

Forecasting: In an AI Era

Humans + AI = An Expanded Workforce



Your Workforce Just Changed

Whether you planned for it... or not.



AI as Labor

AI is no longer just a tool.

It's labor.

“Up to 30% of work hours could be automated by 2030.”

— McKinsey & Company



Work is Splitting

Work is no longer linear.

It's distributed.

“80% of customer interactions are expected to be handled without a human agent.”

— Gartner (projected trend)



Demand is Dynamic

Demand is no longer stable.

It's reshaped. In REAL TIME

“AI-driven automation changes contact volume patterns and increases variability.”

— Deloitte Digital Contact Center studies

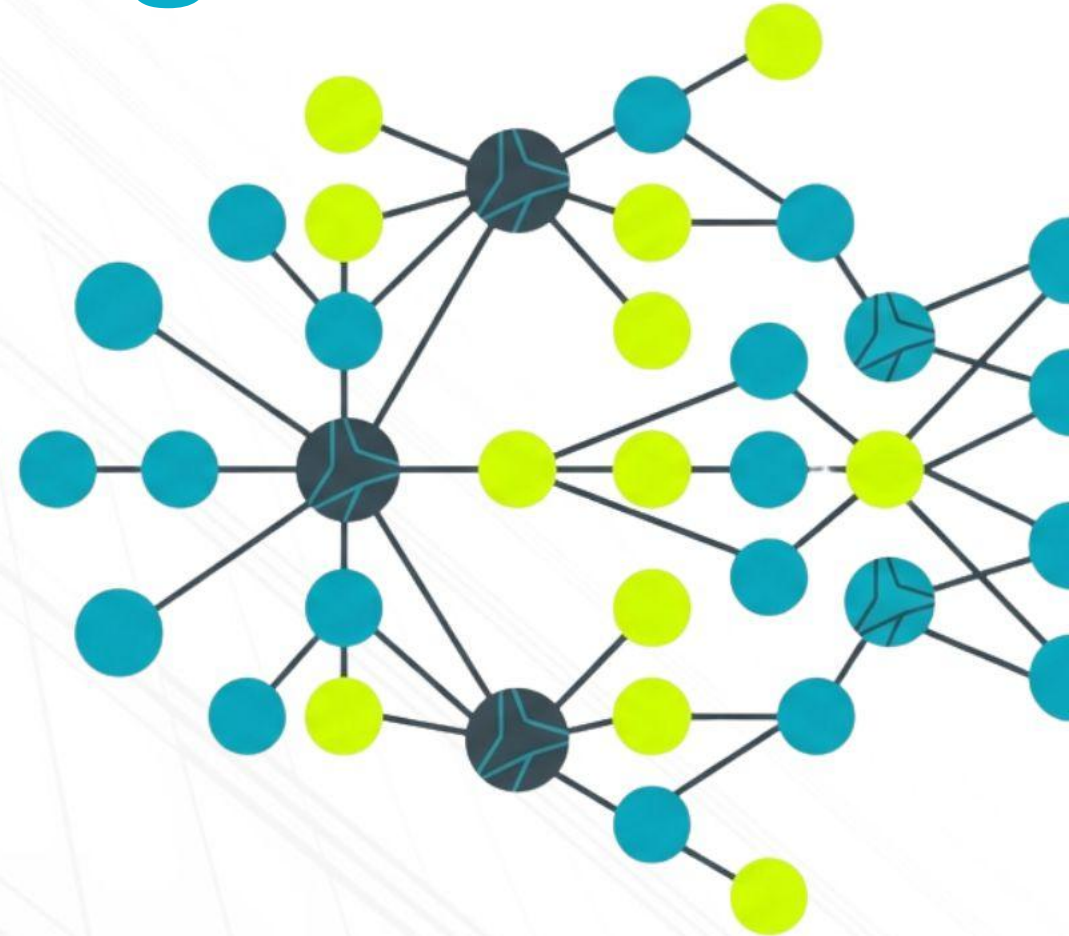


Complexity Increasing

The workforce is more complex than ever.

“Organizations are shifting to hybrid human + digital workforce models at scale.”

