

The Signal and the Noise

Where AI genuinely changes the people workflow, and where it just adds a dashboard.
One board-auditable number for each.

POINT OF VIEW · 2 PAGES · 3 MINUTE READ · FOR CHROS AND BOARDS REVIEWING THE AI LINE · JULY 2026

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE PARAGRAPH

Adoption stopped being the story. 43% of organizations now use AI for HR tasks (SHRM, 2025), and 88% of HR leaders say their organizations have not realized significant business value from it (Gartner, Oct 2025). This page separates evidence that a workflow changed from activity measures that can rise while the workflow stays put. Each entry carries one number a board can check.

01

Signal: the workflow itself changes

EVIDENCE

Three figures. Each carries its source and its question.

Require evidence
from the workflow

70%

of AI value comes from process and work redesign, against 10% from the algorithms themselves. The workflow itself changes, or the value does not arrive. **Ask:** name one workflow that runs differently than eighteen months ago, and what it no longer needs.

BCG, SEP 2025

130+

digital employees at BNY with their own logins and human managers. Capacity is now part human, part agent, and the workforce plan has to say so. **Ask:** does the plan count non-human capacity, with an owner, a unit cost, and a review cadence?

CNBC, FEB 2026

41%

of security, IT, and fraud leaders have already onboarded a fraudulent candidate. Gartner projects one in four candidate profiles worldwide fake by 2028. **Ask:** where in the funnel is identity checked before the badge?

GETREAL SECURITY, FEB 2026 · GARTNER, JUL 2025

02

COUNTER

Activity is the easiest thing
in the building to
manufacture

**Activity measures
can rise without
business value**

Noise: a dashboard appears next to the workflow

Noise is what you get when the workflow stays exactly where it was and reporting arrives beside it. The same test applies: one number, one source, one question.

14%

actually use the AI inside their core HR system. Seats, mandates, and usage leaderboards measure activity, the easiest thing in the building to manufacture. **Ask:** what outcome moved?

SHRM CORE HR SYSTEMS, DEC 2025

41%

of workers received low-quality AI output within a month, at nearly two hours per instance to untangle. Volume is not value. **Ask:** who sits downstream of the output, and what does cleaning it up cost them?

BETTERUP AND STANFORD, SEP 2025

95%

of enterprise GenAI pilots show no measurable P&L return, and roughly 73% of AI-justified layoffs cost the savings back in rehiring. **Ask:** was the work redesigned, or just made cheaper until it came back?

MIT NANDA, JUL 2025 · CAREERMINDS, FEB 2026

03

METHOD

One rule for every AI line in
the people budget.

COMPANION: THE 2026
EDITION

How to read it

For every AI line in the people budget, ask which half of this page it lives on, and require one signal-side number before renewing anything on the noise side. Count outcomes: cycle time, quality, the work that no longer needs a human. **An adoption dashboard is not an outcome.**

HOW THE FIGURES ARE SOURCED

Where a figure is vendor-reported, single-sourced, or contested, the edition says so in line. The numbers here carry their sources so a board can check every one.

Six figures, six questions, and one rule for the renewal conversation.

The full scoreboard, the agent boundary, and the candidate you can't verify are in **Mastering AI for HR: The 2026 Edition**. Full library at tllpartners.biz/library.

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