117-118-D Using Your Cognitive Superpowers

Not "I Fear AI Takes My Job"

1. We May Be Asking the Wrong Question

- Much of the public conversation about artificial intelligence begins with a fear:
- "Will AI take my job?"
- It is an understandable question.
- AI can already write, summarize, research, analyze, calculate, code, translate, search, diagnose patterns and generate professional-quality artifacts at speeds impossible for humans.
- If we imagine the professional and AI as competitors performing the same work, displacement appears to be the obvious trajectory:

$$Human \quad vs. \quad AI$$

- But perhaps that framing misses an equally consequential possibility.
- What happens when the professional gets the AI?
- And then something even more powerful:
- What happens when the professional gets AI plus decades of curated institutional experience?
- The more interesting progression may therefore be:

$$Professional$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$Professional + AI$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$Professional + AI + Curated\ Enterprise\ Cognitome$$

- This is not merely an automation story.
- It is potentially an extraordinary professional productivity story.

2. AI Certainly Will Automate Work

- We should not romanticize the transition.
- Some tasks will disappear.
- Some occupations will shrink.
- Some workflows will require dramatically fewer people.
- Routine research, document production, basic analysis, coding, reconciliation, drafting, summarization and other forms of repeatable cognitive work are already becoming cheaper.
- The mistake is jumping from:
  - AI automates some of the professional's work
  - to:
  - Therefore AI eliminates the professional.
- Technology repeatedly changes the amount and kind of work humans can accomplish.
- The more useful question is:

- What does the professional become capable of after inexpensive machine cognition is placed at their disposal?

3. Three Levels of Professional Capability

Consider three professionals confronting exactly the same problem.

Dimension	Professional	Professional + AI	Professional + AI + Curated Enterprise Cognitome
Primary cognitive resource	Human mind	Human + general machine intelligence	Human + AI + accumulated institutional cognition
Knowledge available	Education, reading and personal experience	Personal knowledge + enormous generalized AI knowledge	Same + proprietary organizational/industry experience
Memory horizon	One human career	Human career + AI's generalized knowledge	Potentially generations of institutional experience
Research speed	Human speed	Machine-assisted	Machine-assisted across general + proprietary knowledge
Routine analysis	Human performs much of it	AI performs/accelerates much of it	AI accelerates it using institutional context
Historical experience	Personally encountered cases	Generalized examples	Thousands or millions of institution-specific cases
Failure memory	What the professional remembers	General knowledge of failures	Curated history of the institution's failures, near misses and recoveries
Tacit expertise	Mostly carried by experienced humans	Partially amplified by AI	Portions can be deliberately captured across generations
“Have we seen this before?”	Limited by personal/team memory	AI searches generalized knowledge	Cognitome searches decades of institutional experience
Understanding why	Depends upon experience	AI can reason from available material	Can potentially reconstruct why earlier decisions were made and what followed
Pattern recognition	Personal experiential patterns	Personal + generalized AI patterns	Personal + AI + institution-scale historical patterns
Cross-domain synthesis	Limited by human bandwidth	Strong	Strong + proprietary institutional relationships
Learning from failure	Professional learns	Professional + AI analyze	Failure becomes persistent institutional cognitive capital
Impact of retirement	Expertise walks out the door	Still substantial	More reasoning and experience can remain accessible
Rookie capability	Education + limited experience	Education + powerful AI	Education + AI + generations of institutional learning

Dimension	Professional	Professional + AI	Professional + AI + Curated Enterprise Cognitome
Veteran capability	Deep judgment and experience	Veteran judgment amplified by AI	Veteran judgment + AI + institutional memory larger than one career
Learning model	Primarily additive	Accelerated	Potentially compounding
Scarce asset	Knowledge + experience	Judgment + experience	Judgment + proprietary accumulated cognition
Competitive moat	Individual expertise	Limited—others can access similar AI	Potentially powerful—competitors cannot easily recreate institutional history
Core question	"What do I know?"	"What can AI help me know?"	"What have generations of us learned?"

The third column deserves particular attention.
It isn't simply more AI.
It introduces another asset:

Institutional Experience

4. AI Removes Cognitive Drudgery

Consider how much of a professional's working day historically disappeared into cognitive logistics.

- Searching.
- Reading.
- Formatting.
- Transcribing.
- Reconciling.
- Drafting.
- Finding old documents.
- Producing presentations.
- Rewriting reports.
- Looking through regulations.
- Finding precedents.
- Searching manuals.
- Creating first-pass analyses.
- These activities consumed expensive professional hours.
- AI can collapse portions of them dramatically.
- That does not automatically eliminate the professional.