— Accenture



A photograph of a call center with several workers wearing headsets and working at computers. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

SO WHAT'S WRONG

These are the **3 MISTAKES** organizations are making when implementing AI in the workforce

And this is where WFM leaders have an opportunity to **LEAD!**

Mistake #1

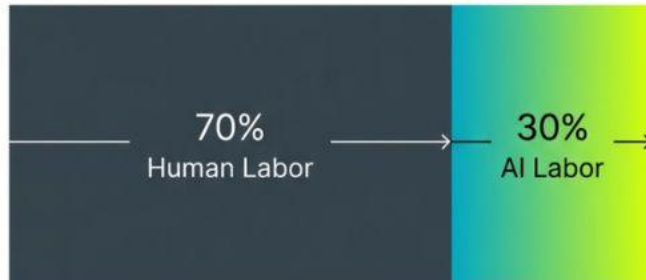
Automating the Work Without **Redesigning** the Workforce

Automation Impact Comparison: Human vs. AI Labor

Before automation



After automation



Human Labor: Dark Gray (#36454f)

AI Labor: Teal (#09adca) & Neon Green (#d1ff04)

Before automation:

- 100% Human Labor

After automation:

- 30% AI Labor
- 70% Human Labor

But the workforce **AFTER** automation?

Stil The Same...

Mistake #2

Miscalculating the Capacity Impact

The Myth:

If AI reduces interactions by **30%**, we need **30% fewer agents**.

The Reality:

Capacity is determined by total workload hours, **not** contact volume.



Mistake #2: In Real Life

Miscalculating the Capacity Impact

Before Transformation

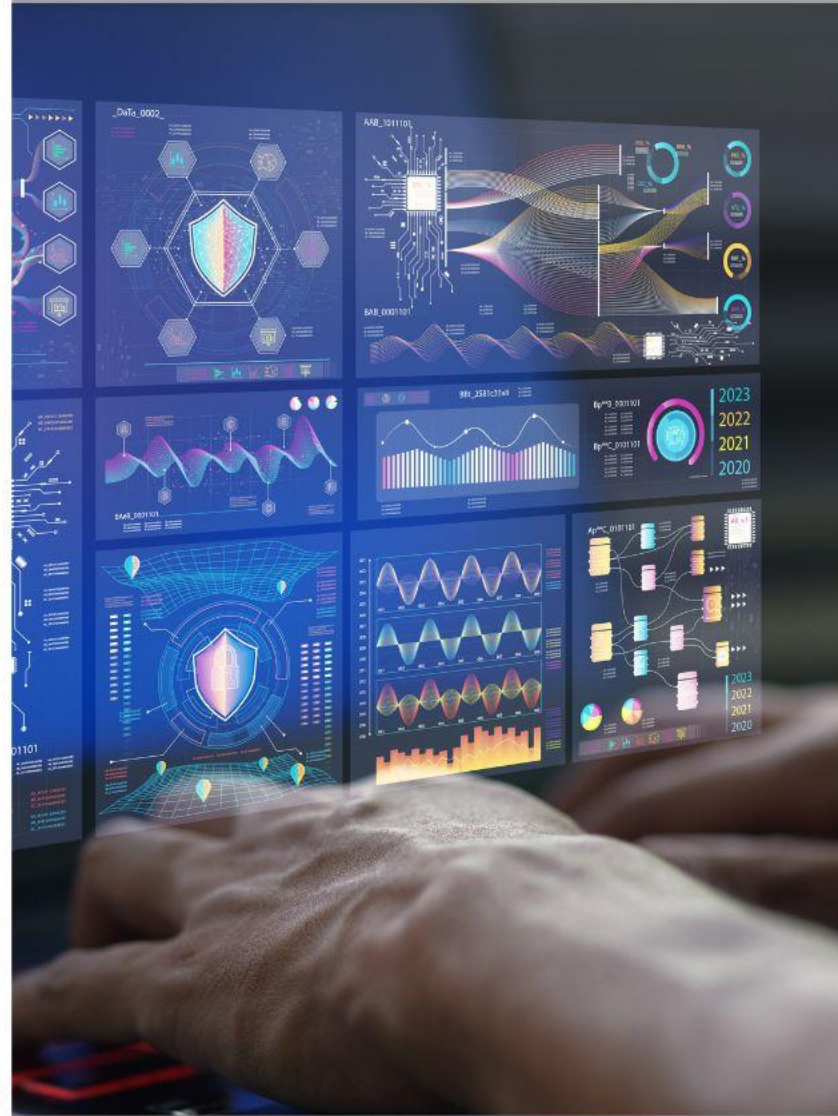
- 100,000 interactions
- AHT = 6 minutes

Total Workload
= 10,000 hours/250 Agents

After Transformation

- 70,000 interactions
- AHT = 8 minutes

Total Workload
= 9,333 hours/233 Agents





Mistake #3:

Loss of Governance & Quality Visibility

The Myth:

Once automation is deployed, the system will **consistently deliver the correct experience.**

The Reality:

Most organizations today review only **1–3% of human interactions** for quality.

