



Grokker

**From overwhelm
to optimization:
AI solutions
for modern HR**

Your inbox has **47** unread benefits questions.

Your wellness program has a **12%** engagement rate despite costing \$300K annually.

Your CFO wants **justification** for every HR dollar spent.

Sound familiar?



You're not alone. 95% of HR leaders find working in HR overwhelming due to excessive workload and stress, with 84% frequently experiencing stress and 81% reporting burnout. Meanwhile, 82% of employees are at risk of burnout, with less than half of employers designing work with well-being in mind.

The traditional approach to HR—more tools, more vendors, more manual processes—isn't working. But AI offers a fundamentally different path forward.

This white paper demonstrates how AI-powered solutions like GrokkyAi™ are transforming HR operations by:

- Reducing administrative burden through intelligent automation and self-service
- Optimizing benefits investments by guiding employees to the right interventions at the right time
- Demonstrating measurable ROI that satisfies both HR and CFO requirements
- Improving employee outcomes without increasing HR workload

The choice isn't between supporting employees or managing costs. With the right AI approach, you can do both and get your weekends back in the process.

The overwhelm — what's breaking in HR

The burnout epidemic

The data paints a stark picture:

- 90% of HR leaders identify limited budgets as a top challenge.
- 89% express concerns about inadequate resources within their teams.¹
- 57% of HR professionals report working beyond normal capacity.
- 19% of HR executives expect their department will be able to increase their headcount.²

This isn't sustainable. 51% of employees have suffered burnout in the past year, a 15 percentage-point increase from the previous year, with mental and emotional stress cited by 63% as the top cause.³ When HR teams are drowning themselves, how can they possibly support employees effectively?

The benefits administration black hole

Consider the time commitment required for benefits administration alone: Small business owners estimate spending 1.6 hours per week on typical benefits administration tasks, with more time required for employers with more staff members and multiple benefit plan options.⁴ For mid-sized and large organizations, this multiplies exponentially.

Most HR professionals spend 10-15 hours each week just responding to employee questions, requests, and disputes.⁵ During open enrollment, this burden becomes crushing. 49% of employees say making health insurance decisions is always very stressful, and among those whose company offers health insurance, 36% feel the open enrollment process is extremely confusing.⁶

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The engagement paradox

Organizations are investing more in employee benefits than ever before, yet utilization and satisfaction remain stubbornly low. Forty-eight percent of HR directors report poor uptake of employee benefits because “employees don’t seem interested” in what is on offer, while 62% stated the benefits they offer “don’t address what people really need” or were “only useful to some of the workforce.”⁷

Even more concerning, 73% of survey respondents reported they don’t measure the engagement rate of their benefits.⁸

How can HR optimize what they can’t measure?



The data overload problem

Modern HR teams are drowning in data but starving for insights. Seventy-three percent of HR leaders prioritize processes over people in their HR teams, not by choice, but by necessity.⁹ When administrative tasks consume every available hour, strategic work becomes impossible.

HR professionals spend around 41% of their time on transactional activities, leaving minimal room to concentrate on creative and consultative endeavors that foster a happy, engaged, and efficient workforce.¹⁰ This is the definition of a broken system.

Why traditional solutions fall short

More vendors, more problems

The typical HR tech stack has exploded. Organizations now manage separate platforms for:

- HRIS/payroll
- Financial wellness
- Benefits administration
- Learning management
- Wellness programs
- Performance management
- Mental health support
- Employee surveys

Each vendor promises to “simplify” HR work. But integrating, managing, and extracting value from a dozen different systems creates more work, not less. HR becomes a vendor management function rather than a strategic partner.

All this leads to dashboard fatigue, a sense of “If we could just see the data, we’d know what to do.” But with more dashboards to monitor, more reports to generate and more metrics to track, there’s no additional time to act on insights. Data without action is just noise, and when HR teams are already working beyond capacity, adding another dashboard they “should” be monitoring only increases stress.

The ROI measurement & employee engagement gap

Despite many companies providing wellness programs, only 28% measure the ROI of their employee wellness program.¹² Without clear ROI metrics, HR struggles to justify existing investments, let alone request budget for new initiatives.

