

# CHRO PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As organizations confront today's multifaceted challenges, CHROs are increasingly at the helm, driving their businesses forward through critical people and talent challenges. Their role is pivotal in aligning HR initiatives with broader strategic business objectives, ensuring a cohesive approach to addressing current and future demands. This report examines the key priorities CHROs are focusing on for 2025, the range of challenges they face, and their vision for the future of work. Based on the perspectives of 212 CHROs spanning diverse industries and organization sizes, these findings provide an in-depth understanding of the evolving role of HR in today's world of work. Specifically, they highlight how CHROs are driving organizational transformation, positioning talent as a strategic asset, and preparing businesses to thrive in an increasingly dynamic environment.

## KEY FINDINGS

- 1. Leadership and manager development is a top priority for many CHROs:** More than half of CHROs (51%) identified leadership and manager development as a top priority in 2025, making this topic the most frequently cited focus among these leaders. This emphasis reflects a shift in HR priorities toward fostering efforts to support sustainable business practices.
- 2. Other CHRO priorities focus on change and the employee experience:** Beyond leadership and manager development, other top areas of focus for HR in 2025 include organization design and change management (30% selecting as a top priority), enhancing the employee experience (28%), and optimizing talent management strategies (27%).
- 3. Economic and financial challenges rank as top concerns for CHROs:** Spanning from macroeconomic factors to the HR function itself, many CHROs identified economic and financial pressures among their most significant challenges. Specifically, 61% of CHROs cited wage inflation and 45% pointed to rising operational costs as key challenges.
- 4. Optimism over AI in the workplace is balanced by consideration of the human element:** An overwhelming majority of CHROs were optimistic about the growing role of artificial intelligence in the workplace in 2025, with 90% expecting its integration to become more widespread and 83% predicting a larger role for AI within HR functions. However, alongside this technological advancement, CHROs remain firmly committed to prioritizing the human side of work. Over half (59%) said they anticipate a greater focus on employee well-being and mental health, and 53% expect increased investment in rapid skill development to ensure workforces effectively adapt to these emerging technologies.









# INTRODUCTION

Leading organizations through the shifting demands of the modern workplace has become an increasingly complex challenge in today's rapidly evolving world of work. Those tasked with steering their organizations through these changes must anticipate dynamic conditions and devise strategic responses. Central to this process are HR teams and their leaders, particularly CHROs, who offer critical guidance on people- and talent-related considerations. Aligning CHROs' strategies with broader business objectives is essential for fostering organizational cohesion, ensuring that strategic initiatives are effective and resonate across all levels.

Despite this importance, many organizations struggle to achieve a fully integrated HR strategy. SHRM research found that just 18% of CHROs reported having an HR strategy that is seamlessly aligned with their organization's broader goals. The absence of this integration often leads to poorer outcomes, including slower profit growth, compared to organizations that succeed in aligning their HR and overall strategies.<sup>1</sup>

For CHROs to effectively support their organizations in adapting to a dynamic work landscape, they must ensure their function's priorities are strategically aligned with their organization's broader goals. The need for strategic alignment is not new, but the accelerating pace of change in the workplace has made it more urgent than ever before. In 2025, the key challenge for CHROs will be anticipating emerging trends and redefining their priorities to respond to both the immediate needs of their organizations and the long-term challenges ahead.

**SHRM conducted research to address these evolving demands and achieve three key objectives:**

1. Understand the priorities CHROs are setting for their teams in 2025.
2. Explore the challenges CHROs are facing in their roles, from macro-level to personal challenges.
3. Determine CHROs' perspectives on emerging workplace trends.

To study these objectives, SHRM surveyed 212 CHROs or those who sit as the senior-most human resource professional in their organization (all respondents will be collectively referred to as CHROs in this report). The findings from this research are intended to provide CHROs and other HR executives with an understanding of the most common priorities their peers are setting for their teams and organizations in 2025, as well as to offer insights into the challenges and perspectives this group shares.



<sup>1</sup>From Alignment to Integration: Perspectives on HR Strategy from Executives and Workers, *People + Strategy* journal, Winter 2025.





# TOP CHRO PRIORITIES ALIGN WITH STRATEGIC BUSINESS GOALS FOR 2025



# TOP CHRO PRIORITIES ALIGN WITH STRATEGIC BUSINESS GOALS FOR 2025

Determining HR objectives for the year ahead is one key task each CHRO must perform. This is no simple task, especially when attempting to align and integrate with overall business objectives. CHROs must carefully weigh strategic needs throughout the organization and their function while working with other executive leaders to negotiate and align on the best course of action for overall business success. Each year is not the same as the last; shifting elements in the market and countless other factors breed new and unique challenges for business leaders to address as they plan for their organization’s future.

Understanding the many competing priorities CHROs are faced with in strategically planning their organization’s and function’s future, this research explored what priorities these business executives are focusing on for 2025. Specifically, the CHROs in this research were asked to provide the top three priorities their HR teams are focusing on in 2025.

*More than half of CHROs said leadership and manager development is a priority in 2025.*

One topic stood out as the clear top priority for CHROs’ HR teams in 2025 — leadership and manager development. In fact, more than half of CHROs (51%) said this objective is one of their top three HR priorities in 2025.

