

A conversation guide for the C-suite

Decide what should change before you change it

Seven questions every team should be asking about transformation,
and what the World Economic Forum says it takes to scale AI.

Why these questions

Technology can start a transformation, but people decide whether it lasts.

Most transformation plans still begin too late. By the time the leadership team sees the roadmap the decision has usually already been made, the platform has a sponsor, the agent has a use case, the partner has a proposal, and the business case has enough confidence around it to carry the decision forward. Almost no one asks whether the work should still exist before anyone automates it.

Harvard Business Impact set out seven questions to ask about transformation now, and the World Economic Forum, with Accenture, argued that scaling AI is an organisational problem before it is a technological one. Both point at the same place the spend usually skips, the people, the decisions and the operating model underneath the tool.

This booklet brings the two together as questions you can put to your own programme, to slow the first decision down before the spend begins.

After Harvard Business Impact

Seven questions to ask before you spend.

- 1** **Are we building a culture that seeks change, or only responds to it?**
A change-seeking culture generates the next move from the floor up, while a responsive one waits for a crisis to force it. The transformations that last are built with the people closest to the work.

- 2** **Is our learning velocity fast enough for the transformation we are chasing?**
Advantage now comes from how quickly the organisation turns new capability into new behaviour and better decisions. With model cycles running in months and the WEF expecting 39 percent of skill sets to change by 2030, the speed an organisation learns at has become a board-level concern.

- 3** **Are we designing around what people must do differently, not just what the business wants to achieve?**
Most programmes start with the enterprise goal and bolt the people on at the end. The durable ones start with the work, the decisions, the roles and the behaviours that actually have to move.

- 4** **Are leaders communicating through uncertainty in a way that builds trust and momentum?**
Transformation never runs in a straight line. In the ambiguity, silence breeds anxiety, while clarity on purpose, priorities and progress keeps people moving before every answer exists.

After Harvard Business Impact

And the three that decide whether it endures.

5 Is there enough psychological safety to experiment, speak up and surface problems early?

A transformation is decided on the front line, and people only surface the real problems when it feels safe to. An organisation that punishes mistakes rewards the caution that holds change back.

6 Are we attending to the human experience of change, not just the business case?

For many, change brings loss and overload, and leaders misread that as resistance. EY and Oxford found that leaders who put humans at the centre at the inflection points were twelve times more likely to lift transformation performance, so the human side of change is one of the strongest levers a leader has.

7 Are we building transformation as an enduring capability, or running it as separate events?

The advantage is becoming the kind of organisation that can keep transforming without losing momentum, treating change as a standing capability it keeps building between programmes.

The question underneath the seven

Should this work exist in its current form before we automate it?

World Economic Forum, with Accenture, March 2026

Scaling AI is an organisational problem before it is a technological one.

The WEF's finding is that AI's value so far has come from isolated pilots, and the deeper gain is still out of reach, embedding AI into the core workflows, decision-making and operating models that define how work gets done. The shift it calls for is to re-architect workflows, decision rights and governance, and to keep human judgement and oversight at the centre as AI moves from supporting analysis to participating directly in execution.

It points to five places where the value concentrates.

- 1 Real-time, individualised customer experience**, shaped for each person as they engage.
- 2 Efficient, resilient operations** that sense, adapt and recover rather than run fixed.
- 3 Accelerated R&D and breakthrough innovation**, compressing the path from idea to product.
- 4 Predictive, AI-powered strategic planning**, decisions informed before the result arrives.
- 5 Data-driven, personalised talent and workforce planning**, matching people, skills and work.

39%

of workers' skill sets expected to change or become outdated by 2030 (WEF)

12X

more likely to lift transformation performance when humans sit at the centre of change (EY and Oxford)

Where this leaves you

Decide what should change before you change it.

Harvard and the WEF reach the same conclusion, that the constraint is organisational. The questions in this booklet are the people half of that, and the operating-model half is the work most programmes never do, which workflow deserves to change, what decision is being moved, who owns the outcome when the agent is right and who owns it when it is wrong.

The AI BVF and the Workflow Coroner do exactly this work, scoring an initiative against strategic alignment, financial return, change enablement and governance before the spend runs away, and ruling whether the answer is accelerate, fix, stop, or go back and understand the work properly. They default to stop, so the spend goes to the work that should survive.

aibvf-mcp, the open server behind the framework, is live on the MCP registry, so you can run the check yourself before the spend begins.