

Keeping HR Human in the Age of AI

Manufacturers Weigh In

Manufacturers
ALLIANCE

AMERICAN FIDELITY 
a different opinion

Presented by



Brent Rempe
Account Development Executive
American Fidelity



Caty Combs
Marketing Strategy Manager
American Fidelity

Who We Are

American Fidelity is a leading benefits administration and enrollment provider with more than 60 years of experience helping employers and their brokers solve key benefits challenges.



Employee Engagement



Education & Communication



Professional Enrollment Experience

Disclaimer

This information is intended to be educational. It is general in nature and should not be considered financial, legal or tax advice. Consult an attorney or a tax professional regarding your specific situation.

Project Highlights

Purpose:

to understand how the manufacturing industry is leveraging the use of AI among HR teams

- 135 survey respondents
- 8 in-depth interviews

Learning Objectives

1 Understand the role of HR in the age of AI

2 Gain insights on AI's strengths and weaknesses for HR functions

3 Learn how your peers are using AI for workforce strategy

Role of HR in the Age of AI

Workforce Trends

Challenges
among tariffs
and immigration

Workforce planning
more important
than ever



Increased need
for agility

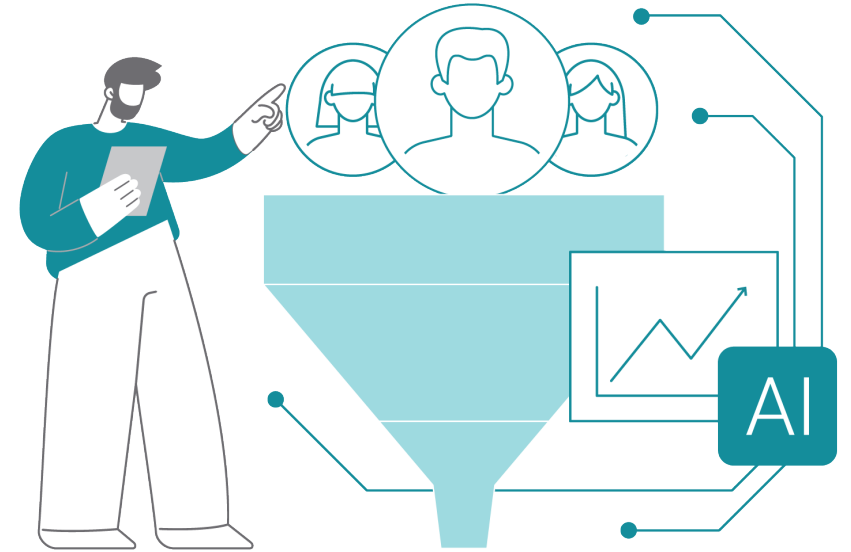
Multi-generational
workforce

Poor employee
engagement,
recruitment and/
or retention

AI as a key Component of Workforce Strategy

Key Findings

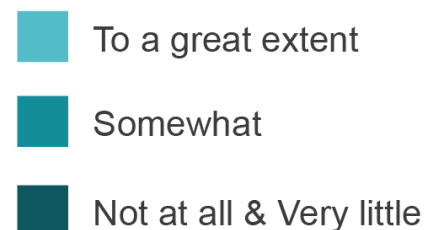
- Vast majority are already implementing AI or planning to do so.
- AI can help increase efficiency of HR teams. – 63% say “AI has the potential to make hiring and management teams more efficient.”



Key Findings

Using AI to Enhance

Recruitment technology has been in use longer so it's more of a proven strategy.



To what extent do you believe AI can enhance your current workforce strategies?

Recruitment



Onboarding



Retention

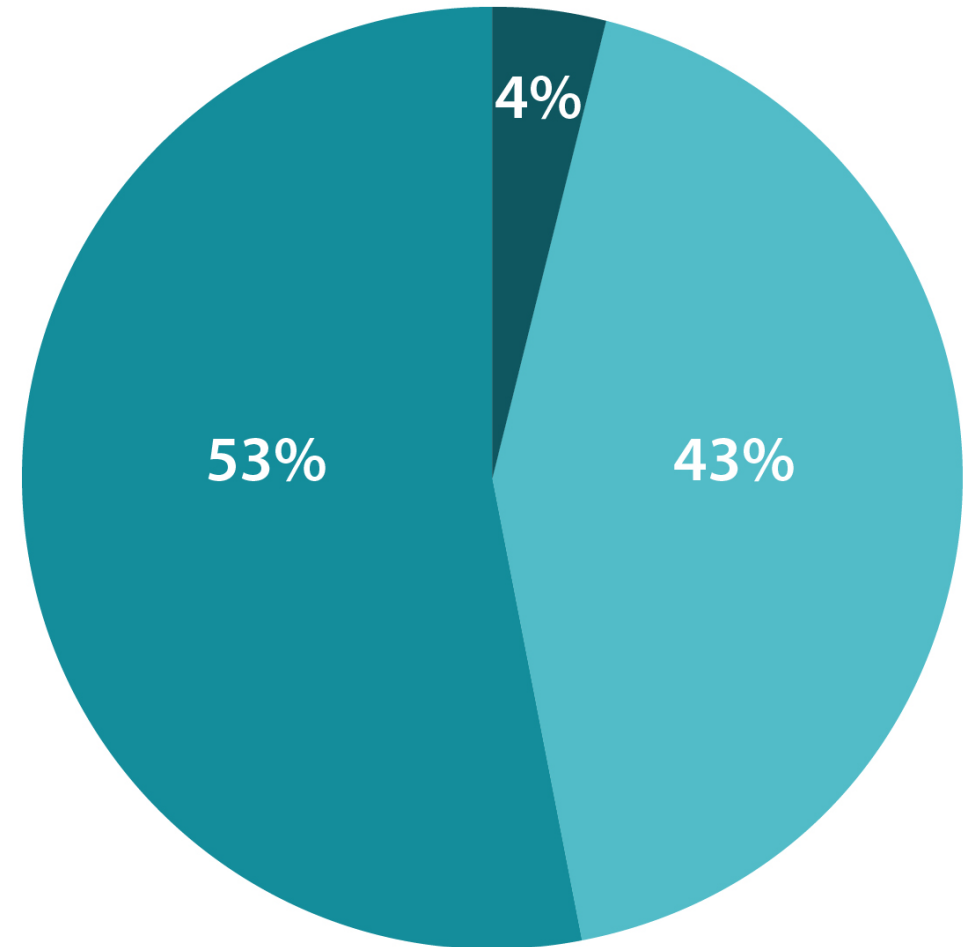
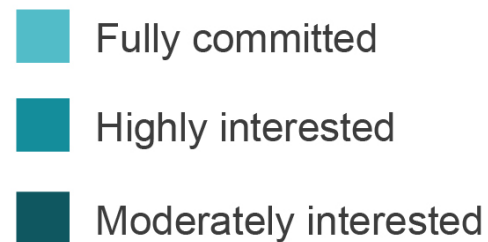


Key Findings

Level of Interest in AI

Most companies see the potential of AI and understand that they need to find space for it to be competitive.

