How to drive organizational effectiveness with HR technology

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Human resources often gets a bad rap. Some version of the headline "Is HR ever your friend?" has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and the *BBC*. But HR is vital to the success of an organization.

The core tasks of HR professionals directly impact company performance. An organization can't thrive without the right people, and human resources is the primary filter for talent. To nurture talent, those in HR oversee professional development for employees, support the company culture, and facilitate important conversations. Plus, HR leads processes that identify and remove individuals who pose a risk to an organization's productivity or security.

The organizational impact of human resources

- **Find talent** to drive the organization's work
- **Reinforce the company culture** with events and communications
- **Maintain employee morale** and **facilitate professional development** for peak performance
- **Reduce risks** from individuals who negatively impact the organization's culture and security

To function well, HR professionals must be able to track the entire employee life cycle, from application to offboarding. They need to know the key factors that influence employees, including performance, pay, and professional goals. They also need to report on this data, while keeping it secure.

No other department maintains such deep and persistent relationships with employees. Ensuring the success of HR initiatives and the accuracy of HR data is the best way for an organization to achieve its goals.

Yet, according to many human resources professionals, the systems that should help them do their work actually make it harder. These systems lack the automation, integration, and reporting capabilities HR staff need to do their jobs efficiently and effectively.

This report is based on a survey of HR professionals conducted in November 2024 using the Wynter platform. It outlines the common technology pain points of HR leaders across a range of industries and provides insights on increasing HR's efficacy to drive positive outcomes organization-wide.

Key Findings

Too many tools and a **lack of integration** between tools hamper HR's effectiveness.

Overly complex tools reduce HR's efficacy.

HR professionals have to spend too much time on **manual work**.

Trends and insights

"
An AI chatbot would be amazing. Where an employee could type in their question and the chatbot would either show the employee where it's addressed in the handbook, provide them with the form to fill out, and then send the appropriate form to the appropriate person for follow-up. "

Too many tools and a lack of integration reduce HR's effectiveness

According to HR leaders, they have to use too many tools to do their jobs. The number of tools and a lack of integration between them hamper HR's efforts.
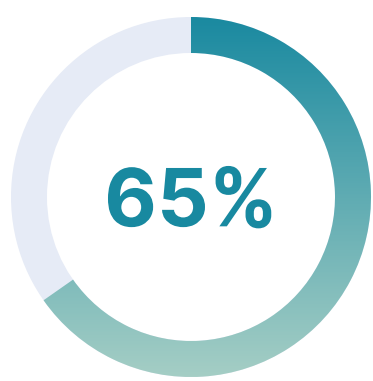
Distribution of number of tools used by HR professionals
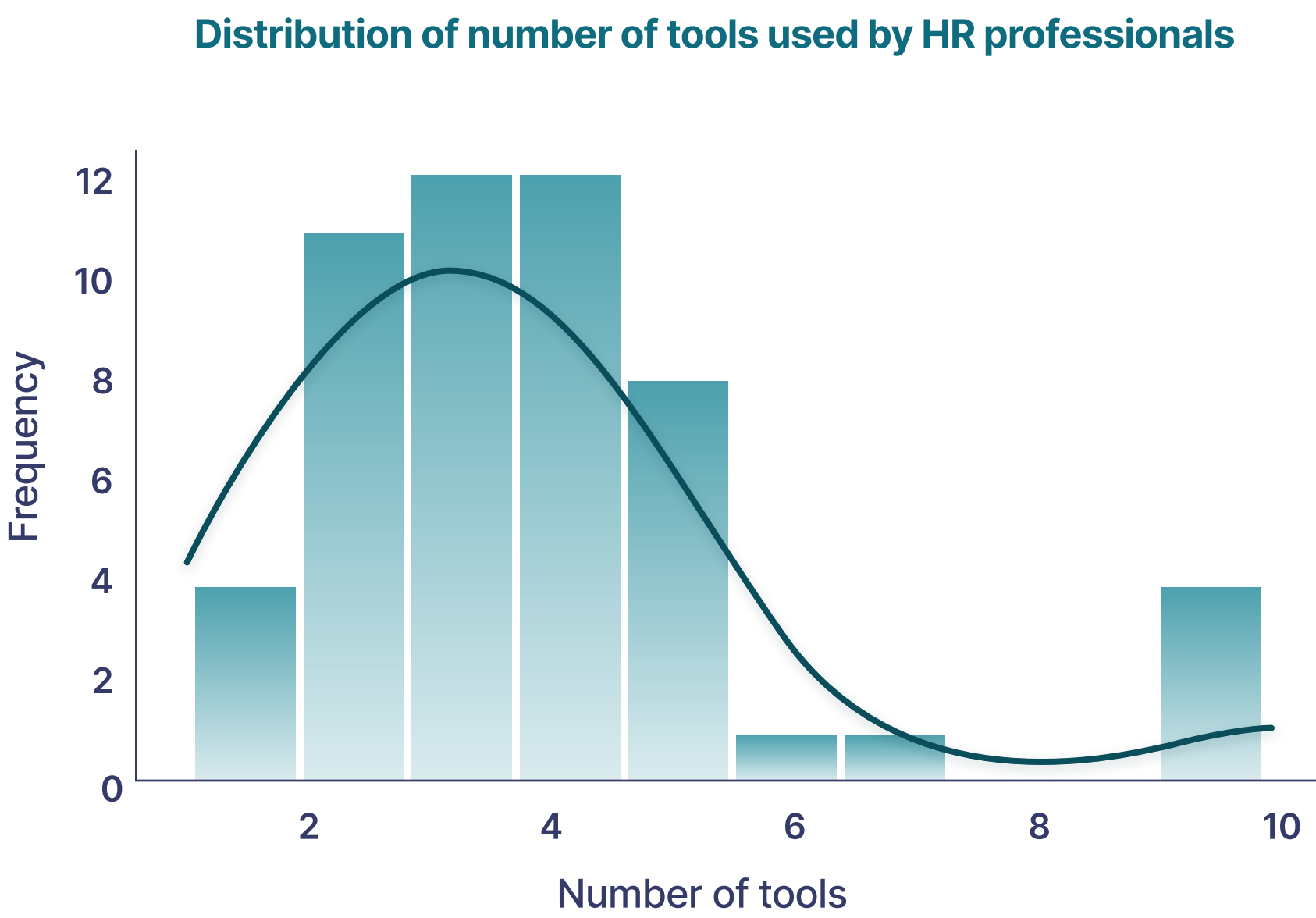
Most professionals use about four different tools to manage HR-related tasks. Some reported using as many as 10 different tools.

