

State of AI at Work



Why AI alone can't
fix broken work



[illegible]

Executive summary: The illusion of progress

Seven in 10 knowledge workers now use AI weekly, a dramatic acceleration from 52% just one year ago. Yet as companies race to deploy the latest AI tools, the fundamentals of work are crumbling beneath their feet.

Over the last year, digital exhaustion climbed to 84% and unmanageable workloads reached 77%. Organizations aren't just failing to fix broken work—they're automating the chaos.

Our research of over 9,000 knowledge workers across the U.S., UK., Australia, Germany, and Japan reveals a divide that's reshaping competitive advantage in the AI era. Organizations fall into two camps:

AI Scalers:

These breakthrough organizations don't just use AI, they've rebuilt work around it. They've constructed the transformation engine that turns AI from a helpful tool into an organizational multiplier.

29%
of organizations

Nonscalers:

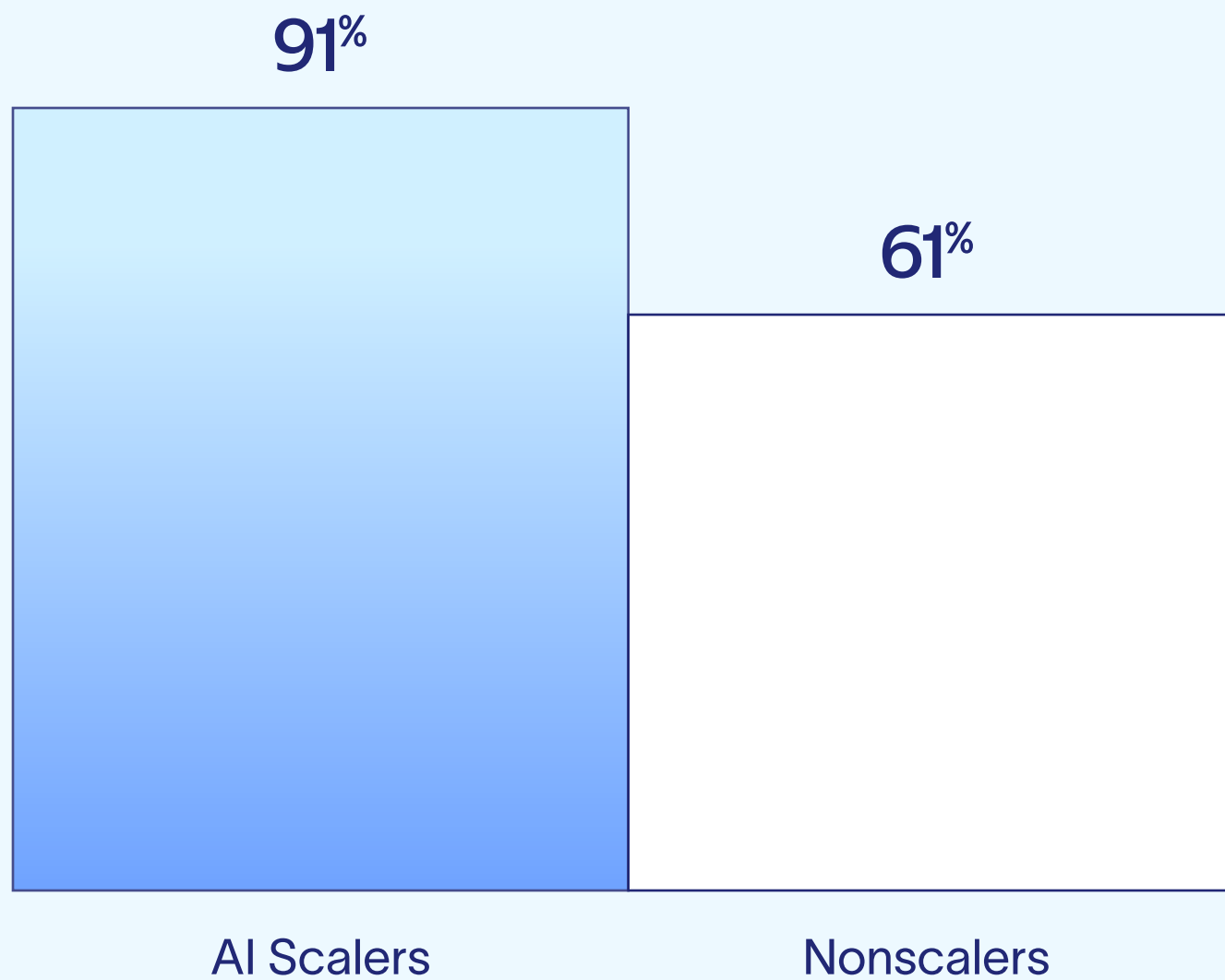
These organizations remain trapped in pilot purgatory, layering AI onto broken workflows without the infrastructure needed for real transformation.

71%
of organizations

The performance gap is telling. AI Scalers are significantly more likely to report productivity improvements using AI (91%) compared to Nonscalers (61%).

AI Scalers are 2.5x more likely to say AI helps them coordinate work more effectively across teams.

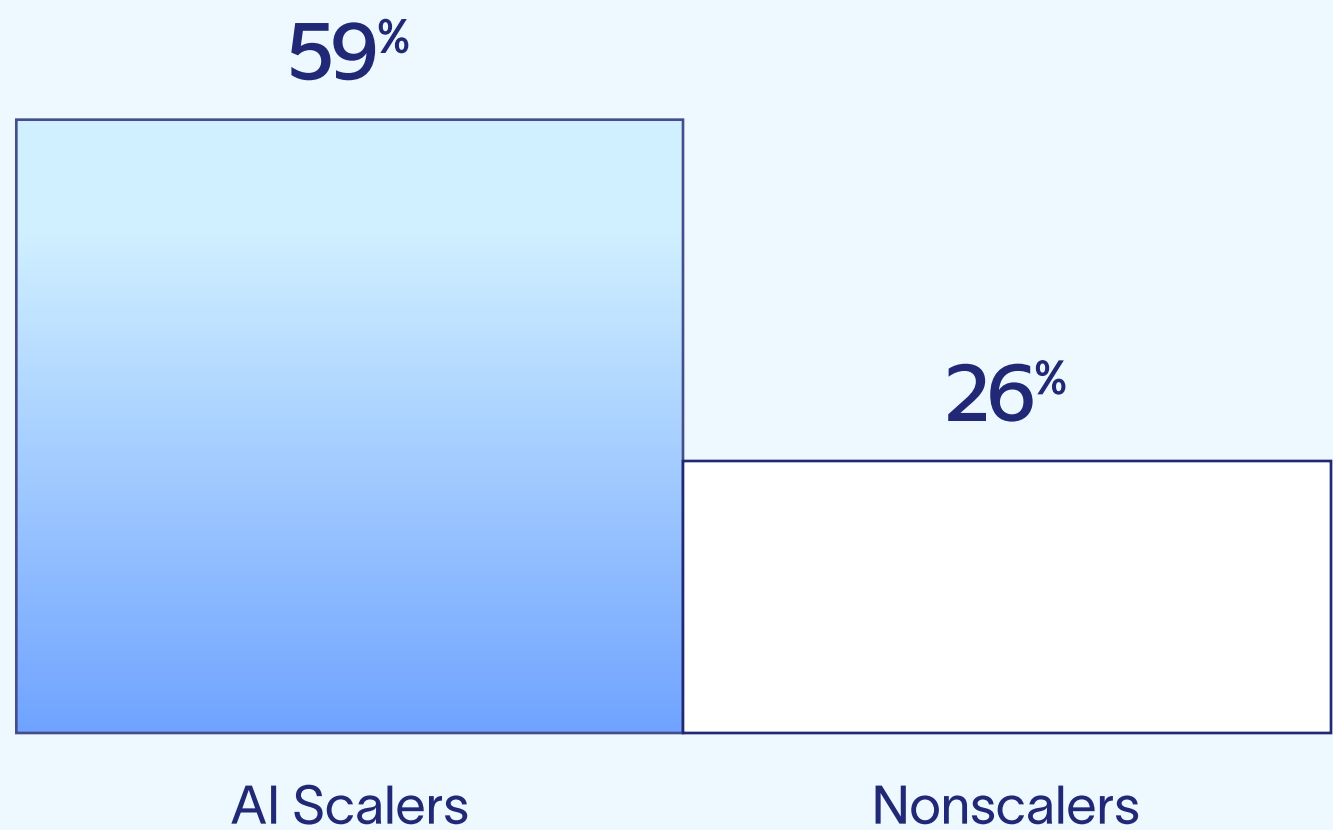
Workers who report productivity improvements from AI



Crucially, AI Scalers are building the organizational muscle vital for survival as AI agents gain traction.

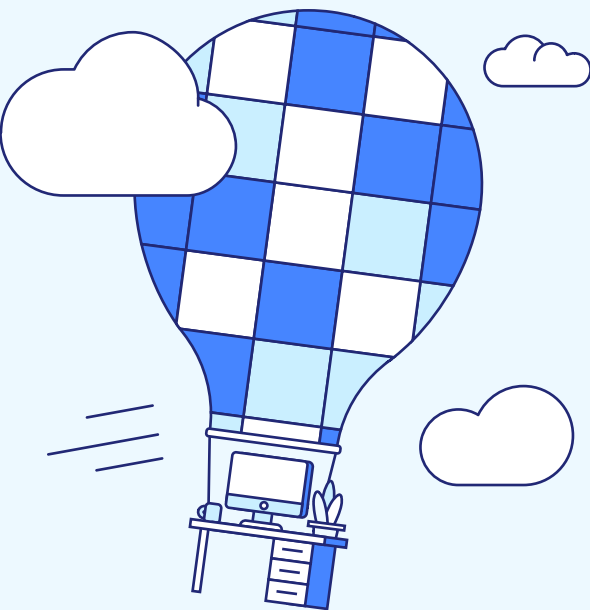
Workers at AI Scalers are 1.3x more likely to understand how to use AI agents in their work and show dramatically higher confidence in human-AI collaboration.

Workers with a strong understanding of how to use AI agents



This isn't speculation. AI agents that think, plan, and act independently are the next wave barreling towards us, and most organizations are woefully unprepared.

While others panic about AI replacing jobs, AI Scalers are preparing for AI as colleagues.



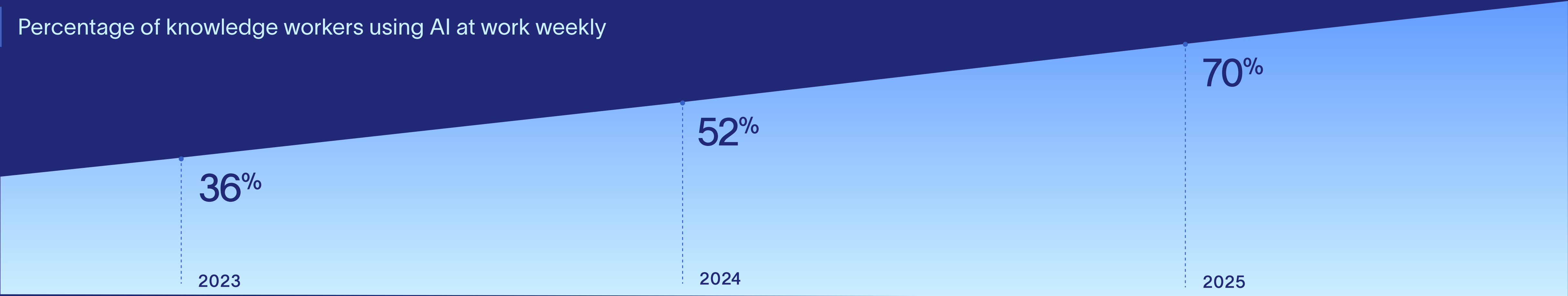
The winners have cracked the code. This report reveals the three systematic drivers that separate breakthrough results from perpetual pilot programs: **redesigning work to eliminate hidden productivity drains, empowering workers through structured transformation journeys, and building AI infrastructure that evolves with AI's explosive capabilities.**

While Nonscalers create traffic jams by dropping powerful technology into unprepared organizations, AI Scalers are building the highways, traffic laws, and driver education that let AI move at full speed.

Mastering these drivers won't just scale AI; it will build the unshakeable foundation needed to thrive when autonomous systems fundamentally reshape work.

AI adoption surges, but work transformation lags

AI adoption just hit a tipping point. Weekly usage exploded from 52% to 70% in just one year, sweeping every organizational level. Executives are in the lead at 88%, managers follow at 79%, and individual contributors reach 62% weekly AI usage. Workers now use AI for 6.7 different work activities on average, up from 4.8 in 2024, signaling a decisive shift from experimentation to systematic integration.



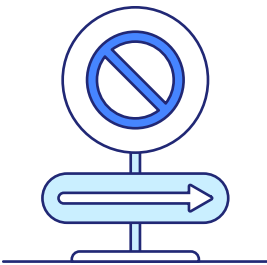
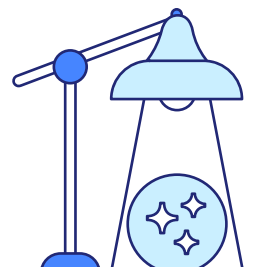
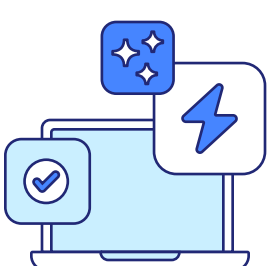
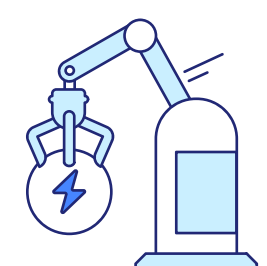
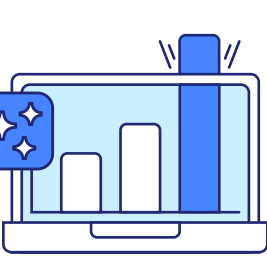
Despite individuals embracing AI tools to drive efficiency, workers are running on digital fumes and feeling more drained than ever.

- Digital exhaustion spiked from 75% to 84%
- Unmanageable workloads jumped from 74% to 77%
- Only 22% of workers say information moves quickly between teams
- Just 30% report effective cross-functional collaboration

Organizations are automating chaos instead of creating clarity.

They're pouring AI onto dysfunctional workflows without addressing the underlying structural rot that creates chaos in the first place.

This explains why only a few organizations break through. AI Scalars grew from 7% in 2024 to 29% in 2025, showing real progress, but 71% of organizations still remain stuck in the planning or pilot phases, unable to move beyond individual adoption.

| AI implementation maturity | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|------|------|
| <div></div> <div>Stage 1: AI Skepticism No current implementation plans or strategies</div> | 26% | 21% |
| <div></div> <div>Stage 2: AI Activation Some interest but no formal implementation plans or strategies</div> | 41% | 23% |
| <div></div> <div>Stage 3: AI Experimentation Formal strategic plans developed but not yet implemented</div> | 14% | 12% |
| <div></div> <div>Stage 4: AI Integration Pilot implementation in select work processes</div> | 12% | 15% |
| <div></div> <div>Stage 5: AI Scaling Organization-wide implementation with established measurement and optimization</div> | 7% | 29% |

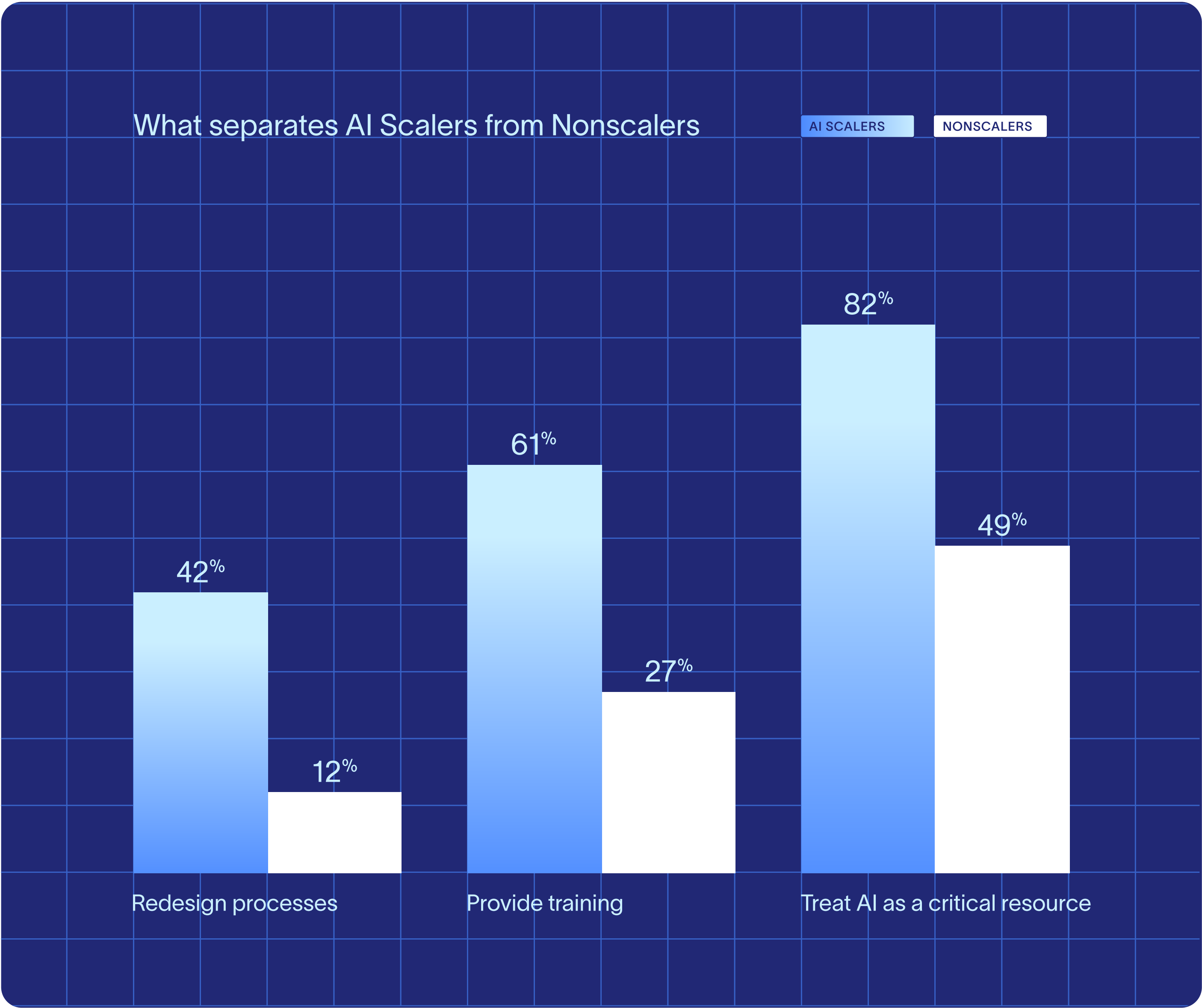
This scaling divide points to a fundamental reality: most organizations treat AI as a productivity band-aid to slap onto existing work. But the real opportunity lies in reimagining how work gets done entirely. The organizations breaking through aren't just using AI better; they're redesigning work around AI's capabilities.

What separates AI Scalers from everyone else?

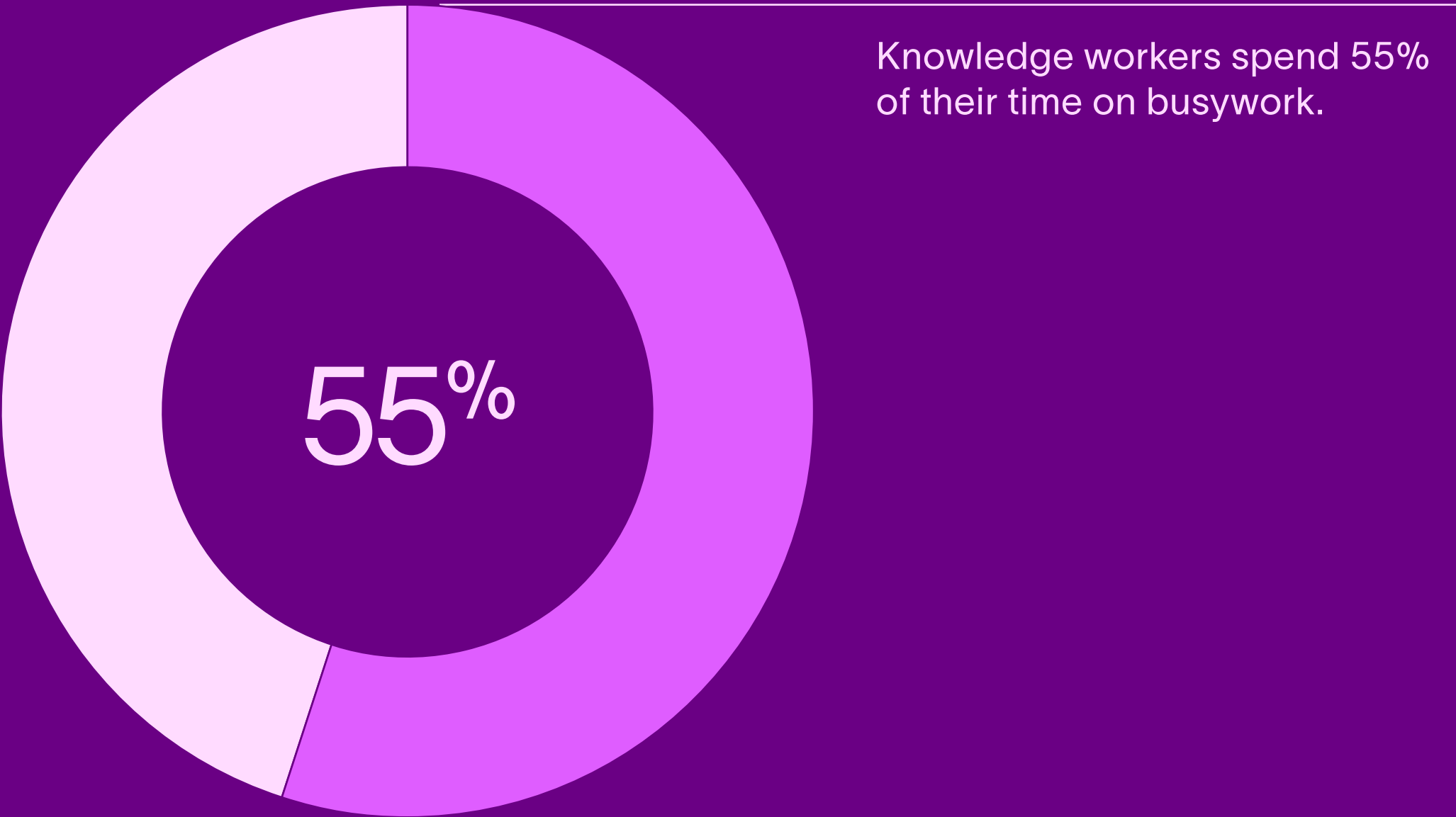
The answer isn't luck or resources—it's strategy. AI Scalers systematically invest in three core capabilities that Nonscalers either ignore or approach haphazardly.

