

Appendix A

Table A.1: Interviewee sample (participants)

#	Position	Industry	Company	Language	Interview length (min)
Phase 1: Semi-structured interviews with 44 strategists with AI experience (Oct.-Dec. 2023)					
E1	Team Lead	Automotive	C1	EN	42
E2	Principal	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	30
E3	Partner & Managing Director	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	48
E4	Associated Partner	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	39
E5	Partner Management	Automotive Supplier	C3	GER	45
E6	Product Owner	Information Technology	C4	EN	48
E7	Head of Strategy	Automotive	C5	EN	41
E8	Head of Strategy & Business Development	Software as a Service	C6	EN	31
E9	Head of Strategy & BD	Glass Industry	C7	EN	52
E10	Chief Strategy Officer	Chemicals & Pharmaceutical	C8	EN	38
E11	Partner & Co-Lead AI	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	43
E12	Chief Data Officer	Health & Medicine	C9	EN	40
E13	Chief Growth Officer	Industrial AI	C10	EN	47
E14	Supervisory board member	Automotive	C11	GER	37
E15	Partner & MD	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	37
E16	Vice President & MD	Technology Consulting	C12	EN	36
E17	Head of Strategy	B2B Software	C13	EN	36
E18	Partner & MD	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	31

E19	Head of Strategy	Airline services	C14	EN	37
E20	Chief Strategy Officer	Automotive	C15	EN	-
E21	Team Lead	Automotive	C1	GER	29
E22	Vice President	Automotive	C1	EN	37
E23	Chief Strategy Officer	Media	C16	EN	38
E24	Principal	Strategy Consulting	C2	EN	28
E25	Manager Digitalization	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	52
E26	Director Growth & Transformation	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	21
E27	Specialist Strategy	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	26
E28	Specialist Strategy	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	36
E29	Senior Manager	Media	C18	GER	45
E30	Manager Strategy	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	39
E31	Head of Advanced Analytics	Semiconductors	C19	GER	37
E32	Project Manager	Strategy Consulting	C20	GER	48
E33	Head of Digital HR Transformation	Strategy Consulting	C21	GER	40
E34	Head of tech product	Automotive	C22	GER	27
E35	Partner	Tax and Financial Advisory	C23	GER	38
E36	Senior Manager	Tax and Financial Advisory	C23	GER	28
E37	Project Manager	Automotive Supplier	C24	GER	32
E38	Director	Industrial Goods	C25	GER	17
E39	Doctoral Candidate	Strategy Consulting	C26	GER	26

E40	Manager	Semiconductors	C19	GER	20
E41	Executive Assistant	Industrial Goods	C27	GER	28
E42	Specialist Strategy	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	28
E43	Vice President, Head of Corporate Strategy and M&A	Automotive Supplier	C28	GER	26
E44	Vice President Strategy and Digitalization	Rail and Commercial Vehicles Supplier	C17	GER	31
Phase 2: Semi-structured interviews with 10 strategists who use AI (Dec.-Feb. 2024/25)					
E45	Founders Associate	Software Company	C29	GER	50
E46	Senior Consultant	Management Consulting	C30	GER	55
E47	Senior Consultant	Management Consulting	C31	GER	63
E48	AI Manager	Management Consulting	C30	GER	42
E49	Senior Consultant	Management Consulting	C30	GER	48
E50	Consultant	Management Consulting	C32	GER	55
E51	Associate	Management Consulting	C33	GER	38
E52	Consultant	Management Consulting	C34	GER	47
E53	Associate	Management Consulting	C33	GER	47
E54	Consultant	Financial Services Provider	C35	GER	49

Appendix B

Interview guideline

Starting questions:

1. How would you describe your role and what are your main tasks and responsibilities in a strategic context?
2. How long have you been working in this role?

Part 1: Scanning and interpretation stages of strategic sensemaking

Scanning

Please think of a situation where you have used AI-based technology for scanning as part of the strategy process.

1. What was the aim of the scanning task?
2. Was the AI-based technology able to support you in the scanning task? If yes, how?

Interpretation

Please think of a situation where you have used AI-based technology for interpretation as part of the strategy process.

3. What was the aim of the interpretation task?
4. Was the AI-based technology able to support you in the interpretation task? If yes, how?

Interrelation scanning and interpretation

When using AI for strategizing, there can be varying degrees of fit and misfit.

5. In the previously discussed tasks, did you simultaneously perceive a fit and misfit between the AI-based technologies and the scanning and interpretation tasks?
 - Follow up: how did you perceive the tension and what factors made the tension perceptible to you in the scanning and interpretation tasks?
 - Follow up: how did you perceive the contradictions between the fit and misfit in the scanning and interpretation tasks?
 - Follow up: in your opinion, is there an interrelation between fit and misfit in the scanning and interpretation tasks?

Part 2: Cyclical/pathways manifestation of the tension in scanning and interpretation stages of strategic sensemaking

Negative and positive cycles/pathways

1. Do you see negative cycles that could arise if the tension between fit and misfit in the scanning and interpretation stages of strategic sensemaking is not accepted or navigated accordingly?
 - Follow up: what do you think are the reasons for this?
2. Do you see positive cycles that could arise if you accept the tension between fit and misfit in the scanning and interpretation stages of strategic sensemaking and navigate it accordingly?
 - Follow up: what do you think are the reasons for this?

Management strategies

3. What management strategies did you use to navigate the tension between fit and misfit in the scanning and interpretation stages of strategic sensemaking?