Too many platforms hinder HR

Issues experienced by HR professionals

65%

65 percent of respondents expressed frustration with "too many platforms/lack of integration across platforms."

Not surprisingly, 65 percent of respondents expressed frustration with "too many platforms/lack of integration across platforms." One noted that their organization uses three different systems to house applicant interviews and resumes, reviews and training information, and employee personnel files.

The types of HR tools used

Types of tools used by HR professionals
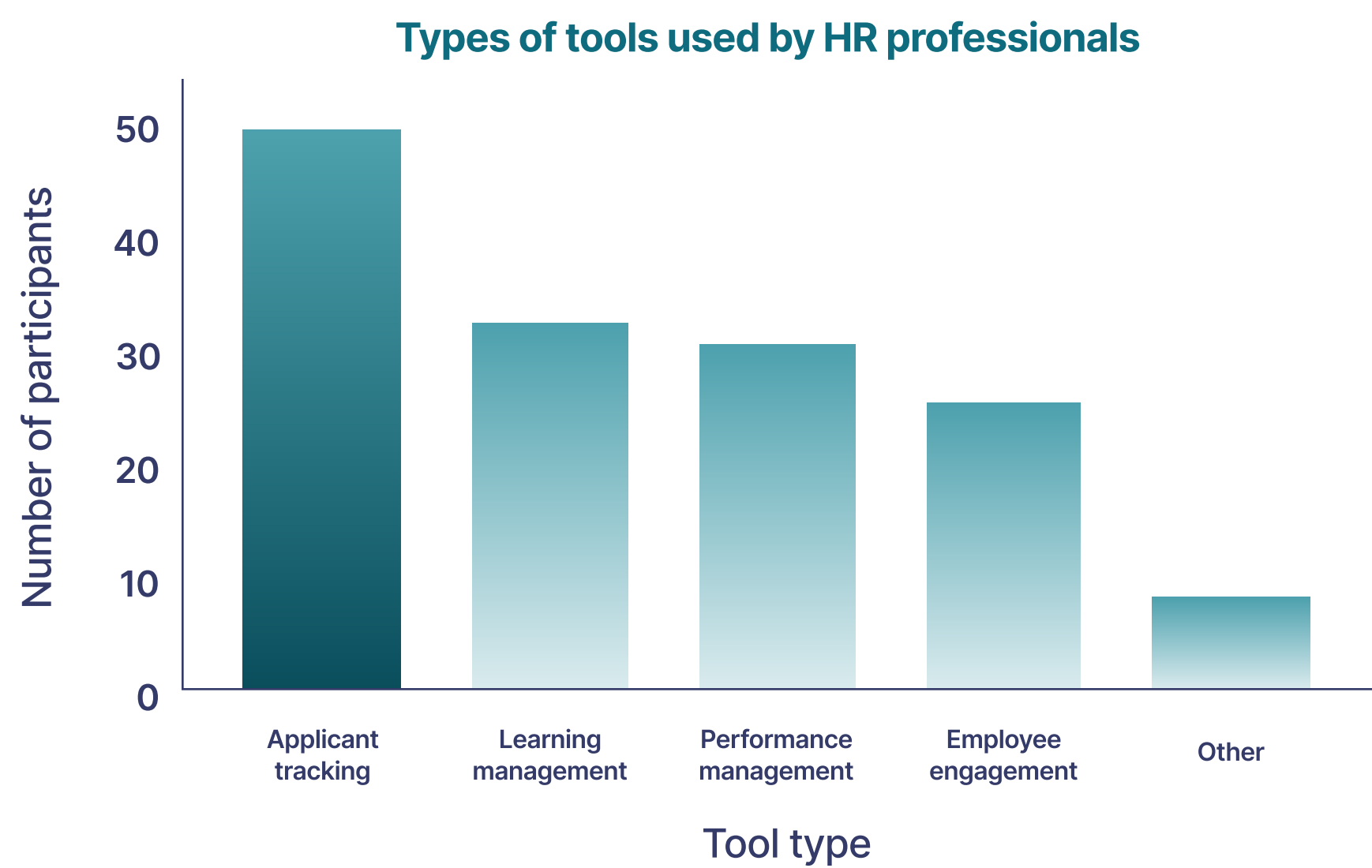
HR tools are used even before a job applicant enters the first stage of their employee life cycle. An overwhelming 96 percent of survey respondents reported using an applicant tracking system (ATS) as a part of their HR toolkit.

