EXECUTIVE BRIEF

From 10X Engineer to 3X Seller

How AI created the 10X engineer, and how it will create a 3X Seller.

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Engineering has shown how AI can expand human capacity by 10x. Sales faces a similar opportunity, albeit 3x. Why 3x? Because selling involves complexity on the buyer's side that we do not control. What AI can change is the seller's main constraint: time.

Today, sellers have about 1,600 hours a year available for selling. Less than 30% of that is spent working with customers. AI can take over much of the work that is not customer-facing and free that time for customers. AI also does not have to stop when a seller does: sellers who learn to orchestrate their AI can keep it working 24/7. At Anthropic, deals per salesperson rose 1.7x in about 6 months as agent use spread.[22] While this technology is available to everyone, few sellers use it.

We recommend closing the gap in 3 stages:

- **1X: Modernize the process**: Align the entire team around a few AI skills while building the infrastructure. This lays the foundation for 2X and 3X.
- **2X: Offload work to AI**. This frees about 40% of the seller's selling time and can be applied to letting sellers do outbound and create pipeline. For most companies, this is the place to start.
- **3X: Become a full-cycle seller:** it frees about 920 hours, more than half a seller's time, but the company must reorganize around the seller. AI companies may go straight here.

AI makes products easier to copy, so more of them look alike. When the product no longer sets a company apart, the GTM has to. Engineering has already shown what happens next: those who adopt AI first pull ahead and create a gap that will keep growing.

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Chapter 1. The 10X Engineer

In 2004, Paul Graham observed that a great programmer could be 10x or even 100x as productive as an ordinary one, and that in every field, *"technology magnifies differences in productivity."*[1] To see where sales is going, it helps to look at engineering, where AI arrived earlier. It shows us three things:

- **Emergence of the 10X engineer:** the top 10% spends 10x as much on coding agents.
- **Constraints in software engineering:** AI moves the constraint from one limit to the next.
- **How sales is different:** what applies to sales, and what does not.

1.1 Emergence of the 10X engineer

In September 2026, OpenAI published data on how its researchers use coding agents.[2] Their research runs on code they write themselves, so they give an early view of how people who write code adopt agents. The data shows that in January, the typical researcher used coding agents only modestly. By mid-August, the top 10% were spending more than 10x the typical researcher. The steep rise has the shape of the Productivity J-Curve:[3] a long, flat stretch while people and processes adapt, then a sharp take-off. That is the first sign of the 10X engineer: not someone who types faster, but someone who hands more of the work to agents. A within-person study at Anthropic found that code output rose after engineers adopted agents, and that agent-written code was removed or reverted no more often than human-written code.[22]

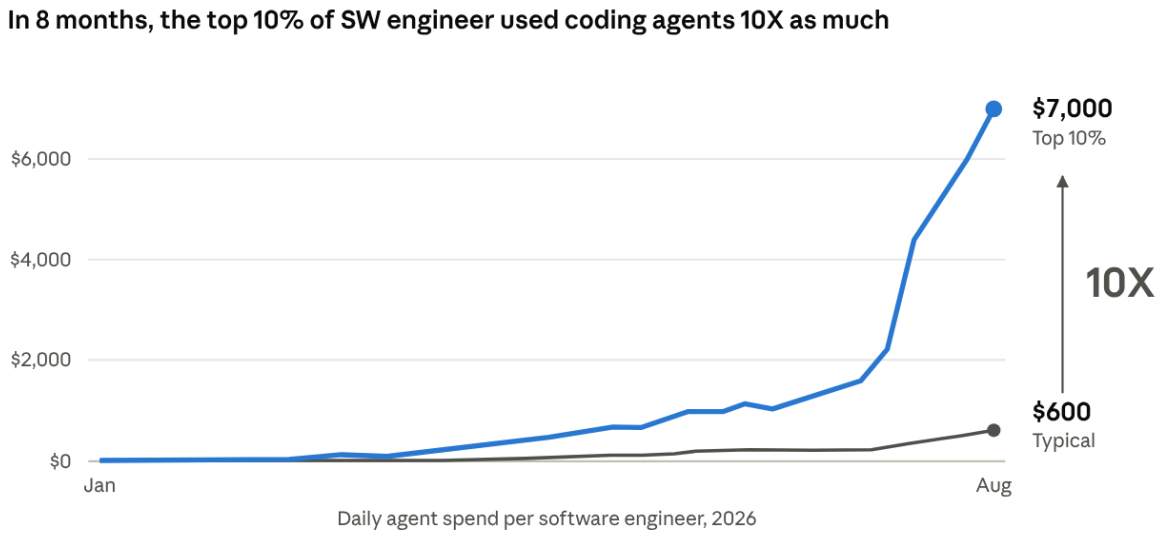


Figure 1.1. Daily coding-agent spending among OpenAI researchers, median versus top 10%, Jan–Aug 2026; the top 10% follow the Productivity J-Curve.[3] Adapted from OpenAI.[2]

Across the industry, software activity rose with it. On GitHub, monthly commits doubled from 1.4 billion to 2.9 billion between April and August 2026, and are up roughly 6x since early 2023.[4] On Vercel, deployments rose about 10x in a year.[5]

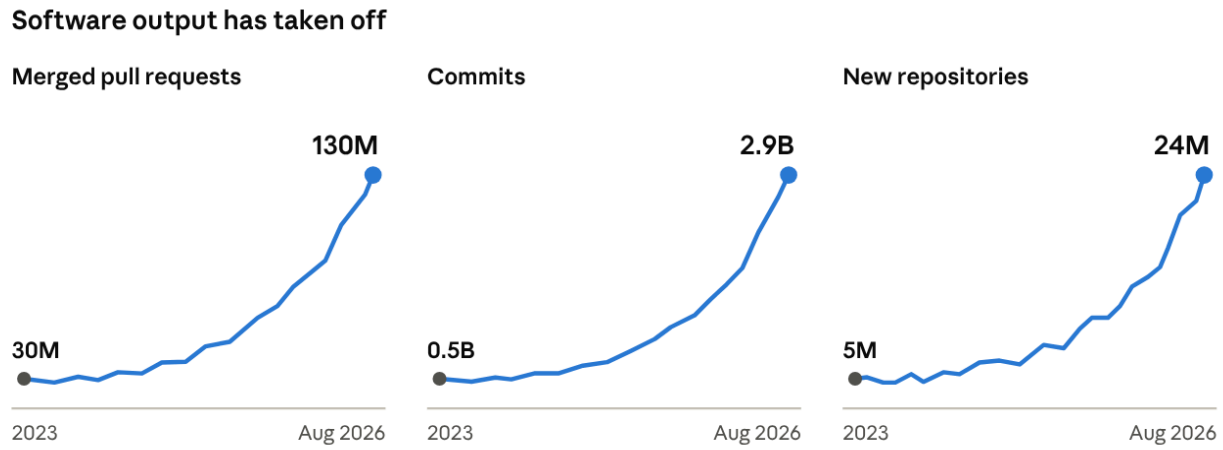


Figure 1.2. Monthly merged pull requests, commits, and new repositories on GitHub, January 2023–August 2026.[4]

1.2 Constraints in software engineering

Like any job, engineering comes down to a short list of key tasks. For now, AI does not change those tasks. It changes how they get done, who does them, and, as a result, how much of the engineer's time each one takes.

Table 1.1. How an engineer's time moves across tasks: a working model. The 2024 column is a pre-agent baseline drawn from Sonar's 2019 survey[6] and GitClear's 2020–2024 data;[7] 2026 and 2027 are estimates.

