

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE TEAM GUIDING HR THROUGH THE AI SHIFT

AI in HR WEEK

Powered by **AAIM**



DAY 4 • THURSDAY, JULY 23

What's Yours to Carry — and What Isn't

A system for deciding what work goes to AI and what stays human. For your own desk, and for the workforce you'll help lead.

By now you've got the tools, you can spot when AI is wrong, and you know the rules of the road. Today is the one that ties it together — and reaches through to your entire organization.

This isn't a tip or trick for your to-do list. It's a way to decide what work goes to AI and what stays with a person — starting with you, and eventually across a whole team.

It's the most adaptable thing we'll hand you all week: one frame that works on a single task this afternoon and on the biggest workforce questions your organization is about to face. It's also the tool that carries you into the leadership conversations coming next. Let's get into it.



Why This One's Different

Let's be honest about the state of HR.

HR has never carried more — the workload is heavier, more varied, and more relentless than it's ever been. Compliance, culture, hiring, conflict, benefits, and whatever landed on your desk five minutes ago. And into all of that, everyone is saying the same thing: you should be using AI. It sounds great in theory. In practice, it hands you a new set of skills to learn and a new set of decisions to make — right when you had no room for either.

You've navigated shifts like this before — but not one quite like this.

Think back to a few of the big changes you've already lived through at work.

The Internet changed *how* we work

Remember when the internet first showed up at work? At first, no one was allowed to use it. Then a few special people could. Then it opened up to the rest of the organization — though the sites you could visit were limited. Now, try doing your job for a day without it. When the wifi drops at the office, everyone's going home.



COVID changed *where* we work

Remember thinking that if we could just hunker down for two weeks, it would all go away? We're six-plus years past the start of COVID-19 — and look how much has changed. From in-person, to more flexibility, to work-from-anywhere, COVID revolutionized where the work happens. (Thank goodness the internet came first, so we were primed to handle it.) But here's the thing: even though it lasted far longer than two weeks, we always knew COVID was temporary. Changed forever, yes — but temporary.

AI changes *who's doing* the work

Now enters the big, bad beast of AI. It isn't temporary like COVID, and by now we all know how to use the internet. But this one is different — because it isn't just changing the when, the where, or the how. It's changing who. You're probably already hearing the fear: "AI is going to take my job!" So let me give it to you straight.



So, Let Me Give It to You Straight

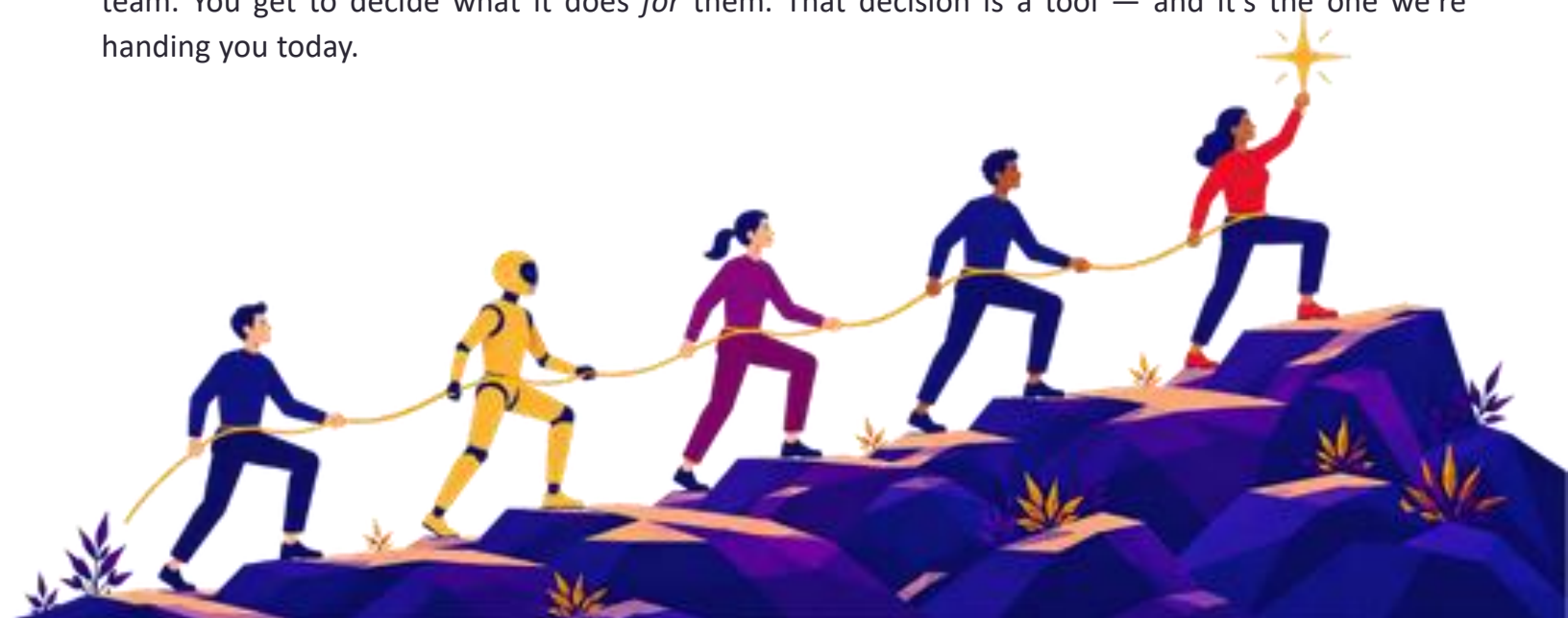
AI isn't replacing HR — it's replacing HR's *tasks*, one at a time. The minute you ask AI to draft the memo, summarize the handbook, or pull the report, a task a person used to do has moved off a human's plate. **And that's okay!** That's you using the tool exactly as it was designed — for your own productivity.