How would you describe the level of interest or willingness among leaders at your company to adopt AI for workforce strategies?

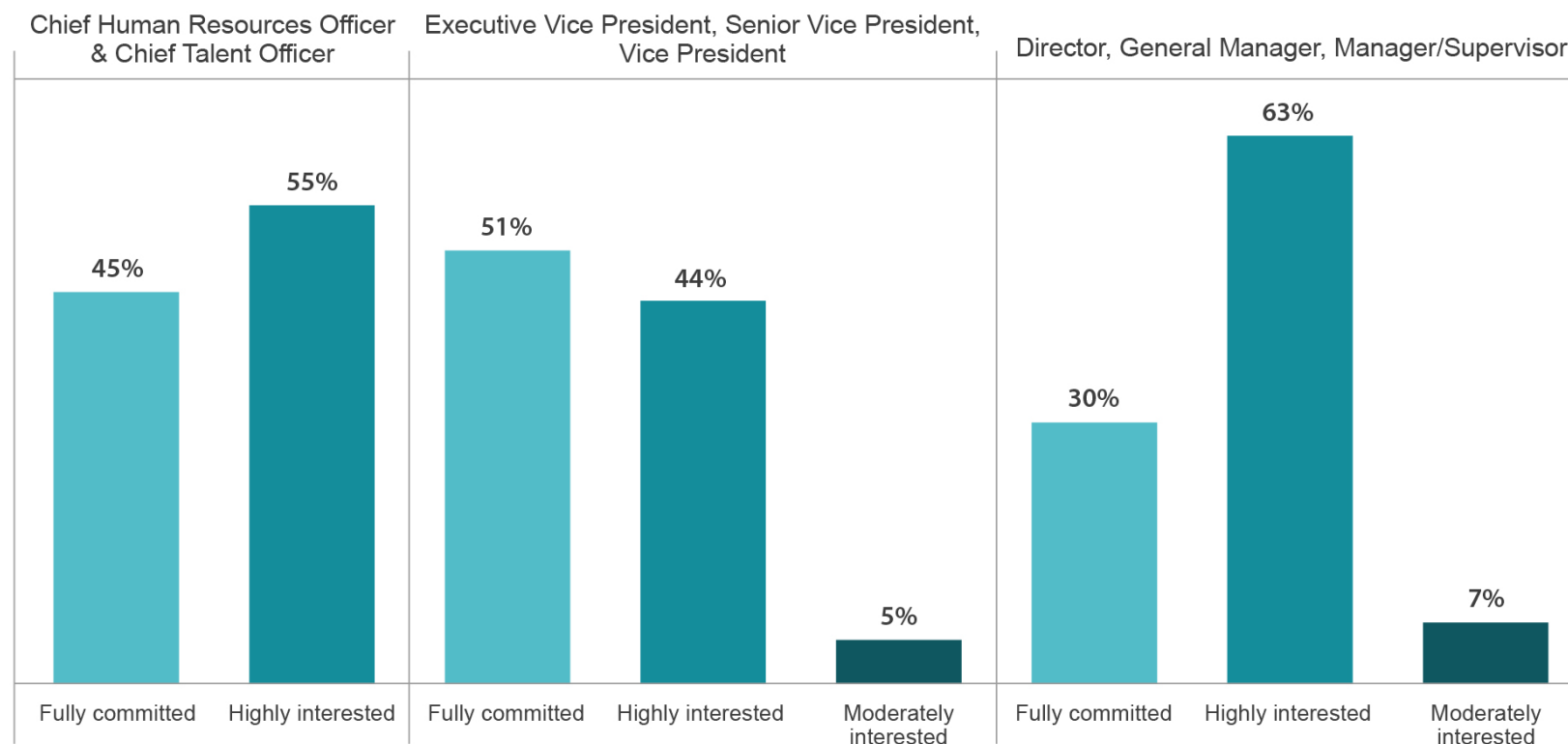
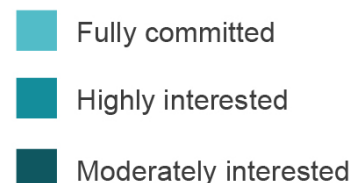


Key Findings

Level of Interest in AI

Interest is high with lower employees but they don't feel companies are fully committed whereas higher level employees tied into leadership teams express more commitment.

How would you describe the level of interest or willingness among leaders at your company to adopt AI for workforce strategies?

