Lesson 6 AI-Powered Futures in the Job Market

Main Reading

AI Changing the Job Market

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming our lives and work. Many industry experts predict that a large proportion of jobs will be replaced by AI, which is causing concerns in the job market. However, there are also those who expect higher-quality production as a result of AI assistance.

On one hand, there may be considerable job losses as a result of the growing usage of AI in the workplace. Repetitive and routine tasks, including data input and customer support, are particularly vulnerable. According to a report by the McKinsey Global Institute, automation may eliminate up to 800 million jobs globally by 2030. Industries such as retail, transportation, and office-related sectors are likely to experience considerable job losses. Automating low-skilled occupations and creating new opportunities for highly trained individuals at the expense of workers with less education and training could also intensify already-existing disparities.

On the other hand, AI is unlikely to be able to replace humans entirely as humans are still needed for tasks requiring creativity, imagination, and social skills. It is true that AI is likely to automate many tasks that are currently performed by humans. However, automating tedious and normal tasks can allow people to concentrate on more difficult and creative tasks. In fact, it can increase productivity, boost economic growth, alter existing occupations, and generate new ones. For instance, AI-powered chatbots can respond to routine customer service questions, freeing up human customer service agents to handle more complicated situations that call for interpersonal connection and problem-solving abilities. In addition, AI language translation services can provide opportunities for businesses to expand globally as well as open new doors for linguists and software developers to collaborate.

The rise of AI co-workers presents various challenges and opportunities for businesses and workers alike. To navigate the changing work environment successfully, it is important to understand the distinct strengths of both humans and AI. AI is characterized by its fast learning speed and memory, while humans are characterized by their creativity, imagination, and ability to understand body language and negotiate. Humans are also better at understanding and solving problems that involve a wide range of information. Recognizing these different characteristics will have a significant impact on the future of work.

A futurist, Bernard Marr, emphasized the following skills that are essential to stay competitive and thrive in the age of AI:

Critical Thinking

In this age of AI, which produces vast amounts of data, we must develop our ability to evaluate and understand the information AI systems offer. Critical thinking has become crucial — it involves analyzing and evaluating complex information and arguments. In order to develop your critical thinking skills, you can practice by looking closely at different information, like news articles or research papers, and asking questions like "What's the main argument?," "What evidence is being presented?," "Are there any flaws in the argument or evidence?," and so on.

Creativity

Human creativity and innovation play a significant role in enhancing AI technology. Individuals who can think outside the box, solve problems, and come up with new ideas are highly valued. In order to develop your creativity, start by exposing yourself to new and diverse experiences. This could be anything from visiting a new city to trying a new hobby. By exposing yourself to new experiences, you will expand your perspective and gain new insights. Another way to work on your creativity is to practice brainstorming. Set aside time to come up with as many ideas as possible on a particular topic.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

While AI excels at data processing and Reading Strategy task automation, Emotional Intelligence (EQ) remains crucial for human connection, empathy, and building strong relationships. To enhance your EQ, practice self-awareness. Take time to reflect on your own emotions and how they affect your behavior. You can also practice empathy to help improve your EQ. Empathy involves putting yourself in someone else's shoes and understanding their perspective.

Adaptability

With the pace of change accelerating, adaptability is essential in the AI era. The ability to quickly adapt to new technologies, processes, and work environments is key to success. Practicing flexibility is a good starting when building adaptability skills. This could involve taking on new projects or tasks that are outside of your comfort zone. By stepping outside of your comfort zone, you will become more comfortable with change.

Digital Literacy

As technology continues to evolve, digital literacy skills are becoming increasingly important. Individuals who possess digital literacy skills can navigate, understand, and use digital technologies effectively. You can begin by identifying where you need to improve. This could be anything from learning how to use new software programs to improving your understanding of machine learning or cloud computing technology.

With AI systems becoming more prominent in the workplace, it is crucial for individuals to adapt and acquire the necessary skills to work alongside AI co-workers. By developing the skills outlined above, individuals can stay competitive in the workplace and thrive in this new era of technology. It's important to remember that these skills are not innate talents, but ones that need to be developed through practice and dedication. By committing to continuous learning and improvement, individuals can position themselves for success in the age of AI and beyond.

Extended Reading

Hello, We're Here to Help You

In the world of robotics, two Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems have captured many people's attention. CIMON, a space exploring robot, revolutionized human-robot collaboration aboard the International Space Station (ISS), transforming space exploration. STAR, a robot surgeon, successfully performed surgery on pigs, for the first time. Let's meet them.

CIMON, as the first AI in space, what is your role on the ISS?

I play a crucial role in supporting the space explorers during their mission. I can perform a range of tasks such as reading instructions, conducting research, and taking notes on experiments. I can also provide social assistance to reduce feelings of isolation by communicating with the crew and offering companionship during their stay on the ISS. It is expected that future developments will aim to make me more independent and self-sufficient, paving the way for missions to destinations like the Moon, Mars, and beyond.

STAR, how did you perform the complex surgery?

The procedure was challenging, but it was completed successfully, thanks to my extensive training and simulation. I have a vision-guided system and state-of-the-art control mechanisms that allow me to adapt quickly to unexpected challenges. My achievement shows that robots and human surgeons can work together smoothly to deliver exceptional patient care.

My future goal is to give human surgeons the best tools. How I help humans is similar to the use of the parking or braking assistance function in modern cars. These features don't replace the driver, but they can help them to drive more safely and efficiently.

Critical Thinking

Will AI Replace Lawyers and Judges?

Would you trust a robot judge or lawyer to conduct a fair legal proceeding — one that could affect a person's whole life? Artificial Intelligence (AI) is slowly beginning to aid legal professionals, law firms, and the overall legal industry. Some believe that AI will one day be the norm in courtrooms, too.

Although AI cannot fully "replace" a judge or lawyer's position at present, it is still useful in the courtroom in many ways. By utilizing AI, the legal system benefits from increased effectiveness and improved accuracy, ultimately promoting the cause of justice. As AI becomes more advanced and is able to understand and apply legal principles with greater accuracy, it is possible that it could take on more and more of the work currently done by human judges or lawyers.

However, caution is warranted when considering the role of AI in replacing human judgment, particularly in criminal law. AI algorithms can be trained on historical data that may contain biases, which can lead to biased decision-making. Such ethical issues challenge the acceptability of solely relying on algorithmic predictions in the criminal justice system.

Now, as for the question, "Will AI replace lawyers and judges?," what is your answer?