

MARKET IMPACT REPORT

Fix the baton pass: Transitions will make or break enterprise models

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Executive summary

Transitions, which involve the structured movement of work, processes, and capabilities from enterprises to internal global capability center (GCC) or shared services teams and outsourcing providers, remain one of the most misunderstood and underused levers of enterprise value within global services transformation initiatives. While most transitions deliver cost and continuity, they fall short on paving the path for agility, transformation, and defining business outcomes.

Transitions have outgrown their role as administrative handovers and should now represent the foundational operating model for the Services-as-Software™ (SaS) era. As enterprises shift to artificial-intelligence-infused service delivery, transitions test resilience, capture knowledge, and build or compromise future-readiness.

HFS Research and Infosys BPM surveyed 153 business and functional leaders and 152 transition management team leaders from GCCs and service providers. The research reveals a consistent headline: Transitions are not meeting strategic expectations for either enterprises or their transition partners, underscoring the need for stronger co-ownership, design discipline, and trust across all involved parties.

Six structural failures undermine transition success:

1

Accountability remains vague

Transitions start under pressure, shaped by ambitious transformation promises, aggressive timelines, and high expectations that are rarely re-baselined. More than half (58%) of enterprises and 50% of transition management teams admit that ownership remains unclear across workstreams. Governance vacuums persist, and co-design is rarely prioritized.

2

Trust gaps persist across both sides

Only 13% of enterprises consider provider playbooks relevant. In parallel, transition management teams report insufficient documentation (58%) and limited access to subject matter experts (SMEs) (40%) as key blockers. These mirrored frustrations reveal mutual distrust and misalignment.

3

Metrics fail to reflect business outcomes

While 86% of enterprises support experience-level agreements (XLAs), just 28% currently track them. Measurement frameworks remain anchored in legacy service-level agreements (SLAs), lacking critical indicators such as adoption, engagement, and resilience.

4

Change management begins too late

About half (52%) of enterprises acknowledge that change management starts after execution begins, and 48% of transition team leaders cite client change maturity as a limiting factor.

5

Transitions succeed at stabilization, but stall when it comes to transformation

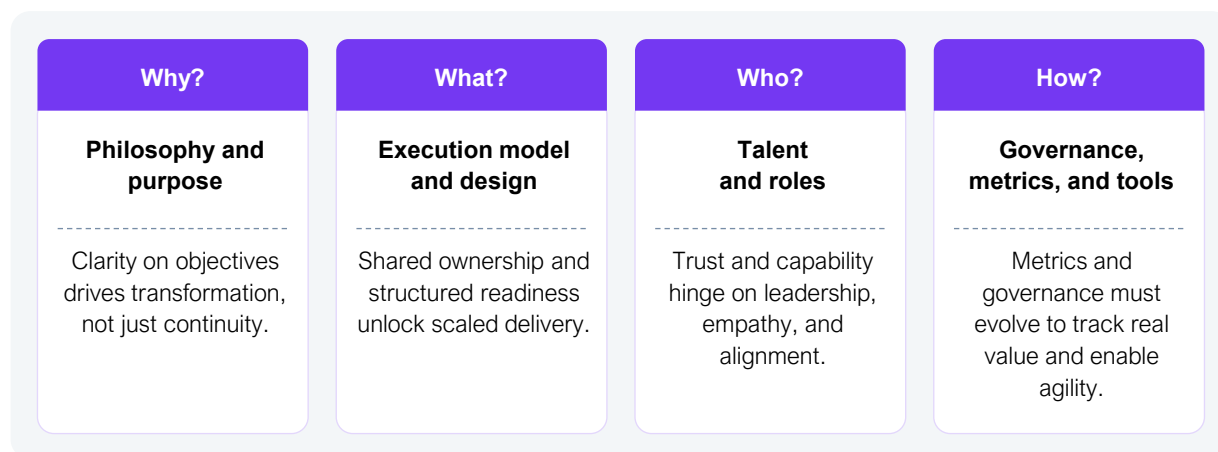
Only 41% of enterprises and 39% of transition management teams say transitions meet value expectations. While transition management teams typically deliver on cost savings, transition timeliness, and service continuity mandates, higher-order benefits such as agility, process innovation, and change adoption often remain unrealized within most enterprise environments.

6

Technology remains underleveraged

Most transitions fail to harness AI-powered analytics, automation, and intelligent tooling that could accelerate knowledge transfer, detect hidden risks early, and provide visibility into operational performance. Nearly 59% of transition management teams face information security or privacy restrictions, and 47% cite integration complexity as a barrier that limits the use of advanced solutions.

This report lays out a transition playbook structured around four foundational pillars, designed to guide both enterprise leaders and transition management teams in building co-owned, future-ready operating models.



These dimensions form the foundation of what must become “**capital T**” **Transitions**—cross-functional, co-owned, and designed for continuous capability building. Most current efforts remain stuck in “small t” transitions—tactical projects focused on stabilization. Elevating transitions means rethinking their purpose, not just improving their execution.

Transitions are launchpads for future enterprise operating models

Transitions are the structured movement of work, processes, and capabilities from enterprises to internal GCC teams, shared services teams, or outsourcing providers. Transitions are enterprise resets that redefine how teams collaborate, operate, and scale future-ready models. They surface structural gaps and shape the long-term health of the operating model.

- **Transitions are when an enterprise resets the foundation.** Process documentation, knowledge capture, and governance definition during transitions create the baseline for years of enterprise performance. If the foundation remains flawed, value leakage continues long after transition management teams depart.
- **Transitions reveal what must change for the model to be future-ready.** They surface the cracks and are as much a stress test of enterprise change readiness as the change in ownership of services.
- **Transitions establish new relationships.** Whether internal or external, service delivery organizations can establish themselves as partners or reduce themselves to task executors. Enterprises can approach the transition management teams and the broader program with openness and trust, or with suspicion and control. These early patterns often persist for years.

- **Transitions will make or break value creation in the Services-as-Software era.** Value in the SaaS era will no longer come from labor arbitrage, but from intelligent, pre-built, and continuously evolving digital capabilities infused with AI. This shift forces a rethinking of talent models, data infrastructure, process design, and governance. Transitions become the proving ground where agility, trust, and adoption are stress-tested before the new model can scale.

“If I had a magic wand, transition wouldn’t happen. It would just be a light switch. But in the real world, it takes months for people to really understand the job, and rightly so.”

— Functional head with a North American retailer

Enterprise leaders across businesses and functions, as well as transition management teams with GCCs and outsourcing providers, unanimously acknowledge the critical role of transitions and the need for both to jointly own the mandate for creating sustained value.

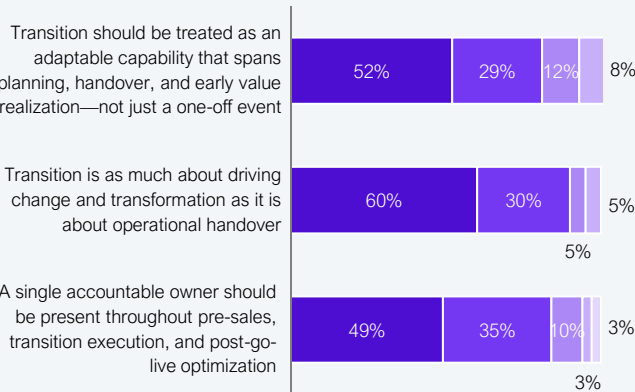
Transitions are equivalent to the **exchange zone in a relay race**. Speed matters, but the quality of execution of the baton pass decides success or failure. In the SaaS era, transitions involve changing the nature of the race itself, navigating adaptive, multi-lane courses that incorporate digital capabilities, AI copilots, and new governance designs.

