



Work Relationship Index 2026

The race to adapt

2026 sees workplace confidence returning, as successful leaders and employees adapt in the face of uncertainty



Now in its fourth year, HP's Work Relationship Index has been tracking the world's relationship with work through a period of ongoing disruption.

In 2026, HP surveyed more than 19,000 desk-based workers across 15 countries, including Knowledge Workers, IT Decision Makers (ITDMs), and Business Leaders to measure key drivers of a healthy work relationship.

After a sharp drop in 2025, workplace health is recovering. The share of Knowledge Workers with a healthy relationship with work has risen by eight percentage points. But uncertainty has not gone away: seven in ten Knowledge Workers remain in the Watch-Out or Critical Zones.

The lesson for leaders is clear. The workers with the healthiest relationship with work are not the ones waiting for stability to return. Leaders need to facilitate the capacity to adapt through trust, upskilling, and technology.

The Work Relationship Index



1. Workplace health is recovering, but uncertainty is here to stay



2. Emerging markets lead for tech optimism and AI



3. AI is becoming a resilience tool



4. AI creating new roles and reshaping work



5. Trust and communication are leadership imperatives



6. Adaptation depends on future-ready skills



7. Technology is the infrastructure of adaptation



8. Technology and skills are key enablers of doing your best work

The WRI provides a blueprint for how businesses can act.

The story of work in 2026 is one of organizations learning to thrive in an environment where uncertainty has become a permanent feature of working life.

The healthiest workplaces are not necessarily those operating in the least disruptive environments. Rather, they're the ones that equip people with the confidence, skills, technology, and support they need to adapt successfully and thrive amid that disruption. As uncertainty becomes an enduring reality, workers increasingly value employers that help them grow, build resilience, and navigate change with confidence.

For leaders looking to build healthier, more resilient, and growing organizations, this year's findings point toward five priorities

01

Build adaptability, not stability

Accept disruption as the new normal and help employees respond to change faster. The strongest signals of workplace success come from those most comfortable with change

02

Actively use AI to strengthen the workforce

Position AI as a tool for performance growth and resilience, not just efficiency, and help workers progress from generative AI to using AI agents

03

Lead with trust and transparency

Clear communication and visible leadership are critical during periods of change, especially to help alleviate Knowledge Worker anxiety about AI

04

Prioritize future-ready skills

Invest in upskilling and transferable skills to help employees adapt over time as job roles and responsibilities change.

05

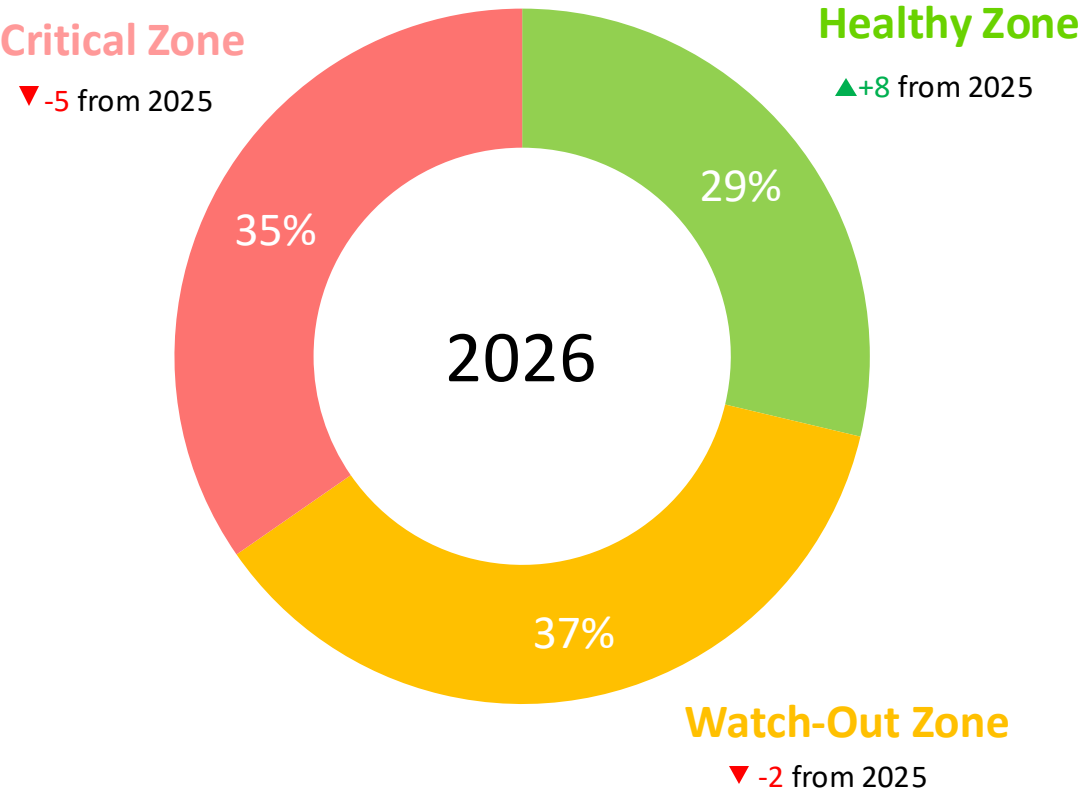
Provide proactive technology and tools

Equip ITDMs with proactive technology and DEX solutions to support and measure employee fulfillment and effective working through organizational change

1. Workplace health is recovering, but uncertainty still defines the future of work



Work Relationship Index



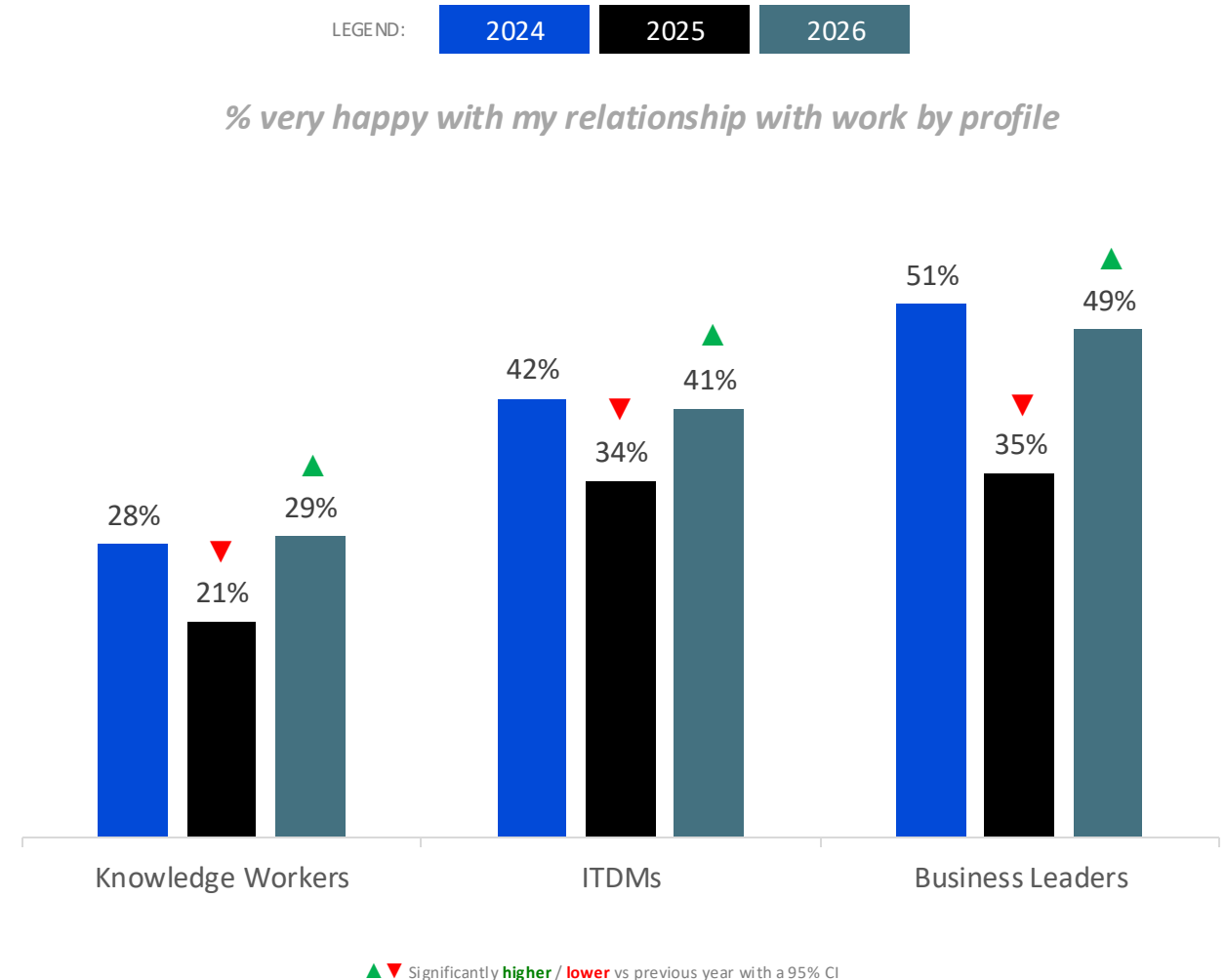
After a difficult 2025, **workplace health has broadly returned to 2024 levels**. 29% of Knowledge Workers now report a healthy relationship with work, up from 21% last year. However, one in three (35%) are in the Critical Zone.

WRI scores are calculated by asking survey respondents to evaluate how happy they are in their relationship with work on a 5-point scale. Healthy Zone = 5, Watch-Out Zone = 4, Critical Zone = 1 to 3

▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower vs 2025 with a 95% CI

This improvement in workplace health is seen across all profiles studied by HP,

but Business Leaders (49%) and ITDMs (41%) continue to report meaningfully healthier relationships with work than Knowledge Workers (29%), a consistent gap that suggests a structural divide in workplace health.



And while workers of all ages have posted strong increases in WRI scores, there is still a substantial gulf between the experiences of older and younger generations. Only 27% of Gen X report a positive relationship with work, the lowest of any generation, just behind Boomers at 29% and seven points lower than either Gen Z or Millennials.

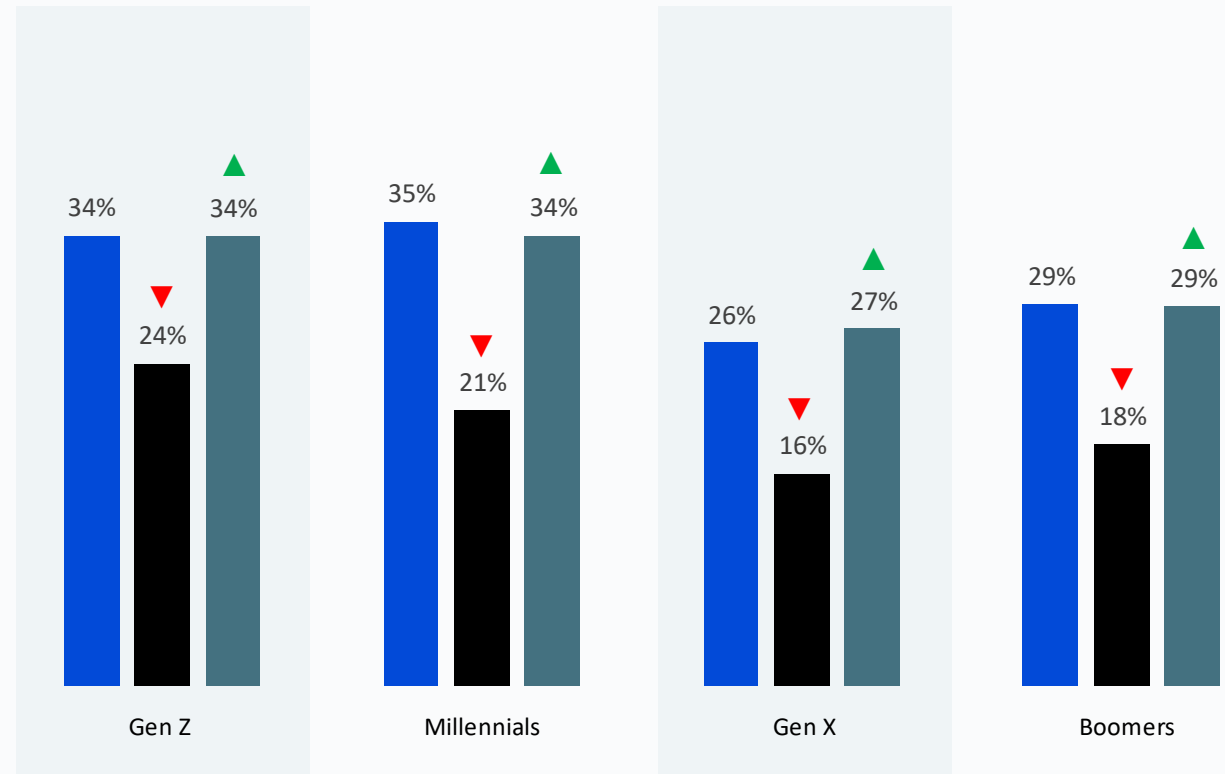
LEGEND:

2024

2025

2026

% very happy with relationship with work by generation (WRI)



▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower vs previous year with a 95% CI

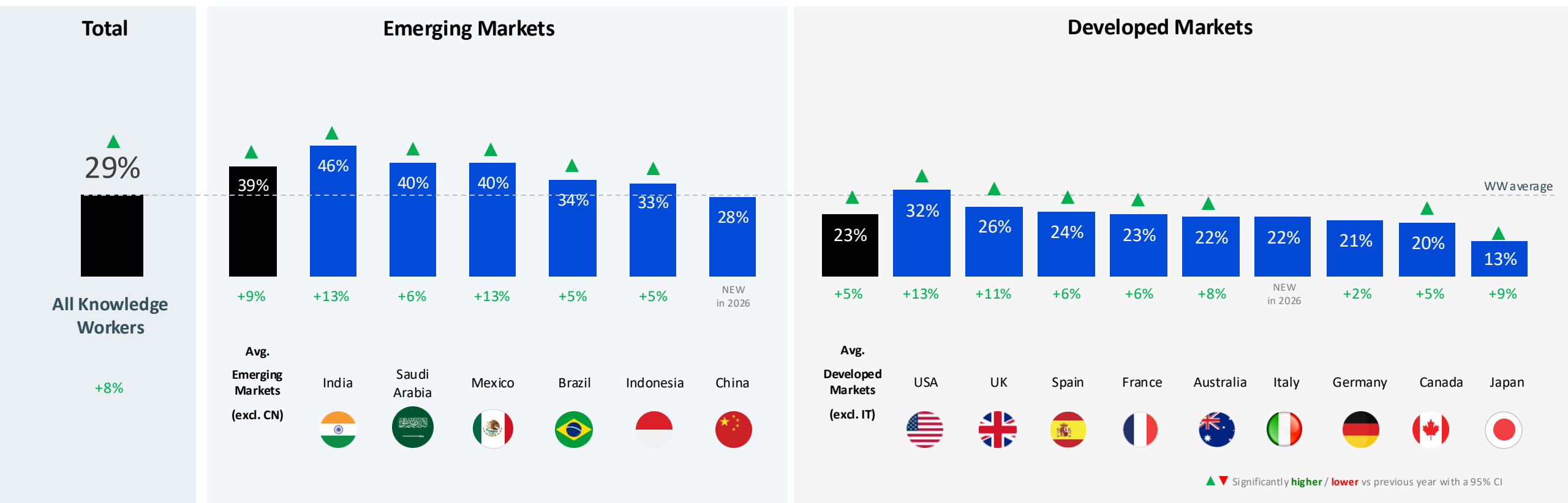
Emerging markets continue to set the pace for workplace health

India (46%), Mexico, and Saudi Arabia (40% each) lead on workplace health, while momentum is strongest in India and Mexico.

