First Movers' Advantage

The Immediate Benefits of Adopting Generative AI for Project Management

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PMI Project Management Institute.

Introduction

Generative AI (GenAI) is a transformative technology poised to revolutionize project management practices and the whole discipline, as well as reshape organizational operations.

According to a recent Microsoft and LinkedIn study, use of GenAI has doubled in the last few months of 2023, with 75% of knowledge workers using it.

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In the First Mover's Advantage report, we wanted to:

1   Discover how high adopters are **leading the charge in embracing** GenAI.

2   Explore how high adopters are **unlocking performance enhancements** with GenAI.

3   Identify why **fostering organizational enablement is important** for GenAI adoption.

4   Investigate how organizations effectively **leverage GenAI to propel business transformation.**
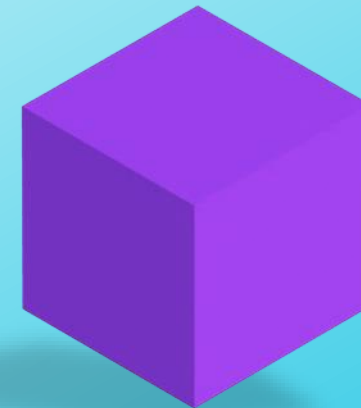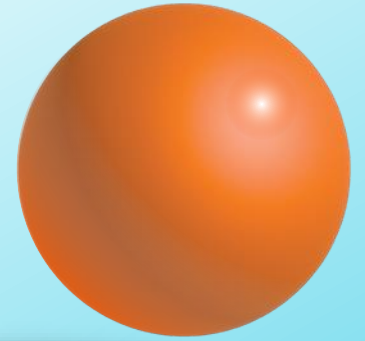
TRAILBLAZERS X EXPLORERS

Trailblazers

Uses GenAI in 51%+ of recent projects.

Only 20% of project professionals are at this level.

They are at the forefront of GenAI adoption, pioneering new and innovative ways to leverage the technology.

Explorers

Uses GenAI in 1%-15% of recent projects.

Only 25% of project professionals are at this level.

In the early stages of exploring and experimenting with GenAI, evaluating potential for growth.

Those using GenAI in more projects...

... also use for a greater portion of the tasks
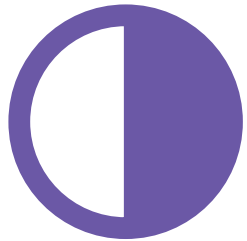
Trailblazers use GenAI in 51% of their projects
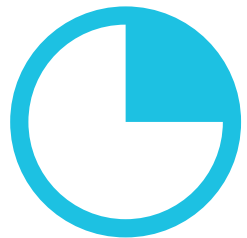
Explorers use GenAI in 1-15% of their projects
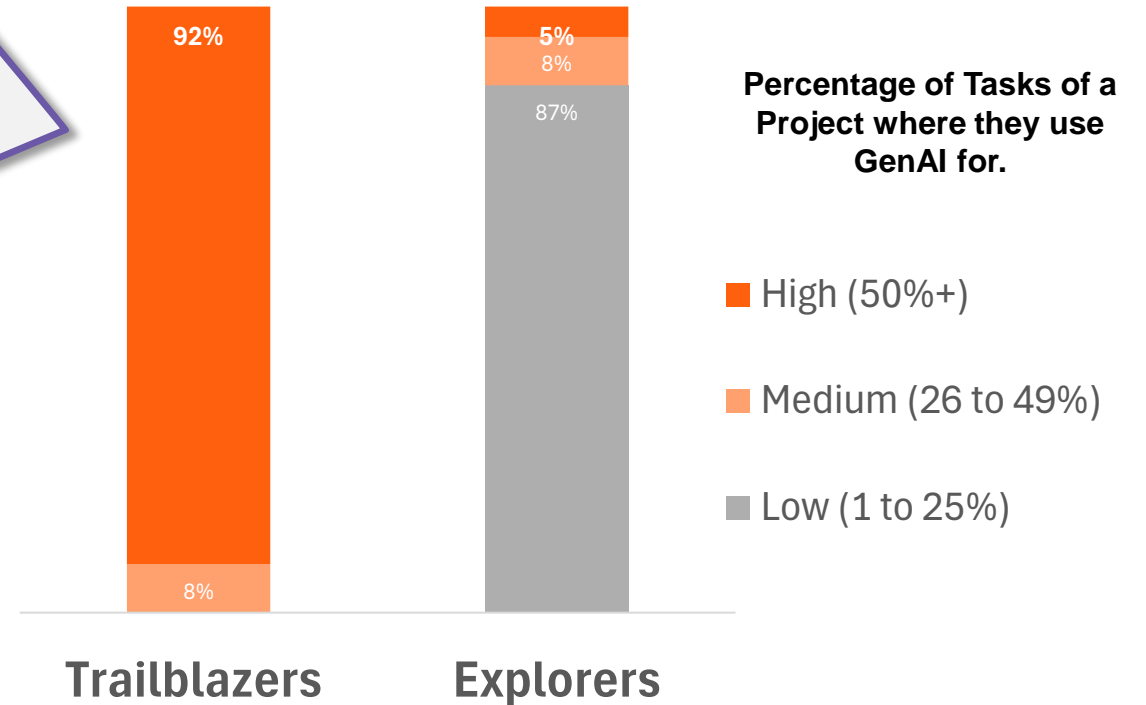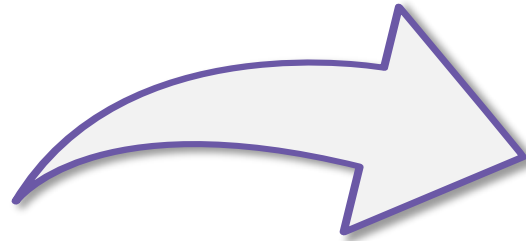
92%

