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MD

AI in HR Productive But Disruptive: What Does It Mean for the Future of HR?

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6 minute engagement

Remember how much the world changed after [the introduction of the iPhone](#)? AI is having the same kind of impact in the workplace and on HR practices.

In the case of [AI in HR](#), it must be leveraged responsibly to ensure fairness and mitigate bias. We took a deep dive with Britta Mühlenberg, the chief operations officer of content production software company [Acrolinx](#), to examine the current state of AI in HR, from revolutionizing [recruitment](#) to [personalizing the employee experience](#). Mühlenberg was previously Acrolinx's chief people officer (CPO).

The effects of AI in HR

Are there any aspects of HR you believe AI won't impact?

HR is a constantly evolving role, and while AI is having a significant impact on the processes of HR, [the role itself will not be changed by the technology](#). With the advent of generative AI, the operations of HR have definitely been impacted, but AI will not be revolutionary in how the HR function provides value to organizations. Being a human has and always will be such a critical part of HR, even as AI plays a larger role in HR operations. I strongly believe that the human side of HR will never be able to be replaced by AI.

How do you see the skills and mindsets of HR pros evolving in an increasingly AI-driven

workplace?

workplace:

What I've typically seen over the course of my career is that compared to other departments, HR is a bit slower at adopting new technologies. I believe the HR function can always up the game in tech savviness. I encourage people in the HR profession to stay informed, do their research and not hesitate to dive in because AI in HR has the potential to positively change the way we work.

You were a CPO for a while. Outside of the AI in your company's product, has AI inspired any adjustments to Acrolinx's company culture?

It's hard to say how AI has impacted Acrolinx's company culture because it's so ingrained in our DNA. One contrast I see in our workforce, relative to many others, is that we aren't scared of AI. In fact, most of our people know more about AI than the average worker because we have been dealing with it for so many years. As [generative AI](#) has stepped onto center stage in recent years, there was a lot of excitement from our people, and it reinvigorated passion about our mission. This has only added to the liveliness in our discussions about generative AI that captivate our entire workforce, and not just [engineers](#) and product people.

What are some specific ways that you've seen AI in HR make life better?

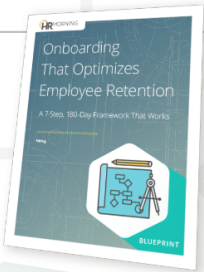
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One area where we've seen AI in HR have an impact is [recruiting](#). There's a big discussion about whether bias can be engineered out of hiring systems, and there are still improvements to be made. However, by applying machine learning and data science to pre-select job candidates, I'm certain that AI will become increasingly better at selecting prospects for roles.

Generative AI is also writing job descriptions and job posts, which is another area where bias can be removed. When using large language models (LLMs) to develop job descriptions, it's important to ensure that all data entering an LLM is unbiased and uses inclusive language. I think this will take us a long way in ensuring equity in hiring, while taking advantage of the efficiency of AI in HR.

The Compliance Side of AI in HR

There are concerns about [AI recruiting tool bias](#) affecting hiring decisions. What can HR pros do about it?

As humans, we know bias exists in hiring with our people hiring managers. As talent acquisition professionals, it's our responsibility to ensure there's enough diversity in hiring panels and decision-making bodies, and to shed light on training around unconscious bias.

With AI in HR, it's much tougher. If AI is used to select job candidates, it's essential to first ensure that AI models aren't built on [biased data](#), especially as HR relies more heavily on AI's outputs.

AI in HR: The Employee Experience

Looking ahead, how can companies ensure responsible implementation of AI in HR practices to

maintain employee trust and well-being?

What's important for each company to do is to first define its [AI strategy](#), especially around generative AI. For example, there are many questions that organizations and employees alike are asking themselves:

- *How do we want to use AI?*
- *What's allowed and what isn't?*
- *How do we allow our people to use it?*
- *What skill sets do we need to use it?*

By addressing these questions as an organization and having guardrails up so that people feel safe using the technology, [HR can help workforces embrace AI](#) in a way that maintains trust and empowers workers. One thing I'm keeping a close eye on, and that I'm intrigued to see in the coming years, is how different AI regulations across jurisdictions will impact how companies use AI globally, including for how employees are using it. How employers abide by AI regulation in their use of AI will play a key role in the responsible implementation of the technology.

What role should HR play in driving the adoption of AI throughout workplaces?

As with any skill, HR plays a critical role in training, implementing, building and identifying skills needed within an organization to make the use of AI successful. Using AI as a skill set will need to be built into competency and skill frameworks to allow each role to gain a clear understanding of how they're expected to use AI. And for workers preparing themselves for the changes AI might bring, one of the most beneficial things they can do is to be open to learning about it. Many employers have yet to fully develop training on AI use in the workplace, but reading resources, completing trainings and seeking out learning content about it puts individuals a step ahead.

How do you foresee AI influencing the training and development of workers?

Beyond needing training on how to use AI itself, there are also lots of opportunities for HR in creating training materials and assets with AI, which can be a significant efficiency gain. I'm super excited to see how it plays out. Making sure the quality of AI-generated learning content is clear in terms of style, tone and structure, so that people can absorb the knowledge, is critical. So is ensuring that the information shared is true and of value.

How do you expect AI to change the future of workplaces in the next few years? Are there any misconceptions you think people have about AI's impact in the workplace?

Some people close to AI may have an idea of some of the ways AI will impact the future workplace, but most people aren't close enough to AI right now to fully predict how it will change the world of work. On that note, one of the big misconceptions anybody can have now is that AI won't change the future of workplaces, and underestimating the level of impact it will have. While the effects of AI on the workplace won't all come into play at once, it will evolve, and right now we cannot even fathom all the ways AI and generative AI will transform work.

Brian Bingaman has been a journalist in the Philadelphia area for nearly 20 years. He was a contributing editor for *ResourcefulFinancePro.com*, as well as the publications *What's Working in Human Resources* and *What's New in Benefits and Compensation*. He first became interested in HR when he started noticing a distinct lack of human interaction from the HR department of the newspaper group where he worked. In addition, Brian has 15 years of experience in the radio broadcasting industry.

