

The Operational Excellence Manifesto: a call to action

**Why we built this automation
solution in the first place.**



Who should read this?

You have one of the toughest (and we think noblest) jobs—the COO or anyone on the hook for business operations that can reliably satisfy customers, reduce costs, grow revenue, and withstand future shocks.

Being the guiding hand that turns strategic ambitions into daily operational excellence isn't easy. There's not another job that carries such a broad mandate to provide the most value with the least waste.

What



What should you do with this?

Use this manifesto to help you understand why we built such a complete AI-powered automation solution for business so you can better understand if what we built can help you achieve operational objectives.

Why



Why does it matter?

Operational excellence matters more than ever—for business and society—because it’s about making things run better.

Stating the obvious: given two organizations with the same strategy, the operationally excellent one will win—from a cost-savings, risk-managing, and revenue-making perspective.

Helping you make your operations a source of competitive advantage that can’t be easily replicated is what matters to us.

To make your operations a source of competitive advantage, we distilled it down to eight rules.



Rules of Operational Excellence

(There are more ... but we swear by these.)



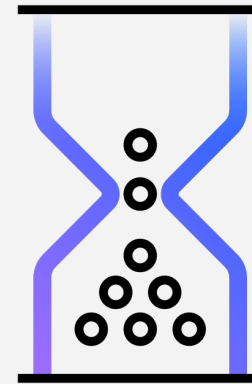
Rule 1/
No unnecessary contact

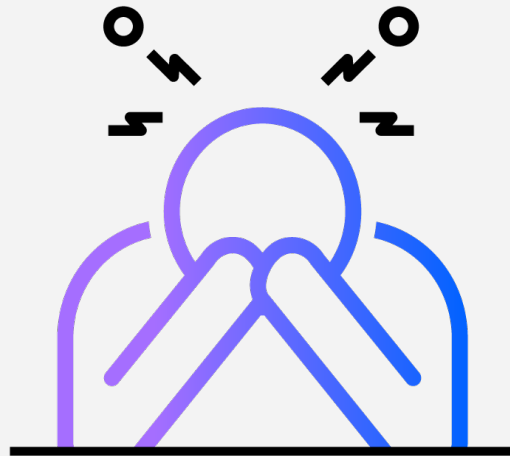
○ Never make a customer or employee contact a person if it's unnecessary.

Rule 2/
Make conversations meaningful

Make sure
employees have
time to talk with
customers when
only a human
can help.

And make sure the conversation
is inarguably satisfying.





Rule 3/ Don't automate annoyance

Avoid automating any action that would be annoying coming from a human.

It will be just as irritating—if not more so—when automated.

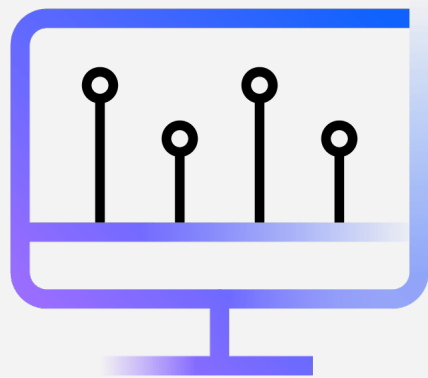
Sending communications too frequently or without relevancy, for example, is annoying. Oh ... and avoid creepy personalization.

Rule 4/
Don't automate empathy

Be thoughtful when automating actions or responses that appear to “feel” a customer’s pain.

Leave empathy and heartfelt apologies to humans—and make sure they have time to sincerely deliver loyalty-inducing sentiments.





Rule 5/
Be ready to change

Prepare for the hard reality that your applications today might not be sufficient six months from now.

Rule 6/
Design for exceptions

Design processes
—aligning people
and tech—that
can handle a
wide range of
exceptions.





Rule 7/
Automate for speed

Don't give customers time to find happiness elsewhere.

Make business decisions as fast as possible by automating as much as possible.

Rule 8/
Make it simple

Be the company
that does it in
the fewest steps
(or clicks).



What's most important for operational excellence?

