2024
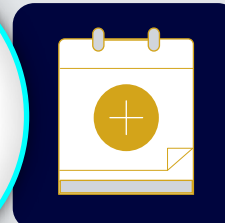## CONFERENCE RETROSPECTIVE

Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies
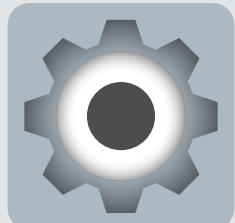
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FOREWORD

Mercer

As emerging technologies continue to disrupt and reshape our lives, we in HR and beyond have both an opportunity and a responsibility to expand our knowledge, skills, 'changeful-ness' and rethink how we equip our employees and organisation to stay relevant and connected.

This year's CRF conference presented a unique platform to share ideas, hear from brilliant thought leaders and explore new perspectives on the phenomenon of Generative AI. As we transition forward to our daily roles with this rich knowledge, we encourage you to reflect on the following key questions:

1 **Values and Vision Alignment:** What do you value as an individual and as an organisation? How can you craft a digital strategy that prioritises human needs, aligns your leadership team and fosters meaningful journeys rather than mere processes?

2 **Cultivating a Digital Mindset:** How will you instil a 'Digital Mindset' throughout your organisation to embrace the innovative applications of emerging technologies? Change is no longer a singular event; it's an ongoing journey that requires continuous learning and adaptation. To become a digital organisation, the goal is not 'Go Live,' but rather to 'Go Begin'. Technology is an enabler for the outcomes you want to achieve. Beyond 'launch' you will need to continuously measure, adapt and improve to enhance your employee experience.

3 **Redesigning Work:** In what ways will you redesign work and the tasks to leverage the strengths of both humans and advanced technologies? Where can you merge human creativity and emotional intelligence with the efficiency and analytical prowess of AI to unlock new levels of productivity and engagement?

4 **Mitigating Risks and Governance:** How will you address the risks associated with Generative AI in the workplace?

At Mercer, we advocate a three-stage approach: Educate, Enable, and Experience. The sooner HR, the business and the workforce comprehend the potentials of Generative AI, the better positioned they will be to embark on this journey and navigate potential challenges.

5 **Experimentation:** How will you FAFO (Fool around and find out)? Once teams are educated on the risks and considerations, how will you get started, create psychological safety and actively encourage experimentation? Will you start by focusing on a few solutions or many? Each experiment will be a stepping stone, pushing boundaries, exploring uncharted territories and redefining what is possible.

6 **Evaluating HR Tech Providers:** What are the foundational belief systems of your HR tech providers? Are they designing tools for the humans you serve or merely for the HR community? What is the problem you're solving for? Consider how these perspectives might shape the functionality and design of the tools you select and use.

As Marshall McLuhan aptly stated, *"We shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us."* We are at a *"printing press"* moment in time, the rapid advancement of knowledge and the dynamic interaction between humans and machines will redefine our work landscape. It is imperative that we educate ourselves on the implications of these changes, make informed choices and identify the skills, enablers (i.e. data quality) and governance necessary to reap the benefits while mitigating risks.

Now is the time to shift HR from being 'Stewards of Employment' to 'Stewards of Humanity', partnering with AI to enhance repetitive tasks, augment strategic decision making and analysis, and make meaningful connections.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants and speakers for sharing their insights and experiences over the past few days. If you wish to continue the conversation and collaborate further, please reach out to us.

Let's take this opportunity to shape a future where technology and humanity thrive together.

Tiana Morgan, HR Transformation Leader, UK
Rebecca Lys, Talent Transformation Leader

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2024 CONFERENCE RETROSPECTIVE

Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

Overall Conference Takeaways

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Navigating the Digital Frontier

What is your Generative AI Strategy?

AI in the Workplace: Ethics, Governance and Law

PARTNER MASTERCLASSES

AI and the Future of Intelligence

The Human-AI Age

Embracing a Digital-First Mindset

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01 **We are currently at a tipping point where AI becomes deeply integrated into society, culture and business.** Generative AI (GenAI)'s ability to generate new content will be revolutionary and we are still only in the infancy stages of this technology – the full potential of GenAI is not yet known.

02 **Do not overlook AI's profound cultural impact by only focusing on business outcomes.** Technologies reflect the values of their creators; leaders must continually identify the values embedded in AI tools and assess whether these align with their personal, business and societal values.

03 **Technology should amplify human potential and enhance – rather than replace – the human experience.** Think of GenAI as a 'thought partner' that can help you to work smarter and take away repetitive tasks, allowing you to focus on more meaningful work.

04 **Cultivate a Digital Mindset, recognising that this doesn't simply mean implementing new technology.** Technology is the 'how,' but not the 'what' or 'why' – these must be defined before deploying any solutions.

05 **A culture of learning and curiosity is essential in a digital-first world.** Organisations must invest in building intentional expertise to preserve critical capabilities and assess the knowledge that AI provides. We must focus on developing the skills that AI is unlikely to master and recognise that true expertise now involves asking the right questions and verifying the answers.

06 **HR has a critical role in shaping AI governance, focusing on transparency, accountability and employee engagement.** Organisations can mitigate legal risk through being proactive in setting employee expectations, creating clear policies and acceptable use policies.

07 **Ethical and responsible AI adoption requires responsible data use, transparency and attention to AI's environmental impact.** Rather than banning AI tools such as ChatGPT – which is unlikely to be effective – instead consider how you can ensure that people use these tools in a way that aligns with company values. Leaders need to embrace the technology's ability to simultaneously help and harm.

08 **AI does not create biases, but reflects our own biases back to us.** AI learns from data shaped by human preferences and therefore exposes existing biases. Whilst humans are deeply attached to our biases, we can leverage AI to help us recognise and confront our own preconceptions.

09 **AI's purpose is not to be perfect but to make things better than they currently are.** Societies must refrain from the double standard of demanding perfection from AI whilst accepting far worse human behaviours.

10 **HR must take the lead in navigating the complex challenges AI brings, focusing on reskilling, job design, transformation and ethical concerns.** HR's role must evolve from managing traditional employment processes to becoming stewards of work and humanity.

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2024 CONFERENCE RETROSPECTIVE

Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

At CRF's 14th International Conference, **Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies,** delegates gathered for three days in Malta, to discuss the implications of new technologies at a societal, organisational, HR function and individual level. With a particular focus on the rapidly evolving landscape of Generative AI (GenAI), attendees discussed how to leverage technology responsibly to drive growth and make work more meaningful, as well as HR's central role in leading the organisation through this change.

SIX KEY ACTIONS FOR HR LEADERS ›››

Conference Chair Gina Jardine summarised the discussions through six key actions that HR leaders can implement:

1. Develop an **AI-ready culture.**
2. **Align with business strategy** – be led by strategy, not the tool.
3. **Don't fear AI,** but do ensure the right ethical and governance frameworks are in place.
4. **Be ahead of the curve,** understanding what your organisation needs to do in the future and how they can prepare for this.
5. Proactively **manage change.**
6. Continue to **develop yourself** and **leverage your networks.**

CONFERENCE CHAIR

✉ **EMAIL**

GINA JARDINE is a former C-suite executive who has made her mark on some of the world's largest and most renowned companies. With a career spanning over 30 years, Gina has worked across public, private, and semi-government organisations, where she was responsible for developing and leading high-performing teams and organisations in her roles as Chief People Officer. Her experience in industries such as mining, building products, automotive and warehousing and logistics, has given her a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities faced by organisations that have long-term investments in financial and human capital-intensive programmes.

Navigating the Digital Frontier: Exploring the Intersection between Technology, Innovation and Culture

We are experiencing one of the largest exponential tech booms in history. Technology has become embedded in every part of the business, from marketing and HR to security, with continuous waves of change impacting organisations. However, if we only focus on business changes, there is a danger of overlooking the deep cultural impact of technology and underestimating technology's influence in co-creating our society.

As the business and AI landscape evolves, leaders must adapt to volatility, uncertainty and technological shifts by embracing complexity and understanding how technology is changing culture and society.

