Navigating the AI Revolution: Workforce Perceptions and Opportunities

Divergent views call for clearer business communication around AI

RingCentral

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Business leaders embrace AI potential

Business decision makers are most excited about using AI, likely due to a clearer understanding of their company's plans to use it. See Page 11

Unsure about the use of AI at work:

21%
decision makers

41%
non-decision makers

Executive Summary

Job disruption leads to role evolution

Many respondents expect AI to eliminate the need for certain roles in the next two decades. However, many see a bright future, in which existing roles are better supported and new ones are created. See Page 13

Unsure about the use of AI in their organization:

33%
believe AI will replace roles

53%
of younger workers believe AI will impact the workforce positively

Executive Summary

AI misalignment offers opportunity for education

Our research demonstrates a significant gap between leaders and employees when it comes to understanding the importance of AI.

AI will be important this year:

44%
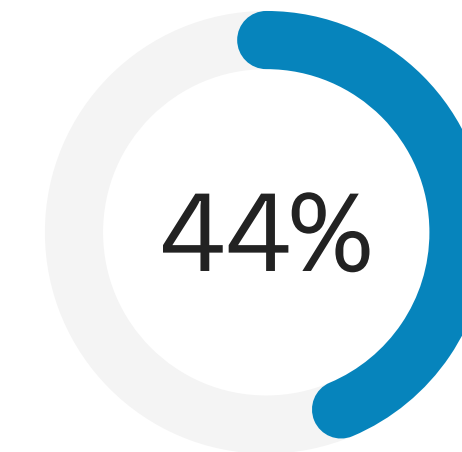decision makers

26%
non-decision makers

Foreword

" AI is revolutionizing work across various applications, from writing and design to sales and workflow automation and customer support. Our survey revealed differing opinions and perceptions about the use of AI at work, how it's used today within organizations, and how it will be in the future. While 44% of business decision-makers believe AI will be important in 2023, only 31% of employees agree. To close this gap and harness AI's potential, leaders need to foster a culture of transparency and collaboration, ensuring all team members are included in this transformative journey."

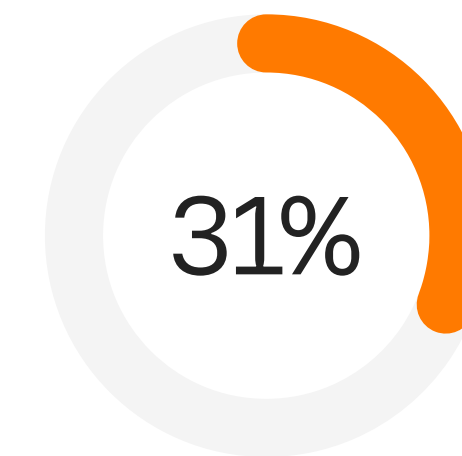**Kira Makagon**
Chief Innovation Officer
RingCentral

AI will be more important in 2023*

44%   business decision makers

31%   workers

Survey question: How important do you think the following technologies will become to your industry in 2023?

Methodology

RingCentral and Ipsos surveyed 1,000 Americans aged 21-65 to explore their understanding of how their organizations use AI, their opinions about applying it at work, and their predictions for the future.

All respondents are currently full- time workers (defined as working full-time, having two part-time jobs, or being full-time self-employed).

Surveys were conducted from 01/19/23 to 01/31/23.

Survey data were weighted to adjust for age, gender, and regional distribution with a margin of error of +/- 3%.
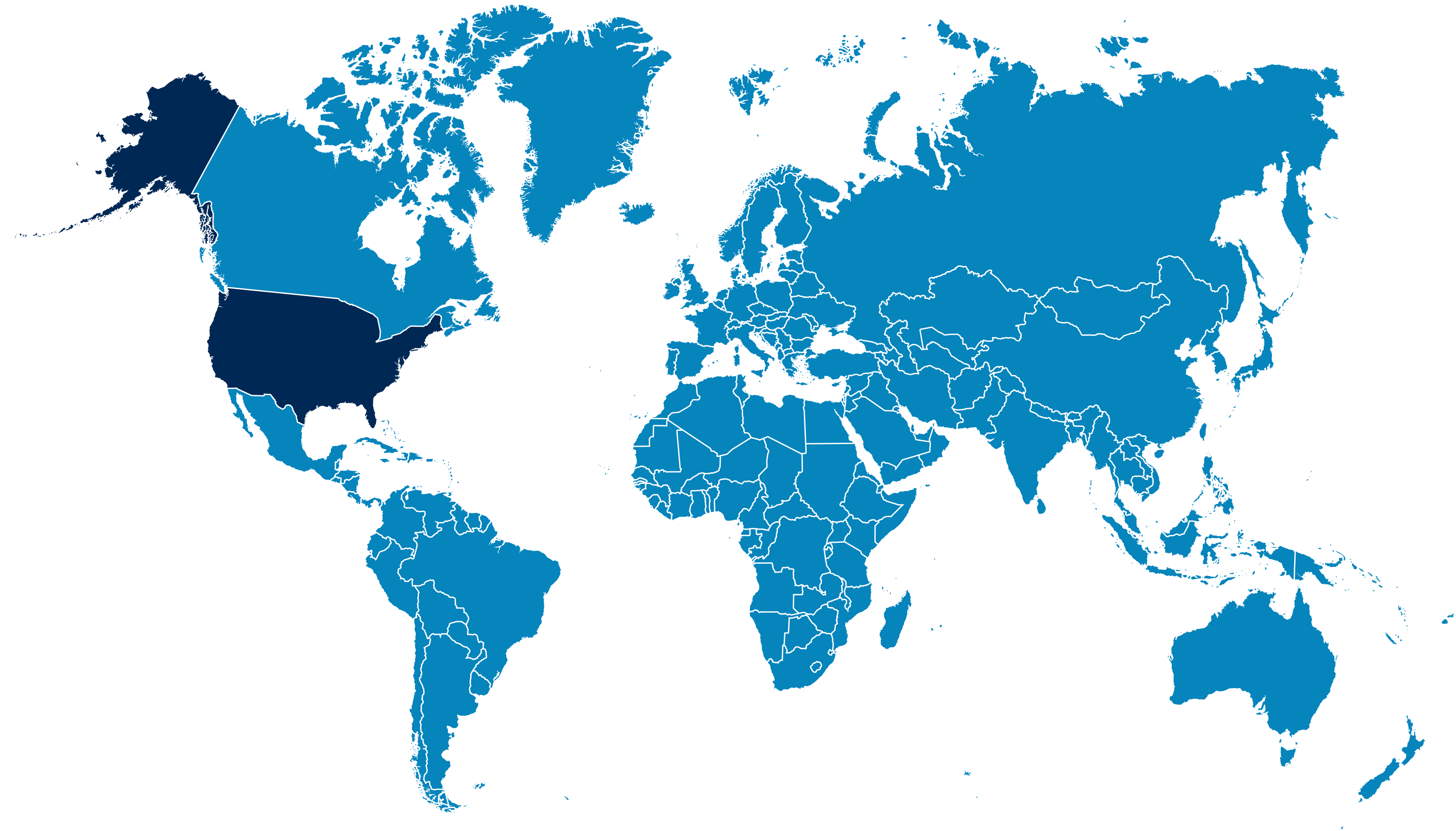
How is the sudden proliferation of AI impacting the workplace?