In developed markets, the US leads with a WRI score of 32%, though it still trails almost every emerging market. Among developed markets, Japan (13%) and Canada (20%) have the lowest share of Knowledge Workers with a healthy relationship with work.

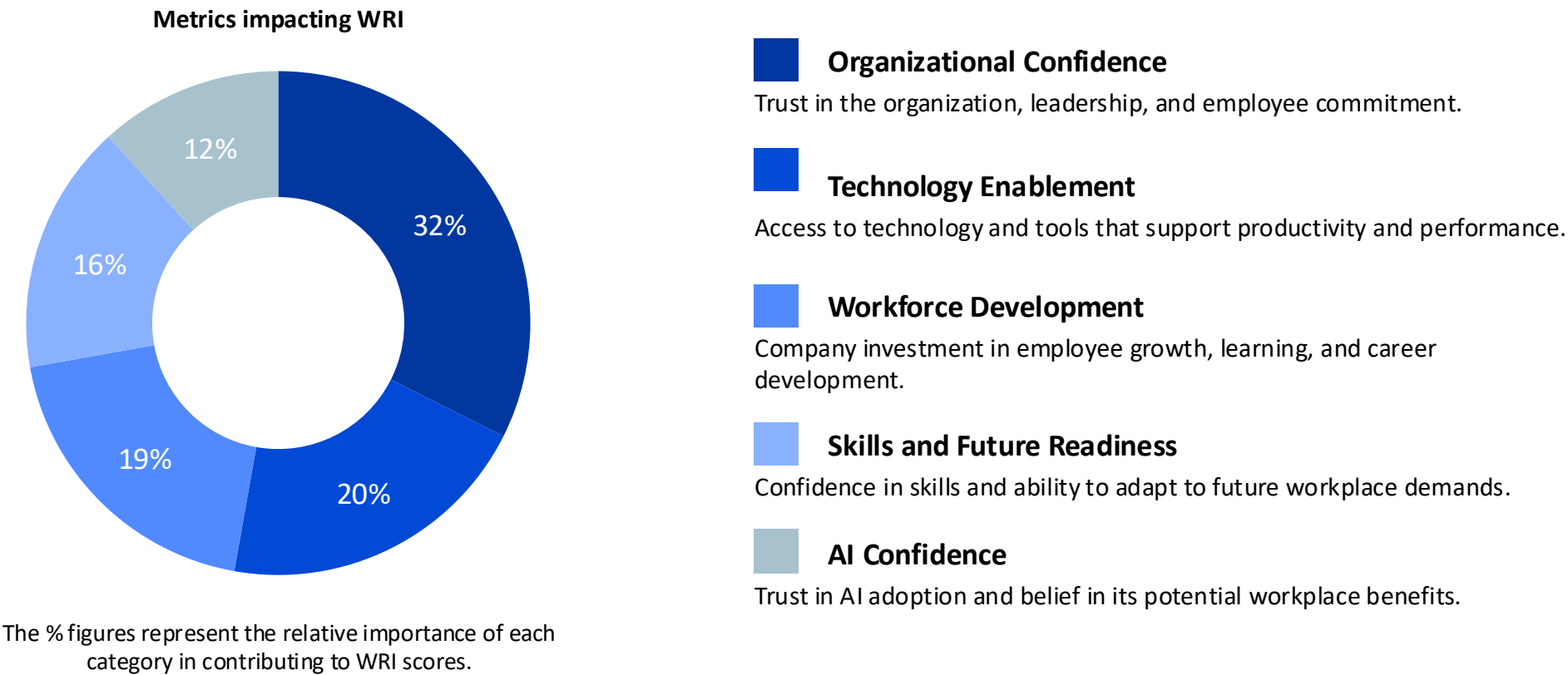
While there are many factors shaping this divide, technology adoption is certainly a crucial one. Emerging markets consistently lead in AI adoption and are more positive about its impact on work.

% very happy with relationship with work by country (WRI)



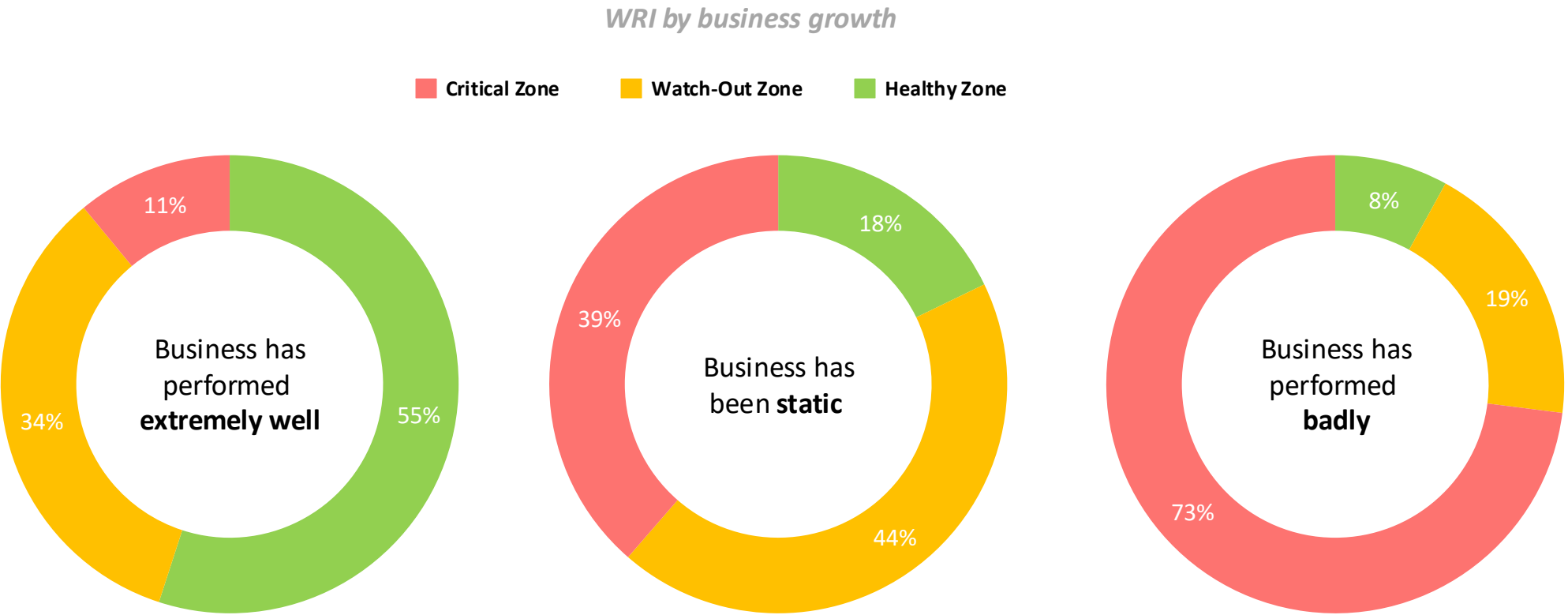
In developed and emerging markets alike, we see the same factors underlying improved relationships with work. **Leadership confidence and technology enablement are key influencers of WRI scores.**

Trust in leadership may be the single biggest lever, but workers looking to adapt to continued change also need the right tools and skills, as well as confidence in how AI is being introduced into their organizations.



Ultimately, improvements in WRI scores matter because business performance and healthy work relationships reinforce a virtuous cycle of growth.

Workers at high-performing companies are around six times more likely to have a healthy relationship with work than those at poorly performing companies (55% vs. 8%). This shows that investing in the factors leaders can control such as leadership, technology, and skills can support both healthier workplaces and stronger growth.



There's been a strong recovery in workplace health
relative to 2025.

This recovery, however, is best read as evidence of adaptation in progress. Disruption still shapes the modern workplace, but leaders are starting to manage the 85% of factors they can control. Using the levers of trust, technology, skills, and clarity, they are helping workers navigate uncertainty more effectively

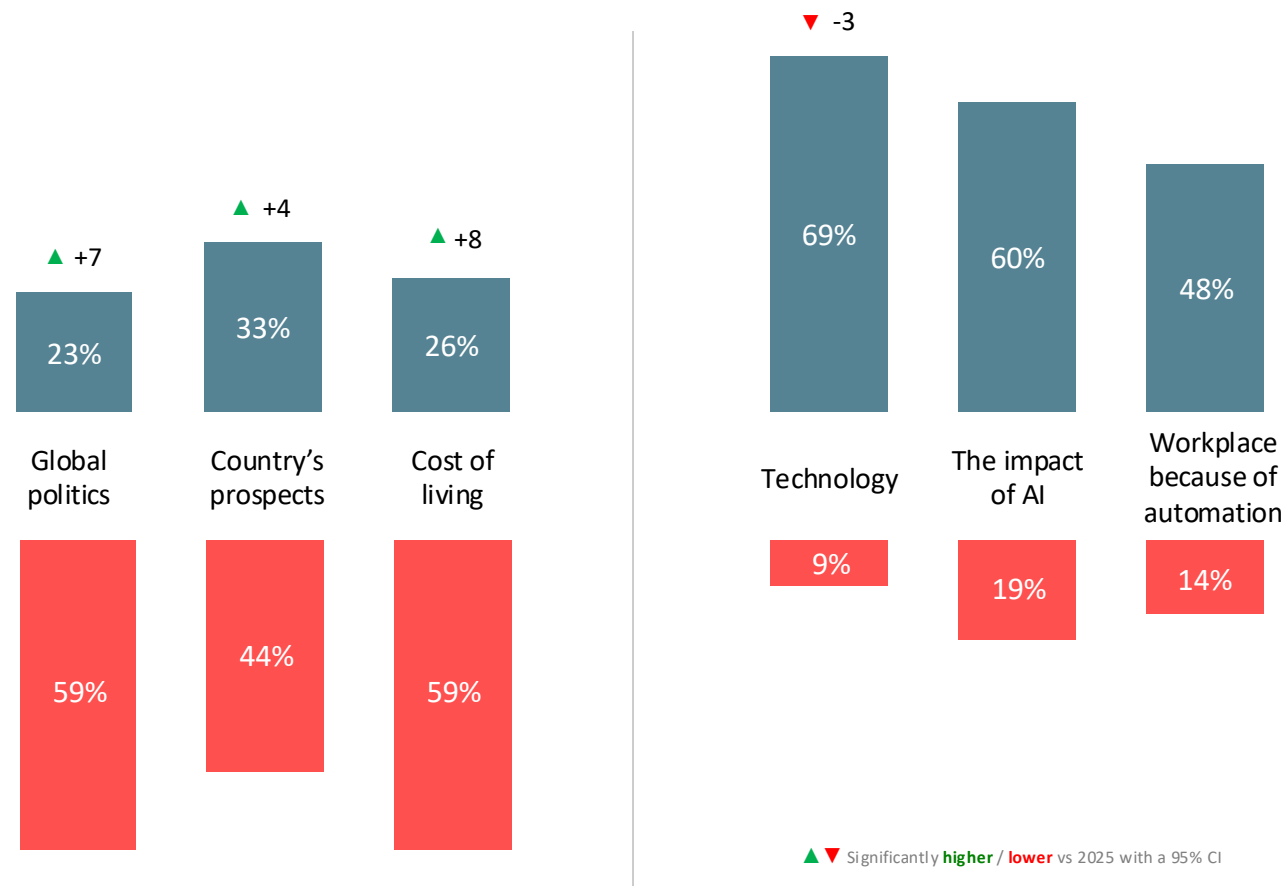
2. Emerging markets lead the race to adapt, as more workers view technology and AI as sources of optimism



Technology and new skills are helping workers adapt to change and disruption.

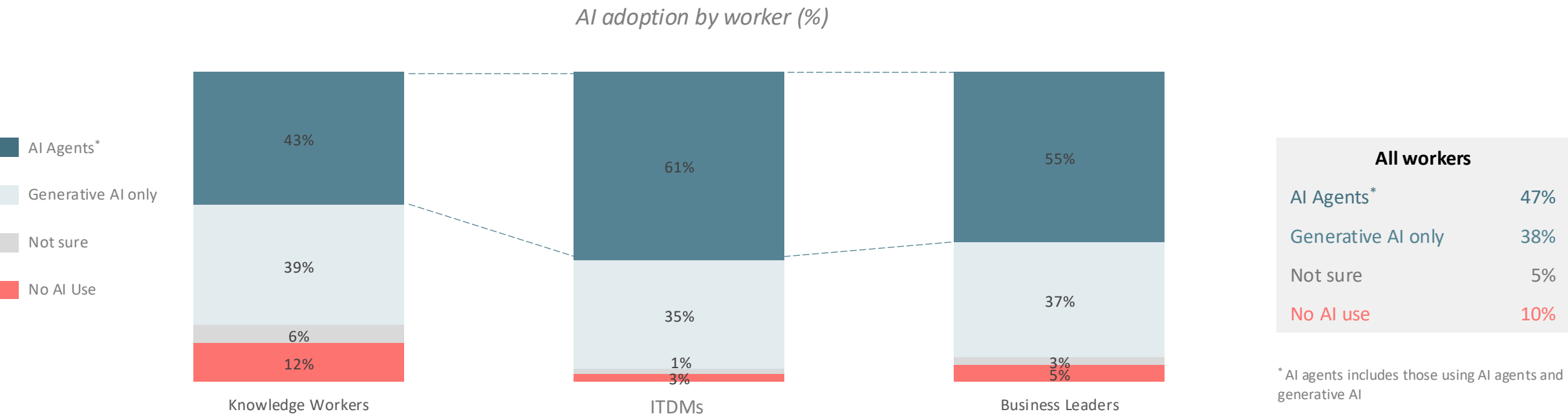
While most say global politics, the economy, and the cost of living have worsened over the past two years, 69% say technology has been a source of positive change within their lives, and 60% say AI's impact on their lives has improved. This optimism toward AI is strongest among workers in the Healthy WRI Zone, where 72% take a positive view towards the impact of AI.