#	Engineering task	2024	2026	2027
1	Understand the requirement	8%	**15%**	**21%**
2	Design and architecture	8%	**20%**	**25%**
3	Write the code	**32%**	10%	5%
4	Debug and maintain the code	**19%**	8%	5%
5	Test the code	12%	3%	1%
6	Review the code	8%	**25%**	**12%**
7	Document	5%	1%	1%
8	Ship and verify: does it do what it was meant to do	8%	**18%**	**30%**

In 2024, writing the code took the largest share of an engineer's time: the constraint was how fast a human could type. Today, agents write a growing share of the code, far faster than any human can ever type. Now, reviewing code takes the most time.

Simply put, the constraint moved from the fingers typing to eyes reviewing. This is what the Theory of Constraints predicts: relieve one constraint, and the next one appears.[19] AI is now starting to take on code review as well. Following this trend, we expect the constraint to move to judgment next: making sure the code does what it was meant to do.

1.3 How sales is different

The question is whether the same applies to sales: is there a 10X seller? There are three important differences to consider:

- **A different constraint:** In engineering, the constraint moved from fingers to eyes, and is now moving to judgment. In sales, the constraint has two sides: the buyer's, which the seller can influence but not control, and the seller's own time, where AI can make significant gains.
- **AI in sales is harder than in engineering:** Code runs in a controlled environment. It compiles, or it doesn't; it passes the tests, or it fails, and the engineer knows instantly. AI can try again and again, at almost no cost, until it works. A sale offers far less of that. A message or a call opener can be tested, but the deal itself runs through buyers who must agree, each with their own priorities, budget, and timing. The answer can take weeks or even months, and a seller cannot meet the same buyer ten times, adjusting the approach until it works.
- **AI in sales started later:** AI in engineering started in 2022 and spent 3 years in the flat part of the Productivity J-Curve[3] before the use of coding agents took off in early 2026. AI in sales started in earnest in 2024 with AI SDRs,[8] and, by our reading, it is still in the flat part.

These differences are why we do not expect 10x in sales. We expect about 3x, and we call the seller who gets there the 3X Seller. The 10X engineer's role changed: from writing code to orchestrating agents that write it, deciding what they build, and checking what comes back. The multiplier in sales is smaller, but because sellers carry the revenue, the effect on the business can be just as large.

The 10X engineer no longer writes most of the code.

They orchestrate agents that do.

That raises the question for sales: can the 3X Seller hand most of the work around the sale to agents, and spend that time with customers?

Chapter 2. The Impact of AI on Sales

Chapter 1 showed what AI does to an engineer's work. Now we look to apply the same lens to sales. It shows us three things:

- **Where sellers spend their time today:** mostly on work that does not involve a customer.
- **How much time AI frees up:** from 250 hours per year at 1X to 920 at 3X.
- **The main constraints of sales:** the seller's time, the buying process, and adoption.

2.1 Where sellers spend their time today

A seller works about 2,000 hours a year. About one day a week, roughly 400 hours, goes to internal meetings, training, and planning, leaving about 1,600 hours for selling. We define these hours as the Seller Capacity. Most of them go to tasks that do not involve the customer: a seller spends less than 30% of their time actually working with the customer.[9] Much of the rest goes to working with tools. The CRM must be updated, the proposal built, the forecast reported. Each tool was added to help the seller, and each one added work. Over time, the seller ended up working for the tools. AI is different: it is the first tool that does the work itself.

AI is changing the seller's role, but not the job's tasks. At least not yet. The seller still has to find and research accounts, diagnose the Impact (the outcome the buyer wants to achieve), and close the deal, but how the tasks get done, and who does them, changes. To see where that time goes, we look at the job the same way we looked at engineering: as a short list of tasks.

Table 2.1. The tasks of a seller and the share of time each takes today.

#	Seller task	What it consists of	Today
1	Find/Qualify	Identify accounts, contacts, triggers, and intent; qualify the opportunity	13%
2	Research	Understand the company, person, and situation; form an Impact hypothesis	13%
3	Engage	Create interest through email, calls, social, and other communication	12%
4	Diagnose	Verify the problem, quantify the business Impact, establish a Critical Event	9%
5	Demonstrate	Show how the solution delivers the agreed Impact, and prove it	9%
6	Navigate	Map the buying group, multithread, build champions	4%
7	Propose	Create proposals, business cases, plans, presentations, and recaps	18%
8	Contracting	Negotiate terms, clear procurement and legal, reach the Commit, the signed agreement	6%
9	Deliver Impact	Drive adoption toward Impact, expand, and generate advocacy	0%
10	Administration	CRM, notes, scheduling, reporting, internal communication	16%

2.2 How much time AI frees

AI does not just make sellers do more or do it faster. It changes what their week is made of. Today, most of it goes to work the buyer never sees. As AI takes that work over, the week fills with the work a human does better: engaging prospective buyers, understanding the Impact the buyer wants, bringing the buying group together, and, for a full-cycle seller, helping the customer achieve that Impact after the deal is signed. That last part rarely happens.

The shift comes in three stages, each handing more work to AI. At 1X, AI skills assist the seller; most organizations are entering this stage now. At 2X, agents take over the time-intensive tasks. At 3X, sellers orchestrate agent workflows that run around the clock.

Table 2.2. How a seller's time shifts across tasks as AI takes on more of the work.

#	Sales task	Group	Today	1X: Skills	2X: Agents	3X: Agent workflows
1	Find and Qualify	AI-led	13%	11%	4%	1%
2	Research	AI-led	13%	8%	5%	1%
3	**Engage**	**Human-led**	**12%**	**15%**	**18%**	**10%**
4	**Diagnose**	**Human-led**	**9%**	**14%**	**24%**	**28%**
5	**Demonstrate**	**Human-led**	**9%**	**14%**	**18%**	**12%**
6	**Navigate**	**Human-led**	**4%**	**7%**	**16%**	**18%**
7	Propose	AI-led	18%	14%	6%	1%
8	Contracting	Hybrid (50/50)	6%	5%	4%	3%
9	Deliver Impact	Human-led	0%	0%	0%	25%
10	Administration	AI-led	16%	12%	5%	1%
	Hours saved by AI	**vs Today**	–	**248**	**656**	**920**

The hours add up quickly: about 250 a year at 1X, and about 650 at 2X, enough to change the business. Companies can put them back into engaging prospective clients via AI-powered outbound, the work sellers used to do themselves- now powered by AI.

