



# CPO Crystal Ball: Top Priorities for 2026

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# Meet the Speakers



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Stuart Gold  
SVP Marketing  
**Arkestro**

# Agenda

- 01 Welcome and Arkestro- Stuart Gold
- 02 The Hackett Group- Kate Denissova
- 03 Trinity Industries- Mike Shin
- 04 Q&A

**What's your top priority  
or resolution for 2026?**

## **1).The 2026 Mandate for CPOs**

Procurement teams need clearer visibility earlier in the cycle.

## **2). Opportunity Discovery Becomes Continuous**

Teams will move toward “always-on” insight into where opportunity sits across the business.

## **3.) Pricing Must Stay Tied to the Market**

Volatile markets demand visibility that goes beyond historical pricing.

## **4.) Contracts Become Predictive Instead of Reactive**

Contract management is moving toward a more proactive, data-driven approach.





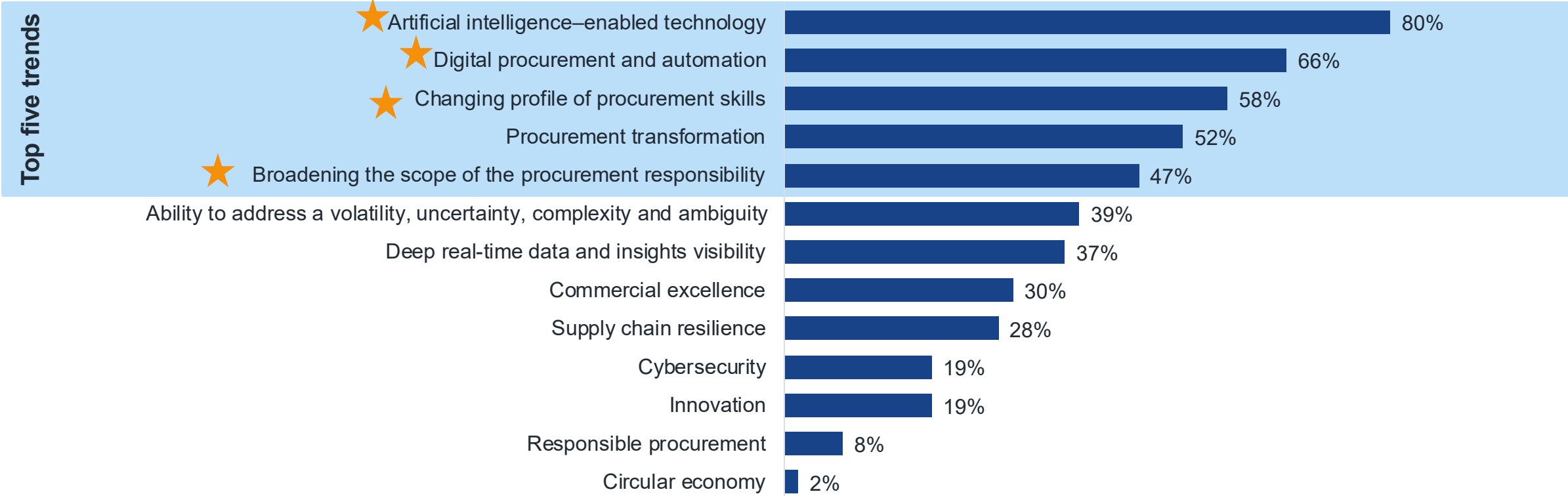
Kate Denissova  
Senior Director, Procurement  
& P2P Advisory  
**The Hackett Group**

# CPO Crystal Ball – 2026 procurement trends, priorities and resources

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# AI, Digital Automation and Broadening Scope of Responsibilities are the most transformative trends in Procurement ...and most organizations are not ready for this shift...

