What Must Change Before the Technology

Technology orchestration and public value, seen through private-sector AI use cases and results



Kim Deok-jung, Director of AI Lab, PUB, Adjunct Professor, Sookmyung Women's University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The essence of AX is redesigning the operating system of work

Corporate AI transformation and public-sector Information Strategy Planning (ISP) both typically proceed in this order: current-state analysis → future vision and gap analysis → selection of build areas → build projects. But this approach tends to stop at layering AI on top of existing work. In **Deloitte's 2025 survey, 59% of organizations were taking a technology-centric approach, and only 16% said they had fully redesigned roles, processes and operating models. In the 2026 survey, only 6% of leaders had made real progress in designing human-AI interaction.** The problem lies less in AI performance than in the absence of Work Design.



Core proposition

AX fails not for lack of AI, but because we add future intelligence to unchanged work.

Lessons the private sector paid for first: five takeaways

1. **Do not treat the AI usage rate as the core indicator of AX maturity.**
   What matters more: Workflow Compression, Human Touch Time, Decision Latency, AI Delegation Ratio and Human Value Density.

2. **Automating everything that can be automated is not optimal.**
   Some work should be deliberately left to people as Training Work that builds expertise and judgment.

3. **Delegated Machine Power matters more than headcount.**
   The number, permissions, data and execution scope of the Agents each person controls must be managed as a new organizational risk.

4. **Future expertise shifts from holding knowledge to Frame Breaking, Selection Intelligence and accountable Judgment.**

5. **The best AX organizations are not those that removed the most people, but those that chose most wisely where people must intervene.**

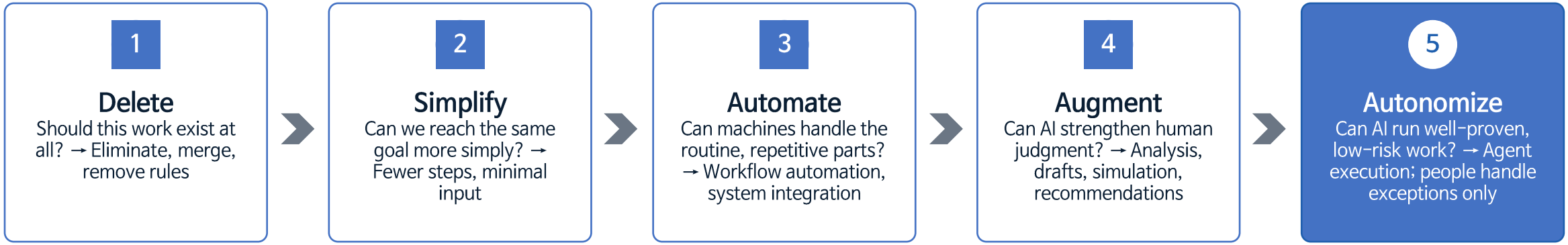


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most dangerous AX: an organization that does pointless work faster

Cutting report writing from 3 hours to 30 minutes, automating meeting minutes and finishing market research in a few hours are real efficiency gains. But this approach never tests why the work exists. **Unless we ask whether that report is necessary, why that approval step exists, and whose decision that meeting serves, AI accelerates inefficiency instead of removing it.**

Work improvement should follow this order, not Automation First



Key message

The sign of good AX is not the AI usage rate but whether Delete and Simplify were considered first. Organizations that only repeat Automate, Augment and Autonomize risk reproducing inefficiency faster.

PART I

How ways of working change: lessons from a project case

Not a “future task list” but a structural change in the work system

This case was compiled while running a project at a company that had completed SOP consulting and begun implementation.

Current state before the project

Manual, fragmented HR and general-affairs operations hurt field accessibility and processing efficiency. This project set out to fix these five pain points.

Current State & Pain Points

HR work from attendance and payroll to retirement relied on repetitive, fragmented, manual processes, limiting efficiency and consistency.

