THE VOICE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSION

2026 INDUSTRY SURVEY REPORT

AI IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSION

What 300 executive and administrative assistants told us about how AI is really changing their work

AN OFFICE DYNAMICS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH REPORT

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CONTENTS

WHAT'S INSIDE

01 A Note Before You Read This

02 Who We Heard From

03 Where Our Respondents Work

04 Where AI Stands in Admin Workplaces Today

05 Policy, Leadership, and Budget

06 Your Day-to-Day With AI

07 What's Getting in the Way

08 What You Use It For, and What You Want Next

09 Confidence, Skill, and Trust

10 What Training Admins Actually Want

11 Does Support Vary by Where You Work?

12 How the Profession Feels About What's Ahead

13 More Voices From the Field

14 About This Report

15 A Final Thought

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01 — A NOTE BEFORE YOU READ THIS

YOU'RE NOT BEHIND. YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME.

If you've felt a little behind on AI, or a little unsure whether you're using it "right," you're in good company. We surveyed 300 administrative and executive assistants in 2026, and the honest answer is: most of the profession is figuring this out together, in real time, often without much guidance from their organizations.

This report is built entirely from what you and your peers told us, covering how AI is being rolled out, how it's actually used day to day, how confident admins feel, and what training would genuinely help. No outside experts, no vendor talking points, just the real patterns in the data and in your own words.

Our hope is that you'll read this and recognize yourself in it, and maybe pick up an idea or two from a peer you'll never meet.

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a profession finding its footing

"I think that APs who embrace the technology and learn how to use it will have more and more powerful tools in their hands as AI grows. APs who are early adopters will stand out from those who drag their feet."