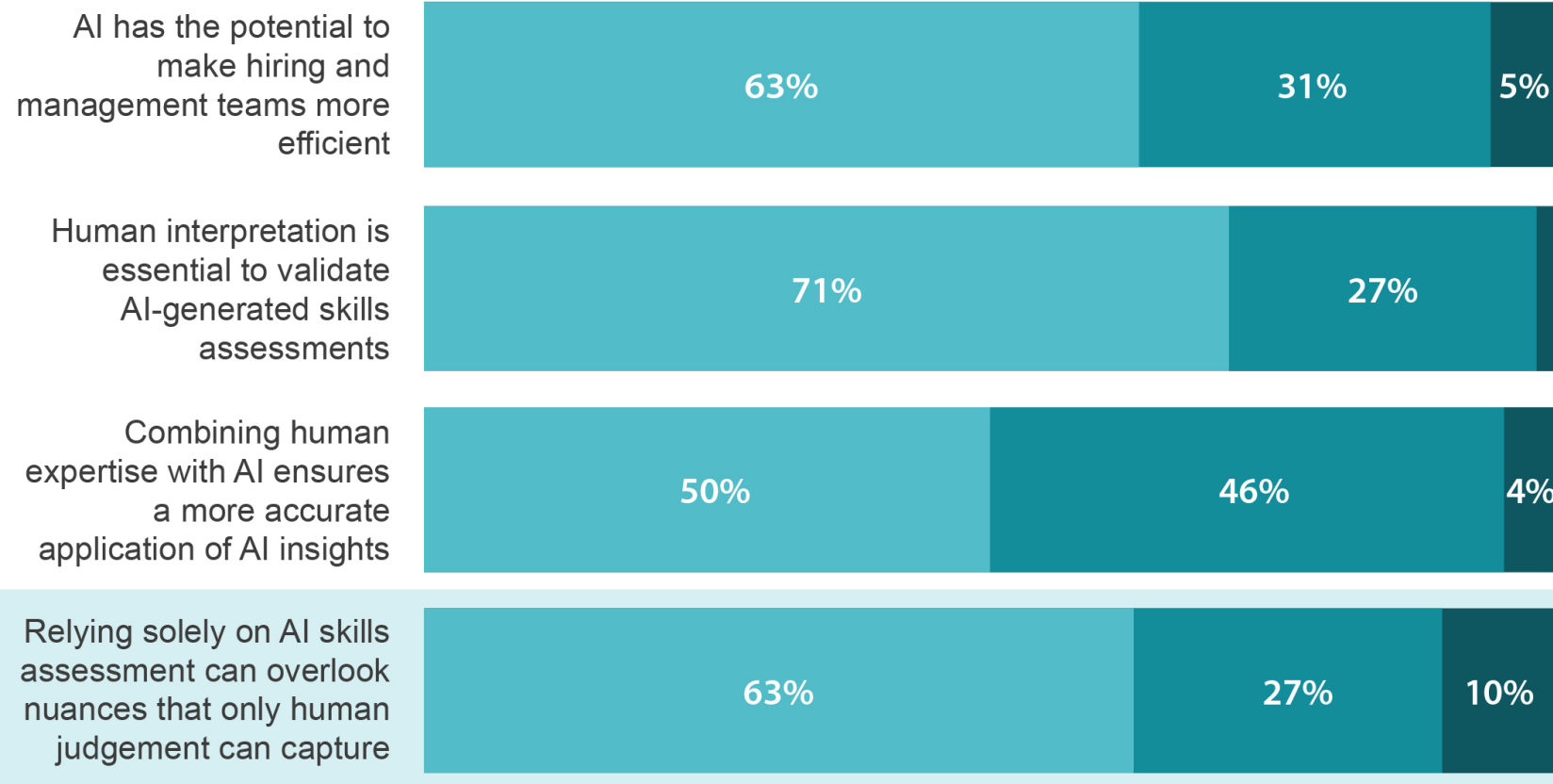
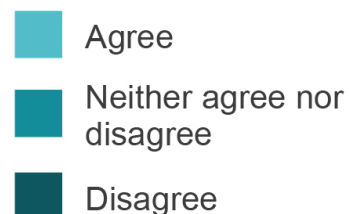


Key Findings

AI Can Make Teams More Efficient

Despite concerns, 63% of respondents agree that AI can increase efficiency of teams.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about AI's role in workforce recruitment and retention strategies.



Recruitment

Recruitment

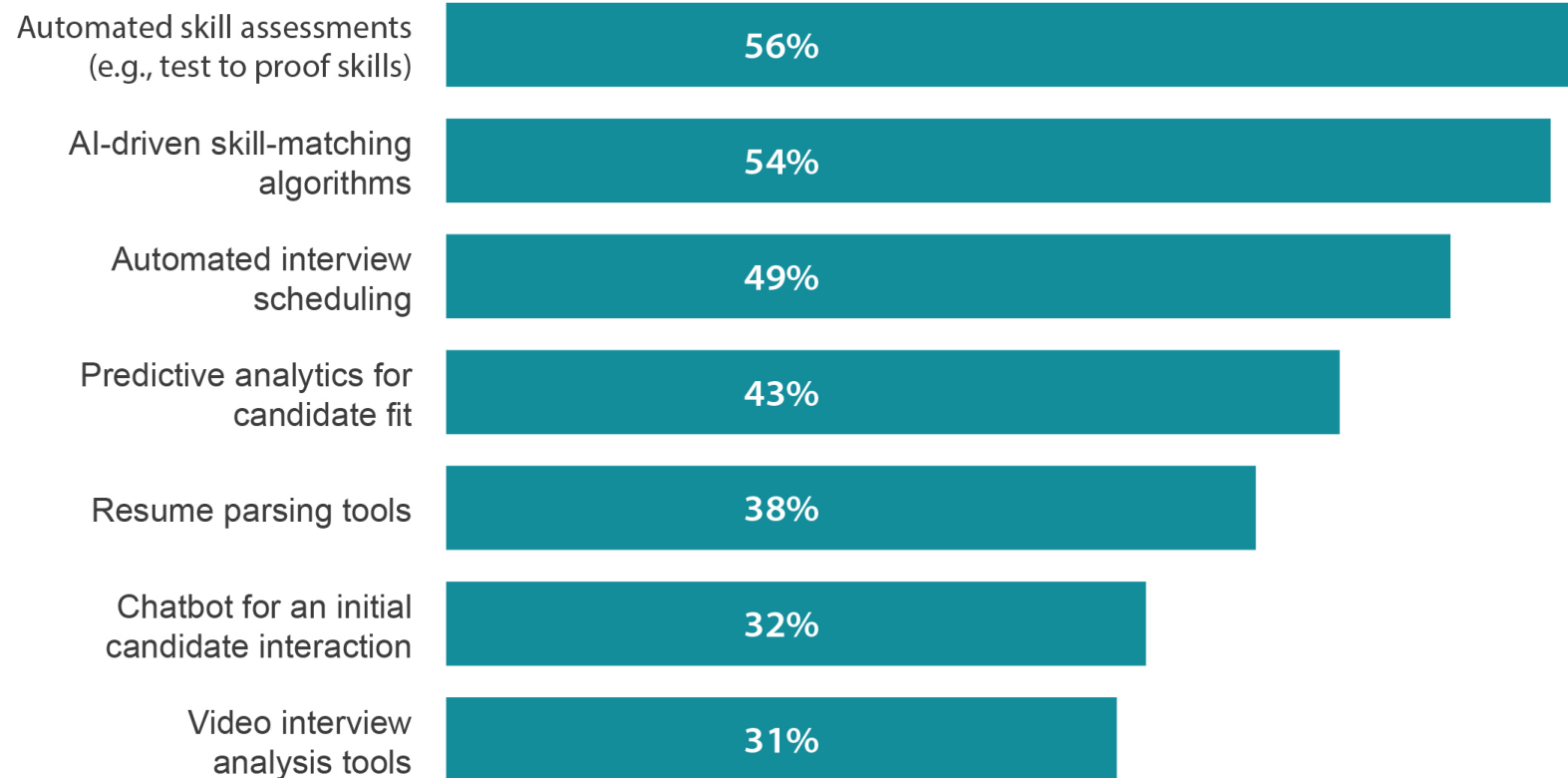
- Recruiting is traditionally data-driven, most innovative function.
- Most time-consuming tasks: #1 screening resumes and applications, #2 conducting initial assessments.
- Most popular usage of AI is with Applicant Tracking Systems.



Recruitment

The top choices reflect the current time-consuming pain points of finding and assessing candidates.

