

AN HOUR WITH A MANAGER

Vol. 1

“
The workforce is at a critical juncture. Workers in traditional jobs may need to learn new skills to stay relevant in the AI-driven landscape”

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Organizations need leadership that fosters a culture of constant learning”

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Empathy has always been a key leadership skill, but in an AI-driven world, it becomes a non-negotiable”

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The future of work isn't just about technology—it's about finding the right balance. Now it's your turn to take that leap”

Sarah Richson

*Award winning
global speaker
& trainer*

*Exclusive
Magazine*

AHWAM

EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINE

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the inaugural edition of An Hour With A Manager magazine, where we explore insights, strategies, and innovations that are shaping the modern workplace.

This new magazine is an offshoot of the popular An Hour With A Manager podcast which has continued to educate people and organizations across nations on good managerial tips and staying up to date with administrative tools and trends, while implementing the right management principles for growth.

In this first issue, we focus on one of the most transformative technologies of our time: Artificial Intelligence (AI).

AHWAM magazine has brought together a scribe of writers with extensive knowledge of the subject at hand and management processes / procedures for your reading pleasure.

AI is no longer a distant concept reserved for tech-savvy experts. It is a practical tool being adopted across industries to streamline operations, automate repetitive tasks, and enhance efficiency in ways we've never seen before. From managing workflows to driving decision-making, AI is helping businesses achieve new heights of productivity, freeing up valuable time for managers and employees to focus on more strategic, creative endeavors. As Calv Lim succinctly posits in 'Epilogue: What's next for your office?' AI can take an overwhelmed office from chaos to calm. By taking over repetitive, time-consuming tasks, AI allows managers and employees to focus on higher-value work—tasks that require creativity, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills, areas where humans excel.

In this edition, we explore the practical applications of AI in the workplace, how it's revolutionizing business processes, and why its ability to simplify routine tasks is becoming indispensable for organizations seeking to remain competitive in today's fast-paced environment. As in Obinna Okwor's 'Leadership's role in AI-driven cybersecurity: A story of change', this issue provides a comprehensive look at how AI can be seamlessly integrated into your business, offering solutions that not only improve efficiency but also foster innovation and growth.

AI is not the enemy. In fact, as Michael Brandt notes in 'The future of leadership: Guiding teams with humanity in an AI-driven era', embracing AI means embracing progress since it is a powerful ally that has the potential to unlock new levels of productivity and innovation in the workplace.

While some may fear that automation threatens jobs, the reality is that AI is designed to enhance human capabilities, not replace them, as Jackson Kimeu outlines in, 'Future of work: Will AI take our jobs?'

However, as Gregorio Uglioni highlights in 'The AI skills gap: Preparing workers for the future', up to 375 million workers globally may need to switch roles or learn new skills to adapt to these changes, and René Zuleta warns in a similarly named article: in the world of AI, the most dangerous move is standing still.

As you read through this edition, we encourage you to embrace the possibilities AI brings and consider how it can enhance your work, your team, and your overall business strategy.

Welcome to the future of management, where AI is no longer an option, but an essential partner in achieving success. Fun fact: AI edited this piece.

Enjoy the read!

Signature

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FUTURE OF WORK: Will AI Take Our Jobs?

Jackson Kimeu — Talent Acquisition Specialist

Introduction

Will robots take over our jobs? It's a question that everybody, including myself, asks themselves since the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). With rapid advancements in automation, machine learning, and AI technology, the workforce is facing a transformative era. Some jobs may disappear, others may be created, but one thing is clear: the future of work is shifting.

AI is already revolutionizing industries like manufacturing, healthcare, finance, and logistics, but it's also raising concerns about job displacement. While these concerns are valid, they are only one side of the story. In this article I share my two-cents on whether AI will truly take our jobs, or if there's a more complex reality at play.

AI's impact on jobs: Automation vs. Augmentation

AI's ability to perform tasks once thought to be reserved for humans is unparalleled. In many sectors, we're seeing AI-powered systems automate routine, repetitive jobs. For example, chatbots are replacing customer service agents, and self-driving vehicles are beginning to disrupt the transportation industry.

However, AI isn't just about replacing jobs—it's also about augmenting them. Machines are taking over mundane, repetitive tasks, but they're also helping workers do their jobs more efficiently and effectively. In fields like healthcare, AI is being used to analyze medical data faster than humans ever could, allowing doctors to make quicker and more accurate diagnoses. In creative industries, AI tools assist designers, writers, and artists by generating ideas and speeding up production processes.

The AI Skills Gap: Preparing Workers for the Future

While the fear of job loss is real, there's a growing consensus that the bigger challenge might be the AI skills gap. As AI systems become more prevalent, the demand for workers who can build, manage, and interact with these systems is skyrocketing.

The workforce is at a critical juncture. Workers in traditional jobs may need to learn new skills to stay relevant in the AI-driven landscape. Yet not everyone has access to the training required to navigate this technological revolution.

Rise of blue-collar economy

While millennials have shied away from blue-collar jobs, there seems to be a realization that these jobs pay equivalent or better than white-collar jobs. Blue collar refers to occupations that typically involve manual labor, skilled trades, or work in industries like construction, manufacturing, agriculture, maintenance, and transportation. These jobs often require physical work and may involve operating machinery or working with hands-on processes. While some manual labor jobs may be automated with advancements in AI and robotics, blue-collar workers in specialized trades that require precision, creativity, and problem-solving will continue to play a critical role in the workforce.

Reskilling and upskilling

To prepare workers for the future, governments, companies, and educational institutions must collaborate on reskilling and upskilling initiatives. Programs that teach employees how to work with AI tools—whether it's coding, data analysis, or machine learning—will be vital. Platforms like Coursera and Udacity are already offering AI-related courses to the public, but this effort needs to be expanded to ensure accessibility. Redefining education

In the long term, education systems may need to rethink how they prepare students for the workforce. The traditional focus on memorization and standard curriculums might give way to more hands-on learning, critical thinking, and creativity—all skills that will be essential in a world where AI can handle routine tasks.

Lifelong learning

The concept of lifelong learning will also become more relevant. With technology evolving so rapidly, workers may need to continuously update their skills throughout their careers. AI literacy won't just be reserved for data scientists or engineers—workers in every industry will need at least a basic understanding of how AI systems work.

Jobs of the future: A mixed reality

While some jobs will undoubtedly be lost to automation, others will emerge. The World Economic Forum predicts that by 2025, 85 million jobs may be displaced due to AI and automation, but 97 million new roles could be created in fields like AI development, data science, and robotics.