— RESPONDENT, 20+ YEARS' EXPERIENCE

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300 VOICES FROM THE FIELD

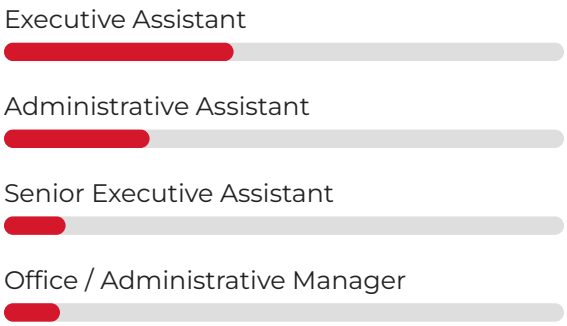
60%

20+ YEARS IN THE PROFESSION

85%

10 OR MORE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

ROLES REPRESENTED

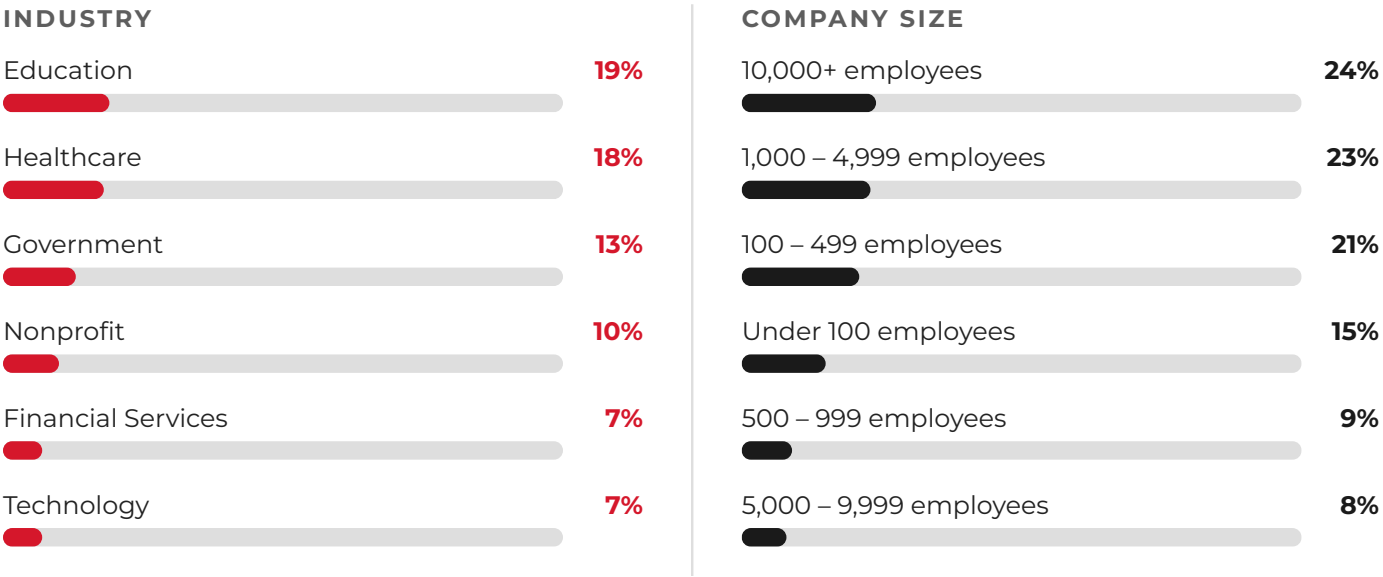


This is a deeply experienced group. Most respondents have spent a decade or more in the profession. A smaller but meaningful share, about 15%, are earlier in their careers (under 10 years), so this report reflects a mix of long-tenured perspective and fresher eyes.

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A CROSS-SECTION OF THE PROFESSION

Wherever you sit, chances are someone in this survey works somewhere similar. Respondents span nearly every industry and every size of organization.



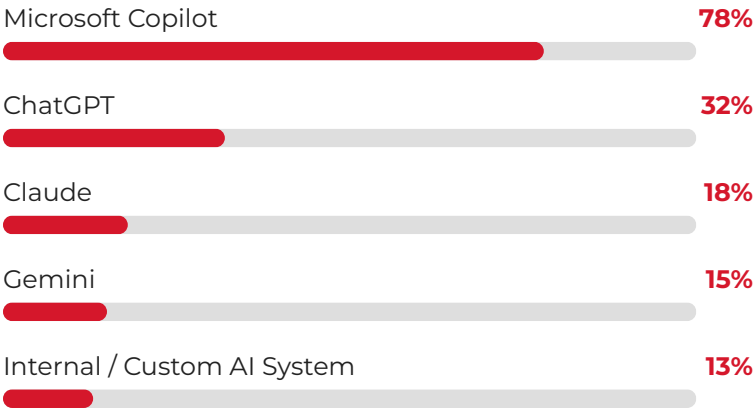
Company size is nearly evenly split between smaller organizations and large enterprises, which turns out to matter quite a bit for how much support admins get. More on that later in this report.

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WHERE AI STANDS IN ADMIN WORKPLACES TODAY

AI has arrived in the admin workplace almost everywhere at once. 96% of respondents say their organization currently allows AI use for work. Access isn't the question anymore, support is.

PLATFORMS OFFICIALLY SUPPORTED



CHOICE OF PLATFORM

47% work somewhere everyone is required to use the same platform. Only 25% can choose their own preferred tool, and 12% say it varies department by department.

Training hasn't kept pace with that access: 48% of respondents have received no formal AI training at all, and 54% say they were never asked for input before tools were chosen for them. If you've felt like you were expected to just figure it out, the data backs up that instinct, and you're far from the only one.

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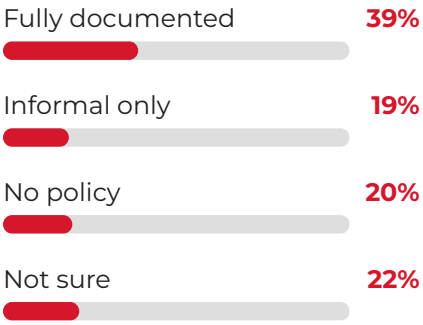
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THE STRUCTURE BEHIND THE TOOLS

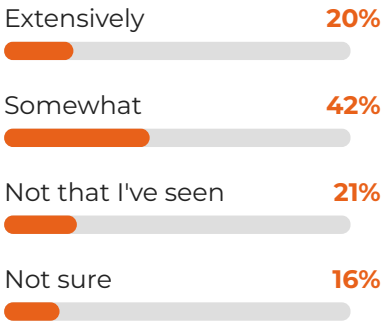
POLICY, LEADERSHIP, AND BUDGET

Three questions tend to shape how supported an admin actually feels: is there a real policy, does leadership use the tools themselves, and who controls whether new access gets approved.