CFOs increasingly demand hard numbers. “Employee satisfaction improved” doesn’t cut it when healthcare costs continue climbing (in 2025 alone, costs have risen by 9%) and productivity metrics remain flat. HR needs to speak the language of business impact, but traditional solutions don’t make this easy. And the same goes for employee engagement.

Organizations respond to low engagement with more communication—more emails about benefits, more webinars nobody attends, more printed guides nobody reads, and more town halls that repeat the same information.

Here’s the reality: only 28% of associate workers are willing to take on additional work with no extra pay.¹¹ Employees aren’t ignoring your communications because they don’t care. They’re overwhelmed too. More volume doesn’t solve a clarity problem.

The AI transformation – a better way forward

What AI-powered HR actually means

AI in HR isn't about replacing human judgment with algorithms. It's about automating the routine so HR professionals can focus on the exceptional. The numbers are compelling. By 2025, it's projected that 90% of HR functions will be augmented by AI, and AI-driven HR tools will save organizations \$1.5 trillion globally.¹³ More importantly, 48% of organizations report significant increases in HR team productivity attributed to AI streamlining processes, automating repetitive tasks, and improving decision-making.¹⁴

38% of HR decision-makers currently employ AI in their practices and workflows, with AI-powered recruitment reducing cost-per-hire by 30%.¹⁵

The four pillars of intelligent HR

1

Intelligent automation

AI handles the routine tasks that consume HR's day—answering common questions, guiding employees through benefits selection, processing routine requests, and flagging issues that need human attention. The time savings are substantial: automated onboarding can result in a 50% reduction in time to productivity.¹⁶

2

Personalization at scale

Every employee has unique needs, but HR can't possibly provide personalized guidance to thousands of individuals. AI can. It analyzes individual circumstances, health history, financial situations, and preferences to deliver tailored recommendations. This isn't generic content pushed to everyone. It's intelligent matching between individual needs and available resources at scale, in real-time, without requiring HR intervention for every interaction.

3

Proactive intervention

Traditional HR is reactive. An employee calls with a problem. HR responds. By then, the issue has often escalated—both in cost and complexity. AI enables proactive support. Predictive models identify employees who would benefit from specific resources before they reach a crisis point. This shifts the paradigm from expensive crisis management to cost-effective prevention.

4

Continuous optimization

AI learns from every interaction. Which benefits messages resonate? Which employees need additional support? What interventions produce the best outcomes? The system becomes smarter over time, continuously improving results without requiring HR to manually analyze every data point.

The AI advantage: Real-world applications

Consider open enrollment, historically one of HR's most stressful periods. With AI-powered solutions:

- Employees receive personalized plan recommendations based on their specific health needs and financial situation
- Common questions are answered instantly, 24/7, without HR intervention
- Completion rates increase as employees get guidance exactly when they need it
- HR teams gain real-time visibility into enrollment progress without manual tracking
- Post-enrollment, the system identifies employees who may benefit from additional support

The result? Organizations that follow best practices report 70% employee engagement, far exceeding the national average of 30%.

