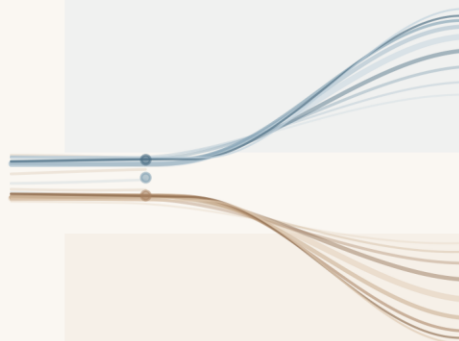


DRAUP — TALENT INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH

The New HR Skill Genome

A deep study across 18 HR roles — the new and emerging skills reshaping the function, and the bifurcation CHROs must plan for now



THE EVIDENCE BASE

This paper consolidates three linked studies run on Draup's live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy for the twelve months to 27 July 2026.

Study 1 — The cross-section. Emerging, new and declining skills across 18 HR roles, from HR Specialist to CHRO. This is the backbone of the paper.

Study 2 — Bifurcation inside a role. Workforce Analyst and Workforce Manager — the role where the split is furthest advanced.

Study 3 — The skill set at full resolution. Complete decomposition of the HR Business Partner role against 119,429 active job descriptions.

All figures are counts of distinct live job descriptions in which a skill is explicitly specified — not survey responses, and not competency-framework entries. “New” denotes a skill appearing in a role profile for the first time; “Emerging” denotes a skill that has crossed from rare to expected.

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Executive Summary

The central finding: HR is undergoing a skills bifurcation unlike any in its history.

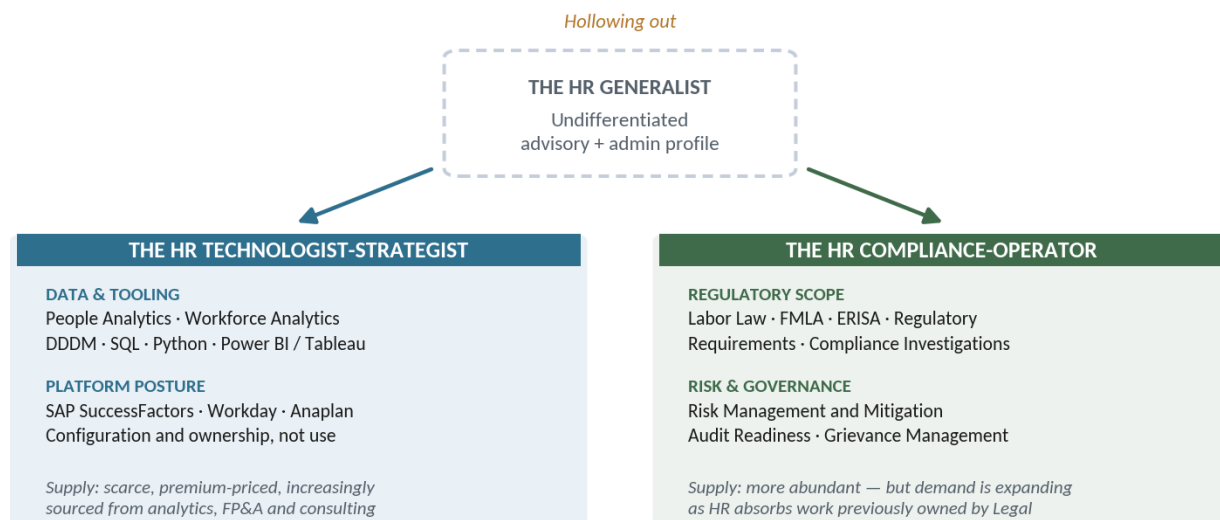
On one side, every role from HR Specialist to CHRO is absorbing a data-analytics layer that did not exist five years ago. On the other, traditional administrative and process-review skills are being systematically retired. The profession is not evolving — it is splitting into two distinct archetypes: the HR Technologist-Strategist and the HR Compliance-Operator. Organizations that fail to recognize this split will hire for the wrong archetype and find their HR function structurally misaligned within three years.

Eighteen roles were studied one by one. Seven findings define what is changing.

EXHIBIT 1

HR is not evolving — it is splitting into two archetypes

Compliance is expanding, not contracting: this is a bifurcation, not a substitution



Both archetypes are growing. What is disappearing is the profile between them.

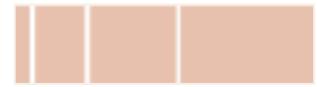
Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

1. The analytics mandate has reached every level of HR.

People Analytics, Workforce Analytics and Data-Driven Decision Making are emerging simultaneously across twelve of the eighteen roles. This is not a specialist trend. The HR Analytics Manager role has already completed the transition — Power BI, Tableau, SQL, Python, Predictive Modeling and Data Governance are core there, not emerging — and every other role is moving toward that profile. Within twenty-four months data literacy will be a baseline expectation for every HR hire, not a differentiator.

2. AI tooling is entering HR workflows directly, and by name.

Four roles now carry AI-native tools flagged as brand-new skills: GitHub Copilot and Data Annotation in Compensation & Benefits Manager; Microsoft Copilot in Workforce Analyst; Artificial Intelligence Development in L&D Manager; Data Annotation again in HR Specialist. No “AI for HR” role is appearing anywhere in the corpus. AI is entering through the existing role structure, one workflow at a time — pay modelling in Comp & Ben, scenario narratives in workforce analytics, learning design in L&D.



3. Compliance is expanding, not contracting.

This runs counter to the prevailing narrative. Compliance Program Management, Compliance Investigations, Regulatory Requirements Management and Compliance Framework are emerging across Employee Relations, HR Manager, HR Specialist and Comp & Ben. Regulatory complexity is increasing faster than automation can absorb it, and HR is being asked to own more of the investigation and reporting burden that previously sat with Legal.

4. HR is absorbing transformation ownership.

HR Transformation, Organization Transformation, Business Transformation and Workforce Transition Planning are emerging at CHRO, Head of HR and ER Manager level simultaneously. Accreditation Standards (new, CHRO) and Change Control (new, HR Program Manager) reinforce the reading: HR is being asked to run transformation with the governance rigor of a PMO.

5. Traditional administrative skills are being retired.

Line Management, Career Management, Advertising, standalone Microsoft Excel, Process Review, Payroll Management System, Record Keeping, legacy HRMS, standalone Diversity & Inclusion, Local Law Compliance, Performance Appraisal Management, Budget Management, Project Planning and Report Drafting are all declining. They are not leaving HR — they are being absorbed into platforms or elevated into strategic frameworks.

6. The bifurcation is visible inside individual roles, not only across them.

Workforce planning is the clearest case: the title now covers a WFM Operations Specialist (Verint, Kronos, Erlang, real-time monitoring) and a Workforce Intelligence Analyst (SQL, Python, Snowflake, predictive modelling) that share a job title and almost no skills. The HRBP has fractured into three archetypes — Strategic Operator, Data Practitioner, Compliance Investigator — and most job descriptions still hire for the first and treat the other two as nice-to-have.

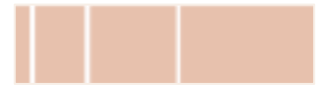
7. The transformation is additive, not substitutive.

The declining lists are short and the emerging lists are long. Workforce planning is retiring exactly one skill — call routing — while absorbing SQL, Python, machine learning, Anaplan and infrastructure monitoring; its core (Workforce Management, Workforce Planning, Capacity Planning, Real-Time Monitoring) remains fully intact. Comp & Ben is building a quantitative modelling layer on top of an unchanged ERISA and benefits-administration foundation. Practitioners are not trading old skills for new ones. They are carrying both, which makes the transition harder, not easier.

THE ONE THING

Conduct a skills gap audit of your entire HR team against the emerging skills identified in this study — specifically People Analytics, Power BI and SQL, SAP SuccessFactors, and Data-Driven Decision Making — and use the results to redesign your next HR hiring cycle and reskilling roadmap.

The data shows the market has already moved. The only question is whether your HR function moves with it.



I. How to Read This Study

The job description is the highest-frequency, lowest-status artifact in the HR function. It is also, at aggregate scale, the only place where the market's working definition of a role is written down as it changes. Internal competency frameworks are typically revised on an eighteen-to-thirty-six-month cycle, so they encode the consensus of the last strategy refresh rather than the demand of the current quarter. Survey research asks practitioners to summarize their own work, which reliably compresses detail. Job descriptions do neither: they are written by hiring managers who are about to spend money.

This study reads that corpus at three levels. Section II works through 18 HR roles one at a time, identifying the skills that are new, emerging and declining in each — this is the substance of the study and the basis for everything that follows. Sections III to VIII synthesize: the five macro shifts that recur across roles, two role-level deep dives that show what the bifurcation looks like up close, the cross-cutting AI signal, the three-layer skill architecture that is replacing the generalist model, and the two archetypes into which the profession is splitting. Sections IX to XI set out the implications and a sequenced set of actions.

Three vocabulary notes. A skill flagged as new has appeared in a role profile for the first time — the earliest-stage signal in the dataset, and the most strategically interesting. A skill flagged as emerging has crossed from rare to expected: it is appearing in enough profiles to signal a structural shift rather than a trend. A skill flagged as declining is losing frequency in the role, which usually means it is being absorbed into a platform or elevated into a broader framework, not that it has ceased to matter.