Appendix C

Graphical representations and indicative lists of quotes, codes, themes, and dimensions

Figure C.1: Graphical representation of indicative codes and quotes for the perceived tension of AI fit-misfit in strategic sensemaking

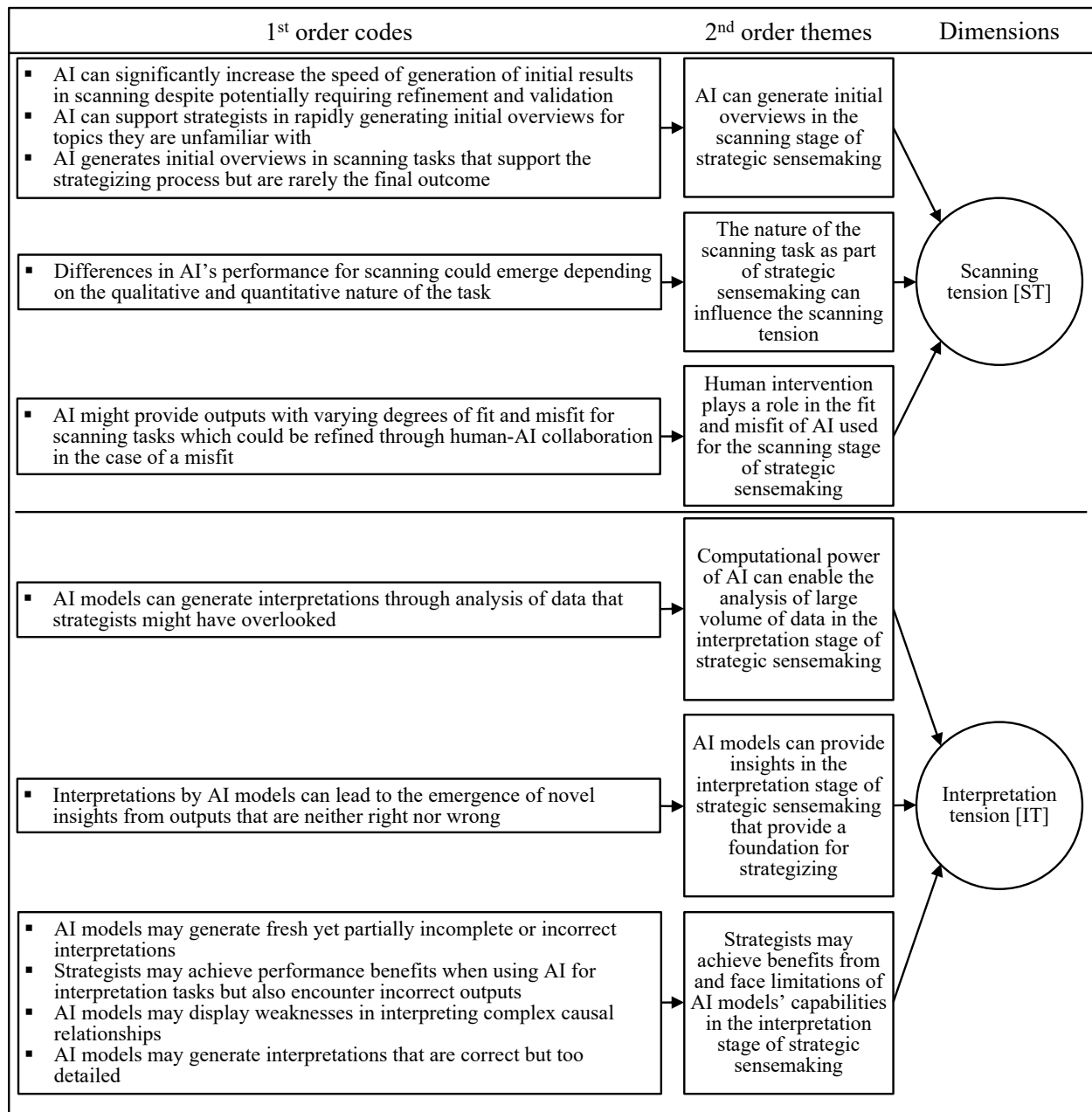


Figure C.1 (cont.): Graphical representation of indicative codes and quotes for the perceived tension of AI fit-misfit in strategic sensemaking (continued)