Real-world application: GrokkyAi in action

Intelligent benefits navigation

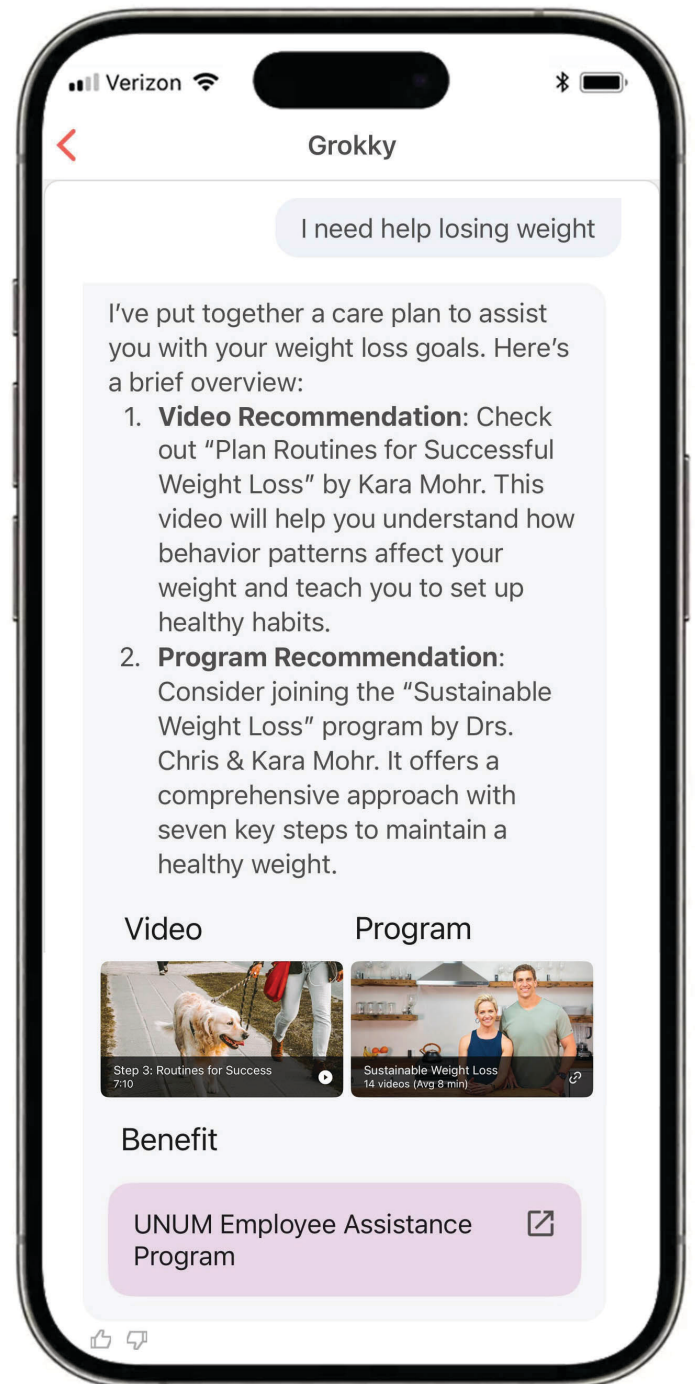
GrokkyAi™ represents a new generation of AI-powered employee support that addresses the core challenges facing modern HR departments. Rather than adding another system to manage, it seamlessly integrates wellbeing support with intelligent guidance.

How it works:

Grokky analyzes multiple data points including health risk assessments, benefits utilization patterns, engagement history, and employee preferences to provide personalized recommendations.

For example, an employee exploring weight management options will receive guidance tailored to their specific situation: BMI, existing conditions, medication history, and personal preferences.

Instead of presenting every available option and expecting employees to become benefits experts overnight, Grokky guides them to the most appropriate, lowest-acuity interventions. An employee with prediabetes might be directed to Grokker's Healthy Weight Suite rather than immediately pursuing expensive GLP-1 medications, which can save thousands while delivering better, long-term outcomes.

