

Whitepaper

# Future-Ready HR:

## A Guide to Using AI and Automation for Training

Welcome to the changing(ed) World.  
The way we work has changed.

This isn't an HR problem; it's a shift in the workplace.  
But HR can help organizations become future ready.

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Let's face it, the way we work has changed.

This isn't an HR problem; it's a paradigm shift in the workplace, and HR needs to ensure they're delivering on helping to solve the problem.

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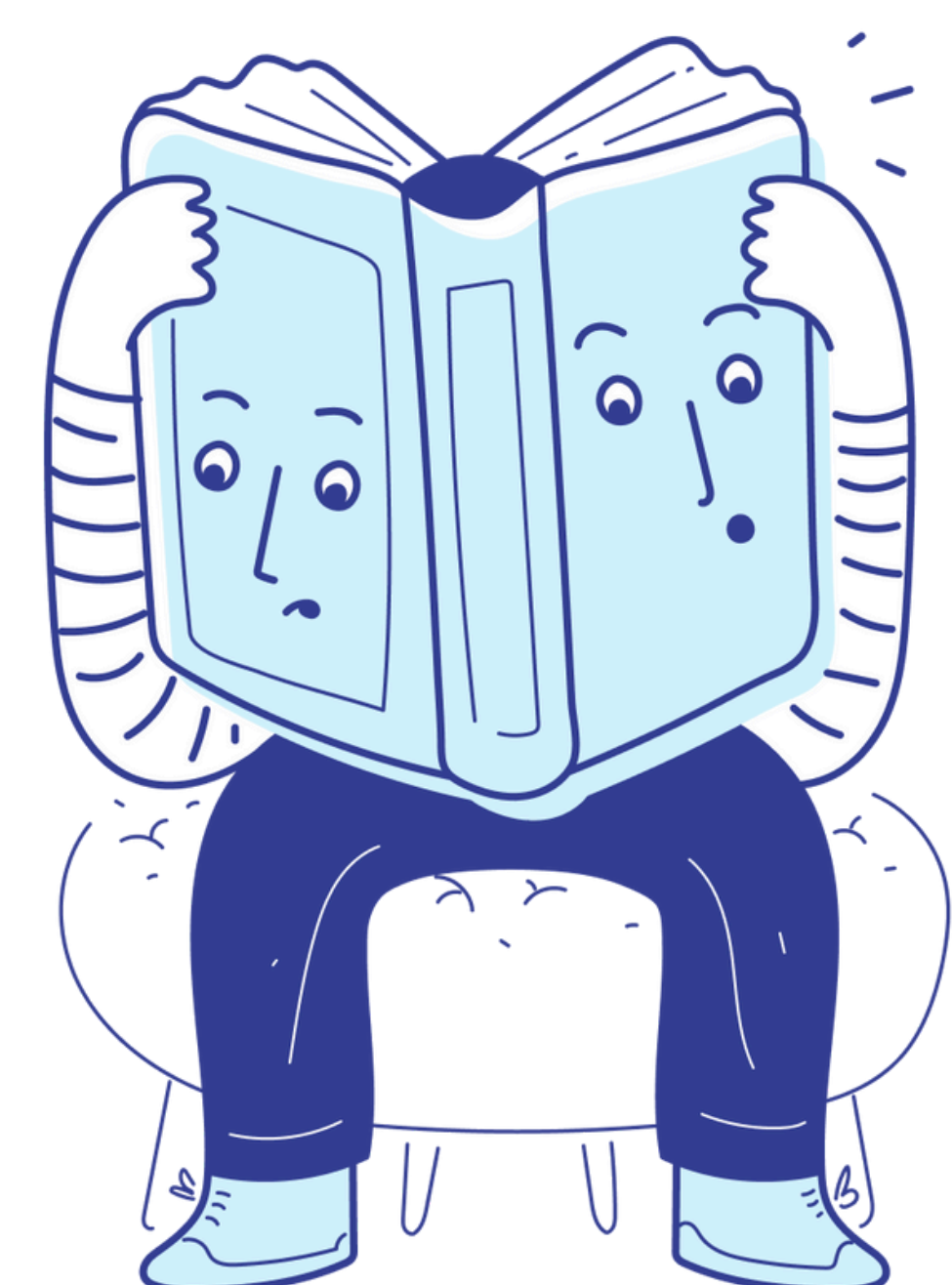
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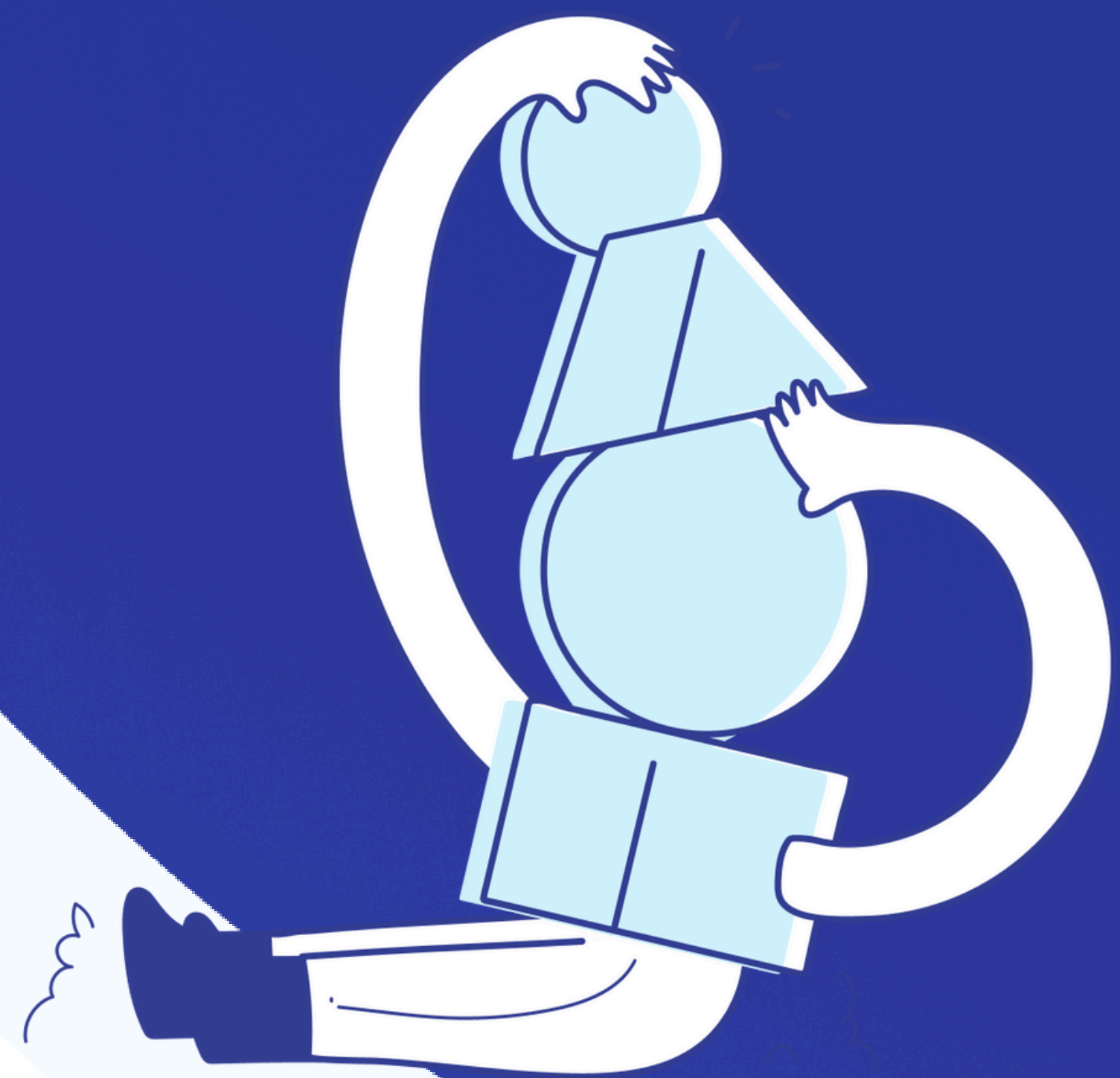
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## Chapter 1