Jobs that require creativity, emotional intelligence, and complex decision-making will likely remain secure. Teachers, nurses, artists, and therapists, for example, are all professions that rely on uniquely human skills that AI cannot easily replicate. Additionally, entirely new jobs, such as AI ethicists and data privacy officers, are likely to become critical as the AI landscape grows more complex.

Conclusion: Collaboration, not competition

Rather than seeing AI as a job-stealer, we should view it as a tool that can transform the way we work. The future of work will be defined not by humans vs. machines but by how we collaborate with technology to enhance productivity and innovation. The key challenge lies in bridging the AI skills gap and ensuring that workers are prepared for this transformation.

By focusing on reskilling, education, and the development of new industries, we can ensure that the future of work is not one of widespread job loss, but one of opportunity and growth.

The question isn't "Will AI take our jobs?" but rather, "How will we prepare for the jobs of the future?"

Kimeu is a highly skilled ICT professional with extensive knowledge of designing new ICT solutions, systems administration, network management, information security assurance and information systems audit to improve business continuity, productivity and efficiency.

LEADERSHIP'S ROLE IN A.I - driven cybersecurity

Obinna Clement Okwor

Information Technology and Cybersecurity Professional

Sarah, an IT head at a mid-sized company, had always relied on traditional methods to prevent cyberattacks. However, when a sophisticated breach struck, she realized their defenses needed a radical upgrade. She turned to AI-powered intrusion detection systems, which were quickly becoming the future of cybersecurity. But the shift wasn't easy.

Sarah's greatest challenge wasn't just adopting new technology—it was leading her team through the transition. Some employees were hesitant, while others didn't fully understand AI's capabilities or its potential impact on cybersecurity. Sarah had to step up, fostering an environment where continuous learning and adaptation were critical. She educated her team on how AI could enhance their ability to detect cyberattacks and encouraged them to embrace new processes.

The rise of AI, however, presented a double-edged sword. While AI significantly improved intrusion detection, cybercriminals were also using AI to make their attacks more sophisticated, particularly targeting IoT devices. Sarah knew that as threats evolved, leadership in cybersecurity had to be proactive. It wasn't enough to install new systems; the team needed to think like attackers and anticipate future threats.

One of the biggest obstacles Sarah faced was the knowledge gap surrounding AI. Her team initially saw AI as something abstract and intimidating. As a leader, she recognized that their lack of understanding could compromise the entire system. Sarah arranged regular training sessions, ensuring that her team stayed informed and confident in using AI to enhance cybersecurity.

But Sarah also knew that this was just the beginning. As the cybersecurity landscape grew more complex, continuous adaptation would be key. With attackers increasingly using AI to target vulnerabilities, especially in IoT, organizations need leadership that prioritizes constant learning. This story, however, is just one chapter.

The next step? A deeper dive into how AI is being used by attackers and how organizations can stay ahead. That's a discussion Sarah plans to lead in a follow-up article.

About the front cover guest

Sarah Richson...Master trainer, executive coach redefining leadership

Sarah Richson is a strategist, speaker, master trainer, and executive coach who has become an inspiration to many.

She is the CEO of Richebele International Consultants and President at Red Carpet Table Bank.

An epitome of strength and resilience, she had a rapid rise to leadership despite facing multiple barriers, excelling as a global director at a young age.

As a Certified Executive Coach, she speaks and trains globally using an authentic, natural storytelling style to captivate her audiences while transforming hearts and minds. Her signature programs comprise Pink Potential, for ladies who want to seriously upscale their personal and professional lives, and Train & Speak, designed to boost participants' confidence in public speaking and educate them on tailoring speeches to specific audiences.

A woman of many parts, Sarah is a governance expert whose exceptional standards and consistent results make her a much sought-after professional in her field. She is currently a doctoral candidate who also holds a bachelor's degree in international business and management, as well as an MBA from the United Kingdom, boosting her qualifications as a distinguished strategist and international consultant.

Her impressive footprint and knowledge are grounded on practical wisdom, having undertaken diverse assignments including capacity building for thousands of professionals as well as working on complex projects across the globe. At the peak of her career Sarah held senior strategic roles which include being a Global Director overseeing 20+ geographies across UK, USA, Asia and Africa.

Sarah holds memberships / accreditations of various reputable professional institutions, including Institute of Human Resources Management (IHRM), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), Academy of Executive Coaching (AOEC), and National Industrial Training Authority (NITA).

In the course of her impactful work, she has received several awards and accolades, including being named Top 101 Global Coaching Leaders 2020 by World HRD Congress, as well as winning Exceptional Woman of Excellence Award (WEF), 2018 and Women Empowerment Principles Champion (WEP), 2019.

Sarah is also a distinguished thought-leader and influencer with vast mastery of the 21st century workplace trends and analytics, which has seen her travel the world as a renowned Global Speaker. She was Technical Judge and Trainer, Institute of Human Resources Management (IHRM), 2016 - 2021; Master Trainer, World Food Program, United Nations, 2019 - 2023; Master Trainer for Ecobank in multiple countries, 2018 - 2024; and Master Trainer and Consultant, IFC, World Bank Group, 2018 - 2024, among others.



She is a values-driven leader who has supported charities to raise school fees and mentor single mothers back into school or work. Her life is underpinned by four personal values which are a constant theme in her life and work relations; speed, creativity, clarity and caring.

Sarah is intrigued with fashion, edu-travel and chocolate. She is happily married and says her proudest achievement is being a mother!

She is equally an Editorial Board Member, Executive Support Magazine and Course Director, Advanced Certificate for the Executive Assistant (ACEA) Training, a trading division of BMTG (UK) Ltd.

AHWAM guests highlight I



Obinna Clement Okwor

Information Technology and Cybersecurity Professional

Topic: Strengthening cybersecurity: Essential Insights For Business Owners



Stephen Maina

Senior Manager Fixed Tribe

Topic: Mastering Storytelling To Enhance Presentations



Esther Elueme

Certified Hr prof.

Topic: Effective Human Resources Management



Michael Brandt

Founder & Senior Consultant

Topic: Unleashing The Power of Emotional Intelligence in Cx



Lalindra De Silva

Seasoned Management Accountant

Topic: Finding Balance Between Work and Life-Can it Be Done?



