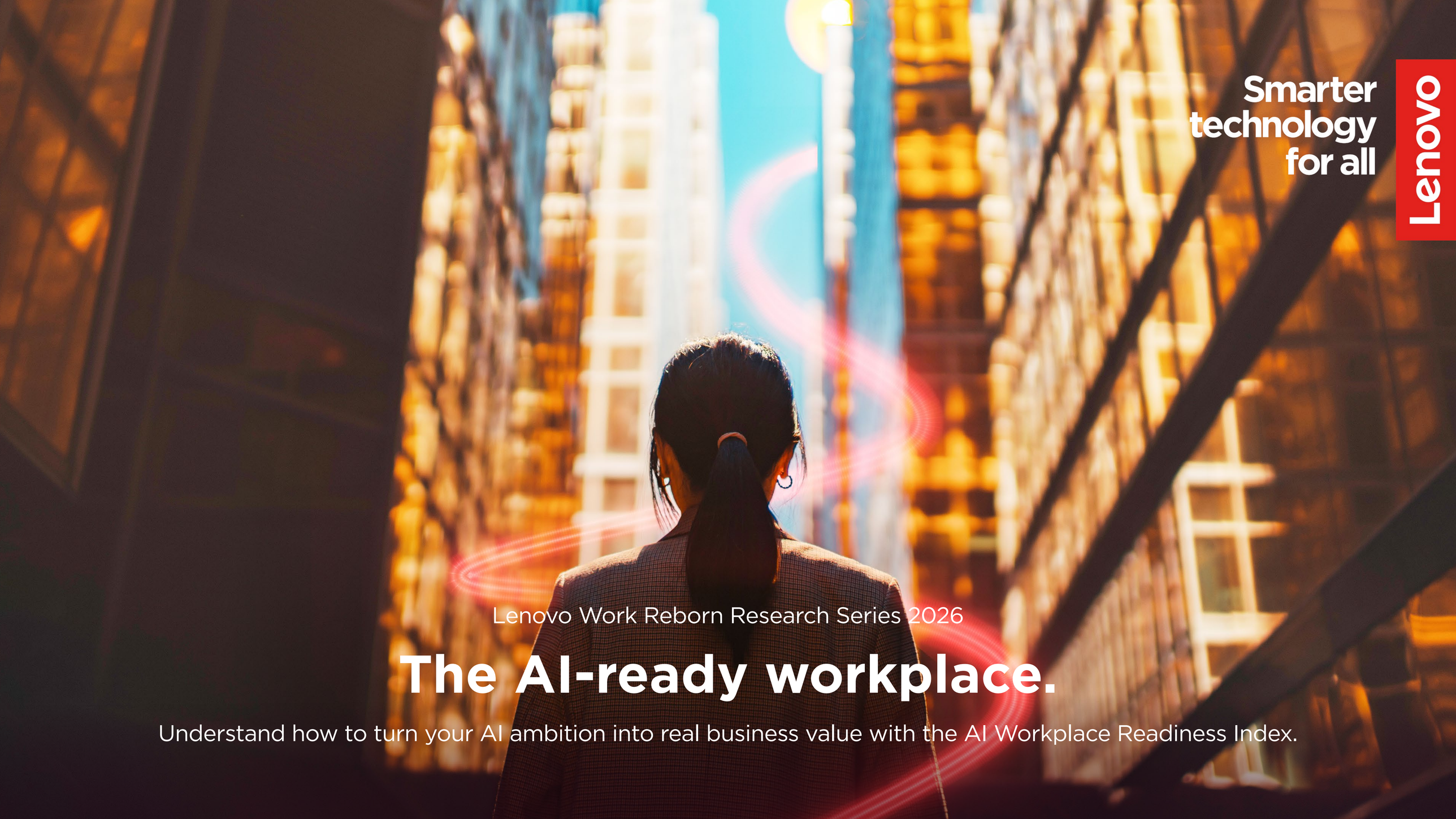


Smarter technology for all

Lenovo

Lenovo Work Reborn Research Series 2026

The AI-ready workplace.

Understand how to turn your AI ambition into real business value with the AI Workplace Readiness Index.

AI ambition needs a workplace ready to deliver

As AI moves into everyday work, the digital workplace around it has further to go.

IT leaders face the challenge of channeling the momentum of AI adoption into positive change across the enterprise. And a critical part of that challenge is the digital workplace—it's the technology, support, governance and employee experience through which AI is put to work.

But ambition is outpacing progress. While 76% of IT decision makers rank AI-led transformation among their organization's top IT priorities, only 27% have scaled AI across business functions.

