LifeLabs Learning LeaderLab CONFERENCE 2026

Watch the recording!

The Lessons We've Learned about AI Implementation

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The Lessons We've Learned About AI Implementation

AI changes more than the tools people use. It affects how work gets done, what skills employees need, and whether they trust the organization leading the change. Leaders share lessons on redesigning work, supporting managers, and measuring whether AI is making a meaningful difference.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

AI transformation is a people and work-design challenge

Buying a tool and training people to use it won't necessarily change how work gets done. The organization has to rethink how tasks, roles, and teams fit together.

People need honesty about what's changing

Employees' concerns about their jobs and livelihoods are real. Leaders build trust by acknowledging uncertainty and involving the people affected in shaping the change.

Adoption doesn't equal value

Usage and hours saved don't show whether AI is helping the business. Success depends on whether it advances a goal, such as improving customer experience, freeing time for higher-value work, or speeding up delivery.

Saved time needs a purpose

If employees use AI to produce more of the same work, the workflow hasn't really changed. The panel emphasized deciding where the recovered time should go, including toward collaboration and human connection.

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ACTION ITEMS

Start with the outcome

Define what the organization wants AI to improve before choosing tools or measuring adoption. Identify how you'll know whether you're making progress over the next 3, 6, 9, and 12 months.

Redesign the work with employees

Map how a workflow operates today, name an owner, and involve the people who do the work in changing it. Training alone won't improve results if the surrounding workflow stays the same.

Make time for experimentation

Set aside time for employees to try AI in their work. Have leaders use the same tools and follow the same time limits and guardrails as their teams.

Decide where saved time goes

Work with managers to identify where AI can reduce effort, then choose how to reinvest that time. Check whether it's going toward the business outcomes you set, rather than simply producing more work.

Hear how leaders can protect time for human connection and build the manager behaviors teams need to use AI well.

"Leaders have to do the work alongside their team, modeling failure and success within the exact tools, time, and parameters that they expect their teams to do it before they can really call it transformation."

Emily Mabie
AI Innovation Lead
Zapier

Put people at the center of AI transformation.

Build the leadership skills and people systems that help employees adapt, managers lead, and new ways of working take hold.

Explore the AI Transformation Program

LifeLabs Learning