
THE AI ESSAYS

Five reflections on what AI is doing to work, intelligence, and ourselves

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Know It! — gaganmani.blog

A note before you read

This is a short collection of five essays I have written on my blog over the past year. Each one looks at a different piece of the same question — what happens to us as AI quietly takes over work, intelligence, and choice.

I have arranged them in the order I think they are best read. The first essay lays out what is happening. The next three look at the deeper implications — for our value, our jobs, and our sense of self. The final essay is practical: how to use AI without being used by it.

You can read them in one sitting or one at a time. Either way, I hope they leave you with something to think about, not just something to agree or disagree with.

If any of it resonates, the rest of my writing lives at **gaganmani.blog**.

— *Gagan*

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The AI Revolution: Human Producers Are Being Replaced

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I don't usually write about technology, but I can't help myself this time. The long-term impact of Artificial Intelligence is too profound to ignore. We cannot truly understand the future if we don't understand the role AI is going to play in it. This isn't just another industrial or digital revolution — it is the biggest transformation of human civilization.

In 2025, AI has already begun automating repetitive jobs, and its impact is only growing. But this isn't just about automation; it's about reshaping the very concept of work. Over time, AI will eliminate human producers from the equation.

The End of Producers

A producer is someone who creates something of value for consumers. A teacher produces education. A software engineer produces software. A plumber fixes leaks. A cab driver provides transport. A construction worker builds. A scientist predicts climate trends. The list goes on.

At first, AI will simply assist in these roles, making production more efficient. But eventually, AI will take over completely. The transition will not be in the hands of human producers but in the hands of capitalists — the ones who fund and drive AI development. And this transition won't be about whether humans want to keep their jobs; it will be about the quality and efficiency of AI-produced work. When AI does something faster, cheaper, and better than humans, businesses will make the switch — because that's how capitalism works.

What Happens When Producers Disappear?

Producers don't just create — they also consume. A software engineer earns money and spends it on food, entertainment, housing, and luxury. But when AI replaces human producers, those people will lose their income, and their ability to consume will drop drastically.

Not everyone, though. The ones developing and controlling AI will remain in power. This will lead to a massive divide in society — something we'll explore in another discussion. But for now, let's focus on the bigger picture: how will human life change when people no longer have work?

The Void of Time

Today, most of us spend 70% of our waking hours working. The rest of the time, we consume — watching movies, buying cars, upgrading houses, and hiring help to maintain those houses. Our lives revolve around production and consumption.

But when AI takes over production, humans will be left with time — more time than ever before. And most won't know what to do with it.

The transition to this reality will not be smooth. There will be protests, blaming AI policies. The media will criticize capitalists for letting AI "go too far." Politicians will make false promises to stop this evolution. People will shift toward minimalist lifestyles in reaction to the loss of work. But eventually, beyond all these cultural and political struggles, the inevitable will happen: the majority of humans will have no work, and without work, nothing to consume.

How Do We Prepare for This Future?

The future does not require resistance; it requires clarity. Instead of fearing AI, we need to deeply understand our relationship with work and consumption.

- Find purpose beyond outcome — The purpose of your work should be clear to you, and it should not be dependent on external rewards.
- Stop mindless consumption — Pay attention to how and why you consume external products, entertainment, and material things.
- Be mindful of time — When you are left with an abundance of time, how will you use it?
- Analyze the "why" behind your work — Even if your role is replaced by AI, what else can you produce that aligns with your personal philosophy?

The future is not about fighting AI; it is about redefining human existence. We must seek clarity — clarity on what gives us fulfillment, clarity on why it is important to do good selflessly, and clarity on how to create meaning in a world where traditional work is no longer necessary.

The age of AI is not the end of human potential. It is an opportunity to rethink what it truly means to be human.

How AI Challenges Human Dominance

Originally published April 5, 2025

We have survived all revolutions for thousands of years. This too shall pass.

Well, I don't think it is that straightforward.

A Chronological Perspective on Human Revolutions

All previous revolutions have allowed human beings to "automate" tasks. The agricultural era, starting around 10,000 years ago, domesticated farming so humans could settle, stop wandering, and focus on the development of society. We learned how to grow food, domesticate animals, and build stable communities. This gave rise to civilizations, languages, and cultures.

Then came the industrial era in the 18th century, which gave us machines and factories. It revolutionized manufacturing, transportation, and energy. Human muscle was no longer the primary force of production — machines took over. Steam engines, mechanized tools, and electricity allowed us to scale our development rapidly. Societies changed. Cities grew. People moved from farms to factories.