5%
8%
87%

8%

Trailblazers   **Explorers**

Percentage of Tasks of a Project where they use GenAI for.

■ High (50%+)

■ Medium (26 to 49%)

■ Low (1 to 25%)

Source: GenAI research on Project Management. UMPUBLISHED DATA. PMI, May 2024.

Main Findings

Key Benefits:
Maximizing Project
Management Benefits

GenAI Trailblazers:
Leading the
Revolutionary Age

Keys to Success:
Achieving
Organizational
Enablement
Transformation

**Leveraging
GenAI:** Strategies
for Business
Transformation

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Crucial Individual Performance Factors That Enable Project Professionals to Gain Edge Over Peers

These individual performance factors for project professionals report significantly higher in productivity, collaboration, creativity, problem solving, and effectiveness compared to Explorers.
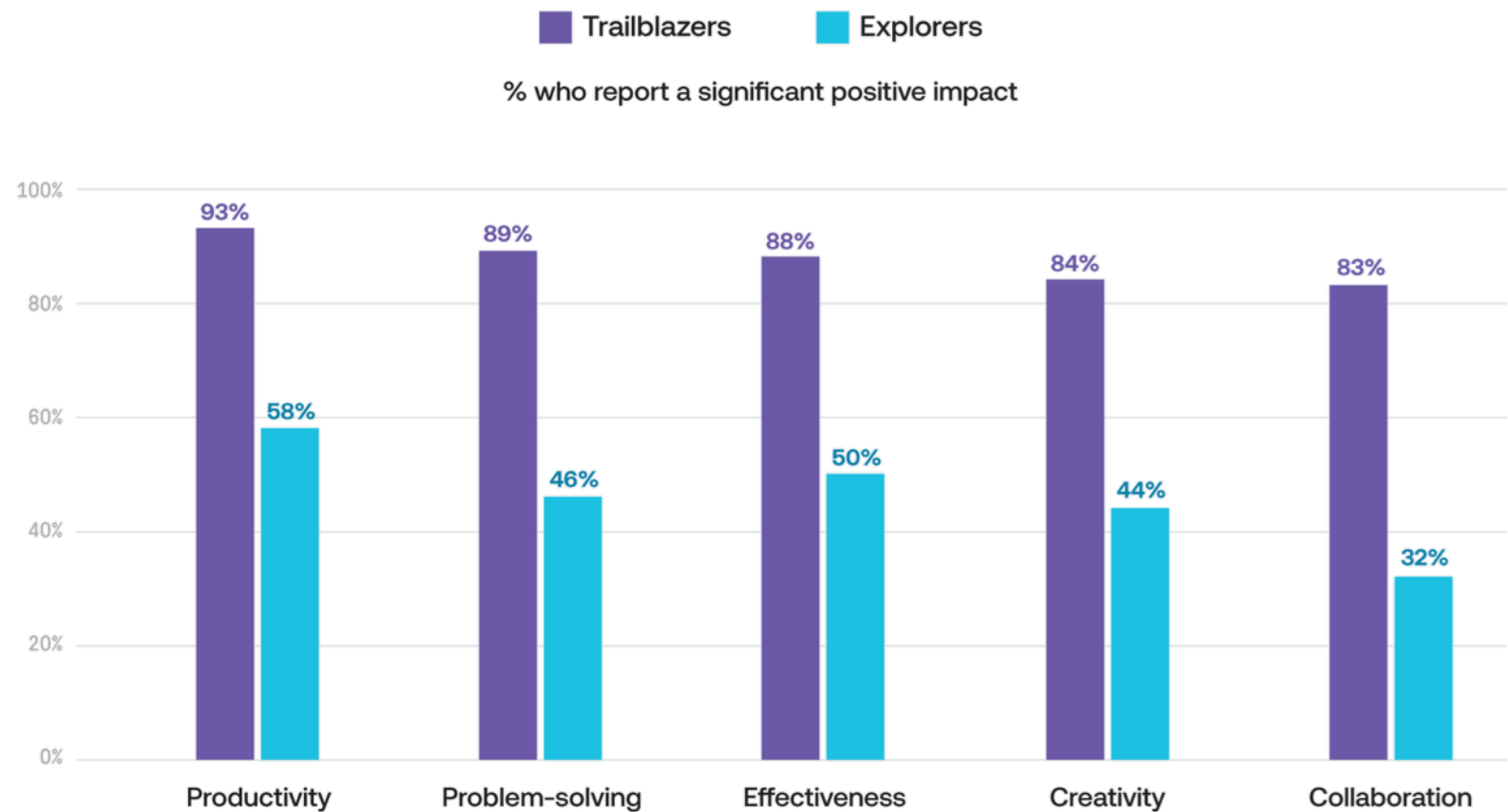
FIGURE 4. GenAI's impact on individual performance

