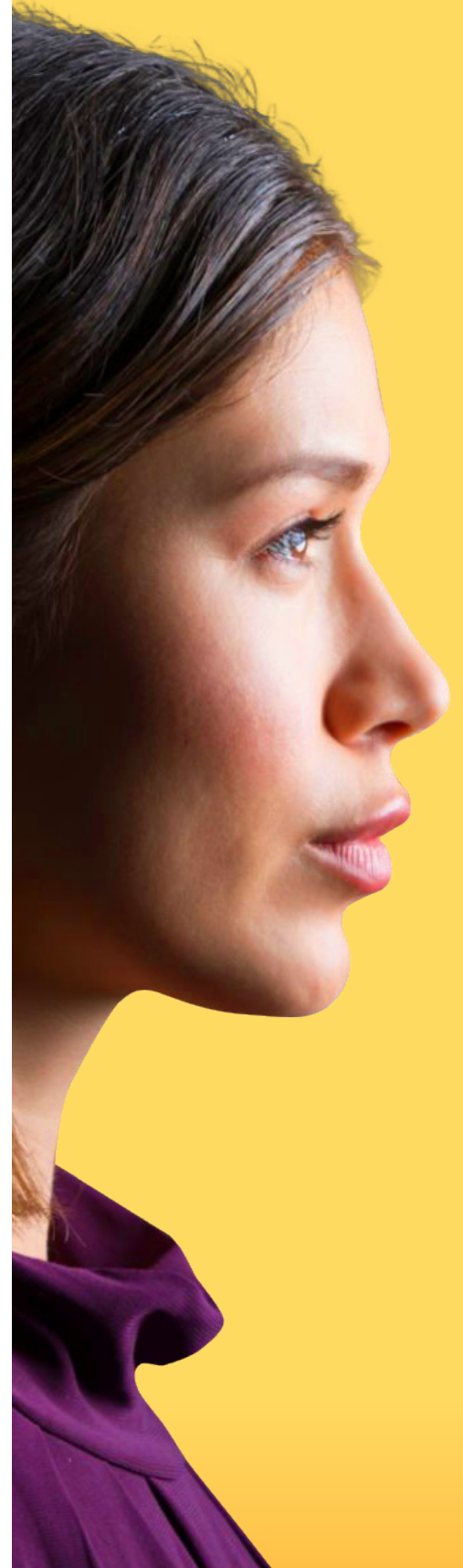**workday**®

Global Study

Closing the AI **trust** gap

2024 report

Introduction

At Workday, we believe successfully unlocking human potential with AI is only possible with a foundation of trust. The future of work starts here—with trust at the center.

As a values-driven organization, we've prioritized trust since day one. Security and protection are our top priorities when it comes to our customers' critical data. Today, we're committed to taking an equally trust-centric approach with Workday AI.

We also recognize that the complexity of the AI landscape means trustworthy AI is about much more than having a reliable software provider. Trust has to be earned—and kept—at every step in the AI journey. It's about ethical development, responsible implementation, transparent guidelines, and smart governance: forward-thinking policies that foster AI innovation while upholding social and ethical values.

And we're facing a critical moment for building that trust. We're at a time where building confidence in the responsible development and use of AI is non-negotiable and must extend across all levels of the organization.

The tipping point for AI success will be an organization's ability to create trust through transparency. The challenge is that AI innovation needs to be balanced with an unwavering commitment to smart governance and communication.

About the research.

This data comes from the global study "Closing the AI Trust Gap," a survey commissioned by Workday and conducted by FT Longitude. The survey encompassed 1,375 business leaders and 4,000 employees across the globe. This breakdown reveals a comprehensive view of the organizational hierarchy, highlighting the perspectives of leadership and the broader employee population. Workday leaders and employees were not included in the survey set. For more information about the research, please see page 10.

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> The scale of addressing this challenge may seem daunting, but our experience has taught us that we can take measured steps. Effective organizational frameworks for responsible AI should consider four fundamental pillars: principles, practices, people, and policy. Companies need to also ensure transparent communication about their approach to each of those areas.

Jim Stratton
Chief Technology Officer, Workday

More from this expert

Survey results.

A trust gap is forming at every level of the workforce— but employees are most skeptical.