IT leaders clearly recognize the role of the digital workplace, with 80% saying it is critical to successful AI-led transformation. But is the workplace itself ready for the change? Today, only 10% of IT decision makers say they have fundamentally redesigned their digital workplace in readiness for AI.

This gap matters because AI does not create value on its own. Value is realized through the workplace: the technology, processes, governance and employee experiences through which AI is put to work.

Based on a global survey of 1,200 IT decision makers, our AI Workplace Readiness Index examines these five critical dimensions of AI-led transformation: Architecture, Operations, Trust, Workforce and Value. We reveal where organizations are making progress, where they're falling behind and how you can get ahead.

For IT leaders, the question is whether your workplace is ready for what you expect AI to do.

I hope this report helps you clarify your answer.

Rakshit



Rakshit Ghura

Vice President & General Manager
Lenovo Digital Workplace Solutions

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See where you stand

Explore the five dimensions of our AI Workplace Readiness Index to understand where your organization can advance AI-led transformation.

Click to jump to section:

1. Architecture — Is your workplace infrastructure ready to support AI across cloud, edge and devices?

2. Operations — Can automation enable IT to progress from resolving problems to predicting and preventing them?

3. Trust — Can your organization govern and protect AI across tools, agents, data and devices?

4. Workforce — Are your employees, roles and workflows able to use AI effectively?

5. Value — Can you connect AI use to measurable business outcomes and future investment decisions?



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You are here

AI ambition is outpacing workplace readiness

IT leaders see AI-led transformation as a priority. Their digital workplaces are struggling to keep up.

With AI-led enterprise transformation being the top IT-related priority for more than three-quarters of enterprise IT leaders, the ambition is clear. But over two-thirds of organizations have yet to scale AI across business functions. Of these, the largest grouping—38%—are still at the function-specific deployment stage.

At the same time, IT leaders understand the role of the digital workplace in turning AI into business value: 80% agree it's critical to successful AI-led enterprise transformation.

We see the future workplace driving value by creating the optimum combination of people and AI working together. But AI cannot deliver its full enterprise value in a digital workplace designed for the pre-AI era. And most organizations are still operating within that constraint.

90%

of organizations have yet to fundamentally redesign their digital workplace operating model for the AI era.

93%

have yet to optimize AI workload placement through a fully hybrid architecture.

90%

cannot measure AI ROI at workflow level.

The cost of poor workplace readiness

A two-tier workforce

Employees using sanctioned AI tools will work alongside those using shadow AI, increasing security and governance risks.

Less control of AI costs

Without hybrid workload placement, organizations have less control over AI costs as usage scales.

Inconsistent employee experience

Organizations will struggle to provide a secure, integrated and consistent employee experience with AI.

AI value trapped in silos

When AI is confined to individual functions, it cannot deliver enterprise-wide transformation value. Without redesigning workflows and measuring business impact, organizations will struggle to turn AI investment into measurable returns.

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How the AI Workplace Readiness Index works

Lenovo's AI Workplace Readiness Index benchmarks how prepared digital workplaces are to support AI-led enterprise transformation.

Highlighting a workplace readiness gap between AI ambition and the workplace conditions required to achieve enterprise-wide value, the findings are grouped into five dimensions: Architecture, Operations, Trust, Workforce and Value.

These dimensions show the degree to which AI is supported by workplace technology, managed by IT, governed securely, adopted by employees and connected to business outcomes.

Each dimension is scored on a 1–5 scale to provide a clear benchmark of current workplace readiness.

Dimension	Readiness score /5	Current indicators of organizational readiness
Architecture How AI workloads are supported and positioned across the digital workplace.	2.9 	**7%** operate a fully hybrid AI architecture.
Operations How devices and IT support are provisioned, managed and automated.	3.2 	**15%** have predictive, largely autonomous IT support.
Trust How AI use is governed and protected across the organization.	3.3 	**10%** have comprehensive governance covering AI tools, agents, data access and costs.
Workforce How AI adoption, employee experience and changing roles are managed.	3.2 	**12%** measure AI adoption and effectiveness at individual or team level and use the findings to improve decisions.
Value How AI use is connected to measurable business outcomes.	3.1 	**10%** have a continuous workflow-level ROI framework that informs use-case prioritization.

The direct link between workplace readiness and AI progress

The AI Workplace Readiness Index clearly shows a direct correlation between digital workplace readiness and progress with AI. But it's important to note that this does not establish causation and the relationship may work in either direction.