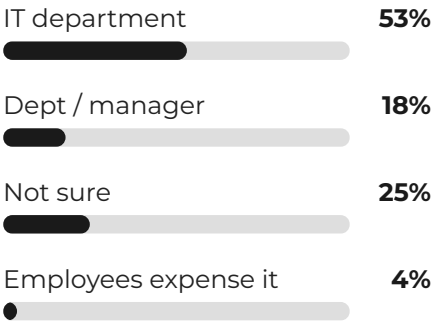
WRITTEN AI POLICY



LEADERSHIP MODELS AI USE



WHO OWNS THE BUDGET



If your organization hasn't formalized any of this yet, you're statistically in the majority, not the exception. Only 39% have a fully documented policy, and IT departments hold the purse strings at over half of organizations, which helps explain why access and permissions can feel like a black box.

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06

HOW IT'S ACTUALLY USED

YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WITH AI

Most admins are using AI daily, but for focused, specific tasks rather than sweeping workflow change. Here's what's leading the way.

Drafting Emails — 80%
The single most common use across every role and tenure level.

Writing Documents — 69%
From memos to reports, AI has become a first-draft partner.

Summarizing Meetings — 61%
Turning notes and recordings into usable takeaways fast.

Research — 61%
Quick answers and background digging before a bigger task.

Brainstorming Ideas — 51%
A sounding board for planning and problem-solving.

Proofreading & Editing — 47%
A second set of eyes before hitting send.

70% of admins use AI daily or several times a week. But for 59%, it still touches less than 10% of their actual workload, most sessions are short, a handful of quick interactions rather than deep, sustained use.

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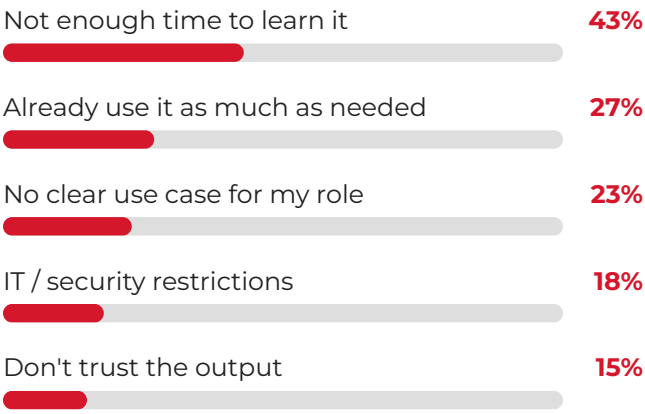
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THE HONEST ANSWER

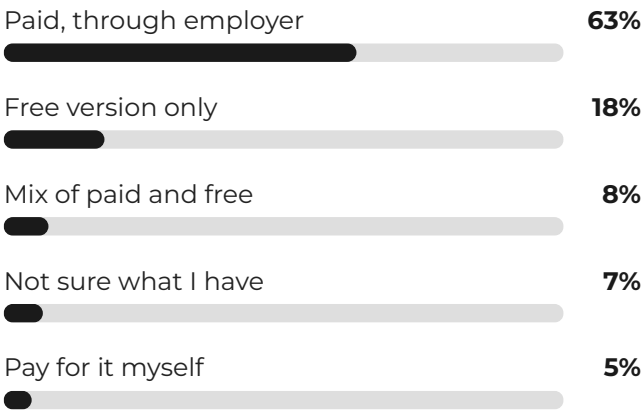
WHAT'S GETTING IN THE WAY

When we asked what keeps admins from using AI more, the answer wasn't skepticism. It was time, and sometimes, access.

WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM USING IT MORE



THE ACCESS YOU ACTUALLY HAVE

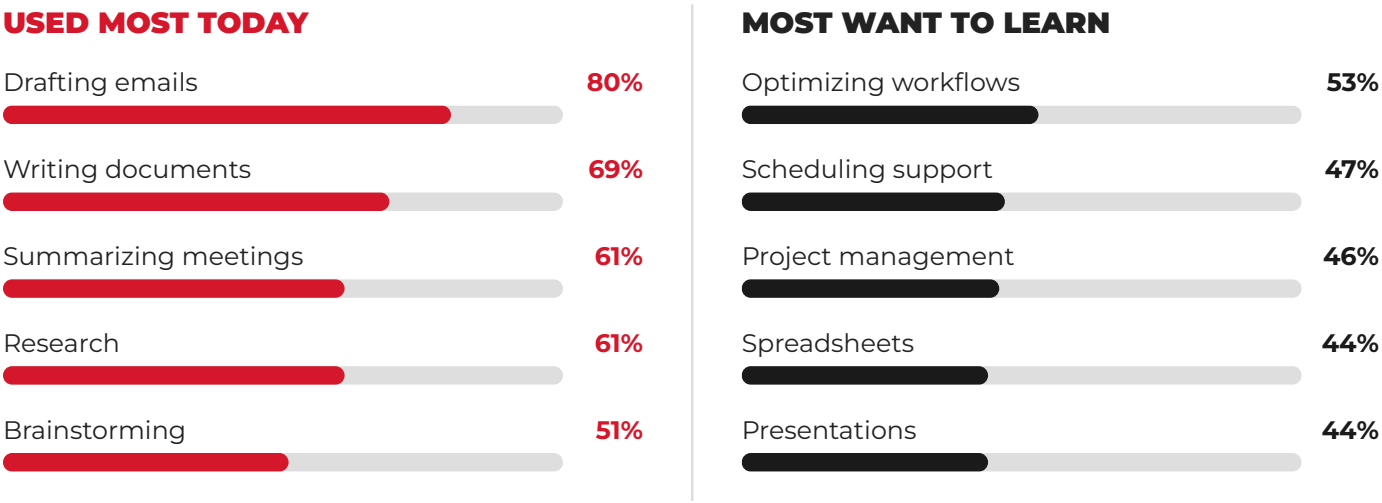


Notice what's near the bottom of the barriers list: only 5% say a lack of leadership encouragement is what's stopping them. This isn't a motivation problem. And if you're on a free version, paying for it yourself, or not sure what access you have, that's a fifth of the profession right there with you.

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WHAT YOU USE IT FOR, AND WHAT YOU WANT NEXT

Here's something interesting: the tasks admins want to learn are almost the opposite of what they currently use AI for. That's not a failure, it's a roadmap.



The tasks with the most structure, the ones deepest in the actual mechanics of the role, are exactly where admins want to grow next.

> "I want to learn how to build AI-powered workflows that handle routine administrative tasks so I can focus on executive decision support, process improvement, and high-value work."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON THE SKILL THEY MOST WANT TO DEVELOP

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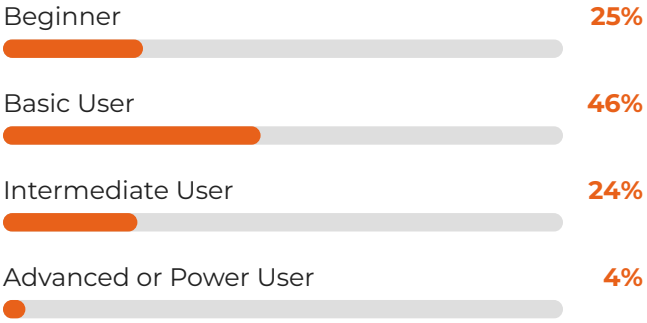
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WHERE THE PROFESSION REALLY STANDS

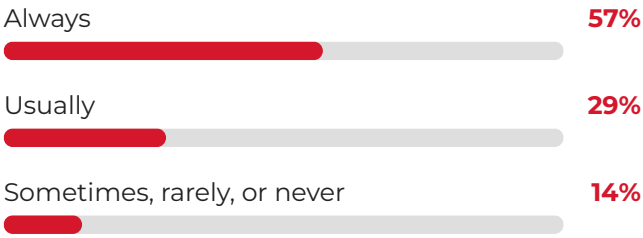
CONFIDENCE, SKILL, AND TRUST

If you don't feel like an expert yet, you're in the majority. Most of the profession is still early on the learning curve, and that's completely normal this early in the technology's life.

SELF-REPORTED PROFICIENCY



HOW OFTEN OUTPUT GETS DOUBLE-CHECKED



> "I have a lack of trust of AI's output so I end up spending quite a bit of time double checking, though probably still a net gain on time saved."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE

That instinct to verify isn't a lack of confidence, it's good judgment. 64% of admins say privacy or confidentiality concerns shape how they use AI at work, a healthy sign of a profession trained to protect sensitive information.

