

BEST PRACTICES TO MAKE YOUR ORGANIZATION GEN AI-READY

Introduction

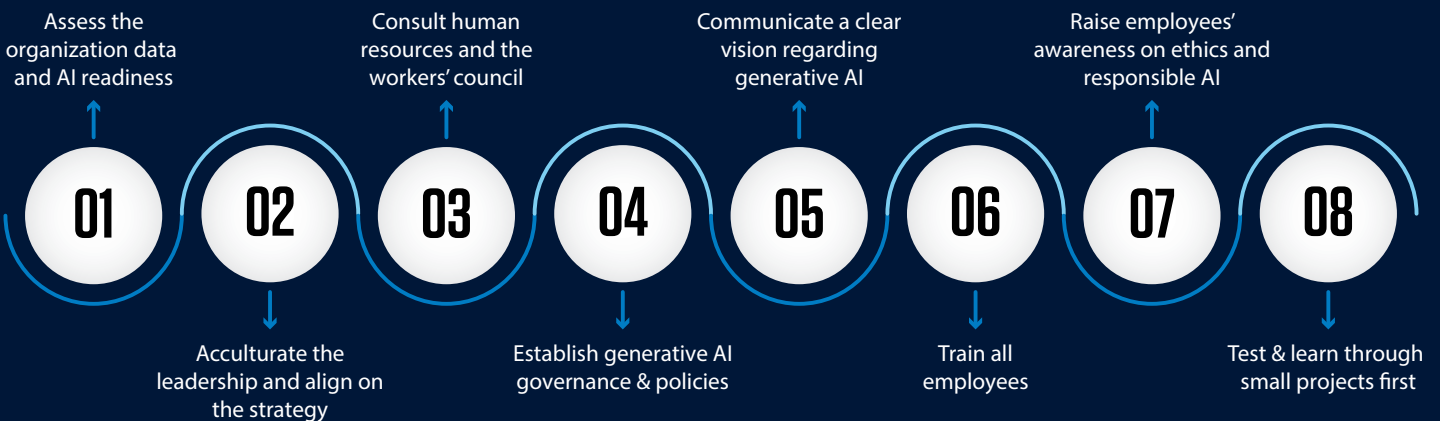
The rapid adoption of ChatGPT has been historic, with just 5 days to reach one million users, compared to 5 months for Spotify and 3.5 years for Netflix according to the companies' announcements. The buzz surrounding the launch of ChatGPT has contributed to a shift in the perception of artificial intelligence technologies. While the use of AI is already a part of users' daily lives, often without their full awareness, the launch of generative AI has changed the game. Generative AI, such as ChatGPT 4.0, is designed from the outset to be user-friendly, making it easier and faster for people to adopt. As a result, we are facing a technology that has already been widely tried by employees, but not yet integrated into their workday.

To successfully integrate generative AI into employees' day-to-day activities, organizations must choose suitable models to deploy internally, to be fine-tuned with the company's data to address specific use cases or develop models in-house. However, the challenge for businesses goes beyond just technological change. The key lies in driving a cultural shift within the company, transforming the buzz into a lasting evolution in culture and ways of working. While the opportunity to augment the capabilities of employees with generative AI is clear, it is now crucial to understand the best practices for making an organization generative AI-ready and to prepare for this change in the daily work life of employees.

To effectively prepare for the integration of generative AI into the workplace and ensure a successful adoption, organizations must follow a series of key steps. The accompanying graphic offers a comprehensive visual representation of these crucial stages, each of which will be explained in this article.



Step by step approach to get your organization gen-AI ready



I. Assess organizational readiness and cultivate leadership support

1. Assess the organization's readiness

Evaluating the company's maturity regarding data and AI is an essential first step in the readiness assessment process. A comprehensive evaluation of the organization's data infrastructure and resources is crucial to determine the quality and suitability of the company's data for training generative AI models that can effectively and accurately address the organization's use cases. This involves verifying the availability, quality, and relevance of the data for the foreseen use cases. It is also necessary to evaluate whether the IT infrastructure can support the workload of the generative AI model. This evaluation will provide a clear understanding of the organization's current capabilities and areas that require improvement to successfully deploy generative AI.

