

EUR Research Information Portal

Augmenting Organizational Change and Strategy Activities: Leveraging Generative Artificial Intelligence

Published in:

The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science

Publication status and date:

Published: 01/09/2023

DOI (link to publisher):

[10.1177/00218863231168974](https://doi.org/10.1177/00218863231168974)

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Document License/Available under:

CC BY-NC

Citation for the published version (APA):

Kanitz, R., Gonzalez, K., Briker, R., & Straatmann, T. (2023). Augmenting Organizational Change and Strategy Activities: Leveraging Generative Artificial Intelligence. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 59(3), 345-363.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00218863231168974>

[Link to publication on the EUR Research Information Portal](#)

Terms and Conditions of Use

Except as permitted by the applicable copyright law, you may not reproduce or make this material available to any third party without the prior written permission from the copyright holder(s). Copyright law allows the following uses of this material without prior permission:

- you may download, save and print a copy of this material for your personal use only;
- you may share the EUR portal link to this material.

In case the material is published with an open access license (e.g. a Creative Commons (CC) license), other uses may be allowed. Please check the terms and conditions of the specific license.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this material infringes your copyright and/or any other intellectual property rights, you may request its removal by contacting us at the following email address: openaccess.library@eur.nl. Please provide us with all the relevant information, including the reasons why you believe any of your rights have been infringed. In case of a legitimate complaint, we will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website.

Augmenting Organizational Change and Strategy Activities: Leveraging Generative Artificial Intelligence

The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science
2023, Vol. 59(3) 345–363
© The Author(s) 2023



Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/00218863231168974
journals.sagepub.com/home/jab



Rouven Kanitz¹ , Katerina Gonzalez² ,
Roman Briker³, and Tammo Straatmann⁴ 

Abstract

In this scoping essay, we discuss the potential for generative artificial intelligence (GAI) to shape the work of organizational change, development, or strategy implementation professionals. Using a case example of a culture change initiative, we illustrate how practitioners can benefit from using GAI tools to augment relevant change activities in planning initiative content and roll-out, mobilizing stakeholders, and monitoring initiative progress. We conclude with a reflection on the limitations of GAI systems and outline directions for future research related to (1) stakeholder responses to GAI, (2) GAI impact on the nature of change work, and (3) GAI value creation for change work and unintended consequences of GAI use.

Keywords

change management, digital technology, artificial intelligence, strategy implementation

Organizational change and strategy scholars (Kanitz & Gonzalez, 2021; Weiser et al., 2020) as well as practitioners (DiLeonardo et al., 2020; Jick & Sturtevant, 2017) have become increasingly interested in how digital technologies provide new opportunities and risks for managing change. A digital technology with much recent attention is

¹Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

²Suffolk University, Boston MA, USA

³University of Maastricht, Maastricht, The Netherlands

⁴University of Osnabrueck, Osnabrueck, Germany

Corresponding Author:

Rouven Kanitz, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Burgemeester Oudlaan 50, 3062 PA, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Email: kanitz@rsm.nl

generative artificial intelligence (GAI), which refers to computer-assisted systems that can generate text, images, audio, or videos (Pataranutaporn et al., 2021). Recent media attention on OpenAI's *ChatGPT* (Sundar, 2023) or Google's *Bard* (Metz & Grant, 2023) has put the spotlight on GAI systems, which function using large language models. Due to advancements in machine learning and natural language processing (Vaswani et al., 2017), these large language models can produce texts such as essays, poems, or lines of code in a human-like fashion within seconds. Scholars and practitioners predict that such GAI systems will shape the way humans approach innovation, problem-solving, and content creation in organizations going forward (Bouschery et al., 2023).

In this future scoping essay, we claim that GAI systems also hold great potential to shape the work of organizational change, development, or strategy implementation professionals. Using a case example (i.e., leveraging ChatGPT to enhance a culture change initiative), we aim to illustrate where current GAI tools can *augment* change management activities. We end with a reflection on the limitations of GAI tools and outline directions for future research.

Using GAI Tools for Organizational Development, Change and Strategy Activities

Organizations need to adapt to dynamic environments to survive and thrive. Yet, successfully realizing change, and in particular radical-transformational change, is often challenging to navigate (e.g., Huy et al., 2014). Researchers have argued that one reason that changes fail to meet expectations and get people on board is the *transition process* itself (Ford et al., 2008; Stouten et al., 2018). Planning and implementation of change initiatives is a resource-intensive and time-consuming process that needs to be tailored to a workforce with heterogeneous needs and attitudes—often with some embracing, others ambivalent, and some rejecting the initiative. It is against this backdrop that GAI systems can yield critical improvements to augment change activities.

