

# Caribbean AI Leadership Sentiment Survey

What leaders told us about  
responsibility, risk and readiness

June 2026



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## INTRODUCTION

# Artificial intelligence (AI) is fundamentally disrupting how value, decisions and work are shaped.

In trying to navigate AI's impact ourselves and steer away from global playbooks, we paused to refocus on our region. Not surprisingly, there was limited information available to help truly understand how AI was unfolding regionally.

We recently engaged leaders across the region to understand how artificial intelligence is showing up in their organizations. Our objective was not to measure technical maturity or benchmark readiness, but to understand the human side of AI adoption: what does it feel like to lead and navigate your organization as AI becomes part of everyday work?

The overwhelming sentiment was not a sense of crisis but a clear and thoughtful reflection of where the Caribbean labor market stands today, and what it must become as AI emerges as foundational. In small labor markets like ours, these implications are deeply personal.

Decisions about AI are inseparable from questions of employment, trust, community impact and the need to adopt AI responsibly. How do we use AI to make us better and stronger? How do we continue to teach and mentor young professionals to be critical thinkers? How do we weave AI into our values and the ethos that defines us?

This report reflects the challenge ahead, as leaders themselves described it. Drawing directly from their insights and experiences, we outline three conditions leaders must intentionally build, along with five leadership shifts required to create those conditions, grounded firmly in Caribbean realities.

Together, these define what we call the Caribbean License to Lead. It is grounded in who we are, the markets we serve and the communities and people entrusted to us.



### **Hema Narinesingh**

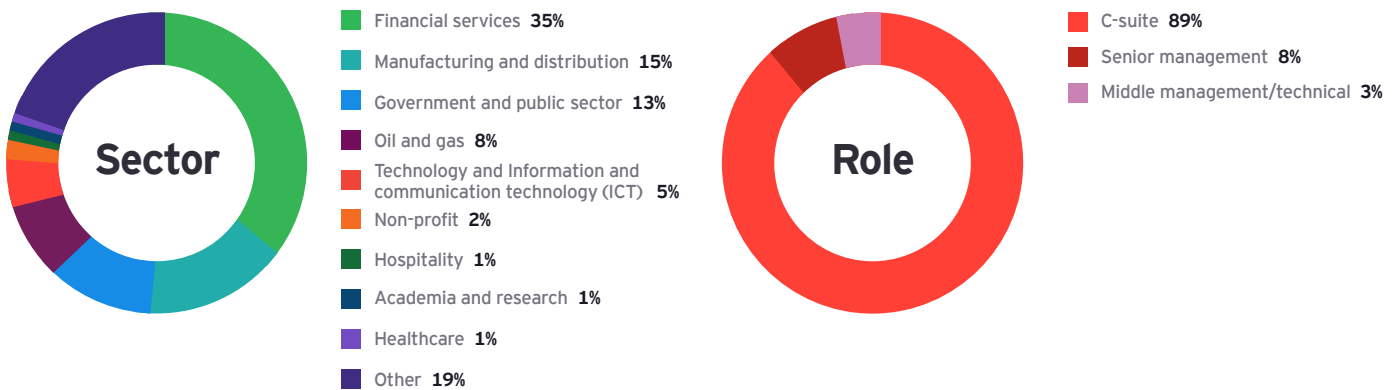
Consulting and Caribbean Talent Hub  
Managing Partner,  
Ernst & Young Services Limited

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AI is already part of daily leadership life in the Caribbean.

We surveyed **239 leaders** across **13 Caribbean locations** to understand how they are experiencing AI in their organizations.

### Profile of survey participants



Source: EY Caribbean AI Leadership Sentiment Survey (n=239), EY Caribbean, 2025

The data points to a structural gap in how leaders are engaging with AI. Technology is moving faster than the systems meant to guide it, and those systems are developing faster than leadership readiness to build and use them.

## THE TAKEAWAY

AI is already part of how Caribbean leaders and teams are working. The challenge for leaders now is about moving with intention, protecting trust, strengthening capability and anchoring adoption in the realities of the people and communities across the region in which they serve. The Caribbean License to Lead was developed to support leaders in this effort.



