Creating People Advantage 2026 Four Power Moves for the CHRO

Canada

17th MARCH 2026

BCG | WFPMA
World Federation of People
Management Associations

> **Global overview of results**

Canada results

The Creating People Advantage Study provides a comprehensive global perspective from HR professionals...

... to holistically assess the status quo of topics that are the most urgent in terms of improving HR departments' capabilities around the globe.

... to provide in-depth perspectives and best practices on key topics for the HR function.

... and thereby equips HR leaders with invaluable HR insights to drive future business success.

...with a unique cooperation between WFPMA and BCG as the basis for success

WFPMA World Federation of People Management Associations

AHRC African Human Resource Confederation

FIDAGH FEDERACIÓN INTERAMERICANA DE ASOCIACIONES DE GESTIÓN HUMANA

NAHRMA

eapm

APFHRM ASIA PACIFIC FEDERATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Network of five regional associations >550,000 global HR professionals as members
Deep expertise on key trends in HR

CPA study
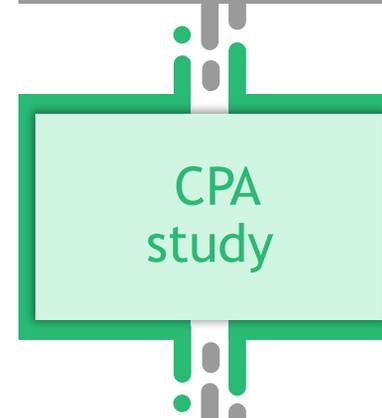
Extensive data base
Sound methodology

BCG

> Methodological expertise
> Analytical know-how
> Editorial & publishing proficiency

The Largest Global HR Study Shaping the Future of People and HR – 10th Edition 2026

CPA Europe 2009 — How to address HR challenges in the recession

CPA 2010 — Creating a New Deal for Middle Managers

CPA Europe 2011 — Time To Act: HR certainties in uncertain times

CPA 2012 — Realizing the Value of People Management

CPA Europe 2013 — Lifting HR practices to the next level

CPA 2014/2015 — How to Set Up Great HR Functions: Connect, Prioritize, Impact

CPA 2016 — Creating People Advantage in the Public Sector

CPA 2021 — The Future of People Management Priorities

CPA 2023 — Set the Right People Priorities for Challenging Times

CPA 2026 — Four Power Moves for the CHRO

Source: BCG

Our Survey Drew Responses from 7,115 Participants in 115 Markets Across Various Industries and Seniority Levels
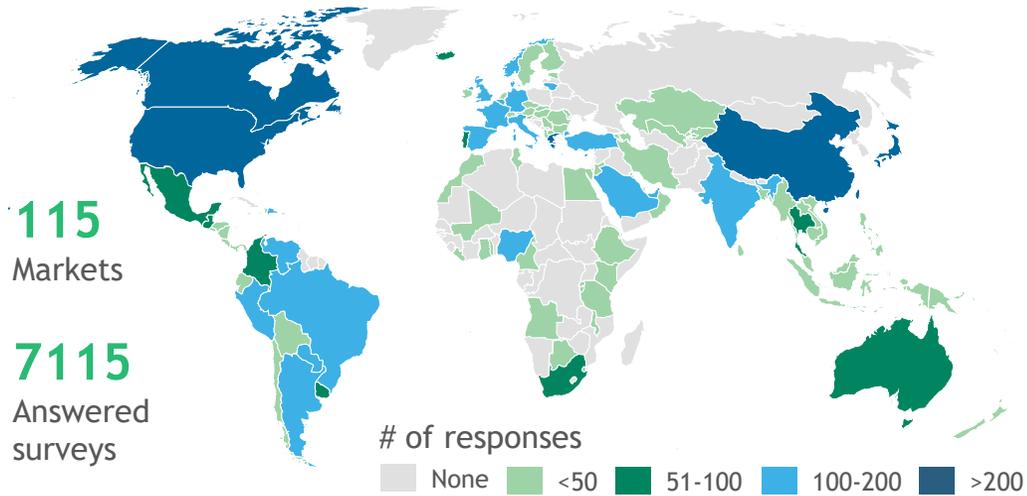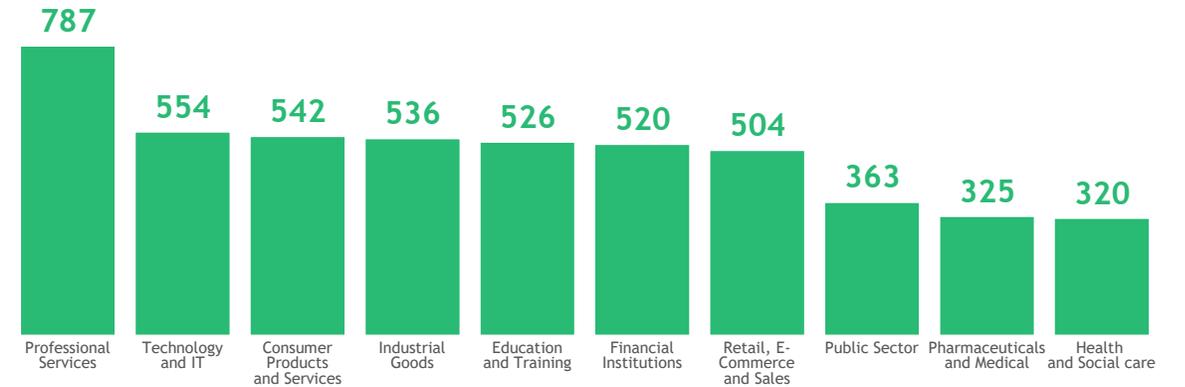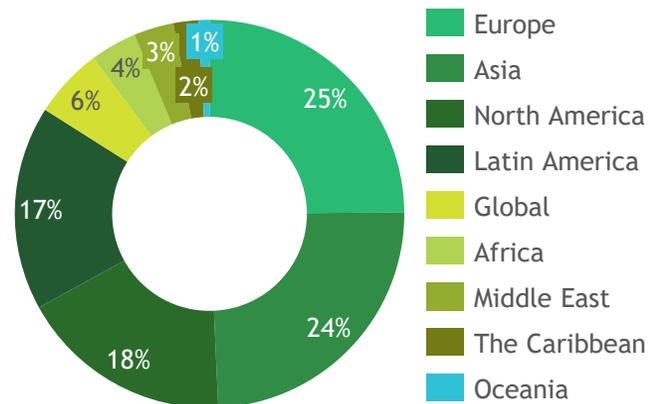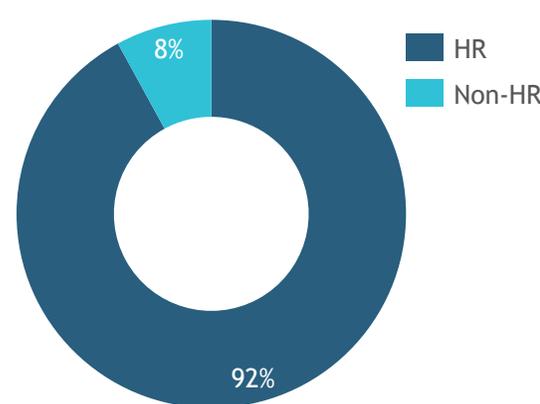
115 Markets

7115 Answered surveys

# of responses
None | <50 | 51-100 | 100-200 | >200

Industry split Top 10

Professional Services	Technology and IT	Consumer Products and Services	Industrial Goods	Education and Training	Financial Institutions	Retail, E-Commerce and Sales	Public Sector	Pharmaceuticals and Medical	Health and Social care
787	554	542	536	526	520	504	363	325	320