% who report a significant positive impact

	Trailblazers	Explorers
Productivity	93%	58%
Problem-solving	89%	46%
Effectiveness	88%	50%
Creativity	84%	44%
Collaboration	83%	32%

Positive Potential for Transformative Impact in Projects

Trailblazers **Explorers**

% who report a significant positive impact

	Project quality management	Project scope management	Project cost management	Project schedule management
Trailblazers	91%	87%	85%	85%
Explorers	40%	34%	42%	46%
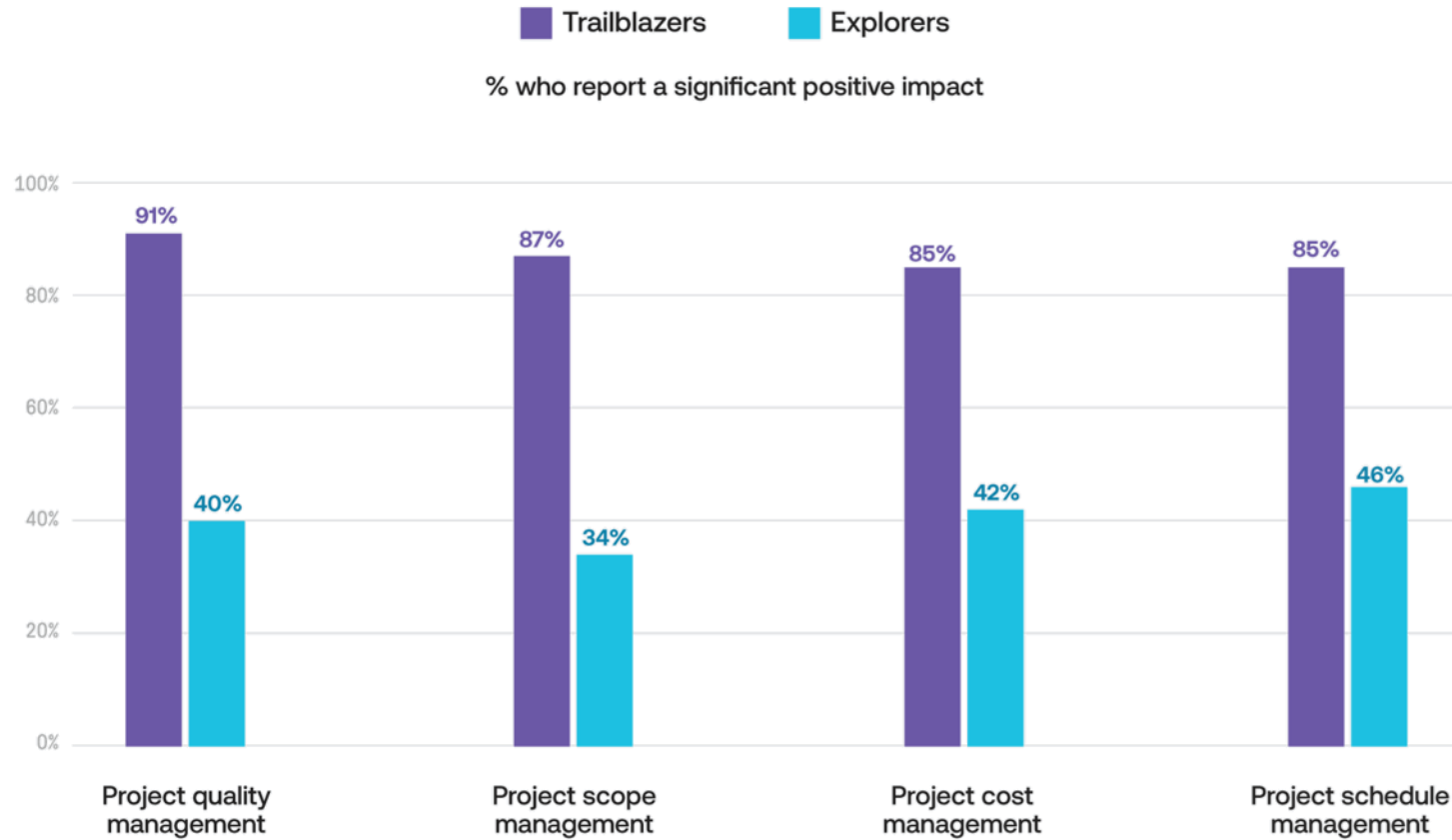
85%+ of Trailblazers expresses strong positive impact of GenAI usage on project aspects, such as scope, schedule, cost and quality management, compared with approximately 40% of Explorers.

