Access Attitude IHD InclUSion 202! EVIDENC FOR SUCCE Disability Confere

AI In the Workplace, Friend and Foe?

Disability Rights Arizona
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Speakers

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Learning Objectives

(1) Identify workplace reasonable accommodation rights.

(2) Assess both positive and negative usage of Artificial Intelligence in the workplace.

(3) Evaluate options for usage of AI driven technology as a workplace reasonable accommodation.

(4) Identify AI tools that support accessibility, mental health, adaptive learning, and job readiness for vocational rehabilitation clients.

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What is AI?

Not this:

"A machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments." (Executive Order, October 30, 2023)

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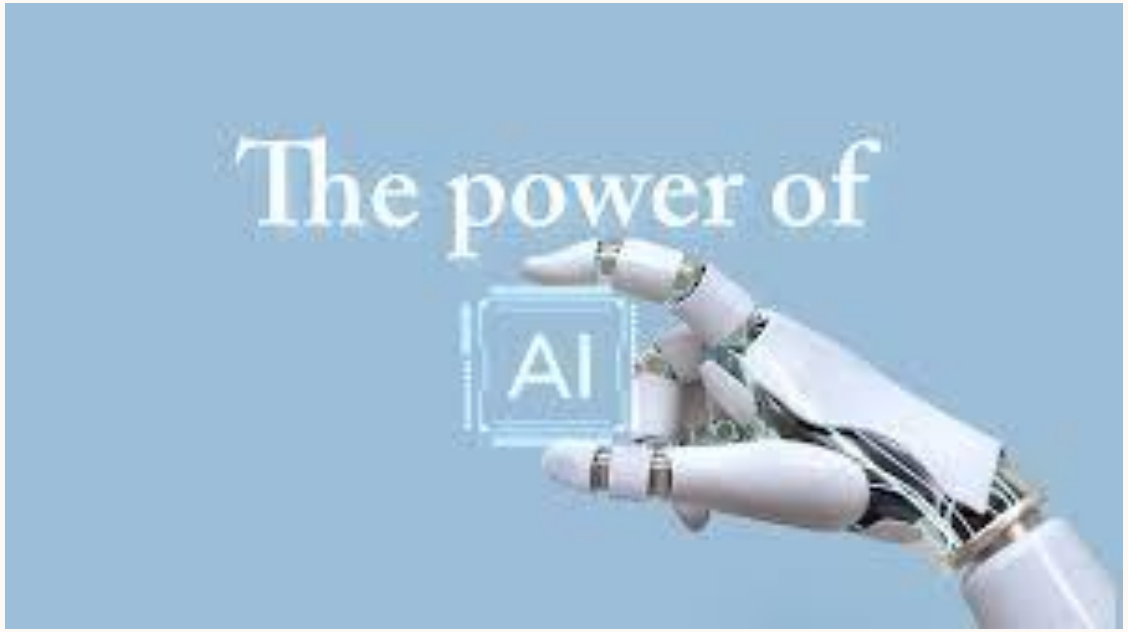
Power of AI

"Artificial intelligence (AI) holds extraordinary potential for both promise and peril."



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Uptick in Usage

- Assess job applicants and employees, including in the recruiting process to test candidates.

- Assess employee productivity, monitor performance, and make promotional decisions.

- Assistive technology to aid with workplace and employee efficiency, organization, tasks and communication.

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Negative Aspects of AI at Work

- AI-based bias

- Disability and racial discrimination in hiring and retention

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Positive Aspects of AI at Work

- Reasonable accommodation
- AI can enhance employment accessibility and productivity
- Beneficial uses may include assistance in completing job tasks, creation of personalized content, and flexible integration into mainstream technology- which could lead to cost savings

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Reasonable Accommodation Rights

- Change in the work environment or job application process that provides an equal employment opportunity to an individual with a disability
- Enables performance of key job tasks
- For example, may include adjustments to the job application process, provision of assistive technology or devices, altering how job functions are performed, providing equal access to information communicated in the workplace

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Audience Participation

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AI as RA (examples from JAN)

- **Ai-Live Captioning -** Converts Spoken Word to Text
- **Ai-Squared -** ZoomText, Window-Eyes, and site cues, for corporations who want to offer accessibility solutions to all their customers.
- **Seeing AI -** Seeing AI is a free app that narrates the world around you. Designed for the blind and low vision community
- **Otter AI -**Note Taking.

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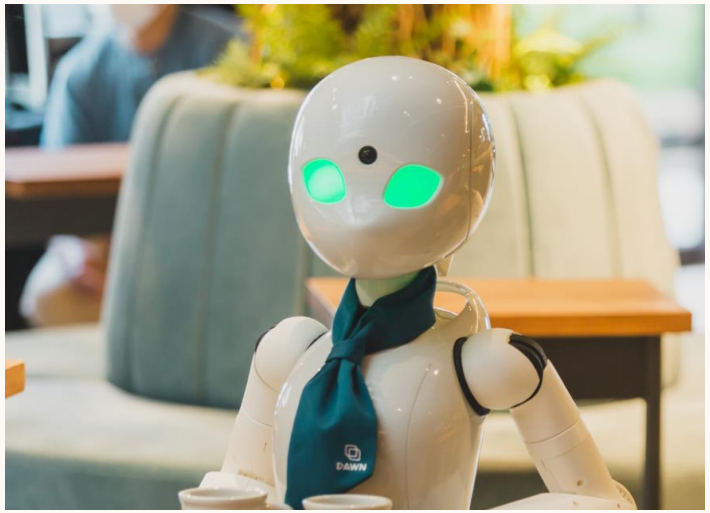
Beyond Software – ROBOTS

At Avatar Robot Cafe DAWN ver.β a in Tokyo, OryLab Inc operates a café for people with disabilities that require remote work.

