

# Beyond the keyboard: How voice AI will *redefine* *work in 2025* and beyond

A new study by Jabra and The London School of Economics and Political Science explores how voice interaction with gen AI is transforming work.



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# The *big* shift

**Silicon Valley has spoken.** Tech leaders at Microsoft, Meta and beyond agree that voice will transform how we interact with generative AI.

While generative AI has already changed the world of work in profound ways, that change has mostly taken place within the boundaries of old habits. We type with our physical keyboards, prompting AI to perform discrete tasks in a linear, one-way exchange that is displayed back to us on a screen.

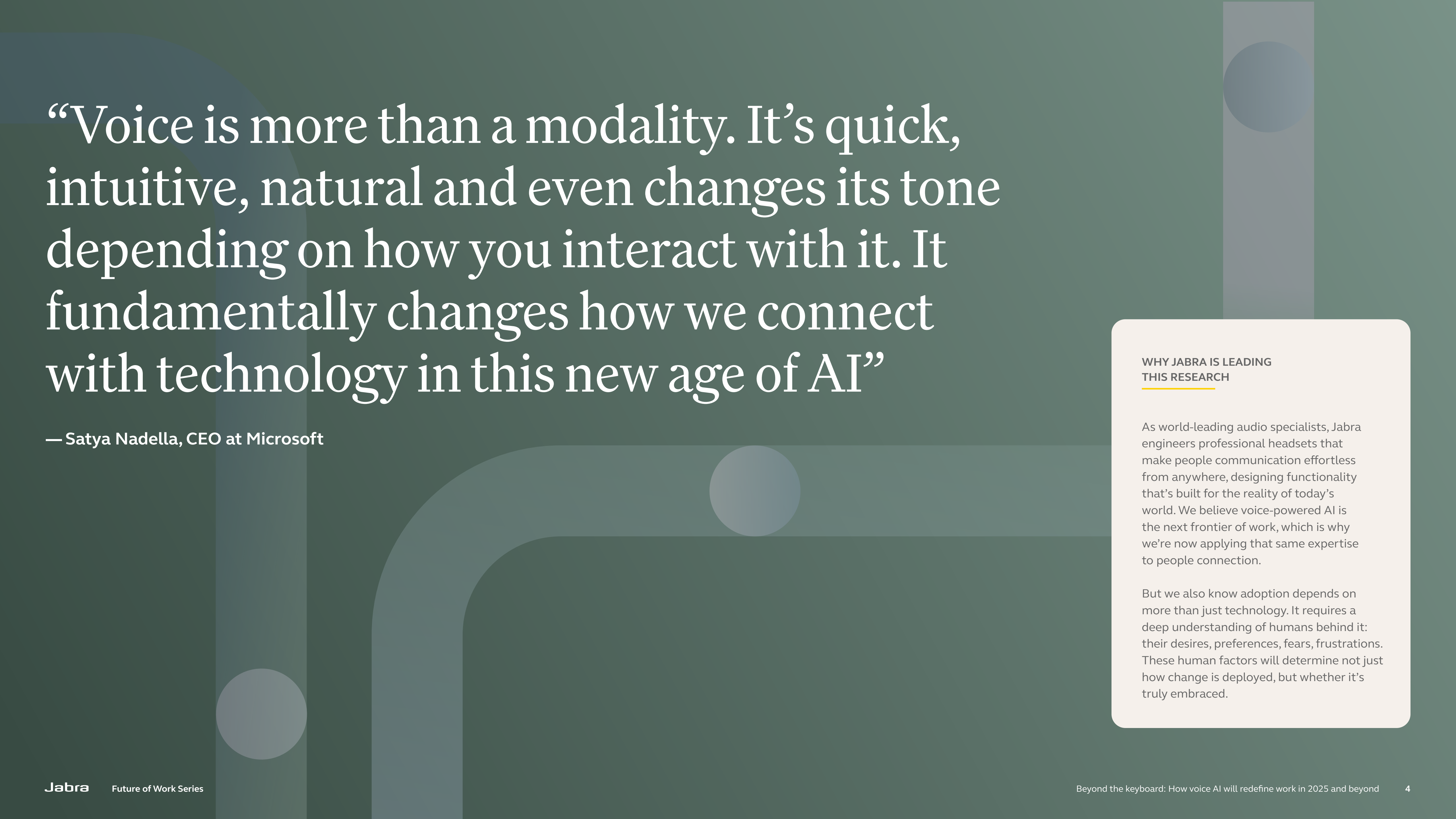
But this way of working will soon be a thing of the past.

The future of work will be defined by systems that are more intelligent, multimodal and ambient; where physical interfaces dissolve and the most natural mode of interaction of all, voice, takes center stage.

The rise of voice isn't a fad. It's the next frontier in how humans and machines connect. At Jabra, we believe organizations that embrace it early will set the pace for the decade ahead.

This report explores the tipping point: when voice is likely to become the primary interface for work, how it will reshape our professional lives, and what leaders must do today to prepare for the possibilities ahead.





# “Voice is more than a modality. It’s quick, intuitive, natural and even changes its tone depending on how you interact with it. It fundamentally changes how we connect with technology in this new age of AI”

— Satya Nadella, CEO at Microsoft

## WHY JABRA IS LEADING THIS RESEARCH

As world-leading audio specialists, Jabra engineers professional headsets that make people communication effortless from anywhere, designing functionality that’s built for the reality of today’s world. We believe voice-powered AI is the next frontier of work, which is why we’re now applying that same expertise to people connection.

But we also know adoption depends on more than just technology. It requires a deep understanding of humans behind it: their desires, preferences, fears, frustrations. These human factors will determine not just how change is deployed, but whether it’s truly embraced.



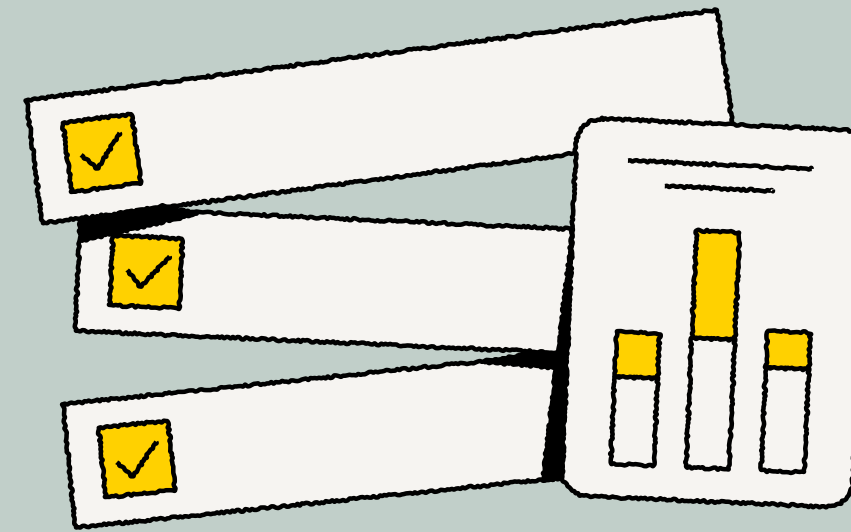
# The research *at a glance*

To better understand how voice-based interaction with generative AI will shape the future of work, we partnered with The London School of Economics Behavioural Lab for Teaching and Research — a world-leading institution for experimental behavioral science.

Led by Michael Muthukrishna, Professor of Economic Psychology at The London School of Economics and Political Research (LSE), this first-of-its-kind behavioral study was conducted with 171 knowledge workers aged 18-70 across a wide range of industries, capturing how people perform, feel, and respond when using voice or text to interact with generative AI.

## About Professor Michael Muthukrishna

Michael Muthukrishna is a Professor of Economic Psychology at the LSE and the lead researcher behind this study. A specialist in cultural evolution and human behavior, he explores how societies and individuals learn, adapt, and innovate. He is also the author of *A Theory of Everyone*.