As more interactions shift to AI:

- A growing portion of customer/patient conversations are **machine-handled**
- Large segments of the experience become **unmonitored**

What Leaders Should Do Instead:



Reskill Your Workforce

Automation changes the **type of work**, not just the volume. Leaders must redesign hiring profiles, training, and career paths to match the **higher-complexity interactions** that remain.



Use REAL capacity impact modeling

Do not assume staffing reductions based on contact volume. Recalculate workforce demand based on **total workload hours, AHT shifts, and occupancy impact** before making staffing decisions.

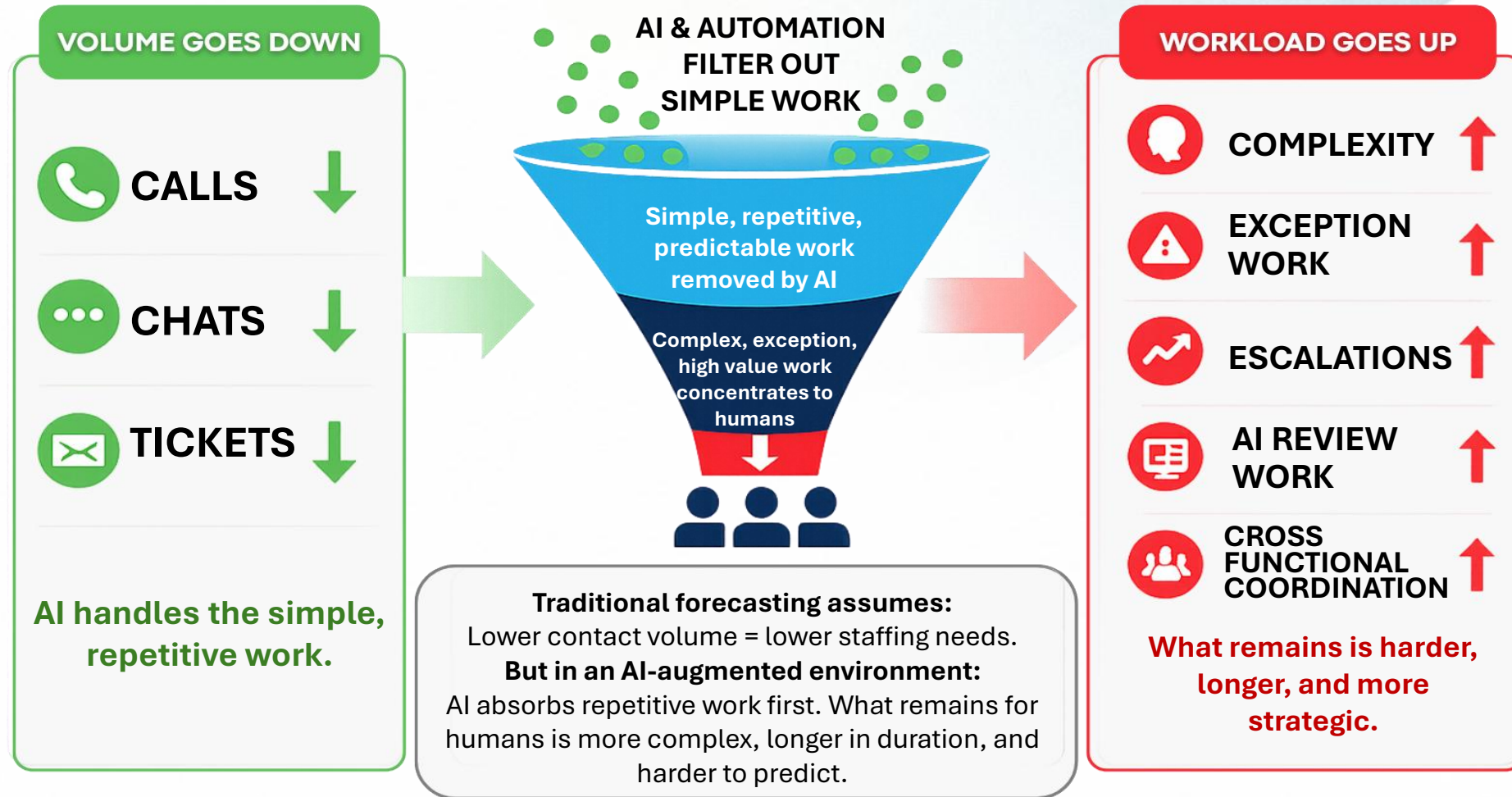


Expand Governance & Quality Programming.

