

HR's Practical Guide to AI Adoption

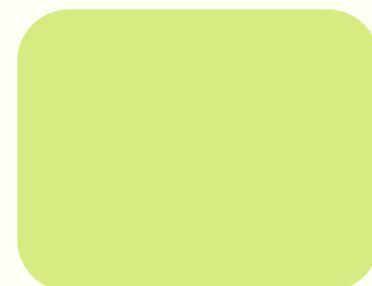
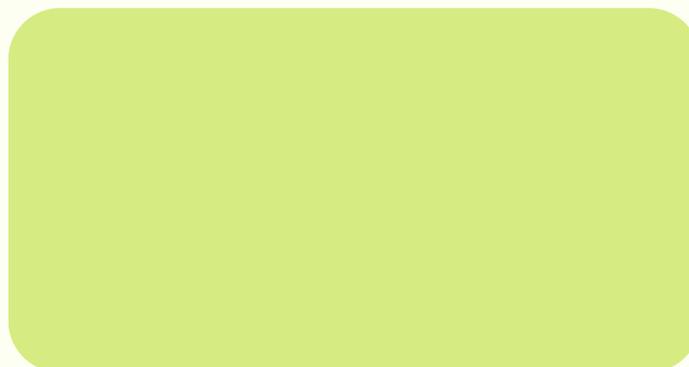


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A Step-by-Step Framework for Introducing AI Without Sacrificing the Human Experience



AI is rapidly changing the HR landscape. For your team, it can mean saving significant time on administrative work while creating space for strategic leadership. It frees you to operate with greater visibility, respond consistently, and support employees with greater focus and intention.

But adoption requires structure and clear intent. Introducing AI into HR workflows affects key areas like compliance, employee trust, and how support is delivered. With clear guardrails, defined ownership, and thoughtful implementation, your team can ensure that AI strengthens your operations rather than creating uncertainty.

This seven-step guide provides a practical path for adopting AI thoughtfully and responsibly. By following this progression, teams can strengthen execution, protect compliance, and build confidence as adoption grows.

Step 1:

Ground AI Adoption in Clear Workflows

Before introducing AI, your team should have a clear picture of how work actually gets done. Without workflow clarity, automation simply layers on top of confusion. The goal at this stage is visibility, not optimization yet, just understanding. Focus on:

- . Where manual effort is highest
- . Where errors or compliance risk occur
- . Where employee experience breaks down
- . Where handoffs create delays

For example: a team preparing quarterly engagement reports may pull data from surveys, HRIS exports, payroll systems, and spreadsheets across multiple departments. Hours may be spent cleaning data and formatting summaries before any analysis even begins. Mapping that workflow often reveals that aggregation, not interpretation, consumes most of the time.

When you can see where effort is concentrated, you can identify where support would create meaningful relief. That clarity sets up the next step: defining what AI should and shouldn't own.

