

HR IN AOTEAROA: 2025

A TOMORROWS PEOPLE RESEARCH REPORT



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Welcome!

Welcome to our annual exploration of Human Resources trends in New Zealand.

As we navigate out of the incredibly complex year that was 2024, into 2025, the landscape of HR continues to evolve, presenting both problems and opportunities for organisations across the country. This report represents the collective insights from HR leaders who are actively navigating the challenges and shaping the future of work in New Zealand.

In partnership with senior HR leaders across New Zealand, we've embarked on an extensive exploration of our evolving HR landscape. These conversations have been more than just data gathering—they represent a deep dive into the real-world challenges, innovations, and transformative strategies shaping our sector. From technology adoption in Auckland's fast-paced corporate environment to talent retention strategies in regional centres, these insights paint a comprehensive picture of HR's strategic evolution in Aotearoa.

Our focus has been purposeful: to translate complex organisational challenges into actionable insights that resonate across different business contexts. Whether you're leading HR transformation in a large enterprise, navigating change in a growing SME, or seeking to understand the forces shaping our workforce, this report aims to offer both insights and practical guidance.

The insights ahead reflect not just where we are, but where we're heading—informed by those at the forefront of HR innovation in New Zealand. Let's explore how organisations across Aotearoa are reimagining HR for the modern workplace in our very challenging times!

Methodology

The methodology for this research was designed to capture a deep understanding of human resources trends across New Zealand. In our pursuit to gather rich, qualitative data, we adopted a multi-faceted approach that involved selecting a diverse range of companies and conducting in-depth interviews with Senior HR leaders.

Selection of Companies

Our research targeted a broad spectrum of companies across New Zealand to ensure a well-rounded representation of the industry landscape. Companies were selected based on various criteria, including size and industry sector. This strategic selection enabled us to explore the nuances of HR trends in different organisational contexts, from small start-ups to large multinational corporations, and across industries ranging from technology and finance, to healthcare and manufacturing.

Participants

Participants in this study were Senior HR leaders who play a pivotal role in shaping and implementing HR strategies within their organisations. Recognising the value of their insights, we sought to engage with these leaders directly. Our participants were approached through a combination of networking, referrals, and direct outreach, ensuring a diverse and knowledgeable pool of interviewees.

Interview Process

Our core methodology centred on maintaining consistency with our 2024 research framework, enabling us to track meaningful shifts in the HR landscape whilst identifying emerging trends. Through face-to-face interviews with Senior HR leaders — supplemented by remote sessions where geographical constraints necessitated — we built upon our established research foundation to create a comprehensive year-on-year analysis.

The interview framework deliberately mirrored our 2024 approach, utilising the same standardised question set to ensure data comparability. This strategic continuity allowed us to identify substantial shifts in organisational priorities, changing challenges, and evolving innovations across the sector. However, we maintained our commitment to conversational flexibility, encouraging participants to explore emerging themes and share deeper insights beyond the core questions.

This balanced approach yielded rich comparative data whilst capturing the nuanced evolution of HR practices. By maintaining consistency in our core enquiry whilst allowing space for emerging themes, we could track both quantifiable changes and qualitative shifts in HR leadership thinking. The methodology proved particularly valuable in understanding how organisations' responses to key challenges have evolved since our 2024 research.

Our questions spanned established focus areas including:

- Strategic workforce planning and talent management
- Employee experience and wellbeing initiatives
- Leadership development and organisational culture
- Technology adoption and digital transformation
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion programmes

Additional discussion points emerged organically, reflecting the dynamic nature of HR in 2025. By maintaining our structured yet flexible approach, we captured emerging priorities, providing a comprehensive view of how HR practices are evolving in New Zealand organisations.

