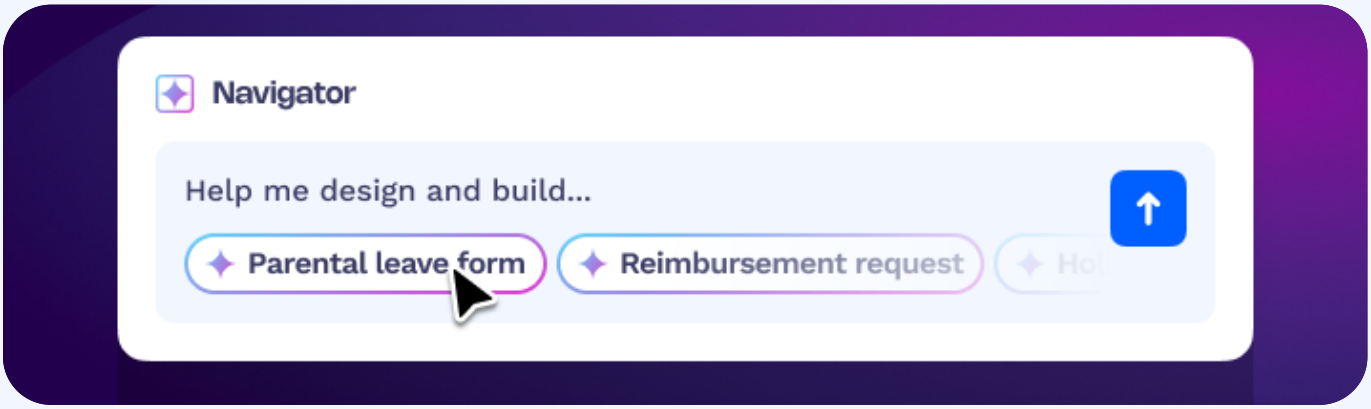
50skills

HR leadership guide

Describe the process. AI builds the workflow. You stay in control.

A leadership guide to automating repetitive HR work and putting AI to work in everyday processes





INTRODUCTION

A note for HR leaders

As organisations grow, repetitive HR work has a habit of growing with them. Teams end up chasing managers and employees, copying information between systems, checking documents and keeping processes moving across inboxes and spreadsheets.

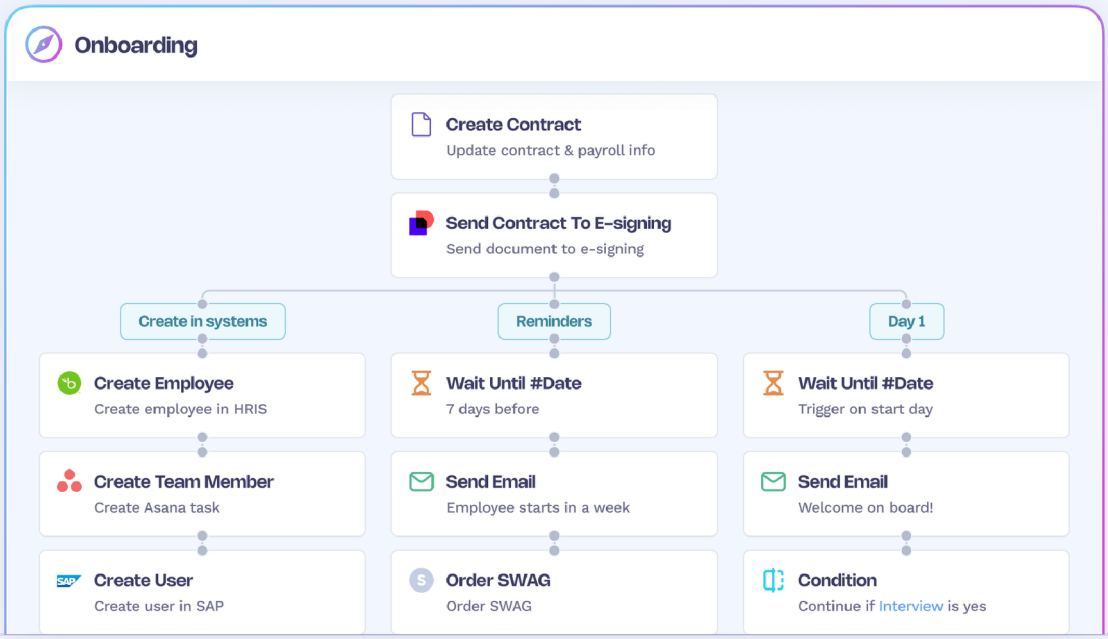
At the same time, your leadership team is likely asking where AI can deliver useful, measurable value. The opportunity is not AI for its own sake. It is using AI and automation to remove the repetitive work already eating into HR's week.

