

The Enterprise in the Age of Agentic AI

eleks

From data silos to intelligent swarms: what needs to change in the enterprise organisations to make agentic AI work?

Enterprises need a new operating model for the age of AI

For three decades, market growth and hiring moved in lockstep. When stocks rose, companies hired. In 2023, that link broke: markets climbed 75% while job openings fell 33%. Economic expansion no longer means more headcount. Something structural has changed.

The root cause, is that most enterprises still run on an operating model designed for the manufacturing era. Siloed departments, pyramidal hierarchies, and linear handoff processes have turned the modern workforce

into a manual integration layer between disconnected systems. People spend their days copying data, exporting spreadsheets, and emailing them to the next silo. Every handoff loses value and adds delay.

The manufacturing paradigm of the enterprise forces our workforce to act like an “API layer” connecting different siloes to keep the organisation running at scale. These inefficiencies are exaggerating our costs and negatively impacting our KPIs.

THIS MANUFACTURING PARADIGM CREATES FOUR PERSISTENT DYSFUNCTIONS:

01

data fragmentation that makes real-time decisions nearly impossible

02

strategic misalignment as departments pull in different directions

03

process ambiguity where no one can clearly trace how work actually moves through the organisation

04

governance complexity that turns prioritisation into a constant argument

Modern work is a network, not a production line. A supply chain decision instantly impacts finance, which changes the marketing budget, which affects sales forecasting.

Trying to fit this networked reality into a 1960s-style org chart creates friction. And in today's world, friction is fatal.

Where most companies stand today with AI

We mapped a six-level AI maturity model, understanding where organisations stand today and where they are heading. Most organisations today sit between Levels 1 and 2, though some are already pushing into Level 3, which is expected to become standard by late 2026. At Level 3, agents begin crossing functional boundaries, and the challenges shift from technical to organisational.

Level	01	02	03	04	05	06
Domain	Silo	Silo	Value stream	Value stream	Value chain	Enterprise
Activity	Discrete Task within the Silo	Functional Tasks within the Silo	Cross-functional Tasks within the Silo	Cross-functional Tasks within multiple Silos	Orchestrating within a Value Chain Domain	Orchestrating across Value Chain
How	Agent	Agents	Agentic Swarms	Agentic Swarms	Agentic Armies?	Agentic Armies?
Machine challenge	Data Governance	Data Governance	Human in the Loop Governance	Human in the Loop Governance	Provisioning & Governance of Agents	Provisioning & Governance of Agents
People challenge	Process Ambiguity	Process Ambiguity	Org Alignment	Org Alignment	Speed of Governance	Speed of Governance
Organization challenge	None	None	Cross-functional Org Needed	Cross-functional Org Needed	New Org Paradigm Needed	New Org Paradigm Needed

Level 3 is the critical inflexion point.

When agents cross departmental boundaries, the questions stop being technical and become organisational: who owns the output?

Who governs it when something goes wrong.

Five fundamentals of the AI-native organisation

The organisations that will lead this transformation are redesigning now, before the technology forces their hand. These are the five principles that define readiness:

01
**TREAT SILOS
AS THE BUG,
NOT THE FEATURE**

They were a necessary compromise of the past. Agentic AI turns that tradeoff on its head.

02
**MOVE FROM
EXECUTION
TO ORCHESTRATION**

Your people should be defining outcomes, not acting as the manual integration layer between systems.

03
**REDESIGN PROCESSES
FOR PARALLEL
EXECUTION**

Standard Operating Procedures were written for a waterfall world. Agents pursue goals, not steps. They work in parallel, not in sequence.

04
**SHIFT GOVERNANCE
FROM IDENTITY
TO PERMISSIONING**

You cannot govern agents as software (SaaS) or as humans (HR). They are a hybrid of both and need a new governance framework.

05
**DESIGN THE
ORGANISATION
AS A NETWORK**

The companies that win the next decade will be those that restructured to work with autonomous agents rather than against them.

"How AI agents will force a new model of enterprise collaboration"

PERSPECTIVES FROM ELEKS ON WHY THE ENTERPRISE OPERATING MODEL IS ABOUT TO BREAK



THE SILO TAX IS REAL, AND IT SHOWS UP EVERYWHERE

Data fragmentation makes real-time decisions nearly impossible. Departments pull in different directions because their incentives and information do not connect. It is often unclear how work actually flows through the organisation. And deciding what to prioritise becomes a full-time argument. These are not separate problems; they are all symptoms of one structural design flaw.



AGENTIC AI CHANGES WHO HOLDS THE CONTROL LOOP

Today's AI tools are passive. You write the prompt, you evaluate the output, you decide the next step. The AI has no initiative. Agentic AI is different: you give it a goal, and it plans, executes, and iterates on its own. This rests on three capabilities working together the ability to perceive the environment, reason through multi-step problems, and use tools to take action in the real world.



THE REAL BREAKTHROUGH IS MULTI-AGENT COORDINATION

A single agent on a single task is useful. The step change comes from swarms: specialised agents that divide labour, share a common memory, hand off tasks dynamically, and coordinate without a central controller. Think of it like a murmuration of starlings — thousands of autonomous units moving in perfect, emergent coordination. That is the operating model the enterprise is evolving toward.



IT IS ALREADY WORKING INSIDE REAL COMPANIES

Uber's Finch system is a three-agent swarm that replaced a multi-day financial data workflow. A supervisor agent receives a plain-language question from an executive, delegates it to a SQL specialist agent that writes the query, and hands it to a validator agent that checks for accuracy before execution. Seconds later, the executive has a chart in Slack. No engineer was involved. The human's job moved from writing the code to defining the outcome.



HONEST ABOUT LIMITATIONS, CLEAR-EYED ABOUT DIRECTION

Today's agents hallucinate, get stuck in loops, and produce output that is sometimes unusable. These problems are real and should not be dismissed. But they are engineering problems on a clear trajectory of improvement. The deeper force, the economic pressure to eliminate the silo tax and the structural friction it creates, is not going away. The question is not whether this shift will happen, but whether your organisation will be ready when it does.



THE BOTTLENECK IS THE ORG CHART, NOT THE ALGORITHM

You cannot run autonomous AI at machine speed inside a hierarchy that operates in quarterly-review time. From Level 3 of the maturity model onward, the point where agents begin crossing departmental boundaries, the traditional siloed structure stops being an inefficiency and becomes a liability. The enterprise must evolve from a hierarchy to a network.

Ready to make AI work across your entire organisation?

The structural transformation is coming, and the organisations that start preparing now will set the terms for everyone else. The question is where to begin.

ELEKS has been helping enterprises navigate complex technology transformations since 1991. With 2,000+ specialists across Europe, the US, and Canada,

we combine deep expertise in agentic AI, data science, and enterprise architecture with hands-on delivery capability to move you from strategy to production.

HOW CAN WE HELP

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Maturity assessment, roadmap development, and strategic guidance to identify where agentic AI delivers the highest impact.

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Custom agent design, multi-agent orchestration, and integration with your existing systems for intelligent workflow automation.

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Dismantling data silos and building the unified platforms that agents need to perceive and act across your enterprise.

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LEGACY MODERNISATION

Transforming outdated infrastructure into agent-ready architectures that support the speed and connectivity agentic AI demands.

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69
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