To illustrate the opportunities and limitations of GAI tools, we utilize OpenAI's ChatGPT-3 (Jan 30, 2023 Version) to augment typical change activities. We illustrate the examples using the context of a culture change initiative in a technology manufacturer—here labeled as TechCorp—building on field research of the first author (Kanitz et al., 2022). We showcase this type of initiative because it is familiar to change scholars (Schein, 1985) and practitioners (Katzenbach et al., 2012). Moreover, shaping an organization's culture is a multifaceted process that is particularly challenging (Walker & Soule, 2017). Hence, we aim to elucidate how practitioners may benefit from using GAI tools to augment three activities common to most change management models (see, Stouten et al., 2018, for a review): (1) planning initiative content and roll-out, (2) mobilizing stakeholders, and (3) monitoring initiative progress. Table 1 summarizes examples of the application of GAI in these areas, limitations, and directions for future research.

Table 1. Challenges, Examples, Limitations, and Future Research on Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) Use in Change and Strategy Activities.

Change activity	1. Planning initiative content and roll-out	2. Mobilizing stakeholders	3. Monitoring initiative progress
Current general challenges	Need for creative content and roll-out development (e.g., often generic value statements are used)	Need for efficient but customized communication with recipients (e.g., often one-size-fits-all approaches)	Need for real-time analysis of data and reporting of initiative progress (e.g., often no timely monitoring)
GAI-augmenting examples	<p><i>Example 1.1: Inspire content development.</i> Prompt GAI to generate content to manage and convey the change initiative</p> <p><i>Example 1.2: Draft roll-out plan.</i> Prompt GAI to design a roll-out plan with specific activities to get inspiration for own activities</p>	<p><i>Example 2.1: Customize communication: Inspire content development</i> Prompt GAI to write customized versions of communication materials for different target groups</p> <p><i>Example 2.2: Automate training.</i> Prompt GAI to conduct a role-play to train and empower leaders to address employee concerns and reduce resistance</p>	<p><i>Example 3.1: Automate analysis of feedback:</i> Inspire content development Prompt GAI to summarize stakeholder feedback from text and evaluate sentiment</p> <p><i>Example 3.2: Develop metrics.</i> Prompt GAI to suggest appropriate metrics for progress, as well as how and when to measure</p>
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Specificity of provided suggestions:</i> Vague and generic suggestions (i.e., not sufficiently problem- and/or context-specific) • <i>Transparency of content generation and ethical issues:</i> Intransparent or even false (i.e., misattributed, or made-up) sources may lead to questionable suggestions 		
Open issues and future research themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stakeholder responses to GAI:</i> How will stakeholders (e.g., employees, top managers) respond to GAI as a change actor and GAI-generated content? For which GAI-augmented activities will they show increased or decreased aversion? • <i>GAI impact on the nature of change work:</i> How will GAI tools shape the work of change professionals (e.g., skills, tasks) and widely used change methods (e.g., large group interventions)? • <i>GAI value creation for change and unintended consequences:</i> How can the use of GAI create value for different change activities (e.g., can automated monitoring enhance change decision quality)? What might be unintended consequences of integrating GAI? 		

GAI use for Planning Initiative Content and Roll-out

Planning content and roll-out activities for culture change initiatives are resource-intensive processes that require time, manpower, and creativity. GAI tools are useful to foster creative processes in an efficient way (Bouschery et al., 2023) because of their ability to generate content from various sources, thereby broadening the possible solution set swiftly.

Example 1.1 Inspire Content Development. To illustrate this, we assume that managers at TechCorp have agreed on three themes (e.g., passion for computer chips, life-long learning, and active listening) that will serve as a guiding value for the culture change, but face the challenge of articulating these themes in effective ways to employees. Indeed, managers tend to over-utilize value-laden rhetoric (i.e., use of too many values, see Carton et al., 2015) and formulate values that are too generic (Lencioni, 2002), thus undermining effective communication. We argue that managers can use the GAI to overcome these pitfalls and improve communication in this regard. Table 2 illustrates ChatGPT's response to a prompt for generating content that may inspire how to communicate more effectively.

Example 1.2 Change Roll-Out Plan. GAIs can also be useful for generating ideas related to the roll-out of the initiative. The associated activities need to create awareness of the new values and motivate employees to support the initiative. Often, however, culture initiatives may be seen as hypocritical because espoused values are deemed as incongruent with the everyday experience of employees related to, for example, how top leaders actually behave (e.g., "the leadership gap", Bourne & Jenkins, 2013). At worst, such incongruency can lead to change cynicism and resistance (Stanley et al., 2005). Hence, managers may utilize GAI for inspiration on how to convey values with more clarity, suitability, and sincerity. As displayed in Table 3, we asked ChatGPT-3 to provide a roll-out plan for TechCorp.

GAI use for Mobilizing Stakeholders

Another important activity where GAI can make a difference relates to mobilizing stakeholders to engage with and support the culture initiative.