This guide explains where that work builds up, why existing HR systems do not always solve it, how AI changes what is possible and how to start small and prove the value. It also gives you what you need to make the case to your leadership team.

80% Less time spent processing employee benefit applications at Íslandshótel, with cases moving from one to two hours to 5–20 minutes.

IN THIS GUIDE

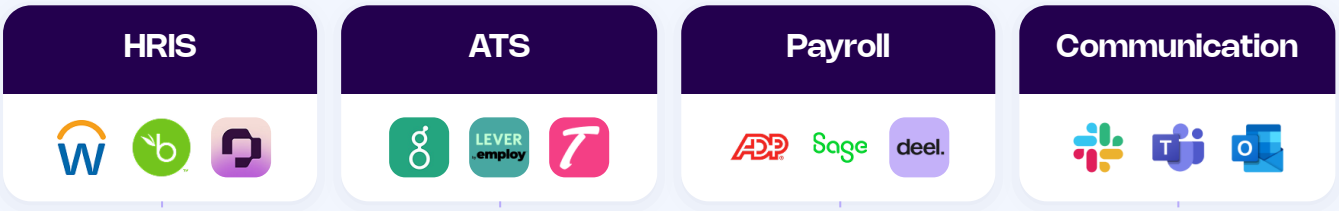
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01

The hidden work between your HR systems

Most organisations already have an HRIS, ATS, payroll system and communication tools. Those systems are essential. But plenty of work still happens between them.



01
Chasing managers or employees for missing information

02
Copying information between systems

03
Checking documents, forms and eligibility

04
Sending reminders and following up on approvals

05
Tracking progress through inboxes and spreadsheets

06
Making sure the next person knows they need to act



The systems hold the data.

HR still ends up moving the process forwards.

Why it matters

This is not only an efficiency problem. When a process depends on HR manually keeping it alive, it creates more back-and-forth, more opportunities for tasks to slip through the cracks and less visibility over where work has got to.

- Processes take longer than they should
- Consistency becomes harder across teams and locations
- Knowledge of how the process works sits with individuals
- HR spends more time coordinating work than improving it
- Skilled people have less time for conversations and decisions that need human judgement

As organisations grow and adopt more tools, this complexity does not stabilise.

It increases.



