



CURATED BY
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2026 HR Trends & Priorities

A cross-publisher analysis of the year's HR agenda

10

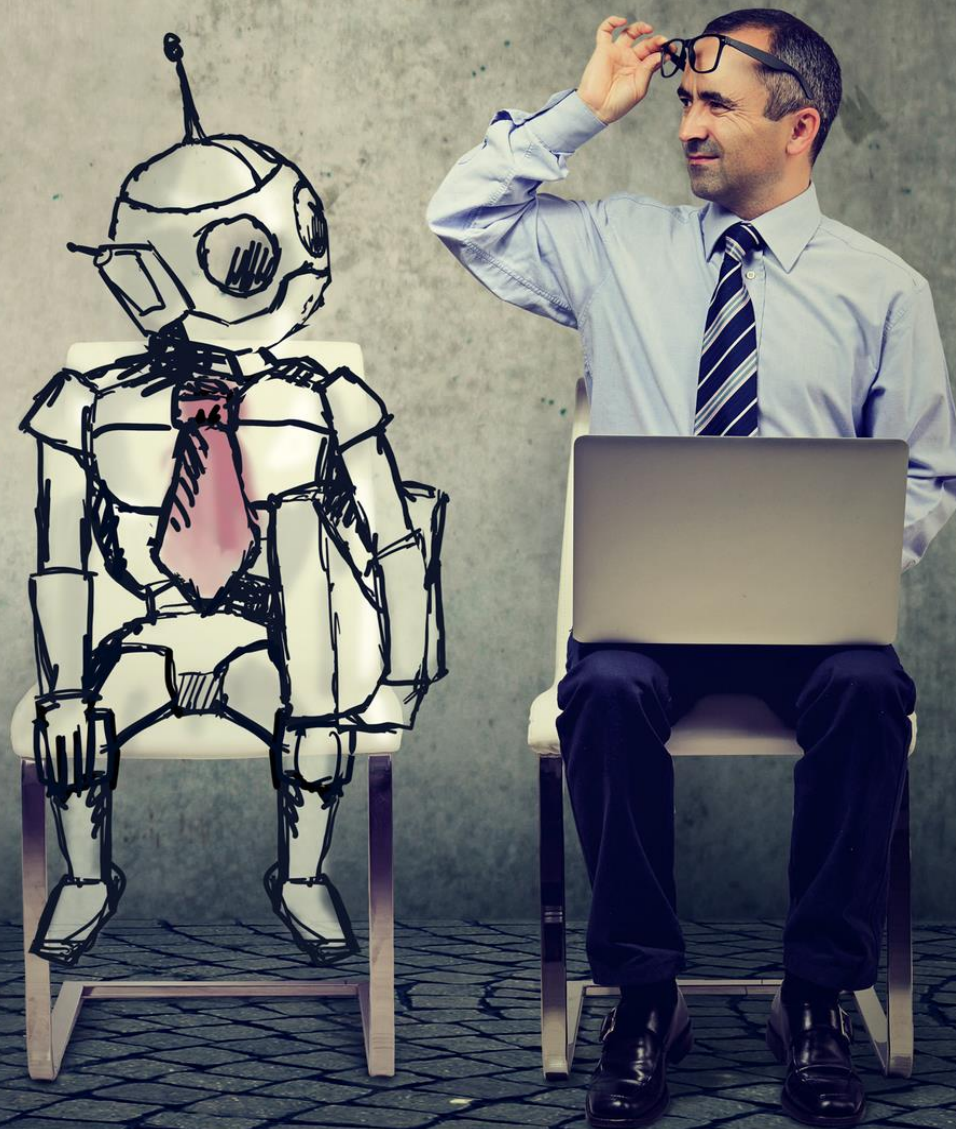
publishers

20

themes

64

trends mapped





HR Trends & Priorities 2026

		AIHR	BCG	David Green	Deloitte	Gartner	i4cp	McKinsey	McLean	Mercer	SHRM	sources / trends
Broad consensus	1 HR Value & Operating Model	AI	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1		9 / 12
	2 Skills & Workforce Agility	AI	1	1	1		1		2		1	7 / 8
	3 Work Redesign & Human-AI Collaboration	AI			1	2	1			1		5 / 6
Emerging	4 AI Adoption & Transformation	AI	2	1			1				1	4 / 5
	5 People Analytics	AI			1		1		1	1		4 / 4
	6 Leadership & Management Development	AI			2	1			1			3 / 4
	7 Organisational Culture				1	1			2			3 / 4
	8 Talent Acquisition & Mobility	AI					1	1			1	3 / 3
	9 Employee Experience, Engagement & Retention	AI			1			1		1		3 / 3
	10 Workforce Models & Flexibility	AI				1	1				1	3 / 3

Reading: sources = publishers raising the theme (the ranking metric); trends = total statements. Themes 11–20 on the next slide; three themes had no 2026 coverage.



