AIGW | Global AI Governance & Workforce Transformation Policy Observatory

AIGW COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE BRIEF

When AI Redesigns Work, What Makes the Transition Work?

What DBS and Meta reveal about operating models, workforce pathways and the limits of AI readiness

Evidence reviewed through 5 November 2026

COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE

Executive snapshot

AI can change how an organization operates before its effects on workers are fully visible. DBS and Meta illustrate two different settings in which leaders have connected AI adoption to organizational redesign. DBS, a Singapore-headquartered bank, describes a structured programme of operating-model transformation, role redesign, training and redeployment. Meta, a US technology company, experimented with smaller AI-supported teams and a broader restructuring under Project OT, while reporting and executive comments revealed tensions around workforce change and the readiness of AI agents. 1 2 3 4

The two cases are not a controlled experiment. They differ in industry, workforce, regulation, starting point, time horizon and available evidence. DBS's evidence is largely company disclosure; Meta's Project OT is unusually visible through Reuters' reporting on internal documents and employee experience, accompanied by Meta's response. Unequal visibility is not proof that one organization experienced fewer problems or achieved better outcomes. 1 3

The central finding: leaders need to evaluate work redesign, technology readiness and workforce transition together, but measure each separately. An AI tool can be used widely without demonstrating reliable agent autonomy. A training programme can begin without demonstrating that workers completed it or moved into durable roles. An organizational restructuring can occur without proving that each job eliminated was replaced by AI.

Key findings

1. **The unit of redesign is the operating workflow.** DBS describes operating-model transformations that bring processes, AI, roles and skills together. Meta's selected product teams tested smaller AI-supported structures. The documented mechanisms and implementation scopes differ. 2 3

2. **Technology readiness must be demonstrated in the work where it is expected to perform.** Reuters reported that Meta's leadership acknowledged agent development had not progressed as quickly as expected; the evidence does not establish that every AI tool or team experiment failed. 3 4

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3. **Training and redeployment require separate measures.** DBS reported more than 11,000 people identified for deeper reskilling or upskilling and 96% commencing training at its 2025 reporting point. It also described employee moves into new roles, but the two statements are not a completed-transition rate. 1

4. **Workforce change cannot be read from one number.** Meta's restructuring included a reduction of about 10% and transfers to AI-related work; planning scenarios for further changes were not all implemented. These are different events and cannot be combined into a count of jobs individually replaced by AI. 3 4

5. **Trust, communication and authority affect implementation.** DBS reports engagement and union consultation; Reuters documents employee concerns and management responses at Meta. Neither source provides a comparable, independently measured trust score across both companies. 1 3

What this brief can and cannot establish

The cases illustrate organizational mechanisms and decision questions. They cannot establish which company has a superior transformation model, whether either achieved a particular worker-level outcome at scale, or whether the differences caused the outcomes described. The analysis uses public information available through 5 November 2026 and does not represent an independent audit of either company.

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1. The decision before the headline

Debate about AI and employment often moves from a technology announcement to a single question: how many jobs will disappear? A more useful first question for leaders is how the work is being reorganized, what the technology can reliably do, and what arrangements exist for people affected by the change.

These questions matter together. If an organization redesigns a workflow on the assumption that an AI agent will perform a task independently, its staffing plan depends on the agent's reliability, the nature of the task, access permissions and the availability of human review. If the system falls short, the organization may need to restore expertise or ask remaining employees to absorb additional work. These are practical risks and scenarios, not a finding that all AI restructuring will fail.

The converse matters too: a workforce programme is not demonstrated to be successful merely because employees have been offered training. The organization needs to know whether the learning was completed, whether people could apply it, what role or assignment followed, and whether that work remained meaningful and sustainable. DBS's disclosures and Meta's experience make these different measurement needs visible in different ways. [1] [3]

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2. DBS: connecting AI deployment to operating-model change

DBS reported that, during 2025, it deployed more than 2,000 models across over 430 AI and analytics use cases. It also reported completing nine operating-model transformation initiatives against a target of six. The bank describes these initiatives as combining process re-engineering, human–AI collaboration, role changes and reskilling. These are company-reported enterprise measures, not an independent assessment of the results of each initiative. 2

Its 2025 sustainability report describes a workforce-planning process in which the bank examines roles affected by AI use cases and defines new or enhanced roles. It reported more than 11,000 employees identified for deeper upskilling or reskilling in roles expected to change significantly, with 96% having commenced training at the reporting point. The same report describes redeployment through operating-model transformations, including moves from customer-service work toward relationship and wealth-planning roles. 1

The distinction among those statements matters. The 11,000-plus figure refers to people identified for deeper learning; 96% refers to commencement among that identified group. The examples of movement show that the bank describes real pathways, but the cited disclosure does not establish how many in the training cohort completed learning, were placed in a different role, remained there, or experienced a change in pay or career progression. 1

The bank also reported approximately SGD 1 billion in 2025 economic value from data analytics and AI/ML initiatives. This bank-wide value estimate should not be treated as the return on the workforce programme or as a measure of value produced by a particular redeployment pathway. The company reports a later initiative with the Institute of Banking and Finance to support sector workforce development; that partnership is evidence of an institutional arrangement, not evidence of its eventual outcomes. 2 5

The AIGW interpretation is that DBS provides a visible example of **connecting technology adoption to workforce planning**. The outcome question remains open: how do training, role assignment, worker experience and business performance relate over time?