FIGURE 3. Impact of GenAI on project performance factors

✅ TAKEAWAYS

High adopters of GenAI perceive significantly greater benefits on key aspects of project management, including project scope, scheduling, cost and quality management.

Those using GenAI more extensively are experiencing noteworthy results on critical aspects for project management such as productivity, problem-solving and effectiveness when executing project work.

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Strategies to Adopt GenAI in Project Work
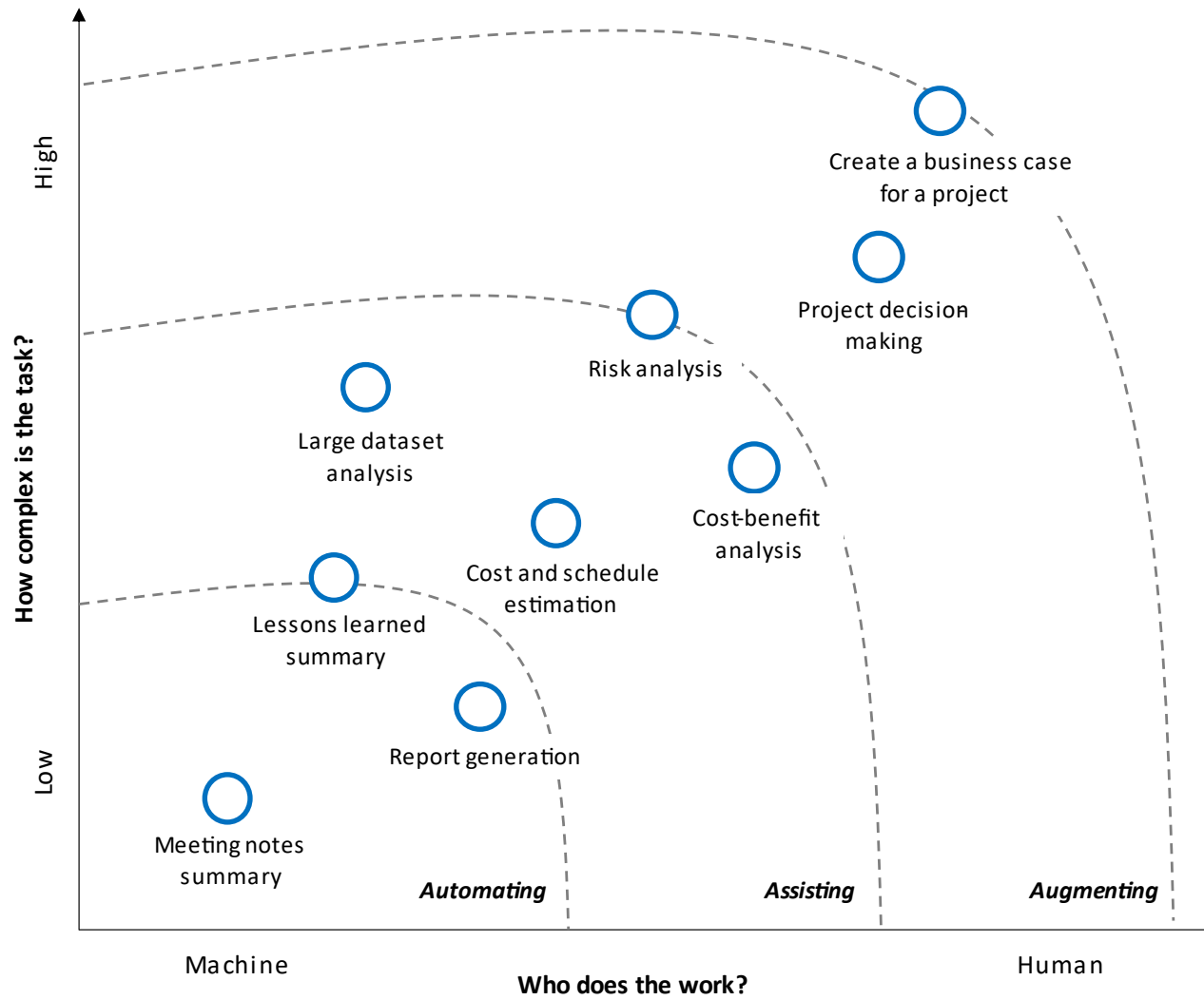
Automation

GenAI can *automate* tasks that are low complexity and require little human intervention in their final output.