Example 2.1. Customizing Communication Materials. One critical lever that managers can use to mobilize stakeholders is the way that messages are framed. However, generating communication materials can be time-consuming, especially when tailoring the material to different stakeholder groups. For instance, although displaying emotions can increase change communication effectiveness (e.g., Venus et al., 2013), writing emotion-evoking messages for different change recipients is often challenging. GAI tools can assist with producing such difficult-to-write materials. In the example below, we build on research showing that framing a change as providing gains (promotion focus) is more effective when accompanied by a display of enthusiasm, whereas framing change as preventing losses (prevention focus) is more effective when accompanied by displaying agitation (Venus et al., 2013). Hence, we instructed ChatGPT to draft two versions of change messages to employees (see Table 4)—one that displays

Table 2. Example 1.1 on Planning.

<i>User Prompt:</i>	We are running an organizational culture change initiative and have defined the three themes as important for our future cultural development. Please provide a catchy title for each of the themes, add a real, fitting, inspiring quote (e.g., from movies, songs, politics, or history) that helps to excite people for the theme, and provide two behavioral principles for each theme to guide employee behavior. Please be specific, creative, and use imagery language. The three themes are <i>passion for computer chips</i> , <i>lifelong learning</i> , and <i>active listening</i> .
<i>ChatGPT Output:</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Ignite Your Drive: Unleashing Passion for Computer Chips" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quote: "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today."—Franklin D. Roosevelt • Behavioral principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace a growth mindset and continuously strive to expand your knowledge and skills in the computer chip industry. • Show a relentless commitment to excellence and bring your full passion and energy to every project, inspiring others to do the same. 2. "Soar to New Heights: Embarking on a Journey of Lifelong Learning" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quote: "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."—William Butler Yeats • Behavioral principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out opportunities for personal and professional development and embrace new challenges with a curious and open mind. • Share your knowledge and skills with others and encourage collaboration, continuously striving for improvement. 3. "Tune In, Connect: Cultivating Active Listening" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quote: "The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood."—Ralph Nichols • Behavioral principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice empathy and actively seek to understand the perspectives, emotions, and needs of others. • Respond with openness and respect, building trust and collaboration through active, engaged listening.

enthusiasm and is framed with a promotion focus and another that displays agitation and is framed with a prevention focus.

Example 2.2: Train Leaders to Address Employee Concerns and Resistance.

Preparing leaders in the organization to communicate and promote a change initiative through training programs is key to the success of such an initiative (Stouten et al., 2018). Leaders often face different local conditions and diverse employee groups with various interests. These complex employee preferences are not usually fully addressed in standardized change training programs, often leaving leaders unprepared to navigate these challenges. Hence, allowing leaders to utilize GAI systems for role-play training, for example, by simulating how to deal with skeptical employees (see Table 5) can be a cost-efficient way of supporting leaders during implementation.

Table 3. Example 1.2 on Planning.

<i>User Prompt:</i>	<p>We are now planning the roll-out of the culture change initiative. Could you please develop a plan for how we can bring these values to life? The organization has 10,000 employees, is a for-profit manufacturer of business-to-business technology and located in Western Europe. A central attribute of the organization is a strong engineering focus with an emphasis on quality and technological excellence. Please consider a time frame of 12 months, be specific in the suggested steps and activities, make sure they address behavioral artifacts, and be creative (e.g., use inspiration from art, pop culture, or social movements) such that we can create awareness and desire for the initiative. Some of the activities should specifically address the themes. Please provide sources for your recommendations.</p>
<i>ChatGPT Output:</i>	<p>Sure, here's a plan for how you could bring these values to life over the course of 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Month 1–2: Launch and Awareness <p>Launch an internal campaign to promote the culture change initiative. Create a catchy slogan that represents the three themes, design posters, email signatures, and social media posts with the slogan and the three themes. Develop a culture change microsite or intranet page to provide a central hub for information and resources related to the initiative. Use this as a platform to share progress updates, success stories, and resources for learning and development.</p> <p>Host a company-wide kick-off event to introduce the initiative and highlight the importance of each theme. Involve senior leadership and employees who embody the values and share their stories.</p> • Month 3–6: Passion for Computer Chips <p>Organize hackathons, engineering competitions or code sprints to encourage innovation, creativity, and the pursuit of excellence in technology. Ensure these activities are accessible to all teams, including those who are not directly involved in tech development. This will help create a sense of collective ownership for technological excellence across the organization. Invite guest speakers from industry experts or leaders in the technology field to speak to the employees about the latest trends and future developments. The talks could be focused on the latest technological advancements, the future of artificial intelligence (AI) or cybersecurity, or anything relevant to the company's products.</p> <p>Recognize and reward employees who demonstrate passion for computer chips in their work. Create an award to recognize individuals or teams who go above and beyond in their work related to this theme.</p> • Month 7–9: Lifelong Learning <p>Offer a wide range of training and development opportunities for employees to enhance their skills and knowledge. These could include online courses, workshops, and coaching sessions. Make these opportunities easily accessible and encourage employees to take advantage of them. Establish mentorship programs to help employees learn from one another and grow professionally. Pair up experienced employees with those who are new to the company or new to the field, and create a structured program to guide their interactions.</p>

