

HUMAN LEADERSHIP IN THE AI ERA

Keeping Humans in the Loop

The
BLACKSMITH





75%

of employees already use AI.

20%

of companies capture real value from it.

Which side is your organization on?

A futuristic office scene with people working at computers, looking at a large digital display showing a complex network diagram. The display features a central circular hub with radiating lines and various data points, including a globe and a pie chart. The office is dimly lit with warm ambient lighting and several hanging pendant lights. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and collaborative.

Where would you start?

MORE PEOPLE

NEW SKILLS

NEW TECHNOLOGY

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

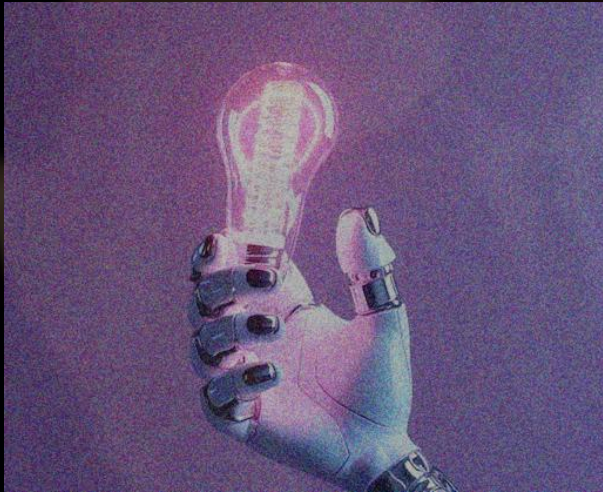
DEFINE

the value

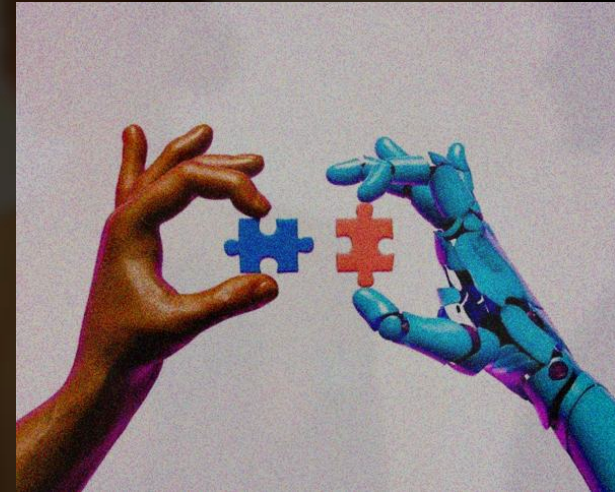
Decide What Matters



WHAT VALUE DO WE WANT TO CREATE?



IMPROVE TODAY



GROW TOMORROW

INVEST IN WHAT WILL CREATE THAT VALUE.



CAPACITY

Not enough
time or people?



CAPABILITY

Missing skills
or judgment?



TECHNOLOGY

Slow steps or systems
that don't connect?

A group of business professionals in suits are walking away from the camera down a long, brightly lit hallway with large windows on the left. The scene is in silhouette, emphasizing the movement and direction of the group.

One decision. Three perspectives.

CEO

What outcome matters?

CFO

Is it worth the investment?

CHRO

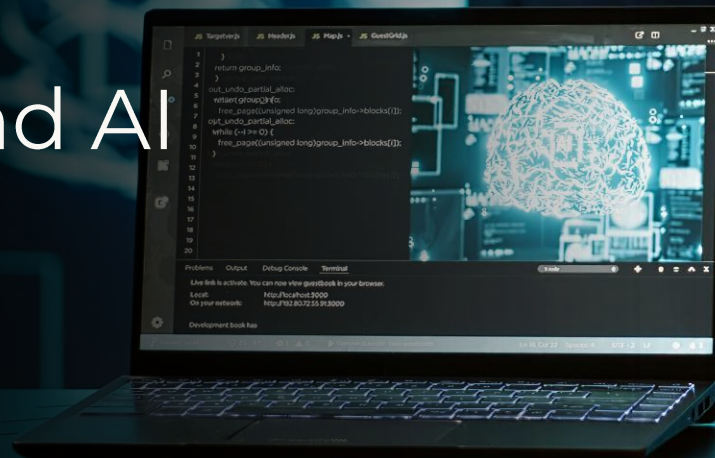
What must people be able to do?