Exhibit 1: Enterprises want transitions to be viewed as a strategic capability, and not just a setup phase

Q. What aspects of your last major transition were most satisfying? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

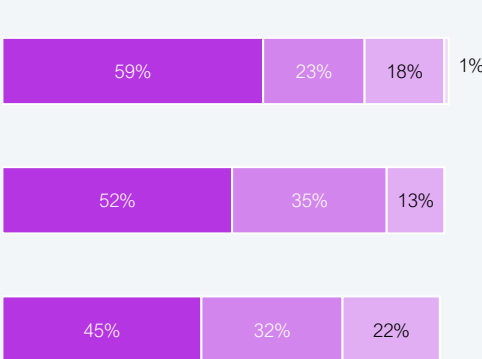
Enterprise leaders (business and functions)

5 = Strongly Agree 4 3 2 1 = Strongly Disagree

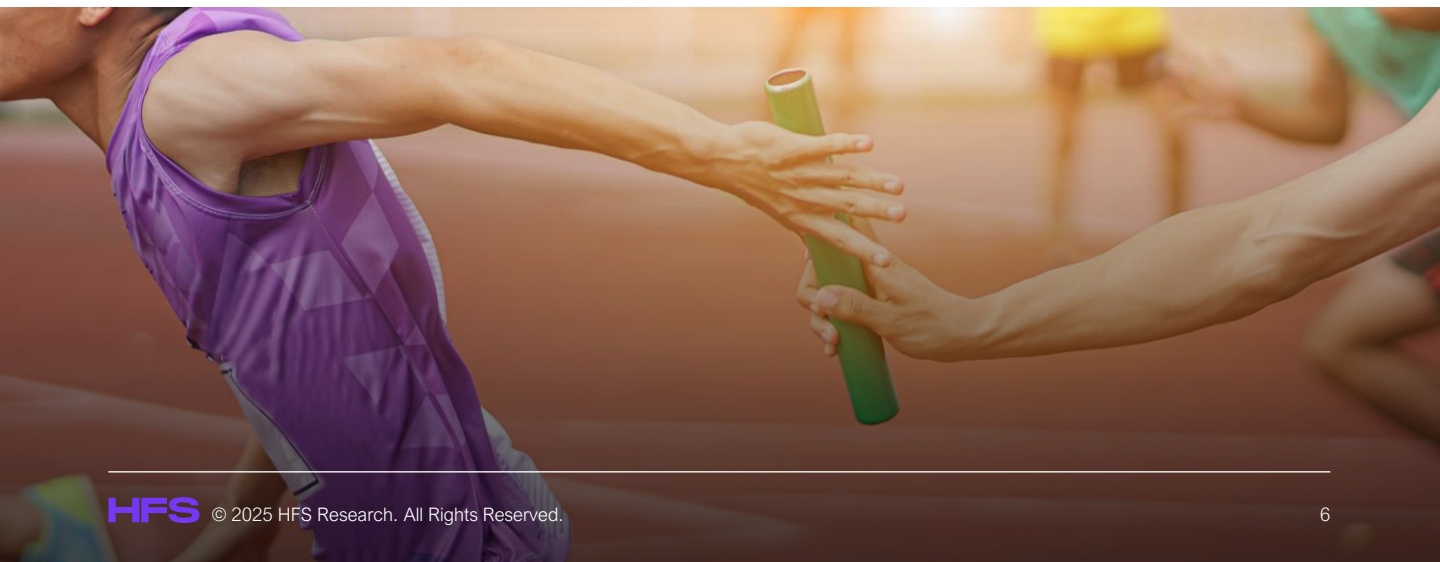


Transition leaders

5 = Strongly Agree 4 3 2 1 = Strongly Disagree



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders, and 152 transition leaders with GCCs and service providers
Source: HFS Research, 2025



Design and trust are the missing foundations of today's transitions

Transitions too often stall at stabilization, with focus limited to keeping the lights on. True transition success must also be measured by the pace of learning, the depth of adoption, stakeholder satisfaction, and the capacity to identify opportunities for improvement (Exhibit 2).

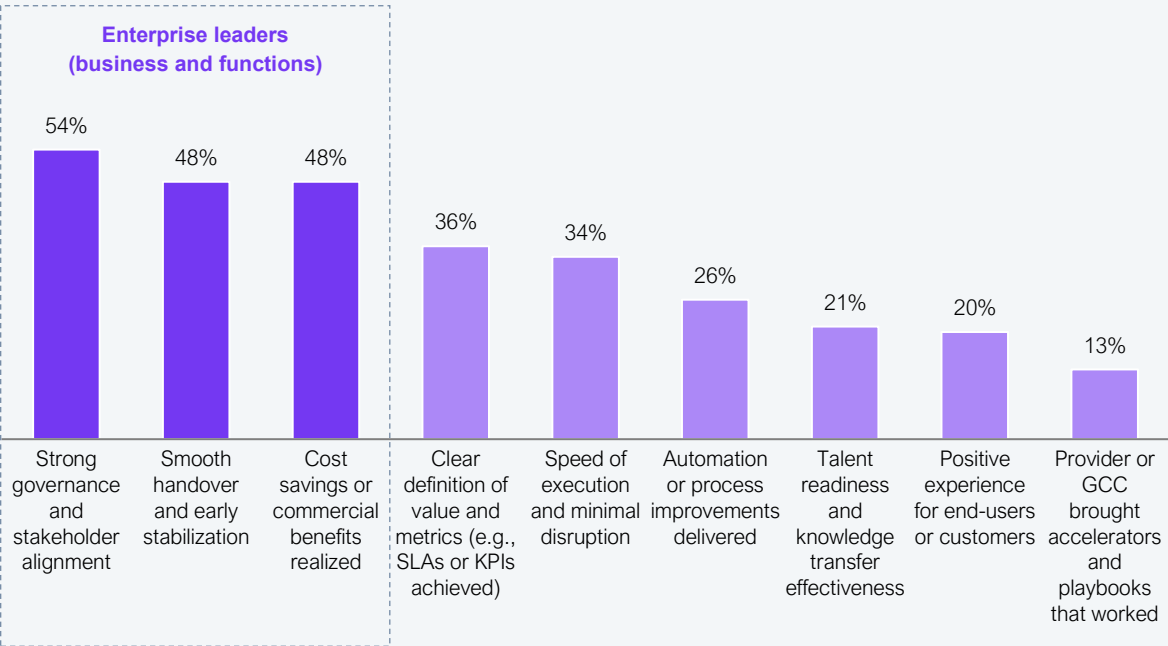
Effective transitions don't end at handover. They blend into continuous education, with transition management teams staying close to business stakeholders to surface risks, nurture ideas, and reinforce new ways of working. This dynamic "transition-as-learning" model sustains value beyond go-live.

