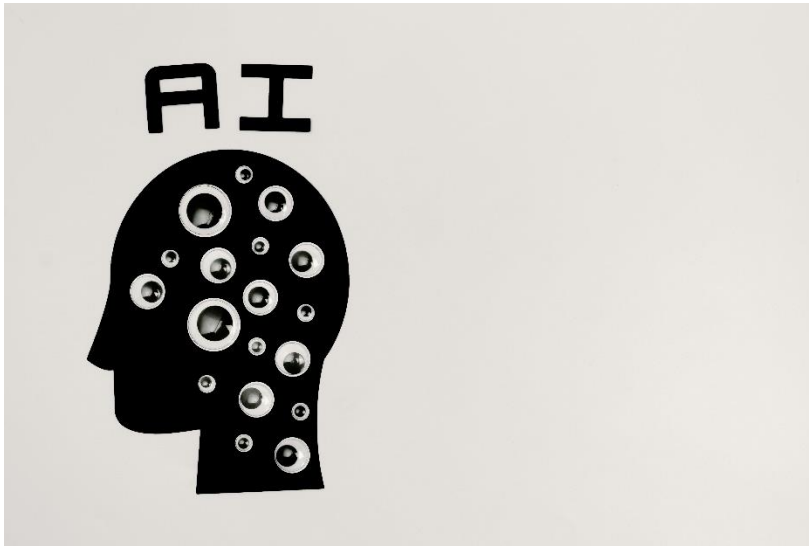


### 3 WAYS TO ADAPT TO AI FOR A NEW ERA



By most measures, artificial intelligence is changing the way we work. But in the midst of this transformation, many of us have discovered something unexpected: we must align organizational culture, structure, and ways of working to support broad AI adoption.

A transformation like AI in the workplace naturally triggers stress and anxiety, but it also releases purpose and intentionality. If leaders minimize threat levels, they can build a growth mindset of their own to maximize the benefits from AI.

But a transformation presents a more foundational opportunity – for organizations to redefine who they are. To scale up AI, here are three ways organizations can use this momentum to transform their culture for the long term.

#### **1. Cultivate a culture of collaboration**

AI has the biggest impact when it is developed by cross functional teams. Increasing levels of teamwork and cooperation on teams, including trends towards more collaboration between humans and machines highlight the importance of learning from others. But often it can be difficult for people to be open to learn from others. Because of the experience biases, the unconscious assumption that confirms what we see is all there is.

Be mindful that our past experiences and expectations shape our view, and consciously role modeling a sincere interest in the perspective, knowledge and expertise of others is key. One of the best ways to role model learning from others is to develop the behaviors of asking for feedback. That way, people can make improvements along the way. And work together across teams, generating new ideas, problem-solving, and actively supporting each other to face AI-related challenges head-on.

## **2. Experiment with new ideas**

Organizations must shed the mindset that an idea needs to be fully baked or a business tool must have every bell and whistle before it is deployed. On the first iteration, AI applications rarely have all their desired functionality. A test-and-learn mentality will reframe mistakes as a source of discoveries, reducing the fear of failure. Getting early user feedback and incorporating it into the next version will allow firms to correct minor issues before they become costly problems. Development will speed up, enabling small AI teams to create minimum viable products in a matter of weeks rather than months.

Such fundamental shifts do not come easily. They require leaders to prepare, motivate, and equip the workforce to make a change. But leaders must first be prepared themselves.

We know that people feel more comfortable sticking with the status quo, rather than exploring something new. But our life with AI is and will continue to be one of experimentation and exploration. Try to encourage humility in yourself and your teams. This will enable you and others to see failures as necessary learning opportunities and embrace experimentation as a continuous learning journey.

## **3. Amplify integration and adoption**

To get employees on board and smooth the way for successful AI launches, leaders should devote early attention to explaining why. A compelling story helps organizations understand the urgency of change initiatives and how all will benefit from them. This is particularly critical with AI projects, because fear that AI will take away jobs increases employees' resistance to it.

Leaders have to provide a vision that rallies everyone around a common goal. Employees must understand why AI is important to the business and how they will fit into a new, AI-focused culture. In particular, they need reassurance that AI will enhance rather than diminish or even eliminate their roles.

Anticipating unique barriers to change. Some obstacles, such as workers' fear of becoming obsolete, are common across organizations. But a company's culture may also have distinctive characteristics that contribute to resistance. For example, if an organization has relationship managers who pride themselves on being attuned to customer needs, they may reject the notion that a machine could have better ideas about what customers want and ignore an AI tool's tailored product recommendations. And managers who believe their status is based on the number of people they oversee might object to the decentralized decision making or reduction in reports that AI could allow.

While cutting-edge technology and talent are certainly needed, it's equally important (if not more) for organizations to use this opportunity to make AI adoption more effective than it's ever been.

About Me:

*Hi there, my name is Tiffany Newhouse. I have over 20 years' experience leading organizations through successful transformational change.*

*In our consulting organization, NPC, we have partnerships that span across many industries and have delivered successful change efforts for small, mid-size, and Fortune 500 companies. Please connect with me here on LinkedIn to share your thoughts and ideas about the future of work. I would love to hear from you.*