



Aligned to thrive with Enterprise Work Management

How you work is how you win

How IBM can help

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Work management must evolve and mature into Enterprise Work Management to build an effective muscle of change.

Key takeaways

■ It takes integration to win.

The new workplace reality requires a more integrated system to optimize work activity and outcomes—and those who prioritize this approach are already outperforming peers.

■ Take the lead by putting people first.

Implementing the technology behind Enterprise Work Management (EWM) may be challenging, but organizations often underestimate the resistance and risks on the people side—a critical misstep.

■ Go for the gold—a holistic approach.

Organizations that adopt a holistic approach to EWM—one that encompasses employees, culture, adoption, strategy, and agility—realize their goals in achieving a competitive advantage 43% more than their peers.

Building the “muscle of change”

Extraordinary pivots were made by organizations amid pandemic lockdowns in 2020 to protect employees and enable work. Since then, workplaces have been radically remade.

In a fluid, dynamic environment that requires real-time responsiveness, we've seen wide-ranging systems deployed across teams and functions. With new expectations by workforce talent, and new demands posed by a shifting marketplace, deep-rooted changes in how we do work—and manage that work—have proliferated across the economy.

But for all the creativity and experimentation, an imposing roadblock remains. Managing ways of working *within* a team or a function is one standalone scenario. For organizations to truly grow and thrive, that collaboration must be enabled seamlessly *across* the enterprise. Work management must evolve and mature into *Enterprise Work Management* to build an effective muscle of change.

In a recent study of business leaders conducted by the IBM Institute for Business Value, we surveyed more than 1,500 executives from nine countries across 10 industries to understand how organizations are approaching their work management transformations, how effective they are at doing so, and what challenges might be getting in the way.

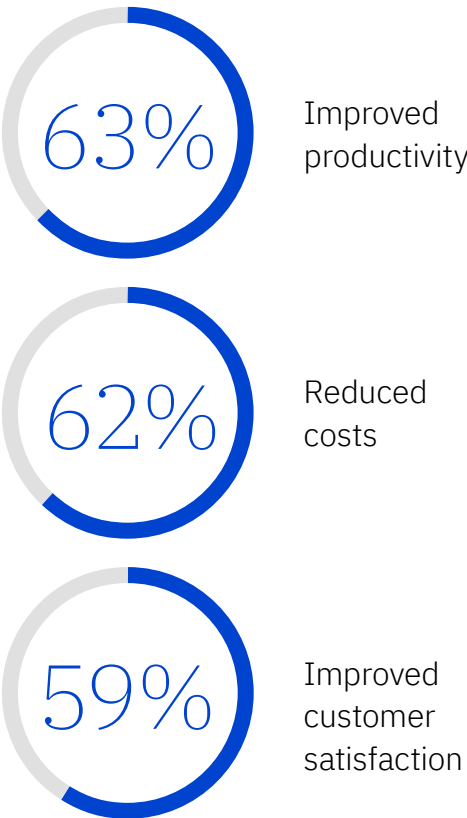
For organizations to truly grow and thrive, collaboration must be enabled seamlessly across the enterprise.

Nearly six in ten agree that the need for effective Enterprise Work Management (EWM) has escalated, moving it from a “nice-to-have” to a mission-critical priority. And the benefits of integrated work management strategies align accordingly, with respondents saying that integrated work management has resulted in improved productivity, reduced costs, and improved customer satisfaction for their organizations (see Figure 1).

With organizations understanding the urgency of EWM, it’s no surprise that spending on work management solutions is expected to increase significantly. New adopters of these solutions expect to spend 33% more in 2023 than in 2021, in-process organizations anticipate spending 24% more, and seasoned veterans expect to spend 29% more.

FIGURE 1

Most organizations have seen improved productivity, reduced costs, and improved customer satisfaction through integrated work management.



Nearly
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agree that the need for effective EWM has escalated to a mission-critical priority.

Q. Which of the above benefits has your organization realized by deploying integrated work management strategies?

Work management spending has momentum, but companies still need to be thoughtful. High levels of economic uncertainty call for organizations to make smart, targeted, strategic investments that position them for long-term growth and resiliency. Work management can help by automating workflows, fostering collaboration within and across teams, and bringing greater visibility into resource allocations and availability.

What’s required is not only a set of systems and digital tools, but a strategic, integrated approach to transforming how people accomplish their work—and how organizations tackle that challenge. EWM is about aligning strategy, people, culture, and technology with personalized processes and simplified collaboration to create faster time to value.

This report explores the accelerated need for EWM and why organizations invest in work management transformations today. We highlight the importance