As more interactions are handled by AI, leaders must implement **quality monitoring and governance for automated interactions**. Transformation should increase visibility into the customer or patient experience — not reduce it.

THE INTERACTION LIE

More Automation Does NOT Always Mean Less Work









AI doesn't eliminate work. It redistributes work.

THE CAPACITY ILLUSION SAMPLE


Why 20% Fewer Contacts Can Still Require The Same (or More) Team

AI reduces volume, but increases the complexity and effort of the work that remains.

METRIC	BEFORE AI (Traditional Environment)	AFTER AI (AI-Augmented Environment)	IMPACT On-Staffing
 Monthly Contacts	100,000	80,000 (-20%)	→
 Avg Handle Time	6 min	11 min (+83%)	↑
 Human Assisted Complexity	Low (Simple/Repetitive)	High (Complex / Judgment Heavy)	↑
 QA/ Governance/ Compliance Tasks	Minimal	Significant (AI Review, Audit, Calibration)	↑
 Cross-Functional Coordination	Low	High (More Handoffs & Collaboration)	↑
 Staffing Impact	Stable (Right-Sized Team)	Stable or Higher (Complexity Offsets Volume Drop)	↑

 **Key Takeaway**

FORECASTING INTERACTIONS IS NO LONGER ENOUGH.
In the AI era, leaders must forecast workload, effort, orchestration, and complexity not just contacts.

 Measure the right thing.
Plan the right capacity.



VOLUME DECREASED.

BUT WORKLOAD COMPLEXITY EXPLODED.

Traditional forecasting looks at contacts.

Modern WFM must forecast workload.




THE NEW FORECASTING MODEL

Forecasting in the AI Era Requires a New Equation

The unit of measurement is changing. **Volume is not workload.**

THE OLD WAY

Interaction Forecasting



Volume × AHT

Predicting contacts based on historical volume and handle time.

Good for the past.



THE NEW WAY

Workload Forecasting

Interactions (Volume) + Workflow Complexity (Process, Steps, Systems) =

AI HANDLES ALL OR PART OF THE WORK

AI Performance (Model Accuracy, Reliability) + **AHT (AI Handle Time)** + **Containment Rate (% Resolved by AI)** + **Resolution Rate (% Successfully Resolved)** + **Transfer to Human Rate (% Escalated to Human)**

HUMANS HANDLE THE WORK

Human Capacity (FTE, Skills, Availability) + **AHT (Human Handle Time)** + **Complexity Level (Case, Customer, Intent)** + **Shrinkage (Time Away, Meetings, Training)** + **Workload Variability (Peaks, Mix, Uncertainty)**

First, determine the total workload.
Then, determine how the work will be handled and model all key drivers.

THE MINDSET SHIFT

In the AI era, forecasting is no longer predicting contacts.

IT'S PREDICTING WORK.

1. Determine the **WORK**. 2. Determine **WHO** will handle it. 3. Determine all key drivers for **EACH**.

In Summary

The Future of Forecasting Is Workload Modeling

Forecasting in the AI Era requires leaders to rethink:


1 **AI Is Labor**
AI is no longer just a tool in the workflow.
It is now part of the workforce.



Forecasting must account for:

- AI containment
- Transfer rates to humans
- AI handle time (AHT)
- AI resolution effectiveness
- AI escalation patterns

2 **Volume ≠ Capacity**
Lower interactions does NOT automatically mean lower staffing.
Capacity is driven by total workload.



Modern forecasting must model:

- Workload complexity
- Orchestration & coordination effort
- Human escalation & exception work
- Governance, QA & review effort
- Skill mix & knowledge requirements

3 **WFM Must Lead**
WFM teams are uniquely positioned to lead organizations through AI transformation.



The future WFM leader is:

- A workload strategist
- A workforce architect
- A change champion
- A business advisor
- A driver of measurable impact

“In the AI Era, we are no longer forecasting contacts.

We are forecasting work.”



Juanita Coley

Founder & CEO
Thee Contact Center Whisperer



Juanita is a dedicated and results-driven professional recognized for her strong work ethic, reliability, and collaborative approach. She brings a high level of integrity and attention to detail to everything she does, consistently contributing to team success and organizational goals. Known for her excellent interpersonal skills, Juanita builds positive relationships and fosters a supportive environment while maintaining a focus on delivering quality outcomes.

THANK YOU

