



HUMAN RESOURCE
CREDENTIALING & LEARNING

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Build Your AI Superpowers

A guide for HR professionals who want to elevate their work, boost productivity, generate insights, and show more impact.





HRCI is the premier credentialing and learning community for the human resource profession.

For over 50 years, HRCI has set the global standard for HR expertise and excellence through its commitment to developing and advancing those in the people business. HRCI helps HR professionals and businesses achieve new competencies that drive results by creating and offering world-class learning and by administering eight global individual certifications and three organizational certifications. Today, over 500,000 HR professionals in 150+ countries have achieved HRCI certification as a mark of high professional distinction.

The Case for Getting Smart on AI



It's impossible to know all the ways artificial intelligence will impact our lives in coming years, but here's something HR professionals can count on: we will all be using AI at work soon.

In fact, many of us are using it right now. An HRCI poll of more than 1,500 HR professionals in September showed that over three quarters use AI at least weekly, primarily "generative" AI for creating content such as letters and reports. At the same time, almost 60% said they are getting very little or no training at all from their organization.

The lesson is clear: HR professionals want to learn more about AI, but many organizations are not yet addressing that need. The question is what HR professionals can do about it now—and it turns out there's a lot. While companies are preparing to roll out AI training programs, professionals can get ahead of the curve by taking proactive steps to build skills faster.

"One of the best ways to learn about AI is simply to use AI, and to do it in more challenging ways over time. The more you do, the more you learn—that's always how we get comfortable with technology."

Chris Scandlen, Chief Information Officer, HRCI

To support HR professionals who want to take AI learning into their own hands, HRCI created this guide based on interviews with AI experts, recent tutorials and studies, several large HRCI surveys, and our experience developing [HRCI CHAT](#). It offers tips for advancing beyond basic tasks and embracing a sophisticated approach to AI that helps you develop stronger skills and increase fluency.

Pro Tip:

Take responsibility for your own AI education. We are headed toward a world in which AI skills will be an expectation. Those who obtain these skills now will be better positioned to seize career opportunities.

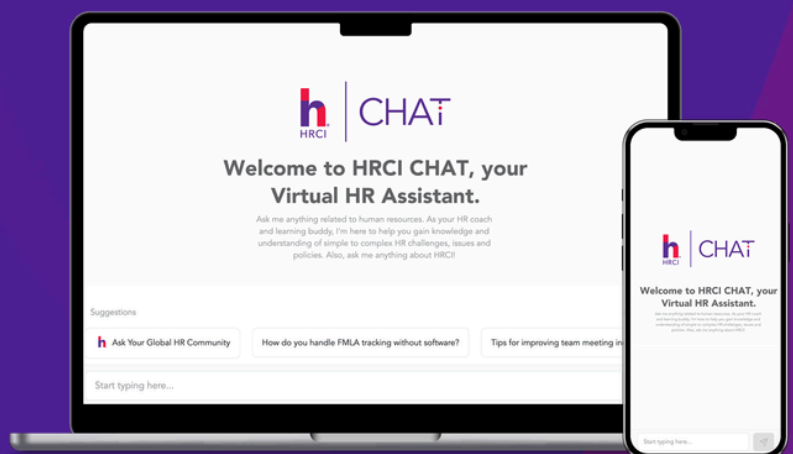
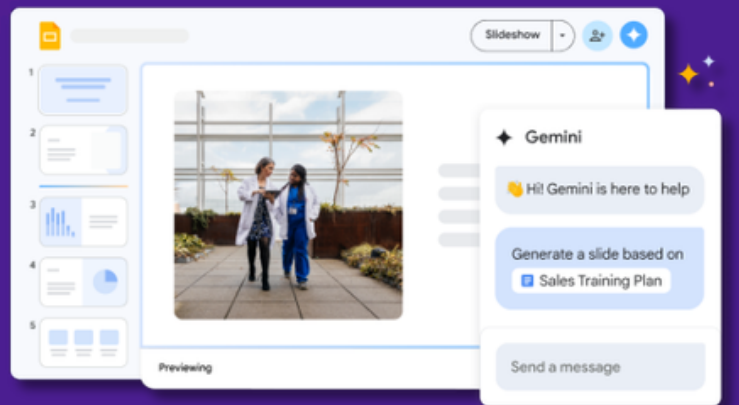
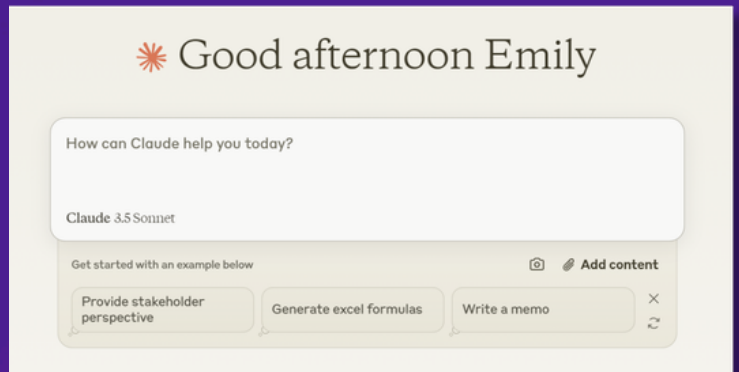
Using AI at Work Is Not 'Cheating'

