4 Tips for Agentic AI Success

Why do we need these tips?

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Gartner Predicts Over 40% of Agentic AI Projects Will Be Canceled by End of 2027

SYDNEY, Australia, June 25, 2025

- Unclear ROI
- Escalating Cost
- Weak Governance

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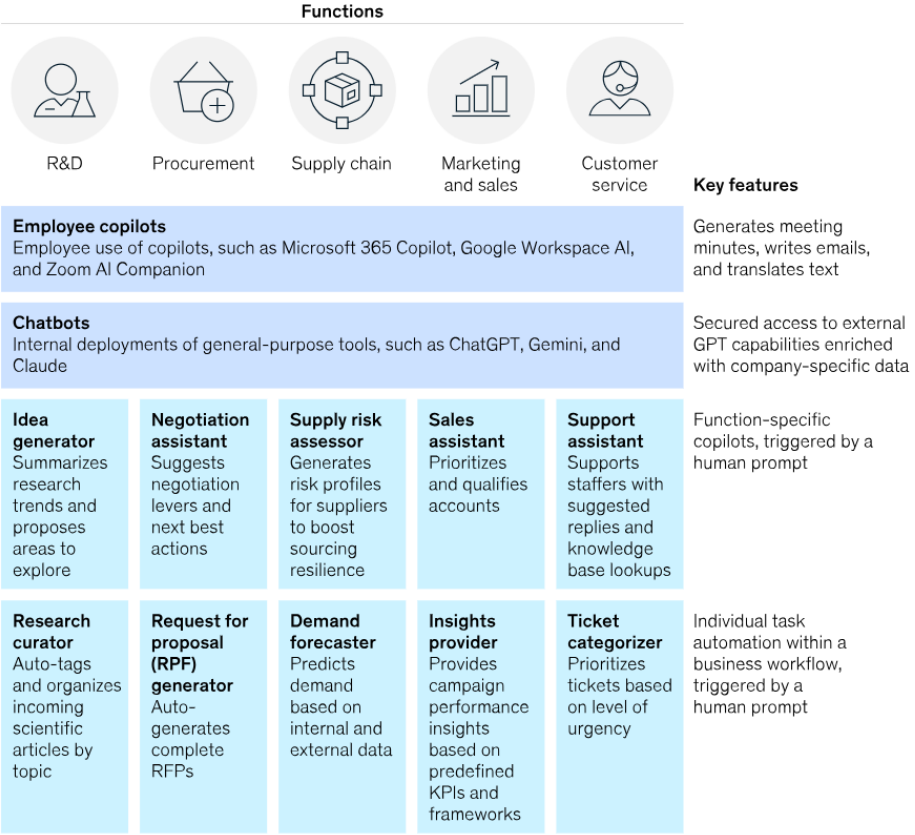
NEWSLETTERS · CFO DAILY

MIT report: 95% of generative AI pilots at companies are failing

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1. Start with the Right Use Cases

Seizing the agentic AI advantage
https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/seizing-the-agentic-ai-advantage

Chapter 1

The gen AI paradox: Widespread deployment, minimal impact

Functions

	R&D	Procurement	Supply chain	Marketing and sales	Customer service	Key features
Horizontal use cases *Enterprise-wide*	**Employee copilots** Employee use of copilots, such as Microsoft 365 Copilot, Google Workspace AI, and Zoom AI Companion					Generates meeting minutes, writes emails, and translates text
	Chatbots Internal deployments of general-purpose tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude					Secured access to external GPT capabilities enriched with company-specific data
Vertical use cases *Function-specific*	**Idea generator** Summarizes research trends and proposes areas to explore	**Negotiation assistant** Suggests negotiation levers and next best actions	**Supply risk assessor** Generates risk profiles for suppliers to boost sourcing resilience	**Sales assistant** Prioritizes and qualifies accounts	**Support assistant** Supports staffers with suggested replies and knowledge base lookups	Function-specific copilots, triggered by a human prompt
	Research curator Auto-tags and organizes incoming scientific articles by topic	**Request for proposal (RPF) generator** Auto-generates complete RFPs	**Demand forecaster** Predicts demand based on internal and external data	**Insights provider** Provides campaign performance insights based on predefined KPIs and frameworks	**Ticket categorizer** Prioritizes tickets based on level of urgency	Individual task automation within a business workflow, triggered by a human prompt

Nearly **eight in ten companies** have deployed gen AI in some form, but roughly the same percentage report no material impact on earnings

This paradox stems from an imbalance between widely scaled horizontal tools (like chatbots) that offer diffuse benefits, and vertical (function-specific) use cases that have higher impact potential but remain largely stuck in pilot mode

2. Tips for driving ROI with Agentic AI

Define clear objectives: What do you aim to achieve – cost reduction, revenue growth, customer satisfaction, or building an economic moat?

Align AI initiatives with business goals: Ensure that AI projects are underpinned by your company's strategic objectives. Whether it's cost reduction, increasing revenue, customer satisfaction, or creating a competitive advantage, aligning AI efforts with business goals ensures relevance and maximises impact

Secure executive sponsorship: Having support from top management is crucial for securing resources and driving organizational change. Executive sponsorship can also help align AI initiatives with broader business strategies.

Stakeholders buy-in: Ensure executive and departmental alignment.

Start with high-impact use cases: Identify areas where AI can deliver significant value quickly. Prioritise projects that address pressing challenges or offer substantial benefits, such as cost reduction or revenue growth, to demonstrate AI ROI early on.

3. Inadequate Risk Governance

Why it's a Concern

Agents act autonomously — calling APIs, sending emails, making decisions.

Without proper guardrails, they can:

1. Make unauthorized actions

2. Cause data leaks

3. Amplify biases or hallucinations

3.1. How to Do Strong Governance for Agentic AI

Role & permission control – Limit what agents can do (least privilege).

Human-in-the-loop – Require approval for high-impact actions.

Audit trails – Log every decision and action agents take.

Testing in sandbox – Validate agents in controlled environments before production.

Continuous monitoring – Track behavior drift, errors, and misuse.

4. Three Pillars of Savings on Agentic AI

4.1. Tiered Model Utilization:

Route simple tasks to lightweight models; reserve top-tier LLMs for high-value use cases.

30–50% reduction in average per-call cost

Example: Customer-chatbot triage handled by an open-source model, with escalation to GPT-4 only for complex issues

4.2. Retrieval-Augmented Prompting

Pull only relevant context from your knowledge base instead of resending full documents

20–40% fewer tokens per query

Example: Sales proposal generation that fetches product specs via vector search vs embedding entire spec sheets

Implement context & semantic caches to reuse prompt fragments and prior answers—expect an extra 10–20 percent reduction in token costs

4.3. Hybrid Rule-First Automation:

Offload routine work to rules/RP

Use deterministic rules or RPA bots to filter out routine cases before invoking AI.

40–60% fewer agent invocations

Example: Invoice approvals automated by a rules engine, with exceptions routed to your AI assistant

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