

A Blanchard Point of View

# An HR/L&D Primer on Generative AI




blanchard.



# How will generative AI affect HR and L&D?

It's the question of the moment if you're a professional working in these fields.

And it's clear that the transformation will be unprecedented.



Generative AI has permeated the workplace. According to the *2024 Work Trend Index Annual Report from Microsoft and LinkedIn* some 75% of global knowledge workers are already using it—double the amount from six months ago—but 60% of companies still have no formal plan to implement it. \*

This tug-of-war between employees and their companies is just one of the challenges to be tackled when evaluating generative AI's influence on HR and L&D.

In this eBook, six Blanchard thought leaders weigh in on some of the additional challenges.

*Generative AI: Separating Truth from Hyperbole* by [April Hennessey](#)

*Dear Next-Gen Leaders: Use AI to Empower and Inspire* by [Lara Dollens](#)

*Generative AI and the Future Workforce* by [Ashley Vevoda](#)

*4 Ways to Enrich Leadership Development in an AI-Enabled World* by [Britney Cole](#)

*Creating an AI-Enabled Chatbot for Leadership Development* by [Dr. Jay Campbell](#)

*Next Level Strategies for Implementing an HR/L&D AI Solution* by [Romero Habib](#)

It is our hope that these perspectives will inspire conversations in your workplace as your company works to leverage generative AI.

Let's explore this new world together!

\*AI at Work Is Here. Now Comes the Hard Part, 2024 Work Trend Index Annual Report from Microsoft and LinkedIn

# Generative AI: Separating Truth from Hyperbole

BY APRIL HENNESSEY, Director of Innovation

It's time for some myth busting about artificial intelligence. If we want to encourage people to proceed toward AI with some caution, but without the fear that would make them resist it altogether, we must separate fact from fiction. People are not always informed about what technology can and can't do. We understand there is a lot of misinformation going around about AI—but AI is not going to come to life and start marching down the streets tomorrow.

Companies like OpenAI and Google understand that people are going to be afraid of using their models if they believe they can't keep their information safe. These companies realize AI as a tool is only as useful as the number of people using it, and are quickly taking steps in response to the market. We will continue to see rapid enhancements to both the tool and the protections these companies enlist to assure people and organizations their information is safe.

## A Historical Perspective

Let's back up for a minute, though. Tensions between humans and technology are nothing new. These anxieties go back to the industrial age and even earlier. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, workers were concerned that new machinery would make them obsolete to the degree that they would no longer be necessary.

In some ways, they were right. Those decades ushered in massive change. Machinery was a boon for human development. Goods became mass produced and more accessible to the average person. The evolution of medicine was accelerated. And, yes, definitions of labor for the average individual shifted, and we no longer needed people for the same jobs at the same rate.



But this era also spawned the rise of specialist professions and other jobs. As people moved into cities and away from rural areas, new jobs in areas such as sanitation, infrastructure, and traffic were created. This led to an increase in the need for doctors, lawyers, construction workers, etc. Humans were not unnecessary or obsolete. In fact, their role became increasingly important in terms of supporting the many changes initiated by the machine age.

## Combating Fear and Taking Control

The introduction of Generative AI is certainly one of those high anxiety moments. You don't have to wander too far down the social media rabbit hole to see anxieties about AI. Some of them are real, some imagined. We are scrambling to figure out what AI means for us. We're trying to answer burning questions like *What are the dangers?* and *How will this affect me?* We look toward worst-case scenarios like deep fakes that amplify fears people already have.

But what about other thoughts that rise up in the midst of change? What about aspects of AI that could allow us to set aside the daily grind of labor that is repetitive and mind-numbing, or necessary but not engaging? What if we could use AI to master those kinds of tasks, freeing us up for the work that allows us to be more connected and human—more creative, innovative, and productive in meaningful ways?

Instead of wondering what is outside our control, smarter questions to ask are:

- How can we use this tool to make us more efficient and productive?
- How can we deploy this tool to make us more inclusive and informed?

We turn the question of control around. *We* are the ones who have ultimate control over AI. It is up to us to figure out how to make it do the work we need it to do.

Here at Blanchard, we've been doing the work of exploring AI for well over a year now. We've been leaning in, holding think tanks, studying different AI tools, and figuring out what we need to be successful and how AI can play a role. As a result, we've got some exciting things in the works, both internally and for our clients.

This process is going to look different for each organization. But I'd encourage individuals and organizations alike to do the work of understanding the tool, adopting it where it makes sense for them, and leading the way in their various industries. AI is going to be a differentiator for human performance and workplace efficiency. Actually, it already is.

How can we use this tool to make us more efficient and productive?

How can we deploy this tool to make us more inclusive and informed?