Every other tool mentioned had a usage rate of at least 50 percent, highlighting the multiple touchpoints HR professionals maintain with employees. For example, 63 percent of respondents use learning management systems (LMS) to support and track employee professional development.

Performance management platforms are also common, with 60 percent of respondents reporting these as part of their toolset. To maintain organizational culture, 50 percent of respondents use employee engagement platforms (EEP).
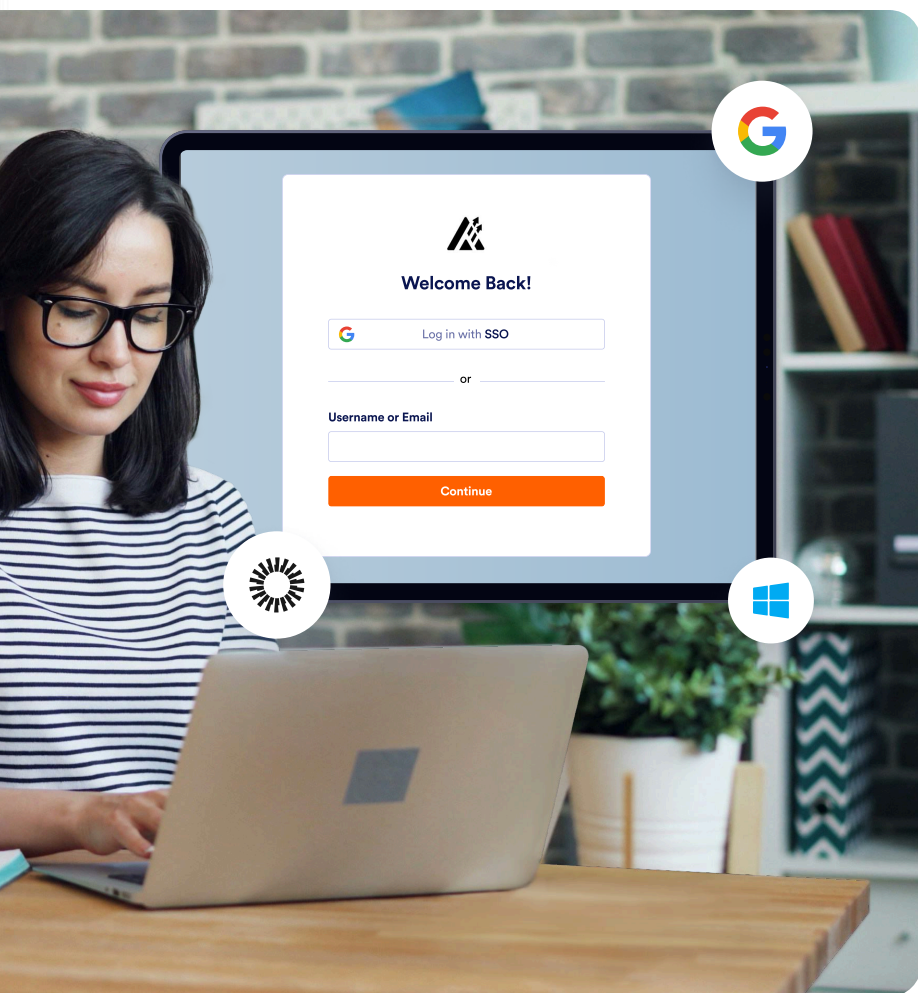
The prevalence of each of these tools highlights their ubiquity in the HR industry and shows the key features that HR professionals need in their tools, such as the ability to:

- **Track** the employee life cycle
- Maintain **data privacy**
- Enable **collaboration across teams**
- **Support training** and development
- **Automate** communications and reporting

Why integration and connectivity are critical to HR's effectiveness

Most performance reviews take place annually and involve several people from different departments. Having to switch back and forth between systems to retrieve all the information required for a review is the opposite of efficient. HR professionals need data to be easily accessible and actionable so they can create reports, share documents, and automate workflows.

> **"**
>
> *I wish my current tools could integrate better across the employee life cycle instead of acting as disparate systems.* **"**

Imagine you're an HR manager preparing for a meeting to discuss promoting an individual to manager. You need to know the employee's performance review history, current job title and salary, and the organization's salary range for managers. To anticipate or recommend new direct reports, you also need to know the structure of the related department.

Plus, you might want to access the individual's training records, specifically related to company privacy and people management. This will enable you to recommend professional development resources that set up the employee for success.

The benefits of having a single system of record

Participants expressed a desire for a single system of record that could flow updated data where it's needed. They also cited the need for seamless integration between systems, rather than multiple, disparate systems, to track the employee life cycle.

"

I would like to have a main database that could update various other programs with pertinent information. "

A single system of record provides HR professionals with a holistic view of an employee's skill set and performance history. Both are critical for making important decisions, such as hiring, promotion, and restructuring.

Maintaining one source of truth for data also ensures that the most current data is protected, not overwritten because of isolated processes.

When all team members use the same data, there are fewer doubts about its accuracy and parity, and less opportunity for human error created by downloading, copying, and pasting data from various systems.

How human resources and technology teams benefit from holistic solutions

By partnering with security and technology teams, HR leaders can identify holistic solutions that include collaboration features without sacrificing security. For example, tools that offer SSO integrations eliminate the need to log in across multiple platforms and ensure that data is accessed by only the intended audience.

Platforms that have no-code, drag-and-drop interfaces empower teams to build the systems they need to do their work. User-friendly technology solutions also reduce the strain on an organization's IT department by limiting support tickets and the need for time-consuming custom modifications and builds.

> ❝
> *I wish for better integration across platforms — seamless syncing with payroll, benefits, and performance management systems would save so much time.* ❞

HR professionals routinely handle sensitive information related to employee wellness, compensation, and performance. Platforms that offer HIPAA compliance features and role-based access enable individuals to use the data they need for daily tasks while protecting the sensitive information of employees.