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3. Meta: organizational ambition meets implementation limits

Reuters' investigation describes Project OT as an effort to reshape Meta's organization around AI-supported work. Meta confirmed the project's existence and said it involved cost reduction, redesigning teams and moving staff into priority areas. Reuters also described selected early product-development pilots involving smaller teams using AI tools. The existence of such pilots does not establish that the same model operated across the whole company. 3

The public record needs to distinguish scenarios from completed actions. Reuters reported that some scenario exercises contemplated reductions of up to 60% in particular teams. Meta said these scenarios included possible redeployments, open-role closures and cuts, and that it had not planned to lay off 60% of its entire workforce. Reuters reported a workforce reduction of about 10% in May 2026 and that a further planned restructuring wave was called off. These events do not establish that AI directly replaced every affected employee. 3

Reuters separately reported that roughly 7,000 employees were reassigned to AI-focused teams in May. The reported transfer count is not a count of successful long-term career transitions. The reasons for the restructuring included significant investment and operating-model pressures; individual decisions cannot be reduced to one cause using the public record. 4

At an internal town hall in July, according to Reuters' reporting on a recording, Mark Zuckerberg acknowledged that agent development had progressed more slowly than expected and that the organization had miscalculated aspects of timing. That evidence supports a narrower observation than 'AI agents failed': some leadership assumptions about the pace of agent development had not materialized as expected in the period discussed. 4

Reuters also reported internal information about increases in code changes, technical incidents and time spent responding to problems. Those reports raise questions about whether measures of activity are capturing useful outcomes and how operational risk is managed. They do not establish, on their own, that every incident was caused by AI or that higher code volume caused a particular change in performance. Meta declined to comment on some of the internal disruption data, according to Reuters. 3

CASE COMPARISON

4. The same leadership question, different evidence

FIGURE 1

Qualitative comparison

DBS and Meta: selected-case comparison

Dimension	DBS: public record	Meta: public record	What cannot be concluded
Organizational context	Singapore-headquartered bank; operating-model transformation across selected initiatives. [1] [2]	US technology company; selected AI-supported pods and a broader restructuring effort. [3]	The two contexts do not provide a controlled comparison.
Work redesign	DBS describes process re-engineering, augmented and streamlined roles, and new roles. [1] [2]	Reuters reports smaller product teams and an effort to organize more work around anticipated AI capabilities. [3]	The disclosures do not establish equivalent task-level productivity across the organizations.
Workforce response	Training commenced among an identified cohort; DBS describes redeployment examples. [1]	Reuters reports layoffs and transfers to AI-related work; planned scenarios and implemented actions differ. [3] [4]	Training starts, redeployment examples, layoffs and transfers are not directly comparable outcome measures.

Source: DBS company disclosures; Reuters reporting [1] [2] [3] [4]

Note: Purposively selected, differently sourced cases; not representative or a ranking. The disclosures are not directly comparable.

CASE COMPARISON

FIGURE 2

Qualitative comparison

DBS and Meta: selected-case comparison

Dimension	DBS: public record	Meta: public record	What cannot be concluded
Technical readiness	DBS describes governance and operational transformations; independent workflow-specific readiness evidence is limited in this brief. [2]	Reuters reports that leadership acknowledged agent development had fallen behind expectations. [4]	The public record does not provide a comparable test of system reliability at both firms.
Communication and worker voice	DBS reports town halls, focus groups and union consultation. [1]	Reuters reports employee concerns and management changes in response. [3]	Different source types and visibility do not justify a cross-company trust ranking.
Outcomes	Reported training starts and illustrative role changes; long-term individual outcomes are not established in the cited disclosure. [1]	Reported restructuring, reassignment and course correction; complete individual outcomes are not public here. [3] [4]	Neither case proves a universal strategy or establishes net economy-wide effects.

Source: DBS company disclosures; Reuters reporting [1] [2] [3] [4]

Note: Purposively selected, differently sourced cases; not representative or a ranking. The disclosures are not directly comparable.

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5. Five lessons for institutional leaders

1. Connect the operating model to demonstrated capability

Map the specific task and decision before deciding what staffing or service levels it can support. Define what the AI does, what people review, when an exception is escalated and what happens when the system fails. Test that design in the actual workflow. Meta's reported experience shows why leaders should separate expectations about future agent capability from evidence that a particular system is ready for a particular assignment. [3] [4]

2. Treat implementation as a sequence of decisions, not a single rollout

DBS describes a process that connects business use cases, impacted roles, redesigned work and learning. That is a useful planning logic. It should not be mistaken for proof that every transition is complete. An organization can use the logic to stage decisions and revisit assumptions when technical performance, demand or worker feedback changes. [1] [2]

3. Measure worker transitions from start to destination

A minimum workforce transition record should distinguish people identified as affected, people offered training, people who start and complete it, people who demonstrate capability, people assigned to changed work, and those who remain in that work over an agreed period. Where appropriate and lawful, measure pay, career progression, job quality and retention. The categories are AIGW's proposed management questions, not a description of a disclosed DBS or Meta dataset.