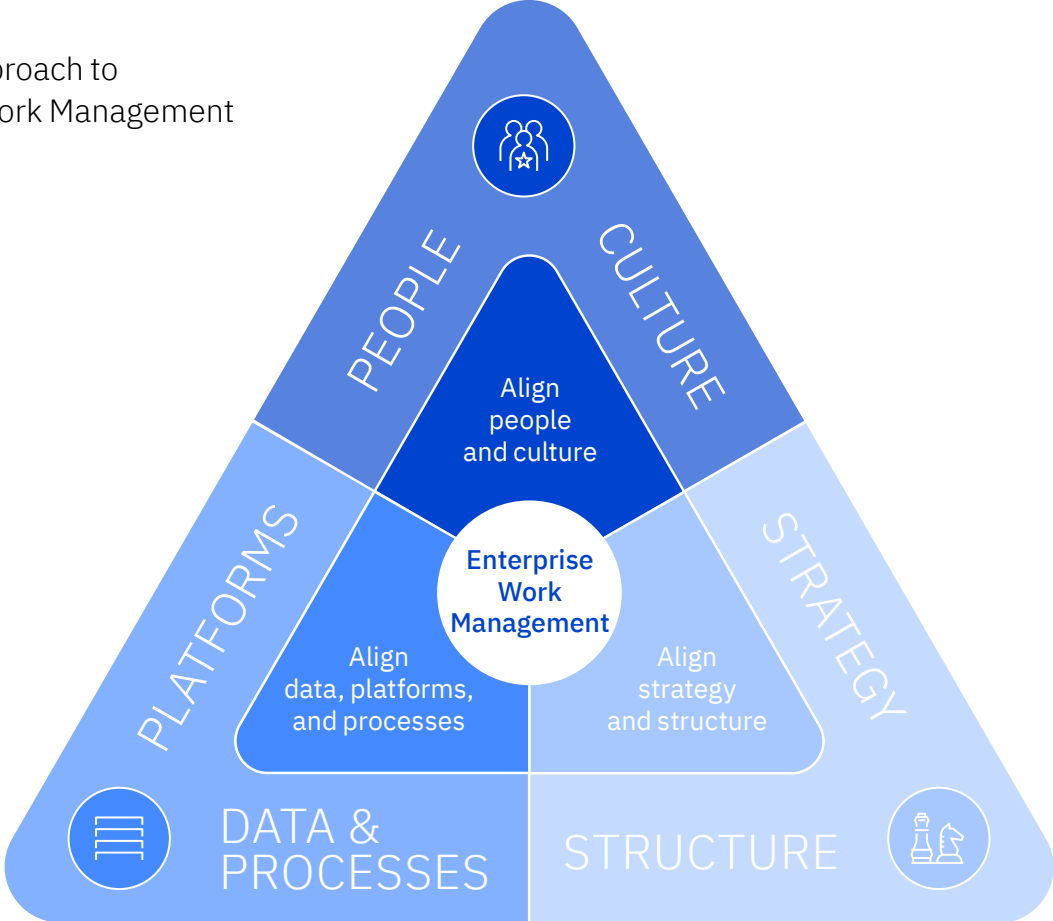
of orchestrating across various work management platforms. We explain how the EWM approach transcends technology to include strategy, people, and process. We also outline three areas of focus to consider when developing an EWM roadmap.

By aggregating multiple work management processes into one enterprise-wide system of record, EWM can free employees to focus on higher-value work, provide clarity on how employee contributions impact overall business results, streamline work across ecosystems, and enhance an organization’s ability to manage compliance requirements.

EWM’s holistic approach addresses all the components of today’s complex work systems in a way that systematically eliminates functional silos across the organization (see Figure 2). Think of EWM as a corporate chiropractor: a way to keep your organization in alignment, healthy, and thriving.

FIGURE 2

A holistic approach to Enterprise Work Management



Section 1

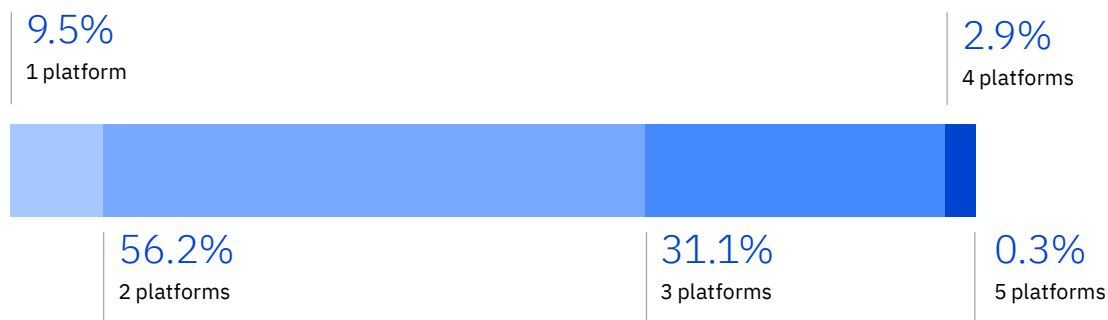
The criticality of orchestration and integration

Of organizations that use work management solutions, the vast majority—nine in ten—“mix and match” across platforms to get what they need. While this can customize functionality, it makes integration of these platforms crucial to implementing true EWM.

Organizations have anywhere from one to five branded work management platforms, with the vast majority (87%) saying they use two to three (see Figure 3). Our respondents report using work management solutions most frequently for project and task management (67%) and workflow management (65%). Document, asset management, and collaboration trail closely at 62% each.

FIGURE 3

Most organizations use multiple work management platforms—but those platforms need to be integrated.



Q. Which work management solution does your organization currently use? Select all that apply.

But when it comes to core functionality, organizations are still eager to expand upon what they have. Organizations report areas they'd like to enhance, such as workflow management, project and task management, collaboration, and document and asset management. Largely unexplored work management functionality includes the critical area of automation (just 36% have this capability—see Perspective, “The importance of integration and automation” on page 7).

If using work management platforms can improve productivity, reduce costs, and improve customer satisfaction, then using multiple platforms would multiply returns, right? Perhaps, but more than one platform can also produce overlapping, redundant workflows, tools, and processes—creating logjams, hindering collaboration, and preventing organizations from reaching their full potential (see case study, “An international toy manufacturer” on page 8). It's like an out-of-synch symphony hitting discordant notes.

That's why *orchestrating* across platforms, technologies, and processes is essential to scaling work management across the enterprise. Even if different teams use different tools, consolidating the data from these tools as much as possible into *one*

system of record creates *one* central control panel—and end-to-end visibility—for the organization. Does this sound ambitious? Keep in mind that consolidation can be a long-term goal. Integrating and consolidating systems of record can still result in better quality data and more accurate reporting.

Another benefit: In interwoven ecosystems that cross organizational boundaries, work management platforms can also foster more productive workflows and partnerships between companies.