II. Role-by-Role Skill Intelligence: What Is Actually Changing

Eighteen roles, examined individually. The pattern only becomes visible when they are read together — but the detail is where the hiring and reskilling decisions live.

EXHIBIT 2

The analytics mandate has reached every level of HR

Emerging and new skills by domain across 18 roles — read down the first column

	Data & Analytics	AI Tooling	Platform & Systems	Compliance & Governance	Transformation & Org Design
HR Business Partner					
Talent Acquisition Manager					
TA Business Partner					
Comp & Ben Manager					
Comp & Ben Specialist					
L&D Manager					
L&D Trainer					
HR Analytics Manager	CORE				
Workforce Analyst					
Workforce Manager *					
HR Manager					
HR Specialist					
HR Program Manager					
D&I Manager					
Employee Relations Manager					
Employee Relations Director					
CHRO					
Head of HR					
HR Supervisor					

Not signalled New skill — first appearance
Emerging skill(s) Already core

* Workforce Manager is a deep-dive role, not part of the 18-role cross-section.

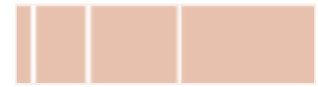
Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

1. Human Resources Business Partner

The HRBP is the role most visibly absorbing the analytics mandate. People Analytics has crossed from nice-to-have into the emerging tier, meaning it now appears in enough profiles to signal a structural shift rather than a trend. Power BI, SAP SuccessFactors, Data-Driven Decision Making and Workforce Analytics are all emerging simultaneously, indicating that the HRBP is being asked to own the data layer previously delegated to a separate analytics team.

The complication: this is happening while the role retains its full strategic advisory load. Workforce Planning, Succession Planning, Org Design and Labor Law all remain core. The HRBP is not being replaced by analytics; it is being asked to carry analytics on top of everything it already does. Section V examines this role at full resolution.

EMERGING People Analytics · Power BI · SAP SuccessFactors · Data-Driven Decision Making · Workforce Analytics · Internal Mobility · Calibration · Shared Services · Data Integrity · Operational Excellence Management



DECLINING Line Management · Career Management — administrative oversight functions being automated or delegated

2. Talent Acquisition Manager

The TA Manager's skill set is being reshaped by two forces: operational analytics and sourcing technology. LinkedIn Recruiter Tool and Greenhouse Software have entered the emerging tier, signaling that platform-native sourcing capability is now expected rather than optional. Recruitment Analytics, Recruiting Metrics and Market Intelligence are emerging together, pointing to a shift from volume-based hiring to intelligence-led talent acquisition.

The complication: Diversity & Inclusion is declining as a standalone skill for this role — not because DEI matters less, but because it is being absorbed into the operational fabric of sourcing rather than treated as a separate competency.

EMERGING LinkedIn Recruiter Tool · Greenhouse Software · Recruitment Analytics · Recruiting Metrics · Market Intelligence · Direct Sourcing · Internal Mobility · Structured Interview · Workforce Planning

DECLINING Advertising · Microsoft Excel (manual tracking replaced by ATS and analytics platforms) · Diversity & Inclusion (as a standalone skill)

3. Talent Acquisition Business Partner

This role is evolving fastest of all TA roles. Terraform has appeared as a new skill — a striking signal that TA Business Partners in tech-heavy organizations are expected to understand infrastructure-as-code environments in order to recruit for them credibly. Job Architecture and Business Process Documentation are also new, indicating the role is being pulled into org design conversations. Continuous Process Improvement rounds out a profile that increasingly looks like a hybrid of recruiter, business analyst and org designer.

NEW Terraform · Job Architecture · Business Process Documentation · Continuous Process Improvement

EMERGING HR Policies · Compliance Program Management · Data Management

DECLINING Client Project Management

4. Compensation & Benefits Manager

This role carries the most striking new-skill signal in the entire HR landscape: GitHub Copilot and Data Annotation have both appeared as new skills. This is not noise. It signals that Comp & Ben Managers at the frontier are beginning to interact with AI tooling directly — automating pay modelling, annotating training data for compensation algorithms, and using AI-assisted analysis. Financial Modeling, Cost Modeling, Cost Containment and SAP Taxation are all emerging, pointing to a role converging with FP&A.

The complication: the traditional Comp & Ben toolkit — ERISA, FMLA, Benefits Administration, Payroll Processing — remains fully intact as core. The role is not replacing its compliance foundation. It is building a quantitative modelling layer on top of it.

NEW GitHub Copilot · Data Annotation

EMERGING Financial Modeling · Cost Modeling · Cost Containment · Data-Driven Decision Making · Workforce Planning · Operational Excellence Management · SAP Taxation · Business Partnering

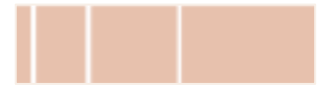
DECLINING Process Review · Payroll Management System

5. Compensation & Benefits Specialist

The Specialist version of this role is absorbing the analytics wave even more aggressively than the Manager level. Python, SQL, People Analytics, Pay Equity Analysis, Data Visualization, Financial Modeling and Compensation Modeling are all emerging simultaneously. This is the most data-intensive emerging skill cluster of any HR role studied — the Comp & Ben Specialist is becoming a quantitative analyst.

NEW Lead Optimization — signals optimization modelling entering compensation work

EMERGING Python · SQL · People Analytics · Pay Equity Analysis · Data Visualization · Financial Modeling · Compensation Modeling · Data-Driven Insights · Data Quality Management · Data Validation · Data Quality Assurance



DECLINING Record Keeping · Human Resource Management System (legacy HRMS skills retiring)

6. Learning & Development Manager

The L&D Manager is being reshaped by two forces: AI integration and experience design. Artificial Intelligence Development has appeared as a new skill — the most significant signal that L&D leaders are now expected to understand how AI is changing learning delivery, not merely to consume AI tools. Risk Identification and 5S Methodology are also new, suggesting L&D is being pulled into operational excellence and risk management conversations. Workday Learning, Learning Pathway, Experiential Learning Strategy and Behavior Change Intervention are all emerging, pointing to a shift from content delivery to behavior architecture.

NEW Artificial Intelligence Development · Risk Identification · 5S Methodology

EMERGING Learning Pathway · Workday Learning · Behavior Change Intervention · Experiential Learning Strategy · Competency Model · Internal Mobility · Learning Operations · User Experience (UX)

7. Learning & Development Trainer

The Trainer role is more stable than the Manager, but Learning Design is emerging as a distinct competency — signaling that trainers are being asked to architect experiences, not just deliver content. The core toolkit of Instructional Design, Adult Learning Theory, Blended Learning and Curriculum Development remains intact.

EMERGING Learning Design

8. Human Resources Analytics Manager

This role has the most technically advanced core skill set in HR. Power BI, Tableau, SQL, Python, Predictive Analytics, Predictive Modeling and Data Governance are all core — not emerging. The role has already completed its technical transformation. What is notable is the absence of a large emerging skills list: this profile has stabilized at a high technical baseline, which suggests the market has reached consensus on what an HR Analytics Manager must know.

This role is the destination that every other HR role is slowly moving toward.

CORE Power BI · Tableau · SQL · Python · Predictive Analytics · Predictive Modeling · Data Governance · People Analytics · SAP SuccessFactors · Workforce Analytics · Data-Driven Decision Making

9. Workforce Analyst

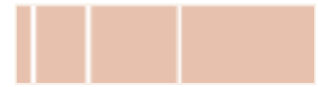
The Workforce Analyst has two new skills that stand out sharply: Microsoft Copilot and Java Database Connectivity. Microsoft Copilot's appearance signals that AI-assisted analysis is entering the day-to-day workflow of workforce planning practitioners. JDBC signals something more technically unexpected — analysts being asked to build or maintain direct database connections for workforce data pipelines, bypassing manual HRIS exports entirely. Advanced Analytics, Labor Market Analysis, Schedule Optimization and Operational Reporting are all emerging: the role is expanding from descriptive to prescriptive analytics. Section IV examines this role and its Manager counterpart in depth.

NEW Microsoft Copilot · Java Database Connectivity (JDBC)

EMERGING Advanced Analytics · Labor Market Analysis · Schedule Optimization · Operational Reporting · Data Validation · Leave/Absence Management · System Configuration · HR Policies · Human Resources Operations · Service Operations Management

10. Human Resources Manager

The HR Manager is absorbing the broadest emerging skill set of any generalist HR role. SAP SuccessFactors, ServiceNow, Paylocity Software, Workforce Management and Data-Driven Decision Making are all emerging — a technology stack that did not exist in this role's profile three years ago. Data Governance, Workforce Analytics, Shared Services and Human Resource Shared Service are also emerging, indicating the HR Manager is being asked to operate within shared services models and own data quality.