Udoh, Christopher Joseph

Sales and marketing specialist

Topic: Building an effective work team



Shelly Chandler

Founder and Principal Strategist, EvolveCX Consulting

Topic: Unleashing The Power of Emotional Intelligence in Cx



Anthony P. Wachira

Founder, MD The Influential

Topic: Navigating Career Changes With Confidence



Chaner Sanchez

Founder, Royale lighthouse

Topic: Measuring OKRs & work performance



Gregorio Uglioni

Advisor, Keynote Speaker & Podcast Host

Topic: Enhancing Employee Engagement and Motivation



Austin Agwaraonye

Seasoned HR Professional

Topic: How To Manage Professional And Networking Relationships



Tunbosun Afolayan SCMP

West Africa's first SCMP, Co-Founder PROALLY NEXSTARS

Topic: What is sustainable development and what is its impact on modern business



Jackson Mwosya

Talent Acquisition Specialist

Topic: Go-to Market Strategy for the future of work



Adaobi Ekwemozo

Product Manager

Topic: How To Transition Into Product Management As A Beginner



Yvan Claude

President of gaea21, soul and leadership coach

Topic: What is sustainable development and what is its impact on modern business



René Zuleta

CEO and Founder- AI Envangelist @Adaptix Digital

Topic: The Evolution of Chatbot and Human Interactions in the Digital Age



Athi Mbete

Entrepreneurial Business Leader

Topic: People in Service Delivery



Empowering Leaders, Transforming Businesses with Optimal Forge

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- ▶ Senior-Level Leadership Mentorship - Starting at \$125/hour or \$745 for 6 sessions.
- ▶ Advanced Career Strategy - Starting at \$95/hour or \$565 for 6 sessions.
- ▶ Business Consulting Services - Starting at \$3,500/project (customizable).

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- ▶ Networking Opportunities

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AHWAM guests highlight II



Lady Shayo Imologome FCA, FCM, MBA

Management Consultant, Strategy, Leadership & Innovation Expert, International Speaker, and Executive Facilitator.

Topic: Harnessing the power of innovation and business growth for profit



Akeem Olanrewaju MCILRM, MNIM
Debt recovery manager

Topic: Debt Management: Techniques for Paying Off Debt and Improving Your Credit Score



Rosebella Abok
Global Customer Experience Professional

Topic: Customer Experience: The Power of Personalization in Customer Support



Cynthia Yinkere
Global Business Leader

Topic: Customer Experience: The Power of Personalization in Customer Support



Evelyn Legaux
Founder, Managing Director Finance OTC Consulting Ltd

Topic: Cash Flow Management: Maximizing Your Business' Financial Health



Camille Nisich
Consultant, coach and corporate trainer

Topic: Investment strategies; Building a strong investment portfolio for long-term growth.



Jesse Ugwuwa
Head, Recoveries at Moniepoint Inc.

Topic: Debt Management: Techniques for Paying Off Debt and Improving Your Credit Score



Uduak Udofia
Founder, Executive Director, Women in Mediation Network

Topic: Data Governance and Security: The Strategies for Comprehensive Data Governance



Dr. Sanele Gamede
Award winning strategic youth life and career coach

Topic: leadership and building a career that brings fulfillment.



Akpan Justina - MCIA, SPHRI
HR Professional

Topic: Problems & solutions of staff training and development in companies/org.



Liene Krumina
legal partner at LKOS law office

Topic: Sustainable Business Practices: Embedding Sustainability in Corporate DNA



Hazeem Kassem
Consulting, chief financial officer

Topic: The Commercial Role of CFOs in an Advertising Business Landscape.



Thomas Fox
Founder of the Compliance Podcast Network

Topic: Compliant Policy: Building a Compliant-First Culture in Legal Services



Titasha Banerjee
international trade counsel

Topic: Strategies for Expanding Global Market Reach



Calv Lim
Innovator, entrepreneur, international speaker and insurance consultant

Topic: Tactics in Building Trust and Combatting Insurance Fraud



Hansen Lye
Insurance, Chartered Accountant

Topic: Real Life Insurance Application in Various Types of Business



Sheila Bundi
GROUP HEAD OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, APA INSURANCE-APOLLO GROUP

Topic: Human centric insurance



Peta King
Managing Director (BX Consultancy and Insurtech Lead - Camelot)

Topic: Human centric insurance



James Venezia
innovation, cyber complex and emerging risk and insurance specialist

Topic: The Role of And Risk Management Consultancy In Bringing New Products to Market



Carolyn Gathuru
Director Strat and BD Lifeskills Consulting

Topic: Handling Customers Complaints: Turning Negatives to Positives



Mandisa Makubalo
Founder - The Unlimited Experiences SA Group Consulting Firm

Topic: The Evolution of Chatbot and Human Interactions in the Digital Age



Erika Krizsan
Founder, Innovation Talent Network

Topic: Empowering Digital Education: How to Manage Talent and Digital Education Tools.



Amit Agrawal
Advisor

Topic: Navigating the Future: Top Technology Trends Shaping 2024 and Beyond in Finance and Business



Calv Lim
Innovator, entrepreneur, international speaker and insurance consultant

Topic: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities with AI in the Workspace



Rohith KR
Serial entrepreneur, business developer

Topic: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities with AI in the Workspace



Dr Marcia Thomas
certified christian leadership, life and career coach

Topic: The Influence of Stress on Leadership.



Gladys Njoroge,
seasoned human resource and accounting expert,

Topic: Team Building and its importance to an organization's growth.



Sam X Renick
co-creator of SammyRabbit.com and the Money School, an award-winning financial educator and children's financial literacy author,

Topic: Early age, youth, and family financial literacy



Idowu Ayodele
Business Strategy and Innovation Expert

Topic: Harnessing the power of innovation and business growth for profit



Mary T. Otunba, ACA
Finance Professional

Topic: Investment strategies; Building a strong investment portfolio for long-term growth.

The AI Skills Gap: Preparing Workers for the Future

René Zuleta — CEO and Founder- AI Evangelist @Adaptix Digital

In the rapidly evolving landscape of modern business, a new challenge looms on the horizon: the AI skills gap. As artificial intelligence reshapes industries at an amazing speed, the divide between AI-savvy professionals and those yet to embrace this transformative technology grows wider by the day. But within this challenge lies an unprecedented opportunity for growth, innovation, and career advancement.

