

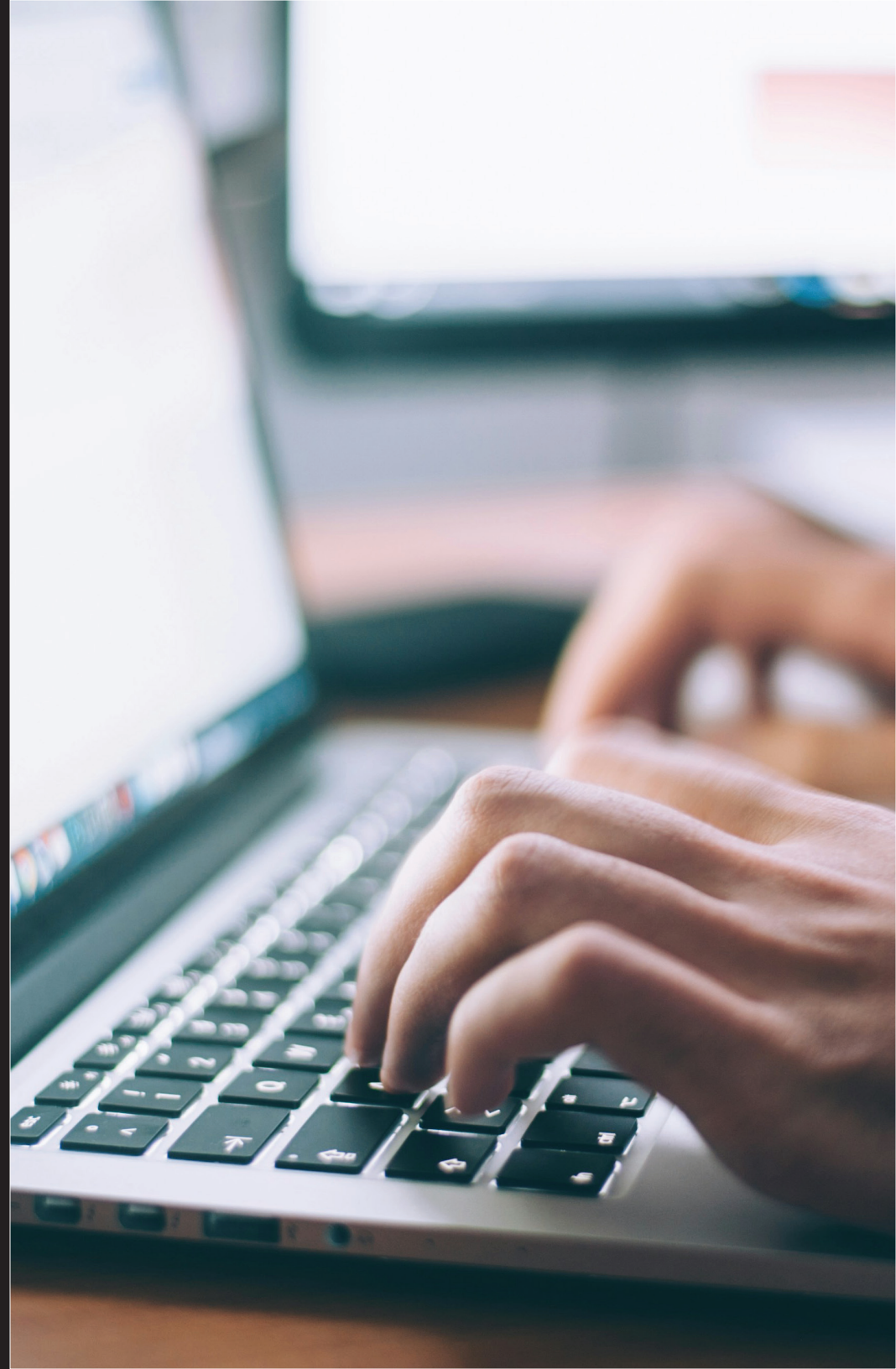
# Preparing People for AI:

## A Guide to Building the Next Generation of Knowledge Workers

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# Preparing People for AI

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As business leaders, we should be spending less time thinking about people or AI, and more time thinking about people and AI. For example, less time thinking about how AI is going to take away jobs and more time thinking about how people and AI together can-do things that could have never been done before.

