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# What happens when artificial intelligence enters an organizational structure?

Global case studies

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# Case 1

Klarna

Fintech / BNPL · Sweden

Source: CNBCE

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| **History** | 2022 – 2025 (ongoing) |
| **What happened?** | Klarna partnered with OpenAI in 2023 and deployed an AI agent in customer service. The company halted hiring in 2024, stating that this agent had taken over the work of 700 full-time employees. The number of employees decreased from 5,527 at the end of 2022 to 3,422 at the end of 2024 (IPO prospectus, March 2025). In Q3 2025, it was reported that the same agent was generating the equivalent of 853 full-time employee jobs. |
| **Conclusion** | Q3 2025 revenue reached $903 million; up from $433 million in the same period of 2022. However, CEO Sebastian Siemiatkowski publicly stated in May 2025: "Cost became too dominant a factor of evaluation, and this led to lower quality, and we lost customers." The company has begun refilling some customer service positions; a "Uber-style" model based on remote, flexible work is being tested. According to Forrester analyst Kate Leggett, the company implemented its AI strategy without accounting for the long-term cost of customer experience. |

# Case 2

Technology · Ireland/USA

Source: SHRM

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| **History** | May 2025 |
| **What happened?** | IBM CEO Arvind Krishna confirmed to the Wall Street Journal in May 2025 that hundreds of HR workers would be replaced by AI. The company's AskHR system automates 94% of routine HR tasks, including leave requests, payroll, and internal inquiries; according to CTO Ji-eun Lee, the AskIT system also reduced call and chat traffic to the IT team by 70%. CHRO Nickle Lamoureux presented an even more advanced picture to analyst Josh Bersin: AI systems are now writing performance reviews, creating development plans, and coaching managers. On top of these steps, in Q4 2025, IBM announced additional layoffs of a "low single-digit percentage" of its global workforce. |
| **Conclusion** | Total employment did not decrease. CEO Krishna stated, "Our total employment actually increased because AI is providing us with resources to invest in other areas." Productivity gains resulting from the use of AI across more than 70 business areas reached $3.5 billion in two years. The freed-up resources were redirected to software development, marketing, and sales. The HR function was significantly downsized; the remaining employees' roles shifted to strategic partnerships and AI platform management. |

# Case 3

shopify

E-commerce/SaaS · Canada

Source: TheHill

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| **History** | April 2025 |
| **What happened?** | Shopify CEO Tobi Lutke sent a memo to all employees in April 2025, which was also made public. The expectation was clear: before requesting new resources or teams, teams would have to prove why they couldn't do the job with AI. Furthermore, AI usage became a key performance metric company-wide; it was incorporated into both evaluation processes and hiring criteria. The new headcount approval process was also linked to the same framework: a request would not be approved unless a team could prove the job couldn't be automated. |
| **Conclusion** | Due to its public announcement, the memo quickly resonated within the industry and became a point of reference for companies seeking to develop similar policies. Shopify did not disclose the number of hires or employees affected; however, the document quickly garnered widespread media attention and brought the "AI-first hiring policy" debate to the forefront of the industry agenda. |

# Case 4

duolingo

EdTech · USA

Source: Entrepreneur

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| **History** | April 2025 (before: January 2024) |
| **What happened?** | Duolingo's transition to AI wasn't a one-off decision, but rather a gradual one. In January 2024, the company phased out 10% of its contractor workforce, citing the tasks that AI could handle. The real turning point came in April 2025: CEO Luis von Ahn officially declared Duolingo an "AI-first" organization in an internal announcement sent to all employees and made public on LinkedIn. This announcement brought about three concrete changes: the use of contractors for tasks that AI could perform would be phased out, AI usage would be integrated into both hiring criteria and performance evaluations, and new headcount approval would only be tied to situations where automation of the task was proven impossible. Von Ahn also explicitly acknowledged that the transition might lead to some short-term quality losses in certain areas. |
| **Conclusion** | In January 2026, Duolingo announced 148 new AI-generated language courses. The number of affected contractors and the percentage of work the system took on were not publicly disclosed. The company stated that full-time employees were not affected by this process, and their roles shifted from routine production tasks to creative and strategic work. |

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# Case 5

salesforce

CRM / SaaS · USA

Source: The San Francisco Standard

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| **History** | January – February 2025 |
| **What happened?** | The decision was first discussed on a podcast, then formalized into an announcement. CEO Marc Benioff stated in a January 2025 podcast interview, "We're seriously discussing whether we're going to hire anyone in engineering this year." This discussion became clear during the February 2025 earnings call: the company would not hire any new engineers throughout 2025. The rationale was directly linked to Agentforce; the platform managed 380,000 conversations on the company's own help portal in the last 90 days with an 84% resolution rate, concretizing the lack of need to add new people to the engineering team. Benioff also added a note to CEOs in the same interview: "We're the last generation to manage people." On the other hand, the company announced plans to hire between 1,000 and 2,000 new sales representatives during the same period; therefore, the freeze was specific to engineering, not company-wide. |
| **Conclusion** | Full-year revenue for FY2025 reached $37.9 billion, representing 9% annual growth. Nearly half of Fortune 500 companies use Salesforce's AI and Data Cloud products. The number of engineers affected was not publicly disclosed. Salesforce officially declared its goal to become "the number one provider of the digital workforce" as its core strategy. |