Would you turn in a report without running spell check? Of course not. At many companies, it would be considered poor practice. Yet the idea persists in some circles that using AI for writing or other tasks is somehow "cheating."

While that may be true in an academic setting—for example, a college student could face consequences for having AI write an essay—it is generally not the case in the workplace, so long as the work produced is accurate and ethical.

"It is time to dispel the myth that using AI for common work tasks is somehow dishonest—it is a productivity tool. So long as the end result is solid, the information is accurate, and everything is properly attributed, there is no shame in embracing the technology."

Dr. Amy Dufrane, CEO, HRCI





A Practical Approach to Learning

Indeed, studies show there is a strong case for using AI every day. A [report by Slack](#), which was based on a survey of more than 5,000 desk workers around the world, found that those using AI daily report 64% higher productivity, 58% better focus, and 81% greater job satisfaction than those who do not use AI. Interestingly, they are also more likely to report favorably on managing work-related stress and maintaining work-life balance.

“The promise of AI is becoming reality,” Denise Dresser, CEO of Slack, said in a statement when the report was released. “Those who use AI every day are gaining a measurable edge—they’re more productive, less stressed, and more fulfilled. This isn’t just efficiency; it’s a transformation in how work gets done and how people feel about their jobs.”

How can you use AI in your daily workflow? Start by reframing the way you think about artificial intelligence. Treat it like a collaborative partner, similar to that coworker you might ask a casual question about your work. Anytime you might ask, “Does this sound okay?”, “What’s another way to say...”, “Do you have any numbers for...”, or “have we ever put anything out on...”, direct those questions to AI.

You can also use it to handle manual, repetitive tasks. Make a list of tasks that are required and important, but that take up time. Examples might be internal email communiques, intranet posts, writing letters, or answering employee questions over email. Then, start using AI to manage those tasks. As an example, we used AI to write a title for this report (see sidebar).

Pro Tip:

Weave AI into your workflow until you are using it daily, then increase the sophistication and complexity of the tasks. Your learning will increase over time.

When you have AI woven into your daily workflow—it won’t take long—start looking for ways to increase the sophistication of the tasks you ask it to perform. If you currently summarize reports and write basic documents, try data analysis or create graphics for a presentation. Attempt projects you could not do without AI.

One way to find such tasks is to make a list of “nice to have” items that would be time consuming to produce. For example, maybe you need a set of templates for your regular reports or a set of numbers that are not readily available. Or perhaps it’s running cross tabs on your latest employee survey. Start by saying to yourself, “It would be nice if I had time to...,” and then fill in the blanks. When you have two or three projects, pick the one that seems the most realistic.