But integration can be tricky, with over half of respondents citing technical integration with other systems as a top tactical barrier to further enhancing their current work management platform. Over half cite technical- and process-related challenges, including limited functionality and interoperability, as their biggest risks.

It's all too easy for organizations to myopically focus on the technology side. Collaboration, coordination, and the effective communication of priorities must all be considered. And processes must work in concert, not in silos.

Orchestrating across platforms, technologies, and processes is essential to scaling work management across the enterprise.



Perspective

The importance of integration and automation

Automation can handle routine, repetitive tasks, freeing employees for creative, strategic thinking. The benefits are many, yet only 36% of organizations currently have this functionality. 44% of organizations overall report wanting to obtain automation.

But it's not enough to simply add automation functionality to the work management wish list—organizations need to consider automation through EWM's holistic lens. An integrated solution is essential to getting the optimal value out of automation. If enterprise ecosystems aren't aligned, automation really isn't being used to its full potential. *It's cross-enterprise automation with integration that builds muscle.*

Automation and integration have a symbiotic relationship. Neither are as powerful without the other. And, the terms automation and integration are sometimes used interchangeably, but they are different. *Integration* is the passing of data back and forth. *Automation* is a tool that triggers action, for example, prompting an approval. While the integration of data can trigger automation, it's not automation in and of itself.

Integration optimizes the maximum potential of automation, but it goes both ways— automation can also improve the quality of integration. For example, some automation tools apply AI to real-time data, creating recommendations specific to your organization. This can help improve workflows and uncover inefficiencies. And the very latest automation tools take on hybrid IT environments, accommodating multiple stakeholders and technical styles of integration.¹

Automation tops the “most wanted” list of functionalities.



44%

Automation



31%

Approvals



30%

Project analytics



26%

Portfolio and program management



26%

Financial management



22%

Workflow management



20%

Document and asset management



20%

Integration capability



19%

Project and task management



18%

Collaboration

Q. Which functionality would your organization like to obtain?

Case study

An international toy manufacturer: What could you do with five extra hours per week?²

This organization struggled with inconsistent processes across teams, geographies, and brands. Many tools were siloed, generating extra manual tasks, data entry, and analysis. Reporting processes were cumbersome, with workflows, applications, physical work sites, and data sources residing in multiple locations.

Embracing an EWM approach across multiple marketing teams and brands proved to be the right move for this company. As a result, they refined delivery and centralized data, increasing velocity and strengthening decision-making.

Some concrete examples: projects were created in just one-quarter of the time, compared to pre-EWM. And one system automatically created reports in just five minutes, down from five hours—in effect, giving employees more than an extra half-day per week to innovate, create, and brainstorm new ideas in a highly competitive industry.

One EWM improvement gave employees more than an extra half-day per week to innovate, create, and brainstorm new ideas.

Section 2

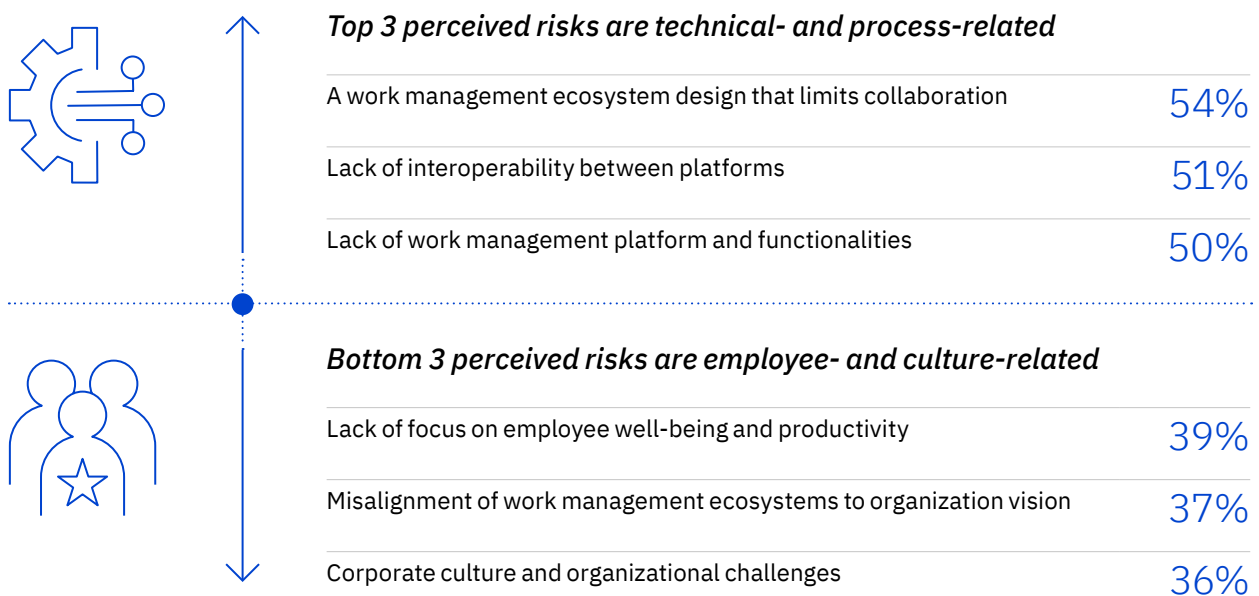
The people factor

In the previous section, we outlined the challenges that a lack of technical integration can pose to a work management transformation. As noted, the top three risks cited by more than half of our respondents are process- and technical-related (see Figure 4), despite the fact that repercussions for employees and culture have the power to derail a transformation.

Our research shows that concerns about employee well-being and productivity, misalignment of work management ecosystems to organizational vision, and corporate culture challenges lag behind other priorities. This is risky, given a tight labor market. One daunting estimate: 85 million jobs could go unfilled by 2030 due to a lack of skilled workers.³

FIGURE 4

Employee well-being and culture are underestimated as risks.



