

The Human Capability Challenge in an AI-Shaped Workplace

Technology is changing the work. Human capability still determines how well the work is done.



Artificial intelligence is changing what people can do, how quickly they can do it and where decisions are made. But more capable technology does not automatically create a more capable organisation.

As technology becomes more capable, are people developing the Human-Centric capability required to use that technology effectively?

Developed by Michael J Bolam with AI-assisted research, analysis and editorial support. Final judgement and approval remain human.

AI may provide information, generate options and support decisions. People still have to determine what is relevant, question what is produced, recognise what is missing, communicate effectively with others and remain accountable for what happens next.

Skillogy PERFORM™ starts from the premise that the human requirement does not disappear when technology improves. It changes where and how human capability must be exercised.

The Skillogy position

Human-Centric AI Readiness complements technical AI capability. It develops the capability people need to work with AI effectively, critically and responsibly while retaining judgement, accountability, adaptability and responsibility for outcomes.

WORK IS CHANGING

Technical competence is necessary. It is not the whole of AI readiness.

The discussion around AI readiness can easily become dominated by technology: which tools people should use, what can be automated, how to prompt effectively and how quickly AI can improve productivity. These questions matter, but they answer only part of the readiness question.

A person can know how to operate an AI tool without knowing when its output should be challenged. A manager can introduce AI into a workflow without recognising that accountability has moved or become

less clear. A leader can approve an AI initiative without adequately preparing people for the way their roles, decisions and responsibilities will change.

Skillogy therefore distinguishes Technical / Digital AI Readiness from Human-Centric AI Readiness. The two are complementary rather than interchangeable.

AI itself is also changing

AI is not a single, static form of technology. Generative AI primarily creates or transforms information and content. Increasingly agentic systems can plan, use tools and carry out sequences of actions towards an objective. Embodied AI can extend that capability into machines and physical systems.

GENERATE - Generative AI Creates or transforms content, analysis, code, images and recommendations.

ACT - Agentic AI Plans, uses tools and takes permitted actions towards an objective.

EMBODY - Embodied AI Connects AI capability to machines, vehicles and physical systems.

These categories overlap, but the direction is important. As autonomy, access and consequence increase, the requirement for human judgement, accountability and governance increases with them.

The wider question - how increasingly autonomous AI should be governed and how meaningful human control can be retained - is considered separately in the Skillogy PERFORM™ Insight Beyond the Workplace: Who Governs an Increasingly Autonomous AI?

RESPONSIBILITY CHANGES WITH THE WORK

AI changes the context in which people perform, manage and lead.

The human requirement changes as responsibility changes. For an individual contributor, AI may become part of researching, analysing, drafting or solving problems. The individual still needs to determine whether the output is useful, accurate and appropriate.

For a manager, the challenge becomes wider. Managers remain accountable for people, work, information, decisions and results even when AI contributes to those processes. For leaders, the requirement changes again: they must shape how AI is introduced, where responsibility sits and what capabilities people need.

USE - Self Performance Use AI critically, adaptively and responsibly while retaining ownership of individual contribution.

ACCOUNT - Manager Performance Remain accountable for AI-enabled people, work, information, decisions and results.

ADAPT - Changing Work Respond as roles, workflows, responsibilities and expectations evolve.

SHAPE - Leadership Impact Shape responsible organisational use of AI around direction, capability, transformation and agility.

Governance becomes part of workplace readiness

As AI systems become capable of taking actions rather than simply producing outputs, organisations need clear answers to practical questions: What may AI access? What may it recommend, decide or do? When must a human approve an action? Who remains accountable? How can actions be monitored, stopped or reversed?

AI can therefore change responsibility without changing somebody's job title. Information may reach a person differently, decisions may happen earlier in a process and work may be redistributed. The role on the organisation chart may look unchanged while the Human-Centric demands of that role have moved.

FROM LEARNING TO PERFORMANCE

Capability has to reach the workplace.

Identifying the required capability is only the beginning. Understanding a concept is not the same as being able to apply it effectively when circumstances are uncertain, pressures are real and consequences matter.

ASSESS > LEARN > APPLY > REVIEW > REFLECT

Assess identifies the relevant capability need. Learn builds understanding of the approved content. Apply moves the capability into real work. Review examines what happened and what changed. Reflect uses evidence to inform the next development cycle.

Workplace application is the transfer point between learning and evidence of performance change. Completion, attendance or confidence alone do not demonstrate that capability has improved.

Five questions organisations should now be asking

- 1. What work is actually changing?** Identify the tasks, interactions, information flows and decisions being affected by AI.
- 2. Where is human responsibility changing?** Examine where judgement, ownership, accountability or decision authority is being redistributed.
- 3. Which Human-Centric capabilities will people need?** Look beyond technology competence to the connected capabilities required to perform, manage and lead effectively.
- 4. How will those capabilities be developed and applied?** Create opportunities to learn, practise, review and adapt in the context of real work.
- 5. What evidence will demonstrate that capability has improved?** Look for credible changes in workplace application and performance rather than relying solely on participation or course completion.

Technology can change rapidly. Human capability determines whether that change becomes better performance.

AI will continue to change what technology can do. The more important organisational question is what people will need to do because of that change. Organisations still depend on people who can think clearly, communicate effectively, exercise judgement, adapt to changing circumstances, accept accountability and take responsibility for outcomes.

Development and content integrity note. These Insights are developed by Michael J Bolam with AI-assisted research, analysis and editorial support. AI may help question, compare, synthesise and draft, but the author determines the subject, challenges assumptions, reviews evidence, makes substantive judgements and approves the final content. AI does not generate, rewrite or replace approved Skillogy PERFORM™ course content.