EMERGING Technology — SAP SuccessFactors · ServiceNow · Paylocity Software · Workforce Management | Analytical — Data-Driven Decision Making · Data Governance · Workforce Analytics · Data Quality Management · Data Quality Assurance

DECLINING Diversity & Inclusion (standalone) · Process Review · Budget Management · Annual Budget Preparation

11. Human Resources Specialist

The HR Specialist has the most expansive emerging skills list of any role in the study — 29 emerging skills — reflecting a role being asked to absorb operational complexity that was previously distributed across multiple specialist functions. People Analytics, Workforce Management, Workforce Analytics, Data Governance, Global Regulatory Compliance and Global Human Resource Management are all emerging for what is nominally an entry-to-mid level role. Data Annotation has appeared as a new skill — the same signal seen in Comp & Ben Manager, suggesting AI data work is entering the HR operational layer broadly.

NEW Data Annotation

EMERGING People Analytics · Workforce Management · Workforce Analytics · Data Governance · Global Regulatory Compliance · Global Human Resource Management · Payroll Administration · Payroll Reporting · System Configuration · System Testing · Employee Data Management (selected from 29)

DECLINING Project Planning · Report Drafting

12. HR Program Manager

The HR Program Manager has one new skill: Change Control — a formal engineering and project-management discipline entering HR program delivery. This signals that HR transformation programs are being run with the same rigor as IT or product programs. Global Human Resource Management is the sole emerging skill, indicating the role is being asked to operate across geographies.

NEW Change Control

EMERGING Global Human Resource Management

13. Diversity & Inclusion Manager

The D&I Manager has one new skill: Data Literacy — a foundational signal that D&I practitioners are being asked to own the measurement and reporting of diversity outcomes, not just the programs. This is a significant shift: D&I is moving from advocacy to accountability. Read alongside the decline of standalone D&I in the TA Manager and HR Manager profiles, the direction is clear — D&I is being embedded operationally and measured quantitatively rather than run as a parallel program.

NEW Data Literacy

EMERGING Contract Management — D&I programs increasingly involve external vendor and community partnerships

14. Employee Relations Manager

The ER Manager has one new skill: Workforce Transition Planning — a direct signal that this role is being pulled into restructuring, reduction-in-force and workforce transformation conversations. Compliance Investigations, Compliance Management and Regulatory Requirements Management are all emerging, indicating the ER function is absorbing a compliance investigation layer that was previously owned by Legal.

NEW Workforce Transition Planning

EMERGING Compliance Investigations · Compliance Management · Regulatory Requirements Management

15. Employee Relations Director

The ER Director role is stable at its core — Labor Law, Labor Relations, Case Management, Union Negotiation and Collective Bargaining — with Complaints Handling and Human Resources Operations emerging. This is operational efficiency entering a traditionally advisory role.

EMERGING Complaints Handling · Human Resources Operations

16. Chief Human Resources Officer

The CHRO role has one new skill: Accreditation Standards — a governance signal that CHROs are being asked to own workforce certification and standards frameworks, likely driven by ESG and skills-based organization mandates. HR Transformation, People Analytics, Workforce Analytics, Organization Transformation, Business Transformation and Capability Development are all emerging. The CHRO is being repositioned as a transformation officer, not just a people officer.

NEW Accreditation Standards

EMERGING HR Transformation · People Analytics · Workforce Analytics · Organization Transformation · Business Transformation · Capability Development · Workforce Management · Internal Mobility · Compliance Framework · Audit Readiness Assessment

DECLINING Local Law Compliance · Performance Appraisal Management · Performance Improvement — administrative HR tasks being delegated or automated

17. Head of Human Resources

The Head of HR has one new skill: Documentation Standards — a governance and compliance signal. HR Transformation, People Analytics, Workforce Analytics, Operational Efficiency, Business Transformation and Organization Transformation are all emerging, mirroring the CHRO pattern at a more operational level.

NEW Documentation Standards

EMERGING HR Transformation · People Analytics · Workforce Analytics · Business Transformation · Organization Transformation · Operational Efficiency · Capability Development · Internal Mobility · Grievance Management · Labor Compliance

18. Human Resources Supervisor

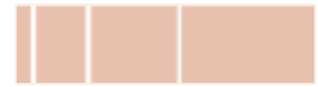
The HR Supervisor role shows Terraform appearing as a new skill in the Talent Acquisition Business Partner variant — confirming that technical infrastructure literacy is entering HR at multiple levels in tech-intensive organizations, not only at the specialist analytics end of the function.

NEW Terraform (via the TA Business Partner variant)

The new-skill frontier, consolidated

Brand-new skills are the earliest-stage signal in the dataset. Read together, they show where role boundaries are dissolving — and the direction is toward engineering, infrastructure, governance and AI, not toward more HR.

Role	New Skills (first appearance in this role profile)
Talent Acquisition Business Partner	Terraform · Job Architecture · Business Process Documentation · Continuous Process Improvement
Compensation & Benefits Manager	GitHub Copilot · Data Annotation
Compensation & Benefits Specialist	Lead Optimization
Learning & Development Manager	Artificial Intelligence Development · Risk Identification · 5S Methodology
Workforce Analyst	Microsoft Copilot · Java Database Connectivity (JDBC)
Workforce Manager	GitHub Copilot · Claude · SAP Analytics Cloud · SAML / SSO · Datadog



Role	New Skills (first appearance in this role profile)
HR Specialist	Data Annotation
HR Program Manager	Change Control
Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Data Literacy
Employee Relations Manager	Workforce Transition Planning
Chief Human Resources Officer	Accreditation Standards
Head of Human Resources	Documentation Standards
HR Supervisor	Terraform

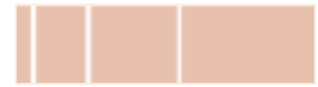
EXHIBIT 3

Not one of HR's 21 new skills originated inside HR

Every brand-new skill in the study traces to an engineering, data, governance or operations discipline



Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.



III. The Five Macro Shifts Across All HR Roles

Shift 1 — The analytics mandate has reached every level of HR

People Analytics, Workforce Analytics and Data-Driven Decision Making are emerging simultaneously across twelve of the eighteen roles studied. This is not a specialist trend; it is a profession-wide transformation. The HR Analytics Manager role has already completed the transition. Every other role is in the process of absorbing it.

Role	Analytics Skills Emerging
HR Business Partner	People Analytics, Power BI, Workforce Analytics, Data-Driven Decision Making
HR Manager	SAP SuccessFactors, ServiceNow, Data Governance, Workforce Analytics
HR Specialist	People Analytics, Workforce Management, Data Governance
Comp & Ben Specialist	Python, SQL, Pay Equity Analysis, Financial Modeling
Comp & Ben Manager	Financial Modeling, Cost Modeling, GitHub Copilot
CHRO / Head of HR	People Analytics, Workforce Analytics, HR Transformation
Workforce Analyst	Microsoft Copilot, JDBC, Advanced Analytics

The implication: within twenty-four months, data literacy will be a baseline expectation for every HR hire rather than a differentiator. The premium currently attached to it is a closing window.

Shift 2 — AI tooling is entering HR workflows directly

Three roles now show AI-native tools as new skills, meaning they have appeared recently enough to be flagged as brand new rather than established: GitHub Copilot in Compensation & Benefits Manager; Microsoft Copilot in Workforce Analyst; Artificial Intelligence Development in L&D Manager; and Data Annotation in both Comp & Ben Manager and HR Specialist.

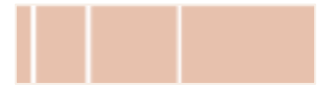
This is the earliest-stage signal in the entire study. These skills are not yet widespread — they are appearing at the frontier. But the pattern is clear: AI is entering HR not through a single “AI for HR” role but through the existing role structure, one workflow at a time. Comp & Ben is using AI for pay modelling. Workforce analytics is using Copilot for analysis. L&D is building AI-native learning experiences. Section VI treats this signal in full.

Shift 3 — Compliance is expanding, not contracting

Across Employee Relations, HR Manager, HR Specialist and Comp & Ben roles, Compliance Program Management, Compliance Investigations, Regulatory Requirements Management and Compliance Framework are all emerging. This runs counter to the narrative that compliance is being automated away. The reality is that regulatory complexity — pay equity legislation, FMLA, ERISA, labor law change, ESG reporting — is increasing faster than automation can absorb it, and HR is being asked to own more of the compliance investigation and reporting burden that previously sat with Legal.

Shift 4 — HR is absorbing transformation ownership

HR Transformation, Organization Transformation, Business Transformation and Workforce Transition Planning are emerging at CHRO, Head of HR and Employee Relations Manager level simultaneously. The CHRO is no longer the steward of people processes; they are being positioned as the owner of organizational transformation. Accreditation



Standards at CHRO level and Change Control at HR Program Manager level reinforce this: HR is being asked to run transformation with the governance rigor of a PMO.

Shift 5 — Traditional administrative skills are being retired

The declining skills list is consistent and telling across roles.

