

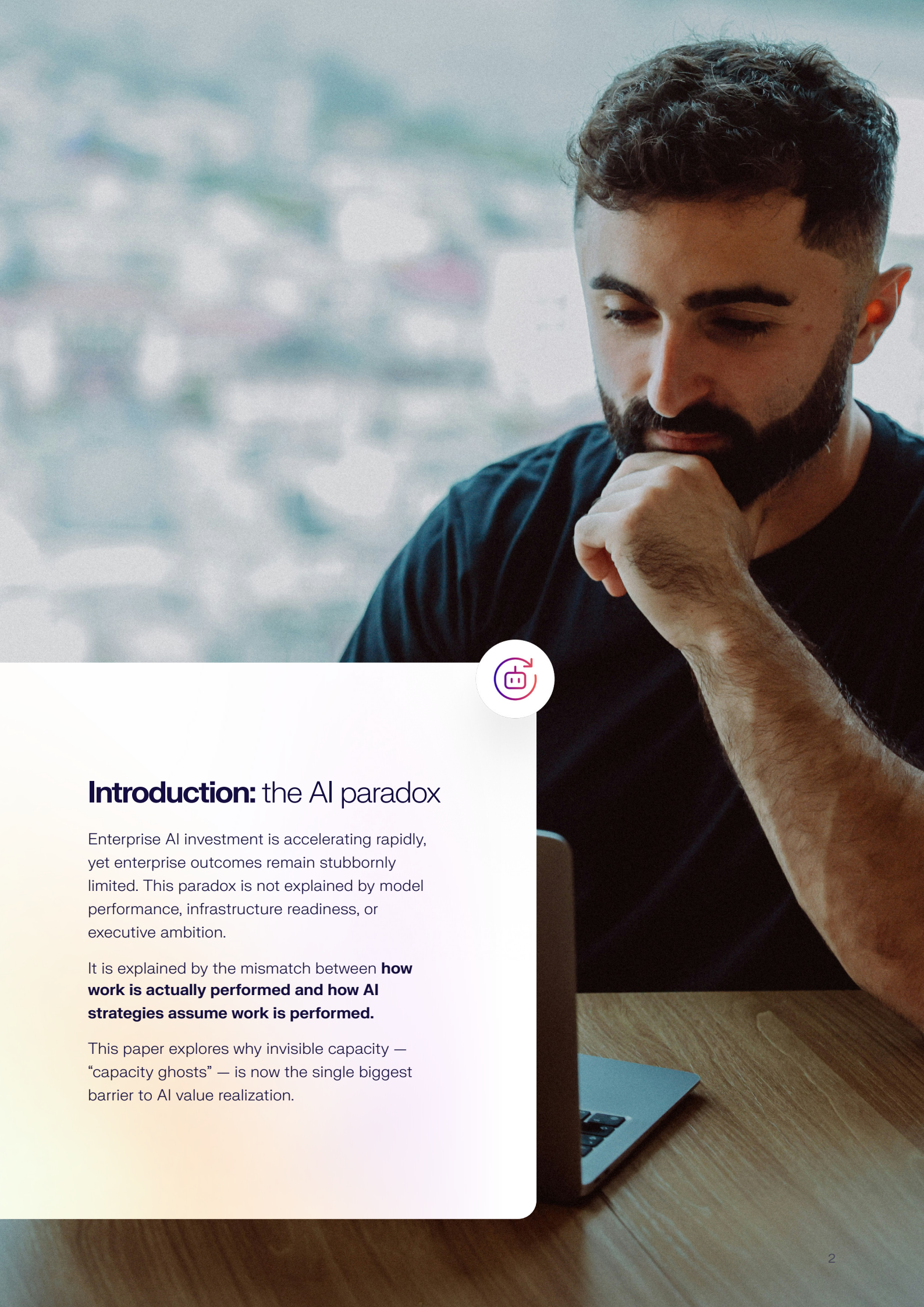


Capacity Ghosts:

Why the Billion-Dollar AI Pivot Dies in Human Silos

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Introduction: the AI paradox

Enterprise AI investment is accelerating rapidly, yet enterprise outcomes remain stubbornly limited. This paradox is not explained by model performance, infrastructure readiness, or executive ambition.