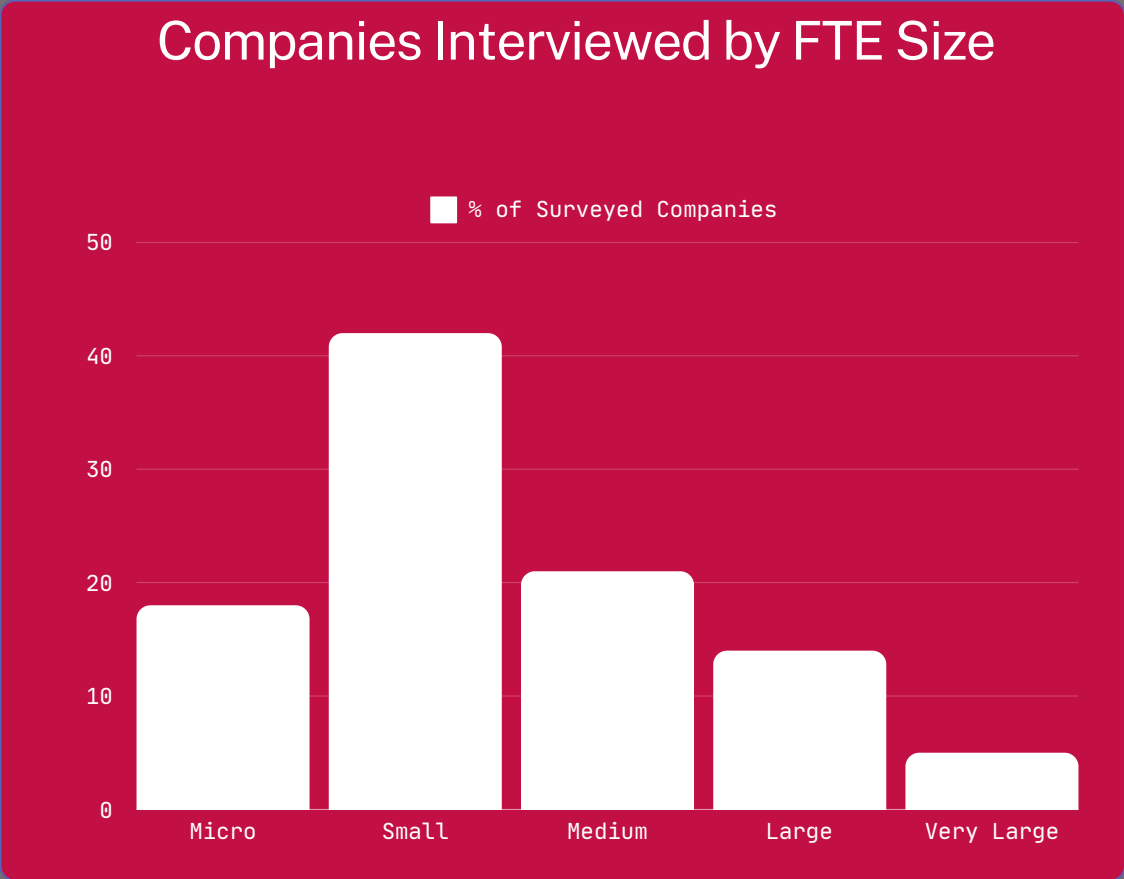
Participant Overview

Our research participants represent a diverse cross-section of New Zealand's business landscape, with representation across key industry sectors and organisational sizes. To ensure accurate representation of the modern business ecosystem, participating organisations were categorized according to New Zealand's standard industry classifications and segmented into clear size groupings.

organisation Size Distribution:

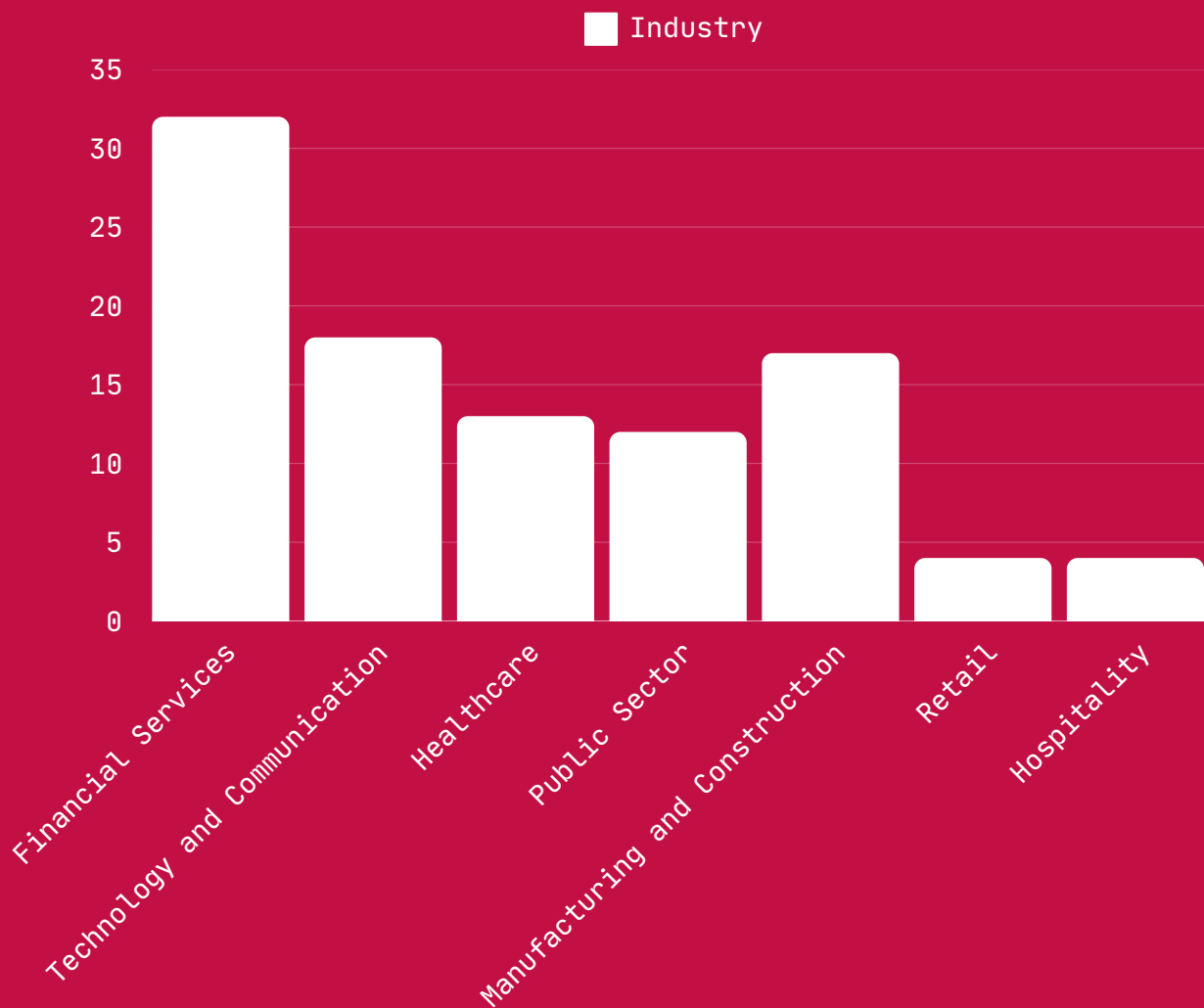
- Micro enterprises (0-100 FTE): 18%
- Small enterprises (100-499 FTE): 42%
- Medium enterprises (500-999 FTE): 21%
- Large enterprises (1,000-4,900 FTE): 14%
- Very large enterprises (5,000-10,000 FTE): 5%

This distribution provides valuable insights into the varying HR challenges and opportunities across different organisational scales, with particularly strong representation from New Zealand's crucial small and medium enterprise sector.