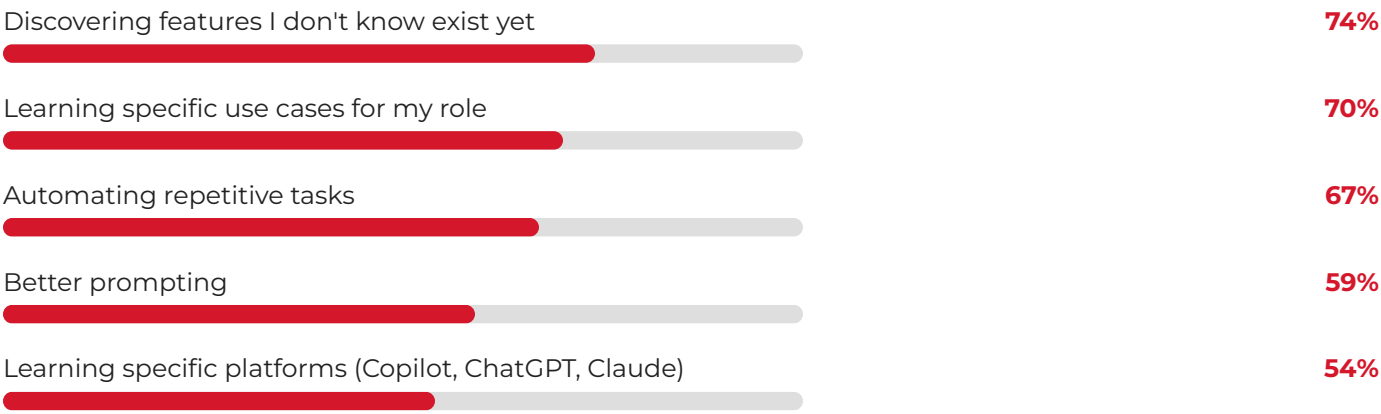
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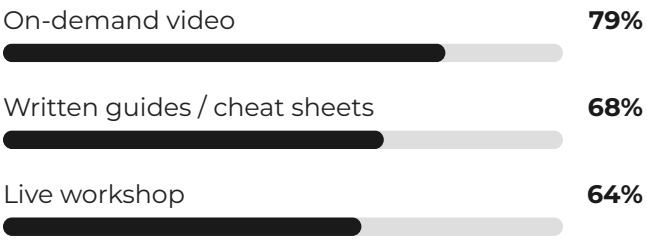
WHAT WOULD ACTUALLY HELP

WHAT TRAINING ADMINS ACTUALLY WANT

When we asked what kind of training would genuinely move the needle, the answers were less about tool mechanics and more about discovery and application.



HOW YOU'D RATHER LEARN



A PEER COMMUNITY, READY TO HELP

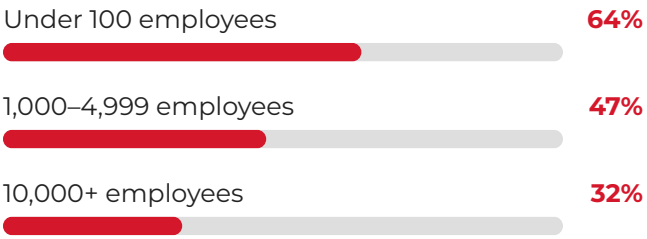
One in three admins said they'd be willing to mentor a colleague on AI, formally or informally. If you've been quietly figuring this out on your own, there's a good chance someone at your own organization would welcome the conversation.

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DOES SUPPORT VARY BY WHERE YOU WORK?

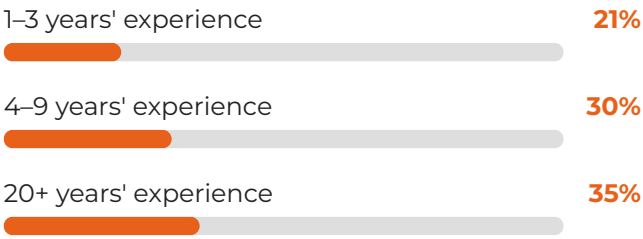
In a word: yes. If you're at a smaller organization and feel like you've gotten less structured support than admins elsewhere, the numbers back that up, and it's worth naming, because it isn't something you're imagining.

