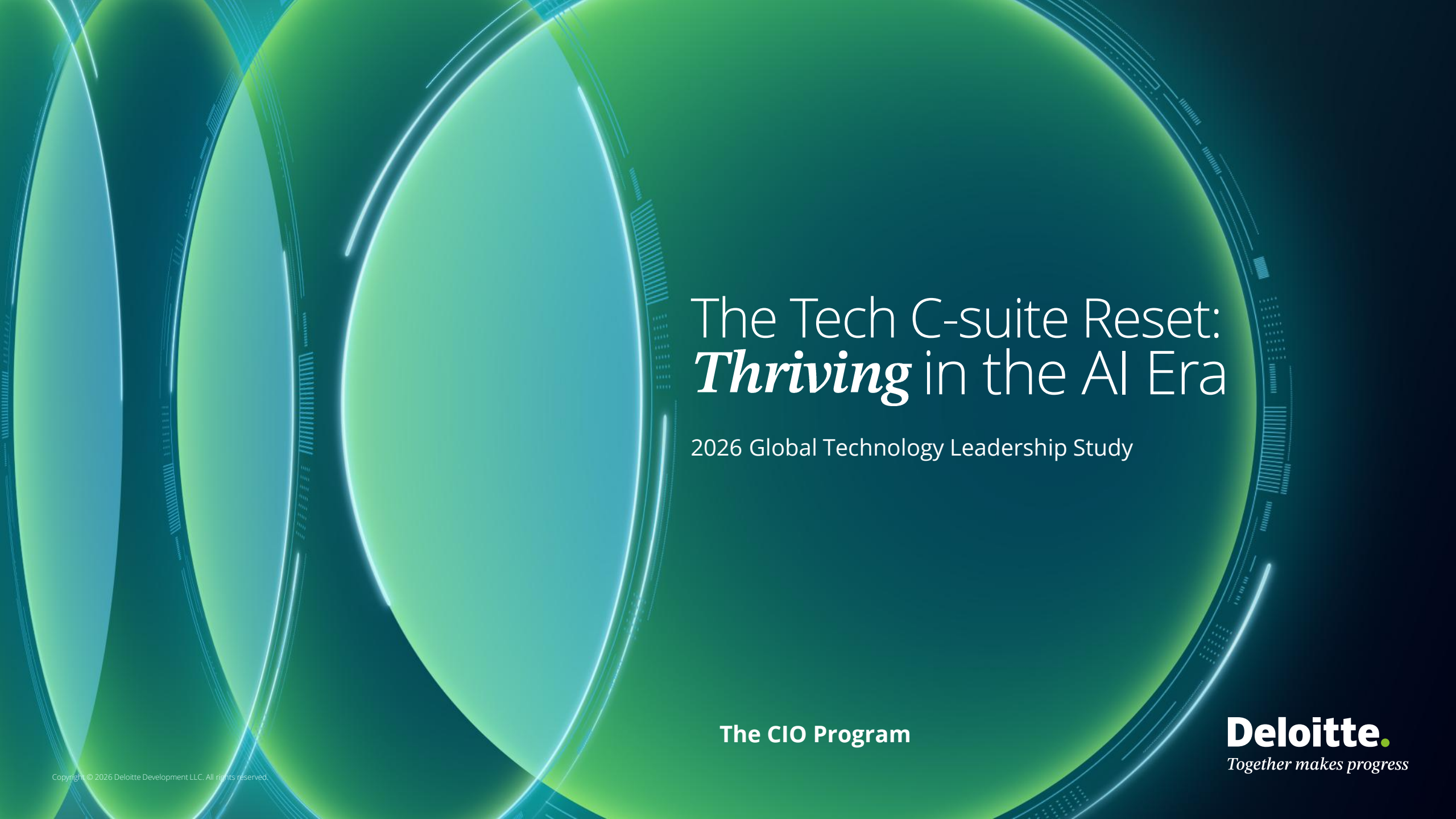




The Tech C-suite Reset: *Thriving* in the AI Era

2026 Global Technology Leadership Study

The CIO Program

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.



**Executives
surveyed**



Key insights



About the research:

For more than a decade, Deloitte's US CIO Program has studied how technology leadership roles have evolved and how tech executives can thrive in a changing landscape.



The mandate has changed



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.