[1] Work Inefficiency	Repetitive inquiries, manual entry and document review pile up on staff as simple, repetitive tasks, raising the risk of delays and human error
[2] Field Accessibility	Production and field workers have limited access to PC-based systems, so they cannot handle basic self-service for leave, benefits and attendance and must rely on HR staff
[3] Manual Processing	Staff visually cross-check medical receipts, attendance proofs, utility bills and other supporting documents by hand, risking misreading and omission errors
[4] SAP Integration Gap	Staff manually edit and update SAP data, causing work and processing delays, and data integrity errors
[5] Automation Gaps	Without automation tools such as AI chatbots, RPA and OCR, data entry and validation are done by hand, increasing individual workload and error risk

Production and field workers have poor access to the PC-based HR system, making it hard to quickly file requests such as uniform orders, medical expense claims and attendance or leave documentation

Why the project initially took an SOP-first approach

The client's six reasonable rationales

1. **Work Visibility**
   Defines scattered work in one language; clears up vague hand-offs
2. **Control & Accountability**
   Documents who judges, executes and approves what
3. **SI (System Dev.)Requirements**
   Turns ideas into specs; developers need concrete specs to build
4. **Audit & Regulation**
   Secures controls, logs and evidence for regulated sectors
5. **Change Management**
   Sets a baseline for training, roles and evaluation
6. **Budget & Procurement**
   Breaks down into SOP → Use Case → SI for budgets and contracts

So what: All six are valid; the issue is timing and purpose.

CRITICAL DISTINCTION

SOPs exist for control and execution, not to design the future.

SOP: WHERE, NOT WHY

- **Essential for control and execution**: authority, evidence, rollback
- **Unfit for exploration and design**: blocks clean-sheet Outcome redesign
- Procurement, hiring and compensation should be defined by "Outcome + Authority + Condition", not by "step sequence"

Lesson from Public Cases: Microsoft, BCG and Deloitte all redesigned Outcome-first, then institutionalized SOPs; reversing the order shrinks the effort to Task Automation

What can go wrong: the SOP-first trap

Traditional BPR / RPA logic

1. **Detailed AS-IS mapping**
   Documents current steps, exceptions and owners
2. **Pain Point discovery**
   Find bottlenecks, manual steps, errors → fix them
3. **TO-BE design**
   Optimization plan based on the existing sequence
4. **Automation candidate selection**
   Assign automation points per Task
5. **SI build**
   Requirements spec → build → operate

A **Agents go beyond rule-based automation**
Broader judgment → can remove whole sequences

HOW THINKING GETS ANCHORED: five patterns

- **Detailed AS-IS mapping → today's sequence mistaken as essential**
  "We do it this way now, so we'll need it later" carries needless hand-offs into the future
- **Pain Point discovery → chance to redefine the Outcome is lost**
  Focusing on reducing pain misses the root question: "Why does this exist?"
- **Task-level candidate selection → chance to eliminate whole processes is missed**
  Agents can bundle and eliminate several Tasks, yet the effort stops at single-Task automation
- **Early TO-BE SOP lock-in → failures and exceptions not reflected**
  SOPs frozen without validation → no plan for failure, uncertainty or interruption in operation
- **SI implementation → capability changes not reflected**
  SOPs and authority can't keep pace with model/Tool evolution → static, not living, SOPs

Result: Agentic Transformation shrinks to Task Automation

Value comes from end-to-end redesign, not overlay (McKinsey/BCG/Deloitte)

Validation through global cases

CASE A

Microsoft

AI Agent Runbooks: designed with Gates

Human-in-the-Loop as a **Gate**

No approval without evidence

"Earn autonomy; never assume it"

CASE B

Microsoft Entra ID

Manage each Agent as a unique Identity

Link a human Sponsor: clear ownership

Time-bound, approved, auditable permissions

Agent = Principal; re-check when Tools change

CASE C

BCG

Redesign working back from the Outcome

End-to-end redesign: 3x AI overlay value

Look first for whole Processes to remove

Overlay ≠ Transformation

CASE D

Deloitte.

