



AI-POWERED INSIGHTS PLATFORM · INSIGHTS REPORT

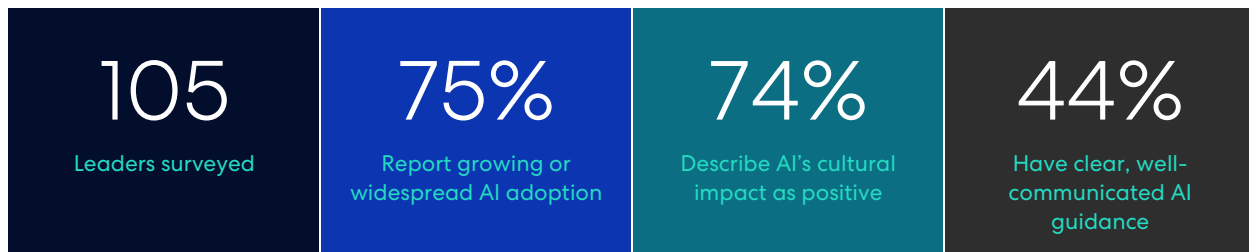
Exploring the Impact of AI on Organizational Culture

Learning from Supervisors, Managers, and Senior Leaders

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AI is reshaping organizational culture. The question now is how.

Remesh conducted a real-time field study with 105 supervisors, managers, and senior leaders to understand how AI is affecting workplace culture, norms, and employee experience. Using the Remesh platform's AI-powered conversational research, participants answered open and closed-ended questions and endorsed each other's responses, surfacing collective sentiment at scale. This report synthesizes those findings alongside the webinar presented by Patrick Hyland, PhD (Remesh) and Elissa Gurman, PhD (MacPhie).



STUDY BACKGROUND

Methodology

The study was run using Remesh Flex + Recruit. Participants engaged in a live, AI-moderated conversation where they answered questions and voted on each other's responses in real time. Remesh Autocode automatically categorized open-text themes. Results represent a cross-section of industries and organizational sizes.

Sample Profile

Dimension	Breakdown
Leadership level	53% Front-Line Manager · 30% Middle Manager · 10% Senior Manager · 8% C-Suite
Top industries	Technology (15%), Education & Research (12%), Financial Services (11%), Hospitals & Healthcare (11%), Government & Public Admin (8%)
Top functions	Administration & Management (29%), Operations (18%), Information Technology (16%), Customer Service (9%)
Organization size	44% ≤250 employees · 26% 251–1,000 · 11% 1,001–5,000 · 18% >5,000

FINDING 01

AI adoption is widespread — and accelerating

Three-quarters of respondents describe their organization’s AI adoption as either growing (62%) or widespread (13%). Only 3% report no adoption. For most leaders, the conversation has shifted from whether to adopt AI to how to manage integration effectively.

Adoption by Industry

Industry	Growing Adoption	Widespread Adoption	Combined
Manufacturing (n=5)	80%	20%	100%
Hospitals & Healthcare (n=11)	73%	9%	82%
Technology (n=17)	71%	12%	83%
Financial Services (n=11)	73%	0%	73%
Government & Public Admin (n=8)	63%	0%	63%
Education & Research (n=13)	31%	15%	46%
Total Sample (n=105)	62%	13%	75%

Education & Research lags at 46% combined adoption — the lowest of any major sector — while Manufacturing and Healthcare report near-universal uptake. This variation matters: organizations in lower-adoption sectors may have more time to shape culture deliberately, while higher-adoption sectors face urgency around governance.

How AI Is Currently Being Used

Application	% of Organizations
Generative AI for writing, summarizing, content creation	79%
AI-supported analytics or dashboards	56%
AI in employee support or service channels	50%
AI in performance management or workforce planning	45%
AI in recruiting or hiring processes	26%
No AI affecting employees or people management	5%

FINDING 02

Efficiency leads — but leaders see deeper opportunity

When asked about the hopes and opportunities AI is creating, efficiency and automation dominate. But the second and third most common themes point to something more profound: AI freeing people to do higher-value work, and enabling better decisions through data.

Opportunity Theme	Share of Open-Text Comments
Faster workflows / increased efficiency	52%
Automation of repetitive tasks	29%
Frees employees to do higher-value work	26%
Improved customer service	18%
Supports creativity, innovation, brainstorming	18%
Better decision-making through data analysis	17%
Cost reduction & business growth	13%

“AI is changing the expectation from volume to value. We are now expected to spend more time on creative problem solving and less on repetitive execution.”