But it's worth asking what comes next. As tasks shift to AI and the workforce quietly realigns around it, one question matters more than any other — and almost no one is saying it out loud:

*How will the leaders left standing lead a workforce that's **part human, part AI?***

That's not a technology question — it's a leadership one. And it starts with a single, learnable decision: what does AI do, and what stays with a person?

Here's the reassuring part, and the whole point of today: you're not stuck with what AI does *to* your team. You get to decide what it does *for* them. That decision is a tool — and it's the one we're handing you today.



The Eisenhower Matrix

This tool is one you may already know — you’ve just never used it for this.

It goes back further than AI, further than most productivity advice. It goes back to a five-star general.

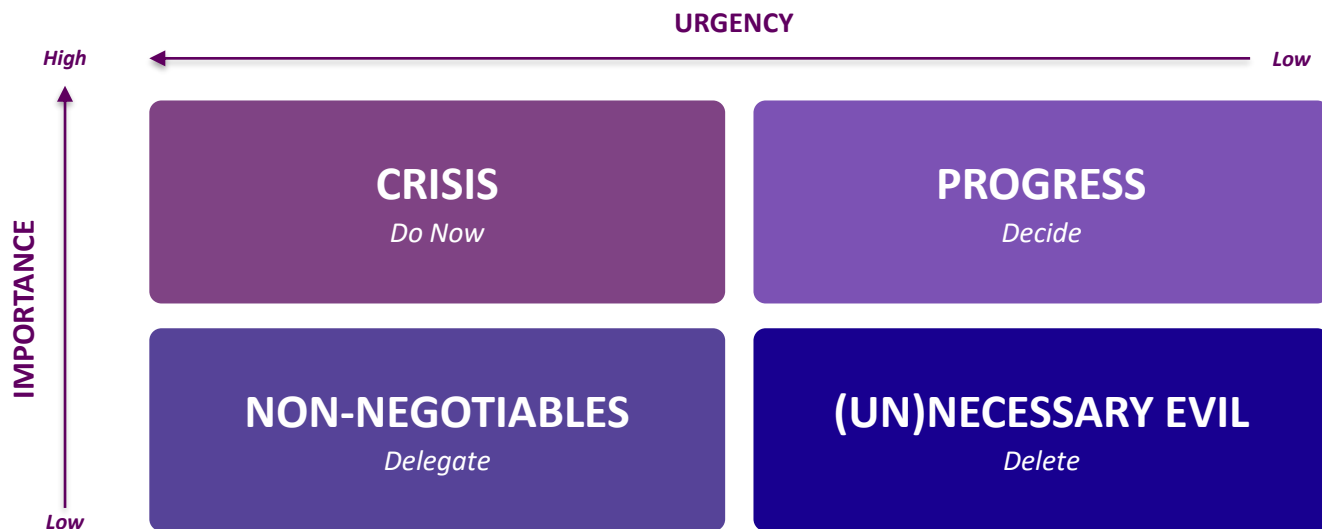
“I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are seldom important, and the important are seldom urgent.”

— Dwight D. Eisenhower

Here’s what’s uncanny about AI:

It’s both urgent and important — which is exactly why leaders freeze on it.

The matrix cuts through the freeze. Put any task on two lines — how important it is, and how urgent it is. The one to watch is the line across the middle: the higher a task sits, the more it shapes a real outcome for a person, and the more it needs your judgment. That’s where you start asking the real question — how much of this should I let AI do? If you want help weighing that, look back at Days 2 and 3 — they were built for exactly this call.



A NOTE FROM AI GURU LAUREN PATEL

I’ve been a little obsessed with this matrix for years. I first utilized it as a *time-management* tool, back when I trained sales and marketing teams — and it’s still in the productivity courses I teach today. Over time it grew into a methodical way to think about how work gets done and how decisions get made. So when AI arrived and everyone started asking me, “what do I hand off, and what do I keep?”, I realized the answer was a frame I’d been teaching for years. The good stuff always has a way of coming back around, doesn’t it?

