NO PREP

Jobs AI Will Change in the Next 10 Years

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Name: Period: Date:

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The Automation Wave Is Already Here

For most of human history, automation meant machines replacing physical labor. Factories used robots to weld cars, and conveyor belts replaced workers who moved goods. But something different is happening now. Starting around 2022 and accelerating rapidly through 2025 and 2026, artificial intelligence began replacing cognitive labor — the kind of thinking, writing, analyzing, and communicating that used to require a human

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Which Jobs Are Most at Risk?

Researchers who study automation look at two main factors when predicting which jobs are most vulnerable. The first is routineness: how much of the job involves doing the same task over and over in a predictable way. The second is the degree to which the work involves processing information versus interacting physically with the world. Jobs that score high on both of those factors (routine, information-based work) face the greatest pressure from AI. Data entry clerks, billing specialists, insurance underwriters, loan processors, and bookkeepers are among the roles that economists most frequently flag as highly automatable. A study by researchers at Oxford University identified that about 47 percent of U.S. jobs were at high risk of

computerization over a 20-year window, and that estimate was made before the large language model revolution that began in late 2022. More recent analyses suggest the timeline is shortening. Goldman Sachs estimated in 2023 that generative AI alone could disrupt 300 million full-time jobs globally.

Jobs That Are Changing, Not Disappearing

The more nuanced story, and the more accurate one for most workers, is that AI is changing jobs rather than eliminating them outright. A radiologist, for example, still reads medical images. But AI now pre-screens those images and flags the most suspicious areas, which means the radiologist handles a higher volume of cases and focuses attention differently. A paralegal still researches legal questions, but AI tools now draft the first version of a brief or pull relevant case law in seconds, so the paralegal spends more time reviewing and less time searching. This pattern of augmentation, humans working alongside AI rather than being replaced by it, is visible across dozens of fields. Architects use AI to generate preliminary designs. Financial analysts use AI to model scenarios. Customer service representatives handle only the complex or emotional calls that AI cannot resolve. In each case, the human role shifts upward toward judgment, creativity, relationship-building, and oversight: precisely the skills that AI handles least well.

Emerging Winners and Losers

Not all workers are equally positioned to benefit from this shift. Workers with strong digital literacy, adaptability, and the ability to collaborate with AI tools are gaining ground. A marketing professional who knows how to write effective prompts for AI image generators and can direct an AI content pipeline is significantly more productive than a marketing professional who cannot. That productivity gap translates directly into salary and job security. On the other side, workers whose jobs require primarily routine cognitive tasks and who lack access to retraining are in a more difficult position. A 55-year-old data entry worker who has spent 30 years in that role faces a harder transition than a 22-year-old entering the workforce who has grown up using AI tools naturally. Economists worry that this transition will widen income inequality, concentrating gains among highly educated and tech-fluent workers while displacing lower-wage workers who have fewer resources to retrain.

What This Means for Career Planning

Students entering the workforce in the next decade need to think differently about career planning than any previous generation. The old model — pick a career, learn its skills, work in that career for 40 years — is increasingly obsolete. The new model requires ongoing learning, adaptability, and a willingness to evolve alongside the tools available. Careers in healthcare, skilled trades, creative fields, education, and social services tend to involve enough human interaction, physical presence, and unpredictable judgment that they are more resilient to automation. Careers built primarily around processing information in predictable ways carry more risk. The good news is that new jobs are also being created. AI trainers, prompt engineers, AI ethicists, machine learning engineers, and AI product managers are roles that barely existed five years ago and now appear on thousands of job boards. The net effect on employment is still being debated by economists, with some predicting net job loss and others predicting that new categories of work will absorb displaced workers — as has happened in previous technological transitions. What is clear is that workers who understand AI, can use it productively, and can adapt to a changing environment will be far better positioned than those who cannot. The sectors where AI-driven job changes are moving fastest tell an important story about how this transition is actually unfolding. Financial services — banking, insurance, investment — employs millions of people in roles heavily dependent on analyzing data and producing written analyses. A junior loan officer who once spent days evaluating an application now works alongside AI systems that generate a preliminary risk assessment in seconds. A compliance analyst who once manually reviewed contracts for regulatory issues now reviews AI-flagged items rather than reading every document from scratch. Insurance companies have deployed AI to process claims, assess risk, and even predict which customers are likely to file claims in the near future. These changes have already reduced headcount in some financial services functions while creating demand for workers who can manage, audit, and override AI systems when they get things wrong. The legal profession is experiencing a similar pattern. AI tools now conduct the kind of preliminary legal research that once occupied large portions of a junior associate's week, and some firms have begun adjusting their associate hiring accordingly. In media and communications, AI tools can generate news summaries, translate content across languages, and produce first drafts of routine articles — tasks that once required teams of junior writers. What is notable across all of these

