● Insigths

Companies in transition: How AI is reshaping leadership

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Foreword: The paradox of AI transformation

It is a strange paradox.

Never before has there been such an urgent need to seriously engage with artificial intelligence in organizations, and yet we are seeing a hesitancy in companies that seems almost ritualistic. People discuss, analyze, and problematize. They set up steering committees, draw up roadmaps, and wait for the next governance paper. And then? Often, nothing happens.

We have known for a long time that those who wait for the perfect system to be in place have already lost. The game for innovation, market share, and employees is already underway. And it will not wait for us.

In my work with organizations, we see three patterns recurring time and again.

First, companies introduce tools that don't even come close to what ChatGPT or Perplexity have long been capable of. Those who already have experience with AI return to their private tools. Others immediately lose interest because the famous "aha" effect fails to materialize.

Second, in many organizations, AI initiatives arise in silos, unconnected, uncoordinated, duplicated, and expensive. There is a lack of shared learning spaces, exchange, and a strategic vision that provides orientation.

And **thirdly**, instead of starting small and boldly, some companies try to take the big leap with multi-million dollar programs for which the organization is not ready. The result: frustration, resistance, ineffectiveness.

At the same time, external pressure is mounting. Demographic change, the shortage of skilled workers, and the increasing demands placed on modern working environments make it clear that we have no time to lose. AI can be a decisive lever for automating routine tasks, relieving existing employees, and making better use of skills.

Those who fail to act not only risk competitive disadvantages but also fail to meet social requirements. In times of labor shortages, technological support is not a luxury, but a necessity.

The path forward is clear: just start but do so strategically. With small, feasible use cases, in teams that are eager to learn, and in areas that offer little risk but a lot of leverage. This is not a retreat; it is a smart offensive. And the basis for real transformation.

This little book is an invitation to see AI not just as a technology, but as a cultural challenge, as a leadership issue, and as an opportunity to rethink organizations: faster, more human, clearer.

Because in the end, it’s always the same: those who act shape the world, and those who wait are shaped by it.

A turning point: Why organizations must act now

Thesis:

Digital transformation was yesterday. Today, it's all about AI transformation. And that calls everything into question: work, leadership, and value creation. Those who don't act now will lose.

Understand:

AI is not just technology. It changes the rules of the game for organizations: tasks, processes, decision-making paths, structures.

Think:

Those who view AI merely as a tool underestimate its impact, miss the opportunity to actively shape the future, and lose significant competitive advantages.

Act:

Now is the time to familiarize yourself with the possibilities of AI, identify initial applications, and make the topic a top priority.

If you want to know why action must be taken now, you don't need scenarios, just a look in the rearview mirror. Never before in recent economic history have demographics, technology, and changing values overlapped at this speed. And never before has leadership been so challenged to not only set guidelines, but also to provide direction.

Some crises are loud and obvious. Others creep quietly into the center of reality until they can no longer be ignored. The current changes, driven by artificial intelligence, are of the latter kind. While the debates about artificial intelligence, digitalization, and new work are being conducted loudly, a tectonic shift is taking place in the background that is fundamentally changing our working world. Humans are becoming the scarcest resource, physically, psychologically, and culturally.

Germany, for example, is losing a net total of around 400,000 workers every year, and they are not alone facing this predicament.[1] Demographic change has long since ceased to be a future scenario, yet it has only now arrived in the present.[2,3]

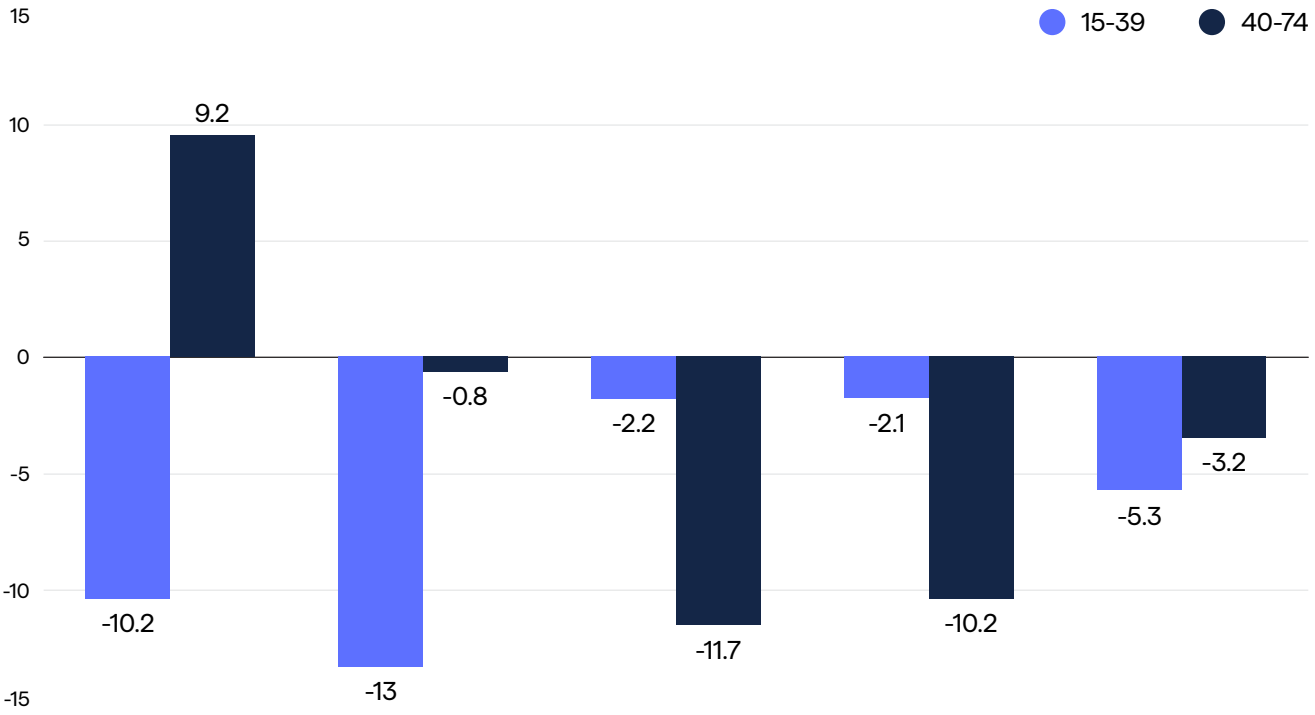


Figure 1: A significant drop in Europe's labor force among the 15–39 age group is expected before 2030 (projected labor force changes, by age group and period, in millions).[3]

1 IAB (2021). Only with an annual net immigration of 400,000 people will the labor supply remain constant in the long term. Institute for Employment Research.

2 Radant, O. (2014). Demographic change: The reasons, implications and consequences for IT departments. International Journal of Human Capital and Information Technology Professionals (IJHCITP), 5①, 14–27. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijhcitp.2014010104

3 Gill, I., Koettl, J. & Packard, T. (2013). Full employment: a distant dream for Europe. IZA J Labor Stud 2, 19. https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-9012-2-19

And it hits companies twice as hard: on the one hand, there is a shortage of skilled workers, and on the other, they are unable to leverage their existing productivity potential. Many organizations employ people who are not equipped for what lies ahead yet are given no opportunity to develop their skills. The result is a contradiction: shortages despite abundance, overload despite underload.

At the same time, there is a glimmer of hope: artificial intelligence is supposed to solve the labour problem, optimize processes, and democratize knowledge. But that is not enough. AI is no substitute for strategic clarity or cultural connectivity. Where there is a lack of data, infrastructure, and willingness to change, its potential fizzles out. And where organizations believe that human development can be replaced by technical tools, they are confusing the means with the end. Despite all the automation, people remain the measure of all things.

However, the shift comes with new expectations. The younger generation doesn't just want to work, they want to make an impact. Self-determination, meaning, and psychological security[4] are no longer wish lists, but minimum requirements. Yet in many places, leadership is still the same as it was twenty years ago: status-driven, controlling, and risk-averse. Hierarchies that once provided orientation now act like concrete slabs on collective creative power.

4 Psychological security refers to a work environment in which employees can openly express negative consequences, admit mistakes, and take risks—a key prerequisite for learning, innovation, and collaborative AI use.

At the same time, a structural problem is becoming apparent: the systems no longer fit the people. In many cases, processes, management concepts, and organizational logic are relics of a time when stability was paramount. Today, it's all about agility, networking, and learning, and this is precisely what many organizations are struggling with. The result: declining loyalty, increasing turnover, and dwindling innovative strength.

What makes this time so dangerous, and at the same time so full of opportunity, is its transitional state. Many companies sense that things cannot continue as they are. But they do not yet know how to do things differently. This ambivalence is the space in which the future will be decided. Those who act now can shape it. Those who wait will be shaped by markets, people, and machines.

Many companies' approach to the current transformation is characterized by a misunderstanding, one that can be costly. They consider AI to be a tool. An IT tool that can be "introduced" like a new CRM system. But artificial intelligence is not a tool; it is an infrastructural turning point. It changes not only processes, but the very logic of work itself: how decisions are made, how collaboration is organized, and how value is created. Anyone who thinks of AI in purely technological terms fails to recognize the depth of the change.

The ubiquitous practice of pilot projects also follows a dangerous fallacy: trial and error is no substitute for strategy. On the contrary, without a clear framework, direction, and purpose, pilot projects get bogged down in day-to-day business or fail due to resistance from the organization. A chatbot tool is tested in customer service or an automation script in accounting, but the system remains as it is. In such constellations, AI becomes decorative rather than transformative. My colleague Philipp Pytel, Partner at Eraneos, once put it this way: "If you have more pilots than Lufthansa, you have a problem."

Added to this is a persistent mindset trap: "Our people aren't ready yet." A sentence that says more about the management system than it does about the employees. Because if you wait for the organization to be "ready," you will never get started.

Transformational capability does not come from waiting, it comes from doing. Especially where uncertainty prevails, orientation is needed, not avoidance.

The real challenge lies not in the technology, but in the transformation. And like any real change, this begins with a clear decision: We're going to do this now. And we're going to do it right.

The good news is that the momentum is there. In many organizations, the old ways are becoming noticeably fragile. Processes that used to be sacred are suddenly up for discussion. The search for new ways of working, the willingness to embrace cultural openness, the interest in AI – all of this is there. But momentum is a fleeting feeling. If it is not used, it tips over into disillusionment. People who feel hope but experience no change resign themselves more quickly than those who never had hope in the first place.

