FIELD NOTE 01

The Readiness Gap

Why individual capability can move faster than organisational readiness - and why that matters in the AI era.

PUBLICATION	Field Note 01 · August 2026
PURPOSE	A research-led field note separating published evidence from Translate IDEAS™ interpretation.

> **The emerging AI challenge is not only whether people can use the tools. It is whether organisations are ready to change around what the tools make possible.**

The observation

Across AI adoption, digital transformation and capability-building, a recurring pattern is becoming visible: individual adoption can move faster than organisational change. People may learn the tool, complete the programme or express confidence while workflows, decision rights, leadership behaviours and cultural norms remain largely unchanged.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

What current research is signalling

Source	Signal	Why it matters
McKinsey, 2026	70% of respondents felt personally prepared to use AI; only 27% of leaders believed their organisations were ready for required shifts.	Individual readiness and organisational readiness can diverge significantly.
BCG, 2025	AI impact is linked to workflow redesign, leadership support, value tracking and sufficient training.	Adoption alone does not create operating impact.
SHRM, 2026	AI implementation is a technology, judgement, leadership and culture challenge.	People systems matter alongside tools.

External studies define the problem landscape. They do not validate the Readiness Framework™ or the Readiness Gap as proprietary constructs.

TRANSLATE IDEAS™ INTERPRETATION

A working concept: the Readiness Gap

We use the term Readiness Gap to describe the distance between individual capability and system capability. It is a working field concept, not a scientifically validated construct. Its value is diagnostic: it prompts teams to look beyond learning activity and ask what else must change for performance to become possible and repeatable.

Dimension	A visible readiness gap
Mindset	People know what to do but do not trust the change, leadership or consequences.
Capability	People have awareness but not enough practice, judgement or role-specific fluency.
Culture	The stated priority conflicts with signals, incentives or norms.
Technology	The tool exists but access, workflow integration, usability or governance blocks use.
Execution	Intent is clear but decisions, handoffs, routines or accountability do not support action.

> **Where are people individually ready, but the organisation is not yet ready to let that capability create value?**

EVIDENCE BASE

References & source discipline

External research informs the problem landscape. It is not presented as validation of Translate IDEAS™ proprietary frameworks.

1. McKinsey & Company (2026). From adoption to impact: Three horizons of AI transformation.
2. Boston Consulting Group (2025). AI at Work: Momentum Builds, but Gaps Remain.
3. SHRM (2026). The State of AI in HR 2026.
4. McKinsey & Company (2026). Reimagine learning and development for the AI age.

> **Next research direction: test how readiness gaps appear across AI, leadership, GTM, employability, culture and community contexts - and which observable signals distinguish completion from durable readiness.**