Thinking back to two years ago - would you say the following areas of your life are **better** or **worse** today?



The optimism around AI is translating into adoption.

Workers at all levels are leaning into AI agents, with ITDMs and Business leaders leading the way.

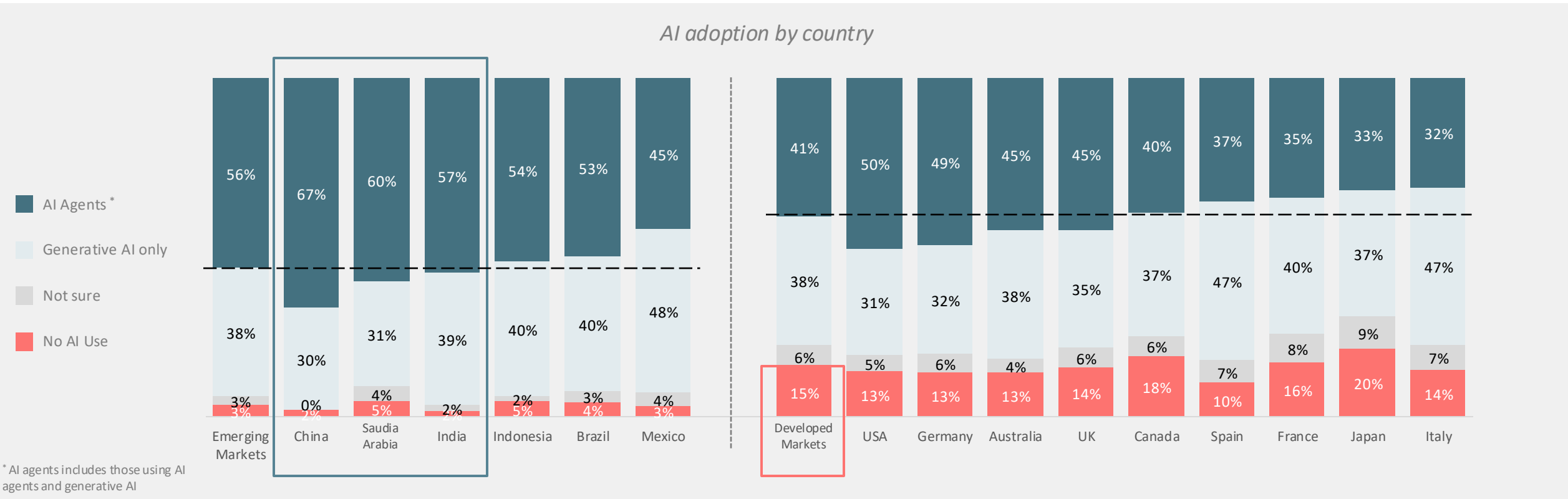


Workers at all levels are leaning into AI agents

47% of all workers report using AI agents compared to 38% who are using generative AI only. ITDMs (61%) and Business Leaders (55%) are ahead of Knowledge Workers (43%) in agentic AI use. continuing the pattern seen previously in the WRI of leadership and technical roles adopting new tools first.

The optimism around AI is translating into adoption.

More workers in emerging markets are using AI agents than in developed markets.



China, Saudi Arabia, and India are setting the pace on agentic AI adoption

These countries show AI agent usage well above the developing markets average. Developed markets overall are still catching up: the US (50%). Germany (49%), and Australia (45%) lead that group, but still trail China at 67%.



Technology is only one of the ways businesses are adapting.

Organizational change is now part of the leadership playbook, as leaders look to build more flexible workforces, strengthen adaptive capacity and reimagine operating models for a post-AI world.

86% of Knowledge Workers experienced organizational change in the past year, and 88% of Business Leaders introduced it, most often by raising performance targets (37%) or cutting costs (27%).

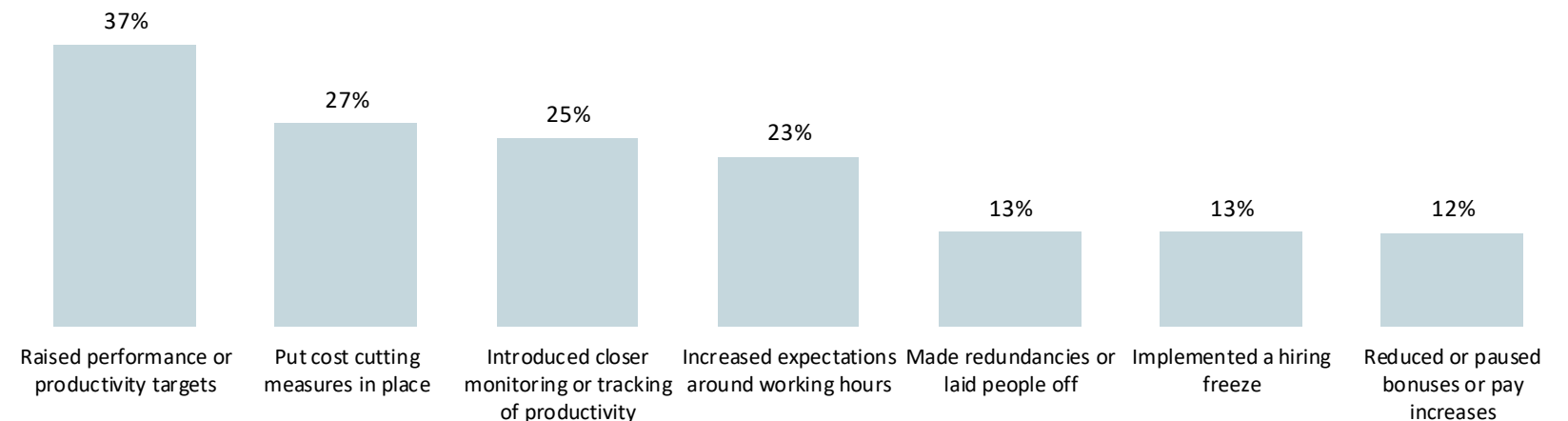
86%

of Knowledge Workers report experiencing organizational change, which has now become a constant way of life for the workforce.

88%

of Business Leaders have introduced organizational changes in the past 12 months.

% of Business Leaders who introduced any of the following at their company in the past 12 months

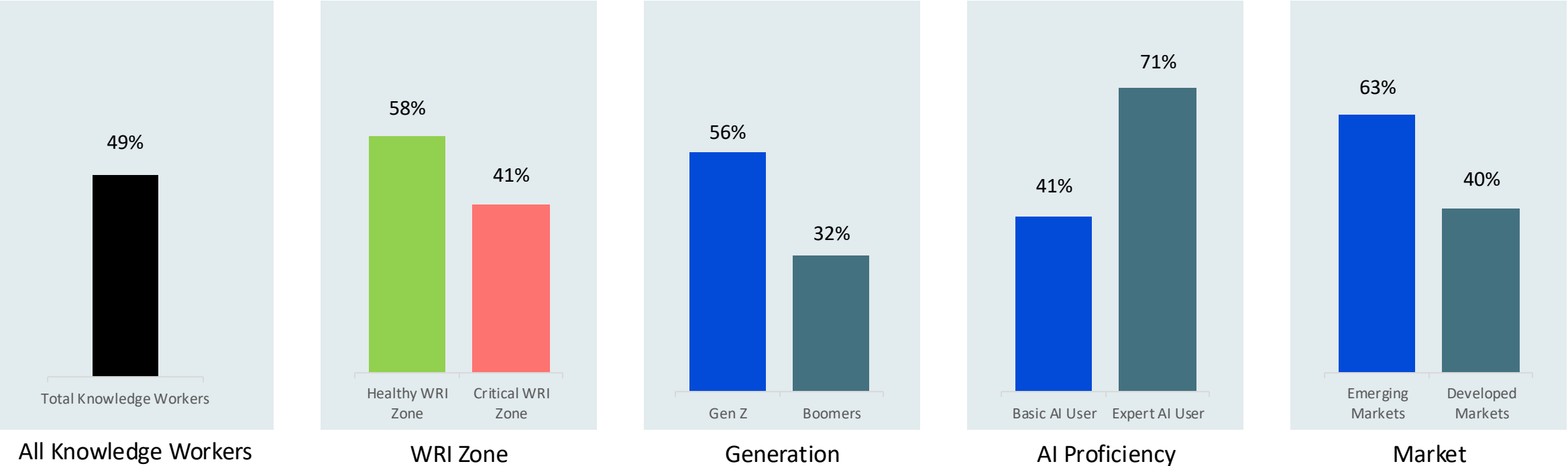


The constant change is reshaping how workers think about their careers,

making agility and continuous skill development priorities even for top performers. Workers in the Healthy WRI Zone are more likely than those in the Critical Zone to anticipate a major career pivot in the coming years (58% vs. 41%). This mindset is especially pronounced among Gen Z and workers in emerging markets, who are more likely than Boomers and those in developed markets to prioritize building new skills.

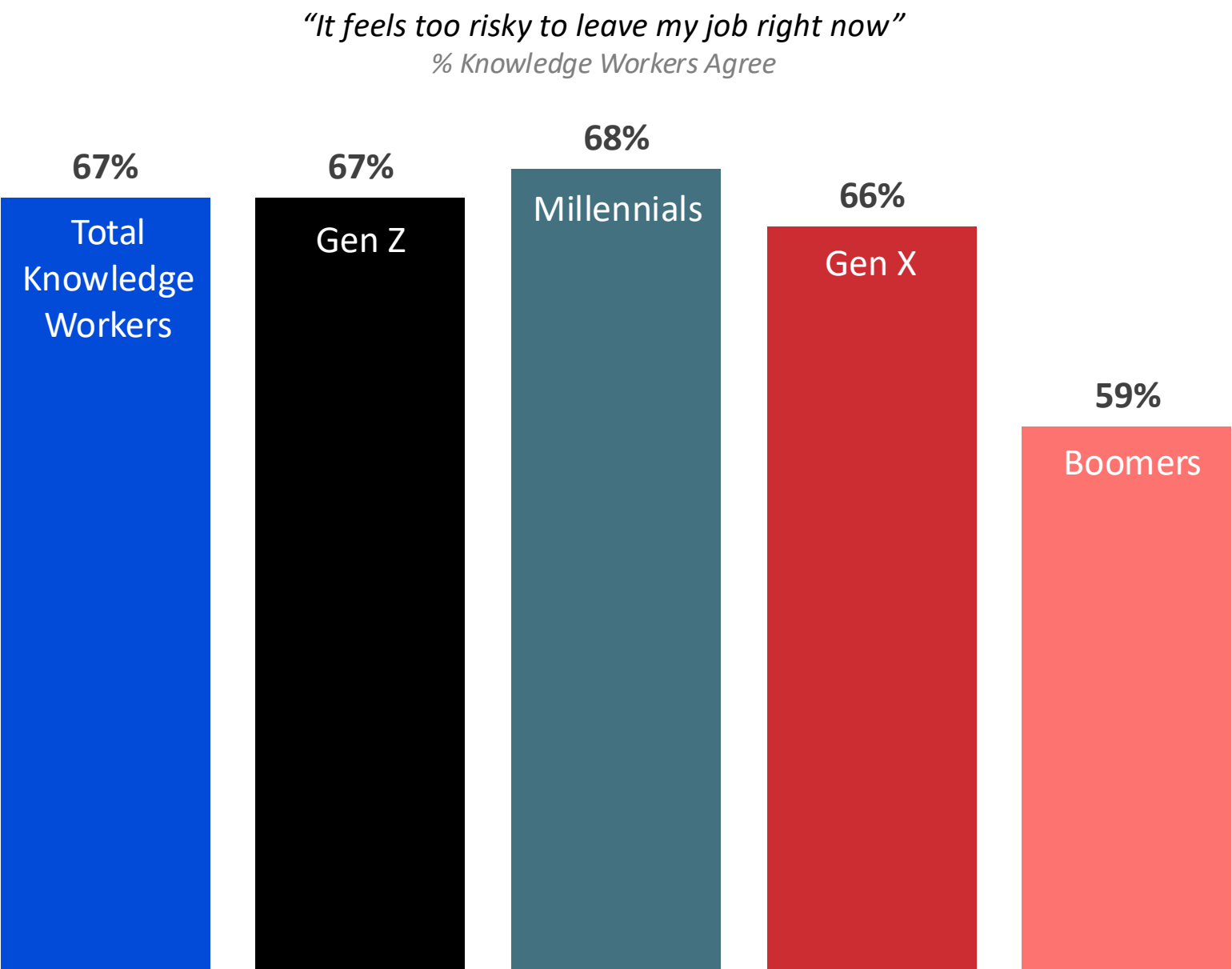
“I may need to significantly pivot my career in the next few years”

% Knowledge Workers Agree



With change and uncertainty now baseline facts of life in many industries, workers are becoming increasingly cautious and are less likely to take risks when it comes to their careers.

Two-thirds of Knowledge Workers say it feels too risky to leave their job right now, a trend known as "job hugging". For leaders, the challenge is to build support that makes people want to stay, not simply feel unable to leave.



