Video transcript

Get insights from an AI ethics expert, Rachel, an AI ethics education program manager at IBM

I'm Rachel. I'm the AI ethics education program manager at IBM, and I've been doing this kind of work for about six years.

What drew me to AI is that it's everywhere. Technology is a really integral part of our lives now, and that is not changing. You know the tools that we used to work, the way we pay our bills, the way we shop, the way we interact with our friends. All of that is being facilitated by technology. And almost all of that technology relies on AI in some way. So, whether we realize it or not, we're interacting with AI every day. And the fact that it's everywhere and has so much impact on us is what really drew me to working with AI.

I knew that education was the right career for me because I love to learn, and I want other people to love to learn too. I really think that education is power. When you learn, you're empowering yourself, whether you're learning a new skill that you could apply to a job or whether you're learning new information that helps you understand the world a little better, gives you a different perspective. You know, I think that learning really makes you a better person, and there's so much to learn when it comes to technology, and especially when it comes to AI because it evolves so quickly and it impacts our lives so much. So, for me, developing education and training that's related to AI and specifically to AI ethics is work that has a lot of meaning.

The best career advice that I ever received was to develop a problem-solving mindset. That means being able to analyze why a problem is happening, understand the layers of impacts, break the problem down into pieces, brainstorm potential solutions, and then also, you know, understand the layers of impact that those potential solutions could have. No matter what work you're doing, you're going to face problems. Work is essentially a never-ending process of solving problems, so having a problem-solving mindset, having problem solving skills, that's going to help you in a career in AI or really wherever your career journey might take you.

I'd like to think that my job enables me to change the world by helping people understand not just how technology works and how it impacts their lives but, also, how they can use technology in responsible ways to help make the world better for everyone. Technology is a really integral part of our lives that's never going to change. And so I think it's really important that people everywhere in all places, all jobs, all walks of life can really understand technology, can really use it. And I think that education really helps to make that happen.

A day in my life is typically pretty busy. I think a lot of people imagine that working in education consists of sitting down and writing content. And I certainly do that work, but there are a lot of steps before I actually get to that point. So, a typical workday for me is, you know, I'll spend a good amount of time meeting with subject matter experts to get their input, have them share their expertise with me. You know, they'll give me feedback on work that I'm drafting. I'll also spend a fair amount of time reading or researching so that I can better understand some of the topics that I'm working on. And, of course, I do spend time almost every day writing content. And I go through a lot of iterative cycles of feedback and

revisions to try to get that content right. So, my days are usually a good mix of time spent meeting with and conversing with experts and stakeholders. Like I said, hearing their feedback, getting their input. But then, also, time spent independently where it's really just me and my computer keyboard creating content.

My favorite part of my job is that I get to learn every day. I'm not an expert in AI or in cybersecurity or in any other subject that I've developed education about, but I get to learn about those subjects in order to do my job, which I think is really cool. I get to meet and talk with experts. I get to do research. Sometimes, I even get to go hands on with products or tools to better understand how they work. So, my job never feels boring or stale because I'm always getting opportunities to learn new things.

Two things that I would tell someone just getting started in AI are ask a lot of questions and always consider ethics. AI is a big, complex, exciting field that evolves all the time. There's always a lot to learn about it. And there's, also, a lot that's still being discovered and figured out about AI. So, if you're working with AI, let yourself be curious. You know, don't hesitate to ask questions. And, also, I think it's really vitally important that as we're working with AI, designing it, developing it, using it, it's really really important that we're thinking about ethics and how we can kind of maximize the benefits of AI while, we're also like minimizing any potential risks of AI. AI is everywhere. We're interacting with it every day in ways that we realize and often in ways that we don't realize. It's impacting our lives every day, so, it's really important that we can trust AI. And that is really only possible when we are intentionally and methodically working toward infusing ethics into AI.