

AI and Developer Burnout Report 2025

How AI is redefining stress, productivity, and expectations at work



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Executive Summary

KEY STATISTICS

- A majority of respondents reported that AI reduces repetitive workload and improves accuracy.
- Many respondents noted that expectations increased after AI adoption.
- A significant portion experienced new stress linked to learning and adapting to AI tools.

AI is reshaping how people work

Offering meaningful relief from repetitive tasks while simultaneously introducing new forms of stress. Our survey shows that although AI reduces traditional burnout linked to manual effort, it creates a more complex emotional and cognitive landscape defined by rising expectations, ongoing learning demands, and concerns about long-term relevance.

Workers across technical and non-technical roles report that AI improves accuracy and helps them meet deadlines, yet also increases pressure to deliver more, learn faster, and adapt continuously. Burnout in 2025 is becoming less about workload volume and more about identity, pace of change, and the mental load of constant adjustment. This report explores these dynamics and offers guidance for organizations aiming to adopt AI sustainably.

Methodology

This survey should be interpreted as a directional indicator of emerging patterns in AI-driven workplace transformation. The intention is to highlight themes shaping modern burnout, not provide exhaustive quantitative measurement.

This report is based on survey responses from professionals across multiple industries and regions—a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions captured both quantitative trends and detailed personal perspectives.


Respondents	51 professionals across roles
Regions	United States, SE Asia, MENA, and India
Format	Online survey with mixed question types
Survey Period	Oct - Nov, 2025


RESPONDENT PROFILE

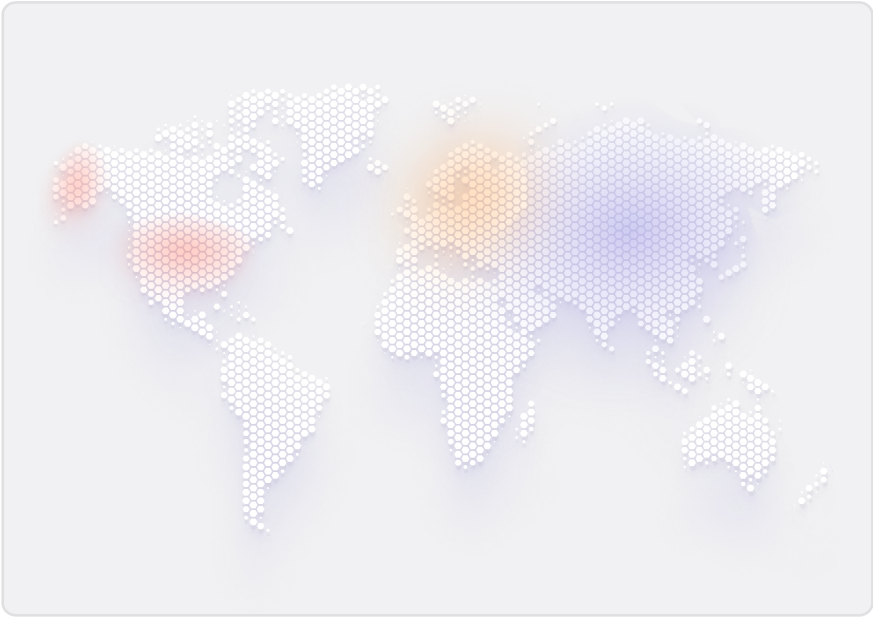
- Technical roles such as developers, engineers, QA, DevSecOps, and security analysts
- Leadership roles, including managers, directors, and executives
- Experience levels ranging from under 3 years to more than a decade