THREE DIGITAL CULTURE THEMES FOR LEADERS

Encoded Beliefs in Technology

Every technology we use is underpinned by a certain belief system. AI tools are shaped by the world view of their founders and are also trained on data that reflects human complexity, including biases and cultural perspectives.

Therefore, it is crucial for business leaders to actively seek out the beliefs underpinning the technologies they implement and continually questioning whether these align with their personal values, as well as broader business and societal values. The includes being explicitly aware of your own beliefs and values by considering questions such as:

* What kind of world should we create, and what values should guide us?
* What are the biggest global challenges, and how can we address them fairly?
* What's my role in shaping the future, and how can I contribute?
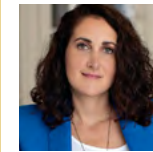
RAHAF HARFOUSH is a Strategist, Digital Anthropologist, and *New York Times* Best-Selling Author who focuses on the intersections between emerging technology, innovation, and digital culture. She is the Executive Director of the Red Thread Institute of Digital Culture and teaches 'Innovation & Emerging Business Models' at Sciences Politique's School of Management and Innovation in Paris. And is a member of France's National Digital Council. In 2021 she joined The Oxford Internet Institute as a Visiting Policy Fellow. Formerly, Rahaf was the Associate Director of the Technology Pioneer Program at the World Economic Forum in Geneva where she helped identify disruptive-startups that were improving the state of the world. Rahaf is the co-author of *The Decoded Company: Know Your Talent Better Than You Know your Customers,* listed on both the *New York Times* and USA Today best seller lists. It won a 2015 Gold Axiom Award for Best Business Technology Book.

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Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies ✦✦

The **Five Layers of Belief Framework** can help to uncover the beliefs embedded in a technology:

✱ **Founder vision** – what do the founders believe?

✱ **Funder vision** – what is the funding strategy?

✱ **Platform vision** – what values & behaviours does the technology promote?

✱ **Community vision** – what do the users believe?

✱ **Exploitation vision** – what do bad actors believe?

Building Deep Knowledge and Expertise

We are entering the world of automated and augmented creativity. Just as the industrial revolution allowed us to create physical products at scale, GenAI allows us to create knowledge products (including ideas, videos, text and code) at scale. Within HR, example use cases of GenAI include:

* **Proprietary internal HR chatbots** which enable practitioners to more easily access the latest research and internal HR policies.

* **External facing chatbots** which can perform tasks such as negotiating with vendors or answering queries from prospective job applicants.

* **Customised messaging at scale** by creating and sharing video or text tailored to individual preferences, whether that's to new recruits, employees or customers.

We are shifting from a searching culture to a generating culture, and this is changing how we learn. Instead of comparing several answers, users now rely on a single platform that presents one answer as definitive. This approach risks losing mastery of thinking, such as critically evaluating, divergent thinking or problem solving.

To navigate this shift, organisations must invest in building intentional expertise and maintain knowledge outside of these tools to preserve critical capabilities. Without the expertise to assess the knowledge that AI provides, organisations risk eroding their internal knowledge base. For example, organisations may require employees to first create a certain number of outputs without relying on AI tools to ensure they develop the required knowledge and skills.

Organisations need to ask themselves: *how can they deepen and expand their expertise to better collaborate with AI?*

Embracing the Duality of Technology

The complexity of our new reality is that technology both harms and helps simultaneously. For example, AI has the potential to revolutionise how we create solar panels and batteries to make them more sustainable, yet the energy required to power these AI tools also has a huge environmental impact.

There are no simple answers to many of the complex issues that AI introduces and leaders must have the courage to embrace this duality, holding space simultaneously for the positives, negatives and unknowns that accompany technological change. This means asking complex questions and considering the implications of technologies holistically.

KEY TAKEAWAYS ›››

1. **Digital culture is best understood through experience and experimentation.** Creating a 'Power Hour' – a regular time in your calendar to experiment with new tools and potentially share findings with others – can encourage experimentation.

2. **Complexity is the normal.** However, complexity also creates opportunity.

3. The best approach to living in a world where technology and answers are always changing is to **excel at asking questions,** such as:
   » Does our tech align with our beliefs?
   » Are we collaborating with AI to expand expertise?
   » Are we embracing duality?

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS ›››

1. **Does the technology we use reflect our core beliefs and values, or does it carry assumptions that could harm our culture or stakeholders?**

2. **How can we deepen our expertise to better collaborate with AI and ensure we're not just relying on it for answers but maintaining a mastery of thinking skills?**

3. **Are we embracing the dual impacts of AI, and how can we prepare for the opportunities and challenges it presents?**

Q **Given that AI is trained with all previous accumulated human wisdom, is there a danger that it will narrow our perspectives and negatively impact creativity and innovation?**

A *The answer is yes and no. These tools play a role as one part of our toolkit. For example, we can still generate our own ideas, but then use these tools to help organise or summarise our ideas. AI can also be used to expand creativity by making more time to explore and visualise things in new ways. However, it cannot replace the need to learn the basics of different creative skills.*

What is your Generative AI Strategy?

WHAT IS GENAI AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

GenAI uses technology to understand a particular context and then generate new content. It can be thought of as a general purpose generator or problem solver.

Unlike its predecessor, Machine Learning, which excelled at predicting outcomes without needing a broader understanding (e.g., optimising supply chains or playing chess), GenAI's ability to create is transformative. Its potential is limited only by data availability, human imagination and ethical considerations.

GenAI's breakthrough was made possible by Google's 2017 landmark research paper, *Attention is All You Need*, which laid the foundation for modern AI. With the release of ChatGPT in 2022, GenAI became widely accessible and is already transforming businesses through applications such as content creation, coding and customer engagement. Still in its early stages – like the internet's infancy – GenAI is evolving at warp speed. As organisations explore new use cases, they will unlock even more possibilities, both positive and challenging.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO AI

Organisations must approach AI strategically, rather than simply using it tactically to address immediate problems. A purely tactical approach will only address the low-hanging fruit and fail to address the real business issues.

Classifying GenAI Applications

Prof. Joshi presented a 2x2 matrix framework to classify GenAI applications based on two dimensions: the value they add to the organisation and the level of complexity or creativity they require to deliver that value. This approach allows organisations to classify and prioritise high-impact AI initiatives accordingly.

HR leaders should place special attention to tasks that are High Value but Low Complexity, as these are likely to be at the highest risk of replacement by AI.

AMIT JOSHI is Professor of AI, Analytics and Marketing Strategy at IMD Business School. He specialises in helping organisations use AI and develop their big data, analytics, and AI capabilities. An award-winning professor and researcher, he has extensive experience of AI and analytics-driven transformations in industries including banking, fintech, retail, automotive, telecoms, and pharma. Joshi believes that no organisation's digital transformation is complete until they really understand their data and how to upscale their analytical capabilities. He is currently focusing on how organisations can ensure that AI implementation occurs strategically and at scale rather than in small islands of excellence.

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Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

HIGH value

Summarise, Benchmark	Strategise, Synthesise
e.g. competitor updates	e.g. Firm strategy 2030

LOW value

Extrapolate	Update, Modify
e.g. reply to an email	e.g. create new pictures from prompts

LOW complexity HIGH complexity

Classifying GenAI applications

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?

The below matrix outlines the impact of GenAI on different types of tasks – increased efficiency, skills enhancement, provoking thinking and potential replacement. These are discussed in further detail opposite.

IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONS

HIGH value

Replacement	Provocation
Most potential for Replacement?	Use to challenge current thinking

LOW value

Efficiency	Enhancement
Replace tasks for employees	Use to compliment employees

LOW complexity HIGH complexity

Classifying GenAI applications

✱ Low value, low complexity tasks: *Increase Efficiency*

GenAI will increase our efficiency in completing low complexity, low value tasks such as day-to-day emails or creating presentations.

✱ Low value, high complexity tasks: *Skills Enhancement*

GenAI can complement and enhance our skills, allowing us to almost instantaneously become average at tasks that we were previously not good at.

✱ High value, high complexity tasks: *Provoke and Challenge Current Thinking*

Whilst we may not be comfortable using AI to conduct sensitive and complex tasks (such as writing a future strategy), we can use it for provocation. We can ask GenAI for feedback or even as a sparring partner to provoke our thinking and challenge ourselves.