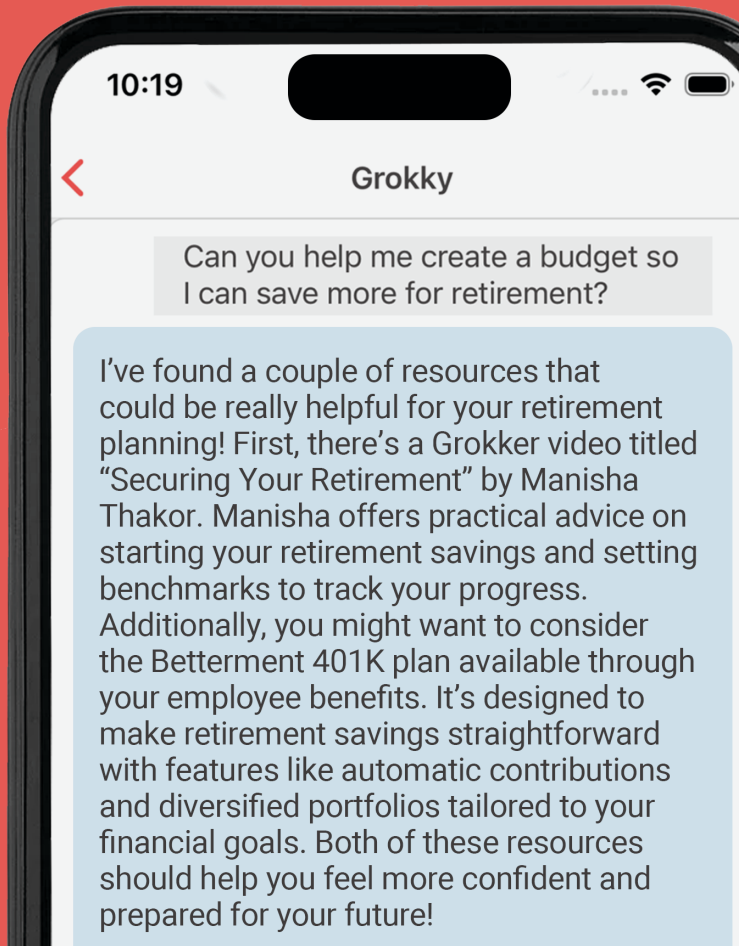


Reducing the question burden

The typical HR team fields hundreds of benefits questions during open enrollment and thousands throughout the year. Most are variations of the same core queries:

- “Which plan is best for my situation?”
- “How do I use my HSA?”
- “What’s covered under mental health benefits?”
- “Where can I find resources for [specific health concern]?”

GrokkyAi™ handles these routine queries instantly, accurately, and at scale. Employees get immediate answers. HR gets their time back. And because the system learns from every interaction, responses become more accurate and helpful over time.



From reactive to proactive support

Traditional wellness programs wait for employees to seek help. By then, issues have often progressed:

- The stressed employee is now anxious or depressed
- The pre-diabetic employee now has Type 2 diabetes
- The financially stretched employee is now in crisis
- The dissatisfied employee is now actively job hunting

GrokkyAi™ identifies patterns that suggest an employee would benefit from specific resources and proactively provides relevant recommendations. These aren't pushy reminders that feel like corporate surveillance, but genuinely helpful suggestions delivered at the right time through the right channels.

Optimizing benefits investments

Every benefits dollar should work as hard as possible. But without intelligent matching between employee needs and available resources, organizations waste money on:

- Underutilized programs that don't meet actual needs
- Employees using expensive interventions when lower-cost options would be equally effective
- Preventable health issues that become chronic conditions
- Benefits communications that don't resonate with their intended audience

**Specifically,
64% of HR leaders
reported a \$2 return
for every \$1 invested
in employees'
wellbeing.**¹⁹

GrokkyAi™ optimizes benefits ROI by ensuring employees use the most appropriate resources for their situations. This isn't about limiting access or pushing cheaper options regardless of need—it's about intelligent matching that delivers better outcomes at lower cost.

Organizations implementing GrokkyAi™-powered solutions report:

- 2X higher engagement compared to alternative wellbeing providers
- 82% active platform engagement
- 100M+ activities logged annually across the Grokker platform

Cost Impact: 95% of companies measuring ROI of corporate wellness programs see positive returns, with 91% of HR leaders reporting decreased healthcare benefit costs as a result of their wellness program.

Time Savings:

HR teams report spending 40-60% less time answering routine benefits questions, redirecting that capacity to strategic initiatives that require human expertise and judgment.

The cost of doing nothing

Before discussing the ROI of AI solutions, consider the cost of maintaining the status quo:

Direct costs:

- Employee burnout costs businesses an estimated \$322 billion in turnover and lost productivity globally
- Depression and anxiety cost the global economy \$1 trillion each year in lost productivity
- Burned-out employees are 63% more likely to take a sick day and are 23% more likely to go to A&E

Inefficiency costs:

- 41% of HR time spent on transactional activities represents hundreds of thousands of dollars in salary costs for activities that could be automated
- The ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees is 1.8-to-1, down from 2.1-to-1 the previous year, representing declining productivity across entire organizations

Opportunity costs:

When HR spends 15 hours per week answering routine questions, they're not:

- Developing retention strategies for high performers
- Creating targeted development programs
- Improving culture and employee experience
- Supporting managers in difficult conversations
- Driving strategic initiatives that impact the bottom line



The ROI of AI-powered solutions

Healthcare Cost Reduction: For every dollar companies invest in employee wellness initiatives, they can see approximately \$6 in healthcare cost savings. More conservatively, the RAND Corporation's analysis estimated an overall ROI of \$1.50, with disease management programs returning \$3.80 for every dollar invested.

