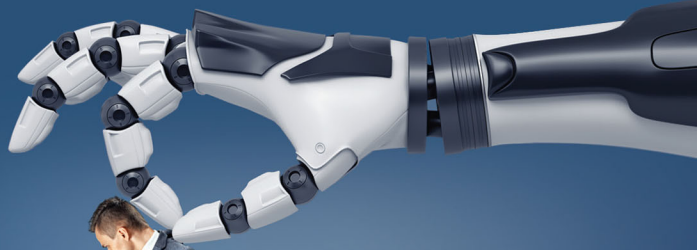


"A hands-on guide for enhancing our humanity
in harmony with AI." —Marshall Goldsmith



IRREPLACEABLE

The Art of Standing Out in the
Age of Artificial Intelligence

PASCAL BORNET

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WILEY

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I dedicate this book to my children and to all the children in the world.

We owe them the best future.

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Preface

I've spent the last 25 years immersed in the world of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation, working for two of the industry's most prominent consulting firms. In my role, I've implemented hundreds of AI projects around the globe and seen firsthand how AI can transform businesses and society—boosting efficiency, enhancing the experiences of customers and employees alike, enhancing people's lives, and sometimes even saving them.

My experiences have led me to a crucial realization: successful AI is really all about us, the humans. AI has been built by people, and it is used by people. Without human insight and interaction, AI loses its essence and purpose. The most successful and profitable AI initiatives I have seen are those that are in strong connections with people.

This is why, a few years ago, I decided to concentrate my research on the frontier between humans and AI. This is where I believe there is the highest value to create for our world.

This has sparked my passion for leveraging AI to create a more humane world. It was this commitment that led me to write my first book, *Intelligent Automation*, in 2020, aiming to make these insights accessible to the largest possible audience.

“Without human insight and interaction, AI loses its essence and purpose.”

My journey continued on social media, where I began sharing this message through stories that sparked inspiration. For example, I love sharing about real-life AI innovations that make a difference in our world—think of hearing aids that let a baby hear their parents’ voices for the first time, or an AI system for public swimming pools that alerts if someone is drowning.

Along the way, I’ve built an amazing online community of millions of followers across LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube who get just as excited about these innovations as I do! And when I’m not online, I’m traveling around the world, speaking at more than 50 events a year to spread the word even further.

The interactions, the questions, and the conversations I’ve had with people during those events, as well as on social media, are what inspired this book.

Consider this book as an extensive question-and-answer session where I address the most critical and sensitive questions raised from my interactions with a wide variety of audiences. As a result, while I am the one putting pen to paper, this book is very much a collaborative effort. In a way, it’s an honor to assert that this book has more than one author—it has millions!

Don’t be fooled by the easy words in this book. They are solid, backed by my 20-plus years in the AI trenches. I’ve sweated to make this a quick read, something anyone can grasp, even if you’re not a bookworm. It’s short, sharp, and packed, ready for you to dive in.

No single book can be for all readers, yet we each play multiple roles in our lives. Most of us are parents, workers, team leaders, or entrepreneurs—in addition, all of us are humans. And AI impacts all these dimensions of our lives simultaneously. However, most books concentrate on just one area, risking imbalance—for instance, improving your professional life might result in neglecting your family life. This book addresses that gap. It adopts a holistic approach, guiding you to maintain balance in your personal, family, and work lives. It ensures you can thrive in the various dimensions that define your existence.

Keep in mind that navigating the AI landscape is a complex, often surprising journey, filled with the unknown of the future. My insights stem from personal experience and extensive research. Yet it’s important to acknowledge that other experts may have differing views.

Humility is key; no one can predict the future with certainty, so embracing a variety of perspectives is essential in this field.

And I'm eager to hear your thoughts and engage in discussions. Share your views using the hashtag #irreplaceable, and let's connect online at [@pascal_bornet](https://twitter.com/pascal_bornet). Also, join the IRREPLACEABLE Community and Academy, a safe space where we can share, learn, and actively engage with the concepts from the book (www.irreplaceable.ai).

