

Humans + AI \_\_\_\_\_

# FUTURE JOB PROSPERITY

13 reasons to believe in  
a positive future of work

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## Creating a positive future of work



Many fear that AI disruption will lead to widespread job losses, the erosion of the quality of work, and increasing work inequity.

Despite these concerns there are a wide range of factors that point to the potential for a highly positive future of work. All of these factors will be amplified by being clear and deliberate in building a 'Humans + AI' future where AI is used to complement humans.

This mini-report presents a range of compelling arguments for why future job prosperity is possible, perhaps even likely.

Seeing the potential for a positive future is a necessary enabler to taking the action that will make it happen.

## Key concepts



**Automation vs. Augmentation:** AI can be deployed with the intent of replacing human work, or of complementing it to enhance human capabilities and increase their value.

**Job Polarization:** We have long observed a growing divide between high-skill, high-wage jobs and low-skill, low-wage jobs, with the risk of current shifts aggravating that gap.

**Skill Premium:** The pay premium for those with superior skills will be impacted by AI, by commoditizing an array of tasks and also enhancing the marketable skills of those who use AI well.

**Adaptability and Learning:** A faster pace of change requires even higher levels of adaptability and learning, with educational support enabling all to make required transitions.

## Arguments for future job prosperity



1. The potential of Humans + AI
2. AI enhances value-generating skills
3. Creation of new jobs
4. Unique human capabilities at the fore
5. Specialization reduces substitutability
6. Enhanced education and learning
7. Comparative advantage
8. Attraction of talent
9. Work redesign
10. Humans' extraordinary adaptability
11. Emotional intelligence and human connection
12. Preference for human work
13. Design for inclusive prosperity

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## The potential of Humans + AI



Rather than considering humans and AI as potential competitors in value-creation, we can and should focus entirely on a 'Humans + AI' framing, in which we seek to maximize the value of humans by using AI to complement their capabilities.

In almost all domains humans and AI collaborating will generate superior outcomes than either working individually.

There is a rapidly growing movement of inspiring leaders, thinkers, and doers putting their energy into designing and implementing the structures that will generate the best outcomes from humans and AI working together.

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## AI enhances value-generating skills



AI can be used for “intelligence augmentation” and task support, substantially increasing the value created by human labor. Those who use AI to enhance their value contribution will be able to maintain or even grow their skill premia.

Research studies across industries have shown that AI usually gives a higher boost to the work capabilities of lower-skilled workers. This narrows the gap between the value of their work and that of high-skilled workers, democratizing value creation.

The unbounded scope of GenAI means this skill enhancement can be applied to any work from routine to complex, from physical labor to strategy consulting.

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## Creation of new jobs



Throughout human history new jobs have been created at a faster rate than jobs have disappeared. The faster the pace of change, the more new jobs are created.

Many rapidly growing roles, such as telehealth nurse, digital identity specialist, mobile money agent, AR designer, and data-driven personal trainer, barely existed a few years ago.

Some of the many jobs being created include neural interface designer, AI auditor, cognitive enhancement coach, AI ethics officer, prompt engineer, and far, far more. We cannot readily predict what new jobs will emerge, but we can be sure they will be plentiful.

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## Unique human capabilities at the fore



The increasing use of GenAI will lead workers to define and refine their unique value contribution in both employment and freelance work.

In pre-GenAI work people's skills were applied more diffusely and consistently to defined tasks and outputs. In collaborative work with AI, people will find different and more pointed ways to complement AI, focusing on their most distinctive human and individual capabilities.

The use of AI will draw out and refine people's unique capabilities working collaboratively with AI, increasing the specificity of their value creation.



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## Specialization reduces substitutability



A key factor driving prices and wages is substitutability. If equivalent work outcomes can be achieved by substitutes, for examples by other people, outsourcing, or AI, the result will be downward pressure on wages.

As we shift to more distinctive and unique human capabilities, accelerated by AI education tools, it will be harder to substitute individual workers.

The most successful companies will be designing work to tap specialist skills, as commoditized work will create commoditized products and services with no competitive advantage.

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## Enhanced education and learning



One of the most powerful and valuable applications of AI is providing personalized education, assisting both those who already have access to quality education as well as the many around the world who do not.