### A new paradigm

# Welcome to the changing(ed) World

The crux of the matter is how to enhance productivity without compromising employee experience. Can HR increase both simultaneously in a world that is moving more rapidly thanks to AI and automation?

The way we work has changed.

This isn't an HR problem; it's a paradigm shift in the workplace, and HR needs to ensure they're delivering on helping to solve the problem.

**41%**

of business  
leaders

Expect to redesign business processes from the ground up with AI in the next 5 years. (Microsoft)

**75%**

Use of global knowledge workers using generative AI on a daily basis. (Microsoft)

**60%**

Leaders who worry their organization's leadership lacks a plan and vision to implement AI. (Microsoft)

We are at a critical juncture in the evolution of AI in the workplace. Just as we now find it hard to imagine life before personal computers, we will soon wonder how work was ever accomplished without AI.

And it's not just AI driving change.

Additional factors driving change include:

- **Social and demographics** - There is a need for policies that address the challenges of an aging workforce, including retirement planning and healthcare. This at the same time that GenZ prepares to enter the workforce.
- **Regulatory changes** - Laws like GDPR and CCPA are influencing how companies handle data and maintain privacy. And Governments increasingly have a say in how brands connect to their audience e.g. Tiktok ban in the US.
- **Labour market dynamics** - Labour shortages in certain sectors and the rise of the gig economy are reshaping the employment landscape.