# Dear Next-Gen Leaders: Use AI to Empower and Inspire

BY LARA DOLLENS, Director of Next-Gen Leadership Innovation

As director of next-gen leadership innovation at Blanchard, one of my passions is to encourage aspiring leaders and influencers to see AI not as a dangerous device we should avoid or fear, but as a tool that can empower and inspire us.

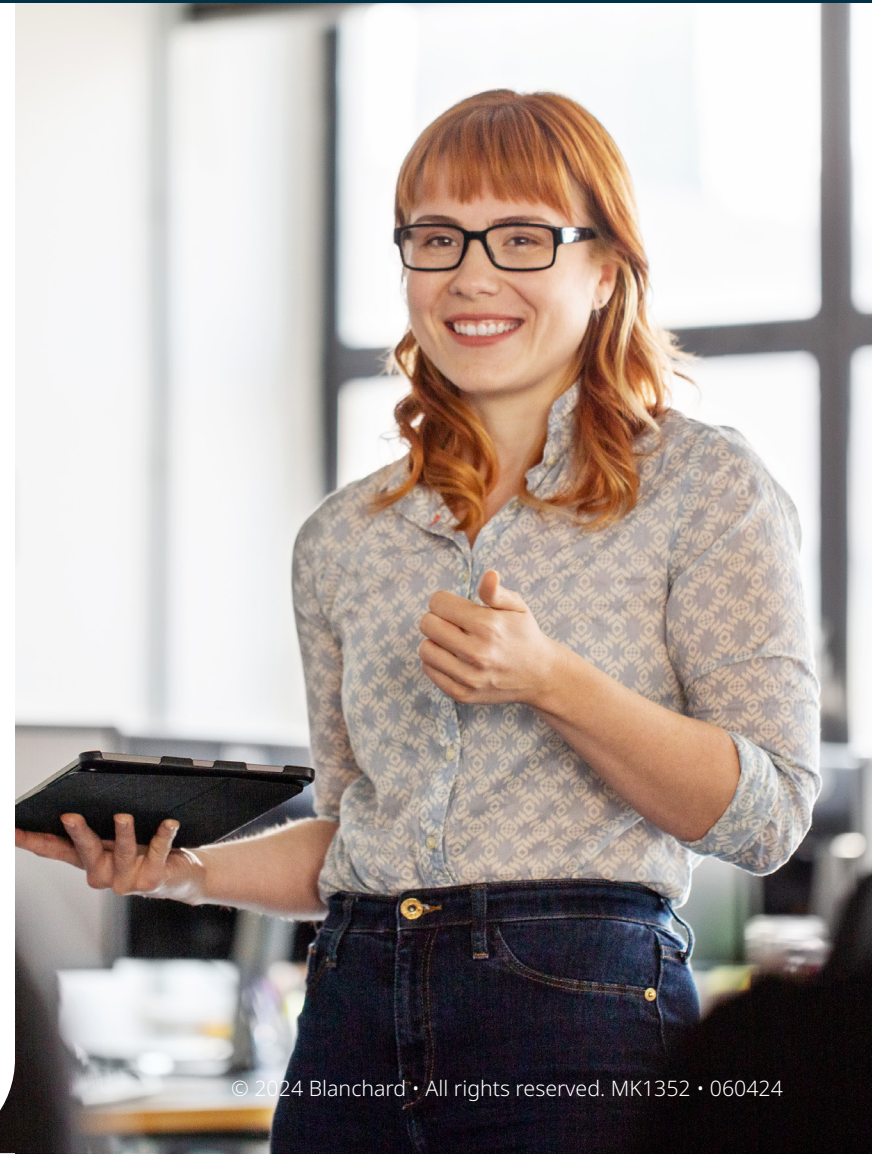
Consider, for example, how AI can help with the following challenges.

**Break Down Language Barriers:** Imagine if language barriers didn't exist—if you could speak to anyone in the world, in real time. What would you do? What *could* you do?

Travel freely around Japan and chat with locals without a translation guide. Collaborate on a project with a research team from India. Perhaps study classical art in Italy, hearing lectures in your native language. Or connect with your first-generation immigrant grandparents by conversing in *their* native tongue.

With the development of advanced [AI-driven translation software](#) that uses natural language processing and speech recognition, it's possible for you to talk to someone in *your* native language and for them to hear it in *their* native language.

When language isn't an obstacle, our world opens up.





Break Down  
Language  
Barriers



Make  
Health Care  
Personalized and  
Affordable



Level the  
Professional  
Playing Field



Enhance  
Accessibility

**Make Health Care Personalized and Affordable:** AI is set to have a [profound impact in the health care sector](#), where it has the potential to free up billions of dollars in resources and allow medical professionals to focus on what they do best—care for their patients. AI has been instrumental in diagnosing diseases more accurately and quickly than human practitioners can.

- AI streamlines cumbersome administrative tasks through automation.
- AI is being used to personalize patient care plans.
- AI rapidly analyzes vast amounts of data, identifies trends, and compares these findings with historical data and medical literature. Tasks like these that would take humans weeks or months, AI accomplishes in minutes.