This book will take you on an exciting and transformative journey. I've distilled 20 years of research to create a unique approach to surviving and thriving with AI that I'm excited to share with you. I've had the privilege of consulting with hundreds of experts in fields such as neuroscience, psychology, resilience, flow, and creativity.

This book is like an open house into the future, addressing the most important question of our current times: In a world of AI, how do we keep our humanity front and center?

We stand out. We become IRREPLACEABLE.

“AI is not the destination; it’s the vehicle that takes us to a more human future.”

More About My Passion for AI and the Reason for This Book

Nature gave ants the capacity to carry up to 50 times their weight and cheetahs the ability to run super-fast. We humans are not as strong or as fast. But we were given another power: the one to create technology. And thanks to technology, we too can carry heavy loads, move at the speed of sound, and do much more! It's like we're the “tech-animals” of the world.

Now, the story of our relationship with AI is actually part of a much bigger story about our love affair with technology. AI is just the latest and greatest in a long line of technologies that have made our lives so much better.

Let me give you some mind-blowing examples of how technology has improved our world. Since 1900, primarily thanks to technology, our life expectancy has doubled to reach 70 years

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old globally,¹ literacy rates have increased from 12% to more than 85%,² extreme poverty has declined from more than 75% to about 10%,³ and child mortality rates have dropped by 93% since 1950.⁴

That's like going from a world where most people couldn't read and had a high chance of not even making it to their fifth birthday to a world where almost everyone goes to school and has a good chance of living a long, healthy life!

Of course, technology isn't perfect. For example, in the same period, CO₂ emissions have risen more than 16 times, contributing significantly to climate change.⁵

But here's the thing: the same technology that causes these problems can also help solve them. We should all be confident in the virtuous cycle of the technologies we create. For example, the very problems caused by technology, like pollution, can be addressed with newer, greener technologies, such as renewable energy systems.

This cycle of technological innovation is essential for human progress. No one reading this book would like to go back in time and live a life full of dangers that ends, at best, at 30 years old.

The long evolution of technology from stone and fire to AI is a sacred legacy from our ancestors, aimed at improving the world. Today, we must honor this legacy by adapting to and evolving with both the advantages and challenges of technology, seizing opportunities, and mitigating risks.

We are the custodians of this legacy, tasked with creating a better future for our children. This responsibility means that discussions about AI's impact should not be limited to experts or corporations; they concern us all. Each of us holds the influence and voice to shape our future with AI.

This book is my commitment to empower you with the tools, insights, and inspiration needed to master the dynamic and exhilarating world of AI.

AI is not the destination; it's the vehicle that takes us to a more human future.

Introduction

Wakeup! The provocative cover of this book is a wake-up call. This book is meant to grab you until you pay attention. Our humanity is at risk, and we need to act now!

AI is here to stay, inevitably expanding and accelerating its presence. It is rapidly infiltrating various aspects of our lives, from influencing our decisions and automating jobs to capturing our children's attention, threatening our privacy and ethics, and even unfairly competing against our businesses.

“This book is a wake-up call. Our humanity is at risk, and we need to act now!”

You Have a Choice to Make

As AI takes over our world at an increasing pace, you are faced with a choice of two options.

Option 1

You can sit back and do nothing, letting AI strip away everything that makes you human. You can let it pull your strings like a puppet, turning you into a meaningless, obsolete husk.

This is exactly what happens when we leverage AI to value speed over depth and prioritize convenience over human connection. This is also what happens when we relinquish creativity to AI copy-paste, or when we opt for AI simulation over authenticity.

I call this the “AI obesity.” Just like how we got hooked on fast food, now we’re binging on fast creativity, fast connections, fast decisions, and even fast love. It’s like we’re addicted to the fast food of AI, consuming it in large quantities without thinking about the consequences.

We’re settling for “good enough” instead of striving for excellence, and we’re losing our jobs, our businesses, our attention, our kids’ safety, and our humanity in the process. If you ask me, AI obesity is a far more critical danger for our humanity than any hypothetical Terminator-style robot apocalypse!

“AI obesity is a far more critical danger for our humanity than any hypothetical Terminator-style robot apocalypse!”