It potentially reallocates the professional's scarce biological cognition toward:

- judgment,
- curiosity,
- exception handling,
- strategy,
- relationships,
- accountability,
- hypothesis formation,
- decision-making.

In other words:

$$Less\ Cognitive\ Drudgery \rightarrow More\ Professional\ Leverage$$

The Knowledge Worker Transforms into the Cognitome Professional

Peter Drucker's Knowledge Worker emerged in an era when knowledge was scarce and much of professional value came from the human ability to search, analyze, summarize, calculate, document and communicate it. In the AI era, much of that activity can increasingly be treated as cognitive drudgery—work that machines can perform rapidly and cheaply—allowing the human professional to move upward toward judgment, curiosity, interpretation, responsibility, creativity and exception handling.

The next evolution is therefore the Cognitome Professional: a human expert amplified by AI and supported by a curated body of accumulated institutional experience. The Knowledge Worker worked with knowledge; the Cognitome Professional orchestrates cognition.

5. Consider the Doctor

The fear-based formulation asks: "Will AI replace doctors?"
The productivity formulation asks: "What happens when every physician has extraordinary cognitive support?"

Imagine a physician who can rapidly:

- review the literature,
- summarize a complex patient history,
- identify medication interactions,
- compare competing hypotheses,
- prepare questions,
- retrieve guidelines,
- and examine unusual patterns.
- The physician's scarce resource—attention—can move toward the patient and the difficult judgment.
- Now add a carefully governed institutional clinical Cognitome containing decades of applicable, appropriately protected experience.
- The physician gains another question:
  "Has our institution encountered something structurally similar before, and what happened?"
- That does not make the AI the physician.
- It potentially makes the physician better equipped with cognitive super-powers.

6. Consider the Aerospace Engineer

An aerospace engineer encounters an unexpected oscillation.

Professional

- Searches memory, talks to colleagues, consults documentation and investigates.

Professional + AI

- Adds enormous technical knowledge, rapid literature synthesis, coding, mathematical assistance and hypothesis generation.

Professional + AI + Enterprise Cognitome

Can additionally ask:

- *"Across seventy years of our test programs, flight experience, manufacturing investigations and failures, where have we encountered phenomena dynamically similar to this?"*
- Perhaps something resembling it occurred in 1987.
- The terminology was different.
- The aircraft was different.
- The engineers involved retired decades ago.
- But the Cognitome preserved the lineage:

$$Observation \rightarrow Hypothesis \rightarrow Test \rightarrow Failure \rightarrow Revised\ Hypothesis \rightarrow Design\ Change \rightarrow Outcome$$

- The engineer hasn't been replaced.
- The engineer has acquired something resembling multi-generational engineering memory.

7. Consider the Lawyer

The fear narrative says: "AI can research cases and draft briefs. Lawyers are finished."

- But research and drafting consume time precisely because historically cognition was expensive.
- The AI-empowered lawyer can delegate portions of:
  - research,
  - comparison,
  - summarization,
  - document analysis,
  - first drafts,
  - and argument exploration.
- The lawyer can spend more cognitive energy on:
  - strategy,
  - negotiation,
  - client understanding,
  - credibility,
  - judgment,
  - and advocacy.
  - Now add a law firm's curated Cognitome containing decades of cases, arguments, opposing strategies, outcomes and institutional lessons.
- The lawyer can ask:
- "When this firm has encountered strategically similar situations, which approaches succeeded, which failed, and why?"
- Again, the unit of competition has changed.

8. Consider the Airline Professional

Imagine an airline operations professional facing a major weather disruption.

- The traditional professional brings personal experience.
- The AI-augmented professional gains machine-scale analysis.
- The Cognitome Professional additionally has access to decades of appropriately curated:
    - weather disruptions,
    - network recoveries,
    - crew problems,
    - maintenance events,
    - airport constraints,
    - passenger-flow consequences,
    - dispatch decisions,
    - and failed recovery strategies.
- The question becomes:
- "When our network previously entered dynamically similar states, which interventions damped the disruption and which accidentally amplified it?"
- That is institutional experience placed within reach of today's decision-maker.