Before diving into complex projects, it’s important to understand the limitations inherent in artificial intelligence. Current generative AI tools, while improving all the time, are far from perfect. AI graphics tools can be particularly quirky, requiring multiple prompts. AI writing and research tools can provide inaccurate conclusions or even fabricated facts known as “hallucinations.” More importantly, they sometimes provide information in a confident manner. You might not be able to tell it’s incorrect information. Fact check anything written by AI. When flawed information is used in a professional setting, results can be disastrous. Several law firms have recently [faced the ire of judges](#) after using AI to generate court briefs and finding they contained fictional citations.

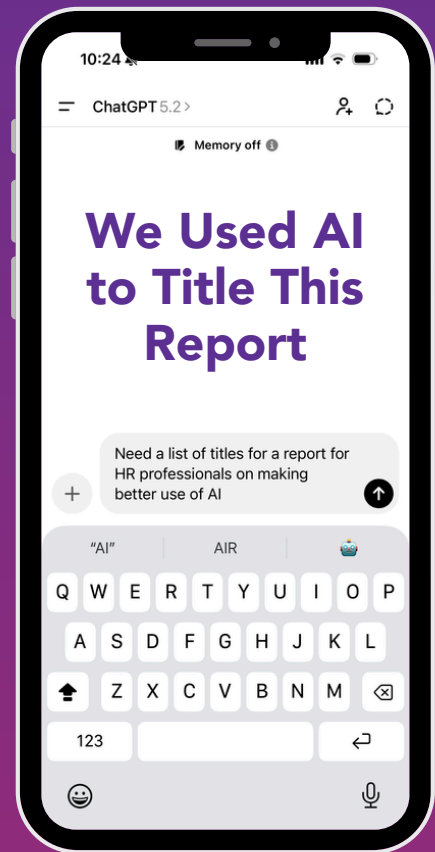
When using AI, always be thoughtful and careful. Separate your AI learning exercises from your work. For example, when using AI to analyze data, use sports scores, your local city council’s budget, or other publicly available information. Always check privacy settings on your AI account, and never enter sensitive or proprietary material without permission. It is equally important to verify the validity of information supplied by AI whenever possible.

“AI is exciting and full of promise, but it is still an emerging technology that is only a few years old. Go out of your way to be careful and responsible.”

Chris Scandlen, Chief Information Officer, HRCI

Pro Tip:

Know your organization’s AI policy and follow it. If certain uses or tools are prohibited, stick to the rules. You can still educate yourself through reading, videos, and classes, as long as any practice remains separate from your job.



To demonstrate how AI can act as a thought partner, we used it to help develop the title of this guide.

We began with a simple prompt in ChatGPT: “Need a list of titles for a report for HR professionals on making better use of AI.” It returned 21 options. We refined them with a second prompt: “Revise list to target what individual HR professionals can do to get more sophisticated with AI.”

One suggestion included “Build Your AI Superpowers.” We liked the phrasing and its focus on the individual, so we kept it (after confirming the phrase wasn’t being used elsewhere).

For the subhead, we reviewed other suggestions and combined the strongest elements to create: “A guide for HR professionals who want to elevate their work, boost productivity, generate insights, and show more impact.”

A Playbook for Better AI Use

Many people new to AI simply open a tool and begin experimenting, a fine strategy to learn the basics. Those who use AI regularly at work often adopt a more sophisticated approach. Here are a few of their go-to strategies:

- Choose the Right Tools.** General-purpose platforms like ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini can handle a wide range of tasks, but other AI tools excel in more specialized areas. Perplexity is strong for research; HRCI CHAT is designed specifically for HR; Claude is known for natural, human-like writing; and Google's Gemini 2.5 Flash Image ("Nano Banana") specializes in photos and graphics. Matching the task to the tool leads to better, faster results.
- Combine Capabilities.** You don't have to do everything with the same tool. For example, to have AI create a report, you might perform research on HRCI CHAT and Perplexity; paste that research into Claude to write a summary or outline; then paste that into Gemini to create an illustration. By combining tools, you get the best from each.
- Write Better Prompts.** Stronger prompts lead to stronger output. Experts recommend being specific about what you want, how you want it delivered, and who the writing is for. Microsoft, maker of Copilot AI, suggests five elements of an effective prompt: persona (the role the AI should take), objective, audience, context, and boundaries. Tone and detailed instructions can improve results further. You can also supply materials such as documents, images, or links to guide the AI's reasoning.
- Describe the Audience.** Improve the quality of AI writing by specifying the audience. In short, tell AI who it is writing for. This might be a general description, such as "executives with 10 years or more experience," or it can be specific, such as writing for an individual person. In the latter case, give AI a bio or a LinkedIn page. In effect, you are generating "personas" that tell the AI who it is serving when it writes.