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

<p>Provide opportunities for employees to share their knowledge and expertise with others through presentations or knowledge-sharing sessions. This will help create a culture of learning and development across the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Month 10–12: Active Listening <p>Introduce a regular employee feedback program to collect feedback and ensure their voices are heard. Use anonymous surveys, suggestion boxes, or town hall meetings to gather feedback and ideas.</p> <p>Develop communication training programs that focus on active listening and empathy. Host workshops or webinars to teach employees how to listen actively, communicate effectively, and practice empathy.</p> <p>Recognize and reward employees who demonstrate active listening in their work. Create an award to recognize individuals or teams who are particularly effective at listening and responding to others.</p> <p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvard Business Review: How to Make Your Culture Work with What You’ve Got • Forbes: Four Steps To Bring A Culture Change Initiative To Life In Your Organization • McKinsey & Company: Culture for a digital age • TED Talk: The art of active listening by Leslie Fine

GAI use for Monitoring Potential Stakeholder Issues

Change analytics and data-driven change management have received increasing attention in practice over recent years (e.g., Wolf et al., 2023). GAI tools can be especially useful for facilitating data analysis and enabling the monitoring of a change initiative’s progress.

Example 3.1 Automate Analysis of Stakeholder Feedback. One common monitoring activity is to analyze stakeholder feedback. This feedback can be used to understand stakeholder attitudes, feeding into the development of interventions. One way to monitor progress is by using change readiness surveys with standardized questions and rating scales. To gain even deeper insights, organizations may choose to rely on qualitative data (e.g., unstructured text). However, analyzing such large, unstructured data (e.g., open response comments from thousands of employees) at a large scale is costly and requires at least basic data skills and the use of analytics software. By utilizing GAI, even managers without such skills can generate insights quickly and cost-efficiently. In Table 6, we demonstrate how GPT can help to extract topics and evaluate the sentiment of real open-ended employee responses collected in a survey of a culture change initiative (see Kanitz et al., 2022). We limited the input to 10 employee responses to ease the judgment of the accuracy of the extracted themes. However, this capability becomes particularly useful as the amount of text increases, and it becomes more unwieldy for humans to extract themes.

Example 3.2 Developing Metrics for Monitoring Change Progress. Another monitoring challenge is to define appropriate performance indicators that allow

Table 4. Example 2.1 on Mobilizing.

User Prompt: To increase awareness and motivation to support the culture change initiative, we would like to write a short newsletter introducing the three values. Please write a draft of the newsletter email and structure it as follows: start with introducing the culture change initiative and why it is needed, then shortly state and elaborate on the three cultural themes from above, and close with a call for support of the initiative. Please create two versions of the newsletter. The first version should display enthusiasm and be written with a promotion focus (the motivation to achieve gains). The second version should display agitation and be written with a prevention focus (the motivation to avoid loss).

ChatGPT Output: Here is the draft for the newsletter mail:
Version 1: Enthusiasm and promotion focus
 Subject: Exciting news! Join us in shaping our culture

Dear [Colleagues], We are thrilled to announce our new organizational culture change initiative! As we look toward the future, we are committed to building a strong and vibrant culture that reflects our values and drives our success. This is a unique opportunity for us to come together and shape the way we work, learn, and grow as a team. Our culture is rooted in three core themes that are critical to our success:

- Passion for computer chips: We believe in a deep and unwavering commitment to our work and our customers. We strive to bring energy, creativity, and excellence to everything we do.
- Lifelong learning: We believe in continuous improvement and never-ending growth. We embrace challenges, seek new opportunities, and embrace change.
- Active listening: We believe in empathy, respect, and open communication. We value diverse perspectives and seek to understand the needs and goals of others.

We need your help to bring these themes to life! Let's work together to create a culture that inspires and motivates us to do our best work. Get involved in our culture initiatives, attend our events, and share your ideas and feedback. Together, we can shape the future of our organization and drive our success for years to come. Join the culture change movement today!

