

SURVEY REPORT

Visier[®]

MANAGERS KNOW AI TOOLS MAKE THEM MORE EFFECTIVE, *Can HR deliver?*





Introduction

“People are your most important asset.” It’s a well-worn saying in the corporate world. But if that’s the case, why do so many people-related decisions still rely solely on intuition?

For too long, managers have been expected to “do their best” when it comes to employee-related decision-making. Whether determining if a team member is ready for promotion, evaluating employee impact against organizational KPIs, or pinpointing the right timing for a new hire, important people-related decisions should not be made based on hearsay, personal judgment, or left up to chance.

In an increasingly data-driven and automated world, managers need more tools and information to thrive.

With nearly half of people managers¹ (44%) having considered quitting a job due to feeling unprepared or unsupported, the question for chief human resources officers (CHROs) becomes:

How can employers champion increased manager effectiveness and leverage emerging technologies to inspire more confident decision-making?



Our survey revealed **managers are surprisingly enthusiastic about the potential of generative AI to increase productivity and simplify the handling and digestion of people-related data—opening the door for CHROs to invest in these types of tools right away.**

As a leader in people analytics, Visier wanted to learn how managers truly feel about people-related data, as well as their openness to generative AI paving a better path forward. In March 2024, we surveyed 400 U.S.-based full-time people managers about their access to people analytics and how AI-powered data democratization could improve their effectiveness.

Here are the top six factors shaping managers’ methodology for decision-making in the workplace right now—and opportunities to incorporate generative AI tools to improve outcomes and bolster manager effectiveness.

1. Managers crave more people data—and they see this information as critical to being a confident, effective leader.

2. Current access to people-related data is too superficial and disconnected.

3. Managers see generative AI as a solution to current decision-making challenges.

4. Managers aren't data scientists.

5. Without easy and reliable access to people data, managers are forced to rely on their instincts.

6. Organizations must prioritize greater data democratization.



1. Managers crave *more people data*—and they see this information as critical to being a *confident, effective leader*.

The more employees someone manages, the more data contributes to their success. People managers with 6-10 (62%) and more than 10 (69%) direct reports are significantly more likely to strongly agree than those with 1-2 (38%) and 3-5 (53%) direct reports.

How respondents rate the effectiveness of the training HR offers to people managers at their company on utilizing people analytics, by number of direct reports

	VERY EFFECTIVE	SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE	SOMEWHAT INEFFECTIVE	VERY INEFFECTIVE	N/A — HR DOESN'T PROVIDE TRAINING ON PEOPLE ANALYTICS
1-2 DIRECT REPORTS	28%	48%	9%	3%	11%
3-5 DIRECT REPORTS	34%	51%	10%	1%	4%
6-10 DIRECT REPORTS	36%	46%	11%	2%	5%
MORE THAN 10 DIRECT REPORTS	54%	38%	2%	4%	2%

If managers had improved access to people-related data, the top benefits they would expect are:

- 67%** better decision-making on hiring, promotions, etc.
- 52%** improved employee engagement and morale
- 49%** increased employee productivity and efficiency

96% 

of managers agree that improved access to people-related data would help them make people-related decisions with more confidence—with over half (54%) strongly agreeing. 



All are key tenets for modern organizational success and manager effectiveness.



2. Current access to people-related data is *too superficial and disconnected*.

The data that's available to managers is about what you would expect it to be. But that's not necessarily a good thing.

The top types of data respondents have direct access to about their direct reports/team members include:

- 57% Qualitative data about employee performance (e.g. written performance reviews)
- 54% Individual compensation data
- 54% Recruitment performance and/or projections
- 54% Quantitative data about employee performance (e.g. employee scorecard)



However, **only 51% of managers** have access to data related to how their team is contributing to business/financial goals. Similarly, nearly two-thirds of managers (63%) lack diversity, equity, and inclusion metrics, as well as turnover metrics or predictions (70%).

These are critical oversights employers must address to enhance strategic decision-making among managers and improve organizational effectiveness.

Likewise, CHROs should be proactive about helping managers put different data points in conversation with one another, whether it involves HR teams reviewing data alongside managers or investing in tools that contextualize people data holistically.