At 3X, about 920 hours come free, so the seller can keep the customers they win through renewal and expansion. By then, more than 90% of the seller's time goes to human-led work with the buyer. Early evidence points the same way: at Anthropic, sales reps who adopted agents closed more deals, and one employee described the strategic part of the job growing from 20% to 90%.[22]

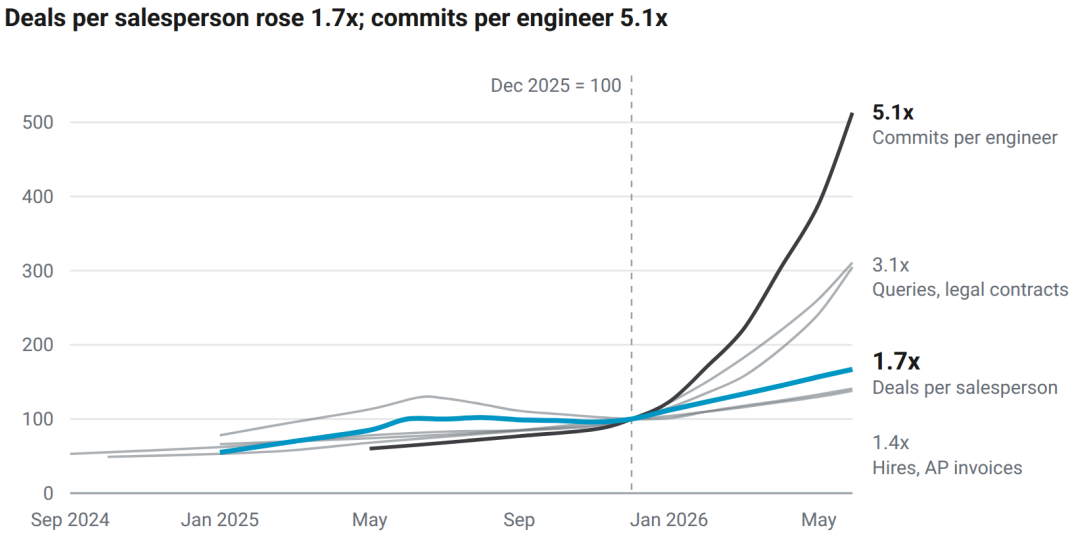


Figure 2.1. Output per person by function at Anthropic, indexed to December 2025 = 100. The company grew rapidly in the same period, so the figure shows correlation, not cause. Adapted from Wilmers et al.[22]

It shows output rising alongside adoption, but not why. A sharper test follows the same reps before and after they adopted agents, and compares them with reps who had not. Before adoption, their results were flat. Within 3 months of adopting agents, they closed 7 more deals.[22]

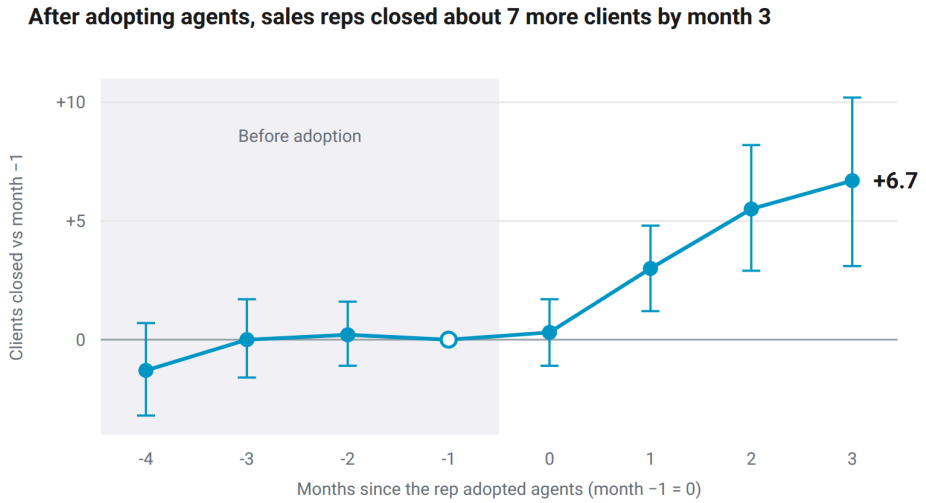


Figure 2.2. Additional clients closed per sales rep after adopting agents, compared with reps who had not. Bars are 95% confidence intervals; reps with more opportunities may have adopted first. Adapted from Wilmers et al.[22]

AI does what it does best. The seller takes the work humans do best.

2.3 The main constraints of sales

Sales, like engineering, runs into constraints, and we want to use AI to relieve them. The first is the one we just looked at.

- **Time constraint: the seller's hours.** Those 1,600 hours are the limit, and every meeting costs more than the meeting itself: a one-hour call typically needs an hour of prep and 30 minutes of follow-up. AI does some of this work better, does more at once, goes faster, and runs around the clock.

If AI can free this many hours, why are most sales teams not jumping on this? Because revenue leaders focus elsewhere, they know the buyer sets the pace of the buying process, not the seller.

- **Process constraint: the buying process.** Approvals, budget cycles, and a buying group that must agree often dictate the pace. However, the seller can influence it. A deal is decided in a handful of meetings, and the sales cycle is determined by the time between meetings. AI can help sellers prepare better, so each meeting counts, and build a mutual plan with a clear Critical Event (a date the buyer must meet, with a consequence if it is missed) that keeps the buyer moving.

Both run into the same constraint: human habit.

- **Adoption constraint: the human's ability to adapt.** Habit, not technical skill, sets the pace: sellers must change how they work, what they delegate, and where they apply their expertise. AI helps through feedback and repetition, and adoption sticks once sellers feel it makes them more capable.

As in engineering, relieving one constraint exposes the next: AI frees the seller's time, and the limit moves to the buying process and, above all, to adoption. At Anthropic, about 80% of interactive agent session time is already spent waiting for human input.[22]

In the past, technology improved slowly enough for people and processes to adjust and keep up. AI improves with every model release, while how people work changes very slowly. Chelsea Larsson calls the result the **capability overhang**: the gap between what AI can do and what sellers actually use, and that gap is growing with every release.[10]

Closing that gap starts with language: humans work with AI in words. Larsson puts it plainly: these are large language models, so *"we use language to tell them what to build."*[11] She also shows how much the wording matters: a small nuance in an instruction can change the quality of the output a great deal. That makes clear writing, and control of language, a core competence.

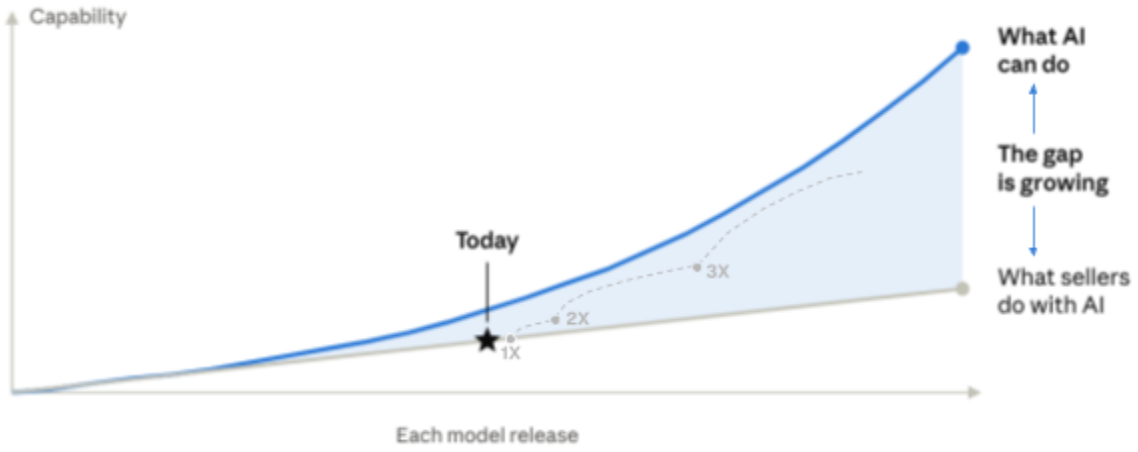


Figure 2.3. The capability overhang: the gap grows with every model release. Adapted from C. Larsson at Anthropic.[10]

Andrej Karpathy put it in one line: ***"The hottest new programming language is English."***[12]

Sellers are likely to have an advantage: they work with language every day. But talking well is not the same as instructing AI well. Writing precise instructions is a separate skill, and it takes training.

