VIEW POINT

HOW GENERATIVE AI IS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF WORK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Abstract

Generative AI is a crucial milestone in the progress of AI. Its ability to create diverse content can potentially transform the future of work. Its ability to augment human expertise holds great promise for revamping work processes. As routine tasks become automated, the workforce will shift toward more strategic, value-driven roles requiring creativity and judgement. This job displacement will necessitate the upskilling and reskilling of employees. New roles, such as AI ethicists and prompt engineers, are emerging to support AI governance and management. Ultimately, if organisations deploy Generative AI with a human-centric focus, it is a tool to empower employees, enhance productivity and reshape the future of work.

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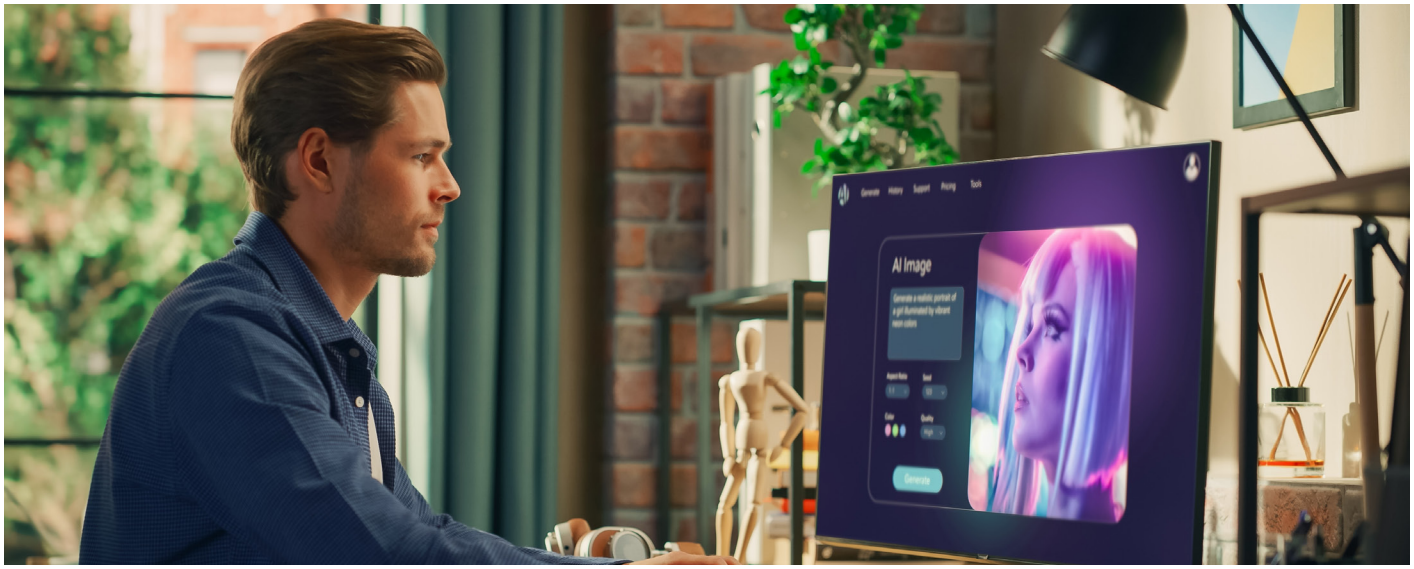

Generative AI is a major milestone in the progress of AI. It has ushered in a new era for AI. GenAI's ability to create content, from text, code, audio, and images to complex protein structures, is unique and game-changing. These capabilities have wide-ranging applicability and can assist human expertise in multiple ways. GenAI can support writing reports, designing websites, marketing, and numerous other functions. There are innumerable GenAI use cases for various industries.

GenAI will fundamentally reshape the way people work. The GenAI-human collaboration will be unprecedented in nature and magnitude because of the breadth of accessibility and impact. GenAI is expected to restructure and reorganise work across the globe. The world is on the cusp of a new chapter in GenAI-facilitated workforce productivity, which could add value to the global economy in the range of trillions of dollars. Generative AI is changing the nature of work, how we work, and the roles in the workforce.