## CHROs’ selections for their top HR priorities in 2025

Respondents could select up to three options across 16 HR practice areas.\*



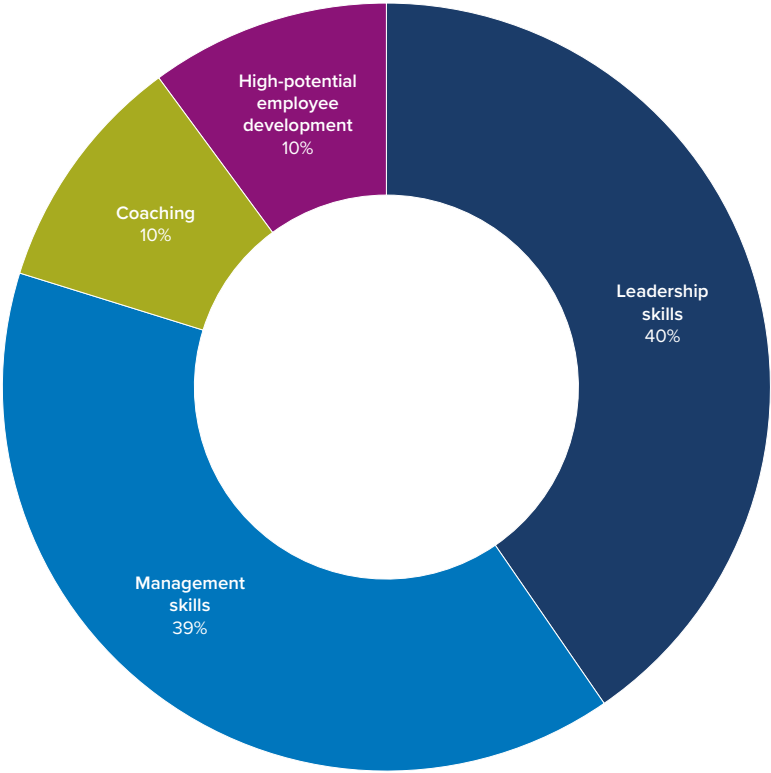
*Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.  
\*See Appendix for definitions of the HR practice areas.*



This top-cited priority reflects a trending shift in focus within the HR function itself, where a greater emphasis is being placed on leadership and manager development.<sup>2</sup> In addition, this shift may be in response to changing priorities or interests among working populations themselves. As more workers show waning interest in becoming leaders at their organizations, HR may be preparing to minimize a future leadership deficit.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, with nearly 1 in 4 workers projected to be 55 years or older, the impending retirement of many workers will create significant gaps in management and leadership roles that organizations must be prepared to address.<sup>4</sup>

Many CHROs who are prioritizing leadership and manager development in 2025 said developing basic leadership skills and management skills throughout their organization are their top priorities within this topic. In fact, among those who said leadership and manager development is one of their top HR priorities, 40% said their top priority within this topic is leadership skills (i.e., essential skills for inspiring and motivating teams effectively) and 39% said management skills (i.e., essential skills for overseeing and directing team operations effectively). Far fewer CHROs said their top priority related to leadership and manager development in 2025 is coaching (10%) or high-potential employee development (10%).

**CHROs' top priority within the leadership and manager development category** 



*Results based on responses from 109 CHROs who selected "leadership and manager development" among their top priorities for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.*

<sup>2</sup> 2025 State of the Workplace, SHRM, 2025.  
<sup>3</sup> Half of Global Workers Are More Interested in Balance and Belonging Than Climbing the Ladder, Randstad, 2024.  
<sup>4</sup> December 2024 Current Population Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024.



These results highlight how much CHROs recognize the importance of basic yet crucial leadership and management skills in their organization. A qualitative analysis of the specific concepts that CHROs are targeting in 2025 for these two areas of development revealed the following:

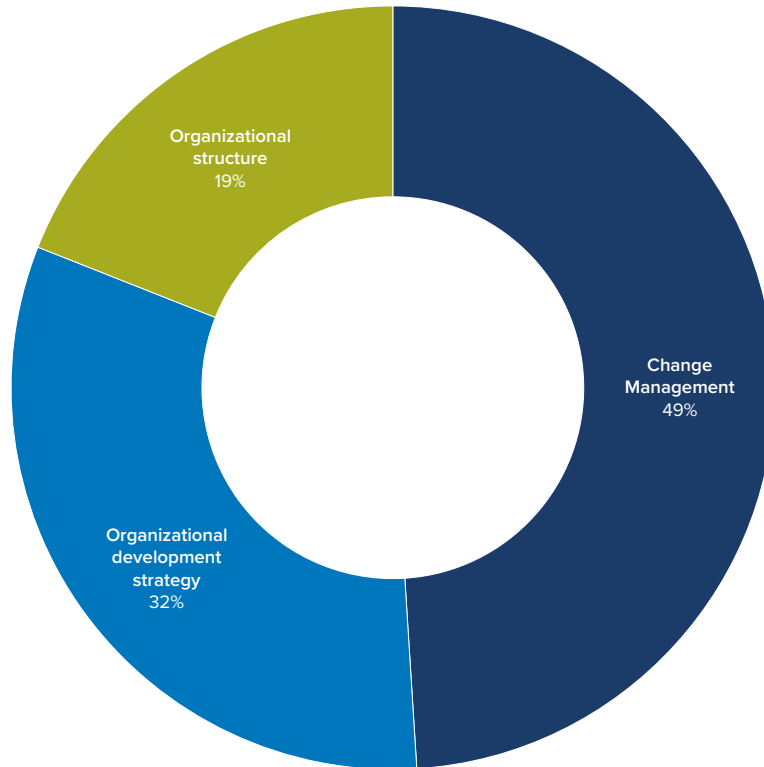
LEADERSHIP SKILLS	
<b>Basic leadership development</b>	CHROs are prioritizing leadership development at all levels by implementing programs and initiatives to equip current and future leaders with the skills needed to drive organizational success.
<b>Adaptability and change management</b>	CHROs are equipping leaders with the skills needed to adapt to rapid industry changes by focusing on change management, regulatory compliance, and how to foster a culture of continuous learning and growth.
<b>Empathy and soft skills</b>	Communication, conflict resolution, and empathetic leadership are recognized as critical skills for managing teams effectively and nurturing a positive organizational culture.
MANAGEMENT SKILLS	
<b>Foundational management training</b>	Gaps in core managerial skills are being addressed by prioritizing training for new managers that focuses on supervision, compliance, retention strategies, and effective team management.
<b>People management development</b>	Management development across all levels is centered on boosting team-building and conflict resolution skills, with leadership programs designed to cultivate empathetic leaders and drive sustained success.
<b>Succession planning and workforce readiness</b>	Succession management programs are being designed to prepare for leadership transitions by addressing skills gaps, fostering internal promotions, and cultivating future leaders through structured career paths and targeted training plans.

*Other CHRO priorities vary, but top strategic priorities include change management, employee experience, and talent management.*

Key organizational and employee-specific topics were each included as central to the 2025 agendas of more than one-quarter of CHROs, including organization design and change management (30% selecting as a top priority), employee experience (28%), and talent management (27%).

