

# How Workers Can Shape The Future of AI

District 1 Conference  
November 13, 2024

**CWA**

# Agenda

1. What is Artificial Intelligence?
2. What does Artificial Intelligence look like in the workplace?
3. How can workers shape the future of AI?

# Small Groups

Periodically we're going to break up into groups and have short discussions.

1. Find a group of 3-4 people near you. Try to find new people!
2. First discussion questions:

Have you used an Artificial Intelligence tool?

Was it for work or in your personal life?

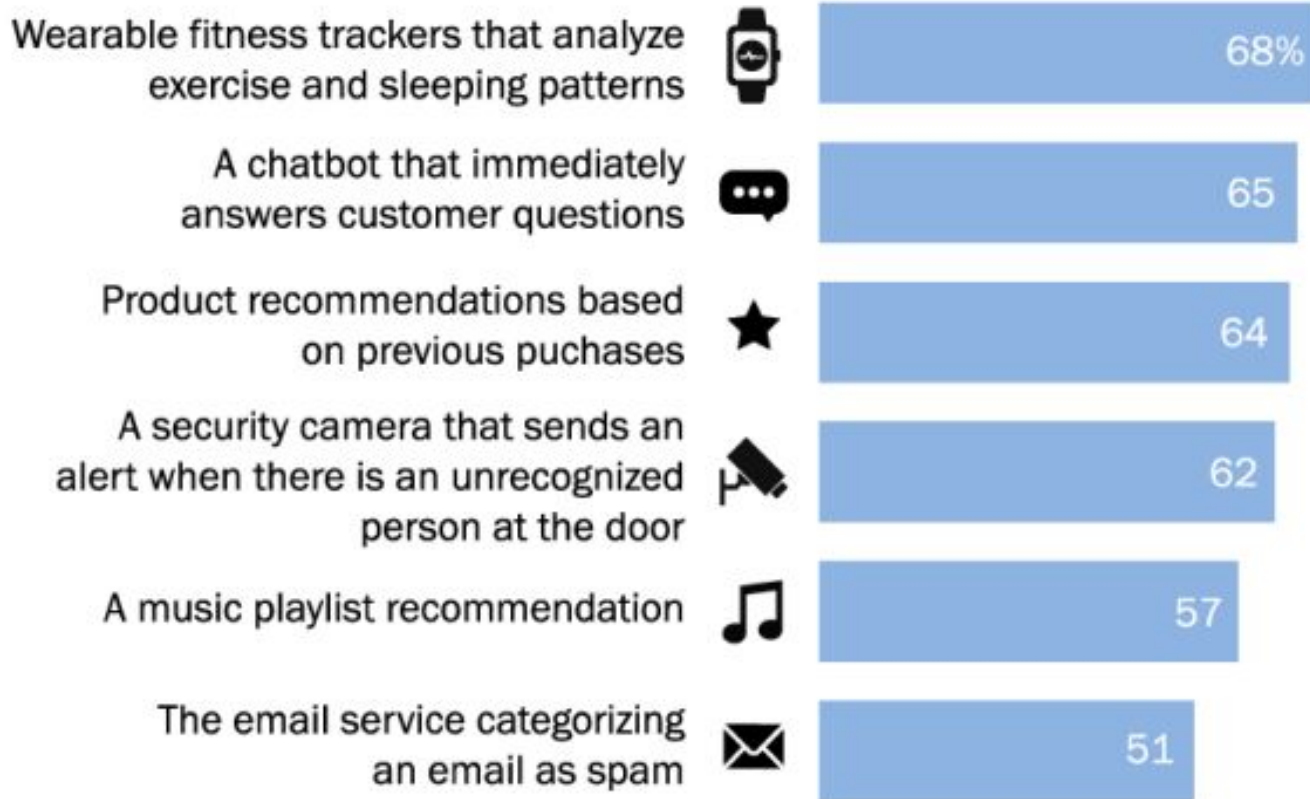
Did the tool work as expected?

What is AI?