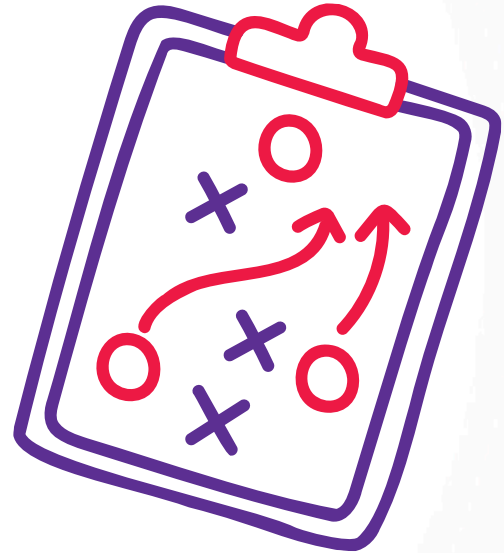
For even more guidance, HRCI's Prompt Guide —located in the [HR + AI Resource Library](#), in [HRCI ENGAGE](#) (free membership required)—offers practical examples and templates to help you refine your prompting skills.

Pro Tip:

Because you never want AI to utilize another organization's language without attribution, tell AI "do not plagiarize" at the end of prompts when appropriate. This helps ensure original content.

A Playbook for Better AI Use

- **Embrace Iteration.** You do not have to accept the first output an AI gives you. Use additional prompts to improve it, such as “write this more formally” or “use punchier language.” You may be surprised at how far the AI can go to deliver what you want. There are also some things it won’t do, based on the AI company’s policies. For example, one AI declined to grab a corporate logo from a website for use in an image or to depict anything that could be considered violent, such as an image of a dollar sign on fire.
- **Validate All You Can.** AI can provide faulty information, especially if it is pulling from a variety of internet sources. Always verify what you can by asking the tool to cite its sources. Review those sources to make sure they’re credible—not just an amateur blog or a social media post. If the AI references reports, review them directly to confirm titles and facts. If experts are quoted, check their credentials, bios, or LinkedIn profiles. In short, validate information whenever possible.



Pro Tip:

Ask the AI to critique its own work. Questions like “How confident are you in this analysis?” or “How can you make this more comprehensive?” often yield helpful insights.

Pro Tip:

AI tools will change as new offerings arise. To stay current, regularly visit sites like [Lmarena](#), a UC Berkeley project that compares AI tools using a voting system

- **Ask Ethical Questions.** AI can generate fictional images, things that never “happened.” This should typically be avoided. For example, we created a very convincing image of basketball icon Shaquille O’Neal in front of the bull statue on New York’s Wall Street, even though the moment depicted never took place. Using an image like that is deceptive, even if the intent is innocent. Before you create something, ask yourself if it is appropriate.
- **Edit Your Work.** AI tools are capable writers, but you can improve their output. Many platforms use corporate-speak, buzzwords, jargon, and repetitive sentence structure or unnatural punctuation. A quick edit can make things shorter and clearer. You can also match the style and tone used by your organization.