**“ When people and AI are orchestrated together, we can create a future that is not only more efficient, but also more human-centered and purpose-driven. ”**

**- Paul Gulbin**



## Introduction

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When it comes to implementing AI in business, it's crucial to understand that nearly every real-world application involves a collaboration between people and technology. It's important that when designing new AI systems for business, we're not just optimizing or implementing new AI tools – we're creating human-AI systems.

Successful business leaders know firsthand how important it is to stay ahead of the curve and ensure your team is ready for the future. AI is not just the future – it's the present, and it's already revolutionizing the way we work, think, and innovate. So how do we prepare our people for AI?

This eBook will help with empowering your people over the course of an AI transformation journey. As you embark on your own AI journey, we'll learn that people are just as important as technology itself. Invest in them, nurture them, and watch as they help you unlock the full potential of AI in your organization. So, let's unlock and apply the value of human insight!

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# Forging Human-AI Partnerships

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Alignment between people and AI requires a partnership. To accomplish this effectively, we need to ask ourselves two essential questions. First, what tasks are best suited for AI, and which ones are better handled by people? And second, how can we ensure that this human-computer system continuously improves over time?

When assessing tasks between people and AI, the goal should be to assign AI the tasks they excel at, while allowing people to focus on what they do best. For instance, AI is far superior to people at storing and recalling vast amounts of information, while people generally outperform technology when it comes to flexible, nuanced interactions with other people.

However, the objective shouldn't be to simply replace people with AI wherever possible. Instead, the true potential lies in discovering how to combine human and AI capabilities in a way that enables us to achieve better results than either could accomplish alone – or even tackle challenges that were previously considered impossible!

Consider Google search as an example. Many define Google search as AI. Its success lies in the symbiotic relationship between people and technology: people create and link the content, while machines store and recall that vast amount of information, helping users find what's most relevant to their needs. Google search didn't merely replace reference librarians – it unlocked a new realm of knowledge creation, search, and advertising, generating countless new jobs and opportunities.

As we design AI systems for business, let's not solely concentrate on what AI can do better than people. Instead, let's explore how we can forge Human-AI partnerships that are greater than the sum of their parts – partnerships that empower us to achieve the previously unimaginable. It's a thrilling challenge that holds immense potential for transforming the way we work and innovate.

# What impact will AI have on how people do their jobs near and long-term?

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Imagine you're starting your workday. You have a smart, tireless assistant by your side, taking care of the mundane tasks and freeing you to focus on the things that really matter.

AI is already making our work lives easier and more efficient. It automates repetitive tasks, like data entry and simple customer inquiries, so we can spend our time on more complex and creative problems. AI-powered tools are helping us make better decisions by analyzing vast amounts of data and providing insights we might have missed. And let's not forget about the magic of AI-assisted writing and coding – it's like having a genius co-author or co-programmer at our fingertips.

But here's where it gets exciting: the long-term impact of AI on our jobs is going to be nothing short of transformative. As AI continues to evolve and become more sophisticated, it will take on increasingly complex tasks, allowing us to focus on the uniquely human aspects of our work – things like strategic thinking, emotional intelligence, and innovation. We'll be able to collaborate with AI in ways we never thought possible, pushing the boundaries of what we can achieve.

Imagine a future where AI helps doctors make more accurate diagnoses, assists lawyers in building airtight cases, and enables marketers to create highly personalized, engaging campaigns. The possibilities are endless, and the best part is that we'll be right there, working alongside these intelligent systems, learning from them, and using our human creativity to take things to the next level.

# Building Trustworthy AI in Your Organization

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Many people are cautious about trusting AI systems or have a concern about accepting AI. Trust is a topic that we can't ignore, especially as AI becomes more and more integrated into our daily lives and business operations. But here's the thing - people's trust in AI is not a one-size-fits-all situation. It's complex, nuanced, and depends a lot on the specific application we're talking about.

According to a 2023 KPMG Global AI Study, three out of five people worldwide report either feeling unsure or downright unwilling to trust AI. That's a big chunk of the population! So, what exactly makes people hesitant to trust AI? Well, the study found that people are generally more skeptical about the safety, security, and fairness of AI systems, as well as how well they protect our privacy. On the flip side, people tend to have more faith in AI's ability to produce accurate and reliable results and provide helpful services. It's a bit of a mixed bag, isn't it?