As work becomes less predictable, and employees feel unable to leave their current roles in search of entirely new opportunities, one in three (36%) **workers are embracing side hustles or personal ventures as a form of insurance.** Knowledge Workers with a side hustle or personal venture are more likely to be in the Healthy WRI Zone (38%, +9 points), suggesting companies may benefit from supporting employees who pursue these initiatives.



36% of workers run an income-generating side hustle or venture

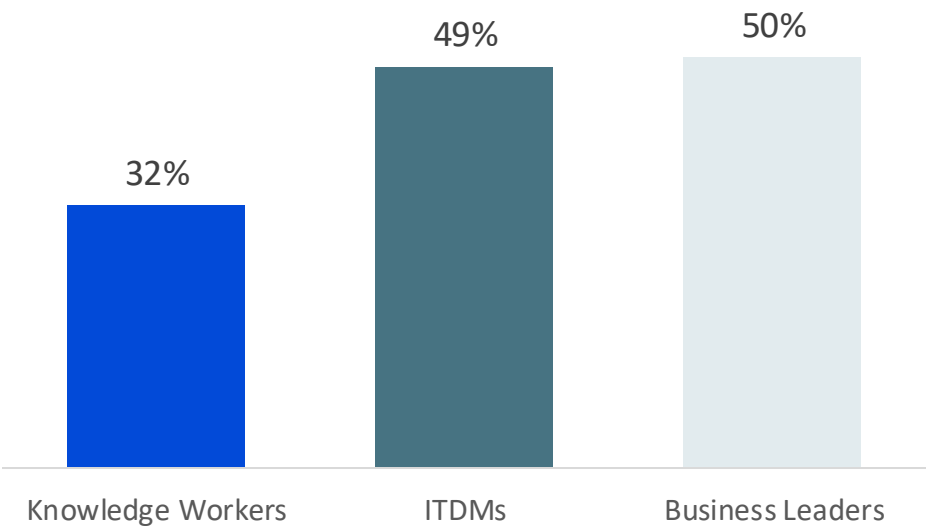
48% of Gen Z report having an income generating side hustle

vs.
↳ 38% Millennials
↳ 23% Gen X
↳ 13% Boomers

47% of workers in Emerging Markets report having an income generating side hustle

vs.
↳ 28% Developed Markets

% Workers with an income-generating side hustle



Taken together, the changes observed in this year's WRI point to a workforce consciously adapting to seize opportunity rather than passively waiting for stability to return.

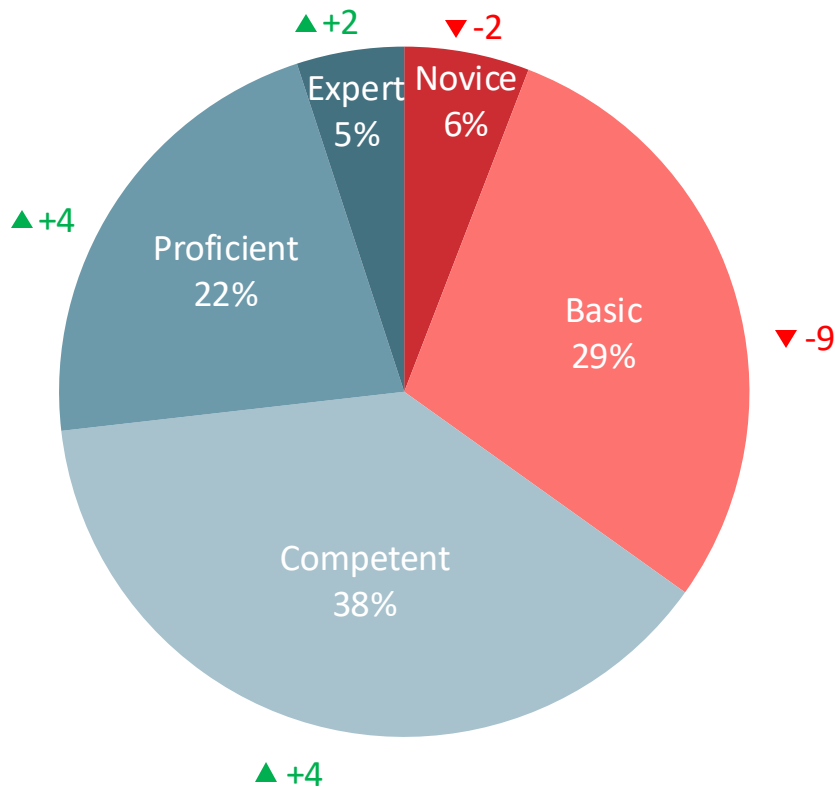
Workers may feel that now is too risky to make major career changes, but they're building new skills, embracing technology, experimenting with AI, and creating additional sources of security where possible.

4. Leaders are embracing the potential of AI to create new roles and change how work gets done



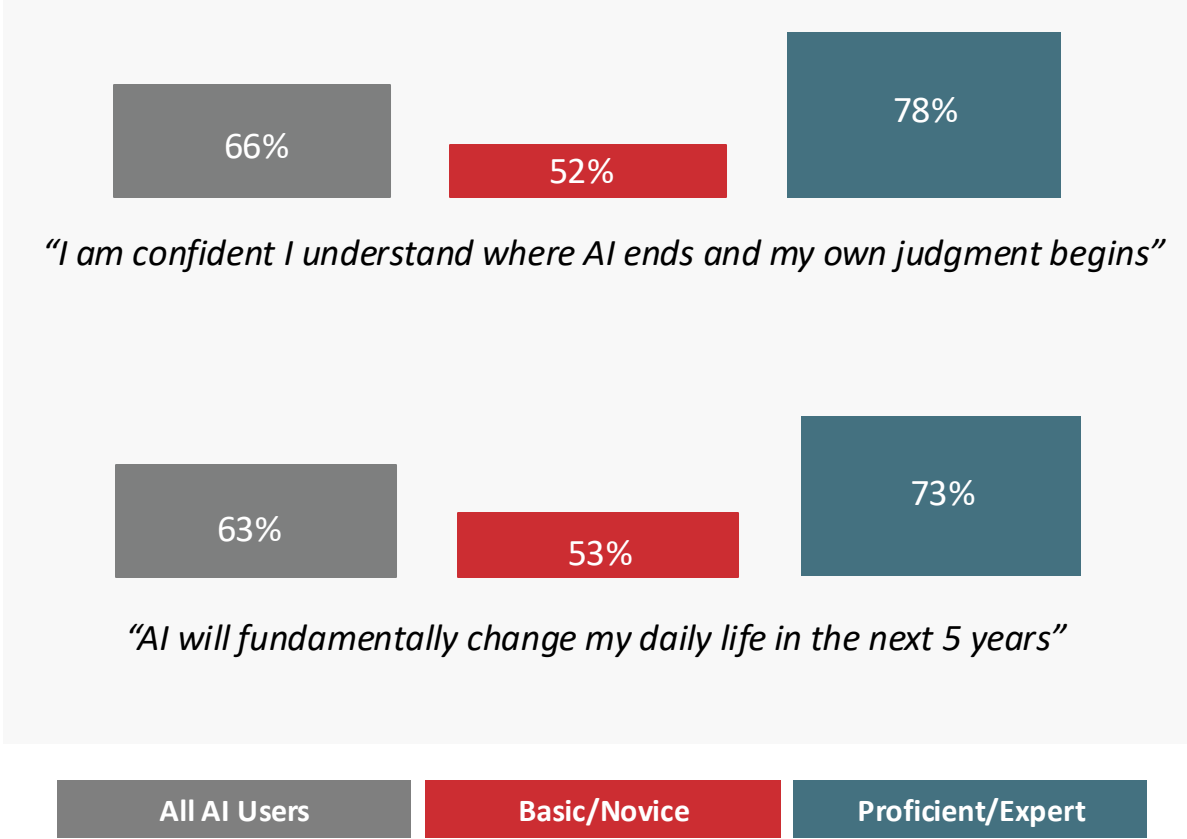
Workers' relationship with AI has developed and matured. Daily use has risen from 31% of workers in 2025 to 39% in 2026, and proficiency appears to build confidence.

% Self-reported AI proficiency (Knowledge Workers)



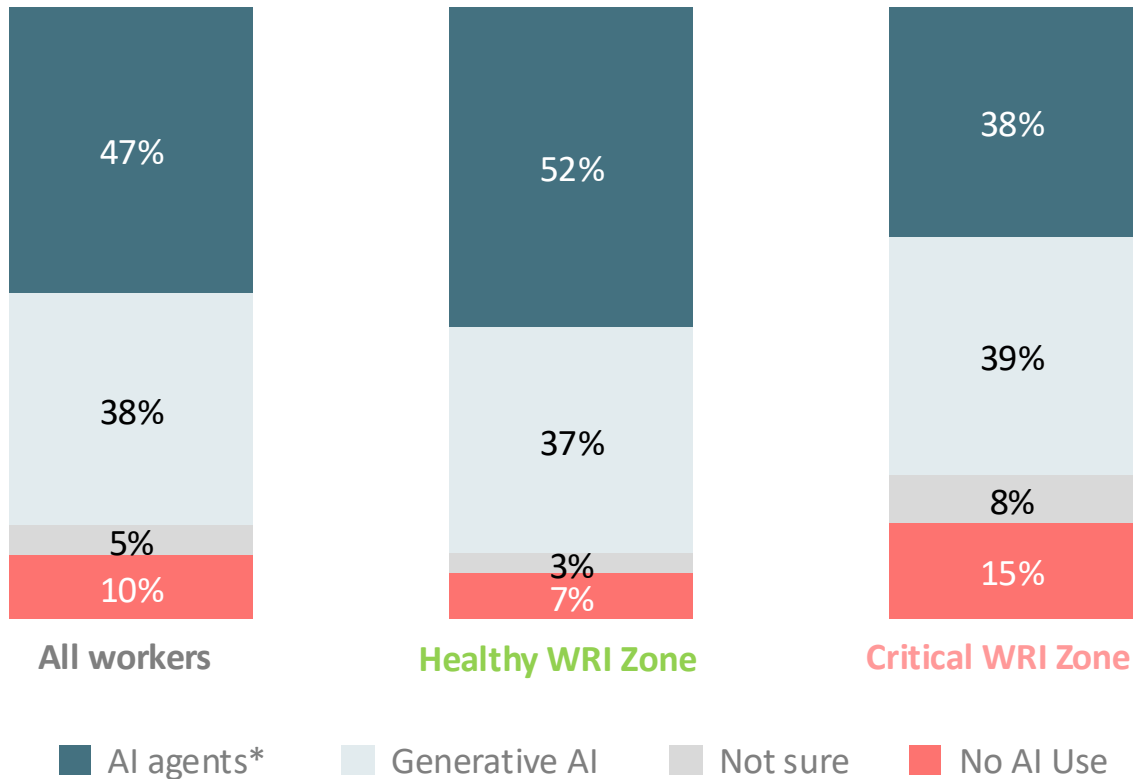
As workers move from Basic/Novice to Proficient/Expert use, confidence in knowing where AI ends and human judgment begins rises from 52% to 78%. Belief that AI will reshape daily life over the next five years also rises, from 53% to 73%. For many workers, AI fluency is becoming a way to take greater ownership of their future.

% Knowledge Workers agree



Increasingly, workers view AI as a central engine of adaptation, a way to regain control in the workplace and build critical skills to support the development of their careers

AI adoption (%)



* AI agents includes those using AI agents and generative AI



Those with a healthy work relationship are more likely to be advanced users of AI agents than those in the Critical Zone (52% vs. 38%). Conversely, Critical Zone workers are more than twice as likely to report no AI use (15% vs. 7%).

Increased AI proficiency brings with it expanded use cases.

Workers are moving beyond using AI for basic research tasks and increasingly embedding it into core workflows. The data shows that breadth of usage expanded rapidly year-on-year.

In which of the following ways do you currently use AI at work?

(among **daily users** of AI at work)

To research/learn about a topic – through Internet search tools and AI-powered assistants
(e.g., Microsoft CoPilot, ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini)



Written content creation and editing (e.g., emails, reports, marketing copy, presentations)



Data analysis / analytics



Productivity / automation of repetitive tasks (e.g., schedules, meetings, daily workstreams)



Learning and skill development



Translating languages



Technical, programming (e.g., generating code, web apps, documentation)



Process and workflow assistance



Customer engagement (e.g., customer messaging / replies, website chatbots, message personalisation)



Using AI agents that autonomously complete tasks in my workflow



Voice assistants (e.g., Amazon Alexa, Siri, Google Assistant)



Visual content creation and editing



Ideation / creation of new products or services



Internal collaboration (company tools, search features)

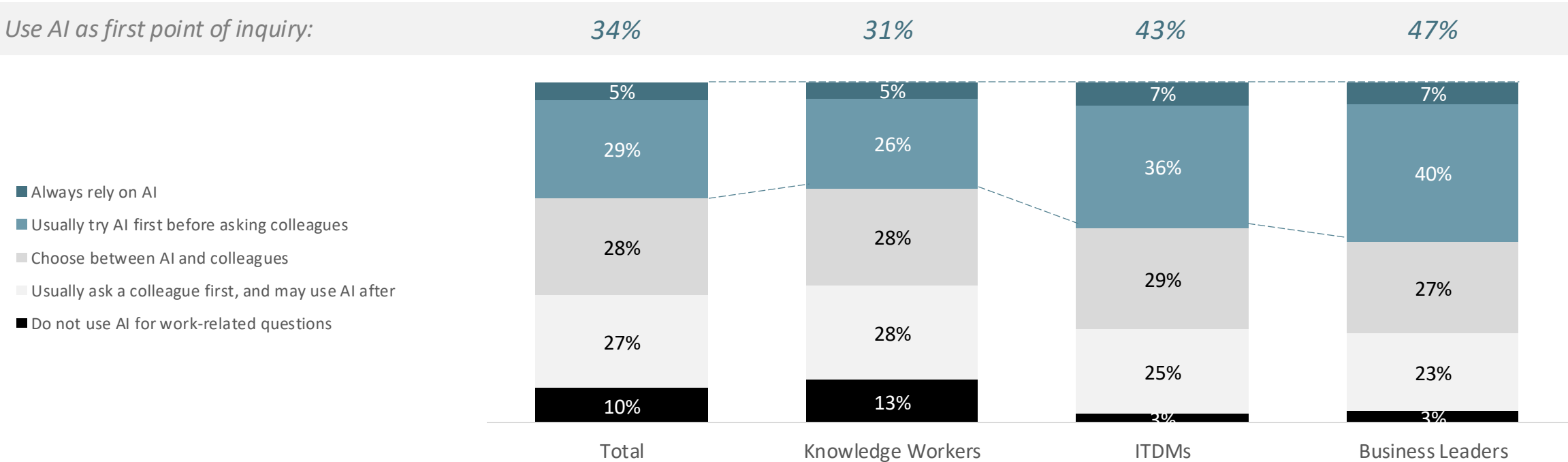


Sales support (pricing, forecasting, lead generation / scoring, identifying new revenue streams)