Enterprise frustration stems from transitions not moving beyond the continuity baseline. Expectations around agility, process improvement, and user experience remain unmet.

Transition management teams defend continuity as proof of execution discipline, but enterprises often lack a clear definition of success beyond SLAs. Even when goals are defined, transition management teams cite limited access, weak sponsorship, and lack of buy-in as barriers to delivering strategic value.

Exhibit 2: Enterprise satisfaction with transitions remains limited to cost, timeliness, and continuity

Q. What aspects of your last major transition were most satisfying?



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

There is mutual recognition that more is possible, but alignment is lacking. Both sides point to gaps in governance, tooling, and data, but differ sharply on the reasons (Exhibit 3).

Enterprises want better preparation: 89% expect proven playbooks and accelerators, over half want stronger discovery and knowledge capture, and nearly two-thirds expect visible value within three months.

Transition management teams counter that transitions fail due to vague objectives (91%), limited stakeholder education (93%), and poor enterprise readiness, including weak documentation, unclear scope, and inadequate access to SMEs (57%).

Until execution models are co-designed and trust is embedded in the exchange zone, transitions will continue to fall short of delivering value beyond basic stabilization benefits.

“Transitions stall when teams show up with generic playbooks that don’t fit the context. They become check-box artifacts rather than living guides.”

— CFO of a North American manufacturer

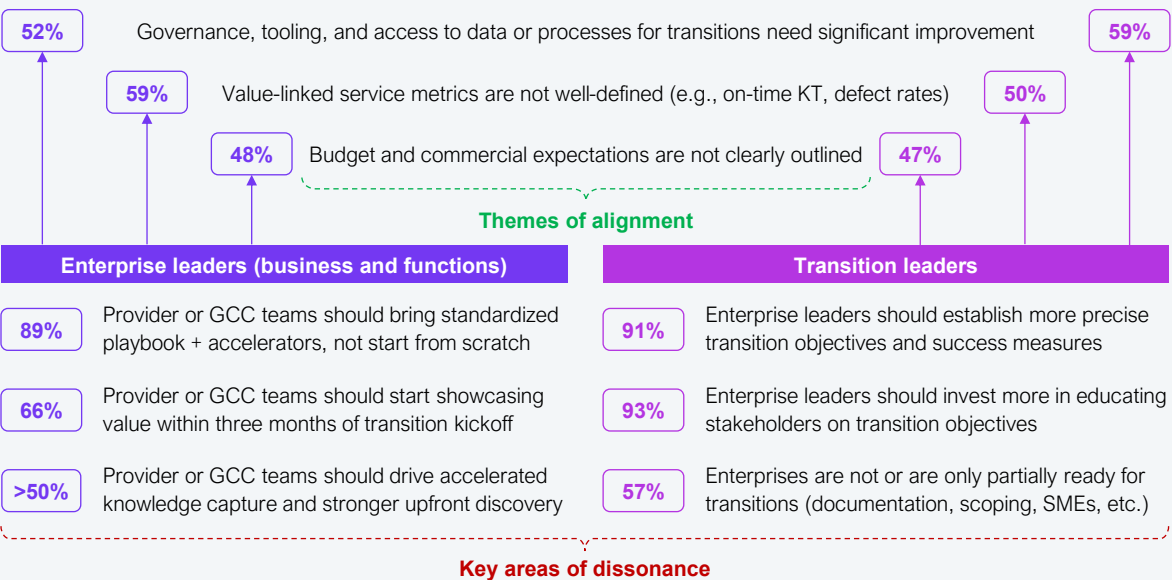
“When things are not packaged well, it is more like garbage in, garbage out. In transitions, unclear scope and weak documentation compromise the foundation.”

— GCC head with a global healthcare organization

“Trust deficits are the real killer. If one side doesn’t believe the other is ready, every issue is magnified.”

— GCC head with a global life sciences organization

Exhibit 3: Enterprises and transition management teams agree things are broken, but not on why



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders, and 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

The exchange zone defines the outcome, and most transitions aren't designed for it

Relay races are won or lost in the exchange zone. Speed matters, but it's the precision of the baton pass, built on trust, clarity, and coordination, that decides success. The same holds for enterprise transitions. Failures are rarely due to lack of effort. They happen because the exchange zone is poorly designed and teams arrive unprepared.

"Ownership doesn't fail because people don't try—it fails because nobody designs for joint accountability."

— GCC head with a
global healthcare organization

Transitions still default to "small t" tasks focused on transferring work and stabilizing SLAs. But the SaaS era demands **"capital T" Transitions**—co-owned, cross-functional, outcome-driven, and designed for repeatability.

Transitions must be treated as a capability, not a milestone. They should be built as an organizational muscle that GCCs and providers can flex during moments of change. Some leading enterprises now embed transition leaders into client teams on a short-term basis, not just to execute, but to inject cross-industry insight, challenge assumptions, and build step-value.

Back to basics: Four questions to answer for both enterprises and transition management teams to shape better transitions

Transitions are high-stakes, high-ambiguity undertakings. Even in steady-state environments, they act as the gearbox for shifting pace when market or technological forces, such as generative AI (GenAI), demand it. However, today, the exchange zone is

often treated as a mere functional handoff rather than a leadership moment. That needs to change.

Transition management teams must approach their role **as integrating into the enterprise** rather than merely transitioning work out of it. That shift turns them into **diagnosticians, coaches, collaborators, and integrators**, extending their role beyond "delivery managers." Enterprise teams must meet that shift by unlocking partner capabilities and resisting rigid, pre-set approaches that treat transitions as chores.

Clarity and accountability begin when both enterprises and transition management teams can answer four foundational questions:

Why? (philosophy and purpose)

- What business outcomes and early wins must the transition deliver?
- How can transitions launch transformation and build long-term adaptability?
- How can transitions educate leaders and stakeholders for the new model?

What? (execution model and design)

- How should accountability and handoffs be structured for speed and discipline?
- What mechanisms (playbooks, governance, scoping) will prevent breakdowns?

Who? (talent and roles)

- How will enterprise and transition management team leaders coordinate effectively?
- What skills are needed to build trust, confidence, and adoption?

How? (governance, metrics, and tools)




- How must governance evolve beyond SLAs to track real value?
- How can technology improve visibility, cadence, and responsiveness?

The framework in Exhibit 4 outlines how transitions must evolve across these dimensions to shift from discrete handovers to a continuous capability.

“A transition is not the cleanup before the real game starts—it is the game. Miss that, and you spend years fixing the cracks you ignored.”

