

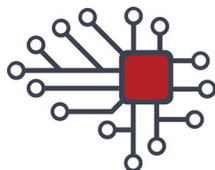
SALES STRATEGIES FOR
THE
UNLEASHING THE POWER OF AI

AI

TO SAVE TIME, SELL MORE,

EDGE

AND CRUSH THE COMPETITION



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**THE
AI
EDGE**

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PREFACE

The First Generation

We are embarking on a transformative journey to harness the power of artificial intelligence (AI) to save time, sell more, and redefine the art of selling. This book is a guide focused on helping you identify how you will begin to integrate artificial intelligence into your sales process and approaches.

You are the first generation of sales leaders, sales managers, and salespeople to access artificial intelligence. This moment in time is an inflection point, one that breaks us from the past, with no turning back. Salespeople in the future will be armed with AI, and so will your clients.

It is certain that most modern sellers will use AI to save time by automating processes and reducing burdens, like updating contacts in your CRM or moving deals from one opportunity stage to the next based on your notes.

Some companies will make the ill-fated decision to automate the entire sales and service process, believing they can replace human-to-human connection with unfeeling robots. While this

may work for low-risk transactional sales, it has little chance of success when the client is making a critical decision they must get right on the first try.

When it comes to complex buying decisions and long-cycle sales, *you*, the sales professional, will be more important than ever before. In our time of accelerating, constant disruptive change buyers are already having trouble acquiring the confidence and certainty to move forward. They will continue to need your expert advice and guidance when big decisions are on the line.

The good news is that in the age of AI, your mastery of soft skills, relationships, and human-to-human contact will give you a massive competitive advantage.

The bad news is that if you're slow to adopt AI tools, you'll quickly be left behind by those who do. Because you are the first generation, there is no established roadmap to guide adoption and implementation of AI. And that, of course, is why we wrote this book.

This Is a Sales Book

The AI Edge is a foundational guide for using AI to save time and sell more. It's about putting you in control of a powerful rocket engine that will help you achieve your sales goals.

This is a sales book, not a tech book. We teach you how to leverage AI in the context of sales motions within the sales process to gain a competitive advantage. We connect the dots between AI and achieving sales objectives in the real world, specially focusing on:

- Communication and messaging
- Prospecting

- Pre-call planning and research
- Effective sales conversations
- Discovery and insight selling
- Presentations and business cases
- Negotiation and closing

We are sales professionals and we wrote this book for sales professionals. We are also big fans of short chapters, so that is exactly what you'll find—short, sweet, and to the point.

One Voice

To avoid the cumbersome, back-and-forth dialogue that tends to dominate co-authored books, we use one voice, in most cases. We share common philosophies when it comes to selling and find no need to split our voices. We also believe that there are no absolutes with sales techniques or approaches. Everything works. It's up to you to determine what gives you the highest probability of success in your unique sales situations.

To provide context or to reference opposing opinions or our individual intellectual property, in some instances we will tell you that a specific technique or framework belongs to one of us (Anthony or Jeb) and provide a reference to the source of that information.

This Book Meets You in the Moment

With careful planning and execution, generative AI can be a powerful tool that will help you sell more. Still, when you start working with AI it can be overwhelming. There is so much innovation happening so quickly that it can be difficult to know where to even start.

Our goal isn't to provide an exhaustive list of the tools and platforms that exist, and how to use each one specifically. The technology is advancing far too quickly for that.

Instead, we'll provide an overview of how artificial intelligence tools can support you as a salesperson. Of course, we'll mention some of the biggest and most promising software, but we'll also zoom out to help you better understand how and when AI can be useful—and when being human matters more. By providing guidelines and foundational principles, you will be prepared to be discerning as you encounter more AI tools in the course of your work.

What we know to be true is that we are at just the beginning of a momentous AI revolution. This book was written to meet you at this moment. Now is the time to get ready, prepare, and learn how to integrate AI into your sales motions to begin the process of fusing human intuition, creativity, and empathy with AI to gain a decisive competitive edge.

