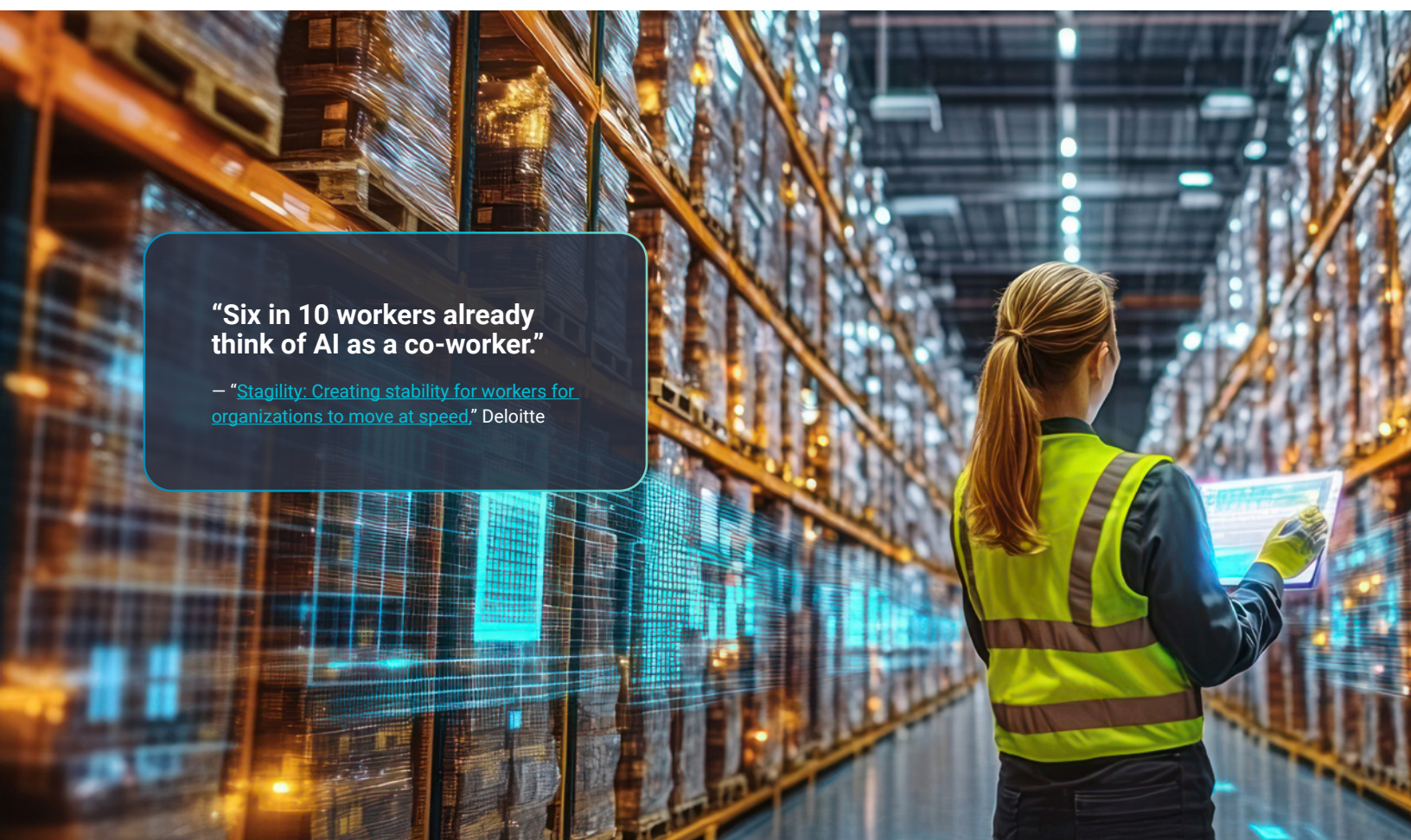
### Source highly skilled talent

One of the most impactful ways gen AI has saved organizations money is by reducing headcount, but AI is now poised to create even more jobs than it's displaced. According to the [WEE](#), there will be 170 million new jobs by 2030 — the equivalent of 14% of today's global workforce.

What's driving this job boom?

While AI can automate an impressive [40-60% of repetitive work](#), only a fraction of complex tasks can be automated.

Analytical thinking remains the most prized skill among [employers](#), with 70% of companies considering it absolutely crucial in 2025. In tandem with the rising need for flexible thinking is the growing need for the ability to *work alongside AI*.