The sudden emergence and adoption of AI tools like ChatGPT and DALL-E will change the game for workers. As AI permeates the news cycle, tech trends, and the workplace, we asked the question: do teams and leaders understand how AI is being used at work now, and how it can be in the future?

While AI is not yet widely adopted at work (only 14% of full-time workers report it's used in their industry), this will change, and fast.

The AI market is expected to grow 20X, to nearly two trillion dollars by the end of the decade. (Source)

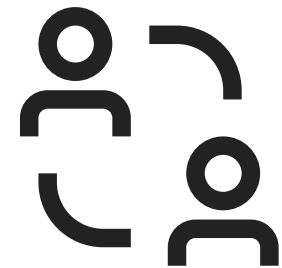

Market size in million U.S. dollars
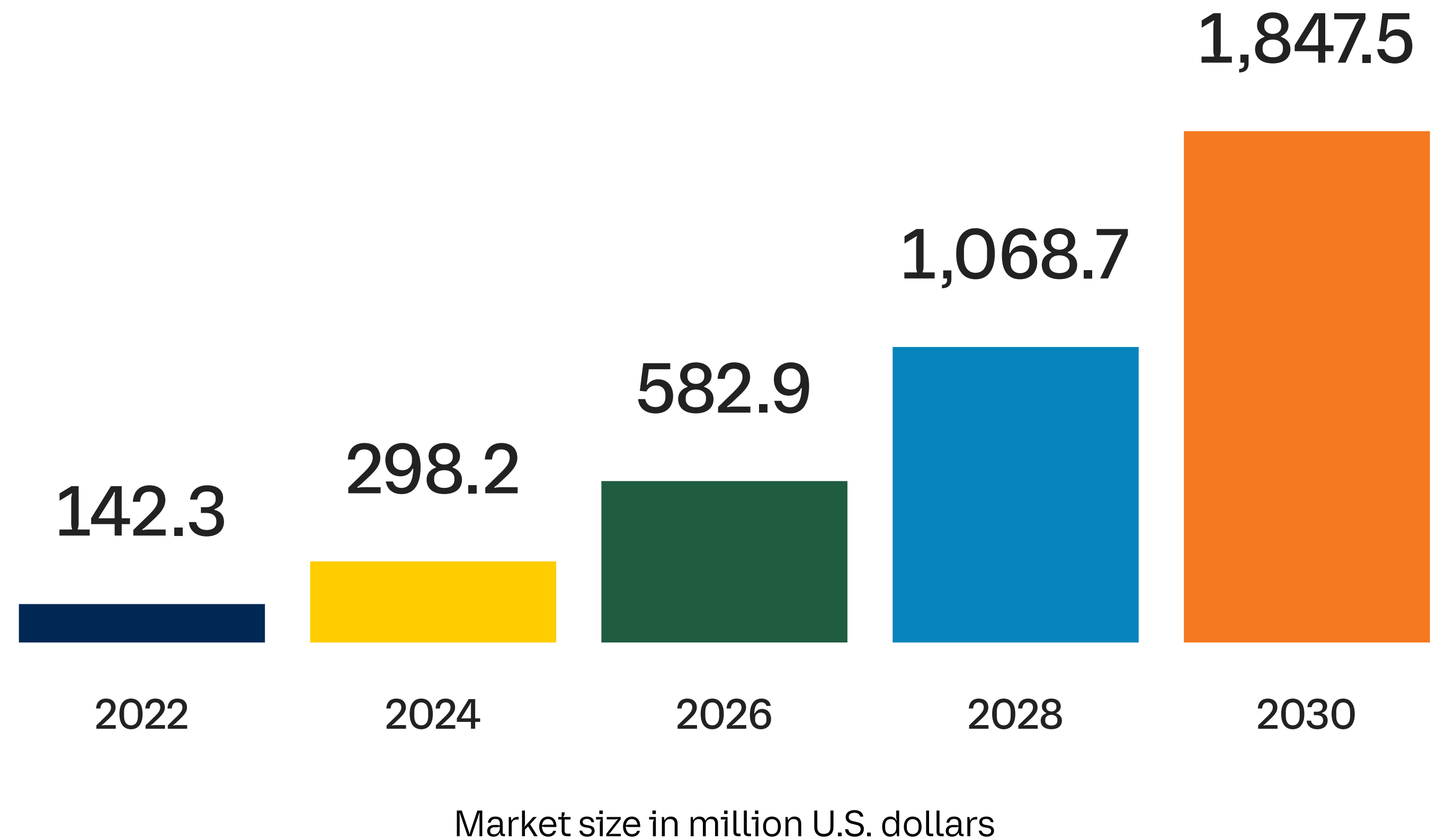
What does AI in the workplace actually mean?