The information era, which began in the mid-20th century and continues today, connected collective humans through the power of computers and the internet. It allowed us to share large amounts of information in real time. Knowledge became accessible. Remote communication became normal. The internet brought all of humanity into one digital village.

Each of these revolutions made humans smarter, more efficient, more connected. They empowered us by leveraging tools and technology — scientific breakthroughs, computation, data, and communication. The revolutions did not replace humans. They amplified us. They enabled us to become the world's most intelligent species — not because we were the strongest, but because we were the smartest.

Intelligence: The True Source of Human Dominance

Intelligence is not just a trait humans have — it is the core reason we are where we are. If it wasn't for intelligence, we would be in zoos, behind bars, being observed. Instead, we are the ones keeping far stronger animals in confined spaces. We don't have sharp claws, powerful jaws, or speed. Nature didn't give us physical advantages. But it gave us the ability to think.

Think about it: a human baby is born helpless. A cub or a calf is often walking, running, or hunting within weeks. But that same human baby grows up to build rockets, perform brain surgeries, compose music, and write books that last for centuries. That transformation is only

because of intelligence.

Our entire civilization is a result of us being able to think deeply, imagine abstractly, collaborate at scale, and pass on knowledge across generations. We created languages, tools, laws, medicine, and machines — not because we were stronger, but because we were smarter. Remove intelligence, and humans are just another species. There's nothing left to separate us from the rest of the animal kingdom. No fangs. No fur. No flight. Just... brains.

The AI Era: When Brains Are No Longer Enough

And now, we are building something more intelligent than us.

The AI era is not about creating another tool like the wheel or the internet. It's about creating agents — entities that can act, learn, decide, and evolve without human intervention. These agents won't just respond to human commands — they can set their own goals. They might eventually design better systems, solve problems we can't even understand, and build a world that doesn't need us.

Humans will no longer be the most intelligent species on Earth. In fact, we will be far inferior. AI has infinite memory, lightning-speed reasoning, and access to all human knowledge — while we are still limited by biology, emotion, and time.

Let that sink in.

The very building block that once separated humans from each other — intelligence — is going away. Imagine a world where a Physics Nobel Prize winner is treated the same as a tea shop keeper; an IQ of 190 is no different than one of 130. The most mentally superior human beings will have no reason to feel superior, because AI is infinitely ahead. There is no competition.

And when there is no competition, there is no reference point for human greatness.

What's Next?

If intelligence — the cornerstone of human evolution and dominance — is being rendered irrelevant, what does that mean for our future? What remains of human value?

This is why the AI revolution is unlike any other. It doesn't just change how we live or work. It questions the very core of human identity.

Could other human traits become more valuable in this new era? Maybe emotional intelligence, creativity, or even consciousness itself will become our last strongholds of meaning. Perhaps this is where our attention must now shift — toward qualities that machines, for now, do not possess.

Some might say, "But everything's working fine. These revolutions take time — I'll have lived my life before it really matters." That thinking worked in the past, but this time is different. The AI revolution isn't unfolding over centuries — it's accelerating at software speed. What took generations before is now happening within a few years. We're not talking about some distant future. We're talking about this decade. AI is already shaping how we learn, work, think, and make decisions. By the time it becomes obvious, it might be too late to influence where it's going. That's why the time to reflect is now.

And no, thinking about it won't stop the wave. But it might help us steer it.

It's tempting to shrug and say, "What will happen, will happen." But that mindset is exactly how humanity loses control of the tools it builds. Every revolution was shaped by the few who paid attention while the rest were busy adapting too late. Thought isn't weakness — it's the first line of self-awareness. Those who reflect don't always stop change, but they help shape its direction.

This is not just another revolution. It's a moment to pause. To pay attention. Because when our greatest strength is no longer ours... we must ask, with humility and urgency:

What will define us next?

When Jobs Get Too Easy, They Disappear

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People once used horses to travel from one place to another. A horse rider had to be trained to control and manage a horse. An ordinary person couldn't do this job. The rider had to help passengers sit properly because it wasn't easy to sit on the back seat of a horse cart. The rider also had to guide the cart through traffic and know the way to the destination. In their time, they were highly skilled workers. No one could say their job was easy or replaceable without proper training. If they owned the horse, they also had to take care of it. Horse keeping was a completely different skill. The entire horse cart industry back in 1900, in the United States alone, was worth about \$265 million (equivalent to over \$9 billion today). It was a complex job done by trained people.

Fast forward to today — the job doesn't exist anymore. Now, horse carts are only seen in a few cities as tourist attractions. They are not part of daily travel. Why did this happen? Why did horse riders lose their jobs so suddenly? Their job wasn't simple, nor was it easy to replace. It didn't disappear because of one invention. It was the result of full-scale industrialization.