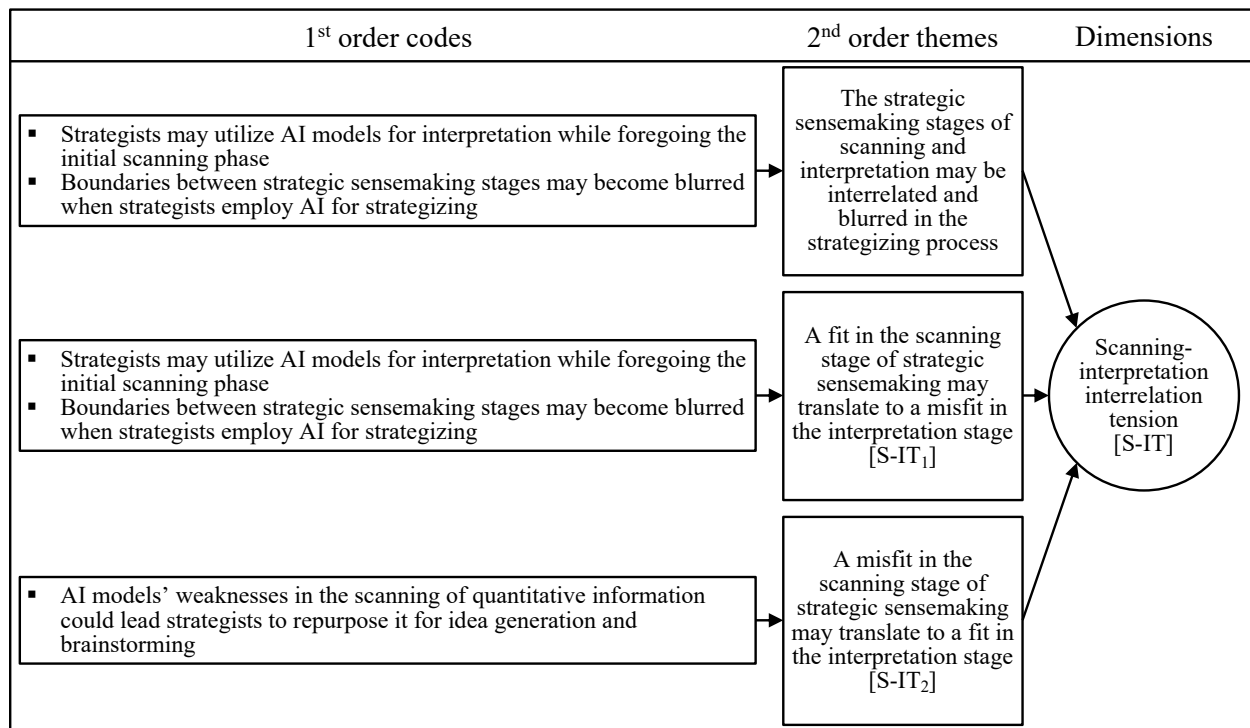


Figure C.2: Graphical representation of indicative codes and quotes antecedents, strategies, and outcomes of the perceived AI fit-misfit tension

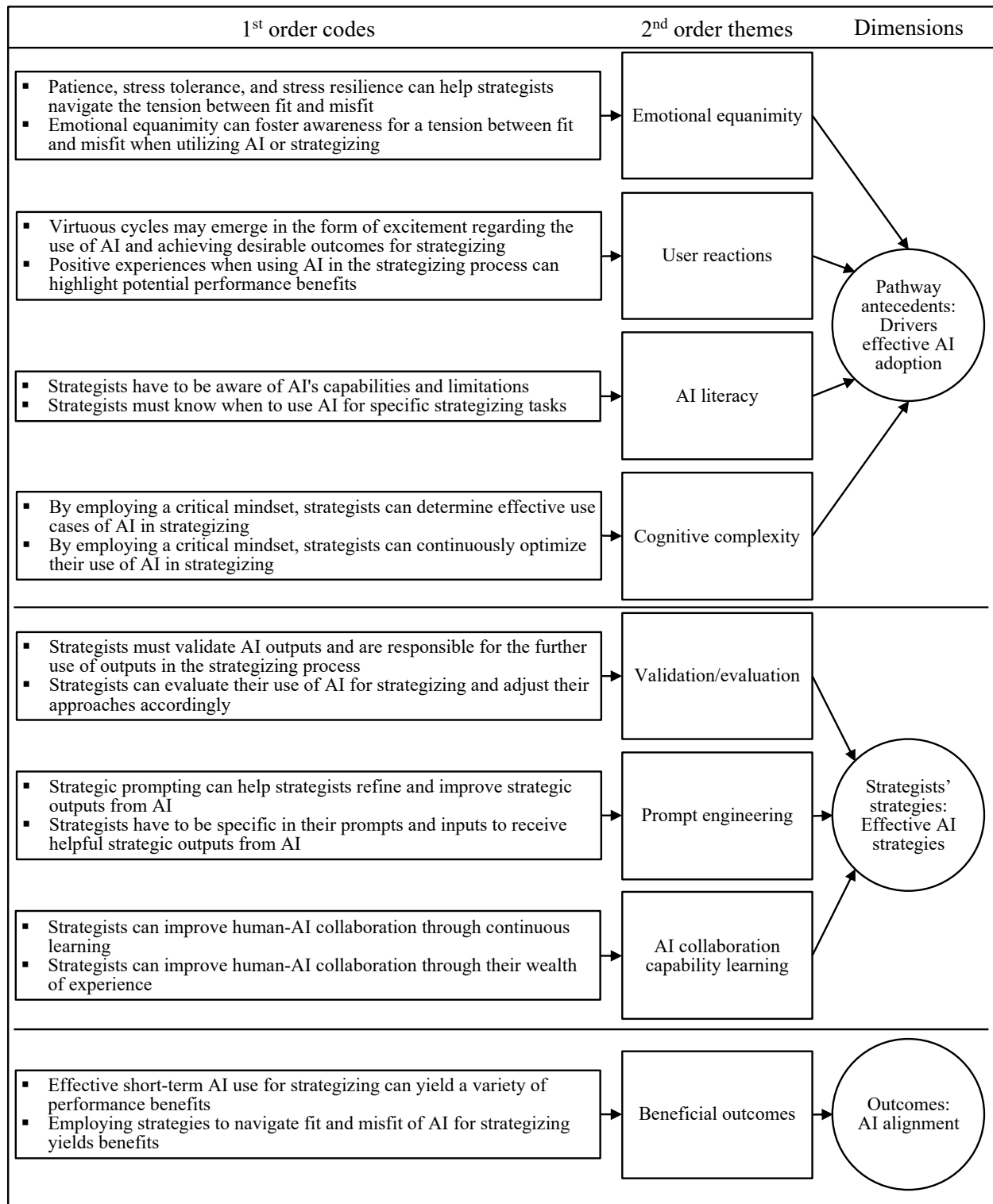


Figure C.2 (cont.): Graphical representation of indicative codes and quotes antecedents, strategies, and outcomes of the perceived AI fit-misfit tension (continued)