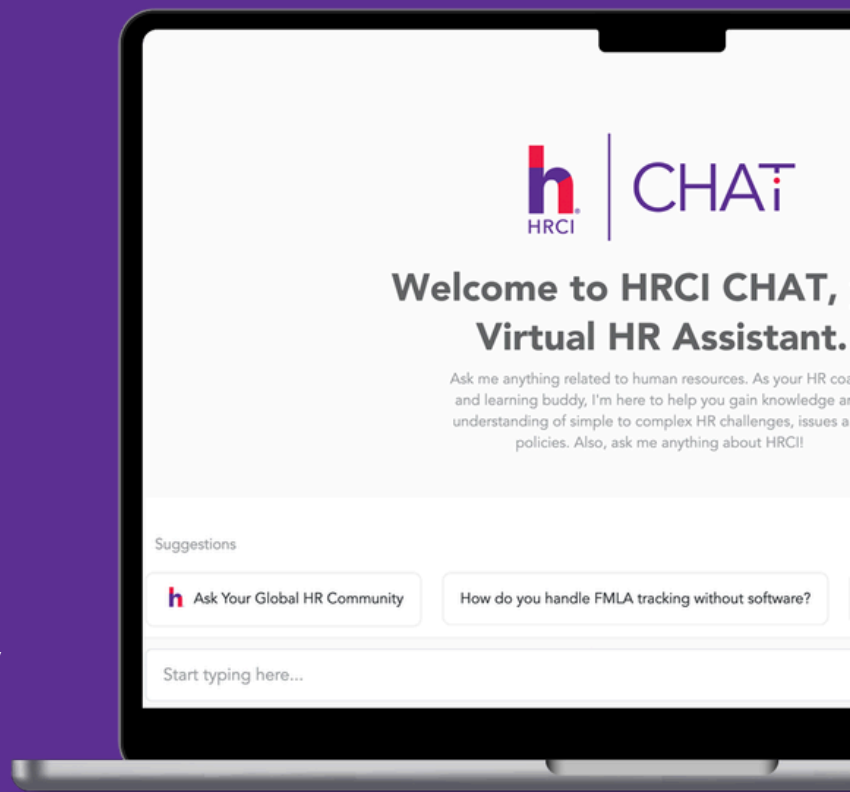
Get to Know HRCI CHAT

HRCI CHAT is an AI-powered assistant designed specifically for HR professionals. Available 24/7, it provides instant, reliable support on a wide range of HR topics—from compliance and policy to leadership and strategy. By streamlining everyday tasks, HRCI CHAT helps HR teams save time, boost efficiency, and focus on strategic priorities that drive organizational success.

“At HRCI, we always want to be on the forefront of educating HR professionals, and the best way for us to do that was to directly enter the AI space with a free tool designed just for them,” said **Chris Scandlen**, Chief Information Officer at HRCI.

HRCI CHAT allows HR professionals to perform many different tasks and learn along the way:

- Analyze workforce data such as turnover, engagement, and compensation trends to inform organizational planning.
- Generate leadership-ready reports to support data-driven decision-making.
- Draft tailored job descriptions, offer letters, and onboarding checklists to streamline hiring.
- Build employee training communications, performance feedback templates, and development plans.



The app is available at no charge to HRCI account holders. HR professionals can also learn more about AI using **HRCI ENGAGE**, a global HR community that allows members to ask questions and solve problems collaboratively.

“We’re changing how HR works by delivering instant support, smarter solutions, and the ability to focus on what matters most—people.”

Dr. Amy Dufrane, CEO, HRCI

Live Example: Putting It All Together

To show how a more advanced AI project can come together—without needing expert skills—we built a simple real-world example. The goal: demonstrate what’s possible when one person uses AI to complete work that would take a team many hours to do manually.

The Exercise

In HRCI’s latest survey, 3,366 HR professionals answered an optional open-ended question: What keeps you at your current job? Responses were unique but revealed clear themes—many mentioned coworkers and strong relationships. We wondered whether AI could quantify those themes and help us prepare a short, board-ready summary paragraph.