Agent-native operations

Human-built processes limit automation

74% of leaders: half of processes redesigned in 4 years

Design for agent, not automate human steps

CASE E

NIST OWASP Open Web Application Security Project

Controls beyond SOPs are essential

Needs a Govern - Map - Measure - Manage frame. SOPs alone can't control agentic risk

Top 10: permission drift, missing evidence, irreversible Actions, Tool-chain attacks

Control plane = Authority Matrix + Registry + Evaluation. SOP is not enough.

- **Common pattern:** Outcome-first → test in Experiments → design Authority & Gates → Agentic SOP v1.0
- **Key lesson:** SOPs are the control layer; design starts with Clean-sheet Work Design.

No AS-IS First: rethinking current-state analysis

Principle: *Understand the current reality, but do not let current process design the future*

Area	Initial handling	WHY
• Outcome / customer value	Define first: Outcome Charter	PRIORITY 1 Sole basis for future design; axis for judging all options
• Laws, policies, controls	Confirm first: Hard Constraints	GUARDRAIL A violation voids the design; rule out no-go areas
• Data and system reality	Outline now, detail in Reality Check	DEFER DETAIL Don't limit imagination; check constraints after Clean-sheet
• Performance Baseline	Must measure: cost, time, quality, errors	EVIDENCE Basis for proving impact; no Agent vs Human comparison = failure
• Detailed Process Sequence	Minimize early: log only bottlenecks and links	MINIMIZE Avoid the trap of today's sequence ruling the future
• Individual Pain Points	Reference only: don't derive solutions	REFERENCE Keep pain fixes from replacing Outcome redefinition

✓ **Look at first**
Outcome, Hard Constraints, Baseline: criteria and measures

◐ **Defer**
Detailed Sequence, Pain: understand, don't design with them

No AS-IS First method: redefining the Current State

TRADITIONAL AS-IS
? In what order does work flow today?

AGENTIC CURRENT-STATE
! Which facts and limits must we respect?

↓ Shift to reality-based design: 7 TARGETS ↓

Core shift principle

Understand the current reality, but do not let the current process design the future

Use the AS-IS sequence only as a constraint or baseline, not as design input.

✓ Outcome, constraints, Baseline first
✗ Minimal Process Sequence early
✗ Pain Points as reference only

1 **Intent: why it exists**
Final Outcome, customer value, key decisions

2 **Hard Constraints**
Rule out no-go areas: law, security, safety

3 **Baseline**
Measure cost, time, quality, errors, FTE to prove impact

4 **Clean-sheet**
With no current organization, how would we design it?

5 **Reality**
Outline data, systems, org, contracts, tech debt

6 **Migration Gap**
Map gaps between future design and reality

7 **Detailed AS-IS (optional)**
Only if needed: bottlenecks, links, regulation

Leaders/practitioners: 20 questions

Top 10: MUST ANSWER

01 **What is the final Outcome in one sentence?** Outcome Charter clarity

03 **With no current process, how would we design?** Clean-sheet imagination

04 **Which decisions must a person own?** Mandatory Human Gate areas

06 **What is an Action's maximum Blast Radius?** Impact of worst-case failure

07 **Least data and permissions?** Least privilege

08 **Which conditions auto-trigger a Human Gate?** Confidence/Impact/risk criteria

12 **Which Actions can't be rolled back?** Payments, external sends, contracts

14 **Technical Owner and Business Sponsor separated?** Separation of accountability

18 **What results expand autonomy?** Earn-autonomy criteria

19 **Which incidents shrink or stop it?** Kill Switch conditions

Remaining 10: FULL LIST (HANDOUT)

02 Customer value and key decisions defined?

05 Legal, regulatory, security Hard Constraints listed?

09 Evidence quality criteria and completeness?

10 Baseline: cost, time, quality measured?

11 Permission re-check when Tools are added?

13 Duplicate and policy exception detection?

15 Agent Registry and Version control?

16 Golden Set-based evaluation?

17 Escalation path and SLA?

20 Living SOP change management?

GO / NO-GO criteria

3+ of the top 10 unanswered = Operating Design first.
5+ = hold the Agent build.

