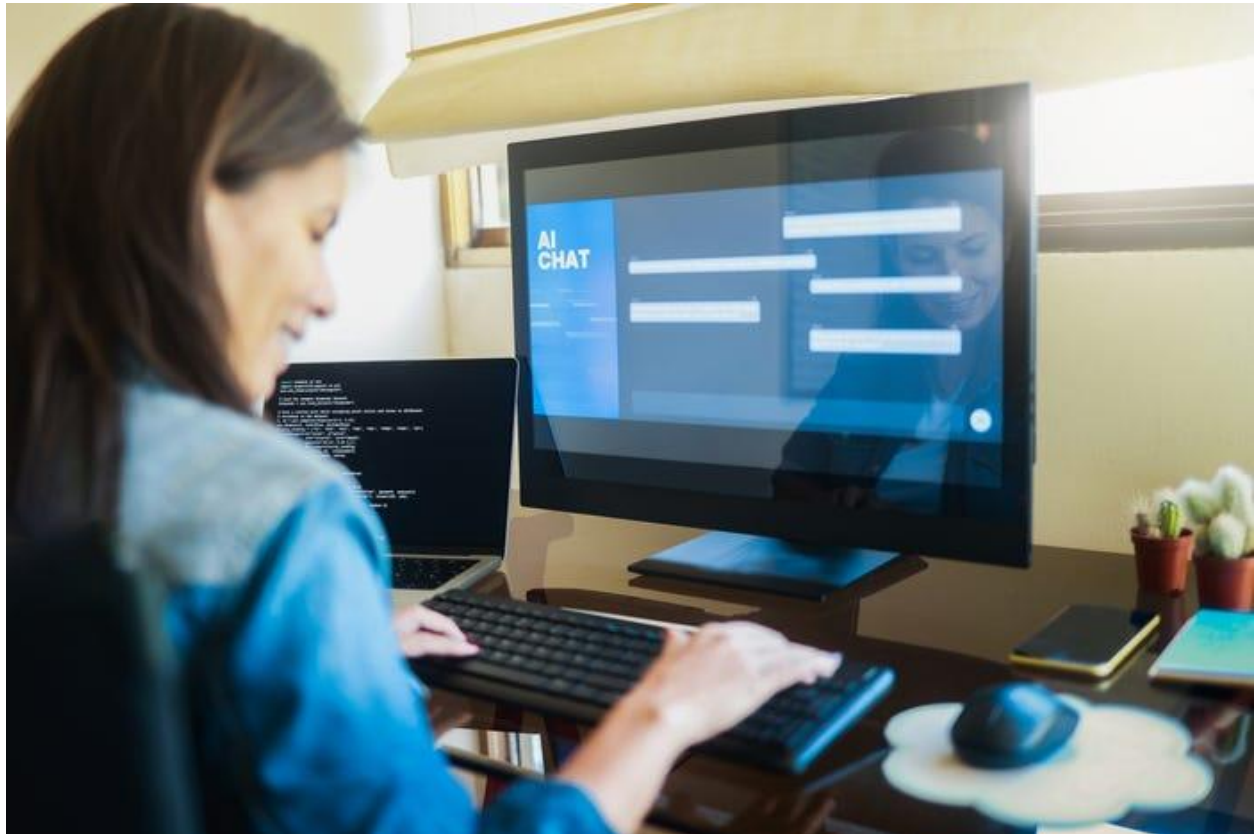


Feeling Way Busier at Work This Year? You're Not Alone.

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88% of respondents in EY's survey are now using AI at work, but the majority use it for basic tasks. Vanessa Nunes/Getty Images

Employees around the world are feeling busier than ever at work, according to a major EY survey.

64% of employees believe their workload has increased in the last twelve months, the survey found.

A top EY exec told BI that AI is creating "pressure, uncertainty, and fear of falling behind."

If you're feeling like your workload has increased in 2025, you're not the only one.

A new EY survey of 15,000 workers found that nearly two-thirds of employees believe their workload has increased in the last 12 months.

AI isn't directly to blame, but, as with most workplace trends today, it's a big part of the story.

"Our research doesn't show that AI is actually increasing workloads," Kim Billeter, EY's global people consulting leader, told Business Insider.

Instead, broader anxieties about AI in the workplace — including fears of skill erosion, a lack of training, and uncertainty over how technology will affect roles — were adding to a sense of pressure to perform, she said.

"That mix of pressure, uncertainty, and fear of falling behind has left many feeling stretched thin," said Billeter.

Training is a particular sticking point, she added, given that employees are often expected to develop new skill sets while continuing to deliver on their existing responsibilities.

EY's findings were reported in the latest edition of the Big Four firm's Work Reimagined Survey, an annual report exploring the changing workplace, published earlier in November. The report is based on responses from 15,000 employees and 1,500 employers across 29 countries.

Perception is not a wholly accurate measure of reality, but employee workloads could be rising globally, Billeter told Business Insider.

"Economic pressures will likely be driving a 'do more with less' mindset, meaning fewer people are handling more tasks. Role complexity is growing as organizations shift to skill-based models, requiring employees to learn continuously while managing existing responsibilities," she said.

On the AI front, poor integration and limited training may create temporary spikes in workload, she said.

As Business Insider recently reported, many US workers have been voicing frustration over the growing flood of AI-generated junk cluttering their workflows — dubbed workslop. AI workslop may look well-organized, informative, and professional, but lacks substance, leaving whoever receives it with more work sifting through the 'slop.'

The 'productivity paradox'

Just because people are using AI doesn't make them more productive, a disconnect known as the "productivity paradox."

EY's survey found that 88% of respondents use AI at work; however, most of their usage is limited to basic applications, such as search and document summarization. These may save a few hours here and there, but won't change how work gets done or how the business performs, EY said.

Only 5% of respondents qualified as advanced users who blend multiple tools and extract far more value from AI by using it as a thought partner rather than a simple tool.

Overall, EY found that companies are missing out on 40% of the AI productivity gains they could achieve with the right strategy.

Addressing workload challenges and balancing the productivity paradox requires focusing on the human side of AI adoption, said Billeter.

Gaining an AI advantage is "inextricably connected" to the talent foundation, she said.

EY has identified five key areas, termed the "Talent Advantage," that it says businesses should combine with their investment in AI tools: AI adoption excellence, learning, talent health, organizational culture, and reward structures.

"Simply investing in technology is not enough. The AI era demands the ability to build strong human foundations and advanced technology in a synchronized and integrated fashion to unlock meaningful transformation in the workforce," said Billeter.