April 2026

Championing. Anxious. Struggling.

AI Readiness Among Agency Employees

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Introduction

This report explores findings from a March 2026 survey of 230 employees from **Advertising & Marketing Independent Network (AMIN)** member agencies across the United States, conducted in partnership with **Meyocks Research + Insights.**

Participation was voluntary and responses were collected without individual attribution. While response rates varied significantly across participating agencies, an analysis of the differences between agencies with higher versus lower response rates does not suggest this variability materially impacted the key findings presented in this report.

The survey assessed how employees are currently using AI for work, what is driving or inhibiting deeper adoption, and what support they need to go further. The study was designed to move beyond simple usage metrics; it was built to answer the harder questions: why are some employees integrating AI deeply while others with equal access and apparent motivation are not? What psychological and organizational conditions predict adoption? And what interventions are most likely to have impact?

The survey instrument draws on validated frameworks from four research traditions. Technology acceptance theory, specifically the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology developed by Venkatesh and colleagues, provided the core model for predicting usage frequency. Weiner's organizational readiness for change framework shaped how we distinguish between employees who lack commitment and those who lack capability, a distinction that matters enormously for intervention design. Edmondson's psychological safety research informed how we measure whether employees feel safe enough to experiment and fail. Lastly, Rogers' innovation diffusion model provided a lens for understanding where employees sit on the broader adoption curve.

“

[AI will] bring agency work back to its roots — ideas over execution.

— Digital/Media

“

It feels like the Wild West, where it doesn’t seem like there’s one trusted source and everyone is doing things a little bit differently.

– Digital/Media

“

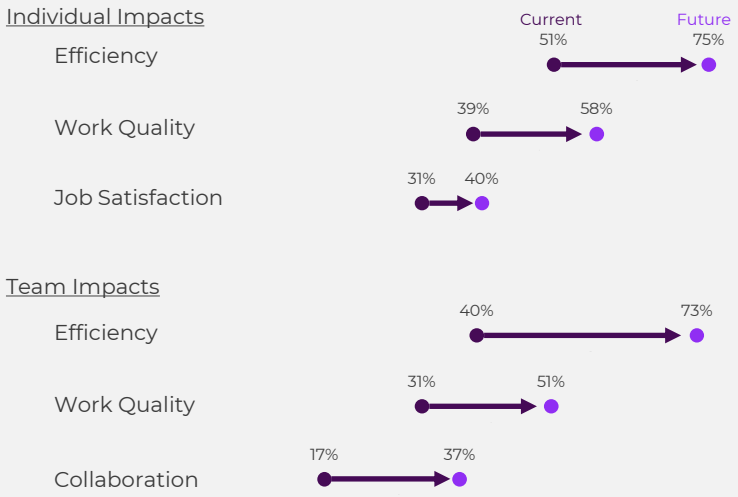
I don’t worry too much about AI taking over my role entirely. I worry more about losing my creative edge and the ability to use my creative skills – falling out of practice.

– Creative

Employees already see benefit and anticipate more. The biggest room for growth is at the team level.

Current and Future Positive Impacts (T2B) at the Individual and Team Levels

Employees already see positive impacts from AI and across dimensions and expect those positive impacts to grow in the future, with more growth coming from team-level integration.



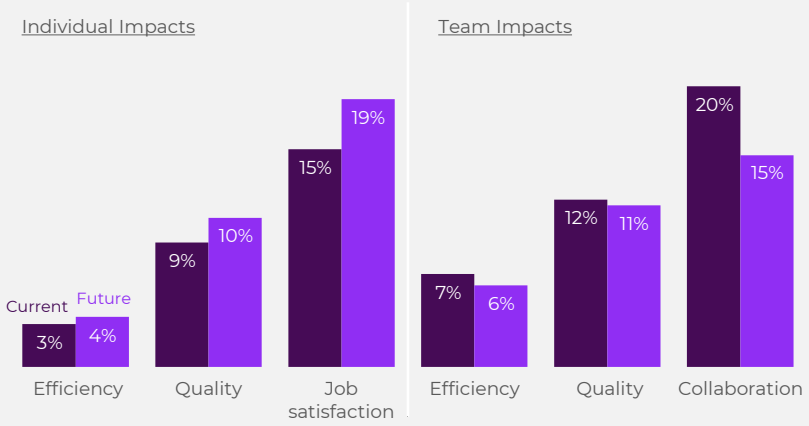
How would you say AI is currently impacting... The efficiency of your own work / The quality of your own work / Your personal job satisfaction / The efficiency of your team / The quality of your team's work / Team collaboration

In the long-term future, what impact do you think AI will have on... The efficiency of your own work / The quality of your own work / Your personal job satisfaction / The efficiency of your team / The quality of your team's work / Team collaboration

Responses on five-point Likert scale; T2B scores plotted. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

Current and Future Negative Impacts (B2B) at the Individual and Team Levels

A meaningful number of employees see negative impacts at both the team and individual levels. While they generally expect those problems to worsen slightly at the individual level, they expect the current negative impacts to moderate somewhat at the team level.



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Responses on five-point Likert scale; B2B scores plotted. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

Employees largely believe AI will help them work faster, but they are less certain it will improve the quality of work or make their jobs more enjoyable.

Employees report meaningful efficiency gains: **51% already see positive impact on their own efficiency, and 40% on team efficiency.** Fewer currently see positive impacts on work quality: 39% at the individual level and 31% at the team level.

But **expectations for the future positive impacts are dramatically higher** across every dimension. Seventy-five percent anticipate individual efficiency gains in the long term, and 73% anticipate team-level efficiency gains.

Job satisfaction and collaboration see the least benefit from AI. Less than a third of employees see a positive impact on job satisfaction today, and only 40% expect one in the future — while 15% say it's currently negative and 19% expect it to worsen. Team collaboration tells a similar story with only 17% reporting a positive impact now versus 20% who reported a negative impact, and just 37% expect improvement ahead. Notably, **employees are roughly twice as likely to report a negative impact on collaboration than a positive one on quality.**

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88% are using AI for work. Most are still flying solo.

Confirming the growth opportunity at the team level, employees report that their personal adoption of AI in the workplace has outpaced their teams' integration of the technology by a significant margin.