For the purpose of this report, we're examining three broad groups of AI being used in the workplace today.

Conversational AI

human-to-machine communication (chatbots)

Conversation AI

applying AI to analyze a human-to-human conversation (meeting transcription and summaries/ key points)
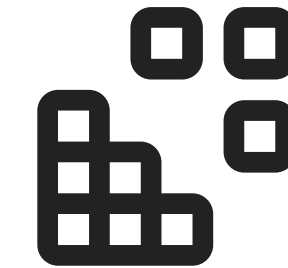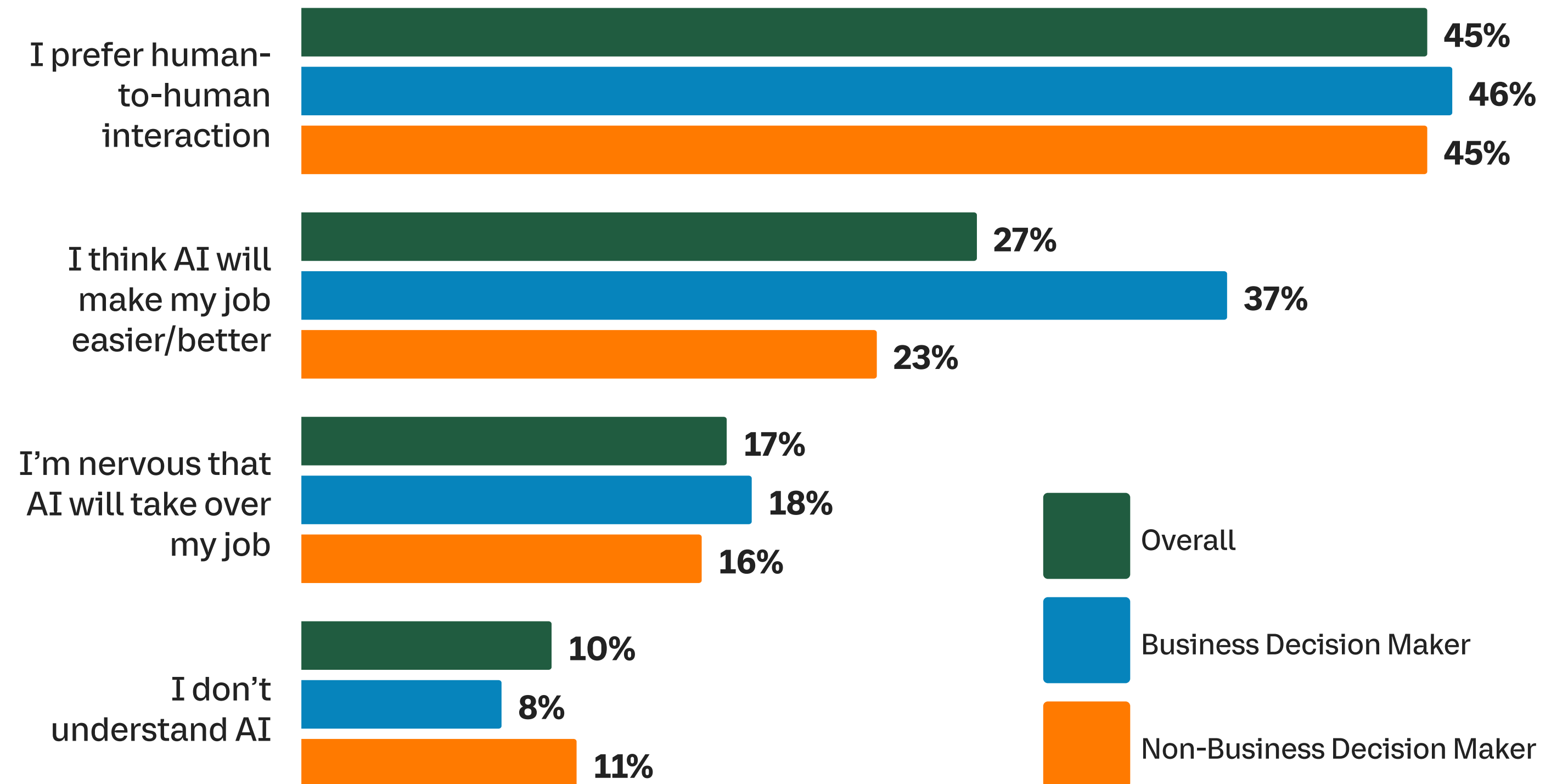
Generative AI

defined by McKinsey as algorithms that can create new content, such as images or text (ChatGPT, DALL-E)

It's been reported that the market for conversational AI alone is expected to reach $22.6 billion by 2024, representing a 30% compound annual growth rate.

How do people really feel about using AI at work?

While AI adoption is still in the early stages, surging headlines and dialogue have sparked opinions among the majority of workers. Business decision makers* are most excited about implementing AI. More than one-third believe it will make their jobs easier by saving time, but also by supporting quality assurance and skill development, increasing creativity, and streamlining meetings.

Feelings on AI support in the workplace:

I prefer human-to-human interaction
- Overall: 45%
- Business Decision Maker: 46%
- Non-Business Decision Maker: 45%

I think AI will make my job easier/better
- Overall: 27%
- Business Decision Maker: 37%
- Non-Business Decision Maker: 23%

I'm nervous that AI will take over my job
- Overall: 17%
- Business Decision Maker: 18%
- Non-Business Decision Maker: 16%

I don't understand AI
- Overall: 10%
- Business Decision Maker: 8%
- Non-Business Decision Maker: 11%

Legend:
- Overall
- Business Decision Maker
- Non-Business Decision Maker

*In the survey, in response to, "Please select which of the following, if any, describes your role at work" those who indicated decision-making responsibilities are noted as business decision-makers.

