



Working and Growing in the Age of AI

10 Soft Skills You Need
to Stand Out

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Soft skills in the age of artificial intelligence: a new challenge for organizations

What skills will truly make a difference in the age of artificial intelligence?

This is undoubtedly one of the most strategic questions organizations face today. While AI is already transforming the way we produce, learn, communicate and make decisions, it is also redefining the skills that create value in a professional context.

The Cegos International Barometer on Transformations, Skills, and Learning 2026 provides a concrete illustration of this.

For employees, **artificial intelligence and automation are the main transformations that organizations must address.**

At the same time, 91% of HR and Learning & Development managers view skills as a strategic issue, while nearly one in four employees believes their skills could become obsolete in the coming years.

In this context, one thing is certain: technical skills will remain essential, but as technologies evolve, **soft skills are becoming the true differentiator.** These are the skills that allow individuals to use sound judgement, collaborate effectively, innovate, engage in continuous learning, foster team cohesion and make responsible decisions in increasingly complex environments.

Cegos experts have supported numerous organizations in developing their employees' skills. **In this white paper, they have identified and compiled the 10 soft skills that appear to be most critical for success in a world where artificial intelligence now plays a dominant role.**

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Soft Skills: A Fundamental and Lasting Foundation in a Constantly Changing World



Soft skills: what exactly are they?

Though long overshadowed by technical skills, soft skills have played a central role in discussions about the future of work for several decades. They have continued to grow in importance to the point that they are now recognized as key factors in performance, employability, and organizational adaptability.

Starting in the 1980s, the growth of the service economy made human interactions central to performance. While technical skills remain essential, interpersonal skills have gradually become a key driver of competitive advantage.

The rise of artificial intelligence is accelerating this trend. As AI revolutionizes society and work, the question of which fundamentally human soft skills to develop to live and work alongside AI has become strategic.

Terms such as behavioral skills, human skills, cross-functional skills, and power skills are multiplying, but they all refer to the same reality. Unlike hard skills, which correspond to the technical knowledge specific to a profession, soft skills relate to the way we act, interact, and adapt.

In short, technical skills open the door to a career, while soft skills enable you to advance and succeed in that career and navigate change.



Critical thinking, communication, emotional intelligence, creativity, cooperation, leadership, and the ability to continuously learn are all skills developed through experience, feedback, training, and practice. Now more than ever, these skills are key drivers of individual and collective performance.

Why is the importance of soft skills continuing to grow?

The growing importance of soft skills is not solely linked to the recent widespread adoption of generative artificial intelligence. For several years, organizations and their teams have been dealing with accelerating technological, economic, environmental, and societal changes. Professions are evolving at an unprecedented pace, causing skills to become obsolete more quickly. Career paths are increasingly characterized by mobility and diverse experiences.

"For a long time, soft skills were considered a nice-to-have compared to hard or technical skills, which were seen as a priority. Artificial intelligence reinforces the importance of soft skills in the professional world because they reflect our interpersonal skills and our unique humanity. Soft skills neither replace nor merely complement hard skills—they give them their full meaning."



Christelle Delavaud
Manager of Offer and Expertise
Personal Development
Cegos

In this context, mastery of technical skills is still important, but it is no longer enough to ensure long-term success. Employees must continuously learn and collaborate with a diverse range of colleagues to resolve unprecedented situations and make decisions based on partially available or unreliable information.

Generative artificial intelligence marks a new, fundamental stage in this evolution. By automating certain cognitive tasks, such as searching for information, drafting documents, producing summaries, generating ideas, and assisting in decision-making, AI is gradually shifting the distribution of value between humans and machines.

Technical skills are essential for understanding and using these technologies effectively. However, as AI systems become more powerful, distinctly human capabilities become more valuable.

Artificial intelligence can generate a response. However, it cannot understand all the subtleties of a given context. Nor can it mediate between conflicting interests, build relationships based on trust, or take responsibility for decisions.

Therefore, rather than pitting artificial intelligence against human intelligence, we should develop them both in a complementary manner. In a world where technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace, soft skills are essential for working, growing, and preserving what makes us human.

Harnessing Human Skills in a World Transformed by AI

Generative AI marks a paradigm shift in our relationship with work. For the first time, a technology can produce content that previously required relatively complex intellectual skills, such as researching information, writing a text, summarizing a document, generating ideas, analyzing data, and making recommendations, in a matter of seconds.

This evolution does not mean that humans are becoming less useful. Rather, it redefines the scope of our usefulness. In the professional world, as certain activities become automated, employees are expected to demonstrate their ability to interpret situations, make decisions, collaborate, devise new solutions, and support organizational change.

So everyone needs to make greater use of their "soft skills"... and do so in a different way.

What AI does particularly well

With its ability to process vast amounts of data in record time, artificial intelligence excels at a number of cognitive tasks.

Specifically, it enables users to:

- Rapidly produce content
- Generate ideas, hypotheses, or scenarios
- Synthesize and structure large amounts of information
- Automate repetitive or time-consuming tasks
- Support analysis and prepare certain decisions

When used wisely, AI is therefore a powerful driver of performance. It speeds up execution, facilitates access to knowledge, and frees up time for activities with higher added value.

While the power and speed of AI are undeniable, the key now lies in knowing how to use it where it creates value and in taking into account the human, organizational, and relational realities that determine the success of a goal. And this is precisely why soft skills are indispensable.



