The Tech C-suite *Reset*

Thriving in the AI Era

Tech Executive Programs

Deloitte.

Together makes progress

The role of technology leaders has fundamentally *transformed*

Success is no longer measured by operational stability, but by the ability to drive enterprise-wide outcomes in an increasingly AI-driven world.

Deloitte's *2026 Global Technology Leadership Study*—drawing on perspectives from leading CIOs, CTOs, CISOs, and CDAOs—reveals key insights about how the tech C-suite is navigating unprecedented ambition alongside critical gaps in capabilities and resources.

662 **Executives surveyed**

7 **Key insights**

About the research:

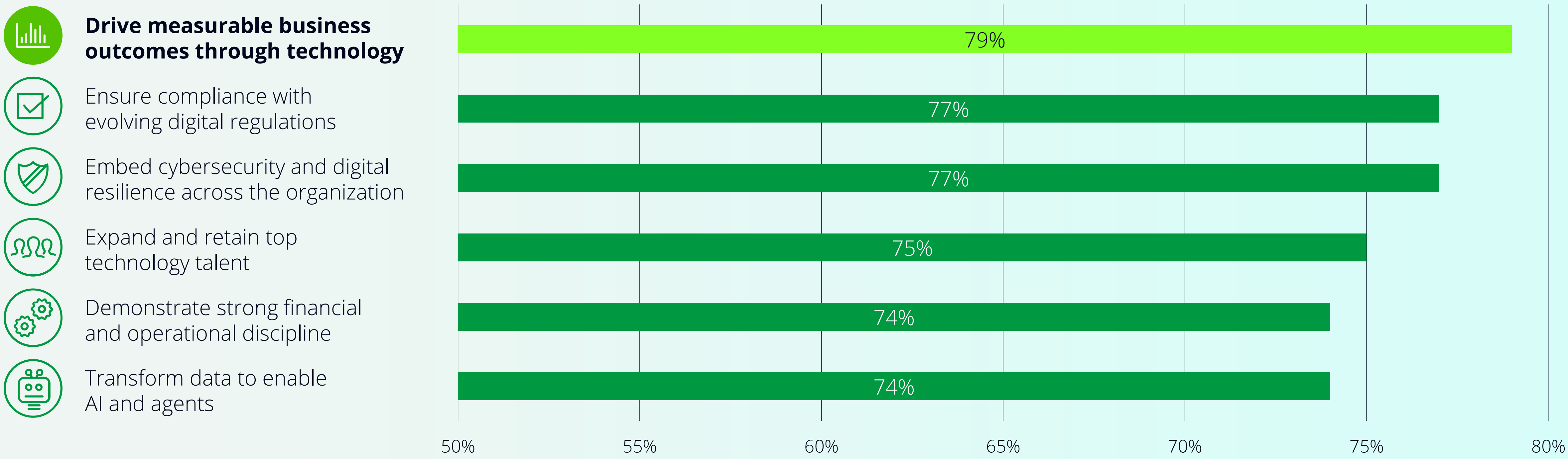
For more than a decade, Deloitte's Tech Executive Programs have studied how technology leadership roles have evolved and how tech executives can thrive in a changing landscape.

The mandate has changed

1

Tech leaders are no longer measured by uptime or delivery alone but rather their ability to drive enterprise value, including growth, productivity, and customer impact.

To what extent are each of these a strategic priority for your organization's tech function in 2026?
Data shows "to a great/very great extent" responses.



N=662

AI is defining success, but not the mandate

2

Success metrics are converging across the tech C-suite. AI is now embedded in how performance is measured, but tech leaders remain accountable for a broader set of outcomes, including resilience, compliance, and sustained enterprise value.

Which measures will most define success for CIOs, CTOs, CISOs, and CDAOs in the next two years?
Data represents top success metrics by role.

