



AFL-CIO Tech Institute

AI Workplace Myths

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to digital systems that, based on human instructions, can make decisions, predictions, or recommendations. AI is increasingly shaping our work, but for workers to share in the benefits, it is important to debunk some common myths.



MYTH: AI will improve my job.



FACT: The use of AI in the workplace can create a range of potential challenges and dangers for workers.

While workers are often told that AI will make their jobs easier or more efficient, these technologies also come with real risks. There are many types of AI, not just chatbots. Employers can use AI to intrusively monitor workers or to hire, discipline and fire them—often without any human involvement. Also, AI systems can intensify working conditions through relentless productivity quotas or unrealistic task assignments. This can make jobs worse and potentially more dangerous.



Workers should have a voice at the table to talk about the use of AI in their workplace. When workers have a say, they can ensure that technology is actually making their jobs easier and safer, not putting them at risk.



MYTH: AI is fair and objective.



FACT: AI is biased and makes mistakes.

AI systems are trained on existing flawed and biased data, and can create problematic outputs as a result. For example, AI hiring tools can illegally discriminate against people based on race, gender, and age, because they are trained on historical hiring data that reflects discriminatory practices.



We need additional laws that require testing of AI systems for bias and discrimination before employers and governments can use them to affect workers or the public.



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MYTH: The creators of AI products and the employers who use them will ensure they are used safely.



FACT: Workers need guardrails and rules to protect them from harmful use, and misuse, of AI in the workplace.

Big Tech companies that create AI systems promise to ensure the technology is safe, but – as we’ve learned from the history of social media – sometimes these promises can’t be trusted. Employers that use AI systems also promise that technology will make work more productive, but the many examples of harmful AI use show that rules are needed. Other industries, like cars, food, and medicine have to follow safety rules. But we don’t currently regulate the safety of AI products the same way.



We need AI laws that require privacy protections, transparency, safety testing, and meaningful human review to protect workers.



MYTH: If we regulate AI, it will slow innovation and we will fall behind other countries.



FACT: Responsible innovation builds safer technology.

Big Tech claims that creating rules for AI might slow innovation, but often these companies are just trying to avoid accountability for the harms their technology causes. Responsible innovation builds safer technology, and ensures that workers and consumers benefit from technology, while minimizing the risks. That is why 80% of Americans want rules for AI.



Lawmakers should listen to working people and pass responsible guardrails for AI.



MYTH: AI is inevitable and will probably take my job.



FACT: We can make better policy choices to protect and improve American jobs.

Job loss, job degradation and other harms of AI are not inevitable, they are human choices. When workers come together to negotiate through collective bargaining or fight to get guardrails passed into law, AI can make work better instead of eliminating it.



We should make choices that support the dignity of working people.



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