Industry segmentation

The research team successfully captured insights from across New Zealand's diverse business landscape, ensuring comprehensive coverage of key industry sectors. This strategic sampling approach allows us to draw meaningful insights about sector-specific challenges and opportunities whilst identifying broader trends that transcend industry boundaries.



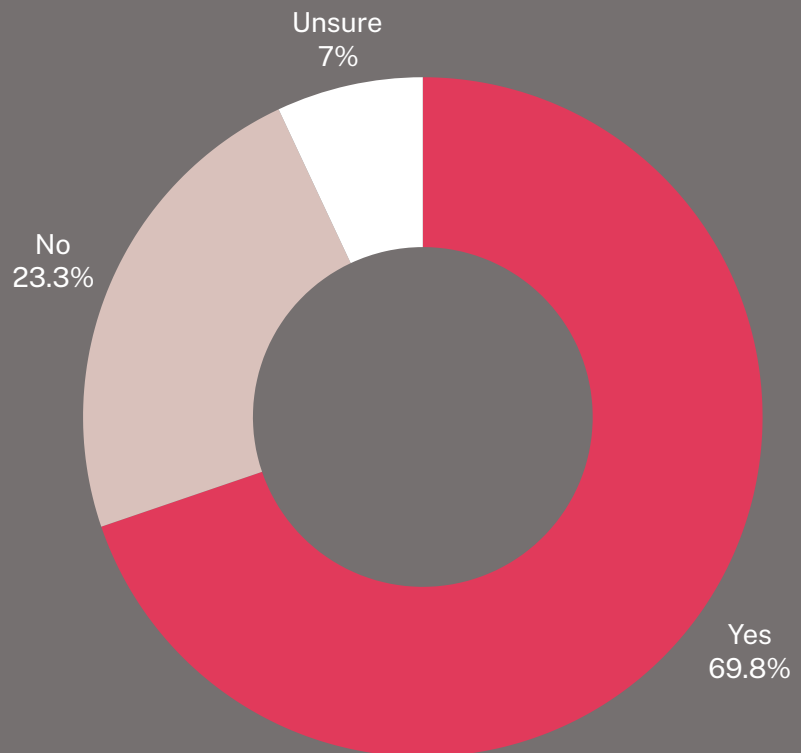
The “HR” Team

HR teams across Aotearoa are in the midst of a significant shift. Our research shows they're being asked to do more strategic work than ever before, but often with the same (or sometimes fewer) resources to get it all done.

Do you believe your HR function is properly resourced for your organisational size?

Side Note:

When interviewing and preparing this document, the research team are referring to the “HR function”. As there is large variation in what this function is called in different organisations, this is the easiest way to achieve some consistency.



HR Team Size Ratio

**Side Note:*

This number has remained the same since the 2024 report. We expected to see some decrease however this was not proved.

Average HR Team Size

1.2%

or 1.2 HR people for every 100 staff

The size of an HR team, and whether that team is appropriately resourced was an emotive topic! There were strong industry trends here, with the more traditionally corporate organisations such as Financial Services and Professional Services showing higher ratios of HR people (1.9 for every 100 staff in Financial Services versus 0.9 in Healthcare).

Overall our NZ average HR team size ration of 1.2% lines up exactly with the PwC Global benchmark from 2022 of 1.2%.

So what's coming?

We expect to see:

- Growing adoption of HR technology, AI and automation is enabling more efficient HR service delivery - We expect this to reduce levels at the “administration” end of the scale but little change at the strategic role level.
- The increasing focus on strategic HR activities may make for different make-up of HR teams but overall ratios will remain stable
- We expect the large number of expected restructures to impact on HR teams as sadly, has been proven in the past.

Trends Shaping the Future of HR in New Zealand



Our research this year reveals three dominant themes that are reshaping the HR landscape:

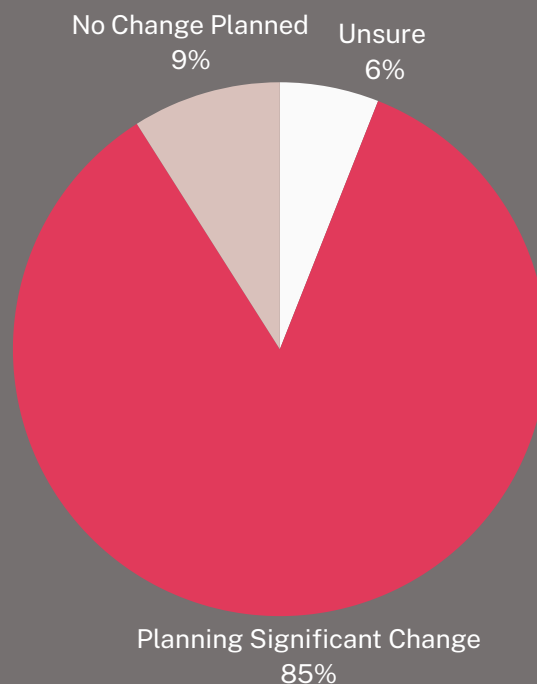
1. Large Scale Change
2. Leadership Development
3. Digital Transformation

Through extensive interviews with HR leaders across New Zealand, we've uncovered how organisations are adapting to these changes and preparing for the future.