This democratized availability of learning tools will assist people to improve their existing marketable skills, and swiftly develop new capabilities as these increase in value in a shifting job marketplace.

## Comparative advantage



The economic theory of comparative advantage states that individuals, organizations, or nations should focus on tasks where they have the greatest efficiency differential over others.

Even if AI is better than humans at every task, it should be applied where its economic advantage is greatest. This will still leave ample jobs for humans where AI's advantage is smaller.

Taken to an extreme, this is an argument around energy allocation. Humans are currently far more energy-efficient than AI. If this dynamic changes, regulation may be required to ensure humans have access to the resources they need to compete.

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## Attraction of talent



Companies can take two broad approaches to the role of AI in work: emphasizing substituting workers with AI, or complementing workers with AI.

The former will experience increasing difficulty in attracting talent.

The latter will attract the best talent.

In a world of AI, the ability to attract top talent, not least to implement the best AI systems, will be an even greater differentiator of performance than in the past. Companies will succeed based on their attitude to human labor relative to AI.

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## Work redesign



There are major risks in current prevailing work structures based on tightly defined job roles. These tend to favor automation over complementing skills.

By understanding the potential value of AI in enhancing value creation leading companies will reconceive the future shape of their organizations, the specific human roles required, and how they deploy their talent to create the highest impact outcomes.

Those companies that engage pre-emptively in this task reorganization will be massively advantaged as value creation shifts to 'Humans + AI' models.

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## Humans' extraordinary adaptability



Humans have proven to be exceptionally adaptable to a vast array of rapid changes in their environment, from the Ice Age to human-created transitions including gunpowder, steam, Internet, and a multitude of other inventions. When needed, we swiftly adapted to Covid and adopted remote and flexible work.

In his 1970 book *Future Shock*, Alvin Toffler suggested that the increasing pace of change would lead to a state of individual and societal shock. In the decades since then and still today we have proven to be exceptionally resilient to accelerating change.

Humans are defined by our unlimited adaptability. We will continue to demonstrate that through shifts present and future.

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## Emotional and human connection



There are many roles where 'humanity' and emotional engagement are expected, including in personal services, healthcare, aged care, and education. People will feel inspired by a human teacher or supported by a human carer, not by their AI counterparts.

Organizations can only be effective if their leaders and employees have strong social and emotional skills to engage, collaborate, ideate, and create an environment where people want to work.

Every business depends on their customer relationships. Engendering trust and loyalty requires human connection and emotional intelligence, which heightens the value of people.

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## Preference for human work



Over and above humans' unique human capabilities of emotional intelligence and connection, people will continue to want and prefer humans to do many kinds of work for them.

For many roles, even if machines equal or exceed human performance, we will still want and prefer humans. We will prefer to read books by human writers, work with a human financial advisor, and be served by human waiters, however witty a robot waiters' repartee.

People are already demonstrating their willingness to pay a premium for human rather than automated services. In an increasingly automated world the premium for humans will increase substantially.



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## Design for inclusive prosperity



Over the last decades the benefits of productivity gains have been increasingly appropriated by corporations rather than workers. The rise of AI and other manifestations of a network economy risk an increased concentration in economic power.

One counterpoint is that corporations and wealthy individuals benefit from inclusive prosperity. A large and growing base of affluent consumers is required to fuel any business's growth. We all lose in a world of massive social fragmentation.

Everyone will be aligned in designing for inclusive economic prosperity. While the pathways to this are not clearly defined, concerted effort can achieve that.

## Action for future job prosperity



The future of work is open for us to create. Nothing is inevitable

The first step is to acknowledge the challenges and also to explore and understand the forces and factors that could lead to future job prosperity.

Enormous positive possibilities are open to us. We can create a world in which people enjoy their work more, there are more opportunities for individuals, and human potential is uncovered and expressed more than ever.

How we act now, as corporate and government leaders, entrepreneurs, and individuals, will shape our future.



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# AMPLIFYING COGNITION

**Resources to amplify your thinking, capabilities, and decision-making**

- **Podcast:** interviews with Humans + AI and cognition leaders
- **Newsletter:** updates, tools, frameworks, resources, insights
- **Humans + AI Explorers Community:** learn and discover with leaders
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