The key is ensuring employees engage with programs. Companies with Wellhub reported 77% seeing overall ROI of more than 100%, compared to 53% without such platforms. Engagement is the difference between a cost center and an investment that pays dividends.



Productivity gains:

58% of organizations believe AI will improve employee productivity in the next five years, but leading organizations are seeing results now. IBM has unlocked approximately \$3.5 billion in cost savings since January 2023, alongside a 50% increase in productivity of enterprise operations through AI-enabled automation of support functions including HR.



Retention impact:

High employee engagement offers median percent differences between top-quartile and bottom-quartile units of 81% less absenteeism, 14% higher productivity, and 18% higher sales. When AI enables HR to focus on strategic engagement initiatives rather than transactional tasks, these gains become achievable.



Reduced administrative costs:

AI-powered recruitment reduces cost-per-hire by 30% and saves \$2,342 per role and 792 hours per hire on average through skill-based hiring. Similar efficiencies apply to benefits administration, employee services, and other HR functions.

Measuring success and avoiding pitfalls

To truly make the most of an AI agent like Grokky, it's important to keep these five success factors in mind so you can avoid these five pitfalls.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS	COMMON PITFALLS
<p>Success factor #1</p> <p>Get executive sponsorship: Visible support from leadership signals organizational commitment and encourages adoption.</p>	<p>Pitfall #1</p> <p>Treating AI as a complete HR replacement: AI augments human expertise; it doesn't replace it. Ensure employees know when they're interacting with AI and can easily reach humans for complex situations.</p>
<p>Success factor #2</p> <p>Establish clear communication: Employees need to understand how the AI tool helps them, not just how it helps HR. Focus messaging on personal benefits: faster answers, better recommendations, easier navigation.</p>	<p>Pitfall #2</p> <p>Set-it-and-forget-it mentality: AI systems require ongoing monitoring, refinement, and optimization. Budget for continuous improvement, not just implementation.</p>
<p>Success factor #3</p> <p>The change management imperative: Some employees will resist AI-assisted support, preferring human interaction. Have clear escalation paths and reassure employees that complex situations still receive human attention.</p>	<p>Pitfall #3</p> <p>Poor integration: If the AI tool doesn't connect seamlessly with existing systems, it becomes another separate platform employees must remember to use. Prioritize integration.</p>
<p>Success factor #4</p> <p>Mind your data quality: AI is only as good as the data it accesses. Ensure employee information, benefits details, and wellness program offerings are accurate and up-to-date.</p>	<p>Pitfall #4</p> <p>Inadequate change management: Technology alone doesn't drive adoption. Invest in communication, training, and ongoing support to ensure employees and HR staff embrace the new approach.</p>
<p>Success factor #5</p> <p>Solicit continuous feedback: Regularly solicit feedback from both employees and HR staff. Use insights to refine and improve the system continuously.</p>	<p>Pitfall #5</p> <p>Unclear success metrics: "Improving employee experience" is laudable but not measurable. Define specific, quantifiable goals before implementation begins.</p>

The future of AI-powered HR

Where We're Headed

- **The AI capabilities available today represent just the beginning:** Near-term developments will deliver even more sophisticated support:
- **Hyper-personalization:** AI will consider not just demographics and health data, but also learning styles, communication preferences, motivational triggers, and behavioral patterns to deliver truly individualized guidance.
- **Predictive health management:** Rather than reacting to health issues, AI will identify risk patterns early and proactively suggest preventive interventions—not just for physical health, but also for mental health, financial stress, and burnout risk.
- **Voice and conversational AI:** Employees will interact naturally through voice interfaces, making support even more accessible and immediate.
- **Integration across the employee journey:** AI will support employees seamlessly from recruitment through onboarding, development, wellbeing, and even retirement planning—with continuous learning across all touchpoints.

The evolving HR role:

As AI handles more transactional work, HR professionals will evolve into strategic advisors and culture architects. By 2026, AI will transform HR into a strategic function in 80% of organizations.

