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# #NEXT DECADE

What does science and technology have  
in store for us over the next decade?

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# Are our jobs safe from robots – the truth and the unfounded fears

**W**ith the world evolving at an unprecedented pace, we have multiple times found ourselves amidst the conversations around the scope of Artificial Intelligence, the bounds (or no bounds!) of Machine Learning etc. The most common element of such conversations being the idea that one day the machines may start doing the things we do, way better than us. Instead of realizing that the future is here, we are surrounded with the fear- the fear of machines outsmarting us and more so, machines taking away our jobs.

Going by logic and reputed researches which have been studying the evolution of smart technology and its impact on the industries and society as a whole, we need not fear this fast-paced evolution. If we look at the statistics and data, automation is going to create 13.6 million new jobs in the next decade. In fact, it will create jobs equivalent to 9% of the workforce by 2025 - those are new jobs that would not exist otherwise. According to Gartner's 2017 hype cycle for emerging technologies, Artificial Intelligence will create around 2.3 million jobs by 2020, driving a net gain of 500,000 new jobs.

The truth is some jobs will be destroyed, others will be created, and others will morph into something new and different.

## What next?

This question has intrigued mankind since long and it is vital to understand the dynamics instead of giving into variety of pre-conceived notions.

For decades, the reason of welcoming the technological innovations has been to decrease human labour, simplify tasks that require human interference and improving the quality and efficiency of work. The ability to negotiate, persuade, understand the underlying thoughts etc. are still some attributes which machines may not be able to emulate. The tasks involving strategizing and persuasion, may still be human's best bet (though there is active work happening around leveraging AI here as well). What else can be said about the conversations around "empathy trainer" — individuals who will teach AI systems to show compassion or people making Alexa and Siri understand the variety of people's question, enabling them to respond in depth.

By taking over the iterative tasks, artificial intelligence allows us to focus on more important aspects of our work. On top of this, by relying on artificial intelligence, we can avoid human errors which in return betters our efficiency in processes. Most importantly, AI can take risks on human's behalf. Ventures into space that have been performed by AI explains this in the best way.

## Will there be enough jobs?

Yes, there will be. We're not going to be in a world where robots and machines do everything. Technology has, since beginning, proven to be assisting humans in getting them closer to their goals by simplifying processes. But it's going to be a big transition and we have to be prepared for the same. We've been through these transitions before and have been able to transform jobs for the better.

## What will be the safeguard?

The kind of jobs that were replaced by technology in the past were mostly around manual labour. With advances made in technology, especially in analytics and AI, we have got assistance with supervision, decision making and management jobs as well. The increased use of AI for day-to-day business operations will force enterprises to create new job roles. With the advent of these new roles, the need of reskilling and upskilling arises. In short, adaptability, upskilling and reskilling are the keywords.

## In a nutshell

Essentially, enterprise leaders and professionals should, instead of looking at machines as a threat that will steal jobs, start looking at it as intelligence augmentation (IA) and an opportunity to move further in their career ladder. In essence, the jobs that will remain, will be improved by IA, thereby making us smarter. So, it's up to humans to make sure they stay relevant in a world increasingly powered by "synthetic minds".

The bottom line, if you are irreplaceable as an intelligent contributor, no AI system can replace your importance in the system. **■**