- 1. **Redesign work (instead of just bolting AI onto it):** AI Scalers rethink workflows to eliminate "productivity taxes"—hidden drains that plague most businesses. They don't bolt AI onto broken processes; they rebuild processes for AI-human collaboration.
- 2. **Empower people systematically:** While Nonscalers hope for organic adoption, AI Scalers guide employees through structured transformation journeys and build AI literacy across all levels. They understand that technology transformation requires human transformation.
- 3. **Build sustainable infrastructure:** AI Scalers create measurement systems and frameworks that can evolve from managing AI tools to overseeing AI agents as workforce participants. They prepare for AI as colleagues, not just software.

These capabilities compound. Miss any one, and you'll stay stuck in pilot mode regardless of how much you invest in AI. Master all three, and you lay the groundwork for AI agents that will reshape the way we work.



From tools to transformation: Redesigning work for the AI era



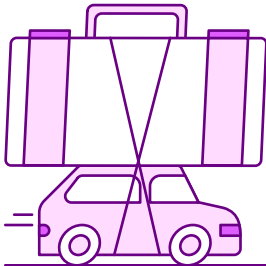

Most organizations have it backward. Instead of reimagining work with AI, they add AI to broken work processes and wonder why transformation stalls. Knowledge workers spend 55% of their time on busywork—chasing status updates, hunting for information, and managing the endless mechanics of work—rather than doing the skilled work they were hired for.

This isn't a technology problem; it's a work design crisis. When 84% of workers regularly encounter unclear task ownership and 92% face interruptions from non-urgent requests, AI becomes just another layer of complexity in an already chaotic system. You're not fixing work; you're digitizing dysfunction.


AI Scalers are 3.5x as likely to be fully redesigning work to integrate AI compared to Nonscalers.


AI Scalers understand what others miss: you need clean, clear workflows for AI to work its magic. This creates the infrastructure necessary for AI systems to access information, understand context, and collaborate effectively, which is impossible when processes remain fragmented and manual.

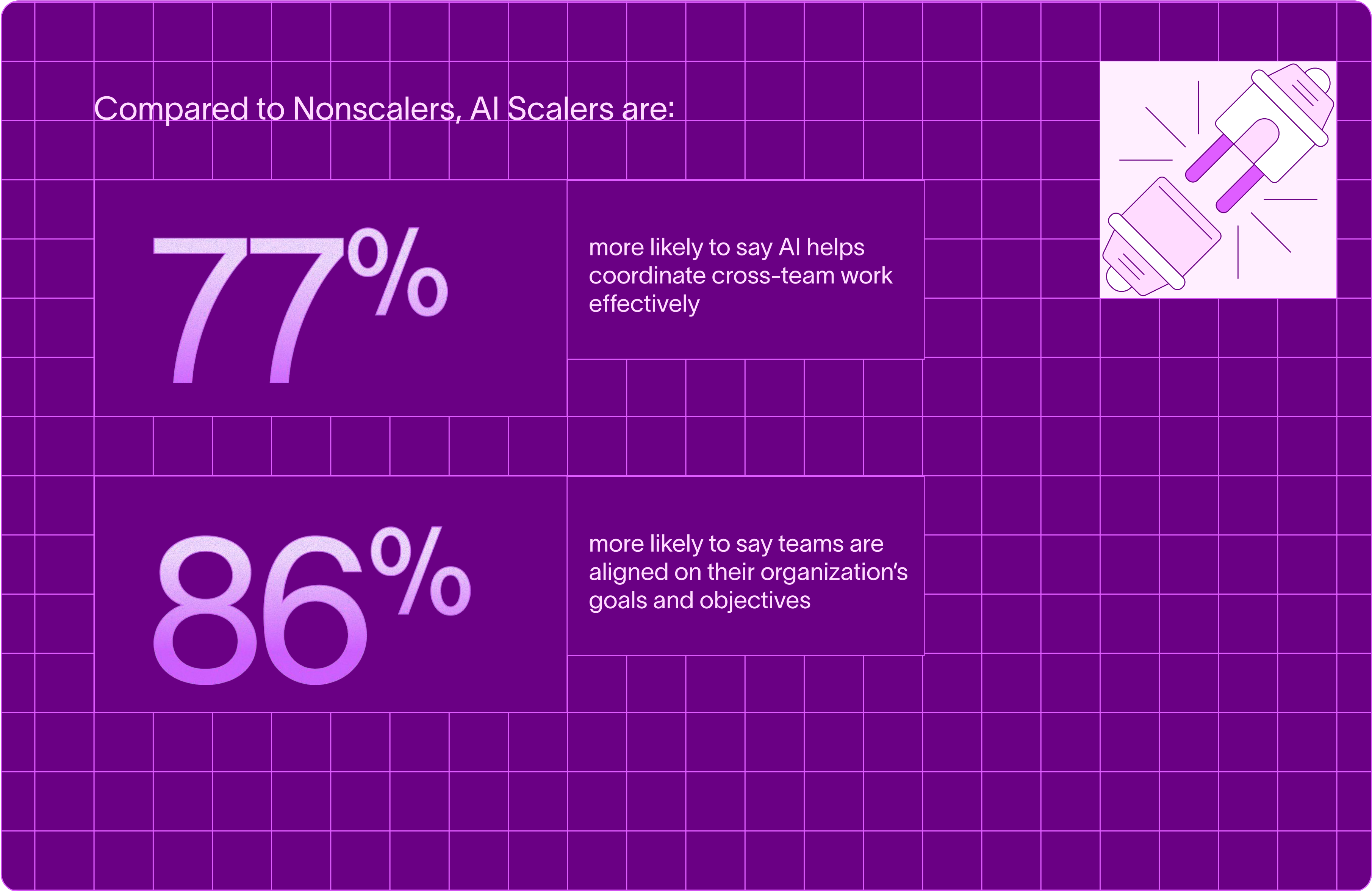
AI Scalers succeed because they identify and eliminate what we call "productivity taxes": the hidden costs that drain productivity and prevent effective AI integration. These taxes are bleeding organizations dry, but most leaders don't realize the cost they're paying.

| The four productivity taxes organizations face | |
|--|--|
| <div></div> <div>Connectivity Tax</div> | The cost of disconnection: when people, tools, and teams work in silos. It leads to misalignment, duplicated work, and too much time spent coordinating work. It multiplies as organizations grow, creating exponential coordination overhead. |
| <div></div> <div>Velocity Tax</div> | The drag of bottlenecks, like manual handoffs, slow approvals, and outdated tech that stall progress. Delays compound, turning quick decisions into week-long processes. |
| <div></div> <div>Resilience Tax</div> | The brittleness of rigid systems and unclear priorities that leave teams unable to respond to change. Organizations lack the flexibility to adapt, breaking under pressure instead of bending with challenges. |
| <div></div> <div>Capacity Tax</div> | The toll of overload. Too many meetings, tools, and distractions that prevent employees from doing their best, most important work. Talent gets wasted on administrative tasks instead of impact. |


Solving the Connectivity Tax with AI


 **The problem:** Only 30% of workers say their teams collaborate effectively across functions. Teams work in silos, leading to misalignment, duplicated work, and excessive time spent coordinating work. This isn't just inefficiency, it's organizational blindness that kills innovation and wastes talent on redundant efforts.

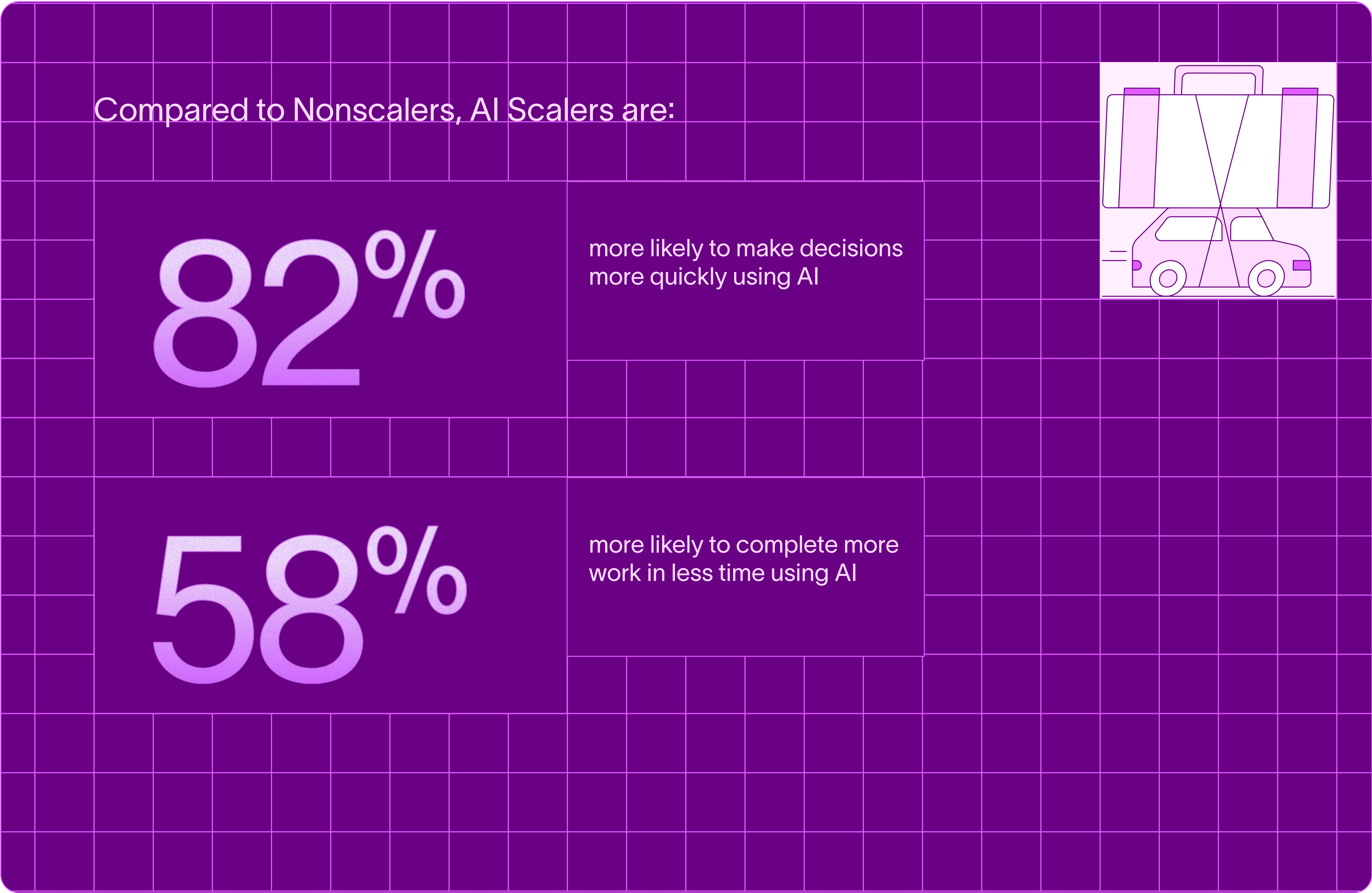
 **How AI Scalers solve it:** AI Scalers don't bolt AI onto fragmented workflows. Instead, they build systems that coordinate work, then use AI to manage flow and align people, tools, and priorities in real-time.




Solving the Velocity Tax with AI


 **The problem:**
Only 22% of workers say information and ideas move quickly between teams. Manual handoffs, slow approvals, and outdated technology create bottlenecks at every step. In fast-moving markets, this velocity gap becomes a competitive death sentence as agile competitors outmaneuver bureaucratic rivals.

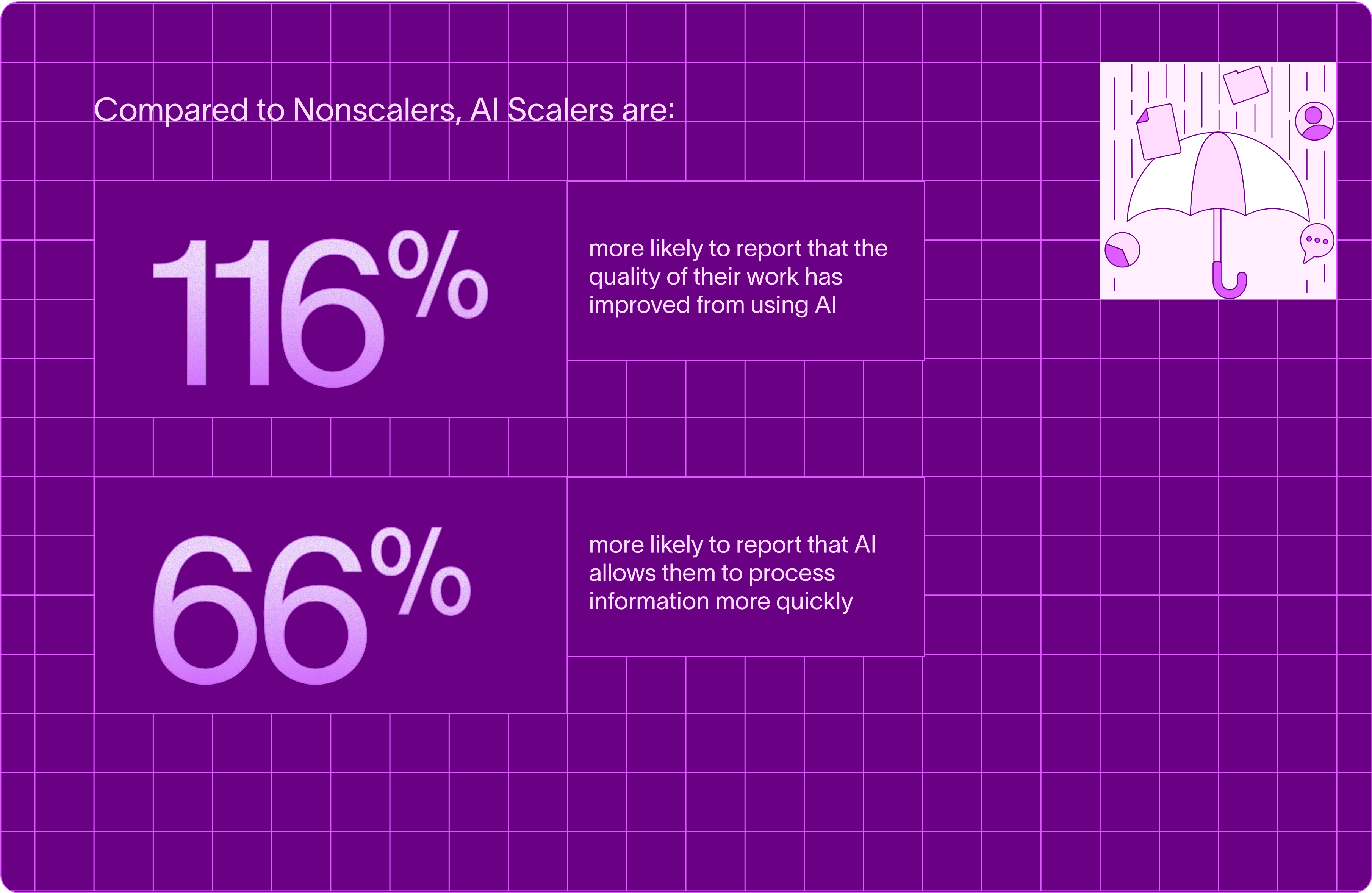
 **How AI Scalers solve it:**
AI Scalers don't automate broken workflows. Instead, they redesign workflows to eliminate bottlenecks and delays, then use AI to automate approvals, flag blockers, and speed up decisions.




Solving the Resilience Tax with AI


 **The problem:** Only 29% of workers feel confident in their organization's ability to adapt to unexpected challenges. Rigid systems and unclear priorities leave teams unable to respond effectively to change. When disruption hits—and it always does—inflexible organizations break down while adaptive competitors thrive.

 **How AI Scalers solve it:** AI Scalers don't embed AI in isolated pockets. Instead, they integrate AI into core systems to spot risks early, adjust plans dynamically, and help teams adapt in real-time.



Solving the Capacity Tax with AI

 **The problem:**
77% of workers have experienced unmanageable workloads in the past six months. The wrong work gets prioritized while valuable work gets delayed. This systematic misallocation of human potential hurts productivity, drives away top talent, and stifles the strategic thinking organizations need most.

 **How AI Scalers solve it:**
AI Scalers don't use AI to squeeze more from maxed-out teams. Instead, they use AI to reduce busywork and redirect human capacity to high-impact efforts like strategy, creativity, and decision-making.

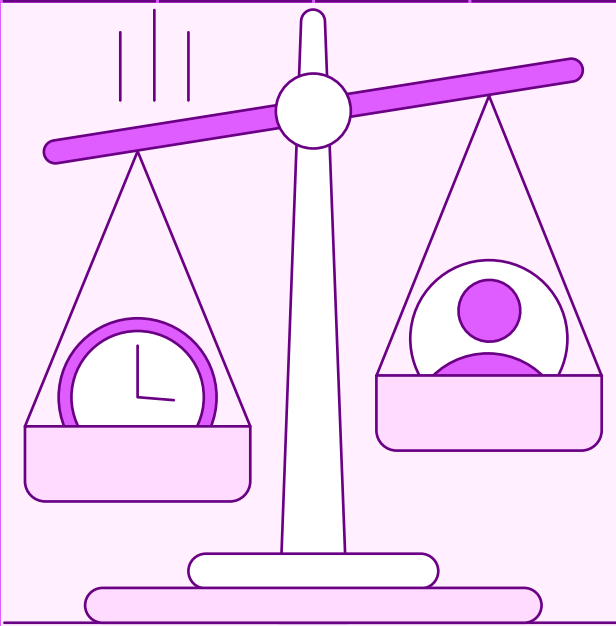
Compared to Nonscalers, AI Scalers are:

120%

more likely to have more time for strategic work as a result of using AI

53%

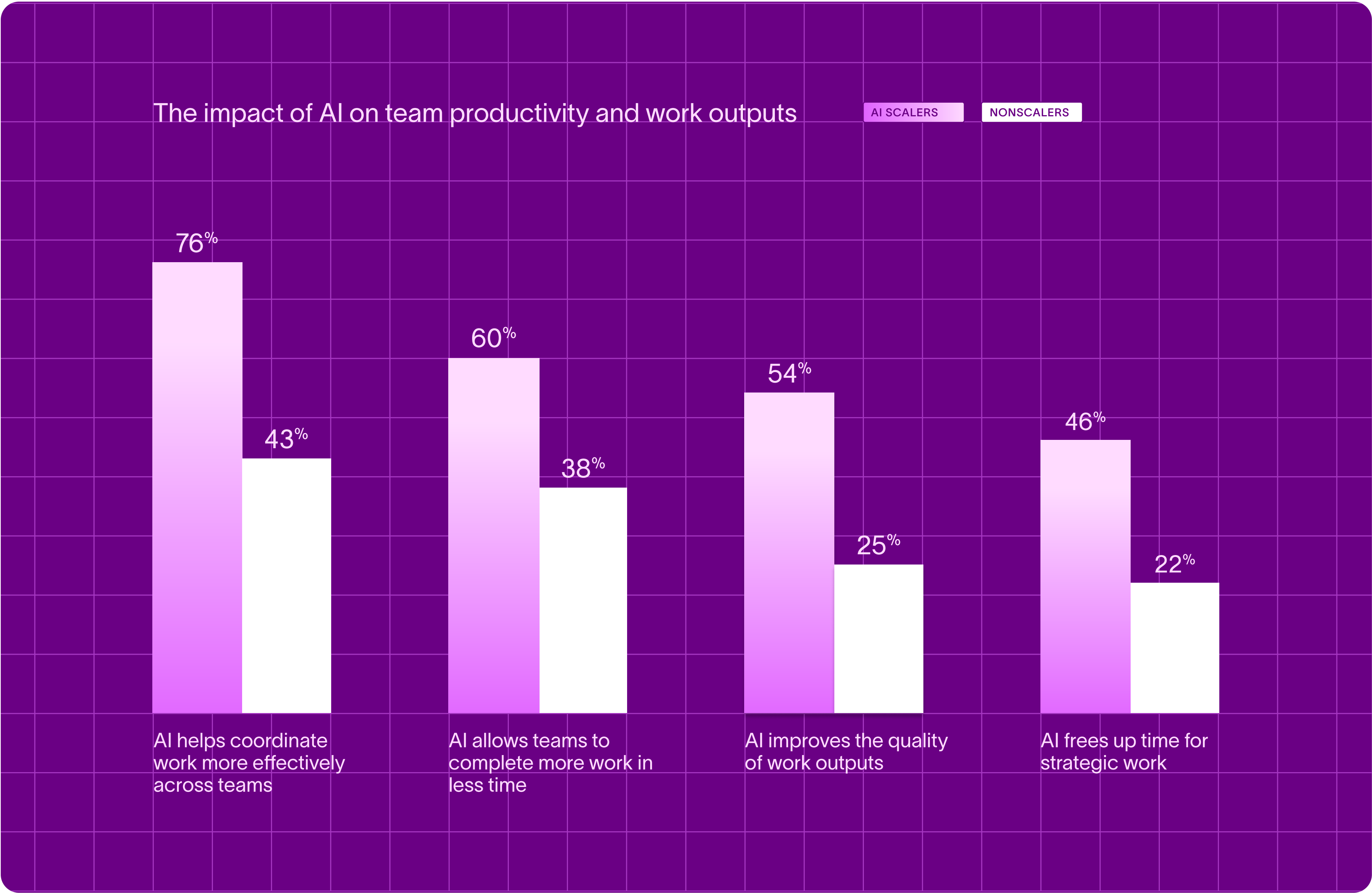
more likely to say that AI reduces the time they spend looking for information they need to do their job



When you eliminate the productivity drains that plague most organizations, AI becomes a multiplier instead of just another tool

The results speak for themselves. When AI Scalers eliminate these productivity taxes, they create organizational multipliers that compound across every team and function. AI transforms from just another tool into the connective tissue that makes everything work better.