This shift not only improves the quality of health care and drives down our costs, it also enhances job satisfaction among health care workers by enabling them to engage in more meaningful work.

**Democratize Education:** AI can ensure that every individual has the opportunity to learn and succeed by providing personalized learning experiences that cater to the specific needs of each student—regardless of where they live, their disabilities, or their socioeconomic status. Here are some real-life areas where this is already happening

- **Adaptive Learning Platforms.** AI systems such as those used by [Khan Academy](#) or Coursera can analyze a student's performance in real time and adjust the curriculum to their learning pace and style. This personalized approach helps students master topics at their own speed before they move on to more challenging material.
- **Virtual Classrooms.** [AI-driven virtual reality \(VR\) classrooms](#) can simulate engaging, interactive learning environments for students who may not have local access to specialized courses. Imagine a student attending a virtual physics class taught by a top-notch instructor from another part of the world, complete with laboratory simulations.

**Level the Professional Playing Field:** AI is helping in the job marketplace by enhancing job matching processes and by providing training that helps individuals gain new skills more efficiently.

- **Recruitment.** Advanced AI algorithms can help reduce bias in hiring by focusing on candidates' skills and potential rather than their background or personal connections. This can open opportunities for a more diverse group of applicants and help companies benefit from a wider range of talent.
- **Skill Development.** **AI-driven platforms** can offer tailored training programs to individuals, helping them acquire new skills or improve existing ones according to market demands. This is particularly valuable in industries where technology changes rapidly and continuous learning is crucial.

**Enhance Accessibility:** AI enhances accessibility in several ways for people with disabilities, with tools that improve their capacity to engage fully in work and in society.

- **Assistive Technologies.** For individuals with visual impairments, AI-powered apps can convert text to speech or provide **real-time audio descriptions of their surroundings**. Similarly, for people with hearing impairments, AI can offer real-time speech-to-text transcription services.
- **Smart Home Devices.** AI-integrated smart home devices can help people with mobility issues control their environment more easily—from adjusting lighting and temperature to managing security systems—through **voice commands or simplified interfaces**.

AI technology helps cover gaps in our community, home, and work environments so that all individuals can work, play, and comfortably exist. Could this move us closer to a society that doesn't need "disabled" labels?

*By shifting our perspective to see AI not as a replacement but as an augmentation of our own abilities, we can better appreciate its potential to liberate us. Now we can focus on more creative, strategic, and interpersonal tasks that leverage human insights and emotions—areas where AI cannot fully replicate human performance.*

## How Can You Start Incorporating AI into Your Life?

It is crucial for coming generations of leaders to develop a strong foundation in AI literacy. By shifting our perspective to see AI not as a *replacement* but as an *augmentation* of our own abilities, we can better appreciate its potential to liberate us. Now we can focus on more creative, strategic, and interpersonal tasks that leverage human insights and emotions—areas where AI cannot fully replicate human performance.

A great way to get started using AI is to reflect on your daily tasks at work, in your studies, or at home. Ask yourself:

- What tasks do I find tedious and time-consuming?
- What limits my ability to perform better?
- How could AI help streamline—or completely reinvent—these tasks?

By identifying specific areas where AI can assist, you will begin to see it as a valuable partner in your professional and personal life.

- Imagine [AI personal assistants](#) that manage your schedule, prioritize emails, and even suggest times when you may be better suited for creative tasks versus administrative ones based on your historical productivity patterns.
- Think of [AI-driven platforms](#) that help small businesses predict market trends, understand customer preferences, and better manage inventory—enabling them to level the playing field against larger corporations.

## Overcoming Fear with Knowledge

People often fear what they don't understand or feel they can't control. What's your current relationship with AI? Increasing transparency about how AI systems are developed, who is behind their creation, and what ethical standards are guiding them can significantly build trust and demystify these advanced technologies.

Dig in and do some research to find out what is out there and available to you. Identify specific areas where AI might help you. If you're able to do that, it's likely that someone is already working on an AI solution.

As you explore, expect to run into fears of redundancy and the discomfort that comes with change—these feelings are embedded in human nature. But remember, you have a choice in how you respond. I hope you'll choose the path that empowers and inspires!

# Generative AI and the Future Workforce

BY ASHLEY VEVODA, VP, Organizational Excellence

I've been meeting with a lot of people leaders recently to help better understand their future workforce needs. Their needs and concerns usually fall under one of these themes:

1. We have too much work to do.
2. We need more people.

As a career L&D and HR professional, I find this to be a common scenario and very much based on a perception of truth from leaders. Businesses are running quickly, scaling for growth, and driving execution, and the to-do lists never end. The seemingly logical solution is to throw more people at the problem.

