

8 tips to keep ahead in AN AI-DRIVEN WORLD

OpenAI's ChatGPT currently exceeds 800 million weekly active users. Supporting this adoption is an infrastructure boom of historic scale. In 2025 alone, \$25.4 billion in US data centre debt was issued, while Morgan Stanley estimates \$2.9 trillion will be spent on AI infrastructure by 2028.

And yet, scale hasn't translated into results. The MIT State of AI in Business 2025 study found that 95% of GenAI pilots have so far delivered zero ROI, prompting concerns that we may be heading toward an AI investment bubble. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella disagrees, arguing that AI will avoid a bubble if it delivers broad-based productivity gains that expand the overall economy. *"It can't be a few companies in one sector, on one continent, capturing all the returns,"* he said. *"Otherwise it's a road to nowhere."* Even so, Nadella acknowledges the path forward won't be linear.

Despite the monumental gap between investment and return – and warnings from the likes of Sam Altman and Demis Hassabis that *"mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war"* – organisations, the media, and Big Tech continue to push the AI hype, pressuring people to adopt and deploy AI wherever possible. The result? More tools, more data to harvest, and a growing trail of harm; including misinformation, erosion of privacy, job displacement, bias creep, and the rising environmental cost of AI – particularly the resource demands of data centres.

This is not to deny AI's potential or usefulness – heck, I used AI in my research for this. Efficiency gains are real, and opportunities in areas such as healthcare are significant. However, as journalist and author Parmy Olson observes, early ambitions to build AI for the public good have increasingly collided with market incentives and competitive speed. If AI is going to reshape how we work and live, we need to be far more deliberate about how it is adopted. With that in mind, here are eight suggestions worth considering if you want to keep pace (as best you can!)

1 Practice adapting

Humans are creatures of habit – often limited by our own imaginations and laziness. So adapting to AI – or any emerging technology – and unlocking its full potential requires deliberate practice. Set aside time to experiment, test what works, and learn from mistakes, gradually building the habits and intuition needed to use AI effectively.

Consider setting up an AI Taskforce at work or joining local Meetups so you can benefit from cross-functional knowledge sharing. For hands-on learning, consider tutorials from platforms like OpenAI's Playground, Microsoft AI Lab, Google AI tutorials, or Coursera/edX courses on practical AI applications. Over time, this structured approach helps you develop the intuition and habits needed to build on existing skills, and extract real value from AI.



2 Optimise your prompts

Developing the skill to write clear, goal-oriented, and context-rich prompts is one of the more practical productivity hacks. And yet, a 2025 study found that only about 19% of ChatGPT users employed prompting strategies. If you're ready to practice adapting, here are four you can try:

- "Tell me the most important 20% of [topic] so that I understand 80% of it."
- "Research [topic] using only published journals, complete with links. Summarize the key findings from these sources – highlighting pros, cons, and practical applications – and suggest next steps."
- "Take my first draft and critique it as if you were [my senior manager/Creative Director at marketing firm Oglivy]."
- "Act as an experienced project manager and review this project plan for risks."

Resources like OpenAI's prompting guide, GitHub repositories such as awesome-prompt-engineering may also be a useful starting point.

Top Tip: Be hyper-aware of what you include in your prompts. Major companies like Samsung have had employees leak proprietary source code and internal data into public AI chats, and studies show a high rate of sensitive information being shared in unapproved AI tools. If you wouldn't shout it across the street, don't paste it into AI.

3 Always write the first draft

Traditional search engines (such as Google, Bing, or DuckDuckGo) invite users to evaluate multiple sources, compare perspectives, and engage in critical thinking. Generative AI, by contrast, produces ready-made answers, which can shortcut cognition and reduce the mental effort required to analyse, question, & synthesise information (think DALL·E, Gemini, Midjourney...)

And then there's agentic AI: autonomous systems designed to pursue complex, multi-step goals by planning, deciding, and executing actions across tools and environments with minimal human input.