Imagine a world where AI assistants streamline your workflow, predictive analytics inform your decisions, and machine learning algorithms uncover insights you never knew existed. This isn't science fiction—it's the reality of today's AI-driven workplace. From customer service chatbots to sophisticated data analysis tools, AI is no longer a futuristic concept but a present-day necessity.

The question is: will you ride this wave of innovation or be left in its wake?

For individuals, embracing AI skills is akin to learning a new language in a world where it's rapidly becoming the universal language of business. Those who master this language will find doors opening to exciting new career opportunities, higher salaries, and the chance to shape the future of their industries. Consider Sarah, a marketing manager who taught herself basic AI and machine learning concepts. Within a year, she had automated her team's reporting processes, freeing up countless hours for creative strategy and earning a promotion in the process.

But the stakes are even higher for businesses. Companies that fail to cultivate AI skills within their workforce risk falling behind more agile, tech-savvy competitors. They may find themselves struggling to keep pace with industry trends, unable to leverage the full potential of their data, or worse—becoming obsolete in an AI-dominated market.

So, how can we bridge this critical skills gap?

For individuals, the journey begins with curiosity and commitment. Online courses, workshops, and even AI-focused bootcamps offer accessible entry points into this exciting field. Start small—learn to use AI-powered tools in your current role, then gradually build up to more advanced concepts. Business leaders, your role is pivotal. Invest in comprehensive AI training programs for your teams. Cultivate a culture of continuous learning where experimentation with AI is encouraged. Consider partnering with educational institutions or tech companies to develop tailored AI curricula for your industry. The AI revolution is not a distant threat—it's a present reality and a gateway to unparalleled opportunities. Will you seize this moment to future-proof your career and propel your business to new heights?

The time for action is now. Embrace the challenge, invest in AI skills, and position yourself at the forefront of the AI-driven future. Remember, in the world of AI, the most dangerous move is standing still.

So, what's your first step towards closing the AI skills gap?

Your future self—and your future business—will thank you for the decision you make today.



The AI Skills Gap: Preparing Workers for the Future II

Gregorio Uglieri — Advisor, Keynote Speaker & Host @CX GoalKeeper Podcast



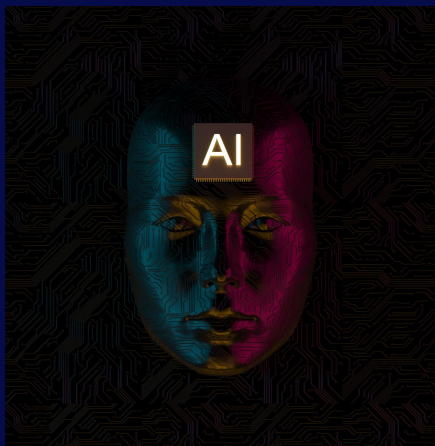
Imagine the world before the internet—a time when communication was slow, business operations were limited by geography, and global connectivity was a distant dream. Now, fast forward to today: the internet has become so fundamental that it's impossible to envision our lives or businesses without it. Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands at a similar threshold, poised to transform the global economy at an unprecedented pace.

However, unlike the internet's emergence, the rise of AI brings with it a powerful twist: it's not just reshaping how we connect or work; it's redefining the very skills we need to thrive. For business leaders and professionals, this isn't a future to watch passively—it's a call to action. The question is not whether AI will impact your industry; the question is whether you'll be prepared to leverage its potential.

As we often discuss on my podcast, the CX Goalkeeper, with insights from diverse experts and leaders worldwide, the future workforce must evolve beyond technical skills alone. AI will complement human capabilities, but only those willing to adapt, upskill, and lean into this new reality will truly succeed. This is the time to seize opportunities, build on AI's momentum, and craft the skills that will define the leaders of tomorrow.

AI and the Future of Employment: A Global Opportunity

The rise of AI has sparked debates about the future of work, with some fearing a wave of mass unemployment. But the truth is far more nuanced—and promising. According to the World Economic Forum, AI is projected to create 97 million new jobs by 2025, offsetting the roles it may automate. AI is not about replacing humans; it's about transforming work, automating repetitive tasks, and unlocking our potential for more meaningful, creative, value generating, and human-centered contributions.



Imagine a world where professionals are liberated from repetitive tasks like data entry and repeated service requests. In this new landscape, the focus shifts toward roles that require problem-solving, critical thinking, understanding different points of view, empathy, innovation and much more—the very areas where human capabilities shine brightest. AI isn't taking away opportunities; it's reshaping them, allowing us to elevate our impact in ways that were previously unimaginable.

However, seizing this opportunity requires action. To thrive in an AI-driven world, we must re-skill and upskill. Research from McKinsey highlights that up to 375 million workers globally may need to switch roles or learn new skills to adapt to these changes. For businesses, this shift is a wake-up call! Companies need to invest in talent development, ensuring that employees are not only tech-savvy but also equipped to enhance customer experiences (CX) and drive tangible value.

The future is bright, but only for those willing to evolve. Upskilling isn't just a necessity; it's a competitive advantage. By preparing today, we can create a future where AI and human talent work hand in hand, maximizing the potential of both.

An example: Service Excellence in the Age of AI

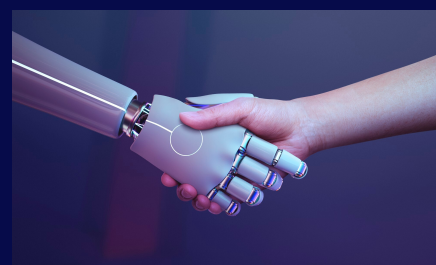
In today's rapidly evolving landscape, AI is revolutionizing the way businesses engage with customers, particularly in the realm of CX. AI-powered tools now streamline interactions, personalize services, and gather insights at a scale never before possible. But here's the catch: while technology can optimize efficiency, it's not enough to achieve true service excellence. Real connections require what only humans can offer—empathy, creativity, and the intuition to solve problems in ways that machines can't replicate.

Imagine AI predicting customer needs and enabling quick responses. Yet, the heart of that is the human touch—creating emotional bonds that foster trust and loyalty. This symbiotic relationship between AI efficiency and human empathy is what will shape the future of the service industry.

However, to maximize this potential, it's essential to invest in upskilling customer service agents. By equipping them with the skills to work alongside AI, agents not only enhance their professional capabilities but also uplift their communities, their employers, and their families. For employers, a more skilled workforce translates into greater customer satisfaction and business growth. For agents, these new competencies open doors to career advancement. Businesses that master this blend of AI technology and human talent won't just meet customer expectations; they'll exceed them, building loyalty, driving success, and creating positive ripples far beyond the workplace.

