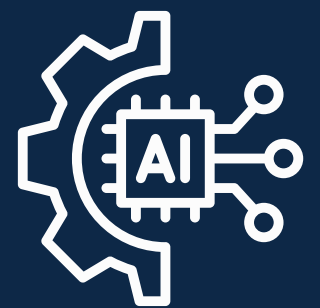


AI IN HR

WHERE TO START

astonfisher



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AI is rapidly reshaping the HR landscape. While the promise is immense—streamlined operations, personalised employee experiences, and data-driven insights—the path to value can be complex. This paper distils practical steps and strategic considerations for organisations seeking to harness AI in HR, drawing on Aston Fisher’s experience and the journey of a FTSE 100 client with a global workforce. The focus is on improving employee experience, operational efficiency, and business outcomes, with a clear framework for evaluating ROI and minimising risk.

1. THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

WHY AI ON HR

Organisations face mounting pressure to attract, retain, and develop talent in a competitive, fast-changing environment. AI enables HR to move from transactional support to strategic enabler—improving employee experience, operational efficiency, and business outcomes.

However, as Davis Aguilar, Global Head of HR Operations at Diageo puts it:

“With so many AI solutions in the market, it’s easy for organisations to chase the next shiny tool. The critical activity is disciplined due diligence, interrogating the ROI and the experiential impact before making any investment.”

A FTSE 100 client we have been supporting on their HR transformation is embracing AI as a top priority for their HR leaders, underpinning efficiency, innovation, and employee engagement at scale. Their approach is rooted in combining advanced technologies with a clear people strategy, aiming to deliver measurable health, business, and employee outcomes.



2. HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

- **Talent Acquisition:** AI-powered job recommendations, candidate matching, automated screening, and predictive analytics.
- **Onboarding:** Virtual assistants, personalised journeys, document verification, and sentiment analysis.
- **Learning & Development:** Personalised learning paths, coaching, and content analytics.
- **Performance Management:** Career pathing, goal tracking, and predictive attrition analytics.
- **HR Operations:** Chatbots, ticket triage, SLA reporting, and compliance tracking.
- **Employee Experience:** Dashboards, diversity analytics, and well-being insights.
- **Knowledge Management:** AI-powered knowledge bases and instant query resolution.

➤ TALENT ACQUISITION

➤ ONBOARDING

➤ LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

➤ PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

➤ HR OPERATIONS

➤ EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

➤ KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

GSK's "digital assistant" (deployed across web, mobile, and Teams) unifies HR help, automates routine queries, and enables self-service for tasks like time-off requests, document translation, and live agent connection. This has resulted in significant time savings and stable employee satisfaction.

3. WHERE TO START PRIORITISING AI IN HR

- Start with High-Volume, Low-Complexity Processes: Automating time-off requests, knowledge search, and ticket triage—areas with clear, measurable ROI and minimal risk.
- Pilot, Measure, and Iterate: Use pilot programmes to validate assumptions before scaling.
- Map the Employee Journey: Identify pain points through employee feedback and HR data.
- Leverage Existing Platforms: Integrate AI with current HR systems to maximise adoption and minimise disruption.

HOW TO DECIDE WHAT TO TACKLE FIRST

Marianne Davies, VP, Head of Global People Services at GSK recommends a practical framework for evaluating AI investments:

“We call it the '3 E's':

- *Process Efficiency*: Will the AI solution increase efficiency (e.g., time/cost savings)?
- *Cost Effectiveness*: Is it more expensive to implement than the benefit it delivers?
- *Employee Experience*: Does it deliver an experience for the employee that is at least as good as what is already in place?”

Start with high-volume, low-complexity processes for quick wins and measurable ROI. Use pilot programmes to validate assumptions before scaling.

4. COMMON CHALLENGES

Common Challenges and how to overcome them:

- **Change Management:** Ensuring stakeholder buy-in and supporting adoption.
- **Data Quality and Integration:** Integrating AI with multiple HR systems and ensuring data accuracy.
- **Guarding against bias and potential discrimination risks:** Ensuring that humans are always kept in the loop when making talent decisions
- **Responsible AI and Compliance:** Maintaining transparency, accountability, and compliance with data protection regulations.
- **Scalability:** Moving from pilots to enterprise-wide adoption while maintaining quality and consistency.
- **Measuring ROI:** Defining clear success metrics and tracking outcomes.