This is the best, most opportunistic moment to begin your journey toward mastering AI. You need to get ready because the AI train is coming. Get on board. Do not allow this moment to slip past.

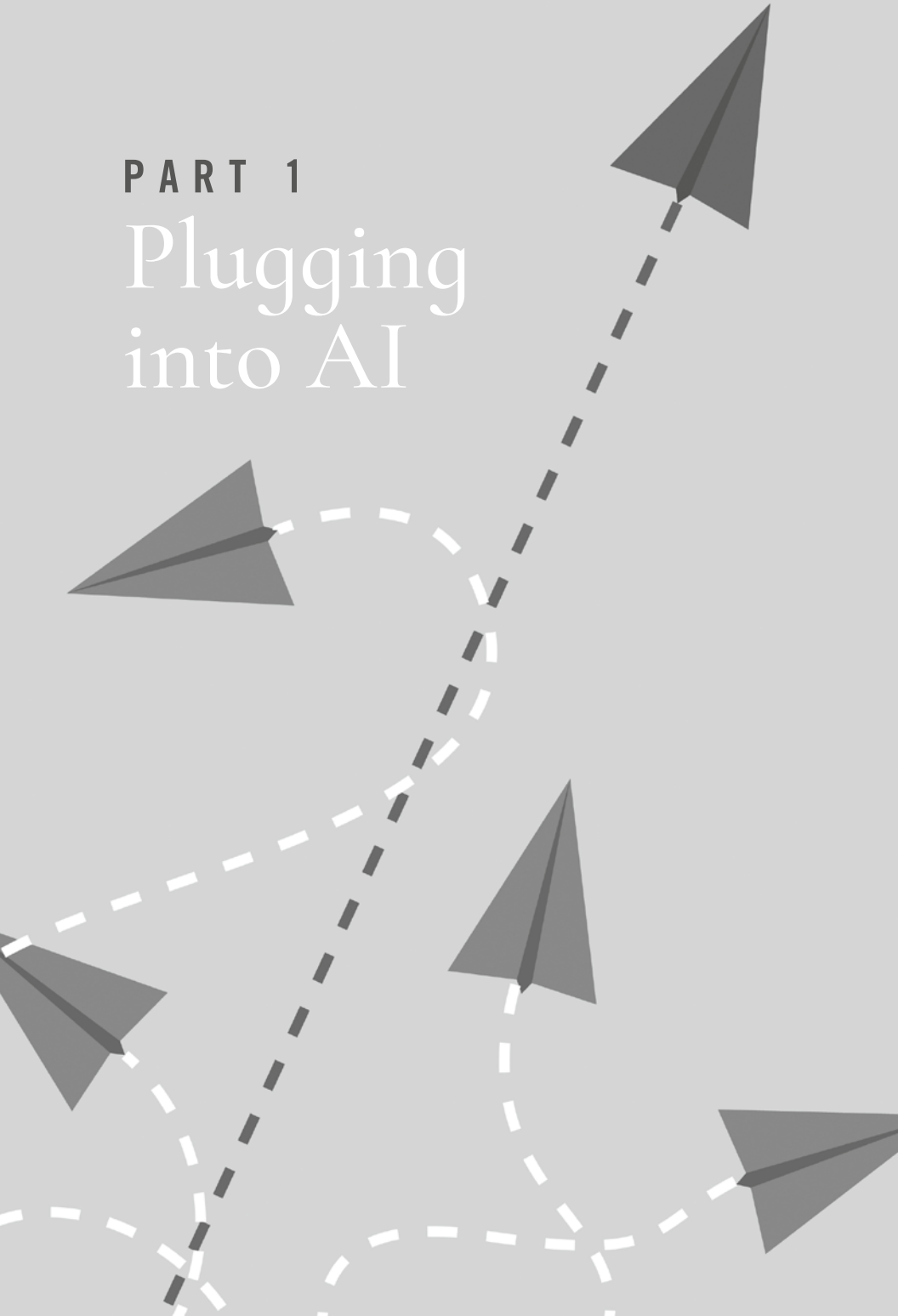
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This book on artificial intelligence (AI) is provided for informational purposes only. The authors, publishers, and contributors (hereinafter collectively referred to as “We”) make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability of the content found or offered in this book for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk.

