

Artificial Intelligence (Part III of III)

We will explore the subject of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in three parts. Part One will accentuate the need to focus on A.I. Part two will detail the evolution of A.I. and its impact on Human Resources. Part three will offer some solutions to the needs of humans as A.I. unfolds upon us.

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Well managers, what now? Persistent awareness about the impacts of A.I. will dominate management's human resources thinking.

One impact is a biological one as A.I. continues to rewire our brains. The billion-plus neurons in our heads evolve through the process of neuroplasticity to either correct some damages or meet new challenges. People don't think as they did 10 years ago and if a management career stretches into the next twenty to forty years, the awareness of the evolving changes will be critical since the demands on neuroplasticity will be accelerating.

A second impact will be change and displacement for all, in the affected stages of A.I. intrusion on a global scale, which will far exceed the effects of the industrial revolution. Other global factors like immigration, economies, climate change, over-population, income disparity, etc. are also leaning on organizations. Insecurity and stress will create a jumpier workforce that will be vulnerable and more intimidated by change. Motivated by a need to protect themselves, workers will lean towards labour action that could cause friction in the workplace. Insecurities and friction will weaken commitment and loyalty to the workplace as workers continuously scan the environment for other job prospects.

The third impact will be new opportunities, new professions, trades and jobs that are unheard of at this

time in our evolution. The new opportunities will not necessarily be a direct replacement for the lost ones, neither at the same time or in the same place, but they will surface somewhere on the global front.

Meanwhile, the knowledgeable manager working to do the right thing will be whipsawed by conflicting values. Work to uphold one value will contradict one or more others. The challenges? Engaging effective managers to deal with changing brains, insecurities, unstable labour and new opportunities.

Sustainable organizations will stay acutely tuned into the A.I. changes and they will recruit, train and retain their effective managers accordingly. They will shape management jobs with a greater focus and emphasis on managing its human resources both on a quantitative and qualitative basis. More transparent values of resiliency and adaptability will influence the organization since the values will not be wresting philosophically. These values will shape the new ways of doing business and organizing the workforce.

Dealing with changing brains is rudimentary but also quite complex. Managers and workers can assimilate some basic tenets of cognition and the effective organizations will engage neuroscience expert for periodic updates. This understanding will promote monitoring the changes in the workforce to react effectively through the selection, evaluation, assignment, training and support of its human resources.

Managers will empathize with the insecurities of the workforce. Clarity about future prospects that engenders trust will help reassure people, while open environments that promote cooperation and collaboration will help diffuse labour conflict and promote organizational loyalty. Indefinite stability cannot be sold to employees, but changes can be projected in measured and deliberate terms with rules and expectations that will be fair and reasonable for most.

Traditional workplace perks/benefits will change to include resiliency training that will equip employees with the attitudes and skills to transition through

career evolutions. And while these transitions become a fact of life, transportable benefits like pensions and insurances will follow.

While work goes on, the organization's active long-term planning will measure the A.I. impacts in order to anticipate the needs for structural change, new skill sets and roles required to accommodate the workforce's evolution. And succession planning that has traditionally been relegated as an afterthought will take on a more critical role at all levels of the organization.

Leaders will have to plot their own course since no one person has all the answers for everyone. Interesting times ahead indeed...