Region of Focus

- Europe — 25%
- Asia — 24%
- North America — 18%
- Latin America — 17%
- Global — 6%
- Africa — 4%
- Middle East — 3%
- The Caribbean — 2%
- Oceania — 1%

Current position

- HR — 92%
- Non-HR — 8%

Level of Seniority

- Individual contributor — 990
- Manager & Senior Manager — 2884
- C Suite & VP — 1418
- Director & Senior Director — 1528
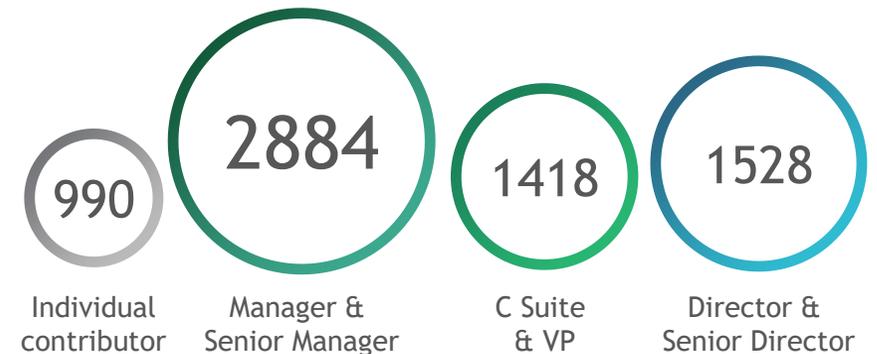
Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (n = 7,115).
Note: "Other" and "N/A" responses are not included in this overview. Because of rounding, not all sector percentages add up to 100%.
China includes Mainland China (704), Hong Kong (332), and Taiwan (18)

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The analysis considers 28 HR and People Management topics in 9 clusters

I People & HR Strategy, Planning & Analytics	**1** People & HR Strategy	**2** Strategic Workforce Planning	**3** HR Cost & Impact Steering · **4** People Analytics & Reporting
II Talent Acquisition	**5** Employer Value Proposition		**6** Recruiting & Onboarding
III People Development	**7** Up- & Reskilling	**8** Talent Management & Succession Planning	**9** Staffing & Mobility Management
IV Performance, Rewards & Engagement	**10** Performance Management	**11** Rewards & Recognition	**12** Employee Engagement & Well-being
V Purpose, Leadership & Culture	**13** Purpose & Culture Activation	**14** Leadership Development	**15** Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Management · **16** Sustainability & ESG
VI Labor & Employee Relations	**17** Policy Management	**18** Employee Relations	**19** Health & Safety
VII Organizational Transformation	**20** Org. Development & Design	**21** Flexible Work Schemes	**22** Transformation Management incl. Restructuring
VIII HR Tech Stack	**23** HR IT Architecture, Software & Data	**24** HR Digital Solutions (e.g., HR Process Automation)	**25** Deployment Of Generative AI & Other Emerging Technologies
IX HR Operating Model	**26** HR Organization & Governance	**27** HR Shared Services	**28** HR Staff Capabilities

HR priorities shift toward workforce capability, talent infrastructure, and digital enablement

Future importance ranking		Responses of "High" or "Somewhat high" (%)	Ranking 2023	Ranking change
1	People & HR Strategy	47% — 37% — 84%	1	0 →
2	Strategic Workforce Planning	41% — 39% — 80%	5	3 ↑
3	Leadership Development	43% — 37% — 80%	2	-1 ↓
4	Employer Value Proposition	39% — 39% — 78%	4	0 →
5	Recruiting & Onboarding	39% — 39% — 78%	9	4 ↑
6	Purpose & Culture Activation	38% — 39% — 77%	6	0 →
7	Upskilling & Reskilling	38% — 39% — 77%	7	0 →
8	Talent Management & Succession Planning	37% — 40% — 77%	15	7 ↑
9	Performance Management	36% — 40% — 76%	10	1 ↑
10	Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	40% — 36% — 76%	3	-7 ↓
11	Employee Relations	34% — 40% — 74%	12	1 ↑
12	Digital Solutions (e.g., HR Process Automation)	36% — 37% — 73%	25	13 ↑
13	Org. Development & Design	32% — 40% — 72%	18	5 ↑
14	Rewards & Recognition	32% — 41% — 72%	8	-6 ↓
15	People Analytics & Reporting	35% — 37% — 72%	16	1 ↑
16	HR Cost & Impact Steering	33% — 39% — 72%	N/A	N/A
17	Health & Safety	38% — 34% — 72%	11	-6 ↓
18	HR Staff Capabilities	32% — 39% — 71%	13	-5 ↓
19	HR IT Architecture, Software & Data	33% — 38% — 71%	14	-5 ↓
20	Policy Management	30% — 39% — 69%	22	2 ↑
21	HR Organization & Governance	28% — 40% — 68%	20	-1 ↓
22	Deployment of Generative AI and Other Emerging Technologies	34% — 31% — 66%	27	5 ↑
23	Transformation Management incl. Restructuring	29% — 36% — 64%	21	-2 ↓
24	Flexible Work Schemes	28% — 35% — 63%	17	-7 ↓
25	Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Management	26% — 36% — 61%	19	-6 ↓
26	Staffing & Mobility Management	24% — 37% — 61%	24	-2 ↓
27	Sustainability & ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)	27% — 32% — 59%	23	-4 ↓
28	HR Shared Services	23% — 35% — 58%	26	-2 ↓

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% 45% 50% 55% 60% 65% 70% 75% 80% 85%

Legend: +3 pts difference | -3 pts difference | High Importance | Somewhat High Importance