The findings do, however, show that digital workplace readiness must be part of any strategy for successfully scaling AI across the enterprise.

Average AI Workplace Readiness Index score among organizations with AI-embedded core business functions

4.1/5

Average AI Workplace Readiness Index score among organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.7/5

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Architecture

Few organizations are ready for hybrid AI

As employees use AI across more workflows, organizations need to manage where AI workloads run across cloud, data center and end-user devices. With a hybrid AI architecture, workloads can be positioned according to business needs, including cost, data privacy and sovereignty, security, latency and governance.

As data sovereignty rises up the agenda—particularly in Europe—a hybrid architecture can help organizations keep sensitive data and AI workloads within the required jurisdiction.

88%

of IT decision makers see data sovereignty as critical to competitiveness.

Currently, Architecture is the lowest-scoring dimension in the AI Workplace Readiness Index. Two factors may be slowing progress:

- Organizations can struggle to demonstrate enough ROI to justify replacing legacy architecture with a new AI-ready stack.
- AI budgets often sit with line-of-business leaders rather than IT. As spending grows, this can both make infrastructure investment harder to coordinate and increase the risk of shadow AI.



33%

have a shared AI foundation with centralized data and managed AI services, but workloads remain mainly cloud-based.



23%

are developing a hybrid architecture across cloud and endpoints, but workload placement is not yet fully optimized.



7%

of organizations operate a fully hybrid AI architecture that manages workloads across cloud and devices and between frontier models, local SLMs and AI PCs as needed.

Hybrid AI remains at an early stage. While many organizations have started building the foundations, few can yet manage workloads across cloud and endpoints as one hybrid environment.

AI Workplace Readiness Index: Architecture benchmark

Organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.4/5

Overall average

2.9/5

Organizations with AI embedded across core business functions

3.4/5

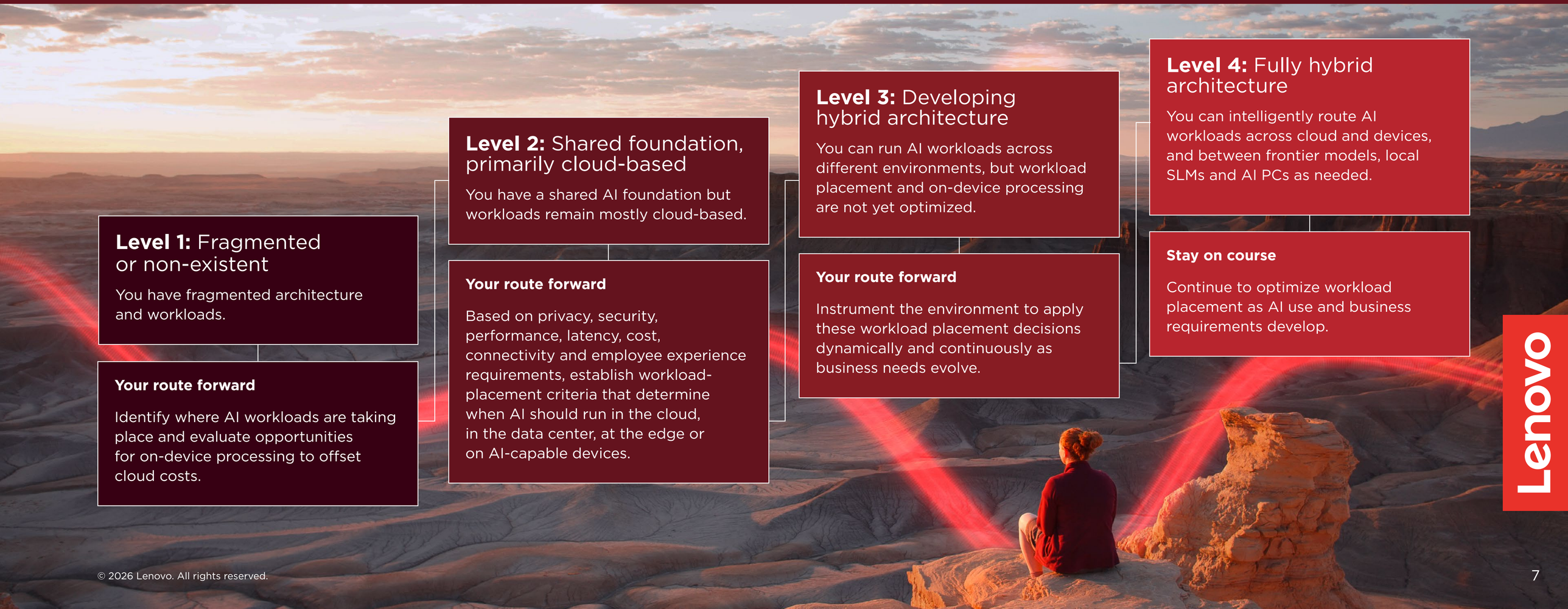
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Architecture

How ready is your architecture for hybrid AI?