The company's culture regarding data and AI is another important aspect of the readiness assessment. It is important to evaluate the attitude of the company and its employees toward AI, as this will impact employees' appetite to adopt generative AI in their day-to-day activities. A culture of continuous learning and trust in AI is necessary to deploy this technology successfully. Additionally, the assessment should consider the level of awareness of the ethical and data protection challenges associated with AI within the company. A culture of open dialogue and transparency regarding the use of technology can also facilitate the integration of generative AI.

2. Acculturate the leadership and align on the strategy

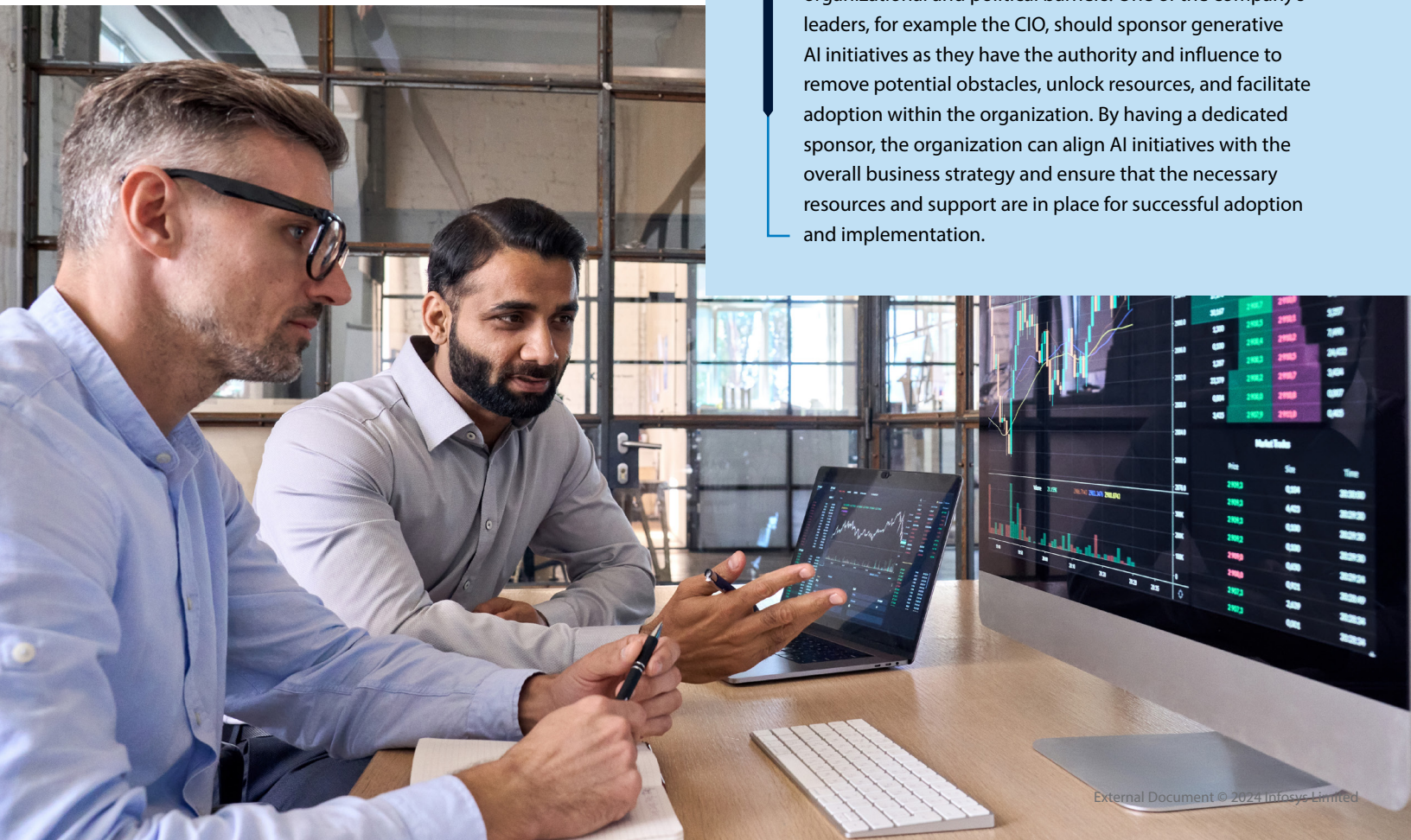
Business leaders must possess a strong comprehension of the opportunities and challenges presented by generative AI to make informed decisions regarding the company's strategy. To empower leaders to make such decisions, they should be provided with training (e.g., Harvard Business School offers a course called "Generative AI for Business Leaders"); and opportunities to experiment with generative AI. Furthermore, a clear vision for the role of generative AI within the overall business strategy is essential to ensure alignment and measurable success, which means that the leadership should have:

Clear objectives & expected results for the generative AI deployment:

This means identifying specific domains within the company where generative AI has the potential to drive innovation, improve efficiency, or enhance employees' daily work. To guarantee successful deployment of generative AI, business leaders should set SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) that match the company's overall goals, enabling progress and success measurement.

Sponsorship for generative AI initiatives:

The cross-functional nature of AI projects requires strong sponsorship to facilitate communication between the various departments involved and overcome organizational and political barriers. One of the company's leaders, for example the CIO, should sponsor generative AI initiatives as they have the authority and influence to remove potential obstacles, unlock resources, and facilitate adoption within the organization. By having a dedicated sponsor, the organization can align AI initiatives with the overall business strategy and ensure that the necessary resources and support are in place for successful adoption and implementation.



II. Manage the impacts on the organization and people

3. Consult HR and Workers' Council

Consulting with Human Resources (HR) and the Workers' Council is a crucial step, as it will directly affect employees' work life, including aspects such as jobs, skills, and workload. Anticipating and managing these impacts is therefore key to ensure a well-managed transition and a successful deployment. Moreover, promoting a transparent and proactive dialogue with the Workers' Council will allow them to better understand the concerns and expectations of the employees, and to strengthen their commitment. They have different roles to make the organization ready:

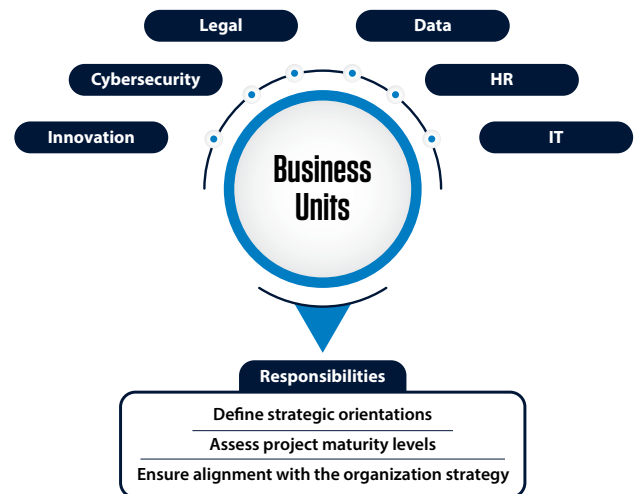
Human Resources: To address potential impacts on day-to-day activities, jobs, skills, or workload, a comprehensive job impact evaluation should be conducted by HR. This approach will lay the foundation for a robust HR strategy, tailored to the company's upcoming transformation. HR will need to familiarize themselves with the challenges and opportunities of generative AI, as it will be key to understand how it will impact employees. HR must be prepared to address matters of job security, internal role transitions, and the upskilling requirements of employees, to ensure that generative AI is both responsible and advantageous for all employees.

Workers' Council: Their involvement in the deployment is not only a legal requirement but also a strategic advantage. By representing the interests and concerns of the employees, the Workers' Council can shed light on the possible impacts of generative AI on the workforce. This collaboration improves the evaluation of AI adoption effects and helps to address any potential resistance or concerns from the employees. Involving employees in the groundwork phase of the deployment will help them feel engaged and listened to from the beginning, ensuring a smoother and more successful adoption of generative AI in the company.

4. Establish generative AI governance and internal policies

Establishing a comprehensive and multidisciplinary governance structure ensures that all relevant perspectives and expertise are considered, thereby facilitating informed decision-making and operational deployment. A well-established governance structure can help organizations navigate the complex landscape of generative AI, mitigate potential risks, and ensure alignment with the overall business strategy.