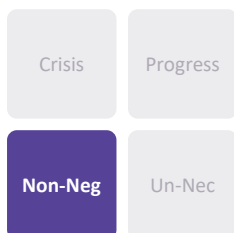
Reading the Four Boxes

Here's a behind-the-scenes look at how we walk through the matrix in our AI strategy sessions. We start in the bottom-right corner, and work our way around — counterclockwise. You'll see why as we go.



(UN)NECESSARY EVIL *Delete · your #1 for AI*

We jokingly call these the “unnecessary evils” — the zero-value, why-am-I-even-doing-this work. The “duh” tasks: reformatting, data entry, the expense report you dread. This is where AI comes in first, and the payoff is immediate — hours back, at almost no risk.



NON-NEGOTIABLES *Delegate · your #2 for AI*

Picture handing a competent assistant a clear order — “go prep the Smith file” — and getting it back ready for you to take over. That's this box: the recurring report, the routine reply, the status update. It still has to get done, and it still needs your direction, but not your deepest judgment. Nobody pays you to pull the report; they pay you to analyze it.



CRISIS *Do Now · human lead, AI predicts, supports, mitigates*

The five-alarm fire HR knows all too well. Don't worry — even with AI, you still get to tackle these, because you bring the expertise, the human connection, the emotional intelligence, and the responsibility. AI just plays support: a fast first draft, the facts gathered while you decide. And once it's deeply woven into your work, it should start spotting the smoke early — flagging a crisis in the making before it catches.



PROGRESS *Decide · human holds, AI assists*

This is the one — the “oh my gosh, I'm on top of the world” box. It doesn't feel like productivity; it feels like growth. You're powerful, you're sharp, you're strategic, and everything's clicking. It's the deep, creative, human work every HR pro wants and never has time for. AI doesn't take this from you — it protects it, by clearing everything below so this is what's left.

The goal, reward, and impact are in the Progress quadrant.

Used well, AI could help you spend something upwards of **80% of your time in Progress**. That might seem like a far cry from how much time you're able to spend there, but every task you delegate to AI frees you up to add another hour to the high-value work you love to do.

The Weight of What's Left

Here's the consequence almost no one is planning for.

Right now, using AI for personal productivity — even departmental enablement — is a major win, and I'd bet you've caught yourself thinking, "if I could just be freed from XYZ, I'd finally get to the work I actually want to do." And that is true. But let me offer one word of caution. When AI clears the bottom of the matrix, your people aren't left with a lighter load — they're left with a heavier one. Everything easy is gone: the quick wins, the small to-do's checked off, the little hits of "done" that got you through a hard day. What remains is the strategic, the creative, the judgment calls — important, unrelenting, and all at once.

That is a different workforce to lead.

Burnout risk climbs, and stamina becomes the thing that separates teams that thrive from teams that fall apart. The old scorecards stop working, too — because you can't measure this kind of work the way you measured the busywork.

HR's value won't be measured by *output* — but by *outcome*.

This is where leadership goes next — and where HR steps up. Delegation was the first pillar; here are two more to build alongside it, because together they're how you lead with **Dual Fluency**:

COMMUNICATION

The mechanism that deploys delegation, in two parallel but different languages.

The way you delegate to a person and the way you delegate to AI cannot be the same. People need meaning — the why, what's in it for them, room to push back. AI needs precision — exact instructions, clear constraints, a definition of "done." Talk to AI like an employee and you'll get poor results; talk to your people like AI and you'll leave them discouraged. Fluency is knowing which mode you're in.

STEWARDSHIP

The deliberate work of protecting, developing, and sustaining your people through the weight of what's left.

When AI takes the easy wins, your people are left holding only the heavy work — a real risk to morale, stamina, and retention. Stewardship is watching for the strain, developing capacity, and reskilling people into what's next, so no one burns out or gets left behind. **Stewardship isn't the soft part of the job. It's the strategic part. It's the deliberate part.**

Keep Going + Your Move Today

You don't have to reorganize your entire HR workload today. Run the sort once, and feel how it changes what you protect.

YOUR MOVE TODAY — SORT ONE REAL WEEK

- 1. List the tasks** actually on your plate today.
- 2. Put them on the matrix.** How important is each one — and how urgent? Remember: does it need human judgment, or just clear rules?
- 3. Find your AI Priority #1.** The low-importance, low-urgency one. If you're not already, this is the place to bring AI into the mix. Maybe you'll even get bold and automate something, set up a routine or schedule, or even **gasp** build an agent!
- 4. Protect one Progress task.** The important-but-not-urgent one — and seriously, block the time. You deserve the time to do the strategic work. The other things can wait.



WHERE THIS GOES NEXT

Delegation is the first pillar of *Dual Fluency* — and honestly, I think it's the hardest one for most managers and leaders. How many times have you said "I stink at delegating," or "no one can do it the way I can"? You're in very good company. On a recent episode of *This Week at Work*, Burt and I dug into this exact idea — and, in true Lauren fashion, into what delegation looks like with AI in the picture.

Give it a listen after the 15-minute mark: "Leadership Development Is Stalling: The Delegation Gap Leaders Must Fix."

[Watch the episode →](#)