

# AI and judgment development in workers

## RESEARCH BRIEF

“Keeping humans in the loop” when using artificial intelligence for efficiency is often framed as a way to balance speed and quality. But what happens when workers gradually lose the judgment skills that give their work a uniquely human touch?

### Why it matters

AI adoption can generate meaningful gains, particularly for entry-level and junior professionals. Some observers have even raised concerns that these roles could be filled by underqualified individuals, alongside the broader debate about whether AI will replace them altogether.

- ▶ As AI becomes more embedded in daily workflows, individuals may **bypass** the experiential aspects of decision-making that shape critical thinking and cultivate a distinct human perspective. Over time, this could weaken the judgment, intuition, and contextual awareness that organizations rely on for nuanced and high-stakes decisions.

### How we know

Repetition and real ownership are central to building judgment, yet both can be obscured or diluted by AI-assisted workflows. Case studies reveal:

- ▶ **In product management**, AI can generate in minutes product specifications, user stories, roadmaps, and more. New product managers increasingly review and edit AI-generated output rather than originating it themselves.
- ▶ **In marketing**, much of the work once done by teams and agencies such as generating ad copy, creating visual assets, and designing campaigns can now be produced quickly and at scale by AI. As a result, marketers may miss out on the creative process that historically helped develop their judgment.

### What this means

- ▶ **For CHROs:** Identifying and selecting high-quality talent may become more challenging and require a sharper eye for true capability rather than surface-level polish.
- ▶ **For organizations:** Deliberate investments will be needed to ensure long-term employee development and that real skill acquisition occurs as individuals move into more senior roles.
- ▶ **For executives:** Greater scrutiny may be necessary when making high-stakes decisions. Leaders should question the source of information and examine the assumptions embedded in AI-generated outputs.

### Now what?

- ▶ Standards for high-quality work will continue to rise as the production of what some call “workspoop” increases: work that appears polished but lacks context/substance for informed decisions. Organizations will need to implement **stronger quality assurance** mechanisms to guard against this vulnerability.
- ▶ The long-term effects on workplace judgment development remain uncertain, but proactive design of **training, accountability, and oversight** will be essential to ensure that efficiency gains do not come at the expense of human discernment.

### LINK TO THE STUDY