What remains profoundly human

No matter how advanced artificial intelligence becomes, it will never think or understand the world the way a human being does.

AI lacks the ability to perceive emotions, relational dynamics, or implicit issues at stake in a situation. AI lacks the capacity to demonstrate intent, intuition, or responsibility.

AI generates responses based on the information at its disposal without experiencing the consequences of the decisions it informs.

These abilities remain the exclusive domain of human beings, who can integrate them into their personal and professional lives.

The following abilities are therefore profoundly human:

- Understanding the nuances of a particular context
- Detecting weak signals that are not captured by available data
- Exercising judgment that takes human, ethical, or organizational considerations into account
- Building a relationship of trust
- Mobilizing and engaging a group around a common goal
- Taking responsibility for the consequences of a decision

Toward a new synergy between humans and AI



As Ethan Mollick, a professor at the Wharton School, has emphasized in his work on co-intelligence, the challenge is no longer determining whether AI outperforms humans; rather, it is learning how to leverage their complementary strengths intelligently.

At Cegos, we have found that this complementarity hinges on employees' and managers' ability to apply the necessary skills to use AI discerningly, responsibly, and efficiently.

The emergence of generative AI and AI agents that can perform sequences of actions autonomously is changing the role of employees. Employees will need to learn how to collaborate with one or more AI systems, delegate certain tasks to them, oversee the results, and coordinate their actions toward a common goal.

This shift is already evident in the most advanced organizations. In its *Work Trend Index 2025*, Microsoft describes the emergence of *Frontier Firms*—organizations where employees and AI agents collaborate in hybrid teams.

Professionals' roles are gradually evolving; they are producing less directly and devoting more time to defining objectives, coordinating contributions, exercising judgment, and making final decisions.



The widespread use of AI represents more of a skills revolution than a technological one.

The organizations that make the most of AI are those with the most powerful tools and those that invest in developing critical human skills. The ability to learn, critical thinking, adaptability, emotional intelligence, leadership, and ethics are the true drivers of a virtuous synergy between humans and AI.

For over a century, through social, economic, and technological revolutions, Cegos has trained individuals and supported organizations in overcoming development challenges.

To break new ground in artificial intelligence, Cegos experts have identified the soft skills that will be most important in the future.

These 10 skills represent a world of possibilities for every organization and individual. We invite you to discover them and learn how to develop them.

Soft Skill #1

Critical Thinking and Discernment

"With AI, all you need to do is ask the right questions."

False.

To use AI effectively, you first need to know how to ask the right questions. The ability to "prompt" has become a key skill that largely determines the quality of the responses you receive. However, as AI systems become more powerful, a new challenge emerges: knowing when to trust them and when to exercise critical thinking. The value no longer lies solely in obtaining an answer, but also in knowing how to assess its reliability, limitations, and consequences.

A good prompt leads to better answers. However, critical thinking and discernment are necessary to determine which parts of those answers are worth keeping.

"AI provides us with increasingly effective answers, provided we know how to ask the right questions. However, critical thinking is even more important because it allows us to transform the answer we receive into an informed decision."



Christelle Delavaud
Manager of Offer and Expertise
Personal Development
Cegos



Understanding critical thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information, evaluate reasoning, and form an informed judgment before making a decision or taking action.

To practice critical thinking, you need to know how to:

- Analyze facts and arguments
- Distinguish opinions from interpretations or evidence
- Seek out contradictory information
- Detect biases, whether human or algorithmic
- Take a step back before drawing conclusions or making decisions

For researchers Alec Fisher and Michael Scriven, critical thinking consists of "conceptualizing, analyzing, and evaluating information in order to guide one's beliefs and actions." Therefore, it does not rely solely on analytical skills. It also requires open-mindedness, humility, rigorous reasoning, and the ability to question one's own certainties.



Why is this skill important in the age of AI?

For a long time, value largely lay in access to and the ability to produce information. With the advent of generative AI, however, information has become abundant, immediately available, and often convincing. The ability to exercise judgment regarding the information provided by AI is what makes the difference now.

While AI is a tremendous driver of productivity, it is far from infallible. AI can generate erroneous information ("hallucinations"), replicate biases present in its training data, offer contextually inappropriate responses, and reinforce the automation bias, which leads us to place excessive trust in machines' recommendations.

Therefore, critical thinking is a true driver of performance. It allows us to take a step back, exercise discernment, and use AI as a decision-making aid rather than an authority.

In the era of generative AI, discernment is a competitive advantage. Being a high-performing professional today means knowing how to exercise sound judgment while working with AI.



How can you develop critical thinking?

Developing critical thinking means:

- Distinguishing facts from interpretations
- Systematically verifying the sources used
- Weighing several hypotheses before drawing a conclusion
- Asking AI to defend an opposing viewpoint
- Explaining the criteria underlying a decision



Discover Cegos training courses to develop critical thinking:

- Critical Thinking for Effective Problem Solving
- Problem Solving and Decision Making



In practice

Imagine you are a sales director. As you prepare for an executive committee meeting, you ask an AI to summarize several market studies to help you recommend a new positioning strategy. The summary seems clear and well-structured. It unambiguously concludes that a particular customer segment should be prioritized. During the meeting, everyone agrees to follow this recommendation. However, before approving the decision, you decide to verify the sources and compare the analysis with the company's internal data. You then realize that several of the cited studies are outdated and certain assumptions do not apply to your market. The AI helped you move faster. However, your critical thinking prevented you from making an ill-informed decision.

