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## LinkedIn's chief economist: Gen AI will impact 'solidly middle-class' workers

 by Meredith Somers | Feb 15, 2024 Why It Matters 

*A LinkedIn analysis predicts that the jobs of 55% of the platform's users will be impacted in some way by the adoption of generative AI.*

As an employment-focused social network that counts more than 1 billion business professionals and 65 million organizations among its users, LinkedIn has a unique view of job-seeker behavior and what skills employers are looking for. And right now, everyone is focused on generative AI.

According to the company's recent "[Future of Work Report: AI at Work](#)," 55% of LinkedIn users' jobs will be impacted in some way by generative AI.

The report also showed that between December 2022 and September 2023, views for AI and AI-related jobs rose 12% across Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. Applications for AI and AI-related job postings for those seven countries increased by 11%, and in just the U.S., views and applications rose by 21% and 19%, respectively.

"By and large, what we're seeing is there are different speeds of displacement, different speeds of augmentation happening, but it is happening across all sectors," said [Karin Kimbrough](#), LinkedIn's chief economist.



"What that tells me is that the adoption rate of this technology ... it is not a flash in the pan," said Kimbrough during a panel discussion at the [MIT Shaping the Future of Work Initiative](#) launch event in January. "It is here. It is changing what employers are looking for."

The [initiative](#), led by co-directors [Daron Acemoglu](#), [Simon Johnson](#), and MIT economist [David Autor](#), uses research to analyze the labor market and improve job quality and job equity for non-college workers.

Here are some additional takeaways from the LinkedIn analysis and panel discussion.

## Disrupting industries

In its analysis, LinkedIn found that 55% of women and 45% of men will experience disruption or changes in their jobs because of generative AI. Women are in the majority, according to the report, because they are overrepresented in jobs that can be partially done by machines, such as administrative and office management positions.



LinkedIn also studied the U.S. communities where the workers who are most likely to be disrupted live.

"We asked, 'What's the median income in the communities that they live in?'" Kimbrough said. "It was 10% above the median. These were folks that were not the locksmith but the librarian. This is your solidly middle-class [cohort] that looked to be the most exposed."

## Becoming 'AI literate'

The LinkedIn analysis found that its users are rapidly adding AI skills to their profiles, though Kimbrough said that doesn't mean they have to become AI experts.

"You just have to know how to be AI literate, how to use the software in your domain," Kimbrough said. "That's going to help you be a little bit more efficient. So it's not about all of us becoming coders; it's about all of us just getting a little bit more literate in our space."

That dovetails with the study's findings that employers today are willing to focus on skills more than previous job titles or degrees.

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"What we actually find in our own data is that when you take a skills-based approach ... you actually expand your potential talent pool, sometimes as much as 20 times," Kimbrough said. "Getting over that initial barrier of 'Did you go to a certain school or did you get a certain degree or did you have a certain title?' makes a huge difference for hiring."

## Investing in employees

Workers are focused on investing in their skill sets, and Kimbrough and MIT Sloan professor of the practice **Zeynep Ton** urged employers to invest in their employees as well.

LinkedIn found that companies that excelled at internal mobility and upskilling retained their employees for nearly twice as long as companies that did not do those things well.

Offering employees a career path "is huge," Ton said. "Once you commit to promoting from within, then your entire HR system changes, because now you're hiring differently; now you're coaching people differently."

And while a paycheck is still a priority, Kimbrough said, younger generations are reporting that it's also important that their employer takes a vested interest in them.

"They want to feel that they have a career path and not just the job," Kimbrough said.

### What Type of Work Do We Want in the Future?



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