Although this approach might appear to be a good short-term solution, it does not consider the holistic nature of what is being asked of the teams, how the teams work, the processes and systems in place, and the strategic and financial needs of the organization. It is also a missed opportunity to assess how current teams are working, skill gaps and challenges they face, and opportunities for optimization and development. To add a cliché—our role as people leaders is to support our operational leaders in enabling our teams to *work smarter, not harder!*



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While these challenges are not new, the approaches to tackling them are dramatically shifting with the evolution of generative AI. As an avid one-year user of ChatGPT, which is in mid-implementation of its enterprise solution here at Blanchard, I could not be more excited for the future of AI work tools and their ability to empower employees and leaders in their roles. I am not a fortune teller, but from my experience, the doomsday predictions of AI taking jobs from workers couldn't be further from the truth. The reality is that platforms like ChatGPT, when people are trained to use them properly, are the rocket to productivity that many managers have no idea their team needs. Here's an example.

In order for my HR team to partner with a leader to bring on a new role in the organization, a job description must be created. This is not a complicated process, but it does require the hiring manager and the HR partner to first have a thorough understanding of the expectations of the role and then take the time to articulate those expectations into a job description. This typically takes about two hours with back-and-forth review—but because the task is not seen as a preferred use of time for operational leaders, it's often rushed or it falls victim to procrastination. The process gets delayed, and, as a result, HR partners are left editing and updating a role without a clear understanding of the role specifics.

Adding an AI tool such as ChatGPT Enterprise into this process immediately improves efficiency and quality. Here's how: An operational leader can spend between two and five minutes talking to ChatGPT in their own words, not needing to worry about clarity of writing, and the system generates a well-written, professionally toned job description.

From there, the leader may spend a few minutes reviewing and fine-tuning the job description before sending it to their HR partner, who in turn takes five to ten minutes to review and approve it. A two-hour process now takes about twenty minutes. Multiply that time savings across the many mundane tasks across our roles (e.g., client research, deck outlines, meeting agendas) and you can see the value of generative AI to improve your and your team's ability to make space for high-level creative and strategic work.

Taking it one step further, GPT features can streamline process and information efficiencies by remembering key information, input, or data, which gives teams the ability to share their efficiency tools across the organization. Now your team is resourced and evaluating the process to make space for higher level work, versus throwing more hires at the problem.

## Not Just for Large Organizations

You might be thinking “This sounds great, but only big companies with big budgets can tackle this.” Or maybe “How would I even begin to make a case for bringing this into my organization and making it useful?” The beauty of generative AI is that accessibility is high—and, with proper planning, you can enable your teams to use it to work smarter and develop in their roles. Here are some ways to get started.

1. **Begin with curiosity and awareness of the risks.** There are thousands of generative AI tools on the market, with new tools launching every day. Find your best medium to learn about trends in the industry and begin experimenting with free or low-cost tools.  
One caution: *Make sure you understand the data privacy and security risks of working with any generative AI tool. Never input any personal or company information into tools that are not authorized as part of your organization’s approved toolkit.* Instead, experiment while keeping things vague and pushing the limits of the tasks you want the tool to tackle.
2. **Build your business case around the needs of your organization.** Determining the pain points, evaluating multiple solutions, and requesting funds to launch a pilot program are a great place to start.
3. **Drive engagement and enablement.** You have people in your organization who will jump at the opportunity to champion an initiative like generative AI—and you have others who will run from it. Find your champions in the organization and bring them together to lead adoption efforts across departments. Ask them to serve as a feedback loop for how teams are interacting with the tool. Celebrate and highlight success stories and learning opportunities to continue to drive momentum and discovery.

Just like the computer and the cellphone, generative AI is here to stay. How you embrace it and build a growth mindset within your organizational culture will be the differentiator between you and other organizations, and it will influence the impact your teams will have. Keep your mind open to the benefits of generative AI and its possibilities of positive change for you, your team, and your organization!

# 4 Ways to Enrich Leadership Development in an AI-Enabled World

BY **BRITNEY COLE**, Chief Innovation Officer and Head of Blanchard Innovation Lab and Experience Center

In the midst of the rapid expansion of conversational and generative AI, HR and L&D professionals worldwide are grappling with mixed emotions—from excitement to apprehension—concerning the technology's impact on the future of work. This era of innovation brings with it a dual challenge: embracing the competitive edge that AI offers while demystifying concerns surrounding job displacement and the changing nature of work.

At Blanchard, one of our core values is *transform together*. This phrase encapsulates the belief that transformation is a journey best undertaken through a blend of human intuition and artificial intelligence, including live dialogues and the strategic use of technology.

Our comprehensive investigation into the application of large language models and generative AI has revealed a promising horizon for leadership development and managerial effectiveness. Using this approach, here is how we see the strategic application of AI unfolding in four key areas.