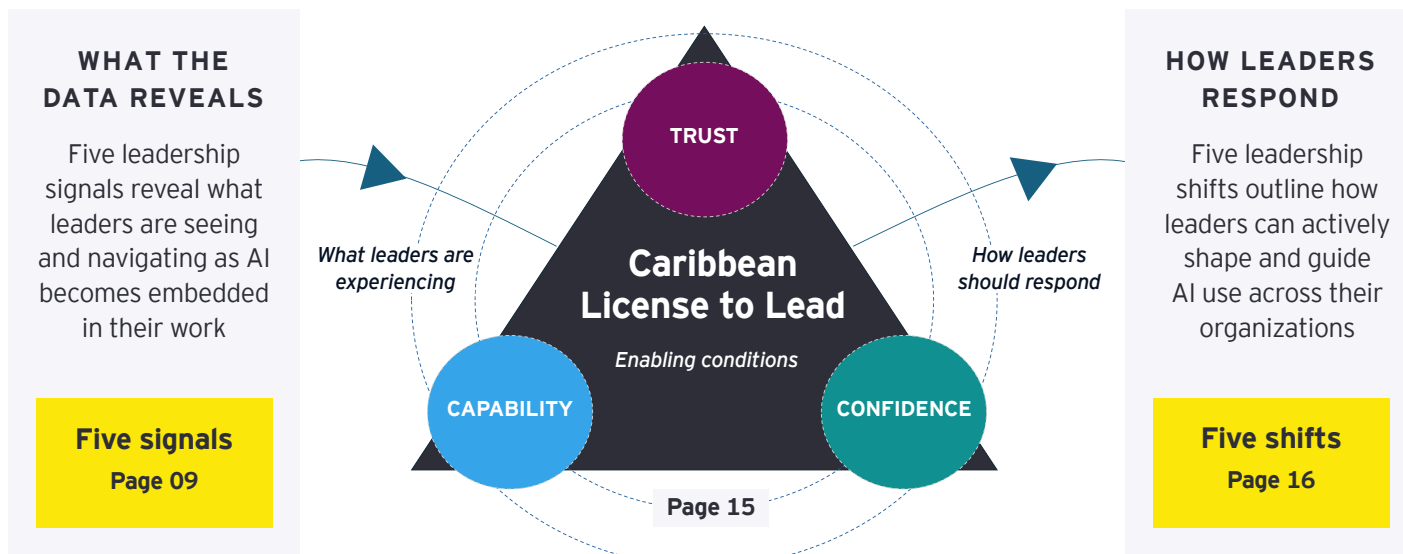
## The Caribbean License to Lead model

How AI momentum, leadership signals, enabling conditions and practical shifts connect into one leadership response

The findings in this report follow a simple leadership logic. AI is already moving through Caribbean organizations, while confidence, governance and shared practice are developing more slowly. The model below shows how this gap shapes what leaders are experiencing (the five signals), what they need to build (the three conditions) and how they can respond in practice (the five shifts) to earn the Caribbean License to Lead.

### THE THREE-SPEED PROBLEM

A structural misalignment between rapid AI use, lagging leadership confidence and unclear governance



### CORE INSIGHT

AI is already moving through Caribbean organizations. The task now is to convert individual use and personal responsibility into shared direction, visible accountability and trusted institutional practice.

## The structural gap leaders must now close

AI is now part of everyday work, from drafting and research, to analysis, automation and decision-making. As its use expands, organizations may appear to be progressing, while alignment is still forming beneath the surface.

### The three-speed problem

The survey data shows three different speeds at work:

**AI adoption is moving fast:** 84.5% of leaders report comfort using AI tools at work or in daily life.

**Leadership confidence is developing more slowly:** Fewer than 30% feel prepared to guide that use effectively across key leadership dimensions

**Governance clarity:** Only 26.3% report clarity around how AI is governed and who is accountable.

This is the three-speed problem: a gap where inconsistent use, uneven accountability and institutional risk begin to form. Until these three speeds begin to align, organizations may use AI more widely than they can guide it.

“

This is a once-in-a-lifetime shift. As leaders in our region, we must move boldly, guiding AI with purpose so it becomes true evolution for our people and region.

CIO, Aruba

## Five signals of the leadership gap

The signals that follow show how this gap is being experienced in practice:

- 1 AI use is advancing faster than formal guidance.** Leaders and teams are already using AI in practical ways, while policies, decision rules and accountability arrangements are still forming.
- 2 Leaders feel responsible, with limited institutional support.** Many leaders understand how AI affects jobs, trust, reputation and service quality, but they are often carrying that responsibility without enough shared governance or executive alignment.
- 3 AI learning is happening unevenly.** Some teams and individuals are experimenting and building confidence. Others are waiting for direction, training or safe spaces to practice. Capability is growing, but not yet consistently across the organization.
- 4 Decision authority shapes adoption speed.** In many Caribbean organizations, AI adoption depends on senior authorization. This creates discipline once direction is clear, but it can also slow responsible experimentation while alignment is still forming.
- 5 AI risks are felt through Caribbean realities.** Leaders are viewing AI risk through the realities of small labor markets, close communities, inequality, data protection concerns and public trust. The risks are not distant. They are social, visible and personal.

## What leaders must now build

Taken together, the signals point to three conditions leaders must intentionally build through repeated leadership practice:

### TRUST

**Trust**, so people can see where AI is used, how decisions are reviewed and who is accountable

### CONFIDENCE

**Confidence**, so leaders and teams understand what is expected and can act with clear direction

### CAPABILITY

**Capability**, so learning moves across teams, sectors and institutions rather than staying with early adopters

## Five leadership shifts

The five shifts in this report show how leaders begin building those conditions:

- 1 Make AI use visible.** Understand how AI is being used, by whom and with what data.
- 2 State your boundaries.** Set clear expectations for how AI should be used and give people permission to act responsibly.
- 3 Review it together.** Bring AI decisions, risks and lessons into regular leadership forums.
- 4 Learn across your sector.** Share what is working, what is unclear and what needs to be strengthened with other organizations navigating this journey.
- 5 Align your leadership.** Agree on what your organization stands for as AI becomes part of how work is done.

These shifts turn the report from diagnosis into action. They provide a practical route from scattered adoption to trusted organizational practice.

“

The responsibility of leaders is not simply to adopt AI, but to shape it, anchoring its use in our values, aligning it with our development priorities so that it empowers our people rather than leaving us dependent. Leadership must be intentional, ethical and visionary if AI is to become a tool for transformation rather than disruption.

Permanent secretary, Grenada

## Operating realities that shape leadership choices

This moment is not defined by resistance to AI.

