

04

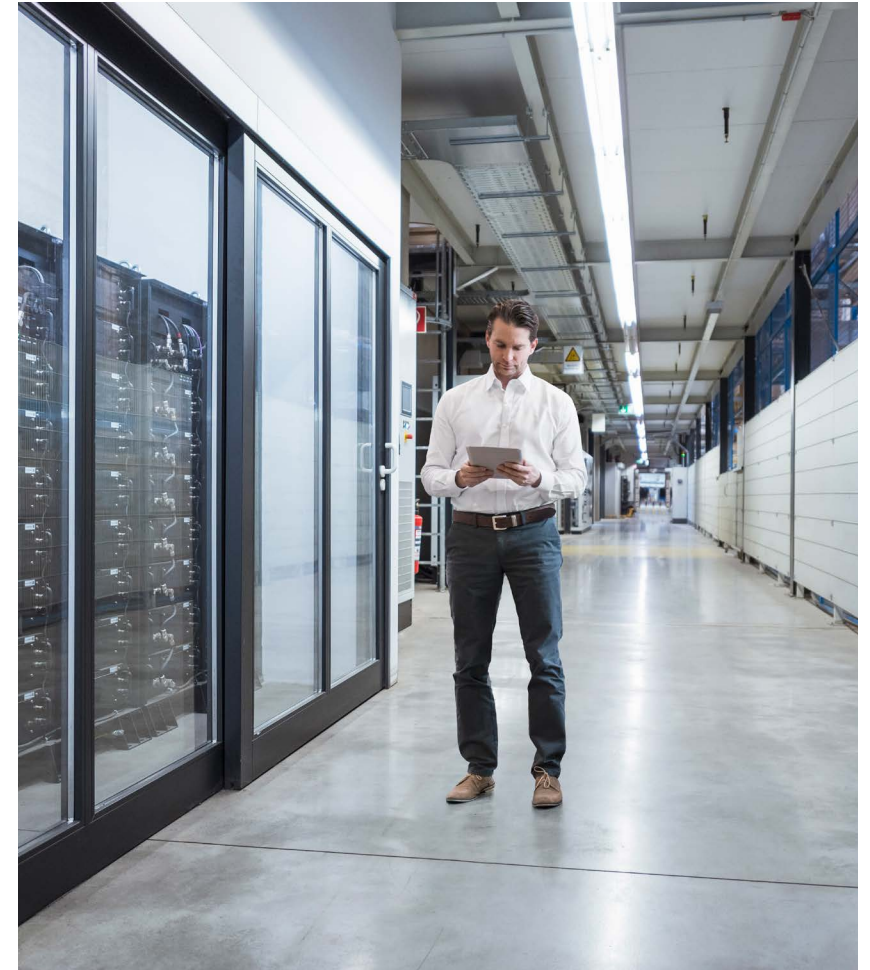
Challenges in data management and the role of cloud platforms