AI Scalers create clear workflows that make both today's AI tools and tomorrow's autonomous systems actually work.



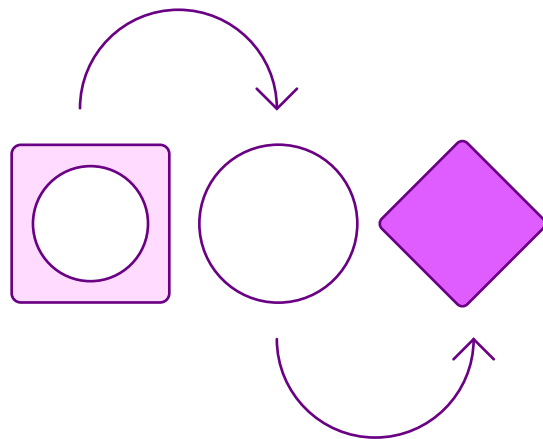
Where to start: The coordination-first approach to workflow redesign

Redesigning work with AI feels overwhelming because every process seems like a candidate for change. When faced with endless possibilities, most organizations either freeze or scatter their efforts across too many initiatives.

Start with personal productivity processes

Nearly one-third of knowledge workers (32%) begin by redesigning how they organize their own daily work with AI. This represents the natural entry point as workers gravitate toward tools that streamline their personal workload because the benefits are immediate and the risks are low.

While personal productivity creates individual wins, it doesn't transform organizational performance. Think of this as the foundation, not the destination.



Scale through coordination workflows

This is where the real transformation happens. The largest opportunities exist in workflows that connect teams and align efforts across the organization:

These coordination workflows form the connective tissue of organizational productivity. When they're optimized with AI, the benefits multiply across every team.

AI Scalers understand this multiplier effect: they're 133% more likely to redesign project management workflows and 118% more likely to redesign goal management processes compared to other organizations.

Workers redesigning workflows with AI

29% Project management workflows

28% Progress monitoring workflows

23% Goal management workflows

Advance to strategic workflows

The highest-impact opportunities remain largely untapped. These workflows directly influence decision-making, but they require the most commitment to change.

AI Scalers don't avoid the hard problems: they're 173% more likely to transform executive reporting, and 147% more likely to tackle resource management and planning with AI.

While most organizations make individual work more efficient, AI Scalers redesign the workflows that make organizations more intelligent. They target processes that coordinate teams, align resources, and inform leadership decisions.

Workers redesigning workflows with AI

22% Strategic planning

22% Resource management & planning

16% Executive reporting

Building the foundation for autonomous coordination

Don't fall into the personal productivity trap. Instead, map your organization's coordination and decision-making workflows. Then, pinpoint where AI could remove bottlenecks, improve decisions, or accelerate handoffs.

- **Which broken workflows create productivity taxes across multiple teams?**

These are your highest-impact targets. When project status updates require manual compilation across six different systems, that's inefficient and organizationally expensive.

- **Where do decisions get delayed because information moves too slowly?**

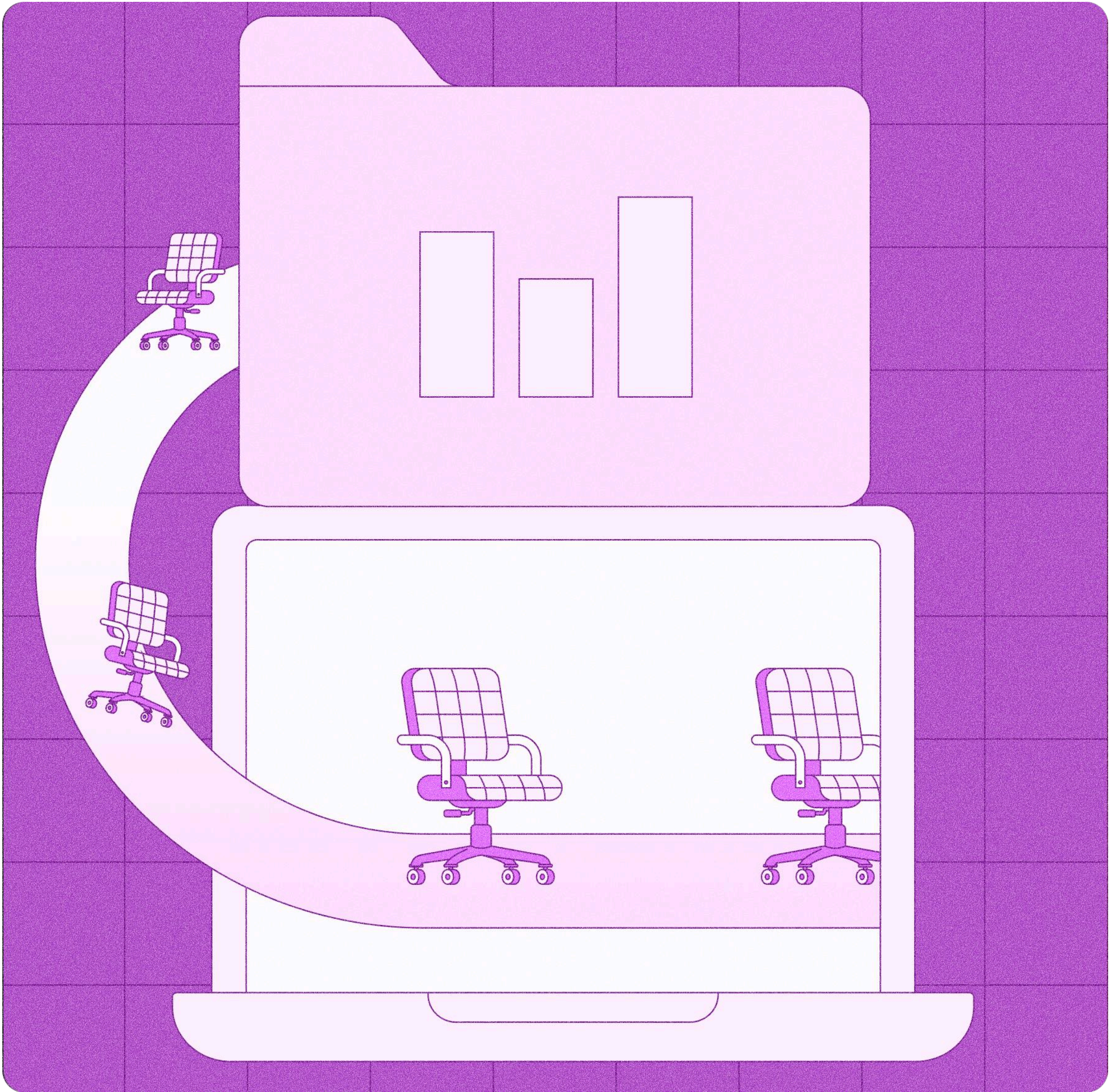
If executive reports take two weeks to prepare, leaders are steering with stale data. If strategic planning drags on for months, it becomes an autopsy, not a forecast.

- **What coordination failures create the most widespread frustration?**

Resource conflicts, unclear project priorities, and misaligned goals slow down individual contributors and create organizational friction that multiplies the productivity taxes across every team.

Start with the workflows that, when redesigned, reduce productivity taxes across the entire organization. This coordination-first approach creates the clean, connected infrastructure that AI agents will need to operate effectively.

AI agents will amplify the organizational reality they encounter. In a messy, fragmented environment, they'll amplify chaos. In a streamlined, well-connected one, they'll amplify success.



The human factor: Cultivating a culture of AI empowerment

Even the most elegantly redesigned workflows fail without buy-in. Technology transformation is ultimately human transformation, and that requires understanding how different people approach change. While executives debate enterprise AI strategies and IT departments roll out new tools, the real battle for competitive advantage is won or lost in the daily decisions workers make to embrace, resist, or ignore AI.

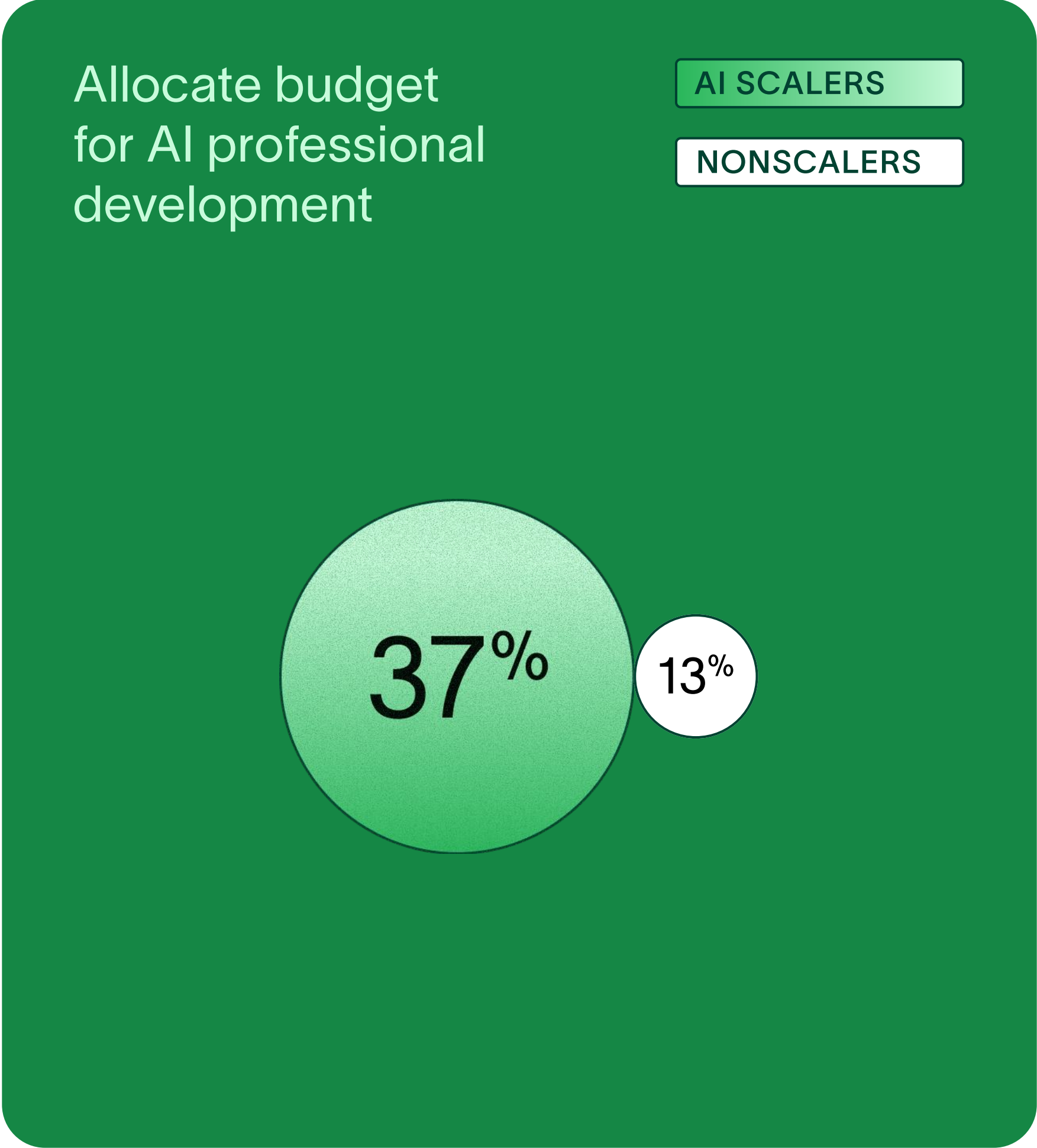
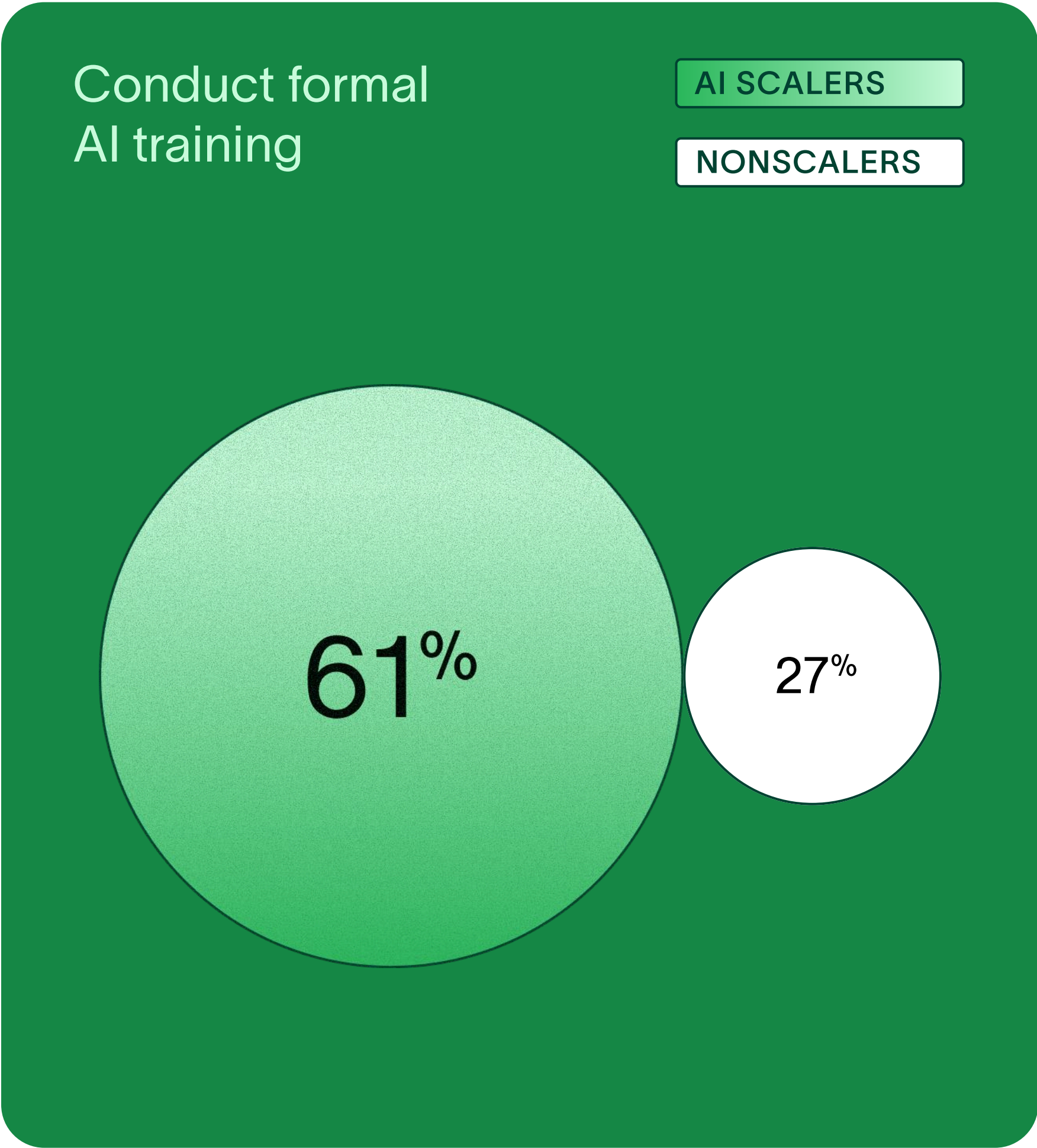
The technology gap isn't the problem. The adoption gap is. Even with identical AI solutions, results vary widely. Some workers save 13 hours a week and reinvent how they work, while others recover less than 2 hours and resist change. The difference isn't the hammer—it's how people swing it.

AI Scalers are 2.3x as likely to provide formal AI training to their employees compared to Nonscalers.

While Nonscalers hope for organic adoption, AI Scalers architect transformation deliberately. They don't cross their fingers and hope for the best. AI Scalers build systematic learning infrastructure.

As a result, 78% of their employees have a strong grasp of how they can use AI at work compared to only 42% of workers at Nonscalers.

This goes beyond training programs. AI transformation follows predictable human patterns. Scaling it requires understanding those patterns and designing systems to accelerate the journey.



Even in organizations successfully scaling AI, employees are using and approaching the technology in vastly different ways. Our research identifies four distinct personas that make or break AI transformation.

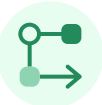
Understanding these personas—how they think, what motivates them, and what holds them back—is essential for scaling AI across any organization.

| The four personas that determine AI success | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| AI persona | % of knowledge workers | % using AI weekly | Hours saved per week using AI | Role in AI adoption |
| Skeptics | 13% | 11% | 1.9 hrs | Resisting and disengaged |
| Traditionalists | 26% | 49% | 5.1 hrs | Cautiously experimenting |
| Integrators | 39% | 91% | 9.4 hrs | Embedding AI into workflows |
| Transformers | 22% | 99% | 13.1 hrs | Redesigning work processes to maximize AI's value |

The Skeptics

"This AI thing will blow over."

Skeptics actively resist AI. They view AI transformation as a top-down mandate imposed by leaders out of touch with frontline realities. When they do experiment with AI, a single failure confirms their suspicions and reinforces their disengagement.



Key characteristics and implications:

Heavily concentrated among frontline workers: 19% of individual contributors compared to 13% of all knowledge workers

Minimally engaged: Only 11% use AI weekly, and 69% never use it at all

Limited productivity gains: Only 12% report improved productivity from AI, saving just 1.9 hours per week



What holds them back:

Extremely resistant to failure: 15% stop using AI after their first unsuccessful attempt (highest of all personas)

Don't see career relevance: Only 8% believe job security depends on adapting to AI (lowest of all personas)

Learning-averse: Only 9% have set specific AI learning objectives

Deeply skeptical: 78% are skeptical about using AI in the workplace

Reluctant to delegate: Would only be comfortable delegating 12% of their work to AI agents

Skeptics represent concentrated resistance that can derail transformation efforts. Rather than forcing adoption, successful organizations acknowledge their concerns, use them as quality control, and gradually build trust through peer demonstrations rather than top-down mandates.

The Traditionalists

"I'll use AI—just don't ask me to change."

Traditionalists represent pragmatic opportunism. They embrace AI for safe, well-defined tasks like email drafting and content summarization, but resist changes requiring workflow modification or new skill development.



Key characteristics and implications:

- Concentrated at lower organizational levels:** 30% of individual contributors and 24% of managers compared to 26% of all knowledge workers
- Regular but limited usage:** 49% use AI weekly, focusing on familiar tasks
- Moderate productivity gains:** 50% report productivity improvements, saving 5.1 hours per week
- Selectively adopting:** Mostly use AI for basic tasks like drafting emails (33%) and summarizing information (33%)
- Risk-averse when experimenting:** 42% try 2–3 different prompts before giving up



What holds them back:

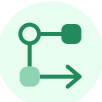
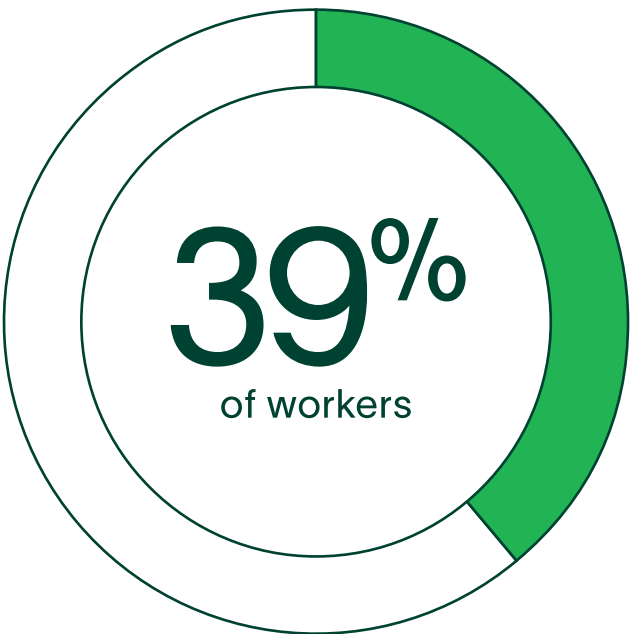
- Resistant to workflow changes:** Traditionalists want AI to make existing work easier, rather than change how work gets done
- Overwhelmed by learning pace:** 28% feel overwhelmed by the speed at which they need to learn AI
- Moderately enthusiastic:** Only 41% are enthusiastic about using AI in the workplace
- Cautiously delegating:** Would be comfortable delegating 20% of their work to AI agents

Traditionalists achieve meaningful but limited gains because they resist the workflow changes necessary for enterprise-wide transformation. Success requires meeting them where they are and embedding AI into familiar processes, while gradually expanding their comfort zone through structured, low-risk exposure to new capabilities.

The Integrators

"AI's not a hack—it's how I work now."

Integrators move beyond tool-level thinking to redesign their personal workflows around AI capabilities. They don't just use AI; they create new patterns of human-AI collaboration.



Key characteristics and implications:

- Well-represented among managers and executives:** 44% of managers and 45% of executives compared to 39% of all knowledge workers
- Highly engaged:** 91% use AI at least weekly
- Strong productivity gains:** 91% report productivity improvements, saving 9.4 hours per week
- Diverse in application:** Move beyond mainly using AI to summarize information (45%) and apply it to data analysis (40%), ideation (37%), and project planning (31%)



What enables them:

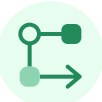
- Empowered to experiment:** 76% feel empowered to experiment with AI at work
- Learning-oriented:** 49% have set specific AI skill development plans
- Highly enthusiastic:** 75% are enthusiastic about using AI in the workplace
- Comfortable with delegation:** Comfortable delegating nearly a third (31%) of their work to AI agents

Integrators represent the sweet spot of AI adoption. They achieve substantial productivity gains through systematic workflow optimization, which creates new capabilities rather than just enabling faster execution. Their concentration in management roles makes them powerful catalysts for broader organizational transformation, but only if organizations give them the platform and resources to scale their innovations.

The Transformers

"We're not tweaking work —we're redesigning it."