This matters because reliance on these systems can subtly reshape how we think. A 2025 MIT Media Lab study found that participants using AI tools showed up to 55% lower brain connectivity than those who wrote without assistance. In practice, this can lead users to accept AI outputs uncritically, overlook errors, and fail to fully develop their own skills.

A better approach is to use AI as a senior advisor. Continue preparing first drafts yourself. If you're not satisfied, *then* ask AI to review your work, challenge your assumptions, & suggest improvements – rather than doing the initial thinking for you.

***Only 5% of custom GenAI tools survive the pilot-to-production cliff, while generic chatbots hit 83% adoption for trivial tasks but stall the moment workflows demand context & customization.**

MIT, State of AI in Business 2025 study

4 Stop outsourcing your humanity

Millions of people are forming friendships with AI companions – the top six apps alone reach 52 million users, with around 55% chatting daily, and some platforms available to users as young as 12 (including xAI's "crazy in love" chatbot, Ani). Searches for "AI girlfriend" have surged 2,400% since 2022, fueling a multibillion-dollar market projected to reach \$11 billion by 2032.

At their core, these tools are designed to prioritise user engagement, not improve a user's wellbeing; so while they may offer temporary comfort or distraction, they risk reshaping how younger generations form friendships, partnerships, and support networks.

Add robotic ballet dancers, AI-generated music/books/poems/art, and AI-written letters to Santa, and we start to dilute the human experience. Human creativity, empathy, and relationships are inherently messy. They take time, demand effort, and sometimes make us uncomfortable. That discomfort is where learning and growth happens. Outsourcing this to faux-empathic LLMs and artificial comfort isn't progress; it's a societal failure that risks exacerbating existing patterns of loneliness, inequality, and disconnection.

So as well as practicing adapting, practice your soft skills too – in the real world with real humans. And if you'd like to read more on this topic, I highly recommend the research of activist and author Laura Bates.

5 Understand AI's limitations

AI is a powerful tool, but it has clear boundaries. One of the most pressing is concentration of power: AI development is increasingly dominated by a small number of organisations based in wealthier nations. This concentration risks monopolistic control over knowledge, resources, and economic value. Countries with strong digital infrastructure, capital, and large datasets are positioned to lead and profit, while poorer nations – with weaker infrastructure, limited resources, and fragile social safety nets – are far less equipped to absorb the disruptions AI brings, from job displacement and skills gaps to bias, misinformation, and online harm. The result is a growing deep and unequal divergence in development.

AI also generates outputs based on patterns in its training data, not true understanding, which means it can produce plausible-sounding but incorrect, incomplete, or biased answers – so-called “AI hallucinations.”

Additionally, it struggles with nuance, context, and human judgment. It cannot replicate empathy, creativity, or moral reasoning. This limitation was highlighted when YouTube was found hosting a channel entirely devoted to AI-generated videos depicting women being shot in the head (Sep 2025), raising urgent questions about responsibility and oversight.

Raising these ethical concerns can come at a cost. Researchers such as Timnit Gebru and Margaret Mitchell were fired from Google after flagging bias and risks in AI models, while others at Microsoft and Meta faced backlash for speaking out on AI ethics and misuse. That doesn't mean we stop questioning or engaging. Responsible AI use means verifying AI suggestions before acting on them, demanding explainable outputs, and understanding the limits of the tech.

For more guidance, check your company's AI policy or ask for clarification.

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According to Elon Musk, “work will become optional” in the next 10 to 20 years. This begs a deeper question: optional for whom? In an economy still governed by wages, ownership, and unequal access to resources, how do those without work sustain agency, access to basic needs, or financial security?

6 Question everything you read / see online

Many users approach AI without fully understanding how it works, which can lead to overconfidence in its outputs. A study published by the BBC and the European Broadcasting Union on October 26, 2025, found that around 45% of AI news queries across ChatGPT, MS Copilot, Gemini, and Perplexity contained errors. This sits alongside a broader erosion of trust: between 2019 and 2023, the total number of deepfake videos online grew 550%, including fake audio and text, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between authentic & fabricated information. What's more, roughly 52% of new web text is now AI-generated (Graphite), raising the alarming prospect of the Dead Internet Theory – a fake online world where humans are replaced by AI-generated “slop,” deepfakes, automated engagement farms and bots.