What is needed now is not another IT project, but a management decision. One that doesn't just say, "We're betting on AI," but recognizes that the "how" is crucial. That technology is not an end in itself, but a catalyst for something deeper: new collaboration, new responsibility, new organizational logic.

Leadership does not become a controlling authority, but a cultural architect. It is about creating spaces where experimentation is allowed, learning is encouraged, and responsibility is shared. Where orientation is not dictated from above, but created together. Such leadership requires courage and a clear compass. Because AI is not just a strategic project. It is a character test for organizations. Those who pass it gain not only efficiency, but also connectivity to a changing world.

The greatest illusion of our time is that change begins with technology. In reality, it is cultural. It is not a question of whether organizations need to change, but how quickly they can do so. Because it is not technology that determines future viability, but the ability to transform. And that does not come from tools, but from content, intelligent arguments, and a shared set of values.

The real disruption is not taking place in the engine room, but in people's minds. In the mindsets of managers, in the expectations of employees, and in the logic of collaboration. Those who fail to recognize this cultural shift, or who downplay it, will be overwhelmed by it.[5]

It is no longer enough to optimize processes or reorganize structures. It is about taking a different view of the people in the organization - as subjects, not as resources. As bearers of meaning, not just of competence. Only where this view succeeds will what companies need most urgently today emerge: energy, trust, and effectiveness.

AI, demographics, and changing values are not a threat. They are an opportunity for renewal. The opportunity does not lie in being perfectly prepared, but in setting out with determination. Because one thing is certain: those who don't lead now will lose out. Not only talent, but also their connection.

5 Côté, C. (2023, March 2). How Does Leadership Influence Organizational Culture? Harvard Business School Online.

Chapter 1: Good AI needs good leadership

Thesis:

AI will not fail because it is too complex, but because leadership remains too complacent.

Understand:

AI inevitably leads to change. One of the key success factors is whether leadership is able to set priorities, tolerate uncertainty, and enable new things.

Think:

Technological transformation rarely fails because of technology, it fails because of leadership that prioritizes security over progress.

Act:

Managers must provide guidance, prepare and make decisions, and create spaces where employees can learn and experiment.

Technology alone does not change anything; people do. In the age of artificial intelligence, this statement is not trivial, but fundamental. What counts today is not only technological implementation expertise, but also cultural navigation skills. Leadership is not a downstream change facilitator; it is the operating system of transformation. Unreflective tool rollouts remain ineffective if the leadership style lags behind the change. Increasing digital maturity is not enough; leadership maturity is needed to enable an AI culture and unleash its potential.

Many executives initially approach AI with doubts: "How do we control it?" In most cases, however, the problem is not control, but oversight. This is because AI provokes cultural ambivalence: on the one hand, massive efficiency gains, on the other, fears of job losses, data misuse, and loss of expertise. Managers need to act differently here than they have in the past. Instead of control, they need trust. And instead of elitist know-how, they need an attitude that understands technology as an enabler of human expertise.

Contradiction between tool focus and cultural blindness

Even technologically advanced companies often get stuck in the contradiction between tool focus and cultural blindness. Many believe that a chatbot or co-pilot is all there is to AI. They overlook that user acceptance often only arises in shadow IT. If no powerful and secure alternative is offered, employees use private tools such as ChatGPT without guidelines, governance, or responsibility. And that is precisely what leads to dangerous imbalances: data protection, compliance, and ethics are put at risk because culture and leadership do not consider them.

The global tech elite also emphasizes the importance of AI as a fundamental force for transformation. Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, summed it up best: "You can't just come in ... and not know what to do when it is ambiguous ... bringing clarity is super, super important." [6] In an environment characterized by uncertainty and high dynamics, orientation becomes the currency of leadership. Jensen Huang, CEO of NVIDIA, puts it even more clearly: "AI is the greatest equalizer." [7] His thesis: Artificial intelligence is changing not only products, but above all business models, role models, and decision-making chains. And Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google, says that AI is "more profound than fire or electricity" [8], a reference to the profound social and economic upheavals that lie ahead.

If technology is as profound as fire or electricity, then leadership is the architecture that determines whether it becomes a campfire or a wildfire.

6 Albergotti, R. (2025, May 19). Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella says firm needs humans more than ever in the AI boom. Semafor. Retrieved from Semafor Technology Feed

7 Adamson, T., & Chan, K. (2025, June 11). Nvidia chief calls AI 'the greatest equalizer' — but warns Europe risks falling behind. Associated Press. Retrieved from VivaTech 2025 coverage

8 Pichai, S. (2023, June 7). AI will be more consequential to humanity than fire or electricity. In OfficeChai. Retrieved from https://officechai.com

The situation is particularly precarious for middle management: at the top, C-level executives are pushing for KPI targets, digital roadmaps, and efficiency goals. Below, however, employees expect meaning, autonomy, and opportunities to learn, but above all psychological security. Studies [9] have repeatedly come to the same conclusion for years: employees don't leave companies, they leave managers. The decisive factor is therefore how concrete strength and motivation are generated here.

Middle managers are caught in the tension between pressure and potential and are often crushed by it. Those who devote themselves solely to the upper agenda lose their innovative strength and empathy. Those who are too focused on their teams come under pressure to deliver efficiency. The key lies in striking a balance: with vision at the top and resonance at the bottom. And with the right attitude internally: authentic, people-centered, and capable of learning.

This is precisely where it will be decided whether AI becomes an integration platform or a wedge – not through tools, but through leadership that moderates tensions and creates meaning.

Today's leaders must be able to do more than just organize. Leadership is needed that embraces uncertainty, creates clarity, and builds culture – because that is precisely what will make the difference between AI implementation and true transformation.

9 Lipman, V. (2021). How psychological safety can benefit organizations. Psychology Today. https://www.psychologytoday.com

Psychological safety as a lever for innovation

Psychological safety is an often underestimated lever for effective AI transformation. Amy Edmondson has described this concept [10] as the basis for innovation: it requires spaces where teams can communicate and experiment without fear of making mistakes or embarrassment. Studies show that teams with high psychological safety are significantly more creative, show less resistance, and are more resilient. AI acts as an amplifier here: introducing new tools without cultural fit causes uncertainty and stress. Research suggests that ethical leadership [11] reduces such stress: it reduces uncertainty through transparent communication, clear control, targeted training, and empathetic cooperation.

What specific skills does good leadership require? Literature and practice cite five characteristics that together form an AI-capable leader profile.[12]

- **Emotional intelligence:** Understanding of individual needs, sensitivity to danger, active listening.
- **Adaptability:** Speed in learning and rethinking. Breaking routines instead of multiplying them.
- **Authenticity:** Demonstrating values, reflecting on decisions, being a role model.
- **Tech literacy:** Not deep technological expertise, but an understanding of data flows, use cases, and scaling logic.
- **Inclusive mindset:** Promoting diversity, integrating perspectives, and living ethical values.

10 Edmondson, A. C. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. Administrative Science Quarterly, 44②, 350–383.

11 Ethical leadership in the context of AI refers to value-based leadership behavior that deliberately creates psychological safety through transparency, integrity, and empathy in order to enable responsible learning, innovation, and trusting collaboration in technological change processes.

12 1213 Frimpong, V. (2025). The Impact of AI on Evolving Leadership Theories and Practices. Journal of Management World, 202③, 188–193.

Carolus, A., Koch, M., Straka, S., Latoschik, M. E., & Wienrich, C. (2023). MAILS – Meta AI Literacy Scale. arXiv preprint.

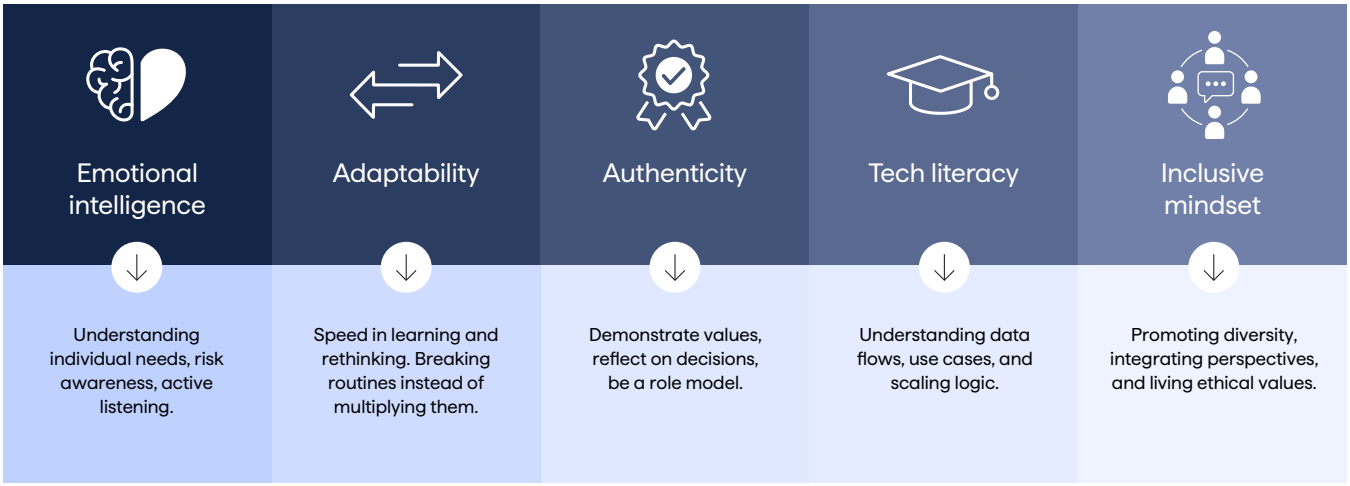


Figure 2: Five key future skills for managers.

These dimensions complement each other: Leading with emotional intelligence without technological validity creates closeness without impact. Being tech-savvy without being reflective creates efficiency without culture. Authenticity alone is no substitute for governance. AI requires interaction.

A tried-and-tested approach involves several stages: First, get started with specific use cases, supported by a cross-functional team and with coaching instead of reporting. Psychological safety becomes a KPI in the test phase, measured by weekly employee surveys, for example. This is followed by standardized success metrics and a governance council that prepares scaling decisions. The third phase involves expansion, with co-pilot programs, training trips, and certification logic. Finally, cultural anchoring: communities of practice, ethical leadership programs, and continuous evaluation. International pioneers such as IKEA and S&P Global show what such phases can look like in reality.