GenAI chatbots can take over routine tasks that are repetitive in nature. A bot provides customers with personalised responses in a language of their choice and also ensures that the brand voice is consistent in all communication across locations. Call centre services can be GenAI-augmented with real-time access to pertinent customer data to provide tailored, relevant, and customised service. Time taken to create content, both image and text, can be significantly reduced with GenAI. A Marketing team can create personalised messages for each customer with translation into various languages, suitable imagery, and tone. Automated reporting is another feature that is widely used across industries. Field reports can be generated in required formats by extracting details from voluminous documentation. A patient's details can be summarised from health records and clinical notes to create intake reports.

In the mining industry, GenAI can take over mine mapping, air quality reporting, and equipment design, freeing engineers to develop optimal solutions for worker safety and reducing environmental impact. Image interpretation of X-rays and CT, PET, and MRI scans using GenAI tools saves considerable time for radiologists. This capability allows radiologists to devote more time to patient consultations, counselling, and other complex cases and procedures. Automation of activities like market research analysis, assessment of marketing strategies, and sales forecasting clears up Marketing Managers' schedules and frees up ample time for functions that need refined evaluation and interpersonal skills like coordinating promotional activities, interaction with customer leadership, and legal resolutions.

There are pros and cons to generative AI becoming integral to the workplace. Along with the significant productivity boost, there is a risk of eliminating specific roles and widening economic disparity. While some roles will benefit from augmentation using GenAI, others could face automation. The jobs at the highest risk of being taken over by GenAI tools are those that are routine and repetitive. Roles like Telemarketers, Call Centre Executives, Legal Secretaries, Statistical Assistants, Tellers, and Clerks will most likely be made redundant by generative AI. These are usually jobs that comprise record-keeping and management of information. Any role that entails applying human judgement, like people management or sophisticated decision-making, requires emotional intelligence and ethical discrimination and, therefore, is unsuitable for automation. Other generative AI risks are hallucination or presentation of made-up facts, copyright and IP, and privacy.

An organisational-level initiative to study the impact of generative AI on jobs will help leaders formulate strategies to equip their workforce to adapt to the challenges and opportunities. All the tasks and corresponding skills needed for a job must be listed and classified based on the likely impact of Generative AI: Automation, Augmentation, or Limited to No Impact. This impact analysis will reveal the existing gaps in skills, the skills needed in the future, and the effect of GenAI across the organisation. Fears regarding job displacement need to be addressed with a roadmap for upskilling and reskilling. The discussion needs to move beyond the prospect of replacement to that of role enhancement.

Employees might not be fully aware of the potential of GenAI, so literacy programs should be conducted to impart an understanding of its capabilities and impact. A workforce well-versed in GenAI essentials can effectively use it. Developing newer skills related to using GenAI tools will be necessary. Every employee will need basic skills such as effective prompt engineering, editing of GenAI output, discerning application of GenAI, and validation of results. Implementing generative AI should be considered a chance to elevate the employee's role through a shift from repetitive to value-driven tasks requiring creativity and judgement. An example would be a software developer impacted by the automation of basic coding. Appropriate upskilling will enable the software developer to take up tasks too complex to be automated, like data strategy, architecture design, or team management. Job displacement will reshape traditional roles. Job realignments and upskilling or reskilling may not be vertical but could potentially branch out into newly created roles like AI ethicist. New jobs that cater solely to the management, use, and governance of generative AI tools have been created across industries. Prompt Engineers refine prompts to get optimal output for a particular use case. AI Model Trainers will handle the training and finetuning of AI models. Generative AI Data Annotators label and curate data for accuracy and suitability. AI Ethicists conduct assessments and frame guidelines for ethical AI development and deployment. Workers in traditional roles can augment their skills with generative solutions. Graphic designers expedite the design process by creating instant outputs and automating image manipulation using GenAI tools. Ideation is quick and straightforward for engineers using generative tools, as all possible solutions are available.

The integration of Generative AI aims to improve operational efficiency, but the outcome should positively impact the workers. Leadership must ensure that organisations commit to the progress and growth of their employees. An effective long-term strategy for Generative AI must be based on the upskilling and reskilling of workers to create a resilient and adaptive workforce. When the workforce is trained to learn, innovate and adapt with GenAI, the result is employee empowerment. Technology, then, is an aid to get work done better and faster.

How Infosys BPM Can Help

The Infosys Generative AI Business Operations platform comprises customised, ready-to-use BPM-focused solutions and responsible design frameworks. The platform allows enterprises to reimagine business processes with an AI-first approach based on our Responsible by Design tenet.

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