— GCC head with a global life sciences organization

Exhibit 4: Transitions must evolve from handovers to continuous capabilities in the SaS world

	Legacy era (Pre2015) 	Digital transformation era (2015–2025) 	Services-as-Software era (2025+) 
Why? (Philosophy and purpose)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Episodic handovers, tactical projects Justify cost takeout, contain risk Transition as switch-over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured lifecycles (plan → handover → adoption) Standardized playbooks, uneven use Managed capability mindset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent transition capability Launchpad for broader transformation Explicit tie to enterprise competitiveness Pain points addressed during transition Test bed for new models (line, product, geo)
What? (Execution model)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise-led handovers Minimal preparation or readiness checks Focus on stabilization and SLA compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick wins in first 90 days Co-managed execution (shared PMO) Early playbooks, clearer workstream ownership Some readiness validation before kickoff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrialized yet adaptive execution spine Joint accountability designed in from start Structured readiness discovery mandatory Playbooks contextualized with domain expertise Mechanisms to overcome inhibitors (infosec, access) Confidence built via early value visibility
Who? (Talent and roles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMEs and project managers Siloed functional handovers Limited change management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition leaders and pods Cross-functional coordination Some change specialists engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI-fluent value architects Embedded change leaders across functions Integrated enterprise–transition teams Leadership continuity from pitch to delivery Stakeholder education embedded
How? (Governance, tools, and metrics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMEs and project managers Siloed functional handovers Limited change management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance forums, still compliance-heavy Early XLAs experimented Dashboards with point automation Task or process mining pilots for discovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated governance fabric with decision SLAs, escalation clarity, shared accountability, and real-time shared metrics Continuous XLA dashboards (adoption, resilience, value) KT copilots for automated knowledge capture Telemetry and digital twins for real-time visibility

Source: HFS Research, 2025

The transition playbook of the future must redefine purpose, execution models, roles, and measures

1

Define the WHY: Transitions only work when the purpose is clear from day one

Enterprises still emphasize cost, timeliness, and continuity as transition outcomes. However, when pressed, they increasingly point to higher-order ambitions, such as early transformation opportunities, including automation, standardization, or redesign; the infusion of domain expertise; and better stakeholder alignment (Exhibit 5).

“Transitions are when the real picture surfaces: optimization pockets, transformation opportunities, and potential model changes that you never see until you start moving work.”

— CFO of a North American manufacturer

Transition management teams are ready to support these goals, but they expect them to be clearly defined. The most significant barrier isn't a lack of ambition; it's a lack of clarity on what success looks like. More than half of enterprises (52%) admit they fail to establish precise success measures for their transitions.

Exhibit 5: Enterprises acknowledge the need to focus on higher-order transition outcomes

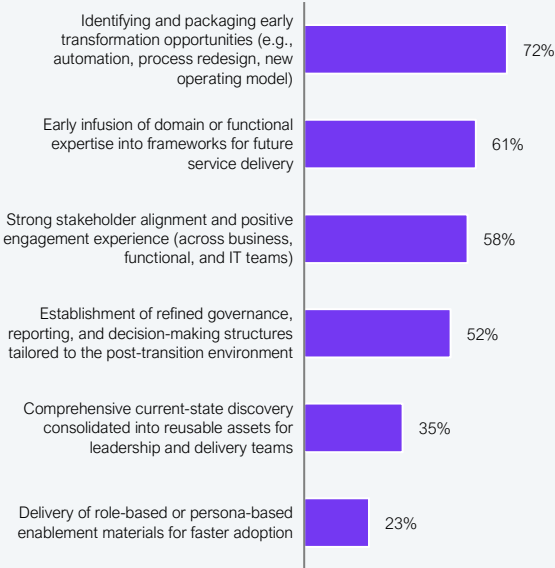
Q. Rank your primary objectives for transitions.

Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Q. Beyond service stabilization, which early outcomes demonstrate the quality of execution by the provider or GCC transition team?

Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

This ambiguity delays buy-in, weakens sponsorship, and limits the ability of transition management teams to operate proactively. Without shared markers, even capable teams revert to safe delivery over value creation.

By contrast, clear objectives enable transition management teams to co-develop measurable outcomes, identify early transformation opportunities, and challenge legacy approaches that are no longer effective. Transition management teams' prior experience and playbooks are critical confidence builders when paired with structured discovery and transparent progress reporting (Exhibit 6).

The best transitions do more than deliver the current program. They leave behind reusable knowledge,

embedded practices, and stakeholder confidence, creating a stronger foundation for future change.

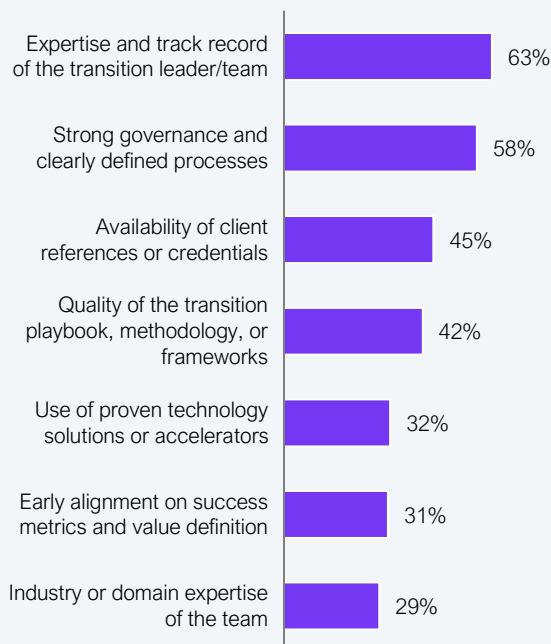
What should enterprises consider while defining the purpose of transitions?

- Define the “why” clearly by setting precise objectives and success markers from the outset.
- Link transition goals explicitly to business transformation, focusing on agility, adoption, and competitiveness.
- Educate and align cross-functional leadership (finance, HR, risk, business) around the transition's purpose.

Exhibit 6: Transition management teams' expertise should shape the journey, not just execute it

Q. What factors most influence your confidence in a transition's success?

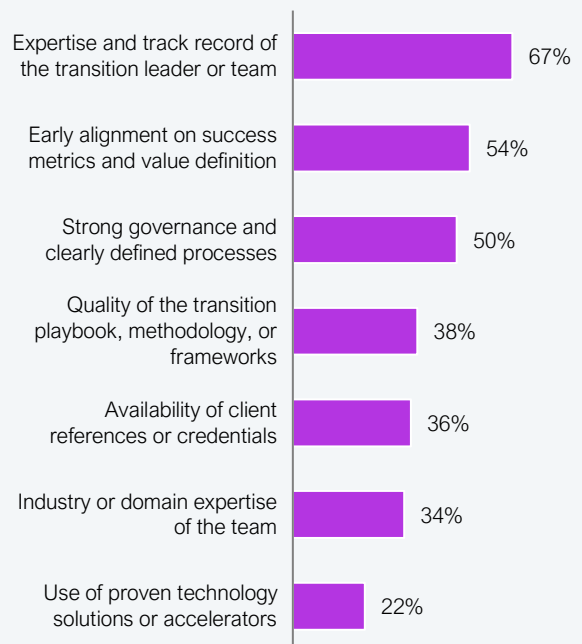
Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. In your experience, what factors are most critical for building client confidence in transition success?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

How can transition management teams assist enterprises in developing robust transition objectives?

- Co-develop the objectives and measures instead of reviewing and accepting them.
- Frame purpose in enterprise terms, not delivery scope.
- Challenge narrow ambitions by leveraging external context and transformational experience.
- Maintain transparency through phased reporting and risk surfacing, so issues are addressed early and not after go-live.

