

2026 SNAPSHOT

AI Readiness Assessment

What 197 structured assessments reveal about how professionals actually relate to AI.

197
structured assessments completed

10
scored dimensions, three readiness layers

65.5%
of respondents are vulnerable adopters.

INSTRUMENT
AI Readiness Assessment (ARA)

COHORT
73% Life sciences

PERIOD
January – March 2026

LEAD AI,
DON'T CHASE IT.

FROM THE FOUNDERS

Between Interest and Action

Most organizations assume their workforce falls into two groups when it comes to AI: those who use it and those who resist it. Yet the question we heard most from leaders was one no dashboard could answer: where are our people, really? Satisfaction scores and login rates showed how programs felt, but they couldn't show whether anything had changed.

So we built the AI Readiness Assessment to measure what sits underneath adoption, across three layers: how people think about AI (Mindset), what they actually do with it (Practice), and whether their organizations make room for them to grow (Environment). Across 197 assessments in 2026, from a cohort of predominantly pharma and life sciences professionals, a third group emerged, sitting between resisters and early adopters. We call them vulnerable adopters.

vulnerable adopter *ˈvʌl-nər-ə-bəl əˈdap-tər/ noun*

An experienced professional who believes AI is relevant to their work and wants to use it, but is not yet practicing consistently; caught between interest and action. Typically classified as Stage 2: Intentional Learner on the AI Readiness Spectrum.

"65.5% of respondents in the 2026 AI Readiness Assessment were vulnerable adopters."

COINED BY KAINDLY, 2026.

That finding is encouraging. Most respondents are capable and motivated, ready to move but missing the structure, permission, and confidence to take the next step. That is a solvable problem. We hope these findings help you see your workforce more clearly and design support that meets people where they actually are.



Barbara Salami, MBA
CEO & Co-Founder



Leanna Baker Williams, PharmD, MS
COO & Co-Founder

Who should read this: Chief Human Resources Officers, L&D leaders, organizational strategists, workforce development funders, and anyone responsible for AI adoption programs who wants to move beyond self-reported survey data to behavioral measurement.

Readiness at a Glance

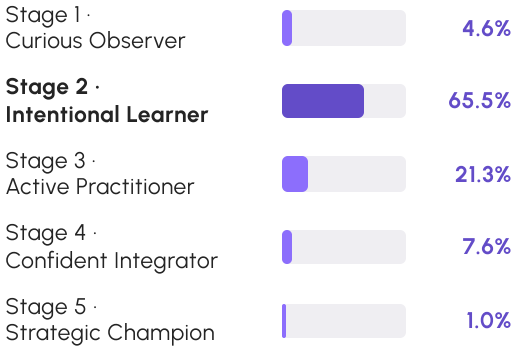
Strategic Thinking Gap
68%
of Stage 2 respondents held back by D10

Stage 2 Concentration
65.5%
Intentional Learner · the vulnerable adopter

Director-Level & Above
49%
incl. 7% C-Suite

Blocked Potential
10.7%
high capability, low support

Stage Distribution · n=197



65.5% are Stage 2: Intentional Learners. They believe AI is relevant but are not yet practicing consistently. This is the vulnerable adopter: experienced professionals caught between interest and action.

Three-Layer Scores · mean of 5

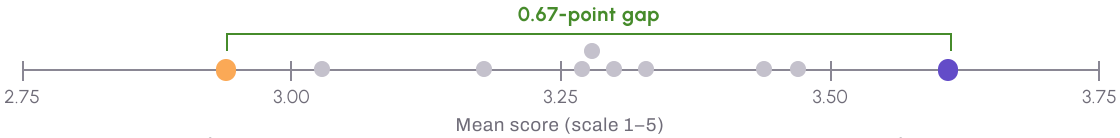


Environment scores slightly below both individual layers.

Mindset and Practice scores are strongly correlated (r = 0.79); 84% of respondents are aligned within half a point.

The Bookends of the Adoption Journey

The assessment was scored across 10 dimensions. The widest gap in the entire assessment exists between the two dimensions that bookend the adoption journey: Relevance Belief (D2) and Self-Perception & Identity (D7).