Satisfying customers



Increasing efficiency



Securing data



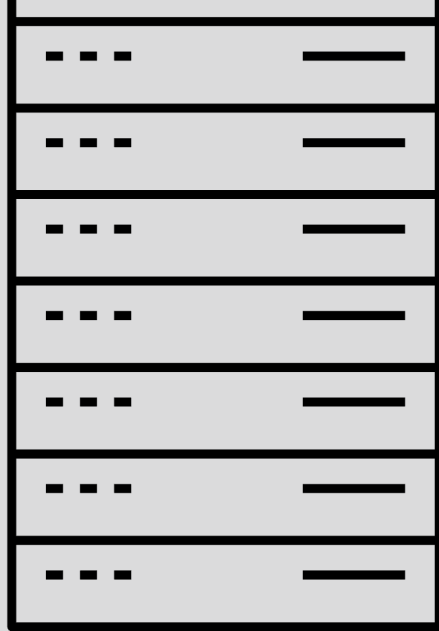
All three are equally important.
But excellence doesn't come easy.



What stands between you
and operational excellence?

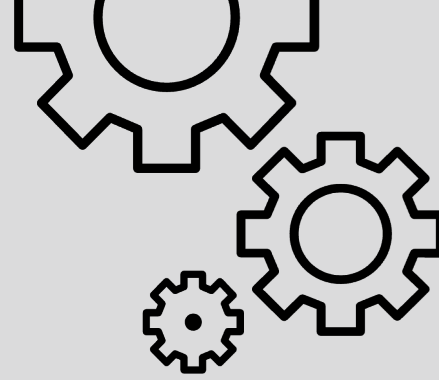
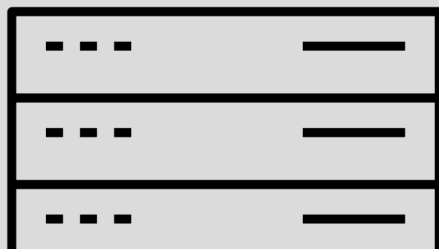
A whole lot of ...





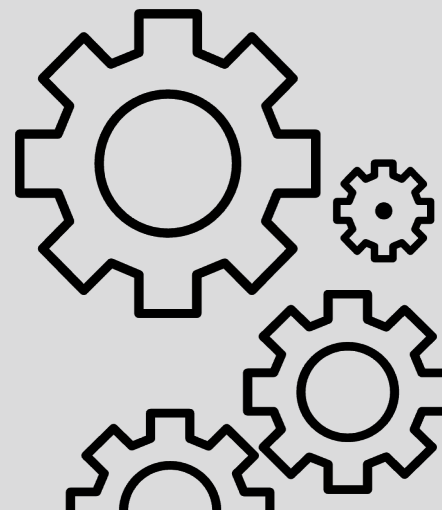
More technology

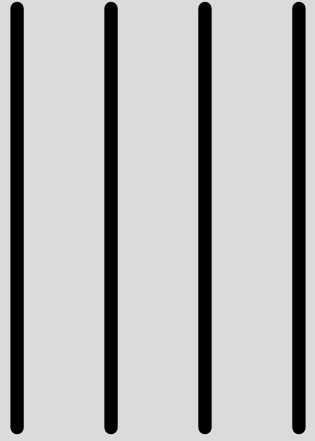
RPA, AI, Machine Learning, IoT, cloud computing, edge computing ... it's hard to keep up, let alone find a coherent way to get the right tech in place.



