

GREAT LAKES GURGAON

Human Capital in the Age of Intelligent Enterprises

Whitepaper on insights from 151 HR & L&D leaders across 32+ industries — on agentic AI adoption, governance readiness, and the future of work.

43%

HAVE FORMAL AI
GOVERNANCE

76%

SAY AI IS REDESIGNING
ROLES

72%

EXPECT AI CO-
WORKERS WITHIN 2-3
YRS

WHAT'S INSIDE

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The Adoption Reality

Where organisations stand on agentic AI — and the governance gap that trails deployment

2

HR at the Epicenter

Why HR's #2 position in adoption creates a unique dual-role risk

3

The Human-Machine Boundary

The irreducible domains where AI still falls short — and why 62% land in HR's core

4

The Capability Imperative

AI fluency and critical thinking tied at 54% — and what it means for L&D design

5

The Future of Work

72% expect AI co-workers within 2-3 years — what this demands of HR and L&D now

AUDIENCE

CHROs, HR Directors, L&D Heads, and senior business leaders across India.

151

RESPONDENTS

32+

INDUSTRIES

66%

ACTIVE / SCALED AI

67%

FROM 1,000+ ORGS

Great Lakes Institute of Management · Gurgaon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Adoption Paradox: AI Is Here. Governance Is Not.

This report synthesises survey responses from 151 HR and L&D leaders across 32+ industries in India. It maps where organisations truly stand on agentic AI — and the governance, capability, and measurement gaps that trail behind deployment.

151TOTAL RESPONDENTS
SURVEYED**66%**ACTIVE PILOTS OR
SCALED AI
DEPLOYMENT**43%**HAVE FORMAL AI
GOVERNANCE IN
PLACE**59%**CITE LOSS OF HUMAN
JUDGMENT AS #1 RISK

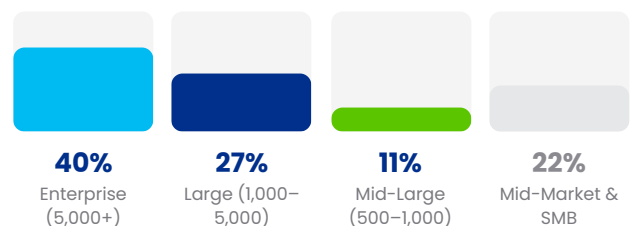
KEY FINDINGS

- 66% are in active pilots or scaled deployment — yet only **43%** have clear employee guidance, and 25% have no guardrails at all.
- HR ranks **#2** in AI adoption (41%), making it simultaneously the function driving and governing the transformation.
- 76% say AI is already changing how roles are designed or performed. Only 1% say it has had no effect.
- AI workflow design and critical thinking both tied at **54%** — equally urgent, not competing priorities.
- 72% believe AI co-workers will be important or central to daily work within 2–3 years.
- Only 9% foresee significant job losses; 51% expect role redesign or new role creation.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Conducted in April–May 2026, this survey focused on **agentic AI** — systems that autonomously plan, decide, and act — reflecting the current frontier of enterprise deployment in India.

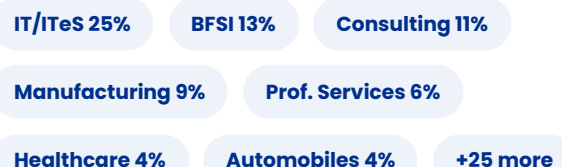
RESPONDENT PROFILE



CENTRAL TENSION

The challenge is not whether to adopt AI — 66% are doing it. The challenge is the **governance gap, capability gap, and measurement gap** that trail behind deployment precisely when people decisions become most consequential.

SECTORS REPRESENTED



DEPLOYMENT IS AHEAD OF GOVERNANCE IN 3 OF 5 ORGANISATIONS

Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey · n=151

1

AGENTIC AI ADOPTION

The Exploration Phase Is Over. Governance Has Not Caught Up.

Two-thirds of organisations are already beyond the experimentation stage — running active pilots or scaling AI agents across multiple functions. The three adoption stages are nearly evenly distributed, signalling a maturing but governance-fractured landscape.

