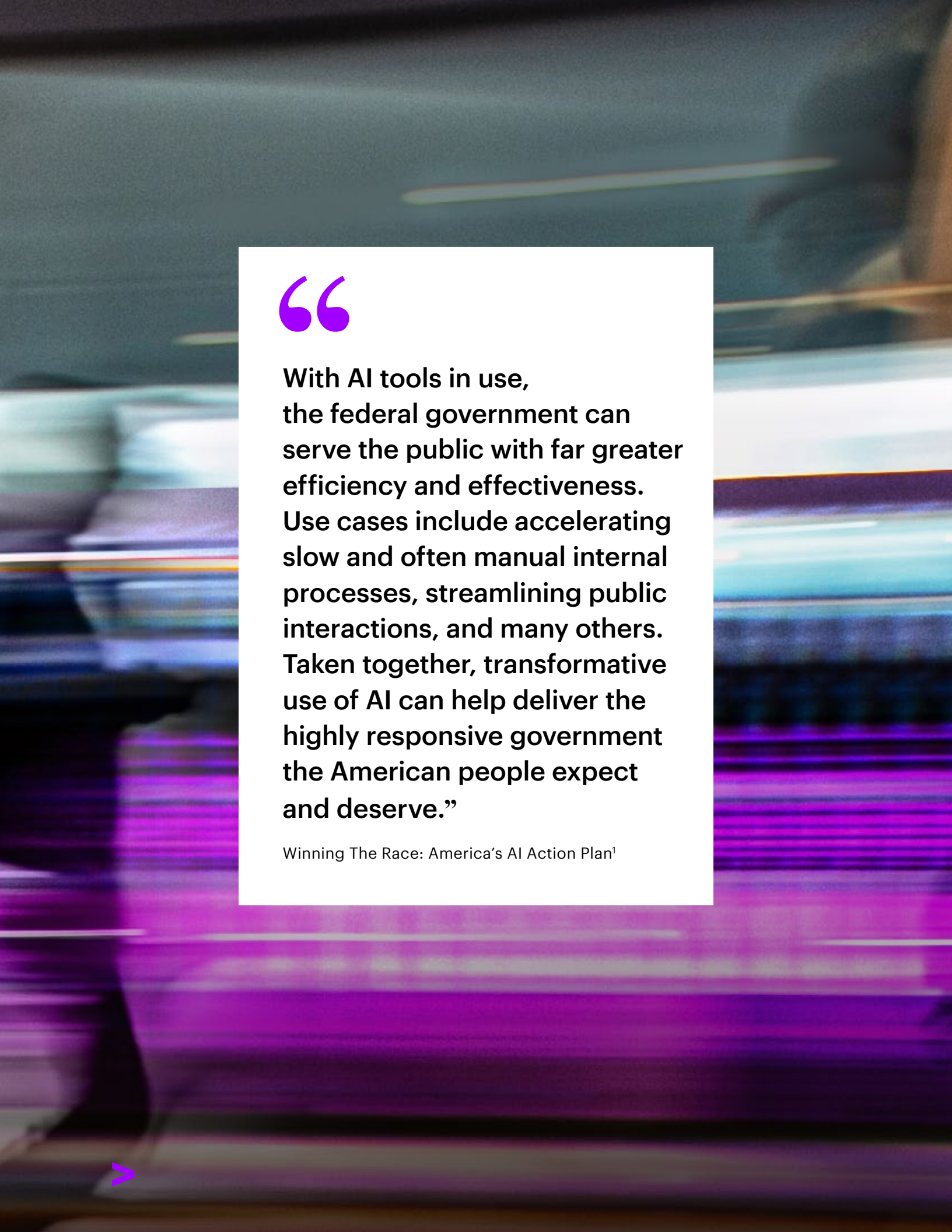
The velocity of work

How AI helps federal leaders turn possibility into productivity

Accenture
Federal
Services



> With AI tools in use, the federal government can serve the public with far greater efficiency and effectiveness. Use cases include accelerating slow and often manual internal processes, streamlining public interactions, and many others. Taken together, transformative use of AI can help deliver the highly responsive government the American people expect and deserve."

Winning The Race: America's AI Action Plan[1]

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SECTION 1

Turning possibility into productivity

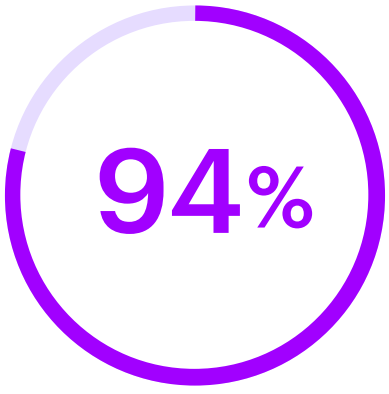
Federal leaders know the future is arriving fast—and that AI and the rise of agentic systems will shape how their agencies rise to meet it.

Across government, the promise is clear: AI can streamline workflows, supercharge productivity, reduce costs, and boost mission outcomes. Collaborating with AI tools and agents, federal employees can approach their tasks with greater insights and precision, and, ultimately, see better outcomes and more impactful results from their work.

