



Monthly Strategies

HR Strategies, LLC

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It's Critical Planning Time

October is a critical planning month for business owners. It's the start of the fourth quarter and the last full month to proactively shape the end of the year before the holidays slow things down.

Here's what business owners should focus on in October:

Top 10 Priorities for Business Owners

1. Finalize Q4 Strategy & KPIs

- Reassess goals vs. performance YTD
- Set clear, measurable Q4 targets
- Communicate focus areas to teams (sales, ops, marketing, etc.)

2. Start 2026 Business Planning

- Begin budget and forecasting for 2026
- Schedule strategic planning sessions
- Identify growth areas, risks, and resource needs

3. Tax Prep and Financial Clean-Up

- Meet with your accountant to review:
 - Estimated tax payments
 - Deductions
 - Capital purchases
- Organize receipts and update bookkeeping
- Evaluate year-end spending (e.g., tech upgrades, bonuses, etc.)

4. Review Staffing and HR Needs

- Identify roles to fill before year-end
- Review performance data and prepare for evaluations
- Plan holiday schedules, bonuses, and recognition

5. Client and Customer Relationship Management

- Reconnect with key clients and partners
- Launch retention efforts or end-of-year offers
- Gather feedback for improvement

6. Inventory and Supply Chain Check

- Audit inventory and review year-end demand forecast
- Confirm vendor/supplier reliability for Q4
- Plan holiday stock or service delivery scaling

7. Marketing/Holiday Campaign Planning

- Finalize Black Friday / Cyber Monday / Holiday promotions
- Set marketing calendar for Q4 and early Q1
- Optimize email lists and social ad spend

8. Technology and Systems Audit

- Review software subscriptions and tools
- Identify inefficiencies or outdated platforms
- Plan necessary upgrades before year-end

9. Legal and Compliance Review

- Ensure business licenses, insurance, and contracts are current
- Prepare any annual reports or filings
- Review employee classification and policy updates

10. Employee Engagement & Culture Planning

- Schedule team-building or end-of-year events

- Gather feedback from team (anonymous engagement surveys work well)
- Prepare for performance reviews and raises/bonuses

HR Hot Topics

Here are five hot Human Resources (HR) topics gaining momentum as we approach the end of 2025, based on workforce trends, tech adoption, and evolving employee expectations:

1. Preparing for 2026 Labor Law Changes & Compliance Updates

Why it matters now:

Governments and regulators across the globe are introducing new labor laws around AI use, employee surveillance, pay transparency, and remote work classification. HR must act before 2026 begins.

Key actions:

- Audit HR tech tools for compliance (especially AI in hiring)
- Update employee handbooks/contracts
- Train managers on upcoming legal changes

2. Strategic Workforce Planning for Economic Uncertainty

Why it matters now:

With signs of economic volatility and market correction, HR leaders are working closely with finance to plan for different workforce scenarios (hiring freezes, layoffs, redeployment).

Key actions:

- Build skills-based workforce models
- Identify critical roles and future gaps
- Develop internal mobility pipelines

3. AI and Automation in HR Operations

Why it matters now:

HR departments are rapidly adopting AI tools for recruiting, onboarding, L&D, and analytics. Before 2026, HR teams are evaluating what's working and what's not.

Key actions:

- Assess ROI of current HR tech stack
- Pilot or scale tools like AI recruiters or chatbots
- Train HR teams on ethical AI use and prompt engineering

4. Reimagining Employee Wellbeing Programs

Why it matters now:

Burnout is still rising, and traditional wellness perks (like meditation apps) aren't cutting it. HR is under pressure to move from perks to real psychological safety and mental health support.

Key actions:

- Evaluate mental health benefits and utilization
- Launch manager mental health training
- Promote time-off culture and workload balance

5. Rethinking Performance & Compensation Reviews

Why it matters now:

Year-end is performance review season, and many organizations are shifting away from rigid ratings and annual cycles toward more agile, personalized feedback and pay models.

Key actions:

- Introduce continuous feedback tools
- Use data to link performance with skill development
- Plan compensation with cost-of-living and pay equity in mind

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