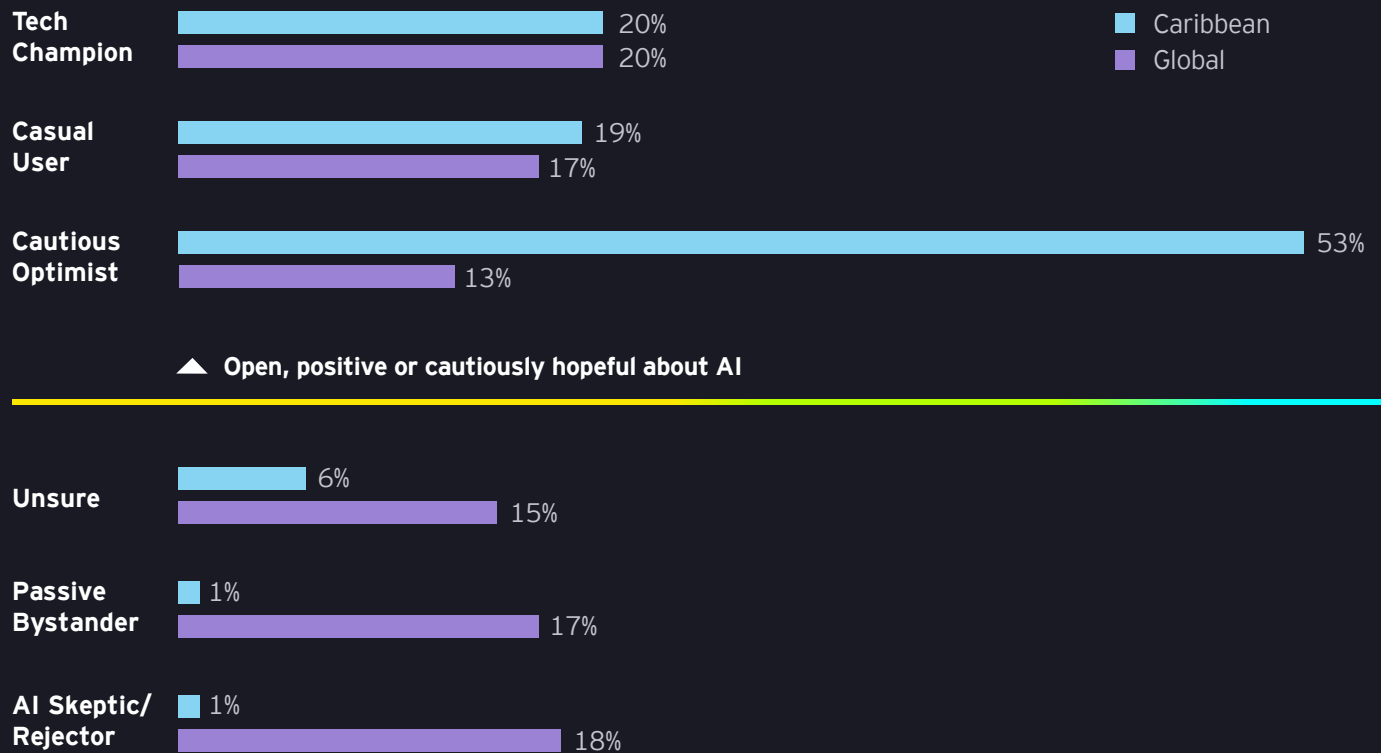
More than 90% of Caribbean leaders are either open, positive or cautiously hopeful about the technology. The dominant persona\* across the region is the “cautious optimist” – leaders who see promise in AI, are mindful of risks and want to move forward responsibly. They do not stand apart from technology. They are actively using it and thinking about how it shapes their organizations.

As AI use becomes part of their daily work, leaders increasingly rely on personal judgment in areas where common institutional direction is still forming.

The Caribbean’s cautious optimists are ready to lead. What they lack is shared structure, clear guidance and institutional backing to translate that readiness into coordinated action.

\*Personas reflect self-reported attitudes toward AI.

### Caribbean leadership personas reflect self-reported attitudes toward AI





# Five leadership sentiment signals

## Understanding signals

A signal is a patterned relationship in the data that emerges when you compare multiple survey questions and notice where two or more dimensions move at different speeds or point in different directions. Signals are diagnostic. They reveal where leadership behavior, perception or alignment is under stress by pointing to observable patterns that require attention.

## The five signals

The survey data reveals five distinct patterns in how Caribbean leaders are experiencing AI. These are consistent, measurable relationships that point to deeper conditions and to what leadership must address. Each signal is presented in three parts: what the data shows, what it means and what it asks of leadership.

1

**AI use is advancing faster than formal guidance**

2

**Leaders feel responsible, with limited institutional support**

3

**AI learning is happening unevenly**

4

**Decision authority shapes adoption speed**

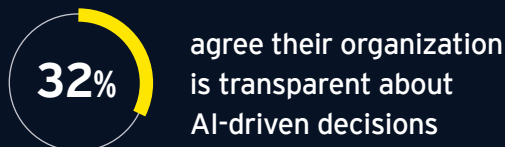
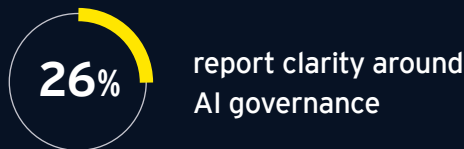
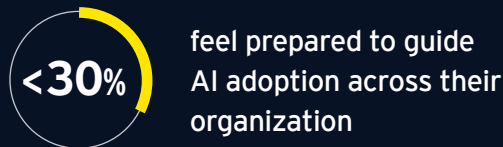
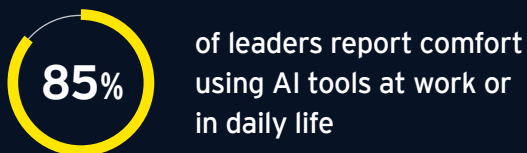
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**AI risks are felt through Caribbean realities**

SIGNAL 1

# AI use is advancing faster than formal guidance

## What the data shows



AI adoption is moving rapidly, while institutional guidance remains limited



## What it means

Leaders are engaging with AI personally and professionally in pragmatic ways. Their focus is on efficiency, analysis and immediate problem-solving. They see the usefulness of the tools and are incorporating them into their work.

Yet institutional guidance has not developed at the same pace.

## What it asks of leadership

Leaders must create visible systems that allow them to understand and guide how AI is being used. They cannot expect consistency from their teams without articulating clear institutional intent.