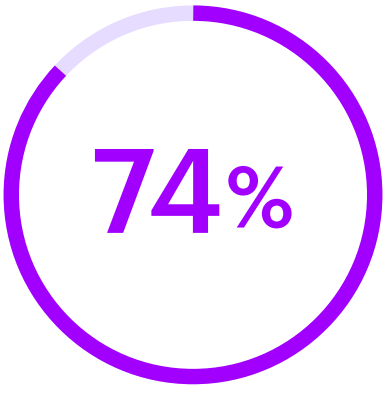
That promise isn't just theoretical. Agencies are already setting bold goals and aggressive timelines for AI adoption. And rightly so. Accenture surveyed 250 senior federal leaders to elicit their perspectives about AI and their path to reinvention. According to our survey, nearly one-third of federal agency leaders expect GenAI to increase productivity by at least 30% within three years.[2] And more than nine out of 10 federal leaders believe AI will help their agencies adjust to cost reductions and efficiency demands.[3]

> Our research shows the opportunity may be even higher. When we analyzed the top 20 most common federal occupational roles using Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*NET data, we found that on average, **52% of all working hours** across these roles can be either automated or augmented through GenAI.[4]

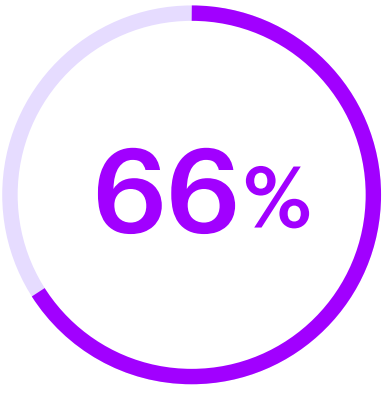
(See "About the research" on page 19 for more on research methodology.)



of federal leaders believe **AI is beneficial to cost reduction**



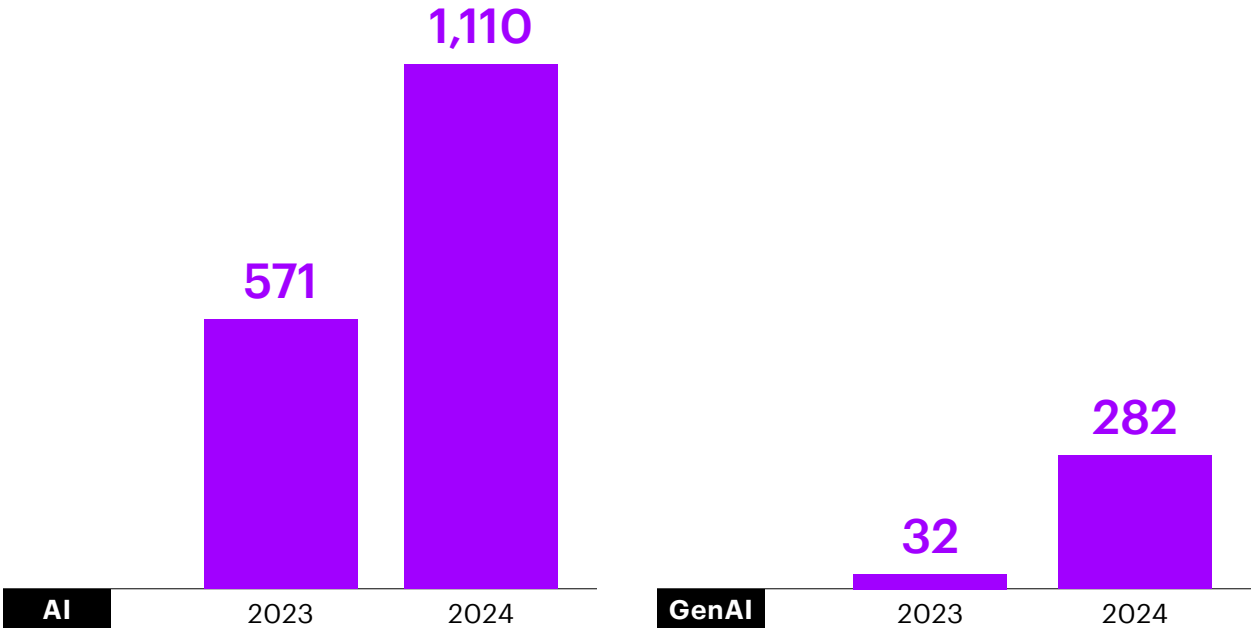
of federal leaders say **AI agents are either part of current investments or are already being piloted**



of federal leaders think **AI is being implemented faster than expected**

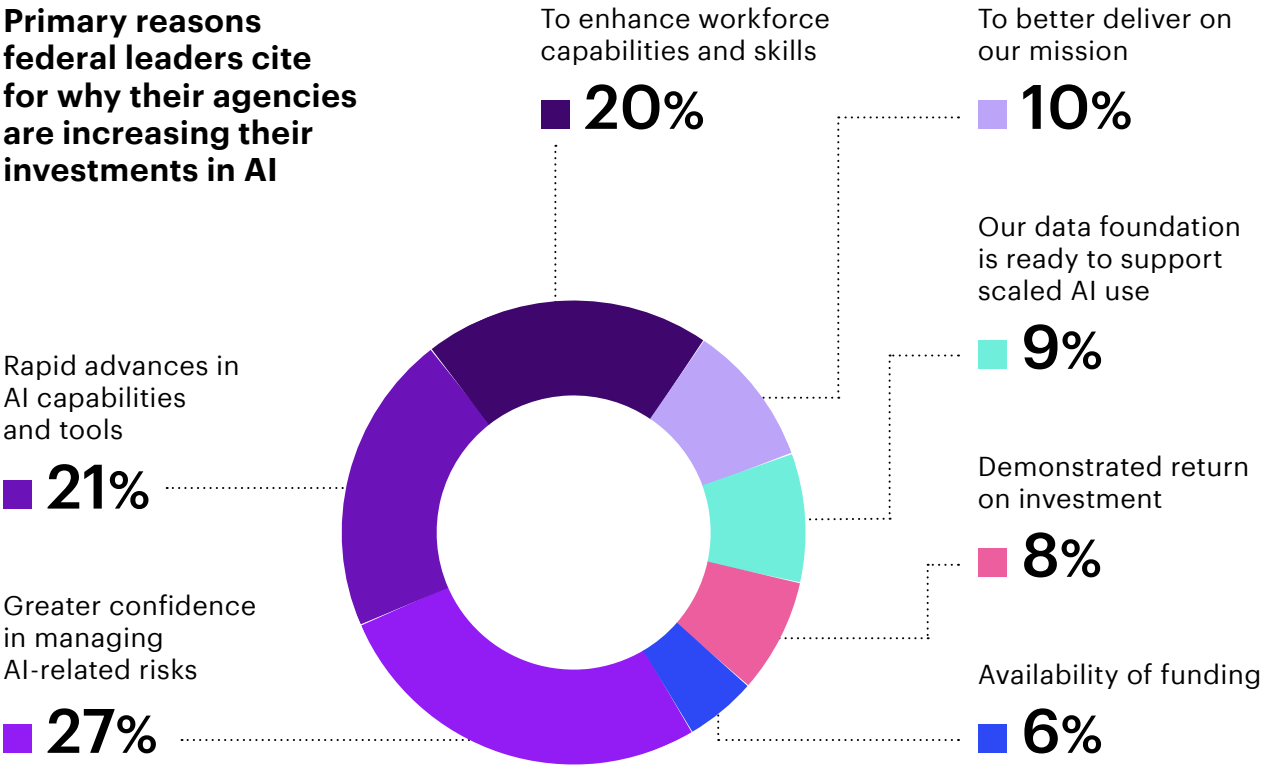
Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture, July 2025.