The constraint is no longer what AI can do.
It is what sellers are ready to hand over.

Chapter 3. Sales' AI Readiness

We know what AI can do for sales. Making it happen takes people, process, and technology working together. Change one without the others, and the change rarely sticks: technology and people without a process produce experiments that never scale; technology and process without people produce shelfware; and process and people without technology produce artisans whose good work is capped by their own hours. A sales organization is ready for AI when all three are in place.

In sales, all three are changing at the same time:

- **Technology:** from tools the seller works for to AI that does the work.
- **Process:** from closing the contract to delivering the Impact.
- **People:** from inbound selling to full-cycle selling.

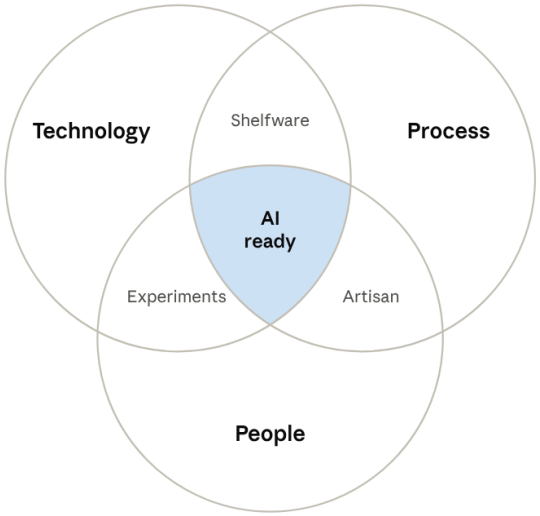


Figure 3.1. AI readiness sits at the intersection of people, process, and technology. Adapted from Leavitt.[13]

3.1 A change in technology

Over the past decades, major technology shifts have created new generations of sellers, and the early adopters tended to become the top performers.

AI is the next shift, but it runs the other way. Earlier shifts added tools the seller had to operate and, together with plentiful inbound demand, specialized roles that split the job into parts: SDR, CSM, RevOps. AI can now take work off the seller and, in many ways, give the seller a single tool to work with. That gives one seller the chance to run the whole cycle again. Growth no longer has to come only from hiring more sellers. As the 10X engineer showed, part of it can now come from creating more capacity per seller.

Table 3.1. Four generations of technology-enabled selling.

Era	Generation	What it adds
G1 2000s	Digitization	Record and organize customer information and create a visible pipeline. Created the account executive.
G2 2010s	Automation	Run repetitive tasks, such as personalized email outreach, at scale. Created specialized sales roles (SDR, CSM, RevOps).
G3 2020s	Virtualization	Engage customers remotely. Less travel frees time to reach more customers. Created online sellers.
G4 2026+	Orchestration	Extend the seller's hours: AI agents work around the clock, improve the quality of what reaches the customer, and build context on each customer. Creates the full-cycle seller.

There is one complication. Technology development keeps innovating, making it hard for sales to catch up. AI keeps improving with every new release, so the *capability overhang* keeps growing, and readiness is never finished. Waiting does not close the gap; it only widens it.

3.2 A change in process

When pricing changes, the way software is bought and sold changes with it. We have seen this before: the move from perpetual licenses to SaaS changed how customers bought, how vendors earned their revenue, and how sales teams were organized. AI is changing pricing again, and this time cost drives the change, not just vendor strategy. This section follows that change from pricing to buying to selling.

A change in pricing

After subscription came consumption (usage), and now pricing is based on outcomes. With this, the financial risk is moving, more and more, from the buyer to the seller.

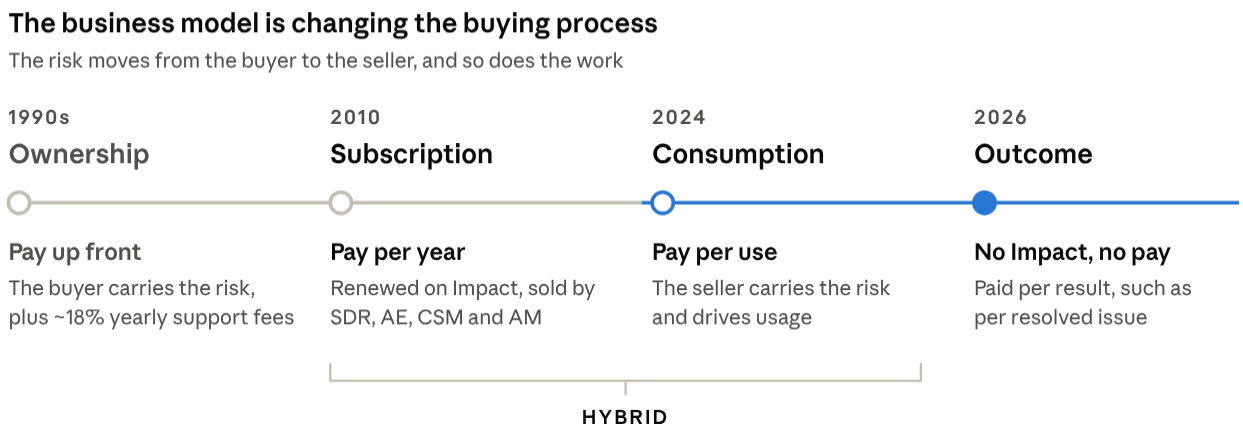


Figure 3.2. Who carries the financial risk of the purchase? Adapted from Revenue Architecture.[15]

AI adds a cost application software didn't have: every use runs up inference costs, as cloud infrastructure always does. That pushes pricing toward usage. But pure usage brings volatile revenue: when customers cut back, revenue falls with them, as consumption-based companies have found. Buyers, for their part, resist costs they cannot predict.

The hybrid sits between the two: a subscription with capped usage, plus fees for usage above the cap. It is now the most common model: 37% of B2B software and AI companies price this way, up from 25% a year earlier.[14,21]

A change in how buyers buy

Buyers are not just paying differently; they are buying for a different reason. When they pay as they use, they are no longer buying software, but the Impact it delivers, and that Impact is tested with every bill. A customer who does not see it uses less and generates less revenue. A growing share of buyers also use AI to research vendors, draft RFPs, and review contracts, so they arrive better prepared than before.

A change in how sellers sell

If buyers buy the Impact, the sale does not end at the signature. With AI, more of the growth comes after the first sale, as customers expand when they see results. When growth moves past the close, the seller's job does too, exposing the SaaS model's weak spot: expansion, split across the account executive, customer success, and account management.

The inbound seller (SaaS era): In the Abundance Era (2012–2022), inbound demand was so plentiful that companies built highly specialized roles for each part of the journey. This turned the account executive (AE) into an inbound seller: someone who converts an inbound lead into a closed annual subscription contract. Then inbound faded, and growth collapsed.

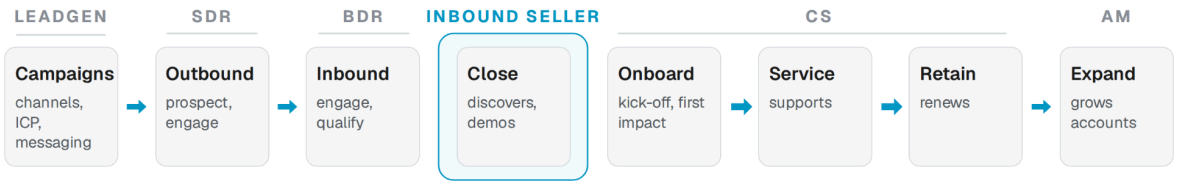


Figure 3.3. Each role owns one part of the customer journey. Adapted from the Winning by Design Bowtie.