CIO		CTO		CISO		CDAO	
AI adoption and value realization	**46%**	AI-enabled automation and innovation velocity	**34%**	Integration of security into innovation and AI initiatives	**44%**	Business value created from data and AI	**32%**
Cyber resilience and risk reduction	**30%**	Cyber secure, resilient engineering practices	**26%**	Organizational security culture and workforce awareness	**29%**	Establishment of trusted data governance and responsible AI practices	**31%**
Platform reliability, scalability, and resilience	**25%**	Speed of innovation and product delivery	**25%**	Business value enabled through secure innovation and risk reduction	**24%**	Adoption of AI and analytics in decision-making	**31%**

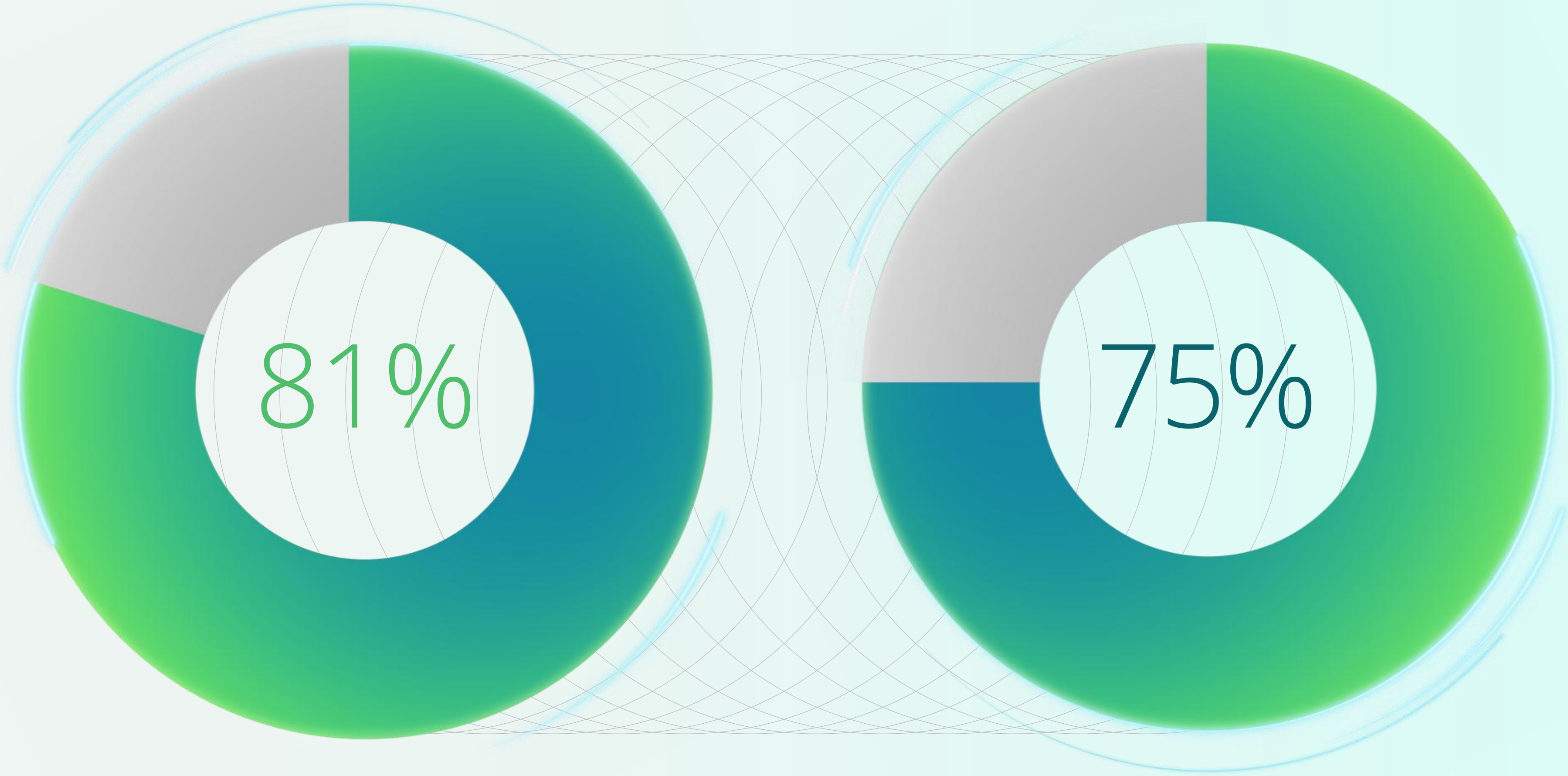
N=660

Confidence is ahead of readiness

3

More than 80% of tech leaders surveyed are confident in their organization's ability to deploy and govern AI capabilities at scale...