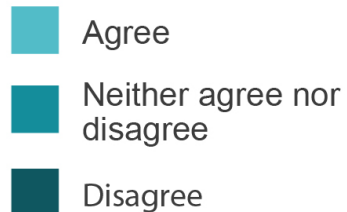
Which of the following AI-powered Application Tracking System (ATS) tools or technologies do you believe have the most significant potential to enhance the productivity and efficiency of the recruiting team? Select all that apply.



Recruitment

With skilled workers in high demand, respondents agree that AI has the potential to help assess skills for manufacturing roles.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about AI's role in assessing skills for manufacturing roles.



AI effectively evaluates the technical skills required for manufacturing positions



AI is a reliable tool for evaluating awareness in candidates



AI reduces the potential for human bias when assessing candidates skills



AI accurately assesses candidates' ability to solve problems



Recruitment

Top 3 recruitment activities that take the most time and resources.

Which of the following recruitment activities take the most time and resources to achieve in a week?



Screening resumes and applications

While AI has been shown to have bias introduced during development (43% listed addressing bias in AI algorithms as a challenge), 60% of respondents still think it can assist with reducing human bias when assessing candidates' skills

Conducting initial assessments

76% of respondents agree that AI effectively evaluates technical skills and 45% agree that AI accurately assesses candidates' ability to solve problems - two elements that are time-consuming for humans to assess

Communicating with candidates

Nearly half (49%) of respondents listed automated interview scheduling as having potential to make recruiting teams more efficient

Poll Question

What recruitment activities take the most time and resources?

Onboarding

Onboarding

“Companies need to rely on a mixed approach that includes human reasoning and empathy alongside technology”

- Anna Tsakiris, American Fidelity

Onboarding

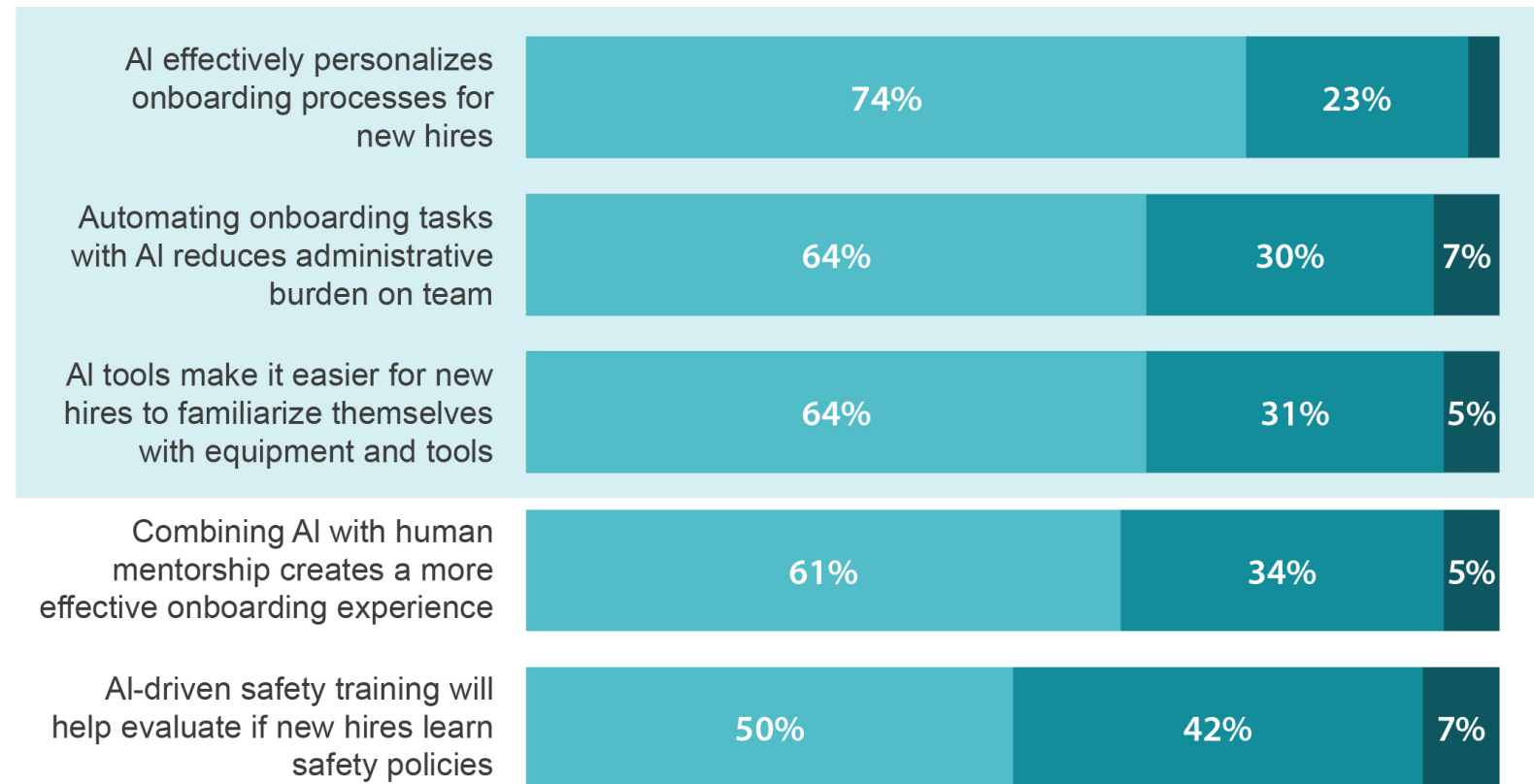
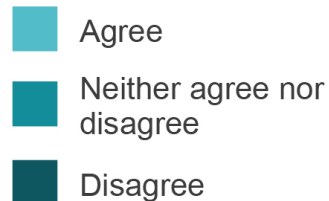
- Most time-consuming tasks in onboarding: #1 Setting up system access, #2 Matching new hires with mentors or team members, #3 Scheduling training sessions or orientations, #4 Delivering personalized safety training.
- Companies are addressing the drain of these activities with AI.
- Widespread belief that human element is critical in the onboarding process.



