

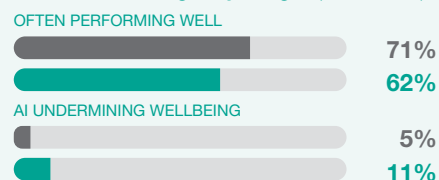
THE AI COMPLICATION

47% of Australian workers now regularly use AI in their roles (380 of 811). This page shows how it is impacting their performance and wellbeing (colored bars) compared to those rarely using AI (the grey bars) along the Change Fatigue Continuum. Each person is placed in the one continuum group that best describes their current experience.

FEELING WELL

Performing well as they adapt to the changes and feel hopeful about the future.

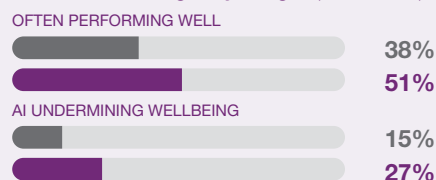
36% of workers rarely using AI (n=154 of 431)
19% of workers regularly using AI (n=74 of 380)



FATIGUING

Tightening their grip to keep up, but starting to worry the changes will not be successful.

20% of workers rarely using AI (n=87 of 431)
18% of workers regularly using AI (n=70 of 380)



QUIETLY CRACKING

Holding it together on the outside while hiding they are falling apart on the inside.

13% of workers rarely using AI (n=54 of 431)
13% of workers regularly using AI (n=51 of 380)



BURNING OUT

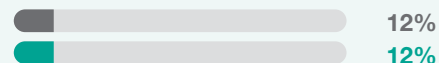
Exhausted and pulling away as they become convinced the changes aren't working.

32% of workers rarely using AI (n=136 of 431)
49% of workers regularly using AI (n=185 of 380)



WHAT THEY'RE THINKING

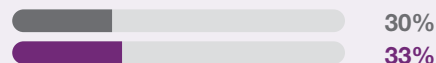
DOUBTING THEMSELVES



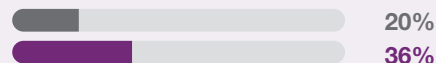
WORRIED ABOUT LOSING JOB TO AI



DOUBTING THEMSELVES



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DOUBTING THEMSELVES

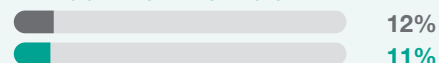


WORRIED ABOUT LOSING JOB TO AI



WHAT THEY'RE FEELING

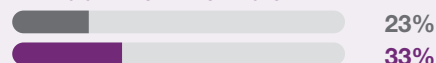
FEELING GRIEF FOR THE CHANGES



FEELING HOPEFUL



FEELING GRIEF FOR THE CHANGES



FEELING HOPEFUL



FEELING GRIEF FOR THE CHANGES



FEELING HOPEFUL



FEELING GRIEF FOR THE CHANGES



FEELING HOPEFUL



WHAT THEY'RE DOING

USING THEIR STRENGTHS



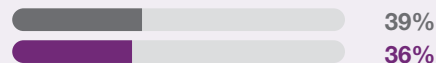
ISOLATING THEMSELVES



USING THEIR STRENGTHS



ISOLATING THEMSELVES



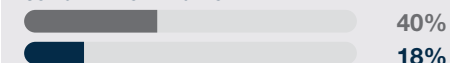
USING THEIR STRENGTHS



ISOLATING THEMSELVES



USING THEIR STRENGTHS



ISOLATING THEMSELVES



RESEARCH INSIGHTS

- **REGULAR AI USE, UNDERMINES WELLBEING:** Nearly half of Australian workers (47%) now regularly use AI in their roles. Compared with those rarely using it, they are nearly half as likely to be *Feeling Well* through change (19% vs 36%) and more likely to be *Burning Out* (49% vs 32%).
- **THE DOUBT IS PERSONAL:** Among workers *Burning Out*, regular AI users doubt themselves more than rare users (74% vs 60%), and their fear of losing their job to AI runs more than three times higher (74% vs 21%).
- **HOPE RISES, SO DOES GRIEF:** At every stage, regular AI users report more hope than rare users, even while *Burning Out* (32% vs 21%). But grief is heavier too: 79% of regular users who are *Burning Out* feel grief for what the changes are costing, versus 53% of rare users.
- **STRENGTHS SLIP FROM VIEW:** Even while *Feeling Well*, regular AI users are already a little less clear on their strengths than rare users (76% vs 83%). By the time they're *Burning Out*, that gap has nearly tripled: 18% versus 40%.
- **THEY PULL AWAY, JUST WHEN IT MATTERS:** Among workers *Burning Out*, 85% of regular AI users cut themselves off when struggling at least sometimes, versus 75% of rare users, withdrawing

RECOMMENDATIONS

Those regularly using AI at work report their strengths are going idle, their confidence is draining, and their connections with colleagues is being cut off. This is because using AI tends to disrupt people's state of flow, that feeling of being "in the zone" and deeply engaged in their work.