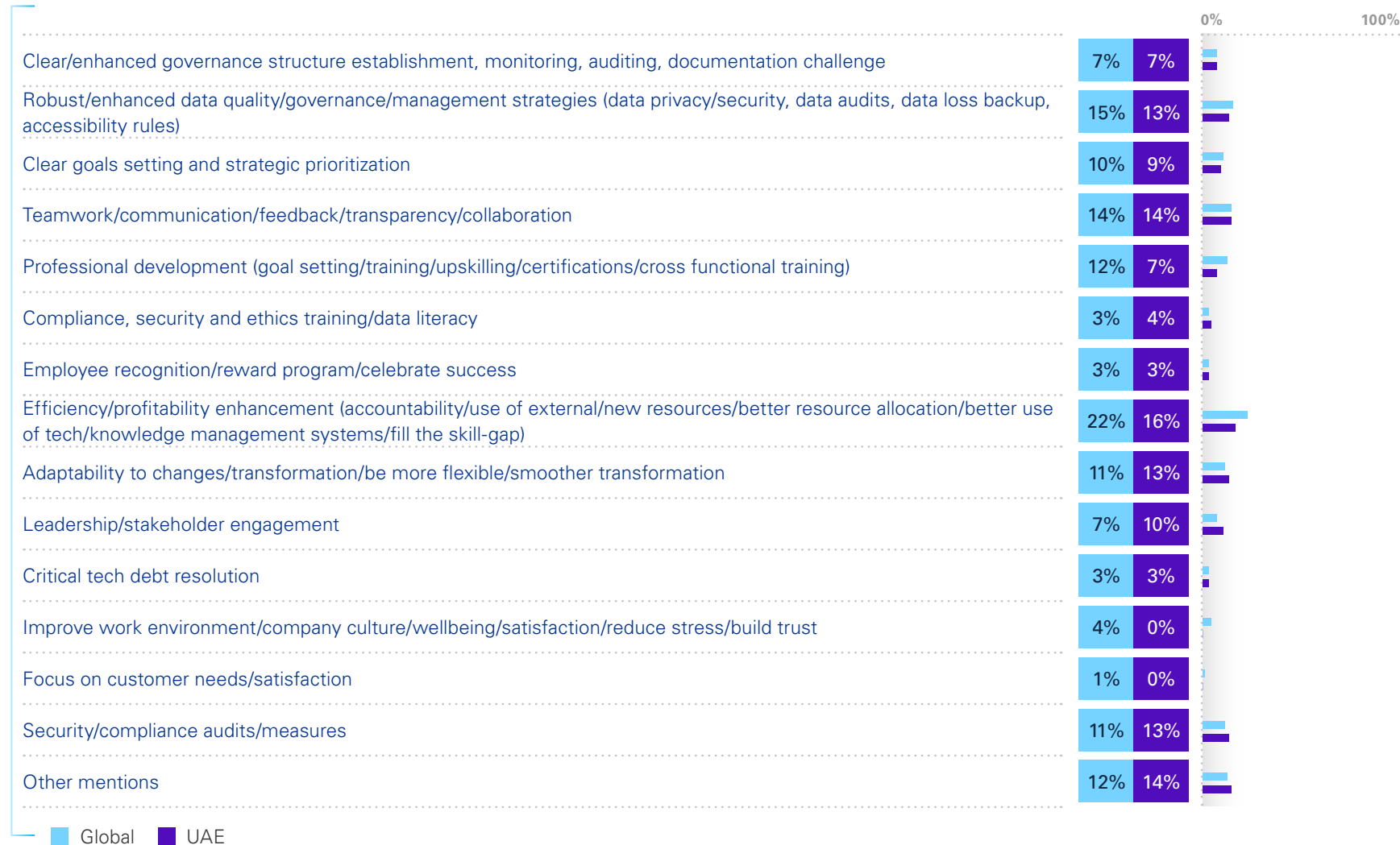
Which of the following challenges are most likely to slow down your transformation?



Both global and UAE tech leaders report facing several challenges in digital transformation. Immature data management strategies affect 13% of organizations in the UAE and 11% globally. And while the inability to agree on priorities or get stakeholder buy-in is a concern for 11% globally, UAE tech leaders (14%) are more focused on transformation fatigue and compliance issues. Only 4% however are facing skills shortages in the UAE, while 10% of global respondents express this is slowing down their organizations' transformation efforts.



What success factor would most help your business overcome your greatest challenge?



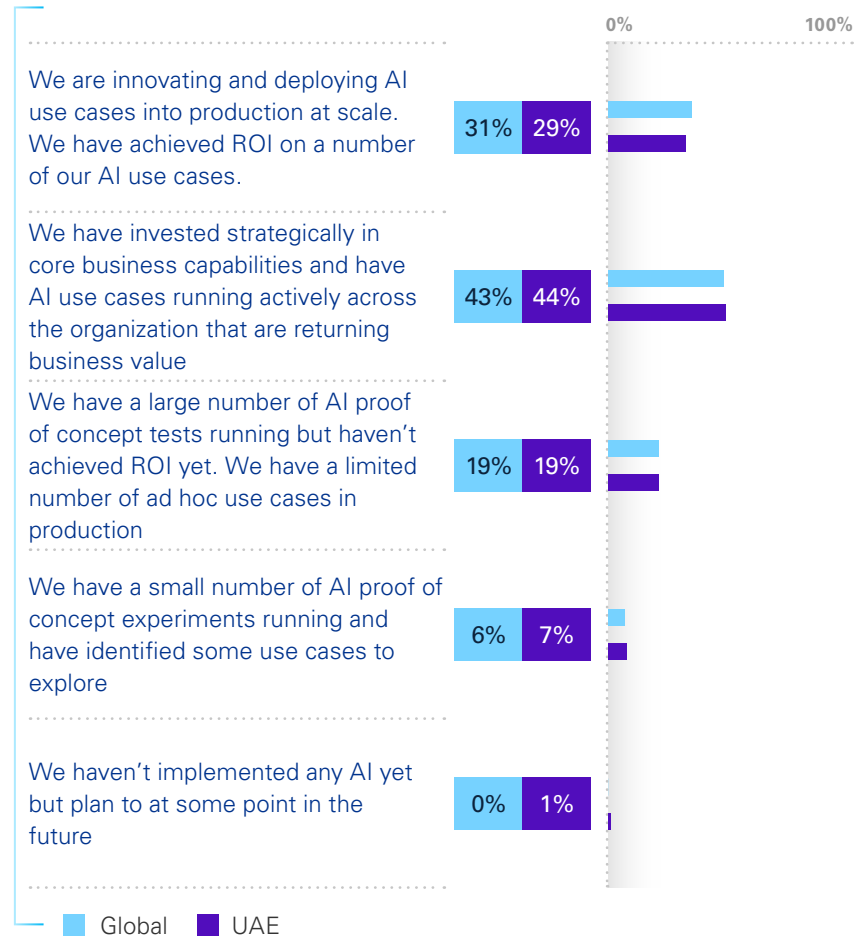
Addressing these challenges requires specific success factors. Enhancing efficiency and profitability through better resource allocation and filling the skill-gap is ranked first, at 22% globally and 16% in the UAE. Robust data quality, governance and management strategies stand out at 15% globally and 13% in the UAE. Both global and local leaders equally agree (14%) that efficient teamwork, communication, feedback, transparency and collaboration are crucial in overcoming transformation challenges. Security and compliance measures and adaptability to change are also highlighted as key enablers by 13% of UAE respondents.