Large Scale Change is Coming

“There’s so many change processes and it’s just change on top of change. Everyone’s burning out.”

Are you planning for significant change in 2025?



The numbers really tell a story here - a whopping 85% of organisations in New Zealand are planning major changes to how they operate in the coming year.

When we got this data, it honestly took us by surprise. We knew from our 2024 report that change was coming, but the scale of what organisations are planning for 2025 is quite remarkable. This isn't just about small tweaks - we're talking about significant shifts that will affect how people work and how organisations operate.

When we dug deeper into the data, we noticed something interesting about how different types of organisations are approaching change.

Private companies showed up as far less likely to be planning significant change, while public sector organisations and listed companies were gearing up for bigger transformations. This makes sense when you think about it - listed companies often feel pressure from shareholders to show they're evolving, while our government organisations are responding to government changes and public sector reforms.

One thing that caught our attention was that only 6% of organisations weren't sure about their change plans. That's remarkably low and suggests that most organisations have a clear picture of where they're heading in 2025, whether that's making big changes or maintaining their current course.

Looking ahead to 2025, we're likely to see two different speeds in the market - most organisations will be navigating significant changes, while a smaller group keeps things steady. This split could create some interesting dynamics, especially when it comes to managing talent, looking at succession, and staying competitive.

For HR teams, this means one thing is certain - change management skills are going to be crucial, regardless of whether your organisation is planning big changes or focusing on stability. While the year ahead might be challenging for many HR professionals, it also offers a real opportunity to show just how valuable HR is to organisational success. The skills and support that HR teams bring to the table will be more important than ever as organisations navigate these changes

Navigating Change and Uncertainty: A Strategic Imperative

The most successful organisations in our study demonstrate that effective change management begins with creating a foundation of transparent communication. Rather than relying on traditional top-down approaches, these organisations are establishing multi-channel dialogue systems that encourage open discussion and active participation in the change journey.

What sets high-performing organisations apart is their investment in leadership capabilities and capacity. Our research reveals that organisations successfully navigating change are those that:

- Provide specialised change management training for people leaders
- Create peer support networks for sharing best practices
- Implement regular coaching and feedback sessions
- Equip managers with practical tools for supporting team wellbeing

Technology as a Catalyst for Growth

The intersection of leadership development and change management naturally leads us to examine how technology serves as a fundamental enabler of organisational transformation. In today's rapidly changing business landscape, technology isn't just supporting change — it's needs to be driving it.

And we seem to be in right in the midst of a paradox - while almost all the participants acknowledge technology as crucial for future success, many businesses are struggling with effective implementation and adoption. This gap between aspiration and execution presents both challenges and opportunities for HR leaders.

If businesses aren't already using data to drive HR decision making, they have to transition to this. It's a crucial move to keep up in this complex world.

Leadership Development - An ongoing challenge

Leadership capabilities remain a critical focus area, with organisations reporting significant gaps:

**only
23%**

feel their leaders
are fully equipped
to lead change

**and
88%**

are planning
major leadership
development
initiatives

The data paints a scary but telling picture of the leadership landscape in New Zealand organisations, with only 23% of respondents feeling confident in their leaders' current capabilities. This stark figure, coupled with the fact that 88% of organisations are planning significant leadership development initiatives, suggests a widespread recognition of the need for enhanced leadership capabilities in an increasingly complex business environment.

What's particularly telling is the nature of the leadership challenges being reported. The feedback from HR leaders points to fundamental gaps in leadership capabilities, with issues around self-awareness, initiative, and the ability to navigate difficult organisational changes emerging as key themes. The emphasis on "leaders leading through difficult times" is especially pertinent given the high percentage of organisations planning significant change in 2025.

"Our Managers just don't have the skills they need to actually manage their teams"

"Our Leaders can lead functionally but how the hell do I coach them on how to manage this level of change..."

Leadership Evolution: Meeting Tomorrow's Challenges

What makes an effective leader in today's workplace looks quite different from what we might have expected even a few years ago. Our conversations with HR leaders across Aotearoa reveal that the old playbook for leadership just isn't cutting it anymore. The challenges organisations are facing today - from hybrid working to rapid market changes - need a fresh approach to leadership.

A Shift in Thinking

Here's what's interesting and frankly, relieving: organisations aren't just talking about the need for better leadership - they're actually doing something about it. A remarkable **88%** are planning significant leadership development initiatives for the coming year. This isn't just about ticking boxes or running a few training sessions; organisations are taking a hard look at what their leaders need and making serious investments in developing those capabilities.

What's particularly heartening is how organisations are approaching this challenge. Rather than just sending leaders off to training courses and hoping for the best, we're seeing a move towards more thoughtful, sustainable approaches. Think ongoing coaching relationships, peer learning groups, and real-world practice opportunities. As one HR leader put it, "**We're not just teaching leadership skills - we're growing leaders who can lead change.**"

Why This Matters Now

The timing of this focus on leadership couldn't be better. With most organisations planning significant changes in 2025, having capable leaders at the helm will be crucial. Think about it - when organisations are going through major changes, it's often the immediate team leader who makes the difference between a team that thrives and one that struggles.