Declining Skill	Roles Affected
Line Management / Career Management	HR Business Partner
Advertising	Talent Acquisition Manager
Microsoft Excel (standalone)	Talent Acquisition Manager
Process Review	Comp & Ben Manager, HR Manager
Payroll Management System	Comp & Ben Manager
Record Keeping	Comp & Ben Specialist
HRMS (legacy)	Comp & Ben Specialist
Diversity & Inclusion (standalone)	TA Manager, HR Manager
Local Law Compliance	CHRO
Performance Appraisal Management	CHRO
Budget Management	HR Manager
Project Planning / Report Drafting	HR Specialist
Client Project Management	TA Business Partner
Call Routing	Workforce Manager

The pattern: manual, administrative and standalone compliance skills are declining. They are not disappearing from HR — they are being absorbed into platforms (SAP SuccessFactors, ServiceNow, Workday) or elevated into strategic frameworks, as with D&I becoming embedded in sourcing strategy rather than run as a standalone program. The decline of Career Management in the HRBP profile is the clearest illustration. The old model was reactive: an employee asks about their career and the HRBP has a conversation. The new model is proactive and data-driven: Internal Mobility frameworks and individual development plans move talent systematically before it starts looking externally. Same outcome, completely different skill set.

IV. Bifurcation Inside a Single Role: Workforce Planning

Two workforce planning roles were studied in depth — Workforce Analyst and Workforce Manager. The finding: this is the most technically aggressive transformation of any operational HR role, and the clearest demonstration that the profession's bifurcation is happening *inside* job titles, not just between them.

The role has two distinct identities, and most job descriptions conflate them

The Workforce Analyst (median experience 15 years) and Workforce Manager (median 17 years) are both senior roles — the largest cohort in each sits at 20-plus years of experience, at 31.9% and 39.8% respectively. This is not entry-level territory. Yet the skills being demanded are those of a three-to-five-year data professional. The market is asking experienced workforce practitioners to absorb a technical stack most of them were never trained on. That gap is the central tension driving hiring failure in this function.

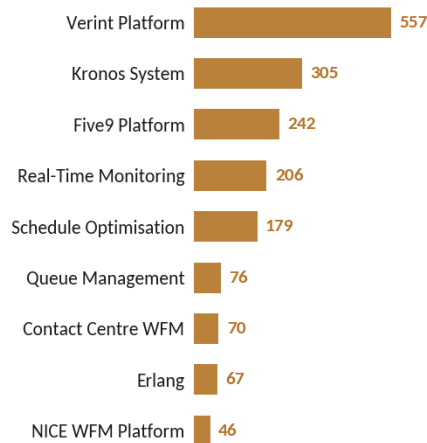
EXHIBIT 4

One job title, two skill sets, almost no overlap

Workforce planning skills by job-description count — the bifurcation inside a single role

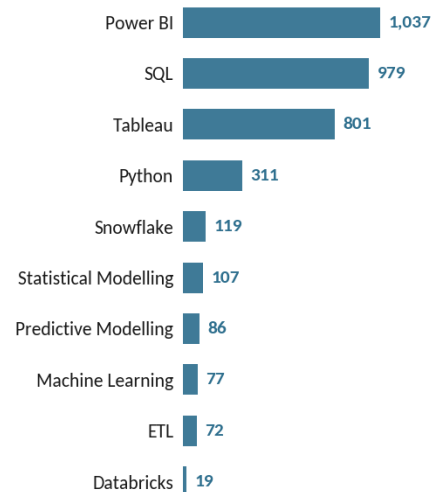
IDENTITY 1 — WFM OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

Contact centres · retail · healthcare



IDENTITY 2 — WORKFORCE INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

Enterprise · technology · financial services



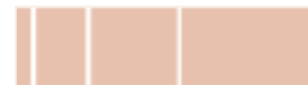
The two identities share a job title and almost no skills. Horizontal scales differ between panels.

Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

These two identities share a job title and almost no skill overlap. Hiring for one when you need the other is the most common and most expensive workforce planning hiring mistake.

The new skills — what has never appeared before

These are the earliest-stage signals in the study, and several of them are IT capabilities entering an HR role.



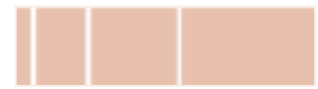
New Skill	Role	JD Count	What It Signals
Microsoft Copilot	Workforce Analyst	33	AI-assisted analysis entering daily workflow — headcount scenario narratives, attrition summaries, capacity planning decks, ad hoc analysis
Java Database Connectivity	Workforce Analyst	21	Analysts building direct database connections for workforce data pipelines, bypassing manual HRIS exports — data engineering entering HR analytics
GitHub Copilot	Workforce Manager	48	Building and maintaining Python forecasting models, automating reporting pipelines, developing custom analytics tools
Claude	Workforce Manager	43	Drafting workforce strategy documents, synthesizing workforce data into executive narratives, building analytical frameworks for headcount planning
SAP Analytics Cloud	Workforce Manager	New	Organizations running SAP SuccessFactors now expect the Workforce Manager to own the analytics layer, not just the operational layer — a configuration skill, not a user skill
SAML / Single Sign-On	Workforce Manager	New	Participation in HRIS system administration and integration — configuring how WFM platforms authenticate with enterprise identity systems
Datadog	Workforce Manager	New	Monitoring the performance and uptime of WFM platforms in real time — the Workforce Manager owning operational reliability of the WFM stack

SAML, SSO and Datadog are the most unexpected new skills in any HR role studied across this series. Together with JDBC they point in one direction: in technology-intensive organizations, the Workforce Manager is becoming a hybrid HR-IT role.

The emerging skills — crossing from rare to expected

At Analyst level, the role is expanding outward and downward at once. Schedule Optimization (179 JDs) has moved beyond platform configuration into genuine mathematical optimization against service level, cost and employee preference simultaneously. Labor Market Analysis (176 JDs) asks the analyst to look outward at external talent supply and wage trends — a skill that previously sat with TA or HR Strategy, now entering scope because headcount planning without external market context produces plans that cannot be executed. Advanced Analytics (63 JDs) means the move from descriptive to diagnostic and predictive work: regression, time-series forecasting, cohort analysis, Monte Carlo simulation. System Configuration (154 JDs), Human Resources Operations (181 JDs), Leave/Absence Management (79 JDs) and Data Validation (136 JDs) round out a role absorbing both operational HR execution and the data quality gate beneath its own analytics.

At Manager level, the emerging set is different in kind. Workforce Forecasting (138 JDs) is distinct from Workforce Planning: it is the quantitative, model-driven prediction of future headcount need, and its emergence signals organizations moving from intuition-based planning to model-driven forecasting with the Manager owning the model. Job Architecture (145 JDs) pulls the Manager into job design — you cannot plan headcount without a structure to plan against. Data Quality Assurance (277 JDs) at this level is not checking data but owning the data quality framework for all workforce data: a governance skill, not an operational one.



The analytics stack — eight layers and one hard gate

Skill	JD Count	Layer	What It Actually Requires
Data Analysis	961	Foundation	Interpreting existing datasets — the baseline
Data Integrity	347	Data Quality	Ensuring workforce data is clean before any model runs
Data Quality Management	247	Data Quality	Systematic accuracy processes across WFM systems
Data Validation	136	Data Quality	Checking outputs against source data — the audit layer
SQL	979	Querying	Pulling and joining workforce data from HRIS and WFM databases directly
Python	311	Modelling	Statistical forecasting, attrition modelling, schedule optimization algorithms
Power BI	1,037	Visualization	Dashboards that operations leaders can self-serve
Tableau	801	Visualization	The alternative platform — often required alongside Power BI
Statistical Modelling	107	Advanced	Regression, time-series and cohort analysis for headcount forecasting
Predictive Modelling	86	Advanced	Forward-looking models for attrition, capacity and demand
Machine Learning	77	Frontier	Attrition prediction, anomaly detection, automated pattern recognition
Snowflake	119	Data Platform	Cloud warehouse — querying workforce data at scale
Databricks	19	Data Platform	Unified analytics — appearing at the frontier of the role
ETL	72	Data Engineering	Building and maintaining pipelines from HRIS to analytics platforms

THE SQL THRESHOLD

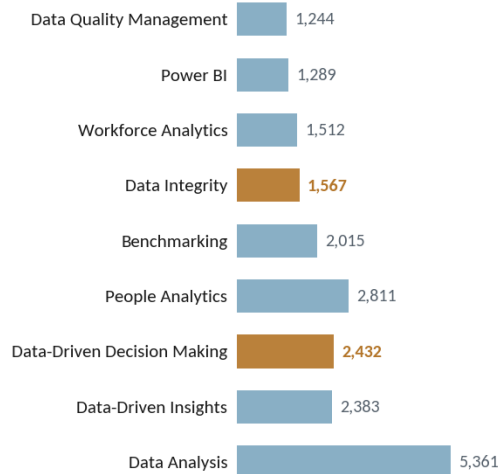
SQL (979 JDs) is the single most important technical gate in workforce analytics. An analyst with Power BI and Tableau but no SQL is building dashboards on pre-processed data that someone else pulled, and cannot answer an ad hoc question without waiting for a data team.

Make SQL a required skill, not a preferred one, in every Workforce Analyst job description — and assess your current team against that threshold now.