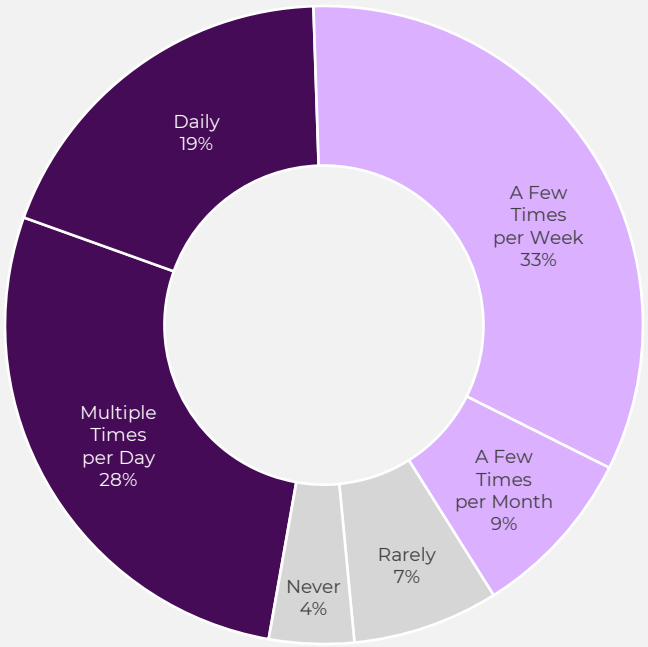
Nearly nine in 10 (88%) employees are using AI for work at least a few times per month, and 47% use it daily or more.

But the story underneath the 88% headline tells a different and more complicated story. **Only 6% of employees say AI is deeply embedded in their team's workflows.**

More than half (53%) describe AI use among their team as individual – something they do on their own, rather than a coordinated team workflow.

Frequency of Individual AI Use

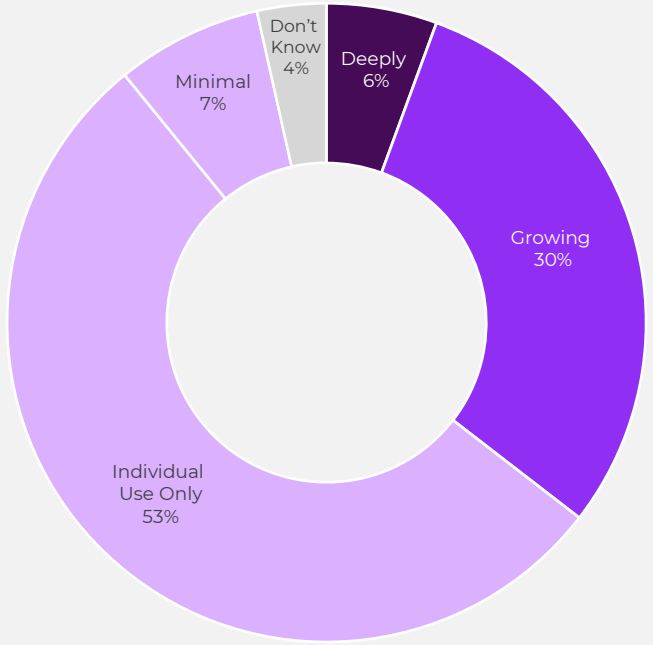
47% use AI at least daily for work-related tasks, while only 12% say they use it rarely or never.



How often do you personally use AI tools for work-related tasks?
All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

Integration of AI into Team Workflows

Only 6% report that AI is deeply embedded in their team's workflows. While 30% say team-level AI integration is growing, 53% say their AI usage is still mostly individual.



How integrated is AI into your team's work?
All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

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What gets someone onboard with AI is different from what deepens their engagement with it.

Building on existing frameworks used by academics and organizational transformation practitioners, we hypothesized that certain factors would affect employees' commitment to exploring how AI could be integrated into their work (similar to the extant research on innovation and change acceptance) and to actively engage with AI in their day-to-day work (similar to extant research in technology adoption). Statistical modeling on survey responses supports those hypotheses and reveals two distinct pathways to AI adoption, each powered by a different set of drivers. More detail on the statistical modelling is available as an appendix to this report.

Commitment to explore: Employees whose attitudes toward AI are positive, who feel psychologically safe to experiment, and who perceive low threat to their professional identity are more likely to be committed to exploring AI's potential. This motivational pathway is the prerequisite for adoption; without it, capability building falls on deaf ears. In this study, our commitment model explains a robust 62% of variance in change commitment among survey respondents.

Actual AI usage in day-to-day work: The factors that predict how frequently employees actually use AI are Performance Expectancy (does AI help me accomplish my work better?), Self-Efficacy (do I feel confident using it?) and Applicability (does the kind of work I do benefit from AI?). In this study, our usage model explains 52% of variance in usage frequency among survey respondents.

The two pathways are independent. We see examples of employees who are highly committed but not frequent users, and employees who are frequent users but are not committed, and we discuss that in greater detail later in this report when we propose employee segments.

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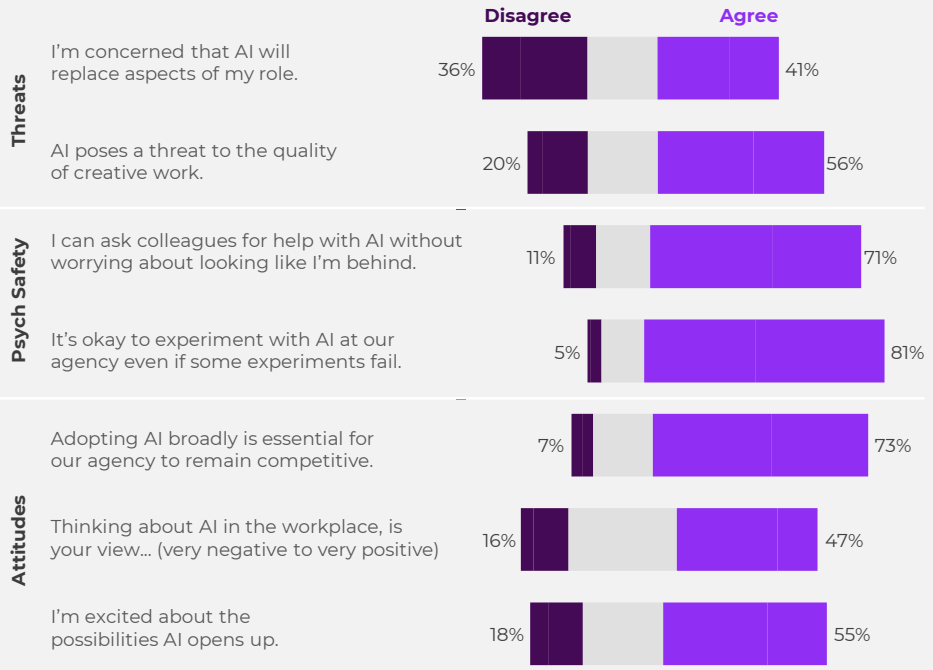
The prerequisites for commitment are generally present.

