SPRYFOX

AI Project Success and Failure: Industry Survey Report

A White Paper Based on Survey of 64 AI Practitioners, July 2025

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Executive Summary

This report analyzes survey responses from 64 experienced AI practitioners from the DACH region to understand the drivers of success and failure in AI projects. The findings reveal critical patterns in AI project execution and provide actionable insights for those seeking to improve AI project outcomes.

Key Findings:

- **67% of AI projects fail**
- **Stakeholder issues are the primary cause of failure** (54.8%), followed by poor data fundamentals (43.5%)
- **Business value alignment is the strongest success driver** (57.4%), highlighting the importance of clear problem-solution fit
- **Success requires unique practices** beyond just avoiding failure, including iterative development (24.6%) and robust evaluation systems (18.0%)
- **Generative AI tools show promise** with 84.4% of practitioners seeing positive or mixed impact, despite overall project challenges

Critical Industry Challenge

67% of AI projects fail according to industry practitioner estimates

This failure rate, derived from averaging practitioner estimates across 64 survey responses from the DACH region, indicates significant challenges in AI project execution and substantial opportunity for improvement.

Methodology

Survey Overview:

- **Participants:** 64 AI practitioners from the DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland)
- **Response Quality:** High response rates (90.6%-96.9%) across all key questions
- **Experience Profile:** 68.8% have 5+ years of AI experience, ensuring credible insights
- **Role Distribution:** 42.2% work in both management and contributor roles, 34.4% contributors, 23.4% managers
- **Analysis Approach:** Manual categorization of 181 qualitative responses across three key areas

Data Collection: Survey responses were collected through structured questionnaires focusing on three critical areas:

1. Factors leading to AI project failures (62 responses, 96.9% response rate)
2. Factors driving AI project success (61 responses, 95.3% response rate)
3. Key differences between AI and traditional IT projects (58 responses, 90.6% response rate)

What Causes AI Projects to Fail

Based on manual analysis of 62 detailed failure accounts from DACH region practitioners, six primary failure categories emerged. These represent the most common reasons why AI projects struggle or fail entirely.

Failure Factor Analysis

Note: Percentages exceed 100% as many projects fail from multiple simultaneous causes, highlighting the complex nature of AI project challenges.

1. Failed Stakeholder Management & Expectations (54.8%)

The most common cause of AI project failure stems from organizational and stakeholder issues rather than technical problems:

Lack of sustained commitment: • No permanent attention from business stakeholders • Insufficient executive sponsorship throughout project lifecycle • Lack of dedicated resources for stakeholder engagement

Unrealistic expectations about AI capabilities: • Expecting too high accuracy from probabilistic systems • Misunderstanding AI's limitations and appropriate use cases • Overestimating speed of implementation and results

Poor communication and alignment: • Limited communication across business units • Inadequate expectation setting and management • Lack of transparency about project progress and challenges

2. Poor Data Fundamentals (43.5%)

Data fundamentals represent a critical foundation that, when inadequate, frequently leads to project failure:

Insufficient data quality: • Poor, incomplete, or inconsistent datasets • Lack of proper data validation and cleaning processes • Inadequate data governance and quality standards

Data availability and access issues: • Unclear data availability and accessibility • Data silos preventing comprehensive analysis • Legal or privacy constraints limiting data use

Data literacy and understanding gaps: • Overconfidence in existing data quality • Lack of understanding about data requirements for AI • Insufficient data science expertise to assess data suitability

3. Unclear Problem Definition & Goals (38.7%)

Many AI projects begin without clear direction, leading to inevitable failure:

Vague or undefined objectives: • Lack of specific, measurable goals • Unclear business problems to be solved • Missing definition of project success criteria

Constantly changing requirements: • Scope creep and shifting priorities • Inadequate requirements gathering processes • Lack of stakeholder alignment on project scope

Absence of clear KPIs: • No measurable success metrics defined • Unclear ROI expectations • Lack of baseline measurements for improvement