20-question handout: team Self-Check in the workshop

Agentic SOP: definition and minimal structure

In an Agentic SOP, the most critical elements are Decision Rule, Authority and Exception. In the Agent era, the question shifts from “What is the next step?” to “When can the Agent decide on its own, and when must it hand off to a person?”

TRADITIONAL SOP

Focus	**Step-centered** — linear sequence and hand-offs
Actors	**Human roles** — owners and approvers
Structure	Defines task sequence
Approval	Static approval lines fixed by rank and amount
System	Systems are tools
Exceptions	Normal flow first; exceptions in an annex
Goal	Completing the document

AGENTIC SOP — OPERATING CONTRACT

Focus	**Action / Condition** — Trigger-Condition-Action-Evidence
Actors	**Human + Agent + System roles** — Agent Job Description
Structure	**Outcome + authority + exceptions**
Approval	**Risk-based Human Gate** — triggered by Confidence/Impact/risk
System	**Agents act** — judge, choose tools, execute
Exceptions	**Covers uncertainty, failure, interruption, Rollback**
Goal	**Continuous revision from operating data** — Living SOP

MINIMAL STRUCTURE
16 sections

01 Outcome	02 Trigger	03 Scope	04 Roles	05 Actions	06 Authority	07 Data & Tools	08 Decision Rules
09 Human Gates	10 Exceptions	11 Escalation	12 Evidence	13 KPI	14 Rollback / Kill	15 Ownership	16 Version

Restructuring the System Dev. project

BEFORE: the old structure

1. **AS-IS analysis**
   Detailed process mapping
2. **TO-BE SOP**
   Document-based future design
3. **Requirements spec**
   Functions, conditions, exceptions
4. **SI build**
   Develop → test → launch

Why it fails

- × Requirement changes surge (SOP Freeze hides failures)
- × Authority/Evidence gaps block operation
- × Unclear Sponsor/Ownership

Recommended: a verified Operating Design

VERIFIED DESIGN

RECOMMENDED WORK PACKAGES: 6 WPs

WP1 Define Outcome & Constraints
Outcome Charter, Hard Constraints, KPI Baseline
→ Charter / Baseline

WP2 Clean-sheet Blueprint + Reality Check
Design the future, then check reality
→ Future Blueprint / Gap Map

WP3 Agent Experiment (2-3 core Work items)
PoC tests failure, quality, cost, Review cost
→ Experiment Evidence

WP4 Authority & Human Gate Design
Per Action: allow/approve/block + triggers
→ Authority Matrix

WP5 Agentic SOP v1.0 + Registry
Institutionalize proven rules; build Evaluation
→ SOP v1.0 / Registry

WP6 Scale-up SI Integration + Governance
Integrated ops, KPIs, versioning, Living SOP
→ Living SOP operation

✓ **Fewer requirement changes**
Verified rules = stable scope

! **Failure patterns found early**
Blast Radius checked in WP3

◉ **Clear Sponsor and Ownership**
Agent ID tied to a Sponsor

Five principles from the project and a standard vocabulary

5 PRINCIPLES

1. **Outcome first; design the future clean-sheet**
   Start from the Outcome/Moment. Redesign with imagination, not today's sequence.
2. **Use AS-IS only to check Reality, Constraints, Baseline**
   Keep detailed Sequence minimal. Check law, policy, security first.
3. **Test in Experiments before setting authority and Gates**
   No assumed authority. Measure failure, quality, cost, Review cost first.
4. **Agentic SOPs center on Action, Authority, Gate and Evidence**
   Action × authority × condition × evidence, incl. Rollback/Kill
5. **SOP as a Living Standard, revised based on operating results**
   Auto re-check when models, Tools or policies change; Golden Set + KPI

