



Middle East  
Human Capital Trends 2026

# Fact or fabrication? AI is blurring the line when it comes to people and work

*As artificial intelligence reshapes how work is created, assessed, and delivered, how can organizations preserve trust in what they see, what they know, and the decisions they make?*

—By Charlie Casella

For generations, organizations have relied on a relatively simple assumption: We can usually tell what is real.

A qualification reflects genuine expertise. A report reflects genuine analysis. An assessment reflects genuine capability. A piece of work reflects genuine effort. These assumptions have long formed the foundation of organizational trust. But today, that foundation is becoming less certain.

All over the world, artificial intelligence is transforming how work is produced, evaluated, and consumed. AI can generate reports, create presentations, write code, summarize meetings, assess candidates, and provide recommendations in seconds. What once required significant time, expertise, and human effort can now be produced at unprecedented speed and scale. The opportunities are enormous...and so are the questions.

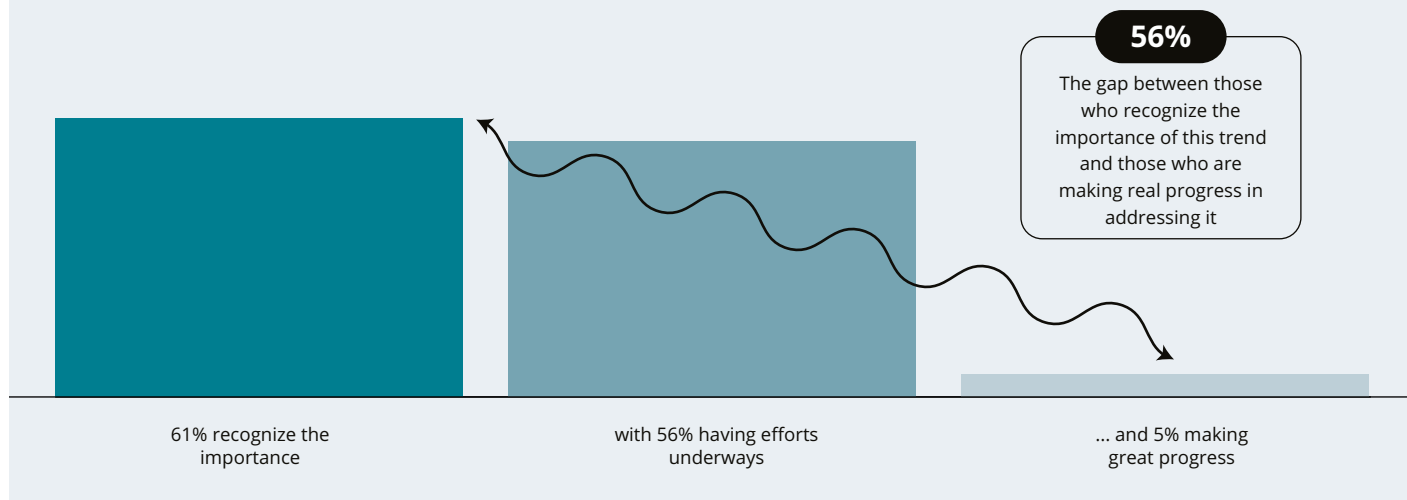
When content can be generated instantly, how do we know it is accurate? When assessments can be influenced by AI, how do we know they reflect genuine capability? When decisions are increasingly informed by algorithms, how do we know they can be trusted?

The question is no longer whether AI can generate the work, but whether organizations (and their people) can trust what it produces.

Globally, 77% of executives believe AI-generated outputs will increasingly require verification and oversight, while 73% expect trust and authenticity to become critical factors in determining organizational success in an AI-enabled future.<sup>1</sup> For organizations across the Middle East, these questions are particularly relevant.

## Organizations say it's important to address the decline in the trustworthiness of workforce data, but only 5% are making great progress toward doing so

How important is addressing "the decline in quality and trustworthiness of work and workforce data (e.g., disinformation)" and "Where is your organization on its journey to address this issue?"