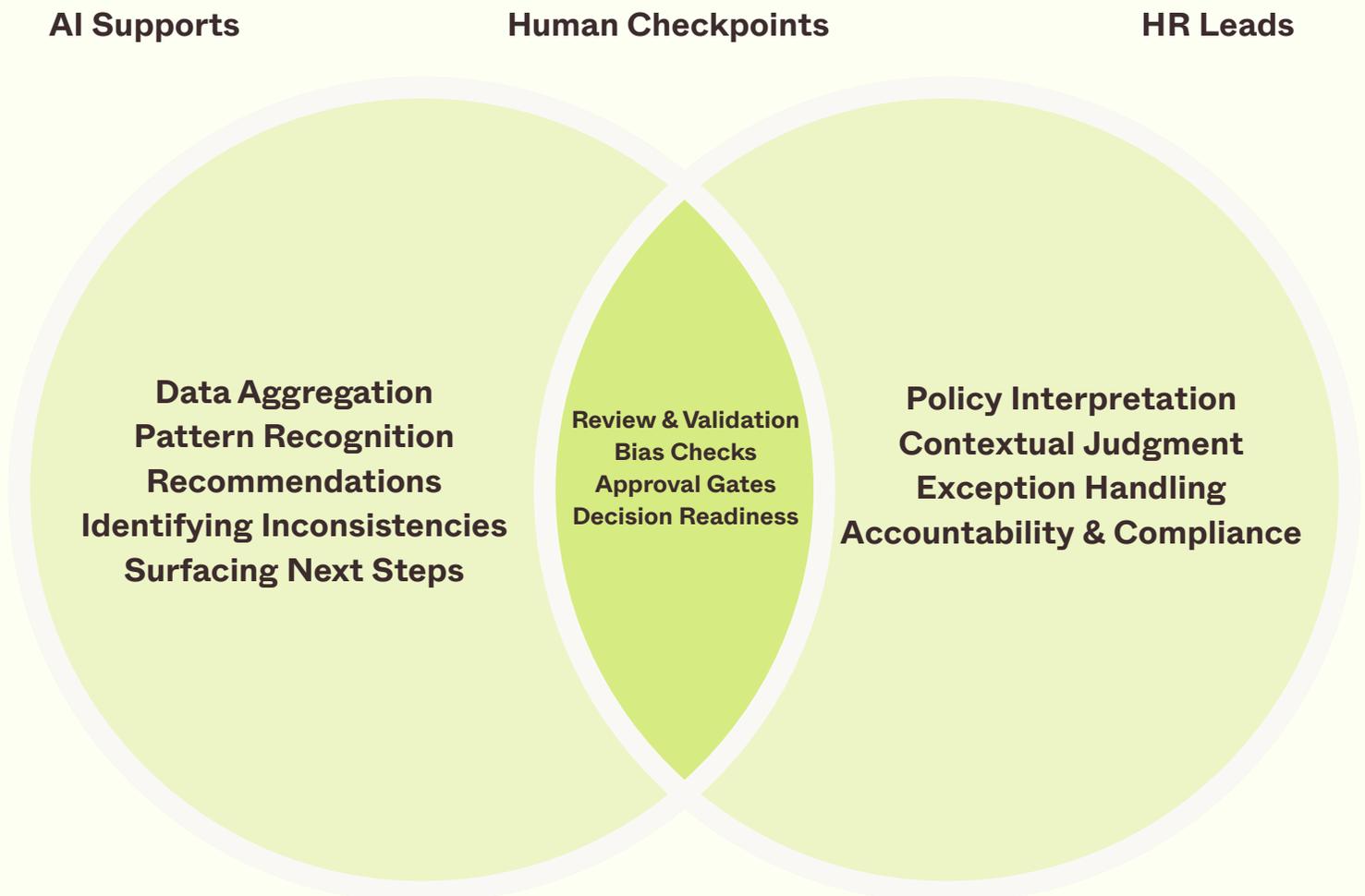
Step 2:

Define What Tasks AI and HR Should Own

With workflows mapped, the next step is defining boundaries. AI can accelerate tasks, but HR leadership, judgment, and employee care shouldn't be outsourced. This is where you establish principles before adopting a new tool. Clarify:

- . Which decisions require human judgment
- . Where empathy and nuance matter most
- . What risks cannot be automated
- . How employees should experience AI interaction

For example: AI may consolidate survey results, identify recurring themes, and highlight statistical outliers. However, determining tasks like which trends warrant action and how to prioritize recommendations should always remain with HR, not handed off to AI.



“Start small with low-stakes automations. Build trust in the tool by focusing on use cases where the consequences are minimal—then expand as confidence grows.”