examples is that the displacement is not uniform: it targets the most routine and predictable parts of these jobs first, leaving the most complex, relationship-dependent, and judgment-intensive work to humans. Workers who understand this pattern and deliberately develop skills in those harder-to-automate areas are responding to the transition effectively. Those who assume the pattern will not reach their specific industry or role are likely to be surprised by how quickly the tools improve. The transition rewards workers who pay close attention to which parts of their jobs are changing and invest in developing the capabilities that remain distinctly human.

Key Information: AI and the Job Market

Detail	Information
McKinsey estimate	Up to 30% of U.S. work hours automatable by 2030 with existing technology
Goldman Sachs estimate	Generative AI could disrupt 300 million full-time jobs globally
Oxford University study	~47% of U.S. jobs at high risk of computerization (pre-LLM estimate)
Most at-risk job types	Routine, information-based roles: data entry, billing, loan processing, bookkeeping
Most resilient job types	Healthcare, skilled trades, creative fields, education, social services
Key vulnerability factors	Routineness and degree of information processing vs. physical interaction
Augmentation pattern	Humans shift toward judgment, creativity, and oversight as AI handles routine tasks
New jobs emerging	AI trainers, prompt engineers, AI ethicists, ML engineers, AI product managers

Case Study: Marcus Thinks About His Future

Marcus is 17 and about to start his senior year. His dad works as a billing specialist at a medical office and has done that job for 12 years. Last month, his dad came home frustrated. 'They brought in a new AI system,' he told Marcus. 'It processed in two hours what used to take our team a week. They haven't said anything about layoffs yet, but three of us are only working part-time now.' Marcus started thinking about his own plans. He had been considering going straight into an administrative office job after graduation — it seemed steady and familiar. Now he wasn't so sure. He looked up some articles about job automation and found the McKinsey report his economics teacher had mentioned. 'I guess I need to think about this differently,' he typed into his notes app. 'What skills are actually going to matter in 10 years?' He had always been good with technology, but he wasn't sure that was enough. He wondered what 'AI-proof' actually looked like in practice, and whether any job was truly safe.

1. Based on the reading and Marcus's situation, why does a billing specialist role face more automation risk than, say, a nurse or a plumber?

2. What advice would you give Marcus about how to approach career planning given what you learned in this reading?

Multiple Choice

1. According to economists, which characteristic makes a job most vulnerable to AI automation?

a) Requiring advanced college degrees and several professional licenses

b) Involving routine, information-based tasks done in predictable ways

c) Requiring strong communication skills with clients

d) Working outdoors in changing weather conditions

2. The Goldman Sachs estimate mentioned in the reading referred to how many full-time jobs potentially disrupted by generative AI globally?

a) 47 million

b) 150 million

c) 30 million

d) 300 million

3. What does 'augmentation' mean in the context of AI and jobs?

a) AI tools are added without ever changing the way work is actually performed

b) Humans and AI work together, with humans focusing on judgment and oversight

c) AI completely replaces humans in a given role

d) Workers are retrained to become AI programmers

Matching

Write the letter of the correct definition on the line next to each term.

Term	Definition
1. ___ Automation	A) Mental work such as writing, analyzing, and decision-making — as opposed to physical labor
2. ___ Augmentation	B) A person who reviews and improves AI outputs to help the system learn more accurate responses
3. ___ Routineness	C) A model in which humans and AI work together, with AI handling routine parts and humans focusing on judgment
4. ___ Cognitive labor	D) Using machines or software to perform tasks previously done by humans
5. ___ AI trainer	E) The degree to which a job involves doing the same predictable task repeatedly

Fill-in-the-Blank

1. McKinsey estimated that up to _____ percent of U.S. work hours could be automated using technology that already exists today.

2. Jobs that involve routine, _____ -based tasks face the greatest pressure from AI automation.

3. The pattern in which humans work alongside AI — focusing on judgment and creativity while AI handles routine work — is called _____.

Short Answer

Answer each question in 2-4 complete sentences.

1. Explain why a radiologist or paralegal might see their job change because of AI rather than disappear entirely. What does their work look like after AI is introduced?

2. Why might older, lower-wage workers face more difficulty adapting to AI-driven job changes than younger workers entering the workforce now? Is this fair?

3. Some economists predict net job loss from AI while others predict new jobs will absorb displaced workers. What evidence from the reading supports both sides of this debate?