AI is becoming the first point of enquiry for many rather than asking colleagues

% Using AI to help with a work task or question



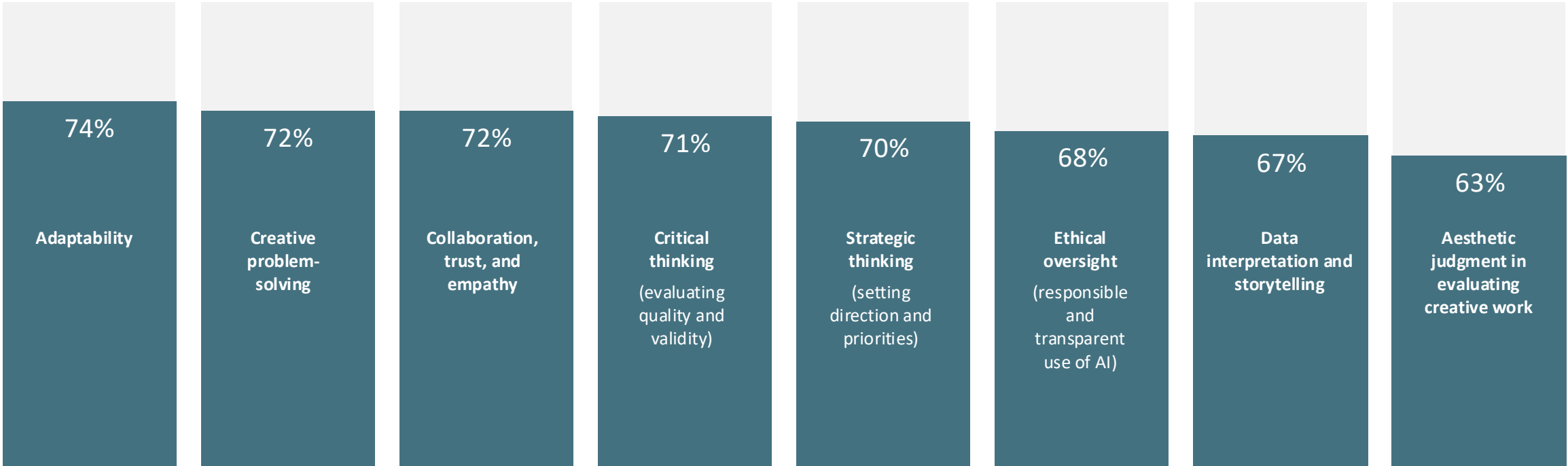
% Using AI to help with a work task or question

47% of Business Leaders and 43% of ITDMs say they usually rely on AI first, or always rely on it before asking a colleague for help, compared with 31% of Knowledge Workers.

Leadership and technical roles are furthest along in treating AI as a genuine first point of inquiry, ahead of the broader workforce.

Human skills remain a differentiator, even as AI rapidly evolves to take on more tasks.

% Find the following human skills important in the workplace



% agree on the importance of human skills

Increased AI usage has prompted workers to rethink the types of skills they need to be investing in to equip themselves for success in the workforce of the future. Adaptability ranks highest at 74%, followed by creative problem solving and collaboration at 72% each. Critical thinking strategic thinking, and ethical oversight are also important, reinforcing that working with AI requires both technical confidence and human judgment.

As AI proficiency increases, workers are coming to understand the technology's potential to build flexibility and resilience.

This is enabling them to find new ways to leverage AI for business success, amplifying the importance of both AI execution and the value of human judgment, creativity, and collaboration.

5. Leaders are embracing the potential of AI to unlock new operating models and value propositions



As workers develop a more sophisticated relationship with AI, leaders are becoming clearer on their expectations for its role within the organization.

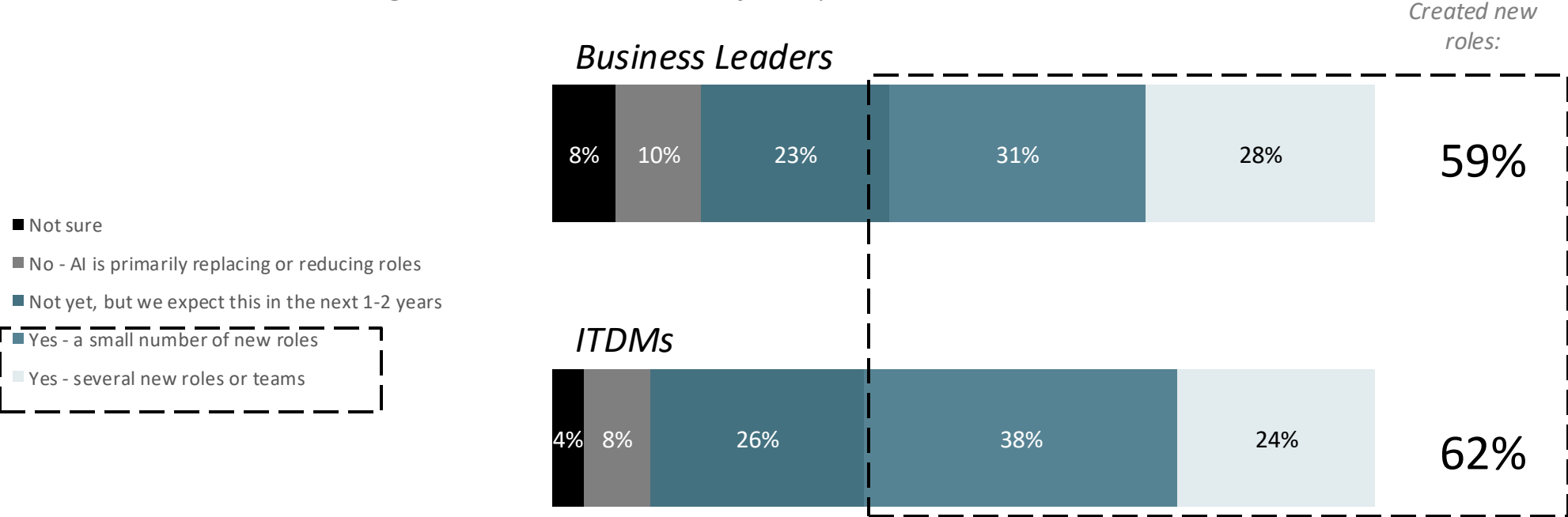
Today's Business Leaders are more likely to see AI creating roles than replacing them.

59%
Business Leaders

62%
ITDMs

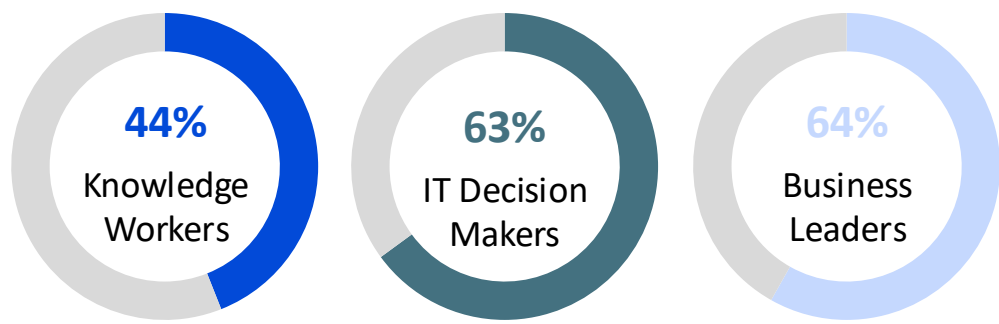
say AI has already created, or will soon
create, new roles or teams

% ITDMs and Business Leaders creating new roles or teams as a results of AI adoption



And while 63% of ITDMs and 64% of Business Leaders agree that their organization communicates clearly about how AI and new technologies may impact roles, only 44% of Knowledge Workers agree, representing **a gap in perceived clarity between those setting AI strategy and those living with its consequences**. This is an opportunity for businesses to bridge the gap. Technology companies report the clearest AI communication (63%), while Government & Public Sector organizations report the least (45%).

“My organization communicates clearly about how AI and new technologies may impact roles”
% Knowledge Workers Agree



Industry	% Agree
Technology & data	63%
Consumer & retail	54%
Education & non-profit	53%
Media & creative	52%
Energy & infrastructure	52%
Manufacturing, engineering & construction	51%
Finance, legal & professional services	51%
Healthcare / medical services	51%
Government & public sector	45%
Other	50%

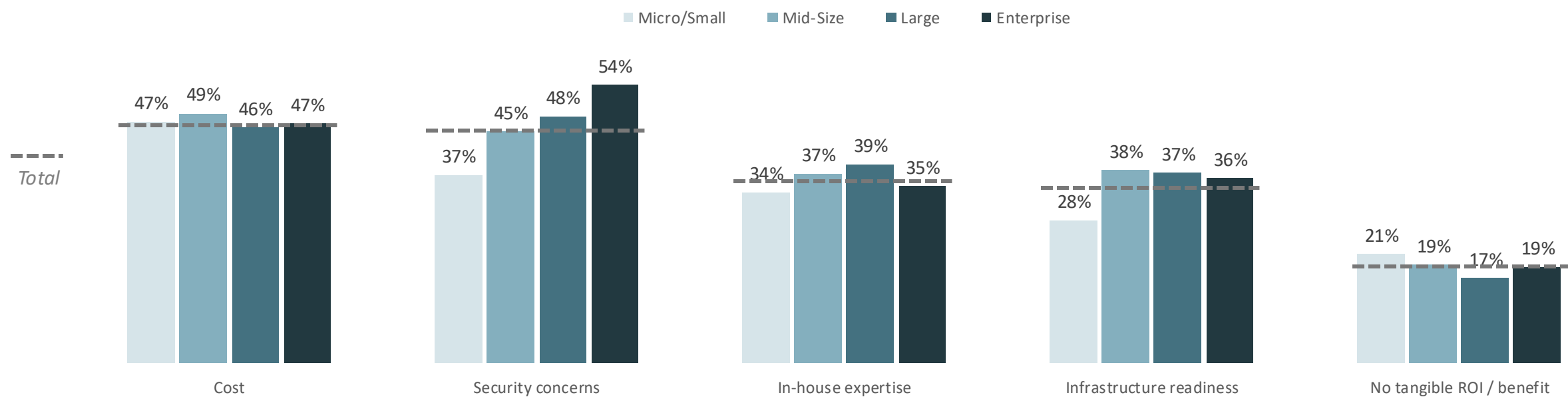


The investment gap is becoming a readiness gap.

As AI becomes a business advantage, organizations risk falling behind if they fail to invest. Cost and security remain the primary barriers to adoption across businesses of every size, with security concerns increasing from 37% among small businesses to 54% among enterprises.

At the same time, a lack of ROI is the least frequently cited obstacle, suggesting that readiness, governance, and risk management, rather than perceived value, are the factors slowing adoption.

Barriers to AI investment as selected by ITDMs and Business Leaders (%)



AI is reshaping roles, teams, and investment priorities. For leaders,
the next challenge is execution:

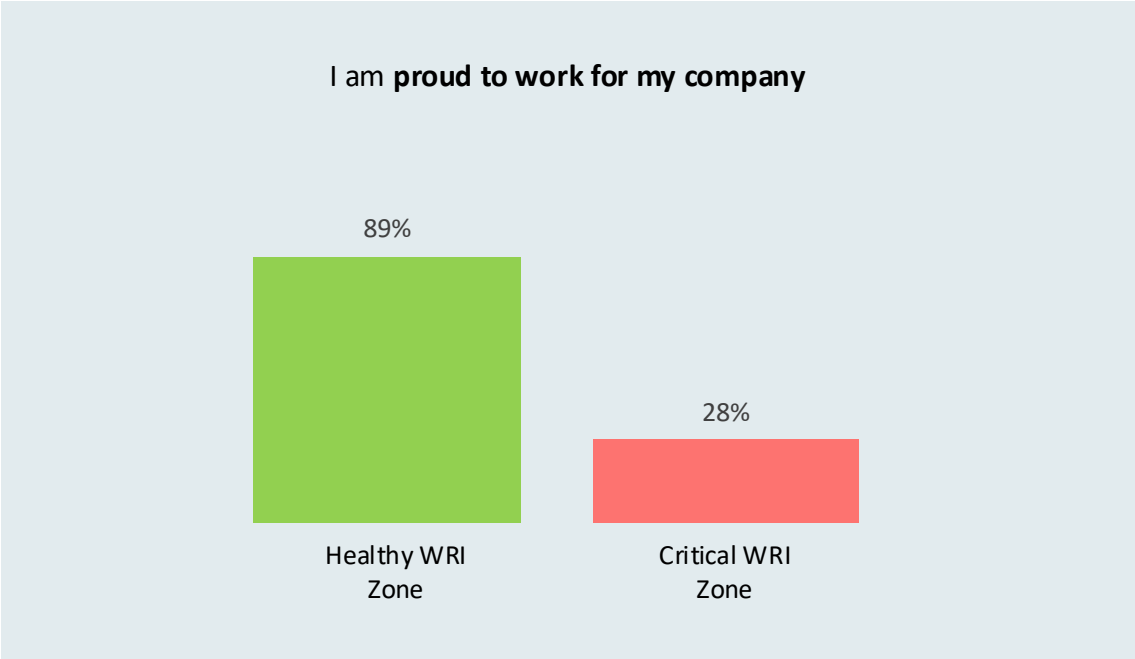
turning AI ambition into clear strategy, trusted communication, and credible risk management.

5. Connection and communication are key for leaders supporting their organizations through change



The AI adoption challenge reflects a wider leadership test: how to build trust when disruption is constant. Leadership support fell sharply in 2025, but this year's data suggests senior leaders are beginning to rebuild clarity and confidence.