Onboarding

The potential for AI in onboarding activities is focused on personalization and efficiency for new employees and reducing the admin burden on the HR team

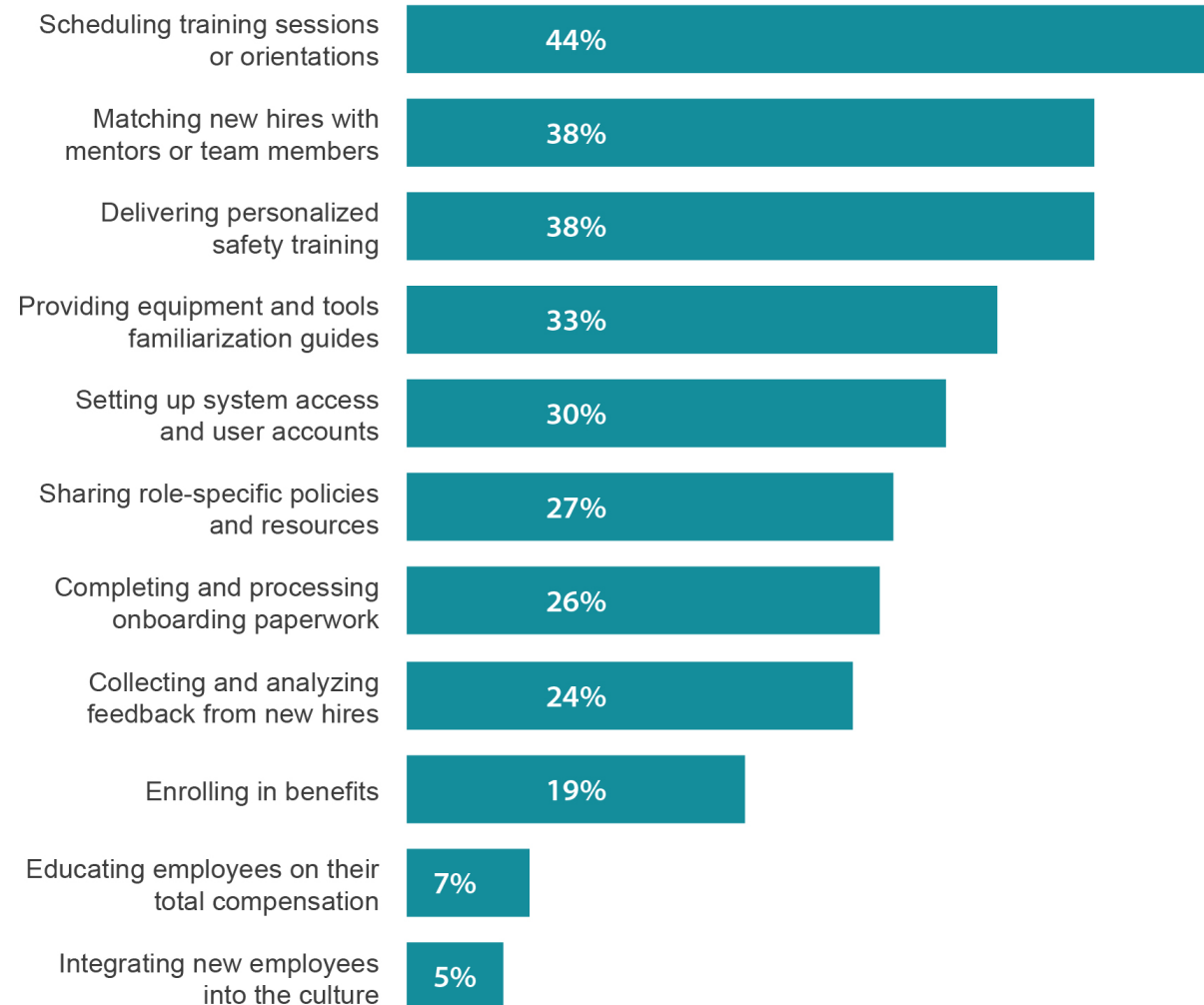
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about AI's role in onboarding new hires:



Onboarding

While setting up system access for new employees was the most time-consuming onboarding task, respondents didn't rank it in the top 3 for task that would benefit from AI/automation perhaps because they are currently or planning to implement a solution.

Please select the top 3 tasks that you believe would benefit the most from using AI-powered tools for automation.



Onboarding

Top 2 planned or current AI/automation features are focused on the pain points of setting up system access and matching new hires with mentors or team members.

Which of the following AI-powered onboarding features is your organization planning to use or currently using to support onboarding? Select all that apply.

AI systems for matching and connecting new hires with mentors

67%

Automated administrative task management (e.g., paperwork, systems, access)

61%

Personalized onboarding platforms tailored to manufacturing roles

57%

AI-driven safety training programs

57%

AI, A/R, or VR tools for equipment familiarization

47%

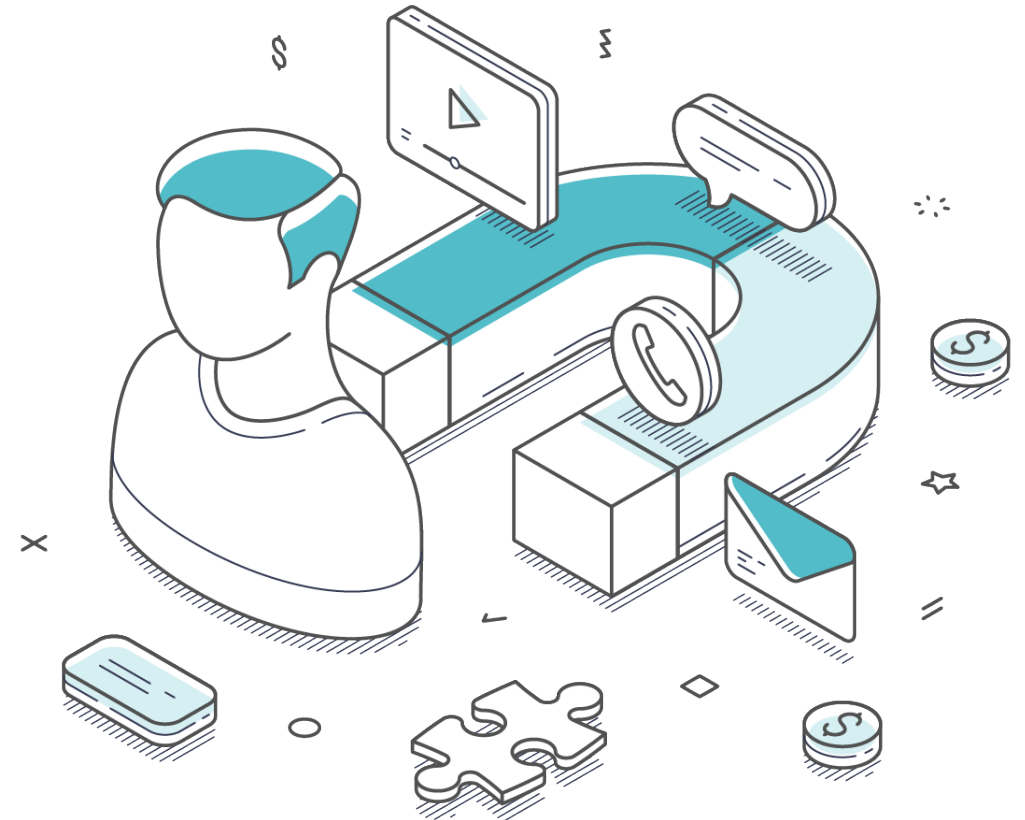
Poll Question

What are the top challenges you hope AI will solve during onboarding?

