

What CHROs Are Actually Worried About With AI And How To Respond To Each One

Six concerns keep resurfacing in the 2026 surveys. Each one has a sourced number and a practical first move.

Six concerns show up again and again in the 2026 CHRO surveys

- 01** Reskilling and the widening talent gap
- 02** Governance and compliance exposure
- 03** Employee trust falling as usage rises
- 04** Proving AI actually paid for itself
- 05** Jobs automated in pieces, roles left untouched
- 06** The CHRO's own AI capability gap

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

6%

of organizations McKinsey calls AI "high performers"

80% of workers report individual productivity gains from AI. Only 6% of organizations attribute significant EBIT impact to it. McKinsey, State of AI: Global Survey 2026 (1,719 respondents, 97 countries).

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

28% →
40%

of employees worried AI will cost them their job

Up from 2024 to 2026, as the share who say they're thriving at work fell from 66% to 44% over the same period. Mercer, Global Talent Trends 2026 (nearly 12,000 respondents).

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

2%

**of CHROs funded AI development
for their own leaders**

The Conference Board, Q1 2026 CHRO Confidence Index.

65%

**say their culture must change
significantly for AI**

Deloitte, 2026 Global Human Capital Trends.

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

None of the six concerns are really about the technology. They're about accountability, trust, and measurement not keeping pace with adoption.

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

THE SHARPEST FINDING

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A function that hasn't built its own AI fluency is poorly positioned to govern everyone else's.

HR invests least in the one layer it's responsible for developing: itself.

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

WHERE TO START

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→ **Tie reskilling budget to a named workflow**

Not a company-wide literacy curriculum

→ **Replace the policy PDF with a per-system decision log**

What the tool does, who signed off, when it was reviewed

→ **Baseline every pilot before it's allowed to scale**

The pilot-to-production gap is a measurement failure

→ **Fund your own AI fluency before the next rollout**

Only 2% of CHROs are doing this today

CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

Six concerns, six named owners, six specific first moves

- 01 Reskilling → HR + the changing function
 - 02 Governance → HR + legal, jointly
 - 03 Trust → HR + the nearest manager
 - 04 ROI → HR + finance
 - 05 Job redesign → HR + the business unit leader
 - 06 CHRO capability → the CHRO, personally
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CHRO AI PRIORITIES 2026

The function asked to answer for all six has invested least in being ready to.

That changes the moment a CHRO decides it does.



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