Which of the following tactics do you use to adapt your digital transformation strategy in response to evolving market trends and risks?



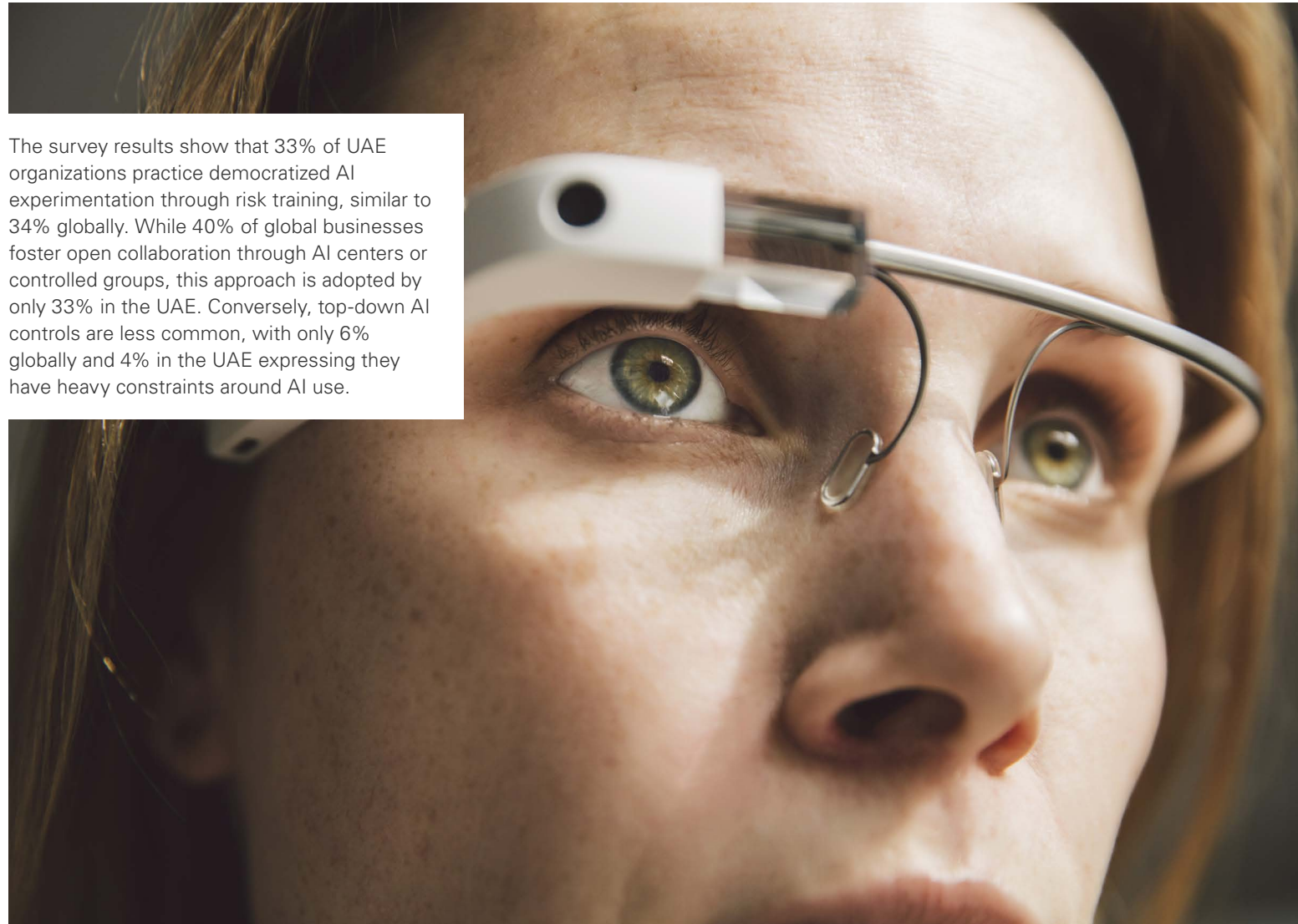
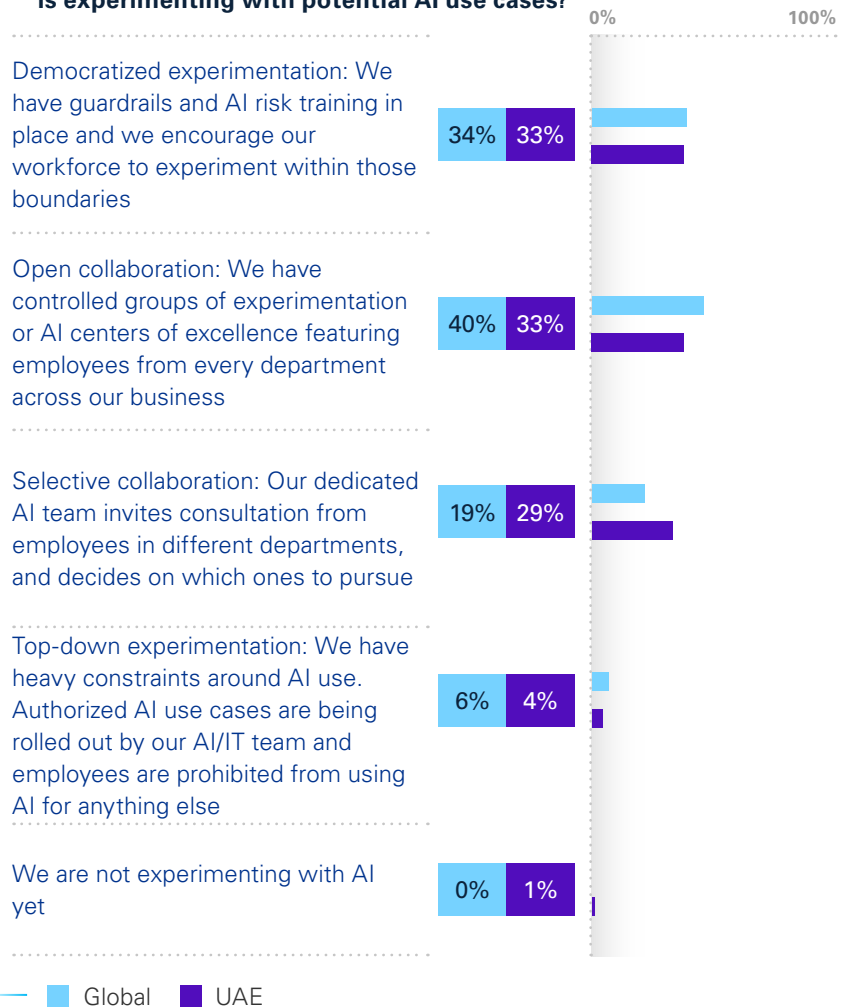
Globally, 45% of tech leaders prioritize data-centric decision-making to adapt their digital transformation strategy in response to evolving market trends and risks, while 43% focus on scenario forecasts and risk workshops. In the UAE, 44% emphasize routine supplier risk assessments and 'red-teaming' exercises to verify AI responsibility and guardrails, compared to 41% and 39% globally.

Which of the following best describe your organization's current maturity level with AI adoption?



In the UAE, 29% of organizations are deploying AI use cases into production at scale and have achieved ROI, while 44% have strategically invested in AI with operational use cases generating business value. Another 19% are running numerous AI proof-of-concept tests without ROI, with 7% still exploring some AI use cases. Only 1% have not yet implemented this technology but plan to in the future.

Which of the following best describe how your company is experimenting with potential AI use cases?



The survey results show that 33% of UAE organizations practice democratized AI experimentation through risk training, similar to 34% globally. While 40% of global businesses foster open collaboration through AI centers or controlled groups, this approach is adopted by only 33% in the UAE. Conversely, top-down AI controls are less common, with only 6% globally and 4% in the UAE expressing they have heavy constraints around AI use.

