



# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EDGE

WHY SOME FLOURISH WHILE  
OTHERS STRUGGLE IN THE AI  
AGE

## ABSTRACT

Exploring how professionals with a growth mindset are thriving in the AI age by viewing technological disruption as an opportunity to discover more meaningful and uniquely human aspects of their work, rather than seeing AI as a threat to their existing roles.

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## **The Psychological Edge**

### **Why Some Flourish While Others Struggle in the AI Age**

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Imagine this scenario: The email arrives on a Tuesday morning, the kind that makes your stomach drop before you've even finished your coffee.

"Hi Sarah, we've decided to implement an AI tool for document review. We'll need to discuss how this affects your role."

Sarah, a mid-level attorney, had two choices in that moment. She could see this as the beginning of the end—proof that her years of legal training were becoming obsolete. Or she could ask a different question entirely.

Let's say she chose the second path. Six months later, she would likely be thriving in ways she never expected.

#### **The Great Mindset Divide**

Something fascinating is happening across every industry right now. As AI capabilities expand at unprecedented speed, professionals are splitting into two distinct camps—and it has nothing to do with their technical skills, seniority, or even how directly AI affects their work.

The divide is psychological.

**Fixed Mindset Response:** "I am what I do. If AI can do what I do, then I become obsolete."

**Growth Mindset Response:** "I can learn and adapt. If AI changes what's possible, I can discover new ways to contribute."

This isn't just positive thinking. The professionals I've observed who are genuinely thriving alongside AI—not just surviving, but finding new energy and purpose in their work—share a fundamentally different relationship with their own capabilities.

#### **Why This Matters More Than Technical Skills**

Here's what caught me off guard in my research: the people adapting most successfully to AI aren't necessarily the most tech-savvy. They're the ones who've cultivated what psychologist Carol Dweck calls a "growth mindset"—the belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and learning.

Consider what happened with Sarah. When her firm introduced AI for document review, her fixed-mindset colleagues focused on what they were losing: "This is what I went to law school for. If AI can do this, what's my value?"

Sarah asked different questions: "What can I learn about legal strategy while AI handles routine review? How can I use the time AI saves me to develop client relationships? What problems do my clients face that require human judgment and creativity?"

Six months later, while her colleagues were still lamenting the "good old days," Sarah had repositioned herself as the go-to lawyer for complex client strategy—work that required exactly the kind of nuanced thinking and relationship-building that AI cannot replicate.

### **The Three Questions That Change Everything**

The most successful professionals I've observed use AI transitions as opportunities to ask three fundamental questions:

**1. "What energizes me that goes beyond my current tasks?"** Instead of defending existing responsibilities, they identify what truly engages them. Often, it's work they've wanted to do but never had time for.

**2. "What problems do I notice that others miss?"** Growth-minded professionals leverage their human perspective to identify challenges that require creative problem-solving—areas where AI serves as a tool rather than a replacement.

**3. "How can I use AI to amplify what I'm uniquely good at?"** Rather than competing with AI, they explore collaboration—using AI to handle routine work while they focus on strategy, relationships, and innovation.

### **The Hidden Opportunity in Disruption**

Here's the counterintuitive truth: AI disruption often reveals that people were constrained by their roles rather than fulfilled by them.

Consider how Sarah's story might unfold. As AI handled the routine document review that had consumed 60% of her time, her initial panic gave way to discovery. For the first time in years, she had space to focus on what had always energized her: understanding client needs, developing creative legal strategies, and building the trusted advisor relationships that originally drew her to law.

She realized she'd been doing the work she was hired to do, but not the work she was meant to do.

The growth mindset didn't just help Sarah adapt to AI—it helped her discover more authentic sources of professional satisfaction. The technology that initially threatened

her routine tasks ultimately freed her to focus on the distinctly human elements of legal practice that she found most meaningful.

### **Beyond Individual Adaptation**

The growth mindset shift isn't just about individual career survival. It's about recognizing that we're living through a civilizational transition comparable to the Industrial Revolution.

Those of us navigating careers during this transformation aren't just adapting to change—we're pioneering new models of human-AI collaboration that will shape how work evolves for generations.

This perspective transforms anxiety into opportunity. Instead of asking "Will AI take my job?" growth-minded professionals ask "How can I help design what human work looks like in an AI world?"

### **The Practice Starts Now**

Developing a growth mindset toward AI isn't about blind optimism. It's about building the psychological resilience needed to navigate unprecedented change.

**Start with honest assessment:** What aspects of your current role energize you versus drain you? AI often eliminates the draining parts while creating space for the energizing ones.

**Experiment with collaboration:** Instead of viewing AI as competition, explore how it might serve as a thinking partner for the work that requires your unique human perspective.

**Focus on learning:** The professionals thriving with AI aren't the ones who've mastered specific tools, but those who've cultivated comfort with continuous learning and adaptation.

### **The Choice We All Face**

Every technological revolution creates winners and losers. But the determining factor isn't usually who has the best technical skills or the most resources.

It's who approaches change with curiosity rather than fear. Who sees disruption as information rather than threat. Who believes in their capacity to grow rather than just defend.

The AI revolution isn't happening to us—it's happening with us. Our mindset determines whether we're active participants in designing the future or passive victims of technological change.

Sarah's story isn't unique. Across every industry, professionals with growth mindsets are discovering that AI doesn't diminish human potential—it reveals possibilities they never knew existed.

The question isn't whether AI will change your work. The question is whether you'll approach that change as a threat to defend against or an opportunity to grow into.

Your mindset will determine your answer. And your answer will determine your future.