Error tolerance as a success factor

In addition, dealing with mistakes is a key issue. In a world where AI models operate probabilistically rather than deterministically, tolerance for error becomes a factor for success. Leadership must learn not only to manage uncertainty, but also to accept it as an integral part of innovation. Mistakes that arise from experimentation are learning opportunities, not deficits. This requires a reassessment of traditional performance criteria: it is not only output that counts, but also learning curves, knowledge gains, and the ability to reflect.

Communication and leadership

The role of leadership is also changing in communication: transparency is becoming the currency of leadership. It is no longer just about the "what" and "how," but increasingly about the "why." Employees need to understand why AI is being introduced, what it changes, and what it does not change. These narratives create clarity, promote engagement, and reduce resistance. Good leadership not only communicates, it also promotes meaning and purpose among employees.

Leadership does not only affect people, it must also promote normative decisions: What data do I use? What are the risks of bias? How do I secure systems against misuse? Organizations are increasingly establishing AI ethics boards that operate on an interdisciplinary basis. Managers are becoming norm facilitators: they make ethics visible in decisions, from data sharing to team culture. Especially in areas of high social relevance such as health, education, or public administration, this normative responsibility cannot be delegated. This is where it is decided whether AI is understood as a tool for the common good or as a technocratic end in itself.

In summary, when leadership fails, shadow IT emerges, compliance risks increase, psychological stress rises, employee retention declines, and innovation stagnates. Technology then remains nothing more than a label. Those who use AI without culture put trust at risk. Those who combine AI with good leadership, on the other hand, activate the future. Because AI can be bought, but trust cannot. It is the task of leadership to make real progress. And that doesn't start with software, but with attitude.

Chapter 2: AI does not make people redundant; it makes them effective

Thesis:

It is not AI that is taking our jobs – it is the way we think about work. Used correctly, technology is not a substitute for humans, but an invitation to further develop them.

Understand:

AI reveals where work creates real value – and where processes, roles or tasks are inefficient or even unnecessary.

Think:

It is not the machine that replaces people, but the organization that replaces what is no longer needed.

Act:

Organizations must consistently question and adapt responsibilities, tasks, and structures to enable effectiveness.

In the world of business that is increasingly characterized by complexity and speed, the focus is shifting away from mere presence and towards effectiveness. But what does effectiveness really mean in the age of AI? Today, effectiveness is more than just output. It's about creating value that makes sense: for the company, for the customer, and for the employees themselves. In an environment where monotonous processes, redundant meetings, and administrative bureaucracy often sap energy, AI frees up resources. It relieves, it focuses, it amplifies. And that is precisely what makes humans not obsolete, but crucial.

AI creates freedom by automating repetitive tasks: extracting data, writing reports, providing standard responses, and reviewing contract documents. At the same time, it supports knowledge work: it provides context, aggregates information, and offers perspectives for decision-making. In customer interaction, it becomes a real-time partner and changes the culture of service and consulting.

Beneficiaries of AI

Those roles that were previously caught between data collection, coordination, and documentation benefit particularly: HR, controlling, purchasing, customer service, and sales. But creative and analytical professions also receive support, not through replacement, but through empowerment. AI provides impetus. It does not design strategy, but it sorts scenarios. Humans remain the decision-makers, but now with tools that enhance relevance and expression in their actions.

This relevance is not only economic, but also emotional. Those who feel that they are effective feel a sense of purpose. Those who notice that their ideas have an impact experience self-efficacy. And those who feel that they are helping to shape the future rather than just managing it feel pride. AI thus becomes not an instrument of control, but a vehicle for empowerment. The prerequisite is that it is not introduced against people, but with them. The psychological aspect is central here. Studies show[13] that employees who feel effective are more loyal, healthier, and more innovative. Companies that minimize administrative work not only create efficiency, but also loyalty. Those who cling to analog processes, on the other hand, create frustration. The feeling of wasting time is poison for motivation.

This development is also changing the understanding of leadership. Leadership based on reporting is losing its legitimacy. After all, the figures are already available. What counts is context, culture, and collaboration. The manager becomes a coach, moderator, and source of meaning. They create an environment in which employees take responsibility because they feel seen and empowered.

An example[14]: In a large industrial company (BCI), AI was used to automate weekly forecast reports. What used to take 12 hours of manual work now takes 30 minutes. The teams now use the time they have freed up for customer projects, innovation sprints, and further training. Productivity increased, but the cultural shift was even more significant: employees felt needed again.

13 Mental Health America. (2023). 2023 workplace wellness research. https://www.mhanational.org; SAS. (2023). The science of happiness at work: How positive psychology can increase productivity. LPS Online.

14 British Columbia Investment Management Corporation. (2024). How AI automation saved 2,300 person-hours and increased job satisfaction by 68% [Case study]

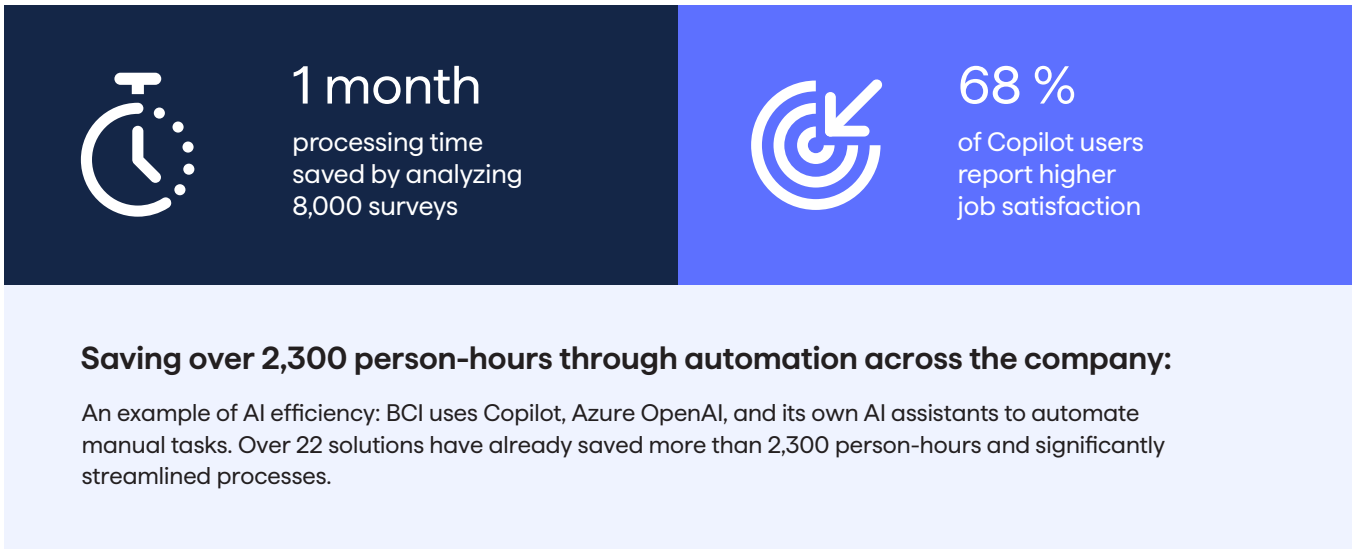


Figure 3: How AI saves time, automates processes, and increases job satisfaction at BCI.

Fear of losing control

Nevertheless, concerns remain. Some managers fear losing control. But the opposite is true: control comes from trust. Those who give their teams good AI tools and trust them to use them responsibly will be rewarded with commitment. Those who block them, on the other hand, provoke shadow IT, inefficiency, and frustration.

Today's best teams develop their own workflows: prompt libraries, internal knowledge databases, and agile processes. Leadership here means facilitation, not regulation. The goal is not the perfect solution from above, but a usable platform from below. Responsibility for quality, ethics, and impact remains, but it is shared.

Jensen Huang (CEO of Nvidia) said, "AI won't take your job. But the person who uses AI will." This statement points to a new form of competition: not between humans and machines, but between different degrees of adaptation. Those who empower people in AI competence, application, and attitude will win.

Another relevant concept is that of AI agents. These autonomous systems act on the basis of predefined goals and can independently execute entire task chains, from research and text writing to the execution of operational decisions. In theory, this promises a new era of automation.

In practice, however, it is clear that without clear ethical guidelines, contextual sensitivity, and human control, such systems run the risk of being not only inefficient but also unpredictable. That is why the principle of "human-in-the-loop" is essential. It ensures that humans remain involved in critical decision-making processes, not as controllers but as interpreters.

In contrast to this is the emerging discourse around "agentic AI," a direction of AI development that aims not only at decision-making competence, but self-control and goal adjustment. This form of AI no longer thinks only within given parameters, but questions and reformulates them. Agentic AI proactively pursues goals, develops its own strategies, and continuously learns from its environment. It acts not only reactively, but also proactively. The difference to traditional AI lies in its adaptability and goal autonomy. While classic AI operates within narrow tasks, agentic AI actively shapes the problem, a radical change of perspective with far-reaching implications.

From assistance to autonomy: AI is taking on increasingly complex tasks, while humans determine the scope of action

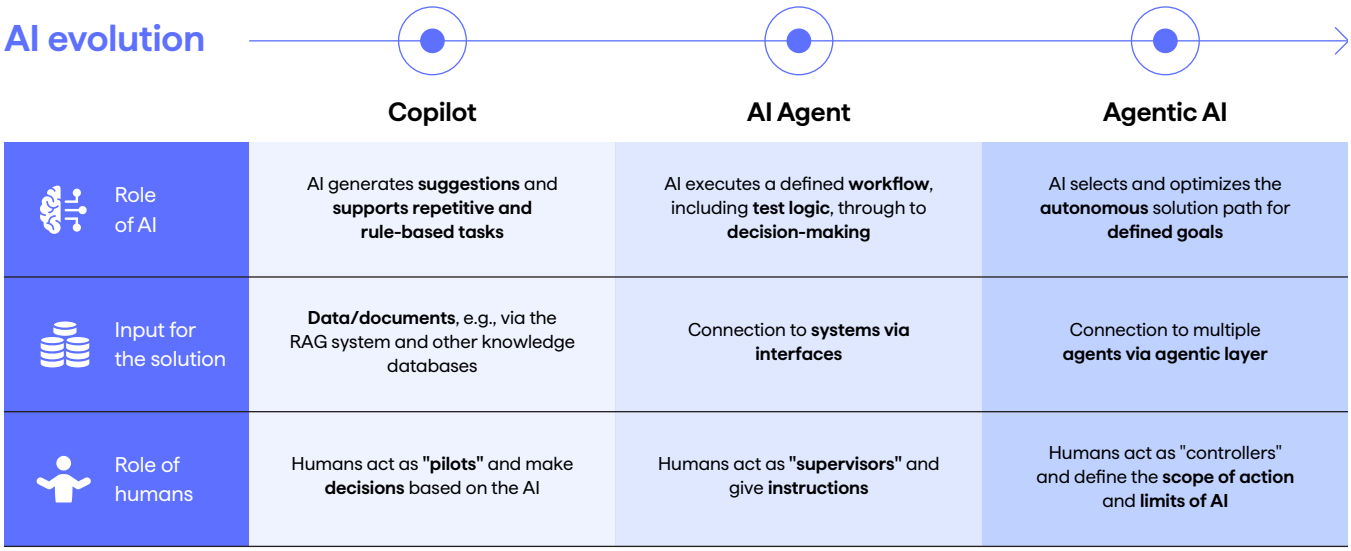


Figure 4: The gradual development of AI in companies – from individual applications to strategic use.