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (n = 7,115).
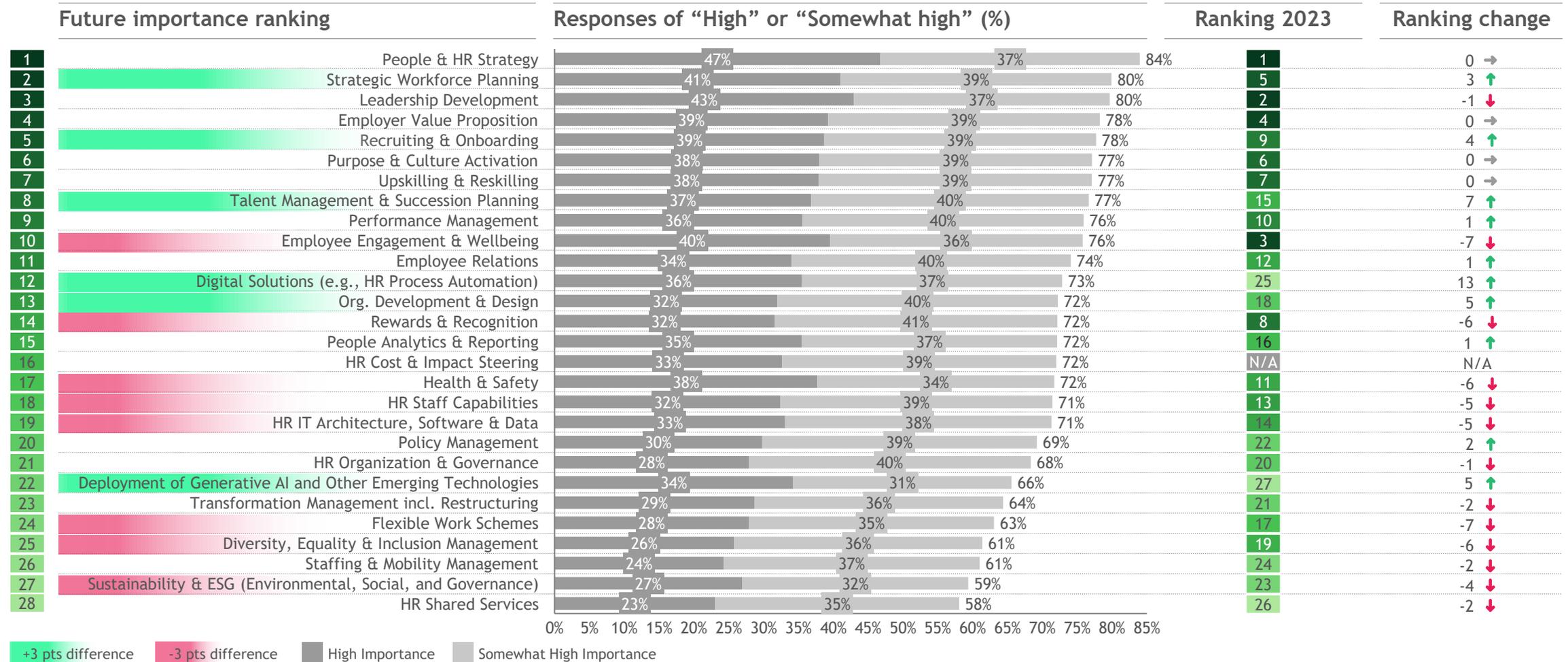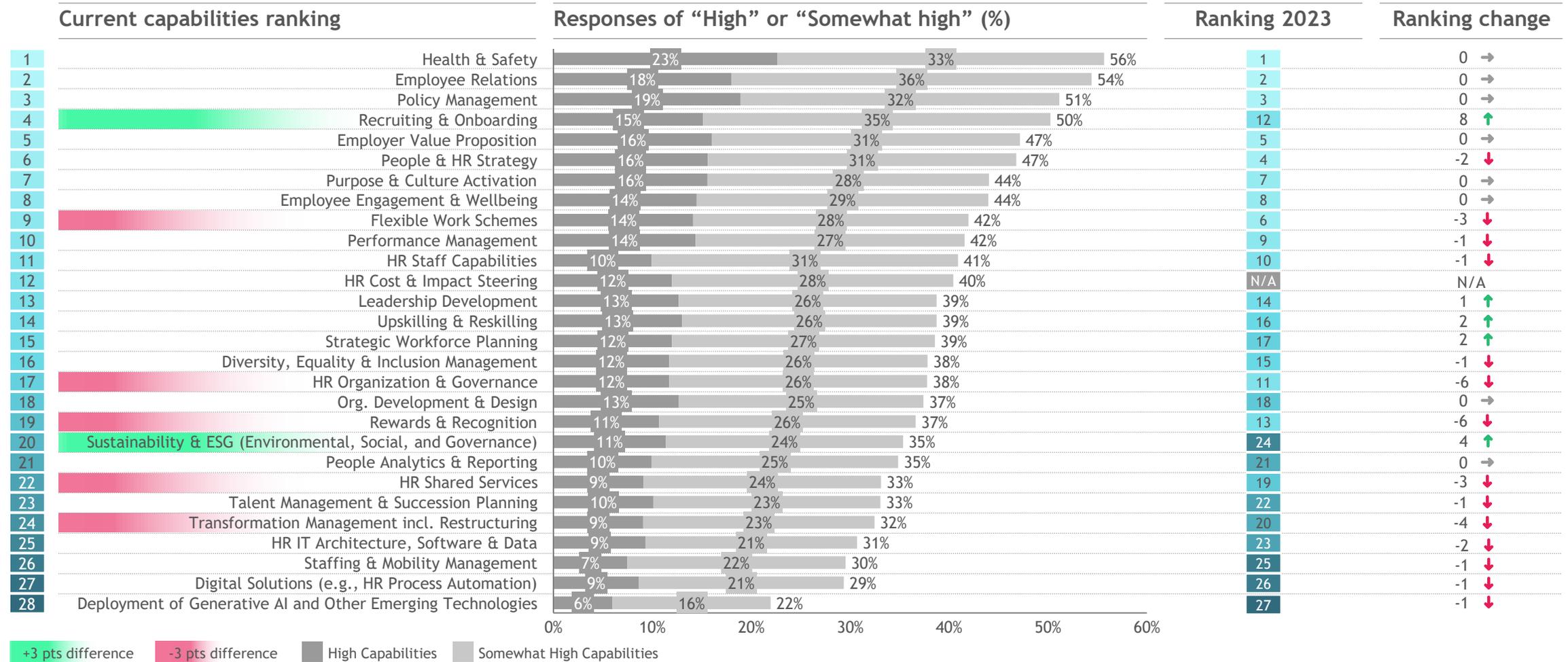Note: "Other" and "N/A" responses are not included in this overview. Because of rounding, not all sector percentages add up to 100%.
The 2023 topic ranking was recalculated based on the average percentage of "High" and "Somewhat high" responses considering merged topics.