% Knowledge Workers Agree



% Knowledge
Workers Agree

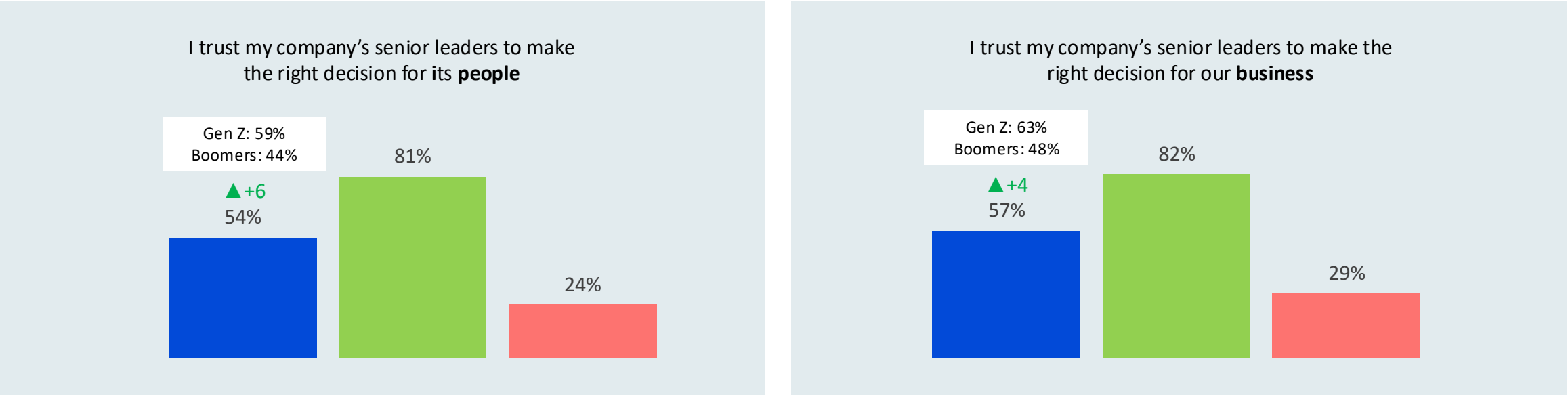
Pride and advocacy are strongest in environments where workers feel supported by leadership. Among workers in the Healthy WRI Zone, 89% are proud to work for their company and 87% would recommend it as a great place to work, compared with 28% and 23% in the Critical Zone.

The AI adoption challenge reflects a wider leadership test: how to build trust when disruption is constant. Leadership support fell sharply in 2025, but this year's data suggests senior leaders are beginning to rebuild clarity and confidence.

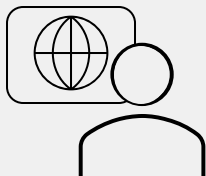
Leadership Trust Indicators

% Knowledge Workers Agree

■ All ■ Healthy WRI Zone ■ Critical WRI Zone



▲ ▼ Significantly higher / lower vs 2025 with a 95% CI



% Knowledge
Workers Agree

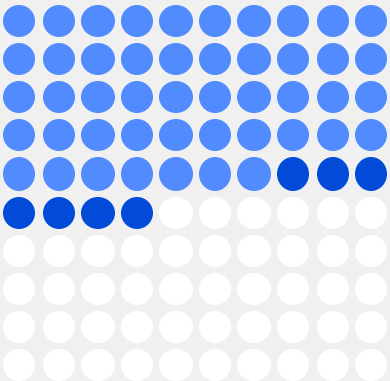
Trust in leadership is one of the strongest foundations of workplace health. In 2026, more than half of Knowledge Workers trust senior leaders to make the right decisions for employees (54%) and for the business (57%), with figures rising by 6 and 4 percentage points respectively year-on-year.

Amid ongoing uncertainty and disruption, workers are placing greater value on transparent and empathetic leadership.

More than half of Knowledge Workers say senior leaders communicate openly, demonstrate empathy, and lead by example. This represents a significant improvement from last year, when leaders were often perceived as prioritizing business transformation over workforce support as they responded to global disruption.

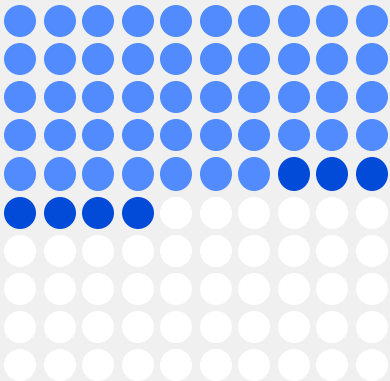


% Knowledge Workers Agree



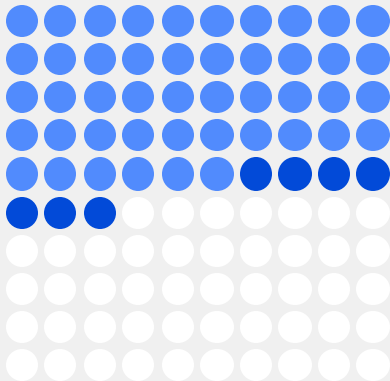
54% +7 YOY

Our senior leaders
communicate transparently
and openly



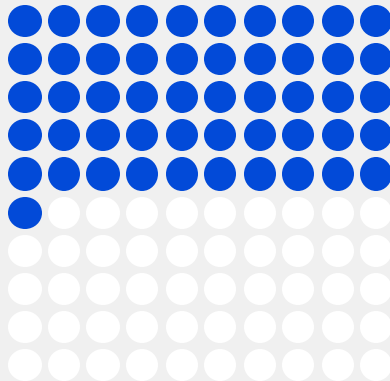
54% +7 YOY

My senior leadership
demonstrate empathy



53% +7 YOY

Our senior leadership
demonstrate the behaviors and
actions they ask from us



51% N/A

Our senior leaders provide
clear direction and context
during times of changes

Trust in leadership is the foundation that makes adaptation possible.

When leaders show empathy and communicate openly, workers are better able to adapt and engage with change.

6. The race to adapt depends on future-ready skills



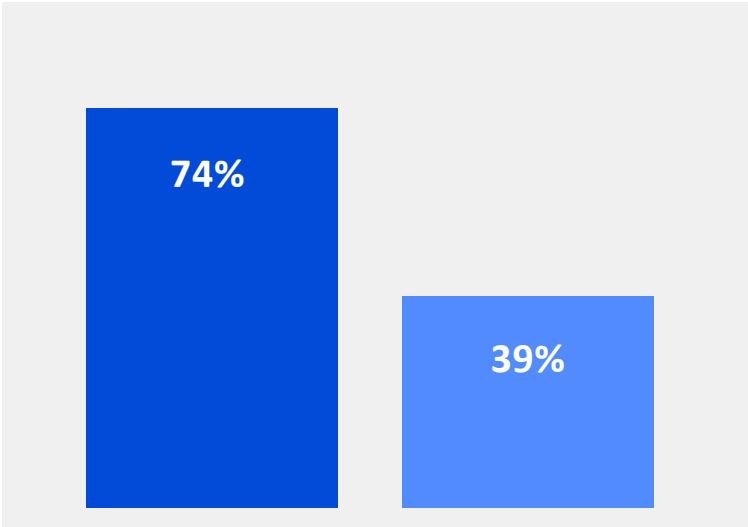
Trust helps people adapt, but it is not enough. Workers also need confidence in their own ability to keep learning as AI changes roles, skills, and expectations.

AI proficiency is linked to healthier work relationships. 32% of Knowledge Workers using AI agents are in the Healthy WRI Zone, compared with 28% of those using generative AI only and 21% of those not using AI.

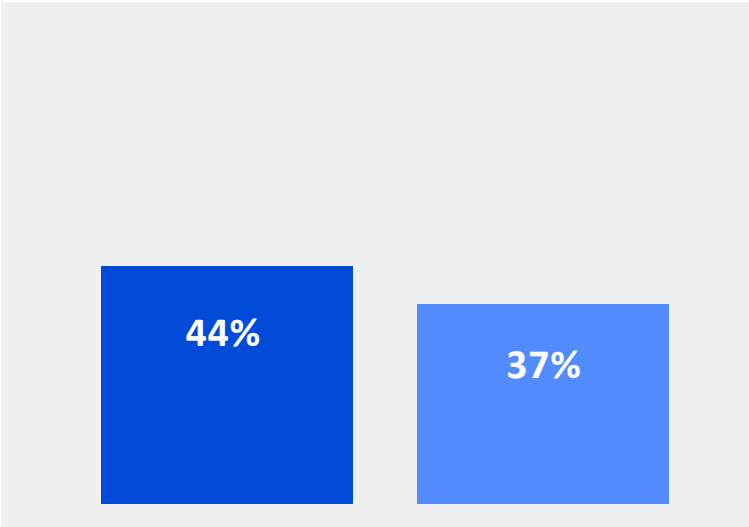
But greater AI fluency also raises the pressure to keep developing new skills. Knowledge Workers using AI agents are more likely than those using generative AI alone to worry that their role will become harder to define (47% vs. 39%) or be replaced by AI (44% vs. 37)

% Knowledge Workers Agree

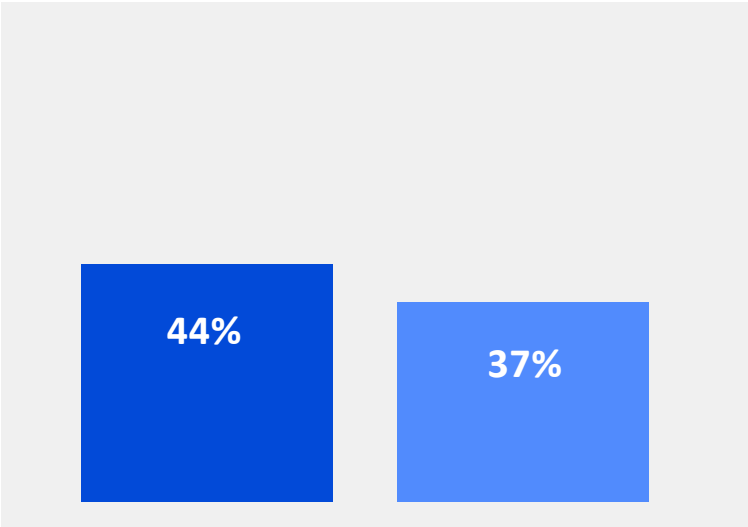
“I worry that as AI takes on more tasks, my role will become harder to define”



“I worry AI will replace my job”



“I worry my job will be replaced by an AI expert”



Knowledge Workers using AI agents*

Knowledge Workers using Gen AI only

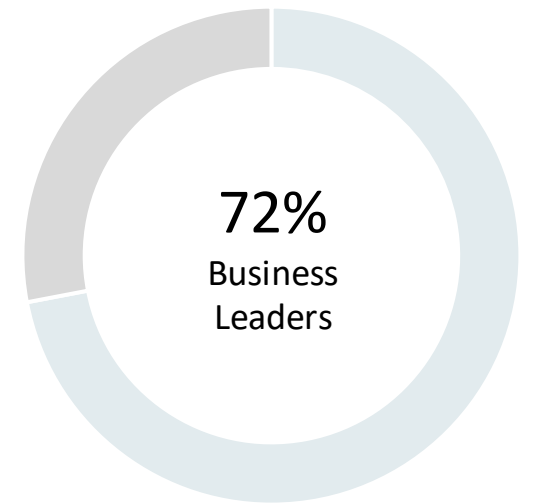
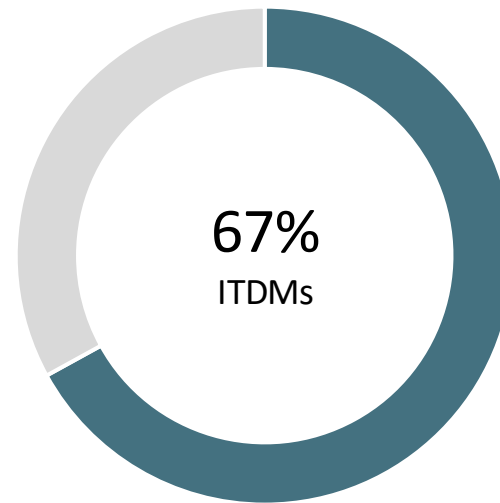
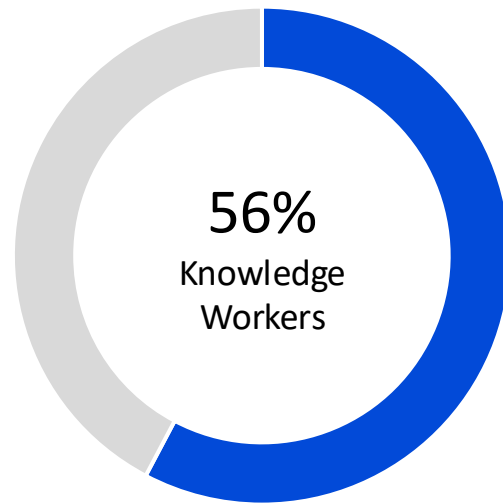
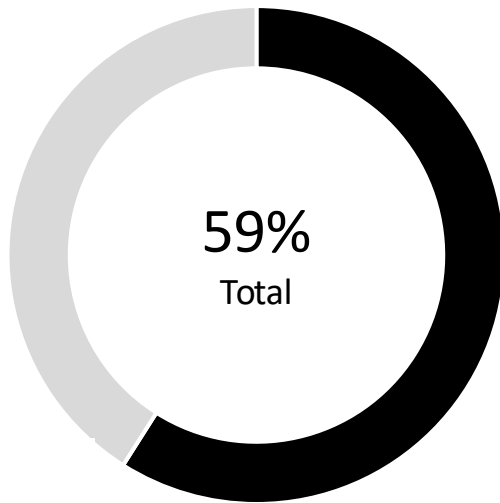
* AI agents include those using AI agents and generative AI



Future-ready workers are investing in skills to stay valuable as work changes.