EXHIBIT 1 — STAGE OF AGENTIC AI ADOPTION

% of 151 respondents

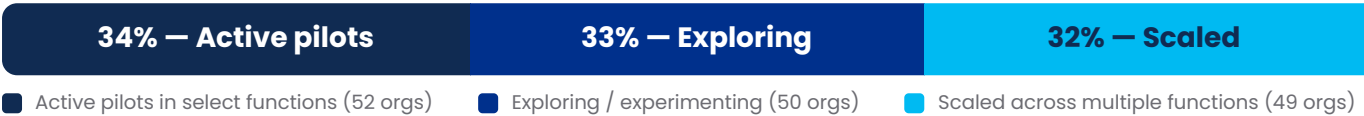
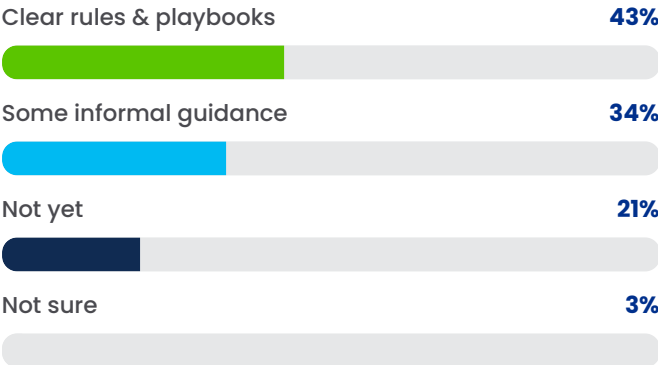


EXHIBIT 2 — FORMAL EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE ON AI AGENTS

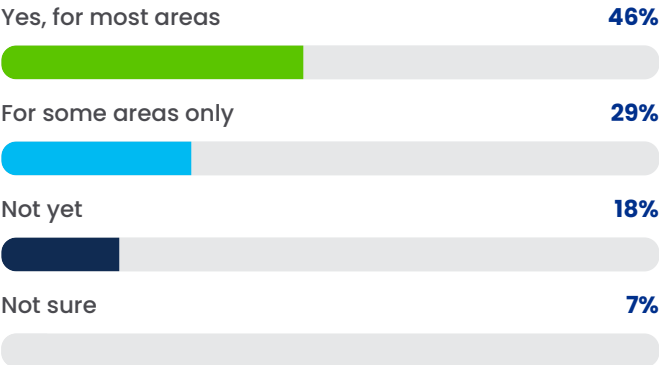
Does your organisation have guidance for employees?



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

EXHIBIT 3 — RESPONSIBLE-USE GUARDRAILS

Does your organisation have clear guardrails for AI use?

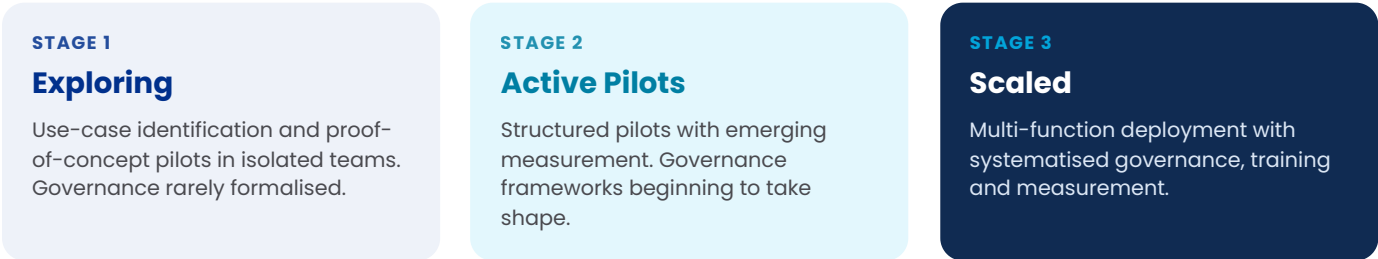


Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

THE GOVERNANCE GAP

If 66% of organisations are actively deploying AI but only 43% have formalised guidance — approximately **1 in 4 is scaling AI in people-sensitive functions without a defined framework**. In HR, where decisions directly affect careers and livelihoods, this is a live operational exposure, not a theoretical risk.

