How will the HR industry evolve in 2024?

Industry influencers share their **top 5 key takeaways** from this year's LinkedIn Talent Connect conference.

This year's **Talent Connect conference** brought together industry leaders from across the globe to tackle the latest trends and challenges in the Talent Acquisition and Learning & Development space. Attendees heard from **The Rt. Hon. Dame Jacinda Ardern, former Prime Minister of New Zealand**, Donna Morris, Walmart's Chief People Officer, who spoke about people, tech and the future of work, and LinkedIn's VP of Product, **Hari Srinivasan, announcing the launch of a new set of generative AI tools** that will help employers hire qualified candidates and develop workers' skills faster and more effectively than ever before.

We asked our Talent Connect conference attendees and the industry's leading voices to reflect on what they learned at the event, actionable tips to stay ahead of the talent industry curve, and future trends they are excited about.
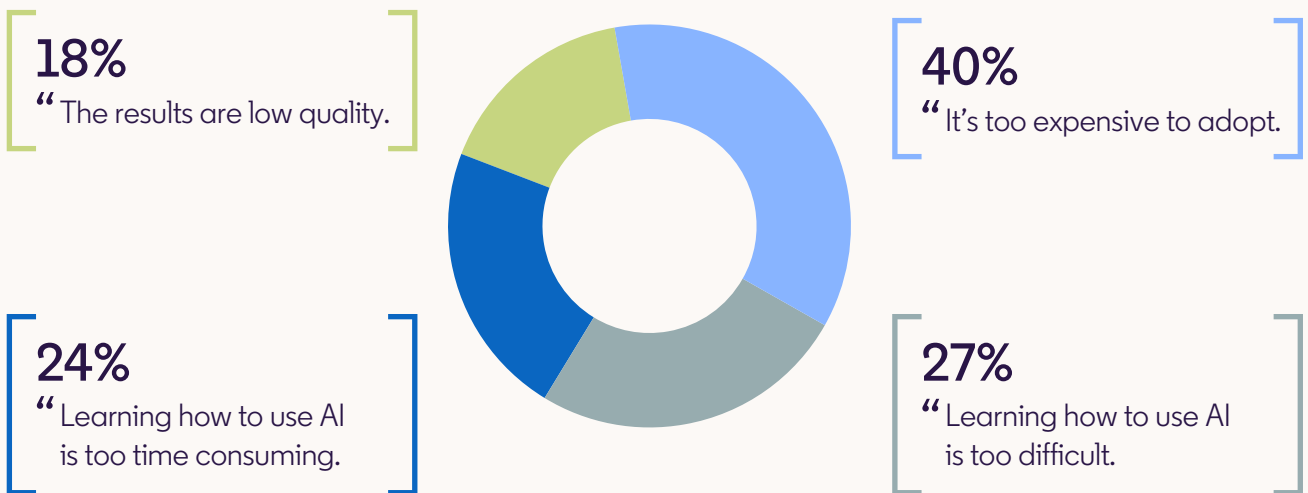
Check out their top five reflections from the Talent Connect conference 2023 below!
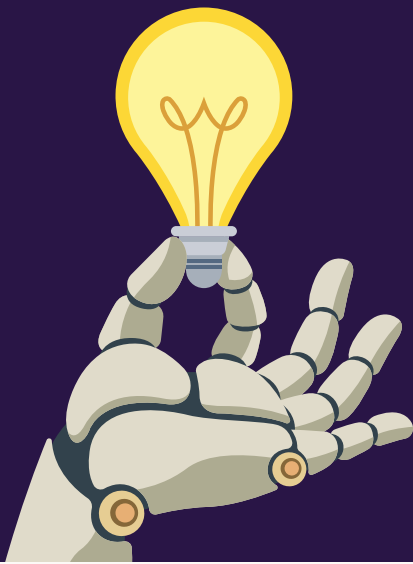
#1: Talent leaders think the biggest barrier to Gen AI is its cost