Reported federal use cases



United States Government Accountability Office, "Artificial Intelligence: Generative AI Use and Management at Federal Agencies," GAO-25-107653, Washington, D.C.: July 29, 2025.

Primary reasons federal leaders cite for why their agencies are increasing their investments in AI



Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture, July 2025.

Agencies are moving on AI—but to what result?

The momentum is building. Executive Orders and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directives and, most recently, the White House's *AI Action Plan*, are pushing agencies to act. Internal pressures—from staffing shortages and more complex mission demands to shifting public expectations—are compelling federal leaders to rethink how work gets done. Overwhelmingly, federal leaders view AI as a critical capability to have in the face of increasing budget pressures and efficiency mandates.

> 94% of federal leaders believe AI is beneficial to cost reduction[5]

The good news: nearly every federal decision maker we've surveyed said their agency has already adopted deliberate strategies to reinvent at least some core functions—and nearly two-thirds of them said their strategies aim to reinvent most or all functions and business units at their agencies.[6] We see this AI adoption running the gamut from experiments on single use cases all the way to the redesign of end-to-end business processes.

Many agencies are even rapidly adopting one of the most recent waves of AI-driven innovation: agentic systems. AI agents are software programs designed to perform tasks autonomously, often mimicking human decision-making and problem-solving abilities. They can sense their environment, plan actions, and execute those actions using tools, all while learning and adapting over time. Moreover, agentic AI can handle a wide range of tasks, from simple to complex, and even interact with other AI systems.

While federal leaders are laser-focused on using GenAI across their enterprise, our research shows that growth in actual GenAI implementations falls under private sector benchmarks.

That gap is explainable—and, in our experience with our own federal clients—easily closed. Meaningful reinvention requires more than pilot projects. It requires coordinated, often complex shifts in how agencies use data, manage IT systems, conduct their work, and reshape, train, and utilize their workforces. Our survey shows that:

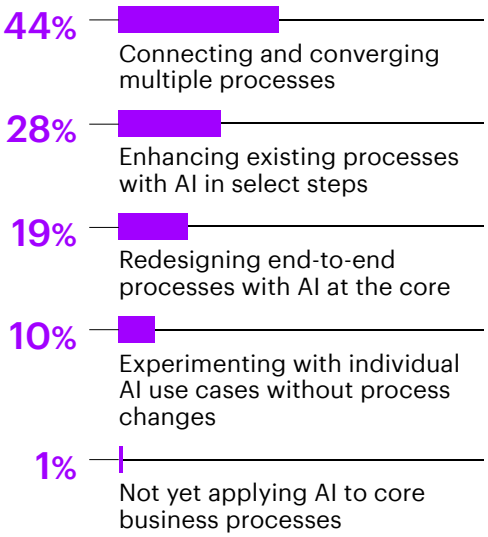
- **97%** of federal leaders expect GenAI adoption to require changes to their data strategy
- **93%** say it will impact their IT estate
- **92%** expect changes to their operating model
- **91%** foresee adjustments to their organization's business processes
- **85%** anticipate workforce shifts to support these changes[7]

A better way forward

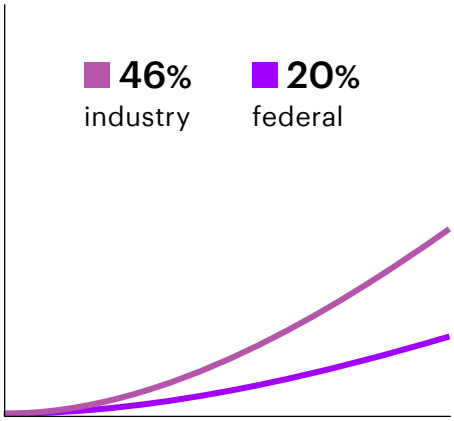
There is a smart way to achieve tangible, quantifiable success at AI-enabled reinvention—one that is already highly proven in the commercial sector. The opportunity in front of us is enormous, and federal agencies will need to act now or risk losing out on significant gains in terms of **process productivity**, which focuses on reduced cost and time savings, and **knowledge productivity**, which focuses on improved mission or business outcomes.

Our bottom-line message is this: federal agencies can take a more analytical approach to finding right-sized, meaningful, high-impact changes at the **business process and functional worker levels**.