Assistance

At the *assisting* level, project professionals can leverage GenAI tools to complement their analysis, get first drafts for review by experts, and iteratively build the expected output for a particular task.

Augmentation

The most complex level is *augmenting*, where project professionals can enhance existing capabilities and learn new skills to perform more complex and strategic tasks.

Tasks that project professionals use GenAI for: Comparison of Trailblazers versus Explorers

Trailblazers **Explorers**

Average Adoption Of Use Cases of GenAI Projects By Trailblazers/Explorers

AUTOMATION
- Summarizing/reviewing: 56% / 40%
- Monitoring: 39% / 25%
- Reporting: 38% / 27%

ASSISTANCE
- Data analysis: 74% / 46%
- Planning: 55% / 33%
- Budgeting/costs: 49% / 16%
- Risk management: 46% / 17%

AUGMENTATION
- Communication: 42% / 33%
- Talent and resources: 37% / 10%
- Decision support: 31% / 16%

Automating*: This refers to using GenAI for low-complexity tasks by creating standard prompts that can be used across different projects and by other team members.

Assisting*: For assisting, project professionals typically use GenAI to complement their analysis and build the expected outcome iteratively.

Augmenting*: For augmentation, project professionals use GenAI for more complex and strategic tasks and enhance their capabilities in the process.

☑ TAKEAWAYS

Project professionals should not only experiment with GenAI in different projects and business contexts, but also in various activities and tasks of the project life cycle.

There is no single pattern of adoption or a "recipe" that can be copied. You and your organization need to define your own adoption strategy.