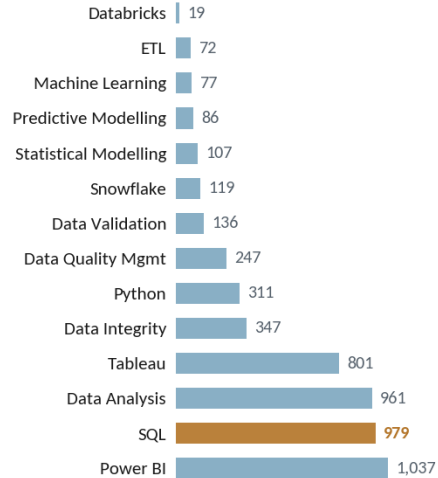
EXHIBIT 5

Analytics is not a skill — it is a stack, and stacks have an order

Job-description counts by layer. Highlighted bars mark where the dependency chain breaks

HR BUSINESS PARTNER — NINE LAYERS

Chain breaks at Data Integrity (the foundation) and DDDM (the translation layer)

WORKFORCE ANALYST — EIGHT LAYERS

SQL is the gate: without it an analyst cannot self-serve workforce data

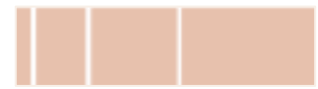
Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

Machine learning is a use-case signal, not a data-science signal

Machine Learning appears in 77 Workforce Analyst and 290 Workforce Manager job descriptions. This does not mean workforce planning is becoming a data science function. It reflects four specific use cases that have become common enough to name in a requisition: attrition prediction models that identify flight risk before resignation using tenure, engagement, compensation gap and manager-change signals; demand forecasting against historical patterns, business growth data and external labor market signals; schedule optimization that balances service level, cost and employee preference; and anomaly detection that flags attrition spikes and absenteeism clusters before they become operational problems.

The platform stack — configuration, not just usage

The expectation has shifted from “can use” to “can configure and administer.” Verint (557 JDs) now means configuring scheduling rules, building custom reports and troubleshooting calculation errors. Kronos (305 JDs) means time and attendance rules and payroll integration — the full administrative layer. Alongside them sit UKG Pro (35), UKG Dimensions (35), UKG Workforce Central (23), Workday Adaptive Planning (28), SAP SuccessFactors (59), Alteryx (66), IBM Cognos (49) and Microsoft Copilot (33).



The soft skills — and one that matters more than its volume suggests

Conversational Proficiency tops both roles (4,499 Analyst / 4,592 Manager JDs), and in this context it means something specific: explaining a headcount forecast to a VP of Operations who does not understand confidence intervals. Strategic Thinking (2,743 / 4,508), Leadership (2,327 / 4,134), Collaboration (3,488 / 3,869) and Planning (2,967 / 3,698) complete the non-negotiable tier. Improvisation (1,842 / 2,708) is more literal than it sounds — responding to a CFO asking for a custom headcount scenario with two hours' notice.

The emerging tier is where to watch. Artificial Intelligence Literacy (9 Analyst / 46 Manager JDs) is the most important emerging soft skill in this study. At Manager level it is explicitly evaluative: employers expect the manager to understand how AI tools work well enough to assess their outputs critically. A manager who cannot judge whether a machine learning attrition model is producing reliable predictions is a liability, not an asset. Systems Thinking (22 / 81), Ambiguity Tolerance (88 / 122), Change Facilitation (53 / 121), Executive Communication (23 / 79) and Financial Acumen (25 / 33) complete the emerging set.

Declining: one skill only — and that is itself a finding

The only declining skill in workforce planning is Call Routing at Manager level, displaced by automated ACD and AI-driven routing platforms. Workforce Management (1,957 JDs), Workforce Planning (1,215 JDs), Capacity Planning (594 JDs) and Real-Time Monitoring (206 JDs) all remain fully intact as core. Unlike Compensation, where several legacy skills are retiring simultaneously, workforce planning is not shedding its core. The transformation is additive, not substitutive — which makes it harder, not easier, because practitioners must carry the full existing load while absorbing an entirely new technical layer.

Three archetypes — and the hiring mistake most organizations make

Archetype	Signature Skills	Where to Find Them
1. WFM Operations Specialist (most common, most traditional)	Verint · Kronos · Five9 · NICE WFM · Erlang · Real-Time Monitoring · Schedule Optimization · Queue Management Emerging: System Configuration · Leave/Absence Management · Operational Reporting	Contact center operations, retail workforce management, healthcare staffing
2. Workforce Intelligence Analyst (fastest growing, scarcest)	SQL · Python · Power BI · Tableau · Statistical & Predictive Modelling Emerging: Machine Learning · Snowflake · Databricks · ETL · Advanced Analytics · Labor Market Analysis	FP&A teams, people analytics functions, data analytics backgrounds, operations research graduates
3. Strategic Workforce Architect (rarest, highest value, most misunderstood)	Workforce Planning · Capacity Planning · Workforce Forecasting · Organizational Design · Scenario Planning Emerging: Anaplan · SAP Analytics Cloud · Job Architecture · Internal Mobility · AI Strategy	Enterprise HR strategy teams, management consulting, FP&A leadership, chief-of-staff offices

THE HIRING MISTAKE

Most organizations write a job description requiring all three archetypes simultaneously — Verint and Python and Anaplan and machine learning and workforce planning and schedule optimization. This profile does not exist in meaningful numbers.

The result is a four-month search ending in a compromise hire who is strong in Archetype 1 and weak in Archetypes 2 and 3 — precisely the wrong outcome for an organization trying to build a strategic workforce intelligence capability.

The correct approach: decide which archetype is the primary need for the next eighteen months, hire to it, and build the other capabilities through reskilling or a second hire.

V. The Skill Set at Full Resolution: The HR Business Partner

The HRBP was studied against 119,429 active job descriptions — the deepest single-role cut in this series. Two findings emerge. The role has fractured into three profiles operating simultaneously. And the skills the market now specifies are considerably more granular than the categories most HR functions hire and assess against.

The HRBP is now three roles in one — and most job descriptions hire for one

The traditional HRBP was a generalist advisor. Today's market demands a Strategic Operator (workforce planning, org design, succession), a Data Practitioner (people analytics, Power BI, Data-Driven Decision Making) and a Compliance Investigator (FMLA, regulatory requirements, compliance Program management) — all in the same person. Most job descriptions still weight the first profile and treat the other two as nice-to-have. That is the structural mismatch driving HRBP hiring failure.

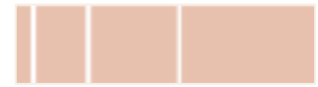
HRBP Archetype	Skill Signature
1. The Strategic Advisor (most common, most traditional)	Core: Workforce Planning · Succession Planning · Org Design · Business Partnering · HR Strategy Soft: Strategic Thinking · Coaching · Advisory · Influencing · Business Acumen Emerging: Calibration · Development Planning · Business Priority Management
2. The Data-Driven HRBP (fastest growing, scarcest)	Core: Data Analysis · People Analytics · HRIS Emerging: Power BI · Workforce Analytics · Data-Driven Decision Making · Data Integrity · Benchmarking Soft: Analytical Thinking · Critical Thinking · Data Storytelling
3. The Compliance-ER Specialist (growing with regulatory complexity)	Core: Labor Law · Labor Relations · Employee Relations Management Emerging: FMLA · Regulatory Requirements Management · Compliance Program Management · Risk Management · Compliance Investigations Soft: Professional Ethics · Discretion · Courageous Conversations

The honest assessment: a single HRBP can cover Archetypes 1 and 3 well, or 1 and 2 well. Covering all three at depth requires either a very senior generalist or a team. Most organizations need all three and hire one person expecting all three.

The emerging analytics stack: nine layers with a dependency chain

People Analytics appearing as an emerging skill (2,811 JDs) is the headline. The granular picture is more instructive — and the layers depend on one another.

Skill	JD Count	Tier	What It Actually Requires
Data Analysis	5,361	Core	Interpreting existing datasets — pivot tables, basic statistical literacy
Data-Driven Insights	2,383	Core	Translating a data output into a business narrative — the “so what” layer



Skill	JD Count	Tier	What It Actually Requires
Data-Driven Decision Making	2,432	Emerging	Structuring a recommendation around data rather than intuition — a mindset shift, not a tool skill
People Analytics	2,811	Emerging	Turnover cohorts, engagement drivers, flight-risk models
Benchmarking	2,015	Emerging	Comparing internal metrics against external market data to contextualize findings
Data Integrity	1,567	Emerging	Ensuring the underlying HR data is clean enough to trust — the unglamorous prerequisite
Workforce Analytics	1,512	Emerging	Headcount modelling, span-of-control analysis, org efficiency — more structural than people analytics
Power BI	1,289	Emerging	Building dashboards that business leaders can self-serve
Data Quality Management	1,244	Emerging	Systematic processes for maintaining accuracy across HRIS systems

An HRBP with Power BI but no Data Integrity is building dashboards on dirty data. An HRBP with People Analytics but no Data-Driven Decision Making can describe what the data shows but cannot turn it into a recommendation. Most HRBPs in the market today hold Data Analysis — the bottom of the stack — and are being asked to develop toward People Analytics and Power BI in the middle. The top of the stack, Workforce Analytics and Data Integrity, remains genuinely scarce and commands a premium.