## One: Enhancing Learning Experiences

We see AI being used to personalize learning journeys, offering leaders and managers content, resources, and a path that resonates with their unique challenges and growth needs. AI-driven analytics will enable the customization of learning modules and the delivery of timely, relevant resources that support ongoing development. Our Innovation Lab is currently working on a mobile app that is geared for next-generation and emerging leaders to do exactly that.



Learning experiences often require translations and localization across the world. AI tools are saving vast amounts of time and effort in translating learning materials to be appropriate for each culture. The impact of new technologies ranges from rapid text translations to localization of synthetic media where avatars or human experts can speak hundreds of languages. Blanchard has been using AI technology for translations for many years and is using newer AI tools for cutting-edge video projects.

## Two: Practicing Leadership Skills

AI has transformative power to support the practical application and mastery of leadership skills. Practice is paramount in developing the art of effective communication, be it delivering constructive feedback, navigating challenging conversations, or discussing career aspirations with team members. Tools that combine video teach-back technology with AI-driven analysis offer an innovative approach to skill development. These platforms enable learners to record their practice sessions, providing a unique opportunity to not only rehearse crucial conversations but also receive instant, objective feedback on their delivery and competence.

At Blanchard, we are using a platform called Bongo in the coming months to assess participants completing our SLII® Train the Trainer program to help them build their confidence and competence at facilitating Blanchard programs. With Bongo and others, AI algorithms analyze aspects of communication such as tone, clarity, body language, and use of language, offering nuanced insights that might be missed in self-assessment or even overlooked by human evaluators. This immediate feedback loop accelerates the learning process, which allows individuals to rapidly iterate and improve their approach. Furthermore, the use of video teach-backs facilitates a deeper level of reflection and self-awareness—critical components of effective leadership.

By providing a safe, supportive environment for practice and application, leaders can build confidence in their abilities, refine their communication strategies, and, ultimately, enhance their effectiveness in leading teams and driving organizational success. This blend of high-tech solutions and human-centric development epitomizes the future of leadership training, where innovation amplifies human potential.

1

Enhancing Learning Experiences

2

Practicing Leadership Skills

3

Facilitating Real-Time Feedback

4

Creating Content

## Three: Facilitating Real-Time Feedback

Facilitating real-time feedback and offering nudges are crucial elements in the continuous development of leadership and managerial skills. Real-time feedback mechanisms offered by platforms such as Cloverleaf and LeadX harness the power of AI to provide immediate insights into individual and team dynamics, communication effectiveness, and overall performance. These insights enable leaders to make on-the-spot adjustments, fostering a culture of agility and responsiveness.

At Blanchard, [the SLII® Chatbot we created using MobileCoach helps learners apply and master leadership skills taught in SLII®](#) by providing quick access to common questions. It also extends and reinforces key content by linking to videos, worksheets, tools, and assessments and by pushing reminders on critical tasks. This integrates conversational AI to respond to unstructured comments and provide extra advice and support based on hundreds of pages of SLII® content.

## Four: Creating Content

Another area where AI has the potential to revolutionize the L&D space is content creation—especially when grounded in human-derived, research-backed frameworks. By leveraging these frameworks as a foundational dataset, AI can generate content that aligns with established principles and insights, ensuring that the output is not only informative but also deeply rooted in proven practices. This approach enables the creation of microlearning, facilitation notes, and resources that are relevant and accurate.

Blanchard's position is simple: our content is human-generated, and our experiences are AI- and tech-enabled. The integration of AI with human expertise and experience in content creation enables a powerful synergy to create solutions that are superior to what either approach could achieve independently.

- AI can personalize content at scale, but it's human expertise that understands the nuances of leadership development.
- AI can simulate realistic scenarios for practice, but human trainers can provide the empathetic feedback and nuanced guidance that AI lacks.
- AI can generate a wide range of ideas and perspectives, but it's the creative insight of human experts that can sift through these perceptions to identify truly innovative solutions to leadership challenges that AI alone might not conceive.

The combination of AI and human expertise in leadership development leverages the strengths of both.

## Leveraging the Best of Both

At Blanchard, our journey of transformation, guided by our values, embraces the promise of AI to enrich the leadership landscape while it upholds the irreplaceable value of the human connection. We envision a future where leaders are empowered to lead with compassion, innovation, and unwavering effectiveness, shaping a world where technology amplifies human potential rather than diminishing it.

How about you?

As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of artificial intelligence together, we encourage you to join us in exploring the synergistic potential of AI to enhance the leader, employee, and learner experience.

# Creating an AI-Enabled Chatbot for Leadership Development

BY DR. JAY CAMPBELL, Chief Product Officer

We recently decided to add an AI-enabled chatbot to Blanchard's most popular leadership development program, SLII®.