4. Inappropriate Technical Approach (27.4%)

Projects fail due to poor technical decision-making and approach:

Technology-first mindset: • Choosing AI solutions before understanding the problem • Implementing AI for the sake of using AI • Ignoring simpler, more appropriate solutions

Over-engineering and complexity: • Building overly complex models for simple problems • Pursuing cutting-edge approaches over proven methods • Focusing on model perfection rather than business value

Poor technical planning: • Inadequate feasibility assessment • Ignoring expert advice on technical limitations • Insufficient consideration of production requirements

5. Insufficient Technical Skills & Capabilities (25.8%)

Skills gaps in AI projects are often unique and represent a significant failure mode:

Domain expertise deficiencies: • Lack of subject matter expertise in the business domain • Missing understanding of industry-specific requirements • Insufficient knowledge of regulatory or compliance needs

Technical skill gaps: • Inadequate AI/ML technical expertise • Missing data engineering capabilities • Lack of MLOps and production deployment skills

Team composition issues: • Incomplete team with missing critical roles • Poor collaboration between technical and business teams • Insufficient experience with AI project management

6. Poor Process & Resource Management (19.4%)

Traditional project management issues still contribute to failures:

Resource and budget constraints: • Insufficient funding allocated to projects • Budget cuts during critical project phases • Inadequate resource planning and allocation

Inappropriate methodologies: • Using waterfall approaches for experimental AI work • Lack of agile or iterative development processes • Poor risk management practices

Timeline and scope management: • Unrealistic timeline expectations • Scope creep without proper change management • Insufficient planning for uncertainty and iteration

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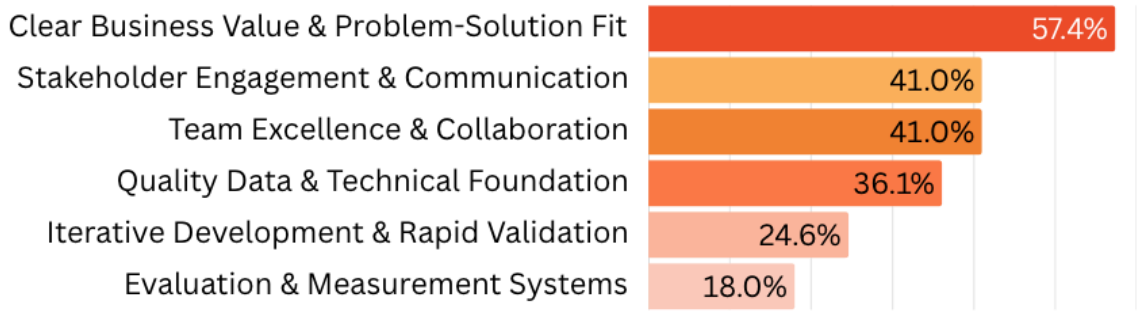
What Makes AI Projects Succeed

Analysis of 61 detailed success accounts reveals that successful AI projects require both avoiding common failure modes and implementing specific positive practices. Six key success categories emerged.

Success Factor Analysis



1. Clear Business Value & Problem-Solution Fit (57.4%)

The strongest predictor of AI project success is having a well-defined business case with clear problem-solution alignment:

Strong business impact and commitment: • Demonstrated business value and clear ROI expectations • Executive sponsorship and willingness to invest resources • Clear focus on business outcomes over technical sophistication

Problem-solution alignment: • Well-defined problems that AI is genuinely suited to solve • Clear understanding that simpler solutions aren't available or appropriate • Focus on solving real business pain points, not technology demonstrations

Valid business case development: • Clear success criteria and measurable objectives • Realistic assessment of business impact and implementation effort • Alignment between AI capabilities and business needs

2. Stakeholder Engagement & Communication (41.0%)

Successful projects maintain strong stakeholder relationships throughout the project lifecycle:

Comprehensive communication strategy: • Regular communication across all organizational hierarchy levels • Proactive expectation setting and realistic timeline communication • Transparent progress reporting and challenge identification