Use the pathway below to identify where your organization stands today. Start with the key questions, then see which level best reflects your current architecture. Each level has a recommendation for progressing from there.

Key question | **Can your organization place and manage AI workloads across cloud, edge and device environments based on business requirements?**



Level 1: Fragmented or non-existent

You have fragmented architecture and workloads.

Your route forward

Identify where AI workloads are taking place and evaluate opportunities for on-device processing to offset cloud costs.

Level 2: Shared foundation, primarily cloud-based

You have a shared AI foundation but workloads remain mostly cloud-based.

Your route forward

Based on privacy, security, performance, latency, cost, connectivity and employee experience requirements, establish workload-placement criteria that determine when AI should run in the cloud, in the data center, at the edge or on AI-capable devices.

Level 3: Developing hybrid architecture

You can run AI workloads across different environments, but workload placement and on-device processing are not yet optimized.

Your route forward

Instrument the environment to apply these workload placement decisions dynamically and continuously as business needs evolve.

Level 4: Fully hybrid architecture

You can intelligently route AI workloads across cloud and devices, and between frontier models, local SLMs and AI PCs as needed.

Stay on course

Continue to optimize workload placement as AI use and business requirements develop.

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Operations

IT automation is moving toward autonomy

Effective IT operations are a prerequisite for AI adoption at scale. They need to become more proactive, predictive and personalized to remove friction from AI adoption. This means adapting technology to employees' roles, skills and work habits, and resolving issues before they disrupt work.

The direction of travel is clear, with IT leaders expecting operations to become more autonomous.

73%

agree the digital workplace of the near future will be increasingly autonomous and self-healing.

Progress depends on two areas: how devices are provisioned and managed throughout their lifecycle, and how IT support identifies and resolves problems.

Most organizations have already automated parts of both. But fully automated provisioning and predictive/autonomous support remain rare.



78%

have automated software deployment using role-based device images.



12%

fully automate device configuration or allocate AI-capable devices to the roles that need them.



74%

can automatically resolve some common problems before employees need to contact IT.



15%

have a predictive, largely autonomous IT support model.

Organizations are moving beyond manual IT operations, but most remain some distance from autonomous, self-healing IT. The next step is to extend automation across the device lifecycle and move IT support from reactive resolution toward prediction and prevention.