The governance committee, as illustrated below, should be composed of representatives from various departments, including IT, Data, Cybersecurity, HR, Legal, Innovation, and Business Units. The responsibilities of the governance committee encompass defining strategic orientations, assessing project maturity levels, and ensuring alignment of generative AI initiatives with the organization's overall strategic and institutional governance. The committee is also responsible for analyzing, prioritizing, and arbitrating on initiatives. In addition to its core responsibilities, the governance committee should also engage in ongoing dialogue with employees to address their potential concerns and provide support to the teams.



The AI governance committee should also establish the company's policies regarding generative AI. The AI charter should outline a code of conduct and be regularly updated to reflect the evolving landscape of generative AI, encompassing aspects such as security, compliance, intellectual property, and certifications. When establishing an internal AI charter for the utilization of generative AI, the governance committee should ensure that all internal policies align with the regulations set forth by institutions, such as the AI Act. Furthermore, the charter should incorporate policies on the ethical and responsible use of AI. A well-defined AI charter can provide a clear framework for the deployment of generative AI, ensure compliance with regulations, and promote ethical and responsible use of the technology.

III. Build skills and awareness on generative AI and ethics

5. Communicate a clear vision for generative AI

Prioritizing clear, transparent, and personalized communication will ensure a smoother adoption of this technology by all employees and help create a generative AI culture. By engaging them in the transformation process, keeping them informed about the organization's strategy regarding generative AI, and addressing their potential concerns, they are more likely to feel involved and committed to the change. This approach not only helps in building trust and alignment with the company's vision but also contributes to the development of a strong generative AI culture within the organization.

A structured approach should be followed to ensure that the communication is tailored to the recipient:

Engage managers first: The company's strategy should be communicated to managers first to equip them with knowledge of the organization's vision and potential impacts on their teams. This enables them to effectively address their teams' queries regarding possible changes. Engaging open dialogue with managers also alleviates concerns and fosters a positive environment. Internal webinars and monthly briefings can be utilized to communicate the overall strategy and summarize the latest AI-related news in the company.

Cascade communications to all employees: By articulating the company's vision through compelling storytelling, employees are more likely to develop an emotional connection to the organizational changes. For instance, communicating success stories of employees who have effectively integrated generative AI into their daily work routines could foster a sense of inclusion and promote greater acceptance.

Organize events and challenges: Employees' engagement and collaboration could be boosted by organizing events such as an AI Day with activities and forums around generative AI. These events encourage inter-departmental learning, sharing, and collaboration, while also showcasing the company's vision and objectives. To motivate employees and promote the adoption and mastery of generative AI, organizations can consider organizing challenges such as hackathons. By offering rewards for the winning teams, a healthy sense of competition can be fostered, and employees can be incentivized to explore and fully leverage the various use cases of generative AI.

6. Train everyone in the company

Offering employees training to enhance their critical thinking skills concerning AI-generated results is key for improved decision-making. This involves setting realistic expectations for AI's capabilities and limitations, as it provides a believable answer but not always the accurate one. Ensuring access to continuous training is also significant, given the technology's rapid advancements. By doing so, organizations can empower their workforce to collaborate effectively with AI and make informed decisions. Organizations should take the following approach:

Create a robust training program: A comprehensive training program should address the diverse needs from leadership to general staff, ensuring a well-rounded and informed workforce. Creating a Prompt Academy is a way to offer dedicated training programs for generative AI that cater to various groups. Key topics include generative AI basics, prompt engineering, and understanding AI limitations. The Prompt Academy is also a way to foster a learning community, which allows individuals to share their challenges and progress with their peers, improving their skills collectively. Additionally, the creation of a Prompt Library, populated by the learning community, provides a valuable resource for knowledge sharing, enabling the learners to share the best prompts with the rest of the community.

Establish a recognition program to motivate employees to become subject matter experts: Incentivizing employees to become proficient in generative AI can be achieved through a recognition program. At Infosys, early adopters of generative AI were rewarded with an "AI-first ready" badge to foster a sense of accomplishment and to highlight their positive attitude towards generative AI in their annual evaluation. Additionally, implementing an employee recognition program that highlights those who continuously learn and apply generative AI, will boost motivation, engagement, and drive innovation.