2.94 **D7 Self-Perception — lowest.** "I am someone who uses AI" is the most common growth edge (52 of 197).

3.61 **D2 Relevance Belief — highest.** The most common strength identified (66 of 197).

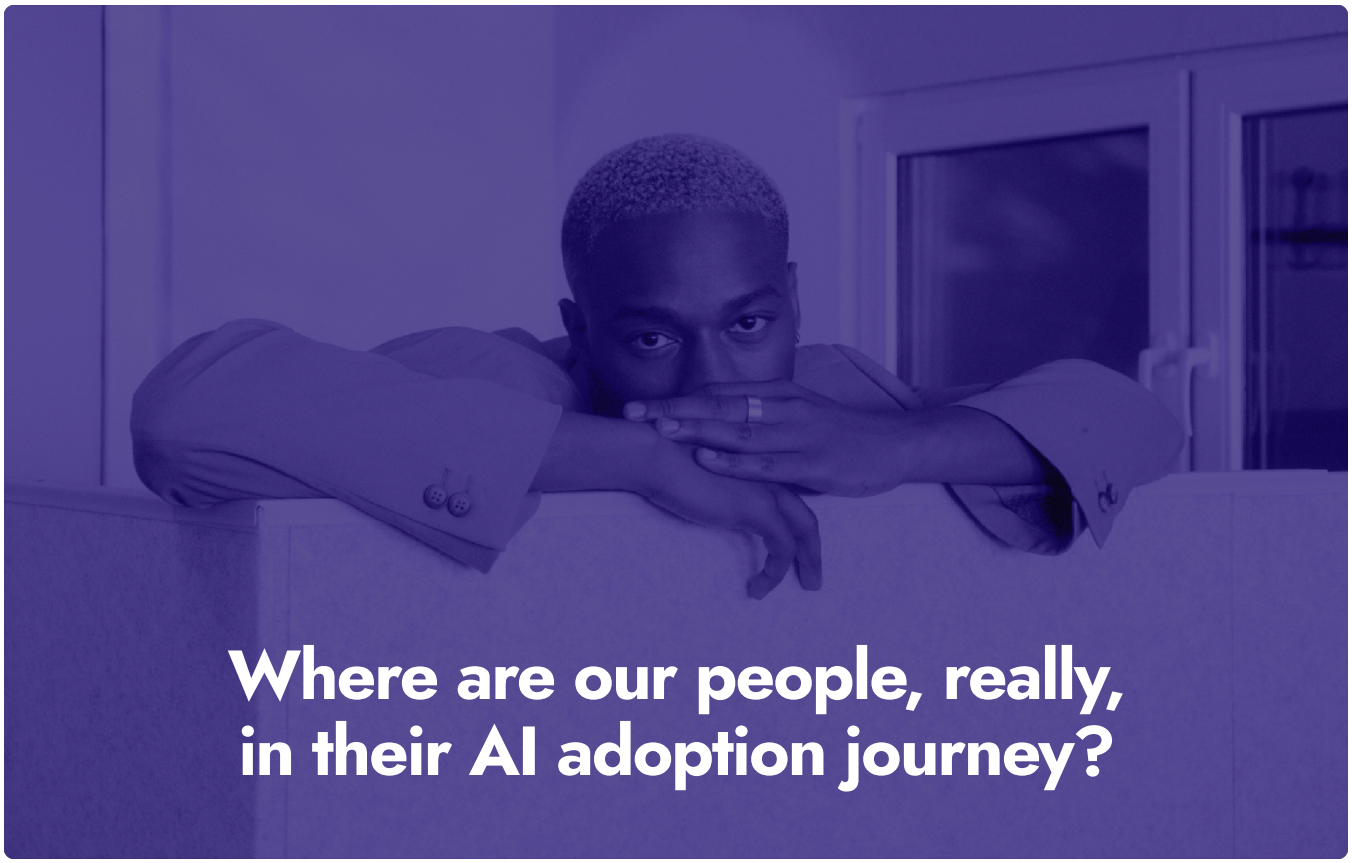
Gray dots show the other eight dimensions.