ADOPTION MATURITY SPECTRUM



Key finding: Most organisations at Stage 2–3 have governance maturity closer to Stage 1

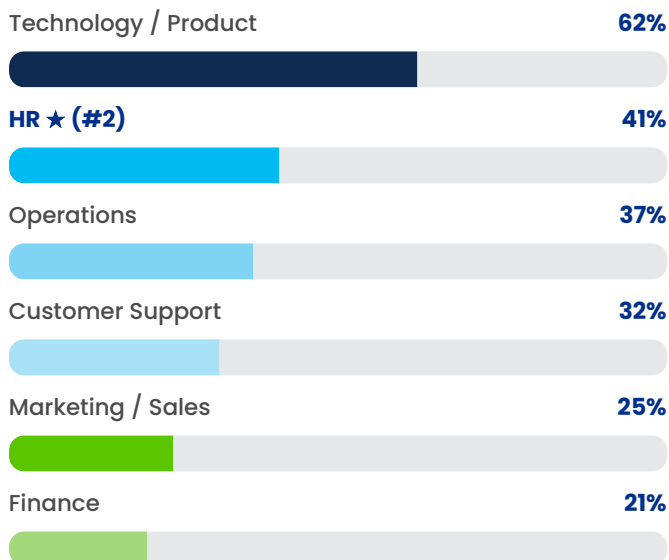
2 WORKFORCE & FUNCTION IMPACT

HR at the Epicenter: Practitioner and Policymaker

"HR is simultaneously the function driving AI adoption and the function responsible for managing its human consequences."

EXHIBIT 4 — FUNCTIONS ADOPTING AGENTIC AI MOST

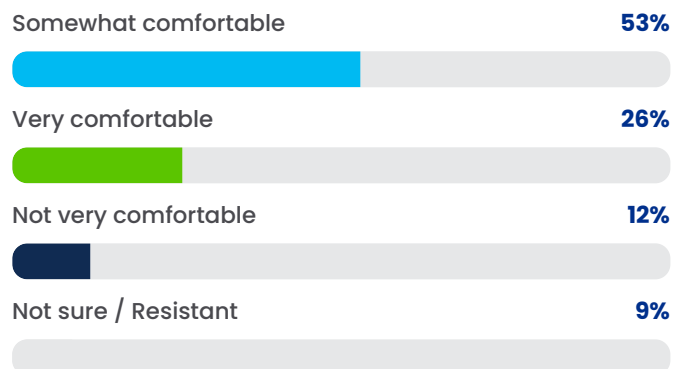
% of 151 respondents (multi-select)



★ HR ranks 2nd · Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

EXHIBIT 5 — EMPLOYEE COMFORT WITH AI AGENTS

Day-to-day working with AI agents



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

79%

AT LEAST SOMEWHAT
COMFORTABLE

26%

VERY COMFORTABLE —
THE REAL BAR

DUAL ROLE RISK

HR's #2 position means the function designing AI policy is also one of its most active users.

The function setting the rules is operating without a complete framework.

COMFORT ≠ CAPABILITY

Surface familiarity exists. **Deep human-AI collaboration skills do not.** This is the L&D gap hiding in plain sight.

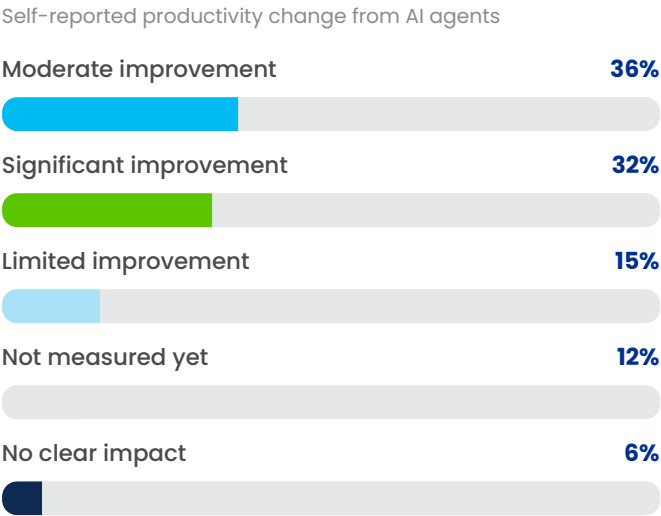
The Dual Pressure on HR

HR faces two simultaneous pressures: it must **deliver AI-driven efficiency gains** while **protecting the human systems** — governance, culture, and judgment — that sustain those gains. Most functions face only one or the other. HR faces both at the same time.