Do employees understand their company's plans for AI?

Among non-decision makers, 41% were unsure about the application of AI at work, compared with 21% of decision makers, highlighting a significant gap between leaders and employees.

Unsure about the use of AI at work:

21% decision makers

41% non-decision makers
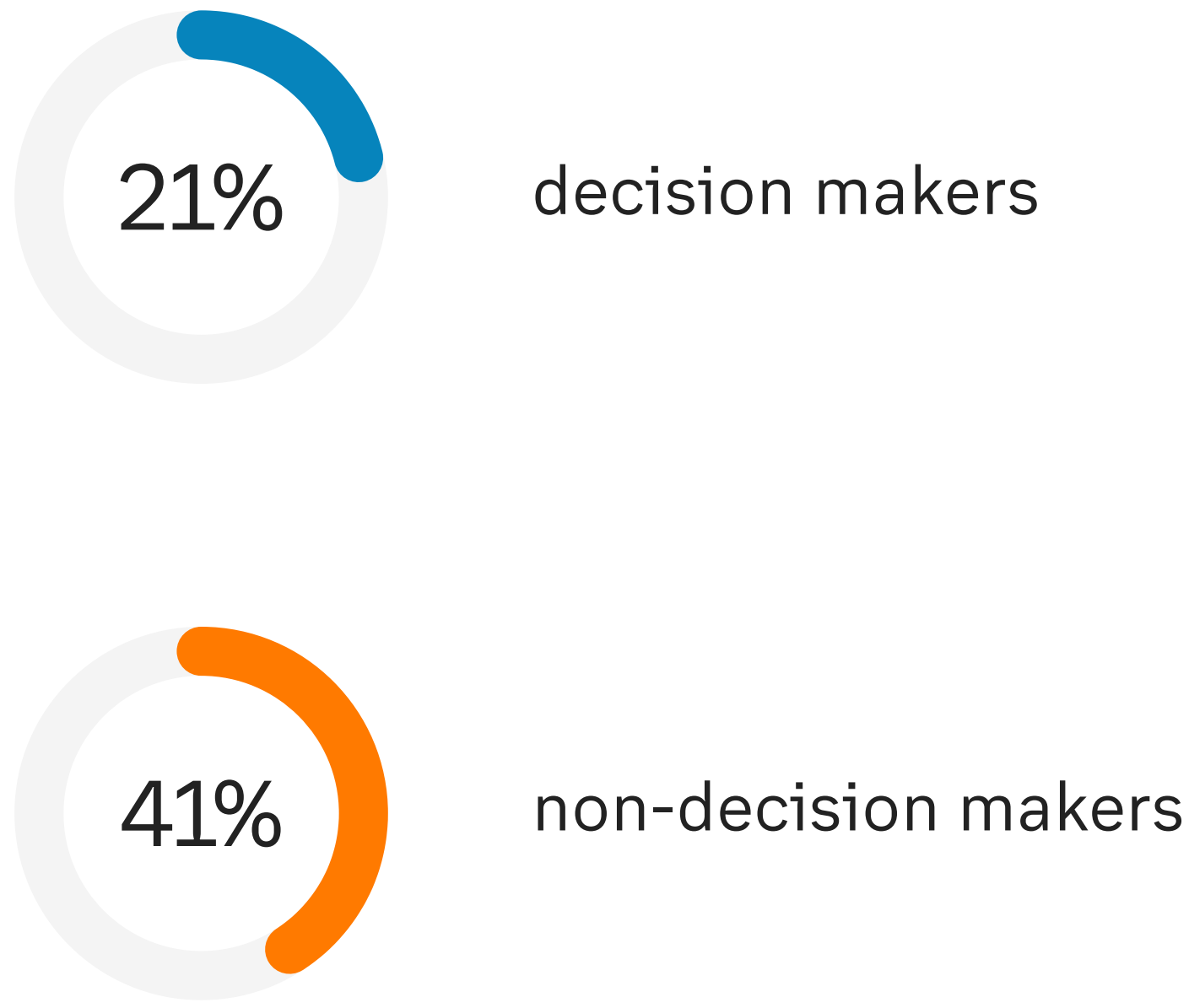
How do different generations feel about using AI at work?

Generational differences play a significant role in attitudes towards AI adoption in the workplace. Younger workers are more enthusiastic about integrating AI into their work processes, while older generations are much less inclined to do so.

Employees excited about using AI in their work, by age group:

| 37%	30%	17%	9%
21-34	35-44	45-54	55-65
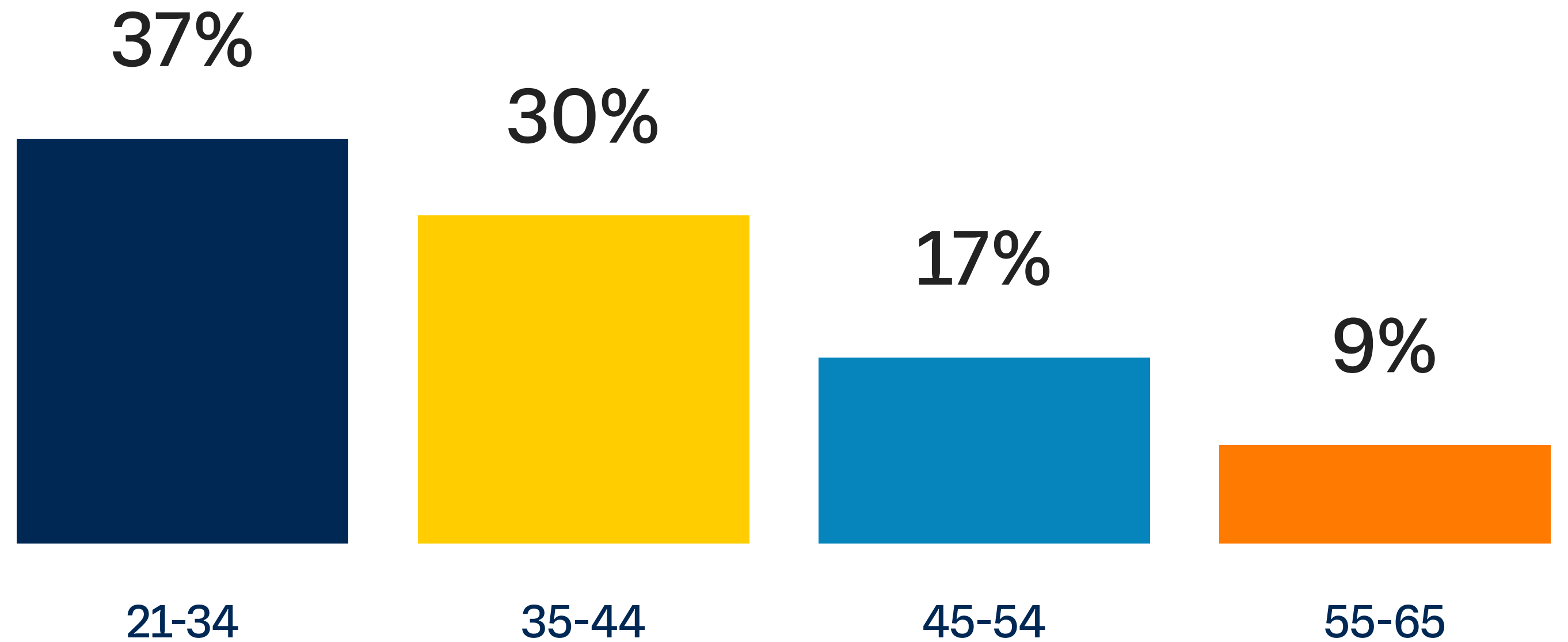
Is there concern that AI will replace jobs?

Disruption is inherent in human history, from the earliest stone tools to the industrial revolution, the invention of the PC, the introduction of cloud computing, and today's proliferation of AI.

While it may feel unsettling, evolution is essential and AI is here to stay. So what does that mean for our jobs?

AI will replace many roles in the next two decades:

33% overall survey respondents

39% decision makers
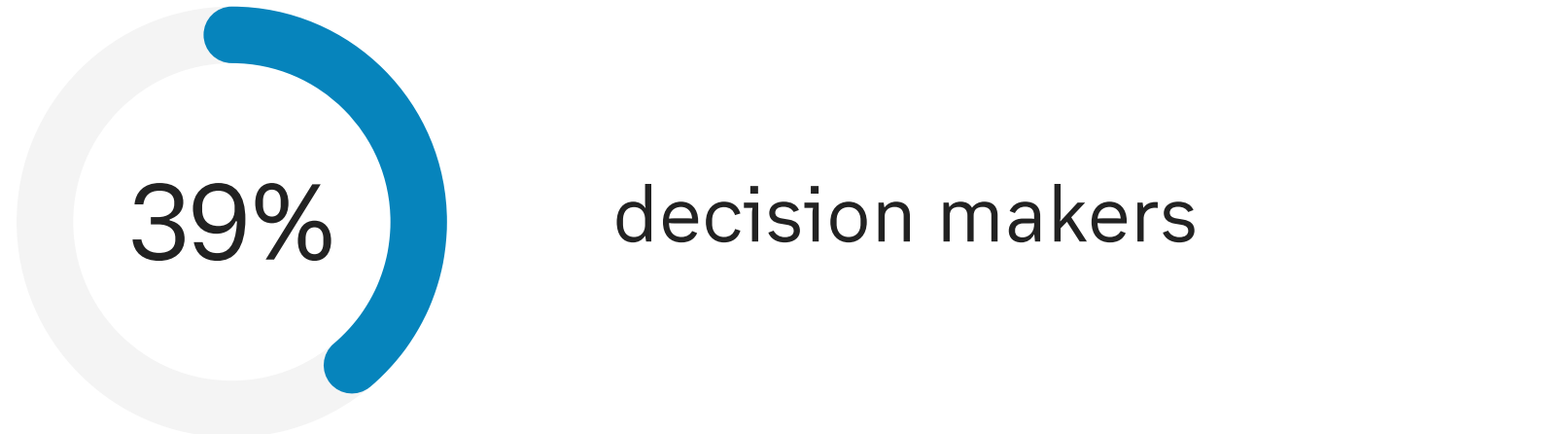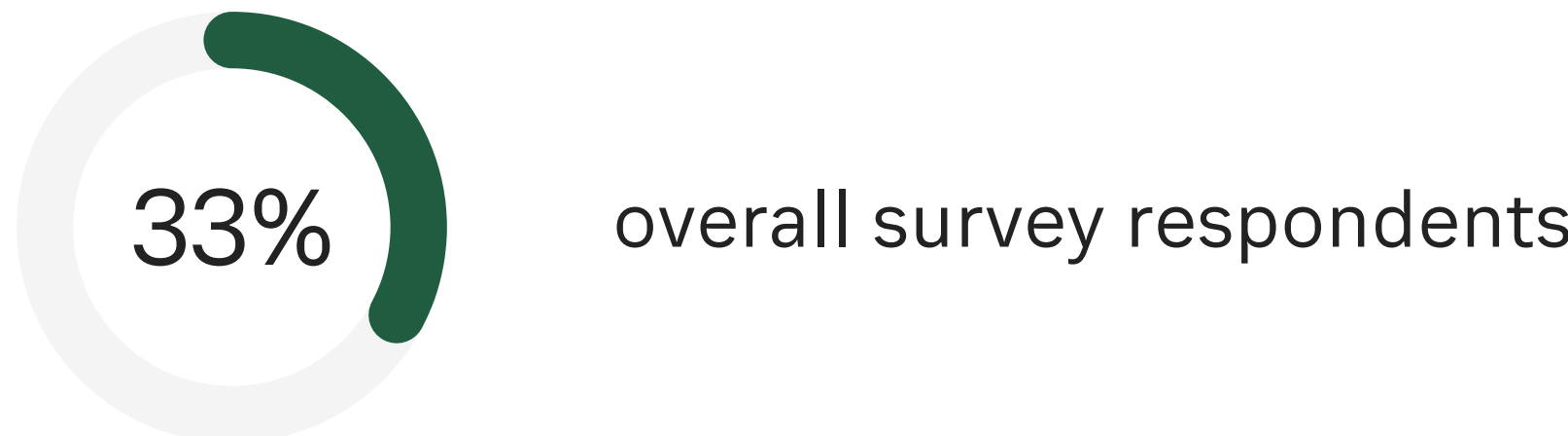
Will AI positively impact the workforce?