02

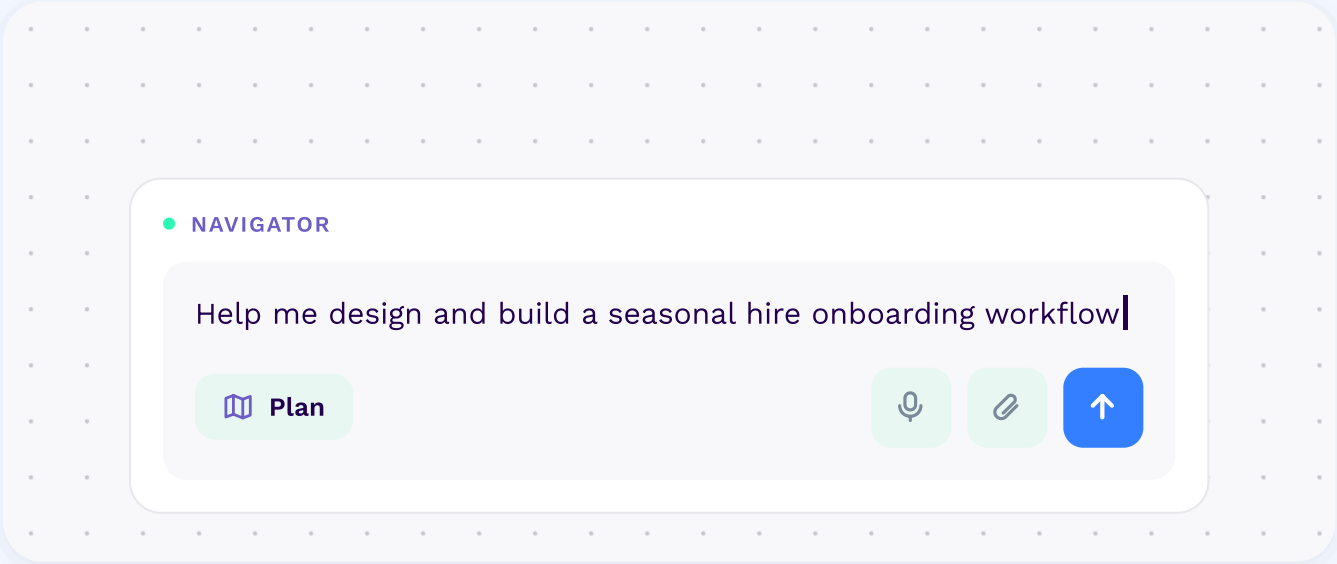
Why AI changes what is possible

Traditionally, automating an HR process could turn into a lengthy implementation project. That meant plenty of repetitive work simply stayed repetitive.

AI makes automation much more accessible to HR teams. HR teams do not need to write code to create a workflow or improve the way a process works.

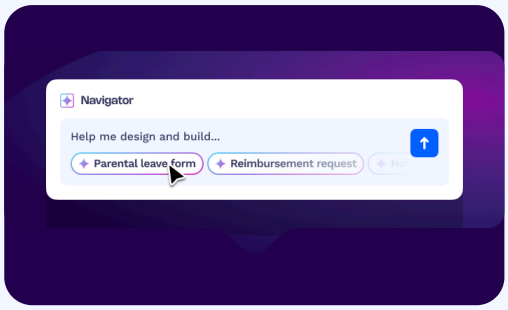
Describe the HR process you want to automate in plain language and AI builds the workflow.

Your HR team can review it, edit it and refine it as the process changes.



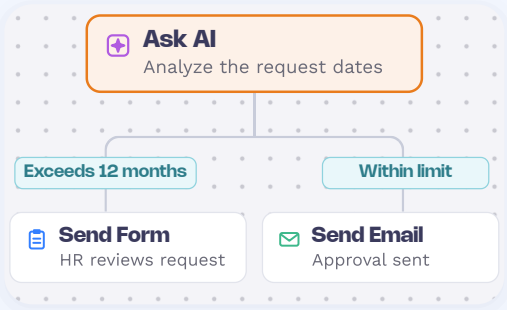
1 Build with AI

Describe the process in plain language: what starts it, who needs to be involved, what decisions need to be made and what should happen next. AI creates the workflow around how you work.



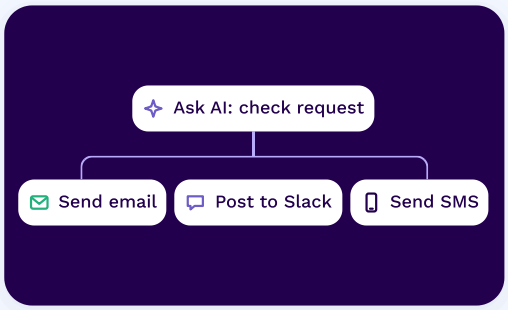
2 Put AI to work inside the process

AI can do useful work within the workflow, including checking information and documentation, applying rules and policies, drafting personalised communications and helping determine what happens next.



3 Automate what happens around it

The workflow can connect the people, systems, approvals, reminders and actions around that AI work, so the process keeps moving without HR manually coordinating every step.



If you can describe a process, you can automate it.

Describe → Automated

03

What 50skills does

50skills is an HR workflow automation platform with AI. We help HR and People teams automate the repetitive work that too often ends up spread across inboxes, spreadsheets and disconnected systems.

You keep the systems you already use. We help automate the work that happens between them.

