

Exploring Linkages Between the Golden Triangle, Mental Health and Generative Artificial Intelligence

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AIB Review, Issue 11

As organisations begin to adopt artificial intelligence (AI) and its subset generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) as part of their technological toolsets, studies are showing a growing shift in the mental health of workers because of increased levels of automation in the workplace never experienced before. As these technologies may be overwhelming to workers, organisations need to create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace that is GenAI-ready.

The Golden Triangle

The Golden Triangle, also known as the Business Triangle, is an equilateral triangle denoting highly proficient and resourceful people, robust and adaptable processes, and effective and future-forward technology toolsets as the foundation for successful businesses. The concept of People, Process and Technology (P-P-T) emphasises that the balance of people, processes and technology drives action. People work for an organisation using processes and technology and similarly use technology to streamline and improve processes. When the three components are in harmony, the organisation operates optimally. A shift in one component causes the others to shift, which must in turn respond to maintain harmony and balance. Often, and to this point, the Golden Triangle is perceived as being synonymous with a three-legged stool, where the P-P-T components are the legs. A broken leg impacts the other two, and their constitution must change to achieve and maintain balance; otherwise, the stool will crumble and fall. The key to the success of an organisation lies in maintaining a balance between people, processes and technology. This article explores the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) broadly and the recent emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) more specifically on the Golden Triangle and its implications for mental health.

Artificial Intelligence and Generative Artificial Intelligence

AI refers to computer technology adept at conducting activities or tasks using machine intelligence that previously required human intelligence. Applications include web search engines (such as [Google Search](#)), recommendation systems (such as [YouTube](#)), human speech recognition (such as [Siri](#)) and self-driving cars (such as [Waymo](#)). The main objective of implementing AI solutions at the organisational level is to have intelligent machines or systems perform tasks that previously required human intervention. The recent emergence and rapid adoption of GenAI tools that can generate text, images, audio, video and code by learning the patterns and structure of input training data to generate new data with similar characteristics change the way many tasks are performed in organisations and brings an urgency to consider the impacts of AI and GenAI on the Golden Triangle as the existing harmony and balance shifts.

Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on the Golden Triangle

As a technology, GenAI can impact processes by identifying inefficiencies and suggesting improvements, automating routine, repetitive or manual tasks and enhancing decision-making; thus, improving employee productivity and leaving employees free to pursue more creative and strategic activities. However, while a [Harvard University study](#) suggests potential positive effects of automation on employment, such as being able to scale a business, the same study identifies that a direct negative effect of automation is reduced employment as humans are replaced by machines. Other studies also show that while automation promises to make working life easier, it also potentially leaves existing employees feeling unskilled, dispensable and fearful of an inevitable shift in their roles; and, with it stress that if left unchecked may play havoc on their mental health.

Implications for Mental Health

[Mental health](#) is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with stress and is crucial to personal, community and socioeconomic development. It exists on a continuum from mental wellness to acute illness and is influenced throughout life by multiple individual, social and structural determinants, including individual psychological and biological factors, such as emotional skills, substance abuse and genetics, and exposure to favourable and unfavourable social, economic, geopolitical and environmental circumstances. [The work environment is one setting that has an impact on mental health; and, in turn, workplace productivity.](#)

Employers are responsible for protecting the health and safety of employees, including their mental health. Thus, employers should have policies and practices in place to create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace if they want their employees to have high productivity levels. [A study by Brookings Institution](#) suggests that sensible policies that support a psychologically safe and healthy workplace can help employees adapt to the changes brought about by the adoption of AI while sharing the benefits that the technology offers. Organisations can take several other steps to create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace that is AI-ready by shifting employee roles, reskilling and training, encouraging and modelling behaviours, managing workloads and having conflict resolution practices in place. Furthermore, [McKinsey & Company](#) suggest the use of AI-driven digital mental health tools, on a voluntary basis at the workplace, including wearables and digital biomarker apps to monitor mood and prevention and treatment solutions using chatbots, may help an organisation create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace.

In addition, leaders can encourage a culture of psychological safety to reduce employee anxiety and increase engagement and productivity when facing AI in the workplace. [Workplace dynamics expert, Amy Gallo](#), details ways in which leaders can foster a culture of psychological safety in the workplace, which could help employees cope with the perceived threats of AI, by establishing clear norms and expectations, encouraging open communication and actively listening to employees, making sure team members feel supported and showing appreciation and humility when people do speak up.

Conclusion

AI in the era of GenAI significantly influences the delicate equilibrium of the Golden Triangle, potentially impacting organisational operations and employee mental health. While GenAI promises efficiency

and automation, it also poses challenges such as job insecurity and skill redundancy, potentially affecting mental health. Employers should strive to create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace to support the adoption of GenAI tools as employees develop new skill sets or shift jobs. During this phase, employees should be encouraged to adopt proactive behaviours to support their mental health and increase engagement. The creation of business policies and practices that support the mental health of employees is integral to both the success of the adoption of GenAI and the success of organisations.

Article written by the author with the support of the editorial team of the *AIB Review*.



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Cite this article:

Pesa, A 2023, 'Exploring Linkages Between the Golden Triangle, Mental Health and Generative Artificial Intelligence', *AIB Review*, Issue 11.

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