Main Findings

Key Benefits: Maximizing Project Management Benefits
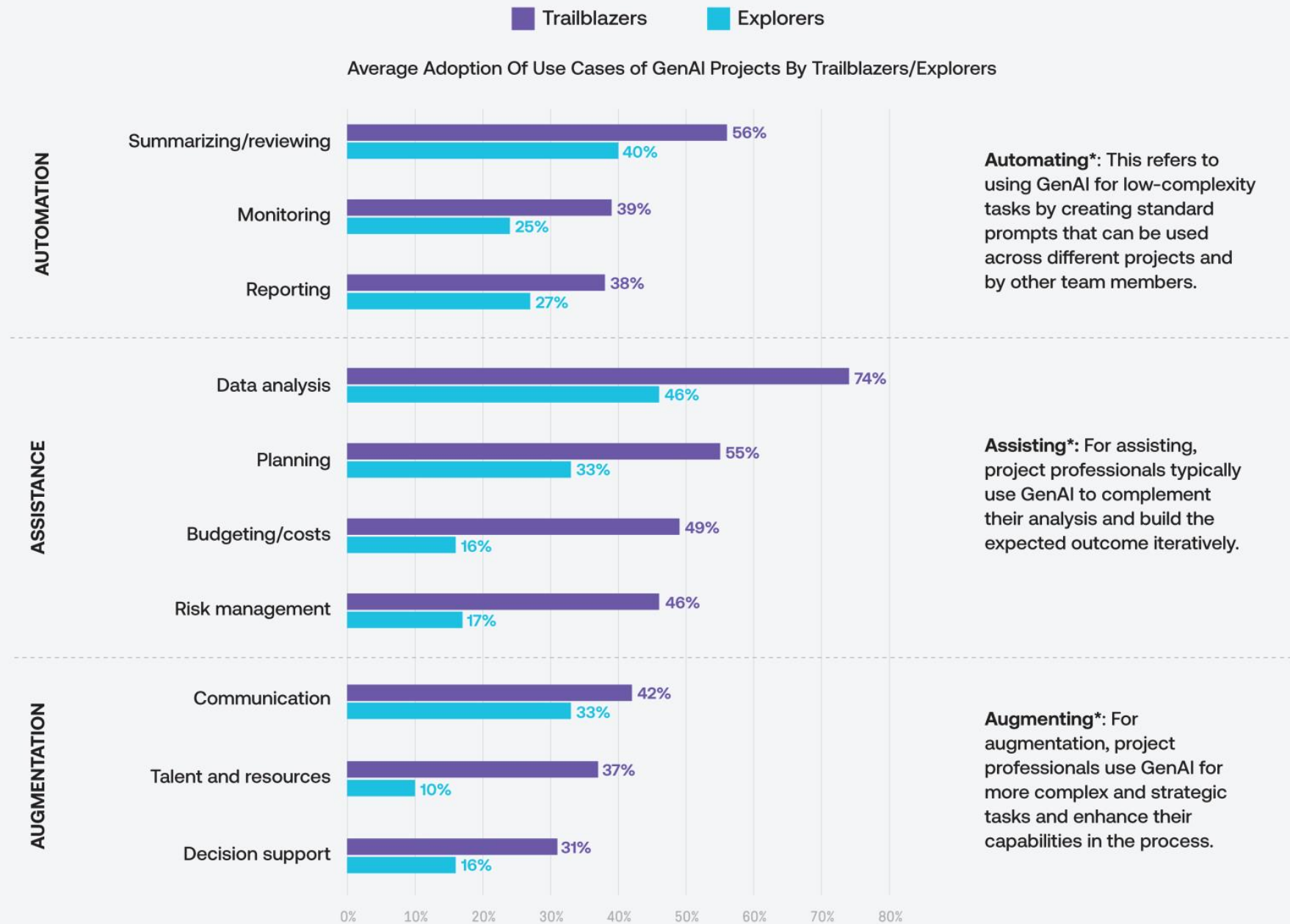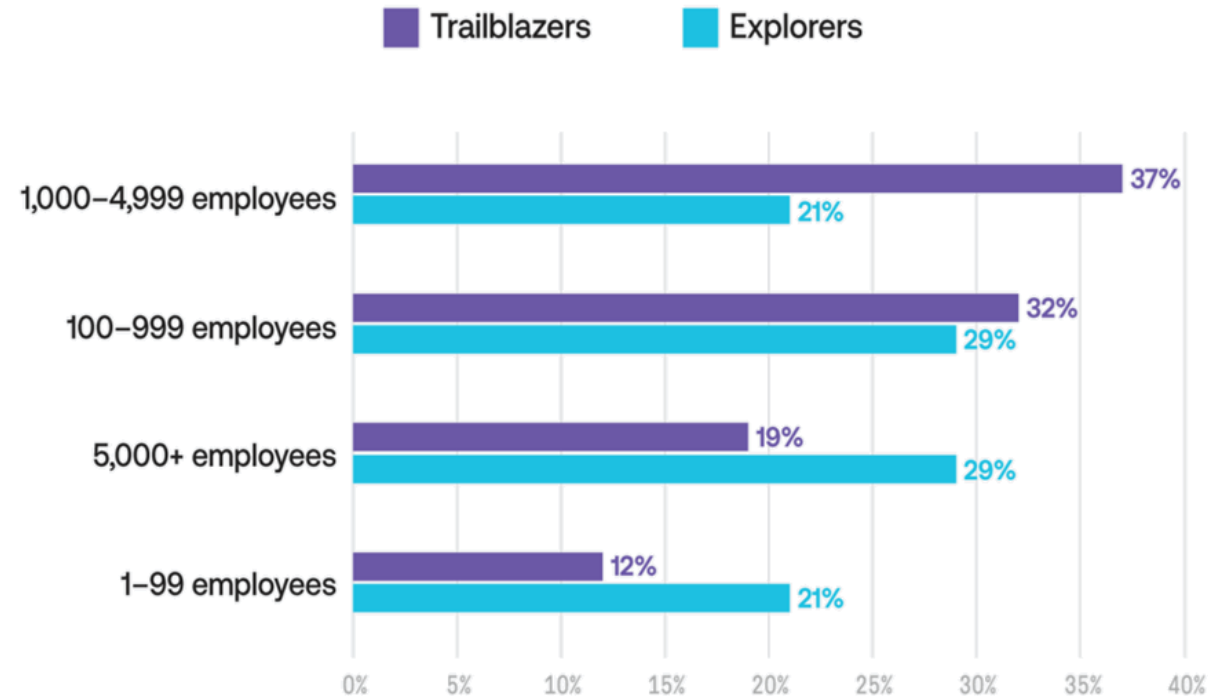
GenAI Trailblazers: Leading the Revolutionary Age

Keys to Success: Achieving Organizational Enablement Transformation

Leveraging GenAI: Strategies for Business Transformation

Trailblazers Explorers

	Trailblazers	Explorers
1,000–4,999 employees	37%	21%
100–999 employees	32%	29%
5,000+ employees	19%	29%
1–99 employees	12%	21%

GenAI adoption varies by organization size.

FIGURE 13. GenAI adoption varies by organization size

Trailblazers are significantly more likely than Explorers to report actively contributing to organizational adoption and fostering a culture that promotes GenAI