**"Six in 10 workers already think of AI as a co-worker."**

— ["Stagility: Creating stability for workers for organizations to move at speed,"](#) Deloitte

Organizations are nearly [six times more likely](#) to see significant ROI from AI when their workers work alongside these tools. While head count cuts eventually hit a breaking point, productivity gains from AI are virtually limitless. Future workforces need highly adaptable, AI-literate employees who can quickly learn new skills.

Talent intelligence platforms can help you create a more adaptable workforce by sourcing this highly skilled talent. These platforms instantly uncover the skills that are rising or falling in the industry, which skills your team needs, and the candidates with the highest potential to meet those needs.

Armed with those insights, your team can partner with HR to build, buy, or borrow talent — in other words, upskill, hire, or contract out work with the skills that will drive long-term success across your entire organization.

### Top 10 fastest growing skills by 2030

- |   |                                      |    |                                 |
|---|--------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | AI and big data                      | 6  | Curiosity and lifelong learning |
| 2 | Networks and cybersecurity           | 7  | Leadership and social influence |
| 3 | Technological literacy               | 8  | Talent management               |
| 4 | Creative thinking                    | 9  | Analytical thinking             |
| 5 | Resilience, flexibility, and agility | 10 | Environmental stewardship       |

Source: [World Economic Forum | Future of Jobs Report 2025](#)

### 3 Sharpen your competitive edge

McKinsey reports that [virtually every](#) business (92%) plans to increase its AI investment over the next three years, but only 1% of leaders consider their company “mature” in its current deployment.

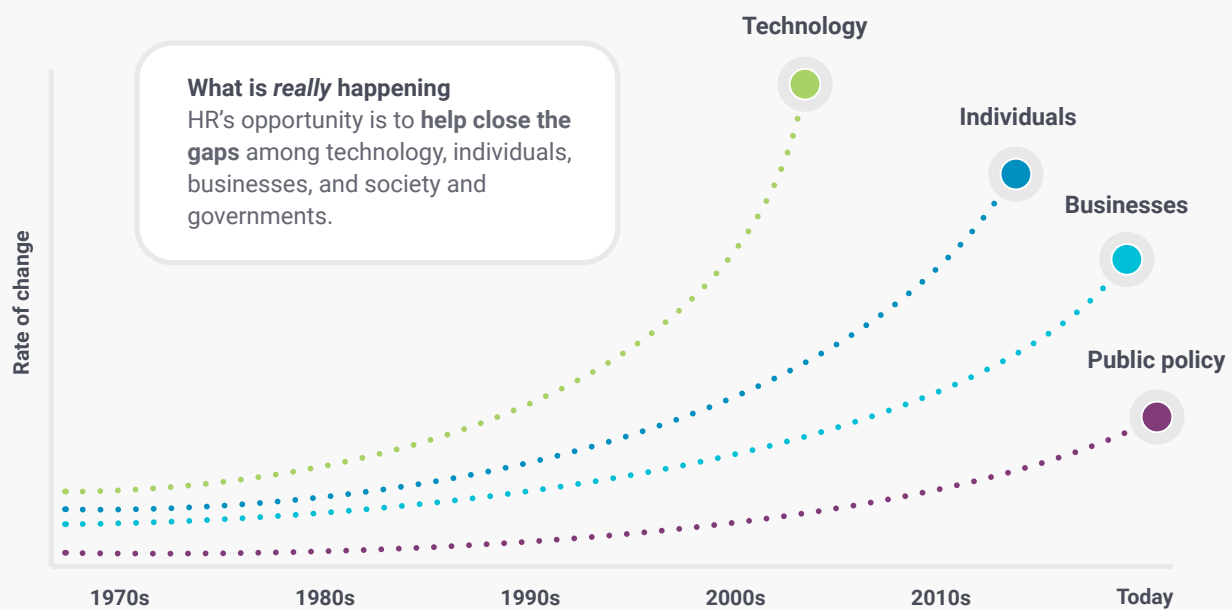
That means there’s a significant opportunity for early adopters.

But that’s only if organizations can align their leadership, talent, and technology. Accenture [found](#) that 87% of reinvention-ready companies — those most likely to realize AI’s value — possess “extensive collaboration” between their tech and business teams. While CHROs don’t need to code, they must intentionally orchestrate adoption and reinvention by aligning talent, tech, and culture around new ways of thinking and working.