3. Managers see *generative AI as a solution to current decision-making challenges.*

This optimism is translating into action, with 64% of respondents saying they have already used generative AI tools to support their people management role. However, there’s still room for improvement, especially for managers who aren’t department/team heads. While two-thirds of department/team heads say they have used generative AI tools to support their role as a people manager, only 37% of non-department/team heads are innovating in the same way.

The good news is that 81% of respondents would use the tool at least once a week if they had access to a generative AI tool that provided use cases such as:

- Gaining performance and productivity insights about a specific employee/team
- Discovering how their team’s performance correlates with their compensation
- Finding out which people on a team are at risk of resigning
- Identifying potential areas for improvement in DEI representation and equity
- Informing their talent acquisition strategies

Nearly one third (30%) would use the tool daily.

How often respondents would use a generative AI tool that provided the above use cases if they had access to it

DAILY	30%
MULTIPLE TIMES PER WEEK	37%
ONCE PER WEEK	14%
ONCE PER MONTH	10%
A FEW TIMES A YEAR	4%
NEVER	5%

People managers' enthusiasm for generative AI in the workplace is clear:

87%

of respondents agree they're excited about the potential of generative AI tools to improve their role as a people manager—with 46% strongly agreeing.





4. Managers aren't *data scientists*.

Though managers are ready for more data, they don't necessarily know how to access and use it. Over 80% of managers experience at least one pain point when pulling data to make decisions.

The top pain point managers face when pulling people-related data is that the process is time-consuming and data is difficult to access (43%). Additionally, 34% of managers say the process is time-consuming and data is difficult to interpret. 32% further report the data is outdated, incomplete, and/or inaccurate.

Waiting for data analysts to gather insights and conduct analysis hinders managers' ability to react quickly to changing circumstances and make timely, informed decisions.

✦ What do people managers need to make smarter, more assured decisions at work?

To address these challenges, CHROs must democratize data access and provide managers with self-service analytics tools that streamline data retrieval and interpretation—with an emphasis on not over-complicating insights. Making data easier to access and interpret is a critical challenge HR leaders must overcome to empower their teams, drive organizational growth, and improve employee engagement, experience, and productivity.





5. Without *easy and reliable* access to people data, managers are forced to rely on their instincts.

Considering that many respondents report data access as a time-consuming and difficult process, this reliance on instinct alone is understandable.

However, with data now a critical driver of success, CHROs must work to bridge the gap between intuition and data. They should empower managers through tools that enhance their insights and decision-making accuracy. This approach can reinforce gut instincts as needed, while also challenging misguided perceptions when required.

Managers' methodology for decision-making should involve a healthy balance of data-driven insights and experiential observations. Too often, data isn't factored in or made available. Without easy access to data, managers are at a disadvantage. This only harms the organization's ability to strategize effectively and ultimately maintain a competitive edge.

53%

of respondents say they **primarily rely on hard data to make all their decisions** while nearly half of respondents (47%) say their decision-making process is still **greatly influenced by intuitive insights and practical experience**—not hard facts.

What types of data should people managers have access to?

Once access is secured, the most common types of data managers can view about their direct reports/teams include qualitative data about employee performance, individual compensation data, recruitment performance and/or projections, and quantitative data about employee performance.





6. Organizations must prioritize *greater data democratization*.

While 89% of respondents can already request access to data about their direct reports and teams from HR, data access should be easier and more independent.

The need for autonomous data access is more apparent when we consider the disparity in data accessibility among various managerial roles.

This difference in access quality underscores the importance of extending data democratization beyond senior management to include all levels of leadership. This step ensures equitable access and enables all managers—regardless of title, department, or seniority—to make informed decisions based on timely, accurate data.



✦ Department/team heads (90%) are **more likely to be able to request data about their direct reports** from HR than non-department/team heads (70%). ✦





Endnotes

1. Visier. New Manager Effectiveness Research Shows They Are More Stressed Than a Year Ago. visier.com/blog/manager-effectiveness-research/



Harness people-related data with generative AI

People managers are more than ready to embrace generative AI tools. So, what's the hold-up?