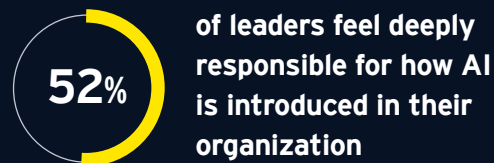
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Leaders in the Caribbean have a dual responsibility: to advocate for legislation that protects citizens while enabling innovation, and to guide AI adoption internally through structured policy and strategy so its use remains transparent, equitable and ethical.

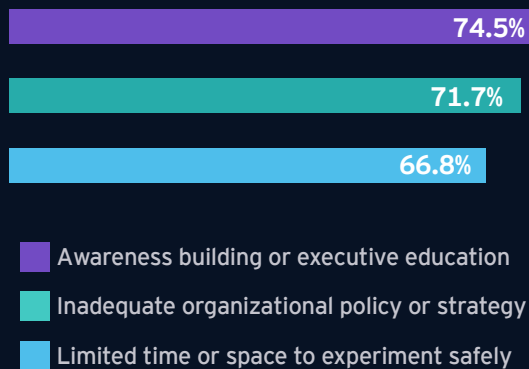
**COO/Operations,  
Trinidad and Tobago**

## Leaders feel responsible, with limited institutional support

### What the data shows



### Top barriers to developing AI skills



Leaders identified awareness building or executive education as the top barrier to developing AI skills (74.5%) followed closely by inadequate organizational policy or strategy (71.7%). Limited time or space to experiment safely emerged as the third major barrier (66.8%).\*

### What it means:

Leaders understand that AI will influence employment patterns, service delivery and public trust. More than half feel deeply accountable for guiding that influence responsibly. This sense of stewardship is significant. It reveals that leaders grasp the weight of the decisions they are making and will need to make going forward.

At the same time, responsibility is often experienced on an individual level rather than institutional. When governance structures are unclear, leaders interpret risk on their own. Decisions are made case by case. Personal responsibility without shared infrastructure can become heavy. It also creates inconsistency, even when intentions are strong.

### What it asks of leadership:

Leaders must build institutional structures that share and support the responsibility they feel personally. The goal is to create conditions in which good judgment can be applied consistently across the organization so that no single leader carries the full weight of decisions that affect teams, clients and stakeholders.

\*Because respondents could select up to three options, percentages reflect the share of respondents choosing each barrier and, therefore, do not sum to 100%.

# AI learning is happening unevenly

## What the data shows

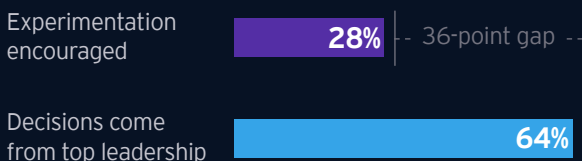
### Top confidence-building measures cited:

- Training or upskilling
- Safe practice environments
- Peer examples and case studies

### Top barriers to building AI skills:

- Awareness building or executive education
- Inadequate organizational policy or strategy
- Limited time or space to experiment safely

## Experimentation vs. centralized authority



## What it means

When asked what would help them feel more prepared, leaders consistently point to practical, hands-on measures. They want training, safe spaces to experiment and opportunities to learn from peers.

The appetite for growth is evident. What is less visible are coordinated pathways that allow learning to spread systematically. Capability develops in pockets. Early adopters move forward. Others wait for direction. Without structured sharing, lessons remain localized. Organizations progress, but unevenly.

## What it asks of leadership

Leaders must create mechanisms that allow learning to be systematic and shared, not episodic and siloed. This requires both internal coordination and cross-organizational connection. It requires peer networks. It requires resources dedicated to capability building, not just to operational firefighting.

“

We need to create true learning organizations and encourage lifelong learning, helping employees to adopt AI tools and skills confidently. At the same time, we must protect our intellectual property by using secure, internal AI systems that are trained on our own data rather than exposing sensitive information to external models.

**CEO and Managing Director,  
Jamaica**

# Decision authority shapes adoption speed

## What the data shows



of leaders say decisions usually come from top leadership



say their organization encourages experimentation



describe their organization as cautious or resistant to change

## What it means

Many Caribbean institutions operate with centralized leadership. Direction from the top carries weight, which can bring clarity, reduce fragmentation and speed up decisions.

At the same time, these systems often rely on formal approval before new ideas move forward. AI tools do not follow that pattern. People use them because they are available and practical. This creates tension. New approaches emerge at the edges while authority remains at the center.

## What it asks of leadership

Leaders must use their central authority to enable rather than constrain. They must state clear direction about AI. But they must also create protected space for teams to experiment within that direction. They must build review processes that capture learning from the edges and feed it back to inform strategy.

“

Caribbean leaders should craft national and regional AI strategies aligned with development priorities, building regulatory frameworks that safeguard data, ethics and equity while aligning with Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and global standards.

**CIO,  
Trinidad and Tobago**

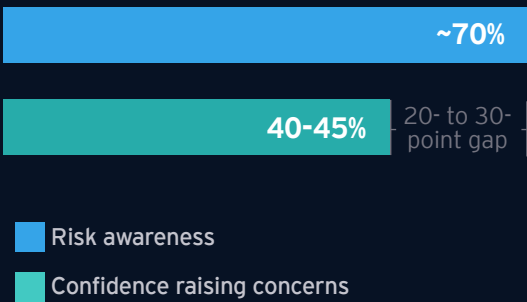
# AI risks are felt through Caribbean realities

## What the data shows

### Top regional risks identified by leaders:

- Job displacement and inequality
- Data misuse and privacy violations
- Social bias and discrimination

## Risks seen vs. concerns raised



Leaders widely recognize risk (~70%), but far fewer feel confident raising concerns (40-45%), revealing a 20- to 30-point gap between awareness and the ability to act on that awareness.