AI Workplace Readiness Index: Operations benchmark

Organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.8/5

Overall average

3.2/5

Organizations with AI embedded across core business functions

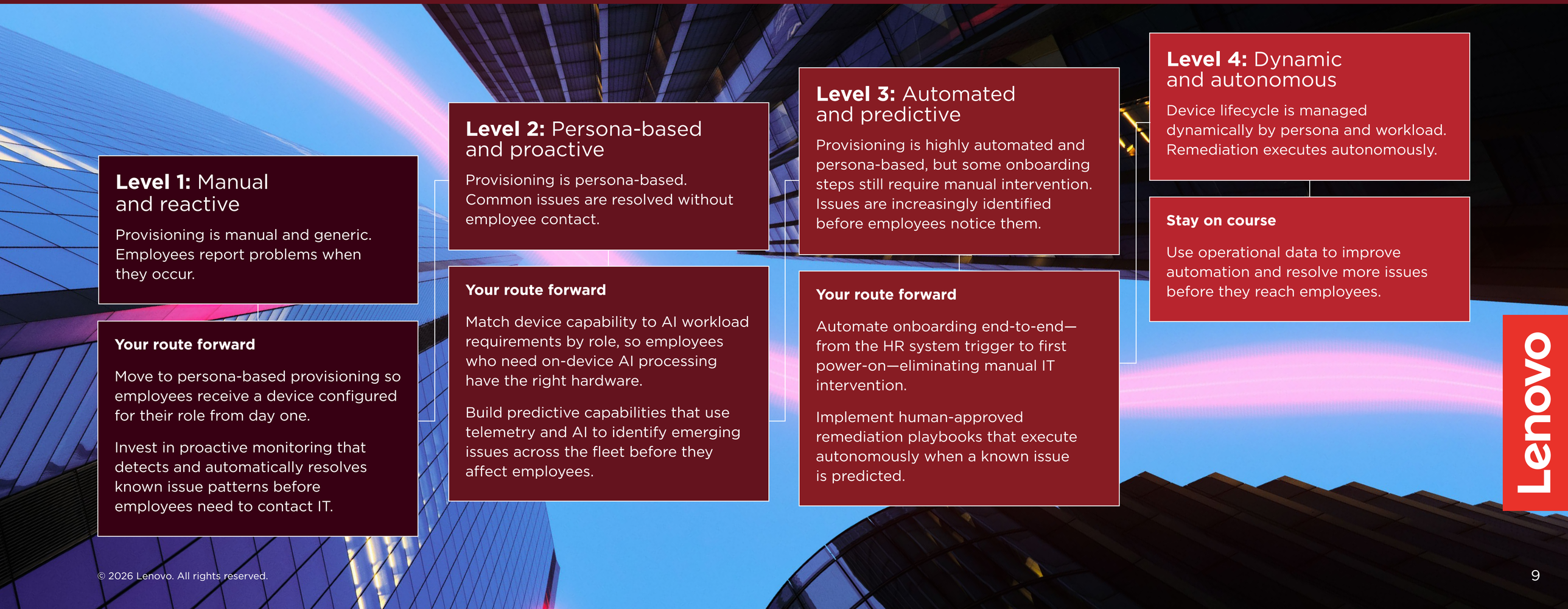
4.2/5

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How far have your IT operations progressed?

Use the pathway below to identify where your organization stands today. Start with the key questions, then see which level best reflects your current operations. Each level has a recommendation for progressing from there.

Key questions | **Can you provision a new employee's device automatically for their role?** | **Does IT find out about device problems before employees do?**



Level 1: Manual and reactive

Provisioning is manual and generic. Employees report problems when they occur.

Your route forward

Move to persona-based provisioning so employees receive a device configured for their role from day one.

Invest in proactive monitoring that detects and automatically resolves known issue patterns before employees need to contact IT.

Level 2: Persona-based and proactive

Provisioning is persona-based. Common issues are resolved without employee contact.

Your route forward

Match device capability to AI workload requirements by role, so employees who need on-device AI processing have the right hardware.

Build predictive capabilities that use telemetry and AI to identify emerging issues across the fleet before they affect employees.

Level 3: Automated and predictive

Provisioning is highly automated and persona-based, but some onboarding steps still require manual intervention. Issues are increasingly identified before employees notice them.

Your route forward

Automate onboarding end-to-end—from the HR system trigger to first power-on—eliminating manual IT intervention.

Implement human-approved remediation playbooks that execute autonomously when a known issue is predicted.

Level 4: Dynamic and autonomous

Device lifecycle is managed dynamically by persona and workload. Remediation executes autonomously.

Stay on course

Use operational data to improve automation and resolve more issues before they reach employees.

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Trust

AI security is advancing faster than AI governance

Trust is critical to AI adoption. Employees need confidence both in AI outputs and in how personal and organizational data is protected. Without it, they may avoid approved tools or turn to shadow AI, creating new security risks.

Organizations have made more progress with AI-enabled security defenses than with the governance and trust frameworks needed to manage AI use across the enterprise. But our research shows that even the most advanced measures remain far from widespread.

Broader trust frameworks are also at an early stage. Few organizations have connected security across the digital workplace or established comprehensive rules for how AI tools, agents and data are governed.

Governance is clearly a major weakness across AI adoption.



82%

have not yet achieved largely automated incident response.



87%

have not progressed to an agentic SOC with fully automated Level 1 response.



85%

cannot distinguish sensitive from non-sensitive AI queries in real time.



86%

lack an enterprise-wide trust architecture spanning device to cloud.



90%

lack comprehensive governance covering AI tools, agents, data access and costs.

Organizations are making progress in specific areas of AI security, but broader trust and governance are less mature. Building trust at scale means extending protection beyond individual security controls to encompass how AI use is governed across the workplace.

"Many employees are already turning to AI tools that have not been approved for the enterprise. Preventing proprietary data from flowing into those tools requires visibility and control at the endpoint as part of a broader device-to-cloud trust strategy."