CONTEXT

The AI Adoption Measurement Gap

Organizations invest heavily in AI tools and training programs. But when asked how they measure whether those investments are working, many rely on two proxies: tool login rates and employee self-assessments. Neither captures readiness. Login frequency does not reveal whether someone uses AI effectively, and self-reported confidence surveys reflect how people feel about AI, not what they do with it.

The result is a measurement gap. Leaders know AI matters. Employees say they want training. Yet most organizations cannot answer a fundamental question:



KAINDLY developed the AI Readiness Assessment to close that gap. Rather than asking professionals whether they feel ready for AI, the ARA measures readiness across three interconnected layers — Mindset, Practice, and Environment — producing a multidimensional profile that captures what people think about AI, what they do with it, and whether their organizational conditions support or constrain their development.

The patterns in this data may have implications beyond life sciences. They illuminate how experienced professionals across knowledge-intensive industries navigate the gap between AI interest and AI practice and what organizations can do about it.

Study Design: From Assessment to Readiness Profile

The ARA uses scenario-based questions that ask respondents to choose what they would actually do, not what they believe they should do.

1 PARTICIPANTS ENROLLMENT

n = 197

professionals completed the AI Readiness Assessment (ARA) in 2026

2 ASSESSMENT DATA COLLECTION

10 scored dimensions · 3 layers

Completion time: 15–25 minutes

SEE FIGURE 1

3 REVIEW & SCORING

Responses reviewed by 2 reviewers

Dimension scores calculated per respondent

4 QUADRANT ANALYSIS

Capability × environmental support → 4 profiles

SEE FIGURE 2

5 STAGE PLACEMENT CLASSIFICATION

Five-Stage AI Readiness Spectrum

Placed by three Practice anchors: D5 Trust Calibration, D6 Behavioral Patterns, D10 Strategic Thinking

1. Curious Observer
2. Intentional Learner
3. Active Practitioner
4. Confident Integrator
5. Strategic Champion

6 DELIVERABLE REPORTING

Each respondent received a personalized 15-page AI Readiness Report

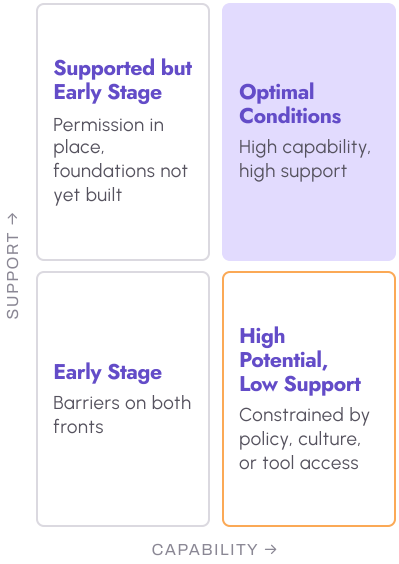
FIGURE 1 THREE MEASUREMENT LAYERS

Mindset
D1, D2, D3, D7, D8
How professionals perceive AI, themselves in relation to it, and their capacity to develop fluency.

Practice
D4, D5, D6, D9, D10
What professionals actually do with AI through observable behavioral patterns.

Environment
Organizational conditions that enable or constrain adoption: tool access, policy clarity, social permission

FIGURE 2 QUADRANT ANALYSIS



SAMPLE COMPOSITION

Senior Professionals Across the Life Sciences Value Chain

197 completed assessments were administered pre-course to a cohort enrolled in a structured AI training program during 2026. The sample is not nationally representative; it reflects professionals in knowledge-intensive roles, predominantly in regulated industries, who self-selected into an AI learning program.

