COMPLIMENTARY EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING

Five Questions Every CEO Should Ask Before Investing Another Dollar in AI

AI investment is accelerating. Organizational value is not automatic. These five questions help leadership teams distinguish experimentation from enterprise performance.

01 What business result are we actually buying?

Start with the operational or commercial outcome, not the technology. Define the workflow, baseline performance, accountable executive, expected benefit and cost of change before authorizing investment.

Decision test: Can we name the metric that will improve, its owner and when we will measure it?

02 Is our organization ready to change how work gets done?

Technical capability is only one part of adoption. Leadership alignment, employee trust, skills, process ownership and incentives determine whether a promising pilot becomes routine practice.

Decision test: Have the people who perform the work helped design the change?

03 Which workflows deserve priority — and which do not?

Avoid spreading effort across disconnected experiments. Compare opportunities on measurable value, implementation effort, data readiness, risk and organizational friction. Start where evidence is strongest.

Decision test: Why is this workflow a better first investment than the alternatives?

THE CENTRAL IDEA

The constraint on AI value is often not access to the technology. It is the organization’s ability to make coordinated decisions and adapt its operating model.

FROM AI ACTIVITY TO MEASURABLE VALUE

Two more questions. One leadership decision.

04 Can we govern AI without slowing responsible innovation?

Make accountability explicit. Evaluate data quality, privacy, security, reliability, human oversight and vendor dependence in proportion to the use case. Governance should enable disciplined experimentation, not merely approve tools.

Decision test: Who can stop, revise or scale the deployment — and on what evidence?

05 How will we know when to scale, redesign or stop?

A successful demonstration is not the same as sustained business value. Establish adoption, quality, cost, employee experience and outcome measures. Review them at defined intervals and be willing to change course.

Decision test: What evidence would persuade us not to expand this initiative?

A practical next step for your leadership team

Select one consequential workflow. In a 60-minute leadership discussion, agree on its business outcome, readiness barriers, risk owner, pilot scope and measurement plan. If those five elements are unclear, resolve them before increasing investment.

GO BEYOND THE FIVE QUESTIONS

The 2026 AI Executive Intelligence Review™

A research-based perspective for leaders navigating AI adoption, workforce redesign, governance and organizational adaptability.

28 major research sources · 6 research disciplines · 35 executive conclusions

Explore the full Review and purchasing options

Prepared by Influence Pro Research™. This briefing offers executive decision prompts synthesized from the Review’s research themes; it does not independently verify each underlying study.