We did this with a clear purpose in mind: to help our learners transition from a positive training experience back into the workforce. You see, far too many learners leave an SLII® class excited to use their new knowledge and skills, only to be overcome by workload and habit and realize a month later that their SLII® skills are fading fast. We believed an AI-powered chatbot could help them over this chasm through a combination of reminders, tools, and just-in-time support. So we set off to build the SLII® Chatbot™.

Together with our platform partner Mobile Coach, we got to work.



## Preparing for two types of interactions

Chatbots can be structured or unstructured. A *structured* interaction is planned out ahead of time, with prompts written to guide users through it. An example is the “dial or say 1” experience we’ve all had calling an 800 number.

*Unstructured* dialogs are not prewritten. ChatGPT is a good example of this type of interaction, where an AI system is trained using a Large Language Model (LLM) to interact with humans using our natural language. We wanted both a structured *and* unstructured system for our SLII® Chatbot.

The structured part of the chatbot would be focused on helping learners through reminders and assistance for one to three months after their training. We wrote the dialog that the bot would say and the questions it would ask. We used preformatted responses; e.g., “type 1 for tools, type 2 for tips.” Our structured script ended up being about 50 pages in length. Our key learnings were to be clear about the goal, to allow plenty of time for development and testing, and to blend information with entertainment.

We also recognized there’s a whole different writing style and syntax used in text messaging that includes acronyms (e.g., lol, btw), use of emojis, lack of punctuation and capitalization, etc. We chose to adopt these in the SLII® Chatbot. It helps to be clear about your writing style guidelines up front.

## Venturing into new territory

Creating the structured dialog was a lot of work but it was work we were familiar with, having done much scripting over the years. The unstructured, conversational part of the chatbot was new territory.

Our goal was to support learners through an SLII® Chatbot that could respond to any question asked. This required a smart AI engine based on an LLM.

Again we leaned on our partner, Mobile Coach, who offered a private LLM so that we could safely assist our clients without feeding our proprietary content to the public ChatGPT system.

We wanted our SLII® Chatbot LLM to be an expert in SLII®, so we started by feeding it existing documents from our SLII® program, facilitation notes, and supporting materials. The LLM was quite flexible in its ability to consume documents, having learned this by absorbing a wide variation of content across the web.

## Designing prompts

The next step was designing prompts. To understand an LLM prompt, think of a sandwich. A user might type a question to the bot such as “I just had a disagreement with a team member—what should I do?” Think of that as the meat of the sandwich. Although the LLM would be able to respond to that question alone, the response would be much more useful and controllable if you embedded the question in a larger prompt. Think of adding bread, lettuce, tomato, and mayo to the sandwich.

Prompts are able to do many things, but we focused on context and writing instructions. Context is about providing the backstory around the question so that the LLM can more effectively understand what’s going on. This can take the form of descriptive text that explains what the user is doing or trying to accomplish. An example is “I asked an employee how their one-on-one conversation went with a team member and they commented: [user’s response].” It’s like how we provide a little context when a new person joins a conversation in progress: “Oh, we were just talking about the merger announcement.”

The writing instructions you provide to the LLM in these prompts can cover many aspects of writing. Whether you know it or not, you probably have an idea of what appropriate and inappropriate responses look like. I remember an early response that was way too long, so we added an instruction around length to limit the LLM responses on that dimension. You can also tell the LLM what tone you are looking for, and where to pull content from. Here’s an example: “Please write an upbeat response that validates their struggle, is less than 100 words, and pulls at least one concept from the following content: [source list]”

## Care and feeding during these early days

The combination of providing lots of source content, offering context and backstory, and defining the tone and style of written responses will give you a good start. The last tip is to invest in care and feeding. LLM chatbots can be easily enhanced and enriched over time by reviewing the performance of the bot and working on interactions that aren’t serving users well.

It still feels like early days in the LLM chatbot space. We are excited to be experimenting with this technology for such an important purpose. I’d highly recommend you give it a try if you can stick with it for the long haul. Good luck!

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# Next Level Strategies for Implementing an HR/L&D AI Solution

BY ROMERO HABIB, Director of Digital for Blanchard Innovation Lab

In the Blanchard Innovation Lab we explore all sorts of things related to learning design and development—including generative and conversational AI. And just like you, we've seen a wide variety of new course and content creation generators pop up since it took off. Every day, new tools flood the market to help people create learning content, most of which are instructionally sound; some not as much.

As we continue to explore new AI possibilities, we are also developing and clarifying best practices to effectively work with this new technology. Here are four strategies that guide our planning. See how these principles could be put to work in your exploration of AI possibilities.



## Discovery: Measure Twice, Cut Once

Discovery is the first critical step along a solution path. This stage is all about digging deep to uncover the pain points and challenges being faced. Think of it as laying the groundwork for a house: without a solid foundation, anything you build on top will be less stable. By thoroughly understanding the specific needs of an end user, we can tailor our AI solutions to address these issues effectively. This phase emphasizes the age-old wisdom of “measure twice, cut once,” underscoring the importance of meticulous planning and preparation. It’s about asking the right questions, listening carefully to the answers, and ensuring that we have a comprehensive understanding of the problems we’re trying to solve.

