MAKING TEAMS WORK
CREATING HIGHLY EFFECTIVE, AI-ENABLED TEAMS

CORPORATE RESEARCH FORUM



KEY TAKEAWAYS



1

AI changes what people can do independently and what they still need from colleagues.

Someone who once asked a colleague for help drafting a proposal can now turn to AI. If colleagues still need to check the proposal, combine it with their own work or make a decision based on it, their work changes too. As AI expands what people can do independently, leaders need to identify where combining expertise still improves the shared result.

2

The effects of AI on a team can emerge at different times

Faster production is an immediate gain. A growing review backlog, weaker coordination or fewer opportunities to develop judgement can take longer to show up. Team effectiveness includes the quality of what the team delivers, its continuing ability to work together and what happens to members' learning and wellbeing (Hackman, 2002).

3

Access to expertise can improve today's work while changing how people develop their own judgement.

In a one-day Procter & Gamble experiment, individuals using AI produced proposals of comparable average quality to unaided pairs. Their proposals drew more evenly on technical and commercial perspectives, but AI-assisted proposals were also more similar to one another (Dell'Acqua et al., 2025). For Gulf employers developing national talent, the practical question is which assignments will give employees experience of weighing trade-offs and receiving feedback as AI takes on some of the work through which they used to learn.

4

AI can bring more perspectives into a discussion and change whom people consult.

A synthesis can surface differences that might otherwise go unnoticed. Colleagues still need to check that it captures their meaning, discuss conflicting assumptions and agree how to proceed. Routine exchanges also help people learn whose judgement to draw on. In one survey, employees who more often turned to AI in place of colleagues reported lower team trust and coordination (Niederhoffer et al., 2026).

5

Removing routine work can change the mix and distribution of demands across a team.

AI can free time, but it can also leave some people handling a greater concentration of complex cases while others spend more time checking drafts and resolving exceptions. Whether the team benefits depends in part on who takes on that work and whether they have the time, expertise and authority to do it (Söllner et al., 2025).

6

Teams need to revisit how they work as their use of AI changes.

Leaders can set a clear direction, clarify responsibilities and give teams the support to adjust their approach. Comparing what happens before and after a change can reveal where output, coordination or learning has improved and where further investigation is needed.





RECOMMENDATIONS

1 **Start with a shared result.**
Choose one piece of work the team is collectively responsible for and define what improvement would look like for the people who receive or use it. Work back from that result to identify what people can now handle independently and where colleagues still need to combine expertise or make a decision together.

2 **Clarify who contributes, checks and decides.**
Follow the work from first draft to final use. Agree when people should disclose AI use, seek a colleague's judgement or escalate uncertainty. Where an AI agent can act independently, define which actions it can take, which require approval and who can intervene.

3 **Keep the exchanges that help colleagues work together.**
Use AI to organise input ahead of a discussion. Ask members to check that the synthesis reflects their meaning, especially where contributions have been translated. Make time to work through disagreements and agree how to proceed. Where a colleague has knowledge of the client, the context or an earlier decision, bring them into the work early enough for that knowledge to shape it.

4 **Design assignments that build judgement.**
Identify the tasks through which less experienced colleagues learn to spot problems and weigh trade-offs. Where AI takes on part of that work, give people opportunities to make an initial assessment themselves, explain their reasoning and get feedback from someone experienced. Include those opportunities in development plans for national talent where relevant.

5 **Plan for the work AI creates and the time it releases.**
Estimate how much checking and exception handling will be needed and who will do it. Give reviewers time and authority to challenge outputs. Check whether the remaining work leaves people with enough variety and opportunity to recover and decide how the team will use any time it saves.

6 **Assess the team's results and adjust how it works.**
Pick a small set of indicators that cover output, coordination, learning and wellbeing. For a proposal team, these might include first-pass quality, time spent waiting for review and whether authors can identify recurring issues themselves. If approvals slow down, establish whether the cause is limited review capacity, late specialist input or unclear standards. Change the arrangement that is causing the problem and check what happens next.

Want to keep reading?

The full report will be available to members of the CRF Network on the 19 November. If you would like a copy or to find out more, please contact Michael Whelan.

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