Preparing Workers for a New Reality

In the short term, technical skills like prompt engineering and proficiency with AI tools are crucial for those entering AI-driven roles. But the long-term success of professionals and businesses will depend on nurturing skills that are inherently human—empathy, leadership, creativity, and the ability to foster collaboration. These are traits that AI cannot replace, and they will be the foundation of future leadership and innovation.



Continuous upskilling is not an option; it's a necessity. Research from PwC suggests that 40% of workers will require reskilling to meet the demands of a transformed job market. This commitment to lifelong learning ensures that individuals remain competitive, adaptable, and ready to capitalize on the opportunities AI creates.

Africa provides a powerful example of this potential. Africa is focusing on mobile-first solutions and solving real-life problems for customers with limited resources. Companies like M-Pesa have revolutionized mobile banking, using AI to enhance customer experiences and drive financial inclusion for millions of unbanked individuals. Another example, Babyl in Rwanda, uses AI-driven telemedicine to bridge the healthcare gap for communities with limited physical infrastructure. These examples highlight how AI-driven upskilling can transform industries

and uplift communities, providing economic growth and improving quality of life for workers and their families.

Conclusion: Embracing AI as an Opportunity

The future of work is one where AI and human skills will coexist, each enhancing the value of the other. By upskilling and developing essential human competencies, professionals and businesses can navigate the challenges of AI and seize its opportunities. This approach not only future-proofs careers but also contributes to broader economic and social development, as seen in emerging markets like Africa. The message is clear: AI isn't taking jobs; it's reshaping them, and those who are prepared will lead this transformation.

Top 3 Takeaways:

1. **Leverage Human Strengths:** Skills like empathy, creativity, and leadership will be the foundation of future success.
2. **Invest in Lifelong Learning:** Upskilling is essential for staying relevant in an AI-driven job market.
3. **AI as a Global Opportunity:** Embrace AI not just for efficiency but for uplifting communities and economies worldwide.

Gregorio Uglioni, 08.10.2024

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Founder's Story

Ubong Mathew

My name is Ubong Mathew, and I am the Team Lead at An Hour With A Manager (AHWAM), a platform where I've had the privilege of hosting numerous distinguished guests and managing a dynamic team. Through our sessions, we've built a robust network of experts who are committed to helping professionals navigate their careers and assisting organizations in implementing effective business strategies. Despite global challenges, my team and I have consistently helped professionals and businesses grow, generating over \$2,500 in monthly revenue.

AHWAM started humbly, originally just a monthly livestream where I tried to sell a digital product called HR Manager. I've always been a camera-shy person, but the need to promote that digital product pushed me out of my comfort zone. That's how the livestream began, every last Thursday of the month, with me inviting guests to speak on various topics—often quite technical. Initially, we used Instagram Live, then shifted to Twitter Live, but it wasn't until we found LinkedIn Audio Live that we really hit our stride. The larger audience on LinkedIn gave me the motivation to keep showing up, month after month, despite any doubts or fears I had about the process.

Before launching AHWAM, I was transitioning from UI/UX design to project management. I wanted to engage with top managers to learn from their experiences and avoid the pitfalls they encountered in their careers. Every topic I chose for the sessions was something I had a personal interest in or had struggled with myself. We'd bring in guest speakers for live or recorded sessions, and gradually, the livestream went from being a once-a-month event to twice a month. This was all while I was still at WeRun Technology, where I was co-founder. At that point, there wasn't even a name for the livestream, but it was growing.

By March or April 2022, I started reflecting deeply on what the platform should be called, especially as it was now bi-monthly. Management Livestream was a name that crossed my mind, but it never quite stuck. Sometimes, we'd go live with just me and the guest, and no one watching. Other times, technical difficulties like bad network connections would stop guests from showing up. But no matter what, I showed up. I increased the momentum, eventually hosting sessions three times a month, though I was always anxious about things beyond my control, like internet issues or power outages. Yet, something inside kept me pushing forward.

As time went on, I started to see how invaluable the platform was—not just to others, but to me personally. I realized I was tapping into the wisdom of professionals with decades of experience and using it to navigate my own career and business life. In choosing guests, I deliberately sought out people who were experts in their niche, often from different countries, but not necessarily famous. I spent hours researching and finding these hidden gems.

By November or December 2023, we expanded to hosting a podcast every Thursday. One of the biggest challenges during this time was that I

was handling everything by myself—producing, editing, managing content, and handling social media until October 2023 when I started my team.

It was overwhelming, and at one point, I almost gave up. Around this time, a mentor stepped in and offered valuable insights. I also met Samuel Akpet, a designer who played a crucial role in our rebranding. That's when An Hour With A Manager officially got its name and, by October 2023, became a registered company. Samuel has since moved on, but I still credit him for helping me shape the brand's identity.

Building a team has been another significant part of the journey. Gabriel, our content person, was a game-changer before he left in early 2024. It was a tough time, personally and professionally, and I even considered shutting down AHWAM. However, by May or June, I brought on a new social media manager, and the team began to stabilize. Now, we have a full team, including a designer, content person, social media manager, and web developer. Ejiro, our web developer, has been particularly amazing in bringing the website and landing pages to life.

This year, we've really found our balance. AHWAM has evolved into a platform where professionals, business leaders, entrepreneurs, and managers come to learn, collaborate, and network. In Africa, we are striving to fill a gap left by the absence of global platforms like Bloomberg or Forbes. Our vision is to be the go-to platform for professionals seeking to connect with top industry leaders across Africa and beyond.

Looking ahead, we plan to host live podcasts in different cities around the world, with sponsors supporting shows on topics like work-life balance. The goal is to build a space where business collaboration and networking can flourish, transcending boundaries of race, religion, or nationality. We've had guests from all walks of life—Asians, Muslims, Christians—and I'm committed to fostering that diversity.

The motivation behind AHWAM has always been to help others. The feedback we receive shows that our platform is making a difference. We're not just offering content; we're connecting people with mentors, coaches, and consultants who can guide them on their professional journeys. In a landscape where many Nigerian and African podcasts fail due to challenges like funding or infrastructure, we've persevered. I've learned that you don't need to wait for perfection before sharing your work with the world.

At AHWAM, we've built this platform not for quick financial gain but to help others navigate their paths. It's been a journey of consistency and growth, and now, more than ever, I can confidently say we know who we are, what we do, and who we're doing it for. We're here to stay, and we're just getting started.