The prerequisites for actual usage are weaker.

Commitment Factors

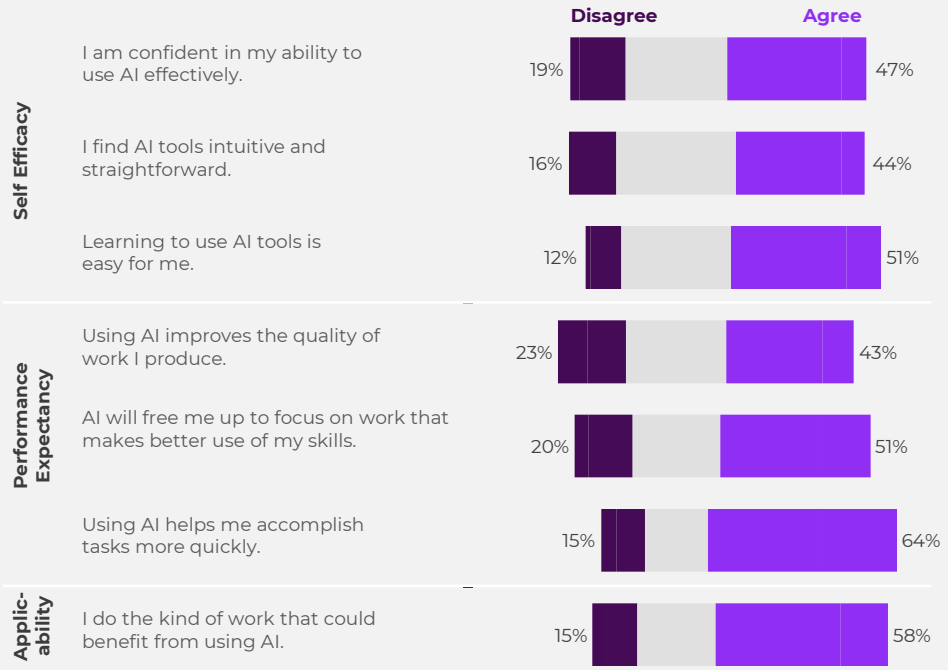
Among the factors that drive commitment to explore ways to integrate AI, threats to professional identity represent the greatest opportunity for improvement.



Responses on five-point Likert scale. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

Usage Factors

Across the factors that predict actual usage of AI in day-to-day work, the story is more muted. The strongest factors in this model are often 15 to 20 percentage points lower than the strongest factors in the commitment model.



Responses on five-point Likert scale. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

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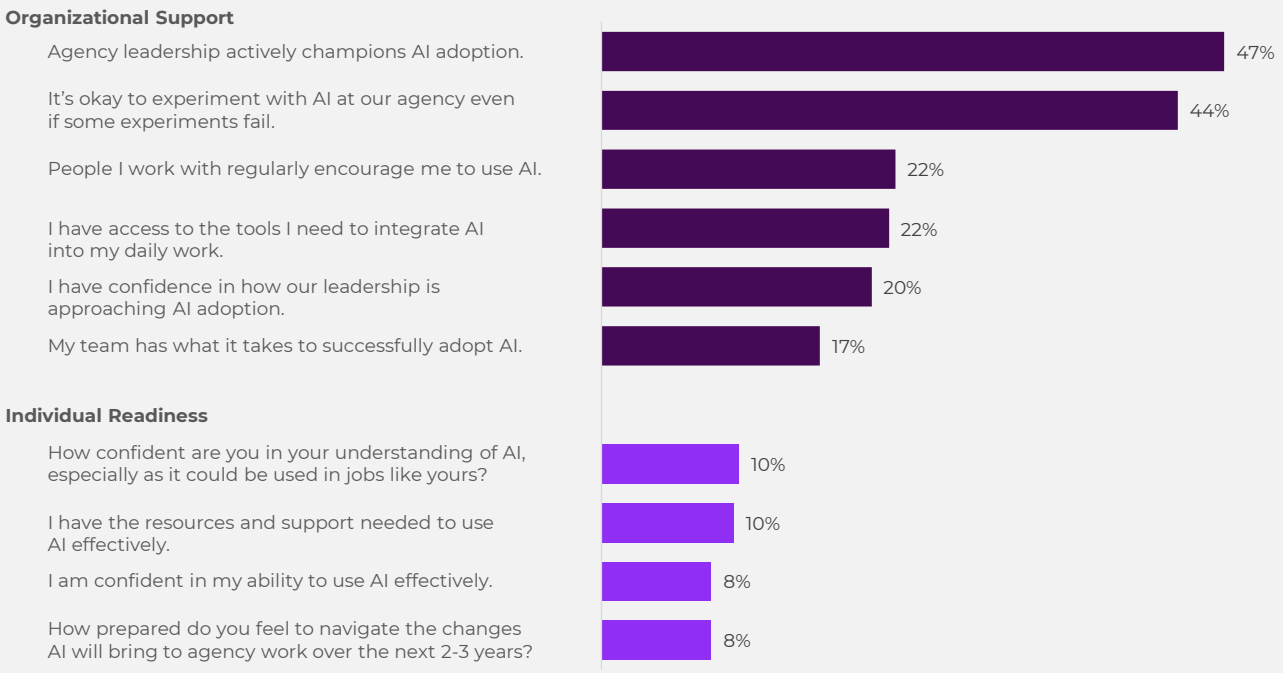
Employees feel motivated and supported. Confidence in their own AI ability has not kept pace.

Employees' Perceptions of Organizational Support versus Individual Readiness

Employees consistently report stronger perceptions of organizational and team support than they do perceptions of their own readiness. Top-one-box responses (strong agreement, high confidence) are reported here.