Some interesting approaches we're seeing include:

- Regular leadership coaching sessions that focus on real-world challenges
- Peer support networks where leaders can learn from each other
- Practical tools and frameworks for guiding teams through change
- Regular feedback loops to measure leadership effectiveness

The HR Opportunity

For HR teams, this leadership challenge presents a real opportunity to shine. It's not just about running leadership programmes anymore - it's about creating an environment where good leadership can flourish naturally. This might mean:

- Building Leadership Ecosystems
- Creating spaces for leaders to learn from each other
- Providing ongoing support rather than one-off training
- Measuring what works and adjusting accordingly
- Supporting Continuous Growth

This might be cheesy but think of it like tending a garden rather than building a structure. Leadership development needs constant attention and nurturing, not just occasional big interventions.

Making It Work

The organisations seeing the best results are those taking a balanced approach:

- Start with Reality - Understanding your current leadership landscape - strengths, gaps, and potential.
- Think Long-term - Building leadership capability isn't a quick fix. The best programmes look at least 2-3 years ahead.
- Keep It Real - Focus on practical skills that leaders can use immediately in their day-to-day work.

As we move into 2025, the organisations that thrive will likely be those that have invested wisely in their leadership capability. But remember - this isn't about creating perfect leaders. It's about building leaders who can guide their teams through uncertainty, maintain engagement during change, and help their organisations adapt to whatever challenges come next.

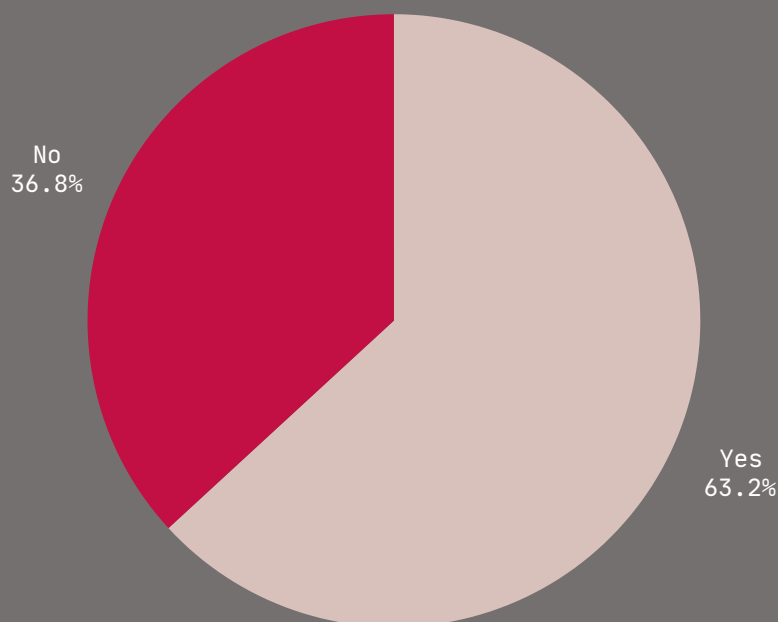
The message is clear: good leadership isn't a nice-to-have anymore - it's essential for organisational success. And while the journey of developing great leaders might be challenging, it's one that organisations simply can't afford to ignore.

Digital Transformation and AI: Reshaping HR in Aotearoa

The digital landscape across New Zealand organisations isn't just changing - it's being fundamentally reshaped. What's fascinating is how differently organisations are approaching this transformation. While some are still cautiously exploring their options, others have already embraced the change and are seeing remarkable results.

The landscape of AI and automation in HR isn't quite what many expected. As one CHRO candidly shared, "Let's be honest - AI and automation aren't future concepts we need to prepare for. They're already here, embedded in our systems and processes. The real challenge isn't access to these tools - it's that we're barely scratching the surface of their potential. Finding the right balance between technological capability and human connection is the puzzle we're all trying to solve."

Are you actively preparing your business for the impact of automation and/or AI?



What we found concerning is the gap between awareness and action. When we asked organisations if they were actively preparing for the impact of AI and automation, only 65% answered yes. This disconnect is striking - while most leaders acknowledge that AI and automation are already here, a significant portion haven't yet started preparing their organisations for this reality. As one HR leader noted, "We all know this is coming but we don't know where to start. And IT has banned us from using chat GPT."

This seems to be about where many organisations find themselves. The tools and capabilities exist, but crafting a roadmap that maintains humanity while maximising technological potential remains a complex challenge. It's not just about implementing new systems - it's about fundamentally rethinking how we approach work while preserving what makes our organisations human.

Our research shows that organisations succeeding in this space are those that acknowledge this complexity rather than trying to simplify it. They're having open conversations about the challenges of balancing efficiency with empathy, automation with human judgment.

The path forward isn't about choosing between technology and humanity - it's about thoughtfully blending both to create something better than either could achieve alone. This requires a level of thinking that goes beyond simple implementation roadmaps to consider the full complexity of human-technology interaction in the workplace.

Building Tomorrow's Workforce

What truly sets successful organisations apart isn't their choice of technology - it's their approach to preparing their people for change. The leaders in this space understand that digital transformation is as much about people as it is about technology.

A large professional services provider in Auckland offers an inspiring example of this approach. They've created what they call a 'Digital Academy' - not just a training program, but a complete learning ecosystem. Here, employees experiment with AI tools in safe environments, collaborate on real-world technology projects, and share success stories. Learning isn't treated as a separate activity; it's woven into the fabric of daily work.