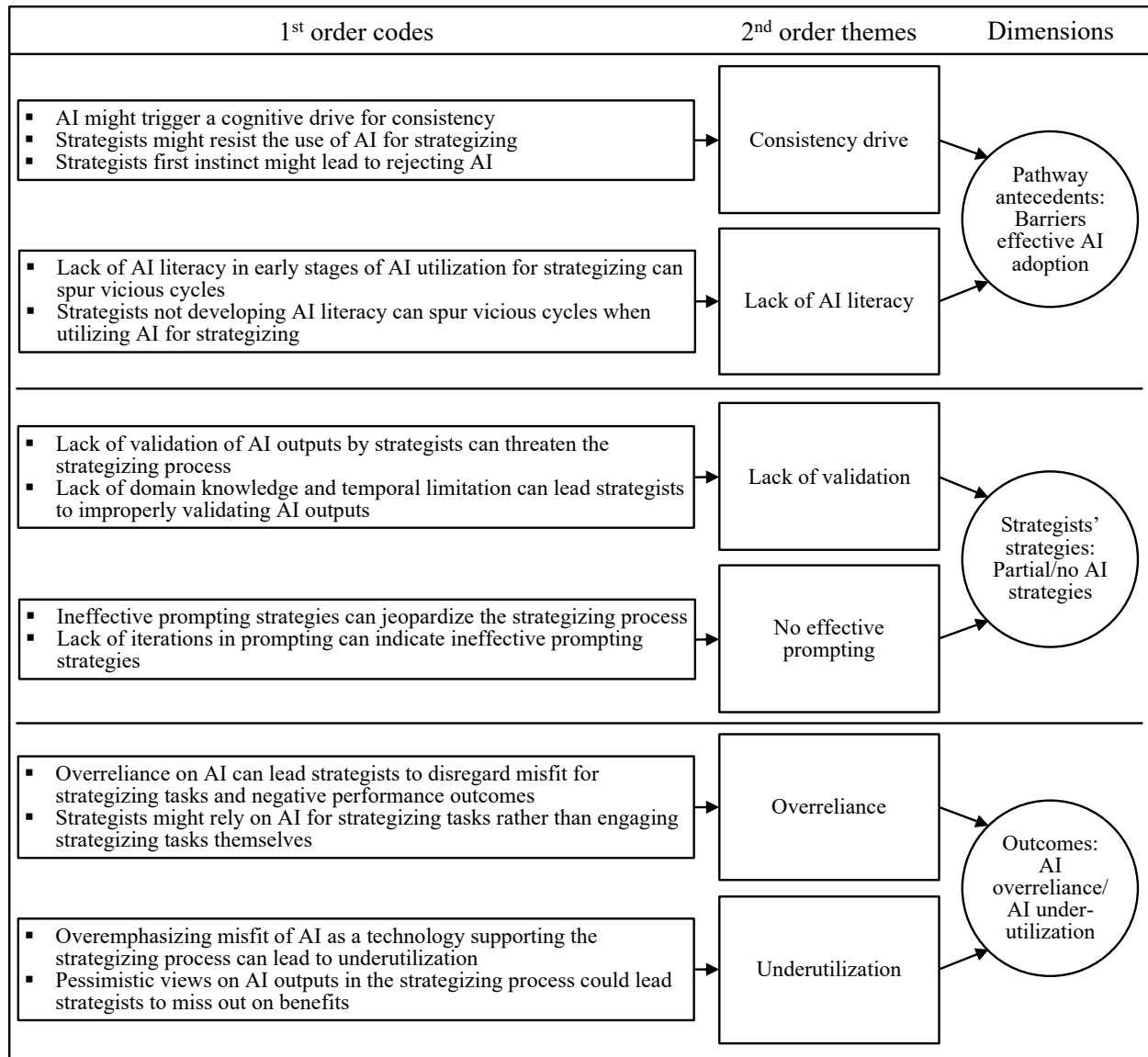


Table C.3: Selected and indicative codes and quotes for the perceived tension of AI fit-misfit in strategic sensemaking

Dimensions and themes	Codes and quotes
The perceived tension in scanning and interpretation	
Tensions between fit and misfit of AI for strategic sensemaking may emerge in a variety of forms for strategists	AI may align with or diverge from strategic sensemaking needs <i>“Because it should always be a support and not fully take over. [...] So also to have a strategy for AI itself, to assess what are the right implications, what can I do with it, but also what are the limits where again, a human layer has to take over.” (E7, Head of Strategy)</i>
	Differences between human and AI may lead to the emergence of complementary fits or misfits as well as strengths and limitations <i>“I would not say that it is on the level of human. It is different from what a human can do.” (E2, Principal)</i>
	Perceptions of AI’s strength and weaknesses and tensions between fit and misfit vary between individuals <i>“Because perception at times can become reality. And it's also how you perceive the outcomes of the data, right? So there could be bias within the engine, or there could be bias in how you extract information from the engine and what you do of it, right?” (E3, Partner)</i>
	Strategists may simultaneously perceive a fit and misfit when using AI for strategic sensemaking <i>“So, it's a blessing and a curse at the same time. It's a huge blessing, but it's also a curse in a way, because in principle you're taking an incredible amount of work off your hands and I'm super grateful for that. And on the other hand– At the end of the day, you have a responsibility as a human being to have completed both the scanning and the interpretation to a reliable degree of accuracy.” (E47, Senior Consultant)</i>
	Strategists may persistently perceive a tension in AI’s fit and misfit for strategic sensemaking <i>“So, it is a persistent condition. I wouldn’t say that I only see the advantages and only see the disadvantages, but that there is</i>

