About Brains & Bots Inc.

Fictional Company Created by the EXMI Team for Learning Purposes

Brains & Bots Inc. is a fictional organization developed by the EXMI team as part of the learning course "Prompting for Professionals". While the company, its characters, and workplace scenarios are not real, they are thoughtfully designed to reflect realistic challenges and opportunities in today's evolving workplace.

Set at the intersection of artificial intelligence and human leadership, Brains & Bots Inc. introduces learners to a playful yet high-performing culture where managers co-create with GenAI. Participants are immersed in practical, narrative-driven situations that simulate real-world people management tasks—such as hiring, onboarding, coaching, and performance management—while exploring the benefits and limitations of AI tools in these contexts.

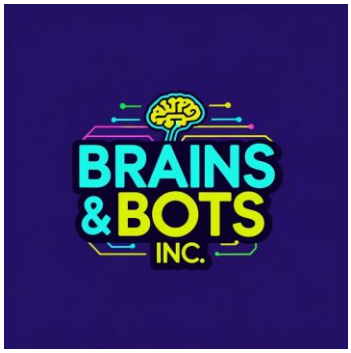
Why It Was Created:
This fictional setting allows learners to safely experiment with GenAI applications, develop critical thinking around AI ethics, and sharpen their leadership skills without real-world consequences. Through the lens of Brains & Bots Inc., learners can engage in scenario-based learning that encourages experimentation, reflection, and growth.

Meet the Key Characters:

- Alex Rivera – A curious product team leader focused on fairness in performance management.
- Priya Shah – A cautious operations manager committed to ethical AI practices.
- Jordan Liu – A high-empathy sales manager navigating the balance between efficiency and trust.

Disclaimer: All names, scenarios, and organizational details in this course are fictional and designed solely for educational purposes. Any resemblance to real people, companies, or situations is purely coincidental.

What follows is the fictional, in-character company description that participants engage with throughout the course.



(Logo used solely for instructional immersion; not affiliated with any real organization)

“**About the Company:**
Brains & Bots Inc. is a fast-growing, future-forward organization that thrives at the intersection of human leadership and artificial intelligence. Known for its playful yet high-performing culture, Brains & Bots is on a mission to help people managers unlock the full potential of GenAI—without losing the irreplaceable value of human intuition, empathy, and judgment.
Here, teams don’t just collaborate, they *co-create* with AI. From talent acquisition to team development and conflict coaching, Brains & Bots is a workplace where people managers use smart tools to lead even smarter.
Throughout this course, you’ll step into the world of Brains & Bots Inc.—a company a lot like yours, with real challenges, real people, and a quirky edge. You’ll meet team members, tackle sticky situations, and test GenAI solutions in realistic workplace scenarios. Think of it as your AI leadership lab—with characters and contexts that grow with you. Whether you're hiring, onboarding, or coaching, Brains & Bots is where your AI sidekick skills come to life!

Key Characters at Brains & Bots Inc.

1. Alex Rivera – The Forward-Thinking Team Leader
Role: Manager of the Product & Design Teams
Personality: Curious, adaptable, loves testing new tools, but keeps a close eye on fairness and inclusivity.
Learning Goal: Wants to use GenAI to personalize onboarding and streamline performance reviews—without losing sight of equity.
Typical Line: “Can AI help me coach my designers without sounding robotic?”

2. Priya Shah – The Cautious People Leader
Role: Senior Manager of Business Operations
Personality: Detail-oriented and risk-aware. Loves structure and asks the hard questions.
Learning Goal: Needs to set team-level AI ground rules that align with company policy—and still get work done efficiently.
Typical Line: “Let’s not get wowed by shiny tools and forget about the data ethics.”

3. Jordan Liu – The Empathy-Driven Sales Manager
Role: Manager of Sales & Customer Success
Personality: High-EQ, people-first, leads with empathy. Not easily sold on tech without proof it helps people.
Learning Goal: Wants to use GenAI to save time and prep for hard conversations—but fears losing trust.
Typical Line: “I don’t want my team to think I’m outsourcing my leadership."

Articles We Mention

1. **Case study**

This case study is included to help you critically explore what it looks like when a large, global organization thoughtfully integrates GenAI into daily work. While the context is consulting, the lessons on adoption, training, oversight, and impact are highly relevant for people managers across industries.