A key difference between classic Generative AI, such as ChatGPT, and Agentic AI is therefore the degree of independence and goal orientation. While GPT models are excellent at responding to specific prompts, They remain reactive. They offer suggestions, ideas, and information, but they do not act on their own initiative. They need a starting signal, a human impetus. Agentic AI, on the other hand, can identify goals itself, derive courses of action, and implement them iteratively [15]. This creates a system that not only executes but also controls. The potential is enormous, but it also shifts responsibility. Managers must learn not only to delegate tasks, but also to cooperate with autonomous systems.

This also has implications for organizational roles. In this context, the IT department is increasingly becoming a kind of human resources department, not for people, but for digital resources. The operation, training, and further development of AI agents are becoming central infrastructure services. IT will then no longer be solely responsible for systems, but will also shape work capability, a transformation from technology management to resource strategy.

Companies need new roles: AI trainers, ethics governance officers, and agent orchestrators. This blurs the lines between technology and human resources development.

Managers need to address these issues, not only from a technological perspective, but also from a values-based perspective. They need to understand the potential and risks of AI agents but also have a strategy for using them responsibly. It is not enough to simply "introduce" AI. It must be cultivated, in the interplay between technology, ethics, and corporate culture.

In summary, this means that work will not decrease, but it will change. It is not about replacing human labor but about refocusing it. From routines to impact. From administration to creativity. From control to trust. AI, when designed correctly, is not the end of human work. It is its upgrade.

And that is precisely the opportunity: to create new culture of effectiveness. Not as an efficiency mantra, but as a people-centered performance promise. Because the question is not whether AI is coming. But whether we design it in such a way that it strengthens us and does not devalue us.

15 Fauscette, M. (2025, April 9). Agentic AI vs. LLMs: Understanding the Shift from Reactive to Proactive AI. Arion Research Blog.

Chapter 3: Technology empowers, culture decides

Thesis:

The introduction of AI is not a technical challenge, but a cultural one. Without openness, psychological safety, and shared learning spaces, the potential of AI will remain unfulfilled.

Understand:

A culture that is hostile to innovation or avoids conflict prevents new technologies from becoming effective – even if they work technically.

Think:

It is not a lack of know-how, but a lack of openness, trust, and willingness to learn that slows down change.

Act:

Leadership must create positive experiences in a targeted manner – through concrete rituals and interventions that enable new things and support learning processes.

Culture is not a soft factor; it is the infrastructure of action. If you want to successfully integrate AI into organizations, you must not only introduce systems but also change beliefs.

What does "culture" mean in the context of AI transformation? It's about values, yes, but not as abstract corporate mission statements. Rather, it's about lived practice that is expressed in behavior, language, speed of decision-making, and willingness to learn. Cultural maturity is evident in how new things are dealt with: with curiosity or with fear? With a desire to shape things or with a desire to defend power?

The invisible barriers

In many organizations, the biggest obstacles to AI are not technical in nature. They are silos. Power dynamics. Fears. The separation of specialist departments and IT is particularly fatal: it prevents the very integrative perspective that would be necessary for data-based innovation. Those who think about AI in their specialist department but do not talk to IT, or vice versa, will only create islands. No change.

What's more, the natural reflex of many people is defensiveness. Not out of malice, but out of feeling overwhelmed. Those who have never worked with AI often only see risks. Those who are about to retire wonder whether it is even worth it anymore. And those who fear for their power cling to their knowledge sovereignty.

All of this is understandable, but there are alternatives. Good leadership recognizes these dynamics, takes them seriously, and creates targeted spaces for joint development.

From knowledge to effectiveness

The first step in cultural transformation is education. Not in the form of traditional training, but as a collective process. Organizations first need a common basic understanding of what AI is and what it is not. This can be achieved through lectures, learning trips, micro-learning, or internal communities of practice, for example.

The key thing is that everyone in the company needs to know what AI stands for, what it can do, and where its limits lie. And depending on their role, different levels of depth are required: those involved in innovation work need deeper insights into prompting, agentic workflows, or data usage. Those who work more in an administrative environment benefit from automation.

This gives rise to a new understanding of the division of labor, between humans and machines, but also between humans themselves.

Rituals that change culture

Culture does not change through instruction. It changes through experience. That is why targeted rituals and interventions are needed in the transformation process. [16]

- **Weekly AI sparring sessions:** Teams analyze new tools together and reflect on what is useful.
- **AI tandems:** Curious minds and skeptics work together on a use case.
- **Open demos:** Employees show how they use AI, informally, transparently, and with a low threshold.
- **Change sponsorships:** Managers actively take on roles as enablers, not decision-makers.

16 McKinsey & Company. (2023). Five bold moves to quickly transform your organization's culture. Retrieved from McKinsey Insights.

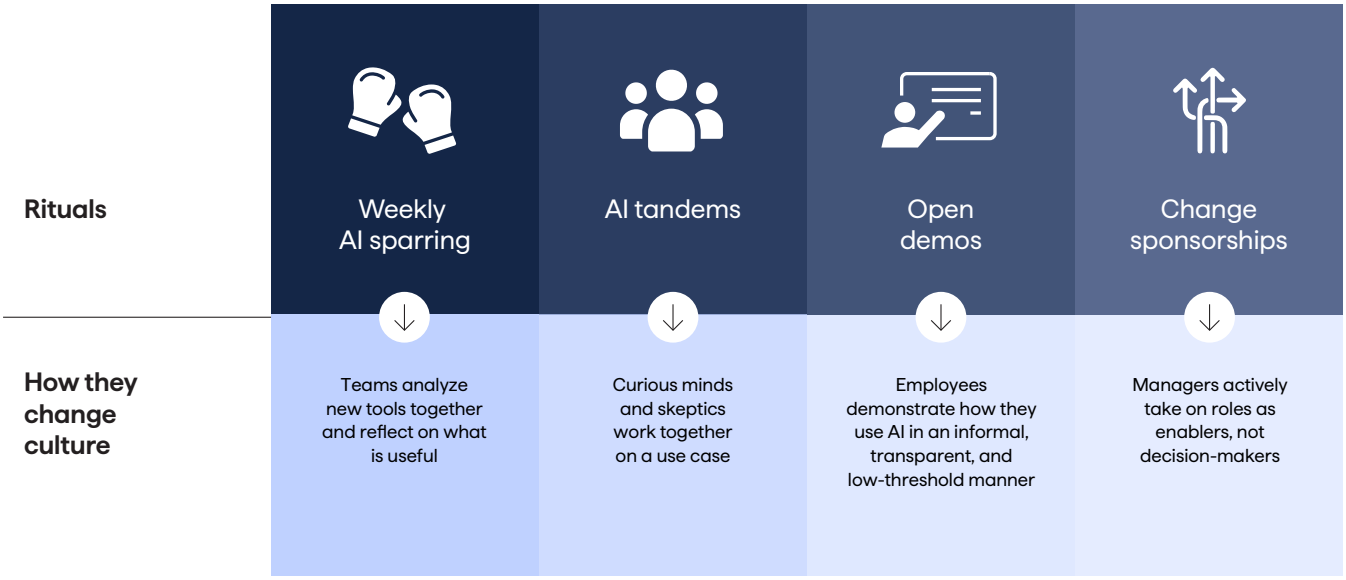


Figure 5: Rituals for promoting an open corporate culture in dealing with AI.

Those who establish such formats gradually shift the basic cultural attitude: from control to trust, from defensiveness to curiosity, from silos to cooperation.

Case study: The technology was there, but no one came

A company introduced a GPT-based solution in the hope of preventing the use of private AI instances. But it was not successful. The application was hardly used for several reasons:

01.
Incorrect target group approach and unclear positioning
The solution offered too little functionality for tech-savvy power users, lacking, for example, the ability to automate workflows, access APIs, or more complex prompt templates. For beginners, on the other hand, there was a lack of concrete use cases or low-threshold entry options. As a result, advanced users stuck with their private tools and beginners saw no added value.

02.
Lack of cultural integration
There was no change management support, no learning formats, and no communication anchors. The introduction was technically implemented but not culturally anchored. An internal study revealed that less than 20% of employees were even aware that the new tool existed. Only 7% had actively tried it out.

03.
No leadership activation
Managers were not involved. There was a lack of both strategic vision and expectation management: What is this tool for? When does it make sense to use it? When doesn't it? Without this framework, its use remained arbitrary and therefore ineffective.

04.
Lack of trust in the process
Interviews with employees revealed that many continued to use private GPT instances, partly because they were more powerful and partly because they felt more secure there. Ironically, this revealed a paradox: fear of losing control led to increased control, which in turn undermined trust and prevented real added value. Studies show[17] of failed AI initiatives fail not because of the technology, but because of a lack of user acceptance and cultural resistance.