GEOGRAPHY

 The **United States** is the largest group

 **Asia** represents significant adoption

 **Europe** and **ROW** add varied perspectives



EXPERIENCE LEVELS



Early-career workers
adapting quickly



Mid-level professionals
integrating AI into
maturing workflows



Senior contributors
balancing expectations
and leadership

ROLE CATEGORIES

The majority of
technical roles

Leadership focused on
strategy & team adaptation

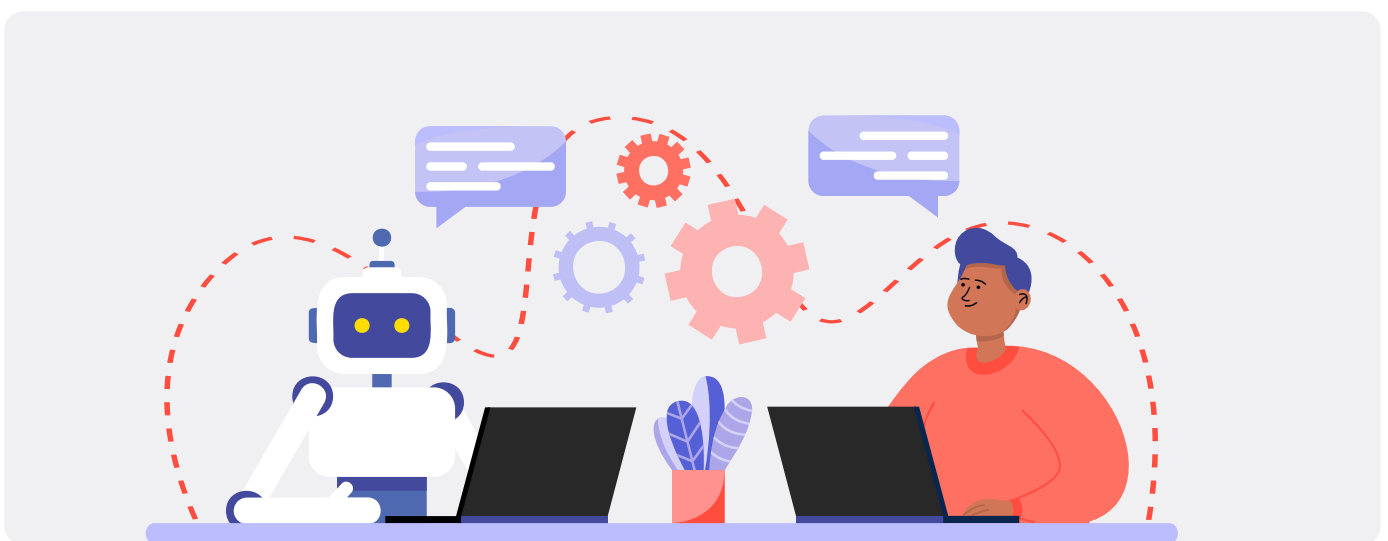
Introduction:

The changing nature of work

AI is no longer just a tool; it has become an invisible layer shaping decisions, expectations, emotional experience, and daily routines. It influences not only how fast tasks get done but also how people perceive their value and relevance.

Developers depend on AI for code suggestions and debugging. Security teams rely on it for analysis. Non-technical workers use it for documentation and decision support. Productivity gains are clear, yet the rapid pace of change introduces new complexities.

As AI accelerates workflows, employees must keep pace while continually learning and adapting. This dual pressure forms the foundation of a new burnout landscape explored in this report.



Insights:

How AI is reshaping burnout

The following insights summarize the strongest patterns observed across respondents. Together, they illustrate AI's dual impact on productivity and well-being.



AI is meaningfully reducing traditional burnout

AI meaningfully decreases time spent on repetitive tasks such as documentation, formatting, and basic coding. Workers report smoother workflows and fewer errors.



AI introduces new cognitive and emotional burnout drivers

Workers describe learning fatigue, fear of falling behind, and increased cognitive load when diagnosing AI-related errors or adapting to new tools.



AI makes deadlines easier but raises expectations

AI helps workers meet deadlines more easily, yet often increases overall expectations and workload.



AI creates hidden emotional and identity stressors

Respondents report concerns about losing mastery, rising context switching, and shifts in how their skills are valued.



AI as a second manager

Automated alerts and suggestions can create a sense of continuous oversight, especially in security-heavy environments.

What workers expect from the next generation of AI tools :

Workers want AI that reduces cognitive load, improves integration, and automates complex tasks reliably.

💡 SUMMARY OF KEY INSIGHTS

- AI reduces traditional stress but creates new cognitive and emotional challenges.
- Productivity gains often translate into higher expectations.
- Workers struggle with identity and relevance as AI expands.
- Tool overload and constant adaptation contribute to mental fatigue.

Future AI must focus on **clarity, context, and reducing mental load.**

Persona Spotlights ↗

Senior Developer: Feels pressure to deliver more while learning constantly. Values AI efficiency but is concerned about long-term skill relevance.

"AI helps me move faster, but keeping up with new tools feels like a job of its own."

— Senior Developer,
Singapore, 5–10 years

Security Professional: Benefits from AI in triage but experiences heightened pressure associated with sensitive and high-stakes oversight.

"AI catches issues quickly, but every miss feels heavier now that the system expects near-perfect vigilance."