Lisa Zimmerman
Chief Technology Officer

Step 3:

Start With a Focused Use Case

AI adoption should begin slowly. Starting small allows HR teams to validate impact without overwhelming systems or people. Strong starting points often include repetitive tasks such as:

- . Document generation or policy summaries
- . Status tracking or internal reporting
- . Recommendations
- . Identifying inconsistencies
- . Pattern recognition

For example: if compiling reports consistently takes two full days each month, that’s a contained and measurable opportunity. Introducing AI to consolidate data and create an initial summary can reduce preparation time without affecting final decision authority. This creates visible impact while limiting risk.

Step 4:

Thoroughly Vet AI Tools and Vendors

Once you know what problem you’re solving, you can begin to evaluate solutions with precision. This step focuses on governance, ensuring any AI system and vendor operates within your compliance and ethical standards. You should evaluate AI tools and vendors based on factors like:

- . Data privacy and security practices
- . Transparency into how outputs are generated
- . Auditability and documentation
- . Ability to maintain HR oversight and final control

For example: if an AI system aggregates survey data and flags engagement risks, HR should be able to trace how those conclusions were formed. Vendors should also be able to explain this information clearly. If not, it’s best to carefully consider if their tool is best for you and your team. A tool that produces recommendations without explainability limits confidence.

Step 5:

Launch AI in a Contained Pilot

With a vetted tool and defined use case, your team should begin adopting AI with a contained rollout. Start by intentionally limiting scope, whether that's by department or workflow stage. This way it only affects the impacted task as opposed to greater responsibilities or functions within the organization. During testing, HR teams should:

- . Document baseline metrics
- . Monitor output quality
- . Track employee feedback
- . Identify edge cases or exceptions

For example: a team might use AI to prepare a monthly workforce report while continuing manual processes for others. Comparing turnaround time and accuracy provides valuable performance data that can be used in the following step.

Step 6:

Measure the Tool's Impact and Refine

Measurement determines whether expansion is justified. Without defined metrics, adoption becomes anecdotal rather than strategic. To properly measure impact, your team should track:

- . Time saved per workflow
- . Reduction in errors or compliance risk
- . Improvement in response time
- . HR capacity reallocated to higher-value work

For example: if reporting preparation time decreases by 50 percent and leaders receive clearer summaries, the value becomes measurable. If inconsistencies emerge, your team can refine processes before expanding. Measurement transforms experimentation into informed strategy. Once results are validated, scaling becomes responsible rather than reactive.

“When you can see how decisions are being made, where exceptions occur, and where intervention is needed, that visibility often gives HR more control than manual processes ever did.”



Brian Nolan
Head of IT & Security

Step 7:

Scale AI Thoughtfully Into High-Impact Functions

After proving value in contained workflows, expansion should be intentional, especially in areas that directly affect employee experience and compliance. Scaling AI successfully means:

- . Maintaining human oversight
- . Preserving employee trust
- . Continuing to measure impact
- . Expanding only where workflows are mature

For example: once engagement reporting is stable, AI could extend to compensation analysis or workforce planning dashboards. Because the team has already established workflow clarity, boundaries, and measurement practices, expansion occurs with discipline. Adoption becomes a structured evolution rather than a broad leap.

At this stage, AI supports HR infrastructure in a way that increases capacity while preserving leadership control.

What HR Leaders Should Walk Away Knowing

AI adoption in HR doesn't require technical expertise, but it does require clarity, structure, and intentional pacing. When introduced responsibly, AI strengthens your team's efficiency while protecting the human experience that defines HR leadership.

Across this framework, three principles remain constant:

- . AI accelerates, not replaces
- . Real progress happens in small, deliberate steps
- . Oversight and empathy remain central

For teams ready to move from exploration to execution, partnering with a platform built for responsible AI in HR can accelerate that progress while maintaining control. After supporting more than 50,000 leaves of absence, Tilt combines AI technology with structured workflows so HR can reduce administrative burden, stay compliant, and support employees with clarity and confidence. If you're evaluating how to introduce AI in a way that strengthens trust and delivers measurable results, Tilt is built to help you take that next step.