-  **Drive measurable business outcomes through technology**
-  Ensure compliance with evolving digital regulations
-  Embed cybersecurity and digital resilience across the organization
-  Expand and retain top technology talent
-  Demonstrate strong financial and operational discipline
-  Transform data to enable AI and agents



AI is defining success, but not the mandate



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.

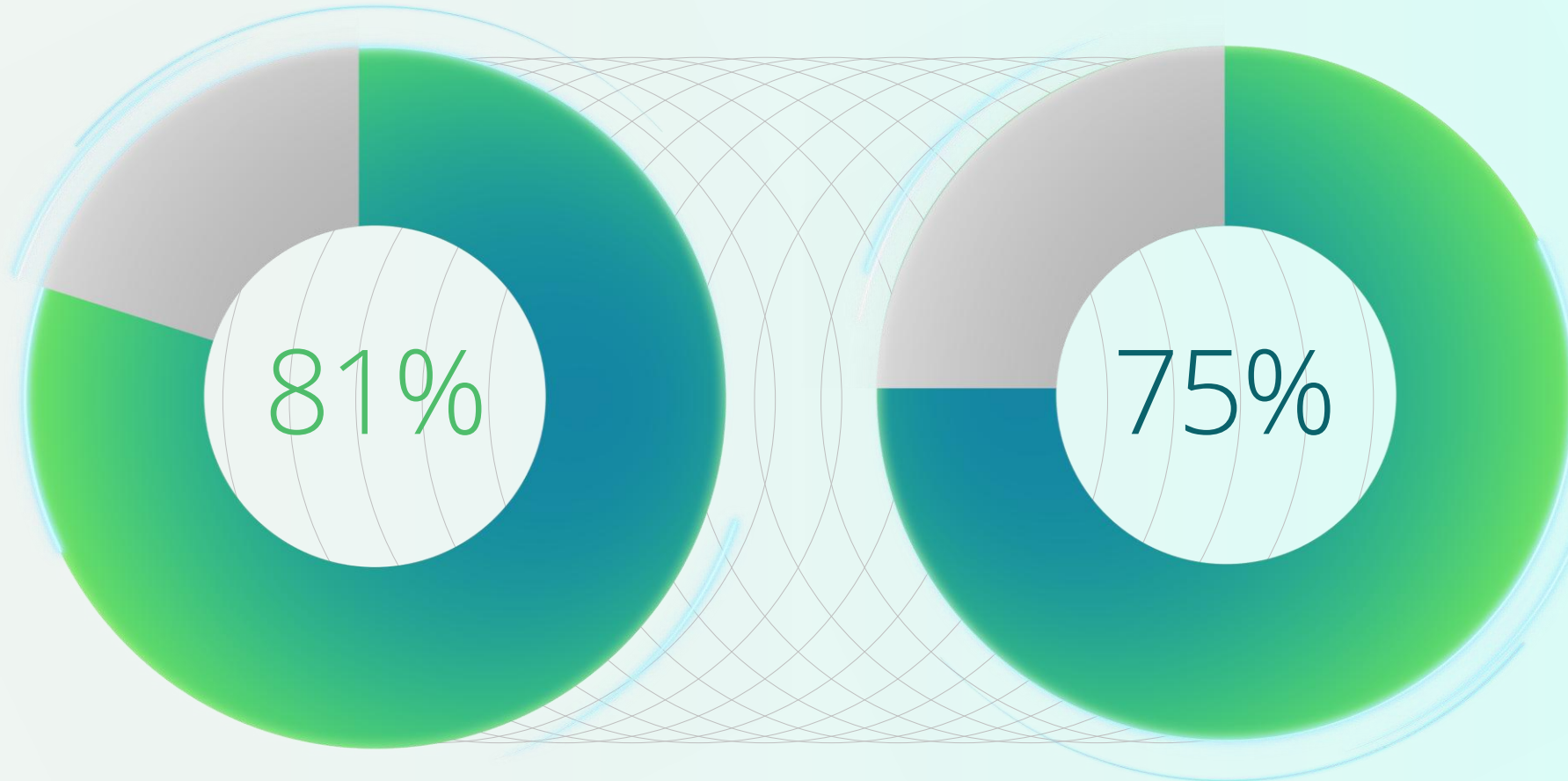
CIO		CTO		CISO		CDAO	
AI adoption and value realization	46%	AI-enabled automation and innovation velocity	34%	Integration of security into innovation and AI initiatives	44%	Business value created from data and AI	32%
Cyber resilience and risk reduction	30%	Cyber secure, resilient engineering practices	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%