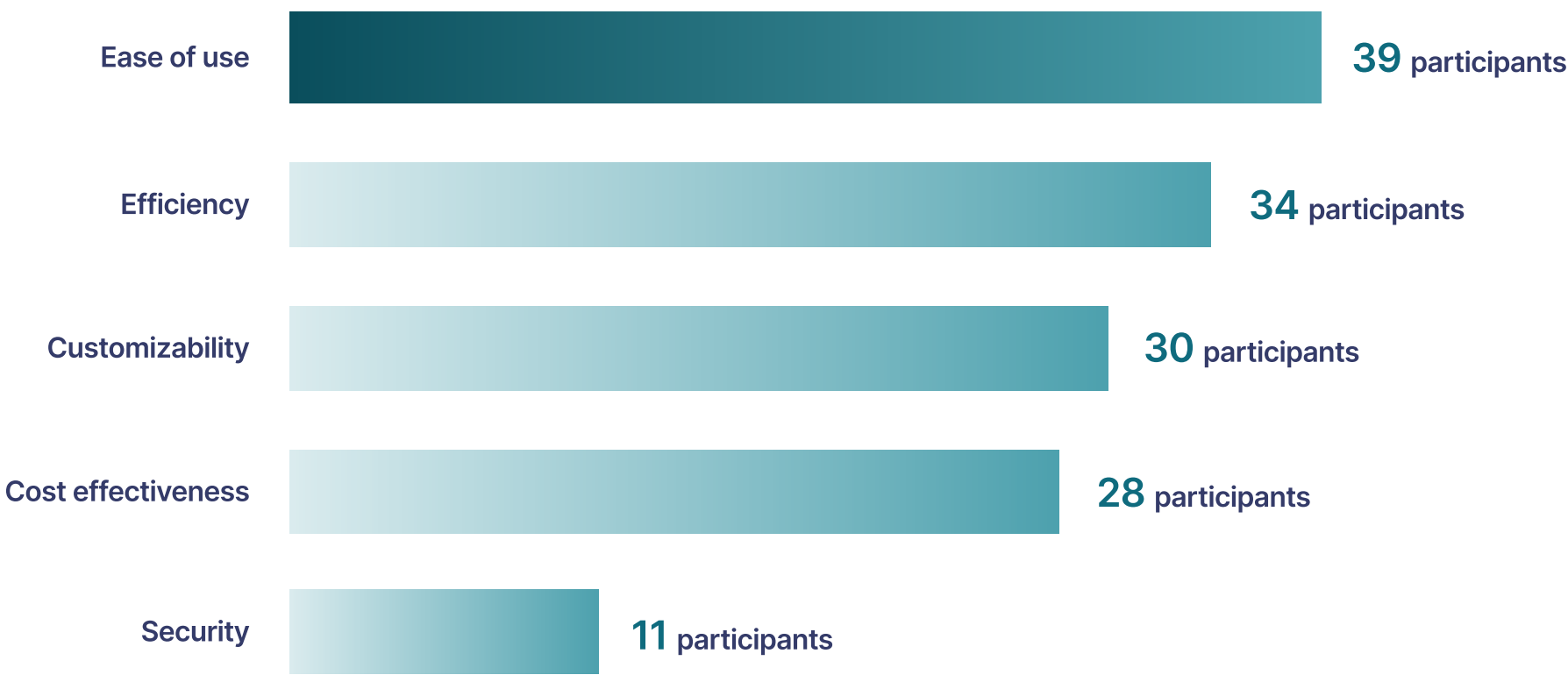## Why complexity matters: Changing systems means changing human behavior

While this report highlights what HR professionals say they want from their technology tools to perform at their best, technology adoption is rarely a straightforward process.

In fact, platform adoption can be a real pain point for organizations. If a new system has a complicated user interface, requires employees to spend more time to complete tasks, or lacks personalization and customization options, users will get frustrated. Even when systems are outdated or cumbersome, people can resist change for a number of reasons:

- Apprehension about the unknown
- Fear of failure with a new system or skill set
- Belief that the current way of doing things is best

To combat opposition to change, the solution an organization chooses must be easy to use and provide the core functionality HR needs. The majority of survey respondents ranked "ease of use" as the top attribute they care about. The other most important attributes were "efficiency" and "customizability."

Important attributes for HR tools

Attribute		Participants
Ease of use		**39** participants
Efficiency		**34** participants
Customizability		**30** participants
Cost effectiveness		**28** participants
Security		**11** participants

Changing behaviors and processes is easier when a new system provides an intuitive, user-friendly interface. No-code platforms and AI tools allow employees to build their own solutions and work more efficiently.

Digital, mobile-friendly platforms give organizations and their employees more flexibility for remote work and real-time collaboration. Mobile functionality is also key for connecting with customers and the communities an organization serves, wherever they may be. User-friendly mobile apps enhance the efficacy of existing tools and communications by extending the organization's reach to individuals working remotely, at conferences, or on the road.

> ❝
> *Having a more user-friendly mobile app for quick approvals, updates, and communication on the go would make the tools even more effective.* ❞

HR tools should mirror the current needs of businesses by delivering mobile solutions, no-code automation, and artificial intelligence (AI) to streamline processes and minimize low-value tasks. Organizations should prioritize technology solutions that demonstrate a solid track record of stability and innovation, to ensure the platform continues to grow along with the business.

John: AI HR Manager
typing...

John: AI HR Manager

16:44

Hi there! I'm John, AI HR Manager. How can I help you today?

Register for employee position

This might take a bit of time; do you

## How AI and automation can increase organizational effectiveness

On average, HR professionals spend one and a half days per week — roughly 25 percent of their time — on manual tasks. The need for easy-to-use tools that increase efficiency couldn't be clearer.

HR professionals spend **one and a half days per week** on manual tasks.