The compliance expansion: four domains have become seven

Skill	JD Count	What Changed
Auditing	2,543	HR audits — I-9, pay equity, policy compliance — previously an HR Ops or Legal function
Regulatory Requirements Management	2,401	Proactive tracking of regulatory change and translation into policy — previously owned by Legal
FMLA	2,255	Now a core HRBP competency rather than an HR Ops skill — HRBPs field leave questions directly
Risk Management	2,164	Identifying people-related legal and operational risk before it materializes
Risk Mitigation	1,713	Executing the response once a risk is identified — the operational counterpart
Compliance Program Management	1,575	Designing and running a compliance program end-to-end, not just following one
Compliance Investigations	172	Formal workplace investigations — still emerging, growing fast in ER-heavy environments

These skills are entering the HRBP profile because Legal and HR Operations are being asked to do more with less, and the HRBP is absorbing the first-line compliance burden. This is not a temporary trend. It is a structural shift driven by regulatory complexity — pay equity legislation, ESG reporting, FMLA expansion — that is not going to reverse.

The emerging strategic skills — and why Calibration deserves attention

Beneath the “strategic” label sit ten separable capabilities. Four are large and established: Workforce Planning (33,437 JDs), Succession Planning (27,950), Organizational Development (17,612) and Organizational Design (16,352). Six are emerging: Development Planning (3,172), Business Priority Management (3,137), Calibration (2,903), Service Delivery Management (2,588), Internal Mobility (2,435) and Capability Development (1,460).

CALIBRATION — EMERGING IN 2,903 JOB DESCRIPTIONS, TRAINED ALMOST NOWHERE

Calibration has crossed the threshold from rare to expected. It is also one of the most technically demanding facilitation skills in HR: the HRBP must hold a room of eight to twelve managers, each defending their own ratings, and move the group toward a fair, consistent distribution without triggering defensiveness or perceived favoritism.

It requires simultaneous command of data (the rating distribution), process (the calibration framework) and interpersonal dynamics (reading the room). It is not taught in most HR Programs and is rarely assessed in interviews.

The granularity finding: what “hard conversations” actually contains

One example illustrates how far the market’s specification has moved beyond the categories HR uses. What is commonly labelled “hard conversations” or “courageous conversations” is in fact a stack of seven separable competencies, appearing at very different frequencies and requiring different training interventions.

Skill	JD Count	What It Actually Means
Influencing	24,285	Moving a decision-maker without authority. The HRBP’s primary lever — they rarely hold line authority.
Conflict Resolution	13,927	Structured mediation between two parties with competing interests. Requires neutrality and process discipline.
Negotiation	9,762	Reaching agreement where both parties give something. Distinct from influencing — involves explicit trade-offs.
Assertive Communication	3,013	Stating a position clearly without aggression or hedging. The skill of saying no to a VP, with evidence.
Providing Feedback	2,841	Delivering performance-specific, behavioral feedback that changes behavior. Not the same as “giving feedback.”
Diplomacy	1,440	Navigating politically sensitive situations without triggering defensiveness. The skill of timing and framing.
Courageous Conversations	554	Initiating difficult dialogue proactively, unprompted. Distinct from reactive conflict handling.

Most HRBP assessments test for conflict resolution and treat the set as covered. But a candidate who scores high on conflict resolution — reactive, structured, invited — may score low on courageous conversations, which is proactive, unstructured and uninvited. These are different behaviors requiring different development interventions. “Tell me about a time you resolved a conflict” tests exactly one of the seven. “Tell me about a time you initiated a difficult conversation that nobody asked you to have” tests a completely different one.

The same compression applies to the analytics and compliance stacks above. The practical consequence is a hiring scorecard that cannot distinguish two finalists — and a development plan aimed at a category rather than a capability.

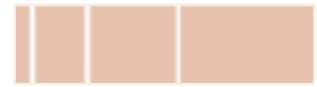
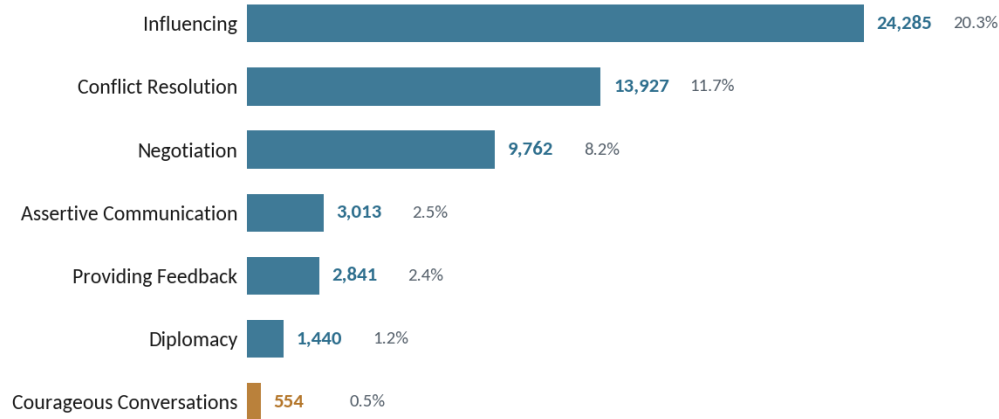


EXHIBIT 6

Inside “hard conversations”: seven skills, not one*HRBP conversation-cluster skills, of 119,429 active job descriptions*

Counts, and share of the 119,429 HRBP postings. Influencing is specified 44× more often than Courageous Conversations — yet both are routinely assessed as a single “communication skills” dimension.

Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

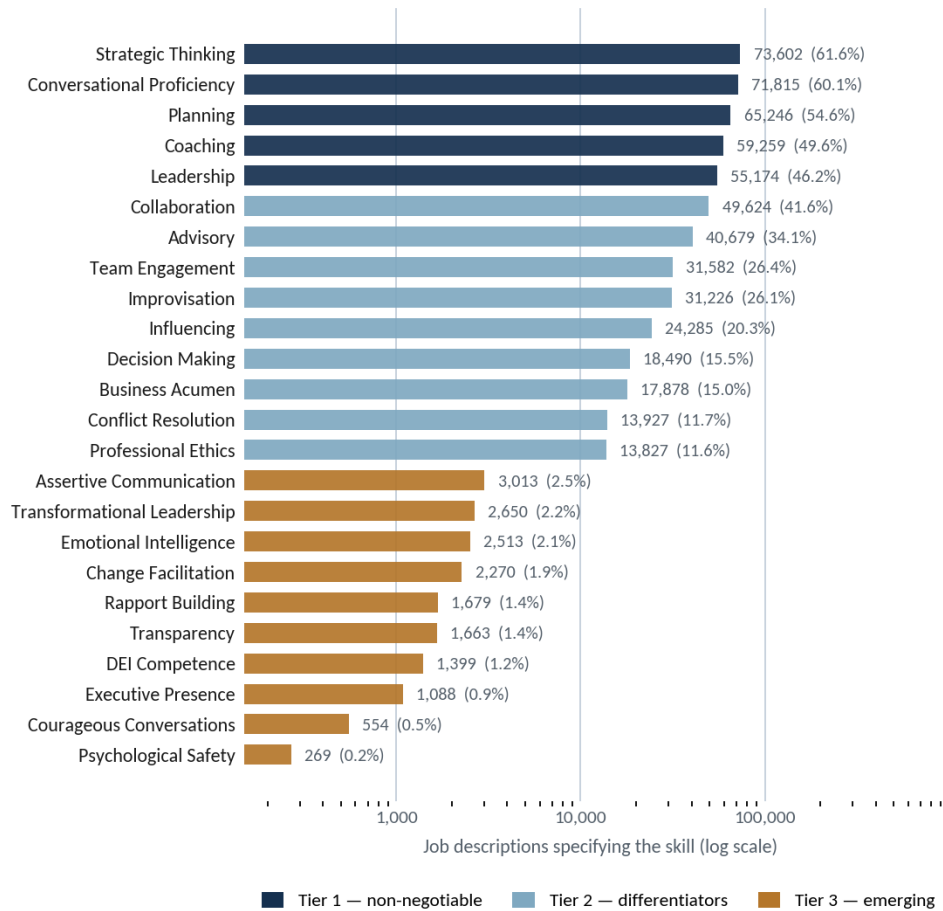
The emerging soft skills — where the differentiation sits

Across 119,429 job descriptions the soft-skill distribution is sharply tiered. The non-negotiable tier is enormous: Strategic Thinking (73,602 JDs), Conversational Proficiency (71,815), Planning (65,246), Coaching (59,259) and Leadership (55,174). Every candidate claims these and no scorecard discriminates on them. The emerging tier is small, and that is exactly where the hiring decision is made.