Q. Thinking of EWM, which challenges present the biggest risk to successful transformation for your organization?

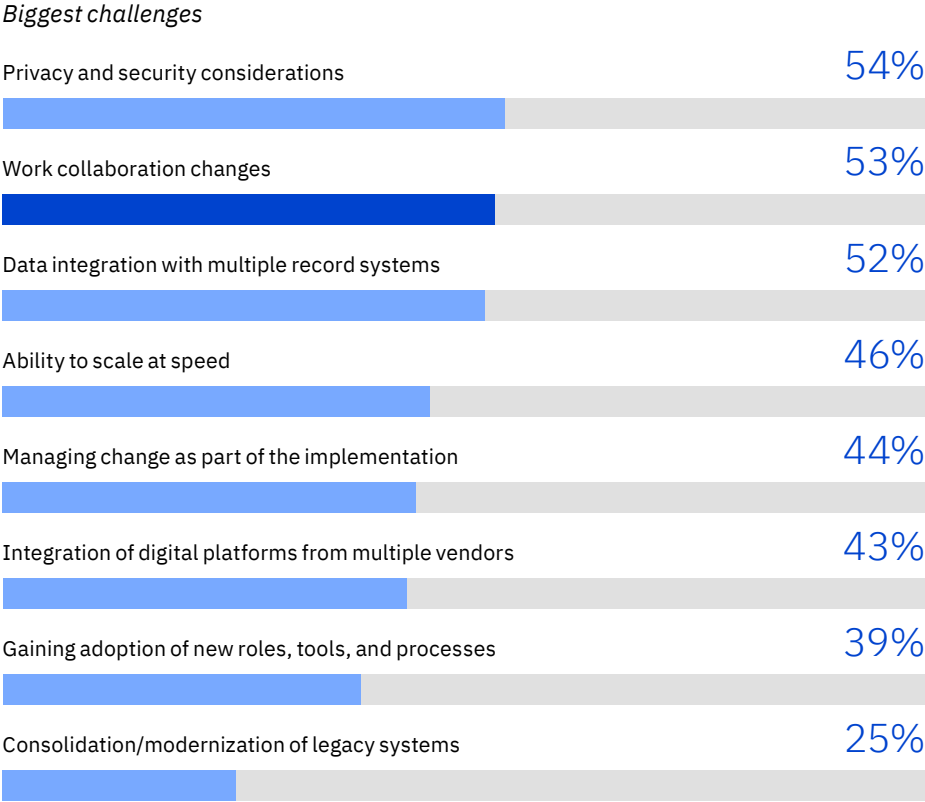
This phenomenon isn't limited to organizations thinking about adopting EWM. A recent IBV study investigating talent and transformation issues found that only one out of three executives (35%) say their enterprise transformation initiatives include a robust change management program.⁴

It's a missed opportunity throughout the enterprise. When you think about it, technology is simply the fuel—employees are the engine. While technology is an essential enabler, without appropriate enrichment and nurturing of people and culture, transformation will stall. In fact, research found that the amount of change that the average employee could absorb without becoming fatigued in 2020 was *half* of what it was in 2019.⁵

Technology can be a *facilitator* of collaboration—yet ultimately, it's the employees who need to work together. And to that point, more than half of respondents report *changes* in workplace collaboration as one of their biggest challenges (see Figure 5).

Certainly, the pandemic underscored a need for organizations to rapidly pivot to where and how their employees connect. We can expect the ways in which employees and ecosystems collaborate will continue to evolve—for example, with the move to remote and hybrid work models.

FIGURE 5
Changes in workplace collaboration are a top challenge for organizations.



Q. What are the biggest challenges for your organization when implementing work management platforms?

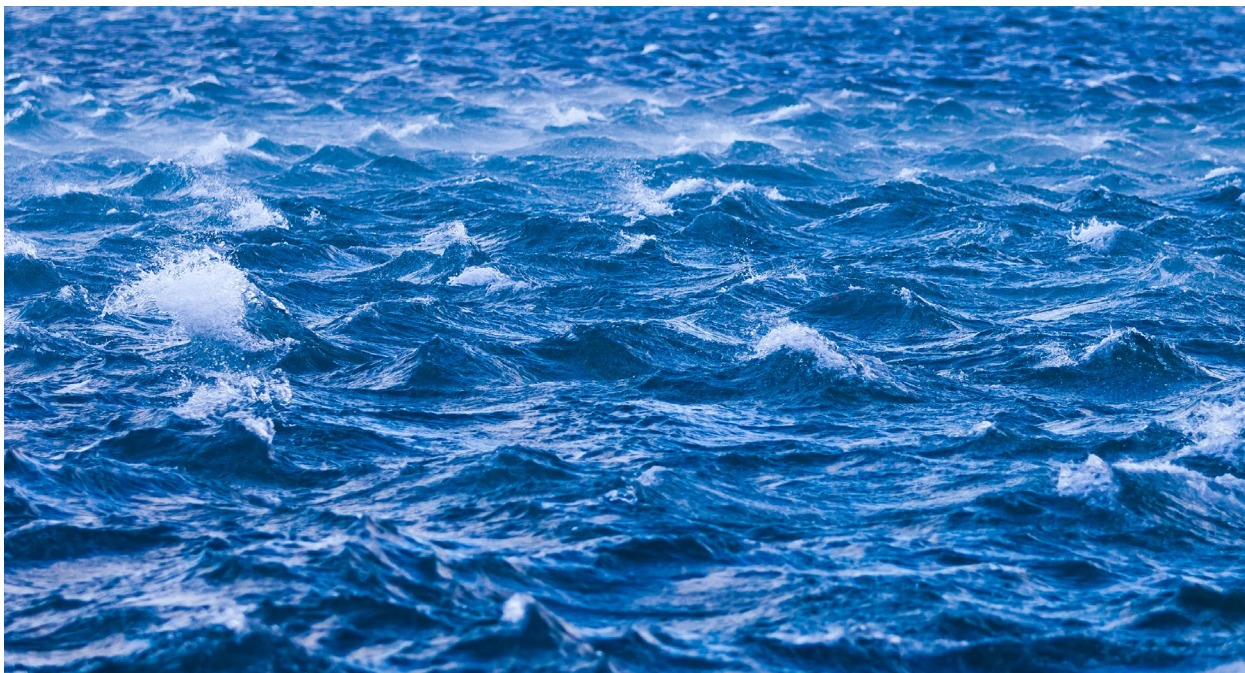
The predominance of remote and hybrid work is a profound shift. What does culture look like in this new context? How do “new hire” remote employees acclimate to corporate culture and ways of doing things? These scenarios can compound the impact of swift, frequent changes on employees. How can enterprises soften change—and how can they avoid “corporate whiplash”?