Since 2022, B2B software companies' growth rate has fallen from 55% to 20%, while retention has slipped from 76% to 70%.[16] Specialized roles were built for plentiful inbound demand; without it, they are hard to sustain.

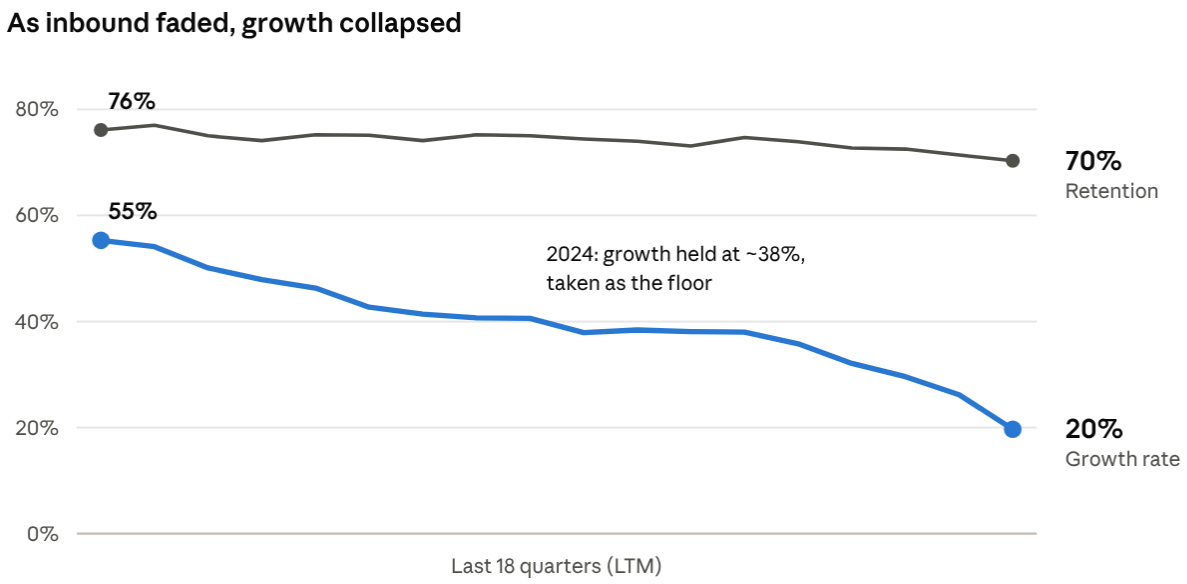


Figure 3.4. Growth rate and retention of B2B software companies with ARR above $100,000, last 18 quarters (LTM). Source: ChartMogul and BenchSights.[16]

The full-cycle seller (AI era): AI can now do many of the tasks the specialized roles were created for. That is the opening for the 3X Seller: a seller who directs AI to operate across the entire customer lifecycle, including expansion, and carries 3x the Commercial Capacity of today's seller. *We define **Commercial Capacity** as the annual recurring revenue one seller produces.*

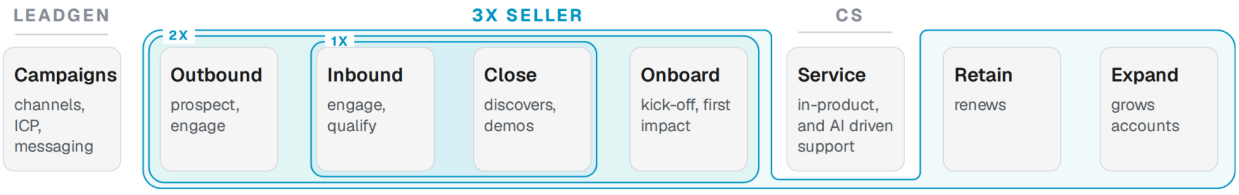


Figure 3.5. Using AI, the seller takes over the work that specialized roles and their tools used to do. At 1X, the seller handles inbound and the close; at 2X, we add outbound and onboarding; at 3X, retention and expansion. In Hartman's words: "AI is undoing 20 years of sales specialization."[17]

The 3X Seller uses the freed-up hours to stay with the customer after the deal closes, accountable for achieving the desired Impact, while specialists, such as forward-deployed engineers, handle implementation. Of the roughly 920 hours AI frees at 3X, about 400 go to expansion of existing customers. The rest go deeper into new deals, mainly Diagnose and Navigate, rather than into more deals (Table 2.2).

The 3X Seller still wins about 10 to 12 new customers a year. The multiple comes from keeping them: because the seller owns the renewal and expansion, 3 years of customers stay with the seller instead of one. Even at 100% net revenue retention, that is 3x the Commercial Capacity.

3.3 A change in human skills

Sellers also have to change how they sell: from selling to the Pain to diagnosing the Impact. The inbound seller worked at high velocity: quickly discovering the Situation and Pain, then demoing features and benefits, with little attention to the Impact. The data shows what that misses. Across 57,826 opportunities in one enterprise software company's CRM, each element is associated with a different lever:

- **Impact and deal size:** deals where the seller captured the Impact are tied to 44% more revenue than deals that stop at the Pain. Yet only about 1 in 5 deals (21%) capture it.
- **Decision and win rate:** deals where the decision process is established win 55% of the time, against 40%.
- **Critical Event and cycle length:** deals with a clear Critical Event close 21% faster[18] (not shown in Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. Diagnostic elements in 57,826 opportunities from one enterprise software company, and their association with revenue and win rate. Won revenue indexed to Pain = 100.[18]

Diagnostic element	Opportunities	Revenue index	Win rate
Situation	63%	90	37.0%
Pain	55%	100	39.9%
Impact ($)	21%	144	42.4%
Critical Event (t)	22%	150	42.4%
Decision (%)	7%	176	55.4%

Scoring every conversation on these elements lets AI sort sellers into top, middle, and bottom performers. That makes visible what many revenue leaders report: the middle tier, half the sellers, is drifting toward the bottom.[18] A model of 50,000 simulation runs shows the drift does not reverse on its own.

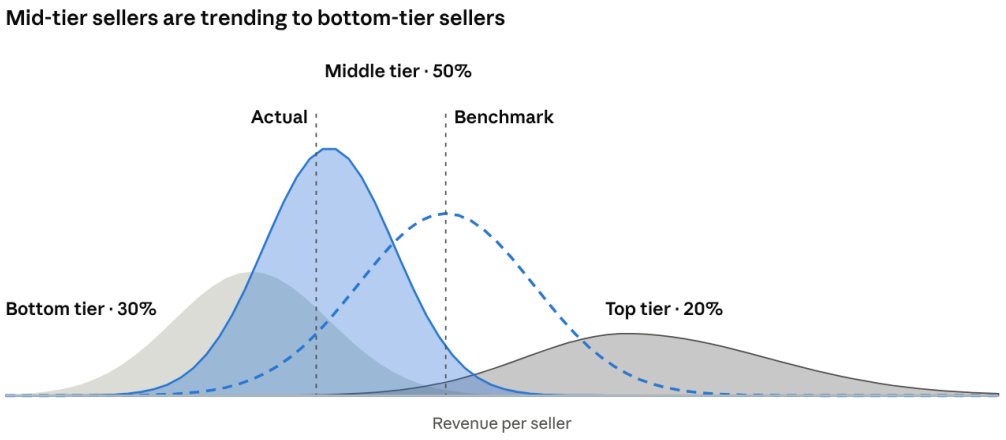


Figure 3.6. Modeled monthly revenue per seller, bottom (30%), middle (50%), and top (20%) tiers, from 50,000 simulations.[18]

Chapter 4. The 3X Seller Program

The technology is ready, and buyers are motivated and already changing how they buy. Sellers, on the other hand, are held back by habit, and by incentives and management built for the old way of selling, so they are unlikely to change on their own.