## PROCUREMENT TRENDS WITH A TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT

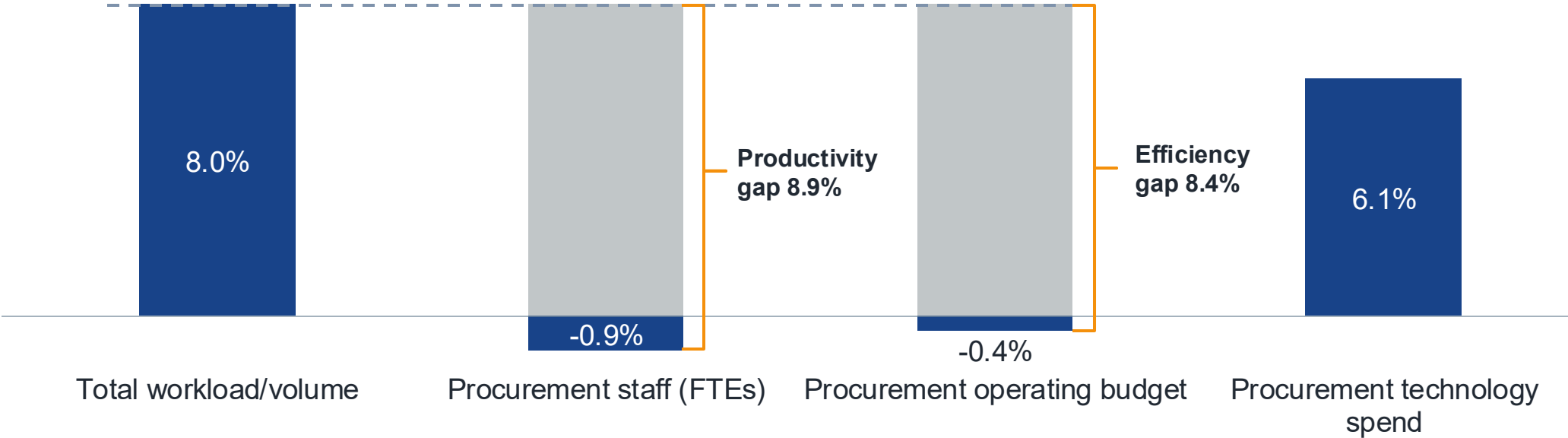


Q. Which key issues and challenges will have the greatest transformational impact on the way procurement performs its job over the next five years? (Please select 5 trends.)

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

Procurement’s workload is **continuing to increase year over year since 2020**...but we are **NOT** adding additional resources to close the productivity gap...

**PROJECTED PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2025 TO 2026  
FOR PROCUREMENT, STAFFING, BUDGET AND TECHNOLOGY SPEND**



Q. What is the estimated expected percentage change in workload, staffing levels, operating budget and technology spend in the procurement function in 2026 compared to 2025?

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# The CPO Crystal Ball – 2026 top 10 priorities for procurement...what is driving our workload

- 1 ENSURE SUPPLY CONTINUITY**  
Supply continuity has moved to the top of the priority list after two years in second position. Supply issues remain top of mind for many teams due to ongoing geopolitical disruption and shifting trade relations. Supply continuity is critical for protecting revenue and profitability.
- 2 IMPROVE SPEND COST REDUCTION**  
Reducing the cost of supplier spend remains a core priority. Spend cost reduction has moved to second place after two years in first place, likely due to the elevated risk profile associated with supply continuity.
- 3 DEPLOY AI-ENABLED TECHNOLOGY **NEW!****  
Deploying AI-enabled technology was added in the 2026 study and has entered the list in third position, highlighting the transformational impact that AI-enabled technology is starting to have on procurement teams.
- 4 TRANSFORM THE OPERATING MODEL**  
Transforming the operating model (e.g., process, technology, people) has moved down from third place in 2025. As teams consider factors such as the need to simplify, increasing business expectations and an AI-enabled future, the operating model should adapt to meet evolving requirements.
- 5 ACT AS A STRATEGIC ADVISOR TO THE BUSINESS**  
Expectations of procurement teams have increased as stakeholders seek support in areas such as supply risk management, digital transformation, and corporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives. Having a “seat at the table” is a key enabler of effectiveness.

- 6 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND MODERN LANDSCAPE**  
Digital transformation continues to be an essential enabler of a procurement organization's ability to do more with less through better intelligence and increased speed, customer-centricity and competitive advantage.
- 7 STRENGTHEN THIRD-PARTY RISK MANAGEMENT VISIBILITY AND CAPABILITY**  
The focus on third-party risk management remains as procurement teams have struggled to gain sufficient visibility to risk and capability to react quickly to the rapidly changing business environment over recent years.
- 8 IMPROVE PROCUREMENT AGILITY**  
Becoming an agile enterprise is important, but it requires developing agile behavior at the process level. Being able to pivot to help solve business challenges is critical to support new and evolving stakeholder objectives effectively and increase satisfaction levels.
- 9 IMPROVE ANALYTICS' AND INSIGHTS' CAPABILITIES**  
Procurement recognizes that success requires a data- and insight-driven approach. A critical enabler is providing reliable and forward-looking data and intelligence to end users, including capabilities such as cost modeling and projecting the impact of changing commercial conditions.
- 10 IMPROVE THE VELOCITY OF THE PROCUREMENT ORGANIZATION **NEW!****  
Procurement teams that improve velocity/speed are better placed to drive competitive advantage, improve efficiency and reduce costs. Speeding up processes leads to faster product development, quicker response times to market changes and lower administrative overhead.

