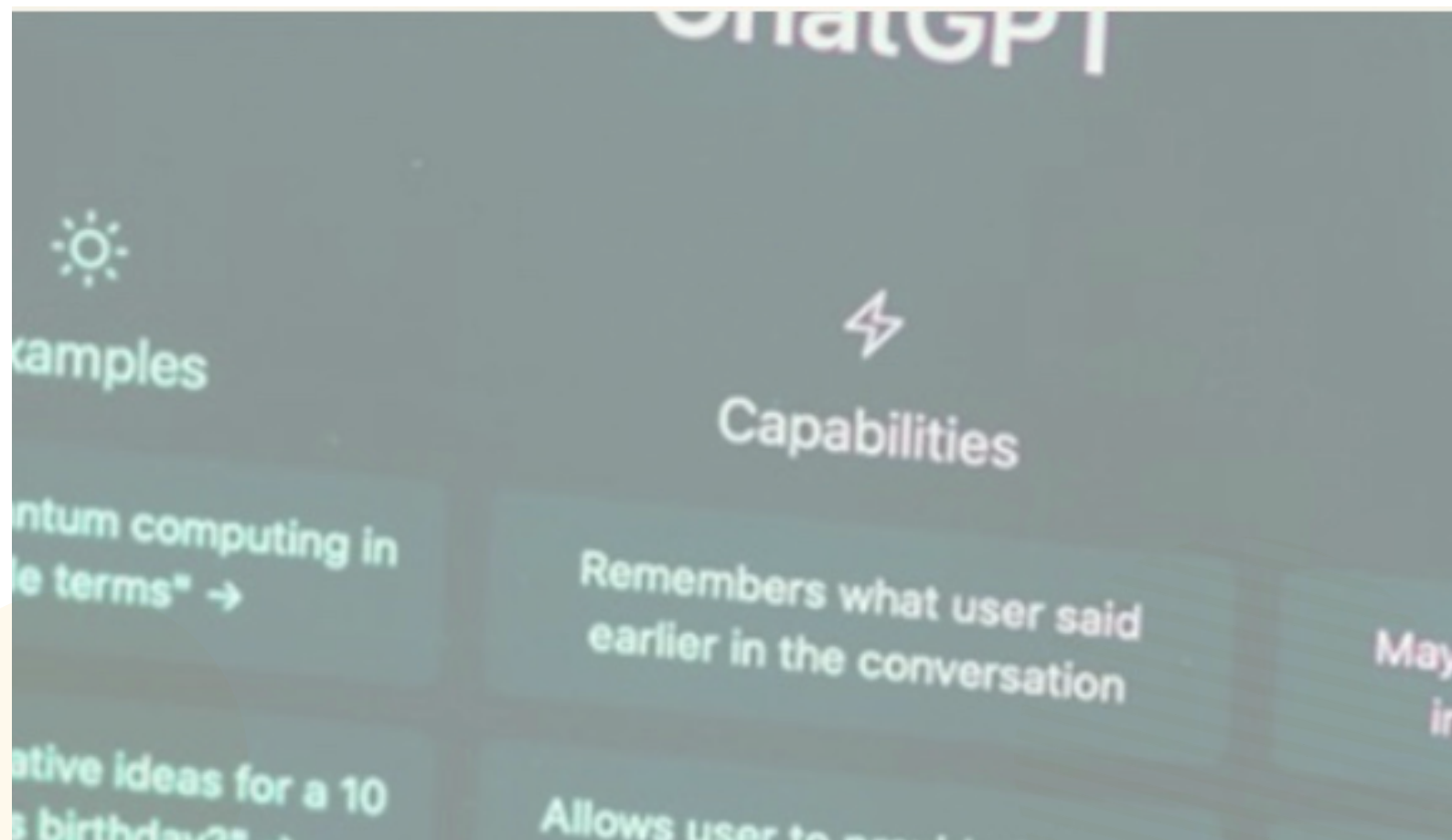


Ready or Not, It's Here: AI Adoption at Work

What thousands of U.S. workers reveal about AI adoption in the workplace right now

idealis.

Dr. Sumona De Graaf
Founder & CEO
idealis.



idealis' research combines behavioral science, organizational psychology, and large-scale data to provide cultural insights for businesses in moments of change and transformation. The research is powered by CivicScience, a firm who has built the largest real-time database that captures human sentiment at work and in the world.