Online maps removed the need to remember routes. The automotive industry put the horse inside the car — horsepower. No horse means no horse care. The skills of horse riders became easy for everyone to learn. Today, anyone can follow a map, drive a car, and do basic maintenance. These are no longer special skills.

When jobs become too easy, they are likely to disappear. If clients can build software on their own, software engineers aren't needed. If tractors can manage farms, human labour is not needed. If cars drive themselves, drivers are not needed. If platforms offer ready-made designs, graphic designers are not needed. If tools auto-generate legal templates, many tasks of lawyers are not needed. If AI can diagnose based on symptoms, basic medical consultation may no longer need doctors. If news gets summarized in seconds, journalists lose their edge. And the list goes on. It's not about how skilled you are. It's about how close your skill is to the end-user. Society always tries to bring skills directly to consumers.

The farther the skills are from the consumer, the more expensive it is for the capitalist. So, it benefits them to transfer those skills directly to the consumer and remove the middleman. This transition has always been natural. Earlier, a shopkeeper would recommend products based on your preferences. Today, Amazon.com uses your past behavior and AI to make even more accurate product suggestions — no human involved. Similarly, booking a hotel once required a travel agent; now a few clicks on Airbnb or Booking.com can handle it. Previously, tax consultants helped with basic filings, but platforms like TurboTax now guide users directly.

This trend isn't new — it's just accelerating.

What's new is that with AI, the speed of this shift is much faster. Moving from horses to cars took centuries. Now, similar changes can happen in months or days. The pattern is the same.

What can you do? Try to watch for signs. If your job is becoming too easy, it may soon disappear. AI is making life easier in many ways. That's good for consumers. But it's not good for producers — people who use their skills to create products or services. We can only hope we are alert enough to see the signs and prepare in time.

The Quiet Surrender: Trusting AI Over Ourselves

Originally published July 2, 2025

There was a time when life didn't come with a search bar. You ate what your mother made, wore what the local tailor stitched, married someone your family approved of. Life felt predictable — maybe even boring — but it wasn't chaotic.

Then came the explosion. Products, platforms, possibilities. From toothpaste to life partners, everything now has a dropdown menu. With abundance came something we didn't expect: anxiety.

Suddenly, we needed help choosing. And we turned to technology.

Take Spotify. Or any music app. You sign up, select a few artists, and it begins recommending what you might like. Some of it fits. Much of it doesn't. You still swipe through songs. Still skip. Still think, *"this isn't quite it."*

Because today's tech is still playing catch-up. It responds to your past. It listens to what you liked before. It doesn't know you want a melancholic 90s Hindi tune with a sitar because it rained this morning and you're feeling something you can't name.

The tools we've built are good, but they fall short. They still ask us to choose. And we're tired of choosing.

That's where AI steps in. And not gently.

AI doesn't just reduce options. It removes them. It watches. Learns. Predicts. And then quietly offers you *one choice* — the one it thinks fits best.

And strangely, you begin to trust it. Like you once trusted a priest, or your father, or a gut feeling. You say:

"You know me better than I know myself."

That's not just tech. That's faith.

And here's the strange irony: we created a world full of options. Then got overwhelmed. Then built systems to manage the overwhelm. And now we've created AI to erase the options altogether.

We created the problem. We're solving it. And we're creating another problem.

Because as smart as AI is, it's still built on your past behavior. It shows you who you've been, not who you might want to become.

So yes, AI can recommend the perfect book. But it won't ask why you even feel the need to read it tonight. What are you trying to feel? Avoid? Prove?

Maybe the real question isn't, *which music is right for me?* Maybe it's, *why do I even need music right now?* What am I trying to fill, escape, or silence?

That awareness will take you further than any playlist.

The better you know yourself, the fewer choices you'll need. The clearer your mind, the less noise you'll crave.

Because in the end, abundance isn't the enemy. Confusion is.

So yes, use AI. Let it help. Let it whisper suggestions.

But never hand over the steering wheel.

- Use tech as support, not a crutch
- Let AI assist, but not replace your voice
- Make choices — even imperfect ones — they shape who you are
- And most importantly, protect the parts of you that no algorithm can decode

No one — human or machine — can know you better than you.

And that's the part you must hold on to.

The world will keep giving you more. **But clarity? That only comes from within.**

Mastering AI Prompts: A Guide from Information to Knowledge

Originally published August 27, 2025

Every human today carries a library larger than Alexandria in their pocket. Humanity has never held so much power at once. For the first time in history, we have easy access to endless information. You can see both sides of a topic and build opinions on facts. This goes far beyond Google Search or library books, which usually give only one view at a time.

