AI ANXIETY
WORKSHOP GUIDE

WORKPLACE
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Artificial intelligence or AI is changing how we live, work and play, and promising to automate many processes and jobs on a massive scale. Some workers are anxious with what they see as the charge to replace humans with machines and smart software and find it hard not to panic when reading the latest iteration of the 'AI is going to take your job' headline. Whilst the idea of AI in the workplace may be unnerving for some, many more workers are excited about the technology than it may seem. Microsoft's annual Work Trends Index shows while 49% of people are worried AI will replace their jobs, but far more – 70% – would delegate as much work as possible to AI to lessen their workloads.

At the end of the session the group should appreciate each other's opinions and concerns and will be able to take a pragmatic approach to how it might impact their own work life.

The session is divided as follows.

LOOK – watch the video and reflect on the content and message.

THINK – activities and questions linking the video to their own experience and workplace.

REMEMBER – a summary of the key learning points.

Each section relating to the videos will last around 15 minutes.

GROUP EXERCISE – At the end of the series of videos there is a chance to bring the learnings together. Delegates should be encouraged to record any personal development actions on their Personal Action Plan sheet.

FEATURED VIDEO

- AI Anxiety

FILM – AI ANXIETY

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Daisy, Kevin, and Tamsin each have a different view on the impact of AI on their working lives.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Big Tech has spent the last few years developing new Generative Ai models and training them with more data than ever before. This means these models are getting very good at generating human quality content including audio, code, images, text, simulations, and videos. We don't know exactly what the limits of what AI will be able to do and when, but it is getting smarter every single day.

Ask the group to think back to the video and discuss what kinds of problems can a generative AI model solve and importantly what are the current limitations of AI models? Answers should include the following.

Generative tools can produce a wide variety of credible writing in seconds, then respond to criticism to make the writing more fit for purpose. This has implications for a wide variety of industries, from IT and software organizations that can benefit from the instantaneous, largely correct code generated by AI models to organisations in need of marketing copy. In short, anyone that needs to produce clear written materials potentially stands to benefit. And with the time and resources saved.

However, sometimes the information they generate is just plain wrong – termed as hallucinations. Worse, sometimes it transfers bias because it's built on the gender, racial, and myriad other biases of the internet and society more generally. There is also the question of whose intellectual property may have inspired a model's output, and what you might owe them!

Now ask the group to discuss how these issues could potentially be overcome and what other practical steps we can all take. The feedback you get should include the following.

Make sure a real human checks the output of a generative AI model before it is published, especially for critical decisions. As organisations begin experimenting—and creating value—with these tools, leaders will do well to keep a finger on the pulse of regulation and risk.

Traditionally, skills need to be fine-tuned as new technologies are brought into the fold, and the generative AI revolution is no different. It's all about co-creation – Firstly, learn to use generative AI tools to streamline administrative tasks. Then use AI to flesh ideas out and develop options whilst you can use the extra time to focus on the tasks that require complex thinking and creativity. So, look on these AI tools as collaborators. People will still want that human connection and spirit embedded within their work and these tools can be used to help facilitate that narrative. Even for nervous workers, leaning into AI optimism simply might be a good strategy.

REMEMBER

Technology has always destabilised the jobs market. In the last few centuries, it's been the printing press, the steam engine, factories, offices, telephones and more recently it's software, internet, mobile. All these different things have changed the landscape of how we do our job and how we use technology. But time and time again, we've seen that these technologies empower millions to move away from repetitive, tedious work processes, freeing time for more thoughtful work. AI is no different. Thinking about how you can work with these machines is always a better proposition than how you can fight against them.

Remind the group of the points at the end of the film.

- Don't panic - it won't be AI that replaces you, though it may be a human who knows how to use it!
- Generative AI will most likely replace repetitive and time-consuming tasks, not jobs, freeing up your time to focus on more complex, creative tasks.
- Treat the AI tools you use at work like a colleague – more of an assistant or co-pilot.
- Be prepared to encounter 'hallucinations' - when misinformation is presented as fact and bias transfer that ai has learnt from unreliable sources.

GROUP EXERCISE

Ask the group to write their name, what they learned, and any lingering questions on a blank card.

Before they leave, direct them to deposit their cards in a folder labeled either:

"Got It"
"More Information, Please," or
"I Need Some Help!"

whichever best represents their understanding of the sessions content.