Q. Please select the top 10 procurement objectives for 2026. (Select up to 10.)  
Q. Please rate the importance of the top 10 procurement objectives for 2026.

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# Evolution of procurement priorities – cost reduction and ensuring supply continuity have consistently featured in the top three priorities for procurement teams since 2022 .... Deploying AI entered the list in third position

2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
1 Reduce risk to ensure supply continuity	1 Ensure supply continuity	1 Improve spend cost reduction	1 Improve spend cost reduction	1 Ensure supply continuity
2 Improve spend cost reduction	2 Combat inflationary price increases	2 Ensure supply continuity	2 Ensure supply continuity	2 Improve spend cost reduction
3 Act as a strategic business advisor	3 Improve spend cost reduction	3 Combat inflationary price increases	3 Transform the operating model	3 Deploy AI-enabled technology <b>NEW!</b>
4 Corporate sustainability	4 Pursue digital transformation and modernize landscape	4 Act as a strategic business advisor	4 Combat inflationary price increases	4 Transform the operating model
5 Accelerate procurement digital transformation	5 Improve analytics' and insights' capabilities	5 Transform the operating model	5 Pursue digital transformation and modernize landscape	5 Act as a strategic business advisor

Q. Please select the top 10 procurement objectives for 2026. (Select up to 10.)  
 Q. Please rate the importance of the top 10 procurement objectives for 2026.

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# What are top investment areas in 2026 – Analytics and AI are at the top.

...FINALLY Talent Management is also getting well deserved attention

## TOP 10 IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON THE 2026 TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

1	Data analytics and reporting	Digital transformation
2	AI-enabled technology (e.g., Gen AI, agentic AI)	Digital transformation
3	Category management	Service design and delivery
4	Strategic sourcing	Service design and delivery
5	Talent management (i.e., acquisition, development, retention)	Human capital
6	Supplier relationship management (SRM)	Service design and delivery
7	Strategic business partnerships	Service design and delivery
8	Contract management	Service design and delivery
9	Third-party risk management	Service design and delivery
10	Core procurement technology	Digital transformation

■ Service design and delivery   ■ Digital transformation   ■ Organization design and service partnering   ■ Human capital

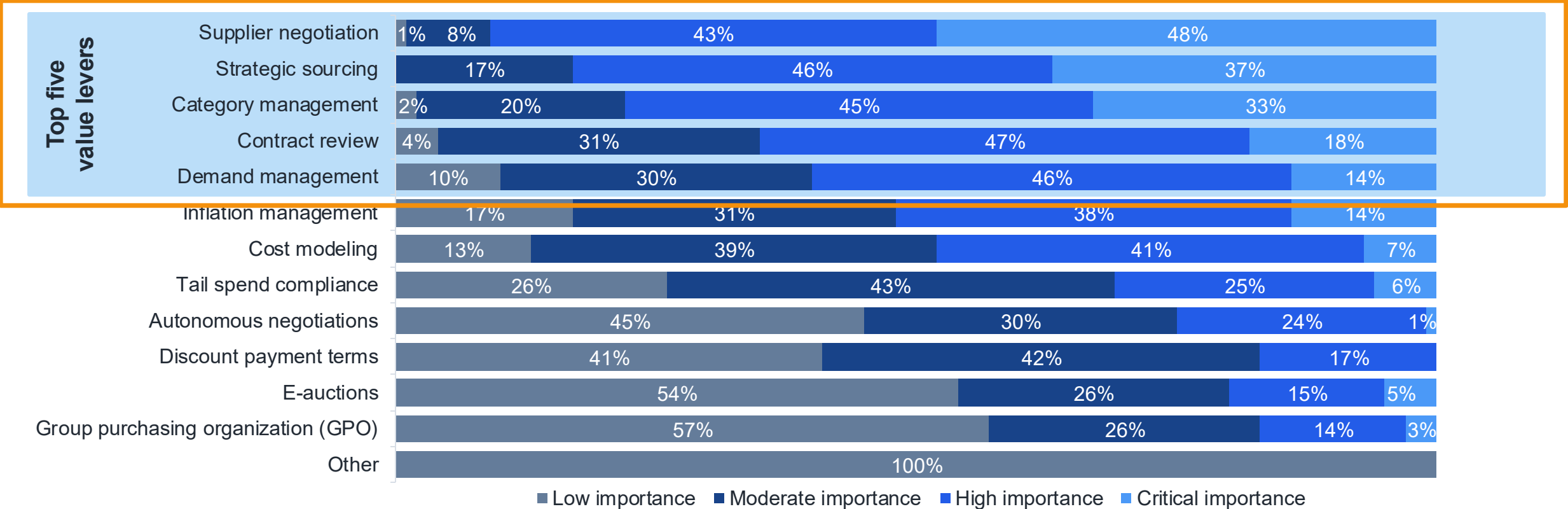
Q. Please select the top 10 improvement initiatives on your organization's 2026 procurement transformation agenda. (Select up to 10.)

