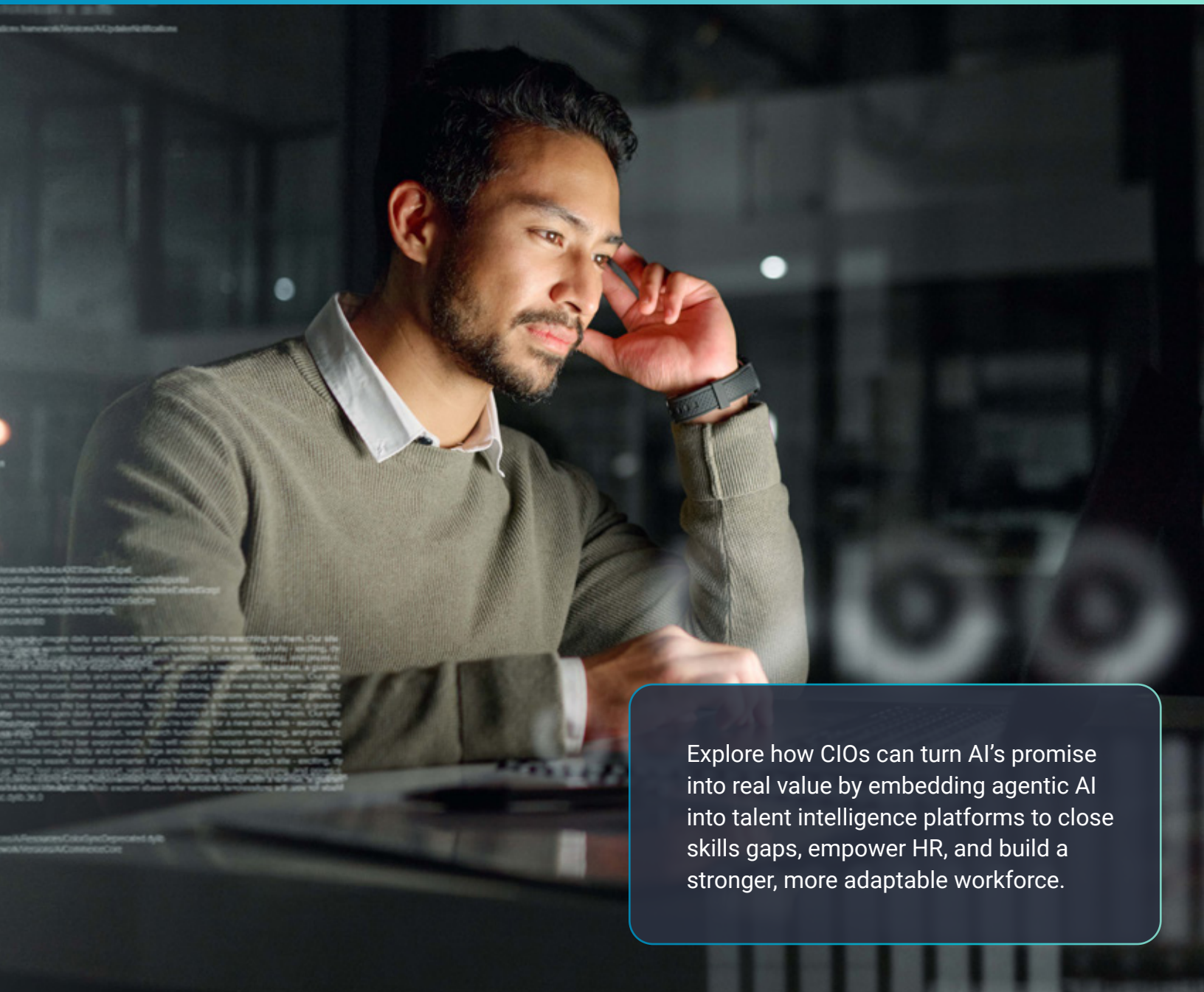


EXECUTIVE BRIEF

# The CIO's guide to agentic AI in HR

How enterprise IT leaders are shaping the future of tech and talent with intelligent, autonomous AI.



Explore how CIOs can turn AI's promise into real value by embedding agentic AI into talent intelligence platforms to close skills gaps, empower HR, and build a stronger, more adaptable workforce.