## Across a range of both creative and persuasive tasks, we measured:



### Productivity

How quickly and accurately participants completed tasks



### Trust

How comfortable and confident participants felt in their interaction



### Preference

How people chose to interact with gen AI when given the option



### Sentiment

How people described the experience and their emotional response

What follows is a rich set of insights that helps us to better understand the following:

### Cognitive impact

How different modes of interaction with gen AI affect trust, adoption, productivity and user sentiment across different types of work tasks

### Behavior change

When speaking to AI is likely to be as common as typing and the factors (e.g. task type, environment, interface design) that will influence that shift

### Task fit

The tasks (e.g. brainstorming, outlining, summarizing) and settings (e.g. private vs. shared spaces) that are best suited to different modes of interaction

### Adoption barriers

The psychological, technical, or social barriers that hold people back from using voice, as well as the behaviors or conditions that accelerate adoption

Together, these insights offer a valuable window into what's coming, and roadmap for how to get ready. The shift to voice interaction with generative AI has the potential to radically redefine everything we know about modern work, but only if organizations are bold enough to imagine, design and invest in entirely new ways of working.

Section 1:

*Today*

# What is voice AI, and *why does it matter?*

**Before we dive into the findings,** let's step back and ask:  
Why is voice AI poised to become a cornerstone of the future of work?

The answer lies not just in the technology itself, but in the challenges it promises to address; challenges that have only intensified in today's workplace.

We've never had more tools to connect us, and yet we're struggling to actually work together. Hybrid work, globalization, and an endless stream of digital platforms were meant to make us more productive. Instead, many of us are drowning in digital debt. Messages multiply, notifications pull us in every direction, and the promise of flexible work often comes at the expense of meaningful collaboration. More communication than ever, less productive work.

## **Enter generative AI.**

At first glance, it feels like relief. Offload the inbox. Automate scheduling. Draft a first cut of that report. But to only consider today's functionality is to miss the point — it's like judging the first mobile phone without ever imagining the smartphone. Generative AI is in its early stages inside the enterprise: experiments,

pilots, basic copilots. Useful, but still reactive. It waits for our prompts, forgets context, and can't yet sustain the flow of complex work.

That's why ROI has been so elusive. Plug-and-play licensing makes adoption simple, but the generalized nature of today's tools means value is shallow. The next chapter will be contextual GenAI: embedded, specialized models that understand roles and workflows. Relevance improves. Accuracy follows. But it's still a human pulling the strings.

From there, the evolution is orchestrated gen AI; systems that can chain reasoning, call APIs, and automate multi-step processes end to end. This is where we start to see real returns, with repetitive workflows offloaded across departments.

## **And then comes agentic AI.**

Not just answering, but acting. Agents that can plan, trigger actions, and learn; working alongside us as autonomous teammates.

That leap is profound. It's the difference between having an assistant and having a colleague. And as Microsoft has predicted, we'll see team structures shift from humans with AI assistants, to human-agent teams, and eventually, human-led, agent-operated organizations.

That raises the bigger question: what happens to collaboration when AI moves from tool to teammate?

We already know that talking to each other is how work gets done. Soon, talking to AI will be just as essential. Which means the way we design our workplaces, our culture, and our communication tools needs to evolve just as quickly.

If generative AI is the starting point and agentic AI is the destination, then the real story is not about the technology itself, but about how we build a future of work that allows humans and intelligent agents to collaborate as naturally as humans do today.





# Moving towards a *voice-first future*

**Predicting the future of technology is never easy.** But history shows us that adoption often follows familiar patterns. From electricity to PCs, broadband, and streaming services, mainstream innovations rise the same way: they start with a few risktakers, then accelerate once the tipping point is crossed.



**We're now approaching that moment for talking to AI at work.**

## Understanding where we are: the diffusion of innovations model

First introduced by sociologist Everett Rogers in the 1960s, the Diffusion of Innovations Model is a well-established framework that has been proven across countless technologies and behaviors. It maps adoption of innovations through five clear phases: **Innovators (2.5%)**, **Early Adopters (13.5%)**, **Early Majority (34%)**, **Late Majority (34%)**, and **Laggards (16%)**.

The power of the model lies in showing when momentum shifts. Once adoption passes a critical threshold, growth stops being gradual and starts accelerating. That's when technologies stop feeling optional and start becoming unavoidable, until even the most reluctant adopters come on board because there is social pressure to do so.



## Innovation Adoption Lifecycle

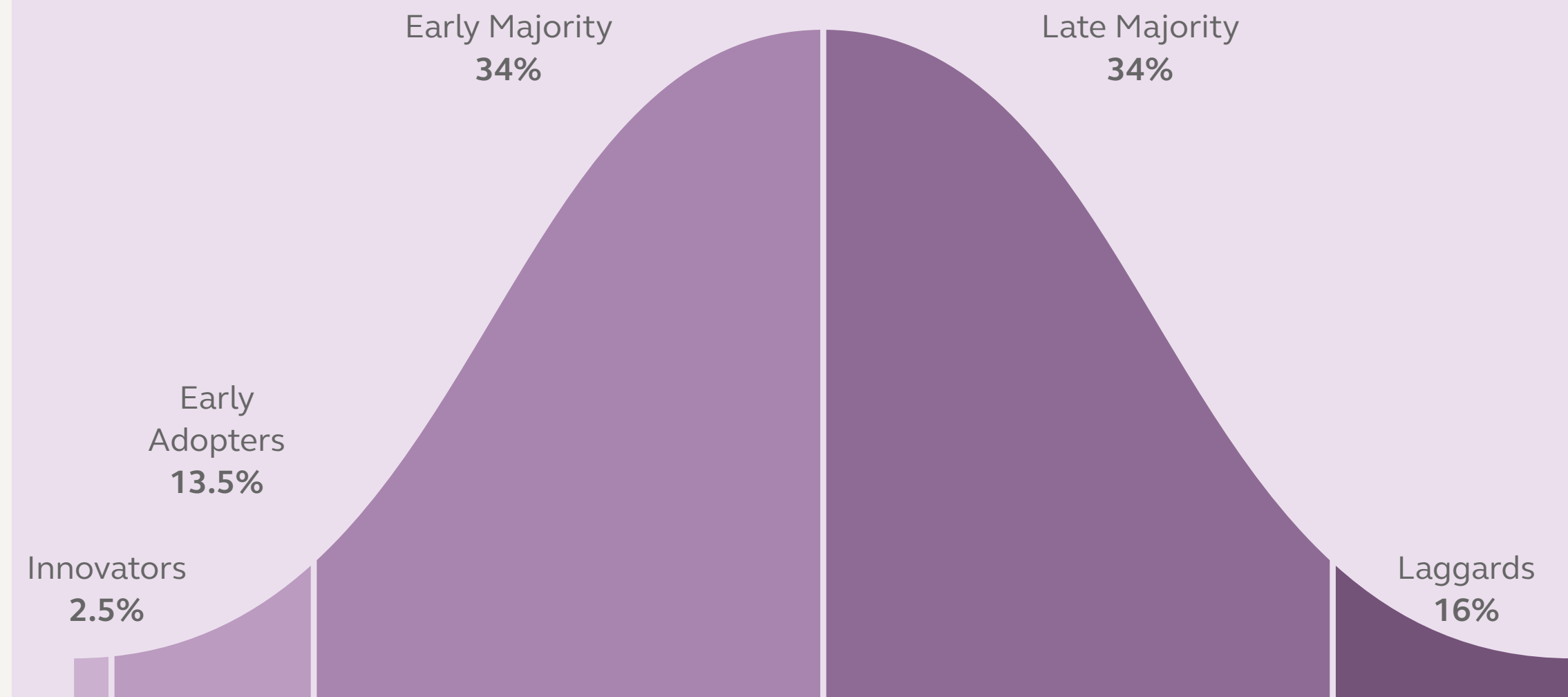


Figure 1: Rogers, E. (1962). Diffusion of Innovations. Free Press.