	<i>always a noticeable tension in between.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant)
Scanning tension [ST]	
AI can generate initial overviews in the scanning stage of strategic sensemaking	AI can significantly increase the speed of generation of initial results in scanning despite potentially requiring refinement and validation <i>“I just found that overall, it was a huge acceleration of the process and that was super pleasant. You have initial results super quickly that you can work with. Sure, you have to refine them and check them.” (E45, Founders Associate)</i>
	AI can support strategists in rapidly generating initial overviews for topics they are unfamiliar with <i>“So, this speed to output, of course it increases it immensely. Especially for a first touchdown. You often have to present something to your superiors and if you have no idea at all, a ChatGPT first proposal is often almost lifesaving in some situations. In any case, it's also very efficient and increases speed to output, you can definitely say that.” (E53, Associate)</i>
	AI generates initial overviews in scanning tasks that support the strategizing process but are rarely the final outcome <i>“As I said, [AI] definitely provides support for a very quick overview. But in the rarest of cases, or actually never before, was it the solution that I then used to continue working with it. It's always a good solution for sorting things out quickly. But if you then have to work in depth with the data, it usually wasn't mature enough to be trustworthy.” (E52, Consultant)</i>
The nature of the scanning task as part of strategic sensemaking can influence the scanning tension	Differences in AI's performance for scanning could emerge depending on the qualitative and quantitative nature of the task <i>“I don't actually use it for numbers at all, simply because it didn't work well at the beginning and I really, really use it a lot just for this creative brainstorming, I think, at the very, very beginning of any strategy development process, to get the big picture.” (E52, Consultant)</i>
	Strategists might experience fit and misfit when utilizing AI for scanning depending on limitations through data privacy regulation and data sensitivity <i>“Yes, it's actually a topic that my colleagues and I deal with on a daily basis. Especially when it comes to market research or</i>

	competitor research using AI. Including tools like ChatGPT, of course, if it's not sensitive data. But we also use internal tools. In the [management consulting firm] context, for example, we have a tool that is based on ChatGPT but of course takes certain data protection guidelines ... into account. We also use tools like this. (E49, Senior Consultant)
Human intervention plays a role in the fit and misfit of AI used for the scanning stage of strategic sensemaking	AI might provide outputs with varying degrees of fit and misfit for scanning tasks which could be refined through human-AI collaboration in the case of a misfit <i>“So, the figures that I got back ... weren't very easy to use ... I had to manipulate some of them ... Claude AI, for example, sometimes simply took ... took the percentage from Germany ... and simply applied this percentage to Japan. ... So, I then had ... to keep prompting, ‘Hey, aren't there perhaps differences between Japan and Germany’ ... Let it be Brazil and Germany, for example, because these are somehow also countries with different stages of development. And then the AI said, well, you're right, here you could actually take a multiple of 1.2 on the number of frontline workers ... he gave me before. And then it might have fit better in the end with the actual numbers from the public pages. I always tried to check a bit to see whether that somehow added up or whether it was a complete mismatch, and I still had to make some adjustments.” (E45, Founders Associate)</i> Scanning outputs generated by AI rely on strategists' capabilities and AI models may deceive strategists in the early stages of utilization <i>“it's just so incredibly convenient to save yourself a bit of Google research or to read projects and simply ask in a chat model whatever you don't understand. That's why I would say that there is this technology fit, but the technology misfit is also ... still very obvious because you're already reaching the limits of what it can offer you. [...]. So, you have to be very specific in what you want in order to get what you need. If you yourself are somehow still very vague about what you need, then you won't get anything good in return. [...]. I always have the feeling that the more you know about the subject yourself, the better you can leverage it. Especially at the beginning, you make progress very quickly. On the other hand, you're still so deceptive ... If it's somehow fabricated or something. [...]. It's sometimes a bit of a misfit, because ... You're hoping for a bit more than you actually get at the beginning. (E53, Associate)</i>
Interpretation tension [IT]	
Computational power of AI can enable the analysis	AI models can generate interpretations through analysis of data that strategists might have overlooked

of large volume of data in the interpretation stage of strategic sensemaking	<i>“There was also a very, very strong fit in some cases. For example, all of the data that we analyzed could theoretically also be analyzed in Excel. It just takes 1000 times longer. And as a user, I then have to look for specific data points that I would like to analyze. And if I decide not to analyze one of these points, then I can potentially miss something very, very important. And then we simply said, ‘Hey, for example, just tell us all the trends you see, all the trends you see, we would like to have now’. And then we got things, for example things like residences, which were suddenly somehow relevant. And really on a very specific level ... And I would never have looked out for something like that, for example. So, these are also things that stood out, where you could say, ‘Hey, what’s the reason for that?’ And it was really, really good.” (E50, Consultant)</i> AI models can help strategists find and interpret phenomena they do not understand <i>“And perhaps also to find connections that we as humans don’t necessarily see or understand immediately. And, also, to collect ideas about where these phenomena in the data can come from, that’s where I see the use of GenAI very strongly.” (E54, Consultant)</i>
Strategists may achieve benefits from and face limitations of AI models’ capabilities in the interpretation stage of strategic sensemaking	Interpretations by AI models can lead to the emergence of novel insights from outputs that are neither right nor wrong <i>“But if we also go in the direction of interpretation and then make strategic decisions. I often find that when you ask a tool specifically about the pros and cons of a strategic action, for example, it’s not often right or wrong. Rather, it’s just kind of a thought-provoking impulse that helps you to use it as a basis, but it’s often the case that I don’t use it one-to-one, the outcome or the answer that I get back, but you question it again yourself and it helps you to think in all directions ... and to see, ‘Okay, have I forgotten something.’ ... And especially when it comes to strategies, it’s often not ... not black or white.” (E51, Associate)</i> AI models may generate fresh yet partially incomplete or incorrect interpretations <i>“I once looked at some financial reports from other companies and I thought I could then use GenAI to help me interpret and prepare data that I was specifically looking for. To a certain extent, this was also possible. But then I did a few sanity checks ... I asked about specific companies that were mentioned in this report in relation to a certain topic and ChatGPT gave me an answer that seemed very convincing at first. But then I asked and</i>