There are three parts to successful discovery.

1. ***Schema creation.*** In this phase you’re understanding the business issue, challenge, or need that you’re solving for in ways that will improve efficiency, quality, or ROI.
2. ***Complex requirement gathering.*** To properly build out that schema or framework, you have to know what the people using the Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) need and want vs. what is possible. Part of this requirement-gathering stage is about alignment. Not only are you refining your schema, you’re also aligning stakeholders’ expectations about what the end product or tool will be able to accomplish.
3. ***Detailed information gathering.*** To ensure that your GPT results are accurate and comprehensive, you must access all available sources and data. The information it might need to access could range from something simple, like articles or small content pieces, to something extremely complicated, like connecting to a financial or customer database and getting real-time financial data. Be comprehensive but also discriminating in this phase. Some of the information you’ll receive will be useful and other parts will be irrelevant. A clear schema will make it easier to sift through the need-to-have, nice-to-have, and don’t-need buckets.

1

Schema creation

2

Complex requirement gathering

3

Detailed information gathering

## Solution Design: Crafting Tailored AI Solutions

Once you've identified the challenges and pain points, it's time to move on to the solution design phase. This is where creativity meets technology. At Blanchard, our team of experts designs AI solutions that are not only innovative but also perfectly tailored to meet the needs identified during the discovery phase. This bespoke approach ensures each solution is as effective as possible, addressing the specific pain points of each department with precision.

For example, in a corporate setting, imagine an HR department is grappling with an inefficient recruitment process. The team gets started on the solution design phase using insights from a successful discovery phase. They develop a customized AI recruiting tool to streamline talent acquisition. This AI tool proves effective at parsing through applications and identifying ideal candidates by learning from historical hiring data—and greatly improves the company's recruitment strategy, making it vastly more efficient. This is the essence of generative AI design: merging creativity with technology to craft solutions that precisely address department-specific challenges.

## Prompt Engineering: The Heart of Custom AI

You hear a lot about prompt engineering—and for a good reason. Prompt engineering is at the core of AI solutions. This phase involves setting up specific AI prompts that will guide the artificial intelligence in performing its tasks efficiently and effectively. It's a nuanced process that requires a deep understanding of both the technology and the unique challenges it aims to solve. The right prompts can mean the difference between a solution that's merely functional and one that truly transforms the way a department operates.

I like to use the metaphor of a genie in a bottle. You rub the bottle and a genie appears. Now you need to make an extremely specific and wise request. If you don't, you might not get what you want or you might get something unintended. It's the same with AI. Ask better questions, get better results.

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## Testing and User Feedback: Refining the Experience

The final stage of a good implementation plan involves rigorous testing and gathering user feedback. This is where we put our AI solutions to the test, in real-world scenarios, to ensure they perform as intended. User feedback is invaluable at this stage, providing insights that help us refine and improve our solutions. It's a process of continuous improvement, where feedback loops play a crucial role in ensuring our AI solutions not only meet but exceed the expectations of our users.

Key stakeholders who will use the GPT every day should test and review the output to ensure it's generating exactly what they want. If everything is successful, the next step is to make sure all users are upskilled, follow the prompt engineering, and understand how to get the magic they need out of the tool that's been created.

It's helpful to remember every piece of software comes with bugs. If there weren't bugs, there would be no need for constant maintenance and code improvement. Humans are imperfect, and so is the code we create.

## Making AI Work for Our Businesses

Now that we've covered some of our overall best practices, let's take a look at how we make AI work specifically in an L&D setting.

1. **Clarify objectives.** Understand what you want to achieve with AI in L&D. Are you looking to streamline design work, support video script writing, role play feedback, translate content into other languages, or something else? Understand the purpose of AI integration and who will be using it, such as instructional designers, learners, or writers.
2. **Integrate with human efforts.** Determine how AI can complement human tasks rather than replace them, ensuring a partnership that leverages the strengths of both. AI should not replace the human element that is central to leadership training; it should complement it. If you use a tool to create a video script for a course, for example, ensure a human is there to review and verify relevancy, accuracy, and cohesion.
3. **Train your team.** Ensure your L&D team understands how to work with AI, interpret its outputs, and apply insights effectively.
4. **Iterate and improve.** Use AI's feedback loops to continually refine your L&D initiatives. Remember, AI thrives on data, so the more you use it, the better it gets.
5. **Focus on the human experience.** Keep the learner's journey at the heart of your AI strategy. In all AI endeavors, the learner's experience should remain paramount. AI in L&D isn't just about smarter learning; it's about deeper, more meaningful development experiences.

## Blanchard Is Looking Ahead and Beyond

At Blanchard we recognize the fusion of AI into our product development work is not just an upgrade—it's a revolution.