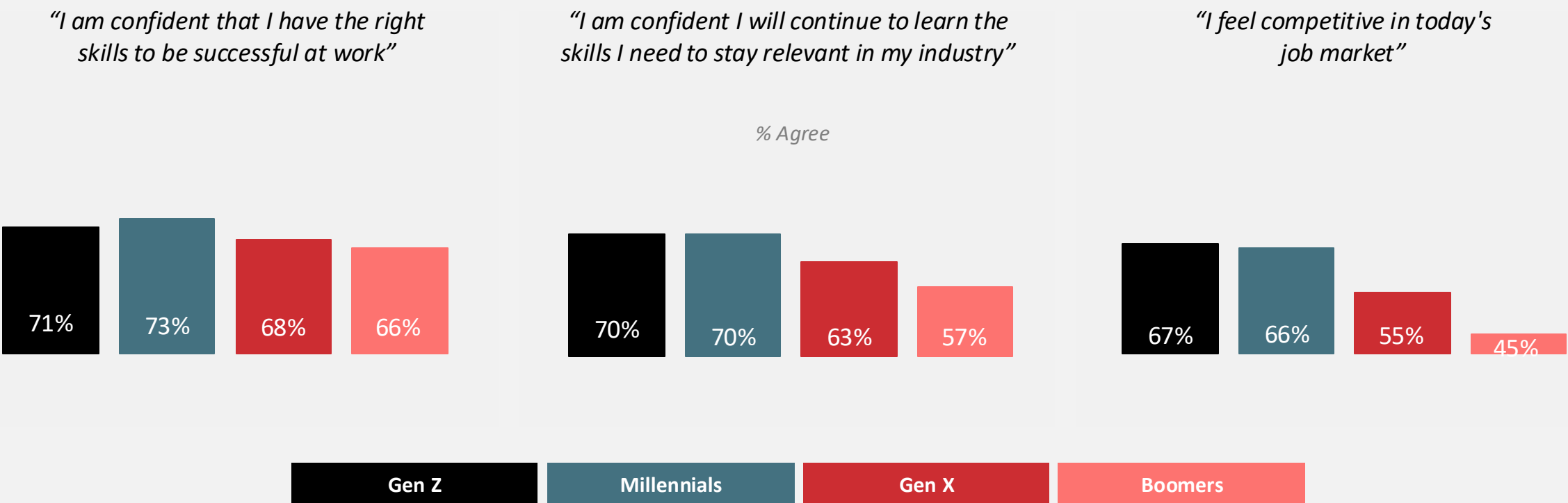
59% of workers value transferrable skills over climbing a traditional career ladder, rising to 67% of ITDMs and 72% of Business Leaders. Most of the Knowledge Workers agree (56%), reinforcing that career resilience now relies on skills that stay valuable as work changes.

"I prioritize building transferable skills over climbing a traditional career ladder"
% Agree

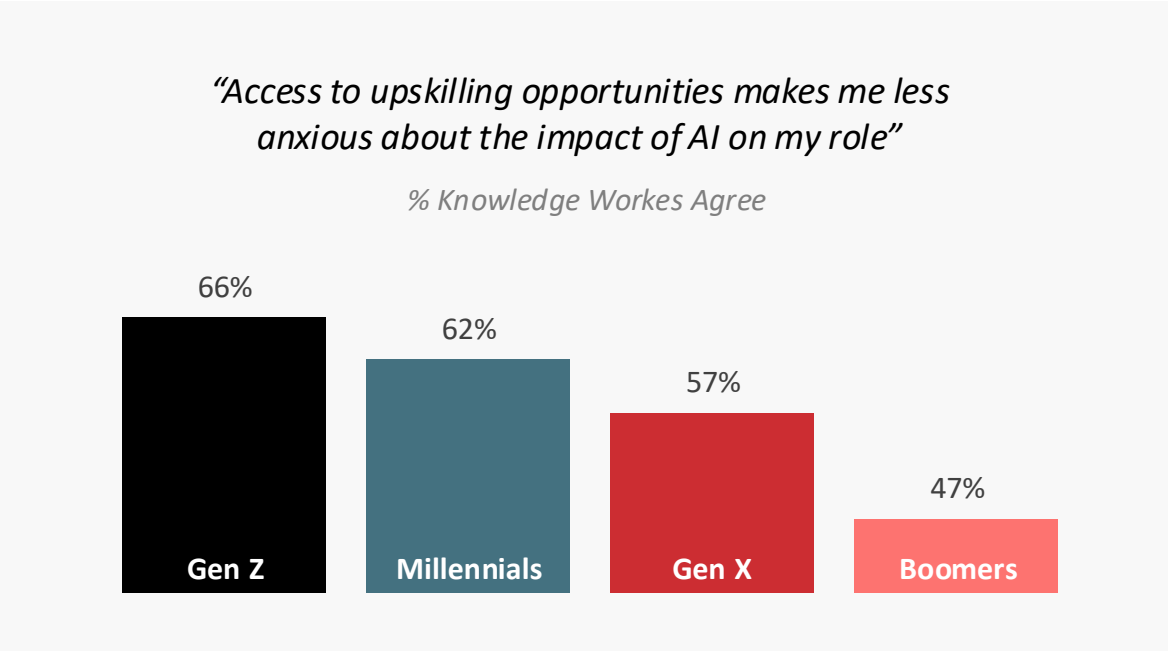
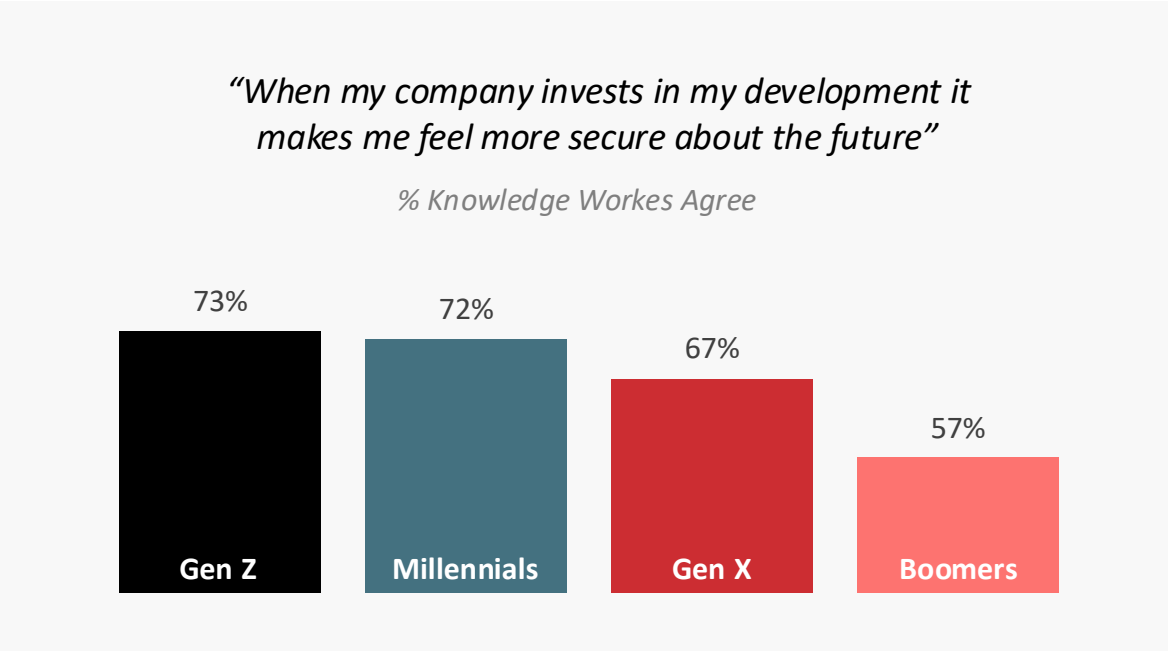


Not every generation feels equally prepared to take on that challenge.

Gen Z and Millennials are more likely than Gen X and Boomers to believe they have the skills to succeed, can continue learning to stay relevant, and remain competitive in today's job market.



When workers believe they have opportunities to grow, they are better able to see change as something they can navigate, making learning and development powerful tools for retention. Businesses that invest in helping people build future-ready skillsets provide workers with confidence that they have a future inside the organization, even as work itself continues to evolve.

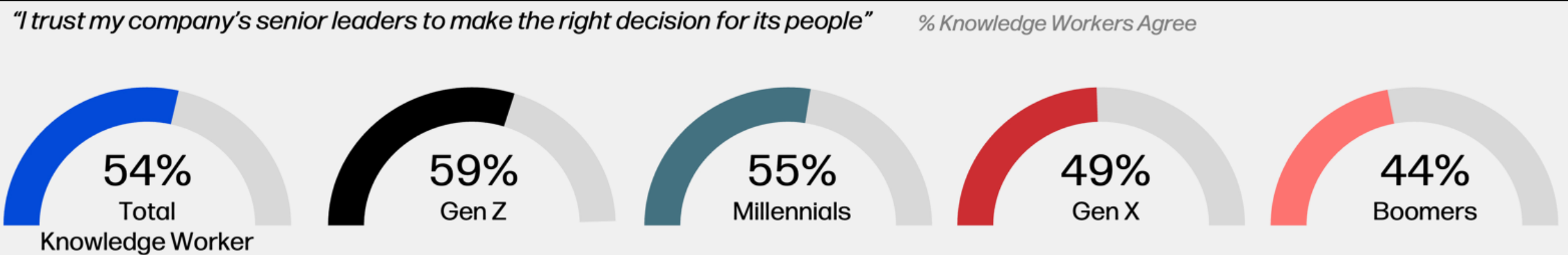
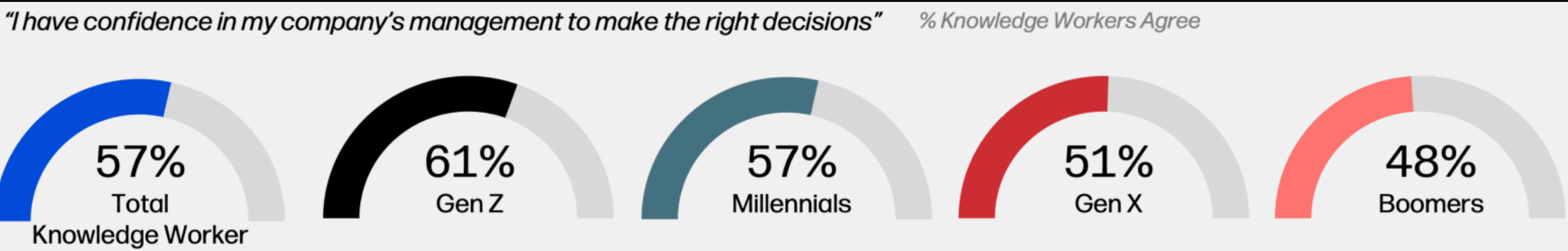


A closer look: Why Gen X feels caught in the middle

The generational data shows a clear divide. Gen Z and Millennials appear more comfortable adapting to change. They have higher WRI scores, more confidence in leadership, and greater comfort with AI agents. Boomers, closer to retirement, feel less pressure to change how they work.

Gen X is caught in the middle. They face real pressure to adapt to new technology and ways of working but have less career-stage flexibility than younger workers.

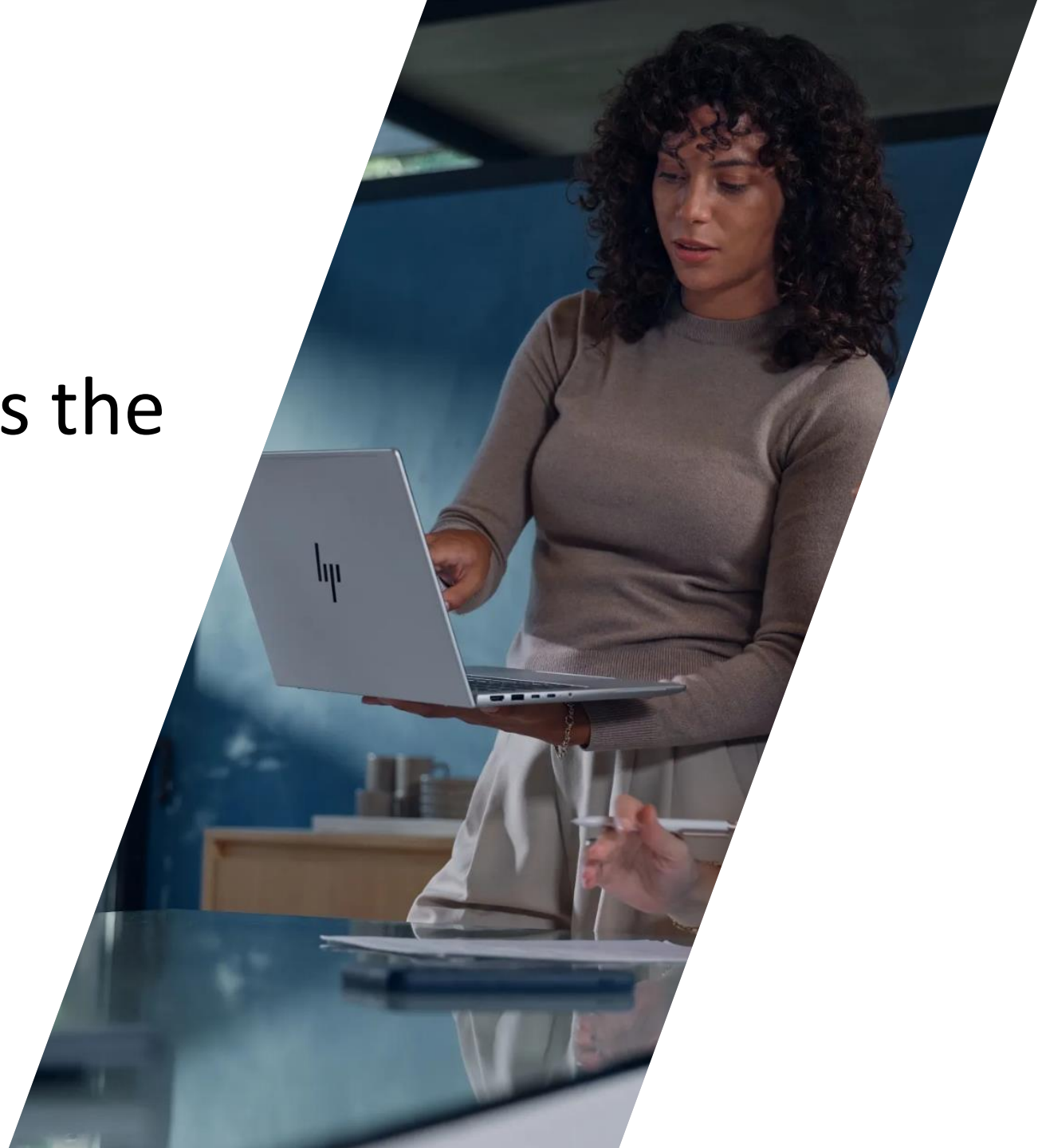
As a result, their leadership confidence is also weaker: 51% trust management to make the right decisions, and 49% trust senior leaders to make the right decisions for employees. Gen X also has the lowest healthy relationship with work score this year, making clear support and communication especially important for this group.