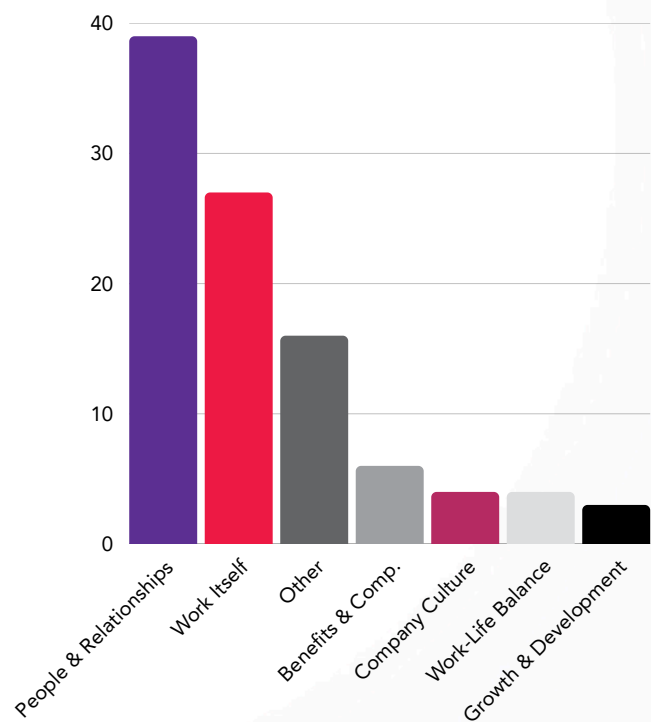
Step 1: ChatGPT Data Analysis

We exported responses into a spreadsheet and uploaded them to ChatGPT with this prompt: This is data on why people stay at their job. It contains responses from people who took a survey. Analyze the top ten reasons and put them in a table with counts and percentages. Make the categories distinct, such as work itself, people and relationships, and benefits and compensation. Use all records.

After eliminating counts and rounding percentages, a table was returned with data that seemed plausible given what we saw in the responses.

ChatGPT also explained what each category represented. “People and Relationships” reflected positive coworker dynamics, supportive managers, and collaborative environments.

Survey: Why HR Professionals Stay on the Job (According to AI)



Source: ChatGPT analysis of HRCI data

“Work Itself” captured comments about enjoying job duties, feeling challenged, and finding purpose—signals that role fit is critical to retention. The “Other” category included vague, mixed, or miscellaneous responses that didn’t fit a primary theme.

In a very illuminating exercise, we also asked ChatGPT to critique its own work by asking, “How confident are you in this analysis?” The AI said it was moderately confident and explained its keyword-based approach. It also suggested improvements like semantic classification or human-defined categories. For simplicity, we kept the initial results.

Live Example: Putting It All Together

Step 2: Contextual Research with HRCI CHAT

Next, we used HRCI CHAT to pull context on long-term retention trends (e.g., pandemic effects, workload increases, and the continued importance of development). While helpful for a longer report, the board already knew this context, so we saved it for potential later use.

Pro Tip:

Champion AI in your organization. If there's a committee or working group, volunteer. If someone is leading AI education, try to help. Position yourself as someone who is both curious and proactive about AI.

Step 3: Copywriting with Claude

We turned to Claude, an AI created by Anthropic and known for human-like writing, to create the short report. We pasted the table with a simple prompt: "The table contains results from a survey of why HR professionals stay at their jobs. It was conducted by HRCI in October. Write a 100-word summary for an audience of professionals in a business tone."

Here is the result:

Claude - Version 1

Why HR Professionals Stay: HRCI Survey Insights

An October HRCI survey reveals that HR professionals are primarily motivated to remain in their roles by people and relationships, cited by 39% of respondents. The work itself ranks second at 27%, indicating strong professional engagement. Notably, traditional retention factors like benefits and compensation (6%), company culture (4%), and work-life balance (4%) show surprisingly low influence. Growth and development opportunities garnered just 3% of responses. These findings suggest that for HR professionals, interpersonal connections and meaningful work significantly outweigh conventional retention strategies, offering valuable insights for organizations seeking to retain talent in this critical function.

That summary was serviceable, but we kept experimenting. We asked Claude to rewrite it for our Board and provided their bios; the result tied the findings to HRCI's educational mission—useful in some contexts, but not what we needed here. When we prompted, "Rewrite this using punchier language," the tone shifted dramatically.