Early and continuous user involvement: • End-users engaged from project inception • Regular validation sessions with business stakeholders • Continuous feedback loops with actual system users

Strong business alignment: • Close collaboration with business process owners • Deep understanding of how AI will integrate into existing workflows • Business stakeholder commitment to process changes when necessary

3. Team Excellence & Collaboration (41.0%)

High-performing teams with diverse skills and strong collaboration drive success:

Complete team composition: • All necessary roles and expertise represented on the team • Balance of technical and business domain expertise • Sufficient experience levels for complex AI implementation

Cross-functional collaboration: • Effective collaboration between software engineers, data engineers, and MLOps specialists • Integration of data scientists with business domain experts • Strong coordination across technical and business teams

Team quality and experience: • High-skilled practitioners with proven AI project experience • Team members with both technical expertise and practical communication skills • Collaborative team culture focused on shared objectives

4. Quality Data & Technical Foundation (36.1%)

High-quality data and solid technical infrastructure provide essential foundations for success:

High-quality datasets: • Clean, well-prepared data that meets AI model requirements • Comprehensive data quality assessment and validation processes • Data collection strategies aligned with AI objectives

Data-driven development approach: • Development guided by realistic metrics and use-case validation • Continuous data quality monitoring and improvement • Integration of data insights into all development decisions

Technical foundation excellence: • Solid technical infrastructure capable of supporting AI workloads • Proper data engineering and pipeline development • Integration of domain knowledge into technical architecture

5. Iterative Development & Rapid Validation (24.6%)

This success factor represents a unique positive practice that doesn't directly mirror any failure category:

Rapid prototyping and experimentation: • Quick development of proof-of-concept implementations • Fast iteration cycles for testing and validation • Emphasis on learning and adaptation over perfect initial solutions

Agile and iterative methodologies: • Agile development approaches designed for experimental work • Regular sprint cycles with frequent stakeholder feedback • Flexibility to pivot based on experimental results and learning

Continuous feedback integration: • Systematic collection and integration of user feedback • Regular validation of assumptions and approach • Rapid response to changing requirements and insights

6. Evaluation & Measurement Systems (18.0%)

Another unique success practice focused on robust measurement and evaluation:

Comprehensive metrics and evaluation: • Well-designed metrics that reflect real-world use cases and business value • Robust evaluation pipelines that guide development decisions • Clear measurement of both technical performance and business impact

Clear success criteria definition: • Aligned definition of success across technical and business stakeholders • Specific, measurable KPIs that reflect business objectives • Regular assessment of progress against defined success criteria

Thorough validation processes: • Comprehensive evaluation of data suitability and model performance • Systematic testing and validation throughout development • Continuous monitoring and assessment of system performance

Success vs. Failure: Critical Insights

The Business Value Gap

The most striking finding is that **clear business value** is the strongest success driver (57.4%), while **stakeholder management failures** are the top cause of failure (54.8%). This suggests that success requires more than just avoiding stakeholder problems, it demands proactive alignment around business value.

Data: Critical to AI Project Outcomes

Data fundamentals are critical to AI project outcomes, appearing as a major factor in both failures (43.5%) and successes (36.1%). This highlights data quality as a fundamental requirement for AI project viability, emphasizing the critical importance of treating data infrastructure and quality as strategic investments rather than afterthoughts.

Unique Success Practices

Two success factors have no direct failure counterparts:

- **Iterative Development & Rapid Validation** (24.6%)
- **Evaluation & Measurement Systems** (18.0%)

