



The Blind Spot at the Centre of Your AI Transformation

Why Work Intelligence is the missing layer for People Analytics and Transformation leaders driving real business value from AI

Hugo Marshall

[Account Director, Beamery](#)

Chris Illingworth

[Solution Director, Beamery](#)

Introduction: Two Challenges. One Missing Piece.

Across the enterprise, two groups of leaders are being asked to navigate the most consequential organisational shift in a generation.

People Analytics leaders are being asked to tell the business what its workforce is capable of — where capacity exists, where skills gaps are forming, and how to blend AI into human working practices in ways that are sustainable, measurable, and genuinely effective. The question is no longer whether AI will change how people work. It is how to manage that change intelligently.

Transformation leaders — whether sitting in HR, Operations, or running cross-functional programmes — are being asked to deliver on the business value of AI investment. The remit typically centres on delivering measurable business value from AI investment — whether through productivity improvement, capacity release, cost efficiency, or revenue contribution.

Despite near-universal intention, McKinsey's 2025 research found that only 6% of organisations can demonstrate meaningful bottom-line impact from their AI investment.¹

They can measure the workforce. They cannot see the work.

The distinction matters more than it ever has. AI is not disrupting job titles or org charts. It is disrupting tasks — how work gets done, when it gets done, and how often. Specific actions. Specific hours. Specific skills. And without task-level visibility, People Analytics cannot model what is coming, and transformation leaders cannot design what comes next — or credibly quantify the value of what they have already deployed.

This paper is about closing that gap — and why the organisations that close it first will have a structural advantage in every AI decision they make from this point forward.



1. The Evolving Landscape of Workforce Analysis

People and workforce analytics has matured dramatically as a discipline. The tools are sharper. The talent is more sophisticated.

The transformation agenda has grown in parallel — elevated by the scale and speed of digital change, and increasingly operating as a cross-functional mandate rather than a project-based initiative.

Yet the data underpinning both varies significantly in its maturity — and where an organisation sits has a direct bearing on the quality of decisions it can make about AI deployment, role redesign, and capacity release. The way organisations approach this often sits on a spectrum that can be categorised as follows:



APPROACH: TRADITIONAL

For most organisations, the baseline remains headcount, job titles, tenure, and performance data. Consistent and auditable, but describing the container of work rather than its contents — and increasingly inadequate as AI reshapes what happens inside roles faster than job architectures can track. As Deloitte has noted, jobs and headcount have long been the foundational structure of workforce planning — a model designed for an era of relative role stability that no longer reflects how work is being performed or reorganised.²



APPROACH: STRATEGIC

The recognised response has been to invest in skills frameworks. Mercer's Skills Snapshot research estimates that 62% of organisations are rebuilding job architectures around skills.³ The intent is right, but the approach carries a structural limitation: frameworks are built through periodic review and describe capability at a point in time. As skill half-lives shorten — the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 projects that 39% of core job skills will be transformed by 2030⁴ — the gap between what a framework says and what the workforce can actually do today widens continuously. Mercer cautions that skills taxonomies without active governance risk rapid obsolescence if not maintained through ongoing analytics and business feedback.³



APPROACH: PRACTICAL

Where live skills data is unavailable, many organisations default to structured assessment: capability surveys, manager evaluations, and self-ratings. These introduce constraints that are difficult to engineer out. Cycles run annually at best, creating a lag that the pace of AI-driven change makes increasingly untenable. Self-reported data reflects aspiration as much as demonstrated capability. Research from Harvard Kennedy School found that manager evaluations are systematically shaped by anchoring effects — managers frequently lean toward employees' self-ratings, even when those ratings reflect social pressure rather than genuine performance.⁵ The cumulative effect is that leaders frequently lack confidence in the outputs. Korn Ferry's 2025 CHRO survey found that only 18% of organisations consistently use data analytics to guide people decisions — for the majority, workforce planning still rests substantially on judgement and assumption.⁶



APPROACH: INTELLIGENT

The leading edge combines dynamic internal skills and capability data with external talent intelligence: labour market signals, competitor workforce profiles, and skills demand trends drawn from job posting data. Continuously updated rather than periodically refreshed, and augmented by AI inference capabilities, this combination allows organisations to move from educated assumption to confident, evidence-based decision-making.

In the context of AI investment alone, this means organisations can predict which work will be most positively impacted by automation, model the likely ROI of specific tools against their own task data, and identify which technologies are most relevant to their unique ways of working — before capital is committed. The result is not just better workforce planning. It is the ability to demonstrate, with auditable data, the bottom-line impact of AI investment.

Most organisations sit somewhere between the Strategic and Practical approaches. The rest of this paper is about what makes the Intelligent approach practical — and why the missing input is not more data of the familiar kind, but a different category of data altogether.