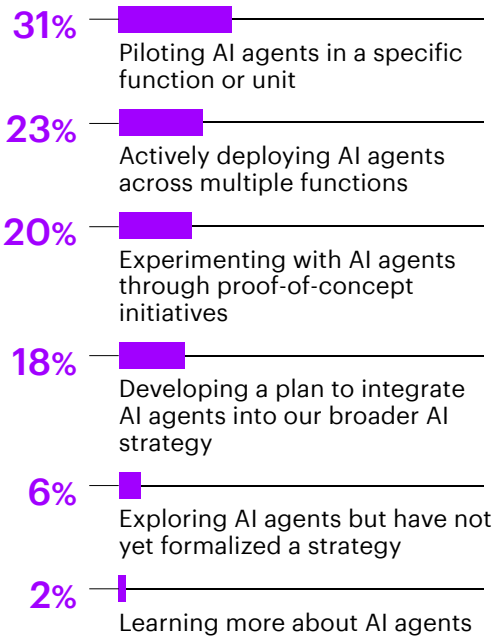
Federal leaders say their agencies are applying AI to their business processes in the following ways:



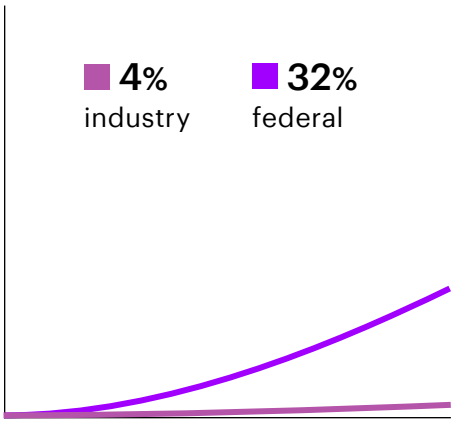
Federal leaders are trailing their commercial industry counterparts at implementing strategies—including leveraging technology, data, AI and GenAI—to reshape operations:



Federal leaders say their agencies are already in various stages of adopting agentic AI tools:



A far greater percentage of federal leaders limit AI-driven reinvention to a select few functions:



Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture

Reinvention in the Age of GenAI, Accenture

SECTION 2

Where to look first to maximize productivity and mission outcomes

Get started by identifying the intersections of process and knowledge that offer the greatest potential for AI to drive measurable productivity gains across government.

Ramp up quickly with a practical, tool-driven framework to pinpoint which opportunity areas are best suited for reinvention and deploy quickly.

With a proven approach and targeted investment, GenAI and agentic solutions can help agencies move from intention to action, and from pilot to scaled impact. It's not about transforming everything at once. It's about starting in the right places, proving value early, and building momentum fast.

Functional areas of promise

Federal leaders already have a strong sense of where the greatest function level potential lies for AI-enabled reinvention and productivity—and, what's more, they're already placing those bets. Based on existing AI implementations, federal leaders are seeing their greatest productivity gains in the areas of IT, operations, research and development, marketing, and customer and citizen service. (See figure 1)

Role-based areas of promise

While it's critical to size up the many functional domains across an agency enterprise, it's also important to look closely at the work roles within those functions.

> Accenture research reveals a powerful insight: GenAI has the potential to affect **52% of all hours worked** by employees in the top 20 occupations across federal services. Of that time, 27% is suitable to automation—tasks that AI could potentially handle independently—and 25% is suitable to augmentation, where AI can significantly enhance how knowledge work is performed.[8] In other words, more than half of these federal employees' time is already spent on tasks that GenAI could meaningfully transform.

But this insight isn't just about averages—it's about understanding who does what and how it can be improved. By applying work-

time studies, agencies can zero in on specific roles and functions to determine where AI capabilities can drive the most value. These studies examine job responsibilities at the task level, revealing exactly which portions of a role are ripe for automation or augmentation.

Take, for example, an agency's finance function. Many roles in this area show high potential for reinvention through AI:[9]

- **Compliance officers: 56%**
- **Information and record clerks: 69%**
- **Financial specialists: 62%**
- **Accountants and auditors: 42%**
- **First-line supervisors** (office and administrative support): **75%**

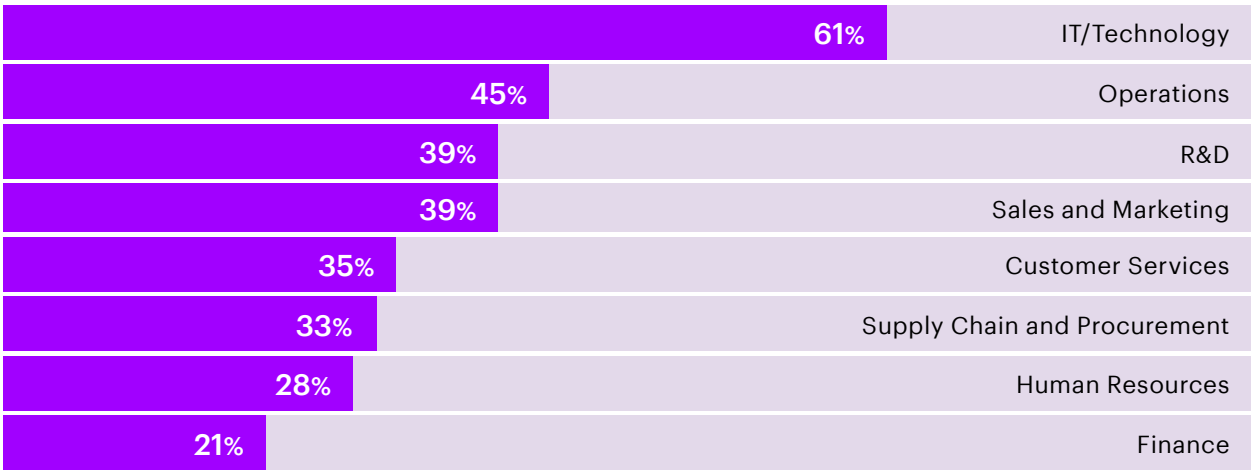
The intersection is everything: where functions meet roles

The real productivity power around AI comes at the intersection of the function and role dimensions. First, the high-level functions that agency leaders already recognize as ripe for transformation and higher knowledge productivity. And, second, the roles and business processes within those functions where GenAI can automate repeatable tasks or augment human strengths.