17 Allganize. (2025, May 24). Why AI adoption fails without cultural alignment and governance support. Allganize Blog. Retrieved from https://www.allganize.ai, Business Insider. (2025, March 19). Companies' biggest barrier to AI isn't tech — it's employee pushback. Retrieved from https://www.businessinsider.com

Internal strategies for overcoming resistance to AI

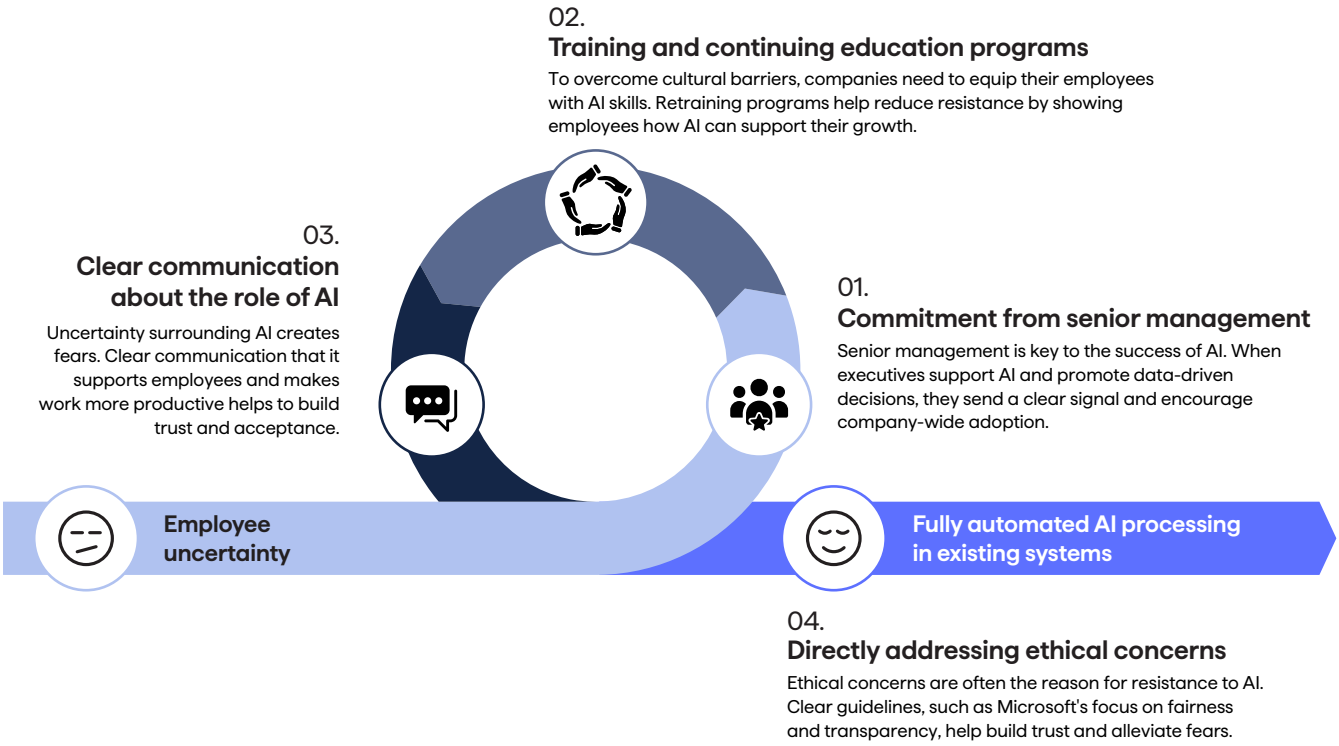


Figure 6: Transition from uncertainty about AI to fully automated AI processing in four steps, with a focus on employee involvement, feedback, and continuous improvement.

This example shows that successfully integrating AI requires more than just software. It requires context, communication, and cultural connectivity.

Conclusion: Tools can be bought. Culture must be shaped.

Technology is not a bottleneck. It is available, scalable, and affordable. The bottleneck is people, not in the sense of a deficit, but in the sense of a priority. Only when employees feel that they are seen, heard, and supported does space for real transformation emerge.

Therefore, the rule is: first the people, then the process, then the tool. Only in this order can sustainable change occur.

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast and technology for dinner." [18]

18 Urahn, S. K. (2024). Culture eats strategy for breakfast. So make culture your focus. Stanford Social Innovation Review.

Chapter 4: AI transformation is not an IT project, but an organizational restructuring

Thesis:

Those who introduce AI must not only implement systems, but also restructure organizations. Because real impact comes from new structures, roles, and principles.

Understand:

AI does not reach its full potential if it is merely applied to existing operating models – it needs new structures, roles, and framework conditions.

Think:

Those who leave existing silos, power structures, and processes untouched are merely digitizing the status quo, and thereby exacerbating existing weaknesses. The rule of thumb is: start small, scale fast.

Act:

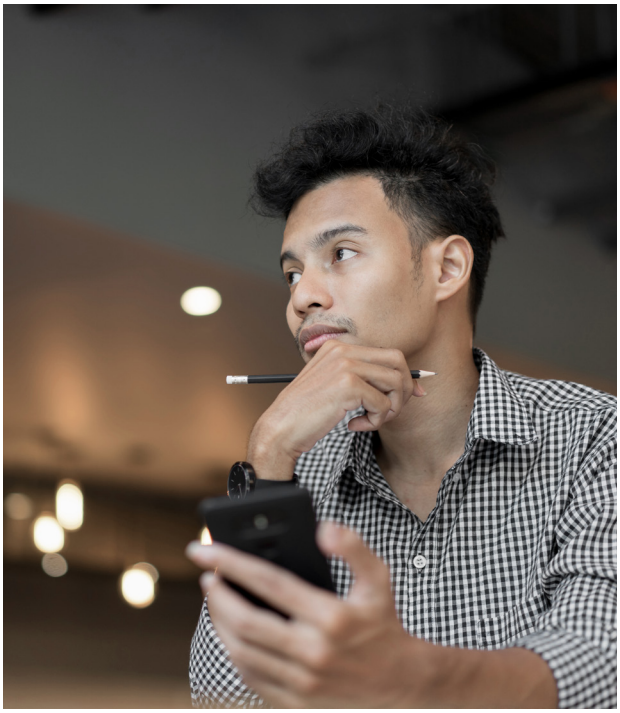
Organizations must integrate AI in a meaningful way. Define use cases, break down silos, rethink collaboration, and ultimately create structures that are geared towards value creation and its results.

Misunderstandings and misconceptions

In many companies, AI is still considered a "tool issue," something that IT purchases and operates. This view is not only simplistic, it is dangerous. Because AI has a profound impact on work processes, decision-making logic, and management principles. Those who treat AI like an IT project will introduce the technology, but will not bring about change.

The biggest misconception: AI is marketed as a silver bullet solution, an all-purpose weapon against inefficiency. But in reality, its introduction requires a high degree of adaptation of processes, skills [19], and target visions. Many organizations have complex approval cascades, fragmented systems, and cumbersome control mechanisms. In such environments, AI fails not because of the technology, but because of the organization.

Another problem is that many projects fail due to overengineering. Everything is thought through, secured, and checked multiple times, but never tried out. Yet the strength of AI lies precisely in iterative learning. "Start small, scale fast" is not just a simple slogan, but a necessity.



19 Radant, O., & Stantchev, V. (2022). A critical assessment and enhancement of metrics for the management of scarce human resources. In Strategic Human Resource Management (pp. 374–402). IGI Global.

From project to transformation

AI cannot simply be "introduced." It must be woven into the DNA of the organization. This means organizations will need:

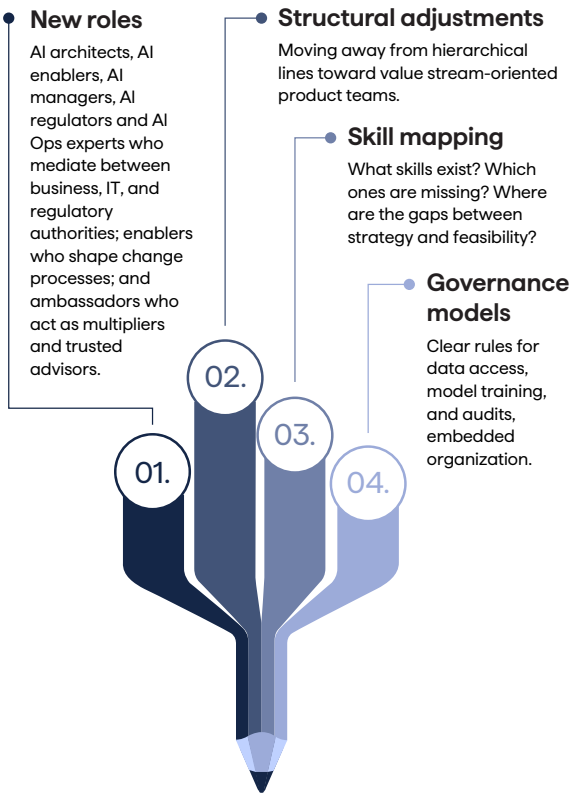


Figure 7: Four steps in the innovation and decision-making process.

Important: There is no "one size fits all" solution. Every organization must develop its own operating system for AI, tailored to its level of maturity, market environment, and culture.

Structures facilitate or block this operating system. Classic matrix organizations with static silos and centralized decisions are unsuitable when AI projects require rapid iterations, fluid responsibilities, and direct experimentation logic. What is missing instead are decision-making spaces that are close to the data, business experts and roles that pool knowledge rather than discipline it, and team designs that focus on product expertise. Project-to-product organizations offer a promising model here – cross-functional teams work autonomously on AI projects, with product responsibility, budget, and governance in context, not far away in rigid project structures.