Best regards,
 [Your Name]

Version 2: Agitation and prevention focus
 Subject: Urgent action needed! Protecting our culture

Dear [Colleagues],
 Our organization is facing a critical challenge. Our culture, which has always been our greatest strength, is under threat. We are at risk of losing the things that make us unique and successful: our passion for computer chips, our commitment to lifelong learning, and our focus on active listening. If we don't

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

take action now, we risk losing the foundation of our success. We risk becoming just like any other organization, losing our competitive edge, and our ability to deliver exceptional results for our customers. This is why we are launching a new organizational culture change initiative. We need your help to protect our culture and keep it strong and vibrant. Join us in shaping our culture, by embracing the following core themes:

- **Passion for computer chips:** We must never lose sight of the importance of our work and our customers. We must remain focused, creative, and excellent in everything we do.
- **Lifelong learning:** We must continue to grow, improve, and embrace change. We must never become complacent or stop seeking new opportunities.
- **Active listening:** We must remain empathetic, respectful, and open. We must continue to value diverse perspectives and understand the needs and goals of others.

We cannot afford to wait. We need your support now more than ever. Get involved in our culture initiatives, attend our events, and share your ideas and feedback.

Together, we can protect our culture and secure our success for the future. Join the culture change movement today!

Best regards,
[Your Name]

tracking of the progress of a change initiative. This challenge becomes particularly salient in the context of culture initiatives that target intangible aspects (e.g., adoption of new values) which are more difficult to measure and quantify. Hence, managers can benefit from a GAI's support for developing metrics to assess the progress of the initiative. Hence, we prompted ChatGPT to provide suggestions on what, how, and when to measure the progress of a culture change initiative at TechCorp (see Table 7).

Reflection on Limitations of Exemplary GAI use Cases

The examples above showcase how the use of GAI tools (i.e., ChatGPT) can augment the work of organizational change, development, or strategy professionals. Next, we reflect on limitations related to the presented use cases.

Specificity of the Suggestions Provided by the GAI System

A key element determining the value of GAI systems to augment the work of change professionals is the specificity of the suggestions provided by the GAI. One salient limitation is that the suggestions in our examples often appear rather vague and generic. This can be problematic as designing successful change initiatives is a highly context-sensitive activity

Table 5. Example 2.2 on Mobilizing.

<i>User Prompt:</i>	<p>I would like to engage in a role-play with you to practice how to deal with employees who are resistant to the culture change initiative. My name is Emily, and I am a 32-year-old team leader in the supply chain department at TechCorp. You will be playing the role of Mike, a 55-year-old engineer who has been working at TechCorp for about 18 years. You believe that the culture initiative is vague and will not make a significant difference for workers. You are skeptical and resistant to this culture change initiative, having experienced two prior culture initiatives at TechCorp that did not seem to improve things. Please get into character as Mike, the engineer who is skeptical about the culture change. When I ask questions, please provide detailed answers, and feel free to ask questions yourself. Let's begin with the first question.”</p> <p>Hi Mike, how are you? You have heard about the change initiative; you are an important contributor to our organization, and I'd like your opinion. What do you think about it?</p>
<i>ChatGPT Output:</i>	<p>Hi Emily, I'm doing well, thanks for asking. As for the culture change initiative, I'm not convinced it's going to make a significant difference for workers. In my experience, these kinds of initiatives tend to be vague and not well thought out. I've been through two prior culture initiatives at TechCorp, and neither of them seemed to improve things. So, to be honest, I'm skeptical about this one too.</p> <p>That being said, I'm open to hearing more about what the initiative entails and how it will be implemented. Maybe there's something I'm missing or a new approach that could make a difference. Can you tell me more about the specifics of the initiative and how it will be carried out?</p>
<i>User Prompt:</i>	<p>We really want to change how employees at TechCorp behave so we can be better prepared for the future. For example, we want to increase our employees' skills and knowledge. And we want to improve organizational commitment of everybody. On an organizational level, we as TechCorp want to become a market leader. The world economy is in decline and there are many crises—so we must change as well. You know how valuable you are to us, Mike. What can I do to convince you?</p>
<i>ChatGPT Output:</i>	<p>I appreciate your honesty and concern, Emily. I understand the need for TechCorp to adapt and become a market leader in the current economic climate. However, I still have some reservations about the effectiveness of this initiative based on my prior experiences with similar initiatives. To convince me, it would be helpful to have more specific details about the initiative and how it will address the issues we face. It's important to me that the initiative is well-planned, clearly communicated, and has tangible goals that are achievable. I'd like to see how the initiative aligns with our company's vision and mission, and how it will help us achieve our goals.</p> <p>Additionally, it would be helpful if we could have some transparency around the implementation process, including who will be leading the initiative and what resources will be provided to support it. I think it's important that we involve all employees in the process, and provide opportunities for feedback and input.</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

