How AI will change the world of work in 2024

By Genevieve Koolen   19 Dec 2023

Our collective professional lives are set for a fundamental shake-up in the year ahead as the unprecedented impact of artificial intelligence (AI) is felt across job functions and in every industry.

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Does the entry of AI into every facet of our job functions represent a threat? On the whole, AI is largely expected to augment human capabilities, not replace them outright. The most likely impact of AI in the workplace is a transformation of our jobs and a shift in focus toward higher-value tasks.

This is reflected in some of the latest industry research.

One survey found that nearly half of European workers expect AI to significantly impact their jobs in 2024. A McKinsey analysis found that the impact of Generative AI on productivity could add the equivalent of $2.6tn to $4.4tn to the global economy annually, with 75% of that impact stemming from value generated in customer operations, marketing and sales, software engineering, and R&D.

What does AI hold for the world of work in 2024? My pick for the top three trends are:

Trend 1: Meeting demands for new types of skills

The rapid adoption of generative AI in the business landscape in 2024 will drive demand for specialised generative AI prompt engineers. Similar to how a sommelier is better at describing and pairing the unique characteristics of wines than the average person, so too will generative AI prompt engineers excel at prompting large language models to achieve more relevant, reliable and responsible business results.

For employers, this creates an opportunity to provide employees with valuable new skills that can transcend traditional job roles, especially within coding and software development. As generative AI grows in popularity, the need for expert AI skills

including good prompt writing will become indispensable to companies.

Trend 2: A new era for software developers

As the builders and engineers behind all of the world's critical and most popular software applications, developers hold a special place within modern technology-led enterprises. In the year ahead, expect AI to become more embedded in the software development process, bringing rapid and dynamic changes.

In light of a surge in the use of generative AI by developers, we will see the creation of new products and services, the automation of repetitive tasks, improvements in the quality of software, the emergence of entirely new ideas and business concepts, and personalised software development.

For companies, the opportunity is to rekindle creativity within their development teams and to redefine the boundaries of software development as we know it.

Trend 3: The indispensable value of managers

Is there a future where AI 'manages' teams of people? Highly unlikely. In fact, 2024 may very well see a resurgence in the role of managers in modern enterprises, especially in the delicate balancing act between implementing tighter budgets and greater bottom-line focus on the one hand and the motivating and engaging employees on the other.

Following a tenuous period in the wake of the pandemic and associated lockdowns where managers were largely cut off from their teams, the role of middle and frontline managers is back in focus.

While AI will inevitably be leveraged to support and improve management functions, it cannot adequately handle more complex tasks such as balancing the needs of neurodiverse employees with those of the business, for example.

However, this leaves managers under immense pressure from the top as well as from those under their management. Organisations will need to implement practices and processes to support the success of managers and empower them to navigate the complex problems they will inevitably deal with.

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