NO FORMAL TRAINING RECEIVED



Admins at the smallest organizations are twice as likely to have gone without any formal AI training compared to those at the largest.

EXCITED ABOUT AI'S POTENTIAL



Excitement doesn't decline with tenure, it actually rises. Veteran admins are not the ones resisting AI.

The most tenured admins are also somewhat more likely to describe themselves as "cautiously exploring" AI rather than diving in headfirst, which reads less like resistance and more like the deliberate, judgment-first approach a couple of decades in the profession tends to build.

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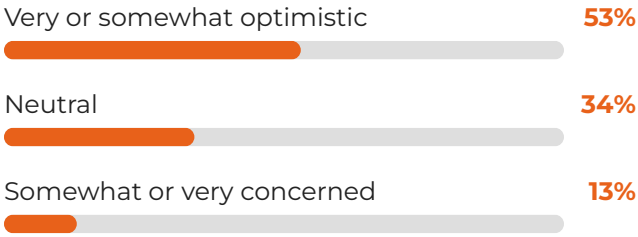
HOW THE PROFESSION FEELS ABOUT WHAT'S AHEAD

91%

BELIEVE AI WILL CHANGE THE ROLE

to some degree over the next three years

FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR OWN CAREER



Most admins believe the role is genuinely going to change, and most feel steady, not shaken, about their own place in that change. The uncertainty in the data isn't fear of AI itself. It reads more like a question of whether organizations will equip their people to be the ones leading that change, rather than catching up to it.

> "AI is not a replacement for Administrative Professionals; it is an amplifier that enhances our ability to deliver greater value. Uniquely human strengths, including emotional intelligence, sound judgment, discretion, relationship management, and critical thinking, are essential."
>
> RESPONDENT, 10-19 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

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MORE VOICES FROM THE FIELD

294 respondents wrote in their own words about AI and the profession. The picture isn't uniform, and it shouldn't be. Here's a wider slice of what came back.

> "Having enough time to keep pace with everything that is coming out. I do regularly make time to learn and share my learnings but I find most EAs just don't have time. Honestly though, it is a bit of a chicken and egg problem."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE

> "I think that younger managers coming in think they don't need admin support because they have AI and other resources they can do on their own."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON AI'S RELATION TO THE PROFESSION

> "It will minimize the effectiveness of an Admin."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON AI'S RELATION TO THE PROFESSION

> "Because it's the big, new thing, everyone wants people to use it, but in my role it isn't always more efficient. There is no way I would trust AI to navigate organizing my exec's calendar. Things change too quickly, and AI doesn't know him like I do."
>
> RESPONDENT, ON THEIR BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Both the optimism and the unease are real, and both showed up again and again. That range is exactly why this report leans on data alongside quotes, rather than picking the version of the story that's easiest to tell.

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

300 administrative and executive assistants completed this survey in 2026

294 respondents also answered in their own words, and those responses shaped the quotes throughout this report

Respondents were reached through Office Dynamics International's network of administrative professionals. Single-select figures reflect the share of all 300 respondents; figures on questions that allowed multiple answers do not sum to 100%. Where this report breaks results out by industry, a small number of industries had fewer than 10 respondents and are not shown individually for that reason.

All quotations are reproduced anonymously. No names, emails, or other identifying information were collected as part of this survey.

Office Dynamics International has surveyed the administrative profession on AI adoption since 2026 and intends this as the first in an annual series tracking how the role and the technology evolve together.

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a craft, not a shortcut

A FINAL THOUGHT

Every technology shift the administrative profession has absorbed, from typewriters to email to the smartphone, has followed the same pattern: the tools change, and the judgment, discretion, and relationship-building at the center of the role do not. This survey suggests AI is following that same pattern, not replacing the profession, but giving it a faster set of hands.

The admins who told us they're excited aren't the ones who already know everything. They're the ones who decided to start learning before they felt ready. That's available to anyone reading this.

If you're looking for a place to start, Office Dynamics International builds training specifically for this profession, including practical, role-specific AI skill-building. You can explore current programs at OfficeDynamics.com.

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