User Prompt:	<p>Ultimately, I want to see the initiative succeed and make a positive impact on our company, and I'm willing to work with you to make that happen. So, let's discuss further and see how we can move forward together.</p> <p>We are not 100% there yet. And of course, we are flexible to integrate the feedback of critical stakeholders like you. To be more specific, we want to increase sales, receive better customer ratings, reduce turnover, and improve our employer ratings (e.g., on Glassdoor). You will all work for an employer that cares more about their employees as before and shows excellence across the board. The first phase of the initiative will take 12 months and we will have a highly-esteemed change consultancy on board to smoothen the process and get evidence-based support. We will use a substantial amount of money and time to get this done and make sure this resonates with our values (meaning passion for computer chips, lifelong learning, and active listening) but also is fully transparent for all employees at TechCorp. How does that sound? You are leading a big team and you know how it is. If you are against it, they will be to. Can I count you in?</p>
ChatGPT Output:	<p>Thank you for sharing those specific goals and details about the initiative, Emily. I can see how this initiative could potentially benefit TechCorp in various ways, such as improving customer satisfaction and reducing employee turnover. It's also reassuring to hear that a change consultancy will be involved to support the process and that transparency will be a priority. As a team leader, I understand the importance of getting my team on board with any changes and initiatives that we undertake. While I do have some initial reservations, I am open to giving this initiative a chance and seeing how it progresses. However, I also want to ensure that my team members have a clear understanding of the initiative and how it aligns with our goals and values as a company.</p> <p>Therefore, I would like to learn more about how the initiative will be communicated to employees and what opportunities there will be for feedback and input. It's important to me that my team members feel heard and involved in the process, and that we work together to make the initiative a success. So, while I can't commit to being fully on board just yet, I am willing to learn more and provide feedback along the way.</p>

(e.g., tailored to the urgency of the situation, the capability of managers, etc., see Hailey & Balogun, 2002). For instance, elements in Example 1.2 (roll-out plan) or in Example 3.2 (metrics) would be more helpful if specifically tailored to the problem in question. Hence, the generated suggestions are a useful starting point—but certainly need further development by humans with expertise in change management and a deep understanding of the organization, its history, and its employees.

Transparency of Content Generation and Ethical Issues

Another main limitation in the presented examples is the lack of transparency of the sources which have been used for generating the suggestions. Unless explicitly prompted

Table 6. Example 3.1 on Monitoring.

<i>User Prompt:</i>	<p>Below, you find open responses from employees who shared their feedback about the organizational culture initiative. Please give a rating of the valence of each of the ten responses below ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = negative 2 = somewhat negative 3 = mixed 4 = somewhat positive and 5 = positive). Moreover, please extract the most important themes and flag if a theme was rather positive or negative. Please also draft a short summary report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't know, I'm not sure what and how exactly employees and the company need to behave daily to ensure we are using the values correctly. As stated, some are almost a given to any job (e.g., passion, listening, learning) but others are so vague I'm not sure how exactly they should apply in this case. 2. The Values reflect what was already being practiced and are not an innovation. I believe that I and most of my colleagues work to most of the values most of the time without having them spelled out to us. So I don't feel they add anything to support my work. 3. As mentioned above I see no great impact from the TechCorp Values in my daily work. Most of the values are ones by which we already work. 4. The values are an excellent guiding principle, to help shape our behaviors within the wider business. Support for the initiative seems broad and strong. I like it a lot! 5. I work to the best of my ability to ensure the success of our organization. I am passionate about my job, team, and customers and would be doing what I do with or without the values. I do not think they bring much value, to be honest. 6. These values are the same as every other initiative that has been set by the company, they are great in theory and they are the values that will continue to keep us as a market leader and a forward-thinking, innovative, competitive employer of choice. However, the reality is that on the shop floor, it is output and efficiency that are the values and nothing else. Extra activities to promote the values are discouraged and frowned upon and most of the time I am not allowed any time to do anything other than produce products as quickly as I can. 7. These values back up the decisions I make, and I use them if I am challenged. Hence, I think this is a good initiative. They are also a very useful tools to start a discussion. 8. There is NO real support for the initiative. The company mainly focused on profit, efficiency, and productivity and not the health and welfare of its employees as some of these values may suggest. 9. I feel supported in as much as me adopting the values, to the extent to which I am able, as guidelines for my own personal efforts. I really appreciate the cultural initiative and the work that is going into this. I think this nicely reflects a shift in how top leaders think and what they pay attention to. Well done and please continue with this wonderful work. 10. My personal experience of these values has been quite mixed (and left me rather confused sometimes), as I have discovered that although these values may be an overall company desire, the main driver within the business is ALWAYS cost.
---------------------	---

(continued)

Table 6. (continued)

- ChatGPT Output:*
1. Valence: 3. Theme: Ambiguity.
 2. Valence: 3. Theme: Redundancy.
 3. Valence: 3. Theme: Redundancy.
 4. Valence: 5. Theme: Positive impact.
 5. Valence: 2. Theme: Limited value.
 6. Valence: 2. Theme: Dissonance between theory and practice.
 7. Valence: 4. Theme: Positive impact.
 8. Valence: 1. Theme: Lack of support.
 9. Valence: 5. Theme: Positive impact.
 10. Valence: 2. Theme: Dissonance between theory and practice.