Build and edit automated workflows with AI by describing the process you want

Connect the systems your team already uses

Automate contracts, onboarding, approvals, employee requests and other repetitive HR processes

Put AI to work checking information, applying policies and drafting communications

Trigger actions, reminders and next steps automatically

Give teams more visibility over where a process has got to

A simple before and after

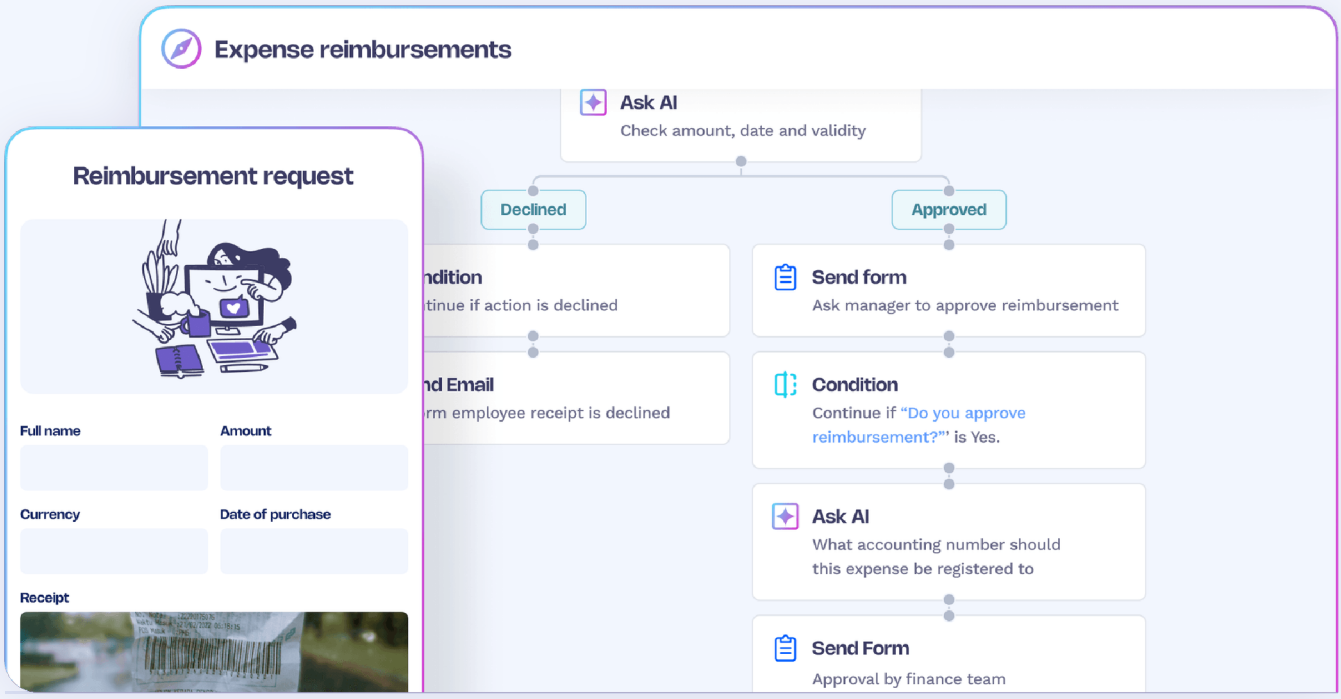
Before

A request arrives by email	INBOX
HR checks the information	HR
Asks for anything missing	HR
Copies details into another system	HR
Chases an approval	HR
Sends a document	HR
Follows up again	HR

After

- ✓ The workflow collects the information
- ✓ Checks what it can
- ✓ Routes the approval
- ✓ Updates the relevant systems
- ✓ Triggers the next action

HR stays in control without having to move every step forwards manually.



04

What practical AI looks like in HR

Practical AI for HR means AI doing useful work inside everyday HR processes, not sitting alongside them as a standalone experiment.



1 Onboarding and background checks

At Icelandair, AI is used as part of the onboarding process to review employment-history information before mandatory background checks are submitted. It identifies missing details and requests clarification from the employee, helping resolve issues earlier and reduce delays. Icelandair has saved 200+ hours on onboarding over 12 months.

200+
hours saved

2 Health grant applications

Icelandair also uses AI to review more than 3,000 health grant receipts each year against company policy, including eligibility and categorisation where needed, before approved claims progress towards payroll.

3,000+
receipts a year

The useful question is not ~~"Where can we use AI?"~~ It is

"Which process is taking too much manual effort, and what useful work could AI and automation take on inside it?"

05

The business case: measurable results

The strongest case for automation is not a promise about future efficiency. It is evidence from processes already running.

