

AI: NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL

BY LUCY PICKERING

Whilst working in Anderson Quigley's Technology Practice and throughout the last year, AI has been a theme and point of conversation in events and a trend on social media. However, we must question whether most of this clickbait is risk mitigation or, in fact, scaremongering. As I scroll LinkedIn or news outlets, I tend to see the same spiralling themes occur, such as [AI outsmarting us](#). I note them as 'spiralling' as these themes can become too overpowering without intervention, and readers may find it hard to form their own argument based on [factual evidence](#).

Through our conversations with candidates, concerns around AI have been echoed, but we have also learnt how AI has made processes more efficient. For example, a candidate described how they brought AI into the supply chain for a well-known FMCG sweet treat brand. In this sense, AI drove business forward and enabled significant cost-cutting. Furthermore, Zoe Amar Digital's ['AI checklist for charity trustees and leaders'](#) cites Carbonaro's article- ['AI could save UK employees 390 hours of working time per year'](#). Amar's handy checklist shows leaders 'how to deploy these technologies in a way that aligns with their charitable purpose'. Educational tools such as this article help to prepare and inform, breaking down the barriers between us and something unknown and, therefore, something painted with slight dread.

We know AI is here to stay and becomes more pervasive in our work and personal lives daily, so the question is not how we can avoid AI, but how can we take control in a world of emerging technologies?

My simple answer to this would be through education; the more we learn about AI, the less we dread it, and ultimately, the more exciting it becomes.

Many pitfalls of AI, such as ['bias in emotional AI'](#), can be perceived through a different lens. We need to consider AI situationally to debate it accurately. Though not beneficial in most situations, AI's lack of creativity/emotion will not be a hindrance in certain examples. In the medical field, AI can use data analysis to make informed choices and treatment plans can be designed by analysing genetics and medical history. Therefore, when setting goals that do not involve reading emotions, AI will fulfil these goals in the most efficient and effective way possible.

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In his book, 'Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence', Max Tegmark discusses the concept of the human being the goal-setter and AI then achieving that goal. In this medical scenario, AI could be successfully used to achieve important goals.

Further, our focus can switch from whether we agree with AI to how we can use it to benefit society and become experts in utilising it. We benefit hugely in recruitment from speaking to technology leaders, which fuels a proactive learning approach amongst our technology practice and the wider business. AI will enable us to do our jobs more effectively if we use it properly, and proactively learning how to use AI can be far from the lazy route. Further, if we consider AI's lack of creativity and emotion, as recruiters and in any profession, these are qualities unique to us which AI cannot replicate. For example, our interview style, winning a new role with a client due to our reputation and unique intelligence.

If we are going to worry about AI, which we inevitably are, we need to at least make sure we are worrying about factual information, as opposed to 'misaligned intelligence' as Tegmark states. My hope is that people in my industry will continue to learn about AI, as in this sense, Francis Bacon's quote, 'knowledge itself is power' could not be more true. The next step would be to ask yourself where you stand when it comes to AI. Tegmark refers to the various stances as 'digital utopian', i.e., 'AGI will happen but is guaranteed to be a good thing', 'techno-sceptic', i.e., those 'convinced AGI won't happen in the foreseeable future', or members of the 'beneficial-AI movement', which revolves around 'safety research' and risk mitigation. Either way, AI may not be so bad after all.



Lucy Pickering joined AQ in 2023, bringing her experience in appointing candidates across an array of sectors, including third-sector appointments and in researching and qualifying candidates for significant C-suite opportunities. Lucy has joined Grace as part of our AQ Technology Practice, and also joins our Interim search team.

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