

Member's Quarterly

Summer 2022 Edition

Ask the Expert

Overcoming resistance and thriving in a workplace with AI – *The future is here- don't miss the train!*



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Q | **Your leadership team just announced an AI initiative. What do you do next?** Your VP just gave you a heads-up that next week, the CEO will be announcing a new initiative to implement an AI-enabled HR solution across the enterprise.

You're not completely taken off guard. You know the company is under pressure to stay competitive and you've heard for the last few years about how artificial intelligence (AI) is poised to transform the workplace. You already know this is going to unsettle your team. They're expecting to see pink slips the minute they hear "AI". To be honest, you're not too sure what this means for you either. What do you do next?

A | **First, take a deep breath.**

This will be a big change and as a leader, you are going to need your best thinking to make the most of it and to guide your team. Know that while there is uncertainty, there is tremendous opportunity as well – not just opportunity for your organization, but opportunity for you and for your team. This will definitely take some work.

Decide to lean in.

AI will change our world, not just how we work, but also how we live, play and age. So, with best thinking engaged, decide to be a part of this AI-enhanced future.

Haven't heard about an AI initiative impacting your team yet? You're not off the hook. For sure your leadership team is talking about it, probably talking to vendors as you read this. Let's hope they are. It's a competitive world out there and no one wants to be left behind-including you.

Get curious.

AI is technology worth learning. While it is super complex technologically, you can understand its implications without understanding exactly how it works. [Prediction Machines: The Simple Economics of Artificial Intelligence](#) is a great place to start. Written for a business audience, authors Ajay Agrawal, Joshua Gans and Avi Goldfarb from the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, offer an accessible introduction and overview of the implications of AI for business.

It's such a loaded term. So much has been said about the potential, the risks and the promise of AI. For a general take on some of those, take a look at Martin Ford's [The Rule of the Robots: How Artificial Intelligence Will Transform Everything](#). If YouTube is your thing, watch [Ford discussing the book](#).

With these starting points as grounding, connect with the team leading the initiative in your organization. You'll probably find that it's a targeted solution intended to improve the efficiency of a specific data-intense process or set of processes, because that is what AI does well.

Go myth-busting.

Armed with your emerging understanding of what's real and what's not, it's time to get your team involved.

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Host a session to identify 3-5 myths, rumours or misinformation about AI and the proposed implementation. Try to base this list on what people actually say, what you have heard or seen in your department, not just what you think they are saying.

Take those one at a time and debunk or confirm them. Pro-tip: Don't debunk all of them. Confirm some to keep your audience guessing and engaged. Create a campaign. Make it playful and informative. Have fun with it.

Workshop the opportunities.

Now that your team is a little better versed in what is real about both AI in general and your company's AI initiative in particular, it's time to get in the game of figuring out how to make the tech work for you and by extension, for the organization.

Host a session with your team to brainstorm how this initiative can make your team better. What processes are likely to be impacted and what would make them work better? It's very likely that data will play a big part, so ask about what data you collect or wish that you could that would help your team deliver more efficiently. Envision how this new technology, assuming it works as planned, can transform your work and what that could mean for your team and your department. Technology is an enabler, so it's essential to understand what exactly you're looking to enable. Add your voice to the discussion of what's possible.

Be patient.

We're still at the beginning of integrating AI-enabled technologies into the workplace. This will not be the last AI initiative in your organization or your career. Understand that it will be messy and there will likely be starts and stops. Commit to the journey. AI is definitely in your future.

Good luck and please feel free to reach out with any questions or comments.

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