What's important to understand is that trust in AI is not just about the technology itself. It's also about the specific application or use case. Take hiring and promotions, for example. People are generally less trusting and accepting of AI being used to make those kinds of decisions. But when it comes to healthcare, like using AI to help with medical diagnoses and treatments, people are much more open to that, probably because they see a direct benefit to their own well-being.

It's ironic that we're more willing to let AI recommend us products or personalize our social media feeds than we are to let it make decisions about our careers. But at the same time, we're more comfortable with AI playing a role in our healthcare than in our job prospects. It just goes to show that trust in AI is not a simple yes or no question, trust depends on the context and the perceived risks and benefits.

So, what does all this mean for us as business leaders? Well, it means that we can't take trust in AI for granted. We need to be proactive in understanding people's concerns and addressing them head-on. We need to be transparent about how we're using AI and what measures we're taking to ensure its safety, security, and fairness.

# Why AI Needs A Creative Human Touch

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of these powerful AI systems that can analyze data, make predictions, and automate tasks seemingly without breaking a sweat. But here's the thing – without a human perspective, AI can miss the mark. What is the role of human touch in AI?

Think about it this way: AI is incredibly smart and efficient, but it doesn't have the same context, empathy, or understanding of nuance that we humans do. It might provide insights or recommendations that are technically correct but fail to consider the broader implications, ethical considerations, or unique circumstances of a given situation. How about experiences and discernment? That's where people come in.

As humans, we have the unique ability to bring our own experiences, judgement, and critical thinking to the table. We can look at the output of AI and say, "Hmm, this doesn't quite align with our values," or "Let's consider how this might impact our stakeholders." It's like we're the navigators of an AI-powered ship, ensuring that it stays on course and reaches its destination safely.

But it goes beyond just oversight and decision-making. By collaborating with AI, we can unlock new levels of efficiency, innovation, and problem-solving. We can use these tools to identify patterns, uncover insights, and automate routine tasks, freeing us up to focus on higher-level strategic thinking. It's a partnership, where AI brings its raw computational power, and we bring our human wisdom and expertise. We need to approach this new era with a sense of responsibility, ethics, and, most importantly, a human touch.

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# How AI Helps Inexperienced Workers

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My oldest son recently graduated from college and is eager to make his mark in the business world. However, he's feeling a bit overwhelmed by all the new responsibilities and challenges. That's where AI comes in, like a wise and patient mentor, ready to guide him through the ups and downs of his professional journey. Imagine being able to tap into the collective knowledge and experience of your entire industry, all through the power of AI.

For example, let's say you're a new marketing coordinator, tasked with creating a social media campaign for a product launch. With AI-powered tools like chatbots and sentiment analysis, you can quickly gather customer insights, create targeted content, and monitor the campaign's performance in real-time. It's like having a team of seasoned marketers by your side, helping you make data-driven decisions and optimize your strategy on the fly.

Here's the exciting part – by working alongside AI, inexperienced workers aren't just getting better at their current jobs; they're also developing transferable skills that will serve them well throughout their careers. Skills like data analysis, problem-solving, and adaptability – the very skills that are becoming increasingly valuable in our fast-paced, ever-changing business landscape.

The same goes for the experienced worker. If you're a workforce veteran and embarking on a new role, don't be intimidated by the challenges ahead. Embrace the power of AI, and let it be your guide and your partner in growth. With AI by your side, you have the potential to achieve great things and make a real impact in your organization, no matter your level of experience. The future is bright, and it's waiting for you to seize it.

# The Importance of Preparing People for AI Adoption

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Many organizations are excited about the potential of AI and can't wait to start implementing it across the business. But here's the thing – if you don't take the time to get your employees on board and adapt your processes, you're setting yourself up for a bumpy ride. It's like trying to drive a car without learning how to operate the pedals and steering wheel first – not a good idea.

You see, AI isn't just about the technology itself; it's about how it integrates with your people and your way of doing things. As the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) wisely points out, "The success of AI implementation depends on the workforce's willingness and ability to adopt and work alongside this technology." In other words, if your employees are resistant, unprepared, or unsupported, even the most brilliant AI system will struggle to deliver results.