# Audience Poll: Which of the following use AI?

SCAN ME





# What is Artificial Intelligence?

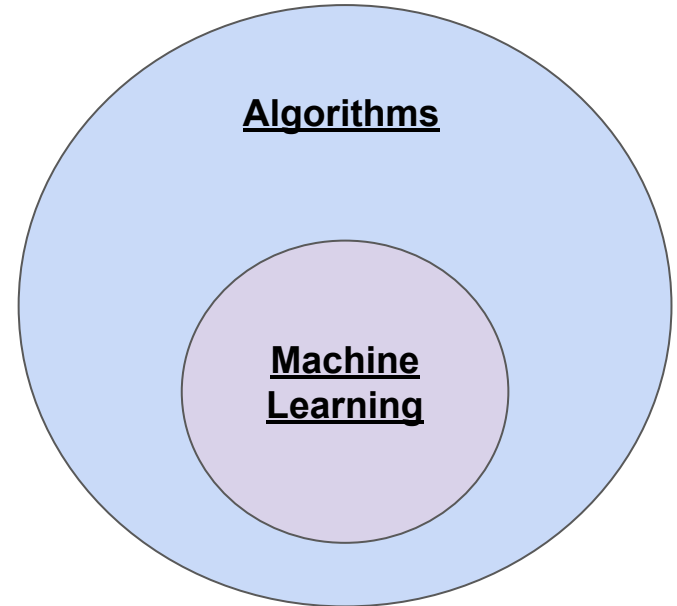
The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development defines Artificial Intelligence as:

*a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments*

# How does AI work?

**Algorithm**: Well-defined process or set of rules to solve a problem

**Machine Learning**: Algorithms that detect patterns in data, using those patterns to make predictions and recommendations