A closer examination of these general topics reveals the specific areas of focus that CHROs are prioritizing within them. Starting with organization design and change management, nearly half of the CHROs who are focusing on this topic in 2025 (49%) said change management (i.e., strategies for effectively planning and managing transitions within an organization) is their top area to address. One-third (33%) said organizational development strategy (i.e., a planned approach for aligning structures, responsibilities, processes, and systems with an organization’s goals) is their top priority within this broader topic, and 20% said their top priority is organizational structure (i.e., a system defining the hierarchy and roles within an organization). These plans for 2025 build on the frequent changes reported by U.S. workers in 2024, underscoring the continuous evolution that defines modern workplaces.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 2023-24 SHRM State of the Workplace Report, SHRM, 2024.

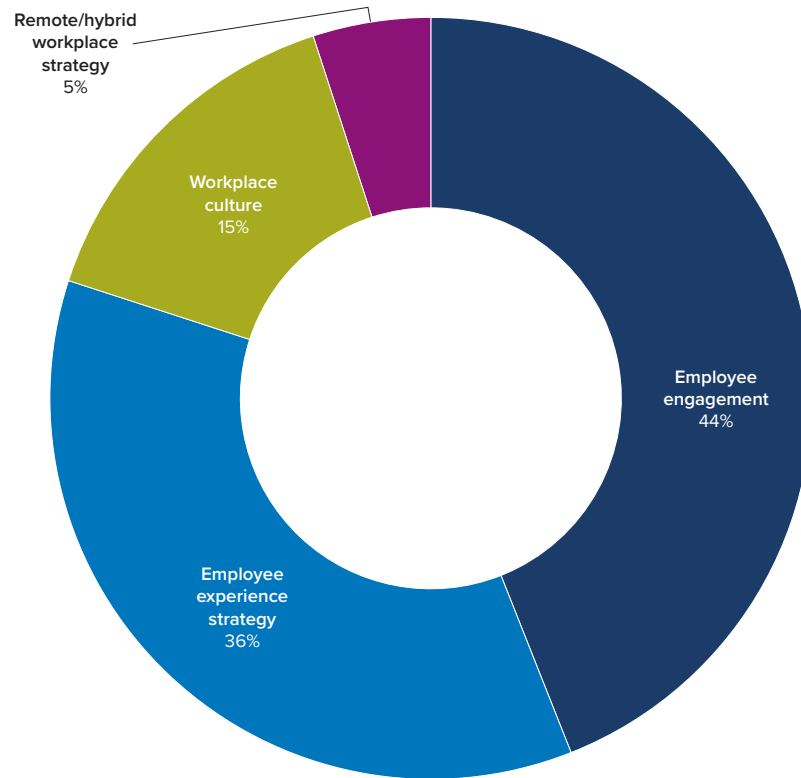


*Results based on responses from 63 CHROs who selected "organization design and change management" among their top priorities for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.*

Next, many CHROs who are prioritizing employee experience in 2025 are focusing on their employees' engagement or the strategy behind creating a positive employee experience. Forty-four percent of CHROs who are prioritizing employee experience said that employee engagement (i.e., the emotional commitment and enthusiasm employees feel toward the organization and their work) is their top priority within this topic in 2025. More than one-third (40%) of CHROs who are focused on employee experience (36%) said their top priority is employee experience strategy (i.e., a planned approach for improving employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity). Fewer CHROs selected other options as their top priority within this category, including workplace culture (15%) and remote/hybrid workplace strategy (5%).





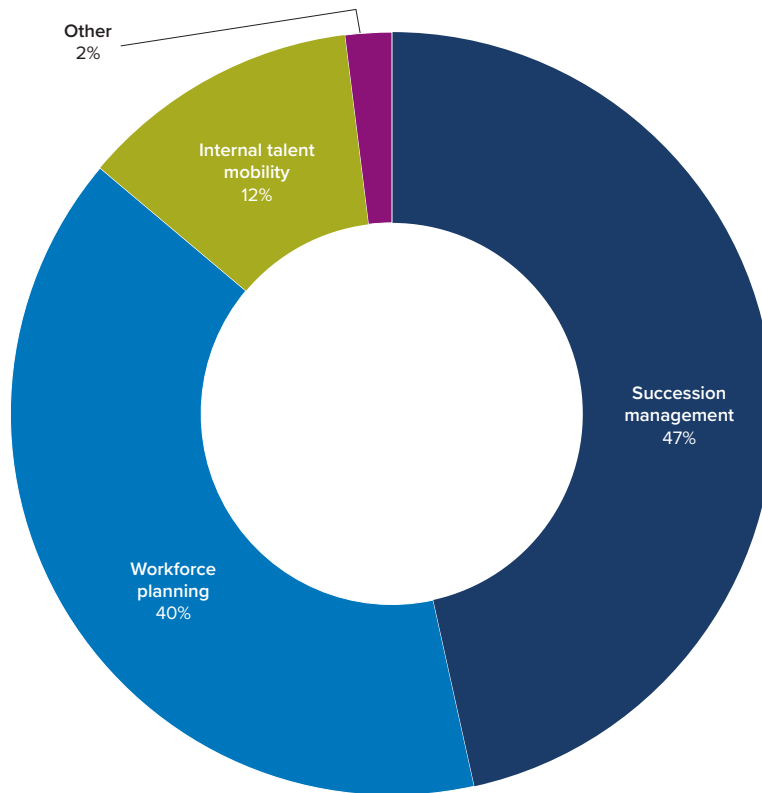


Results based on responses from 59 CHROs who selected “employee experience” among their top priorities for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

Finally, talent management — the comprehensive integration of HR processes for recruiting, developing, and retaining talent to support organizational goals — emerged as another top priority held by many CHROs for 2025. Within this category, many CHROs are again focusing on future planning through leadership development. Nearly one-half of CHROs (47%) focusing broadly on talent management said their top priority within this category is succession management (i.e., strategic planning to ensure leadership continuity and future talent readiness). More than one-third (40%) said workforce planning (i.e., a strategic process to forecast and align workforce needs and talent capabilities with business objectives) is their top priority.



