

BETWEEN OPPORTUNITY AND COLLAPSE: BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE FUTURE WITH AI

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In 2017, long before artificial intelligence was at the top of organizations' strategic priorities, Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff made a visionary decision: he invited a new "executive" to his weekly board meetings—an artificial intelligence called Einstein Guidance.

During these strategic meetings with 20 to 30 top executives, Benioff would turn to Einstein and ask, "OK, Einstein, you've heard all that, now what do you think?"

The system provided unbiased analysis of quarterly forecasts, pointed out areas of strength and weakness, and occasionally singled out executives who needed special attention. "As a CEO, many politicians and bureaucrats in the meeting tell you what they want you to believe. Einstein comes in without bias. Because it's based solely on data, it's a transformative tool," Benioff said at the time.

This example and many others raise a fundamental question: how is AI redefining decision-making in corporate governance, and what is the ideal balance between automation and human judgment?

This scenario is not limited to the corporate world.

We are facing a global dilemma: how do we balance the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence with the need to preserve human autonomy, ensure accountability in decisions, and maintain social equity in an increasingly automated world?

The AI revolution is reshaping our reality. On the one hand, there are extraordinary advances: systems capable of analyzing vast volumes of data, algorithms anticipating market trends, and virtual assistants optimizing complex operations in real-time. On the other hand, we face critical challenges: ethical questions about delegating decisions, the risk of algorithm bias, and the impact on the workforce. The current moment demands a profound reflection on how we want to shape our future with AI. We cannot fall into the trap of technological determinism, believing that the advancement of AI will follow a predetermined and inevitable path. On the contrary, we have the responsibility and the opportunity to direct it to serve the common good. The big question is: are we ready?

A Deloitte study conducted in October 2024 revealed worrying data on the relationship between boards and AI:

- **45%** of boards still do not discuss AI on their agendas.
- **79%** of respondents say their boards have limited, minimal, or no knowledge of AI.
- Only **2%** of respondents consider their boards highly skilled and experienced.

- **46%** are dissatisfied or concerned about how much time their boards dedicate to AI.

We need a clear and structured approach to build a genuinely inclusive and responsible future with AI.

First, developing governance frameworks that establish clear boundaries for using AI in decision-making is essential. We need to define when AI should act as support and when humans should make the final decision exclusively.

Second, we must empower our leaders to interact effectively with AI systems; this requires new competencies that combine technological knowledge with essential human skills: ethical judgment, emotional intelligence, and strategic thinking.

Third, AI mustn't increase inequalities. The diversity of human perspectives must be preserved and valued in organizational decisions.

Finally, technology must enhance, not replace, human capacity. AI should support decisions, not replace human judgment, concerning values, ethics, and social impact.

A good example of best practices is Itaú Unibanco, which has demonstrated a solid commitment to the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into its operations, aligning itself with proposed actions for an inclusive and ethical future in using this technology.

The bank has established centralized governance for its AI platforms, ensuring safe and scalable adoption. This approach ensures that AI solutions are implemented responsibly, maintaining human oversight in critical decisions.

In addition, the bank has invested significantly in training its employees in AI and data analytics. Training programs were developed and addressed everyone from interns to senior executives, promoting an organizational culture that combines technological skills with essential human competencies such as ethical judgment and strategic thinking.

The bank has also recognized and acknowledged the importance of diversity of perspectives in decision-making and, therefore, maintains diversity as a competitive differentiator and an institutional priority; this ensures that the implementation of AI does not amplify existing inequalities but contributes to more inclusive solutions.

Examples like this show that it is possible to adopt AI in a balanced and responsible way. But there is still much to be done.

The future of AI in organizations and society is not predetermined. We are build-

ing this future now through our choices and actions.

There is a middle path between the opportunity to create more innovative organizations and the risk of devaluing human contribution. This path requires vision, courage, and commitment to human-centered development.

The question is not whether or not to adopt AI in governance but how to integrate it in a way that expands, rather than reduces, our ability to make ethical and responsible decisions.

The future we want - inclusive, ethical, and human-centered - will only be built if we act decisively today. And don't think that what we do now will define the legacy for future generations.

What we do now will redefine our reality tomorrow, or rather, this afternoon.

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