So, what can you do to set your organization up for AI success? It all starts with communication and education. Take the time to explain to your team what AI is, how it works, and most importantly, how it will benefit them and the company. Help them understand that AI isn't here to replace them but to empower them to do their best work.

But it doesn't stop there – you also need to invest in training and upskilling your workforce. Give them the tools and knowledge they need to work effectively alongside AI, whether that means learning new software, developing data literacy skills, or adopting a more agile and experimental mindset. And don't forget to lead by example – show your team that you're committed to embracing AI and adapting to this new way of working.

Now, I know what you might be thinking – this all sounds like a lot of work. And you're right, it is. By laying the groundwork with your people and processes, you'll be setting your organization up to reap the full benefits of AI, from increased efficiency and productivity to better decision-making and customer experiences.

# How to Prepare Your Workforce for AI

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A common question on the minds of many business leaders is “AI sounds great, but how do I actually go about preparing my workforce for it?” Best practice companies have broken down this question into six key areas.

# 1. Communicating the Vision and Benefits of AI Adoption

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One remarkable example of effectively communicating the vision and benefits of AI adoption comes from Joe Atkinson, the Chief Digital Officer at PwC. As a leader in the professional services industry, Atkinson has been a strong advocate for the transformative potential of AI and its ability to enhance the way we work.

In an interview with Forbes, Atkinson emphasized the importance of framing AI as a tool for empowerment rather than replacement. He stated, *“AI is not about replacing people, it’s about augmenting their capabilities and allowing them to focus on higher-value work.”* This quote encapsulates Atkinson’s vision for how AI can create new opportunities for employees to learn, grow, and make a meaningful impact in their roles.

Atkinson has also been a proponent of upskilling and reskilling initiatives to prepare the workforce for the AI era. He has emphasized the need for continuous learning and the development of both technical and soft skills to thrive in an AI-driven world. In a 2019 article for the World Economic Forum, Atkinson wrote, *“The key to success in the AI era is not just about acquiring technical skills, but also about developing uniquely human skills like creativity, empathy, and adaptability.”* This quote highlights the importance of a well-rounded approach to workforce development, one that recognizes the value of both technical expertise and human-centric skills. Under Atkinson’s leadership, PwC has invested heavily in upskilling programs and digital accelerators to help employees navigate the changing landscape of work.

By consistently communicating the vision and benefits of AI adoption, business leaders can create a sense of excitement and opportunity around this transformative technology. Paint a picture of a future where AI and human workers collaborate seamlessly, driving innovation, growth, and success for their organizations.





## 2. Addressing Concerns and Fears about Job Displacement

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With any major technological shift, there will be concerns and fears about job displacement. It's essential to address these early and head-on and provide reassurance to your team. Emphasize that AI is not about replacing humans but rather about augmenting their abilities and freeing them up to focus on higher-value work. A great way to do this is by sharing success stories of companies that have successfully implemented AI and seen positive results for their employees. For instance, AT&T has been transparent about its efforts to retrain and upskill its workforce for the AI pivot, investing millions in employee education and development programs.

However, as a small business, you probably don't have the same financial resources as a giant corporation like AT&T. Nonetheless, there are still practical ways to reduce fear about job displacement and empower your team to embrace AI. One approach is to start small and focus on specific, manageable projects that demonstrate the value of AI without causing significant disruption. For example, you could implement an AI-powered chatbot to handle routine customer inquiries, freeing up your customer service team to focus on more complex issues. Another option is to provide targeted training and development opportunities, such as online courses or workshops, to help your employees build AI-related skills and knowledge.

It costs little to foster an open and transparent culture where employees feel comfortable discussing their concerns and ideas about AI and work together to identify new roles and opportunities that align with their strengths and interests.





### 3. Identifying Roles and Skills Most Impacted by AI

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It's crucial to identify the specific roles and skills within your organization that will be most impacted by AI. One approach is to conduct a skills gap analysis, which involves assessing your current workforce's skills and identifying areas where additional training or upskilling may be needed. This can help you prioritize your training efforts and ensure that your team is well-prepared for the AI-driven future.