Generative AI will change the way we hire and learn. Fact. So, what's stopping talent teams from embracing it and realizing its potential?
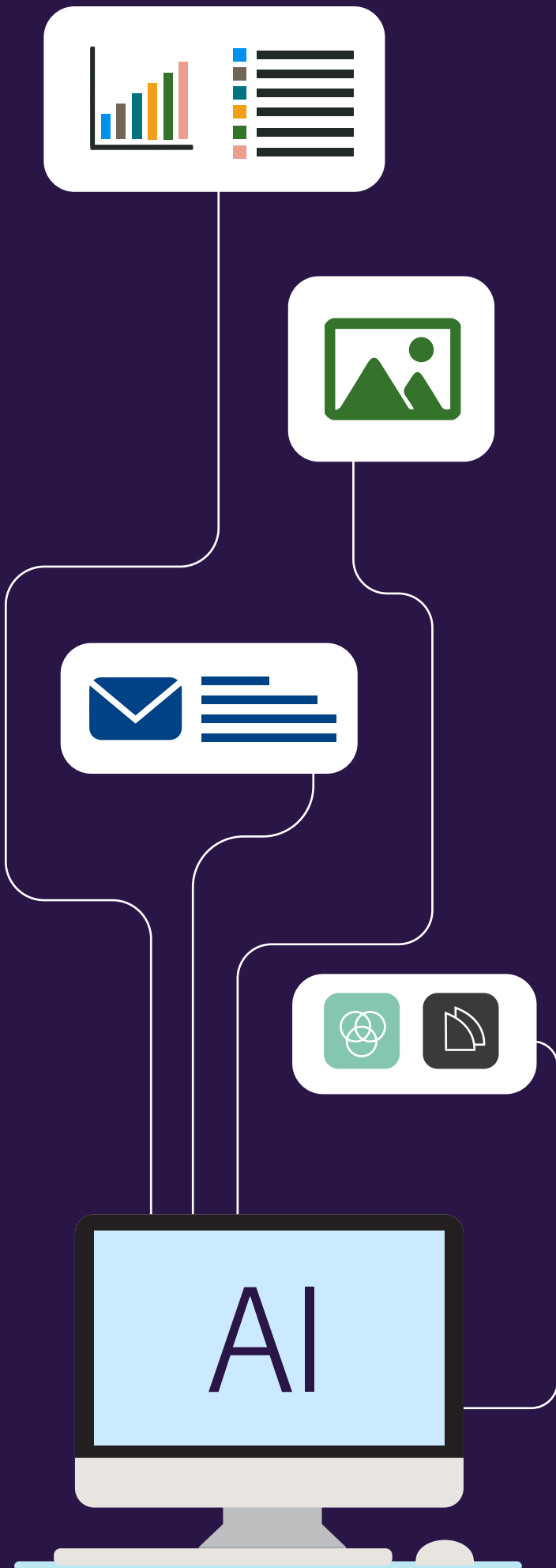
Here's what they said…

18%
" The results are low quality.

40%
" It's too expensive to adopt.

24%
" Learning how to use AI is too time consuming.

27%
" Learning how to use AI is too difficult.

How can businesses overcome this?

" Create a safe space in a company to safely experiment with AI so employees can understand its potential.

AI Dea
Founder at Edge of Work

Linkedin

> "In truth, it's just fear of the unknown, but leaders who embrace AI help show the way for their teams.

Johnny Campbell
CEO at Social Talent

> "Let people use it and show them how their jobs will evolve, not necessarily be replaced."

Amanda Nolen
Co-founder at NilesNolen

> "Internal workshops on practical and accessible application of Gen AI in different types of roles.
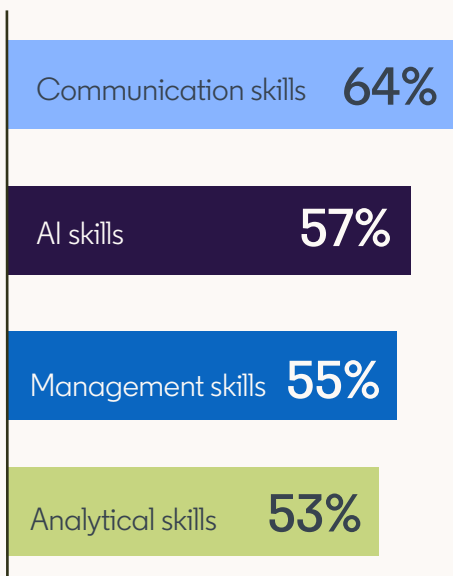
Lars Schmidt
Founder at Amplify Talent

Linked in

#2: Soft skill gaps are bigger than analytical, hard skill gaps

A skills-first approach to hiring and career development is key for teams that want to learn, grow and become more agile. But this has to include a focus on soft skills, just as much as the more technical "hard" skills. With the industry facing the changes generative AI brings, we asked what skills we need to focus on developing.

They answered...

Skill	Percentage
Communication skills	64%
AI skills	57%
Management skills	55%
Analytical skills	53%

How can talent teams support employee skill growth?

" Leveraging Gen AI as a force multiplier for talent development goals can elevate the skills and experiences of employees, helping them reach their full potential and catapulting the organization into the future.

Dr. Terri Horton
Future of Work: HR Consultant

> " We've talked to thousands of middle managers and executives, and they all want talent partners who know their business, who aren't transactional. Relationship-building leads to trust. Influencing leads to better outcomes and recommendations for businesses.

John Vlastelica
CEO at Recruiting Toolbox

> " Talent professionals must be proactive – rather than reactive – to close skills gaps in AI, communication, analytics, and management. Let's level up our teams with AI literacy, refining communication with a focus on empathy, promoting data-driven decision-making, and shifting from mere management to empathetic leadership.

Jackye Clayton
VP of TA and DEIB at Textio

#3: Daily tasks aren't leaving room for development

Learning and Development Leaders aren't just delivering courses – they're empowering meaningful careers. But our survey shows they face big challenges – like day-to-day work often being prioritized over development. We asked what the top obstacle to development was.
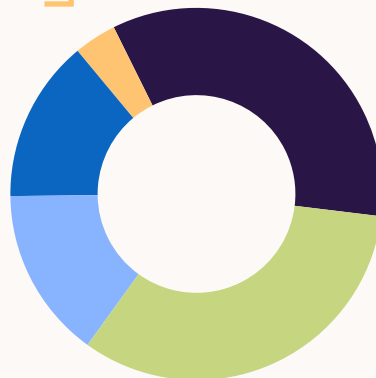
They answered…

7%
" I don't see how it will apply to my job.