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Soft Skill #2

Learning to Learn

“With AI, we will have to keep learning more and more.”

True and false.

One thing is certain: artificial intelligence is accelerating the evolution of jobs, tools, and necessary skills. Learning throughout one's professional life is therefore more necessary than ever.

However, the key does not lie in accumulating ever more knowledge. The ability to continuously learn, unlearn, and relearn will make the difference, keeping pace with change.

In a world where knowledge abounds and quickly becomes obsolete, the most enduring skill is the ability to continuously learn.

“In light of the accelerating pace of change, learning and training cannot be considered isolated events in one's professional life. Learning is becoming an ongoing process integrated into one's profession. Employees who know how to learn from their experiences, seek feedback, collaborate, and refine their practices will be best equipped to adapt. Organizations must also create the necessary conditions—time, resources, support, and psychological safety—to ensure a genuine right to try.”



Laurence Ballereaud
Director of Bespoke Training Projects
Cegos



Understanding the ability to learn

Learning to learn means acquiring new knowledge, questioning one's habits, and applying what one has learned in new situations.

Learning to learn means:

- Knowing how to identify one's learning needs
- Demonstrating curiosity and openness
- Being willing to step outside one's comfort zone
- Learning from both successes and mistakes
- Turning feedback into opportunities for growth

The work of Carol Dweck, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, shows that this ability relies heavily on what is known as the growth mindset.

Unlike the *fixed mindset*, which views skills as fixed, the *growth mindset* is based on the belief that anyone can improve through effort, experimentation, and learning. It fosters curiosity, perseverance, adaptability, and a willingness to try rather than a fear of failure.



Why is this skill important in the age of AI?

In the age of AI, learning how to learn is essential for remaining relevant in the long term. Specifically, learning how to learn allows you to:

- Quickly adopt new AI-related tools or practices
- Challenge practices that have become less relevant
- Develop new skills throughout your career
- Experiment without fear of making mistakes
- Adapt your practices as innovations emerge

Furthermore, artificial intelligence can facilitate learning by offering personalized learning paths, tailored explanations, and interactive scenarios.

The willingness to grow, experiment, and regularly update one's knowledge is what makes the difference.



How can you develop your ability to learn?

There are several ways to strengthen your *growth mindset*:

- Regularly identify your strengths and areas for improvement
- View mistakes as learning opportunities
- Embrace feedback as opportunities for growth
- Deliberately step outside your comfort zone
- Draw inspiration from others' successes rather than comparing yourself to them

At Cegos, we have observed that employees who adopt this mindset learn more effectively and strengthen their adaptability, confidence in the face of change, and ability to thrive in evolving environments over the long term.



Discover Cegos training courses to learn how to learn

- Growth Mindset: Reinventing Yourself Professionally.
- The 5 Keys to Success.

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In practice

Imagine you have been managing teams for fifteen years and have mastered your work methods. When your company implements an AI assistant, your initial attempts are disappointing. You sometimes feel that you would be more effective working the way you used to.

Instead of concluding that AI is not for you, you persevere. You analyze what did not work, test new approaches, discuss your colleagues' practices with them, and learn from every challenge. You understand these steps are normal in the learning process and will eventually allow you to use AI in ways you never imagined.



Soft Skill #3

Adaptability and Resilience

"Once we have gotten used to AI, we will find our bearings again."

False.

Artificial intelligence does not introduce a one-time change; it ushers in constant transformation.

Technological advancements, new professional practices, the reorganization of job roles, and the emergence of AI agents are constantly shifting the points of reference. The goal is not to weather a period of change before finding equilibrium, but to constantly adapt in order to thrive in an environment where everything is in flux.

"For a long time, companies managed change in stages as a series of projects. Today, however, change is the context in which they operate. The most successful employees are those who develop the ability to adapt their practices throughout their careers. Adaptability and resilience are becoming essential long-term skills."

Employees must adapt and develop their ability to grow as change becomes the norm.



Christophe Perilhou
Bespoke Solutions Director
Cegos



Understanding adaptability and resilience

Adaptability is the ability to adjust one's behaviors, practices, and ways of operating in response to new situations.

Resilience is the ability to regain balance after a setback, to bounce back, and to continue growing despite uncertainty.

Adaptability allows you to change course. Resilience allows you to keep moving forward when that change becomes difficult.

Developing your adaptability and resilience means:

- Accepting that reference points change
- Quickly adjusting one's practices
- Managing uncertainty without becoming paralyzed
- Learning from one's experiences, including the difficulties encountered
- Maintaining one's commitment in changing contexts.

In the professional world, adaptability and resilience are not merely about withstanding stress, unexpected events, or difficult situations; they also rely on the ability to make sense of changes and adapt to them gradually.

Why are these skills important in the age of AI?

Artificial intelligence is accelerating the pace of transformation at every level of the organization. Jobs are evolving and processes are constantly being reimaged. This pace of change often challenges long-established practices, benchmarks, and even expertise developed over many years. What was effective or valued yesterday may not be so today.

In this context, adaptability becomes a true professional skill rather than just a personal quality. It enables individuals to:

- Smoothly integrate new tools or work methods
- Adapt their practices to the pace of technological change
- Remain effective despite uncertainty
- Turn changes into opportunities for growth

Resilience, for its part, helps individuals preserve their energy, overcome resistance, quickly regain balance, and maintain their commitment as one transformation follows another.