Capabilities lag behind future-critical topics with limited progress particularly in digital and AI
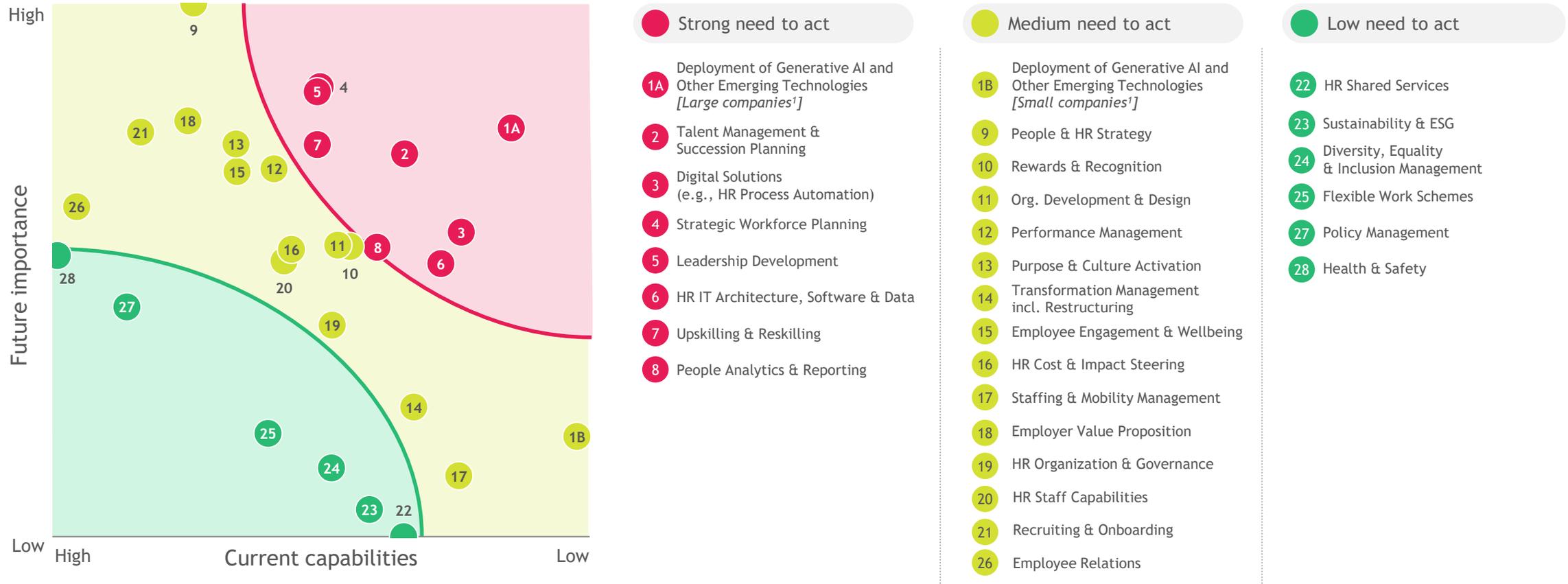
Current capabilities ranking		Responses of "High" or "Somewhat high" (%)	Ranking 2023	Ranking change
1	Health & Safety	23% / 33% / 56%	1	0 →
2	Employee Relations	18% / 36% / 54%	2	0 →
3	Policy Management	19% / 32% / 51%	3	0 →
4	Recruiting & Onboarding	15% / 35% / 50%	12	8 ↑
5	Employer Value Proposition	16% / 31% / 47%	5	0 →
6	People & HR Strategy	16% / 31% / 47%	4	-2 ↓
7	Purpose & Culture Activation	16% / 28% / 44%	7	0 →
8	Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	14% / 29% / 44%	8	0 →
9	Flexible Work Schemes	14% / 28% / 42%	6	-3 ↓
10	Performance Management	14% / 27% / 42%	9	-1 ↓
11	HR Staff Capabilities	10% / 31% / 41%	10	-1 ↓
12	HR Cost & Impact Steering	12% / 28% / 40%	N/A	N/A
13	Leadership Development	13% / 26% / 39%	14	1 ↑
14	Upskilling & Reskilling	13% / 26% / 39%	16	2 ↑
15	Strategic Workforce Planning	12% / 27% / 39%	17	2 ↑
16	Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Management	12% / 26% / 38%	15	-1 ↓
17	HR Organization & Governance	12% / 26% / 38%	11	-6 ↓
18	Org. Development & Design	13% / 25% / 37%	18	0 →
19	Rewards & Recognition	11% / 26% / 37%	13	-6 ↓
20	Sustainability & ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)	11% / 24% / 35%	24	4 ↑
21	People Analytics & Reporting	10% / 25% / 35%	21	0 →
22	HR Shared Services	9% / 24% / 33%	19	-3 ↓
23	Talent Management & Succession Planning	10% / 23% / 33%	22	-1 ↓
24	Transformation Management incl. Restructuring	9% / 23% / 32%	20	-4 ↓
25	HR IT Architecture, Software & Data	9% / 21% / 31%	23	-2 ↓
26	Staffing & Mobility Management	7% / 22% / 30%	25	-1 ↓
27	Digital Solutions (e.g., HR Process Automation)	9% / 21% / 29%	26	-1 ↓
28	Deployment of Generative AI and Other Emerging Technologies	6% / 16% / 22%	27	-1 ↓

Legend: +3 pts difference | -3 pts difference | High Capabilities | Somewhat High Capabilities

Sorting the 28 topics by difference between current capabilities and future importance lead to a "need to act" prioritization

Strong need to act

1A Deployment of Generative AI and Other Emerging Technologies [Large companies[1]]

2 Talent Management & Succession Planning

3 Digital Solutions (e.g., HR Process Automation)

4 Strategic Workforce Planning

5 Leadership Development

6 HR IT Architecture, Software & Data

7 Upskilling & Reskilling

8 People Analytics & Reporting

Medium need to act

1B Deployment of Generative AI and Other Emerging Technologies [Small companies[1]]

9 People & HR Strategy

10 Rewards & Recognition

11 Org. Development & Design

12 Performance Management

13 Purpose & Culture Activation

14 Transformation Management incl. Restructuring

15 Employee Engagement & Wellbeing

16 HR Cost & Impact Steering

17 Staffing & Mobility Management

18 Employer Value Proposition

19 HR Organization & Governance

20 HR Staff Capabilities

21 Recruiting & Onboarding

26 Employee Relations

Low need to act

22 HR Shared Services

23 Sustainability & ESG

24 Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Management

25 Flexible Work Schemes

27 Policy Management

28 Health & Safety

2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (n = 7,115) 1. Delta calculation for GenAI deployment split by company size due to significant differences. Large companies > 5000, Small companies < 5000
Note: Ranked by highest number of responses in "high" and "somewhat high"

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Talent priorities reflect local labor market dynamics and HR maturity levels

Future Importance	Global	Americas								Europe											Asia Pacific						Africa
	Global	United States	Argentina	Brazil	Canada	Dominican Republic	Paraguay	Peru	Venezuela	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	France	Italy	Lithuania	Norway	Spain	Türkiye	United Kingdom	Mainland China	Hong Kong	India	Japan	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates	Nigeria
People & HR Strategy	1	1	1	1	1	10	13	3	10	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	22	1
Strategic Workforce Planning	2	2	20	8	2	13	19	16	16	3	8	3	6	5	12	1	7	15	2	12	2	7	2	4	9	20	5
Leadership Development	3	6	2	16	4	8	3	11	5	2	1	7	5	11	6	2	2	3	9	22	3	10	9	3	24	16	15
Employer Value Proposition	4	4	12	6	3	9	8	7	14	9	9	16	7	22	2	12	12	4	16	10	7	8	6	7	8	2	13
Recruiting & Onboarding	5	3	17	2	5	15	8	9	18	5	5	17	1	15	4	5	1	17	22	3	10	18	6	11	5	23	11
Purpose & Culture Activation	6	9	16	15	11	5	11	4	4	12	7	15	12	16	8	8	8	9	6	12	11	2	15	1	14	18	6
Upskilling & Reskilling	7	11	7	3	9	16	23	18	20	3	6	6	3	7	7	16	4	6	6	5	9	4	15	8	20	10	3
Talent Management & Succession Planning	8	7	18	14	7	21	20	14	24	8	11	10	4	19	5	18	13	11	8	8	4	11	1	6	6	4	18
Performance Management	9	9	4	8	12	4	2	4	11	14	16	21	13	13	17	7	16	9	20	6	5	9	4	12	10	8	7
Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	10	5	13	5	6	6	6	12	9	6	3	9	9	9	1	4	5	2	15	4	15	22	5	5	12	14	19
Total number of responses	7115	926	122	152	352	172	164	161	139	111	158	168	242	135	118	104	159	110	127	123	704	332	112	344	106	119	155

Color code for global ranking

Low importance ▢▢▢▢▢ High importance

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Operational strength is broadly established while strategic talent capabilities differ widely by country

Current Capabilities	Global	United States	Argentina	Brazil	Canada	Dominican Republic	Paraguay	Peru	Venezuela	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Greece	France	Italy	Lithuania	Norway	Spain	Türkiye	United Kingdom	Mainland China	Hong Kong	India	Japan	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates	Nigeria
Health & Safety	1	1	1	2	2	4	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	23	6	1	3	9	2
Employee Relations	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	9	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	3	4	11	9	4	14	19	1
Policy Management	3	4	5	8	5	3	3	4	3	5	7	6	3	13	6	4	2	4	5	11	3	4	20	10	6	9	3
Recruiting & Onboarding	4	3	4	4	3	7	5	8	11	2	5	4	4	3	5	5	3	4	3	4	2	17	2	9	2	7	4
Employer Value Proposition	5	6	9	10	4	8	7	12	6	4	10	5	9	17	3	14	10	7	7	9	6	2	5	5	5	3	13
People & HR Strategy	6	5	12	7	6	13	17	6	14	7	1	12	7	11	7	4	6	8	6	2	11	9	7	15	9	17	6
Purpose & Culture Activation	7	7	4	6	8	10	7	9	9	12	4	8	15	18	13	11	7	20	18	14	15	5	17	6	17	23	7
Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	8	8	13	3	7	5	11	3	5	6	2	10	11	4	10	9	5	6	11	6	9	24	3	8	13	1	16
Flexible Work Schemes	9	11	15	20	11	26	12	13	21	8	8	2	18	5	8	6	12	10	20	15	10	14	27	2	7	24	20
Performance Management	10	10	16	16	13	11	14	5	16	14	22	18	10	14	12	10	18	13	13	7	14	1	3	16	3	6	9
Total number of responses	7115	926	122	152	352	172	164	161	139	111	158	168	242	135	118	104	159	110	127	123	704	332	112	344	106	119	155