Many believe that while AI may automate certain tasks, it is also likely to create entirely new roles — such as prompt engineers or AI-assisted healthcare technicians — much like technological advancements of the past. The World Economic Forum predicts almost 100 million new jobs by 2025 from human-machine collaboration.

AI advancements will positively impact the workforce:
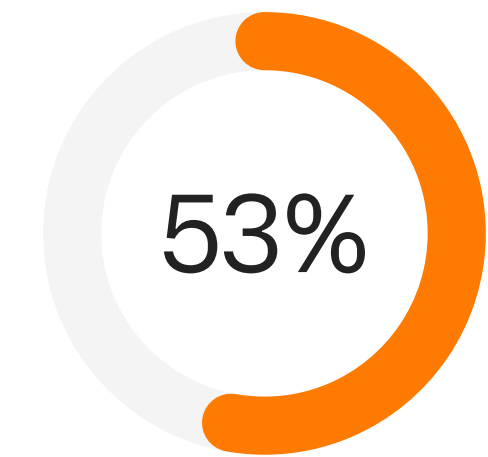
53% workers 21-34
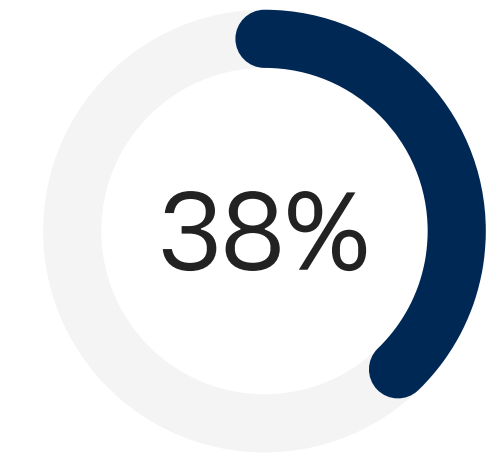
38% full-time workers overall

How is AI being applied today?

While the technology space is one of the clearest beneficiaries of AI solutions, many industries are implementing AI today to access, interpret, and act on information quickly, train employees, improve team collaboration, and deliver better service or care.

Here are a few ways AI is being used today at work:
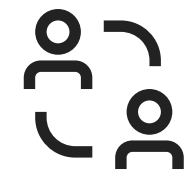
Collaboration - AI-generated meeting insights are boosting post-meeting productivity. Teams spend less time taking notes, and others who can't make it catch up quickly.

Sales and customer service - Real-time behavioral coaching using AI can track agent performance, customize coaching, and drive growth.

Frontline workers - Increased automation eliminates the need to perform routine tasks, freeing up frontline workers to upskill and provide more value.

Healthcare - AI is being used to analyze medical data and compare it to millions of other records to help doctors narrow down possible diagnoses.

Law - Lawyers use AI to support time-consuming tasks including due diligence, document review, compliance, and contract management.

Finance - Financial organizations have used AI for years to improve a range of activities, including underwriting and fraud detection.

HR - Organizations use AI to help write job descriptions and onboarding materials, analyze pay, and to support coaching and performance management.

Is AI producing quality work?

Among workers who already use AI in their workplaces, the jury is still out on the work it produces when it comes to tasks like content creation or research. Leaders will need to train workers to confirm that the quality and accuracy of any final product meets their organization's standards and expectations.

Of those already using AI:
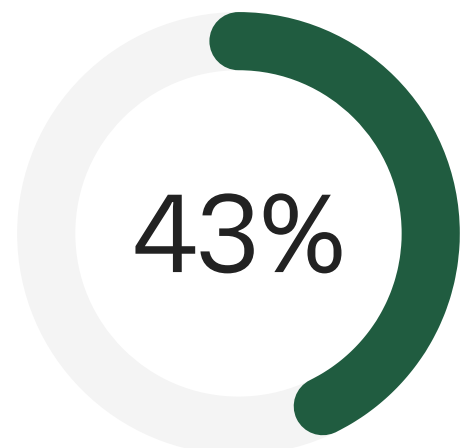
**43%** had mixed feelings about the work produced (oversight /edits needed)
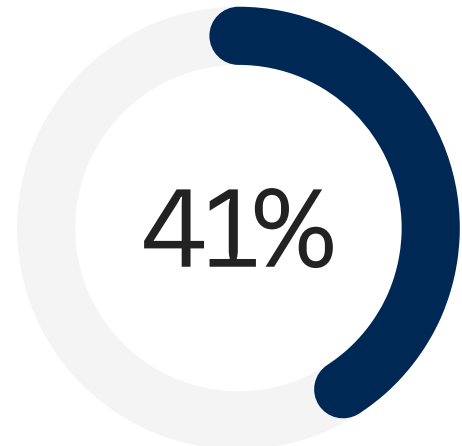
41% felt good about it (minimal edits needed)

What is the top benefit workers expect from AI?