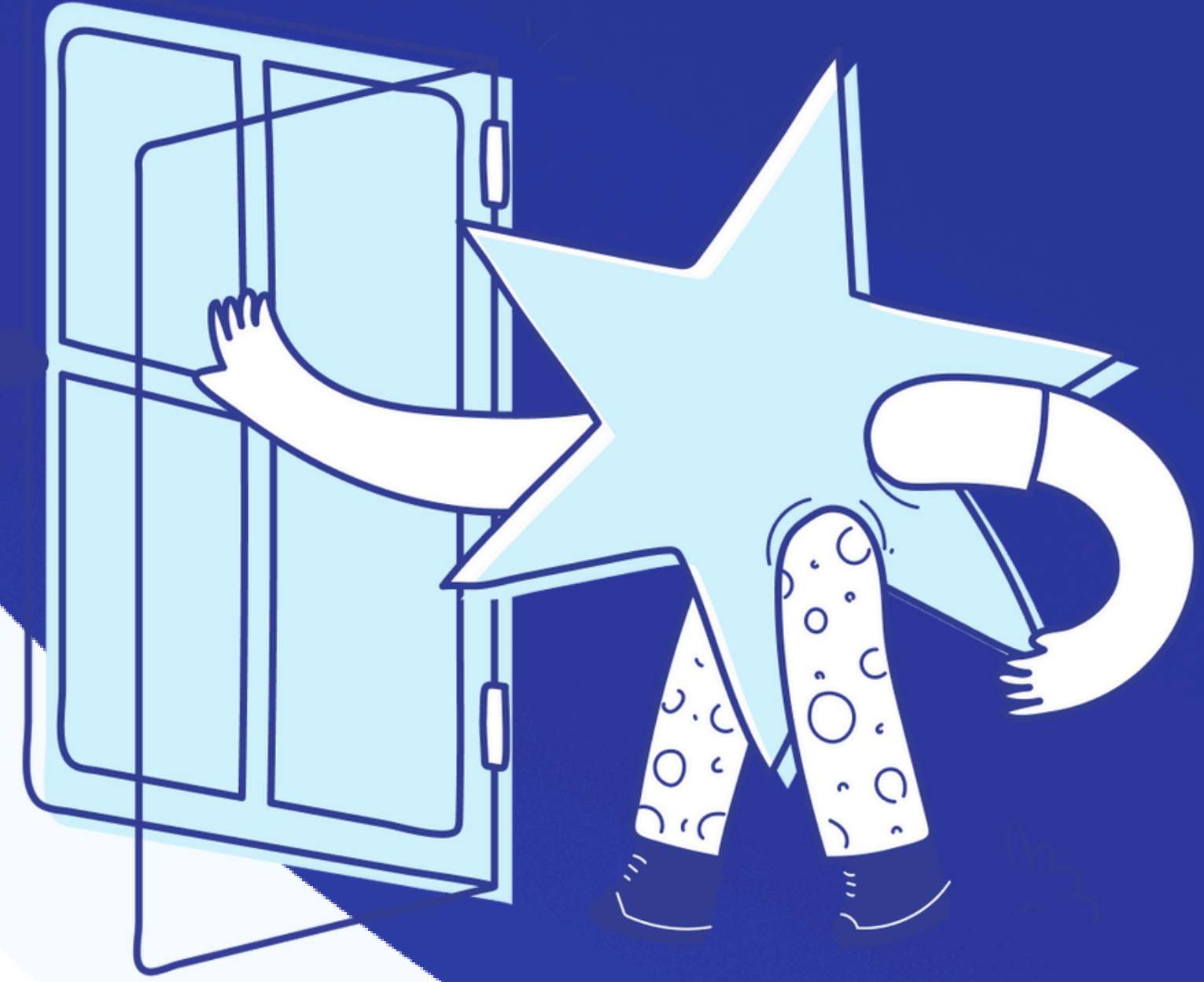
HR leaders who can provide insight into innovative ways to BOTH increase productivity AND employee engagement are worth their weight in gold as they drive transformation.

### How Whale is Helping Reshape Work



### Jonathan H. Westover

Professor of Organization Change (Utah),  
Author and HBR Advisory Council Member



## Chapter 2

How train to be future-ready?

# Enter the Future-Ready Organization

Future-fit means balancing two parallels; the ability to maintain or increase current performance while simultaneously transforming and maximizing core business. But how does this look in practice?

In the past, organizations would upskill their teams to solve problems that already existed. A future-fit organization upskills its teams and the way they work to solve problems that don't yet exist.

**1.6**

times faster

Executives at future-fit organizations report 1.6 times faster average year-over-year revenue growth than those that are not future-fit. (Forrester)

## What future-fit really means?

### Readiness to Change

Organizations must cultivate a culture that encourages experimentation, creativity, and the adoption of new technologies. By embracing change and continuously evolving, businesses can stay ahead of competitors and respond effectively to market disruptions.

### Key Competencies and Skills for Future Readiness

Future-ready organizations require a workforce equipped with key competencies and skills. These include digital literacy, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and adaptability. Investing in training and development is essential for building a competent and resilient workforce.

### Agility and Adaptability

Agility and adaptability are essential traits for organizations navigating an uncertain future. This involves being responsive to market changes, customer needs, and technological advancements. HR can support agility by promoting flexible work arrangements, encouraging continuous learning, and fostering a culture of innovation.