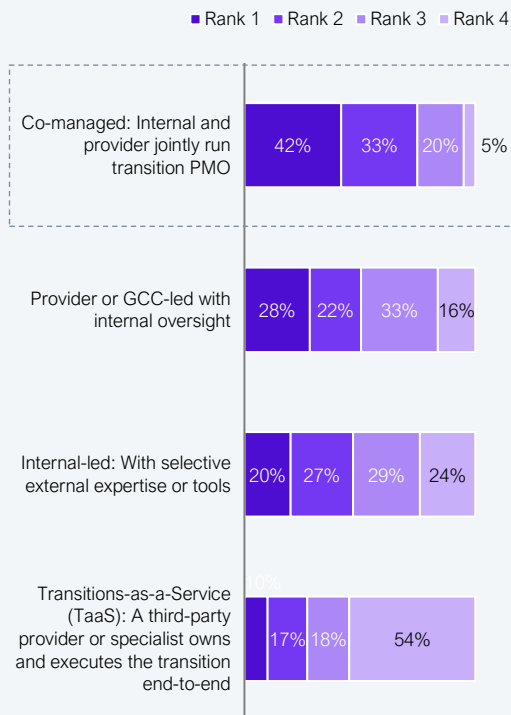
2

Design the WHAT: Enterprises and transition management teams must co-build the execution models, not improvise

Teams win relay races in the exchange zone, but they plan the handoff well in advance of the race. Transitions are no different. Success depends on strategic setup, not just seamless delivery (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Enterprises and transition management teams emphasize a collaborative ownership model

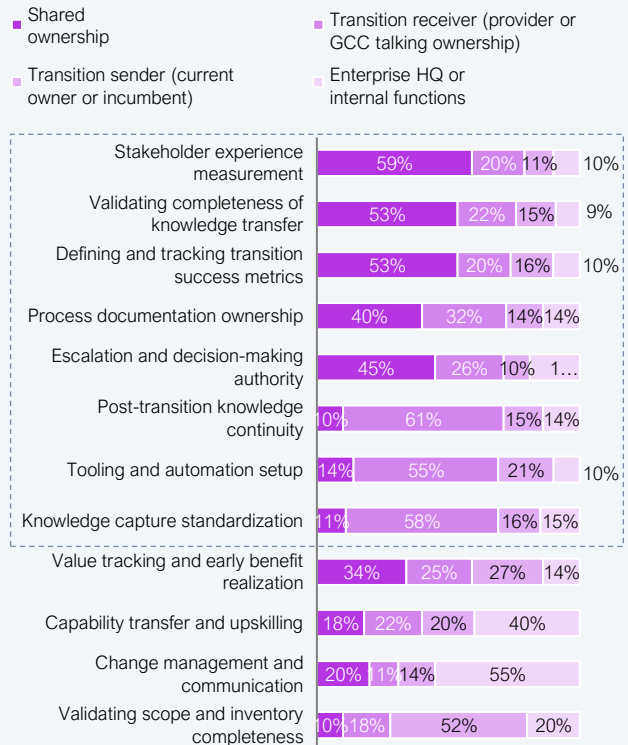
Q. How would you prefer to execute transitions? Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. How should ownership be defined for transition workstreams?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Many transitions begin with overpromises by providers, over-expectations from enterprises, delayed contracting, and compressed delivery cycles. Such constraints are structural realities of the transition landscape and are hard to eliminate. What can change is how transition management teams are equipped to manage them through early scoping, contextual playbooks, and adaptive governance.

Enterprises and transition leaders broadly support co-management as a starting point. Three-fourths (75%) of enterprises prefer shared execution, and transition team leaders are even more willing to take ownership of it. Yet in practice, both sides fall short. Providers remain cautious, reading between the fragmented signals, while enterprises avoid confronting root challenges, such as weak change maturity or internal friction. Accountability remains a paper promise.

To make co-management work, teams need more than intent. Co-management requires discipline, including clearly defined prerequisites, toll gates, stakeholder mapping, and playbooks that reflect the enterprise's pace and risk appetite.

Best-in-class enterprises build tiered execution models (e.g., conservative, balanced, or aggressive) based on data quality, stakeholder availability, and process readiness. This approach avoids one-size-fits-all delivery and fosters confidence through tailored execution.

"You don't win credibility with a big-bang go-live. You win it tranche by tranche. One market, one process, one phase at a time."

— GCC leader with a leading health enterprise

Joint accountability must also extend to less-visible areas, such as early discovery, governance setup, and value measurement, precise areas where alignment often breaks down. Formal mechanisms, such as joint project management offices (PMOs), shared escalation paths, and decision SLAs, help embed shared intent into operating structures.

Some enterprises are even establishing dedicated transition management offices (TMOs), either standalone or embedded within PMOs, to ensure ownership, continuity, and agility through the state-change journey.

Successful transitions front-load discovery as a design activity—surfacing dependencies across business, finance, HR, and risk before they derail execution. Transition team leaders say enterprise constraints consistently block their ability to deliver (Exhibit 8):

- 58% cite poor documentation.
- 46% cite unclear scope.
- 40% cite lack of SME access.

Exhibit 8: Transition management teams expect enterprises to address key readiness blockers

Q. How would you rate client readiness for transitions in your experience?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 survey participants
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. What are the biggest readiness blockers you encounter?

Transition leaders



Even when advanced toolsets are available, 59% of transition management teams face information security (infosec) or privacy restrictions, 47% cite integration complexity, and 42% flag budget limitations (Exhibit 9). Without clean inputs, even the best accelerators fall flat. Enterprises must “pre-run the track” before the baton pass by validating documentation, scoping, and SME access so teams can execute with confidence, not improvisation.

How should enterprises prepare for transitions?

- Establish transition-specific enablers, including aligned SMEs, approvals, and budgets.
- Define value measures upfront and embed discovery into the transition charter.

- Insist on phased delivery (markets, pilots, functions) to demonstrate value progressively.
- Contextualize playbooks with enterprise-specific inputs, instead of dismissing them as generic.

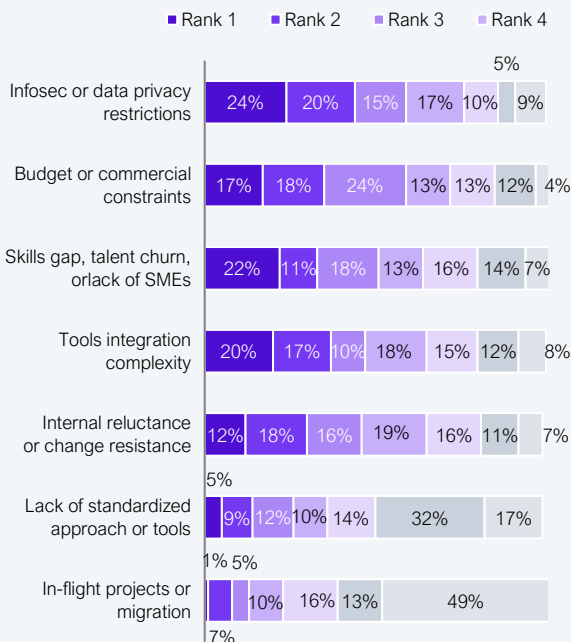
How can transition management teams elevate execution quality?

- Embed expertise early and tailor playbooks to design accelerated outcomes (e.g., fast-track knowledge transfer)
- Run structured readiness checks to expose and mitigate enterprise constraints before execution.

