



Accelerate AI

Build Your AI Capability – Fast

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Fit For The
FUTURE

Introduction

In 2023, global consulting giant PwC decided to embrace AI in a big way. They invested **one billion dollars**, created their own AI tool ChatPwC, rolled out a global AI upskilling program, and continues to provide support to enable this AI transformation.

This shows what's possible when you go all in with AI transformation – a process that includes:

choosing and sourcing (or building) the **best AI technology**
putting appropriate **digital infrastructure** in place
crafting **policies** about use of AI
engaging all internal and external **stakeholders**
training all staff to use AI effectively
and more (*much more*) ...

If you have the resources to do all of this – fast – go for it!

Many other organisations recognise the importance of AI, and would love to do this kind of massive transformation. But they don't. Or start and get stuck. Or spend months arguing over AI policy. Or find AI technology is moving too fast to stay current.

Or maybe they just don't have a cool billion dollars sitting around!

You can start with the best of intentions, but you either get stuck or it takes way too long. And that's bad.

Another organisation I know (who shall remain nameless) is doing this kind of transformation. But *it will take two years*, and until then their staff are not allowed to use AI! Even ignoring the fact their AI transformation will be obsolete in two years, everybody loses the benefits of using AI *now*.

The cost of AI transformation

Apart from the obvious opportunity cost of delaying your use of AI, large-scale transformation processes have other costs.

The transformation process is **time-consuming**, not only delaying your intended outcome, but AI is changing so fast that outcome rapidly becomes obsolete.

The process is **highly resource-intensive**, diverting time, money, and attention from other parts of the business.

The fast-changing nature of AI can lead to **paralysis by analysis**, constantly planning, assessing and reviewing because you're chasing a moving target.

Many people are struggling with **change fatigue**, and a large transformation process only makes this worse.

Large-scale transformation projects can **stifle innovation** because they hinder the fast, iterative approaches that often lead to creative breakthroughs.

The effort to get the transformation right leads to **diminishing returns**.

A fast-changing technology like AI can cause **scope creep** and other delays.

The transformation process **delays feedback**, which hampers the process of aligning with user needs.

Waiting for a full-scale transformation can lead to **lower morale** when staff feel blocked from creating real value fast.

Many top-down transformation processes create a **rigid mindset**, limiting flexibility and adaptability.

Transformation is complex, often creating **unwieldy and inefficient processes**.

There's a better way

I'm on a mission to get people thinking – and acting – differently about AI!

What if I told you there's a better way to build AI capability in your team and organisation?

It doesn't need full-scale transformation.

It doesn't need massive use of resources.

It doesn't need you to upgrade your digital infrastructure.

And it won't conflict with any existing AI transformation (in fact, it usually helps it).

Instead of an AI transformation, you build capability with multiple **AI projects**.

You integrate AI in many small stages – creating real value at each stage while also building the capability of your teams.

An AI project is a small, fast (typically 3-4 months), team-based effort to deploy AI to solve a real problem in the team or organisation.

As a leader, you help your teams:

- identify suitable projects
- test the concepts at a small scale
- choose those that are feasible
- and build them!

This lets individual leaders, managers, and team members drive AI throughout the organisation. They work together to solve real problems, create value, learn about using AI themselves, and boost their own productivity and well-being.

Instead of being fearful of AI, people learn to be skilful and resourceful – while still being appropriately careful about it.



Sample AI projects

The secret to success with this approach is to choose the correct AI projects. Not every problem can be fixed in a 90-day project, so put them aside on focus on those that can!