### Technological Integration and Innovation

Integrating technology and fostering innovation is crucial for future readiness.

Organizations must leverage AI, automation, and other advanced technologies to enhance efficiency and drive innovation.

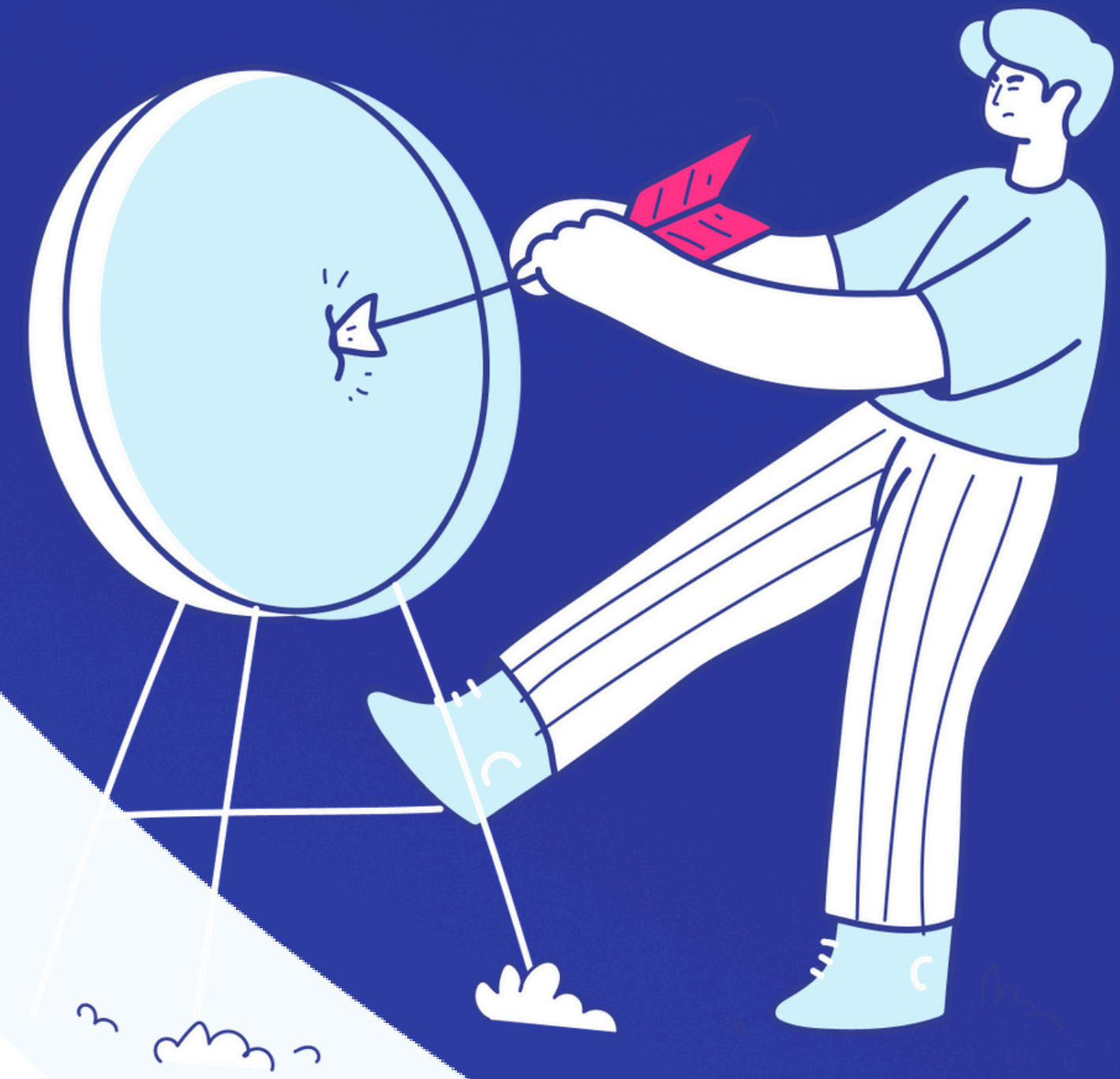
### Employee-Centric Culture - When People Thrive, Businesses Thrive

A future-fit organization recognizes that its people are its greatest asset. Fostering an employee-centric culture involves prioritizing employee well-being, development, and engagement. When employees thrive, they are more productive, innovative, and committed to the organization.



### Nadia Harris

Author "How to tackle hybrid working?" and Head of HR



### Chapter 3

**HR must develop strategies for change**

# **7 Key Challenges facing HR in 2025 and Beyond**

HR can be crucial in shaping resilient and future-ready organizations but they must develop strategies to manage complexities, ensuring that the business remains competitive and resilient.

As we look towards 2025 and beyond, HR faces a range of emerging challenges that will significantly impact organizational success. This is because business itself is facing a range of challenges.