How can you develop greater adaptability and resilience?

There are several ways to strengthen these qualities:

- Regularly experiment with new ways of working
- Gradually step outside your comfort zone
- View challenges as opportunities to learn
- Take a step back to distinguish between what you can control and what you cannot
- Rely on the group to share experiences and best practices

At Cegos, we have found that organizations that adapt best foster a culture of experimentation, feedback, and continuous learning.

Adaptability enables you to cope with change.

Resilience enables you to turn change into a driver of progress.

Discover Cegos training programs to develop your adaptability and resilience

- MyStory: Succeeding in Situations of Change
- Change Management
- The 4 Keys to Change Management

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In practice

Imagine your company is rolling out a new AI assistant that will automate certain tasks you used to perform. You feel anxious. Will you lose your value?

Instead of resisting change, you decide to embrace it with an open and adaptable mindset. You identify tasks for which your expertise, judgment, and interpersonal skills are indispensable. You try out new approaches, choosing to make AI a partner in your work. This change becomes an opportunity for reflection and growth.



Soft Skill #4

Emotional Intelligence

"Emotions have no place in business decisions. They are an obstacle to performance."

False.

Decision-making is never completely rational. It occurs within a specific context, involves people, and evokes reactions that no algorithm can fully predict.

Artificial intelligence can analyze data, identify trends, and offer recommendations. However, it does not experience emotions or tensions and does not pick up on relational cues. However, as AI evolves, the ability to understand others, build trust, and engage teams is becoming a key differentiator.

"The more technology permeates our lives, the more crucial interpersonal skills become. Emotional intelligence enables us to grasp what data cannot show us: the emotions, doubts, resistance, and needs that influence decisions. AI can shed light on a situation, but it will never replace trust, empathy, or the quality of human relationships."

Emotions do not hinder decision-making. When understood and managed, they improve the quality of decisions.



Christelle Delavaud
Manager of Offer and Expertise
Personal Development
Cegos



Understanding emotional intelligence

Popularized by **Daniel Goleman**, emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, express, and regulate one's own emotions while considering those of others.

Developing emotional intelligence involves the following:

- Identifying and understanding one's emotions
- Regulating one's reactions to complex situations
- Perceiving the emotions and needs of others
- Demonstrating empathy
- Building trusting relationships

Emotional intelligence also relies on intuition—that is, according to psychologist Gary Klein, the ability to quickly recognize situations one has encountered before and to draw on accumulated experience.



Why is this skill strategic in the age of AI?

AI provides increasingly sophisticated analyses, but it does not perceive an employee's hesitation, a team's fatigue, or the tensions that can hinder a project. Yet these factors directly influence the quality of decisions and collective performance.

Emotional intelligence enables you to:

- understand human reactions beyond the facts
- adapt your communication
- build trust
- prevent or defuse tensions
- tap into your intuition when several options seem viable

AI, on the other hand, informs decisions with data. Emotional intelligence enables you to understand people, context, and relational dynamics.



How can you develop your emotional intelligence?

It is strengthened through observation, reflection, and experimentation. It also involves getting to know yourself better to better understand others.

A few strategies include:

- developing self-awareness
- identifying situations that cause stress
- practicing active listening
- acknowledging emotions before trying to resolve them
- regularly seeking feedback.



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- Emotional Intelligence
- Developing Empathy in a Changing World

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In practice

Imagine you are about to close a major deal. Before the meeting, you used artificial intelligence to identify the client's main challenges and prepare your presentation. Everything seems to be going smoothly. Yet, you sense a slight hesitation in the client's demeanor. You take the time to ask questions and discover their main concern is not the price but their teams' ability to take ownership of the project. This discussion enables you to tailor your support and strengthen your trusting relationship.



Soft Skill #5

Leadership

“You do not need leadership to manage AI agents.”

False.

AI agents can perform tasks, coordinate actions, and support decision-making processes. However, they cannot provide vision, direction, or meaning to collective action.

As organizations increasingly integrate artificial intelligence, transformations are accelerating, making work environments more complex.

In this context, effective leadership is essential. The purpose of leadership remains unchanged: to provide direction, create meaning, unite efforts, and enable everyone to understand their contribution to a common goal.

As AI transforms organizations, the deeply human dimensions of leadership become more valuable than ever.

“As organizations evolve at an ever-faster pace, employees need clear direction and a framework of trust more than ever. The leader's role is not to have all the answers but to provide meaning, create conditions that foster engagement, and enable everyone to contribute fully to collective success. These are all skills and responsibilities that AI cannot fulfill.”



Laurence Ballereaud
Director of Bespoke Training Projects
Cegos



Understanding leadership

In an era of constant and accelerating change, effective leadership is essential for maintaining a collective direction as organizations, business lines, and ways of working evolve.

In particular, leadership relies on emotional intelligence to build trust, foster cooperation, and enable everyone to contribute fully.

Exercising leadership means:

- Providing a clear and meaningful vision
- Build trust
- Bringing together complementary profiles and areas of expertise
- Giving meaning to change
- Promoting responsible, informed, and inclusive decisions

Research by **Amy Edmondson, a professor at Harvard Business School**, shows that the highest-performing teams are not those that make the fewest mistakes. Rather, they are those in which everyone feels safe enough to share their ideas, ask questions, and learn collectively. This psychological safety is now one of the cornerstones of leadership capable of sustainably guiding transformations.



Why is this skill strategic in the age of AI?