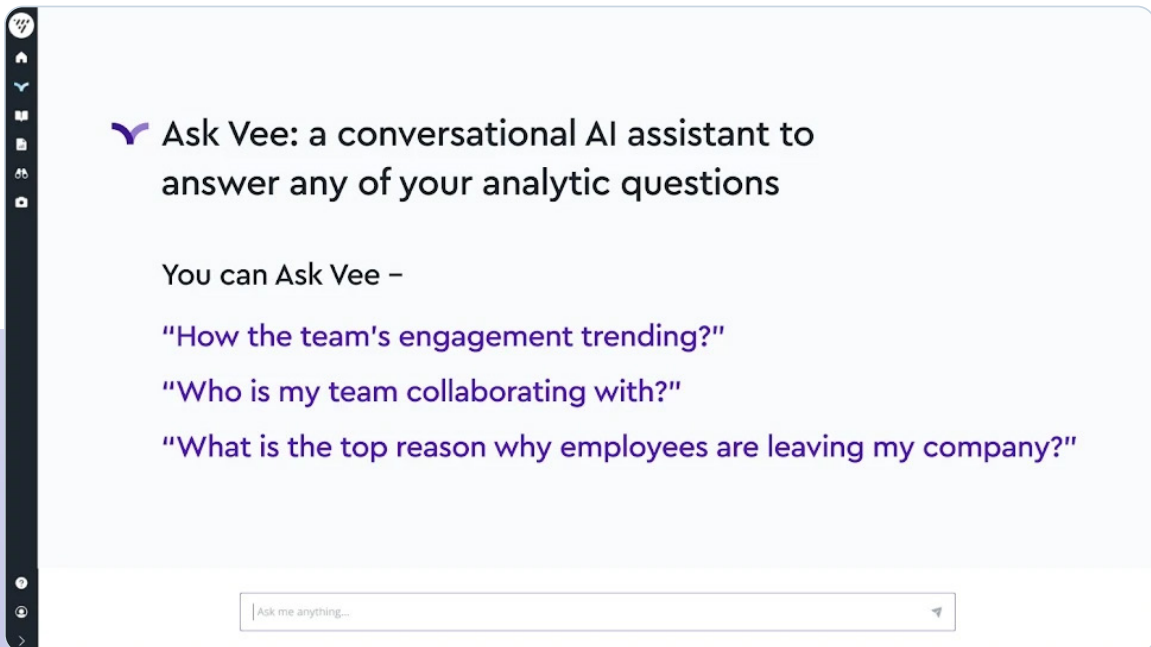
By investing in AI to democratize data access and analytics, CHROs can better support managers, improve decision-making, nurture and retain talent, and empower effective change management organization-wide. Data democratization is key to ensuring managers can harness people-related data more effectively—and more often.

Automation may be the missing piece to redefine the methodology behind manager decision-making today, bringing best practices up to speed with the times and technologies.

To learn more about how AI can democratize data and empower managers, meet Visier's [Vee](#).

Visier's **Vee** revolutionizes self-service capabilities with an intuitive conversational interface to people analytics, accelerating access to workforce insights. Combining visual representations with clear narrative responses, it ensures that any people leader, regardless of expertise, can effortlessly navigate complex queries. Integrated within **Visier People**®, Slack, and Microsoft Teams, **Vee** seamlessly integrates into daily workflows, empowering users to obtain insights effortlessly.

Beyond assisting analysts with dashboard preparation, **Vee** directly addresses end-user inquiries, tailored specifically to the HR and People Analytics domain. Trained on data from guidebooks and benchmarks, totaling over 250 million values, **Vee** offers unparalleled expertise and relevance.



Vee, Visier's digital assistant, uses generative AI to answer questions about your workforce.

About Visier

Visier is the recognized global leader in people analytics, workforce and compensation planning, embedded solutions, and genAI for people answers.

At the core of Visier's innovations is a simple premise: People impact is business impact, and you can't manage what you don't measure. Visier gives people-powered organizations the tools and insights to drive productivity, performance, and business outcomes through people impact.

Founded in 2010 by the pioneers of business intelligence, Visier has over 50,000 customers in 75 countries, including enterprises like BASF, Panasonic, Experian, Amgen, eBay, Ford Motor Company, and more. Visier is headquartered in Vancouver, BC with offices and team members worldwide.

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