## CHROs' top priority within the talent management category



Results based on responses from 58 CHROs who selected "talent management" among their top priorities for 2025. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

CHROs' priorities for 2025 reflect a strategic evolution in HR's role, with a strong emphasis on people-centric initiatives and broader organizational goals. Leadership and manager development stands out as a focal point, intertwined with other key priorities such as driving change initiatives, enhancing employee experiences, and strengthening talent management strategies. These priorities underscore HR's increasing influence in crafting and executing strategic organizational initiatives, showcasing a deeper alignment between HR and overall business objectives than ever before.







# CHROS NAVIGATE A WIDE RANGE OF COMPLEX CHALLENGES

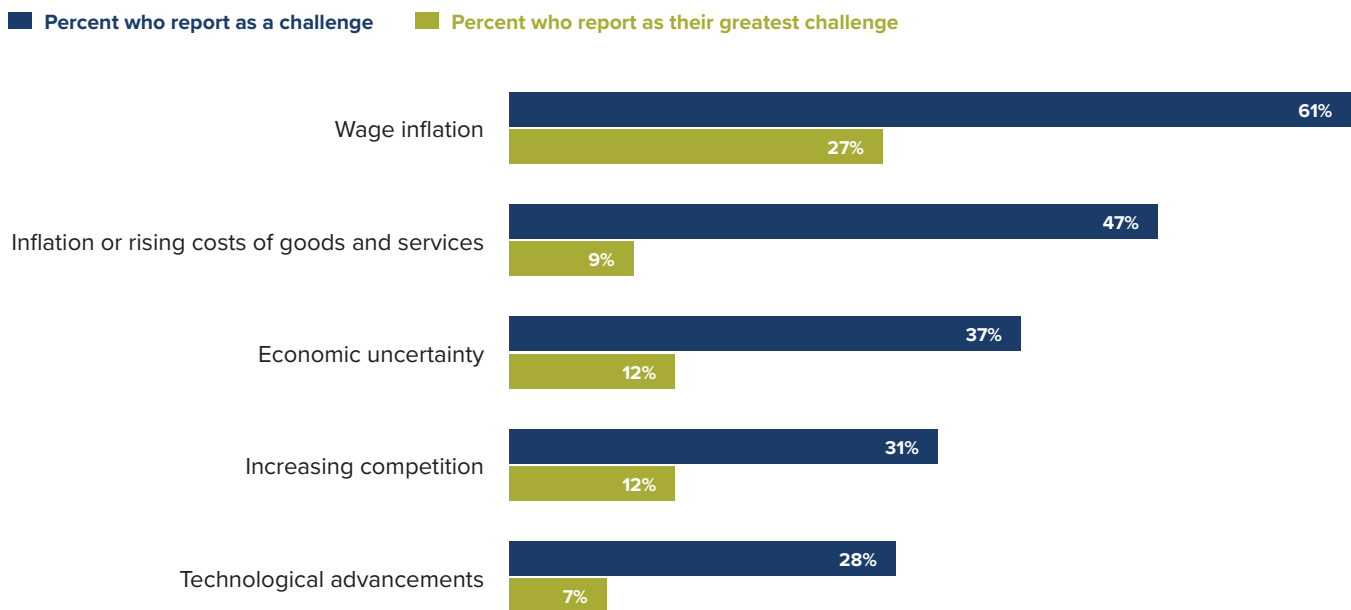
# CHROS NAVIGATE A WIDE RANGE OF COMPLEX CHALLENGES

CHROs play a pivotal role in shaping organizational priorities while simultaneously preparing the business to address complex challenges. As strategic leaders of the HR function, they must maintain a comprehensive awareness of the obstacles present at every level — ranging from departmental issues up to macro-level market dynamics — all while navigating the unique personal demands of their role. In this research, CHROs shared insights into the wide array of challenges they encounter and identified the most critical issues at the forefront of each perspective.

## *Economic and financial challenges rank among the top macroeconomic and organizational concerns for CHROs.*

When CHROs were asked to report on macroeconomic and broader organizational challenges their employer is facing, many unsurprisingly pointed to economic- or financial-related challenges. Wage inflation is the most common macroeconomic challenge identified by CHROs, cited by 61% of respondents. More than one-quarter of CHROs (27%) said wage inflation is the greatest macroeconomic challenge their organization is facing. Similarly, nearly half of CHROs (47%) said that inflation or rising costs of goods and services is a challenge. However, just 9% said this was their organization’s greatest macroeconomic challenge. More broadly, over one-third (37%) said economic uncertainty is a challenge, with 12% citing this as the greatest macroeconomic challenge for their organization.