**62%**  
of workers

Cite being on the same pages as coworkers, difficult to achieve. (Adobe, State of Work Report)

## 1 Talent Acquisition and Retention

Navigating the Competitive Talent Landscape is increasingly challenging and retaining top talent requires a focus on employee engagement, career development, and recognition.

## 2 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

HR leaders must implement policies and practices that support diversity, address biases, and promote equity. This includes diverse hiring practices.

## 3 Technological Disruption

The integration of AI and automation in HR processes can drive efficiency and innovation. HR leaders must identify areas where technology can enhance operations, such as recruitment, onboarding, and performance management.

## 4 Employee Well-being and Mental Health

Traditional wellness initiatives are not enough. The challenge for HR is to find better ways of working that promote productivity AND employee wellness at the same time.

## 5 Compliance and Regulatory Changes

HR must develop comprehensive compliance programs that include policies, training, and monitoring systems.

## 6 Remote and Hybrid Work Models

The here-to-stay hybrid work models requires policies and practices to support these arrangements.

## 7 Skills Gap and Workforce Development

The rapid pace of technological advancement has led to a skills gap in many industries. HR leaders must identify critical skill shortages and implement training to bridge the gaps.



### Jason Greer

“The Employee Whisperer” Diversity, Employee and Labor Relations Expert



## Chapter 4

How to impact the bottom line?

# HR as The Strategic Partner

The evolution of HR's role involves a proactive approach to navigating complex challenges such as remote work, diversity, and regulatory compliance, making HR pivotal in shaping resilience and agility.

**The shift related to AI is less about replacing human roles and more about enhancing human capabilities, allowing HR professionals to focus on strategic initiatives**  
**– Tomasz Smolarczyk, Head of AI at Spyrosoft**