It is explained by the mismatch between **how work is actually performed** and **how AI strategies assume work is performed**.

This paper explores why invisible capacity — “capacity ghosts” — is now the single biggest barrier to AI value realization.

1. AI investment has crossed a strategic threshold

With global AI spending projected to reach

\$2.5 trillion by 2026

([Gartner](#)),

AI has become inseparable from enterprise strategy. Boards increasingly expect AI to drive material cost efficiencies, productivity gains, and revenue growth.

However, scale remains elusive.



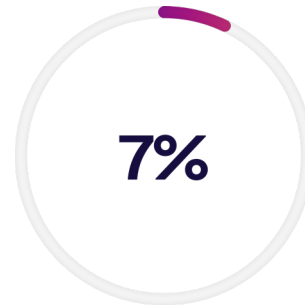
2. Why pilots dominate — and ROI expectations lag

Despite investment growth:



Only **2%** of AI decision-makers expect transformational AI in less than three months.

([Forrester](#)).



Only **7%** of enterprises have production-grade AI deployments

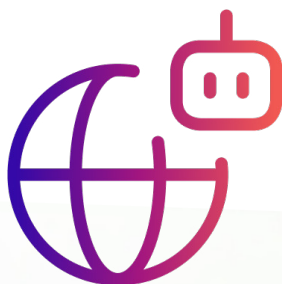
([McKinsey](#)).

Most functions remain in a “planning” or “pilot” phase, creating a widening gap between aspiration and execution.

3. AI scaling fails without task-level redesign

AI introduces new tasks while automating others. Yet most organizations continue to manage transformation at the role or function level.

McKinsey data shows:



AI is used
broadly but shallowly.



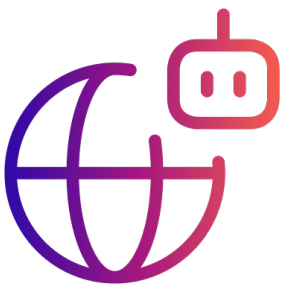
True multi-function
scaling **is rare.**

[MIT research](#) reinforces this: pilots fail not due to technology, but due to organizational friction — fragmented ownership, unclear accountability, and insufficient change capacity.



4. A leadership shift is underway

AI transformation increasingly bypasses traditional HR ownership, landing instead with strategy and transformation leaders.



[BCG reports](#) that only **26%** of enterprises have implemented a coherent AI strategy. At the same time, demand for transformation leadership is rising sharply.

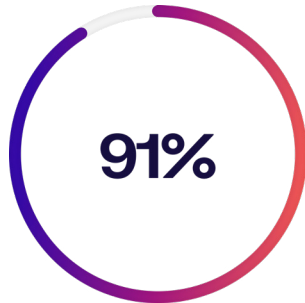
This creates both risk and opportunity for CSOs and CTrOs to redefine how AI and workforce strategy intersect.



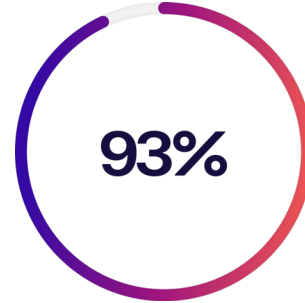
5. Workforce transformation is the critical unlock

The most advanced AI adopters link AI initiatives to **explicit cost and productivity outcomes**.

[Beamery's Human-Machine Economy](#) research highlights the scale of impending change:



of executives expect their
org charts to change in 2026.



of C-suite executives anticipate new
roles or departments will be created within
six months due to AI implementation.



Enterprise example

A large global professional services company leveraged Beamery's AI tasks and skills inference to develop an automation strategy within its global finance function. The analysis found that >45% of the volume of work being performed had high potential to be performed using AI technologies, but the highly automatable work was highly concentrated within two sub-functions of (>10 total). Rather than trying to 'augment everything' - the functional leader developed a strategy that involved only deploying 1-2 tools (decreasing transformation tax and investment cost in tools).



6. From roles to reality: making capacity visible

To unlock AI value, organizations must:



Map tasks, not just jobs.



Understand skill adjacencies created by AI.



Redesign roles dynamically as work evolves.

This is not a one-time exercise. It is a new intelligence layer for enterprise strategy.



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