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The screenshot displays the HRManeja website interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes links for Home, Features, Why Us, FAQ, and Contact, along with a 'Get Started' button. The hero section features the tagline 'The intelligent way to manage employees.' and a call to action with 'View Demo' and 'Start Free Trial' buttons. A testimonial from Godfred Akpan is featured below. The footer includes logos of partner companies like ctua.ly, lekture, and werun, and a section titled 'Work smart with Hr-Maneja'.

The Future of Leadership: Guiding Teams in an AI-Driven Era

Michael Brandt — Founder & Senior Consultant



As AI continues to revolutionize industries and transform the workplace, there's an underlying concern that technology will replace many human functions. However, while AI can excel in automation, data analysis, and operational efficiency, it will never replicate the core elements of human connection that are fundamental to effective leadership. In fact, in an AI-driven era, leadership that focuses on empathy, emotional intelligence, and team development is more important than ever.

In this article I'd like to explore how the future of leadership hinges on balancing advanced technology with a deep commitment to nurturing human relationships. It is the leaders who maintain and cultivate these connections who will unlock their teams' highest potential.

1. AI can automate tasks, but not relationships

AI can certainly streamline repetitive tasks, provide data insights, and even help inform decision-making. But at its core, leadership is about relationships. No amount of technology can replace the need for trust, understanding, and genuine care within teams. These human elements are what create cohesion, loyalty, and motivation—factors that no algorithm can replicate.

Leaders must embrace AI to handle routine tasks, allowing them to focus more energy on what truly matters: their people. By investing in relationships and being present with their teams, leaders will create environments where collaboration thrives, creativity blossoms, and individuals feel valued beyond their productivity.

This same principle applies to customer relationships. While automation can simplify processes like answering frequently asked questions, processing orders, or providing standardized information, it cannot build meaningful relationships with customers. Genuine loyalty and customer satisfaction are founded on human interactions, empathy, and personalized care. Just as leaders must nurture their teams, companies must ensure they maintain a human touch in their customer interactions, offering more than just efficiency, but also understanding and connection. These are the aspects that truly inspire long-term trust and loyalty.

2. Empathy as the cornerstone of AI-enhanced leadership

Empathy has always been a key leadership skill, but in an AI-driven world, it becomes a non-negotiable. While AI can predict trends and analyze behavior, it cannot sense emotions, perceive unspoken concerns, or understand the complexities of personal circumstances that may impact an employee's performance. Leaders must bridge this gap by offering emotional support, recognizing struggles, and providing the human connection that AI lacks.

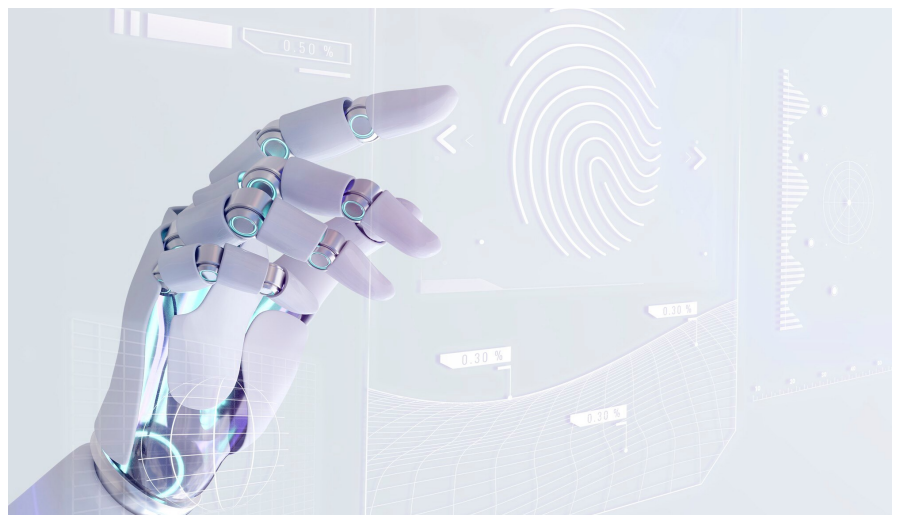
Empathy is the foundation of trust, and trust is what binds teams together. In an increasingly digital workplace, employees will still crave human interaction and guidance, particularly when navigating the pressures of working with AI systems. Empathetic leaders, who listen and respond to the emotional needs of their teams, will see higher engagement, loyalty, and ultimately better results.

3. Nurturing talent to thrive alongside AI

AI is reshaping roles and workflows, but it's leaders who are responsible for preparing their teams to thrive in this new landscape. Human talent will always be the driving force behind any successful organization, and nurturing that talent is essential—especially as AI continues to take on more operational responsibilities.

Leaders must focus on the growth and development of their teams, helping them adapt to new AI technologies while further developing their personal and professional skills. This requires an emphasis on upskilling and lifelong learning, but also on soft skills like creativity, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence—traits that AI cannot emulate.

Moreover, leaders need to create a supportive environment where individuals feel empowered to learn, take risks, and experiment without fear of failure. In this sense, nurturing talent is not just about keeping up with AI but about ensuring that human potential continues to shine alongside technological advances.



4. Emotional intelligence will outshine algorithms

In a world of complex AI systems, emotional intelligence (EQ) will be one of the most valuable assets a leader can possess. While AI can process data, it cannot engage in meaningful human interactions, nor can it understand the nuanced emotions that drive decision-making and team dynamics. This is where leaders come in. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence can sense the unspoken challenges within their teams, anticipate conflicts, and mediate them with compassion. They can inspire confidence, motivate individuals on a deeper level, and sustain an atmosphere of trust and psychological safety. In times of uncertainty, when AI-driven decisions may feel impersonal or unclear, emotionally intelligent leaders provide the grounding and reassurance that teams need to stay motivated and aligned with organizational goals.

5. Balancing technology with humanity

While AI will undoubtedly play a key role in improving efficiency and reducing costs, it's the human aspects of leadership that will drive true value in organizations. Leaders must be vigilant in ensuring that their use of AI does not come at the expense of human connection. In fact, as AI takes over more tasks, leaders should double down on their efforts to maintain a personal touch in their day-to-day interactions. Building strong relationships, creating a sense of belonging, and understanding individual aspirations are more important than ever. These human elements are what will keep teams motivated and productive in an increasingly automated environment. Leaders who make time for one-on-one conversations, recognize achievements, and offer personalized support will create teams that are resilient, agile, and prepared for the future.