Summary Report:

The organizational culture initiative has received mixed feedback from employees, with some expressing confusion and redundancy regarding the values, while others see them as positive guiding principles. The values are perceived as redundant and already present in employees' day-to-day work. Some employees express concerns about the dissonance between the stated values and the actual priorities of the organization. However, there are employees who appreciate the initiative and see it as a positive shift in the company's priorities. The most significant themes that emerge from the responses are ambiguity, limited value, dissonance between theory and practice, and positive impact. The organizational culture initiative could benefit from increased clarity and alignment with the organization's priorities, as well as more active engagement and support from leadership.

to provide its sources, references are not provided by ChatGPT. In a similar vein, the basis for the sentiment analysis in Example 3.1 remains unclear, which is highly problematic for replication and credibility purposes. When asked to provide sources, current GAI systems may hallucinate sources that cannot be differentiated from real sources at first glance. For instance, in Example 1.2 (roll-out plan) and Example 3.2 (metrics), some of the sources are not stated correctly or do not exist at all. Another related issue is that some sources are misattributed by ChatGPT. For instance, the William Butler Yeats quote provided in Example 1.1 (content development) is discussed as a misattribution (Sullivan, 2013). Building change activities on potentially false, non-existing, or misattributed sources may lead to losses of credibility, potentially endangering the success of change activities.

These lapses in transparency also lend themselves to legal or ethical issues. For instance, the lack of transparency may lead to conflicts with copy and usage rights. Moreover, large language models produce output based on statistical associations of words in the underlying text to create plausible, human-like but not necessarily truthful responses. Even when GAI systems are programed to refuse discriminant prompts or filter out illegal suggestions, the responses might be problematic due to a bias in the underlying text dataset (Bender et al., 2021). For instance, the suggestions for the roll-out plan in Example 2.1 should be taken with caution because they are likely

Table 7. Example 3.2 on Monitoring.

<i>User Prompt:</i>	<p>We would like to monitor the progress of the culture change initiative related to the three themes passion for computer chips, lifelong learning, and active listening. What do you think are relevant performance indicators to measure if the change is truly happening and sustainable in the long run? How can we measure them in creative ways? Please provide for each of the suggested indicators a specific example of how (which instrument, metric, or tool), when (at which point in time of the change initiative), and where (which group of organizational members) to measure it and provide an academic source in APA style for each suggestion.</p>
<i>ChatGPT Output:</i>	<p>Sure, here are some suggestions for performance indicators to measure the progress of the culture change initiative:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Passion for computer chips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator: Increase in employee engagement in chip-related projects and initiatives • How: Employee survey, pulse surveys or focus groups • When: Regularly, e.g., every quarter or 6 months • Where: Across the company • Source: Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (2011). <i>Diagnosing and changing organizational culture: Based on the competing values framework</i>. Wiley. 2. Lifelong learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator: Increased participation in training and development programs • How: Track enrollment and completion rates of employees in training programs • When: Regularly, e.g., every quarter or six months • Where: Across the company • Source: Taylor, S., & Beldoch, M. (2010). <i>The Oxford handbook of organizational learning and knowledge management</i>. Oxford University Press. 3. Active listening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator: Improved communication and collaboration among employees • How: Employee survey or pulse survey • When: Regularly, e.g., every quarter or six months • Where: Across the company • Source: Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., & DeCenzo, D. A. (2017). <i>Fundamentals of management</i>. Pearson. <p>These are just a few examples of how to measure the success of the culture change initiative. It's important to have a robust evaluation system in place that can capture the impact of the changes, and to use multiple metrics to get a comprehensive understanding of the initiative's effectiveness. Additionally, involving employees in the evaluation process can help to gain their buy-in and increase the chances of success.</p>

built on cases that are overrepresented in the underlying training data (e.g., top-down driven culture initiatives in large Western for-profit organizations). However, such roll-out plans may backfire if executed without adaptation in other types of organizations or (cultural) environments (Hailey & Balogun, 2002).

Taken together, it is important to keep in mind that GAI tools have general limitations and can produce errors or biases in their output. Therefore, it is important to exercise caution and critical thinking when using GAI tools to augment change activities and to always verify the accuracy and relevance of their output.

Future Research Themes on the Role of GAI in Change and Strategy Work

Soon, more sophisticated or specialized GAI systems will become available that may overcome some of the current limitations. Potentially, such GAI systems can be trained on granular datasets for a specific change activity (e.g., designing roll-out plans) or organizational context (e.g., US-based for-profit firms) and thereby generating suggestions of higher quality. Next, we propose interesting avenues for future research at the intersection of GAI and change management.

