What It Takes to Find 'Clarity' In Today's Chaos

HR Executive | Jen Colletta | October 20, 2026



We're living in a world of "always-on" culture—and it's burning out HR professionals.

"Those of us in HR … are being asked to help organizations navigate AI, to redesign work, to help organizations build the skills of the future. We're helping everyone else navigate an unprecedented am amount of uncertainty but we're still trying to figure out what transformation means for ourselves," said Christine DiDonato, founder of Career Revolution at the opening keynote of Women in HR at HR Tech in Las Vegas Tuesday.

Moving fast isn't just how HR has become expected to work, it's been how HR proves its value. But along the way, DiDonato said, it's become harder for HR professionals to distinguish what's important from what actually matters—especially as "the ground is moving under out feet" thanks to disruptive factors like AI.

Such uncertainty likely prompts two responses: freeze, where individuals are risk-averse, or frenzy, where they're reaching for anything that feels like growth. While they seem opposite, they're both responses to the same problem, DiDonato said: a lack of clarity.

"The path to a successful, fulfilling career isn't about doing more; it's about doing more of what matters to you," she said. Clarity isn't about having it all figured out, but rather being deeply connected to what drives you, your values and what success looks like for you personally.

"You have to know these so well that every decision you make—every yes and every no—comes from internal clarity and not the noise around you," she said.

3 principles to build clarity

DiDonato shared three strategies to help HR lead with clarity.

You can't change what you don't own

DiDonato shared a personal story that was a moment of awakening for her. Years ago, after working late on Christmas Eve and complaining about work at her family dinner, her mother gave her some straight talk: She sounded like a broken record and needed to take control of things she wanted to change. "My mother had had enough. And that's when it hit me: It was the moment I got clear that some of my actions—or lack of actions—is what got me standing in that place of exhaustion."

HR professionals who find themselves repeating a refrain about leadership challenges, unrealistic goals or changing requirements need to stop "giving away our power" and ask instead, "What is ours to own? Pause the record and ask what part of my own actions got me here."

You can't see a new future through an old lens

You can't see a new future through an old lens, DiDonato said. The lens through which we see the world around us is taught from families, informed by our life experiences and shaped by seeing what has and hasn't worked.

Such lenses become "ingrained," as we view them as fact, not as beliefs, which can hold people back from stepping into their power.

"The minute you start to upgrade to a new lens, something phenomenal happens: You see options and opportunities you haven't seen before," DiDonato said. "You start questioning that maybe you can do that thing, maybe you're more ready than you thought. You enter into uncharted territory."

You don't have to feel brave to be brave

DiDonato recalled a time when she stood up to a bully in elementary school—even though her voice was shaking. The same holds true for pursuing clarity; acting boldly is what creates the confidence, not the other way around, she said.

"In this world right now where change is happening at the speed of light and there's more uncertainty than our brains could ever process, we might be waiting to feel 100% ready before taking the risks," DiDonato said. "But confidence is a trailing indicator; it comes after the fact."

"Own where you are, upgrade that lens, have the courage to take that next step even if you don't feel ready," she added. "Because growth isn't about doing more; it's about doing more of what matters to you. When you grow from the inside out, you don't just think differently; you will show up differently—with purpose, with power, with clarity and with momentum that actually sticks."