

# From the Edge to the Core

---

*Bringing Agentic AI to the  
Heart of the Enterprise*

HBR  
Analytic  
Services  
**RESEARCH  
REPORT**

Sponsored by



---

## Enterprise Orchestration Is Emerging as the Foundation of Agent Predictability and Trust

---

AI agents promise to transform how organizations run their core business processes and create value. Despite accelerating investment, the stochastic and unpredictable nature of today's artificial intelligence (AI) systems has created a profound trust gap. According to the research in this report by Harvard Business Review Analytic Services, just 6% of respondents said their organization fully trusts agentic AI to autonomously handle core end-to-end processes—the very processes that determine how their companies operate and compete.

Organizations are realizing that AI models alone cannot deliver predictable outcomes. They are investing elsewhere to improve their agentic strategies. According to this paper's research, 74% of respondents said their organization is either currently working on or plans to implement enterprise orchestration in preparation for agentic AI in core processes. Many forward-thinking organizations already have.

The importance of orchestration is accentuated by three key trends in today's agentic economy.

**Providing comprehensive context to AI agents.** Executives want AI agents that deliver accurate, valuable results. They realize that effective agents

require comprehensive context in a governed way for the data, process intelligence, and business signals that lead to informed, valuable AI actions.

**Empowering agents to act in enterprise systems.** To manage unpredictability, many organizations are turning to reusable skills that standardize how agents act. Each enterprise skill represents a defined, governed unit of work—such as resetting a password, approving a purchase order, allocating inventory, or processing a payment. These reusable steps can be executed consistently and reliably every time.

**Delivering trust with enterprise model context protocol (MCP).** MCP is emerging as a new protocol for agents to interact with tools, data, and each other. But forward-looking executives seek an approach that works at enterprise scale. Many organizations are turning to enterprise orchestration as an enterprise MCP to grant agents context, skills, and trust. This approach becomes a layer for empowering and governing agents, enabling the organization to meet enterprise requirements such as auditability, security, or transactionality.

Together, these forces enable agents to act predictably and drive measurable impact on board-level KPIs, such as growth rate, customer



**Carter Busse**  
Chief Information Officer  
Workato

retention, and employee satisfaction, among others.

The organizations that will lead in this next era will see enterprise orchestration as the foundation of enterprise trust. Just as the internet required protocols and governance before it could transform commerce, agentic AI requires orchestration and standards before it can safely transform the enterprise.

The research in this paper makes one conclusion unmistakable: The next wave of transformation will not be powered by AI models, frameworks, or protocols alone—it will be powered by trusted orchestration (also framed as enterprise MCP). Building that trust is not merely a technology challenge. It is a leadership imperative.

Learn more at [www.enterprisemcp.ai](http://www.enterprisemcp.ai).

---

---

# From the Edge to the Core

## *Bringing Agentic AI to the Heart of the Enterprise*

When generative AI (gen AI) entered organizations in full force in 2022, it changed the nature of work forever, making content and knowledge work both faster and cheaper to produce. Now the next wave of the artificial intelligence (AI) revolution has arrived in the form of agentic AI—this time promising to transform business processes and the traditional ways that enterprises create value.


**UNLIKE GEN AI**, agentic AI can make decisions and act autonomously to execute tasks and achieve specific goals with minimal human supervision. AI agents can also work together to complete end-to-end workflows by connecting to different applications, drawing on other forms of AI and machine learning tools, and learning as they evolve.


“As the name suggests, agentic AI has the ability to do something,” says David De Cremer, a professor of management and technology at Northeastern University’s D’Amore-McKim School of Business in Boston. “It evolves, learns from interactions, and refines behavior in pursuit of a goal, so it can drive automation and maximize more-efficient automated workflows.”

The enthusiasm for agentic AI is reflected in the speed and scale with which organizations are adopting and experimenting with this technology. In a July 2025 survey by Harvard Business Review Analytic Services of 603 members of the *Harvard Business Review* audience who are involved in their organization’s technology decisions (including decisions to use/not use agentic AI) and are from organizations that have at least considered using agentic AI, 9% say their organization has fully deployed agentic AI. Half (50%) say their organization is piloting or exploring some use cases of agentic AI, 31% say their organization is considering using agentic AI, and 10% say their organization has considered using agentic AI but is not moving forward with it.

### HIGHLIGHTS

 **86%**  
of survey respondents **expect their organization’s investment in agentic AI to increase** over the next two years.

 **82%**  
**have implemented enterprise orchestration in preparation for agentic AI use**, are currently doing so, or have plans to implement it.

 **6%**  
say their organization **fully trusts agentic AI to autonomously handle core end-to-end business processes** (e.g., source-to-pay, hire to retire).

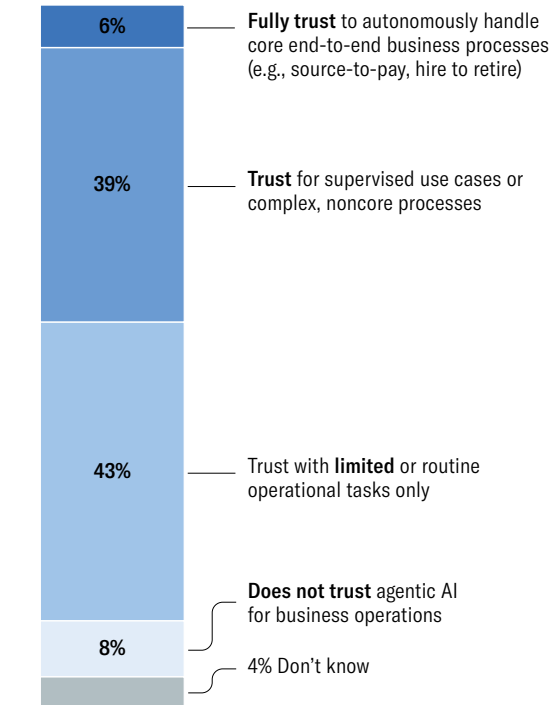
Due to rounding, some figures in this report may not add up to 100%.