These tools are still new, and there are still quirks to be worked out – but the potential is vast.

Overall, the most anticipated benefit is the possibility of saving time:

31% overall

47% decision maker

26% non-decision maker
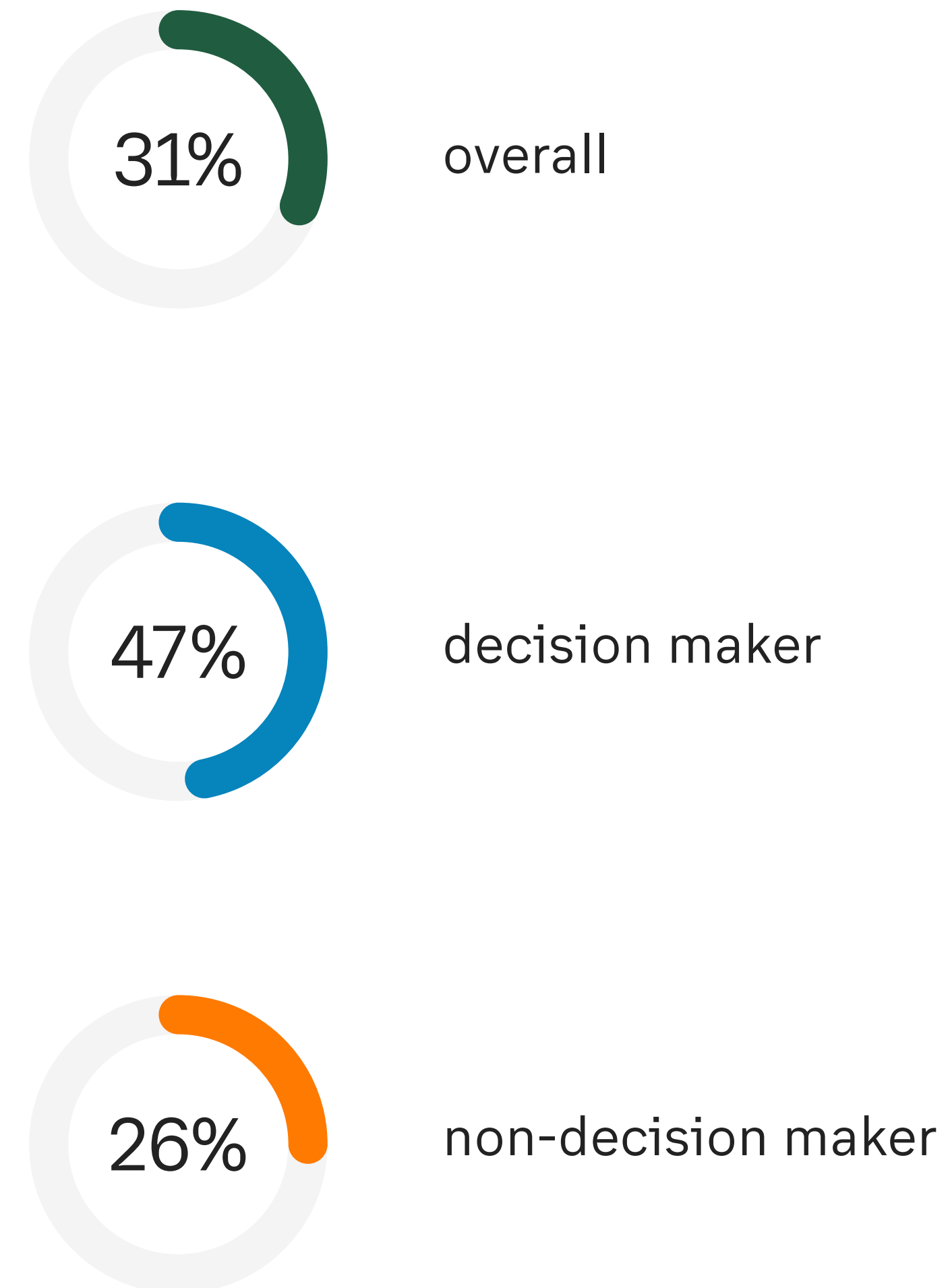
How might AI create new paths to productivity?

In the future, many workers harbor high hopes for the impact AI might have on their jobs, with some envisioning every desk worker with the time-saving support of a personal AI admin.

Everyone will have a virtual assistant in the next 20 years:

39% decision maker

31% workers
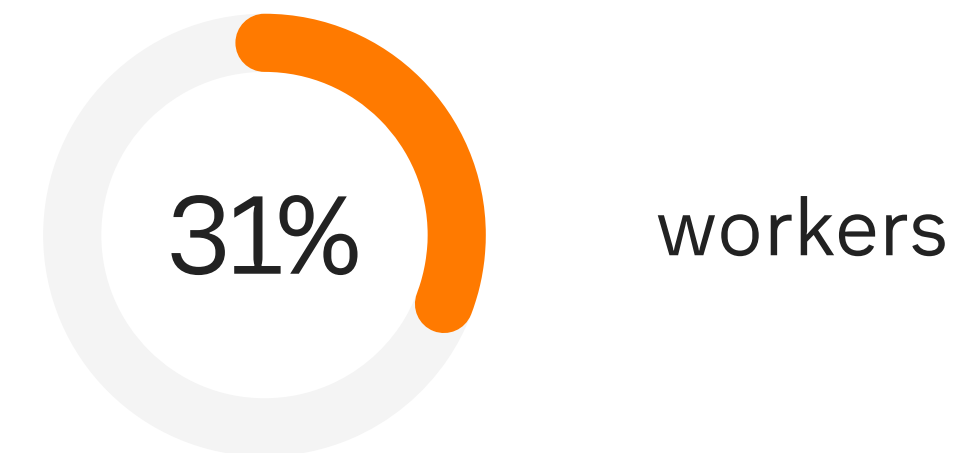
How can leaders implement AI in the right way?