While it's still early days for AI adoption in the workplace, we're already seeing that trust will be key to realizing its full potential. As AI implementation moves from the realm of possibility to reality, a trust gap has formed across all levels of the workforce, with employees demonstrating even lower levels of trust in AI than those in leadership positions:

At the leadership level, only 62% welcome AI, and only 62% are confident their organization will ensure AI is implemented in a responsible and trustworthy way. At the employee level, these figures drop even lower to 52% and 55%, respectively. **This is the AI trust gap.**

The AI trust gap: the lack of confidence in, and understanding of, an organization's intentions and capabilities around responsible AI deployment within the workplace.

This and other key findings from our global survey illuminate important realities organizations will need to consider as they continue to move forward with AI. Read on to discover:

- Where leaders and employees are aligned on AI sentiment
- Where trust around AI implementation begins to diverge
- Areas of opportunity for closing the trust gap

> In order to build trust, it is imperative that organizations take a risk-based approach to responsible AI governance and rely on a diverse set of stakeholders to shape associated policies and practices. A dedicated, independent responsible AI team with guidance from cross-disciplinary subject matter experts and senior leadership is best practice.

Kelly Trindel
Chief Responsible AI Officer, Workday

More from this expert

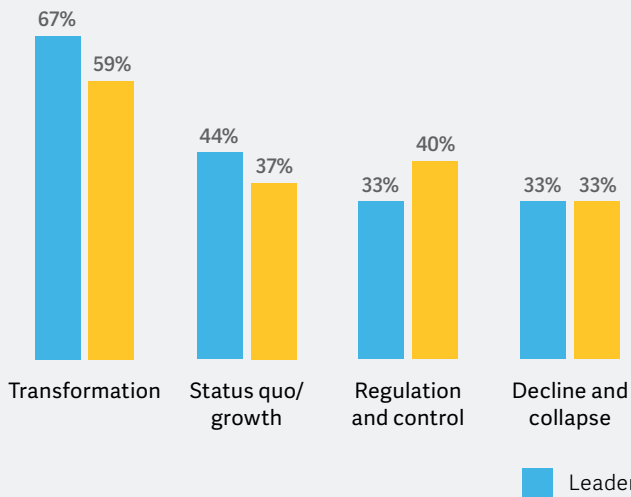**62%**
of leaders welcome AI

Only **52%** of employees do

Section 1: Perspectives align on AI's potential and responsible use.

At the outset of our research, we hypothesized that there would be a general alignment between business leaders and employees regarding their overall enthusiasm for AI. Encouragingly, this has proven true: leaders and employees are aligned in several areas, including AI's potential for business transformation, as well as efforts to reduce risk and ensure trustworthy AI.
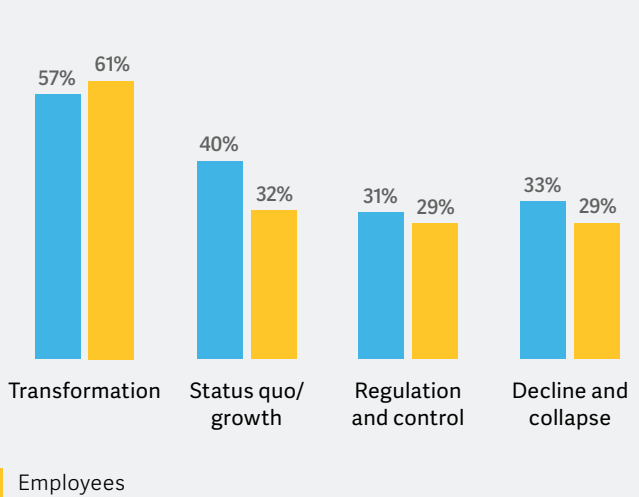
Both leaders and employees believe in and hope for a transformation scenario* with AI.

Proportion of leaders and employees who believe each AI scenario is likely to occur.

	Leaders	Employees
Transformation	67%	59%
Status quo/growth	44%	37%
Regulation and control	33%	40%
Decline and collapse	33%	33%

Proportion of leaders and employees who are hopeful each AI scenario will occur.

	Leaders	Employees
Transformation	57%	61%
Status quo/growth	40%	32%
Regulation and control	31%	29%
Decline and collapse	33%	29%

■ Leaders   ■ Employees

Survey questions: How likely do you feel it is that this scenario will happen?** Respondents selected one option per scenario on a scale from 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely). Chart represents respondents who selected 4 (somewhat likely) or 5 (extremely likely) on this scale. How hopeful are you that this scenario will happen? Respondents selected one option per scenario on a scale from 1 (strongly hope this future does not occur) to 5 (strongly hope this future occurs). Chart represents respondents who selected 4 (somewhat hope this future occurs) or 5 (strongly hope this future occurs) on this scale.

*Refer to page 9 for additional information on AI scenarios.