In fact, our research suggests a clear trajectory:

Within *three years*, voice will become a primary interface for generative AI in many work scenarios.



# Where voice *sits today*

**In our study, 14% of participants preferred voice over typing when interacting with generative AI.**

This places us just over the 13.5% threshold that marks the early adopter phase, right before the curve begins its rapid climb toward mass adoption.

This suggests we're not simply talking about a possibility of voice as a primary modality with AI at work. We're standing at the very edge of take-off.

## AGE ISN'T THE DRIVER. CONTEXT IS.

One of the most surprising insights from our research? Older participants were actually more likely to embrace voice for work tasks than younger users. While Gen Z may be more accustomed to speaking to their devices in personal contexts (think Siri or Alexa), they were less likely to use voice for professional tasks like onboarding or report writing.

In contrast, older professionals often preferred voice once they experienced it. This points to an important truth: it's not age, but context, that drives behavior. When voice feels practical, private, and productive, people of all ages are willing to adopt it.



The data is consistent with CEO and technology leader predictions of a shift toward voice computing, where talking and listening are augmenting or even replacing typing and reading.”

— Professor Michael Muthukrishna,  
Lead Researcher

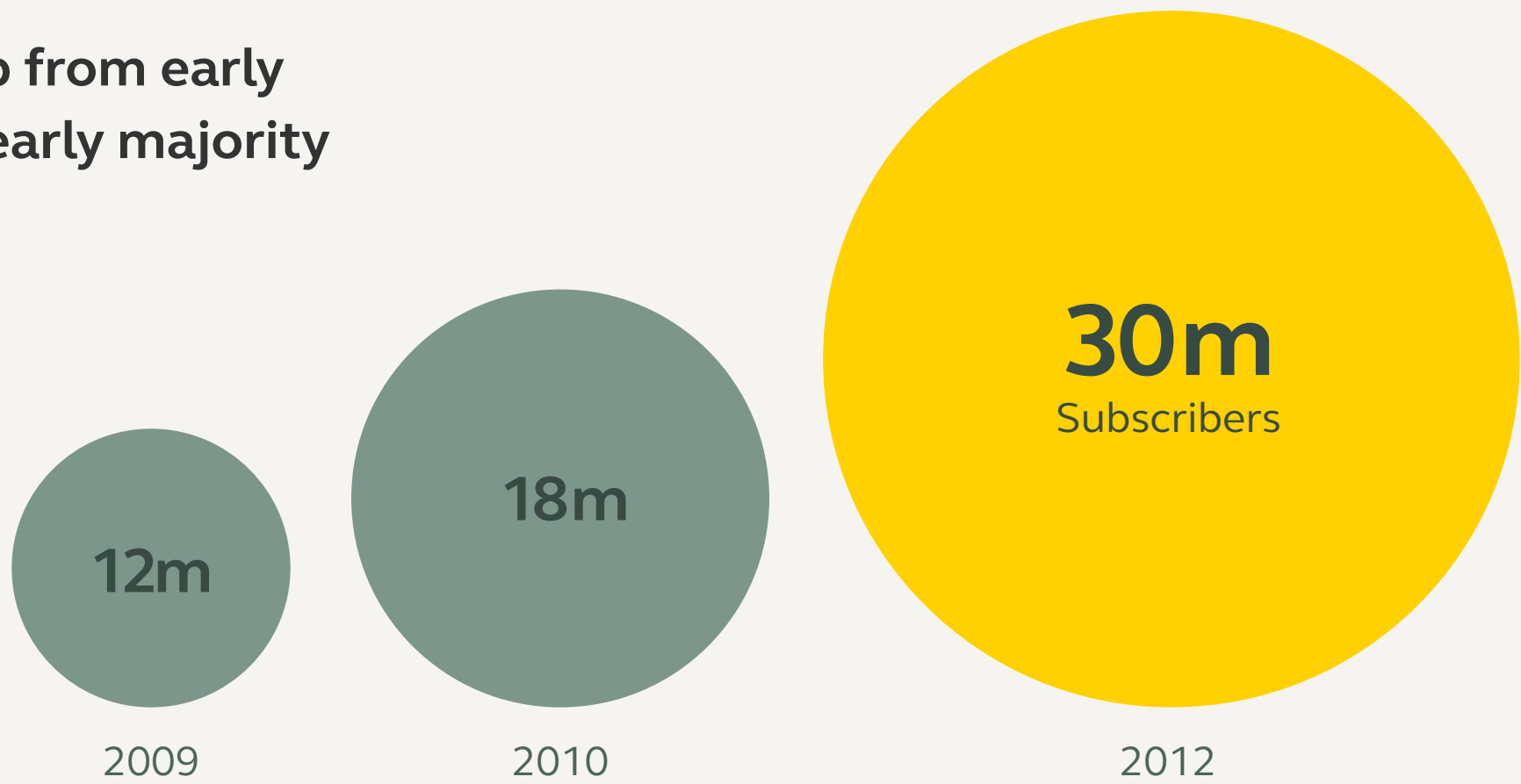
# Learning from the past and *predicting what comes next* for voice AI

History shows us how fast things can move from here.

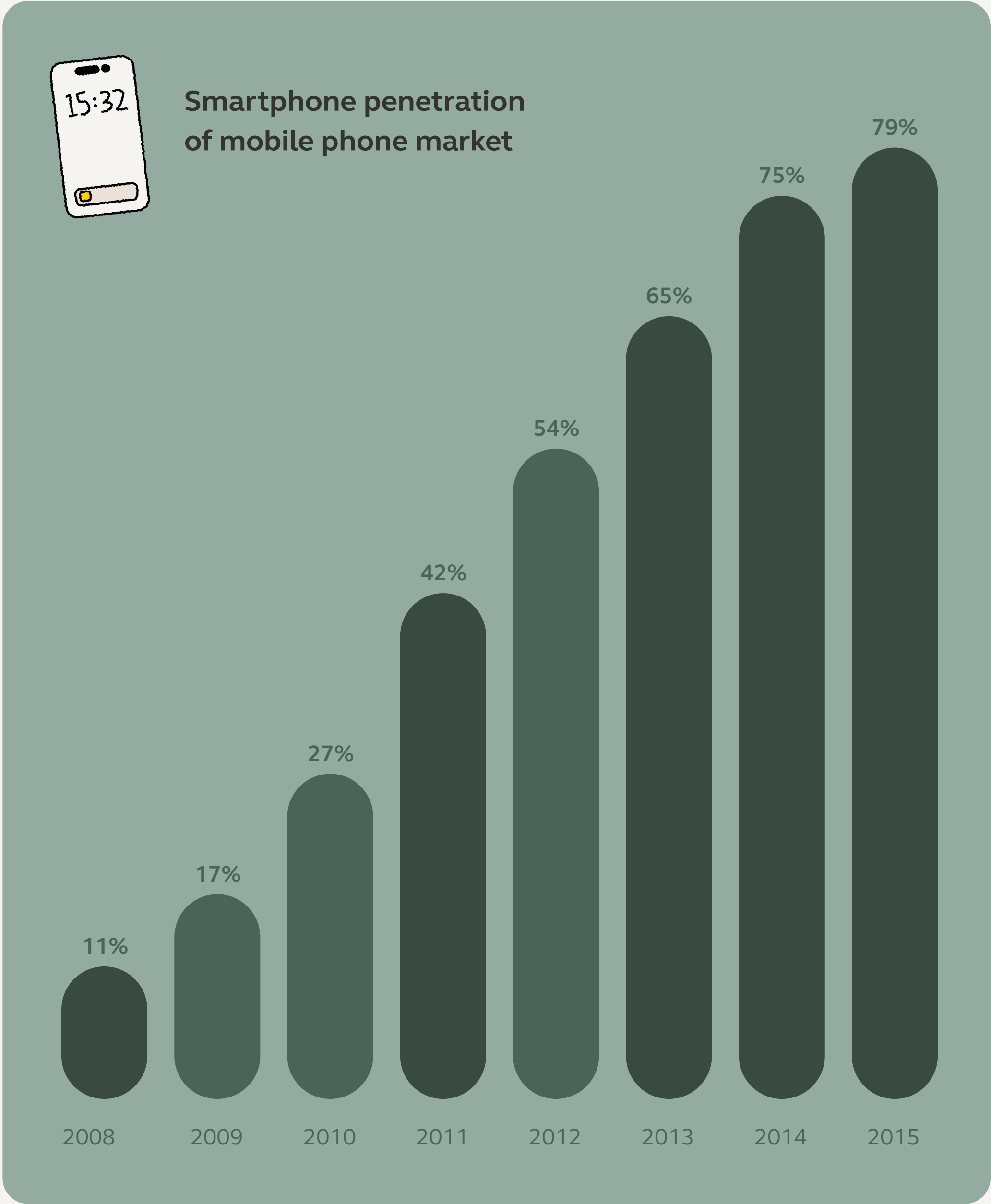
When smartphones reached **14% U.S. adoption** in **2009**, they jumped to **27% in 2010**, and surpassed **50% by 2012**, crossing into the early majority in under three years.