More complexity

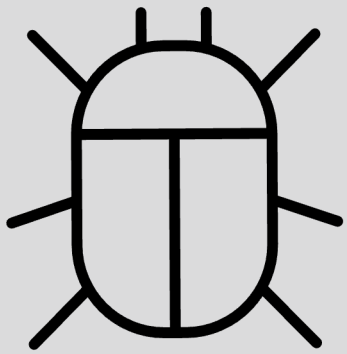
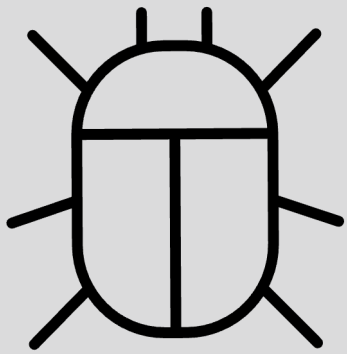
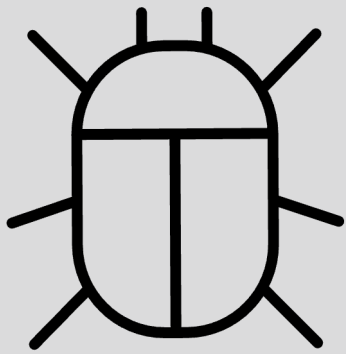
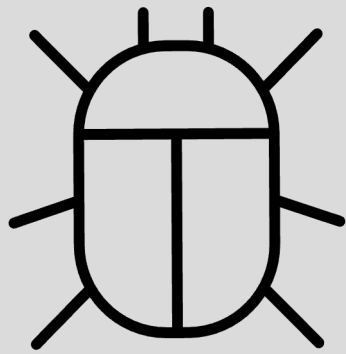
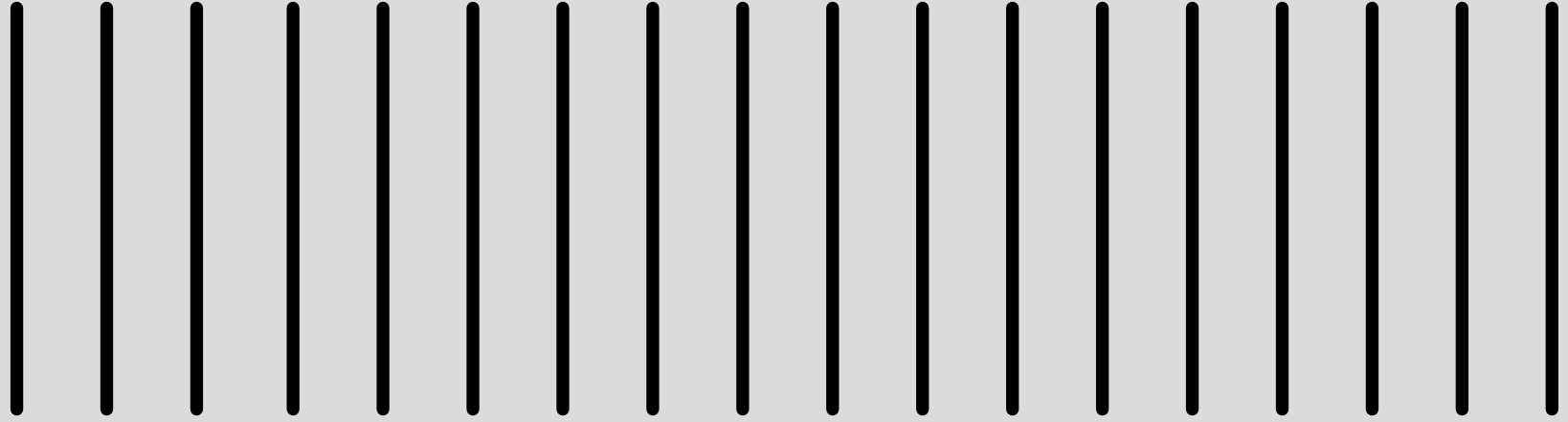
Fragmenting and fluctuating demand. More products and processes. Increasing regulation and expanding markets. All combining to increase operational complexity.





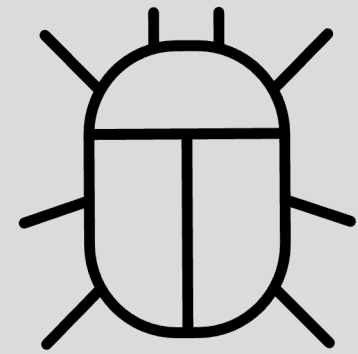
More change

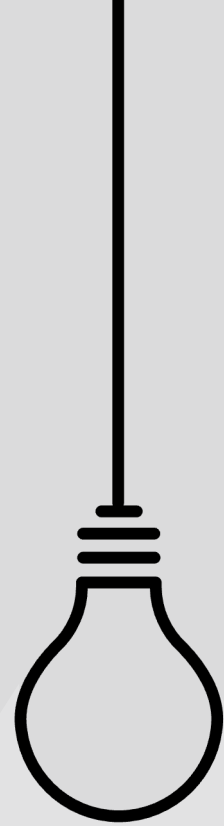
A conveyor belt of disruptors—where every change seems to affect your business performance.