Confidence is ahead of readiness

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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:

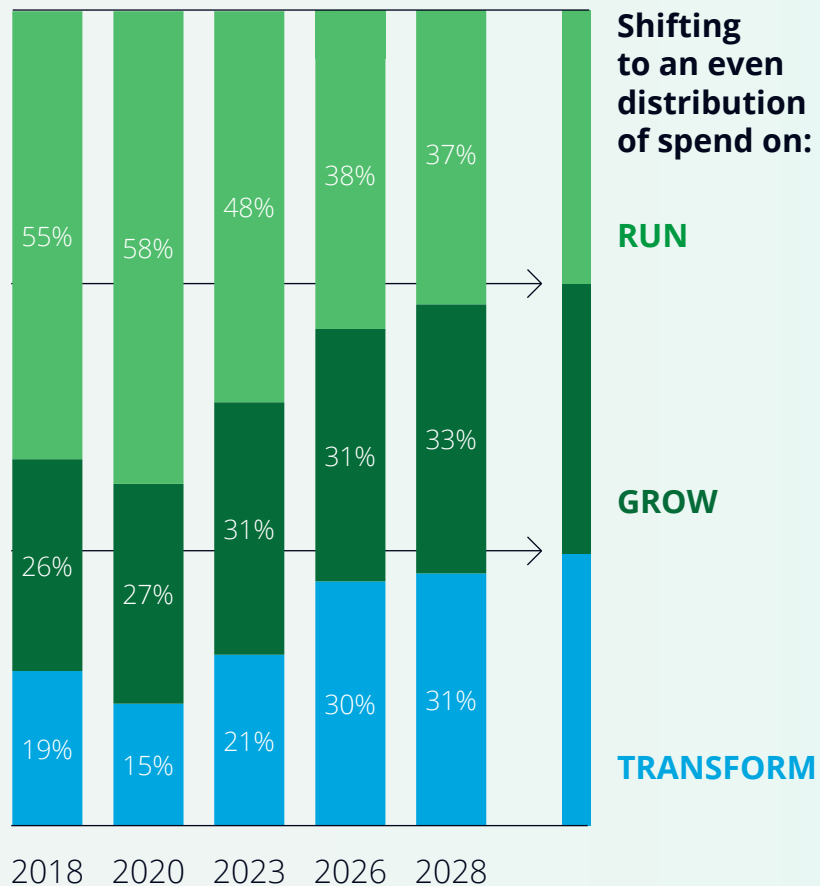
There is a widening gap between ambition and capability in scaling new tech

