

Stonehill Reports Sharp Rise in Organizational Design Work as Hiring Freezes and AI Push Companies to Restructure

Consultancy sees rising demand for organizational redesign and role architecture as companies look inward for growth they can no longer hire their way toward

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, July 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Stonehill, a strategy and innovation consultancy serving PE-backed and founder-led middle-market companies, today reported a sharp increase in client demand for [organizational design](#) work. The firm points to two market forces behind the trend: hiring has frozen across much of the economy, and AI has created a potential windfall for companies that most have not yet fully adopted.

Economists have described 2026 as a "low-hire, low-fire" labor market: job growth has slowed to levels not seen since 2010, voluntary quits are near decade lows, and roughly two-thirds of CEOs surveyed this year said they plan to freeze or cut hiring rather than add headcount. With growth by hiring largely off the table, leadership teams are looking inward - at how the people, roles, and reporting lines they already have are organized - to find capacity they can't get by adding headcount.

At the same time, most companies have not fully captured the upside AI already makes available to them. The tools are purchased and in place, but the org chart, decision rights, and reporting structure built for an earlier way of working haven't caught up - so the gains sit on the table, unrealized. Stonehill is seeing this firsthand across its client base: the [technology strategy](#) is there, but the organization around it isn't yet built to use it.

"Every client conversation we're having right now eventually turns into an organizational design conversation," said Doug Pace, Founder and CEO of Stonehill. "Hiring has frozen, so nobody's growing their way out of a structural problem anymore. And most companies are sitting on an AI windfall they haven't actually captured, because the org chart, the decision rights, and the span of control around it haven't changed. That's the gap we're being asked to close."

Stonehill's organizational design engagements typically address a common set of questions: which roles should be consolidated or restructured now that hiring isn't an option; how spans of control and management layers should change as AI absorbs more routine and repetitive work; and how decision rights, incentive structures, and succession plans need to be reworked so the organization actually captures the gains it has already paid for. This work sits alongside the firm's existing practice areas in post-merger integration, carve-out and TSA advisory, and its [AI](#).

Pace noted that the companies pulling ahead right now are treating organizational design as the way to unlock the AI investment they've already made, not a separate project for later. "The firms getting this right are redesigning the organization to actually capture the upside they paid for," he said. "The ones getting it wrong are sitting on the same tools, the same org chart, and the same gap between the two — and in a frozen hiring market, there's no new headcount coming to paper over that."

Stonehill's organizational design practice is available to middle-market clients as a standalone engagement or as part of a broader post-merger integration, carve-out, or transformation program.

About Stonehill

Stonehill is a nationally recognized strategy and innovation consultancy serving Fortune 1000 companies, private equity, and government clients. The firm specializes in helping organizations navigate their most complex and sensitive challenges, combining design thinking, business strategy, and advanced analytics to identify opportunity, create change, and accelerate growth. Known for handling its clients' boldest ideas, Stonehill has facilitated billions of dollars in mergers and delivered solutions that have touched millions of lives. For more information, visit stonehillinnovation.com.

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