Technologies that require a behavior change (as voice-powered AI does) follow the same S-curve. Take the case of Netflix.

 **Netflix's leap from early adopters to early majority**



Source: Rogers, 1962; Medium, 2023; StratechI, n.d.



# The conditions for *take-off*

While the The Diffusion of Innovations model is helpful to predict the pace of adoption, it doesn't guarantee mass adoption; just because voice AI adoption sits at 13% today doesn't mean that it will become mainstream.

What the model **does** provide is a framework for understanding the conditions that determine whether a technology thrives or fizzles out.

Across multiple meta-analyses, researchers have identified 3 factors that consistently predict which technologies are most likely to take off:

**01 Perceived advantage**  
Does it feel genuinely helpful?

**02 Compatibility**  
Does it fit how I already work?

**03 Visibility**  
Can I see others using it successfully?

Put otherwise: People don't *just* want to try something new. They want to know it works, fits their workflow, and won't make them look replaceable or out of step.



# Why we predict *mainstream voice* AI adoption by 2028

**Voice interaction with AI is now hitting the critical inflection points** that predict mainstream adoption: delivering real-world benefits, integrating seamlessly into workflows via emerging hardware, and gaining visibility through successful use cases.

These are the same conditions that have historically triggered the steep climb toward mass adoption — something our research further validates.

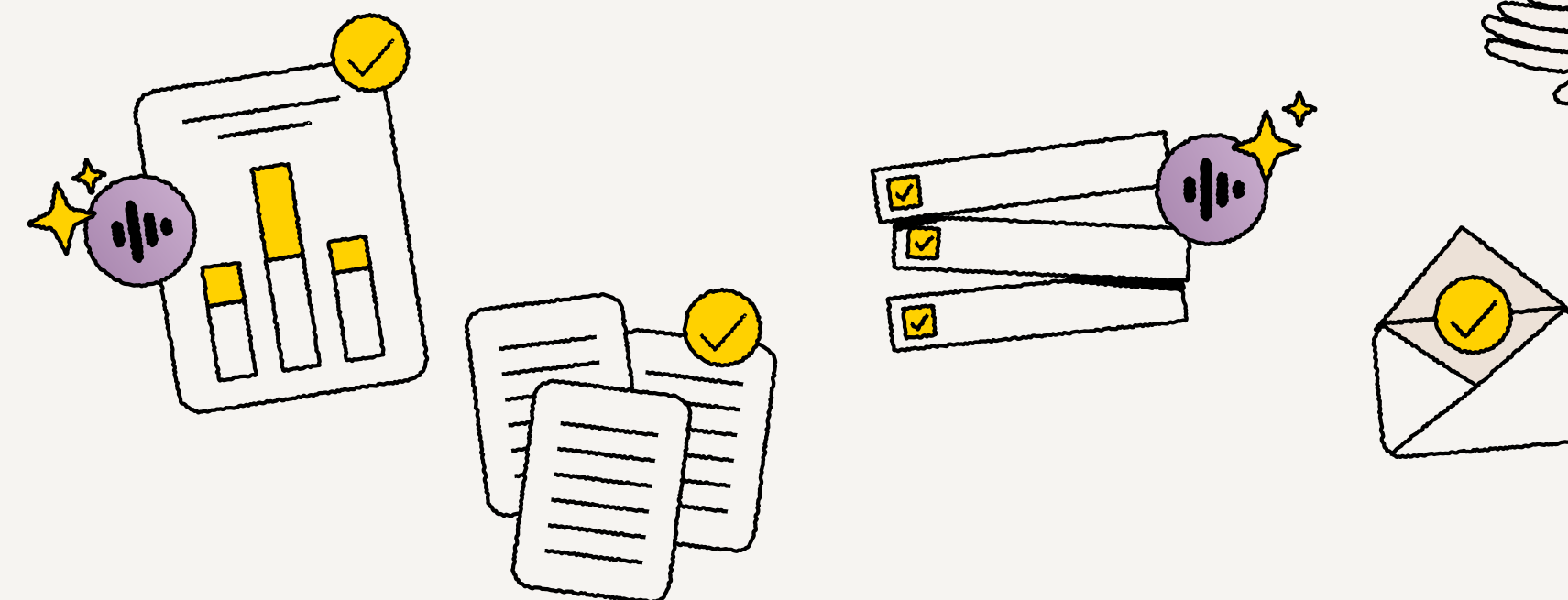
Our study reveals that trust in **AI rose by 33%** when people interacted with it through voice rather than text. Voice adds something essential: a sense of connection. It makes AI feel less like a tool and more like a collaborator.

This shift is particularly significant as we move toward a future where agentic AI takes on more complex roles, with voice serving as the natural gateway to generative AI.

**For leaders, the implications are clear: voice AI is not just a trend but an inevitability. As its usefulness and integration continue to grow, the time to prepare for this transition is now.**

# 33%

increased trust when people interacted with AI



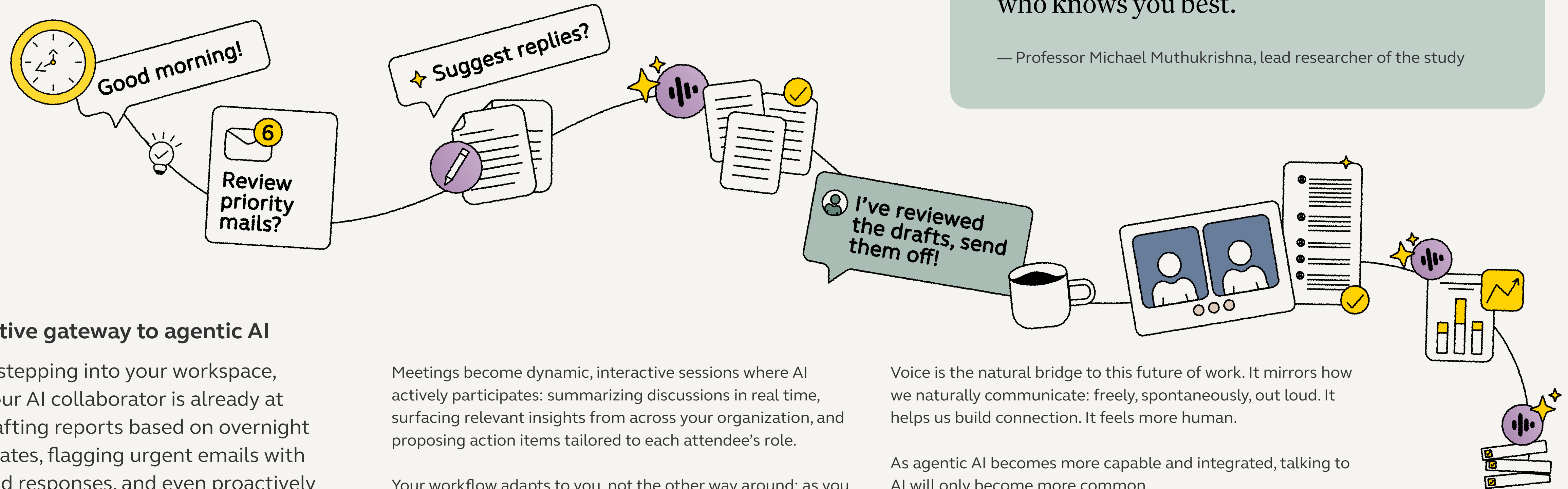
Section 2:

# *Tomorrow*

# What does work look like when it's *powered by voice AI*?

“The future isn’t a single giant model. It’s a coordinated team of specialist agents managed by a personalized chief-of-staff AI who knows you best.”