Create a Generative AI Champion Network: These SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) form a community of AI enthusiasts who possess a deep understanding of generative AI. The network will provide them with a platform for collaboration, continuous learning, and knowledge exchange, thereby promoting a culture of innovation and expertise within the organization. Members of this group should be nominated to ensure that it is diverse and multidisciplinary. They will participate in the organization's upskilling by cascading their knowledge to their teams and being a trusted source of information and guidance.



7. Raise employees' awareness regarding generative AI ethics and responsible AI

Generative AI can often be perceived as a magical “black box” with answers to everything. However, Generative AI is subject to ethical challenges such as lack of explainability, environmental impact, workforce consequences, biases, intellectual property rights issues, etc. For instance, an employee could upload sensitive data into a generative AI for its usage, which could lead to a data breach. Organizations thus must educate employees about the ethical challenges and responsible usage of generative AI. By doing so, companies can mitigate potential ethical and societal risks associated with AI usage, safeguarding their reputation in the event of errors, ethical issues, or data breaches. Furthermore, promoting responsible innovation and nurturing trust and acceptance of AI among employees encourages sustainable and responsible practices. More than just educating employees, the integration of responsible AI principles and ethical considerations should be a significant part of all measures taken to facilitate the adoption and deployment of generative AI, rather than being treated as an isolated practice.

To promote ethical and responsible generative AI usage, the following key aspects should be considered :

Continuous training and communication: Foster ongoing education and awareness about generative AI ethics. Conduct workshops, webinars, and training sessions to keep employees informed. (e.g., Weekly Newsletters on Responsible AI, Responsible AI Hackathon to foster learning through challenges)

Organizational Commitment: Establish a clear commitment to ethical AI, from the company's policies to the initiatives launched. (e.g., Sponsor's commitment to responsible AI usage, getting the Fairly Trained AI Certification that attest the ethical practices in the AI model training of the company to guarantee the company's commitment)

Integration of ethics into all generative AI initiatives: Emphasize the significance of responsible AI principles and ensure their integration throughout the entire project lifecycle for all generative AI initiatives (e.g., conduct a responsible AI assessment for every generative AI initiative to ensure it is compliant with the internal policies)

Accountability: Hold employees and leaders accountable for adhering to ethical principles in generative AI practices. (e.g., conduct internal audits to confirm alignment with the policies and the regulations)

IV. Start small before scaling

Incorporating the previously mentioned best practices enables the company and its employees to establish a strong foundation for the successful implementation of generative AI initiatives. However, it is advisable to launch small scale initiatives first to gather additional insights and make any necessary adjustments before proceeding with a full-scale launch.

8. Test & learn through simple use cases first

Most businesses have identified business use cases that could offer productivity benefits, increased efficiency, and/or better user experience, by implementing generative AI. When deploying generative AI within a company, it is essential to start with small-scale initiatives. The test & learn phase involves experimenting with various use cases, thereby gathering valuable data, user feedback, and identifying potential opportunities or challenges. By adopting this method, the company can gain a better understanding of the implications for employees and refine and optimize the various use cases before a full-scale deployment. This not only helps in mitigating risks by testing the deployment in a controlled environment but also ensures a successful adoption of AI within the organization.

During this phase, the organization can set up an AI experts' team, who will be responsible for examining and testing use cases, according to specific business needs. This approach offers the opportunity to assess the potential benefits of the technology for the organization, gather valuable feedback from users and identify potential opportunities or problems. In this way, the implications for employees are better understood, and the various use cases can be refined and optimized before wider implementation.

For instance, the AI experts' team could test the use case of enhancing the job advertisement process by building a model for tailored job adverts generation for the recruitment team. By fine-tuning an open-source model with the organization's specific data, a customized model can be developed to create contextualized and personalized job advertisements, employing a particular tone or vocabulary based on the target audience and distribution channel for HR managers. This use case can be tested by the HR team and refined according to their feedback on the model.



Conclusion

Generative AI presents a transformative opportunity, but its success hinges on human readiness. This journey is not a technological sprint, but a collaborative marathon. Engage all stakeholders, from the initial assessment to final deployment, to foster a culture of understanding and ownership. Remember, people are more than just users of AI – their insights and concerns are crucial. By prioritizing human factors and investing in mindset shifts, you will ensure a smooth integration that empowers your workforce to leverage the full potential of generative AI.

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*** Some formulations of this Point of View were assisted by Mistral AI.**

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