**Transformation scenario: Imagine that AI is widely adopted across companies and your organization as well. It's part of everyday life at your workplace, and many other workplaces. In this scenario, AI has allowed employees at your organization to reduce manual labor significantly. In this scenario, all the right things seem to have happened. You yourself have been using AI to automate routine and boring tasks. New employees are delighted to find these tools already in use at your organization. In other companies, there are similar stories of productivity enhancements. Companies are considering expanding AI use because of this increased productivity. Popular news stories describe increased creativity and employee engagement in companies that adopt AI.

Both groups agree AI implementation should prioritize human control.

Leaders
Employees

In my opinion, any AI application with significant risks should remain under human control.

Leaders: 70%
Employees: 69%

AI should be developed and used in such a way that easily allows for human review and intervention.

Leaders: 70%
Employees: 66%

Survey question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about AI? Respondents selected one option per statement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data represents respondents who selected 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree) on this scale.

Both groups cite regulation and frameworks as most important for trustworthy AI.

Leaders
Employees

Organizational frameworks for ethical AI (responsible use policies, and fairness and transparency guidelines).

Leaders: 42%
Employees: 36%

Regulation of critical applications of AI and data (autonomous vehicles, healthcare, and financial systems).

Leaders: 42%
Employees: 36%

Survey question: In this possible future, where AI is already part of everyday life in your workplace as well as many others, which of the following would be most important to ensure AI is trustworthy? Respondents selected one to three options. Data represents the highest-rated options.

Section 2: When it comes to the development of AI, the trust gap between leaders and employees diverges even more.

While most leaders and employees agree on the value of AI and the need for its careful implementation, the existing trust gap becomes even more pronounced when it comes to developing AI in a way that facilitates human review and intervention.

Employees aren't confident their company takes a people-first approach.

70% of leaders say AI should be developed in a way that easily allows for human review and intervention, and yet . . .

42% of employees believe their company does not have a clear understanding of which systems should be fully automated and which require human intervention.

At all levels, there's the worry that human welfare isn't a leadership priority.

When it comes to the perception of prioritizing employee interests in AI implementation, the level of trust drops considerably, with a sizable number of employees and leaders lacking confidence in this aspect.

1 in 4 employees (23%) are not confident their organization:

- Puts employee interests above its own when implementing AI (compared to 21% of leaders)
- Prioritizes innovating with care for people over innovating with speed (compared to 17% of leaders)
- Will ensure AI is implemented in a responsible and trustworthy way (compared to 17% of leaders)

Survey question: Thinking about your organization's current abilities and approach to AI, how confident are you in the following? Respondents selected one option per statement on a scale of 1 (not confident at all) to 5 (extremely). Data represents respondents who selected 1 (not confident at all) or 2 (not very confident) on this scale.

> "
> We know how these technologies can benefit economic opportunities for people—that's our business. But people won't use technologies they don't trust. Skills are the way forward, and not only skills, but skills backed by a thoughtful, ethical, responsible implementation of AI that has regulatory safeguards that help facilitate trust.
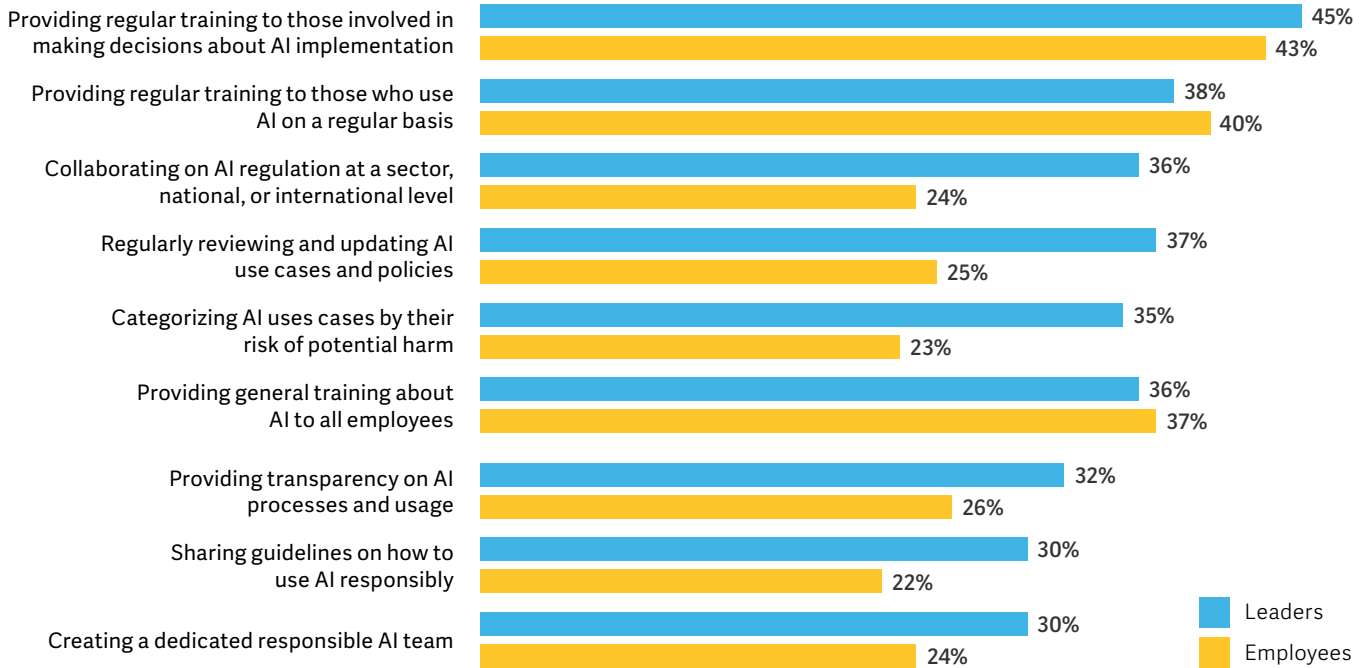
Chandler C. Morse
VP, Public Policy,
Workday