> AI's greatest returns will come not from automating isolated tasks, but from re-imagining entire processes—especially those dominated by measurable, repeatable, predictable and transactional work.

FIGURE 1

Functional areas cited by federal leaders as showing the greatest productivity gains due to AI:



Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture, July 2025.

SECTION 3

Five high-value federal opportunities to accelerate impact

For federal agencies navigating rising public expectations, workforce constraints, and mission urgency, generative and agentic AI offers more than efficiency gains—it provides a path to smarter, faster, and more adaptive government.

There are high-value starting points where agencies can generate meaningful returns quickly.

We've highlighted five domains where agencies can get started now—maximizing resource investments, demonstrating immediate impact, and laying the foundation for long-term transformation. The roles and functions within these workflow categories offer high potential for AI-driven augmentation or automation or both, meaning they not only offer the potential for significant process and knowledge productivity improvements, but they can also provide early success stories and lessons learned to build institutional confidence and momentum for broader adoption.

1. Personal productivity at scale

The most impactful opportunity is also the most accessible: boosting the personal productivity of every federal employee. By investing in platform-based GenAI solutions, agencies can deliver immediate, enterprise-wide support for knowledge workers. These tools empower employees to draft, edit, translate, summarize, and analyze with greater speed and precision. **Just as importantly, they lay the groundwork for future agentic AI capabilities that will automate complex workflows end-to-end.**

Many federal agencies have already gotten to this fundamental stage in their AI maturity, using widely available LLM backed tools, apps, and research agents to do everything from generating emails and spotting trends in data to summarizing hefty reports. (See figure 2)

2. Customer-facing services and contact centers

Few federal functions are more mission-critical—or more ripe for agentic AI transformation—than customer service. Whether through website chatbots or contact centers, the use of agents can radically improve how agencies engage with the American public: answering questions, summarizing policies, routing requests, and resolving issues quickly and accurately.

The opportunity is real and proven. A 2023 study found that GenAI assistance increased customer service productivity by 14%—as measured by issues resolved per hour—while also helping newer agents ramp up more quickly. AI tools also improved customer sentiment, reduced escalations, and increased retention, demonstrating their potential to both elevate service and support the workforce.[10]

Enter the Agentic Service Center. This model blends human expertise and Agentic AI to modernize how agencies interact with the public. Such centers solve many of the customer service challenges that agencies face: changing consumer expectations and preferences, high attrition rates, and legacy technology and processes. By design, they focus on three priorities: Innovations like agentic IVR (Interactive Voice Response) provide contact elimination, contact containment, and human agent efficiency.

> **Case in point: the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB).** With over 7 million participants in its retirement plan, FRTIB partnered with Accenture to reimagine its contact center. By integrating cloud, AI, and agent efficiency tools, FRTIB cut wait times by 32%, consistently achieves participant satisfaction scores of 93% to 94%, and boosted first-call resolution.

The message is clear: AI is not just improving service—it's redefining what great public service looks like.

3. Combatting fraud, waste, and abuse

The federal government loses more than $162 billion annually to improper payments—with more than half of that from healthcare alone.[10] These losses aren't just numbers; they reflect missed opportunities to better serve the public. But here, too, Generative and agentic AI offer game changing solutions.

In industry, financial services institutions are already improving their data and AI capabilities to combat fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA). With similar investments, government programs could reduce FWA across healthcare and other public health services. These savings would come from reducing incorrect coding, duplicate billing, and medically unnecessary services, and enhancing eligibility verification and identification of fake claims.

For example, AI tools and solutions can be highly effective against many systemic challenges in the FWA field, including:

- **System fragmentation:** The decentralized claims processing system leads to data silos and inconsistent adjudication. A shared, cloud-based data platform with agentic AI workflows and graph analytics can unify and streamline operations by reading data and making inferences from beneficiary, provider, and population data.
- **Manual clinical validation:** An enormous amount of the claims processing workload is done manually. Leveraging AI agents, tools, and data feeds from health information networks can automate far more of the claims adjudication process while also improving accuracy.
- **Outdated infrastructure:** Legacy systems limit agencies' ability to adopt advanced technologies. Investments in modern, cloud-based, AI-compatible data platforms, including those offered by AWS, Microsoft Azure, Databricks, Google Cloud Platform, Palantir, and others—which natively support agents, optimized Large Language Model (LLM) selection and use, and responsible, secure AI workflows—can enable scalable and secure data solutions.
- **Sophisticated fraud schemes:** Fraudsters use advanced tools like LLMs to fabricate claims. Agencies need equally advanced AI systems—such as specially trained LLMs, graph analytics, and social network analysis—to detect and prevent AI-enabled fraud.

In 2024, a government health agency faced a daunting future: manual claim reviews, an expected 43% workload increase, and a shrinking workforce. The agency partnered with Accenture to deploy an AI solution that reviews complex disability claims in days rather than months. The system is now used nationwide by more than 7,000 active users per month, sustaining the mission with greater speed and accuracy.

This is the kind of breakthrough GenAI can deliver—not just cost savings, but a more trustworthy and responsive government.

4. Legacy system evaluation and modernization

Every federal agency is grappling with the exorbitant costs and operational challenges of legacy IT.[11] Aging mainframes and outdated codebases strain budgets, hinder innovation, and limit customer services. But here, too, GenAI is opening new doors.

Private sector pioneers have already shown how legacy systems can be transformed through AI-assisted code conversion, modernization of business logic, and deployment of scalable cloud-native architectures.

