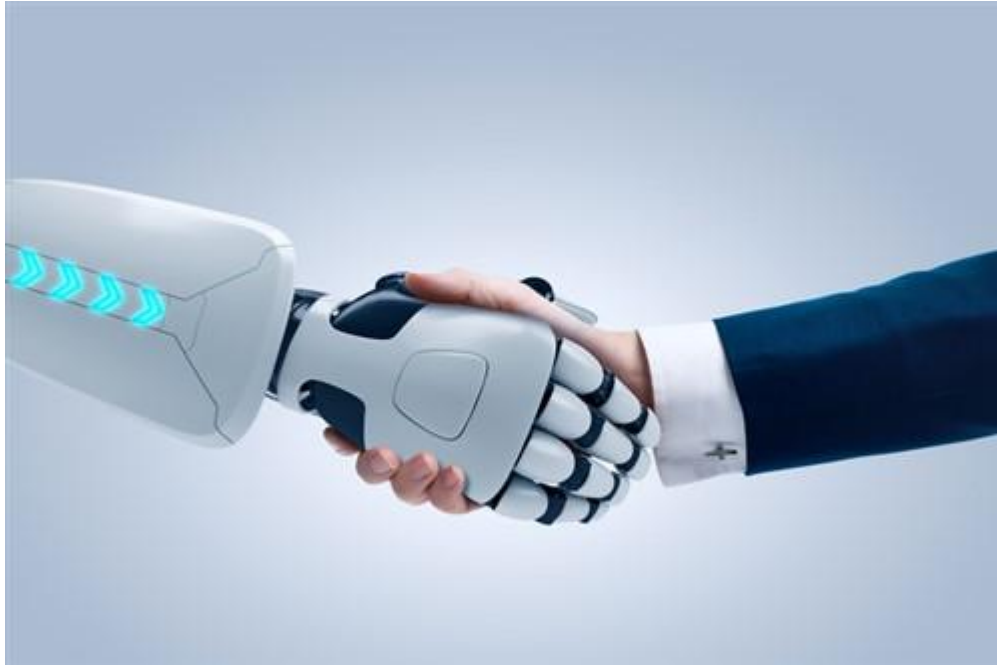# Why 70% of execs see humans and robots coexisting

by Rachel Ranosa
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Despite growing concern over the impact of automation on the future of work, business leaders worldwide believe collaboration between humans and machines could change work for the better.

In a global survey by software company Pegasystems, seven in 10 senior executives predict the workforce will evolve to include both human and artificial intelligence, and give rise to a "hybrid workplace".

The respondents believe AI will enhance workers' efficiency (73%) and customer service (62%).

Increasing autonomy
Pegasystems' research suggests increasing autonomy and improving processes will lead to employees achieving a "greater sense of job satisfaction". According to the research:

- 64% predict employees will take on more challenging and varied roles as they learn to collaborate with robots, and delegate routine and monotonous tasks to machines
- 78% believe robots will enable employees to make better informed decisions, rendering traditional management hierarchies obsolete.

By relying on smart software, workers can find solutions to problems without the need to go up the chain of command, the researchers note.

'Beyond basic efficiency'

One area of development identified in the research is customer relationship management. Seven in 10 respondents believe robotic software will help direct customer service agents and improve overall customer experience.

The study forecasts how customer service will benefit from Robotic Process Automation (RPA), a type of cognitive software that learns from humans by observing their interactions, routines, and use of existing applications. The bot masters the processes before taking over and automating them.

RPA examples already exist.

Nuance Enterprise, an AI-focused customer service solutions provider, is programmed to "mimic" customer service agents. The software listens in on their conversations, picks up on contextual and technical clues, examines the issue then recommends a solution to the customer.

Similarly, IBM's Watson Assistant helps businesses develop their own virtual assistants and chatbots that speak natural language, allowing the bots to participate in human conversations.

By automating responses, AI aims to reduce the daily "friction" of customer interaction, the report suggests.

"Organizations must augment their human intelligence with AI across the entire organization in order to move beyond basic efficiency improvements," said Don Schuerman, Pegasystems chief technology officer and vice president of product marketing.

"By deploying AI and automation with an end-to-end view in mind, businesses can move closer to fulfilling their customer-centric vision."

https://www.hrtechnologynews.com/news/workforce-management/why-70-of-execs-see-humans-and-robots-coexisting/95182

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