Option 2

Alternatively, you can choose quality over convenience. You can swap fast food for a gourmet dining experience. This decision for authenticity, uniqueness, and depth is your key to maintaining your humanity in an AI-dominated world. It is about becoming truly IRREPLACEABLE.

How to achieve that? Well, first and foremost, you need to understand that AI itself isn’t the problem. It’s like food—AI is not inherently good or bad, it’s all about how you engage with it: the amount, quality, variety, and frequency of your consumption.

However, the big difference between food and AI is that our parents warned us that eating too much can lead to obesity. Unfortunately, no one has yet taught us how to consume AI to avoid falling into AI obesity—but this book will fill that gap. So embracing the gourmet experience is not about refusing or banning AI; it is about using it wisely. It means getting the best out of it without losing yourself.

The closer you get to AI, the more you stand to gain—better efficiency, smarter learning, improved life satisfaction—but also the more dangerous it becomes. Imagine you’re juggling sharp knives. With the right skills, you’ll wow everyone. Without them, you could severely hurt yourself. This book is here to teach you the skills for that amazing juggling act.

To master this art, this book is going to take you on a practical journey to become IRREPLACEABLE. This groundbreaking approach draws on my 20 years of pioneering research at the human-AI frontier. It offers practical strategies that apply universally to your personal life, your children, your work, and your organization.

By leveraging it, you will develop the confidence to equip and guide your kids toward a successful future alongside AI. Additionally, you will be able to transform the impact of AI on your children from a distractor to a powerful educational ally.

You'll discover how to enhance your unique capabilities—those that AI can't match. By subtly blending your talents with AI, you'll forge powerful synergies, propelling your performance to new heights. Soon you won't be searching for jobs; jobs will be seeking you out. Forget climbing the corporate ladder; you'll be constructing your own.

Adopters of the IRREPLACEABLE approach have seen remarkable outcomes: over 30% increase in efficiency and 40% enhancement in work quality. They're enjoying a more balanced life, with heightened satisfaction and a deeper sense of purpose in their work. They also report having boosted their resilience and adaptability, leading them to greater inner peace, sharper focus, and overall life satisfaction.

Applying the IRREPLACEABLE journey to your company allows you to dramatically transform your business model with AI at scale. Simultaneously, you'll master the delicate art of merging human and AI strengths, significantly enhancing your business's uniqueness and competitive edge. You'll drive innovation to a point where you're no longer just adapting to the market—you're redefining it.

Your IRREPLACEABLE Journey

The “IRREPLACEABLE” framework introduces the “Three Competencies of the Future,” developed from extensive research supported by experts in diverse fields such as behavioral psychology, addiction, pediatrics, resilience, flow, creativity, critical thinking, neuroscience, and learning.

As we will learn in more detail later in the book, “AI-Ready” focuses on enhanced performance and ethical AI use. “Human-Ready” leverages our unique human capabilities and creates synergies with AI.

“Change-Ready” emphasizes resilience and adaptability in the rapidly changing AI landscape.

This book marks the beginning of your transformation, which continues online. My LinkedIn page (www.linkedin.com/in/pascalbornet), X account (@pascal_bornet), and YouTube channel (@pascal_bornet) offer further insights, educational materials, expert discussions, and updates to support your ongoing journey. Join the IRREPLACEABLE Academy and community at www.irreplaceable.ai. Share your experiences of becoming IRREPLACEABLE using #irreplaceable.

The first step in your self-transformation journey is to take the IRQ: the IRREPLACEABLE Quotient test (www.irreplaceable.ai). This test allows you to identify which competencies you need to work on in priority. It will also help you track your progress and coach your learning because you can retake the test at any time during your journey.

How This Book Is Organized

Part 1, “The IRREPLACEABLE Imperative,” kicks off with a bang, shattering the myths surrounding AI and unveiling the game-changing IRREPLACEABLE framework. You’ll discover the secret sauce to supercharging your human potential and get started with the IRREPLACEABLE roadmap.

In Part 2, “Building IRREPLACEABLE Skills,” you’ll dive into how AI is redefining the world of skills. You’ll discover the power of creating a synergistic relationship with AI, leveraging your uniquely human abilities—the Humics—to build skills that complement and enhance AI’s capabilities.