Schedule Patient Appointments

Use patient data to predict no-shows and optimise appointment scheduling

Classify Medical Records

Categorise and tag medical records for easier retrieval

Personalise Marketing Campaigns

Analyse customer purchase history to create personalised marketing campaigns

Assess Aged Care Safety

Inspect photos or videos of homes to highlight potential safety issues

Analyse Customer Sentiment

Analyse customer reviews and feedback for sentiment trends

Classify Expenses

Automatically classify expenses from transaction data

Manage Inventory

Use historical sales data to predict stock levels and optimise inventory

Review Quality Control

Analyse production data to gain insights for quality control

Recommend Courses

Recommend courses to students based on their interests and performance

Optimise Delivery Routes

Use past delivery data to optimise delivery routes

Analyse Customer Experience

Analyse customer satisfaction surveys and extract key insights

Use Dynamic Pricing

Use historical booking data to adjust hotel room prices based on demand

Sample AI projects

Answer Customer Queries

Build a chatbot to handle routine customer queries

Analyse Customer Feedback

Analyse customer reviews and feedback to provide actionable insights

Predict Crop Yields

Use weather and soil data to predict yields

Manage Farm Operations

Use farm data to recommend ways to improve efficiency

Forecast Energy Use

Use energy consumption data to predict usage and optimise energy distribution

Analyse Customer Billing

Analyse billing data to help customers manage energy usage

Analyse Resident Feedback

Analyse public feedback and sentiment from local residents on social media

Write Tender Applications

Help clients write applications for government tenders and grants

Choosing The Right Projects

- What problem does this fix?
- What value will we get from solving it?
- Can we get the data we need for the AI?
- What sort of prototype (or pilot project, or proof of concept) could we build?
- Who are the key stakeholders, and how will we collaborate with them?
- What are the privacy, security, and other issues we need to consider?
- Can we build a product in 90 days?
- If it works, can we extend and scale it?

Benefits

For most teams and organisations, this is a better – and faster – approach to building AI capability in your team, for many reasons.

You start **seeing results** faster, helping you stay motivated and on track.

You complete simple tasks faster, leading to **improved efficiency** and freeing up time for more important work.

You can adapt more easily, giving you **greater flexibility** as circumstances, information, and technology change.

You see the value of your work much sooner, leading to **early return on investment** and boosting performance.

These projects foster a **culture of change and innovation**.

Quick wins boost team morale, leading to **greater engagement** and a more positive workplace.

Successful AI projects can be **scaled up** efficiently based on real-world feedback and results.

Engaging everybody in AI projects boosts your **employee value proposition**, enhancing recruitment and retention.

The AI projects **drive and inform** your overall AI transformation process.

Staying agile and responsive gives you a **competitive edge** in your industry.

Quick wins lead to **increased productivity** across your team and organisation.

Small projects allow for **faster feedback**, helping you improve and iterate.

Rapid projects provide **on-the-job AI learning** for your team.

The four (actually five) key outcomes

As part of the decision-making process to choose the right projects, consider which of these outcomes you plan to achieve from a project.



TIME

Saves time or boosts productivity



MONEY

Saves money or makes money



WELLBEING

Reduces stress or enhances wellbeing



ENGAGEMENT

Boosts engagement with customers, employees, or others

Don't forget this fifth outcome – often overlooked, but just as important as the others.



AI SKILLS

Increases AI capability in your team for the future

The AI Accelerator program

In my AI Accelerator program, I facilitate the AI projects process with your leaders and teams – with some combination of these three modules.

AI Leaders Lab

Most leaders know AI will play an important role, but are (appropriately) cautious about rolling it out. They have staff who want to get behind the wheel and floor the accelerator, but also know leaders need to fit the car with seat belts and brakes!

This session – for your executive team and other leaders – is a facilitated discussion for leaders to understand how to leverage AI effectively, and also knowing how to do it safely, ethically, and responsibly.

AI At Work

Even with all the attention on AI, many people have never used tools like ChatGPT – or they have used it and been disappointed with the results.

This interactive online session for all your staff is a practical introduction to AI at work, with plenty of time for demonstration and Q&A. With this awareness and knowledge, they will then spot many opportunities to use AI in their everyday work.

AI Champions

As noted, the key to building AI capability comes from fast, high-value, low-cost projects. Each project needs one or two “champions” to lead the initiative.

We work together identify the AI champions in your organisation, and I then work with them over 3-4 months. This includes group mentoring, masterclasses, one-on-one coaching, and other activities to help them stay on track and complete their projects.

Common objections

Unfortunately, due to media distortion of AI, many leaders are fearful of it. Some caution is justified, but some of it is due to misunderstandings that hinder your ability to leverage AI effectively.

“We don’t know where to start.”

That’s why this is a step-by-step process that helps you get started – regardless of your prior experience with AI.

“We don’t have the time.”

These projects focus on fast and efficient ‘quick wins’, saving more time – even in the short term – than they cost.

“We don’t have the budget.”

The program focusses on cost-effective projects that deliver immediate value, saving more money than they cost.

“Using AI will require too much change.”

That’s why it’s better to start with small projects.

“People are scared AI will take their jobs.”

This is a real concern in many workplaces. This program helps your people work with AI, and they learn how to use it as an assistant, not a threat to their job or livelihood.

“Our IT department won’t allow it.”

IT people must prioritise safety and security, but also want to leverage technology. This process helps you create proven use cases that help your IT department prioritise access to AI.

“Our current systems and processes work fine without AI.”

Good! That gives you a head start, because AI can enhance and optimise them, freeing up resources for other work.