— Professor Michael Muthukrishna, lead researcher of the study



## An intuitive gateway to agentic AI

Imagine stepping into your workspace, where your AI collaborator is already at work: drafting reports based on overnight data updates, flagging urgent emails with suggested responses, and even proactively resolving low-level decisions before you’ve had your first coffee.

Meetings become dynamic, interactive sessions where AI actively participates: summarizing discussions in real time, surfacing relevant insights from across your organization, and proposing action items tailored to each attendee’s role.

Your workflow adapts to you, not the other way around: as you speak, your AI anticipates your next steps, pulls up the right tools, and even negotiates with other AI agents on your behalf.

The office of tomorrow isn’t a place where you use technology; it’s where technology works alongside you, seamlessly blending into the background like a trusted colleague. Tasks that once required hours of coordination—researching, analyzing, or aligning teams — now happen in minutes.

Voice is the natural bridge to this future of work. It mirrors how we naturally communicate: freely, spontaneously, out loud. It helps us build connection. It feels more human.

As agentic AI becomes more capable and integrated, talking to AI will only become more common.

This vision demands more than new interfaces. It requires a new mindset around work itself. When voice becomes the gateway to a constellation of smart agents — each with its own skillset, memory, and logic — the workday becomes less about tasks, and more about orchestrating intelligence.

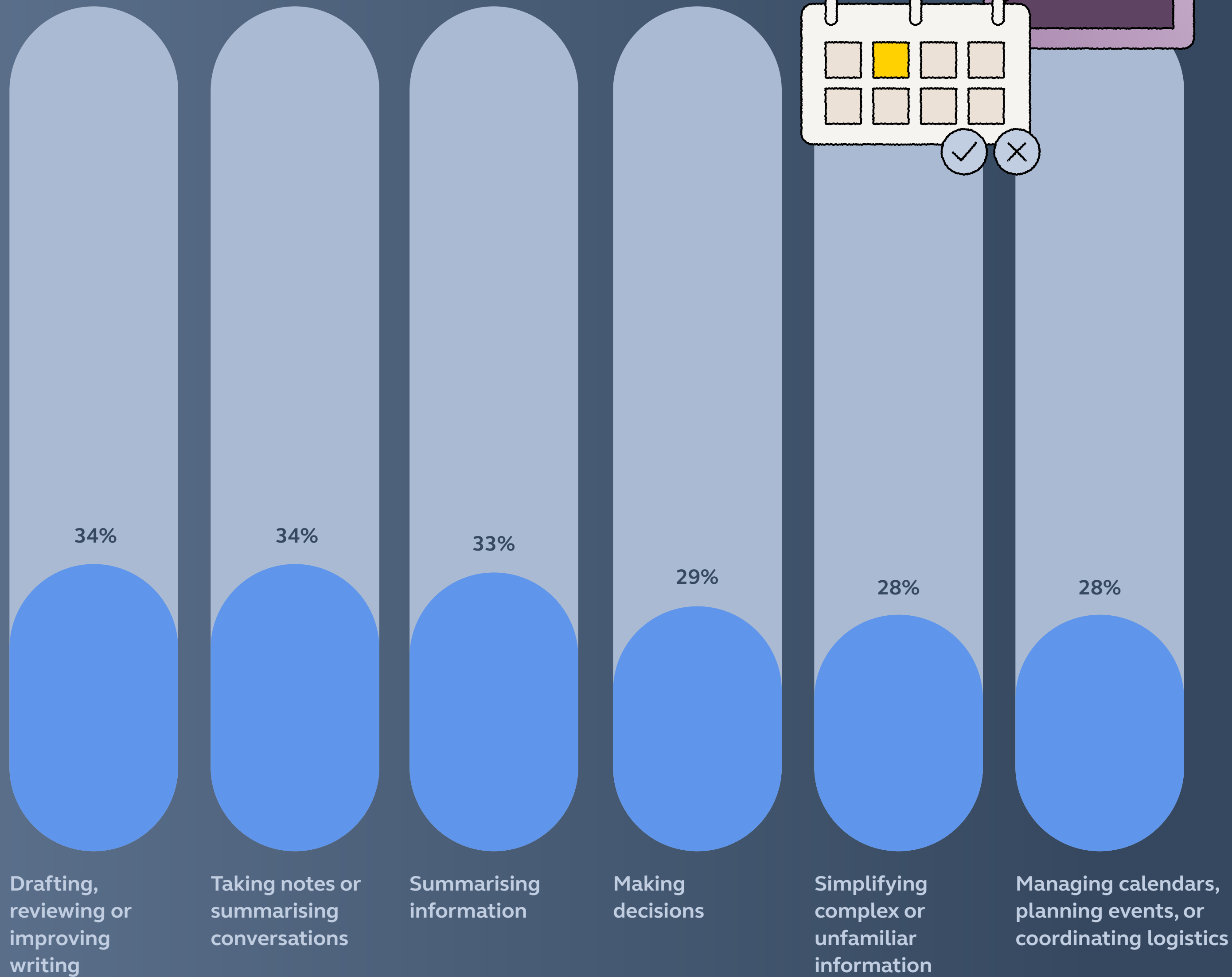
# AI at work today

Before looking ahead, it helps to see how AI is being used across the workforce right now. According to research carried out by Jabra in 2025, adoption is concentrated in three main areas:

- 1 Efficiency  
(e.g. note-taking, meeting scheduling)
- 2 Content creation  
(e.g. written and visual content)
- 3 Ideation and problem-solving

The types of tasks that fall within these three categories demand very different types of skills and ways of working with AI. Some are best served through structured, precise input, while others benefit from more open, free-flowing interaction. **So where exactly does voice AI win?**