✱ Low Complexity, High Value tasks: *Replacement?*

These tasks have the highest potential for replacement by AI. Organisations should consider how to reskill employees whose full-time job fits in this quadrant – ideally moving them into the top right quadrant. Organisations should also carefully consider before hiring any new employees whose role fits entirely in this quadrant.

AI DRAWBACKS

There are concerns and drawbacks associated with generative AI:

✱ Cost: Generative AI remains expensive, with some estimates suggesting that each query to ChatGPT costs between 1 to 10 cents, compared to a fraction of that for a standard Google search. A very high amount of computing power and therefore energy is also required.

✱ Regulation: most LLMs are opaque regarding their training datasets, leading to issues of accuracy, bias and copyright.

✱ Ethics: Regulatory frameworks are still evolving, with organisations adopting various policies ranging from outright bans to soft regulations.

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Overall Conference Takeaways

Navigating the Digital Frontier

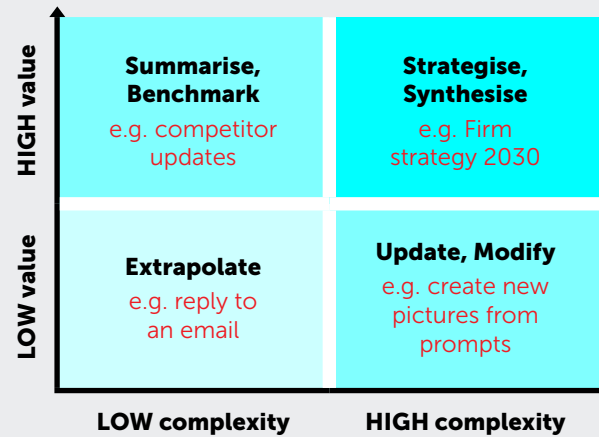**What is your Generative AI Strategy?**

AI in the Workplace: Ethics, Governance and Law

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AI and the Future of Intelligence

The Human-AI Age
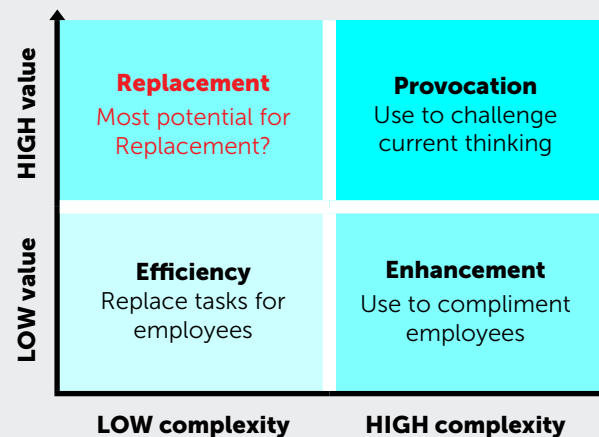
Embracing a Digital-First Mindset

THE SECRET TO WINNING WITH GENAI

✱ Start small and focus on 'boring' and simple tasks that add business value.

✱ Understand the nature of your 'battlefield' – different organisations, industries and geographies will face different problems.

✱ Don't use GenAI just because it is new – sometimes simple tools like Microsoft Excel will be the best tool for your specific problem. If you do use GenAI, understand which tool is the best to use – there are multiple tools and ways of using them.

✱ Launch and adoption should not be only left to IT. HR is the best driver in widely scaling and democratising these tools.

✱ Be humble and curious. Nobody is an expert due to the quick changing nature of these tools. The flipside of this is that you can very quickly catch up.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS FOR ATTENDEES >>>

1. How are you personally using / experimenting with GenAI?
2. How can you shape your AI policy and guidelines to encourage maximum adoption of this technology in your organisation?
3. What actions will you need to take to mitigate the possible downsides of this technology?

RESOURCES

🌐 **4 Types of GenAI Risk and How to Mitigate Them**

🌐 **What Roles Could Generative AI Play on Your Team?**

Q What would your advice be to an organisation or individual in terms of making the first step towards implementation?

A *When creating AI use cases within an organisation, success should be driven by ground-up experimentation, rather than top-down mandates. With the advent of ChatGPT, everyone with an internet connection gained access to one of the most powerful AI tools ever created. Organisations need to determine how they can leverage this democratisation and build something from momentum from the bottom up.*

Q How can we balance the difficulty in getting investment for these systems with the drive for widespread experimentation?

A *The cost of implementing AI tools varies significantly depending on the industry and organisational needs. For highly regulated industries, developing AI tools that meet stringent safeguards and firewalls can be expensive. However, for organisations with more basic security requirements, creating custom AI tools may be relatively cost-effective. Much of the expense depends on the complexity of the problems you aim to solve, which is why it's crucial to start with solving simpler problems.*

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AI in the Workplace:
Ethics, Governance and
Employment Law Considerations

REGULATORY LANDSCAPE IN THE UK, EU AND US

The regulatory landscape surrounding AI is constantly evolving as governments strive to balance fostering innovation, encouraging investment and ensuring effective regulation. Good AI governance must align with this shifting regulatory framework (examples of which are outlined below), as well as engaging with existing legislation that applies to AI, such as the **Equality Act 2010** in the UK.

The UK

* A light touch approach, with no specific legislation governing AI or its use in the employment context. However, certain guiding principles exist, such as the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology's published principles on Responsible AI in Recruitment.

* The 2024 change in government may lead to change in regulations.

EU

* Recently introduced the AI Act, the world's first comprehensive set of rules to govern the development and use of AI.

* This legislation adopts a risk-based approach and has multiple applications related to HR.

US

* A voluntary based approach with no federal legislation, though state regulations are starting to emerge.

* Existing frameworks, such as the Executive order on Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Development guide the regulation of AI.

Global organisations will also need to consider how different regulations might apply to different jurisdictions.

FURAT ASHRAF is a Partner within Bird & Bird's London employment team. Furat has an international focus, with extensive experience of supporting US multinationals with employment law needs across EMEA and APAC. She leads the Tech & Comms group and acts for some of the Firm's biggest tech clients. Most recently, she supported a number of clients on cross-border reductions, offshoring and other multi-jurisdictional change management exercises including the transition to, or away from, remote working. She has also advised on global policy and contract reviews, together with other compliance-related exercises for companies with employees in multiple countries. Furat supports clients on the TUPE aspects of outsourcings and business transfers and advises on the full spectrum of employment law issues such as unfair dismissal, unlawful deductions from wages, whistleblowing and discrimination cases.

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KEYNOTE SESSIONS

- Overall Conference Takeaways
- Navigating the Digital Frontier
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- AI and the Future of Intelligence
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AI IN THE WORKPLACE — RISK MITIGATION

There are numerous risk areas for HR regarding AI in the workplace, including employee misuse, discrimination, unequal impact on the workforce (e.g. when particular groups are excluded from having access to certain opportunities), litigation risk and reputational damage.

Through example use cases, the session outlined the following risk mitigation strategies that companies and HR teams can use when implementing and utilising AI systems:

✳ **Transparent and explainable AI processes and policies.** Organisations must take accountability for the tools they use and be able to clearly explain how decisions were made.

✳ **Early Engagement with Employees** to set expectations on acceptable use of tools, ensuring that employees understand the rules and guardrails in place (e.g. where will employees find the policy? Have you explained what will happen if they don't comply?). Through early engagement, organisations can also offer equal opportunities for everyone to learn and provide additional support to those who need it. When this process is followed thoroughly, organisations are on much safer legal ground if issues arise later.

✳ **Education, training and skill development** for any employees who interact with the technology, make decisions based on the technology or review its outputs. This should be ongoing to keep pace with the evolving nature of AI tools.

✳ **Safeguards and oversight,** ensuring that humans work alongside AI tools to validate solutions. This does not necessarily mean every AI-generated outcome needs review, but there should be a robust review protocol in place. Senior leadership should apply a risk-based approach, focusing on signing off high-risk use cases.

✳ **Due diligence.** Consider what data the tool has been tested on and whether you need to test it on your own data (be mindful that inaccuracies or hallucinations are more common in organisations with small pools of data). Conducting a pilot before wider rollout allows for testing in a safe and controlled environment.