FIGURE 1

### Trust in Agentic AI Is Still Limited

Where it's strongest is with supervised use cases or routine operational tasks

Which of the following best describes your organization's current level of trust in agentic AI?



Base: 603 respondents.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

Kim Huffman, chief information officer at Workiva, a software company headquartered in Ames, Iowa, that provides an AI-powered platform for transparency, accountability, and trust, believes agentic AI could usher in the most transformative technology wave businesses have navigated yet. “If I think back to the history of information technology and how it has influenced organizations, technology was always a business enabler,” she says. “I think agentic AI is likely to be the biggest shift of our lifetime because this technology is actually leading the transformation of the business; it is no longer just enabling it.”

But as AI’s role within the organization advances and the technology itself can increasingly operate autonomously or in collaboration with other digital tools, the question becomes whether companies are ready and willing to trust

agentic AI to run core processes at the heart of the enterprise. Understandably, organizations appear to be taking a cautious approach. Just 6% of respondents say their organization fully trusts agentic AI to autonomously handle core end-to-end processes. Among these processes are source-to-pay, a procurement process that spans sourcing a supplier to making final payment, and hire to retire, an HR process that encompasses the entire employee life cycle, from recruitment to offboarding. The majority of respondents say their organization trusts agentic AI with limited or routine operational tasks (43%) or supervised use cases or complex, noncore processes (39%). **FIGURE 1**

This report examines what it will take for executives to trust agentic AI at the core of their business. It explores the benefits of agentic AI and early use cases, the concerns and challenges organizations have in adopting this technology, and the steps companies can take to prepare their enterprise for the paradigm shift to come.

### Tapping Significant Potential Slowly

While it is still very early days for agentic AI, companies are racing to understand and test its potential. Just like gen AI before it, agentic AI has quickly captured the attention of business executives. According to the global management consulting company Boston Consulting Group (BCG), AI agents—“hardly spoken of at all in 2024”—have made up 17% of total AI value in 2025, with “value” being defined as both the revenue and cash flow increases and the process and workflow improvements that companies are seeing from their AI investments. Boston-based BCG predicts that agents could account for nearly a third (29%) of all AI value by 2028.<sup>1</sup>

For many organizations, the IT function has been the obvious place to start with internal agentic AI pilots. Employees on these teams are often receptive to trying out new tools, for one thing. IT support enquiries also can consume a lot of resources; plus internal functions are less risky testing grounds than are customer-facing solutions.

**“We have been on this journey for a little over a year, but there’s a lot of hype, so we have taken a very thoughtful and pragmatic approach, one that is grounded in our business outcomes.”**

Kim Huffman, chief information officer, Workiva

Around nine months ago, Amplitude, a digital analytics software company based in San Francisco, kicked off its AI Everywhere program, rolling out an IT agent for employees as its first agentic AI pilot. The organization’s finance, procurement, and marketing functions were all fast followers and now have AI agents of their own.

Amplitude’s IT agent started small in terms of its scope but has already had a sizable impact, says Vikram Singhvi, the company’s vice president of corporate engineering and information technology. “We identified seven very simple, low-impact use cases that an IT agent could perform,” he explains, “things such as adding new users to online teams. These use cases accounted for 40% of our support tickets, so the IT agent has freed up 40% of my team’s capacity. We are now working on our next seven use cases and enhancing our user experience. Our goal is to free up IT help desk capacity by 60% to 70%. With this available capacity, the team will focus on building more AI use cases.”

Companies are also starting to think about how they can deploy agentic AI to improve the customer experience. At Jotform, a San Francisco-based company that builds online forms, an AI agent designed for customer service now has 15,000 active users. But its single biggest user group is somewhat surprising: Jotform’s own customer support team.

“We put an AI agent on our website to provide customer support to our users,” says Aytakin Tank, Jotform’s founder and chief executive officer. “Around 20 of our own customer service representatives were able to stop answering customers and instead start reviewing conversations between the agent and our customers. We looked for patterns in their requests and started solving common problems by providing new tools to the Jotform AI agent.”

While the potential of agentic AI is significant, many organizations are being deliberate and strategic in their approach rather than rushing to full adoption. Workiva’s three-year AI ambition is bold—every function will eventually have its own agent or team of agentic assistants—but the company is moving step by step. “We have been on this

**Workiva’s Huffman says that looking for use cases that are already automated is a good place to start. “If you can’t automate a process, you can’t easily ‘agentify’ it. If a workflow is automated and the data is clean, it is probably more ripe for agentic AI.”**

journey for a little over a year, but there’s a lot of hype, so we have taken a very thoughtful and pragmatic approach, one that is grounded in our business outcomes,” explains Workiva’s Huffman. “We start with a value hypothesis of the use cases we’re testing, define how we’re going to assess our value hypothesis and measure value, and then if we see the value we expected, we build out our deployment at scale.”

So far, most of Workiva’s early exploration with agentic AI has been in the sales and marketing functions, where teams are experimenting with sales assistants and lead scoring agents. But both Workiva and Amplitude are piloting agentic AI in functions where survey respondents expect the technology to have its greatest ultimate impact: the IT department (56%), followed by operations (55%), marketing (32%), and sales (31%). Huffman says that looking for use cases that are already automated is a good place to start. “If you can’t automate a process, you can’t easily ‘agentify’ it,” she explains. “If a workflow is automated and the data is clean, it is probably more ripe for agentic AI.”

