NEWS LESSON

What Happens if the Advice Turns Out to Be Wrong?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What decision would you happily ask an AI chatbot to help with?
2. Does a confident answer make you more likely to trust advice?
3. Would you prefer advice from a person who knows you or a tool with lots of information?

2 Key words

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

1	**convincing**	☐	A	secret and not to be shared
2	**intimate**	☐	B	making you believe something is true
3	**compassionate**	☐	C	change something back to how it was
4	**inaccurate**	☐	D	the special words used in one subject
5	**terminology**	☐	E	kind and caring about other people's problems
6	**confidential**	☐	F	not correct
7	**undo**	☐	G	something or someone used in place of another
8	**substitute**	☐	H	very personal and private

3 Read

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

A poor restaurant suggestion costs you an evening. A mistaken medical or financial choice is far harder to undo, and a chatbot only knows the version of events you typed.

1 Imagine asking an AI chatbot whether to move abroad, end a relationship or accept a new job. Within seconds it produces a convincing answer, carefully organised into advantages and disadvantages. The advice may be useful, but how much authority should we give it when the consequences are personal?

2 A useful test is to ask what happens if the recommendation turns out to be wrong. A poor restaurant suggestion is inconvenient; a mistaken medical or financial decision can be much harder to undo.

3 Pew Research Center surveyed more than 5,000 US adults in June 2025 and published the findings that September. Respondents were more willing to accept AI involvement in analysing complex information, such as forecasting weather or developing medicines, than in intimate areas of life. A clear majority opposed AI playing a role in judging whether two people could fall in love.

4 The distinction makes sense. AI can process large quantities of text and identify patterns, but it does not have human experience or direct knowledge of someone's circumstances. It may also provide inaccurate information in an extremely confident tone. An answer that sounds compassionate is not necessarily reliable.

5 Nevertheless, ruling out AI altogether would mean losing some genuinely useful support. Someone facing a difficult career decision could ask a chatbot to point out considerations they had overlooked. A patient could use it to understand medical terminology before speaking to a doctor. In both cases, the tool can improve preparation without replacing professional judgement. If you ask it about a complicated relationship, it only knows the version of events you have chosen to type.

6 There are questions about privacy as well. Sharing intimate relationship problems, financial details or health information with a digital service may expose sensitive material. Users should understand how their data may be handled before treating a chatbot like a confidential adviser.

7 One way to reduce the risks is to improve the questions we ask. A person considering a move abroad could request a checklist of costs and practical issues rather than asking a chatbot to decide whether they should leave. Someone facing a complicated medical appointment could ask for an explanation of unfamiliar terms and then confirm it with their clinician.

8 These uses treat AI as a tool for preparing decisions, not as a substitute for the people responsible for them. Users should also check official sources, question unsupported claims and avoid handing over unnecessary personal information. A fluent answer can hide important gaps: the chatbot may not know local regulations, family circumstances or recent changes. The ability to challenge its output is therefore part of using it intelligently.

9 The central issue is not whether AI is intelligent enough to have an opinion. It is whether we understand its limitations. A sensible approach may be to ask AI better questions rather than allow it to make our decisions for us.

Sources: Pew Research Center. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

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

1. The writer thinks a wrong restaurant suggestion is easier to recover from than a wrong medical decision. T F NG
2. Pew published its findings in June 2025. T F NG
3. Most people in the survey had already used a chatbot for personal advice. T F NG
4. The writer says a kind tone is not proof that an answer is correct. T F NG
5. The writer says the main question is whether AI is clever enough to have an opinion. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

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

authority **circumstances** **clinician** **consequences** **overlooked** **regulations** **reliable** **sensitive**

1. Only a judge has the legal _____ to send someone to prison.
2. Ignoring a safety warning can have serious _____ , so read it carefully.
3. Her doctor changed the treatment because of her personal _____ .
4. New fire safety _____ say that every building must have two exits.
5. I would not trust a weather app that is not _____ , because it was wrong three times this week.
6. She had _____ one important clause in the contract, so the problem only appeared later.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Pew Research Center _____ more than 5,000 US adults in June 2025. (SURVEY)
2. The findings _____ in September. (PUBLISH)
3. Users should _____ how their data may be handled. (UNDERSTAND)
4. By the time she opened the chatbot, she _____ the same question to three friends. (ASK)
5. A chatbot only knows the version of events you _____ to type. (CHOOSE)

7 Language focus: prepositions

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Verbs, adjectives and nouns often take a fixed preposition. After 'to' in 'object to', use an -ing form.

at by for of on to with

1. Many people object _____ sharing personal details with a chatbot.
2. A good doctor will insist _____ checking the facts before prescribing anything.
3. A chatbot is not a substitute _____ professional advice.
4. Few chatbots are capable _____ understanding a person's real situation.
5. Many users are not familiar _____ how their data is stored.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

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

1. Which decisions should always stay with a person?
2. What would you check before acting on an AI suggestion?
3. Could asking for advice too often make choosing harder on your own?

9 Role-play: let the chatbot decide?

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

Student A · the person with two job offers

You have two job offers and cannot choose. You want to ask a chatbot to decide for you. Explain why you think it is a good idea. Listen to your friend's worries.

Student B · the friend

You think your friend should not let a chatbot choose. Ask questions about the jobs. Suggest a better way to use the chatbot, and say who should make the final decision.

Useful phrases

I'm thinking of asking a chatbot to decide.
That's a big decision, so I wouldn't let it choose.
What if the answer's wrong?
It could help you make a list of questions.
I'd still check the facts myself.
Let's agree that the final choice is yours.

Afterwards, tell the class: did your friend change your mind, and who should make the final decision?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

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

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 authority · 2 consequences · 3 circumstances · 4 regulations · 5 reliable · 6 overlooked

6 Verb forms

1 surveyed · 2 were published · 3 understand · 4 had asked · 5 have chosen

7 Language focus

1 to · 2 on · 3 for · 4 of · 5 with

This lesson is free. If it saved you time, you can support johnplusnews at **ko-fi.com/johnplusenglish**