### CHROs’ top macroeconomic challenges

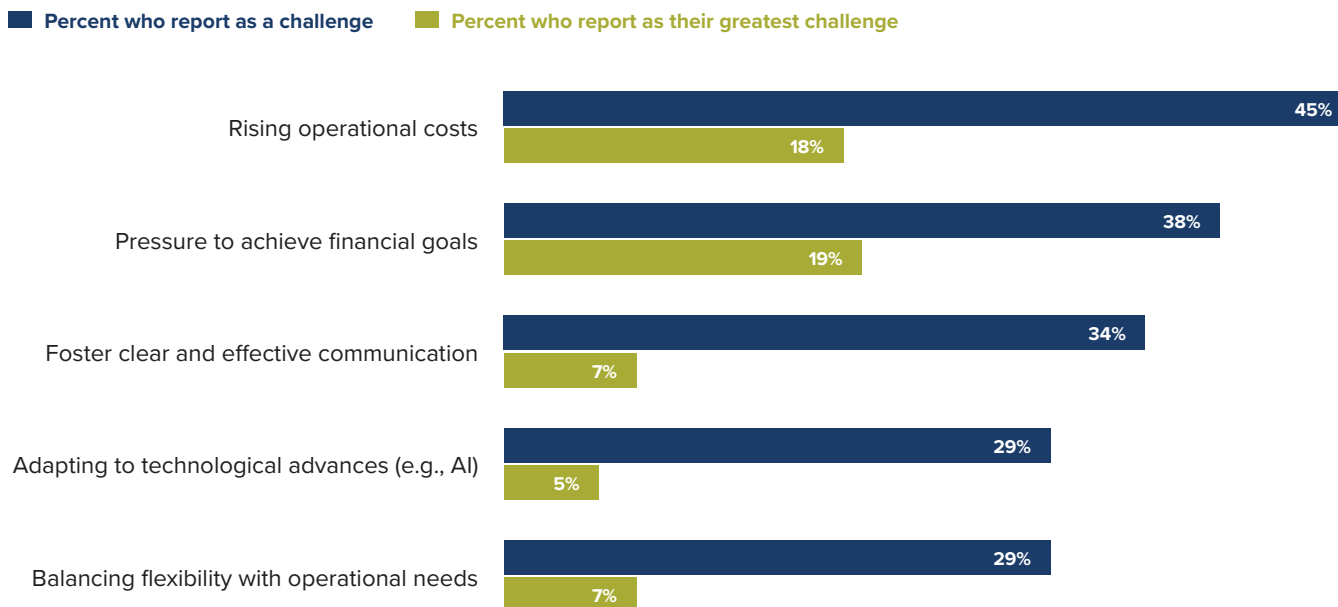


*Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Top five results shown based on “percent who report as a challenge.” Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.*

Financial-related challenges remain a dominant concern for CHROs when thinking about challenges faced across the overall organization. In this category, 45% of CHROs identified rising operational costs as a key challenge for their organization. Similarly, the pressure to achieve financial goals emerged as another leading issue, with 38% of CHROs highlighting this challenge. About 1 in 5 CHROs (18% and 19%, respectively) each cited rising operational costs and pressure to achieve financial goals as their most pressing concern.



## CHROs' top overall organizational challenges



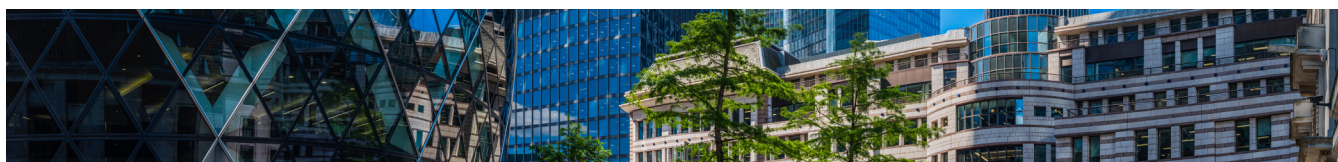
Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Top five results shown based on "percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

Economic-related challenges, especially wage and cost inflation, emerged as some of the most pressing macroeconomic and organizational challenges that CHROs face. These challenges are intricately linked to key HR practice areas such as recruiting and total rewards, underscoring the need for CHROs to work closely with other executive leaders across their organization to devise strategic solutions. Building a strong relationship with the CFO, in particular, can prove to be especially valuable. Together, these executives can combine their expertise to proactively address challenges and adapt to shifting market conditions. By fostering such collaborations and partnerships, CHROs can ensure their organizations remain competitive and resilient in a dynamic economic environment.

### *Employee engagement, attraction, and retention are among the greatest organizational talent challenges that CHROs are facing.*

CHROs most frequently identified maintaining employee morale and motivation as an organizational talent challenge they face, with 50% highlighting this concern. Attracting skilled employees was cited by 41% as another talent challenge, and 40% pointed to retaining talent as a major issue. When asked to identify their greatest talent challenge, 15% of CHROs identified employee retention as their top concern, followed by 14% for attracting skilled talent and 13% for maintaining employee morale and motivation.

Beyond these, other talent-related challenges that stand out involve leadership development. Notably, 40% of CHROs reported difficulties in establishing effective leadership development programs as a concern, and 37% identified developing succession plans as a challenge. These crucial areas align closely with the broader priorities many CHROs have outlined, suggesting that many are focused on implementing strategies to directly address these gaps in 2025.

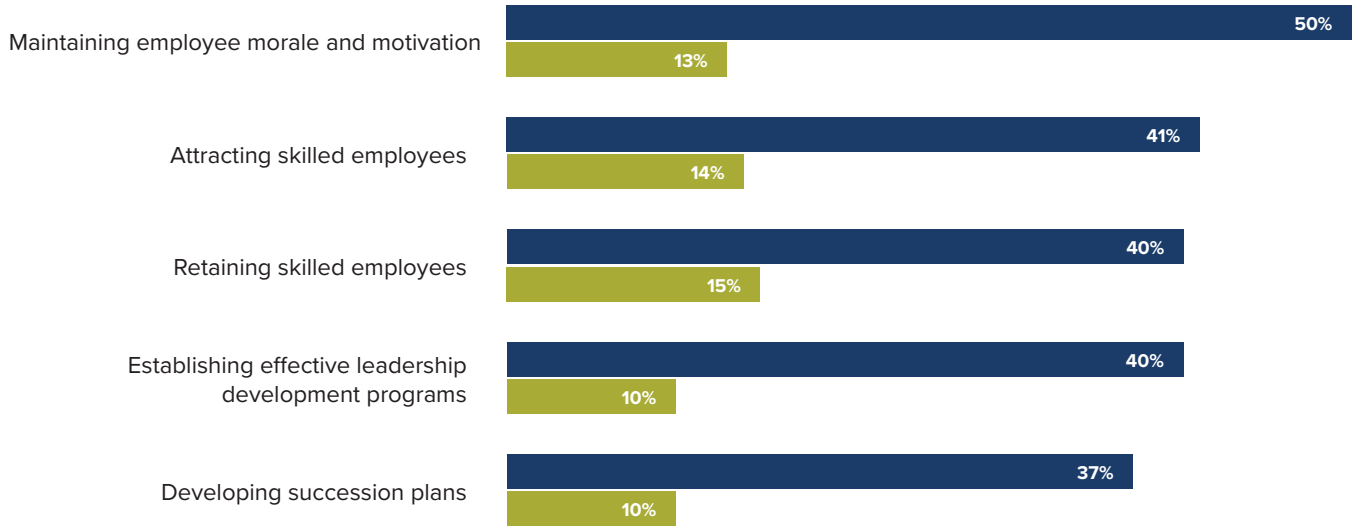


## CHROs' top organizational talent challenges



■ Percent who report as a challenge

■ Percent who report as their greatest challenge



Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Top five results shown based on "percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

These results emphasize the persistence of long-standing talent challenges that HR leaders and teams have navigated for years. However, they also reveal a growing recognition among CHROs of the critical need to address leadership development and processes that will strengthen their organization's talent capabilities. Coupled with many CHROs pointing to leadership development as a leading organizational priority, these results underscore a commitment to investing in employees through the creation of formalized programs and structured plans aimed at cultivating future organizational leaders to address these challenges.