How we built it

20

themes

64

trends

10

sources

75%

AI-framed

How we built it

- 1 Collect each publisher's 2026 HR outlook.
- 2 Extract every trend verbatim, in the source's own order.
- 3 Map each to the 20-theme framework (v2) — borderline calls flagged; trends with no home set aside.
- 4 Treat AI as a cross-cutting lens, flagged per trend — not a separate bucket.
- 5 Rank by breadth; visualise the top 10 as a theme × source heatmap.

Ranking metric

Breadth — distinct sources raising a theme (ties broken by total trends). Frequency shows as cell intensity.

Scope

10 sources assessed; McKinsey HR Monitor 2026 added on publication (June 2026).

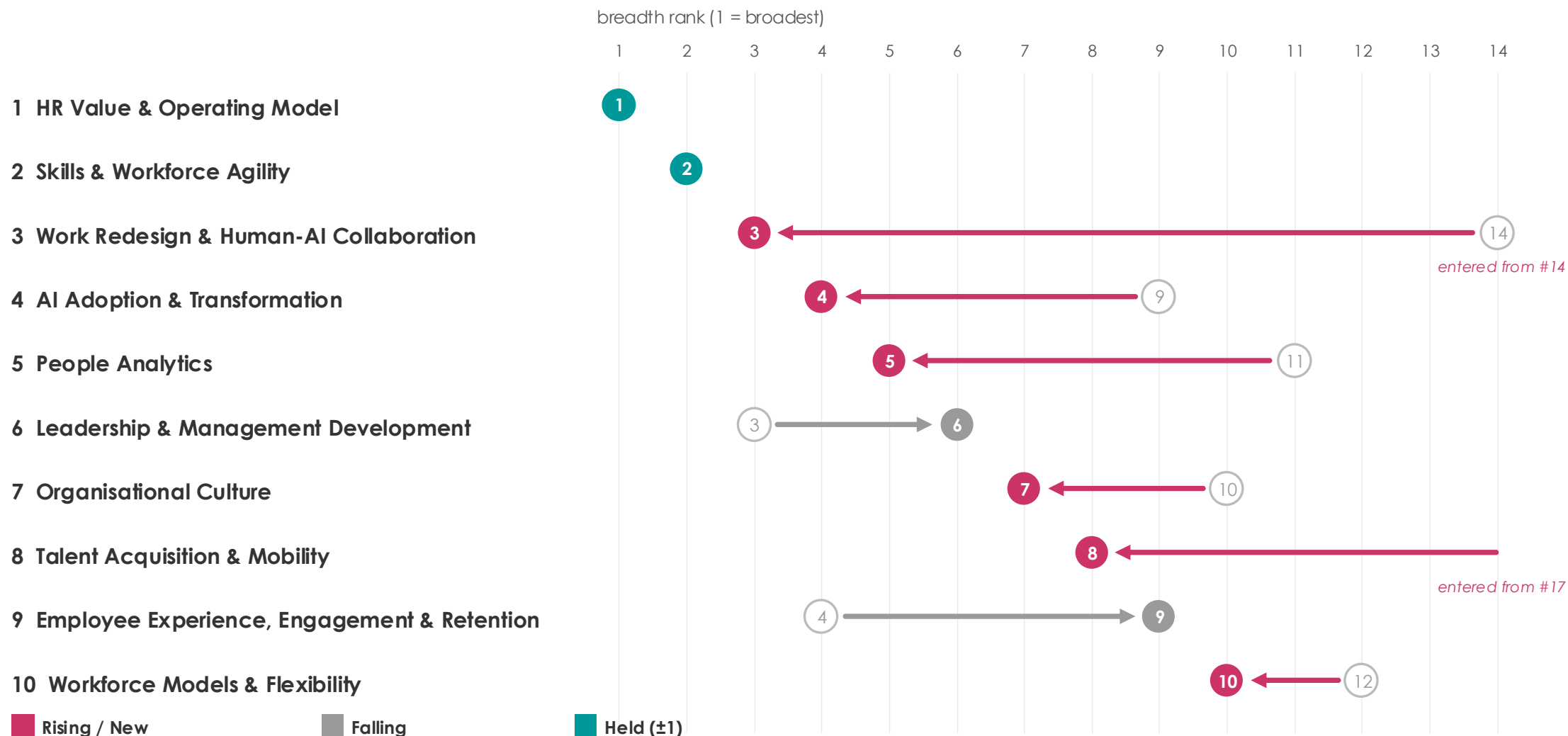
Below the top 10 — the full ranked field