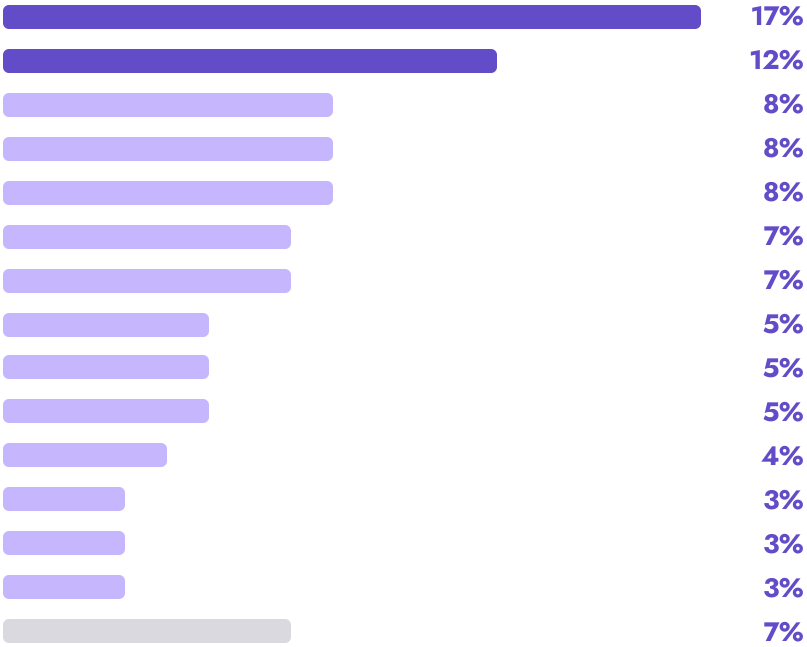
197 respondents

14 functions, plus Other

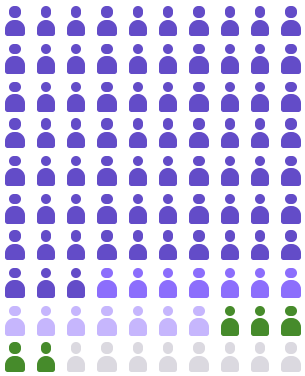
9 industries, plus Other

49% Director and above

FUNCTION



INDUSTRY · EACH FIGURE = 1%



- **73%** Pharma / Biotech / Life Sciences
- **7%** Consulting / Professional Services
- **7%** Medical Devices
- **6%** Healthcare Providers
- **8%** Other

SENIORITY

7%	C-Suite
4%	VP / SVP
11%	Sr Dir / Exec Dir
28%	Assoc Dir / Director
29%	Manager / Sr Manager
9%	Analyst / Coordinator

49% Director and above

Remaining 13% selected Other / Prefer not to say.

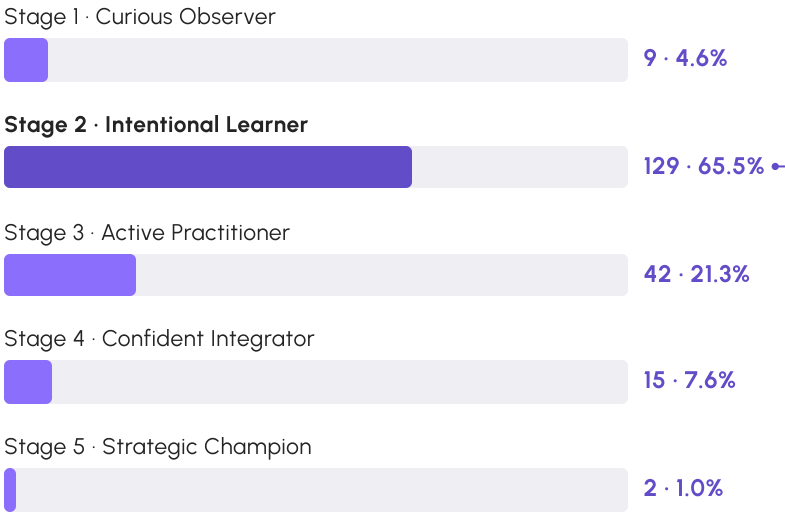
Their functions span the full drug development and commercialization lifecycle, from clinical trials to market access.

FINDING 1

The Stage 2 Concentration

Two-thirds of respondents (65.5%) are classified as **Stage 2: Intentional Learner**. They have moved past casual awareness. They believe AI is relevant to their work. They want to learn. But they are not yet practicing consistently enough to advance.

Figure 3. Distribution of respondents across the Five-Stage AI Readiness Spectrum (n = 197).



The exception: VP/SVP respondents (n = 7), with 86% at Stage 3 or above.

This difference does not appear attributable to training exposure. One plausible explanation is that D10, Strategic Thinking, the anchor most associated with Stage 2 classification, measures a competency VP/SVP-level professionals may already have developed through their roles: connecting capability to business outcomes. With a small subgroup, this should be read as directional.

