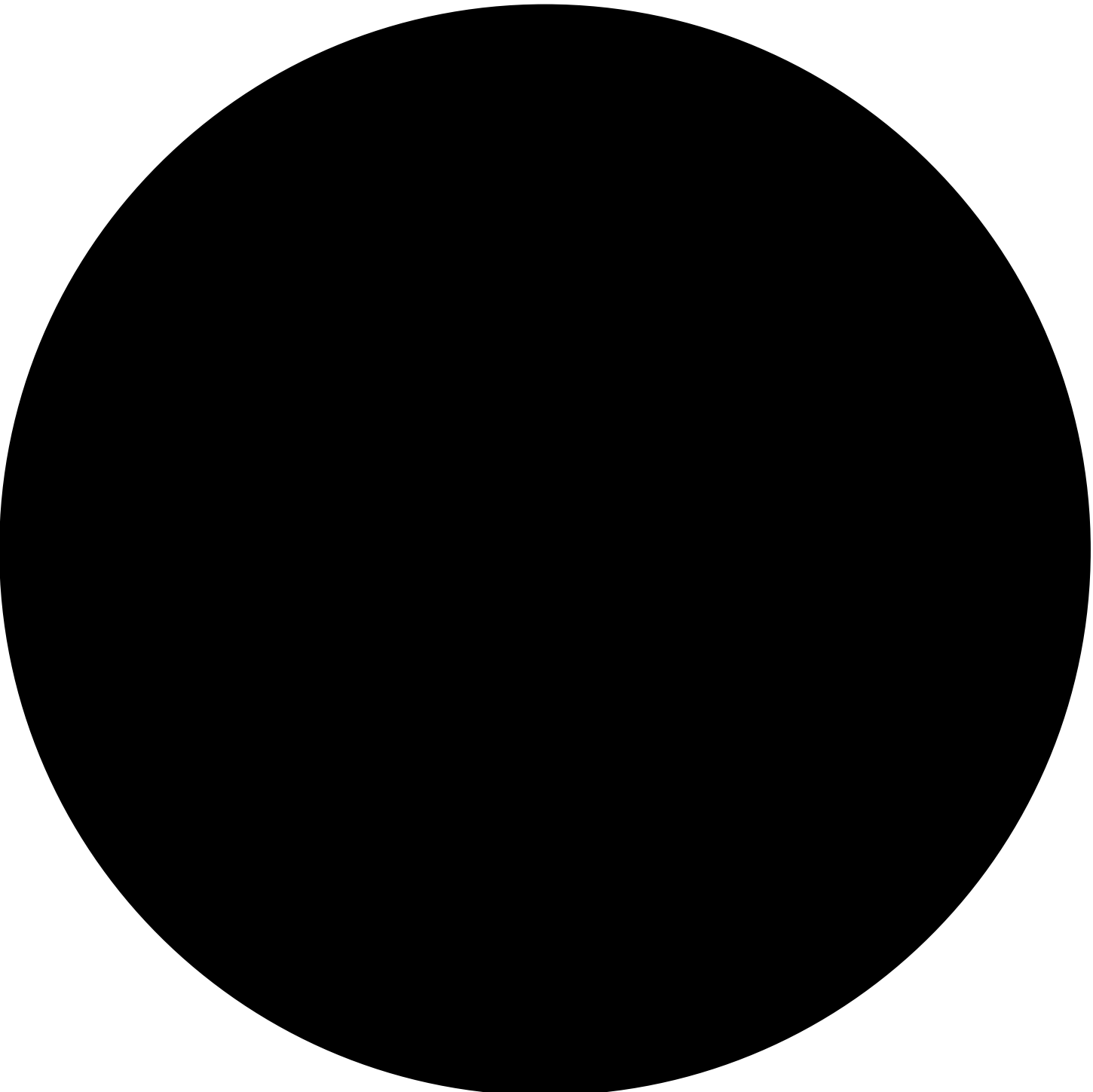


JOB AUTOMATION COMES TO THE OFFICE

Posted on 07/02/2017 by Naider



When talking about the threat of robotization and automation for the future of the labor market, it is normal to think first of all about factories and assembly line operators, but artificial intelligence also has a potential great impact in office and office work. As a sign of the materialization of this reality, the Japanese insurance company Fukuoku Mutual Life Insurance has recently announced the dismissal of 34 administrative people for the implementation of an IBM artificial intelligence system, according to [*The Guardian*](#).

Obviously the more than 30 workers who will be replaced have received it as bad news, but the insurance company assures that the artificial intelligence system will increase productivity by 30% and expects to amortize the investment in two years: the IBM's cognitive technology will be used to analyze and interpret hundreds of certificates and medical records to calculate mutual payments like a human, but in much less time.

Japan's aging and shrinking population, coupled with its position of technological leadership, make Japan a ripe testing ground for artificial intelligence. Also at the highest level in the public sector, as his ministry of economy, trade and industry has announced the introduction of artificial intelligence on a trial basis to help senior officials draft responses for the minister at cabinet meetings and parliamentary sessions.

According to [a study by Nomura Research Institute](#), about half of jobs in Japan will be automated by machines in the next 20 years. Along the same lines, a study from Oxford University predicts the [loss of 47% of jobs that currently exist](#) in developed countries in the next 25 years. Until now, *blue collar* workers or blue overalls have been affected by robotization, however, administrative jobs, especially the most routine ones, are at the front line of risk.

The loss of jobs inevitably leads us to think of a dystopian scenario in which inequality, precariousness, and the disappearance of the middle classes deepen. However, we must consider that at other times in history, the disappearance of some jobs has led to the appearance of others, and the scenario presented to us may lead to the appearance of new categories of workers who work together with robots instead of being replaced by them. Creative jobs, which use multidisciplinary knowledge and cognitive skills to produce hard-to-anticipate goods and services, can

also be appreciated – including designers, programmers, architects, artists, public relations, etc. – because they are necessary in all kinds of sectors.

Automation, on the other hand, can be seen as an opportunity to develop a more egalitarian society, with shorter work calendars and more fairly distributed -avoiding simultaneous unemployment and stressed wage earners-, in which citizens of an economic safety net – such as a potential [universal basic income](#) – in order to pursuing your passions instead of a livelihood: starting new business activities, re-educating yourself, or engaging in creative projects. On the idea developed by the Australian think tank [The Green Institute](#), salaried employment would not be a measure of dignity and the only way to contribute to society, but rather there would be a system, institutions and a culture in place that would lead to greater equality, democracy and civil society. revitalized, better environmental outcomes, and a more creative and interconnected community.

There are no comments yet.