Exhibit 9: Enterprises must enable transition management teams to apply advanced solutions

Q. What are the biggest inhibitors to better transition outcomes in your organization?

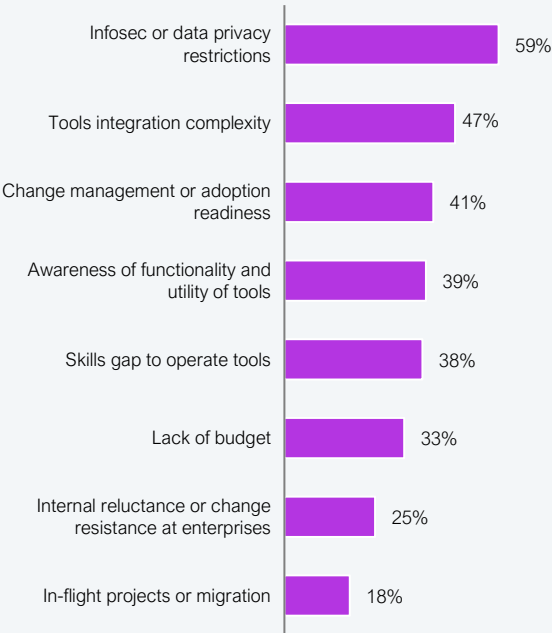
Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. What are the main barriers to adopting advanced solutions in transitions?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

3

Recruit the WHO: Transition outcomes depend on the talent empowered to lead and connect

The effectiveness of a transition rarely hinges on team headcount. It depends on how talent, leadership, and soft skills are orchestrated across enterprise and provider teams.

Enterprises and transition management team leaders consistently cite communication, empathy, and business acumen as the most significant capability gaps (Exhibit 10). These are not optional; they build credibility in the ambiguity of transition periods.

This doesn't downplay technical rigor. But expertise must be matched with the ability to engage stakeholders, tell the story of progress, and create confidence under pressure.

Transition management teams should leverage industry context, empathic communication, and consensus-building skills to instill confidence among enterprise stakeholders from the outset. Visible leadership is just as critical. Transition management teams must appoint a named transition lead early to ensure continuity and field teams that reflect enterprise diversity across gender and generations.

Best practices emphasize the role of local liaisons embedded in-country to work directly with enterprise stakeholders while coordinating tightly with nearshore and offshore delivery hubs. Without this, communications breakdown and context gaps multiply.

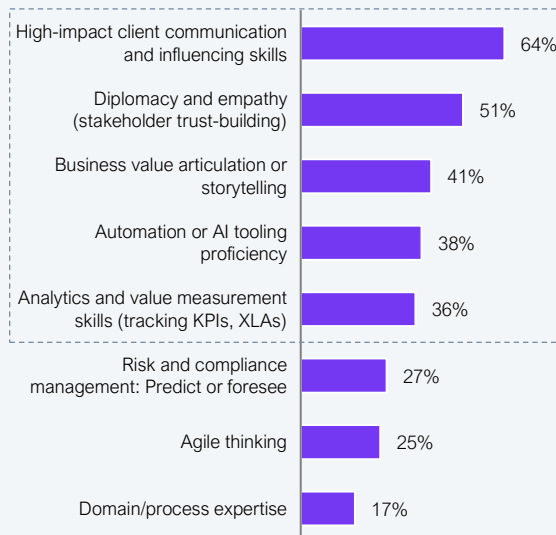
"Local liaisons in-country working with offshore pods make all the difference—without them, communication breaks down."

— CFO of a North American manufacturer

Exhibit 10: Softer aspects of engagement are the most critical gaps in transition skills

Q. Which critical skill gaps are most acute in transition teams today?

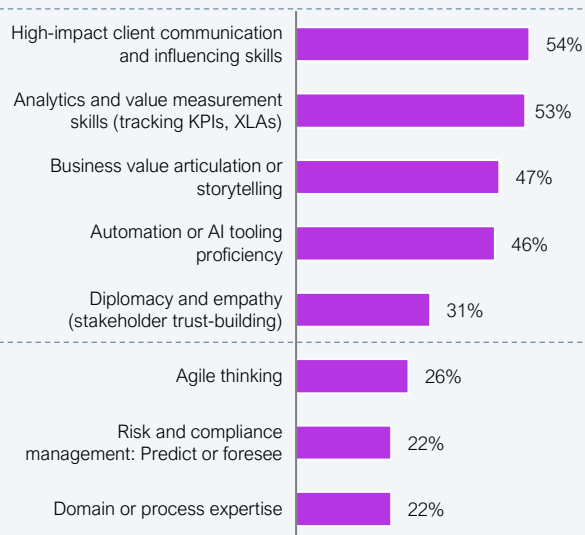
Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. Which critical skill gaps are most acute in transition teams today?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Enterprises also underinvest in internal transition leadership. Trust improves when enterprises field their own capable transition managers to co-own accountability, safeguard context, and reduce friction. While many of these roles are temporary, the experience builds a powerful talent bench for broader transformation programs.

Market signals reinforce this shift. Salaries for AI and transition program managers are among the fastest-growing in the tech industry, underlining the premium on leaders who can shepherd organizations through change curves.

Change management is another critical element, and enterprises often treat it as an afterthought today. About half (52%) of enterprises concede that change management starts too late in the transition journey. Transition management teams echo this, citing weak client change maturity (48%) as a key friction point (Exhibit 11).

A shift-left approach is critical wherein change management is embedded from day one to ensure that communication, training, and leadership sponsorship evolve in step with operational changes, rather than reacting to them.

Key stakeholder groups, such as finance, HR, risk, and local business leaders, are often overlooked in transition planning. Their buy-in drives budgets, controls, and regional adoption, while ignoring them undermines success.

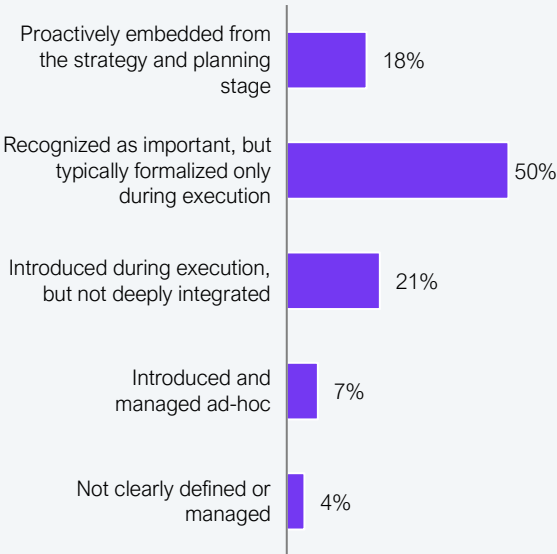
“For many transition managers, their experience becomes a natural stepping-stone into transformation roles. It’s a win-win for the talent and the enterprise.”

— GCC head with a global healthcare organization

Exhibit 11: Change management needs to be a de facto workflow within transition planning and strategy

Q. How is change management typically approached in transitions in your organization?

Enterprise leaders (business and functions)



Sample: 153 enterprise business and functional leaders
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Q. Which aspects of change management are most frequently overlooked by client teams?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

How should enterprises set up for transitions?

- Appoint internal transition managers to integrate cross-functional stakeholders and co-own accountability for the transition.
- Treat change management as a core workstream, resourced from day one—even if sourced externally.