However, if we can find ways to use people's strengths wisely and well as they actively collaborate with AI tools, studies suggest they can stay just as engaged in the work as if they'd done it alone.

We recommend workplaces encourage each person to build their own AI Strengths Map:

- **FIND THE STRENGTHS:** Divide a page into three columns, their regular tasks and the required skills in the middle, their strengths on the left, AI's strengths on the right.
- **ALIGN THE STRENGTHS:** Draw a line from each task to the strengths involved in doing it well, theirs, AI's, or both, based on what matters most: building human capability, leveraging AI's efficiency, strengthening team relationships, or any other outcome you value.

How are you encouraging people to use their strengths wisely and well with AI?

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The Change Lab Workplace Survey was first conducted in December 2019 with 1,007 randomly selected Australian workers, based on research items developed by Dr. Peggy Kern (University of Melbourne) to understand the impact of navigating change on people's wellbeing.

In 2020 and 2021, as the global pandemic raged, we expanded the survey questions with the assistance of Dr. Mandy O'Neill (George Mason University) and Dr. Lindsey Godwin (Champlain College) to understand the impact of leadership behaviors and systemic changes. Data from more than 3,750 workers in Australia and the United States was gathered to understand how leaders and teams might thrive, amid unprecedented workplace disruption and uncertainty.

In 2022 and 2023, we expanded the questions to include the frequency and impact of psychosocial hazards, responding to emerging workplace mental health legislation. In July 2025, we added questions to explore how workers were navigating the supercycle of change, gathering data from 1,004 randomly selected, full-time Australian workers.

Now in July 2026, we returned with new questions to explore how AI is reshaping the way people work, lead and change. We worked with an independent research agency to gather data from 811 randomly selected, full-time, Australian workers who included:

GENDER	
Male	414
Female	397
AGE	
18-24	57
25-34	176
35-44	204
45-54	188
55-64	138
65+	48
ETHNICITY	
White/Caucasian	594
Asian	145
Indigenous	11
Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial	9
People of Color	41
Prefer not to answer	11

WORKPLACE	
Sole Operator	56
Not For Profit	60
Government Funded	121
Privately Funded	361
Publicly Listed	112
Other	101
RESPONSIBILITIES	
Team Member	431
Leader	303
CEO/Owner	77
Industries were representative of Australian workplaces including Agriculture, Banking & Finance, Community & Social Services, Construction, Education, Government & Public Administration, Healthcare & Medical, Technology & Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Mining, Retail, Science, Tourism, and Transportation & Warehousing.	

WANT MORE?



FREE – HEART OF CHANGE SURVEY TOOL

You've just read about the four stages of change fatigue. This free five-minute survey shows you which one your team is closer to right now. It's scored across the five HEART factors, and hands you a personalized report with small, practical next steps.

[Click here to take the survey.](#)



THE NERVOUS SYSTEM ADVANTAGE TOOLBOX

Why do people say "I'm fine" when they're anything but? This toolbox decodes what's happening in the body before words catch up, then hands your people 10 body-based tools to use in meetings, hard conversations, on the witness stand. Five brain-based tools help when trust is hardest to find. [Click here to get the toolbox.](#)



THE HEART OF CHANGE TOOLBOX

Change brings fear, uncertainty, and doubt with it. This toolbox puts 75 evidence-based tools in your people's hands, at the Me, We, and Us levels, so they can stay curious instead of resistant when the changes keep stacking up. [Click here to get your tools.](#)



LEADING HEART OF CHANGE MASTERCLASS

Ready to help others navigate change with HEART, at your own pace? This self-paced masterclass walks you through the assessment tools, conversation templates, and evidence-based practices behind this report, at the Me, We, and Us levels, so you can put them to work with your team or clients. [Click here to learn more.](#)