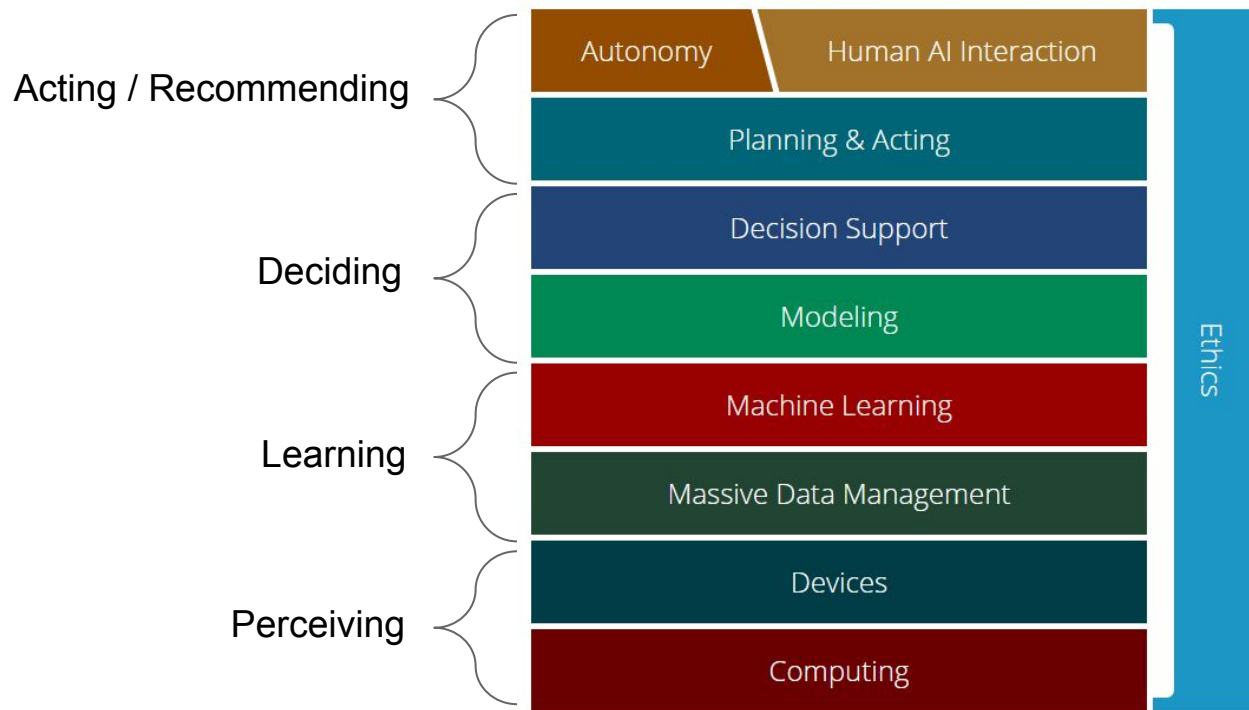




- LEVEL 1  
Child
- LEVEL 2  
Teen
- LEVEL 3  
College Student
- LEVEL 4  
Grad Student
- LEVEL 5  
Expert



# AI is a “Stack” of Technologies



Source: Carnegie Mellon, Block Center

# The Properties of AI Systems Can Range From...

- Easily Explainable/Interpretable to Not Easily Explainable/Interpretable
  - Algorithms -> Machine Learning -> Deep Learning
- Narrow to General
  - Narrow AI is trained to perform a specific task
  - Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) - hypothetical AI systems that demonstrate broad capabilities across domains
- Predictive or Generative
  - Predictive AI - forecasts future events by analyzing historical data trends
  - Generative AI - creates new output such as text (ChatGPT), images (DAL-E), sound, video

# Small Group Discussions

1. What misconceptions about AI have you heard from family, friends and coworkers?
2. What information from this overview do you think would be helpful to communicate to members at your workplaces?

What does Artificial Intelligence look like in the workplace?

# Examples of AI use reported at CWA Workplaces

Digital and Legacy Print Media	Audio and Video Broadcast	Call Centers	Outside Technicians	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Headline suggestions,</li> <li>● Link generation</li> <li>● SEO</li> <li>● Copy Editing</li> <li>● Stats based article writing</li> <li>● Article summarizing and repurposing into new forms</li> <li>● News archive digitization to use for training data</li> <li>● Content personalization and recommendation</li> <li>● Predicting user behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quality control / compatibility / compliance</li> <li>● Metadata generation</li> <li>● Video / audio editing</li> <li>● Break structures / advertisement placement</li> <li>● Subtitling / captioning</li> <li>● Voice generation or recreation</li> <li>● Content generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitoring and feedback on call flow, voice tone/pace</li> <li>● Call transcription and summarization</li> <li>● Voice recognition and response / virtual agent</li> <li>● Chabots</li> <li>● Assistance searching for consumer or product information</li> <li>● Recruitment and hiring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GPS monitoring &amp; metric tracking</li> <li>● Routing</li> <li>● Repair testing</li> <li>● Circuit monitoring and technician deployment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Automated Code Writing</li> <li>● Automated surveillance</li> <li>● Automated management</li> </ul>

# AI in the Workplace

<b>AI Systems in the Workplace can...</b>	<b>By...</b>	<b>Whose work is being “automated” (or “augmented”)?</b>
Surveil	Monitoring and flagging occurrences in digital data generated by webcams, electronic timesheets, key strokes, mouse movement, GPS, wearables, etc.	Manager
Manage	Automating decision-making or coaching/feedback functions	Manager
Automate	Performing tasks or providing assistance with tasks performed by the bargaining unit.	Worker

# AI Tool Use Reported by CWA Call Center Members

## “Work Automating”

Routes calls to agents based on fit with customer or past call performance	73%
Helps find and fix network or equipment faults	59%
Helps find product or customer information during calls or chats	67%
Helps fill-in online forms or follow up after calls or chats	56%