Live Example: Putting It All Together

Step 3, continued

Claude - Version 2

Why HR Professionals Stay: October Survey Insights

HR professionals stay for people, not perks. Our October survey shows 39% cite relationships as their top reason for staying, while 27% point to the work itself. The surprise? Traditional retention levers barely register: compensation and benefits (6%), company culture (4%), work-life balance (4%), and growth opportunities (3%). The verdict is clear: HR professionals value genuine connections and meaningful work over conventional incentives. Organizations looking to retain HR talent should prioritize building strong teams and engaging work over standard benefits packages. In HR, it's the human element—not the employee handbook—that keeps people committed.

With a little human editing to the text in the gray box, we were able to produce what appears in the red box. For transparency, we added that AI was used in the analysis.

Human + Claude - Version 3

Why HR Professionals Stay: October Survey Insights

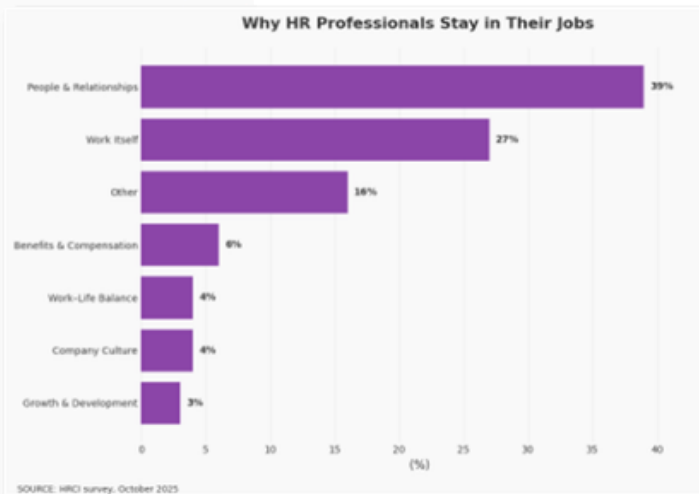
HR professionals stay for people, not perks. A ChatGPT analysis of our October survey shows 39% cite relationships as the top reason for staying in the job, while 27% point to the work itself. The surprise? Traditional retention levers are less impactful than might be expected: compensation and benefits (6%), company culture (4%), work-life balance (4%), and growth opportunities (3%). This validates what many of us already know: HR professionals value genuine connections and meaningful work.

Step 4: Using Gemini (Nano Banana) for Brand-Compliant Visuals

To complement the summary, we asked Gemini to turn the table into a bar chart styled like the HRCI website. After asking Gemini to add a headline, make it horizontal, remove some labels, and add a source, we had a useable graphic, produced a non-designer in just a few minutes.

Live Example: Putting It All Together

Step 4, continued



“Artificial intelligence is a new frontier that promises both massive advancements and significant change for those of us in HR. The professionals who educate themselves and get comfortable with AI now will be ready to take advantage of the opportunities just around the corner.”

Amy Dufrane, CEO, HRCI

The Takeaway

Overall, the exercise showed the power, flexibility, and capability of AI. In about two hours, one person created an analysis, a written report, and a graphic—work that typically takes days to produce. It also identified limitations and stumbling points inherent to AI.

Pro Tip:

Don't wait for your company to roll out AI training. Find an educational opportunity and make a case for your firm to pay. Many organizations are willing to fund professional development.



Pro Series: AI for HR

The **HRCI Pro: AI for HR** certificate course covers essential topics in artificial intelligence for an organization.

This certificate includes: Artificial Intelligence and the Employee Experience, Generative AI for HR Professionals, and Responsible Implementation and Compliance.

Learners who enroll in the HRCI Pro: AI for HR are eligible to claim a digital badge to demonstrate their competency.



Courses Include:

- Generative AI for HR Professionals
- Responsible Implementation and Compliance
- Artificial Intelligence and the Employee Experience



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To learn more about this and other topics, visit the [HRCI Learning Center at **learn.hrci.org**](https://www.hrci.org).