In adopting a new technology like generative AI, L&D professionals have new ways to elevate their skill set and focus on the needed consultative skills to solve complex problems that require training. AI will also serve as our ally in shaping a world where leadership is for the many, not the few, and where the potential of every individual is realized. AI increases accessibility, where amazing content can be tapped into by anyone. That's part of our mission at the Blanchard Innovation Lab.

To learn more about our research into AI and other areas we are exploring at the forefront of human-centric, technology-forward designs, [contact us](#). We'd love to discuss our latest projects—and maybe learn about yours!



# Next Steps

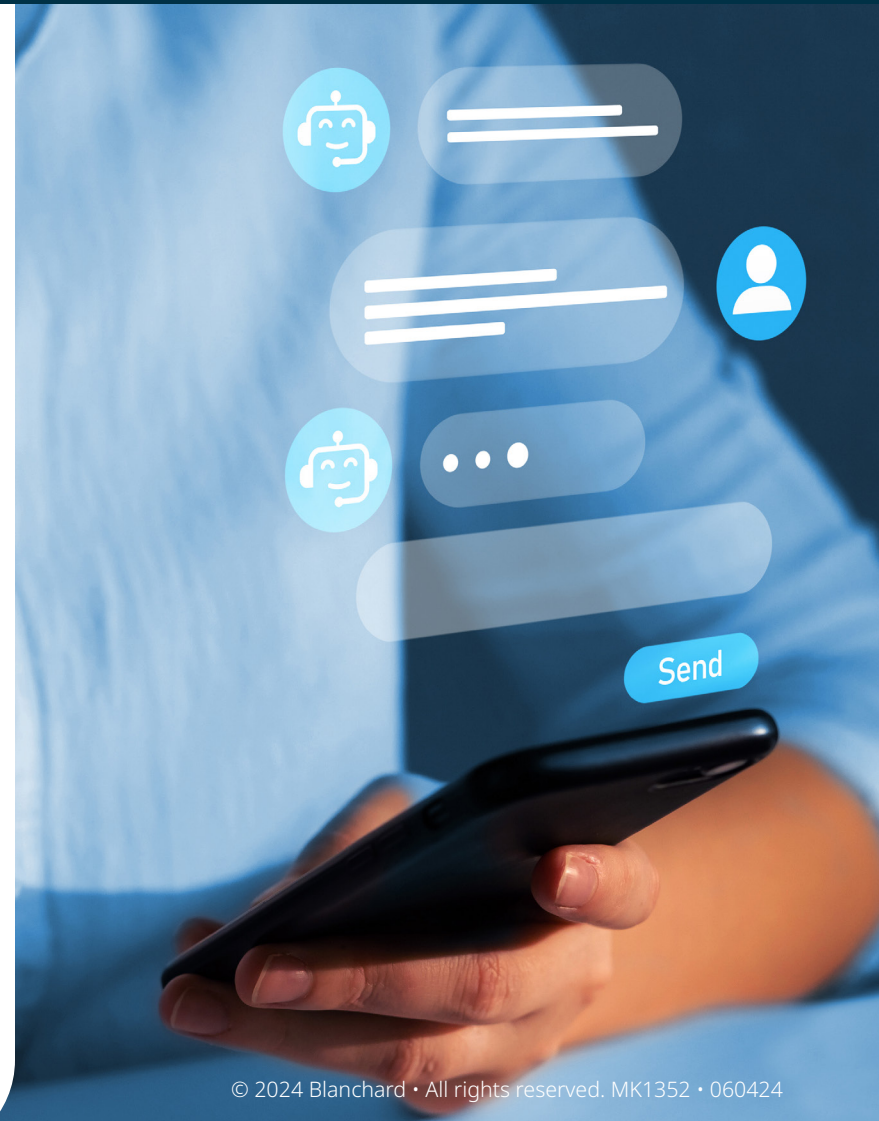
The six perspectives we've shared are meant to give you a look inside the generative AI landscape. We hope you found them to be useful and thought provoking.

Consider the questions below as you continue your journey:

- How does our perspective match yours?
- What caught you by surprise?
- What would you like to know more about?

Interested in discussing further? You can bring your experiences and questions to the [Blanchard Community](#) and explore them with other HR/L&D professionals from around the world.

[Joining](#) is free and it only takes a few minutes of your time. We're confident that you'll find it to be a valuable resource.



# About the Authors



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## About Blanchard

Blanchard® is a global leader in leadership development, consulting, and coaching. For more than 40 years, Blanchard has partnered with organizations to maximize individual achievement and organizational performance – bringing measurable progress and true transformation. Blanchard's SLII® is the global leadership model of choice, powering inspired leaders for more than 10,000 organizations worldwide. Blanchard also offers a suite of award-winning solutions through flexible delivery modalities to meet the specific needs of clients and learners.

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