Key Insight

The most-endorsed participant response — 81% agreement — centered on efficiency. But the broader pattern reveals that leaders also want AI to transform the nature of work itself: enabling judgment, creativity, and strategic thinking rather than just automating tasks.

Significant concerns persist beneath the optimism

Despite broadly positive sentiment, leaders identified real anxieties. Job displacement is the single largest concern at 37% of open-text comments — and it carries cultural weight beyond individual job security.

Concern Theme	Share of Open-Text Comments
Job loss & role displacement	37%
Data privacy & information security	24%
Inaccurate outputs & hallucinations	21%
Overreliance on AI; reduced critical thinking	15%
Need for training, upskilling, adaptation	13%
No new concerns / AI seen positively	11%
Quality risks in specialized tasks/decisions	10%

“Some may think they need to outperform AI in order to keep jobs.”

“Things are expected to be completed quicker, so more work is then given. So it has increased expectations.”

When employees believe AI threatens their roles, they are less likely to adopt it openly — creating drag on the efficiency gains organizations are hoping to achieve. Displacement anxiety also undermines psychological safety, collaboration, and the willingness to experiment.

FINDING 04

Cultural impact is broadly positive — but uneven by level

74% of respondents describe AI’s impact on culture or team dynamics as positive (25% very positive, 49% somewhat positive). No respondents reported a negative impact. But 27% report mixed feelings — and the distribution by leadership level reveals a notable pattern.

Leadership Level	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Mixed
Front-Line Manager (n=56)	23%	54%	23%
Middle Management	19%	45%	36%

(n=31)			
Senior Management (n=10)	40%	50%	10%
C-Suite (n=8)	38%	25%	38%

Notable Pattern

Middle managers report the highest rate of mixed sentiment (36%). Positioned between executive mandates and frontline realities, they absorb the tension of both. C-suite leaders are also more split than senior managers — possibly because they are closer to the full complexity of deployment.

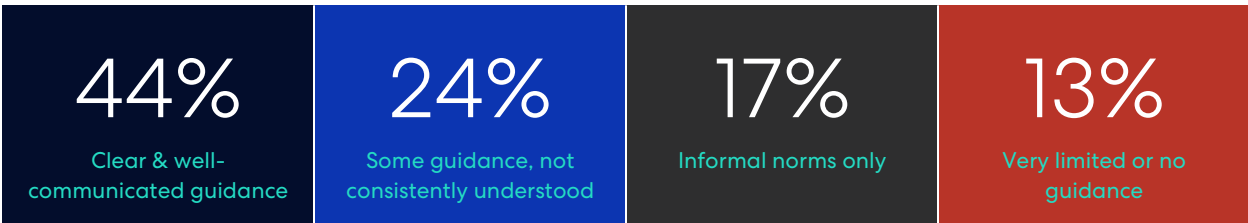
What Drives Positive vs. Mixed Impact

Conditions for Positive Impact	Factors Creating Mixed Impact
AI framed as support, not replacement	Benefits come with social strain (job security, role change)
Training and practical understanding in place	Adoption is uneven — some teams adapt, others lag
Leadership communicates clearly and builds trust	Skepticism and stigma around admitting AI use
Clear guardrails and human oversight exist	Policies and norms unclear or unstable
AI delivers visible, concrete work benefits	Overreliance and quality concerns create hesitation

FINDING 05

Governance is the critical gap

Less than half of respondents (44%) say their organization provides clear, well-communicated AI guidance. The rest operate in varying degrees of informality, inconsistency, or silence — and the data shows this directly undermines cultural outcomes.



Governance Quality vs. Cultural Sentiment

Governance Level	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Mixed
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Clear & well-communicated (n=46)	41%	52%	7%
Some guidance (n=25)	16%	52%	32%
Informal norms (n=18)	11%	50%	39%
Very limited or no guidance (n=13)	8%	38%	54%
Not sure (n=2)	0%	0%	100%

Key Finding

Organizations with clear AI governance are 6× more likely to report “very positive” cultural impact than those with little or no guidance (41% vs. 8%). Governance is not just a compliance function — it is a culture-building tool.