Workiva was an enthusiastic early adopter of gen AI and has seen great results from its content-related gen AI tools. On the agentic AI front, it is still too early to say what the net impact on the business will be, though Huffman says expectations are high. While many companies in our survey have yet to see the impact of their agentic AI investments, their expectations are for improved organizational efficiency (67%), cost savings (62%), and improved employee agility, speed, and responsiveness (54%). These are also,

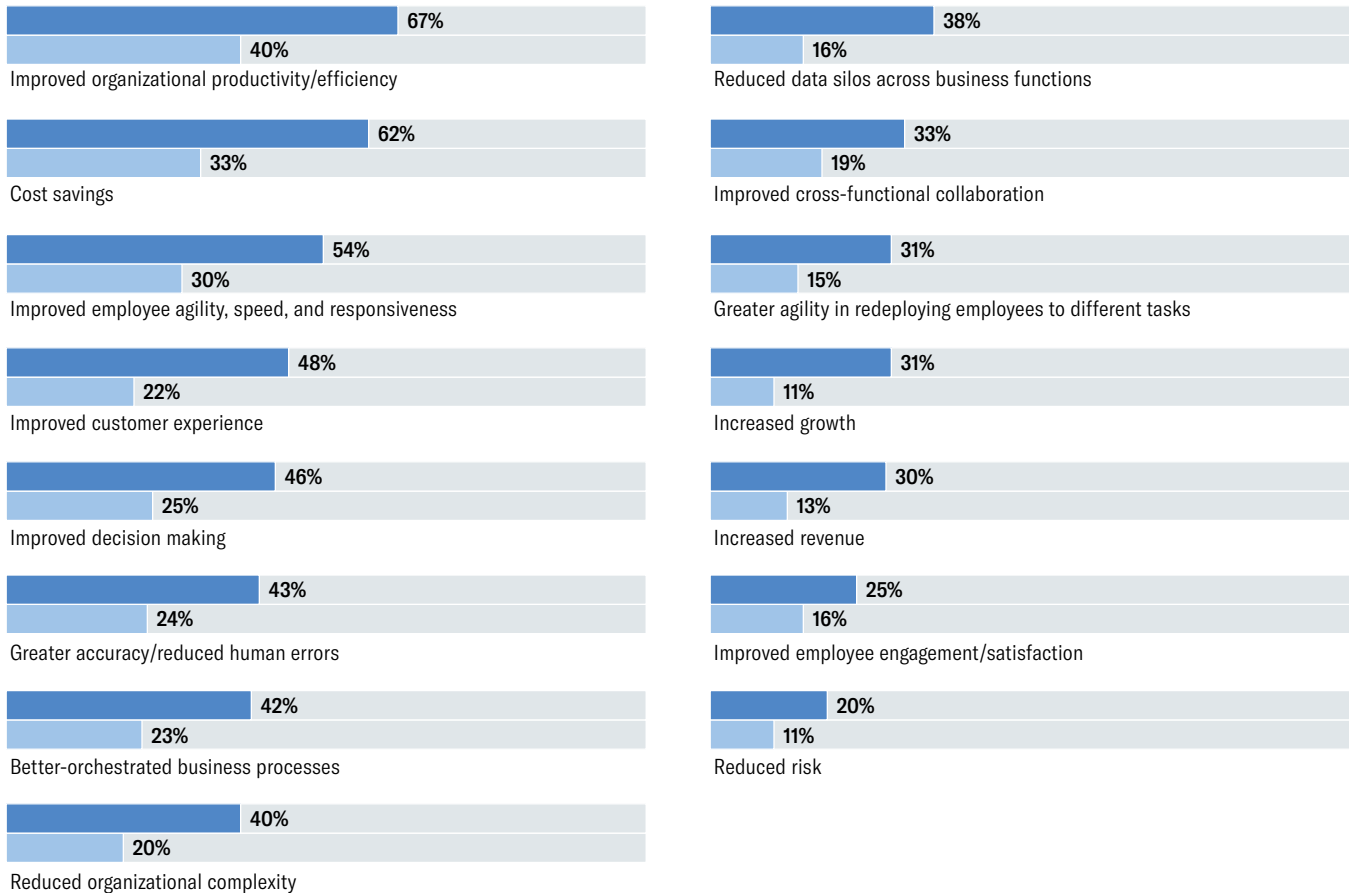
FIGURE 2

## Achieved Benefits Fall Short of Expectations

But the bulk of agentic AI achievement has occurred where it was most expected

What benefits would your organization expect to achieve from agentic AI implementation?  
What benefits, if any, has your organization achieved from agentic AI implementation to date?

■ Expect to achieve ■ Has achieved, among those using or piloting agentic AI



Base: 603 respondents expect to achieve benefits; 358 respondents say their organization has fully deployed or is piloting agentic AI and has achieved benefits.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

incidentally, the top three areas where benefits are being achieved. FIGURE 2

How successful organizations are in achieving the kind of impact hoped for from their agentic AI implementations may come down to readiness, likely because agentic AI is not a simple plug-and-play solution. Agentic AI requires the correct technology and data setup as well as fit-for-purpose risk and governance guardrails.