### **Limited HR budget or resources, preparing staff for the future, and inefficiencies are among the top challenges for the HR function.**

Within the HR function itself, CHROs again pointed to a financial-related challenge as the most common and most pressing issue that they face. HR budget constraints or limited resources were reported to be a challenge for 31% of CHROs, with 16% saying this is their most pressing HR function challenge. Other leading HR function challenges included preparing HR staff for future challenges (cited by 29% of CHROs) and inefficiency in HR processes (cited by 28%). Budgetary and staffing challenges are long-standing issues for HR departments, with many professionals reporting that their teams operate beyond typical capacity and lack adequate staff to provide necessary support.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 2023-24 SHRM State of the Workplace Report, SHRM, 2024.





## CHROs' top HR function challenges



Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Top five results shown based on “percent who report as a challenge.” Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

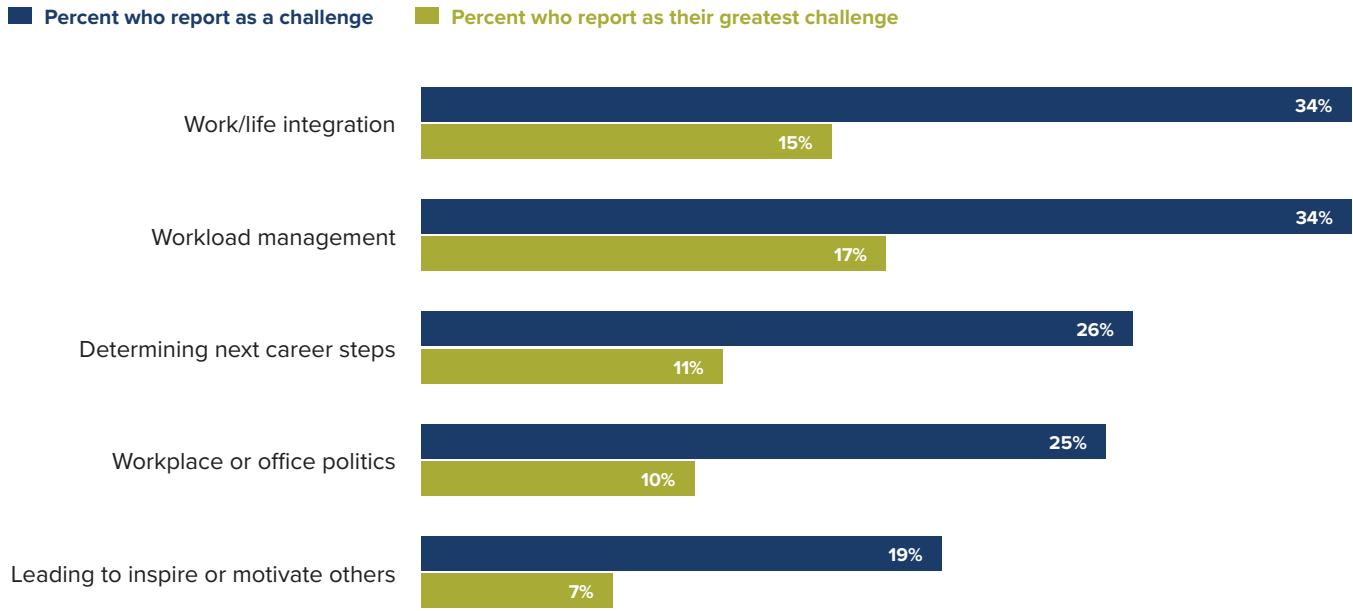
These challenges highlight the interconnectedness between the HR function and broader organizational challenges, including those related to financial performance and other key business indicators. Additionally, these challenges point to a strong alignment with many of the top priorities CHROs have identified for 2025, suggesting potential underlying influences behind these priorities. For instance, two of the most common HR function challenges — inefficiencies in HR processes and implementing organizational or policy changes — are likely connected to organizational structure and change management, which was one of the top CHRO priorities identified for 2025.

### **Work/life integration and workload management are the greatest personal challenges for CHROs.**

Unsurprisingly, work/life integration and workload management emerged as the most prevalent personal challenges faced by CHROs, reflecting the demanding nature of senior executive roles. One-third of CHROs (34%) identified each of these issues as ongoing challenges, with 17% citing workload management as their most pressing concern and 15% viewing work/life integration as their greatest personal challenge. Beyond these, other significant personal challenges included planning their next career steps (cited by 26%), navigating workplace or office politics (25%), and fostering leadership that inspires and motivates others (19%).



## CHROs' top personal challenges



Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Top five results shown based on "percent who report as a challenge." Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.

The role of CHRO carries immense responsibility, with high demands and significant pressure to achieve the objectives of both the HR function and the broader organization. These demands may push CHROs to extend their professional efforts well beyond standard expectations. As these results indicated, many will forgo personal time and accept increased workloads to fulfill their objectives. Beyond these demands, CHROs frequently face the added complexities of steering their career paths and managing the intricacies of workplace politics, including their unique position to inspire others in their organization. These challenges underscore the multifaceted nature of this role, requiring both resilience and strategic acumen to thrive in a critical leadership position.