EXHIBIT 7

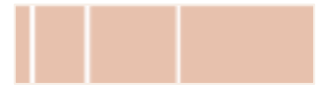
The skills that differentiate sit two orders of magnitude below the table stakes

HRBP soft-skill demand, of 119,429 active job descriptions — note the logarithmic scale



Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

Emerging Soft Skill	JD Count	Why It Matters
Assertive Communication	3,013	Stating a position clearly without aggression
Transformational Leadership	2,650	Leading change that shifts culture, not just process
Emotional Intelligence	2,513	Reading and managing one's own state and others' — the foundation of courageous conversations
Change Facilitation	2,270	Guiding a group through change — distinct from change management, which is a project skill
Rapport Building	1,679	Establishing trust quickly — critical for HRBPs who rotate across business units



Emerging Soft Skill	JD Count	Why It Matters
Transparency	1,663	Communicating openly about constraints and trade-offs — the antidote to HR being seen as opaque
DEI Competence	1,399	Applying DEI principles in day-to-day decisions — distinct from running a DEI program
Executive Presence	1,088	Commanding credibility with C-suite leaders — determines whether the HRBP gets a seat at the table
Courageous Conversations	554	The rarest and most valuable of the conversation skills
Psychological Safety	269	Creating conditions where people speak up without fear — the HRBP's enabling role is growing

Platform fluency is now expected of the HRBP

The HRBP is no longer a platform-agnostic role. SAP SuccessFactors (2,237 JDs) leads, meaning running performance cycles, workforce data pulls and org management rather than simply logging in. Dayforce (582), ADP Workforce Now (536), Paylocity (524), BambooHR (436), Greenhouse (319), ServiceNow (154) and Workday HCM (114) follow. Alongside them sit GitHub Copilot (211), ChatGPT (175) and Claude (87) — treated in Section VI.

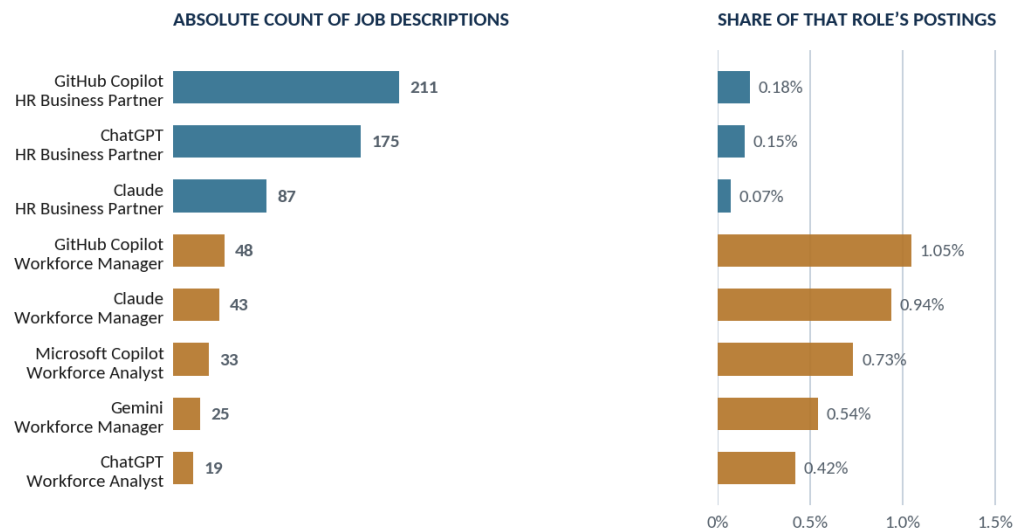
VI. The AI Signal: Tools Entering HR By Name

Across all three studies, the most consistent frontier signal is that generative and AI-assisted tools are now specified in HR job descriptions by product name. This is a different signal from “AI awareness” or “familiarity with emerging technology,” and it should be read differently: employers who write a product name into a requisition have a workflow in mind and expect fluency, not familiarity.

EXHIBIT 8

AI has entered HR job descriptions by name — at frontier penetration

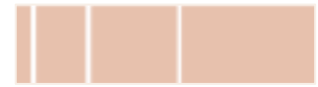
Named AI tools by role, in absolute counts and as a share of that role's posting base



Read both panels together. The signal is that employers are naming specific tools — not that penetration is yet high. At under 1.5% of postings these are frontier indicators, not established market expectations.

Source: Draup live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, 12 months to 27 July 2026.

Tool	Role	JD Count	Use Case Signaled
GitHub Copilot	HR Business Partner	211	AI-assisted work entering the HRBP toolkit
ChatGPT	HR Business Partner	175	Policy drafting, communication templates, data summarization
Claude	HR Business Partner	87	Policy drafting, JD writing, document synthesis
GitHub Copilot	Workforce Manager	48	Building Python forecasting models, automating reporting pipelines
Claude	Workforce Manager	43	Workforce strategy documents, executive narratives from workforce data



Tool	Role	JD Count	Use Case Signaled
Microsoft Copilot	Workforce Analyst	33	Scenario narratives, attrition summaries, ad hoc analysis acceleration
Gemini	Workforce Manager	25	Analytical and drafting support
ChatGPT	Workforce Analyst	19	Report summarization and ad hoc analysis
GitHub Copilot	Comp & Ben Manager	New	AI-assisted pay modelling and analysis
Data Annotation	Comp & Ben Manager; HR Specialist	New	Preparing training data for compensation and HR models
Artificial Intelligence Development	L&D Manager	New	Designing AI-native learning experiences, not just consuming AI tools

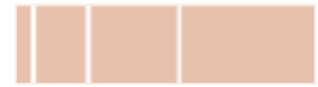
Four readings

- **The entry point is the workflow, not a new role.** No “AI for HR” role appears anywhere in the corpus. AI is entering through the existing role structure, one task at a time: policy drafting in HRBP, scenario narrative generation and forecasting-script development in workforce planning, pay modelling and data annotation in Comp & Ben, experience design in L&D.
- **The use case changes with seniority.** At analyst level, AI accelerates analysis — summarizing, drafting, answering unstructured questions without building a full model. At manager level, AI writes code and drafts strategy. A Workforce Manager who can use GitHub Copilot to build a headcount forecasting model in Python is operating at a fundamentally different capability level than one who cannot.
- **Workforce planning is absorbing AI faster than almost any other HR function,** because its work is inherently quantitative and repetitive — forecasting, scheduling, reporting and scenario modelling are precisely the tasks where AI tools deliver the highest productivity multiplier.
- **The corresponding soft skill is arriving behind the tools.** Artificial Intelligence Literacy appears in 9 Workforce Analyst and 46 Workforce Manager job descriptions, and at manager level it is explicitly evaluative — employers expect the manager to judge whether an AI output can be trusted.

THE PROGRAM DESIGN IMPLICATION

Generic AI awareness sessions will not close this gap, because the gap is not conceptual. The intervention that matches the signal is a short, applied, role-specific workshop built on named workflows: for HRBPs, policy drafting, communication templates and data summarization; for workforce planning, scenario narrative drafting, forecasting script acceleration and ad hoc analysis. Four hours, practical, per function.

Note the reflexive point for L&D. Artificial Intelligence Development appearing as a new skill in the L&D Manager profile means learning leaders are expected to understand how AI changes learning delivery, not merely to use AI tools. The profession cannot teach what it does not understand.



VII. The New HR Skill Architecture — Three Layers

The 18 roles reveal a three-layer skill architecture that is replacing the traditional HR generalist model. Every role now holds some of all three layers; what differs is the depth required at each.

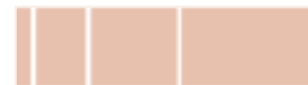
Layer	Contents	Status
Layer 1 The Data Foundation	People Analytics · Workforce Analytics · Data-Driven Decision Making · Power BI / Tableau / SQL · Data Integrity · Data Governance	Now expected at every level. Emerging in 12 of 18 roles; already core in HR Analytics Manager.
Layer 2 The Technology Stack	SAP SuccessFactors · ServiceNow · Workday Learning · LinkedIn Recruiter Tool · Greenhouse · Paylocity · Kronos · Verint · Anaplan · Microsoft & GitHub Copilot	Platform fluency replacing manual process. The expectation has moved from “can use” to “can configure.”
Layer 3 The Transformation Mandate	HR Transformation · Organization Transformation · Workforce Transition Planning · Capability Development · Internal Mobility · Accreditation Standards · Change Control	Emerging at senior levels and trickling down. PMO governance rigor applied to people change.

The critical qualifier: these three layers sit *on top of* an intact traditional core. Labor Law, Employee Relations, Succession Planning, Capacity Planning, ERISA, Benefits Administration and payroll compliance have not gone anywhere. This is the load problem, and it is why a reskilling plan alone is insufficient — at some point the answer is role redesign or additional headcount, not more training.

VIII. The Two Archetypes: Technologist-Strategist and Compliance-Operator

Read the eighteen role profiles together and the bifurcation resolves into two coherent archetypes. Both are growing. What is disappearing is the undifferentiated generalist between them.