THE PATTERN HOLDS ACROSS LEVELS

75% of Manager / Sr Manager are Stage 2 (n = 57)

57% of Sr Director / Exec Director are Stage 2 (n = 21)

64% of Associate Director / Director are Stage 2 (n = 55)

64% of C-Suite are Stage 2 (n = 14)

69% of pharma/biotech respondents are Stage 2 (n = 144), vs 55% non-pharma (n = 53); may reflect regulatory caution and compliance culture

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

If your workforce looks anything like this sample, the majority of your people are not resistant to AI. They are stuck at the threshold of practice. Awareness campaigns and tool rollouts will not move them. They need structured, low-stakes opportunities to practice — not more information about why AI matters. They already know why it matters. They need help crossing from intention to action.

FINDING 2

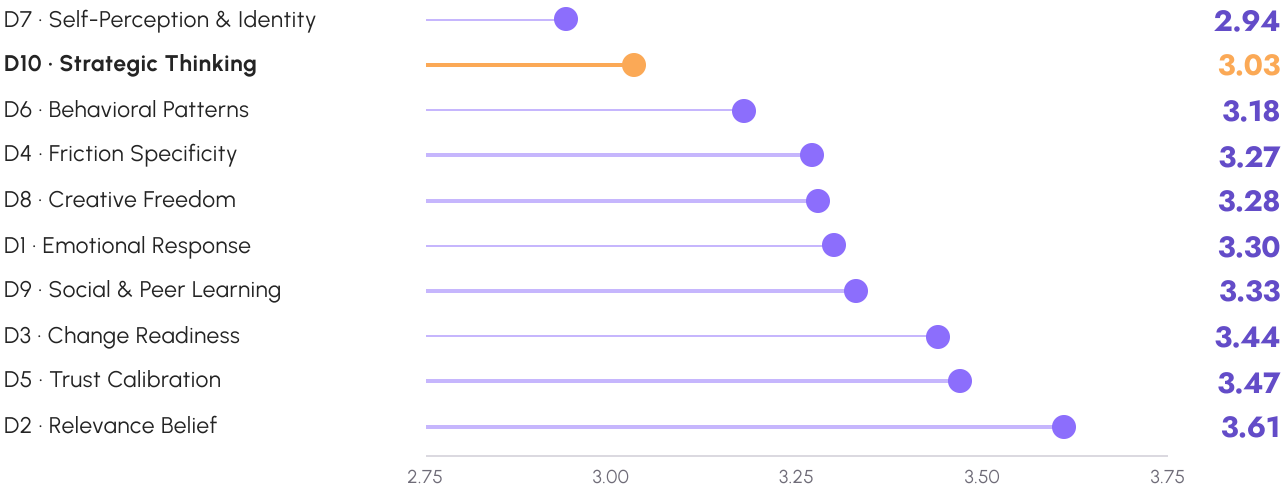
Strategic Thinking Is the Bottleneck

Strategic Thinking (D10) measures whether a professional can connect AI capabilities to business outcomes. It is the anchor most often holding Stage 2 respondents back.

Figure 4. Lowest-scoring staging anchor among Stage 2 respondents (n = 129).



Figure 5. Mean scores by dimension, all respondents (n = 197; scale 1–5).



Emotional response, change readiness, and trust calibration all score higher than strategic thinking.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