Transformers don't just integrate AI into workflows; they challenge whether current workflows make sense in an AI-powered world. They view AI transformation as an opportunity to solve systemic organizational problems.



Key characteristics and implications:

- Heavily concentrated among executives:** 31% of executives compared to 22% of all knowledge workers
- Universally engaged:** 99% use AI at least weekly
- Extraordinary productivity gains:** 97% report productivity improvements, saving 13.1 hours per week
- Advanced usage:** Lead in data analysis (58%), technical writing (47%), project planning (46%), and email generation (53%)



What enables them:

- Collaboratively minded:** 86% view AI as a collaborative partner rather than just a tool
- Extremely enthusiastic:** 91% are enthusiastic about workplace AI (highest of all personas)
- Learning-committed:** 74% have set specific professional development goals related to AI skills
- Boldly delegating:** Would be comfortable delegating 44% of their work to AI agents

Transformers achieve extraordinary results because they create better AI systems that benefit entire organizations. The key is leveraging their vision while ensuring the organization can absorb and sustain their innovations through structured change management.

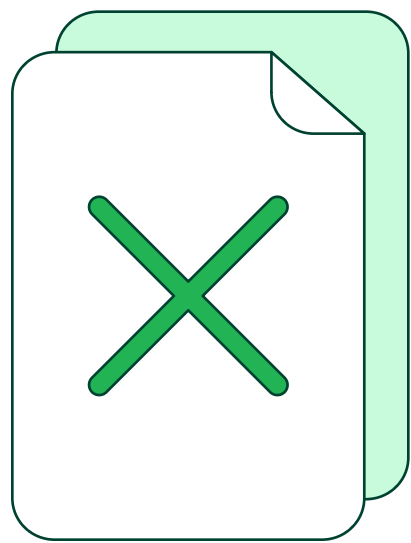
What keeps workers trapped as Skeptics or Traditionalists?

Three barriers hold them back and create a perfect storm: workers lack time, guidance, and confidence—the exact resources needed to progress along the AI adoption spectrum.



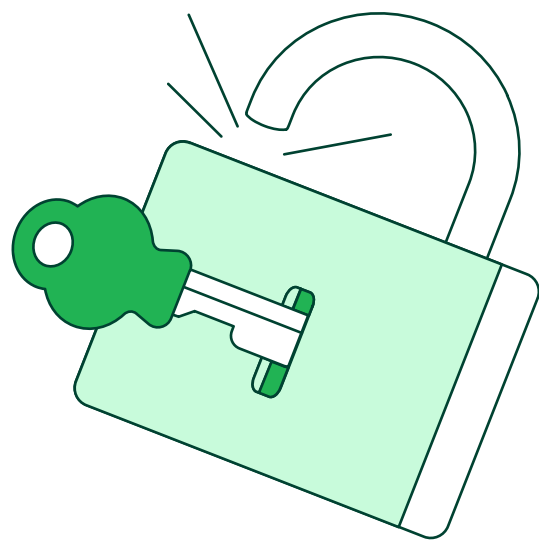
Time pressure blocks experimentation

Workers at Nonscalers are 73% more likely to say they don't have enough time to experiment with AI, creating a catch-22 where they need AI skills to work efficiently but lack the time to develop them.



Guidance gaps cause stagnation

Nonscalers' workers are 60% more likely to worry that they won't know how to evaluate AI results. Without guidance, workers can't tell good AI outputs from bad ones, so they avoid using AI altogether.



Risk-taking behavior leads to security gaps

Workers at Nonscalers are 25% more likely to use unauthorized AI tools to get work done, creating shadow IT problems as employees seek workarounds when proper AI resources aren't provided.

You don't need everyone to be a Transformer

It's tempting to think the perfect AI organization is full of Transformers, but that's not necessarily the case.

Too many cooks spoil the broth, even when they're brilliant cooks. Our research shows that loading up on too many Transformers can be just as risky as being overrun by Skeptics. With too many Transformers, change happens too fast; tools roll out faster than people can be trained or systems can keep up. Swing too far the other way, and a team full of Skeptics gets stuck in an endless loop of AI pilots and experimentation: testing, hesitating, and never scaling.

The most effective AI organizations are the ones with the right mix of personas.

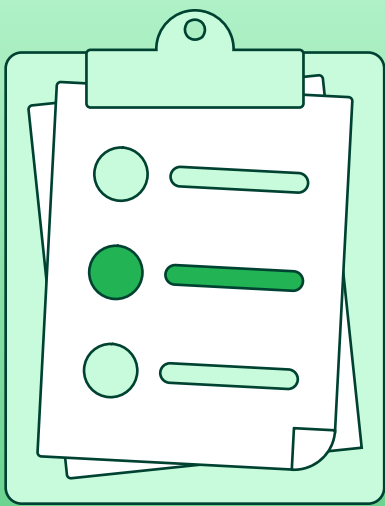
This isn't about forcing everyone to become Transformers. It's about creating an ecosystem where each persona contributes to sustainable AI adoption. Skeptics provide quality control, Traditionalists ensure stability, Integrators scale innovations, and Transformers push boundaries.

The optimal persona composition for AI scaling

| AI persona | Ideal share | What they contribute |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Transformers | 38% | Redesign work from the ground up. Push boundaries, see what's possible. |
| Integrators | 25% | Make AI operational. Turn experiments into systems. Connect vision to reality. |
| Traditionalists | 20% | Keep the wheels turning. Adopt cautiously. Ask, "Does this actually work?" |
| Skeptics | 17% | Slow things down when necessary. Ask the uncomfortable questions. Keep the hype in check. |

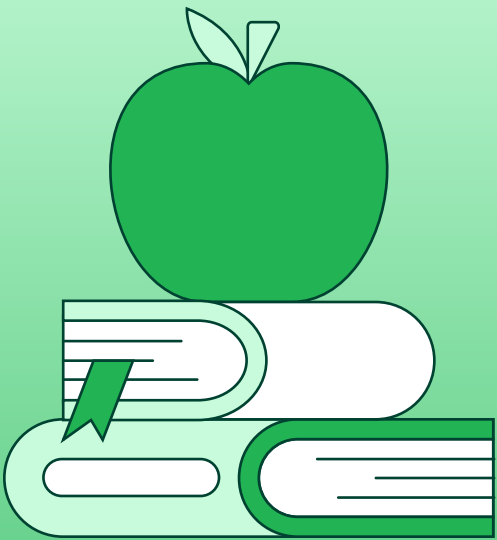
How AI Scalers systematically develop AI capabilities

AI Scalers don't leave transformation to chance. They create systematic approaches that move people along the adoption spectrum.



Make skills development a priority

Workers at AI Scalers are 103% more likely to have set specific AI learning goals, turning abstract AI enthusiasm into concrete skill-building plans with dedicated budgets and clear development pathways.



Build systematic learning infrastructure

AI Scalers are 126% more likely to conduct formal AI training, creating structured programs that move employees from basic AI awareness to advanced capability with measurable outcomes.



Create space to experiment

Workers at AI Scalers are 52% more likely to feel empowered to try AI at work, with clear frameworks for safe experimentation that remove the fear of "breaking" something while exploring AI capabilities.

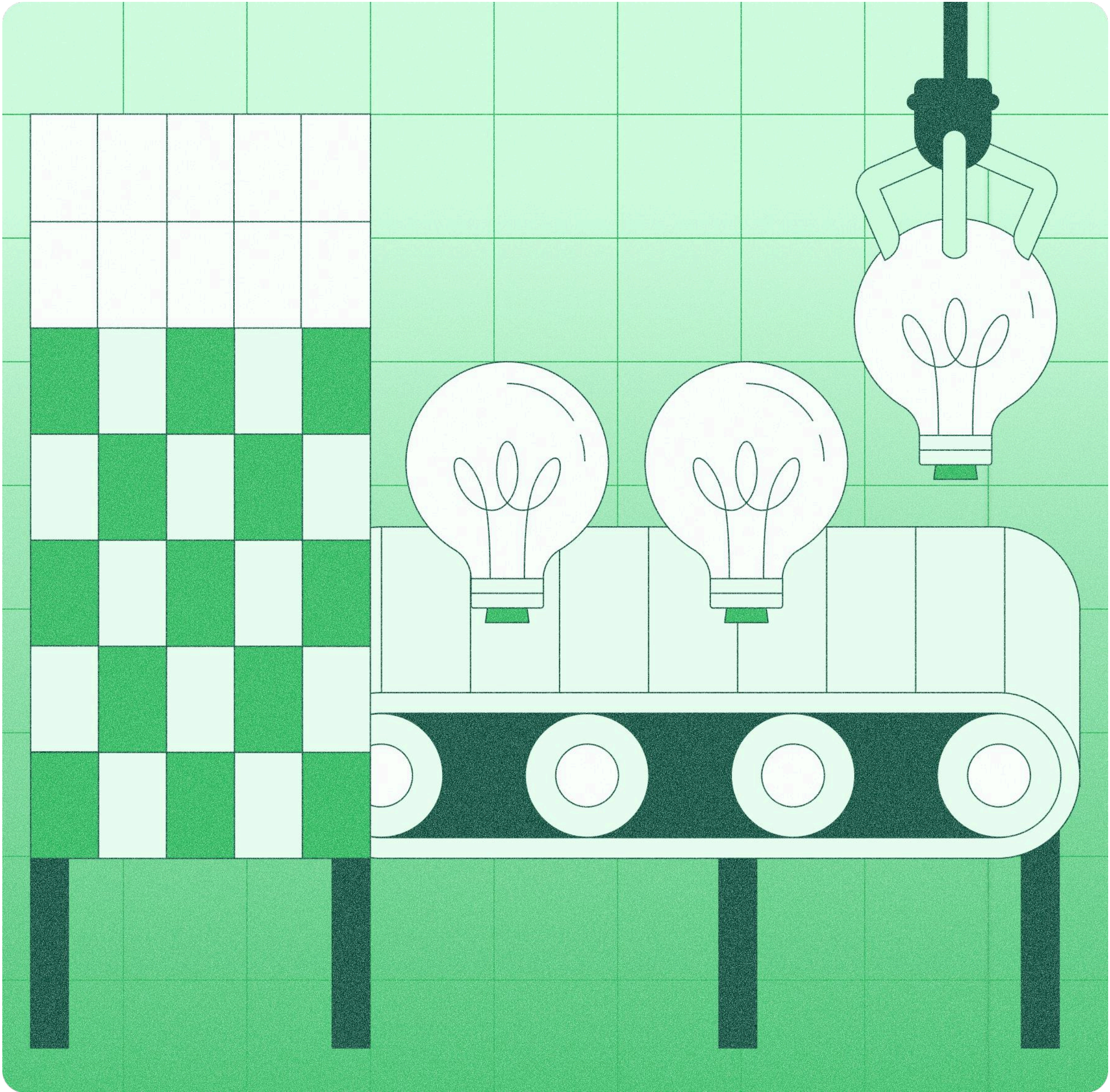
How systematic empowerment drives AI agent readiness

The personas that AI Scalers foster today become the foundation for tomorrow's autonomous workplace. As AI capabilities advance toward systems that plan and execute independently, each persona requires different preparation:

- **Transformers become agent orchestrators**
Already viewing AI as collaborative partners, they're positioned to design and manage complex autonomous AI systems.
- **Integrators become agent collaborators**
Their systematic approach to embedding AI into workflows translates directly to coordinating with autonomous AI systems.
- **Traditionalists need structured pathways**
Clear frameworks and gradual introduction help them adapt to increasingly autonomous AI capabilities.
- **Skeptics require trust-building**
Transparent governance and demonstrated value create the confidence needed for autonomous AI acceptance.

By building cultures where all personas can contribute to AI transformation, AI Scalers prepare for the trust, communication, and coordination requirements that autonomous AI systems will demand.

Understanding these personas reveals why AI transformation can't be solved through training alone. Each group needs different support structures, and without the organizational engine to guide them, even Transformers can't scale their innovations across the organization. This is where governance becomes critical, not as bureaucratic oversight, but as the enabling infrastructure that turns individual AI wins into organizational transformation.



Beyond governance: Building the guardrails for AI success

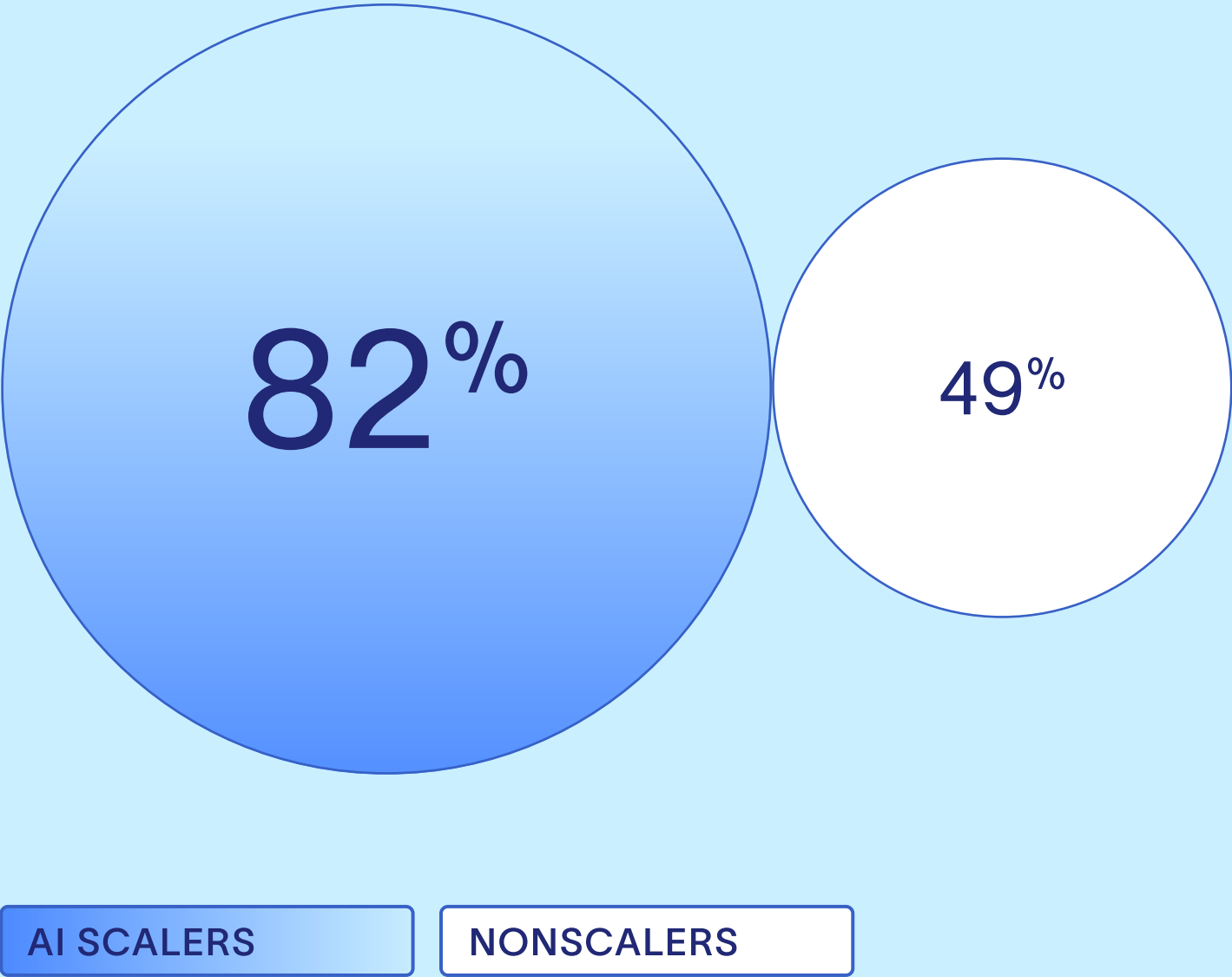
Here's a stat that should terrify every executive: **46% of workers say colleagues hide the fact that AI helped get their work done.** Without proper guardrails, AI adoption goes underground like water finding cracks in a foundation.

Organizations are pouring billions into AI tools and training but neglecting the infrastructure that turns scattered experiments into sustained advantage. The result: adoption stays hidden, results vary wildly, and no one knows what's actually working.

AI Scalers understand that transformation requires more than tools; it demands systematic support structures that guide without constraining. They build mechanisms that optimize today's performance while preparing for tomorrow's agentic capabilities.

The 3 Ps of AI infrastructure: Policy, psychological safety, and performance

Treat AI solutions like a
business-critical resource



Policy:
Clear frameworks that provide guardrails without bureaucracy, defining who does what, when AI is appropriate, and how quality gets maintained.



Psychological safety:
Cultural foundations that make AI usage transparent rather than hidden, enabling organizational learning and adaptation.



Performance measurement:
Comprehensive tracking systems that prove business value and drive continuous improvement.

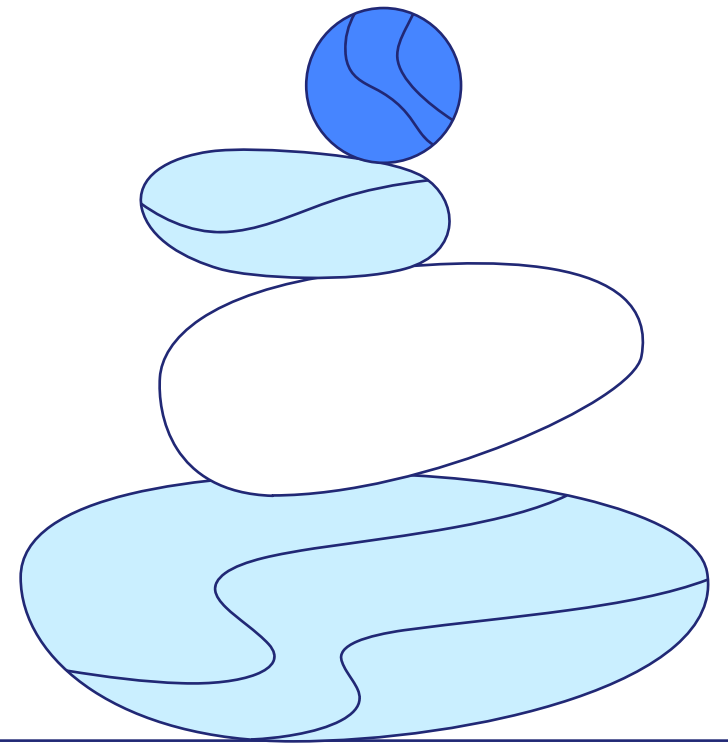
Policy: Frameworks that guide without constraining

The problem:

Most organizations operate in a governance vacuum.

Only 31% of employees say their organization has an AI usage policy in place, and just 19% report clear agreements on which tasks humans versus AI should handle.

Without basic frameworks, teams make up rules as they go.



How AI Scalars solve it:

They establish comprehensive governance that provides clarity without bureaucracy.

Clear usage guidelines:

AI Scalars are 122% more likely to have AI usage policies in place compared to Nonscalars, defining acceptable use, quality standards, and decision rights.

Quality standards that match expectations:

AI Scalars set clear performance bars, with 76% believing AI work outputs should meet the same standards as human work versus 60% of Nonscalars.

Defined human-AI boundaries:

AI Scalars are 154% more likely to provide clear agreements about human-AI task ownership, documenting explicit handoffs between human and AI responsibilities.

Systematic oversight mechanisms:

79%

have teams actively providing feedback to improve AI performance vs. 40% of Nonscalars

73%

systematically track AI solution performance across teams vs. 35%

70%

have clear processes for addressing underperforming AI solutions vs. 32%

Even AI Scalers face roadblocks that crush momentum. 45% report automated processes still require manual fixes, and 27% say AI generates output faster than teams can properly review it. The difference is they address these issues systematically rather than reactively.

What leaders can do



Establish the framework:

Create AI usage policies that define acceptable use, quality standards, and decision rights. Don't leave teams guessing about boundaries.



Define the handoffs:

Document explicit agreements about which tasks humans handle, which AI handles, and which require collaboration.



Build feedback loops:

Establish regular processes for teams to discuss AI performance, treating it like any other business-critical system.



Assign accountability:

Designate specific people responsible for monitoring and optimizing AI solution performance.

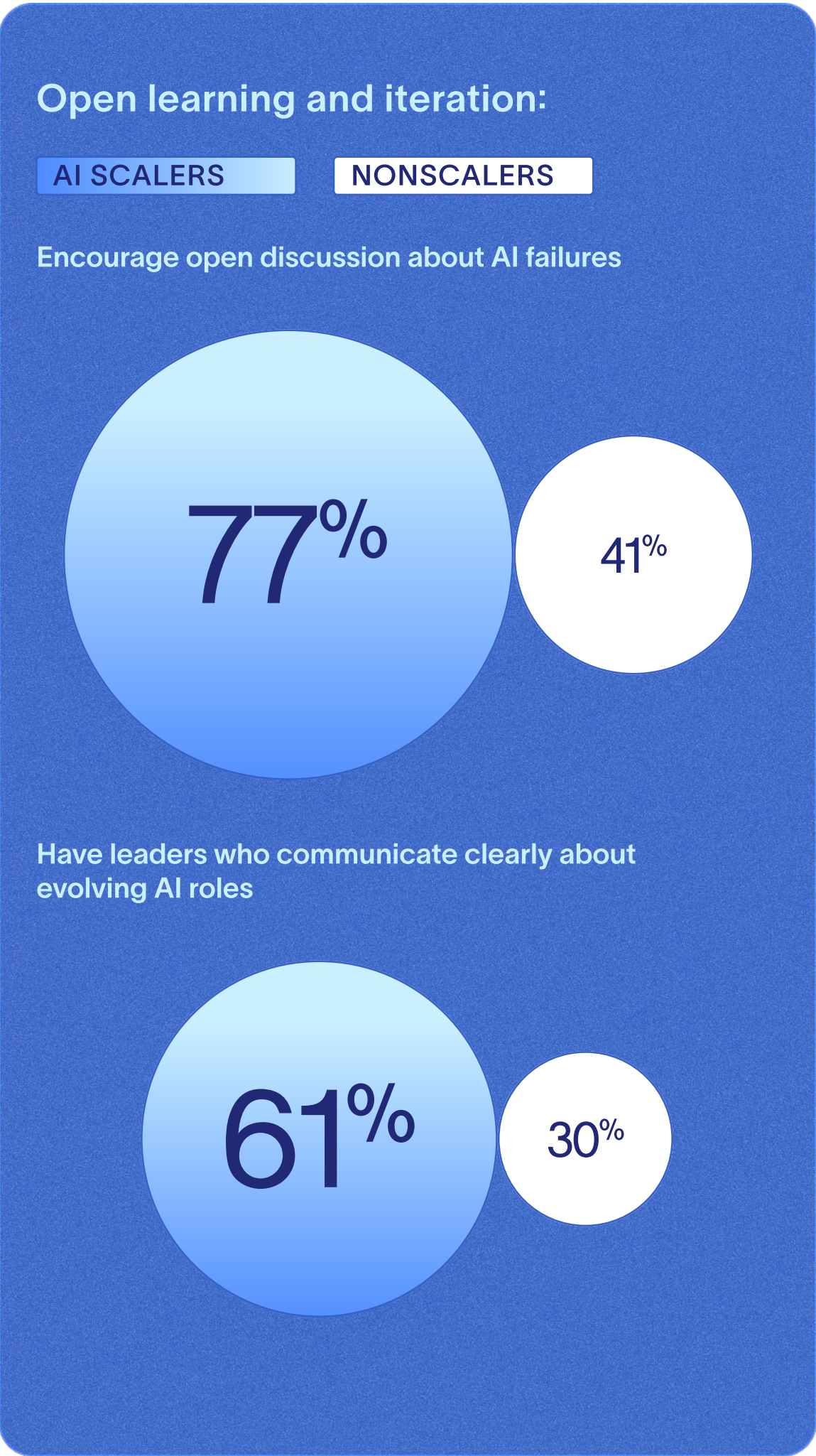
Psychological safety:
Cultural foundations that enable
transparent change

The problem:
Workplace stigma creates a culture of secrecy that pushes AI usage underground.