Let's walk through an example. Personally, I love landscaping. Being outdoors and creating with my own hands is an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. So, let's assume upskilling a family-owned business with 50 employees. We'll call it Green Valley Landscaping. To assess their workforce's readiness for AI adoption, Green Valley first identified the specific roles and skills that would be most impacted by AI, including landscape designers, field technicians, and customer service representatives.

Next, a program called "AI in the Green" was created through a series of workshops and online courses tailored to each role within the company. Landscape designers learned how to use a new AI-powered tool for site analysis and design optimization, while field technicians received training on predictive maintenance and autonomous operation of sprinkler systems. Customer service representatives learned how to work alongside a new AI-powered chatbot and virtual assistant to provide more efficient and personalized support.

Green Valley Landscaping rolled out the "AI in the Green" program over the course of six months, with employees dedicating a few hours each week to training and hands-on practice. The company leveraged an external "AI Coach" and partnered with a local community college to provide additional support.

By identifying critical skills gaps early on, providing customized training, and fostering a culture of continuous learning, companies of all sizes can build the AI expertise needed to thrive.

## 4. Building In-House Expertise

### *Developing a Comprehensive Training and Upskilling Program*

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### Technical Skills Training

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When it comes to technical skills training, it's important to focus on the specific AI technologies and tools that are most relevant to your business. This could include training in machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, or other specialized areas. There are many great resources available for technical skills training, including online courses, bootcamps, and certification programs. One example is Google's Machine Learning Crash Course, which provides a free, self-paced introduction to machine learning concepts and techniques.

### Soft Skills Development (e.g., Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving)

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Soft skills development includes skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and emotional intelligence – all of which will be increasingly important in the AI-driven workplace.

One example of a company that has prioritized soft skills development is Airbnb. They created a program called “Data University,” which aims to democratize data science and analytics skills across the organization. The program includes courses on data-driven decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving, all taught through a mix of in-person and online learning.

### Continuous Learning and Adaptability

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Of course, preparing your workforce for AI is not a one-and-done effort. As AI technologies continue to evolve and advance, it's essential to foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptability within your organization. This means providing ongoing learning opportunities, encouraging experimentation and risk-taking, and creating a safe space for employees to try new things and learn from their mistakes. It also means leading by example and modeling the kind of curiosity, openness, and adaptability that you want to see in your team.





## 5. Fostering a Culture of Innovation and Experimentation

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Preparing your workforce for AI requires fostering a culture of innovation and experimentation within your organization. This means encouraging your team to think creatively, take risks, and push the boundaries of what's possible with AI. Larger organizations may want to consider creating AI champions, dedicated innovation teams or “centers of excellence” within your organization. These teams can be given the freedom and resources to experiment with new AI technologies and applications, and to bring fresh ideas and perspectives back to the broader organization.

Any size organization can create a culture of experimentation and iteration, where employees are encouraged to test new ideas and approaches, learn from their failures, and continuously improve and refine their work. Ultimately, preparing your workforce for AI is about empowering your employees to be curious, adaptable, and innovative in the face of change.



## 6. Learning by Being Curious

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I've discovered through my own journey with AI that curiosity is the starting point that unlocks the door to mastery. It's the spark that ignites the fire of experimentation and, ultimately, leads to a deep understanding of AI. And the best part? Anyone can do it, including you.

You see, when you approach AI with a sense of wonder and enthusiasm, you open yourself up to a world of possibilities. It's like being a kid in a candy store – everywhere you turn, there's something new and exciting to explore. And as you start to poke around, ask questions, and tinker with different tools and techniques, something amazing starts to happen, you begin to develop a real feel for how AI works.

The point is, by letting your curiosity guide you, you'll naturally start to develop a hands-on understanding of AI that goes beyond the buzzwords and hype. You'll start to see how different algorithms work, how to choose the right tools for the job, and how to troubleshoot common issues that arise. And as you gain more confidence and experience, you'll find yourself taking on bigger and more ambitious projects, pushing the boundaries of what's possible with AI.