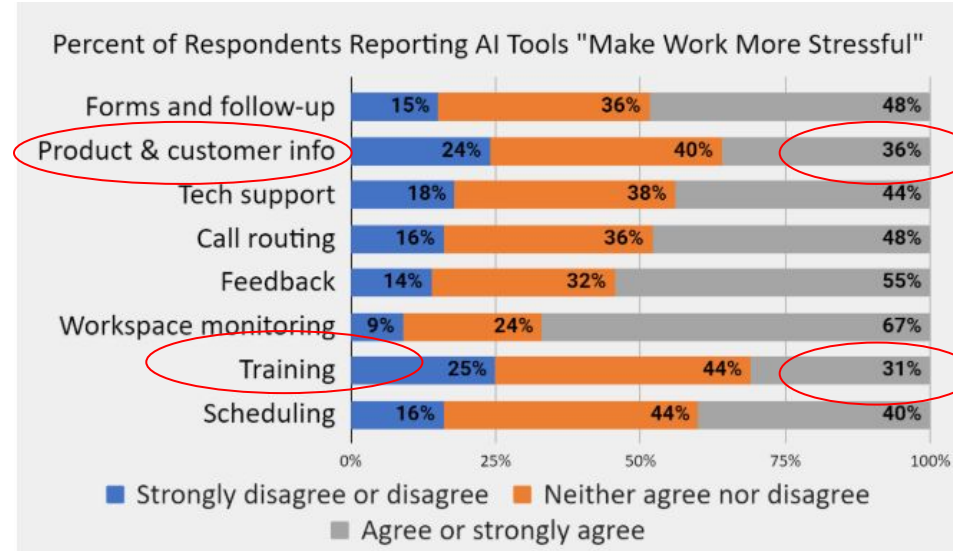
## “Management Automating”

Schedules hours and breaks	66%
Helps with training and development	64%
Automates monitoring of employees' workspace	66%
Gives automate feedback on voice tone, pace, script adherence or call content	57%



# Member assessment of the impact of new tools

- Majorities “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that automated feedback (55%) and workspace monitoring (67%) made work more stressful.
- Much smaller shares of members thought automated information finding (36%) and AI assisted training (31%) made work more stressful.
- Majority (53%) thought tools that helps find customer and product information improved service and 40% thought it made work easier



# Concerns about AI Systems

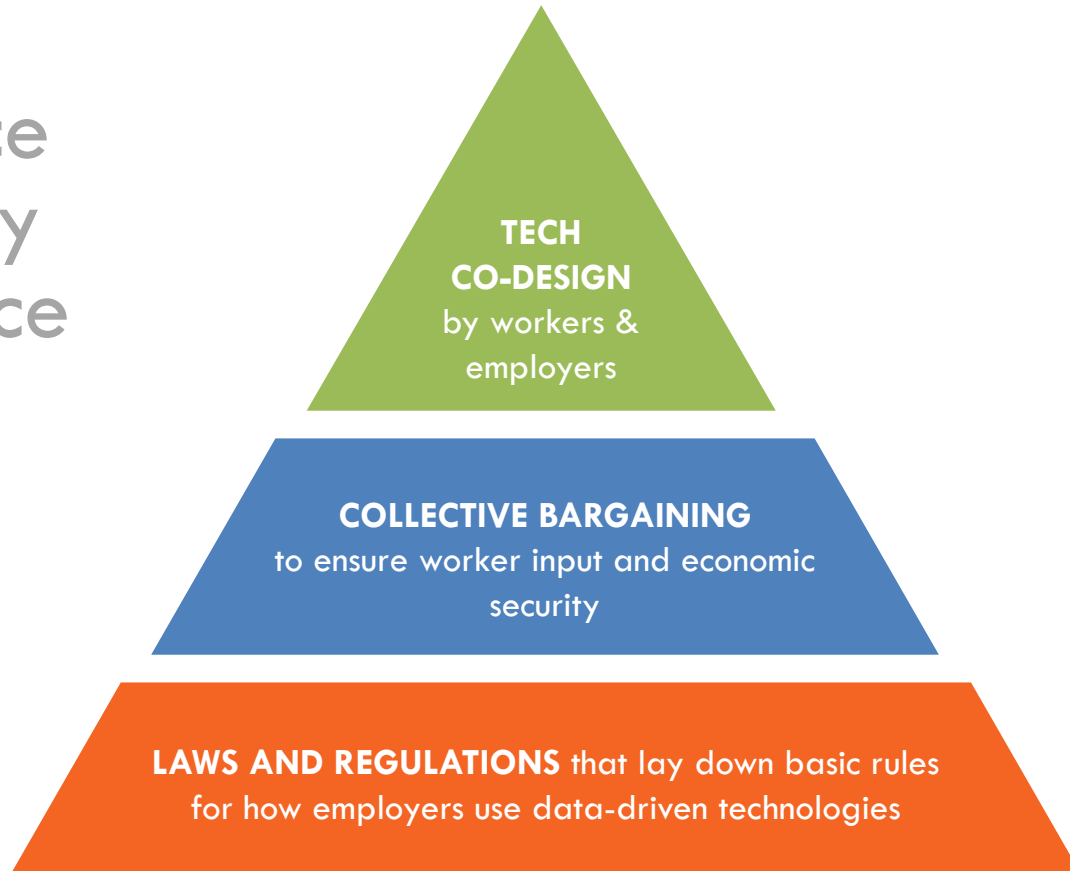
<b>Concern about AI Models</b>	<b>Concerns about Job Impacts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Transparency</li><li>● Output Quality</li><li>● Accountability for System Decisions and Need for Human Oversight</li><li>● Discriminatory Effects</li><li>● Data Privacy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Automation and Loss of Jobs</li><li>● Increased Job Intensity</li><li>● De-Skilling</li><li>● Loss of Employee Discretion</li><li>● Opportunities to Circumvent CBA Protections</li></ul>