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# Case 6

amazon

Retail / Logistics / Cloud · USA

Source: CNBCE

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| **History** | October – November 2025 |
| **What happened?** | Amazon announced it will lay off approximately 14,000 corporate employees by October 2025; this represents about 4% of its 350,000-strong white-collar workforce. The official reason given was to reduce bureaucratic layers and redirect resources to strategic investments, but CEO Andy Jassy had laid the groundwork for this decision much earlier. In a June 2025 article, Jassy stated, "As we use AI more, we expect our total corporate workforce to shrink." The company announced investments exceeding $100 billion in AI infrastructure around the same time; the layoffs and investment decision came simultaneously. |
| **Conclusion** | According to Fortune's analysis, the first group affected was not, contrary to expectations, warehouse workers, but the middle management that oversees them. This finding aligns with Gartner's November 2025 prediction: by 2026, one-fifth of companies will have replaced at least half of their management tiers with AI. The Amazon case reveals a clear pattern in this regard: high AI investment and a decrease in corporate headcount are occurring simultaneously. The company stated that it will continue hiring in key strategic areas. |

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# Case 7

accenture

Consulting / Technology · Ireland (global)

Source: Channel Insider

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| **History** | May – August 2025, ongoing |
| **What happened?** | Accenture laid off more than 11,000 employees between May and August 2025 as part of an $865 million restructuring program. Including voluntary departures, the total loss over six months reached approximately 22,000 people; the workforce decreased from 791,000 to 779,000. CEO Julie Sweet outlined a three-stage strategy: first, retraining; if retraining wasn't possible, then "accelerated timeframes" for those deemed unsuitable for AI roles; and finally, operational efficiency through AI. CFO Angie Park emphasized that the layoffs were related to talent strategy, not utilization rates. During the same period, the company provided basic generative AI training to 550,000 employees, increased the number of AI specialists from 40,000 in 2023 to 77,000, and shifted its focus to agentic AI by 2025. |
| **Conclusion** | Full-year revenue for FY2025 reached $69.7 billion, a 7% increase year-over-year. New AI bookings rose to $5.1 billion from $3 billion the previous year. Accenture resumed rehiring after the program concluded in December 2025, but this time only for AI, data, and technology roles. Q1 FY2026 revenue increased by 6% to $18.7 billion. The total cost of the restructuring reached $923 million, primarily consisting of severance payments. |

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# Case 8

# Deloitte.

Consultancy / Auditing · Australia

Source: The Register

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| **History** | July – October 2025 |
| **What happened?** | Deloitte Australia prepared a report for the Department for Work and Work Relations for AU$440,000. Published in July 2025, the report assessed the compliance framework of the IT system by which the government automatically imposes penalties on social benefit recipients. Dr. Christopher Rudge of the University of Sydney, upon reading the report, identified dozens of fabricated sources: non-existent academic papers, studies not found in university journals, and a completely fictitious quote allegedly taken from a Federal Court decision. Deloitte initially defended the "accuracy of the content," then quietly updated the report. The updated version disclosed the use of AI for the first time: an Azure OpenAI GPT-40 based toolchain was used to fill document and traceability gaps. Rudge's comment summed up the seriousness of the situation: "I can't understand how a human could generate titles for non-existent works. This doesn't even show up on Google. It's good that it's AI, because it would be even worse if a human did it." |

**Conclusion**

Deloitte returned the final installment of the contract. While the ministry stated that the essence of the report remained intact and the recommendations were unchanged, Australian Greens Party spokesperson Senator Barbara Pocock argued that the entire $290,000 should be refunded. Deloitte, however, merely informed the Associated Press that "the matter has been resolved directly with the client." Independent legal experts reminded that the terms of use for AI platforms clearly state that the responsibility for verifying the outputs rests with the user. Given that Deloitte sells AI ethics consulting and AI training on a global scale, this case has turned into a serious reputational crisis for the company.

# Contextual Data

**SHRM (December 2025)**

87% of HR professionals predict increased use of AI in their organizations. 52% of companies do not directly integrate HR functions into their AI strategy. (*Source:* SHRM)

**McKinsey State of AI (November 2025)**

32% of companies plan to reduce their workforce by at least 3% due to AI in the next year. This finding covers 1,993 business leaders from 105 countries. *(Source: McKinsey)*

**Gartner (2024)**

By 2026, 20% of organizations are expected to use AI to flatten their structures and eliminate more than half of current middle management positions. (*Source:* *Gartner*)

**Challenger, Gray & Christmas (2025)**

The number of planned job cuts directly linked to AI in the U.S. in 2025 is approximately 55,000. Total U.S. job cuts have reached 1.17 million, the highest level since the COVID-19 pandemic. (*Source:* *ChallengerGray*)