More threats

Security and privacy attacks disrupting organizations and tarnishing reputations.





More rethinking

Digitizing operations has improved productivity and efficiency—but it's also requiring leaders to rethink operations along their entire value chain.



More effort

You've made the easy fixes to achieve some cost savings, productivity gains, and customer experience enhancements. Now what?



“The future is already here.
It’s just unevenly distributed.”

– **William Gibson**, science fiction writer and essayist

What's the biggest enemy to operational excellence?

Inaction.

Even if you're not quite ready, standing still isn't an option—even for industry leaders.

We help you take action

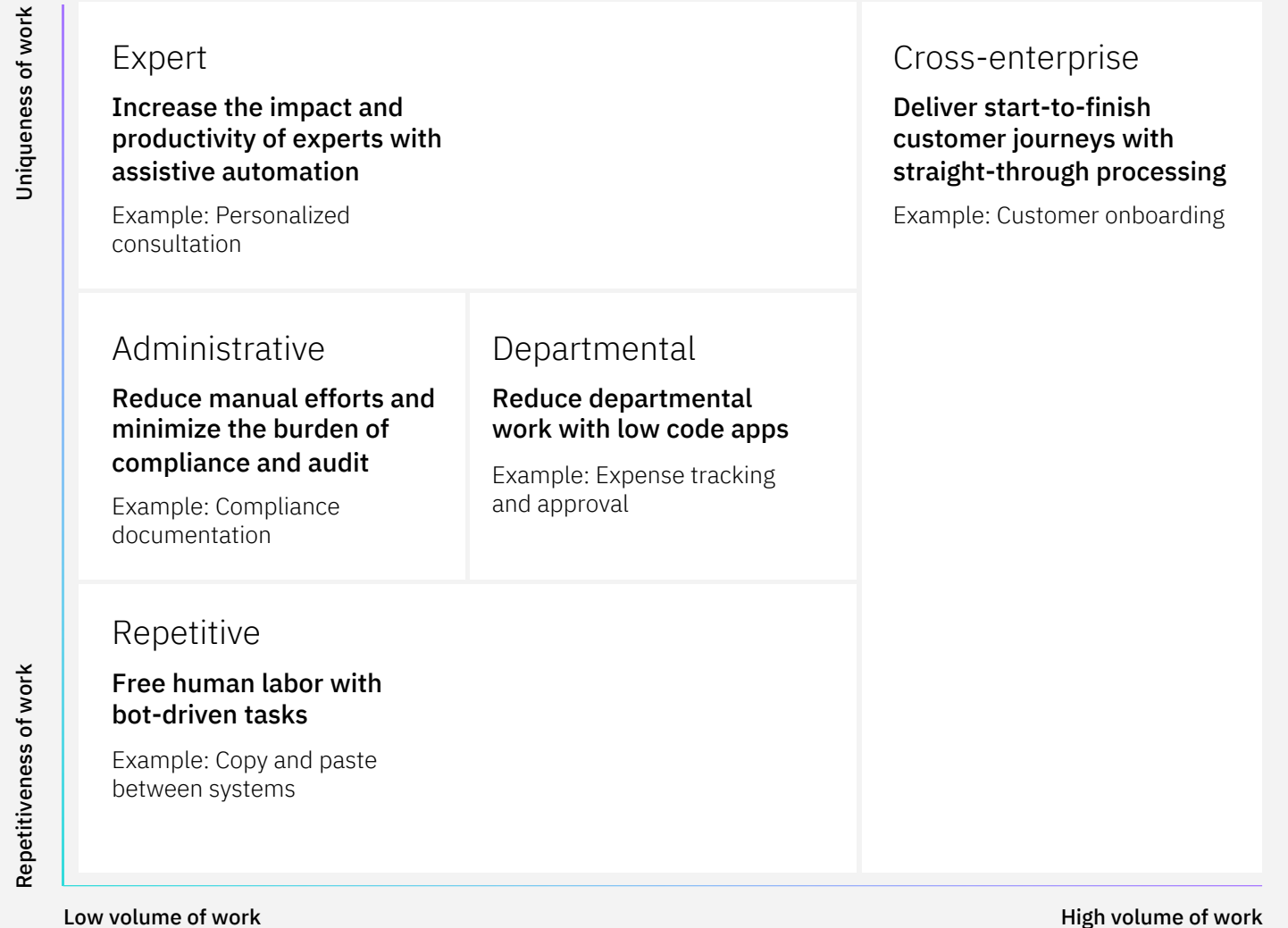
As IBM AI and automation tech builders, we want to contribute to a future that runs better.