Effective change management must embrace the chaos—both acknowledging the velocity of change and providing meaningful assistance to employees. Recent research found that only 24% of workers have a high degree of readiness to adopt new, technologically driven ways of working—a daunting minority.⁶ The remaining 76%? They will need support.

In our experience, what can go awry in transformations often falls outside technology’s realm. In many ways, the issues are more complex than bits and bytes:

employees fail to adapt. Changes aren’t communicated effectively. The corporate culture isn’t prepared for or amenable to the transition. Organizational leadership is inconsistent. In these situations, the pitfalls simply aren’t within the technical design.⁷

To succeed, an enterprise-wide EWM transformation requires a thorough understanding of the people impacted, human-centered process design, and a plan for smooth adoption—but few organizations have recognized this and acted. For example, other IBV research reveals that just 30% consider their “transformation timeline” to be the time needed to transform people, as opposed to the time needed to implement technology.⁸ Moving forward, organizations need to apply a “servant leadership” model that includes a greater understanding and consideration of employees, mindsets, and culture.





Section 3

Enterprise Work Management: A roadmap to organizational agility

There's an old parable: "Give a person a fish, you feed them for a day. Teach a person to fish, you feed them for a lifetime." This easily extends to change: if you teach an organization *how to change*—how to develop those muscles—it will thrive.

True enterprise agility hinges on how well an enterprise can change and evolve its ways of working in a constantly shifting environment (see case study, "Marketing group at a global B2B services firm"). How easily can it grow and prosper in unstable conditions? How can technical processes adapt to evolutions in technology? How can a workforce remain motivated in the face of incessant uncertainty?

Getting to enterprise agility and scale is not easy: 46% of organizations say scaling at speed is one of their biggest challenges. Yet part of the problem may be underutilizing work management—*especially integrated EWM*—as a means to achieve true agility and scale. Our research shows most organizations are not yet fully recognizing this connection: only one in four (26%) of respondents felt that scaling rapidly is a reason to invest in EWM.

Meet the Agility Outperformers

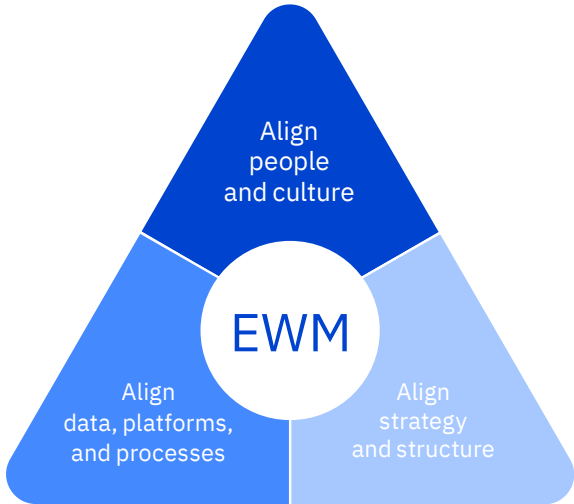
- Comprise 11% of respondents
- Employ an EWM approach to work management transformations
- Report greater business results across multiple dimensions.

EWM provides a roadmap to attaining the increasing levels of agility demanded by today’s economy. In fact, we found the organizations that excelled at change—Agility Outperformers, which are 11% of our respondents—consistently employed an EWM

approach in their organization’s work management transformations (see Figure 6). And 53% of them report achieving their goals in scaling rapidly with work management platforms to a large or significantly large extent.

FIGURE 6

Most Agility Outperformers embrace the EWM holistic approach.



People and culture

- 71% consider aligning talent selection and development to their objectives to be very or extremely important
- 67% value aligning culture and employee experience to their objectives
- 57% achieve desired results from new cross-functional roles that facilitate collaboration between individuals and teams

Strategy and structure

- 65% consider alignment of work management initiatives to business strategy to be a top business priority
- 70% value aligning organizational structures to their objectives
- 82% value increasing organizational collaboration and breaking down silos

Data, platforms, and processes

- 70% achieved desired results from an integration and data strategy aligned to their objectives

Case study

Marketing group at a global B2B services firm: Capturing evolving marketing opportunities⁹

Marketing leaders at a global business-to-business (B2B) services firm were on a journey to improve the strategic value of marketing in their organization. To achieve that goal, they engaged IBM iX to assess their work management operating model.

Together, they found an organization hindered by legacy culture and failing to meet stakeholder expectations. Findings included:

- Complex business processes that caused delays and limited innovation
- Hierarchical decision-making and organizational silos that inhibited collaboration
- A lack of prioritization and shared objectives with stakeholders
- Ineffective design and use of a work management platform
- A “fear of failure” culture.