Legacy ways of working create constraints



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

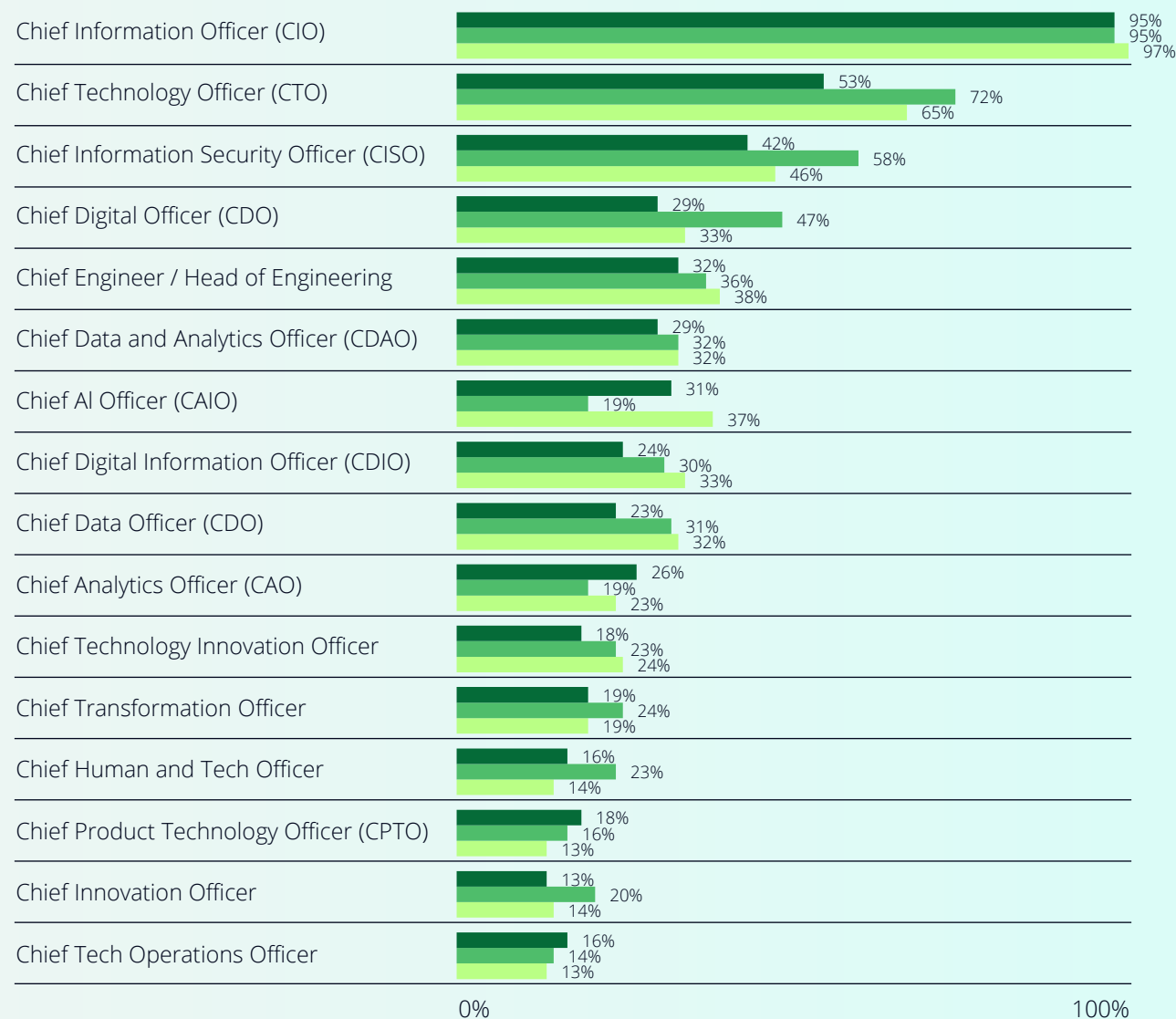
The tech C-suite is expanding, making orchestration critical



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
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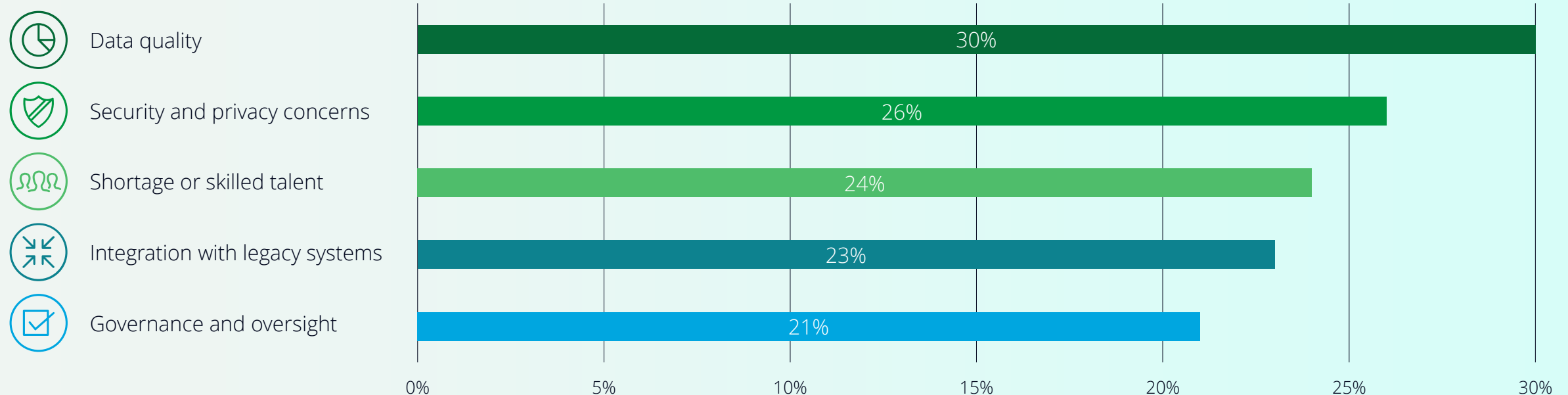
Barriers to progress are foundational

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.