✳ **Implementing informal reporting channels** when rolling out new tools. This reduces the risk of employee activism or public complaints.

✳ **Internal ongoing risk governance and risk management** to monitor and audit the system. This may include AI committees or advocates with ownership over this area.

KEY TAKEAWAYS ⟫⟫

1 **Risk mitigation is an important part of any AI strategy.** Clear acceptable use policies and/or principles can help to set employee expectations and ensure your business is protected from some of the main risks that may arise from the use of AI by the workforce at large (e.g. data protection, breach of confidentiality or IP infringement).

2 **Early engagement and communication with employees is crucial to ensure a positive dialogue** around the use of AI and to be able to address any concerns they may have. This should be a built on a robust, employee-facing AI policy.

RESOURCES

🌐 [Employment & AI: Navigating a New Technological Frontier — Event Summary Notes](#)

🌐 [EU Employment Masterclass with Lexology: What's new for 2024 on EU Works Councils, Platform Workers, AI, Whistleblowers and the 'S' in ESG?](#)

🌐 [The 5 in 10 Podcast Series Episode 4: The Key Considerations for Employers when Implementing an Employee-facing generative AI Policy](#)

🌐 [Generative AI Tools: Key Employment Issues and How to Address Them](#)

🌐 [Analysing the Impact of the EU AI Act Vote on Businesses](#)

DECODED

AI and the Future of Intelligence

DEFINITIONS

AI can be defined as 'computers doing things that previously only humans were thought to be capable of'. GenAI is different to previous forms of AI as it can generate new information, such as text, images and audio. The next big milestone for AI will be the creation of Artificial General Intelligence, meaning the ability of a computer to not only perform tasks like a human, but to adapt and respond in the way that a human would.

One widespread example of **GenAI** is **ChatGPT**, which is underpinned by a technology known as a **GPT**:

G **enerative** *(it generate / creates)*

P **re-trained** *(it has already been trained on data and is therefore released ready to be used)*

T **ransformer** *(a specific way of processing information through transforming it into a computer usable language)*

GPTs can be split into two categories:

* **Horizontal GPTs,** which provide broad, generalised solutions for many tasks (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini).

* **Vertical AI,** which provides deep, specialised solutions for specific industries (e.g. Bloomberg GPT for the finance sector).

Hallucinations are an inherent feature of a GPT and, when used with the appropriate safeguards, can enhance creativity and generate novel information. Organisations need to decide the level of risk they are willing to take and how they will keep humans in the loop to verify generated content.

NICKY KIRSHEN is the Managing Director of Decoded and has been a key member of the company's global expansion since 2014. Decoded partners with global organisations to accelerate digital transformation by building the talent required to unlock their digital potential. They do this by embedding learning programmes that enhance digital literacy and data skills across entire workforces. During her time at Decoded, Nicky has held various roles, including leading early business development in APAC and more recently, spearheading the strategic growth of the EMEA region.

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MARISA MITCHELL is the Global Head of Leadership Training at Decoded, where she combines her passion for teaching with her expertise in data and digital technologies to design and deliver programmes for C-Suite executives and senior leaders worldwide. She has played a pivotal role in expanding Decoded's training portfolio, across topics including AI, data, cybersecurity, open banking and design thinking. One of her notable achievements includes leading the development and facilitation of training programmes for multiple branches of the US Government, including the DoD, DoJ, Congressional Staffers and Senators.

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Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

GENAI EXAMPLE USES CASES

There are a variety of GenAI tools which organisations can use to free employees up from repetitive, tedious, routine work and create time for humans to engage in more creative and innovative tasks. Supported by demonstrations and hands-on exercises, the session highlighted the below example use cases of GenAI:

* **Summarising Information.** Tool such as ChatGPT can be used to summarise reports in a variety of ways, including providing page numbers to reference information or creating a LinkedIn post to publicise a report. Users should review the results from their initial prompt and then iterate accordingly.

* **Reviewing Candidate CVs** according to a set of criteria. GenAI adds value by highlighting important information or ranking certain terms, but should not be used to make final judgements concerning who to hire – this still requires human expertise.

* **Create AI assistants,** most commonly by collaborating with an external provider to turn an existing knowledge base into an easily searchable tool. For example, Morgan Stanley designed an internal AI assistant in partnership with OpenAI, allowing analysts to quickly access information from reports and therefore spend more time with their customers.

* **AI video creation.** Tools such as Colossyan can create AI videos from text in minutes and auto-translate to dozens of languages with the click of a button. Example use cases include creating training or disseminating regularly updated information.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING AI IN THE WORKPLACE

This is an emerging field and there is no standard set of rules for all organisations. However, there are key themes and questions for practitioners to consider:

* AI can assist you to do your job, boost your analytical and decision making capabilities and even heighten your creativity, **but it can't be you.** Organisations should 'keep the human in the loop' and think about how they can use GenAI as an assistant to upgrade their productivity.

* Given that **incorrect information or hallucinations are a feature of these tools,** make a plan for how you will safeguard against this. Where did the data that the tool is trained on come from?

* Rather than banning tools (which is ineffective), **how can you ensure that people use these tools in a way that aligns with your company values?** How will you make sure your policies and procedures are up to date?

* Consider **how you will safeguard against biases and balance ethical considerations.** How can you ensure that AI technologies don't exacerbate existing inequalities? Given the vast amounts of energy required to train and maintain these tools, what are the implications of rolling out an AI tool (e.g. Microsoft's Co-Pilot) on an organisation's carbon footprint?

* Always remember that **humans have the power to shape and direct AI.**
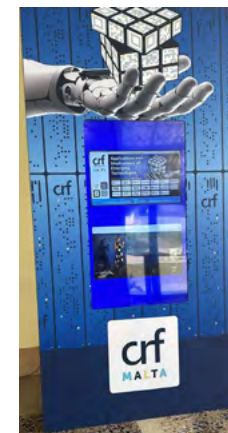
The Human AI Age

Historically, societies have often blamed technological inventions for causing societal harm, such as fears that writing would destroy memory or that newspapers would end social gatherings. It is therefore unsurprising that overall sentiment towards AI is largely negative, with three key fears dominating mainstream discussions:

(*) AI will destroy jobs and make humans obsolete.

(*) AI will introduce bias into human society.

(*) AI will make humans antisocial.

While none of these concerns are entirely untrue, they require more nuance, as discussed below.

CONFRONTING AI RISKS

Fear 1: **AI will Destroy Jobs and Make Humans Obsolete.**

(*) **Treat predictions with caution.** Historically, predictions about the catastrophic impact of new technologies on jobs have often been exaggerated. For example, predictions that big data would fully automate vast numbers of jobs have not come to pass. We should treat similar predictions of large-scale AI-driven job losses with caution.

(*) **Invest in upskilling and reskilling.** While AI has displaced certain roles, it has simultaneously created new ones, often at a faster rate than jobs have been made redundant. The greater challenge lies in the inaccessibility of these new opportunities for displaced workers, underscoring the critical need for reskilling and upskilling.

(*) **Productivity has stalled.** Productivity surged during the early digital revolution (2000–2008) but stagnated post-2008, coinciding with the financial crisis and the rise of AI-enabled smartphones and social media. 60-85% of smartphone use happens during working hours and 70% of workers report being distracted (estimated to cost the US economy $650bn in productivity loss). The impact of tech-enabled hybrid working on productivity has also been mixed.
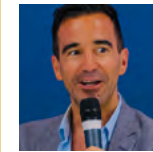
PROF. TOMAS CHAMORRO-PREMUZIC is an international authority in people analytics, talent management, leadership development, and the Human-AI interface. He is the Chief Innovation Officer at Manpower Group, co-founder of Deeper Signals and Metaprofiling, and Professor of Business Psychology at both University College London, and Columbia University. He has previously held academic positions at New York University and the London School of Economics, and lectured at Harvard, Stanford and London Business Schools, Johns Hopkins, IMD, and INSEAD, as well as being the CEO at Hogan Assessment Systems. Dr. Tomas has published 10 books and over 200 papers, making him one of the most prolific social scientists of his generation. He is a frequent contributor to Fast Company, *The Guardian, Forbes,* and the *Harvard Business Review.*

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Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies ✦

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Fear 2: AI Will Introduce Bias in Human Society

* AI systems learn from data shaped by human preferences, choices and behaviours. They therefore expose existing biases, rather than create or introduce them. For instance, a chatbot trained to predict promotions will mirror the biases present in a company's culture rather than create them.