	The HR Technologist-Strategist	The HR Compliance-Operator
Data & tooling	People Analytics · Workforce Analytics · DDDM · SQL · Python · Power BI / Tableau · Data Governance · Data Integrity · Copilot / generative AI tools	Data Quality Management · Data Validation · Employee Data Management · Audit Readiness Assessment — data skills in service of evidence, not modelling
Platform posture	SAP SuccessFactors · ServiceNow · Workday · Anaplan · Greenhouse · Verint / UKG — configuration and ownership	HRIS and case-management fluency — accurate operation within the platform rather than configuration of it
Strategic scope	HR Transformation · Organization Transformation · Business Transformation · Job Architecture · Capability Development · Internal Mobility · Workforce Forecasting	Labor Law · Labor Relations · FMLA · ERISA · Regulatory Requirements Management · Compliance Program Management · Compliance Investigations · Risk Management and Mitigation · Grievance Management
Where it is concentrating	HR Analytics Manager (already complete) · Comp & Ben Specialist · Workforce Analyst and Manager · CHRO and Head of HR · the Data-Driven HRBP	Employee Relations Manager and Director · the Compliance-ER HRBP · HR Specialist · the benefits and payroll side of Comp & Ben



	The HR Technologist-Strategist	The HR Compliance-Operator
Market supply	Scarce, priced at a premium, and increasingly sourced from adjacent verticals — analytics, FP&A, operations research, consulting	More abundant, but demand is expanding as regulatory complexity outruns automation and HR absorbs work previously owned by Legal

Two things follow. First, this is not a story of one archetype replacing the other. Compliance is expanding, not contracting; the Compliance-Operator profile is growing in scope even as the Technologist-Strategist profile grows in scarcity. Second, the failure mode is not choosing the wrong archetype — it is failing to recognize that a choice exists, and writing job descriptions, development plans and succession slates that assume a single undifferentiated HR profile. Organizations that fail to recognize this split will hire for the wrong archetype and find their HR function structurally misaligned within three years.

IX. What This Means: Strategic Implications

For HR leaders hiring HR teams

The job description written three years ago is structurally wrong today. An HRBP job description that does not include People Analytics and Power BI will attract candidates who are already behind the market. A Comp & Ben Specialist job description that does not include SQL or Python will miss the emerging archetype entirely. Every HR job description needs a data skills audit before the next hire.

For CHROs thinking about team reskilling

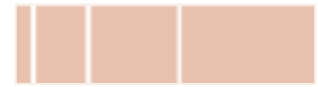
The most urgent reskilling gap is not at the CHRO level. It is at HR Specialist and HR Manager level, where the emerging skills list is longest — the HR Specialist profile alone carries 29 emerging skills — and where the gap between current capability and market expectation is widest. A specialist who cannot navigate SAP SuccessFactors, ServiceNow and basic data governance is already operating below the market baseline.

For L&D teams designing HR capability programs

The L&D Manager's own role is the most instructive. Artificial Intelligence Development appearing as a new skill means L&D leaders must understand AI in order to design learning for an AI-augmented workforce. The profession cannot teach what it does not understand. The highest-leverage L&D investment for HR teams right now is AI literacy — not generic AI awareness, but applied AI in HR workflows: pay modelling, sourcing automation, workforce forecasting.

For talent acquisition teams sourcing HR talent

The traditional HR talent pool is bifurcating. Candidates with the new analytics and AI layer are scarce and command a premium; candidates with only the traditional compliance and generalist profile are abundant. Sourcing strategies must explicitly target the analytics-capable segment — which means searching for Python, SQL, Power BI and People Analytics alongside traditional HR credentials, and accepting that this profile will come from adjacent verticals such as analytics, FP&A and operations as much as from traditional HR career paths.



X. The Uncomfortable Truth

Most HR functions are hiring for the HR of 2019, not the HR of 2026.

The skills data is unambiguous. People Analytics, Workforce Analytics and Data-Driven Decision Making are no longer emerging in the HR Analytics Manager role — they are core. They are now emerging in the HRBP, HR Manager, HR Specialist and CHRO roles. The window to treat data literacy as a future skill for HR has closed. It is a present requirement, and the gap between what most HR teams can do and what the market now expects is widening every quarter.

The same is true of the frontier signals. Terraform in a Talent Acquisition Business Partner profile, JDBC and Datadog in workforce planning, GitHub Copilot in Compensation & Benefits, Data Literacy in D&I, Change Control in HR Program Management — none of these were plausible entries in an HR job description three years ago. They are all live today. The organizations that treat them as curiosities will read them again in two years as baseline requirements they failed to build toward.

XI. Conclusion: Prioritized Actions

The findings resolve into a sequenced agenda across three horizons.

HORIZON 1 • 0–90 DAYS

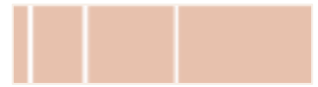
Finding	Action	Owner	Consequence of Inaction
People Analytics emerging across 12 of 18 roles	Audit every HR job description; add data skills requirements before the next hire cycle	CHRO / TA Lead	HR hires will be structurally misaligned within 18 months
GitHub Copilot, Microsoft Copilot, Claude and ChatGPT appearing across HRBP, Comp & Ben and workforce planning	Launch an applied AI literacy program — a four-hour workshop per function on named workflows, not awareness sessions	L&D / CHRO	The HR function falls behind the AI adoption curve it is supposed to advise the business on
SQL is the critical break point in workforce analytics (979 JDs)	Make SQL required, not preferred, in every Workforce Analyst job description; assess the current team against it now	WFM Lead / TA	Analysts remain dependent on data teams for every ad hoc request; planning velocity stays low
Three archetypes exist in both workforce planning and the HRBP role; most job descriptions hire for all of them at once	Decide which archetype each open role requires before the job description is written	TA Lead	Four-month searches ending in compromise hires who are strong in the wrong archetype
“Hard conversations” is seven distinct skills; the analytics stack is nine layers	Redesign the HRBP interview scorecard to assess each competency separately with distinct behavioral questions	TA Lead / CHRO	Scorecards that cannot distinguish two finalists, and development plans aimed at categories rather than capabilities

HORIZON 2 · 3–12 MONTHS

Finding	Action	Owner	Consequence of Inaction
Comp & Ben Specialist absorbing Python, SQL and Pay Equity Analysis	Create a Comp & Ben Analyst role or reskill current specialists in quantitative methods	Total Rewards Lead	Pay equity analysis and compensation modelling require external consultants indefinitely
Calibration emerging in 2,903 HRBP job descriptions and taught almost nowhere	Make calibration facilitation a mandatory skill in HRBP development, with a live simulation in onboarding	L&D Lead	Rating distributions stay inconsistent and manager trust in performance processes erodes
Anaplan appearing in 62 Workforce Manager job descriptions — workforce planning converging with FP&A	Decide whether the Workforce Manager should own the headcount model in Anaplan alongside Finance; if so, certify at least one team member	CHRO / CFO	Workforce planning stays disconnected from the financial planning cycle; headcount decisions lag business decisions by a quarter
Machine Learning in 77 Analyst and 290 Manager job descriptions	Designate one internal owner for attrition prediction modelling with Python and ML capability; stop outsourcing it annually	WFM Lead / People Analytics	Attrition risk remains reactive; talent is lost that 60 days' warning would have retained
JDBC, SAML/SSO and Datadog entering workforce planning — IT-adjacent capabilities	Assess whether your WFM architecture requires connectivity and monitoring skills; if so, create a hybrid role or a formal IT partnership	WFM Lead / CIO	Platform failures go undetected until they cause disruption; pipeline errors corrupt workforce models silently
Internal Mobility replacing Career Management across the HRBP profile	Audit whether the HRBP team has Internal Mobility as a practiced skill, not just a concept — it requires platform knowledge plus proactive outreach	CHRO	Talent continues to leave for moves it could have made internally
HR Transformation emerging at CHRO and Head of HR level	Reposition the CHRO mandate explicitly as transformation ownership; update board-level HR reporting to match	CEO / CHRO	HR remains a support function while transformation is owned by Strategy or Operations
Traditional administrative skills declining across all roles	Accelerate HRIS platform adoption (SAP SuccessFactors, ServiceNow) to absorb manual workflows	HR Ops / CIO	The HR team spends disproportionate time on tasks the platform already automates

HORIZON 3 · 12–36 MONTHS

Finding	Action	Owner	Consequence of Inaction
Workforce Forecasting emerging at Manager level — the shift from intuition to model-driven planning	Require Workforce Managers to build and present a quantitative headcount forecast with confidence intervals as part of the annual planning cycle	CHRO / CFO	Headcount planning remains intuition-based; the organization cannot defend its workforce decisions to the board with data
L&D Manager absorbing Artificial Intelligence Development as a new skill	Require L&D leaders to complete an applied AI-in-learning certification before designing next-generation programs	CLO / L&D Lead	Learning programs will be designed for a workforce that no longer exists
The generalist model is being replaced by a three-layer architecture	Re-architect HR role design with explicit depth targets per role across the Data Foundation, Technology Stack and Transformation Mandate	CHRO	Roles keep accumulating skills additively until the load becomes unmanageable and attrition follows



THE ONE THING

Conduct a skills gap audit of your entire HR team against the emerging skills identified in this study — specifically People Analytics, Power BI and SQL, SAP SuccessFactors, and Data-Driven Decision Making — and use the results to redesign your next HR hiring cycle and reskilling roadmap.

The data shows the market has already moved. The only question is whether your HR function moves with it, or gets left behind.

About this research

Draup is an AI-native workforce intelligence and work redesign platform. The findings in this paper are drawn from Draup's live job-description corpus and skill taxonomy, covering emerging, new and declining skills across 18 HR roles for the twelve months to 27 July 2026. Job-description counts represent distinct active postings in which a skill was explicitly specified. Role-level deep dives were conducted for the HR Business Partner role (119,429 job descriptions) and for the Workforce Analyst and Workforce Manager roles.

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