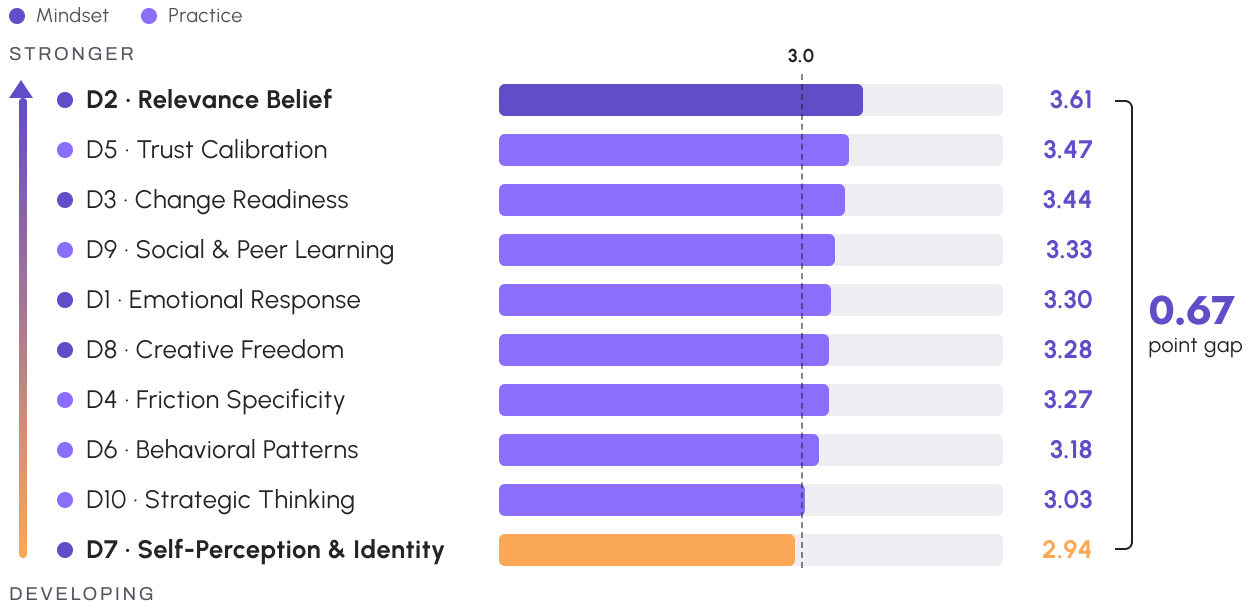
Training that focuses on tool features and prompting techniques may improve habits but will not address the strategic thinking gap. To move the Stage 2 population, organizations need learning experiences that connect AI capabilities to specific business problems, role-level decisions, and measurable outcomes.

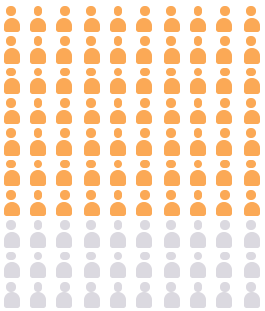
FINDING 3

The Identity Gap

The widest gap in the entire assessment exists between the two dimensions that bookend the adoption journey: **Relevance Belief (D2)** and **Self-Perception & Identity (D7)**.

Figure 6. Mean scores across all 10 dimensions (n = 197; scale 1–5).





70%

score 3.0 or below on D7.

52 of 197 named it their top growth edge.

The highest- and lowest-scoring dimensions are both Mindset. Respondents believe AI is relevant to their work but **do not yet see themselves as capable AI users.**

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Identity shifts through experience, social proof, and progressive mastery. The most effective intervention is a structured experience that lets professionals say 'I did that with AI' often enough that it becomes part of how they see themselves.

FINDING 4

Blocked Potential

21 respondents (11%) show strong individual capability but low environmental support.

Figure 7. Quadrant distribution (n = 197).