Q. Please rate the importance and maturity level of the top 10 improvement initiatives on your 2026 procurement transformation agenda.

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# What are they top savings and value realization techniques for 2026?

## SAVINGS AND VALUE REALIZATION TECHNIQUES



Q. Please rate the importance of the following techniques to drive increased savings and value realization in 2026.

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# What should we expect for greatest and lowest cost savings in 2026 – Direct spend categories

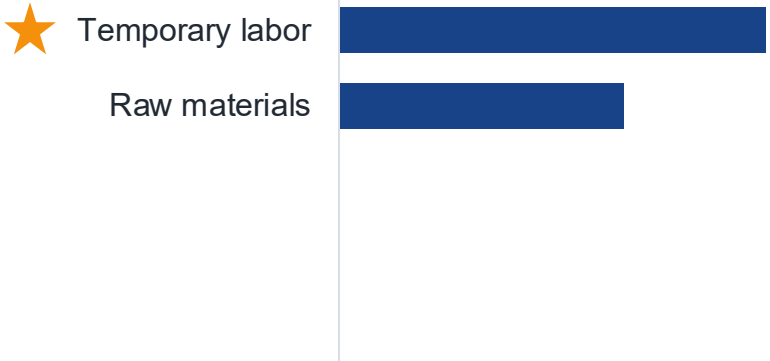
## GREATEST AND LOWEST COST SAVINGS IN 2026: DIRECT SPEND CATEGORIES

### Greatest cost savings (cited multiple times)



**Other spend categories with only one citation:** AI, coffee, COGS, computing, cytokine, direct materials, direct services, fabrications, fuel, glycols, lecithin, machined parts, metals, operating costs, plastics, powdered beverages, ramen noodles, reactors, soy, tanks/cylinders, temporary labor

### Lowest cost savings (cited multiple times)



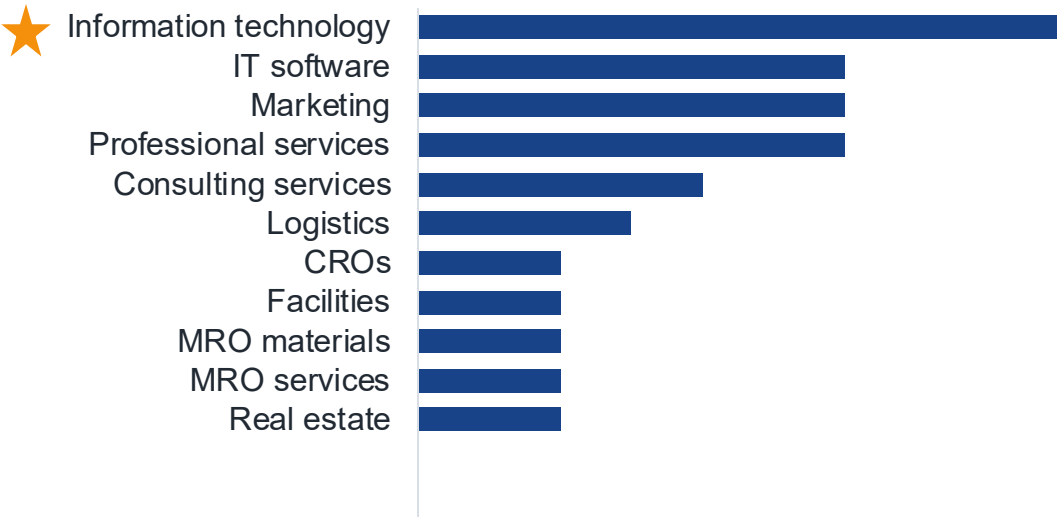
**Other spend categories with only one citation:** Beef products, biologics, candy bars, clinical development services, electrical controls, fragrance ingredients, hydrocarbon, instrumentation, manufacturing aids, manufacturing services, MRO materials, natural sweeteners, packaging, peripheral components, power and connectivity, seafood, technology, trade compliance, turpentines

