HR-Centered Coaching: A Golden Solution For HRM In The Age Of AI

Preparing employees for rapid technological change requires more than technical training or process redesign. It requires a developmental approach that integrates coaching, strengths-based reflection, and AI-enabled insights into a coherent managerial practice. This article provides a rich foundation for this integration by emphasising self-awareness, positive psychology, reflective exercises, and personalised coaching. When adapted for organisational settings, these practices can help managers cultivate employees who are confident, adaptable, and able to thrive in an AI-enabled workplace.

Strengths-Based Development As A Foundation For Adaptability

Strengths-based development is a powerful approach for helping employees navigate technological change. Rather than focusing on deficits or skill gaps, strengths-based development emphasises identifying and leveraging the unique capabilities that individuals bring to their roles. We describe how students identify their top strengths, match them to daily tasks, and create action plans for growth. This approach aligns with research showing that individuals who use their strengths at work experience higher engagement, better performance, and greater well-being.

In an AI-enabled workplace, strengths-based development becomes even more important. As routine tasks become automated, employees must rely more heavily on unique human strengths such as creativity, empathy, judgment, and collaboration. Managers can help employees identify these strengths through assessments, reflective exercises, and colleague feedback. The Reflective Best Self Exercise, referenced in the article, provides a structured method for identifying strengths based on feedback from others. This exercise can be adapted for organisational use to help employees gain insight into how their strengths contribute to team and organisational success.

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Once strengths are identified, managers can help employees align their strengths with evolving organisational needs. This may involve redesigning roles, reallocating tasks, or creating opportunities for employees to use their strengths in new ways. For example, an employee with strong storytelling skills may take on a role in internal communications or training, while an employee with strong analytical skills may work with AI tools to support decision-making. By aligning strengths with tasks, managers can enhance performance, increase engagement, and build adaptability.

AI As A Tool For Personalised Development For The AI Era

AI offers powerful tools for supporting personalised development. AI-driven analytics can provide insights into employee performance, identify skill gaps, and recommend targeted learning resources. For example, AI systems can analyse patterns in employee behaviour to identify areas where additional training may be needed or suggest personalised learning paths based on individual strengths and career goals. These tools can enhance coaching effectiveness by providing data-driven insights that inform coaching conversations.

However, AI must be used thoughtfully. We emphasise the importance of positive psychology and emotional intelligence in supporting personal growth. AI tools should complement, not replace, HR-centred coaching practices. Managers must interpret AI-generated insights with empathy and context, recognising that data alone cannot capture the full complexity of human experience. For example, if an AI system identifies an employee as at risk of disengagement, the manager should explore underlying causes through conversation rather than relying solely on data. This approach ensures that AI supports well-being and development rather than creating fear or mistrust.

AI can also support strengths-based development by identifying patterns in employee performance that reflect underlying strengths. For example, AI tools can analyse communication patterns to identify employees who excel at collaboration or analyse project data to identify employees who consistently demonstrate creativity or problem-solving skills. These insights can help managers identify strengths that may not be immediately apparent and create opportunities for employees to use those strengths in meaningful ways.

Reframing The Manager's Role In An AI-Disrupted Workplace

One of the most significant implications of this framework is the need to redefine the manager's role. Traditional managerial roles emphasised supervision, task coordination,

and performance evaluation. However, as AI automates routine tasks and provides real-time performance data, managers must shift their focus from oversight to development. Helping the student with their life goals is also tantamount to the student-professor connection. Similarly, managers must help employees navigate their career paths, develop their strengths, and build the capabilities needed to thrive in an AI-enabled workplace.

This shift requires managers to adopt a coaching mindset. Rather than telling employees what to do, managers must ask powerful questions, listen deeply, and support employees in finding their own solutions. Managers who adopt this approach can help employees reframe challenges, explore new possibilities, and develop a sense of agency in shaping their future.

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Building A Strengths-Based Organisational Culture

Another key implication is the importance of building a strengths-based organisational culture. We describe how students identify their top strengths, match them to daily tasks, and create action plans for growth. This approach can be adapted for organisational use to help employees understand their unique contributions and align their strengths with organisational needs.

A strengths-based culture emphasises what employees do well rather than focusing solely on deficits or skill gaps. This approach can enhance engagement, improve performance, and foster a sense of belonging. In the context of AI, strengths-based development becomes even more important. As routine tasks become automated, employees must rely more heavily on unique human strengths such as creativity, empathy, judgment, and collaboration. Managers who help employees identify and leverage these strengths can create a workforce that is not only more adaptable but also more fulfilled.

Supporting Emotional Well-Being In Times Of Change And Disruption

The integration of AI into the workplace can create anxiety, uncertainty, and resistance among employees. The following films are used to stimulate reflection on purpose, resilience, and positive thinking: The Strangest Secret, The Celestine Prophecy, You Can Heal Your Life, and Pay It Forward. Films such as Milton's Secret, illustrate the importance of emotional regulation and mentorship, while You Can Heal Your Life emphasises the power of positive thinking and self-esteem. These examples underscore the importance of addressing the emotional dimensions of change.

Managers must create a psychologically safe environment where employees feel comfortable expressing concerns, asking questions, and experimenting with new technologies. This requires empathy, patience, and a commitment to positive reinforcement. Students are placed in a setting where they feel at their best, in a positive climate grounded in hope, inspiration, passion, creativity, encouragement, and compassion. Managers can create similar environments by celebrating successes, acknowledging effort, and fostering a culture of appreciation.

Creating An AI-Enabled Culture Of Continuous Learning

The rapid pace of technological change requires a culture of continuous learning. Employees must be willing to learn new skills, adapt to new technologies, and embrace new ways of working. Managers play a critical role in fostering this culture by modeling curiosity, encouraging experimentation, and providing opportunities for learning and development.

The article describes how students engage in reflective exercises, film-based discussions, and positive reinforcement rituals to develop self-awareness and motivation. These practices can be adapted for organisational use to create a culture of continuous learning. For example, managers can facilitate reflective exercises, use storytelling to inspire employees, and create rituals that celebrate learning and growth.

Enhancing Organisational Resilience

Finally, integrating AI, coaching, and the four functions of management can enhance organisational resilience. Organisations that invest in employee development, foster a strengths-based culture, and support emotional well-being are better equipped to navigate uncertainty and adapt to change. Films such as Rudy and Dead Poets Society emphasise the importance of perseverance, creativity, and purpose in overcoming challenges. These qualities are essential for building a resilient workforce capable of thriving in an AI-enabled workplace.

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In Conclusion

Preparing employees for rapid technological change requires a managerial approach that integrates classical management theory with contemporary insights from positive psychology, coaching, and AI-enabled tools. The Four Functions of Management - planning, organising, leading, and controlling - remain highly relevant in the age of artificial intelligence, but their application must evolve to address the psychological, developmental, and strategic challenges that employees face. As organisations adopt AI technologies, employees must navigate uncertainty, redefine their roles, and develop new capabilities. Managers play a critical role in supporting this transition by providing clarity, fostering strengths, offering emotional support, and creating opportunities for continuous learning.

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