Avatar robots OriHime and OriHime-D can be operated from homes or hospitals, to provide services.

Anyone can work from anywhere!



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Beyond Software – ROBOTS

This may look like carry on bag but this AI suitcase is much more. It's a guide device to assist people who have vision disabilities.

When you grip the handle, it will guide you to any destination and use generative AI to see the surroundings and communicate, such as stopping if someone steps in front of the user and saying "I stopped because there is a person ahead of us."

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Concerns

Anything that can "see" or "hear" raises privacy concerns, including workers privacy and safe guarding confidential or proprietary information.

Generative AI can be untrustworthy and requires human supervision, so if a worker lets AI do the work for them and it's wrong then the blame falls on the human.

The Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT) has developed an AI & Inclusive Hiring Framework that is based on the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) AI Risk Management Framework.

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Concerns

Fig. 1. Examples of potential harms related to AI systems. Trustworthy AI systems and their responsible use can mitigate negative risks and contribute to benefits for people, organizations, and ecosystems.

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Opening Question – Let's Get Real

- **By a show of hands, how many of you have ever tried out an accessibility tool 'just to see what it does'… and then accidentally kept using it because it made your life easier too?**

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AI in Vocational Rehabilitation – An Overview

- AI is transforming how services are delivered to people with disabilities
- Enhances personalization, accessibility, and efficiency of VR programs
- Supports decision-making for counselors and independence for clients
- Applications span assessment, training, placement, and ongoing support

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AI Tools Supporting Key VR Areas

- **Accessibility**
  - **Be My Eyes: AI visual assistance for blind users**
  - **Microsoft Seeing AI: Real-time narration of surroundings**
- **Mental Health**
  - **Woebot Health: AI chatbot for CBT-based support**
  - ***Wysa*: Conversational AI for emotional wellness**

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AI Tools Supporting Key VR Areas (Continued)

- Adaptive Learning
  - Cognii: AI tutor providing feedback in natural language
  - Read&Write by Texthelp: Literacy support via text-to-speech, dictionaries, and highlighting tools
- Job Readiness
  - Rezi / Jobscan: Resume builders powered by AI optimization
  - Pymetrics: Neuroscience-based career fit assessments using gamified AI tools

Looking Ahead

- Ethical use of AI must ensure transparency and fairness
- VR professionals must stay updated on AI trends and tools
- Cross-sector collaboration needed to scale impact

Closing Quote:

“AI doesn’t replace counselors, it equips them to empower clients.”

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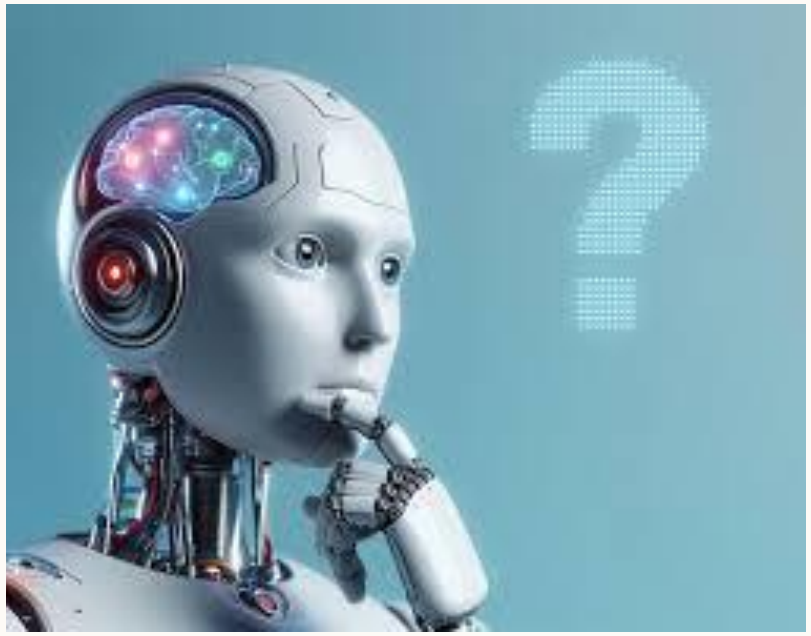
Questions



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References

- Exec. Order No. 14,110, 88 Fed. Reg. 75191, 75193 (Nov. 1, 2023) (Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence), *available at* https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/11/01/2023-24283/safe-secure-and-trustworthy-development-and-use-of-artificial-intelligence

- Job Accommodation Network

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References Continued

- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) AI Risk Management Framework.

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