Responses on five-point Likert scales, though anchors varies by question. Top box (T1B) scores plotted. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

> "I feel like the agency is ahead of the curve, but I'm not well-versed enough in AI myself... I am concerned that I don't know enough about it to keep up at this point.
>
> — *Account/Strategy*

When employees describe how their agency has positioned AI, the story is encouraging: leadership is visible, the culture is safe for experimentation, and organizational support is strong. But when they describe their own relationship with AI, the picture changes. Self-efficacy, skill level, and preparedness consistently score 20 to 30 percentage points below the organizational indicators.

Only 47% of employees feel confident in their own AI ability. Just 8% describe their skill level as Advanced; 58% consider themselves Intermediate and 30% Beginner. **Only 40% feel prepared for the AI-related changes coming in the next two to three years.**

The gap between how well employees feel supported and how capable they actually feel is the clearest diagnostic in the data. **To close that gap, employees request targeted training, role-specific use cases, and structured time to practice**; not more cultural encouragement, which is already abundant.

Three personas.
Three approaches.

Employee Segmentation

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An employee's relationship with AI can be described through three nuanced profiles, each with different needs.

	AI Champions	Craft Anxious	Willing but Struggling
Percent of Sample	51%	24%	25%
Daily AI usage rate	High	Medium	Low
Breadth of AI activities	High	Medium	Low
Confidence in own AI ability	High	High	Low
Organizational support	High	Medium	Low
Positive AI attitudes	High	Low	Medium
Quality concerns	Medium	High	Low
Wants more training	Medium	Low	High
Expects AI to improve future job satisfaction	High	Low	Medium

Using statistical clustering techniques on validated multi-item factors (adoption momentum, AI capability, organizational trust, and social support) we identified three natural groupings of employees. The statistical approach we used produces groups are best understood as regions along a (multi-dimensional) continuum rather than airtight categories. **What makes these segments analytically useful isn't the taxonomy, it's the underlying logic each group reveals**.

- **AI Champions** (51% of survey respondents) are daily or near-daily users who believe AI genuinely improves their work and are actively exploring its possibilities.
- **Craft Anxious** employees (24%) are capable and organizationally well-supported users who nonetheless hold the most negative view of AI's Impact of anyone in this study, because of genuine concerns about what AI means for the quality of their craft.
- **Willing but Struggling** employees (25%) are motivated to engage but held back by capability gaps and limited structural support.

The distribution of these groups varies meaningfully across agencies, which may align with each agency's approach to AI so far. AI Champions range from 30% at one agency to 58% at another. Craft Anxious ranges from 13% to 37%. Willing but Struggling ranges from 5% to 44%.

A note about a fourth expected group: Our segmentation model aligns in some respects with the four-quadrant model Weiner et al propose in their organizational framework. A fourth segment in our model that would align with the fourth quadrant in the extant model – "Resistors," in Weiner's parlance, who believe they're *capable* of using AI but still refuse to do so – did not appear in this data. Indeed, working with the multi-item factors inspired by Weiner's work and validated here, we find only two of 230 survey respondents who showed both high self efficacy and low willingness to engage.

AI Champions

They're daily users who believe AI makes their work better. They need ways to share what they've learned.

> "Anything is possible now. Building new tools, designing previously impossible production components with small budgets. Anything you can imagine can be accomplished.
>
> — *Creative, AI Champion*

AI Champions represent 51% of survey responses.

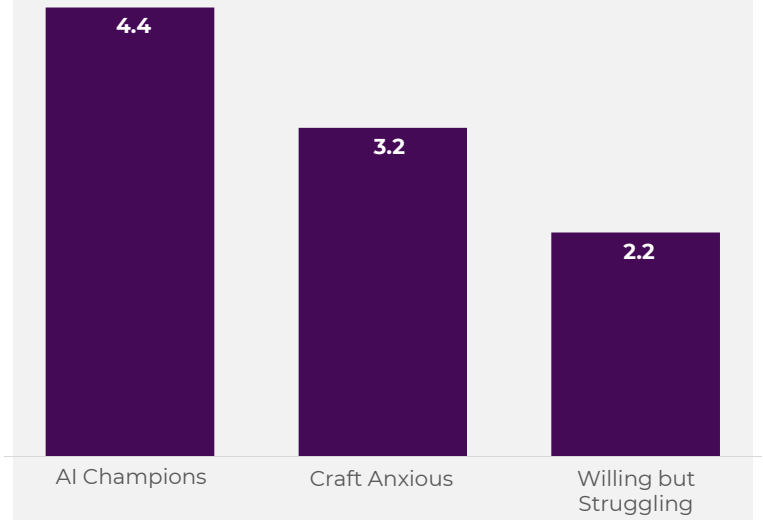
They have clearly crossed the threshold from cautious experimentation to active integration. Two in three (66%) use AI daily or more, and they use it broadly, averaging 4.4 distinct activities per person, from writing and research to strategy development and client presentations. Nearly half (47%) work in Strategy and Account Leadership, and they are distributed across all tenure levels.

What separates Champions from other segments isn't just frequency. It's what they believe AI is doing. They score highest on performance expectancy (4.05), the conviction that AI concretely improves the quality and speed of their work, and their change commitment (4.44) is the highest of any group in the study. They also feel the effects directly: 62% say AI has improved the quality of their work, and 53% say it has improved their job satisfaction. Their future expectations are even more bullish. Ninety-five percent expect AI to improve their efficiency going forward, and 80% expect quality gains.

Their barriers are not what you might expect from the most sophisticated users in the study. **Quality and accuracy concerns still top the list at 47%.** Even Champions hold the profession to a standard that AI doesn't always meet. Client policy constraints follow at 23%. What this group is asking for is not training, though 58% cite it, likely meaning deepening rather than starting. **They want better access to tools (36%) and structures to share what they have already figured out with the people around them.**

Average Number of AI Activities

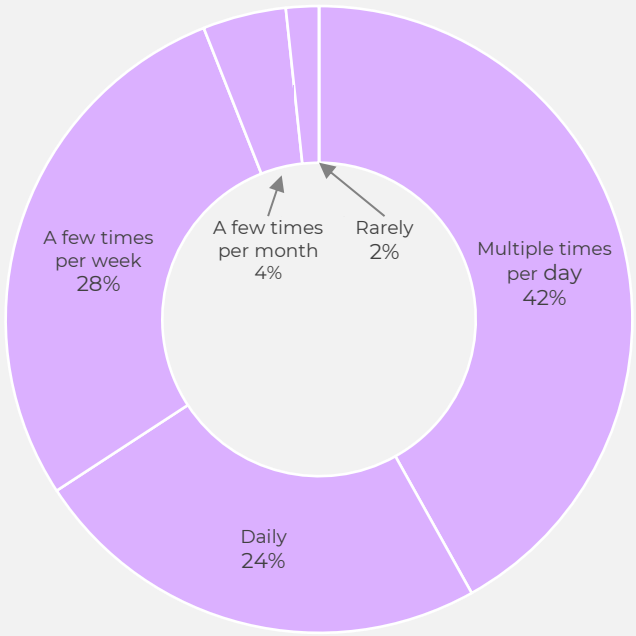
AI Champions use AI for a wider variety of activities than any other segment – twice as many as the Willing but Struggling.