To adopt AI in sales, we recommend the 3X Seller Program: 3 stages in which people, process, and technology move together.[13] Each builds on the one before, and the goal is, at a minimum, a 2X Seller:

- **1X focuses on AI skills: Set up the infrastructure and start making the sales process AI-ready.** The seller learns to sell to the Impact, not to the Pain, and installs the first AI skills: summarize a call, draft the recap, and research a prospect.
- **2X focuses on AI agents: Let AI take over sales tasks.** Agents handle routine work and preparation, and the seller gets more than 10 hours a week back. The seller puts those hours into their own outbound campaigns, with AI handling research and personalization.
- **3X focuses on AI agent workflows: Become a full-cycle seller.** Agent workflows run around the clock across the customer journey, giving the seller more than 15 hours a week back to own each account past the close through Impact, renewal, and expansion.

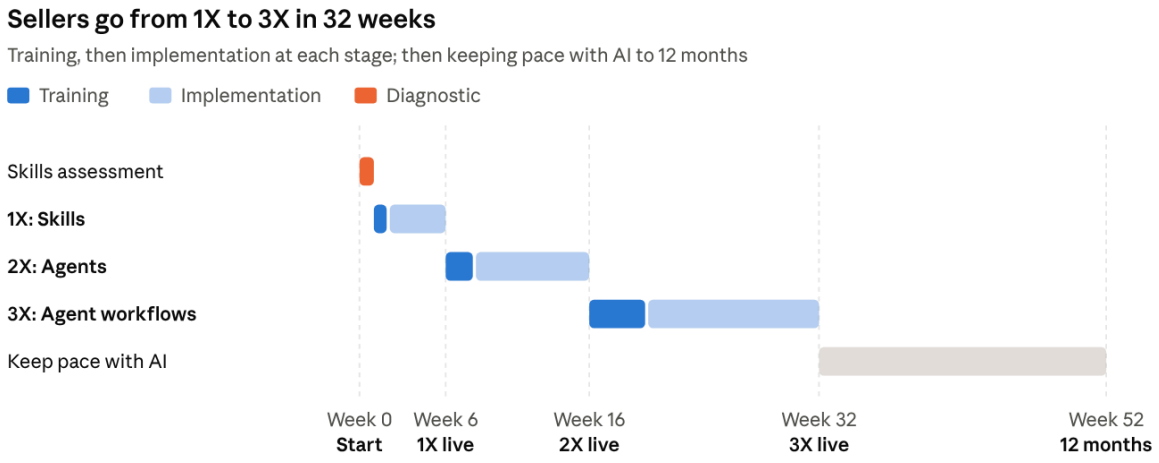


Figure 4.1. The seller track: training and implementation at each stage, then keeping pace with AI for 12 months. Weeks are indicative.

Each stage is more than a one-off training: the seller must apply it in a live environment on real deals. That is why it takes time: 30 days of implementation at 1X, 60 at 2X, and 90 at 3X. With training included, a seller reaches 2X in about 16 weeks and 3X in about 32.

For the rest of the 12 months, sellers keep pace with AI: new skills arrive as the models improve, and the ones they have are tuned. We train the company's enablement and RevOps teams to lead the implementation, so the capability stays in-house.

Each stage trains two kinds of skills, side by side. **AI skills** put AI to work for the seller, from asking the right questions to installing skills that run on their own; they increase how much work a seller gets done. **Seller skills** are the seller's own, such as diagnosing the Impact; they raise the seller's expertise with the buyer.

4.1 1X: Set up the infrastructure to be AI-ready

1X starts with a skills assessment: AI scores the team's own calls on how well sellers diagnose the buyer's situation and sell to the Impact, so the training targets the gaps that matter. Then come the basics. The seller learns to use the company's AI tools, and why writing matters: clear words get clear work back. At the same time, we set up the infrastructure and test every connector to email, calendar, and CRM.

> **"We already do this."** That is what many team leaders say when they read about 1X. The point of 1X is that the whole team does it, as a discipline, using the same tools, the same approach, on the same infrastructure. That shared base is what the agents at 2X and the workflows at 3X are built on. It also brings in everyone, not just the top performers, who often need little training. The other two tiers need it most.

Format: a 90-minute live workshop, then 30 days to implement it, supported by the company's own enablement team.

Who it is for: every seller; 1X is the entry point to the program.

What they need to know: limited prior AI experience.

Infrastructure: a paid AI plan for the entire team, with the connectors known to be working before the first session starts.

What is included: in AI, the setup and 3 AI skills installed: summarize a call, draft the recap, and research a prospect; in selling, diagnosing the Impact and establishing the Critical Event. 1X is complete when the setup and skills run on a real meeting.

AI skills:

- **Skill 1. Asking AI:** what to ask, and how to ask it.
- **Skill 2. Setting up:** one project per account, connected to email, calendar, and CRM, so AI works from the seller's own data.
- **Skill 3. Research and recaps on request:** AI drafts the account brief, call summary, and CRM update; the seller reviews, and nothing reaches a customer unread.

Seller skills:

- **Skill 4. Discovery to Impact:** asking past the Pain to uncover the Impact the buyer wants to achieve.
- **Skill 5. The Critical Event:** establishing why the buyer must act, and by when.

One skill runs through both lists: asking good questions, of AI and of buyers.

4.2 2X: Let AI agents take over sales tasks

2X hands the routine work to AI. Agents prepare the day, meetings, and follow-up, and the seller puts the freed hours into two things: creating their own pipeline with targeted outbound campaigns, and staying in touch with customers after the sale. At the same time, the business workflows are mapped, the sales process is codified, and a Go-to-Market Diagnostic and ideal customer profile analysis define whom to target. As a result, agents and campaigns work the way the best sellers do.

Staying in touch is what we call **swinging through the contract**: as in a golf or tennis swing, the motion does not stop at the point of contact. The seller checks the account at 30, 60, and 90 days after the purchase and lets the customer know they are still paying attention. Retention and expansion stay with customer success.

2X is where most SaaS companies should steer. It frees about 650 of the 920 hours that 3X frees, roughly 70% (Table 2.2), without changing the comp plan, the org structure, or the hiring profile. That makes it the best return on the effort, especially for SaaS unicorns that depend on new pipeline while their marketing struggles to deliver it.

> **There is a trap at 2X.** Sellers are tempted to put the freed hours into using AI to run outdated sales motions faster: more cold emails, more connection requests. The training shows where those hours pay off instead. In many cases, that is with buyers who are already engaged, and in small campaigns aimed at the right accounts.

Format: about 2 weeks of training: 4 live sessions of 1 hour, plus 15 to 20 minutes of pre-work before each; then 60 days to implement it.

Who it is for: sellers who completed 1X or passed the assessment.

What they need to know: the 1X skills in daily use.

Infrastructure: a paid AI plan, with the connectors working before the first session.

What is included: in AI, a daily brief, an overnight account report, an Impact scorecard on a live deal, and one AI skill the team can reuse; in selling, targeted outbound campaigns, check-ins at 30, 60, and 90 days after the purchase, a buyer-owned business case, and a mutual plan. 2X is complete when all sessions are attended, assignments score 75% or better, and the final AI skill passes.