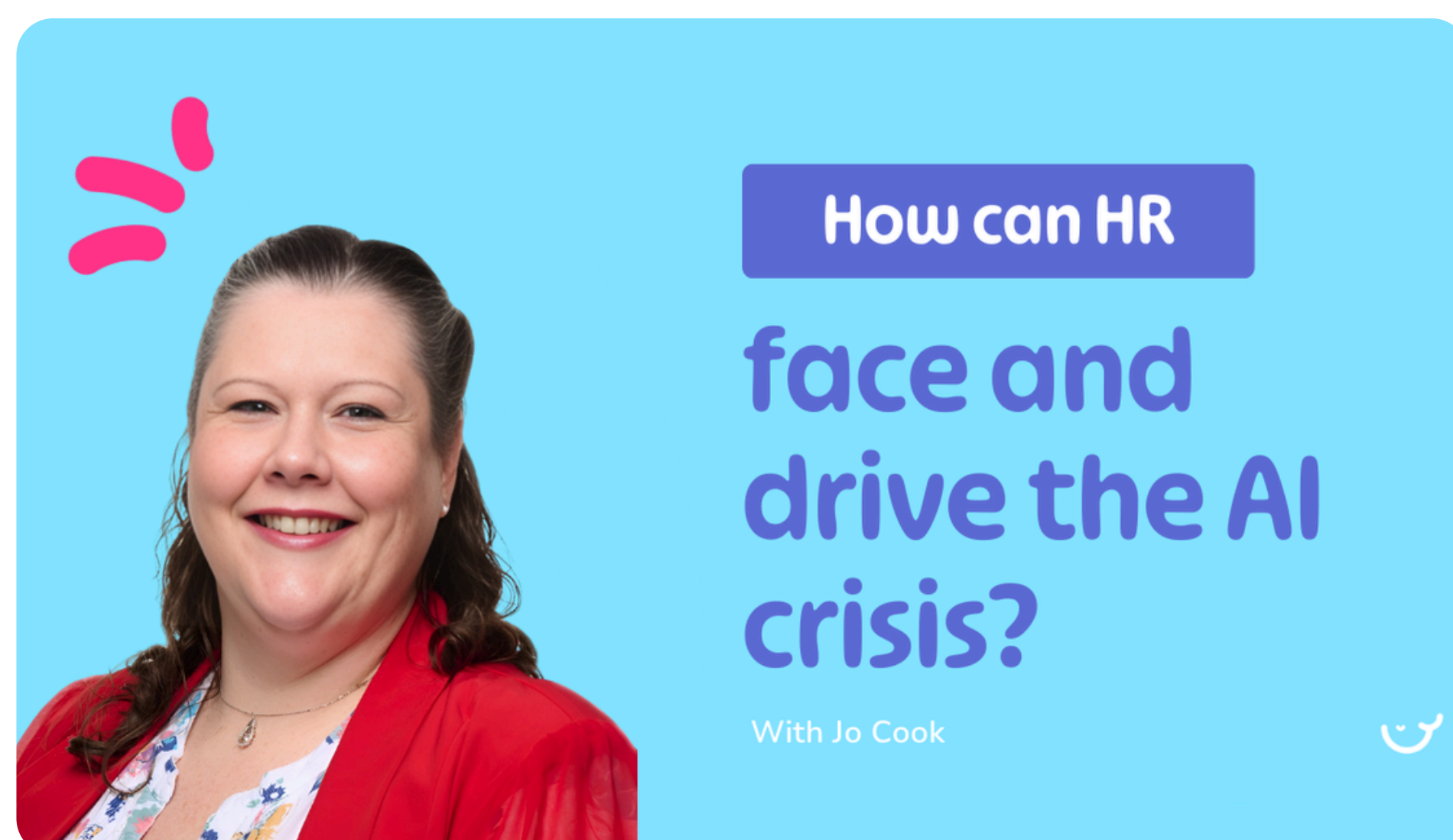
**76%**

76% of HR leaders believe that if their organization does not adopt and implement AI solutions, such as generative AI, in the next 12 to 24 months, they will be lagging in organizational success compared to those that do. (Gartner)

To ensure organizational resilience and success, HR leaders must anticipate future challenges. This involves staying ahead of industry trends, adopting innovative technologies, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Companies that prioritize **continuous learning** don't stop at one-time training sessions; they cultivate an environment where exploring new ideas and acquiring fresh knowledge is a regular practice.

The key, though, isn't just offering courses and certifications. It's about nurturing a mindset where employees are genuinely excited about growth and innovation.



### Jo Cook

Editor of Training Journal and Founder of Lightbulb Moment

### It's all about culture

Advancements in AI, automation, and HR technologies offer significant opportunities for enhancing HR functions. Understanding how to effectively integrate these tools while addressing potential challenges is crucial. Technologies such as AI-driven recruitment, automated onboarding processes, and advanced HR analytics can streamline operations and improve decision-making.

### HR as a strategic partner

As HR themselves adopt AI and automation, they enable their focus to become the people, the business and the culture. In doing so, they become a strategic partner to the business.

Being the change in terms of first adoption of AI and automation, sets people practitioners up for strategic success.

**How Whale helps automate onboarding and training**



## Chapter 5

How to onboard and train

# Upskilling and Training in 2025 and beyond

In the era of AI, reskilling and upskilling initiatives are critical for organizations to keep up with the ebbs and flows of technological change. It's all about upskilling the workforce and shifting recruiting to be skills-based as opposed to title or role-based.

AI could have the greatest impact on the HR industry in areas such as recruitment and talent acquisition, employee onboarding and training, employee engagement, performance management and feedback, and compensation and benefits management.

**89%**

of talent professionals

According to LinkedIn's 2023 Global Talent Trends report, 89% of talent professionals say ongoing skills gaps and talent shortages will be critical issues over the next five years.

**23%**

Of global jobs will change due to industry transformation, including through artificial intelligence and other text, image, and voice processing technologies. (LinkedIn)

The WEF's [Future of Jobs Report](#) states that

- 81.2% of organizations plan to invest in learning and training on the job
- 80% plan to accelerate the automation of processes
- 45.5% intend to transition existing staff from declining to growing roles
- 25.5% plan to outsource significant areas of work
- 24.3% intend to expand the use of contract work.

In 2024, the IMF suggested that 60% of jobs in advanced economies may be impacted by AI.

To effectively embrace a skills-based learning model, organizations can adopt various strategies and approaches that leverage modern technology and innovative learning methods including;

- Personalized learning paths
- Continuous learning
- Leveraging technology for learning
- Incorporating microlearning
- Developing skills based assessment
- Aligning learning with business goals



**Steve Simpson**

Author of UGRs: Cracking the Corporate Culture Code



## Chapter 6

Unlocking true human potential

# AI and Automation Now

Current sentiment is not the "AI is going to take our jobs" fear-based propaganda that occupied headlines when AI surfaced but rather that AI and automation are set to redefine job roles, streamline processes, and enhance productivity. So how to implement it?