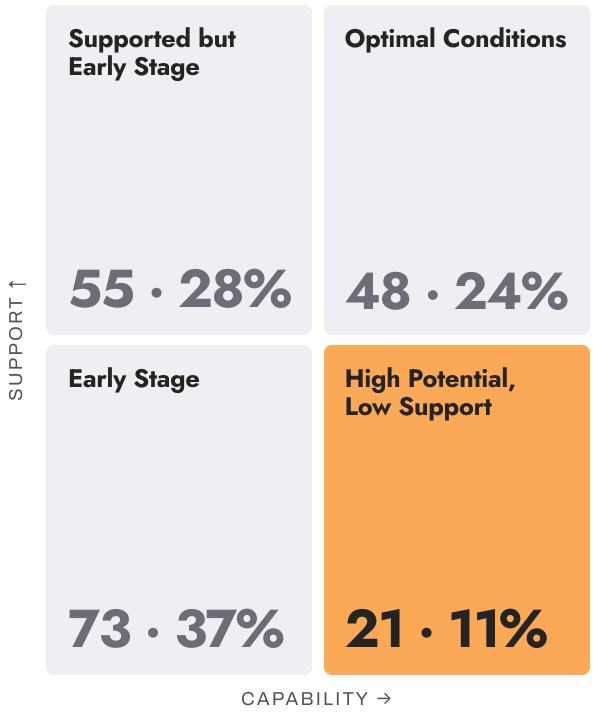
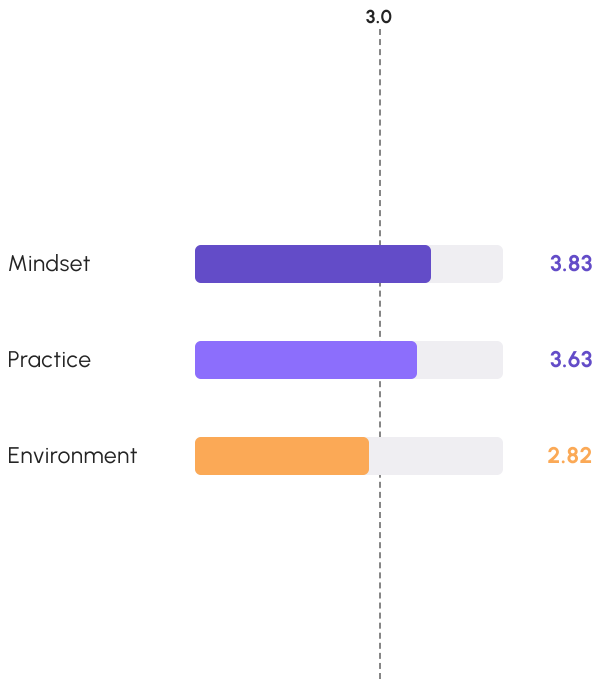


Figure 8. Mean layer scores within High Potential, Low Support (n = 21).



Across the full sample, pharma/biotech respondents score slightly lower on Environment (3.12) than non-pharma respondents (3.34).

EARLY SIGNAL · N = 2 · DIRECTIONAL ONLY

Stage scores may drop as understanding grows.

Participant A · Stage 3 → 2 Creative Freedom **+1.00** Trust Calibration **−0.67** Self-Perception **−0.33**

Participant B · Stage 4 → 3 Friction Specificity **+0.67** Peer Learning **+0.67** Relevance Belief **−1.00**
Environment **3.68 → 3.30**

Both participants completed the ARA before and after a four-week program. One possible reading is that increased knowledge produced more critical self-assessment. A larger pre/post sample is needed to test this.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

For high-potential professionals in low-support environments, the next step is organizational: clearer policies, visible leadership endorsement, tool provisioning, and performance signals. Separately, if you evaluate AI training by post-program confidence alone, consider that short-term score declines may reflect growing understanding.

Three Priorities for Organizational AI Strategy

The four findings converge on a systemic challenge: the transition from AI interest to AI practice is constrained by factors operating across all three layers of readiness. The majority of professionals have cleared the awareness hurdle. They are stalled at the practice threshold.

01 Design for the Stage 2 population

Two-thirds of respondents sit at Stage 2, and much AI training is built for beginners or power users. This group needs structured use-case mapping tied to role-specific business problems, cohort-based learning that builds social proof, and progressive challenges that create repeated 'I did that' experiences.

FROM FINDINGS 1, 2 & 3

02 Address environment before assuming capability gaps

For roughly one in ten professionals, the constraint is organizational, not individual. Audit the Environment layer — are AI policies explicit and enabling? Do managers signal support for experimentation? Are AI goals integrated into performance frameworks? — before investing in additional training for populations that may already be capable but environmentally constrained.