In fact, many commentators are now calling for a major overhaul of business processes. The global management consulting firm McKinsey & Co., headquartered in New York, says a “rewiring” of organizations is needed to unlock the full value of agentic AI.<sup>2</sup> Tom Davenport, coauthor of *Agentic Artificial Intelligence: Harnessing AI Agents to Reinvent Business, Work, and Life* and the President’s Distinguished Professor of Information Technology at Babson College

in Wellesley, Mass., believes the arrival of agentic AI may finally force companies to rethink traditional ways of doing things. “Agentic AI is inherently a workflow-oriented technology,” he says. “If you are going to use agentic AI, it makes sense to redesign your processes and not just use it to do the same old steps. You need to think, ‘What agents am I going to rely on for this task?’ ‘Where am I going to source these agents?’ and ‘How will humans intervene?’ That definitely takes some process design thinking.”

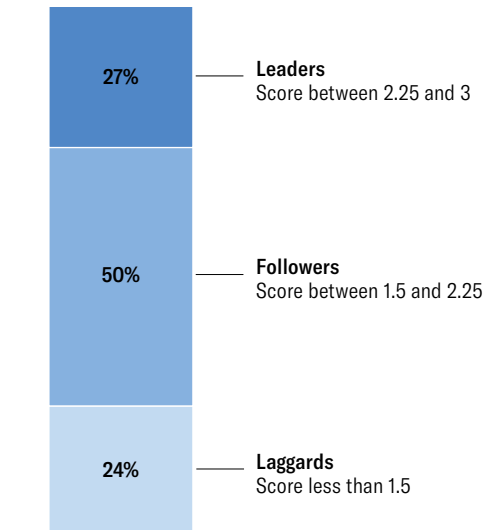
The extent of business process rewiring that is being called for—and the kinds of risks that could be introduced without adequate human-in-the-loop controls—means many organizations are not yet fully ready to support agentic AI adoption for core business processes. Just 20% of respondents say their technology infrastructure is fully ready, 15% say their data and systems are fully ready, 15% say their cybersecurity protocols are fully ready, and only 12% feel their risk and governance controls are fully ready. For the survey, four factors—technology infrastructure, data and systems, cybersecurity protocols, and risk and governance controls—were used to assess organizational readiness. Using these four factors, respondents indicated whether their organization is fully ready, partially ready, or not at all ready to support agentic AI for core business processes. Composite scores were established, where a score of 2.25–3 is a leader, a score of 1.5–2.25 is a follower, and a score of less than 1.5 is a laggard. Just over a quarter of organizations are defined here as leaders in readiness for agentic AI adoption, half are defined as followers, and 24% are defined as laggards. **FIGURE 3**

Organizations that are more ready for agentic AI appear better positioned to see a positive impact from it. Leaders are achieving benefits to a greater extent than are followers and laggards. Forty-two percent of leaders and 41% of followers are seeing improved organizational productivity or efficiency compared to 33% of laggards. Likewise, 43% of leaders are experiencing cost savings from agentic AI implementation, while 29% of followers and only 20% of laggards say the same.

FIGURE 3

### Most Organizations Aren’t Fully Agentic AI-Ready Just over a quarter qualified as leaders based on scoring high on a readiness scale

At your organization, to what extent are the following currently ready to support agentic AI adoption for core business processes?



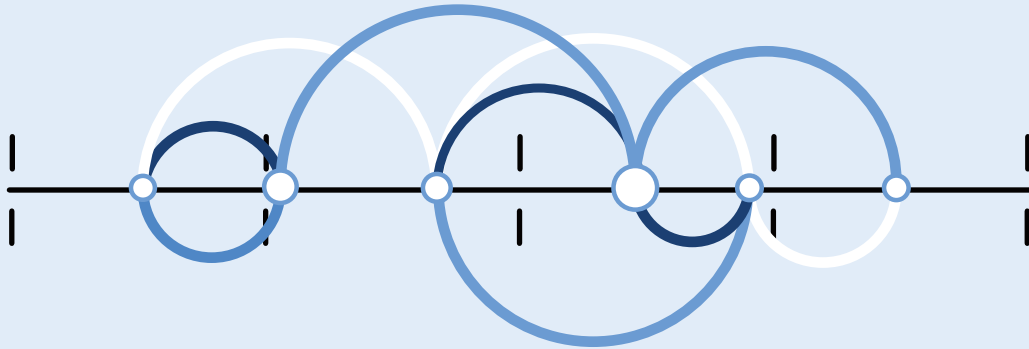
Base: 603 respondents. Scores represent organizational readiness for AI adoption based on four factors: technology infrastructure, data and systems, cybersecurity protocols, and risk and governance controls.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

### Organizational Barriers and Challenges to Adoption

To get the benefits of agentic AI, organizations need to build trust in the technology by reducing the risk of errors or potential data or cybersecurity vulnerabilities and by addressing employee skepticism—including fear that agents may make their jobs obsolete. Companies will also need to prepare their technology and data foundations to ensure agents can access the systems and data needed to execute different tasks.

Issues related to risk and data quality are not new for organizations, but they become increasingly urgent as companies enter this agentic age. They are also the areas where organizations tend to struggle most in their use or adoption of agentic AI. Cybersecurity/privacy concerns represent a key challenge organizations are facing, cited by 31% of respondents, followed by concerns about data output quality (23%), business processes not being ready for



---

Organizations need to build trust in [agentic AI] by reducing the risk of errors or potential data or cybersecurity vulnerabilities and by addressing employee skepticism.

---



**“If your data is not amplified or orchestrated across your different systems, you get a garbage-in, garbage-out solution. And then when it doesn’t work, people blame the AI.”**

Ramanujam Theekshidar, chief digital officer, U.S. Electrical Services

automation (22%), and technology infrastructure limitations (22%). **FIGURE 4**

Risk and governance controls are important to get right, not least to build trust in agentic AI and reassure employees and customers that it is safe to use. Michael Collins, chief executive officer of Alumni Ventures, a venture capital firm located in Manchester, N.H., argues that managing risks with agentic AI is actually about making sound business judgments and treating agents as you would a new hire. “Agentic AI is like a junior employee,” he explains. “At the very beginning, you don’t trust them to do much at all—they need a lot of supervision. But over time, you develop trust in that employee to do more, and with feedback, the quality of their work gets better.”

