

Who can mobilize the redesign?

A priority workflow needs one person answerable for the outcome and able to mobilize the conditions for a bounded test. The work of redesign still needs to be shared.

Value crosses functions. Accountability often does not.

A consequential workflow may cross functions, systems, budgets and decision rights while accountability remains divided. Each leader can own a piece. No one person may be answerable for the value and consequences produced by the whole.

A 2026 [HFS Research survey](#) of 505 Global 2000 decision-makers offers a current signal. Twenty-eight percent said AI accountability was fragmented or competing, and 20 percent said ownership was still evolving or debated. Only 21 percent reported redesigning or creating workflows for agent autonomy; most were layering agents onto existing workflows or making limited process changes.

The survey is commercial and self-reported. It does not show that fragmented accountability causes weak results or identify the right ownership model. It does show that AI adoption is advancing while ownership and workflow redesign remain unresolved in many organizations.

When value crosses boundaries, local authority may be insufficient to change the whole workflow.

Access does not create authority to redesign the work.

Research referred to in Brief 01 – Priority: in a six-month randomized field experiment across 66 firms and 7,137 knowledge workers, [Dillon and colleagues](#) found that treated employees who actively used an integrated generative AI tool spent about two fewer hours a week on email. The researchers detected no shift in the quantity or composition of tasks from individual-level access.

The experiment did not test workflow redesign or ownership. It clarifies the level of change: individual access can alter work a person controls without changing the coordinated work around it. A priority workflow may therefore require someone who can mobilize changes to decisions, handoffs, roles, measures and operating conditions.

The gap may not be willingness to use AI. It may be the authority to redesign the system around the work.

Ownership is not the same as control.

An accountable outcome owner is answerable for what the workflow produces and for the consequences of changing it. That is different from a technology sponsor, project manager, functional process owner or governance committee. Each may be necessary. None automatically holds the end-to-end value question.

Mobilizing redesign requires three distinct conditions:

1. **Accountability.** Who is answerable for the outcome, the value hypothesis and the consequences for business, people, adoption and governance?
2. **Authority.** Who can convene across boundaries, resolve tradeoffs, change operating conditions and commit a bounded level of resources?
3. **Participation.** Whose knowledge and involvement are required to understand the work, redesign it credibly and live with its effects?

Shared redesign should not mean diffuse accountability. Explicit accountability should not mean unilateral control. The owner keeps the outcome and decision conditions in view; the redesign team contributes the distributed knowledge needed to understand the work and test alternatives.

Why redesign must remain shared.

[Parker and Grote's review](#) of work design and digital technology argues that work design choices should be considered proactively during technology implementation, consistent with jointly optimizing the social and technical system. It also calls for detailed study of work in context because technology's effects depend on work practices, organizational choices and how people use it.

Participation is therefore more than consultation after a design is chosen. The people who do, receive, enable and govern the work need defined roles in making the current workflow visible, developing alternatives and testing consequences. Decision rights should remain explicit.

What the evidence supports and what Organicity adds.

A 2026 [MIT CISR survey](#) of 132 enterprises found that adapted workflows, redefined roles and metrics, and more extensive use of AI-enabled digital colleagues were significantly correlated with stronger value measures. Twenty-two percent reported major workflow redesign and 9 percent reported formal integration into workforce strategy.

Taken together, the research supports a bounded claim. Individual AI access, technology governance and workflow redesign are different organizational acts. Realizing value is associated with changes to workflows, roles and measures, and the work design literature supports deliberate attention to both technical and human design choices.

The evidence does not prove that every priority workflow needs one owner, establish the right seniority or show that naming an owner causes value. The HFS and MIT CISR studies are self-reported and cross-sectional; the Dillon experiment did not test organizational redesign.

Organicity's proposition is narrower and testable: a priority workflow needs one accountable outcome owner with enough authority to mobilize a bounded redesign, while the knowledge and participation required to design the work remain shared. Ownership is a set of operating conditions, not a name in a governance chart.

What makes ownership sufficient?

A priority workflow is ready for a redesign test when five ownership conditions are present:

1. **The outcome is explicit.** The value to be created, the people who receive it and the conditions that matter are clear enough to test.
2. **Accountability is end-to-end.** One person is answerable for the workflow outcome, not only for a functional component, technology deployment or project milestone.
3. **Authority matches the inquiry.** The owner can convene across boundaries, resolve material tradeoffs and alter the conditions that currently shape the work.
4. **Participation is credible.** People who understand the tasks, decisions, relationships, handoffs, exceptions, learning and consequences have defined roles in the redesign.
5. **Resources and decision rights are real.** A bounded budget, protected time, relevant data and an explicit stop, revise, continue or scale decision are in place.

The owner's job is to hold the value hypothesis, mobilize the conditions, resolve cross-system tradeoffs and act on evidence. The owner does not need to possess all the knowledge or make every design choice.

If a condition is missing, a title may create responsibility without the capacity to act. Shared sponsorship may create activity without a person answerable for the result.

Mobilize one bounded work redesign test.

One workflow. One accountable outcome owner. One bounded budget. One cross-functional team. One evidence-based decision.

The owner holds the value hypothesis and the conditions for inquiry. The cross-functional team makes the current work visible, develops alternatives and tests consequences across business, human, adoption and governance outcomes. The bounded budget creates permission to learn without assuming scale.

The test should reveal not only whether redesigned work improves the outcome, but whether the organization can change the surrounding conditions: decision rights, measures, relationships, handoffs, role expectations, learning and accountability. AI may be one contributor. The evidence should support a stop, revise, continue or scale decision.

Ownership determines who can mobilize the inquiry and remain answerable for the outcome. It does not determine how contribution should be allocated. That is the suitability question.

Questions worth staying with.

Ownership is a discipline for making a priority workflow actionable. It does not answer where AI should contribute, what consequential judgment should remain human, what capability the work should continue to develop or whether the design will hold under pressure. It establishes who can convene those questions and make a decision from evidence.

Once authority, participation and resources for redesign are in place, the next question is suitability: how should contribution be allocated among people, AI and organizational systems?

The question is:

Who is answerable for the workflow outcome, and do they have the authority, participation and budget to redesign the system that produces it?

Sources

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