We built a complete (yet modular) set of integrated AI-powered software for transforming fragile processes held together by manual labor—no matter where they exist in your organization—so you can deliver straight-through processing.

Our mission: help you improve your business operations in ways that make people take notice—for the right reasons.

[Learn more →](#)

Five types of work common to most organizations that can be fully or partially automated depending on uniqueness and volume of work

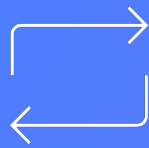


| A solution designed with **key “-ilities”** in mind.



Agility

To build business applications with minimal or no coding



Changeability

To easily modify what you build



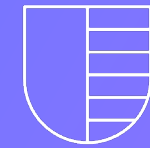
Learnability

To train the software to improve over time



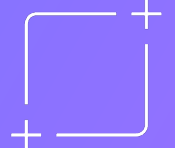
Scalability

To grow your solution to serve more customers



Trustability

To rest easier knowing your data is your own and the software is security-rich



Reliability

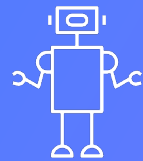
To dependably serve users with enterprise software that *works*

... intelligent automation.



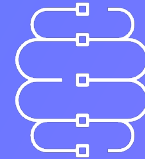
Process mining and modeling

- Discover frequency, rework, duration and cost from real data
- Generate process models
- Analyze impact on KPIs
- Simulate future processes



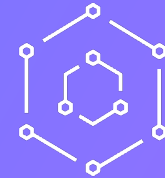
RPA and digital labor

- Perform repetitive tasks
- Act on data extracted from unstructured documents
- Automate systems that do not have APIs



AI and operational intelligence

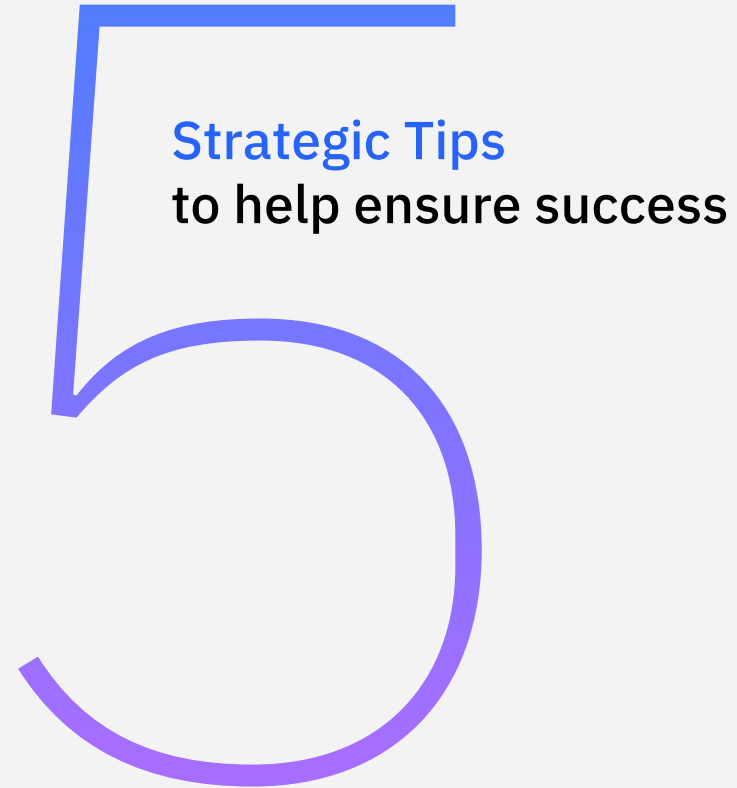
- Classify and understand content
- Prioritize tasks
- Make predictive decisions
- Build intelligent chatbots
- Apply AI to operational data