The Upskilling Revolution

Here's where things get really interesting. The organisations leading the pack aren't just implementing new technology - they're fundamentally reimagining how their workforce develops and evolves.

The most successful organisations in our study share some common approaches:

- **Proactive Skills Development** They're not waiting for skills gaps to appear. Instead, they're:
 - Mapping future skill requirements
 - Creating learning pathways for different roles
 - Providing time and resources for upskilling
 - Measuring and rewarding learning progress
- **Comprehensive Training Programs** These aren't just technical training sessions. Leading organisations are building programs that cover:
 - Technical skills for specific tools and platforms
 - Digital literacy and AI awareness
 - Critical thinking and problem-solving
 - Adaptability and change management
 - Ethical considerations in AI use

Making Technology Human

The most successful implementations we've seen share a common thread: they maintain a laser focus on the human experience. These organisations understand that technology should enhance, not replace, human capabilities. They're creating systems that grow with their people, measuring success not just in efficiency gains but in improved employee experiences.

One healthcare provider's approach particularly stands out. When implementing a new HR platform, they began not with technical specifications but with employee journey mapping. They asked questions like "**How will this make our people's lives easier?**" and "**What frustrations can we eliminate?**" This human-centered approach led to significantly higher adoption rates and user satisfaction.

The Human Touch in a Digital World

Perhaps the most encouraging trend we've observed is the growing recognition that digital transformation isn't about replacing human capabilities - it's about enhancing them. Leading organisations are using technology to amplify what makes us uniquely human: our creativity, empathy, and strategic thinking.

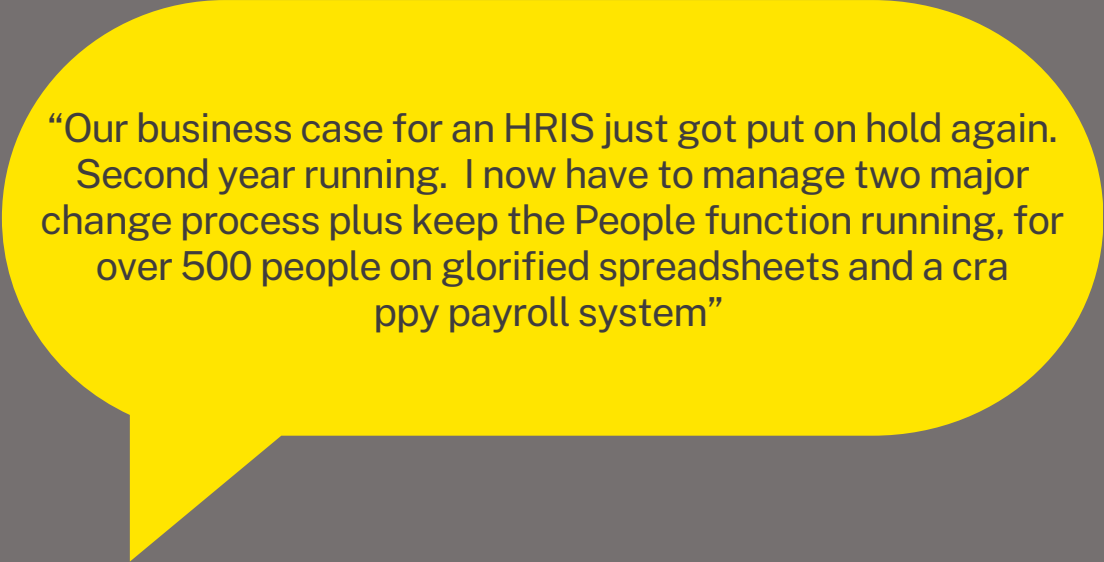
One CHRO summed it up perfectly: "**The goal isn't to have the most advanced technology - it's to have technology that genuinely helps our people do their best work.**" This sentiment captures the essence of successful digital transformation: technology serves people, not the other way around.

HR Technology: Making Digital Work for People

The landscape of HR technology in New Zealand presents a frankly terrifying picture of an industry that's lagging behind when it comes to technology.

The data tells an interesting story about how New Zealand organisations are approaching HR technology:

- **94%** of organisations surveyed had more than one system supporting their HR function (with some having up to 9!)
-
- Only **23%** feel their current technology stack fully supports their strategic objectives
-
- **49%** are planning significant technology changes in the coming year



“Our business case for an HRIS just got put on hold again. Second year running. I now have to manage two major change process plus keep the People function running, for over 500 people on glorified spreadsheets and a crappy payroll system”

The Funding Challenge: Making the Case for HR Technology

One of the most frustrating challenges our respondents shared was the ongoing struggle to secure funding for HR technology. The story we heard repeatedly was striking: HR teams submitting multiple business cases for essential platform upgrades, only to see them declined while other digital transformation projects sail through approval processes. We heard over and over that:

- HR system projects had been deprioritised for multiple years in a row
- HR platforms often end up at the bottom of digital transformation priority lists

What makes this particularly challenging is that HR teams are increasingly expected to do more and more, with outdated systems or cobbled-together solutions.

However, some organisations are finding creative ways to overcome these challenges. Successful approaches include:

Building a Stronger Business Case

The HR teams having more success in securing funding are those that:

- Link HR technology directly to broader business objectives
- Quantify the cost of not investing in new systems
- Demonstrate how HR platforms can support other digital transformation initiatives

Finding Strategic Champions

One HR leader shared their winning approach: "We started inviting IT and Finance leaders to experience our current systems first-hand. Nothing makes the case for investment quite like watching someone struggle with clunky processes they'd never tolerate in their own departments."