Distribution of time HR professionals spend on manual tasks
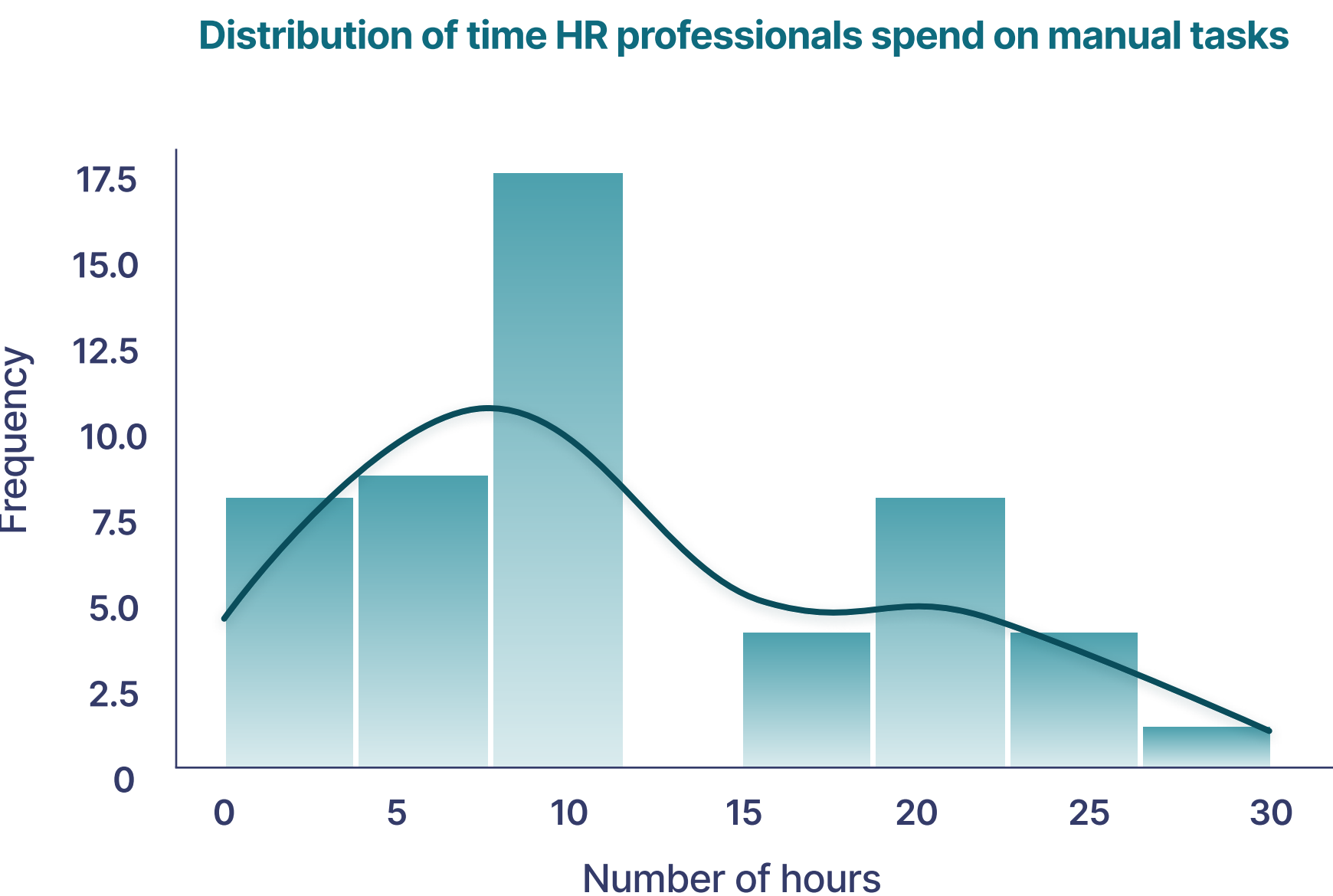
The many manual tasks that HR has to perform include scheduling meetings, sending follow-up emails, tracking and routing approvals, as well as attaching, sending, downloading, and uploading PDF forms. Not surprisingly, many respondents indicated that they wanted tools capable of automating these tasks.

Organizations should seize every opportunity to automate. Cyclical manual tasks routinely waste resources. Automating these tasks frees up staff for more strategic work, maximizing the organization's talent pool. This type of automation also increases the organization's capabilities, enabling it to scale.