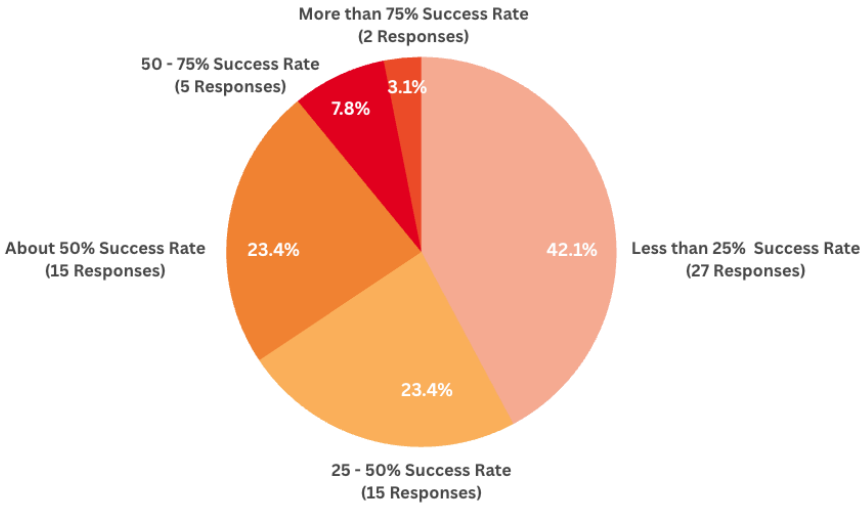
These represent positive practices that organizations must actively implement, rather than simply avoiding problems.

Team Excellence Paradox

Team excellence appears more important for success (41.0%) than **insufficient skills** as a cause of failure (25.8%). This suggests that having exceptional teams provides disproportionate value beyond just meeting minimum skill requirements.

Industry Perception of AI Project Success Rates

Survey respondents provided sobering assessments of AI project success rates across the industry:

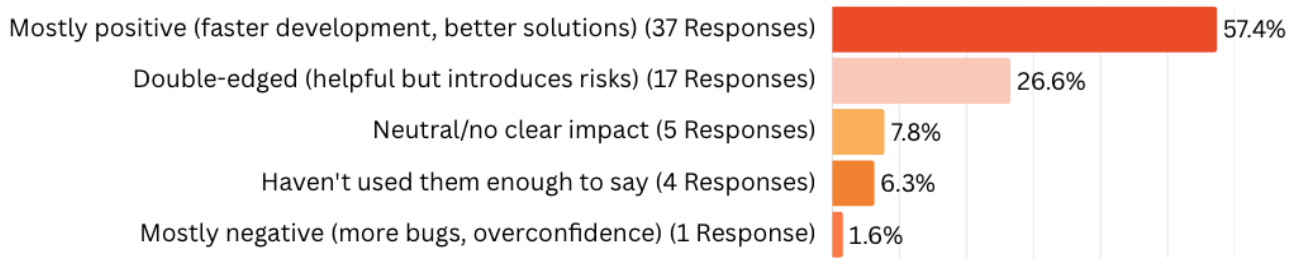


Critical Finding: 84.4% of practitioners believe AI project success rates are 50% or lower, with nearly 40% estimating success rates below 25%. Only 15.7% believe success rates exceed 50%.

This pessimistic industry view, combined into an estimated 67% average failure rate, indicates significant opportunity for improvement through better application of known success and failure factors.

Impact of Generative AI Coding Tools

Despite challenges with AI projects overall, practitioners show optimism about generative AI coding tools:

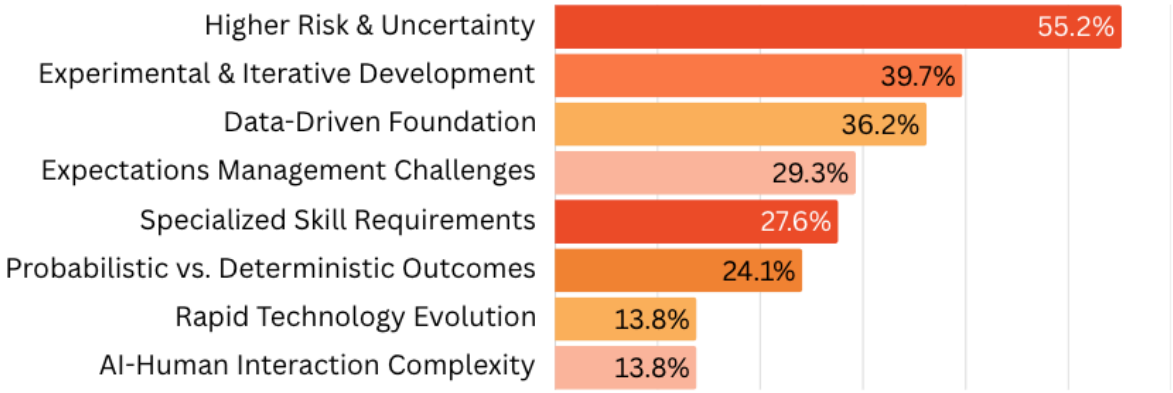


Key Finding: 84.4% of practitioners see either positive or mixed (but helpful) impact from GenAI coding tools. This optimism about tools contrasts with the sobering 67% project failure rate, suggesting that technological advancement alone is insufficient without better project management practices.

How AI Projects Fundamentally Differ from Traditional IT Projects

Based on analysis of 58 detailed responses (90.6% response rate), practitioners identified eight key areas where AI projects require fundamentally different approaches from traditional IT initiatives. These differences have profound implications for project management, team composition, and organizational readiness.

Key Differences Analysis



1. Higher Risk & Uncertainty (55.2%)

AI projects face fundamentally higher uncertainty compared to traditional IT's more predictable outcomes:

Inherent feasibility uncertainty: • No guarantee that desired performance levels are achievable with available data • Unknown outcomes until significant development effort is invested • Possibility that technical solutions may not exist for the business problem

Unpredictable development timelines: • Difficult to estimate development effort and timeline accurately • Experimental nature makes traditional project planning inadequate • Risk of discovering fundamental roadblocks late in development

Performance and outcome uncertainty: • Cannot predict final system performance until implementation • Success metrics may be difficult to define or achieve • Business value realization is less predictable than traditional IT

2. Experimental & Iterative Development (39.7%)

AI projects require fundamentally different development approaches than traditional software:

Research-oriented methodology: • Projects are inherently exploratory with unknown optimal solutions • Requires testing multiple approaches and model architectures • Success depends on experimentation rather than following established patterns

Iterative and adaptive processes: • Development involves trying different models and hyperparameters • Requires continuous testing, learning, and adjustment of approach • Traditional linear development processes are inadequate

Acceptance of failure as learning: • Must plan for and accept that initial approaches may not work • Requires organizational tolerance for experimental failure • Success depends on rapid iteration and learning from failed attempts

3. Data-Driven Foundation (36.2%)

Unlike traditional IT's focus on code and system architecture, AI projects depend fundamentally on data:

Data as primary project driver: • Project success depends more on data quality than code quality • Data collection and preparation often represent majority of project effort • Architecture decisions must be driven by data characteristics rather than functional requirements

Data-centric development process: • Projects must start with thorough data assessment and understanding • Model development is constrained by available data characteristics • Success requires deep understanding of data sources, quality, and limitations

Ongoing data management requirements: • Requires continuous monitoring of data quality and model performance • Must plan for data drift and changing data characteristics over time • Data versioning and management become critical operational requirements

4. Expectations Management Challenges (29.3%)

AI projects face unique stakeholder expectation challenges due to technology perceptions:

Unrealistic capability expectations: • Stakeholders often overestimate AI's current capabilities • Media hype creates unrealistic expectations about implementation speed and outcomes • Requires continuous education about AI limitations and realistic timelines

Complex stakeholder education requirements: • Must educate stakeholders about probabilistic vs. deterministic outcomes • Requires ongoing communication about experimental nature and uncertainty • Success depends on managing expectations throughout project lifecycle

Higher stakes and visibility: • AI projects often have higher organizational visibility and expectations • Pressure for quick results and immediate business impact • Requires sophisticated communication and change management strategies

5. Specialized Skill Requirements (27.6%)

AI projects demand different and more diverse expertise than traditional IT:

Cross-functional team requirements: • Requires combination of data scientists, ML engineers, domain experts, and software developers • Team must include both technical AI expertise and business domain knowledge • Collaboration across disciplines that traditionally work separately