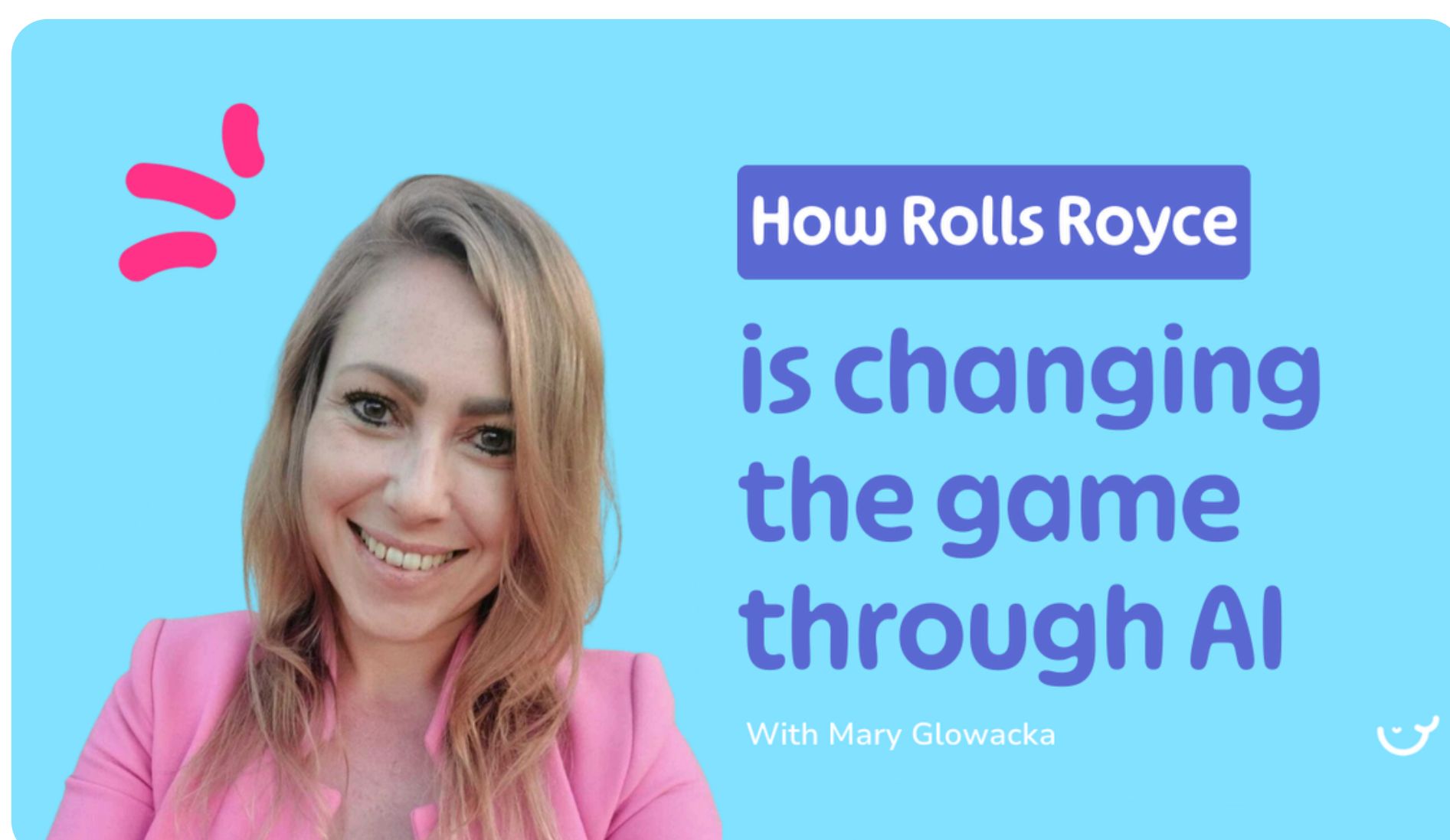
76% of HR leaders according to Gartner believe that if their organization does not adopt and implement AI solutions, such as generative AI, in the next 12 to 24 months, they will be lagging in organizational success compared to those that do.

65%

In the latest [McKinsey Global Survey](#) on AI, 65 percent of respondents report that their organizations are regularly using gen AI, nearly double the percentage from our previous survey just ten months ago.

In 2024 Rolls Royce (\$21 billion annual turnover) has dominated headlines as the latest AI darling success story; [Rolls Royce is in the middle of a multi-year transformation program](#). The company that was founded in 1906, now has nearly 42,000 employees in 48 countries, and its business is divided into civil aerospace (45%), defense (29%) and power systems (26%).

## How To Use AI to Onboard and Train



### Mary Glowacka

Global Head of Learning & Leadership Development, Rolls Royce

Mary Glowacka, Head of Learning & Leadership Development states; *"AI is really a thread through the whole ecosystem. Just look at our tech stack, and the AI piece is in there. AI is an inherent component of these technologies. People teams should be adopting this approach first and foremost."*

HR teams are pivotal in facilitating the transition to AI and automation.

In order to leverage AI, HR and People Teams should;

- **Assess Organizational Readiness:** Evaluate the current state of technology and workforce readiness for AI integration.
- **Develop Training Programs:** Create and implement training initiatives to upskill employees in AI and automation technologies.
- **Foster a Culture of Innovation:** Encourage a mindset that embraces technological change and continuous learning.
- **Adopt the tools:** Technologies such as AI-driven recruitment, automated onboarding processes, and advanced HR analytics can streamline operations and improve decision-making.



## Chapter 7

### Key Takeaways

# AI + HI is The Future of Work

Artificial intelligence AND human intelligence combined is the ultimate solution for productivity and employee experience. Here are the 7 key tasks HR professionals need to implement in order to help unlock the true potential of people and processes to deliver bottom line impact.

**AI will replace skills, not jobs or people. Responsible leaders leverage AI while maintaining a people-first perspective. Here are 7 practical ways to implement an AI + HI (human intelligence) approach.**

**66%**  
of workers

Nearly two-thirds of employees say they've experienced more change at work in the last year than in the 12 months prior, and one-third of workers say they've experienced four or more significant changes at work in the last year, including to their team structures and daily job responsibilities. The question is how can HR help manage and lead the change?