Enabling project professionals to adopt GenAI will increase high adopters, driving greater benefits and advocacy, creating a positive feedback loop for further adoption.
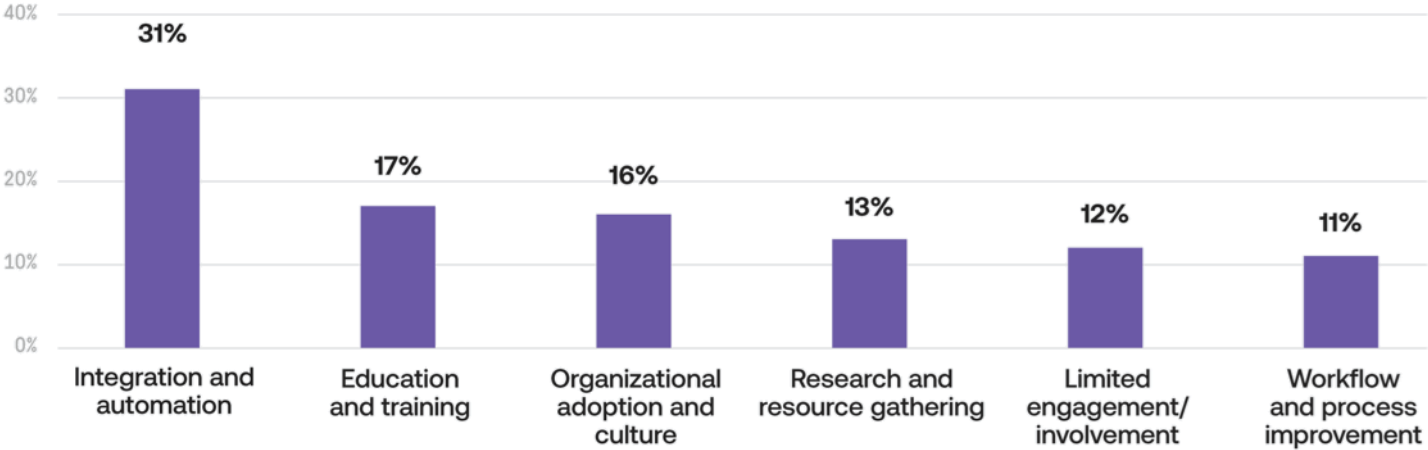
FIGURE 23. Usage of GenAI across different project management tasks (for all project professionals)

Q: For Project P. what activities did you use GenAI for?

- Integration and automation: 31%
- Education and training: 17%
- Organizational adoption and culture: 16%
- Research and resource gathering: 13%
- Limited engagement/involvement: 12%
- Workflow and process improvement: 11%

☑ TAKEAWAYS

Do not limit your adoption experience to easy, low-complexity tasks. Experimenting with GenAI in a variety of tasks helps build your understanding of its potential use cases.

Adopt a proactive approach toward adoption. Project professionals should use their skills to help cultivate a conducive organizational culture transformation.