Rank	Theme / topic	sources / trends	Status
11	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	3 / 3	Emerging
12	Strategic Workforce Planning	2 / 2	Emerging
13	Change Management	2 / 2	Emerging
14	Responsible AI, Data & Governance	2 / 2	Emerging
15	Performance Management & Productivity	1 / 1	Single-source
16	Pay, Reward & Benefits	1 / 1	Single-source
17	Sustainability / ESG	1 / 1	Single-source
18	AI in HR	—	No coverage
19	Wellbeing & Resilience	—	No coverage
20	Workforce Demographics & Labour Market	—	No coverage

All 64 trends mapped within the 20-theme framework (v2); ranks 18–20 drew no 2026 coverage. Ties broken by total trends, then framework order.



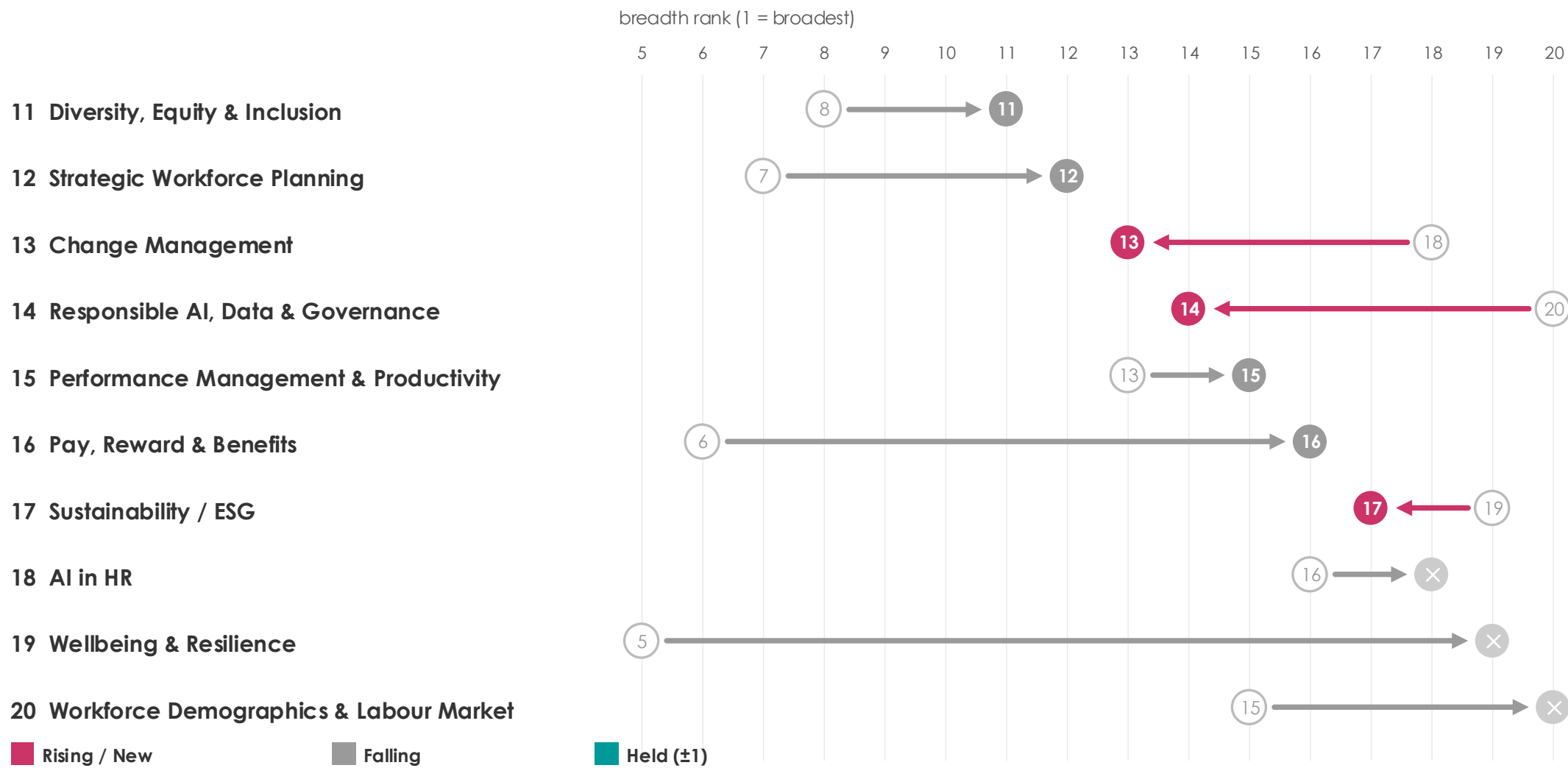
2026 Evolution | Trends 1 to 10



HR Value & Operating Model and Skills hold #1–#2 in both years. Four themes climbed in from outside the 2025 top 10 — Work Redesign (14→3), People Analytics (11→5), Talent Acquisition (17→8) and Workforce Models (12→10) — while EX & Engagement slid (4→9). Ranks are within-year; the 2026 roster adds BCG, so this tracks relative standing, not absolute volume.



2026 Evolution | Trends 11 to 20



The lower half is where the field thinned. Pay, Reward & Benefits fell hardest (6→16) and DEI slipped out of the top 10 (8→11), while Change Management (18→13) and Responsible AI, Data & Governance (20→14) edged up. X marks the three themes with no 2026 coverage at all: AI in HR (from #16), Wellbeing & Resilience (from #5) and Workforce Demographics, Labour Market & Society (from #15). Ranks are within-year; the 2026 roster adds BCG.



Sources

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McLean & Company. (2026). *Trends HR 2026: Leading Through Change: Human-Centric and Future-Ready.* Based on the HR Trends Survey 2026.

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Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). (2026). *SHRM 2026: Trends and Predictions.* Published by HR Quarterly.



Methodology Summary



Publisher	Report	Primary Method	Sample Size	Geographies	Respondent Profile