## What it means

Leaders are clear-eyed about risk. In small labor markets, workforce shifts are felt quickly through professional networks. Regulatory frameworks are still maturing across jurisdictions. Historical experiences of exclusion heighten sensitivity to fairness and who gets left behind.

Risk awareness is not theoretical; it is rooted in lived context. Leaders understand that AI will be part of their organizational future. They are seeking assurance that risk will be managed deliberately rather than reactively.

## What it asks of leadership

Leaders must build governance that takes these risks seriously and addresses them explicitly, not as a compliance exercise but as a reflection of a commitment to the communities and people they serve. This means being transparent about trade-offs and making visible how decisions about AI align with organizational values. It also means acknowledging where there is uncertainty and managing it deliberately.



## ■ Three conditions for leadership

Viewed together, the five sentiment signals point to three underlying conditions that Caribbean leaders must actively build. These are not problems to solve but conditions to create through deliberate leadership practice.

### TRUST

Transparency,  
accountability, ethics

#### When Trust is strong:

- Confidence grows
- Capability is applied

### CONFIDENCE

Leadership, literacy,  
readiness

#### When Confidence is strong:

- Trust is sustained
- Capability is developed

### CAPABILITY

Systems, standards,  
governance, coordination

#### When Capability is strong:

- Trust is reinforced
- Confidence increases



## Five shifts for Caribbean leaders

Caribbean leaders must make five deliberate shifts to build the three conditions and earn the License to Lead.

These five shifts are drawn directly from what the data shows leaders need to do now. These shifts are interconnected, each one reinforcing the others. Practiced over time, they form a leadership approach that fits the transformation demands of this moment.

When practiced as a system, these shifts create a leadership approach that keeps pace with change, builds trust amid uncertainty and deepens capability over time.

The five shifts and related action steps are presented in the second person so leaders can engage with them as direct guidance.

- 1** Make AI use visible
- 2** State your boundaries
- 3** Review it together
- 4** Learn across your sector
- 5** Align your leadership



SHIFT 1

# 1 Make AI use visible

## WHAT THIS HELPS TO BUILD

### TRUST

Through visibility

### CAPABILITY

Through awareness of what is happening

#### What this means:

Establish a clear view of where AI is being used across the organization, who is using it and what data is involved. This should be captured in a simple, shared inventory and reviewed regularly.

#### Why it matters:

Visibility is the starting point for every other aspect of responsible AI leadership. When you know where tools are being used, by whom and with what data, AI stops being an abstraction and becomes something you can understand and guide. Patterns begin to emerge, revealing where risks might be building, opportunities are taking shape and support is needed. This clarity also strengthens trust: teams and stakeholders see that you are paying attention, that you understand the landscape and that decisions are being made with real insight rather than guesswork. Making AI use visible turns an otherwise hidden, fragmented reality into something you can manage deliberately and confidently.

#### What this requires:

- Designate an individual to coordinate this effort
- Ask teams to report where they are using AI tools (drafting, analysis, decision support, automation, etc.)
- Document what data is being used and how it is protected
- Review findings with leadership and communicate results to the organization
- Repeat regularly (quarterly or semiannually) to track change over time

#### What 90 days looks like:

**Month 1:** Define what you are asking teams to report and create a simple template.

**Month 2:** Collect initial reports. Identify gaps and follow up.

**Month 3:** Synthesize findings. Hold a leadership discussion about what you are seeing. Communicate results to the organization.

## State your boundaries

### WHAT THIS HELPS TO BUILD

#### CONFIDENCE

Through clarity about what is expected

#### TRUST

Through visible alignment of AI use to organizational values

#### What this means:

Define what your organization will and will not do with AI, and communicate those boundaries in plain language, linked to your organizational values and risk tolerance.

#### Why it matters:

Clear boundaries give people something solid to stand on. When expectations are vague, teams second-guess themselves, slow down and make decisions in isolation without a shared compass. But when leaders articulate what the organization will and will not do with AI, and link those boundaries to values and risk tolerance, they create a common foundation. Decisions become easier and more consistent. Teams act with greater intention, and the organization moves forward with a sense of alignment that is felt across every level.

#### What this requires:

Bring your executive team together to discuss:

- What risks are unacceptable to us? What values guide how we use AI?
- Translate that discussion into clear statements: “We will use AI for X, but not for Y, because ...”
- Communicate these boundaries to the organization, and make them reference points for decisions about AI adoption.

#### What 90 days looks like:

**Month 1:** Convene your executive team. Discuss values, risk tolerance and organizational priorities related to AI.

**Month 2:** Draft clear boundaries based on that discussion. Test them with teams for understanding and feasibility.

**Month 3:** Communicate boundaries to the organization and make them part of how decisions are made.

“

Leaders must set a clear AI strategy and define the rules — including limits and human-in-the-loop checks — to guide responsible use across their organizations.

**General Manager,  
Trinidad and Tobago**

# Review it together

## WHAT THIS HELPS TO BUILD:

### TRUST

Through visible, routine review

### CONFIDENCE

Through shared discussion and collective learning

#### What this means:

Embed AI governance into existing leadership forums so it becomes part of the normal rhythm of decision-making. Discussions on AI decisions, outcomes and risks should sit alongside other organizational priorities, not apart from them.

#### Why it matters:

Effective governance grows through steady, collective attention, not only when something goes wrong. When AI decisions and risks are discussed regularly in the same forums that shape the rest of the organization's direction, leaders develop shared judgment and a deeper sense of familiarity over time. Patterns become easier to recognize, lessons accumulate more naturally and teams gain confidence knowing that leadership is actively engaged. Routine visibility turns governance from a reactive function into an ongoing, informed practice.