Retention & Engagement

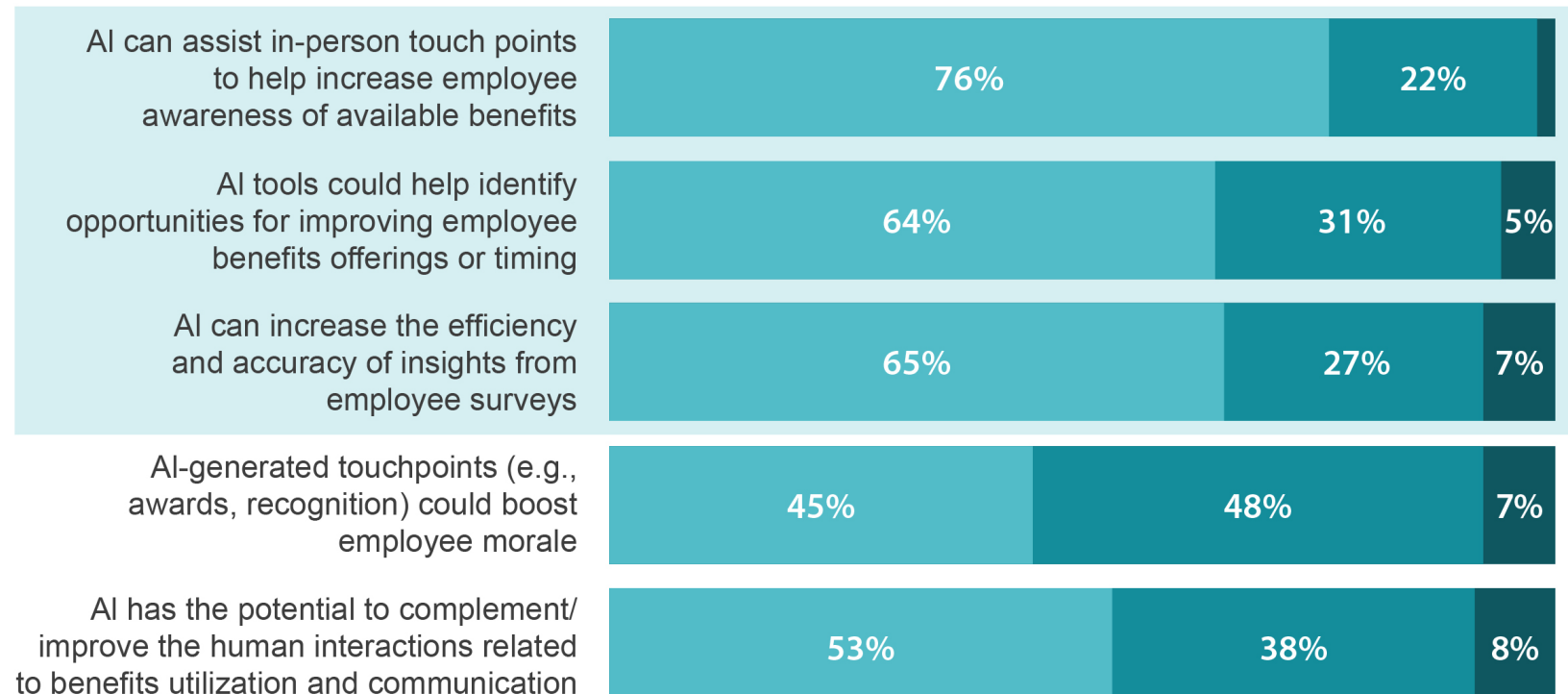
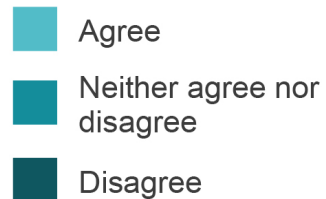
Retention & Engagement

- Retention vs acquisition costs.
- Using AI to take the pulse of employee engagement.
- Significantly less enthusiasm for using AI-generated touchpoints about awards and recognition.



Retention & Engagement

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the potential role of AI in enhancing re-recruitment practices.



Retention & Engagement

AI potential opportunities are focused on communications and analytics, including a deep understanding of career growth opportunities.

Which of the following do you believe would benefit the most from using AI-powered tools for automation in retention and re-recruitment? Select all that apply.

Personalized communications from HR team or hiring team to maintain relationships

63%

Analytics to track employee participation in re-recruitment efforts

59%

Printed or digital materials highlighting re-recruitment initiatives

45%

Regular updates on career growth opportunities

41%

Automated campaigns to engage employees

37%

Communication on total compensation

36%

Education and utilization pertaining to employee benefits

21%

Poll Question

What best practices are you using to retain employees or improve employee engagement?