AI accelerates change, multiplies sources of information, and increases the complexity of decision-making processes. Therefore, collective performance no longer depends solely on individual expertise, but also on the ability to maintain a shared vision and ensure consistency.

Leadership enables us to:

- Regularly share priorities
- Explain decisions and the rationale behind them
- Foster dialogue and complementary perspectives
- Encourage initiatives and recognize everyone's contributions
- Develop a culture of feedback and collective learning



How can you develop your leadership skills?

Leadership is built through action. It does not depend solely on a hierarchical position, but rather on the ability to lead a group, build trust, and maintain a shared direction, even as circumstances change.

To develop or strengthen your leadership skills, it is helpful to:

- Seek feedback on your leadership approach and its impact on others
- Develop your listening skills and your ability to take different perspectives into account
- Step back from your decisions and question your own biases
- Experiment with different leadership styles depending on the situation and the people involved
- Analyze challenging management situations and learn from them



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- A Leader and a Mentor
- A Leader and an Ally

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In practice

Imagine two teams are working on a strategic project. Although the necessary resources are in place, differing priorities and mounting misunderstandings are causing problems. You bring the stakeholders together, clarify the common goal, redefine responsibilities, and spell out the decision-making criteria. Within a few weeks, communication improves and the project regains its collective momentum. Your leadership created the conditions that allowed everyone to move in the same direction.



Communication

“With AI, communication becomes easier”

True... but not necessarily better.

In a matter of seconds, artificial intelligence can generate clear, structured content tailored to different audiences. It has never been easier or faster to produce an email, presentation, report, or summary.

However, producing more content does not necessarily mean communicating better.

As information becomes abundant, instantly accessible, and easy to generate, the real challenge is no longer simply conveying a message. It lies in capturing attention, creating a shared understanding, providing meaning, and driving action.

The major challenge of communication is helping everyone navigate an environment where information is overwhelming and the line between truth and falsehood is blurred.

“Artificial intelligence helps us produce content faster and in greater quantities. However, the real challenge of communication within organizations in the age of AI is enabling everyone to understand a situation, distinguish fact from fiction, grasp the key issues, and know how to act. The true value lies in the ability to create clarity, provide meaning, and foster dialogue.”



Christelle Delavaud
Manager of Offer and Expertise
Personal Development
Cegos



Understanding communication

Communication is the ability to establish a shared understanding. It allows us to do more than simply convey information; it enables us to explain, persuade, foster dialogue, and create the conditions for collective action.

Effective communication means:

- Listening before responding
- Tailoring your message to your audience
- Explaining complex topics simply
- Persuading without imposing your views
- Fostering dialogue rather than monologue

As sociologist and MIT professor emeritus Edgar Schein points out, the quality of communication depends as much on the ability to listen and ask questions as it does on the ability to convey a message. Effective communication does more than inform; it builds relationships that foster understanding and cooperation.



Why is this skill strategic in the age of AI?

Artificial intelligence significantly reduces the cost of content production. This acceleration is profoundly transforming our information environment. AI facilitates access to knowledge, but it also contributes to information overload. There is a risk that we will no longer know which information to retain, how to interpret it, or how to share it.

In particular, communication makes it possible to:

- Transform information into useful messages
- Make complex topics accessible
- Foster dialogue about change
- Build trust in an environment where anyone can create content

As the volume of content grows, value increasingly lies in the ability to create clarity, understanding, and buy-in, rather than in the quantity of information disseminated.



How can you improve your communication?

The most effective way to improve communication is to learn to make yourself better understood. This requires constant attention to how messages are received, interpreted, and internalized.

To strengthen your communication skills, you should:

- Practice active listening and ask more questions
- Adapt your language and examples to your audience
- Prioritize simple, concrete, and structured messages
- Rephrase to ensure understanding
- Allow room for dialogue and feedback



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- Effective Communication

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In practice

Imagine you receive a very comprehensive summary prepared using AI ahead of an executive committee meeting. The document is precise, well-reasoned, and thorough. Before sharing it, you identify three key messages, simplify certain phrasing, and tailor the examples to your audience. Your goal is not to convey all the information, but rather to help everyone grasp the essentials.



Soft Skill #7

Creativity

“With AI, human creativity becomes less important.”

False. In fact, the opposite is true.

Generating ideas, concepts, or solutions has never been easier. In a matter of seconds, AI can suggest numerous possibilities. However, generating ideas is only one step in the creative process.

The real challenge lies in determining which ideas address a real need, which ones are worth developing further, and how to transform them into value-driven innovations.

“Artificial intelligence is a tool that accelerates the flow of ideas. Human creativity and synthetic thinking involve giving those ideas direction, establishing new connections, and developing a coherent vision. True innovation does not arise solely from an abundance of ideas, but also from the ability to connect them and give them purpose. This process remains profoundly human.”

**AI multiplies the possibilities.
Creative thinking provides direction
and coherence.**



Laurence Ballereaud
Director of Bespoke Training Projects
Cegos



Understanding creativity

Creativity is the ability to view situations from new perspectives, imagine original responses, and generate solutions that are novel, relevant, and useful. According to Wallas's model, the creative process has four stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification.

Exercising creativity means:

- Exploring multiple avenues before making a choice
- Combining different disciplines, experiences, or perspectives
- Identifying connections between seemingly unrelated pieces of information
- Prioritizing information to develop a big-picture view
- Transforming a sequence of ideas into a solution, narrative, or strategy

Cognitive scientist Margaret Boden distinguishes between several forms of creativity.