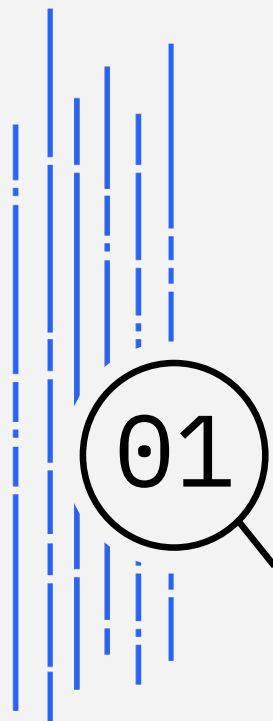
Core automation

- Capture and process documents
- Manage work
- Automate decisions
- Digitize content
- Build low-code applications

Regardless of the
tech you invest in,
there are ...



Strategic Tips
to help ensure success

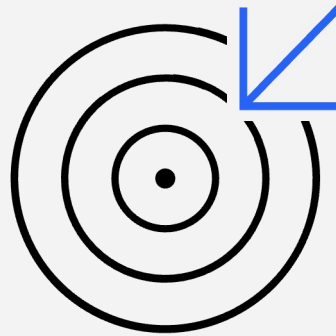


Big operational challenges aren't solved with small automation solutions

You'll need more capabilities than you think—including advanced tech to support enterprisewide transformation.

Dig into the topic of automating cross-enterprise and expert work for digital transformation—get 'The COO's Pocket Guide to Enterprisewide Intelligent Automation'.

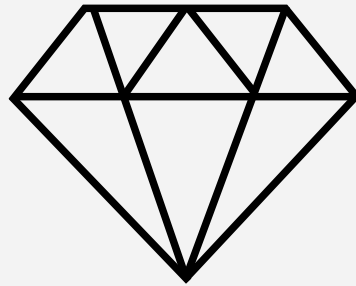
Get the guide →



02

Ready-Shoot-Aim isn't working

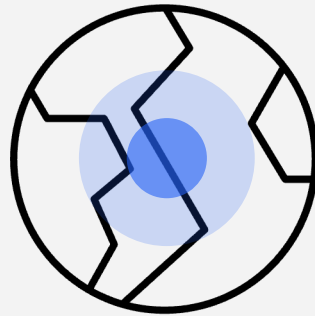
Have the critical insight to prioritize the right technology investments and initiatives.



03

Bright, shiny objects can blind you

Always press vendors on the ease with which you can change, integrate, scale, and secure their solutions.



04

Act your way into a better future

In addition to short-term projects, look for elegant, longer-term solutions. Band-aid solutions eventually expose wounds.

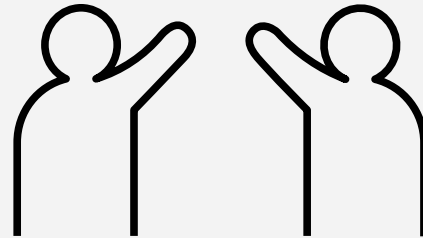
Perfection is simplicity of operations. And, like brevity, it can take a while to get there—but it's worth it.

05

Don't go it alone

No matter whose tech you buy, rebuilding business processes takes time—and it's never really over given continuous improvements.

Make sure you're working with a resourceful, steady partner with the industry and operational knowledge to ensure that your tech, people, and processes work together.



As your job gets tougher,
what you do is becoming even
more important to business
and the planet ... and we're
not being overly sentimental
here.

Customers and citizens need your knack for fixing
problems and making things happen so they have
products and services they trust ... and you have
growth and goodwill you can sustain.



Call to action: Take a risk-free step toward operational excellence in the next 30 days.

Schedule your half-day *virtual workshop*—no charge. [Click here](#)

Bring your business and IT leaders together with our automation experts to identify and prioritize strategic automation projects—at no charge. Most pilots go live within one to three months of inception.

Or, if you don't have time for the workshop ...

... get our latest tech news and education
for improving business operations using intelligent
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