AI skills:

- **Skill 6. The daily brief:** AI reads across messages and meetings and returns one briefing; the seller decides what matters today.
- **Skill 7. Meeting prep and follow-up:** AI prepares the meeting and drafts the follow-up; the seller edits rather than writes.
- **Skill 8. Account monitoring:** AI works the seller's accounts around the clock and flags what changed.
- **Skill 9. Reusable AI skills:** turning repeated work into AI skills the whole team can use.

Seller skills:

- **Skill 10. Scoring the Impact:** every live deal is scored on its Impact, so the seller sees which still stop at the Pain.
- **Skill 11. A business case the buyer owns:** built on the Impact, in the customer's terms. It raises deal size and reduces deals lost to no decision.
- **Skill 12. A personalized proposal and mutual plan:** built from what this buying group said, working back from the Critical Event.
- **Skill 13. Creating demand:** the seller designs targeted campaigns of 10 to 20 buyers; AI finds, researches, and personalizes; the seller opens the conversation and qualifies the opportunity.
- **Skill 14. Swinging through the contract:** checking the account at 30, 60, and 90 days after the purchase, and letting the customer know the seller is still paying attention.
- **Skill 15. Review**: checking everything AI prepares before it reaches a customer. The rule holds at 3X: agent workflows run unattended, but nothing reaches a customer without the seller.

4.3 3X: Become a full-cycle seller

3X makes the seller a full-cycle seller. Agent workflows run around the clock across the customer journey, and the seller stays with the customer past the close, through Impact, renewal, and expansion. At the same time, we connect the Signal Layer. As a result, every workflow knows where each customer stands and directs agents to the accounts the Go-to-Market Diagnostic and ideal customer profile analysis identified.

> **At 3X, the seller stops just closing deals and starts running a business.** That is a change in role, not just in tools. It works only if the organization lets go of the handoff: the account stays with the seller after the close. That takes a new comp plan, a new org structure, and new hiring profiles: a change for the whole company, not just for sales. At one AI company, hiring scorecards already weigh customer orientation more and execution skills less.[22]

Format: 3 to 4 weeks of training in 90-minute build labs, then 90 days to implement it.

Who it is for: sellers who completed 2X, in an organization that lets them keep a portfolio of accounts after the close.

What they need to know: the 2X skills and agents in daily use.

Infrastructure: a working AI environment from day one.

What is included: in AI, 6 agent workflows that run unattended; in selling, multi-threading every account, white space planning, and delivering the Impact after the Commit. Each agent workflow counts as shipped after 14 days running unattended. 3X is complete after 30 consecutive days of the whole stack running unattended, reviewed by RevOps.

AI skills:

- **Skill 16. Always-on agent workflows:** AI work that continues outside working hours.
- **Skill 17. A shared account agent:** one agent per account sits in the team's deal channel, watches the account and every call, and tells the team each week where there is potential for new white space.

Seller skills:

- **Skill 18. Delivering the Impact:** staying commercially accountable after the Commit, through adoption.
- **Skill 19. Multi-threading every account:** mapping the buying group, a key lever the seller has on the buyer's pace.
- **Skill 20. White space planning:** finding and working the white space inside an account.

- **Skill 21. Leading the account team with AI:** setting direction for the AI and for the team.

4.4 Securing adoption

Training alone does not change behavior. Adoption takes hold when the organization measures whether the skills are used, quantifies what they are worth, and coaches, both in the moment of need and on a regular cycle. Managers lead each of these.

- **Skills adoption:** the seller's calls are scored continuously on how well they diagnose the Impact, and benchmarked against the team's own top performers, not an external average. The gap between the best and the average becomes visible by skill and by person, and frontline and second-line managers are trained to inspect and coach against it.
- **Skills analysis:** top, middle, and bottom performers are scored on leading and lagging indicators. This sizes, in dollars, the revenue sitting between the best and the average, and names the skills that close it.
- **Deal coaching:** an AI deal coach reviews live deals and flags what is still undiagnosed in each live deal. Coaching arrives before the call, not at the weekly review, and the coach runs role-play on the weak skill.
- **Coaching cycle:** each selling skill is trained in a sprint of one 2-hour session on a single skill, followed by 3 weekly 1-hour coaching sessions on the team's own calls. The skill is chosen from the skills assessment, so the team trains what moves the number.

4.5 The infrastructure behind the 3X Seller

AI must know where every customer is and what was promised. An optional Growth Assessment comes first:

0. **Run a Growth Assessment (optional):** 1 week to establish where the organization stands against its multi-year growth thesis before the program starts. Is it growing as planned, is growth slowing down, or has growth stopped?
1. **Implement the data model:** every stage of the customer journey, from prospect to end of life, gets clear entry and exit points[15]. It is the base every other step builds on.
2. **Map the business workflows and tool stack onto the data model:** map each business workflow to the stages it covers and the tools it runs on.

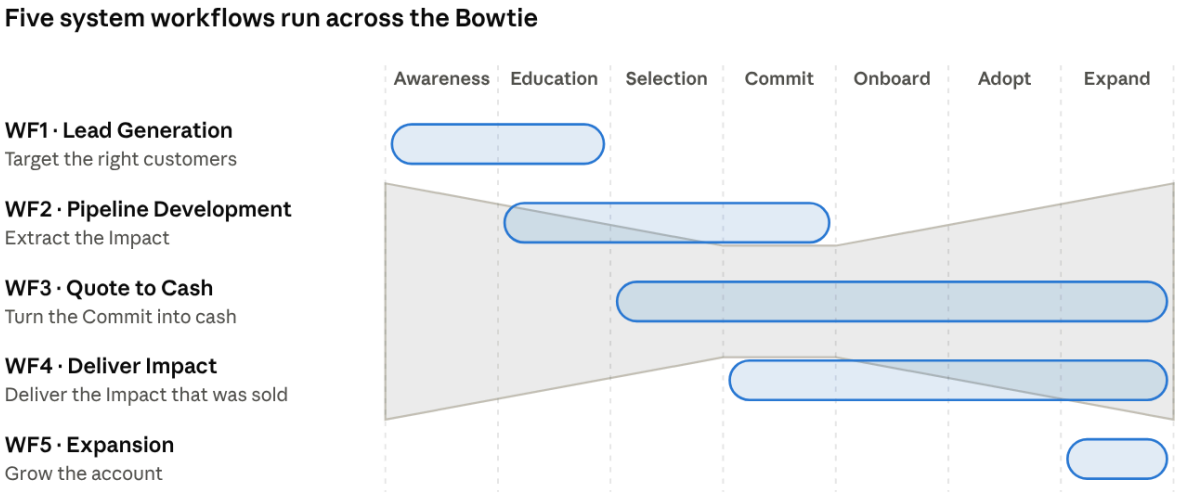


Figure 4.2. Example of business workflows mapped across the stages of the customer journey, each running on its own tools. Adapted from Winning by Design's workflow map.

3. **Codify the sales process:** move the methodology from the Pain to the Impact, write it down as playbooks, and ground the AI in it.
4. **Run a Go-to-Market Diagnostic and ideal customer profile analysis:** over 12 weeks, establish which segments and motions drive revenue that is retained and expanded, and where the pipeline gap sits. The ideal customer profile analysis turns that into the targeting agents and campaigns use: which accounts, which buyers, and which triggers. Marketing then prepares the segmentation and account data.
5. **Connect the Signal Layer:** we define the **Signal Layer** as a shared way to record every conversation, whether a seller or AI held it, against the data model so that anyone can pick it up at any stage. It is how the business workflows talk to each other. It is how AI tools talk to each other. It is how AI communicates with humans.