# CHROS' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

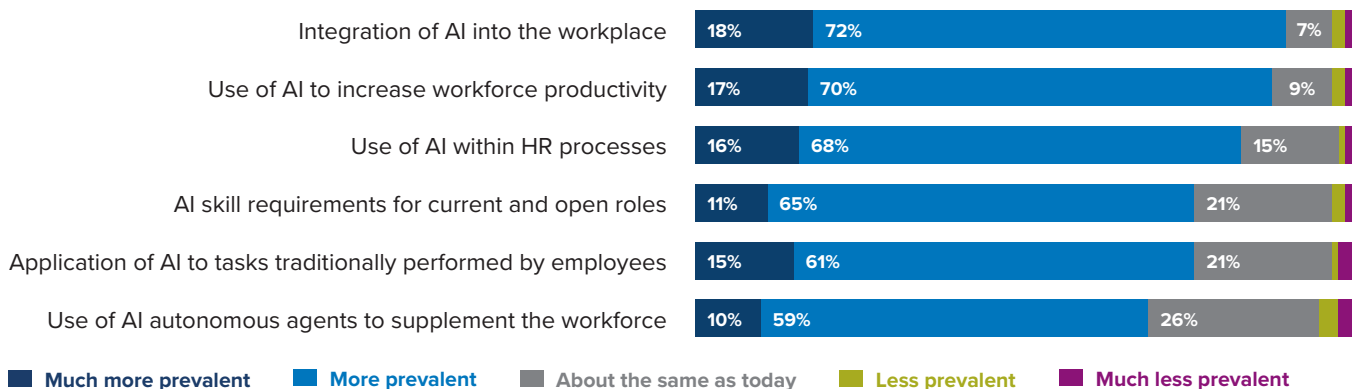
# CHROS' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

CHROs play a critical role in anticipating shifts within the labor market and the broader workforce, requiring a forward-thinking approach to address emerging trends. Their ability to forecast these changes can directly influence how their organizations adapt to and adopt evolving workplace dynamics. Recognizing this crucial function, this research aimed to capture CHROs' perspectives on both current workplace trends and those anticipated to evolve in the future. Respondents provided their assessments of these trends, specifying whether they expect each one to gain prominence, maintain its current level of influence, or diminish over time. These predictions offer insights into how CHROs envision the future of work and its implications for organizational planning and success.

**CHROs overwhelmingly believe AI will become more prevalent in the workplace in 2025.**

AI stands out as the most prominent workplace trend that CHROs anticipate will gain momentum in 2025. A dominant 90% of CHROs said they expect AI integration in the workplace to become more or much more prevalent. Alongside this rise, 87% foresee AI playing a critical role in boosting workforce productivity, highlighting significant confidence in its potential to drive widespread organizational benefits. In addition, AI is projected to make significant inroads within the HR function, with 83% of CHROs predicting a more prominent role for AI in managing HR tasks and processes. Beyond organizational and departmental applications, many CHROs said they expect AI to reshape the broader workforce landscape. For example, 76% of CHROs anticipate an increased focus on AI-related skills in job requirements, while a similar 76% believe AI will increasingly take on tasks traditionally performed by employees. Additionally, 69% predicted a greater reliance on AI-driven autonomous agents to supplement workforce capabilities.

## CHROs' predictions of how AI trends in the world of work will change in 2025



Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.





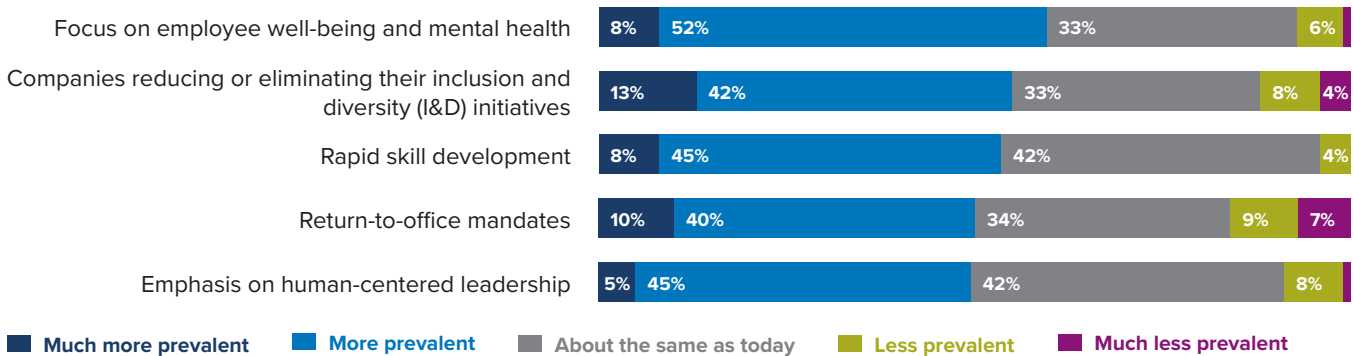
These findings indicate a bullish attitude among CHROs regarding AI's expanding influence in the workplace. Beyond AI's broader workforce implications, many CHROs said they envision it taking on a more critical role within their organizations, including in their own HR function. As this technology continues to rapidly evolve, it is vital for CHROs to stay informed about emerging trends, equipping their organizations with the knowledge and resources to harness AI responsibly, productively, and innovatively. What is undeniable is the consensus among these leaders: The workplace of 2025 will see AI integrated more prominently than ever before.

**Other rising trends include a focus on employee experience and changes to workplace policies.**

Many CHROs predicted several non-AI workplace trends gaining prominence in 2025, too, particularly those linked to the employee experience and workplace policies. Starting with trends in employee experience, a majority — 59% of CHROs — said they believe there will be an increased focus on employee well-being and mental health, reflecting this area's recent status as an ongoing focus for many organizations. Additionally, 53% said they expect to see heightened investment in rapid skills development. This trend is likely influenced by CHROs' expectations surrounding AI's expanding role in the workplace. Half of CHROs (50%) also anticipate a growing shift toward human-centered leadership, emphasizing the value of empathetic and people-focused management.

Concerning workplace policy trends, more than half of CHROs (55%) said they anticipate an increase in companies scaling back or eliminating inclusion and diversity (I&D) initiatives. Furthermore, 50% of CHROs said they expect a rise in return-to-office mandates, with more workplaces requiring employees to be onsite full time or more frequently than they currently are. Notably, even before a series of presidential executive orders and memorandums were announced in January 2025, such as EO 14173 titled "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity," many CHROs had already anticipated these trends in late 2024, when the data for this report was collected.

**CHROs' predictions of how other trends in the world of work will change in 2025**



*Results based on responses from 212 CHROs. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Any discrepancies with the text are the result of rounding.*

These anticipated shifts indicate that CHROs and other leaders may be actively aligning workplace strategies with the transformational changes they envision, particularly those driven by the growing influence of AI. Further, many leaders appear to anticipate shifts in workplaces policies as more organizations adjust to evolving long-term success strategies along with the uncertainties of a dynamic business and political environment.