AI use at work today





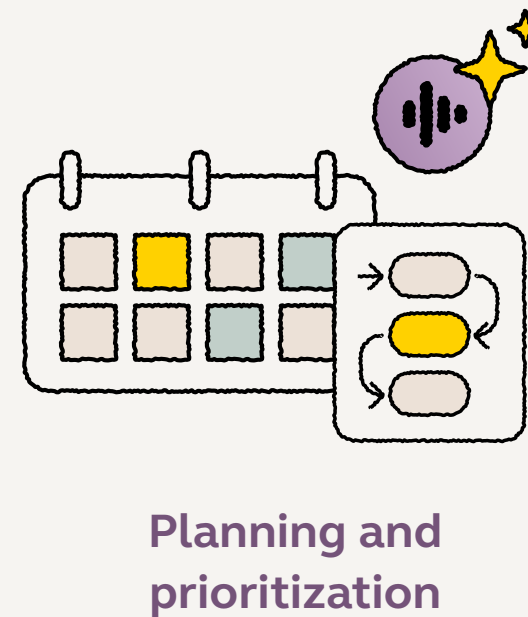
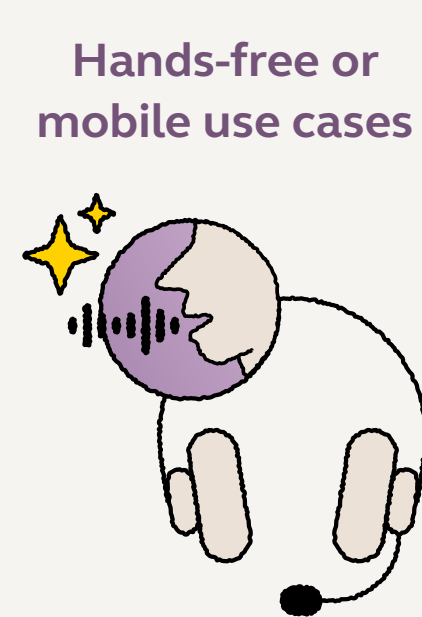
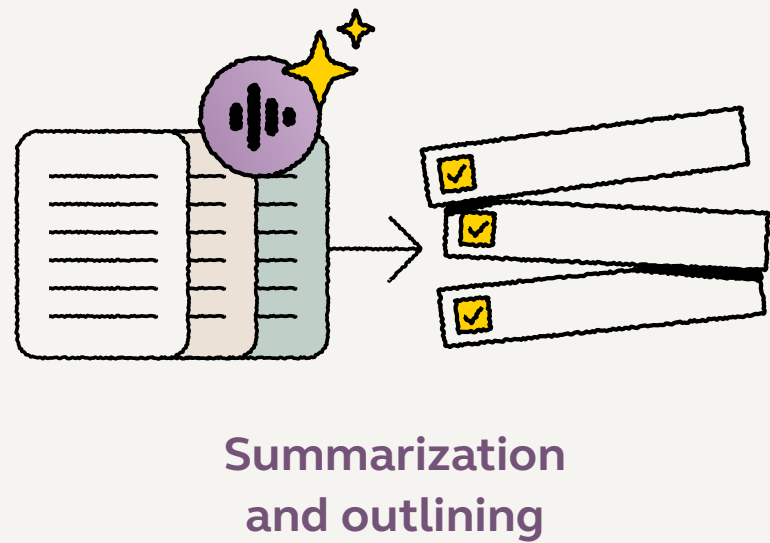
# Which tasks are *best suited* to voice AI?

Participants in our study described a future where AI is embedded throughout their day, seamlessly shifting between voice and text depending on the task. Typing will remain useful for scanning, refining, and editing, especially when precision or privacy is important. But voice will dominate in the moments that demand speed, creativity, or cognitive flow.

As one participant put it:

“I imagine having generative AI with me all the time... helping me brainstorm, proofread, and explain complex ideas. Like a colleague that’s always there, always ready.”

Our task-specific data supports this. Voice was seen as particularly well suited to:



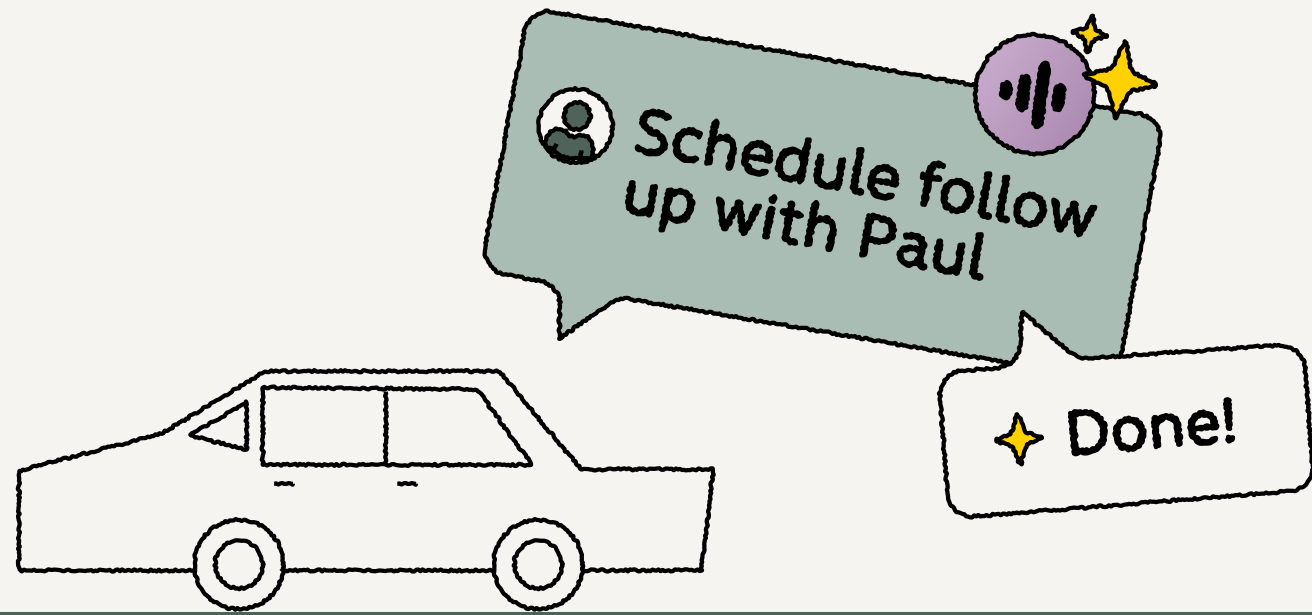
Many described voice as ideal for “quick ask” moments, where capturing ideas fast mattered more than polish. Others saw value in using voice to explore ideas aloud, especially when alone, on-the-go, or away from a keyboard.

“I liked being able to speak freely and quickly — it helped me get thoughts out without overthinking.”

Understanding where voice AI wins is going to be critical if businesses are to succeed in the future of work.

## Where voice AI shines

Beyond task types, where we are also impacts how we prefer to interact with AI. Our study participants suggested they would prefer voice for hands-free tasks (driving, cooking), unstructured thinking (brainstorming, long queries, language practice) and in private/home settings.