	<i>two companies, for example, were not mentioned at all in the report.” (E51, Associate)</i>
	Strategists may achieve performance benefits when using AI for interpretation tasks but also encounter incorrect outputs <i>“I think I already said that earlier with the use cases that it is a great help and that I see huge added value in it. However, there are also some topics where incorrect information is sometimes provided. And sometimes things are simply included where there is no concrete ... fact behind it, but perhaps an interpretation that doesn’t make much sense. Where ... through my judgment I can say, ‘Hmm, that’s not right or only half right. That’s why I have to adjust it again.’” (E46, Senior Consultant)</i>
	AI models may display weaknesses in interpreting complex causal relationships <i>“And that’s why I would say that there was also this tension, but it was a bit different. We were really a bit more experimental and a bit more open. And we also really actively said, ‘Okay, interpret this or what would be an adjustment to the price that would make sense.’ And then sometimes the result was things like increasing the price by two basis points for everyone. Which is an enormously high price that you can’t actually explain to the customer.” (E50, Consultant)</i>
	AI models may generate interpretations that are correct but too detailed <i>“So, we’ve also seen that in these price lists. Many of these extra costs are things that we really didn’t want to analyze because they are so irrelevant or only affect a small proportion of customers. If they are then pulled out anyway, we do have a holistic picture, which is really very detailed, but which is clearly too detailed for our task, where we really only want to get a rough initial overview.” (E50, Consultant)</i>
Scanning-interpretation interrelation tension [S-IT]	
The strategic sensemaking stages of scanning and interpretation may be interrelated and blurred in the strategizing process	Strategists may utilize AI models for interpretation while foregoing the initial scanning phase <i>“And then just to give me all these arguments without ... having to do a lot of research, but simply to ask ... ‘Hey explicitly for this task. What are the pros and cons? Give me your analysis. What are the weaknesses? What are the strengths? What is the risk if we use this?’ That’s where [AI] helps a lot.” (E54, Consultant)</i>

	Boundaries between strategic sensemaking stages may become blurred when strategists employ AI for strategizing <i>“For me, it’s something in between scanning and interpretation, this topic of ideas. The fact that you have certain options through a GenAI tool ... Exactly, so. I have never made a concrete strategic decision through any GenAI tool ... That’s why I have a bit of a problem with this interpretation-versus-scanning issue, because for me it’s something in-between. And it’s this generation of ideas where you say that you can derive certain options or have [AI] spit out certain options for you. And they then help you, or in this case me, based on all information that you’ve gathered additionally, to make a decision.”</i> (E46, Senior Consultant)
A fit in the scanning stage of strategic sensemaking may translate to a misfit in the interpretation stage [S-IT ₁]	Granularity of scanning tasks may lead to reduced quality of AI interpretation in strategizing <i>“AI is great for creating an overview but if you then want to build on this overview and then go deeper into it, the more detailed you want to look at something, the more number-driven it becomes, the fuzzier the output becomes ... and the more dangerous it is to simply use it. Because if you go within the individual steps and ... actually want execution from AI ... for example, with market research ... it's somehow more difficult to do this accurate prompting and generate the right output.”</i> (E45, Founders Associate)
	Oversimplification by AI may either necessitate verification through strategists or risking interpretation inaccuracies <i>“[...] in the interaction with language models and the output is too generic there. [...]. But of course, if I have to check every output for accuracy first, I have to question whether I'm really saving myself work [...].”</i> (E37)
A misfit in the scanning stage of strategic sensemaking may translate to a fit in the interpretation stage [S-IT ₂]	AI models’ weaknesses in the scanning of quantitative information could lead strategists to repurpose it for idea generation and brainstorming <i>“I don’t actually use it for numbers at all, simply because it didn’t work well at the beginning and I really, really use it a lot just for this creative brainstorming, I think, at the very, very beginning of any strategy development process, to get the big picture.”</i> (E52, Consultant)
	Provision of sources from AI models’ scanning process can deliver insights on the fit of interpretations in strategic sensemaking

	<i>“And I believe that the measures that I have just mentioned, which lead to more trust in the tool, are also linked to this ... Whether it’s topics such as how, when I ask for sources, I also get the sources themselves so that I can check again for myself whether I can verify or not verify the whole thing. Or to have a precise understanding of what is actually happening in the background. I think there are already tools that now go into detail and say, ‘Okay, please run me through it exactly. How did you arrive at this result? And what interpretations did you make yourself?’ This is already possible to some extent in order to see very clearly in the GenAI which of this output is based on one hundred percent data and which of it is an interpretation that was carried out using the model.” (E52, Consultant)</i>
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Table C.4: Selected and indicative codes and quotes for antecedents, strategies, and outcomes of the perceived AI fit-misfit tension