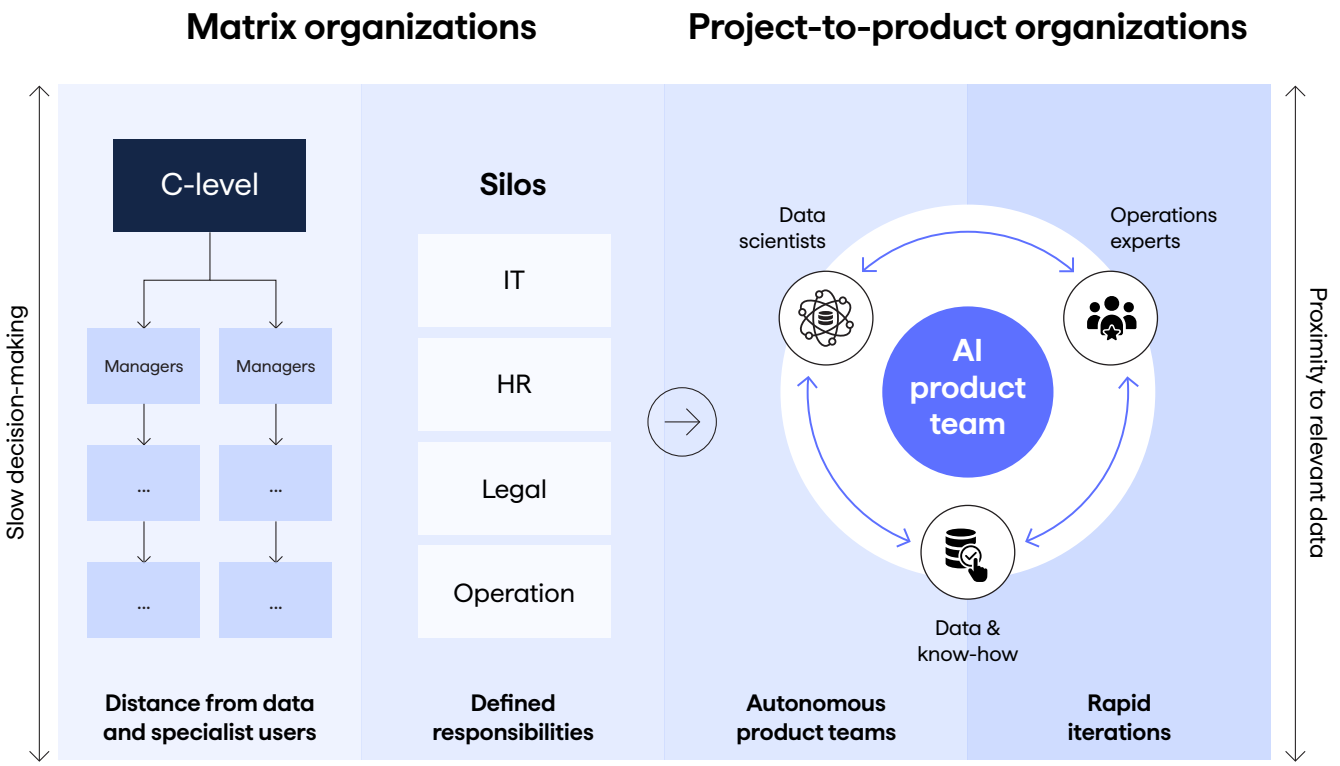


Figure 8: Traditional, hierarchically organized corporate structures with functional silos (left) versus an agile, interdisciplinary team structure for AI products (right), in which data scientists and subject matter experts work together in AI. Focus on employee involvement, feedback, and continuous improvement.

Case study: From project to product: Spotify as an organizational role model[20]

Even though AI represents a revolution, we can learn from the past. The difference to the agile transformation of the 2010s is that the AI revolution is progressing much faster, but technological developments in just a few months are also offering opportunities that were previously unforeseeable.[21]

Spotify offers an example of successful structural transformation. Instead of organizing projects around budgets and committees, the company works in a product-centric manner. The app is the product, and all teams work continuously to improve it. There are no annual project proposals, but rather a permanent focus on value streams.[22]

Spotify works with so-called "squads" – small, autonomous teams that are each responsible for specific parts of the product. These squads are embedded in "tribes" that bundle thematically related squads.

20 Kniberg, H., & Ivarsson, A. (2012). Scaling Agile @ Spotify.

21 2122Tupsakhare, P. (2024). Enhancing Agile Methodologies with AI: Driving Efficiency and Innovation. European Journal of Advances in Engineering and Technology, 9(10), 66 71. Zhang, Z., Rayhan, M., Herda, T., Goisauf, M., & Abrahamsson, P. (2024). LLM based agents for automating the enhancement of user story quality: An early report. arXiv. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2403.09442

22 Businessmap. (2025). What Is the Spotify Model for Scaling Agile?

This is supplemented by "chapters" (functional communities, such as UX or backend) and "guilds" (interest-driven, informal exchange formats).

This structure allows Spotify to work in a highly decentralized yet strategically coherent manner. Prioritization is done via lean portfolio management. Instead of allocating budgets according to the calendar, resources flow to where they generate the greatest customer benefit. Governance is adaptive, focused on impact rather than hierarchy.

Important principles here are:

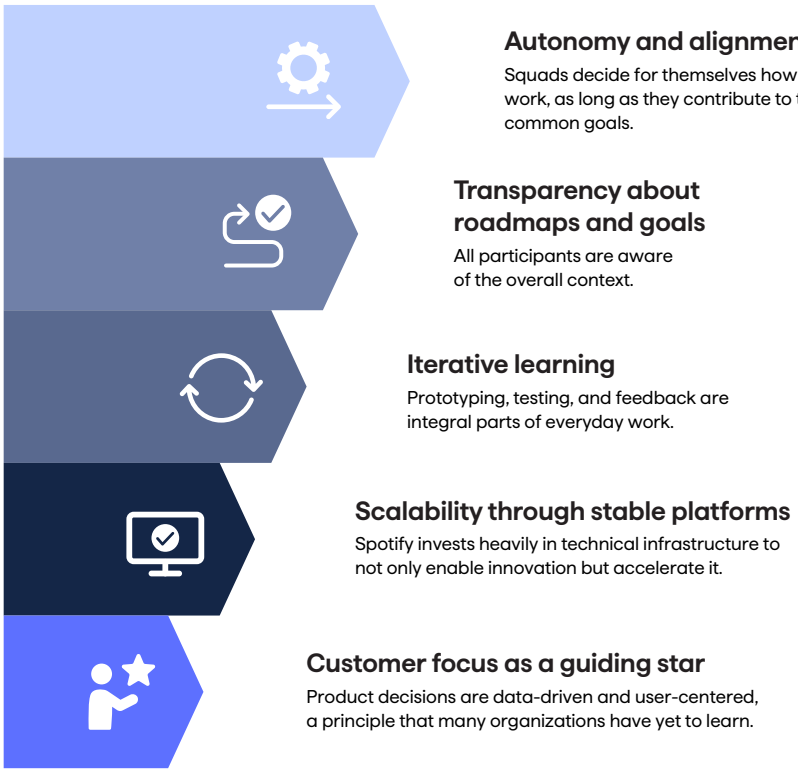


Figure 9: Five success factors of modern product development.

Companies such as ING, Bosch, and Zalando are now following similar models, some inspired by Spotify, others developed independently. This shows that product orientation is not a question of industry, but of attitude.

Spotify has also managed to not only establish a product-oriented structure, but also to promote a corporate culture in which continuous learning, mutual trust, and a high degree of adaptability are essential. Through targeted training, internal mentoring programs, and transparent innovation controlling, Spotify has succeeded in making its organization not only more efficient, but also more resilient.

For organizations dealing with AI transformations, we can draw several following conclusions.

What goes wrong and how to recognize it

Typical mistakes in AI projects:

- **Starting with overly complex use cases:** for example, regulatory reports with high risk potential or data-intensive projects without a clean basis.
- **Technology without enablement:** AI tools are introduced but not explained or practiced. Training, coaching, and support are lacking.
- **Isolated solutions:** Different departments are working on AI, but not with each other, leading to redundancy, friction, and turf wars.
- **Lack of target visions:** It is unclear what AI is supposed to contribute to: Efficiency? Innovation? Compliance? Reducing the workload on employees?
- **No clear governance:** Responsibilities and processes for control, escalation, and further development are either missing or vague.
- **Lack of integration into existing processes:** AI is seen as an add-on, not as an integral part of value creation.

Early warning signs organizations can look for are:

- low use of the tools,
- high frustration among teams,
- parallel shadow tools or workarounds,
- political debates about responsibilities,
- lack of visible and scalable successes,
- hesitant leadership that fails to set priorities
- or innovation theater, with showcases but no impact.

Added to this is often a lack of monitoring of the actual impact. Is AI being measured to see if it's having the desired effect? Are learnings being collected and shared? Without these feedback loops, even the most ambitious project will fade away in the operational noise.

These symptoms should not be seen as outliers, but as valid indications that a systemic redesign is necessary, not a tool fix.

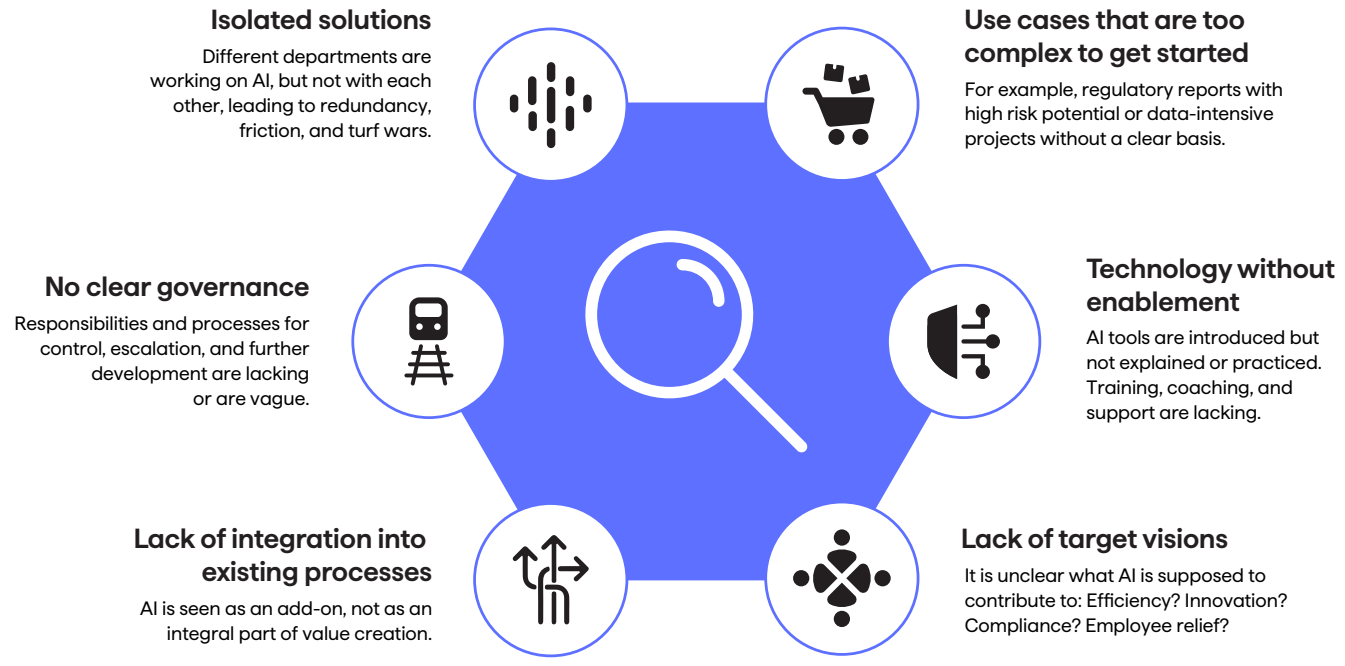


Figure 10: Six typical mistakes in AI projects.