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE SHIFT

1. **Work Design** Outcome Map / Future Blueprint
↓
2. **Human-Agent Design** Role Model / Agent JD / System
↓
3. **Authority & Control** Matrix / Human Gate / Guardrail
↓
4. **Agentic SOP** Runbook: sits at Layer 4
↓
5. **Governance & Learning** Registry / KPI / Evaluation / Change

Understand the present, but don't let it design the future.

Understand the current reality, but do not let the current process design the future. Agentic Work Design first, Agentic SOP as operating contract.

Implications for the Public Sector

Same trap, different stage: private-sector lessons in public-sector terms

The findings from Company H were not about the industry but about how work is designed. The same scenes appear in the public sector.

Private-sector finding	Similar scene in the public sector	Questions to ask ourselves
1 **The SOP-first trap** Today's sequence dictates future design	AI adoption that copies procedures from laws, guidelines and manuals as-is	**Is this procedure required by law, or by habit?**
2 **Build after locking requirements** Freeze before validation → requirement changes surge	IT projects that lock feature lists before procurement	**Did we leave room for small experiments to surface failures before procurement?**
3 **Risk-based Human Gate** Intervene by risk and confidence, not rank or amount	Delegation-of-authority rules fixed by rank and amount	**Have we redefined, by risk, where public servants must decide?**
4 **No approval without Evidence** Rationale, sources and policy mapping come before approval	Audit, records management, information disclosure and accountability to citizens	**Can we explain to citizens the basis of decisions AI was involved in?**
5 **Autonomy is earned** Expand as results build up; scale back after incidents	Pilots rolled out wholesale afterward	**Did we set criteria for scaling up and stopping before adoption?**

PART II

Once AI takes over the work, what must we prepare?

Where should we reinvest the freed-up Human Capacity?

This case is still under discussion with the client; please use it for reference only.

Value Reinvestment

Blind Spot: "Now do more strategic work"

What companies find easy to say

"You have time now, so be more strategic, create more value, find new work"



What employees actually say

“It's unclear what work, how much, and how it counts as 'strategic.' Isn't this just pushing job design onto individuals?”

1 Instructions that are too vague

Abstract expectations of being 'strategic' don't turn into action. Without a concrete Outcome, nothing happens.

2 Job design pushed onto individuals

Work Design the company should do is left to each employee, leading to everyone-for-themselves, uncertainty and burnout.

3 Disconnected from performance management

If KPIs stay the same and 'more valuable work' is added, people see more workload, not redesign.

- **The organization, not individuals, must design Value Reinvestment**

Value Reinvestment

What we must guard against

The moment value reinvestment becomes an excuse for 'ruthless job reassignment', AI transformation loses trust.

A typical misreading

An accountant's repetitive work is taken over by an Agent →
"Now go find new business"



This is not Work Redesign

! Demanding **entirely different skills and identity** after old work disappears
is a **Job Transition**: it needs its own design.

1. **No continuity of purpose** — accurate close vs uncertain new business

2. **Low skill similarity** — reconciliation vs market discovery and negotiation

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION GAP

X Pitch — Technology that boosts productivity

O Reality — **Technology that gets you more work when you finish early**

"Finish early, get more work"

1. **No distinction between Role Evolution and Job Transition** — demanding entirely different skills while blaming 'AI'

2. **Resistance is rational** — opaque reinvestment triggers rational self-protection

Why Resistance Becomes Rational

Same KPIs + AI usage demands + new value creation = **seen as more workload**
Without clear integration into Role and Goal, it is added burden, not redesign.

Value Reinvestment

What is Value Reinvestment Work?

