

Workday: Most leaders see AI reshaping jobs, not cutting staff

Executive Summary

A new global survey by Workday (5 Oct) finds most business leaders do not expect AI to shrink their headcount - instead, they foresee using AI to help existing employees work more productively (investor.workday.com [1]). But many workers feel they aren't getting the support they need to keep pace (investor.workday.com [2]). Meanwhile, one US company, Fair Isaac (FICO), announced plans on 6 Oct to cut 15% of its workforce to integrate AI into its products (www.thestar.com.my [3]) - even as research suggests such AI-driven layoffs often fail to deliver the hoped-for returns (www.gartner.com [4]).

References:

- [1] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=getting%20the%20help%20they%20need,roles%20inside%20the%20same%20company>
- [2] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=2026%20survey%20of%206%2C000%20full,saying%20they%27re>
- [3] www.thestar.com.my — <https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring#:~:text=pre,loan%20providers%20%E2%80%94%20have%20plunged>
- [4] www.gartner.com — <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2026-05-05-gartner-says-autonomous-business-and-artificial-intelligence-layoffs-may-create-budget-room-but-do-not-deliver-returns#:~:text=Transition%20to%20Autonomous%20Capabilities%20Among,that%20workforce%20reduction%20rates%20were>

Leaders see AI reshaping jobs, not cutting staff

Workday's new Global Workforce Report - based on a survey of 6,000 full-time employees and additional analysis of job data - suggests that artificial intelligence is prompting companies to rethink roles rather than eliminate them. The report found that 40% of business leaders expect AI to help them "get more out of the employees they already have," whereas only 28% expect it to reduce headcount (investor.workday.com [1]). As AI automates routine tasks, managers are tending to redeploy people into higher-value work instead of cutting positions. In fact, many companies are holding onto staff even as roles evolve: lateral moves into new internal roles fell at 57% of employers in the past year and promotion rates have flatlined (investor.workday.com [2]), suggesting that organisations are reorganising work internally rather than shedding workers.

Workday's analysis also reveals a rapid shift in the skills employers demand. Postings for "basic" AI capabilities - like using or prompting generative AI tools - spiked at the start of 2026 but then declined by 25% over the following months (investor.workday.com [3]). At the same time, demand for more advanced, "hands-on" skills such as building AI tools, automating workflows and AI engineering has surged - climbing 51% between September 2025 and July 2026 (investor.workday.com [4]). As one Workday executive put it, "Employees may not be changing jobs, but their jobs are changing around them" (investor.workday.com [5]). In practice, AI is being used to augment existing roles and create new responsibilities, rather than replace workers outright.

Yet many employees worry they are not receiving the help they need to adapt to these changes. In Workday's survey, 79% of workers said they know what new skills they need to succeed, but only 66% said their employer helps them develop those skills - a 13-point gap (investor.workday.com [6]). Even among those using AI extensively on the job, 62% fear it will make their current skills less valuable - though 76% also expect it to open up new career opportunities for them (investor.workday.com [7]). The findings highlight a growing risk that without more support and training, companies could fail to realise AI's full potential due to an "AI readiness" gap in their workforce.

References:

- [1] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=getting%20the%20help%20they%20need,roles%20inside%20the%20same%20company>
- [2] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=leadership%20skills%20fell%20, rates%20worldwide%20stayed%20essentially%20flat>
- [3] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=peaked%20in%20January%202026%2C%20and, just%20use%20AI%20to%20wanting>
- [4] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=peaked%20in%20January%202026%2C%20and, just%20use%20AI%20to%20wanting>
- [5] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=fell%20at%2057,president%2C%20people%20systems%2C%20intelligence>
- [6] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=2026%20survey%20of%206%2C000%20full,saying%20they%27re>
- [7] investor.workday.com — <https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx#:~:text=Pulse%20survey%20of%205%2C944%20workers%2C,harder%2C%20job%20requisition%20data%20from>

Automation spurs layoffs - but with uncertain payoff

One company breaking from the pack is Fair Isaac Corporation (FICO). On 6 October, the US credit-score giant announced it will eliminate about 15% of its workforce - roughly 570 jobs - as part of a restructuring to "operate... faster" and integrate AI into product development (www.thestar.com.my [1]) (www.thestar.com.my [2]). The layoffs are intended to streamline operations and free up resources for AI projects, with FICO taking a \$27 /million charge for severance costs in its fourth quarter (www.thestar.com.my [3]). The firm said the plan should be largely completed by late 2027 (www.channelnewsasia.com [4]). FICO is the latest in a string of companies trimming staff as they automate tasks and redirect spending towards AI, betting on efficiency gains down the line.

However, emerging evidence suggests that cutting workers to make way for AI is far from a guaranteed success. In May, research by Gartner found that 80% of large enterprises piloting "autonomous" AI capabilities had indeed reduced headcount - yet these reductions showed "no correlation" with improved returns on investment (www.gartner.com [5]). In fact, companies that slashed jobs for AI were just as likely to see negative or negligible outcomes as they were to see meaningful productivity gains (www.theregister.com [6]). Gartner's analysts conclude that organisations achieve better ROI when they invest in equipping their workforce with new skills and redesigning work processes, rather than pursuing headcount reductions as a shortcut to AI-driven savings. The lesson for leaders: layoffs might create short-term budget room, but lasting value from AI often hinges on human capital and thoughtful change management.