ICELANDAIR

20+
workflows
digitised.

200+
hours
saved on onboarding over 12 months.

4–5
months
of manual HR admin removed each year.

FESTI

200+
hours
of manual work saved on its employee stock option process.

ÍSLANDSHÓTEL

80%
reduction
in time spent processing employee benefit applications, with cases moving from one to two hours to 5–20 minutes.

First Water

15+
processes
automated after starting with onboarding, with 15,000 workflow actions completed within two years.

Different organisations start with different problems. The common pattern is that once a useful process is automated and the value is visible, teams begin to see other processes differently.

06

Start with one useful process

You do not need to redesign HR or automate everything at once. A practical approach is:

1

Identify one repetitive, high-impact process

2

Describe how you want the process to work

3

Let AI build the workflow, then review and edit it yourself

4

Measure the result, then expand to the next process

What starts with one workflow often grows into 10+ automated HR processes.



Onboarding



Leave request



Offboarding



Travel request



Apply for benefits



Reimbursements



Request to hire



Suggestion box



Birthday form

Good places to look

01 Processes with lots of chasing or reminders

02 Processes where the same information is checked repeatedly

03 Processes that move between several people or systems

04 High-volume requests, applications or approvals

05 Processes where missing information regularly causes delays

06 Processes that become especially painful during seasonal peaks

EXAMPLE USE CASE

Benefit requests

Employee applies for a benefit → AI checks eligibility and documents → HR approves → Payroll and provider updated

High volume | Several people and systems | Lots of reminders | Same information checked repeatedly

The goal is not to find the most impressive AI use case. It is to find useful work that your team should not have to keep doing manually.

07

Common leadership questions

Q We already have HR systems.

Good. 50skills connects with the systems you already use and automates the repetitive work between them.

Q Where does AI fit?

In two places: it makes workflows easier to build, and it can do practical work inside them, such as checking documentation, applying rules, drafting communications and helping trigger the next action.

Q Will this become a huge implementation project?

No. Your first workflow can be live quickly, without a months-long implementation. Start with one useful process, prove the value and expand from there.

Q Do we need to redesign the process first?

No. Start by describing how you want the process to work, and AI builds the workflow from there.

Q Is this about replacing HR?

No. It is about removing repetitive coordination so HR has more time for work that benefits from human judgement, context and conversation.

Q What should we measure?

Start with what matters for that process: time saved, turnaround time, manual steps removed, fewer errors or missing details, and a better experience for employees and managers.

Is our employee data secure?

Before approving a new platform, leadership, IT and procurement will want to know how employee data is handled. These are the points they usually ask about.

100%

EU data residency. All customer data is hosted in the EU.

ZERO

Customer data used to train or fine-tune AI models.



Cyber Essentials Plus, independently verified.

- ✓ AI features are optional and can be disabled per account
- ✓ AI processing stays within the EU
- ✓ The prompt, input and output of every AI step are visible
- ✓ You control exactly what data enters any AI action
- ✓ Integrations are added and authorised by your team
- ✓ A full audit trail on all actions and data changes

REVIEWED BY REGULATED ORGANISATIONS

Central Bank of Iceland, Icelandair, City of Reykjavík and deCODE Genetics each completed a formal security review before deploying 50skills.

Full security overview: 50skills.com/security

Questions: security@50skills.com

08

The strategic outcome

The goal is not simply to make HR faster. It is to stop important processes depending on someone remembering to chase the next step.

- ✓ Less chasing, copying and checking
- ✓ Less reliance on individual memory and manual follow-up
- ✓ More time for conversations, decisions and work that actually need people
- ✓ More consistent processes
- ✓ More visibility and fewer missed tasks

HOW TO SUMMARISE THIS INTERNALLY

"We're spending too much HR time chasing people, copying information and keeping processes moving across different systems. With 50skills, we can describe one repetitive process in plain language, let AI build the workflow, then review and edit it ourselves. That gives HR ownership of the automation, without turning it into a lengthy implementation project."

FINAL THOUGHT

AI becomes useful when it moves from an interesting technology to practical work inside a real process.



Start with one process that should work better.

01 **Describe it.**

02 **Automate it.**

03 **Measure what changes.**

04 **Then find the next one.**

50skills

Book a demo to see how 50skills could work for your team.

Get started