Mean number of items selected from 10-item pick list. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

Frequency of Use Among AI Champions

Two thirds use AI daily.



n=117 AI Champions. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

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Craft Anxious

They're frequent users who are just as AI fluent as Champions. Nonetheless, they expect AI to make their work (and their jobs) worse.

Craft Anxious employees, representing 24% of survey responses, defy expected explanations for AI reluctance. They are not beginners: 77% consider themselves Intermediate or Advanced users. They are not unsupported: organizational support (3.74/5.00) and leadership encouragement (4.41) score nearly identically to AI Champions. They are not low-confidence: their self-efficacy (3.64) is nearly equal to the Champions' 3.68.

What separates them from other segments is what they believe AI is doing to the work. Their composite AI attitudes (2.29/5.00) are the lowest of any group in the study by a wide margin, and their threat perception is the highest. Seventy-nine percent identify quality and accuracy concerns as their primary barrier. That's 30 percentage points above AI Champions and the highest rate of any segment on any barrier. When asked how AI has affected the quality of their work, their average response falls below the scale midpoint of 3.0, meaning that on net, they believe AI has made their work worse.

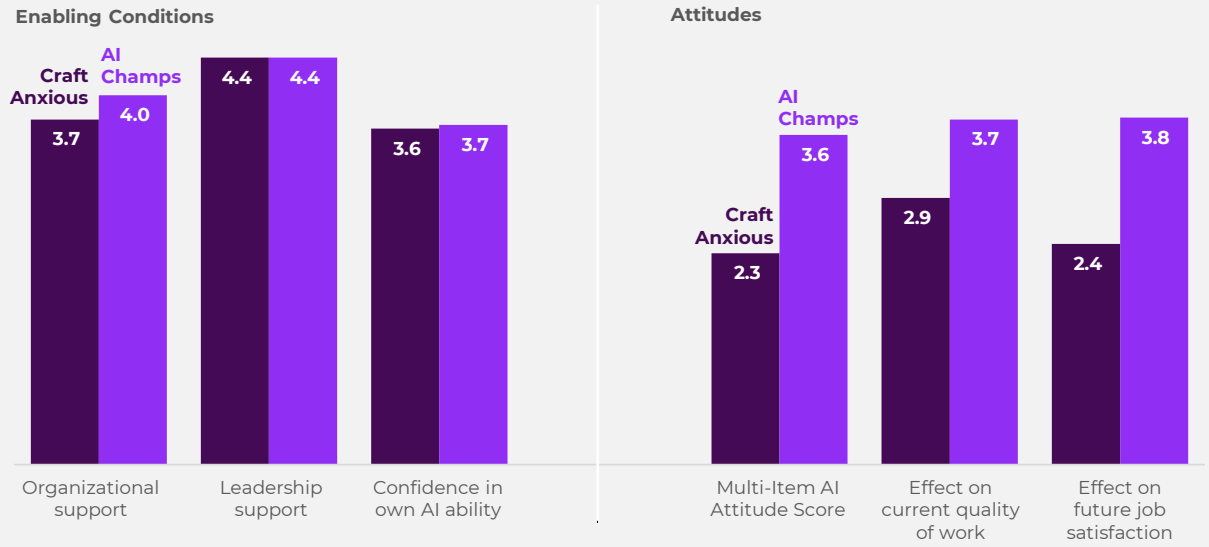
The forward-looking data is starker still. **Only 7% of Craft Anxious employees expect AI to improve their job satisfaction in the long run.** The comparable figure among AI Champions is 62%. This is not a readiness gap that more training will close: only 32% of this group say they need more training, the lowest of any segment and 27 percentage points below Willing but Struggling employees. **Their open-text responses call for honest dialogue about when AI should and should not be used, and the professional latitude to make that call themselves.**

More than half (52%) work in Creative, and 41% are in the mid-career 8-to-15-year tenure band. These are professionals who have spent meaningful careers building an identity around the quality of their judgment and taste.

> "Honestly, not that excited about AI in agency work. I'm mainly engaging with it because I need to do it to keep my job for as long as I can.
>
> — *Creative, Craft Anxious*

Similar Conditions, Different Attitudes

The Craft Anxious are similar to AI Champions on enabling conditions. Attitudes separate the two segments.



Mean scores out of 5 possible points. Individual items are weighted equally in multi-item composite scores. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

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Willing But Struggling

> Give specific guidelines for when to and not to use AI, which AI platforms are appropriate to use in my role, and allow time for training and experimenting on specific platforms.
>
> — *Creative, Willing But Struggling*

They want to engage with AI but lack confidence in their own ability to integrate the technology effectively.

Willing but Struggling employees represent 25% of the response set. Their challenge is neither attitude nor identity. Their change commitment (3.40/5.00) is not dramatically below the study average, and they're generally more positive than negative about how AI is changing work. The problem is that they haven't had enough exposure to see iti n *their* work, and the organizational conditions that would get them there are not in place.

Self-efficacy (belief in their own ability to learn AI) sits at 2.32/5.00, the lowest of any segment. Facilitating conditions, meaning whether they have the practical resources, access, and support to use AI daily, score 2.35, also the lowest. Nearly two-thirds (65%) describe their AI skill level as Beginner, and 11% have no experience at all. Thirty percent never or rarely use AI for work, nearly three times the rate of Craft Anxious employees.

