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## Man vs. Machine

### Are machines replacing employees?

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Machine learning and automation are reshaping our lives and the future of work.

#### **Are machines going to replace employees?**

The question is not whether it will occur-the challenge is to understand the change and how it will proceed.

Cast for years as Hollywood bad guys (think Fembots, Terminator, Megatron), many people did not anticipate the real impact of machines on human life. Instead of aggressors, machines deliver (and even write) news, build products, keep traffic running smoothly, and check you in for your medical appointment.

At the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland in January of this year, **it was estimated up to 47 percent of jobs in the United States could be affected by automation and five million jobs will be lost globally by 2020 as a result.**

Then, in February of this year, the White House Council of Economic Advisers included in their annual report a forecast that workers earning under \$20 per hour face a substantial risk of job loss due to software and automation developments, compared to those earning more than \$40 per hour.

Automation is closing the door on one way of life-and opening the door to another.

## What will that future look like?

Recently, the Obama administration announced threshold changes to rules that regulate the overtime paid to American workers. With the rule revisions going into effect on December 1, 2016, employers are pressed to comply as well as maintain a bottom line. ([Click here for specifics on the proposed changes](#))

For employers, the upshot of the revised rules is scrutiny of the work, and work habits, of exempt and non-exempt employees as well as potential reassignment of work to reduce overtime hours. With the rules prompting a need for efficiency, some of that reassigned work could be absorbed by software, or machines.

As machines and software change the way we work, employers need to envision how automation could affect their workforce and how machines are globally affecting their industry. Certainly some jobs will be lost, others changed, and still others added. Meeting the challenge with new processes, new technology, and a new plan for profit and stability is the work ahead.

When you have questions about regulatory or other changes affecting your company or industry, and how to manage reskilling, onboarding, or offboarding, contact McCloskey Partners. We are available to help!

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