Our research uncovered a significant gap between leaders and employees when it comes to understanding the importance of AI.

Given this discrepancy, it will be critical for leadership to implement AI in a thoughtful way, seeking out established partners with proven track records and secure cloud protocols, developing clearly defined plans for how the technology will be used, and communicating consistently with all levels of the organization.

AI will be important this year:

44% decision makers

26% non-decision makers
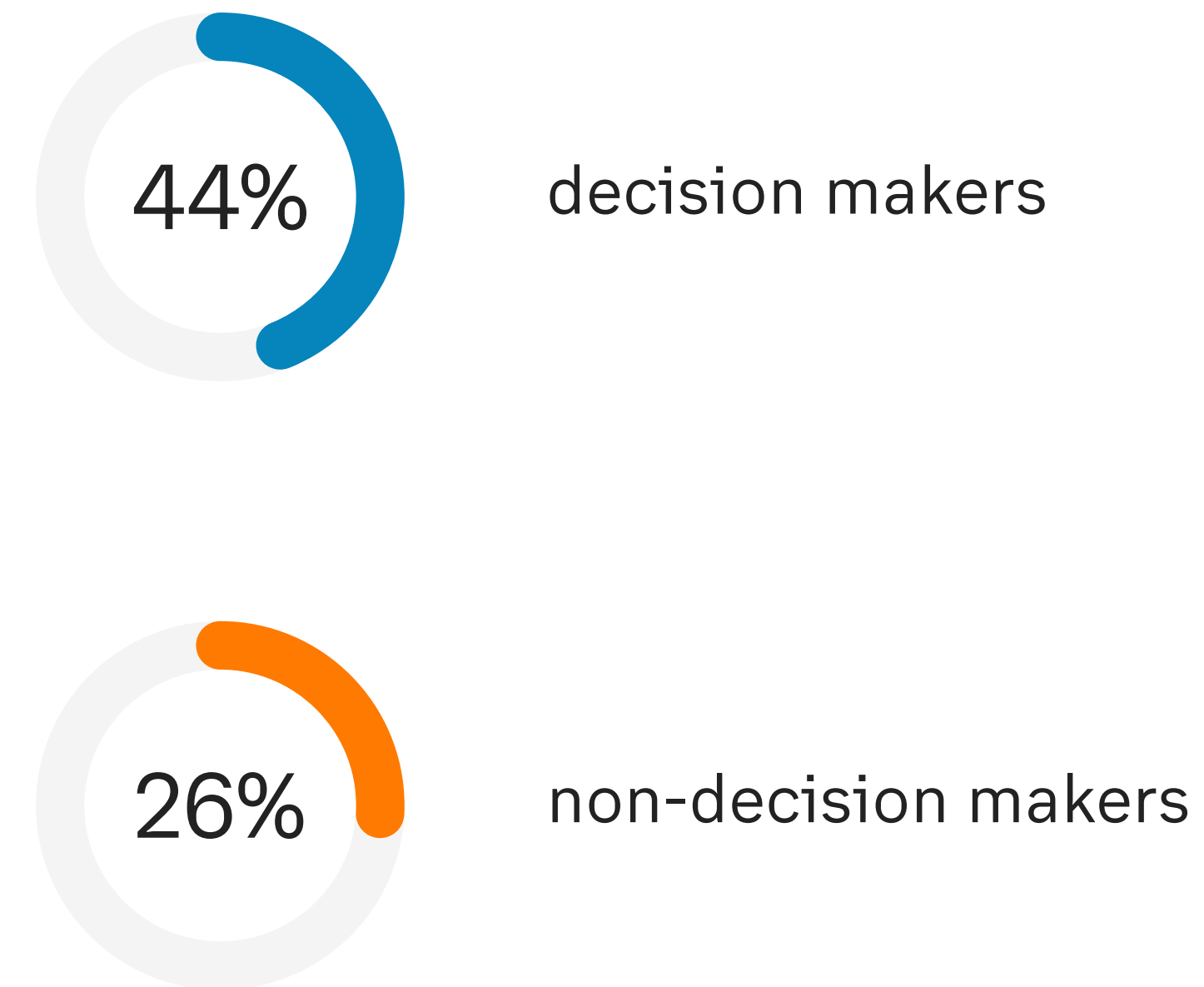
How can leaders set teams up for success?

As more and more news and advances come out and companies look to invest in AI, leaders will need to set their organizations up for success in a quickly shifting landscape.

[McKinsey data](#) shows that 63% of respondents expect their organizations' investment in AI to increase over the next three years.
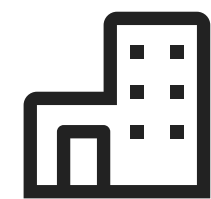
Here are a few tactics leaders can use to more smoothly implement AI in their organizations:

Regular communications at an organizational and individual team/manager level

AI policies and guidebooks

Town halls and office hours

Tutorials

Soliciting feedback

Securing team buy-in early on with information and support will improve the likelihood of AI adoption and success.

The path forward:
AI and the workforce of the future

The way we work today is constantly evolving, driven by shifting work patterns, changing economic conditions, and rapid technological progress. The rise in hybrid and remote work is increasing reliance on digital tools to communicate and collaborate with colleagues and customers.
At the same time, organizations have a greater need for efficiency, speed, and innovation than ever before.

Advancements like AI will support these shifts, ultimately enabling us to improve both how we work, and how we work together.

AI at RingCentral

Now several years into our AI journey with products like [Advanced Meeting Insights](#) and [AI tools for Contact Center](#), we introduced RingSense for Sales, the first offering in the RingSense AI portfolio.

RingSense analyzes interactions among salespeople and their prospects to provide sales leaders with key insights to help them train, mentor, and drive their teams to greater levels of efficiency and success.

RingCentral