More from this expert

Our vision for AI and the future of work.

- We develop AI technologies to amplify human potential for positive societal impact.
- We follow a robust responsible AI framework, ensuring a deep understanding of where human intervention is needed.
- We champion transparency and fairness and deliver on our commitment to data privacy and protection.
- We want to help teams be more productive and augment, not replace, workers.
- We work to develop AI to solve real business problems.

Section 3: Data on AI governance and use is not readily visible to employees.

While employees are calling for regulation and ethical frameworks to ensure that AI is trustworthy, there is a lack of awareness across all levels of the workforce when it comes to collaborating on AI regulation and sharing responsible AI guidelines.

	Leaders	Employees
Providing regular training to those involved in making decisions about AI implementation	45%	43%
Providing regular training to those who use AI on a regular basis	38%	40%
Collaborating on AI regulation at a sector, national, or international level	36%	24%
Regularly reviewing and updating AI use cases and policies	37%	25%
Categorizing AI uses cases by their risk of potential harm	35%	23%
Providing general training about AI to all employees	36%	37%
Providing transparency on AI processes and usage	32%	26%
Sharing guidelines on how to use AI responsibly	30%	22%
Creating a dedicated responsible AI team	30%	24%

Survey question: To the best of your knowledge, which of the following, if any, is your company currently doing? Respondents selected all answers that applied.

1 in 4

employees (24%) say their organization is collaborating on AI regulation, in comparison to 36% of leaders.

1 in 5

(22%) say their company has shared guidelines on responsible AI use, in comparison to 30% of leaders.

Our responsible AI philosophy.

- We work closely with customers, partners, and legislators to create and adhere to responsible AI (RAI) practices.

- All new AI technologies are assessed by our dedicated RAI team to determine their level of sensitivity or risk.

- AI solutions for sensitive use cases are built in adherence to our RAI guidelines, which address areas including fairness, human oversight, explainability, reliability, and transparency.

Closing remarks:
How Workday is closing the AI trust gap.

Workday has been leading by example for nearly a decade in our commitment to the responsible development of AI technologies in service of our customers, the responsible deployment within our own company for the benefit of our employees, and our advocacy for its regulation for the good of the world around us.

We are transparent and open with our employees about our ethical AI approach, be it the way it is built, the way it is used, or the way we advocate for its regulation. Our commitment here is a reflection of our core values, including a focus on our employees, customer service, innovation, and integrity.

When it comes to closing the trust gap for our customers, we advocate for and utilize a risk-based responsible AI governance approach, leveraging best practices including those described in the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, to ensure that responsible AI innovation is promoted while preserving the benefits that innovation brings.

We believe that meaningful and workable AI regulation is necessary to close the AI trust gap in the world around us and that policy advocacy is central to that effort. We've been helping lay the groundwork for AI regulation since 2019 by pushing for policies that leverage a nuanced, risk-based approach to AI; include workable accountability tools; support global harmonization; and recognize AI's role in driving skills at scale.