AIHR	AIHR HR Priorities 2026	Secondary synthesis + internal survey	1,500+ HR professionals (internal AI survey); secondary data from multiple external sources	Global (primarily US/European external sources)	HR professionals; secondary data from broader exec surveys
BCG/WFPMA	BCG/WFPMA Creating People Advantage 2026	Proprietary quantitative web survey + regression analysis	n = 7,115	115 countries/administrative regions	HR and business leaders (all seniority levels); 25 industries
Deloitte	Deloitte 2026 Global Human Capital Trends	Quantitative survey (with Oxford Economics) + qualitative interviews	3,000 leaders (core survey); 6,000 workers/managers/executives (supplemental); 50+ executive interviews	15 countries	Business and HR leaders + employees/managers/executives
Gartner	Gartner 2026 Strategic HR Priorities	Annual quantitative CHRO survey	n = 426 CHROs	4 global regions; 23 industries	CHROs exclusively
David Green	David Green 12 Opportunities for HR in 2026	Expert synthesis + community crowdsourcing	N/A (qualitative)	Global	People analytics leaders; CHROs; Digital HR Leaders Podcast network; Insight222 research community
i4cp	i4cp 2026 Priorities & Predictions	Invitation-only executive board input	Not disclosed (C-suite HR leaders)	Global	CHROs, CLTOs, Total Rewards, Talent Acquisition, People Analytics, Future of Work board members
McKinsey	McKinsey HR at a Turning Point / HR Monitor 2026	Annual quantitative benchmark survey	~1,300 HR professionals; ~5,500 employees	10 countries (8 European + US + China)	HR professionals + employees
McLean & Company	McLean & Company HR Trends 2026	Quantitative survey	n = 1,626	Global, multiple industries	HR and leadership respondents
Mercer	Mercer Global Talent Trends 2026	Quantitative multi-stakeholder survey	~12,000 (9,250 employees; 1,650 HR leaders; 825 C-suite; 100 investors)	16 geographies; 16 industries	C-suite executives, HR leaders, employees, investors
SHRM	SHRM 2026 Trends and Predictions	Multiple quantitative surveys (CEO, CHRO, HR professional, worker panels)	116 CEOs; 129 CHROs; 1,856 HR professionals; 2,079 U.S. workers; 2,094 HR professionals (Talent Trends)	Primarily U.S. (global for CHRO survey)	CEOs, CHROs, HR professionals, U.S. workers



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