

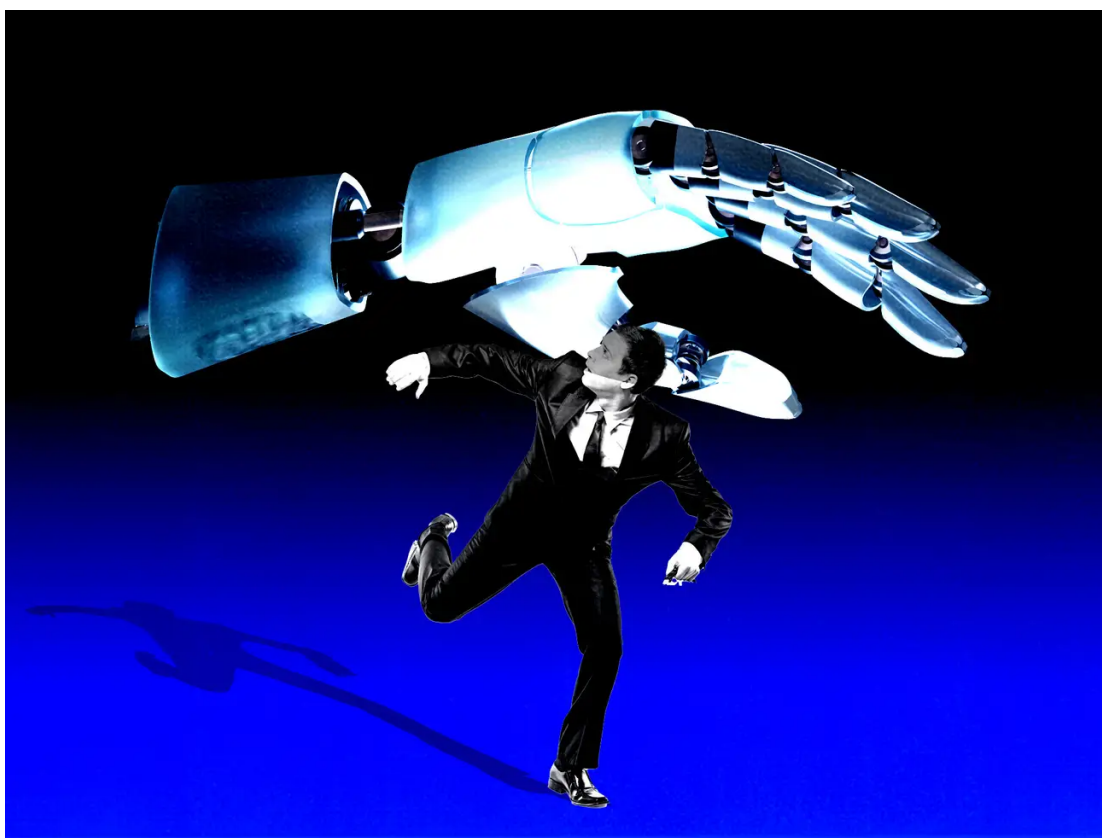
How AI Will Impact Jobs: Which Roles Are Safe and Which Will Be Disrupted

BI archive.is/UyEGy

March 10, 2025

Careers

Jobs you thought were AI-proof probably aren't



We asked AI what jobs are safe from AI. The results were mixed. Getty Images; Jenny Chang-Rodriguez/BI

- We asked ChatGPT what jobs are safe from being taken over by AI. The results seemed promising — at first.
- A tech CEO told BI that AI will affect most jobs and that people and bots will work together.
- Roles requiring human judgment and emotional intelligence could be less likely to go away.

Ask AI what jobs are safe from a bot takeover, and you'll get back a bunch of reasons to feel good.

Plumbers, HVAC workers, nurses, and diplomats needn't worry that artificial intelligence will soon show up to fix a leaky pipe, change a bandage, or prevent countries from nuking each other.

Makes sense.

Yet, scan the list a little more, and ChatGPT will also have you believe that lawyers, counselors, and writers (ahem) are just as safe as chefs, mechanics, and electricians. Suddenly, AI's predictions can feel more like hallucinations.