Solutions that offer no-code conditional logic can have a big impact on efficiency and efficacy. Conditional logic automates processes based on predetermined outcomes. For instance, teams can transform static paper documents into online forms that use a series of conditions to trigger task assignments, notification emails, approval requests, and more.
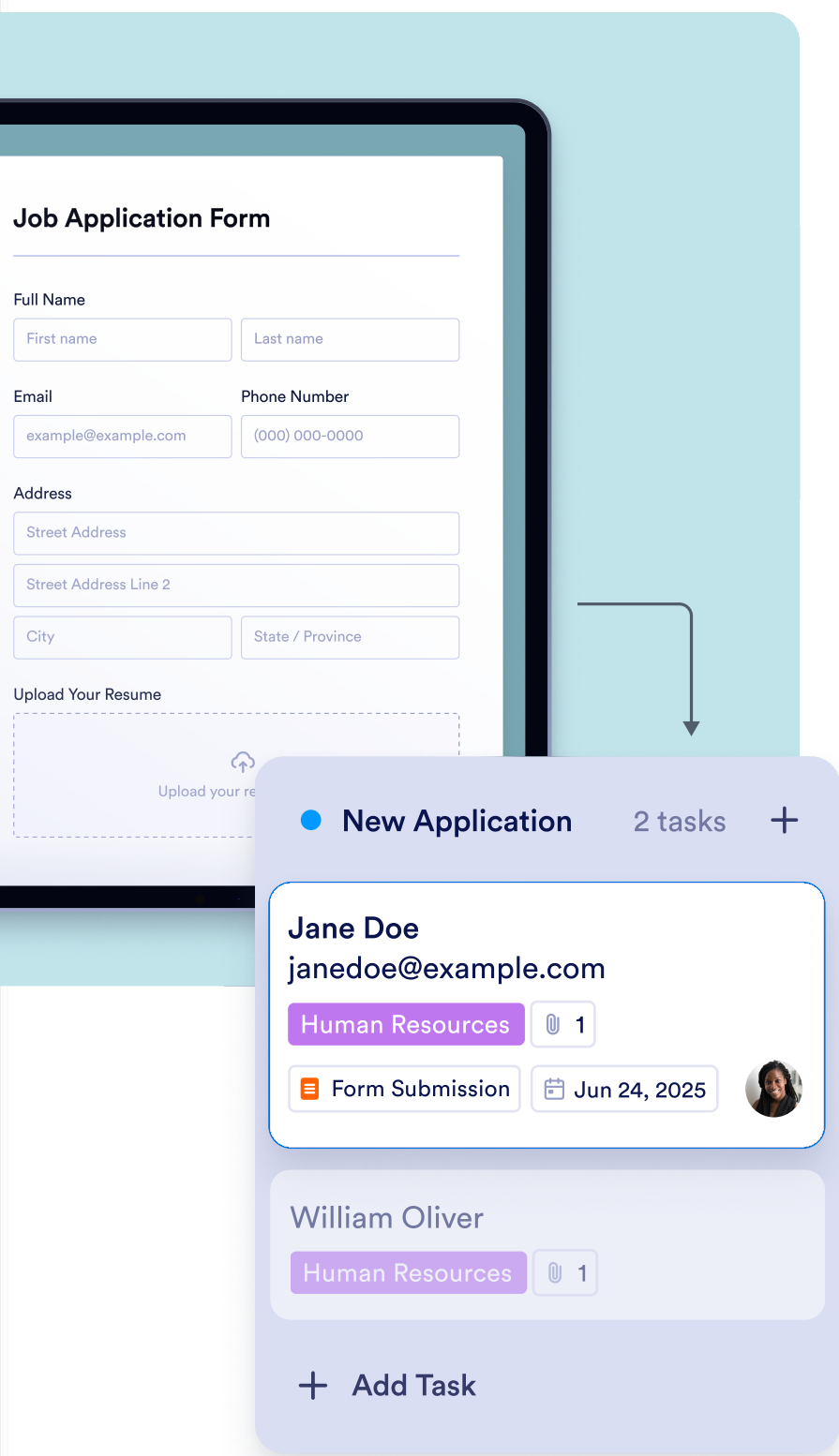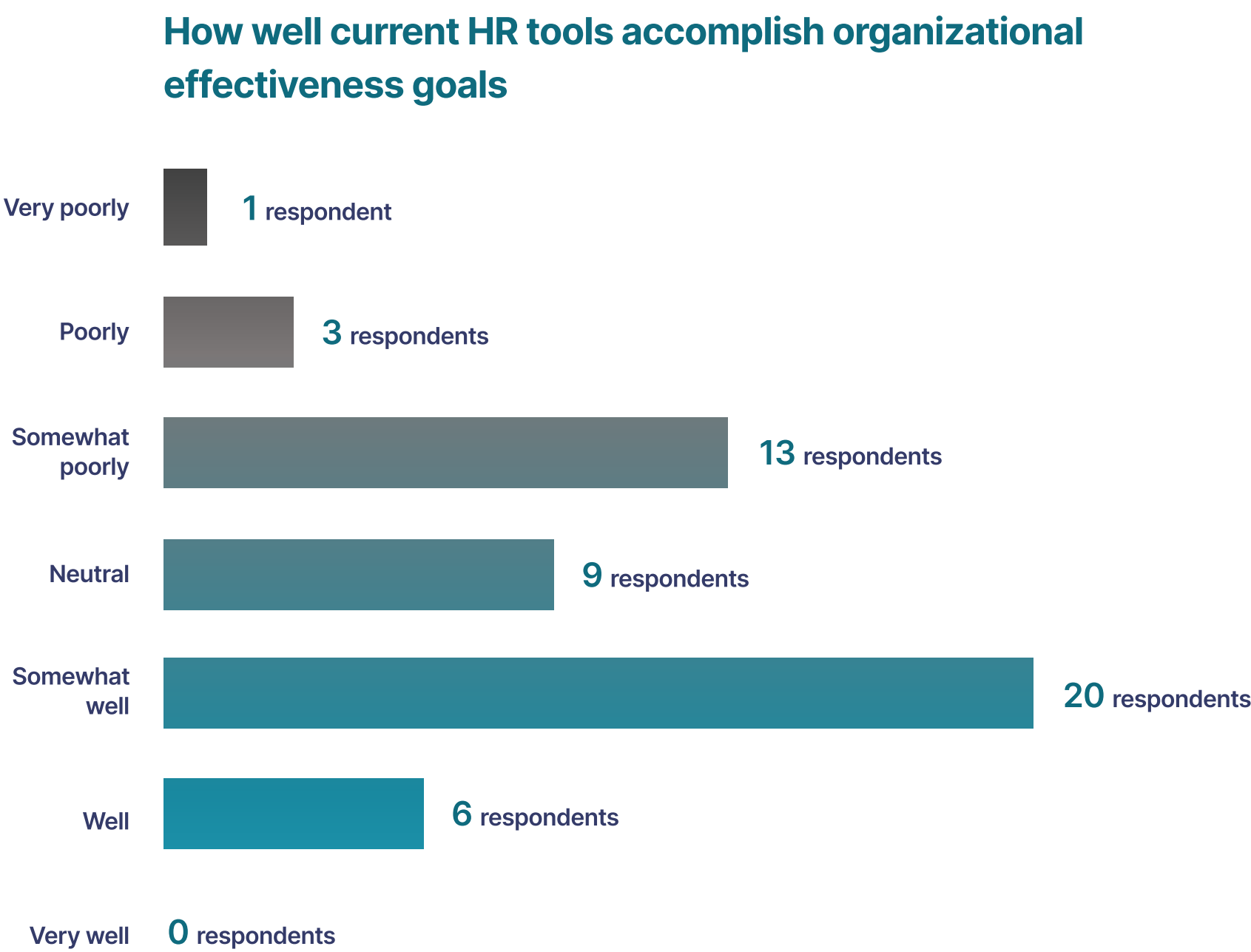
The email automation included in such systems eliminates the need to manually send reminders. Likewise, online forms that contain real-time data can prevent many problems, including documents getting buried in inboxes and version control issues.