* Humans are deeply attached to our biases, often unconsciously resisting information that contradicts our existing beliefs. We tend to prefer echo chambers, where our views are reinforced rather than challenged. When these biases are not reflected in AI outputs, we might even accuse the systems of being biased themselves.

* We can leverage AI to help us recognise and confront our own preconceptions, rather than seeing AI as the source of bias. Unlike human biases, which can be deeply hidden and hard to pinpoint, AI is code – it can always be unpacked and examined. While no amount of unconscious bias training can make individuals fully unlearn their ingrained beliefs, AI excels at unlearning and relearning.

Fear 3: AI will Make Humans Antisocial.

* There is some evidence to support the idea that AI is making us more antisocial. The algorithms that fuel social media incentivise us when we display narcissistic behaviours. AI-driven social media platforms are designed to highjack our attention and have helped fuel digital narcissism.

SEEING OURSELVES THROUGH AI

Overall, humans should not blame AI for our lack of focus, prejudiced bias or fragile egos. Instead, AI reflects or even augments our dark side tendencies. This also speaks to a big opportunity – to upgrade ourselves and improve in the age of AI to ensure that the AI age is a new and better human age.

THE AI OPPORTUNITIES

1 Harness the skills AI will (probably) not master
While AI excels in IQ-related tasks, it remains uncertain whether it will rival humans in emotional intelligence (EQ). Whilst qualities such as empathy, curiosity, and self-awareness continue to be more distinctly human qualities, humans do not necessarily consistently display these qualities in the workplace ourselves. We should identify the skills that AI cannot current master and focus skills development on these.

2 Shift from credentials to potential
AI devalues and disrupts hard skills and expertise. Therefore, organisations in the future will need to not only hire for skills and soft skills, but for potential – i.e. the ability to develop the relevant skills in the future. Even if future skills are unknown, cultivating employees who have good learning skills (i.e. they are smart), people skills (i.e. they are nice) and have a strong work ethic will help prepare your organisation for future demands.

3 Develop deep expertise
GenAI provides widely accessible but superficial expertise – it can be thought of as the intellectual equivalent of the fast food industry. Rather than just knowing answers, true expertise now involves asking the right questions, verifying the answers and adopting a mindset of 'slow thinking'.

4 Rehumanise work
As AI increasingly takes over more of our work tasks, we must consider how to maintain human connection in the workplace and avoid only focusing on efficiency (an approach which risks creating a dehumanising experience, such as avoiding human interaction by ordering coffee online). If AI is set to handle 80% of our work, it becomes even more crucial to ensure that the remaining 20% – the direct, human-to-human connections – are meaningful and humane. Leaders will need to relate to and connect with their teams on a human level more than ever before.

5 No double standards (AI does not need to be perfect).
It's useful to remember that AI is still a work in progress and far from perfect. Societies must refrain from the double standard of demanding perfection from AI whilst accepting far worse human behaviours. Even in its current form, AI is often better than the alternative.

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Overall Conference Takeaways

Navigating the Digital Frontier

What is your Generative AI Strategy?

AI in the Workplace: Ethics, Governance and Law

PARTNER MASTERCLASSES

AI and the Future of Intelligence

The Human-AI Age

Embracing a Digital-First Mindset

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS FOR ATTENDEES ›››

1 How are you planning to future-proof your talent for the AI age?

2 What key skills must leaders display to successfully navigate the AI age?

Q **From the perspective of a leader, what are the mistakes to avoid in relation to AI?**

A *When integrating AI, one of the most common mistakes is viewing it as a solution in search of a problem. AI is not a strategy in itself – instead, it should be infused into your existing strategy to accelerate or protect it. There's no need to change your KPIs, objectives, or outcomes; rather, focus on how AI can positively impact them.*

Start small, learn from mistakes and be prepared to iterate. On a cultural level, create an experimental mindset, encouraging people to use it and share their experiences.

Q **How can we build deep expertise in early talent, considering that many of the experiences of previous generations are now automated?**

A *We already have a lot to improve on in terms early career talent and the 'when' and the 'why' of assessing people for high potential, before even addressing the 'how'. For example, we hire people based on what they have done, rather than on their future potential. This demands a common sense where we don't overly worry about what GenAI might change, when we already have so many human-created areas to improve on.*

Digital HR Transformation: Embracing a Digital-First Mindset in a Rapidly Evolving World

We have transitioned from a world where being digitally connected was difficult to one where building meaningful human connections is the challenge. In today's human-technology era, where both are meant to work together, we often overlook the human aspect. Technology should amplify human potential, even when so many interactions happen online.

ADOPTING A DIGITAL MINDSET

As organisations face increasingly complex challenges, HR's role must evolve from managing traditional employment processes to becoming **stewards of work and humanity.** The aim is to ensure technology enhances the human experience, not replaces it. HR will be responsible for redesigning work to align with this vision.

* A modern talent strategy must encompass **Buy, Build, Borrow, Bot.** HR needs to decide what tasks are best done by humans and what can be delegated to machines.

* Every organisation should adopt a **digital-first mindset,** recognising that this doesn't simply mean implementing new technology. Technology is the 'how,' but not the 'what' or 'why' – these must be defined before deploying any solutions.

* HR must shift from executing tech projects to **truly being digital.** No investment in technology will deliver results without this foundational understanding.

* When things go wrong, it's often a reflection of how we approach change. **Change isn't the enemy** – the problem is our reluctance to integrate it into our strategy.

* Organisations may fear **change fatigue,** but change is inevitable. Rather than avoiding it, leaders should focus on how to adapt to ongoing changes.

JASON AVERBOOK is a Senior Partner and Global Leader of Digital HR Strategy with Mercer Leapgen. From 2018 to 2023, he was Co-founder and CEO of Leapgen, a digital transformation company helping organisations shape their future workplace. Now as Mercer Leapgen he continues to broaden executive mindsets to rethink how to better design and deliver employee services and drive the shift from 'doing technology projects' to 'being a digital function'. Prior, Jason served as the CEO of The Marcus Buckingham Company. In 2005, he co-founded Knowledge Infusion LLC and served as its CEO until 2012, when the company was sold to Appirio. He also held senior leadership roles at PeopleSoft and Ceridian Corporation. Jason has been recognised globally as one of the top three thought-leaders around HR technology and the future of work.

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Applications and Implications of Emerging Technologies

HOW DO WE CHANGE CHANGE?

There are two approaches to managing change: change management and **changefulness**. Change management teaches people how to implement processes, while changefulness encourages a mindset that embraces new ways of thinking, experimentation and risk-taking. A culture of changefulness enables organisations to remain adaptable.

People often assume that bringing in new tools will automatically lead to transformation, but this isn't the case. Real transformation requires strategy and careful thought before technology comes into play. Skipping this step will likely result in failure, leading to the incorrect belief that the technology itself is flawed.

DIGITAL EQUATION FOR SUCCESS

The below steps can help us to exceed the expectations of the workforce and meet the needs of the business. Digital transformation is not a one-time project but a continuous journey as AI evolves.

1 Vision and Mindset

Begin with an aligned vision, where the HR leadership team shares a strategy and sees transformation as a continuous journey, focusing on a 'go begin' mindset rather than just 'go live.'

A key challenge in AI implementation is determining what the organisation aspires to be 'great' at versus what it will be 'good enough' at.

Think holistically as a function, rather than in silos.

2 Audience and People

Design technology not for HR, but for the humans who will use it.

3 Processes and Journeys

While HR often excels at process efficiency, employees value experience. Processes generate data, but journeys generate emotion.

4 Technology and Solutions

If the earlier steps are done right, implementing technology becomes the easiest part. However, many organisations start here, overlooking the human side.

AI AND AMPLIFYING PEOPLE

The true essence of being digital is about amplifying people, not replacing them or eliminating jobs. A job consists of many tasks, and while AI can automate or eliminate certain tasks, its purpose is to enhance human potential.