The marketing leaders partnered with IBM iX to transform marketing into an agile organization through EWM. Specifically, they better aligned operations to strategy, adjusted structures and roles, streamlined processes, and created better technology solutions. Most profound were new perspectives on team delivery, self-governance, decision-making, iteration, and more, which empowered the organization to:

- Embrace a client-centric and adaptive approach and mindset
- Establish cross-functional teams to break down silos, increase velocity, and improve quality
- Redesign the work management platform to support agile teams and simplify workflows
- Drive culture change through leadership “lifelines” and questioning of legacy processes and mindsets.

This transformation is already showing measurable business impact, even as the engagement is still in process:

- Improved turnaround times with over 50% gains in speed to market
- Increased velocity of work processes by 33% within the first four months
- Enhanced ability of agile teams to plan, coordinate, and execute work as a team to meet expectations
- Scaled enterprise-level transformation across the entire global marketing organization.

The Agility Outperformer approach, which integrates strategy, process, people, culture, and technology, produced notable results in enterprise agility—and much more. Over the past two years, these organizations also report outperforming competitors in enterprise-wide digital transformation (36% more than their peers), as well as innovation and employee satisfaction.

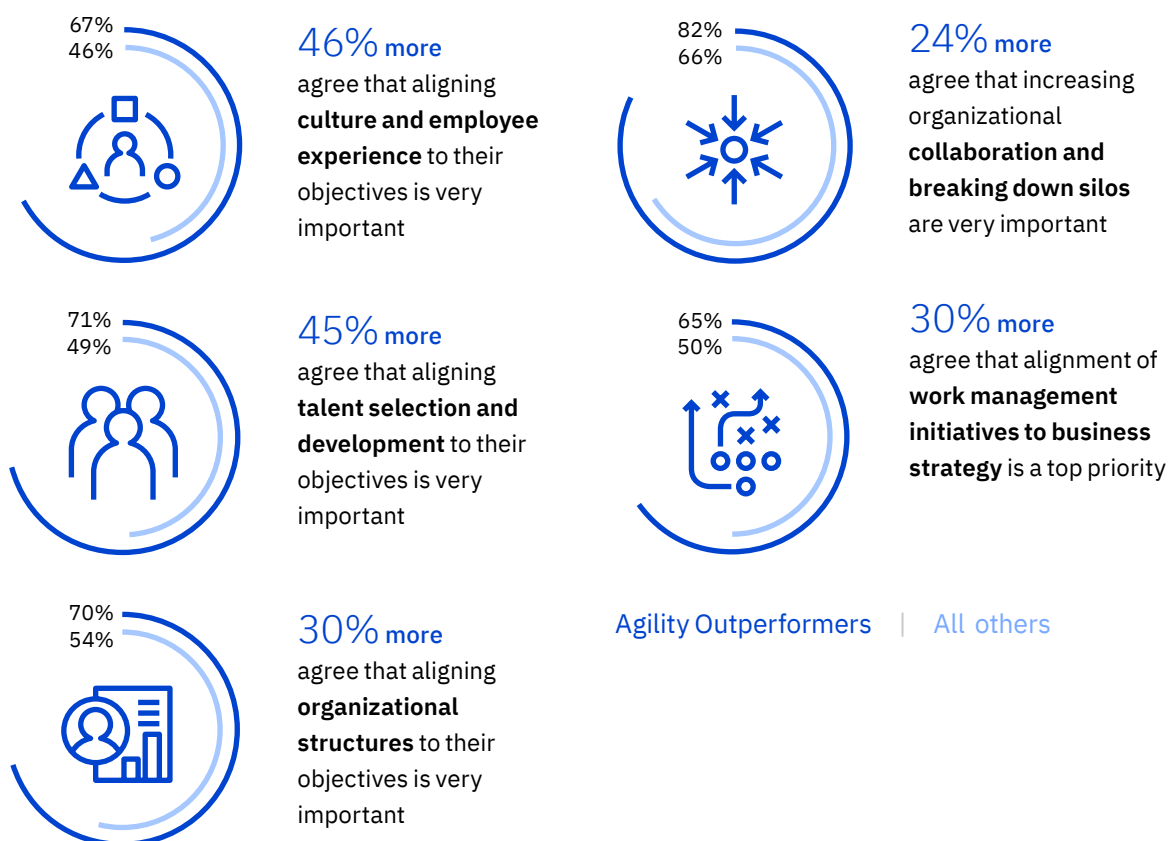
And their outperformance in the ever-crucial supply chain realm is dramatic during that timeframe. Agility Outperformers say they bested competitors in resiliency to supply chain disruptions 70% more often than their peers—and in monitoring supply chain partners, a full 103% more.

Agility Outperformers are models for embracing “people” factors, weaving culture, people, and collaboration into their strategic priorities and objectives. For example, when compared to their peers, 45% more Agility Outperformers say aligning talent selection and development is important to their strategic objectives—and 30% more say aligning organizational structures to objectives is important as well.

46% more cite aligning culture and employee experience as important to those objectives. And 24% more say increasing organizational collaboration and breaking down silos are important to their strategic priorities (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7

Agility Outperformers take a more holistic approach to culture, employees, and more.



Q. Which of the above statements best describes how your work management initiatives are aligned to your business strategy?
 Q. How important are the above to your organization's strategic objectives?