The steps run alongside the training. The optional Growth Assessment takes place the week before the program starts. The data model goes in during the first 4 weeks, and the business workflows are mapped onto it starting in week 2. The sales process is codified from week 4. The Go-to-Market Diagnostic and ideal customer profile analysis also start in week 4 and run alongside 1X and 2X. The seller's first campaigns at 2X work from their early results, and both are complete when 2X ends in week 16. The Signal Layer is in place when 3X is complete in week 32.

Conclusion

As you read this, AI can take over many of the tasks that once filled a seller's day.

Sellers who orchestrate their AI to work around the clock get their time back, and their AI keeps working while they are offline. Together, that capacity can go toward growing revenue, improving cost efficiency, deepening customer relationships, and helping them achieve the Impact they bought for.

The result is 2x to 3x Commercial Capacity per seller. This is not just for top sellers; it is available to anyone. It presents sales with an opportunity we haven't seen in a long time.

As executives, we need to realize that AI copies.

In product, it copies functionality across companies, making products look alike. In sales, it copies the AI skills of top performers across the team, especially to the middle tier. Left to individual sellers, AI does what Graham predicted: top performers pull further ahead, as the top 10% of OpenAI researchers did.

Bringing the middle tier along takes a program. And because adoption is the hardest part, competitors cannot copy it quickly: the companies that adopt first create a new moat.

That makes sales a differentiator right when companies need it the most.

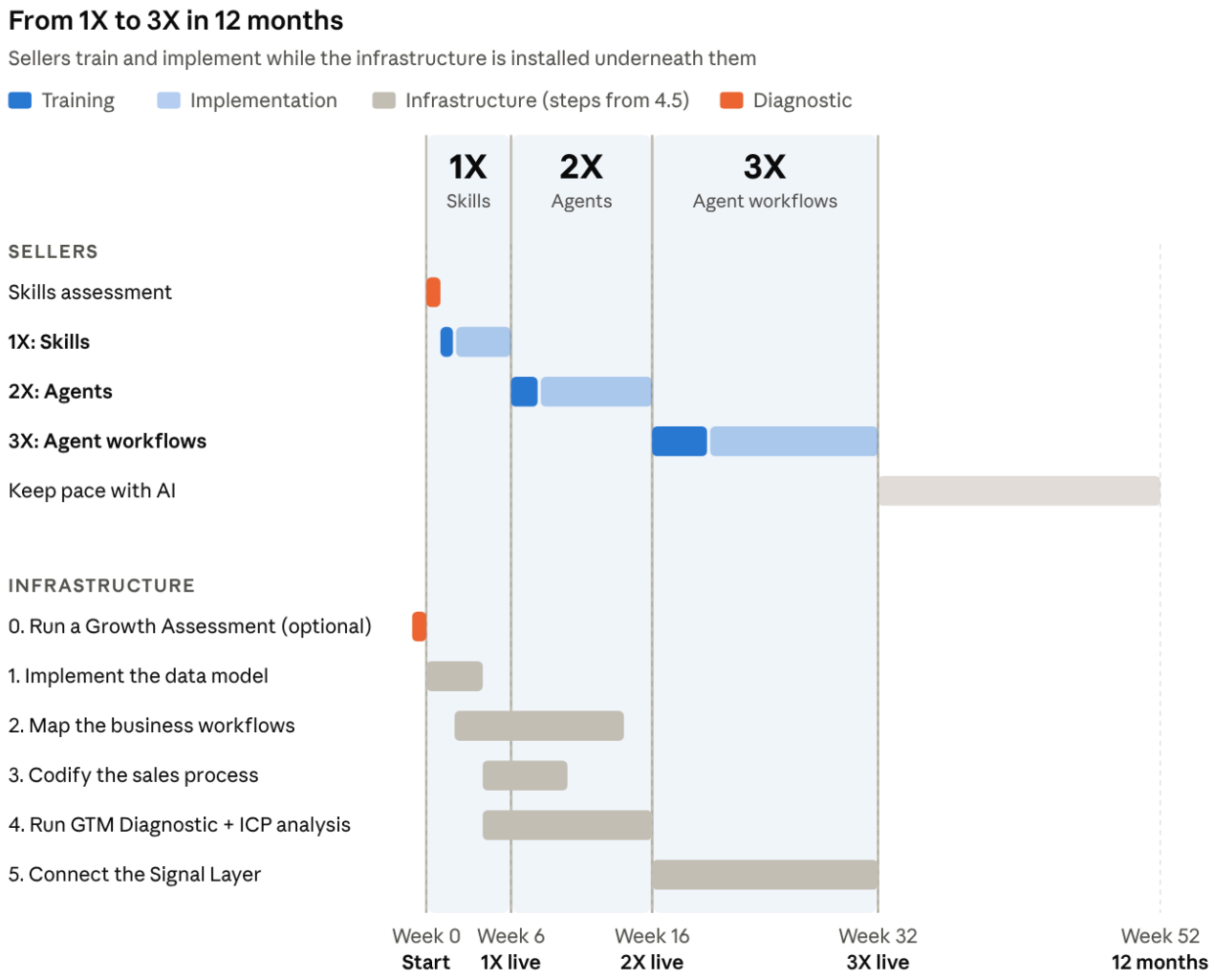
With growth rates under pressure, the goal of every CRO should be to bring all sellers to at least 2X capability in 16 weeks: their own pipeline, and customers who know the seller is still there after the sale. AI companies can have top performers working as 3X Sellers in 32 weeks; for most SaaS companies, 3X follows the restructuring it requires. Freed hours become revenue only when they are spent on the right accounts.

The 3X Seller Program is the blueprint that moves the whole team forward together.

The technology is ready. The question is: are we?

APPENDIX

PROGRAM TIMELINE



The 3X Seller program over 12 months. Weeks are indicative.

LIMITATIONS

- Figure 1.1 shows OpenAI researchers, an early-adopter group who write code daily; we use them as an indicator of how engineers adopt coding agents, not as a measure of all engineers.
- The capacity model uses working assumptions for a $50,000 ACV sale: 2,000 working hours a year, about 400 of them internal, 50 active opportunities, 150 days in the portfolio (about 122 opportunities a year, by Little's Law[20]), a 10% win rate, 8 meetings per win and 4 per loss, and 2.5 human hours per meeting before AI and 1.5 after.
- The 3X multiple measures the recurring revenue one seller carries, not new bookings. It rests on the freed hours being enough to keep three years of customers: about 3.0x at 100% net revenue retention, 3.25x at 108%, and 2.7x at 90%. Whether the company gains revenue, rather than moving it between columns, depends on owned accounts retaining better than handed-off ones. Our assumption of 108% under seller ownership is a hypothesis consistent with field observation, not a measured result. Table 1.1 and the 1X–3X columns of Table 2.2 are estimates.
- The diagnostic analysis (Table 3.2) and the tier analysis (Figure 3.6) come from one enterprise software company's CRM data. The associations are not causal estimates and are not controlled for deal stage: elements captured late in a deal, such as the Decision, favor deals that are already far along. Statements by practitioners and by parties with an interest in AI adoption are reported as views, not evidence.
- Reference 22 reports internal data from one AI company; we use it as early evidence, not as a general result.
- The framework assumes B2B recurring revenue with multi-stakeholder buying.

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