### **1 Be the Change in AI + HI**

As HR & People team implement AI and automation in their own ways of work, they become ambassadors for change and for showing that an "AI + HI" approach is a winning strategy.

### **2 Leverage Technology**

Implement AI-driven solutions such as recruitment automation, onboarding processes, and advanced HR analytics. These tools can significantly streamline operations and enhance decision-making capabilities.

### **3 Onboard and train right**

Create and execute training initiatives that focus on upskilling employees in AI and automation technologies. This ensures that the workforce is equipped to handle new tools and systems.

### **4 People First**

As automation increases, focus on maintaining and even improving employee engagement and well-being. A balanced approach that considers both technology and human elements is key to long-term success.

### **5 Focus on Skill Building**

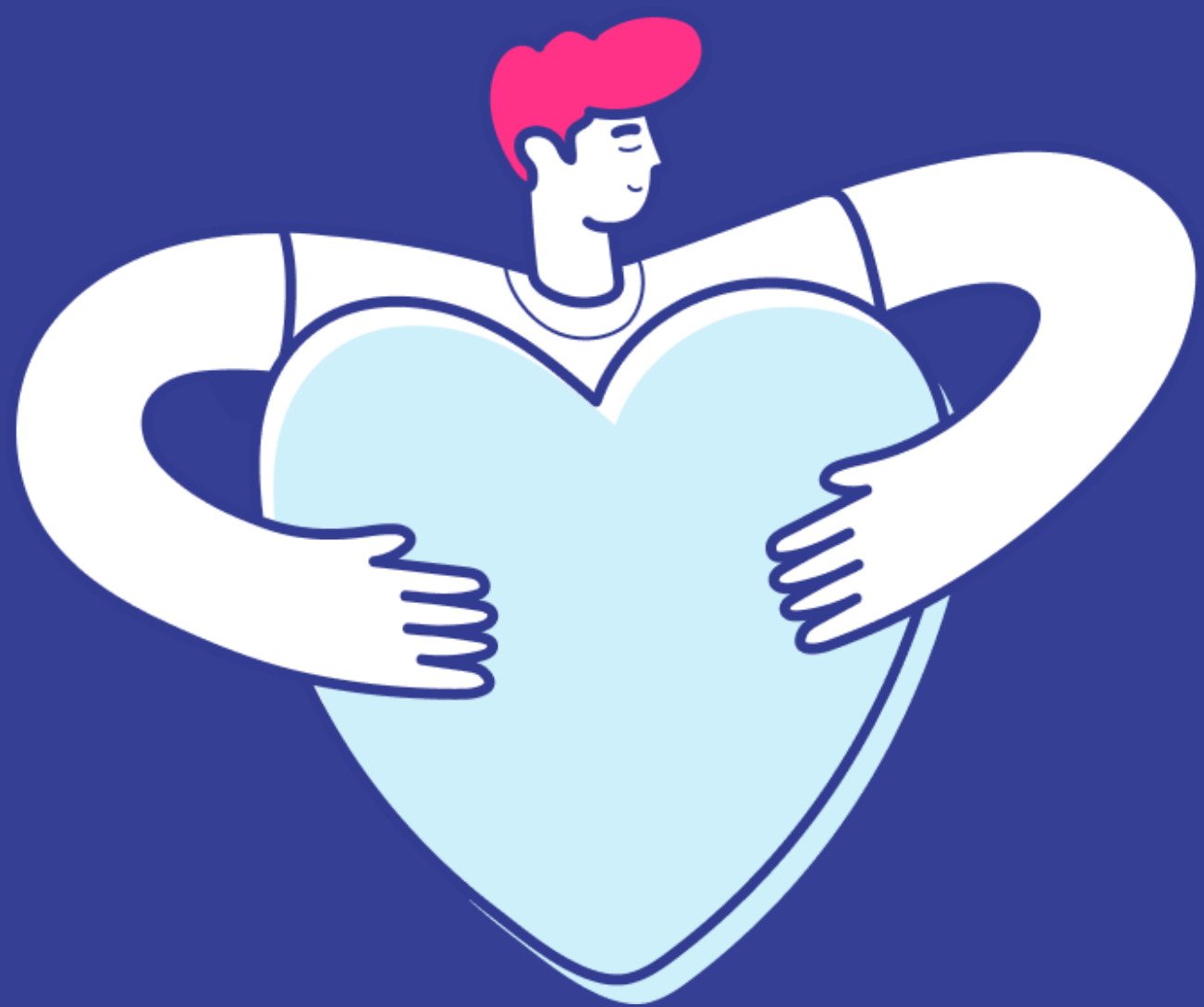
Encourage an organizational mindset that embraces technological change and continuous learning. This cultural shift is crucial for successful AI and automation adoption. But it's not just about learning, it's about building skills.

**How Whale is Helping Reshape Work**



**LaToya Lyn**

Chief People Officer



# Thank you!

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