This shift is already beginning. AI-powered wellness programs will reduce burnout rates by 30% by 2026, and AI-driven training increases employee engagement by 72%. HR teams using AI report redirecting 40-60% of their time from administrative tasks to strategic initiatives.

The future HR professional will:

- Interpret AI insights to make strategic recommendations
- Design employee experiences informed by predictive analytics
- Coach managers using data-driven performance insights
- Shape organizational culture through targeted interventions
- Serve as trusted advisors to leadership on people strategy

Preparing your organization

- **Build AI literacy:** HR teams need basic understanding of AI capabilities and limitations. Invest in training that demystifies the technology and builds confidence in using AI-generated insights.
- **Start with quick wins:** Don't try to transform everything at once. Identify high-impact, low-complexity use cases to build momentum and demonstrate value.
- **Prioritize ethics and privacy:** As AI systems handle more sensitive employee data, robust privacy protections and ethical guidelines become critical. Establish clear policies and maintain transparency with employees.
- **Embrace continuous learning:** AI capabilities evolve rapidly. Create a culture of experimentation and learning within HR. Encourage teams to explore new features, share discoveries, and continuously refine their approach.

Partner with the right vendors; not all AI solutions are created equal. Look for vendors with:

- Proven track record in HR applications
- Strong data security and privacy practices
- Transparent AI methodologies
- Ongoing innovation and investment
- Responsive support and optimization services

Conclusion: From survival to strategic impact

The current state of HR is unsustainable. 95% of HR leaders find their work overwhelming, with 84% experiencing frequent stress and 81% reporting burnout. Meanwhile, 82% of employees are at risk of burnout, with less than half of employers designing work with well-being in mind. Something has to change.

AI-powered solutions like GrokkyAi™ offer a path forward that doesn't require choosing between supporting employees and managing costs, between HR team wellbeing and organizational priorities, between strategic impact and operational excellence.

The organizations that will thrive in the coming years are those that embrace AI not as a replacement for human judgment, but as an amplifier of human capability. HR professionals who master AI-assisted workflows will deliver more value, experience less stress, and drive measurable business impact.

The choice is clear: continue the exhausting cycle of more tools, more vendors, more manual work—or embrace the AI transformation that enables HR to finally focus on what matters most: people.

The overwhelm is real. The solution is here.

The time to act is now.

SOURCES:

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⁶ Gallup. (2024-2025). State of the Global Workforce report.

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⁹ Deloitte. (2024). Power Human Resource Service Delivery with AI.

¹⁰ TestGorilla. (2024). State of Skills-based Hiring.

¹¹ FlowForma. (2024). HR automation trends research.

¹² Wellhub. (2024). Return on Wellbeing Report.

¹³ RAND Corporation. Workplace wellness program analysis.

¹⁴ Harvard Business Review. Wellness program ROI studies.

¹⁵ SQ Magazine. (2025). AI in HR Statistics.

¹⁶ PwC. (2025). Global AI Jobs Barometer.

This white paper synthesizes research from multiple authoritative sources current as of Q4 2024-Q1 2025. All statistics and data points are cited from published reports and peer-reviewed research.

About Grokker



Grokker transforms employee physical, mental, and financial wellbeing globally through our life-changing content. Our inclusive community of experts and personalized guidance is proven to strengthen retention by 68%, triple engagement, and lessen the burden on HR teams.

With Grokker, each member's well-being experience is personalized to help guide them to the lowest acuity, highest impact intervention. Our solution seamlessly integrates with your HR team and provides them with ongoing actionable insights.

Global organizations like Pfizer, Target, and Domino's trust Grokker to support the diverse wellbeing needs of their teams in over 179 countries and 21 localized languages. Grokker is dedicated to making holistic health and wellbeing equitable, engaging, and accessible for all.

Platform Highlights:

- 4,000+ expert-led videos covering fitness, nutrition, mental health, sleep, and financial wellbeing
- 2X higher engagement compared to alternative wellbeing providers
- 82% active platform engagement
- 30-day implementation with turnkey content and dedicated success partners
- 21 language support for global organizations

For more information about how Grokker and GrokkyAi™ can transform your HR operations while improving employee wellbeing, [**schedule a demo today.**](#)