➤ CHANGE MANAGEMENT

➤ DATA QUALITY & INTEGRATION

➤ GUARDING AGAINST BIAS & POTENTIAL DISCRIMINATION RISKS

➤ RESPONSIBLE AI & COMPLIANCE

➤ SCALABILITY

➤ MEASURING ROI

5. PRACTICAL STEPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Define clear objectives and success metrics.
2. Map the employee journey and identify pain points.
3. Evaluate the AI landscape and choose wisely (see Appendix for a list of examples).
4. Pilot, measure, and iterate.
5. Ensure responsible AI and change management.
6. Scale and optimise.

➤ DEFINE

➤ MAP

➤ EVALUATE

➤ PILOT, MEASURE & ITERATE

➤ RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

➤ SCALE & OPTIMISE

CASE STUDY

GSK – OUTCOMES

- **Employee Time Savings:** Over 60,000 hours saved annually through automation of knowledge search and time-off requests.
- **Support Shift:** 30% reduction in live chat volumes.
- **Self-Service:** Employees can complete HR tasks via digital assistant, reducing reliance on manual processes.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Machine learning is used to enhance knowledge quality, fill gaps, and suggest new content.

CONCLUSION

AI is not a silver bullet, but when thoughtfully deployed, it can transform HR into a strategic powerhouse—delivering better experiences, smarter decisions, and measurable business value. With the right framework, clear ROI focus, and a commitment to responsible innovation, HR can lead the way in shaping the future of work.

APPENDIX

AI TOOLS FOR HR

AI TOOL	PROBLEM SOLVED	SOLUTION	KEY FEATURES
VISIER	LACK OF ACTIONABLE WORKFORCE INSIGHTS	AI-POWERED PEOPLE ANALYTICS PLATFORM	PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS, AI ASSISTANT, ORG DESIGN
TECHWOLF	INACCURATE/OUTDATED SKILLS DATA	AI-DRIVEN SKILL INFERENCE ENGINE	REAL-TIME SKILL PROFILES, GAP ANALYSIS
DEGREED	INEFFICIENT CORPORATE LEARNING	AI-POWERED LEARNING PLATFORM	AI COACH, SKILL TAGGING, GENERATED PATHWAYS
EIGHTFOLD AI	POOR TALENT MATCHING	TALENT INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM	SCREENING, CAREER PATHING, DIVERSITY ANALYTICS
LEENA AI	MANUAL HR OPERATIONS	AI-POWERED HR ASSISTANT	VIRTUAL ASSISTANT, REAL-TIME INSIGHTS
METAVIEW	INTERVIEW NOTE-TAKING	AI INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION	AUTOMATED SUMMARIES, ATS INTEGRATION
FETCHER	CANDIDATE SOURCING	AI SOURCING TOOL	DISCOVERY, OUTREACH, PIPELINE AUTOMATION
PARADOX	MANUAL RECRUITMENT	CONVERSATIONAL AI ASSISTANT	CHAT ENGAGEMENT, INTERVIEW SCHEDULING
BEAMERY	FRAGMENTED TALENT DATA	UNIFIED TALENT LIFECYCLE PLATFORM	TALENT GRAPH, CAREER PATHING, DEI ANALYTICS
LIGHTCAST	LACK OF LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS	LABOUR MARKET ANALYTICS	JOB TRENDS, SKILL DEMAND, BENCHMARKING

Our purpose is to empower clients to be industry leaders by connecting them with game-changing talent

1 Executive Search
Build sustainable and diverse leadership teams for long-term success

6-8 weeks

2 Interim Management
Finding temporary experienced leaders to manage change, fill critical gaps, or drive specific projects.

2-3 weeks

3 Talent Advisory
Advise on the organisational strategies and structures to help with succession planning & coaching of future leaders.

6 weeks-18 months

ABOUT ASTON FISHER

At Aston Fisher is a global executive search firm specialising in finding the best management and leadership talent for your future needs. Our premise is that just the right amount of science compliments human decision making, so we use a refined data-driven approach, to ensure every placement is a success. Our expert team consists of search professionals and industry experienced leaders who've lived and worked internationally. We all share a belief that search can be done differently.