



Artificial Intelligence

Visions of the Future

Future Ready

As machines seek to learn, humanity faces myriad potential futures filled with promised benefits and possible consequences directly tied to our increasing use of and dependence upon artificial intelligence (AI).

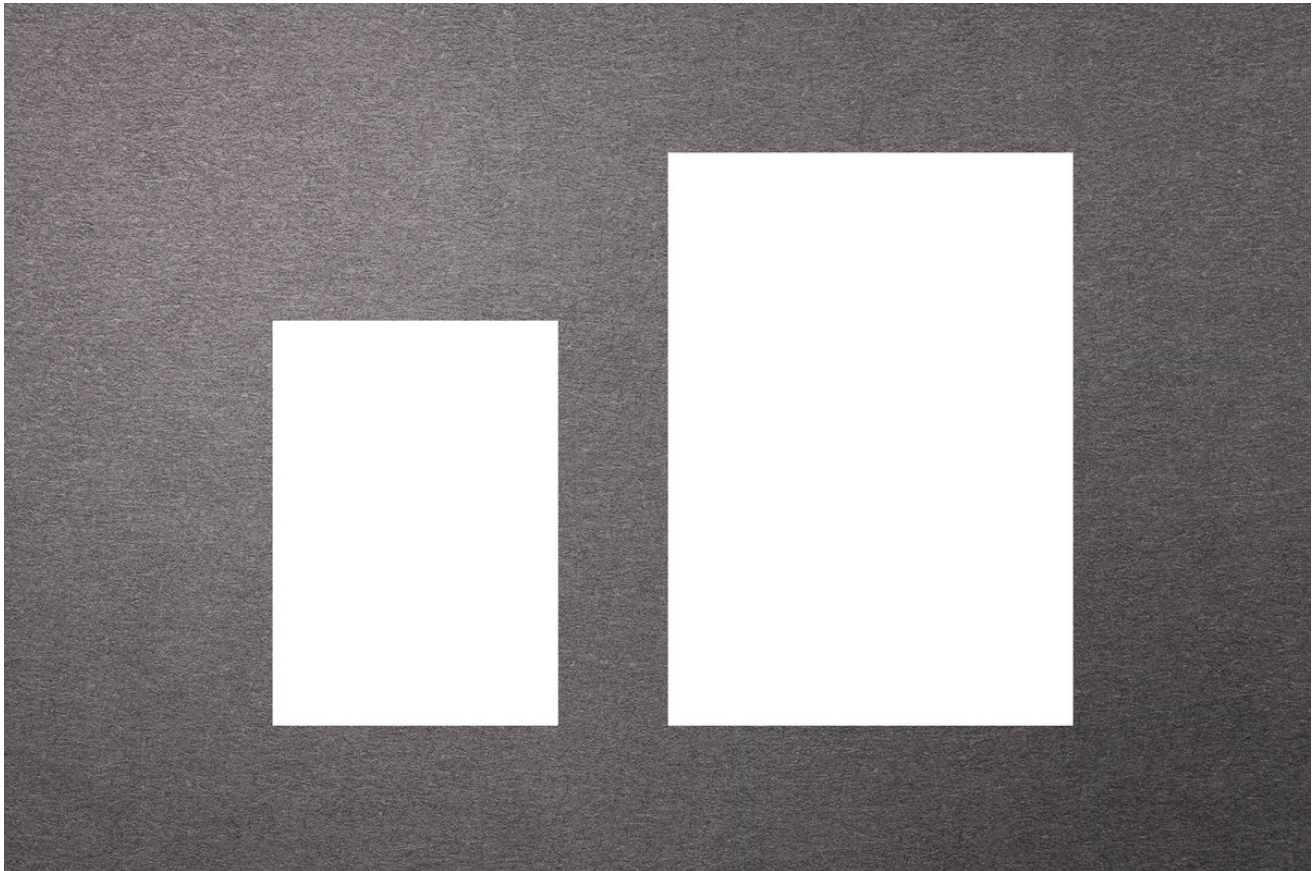
Today, let's use our creative intelligence to think about those potential futures, and explore what we know, what we need to learn, and what will matter most in shaping a positive, advantageous future for humanity in this sphere.

AI BASICS

Grab some paper (11x17, if you have it), and here's a little pre-reading, if you are interested:

- [Artificial Intelligence](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Age of AI: Everything you need to know](#)
- [10 Examples of How AI is Already Used Everyday](#)

11x17 paper



If you have it, **grab 11x17 paper.** Your ideas need space!

The great thing about 11x17 paper, also known as ledger paper, is that it has the nifty attribute of being a normal-sized page when folded in half, for easy storage of your big ideas. Grab a few sheets, and let your ideas run wild!

Positive Futures

Divide your paper into three parts. The left side will be for positive futures, the right for negative futures, and we'll get to the middle later.

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Now, take five minutes to brainstorm in the left column. Focus on getting your ideas down with words and key phrases rather than focusing on your spelling and writing full sentences. Drawing works, as well!

Think about every aspect of human society, including healthcare, transportation, marketing, banking and finance, retail, manufacturing, entertainment, etc.

Negative Futures

Now, let's switch to the right column. Again, take five minutes to brainstorm potential negative futures resulting from use, and abuse, of AI.

Continue to think about different industries, but also think about different levels of society:

- **Individual level.** How could AI negatively impact people on an individual level? How could individuals misuse or abuse artificial intelligence?
- **Local level.** How could AI negatively impact local communities? How would some of the negative scenarios impact your community?
- **Societal level.** Looking at the aggregate, or all of society put together. What are some of the big challenges or threats that will impact all humans?

Toolbox Adds

Scenario Planning. The type of scenario or alternate futures analysis you are doing today is a great tool when facing a future filled with uncertainty. By taking time to think through everything that is possible, from the worst of the worst to the best of the best, and other mixed-outcome possibilities, you can help to uncover trends and issues that you might not consider if only thinking about the most likely, or worst-case future.

Risk Management. Risk is a function of the likelihood of something happening, and the consequences if it does happen. Think about your futures from this perspective, and you can start to prioritize your potential action items in the middle of your page.

Confidence Interval. A critical aspect of responsible analysis is to accept and reflect uncertainty. We do not have a crystal ball, so we should always caveat or clarify to people how confident we are about what will happen. The truth might be we do not know, and that is okay!

Shape It

Divide the middle of your paper into a top and bottom half. In the top half, brainstorm what individuals and society can do to make the positives more likely to happen, and to prevent the negative consequences that you identified. Consider:

- **Technology.** What technologies will be needed to make the most of AI's potential? Can AI help us prevent negative uses of AI?
- **Policy.** How can regulations and laws be used to curb negative and encourage positive outcomes?
- **Investment.** How will investment (how and where companies, and governments spend money) play a role in the evolution of AI and outcomes?

Circle the three of your ideas that you think will have the greatest positive impact. **What can you do to help make them happen? What could others do to help?**

Track It

Last, but certainly not least, you will want to know whether we are heading toward the positive future you are trying to build, or whether humanity's trajectory is falling short.

In the bottom middle section, brainstorm different signs and signals (early indicators) that will help society know whether we are on a positive or negative trajectory.

Also, think about what early indicators might be missing, because nobody is tracking that information. Are there any indicators that need to be developed and monitored? If so, are they something you can develop, or would they require help from others?

Circle the early indicators that you plan to monitor, and any action steps needed to develop new indicators.



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