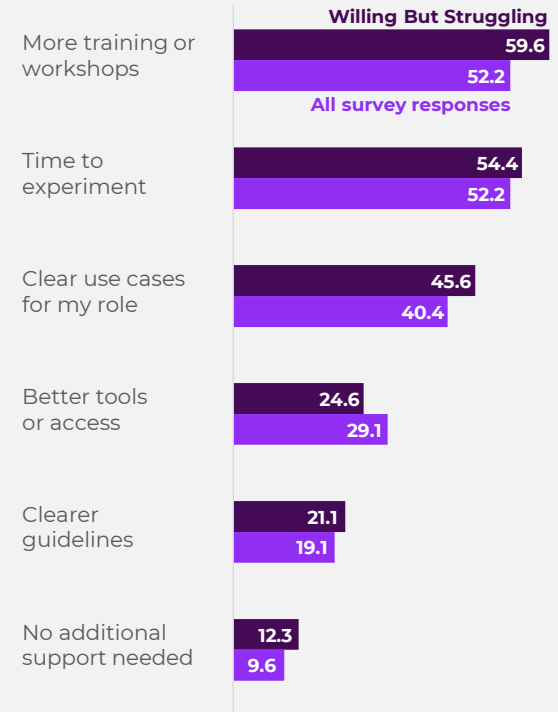
This group skews most senior by tenure: 44% have more than 15 years of industry experience, the highest concentration of any segment but the instinct to read that as generational resistance would be a mistake.

Among moderate users, 34% fall into Weiner's "willing but unable" pattern (committed to change but lacking the belief they can); **the motivation to engage is real, but the capability and conditions to act on it aren't there.** An additional 30% fall into the "stuck" pattern (lacking on both commitment to change and belief they can change).

This group suffers from a structural problem requiring a structural response, and they were direct about what that response should look like. Sixty percent want more training and workshops, the highest rate of any segment. Fifty-four percent want protected time to experiment. Forty-six percent want clear use cases tailored to their specific role. No segment is more concrete about what it needs, or more ready to use it once provided.

Willing But Struggling and Other Segments Request the Same Basic Enablers

Percent of sample selecting each enabler, Willing But Struggling versus overall average



What would most help you integrate AI more effectively? Select up to three. Values shown above are percent of survey respondents selecting each item. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

> There are a ton of AI tools. Many do not have anything to do with what I do. At times I feel behind when I do not know a certain tool, only to discover that I really wouldn't use that tool anyway.
>
> — *Creative, Willing But Struggling*

Self-Reported Skill Level by Segment

More than three quarters of Willing But Struggling respondents describe their AI skill level as "no experience" or "beginner."

	Willing but Struggling	Craft Anxious	AI Champions
No experience	10.5%	1.8	0.0
Beginner	64.9	14.3	20.5
Intermediate	24.6	76.8	66.7
Advanced	0.0	7.1	12.8

How would you rate your current skill level with AI tools? Percent of survey respondents each option, by segment. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of 230 members across U.S. AMIN agencies.

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Perceived threat to professional identity is the strongest suppressor of commitment. The cost may compound over time.

Among all the predictors of change commitment tested, threat perception is by far the strongest negative driver. When employees believe AI threatens the quality of their work or their professional relevance, that belief actively suppresses their willingness to engage. This effect is more statistically powerfully than any other variable in the model, including organizational support, attitudes, and self-efficacy.

The compounding effect is visible in future expectations. AI Champions expect AI to substantially improve their individual work (4.07 on a 5-point scale) and their team's performance (3.95). Willing but Struggling employees expect moderate improvement (3.42 individual; 3.29 team). Craft Anxious employees expect neither. Their future individual impact expectation (2.83) doesn't clear the midpoint, and their future team impact expectation (2.93) is similar. They are the only group in the study whose future expectations sit near neutral. Among Craft Anxious employees, AI's impact on current job satisfaction (2.52) is the lowest of any group and sits below the scale midpoint. Their future satisfaction expectation (2.39) is even lower.

The mechanism behind these expectations adds urgency. Threat perception shapes attitudes; attitudes shape both current satisfaction with AI's impact and expectations for future satisfaction. **This could prove to be a self-reinforcing cycle: unaddressed craft anxiety depresses current satisfaction, which forecloses future expectations, which deepens current disengagement.**

> "Continued pressure to drive AI efficiencies from both clients and the agency, which can diminish the parts of my role I enjoy most and reduce the level of taste and human nuance in the work.
>
> *— Account/Strategy, Craft Anxious*

> "... I want AI to create time for me to practice my craft, not take away from it by never [letting] me actually produce my own work. There is value in process. There is value in the journey.
>
> *— Creative, Craft Anxious*

> "Honestly, my biggest concern isn't the technology — it's the race to the bottom it could accelerate. When every agency has access to the same models, there's enormous pressure to compete on speed and price rather than ideas.
>
> *— Creative, Craft Anxious*

The pattern of enablers mirrors the pattern of barriers.