Concerns & Challenges

Concerns & Challenges

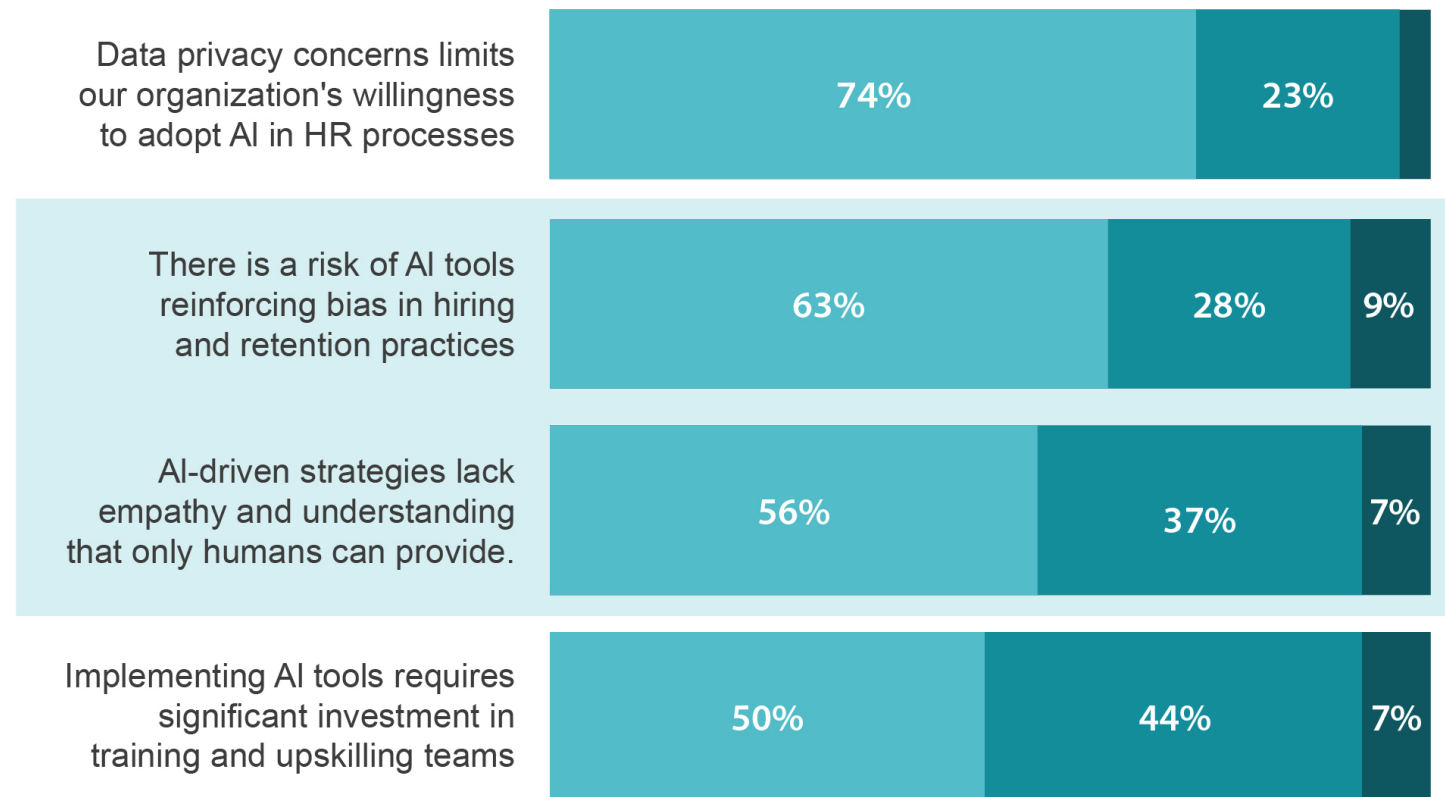
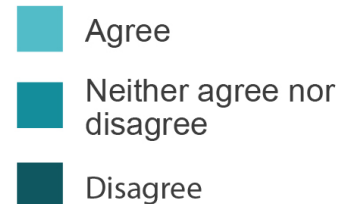
- Preserving empathy and the human connection across all phases of HR.
- Uprooting bias: some see AI as a solution to bias, others are concerned that it is built in.
- Widespread privacy concerns.



Concerns & Challenges

Privacy concerns and costs are concern for AI in all functions. More unique to HR/personnel functions: reinforcing bias and empathy/understanding from humans.

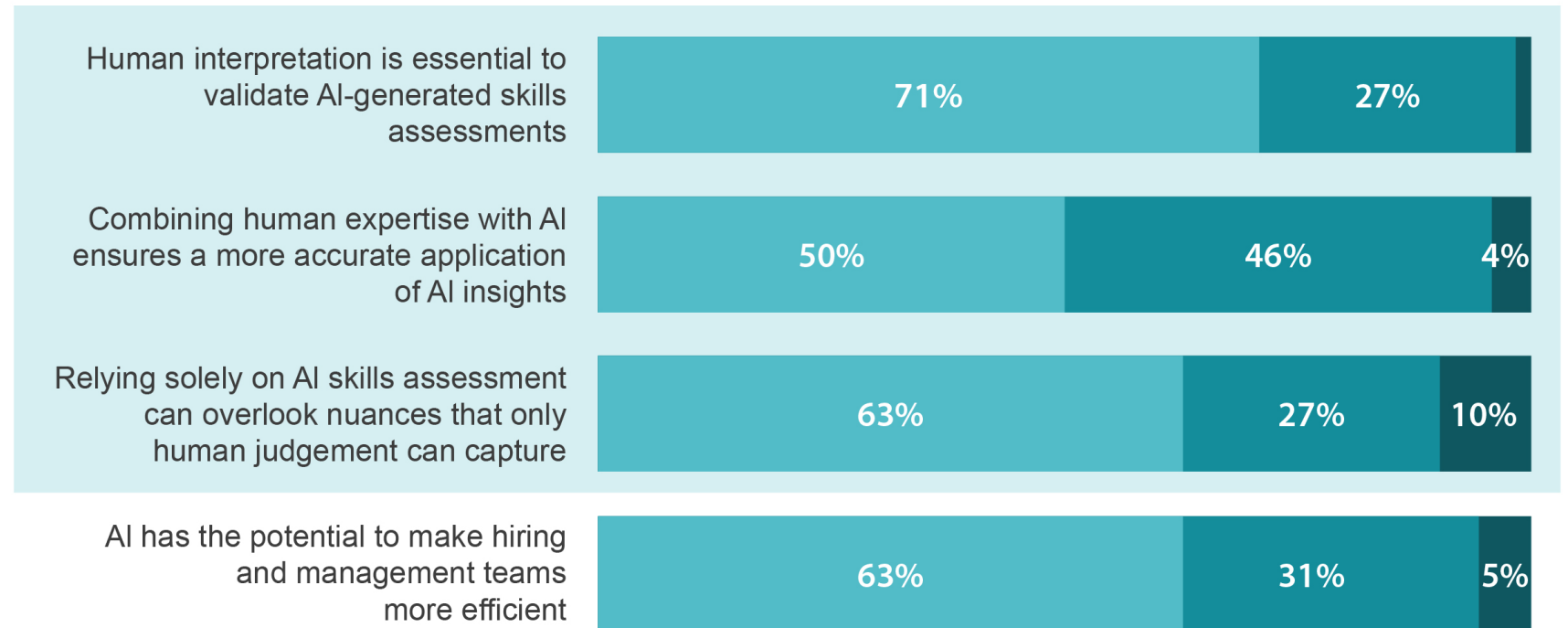
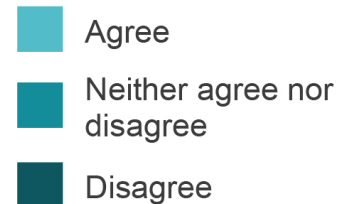
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following concerns of using AI.



Concerns & Challenges

While teams can be more efficient, there is concern about what element is lost without a human.