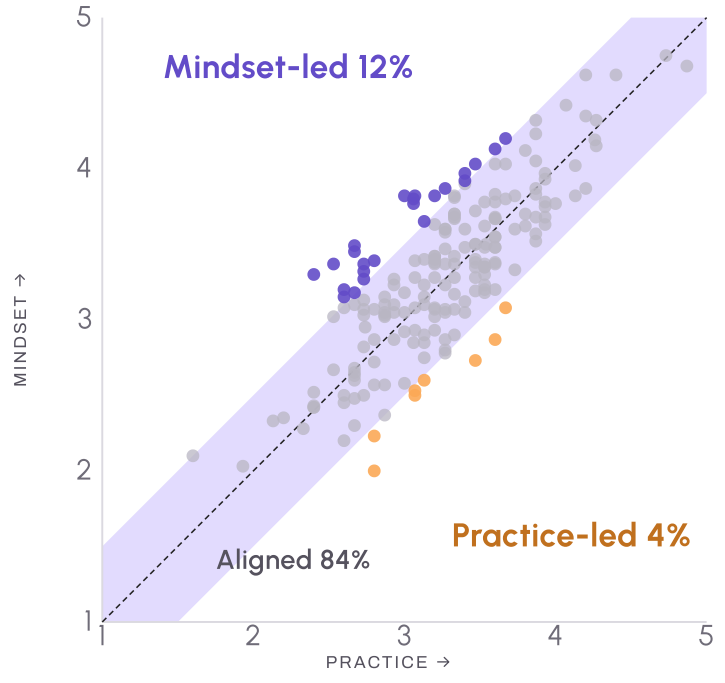
FROM FINDING 4

03 Measure behavior and context alongside sentiment

Most respondents' mindset and practice scores move together, but about one in six shows a meaningful gap: 12% are Mindset-led and 4% are Practice-led. A single readiness score hides these profiles, and without measuring environment, organizations cannot tell 'not ready' from 'ready but blocked.'

FROM FINDINGS 3 & 4

Figure 9. Mindset vs. Practice layer scores by respondent (n = 197). Pearson r = 0.79, p < 0.001.



LIMITATIONS

This sample is self-selected and not nationally representative, drawn from a single cohort entering an AI training program. Results reflect a single time point and a self-report instrument. Some subgroup findings rest on small samples and should be read as directional.

ABOUT THE ARA

The KAINDLY AI Readiness Assessment measures readiness across Mindset, Practice, and Environment through 10 scored dimensions.

To assess your team's AI readiness, contact KAINDLY at hello@kaindly.ai

We Close the AI Gap With *Fluency*.

Most enterprise AI programs stall because they treat adoption as a skill problem. KAINDLY treats it as an access problem and builds the habits, language, and leadership culture that make AI stick inside real organizations.

WHO WE ARE

An AI fluency and adoption accelerator, helping organizations and individuals move from awareness to action, building the habits, confidence, and leadership culture that turn AI into a genuine competitive advantage.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The adoption gap is an **access gap**: access to the right context, language, leadership modeling, and psychological safety to experiment. We close each one.

OUR METHOD

Diagnose before you treat. Every engagement begins with an honest measurement of where people actually are, not where they think they are. **Interventions that fit the real problem stick.**

FIVE PILLARS OF ENGAGEMENT

Each stands alone. Together, they compound.

01 **AI Readiness Spectrum™** — ASSESSMENT

A 10-dimension diagnostic that places every individual on the AI adoption curve, available for individuals and enterprises.

02 **Skills Audit & AI Opportunity Scan** — DISCOVERY

Maps AI's highest-value opportunities to your real workflows using our *Find the Friction First™* methodology, producing a heat map of adoption opportunity across teams.

03 **Executive Leadership Accelerator** — LEADERS

A hands-on session where leaders leave with a daily practice, the right questions to ask their teams, and the confidence to model AI use so others feel safe to follow.

04 **Custom Curriculum Design & AI Academy** — ENTERPRISE

Diagnostic data translated into bespoke cohort programs built around your specific workflows, roles, and transformation goals.

05 **The KAINDLY Collective** — COMMUNITY

Weekly sessions, monthly challenges, peer community. The Collective is where habits become competitive advantage for individuals and organizations alike.

TRUSTED BY

Leading biotech and pharma organizations, nonprofits and mission-driven institutions, and executive teams across industries.

WHERE WE WORK

Enterprise & Individual. Executive teams, function leadership, full-organization rollouts, and individual practitioners building fluency on their own timeline.

START HERE

KAINDLY.AI — Take the AI Readiness Assessment. Schedule a conversation. Or just explore. The sequence will find you.

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