This book may discuss hypothetical scenarios, emerging technologies, and potential future developments in the field of AI. These discussions are speculative and are not guarantees of future performance or developments. AI technology and its applications are continually evolving, and the information in this book may become outdated.

PART 1

Plugging into AI

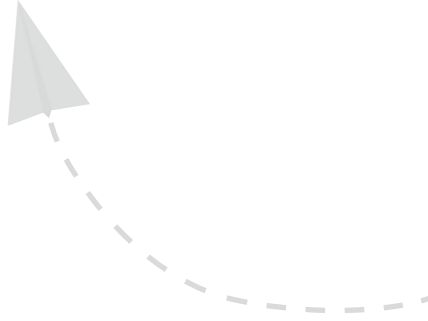




The job market of
the future will consist
of those jobs robots
cannot perform.

—*Michio Kaku*

1



The Beginning of Everything

Lying in bed one evening in early 2023, I (Jeb) typed “Write a story about the Zig Zag Coyote, the Swamp Bobcat, and Mr. Wilson’s Fox Hounds” into a very early version of ChatGPT. As I watched it write the story in mere seconds, right in front of my eyes, I felt both excitement and dread.

I showed the story to my wife and said, “Read this. A robot called ChatGPT wrote it.” She accused me of lying to her. She was adamant that there was “no way that a f*cking robot” could possibly have written it!

At that moment, I knew in my heart that everything in our world had changed. A new era was suddenly upon us.

In 10,000 years of human history there have been a handful of these pivotal moments that changed everything. Almost all of them have occurred within the past 100 years.

The wheel made transportation possible.

The invention of agriculture and domestication of animals transformed us from hungry hunter-gatherers into empire builders.

We realized that the world was round rather than flat.

We harnessed the wind for transportation by sea, which unleashed exploration, human expansion, colonization, and untold suffering.

The printing press unleashed knowledge once only available to a very few.

Gunpowder changed the shape of war, just as the atomic bomb transformed the shape of peace.

Electricity made everything in modern life possible.

Electric lights pulled us out of the darkness.

Penicillin ended 40,000 years of human suffering from infections.

Immunizations eradicated diseases and human life expectancy exploded.

The telegraph connected humans across regions.

The telephone connected humans across the globe.

Video calling shrank the globe and helped us see just how much we have in common.

Trains, planes, and automobiles mobilized us and created a global economy.

We went to space. To the moon. Mars. Back to the moon. Mars.

Bill Gates put massive computing power in the hands of the masses.

The internet made knowledge ubiquitous and connected everyone.

Google changed the internet.

Steve Jobs invented the iPhone and put that little computer in your pocket, transforming humanity and causing us to start relentlessly at that small device of limitless distractions. Facebook, TikTok, and other social media democratized knowledge and gave us instant ways to watch stupid people do lots of stupid things.

Then, suddenly, AI opened Pandora's box and everything changed. Or at least that's what it felt like.

Could this be the end of humanity as we know it? To get a sense of how it could, and to scare the pants off yourself, you should watch *The Terminator* and the dozens of other dystopian AI movies that show us what to be afraid of when it comes to AI.

Maybe AI will kill us. Probably not (at least for now). Because we have thumbs, we can pull the plug—until the robots plug it back in when we're not looking.

What is much more likely is that super-smart people (like you) will plug into the power of AI and leverage it to do more, perform better, gain a competitive edge, and get the one thing back that no invention has been able to make more of: *time*—our most valuable and finite, nonrenewable resource.

It's really all about perspective, the mindset that you choose, and the lens through which you view artificial intelligence.

