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## **CEO's Corner: Looking Ahead: What 2026 Might Hold for HR and How We Show Up for It**

**By Teri Zipper, CEO, Sapiient Insights Group**

A new year gives us a rare pause—to look back, but more importantly, to look forward. And 2026 isn't just another year. It's part of a decade that continues to redefine how we lead, operate, and create impact.

HR enters this year with greater strategic visibility than ever, yet outcomes slipped slightly in 2025. That gap matters. Being seen as strategic is good; converting strategy into aligned, measurable execution is where leadership shows up. Complex systems, an expanding vendor landscape, and uneven returns on tech—especially AI—remain challenges. But they're also opportunities for clarity and focus.

We're facing headwinds: tighter budgets for some, organizational fatigue, and external uncertainty. But the strongest leaders don't wait for ideal conditions. They set intentional goals, simplify where needed, and bring the right people with them.

As you shape 2026, ask yourself:

- What outcomes truly matter?
- How will success show up—for the business and for people?
- What needs to be simplified or reinvented?

- And who do you want beside you as you lead forward?

Leadership development becomes essential this year—not just at the top, but across teams. The leaders who thrive will be those who stay curious, build trust, and remain grounded in purpose even as the landscape shifts.

2026 won't be “business as usual.” And that's an advantage. It's a moment to challenge old assumptions, tighten alignment, and elevate the impact HR can make when strategy, systems, and people move together.

Here's to clarity, courage, and meaningful goals. Happy New Year.

[Read more here.](#)



### **Lead the AI Revolution in HR**

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the workplace, and it is imperative for HR professionals to take the lead in this transformation. To support HR leaders in navigating this change, the HR Leader's AI Launch Plan offers a complimentary five-day email course designed to equip you with essential tools for success.

#### What You'll Gain from the Course

- Build credibility with executives
- Protect HR roles during tech-driven change

- Drive AI adoption with confidence

Each day of the course provides actionable steps that help you align your teams, foster trust, and prepare your workforce for future challenges.

[Sign up today](#) and take the lead in your organization's AI journey: Register for the HR Leader's AI Launch Plan



Stacey Harris, Chief Research Officer & Managing Partner shares what stood out to her at Dayforce Discover 2025

Watch Stacey's full perspective on AI, compliance, and innovation in HR tech:

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 **February 26th**

**Insperty Virtual Event Spotlight:**

**Scaling HR – Ensuring HR Evolves as Your Business Grows**

Growth is a sign of success—but it demands strategic evolution. In this session, **Insperty** and **Sapient Insights Group** share new research and practical guidance

for HR leaders looking to scale their capabilities alongside business expansion. Learn how to align HR with company goals, overcome scaling challenges, and elevate both the HR function and the broader organization.

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Whether you're a vendor, consultant, or partner, becoming a Distributor gives you a seat at the table where decisions are shaped not just tracked.

Each year, 4,500+ global organizations contribute to Sapient Insights Group's Annual HR Systems Survey the gold standard in HR tech research.

As a Distributor, you may be eligible for exclusive insights, early access to critical data, and customized reports an opportunity valued at over \$35,000.

👉 If you would like to schedule a 30-minute informational call with a member of our research team before RSVPing to become a Distributor, please email [research@sapientinsights.com](mailto:research@sapientinsights.com)

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## Where Sapiient Is Headed in 2026

Sapiient Insights Group is entering 2026 with a sharper focus on deeper, more customized research—and client tailored deep dives reflect that direction. As HR technology becomes more complex, crowded, and AI-driven, leaders need clearer, data-backed guidance. That’s exactly what these engagements deliver.

These projects highlight three big shifts for Sapiient:

### **More Precision.**

Clients want answers tailored to their environments—not generic trends. Our deep dives offer system-level mapping, benchmark comparisons, and strategic recommendations grounded in the industry’s largest independent dataset.

### **More Voice-of-the-Customer Insight.**

We’re doubling down on user-experience data, helping organizations connect technology choices to real employee impact and adoption.

### **More Strategic Integration.**

Sapiient’s strength is the blend of unbiased research and practical advisory. In 2026, we’re expanding that model—offering clearer roadmaps for AI readiness, system maturity, and long-term tech planning.

These deep-dive projects are a preview of what’s ahead: **deeper analysis, broader perspective, and bolder strategic support** for the organizations navigating the future of HR technology.

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