The New CHRO Mandate

The CHRO of the intelligent enterprise must be simultaneously architect (deploying AI to transform HR operations) and guardian (ensuring AI deployment in people-sensitive decisions is governed, equitable, and human-supervised). This dual mandate requires a fundamentally new operating model for HR leadership.

EXHIBIT 6 — AI IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

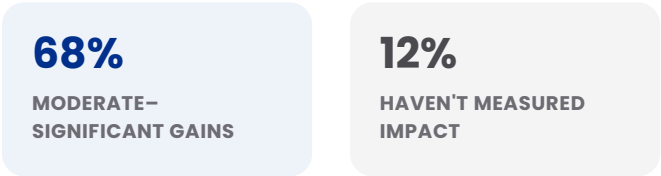
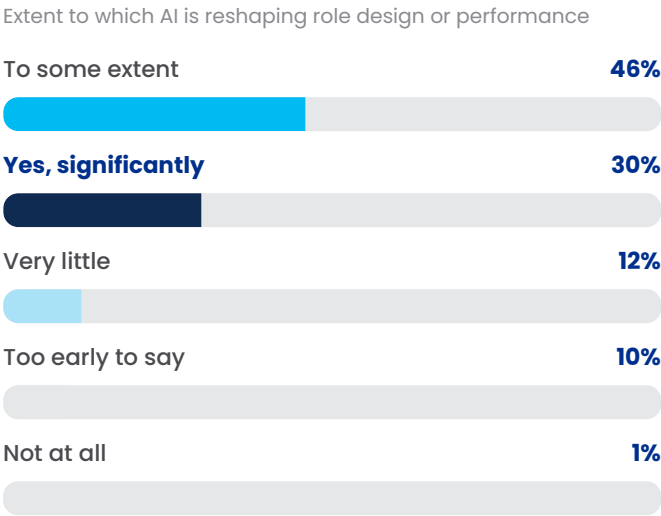
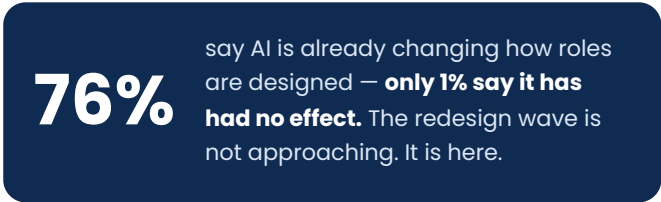


EXHIBIT 7 — ARE AI AGENTS REDESIGNING ROLES?



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)



"Organisations scaling AI without measurement infrastructure are making consequential people decisions in the dark. The 12% who have not measured productivity impact represent a risk, not a planning gap."

Measure Now

12% haven't measured AI's productivity impact. Build measurement frameworks before scale — not after. Ungoverned AI is ungovernable AI.

Redesign Proactively

76% of roles are changing already. Job architecture must adapt faster than the technology deployment cycle or capability gaps will compound.

Bridge the Gap

Comfort is wide (79%) but depth is thin (26%). L&D must close the gap from surface familiarity to confident, high-quality human-AI collaboration.

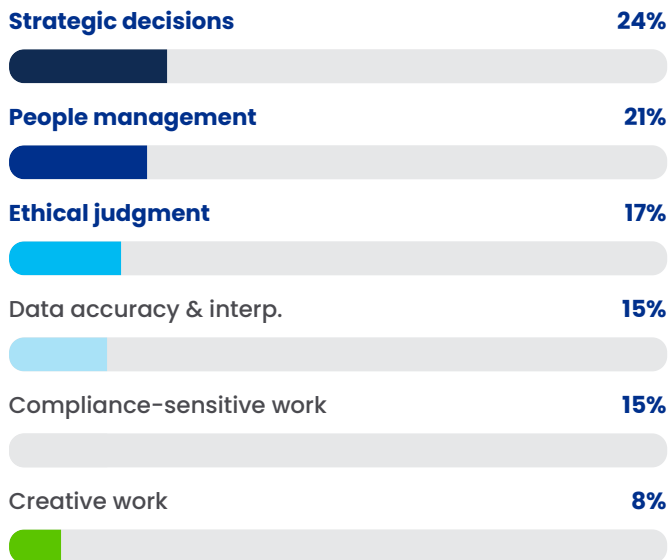
3 HUMAN JUDGMENT VS. ALGORITHMIC DECISIONS

The Irreducible Human Core: Where AI Still Falls Short

Respondents were unambiguous. The three domains most frequently cited as AI's weakest areas — strategic decisions, people management, and ethical judgment — together account for 62% of responses. These are not peripheral to HR. They are its core mandate.