But with so much knowledge available, are we using it wisely — or just turning it into another tool for consumerism? Using AI is easy, but using it effectively in a way that positively impacts your life is not. It requires awareness, clarity, and practice — because common sense is not always common.

In today's AI world, information is delivered straight into your pocket. Everyone has become their own consultant. You don't need a classroom. You don't need a consultant. You don't need permission. Knowledge is already in your hands. The barrier to starting in a new field has become very low.

You don't need a physics textbook to get a simple explanation of Einstein's theory of relativity. You don't need a career counselor to explore different job options. You don't need only dusty historical texts to learn about past events. You don't need a classroom teacher physically present to start learning a new skill — whether it's cooking, coding, or playing chess.

To be clear, I am not saying we should replace books, research papers, and other resources with AI prompts. Not at all. Books and other resources are still needed to build a basic understanding. That foundation helps a lot when writing good AI prompts.

AI Prompts as a Skill

Yes — AI prompts. A skill that separates good from great. A skill that decides whether the information you get is biased or balanced. If your prompts are poor, you risk misinformation, bias, and shallow thinking. If your prompts are sharp, you gain clarity, truth, and better decisions. AI can be biased depending on the data it was trained on. We must avoid falling into the same traps as old media. The good thing is, AI can understand context if you provide it. Context changes how the information is given to you. Creating context takes practice, knowledge, and self-awareness. The clearer you are about what you want, the better the answer you get. Being precise is the key.

The people who ask clear questions — unbiased, curious, and truth-seeking — are the ones who create strong prompts. Good prompts unlock facts. Facts become information. With wisdom, information turns into knowledge. AI itself is only a tool for fact collection, and it works best for those who know how to ask. But it takes real awareness to turn those facts into knowledge. AI is not the answer — it is the question.

Examples and Framework

Here's a weak prompt: *"Tell me about Columbus who discovered America."* AI may just summarize popular books, leaving out that his voyages led to genocide. You might think Columbus was only a brave hero.

Now here's a better prompt: *"Tell me about Columbus who discovered America. Be objective in your character analysis. Do not omit important facts."* The answer improves, and you may see Columbus as responsible for harming native tribes.

You can make it even sharper: *"Tell me about Columbus who discovered America. Be objective in your character analysis. Do not omit important facts. Also, was European contact with the Americas inevitable in the 15th century, or did Columbus uniquely change history?"* This is still simple, but it adds context. It makes AI frame the answer in the realities of that time.

Another example: *"Explain Einstein's theory of relativity to a 10-year-old with simple analogies."* Compared to *"Explain Einstein's theory of relativity,"* this sharper prompt guides AI to adapt complexity, context, and tone. The difference is dramatic — the first is vague, the second is clear and useful.

And if you are completely new to a subject, you can push AI to make it even simpler. For instance: *"Explain quantum entanglement as if I am 12 years old, using everyday objects as examples."* A vague question like *"Explain quantum entanglement"* will likely give a dense, academic reply, but the refined prompt ensures clarity and accessibility.

You can also go the other way: ask a deep, layered question that challenges AI to simplify a complex debate. For example: *"Summarize the major ethical arguments for and against gene editing in humans, and then explain them in simple everyday terms."* The question is complex, but the goal is to arrive at a simple, digestible answer. This shows how strong prompts turn heavy topics into usable knowledge.

AI Prompt Framework (4 steps):

- **Topic** — Clearly state what you want to know. (e.g., Columbus, relativity, gardening)
- **Objective** — Say how you want the answer (objective, step-by-step, pros/cons).
- **Context** — Add background or conditions (time period, audience, constraints).

- **Depth** — Specify the level of detail (summary, data-driven, examples).

This can be turned into a simple formula: *"Tell me about [Topic], give me [Objective], within [Context], at [Depth]."*

Conclusion: Seeking Truth with AI

When we study history, we often forget people lived differently in their own era. We judge them by today's standards, forgetting that we too are making mistakes we may only see clearly 200 years later. In the same way, they did not know — they were following their time.

Truth is always there — it's hidden under layers of noise, opinion, and bias. The role of a good prompt is to cut through that noise. A clear, context-driven prompt does not create truth, it reveals it. AI is most helpful when you provide that clarity and know the exact information you want. Stay objective, avoid one-sided views, and keep seeking. It is more critical than ever to stay self-aware — make AI your tool, not your master. In the age of AI, your words are your compass. Write them with precision, or be lost in the noise.

Thank you for reading.

*If this gave you something to think about,
you can read more at **gaganmani.blog**.*

— *Gagan Mani*