Source: Analysis of Deloitte's 2026 Global Human Capital Trends survey data.

National strategies such as the UAE National AI Strategy, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, and Qatar's National AI Strategy are accelerating AI adoption across both the public and private sectors. As AI becomes embedded into everyday work, organizations must ensure that trust keeps pace with technology.<sup>9,10,11</sup> Alongside AI adoption, it will be crucial to preserve confidence in the people, processes, and decisions that increasingly depend on this vital technology.

### The trust paradox: More intelligence, less confidence

For decades, organizations assumed that better information would lead to better decisions. AI, at first glance, appears to deliver exactly that: More data, more analysis, more recommendations and more content.

Yet many organizations are experiencing an unexpected outcome. As intelligence scales, confidence does not—the exact opposite of the desired end state.

Employees increasingly question whether content is authentic. Leaders spend more time validating information before acting on it. Organizations introduce additional controls to verify outputs that would once have been assumed to be reliable.

The result is a paradox: AI accelerates output and then organizations slow down to verify it.

This challenge is becoming more visible as generative AI makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish between authentic and synthetic content. Europol has highlighted the growing sophistication of AI-generated media and the implications this creates for trust, verification, and decision-making across institutions and society.<sup>2</sup>

This is not because AI lacks value. On the contrary, AI is creating extraordinary opportunities for productivity, innovation, and insight. The World Economic Forum and Gartner both identify AI as one of the most transformative forces shaping the future of work and organizational competitiveness.<sup>3,4</sup> The challenge is that trust has become a new constraint. Without trust, AI-generated insights go unused, recommendations are ignored and adoption stalls.

In this sense, trust is becoming one of the most important determinants of whether organizations realize value from their AI investments. The organizations that thrive in the years ahead will not simply be those that deploy AI effectively. They will be those that create confidence in how AI is used, how its outputs are validated, and how accountability is maintained. In short, trust can no longer be assumed—it must be deliberately designed.

### Designing trust: Five levers for ai-enabled organizations

If trust is becoming a prerequisite for AI adoption, the next question for leaders is relatively straightforward: How do organizations build it?

Trust cannot be mandated through policy, nor can it be assumed simply because a technology has been deployed. In an AI-enabled workplace, trust must be deliberately engineered into the systems, processes, and experiences that shape how people interact with technology.

Across the Middle East, leading organizations are increasingly focusing on five levers to strengthen confidence in AI-generated work and decisions.

#### Make AI transparent

Trust begins with understanding. People are more likely to trust recommendations when they understand how they were generated, what information informed them, and where limitations may exist.

The challenge is that many AI systems operate as black boxes. They produce outputs without clearly revealing the reasoning behind them. While this may be acceptable for low-risk tasks, it becomes problematic when AI begins influencing hiring decisions, financial approvals, workforce planning, customer interactions, or strategic choices. Leading organizations are therefore investing in explainability.

This principle is increasingly reflected in emerging governance frameworks such as the UAE AI Ethics Guidelines, which emphasize transparency, fairness, and accountability in AI-enabled decision-making.<sup>5</sup> Transparency does not eliminate uncertainty, rather it gives people greater confidence in navigating it.

#### Verify authenticity

As AI-generated content becomes increasingly sophisticated, distinguishing authentic work from synthetic outputs is becoming more difficult and this challenge extends beyond misinformation or deepfakes.

Organizations are increasingly asking broader questions:

- Did a candidate write this application?
- Was this report generated by AI?
- Can this recommendation be traced back to reliable information?
- How can we verify the origin of what we are seeing?

The ability to authenticate content is rapidly becoming a strategic capability. Across the region, organizations are exploring new approaches to content verification, digital credentials, watermarking technologies, and provenance tracking to strengthen confidence in AI-generated outputs. In an environment where fabrication is becoming easier, authenticity becomes more valuable.



### Preserve human oversight

Trust is strengthened when accountability remains clear. Regardless of how advanced AI becomes, responsibility for important decisions cannot be delegated to algorithms.