The integrated organization

Organizations that effectively integrate AI can be recognized by three principles:

01.
Value stream instead of departmental logic:
Everything is geared toward added value for customers, employees, and regulators. Processes are designed to deliver this value efficiently and transparently.

02.
Merging IT and expertise:
Specialist departments and technology teams do not work alongside each other, but with each other. The separation between requirements and implementation is replaced by co-creation, agile delivery, and shared responsibility.

03.
Transparency and openness:
Knowledge is shared, mistakes are reflected upon, and progress is made visible. Metrics on the impact of AI are known, and teams learn openly and continuously.

In addition:

- **Adaptive governance:** no rigid rules, but flexible frameworks that enable change.
- **Psychological safety:** Employees feel confident to try new things, give feedback, and take responsibility.
- **Learning systems:** Organizations systematically evaluate their AI initiatives and develop them further in terms of expertise, technology, and culture.
- **User centricity:** The experiences of employees and customers are actively incorporated into the development of new solutions.
- **Culture of responsibility:** Decisions about the use of AI follow clear ethical guidelines and are reviewed regularly.

These organizations are not only more efficient, they are also more adaptable, resilient, and people-centered. They understand that AI is not the goal. It is the tool for building a better organization.

Chapter 5:
Trust, ethics, and transparency – the cultural foundations of effective AI

Thesis:

Technology does not change organizations. People do. And they only do so when they have confidence in themselves, in their leadership, and in the purpose of the change. Without this cultural foundation, AI remains a technical gimmick.

Understand:

AI can only be effective if employees have confidence in how the organization handles technology, data, and change.

Think:

Radical transparency, a culture of error, and ethical guidelines create the basis for reducing fear of AI.

Act:

Trust is built through standards and behavior – managers must explain decisions, take concerns seriously, and design processes in a participatory manner.

Why trust is the foundation

AI transformation is not purely a technological undertaking; it's a challenge for people. New tools, new processes, new roles, all of it requiring of employees to change. And change requires trust.

Trust means being allowed to make mistakes. Those who are afraid don't risk failing, and those who don't fail never learn. Organizations that do not embrace a culture of error are therefore blocking themselves from growth. Development requires permission. Those who introduce AI also introduce a new culture of learning, or they will fail because of the old one.

When trust is lacking, the opposite occurs. There is pressure to conform, resistance, and shadow processes. The technology remains unused, not because it doesn't work, but because no one wants to use it. Trust is not a soft factor, It's the hard infrastructure for change.

Ethics as an operating system

Can AI be used in an ethically neutral way? No, because every technology decision is also a social decision. It's not always about big moral dilemmas. But it is always about responsibility – for employees, for customers, for society.

For example, Google developed an AI system for selecting job applicants that unconsciously favored men because it was trained on historical data. The result was systematic bias. The problem was not the technology, but a lack of ethical guidelines.

That's why we need:

- **Clear ethical principles** embedded in development processes.
- **Regular review** of the models used for bias, discrimination, and transparency.
- **A committee or ethics board** that questions and adapts guidelines.
- **Leaders as role models** who exemplify these principles and translate them into decisions.

External standards such as the GDPR or the EU AI Act can provide guidance, but they lag developments. That is why we need our own guidelines that are faster, more concrete, and more effective.

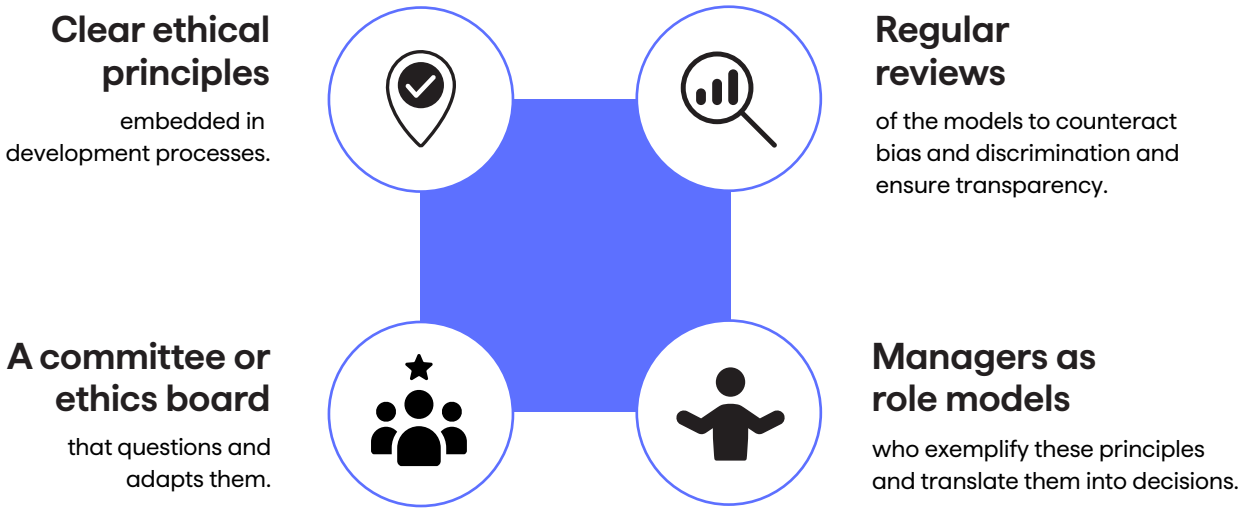


Figure 11: Four central elements of ethical principles of action in a corporate context.

Radical transparency as a cultural response

Cultural barriers are rarely rational. They arise from uncertainty, lack of transparency, and mistrust. The best response to this is radical openness.

What does the organization want to achieve with AI? Which processes should be changed? What are the risks? What questions do employees have? And who is listening to them?

Transparency does not mean that everything has been decided, but that everything is open to discussion. It means creating space for dialogue, doubt, and criticism. And it means that managers are approachable, not just present.

Novartis provides a positive example: it established an "AI Ethics Council" that not only supports decision-making but also publicly reports on its considerations. Employees can ask questions, submit cases, and join in the discussion. The result: greater trust, higher adoption rates, and better results.

What is at stake in the long term

AI transformation is not a sprint, but a marathon. Many companies start out euphorically. But once the initial wave has passed, the hard tasks remain streamlining processes, replacing legacy IT, and breaking down silos. This is not sexy, but it is necessary.

The biggest risk is therefore not a false start, but a flattening of the learning curve. When ethics become a cliché, when trust is lost, and when leadership withdraws, it is not the technology that fails, but the organization.

That's why we need:

- **Long-term anchoring of ethical principles** through committees, rituals, and feedback loops.
- **Recurring reflection:** Are our guidelines still appropriate? Are we promoting the right attitude?
- **Creative drive instead of rule compliance:** Those who want to shape things must not only obey the law but also set standards.

Vision: A trustworthy organization

What if organizations became not only more efficient, but also more human? What if AI were seen not as a threat, but as a relief? What if leadership did not control, but enabled? Then companies would begin to learn from themselves. Not because they have to, but because they want to. Then AI would not be the goal, but the tool. And trust would not be the prerequisite, but the result of a successful transformation.

Chapter 6: Speed beats theory, those who act learn faster

Thesis:

Instead of waiting for the perfect plan, we should just get started. Real progress comes from iterative action, not PowerPoint perfection. In a world where technological developments are growing exponentially, speed is becoming a strategic skill.

Understand:

Those who wait for complete concepts, perfect data models, or fully developed operating models are wasting time, and thus opportunities for initial successes and learning effects.

Think:

Progress comes not from planning, but from doing. The courage to experiment is the key driver for learning and development.

Act:

Start small, learn fast, adapt systematically. Organizations need agile pilot projects with clear learning objectives instead of paralyzing hedging logic and endless planning cycles.

Example: Germany between caution and despondency

In many organizations, a culture of perfectionism still prevails. Processes are planned at length, passed through all committees, and secured multiple times before the first steps are taken. This habitus, often romanticized as "thorough," turns out to be a brake on innovation in the context of exponential technologies such as AI.

The causes are complex. A high sensitivity to regulation, a historically grown aversion to risk, excessive coordination routines, and, last but not least, a management culture that avoids mistakes instead of creating opportunities for learning. This creates a paradoxical situation, although the need for change is recognized, the fear of imperfection paralyzes any ability to act.

But AI systems cannot be perfected on the drawing board. Their impact only becomes apparent when they are put into practice, in feedback, in real use. Those who hesitate here lose twice: in learning speed and in the trust of employees who see that there is a lot of talk in the organization, but little is implemented.

Prototypes, experiments, iterations – the agile path to impact

Organizations that successfully introduce AI do so not with a master plan, but with an experimental mode. They start with small, concrete prototypes, test their impact, learn from them and scale what works. This principle, familiar from agile product development, is also gaining importance in the transformation of strategic processes.

Impact occurs where technology meets real problems. A well-designed prototype answers not only technical questions, but also cultural ones: How do employees react to the new logic? Where do friction, misunderstandings, and resistance arise? And how can these be used productively to improve the system?

Especially in uncertain times, it is not the big breakthrough that counts, but the ability to adapt. That is why organizations need not only technological expertise, but also an attitude of encouragement: We try things out, we reflect and we adapt. This is the only way to build trust in the system, in the technology, and in our own creative power.

A plea for bold small steps, even on a large scale

The real game changer in AI transformation is not the grand master plan, but the sum of bold, small steps. These small steps are not just tactical experiments, but strategic learning paths. Every decision and every small project can serve as a sensor: for maturity, for acceptance, and for impact.

Bold small steps resolve the tension between the pressure to act and uncertainty. They allow risks to be minimized without blocking innovation. The principle is start quickly, measure specifically, learn consistently. It is crucial that these small steps do not take place in silos but are part of a larger strategic framework.

This requires a new attitude at the management level where mistakes are not to be avoided but are necessary. Not as failures, but as sources of insight. The decisive factor is how they are dealt with. An organization that rewards courage rather than caution will learn faster and adapt better in the long run.

The COVID-19 crisis provides an example. Companies that relied on self-organized teams, open communication, and iterative learning cycles were able to respond more quickly to the dynamics. Studies show that empowerment-based leadership creates more productive teams in the long term. [23]

The plea is therefore not to hesitate. Just get started, with structure, with attitude, with courage.