#### What this requires:

- Identify an existing forum where your leadership team meets regularly (monthly, quarterly)
- Add AI as a standing agenda item
- Prepare for these conversations: *What are we learning about how AI is being used? What outcomes are we seeing? What risks are emerging?*
- Create a simple process for how decisions about AI are made and reviewed

#### What 90 days looks like:

**Month 1:** Identify the forum and add AI to the agenda. Prepare for the first discussion using data from Shift 1 (visibility).

**Month 2:** Hold the first discussion. Establish what you will review regularly. Identify decisions that need governance.

**Month 3:** Hold a second discussion. Reflect on what you are learning. Adjust your process based on what you have learned.

“

Leaders must play an active role in the development and governance of AI. This means creating space within the organization to shape how AI is used, while also engaging in decisions about how we manage this transformation together.

**CEO and Managing Director,  
Suriname**



SHIFT 4

## Learn across your sector

### WHAT THIS HELPS TO BUILD

#### CAPABILITY

Through shared learning and spread of practice

#### CONFIDENCE

Through peer examples and reference points

#### What this means:

Share what you are learning about AI with peers across organizations and sectors, and use structured forums to exchange lessons, discuss standards and spread learning.

#### Why it matters:

Every leader in the region is confronting similar uncertainties around AI, even if they surface in different ways. When learning stays trapped within individual organizations, everyone ends up solving the same problems in isolation, slower, with more gaps and with uneven levels of readiness. But when insights are shared across sectors, capability grows more quickly. Leaders gain access to approaches they might not have considered, emerging standards take shape faster and the entire ecosystem becomes more resilient. In a moment defined by rapid change, collective learning becomes a strategic advantage.

#### What this requires:

- Identify peers navigating similar AI questions (in your sector, in adjacent sectors, across the region)
- Initiate conversations about what you are learning
- Participate in or create forums where leaders can share experience
- Document lessons and case studies that can help others
- Be willing to learn from others' experience, not just share your own

#### What 90 days looks like:

**Month 1:** Identify three to five peer leaders or organizations navigating similar work and reach out.

**Month 2:** Have conversations about what you are each learning. If possible, facilitate a small peer group conversation.

**Month 3:** Identify themes or lessons from those conversations. Begin documenting what you are learning collectively.



SHIFT 5

## Align your leadership

### WHAT THIS HELPS TO BUILD

#### CONFIDENCE

Through aligned leadership and clear direction

#### TRUST

Through visible consistency of leadership voice and action

#### What this means:

Confirm the executive team shares a common understanding of AI implications for the organization and a clear, consistent approach to how it will be guided.

#### Why it matters:

Senior-level alignment is one of the strongest signals an organization can feel. When executives share a common understanding and speak from a unified position, it creates stability. Teams experience consistency rather than mixed signals. Confidence rises because people know the direction is steady. Decisions move more quickly, and with that clarity, culture begins to shift in a meaningful, sustained way.

#### What this requires:

- Bring your executive team together for structured engagement on AI
- Explore together: What does AI mean for our organization? What are the implications for our people, our services, our operations?
- Discuss and agree on your approach to AI governance (drawing on shifts 1-4)
- Create mechanisms for ongoing discussion so alignment is maintained as conditions change

#### What 90 days looks like:

**Month 1:** Convene the executive team. Bring in external perspective if needed (consultant, peer leader, facilitator). Discuss what AI means for your organization.

**Month 2:** Work through the five shifts together. Align on what each shift means in your context and who owns it.

**Month 3:** Establish regular cadence for ongoing discussion. Plan how you will communicate alignment to the organization.

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Leadership legitimacy comes from aligning around shared principles, clear boundaries and consistent decisions as AI becomes part of everyday work.

**CEO and Managing Director,  
Grenada**

	Make AI use visible	State your boundaries	Review it together	Learn across your sector	Align your leadership
<b>30 days</b>	Initiate AI usage scan	Communicate leadership stance	Create AI review group	Initiate cross-functional forums	Executive AI briefing
<b>90 days</b>	Map tools and risk areas	Define acceptable use	Conduct first audits	Standardize key processes	Leadership roundtables
	Identify quick wins	Set decision guardrails	Track incidents and concerns	Share resources	Scenario planning
<b>180 days</b>	Establish monitoring cadence	Publish AI guidance statement	Integrate into governance	Build sector partnerships	Ongoing alignment

## THE LICENSE TO LEAD

Leadership legitimacy is not conferred by technical certification or credentials. It is earned quietly through the impact of decisions on employees, customers, stakeholders and the community. The Caribbean License to Lead is the condition in which leaders guide AI adoption with clarity, accountability and alignment to the values their organization holds.

### It is granted when:

- Employees see that AI decisions are made transparently and reviewed fairly (Trust)
- Teams understand what leaders expect of them and see leadership moving together (Confidence)
- Learning spreads across the organization and the sector, and capability deepens over time (Capability)

The Caribbean License to Lead is not preserved through statements or titles; it is sustained through steady, visible practice. It is renewed each day in the way leaders make decisions, the clarity they create and the consistency with which they show up.

Legitimacy grows when leaders make AI use understandable, when they surface concerns rather than hide them and when their actions reinforce the values they claim to uphold.

Across the region, leaders have already begun this work. Engagement with AI is increasing, and there is a clear awareness of both possibility and responsibility. Many organizations are experimenting, learning and acknowledging the risks that must be managed. The momentum is real; the task now is to continue strengthening these practices so legitimacy keeps pace with the transformation underway.

The work now is alignment. The tools leaders are using, the confidence they are building and the governance structures they are creating must mature together. If they do, AI adoption can strengthen institutional capability while preserving trust. If they do not, unevenness will persist and legitimacy may erode quietly, unnoticed until it is too late to rebuild.