## The window of AI opportunity

CIOs are under enormous pressure to turn AI's potential into tangible ROI, but when [70% of transformations fail](#), the margin for error is slim. CIOs must invest in the *right* AI solutions, a daunting task with every department vying for a share of the AI budget.

Every team wants AI. And the market is flooded with noise. But not every AI investment delivers ROI, improves productivity and decision-making, or creates a long-term strategic advantage. In this brief, we explore how talent intelligence platforms that use agentic AI can help you secure highly skilled IT talent, empower HR, and prepare your workforce for anything.







## From generative to agentic AI

Generative AI has captured the attention of nearly every business. McKinsey [estimates](#) that gen AI could contribute up to \$4.4 trillion to global GDP by 2030. And companies investing in AI are seeing an average of a [\\$3.7 return for every dollar](#), according to a new study from IDC and Microsoft, with the top 5% of leaders in AI adoption seeing even higher returns around \$10.

In the span of months, generative AI has transformed how teams draft content, write code, and automate repetitive work. Now, the next leap for enterprises is here — a shift from reactive, prompted tools to independent, intelligent agents that boost productivity, reduce costs, and drive returns.

## The future of gen AI is agentic AI.

The race for CIOs to adopt this technology has already started. According to [CIO Dive](#), nearly 45% of leaders expect agentic AI to have a greater impact than generative AI. And [KPMG](#) reports that over half of organizations “are exploring the use of AI agents, and another 37% are piloting AI agents.”

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

One significant reason many AI transformations fail is a [lack of the right skills](#). Another, 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.”

For CIOs to make the most of their AI investments, they must invest strategically.

## 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.

## What is talent intelligence?

Enter talent intelligence.

Talent intelligence platforms are dynamic, always-on platforms that use deep-learning and agentic AI, distilling billions of data global data points and empowering your HR team with agents to help them make better, faster, and more strategic talent decisions.

### 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 may tell you who to hire, but they won't help you *run* the hiring process.

With a talent intelligence platform and agentic AI, you can have autonomous agents that help:

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

Talent intelligence platforms with integrated agentic AI aren't just a boon for the HR team — these can also transform IT.

## Benefits of agentic AI for CIOs

### 1 Source highly skilled IT talent

One of the most impactful ways generative AI has saved money is by reducing head count, but surprisingly, IT has reversed this trend.

According to [McKinsey](#), IT teams are more likely to need increased head count as AI usage rises. Even more interesting, IT also saw the largest increase in AI usage over the past six months, surging from 27% to 36%.

Skilled IT talent with AI know-how is increasing in demand. Couple that with an impending [talent shortage](#), and you can quickly see how important it is to build a highly skilled IT team today.

In fact, the World Economic Forum's 2025 [Future of Jobs report](#) shows that expertise in AI and big data; networks and cybersecurity; and technological literacy are among the top three fastest growing skills needed by 2030.

Talent intelligence platforms can help you create a more adaptable workforce by sourcing this highly skilled technical talent. These platforms instantly uncover the skills that are rising or falling in the industry and which skills your team 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 Forums | Future of Jobs Report 2025](#)

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

False agentic AI applications are everywhere. These are tools that rely on predefined workflows and single-shot prompts, and run the risk of running up your technical debt while not delivering what your organization truly needs.

On the other hand, developing your own agentic AI requires significant investment, including developing multi-layered systems that coordinate dozens of specialized processes in parallel and ensuring that the agent doesn't only execute but evolves as it works.

Talent intelligence platforms with embedded agentic AI solve all of this out of the box.

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

	Rule-based systems	Traditional automation	Agentic AI
<b>Decision-making</b>	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.
<b>Adaptability</b>	None.	Limited to known scenarios.	Dynamically adjusts paths mid-task, reflects on outcomes, and redirects without manual intervention.
<b>Product &amp; data usage</b>	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.
<b>Memory</b>	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.
<b>Proactiveness</b>	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.
<b>Transparency</b>	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 busywork. True agentic AI expands your team's thinking powers. That means handling not just tasks but decisions, adjustments, and reflection. True 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 flows, and manually correcting what the system failed to catch.

Global power management company Eaton used an AI-powered talent intelligence platform to [transform their 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.





