

Editorial: *Today's Business Imperative, AI Upskilling and Human-Agent Collaboration, Building Adaptability*



A story is brought to life sometimes by sequence, context, emotion as small shifts, recently (Nadim, 2025) told us David Pearl, an arts-in-business pioneer recognized as helping leaders confirm their leadership skills based on creative storytelling (shaping opinions and decisions) usage. But in his opinion, before focusing on storytelling, a leader must pay attention to right building and structuring (leading to emotion) a story, listening and reshaping the narrative, making sense of the past and shaping the future by authoring it, engaging with the audience (loving it more than protecting himself from harm) and helping it to see both perspective, and direction, consequently enchanting it.

As a significant role in influencing others can be played by leadership roles, three roles (innovative democratic leadership, innovation leader search steering committee, and organizational excellence keeper) were identified by Sayyadi and Provitera (2025), organizations' performance being influenced by the above-mentioned roles along with both personal development, and leaders' behaviors' improvement. The authors showed that practice demonstrated how important is for companies to avoid a loss of opportunities because of an eventual resistance to start on this new leadership path.

According to Kelly et al. (2025), as growth have been made today's business imperative by three well-known factors (economic shifts, disruptive technology, and changing customer

preferences), to capture this growth leaders need to rapidly shift investments accordingly, learning from the past, and ensuring proven growth tactics' execution. And as AI-driven ways of working are involving specific measures, leaders need to act on the path to create the necessary organizational operating model able to face all challenges including at the evolving level of B2C and B2B decision-making, considering the experience economy and omnichannel experience.

To benefit from AI as much as possible, marketing leaders, for instance, need to incorporate AI into their marketing strategy (either ensuring marketing workflows' intelligently automation with pre-built apps, or ensuring internal productivity tools' building based on data quality), changing marketers' job fundamental nature (Flinders and Hayes, 2025). What involve to set out goals and expectations, acquire the right talent, use customer data for training and implementation purposes while adhering to data privacy regulations, test data quality and accuracy, choose the right AI solution, integrate and deploy AI while paying attention to acclimatization process with the new ways of working, and monitor outputs and improve AI tools (ensuring that AI-powered workflows are meeting KPI targets, and are continuously optimized by altering strategies).

As shown by Wade and Joshi (2025), higher employee engagement is driven by AI upskilling, that is considered the most strategic investment a company thinking about and planning for the future can make. They recommend seven steps, the last step to be followed being this: *"Build continuous learning structures: AI evolves rapidly, necessitating ongoing education rather than one-time training. This includes a sharing of best practices as well as failures."*

As workplaces are rapidly changed by AI, Alikhani (2025) showed that for building systems that amplify to the fullest degree human strengths (instead of exploit cognitive shortcuts based on experience) is essential to redefine the physical description of success in AI human collaboration. She started from the pressing concern known as AI sycophancy (instead of challenging assumptions systems reinforce existing biases more than is reasonable), outputs' accuracy or reliability being overestimate by users because of persuasive AI behaviors.

In the preface of a Playbook for AI-Driven Commerce, the CEO of Orium (2025), Jason Cottrell, made reference to the thinking that brought them to agentic transformation, highlighting as follows: *"What we're seeing now with AI isn't a disruption in technology alone. It's a disruption in how work happens, how decisions get made, and how teams are structured... And as much as this shift is technical, it's also cultural. You don't just deploy an agent. You learn to work with one. You experiment to discover the best ways to collaborate... What this book offers is a starting point. Think of it like a field guide, not a blueprint, because agentic transformation will look different in every organization. But the direction of travel is the same. This isn't a story about automation. It's about amplification, about expanding what's possible when humans and agents work in concert."* This shift in the way work happens, from using AI to streamline tasks (eliminating repetitive and unnecessary steps or activities to improve the efficiency) to working

alongside AI agents as (augmented) collaborators (consumers – agentic buyers’ rise; operators – by AI empowered teams; delivery teams – accelerated by agents), was underlined by the above-mentioned playbook that referred to automation (when rules ruled), then assistance (when AI got conversational), and now agency (AI becomes collaborative) as layers, not isolated phases, agents thinking ahead as part of the team. ROI is coming from agents-human workflow integration (while sharing feedback, concerns, or improvements), scaling collaboration and governing it intelligently (targeting speed, safety, and sustainability), and sustaining innovation. This new operating model is based on human-agent collaboration, the agent being treated like a teammate, consequently being evaluated, guided, and improved.

Allow us to end by making reference to a significant recently article written by BCG’s experts and entitled “The Transformation Paradox: How to Grow When the Growing Gets Tough” (Seppä et al., 2025), highlighting the following main points: *“Successful growth transformations hinge on balancing creativity with disciplined execution—embracing innovation systematically rather than relying on chance... Building adaptability through repeated transformation experience significantly boosts long-term success rates, enabling businesses to proactively shape their future rather than merely reacting to disruptions.”*

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