

Lesson 5 Winning with AI

FUTURE-PROOF YOUR CAREER

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the biggest catch phrases these days. While cutting-edge technology might have benefits for many people, it is also a cause of concern for those trying to start a career. With so many jobs disappearing, what kind of career should you pursue, and what skills should you have to survive in the AI age? Whether you like it or hate it, AI technology is probably here to stay. Here are the core competencies you need to foster for a great career in the age of AI.

Ask the right questions, rather than merely find answers.

Before the Internet, people with vast knowledge were considered to be the most talented. Quiz shows with difficult questions, such as the name of the famous stone castle built by Cormac MacCarthy in 1446, used to be very popular. However, things have changed, and now with the presence of AI, many people question why one would memorize such information. Unlike in the past, this is because you can quickly find answers on the Internet, and if you want, an AI assistant will even find an answer for you.

In 2011, the 74-time winner of a popular American quiz show competed against a supercomputer. The fact that the computer won a resounding victory shows that humans cannot keep up with computers in finding factual information. If that person were to compete with current AI, he would probably lose by a larger margin.

We don't need to memorize all the answers, and no matter how hard we try, we cannot rival AI in memorizing vast quantities of information. What we need to focus on is obtaining the "right" answers from AI, and the key is to ask the right questions to elicit the answer you want from AI. That is not to say you don't need to study. To ask the right questions, you must understand the context in which you're asking the question, and you also need background knowledge on the topic. When AI provides an answer, you must also be able to tell how accurate the answer is. We are currently in an era where the ability to use information is more important than having all the details memorized. We must be able to do what AI is not good at rather than focusing on what AI does best.

Develop critical thinking skills for evaluating information.

AI can often find the information we want quickly, but there are problems with this. AI creates a lot of false or biased information. Further, AI cannot understand the intentions of the person who created the information, nor does it have the ability to judge whether the information is right or wrong. Moreover, stories of AI providing fake information are often reported. For example, there was a case of a lawyer who submitted non-existent cases made by AI to a real court. There has also been an example of AI recommending restaurants that didn't exist.

Just as much as misleading information, feeding biased information into AI causes incorrect or even harmful output. A world-famous Internet company had AI study ten years of employee records to create a new employee selection algorithm. However, the company decided not to use the algorithm when it favored men over women. The proportion of male employees was very high and thus the AI's machine learning had an underlying bias towards male data. When analyzing the information provided by AI, it is always necessary to assess the quality of information — remember: garbage in, garbage out.

Develop interpersonal skills that are particularly challenging for AI to replace.

It is AI that is good at collecting and classifying information. Meanwhile, it is humans that are best at dealing with people. The ability to understand, empathize, and communicate with people emotionally is potentially the most important human ability that artificial intelligence cannot replace. For example, AI disease diagnostic programs, which are already used in many hospitals, may accurately diagnose a patient's illness such as cancer, but they don't have the human touch that can make eye contact, empathize with pain, share worries, hold hands, or give encouragement to patients in despair. It is human doctors who can cure the patient's emotional distress. Actually knowing and caring about what others think and feel is a unique competitive advantage we still possess.

**Become a life-long learner,
embracing changes.**

According to a future job report published by a top global investment bank, up to 300 million jobs around the world could be affected by artificial intelligence. The report also noted that technological innovation has historically created employment growth in the long run. In the age of AI, the ability to adapt to new technologies and work environments is crucial. You must embrace change and be open to learning and mastering new skills. It is very likely that many of those without AI skills will be left behind. That is why we must become life-long learners.

Continuous upskilling and reskilling will enable you to stay valuable in the changing job market. AI will replace some jobs but substantially alter many more. Furthermore, you probably won't be replaced by AI. More likely a person with AI skills will replace you.

In conclusion, surviving and competing with AI requires a shift in mindset. Instead of fearing AI, we must embrace it as a companion in this new era and find ways to collaborate with it and complement it. We must also focus on developing interpersonal skills that machines cannot replace. By doing so, we can not only survive in this era of AI but also thrive and prosper.