We are at the equivalent of the AI printing press moment – AI has gone mainstream, and many believe it will change everything. C-suite executives, influenced by media portrayals, often fear that AI will replace jobs entirely, but this is a misconception.

In reality, AI will reduce transactional work (e.g., answering emails, data entry, report writing) and enable employees to focus on relational work. This is not a futuristic idea – it's achievable today. Although some organisations may not be ready for this shift due to change management challenges, the technology is here and ready to be used. Organisations must decide how much to automate and own their digital signature, shaping the future of work based on their unique vision.

USING GENERATIVE AI (GENAI)

GenAI should be seen as a thought partner – it knows vast amounts of information, learns quickly and adapts to your working style. It's patient, capable of 'unlearning' and can move seamlessly across disciplines. However, keep in mind that it can also make mistakes or 'hallucinate.'

GenAI engages in ongoing conversations rather than providing one-shot answers like traditional search engines.

The session demonstrated **use cases include creating course plans, quizzes, writing HTML code, building ROI calculators** and generating personalised emails and videos – all within minutes.

GenAI's unique ability to see, hear and speak simultaneously allows users to practice conversations and receive tailored feedback. With **ChatGPT Vision,** users can upload images, slides, or graphs they don't understand and receive summaries or interpretations.

GenAI has evolved dramatically in just five years, with ChatGPT4 representing an exponential leap in intelligence, **boasting an IQ of 120.** The upcoming ChatGPT5, expected to launch this year, is anticipated to be many times more intelligent.

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KEYNOTE SESSIONS

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The key is to approach technology with a mindset of 'what if something goes right?' rather than focusing on what might go wrong. Additionally, identify AI use cases that align with your specific strategy – there's no one-size-fits-all approach.

BEST PRACTICES FOR PROMPT WRITING

The below cues can help to significantly enhance the responses you receive:

✳ Task description – a clear statement of what you are looking for.

✳ Role – the persona you want the AI to assume.

✳ Context – information that will help AI with the task.

✳ Specific Requirements – details or instructions that AI needs to compete the task.

✳ Boundaries – limitations on what the AI should or should not be doing.

✳ Reasoning – how the AI should reason and analyse the task.

DATA PRIVACY AND GOVERNANCE

When using public tools, remember that you can choose to opt out of having your data used for training. Most queries can be handled without sharing personal information. For proprietary internal tools, data remains within the organisation.

Rather than blocking tools like ChatGPT due to privacy concerns, it's more effective to educate employees on responsible use and governance. Don't avoid AI – use it wisely.

Q For those who are learning to implement a digital mindset, what can we focus on from an HR perspective?

A *Be agile and unafraid of change and risk. Changefulness is key, as is not thinking in siloes. Focusing on the outcomes, rather than the 'how'. Data hygiene is also a huge component.*

EMBRACING A DIGITAL-FIRST MINDSET ›››

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Change Management: The Essentials

Change is a constant in organisational life, yet the majority of change initiatives are judged to have failed. Learn how to manage change effectively, avoid the problems that hamper most change efforts, and apply practical tools and frameworks in your organisation.

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Workforce Analytics and Storytelling

Data and analytics are the future of HR. This course will prepare you for that future: arming you with the practical tools to drive valuable insights around business issues, influence decision-making and drive organisational performance.

crf learning ON DEMAND COURSE
AI: Implications and Applications

Unlock the revolutionary potential of AI that is transforming the way we live and work. Embracing AI can enable your organisation to achieve greater efficiencies and enhance employee experience. This course will equip you with the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate AI into your HR workflows, enabling you to make better informed decisions, drive organisational growth and seize the competitive edge.

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5 Ways Technology is Driving Revolution in Leadership Development

Technology is constantly adapting and evolving. For some, it is an enabler and for others – particularly for Generation Z – it is more of an expectation and an extension to normal life. Post pandemic, attending meetings remotely has become business as usual for many. Group interactive learning is also likely less to be prominent with the advent of 'at-the-fingertip' online knowledge and eLearning. As a result, applied skills development may have suffered.

LMS systems help distribute and make accessible a large content of material for self-directed learning. But, is there a way to tap into technology to enable group learning and skills application?

Joey Lowdon and Rob Field from Advanced People Strategies shared an applied example of the APS SkillsPilot solution, a next generation development tool for leaders and their teams. This technology enables the development of practical skills in dealing with presented business issues from and with real people in the room. Participants, sponsors, mentors and coaches are able to participate from anywhere in the world or review content at a later time, meaning supporting investment continues to be invested in the learning experience rather than venue overheads.

Such an approach enables sponsors to blend and integrate a range of development activities such as personality, 360 and climate survey diagnostics with targeted group learning and development skills practice and application reflection.

The CRF Masterclass session shared an example of how this technology is being integrated into normal working day schedules. Learning developments are evolving from sponsor-led to participant requested involvement and HR leaders are able to achieve a bigger bang for their buck and stronger engagement with their audiences.

APS CONTACTS

Request for slides and materials

✉ **Rob Field**
Learning and Development Director

✉ **Joey Lowdon**
Senior Learning and Development Consultant

KEY TAKEAWAYS *How Technology is Enabling Skills Development*

For sponsors:

1. **Optimise budgets** by removing the associated costs of travel and accommodation that come with traditional learning events.

2. Enable people or teams dispersed by obstacles such as geography, time zones or filled calendars to **attend meaningful, applied learning events** with business relevant scenarios.

3. **Assess and compare capabilities,** experience, and personality across multiple regions and territories.

4. **Increase your talent pool for future positions,** with HR helping potential leaders accelerate experience and learning in any region around the world.

For participants:

1. **Agile programme delivery** means events can be focused to specifically address capabilities highlighted in assessments and be delivered in bitesize segments, spread over extended time periods, resulting in a better likelihood of learning retention.

2. **Record and reflect** on learning and behaviours with individuals or groups post event to enable continuous improvement programmes.

3. Without the need for travel or excessive time away from day-to-day responsibilities, sessions can be attended easily with **minimal impact on your working day.**

RESOURCES

🌐 **SkillsPilot**

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Workforce Disruption:
Responding to Emerging Technologies in the Context of International Restructuring

In this session, Bird & Bird discussed how AI and other emerging technologies provide opportunities for making restructuring and redundancy projects faster as well as more efficient, accurate and cost-effective. At the same time, there are a range of thorny issues for organisations to navigate, including ethical issues, legal considerations, concerns around job security and challenges with implementation. A clear strategy and training are key.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 **AI enhances efficiency and accelerates restructuring processes** by automating repetitive tasks and allowing a better analysis of large data sets, leading to faster and more data-driven decisions.

2 While AI may reduce human bias, **it introduces ethical and legal risks,** such as the perpetuation of discrimination if not properly managed or issues regarding consultation and legal compliance during implementation.

3 Consequently, successful implementation of AI requires **clear objectives, proper tool selection, and training for both management and employees** to ensure smooth integration into restructuring/redundancy exercises.

4 In particular, AI decision-making in these projects should be **balanced with human oversight** to avoid overreliance on technology and unintended consequences.

5 In any case, AI will not only serve as a tool for restructuring/redundancy processes, but also will **trigger them** as it transforms organisational roles and skill requirements. Companies will need to adapt their structures and roles, as well as prepare their employees for these changing work environments.

BIRD & BIRD CONTACTS

Request for slides and materials

✉ **Charles Hill**
Associate, United Kingdom

✉ **Jorge J. Sanz Levia**
Counsel, Spain

RESOURCES

🌐 **Employment and AI: Navigating a New Technological Frontier**

🌐 **Change Management and Restructuring Projects**

🌐 **AI in the Workplace: Shaping the Next Generation**

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Mastering AI –
Shaping the Near Future of Work

Today is likely the last moment before AI is embedded into almost every aspect of our work and our lives. While current artificial intelligence systems are over-hyped in the present moment, virtually every sector of the economy and society will be affected by AI in the days ahead, and those impacts are likely to be profound. This is because these systems have three remarkable features:

- They are already quite capable;
- They are getting more capable by the week and
- Anybody can use them.