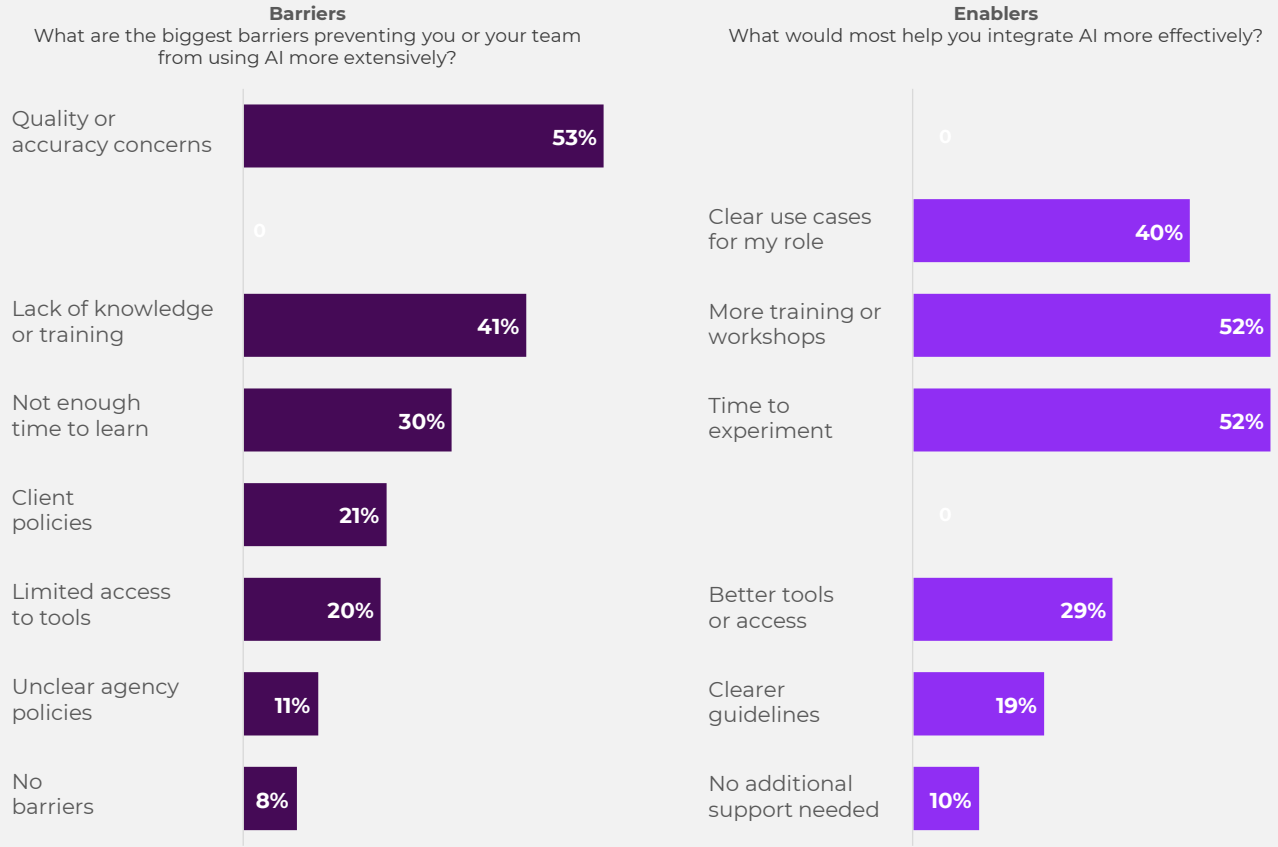
When placed side by side, the top barriers and top enablers align nearly perfectly. The things employees say are holding them back speak to the things they say would help them go further.

Quality and accuracy concerns top the barrier list at 53%. As discussed earlier in this report this figure deserves careful interpretation. It is not generic worry about AI being unreliable; these are professionals whose output quality is their product. The concern is specific to the craft. It is also not concentrated among skeptics: 47% of AI Champions cite it as a barrier, meaning that **even the most enthusiastic users in the study hold the profession to a standard they feel AI does not consistently meet.** Among Craft Anxious employees the rate reaches 79%. Quality concern is the most universal finding in the barriers data.

Training needs (41%) and time constraints (30%) follow, and both are directly echoed in the enabler list, where more training opportunities and time to experiment are tied at 52%.

One barrier has no enabler counterpart: client policies, cited by 21% of respondents. This is the one item on the list that agencies cannot resolve internally regardless of what they invest in training, time, or tools.

Top Barriers and Enablers to AI Integration



Respondents selected up to three items from the defined pick list. All survey respondents. n=230. March 2026 survey of employees of five AMIN Americas agencies.

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“

The agencies that will win [won’t be] the ones that use AI the most. They’re the ones that use it to amplify the distinctly human things: taste, relationships, cultural intuition, the courage to take a creative risk.

– Creative, Craft Anxious

“

I am both excited and scared by the possibilities.

– Account/Strategy, AI Champion

Thank You

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Appendix A: Methodology

Survey design and administration: Meyocks Research + Insights developed and fielded this survey in collaboration with AMIN's member agencies. The instrument consisted of 26 questions across 9 topical sections, including a 21-item attitudinal battery, behavioral self-report items, and five open-end questions. The survey was administered online via Alchemer over a 10-day field period in March 2026. All 230 responses were complete; no partial responses were included in the analysis.

Sampling: The survey targeted all employees across AMIN member agencies using a census approach. Response rates varied by agency; see the agency-specific supplements for details.

Analytical frameworks: Attitudinal items were adapted from Venkatesh, Morris, Davis and Davis (2003) Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Adoption readiness classification was adapted from Weiner's (2009) theory of organizational readiness for change. Psychological safety items drew from Edmondson's (1999) conceptualization of team psychological safety.

Scale construction and reliability: Composite scores were constructed from multi-item scales where items demonstrated adequate internal consistency. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega. Two planned composites, Leadership Support and Psychological Safety, failed to meet the reliability threshold (alpha = 0.457 and 0.413 respectively), indicating insufficient inter-item correlation for composite scoring. Rather than forcing unreliable composites into the analysis, these constructs were represented in subsequent models by their constituent individual items. The five-item Organizational Support composite (alpha = 0.751), Performance Expectancy (two items), and Effort Expectancy (two items) met reliability standards and were retained as composites. All composites were constructed as unweighted row means; missing item-level data were handled using pairwise deletion.

Regression models: Two regression models underlie the adoption pathway framework presented in this report. Usage frequency was modeled using ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds model) with usage frequency as a six-category ordered outcome. A theory-driven model including UTAUT constructs explained 51.9% of variance in usage frequency (Nagelkerke pseudo-R^2). Performance expectancy and self-efficacy emerged as the only statistically significant independent predictors; organizational support, psychological safety, change commitment, and perceived applicability did not reach significance once those two variables were controlled. A full model adding job function, tenure, and technology adoption style improved fit significantly (likelihood ratio test $p = 0.004$), with Operations/Support role and more cautious technology adoption orientation both negatively associated with usage frequency. Change commitment was modeled separately using OLS regression; threat perception emerged as the strongest negative predictor among all variables tested, with a standardized coefficient meaningfully larger than those of organizational support, attitudes, and self-efficacy. The attitudes model (OLS, adjusted $R^2 = 0.34$) identified psychological safety and usage frequency as the primary positive predictors. The independence of the usage and commitment pathways was confirmed empirically: the predictors that drive frequency do not fully overlap with those that drive willingness to explore, which is the basis for treating them as diagnostically distinct in this report.

Factor analysis and segmentation: Exploratory factor analysis (maximum likelihood, oblimin rotation) identified four underlying dimensions explaining 49.7% of cumulative variance. K-means cluster analysis of factor scores identified three employee segments (k=3; average silhouette width = 0.305; 83% agreement between k-means and hierarchical clustering). Segments represent regions along an adoption continuum rather than mutually exclusive types.