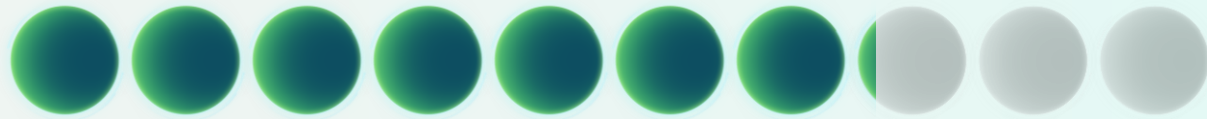


N=660

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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



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.

The first two pieces are now available on Deloitte Insights:

[Part I | The dual mandate redefining the future of technology leadership](#)

[Part II | Rewiring the enterprise operating model for AI scale](#)

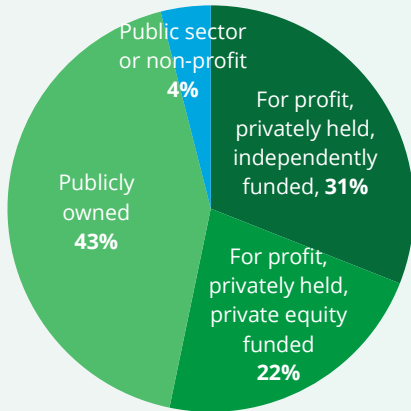
[Visit Deloitte.com](#) to learn more and subscribe to stay current with the latest perspectives as they are released over the coming weeks and months.

Who we surveyed

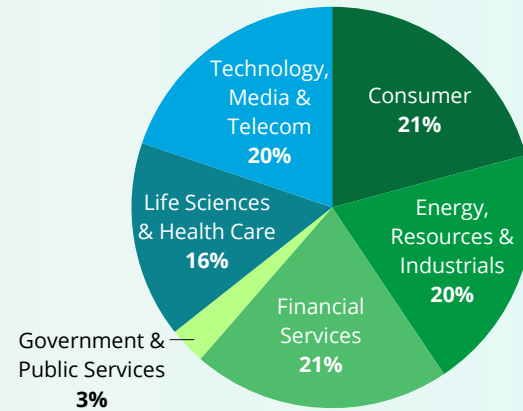
Deloitte conducted an online survey of 662 global senior tech leaders from December 2025 – February 2026. 87% of responses were C-suite leaders.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