Another helpful framework for thinking about risk controls is software development, according to Jotform’s Tank. “How do you make sure an agent does not go off the rails and do things it’s not meant to do? Agents are like software, and in software development, you can define things clearly,” he asserts. “Security risk management for software is already a well-established field, so apply the same rules, checks, and balances that you have for software deployment to your AI agents.”

Of course, the “garbage in, garbage out” maxim applies just as much for agentic AI as it does for other forms of AI, including gen AI. Here, again, is where readiness is key. At U.S. Electrical Services Inc., one of the largest distributors of electrical parts to contractors across the United States, headquartered in Middletown, Conn., the quality of data and subject-matter expertise within the business has been a key consideration when deciding which use cases to tackle first with agentic AI.

“In a lot of companies, systems have been built using Band-Aid solutions or layered on top of business processes that were not fully optimized,” says Ramanujam Theekshidar, chief digital officer at U.S. Electrical Services. “If your data is not amplified or orchestrated across your different systems, you get a garbage-in, garbage-out solution. And then when it doesn’t work, people blame the AI. You need to

first look at the use cases you are trying to achieve and then look at the data you have available.”

Theekshidar cautions that the right risk mindset is crucial, given that agentic AI is still an immature technology. “Have the mindset that there are going to be failures,” he notes. “But mitigate the risk so that if you fail, you learn fast and still deliver business outcomes.”

While there are certainly risks and challenges related to agentic AI use, these potential barriers are not deterring organizations from continuing to invest. In fact, 72% of respondents agree that their organization sees the benefits of agentic AI outweighing the risks to the business. Leaders are most likely to take this stance, with 47% strongly agreeing compared with 11% of laggards.

## Maximizing Impact on the Enterprise

Many organizations are understandably focusing their agentic AI efforts on noncore business processes and limited routine tasks. The true power of agentic AI, however, is likely to be felt when companies can use multi-agentic systems to execute end-to-end workflows.

Like Amplitude, Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., has started its agentic AI efforts in the IT help desk space but ultimately sees agentic AI providing a one-stop-shop support solution for students, faculty, employees, and new recruits. Darren Owsley, the university’s deputy chief information officer and chief information security officer, pictures use cases for agentic AI everywhere across the institution and envisages a future where agents could even sit alongside people in the organizational chart. Gonzaga’s IT support agent will eventually expand to include facilities- and recruitment-related service requests and inquiries. This multi-agentic solution is where connectivity across the different systems and applications used within the organization will become crucial, in his view.

“I think the orchestration of these different agents is going to be really impactful,” Owsley claims. “You can’t just

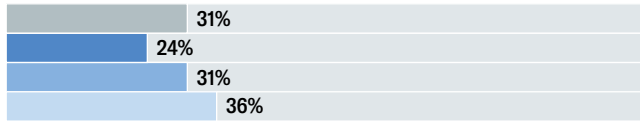
FIGURE 4

## Security and Privacy Concerns Pose Challenges

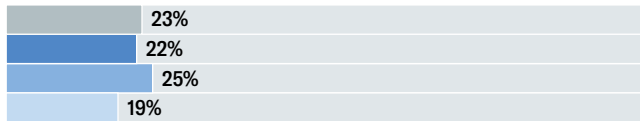
To different degrees, leaders, followers, and laggards face similar agentic AI adoption issues

What are the main challenges your organization has experienced related to agentic AI use or adoption? Select up to three.

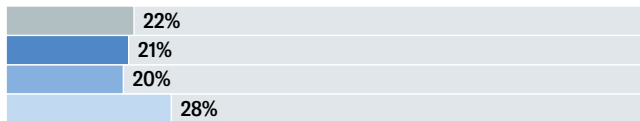
■ Total ■ Leaders ■ Followers ■ Laggards



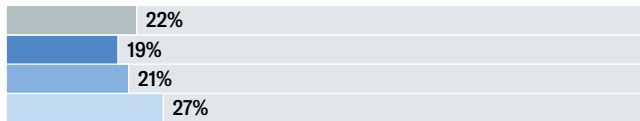
Cybersecurity/privacy concerns



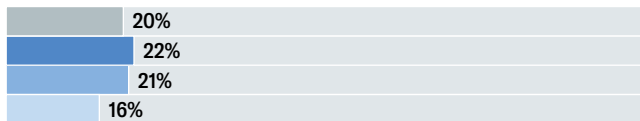
Concerns about data output quality



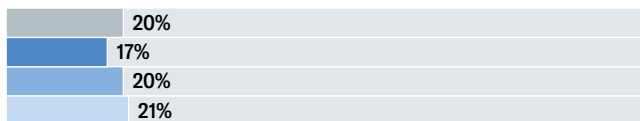
Business processes not ready for automation



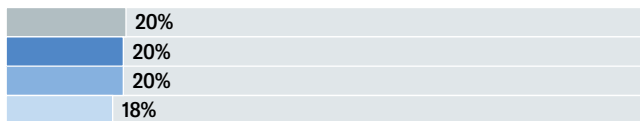
Technology infrastructure limitations



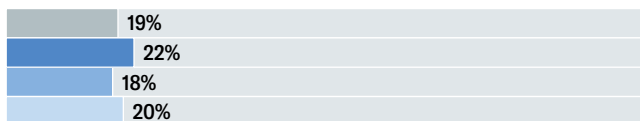
Incomplete context from data to support agentic AI