Sally Lowery
Head of IDG Worldwide Commercial Marketing, Lenovo

AI Workplace Readiness Index: Trust benchmark

Organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.8/5

Overall average

3.3/5

Organizations with AI embedded across core business functions

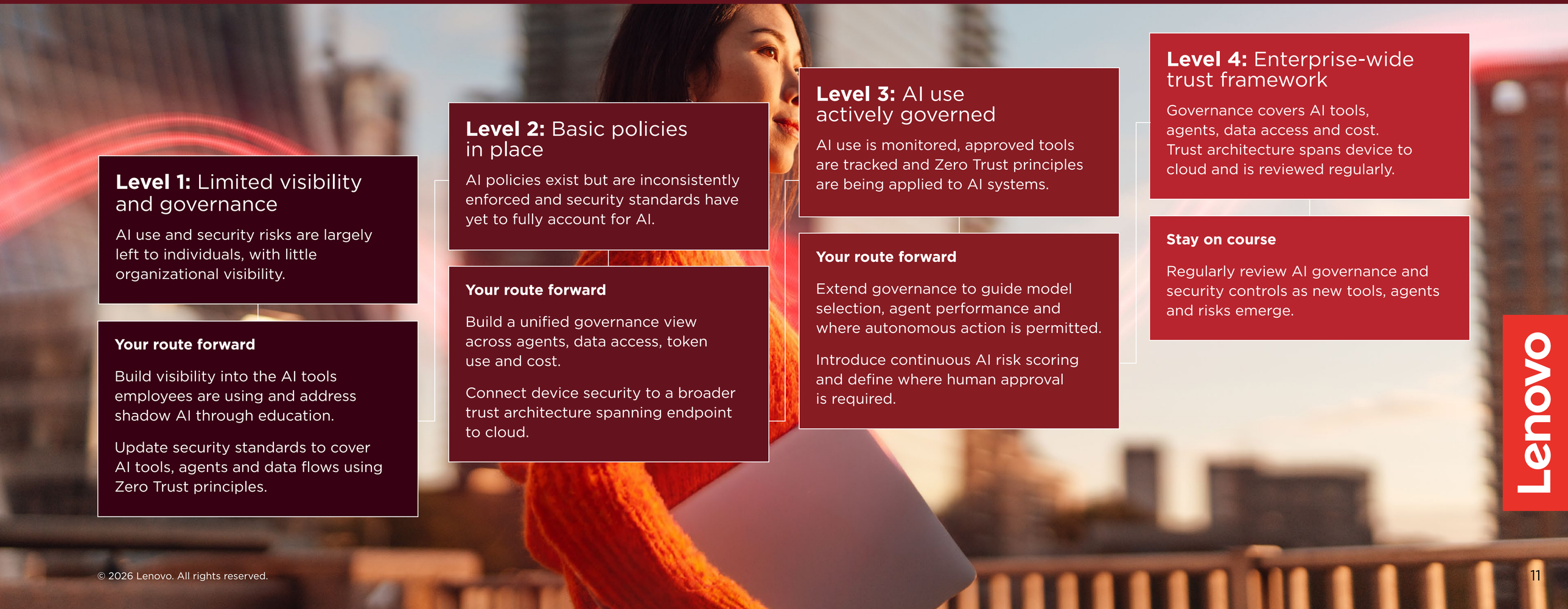
4.2/5

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How well are you governing and protecting AI?

Use the pathway below to identify where your organization stands today. Start with the key questions, then see which level best reflects your approach to AI governance and security. Each level has a recommendation for progressing from there.

Key questions | **Do you formally govern employee AI use?** | **Does your security architecture address AI risks across devices, agents and data flows?**



Level 1: Limited visibility and governance

AI use and security risks are largely left to individuals, with little organizational visibility.

Your route forward

Build visibility into the AI tools employees are using and address shadow AI through education.

Update security standards to cover AI tools, agents and data flows using Zero Trust principles.

Level 2: Basic policies in place

AI policies exist but are inconsistently enforced and security standards have yet to fully account for AI.

Your route forward

Build a unified governance view across agents, data access, token use and cost.

Connect device security to a broader trust architecture spanning endpoint to cloud.

Level 3: AI use actively governed

AI use is monitored, approved tools are tracked and Zero Trust principles are being applied to AI systems.

Your route forward

Extend governance to guide model selection, agent performance and where autonomous action is permitted.

Introduce continuous AI risk scoring and define where human approval is required.

Level 4: Enterprise-wide trust framework

Governance covers AI tools, agents, data access and cost. Trust architecture spans device to cloud and is reviewed regularly.

Stay on course

Regularly review AI governance and security controls as new tools, agents and risks emerge.

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Workforce

Organizations are preparing employees for AI, but not yet redesigning work around it

Employees are where AI capability becomes business value. They apply AI to real work, assess its outputs and increasingly work alongside AI agents. Successful adoption depends on preparing people for that shift.