Given this broad applicability, BTS presented how it is useful for leaders to learn:

- How AI works (what it can and cannot do).
- How to think strategically about using AI both today and tomorrow.
- How to talk to anyone (employees, customers, regulators, vendors etc.) about points 1 and 2.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Chapter 1 Artificial Intelligence is the simulation of any cognitive task.
The key terms to know are **machine learning, deep learning** and **generative AI.**

2. Chapter 2 AI systems are X to Y statistical prediction machines. **AI doesn't 'think' — it finds patterns in data.** The value of its output depends on:
1. the potential value at stake from your use case, and
2. the value of data you use to solve the use case.

3. Chapter 3 This is likely the last moment before AI is embedded into almost every aspect of our work and our lives. Leveraging AI will **require us to develop new mindsets and**

skillsets, and to let go of some beliefs that emerged from the limits of older technology. These may include behaviours and biases we've never seen before.

Moving forward, we have found that the best way to build the alignment, mindset and capability that leaders need to use these systems (as well as overcome resistance to using these systems) is through simulation based immersive experiences that allow participants to experience and internalise the key shifts required.

BTS CONTACTS

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✉ **James Blaker**
Senior Vice President & Head of BTS London

✉ **William Heard**
Director, BTS London

✉ **Peter Mulford**
Executive Vice President and Managing Director, BTS Innovation and Digital Transformation Practice

RESOURCES

🌐 **Prediction Machines: The Simple Economics of Artificial Intelligence**

🌐 **Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI**

🌐 **The Age of AI: And Our Human Future**

🌐 **Three Shifts Towards Becoming an AI-augmented Business**

🌐 **The 6 Most Important Questions CEOs Should Be Able to Answer About AI Now**

🌐 **Podcast: Man vs Machine: Trusting Computerised Mathematics**

🌐 **Podcast: The Future is Now**

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AI and Ethics:
Leadership and Decision-Making in AI-Enabled Businesses

Generative AI has rapidly transformed the business landscape, with major tech firms racing to enhance their capabilities and products. While AI can conduct complex tasks like deep web searches and producing sophisticated content, many question whether these systems possess true intelligence. Governments and institutions are grappling with how to regulate AI as it poses risks such as the spread of misinformation and harmful biases, yet AI tools remain easily accessible without clear usage guidelines.

During a workshop at our Annual Conference, Headspring's Associate Professor Roger Steare, an expert in AI ethics and moral reasoning, guided our members through the complexities of ethical decision-making. Steare introduced the MoralDNA Profile and shared insights from testing generative AI systems like ChatGPT 4.0 and Llama 3.1.

These generative AI systems either stated that they were incapable of moral reasoning, empathy, self-control and humility; OR they lied by suggesting that they did have these capabilities. These findings led to some important questions:

1 **Would we hire someone who is incapable of moral reasoning, who feels no empathy, who lies or who is narcissistic?**

2 **Should we therefore trust AI to help us make good decisions?**

3 **What then will we do to use AI responsibly?**

HEADSPRING CONTACTS

Roger Steare
Associate Professor, Headspring

✉ **Nick Winwood**
VP, Corporate Partnerships UK&I

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The conversation sparked a range of thought-provoking insights and raised even more critical questions. As AI continues to evolve and integrate deeper into our lives and businesses, the ethical challenges it presents are only beginning to unfold. How we choose to navigate these challenges may well shape the future of leadership and decision-making in AI-enabled environments. The journey towards responsible AI is just getting started – what role will you play?

Headspring works with over 250 leading organisations worldwide to support leaders with decision making, gain an outside-in perspective of their industry and have clarity to lead in a changing world.

RESOURCES

🌐 **Beyond Practice: A Talent Strategy that Transforms**

🌐 **How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love AI**

🌐 **Why Isolated L&D Programmes Don't Lead to Real Change**

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Meet AI, the Newest Member of your Team. How will it transform the team as we know it?

As AI integrates into daily workflows, automating tactical tasks and streamlining processes, we are presented with a unique opportunity to reshape how we work and interact as teams. The shift towards an era of an abundance of time, enables leaders to redirect their focus from routinised burdens to what truly drives long-term success: human connection and creativity.

While leaders are motivated to enhance team bonds, many feel unprepared to do so effectively. This gap in relational capability, combined with over-reliance on AI, risks undermining genuine human interaction. Evidence suggests that teams using AI in meetings may hold back ideas or self-censor, fearing how their contributions might be recorded or perceived.

Encouraging teams to tap into their intuitive insights can unlock creativity and problem-solving potential that AI or structured systems might miss. McKinsey research shows that organisations often rely on social capital to drive innovation but fail to create environments where it can flourish. Moving beyond traditional communication methods, teams can adopt structures like Peer Forums, Open Space Technology or Generative Conversations to foster collective intelligence. As AI handles repetitive tasks, teams can dedicate more time to these exploratory conversations, leading to new ways of collaborating and innovating.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 **Prioritise Psychological Safety** (as it was meant to be): Create environments where team members feel safe to share intuitive ideas without judgment or fear. Intuition, a source of innovative thinking, thrives in psychologically safe spaces. HR leaders should position AI as an enabler of both efficiency and relational depth, allowing teams to connect and collaborate in ways that generate groundbreaking ideas.

2 **Facilitate Unstructured Conversations:** Encourage open-ended discussions where intuition takes the lead. Structures like Peer Forums and World Café create opportunities for team members to trust their instincts and share innovative ideas. These settings also nurture the ability to access and express intuition – a skill that is often underutilised in traditional team settings. Team leaders should cultivate environments where intuition is encouraged.

3 **Invest in Relational Capability:** Equip leaders and teams with the skills to build authentic relationships that go beyond superficial collaboration. Our Masterclass poll revealed a gap between the Will and the Skill.

People still leave jobs primarily due to poor managers. By leveraging AI to alleviate tactical burdens, leaders will now have an abundance of time to nurture the relationships and creativity that retain top talent and drive innovation. The future of work lies not only in what technology can do but in how deeply we can connect with each other and unlock our shared potential.

Let's seize this moment to deepen how we relate to one another, and unlock the powerful, intuitive insights that will shape the organisations of tomorrow

RESOURCES

🌐 [How AI Features Can Change Team Dynamics](#)

🌐 [Network effects: How to Rebuild Social Capital and Improve Corporate Performance](#)

🌐 [Would Having an AI Boss be Better than your Current Human One?](#)

🌐 [Inspira AI Corp. Reveals Groundbreaking Study on AI vs Human Management in Modifying Workplace Behaviour](#)

Mercer

How GenAI is Reshaping the Employee Experience

In this masterclass, Mercer's Jason Averbrook and Tiana Morgan explored the exciting possibilities of Generative AI and its impact on the future of work. They discussed the latest features of Generative AI and how it is revolutionising the employee experience by focusing on three key aspects: 'Heads,' 'Hands' and 'Heart' work. From improving communication and collaboration to streamlining workflows and boosting productivity, Generative AI is transforming our day-to-day work. The masterclass also emphasised the shift from 'Technology Implementation' to 'Digital Transformation.'

During interactive group discussions, participants explored the potential of Generative AI in their own organisations and work environments. They delved into topics such as leveraging advancements in natural language processing, computer vision and virtual reality. These technologies can be harnessed to create personalised and immersive employee experiences, ultimately enhancing productivity and engagement.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Drawing on real-world insights, live case studies and success stories, the masterclass provided a comprehensive overview of Generative AI's potential and how it can reshape the employee experience. Participants left with practical knowledge and inspiration to leverage this technology in their own organisations, including:

1. **Knowledge and strategies** for leveraging GenAI to reshape the employee experience.

2. **An understanding** of how GenAI can benefit employee productivity and engagement.

3. An awareness of the importance of **adopting a 'human-centric' design approach** when implementing AI to enhance the employee experience. Additionally, the masterclass also highlighted the significance of designing the employee experience using AI to meet consumer expectations.

MERCER CONTACTS

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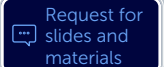
Get in touch with **Tiana** or **Jason** to continue the conversation about Digital HR Strategy in a bespoke workshop for your organisation.