Verbatim responses: Selected open-end responses appear throughout this report. Responses are reproduced exactly as written by respondents, without attribution to named individuals. Note that some respondents may be recognizable to colleagues who know them personally from the content of their responses; respondents were informed of this possibility at the time of the survey.

For a detailed methodological discussion including item development, scale construction, reliability analysis, and full regression model specifications, contact Meyocks Research + Insights.

Appendix B: Venkatesh Adoption of Technology Framework

Purpose: This appendix explains the technology adoption framework that underlies the predictive modeling in this report.

Framework Overview: The adoption pathway model used in this report is adapted from the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), first developed by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis (2003). UTAUT was developed through a synthesis of eight prior technology adoption models and has since been validated across hundreds of organizational studies. For this study, the framework was adapted to the agency context and extended with constructs from psychological safety and organizational change readiness research. Two outcome variables were modeled separately: day-to-day AI usage frequency and change commitment (the motivation to explore AI's potential). These are treated as distinct outcomes because they respond to different predictors and require different interventions.

- **Performance Expectancy** is the degree to which an employee believes that using AI will help them do their job better. In UTAUT research, this is consistently the strongest predictor of actual technology use. In this study it was measured by two items: whether AI helps accomplish tasks more quickly, and whether AI improves the quality of work produced. Performance expectancy emerged as the strongest independent predictor of usage frequency in the regression model (b=1.22, p<.001), confirming its primacy in the UTAUT literature.

- **Effort Expectancy** is the degree to which an employee believes AI tools are easy to learn and use. In UTAUT, this construct tends to matter more early in an adoption cycle and less once users gain experience. Effort Expectancy did not reach significance in our regression model once Performance Expectancy and Self-Efficacy were controlled. The practical implication is that ease of use is not the primary barrier; employees are more constrained by whether they believe AI will help them than by whether they believe they can use it.

- **Social Influence** in the original UTAUT framework captures whether "important others" believe the individual should use the technology. In this study it is operationalized through two constructs: peer influence and leadership support. Both contribute to the Organizational Support composite. Notably, neither leadership support nor organizational support as a composite reached significance as independent predictors of usage frequency in our regression analysis. This finding is consistent with UTAUT research showing that social influence effects are stronger in mandatory adoption contexts than in voluntary ones; when AI use is discretionary, organizational encouragement creates conditions for adoption but does not drive it directly.

- **Facilitating Conditions** captures whether employees have the resources, infrastructure, and support they need to use AI effectively. It was measured by two items covering tool access and overall resource availability. Facilitating Conditions did not independently predict usage frequency in the regression model, but it was the lowest-scoring construct among Willing but Struggling employees (2.35/5.0), where structural gaps are the primary barrier.

Extensions to the Core Model

Three constructs were added to the UTAUT base to address dimensions particularly relevant to the agency context.

- **Psychological Safety** (Edmondson, 1999) captures whether employees feel safe experimenting with AI without fear of negative consequences. It was measured by two items: whether experimentation is culturally permitted, and whether employees can ask colleagues for help without judgment. Psychological safety emerged as a significant predictor of AI attitudes but not of usage frequency directly. This pattern suggests psychological safety is more important for building the motivational conditions for adoption than for driving actual behavior once those conditions are established.

- **Self-Efficacy** (Bandura, 1977; adapted for technology contexts) captures employees' confidence in their own ability to use AI effectively, as distinct from their assessment of whether the tools themselves are easy to use. Self-Efficacy was the second strongest independent predictor of usage frequency in the regression model (b=0.57, p<.01) and is the construct most clearly distinguishing the Willing but Struggling segment (mean 2.32) from AI Champions (mean 3.68). The distinction between Effort Expectancy and Self-Efficacy is important for intervention design: Effort Expectancy is a belief about the tool; Self-Efficacy is a belief about oneself. Training that demonstrates tool functionality addresses Effort Expectancy. Training that produces successful task completion and builds personal competence addresses Self-Efficacy.

- **Perceived Applicability** captures whether employees believe their specific work can benefit from AI. While we found it to be only marginally significant (b=0.38, p=.033 in the full model), its inclusion reflects our finding that employees across different functions vary substantially in how much they perceive AI as relevant to their work, and this perception shapes adoption independent of general attitudes toward the technology.

REFERENCE

Venkatesh, V., Morris, M. G., Davis, G. B., & Davis, F. D. (2003). User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view. *MIS Quarterly, 27*(3), 425–478. https://doi.org/10.2307/30036540

Appendix C: Weiner Commitment-Capability Framework

Purpose: This appendix explains the analytical framework referenced throughout the report.

Framework Overview: The diagnostic used in this report is adapted from Weiner's theory of organizational readiness for change (first published in 2009 and expanded broadly since), which proposes that readiness involves two separable dimensions: change commitment (the motivation or 'will' to pursue a change) and change efficacy (the belief in one's capability to execute it).

When both dimensions are assessed simultaneously, four distinct patterns emerge. Each points toward a different kind of intervention:

- **High commitment + Low efficacy: 'Willing but Unable'** - These employees want to engage more deeply with AI but feel they lack the skill, confidence, or resources to do so. The intervention is capability-building: training, tool access, role-specific use cases, and time to practice. This is the dominant pattern among AMIN non-heavy users.
- **High commitment + High efficacy: 'Contextual barrier'** - These employees are motivated and capable but face external obstacles (client policies, tool access gaps, unclear guidelines) that prevent deeper adoption. The intervention is structural: remove the specific barrier.
- **Low commitment + Low efficacy: 'Stuck'** - These employees face both motivational and capability challenges. Effective intervention typically requires addressing the motivational dimension first; capability investment is wasted if the underlying commitment is absent.
- **Low commitment + High efficacy: 'Resistor'** - These employees have the capability to engage but are choosing not to. This is the pattern most commonly assumed to be widespread; in AMIN agencies, only 3 respondents (1.3%) meet this definition. The intervention, if any, is persuasion and dialogue rather than training.

Application In This Report: The diagnostic was applied to employees who are not currently heavy AI users (Moderate Users and Non/Rare Users), using change commitment (q08o, scored 1-5) and self-efficacy (q08m, scored 1-5). Employees scoring 4 or above on each dimension were classified as meeting the threshold. Thresholds were set at this level to represent genuine readiness rather than nominal awareness.

REFERENCE

Weiner, B. J. (2009). A theory of organizational readiness for change. Implementation Science, 4(1), 67. https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-4-67