...yet 75% agree their operating models and processes must change within the next 12–18 months to drive greater value.



The bottom line:

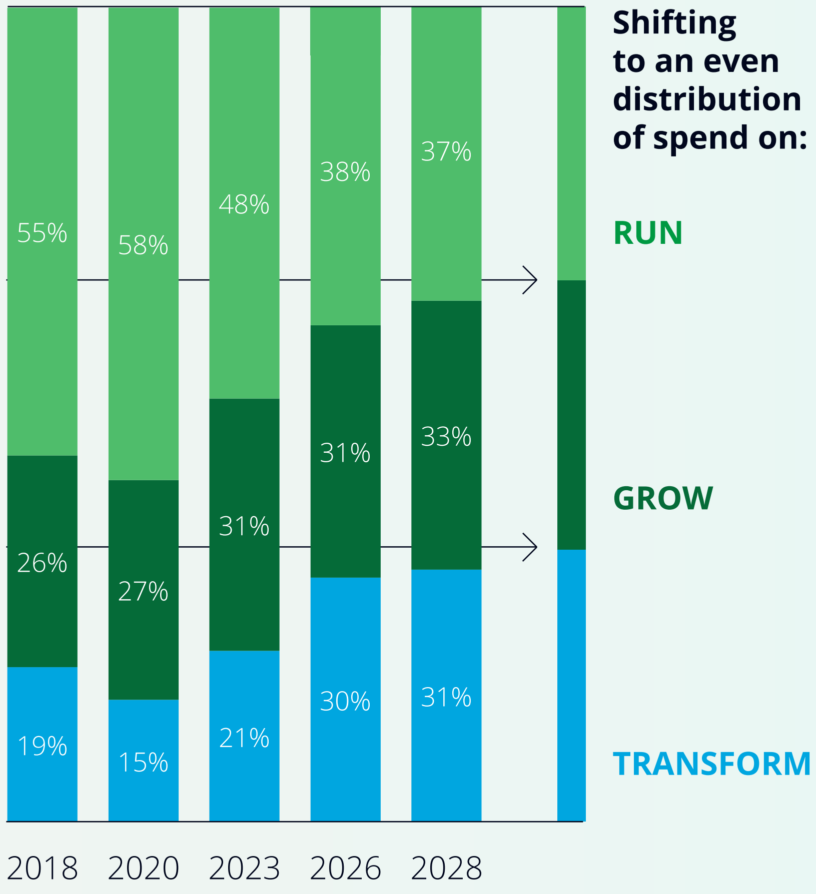
There is a widening gap between ambition and capability in scaling new tech

N=662

Legacy ways of working create constraints

4

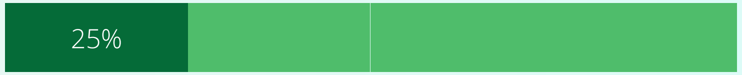
Leaders are increasingly asked to run, grow, and transform the business simultaneously...



...but many are operating with funding models that haven't kept pace with demand.

Tech budgets are only moving from 6% to 8% of revenue in the next two years.

Despite AI's stated importance, 89% of tech leaders report allocating no more than 25% of their technology budgets to AI initiatives.



With spending spread across competing demands rather than reallocated to reflect the importance of AI, this will likely force difficult choices about investments and priorities.

The bottom line:

41% of leaders say the tech function can't meet business needs

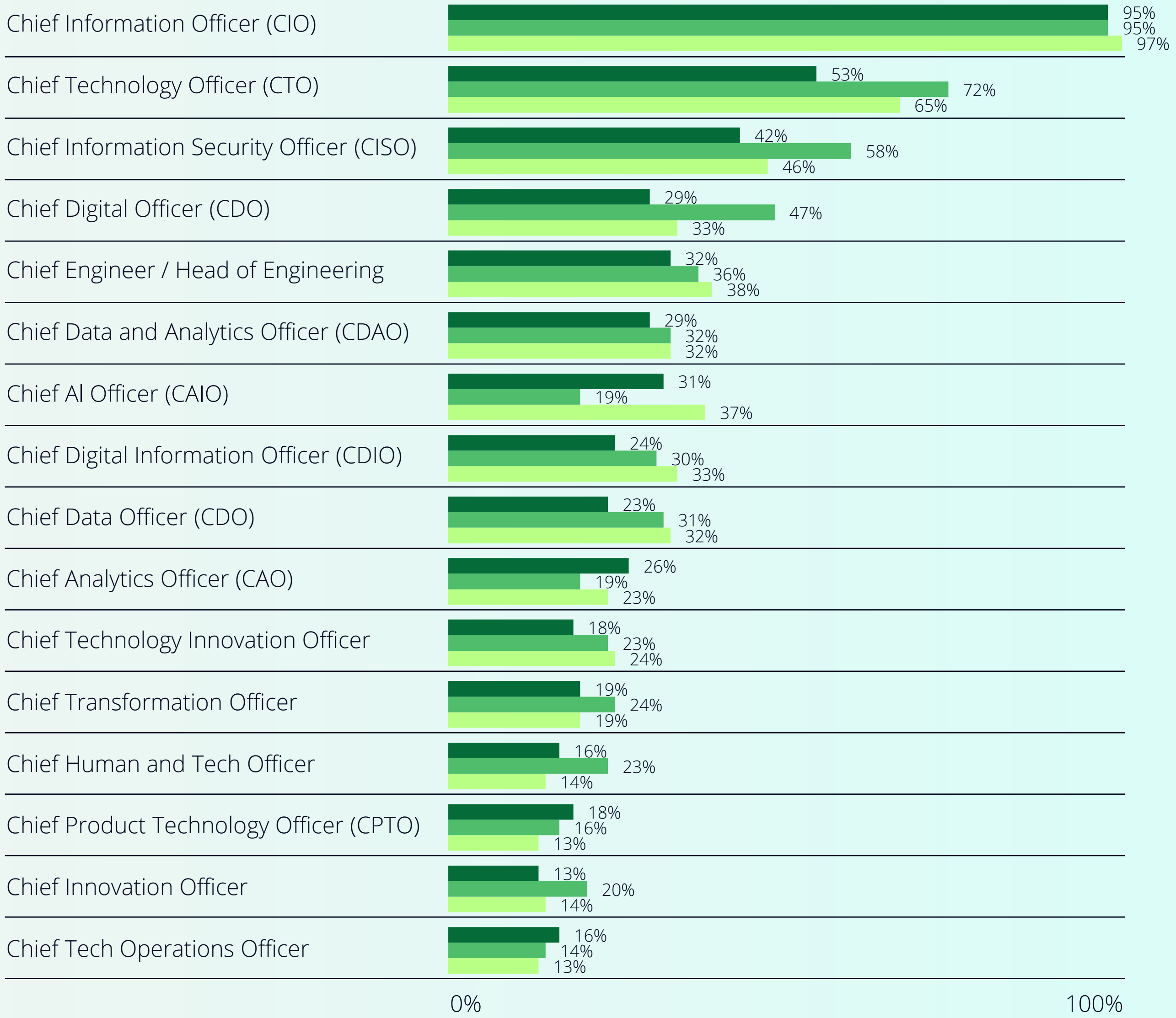
N=1,116 for 2018, 717 for 2020, 1,179 for 2023, 662 for 2026 and 2028

The tech C-suite is expanding, making orchestration critical

5

Technology leadership is no longer centralized, and the challenge is no longer control; it is coordination across an increasingly complex leadership system where leaders must align priorities and make explicit trade-offs across value, risk, and investment.

Which of the following tech-focused C-suite roles* exist in your organization?



Americas & LATAM
EMEA
APAC

The bottom line:

71% of organizations have 5 or more C-suite tech leaders

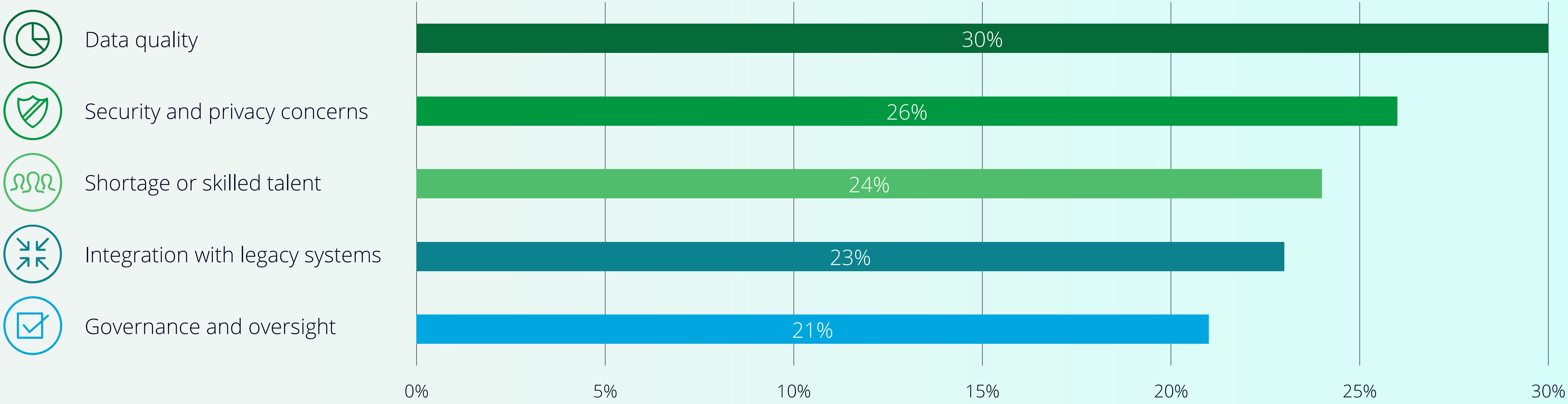
*or equivalent; N=662

Barriers to progress are foundational

6

More than half of tech leaders surveyed expect significant or transformative impact from AI agents by 2028, but challenges remain. The limiting factor isn't the availability of technology itself, but rather the readiness of the enterprise, including its data foundations, workforce capabilities, and ability to integrate new solutions into existing environments.

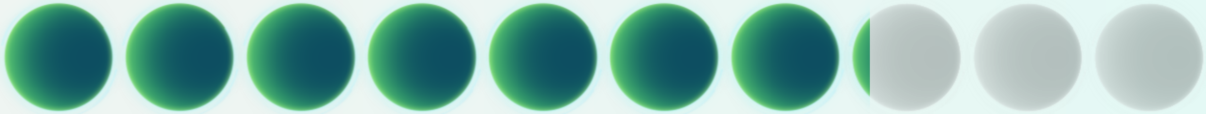
What are the biggest barriers to implementing AI agents at scale in your organization?
Data represents top five barriers.



N=660

This is a leadership moment

Expectations are rising rapidly but so is conviction. Leaders who can translate this moment into clear priorities, disciplined execution, and enterprise impact have an opportunity to redefine both their role and their organization's trajectory.



More than 7 in 10 tech leaders feel inspired or determined about the future of their role

N=662

Leading through the reset

The message is clear: the era of the operational technologist is over.

Today's leaders are defined by their ability to orchestrate complex ecosystems, translate technology into enterprise value, and lead through ambiguity. The challenge is significant, but the opportunity is immense.

You are accountable for enterprise value, not just technology performance

Your operating model is now a primary constraint and how you influence transformation matters more than ever

Orchestration across the C-suite is a core leadership capability

Take action:

To understand the nuances behind these findings, we will dig into the results through a series of deep-dive articles.

Our first piece, featured below, examines how tech leader roles are evolving.

Part I | The dual mandate redefining the future of technology leadership

Now available!

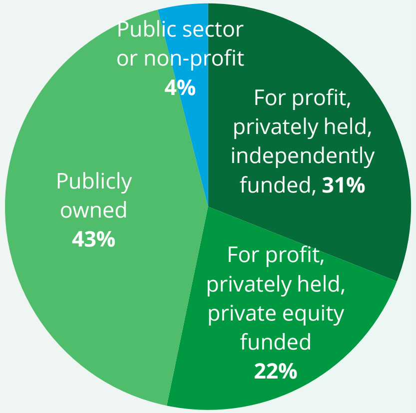
Visit Deloitte.com to learn more and subscribe to stay current with the latest perspectives as they are released over the coming weeks and months.