# Small Group Discussions

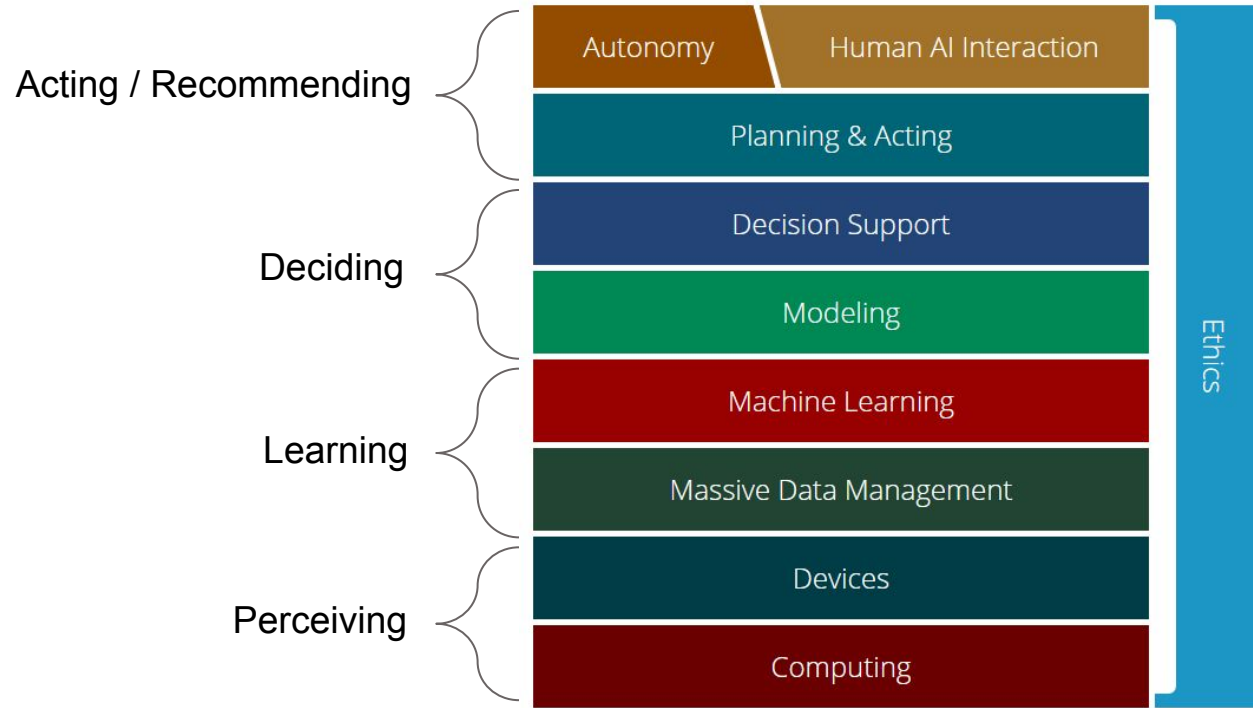
1. Which of these AI work functions (surveillance, management, automation) poses the greatest risk to workers?
2. What protections against AI do you think are important for members in the workplace you represent?