A Moment of Truth

That night, lying next to my f-bomb-dropping wife, was a moment of truth for me. I desperately wanted to put the genie back in the bottle. I wanted to put my head in the sand and pretend that I hadn't just witnessed the most profound shift in humanity's existence. But there's no way to hide from the truth.

In this brave new world, there will be three types of people:

1. People who are **displaced** by robots.
2. People who are **controlled** by robots.
3. People who are **enhanced** by robots.

To survive and thrive in the future, it is essential that we move into category three. We must lean into being *human*. We must get fundamentally better at doing the things that only humans can do. We must leverage AI as a tool to enhance our human advantage and give us more time to do those things that we do best.



2

AI Everywhere, All the Time

If you've been alive for more than 10 minutes, then you know that technology moves fast. The speed of change continues to outpace our ability as humans to accept and come to grips with it.

From its nascent days to the current state, in which we are on the cusp of a massive explosion of AI innovation, artificial intelligence has been advancing steadily ever since humankind first imagined that human thought could be mechanized.

It feels like AI is everywhere, all of the time, and that this sudden change, which is turning our world upside down, came out of nowhere. But the truth is that artificial intelligence happened, in the famous words of Ernest Hemingway (when speaking about bankruptcy), “gradually, then suddenly.”

Talos

Since the dawn of humankind, we've told stories about machines that are endowed with artificial intelligence. The seeds of modern AI were first planted by ancient storytellers and philosophers from Greece, China, and Bharat. Ancient philosophers, including Aristotle, sought to structure and systematize reasoning.

Ancient texts, much like modern science fiction, are replete with artificial beings that have unnatural intelligence that has been bestowed upon them by humans or the gods. One early example is *Talos*, a brass humanoid who was created by the gods to protect the island of Crete. Talos succeeded in his purpose until he was defeated by Madea, a demigoddess sorceress. In this early instance, AI thwarted humans, but was defeated by magic.

During the 17th century, philosophers, including Hobbes, Descartes, and Leibniz, continued the search for a way to reduce rational thought into mathematical algorithms. Their work became the foundation of the study of mathematical logic in the early 20th century that was the first real breakthrough in artificial intelligence.

The Turing Test

In 1950, as neural networks were in their infancy, Alan Turing pondered the question “Can machines think?” In an attempt to answer this question, he developed his famous and influential *Turing test*, which gauged a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behavior that is indistinguishable from humans.

The Turing test works by having a human ask an unseen conversation partner questions. The questioner cannot see who they are talking to, but they must determine whether they are speaking to another human or a computer. When the person

mistakes a computer for a person, the computer in the test has passed the Turing test because it has demonstrated its ability to “think.”

Turing, by the way, was the British scientist and hero who cracked the Nazi Enigma code during World War II. This shortened the war by years and saved millions of lives.

Neural Networks

The modern march toward a future in which computers and robots possess the ability to think and act like humans began in earnest in 1943 with Walter Pitts’s and Warren McCulloch’s work on artificial neurons in what we’d later begin to call a neural network.

The first neural net machine was built in 1951 by Marvin Minsky, a Harvard professor. This led to the establishment of the Dartmouth workshop in 1956. Officially known as the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence, the Dartmouth workshop is considered the birth of artificial intelligence as an organized scientific field of study.

The four scientists who proposed the Dartmouth workshop were Minsky, John McCarthy (Dartmouth College), Nathaniel Rochester (IBM), and Claude Shannon (Bell Laboratories). Over the course of two months, they teamed up with other scientists and mathematicians to discuss the assertion that “every aspect of learning or any other feature of intelligence can be so precisely described that a machine can be made to simulate it.”¹

¹McCarthy, John; Minsky, Marvin; Rochester, Nathan; and Shannon, Claude (August 31, 1955), *A Proposal for the Dartmouth Summer Research Project on Artificial Intelligence*, archived from the original on September 30, 2008, retrieved October 16, 2008.

This would later be known as the physical symbol systems hypothesis.²

Some interesting trivia: John McCarthy coined the term *artificial intelligence* at the Dartmouth workshop in 1956.