Region groupings: Global | Americas | Europe | Asia Pacific | Africa

Color code for global ranking: Low capability — High capability

Global overview of results

> Canada results

Our survey drew 352 responses from Canada

Geography
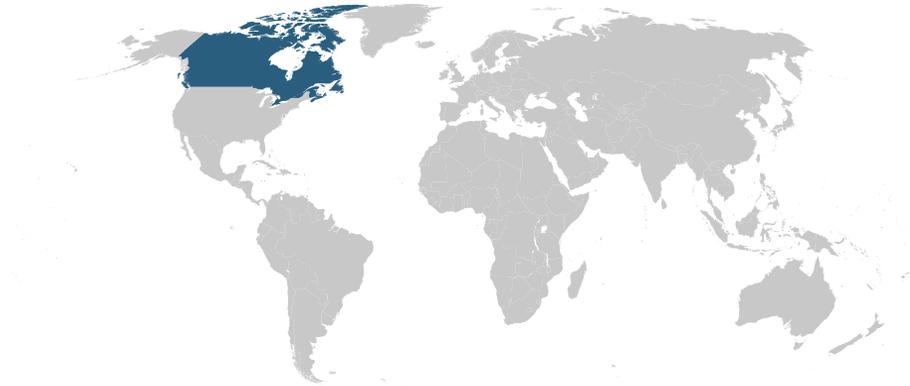
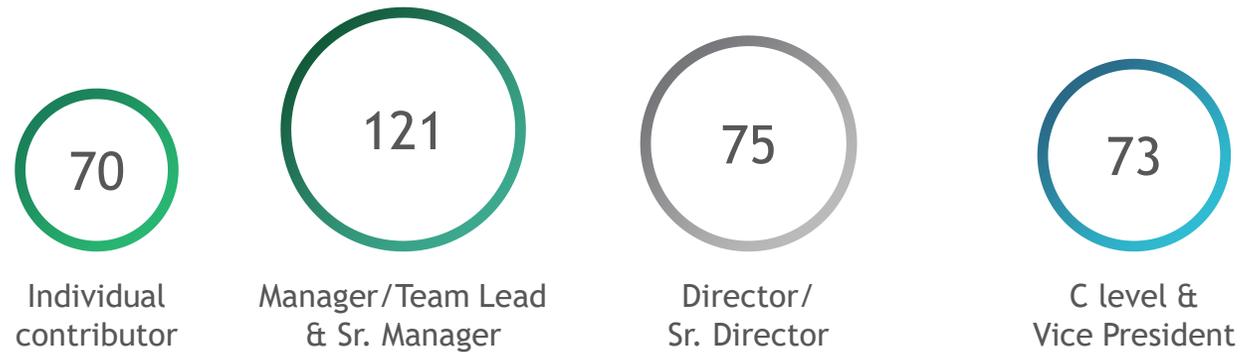## Industry split
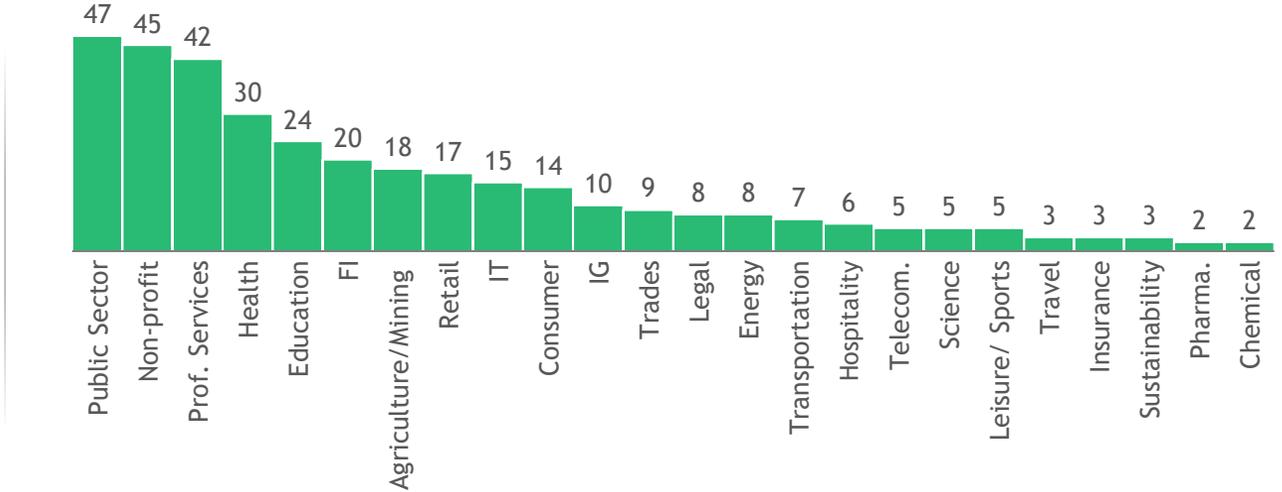
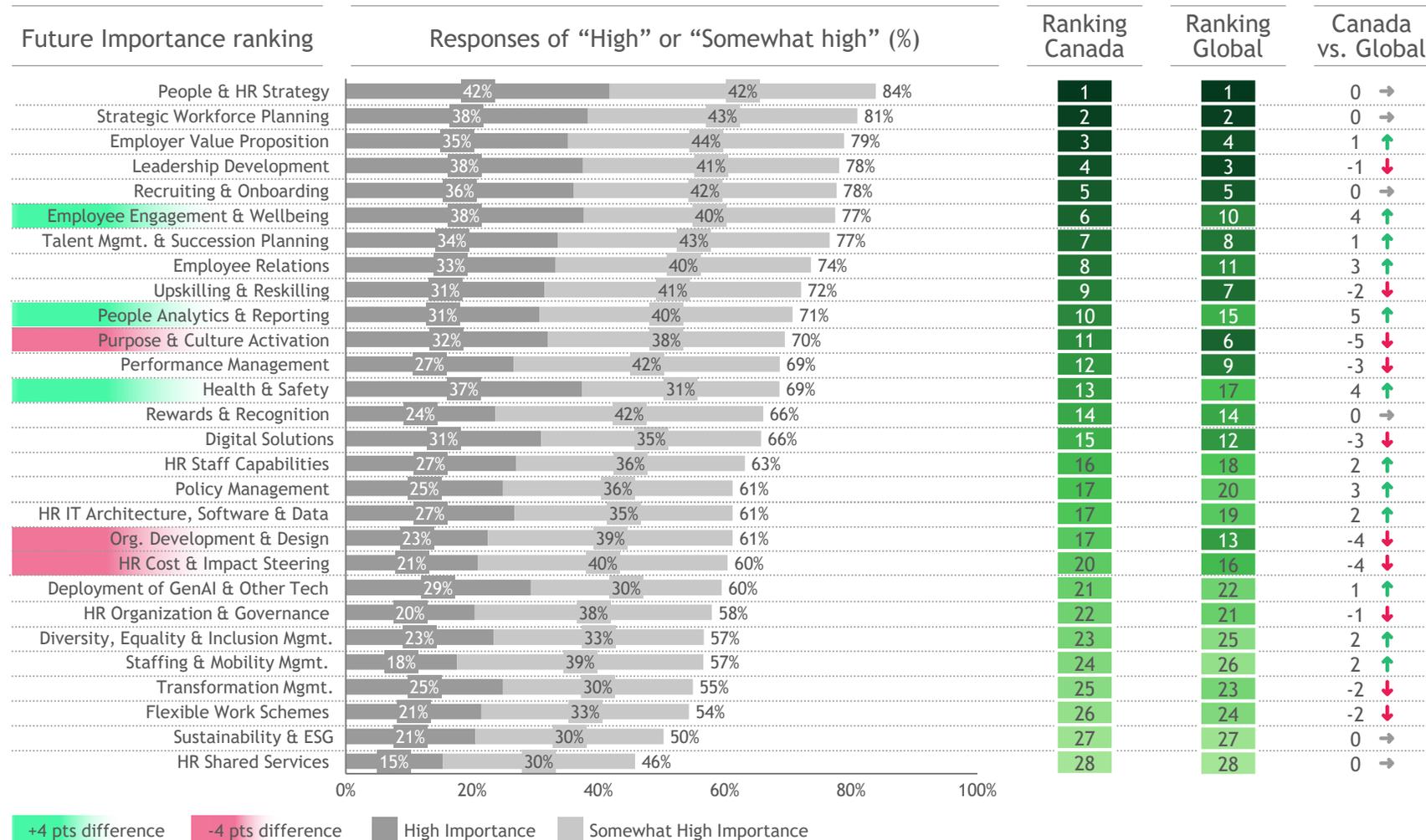| Public Sector	Non-profit	Prof. Services	Health	Education	FI	Agriculture/Mining	Retail	IT	Consumer	IG	Trades	Legal	Energy	Transportation	Hospitality	Telecom.	Science	Leisure/Sports	Travel	Insurance	Sustainability	Pharma.	Chemical
47	45	42	30	24	20	18	17	15	14	10	9	8	8	7	6	5	5	5	3	3	3	2	2