Part 3, “Becoming IRREPLACEABLE at Work,” teaches you the art of AI augmentation, enabling you to elevate your work performance without risking your job to automation. You’ll learn to adopt an AI mindset, strategically apply AI to your work and life, and maintain AI literacy in an ever-evolving landscape. You’ll also confront the burning questions of personal data management and ethical AI use head-on.

Part 4, “Raising IRREPLACEABLE Kids and Protecting Yourself,” equips you with the tools to future-proof children in the age of AI. From outsmarting digital distractions to breaking free from AI

addiction, you'll gain the tools to navigate the AI-infused world with confidence and redefine the essence of a well-balanced life for you and your children.

Part 5, "Leading IRREPLACEABLE Companies," teaches you how to embed AI into your organization's DNA while creating an environment where humans and AI work together seamlessly, unlocking unprecedented innovation and growth. You'll explore the principles of responsible AI implementation, and I'll show you how to build resilient, adaptable businesses that thrive in the face of change.

Part 6, "Implementing an Action Plan," provides a practical summary, guiding you on how to immediately apply the method in your daily life.

Throughout this book, you'll find real-life examples, expert insights, and actionable strategies that you can immediately apply to your life and work. By the end of this journey, you'll have the mindset, skills, and tools to become truly IRREPLACEABLE—ready to harness the power of AI, amplify your human potential, and create a future that is more innovative, inclusive, and deeply fulfilling.

PART



The IRREPLACEABLE Imperative

In this first part of the book, you'll explore the overarching concept of being IRREPLACEABLE in the age of AI. You'll dive into what it means for you as an individual, setting the foundation for the rest of the book.

Remember, AI impacts all dimensions of your life simultaneously—your personal life, your role as a parent, your work, and your business. This book takes a holistic approach, ensuring that you can thrive in all these areas. You'll start by understanding the IRREPLACEABLE imperative, which will guide you through the rest of your journey.

CHAPTER

1

Don't Believe All You Hear About AI!

AI has become an inescapable presence, transforming the way we live, work, and interact. But amid the hype and the headlines, it's easy to get lost in a maze of misconceptions and half-truths.

In this chapter, I'll separate fact from fiction, dispelling the myths that cloud our understanding of AI and its impact on our world. You'll explore the reality of AI's influence on society, business, and the future of work, laying the groundwork for the IRREPLACEABLE framework that will guide you through this transformative journey.

I've pinpointed 10 prevalent rumors surrounding AI. For each, I'll delve into analysis and offer my verdict—TRUE or FALSE—based on my insights.

Adapting to AI's Influence

Rumor #1: AI is only important for tech enthusiasts or people working in technology

FALSE.

Honestly, we often miss just how much AI has woven itself into the fabric of our daily lives. It's everywhere, and our reliance on it is continuously deepening. Every single day, we're all engaging with AI in so many ways, often without even realizing it!

Let's delve into the myriad ways AI interacts with our daily lives:

- You wake up and roll out of bed, and your smart home's thermostat has already adjusted the temperature, ensuring a cozy morning for you. That's AI working its magic.
- On your commute, you're taking a new route today. But no worries—your GPS reroutes in real-time based on current traffic conditions. That smooth, traffic-free drive? Courtesy of AI.
- Your car, like most modern cars, comes embedded with AI-driven features—from adaptive cruise control and automated parking to predictive maintenance alerts. It's AI looking at your safety.
- As you start your workday, the document you're drafting autocorrects your typos and suggests better phrasing—that's AI refining your words.
- Checking social media? The posts you see first, the ads that mysteriously match your recent search history, and even the memes tailored to your sense of humor—all are AI's handiwork.
- Got a client overseas? When you converse over email, AI-driven translation tools help bridge any language gaps, ensuring seamless communication.
- Planning a business trip? The online platform you use to book your flight employs AI to find you the best deals and optimal flight times and even suggests hotels based on your past preferences. Once on the flight, AI systems assist pilots in optimizing routes in real time based on changing weather conditions and airspace traffic.
- Got a virtual meeting? The noise-cancellation ensuring the car horn in the street doesn't disrupt proceedings is, once again, AI's doing. And that spam-free inbox you enjoy? AI's tireless efforts filter out those unnecessary emails.
- Returning home, you might unwind with some tunes. Your music streaming app creates a playlist with fresh songs that fit right in with your favorites. You guessed it—AI's behind that perfect playlist.
- At home, beyond smart fridges and thermostats, there are AI-powered ovens that adjust cooking times based on what's inside, washing machines that optimize cycles based on load weight and dirtiness, and even vacuums that learn the layout of your house for efficient cleaning.