While a few technology providers specialize in workflow automation, some platforms provide native automation tools, minimizing the need for multiple third-party software integrations. While integrations and APIs can be useful, it's worth analyzing the feature set of systems to reduce costs and complexity wherever possible.

Empowering human resources to drive organizational effectiveness

HR professionals are often charged with maintaining, if not improving, an organization's effectiveness. However, the tools they have at their disposal are often lacking. In fact, not one of our survey respondents indicated that their software solutions support their organizational effectiveness goals "very well." A quarter of them said their HR tools did a somewhat poor job of helping them accomplish these goals.

How well current HR tools accomplish organizational effectiveness goals

Very poorly	**1** respondent
Poorly	**3** respondents
Somewhat poorly	**13** respondents
Neutral	**9** respondents
Somewhat well	**20** respondents
Well	**6** respondents
Very well	**0** respondents

It's often said that what matters gets measured, and employee performance is no exception. Many survey participants cited a need for software that easily generates, customizes, and shares reports.

> **Being able to generate reports — data and trends — more efficiently, accurately, and easily would be great.**

Cross-departmental communication and reporting are necessary for performance reviews. One respondent expressed a need for "customized reports containing payroll data that can be shared with accounting, including comparing the previous pay period to the current one."

To ensure employees have the resources necessary to reach their professional development goals, HR professionals need easy-to-build learning platforms.

For HR to make a difference at the organizational level, staff need to be able to measure, interact with, report on, train, and motivate employees in all departments and at all levels. These interactions should be free from technological barriers and automated whenever possible.

Human resources is responsible for fostering professional development, supporting employees in reaching their career goals, and developing fair and appropriate compensation packages for every employee. To provide personalized service at scale, HR managers need systems that streamline and automate routine communications and processes, saving them time that can be better used to measure the impact of HR initiatives, adjust strategic efforts, and plan the future of work.

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