Dimensions and themes	Codes and quotes
Pathway antecedents: Drivers effective AI adoption	
Emotional equanimity	Patience, stress tolerance, and stress resilience can help strategists navigate the tension between fit and misfit <i>“Yes, so it's a certain, perhaps also, stress tolerance or stress resilience towards the whole thing. So that you also have a certain amount of patience, both towards yourself and towards this [AI] copilot. And also, somehow a certain– Yes, well, it's just not a cure-all, at least not yet. And that you somehow accept that and then somehow accept the limits of it.” (E53, Associate)</i> Emotional equanimity can foster awareness for a tension between fit and misfit when utilizing AI or strategizing <i>“But I'm actually more relaxed about it and like to try it out and see that it works, and I'm also aware that it can sometimes not work, and with that knowledge, you can actually approach it very calmly.” (E50, Consultant)</i>
User reactions	Virtuous cycles may emerge in the form of excitement regarding the use of AI and achieving desirable outcomes for strategizing <i>“I would say the virtuous cycle is that for use cases where you can use technology, you're naturally looking forward to it. And I would say, despite this awareness of the field of tension, that this is a huge opportunity that I am realizing.” (E47, Senior Consultant)</i>

	Positive experiences when using AI in the strategizing process can highlight potential performance benefits <i>“And that if you are aware of this, this tension which you have shown with [fit] and [misfit] and don't take everything at face value, it really has a very positive effect, and I actually notice that, maybe not every day. But every week, I have something where I use some GenAI tool for some use case, and it actually works phenomenally and somehow saves me half an hour of work. And that's actually something I can no longer imagine life without. And especially when things have to be done quickly or when you're under time pressure and then you have a technology that supports you, that's actually something very, very positive, and provides added value which I don't think will really diminish.” (E50, Consultant)</i>
AI literacy	Strategists have to be aware of AI's capabilities and limitations <i>“I think you just have to be aware of certain limitations when you're using GenAI tools.” (E46, Senior Consultant)</i> <i>“So, I think ... in the end it's about knowing the capabilities of the tool ... To know exactly where it can help me and where it can't help me. And if you can use it ideally in that sense, then it's a great support across all areas.” (E52, Consultant)</i> Strategists must know when to use AI for specific strategizing tasks <i>“Then I think it's also about knowing for which tasks it makes the most sense to use [AI] and when not to.” (E46, Senior Consultant)</i> <i>“As soon as I know where my biggest leverage is, then [AI] really is a very big lever in that area.” (E52, Consultant)</i>
Cognitive complexity	By employing a critical mindset, strategists can determine effective use cases of AI in strategizing <i>“And that's basically just that, try it out, be critical. If it works well, make it a use case where you can simply use technology as a fit. But also define use cases where you know that you either have to exercise a lot of control or you simply can't do that with the technology in terms of the fit.” (E47, Senior Consultant)</i> By employing a critical mindset, strategists can continuously optimize their use of AI in strategizing

	<i>“And actually, whenever I use AI, I take it with a grain of salt. And I try to somehow optimize it so that the output is somehow intuitively the best and somehow also partially cross-checked.”</i> (E45, Founders Associate)
Pathway antecedents: Barriers effective AI adoption	
Consistency drive	AI might trigger a cognitive drive for consistency <i>“In other words, in many organizations, the majority of people tend to be reluctant because they say, ‘This is something new, this is fundamental change...’, which it really is, ‘...and will I actually lose my job?’”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant)
	Strategists might resist the use of AI for strategizing <i>“You might not even try the internal tools at our company, such as this document driven chat, to have a document evaluated, but simply prefer to do it yourself, because it's probably quicker than if you get to grips with the tool first and then understand it.”</i> (E49, Senior Consultant)
	Strategists first instinct might lead to rejecting AI <i>“We have a general fear of artificial intelligence and of generative artificial intelligence because many people can't make a differentiated assessment of it. And the first basic human attitude towards change is rejection.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant)
Lack of AI literacy	Lack of AI literacy in early stages of AI utilization for strategizing can spur vicious cycles <i>“Especially at the beginning, you make progress very quickly. On the other hand, you're still very deceptive for ... any kind of fabrication ... So, it's ... partly a certain misfit.”</i> (E53, Associate)
	Strategists not developing AI literacy can spur vicious cycles when utilizing AI for strategizing <i>“If you don't stay up to date and don't catch up somehow in the long term, you'll lose out at some point and that will have an impact on the company's effectiveness, profitability and so on.”</i> (E49, Senior Consultant)
Strategists' strategies: Effective AI strategies	
Validation/evaluation	Strategists must validate AI outputs and are responsible for the further use of outputs in the strategizing process <i>“At the end of the day, you have a responsibility as a human being to have completed both the scanning and the interpretation to a reliable degree of accuracy. Especially if this is followed by</i>

	<i>budget-intensive strategic decision-making processes ... In other words, you basically have to be the controlling authority.” (E47, Senior Consultant)</i> Strategists can evaluate their use of AI for strategizing and adjust their approaches accordingly <i>“And I actually find it really exciting to see, ‘Okay, depending on how I approach it now, you get a different result somehow’. In other words, if I ... have issues ... a kind of misfit that I somehow notice in this evaluation process, then I try to adjust my approach again and see if it changes anything ... And as I said, if it doesn't work, then I would simply use it less for this task.” (E51, Associate)</i>
Prompt engineering	Strategic prompting can help strategists refine and improve strategic outputs from AI <i>“I mean, in very few cases do you write [the prompt] once and ... get exactly what you want the first time. It's more a case of repeating it, adapting it again and again, slowly working your way towards the result you actually want.” (E52, Consultant)</i> Strategists have to be specific in their prompts and inputs to receive helpful strategic outputs from AI <i>“I would definitely say that the type of prompt makes a big difference ... The more precise an input I can give, whether it's in the type of prompt, but also, of course, [inputs on] the ... situations that I provide, the higher the fit will naturally be.” (E52, Consultant)</i>
AI collaboration capability learning	Strategists can improve human-AI collaboration through continuous learning <i>“I think the most important point for me is actually that, in an exaggerated sense, you always force yourself to use the technologies. We are creatures of habit and if you don't do it, you'll do it less and less. And then you basically consciously engage with it, so to speak, accepting training ... research for yourself how you can improve it, refine it, in order to simply achieve or reach a higher fit.” (E49, Senior Consultant)</i> Strategists can improve human-AI collaboration through their wealth of experience <i>“And by building up this wealth of experience, what works, what doesn't work, what works well, what can I change so that it perhaps becomes a greater fit and the misfit is minimized, you</i>