23 Koch, J., & Schermuly, C. C. (2021). Managing the crisis: How COVID-19 demands interact with agile project management in predicting employee exhaustion. British Journal of Management, 32④, 1265–1283. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12536

Chapter 7: People first, not as a gesture, but as a business strategy

Thesis:

Rehumanization is not a step backwards, but a strategic step forward. Those who use AI must become more human, not less.

Understand:

AI can do a lot, but not everything. Creativity, empathy, and the desire for meaning are deeply human and crucial to whether new solutions are truly relevant.

Think:

Sustainable progress can only be achieved when technological excellence interacts with humanity. AI needs to be guided by values, not just efficiency.

Act:

Managers must advance the discourse from "What can AI do?" to "What do we want to do with it?" They must make this question the guiding principle of their own actions – and empower their team to implement this aspiration in their everyday work.

Rehumanizing work as a strategy for the future

At a time when technologies are scaling exponentially, there is a growing temptation to view humans as a disruptive factor – too slow, too prone to error, and too expensive. But the opposite is true. The future belongs to organizations that cultivate human qualities, not eliminate them. Creativity, judgment, empathy, ethical sensibility, a sense of context, none of these things can be automated. They are the real bottleneck and, at the same time, the greatest lever for value creation.

The use of AI requires a new balance, one between efficiency and meaning, between speed and responsibility, and between technical scaling and cultural depth. Rehumanization does not mean working against technology but using it in such a way that it enhances human potential rather than replacing it.

Organizations that understand this logic not only create more resilient structures, but they also become magnets for talent, innovation, and trust.[24]

A personal appeal to decision-makers

Those who bear responsibility today are at a turning point. It is no longer enough to "introduce" AI. It takes courage to break new ground. Courage to relinquish control. Courage to not know everything, but to want to know everything.

In this context, leadership does not mean dictating everything, but rather creating spaces in which learning, experimentation, and a genuine sense of responsibility become possible. Those who create the right conditions now will not only master the technology but also shape an organization that will still be effective tomorrow.

That's why we're appealing to you. Use your position. Make the future more humane, courageous, and clear, not despite AI, but because of it.

24 Jacobsen, D. (2025, February 4). People-first leadership: Why the best leaders put people at the center of success. Workhuman Live. https://www.workhumanlive.com/blog/people-first-leadership

Outlook: What comes after the AI wave?

The next wave will not be technological; it will be social. It is no longer a question of "What can AI do?" but rather "What do we want to do with it?"

Organizations will have to be measured by how they translate technological possibilities into social responsibility. What values they live by. How they deal with uncertainty. How they enable learning. And how, despite all their digital sophistication, they keep people at the center.

The pace of change will continue to increase with advances in multimodal AI systems, personalized AI assistance systems, AI-supported decision-making, and autonomous organizational units that will fundamentally change working models. Studies by McKinsey and the World Economic Forum show [25,26], that by 2030, over a billion people will need to be retrained, not because of a lack of jobs, but because of a lack of fit.

25 McKinsey & Company. (2023). Generative AI and the future of work in America. https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/generative-ai-and-the-future-of-work-in-america

26 World Economic Forum. (2023). Reskilling Revolution: 1 billion people by 2030. https://initiatives.weforum.org/reskilling-revolution/home

Continuing education and retraining prospects 2025-2030

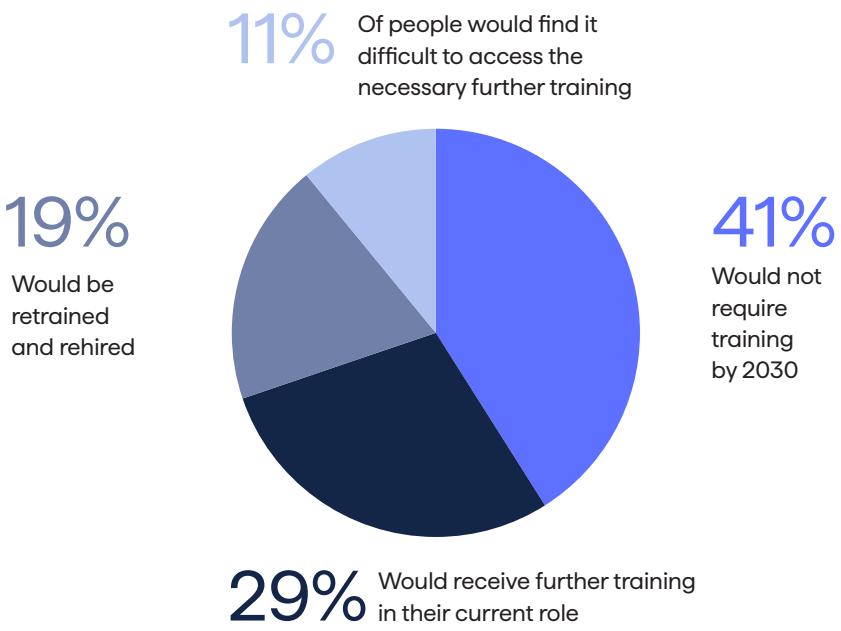


Figure 12: Distribution of typical training prospects for a representative group of 100 employees, calculated on the basis of the average training requirements reported by the employers surveyed.[27]

At the same time, society's expectations of companies to act ethically and not only communicate values such as transparency, fairness, and sustainability, but also live by them, are growing. The pressure for social legitimacy is increasing. Those who merely implement technology without shaping cultural change will lose not only talent, but also trust.

So what comes after the AI wave? The test of maturity. Not for machines, but for ourselves. For our institutions, our leadership, and our culture. It is an opportunity for a new operating system, one that is human, learning and value-based. Those who seize it will not only experience the future, but shape it.

27 World Economic Forum. (2025). Future of Jobs Survey https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2025/

Conclusion

Final thoughts

The introduction of AI is no longer a technical decision; it's a strategic feat. It does not require more technology for technology's sake, but rather more cooperation, more coordination, and more courageous leadership. It requires joint strategies, coordinated processes, and tools that not only manage but also connect.

Because one thing is clear, the speed of technological progress will not slow down. If you want to survive in this dynamic environment, you cannot hide behind perfection. Too often, we see organizations that prefer to discuss potential stumbling blocks instead of taking the first feasible steps. Yet it is precisely the imperfect beginning that leads to progress.

This document has shown that it is not about making a big splash at the push of a button. It's about cleverly placed impulses that unfold iteratively. About experiments from which we can learn. About a culture that does not punish mistakes but sees them as a source of further development. And about leadership that opens up spaces instead of tightening control.

To decision-makers in business, government, and society, now is the moment. The tools are available, the knowledge is there, but the will to implement is what matters. Don't make AI a project. Make it a movement.

Get started! Learn. Take a stand. Do this not as a gesture, but as a business strategy.

Glossary

01.
Fundamental concepts & technologies

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The ability of machines to perform cognitive tasks.
- **Machine learning (ML):** A subfield of AI in which systems learn from data.
- **Deep Learning:** Specialized ML approach using neural networks.
- **Large Language Models (LLMs):** Language models such as GPT that process large amounts of text.
- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** Processing and analysis of natural language by machines.
- **Computer Vision:** Interpretation of visual information by AI.
- **Reinforcement Learning (RL):** Learning through trial and reward.
- **Foundation Models:** Large, generalized AI models as a basis for many tasks.
- **Transformer:** Architecture for LLMs with parallel information processing.

02.
Agentic AI & AI agents

- **AI Agent:** Autonomously acting system with goal orientation.
- **Agentic AI:** AI with proactive goal setting, self-control, and adaptability.
- **Multi-agent system:** Network of agents that learn from each other.
- **Agent orchestrator:** System for coordinating multiple AI agents.
- **Iterative reasoning:** Ability of agents to argue in multiple steps.
- **Goal autonomy:** Independent goal derivation by agentic AI.
- **Adaptive planning:** Dynamic strategy development by agents.
- **Human-in-the-loop:** Humans remain involved as context providers and control instances.

03.
Generative AI & Tools

- **ChatGPT:** Conversation model from OpenAI.
- **Claude:** Language model from Anthropic with a focus on security.
- **Gemini:** Google's multimodal LLM.
- **Copilot:** Microsoft's AI assistant in Office environments.
- **Midjourney / DALL·E / Stable Diffusion:** AI-based image generation.
- **Sora / Runway Gen-2:** Text-to-video systems.
- **LangChain / AutoGen / CAMEL:** Agent frameworks for task automation.
- **RAG (Retrieval Augmented Generation):** Linking LLMs with real-time data access.
- **Qdrant:** Vector database for semantic AI search.

04.
Governance, ethics & organization

- **AI Ethics Board:** Interdisciplinary committee for ethical issues surrounding AI use.
- **AI Governance:** Management of risks, guidelines, and responsibilities.
- **Bias (Algorithmic Bias):** Distortion in data or models.
- **Explainable AI (XAI):** Comprehensible and transparent AI systems.
- **Data Privacy:** Protection of personal data in the context of AI.
- **Ethical AI:** Value-based development and application of AI.
- **Security vulnerabilities:** Weaknesses in AI systems.
- **Shadow IT:** Uncontrolled use of AI by employees outside of IT governance.

05.
Organizational transformation

- **IT as HR for AI:** IT manages digital resources in the same way as the HR department.
- **Project-to-product:** Organizational design with a focus on long-term product responsibility.
- **Tech literacy:** Basic understanding of technological principles among the workforce.
- **Digital Enablement:** Empowering employees to use AI.
- **Prompt Engineering:** Technology for optimizing AI spending.
- **Communities of Practice:** Teams for interdisciplinary AI learning.
- **Psychological Safety:** A culture of error that promotes innovation in AI projects.

06.
Risks, quality & control

- **Hallucination:** Factually incorrect but linguistically plausible statements by LLMs.
- **Data poisoning:** Manipulation of training data for deception.
- **Adversarial examples:** Attacks through targeted interference.
- **Overfitting:** Over-adjustment of a model to training data.
- **Validation Set:** Test data for coordination and quality control.
- **Fine-tuning:** Readjustment of pre-trained models for specific tasks.
- **Transfer learning:** Application of existing models to new task areas.

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Olaf studied business administration at HTW Berlin and then earned his doctorate at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. His dissertation focused on the strategic and cultural development of companies, with a particular focus on demographic change, social change, and digitalization. At Eraneos, he contributes his expertise in the areas of organizational development, leadership, and AI transformation.

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