AI can reduce friction while also creating new distractions, making employee experience more important to track. As agents take on more routine work, human roles also need to shift toward judgment and oversight.

Organizations need to understand how effectively employees are using AI, then use that insight to improve training, persona design and technology choices. Most are still some way from doing this systematically.



70%

of organizations have an AI adoption program.



12%

measure adoption and effectiveness at individual and team level, and use the findings to refine training, personas and technology selection.



96%

measure employee experience in some way.



14%

have a multidimensional view of employee experience.



39%

are rethinking role design in light of agentic AI.



11%

have an organizational design that explicitly reflects a human-plus-agent workforce model.

Many organizations are making progress in AI adoption and measuring employee experience. But fewer are using those insights to improve how people work or to redesign roles around AI agents.

AI Workplace Readiness Index: Workforce benchmark

Organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.7/5

Overall average

3.2/5

Organizations with AI embedded across core business functions

4.3/5

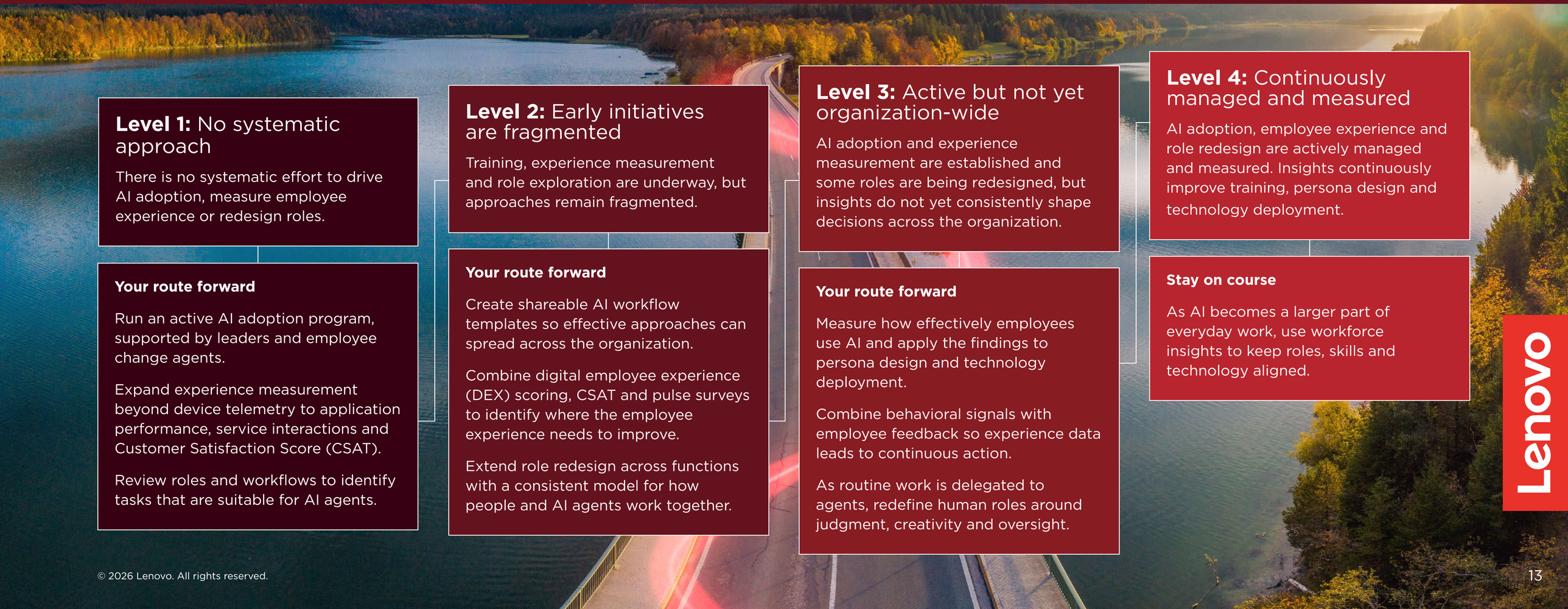
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Workforce

Is your workforce prepared for AI?

Use the pathway below to identify where your organization stands today. Start with the key questions, then see which level best reflects how you manage AI adoption, employee experience and changing roles. Each level has a recommendation for progressing from there.

Key questions | **Are you measuring AI adoption and employee experience?** | **Are you redesigning roles for a workforce that includes AI agents?**



Level 1: No systematic approach

There is no systematic effort to drive AI adoption, measure employee experience or redesign roles.

Your route forward

Run an active AI adoption program, supported by leaders and employee change agents.