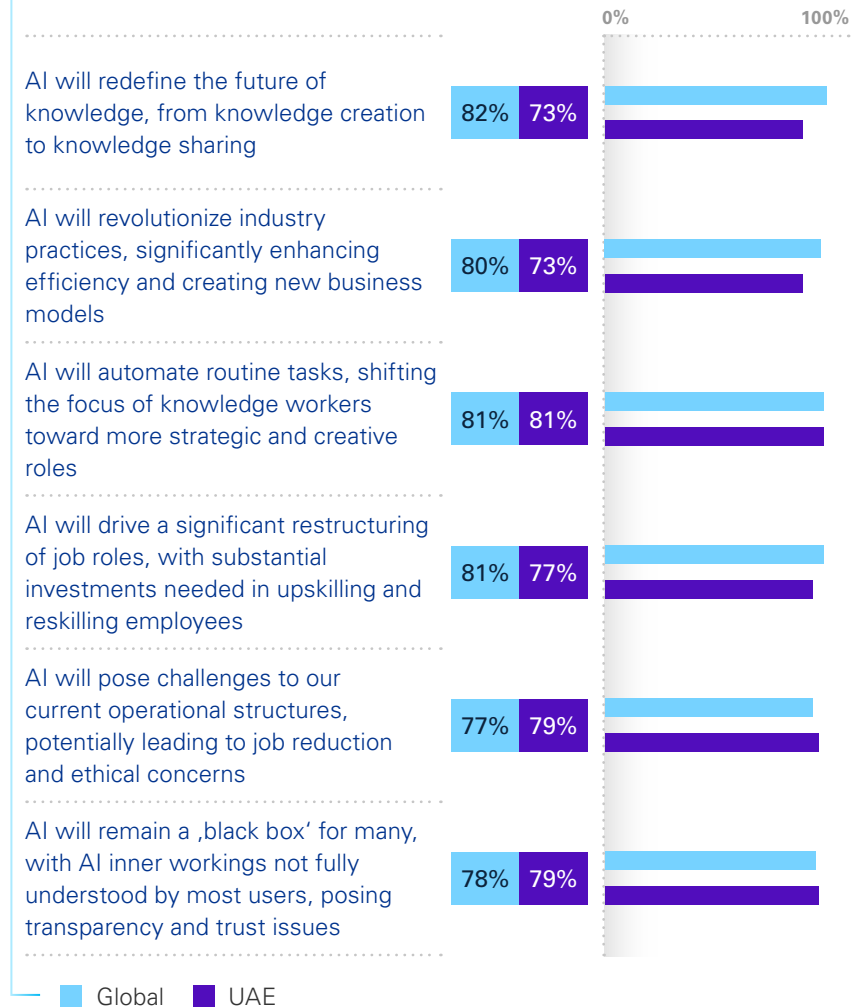
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in light of how AI is impacting your workforce?



In the UAE, 70% agree that AI fills skill gaps among knowledge workers that had previously been a major challenge for their organizations. Notably, 77% see significant evolution in their roles as tech leaders over the last two years and expect the pace of change to accelerate, and 70% express concerns about productivity bottlenecks due to AI management limitations. In an ever-changing tech landscape, 59% of UAE respondents feel some employees are left behind and another 59% believe employees with the most AI knowledge (super users) are being dispersed into different business departments. Our survey found that these local sentiments strongly align with global leaders', at 66% and 69% respectively. Like 74% of leaders worldwide, 72% of respondents in the UAE consider themselves risk guardians in terms of how their organizations leverage AI.

To what extent, if at all, do you anticipate AI disrupting the roles of knowledge workers and the broader landscape of your industry over the next ten years?

To some/great extent



Over the next decade, 82% of tech leaders globally foresee AI transforming knowledge creation and sharing. In the UAE, this expectation is slightly lower at 73%. Similarly, 80% of global leaders anticipate AI revolutionizing industry practices, compared to 73% in the UAE. When it comes to job restructuring, 81% of leaders in the UAE and worldwide believe AI will automate routine tasks, with 77% in the UAE foreseeing a shift of knowledge workers toward more strategic and creative roles. Concerns about AI's impact are also prevalent, with 77% globally worried about operational disruptions and ethical issues, closely mirrored by 79% in the UAE, who share similar concerns about transparency and trust. These findings indicate that while global leaders are more focused on the broader transformational impact of AI on knowledge creation and industry practices, UAE leaders are particularly aware of the operational and workforce shifts that AI will drive, highlighting a more immediate focus on practical implementation and transparency issues.