

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR MANAGERS



Human-AI collaboration in the public sector
NTNU Master Thesis

Marisa Iversen – scisco.no

Effective Human-AI Collaboration

As part of my master's degree in Industrial Economics and Technology Management (INDØK), I examined how public-sector employees perceive and approach human-AI collaboration within creative and innovation processes.

The research suggests that effective AI integration requires more than implementing new technology. Managers play a critical role in creating the conditions that allow employees to collaborate with AI safely, creatively, and responsibly. The four principles below summarize the key recommendations from this study.

| ✓ Do | ✗ Avoid |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Create AI sandbox environments | Experiment on sensitive data |
| Prioritize quality over speed | Measure success only by time saved |
| Invest in employee expertise | Assume AI replaces domain knowledge |
| Preserve human-led creativity | Begin every creative task with AI |

Practical Recommendations

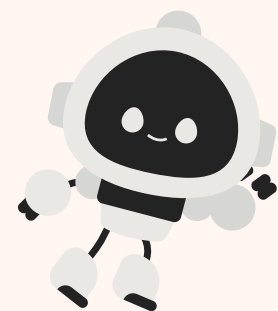
1. Create Safe Spaces for AI Experimentation

Why it matters

Employees need opportunities to explore AI without risking sensitive information or violating regulations.

What managers should do

- Establish secure AI sandbox environments.
- Allow teams to test AI on non-sensitive data.
- Encourage experimentation and learning before scaling successful practices.



2. Measure AI by Better Outcomes, Not Just Faster Work

Why it matters

AI often increases output rather than reducing workload. Time saved is frequently reinvested in additional tasks or spent verifying AI-generated content.

What managers should do

- Avoid measuring AI success solely by time savings.
- Recognize verification as a necessary part of AI-enabled work.
- Evaluate AI based on quality, capacity, and better decision-making - not just efficiency.

3. Invest in People, Not Just AI

Why it matters

Employees with strong domain expertise benefit most from AI because they can identify mistakes, challenge outputs, and apply professional judgment.



What managers should do

- Continue investing in professional expertise.
- Pair junior employees with experienced mentors.
- Train staff to critically evaluate AI outputs rather than accept them at face value.

4. Protect Human Creativity

Why it matters

AI generates many ideas quickly, but they often converge on conventional solutions.

What managers should do

- Begin brainstorming sessions without AI.
- Introduce AI after initial human ideas have been developed.
- Encourage teams to challenge AI suggestions rather than accept the first response.

AI delivers the greatest value when it complements, rather than replaces, human expertise.

Managers who prioritize responsible implementation, continuous learning, and human judgment will be best positioned to realize its potential.