References:

- [1] www.thestar.com.my — <https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring#:~:text=pre,loan%20providers%20%E2%80%94%20have%20plunged>
- [2] www.thestar.com.my — <https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring#:~:text=%E2%81%A0value%20for%20our%20customers%2C,the%20company%20%E2%80%94%20known%20for>
- [3] www.thestar.com.my — <https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring#:~:text=%E2%81%A0value%20for%20our%20customers%2C,the%20company%20%E2%80%94%20known%20for>

restructuring#:~:text=the%20end%20of%20September%202025%2C,the%20company%20%E2%80%94%20known%20for
[4] [www.channelnewsasia.com — https://www.channelnewsasia.com/business/fico-cuts-workforce-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring-6437681#:~:text=2026%2C%20primarily%20related%20to%20severance,cuts%20could%20affect%20about%205](https://www.channelnewsasia.com/business/fico-cuts-workforce-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring-6437681#:~:text=2026%2C%20primarily%20related%20to%20severance,cuts%20could%20affect%20about%205)
[5] [www.gartner.com — https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2026-05-05-gartner-says-autonomous-business-and-artificial-intelligence-layoffs-may-create-budget-room-but-do-not-deliver-returns#:~:text=Transition%20to%20Autonomous%20Capabilities%20Among,that%20workforce%20reduction%20rates%20were](https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2026-05-05-gartner-says-autonomous-business-and-artificial-intelligence-layoffs-may-create-budget-room-but-do-not-deliver-returns#:~:text=Transition%20to%20Autonomous%20Capabilities%20Among,that%20workforce%20reduction%20rates%20were)
[6] [www.theregister.com — https://www.theregister.com/ai-and-ml/2026/05/06/ai-layoffs-backfire-as-cutting-staff-doesnt-cut-it-firms-warned/5230631#:~:text=around%2080%20percent%20had%20cut,returns%2C%20they%20just%20create%20vacancies](https://www.theregister.com/ai-and-ml/2026/05/06/ai-layoffs-backfire-as-cutting-staff-doesnt-cut-it-firms-warned/5230631#:~:text=around%2080%20percent%20had%20cut,returns%2C%20they%20just%20create%20vacancies)

UK staff turn to ‘shadow AI’ amid skills gap

Recent research illustrates how employees themselves are driving AI adoption - sometimes under the radar. A landmark Deloitte survey of 25,000 UK workers found that 63% are already using generative AI tools in their jobs (www.deloitte.com [1]). Many are not waiting for permission: nearly one-third of these GenAI users in the UK are doing so without their employer's knowledge (www.deloitte.com [2]). This unofficial “shadow AI” usage highlights a hunger among staff to upskill with AI, but it also raises risks around data security and consistency when companies lack clear policies.

The Deloitte study estimates British workers are spending close to £1 /billion of their own money each year on generative AI tools for work (www.deloitte.com [3]). About 46% of those using AI at work rely on free tools, while only 34% use employer-provided software and 17% use in-house AI systems (www.deloitte.com [4]). The prevalence of self-funded, unsanctioned tool use suggests many organisations have yet to provide the training, infrastructure and governance employees need to use AI effectively. Leaders should assess how staff are experimenting with AI on their own - and consider investing in sanctioned solutions, education and support before “bottom-up” adoption outpaces the company's controls and strategy.

References:

[1] [www.deloitte.com — https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=responding,they%20are%20using%2C%20nearly%20half](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=responding,they%20are%20using%2C%20nearly%20half)
[2] [www.deloitte.com — https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=used%20GenAI%20tools%20for%20work%3B,use%20for%20work%2C%20according%20to](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=used%20GenAI%20tools%20for%20work%3B,use%20for%20work%2C%20according%20to)
[3] [www.deloitte.com — https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=from%2025%2C000%20workers%2C%20finds%20employees,use%20for%20work%2C%20according%20to](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=from%2025%2C000%20workers%2C%20finds%20employees,use%20for%20work%2C%20according%20to)
[4] [www.deloitte.com — https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=that%2063,house%20tools.%20In](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html#:~:text=that%2063,house%20tools.%20In)

Key Statistics

- 28% - Share of global business leaders who expect AI to reduce headcount (Workday, 2026)
- 15% - Proportion of FICO's workforce being cut in AI-driven restructuring (FICO, 2026)
- 80% - Large firms using AI that have reported workforce reductions (Gartner, 2026)
- 63% - UK working adults who say they use generative AI at work (Deloitte, 2026)
- £958 /million - Annual personal spend by UK workers on generative AI tools for work (Deloitte, 2026)

KEY TAKEAWAY

Audit your workforce's AI readiness: ensure employees have the training and support to integrate AI into their roles. Focus on redesigning work and upskilling your people - quick headcount cuts for AI gains may backfire long term.

Sources

[Workday Global Workforce Report: AI Is Rewriting Jobs More Than It's Cutting Them \(Press Release\)](https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx)

<https://investor.workday.com/news-and-events/press-releases/news-details/2026/Workday-Global-Workforce-Report-AI-Is-Rewriting-Jobs-More-Than-Its-Cutting-Them/default.aspx>

[FICO cuts workforce by 15% as part of AI-driven restructuring \(Reuters via The Star\)](https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring)

<https://www.thestar.com.my/tech/tech-news/2026/10/07/fico-cuts-workforce-by-15-in-ai-driven-restructuring>

[Gartner Says Autonomous Business and AI Layoffs May Create Budget Room, but Do Not Deliver Returns \(Press Release\)](https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2026-05-05-gartner-says-autonomous-business-and-artificial-intelligence-layoffs-may-create-budget-room-but-do-not-deliver-returns)

<https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2026-05-05-gartner-says-autonomous-business-and-artificial-intelligence-layoffs-may-create-budget-room-but-do-not-deliver-returns>

[British workers spend nearly £1bn of their own money on GenAI for work \(Deloitte UK Press Release\)](https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html)

<https://www.deloitte.com/uk/en/about/press-room/british-workers-spend-one-billion-pounds-of-their-own-money-on-gen-ai-for-work.html>