What is perhaps most significant about this moment is that organisations no longer need to work through these approaches sequentially. The emergence of AI and data enrichment capabilities means that the journey from Traditional to Intelligent — which once would have required years of investment in skills infrastructure and assessment design — can now be completed in a matter of weeks. The barrier to genuinely intelligent workforce decision-making has rarely been lower.



2. The Questions That Will Define Competitive Advantage

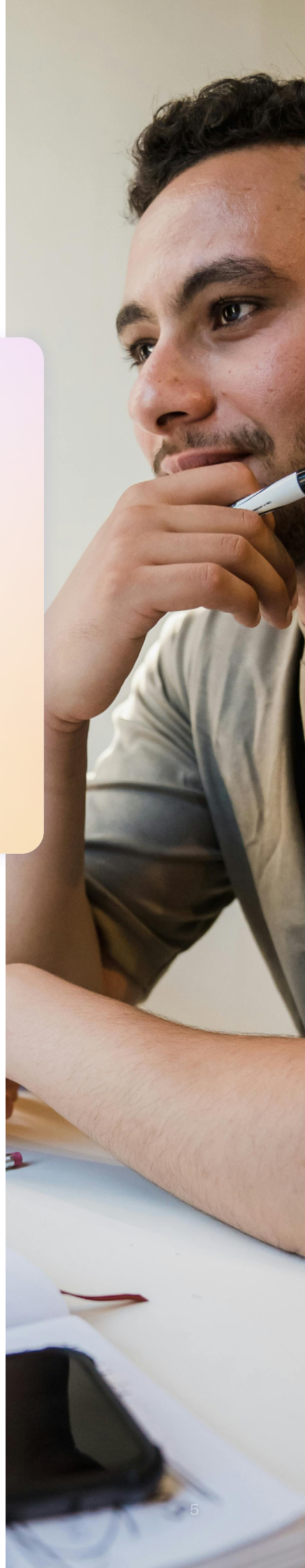
The executive agenda has moved faster than the data infrastructure supporting it. Boards and C-suites are wrestling with a set of questions that go to the heart of how their organisations will compete over the next three to five years:

- Which functions have the highest concentration of automatable tasks — and what is the financial value of releasing that capacity?
- Where do we have latent skills that AI can amplify rather than replace — and how do we redeploy those people before competitors do?
- If we deploy an AI platform in one function, what is the downstream capacity and skills impact on adjacent teams?
- How do we redesign roles — not just retitle them — to reflect how work will actually be performed in 12 months?
- Which of the tools on our AI procurement shortlist will create the most impact across the most functions — and how do we demonstrate that to the CFO?

These are not engagement or retention questions. They are work intelligence questions — and the organisations that can answer them with confidence, rather than assumption, are beginning to pull meaningfully ahead.

The evidence is becoming difficult to ignore. IBM is among the most cited examples of what disciplined, data-led AI deployment can deliver at scale. Following a deliberate internal transformation programme launched in 2023, the organisation used AI and automation to unlock an estimated 3.9 million hours of workforce capacity in 2024 alone — contributing to \$4.5 billion in productivity gains and \$12.7 billion in free cash flow, outcomes directly attributed to understanding where AI would have the greatest impact before investment decisions were made.⁷

The gap between those organisations and the majority is not primarily a technology gap. It is a data gap — the absence of task-level insight that would allow leaders to answer the questions above with the same rigour they would apply to any capital allocation decision. Organisations that close that gap first will not simply make better workforce decisions. They will make faster ones — and in an environment where AI capability is advancing rapidly, the compounding advantage of earlier, better-informed decisions is significant.



3. What Work Intelligence Makes Visible

Work Intelligence is not a replacement for People Analytics infrastructure or transformation methodology. It is the missing input that makes both genuinely predictive, executable, and commercially defensible.

By inferring the actual tasks performed across every role in the organisation — the hours dedicated to those tasks, the skills required to execute them, and the automation propensity of each — Work Intelligence generates what can be described as organisational ground truth.

This is not survey data. It is not self-reported. It is derived from a standard HRIS extract using inference that can be completed in weeks, with no PII, no complex IT integration, and no disruption to the business.

What it produces transforms the conversation from description to decision:

FROM:	TO:
“25% of our workforce is in roles that could be affected by AI.”	“In our Finance function, 38% of task-hours are highly automatable — concentrated in two sub-functions. Redeploying that capacity unlocks the equivalent of 140 FTE headroom without a single redundancy.”

The difference is not cosmetic. The first statement creates anxiety. The second creates a strategy — and a financial baseline that leaders can act on.