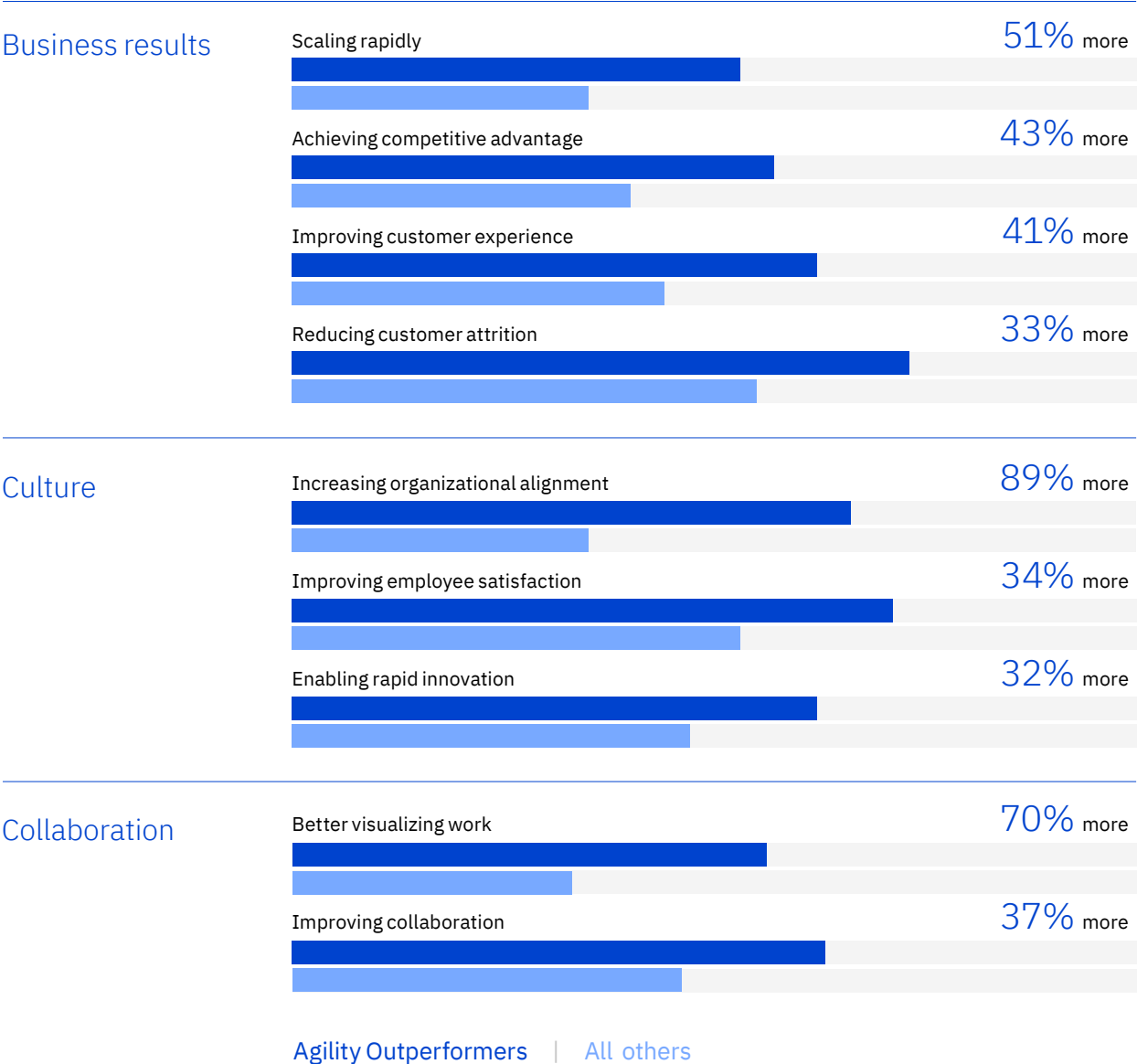
This synthesis of people and organizational considerations with strategic priorities and objectives pays off. For example, when compared to their peers, a full 34% more Agility Outperformers realize goals in employee satisfaction. 37% more report improved collaboration. In terms of agility, 51% more report an ability to scale more rapidly than competitors (see Figure 8).

And to conclude, 65% of Agility Outperformers say alignment of work management initiatives to business strategy was a top strategic business priority—

30% more than other respondents (50%). This alignment of strategy and structure is a foundational component of EWM.

Agility Outperformers have much to teach us. They understand how strategy, structure, data, platforms, processes—and of course, people and culture—overlap and intertwine. They are able to tap into the full might of one cohesive organization. Agility Outperformers get it: how an enterprise works together is how an enterprise wins—together.

FIGURE 8 Agility Outperformers excel in multiple areas across business results, culture, and collaboration.



Q. To what extent has your organization realized your work management goals in each of the above areas?

Action guide

To succeed, Enterprise Work Management requires enterprise support, starting at the very top. CEOs need to be fluent in the benefits of EWM—and be willing to champion the cause. CMOs, with their emphasis on sales and the customer experience, play a critical role as well. While certain actions call upon the expertise of specific C-suite roles, the CEO and CMO should influence efforts organization-wide.

Invite the COO and CHRO to partner on developing an outcome-focused, people-centric EWM vision

- Stay grounded in why your organization needs transformation and what can be gained from it. Define understandable, measurable business, employee, and customer outcomes for the desired EWM transformation.
- Design a compelling, future-state vision for *how* your organization does work. Be willing to *reimagine* the current state without being bound to existing tools, processes, and perspectives. Use design thinking to question legacy structures and processes and focus on delivering value through end-to-end process workflows. Be sure to address structure, process, organizational leadership, culture, and/or capabilities in your vision.
- Assess the organization’s processes, people, and structures against this vision and identify the key mindset and behavioral changes needed to transform vision into reality. And remember: people are the strongest part of any transformation.

