

CAHRS

PARTNER MEETING RECAP

Transforming HR for the Future

October 29-30, 2025

- [Partner Meeting Recap](#)

PARTNER MEETING RECAP:

8:30–8:40 a.m. — Welcome and Overview

Brad Bell – William J. Conaty Professor of Strategic HR, Academic Director, CAHRS

Brad opened by framing the ongoing evolution of HR as a long-term transformation — one that is accelerating toward a new era defined by agility, technology, and human connection. He challenged attendees to think in terms of 'Transformation with a capital T' and to consider what comes next for the profession.

- HR's transformation has been ongoing for decades, but the pace and scope today are unprecedented.
- Brad described constant external churn — economic shifts, transformative technologies, labor market volatility — as part of a century-long evolution in how organizations and people adapt.
- The field remains vibrant and resilient, returning to its human-centric roots while looking forward.

8:45–9:25 a.m. — The Future of HR: CHRO Panel Discussion

Michael D'Ambrose (Retired CHRO), Simon King (CPO, Daiichi Sankyo Inc.), Carolyn Roach (CHRO, XPO)

A dynamic, multigenerational panel examined HR's current state and future direction. Discussion focused on HR's increasing strategic relevance, the integration of technology and human performance, and the courage required to lead transformation. With the complexity of change, the panelists underscored the importance of staying grounded in mission, prioritizing the employee experience, and leading with clarity on expectations, business outcomes, shared ownership of solutions, and trust in your team.

- Simon King emphasized HR's rising importance, calling for purpose-driven leadership and the ability to anticipate change three to five years ahead.
- Carolyn Roach focused on enabling productivity and efficiency through a people-first mindset, using technology and culture in balance.
- Michael D'Ambrose described the function as 'markedly better' — more strategic, integrated, and technologically capable — but urged HR to deepen business acumen and influence.
- Panelists highlighted GenAI as both a challenge and an opportunity — HR is increasingly being asked to lead digital transformation, redefining skills, structures, and metrics.
- Key capabilities for HR success: learning agility, strategic integration, and courage to uphold personal values in leadership decisions.

9:30–10:10 a.m. — Fact, Fiction, and the Future of AI

Nickle LaMoreaux – SVP & CHRO, IBM

Nickle's talk on AI transformation was one of the most discussed sessions. She shared IBM's decade-long evolution with AI, balancing innovation with governance. Her central message: technology is easy; leadership and process change are hard. She encouraged HR leaders to experiment boldly but purposefully.

- Shared IBM's AI journey: from early chaos to a unified, governed system through AskHR and AI-powered service delivery.
- By 2025, 94% of employee inquiries are resolved through AI — freeing HRBPs to focus on strategy and complex human issues.
- Warned against 'FOMO-driven' implementation — emphasized fit-for-purpose design aligned to culture and business model.
- Urged HR teams to start small and focus on what matters most to the business – the behaviors you want to change: use AI on high-volume, low-risk processes and build confidence through iteration.

10:35–11:15 a.m. — Adapting to the New Workplace Environment in the Trump Administration

Erin King Sweeney – Senior Associate Director, Cornell Brooks Institute of Politics and Global Affairs (IOPGA)

Erin provided a policy-level briefing on the evolving regulatory landscape under the Trump administration, focusing on employer implications across labor, immigration, and compliance. The discussion was analytical and practical, and it raised significant concerns about costs and complexity for large organizations.

- Outlined major executive orders affecting both private and public employers; many are expected to face litigation.
- Discussed tension between federal and state mandates, particularly around immigration and funding compliance.
- Highlighted changes at the NLRB, EEOC, and OMB — noting the OMB head's connection to Project 2025.
- Visa costs and restrictions have escalated, pushing companies toward hiring locally.
- Framed the broader issue as balancing compliance with business agility amid uncertain federal direction.

11:20–12:00 p.m. — How HR is Empowering Shell's Evolution

Christine Hillier – HR Manager, Shell Polymers Chemicals & Brandon Davis – Industrial Relations Advisor, Shell

Christine and Brandon provided an inside look at Shell's HR transformation, tackling workforce complexity and leadership development in a diverse global organization. Their tone was grounded and pragmatic, focusing on execution and trust.

- Shared that Shell's employee base spans from entry-level workers to PhDs — creating layered motivations and challenges.
- Outlined four HR priorities: building essential HR capabilities for the future, supporting productivity through risk assessment and AI adoption, and leveraging leaders to build trust in Shell throughout the change journey.
- Described AI as a pivot point for redefining productivity — transactional work is automated, while relational and expertise work is augmented.
- Reinforced the need to create a cohesive narrative and that trust and meeting people where they are remain foundational to performance and engagement.

1:15–1:55 p.m. — Rethinking Workforce Strategy in the Age of AI

Jordana Kammerud – SVP & CHRO, Corning

Jordana outlined Corning's approach to AI-driven workforce design, exploring the rapid shift from revolutionary technology to essential capability. She emphasized adaptability, skill evolution, and the importance of human-centered transformation.

- Predicted that 39% of job components will change due to AI; adaptability will determine success.
- Described skills as the new currency — with a half-life of roughly two years — making continuous learning critical.
- Introduced Corning's framework for AI transformation: training employees to work alongside AI, integrating AI into workflows, and building agile human systems.
- Highlighted enduring human skills like empathy, ethical reasoning, and curiosity as key differentiators.
- Encouraged viewing talent as a skills ecosystem, enabling faster internal mobility and upskilling through AI insights.

2:00–2:40 p.m. — Workday's Talent Philosophy

Sandra Scott – Principal Talent Management Strategist, Workday

Sandra's presentation walked attendees through Workday's new enterprise talent philosophy and high-impact practices. Her content resonated for its clarity and measurable outcomes.

- Workday unified its decentralized talent approach into a consistent six-lever philosophy: performance, differentiation, transparency, accountability, development, and behaviors.
- Shared data showing how goal setting, frequent check-ins, and performance calibration drive engagement and clarity.
- Outlined three high-impact practices: setting goals (linked to strategy), regular check-ins (94% adoption), and quarterly reviews replacing annual cycles.
- Highlighted use of AI to connect individual goals to growth objectives and suggest development opportunities.

3:05–4:00 p.m. — HRBP Framework and Closing Reflections

Brad Bell – Professor of Strategic HR and Director, CAHRS

Brad closed the day by introducing the CAHRS HRBP Framework, summarizing common themes, and tying the sessions together. The conversation emphasized curiosity, courage, and the need for HR to lead transformation with both vision and empathy.

- Explained that the HRBP Framework helps define expectations and time allocation for HR business partners.
- Nickle and Simon shared use cases: aligning HRBP priorities to client expectations and freeing capacity for strategic work.
- Encouraged integrating GenAI to offload tactical HR tasks, allowing HRBPs to operate at their highest value.

Wrap-Up & Takeaways

Across the day, recurring themes emerged around courage, clarity, and capability. Speakers converged on the idea that HR's future depends less on new technology and more on behavior change, trust, and learning agility. The CAHRS community demonstrated strong alignment on both the human and technical sides of transformation.

- Start small — pilot, iterate, and learn.
- Think in terms of 'the art of the possible' when applying AI.
- Behavioral and mindset shifts must accompany technological change.
- Flexibility and adaptability remain essential capabilities at all levels.
- HR's purpose continues to center on being capable, caring, and courageous while driving business results.