Specialized technical expertise: • Requires deep understanding of machine learning, statistics, and data science • Need for expertise in model development, training, and deployment • Requires knowledge of AI-specific tools, frameworks, and methodologies

Domain knowledge integration: • Success requires deep understanding of business domain and use case context • Must combine technical AI skills with industry-specific expertise • Requires team members who can bridge technical and business perspectives

6. Probabilistic vs. Deterministic Outcomes (24.1%)

AI systems fundamentally differ from traditional IT in their probabilistic nature:

Probabilistic system behavior: • AI systems provide probability-based results rather than deterministic outcomes • Must design systems and processes to handle uncertainty and variability • Requires different approaches to testing, validation, and quality assurance

Different success measurement approaches: • Cannot use traditional binary pass/fail testing approaches • Requires metric-based evaluation and continuous performance monitoring • Success criteria must account for probabilistic nature and acceptable error rates

User adaptation requirements: • Users must understand and adapt to probabilistic system behavior • Requires different user interface design and user training approaches • Must build user trust in systems that provide uncertain outcomes

7. Rapid Technology Evolution (13.8%)

The fast-moving AI landscape creates unique project management challenges:

Accelerated technology change: • AI ecosystem evolves faster than traditional IT technology landscapes • Risk that project approaches become obsolete during development • Requires continuous evaluation of new tools, methods, and approaches

Competitive timing pressure: • Late delivery may result in solutions becoming irrelevant due to market changes • Pressure to adopt latest technologies to maintain competitive advantage • Requires balance between proven approaches and cutting-edge capabilities

Sustainability and maintenance challenges: • Rapid tool updates can impact existing implementations • Must plan for ongoing adaptation to evolving AI ecosystem • Requires strategies for managing technical debt in fast-moving environment

8. AI-Human Interaction Complexity (13.8%)

AI systems require fundamentally different user interaction patterns than traditional software:

User trust and adoption challenges: • Users must learn to trust and effectively use probabilistic systems • Requires different change management approaches than traditional software • Success depends on user understanding of AI capabilities and limitations

Human-in-the-loop design requirements: • Must design systems that effectively combine AI capabilities with human judgment • Requires new approaches to user interface and workflow design • Must plan for human oversight and intervention in AI decision-making

Behavioral change requirements: • Success requires users to change how they work and make decisions • Must design for user adaptation to AI-augmented processes • Requires comprehensive training and support for new ways of working

Strategic Implications: The Complete Picture

This comprehensive analysis of 181 qualitative responses from 64 DACH region AI practitioners reveals three critical insights for organizations pursuing AI initiatives.

The Organizational Challenge is Greater Than the Technical Challenge

Across all three areas analyzed—failures, successes, and differences from IT—organizational factors dominate technical ones:

- **Stakeholder management failures** are the top cause of project failure (54.8%)
- **Clear business value alignment** is the strongest success driver (57.4%)
- **Higher risk and uncertainty** is the primary difference from traditional IT (55.2%)

This pattern indicates that AI projects fail or succeed based more on organizational readiness than technical capability.

Success Requires Both Avoiding Failure and Implementing Unique Practices

The analysis reveals that successful AI projects require two distinct approaches:

1. Avoiding Common Failure Modes:

- Failed stakeholder management → Strong stakeholder engagement (41.0% success factor)
- Poor data fundamentals → Quality data & technical foundation (36.1% success factor)
- Unclear problem definition → Clear business value & problem-solution fit (57.4% success factor)

2. Implementing AI-Specific Success Practices:

- Iterative development & rapid validation (24.6% success factor)
- Evaluation & measurement systems (18.0% success factor)
- Team excellence & collaboration (41.0% success factor)

AI Projects Require Fundamentally Different Management Approaches

The differences from traditional IT are not incremental but fundamental:

- **55.2% uncertainty vs. predictable outcomes** demands new risk management approaches
- **39.7% experimental development vs. linear development** requires agile methodologies designed for research
- **36.2% data-driven foundation vs. code-driven foundation** necessitates new technical competencies
- **29.3% expectation management challenges** require continuous stakeholder education

Recommendations for Organizations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of failure factors, success drivers, and fundamental differences from traditional IT, organizations should implement the following strategic recommendations to improve AI project outcomes.