Workers hide their AI usage due to workplace stigma: 29% worry people will think they're lazy for using AI at work, while 20% worry they'll think they're a fraud.

This prevents organizations from learning what works, coordinating AI efforts, or managing the transformation that's happening with or without leadership guidance.

How AI Scalars solve it:
They foster transparency that enables systematic improvement while proactively managing organizational transformation.



Proactive organizational adaptation:

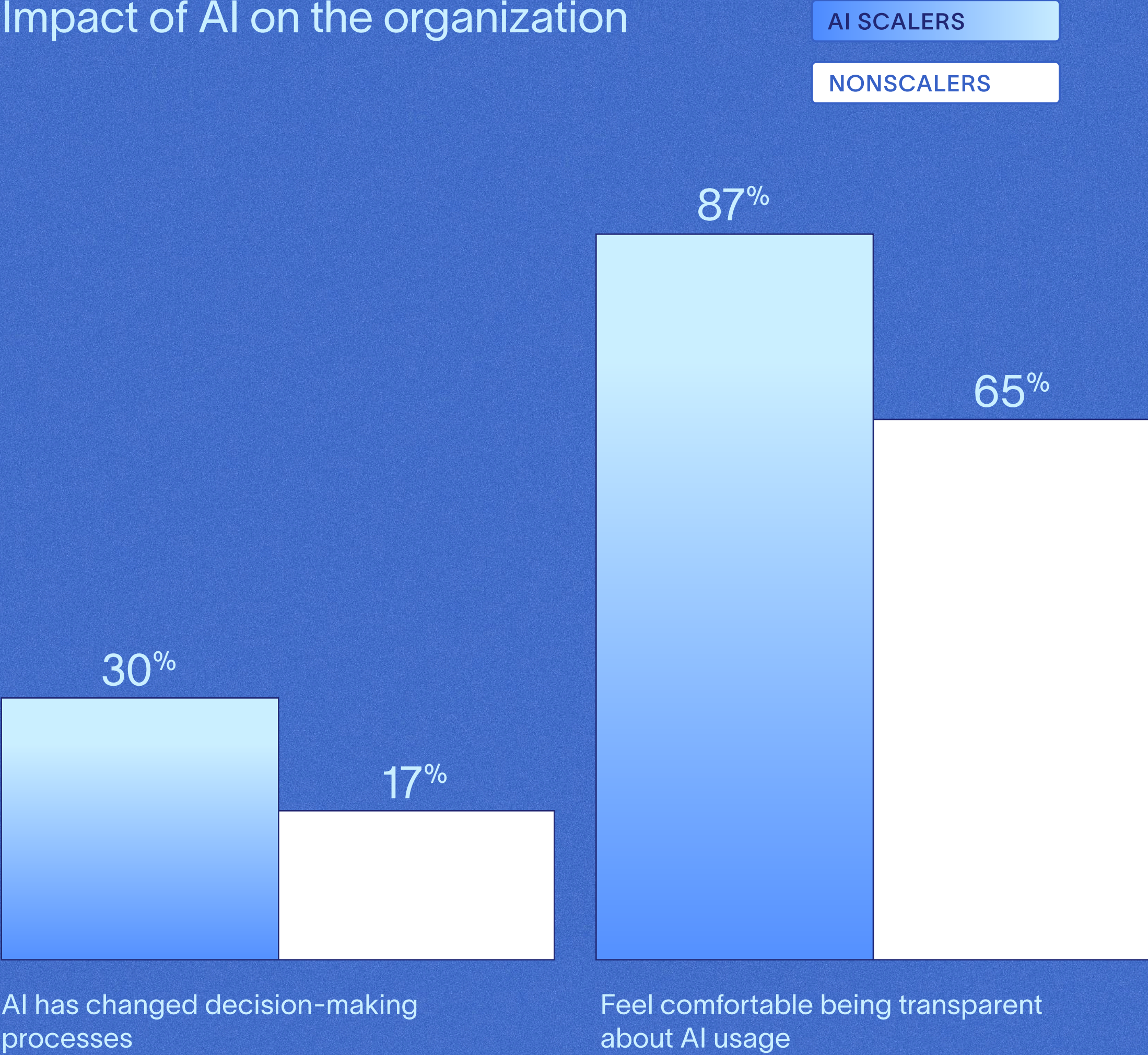
80% of AI Scaler employees believe AI will become integral to teamwork vs. 47% of Nonscalars

65% Report more cross-functional collaboration emerging vs. 30%

46% See traditional departmental boundaries becoming less relevant vs. 27%

27% have created new roles specifically for managing AI workflows vs. 12%

Impact of AI on the organization



What leaders can do

Embrace the failures:

Establish regular AI retrospectives where teams openly discuss what went wrong and what went right, without blame or judgment.

Prepare for change:

Invest in change management capabilities now. Organizational boundaries and decision flows will shift as AI capabilities advance.

Break the silos:

Run cross-functional AI projects that force departments to collaborate in new ways, testing future organizational models.

Make it routine:

Integrate AI status updates into existing meetings, making them as normal as reviewing budgets or project timelines.

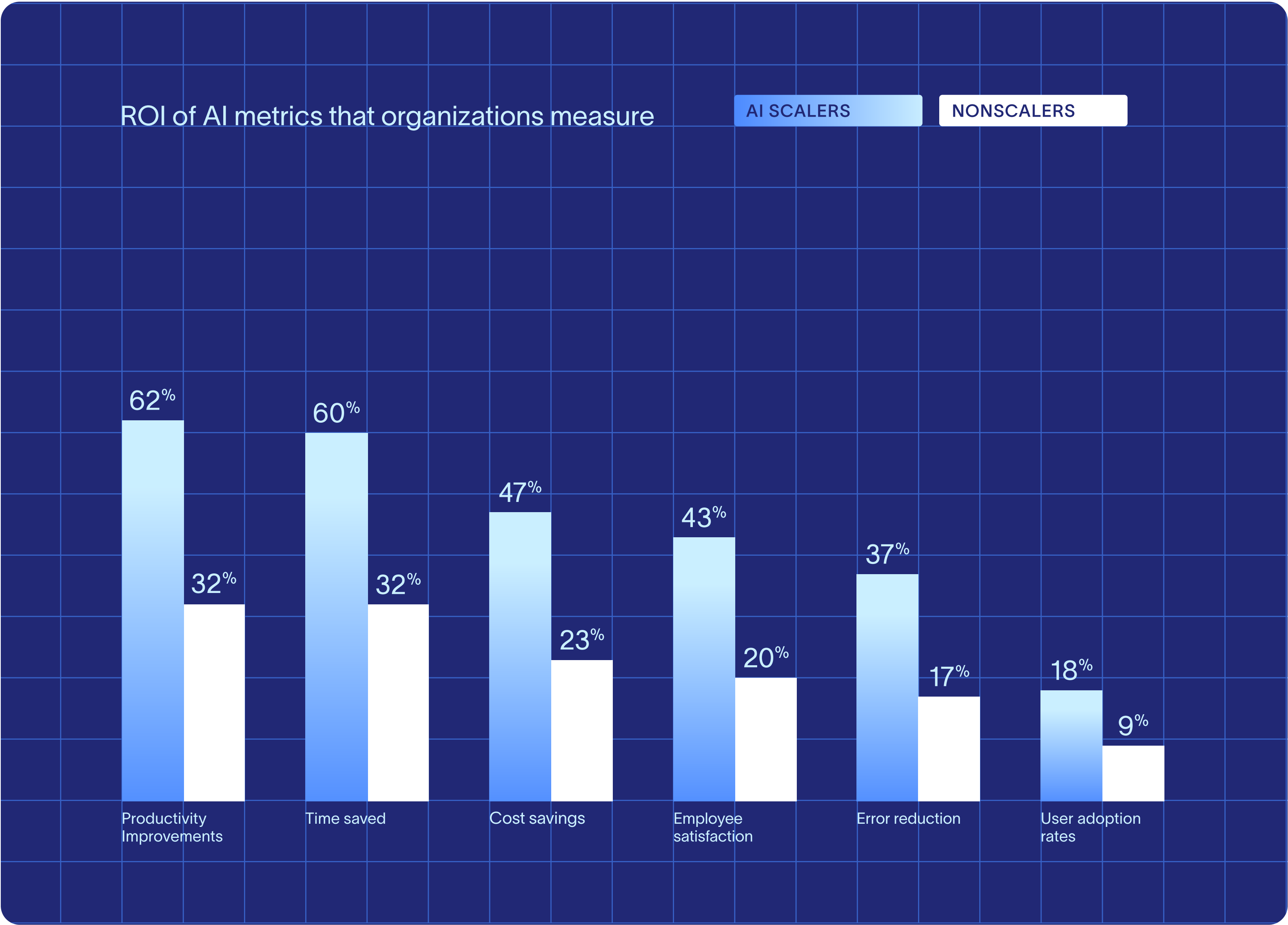
Performance: Measure what matters

The problem:
Organizations deploy AI tools without systematic measurement.

Only 23% of organizations measure employee satisfaction with AI solutions.

This makes it impossible to optimize performance, prove value, or identify what's actually working.

How AI Scalers solve it:
AI Scalers measure the ROI of AI solutions comprehensively across multiple dimensions.



The focus on human-centered metrics including employee satisfaction and user adoption reflects a crucial understanding: AI transformation succeeds only when people embrace it. Technical performance without human buy-in creates unsustainable solutions.

What leaders can do



Own the outcomes:

Assign clear ownership for AI solution performance with designated people responsible for monitoring and optimization.



Prove business value:

Document concrete ROI to justify continued investment and guide resource allocation decisions.



Track the human element:

Monitor adoption rates and employee satisfaction to ensure AI enhances rather than disrupts work experience.



Create optimization cycles:

Use measurement data to continuously improve AI implementation rather than treating deployment as the finish line.

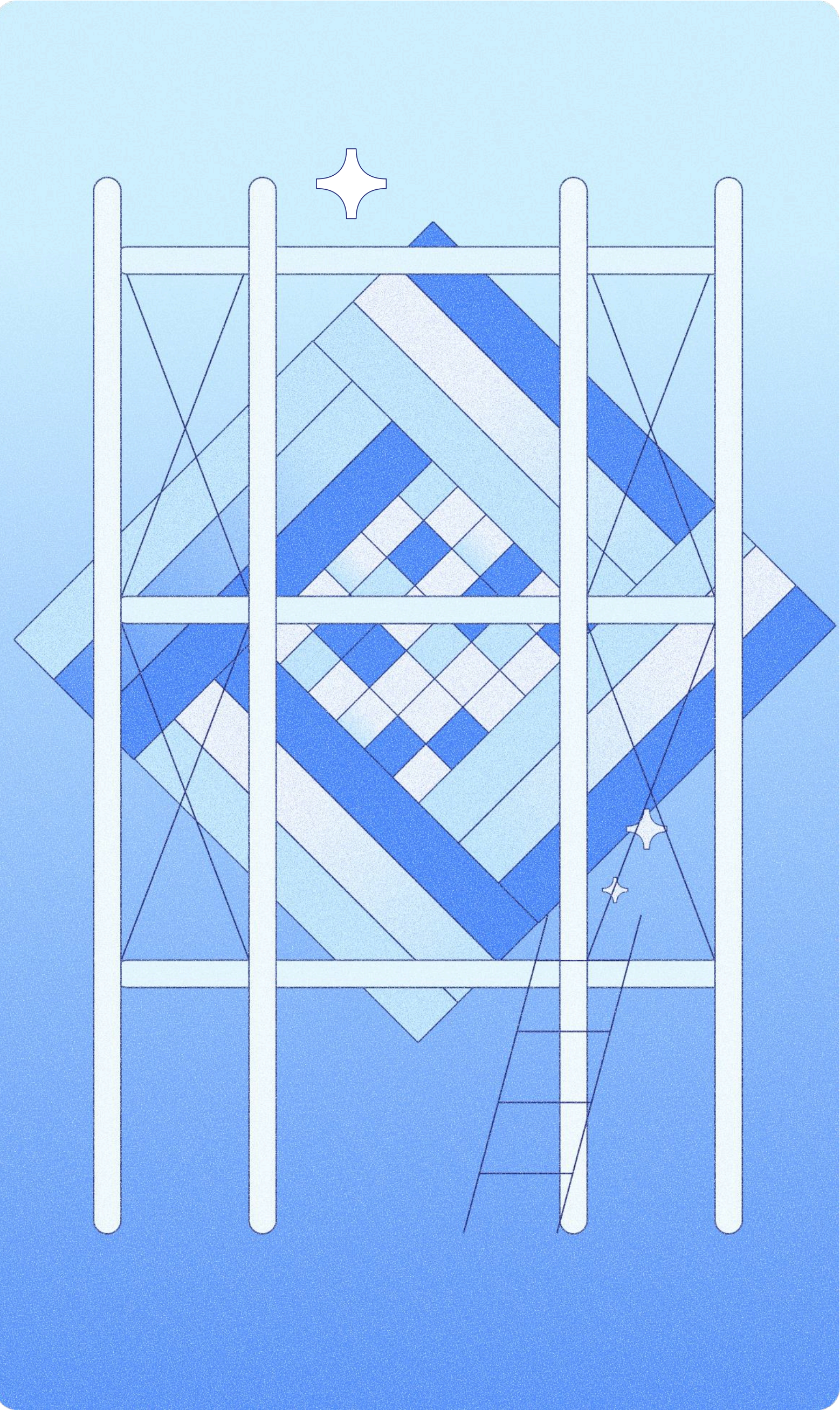
Building the foundation for human + AI collaboration

The three systematic drivers that separate AI Scalers from everyone else become even more critical as AI evolves beyond tools to AI agents.

AI Scalers are building the organizational foundation that tomorrow's autonomous workplace demands.

The three systematic drivers

- 1 Clean workflows provide the structured environment AI agents need to operate effectively.
- 2 Diverse AI personas create the human foundation for managing AI agents.
- 3 Policy frameworks, psychological safety, and performance measurement become the governance backbone for collaborating with AI agents that can plan, execute, and make decisions independently.



How AI agents will reshape work

Only **43%** of workers can correctly identify AI agents

Only **36%** of workers have a strong understanding of how to use AI agents

In boardrooms from Silicon Valley to London, leaders are betting on a new class of autonomous software agents—systems that can think, decide, and act without constant human direction. These AI agents represent the most consequential shift in workplace dynamics since the arrival of personal computing, with the potential to offload entire categories of work to machines that operate alongside people.

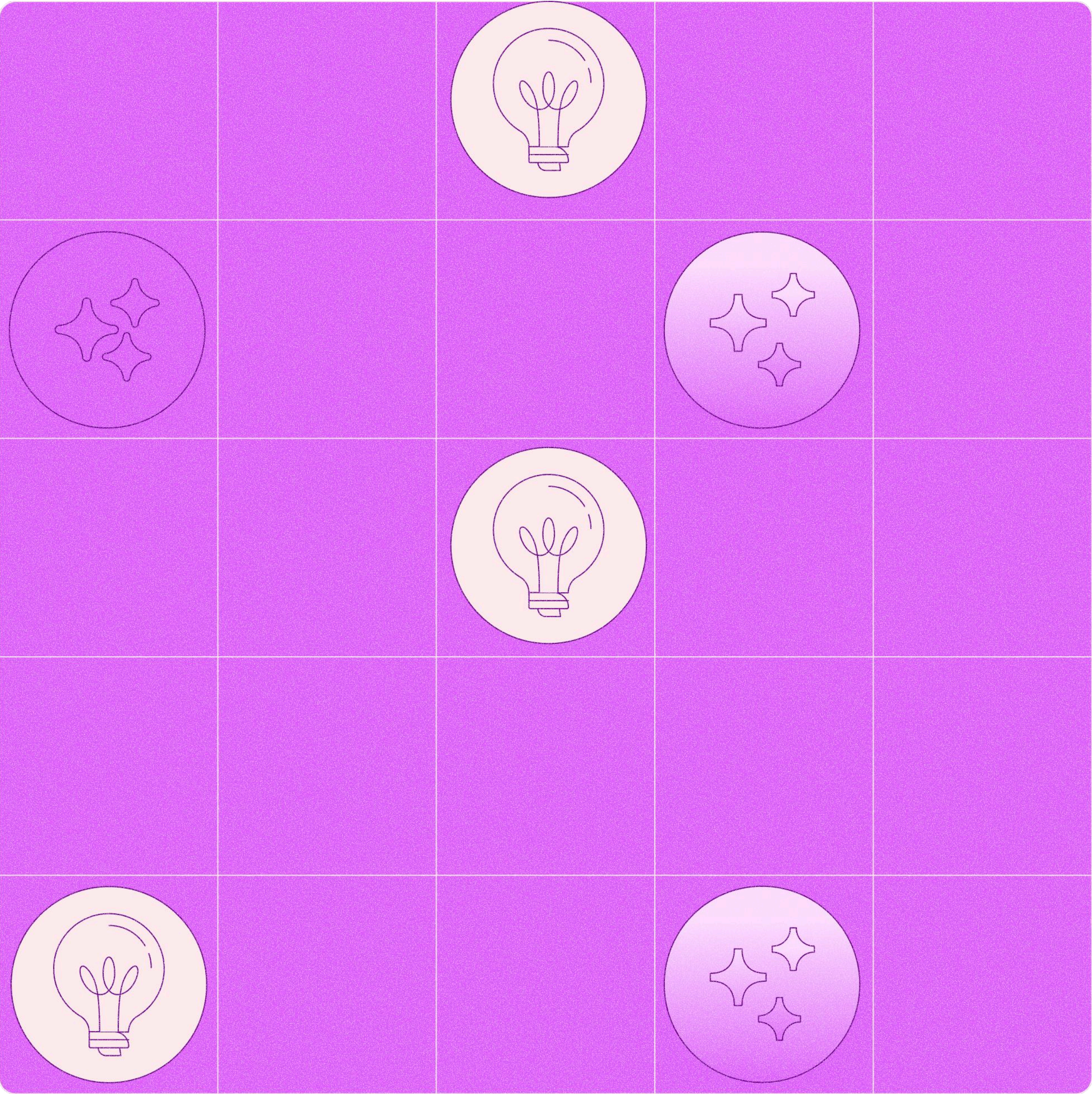
This transformation is already underway. Survey results show that 76% of workers believe AI agents represent a fundamental change in how we work, not just another productivity tool. They expect to delegate 43% of their workload to AI agents within three years. This degree of autonomy will alter how work is produced, who receives credit, and how organizations are structured.

Yet most organizations are entering this transformation without the structures, skills, or trust needed to make it work.

Nearly one-third (32%) of organizations don't have any plans for implementing AI agents, while 77% of workers are already experimenting with them at work. The gap between ambition and readiness will determine who builds lasting advantage and who wastes resources on implementations that are too little, too late.

Only
20%

of organizations have successfully scaled AI agents across their operations, while 32% have no implementation plans or strategies at all.



The governance-ownership divide: Why leaders and employees see different agentic futures

The most critical challenge in AI agent adoption isn't technical. It's organizational. The shift from generative AI to AI agents marks a radical change in how work is produced and by whom it is credited.

Generative AI acts only when prompted, producing outputs that remain under clear human authorship. AI agents, by contrast, can initiate actions, make decisions, and coordinate across systems without constant human oversight. AI agents function as independent actors with persistent identities, histories of action, and recognized contributions to the work they perform.

This creates two defining complexities that split along the leadership-employee divide.

1. Governance: The executive challenge

AI agents can act without humans fully controlling the initiation or constraints of their actions. Without robust oversight systems, they may exceed their intended scope, misinterpret context, or trigger unintended consequences. This raises fundamental questions about what rules should govern agent behavior, how those rules are enforced, and who has the authority to intervene when things go wrong.

Leaders see opportunity across the board, but they are deeply concerned with governance and maintaining strategic control as AI agents gain autonomy. Their fears center on organizational risk:

- 65% worry that AI agents will make mistakes that they won't catch
- 46% worry that AI agents will misuse sensitive data

2. Ownership and accountability: The employee challenge

Because AI agents are recognized as independent contributors to work production, human authorship becomes blurred. Workers may no longer receive full credit for outputs generated under their design, and conversely, failures can no longer be cleanly attributed to a specific person. This shift complicates performance evaluation, intellectual property rights, and the chain of accountability—particularly when AI agents collaborate or hand off work to one another.

In many cases, employees are asked to bear all of the downside risk, taking accountability for the actions that AI agents take, while giving up ownership and potential credit for their work.

Compared to executives, their concerns center on ownership, accountability, and maintaining control over work that defines their professional identity.