6. Creating a culture of compassion and inclusion

The future of leadership isn't just about leveraging AI to achieve better outcomes; it's also about creating inclusive, compassionate workplaces where everyone feels they belong. AI, if unchecked, can perpetuate biases or create environments that feel overly mechanical. This is where human leadership must step in. Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that AI technologies are implemented ethically and fairly. But beyond that, they must cultivate a workplace culture where diverse perspectives are valued, and empathy is woven into the fabric of the organization. By creating an inclusive environment, leaders ensure that every team member feels seen, heard, and valued - strengthening the collective power of the organization in ways that AI simply cannot.

7. Purpose-driven leadership in an AI world

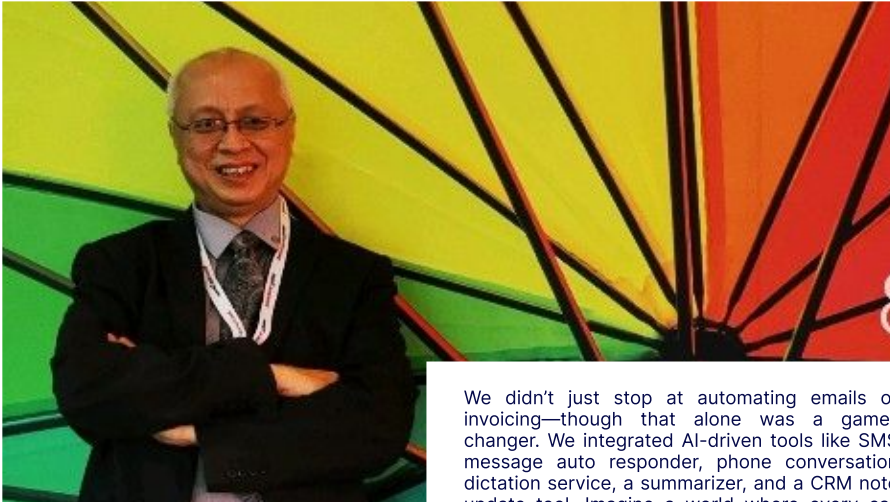
AI can be a powerful tool for achieving efficiency and scale, but without purpose, it risks becoming an impersonal and transactional force within organizations. Leaders must provide a clear vision that transcends the data-driven outputs of AI systems and resonates on a human level. Purpose-driven leadership offers a compelling narrative that gives meaning to work. It ensures that employees remain connected to the larger mission of the organisation, even as AI takes over certain tasks. Leaders who continuously communicate this sense of purpose will cultivate teams that are not only more engaged but also more fulfilled and motivated to perform at their best.

To summarise: AI enhances, but leadership empowers

While AI will undoubtedly reshape the workplace and offer significant benefits, it cannot replace the human qualities that make leadership effective. Empathy, emotional intelligence, and relationship-building remain the cornerstones of guiding successful teams. Leaders must embrace the technological advantages that AI brings but never lose sight of their primary role: nurturing human potential.

The leaders of tomorrow will be those who leverage AI to enhance productivity while investing deeply in the well-being, development, and emotional needs of their teams. By balancing technology with humanity, leaders will create organisations that are not only more efficient but also more compassionate, inclusive, and capable of thriving in the ever-evolving AI-driven world.

**Michael Brandt CCXP is the Founder & Senior Consultant, Michael Brandt CX-Excellence*



What's next for your office?

Calv Lim — Innovator, entrepreneur, international speaker and insurance consultant

At first glance, AI might seem like something reserved for tech giants and industry leaders—distant, complex, and out of reach for the average business. But the reality is far different. AI is transforming the business world in ways that are tangible, accessible, and profoundly impactful, even for small to medium-sized offices. The story I'm about to share isn't a far-off fantasy—it's happening right now in businesses just like yours. It's about how AI can take an overwhelmed office from chaos to calm, from reactive to proactive, and from just getting by to truly thriving. And the best part? It could be your story too.

Did you know?

"Up to 70% of CRM implementations fail due to poor user adoption or overwhelming manual input."

(Source: Gartner)

Let's be honest. The modern office is a storm of tasks. Calls, emails, meetings. We juggle these day in and day out, always feeling like we're falling behind. For Jane, the office manager, her days were a blur of scheduling, chasing tasks, and trying to make sense of all the noise. The sales team spent hours digging through leads, while customer service was buried under inquiries. But here's where our story changed—where your story could change too.

Fun Fact:

"The average call center agent spends nearly 40% of their time on non-productive tasks like data entry and call logging."

(Source: McKinsey)

When we first heard about AI, we were skeptical. It sounded distant, futuristic, like something that belonged in tech giants' boardrooms. But the more we learned, the more we realized AI wasn't a robotic replacement—it was an ally, a silent partner that would take the mundane off our plates, so we could focus on what really mattered.

And what happened next was magic.

We didn't just stop at automating emails or invoicing—though that alone was a game-changer. We integrated AI-driven tools like SMS message auto responder, phone conversation dictation service, a summarizer, and a CRM note update tool. Imagine a world where every call you made was instantly captured, summarized, and logged into your CRM without lifting a finger. No more trying to remember important details or manually entering data. It was all there, ready for us to use, in minutes. We introduced an AI note taker to help us manage those long meetings—those ones where great ideas are flying but getting lost in a sea of words. Now, the notes took themselves, perfectly organized and sent to the team, and we didn't miss a thing. Our task reminder tool? That little gem meant we never forgot a deadline or a follow-up again. We were organized, responsive, and always a step ahead.

Did you know?

"Without AI, it takes an average of 12 minutes for an employee to respond to a single customer service email—AI can reduce that to mere seconds."

Suddenly, our team wasn't drowning in work. We weren't trying to do everything all at once. We had time to think, to be creative, to focus on growing the business instead of just maintaining it. John, our head of sales, no longer wasted hours guessing which leads to chase. AI sorted through the data, showed him where to focus, and—like a trusted advisor—suggested which clients to follow up with. And guess what? That long-lost client the AI recommended? John took the risk, made the call, and it paid off—a deal closed that same day.

Fun Fact:

"AI doesn't just handle the boring stuff—teams using AI note-takers report an increase in creativity and collaboration during meetings by 25%!"