✉ **Jason Averbook**
Senior Partner, Global Leader Digital HR Strategy

✉ **Tiana Morgan**
Principal, Workforce Transformation and HRT SME

RESOURCES

🌐 **Future of HR White Paper**

🌐 **HR Service Delivery White Paper**

🌐 **HR Technology Confidence Check**

Sidebar navigation

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KEYNOTE SESSIONS

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A Revolution in Leadership Development

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Workforce Disruption

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Tech-Savvy Leadership

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Tech-Savvy Leadership:
What does it mean and
what can we do about it?

In an engaging masterclass on 'tech-savvy leadership,' Anna Barras and Nick Twyman from RHR International highlighted the growing demand for senior leaders who can confidently navigate today's technology-enabled world. They defined tech-savvy leadership and facilitated a discussion around the essential mindsets, skills and behaviours that enable leaders to excel. The session emphasised the importance of considering a range of nuanced, contextual factors when assessing executive leaders. The masterclass concluded with a hands-on exercise designed to apply the learning from the session.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 **Successful integration of emerging technologies such as Generative AI is crucial for businesses,** but employees doubt leaders' ability to handle risks and opportunities, while leaders themselves are struggling to keep pace with rapid change.

2 **Identifying and fostering 'tech-savvy' mindsets, skills and behaviours in the workforce is essential** to driving technology-enabled growth and informing better executive hiring decisions.

3 **Capabilities for 'tech-savvy' leaders are not necessarily different to those we would look for in leaders who are leading successfully at scale.** In particular, we would want to carefully assess for outside-in thinking, risk tolerance, comfort with ambiguity and reasoning agility, as well as strong communication skills to inspire and engage others.

4 **Understanding the market, organisational and role context** is crucial for determining the most critical success factors and for building a detailed, behaviourally-based profile for assessing candidates.

RHR CONTACTS

✉ **Anna Barras**
Partner

✉ **Nick Twyman**
Partner

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RESOURCES

🌐 **RHR Overview**

🌐 **Assessing Critical Talent**

🌐 **It's Time to Rethink How You Identify Top Talent in Your Organisation**

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Revolutionising HR – Driving Organisational Productivity

Harnessing digital automation is a critical way for HR to increase organisational productivity. According to CRF partners Ricoh Europe, companies who equip their employees with automated processes can expect a 40% increase in productivity as well as a 20% revenue boost.
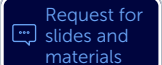
In their masterclass session, Revolutionising HR – Driving Organisational Productivity, Ricoh Europe explored how to utilise end-to-end process automation and data-led decision-making to support the HR function and help it achieve its strategic aims.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 **Process automation is key to drive productivity within organisations.** By automating repetitive and time-consuming tasks, companies can free up employees to focus on higher-value activities.

2 **Using an automated platform that offers bespoke and tailored solutions for HR functions can significantly transform how organisations manage their workforce.**

3 **Process automation enables HR to generate accurate, real-time insights with minimal manual effort, enhancing data accuracy and consistency.** This streamlined access to actionable data empowers data-led decisions, helping HR leaders make informed choices on talent management, workforce planning and employee engagement strategies.

RICOH CONTACTS

Request for slides and materials

✉ **Denholm Kirkham**
Process Automation Technical Specialist

✉ **Zi Hareshe**
Process Automation Specialist

✉ **Gary Moore**
Head of Process Automation

OFFER

★ As a token of our appreciation, we would like to offer all attendees of the masterclass the opportunity to benefit from a session of consultancy from Ricoh. This session will focus on identifying areas where we could support your business in taking crucial next steps towards a more digital future, with absolutely no obligation. Should you wish to take advantage of this offer, please contact **Zi Hareshe** directly to schedule a time.

RESOURCES

🌐 **Abolishing Admin: Balancing Automation and Critical Systems**

🌐 **Video: Let People Succeed**

🌐 **Process Automation**

🌐 **Ricoh Today**

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WITH ANOTHER SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL CRF PARTNERS

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Navigating the Digital Frontier

What is your Generative AI Strategy?

AI in the Workplace: Ethics, Governance and Law

Partner Masterclasses

AI and the Future of Intelligence

The Human-AI Age

Embracing a Digital-First Mindset

MORE RESOURCES AND OFFERS FROM CRF PARTNERS

Achieve Breakthrough
Developing Breakthrough Leaders and Teams
Read. Lead. Breakthrough. | Introduction to Achieve Breakthrough

Beamery
Build a Skills-Based Organisation | Building a Skills-Based Future
Salesforce Adopts Skills Based AI

Beamery is offering a free skills consultation to attendees of CRF's 2024 Conference, which will demonstrate how AI can help define skill demand and supply. As CRF's Skills-Based Transformation Partner, Beamery offers a technology solution to help businesses build a unified skills data layer that allows them to get more value out of their existing HR tech stack. This includes embedding skills-based hiring and automation into recruitment, as well as creating a dynamic, company-specific job architecture, based on skills. With Beamery, you can unlock internal people data to make proactive talent decisions aligned with market trends and the evolving workforce. As Jason Averbrook highlighted, a strong data foundation is key to any AI-driven initiative. By building this skills foundation, HR leaders can make better, more strategic decisions. For further information, please refer to our analysis of emerging and declining industry skill trends. If you interested in having a consultative session, then please reach out to: Hugh Marshall.

Guider
What is Mentoring | Collaborative Learning Software
Case Studies – Actionable Tips for L&D

IMD
Organisational Learning in Action Programme
Orchestrating Winning Performance Programme | IMD NEXUS
Future Leaders Programme | IMD Custom Programmes

Manpower
The Ultimate Recruitment Guide | IT World of Work 2024 Outlook
People-First Strategy For AI-Powered Workforce Productivity

The Oxford Group
5 Conversations – Transforming Trust, Engagement, and Performance
The Advanced Evolution of Emotional Intelligence for Leaders
Fostering Collaboration in Hybrid Teams
Unlock Innovation with Psychological Safety

As mentioned at the Conference welcome drinks reception, The Oxford Group's 5 Conversations programme draws on over 35 years of insight and experience, focusing on how authentic two-way human conversations build relationships, trust and engagement at work. Request the opening two chapters of the programme here. Also, The Oxford Group recently partnered with Professor Alan Brown to explore the Impact of AI on the Past, Present, and Future of Leadership. Click here to watch the three-part video series. In addition, you can download The Oxford Group's latest whitepaper titled Developing Emotional Capital: The Advanced Evolution of Emotional Intelligence for Leaders.

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2025 CRF Programme

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

- Overall Conference Takeaways
- Navigating the Digital Frontier
- What is your Generative AI Strategy?
- AI in the Workplace: Ethics, Governance and Law
- AI and the Future of Intelligence
- The Human-AI Age
- Embracing a Digital-First Mindset

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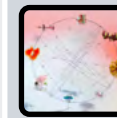|	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
UK	Harnessing HR Technology to Drive Organisational Performance	Leading Human-Centred Organisational Change; WORK PSYCHOLOGY SERIES: Motivation and Work Performance	The Changing Role of the HR Leader		WORK PSYCHOLOGY SERIES: Assessing Potential	Creating an Inclusive Culture		The New Deal at Work: How is the Psychological Contract Changing?		Developing Future-Ready Talent; WORK PSYCHOLOGY SERIES: Behaviour Change	HR Directors' Dinner
EUROPE			The Changing Role of the HR Leader; Strategic Workforce Planning	Future Readiness Strategy and Disruptive Innovation		Driving Organisational Performance	Creating an Inclusive Culture		INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: Rethink Work: Evolve or Endure	The Changing Role of the HR Leader; Developing Future-Ready Talent	
GULF		Harnessing HR Technology to Drive Organisational Performance			GULF CONFERENCE: Driving Change, Accelerating Growth					Empowering Future Leaders: Cultivating Talent in the Gulf	
ONLINE	Harnessing HR Technology to Drive Organisational Performance	Leading Human-Centred Organisational Change	The Changing Role of the HR Leader			Creating an Inclusive Culture		The New Deal at Work: How is the Psychological Contract Changing?	ONLINE CONFERENCE: Rethink Work: Evolve or Endure	Developing Future-Ready Talent	