

AI in Human Resources: Key Roundtable Takeaways

The recent Middlemore virtual roundtable, “AI in HR”, hosted by Cathrine McCarroll and featuring Mike Piker, VP of Global Total Reward at Shiseido, was a dynamic gathering of senior HR professionals - exploring the seismic impact that artificial intelligence is having on HR and Reward.

We explore the key highlights from the session.





The Three Biggest Key Takeaways

1. Trust and Transparency Are Foundational

AI must operate with clear explainability, giving employees a route to understand and appeal decisions, supporting genuine trust in HR processes.

2. Rigorous Fairness and Bias Mitigation

Continuous auditing, independent bias checks and targeted fairness testing ensure AI tools enhance rather than erode equity, especially in pay, promotions, and performance assessment.

3. Human Oversight Remains Essential

Human context adds value to automated recommendations, protecting against unintended consequences and upholding empathy, AI in HR should augment rather than supplant decision-making.





Practical Use Cases for AI

The roundtable spotlighted emerging, in-house examples of AI in HR beyond the theoretical. These included chatbots for employee equity queries, AI-driven performance management pilots, automated job slotting and pay recommendations, and digital avatars for managing global mobility.

Attendees agreed that much of this innovation is being piloted internally by reward and HR teams rather than delivered “off the shelf” by vendors, which often results in misaligned solutions. This bottom-up approach lets HR leaders test, learn and tailor AI use to specific organisational needs.





Challenges and Risks:

The discussion did not shy away from AI's complexity and risk, particularly regarding compliance with evolving pay transparency laws (notably acute in the UK, EU, and US) and data privacy requirements.

Mike emphasised that, beyond efficiency and productivity, one of the strongest arguments for AI in reward is its capacity to manage compliance risk and mitigate potential litigation—vital as regulatory environments tighten.

Several foundational principles emerged:

- AI must be embedded as a tool to support - not replace, human decision-making.
- The goal is not only to automate tasks, but to eliminate underlying bias, particularly in pay and progression.
- Real-world user cases focused on how HR professionals are piloting AI systems to drive equity, manage compliance and enhance data quality, rather than relying solely on vendor offerings.






Final Reflections

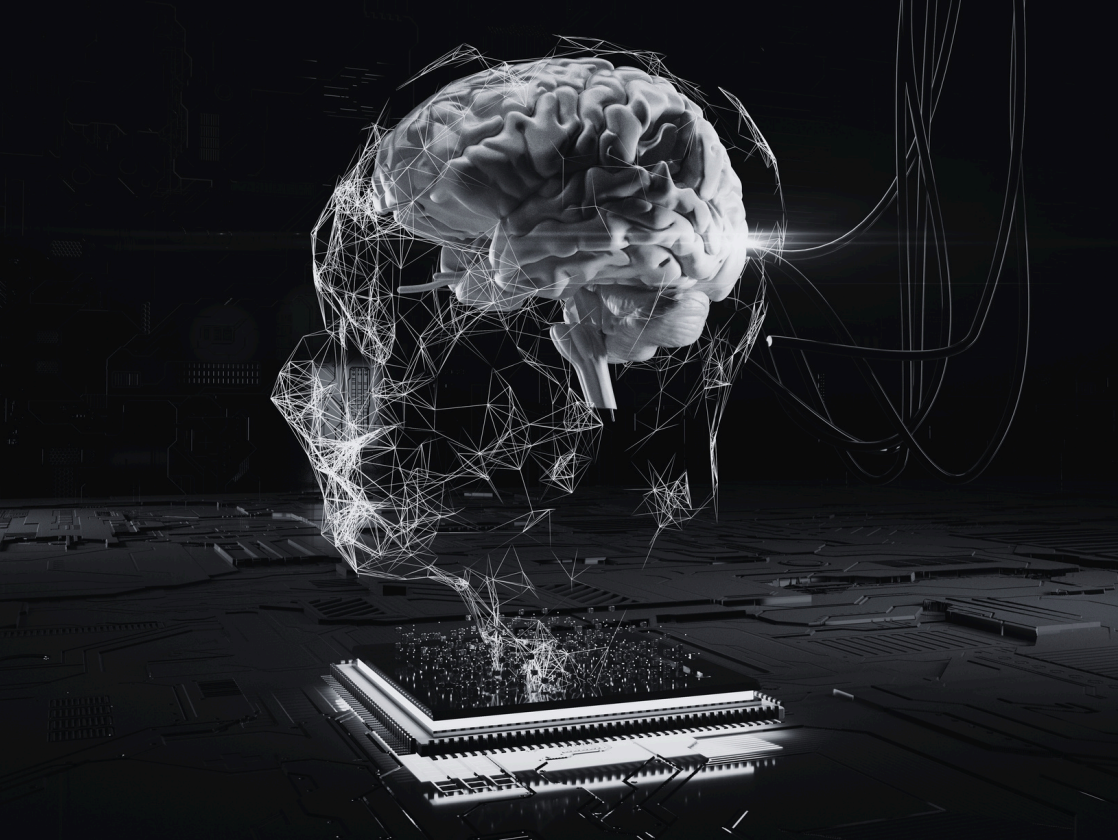
The roundtable surfaced a clear message: AI offers the opportunity to radically accelerate HR's impact, but only if deployed with responsibility. Attendees shared user cases from automated job slotting, risk-managed compliance reporting, and performance management, but also recognised the importance of aligning AI projects to commercial priorities for real organisational support.

The session concluded with encouragement to HR and reward leaders to embrace experimentation, challenge vendor-driven "one-size-fits-all" solutions and use peer platforms like Middlemore's roundtables for open debate and practical learning.

A huge thank you to Mike who delivered an insightful view into AI in HR, specifically in the Reward space, and our attendees who all contributed to such an engaging conversation.

For details on the next event in the Middlemore reward series, please contact Cathrine McCarroll. To read the full blog visit our website: www.middlemore.co.uk





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