

AI in the Workplace: Why People Strategy Comes Before Technology

Artificial intelligence is no longer a future consideration for employers. It is actively reshaping how organizations hire, manage performance, and develop talent. For HR leaders, the question has shifted from "should we adopt AI?" to "how do we lead this responsibly?"

The answer lies in pairing sophisticated technology with an equally strong people strategy.

The Most Common Mistake Organizations Make

Most AI workforce initiatives do not fail because of bad technology. They fail because of unclear communication, misaligned expectations, and employees who feel left behind. According to McKinsey, only 21% of companies have built sufficient readiness for employees to work effectively alongside AI. That gap represents both a risk and an opportunity, and HR is uniquely positioned to close it.

Organizations that rush toward deployment without first addressing governance, role clarity, and workforce readiness often find themselves managing the fallout rather than capturing the upside.

What "AI-Ready" Actually Means

An AI-ready organization is not defined by the tools it has deployed; it is defined by clarity. Leaders know which problems they are solving; employees understand how AI affects their work, and governance structures are in place before issues arise, not after. This kind of readiness requires HR to step into a more strategic leadership role, one that many organizations have not yet fully embraced.

Where to Start

OneDigital's [AI+HR hub](#) offers a practical starting point, with readiness checklists, compliance guidance, and real-world case studies from organizations already executing at scale. A few principles consistently stand out:

- **Communicate early and honestly.** Employees do not resist AI; they resist uncertainty about what it means for them.
- **Establish governance before deployment.** Transparency and oversight are foundations for trust, not compliance checkboxes.
- **Redefine roles, do not just redistribute tasks.** When AI handles the transactional work, what remains must be deliberately redesigned, not simply reassigned.

The organizations seeing the greatest impact are not moving the fastest. They are moving the most deliberately, with their people strategy leading the way. [Access OneDigital's AI+HR Hub here](#)

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Commented [DG1]: [@Kristel Amboy](#) Thoughts on the newsletter article?