



TRANSFORM 2026: AN NGUYEN RUDA AND JAMIE VIRAMONTES ON THE LEGAL AND HR REALITIES OF AI IN THE WORKPLACE

Speaking Engagements

14, April 2026

At Transform 2026 in Las Vegas, [An Nguyen Ruda](#), CEO and Co-Managing Partner of Bartko Pavia, joined [Jamie Viramontes](#), CEO of Konnect, for a discussion as part of *The Human + AI Equation* event, focused on how organizations are navigating AI while keeping people at the center of decision making. Framed through both legal and HR perspectives, the discussion focused on what is actually happening inside organizations today, from leadership challenges to compliance risks and real world implementation.

A central theme of the conversation between An and Jamie was that AI cannot replace leadership. While AI can enhance efficiency and support decision making, it cannot replicate judgment, foresight, or human connection. As organizations increasingly integrate AI into their workflows, the role of leadership becomes even more critical. Culture plays an equally defining role. As Jamie noted, “You can’t put culture before the tool. Culture determines how AI will be integrated into the workplace.” Organizations that prioritize technology before culture will risk misalignment and ineffective adoption.

An introduced a practical framework for implementation: treat AI like a new employee. This means integrating it into the organizational structure, onboarding it intentionally, and even applying a 90-day probationary period as you would a human employee. AI is not plug and play. Training takes time, iteration, and ongoing oversight. This approach reinforces that AI must be actively managed, not simply deployed.

From a legal perspective, AI introduces new risks, particularly around bias and compliance. An emphasized that while human bias is shaped by lived experience and can be recognized and adjusted, AI inherits bias from data without that same ability for self-correction. This raises critical

questions around accountability and governance, underscoring the need for legal oversight as organizations scale AI adoption.

At the core of the discussion was An's concept of the "Human Premium." As she explained, "Don't be afraid of AI replacing you. Think of yourself as a premium product." The value of human contribution lies in what AI cannot replicate: intuition, empathy, and the ability to create meaningful connection. As An put it, "You're delivering an unspoken feeling. You see around the corner, you have empathy, you create connection. That's not something a robot can replicate."

She also introduced the idea of the "Flex,." This is the idea that "the flex is having a human assistant," highlighting how human involvement itself is becoming a marker of quality and trust in an AI driven environment.

The discussion also acknowledged the urgency many organizations are facing. AI is evolving rapidly, and in-house HR leaders are under pressure to adopt it just as quickly. For many, partnering with established platforms offers a more structured and lower risk path forward. As An put it, "You can build it yourself but you're going to have to own the mistakes. I can learn to make bread, the first couple loaves are not going to taste good or I can go buy some bread. Buy the bread." The idea is that building internally often comes with a steep learning curve and increased risk, whereas buying can accelerate implementation and reliability.

Ultimately, the conversation made clear that AI is not replacing human value, it is redefining it. The organizations that will succeed will be those that lead with culture, invest in strong leadership, and approach AI not as a shortcut, but as a tool that requires thoughtful, human centered integration.

Watch the full interview here: <https://www.hrconnect.com/transforminterview2026>

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