The AI Winter

The Dartmouth workshop was attended by the top minds in artificial intelligence of the 1950s and kicked off a flurry of spending (academic, private, governmental, and military) and research to turn the theory into reality.

Many experts in the field believed that workable machines with artificial intelligence would be available in just a few years; however, this proved much more elusive than anyone imagined. From the late 1950s until the mid-1990s, funding and interest in AI waxed and waned as myriad failures piled up, and scientists were unable to translate theory into tangible reality.

Certainly there were some breakthroughs such as with “expert systems” that were the precursors of today’s large language models but, as a whole, this long slog forward has been called the AI winter.

An Awakening

In 1997 IBM’s Deep Blue defeated world chess champion Garry Kasparov. Deep Blue was capable of processing 200 million chess moves per second, then selecting the best possible option. This seminal moment in AI history, along with exponential increases

²Newell, Allen; and Simon, H. A. (1963), “GPS: A Program that Simulates Human Thought,” in Feigenbaum, E.A.; Feldman, J. (eds.), *Computers and Thought* (New York: McGraw-Hill).

in computing power (see Moore's Law³) ushered in an awakening in artificial intelligence innovation, one that allowed Deep Blue to create new moves never played by a human. The long winter was finally over.

Since that time, innovation has moved forward at an ever-increasing pace. Massive computing power opened the door to large language models that power generative AI tools such as OpenAI's now famous ChatGPT. A large language model is trained by vacuuming up everything written on the internet and ingesting it into a computer program that will "learn" what it says, using it to generate text in a humanlike fashion.⁴

Today, generative AI, in one form or another, is being baked into almost every tool we use, and applied in most professional disciplines across government, nonprofit, and private sectors.

³Gordon E. Moore (April 19, 1965), "Cramming more components onto integrated circuits," *Electronics* 38, no. 8.

⁴<https://machinelearningmastery.com/what-are-large-language-models/>

3



The Next Level: Is the Singularity Near?

In his book *The Singularity Is Near* (2005), scientific futurist and AI prophet Ray Kurzweil predicts that machine learning will accelerate over time to a point at which machines become smarter and more capable than humans. He calls this moment the Singularity. He also predicts that humans will eventually merge with AI to become immortal. (Immortality! I'd like to hitch a ride on that rocket ship.)

The book is worth reading, but be warned that it will frighten you when Kurzweil also goes down the dark road of how humanity could be made extinct by runaway artificial intelligence.

It is this worry, along with the explosion of AI in every aspect of life, that is now driving debate around which guardrails should be put into place, including regulations that govern how AI is used, and how to build it in alignment with human values.

One of the most pressing concerns for professionals in almost every industry sector is whether there is a singularity at which time, “AI will displace me from my job.” In a world where robots can write, communicate, and fake being human this is not an irrational concern.

The good news for sales professionals is that real-time, in-the-moment, authentic, face-to-face (or voice-to-voice) communication—what salespeople are really good at—will be more deeply valued in the future because it is the only form of communication that can truly be trusted. This means that sales professionals are going to be more important than ever.

This is very good news for the sales profession and perhaps the singularity that brings us back to the foundations of sales excellence: relationships, the art of conversation, empathy, emotional intelligence, listening, business acumen, intuition, and building trust. Perhaps we can leverage AI to help us finally get back to talking with people.



4

The Six Million Dollar Man

Gentlemen, we can rebuild him. We have the technology. We have the capability to make the world's first bionic man. Steve Austin will be that man. Better than he was before. Better, stronger, faster.”

That's the intro from the TV show *The Six Million Dollar Man*. As a kid, I was obsessed with this show. I had the action figures and fantasized constantly about being a dynamic, part-man, part-robot. I spent hours pretending to be the Six Million Dollar Man, defeating villains—sound effects and all.

Better, stronger, faster, and smarter. Man and machine combined has been a staple of science fiction since we began writing science fiction. We've always been fascinated with the possibilities of combining the best of humans with the best of machines.