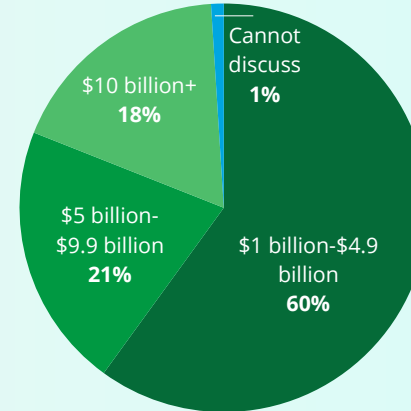
COMPANY TYPE



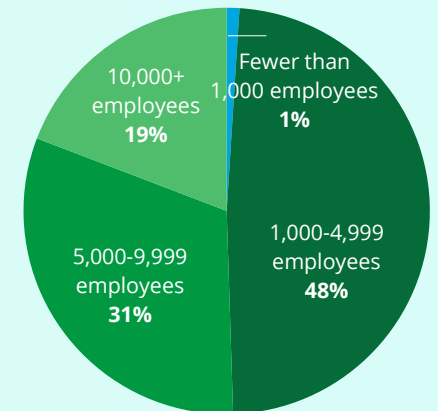
INDUSTRY



COMPANY REVENUE

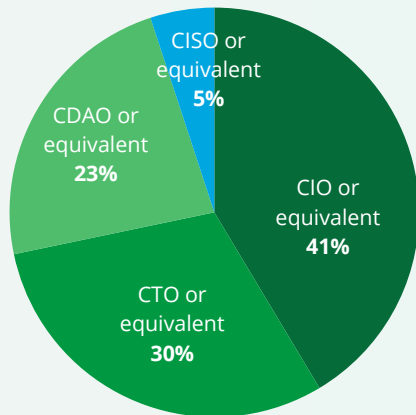


COMPANY SIZE

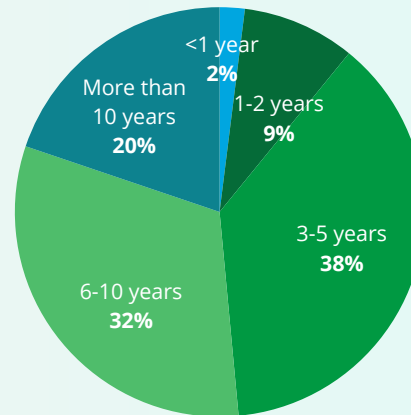


INDIVIDUAL DEMOGRAPHICS

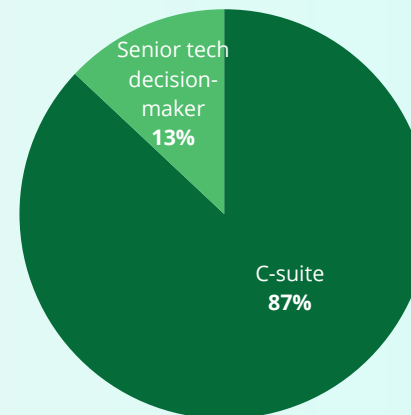
PRIMARY ROLE



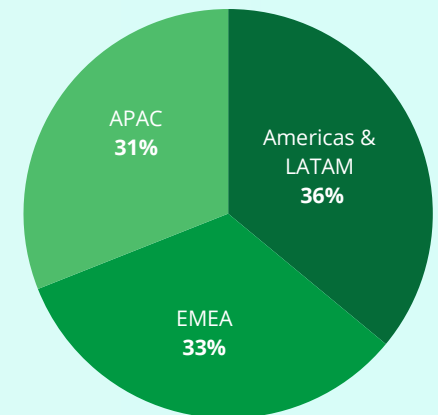
TENURE



SENIORITY



LOCATION



Continue the conversation



Anjali Shaikh

Leader of the Global CIO & US Tech
Executive Programs
Managing Director, Deloitte Consulting LLP
anjalishaikh@deloitte.com



Steve Pratt

US Tech Exec Programs Leader
Principal, Deloitte Consulting LLP
stevenpratt@deloitte.com

TO EXPLORE SECTOR-SPECIFIC INSIGHTS, PLEASE REACH OUT TO OUR PRACTICE LEADERS

CONSUMER

Eugene O'Callaghan

Automotive
euocallaghan@deloitte.com

Andy Paradis

Retail & Consumer Products
andyparadis@deloitte.com

Joe Greiner

Transportation, Hospitality & Services
jogreiner@deloitte.com

ENERGY, RESOURCES & INDUSTRIALS

Damon Vaccaro

Energy & Chemicals
dvaccaro@deloitte.com

Todd Wilson

Industrial Products & Construction
toddwilson@deloitte.com

Rick Perez

Power, Utilities & Renewables
rperez@deloitte.com

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Amit Anand

Banking & Capital Markets
amitanand52@deloitte.com

Garima Dhasmana

Banking & Capital Markets
gdhasmana@deloitte.com

Tim Potter

Insurance
tipotter@deloitte.com

Peter Fever

Inv Mgmt. & Real Estate
pfever@deloitte.com

GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SERVICES

Bharat Chaturvedi

Civil
bhchaturvedi@deloitte.com

Riz Ahmed

Defense, Security & Justice
rizwahmed@deloitte.com

Anne Glass

Fed Health
anglass@deloitte.com

Sam Park

State, Local & Higher Ed
samupark@deloitte.com

LIFE SCIENCES & HEALTH CARE

Matt Dortch

Life Sciences
mdortch@deloitte.com

Chris Shudes

Health Care
cshudes@deloitte.com

TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Jagjeet Gill

Technology
jagjgill@deloitte.com

Duke Luper

Technology, Media & Entertainment
dluper@deloitte.com

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