

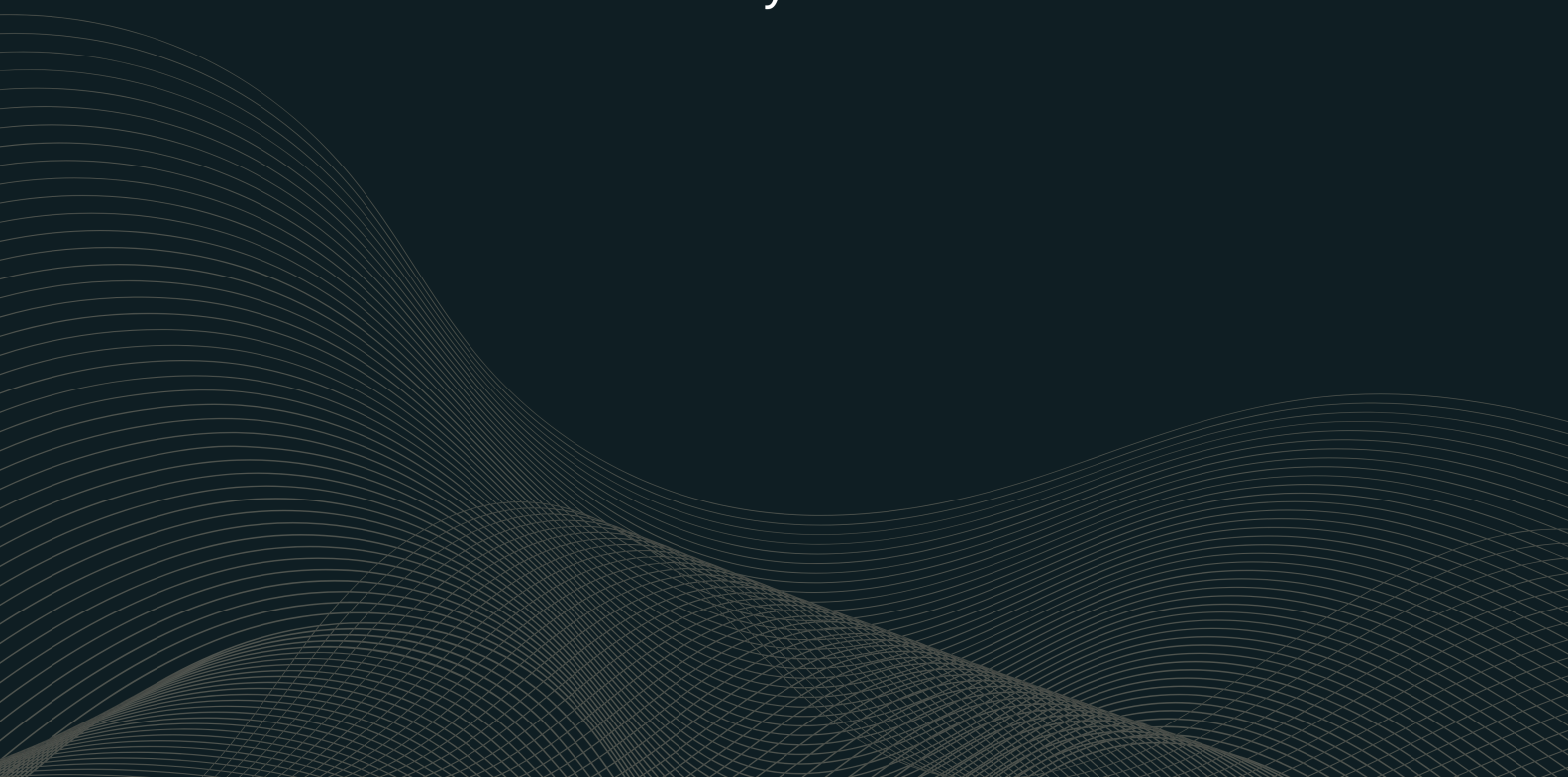


What Boards Actually Need to See From AI

The AI Operating Model Playbook

Manoj Tavarajoo

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Opening context

As AI investment grows and automation embeds into core processes, boards increasingly ask for visibility. They want assurance that AI is creating value, that risks are managed, and that leadership remains in control.

Organisations often respond by providing more information. Dashboards expand. Metrics proliferate. Yet confidence remains fragile.

The issue is not a lack of data. It is a mismatch between what boards are shown and what boards need.

Why this fails in most organisations

Many AI updates focus on activity rather than consequence. Initiatives launched, models deployed, accuracy achieved. These do not answer the board's core questions.

Boards oversee value, risk, and strategic alignment. Technical metrics rarely reveal whether AI is changing outcomes or increasing exposure.

Inconsistent reporting further weakens oversight. Without a coherent narrative, boards struggle to assess progress.

The operating model insight

Boards need insight into outcomes, trajectories, and control, not technical detail.

Effective reporting shows whether AI is embedded into processes, whether decisions are changing, how value is compounding, and where risk is emerging.

This requires a small number of consistent signals aligned to maturity and impact.

What this looks like in practice

Organisations that report effectively provide structured, repeatable AI updates. Reports map initiatives to outcomes, show leading and lagging indicators, and surface risk through observed behaviour.

Boards see where AI is exploratory, scaling, or operationally critical.

This builds confidence without overwhelming detail.

Common mistakes to avoid

Flooding boards with technical metrics.

Reporting only successes.

Fragmenting reporting across business units.

Avoiding difficult conversations about underperformance.

What leaders must do differently

Leaders must redesign AI reporting with the board's role in mind. They should prioritise clarity, consistency, and relevance.

They must be willing to show where AI is not yet delivering value and how that is being addressed.

Conclusion

Boards do not need to understand algorithms to govern AI effectively.

They need visibility into outcomes, trajectories, and control. When reporting aligns with these needs, governance strengthens and confidence grows.



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