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**FERGUSON PARTNERS RELEASES 2026 HUMAN CAPITAL TRENDS REPORT
FOR THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY**

New research reveals evolving role of Human Resources as strategic business partners to the C-Suite; Increased HR integration reshaping leadership, AI adoption, and workforce strategy across the industry

January 12, 2026 – Ferguson Partners, a global leader in talent management and strategic advisory services for the real assets industry, today released its **2026 Human Capital Trends Report**, identifying the most pressing real assets industry workforce priorities shaping the year ahead.

The report, based on survey responses from Human Resources (HR) and business leaders from 67 diverse real estate companies across the country, representing most major property sectors, provides the industry's most comprehensive overview of how the real estate industry is navigating critical human capital issues including technology, leadership, and talent transformation.

While the report identifies a broad set of priorities ranging from AI adoption and leadership development to navigating a multigenerational workforce, its findings point to a deeper shift: **HR's growing integration into enterprise strategy and decision-making**, with personnel strategy now central to shaping business direction.

"It's rare to see this level of visibility into how the real estate industry is thinking about its people," said **Julia Sweeney, Managing Director, Ferguson Partners**. "This year's data shows that the organizations leading the way are those treating HR as a strategic partner in driving long-term value by aligning leadership, culture, and talent strategy to strengthen performance and resilience."

The findings show a marked rise in expectations from Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs) to serve as trusted advisors to CEOs and Boards, with smaller firms reporting the sharpest increase in priority over the next 12-24 months. Larger firms now consider this level of partnership a baseline requirement. HR's strategic integration represents a fundamental shift in how real estate organizations drive performance, and long-term value.

"We anticipate M&A activity to increase as firms seek new growth opportunities, operating platform efficiencies, and greater organizational resiliency," said **Mike Cordingley, Managing Director, Ferguson Partners**. "Firms that consider both strategy and culture alignment are

better positioned to fully realize the benefits of these transactions. Our report shows that leaders increasingly recognize that successful integrations depend just as much on aligning people and purpose as they do on the financial mechanics of a deal.”

Key Findings from the Report include:

- **HR as a strategic partner:** Boards and executives expect CHROs to be strategic workforce planners, leading organizational design and talent strategy.
- **AI and automation:** 57% of CHROs rank the impact of AI and automation as a top priority for 2026, underscoring the need for HR-led change management and reskilling initiatives.
- **Leadership development:** Nearly 90% of CHROs report visible skill gaps among mid-level managers, particularly in coaching, strategic thinking, and communication.
- **Resilience and agility:** Two-thirds of CHROs cite resilience, agility, and flexibility as vital behavioral traits for success amid continued market uncertainty.
- **Multigenerational workforce:** 78% observe clear generational divides in working styles, requiring thoughtful programs to reduce generational gaps in the workplace and tailored employee value propositions across career stages.
- **Institutionalizing talent strategy:** Larger firms have established talent strategies, while smaller firms risk falling behind without consistent leadership and capability development. Ferguson Partners defines talent strategy as attracting, developing, organizing, and retaining top talent to achieve business goals.
- **M&A integration:** CHROs emphasize workforce planning and culture as critical to successful integrations, yet few companies cite change management as a top HR priority during M&A.
- **Inclusion as performance driver:** Nearly all companies view inclusion as essential to decision-making, innovation, and retention.

The 2026 Human Capital Report reflects Ferguson Partners’ ongoing commitment to helping organizations align leadership, structure, and culture with business outcomes. Additional insights and the full report are available upon request.

About Ferguson Partners

Founded in 1989, Ferguson Partners has built a reputation as the premier firm dedicated to serving the talent management and strategic advisory needs of the real assets industries. With offices in Charlotte, Chicago, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, New York, Singapore, Sydney, and Tokyo, Ferguson Partners is unique in combining global reach with a boutique touch and highly specialized approach across four main business lines. For more information please visit [fergusonpartners.com](https://www.fergusonpartners.com).

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