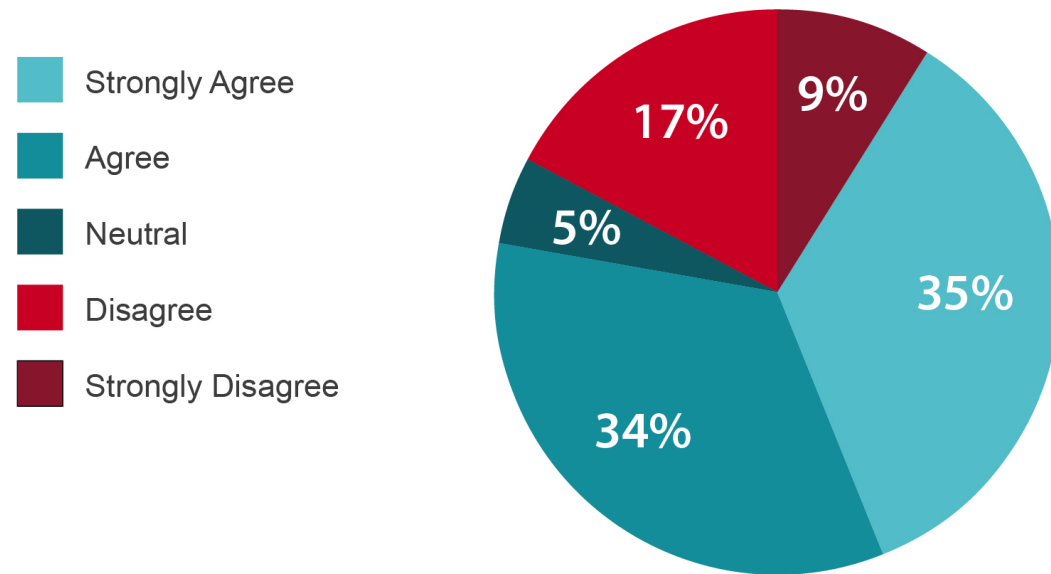
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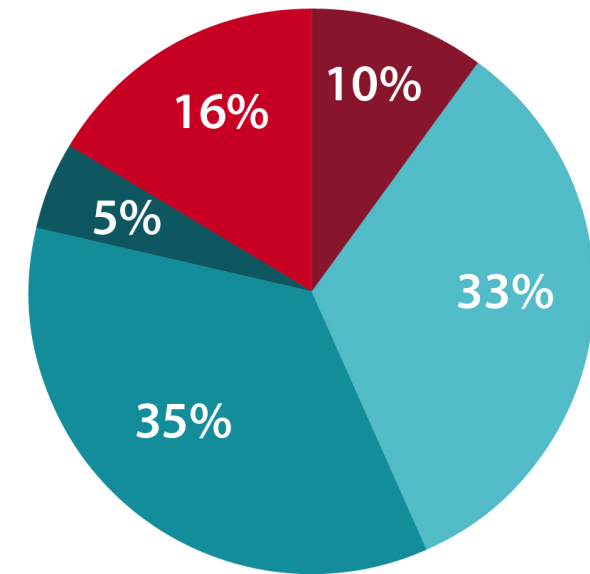
Concerns & Challenges

Respondents showed concern for losing the human touch in onboarding, hiring, and retention practices.

To what extent do you agree with the concern that using AI in onboarding new hires may result in losing the human touch?



To what extent do you agree with the concern that using AI in hiring and retention processes may result in losing the human touch?



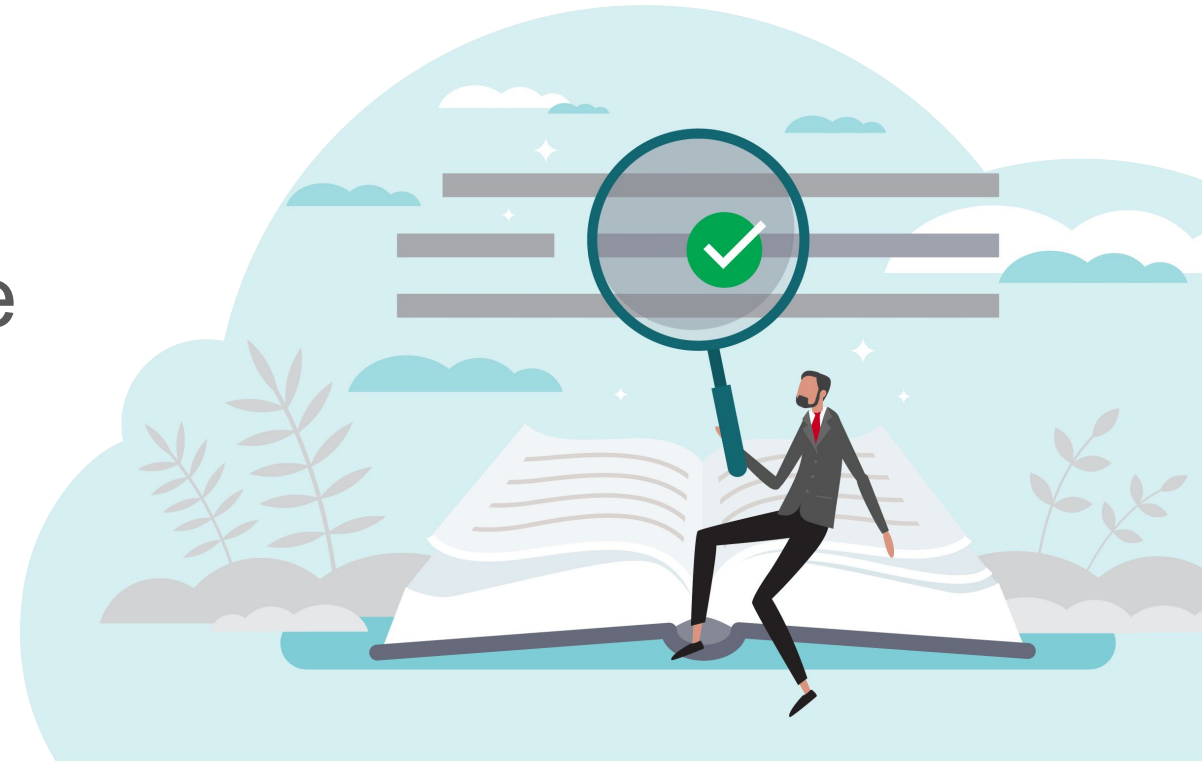
Ways to Ensure Human Touch Remains

- Guides employees through training, but real people bring the company culture to life.
- Removes repetitive tasks so HR can focus on meaningful interactions.
- Allows human trainers to focus on strategic guidance.
- Human interaction fosters motivation and loyalty, which AI might not be able to achieve on its own.
- Employees need encouragement and mentorship that AI cannot fully replace.
- Trust and rapport come from real conversations, not AI-driven processes.

The Future of AI in Workforce Strategies

Final Thesis

While manufacturers are looking to implement AI to support HR, they recognize the need to enhance the human touch, specifically around onboarding, benefits and retention.



How We Help

Benefits Education and Human Touch

- Reinforces the notion that human touch, empathy and strategic guidance are needed.
- You keep the human touch in HR in so many other areas, we can help provide that human touch in benefits administration.
- Serve as a partner in the manufacturing workforce to secure the human touch and be seen as an extension of your HR team.

Let's Talk

Brent Rempe

Account Development Executive

brent.rempe@americanfidelity.com



[americanfidelity.com/
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