Forrester: AI-Led Job Disruption Will Escalate, While Fears Of A Job Apocalypse Are Overstated

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Only 6% Of Jobs In The US Will Be Automated By 2030

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 13, 2026-- Forrester (Nasdaq: FORR) forecasts that automation and AI will have a real but modest impact on jobs through 2030. While AI could account for 6% of total US job losses, equating to 10.4 million roles, widespread AI-driven job replacement remains unlikely, as labor productivity would need to accelerate significantly for AI to replace human talent at scale. Rather than eliminating roles, Forrester forecasts that AI will augment 20% of jobs over the next five years, making it essential for businesses to invest in employee training and upskilling.

According to the new report, The Forrester AI Job Impact Forecast, US, 2025–2030, over-automating roles due to the hype surrounding AI can lead to costly pullbacks, damaged reputations, and weakened employee experiences. Forrester's 2026 future-of-work predictions further reveal that over half of layoffs attributed to AI will be quietly reversed as companies realize the operational challenges of replacing human talent prematurely.

Additional findings from the new forecast report include:

- **Financially driven layoffs are being confused with AI-driven layoffs.** Many companies announcing AI-related layoffs do not have mature, vetted AI applications ready to fill those roles, highlighting a trend of "AI washing" — attributing financially motivated cuts to future AI implementation.
- **AI impacts specific job categories disproportionately.** AI's influence varies significantly across roles, with junior positions, software developers, and customer service representatives experiencing the most pressure.
- **Businesses need to invest in, not replace, human employees. To fully realize the value of their AI investments, companies must also invest in employee AI skill development.** By understanding the technology change quotient and artificial intelligence quotient, organizations can measure and build employee readiness, equip them with the necessary skills, and train them on the ethical use of AI to drive business growth.

"We may not be heading for an imminent AI job apocalypse, but how organizations handle AI today will define more than just their future success," said J. P. Gownder, vice president and principal analyst at Forrester. "To navigate the complexity around the human and AI era, leaders must prioritize governance and invest in their people — treating AI not as a replacement for human talent but as a tool to enhance it."

Resources:

- Learn more about **The Forrester AI Job Impact Forecast, US, 2025–2030**, in this blog or download the report here (client access required).
- Hear more about this research in this video.
- Read more about Forrester's 2026 Future of Work predictions in this blog.

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Press contact:
Hannah Segvich
hsegvich@forrester.com

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