### **Change Happens**

They keep moving the cheese

### **Anticipate Change**

Get ready for the cheese to move

### **Monitor Change**

Smell the cheese often so you know when it is getting old

### **Adapt to Change Quickly**

The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese

### **Change**

Move with the cheese

### **Enjoy Change!**

Savor the adventure and enjoy the taste of new cheese!

### **Be Ready to Change Quickly and Enjoy It Again & Again**

They keep moving the cheese

From the #1 Bestseller,  
*Who Moved My Cheese?*  
by Spencer Johnson, M.D.

## **Adjusting Attitudes Toward Change**

The process of experimentation and learning is not a one-time event. We're all on a learning journey that requires a willingness to try new things, make mistakes, and keep pushing forward. It's about cultivating a mindset of lifelong learning, where you're always seeking out new knowledge and skills to stay ahead of the curve. This is my definition of change management.

This reminds me of the lessons taught in the book "Who Moved My Cheese" by Dr. Spencer Johnson. The story is a simple parable about change and how we react to it. The characters in the book, two mice named Sniff and Scurry and two little people named Hem and Haw, live in a maze and look for cheese. When their cheese is suddenly moved, they must adapt and find new cheese, which represents the changes we face in life and work.

As Dr. Johnson writes, "If you do not change, you can become extinct." This quote perfectly encapsulates the importance of embracing change and being curious about new opportunities, like AI. Just like the characters in the book, we must be willing to explore new paths, learn new skills, and adapt to the changing world around us.





## Summary

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So, if you're ready to embark on your own AI journey, my advice is simple: invest in your people, upskill and let your curiosity be your guide. Don't be afraid to challenge, ask questions, try new things, and make mistakes along the way. Embrace the process of experimentation and learning, and trust that it will lead you to a deeper understanding and mastery of this incredible technology.

And who knows – maybe one day, you'll be the one sharing your own stories of AI success and inspiring the next generation of curious business leaders. The possibilities are endless, and the journey starts with a single step.

# About the Author



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## Paul Gulbin

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Paul Gulbin understands firsthand how to effectively leverage partnerships, investments and acquisitions for strategic organic and inorganic growth. In his latest entrepreneurial venture, Paul founded Cambridge Transformation Partners to provide end-to-end guidance on optimizing performance - implementing digital solutions from AI and machine learning to process automation to modern systems and intelligent workflows.

As a seasoned business builder, Paul Gulbin is at the forefront of transforming organizations through AI and emerging technologies. Paul's dedication to empowering businesses with AI solutions reflects his commitment to leading by example in the digital revolution.

Paul focuses on leading the strategic direction and execution of AI initiatives across organizations to identify opportunities for innovation and develop cutting-edge AI solutions that drive business growth.

For those intrigued by the convergence of AI and business, Paul offers a practical roadmap to navigating and leveraging these technologies successfully. By adopting strategies discussed in this eBook, business leaders can be well on their way to preparing their people for the exciting world of AI.

To discover more about harnessing the power of AI or to engage with Paul's expertise, reach out to him at [\*\*paul@cambridgetransform.com\*\*](mailto:paul@cambridgetransform.com) or visit [\*\*www.cambridgetransform.com\*\*](http://www.cambridgetransform.com)

# Preparing People for AI:

## 6 Steps to Build the Next Generation of Knowledge Workers

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### Communicate the Vision and Benefits of AI Adoption

*Paint a picture of how AI will transform your business and empower employees. Highlight opportunities for growth, innovation, and personal development.*



### Address Concerns and Job Displacement Fear

*Be transparent and address fear head-on. Emphasize what's in it for me and share success stories.*



### Identify Roles and Skills Impacted by AI

*Identify the specific roles and skills impacted by AI. Conduct a skills gap analysis and identify areas where training or upskilling may be needed.*



### Build In-House Expertise, Training and Upskilling

*Develop a comprehensive training and upskilling program. Blend technical skill training, soft skills development, and ongoing learning opportunities.*



### Foster a Culture of Innovation and Experimentation

*Encourage your team to think creatively, take risks, and push the boundaries of what's possible with AI. Create teams that have the freedom and resources to experiment with new AI tools and bring fresh ideas and perspectives to your organization.*



### Learn by Being Curious

*Approach AI with a sense of wonder and enthusiasm. Explore, ask questions, and tinker with different tools and techniques.*

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