ONLY FOR DISCUSSION

DEFINITION

Work that reinvests the time and capability freed by AI into what matters more: outcomes, customers, innovation, quality, learning



1. **It doesn't have to mean creating new work** — keep the purpose of existing work, change its intensity
2. **Depth and quality are what change** — value shifts within the same job
3. **The organization must design it** — a system, not individual effort



Sales

Proposal writing time ↓ → Deep customer meeting time ↑



HR

Data/reporting time ↓ → Problem-solving time ↑



Managers

Report preparation time ↓ → Coaching time ↑

The point is **not to find new jobs,** but to reshape the Work Portfolio by changing the depth and quality of existing work.

Value Reinvestment

Key distinction framework: Role Evolution vs Job Transition

Value reinvestment must not become an excuse for 'ruthless job reassignment.' Separate the two clearly; Transitions need their own design.

NATURAL SHIFT

Role Evolution

RECOMMENDED

The job's purpose stays; methods and focus shift

- **Continuity of purpose** — why the work exists stays the same
- **High skill similarity** — existing skills extend and deepen
- **Identity preserved** — 'I'm still in HR'
- Adaptable through Skill extension

Ex: HR reports → time for org issues and internal consulting



Within the same job,
the center of value shifts: a natural evolution

HARD SHIFT

Job Transition

CAUTION

Needs very different skills and duties: a different job

- **Discontinuity of purpose** — entirely different outcomes expected
- **Large skill and responsibility gap** — impossible without reskilling
- **Identity shift** — 'I now do a different job'
- Reskilling + mobility options + adjustment period required

Ex: Accounting routine replaced → “Find new business”: an impossible demand

⚠ **Career paths, authority and evaluation must be fully redesigned**

Decision criteria

Continuity of purpose · skill similarity · identity preserved

Principle

Leaders design Evolution; the org co-designs Transition. **Never impose it "because of AI"**

Value Reinvestment

Six steps of AI-era Work Redesign: they must connect as one system

It doesn't end with automation. Value Reinvestment happens only when the flow from freeing Capacity to redesigning performance is unbroken.

1 TASK TAKEOVER

Agents take over Tasks



2 CAPACITY RELEASE

Human Capacity is freed up



3 REINVESTMENT DECISION

Decide where to reinvest



4 WORK DEFINITION

Define value reinvestment work in that direction



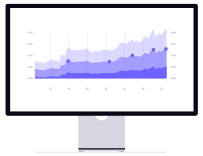
5 ROLE & CAPABILITY

Adjust roles and skills



6 PERFORMANCE REDESIGN

Reset goals and criteria





All of this is one system: Agent Task → Capacity → Decision → Work → Role → Performance. If one link breaks, trust collapses.

! **Key principle:** Reinvestment work outside formal Roles and Goals becomes extra load on old KPIs. Change performance criteria too.

PART III · Recommendations for the Public Sector

From people who operate technology to people who decide where it goes

In the agentic AI era, a public servant's role is less 'someone who uses AI better' and more 'someone who decides what to delegate and what to protect.'

01

Work redesigner

Able to retire old practices

Before adding AI, ask why each report, approval and meeting exists. Decisions to eliminate or merge work come from organizational authority, not technology.

Private-sector case:
Redefined the Outcome first instead of stopping at single-Task automation

02

Technology orchestrator

Designer of authority

Decide what Agents do autonomously, with approval, or never. As buyer and operator, require the authority matrix, evidence trail and stop criteria.

Private-sector case:
Tested Authority and Human Gates in experiments, then institutionalized them

03

Guardian of public value

Keeper of non-delegable judgment

Fairness, legitimate discretion and accountability to citizens are not delegated, however accurate AI becomes. Freed-up time goes back into frontline services and policy quality.

Private-sector case:
The organization, not individuals, decided how to use the freed-up time

Common condition Individual capability alone cannot complete these three roles. Jobs, authority and evaluation systems must change together for public servants to take them on.

Thank You

References

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