- 54% of individual contributors worry AI agents will negatively impact their long-term careers
- 41% of individual contributors fear AI agents will replace their jobs entirely



This split reflects how each group is measured and rewarded. Executives focus on organizational outcomes and strategic positioning. Employees focus on individual contribution and career trajectory.

These divergent concerns shape how each group approaches AI adoption and explain why they often prioritize different risks and show different patterns of resistance.

The governance vacuum: Organizations are unprepared for AI agents

While workers develop practical experience with AI agents, most organizations lack necessary infrastructure for effective human-agent collaboration. The technology is racing ahead of the organizational capacity needed to manage it.

The governance vacuum represents more than bureaucratic oversight. Unlike traditional software that executes predetermined functions, AI agents make decisions, interpret context, and take actions that can cascade across systems and relationships. Without proper frameworks, they become organizational wildcards: potentially helpful, but fundamentally unpredictable.

The unpreparedness is widespread across organizations’ basic governance functions:

- Only 14% have clear ethical frameworks for AI agents
- Only 15% have processes for deploying new AI agents
- Only 12% have processes for reviewing employee-created AI agents
- 31% allow employees to create AI agents without oversight

As a result, in many organizations, AI agents are proliferating without basic guardrails. Employees are experimenting with systems that can access sensitive data, make decisions on their behalf, and interact with external stakeholders, all without systematic review or oversight. It's the organizational equivalent of giving every employee the ability to hire contractors without HR approval or reference checks.

The accountability crisis deepens when things go wrong. In traditional software failures, the chain of responsibility is usually clear: someone deployed it, someone configured it, someone used it inappropriately. With AI agents, that clarity evaporates.

When AI agents make mistakes, accountability is scattered:

- 22% blame the user
- 20% blame IT
- 9% blame the person who created the AI agent
- 33% have no idea who to blame

This diffusion of responsibility creates escalating risk. When no one owns failures, organizations can't systematically improve their AI agent deployments. Each mistake becomes a one-off incident rather than data for building better systems. The same types of failures repeat because there's no institutional mechanism for capturing lessons and applying them broadly.

The consequences of this governance vacuum are already materializing. Over three quarters (79%) of organizations expect to accumulate **"AI debt"**: the technical and organizational costs of poorly implemented autonomous systems that must eventually be addressed.

Unlike technical debt, which primarily affects engineering teams, AI debt has organizational consequences.

Poor data quality degrades decision-making across functions. Security vulnerabilities expose the entire organization to risk. Low-impact AI agents waste human attention and resources. And management skills gaps mean the problems compound over time rather than improve.

Organizations expect this AI debt to manifest as:

Data quality issues

45%

Security vulnerabilities

39%

Growing skills gaps

37%

Low impact agents

37%

When AI agents fail: The collaboration breakdown

Beyond governance gaps lies a deeper problem: organizations fail to make AI agents effective collaborators. Picture a jazz ensemble where the newest member has never heard the song but insists on playing lead. That's how most organizations deploy AI agents; brilliant technology, terrible timing. When these AI agents inevitably disappoint, the real culprit isn't technical capability but clumsy integration into existing workflows.

Workers want AI agents that understand their role within collaborative ecosystems. This creates a paradox where 44% find AI agents easier to work with than humans in specific contexts, but only 5% see AI agents as true teammates. The gap between utility and trust represents a fundamental design challenge that most organizations haven't recognized, let alone addressed.

This trust deficit creates a monitoring dilemma:

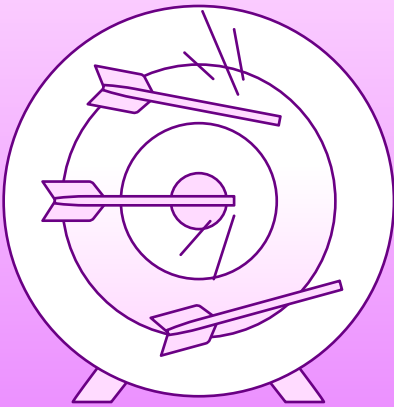
While 85% of workers believe all AI agent output should be reviewed by a human, nearly half (49%) say the need for constant monitoring actually makes them less confident in the technology's value.

The monitoring problem is compounded by a basic skills gap. Understanding what to delegate to AI agents isn't intuitive.

Nearly one third of workers (31%) don't know how to make these delegation decisions, with individual contributors struggling most (38% vs. 26% of executives and 25% of managers).

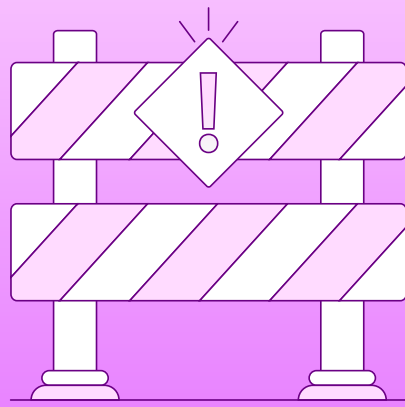
Without delegation skills, workers default to over-monitoring, which perpetuates the trust problem and explains the complex boundaries they draw around human-AI collaboration.

What would make an AI agent a bad teammate? Workers reveal clear deal-breakers for collaboration:



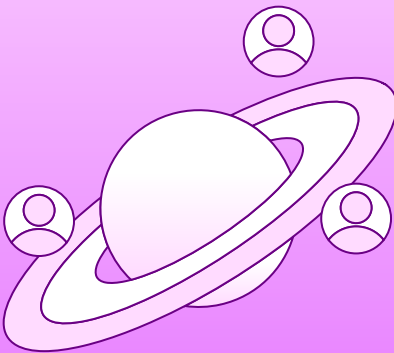
62%

say unreliable or inconsistent performance makes AI agents unusable



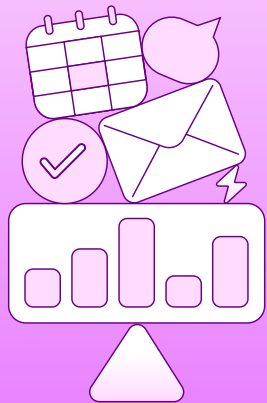
57%

can't work with AI agents that make confident claims about incorrect information



56%

need AI agents that learn from feedback



54%

reject AI agents that create more work instead of reducing it

The ownership paradox: What employees will and won't give up

Despite their concerns, employees have clear expectations about how AI agents should integrate into their work. They want intelligent systems that eliminate drudgery while maintaining control over tasks that define their professional identity.

Workers prioritize AI agents for productivity multiplication:

- 61% want AI agents to handle routine or repetitive work
- 52% want AI agents to do better work faster
- 32% want to free up time for strategic thinking
- 31% want to avoid boring or draining tasks

What emerges is not blanket resistance to AI agents, but a sophisticated framework for thinking about delegation. Workers intuitively understand that some work represents them—their judgment, expertise, and relationships—while other work simply needs to get done for them to be effective.

We see this most clearly when comparing worker comfort with generative AI versus autonomous AI agents. Workers readily accept AI assistance but draw sharp boundaries around AI independence, revealing an intuitive divide between work that is about them versus work that is for them.

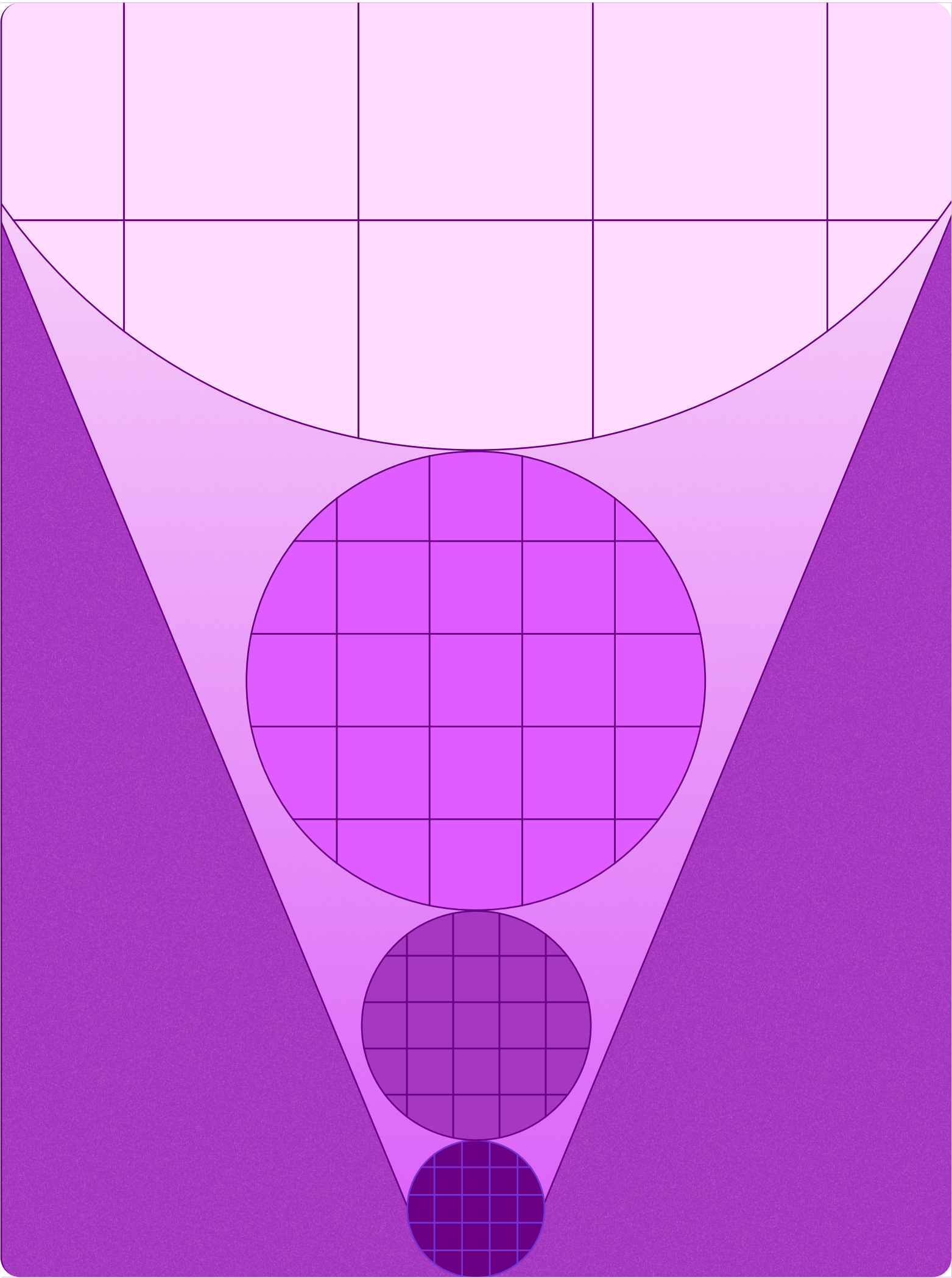
Tasks workers happily delegate: "Please, take this off my plate"

Workers are happy to delegate administrative overhead, tasks that are for them, and even prefer full AI agent autonomy. These are tasks that require accuracy and consistency but don't express individual expertise or judgment.

Administrative work (equal or higher comfort with AI agents):

- **Taking meeting notes:** 42% GenAI vs. 43% AI agents (same comfort)
- **Organizing documents:** 28% GenAI vs. 31% AI agents (prefer agents)
- **Scheduling meetings:** 23% GenAI vs. 27% AI agents (prefer agents)
- **Monitoring project status:** 16% GenAI vs. 21% AI agents (prefer agents)

When AI makes mistakes on these tasks, they're fixable and don't reflect poorly on the human. In fact, **70% would prefer to delegate some of these tasks to AI agents rather than humans.**



The creativity fortress: "This is what makes me, me"

The boundary sharpens when work involves creative expression, strategic thinking, or relationship building. Workers prefer using generative AI as a writing partner they control rather than an AI agent that writes independently. This is the difference between "help me write this" and "write this for me."

When it comes to creative, strategic, or relationship-based work, tasks that are about them, delegation comfort plummets. Workers understand that communication is relationship-building, not just information transfer. They want AI as a creative partner they control, not an independent creator.

| Work tasks | Would delegate to GenAI | Would delegate to AI agents | The real reason |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Drafting emails | 59% | 36% | "That's my voice, my relationships" |
| Writing reports | 44% | 33% | "That's my analysis, my insights" |
| Creating presentations | 35% | 24% | "That's my story, my persuasion" |

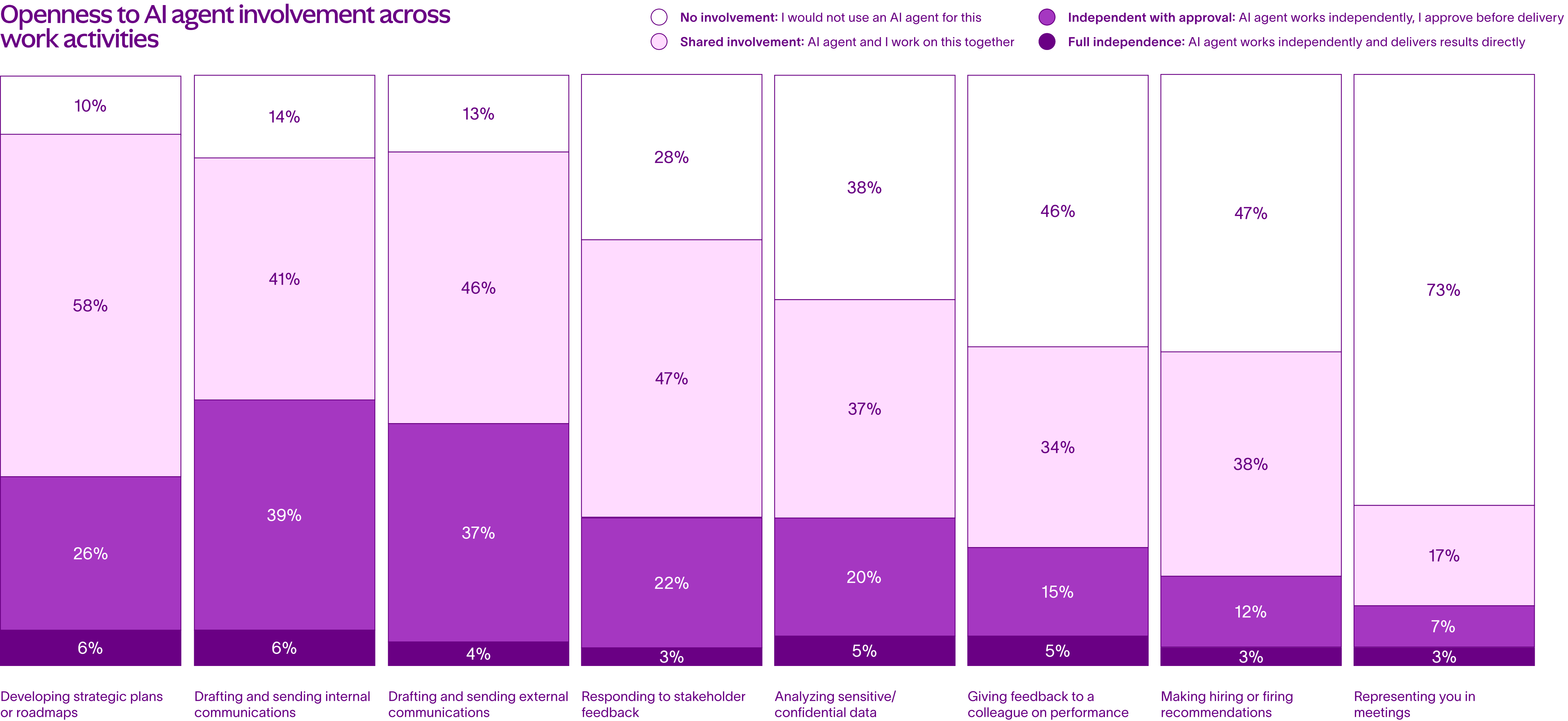
The relationship red line: "Don't speak for me"

This boundary becomes absolute when it comes to high-stakes interpersonal situations. Workers draw unmovable boundaries around any activity where they could be held accountable for an AI agent's judgment or representation.

As the potential for reputational damage increases, workers insist on maintaining control. Only 3% are comfortable with AI agents representing them in meetings independently, because when an agent speaks for you, its mistakes become your reputation.

These challenges create a daunting picture of governance gaps, collaboration breakdowns, and ownership conflicts. Yet some organizations are successfully navigating this complexity. The difference isn't that they've avoided these problems; it's that they've built systematic approaches to address them.

Openness to AI agent involvement across work activities



What works: Learning from successful implementations

AI Agent Scalers: Building systematic advantage

Despite widespread unpreparedness, 20% of organizations have successfully scaled AI agents with systematic implementation and measurement. These AI Agent Scalers provide compelling evidence for what effective AI agent adoption looks like and why infrastructure matters more than technology.

Workers across all organizations are remarkably consistent in what they need to succeed with AI agents:

- 56% want clear guidelines on when and how to use AI agents
- 55% want training on working effectively with AI agents
- 52% want data security and privacy protections
- 52% want clear boundaries between human and AI responsibilities

The difference lies in execution.

AI Agent Scalers systematically address these needs through infrastructure investment.

Compared to Nonscalers they are:

- 130% more likely to provide training on using AI agents at work
- 116% more likely to have clear ethical frameworks for AI agent use
- 54% more likely to actively measure AI agent performance

As a result, workers at AI Agent Scalers report performance advantages that compound over time.

Compared to Nonscalers, AI Agent Scalers are:

46% more likely to report improved productivity from AI agents

80% more to see AI agents as teammates rather than tools

38% more likely to confidently delegate work to AI agents

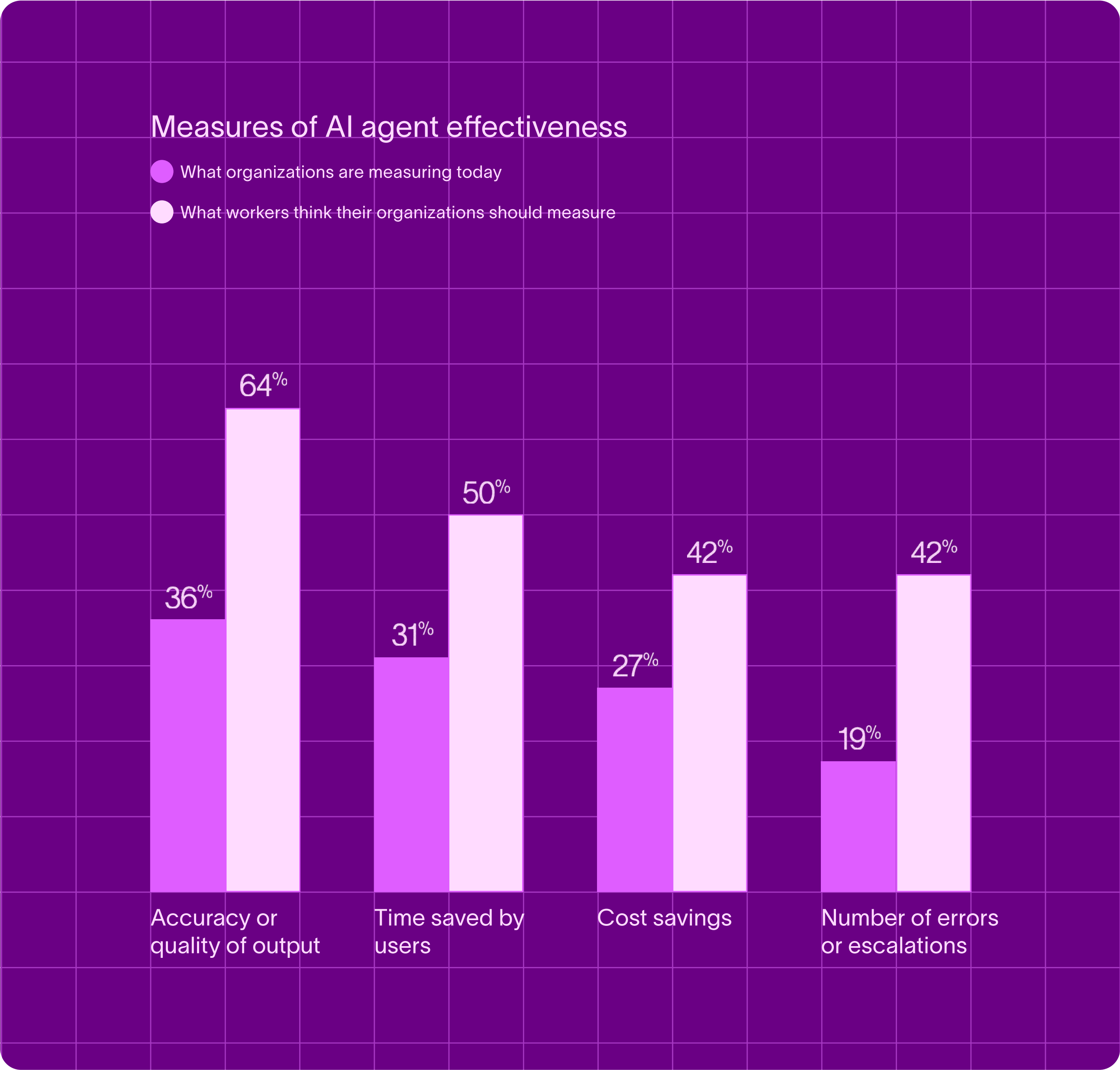
But the real advantage isn't just speed—it's acceleration capacity. While others are still learning to walk, AI Agent Scalers are building the organizational race car: measurement systems that track performance, governance frameworks that provide guardrails, and collaboration patterns that will let them floor it when autonomous capabilities explode.

Optimization requires measurement: The performance tracking advantage

At the heart of the AI Agent Scaler advantage lies a commitment to systematic measurement. Organizations that successfully scale AI agents distinguish themselves through disciplined performance tracking, though significant gaps remain between current practice and worker expectations.

63% of organizations measure AI agent effectiveness, but there's a telling disconnect in measurement priorities.

The emphasis on error tracking in worker preferences suggests they understand something many organizations miss: reliability and quality control are fundamental to successful human-agent collaboration. Workers want measurement systems that optimize for trust and dependability, not just efficiency.