9. The Rookie Could Receive the Largest Productivity Gain

- The implications for young professionals are particularly interesting.
- A veteran engineer has thirty years of pattern recognition.
- The rookie has six months.
- AI dramatically narrows the knowledge gap.
- A Cognitome could begin narrowing part of the experience-access gap.
- Not by pretending the rookie has experience they do not possess.
- That distinction is crucial.
- But by making relevant historical experience accessible when needed.
- Thus [Rookie + Institutional Cognitome] could become an extraordinarily capable professional configuration.
- The rookie still needs mentoring.
- Still needs judgment.
- Still needs experience.
- Still needs accountability.
- But the institution no longer needs to force every rookie to rediscover every historical lesson from scratch.

10. Veterans May Become Even More Powerful

- The Cognitome is not merely a rookie accelerator.
- Consider the veteran.
- They already possess
    - deep intuition,
    - pattern recognition,
    - domain judgment,
    - practical wisdom.
- Now give that person an LLM.
- Then give them institutional memory larger than any human career.
- The resulting configuration becomes:

$$\boxed{Veteran\ Judgment + Machine\ Intelligence + Institutional\ Memory}$$

- That may be one of the most productive professional combinations ever created.

- AI could therefore increase the leverage of genuinely experienced people enormously.

11. Knowledge Becomes Cheap; Judgment Becomes Expensive

- This may be one of the fundamental economic transitions.

Historically:

$$Knowledge = Scarce$$

Therefore professionals were paid partly because they possessed it.

LLMs change that.

Increasingly:

$$Generic\ Knowledge = Abundant$$

But:

$$Judgment$$

$$Experience$$

$$Accountability$$

$$Trust$$

$$Curiosity$$

$$Reality\ Contact$$

remain scarce.

- The value of the professional therefore migrates upward.
- The future professional should not try to beat AI at retrieving information.
- They should use AI to escape the retrieval layer.

12. Curiosity Could Become More Valuable Than Recall

- There is another remarkable consequence.
- When answers were expensive, knowing answers created professional advantage.
- When answers become cheap, something else becomes scarce:
- Knowing which question deserves to be asked.
- An engineer notices a vibration everyone else ignores.
- A physician notices two weak symptoms that don't quite fit.
- An accountant sees three harmless financial movements that strangely occur together.
- An insurance professional notices a new coupling among previously independent risks.
- The Cognitome Professional says: “Something about this bothers me. Let's investigate.”
- AI provides enormous investigative capacity.
- The Cognitome supplies historical context.
- The human supplies the curiosity.

Thus:

$$\boxed{Human\ Curiosity \times AI\ Capability \times Institutional\ Experience}$$

could become a formidable professional productivity engine.

13. The Professional Moves From Doing Cognition to Orchestrating Cognition

This may change the professional job description itself.

- The traditional professional personally performs much of the cognitive work.
- The empowered professional increasingly:

$$\text{Frames} \rightarrow \text{Questions} \rightarrow \text{Delegates} \rightarrow \text{Evaluates} \rightarrow \text{Challenges} \rightarrow \text{Integrates} \rightarrow \text{Decides}$$

- The professional becomes partly an orchestrator of cognition.
- That is not necessarily less demanding.
- It may be more demanding.
- Because when cognition becomes cheap, poor questions can produce enormous amounts of useless cognition very quickly (sometime derogatorily called ‘AI-Slop’)
- The scarce skill becomes steering the cognitive machinery toward reality.

14. One Professional May Begin Resembling Yesterday's Team

Suppose a senior engineer historically required:

- a junior analyst,
- a researcher,
- a programmer,
- a documentation specialist,
- and substantial administrative support.
- AI may allow portions of those cognitive functions to happen around one professional.
- Then the productivity unit changes from:

Then the productivity unit changes from:

$$One\ Professional \rightarrow One\ Professional's\ Output$$

toward:

$$One\ Professional + AI \rightarrow Historically\ Team\ Scale\ Output$$

Add a mature Cognitome and the professional also gains portions of the organization's accumulated historical perspective.

Thus one professional can begin behaving cognitively more like a **micro-institution**.

15. This Does Not Mean Employment Cannot Fall

- There is an important economic distinction.
- Professional productivity exploding does not imply professional employment exploding.
- Indeed, productivity gains can mean fewer professionals are required to produce a given quantity of work.
- A law firm that required 100 people may accomplish comparable output with fewer.
- An engineering organization may automate substantial analytical work.
- An accounting operation may require fewer people performing routine reconciliation.
- Therefore the employment consequences could still be disruptive.
- But that is different from saying ‘AI makes professionals useless’.

