# Impact of AI on People

We have now explored how to implement AI systems, whether by using, adapting, or building. We have also looked at what it means for those systems to be usable, and how that supports trust and access.

This final section builds on that foundation, to explore the role our people play in implementing and supporting AI systems in the public service.

The success of any AI system, either internal or externally facing, hinges on people being willing and able to embrace and support the change. Here we briefly highlight some of the considerations leaders may wish to plan for, relating to how colleagues may be impacted and supported when implementing AI. These include workforce changes, skill development, and psychological responses.

## Understanding AI Transformation

The implementation of some AI use cases may require changing how tasks are approached and how processes are structured. In some areas, routine or repetitive aspects of work may be supported through automation. This can create space for people to apply judgment, focus on strategic priorities, or spend more time on direct engagement.

Processes may shift in scope or emphasis. For example, frontline teams may use AI systems to respond to enquiries more efficiently. People working with data may focus more on analysis and interpretation, supported by AI systems that surface patterns or summarise information.

Understanding where AI may influence the shape of a role, and supporting those transitions with clear communication and training, can help reduce uncertainty and support engagement.

**Reflective question**: How might the tasks and responsibilities in your team shift if an AI use case is implemented?

## Upskilling and Reskilling for the AI Era

Skills development is often an important part of preparing for AI use. This may include building confidence with new AI systems, understanding how to interpret AI-generated information, or learning how to integrate AI into daily work.

The pace of change in AI suggests that developing the skills to work effectively with these systems will continue to be a regular part of our working lives. This includes empowering people with the knowledge and confidence to:

* explain these systems to others,
* understand how it aligns with public service values, and
* know what to do if something seems wrong.

In many cases, implementing AI use cases also requires specialist or technical input. This can involve upskilling in areas such as AI governance, data handling, system integration, or AI system monitoring. Ensuring there is access to the right specialist and technical expertise, whether within teams or through collaboration, can support successful delivery.

Training approaches that are practical, accessible, and relevant to different processes can support adoption and learning. Providing opportunities to build capability over time, not only during the transition, can also help build readiness and reduce disruption.

**Reflective question:** Who in your team would need support to build new skills or confidence, and how might that be provided in a practical way? Does this align with the timeline envisioned for a given use case?

## Addressing the Human Response to AI

New technologies can bring mixed reactions. It is natural for people to have questions about how AI might influence their roles – the kinds of tasks they perform, the level of oversight they may be expected to apply, and whether the changes may affect different processes or groups in different ways.

Clear and ongoing communication can help build understanding. Providing opportunities for involvement, such as giving feedback or participating in testing, can support trust. When AI aligns with service goals and is introduced with care, confidence in its use may grow over time.

Identifying the right use case and determining how to implement it technically is only the beginning. How people experience AI in their roles, and the clarity and support available throughout the process, are likely to influence how the change is received and sustained. Considering how to communicate clearly, while acknowledging both concerns and potential benefits, may help support a constructive response and contribute to building trust.

**Reflective question**: What concerns might people have about an AI use case, and how can those be acknowledged and addressed early?

## Leading Change with Intention

Implementing an AI use case in the public service is both a technological and a change process, deeply intertwined with public value. Change, technology, and trust are central to this process. To foster trust and ensure that technology serves public interests, plan ahead, engage teams early, and offer regular communication to help reduce uncertainty and build momentum.

Some organisations identify early adopters or AI champions who can share experiences and support their colleagues. Others integrate AI into existing change frameworks to maintain consistency and clarity throughout the process.

Past technology change programmes suggest that making space for feedback, learning, and adjustment is important. This can help ensure implementation is responsive and inclusive and contributes to longer-term success.

**Reflective question:** What steps can be taken upfront to support clear communication, early engagement, and trust throughout the process? Are there tried and tested technology change approaches in your agency that may apply well here?

## Conclusion and Next Steps

AI can contribute to improved service delivery, better use of information, and enhanced ways of working. At the same time, these shifts affect people, processes, and how work is experienced.

This section posed key questions to help support a thoughtful approach that ensures change is manageable, supported, and aligned with public service goals.

Consider:

* Reviewing how processes may evolve as AI systems are introduced
* Exploring training or reskilling needs within teams
* Creating opportunities to hear perspectives and questions from people across the organisation

A people-focused approach helps create the conditions for AI to be used in ways that are effective, trusted, and aligned with the values of public service.

## Three key takeaways

1. What does the pace of AI change mean for our skills?

Ongoing skill development is likely to be part of how we work with AI. Supporting people to adapt over time is part of successful implementation.

1. Do we need different kinds of capability to make this work?

Both technical and non-technical upskilling may be needed. This includes confidence with new AI systems, interpreting outputs, and explaining systems to others.

1. Is technical planning enough for an AI project to succeed?

People-focused planning is just as important as technical planning. How change is experienced, communicated, and supported shapes long-term adoption and success.