That's because bots are drafting complex legalese, creating tailored mental health protocols, and writing a whole lot of books.

Ultimately, AI's can-do attitude when it comes to almost any ask is a reminder the technology will likely brush up against most jobs — even if it doesn't gobble them up.

"I can't think of any roles that won't be impacted," Scott Russell, CEO of the tech company NICE, which helps big companies like Disney and Walmart with their customer-service operations, told Business Insider.

One plus: Russell said he doesn't think there are many jobs that AI will replace altogether. Instead, he expects many roles will end up as a blend of people and AI.

The AI teammate

Russell said that at NICE, AI is helping clients' customer service teams triage inquiries and direct them to the right workers. After an employee determines the best fix for a problem, the worker often returns the task to a bot to complete it. All the while, he said, the customer doesn't see the baton going from AI to a person and back to AI.

Yet, when some workers think about AI, they might not envision the helpful-colleague scenario.

In an October survey of over 5,000 US adults, the Pew Research Center found that only 6% of workers expect AI to boost their job prospects in the long run. Ouch.

About one-third of respondents said AI would worsen things for them, and a similar share thought the technology wouldn't have much impact.

The need for human judgment

Jochen Menges, a professor of human resource management and leadership at the University of Zurich, told BI that it's difficult to say which jobs might remain untouched by AI, though people who work as barbers and caregivers, no surprise, face fewer immediate threats.

Yet, even for jobs that might more readily be overtaken by AI, he said, people will often still need to use their judgment to react to what AI produces. Workers must ask questions and perhaps develop further prompts to get AI to do what's needed.

"Jobs that will have an emotional element attached to them will likely be the ones that will be higher valued in the future," Menges said.

It can be hard to consider how AI can infiltrate jobs that might seem hard to automate, said Sandra Moran, chief customer experience officer at WorkForce Software, which makes software and tools large employers use to manage their teams. Yet, as people become more comfortable with understanding what AI can do, we'll see more AI-assisted human processes and jobs, she said.

Moran pointed to fast-food workers who take drive-thru orders from home. That job was long thought of as only being doable in person. Yet, once it's clear that it can be done remotely, it's not hard to see how an AI or tech-enabled stand-in could do that work.

"There is no job that you should consider AI-proof," she told BI.

Gray-collar workers

Moran expects that as manufacturers, for example, look to bring AI into factories, there will be a greater need for what are sometimes called "gray-collar workers" — those who do a mix of hands-on and technical work.

Bertina Ceccarelli, CEO of NPower, a nonprofit that trains young people and those with military ties for careers in tech, said roles that combine desk work with on-your-feet duties include "racking and stacking" equipment in data centers, running cables for networks, setting up WiFi, and making sure new employees have the equipment they need.

She said part of NPower's job is to prepare students for jobs that AI will not disrupt, at least in the short term.

"Most are physically present, entry-level IT technician jobs," she told BI. While the pay often isn't killer to start, Ceccarelli said, these roles can help younger workers, in particular, figure out where to steer their careers.

She said that jobs that are at least partly hands-on are also all the more important because traditional jobs, such as IT help desk technicians, are diminishing.

By comparison, "You still need to have a human being who is shipping out that PC to a remote worker," Ceccarelli said.

The 'vast middle'

Chetan Dube, founder and CEO of Quant, which develops agents to serve as digital workers, told BI that he expects jobs where training often involves apprenticeship — think electricians and plumbers — to be largely safe. So, too, are the highest-level jobs atop various fields, he said.

Dube's concern centers on the "vast middle," such as jobs where people process insurance claims or drive a bus. He expects AI to take on many of those roles before the end of the decade.

Nevertheless, Dube also predicts that the gains from AI will be substantial enough that, with proper regulation, the technology could give humans far more time to pursue other interests while worrying less about employment.

He calculated that in the US, the value of all economic activity, as measured by gross domestic product, could surge as much as 40% thanks to AI agents.

Humans won't need to work as much, Dube said, because "these digital employees are going to work 24/7."