Respondent position

Non-HR 9%

352 Answered surveys

HR 91%

Level of Seniority

70 Individual contributor

121 Manager/Team Lead & Sr. Manager

75 Director/ Sr. Director

73 C level & Vice President

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352).
Not Included: N/A and other answers

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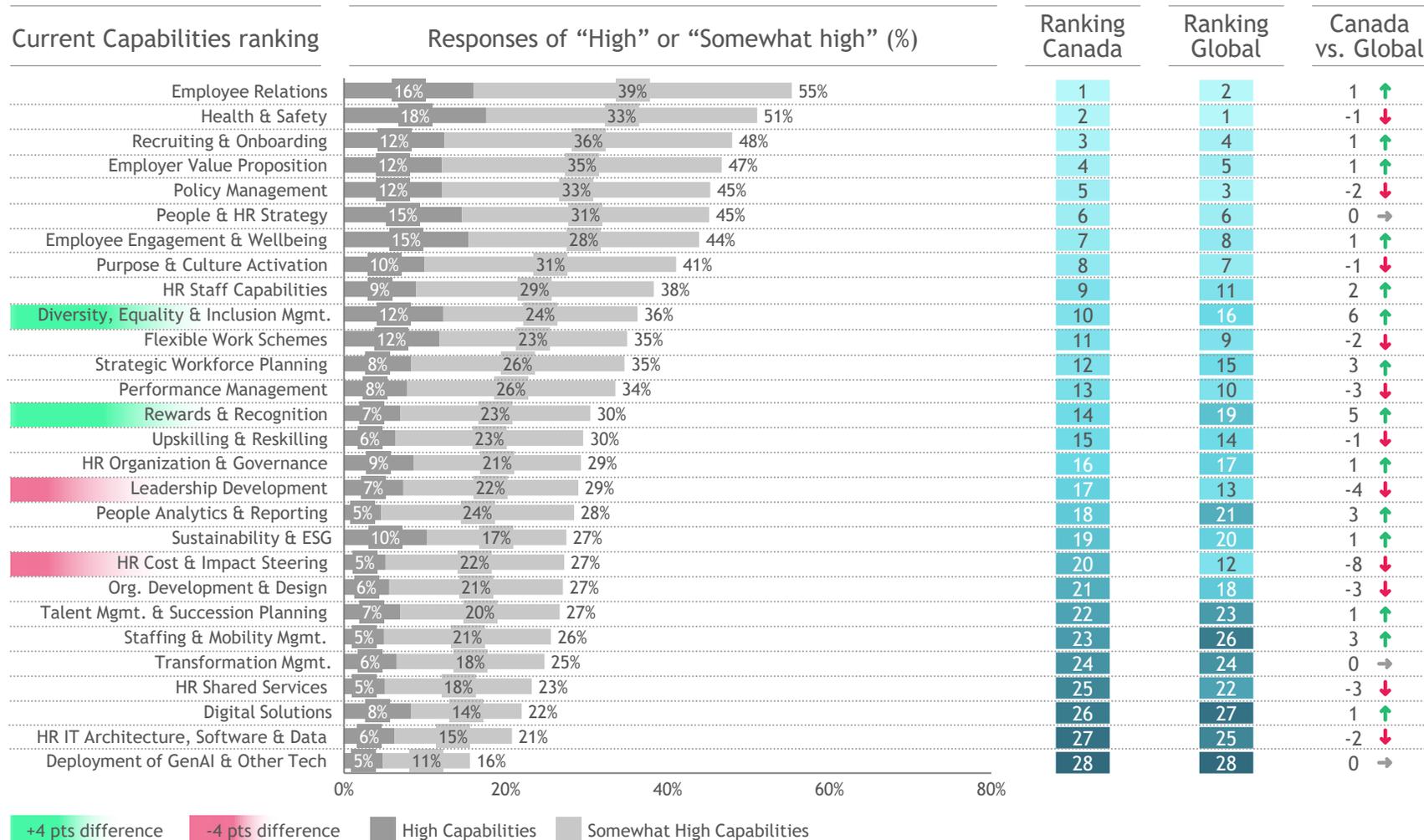# Ranking of 28 topics for Future Importance Global vs Canada; major differences in 6 topics

Future Importance ranking	Responses of "High" or "Somewhat high" (%)	Ranking Canada	Ranking Global	Canada vs. Global
People & HR Strategy	42% 42% 84%	1	1	0 →
Strategic Workforce Planning	38% 43% 81%	2	2	0 →
Employer Value Proposition	35% 44% 79%	3	4	1 ↑
Leadership Development	38% 41% 78%	4	3	-1 ↓
Recruiting & Onboarding	36% 42% 78%	5	5	0 →
Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	38% 40% 77%	6	10	4 ↑
Talent Mgmt. & Succession Planning	34% 43% 77%	7	8	1 ↑
Employee Relations	33% 40% 74%	8	11	3 ↑
Upskilling & Reskilling	31% 41% 72%	9	7	-2 ↓
People Analytics & Reporting	31% 40% 71%	10	15	5 ↑
Purpose & Culture Activation	32% 38% 70%	11	6	-5 ↓
Performance Management	27% 42% 69%	12	9	-3 ↓
Health & Safety	37% 31% 69%	13	17	4 ↑
Rewards & Recognition	24% 42% 66%	14	14	0 →
Digital Solutions	31% 35% 66%	15	12	-3 ↓
HR Staff Capabilities	27% 36% 63%	16	18	2 ↑
Policy Management	25% 36% 61%	17	20	3 ↑
HR IT Architecture, Software & Data	27% 35% 61%	17	19	2 ↑
Org. Development & Design	23% 39% 61%	17	13	-4 ↓
HR Cost & Impact Steering	21% 40% 60%	20	16	-4 ↓
Deployment of GenAI & Other Tech	29% 30% 60%	21	22	1 ↑
HR Organization & Governance	20% 38% 58%	22	21	-1 ↓
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Mgmt.	23% 33% 57%	23	25	2 ↑
Staffing & Mobility Mgmt.	18% 39% 57%	24	26	2 ↑
Transformation Mgmt.	25% 30% 55%	25	23	-2 ↓
Flexible Work Schemes	21% 33% 54%	26	24	-2 ↓
Sustainability & ESG	21% 30% 50%	27	27	0 →
HR Shared Services	15% 30% 46%	28	28	0 →