Q. Which three direct and indirect spend categories do you project will yield the greatest cost savings in 2026?  
 Q. Which three spend categories do you project will yield the lowest cost savings in 2026?

# What should we expect for greatest and lowest cost savings in 2026 – Indirect spend categories

## GREATEST AND LOWEST COST SAVINGS IN 2026: INDIRECT SPEND CATEGORIES

### Greatest cost savings (cited multiple times)



**Other spend categories with only one citation:** Capital equipment, clinical technology, commercial services, corporate services, data center, food and beverage, FSP, HR services, IT hardware, kitchen equipment, maintenance turnaround inspections, managed services, money movement, research, servicing, training and development, telecom

Q. Which three direct and indirect spend categories do you project will yield the greatest cost savings in 2026?  
 Q. Which three spend categories do you project will yield the lowest cost savings in 2026?

### Lowest cost savings (cited multiple times)

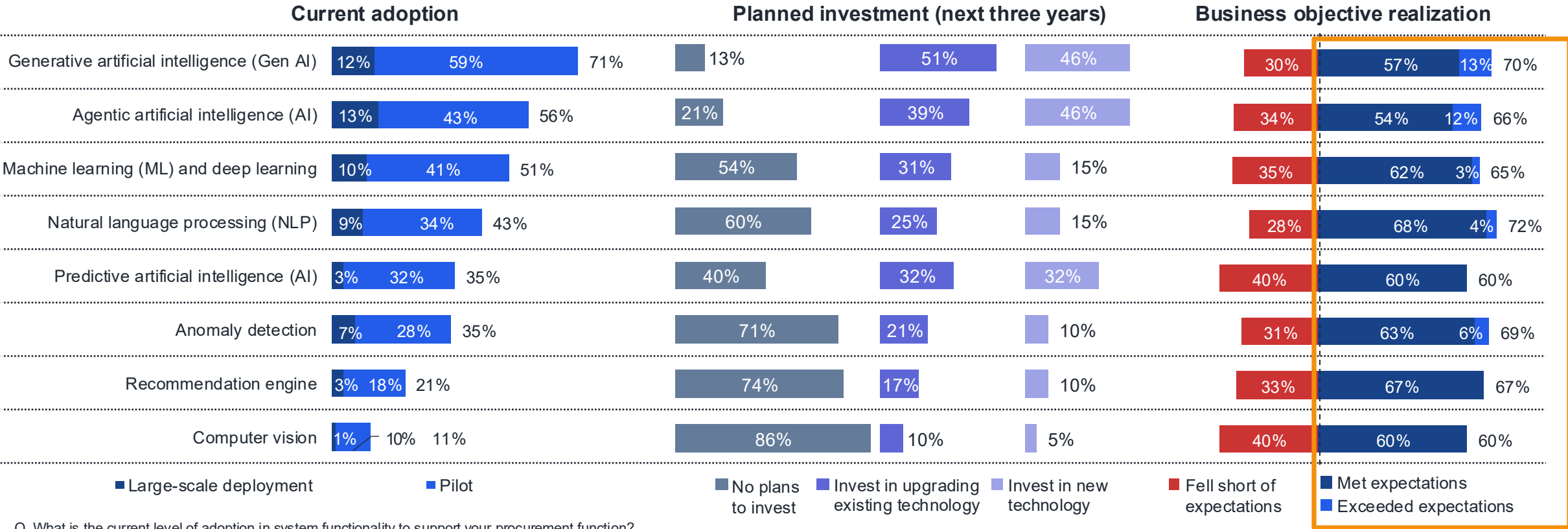


**Other spend categories with only one citation:** Construction, consulting services, consumables, FCM, HR information systems, IT cloud services, IT hardware, leasing, logistics/warehousing, market data, marketing: TV/film production, payroll services, ports, training and development

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# How are we closing the productivity gap – through **AI-enabled technologies** that are **meeting and exceeding expectation** across the board in the pilot deployments!

## TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AND BUSINESS OBJECTIVE REALIZATION

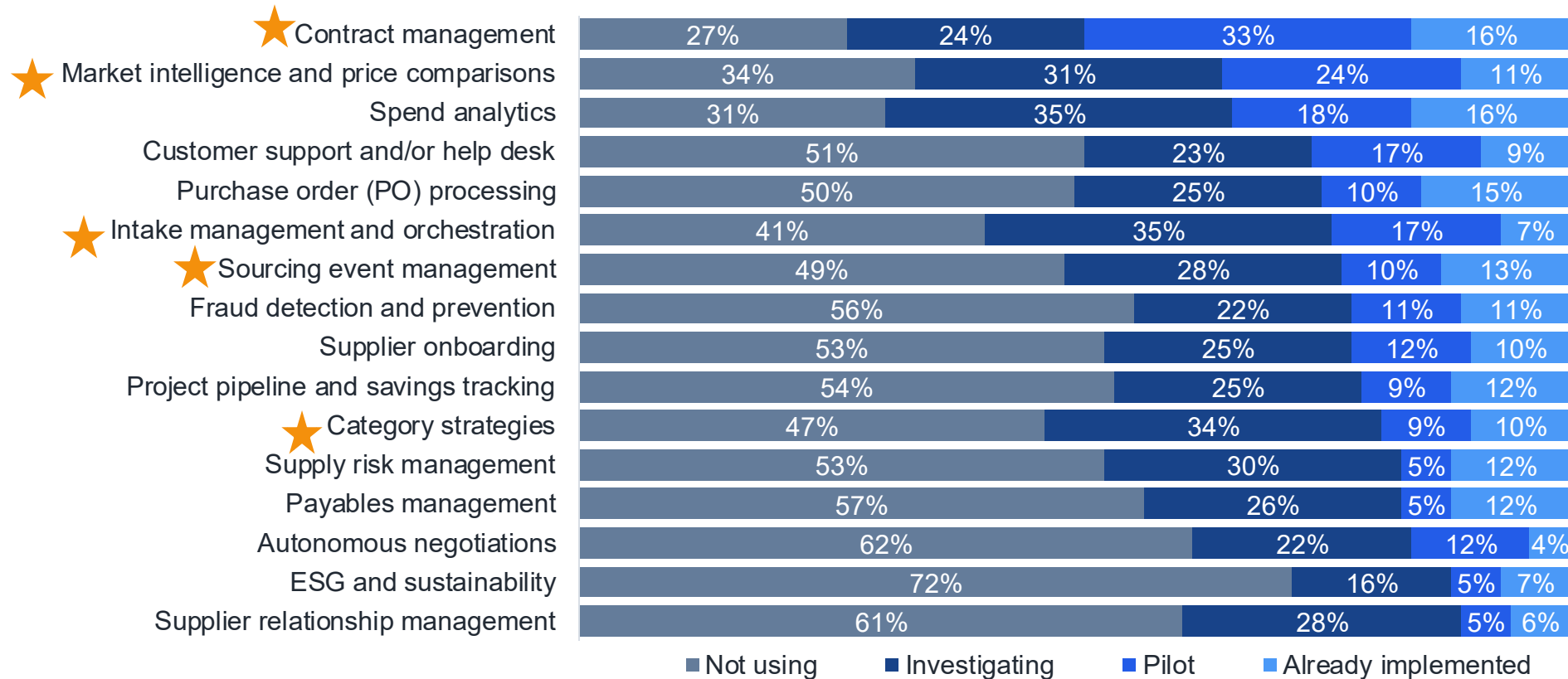


Q. What is the current level of adoption in system functionality to support your procurement function?  
 Q. What is the planned investment in system functionality over the next three years to support your procurement function? (Select all that apply.)  
 Q. Select the type of solution deployed and the extent to which realization of business objectives met expectations for the following technology projects executed in the procurement function over the last two years.