(Source: Deloitte Insights)

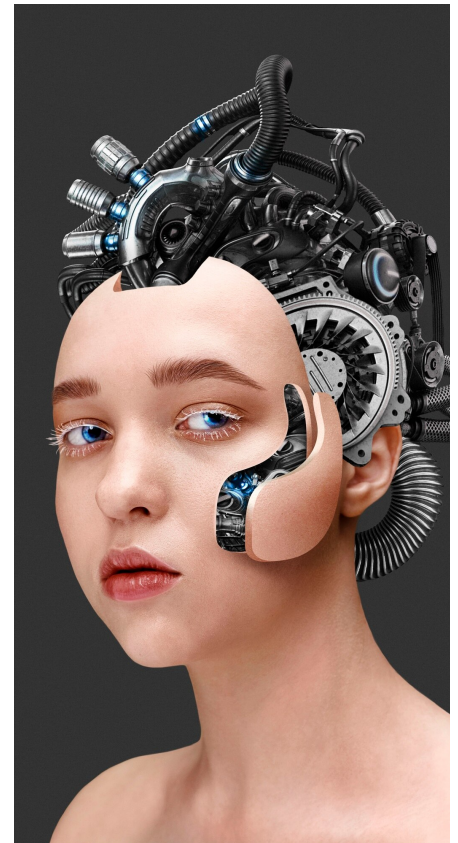
And it wasn't just sales. Mike's customer service team was thriving too. With our AI-powered chatbot handling the routine inquiries, Mike could spend his time on the clients that needed him most. No more endless emails to sift through—those were handled overnight by the AI, which didn't even take a coffee break.

Here's the truth: AI didn't just make us more productive—it made us more engaged. By lifting the weight of repetitive tasks, it allowed us to focus on what we're truly good at. The AI became a part of the team. We even gave our AI tools personalities—Mike called his chatbot "Chad," and John dubbed the lead-scoring tool "The Oracle." These weren't just pieces of software anymore; they were our office buddies, always there, always working quietly in the background.

What we learned is that AI isn't about taking jobs. It's about empowering people. We didn't lose our humanity—we gained more of it. With the AI taking care of the admin work, we found time for what we loved: brainstorming, solving big problems, and spending quality time with clients.

And here's where the story turns to you.

Your office could be next. The tools that transformed Bright Ideas Inc. are the same ones we offer to you—a telephone dictation service, summarizer, note taker, CRM note update, and task reminder. These aren't luxuries meant for massive corporations. They're for you, the small business owner juggling too much, trying to grow without breaking under the pressure.



Time-Saving Tip

"Implementing AI-driven dictation and summarization tools can reduce 50% of time spent on manual note-taking."

(Source: HubSpot)

AI can be your office's silent partner, handling the grind so you can focus on the big picture. The only question left is, how will you use it? We've learned that the future of work isn't just about technology—it's about finding the right balance. Now it's your turn to take that leap. Are you ready to transform your office? The tools are already here, waiting for you.

So, go ahead—make AI your office buddy, and watch your business, your team, and your creativity soar.

Why AI Matters:

"Over 60% of sales teams admit to losing leads due to manual data entry errors. AI tools help eliminate those mistakes."

(Source: Harvard Business Review)

Listener's Review



An Hour With A Manager helped me shift from business development to product management - **Alexander Gichangi, Kenya**

My journey through An Hour With A Manager opened my eyes to the intricate layers of leadership and operational strategy in ways I hadn't considered before. Initially focused on business development, I found myself repeatedly drawn to the strategic elements of product development discussed during sessions. The more I engaged with the content, the clearer it became that my passion lies not just in growing a business but in shaping the products that drive it.

The aha moment came during a particular episode discussing product-market fit. I realized that, while I was great at developing relationships and growing markets, what truly excited me was understanding customer needs and translating them into product innovations. It was then I knew I wanted to pivot my career toward product management - aligning my business acumen with the creativity and strategic thinking required to lead product initiatives.

This realization has set me on a path to pursue roles that allow me to influence product decisions and contribute to their success in the marketplace. An Hour With A Manager helped me see my potential in a completely different light and ultimately led to this exciting career shift. Thanks again for providing such impactful content!

Q&A session On handling Firing Carolyn Gathuru

Questions:

- Have you ever been fired?
- How did it affect your professional career?
- What steps did you take to find a solution?
- What's your expert advice for other professionals, both junior and senior, who find themselves in a similar position?

An Hour With A Manager helped my career transition - **Eva Vanessa Okwor, Program Officer, Abuja, Nigeria**



It has been a wonderful journey being part of the audience of AHWAM over the last year. The LinkedIn podcast and insightful speakers have played a pivotal role in shaping my mindset and preparing me for my career transition to a new country.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to appreciate Mathew for the personalized coaching on self-branding via LinkedIn. This has significantly enhanced my online presence, allowing individuals and organizations to quickly understand what I do just by visiting my profile. I highly recommend everyone to plug into An Hour With A Manager for personal and professional growth.

Answers:

Being fired or sacked as it is generally referred to is one of the biggest fears that employees have. So much so that they will tolerate poor leadership, toxic work environments and exhausting work life imbalance all so that the 'opportunity to be gotten rid of' does not knock on their door steps. Unpacking this fear yields various root causes including: the fear of not being able to find gainful employment again; the fear of failure of not being good enough and not succeeding at work; the fear of detaching from the norm and known and getting into the world of the unknown; as well as the fear of backlash from community and loved ones and having a besmirched reputation. It is indeed a very shaky space psychologically and emotionally and as with all things in life that happen in life that shake ones core, it is important to take time off to reflect on the happening and how one is feeling about it.

Should the situation be that it was a fair and just discharge, then the reasons behind this need to be examined with the outcome on lessons learned. Should it have been an unfair dismissal, one could take the time to assess if to take on the battle for legal justice or not. Whichever way the decision goes, the root cause analysis of this also needs to be examined for lessons learned. Our attitude towards malhappenings of this nature is that they are not here to debilitate us and cause us to be stuck, but to open our eyes to possibilities. One should desist completely from getting involved in retaliatory activities spurred by anger and bitterness. Armed with the lessons learned both individually and in consultation with others within and without the workplace that would provide candid and useful feedback, one needs to dust up and look for new placement. Having integrity to the truth when confronted with the question as to the cause of one's exit when applying for new opportunities is the winning formula. One should be forthright to indicate what happened and what is being done about it. Being fired may very well be the closure of one door and the opening of a new opportunity to fly. Our reaction and attitude is what matters the most.



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