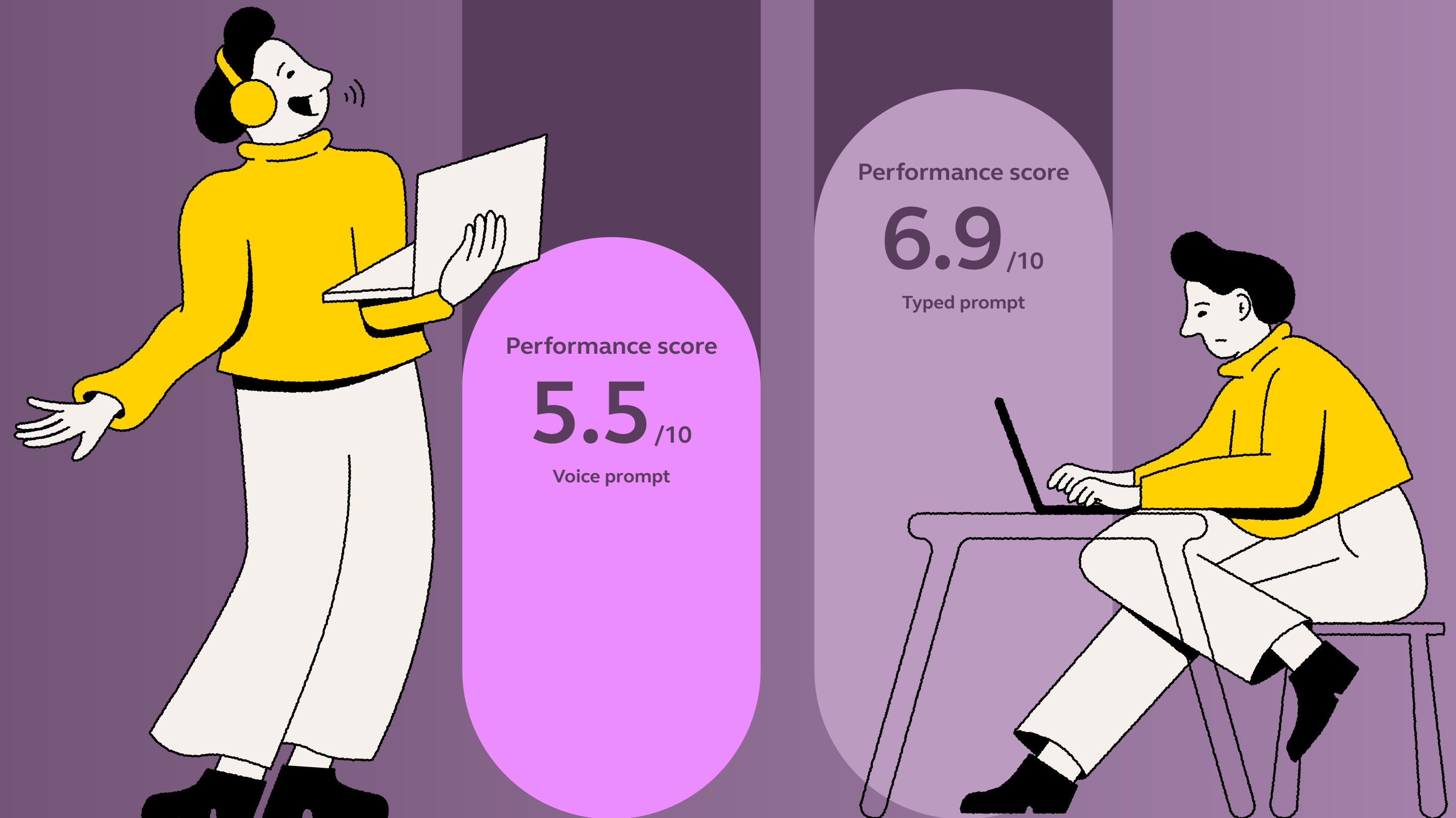
# Understanding where voice AI wins is critical

In our study, users who preferred voice performed around 20% less effectively on certain tasks — scoring 5.5 out of 10 versus 6.9 respectively ( $p = 0.02$ ). This was often caused by accuracy issues and the challenges of articulating thoughts clearly out loud.

But these challenges don't undermine the potential of voice AI; they point to what needs attention most urgently: understanding the types of tasks that speaking to AI is best suited to, and providing adequate training around them.

# 20%

Lower performance for some tasks when using voice-AI



Section 3:

# *Get ahead*

# What do businesses need to do now to *prepare for voice AI?*

The shift to voice AI is already underway. But real transformation won't come from technology advances alone. It will depend on how well organizations prepare people, spaces, and behaviors to support this new way of working.

Our research shows that while many workers see the potential of voice AI, adoption is still being held back by friction; not only technical, but also cultural, ethical, environmental and behavioral. To tackle this, we've developed a powerful 4-point framework with LSE to help prepare for the road ahead:

## The voice readiness framework

Equip people and spaces with the right technology

01

Address privacy concerns head on

02

Normalize and enable the behavior of talking to AI

03

Be clear on where voice wins

04



# Equip people and spaces with the *right* technology

If voice AI is to become a default interface at work, the tools and spaces people rely on every day need to evolve. That starts with personal hardware.



Workers need professional-grade audio and video solutions that capture speech accurately and interfaces that make interaction seamless, including quick engage and mute functions.

If poor voice capture leads to poor AI output people simply will not use it.

This concern was echoed by several participants in our study, including one who said, “I would want transcription accuracy to be 100% or as close to it as possible.” Another added, “Knowing that the voice recognition is extremely accurate” would make them more likely to use voice-based AI in their workflow.

Beyond this, every meeting space needs to support intelligent collaboration. That means equipping meeting rooms big and small with technology to enable accurate voice and video pickup. Businesses need to consider AI as an ambient presence within the work environment, ensuring that every exchange of ideas can cascade a series of follow-on actions and events.

01

# Address privacy concerns *head-on*

**One of the most consistent blockers** to voice adoption is fear over data security and surveillance. People aren't just asking if AI works: they're asking who is listening, how their voice is stored, and what it might be used for.

These fears aren't unfounded. Broader research highlights risks around always-on recording, unintended data capture — especially in shared environments.

This sentiment is echoed in recent research conducted by Jabra, which showed that while most knowledge workers recognize the benefit of AI, **33% stated security concerns** as a barrier to using AI.



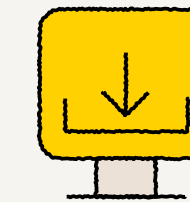
**“I don’t trust AI with my voice data, ... it feels a bit too personal. I worry about data protection and location tracking... my voice being used against me in a professional context.”**

## To earn trust, businesses must:



### Be transparent about how voice data is used

Don't just bury policies in fine print. Communicate clearly and proactively: explain whether data is stored, for how long, and who has access. Use plain language in onboarding materials and in-product prompts.



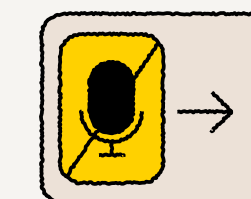
### Offer visible controls and consent mechanisms

Make sure that privacy controls on hardware are obvious and easy to use. That could mean “on/off” indicators when microphones are active, physical mute buttons on devices, or simple settings in collaboration apps where employees opt in or out of speaking to AI on their terms. Where possible, give real-time confirmation (e.g. “this conversation is not being recorded”).



### Involve employees in shaping governance frameworks

Don't design policies in a vacuum. Create working groups or employee councils to feed into how voice data is handled. Run workshops where staff can raise concerns and propose solutions. Share draft governance frameworks for feedback before making them final. The more employees feel ownership, the more likely they are to trust and adopt the technology.