Who we surveyed

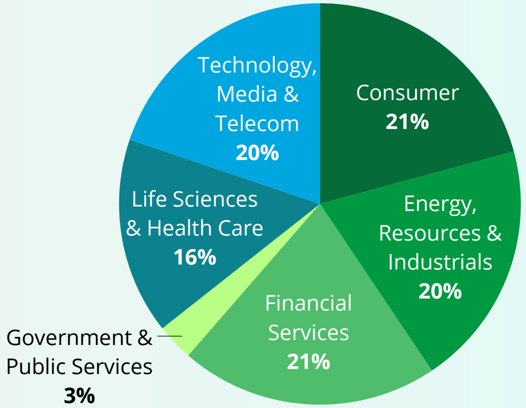
Deloitte conducted an online survey of 662 global senior tech leaders from December 2025 – February 2026. 87% of responses were C-suite leaders.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

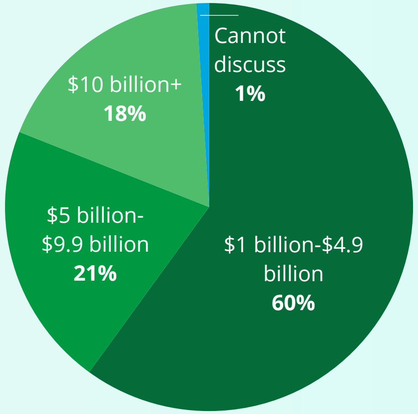
COMPANY TYPE



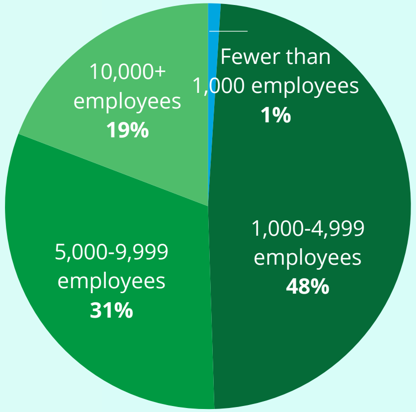
INDUSTRY



COMPANY REVENUE

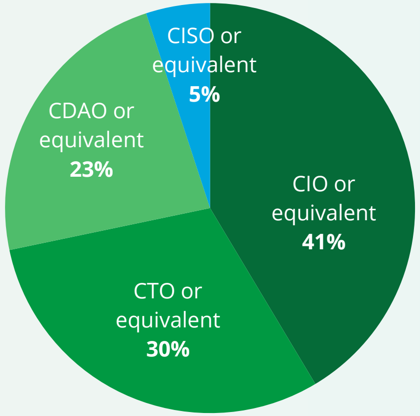


COMPANY SIZE

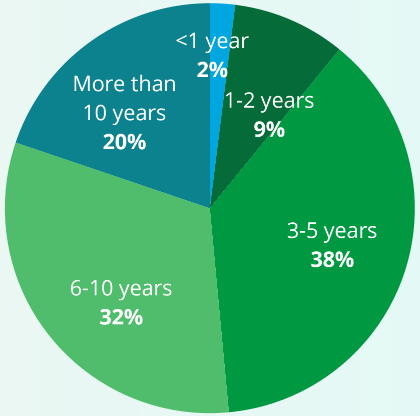


INDIVIDUAL DEMOGRAPHICS

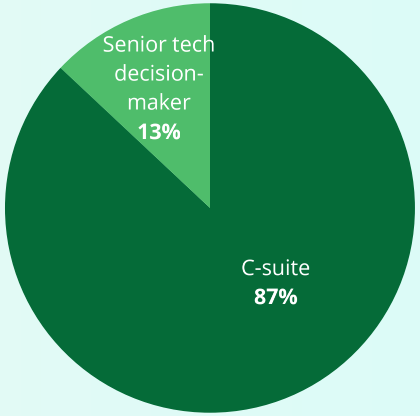
PRIMARY ROLE



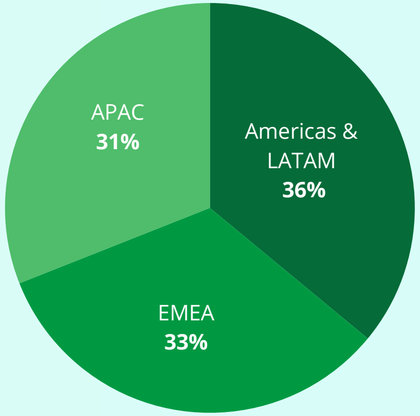
TENURE



SENIORITY



LOCATION



Note: May not total 100% due to rounding; GPS responses were US only.

Continue the conversation

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