AGREE ON THE OUTCOME.
THEN DESIGN THE WORK
AROUND IT.

DESIGN

the workflow

Design How People And AI
Work Together



McDONALD'S

THE ERROR REACHED THE CUSTOMER.



100+

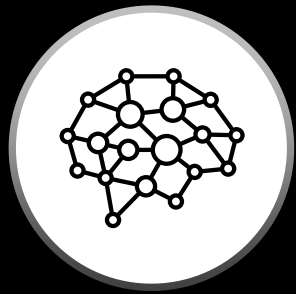
U.S. restaurants in the pilot

Testing reported from
2021–2024

Source: Associated Press; IBM/McDonald's pilot announcement, 2021–2024



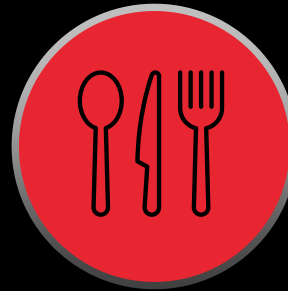
THE MISTAKE TRAVELLED THROUGH 5 STEPS.



AI



ORDER



KITCHEN



EMPLOYEE



CUSTOMER

The customer didn't blame 'the AI.'
They blamed McDonald's.



A pilot **ends.**

The next decision still belongs to the leader.

Stopping what isn't ready is governance working
— **not failure.**

Who can catch it?



NOT EVERY DECISION

SHOULD BE LEFT TO AI.

AI-LED

HUMAN + AI

HUMAN-LED

***Higher risk** needs more human
involvement.*

AI REWRITES THE CODE. PEOPLE DECIDE WHAT SHIPS.



TESTED

BEFORE REVIEW

74%

AI-AUTHORED CHANGES*

50%

LESS TIME*

75%

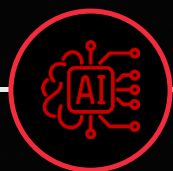
New code &
engineer-approved

ENGINEER



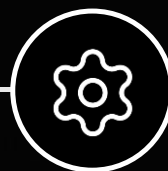
FIND

AI



REWRITE

SYSTEM



TEST

ENGINEER



REVIEW

HUMAN OWNER



RELEASE

Ref: Google Research (2024). Estimates and AI-authored share refer to one migration workstream.



AI creates the capacity.
Leadership decides
where it goes.

SKILLS CONNECT PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY

WORKFORCE

People



SKILLS

AI & TECHNOLOGY

Tools



Tools give access. Skills make them useful.

WHEN WORK **CHANGES**, PEOPLE'S **ROLES CHANGE**.



DEVELOP

Learn
the new work



REDEPLOY

Move
skills where needed



HIRE

Fill
a critical gap

IF PEOPLE CAN'T
CHALLENGE OR STOP AI,
THEY'RE **NOT**
IN THE LOOP.



A hand in a dark suit sleeve holds a black pen, pointing it towards a digital cityscape. The background is a blurred city skyline at night, with blue and orange light trails and data-like patterns overlaid. The word 'DELIVER' is in large, bold, yellow letters, and 'outcomes' is in white lowercase letters below it, underlined with a red line.

DELIVER

outcomes

Measure What Changes. Learn. Improve.

MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

TIME

QUALITY

IMPACT





UNCLEAR VISION LEADS
UNCLEAR RESULTS.

Back to the meeting

What should we invest in first?

VISION COMES FROM HUMAN.

AI AMPLIFIES IT
IT DOESN'T REPLACE IT.



NEXT 2-3 YEARS



DEFINE

Decide What Matters



DESIGN

Design How People And AI Work Together



DELIVER

Measure What Changes. Learn. Improve.



The
BLACKSMITH

THANK YOU.