A more plausible mechanism in many domains may be:

$$AI \rightarrow Professional\ Productivity \uparrow\uparrow$$

which can produce:

$$Cost\ per\ Unit\ of\ Professional\ Cognition \downarrow$$

and potentially:

$$Demand\ for\ New\ Professional\ Applications \uparrow$$

The final employment equilibrium is an economic question, not a foregone technological conclusion.

16. Professional Services Could Become Far More Affordable

This productivity increase could have enormous social consequences.
Today high-quality:

- legal advice,
- engineering analysis,
- medical expertise,
- accounting assistance,
- financial analysis,
- and consulting
- are expensive partly because expert human hours are expensive.
- If one excellent professional can safely accomplish several times more useful work, the effective cost of expertise can fall.
- That could make professional services accessible to people and organizations that historically could not afford them.
- Thus AI's professional story may not merely be:
  - fewer professionals doing today's work.
- It could also become:
  - vastly more professional cognition applied to problems society previously could not afford to analyze.
  - That possibility deserves much more attention.

17. The Enterprise Cognitome Adds the Proprietary Layer

- This is where our three-level progression becomes strategically important.
- Frontier LLM capability will increasingly diffuse.
- Your competitor can access an excellent model.
- So can you.
- Therefore:

$$LLM\ Access \neq Sustainable\ Moat$$

But your competitor cannot easily recreate:

- your 40 years of cross-domain experience
- your thirty years of field failures,
- your fifty years of engineering tests,
- your millions of claims,
- your maintenance experience,
- your rejected designs,

- your customer history,
- your near misses,
- your recovery strategies,
- your institutional corrections.

The Cognitome transforms that history into potential cognitive leverage.

Thus:

$$Professional + Commodity\ Intelligence + Proprietary\ Cognition$$

may become the premium professional configuration.

18. Enterprise Productivity Could Compound

Now scale from the individual professional to the organization.

- Every professional uses the Cognitome.
- Every project produces new experience.
- New experience enriches the Cognitome.
- The richer Cognitome improves future professional work.

That produces:

$$Experience \rightarrow Cognitome \rightarrow Better\ Professional$$

$$Better\ Professional \rightarrow Better\ Work \rightarrow New\ Experience$$

$$New\ Experience \rightarrow Richer\ Cognitome$$

Therefore:

Therefore:

$$Professional\ Productivity \rightarrow Institutional\ Learning \rightarrow Greater\ Future\ Professional\ Productivity$$

That is a productivity flywheel.

19. The Best Companies May Become Cognitome Companies

- Imagine two aerospace firms employing equally capable engineers and accessing the same frontier AI.
- Company A gives every engineer an AI assistant.
- Company B gives every engineer:

$$AI + Curated\ Enterprise\ Cognitome$$

Company B's engineer can access generations of:

- design,
- testing,
- failure,

- certification,
- manufacturing,
- maintenance,
- and operational history.

Over time,

- every new project further enriches that Cognitome.
- The productivity gap may compound.
- This suggests a provocative future management question:
  - How much Cognitome does every employee have behind them?

20. Enterprise Valuation May Eventually Reflect This

The productivity argument also reinforces our earlier Corporate Cognitome thesis.

- If a rich Cognitome makes professionals materially more capable, then Cognitome richness is not merely an interesting knowledge-management characteristic.
- It potentially becomes an economic asset.
- Enterprise valuation may someday increasingly recognize:

$$Physical\ Capital + Financial\ Capital + Human\ Capital + IP + Data + \boxed{Cognitive\ Capital}$$

A corporation that has converted seventy years of experience into usable institutional cognition could possess an advantage that a younger competitor cannot easily buy.
Its Cognitome increases the leverage of every professional who works there.
That should eventually matter to enterprise value.

21. The Employment Conversation Should Therefore Have Two Axes

The public debate commonly has one:

$$\boxed{\text{Jobs Destroyed by AI}}$$

We need another:

$$\boxed{\text{Human Capability Multiplied by AI}}$$

- Both can be true simultaneously.
- Some tasks disappear.
- Some jobs disappear.
- Some professional categories shrink.
- But the professionals who remain may become dramatically more capable.
- And entirely new economically viable activities may emerge because professional cognition has become cheaper and more abundant.
- A serious AI labor discussion must therefore examine Displacement and Amplification rather than assuming one cancels the other.