The irony many respondents pointed out is that delaying HR technology investments often leads to higher costs in the long run. This manifests in: Increasing maintenance costs for legacy systems, lost productivity from manual processes and higher risk of compliance issues.

As one CHRO noted: "We're spending more manually maintaining data between our system stack than a new platform would cost. But we still can't make IT see how inefficient and expensive this is."

Moving Forward

For HR teams struggling with this challenge, our research suggests several effective approaches:

- **Build Alliances** - Partner with other departments to show how HR technology supports their objectives.
- **Speak the Language** - Frame technology investments in terms of business outcomes rather than HR processes.
- **Show the Hidden Costs** - Document the true cost of maintaining status quo, including time spent on manual processes.

The message is clear: while securing funding for HR technology remains a significant challenge, the organisations that succeed are those that position these investments as business-critical rather than HR-specific. As one successful HR leader put it: "**We stopped talking about HR technology and started talking about business enablement. That's when things started to change.**"

As we look ahead, the quest for the right HR technology seems less about chasing the latest and greatest and more about finding practical, strategic fits that genuinely support and drive forward HR's evolving role. It's an exciting time for HR tech, with plenty of opportunities for innovation, improvement, and most importantly, strategic alignment to help HR leaders meet their goals more effectively.

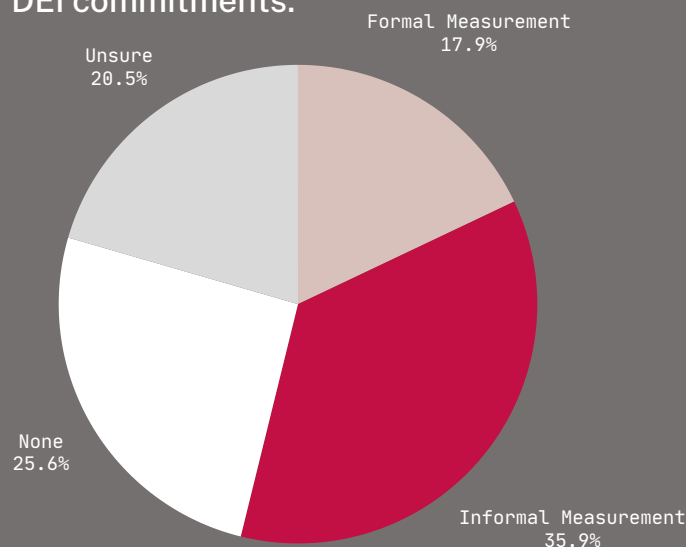
For HR teams planning their next steps, consider:

- **The Human Touch** - Even the most sophisticated system needs a human element. Think about how your technology can enhance rather than replace personal connections.
- **Integration Matters** - Before adding another system to your tech stack, consider how it will work with your existing tools. Sometimes, making better use of what you have is more valuable than adding something new.

For more information about HR Technology specific trends - check out our "HR Technology Trends 2024" report [here](#).

The State of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging in NZ: Are We Really Making Progress?

Let's be honest - the numbers don't lie, and they're telling us that New Zealand organisations still have a long way to go when it comes to DEIB. Despite years of discussions and promises about creating more diverse and inclusive workplaces, only 18% of surveyed organisations are actually measuring their progress. That's less than one in five organisations putting real accountability behind their DEI commitments.



The visualisations tell part of the story, but let's dig deeper into what's really happening. Looking at the data by organisation size reveals some concerning patterns. While larger organisations (1000+ employees) are more likely to have formal DEIB programs, it's worth asking: why aren't they all doing this? With greater resources and impact potential, the fact that only 25% of large organisations have formal measurement systems is disappointing.

The Pay Gap Elephant in the Room

The numbers around pay gap reporting are particularly concerning:

- 31% have no formal reporting structure whatsoever
- Only 19% voluntarily disclose their pay gaps publicly
- 12% keep their audits internal only
- The remaining 38% use various approaches, but often without clear accountability measures

What's Actually Working?

It's not all doom and gloom. Some organisations are making genuine efforts to move beyond token gestures. We're seeing success with:

- Cultural integration initiatives, like celebrating language diversity and implementing family-inclusive policies
- Partnerships with organisations like Diversity Works Pride Pledge adoption and dedicated DEI committees
- Flexible work arrangements that actually support diverse needs
-

But here's the reality check: many of these initiatives lack teeth. Without proper measurement and accountability, how do we know if they're making a real difference?

The "We're Already Diverse" Myth

A concerning trend in the data is organisations claiming they don't need formal DEIB initiatives because "it's already part of our culture." While authentic integration of DEIB principles is the ultimate goal, this approach often masks a lack of concrete action and measurement.

Looking Forward: The Hard Truth

New Zealand organisations need to move beyond good intentions and comfortable conversations. Real progress requires:

- Concrete measurement frameworks
- Public accountability
- Investment in proper data infrastructure
- Leadership commitment backed by actions, not just words

The Path Forward If we're serious about creating truly inclusive workplaces, organisations need to:

- Stop hiding behind informal approaches
- Invest in proper measurement systems
- Make pay gap reporting mandatory and public
- Set specific, measurable DEIB targets
- Hold leadership accountable for progress

The data shows we're at a crucial turning point. While some organisations are making genuine progress, too many are still treating DEIB as a 'nice to have' rather than a business imperative. In 2025, that's simply not good enough.