How should transition management teams approach the people aspect of transitions?

- Balance delivery expertise with business fluency and storytelling.
- Deploy local liaisons and ensure leadership continuity across phases.
- Proactively engage overlooked stakeholders (e.g., finance, HR, risk) through structured OCM.
- Name a transition lead early, reflect enterprise values in team composition (e.g., gender, generational diversity).

4 Equip the HOW: Governance, metrics, and tools must track what matters

Transition governance and measurement often lag execution, yet they determine whether a transition scales or stalls.

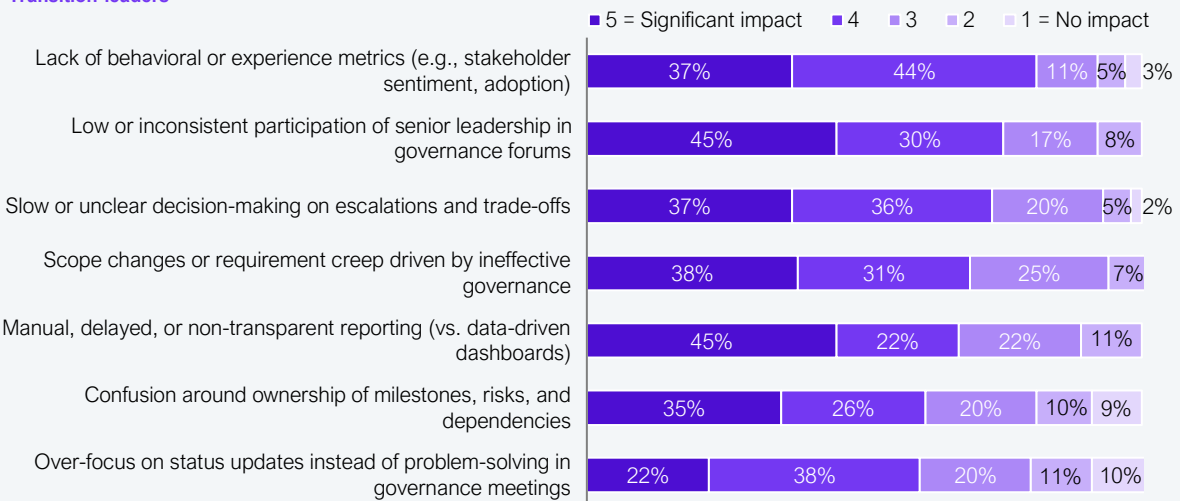
Enterprise and provider leaders agree that stronger governance and better visibility are essential. More than half (58%) of enterprises cite governance structures and clearly defined processes as critical to the success of their transition, and 47% prioritize an adaptive cadence enabled by data and insights. Transition team leaders echo this, pointing to governance gaps and inconsistent stakeholder engagement as recurring pain points (Exhibit 12).

Best practice embeds SLAs, escalation paths, cadence rituals, and decision rights into the operating fabric from day one. These are not admin tasks but trust-building levers. Steering forums, dashboards, and structured reviews ensure risks are surfaced early, trade-offs are addressed transparently, and confidence is reinforced through shared visibility.

Exhibit 12: Transition teams call for stronger governance design and cadence

Q. To what extent do the following challenges impact governance effectiveness in transitions?

Transition leaders



Sample: 152 transition leaders with service providers and GCCs
Source: HFS Research, 2025

But governance without measurement loses meaning.

Despite growing interest in experience-level agreements (XLAs), most transitions still measure what's easy. Metrics remain anchored in SLA-era logic, including uptime, defect rates, and go-live status. Meanwhile, transition value around agility, adoption, user satisfaction, and resilience remains unmeasured.

Early XLAs can start simple by tracking these metrics:

- Percentage of users onboarded within 90 days.
- Cycle-time reduction in approvals or onboarding.
- Time to recovery during service disruptions.

Over time, metrics should ladder up to include these metrics:

- Operational level: SLA + XLA (adoption, cycle time, error rate).
- Functional level: standardization, productivity, compliance.
- Executive level: resilience, competitiveness, EBIT contribution.






Organizations that consistently track this hierarchy of value from the user level to the enterprise level realize greater transition maturity and transformation impact.

"You can't keep measuring defect rates and uptime and expect transformation. Telemetry on adoption, experience, and resilience would be very valuable."

— GCC head with a global life sciences organization

Enterprises are also asking for greater visibility into "human signals." About 80% expect providers to track soft factors, such as stakeholder sentiment, alignment, and engagement. Modern tools can quantify these with sentiment analysis, stakeholder heatmaps, and network and behavioral analytics.

AI will play an increasingly central role in enhancing the transition experience, not replacing humans. Leading enterprises aren't waiting for full AI infusion; they're starting with accessible, pragmatic levers.

AI or analytics enabler	Transition use case
 Dashboards and process mining	Visualize bottlenecks and surface hidden workflows
 Sentiment and engagement analytics	Track adoption and stakeholder alignment
 Behavioral telemetry	Detect fatigue and flag risk-prone areas early
 GenAI copilots	Auto-capture knowledge, simulate scenarios, and codify playbooks
 Predictive risk analytics	Anticipate disruptions and suggest proactive actions

“AI adoption works when framed as an experience enhancer; productivity follows as a by-product.”

— Functional head with a North American retailer

“AI adoption works when framed as an experience enhancer; productivity follows as a by-product.”

— GCC leader with a leading health enterprise

How can enterprises rewire governance, metrics, and collaboration?

- Treat governance as a strategic design choice and not an afterthought.
- Shift metrics from stabilization to adoption, experience, and resilience.
- Create data access and enablement for AI-led transition visibility.
- Adopt an ecosystem mindset by integrating ops, tech, and design teams.

How can transition management teams enable better governance and value tracking?

- Build adaptive governance with cadence, transparency, and decision SLAs.
- Use AI and analytics to enhance visibility and simplify execution.
- Co-own value measurement with the enterprise, starting with XLAs.

The Bottom Line: Transitions are where long-term value is either enabled or constrained.

In the evolving Services-as-Software era, transitions are no longer just operational events. They are pivotal design moments that shape how enterprises and their partners collaborate, scale, and adapt. Whether delivered through global capability centers or external providers, transitions define how quickly and effectively organizations move from intent to impact.

Transitions must evolve from tactical handovers to shared, co-designed capabilities that prioritize both long-term adaptability and near-term stability. For this to happen, both enterprises and transition teams must align around a clear purpose, a more disciplined execution model, empowered talent, and value-driven governance.

When transitions are approached with shared accountability, transparent design, and a commitment to continuous learning, they build the trust and resilience needed to scale future-ready operating models.

The ask is simple: enterprises and transition teams need to treat transitions as a joint investment in future capability, not just a means of operational transfer. Doing so sets the foundation for transformational value not after the transition, but through it.

Survey demographics (1/2)

Enterprise leaders (businesses and functions)

Exhibit 13: Which of the following best describes your current role?



Exhibit 14: What is your primary role in transitions?



Exhibit 15: For which of the following functions have you been involved in transitions?