For Executives: Building Organizational Readiness

1. Establish AI-Specific Governance and Risk Management

- Accept that AI projects have inherently higher uncertainty (55.2% cite this as key difference)
- Create risk management frameworks designed for experimental, iterative development
- Budget for multiple potential outcomes and pivot points
- Set realistic expectations about feasibility uncertainty and timeline unpredictability

2. Invest in Comprehensive Stakeholder Management

- Address the primary failure cause: failed stakeholder management & expectations (54.8%)
- Allocate dedicated resources for continuous stakeholder education about AI capabilities and limitations
- Implement sophisticated expectation management processes (29.3% cite this as major challenge)
- Establish regular communication cycles to manage the unique complexity of AI-human interaction

3. Prioritize Business Value Alignment

- Focus on the strongest success driver: clear business value & problem-solution fit (57.4%)
- Require detailed business cases that demonstrate genuine need for AI solutions
- Ensure projects solve real business problems rather than pursuing technology for its own sake
- Maintain executive sponsorship throughout the experimental development process

4. Build Organizational AI Literacy

- Educate stakeholders about probabilistic vs. deterministic outcomes (24.1% cite this difference)
- Develop understanding of data-driven vs. code-driven development approaches
- Create change management strategies for AI-human interaction complexity
- Prepare organization for continuous adaptation to rapid technology evolution (13.8%)

For Technical Leaders: Implementing AI-Specific Practices

1. Establish Data Excellence as Strategic Foundation

- Address both major failure cause (43.5%) and critical success factor (36.1%)
- Treat data preparation as first-class engineering discipline, not afterthought
- Implement comprehensive data quality assessment and monitoring systems
- Plan for ongoing data management requirements including drift monitoring

2. Build Cross-Functional, High-Performance Teams

- Address specialized skill requirements that differ fundamentally from traditional IT (27.6%)
- Assemble teams including data scientists, ML engineers, domain experts, and software developers
- Prioritize team excellence & collaboration (41.0% success factor)
- Ensure sufficient experience with AI project management and experimental development

3. Implement Evaluation-First Development

- Build robust evaluation & measurement systems (18.0% unique success factor)
- Establish clear metrics and success criteria before model development
- Create evaluation pipelines designed for probabilistic system assessment
- Plan for continuous monitoring and model performance tracking

4. Avoid Technology-First Approaches

- Prevent inappropriate technical approach failures (27.4% of failures)
- Start with business problems and data assessment, not available AI technologies
- Choose proven approaches over cutting-edge methods when appropriate
- Resist over-engineering and unnecessary complexity

For Project Managers: Adapting to AI's Experimental Nature

1. Embrace Experimental and Iterative Methodologies

- Address the fundamental difference in development approach (39.7% cite experimental nature)
- Implement iterative development & rapid validation practices (24.6% success factor)
- Plan for rapid prototyping, frequent validation cycles, and continuous learning
- Create frameworks for "failing fast" and pivoting based on experimental results

2. Manage Uncertainty and Expectations Proactively

- Address unique expectation management challenges
- Build timeline buffers for experimental phases and unknown outcomes
- Communicate uncertainty transparently while maintaining stakeholder confidence
- Develop sophisticated change management approaches for probabilistic systems

3. Plan for Production from Project Inception

- Consider deployment, monitoring, and maintenance requirements early
- Plan for MLOps capabilities and infrastructure needs
- Ensure integration with existing business processes and workflows
- Prepare for ongoing model retraining and adaptation requirements

4. Address AI-Human Interaction Complexity

- Plan for complex user adoption and trust-building requirements
- Design human-in-the-loop systems and workflows
- Implement comprehensive user training for probabilistic system interaction
- Create change management strategies for new ways of working with AI