The Power of Kindness in HR: More Than Just Nice to Have

In the midst of change programmes and challenging market conditions, it's easy to get caught up in processes and forget the human impact of our decisions. Yet our research shows that organisations that maintain kindness as a core principle, even during difficult times, tend to maintain higher engagement levels and stronger employer brands.

When Kindness Goes Missing: Learning from Poor Practice

Let's be honest - we've all seen examples of HR processes that missed the mark on basic human kindness. Our interviews revealed some concerning patterns:

"They sent the email at 4:55 pm on a Friday, telling everyone to attend a Monday morning meeting about 'organisational changes.' People spent the entire weekend stressed and anxious."

"The consultation process was technically compliant but emotionally tone-deaf. People were given feedback about their roles being disestablished in open plan offices. Then expected to work for the rest of the day"

These examples aren't just about poor timing or process - they're about forgetting the human impact of our decisions. Running a change process or restructure is never easy and never fun, however we need to look beyond following due process and look to how we consider the humanity of our processes.

And another concerning trends is this lack of empathy flowing through to recruitment and performance conversations. We heard numerous stories about recruitment processes where kindness was notably absent:

- Candidates attending multiple interviews only to receive automated rejection emails
- People learning they didn't get the job through LinkedIn updates
- Detailed applications met with silence for months
- Internal candidates finding out about decisions through office gossip

One candidate shared with us: "I went through four interviews, completed a case study presentation, and then heard nothing for four weeks. When I finally got a response (after chasing), it was a two-line email saying I was unsuccessful. That's three months of their hope and effort dismissed in two lines."

The reality of our current space and time is summed up beautifully but one HR leader "How do we keep doing what we need to do today while adapting for the future. It's never felt so busy. Everything is urgent and now now now. " But it's key, even with these stressors, that we remember kindness. It will shape the future of the way we work together in these challenging times.

Conclusion

First and foremost, to all the amazing leaders who gave their time and energy to talk with me, I honestly can't thank you enough! The conversations were amazing, inspiring and humbling. I think we covered all the emotional spectrum from enthusiasm, positivity right down to frustration and tears. It was a fantastic experience to be able to spend the time with you all.

Looking Ahead: The Future of HR in Aotearoa

As we conclude this deep dive into HR trends across New Zealand, several themes emerge that will shape our industry in 2025 and beyond. The landscape ahead presents both significant challenges and remarkable opportunities for HR professionals and organisations alike.

Key Takeaways

The data paints a picture of an industry in transition. With 85% of organisations planning major changes, HR teams are being asked to do more than ever before - often with the same or fewer resources. This pressure is creating a crucial moment where we must innovate or risk falling behind.

Our research highlights three critical areas demanding immediate attention:

1. **Leadership Development:** The stark reality that only 23% of organisations feel their leaders are fully equipped for change signals an urgent need for more robust leadership development programmes. This isn't just about training - it's about fundamentally reimagining how we develop leaders for an increasingly complex future.
2. **Technology Integration:** While technology adoption is accelerating, many organisations are still struggling with outdated systems and fragmented solutions. The gap between aspiration and implementation needs to be bridged with practical, people-focused approaches to digital transformation.
3. **Diversity and Inclusion:** The numbers around DEIB initiatives and pay gap reporting reveal that we're still falling short of creating truly inclusive workplaces. Good intentions must be backed by concrete actions and measurable outcomes.

A Call to Action

The role of HR has never been more crucial. As we navigate through economic uncertainty, technological change, and evolving workplace expectations, HR professionals have a unique opportunity to shape the future of work in Aotearoa.

The path forward requires:

- Courage to challenge outdated approaches
- Commitment to measuring what matters
- Investment in both technology and human capabilities
- Recognition that kindness and efficiency aren't mutually exclusive

Final Thoughts

The insights gathered in this report reflect not just data points but real experiences, challenges, and aspirations of HR leaders across New Zealand. While the road ahead may be challenging, the commitment and creativity shown by HR professionals across the country give reason for optimism.

The future of HR in Aotearoa will be shaped not just by global trends but by our unique cultural values and workplace practices. By embracing change while staying true to our principle of manaakitanga, we can build workplaces that are not only more efficient but more human.

As we move forward, let's remember that our greatest strength lies not in our systems or processes, but in our people and our shared commitment to creating better workplaces for all New Zealanders.

Together, we can turn these challenges into opportunities for positive change.



About the Author:



Jane is the founder and CEO of Tomorrow's People.

Her early career experience in HR, combined with her nerdy passion for the latest technologies made for a natural progression into establishing New Zealand's first specialist consultancy in HR Tech.

Jane has extensive experience in ensuring the successful selection, implementation and ongoing operation of processes and systems to support HR and Payroll - with the strong generalist HR knowledge necessary to understand key business needs. She has worked with a wide range of technologies and industries. Jane's experience, thought leadership and independence in the HR technology space set her apart.

Jane is passionate about providing and enabling flexible and part-time work and living and breathing a truly modern approach to work. As a recognized voice in HR technology and workplace innovation, she frequently shares insights at industry conferences and corporate events. Jane welcomes speaking opportunities where she can contribute her expertise on HR tech trends, workplace transformation, and the future of work.

Connect with Jane to discuss speaking engagements, consulting opportunities, or to learn more about transforming your HR technology landscape at jane@tomorrowspeople.co.nz.

For questions, queries or discussions about this report, or to connect with Jane to discuss speaking engagements, consulting opportunities, or to learn more about transforming your HR technology landscape contact:

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