The acceleration ahead: Building bridges for human + AI collaboration

Worker expectations for human-AI collaboration are accelerating rapidly:

- Today: Comfortable delegating 27% of work to AI agents
- In 1 year: Expect to delegate 34% of work
- In 3 years: Expect to delegate 43% of work

By 2030, they expect AI to fundamentally reshape organizational hierarchies and decision-making structures:

- 49% expect AI evaluating employee performance
- 42% expect AI making hiring recommendations
- 40% expect AI creating and implementing strategy

Nearly half (48%) of workers even predict flatter organizations with fewer managers as AI agents take on coordination and supervisory tasks, suggesting a potential redefinition of leadership roles.

This organizational transformation is already reshaping hiring priorities. Nearly three quarters (72%) of organizations now prioritize AI-related competencies, including digital literacy, comfort working with AI, and critical thinking to evaluate AI outputs, placing them on par with traditional skills.

Success increasingly depends on orchestrating AI agents, not just using tools.

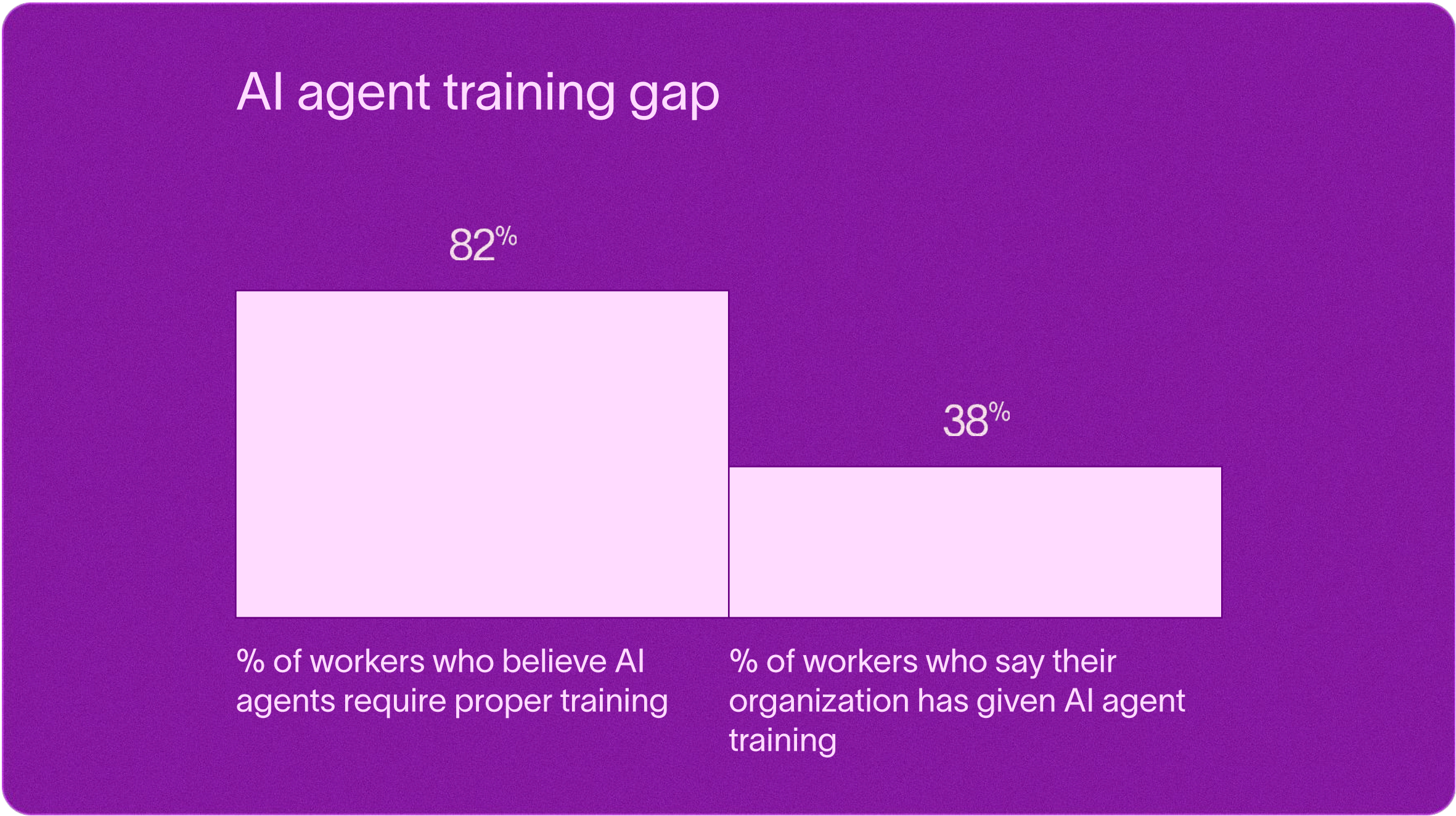
Yet organizations are unprepared for this timeline. While 82% of workers say AI agents require proper training, only 38% of organizations provide it. As workers prepare to hand over nearly half their work to AI agents, most organizations lack the guardrails that executives need and the ownership clarity employees demand.

Without addressing these foundational gaps, organizations face mounting AI debt: poor data quality, security vulnerabilities, and low-impact AI agents that create more problems than they solve. The path forward requires bridging the current divide between executive governance concerns and employee ownership needs.

For governance (executive concerns): Build systematic measurement, ethical frameworks, and deployment processes that provide the strategic control leaders need while enabling innovation.

For ownership (employee concerns): Develop clear delegation frameworks, skills training, and boundaries that help employees maintain professional identity while embracing productive collaboration with AI agents.

The organizations that master both governance and ownership will unlock scale, safety, and trust in their agent deployments.



Those that fail will face a widening gap between ambition and operational reality, risking both talent retention and competitive positioning.

The competitive implications are profound. Organizations building systematic human-AI collaboration capabilities today are developing foundational skills for market leadership in an autonomous economy.

The autonomous future isn't a distant possibility. It's already reshaping how the most advanced organizations work. The question isn't whether AI agents will transform your workplace,

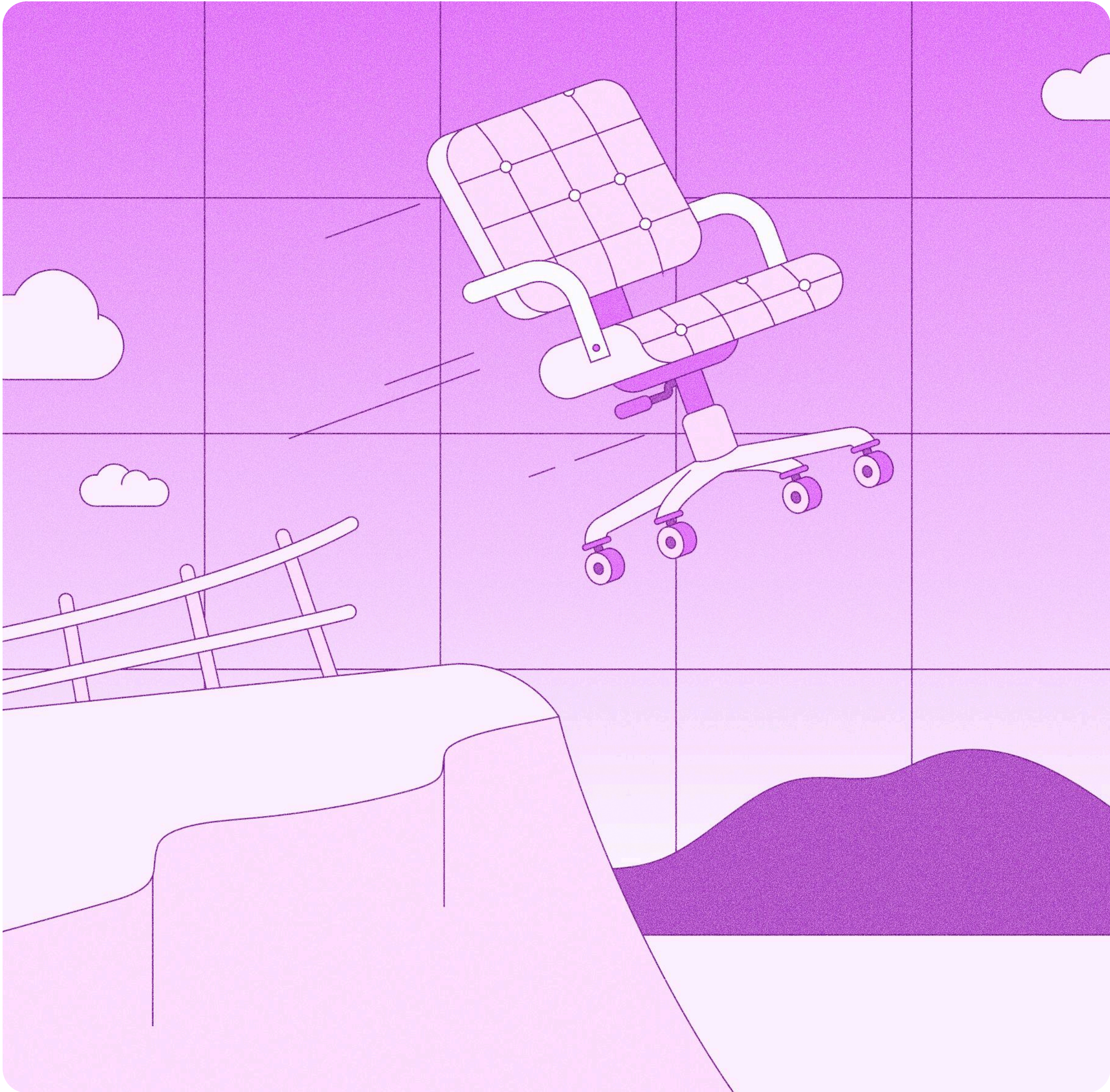
but whether you'll have the systematic capabilities needed to thrive when they do. The organizations building that foundation today through redesigned workflows, empowered people, and robust infrastructure aren't just preparing for the future. They're creating it.

The future of work is human + AI teamwork

This represents a fundamental shift in how teams collaborate. Even in an autonomous future, market success still depends on how well teams work together to address pressing challenges and achieve ambitious objectives. AI can either make that teamwork easier and help us move faster together, or it can further silo us and create more distrust.

Organizations building systematic human-AI collaboration capabilities today aren't just improving productivity but developing foundational skills for market leadership in an autonomous economy. Success will be measured by how effectively humans orchestrate and collaborate with autonomous systems.

The autonomous future is here. The question is whether your organization is ready for it.



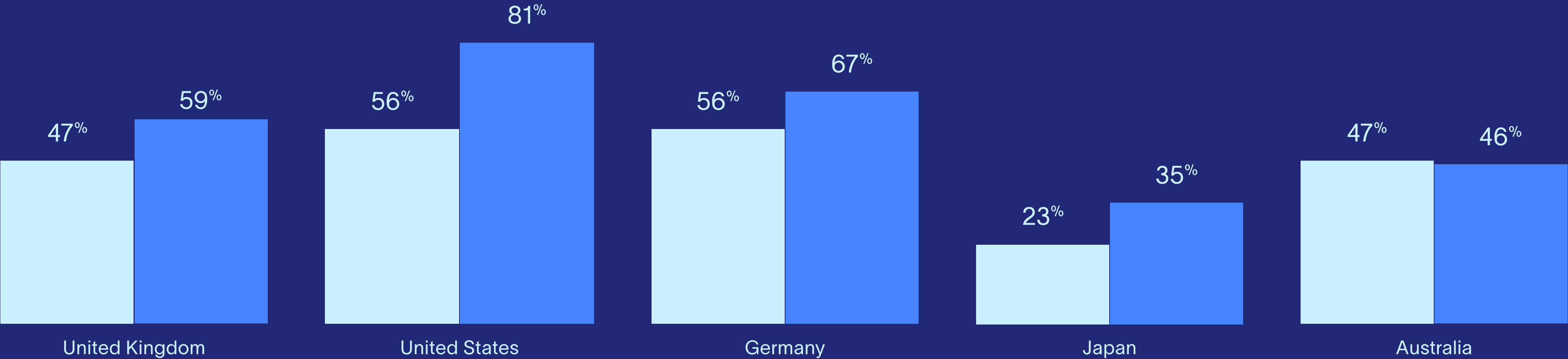
Appendix: Global perspectives on AI transformation

The surge is global, but the pace varies

The global AI transformation is unfolding like a massive experiment with five different approaches to the same challenge. This appendix reveals how the three drivers of AI success—redesigning work, empowering people, and building infrastructure—play out across five major economies, exposing why some markets thrive while others struggle with the same technology.

Percentage of knowledge workers using AI at work weekly

● 2024 ● 2025



The automation of chaos: A global epidemic

Organizations worldwide are making the same critical mistake: layering AI onto broken workflows instead of redesigning work.

The United States tells the clearest cautionary tale: highest AI adoption yet surging digital exhaustion. Workers are using AI more than any other country, but they're burning out faster too. The UK follows the same pattern—rising adoption, rising exhaustion. These markets prove that more AI without better work design creates more problems, not fewer.

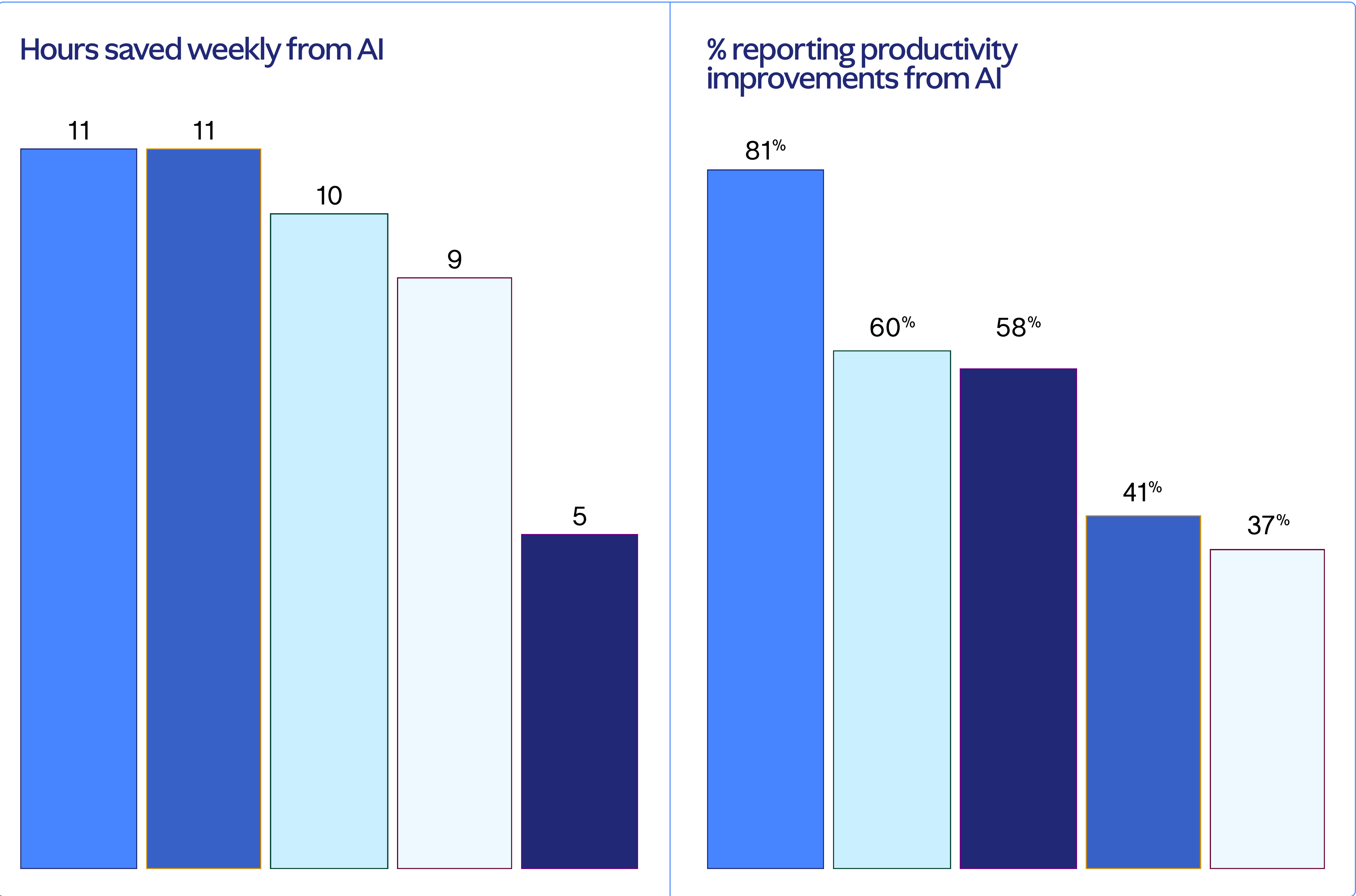
Germany stands apart. Despite strong AI adoption, digital exhaustion remains flat. The difference lies in more deliberate implementation that prevents chaos from multiplying.

| Country | Weekly AI usage | Change in unmanageable workloads | Change in digital exhaustion |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| United States | 81% | +8% | +13% |
| Germany | 67% | -1% | 0% |
| United Kingdom | 59% | -1% | +11% |
| Australia | 46% | +16% | -10% |
| Japan | 35% | +9% | -3% |

Productivity without progress

Japanese workers save 9 hours weekly despite only 37% reporting improvements, while UK workers save just 5 hours with 58% reporting gains. This suggests Japan's AI usage, though limited, targets high-impact tasks, while the UK spreads AI thinly across low-value activities. Australia mirrors the U.S. in hours saved but with half the workers reporting improvements, indicating concentrated benefits among early adopters.

- Japan
- Germany
- United States
- Australia
- United Kingdom



Scaling AI across the world

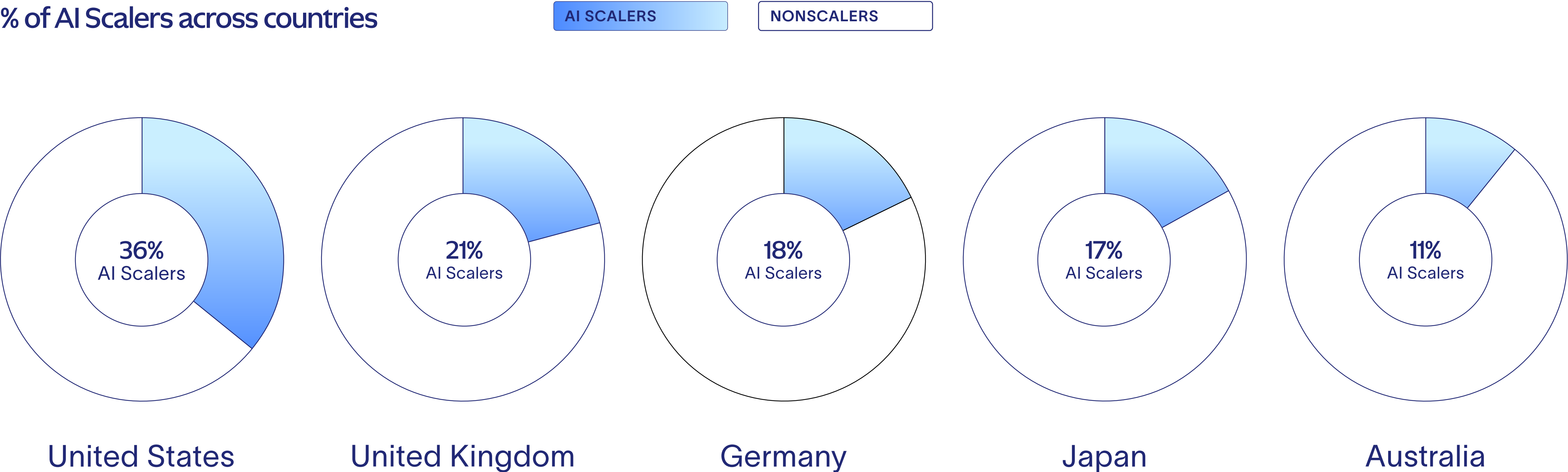
The percentage of organizations reaching Stage 5 implementation maturity (AI Scalers) reveals which markets are moving beyond experimentation to systematic transformation.

The U.S. shows over 3x the AI Scaler penetration of Australia (36% vs. 11%), demonstrating how systematic approaches create competitive advantage.

Even culturally similar markets (UK and Australia) show dramatic divergence in scaling capability.

The following sections reveal why these gaps exist through the lens of three critical drivers.

% of AI Scalers across countries



United States United Kingdom Germany Japan Australia

Redesigning work for AI

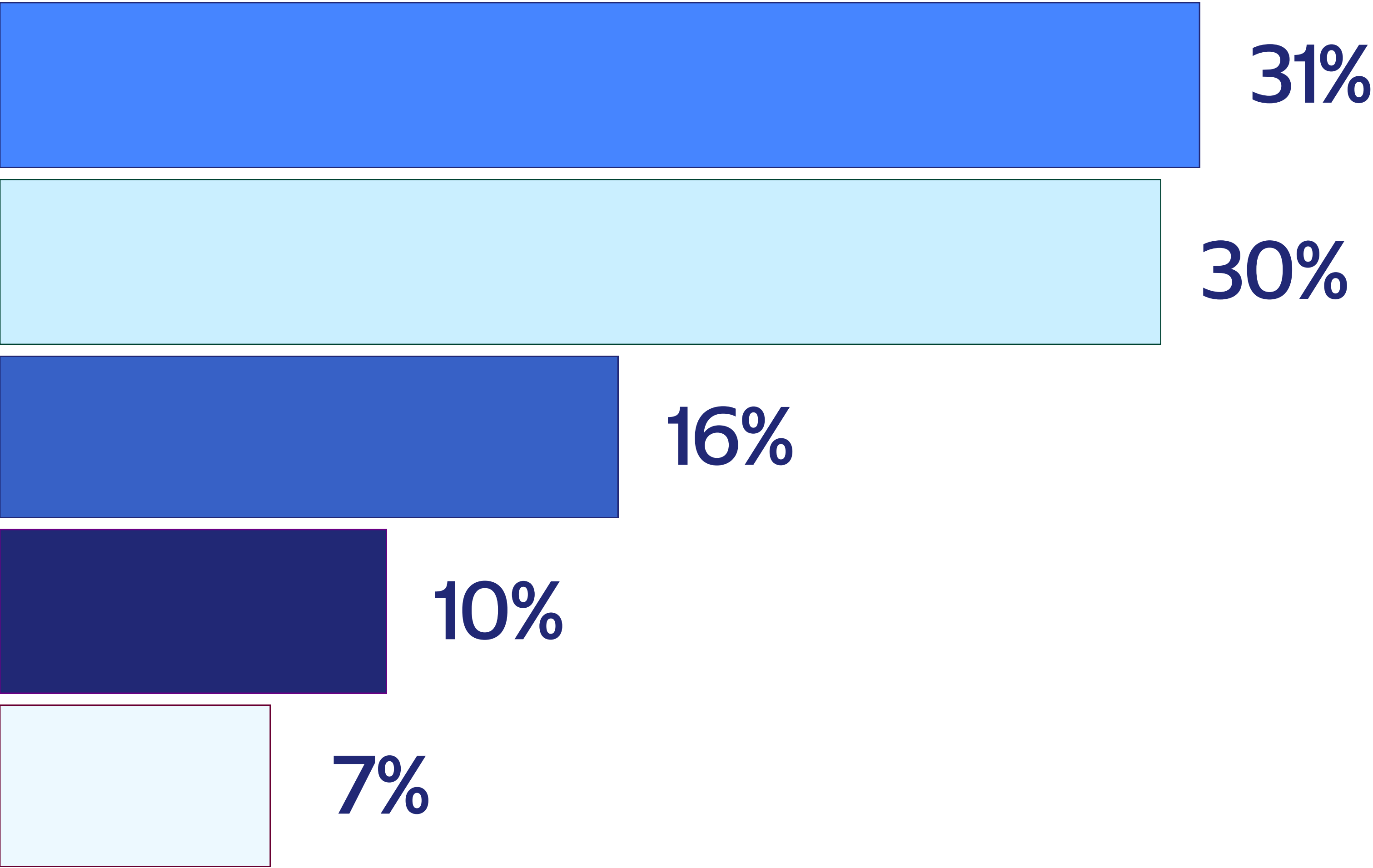
The first driver separating AI Scalers from everyone else is the willingness to fundamentally redesign workflows. The global data shows most organizations fail this test.

