NEWS LESSON

# What Happens When AI Takes the Part of the Job You Liked?



## BEFORE YOU READ

### 1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Can a prediction change behaviour even when it turns out to be wrong?
2. Who should decide how a new tool is introduced at work?
3. Is leaving a career early a sensible strategy or an overreaction?

### 2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **pseudonym** | ☐ | A | in the most basic and important way |
| 2 | **entry-level** | ☐ | B | arranges into a clear pattern or order |
| 3 | **substituting** | ☐ | C | times when a company ends the jobs of some workers |
| 4 | **supervising** | ☐ | D | suitable for someone starting their career |
| 5 | **fundamentally** | ☐ | E | using one thing in place of another |
| 6 | **layoffs** | ☐ | F | doing something well without wasting time or money |
| 7 | **efficiency** | ☐ | G | a false name used instead of your real one |
| 8 | **organises** | ☐ | H | watching over work to make sure it is done properly |

## 3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

**The workers in this report were not replaced. They resigned, and their reasons expose a gap between what the data shows and what employment now feels like from inside.**

1 The familiar story about artificial intelligence and work ends with somebody being replaced. A quieter story is unfolding alongside it, and it has a more uncomfortable shape: the job remains, the salary is intact, and the person leaves anyway.

2 The Guardian's report opens with Mrinank Sharma, an AI researcher who resigned from Anthropic this year and published his resignation letter on X, where it was read more than fifteen million times. He wrote of a world in peril. He also announced his next move, which was to study for a degree in poetry. Since then, the paper reports, workers well outside the technology industry have been reaching similar conclusions by different routes.

3 Their accounts share a structure. Vanessa Hsia spent nearly a decade in public relations before leaving for a master's in comparative literature, describing an industry chasing quantity over quality and substituting AI for critical thinking. An anonymous engineer at a large technology company said the career he had built over ten years was, in his words, fundamentally gone. Chris, who requested a pseudonym, moved from software engineering into policing after AI drained the thinking and the enjoyment out of writing code.

4 Hanna Horvath supplies the sentence that organises all of it. AI, she argues, "doesn't have to replace your job" to change what the job is. Having left an editing role, she described colleagues who no longer edited anything and had instead become project managers supervising machine-produced text. That is not redundancy. It is a quiet substitution of one occupation for another behind an unchanged job title.

5 The economic picture refuses to cooperate with the fear. The Economist puts roughly a million American jobs created by AI against some 200,000 losses attributed to it. Dario Amodei, Anthropic's chief executive, predicted in May 2025 that AI would eliminate half of entry-level white-collar jobs before the decade ended. That has not happened. Brendan Moore, an economist at Notre Dame, points out that workers are absorbing warnings from technology executives alongside layoffs that firms attribute to AI, when many of those companies would have cut staff anyway.

6 So the fear is running ahead of the evidence, and it is still producing consequences. Seventy-one per cent of Americans expect fewer jobs within twenty years, and some of them are not waiting to find out. There is something almost rational in it: if you believe your field is closing, leaving early while you still have the choice is a defensible move.

7 The harder question sits underneath. If a tool removes the most absorbing part of a role, who decides whether that is a gain? Efficiency and loss can be the same event viewed from two desks. The time a machine saves can be spent making the work better or simply producing more of it, and very few of the people doing the work are being asked which.

Sources: The Guardian, Fearing AI disruption, white-collar workers are quitting their jobs. Picture: .

## 4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Sharma and Hsia both left their fields to study arts or humanities subjects. T F NG
2. Amodei's 2025 forecast and the Economist's figures point the same way. T F NG
3. The article states Sharma's salary at Anthropic. T F NG
4. The article argues that Horvath's former colleagues kept their job titles even though their daily work had changed. T F NG
5. The article says workers are routinely consulted about how AI is introduced. T F NG

## 5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

| attribute | eliminate | fleeting | intact | lucrative | supplies | uncomfortable | unfolding |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

1. The merger cost hundreds of jobs, but the company's reputation emerged _____ .
2. Analysts say a far larger shift is quietly _____ in the labour market, and few have noticed.
3. The new software was meant to _____ routine errors, not the people who spot them.
4. Executives often _____ falling headcount to technology rather than to poor planning.
5. A single anecdote from the factory floor _____ the clearest evidence of the policy's effect.
6. The report reaches a deeply _____ conclusion for managers who prided themselves on fairness.

## 6 Word forms

Use the word in brackets to make a word that fits the gap.

1. The _____ of the resignation letter, read fifteen million times, surprised even its author. (POPULAR)
2. Many economists regard the panic as largely _____ given the figures. (RATIONAL)
3. The company's _____ of the chatbot saved money but cost goodwill. (INTRODUCE)
4. Her _____ to retrain at forty impressed her colleagues. (WILLING)
5. Blaming AI for every layoff is _____ , since many cuts were planned already. (MISLEAD)

## 7 Language focus: phrasal verbs

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some phrasal verbs are formal in meaning: bear out means confirm and play down means make seem less important. Learn them with their prepositions.

**down for from into off out through**

1. The data does not bear _____ the claim that half of entry-level jobs have vanished.
2. Moore suggests that some of the fear stems _____ warnings from executives.
3. Executives tend to play _____ the human cost of automation.
4. Staff who buy _____ the promise of a smoother workday may later feel their skills are being hollowed out.
5. The study could not account _____ why some workers left while others stayed.

SPEAK

## 8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. The data shows no mass job losses, yet people are resigning. Are they acting rationally?
2. The article asks who decides whether removing a task is a gain. Who should?
3. Should employers be obliged to consult staff before mandating AI tools?

## 9 Role-play: the new AI tool

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

**Student A · the manager**

Next month your team must start using a new AI tool. It will save time and money. Explain why it is a good idea. Ask your employee how they feel. Try to find a plan you both accept.

**Student B · the employee**

You love the creative part of your job, and the new AI tool will do most of it. You are worried. Say how you feel, ask to keep some of the work, and say what you might do if nothing changes.

**Useful phrases**

I'd like to talk about the new tool.
It's going to save us a lot of time.
I'm worried it'll take the best part of my job.
What's your biggest concern?
Couldn't I keep some of the work myself?
I'd hate to leave, but I might have to.

**Afterwards, tell the class: did you find a plan, or did the employee decide to leave?**

ANSWER KEY

**2 Key words**

1 G · 2 D · 3 E · 4 H · 5 A · 6 C · 7 F · 8 B

**4 True, false or not given**

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

**5 Vocabulary**

1 intact · 2 unfolding · 3 eliminate · 4 attribute · 5 supplies · 6 uncomfortable

**6 Word forms**

1 popularity · 2 irrational · 3 introduction · 4 willingness · 5 misleading

**7 Language focus**

1 out · 2 from · 3 down · 4 into · 5 for

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