While some involve combining or exploring existing ideas, others enable us to transform the frameworks of thought themselves. This distinction is particularly illuminating in the age of generative AI.

Why is this skill strategic in the age of AI?

Artificial intelligence makes exploring ideas and possibilities much easier. While this abundance presents an opportunity, it also poses a challenge:

How do we identify the ideas that will truly create value?

In an environment where content is easy to generate, competitive advantage no longer depends solely on the ability to generate ideas but also on the ability to select, enrich, and articulate them around a creative vision.

Creativity enables us to:

- Enrich AI-generated proposals with business expertise
- Bring together ideas from different disciplines
- Build a strategic vision based on diverse information
- Transform a set of ideas into a coherent project
- Stimulate innovation that addresses a real need

AI accelerates the exploration of possibilities. Human creativity gives them purpose. Synthetic thinking builds the coherence that transforms an idea into innovation.

How can you develop your creativity?

Creativity thrives on curiosity, experimentation, and exposure to different worlds. Synthetic thinking develops by learning to take a step back, distinguish what is essential, and structure complexity.

There are a few practices that can help strengthen these two skills:

- Regularly explore areas outside your area of expertise
- Compare several solutions before selecting one
- Use AI as a partner in exploration rather than as a provider of answers
- Alternate between phases of exploration and synthesis
- Practice rephrasing complex ideas in simple, structured ways.

 **Discover Cegos training courses to develop your creative thinking**

- Boost Your Creativity with AI
- Innovating with Design Thinking
- Creativity & Innovation
- Innovative Thinking & Problem-Solving Toolbox

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In practice

Imagine your team is developing a new product to meet a specific customer need. In just a few minutes, the AI generated about forty proposals. They all seem interesting, but none of them really stand out. Instead of trying to keep as many as possible, you return to the original question: What problem do we really want to solve? Using this criterion, you eliminate most of the ideas, combine the most promising ones, and develop a unique, coherent offering that meets your client's expectations.



Soft Skill #8

Human-AI Collaboration

"A high-performance AI can work on its own."

False.

Generative AI can now write content, analyze data, search for information, and offer recommendations. AI agents take it a step further by performing multiple actions autonomously and interacting with other systems.

However, their performance depends on more than just their technical capabilities. It also depends on how humans define objectives, organize work, supervise output, and make decisions.

Therefore, the real challenge is not simply knowing how to use AI but also learning to collaborate with it.

This collaboration requires intelligently dividing roles by entrusting AI with tasks it performs best while retaining responsibility for decisions, context, and value creation.

"With AI, we are gradually shifting from an approach based on assistance to one based on collaboration. Professionals will need to learn how to not only use artificial intelligence but also manage, supervise, and coordinate multiple AI systems toward a common goal. This ability will become a professional skill in its own right."

As AI becomes more autonomous, the quality of collaboration with it becomes a key factor in performance.



Christophe Perilhou
Bespoke Solutions Director
Cegos



Understanding Human-AI collaboration

Ethan Mollick, a professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, encourages us to view AI not as a mere tool, but as a true cognitive partner (co-intelligence) in his work on human-AI collaboration. Therefore, the goal is not just to assign a task to AI but to build a collaborative relationship in which each party contributes its strengths.

AI brings processing speed, analytical capabilities, and the ability to rapidly explore numerous possibilities. Humans, for their part, contribute an understanding of context, intention, discernment, creativity, and responsibility for decisions.

Human-AI collaboration requires the ability to:

- Understand the strengths and limitations of AI systems
- Decide which tasks to delegate and which to retain
- Communicate effectively with AI to obtain relevant results
- Supervise, challenge, and enhance the generated outputs
- Integrate AI's contributions into a broader decision-making process



Why is this skill becoming more important in the age of AI?

Generative AI is the first step. The emergence of AI agents that can perform multiple actions autonomously marks a new phase. Employees will no longer work solely with conversational assistants; they will work with true digital partners that can search for information, produce deliverables, coordinate activities, and interact with other applications.

This shift is already evident in the most advanced organizations. In its **Work Trend Index 2025**, Microsoft describes **Frontier Firms**, where employees and AI agents collaborate in hybrid teams.

In this context, the question is no longer simply “What can AI do?” but “Who—humans or AI—is best suited to perform this task?”

Some activities are best entrusted to artificial intelligence, while others require human expertise, judgment, or responsibility.

Performance depends on the ability to intelligently organize this division of labor.



How can we learn to collaborate with AI?

Like any other skill, collaboration with AI can be learned. Rather than delegating as much as possible, it's about distinguishing between tasks where AI provides real added value and those where human intervention remains essential.

Here are a few practices to help develop this skill:

- Identify activities with high human value
- Compare results obtained using multiple models or agents
- Learn to supervise rather than execute tasks systematically
- Share best practices for collaborating with AI within your team
- Regularly reassess the division of tasks between humans and AI as tools evolve.



Discover Cegos training courses to develop your understanding of human-AI collaboration

- AI for Productivity and Effectiveness: How to Integrate AI in My Daily Work
- AI Prompting – Level 2

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In practice

Imagine you need to develop your company's skills development plan.

One AI analyzes the results of annual performance reviews. Another identifies emerging skills based on market trends. A third proposes several training pathway scenarios. Then, business unit leaders, HR, and managers evaluate these proposals based on their knowledge of the ground situation, the company's strategic priorities, and operational constraints. With this combination of human and artificial intelligence expertise, you can develop a relevant and coherent plan.