27%
" Training is too expensive.

29%
" I can't find the right format or expertise to benefit my team.

66%
" I don't have the time for training.

66%
" My immediate work is more important to the business than training.

How can we change this?

" Ensure that everyone's scheduling training & courses with L&D. Different training channels are important, so people can learn when and how it works for them. Incentives (and penalties if necessary) are important too, to motivate ongoing learning behaviors…

Sophie Wade
Founder of Flexcel Network

Linked**in**

#4: Change is on the horizon. It's going to look like…

Embracing innovation and a changing world is key to unlocking tomorrow's possibilities. But what does that changing world look like for Talent & Learning pros?

True Advisors

" The purely transactional recruiter or HR partner is going to have a hard time in the new world. It's key that - as talent leaders - we're developing our teams, so they know expectations are high and consequences are higher if we don't show up as true advisors and business leaders.

John Vlastelica
CEO at Recruiting Toolbox

AI, Skills, Well-being

" We can anticipate a few major shifts: AI will streamline recruitment, and personalized learning will be the norm. There will be an increasing emphasis on skills over degrees and job titles as job roles become more flexible. DEIB will become integral to organizational culture, affecting recruitment and L&D. Employee well-being will be a recruitment, retention, and development cornerstone.
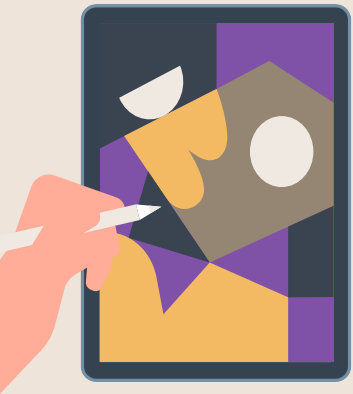
Jackye Clayton
VP of TA and DEIB at Textio

AI

" Gen AI everywhere. Smart adoption will become a massive force multiplier for teams, creating a bigger gap for TA/L&D teams that are slow to embrace.

Lars Schmidt
Founder at Amplify Talent

Skills

" The intersection of skills-based hiring and pay equity is going to be huge. There's a growing need to identify skills, place value on those skills and explain compensation for those skills.

Stacey Gordon
Executive Advisor at ReworkWork

How can talent & learning professionals prepare?

Internal Mobility

" TA needs to facilitate mobility with an internal talent marketplace and cross-company relationships. L&D needs a companywide skills inventory to understand the needs, gaps, and trends to identify skills opportunities that are aligned with talent's development interests and strengths.

Sophie Wade
Founder of Flexcel Network

AI

" Investing in AI capabilities is crucial to stay competitive. But technology can only take us so far. Nuanced decision-making requires a human touch. By blending the power of AI with human intuition, businesses can achieve the best of both worlds - streamlined processes and personalized insights. Finally, keep your finger on the pulse of employee well-being because a healthy, satisfied team is key to organizational success.

Jackye Clayton
VP of TA and DEIB at Textio

Learning

" 1) Be curious explorers, and really push ourselves to stay at the forefront of A) our industry and B) our function (think almost like major + minor.)

2) Be willing to use our knowledge to partner with other stakeholders to solve challenges /pursue opportunities that are in the business.
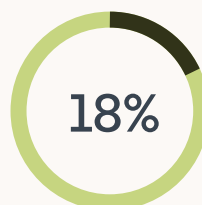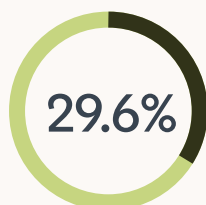
Al Dea
Founder at Edge of Work

#5: To immediately drive impact, Talent Leaders can put AI to use and adopt a skill-first approach to hiring

When asked what the one thing talent leaders will be taking back to their organizations to apply straight away.

They said…

29.6% said putting AI to use or learning how to integrate it into their daily work.

18% said a shift towards a skill-first hiring approach was top of mind.

> Adopting a skills-first approach will innovate our existing recruitment processes, making them more adaptive and inclusive. This will reduce time-to-hire and improve employee retention, as individuals will be positioned in roles that genuinely leverage their unique skill sets.

Jackye Clayton
VP of TA and DEIB at Textio

> When we start using and normalizing skills terms, it will facilitate our use of skills as a way to identify and communicate our value. We need to stay on top of and keep updating our skills to stay competitive.

Sophie Wade
Founder of Flexcel Network

Want to learn more?

Check out Talent Connect conference 2023 **recorded sessions** to learn about the future of HR, tips for hiring & attracting talent, career development and more!

Methodology

Responses sourced from a survey of Talent Connect attendees and leading industry influencer voices conducted in October 2023.

Linkedin