### 3 Sharpen your competitive edge

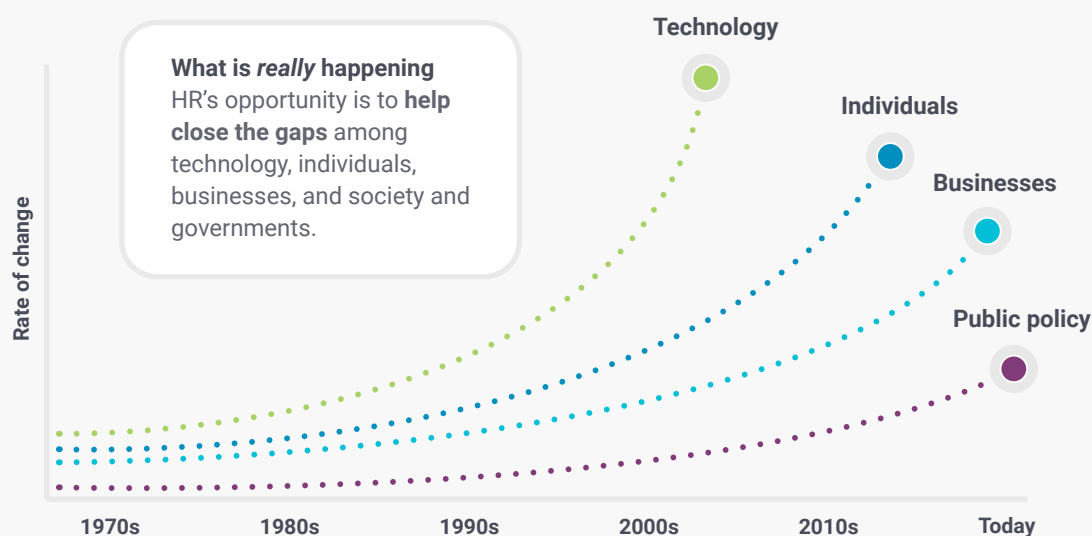
McKinsey reports that [virtually every](#) business (92%) plans to increase its AI investment over the next three years, but only 1% of leaders consider their company “mature” in its current deployment.

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

But that’s only if organizations can align leadership, talent, and technology. McKinsey also reported that nearly half (47%) of executives say their organizations are developing and releasing gen AI tools too slowly, citing talent skill gaps as the major factor causing delays.

Waiting too long to adopt can carry a hefty price tag. One study found that [organizations with strong innovation cultures extract more value from their tech investments](#). They’re more likely to move ahead with strategic technology investments to help them secure future growth.

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



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

The world has its eyes on generative and agentic AI, but the truth is that AI has been around for decades. Organizations and departments that lead the way in adoption will outperform competitors for years. While this principle is true for AI in any function, it’s especially true in IT and HR, where internal infrastructure and top talent power the business.

## CIO's talent intelligence cheat sheet

CIOs and CHROs 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, and talent intelligence platforms.



**"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, 2025  
*Human Capital Trends*

Talent intelligence platforms can help HR and IT better find top talent for IT and the organization 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 benefit 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 insights, assistance, and augmenting complex processes. By cutting busywork and enhancing decision-making, it lets you focus on building a more resilient, adaptable workforce ready for change.

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

- Overseeing AI investments and driving ROI.
- Ensuring successful technical implementation and quick adoption of the latest technologies.
- Maintaining a high-performing tech stack that drives modern digital experiences.

#### **Key challenges:**

- Lack of IT talent with AI and other in-demand skills.
- Growing cybersecurity concerns.
- Siloed or disconnected tech solutions that create friction and slow down collaboration.

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

- Attracting and retaining highly valuable technology generalists.
- Offering built-in talent agents to source the right talent, empower HR, and promote internal mobility.
- Promoting organizational health and profitability with data-driven hires and employee development.

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

- Do you feel your team 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)?
- How do you think the organization would change if every department had insights into its skills mix, including skills gaps?



## 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 CIOs must decide how their organizations will work — and compete — over the next decade.

As a CIO, 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, it 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 AI's market-leading Talent Intelligence Platform™ helps organizations retain top performers, upskill and reskill their workforce, and recruit talent efficiently. Eightfold's patented deep-learning artificial intelligence 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](https://www.eightfold.ai).