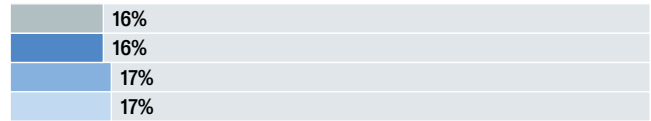
Lack of relevant skills/talent



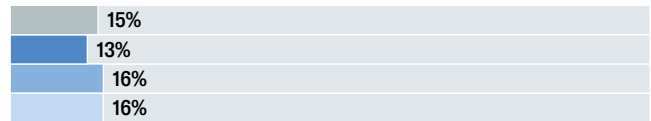
Governance and regulatory uncertainty



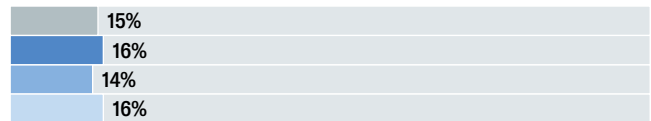
Ethical concerns



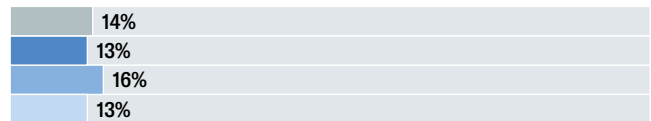
Lack of budget



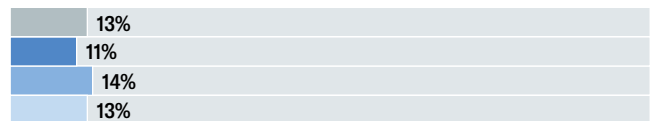
Lack of trust in agentic AI



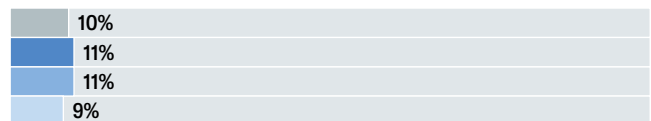
Unclear business value/results



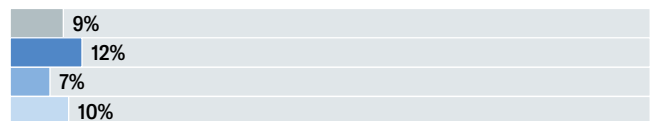
Siloed systems/data



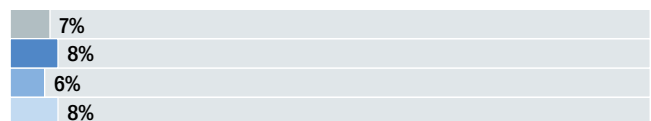
Employee resistance or concerns



Difficulty finding a suitable vendor/solution



Concerns about workforce impacts



Lack of executive support

Base: 603 respondents; varies by segment. Not shown: 0%–1% other, 0%–2% none, 0%–1% don't know, varies by segment.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

have all these agents doing their own thing in an uncoordinated way. That could get out of hand quickly.”

By a stroke of luck or just sound strategic planning, Owsley and his team started thinking about software integrations a few years ago, before agentic AI was even on their radar. “We have hundreds of applications that connect to our enterprise resource planning system,” he explains. “We bought a platform to support data orchestration across these different systems. That platform will now help us ensure consistent interactions as we build out our agents. It will help us put a little bit of governance behind it.”

Many organizations appear to be prioritizing enterprise orchestration in preparation for agentic AI. Also called enterprise integration, the approach aims to connect the various systems, services, and applications across an enterprise to support automation and seamlessly connect data and business processes. Eight percent of respondents say their organization has already implemented enterprise orchestration in preparation for agentic AI use, and 74% are either currently working on implementing it or planning to implement it. Leaders are well ahead of laggards in this space: 21% of leaders have already implemented enterprise orchestration compared to the just 1% of laggards that have done so. **FIGURE 5**

At Amplitude, enterprise orchestration was also already in place before the AI Everywhere program kicked off. “We have many applications and 100 different data pipelines or integrations in our business, and we use an enterprise orchestration platform to connect all of those together,” explains Amplitude’s Singhvi. “All of the data from our different systems passes through this platform, and because our applications are already connected, adding an agentic solution will be an easy lift for us.”

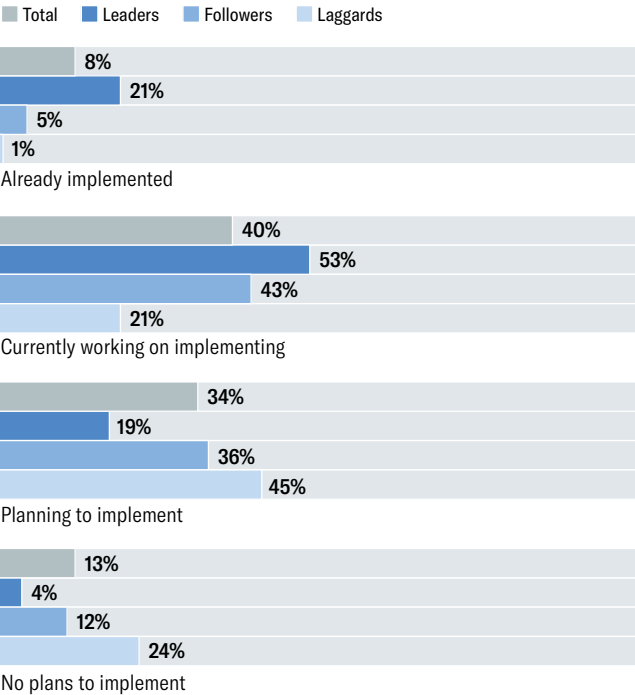
As seen at both Gonzaga and Amplitude, improving connectivity between systems and applications appears to be a leading driver of enterprise orchestration efforts. Similarly, 82% of respondents in the survey say that providing connectivity to applications is a very or moderately

FIGURE 5

**The Enterprise Orchestration Factor**

**A majority of organizations have implemented or plan to implement this connectivity between systems and applications**

Which of the following best describes your organization’s current state regarding enterprise orchestration in preparation for agentic AI?