22. The Fear Narrative Uses the Wrong Unit of Analysis

When we ask:

> **Can AI perform this task?**

we implicitly compare:

$$Human \quad vs. \quad AI$$

But the future workplace may compare:

$$Human$$

with:

$$Human + AI$$

and eventually:

$$Human + AI + Cognitome$$

- That is a completely different competitive landscape.
- The professional who refuses AI may indeed become vulnerable.
- But the professional who learns to cultivate and operate with machine cognition may become vastly more productive.
- Therefore the more useful career question may increasingly be:
- “How do I become the professional whom AI makes dramatically better?”

23. The Three Generations of my Superpowers

We can summarize the transformation simply.

Generation 1 — The Professional

- I know.
- Capability comes primarily from education, personal experience, biological memory and judgment.

Generation 2 — The AI-Augmented Professional

- I know—and I can summon enormous generalized machine intelligence.
- Capability expands dramatically through research, synthesis, analysis and generation.

Generation 3 — The Cognitome Professional

- I know, I have machine intelligence, and generations of accumulated institutional experience stand behind me.
- Now professional cognition becomes both augmented and longitudinal.
- That third transition may ultimately prove larger than the second.

24. The Professional Doesn't Become Less Human

There is an irony here. As machines become better at routine cognition, the distinctly human dimensions of professional work may become more important.

- Judgment.
- Responsibility.
- Trust.
- Empathy.
- Leadership.
- Curiosity.
- Ethics.
- Courage.
- Skepticism.
- Knowing when something simply doesn't feel right.
- The machine can generate ten hypotheses.
- The professional must determine which deserve attention.
- The Cognitome can retrieve seventy years of experience.
- The professional must judge its applicability today.

Thus:

$$More\ Machine\ Cognition \neq Less\ Need\ for\ Human\ Judgment$$

- In consequential domains, it may mean human judgment is applied at a much more leveraged level.

25. From Job Protection to Capability Expansion

- Perhaps professionals are being encouraged to ask the wrong defensive question:
  "How do I protect my job from AI?"
- A more productive question is:
  "What could I accomplish if cognitive scarcity were suddenly removed?"

- What problems have engineers never investigated because there wasn't enough engineering time?
- How many patients could receive better-prepared clinical attention?
- How many small businesses could afford sophisticated financial analysis?
- How many minor anomalies could receive serious investigation?
- How many historical failures could be reexamined?
- How many hypotheses could scientists test?
- How many weak signals could insurers investigate?
- How many forgotten engineering lessons could be rediscovered?
- The productivity upside may be enormous precisely because society has always rationed expertise.

26. The Productivity Explosion

- Industrial machinery multiplied muscle.
- Computers multiplied calculation.
- Networks multiplied communication.
- AI may multiply cognition.
- And the Cognitome could add something further:

AI multiplies cognition; the Cognitome compounds experience.

Put those together with an accomplished human professional:

$$Human\ Judgment \times AI\ Cognitive\ Leverage \times Accumulated\ Institutional\ Experience$$

- and we may obtain an entirely new professional productivity regime.
- Not infinite productivity.
- Not infallibility.
- Not the elimination of human expertise.
- But potentially a dramatic expansion of what one qualified professional can accomplish.

27. Conclusion — Don't Just Ask Who AI Replaces

- The fear of professional displacement is legitimate.
- AI will automate work.
- Some jobs will disappear.
- Some professional organizations will need fewer people.
- Some skills that commanded premiums for decades will become commodities.
- But that is only one side of the transformation.
- The other side may be historically significant:
    - AI could create the most cognitively empowered generation of professionals humanity has ever produced.
    - The first professional (uptill 1970s) carried what they could learn and remember.
    - The second professional (uptil 2025) gains access to machine-scale generalized intelligence.
    - The third professional (from 2026 onwards) gains something even more extraordinary: ***machine intelligence standing beside them and generations of institutional experience standing behind them.***

So perhaps the defining progression of professional work in the AI era will be:

$$Professional \rightarrow Professional + AI \rightarrow Professional + AI + Cognitome$$

- And the defining question should evolve accordingly.
- Not merely:

  "Will AI take my job?"

- But:

  "What happens to my profession when every capable professional becomes several times more cognitively powerful?"

- And eventually:

  "What happens when that professional can reach backward through decades of curated institutional experience before making the next decision?"

- That is not primarily a story about replacing professionals.
- It is a story about amplifying them.
- And if the Cognitome thesis proves correct, the great productivity surprise of the AI age may not be how much work machines perform without humans. It may be –

How much more extraordinary work empowered humans become capable of doing ?