AI-powered tools also enable sophisticated data collection & targeting, allowing malicious actors – including foreign states and extremist groups – to microtarget individuals with personalised, manipulative messages that exploit psychological vulnerabilities. We're already seeing this in practice: AI-generated profiles and imagery are being used in sextortion scams; recommendation algorithms and tailored messaging have been exploited to radicalise vulnerable groups and influence voters in Cambridge Analytica-style campaigns; and generative tools are increasingly linked to the creation of non-consensual sexual deepfakes, including recent cases involving Grok AI on X.

Concerns about misuse are not new. Back in 2018, Lord Clement-Jones, head of the House of Lords select committee on AI, warned that Britain needed to lead on regulation to prevent companies like Cambridge Analytica from setting dangerous precedents.

Taken together, these trends make it clear: we better protect ourselves (and our businesses) if we start by doubting the system, questioning what AI presents as fact, and recognising that technology alone cannot safeguard truth, ethics, or human rights.

7 Assume your team is already using AI

If you're a team lead, assume your team is already using AI – because they probably are. Not to cut corners, but because free, easily accessible tools make it hard to ignore, especially under pressure to move faster. The risk here isn't AI use itself; it's the assumption that it makes work instant, effortless, or foolproof – or that AI magically turns every team member into an expert at every task.

In practice, good AI use often takes more time: writing thoughtful prompts, reviewing outputs, correcting errors, and adding the nuance and context only subject-matter experts can provide. It's also worth noting that AI doesn't automatically halve project timelines, so be realistic with expectations. Make space for review, be clear about what AI can and can't be used for, and encourage transparency.

8 Deploy acts of micro-feminism

Generative AI mirrors the best and worst of humanity. It picks up biases, amplifies misinformation, churns out nonsense and allows itself to be exploited.

And if I'm being honest, it just doesn't feel right that a predicted ~10% of future energy consumption, plus copious amounts of water and land, will be spent storing databases full of AI slop, synthetic noise and deepfaked fantasies.

While the AI genie is sadly already out of the bottle, and it's unlikely we'll ever match its sheer scale, we are not powerless. One practical step is actively correcting AI bias in your prompts: lead with women's names before men's, explicitly identify yourself as a female CEO, VP, or team lead, and/or highlight accomplishments at the top of a pay bracket. Reference men in nurturing roles, or ask for gift recommendations for boys who like dance and the color pink. Small, deliberate interventions like these may feel modest, but collectively they can help AI reflect a fairer, more inclusive reality – and remind us that human intention still matters in shaping the systems we build.

About me (Eloisa Tovee)

I'm a multidisciplinary marketer with a background spanning emerging technology, law, logistics, and creative storytelling. I've served as a UN Women UK delegate to the Commission on the Status of Women for the past three years, advocating for gender equality in global policy conversations, and I co-host The Unfairer Sex podcast, where we explore everyday sexism and cultural narratives with honesty and humour.

My interest in artificial intelligence (AI) comes from both opportunity and a growing discomfort with the speed and scale at which Large Language Models (LLMs), AI, and machine learning (ML) have been embedded into our daily lives. It's also hard to ignore the vast amount of money riding on this being a success, and too often that urgency means harm prevention, ethics, and long-term impact take a back seat.

Like many professionals, I feel growing pressure to use AI in my day-to-day work, while also witnessing the very real harms of relying on an increasingly online/tech-first world. I care deeply about how emerging technologies are deployed – in particular, whether they amplify voices and democratise knowledge, or reinforce bias, misinformation, and erode societal trust. For me, AI isn't just a productivity tool; it's a societal force that demands scrutiny, context, and human judgement. Which is why I joined Jeremy Burns on an episode of the **Build Your Edge podcast** – to explore where AI adds value, where it falls short, and why questioning its role matters just as much as adopting it.

Treat the above as guidance, not gospel, and always supplement with your own research.