EXHIBIT 8 — WHERE AI REMAINS LEAST RELIABLE

% of 151 respondents — single select



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

62%

cite HR's core domains as AI's weakest areas — strategic decisions, people management, ethical judgment

STRUCTURAL IMPLICATION

The question is not whether to protect these domains — it is how to make that protection **structural, not aspirational**. Human judgment boundaries must be institutionalised, not assumed.

THE THREE IRREDUCIBLE DOMAINS**Strategic Decisions — 24%**

AI can surface scenarios and data — but cannot weigh ambiguous tradeoffs with organisational context, stakeholder relationships, and long-term consequence.

People Management — 21%

Coaching, conflict resolution, and performance conversations require empathy, trust, and contextual judgment that no model can replicate.

Ethical Judgment — 17%

Fairness, inclusion, and values-based decision-making require active human stewardship. Algorithmic outputs can encode bias invisibly without human audit.

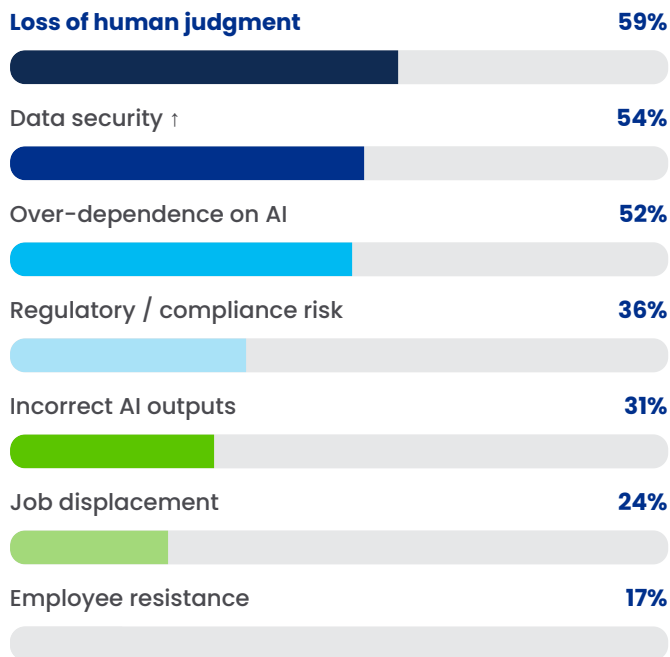
"These are not AI's blind spots — they are HR's irreducible mandate. The function that abdicates these domains to algorithms will have abdicated its identity."

A Sharpening Risk Profile: Human Before Technical

Respondents selected their top 3 risk factors from a defined list. The resulting hierarchy is unambiguous: the most widely cited risks are not technical failures or data breaches — they are organisational and human risks that belong squarely in the HR domain.

EXHIBIT 9 — TOP RISK FACTORS WITH LARGE-SCALE AI

% citing risk in top 3 — multi-select (n=151)



† Data security overtook over-dependence vs. prior survey wave

#1 Loss of human judgment
59% of leaders — rising in prominence

#2 Data security
54% — surged past #3 in this wave

#3 Over-dependence on AI
52% — a cultural, not technical, risk

WHAT MOVED

Data security surged to #2 — overtaking over-dependence from the prior wave. As AI agents embed deeper, data exposure is becoming concrete and operational, not abstract.

KEY OBSERVATION

The top 3 risks are concerns about the **human-machine relationship**. They are not IT department risks. They are CHRO risks.

"The most cited risks are not data breaches or system failures — they are the erosion of **human judgment and the atrophy of decision-making capability. HR must own these risks, not IT."**

RISK MITIGATION ACTIONS

For Loss of Judgment

Define human-review requirements for AI-assisted decisions in hiring, performance management, and strategic planning — embedded in governance, not optional.