The region stands at a point where deliberate leadership can shape that trajectory.

## USING THIS REPORT

This survey marks the starting point. What follows is how the region's leaders act on it.

The five shifts outlined in this report are not tasks to check off. They are practices to establish. They reinforce each other. They are most powerful when pursued together, not sequentially.

The next 90 days are critical. This is when you establish momentum, signal to your organization that this work matters and begin building the conditions for the License to Lead.

### For public sector leaders:

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#### Begin here:

- Convene your executive team to align on what AI means for your mandate and how you will guide it (shift 5).
- Map where AI is being used in your ministry or agency (shift 1).
- State your boundaries and priorities clearly in leadership communications (shift 2).

#### Then establish:

- A standing agenda item for AI in your regular leadership forum (shift 3).
- A peer network with leaders in other ministries or agencies navigating similar work (shift 4).

### For private sector leaders:

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#### Begin here:

- Establish visibility into where AI is being used and embedded in workflows (shift 1).
- Define your organizational boundaries and risk tolerance for AI (shift 2).
- Embed AI review into your existing governance structures (shift 3).

#### Then establish:

- Peer connections with leaders in your sector and adjacent sectors (shift 4).
- Shared understanding across your executive team (shift 5).

### For civil society and educational leaders:

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#### Begin here:

- Document how AI is being used in your context and what you are learning (shift 1).
- Advocate for regional coordination on AI governance and learning (shift 4).
- Build peer networks that allow sharing of experience across organizations (shift 4).

#### Then establish:

- Clear boundaries for how AI is used in your work and why (shift 2).
- Regular forums for discussing AI implications and governance (shift 3).

# This report is written for individual leaders and for leadership teams.

### Reading alone:

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If you are reading this as an individual leader, you will find:

- An accurate reflection of how Caribbean leaders are currently experiencing AI (the moment we are in, what leaders told us).
- Clarity about what is necessary for your leadership in this context (what must shift).
- A framework for thinking about your own organization's readiness (the three conditions, the five shifts).

### As you read, ask yourself:

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- Which of the five signals do I see in my own organization? Where are we strong and where are we weakest across the three conditions?
- Which of the five shifts should I prioritize first in my context?
- What support or peer connection would help me move forward?

### Using with your team:

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If you are using this report with your leadership team or broader organization, consider these approaches:

#### For an executive team session:

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- Distribute the report in advance. Ask team members to read it and come prepared to discuss.
- In a meeting, walk through the five signals. For each one, ask: Do we see this in our organization? What does it mean for us? Based on where we are today, which shift should we start with? Who will own it?
- Discuss the three conditions. Where are we strongest? Where do we most need to develop?
- Establish a plan for the next 90 days and agree on a cadence for ongoing discussion.

#### For a broader organizational discussion:

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- Use the five signals as conversation starters with teams. Ask: Where do you see this in your work?
- Make the five shifts explicit. Communicate why each one matters and what you are asking of teams.
- Invite feedback and participation. What barriers do teams see? What support do they need?
- Establish visible progress. Share what you are learning in the visibility work. Report on decisions being made.

## CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK

# Use these questions to guide discussion of the report within your organization:

### **On what we are seeing:**

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Which of the five signals most strongly reflects our current state?

What data or evidence do we have that confirms this?

What is this signal telling us about what needs to change?

### **On the three conditions:**

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How would we rate ourselves on Trust, Confidence and Capability?

What would it look like if we were stronger on each condition?

What is one action we could take in the next 30 days to strengthen each condition?

### **On the five shifts:**

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Which shift is most urgent for us?

What would it take to make this shift in our context?

Who needs to be involved? What resources would it require?

How will we know we are making progress?

### **On the path forward:**

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How does this report change how we think about AI in our organization?

What commitments are we making based on what we have learned?

How will we stay connected to this work over time?

## METHODOLOGY

# The survey design was a structured questionnaire with Likert scale questions, ranking exercises and open-ended responses.

Questions were designed to capture both sentiment (how leaders feel about their role) and specific dimensions of readiness (preparation to guide AI, clarity around governance, perception of barriers).

### Respondent profile:

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- 239 leaders across 13 Caribbean locations, representing:
  - C-suite and senior management
  - Middle management and departmental leadership
  - Technical leadership roles
  - Public sector, private sector, civil society and educational institutions

### Distribution:

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The online survey was distributed through professional networks, sector associations, institutional connections and direct outreach. Respondents were self-selected, but efforts were made to maintain broad geographic and sectoral representation.

### Response period:

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Q4 2025: September 16-December 28 2025

### Data cleaning:

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Responses were reviewed for completeness and consistency. Incomplete responses were excluded from analysis.