Inside This Media Kit.

NEW RESEARCH: U.S. workers are adopting GenAI faster than their employers are guiding them. Adoption has climbed to 62%, up 16 points in a year, while only 40% of workers report clear guidelines for using it.

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Adoption, concern, the leadership gap, and the ways organizational guardrails payoff

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Organizational Psychologist, Founder & CEO, idealis.

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Executive Summary.

Our latest research, **Ready or Not, It's Here: AI Adoption at Work** examines how U.S. workers are adopting generative AI, and reveals a workforce moving faster than its leaders:

- Adoption has moved from experiment to habit. 62% of workers now use GenAI professionally, up 16 points in a year, yet only 40% say their company has clear guidelines for using it.
- The more people use AI, the more anxious they become. 72% of AI users worry about their own job security, compared with 46% of those who don't use it yet.
- Leaders are already inside the technology, with 76% using GenAI versus 61% of non-leaders, which makes clear guidelines an important leadership choice. Where guidelines exist, engagement and skill development rise sharply.

Based on responses from **up to 75,000 U.S. workers**, the research offers a current read on how AI is reshaping the everyday experience of work, and what it means for leadership, culture, and decision-making today.

Why this matters for leaders:

AI doesn't invent an organization's problems, and it won't solve them on its own. It amplifies whatever is already there. Where trust, transparency, or clear expectations are thin, AI surfaces those fault lines first. Where the foundation is strong, it reveals that too.

That makes AI adoption a leadership challenge as much as a technical one. The organizations that pair adoption with clear standards are the ones building the trust and capability to carry their people through the change.

About the report:

This report focuses on U.S. workers and examines:

- How GenAI adoption has shifted over the past year
- Where concern and comfort diverge across the workforce
- How leaders, industries, and demographic groups differ in adoption

The research tracks GenAI adoption and concern across leadership levels, industries, education, age, and demographic groups, alongside the guidelines and cultural conditions that shape how organizations adopt AI.

Key Findings.

Findings are based on responses from up to 75,000 U.S. workers who represent the current workforce, powered by CivicScience.

A SURPRISING INSIGHT: The workers closest to AI are the most anxious about it. 72% of AI users worry about their job security, compared with just 46% of workers who don't yet use it.

Adoption and Concern

Adoption has climbed while concern has stayed high.

- 62% of workers now use GenAI professionally, up from 46% a year ago, with 38% using it multiple times a week.
- 78% remain concerned about AI's impact on jobs, essentially unchanged from last year.

The Leadership Gap

Leaders are adopting AI faster than the people they manage.

- 76% of leaders use GenAI at work, compared with 61% of non-leaders, and they report greater comfort using it (54% versus 37%).

The Guardrails Gap

Adoption is outrunning the guidance meant to govern it.

- Only 40% of workers say their company has clear GenAI usage guidelines in place.

Where clear guidelines exist, the payoff shows up quickly in engagement and learning.

- Employees with clear guidelines report higher engagement (66% versus 54%) and far greater access to skill development (80% versus 56%).

The gap between fast adoption and slow guidance is where leadership attention is needed most.

Who Is Adopting AI

Adoption varies widely across industries and demographic groups.

- Financial services (86%), education (85%), information and professional services (75%), and health services (69%) lead all industries in adoption.
- Hispanic/Latino (76%), Black (83%), and Asian (83%) workers use AI at work at higher rates than white workers (55%), and those with advanced degrees use it less than those without a college degree.

About the Report.

"Ready or Not, It's Here: AI Adoption at Work" is the July 2026 edition of Pulse of the Workforce. This report examines how GenAI is reshaping the everyday experience of work across industries, roles, and levels of seniority. The research was conducted in partnership with CivicScience using its national survey platform.

This report is based on the responses of over 15,000 U.S. workers over the past several months and the respondent sample is representative of the U.S. Labor Statistics demographics.

What We Mean by "AI"

When we refer to "AI" in this report, we mean generative AI (GenAI) tools that create content and insights in real time, such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, and Claude. This is distinct from AI in its broader forms, like predictive analytics and automation. The report examines:

- How GenAI adoption has changed over the past year
- Where workers feel concern, comfort, and pressure
- How adoption differs by leadership level, industry, and demographics

The findings focus on how leaders and teams are experiencing GenAI in day-to-day work, not AI in every form. Where the report compares groups, it looks at differences by leadership level, industry, education, age, and race.