5. Optimizing core business systems

Behind every mission is a back office—the financial systems, procurement processes, HR functions, and supply chains that keep government running. Yet for too long, the enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems that manage these support functions have been fragmented, outdated, and costly to maintain. To address this, ERP platforms like Oracle and Salesforce are embedding agents and GenAI capabilities directly into their products. Similarly, by embedding intelligence directly into ERP systems, federal agencies can create a new foundation of efficiency, insight, agility, and improved mission performance. For example:

- **Unified systems:** Consolidate and streamline disparate workflows, reducing IT sprawl and maintenance costs.
- **Faster tasks:** Automate routine activities like invoice matching and compliance checks, delivering value in months, not years.
- **Better insights:** Predictive insights into spending, workforce trends, and supply chain issues, enhance policy and operational planning.
- **Optimized performance:** Create transparency, identify inefficiencies, and optimize resource allocation, empowering agencies to focus.
- **Customized support:** Agents can be built and leveraged across the enterprise, including procurement, financial forecasting and budgeting, workforce planning and scheduling, compliance and risk monitoring, and supply chain optimization.

Modernizing ERP systems with AI is not just a cost-savings exercise—it's about creating the resilient digital backbone needed to support future-looking missions.

Success depends on making business systems AI-ready. This means:

- **Building strong data foundations** that foster greater data access and integration (similar to the goals of Executive Order 14243, "Stopping Waste, Fraud, and Abuse by Eliminating Information Silos") from across the enterprise.
- **Using open formats** to ensure interoperability and long-term flexibility.
- **Treating data as a product**, governed with clear ownership and accountability.
- **Embedding business logic onto data** so AI can act with accuracy and context.

Taken together, these principles allow ERP platforms to become more than just systems of record. They become engines of insight and innovation—fueling smarter policies, and optimized processes.

The road ahead

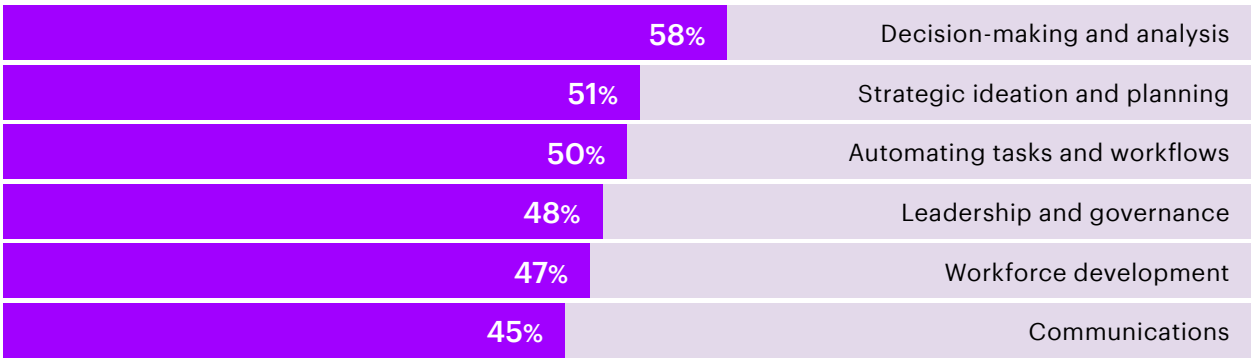
By targeting high-impact, high-visibility functions like personal productivity, customer service, fraud prevention, and system modernization, agencies can demonstrate early wins, build enterprise readiness, and scale their successes.

These examples—all opportunity areas that are high impact, measurable, and ripe for quick gains—illustrate the value of taking deliberate, strategic moves to align AI capabilities with agency missions, workforces, and processes.

If federal agencies act now—focusing their AI initiatives on where functional areas of promise intersect with role-based areas of promise—they can move from proof-of-concept to proof-of-value.

FIGURE 2

Federal leaders say they are using AI tools in support of these professional activities:



Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture

SECTION 4

Choose the right AI use cases and start providing value—today

Smart AI reinvention uses analytics and precision to choose the right places to start.

That means zeroing in on the functions that matter most to your mission, identifying the work within those functions that is most measurable, repeatable, predictable, and transactional (MRPT), and deploying solutions with clear goals *and* a clear path to adoption.

In the last section, we identified high-impact federal domains where GenAI can deliver meaningful productivity improvements. In this section, we offer a practical roadmap to help leaders evaluate their agency's environments, prioritize where to begin, and implement AI solutions that produce real, scalable value.

Here are five evaluative criteria that will help you select the right opportunities for your agency:

1. Focus on measurable outcome improvements that deliver real, tangible value

The first step is aligning AI reinvention with real mission impact. Aim for real, measurable improvements in service quality, efficiency, compliance, and user satisfaction.

Ask yourself: Will this AI use case deliver better results for the people we serve? Will it enhance employee performance and reduce operational drag? Look for areas where AI implementation will have a direct line to improving your agency metrics on:

- Customer sentiment and user satisfaction scores (as measured by Net Promoter Scores (NPS), Customer Satisfaction Surveys (CSS), Customer Satisfaction Scores (CSAT), Customer Effort Scores (CES), and other similar metrics)
- Quality and accuracy
- Cycle times and lag
- Compliance and control
- Efficiency without increasing risk

> A groundbreaking 2023 study on a GenAI chat assistant used in a Fortune 500 customer service center showed a 14% boost in productivity, improved customer sentiment, and faster resolution times—especially among newer, less experienced workers. These benefits translated into fewer escalations, reduced turnover, and better morale.[12] [13]

2. Target business processes with high potential for reinvention

Assess which jobs and business processes are most ready for re-imagining at your agency. Focus on areas where AI capabilities and solutions can eliminate bottlenecks and shift your talent from manual to strategic work. Here are tools and methods that can help you accomplish this:

- **Cycle time studies:** Use AI to analyze how long it takes for inputs to become outputs across processes. Where are the delays?

- **Work-time data:** Figure out where inefficiencies exist and identify high-volume, low-complexity tasks suitable for automation or augmentation.
- **Digital twin tools:** Tools like Accenture's Process Value Explorer can model your current operations and also simulate various future states of those operations to identify which process changes will create maximum impact.

