

How HR and L&D Leaders Stay Relevant in 2026

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ABOUT THE EVENT

AI, skills chaos, and the leadership reset no one prepared you for.

Explore what it really takes for HR and L&D leaders to stay relevant in 2026: shifting from administrators to diagnosticians, equipping managers to lead amid uncertainty, and using AI as a judgment multiplier. Get practical frameworks to assess readiness, close skills gaps, and turn experimentation into sustained impact.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Expect a wide range of AI readiness

Even among motivated, forward-thinking teams, AI comfort spans the whole spectrum. AI is changing our tools and reshaping roles and workflows. Share this message with your execs and design solutions that meet different needs.

Shift from doing to diagnosing

AI has made output abundant, but impact still comes from judgment. The real advantage lies in the questions you ask, the workflows you redesign, and the behaviors you reinforce. Human discernment is key.

Focus on enablement vs. ownership

HR's role is not to own AI adoption, but to enable experimentation, identify AI champions, and empower leaders to apply AI based on team needs. AI adoption succeeds when you set the conditions and leaders do the work.

Align strategy to outcomes

HR leaders must move beyond tools and tactics and lead with a clear talent strategy that's deeply aligned to business outcomes. If your CEO is discussing AI's impact and you're not in that conversation, that's your cue.

Hear how AI-forward HR leaders shift from “doing the work” to diagnosing what matters most.

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ACTION ITEMS



Do a three-capabilities audit

Assess readiness across:

1. Technical: Data quality, system integration, governance, and security.
2. Strategic: High-value use cases, workflow prioritization, and decision ownership.
3. People: AI literacy, manager readiness, AI champions, and psychological safety.



Equip managers to lead amid AI

Leaders need support to diagnose the right problems, delegate between humans and AI, and communicate change. Start by talking with managers to understand where they feel confident or constrained, then develop high-impact skills like [delegation](#), judgment, and [change leadership](#).



Use AI as a thought partner

Use AI to stress-test ideas, explore alternative strategies, and surface blind spots before making high-stakes decisions. This accelerates the conversation by enabling better thinking, sharper questions, and more intentional tradeoffs.



Edit, don't create

AI-forward leaders rarely start from a blank page. Use AI to generate first drafts (training outlines, scenarios, comms) then spend time refining, contextualizing, and humanizing the output. This shift frees capacity for strategic work without sacrificing quality.

Use the [CAMPS™](#) (Certainty, Autonomy, Meaning, Progress, Social Inclusion) to check in with people amid change.



“If there’s one theme that’s absolutely critical in times of change, it’s ensuring that the right skill set is embedded into all of your organizational systems and team training practices.”

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Turn AI disruption into a leadership advantage.

[LifeLabs Learning](#) equips managers with practical tools and a shared language to lead through change—fast.

Discover 5 Ways to Use AI in Your Workflows: [Learn more](#)

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