On the flip side, there’s a massive opportunity cost to *waiting* too long to adopt and adapt. One study found that organizations with strong innovation can [better spot new opportunities and extract more value from their tech investments](#), but the same can’t be said for those lagging in adoption.

The world has its eyes on what AI — especially agentic AI — can help us achieve in business. CHROs who lead the way in adoption will outperform competitors for years to come.

#### The rate of adopters, individuals, society, businesses, and government agencies



Source: Deloitte University Press | [dupress.deloitte.com](http://dupress.deloitte.com)

## CHRO's talent intelligence cheat sheet

The good news is, you're not alone in this transformation. CHROs and CIOs have a direct and profound impact on one another. IT relies on HR to acquire and retain valuable tech talent, while HR looks to IT for help with tech enablement, including HRIS, ATS, AI, and talent intelligence.

Talent intelligence platforms can help HR and IT better find top talent for the organizations at large. Even better, leading talent intelligence platforms can integrate with existing HR infrastructure easily and deploy in as little as a few weeks, keeping total cost of ownership (TCO) low and ROI high. The immediate benefit is better quality hires. The long-term payoff is an organization with future-ready skills and higher-performing, engaged workers.

Agentic AI takes those benefits a step further by adapting to your team, offering generative insights and assistance, and augmenting complex processes. Reducing busywork and enhancing decision-making lets your HR team focus on building a more resilient, adaptable workforce ready for change.



**"30% of executives said they believe that to create better human and business outcomes, they need their chief information and chief digital officers to join forces with the chief human resources officer to optimize human and machine collaboration and help people work with AI."**

— ["Stagility: Creating stability for workers for organizations to move at speed,"](#) Deloitte



### **Top concerns/strategic focus:**

- Creating a people-first organization to drive business success.
- Meeting the priorities of the organization's chiefs and presidents.
- Determining how the organization will have the people and skills to move forward and lead their industry.
- Ensuring successful technical implementation and quick adoption of the latest HR technologies, especially AI.

### **Key challenges:**

- Achieving more with the same budget: Need to show justification for investments in systems and technology.
- Identifying talent gaps and creating a plan to address them so that talent strategy is aligned with business strategy.
- Having a seat at the technology table requires being a strategic partner to the CEO, CIO, and peer-to-executive team.

### **Talent intelligence platforms help by:**

- Attracting and retaining highly valuable technical talent.
- Offering built-in talent agents to help source the right talent, empower HR, and promote internal mobility.
- Providing real-time insights into the organization's skills and skills trends in the industry to help you make plans to build, buy, or borrow talent.
- Reducing turnover and expenses by offering scalable talent development opportunities that increase employee satisfaction.

### **Questions to think about:**

- Do you feel your organization has the skills it needs to succeed over the next one to three years?
- What are the most critical factors to consider when implementing a new AI solution in HR (business value, deployment speed, cost, security, or something else)?
- What elements of your talent ecosystem are you most focused on transforming this year?
- What's your vision for how the HR organization will support your business's overall workforce and AI strategy?



## Build a modern workforce with talent intelligence and agentic AI

Agentic AI represents more than just the start of the next hype cycle. Its arrival is an inflection point where CHROs must decide how their organization will work — and compete — over the next decade.

As a CHRO, you're in a strategic position to shape this transformation and ensure that AI adoption doesn't stop at scripted, prompted tools but extends into systems that can act with judgment and learn over time.

At Eightfold, we're ready to help you lead that transformation. Our [Talent Intelligence Platform](#) combines your enterprise data, market trends, and real-time work signals to build a dynamic understanding of your workforce. By modeling skills, capabilities, aspirations, and the work people perform every day, our platform helps you anticipate talent needs, close skill gaps, and drive productivity.

The result: faster, smarter decisions across hiring, development, and planning — and a lasting talent advantage.

See how other [great organizations](#) are transforming their workforces with AI.

### About Eightfold AI

Eightfold Talent Intelligence is evolving into Talent Advantage — an end-to-end system that acts, not just analyzes. Eightfold AI engages with candidates from the moment of interest, screening, interviewing, and selecting top talent. Once hired, each employee's digital twin accelerates onboarding, amplifies productivity, and surfaces real-time insights from across the organization. With a unified platform for internal mobility and growth, CHROs can now lead a workforce that is engaged, adaptive, self-improving, and most importantly, productive. Our patented deep-learning and generative AI platform is available in more than 155 countries and 24 languages, enabling cutting-edge enterprises to transform their talent into a competitive advantage. For more information, visit [www.eightfold.ai](http://www.eightfold.ai).