Common objections

“We lack the technical skills to use AI.”

This used to be a major barrier, but now you don't need technical skills to use AI.

“We're concerned about data privacy, security, and other risks of using AI.”

Good! This program considers these issues at every stage, so you can test and build AI projects safely and responsibly.

“Our industry isn't ready for AI.”

Most industries aren't ready for AI! And most organisations aren't using it effectively. This process gives you a competitive advantage with customers, employers, and brand positioning.

“We don't have enough data to leverage AI effectively.”

Sometimes, you get better results from training AI on your own data. But many AI tools work with small datasets or even pre-trained models, so you can get value without using your data.

“There are too many risks involved with AI.”

These small projects reduce risk by allowing you to test and learn without significant investment or exposure.

“We don't have leadership buy-in for AI initiatives.”

The best way to get buy-in is by demonstrating success, and quick wins from initial projects give you the evidence to convince senior leadership and gain their support.

What people say

For more than 10 years, I've helped leaders and teams leverage AI. Here are some of the comments from participants in my keynote sessions, masterclasses, leadership forums, and other programs.

"Gihan was remarkable at building a great group dynamic and had super-relevant information to share."

ANU

"Enjoyed the interactive nature of the AI workshop and Gihan's knowledge sharing."

Defence Australia

"It really opened my eyes to how AI could help tasks that I had put off as too hard and time-consuming."

Australian Seed Federation

"Thank you for your AI presentation for our members. It was very professional, delivered with great care for the audience, and it felt like you were very much in affinity with their world."

Golf Management Australia

"What you shared gave me the tools to easily use AI in my work environment. Your enthusiasm is contagious and encouraged me to extend my learning into a field I have found myself slightly apprehensive about."

St Mark's Anglican Community School

"Great ideas and discussion. I loved Gihan's innovative use of ChatGPT to aid futures thinking."

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

"I enjoy the way you respond to the group, and your ability to set the tone of human response to change whilst creating a space of hope, reality, and inspiration."

St Mary's Parish School Greensborough

"Lots of ideas on how to use AI at home and at work."

City of Greater Geraldton

What people say

"Clarity, simplicity, and real life examples and usage of AI."

Milicevic Lawyers

"I've always been a bit scared of ChatGPT, and this has given me more confidence and control."

City of Melville

"Gihan shared some of his extensive knowledge on AI, including assessing readiness, risks and challenges and how to bring your people with you on your AI journey."

The Mindfield Navigator

"I loved your presentation Gihan!! So interactive and an eye opener."

City of Melville

"Gihan gave me the confidence to try AI, he demonstrated practical applications of this technology, and I'm imagining how we could use AI in a number of our Club operations. Thank you!."

Victor Harbor Golf Club

"Inspiring and scary all at once! 2024 is a year of transformation for us and I look forward to learning more."

Holcim

"It has set my neurons firing and lots of thoughts and ideas generated."

North Metropolitan TAFE

"I enjoyed learning how to be more opportunistic with AI."

Westrac

"Loved Gihan sharing his ideas about the business application of AI and the positive focus on the opportunity AI creates."

DFK Gooding Partners

"Practical advice provided and really helped to demystify AI. Thank you!"

Department of Finance

Next steps

Want to find out more about building AI capability in your organisation? Choose from these three options. Click or scan QR codes here.

AI Accelerator

With this program, I'll help you work through the program described earlier. It's designed for forward-thinking leaders who are keen to start using AI and want somebody to guide their teams through the process.



Other AI Services

Need an engaging keynote speaker at your conference? Or do you want your people to roll up their sleeves and learn about using AI in their workplace? Find out about Gihan's conference topics and masterclasses.



Let's Chat!

Still not sure? Schedule an obligation-free 20-minute chat and we can talk about the best way to build AI capability in your teams and organisation. You might be surprised at how easy it is to get started and build momentum.





Gihan Perera is a futurist, speaker, author, and AI researcher for more than 30 years who shows you how to be fit for the future in a fast-changing world.

Over three decades, he has worked with leaders and organisations throughout Australia, as well as in New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, and North America – helping them to thrive in a fast-changing world.

He is the author of *Disrupted*, *Disruption By Design*, and *The Future of Leadership*.

Forbes rated him the #5 social media influencer in the world (and #1 in Australia) in his area of expertise.

He was recognised as the 2024 Educator Of The Year by his peers in Professional Speakers Australia.

As a speaker and educator, he shares future trends and thought-provoking insights – delivered with interaction, engagement, and humour – that leave people feeling positive, empowered, and optimistic about their future.

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