— DevSecOps Engineer,
USA, 5–10 years

Early-Career Engineer: Feels empowered by AI as a learning tool and sees it as a way to close gaps quickly.

"AI speeds up my learning curve, but I worry whether I'm building real skills or just relying on the tool."

— Junior Developer,
UAE, < 3 years

Non-Technical Worker: Uses AI mainly for documentation and administrative relief. Reports fewer identity-related concerns.

"AI saves me hours of admin work, but sometimes the volume of suggestions becomes overwhelming."

— Content writer, India,
3–5 years

Manager: Navigates uneven AI adoption across teams while balancing expectations and well-being.

"My team is faster with AI, but the pressure to consistently scale output has created new stress we didn't anticipate."

— Head of Engineering,
United States, 10+ years

Implications to businesses

As organizations rapidly adopt AI, leadership must balance productivity gains with the emotional and cognitive realities shaping employee well-being.

AI adoption brings powerful opportunities, but it also reshapes how people experience work. The transition requires leaders to balance productivity gains with the mental and emotional realities employees now face.

Without planning, organizations risk amplifying stress even as workflows become more efficient.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

- ◆ Cognitive load is rising due to increased decision demands.
- ◆ Productivity gains may unintentionally fuel unrealistic expectations.
- ◆ Security risks increase when teams adopt AI without guardrails.
- ◆ Tool overload leads to fragmented workflows.
- ◆ Lack of formal training contributes to learning pressure.

Organizations that recognize these shifts early will be better positioned to implement AI sustainably and maintain team wellbeing.

Recommendations

Sustainable AI adoption requires intentional guardrails that protect mental bandwidth, deepen team confidence, and ensure secure engineering practices.

Effective AI adoption requires thoughtful leadership. As teams navigate new pressures, organizations must introduce guardrails that protect employees from cognitive overload, promote skill growth, and ensure secure practices.

✓ KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Set realistic expectations around AI-driven productivity.
- Provide structured AI training as part of normal work.
- Consolidate tools to reduce complexity.
- Encourage thoughtful, not automatic, reliance on AI outputs.
- Offer clear communication about long-term roles and skill paths.

Looking ahead to 2025–2026

As AI capabilities advance, organizations should expect:

- More pervasive AI integration increasing the need for cognitive load management.
- Growing pressure on teams to specialize in using AI effectively.
- Clear differentiation between organizations that adopt AI humanely and those that use it solely as a speed lever.

When applied consistently, these practices help organizations unlock AI's potential while building resilient, confident, and engaged teams.



Conclusion and future outlook

AI is transforming work at every level. It reduces repetitive tasks and improves efficiency, yet it also accelerates expectations and reshapes how workers perceive their value. Burnout is shifting away from task overload and toward rapid adaptation, learning pressure, and identity concerns.

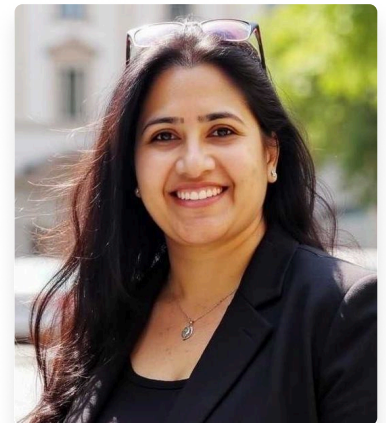
The next frontier is not faster AI, but healthier AI adoption. Organizations that emphasize human-centered implementation will build teams that thrive amid technological acceleration. Those who fail to support employees emotionally and cognitively risk contributing to a new burnout epidemic.

As AI continues evolving, the measure of organizational maturity will be the ability to integrate innovation with well-being.

About the author

Rishika is the Chief Strategy Officer at Appknox, where she drives the company's strategic initiatives and growth in the cybersecurity landscape. With a background in technology and business leadership, she specializes in helping organizations navigate the complex intersection of security, technology, and regulatory compliance.

Rishika is deeply passionate about the evolving cybersecurity landscape and plays a pivotal role in shaping Appknox's global strategies, particularly in the Middle East, US, and India. Her vision for secure-by-design digital transformation is transforming how enterprises approach mobile security.



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About Appknox

Appknox is a leading mobile application and **API security testing platform** trusted by enterprises and government organizations worldwide. We enable teams to innovate securely and responsibly. As AI transforms development workflows, Appknox remains committed to helping organizations adopt technology that protects both security and well-being.