Research Scope and Methodology

The findings in this report are based on responses from up to 75,000 U.S. workers, weighted to reflect the U.S. labor force. This edition is a follow-up wave of idealis's 2025 study on workplace AI adoption, with responses collected over the last several months.

The research was conducted in partnership with CivicScience, using its national survey platform to collect responses. The survey explored GenAI adoption and frequency of use, concern about AI's impact on jobs, comfort and trust in AI, the presence of clear usage guidelines, and how these vary across the workforce.

About Dr. Sumona De Graaf.

Dr. Sumona De Graaf is the Founder and CEO of **idealis.**, a research-backed leadership advisory firm focused on helping organizations perform at their best without losing sight of their humanity.

Prior to founding idealis., Dr. De Graaf served as Chief Human Resources Officer of a Fortune 300 company in the waste and environmental services industry, where she was responsible for the workforce experience of more than 40,000 employees, leading human capital strategy through periods of significant technological and organizational change.

As CHRO, Dr. De Graaf led major workforce transitions where new technology, culture, and performance were inseparable, giving her firsthand insight into how leadership decisions land on people in moments of change. Her work required balancing operational continuity with the dignity, engagement, and trust of employees at scale, especially as new tools and technology reshaped how work got done.

Dr. De Graaf is an organizational psychologist specializing in human motivation and performance. Earlier in her career, she held leadership roles at **ghSMART**, **Bloomberg LP**, **American Express**, and **Goldman Sachs**, working with leaders across industries to navigate growth, transformation, and complexity.

Today, through idealis., Dr. De Graaf advises founders, boards, investors, and executive teams on leadership, organizational culture, workforce transitions, and the human impact of strategic decisions.

She resides in **Amsterdam, The Netherlands**, with her husband, two children, and Old English Sheepdog.

Media Assets.

Dr. Sumona De Graaf
Founder & CEO, idealis.



High-resolution images
available upon request.



Short Media Bio

Dr. Sumona De Graaf is the Founder and CEO of idealis., a research-backed leadership advisory firm focused on organizational performance and culture. Prior to founding idealis., she served as Chief Human Resources Officer of a Fortune 300 company in the waste and environmental services industry, where she was responsible for the workforce experience of more than 40,000 employees.

In that role, Dr. De Graaf led human capital strategy through periods of significant technological and organizational change. She holds a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology and has held leadership roles at ghSMART, Bloomberg LP, American Express, and Goldman Sachs. She advises executives, boards, and investors on leadership, organizational culture, and workforce transitions.

Media Contact.

For press inquiries, interview requests, or access to additional materials related to Ready or Not, It's Here: AI Adoption at Work, please contact:

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Press Information.

Expert Availability

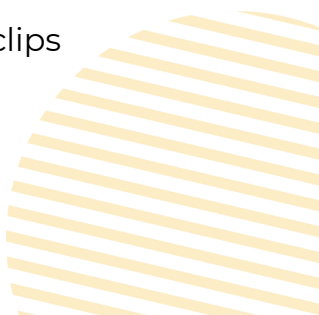
Dr. Sumona De Graaf is available for:

- Media interviews (print, broadcast, digital)
- Podcast appearances, panel discussions, and keynote conversations

Topics include:

- Why guidelines, not adoption, are the real leadership gap in AI right now
- What the data reveals about trust, leadership, and organizational culture
- Why leaders and rising talent are adopting AI faster than everyone else
- How to frame AI as augmented intelligence rather than a threat to job security

Additional Materials Available Upon Request

- Data highlights and charts
 - Full research report (PDF)
 - Data highlights and statistical charts (high-resolution)
 - Industry-specific data breakdowns (retail, healthcare, manufacturing, etc.)
 - One-page fact sheet for quick reference
 - Methodology appendix
 - Dr. De Graaf headshots (high-resolution)
 - Short video commentary clips
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About id

All statistics from this report may be cited with attribution to "idealis. Ready or Not: AI Adoption at Work, 2026" or "idealis. Pulse of the U.S. Workforce."
For charts and data visualizations, please credit "idealis. Advisory"

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About id

idealis. is a research-backed leadership advisory firm that helps organizations navigate inflection points with clarity, trust, and a deep belief that high performance and high humanity are inextricably linked. Grounded in real-time workforce data and deep operating experience, idealis. partners with leaders to align strategy and culture where decisions meet lived experience.