> Generative and agentic AI deliver big boosts in areas with high turnover or lots of early-career staff. Use internal workforce data to identify where business processes with less experienced teams would benefit most from AI augmentation.

3. Right people, right skills, right time

Key to selecting a good use case is having the right people, with the right skills, and the right capacity, in place to deliver a successful outcome. That means, when evaluating potential use cases, it's critical to look beyond the business process itself to the broader ecosystem of people that support and rely on that process.

Ask yourself which types of role-players, skill sets, subject matter experts, and stakeholder representatives you will need for any given use case. For example:

- **Do you** have the necessary technical skills and sufficient capacity?
- **Is there** adequate senior-level investment and support? Are you providing top-level oversight?
- **Is the** business or function committed to the change, and do they have subject matter experts available to participate?
- **Do you** have the resources required for knowledge management and change management activities?

Even if the needed talent and role-players aren't on hand, you can still move the needle on AI initiatives. Prudent investments now—either through reallocating talent, upskilling, shifting workloads, or investing in temporary support—can help align the right project teams for success.

4. Lean into your strengths

It's critical to understand the many factors that will contribute to the successful workforce adoption of any workflow reinvention candidates you consider.

Consider which components will be important to address in an enablement plan for any given use case candidate and how large the adoption lift will be. Some considerations include:

- **How big of a change is this for your workforce, your users?**
  Mobilize early adopters and internal champions who can drive momentum and support change.
- **How capable is your organization when it comes to process redesign?**
  Empower functional leaders to help translate how work done today will be re-engineered for an AI-enabled environment tomorrow.
- **How will people's jobs, roles, and responsibilities change as a result of a re-engineered business process?**
  Will there be skill, expertise, and capability gaps? If so, consider the scope and scale of training, hiring, and upskilling needed.

Of course, ensure you have the budget resources on hand as well—not just for technology, but also for time, training, and change management. (See figure 3)

> In many cases, the AI solution itself may lead to expedited worker learning. In the 2023 study cited above, researchers found that access to the AI tool helped newer agents move more quickly down the experience curve. Agents who had access to the AI tool and only two months of tenure performed just as well as agents who did not have access to the tool who had more than six months of tenure. They also found that engagement with AI recommendations generated durable learning for many agents. Examining data on software outages—periods in which the AI software failed to provide any suggestions—they discovered that workers exhibited productivity gains relative to their pre-AI baseline even when AI recommendations were unavailable.[14]

5. Evaluate your AI foundation readiness and balance short-term investments with future goals

Regardless of which use case you choose, there will almost always be some need to improve your data and AI foundations. Be realistic about what infrastructure capabilities you have, what you need, what is feasible to accomplish in the near term and invest strategically.

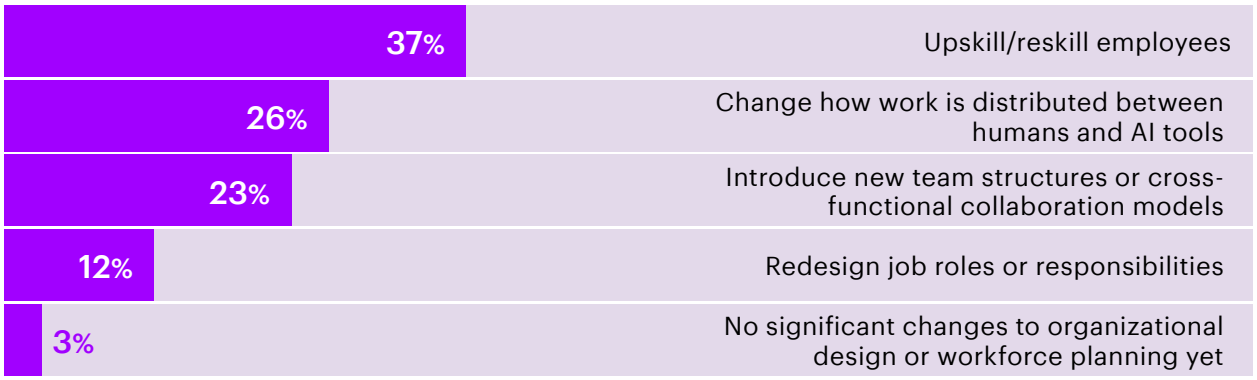
Select use cases that match your current technological capabilities plus whatever needed upgrades you can realistically achieve. You may not have the ideal foundations in place, but it's important not to let that get in the way of progress. If you develop a modernization roadmap and then choose AI use cases that align with that roadmap, you can be on a path that is realistic, affordable, and keeps you moving toward the ideal future state. A great way to start this process is by asking yourself if you have the necessary IT infrastructure and platforms to deliver needed capabilities in these four foundational areas:

- Modern application engineering
- Data management
- Analytics, machine learning, GenAI, and agentic AI
- Strategy and workforce

Success starts with smart targeting—and accelerates with the right partners and plans.

FIGURE 3

Federal leaders say their organizations plan to do the following to adapt their workforces or operating models to support AI adoption:



Pulse of Change Survey, Accenture

SECTION 5

Harness the power of AI for better mission results

The path forward is clear—and full of possibility.

Proof points of high impact GenAI applications and the emergence of agentic capabilities and systems, represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity for federal agencies to drive meaningful change, increase productivity, reduce costs, and reimagine how government serves the American people.

But it's also increasingly viewed by federal leaders as a core capability that can enhance their agencies' resilience in times of uncertainty and disruption.

> 94% of federal leaders view technology advancements, including AI, as contributing toward their organizations' business resilience and agility.[15]

We know the promise is real. According to our research, hundreds of thousands of federal jobs spend half their time on work ripe for automation or augmentation with AI. That's not incremental improvement. That's transformation.

Unlocking this potential happens when leaders get deliberate, when they look across their organizations and ask not just "where could we use AI?" but "where should we begin to reinvent?" It happens when they apply the right criteria, focus on high-impact functions, and act on the areas that offer both strategic importance and practical readiness. And it happens when they build smart, cross-functional teams to lead the way—backed by data, committed to change, and ready to bring their people along.