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# Most popular AI-enabled technology use cases to drive efficiency – Contract Management and Market Intelligence...Sourcing, Category and Intake Management will be gaining popularity 2026

## CURRENT STATUS OF AI-ENABLED TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT



### Status definitions:

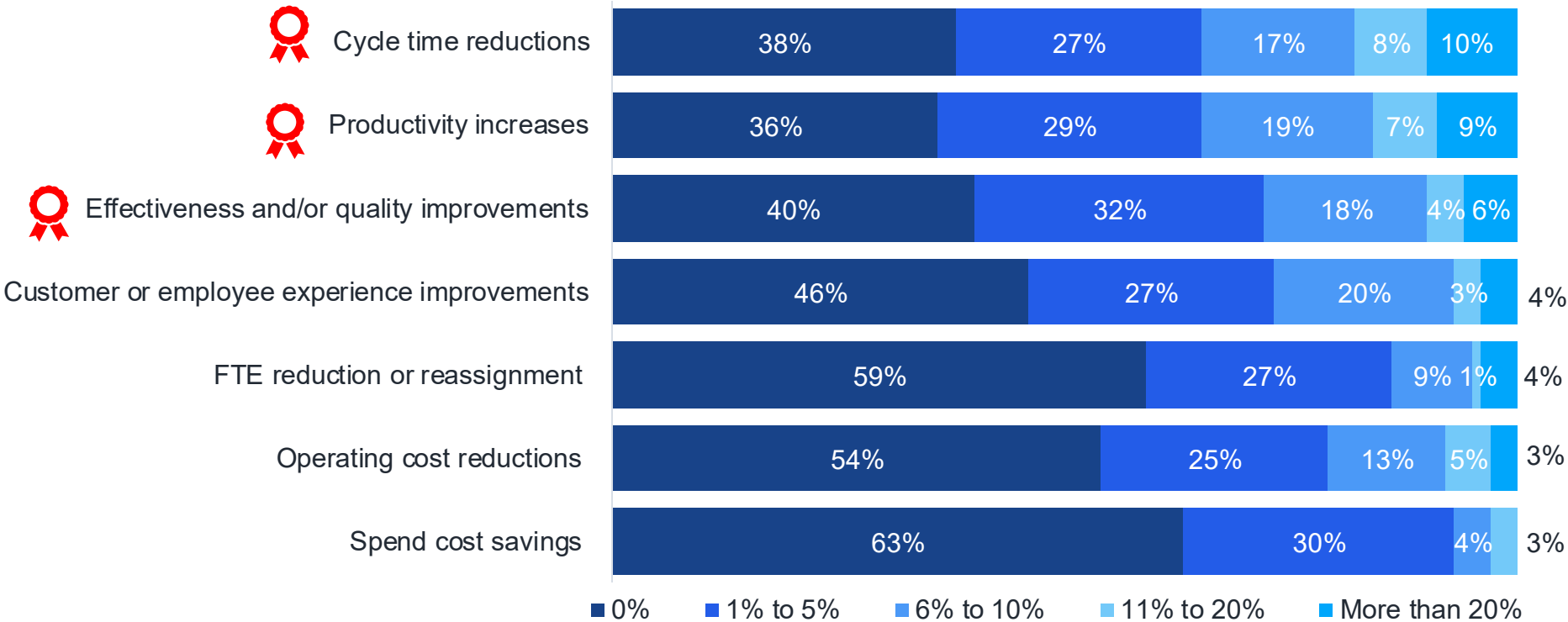
- **Investigating:** Currently exploring or researching the application of AI-enabled technology for this process or activity.
- **Pilot:** There is an ongoing pilot project testing the application of AI-enabled technology for this process or activity.
- **Already implemented:** AI-enabled technology has already been implemented for this process or activity.

Q. Please indicate the progress made in pursuing the following potential procurement use cases for AI-enabled technology. (Only include use cases where AI is formally integrated into workflows, not informal or individual use.)

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study

# Let's not forget about the **value realization!**

## AI-ENABLED TECHNOLOGY VALUE REALIZATION



Q. What value (real or perceived) has your organization begun to realize through its use of AI-enabled technology?

Source: The Hackett Group® 2026 Procurement Agenda and Key Issues Study



Mike Shin  
Chief Supply Chain Officer  
**Trinity Industries**

# Connect with Kate and Mike



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# NEW RESOURCE:

## Arkestro Across the Industries

### Special Edition Predictive Procurement at Scale Use Cases

Real-world use cases showing how Predictive Procurement amplifies outcomes across complex industries.

#### Inside the booklet:

- Proven use cases from real customers
- Industry-specific results & insights
- How teams drive impact with Predictive Procurement





# Thank You!

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