Expand experience measurement beyond device telemetry to application performance, service interactions and Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT).

Review roles and workflows to identify tasks that are suitable for AI agents.

Level 2: Early initiatives are fragmented

Training, experience measurement and role exploration are underway, but approaches remain fragmented.

Your route forward

Create shareable AI workflow templates so effective approaches can spread across the organization.

Combine digital employee experience (DEX) scoring, CSAT and pulse surveys to identify where the employee experience needs to improve.

Extend role redesign across functions with a consistent model for how people and AI agents work together.

Level 3: Active but not yet organization-wide

AI adoption and experience measurement are established and some roles are being redesigned, but insights do not yet consistently shape decisions across the organization.

Your route forward

Measure how effectively employees use AI and apply the findings to persona design and technology deployment.

Combine behavioral signals with employee feedback so experience data leads to continuous action.

As routine work is delegated to agents, redefine human roles around judgment, creativity and oversight.

Level 4: Continuously managed and measured

AI adoption, employee experience and role redesign are actively managed and measured. Insights continuously improve training, persona design and technology deployment.

Stay on course

As AI becomes a larger part of everyday work, use workforce insights to keep roles, skills and technology aligned.

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Value

Proving AI value is key to scaling it

One of the main barriers to scaling AI is commercial. Organizations need to show that employee AI use creates enough business value to justify further investment. Without that link, successful pilots can struggle to progress.

Cost and productivity measures support the business case, but they do not capture the wider value AI can create. Organizations need workflow-level KPIs, such as cycle time, repeat incidents and outcome quality. Continuous ROI measurement can then inform which use cases to scale and where to invest next.



36%

of organizations can measure the broader business impact of AI use.



10%

have a continuous, workflow-level ROI framework that feeds into use-case prioritization.

The findings show a clear link between AI adoption and value measurement. Organizations with more mature AI adoption are also much better at connecting its use to business outcomes.



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"Every company we're talking to is asking the same thing: what value are we actually getting from AI? That's where workflow-level measurement matters. Are cycle times down? Are repeat incidents falling? Is the outcome better? That's how you show where AI is creating value."

Rakshit Ghura
Vice President & General Manager
Lenovo Digital Workplace Solutions

AI Workplace Readiness Index: Value benchmark

Organizations still evaluating AI opportunities

2.8/5

Overall average

3.1/5

Organizations with AI embedded across core business functions

4.4/5

Value

How well can you prove the value of AI?

Use the pathway below to identify where your organization stands today. Start with the key questions, then see which level best reflects how you measure AI value and use those insights to guide investment. Each level has a recommendation for progressing from there.

Key questions | **Do you have a systematic way to connect AI use to business outcomes?** | **Does that data inform where you invest next?**



Level 1: Value is anecdotal

There is no systematic link between AI use and business outcomes.

Your route forward

Connect AI use to a specific business outcome at initiative level. Start with high-frequency problems where impact can be measured directly.

Level 2: Cost and productivity are measured

AI impact is measured by cost and productivity, but not by broader business outcomes.

Your route forward

Redesign a domain end-to-end with AI and measure the full value created, not just cost savings.

Level 3: Business impact is measured

Business impact is measured at initiative level, but retrospectively and without consistently informing future decisions.

Your route forward

Make measurement continuous so workflow-level ROI informs model choice, persona design and investment priorities in real time.

Level 4: Value continuously guides decisions

A continuous ROI framework connects AI use to business outcomes and informs use case prioritization.

Stay on course

Use workflow-level ROI to keep investment focused on the AI use cases delivering the greatest business value.

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Your AI workplace readiness

Decide where to focus next

Use your readiness levels to identify where action matters most.

Your organization may be further ahead in some dimensions than others. Looking across all five can show where readiness is strongest and where gaps could limit progress.

Where to start

An earlier level does not automatically mean that dimension should come first. Focus on the gaps most likely to hold back your immediate AI priorities.

Architecture, Operations, Trust, Workforce and Value are connected. Progress in one area may depend on progress elsewhere.

Use the route forward for your priority dimensions to identify the next action.

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Lenovo Digital Workplace Solutions

Building the workplace where AI delivers real outcomes

Turn your AI workplace priorities into a practical plan for technology, services and support.

Explore Lenovo Digital Workplace Solutions

Methodology:

For this study, Lenovo surveyed 1,200 IT leaders in August 2026. The survey sample included respondents from the US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, India, Japan, Singapore, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand. Respondents included IT leaders from companies with at least 1,000 employees and from a range of sectors.

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