# Workers Taking Action on AI

# Workplace technology governance



# Worker Voice is Needed at Every Level of Stack



# CWA AI Committee Report

Principles and Recommendations for bargaining and political advocacy on Artificial Intelligence issues:

1. Bargaining Principles: Emphasizing a proactive and comprehensive approach to bargaining, with a goal of establishing worker input early in AI development and implementation to ensure technology complements (instead of replacing) workers, protects job quality and supports worker training and transition where needed.
2. Public Policy Principles: Advocating to expand role for collective bargaining and worker input in AI development and setting a floor for the accountable and ethical uses of AI in workplaces and more broadly



<https://cwa.org/ai-principles>

# Bargaining on New Technologies

- Employers are required to bargain on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment (“mandatory” subjects of bargaining)
- If an employer’s decision on a “permissive” subject of bargaining causes a “material, substantial and significant” change to working conditions that the employer has an obligation to notify the union and bargain the impact (effects bargaining)
- Management Rights Clauses in CBAs can limit our ability to request bargaining on new technology that impacts our workplace



# Ways that New Technology Can Impact Working Conditions

- Type and pace of work
- Benefit and compensation levels
- Decision-making on discipline and dismissal
- Opportunities for transfer and promotion
- Movement of work functions out of the bargaining unit

## One-Third of Employees Say Their Organization Is Taking Action on AI

To the best of your knowledge, has your organization begun integrating new artificial intelligence (AI) technology or tools to improve business practices (e.g., increase productivity, efficiency and quality)?



WF Q2 2024, U.S. Employees; Overall MOE:  $\pm 1$  point, Production/Frontline MOE:  $\pm 4$  points, White-Collar MOE:  $\pm 2$  points, Healthcare/Social Assistance MOE:  $\pm 4$  points, Administrative/Clerical MOE:  $\pm 5$  points

[Get the data](#) • [Download image](#)

GALLUP

# Bargaining Priorities on AI

1. Advanced notice and information sharing
2. Collaboration on development and implementation
3. Limits on abusive practices enabled by technology (data privacy, work-life balance, discrimination, discipline, performance metrics)
4. On-going human review and oversight
5. Addressing impacts of new technology on the workforce (retraining, career opportunities, severance)
6. Sharing the productivity benefits (wage increases, better schedules, an other enhancements)

# Takeaways for Empowering Workers on AI

1. **Ask** about AI systems in use in your workplace - AI systems can be in use for surveillance / management / automation that you're not aware of. Employers have no requirement to disclose.

**WE MUST ASK TO FIND OUT HOW AI IS BEING USED.**

2. **Demand** to bargain on the effect of new systems - workplace technology will inherently have an impact on working conditions.

**WE CAN DEMAND BARGAINING ON NEW SYSTEMS.**

3. **Mobilize** members on workplace technology issues - the effects of these systems are not predetermined. Technology can be used to improve jobs and workers can share in added value.

**WE WILL ONLY GET A SEAT AT THE TABLE IF WE MOBILIZE.**

# AI Committee Deliverables to Support Bargaining

- Member education curriculum
- Bargaining toolkit (RFIs, Model Language, Case Studies)
- AI ethics policy
- Member-led digital systems mapping process
- Policy toolkit

# Discussion Questions

- Are there examples in your workplaces where new technology has had unforeseen problems? Are there instances where workers having input could have made technology work better?
- What should workers prioritize if they have a voice in the development of new technology? What do they need to make sure technology creates value AND creates good jobs?