"Rewiring the way McKinsey works with Lilli, our generative AI platform"

Launched in July 2023 and fully rolled out across McKinsey by mid-2024, the Lilli generative AI platform has achieved impressive firmwide adoption, with 70–75% of approximately 45,000 employees using it weekly and generating around 500,000 prompts per month. Lilli significantly enhanced productivity by saving an estimated 30% of time spent on knowledge tasks and improving content quality by roughly 20%.

The case study demonstrates how Lilli supports tasks such as synthesizing decades of firm knowledge, drafting presentations, ideating, and connecting users with relevant internal experts—allowing human consultants to focus more on strategy, critical thinking, and client relationships.

It exemplifies a balanced, human-centered AI integration model, with clearly defined boundaries where Lilli assists with content generation while people apply context, judgment, and oversight. With its emphasis on user training, iterative feedback, and responsible governance, this case provides a compelling framework for learners to assess how generative AI can augment—rather than replace—human roles in people management and beyond.

Source: McKinsey & Company Case Study (2024)
McKinsey & Company. (2024). *Rewiring the way McKinsey works with Lilli, our generative AI platform*.

Link: https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/mckinsey-digital/how-we-help-clients/rewiring-the-way-mckinsey-works-with-lill

2. The Cybernetic Teammate: A Field Experiment on Generative AI Reshaping Teamwork and Expertise

Group	Performance Improvement	Time Efficiency
Individual + AI vs. control	+0.37 SD	–16.4% time spent

Team + AI vs. team control	+0.39 SD	–12.7% time spent
Team + AI breakthroughs	3× more likely to land in the top 10%	

Teams using AI were 3× more likely to come up with the top 10% of solutions than the control group.

Without AI, we saw clear professional silos… When paired with AI… the distinction between specialists virtually disappeared

Source: Dell'Acqua, Fabrizio and Ayoubi, Charles and Lifshitz-Assaf, Hila and Sadun, Raffaella and Mollick, Ethan R. and Mollick, Lilach and Han, Yi and Goldman, Jeff and Nair, Hari and Taub, Stew and Lakhani, Karim R., The Cybernetic Teammate: A Field Experiment on Generative AI Reshaping Teamwork and Expertise (March 28, 2025). Harvard Business School Strategy Unit Working Paper No. 25-043, Harvard Business School Technology & Operations Mgt. Unit Working Paper No. 25-043, The Wharton School Research Paper, ESSEC Business School Research Paper, Harvard Business School Working Paper 25-043, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=5188231 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5188231

The Cybernetic Teammate" https://www.oneusefulthing.org/p/the-cybernetic-teammate

3. How generative AI can boost highly skilled workers' productivity

When tasks aligned with GPT-4's strengths (so-called "inside the frontier"), highly skilled workers' performance improved by nearly 40%. Workers in the lower half of baseline skill benefited the most, showing a 43% improvement compared to a 17% improvement for higher-skilled workers. In short, generative AI can enhance a highly skilled worker's performance by up to 40% compared with those who do not use it.

However, when tasks exceeded GPT-4's reliable capabilities ("outside the frontier"), performance actually dropped—by 13 points without prompt training and by 24 points when combined with overview training. The main reason is that workers often "switch off their brains and follow what AI recommends," even when the output is incorrect. This highlights the importance of validating AI outputs and continuing to exert cognitive effort and expert judgment.

To harness AI effectively among skilled professionals, the authors recommend several organizational practices:

- **Design role-aware workflows** that clearly define which tasks AI should support (inside the frontier) and which require human judgment.
- **Provide prompt-engineering training,** as participants with AI plus prompt-engineering training outperformed peers by an additional ~4.5%.
- **Ensure continued cognitive engagement** by reinforcing that AI outputs require expert review, especially when decisions are novel or sensitive.

Dell'Acqua, Fabrizio and McFowland III, Edward and Mollick, Ethan R. and Lifshitz-Assaf, Hila and Kellogg, Katherine and Rajendran, Saran and Krayer, Lisa and Candelon, François and Lakhani, Karim R., Navigating the Jagged Technological Frontier: Field Experimental Evidence of the Effects of AI on Knowledge Worker Productivity and Quality (September 15, 2023). Harvard Business School Technology & Operations Mgt. Unit Working Paper No. 24-013, The Wharton School Research Paper, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=4573321 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4573321

Somers, M. (2023, October 19). *How generative AI can boost highly skilled workers' productivity*. MIT Sloan School of Management. https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/how-generative-ai-can-boost-highly-skilled-workers-productivity