> "
> When I think about the future of AI, I think about the different disciplines coming together—from the humanities, the social sciences, engineering, legal, policy, HR, IT—to make sure that we take the time now to learn from past technological revolutions so that this one creates the best possible future, for everyone.

Kathy Pham
VP, Artificial Intelligence
and Machine Learning,
Workday

More from this expert

Appendix: AI scenarios.

Regulation and control.

There has been widespread public concern about AI and its potential harm. Articles in the popular press question whether we have properly managed the harm caused by AI. Lawmakers in a few jurisdictions, including yours, have responded by creating new regulations. These regulations limit how much companies can use AI in various areas of the business, including hiring, promotions, and publicly filed financial statements. Companies now cannot use AI in these areas because its use is legally prohibited.

Decline and collapse.

There have been several high-profile AI incidents at other companies. Everything that could have gone wrong seems to have gone wrong. In one case, an employer used AI to make decisions about promotions and hiring that resulted in clear bias and job loss. Employees responded by suing that company, and similar lawsuits were soon filed against other companies that employed similar techniques. There are popular news stories of "AI strikes" breaking out at various companies. Large labor unions have organized new members around the cause of AI bias. Employees at your own organization are refusing to use AI because of concerns about bias and invasion of privacy. Candidates for jobs are routinely declining job offers because they are not satisfied with your company's policy on AI use.

Status quo/growth.

Employees at your organization are using AI but the results are uneven. In this scenario, some tasks are faster and easier, but there is still a lot of manual work that AI has not automated. In your own company, you have seen AI improve the speed of some things, but you personally aren't experiencing the promise of wholesale productivity improvement. There are articles in the popular press where people are questioning whether AI is worth the expense. Some high-profile CEOs have expressed disappointment with their AI adoption, while others argue that businesses must stay the course to get the full return on investment.

Transformation.

AI has allowed employees at your organization to reduce manual labor significantly. In this scenario, all the right things seem to have happened. You yourself have been using AI to automate routine and boring tasks. New employees are delighted to find these tools already in use at your organization. In other companies, there are similar stories of productivity enhancements. Companies are considering expanding AI use because of this increased productivity. Popular news stories describe increased creativity and employee engagement in companies that adopt AI.

About the research.

This data comes from a global survey commissioned by Workday and conducted by FT Longitude in November 2023. We surveyed 5,375 business leaders and employees across 15 countries in 3 core regions. This included 1,375 C-suite and director-level business executives and 4,000 employees (department managers, supervisors, workers, and manual/technical or other roles). There were 1,480 respondents in North America; 3,465 in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA); and 430 in Asia-Pacific and Japan (APJ). All organizations surveyed have 500 employees or more. Workday leaders and employees were not included in the research.

Respondents by business function.

- IT/Technology
- Finance
- HR
- CEO

44%
40%
13%
3%

Respondents by group.

- Business leaders
- Employees

26%
74%
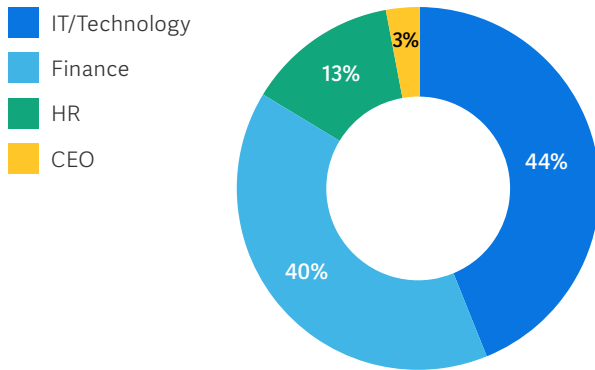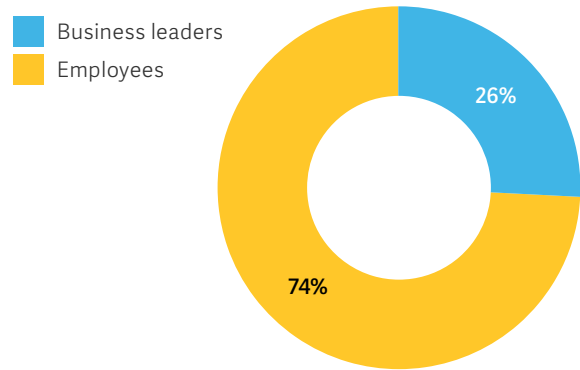
It's time to close the AI trust gap.

To learn more about Workday AI and how we're working to close the AI trust gap, please visit: workday.com/responsibleai