Legend: +4 pts difference | -4 pts difference | High Importance | Somewhat High Importance

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Canada vs. Global comparison

↑ Future importance of **People Analytics & Reporting, Employee Engagement & Wellbeing and Health & Safety** ranked much <u>higher</u>

↓ Future importance of **Purpose & Culture Activation, Org. Development & Design and HR Cost & Impact Steering** ranked much <u>lower</u>

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352).

Ranking of 28 topics for Current Capabilities Global vs Canada; major differences in 4 topics

Current Capabilities ranking	Responses of "High" or "Somewhat high" (%)	Ranking Canada	Ranking Global	Canada vs. Global
Employee Relations	16% / 39% / 55%	1	2	1 ↑
Health & Safety	18% / 33% / 51%	2	1	-1 ↓
Recruiting & Onboarding	12% / 36% / 48%	3	4	1 ↑
Employer Value Proposition	12% / 35% / 47%	4	5	1 ↑
Policy Management	12% / 33% / 45%	5	3	-2 ↓
People & HR Strategy	15% / 31% / 45%	6	6	0 →
Employee Engagement & Wellbeing	15% / 28% / 44%	7	8	1 ↑
Purpose & Culture Activation	10% / 31% / 41%	8	7	-1 ↓
HR Staff Capabilities	9% / 29% / 38%	9	11	2 ↑
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Mgmt.	12% / 24% / 36%	10	16	6 ↑
Flexible Work Schemes	12% / 23% / 35%	11	9	-2 ↓
Strategic Workforce Planning	8% / 26% / 35%	12	15	3 ↑
Performance Management	8% / 26% / 34%	13	10	-3 ↓
Rewards & Recognition	7% / 23% / 30%	14	19	5 ↑
Upskilling & Reskilling	6% / 23% / 30%	15	14	-1 ↓
HR Organization & Governance	9% / 21% / 29%	16	17	1 ↑
Leadership Development	7% / 22% / 29%	17	13	-4 ↓
People Analytics & Reporting	5% / 24% / 28%	18	21	3 ↑
Sustainability & ESG	10% / 17% / 27%	19	20	1 ↑
HR Cost & Impact Steering	5% / 22% / 27%	20	12	-8 ↓
Org. Development & Design	6% / 21% / 27%	21	18	-3 ↓
Talent Mgmt. & Succession Planning	7% / 20% / 27%	22	23	1 ↑
Staffing & Mobility Mgmt.	5% / 21% / 26%	23	26	3 ↑
Transformation Mgmt.	6% / 18% / 25%	24	24	0 →
HR Shared Services	5% / 18% / 23%	25	22	-3 ↓
Digital Solutions	8% / 14% / 22%	26	27	1 ↑
HR IT Architecture, Software & Data	6% / 15% / 21%	27	25	-2 ↓
Deployment of GenAI & Other Tech	5% / 11% / 16%	28	28	0 →

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%

Legend: +4 pts difference | -4 pts difference | High Capabilities | Somewhat High Capabilities

Canada vs. Global comparison

↑ Current capabilities in **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Management and Rewards & Recognition** ranked much **higher**

↓ Current capabilities in **HR Cost & Impact Steering** ranked much **lower**

↓ Current capabilities in **Leadership Development** ranked notably **lower**

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352).

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Canada shows solid Gen AI adoption, but privacy and ethics concerns are a major constraint

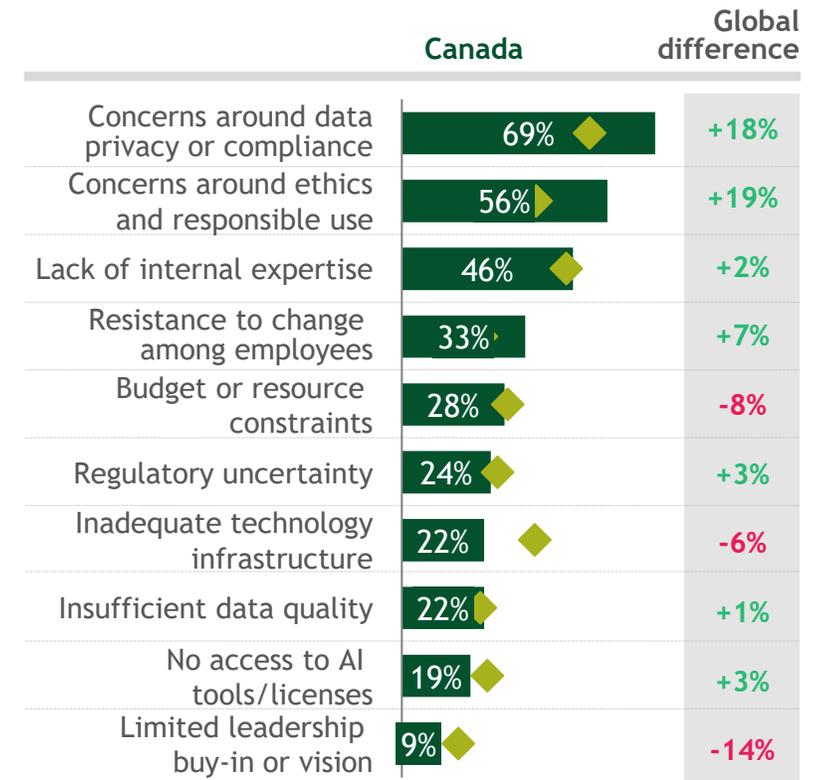## What level of relevance does Gen AI currently have for your organization?

Canada	Global
8%	12%
25%	26%
26%	25%
21%	24%
20%	12%
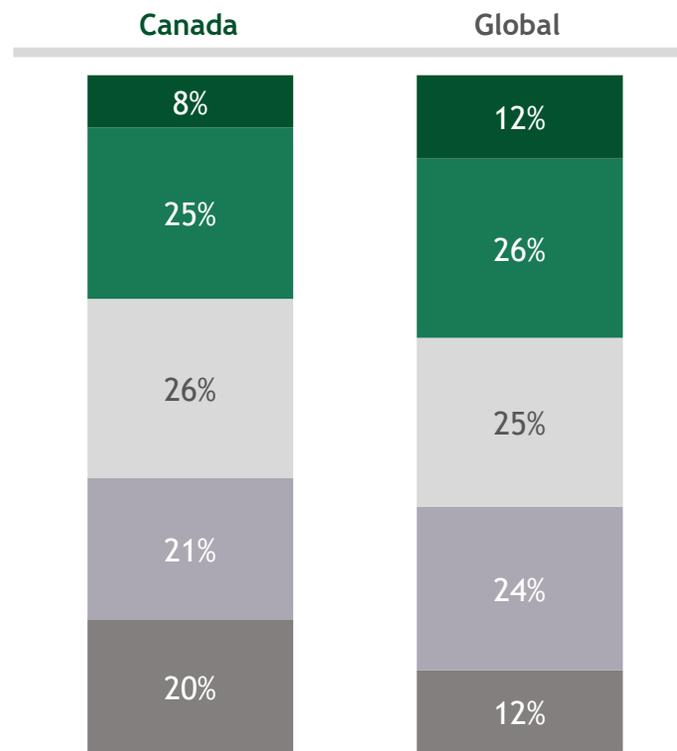
Legend: ■ High ■ Strong ■ Moderate ■ Some ■ Low

To what extent has Gen AI been adopted across your organization?

