



# AI revolution blending tech with human insight

by Janice Otremba

In our modern corporate landscape, a transformative force is reshaping the realm of our workforces and beyond: artificial intelligence (AI). This is not just technology for technology's sake. AI in our workforce is like having a brilliant co-pilot, one that is as savvy with data as it is with people dynamics.

The journey toward integrating AI in the workplace is often met with a blend of

skepticism and apprehension. A common concern is the fear of job displacement. Many worry that AI's efficiency might render certain roles obsolete.

There is also the underlying anxiety that reliance on AI could lead to a general complacency or "laziness" in the workforce as machines take on tasks traditionally performed by humans. Additionally, the prospect of having

to learn and adapt to new AI-driven systems can be daunting for many, feeding into a reluctance to embrace this technological shift.

These concerns are not unfounded, but they often stem from a misunderstanding of AI's role as a tool designed to complement and enhance human capabilities, not replace them. It is crucial for organizations to address these fears

head-on, providing clear communication and education about AI's purpose, its potential to create new opportunities, and the measures in place to ensure a balanced and ethical integration into the workplace. By doing so, they can transform apprehension into acceptance and even enthusiasm for the new possibilities that AI brings to the table.

## The AI Roadmap

The first time I used AI (that I know of) the AI had transcribed a meeting for me. And it did not just transcribe the meeting for me, but captured the essence of our discussions and created a synopsis. It was wonderful and creepy at the same time.

And should the burning question be about who gets the gold star for the work? Is it the mastermind behind the curtain (a circuit-brained whiz) or a good old-fashioned human noodle? In our struggle with AI, it is not just about feeding the beast and hoping it spits out something spectacular. It's like trying to bake a cake with a super fancy mixer. The mixer does the heavy stirring, but if you do not know your sugar from your salt, you are in for a not-so-sweet surprise. In the world of AI, comprehension is not just king, it is the whole kingdom. If talent uses AI without really grasping the nitty-gritty of their subjects, their work will fall flat.

What can AI do for product inconsistency? We asked AI to help us with this one and here is what it said (after a couple of prompts to keep it simple):

*Absolutely! AI can be a game-changer in enhancing work product consistency. By automating routine tasks, it standardizes processes, minimizing human error and ensuring uniform quality. AI-driven quality control continuously monitors outputs, immediately flagging inconsistencies for real-time correction.*

*Its advanced data analysis capabilities identify patterns and sources of irregularities, informing process improvements. In production settings, predictive maintenance anticipates equipment issues, maintaining*

*steady quality. AI also personalizes employee training to address performance variability and benchmarks work against industry standards, ensuring outputs consistently meet high-quality thresholds.*

*In essence, AI acts as a vigilant guardian of consistency, transforming the way work is done and maintained across various sectors.*

Before we let AI take the wheel, we need to know our roadmap – understand the topic, the issues, and what we are actually asking AI to do.

It is not about outsourcing our brains to the cloud; it is about using AI to amplify our smarts, not replace them. After all, we are shooting for leaders who are less “fumbling in the dark” and more “navigating with a map and compass,” alongside a workforce that are true whizzes in their spaces, not just keyboard warriors.

AI's functions transcend traditional roles, emerging as a versatile tool for collaboration with unions, non-unions, stakeholders, and leaders. As an incubator for concepts and strategies, AI brings a new dimension to various organizational aspects.

The following is recommended to be kept top of mind, and if it all seems overwhelming, start by simply using AI as a sounding board for your thoughts and ideas.

**Strategic partnership in workforce management** – AI is not limited to scanning resumes; it is a strategic asset in workforce management. Its ability to sift through data with unmatched efficiency aids not only in recruitment, but also in aligning workforce strategies with the diverse needs of unions, stakeholders, and leadership. AI's predictive capabilities serve as a guide in making informed decisions, ensuring the recruitment of talents that resonate with the organization's dynamic environment.

**Tailoring employee experiences and development** – Beyond recruitment, AI personalizes the onboarding and development journey for each individual, moving away from generic approaches. It acts as an adaptive assistant, helping

employees, whether part of unions or otherwise, navigate their roles effectively. For leaders and stakeholders, AI offers insights into skill development, aligning training with organizational goals.

**Enhancing performance, engagement, and workplace dynamics** – In performance management, AI offers continuous insights, functioning like a digital coach that provides real-time feedback and foresight. Its role in gauging employee engagement and morale through sentiment analysis is invaluable in maintaining a harmonious work environment across different roles and departments.

**Advocating fairness and well-being** – AI serves as a neutral party in ensuring equitable compensation and benefits, aligning them with market standards and individual needs. Its analytical skills are crucial in developing health and wellness programs that address the varied requirements of a diverse workforce, stakeholders, and leaders.

**Fostering diversity and compliance** – AI's ability to identify and reduce biases contributes to creating a more inclusive workplace. For leaders working with unions and various stakeholders, AI provides a clear path through the complexities of compliance and regulation, ensuring that the organization adheres to legal and ethical standards.

## Balancing AI with Human Judgment

In the Canadian context, AI needs to operate within a framework shaped by laws like the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, ensuring respect for privacy and equality. The involvement of entities like Canada's digital supercluster hints at a future where AI is not just about following rules, but about setting new standards in ethical AI use.

Navigating the AI terrain comes with its quirks, too. AI can crunch data like a champion, but it is not the be-all, end-all. It has a few blind spots – like occasionally

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As we fumble into this brave new world, we must talk policies. AI is like a rocket ship strapped to a roller coaster – it is thrilling, but we need some safety belts and a roadmap. The rules and regulations are still catching up to AI’s turbocharged engines, so it is on us to steer this ship. We need policies that are not just rulebooks but guardians of our core values and ethics.

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mimicking biases or missing the emotional mark (think of a robot trying to read a love poem).

So, what is the trick? It is about striking a harmony – using AI as the assistant to our human lead. We blend its analytical abilities with our knack for empathy and judgment. It is less about AI stealing the show and more about it setting the stage for human brilliance to shine.

Gazing into our crystal ball, we cannot help but chuckle at the excitement (and occasional panic) it stirs up among our workforce. Some people get invigorated when they spot a new gadget, while others turn into skeptics or hide,

eyeing every innovation like it is a plate of mystery meatloaf. The world of AI is like a grand theme park – thrilling for some, terrifying for others.

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So, here is a playbook: clear procedures, spotlight on transparency, and

hold AI and those who use it accountable. We are not babysitting a robot, we are creating an environment where AI works side by side with our amazing workforce, not as the AI el supremo.

Remember when some thought the World Wide Web (www) was just a fad? (Yeah, those were the days.) Similarly, AI is taking center stage in our daily lives, and it is not a fleeting trend – it is a revolution.

This is the big leap, where AI’s “data brains” meet our “people hearts,” a fusion of efficiency and human connection. And as we dance to this new rhythm, we are not just managing a workforce, we are sculpting the future of work.

Personally, and professionally, we love AI as a tool, but there are times when we want the human touch. Case in point, this article was human-powered.



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