Soft Skill #9

Ethical Judgment and Responsibility

"If a decision has been recommended by an AI, the responsibility lies with the algorithm."

False. This confusion is dangerous.

Artificial intelligence can analyze data, identify trends, and offer recommendations. It can automate certain decisions and trigger actions without human intervention, but it is never held accountable for the consequences of its actions.

As organizations integrate AI into their processes, the ability to use these technologies with discernment, transparency, and accountability is emerging as a new requirement. While AI can inform a decision, it cannot address its human implications or take legal or ethical responsibility for it.

The more autonomy artificial intelligence gains, the more essential human responsibility becomes.

"Artificial intelligence does not shift responsibility to the machine. On the contrary, it compels organizations and their teams to strengthen their judgment, transparency, and accountability. Responsible use of AI depends not only on good data and algorithms, but also on people capable of overseeing it and taking responsibility for its use and consequences."



Christelle Delavaud
Manager of Offer and Expertise
Personal Development
Cegos



Understanding ethical judgment and responsibility

Ethical judgment is the ability to evaluate the consequences of one's decisions and actions based on their impact on individuals, organizations, and society.

Ethics is not merely about following rules or regulations. Rather, it involves exercising judgment when multiple options are available, balancing sometimes conflicting interests, and accepting the consequences of one's choices.

Exercising ethical judgment means knowing how to:

- Question the impacts of a decision before implementing it
- Identify risks of bias, discrimination, or exclusion
- Protect sensitive data and the confidentiality of information
- Demonstrate transparency regarding the use of AI
- Take responsibility for the decisions made

The OECD's International Principles on AI and the European AI Act reiterate a fundamental principle: responsibility for decisions always rests with the organizations and individuals who use these systems.



Why is this skill strategic in the age of AI?

Artificial intelligence can speed up decision-making, process more information, and automate certain tasks. However, this efficiency can create the illusion that a decision is objectively “fair” simply because it is generated by an algorithm.

However, no AI is neutral. The data on which AI relies may contain biases, and some models are difficult to explain. Additionally, the recommendations generated do not always consider the human, social, or ethical dimensions of a situation.

In this context, ethical judgment is essential for ensuring the quality of decisions.

Ethical judgment allows us to:

- Question the relevance of a recommendation generated by AI
- Assess the consequences of a decision for various stakeholders
- Ensure the responsible use of data
- Prevent the risks of discrimination or exclusion
- Maintain human oversight of the most sensitive decisions

Ethical judgment does not mean mistrusting artificial intelligence; rather, it ensures that AI remains at the service of responsible and humane decisions.



How can you develop your ethical judgment?

The ability to ask the right questions, compare different perspectives, and reflect on the consequences of choices made are all key to developing ethical judgment.

Several practices can help strengthen this skill:

- Systematically weighing the human impacts of a decision
- Clearly articulating the criteria underlying a decision
- Bringing together complementary perspectives when facing a complex situation
- Fostering a culture of transparency regarding the use of AI
- Educating oneself on the ethical, regulatory, and societal issues related to artificial intelligence

The more significant the consequences of a decision are for people, the more essential human judgment becomes.



In practice

Imagine your company is hiring! An AI system recommends creating a shortlist of candidates based on profiles that have historically received the highest performance ratings. After analyzing the criteria used and verifying that they do not replicate past biases, you decide to maintain human oversight at every stage of the process before approving this approach.



Soft Skill #10

Self-Leadership

"The more advanced AI becomes, the less we will need to think."

False. That is precisely where the risk lies.

AI makes work easier by searching for information, drafting content, and offering recommendations.

However, the more effective AI becomes, the more a fundamental question arises: What do we choose to continue doing

on our own? By continually delegating certain intellectual activities, we may gradually use our attention, memory, ability to concentrate, and capacity for personal reflection less and less. This phenomenon is all the more insidious because it is often accompanied by an immediate gain in time and convenience.

The real challenge lies in preserving our ability to think, decide, and learn in a world where technology is ubiquitous.

"Artificial intelligence saves us time. The real question is what we choose to do with it. If we use this time to develop our critical thinking, creativity, or decision-making skills, AI can be a powerful driver of progress. However, if we gradually stop exercising these abilities, we risk losing our autonomy and sovereignty."

Self-leadership means remaining fully in control of our choices, even when technology can make decisions faster than we can."



Laurence Ballereaud
Director of Bespoke Training Projects
Cegos



Understanding self-leadership

Self-leadership is the ability to guide oneself with clarity, intention, and autonomy. It involves managing one's attention, energy, priorities, and decisions to act in alignment with one's goals and values, even amidst distractions.

Exercising self-leadership means:

- Knowing how to step back before acting
- Managing one's attention in a constantly digital environment
- Setting aside time for reflection and concentration
- Exercising independent judgment
- Remaining in control of one's decisions despite technological assistance

Research in cognitive psychology shows that we tend to delegate part of our mental effort to the tools around us. This is known as *cognitive offloading*. **Self-leadership involves finding the right balance between leveraging technology and maintaining one's cognitive abilities.**



Why is this skill important in the age of AI?

When answers become instantaneous and recommendations are constantly available, there is a strong temptation to accept the AI's first suggestion, stop thinking things through, or delegate reasoning processes that we would have previously carried out ourselves.