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Peak organizations most likely to support GenAI usage on an organization-wide level.
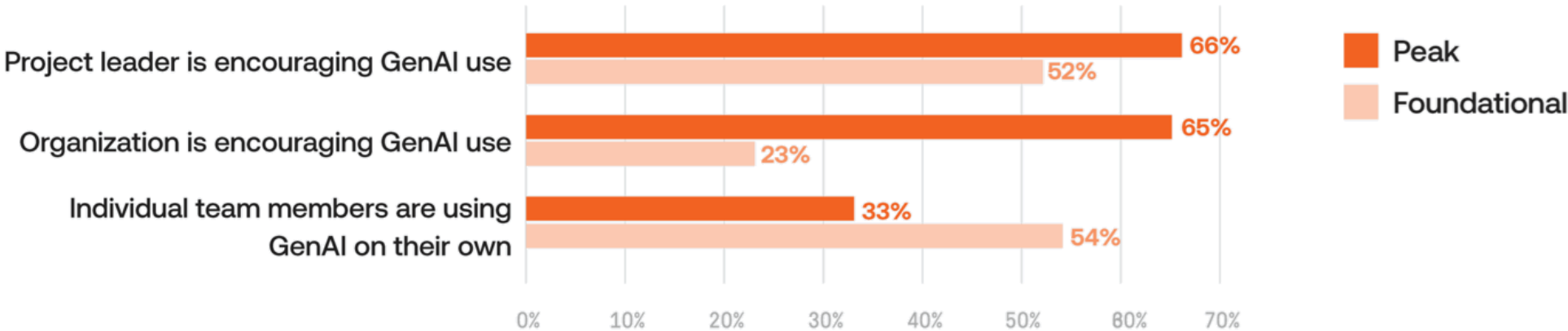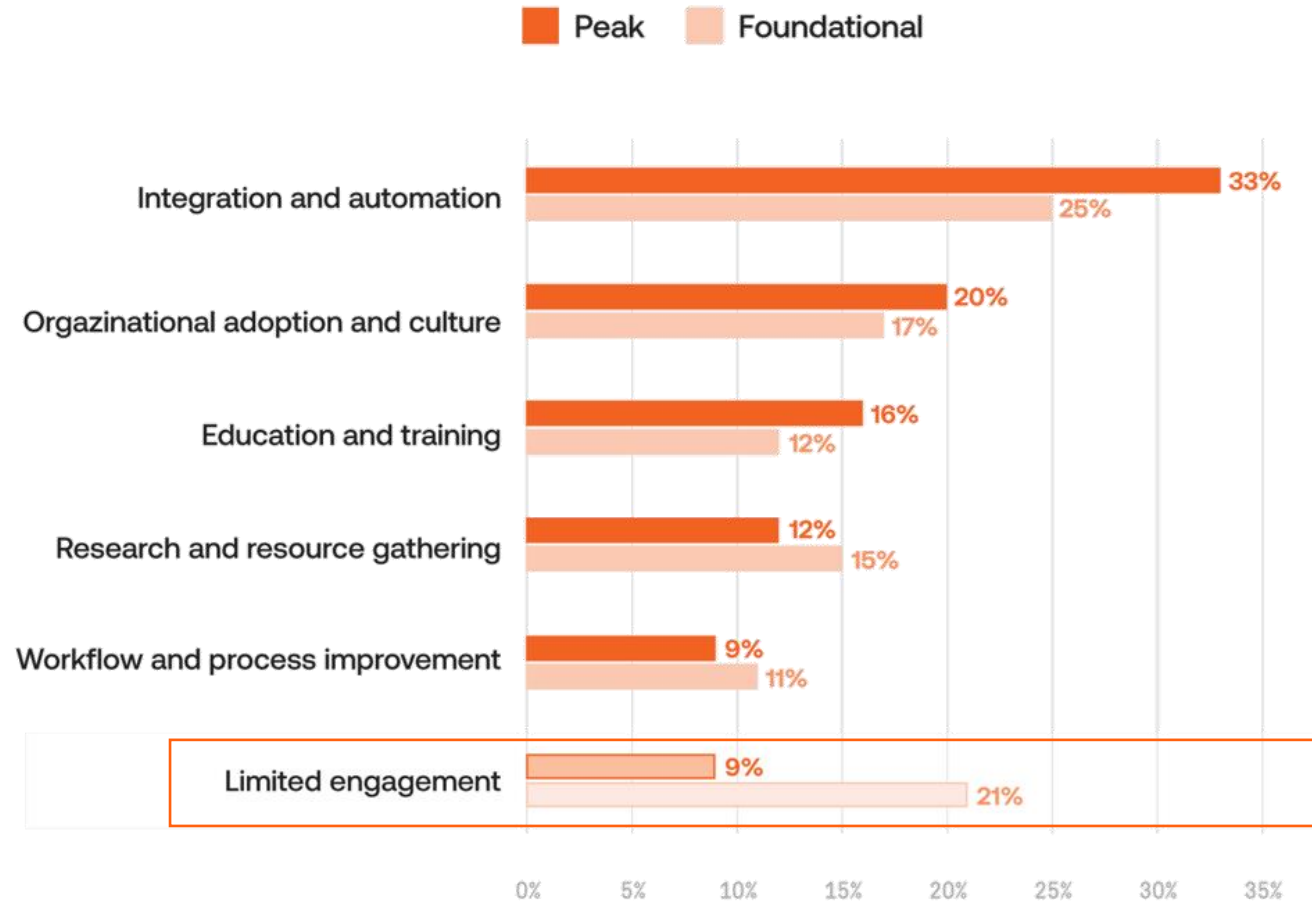

FIGURE 10. Relationship between enablement level and level of support for GenAI use

Trailblazers are 10x more likely to be found within Peak enablement organizations

Project professionals in **Foundational enablement organizations report limited engagement** and involvement in promoting GenAI adoption.

FIGURE 14. What have you, as an organization, been doing to promote GenAI for project management?

Legend: Peak / Foundational

Integration and automation — Peak 33%, Foundational 25%
Orgazinational adoption and culture — Peak 20%, Foundational 17%
Education and training — Peak 16%, Foundational 12%
Research and resource gathering — Peak 12%, Foundational 15%
Workflow and process improvement — Peak 9%, Foundational 11%
Limited engagement — Peak 9%, Foundational 21%

✅ TAKEAWAYS

Establishing a comprehensive organizational enablement framework is crucial to support GenAI-driven transformation in project management across the enterprise.

Without supportive infrastructure, project managers, no matter how enthusiastic, may encounter difficulties in effectively integrating GenAI into project workflows.

What can organizations do better to support GenAI adoption?

1 Establish a coherent strategy, policy and goals on GenAI adoption for project management.

2 Fostering collaborative learning environments through webinars, trainings, and educational programs.

3 Prioritize feedback mechanisms for assessing GenAI tools.

4 Create safe environments for experimentation.
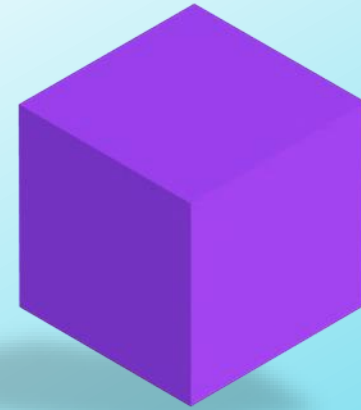
DOWNLOAD THE REPORT

First Mover's Advantage

PMI.org/learning/thought-leadership/
benefits-of-ai-for-project-management

THANK YOU!