### Prioritize edge processing where possible

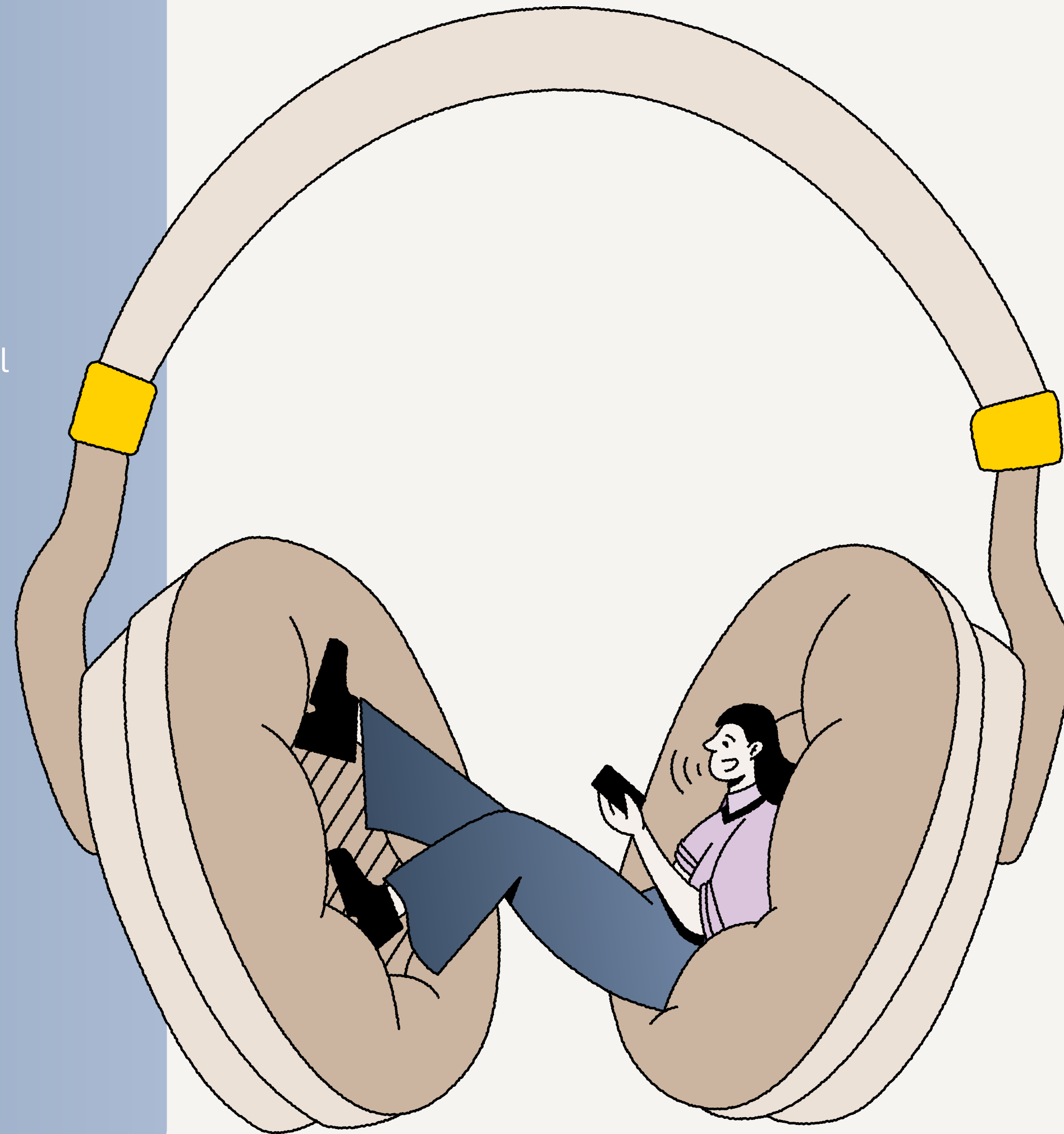
Investing in technology that encrypts voice data reduces the risk of interception and reassures employees that conversations can't be leaked. Work hardware vendors that provide edge AI capabilities and make this a procurement requirement for headsets, meeting room systems, and other workplace devices.

# 02

# Normalize and enable the behavior of talking to AI

**Changing behavior starts with changing culture.** Right now, speaking to AI out loud still feels strange to many people; not because the technology doesn't work, but because the social norms haven't caught up.

03



In our interviews, participants often described voice as useful in theory but awkward in practice. They worried about being judged, misunderstood, or overheard. Several voiced concerns about creating noisy environments or distracting colleagues: a reminder that sound is both a practical and social barrier.



**“If I’m at work in an open-plan office and using AI tools, I don’t want to be speaking out loud. I’d rather just type — because when speaking, others can hear and so I’m more conscious of what I’m saying.”**

**This is where the right technology matters.**

Features like effective active noise cancellation (ANC) and speech-isolating microphones, for example, can minimize disruption and unwanted voice pick up. But hardware alone isn’t enough. After all: adoption isn’t just about capability, it’s about confidence.

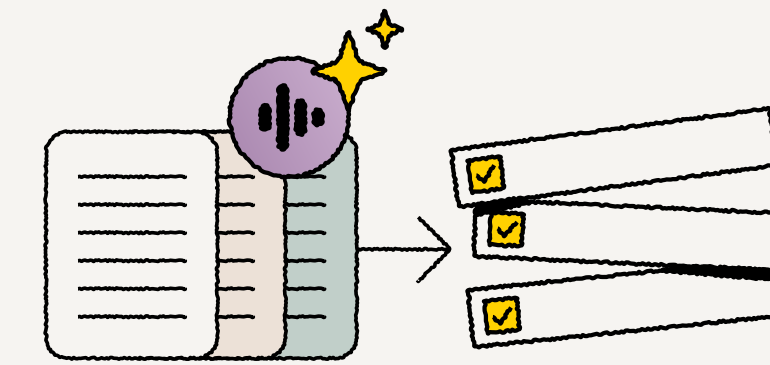
For voice AI to truly take hold, businesses need to normalize it. That means piloting team experiments, modeling usage from leadership, and offering light etiquette guidelines that reduce friction and embarrassment. **When voice is no longer the exception people will begin to lean into it with confidence and ease.**



# Be clear on *where voice wins*

**Voice isn't right for every task.** But when speed matters more than precision, it shines. As businesses expand generative AI into a wider range of use cases and workflows, multi-modality will be key to driving adoption, allowing people to switch naturally between voice and typing depending on the context. The more ways people can interact with AI, the greater its perceived value and everyday use will become.

# 04



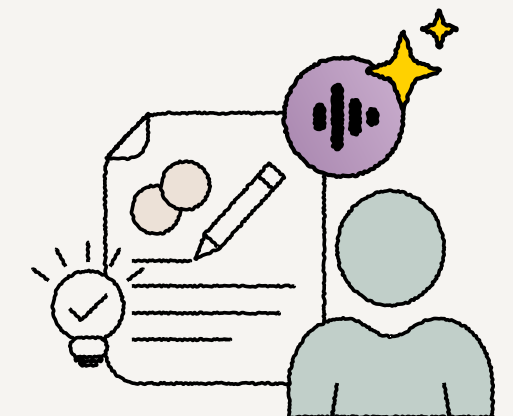
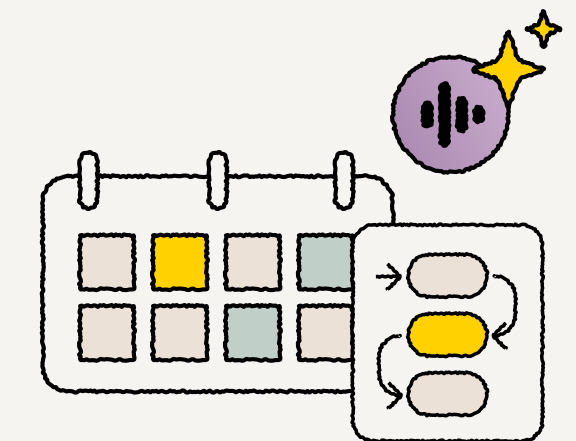
Survey participants consistently identified **brainstorming, quick ideation, summarization, reviewing outlines, and status updates** as natural “voice-first” moments.



**“I liked speaking when I needed to think aloud... it worked best when I just wanted to get something out quickly.”**

Leaders have a role to play in mapping these “sweet spots” — and just as importantly, signaling where voice adds less value. Clarity helps workers know when to speak and when to type, boosting confidence in both. We call the intersection between the usefulness of AI and rising adoption the confident quotient (CQ), a measure of how strongly confidence in AI drives its adoption.

Equally critical is training. Employees need hands-on guidance to understand which tasks are best suited to voice AI, how to speak to AI, when to switch between modalities, and how to integrate voice into everyday workflows. Without training, people risk defaulting back to old habits, even when voice could deliver more value.





# Preparing for the *voice-first era*

**Voice AI is no longer a question of if, but when.** The data shows that we're crossing the threshold into mainstream adoption, and the organizations that act now will define what this next era of work looks like.

The task ahead isn't simply technical. It's cultural, behavioral. It requires enablement. Success will depend on creating workplaces where voice feels natural, trusted, and productive. That means investing in the right tools, building trust through transparency, and training people to thrive in a world where speaking to AI is as normal as typing.

The shift to voice will unlock new ways of working: faster, more intuitive, and more human. The question for leaders is not whether they will adapt, but whether they will adapt in time.



Find out more

If you have any questions about Jabra products, please contact your Jabra representative or visit: **jabra.com**

Who we are

At Jabra, we obsessively engineer with one goal: to free you to work your way. Not a one-size-fits-all way. Your way. Whether you’re in a café, on the move, in the zone, or somewhere entirely new, our products meet you there without compromise. Today, tomorrow, whatever’s coming next, we’re here for it.

**Jabra. Built for work. Designed for freedom.**



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