- Movie night? The recommendations from your streaming service don't disappoint. Whether you're in the mood for a rom-com or an action-packed thriller, AI knows just the thing.
- Finally, as you drift off to sleep, your fitness tracker monitors your sleep patterns, ensuring you wake up refreshed. That gentle wake-up alarm that doesn't jar you out of slumber? A lullaby from our ever-present helper, AI.

Now, think bigger. Our entire supply chains—from the factory producing goods and the systems optimizing shipping routes to the stock management at your local store—rely heavily on AI. The banking system is also a massive nexus of AI operations. From fraud detection and credit score evaluations to high-frequency trading, AIs are at the helm. In the high-stakes environment of hospitals, AI acts as an invaluable ally, working alongside medical professionals, amplifying their ability to save lives and enhance patient care.

This also raises questions. For example, we believe we should not give AI the right to make decisions by itself without consulting us. But we have already been doing this for years, and the delegation trend is accelerating. Financial markets operate on AI automation, aircraft are piloted by AI, and traffic lights are controlled by AI. This raises several questions: What are the implications of such a delegation? To what extent should we entrust AI with such responsibilities? And is it truly safe to rely on AI across all facets of our existence?

In addition, can you imagine what would happen if, one day, all AI systems just...stopped working? That's a scary thought. The consequences would be unimaginable. Not only would we lose out on many of our modern comforts and work automation, but it could be disastrous in fields like medicine. So many people rely on AI-driven systems for critical care and support.

With AI everywhere, it is imperative for all of us to become aware and responsible, to become IRREPLACEABLE.

Rumor #2: To be successful in an AI world, we need to adopt AI-like qualities

FALSE.

We have been taught that to succeed, we need to be good at crunching numbers, hyper-focused, working 24/7, and becoming

a super-productive workhorse. We tend to admire startup leaders who burn out after working endlessly for months. I still hear managers saying that if you are not stressed, you are not doing enough. And when we carve out time for ourselves, most of us still feel guilty about not achieving more.

But times have changed. Today, with the recent advancements in AI, this mentality is just stone age.

Here's a hot take: to avoid being redundant with AI, you have to be less like AI, not more! To really click with AI, you've got to play up what makes you human, where AI will never be as good as you: harnessing creativity, exploring unconventional ideas, and fostering profound connections with others. Creating synergies that elevate your work to unprecedented levels is impossible if you concentrate solely on skills where AI outshines.

As you will learn in this book, it's these human superpowers—like creativity, empathy, leadership, and just being a good listener—that'll give you the real edge. That's your secret sauce AI can't copy.

Rumor #3: Using AI at work or school is cheating

FALSE.

Ever feel like a fraud using tech to be more efficient at work? It's like there's this unwritten rule that if you're using ChatGPT or Google Translate, you're not really doing the job properly. As if you're breaking some sacred commandment: thou shalt not leverage smart tools but rely on brute human force alone!

Scrap that antiquated notion—it's just not true. You know what? Using AI smartly is a game-changer. It doesn't make your work less valuable; it shows you're clever about how you get things done. This skill is increasingly valuable in a tech-intensive world.

AI is as fundamental as electricity, the internet, or fire. Just as we no longer specify that we baked a cake “with fire” or “with electricity,” it is irrelevant to mention that we crafted a presentation “with AI.” AI's integration should become seamlessly implicit in any of our accomplishments.

The time has come to reexamine these outdated attitudes toward technology. In this book, we will cover how to make this mind shift and several other ones to ensure your success in a world increasingly driven by AI.

Managers should lead this cultural change. Encourage teams to openly embrace AI tools that amplify their talents. Tell them they're