4. A Different Kind of Conversation

For analytics and transformation leaders, the frustration of the current moment is specific. The board is asking questions about AI investment and workforce capacity that sit squarely within your domain. But the data available to answer them — built on role-level assumptions, periodic assessments, and headcount snapshots — was designed for a different era of decision-making.

The result is a familiar dynamic: sophisticated analysis applied to insufficient inputs, producing answers that are directionally reasonable but not defensible under scrutiny. Estimates where evidence is needed. Frameworks where precision is expected. And a growing sense that the function is being asked to lead a conversation it cannot yet fully own.

Work Intelligence changes the terms of that conversation. It provides the task-level foundation that allows both analytics and transformation leaders to engage the business on its own terms — grounding workforce decisions in the same rigour applied to any significant capital or operational question. What that unlocks, in practice, is worth examining for each function in turn.

FOR ANALYTICS LEADERS:

The shift is from describing what the workforce looks like to predicting what it will need to do — and quantifying the gap between those two states with financial precision.

- **AI-human blend design: Continuous capacity modelling**

Move from job-title-based estimates of AI impact to real-time, task-level modelling of how AI is actually changing what people do — and where human capability is being freed, augmented, or made redundant. For the first time, capacity planning reflects how work is actually being performed rather than how it has historically been labelled.

- **Quantified ROI: Predictive AI impact assessment**

Quantify automation propensity at task level before a single tool is procured. Build ROI projections from actual work data rather than job-title approximations — and track whether those projections materialise after deployment. This is the difference between presenting a business case and defending one.

- **Hidden talent pools: Skills adjacency mapping**

Identify employees spending significant time on automatable tasks whose remaining skills are well-aligned to high-value roles elsewhere. Work Intelligence makes those adjacencies visible and actionable before redeployment becomes urgent — shifting the function from reactive talent management to proactive workforce architecture.



FOR TRANSFORMATION LEADERS:

The shift is from designing change programmes around functions and headcount to sequencing interventions based on where the actual work is concentrated — and where the return on transformation investment will be highest.

- **Where to focus first: Precision intervention sequencing**

Identify where to deploy transformation effort based on task concentration, not function size.

Organisations that have tried to transform everything simultaneously know the cost of that approach.

Task-level data makes it possible to sequence with precision — deploying change capacity where the productivity return justifies it.

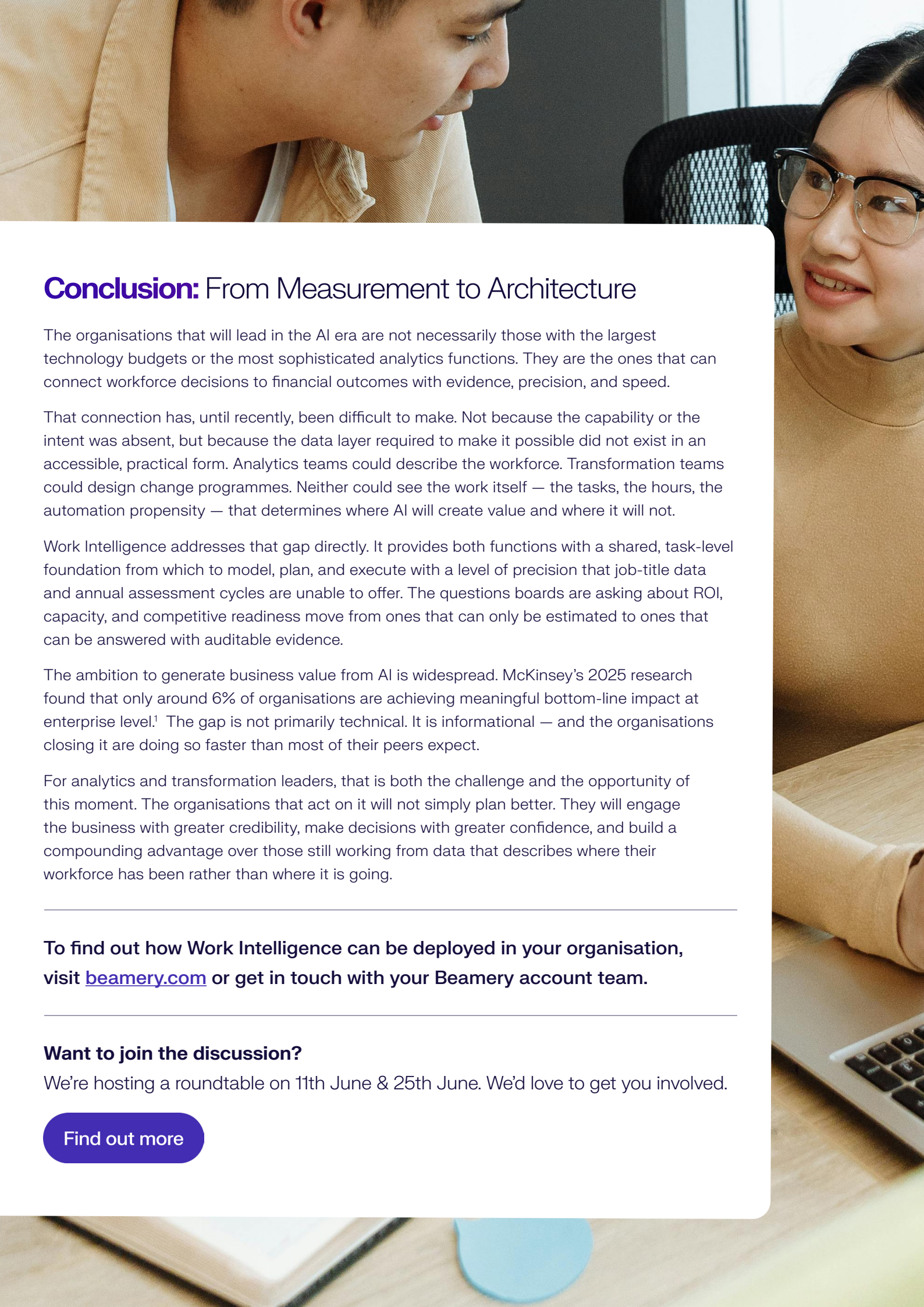
- **Continuous, not periodic: Role redesign at scale**