Research on *automation bias* shows, in fact, that we tend to place excessive trust in recommendations generated by an automated system, even when they are incomplete or incorrect.

Developing self-leadership allows you to:

- Maintain an active stance toward AI recommendations
- Protect your ability to concentrate in a digital environment
- Make conscious decisions rather than acting automatically
- Preserve time for personal reflection
- Continue developing your skills rather than delegating them systematically

The goal is to consciously choose when to use AI to enhance our thinking and prevent it from replacing it.



How can you develop self-leadership?

Self-leadership is built through daily habits. It relies on personal discipline that allows you to maintain your intellectual autonomy in a highly assisted environment.

Here are a few practices to help strengthen self-leadership:

- Formulate your own thoughts before consulting AI
- Set aside time to work without digital assistance when appropriate
- Question the recommendations provided rather than applying them automatically
- Develop routines that promote attention and concentration
- Regularly take a step back to reflect on how you use AI and the skills you continue to exercise.



Discover Cegos training courses to develop your self-leadership

- Self-management in a Hybrid World
- Assertiveness & Self-confidence
- Time & Energy Management

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In practice

Imagine, on Monday morning, you ask your AI assistant to organize your week. In just a few seconds, it suggests an optimized schedule. You pause to ask yourself: Is this really the kind of week I want? The AI prioritizes urgent tasks, but you want to devote time to a strategic project. Before approving the recommendations, you define your priorities and goals and consider what will have the greatest impact. This way, you can use AI without giving up your ability to exercise judgment.



Soft skills can be learned.

How can they be developed in the long term?

The ten skills presented in this white paper are not innate talents or traits reserved for certain types of people. Like any professional skill, they can be acquired, strengthened, and developed throughout one's life.

This idea is now widely supported by research in cognitive science, psychology, and educational science. This idea is also central to Cegos's experience supporting organizational transformation and skills development for over a century.

Although technologies, professions, and organizations are constantly evolving, one fact remains: behaviors do not change simply because we understand an idea; they change because we practice applying it in real-world situations.

In an era of profound transformation in the ways we work, collaborate, and think due to artificial intelligence, this reality takes on a new dimension: Technical skills will continue to evolve at an ever-faster pace. Human and cross-functional skills, on the other hand, are developed over time through experience, practice, feedback, and reflection.



Soft skills are developed through doing...

By nature, soft skills are interpersonal.

They are developed through interactions with colleagues, managers, clients, trainers, and others. Feedback, observation, sharing experiences, and collective intelligence are essential to this development.

Managerial support is also crucial. Managers create conditions in which everyone can experiment, learn from successes and mistakes, and improve their practices over time. Organizations that encourage dialogue, experimentation, and a culture of feedback provide a particularly favorable environment for developing soft skills.

Soft skills are also developed with other people

Behavioral skills are deeply relational. They develop through interaction, peer feedback, guidance, and coaching.

Often, it is through interaction that individuals become aware of their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and adjust their behavior.

Developing soft skills is therefore as much an individual effort as it is a collective one.

Soft skills are developed when the time is right

Not all skills develop in the same way or at the same time. **Learning is most effective when it addresses a specific need and can be applied immediately in the workplace.**

Developing leadership skills is particularly meaningful when leading a team. Critical thinking becomes important when working with artificial intelligence tools. Developing adaptability naturally goes hand in hand with a period of transformation.

This “learning when needed” approach promotes knowledge transfer and application. It is one of the most effective ways to develop skills sustainably in an increasingly dynamic environment.

AI can accelerate learning without replacing human experience

AI can transform jobs. The way we learn is also being transformed.

When used as a learning companion, AI extends the training experience beyond the classroom. AI facilitates practice, offers role-playing scenarios and personalized exercises, provides immediate feedback, and supports learners as they apply what they've learned to their daily lives.

The Cegos AI Companion exemplifies this opportunity

Integrated into training programs, this learning companion is based exclusively on content developed and validated by Cegos experts and enriches the learners' experience. Accessible during and after training, it allows learners to review methods, delve deeper into concepts, prepare for professional situations, practice with real-world scenarios, and receive personalized support when questions arise in the workplace.

However, artificial intelligence is no substitute for experience, human interaction, or the guidance of a trainer or manager.

One of the key takeaways from this white paper is undoubtedly that, as artificial intelligence advances, human skills become more strategic than ever.

The development of these skills is not based on a dichotomy between humans and technology, but rather on their complementarity.





The future of training lies in leveraging AI's opportunities to reinforce the richness of learning and human nature: experience, practice, relationships with others, and lifelong learning.



Cegos: your partner in transformation in the age of AI

Artificial intelligence is ushering in a new era in organizational transformation.

It goes far beyond the adoption of technologies; it is prompting companies to rethink their business models, lines of business, management styles, governance, and the broader skills that will determine their future performance.

In this context, the real challenge is not just to deploy AI, but to enable everyone to work effectively and responsibly in an environment where human and artificial intelligence complement each other.

This guiding principle informs Cegos's actions.

We support organizations in developing the necessary skills for this transformation.

This includes familiarizing employees with AI, evolving job roles, developing managers, and transforming HR and Learning & Development functions, as well as governance and change management.

We combine our proven capabilities in educational innovation with our teams' expertise in developing these skills and our commitment to using AI effectively, ethically, and in a human-centered manner.

This unique approach enables us to help organizations transform their skills for the age of artificial intelligence.





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