	<i>then get a good gut feeling for it.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant) <i>“So, if you’ve used [AI] a few times ... then virtuous is that you probably learn through the environment whether one thing was right or not and hopefully you improve it through that.”</i> (E48, AI Manager)
Strategists’ strategies: Partial/no AI strategies	
Lack of validation	Lack of validation of AI outputs by strategists can threaten the strategizing process <i>“But what you should always do is quality control. That really also means checking sources and the 10% of cases is then just the hallucination of the large language models, the generative artificial intelligence. In other words, they simply combine information into information that is not correct. This is of course a huge disadvantage, because if this slips through, you are making strategic decisions based on incorrect information.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant) Lack of domain knowledge and temporal limitation can lead strategists to improperly validating AI outputs <i>“I’ve also had times when I’ve simply adopted generic bullets or something like that without questioning them and then they’re simply wrong and you only half know it yourself and somehow can’t validate it, which makes you a bit more wary of the whole thing. Especially if you somehow can’t really validate it yourself with your limited knowledge or can only validate it with a lot of time.”</i> (E53, Associate)
No effective prompting	Ineffective prompting strategies can jeopardize the strategizing process <i>“Yes, that’s just the thing. For example, if you ... don’t set the prompt correctly at the beginning, but then keep building on this prompt, for example regarding different geographical regions, then everything just sucks. In the end, you end up with a bad output for all markets ... and have to do it all over again.”</i> (E45, Founders Associate) Lack of iterations in prompting can indicate ineffective prompting strategies <i>“So, if someone makes a lot of iterations, then for me it’s a sign that the person knows their way around and thinks for themselves. If someone simply takes the first suggestion, then it’s probably someone who can’t use it. For me, that’s a sign, okay: misfit.”</i> (E48, AI Manager)

Outcomes: AI alignment	
Beneficial outcomes	Effective short-term AI use for strategizing can yield a variety of performance benefits <i>“On a personal level, I would say that it naturally has a lot to do with effectiveness, efficiency, and speed in day-to-day work. In other words, AI and the various tools, whether internal or external, can, of course, make your work much easier, much more efficient, and much faster. And I believe that if you use tools skillfully, as I can see with our colleagues, you can complete some tasks in just a few minutes that might take a few hours and then take other colleagues a few hours.”</i> (E49, Senior Consultant)
	Employing strategies to navigate fit and misfit of AI for strategizing yields benefits <i>“There's a permanent tension in me that sees the opportunities and potential of generative artificial intelligence or artificial intelligence in general, appreciates it, and just thinks it's awesome. On the other hand, there is also a permanent critical state. What can it really do? How reliable can it really be? And what do I perhaps still have to do myself, check myself, etc.? So, it is a persistent condition. I wouldn't say that I only see the advantages and only see the disadvantages, but that there is always a noticeable tension in between. On the other hand, I would say that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. I see a fit rather than a misfit.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant)
Outcomes: AI overreliance/AI under-utilization	
Overreliance	Overreliance on AI can lead strategists to disregard misfit for strategizing tasks and negative performance outcomes <i>“Artificial intelligence or generative artificial intelligence is simply a ground-breaking technology that will change the way we work, live, etc. And because of this enthusiasm or fascination, you can tend to become a crazy techno-optimist. That simply means concentrating only on the fit and somehow leaving the misfit out of it.”</i> (E47, Senior Consultant) <i>“But if you now say that you only see this technology as good and then ... at some point you come to the realization that this technology does have certain limitations. Because the results that you get from it simply don't match the quality that you might otherwise achieve. ... So, if you consider everything to be right, then of course at some point ... the reality ... catches up with you</i>

	<i>that there are certain limitations in the technology, and you notice that the quality of the outputs simply suffers as a result.” (E46, Senior Consultant)</i> Strategists might rely on AI for strategizing tasks rather than engaging strategizing tasks themselves <i>“But I do believe that there is a risk of overusing it, so to speak—Using it too much, with the result that you no longer really think about things yourself. I’ve already mentioned that I often use it for brainstorming and similar tasks. So, when I’m given a task, I often find myself asking for ideas directly on ChatGPT or something like that. And that’s a risk in itself because you actually brainstorm less yourself and question things less. And that somehow contributes to us, yes, actually not really using our own heads to tackle such issues in society in the future.” (E51, Associate)</i> <i>“You sometimes have a certain dependency on this technology. If it doesn’t really fit well with your task and you’ve already invested a relatively large amount of time in terms of sunk costs, it’s sometimes difficult to take the alternative route. Then you might have done yourself a bigger favor sometimes by working on the topic a bit more yourself and not relying on a copilot.” (E53, Associate)</i>
Underutilization	Overemphasizing misfit of AI as a technology supporting the strategizing process can lead to underutilization <i>“On the other hand, I also find techno-pessimism ... where you only see the misfit and not the fit or the advantages, I actually find that even more difficult, because that’s simply a denial of technology.” (E47, Senior Consultant)</i> Pessimistic views on AI outputs in the strategizing process could lead strategists to miss out on benefits <i>“if you don’t do any more research with GenAI just because individual facts aren’t right, then of course you don’t have all the advantages ... you could otherwise have if you simply realize the pitfalls of the technologies and face it all with a certain human judgment” (E46, Senior Consultant)</i>