# WHAT'S NEXT FOR TODAY'S CHRO?



# WHAT'S NEXT FOR TODAY'S CHRO?

In 2025, CHROs will continue to serve as key architects of their organizations' success, shaping strategic direction and providing expert leadership in response to rapid technological evolution and dynamic market and political landscapes. Their ability to lead with foresight and adaptability is paramount as they prepare their workforce to meet these challenges. By equipping employees with the critical knowledge, evolving skill sets, and informed guidance needed to excel, CHROs will not only drive organizational resilience but also position their teams to succeed in an era of unprecedented change and uncertainty. Expected CHRO trends for 2025 include:

## 1. Leadership and manager development will continue to be paramount for organizational success.

Leadership and manager development is a clear priority for CHROs, with more than half identifying it as a top focus for their workforce in 2025. This emphasis underscores the vital role that skilled people managers play in driving an organization's mission and nurturing a cohesive, high-performing culture. CHROs, as pivotal leaders in talent and workforce strategy, are uniquely positioned to drive these initiatives, serving as leadership cultivators by providing emerging leaders with the critical training, tools, and guidance they need to excel. By fostering robust leadership pipelines, CHROs will lay the groundwork for sustained organizational resilience and continued success, ensuring that future leaders uphold and advance the organization's vision and values.

## 2. CHROs and their teams will lead strategic organizational initiatives.

Beyond leadership and manager development, CHROs' priorities for 2025 reflect a clear alignment with driving strategic organizational initiatives. While core practice areas such as employee and labor relations, performance management, recruiting, and total rewards will continue to remain fundamental to HR, more CHROs will prioritize action to shape broader business outcomes. These include leading efforts in organizational design and change management, enhancing the employee experience, and strengthening talent management capabilities. Collectively, these priorities underscore HR's role as a strategic partner, aligning workforce strategies with the dynamic demands of the future to drive business success.

## 3. CHROs will play a greater role in navigating organizational challenges, including those related to talent and the rising prevalence of AI in the workplace.

CHROs and their teams will remain at the forefront of addressing long-standing talent challenges such as hiring and retaining top talent and fostering employee morale. Beyond these enduring responsibilities, CHROs will increasingly be called upon to help guide organizations through the complex and evolving role of AI in the workplace, a shift many expect to accelerate in 2025. CHROs are uniquely positioned to guide their organizations through this transformation, particularly in change management and upskilling and reskilling efforts. By aligning AI's potential with the needs of their workforce, CHROs will empower their organizations to pursue innovation while fostering a durable and adaptable workforce in 2025 and beyond.





# CONCLUSION, METHODOLOGY, AND ABOUT SHRM



# CONCLUSION

These findings highlight the strategic leadership CHROs are providing as they shape the future of HR for 2025 and beyond. CHROs are focusing on key business areas to ensure their organizations are ready for tomorrow's challenges, such as developing future leaders and managers and managing the change that comes with the evolving world of work. As AI and other technological advancements reshape workplaces — an expectation many CHROs have for 2025 — businesses will face complex decisions about their workforce's future. By combining their traditional responsibilities with a bold, forward-looking vision, CHROs are elevating HR into a pivotal role, positioning it as a key driver of enterprisewide success.

## METHODOLOGY

A sample of 212 CHROs or those who sit as the senior-most human resource professional in their organization were surveyed between Nov. 20 and Dec. 19, 2024. The survey was fielded electronically using the SHRM Voice of Work Research Panel and the SHRM Executive Network to U.S.-based CHROs and senior HR executives. In total, 147 participants were fielded from the SHRM Voice of Work Research Panel and 65 participants were fielded from the SHRM Executive Network. For the purposes of this survey, participants were required to be the senior-most human resource representative in their organization across a variety of titles they held. Participants represent organizations across multiple types of industries, sectors, sizes, and locations. The data was not weighted.

How to cite: *CHRO Priorities and Perspectives*, SHRM, 2025.

## ABOUT SHRM



SHRM is a member-driven catalyst for creating better workplaces where people and businesses thrive together. As the trusted authority on all things work, SHRM is the foremost expert, researcher, advocate, and thought leader on issues and innovations impacting today's evolving workplaces. With nearly 340,000 members in 180 countries, SHRM touches the lives of more than 362 million workers and their families globally. Discover more at [SHRM.org](https://www.shrm.org).



# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX

SHRM identified 16 core HR practice areas that reflect HR’s evolving role from an administrative function to a strategic partner that is pivotal to organizational success in today’s world of work.

HR PRACTICE	DEFINITION
Leadership and manager development	Enhancing skills for guiding teams and managing organizations effectively
Leadership and development	Training and resources to foster employee growth and development
Recruiting	Attracting and selecting talent to meet organizational needs
Total rewards	Comprehensive compensation and benefits strategies to attract, retain, and engage talent
Performance management	Process of aligning individual objectives with organizational goals to optimize employee and organizational success
Employee experience	Holistic approach to enhancing employee engagement, productivity, and satisfaction
Inclusion and diversity (I&D)	Fostering an inclusive environment that leverages diverse perspectives to enhance organizational success
Talent analytics	Data-driven insights to inform workforce planning and optimize performance
Talent management	Comprehensive integration of HR processes for recruiting, developing, and retaining talent to support organizational goals
HR function strategy and management	Aligning HR practices with business goals to drive organizational success
HR technology	Strategic use of digital tools and platforms designed to enhance HR processes, streamline operations, and improve employee experiences
C-suite/board relations	Fostering effective communication and strategic alignment between executives and board members to enhance governance and decision-making
Environmental, social, and governance (ESG); ethics; and compliance	Strategic integration of ethical practices and compliance measures to advance sustainability and governance objectives
Future of work	Adapting work models and transforming workplace dynamics to enhance organizational agility and innovation
Labor and employee relations	Managing workplace dynamics and ensuring compliance with labor laws to foster a harmonious and legally sound work environment
Organizational design and change management	Aligning organizational structures and processes with strategic goals to enhance adaptability and performance





# OUR PURPOSE IS TO ELEVATE HR

**Our mission is to empower people and workplaces** by advancing HR practices and by maximizing human potential. Our vision is to build a world of work that works for all.

**BETTER WORKPLACES, BETTER WORLD.**

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