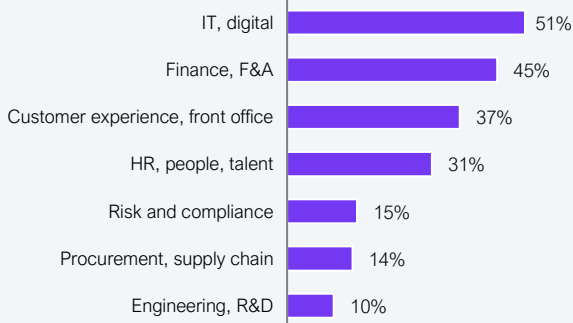


Exhibit 16: Where is your organization's primary corporate headquarters located?

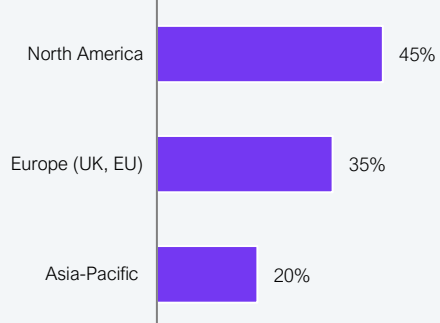


Exhibit 17: Which industry best represents your organization?

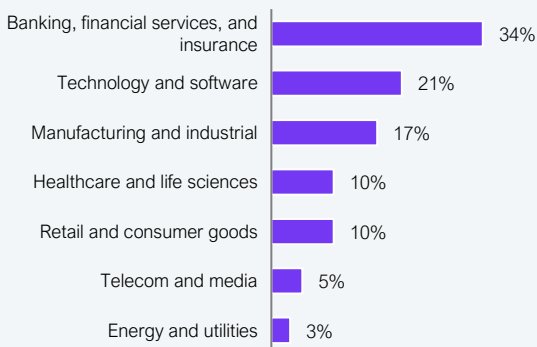
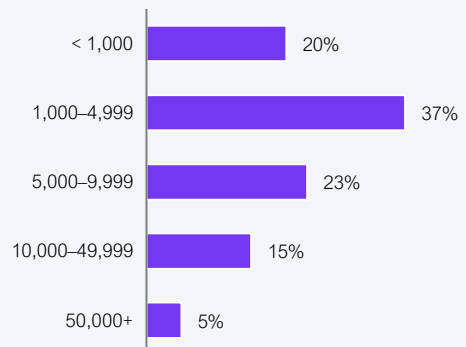


Exhibit 18: What is your organization's global employee count?



Sample: 153 survey participants
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Survey demographics (2/2)

Transition management team leaders (GCCs and service providers)

Exhibit 19: Which best describes your involvement in transitions or migrations?

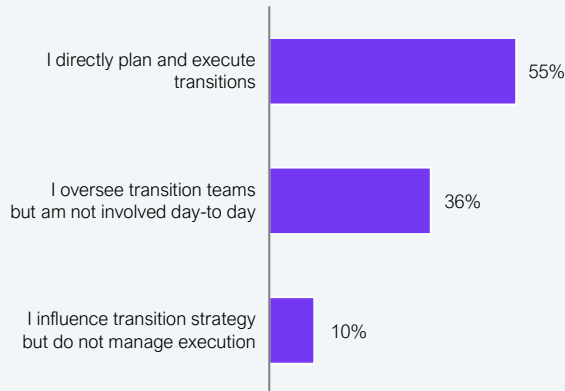


Exhibit 20: Which of the following best describes your role?

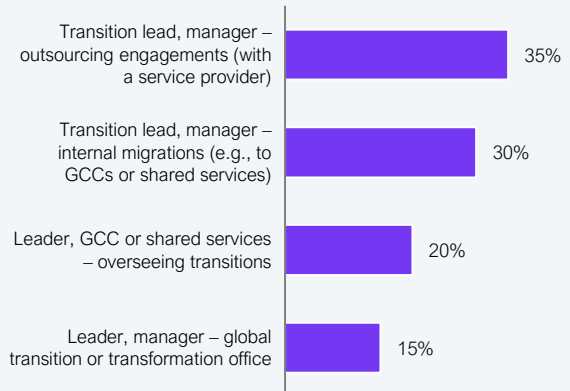


Exhibit 21: Where is your primary work location?

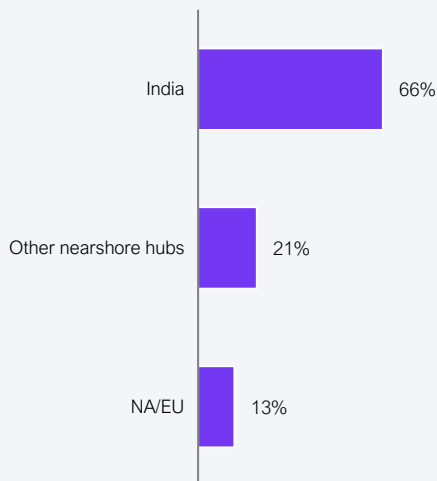


Exhibit 22: For which of the following functions have you directly covered transitions?

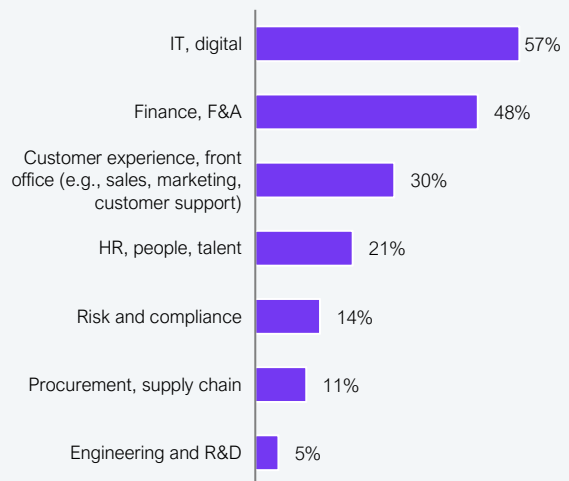
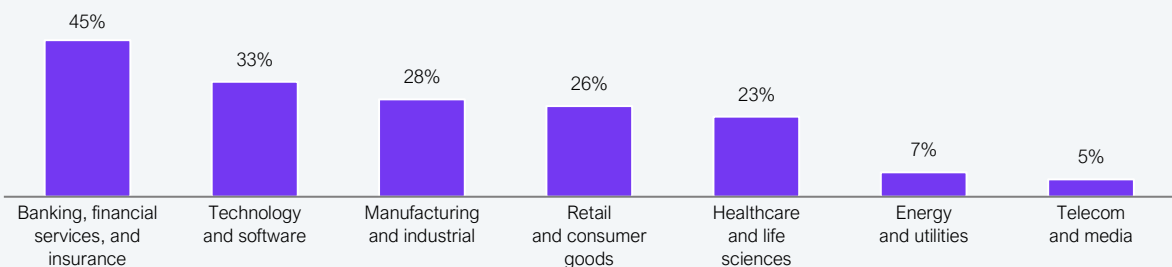


Exhibit 23: Which industry vertical(s) have you most recently managed transitions for?



Sample: 152 survey participants
Source: HFS Research, 2025

HFS Research authors



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Ashwin is an Executive Research Leader at HFS Research. He has more than 17 years of experience in the global business services (GBS) and technology services advisory space, with a proven track record as a trusted advisor for C-level executives and services leaders across Fortune 2000 enterprises and service providers.

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