FINDING 06

Four actions leaders say would help most

When asked what guardrails and support would improve the employee experience as AI use grows, four priorities emerged clearly. Training leads by a wide margin.

Priority Action	Share of Comments
AI training and education	50%
Clear AI policies and usage rules	30%
Transparent communication from leadership	18%
Ethical AI standards and compliance	9%
Limit AI to suitable tasks and fields	9%
Job security and non-replacement assurances	8%
Human oversight for AI outputs and decisions	8%

“Leaders need to be straightforward that AI is not a position replacement. We are not training AI to take their jobs, but rather using AI to make their jobs easier and more efficient.”

IMPLICATIONS

Three strategies for people leaders

Presenters Patrick Hyland and Elissa Gurman distilled the study into three strategic recommendations for HR and business leaders managing AI integration.

01 · Take a sociotechnical perspective

AI adoption is an organizational change challenge, not a technology project. Sociotechnical Systems (STS) theory offers a proven framework: sustainable effectiveness requires social systems (people, culture, norms) and technical systems (tools, governance, processes) to be designed in harmony.

- Involve employees closest to the technology in shaping how it is used — they produce better outcomes and build stronger ownership.
- Align culture, leadership messaging, training, and governance alongside the technical rollout.
- Aim for a win-win-win: for employees, the organization, and the technology ecosystem.

02 · Talk to your workforce

This study provides directional insights, but adoption varies meaningfully across industries, organizations, and teams. The only way to understand how AI is affecting your specific workforce is to ask them directly — in conditions where they can answer honestly and without fear.

- Run conversational research that surfaces hopes, anxieties, and unmet needs before designing interventions.
- Use open-ended methods that reveal what close-ended surveys cannot capture.
- Repeat the listening process as AI use evolves — employee sentiment will shift.

03 · Build a human-centric AI culture

Leaders consistently called for organizations to take a human-first approach. Drawing on Edgar Schein's 11 mechanisms for embedding culture, there are concrete actions available at every organizational lever:

Schein's Cultural Lever	AI-Specific Leadership Action
Pay attention / measure / control	Track efficiency gains alongside role clarity, wellbeing, and performance pressure
React to crises	Address job fear, data concerns, and AI errors quickly and visibly
Role model / teach / coach	Leaders model AI as support, with human review visible and routine
Allocate rewards / status	Reward responsible, quality-focused use — not just speed or volume
Recruit / promote	Advance people with AI literacy, adaptability, and ethical judgment
Design structure	Keep human accountability clear; clarify how roles change across teams

Systems / procedures	Establish written policies, governance frameworks, ethical guidelines
Rites / rituals	Make AI training and open discussion a recurring, normalized practice
Stories / legends	Share examples of AI freeing people for creative, high-value work
Formal values / creed	Codify augmentation, transparency, and human oversight as org values

FRAMEWORK

The SCARF Lens: when AI helps vs. hurts

Research by David Rock (NeuroLeadership Institute) identifies five social domains — Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, and Fairness — that drive how people respond at work. This study’s findings map directly onto that framework.

AI as a Benefit	AI as a Threat
STATUS: Faster, smarter work elevates capability and contribution	Raises performance pressure; creates fear of displacement
CERTAINTY: More data and consistent workflows reduce ambiguity	Inaccurate outputs and unclear roles create confusion
AUTONOMY: Framed as augmentation, AI empowers human judgment	Overreliance and reduced critical thinking threaten agency
RELATEDNESS: Frees time for human-centered collaboration	Reduced interaction and less “human touch” create distance
FAIRNESS: Transparent governance and shared standards feel equitable	Uneven adoption, unclear rules, inconsistent treatment feel unjust

The Central Principle

AI is mostly experienced as a benefit when it increases speed, information, empowerment, and structured support. It becomes a threat when it shifts into pressure, ambiguity, or the sense of replacement. The transition between benefit and threat is determined by leadership choices, governance quality, and how AI is framed.

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ABOUT THIS STUDY

Conducted via the Remesh platform using Remesh Flex + Recruit. 105 supervisors, managers, and leaders surveyed. Presented by Patrick Hyland, PhD (Director of Employee Research, Remesh) and Elissa Gurman, PhD (Principal, MacPhie). Mixed-method approach with open and closed-ended questions. Remesh Autocode used for qualitative theme analysis.

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