Upskilling has become a core resilience strategy.

Workers are looking to develop broader, more future-oriented skillsets; leaders who invest in continuous learning give employees the confidence to adapt alongside AI rather than fear it, encouraging a belief that they have a future within the organization

7. Technology creates the infrastructure that supports effective adaptation



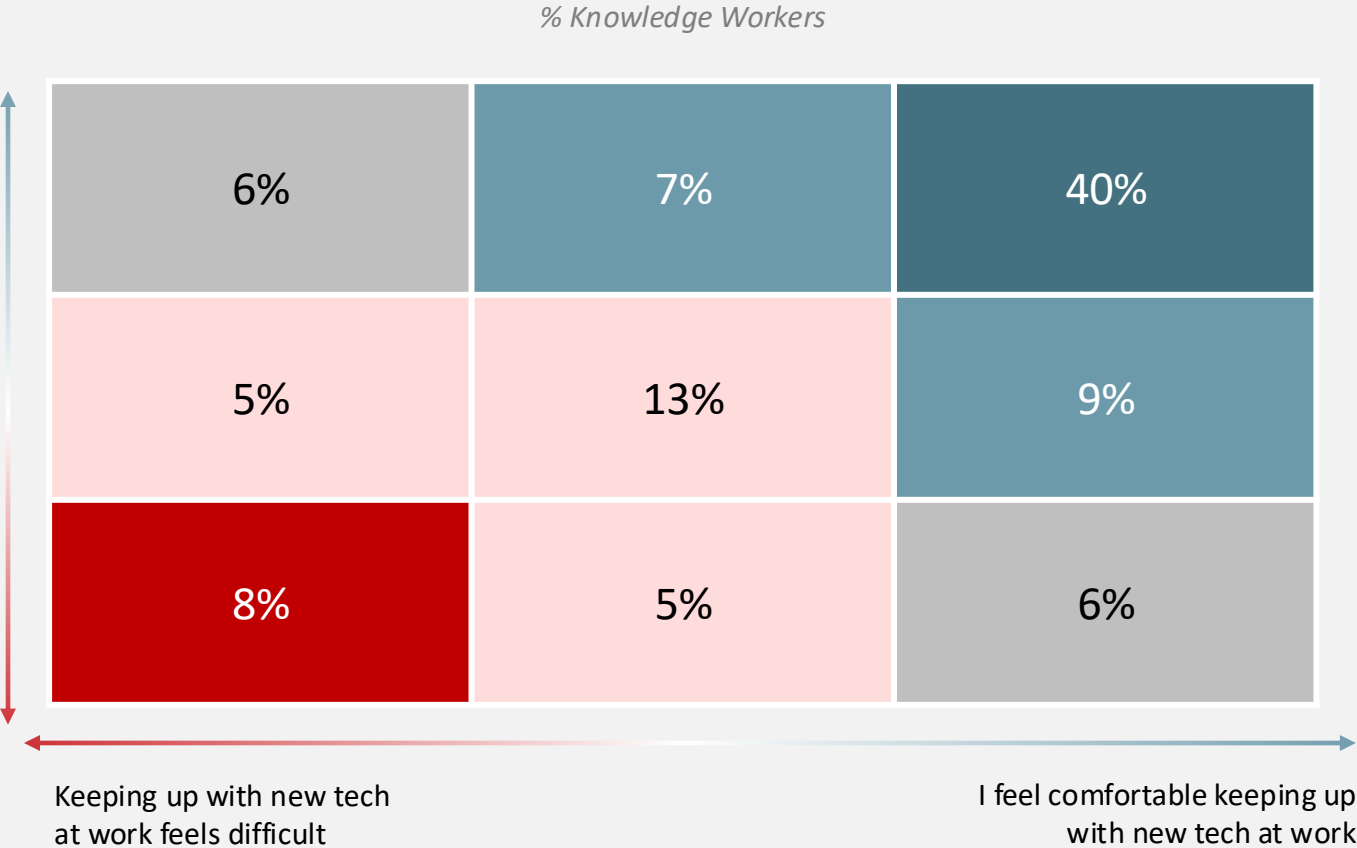
Leadership and learning create the conditions for adaptation, but workers also need technology that enables them to put new skills into practice.

That's why **workers who feel comfortable with new technology are also the most productive**. 40% of Knowledge Workers say workplace technology helps them work more productively **and** they feel comfortable keeping up with new tools.

Confidence is highest in emerging markets (51% vs. 33% in developed markets), among Gen Z and Millennials (42% each), at high-performing companies (46%), and among workers in the Healthy WRI Zone (54%). As with leadership and skills, technology confidence is closely associated with healthier relationships with work.

Technology at work helps me feel more productive and efficient

Technology at work often feels overwhelming and exhausting



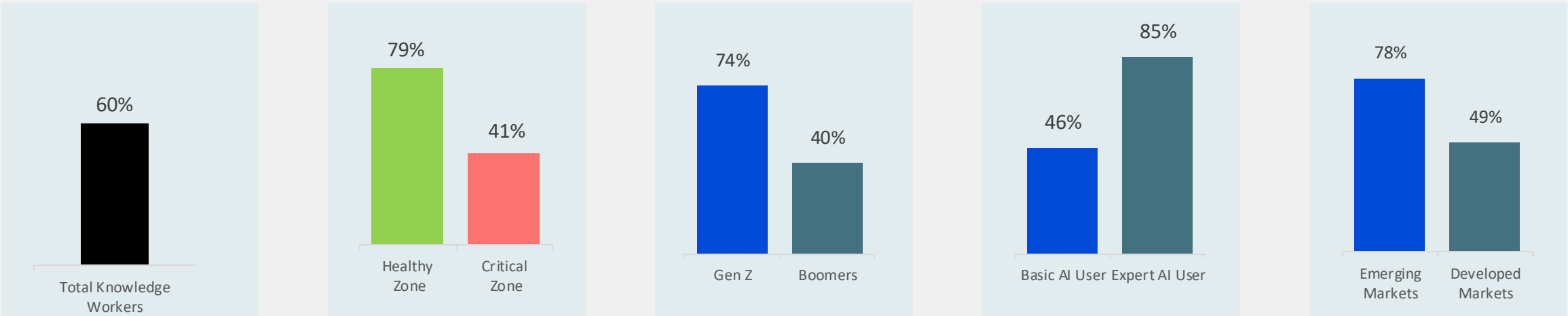
Having that baseline of confidence also changes how workers think about the future.

79% of workers in the Healthy WRI Zone are excited about the impact technology will have on their working lives, compared with just 41% in the Critical Zone.

Techno-optimism is substantially higher among Expert AI Users compared to Basic Users (85% vs. 46%) and by those in emerging markets, reinforcing the notion that those most comfortable with new technology are most likely to see it as a source of opportunity.

“I am excited about how technology will improve my work life”

% Knowledge Workers Agree



WRI Zone

Generation

AI Proficiency

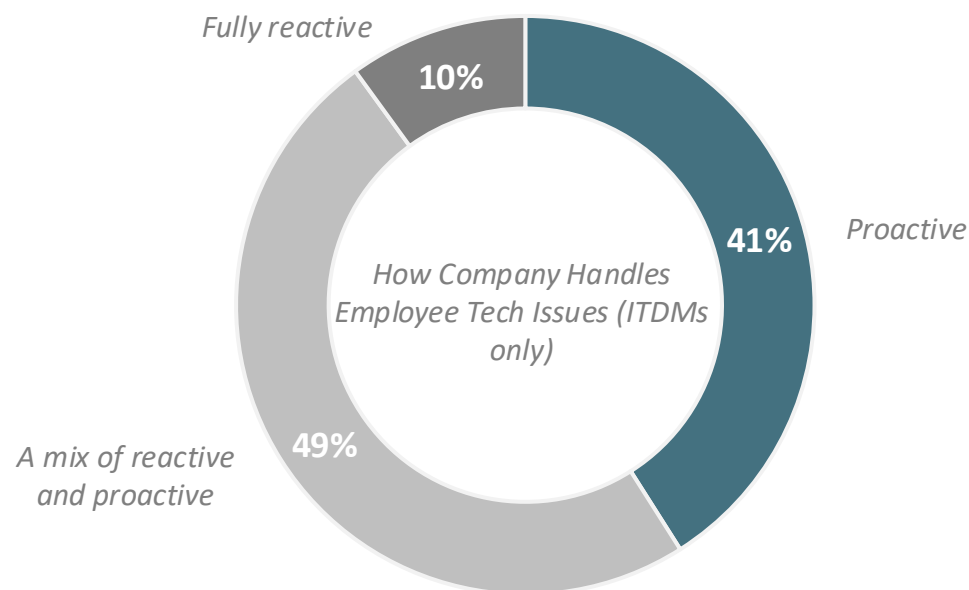
Market



The business case for good tech is clear, but there is room for proactive management to catch up.

41% of ITDMs say their company manages employee technology issues proactively, while 49% describe a mixed approach and 10% a reactive one.

And ITDMs at proactive organizations are 18 points more likely to be in the Healthy WRI Zone than those at reactive organizations (53% vs. 35%). Technology creates the greatest value when it quietly removes friction, allowing workers to focus on adapting rather than troubleshooting.



53%

of ITDMs in organizations with a proactive approach to managing technology issues are in the **Healthy WRI Zone**

Vs.

35%

in fully reactive organizations

Opportunity: Despite 8 in 10 ITDMs being familiar with DEX solutions, just 1 in 10 use them currently

Technology is the operating layer of adaptation

Trusted leadership and upskilling create the conditions for change, but reliable tools and proactive support make adaptation possible in daily work. Organisations that get this right reduce friction, build resilience, and help change feel manageable.

8. Technology and skills are key enablers of doing your best work



Throughout the findings Of this year's WRI, one theme emerges consistently: healthy relationships with work are built by giving people the confidence and the tools they need to adapt in the face of change and uncertainty.

Reliable technology remains the foundation. **Knowledge Workers say faster, more reliable devices are the single biggest enabler of doing their best work (51%)**, followed by tools that help them learn and adapt (39%), seamless integration across workplace technologies (37%), shared knowledge systems (36%), and AI tools tailored to their role (35%).

Yet the findings also suggest many organizations are not providing the optimum setup for best work, as only 60% of Knowledge Workers agree they have the tools they need to be successful.

Thinking about the technology and tools you use at work, which would enable you to do your best work? (Knowledge Workers)

1 **Faster, more reliable devices**
(e.g. laptops, hardware) **51%**

2 Tools that help me **learn new skills**
and adapt as I work **39%**

3 Technology that **integrates seamlessly**
across my work tools **37%**

4 **Shared knowledge systems** for
easier to find information **36%**

5 **AI tools** tailored to my job role **35%**

6 Technology that helps me think
more **strategically** **33%**

7 Technology that helps me **prioritize**
31%

8 **Collaboration tools** that enable equal participation for
remote and in-person employees **31%**

9 Technology that **reduces unnecessary**
interruptions and follow-ups **30%**

% Knowledge Workers Agree



Knowledge Workers in
Critical Zone



Total Knowledge
Workers



Knowledge Workers in
Healthy Zone

*“Poor integration between devices, tools, and systems creates **unnecessary friction in my work**”*



33%



41%



51%

*“I have access to a complete set of devices and accessories that **work seamlessly together**”*



31%



55%



77%

*“My company **gives me the tools I need** to be successful at work”*



35%



60%



82%

Technology and skills are key enablers of doing your best work.

Confidence at work is built on the basics: the right devices, tools, and support working together without friction. Organisations that provide this foundation, and pair it with opportunities to build skills, enable people to do their best work even in times of change.

The WRI provides a blueprint for how businesses can act.

The story of work in 2026 is one of organizations learning to thrive in an environment where uncertainty has become a permanent feature of working life.

The healthiest workplaces are not necessarily those operating in the least disruptive environments. Rather, they're the ones that equip people with the confidence, skills, technology, and support they need to adapt successfully and thrive amid that disruption. As uncertainty becomes an enduring reality, workers increasingly value employers that help them grow, build resilience, and navigate change with confidence.

For leaders looking to build healthier, more resilient, and growing organizations, this year's findings point toward five priorities

01

Build adaptability, not stability

Accept disruption as the new normal and help employees respond to change faster. The strongest signals of workplace success come from those most comfortable with change

02

Actively use AI to strengthen the workforce

Position AI as a tool for performance growth and resilience, not just efficiency, and help workers progress from generative AI to using AI agents

03

Lead with trust and transparency

Clear communication and visible leadership are critical during periods of change, especially to help alleviate Knowledge Worker anxiety about AI

04

Prioritize future-ready skills

Invest in upskilling and transferable skills to help employees adapt over time as job roles and responsibilities change.

05

Provide proactive technology and tools

Equip ITDMs with proactive technology and DEX solutions to support and measure employee fulfillment and effective working through organizational change



The path forward is to build workforces that can thrive amid continual disruption.

In 2026, the resilience dividend will come from turning uncertainty into a manageable condition of work through trusted leadership, purposeful AI adoption, future-ready skills, and proactive technology support.

WRI 2026 methodology

Now in its fourth consecutive year, the Work Relationship Index is a global study, led by HP, on the world's relationship with work.

In partnership with the National Research Group (NRG), HP conducted a survey of 19,506 desk-based workers across 15 countries from 7 April -13 May 2026. The countries included were US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Saudi Arabia, India, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, and China.

Respondents completed a 25-minute online survey about their relationship with work. The three audience groups were as follows:

- Knowledge Workers (n=15,003 | ~1,000/country)
- ITDMs (n=3,002 | ~200/country)
- Business Leaders (n=1,501 | ~100/country)

% agree on charts is based on the percentage of respondents that scored 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale (e.g., strongly agree and agree). This scoring was used in all measurements except the WRI score, which uses only the top box score (strongly agree).