For Data Security

Establish data classification frameworks for AI agent access; include HR data in enterprise AI governance policies before deployment, not after incidents.

For Over-Dependence

Design workflows that require active human engagement, not passive override — keeping critical thinking alive as AI handles routine tasks.

4 CAPABILITIES FOR THE AI-READY WORKFORCE

AI Fluency and Critical Thinking: Equally Urgent. Not Competing.

TIED AT

54%

AI Workflow Design & Critical Thinking

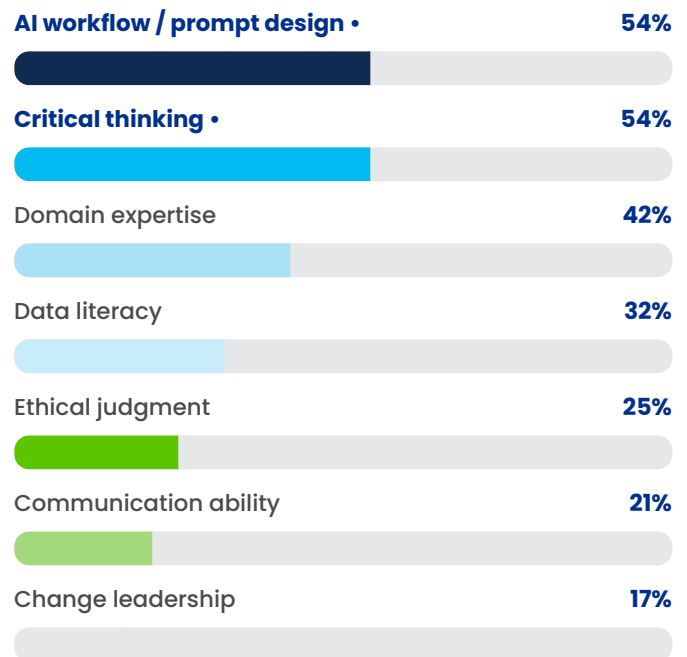
Organisations see them as equally urgent — not competing priorities

L&D DESIGN SIGNAL

A programme that builds only AI workflow skills produces an employee who can prompt but not think critically about the output. **Both must be developed simultaneously** — integrated, not sequential.

EXHIBIT 10 — CAPABILITY PRIORITY INDEX — NEXT 2–3 YEARS

% of 151 respondents (multi-select)



• Tied at 54% — within one percentage point • Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

IMPLICATIONS FOR L&D ARCHITECTURE

What Most L&D Programmes Do Today

AI awareness modules → Prompt writing workshops → Digital tools training → Separate critical thinking programmes. Sequential. Siloed. Too slow.

What the Data Says Is Needed

Integrated, role-specific learning journeys that develop AI fluency and critical thinking simultaneously — applied to real decisions. Integrated. Fast. Measurable.

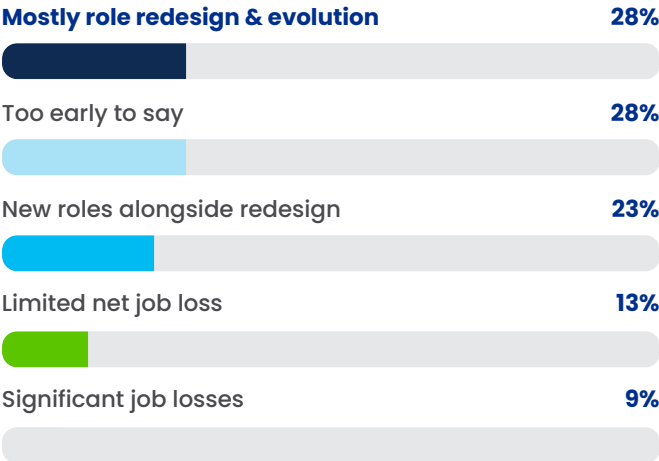
- Course catalogs cannot address a multi-capability, role-specific, fast-evolving need. Adaptive ecosystems are required.
- Domain expertise (42%) signals that professional mastery still matters — L&D must protect it, not replace it.
- Ethical judgment (25%) must be a developed, embedded capability — not a policy document employees read once.
- Leaders need specific preparation for when to trust AI, when to override it, and how to detect errors — not just general AI literacy.