People need confidence that there is still a human accountable for outcomes, particularly when decisions affect employees, customers, citizens, or broader stakeholders. This is especially relevant in highly regulated sectors such as healthcare, financial services, aviation, and the public sector, where trust depends not only on accuracy but also on accountability.

The most successful organizations are therefore treating AI as a decision-support capability rather than a decision-making substitute.

### Build workforce confidence

Trust is not solely a technology issue but also a workforce issue.

Even the most sophisticated AI systems will struggle to create value if employees do not understand how to use them effectively or lack confidence in their outputs. This makes capability-building among the workforce critical.

Across the GCC, governments and organizations are investing heavily in AI literacy and workforce readiness initiatives so as to develop employees who can interpret AI-generated recommendations, identify potential limitations, exercise critical thinking, and understand when human intervention is required.

Organizations such as Saudi Aramco, stc, and national institutions led by SDAIA are investing significantly in workforce capability-building to prepare employees for AI-enabled work environments.<sup>6,7,8</sup>

The objective is not to turn every employee into an AI specialist; it is to ensure that every employee can engage with AI responsibly and effectively.

### Strengthen data integrity

Trust in AI depends on trust in the information that powers it. Even the most sophisticated models cannot overcome poor-quality, incomplete, biased, or unreliable data.

Organizations therefore need to pay as much attention to their data foundations as they do to their AI ambitions. This requires robust governance, clear ownership, effective controls, and ongoing monitoring of data quality.

Leading organizations increasingly recognize that trustworthy AI begins long before an algorithm is deployed. It begins with the integrity of the data ecosystem that supports it.

Together, these five levers highlight an important shift: Trust is no longer a by-product of successful AI adoption, it is, in fact, becoming a condition for it.

The organizations that move fastest will not necessarily be those that create the greatest value. Instead it is the organizations that build trust the fastest that are likely to be the ones that unlock AI's full potential.

### Conclusion: Trust becomes the advantage

Ultimately, the challenge facing organizations is not whether AI can generate content, insights, recommendations, or decisions, it is whether people can trust them. As AI becomes more capable, trust is emerging as a new differentiator. Fundamentally, trust is not a by-product of AI adoption, it is a prerequisite for it.

Building trustworthy AI-enabled organizations requires leaders to:

- **Make AI transparent:** Help people understand how outputs are generated and where limitations exist.
- **Verify authenticity:** Strengthen confidence in the origin, accuracy, and integrity of AI-generated content.
- **Preserve human oversight:** Ensure accountability remains visible, particularly for high-impact decisions.
- **Build workforce confidence:** Equip employees with the skills and judgment required to work effectively alongside AI.
- **Strengthen data integrity:** Create robust foundations that support reliable, trustworthy outputs.

The organizations that succeed in the coming decade will not necessarily be those with access to the most powerful AI. They will be those that create the greatest confidence in how that AI is used.

Because in an era where intelligence is increasingly artificial, trust becomes the defining human advantage.



## Research Methodology

Deloitte's 2026 Global Human Capital Trends worked in collaboration with Oxford Economics to survey more than 3,000 business and human resources leaders across multiple industries and sectors in 15 countries. In addition to the broad, global survey that provides the foundational data for the 2026 Global Human Capital Trends report, Deloitte supplemented its research with surveys of 6,000 workers, managers and executives to uncover where there may be gaps between leader and manager perception and worker realities. The survey data is complemented by more than 50 interviews with executives and subject matter experts from some of today's leading organizations. These insights helped shape the trends in this report.

## Endnotes

1. Deloitte, 2026 Global Human Capital Trends Survey, <https://www.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/talent/human-capital-trends.html>
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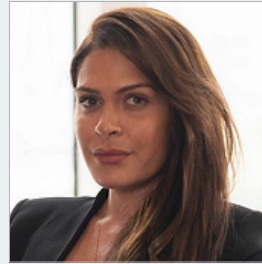
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