The U.S. matches high adoption with workflow transformation (31%), enabling their leading AI Scaler rate. Germany shows similar workflow redesign (30%) but half the Scalers, revealing that redesign alone isn't enough—you need the other drivers too.

The UK's failure is instructive: only 10% redesign workflows. They're trying to scale AI without transforming how work gets done. Japan's 7% workflow redesign explains their scaling struggles—they're trying to fit AI into existing structures rather than rebuilding around it.

% redesigning workflows

- Japan
- Australia
- Germany
- United Kingdom
- United States



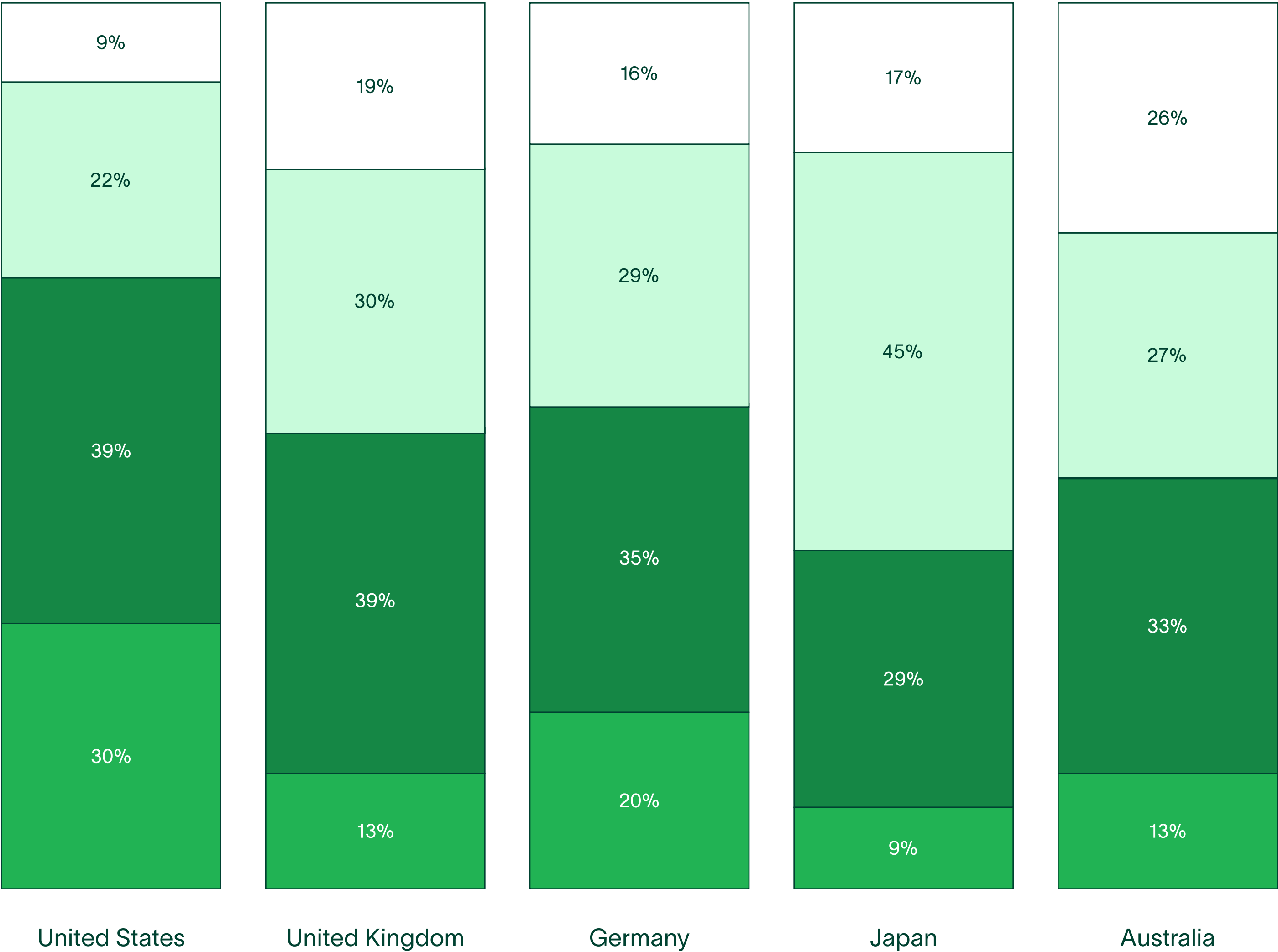
Empowering people through the right AI personas

Differences in systematic people empowerment show up clearly in AI persona distribution and sentiment patterns across markets.

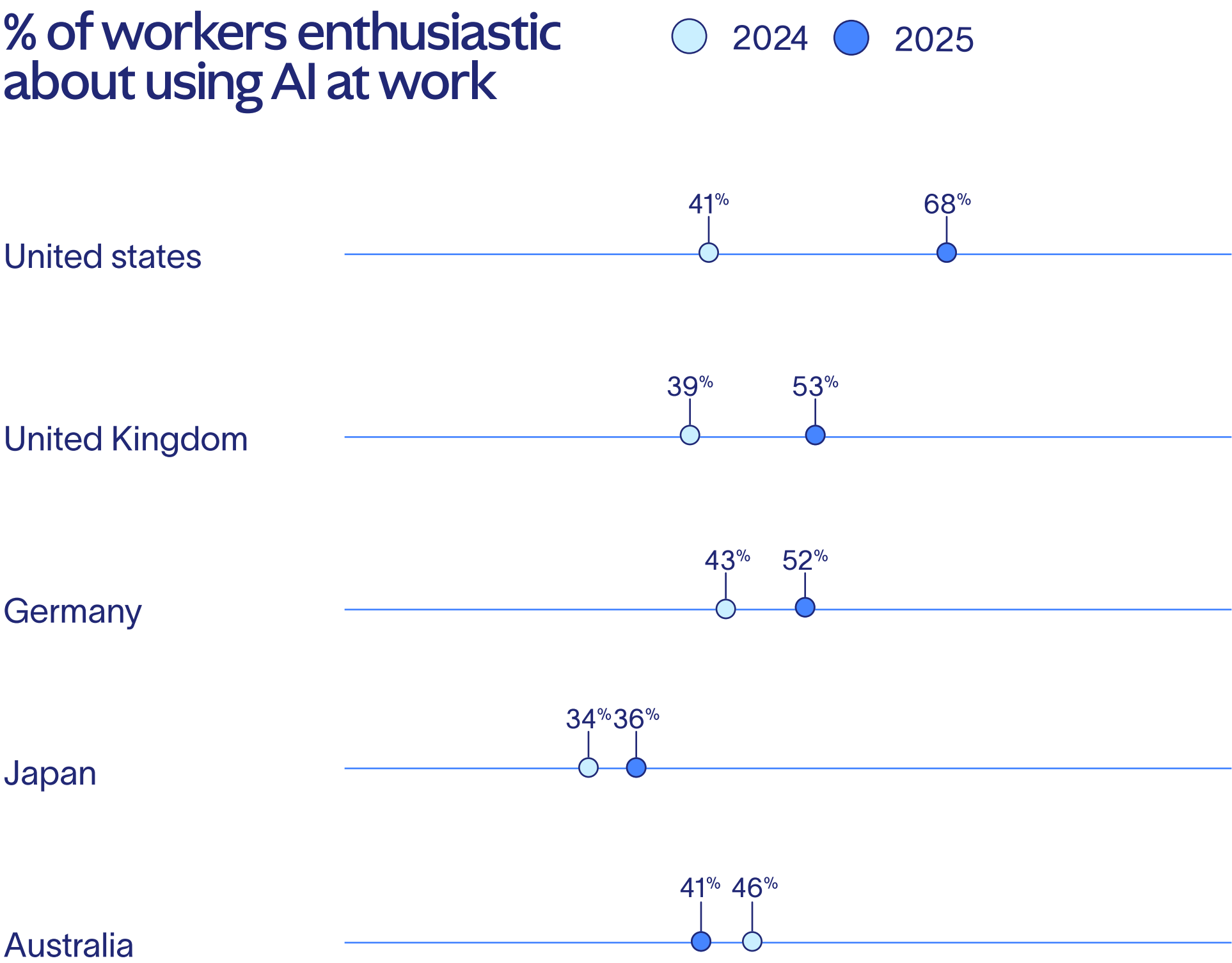
The U.S. has over 3x more Transformers than Japan (30% vs. 9%). With nearly 70% of U.S. workers in high-adoption categories (Transformers + Integrators) and only 9% Skeptics, resistance is minimal and transformation can accelerate. Japan's challenge is clear: 45% Traditionalists—the highest globally—create institutional inertia. Australia's 26% Skeptics—also highest globally—explains their stagnation. Over a quarter of their workforce actively resists AI.

- Transformers
- Integrators
- Traditionalists
- Skeptics

% of workers in each AI Persona

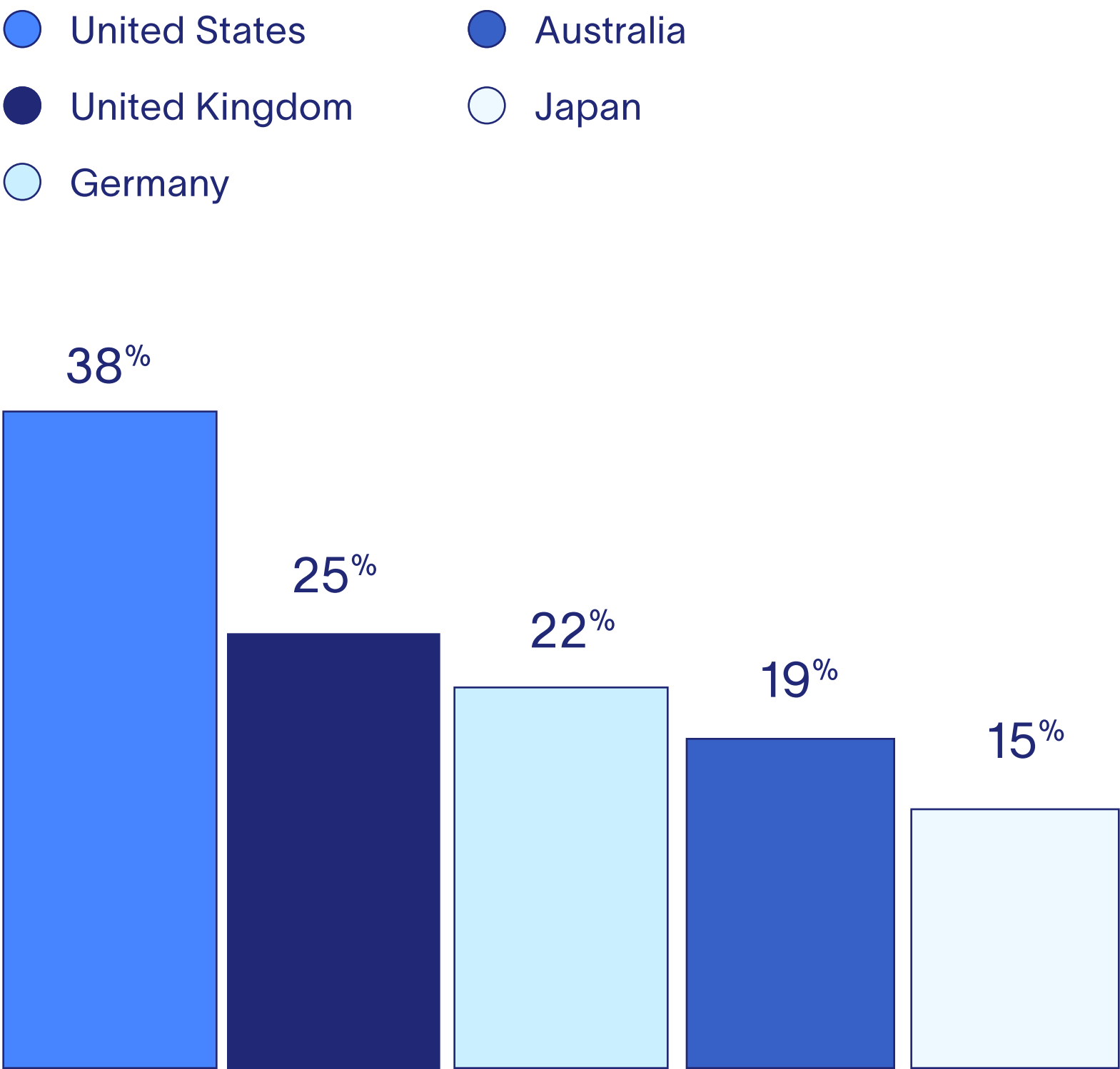


The U.S. enthusiasm surge (+66%) supports their transformation success. Australia is the only market where enthusiasm declined (-11%), creating a workforce increasingly unprepared for AI transformation.



Building infrastructure for scale

The third driver reveals why technical capability alone doesn't guarantee success. Infrastructure—the policies, processes, and frameworks that enable scaling—varies dramatically by region.

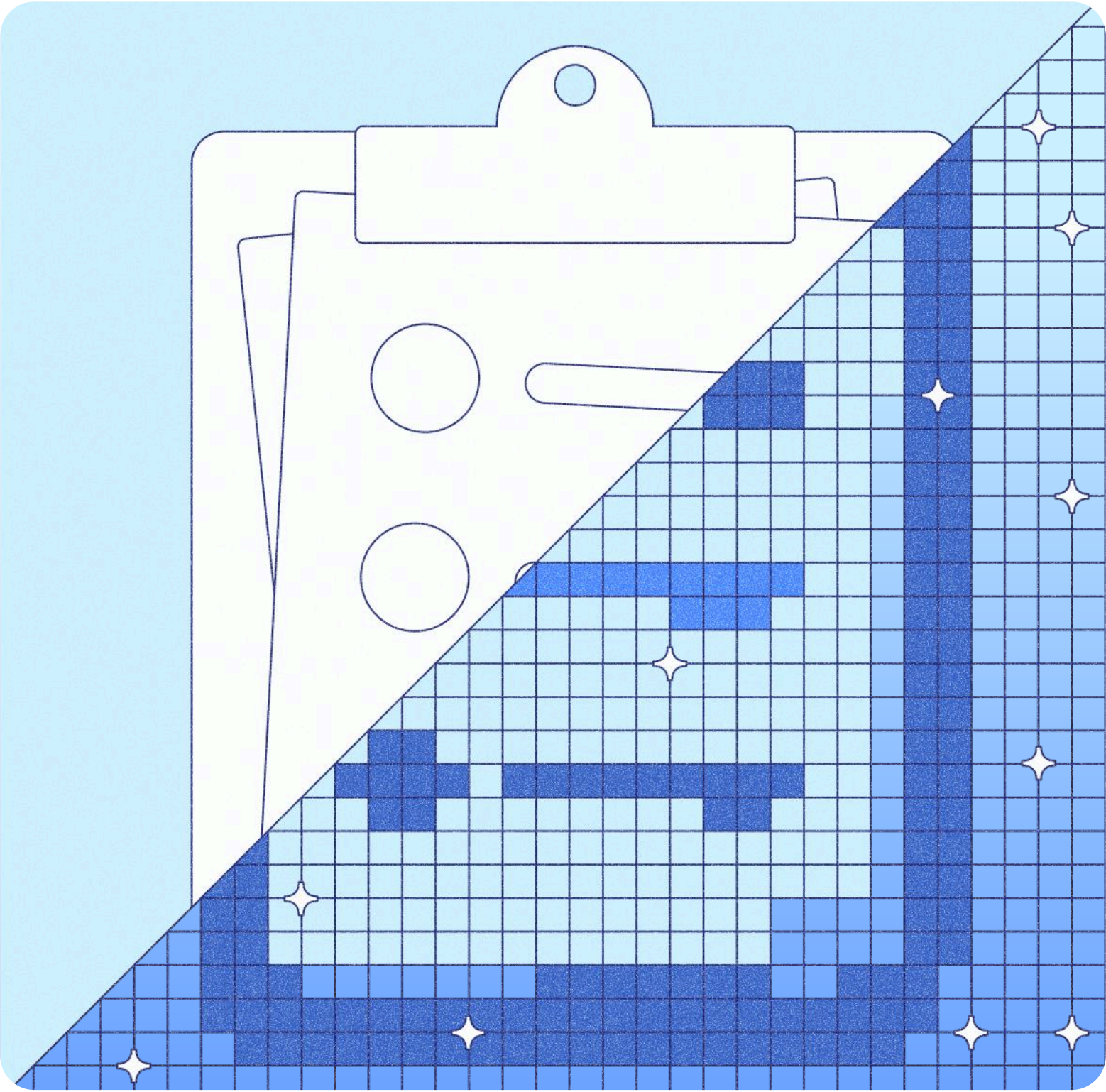


The AI agent readiness divide

These three drivers determine which markets are prepared for AI agents. The readiness gaps are massive.

The U.S. and Germany lead in AI agent understanding (52%), but their paths diverge from there. The UK and Japan face a crisis: with only 19% and 13% respectively understanding AI agents, they're unprepared for the autonomous future already arriving.

| Country | Workers with a strong understanding of AI agents |
|----------------|--|
| United States | 52% |
| Germany | 52% |
| United Kingdom | 26% |
| Australia | 19% |
| Japan | 13% |

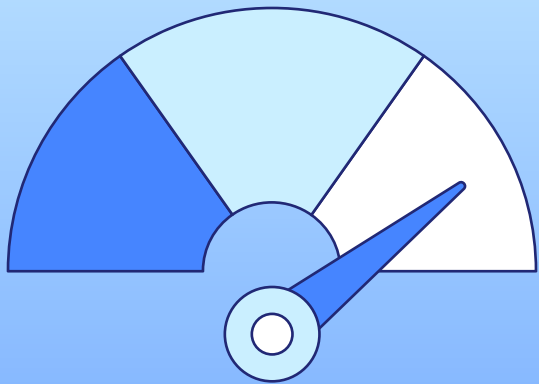


Three futures emerging from today's choices

The data reveals an uncomfortable truth: there's no perfect model. The U.S. sacrifices sustainability for speed. Germany sacrifices speed for stability. Japan sacrifices both for certainty.

Success requires choosing which trade-offs your culture can sustain, then building the three drivers: redesigned work, empowered people, and enabling infrastructure to support that choice. The markets thriving aren't those avoiding trade-offs but those making deliberate choices about which costs they're willing to bear.

The autonomous future won't wait for perfect preparation. The winners will be those who build good-enough infrastructure fast enough to learn and adapt, rather than those seeking perfect solutions that arrive too late.



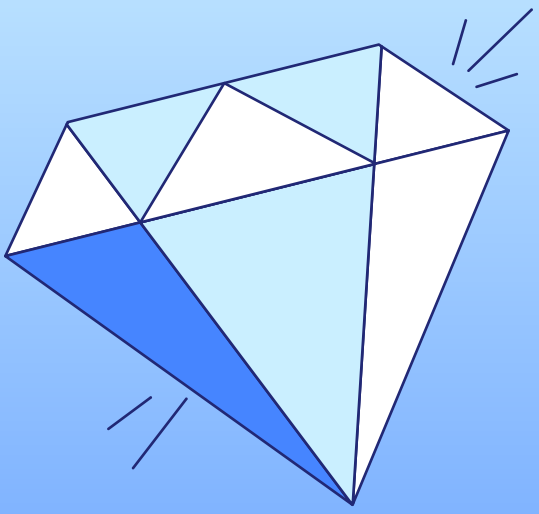
The U.S. path: Speed at any cost

Highest adoption, most Transformers, leading infrastructure, but also surging digital exhaustion. They're winning the race by running their workforce into the ground. This model works until it doesn't.



The German path: Deliberate progress

Strong understanding of AI agents, ambitious about workflow redesign, but held back by cautious culture and governance gaps. They know where to go but move too slowly to lead.



The Japanese path: Waiting for perfection

Minimal infrastructure, few Transformers, lowest understanding of AI agents. Their traditional strength of methodical perfection becomes a weakness when speed matters more than precision.

Methodology

This research from the Asana Work Innovation Lab surveyed 9,236 knowledge workers across five countries in 2025: United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and Australia. The surveys were administered via Qualtrics between February and August 2025, with data collection conducted in partnership with panel providers Prolific and RepData. Respondents were employed knowledge workers using computers or mobile devices for at least 50% of their work, with Executives defined as Director level and above. Surveys were conducted in local languages where applicable. The study did not target Asana customers or employees.