Engage the CDO and CIO/CTO to architect a plan for integrating processes, data, and platforms

- Define cross-organizational strategic themes that align to the EWM transformation vision. Assess organizational structures, strategies, technology, and culture against these themes. Visualize the organization as an ecosystem of data and teams. What needs to change to fully integrate this vision?
- Identify the technology and integrations needed to support new processes and improved decision-making. Keep in mind, integrations can be “invisible” too. Consider where integrations can pass data to other systems, while maintaining a familiar user interface.
- Create a backlog and release plan from your EWM future-state vision. With an agile approach, identify minimum viable products (MVPs) to implement change in “bite-size” chunks that can be measured against outcomes. Taking on smaller pieces aligned to your vision and strategy provides ongoing quick wins and keeps people motivated.
- Set up your core systems of record and define a plan to build cross-enterprise automation and integration to connect the full work management ecosystem and build muscle.

As the EWM initiative rolls out, mobilize the CHRO to drive a culture of transparency, adoption, and effective change management initiatives

- Develop a workstream for change management consisting of “change champions” to define and lead change and increase adoption. This means a group of influencers that can guide users through changes in small steps that align with the MVPs. Be sure your change strategy is integrated with business strategy and focus on creating a culture to support the new mindsets required for the transformation.
- Establish a governance model to manage stakeholders, expectations, and program progress from day one. An agile approach is key here, working in iteration and focusing on delivering value quickly and often. This celebrates successes and heads off challenges early.
- Enlist the COO to lead tracking efforts measuring your baseline and improvements. These metrics help your organization stay rooted in the value the transformation is driving across business, employee, and customer outcomes.

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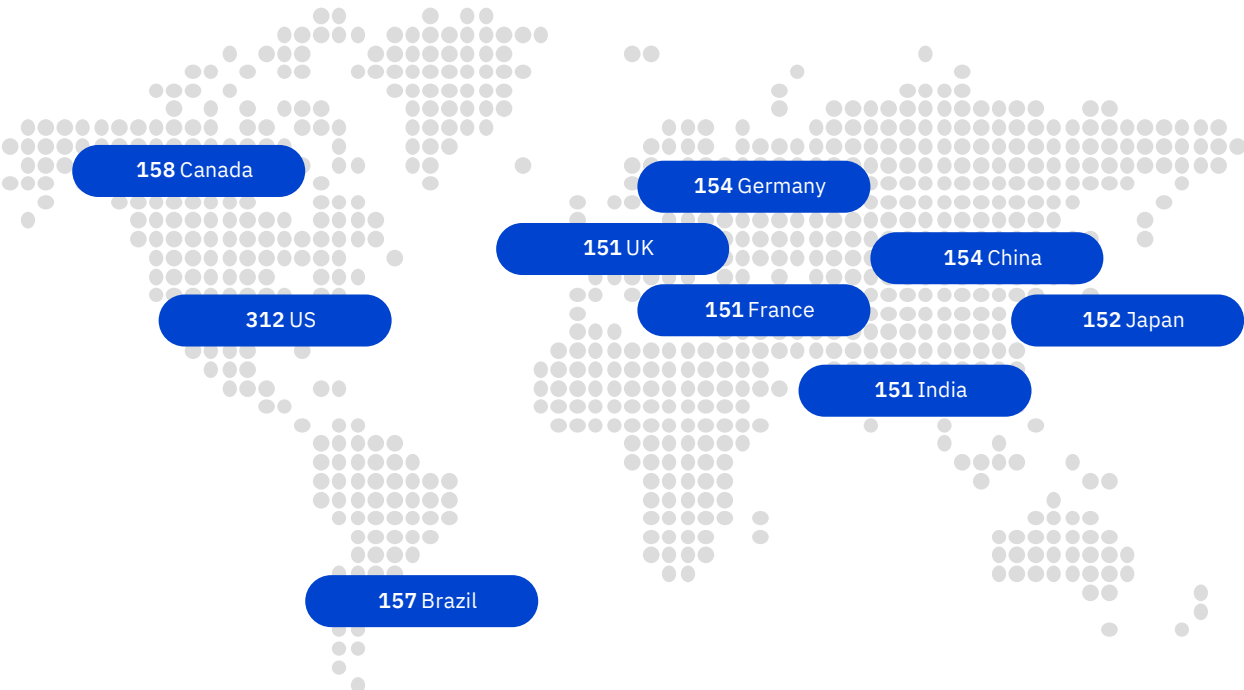
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Research and methodology

We conducted a survey with 1,540 business leaders from nine countries and across 10 industries to understand how organizations evolve their work management approach. All respondents currently use work management platforms. As well, all respondents are involved in their work management transformation and include C-suite executives, line of business executives, and work management professionals.

The data results are brand-agnostic, reflecting all work management platforms addressed in the survey, including 507 Adobe Workfront users and 1,033 non-Adobe users (Planview, Monday.com, Wrike, Smartsheet, Asana, Atlassian, Clarity, and Microsoft Azure DevOps).

We identified a group we call Agility Outperformers, a subset of 11% of our respondents. They stood out from their peers by taking a holistic approach to their organizational strategy and reporting greater business results and achievements across multiple dimensions.



Work Management Platform		Role	
Adobe	507	Executive	619
Non-Adobe	1,033	Non-executive	921

Industry

Banking	152
Financial services	84
Professional services	77
Consumer products, Retail	302
Telecommunications, Media & entertainment	154
Energy, Utilities	152
Healthcare	156
Insurance	153
Industrial, Manufacturing	152
Information technology	158

Role	
Chief Executive Officer	32
Chief Operations Officer	32
Chief Marketing Officer	32
Chief Information Officer	33
Chief Technology Officer	30
Chief Digital/Transformation Officer	32
Chief Financial Officer	39
Chief Human Resource/Work Officer	30
Chief Experience Officer	32
Senior or Executive VP/VP	327
Non-executive leader/Director	307
Manager/Senior leader/SME	614

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IBM Institute for Business Value. July 2020.
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"Pursuing transformation like digital natives: Lessons for enterprises from tech leaders who have lived it."
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