Base: 603 respondents; varies by segment.

Not shown: 3%–8% don’t know, varies by segment.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

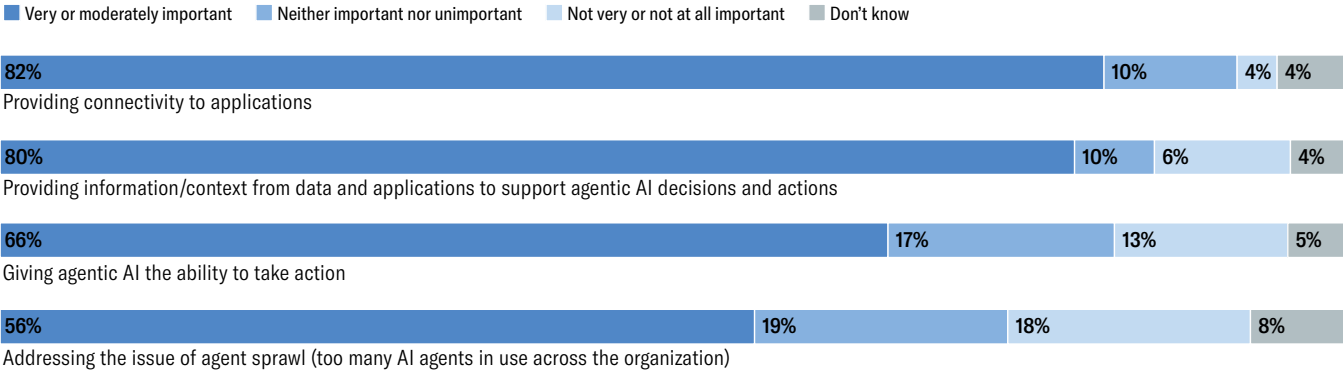
important outcome of enterprise orchestration for their organization, and 80% say providing information/context from data and applications to support agentic AI decisions and actions is a very or moderately important outcome of their enterprise orchestration efforts. **FIGURE 6**

Beyond improved connectivity between data and systems, organizations are taking several other steps to get ready for agentic AI. Training or upskilling employees in agentic AI oversight is a common priority for organizations getting ready for agentic AI use within business processes, having been cited by 44% of respondents. Meanwhile, 39% selected creating responsible AI guardrails and governance as a priority. In particular, training employees in agentic AI oversight appears to be a priority for leaders, with 54% of leaders and 46% of followers doing so compared to 29% of laggards.

FIGURE 6

**Connectivity and Context Are Paramount**  
Applications involving both that support agentic AI are the most important outcomes of enterprise orchestration

How important are each of the following outcomes of enterprise orchestration to your organization?



Base: 603 respondents.

Source: Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey, July 2025

**The Short-Term Outlook**

Much of the debate about organizational readiness for agentic AI is focused on risk or the more technical aspects of technology infrastructure and data connectivity. But other often-overlooked factors could thwart the implementation of agentic AI or prevent organizations from capturing its full value. For Huffman, bringing people along on the journey will be critical. “The change management and reskilling that is going to be required across every company is something I feel has been underestimated,” she says. “If people don’t understand something, they are fearful of it, and then they will be hesitant to embrace it.”

Workiva has started with the basics, such as investing time to create a base-level understanding of AI across the enterprise and then building on this effort with deeper and more-specialized learning modules. AI ambassadors and champions also play a vital role in getting teams comfortable with the technology. “We have AI ambassadors in every function,” Huffman explains. “Their responsibility is to be a carrier of information to their team as well as to identify use cases in their function so we can curate ideas from the broader organization. AI champions then help us assess and test those use cases to see where there is potential value.”

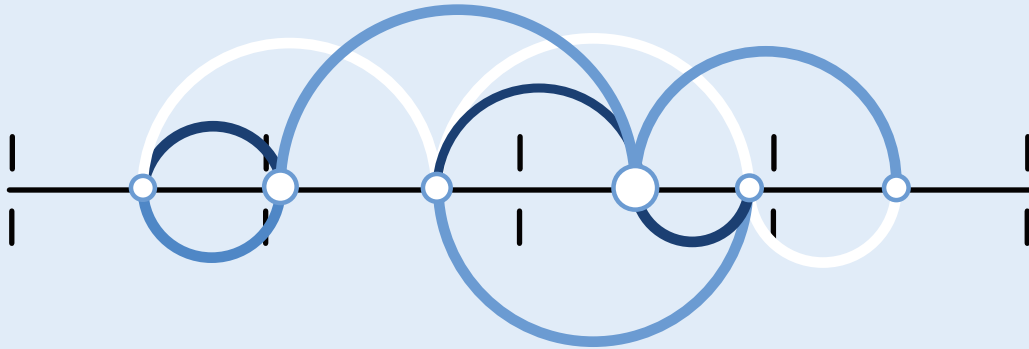
AI adoption is driving the democratization of technology within organizations as employees outside the IT function help drive the adoption of new tools and technologies.

Gonzaga, for example, is crowding in as many different people as possible to get its agentic AI pilots off the ground. “We brought together a very diverse group of individuals to work on our IT agent,” explains Gonzaga’s Owsley. “We handpicked individuals from information security, project management, all areas of the IT function, and even students, who brought in some really fresh ideas and perspectives.”