4. Pair activity metrics with delivery, quality and risk

Usage counts, training hours and code changes can help show activity. They cannot by themselves establish customer value, reliable delivery, quality, workload or return on investment. Leaders should compare metrics at the same unit of analysis and record baselines, periods and countervailing costs. Reuters' reporting on Meta's internal metrics highlights the need for this distinction; it does not independently establish a quantified causal effect of AI across all reported incidents. [3]

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5. Make employee voice and decision rights visible

Employees need a credible explanation of what is changing, how decisions will be made, how data will be used and where questions or appeals can go. Managers need defined authority to pause a deployment or correct an unsafe handoff. DBS reports consultation and engagement arrangements; Reuters documents concerns at Meta. These are differently sourced observations, not a comparable effectiveness assessment. 1 3

6. A practical decision card

Before changing a workflow or staffing model, ask:

1. **Work:** Which task and workflow are changing, and what remains human work?

2. **Readiness:** What has the system actually demonstrated in that setting, including error rates and exception handling?

3. **Authority:** Who reviews, approves, overrides and is accountable?

4. **People:** Who is affected, what alternatives exist, and how can workers participate?

5. **Transition:** What evidence connects learning to an actual assignment and sustained role?

6. **Measurement:** What are the baseline, period, unit, quality, cost and worker outcome?

7. **Course correction:** What evidence would cause leaders to scale, redesign, pause or reverse the change?

These questions are a discussion aid developed from the case analysis. They are not a validated maturity score or certification.

7. Implications beyond the two cases

For employers, the cases suggest that AI adoption, work redesign and workforce transition need connected governance, while maintaining separate evidence for each. For policymakers, they raise a measurement problem: adoption or training activity is easier to count than the quality and durability of role transitions. For education and training providers, they highlight the importance of linking learning to genuine opportunities to practise and apply capability.

These implications do not imply a single national model. Singapore's banking context and a US platform company's operating environment are distinct. AIGW's broader China research can examine how Chinese policy instruments and enterprise practices address comparable questions, but the present two-case comparison does not itself establish a China finding.

SOURCES

Conclusion and references

The question is not whether an enterprise has an AI strategy. It is whether the organization can connect what the technology reliably does to the way work is designed, the decisions people retain, and the paths available to workers.

DBS provides company-reported evidence of a structured attempt to connect AI use, operating-model change and workforce planning. Meta's Project OT provides a more visible account of organizational ambition, workforce disruption and a subsequent reassessment of technical and organizational timing. Both leave important worker-level outcomes insufficiently visible in the public sources reviewed.

The practical task is to replace a single transformation headline with an evidence chain: **work changed, technology performance, human authority, workforce response and verified outcomes**.

1. DBS Group Holdings. *Sustainability Report 2025, "Transforming our workforce," p. 62*. 9 March 2026. Company disclosure.
   Boundary: Training starts and redeployment examples do not establish completion or transition outcomes for the cohort
   https://www.dbs.com/annualreports/2025/i/pdf/DBS_SR2025.pdf

2. DBS Group Holdings. *Annual Report 2025, CEO discussion of AI and operating-model transformations*. Company disclosure.
   Boundary: AI value is bank-wide and not workforce-transition ROI
   https://www.dbs.com/iwov-resources/images/investors/annual-report/dbs-annual-report-2025.pdf

3. Reuters, Katie Paul with additional reporting. *Mark Zuckerberg had a bold plan to replace Meta staff with AI. Here's how it imploded*. 26 August 2026. Investigation based on reviewed internal material, interviews and Meta's response.
   Boundary: Not a comprehensive independently audited outcome study
   https://www.reuters.com/investigations/mark-zuckerberg-had-bold-plan-replace-meta-staff-with-ai-heres-how-it-imploded-2026-08-26/

4. Reuters, reproduced by StreetInsider. *Meta's Zuckerberg says AI agent tech progressing slower than expected*. 2 July 2026. Based on a recording heard by Reuters.
   Boundary: Companywide counts do not establish individual causal attribution or long-term outcomes
   https://www.streetinsider.com/Reuters/Exclusive-Meta%27s%2BZuckerberg%2Bsays%2BAI%2Bagent%2Btech%2Bprogressing%2Bslower%2Bthan%2Bexpected/26727829.html

SOURCES

5. DBS. *DBS inks industry's first MOU with IBF to jointly uplift, upskill and upbuild Singapore's financial sector workforce for the AI era*. 2026. Company announcement.

Boundary: A partnership announcement does not establish programme impact

https://www.dbs.com/NewsPrinter.page?locale=en&newsId=msd3pa0v

6. AIGW Policy Observatory. *DBS: How AI Is Redesigning Banking Roles, Reskilling and Redeployment*. October 2026. Prior AIGW case, context and related research.

https://gaeedu.org/publication/dbs-ai-banking-role-redesign-reskilling-redeployment

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https://gaeedu.org/publication/meta-project-ot-ai-native-workforce-restructuring