5 JOBS, ROLES & AI CO-WORKERS

Redesign, Not Replacement — But the Clock Is Running

EXHIBIT 11 — PROJECTED IMPACT ON JOBS

Expected primary outcome of increased AI adoption in sector



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

51%

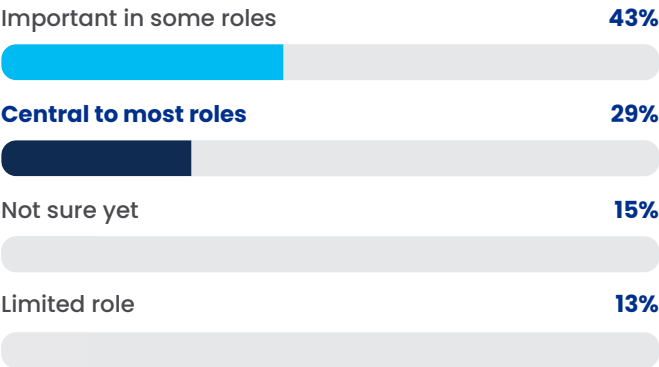
EXPECT REDESIGN OR
NEW ROLE CREATION

9%

FORESEE SIGNIFICANT
JOB LOSSES

EXHIBIT 12 — IMPORTANCE OF AI CO-WORKERS IN DAILY WORK

Expected within 2–3 years



Source: Great Lakes Gurgaon Survey (n=151)

72%

believe AI co-workers will be **important or central** to daily work within 2–3 years — making collaboration with AI an immediate operational need, not a future planning item.

THE COLLABORATION IMPERATIVE

Programmes on "understanding AI" are already lagging. The need is for **working effectively alongside intelligent agents** at speed, with sound judgment.

THE HUMAN-AI COLLABORATION TIMELINE

Now — 2026

Active Deployment

66% running AI agents. Governance lags. Productivity gains emerging. Roles beginning to shift.

2027–2028

AI Co-workers Mainstream

72% expect AI co-workers to be important or central. Frameworks built now deliver structural advantage.

The Critical Window

Build Now or Catch Up Later

Organisations building human-AI collaboration capability today have a 2–3 year advantage. The window is open now.

FIVE QUESTIONS HR LEADERSHIP MUST ANSWER

From Survey Data to Actionable Discussion

The survey does not present a crisis. It presents an imperative. The following five threads run through every section of this data — the questions this research raises for HR leadership.

1 Deployment vs. Governance Readiness

The tension is not adoption vs. hesitation — 66% are deploying. Only 43% have a framework. The gap is the agenda. How do organisations close the governance lag before it becomes a liability in people-sensitive functions?

2 HR Is Both Practitioner and Policymaker

HR ranks #2 in AI adoption (41%) while owning governance, ethics, and workforce design. This dual role demands a new CHRO mandate — simultaneously architect and guardian of the intelligent enterprise.

3 The Human Core Is Non-Negotiable

62% say AI falls shortest in strategic decisions, people management, and ethical judgment — HR's very core. Where is the non-negotiable human boundary, and how do we make it structural rather than aspirational?

4 Comfort Is Not Capability

79% are comfortable with AI; only 26% are very comfortable. AI fluency and critical thinking tied at 54% as the most urgent capabilities. L&D must build both simultaneously, at scale, with measurable outcomes — not awareness programmes.

5 Redesign, Not Replacement — But Act Now

51% expect role redesign; 9% foresee job loss. The optimism is warranted — but it demands concrete reskilling infrastructure, not intent. Organisations that wait for certainty will be left behind.

CLOSING THOUGHT

"The organisations that will thrive are not those that automate the most — but those that most purposefully preserve what makes human judgment irreplaceable."

Methodology Note

Survey conducted with 151 self-selected HR and L&D professionals across India, April–May 2026. Responses reflect individual professional opinion. Multi-select questions allow percentages to exceed 100%.

About This Research

Published by Great Lakes Institute of Management, Gurgaon, as part of its ongoing research into the intersection of AI adoption, governance, and people strategy in Indian enterprises.