The opportunity is huge—and the window is now. Federal leaders who take bold, smart steps today can position their agencies to lead the next era of transformation—advancing technology adoption, mission delivery, workforce empowerment, and customer service alike.

The era of AI-powered productivity is here. With the right mindset, a strategic plan, and the right partner, your agency can fully realize it.

Let's get started.

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Federal government reinvention survey

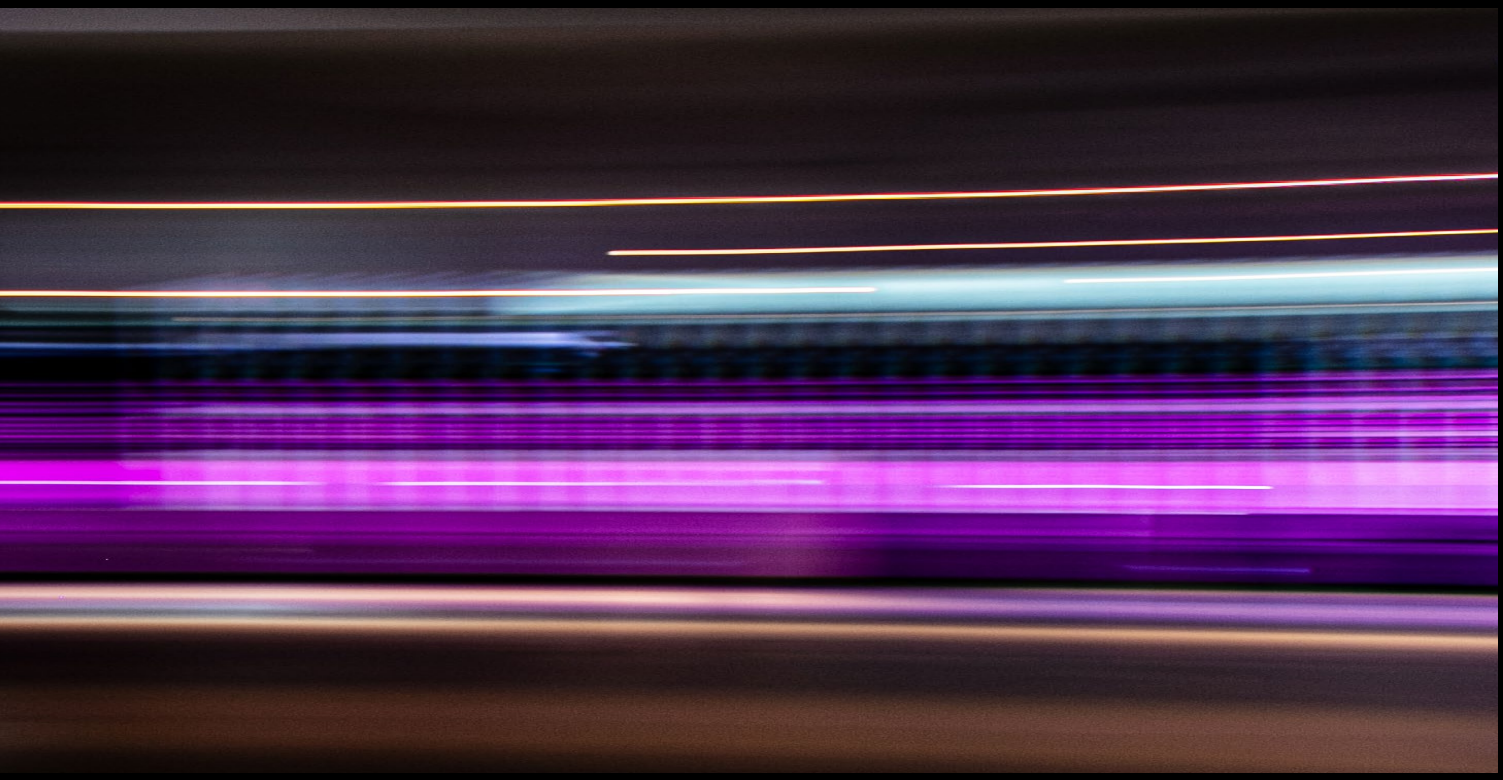
Accenture Research conducted a survey of 250 U.S. federal government leaders in 2024. Comparisons between federal and cross-industry findings are based on Accenture's Federal Government Reinvention Survey and its global Reinvention in the Age of Generative AI survey, which canvassed 1,500 leaders across 19 industries in 10 countries.

Generative AI occupation analysis

The potential impact of generative AI on the top 20 occupations in the U.S. federal government (with exception of U.S. postal occupations) was analyzed using publicly available data. The analysis applied a task-based framework, where the level of impact is determined by the extent of language-based knowledge required for specific tasks. Language-dependent, standardized, routine, and process-oriented tasks were identified as prime candidates for automation through large language models (LLMs), while tasks requiring greater human interaction, contextual reasoning, or expert judgment were assessed as better suited for augmentation. Occupation-level data was drawn from O*NET and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). O*NET provides a taxonomy of more than 19,000 tasks, including the estimated time spent on each within an occupation. Researchers combined manual (human) review and machine-assisted classification to assign numeric values reflecting automation potential.

The analysis included four stages:

- **Identification** — Tasks requiring intensive use of natural, mathematical, or computational language relevant to LLM features were identified.
- **Assessment** — Each task was evaluated for interpersonal collaboration, complex reasoning, or expert validation, and scored according to its transformation potential.
- **Classification** — Tasks were then categorized into four groups: Automation potential, Augmentation potential, Low potential, and Non-language.
- **Calculation** — Transformation potential labels were combined with BLS employment figures, hours worked, and O*NET task frequency data to estimate the share of total work time that could be transformed by generative AI.



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