Given the pace at which AI is advancing, the next couple of years are likely to introduce a lot of change for those organizations that are eager to transform their business with agentic AI. Not surprisingly, 86% of respondents expect their organization’s investment in agentic AI to increase over the next two years.

What is more encouraging, however, is that companies appear to understand that investment can’t just be in agentic AI itself; it also needs to happen in areas that will ultimately support agentic AI to deliver results—solutions such as enterprise orchestration. Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents agree that in the next two years their organization expects to invest in technologies and platforms to help it deploy agentic AI within core organizational processes.

For all the enthusiasm and intended investment, Northeastern’s De Cremer believes every organization’s agentic journey is unique and will involve experimentation and change. “AI adoption is an iterative exercise,” he asserts. “In part, it’s a technology-adoption exercise, but it is much more a behavioral exercise because people need to accept it, they need to learn how to work with it, they need training,



---

Eighty-six percent of respondents expect their organization's investment in agentic AI to increase over the next two years.

and they need to give fast feedback on what works and what doesn't. Businesses also need to think about which parts of jobs are automated and what to do with people who no longer perform those tasks."

Babson's Davenport advises companies starting out on this journey to do something simple: They should lean on their vendors and start small. "I think a lot of the progress we will see with agentic AI in the next two years will come from

technology and software vendors," he says. "To get going, pick something noncritical and fully internal to begin with and work with your existing vendors to understand what they are doing in that space. Adopt some of their capabilities to try out an agent, and then start the important work of thinking about how you are going to redesign your processes to take advantage of this new capability."

---

## Endnotes

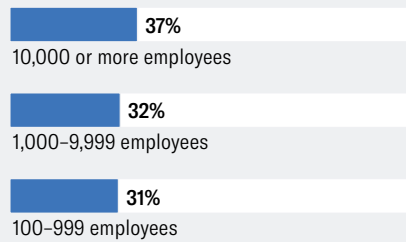
- 1 Jessica Apotheke, Vinciane Beauchene, Nicolas de Bellefonds, et al., "The Widening AI Value Gap," Boston Consulting Group, September 2025. <https://media-publications.bcg.com/The-Widening-AI-Value-Gap-Sept-2025.pdf>.
- 2 Alex Singla, Alexander Sukharevsky, Lareina Yee, et al., "The state of AI – How organizations are rewiring to capture value," McKinsey & Co., March 2025. <https://sitic.org/the-state-of-ai-how-organizations-are-rewiring-to-capture-value/>



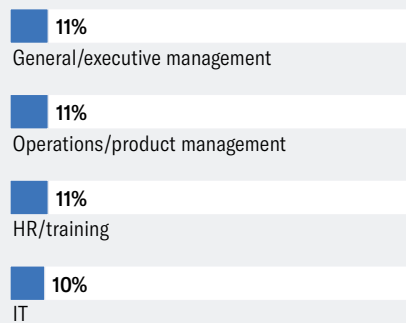
## METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Harvard Business Review Analytic Services surveyed 603 members of the *Harvard Business Review* audience via an online survey fielded in July 2025. Respondents qualified to complete the survey if they are involved in their organization's technology decisions (including decisions to use/not use agentic AI) and are from organizations that have at least considered using agentic AI.

### ORGANIZATION SIZE

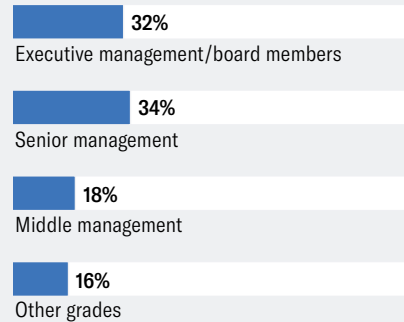


### JOB FUNCTIONS

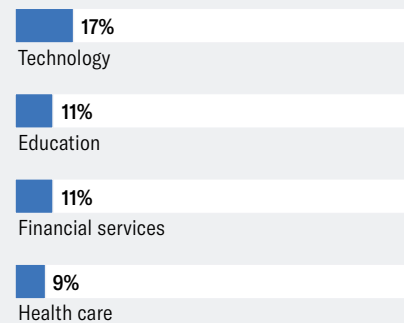


All other sectors less than 8% each.

### SENIORITY

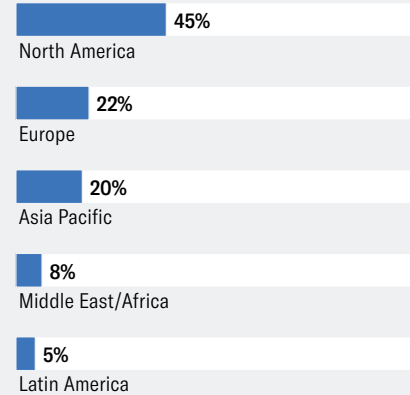


### INDUSTRIES



All other sectors less than 8% each.

### REGIONS





VISIT US ONLINE

**[hbr.org/hbr-analytic-services](https://hbr.org/hbr-analytic-services)**

Harvard Business Review Analytic Services is an independent commercial research unit within Harvard Business Review Group, conducting research and comparative analysis on important management challenges and emerging business opportunities. Seeking to provide business intelligence and peer-group insight, each report is published based on the findings of original quantitative and/or qualitative research and analysis. Quantitative surveys are conducted with the HBR Advisory Council, HBR's global research panel, and qualitative research is conducted with senior business executives and subject-matter experts from within and beyond the *Harvard Business Review* author community. Email us at [hbranalyticservices@hbr.org](mailto:hbranalyticservices@hbr.org).