When AI changes what a role requires, job titles become misleading guides to what people are actually doing. Work Intelligence provides the task-level blueprint to redesign roles as an ongoing capability — not a one-off programme event triggered by restructuring, but a continuous process that keeps pace with how AI is reshaping work in real time.

- **Before capital is committed: Procurement confidence**

Use task-level automation propensity data to evaluate which AI tools will create the largest gains across the most functions before committing capital. This reframes the transformation leader's role in AI procurement from implementer to architect — with the data to recommend, not just deliver.



A man and a woman in business attire are looking at a laptop screen. The man is on the left, wearing a light-colored shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing glasses and a light-colored top. They are both smiling and appear to be in a collaborative work environment.

Conclusion: From Measurement to Architecture

The organisations that will lead in the AI era are not necessarily those with the largest technology budgets or the most sophisticated analytics functions. They are the ones that can connect workforce decisions to financial outcomes with evidence, precision, and speed.

That connection has, until recently, been difficult to make. Not because the capability or the intent was absent, but because the data layer required to make it possible did not exist in an accessible, practical form. Analytics teams could describe the workforce. Transformation teams could design change programmes. Neither could see the work itself — the tasks, the hours, the automation propensity — that determines where AI will create value and where it will not.

Work Intelligence addresses that gap directly. It provides both functions with a shared, task-level foundation from which to model, plan, and execute with a level of precision that job-title data and annual assessment cycles are unable to offer. The questions boards are asking about ROI, capacity, and competitive readiness move from ones that can only be estimated to ones that can be answered with auditable evidence.

The ambition to generate business value from AI is widespread. McKinsey's 2025 research found that only around 6% of organisations are achieving meaningful bottom-line impact at enterprise level.¹ The gap is not primarily technical. It is informational — and the organisations closing it are doing so faster than most of their peers expect.

For analytics and transformation leaders, that is both the challenge and the opportunity of this moment. The organisations that act on it will not simply plan better. They will engage the business with greater credibility, make decisions with greater confidence, and build a compounding advantage over those still working from data that describes where their workforce has been rather than where it is going.

To find out how Work Intelligence can be deployed in your organisation, visit beamery.com or get in touch with your Beamery account team.

Want to join the discussion?

We're hosting a roundtable on 11th June & 25th June. We'd love to get you involved.

[Find out more](#)



Endnotes

^[1] McKinsey & Company, The State of AI: How Organizations Are Rewiring to Capture Value, McKinsey & Company, March 2025

^[2] Deloitte, Reinventing Workforce Planning for an AI-Powered, Uncertain World, Deloitte Insights, 2025

^[3] Mercer, Skills Snapshot Survey, Mercer, 2024–2025

^[4] World Economic Forum, The Future of Jobs Report 2025, World Economic Forum, January 2025

^[5] Bohnet, I., Hauser, O.P. and Kristal, A.S., Can gender and race dynamics in performance appraisals be disrupted? The case of social influence, Harvard Kennedy School / Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, 2025

^[6] Korn Ferry, Workforce 2025: Strategic Workforce Planning, Korn Ferry, 2025

^[7] IBM, Enterprise Transformation and Extreme Productivity with AI, IBM Think, 2025

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