	Canada	Global difference
Implemented in selected functions or pilots	36%	-10%
Being actively used across the organization	34%	+9%
Exploring and planning	21%	0%
Not yet started, but interested	9%	+1%

Legend: ■ Canada ◆ Global

What are the biggest barriers to adopting Gen AI in your organization's HR processes?[1]

	Canada	Global difference
Concerns around data privacy or compliance	69%	+18%
Concerns around ethics and responsible use	56%	+19%
Lack of internal expertise	46%	+2%
Resistance to change among employees	33%	+7%
Budget or resource constraints	28%	-8%
Regulatory uncertainty	24%	+3%
Inadequate technology infrastructure	22%	-6%
Insufficient data quality	22%	+1%
No access to AI tools/licenses	19%	+3%
Limited leadership buy-in or vision	9%	-14%

Legend: ■ Canada ◆ Global

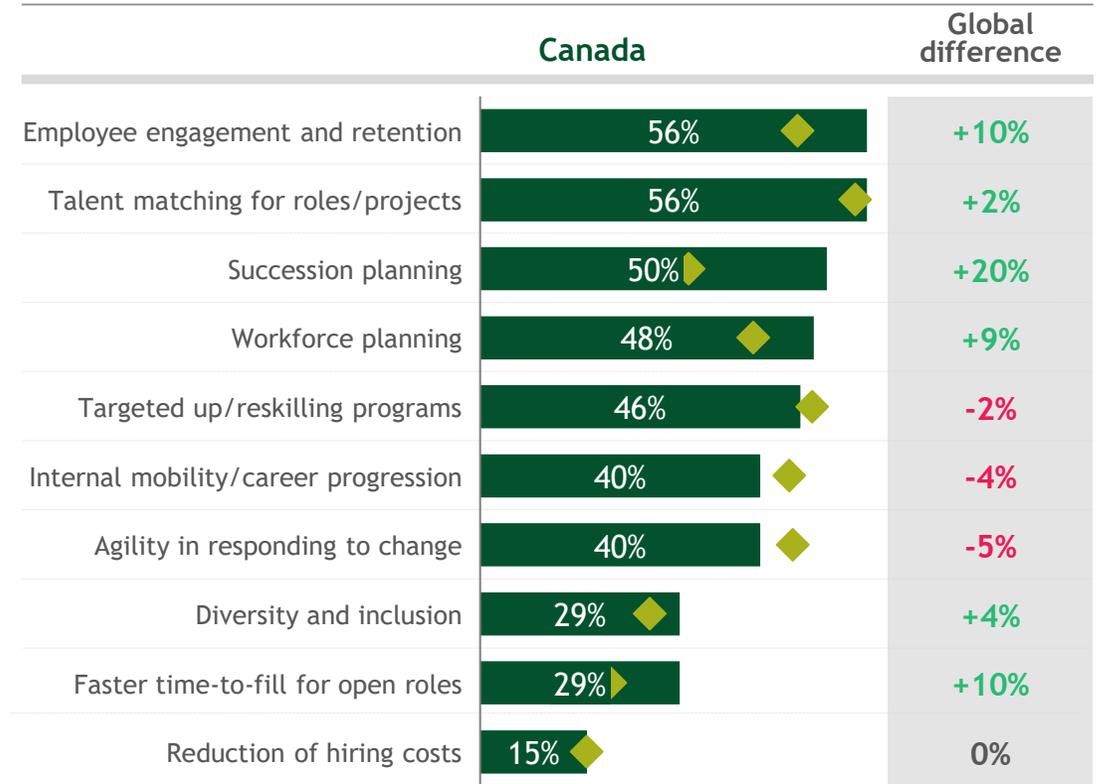Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352, n size varies by question due to respondent selection). 1. question is multiple select; "Other" answer choice not included

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In Canada, strategic expectations are high but recognition and early involvement lag

How much would you agree with the following statements? In my organization,...

Expectations of HR's strategic contribution

	Canada	Global difference
HR is expected to actively contribute to business strategy discussions ("seat at the table")	80%	-3%
HR is expected to deliver insights that inform business decisions	77%	-6%
The C-suite views HR as a key enabler of business performance and success	60%	-5%

Trust in HR and involvement in business decisions

	Canada	Global difference
Senior leaders trust HR to lead major transformation efforts	67%	-6%
HR is involved early in the planning of enterprise-wide initiatives (not just in execution)	56%	-10%
There is a clear understanding among business leaders of the value HR provides	53%	-7%

■ Canada ◆ Global

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352, n size varies by question due to respondent selection).

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Canada sees strong impact from skills-led use cases, despite limited foundational adoption

What does "skills-led organization" mean in your organization?[1]

	Canada	Global difference
Work is organized around skills and tasks	25%	-1%
Employees build and apply skills beyond their current roles	17%	-4%
Employees are offered extensive training to develop skills	15%	+3%
Hiring is based on skills	15%	+9%
It's more of a buzzword	11%	+5%
People are matched to projects based on their abilities, not role	7%	-5%
Skills data is actively used to guide promotions/workforce planning	6%	-7%
I'm not sure	1%	-2%

■ Canada ◆ Global

Which use cases have proven most impactful when applying a skills-led approach?[2]

	Canada	Global difference
Employee engagement and retention	56%	+10%
Talent matching for roles/projects	56%	+2%
Succession planning	50%	+20%
Workforce planning	48%	+9%
Targeted up/reskilling programs	46%	-2%
Internal mobility/career progression	40%	-4%
Agility in responding to change	40%	-5%
Diversity and inclusion	29%	+4%
Faster time-to-fill for open roles	29%	+10%
Reduction of hiring costs	15%	0%

■ Canada ◆ Global

Source: 2026 BCG/WFPMA proprietary web survey and analysis (Global n = 7,115, Canada total n = 352, n size varies by question due to respondent selection). 1. "Other" answer choice not included 2. question is multiple select; "Other" answer choice not included

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Three major topics emerge from the CPA 2026

Main CPA topics

Digitalization / AI

1. Deployment of GenAI & Other Emerging Technologies
3. Digital Solutions (e.g., HR Process Automation)
6. HR IT Architecture, Software & Data
8. People Analytics & Reporting

Workforce of the future

4. Strategic Workforce Planning
2. Talent Management & Succession Planning
5. Leadership Development
7. Upskilling & Reskilling

Value delivery

- Rising expectations on Digital and Workforce require HR to move beyond strong but admin-heavy foundations
- Clear mandate to modernize the HR operating model and translate priorities into measurable business value

What This Means for HR Leaders

- Move from pilots to enterprise scale
- Redesign workflows, not just automate tasks
- Build strong data governance and AI fluency
- HR must co lead enterprise AI transformation

- Shift from skills ambition to execution at scale
- Institutionalize strategic workforce planning
- Embed skills into talent and leadership systems
- Leadership capability drives performance

- Link people initiatives to business outcomes
- Measure capability ROI and impact
- Modernize HR governance and capabilities
- Move from enabler to value driver