### Analysis approach:

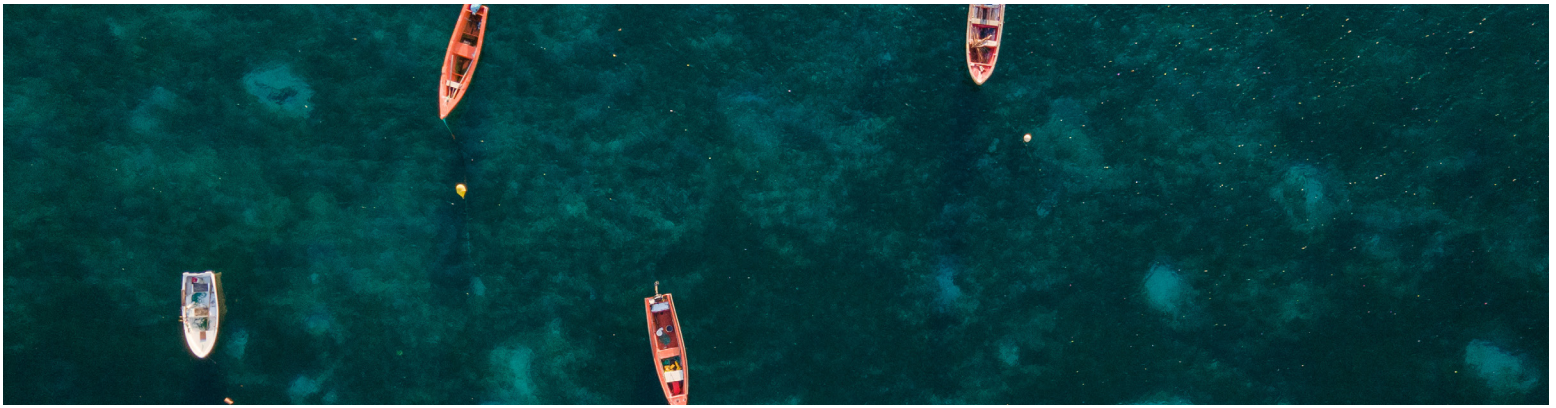
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Quantitative analysis of Likert scale and ranking questions was conducted to identify patterns in frequency and response. This was complemented by thematic analysis of open-ended responses to understand leaders' reasoning, perceived barriers and support needs. Quantitative and qualitative findings were then synthesized to identify key signals and patterns.

### Limitations:

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This is a sentiment study, not a technical assessment. It reflects how leaders feel and what they report about their organizations, rather than objective measures of maturity or capability. Respondents were self-selected, which may introduce bias toward leaders already engaged with these questions. In addition, the survey captures a moment in time (Q4 2025) and may not reflect changes occurring rapidly in this space.



## METHODOLOGY (cont.)

# The survey included questions across six dimensions.

### **AI familiarity and comfort:**

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How familiar are you with how AI works? How comfortable are you using AI tools in your work or daily life? What concerns do you have about AI?

### **Leadership sentiment:**

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How do you feel about your role in shaping how AI is adopted in your organization? What emotions do you associate with AI in the workplace? Do you feel responsible for how AI is introduced?

### **Leadership preparedness:**

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How prepared do you feel to understand AI implications for your organization? How prepared do you feel to make decisions on AI investments? How prepared do you feel to balance AI benefits with ethics, inclusion and cultural fit? How prepared do you feel to navigate organizational resistance to AI adoption?

### **Organizational readiness:**

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Does your organization have clarity around AI governance? Is it clear who is accountable for AI-related decisions? Is AI use transparent to employees and stakeholders? Are ethics and responsible AI use organizational priorities?

### **Barriers and support needs:**

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What are the top barriers preventing you from building AI skills? What would most help you feel confident in your ability to guide AI adoption? What kind of support do you need from your organization, your sector and the region?

### **Risk perception:**

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What do you see as the most serious risks AI may introduce to your organization, your sector and the Caribbean region? How serious is each risk?

# Key data summary

## AI use and comfort:

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- 84.5% report comfort using AI tools at work or in daily life.

## Leadership preparedness:

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- 16.9% feel prepared to understand AI implications for their organization.
- 15.9% feel prepared to make decisions on AI investments.
- 16.9% feel prepared to balance AI benefits with ethics, inclusion and cultural fit.
- 18.5% feel prepared to balance innovation with organizational resistance.

## Organizational readiness:

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- 26.3% report clarity around how AI is governed in their organization.
- 32.3% agree their organization is transparent about AI-driven decisions.
- 58.1% agree their organization treats AI ethics and responsible use as priorities.

## Leadership sentiment:

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- 51.5% feel deeply responsible for how AI is introduced.
- 41.9% describe their approach as “figuring it out as we go.”

## Organizational culture:

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- 64.1% say decisions usually come from top leadership.
- 28.2% say their organization encourages experimentation.
- 28.2% describe their organization as cautious or resistant to change.

## Top barriers to building AI skills:

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- Awareness building or executive education
- Inadequate organizational policy or strategy
- Limited time or space to experiment safely

## Top confidence-building measures:

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- Training or upskilling (hands-on, practical)
- Opportunities to practice and use AI safely
- Peer examples or case studies from similar contexts

## Top regional risks identified:

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- Job displacement and inequality
- Data misuse and privacy violations
- Social bias and discrimination



# Glossary

## **Three-speed problem:**

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The structural misalignment between AI use (fast), leadership confidence (slower) and governance clarity (slowest). When technology spreads faster than the systems meant to guide it, organizations move, but not in alignment.

## **Caribbean License to Lead:**

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The earned social and institutional legitimacy to guide AI adoption responsibly, transparently and in alignment with Caribbean values. It is granted by employees, customers and stakeholders when they see that AI is being guided with clarity, accountability and alignment to what the organization values.

## **Trust:**

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The condition in which people can see how AI decisions are made and know they will be reviewed fairly and transparently. Built through visibility, routine review and clear accountability.

## **Confidence:**

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The condition in which people understand what is expected of them and see that leadership is aligned. Built through clear direction, shared understanding at senior levels and collective learning.

## **Capability:**

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The condition in which learning spreads systematically across boundaries rather than remaining siloed. Built through coordination, peer sharing and resourced skill building.

## **The five shifts:**

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**Make AI use visible:** Establish clarity about where AI is being used and how it shapes the way we work.

**State your boundaries:** Define what your organization will and will not do with AI, tied to values and risk tolerance.

**Review it together:** Embed AI governance into existing leadership forums and make it routine.

**Learn across your sector:** Share lessons, peer examples and standards with other organizations.

**Align your leadership:** Confirm your executive team holds a shared understanding of AI implications and your organizational stance.

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