Organizational Transformation Requirements

1. Develop AI-Specific Organizational Capabilities

- Build tolerance for higher risk and uncertainty than traditional IT projects
- Create frameworks for continuous adaptation to rapid technology evolution
- Establish data governance and quality management as core competencies
- Develop expertise in managing experimental, research-oriented projects

2. Balance Innovation with Risk Management

- Leverage positive impact of generative AI tools while maintaining project discipline
- Combine technological advancement with improved organizational practices
- Focus on proven methodologies while remaining adaptable to technology evolution
- Maintain strategic focus on business value while embracing experimental approaches

Success Measurement and Continuous Improvement

1. Implement AI-Appropriate Success Metrics

- Move beyond traditional binary pass/fail metrics to probabilistic assessment
- Establish business value measurement frameworks appropriate for experimental projects
- Create learning and knowledge capture processes for failed experiments
- Develop organizational capabilities for continuous improvement in AI project management

The path forward requires organizations to simultaneously address the primary failure causes, implement unique AI success practices, and adapt to fundamental differences from traditional IT project management. Organizations that master this comprehensive approach will be positioned to exceed the current 37% industry success rate and realize AI's transformative potential.

Conclusion

This survey of 64 experienced AI practitioners from the DACH region provides a comprehensive analysis to date of what drives AI project success and failure. The 67% failure rate represents both a significant industry challenge and substantial opportunity for organizations that master the unique requirements of AI project execution.

Key Findings Summary

What Causes Failure: Organizational issues (stakeholder management 54.8%, unclear goals 38.7%) dominate technical problems (inappropriate approach 27.4%, insufficient skills 25.8%).

What Drives Success: Business value alignment (57.4%) and stakeholder engagement (41.0%) are most critical, but success also requires unique positive practices like iterative development (24.6%) and robust evaluation systems (18.0%).

How AI Differs: Higher uncertainty (55.2%), experimental development approaches (39.7%), and data-driven foundations (36.2%) make AI projects fundamentally different from traditional IT initiatives.

The Transformation Imperative

The convergence of evidence across failure analysis, success factors, and fundamental differences points to a clear conclusion: **AI projects require organizational transformation, not just technological adoption.** Organizations that treat AI as an incremental improvement to existing IT practices will likely join the 67% of projects that fail.

Success requires embracing AI's experimental nature, building tolerance for uncertainty, investing in stakeholder education, and developing new management approaches designed for probabilistic outcomes. The organizations that master this balance will realize AI's transformative potential while avoiding the common pitfalls that characterize the current industry landscape.

As AI technology continues to evolve at unprecedented speed, these organizational and methodological foundations will become increasingly important differentiators between organizations that successfully harness AI's potential and those that struggle with the fundamental challenges this research has identified.

The roadmap is clear: combine technical excellence with organizational maturity, embrace uncertainty while maintaining strategic focus, and build AI-specific capabilities while avoiding the technology-first trap that causes many of the project failures. Organizations that follow this path will be positioned to exceed the 37% success rate that currently characterizes the industry.

About This Research

This report is based on survey responses from 64 AI practitioners from the DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) with extensive industry experience (68.8% with 5+ years). The survey achieved exceptional response rates (90.6%-96.9%) across all key questions through manual analysis of 181 qualitative responses covering project failures, success factors, and fundamental differences from traditional IT projects. For questions about methodology, additional analysis, or underlying data, please contact Dr. Christian Debes at christian.debes@spryfox.de

Limitations and Future Research

Survey Limitations:

- Sample focused on DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) practitioners; patterns may vary in other geographic regions
- Self-reported data may contain perception biases
- Industry-specific variations not analyzed in this study

Areas for Future Research:

- Industry-specific patterns in AI project success and failure
- Quantitative correlation analysis between success factors and project outcomes
- Longitudinal studies tracking AI project maturity over time
- Economic impact analysis of implementing recommended practices
- Extension beyond the DACH region to analyze regional differences