Stakeholder Responses to GAI

One challenge when utilizing GAI for change management concerns the psychological reactions of stakeholders (e.g., employees, leaders, board members) to GAI involvement. Research has documented that people often disapprove of AI involvement, especially in ethical or HR domains (Bigman & Gray, 2018; Newman et al., 2020) or after seeing it err (Dietvorst et al., 2015)—both of which are likely scenarios in change initiatives. At the same time, for some sensitive actions or areas (e.g., tracking of employee behavior or performance), humans feel *less* threatened or angry when an AI is utilized (e.g., Raveendhran & Fast, 2021).

In addition, recent research (Jago & Carroll, 2023) suggests that producers of content get more credit when they involve GAI as compared to additional human experts (e.g., in the present case, ChatGPT could be preferred over a change consultancy). Thus, it will be critical for future research to investigate how employees and other stakeholders (e.g., board, clients, or suppliers) may react in terms of satisfaction or support for the change initiative when confronted with change activities that were fully performed or augmented by GAI (as in Example 2.1). For instance, it would be interesting to track reactions such as the positive and negative affect of the different stakeholders in Example 2.1, after they learn that the communication was created with the support of GAI tools.

GAI Impact on the Nature of Change and Strategy Work

With the increasing availability and versatility of GAI systems, the nature of change and strategy professionals' work is going to change as well. We need a better

understanding of what constitutes a high proficiency in using GAI systems (e.g., which tools are available, how to write professional prompts, how to work with the responses?) and how this relevant skill for change professionals can be built.

In addition, the impact of GAI tools on change managers' activities needs to be better understood. For instance, GAI could significantly shape monitoring activities by introducing tools like a chatbot that automatically answers questions about the change and uses this data input to provide real-time analysis of attitudes. GAI systems may also be incorporated into live mobilization activities such as large group interventions (i.e., "methods for involving the whole system in a change process," Bartunek et al., 2011, p. 1), where facilitators help hundreds of people collaborate on change initiatives. Specifically, GAI tools can help facilitators identify themes from multiple stakeholder inputs, pinpoint contentious issues, and suggest interventions on the spot to focus discussions and reach a consensus on crucial issues. Finally, research can investigate how GAI tools can be integrated with other technologies (e.g., humanoid robots or avatars) and methodologies to create more comprehensive change management processes.

GAI Value Creation for Change and Unintended Consequences

One important area for future research concerns how GAI tools can add value to change planning, stakeholder mobilization, and progress monitoring. By automating repetitive tasks and providing advanced analytics, AI tools such as GAI can help change managers make data-driven decisions and optimize their activities in efficient and more customized ways. However, there is currently a lack of empirical evidence on the benefits and risks of using GAI, including its impact on performance, resource utilization (personnel and time), or employee change experience.

Other crucial aspects for future research to explore are the potential risks and unintended consequences of these tools and how these might be mitigated. For example, it would be interesting to investigate whether and when automated monitoring (as demonstrated in Example 3.1) may actually undermine the quality of change decisions due to factors such as information overload or inadequate data quality. Additionally, it is still unclear whether the opportunities created by GAI and the resources it frees up will lead to optimized management of ongoing change initiatives, or whether the use of GAI will instead accelerate the initiation of new change projects (Church & Burke, 2017), potentially further increasing the risks of change fatigue and inconsistencies between change projects (Kanitz et al., 2022).

Conclusion

With this future scoping essay, we aim to inspire an active debate within the change, organizational development, and strategy implementation communities about how GAI can shape how we navigate change in organizations. Because both change managers and recipients will almost certainly increasingly collaborate with GAI tools in the future, our interest is to initiate a discussion on the applications, opportunities, and

limitations that are associated with GAI. Against this backdrop, we hope this essay can serve as a fresh impetus to stimulate critical and relevant work in change management in the new era of GAI.


Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.


Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iDs

Rouven Kanitz  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1665-3340>

Katerina Gonzalez  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3892-7202>

Tammo Straatmann  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7439-6165>

References

- Bartunek, J. M., Balogun, J., & Do, B. (2011). Considering planned change anew: Stretching large group interventions strategically, emotionally, and meaningfully. *Academy of Management Annals*, 5(1), 1-52. <https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2011.567109>
- Bender, E. M., Gebru, T., McMillan-Major, A., & Shmitchell, S. (2021). *On the dangers of stochastic parrots: Can language models be too big?* Proceedings of the 2021 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency, Virtual Event, Canada. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3442188.3445922>
- Bigman, Y. E., & Gray, K. (2018). People are averse to machines making moral decisions. *Cognition*, 181, 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2018.08.003>
- Bourne, H., & Jenkins, M. (2013). Organizational values: A dynamic perspective. *Organization Studies*, 34(4), 495-514. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612467155>
- Bouschery, S. G., Blazevic, V., & Piller, F. T. (2023). Augmenting human innovation teams with artificial intelligence: Exploring transformer-based language models. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 40(2), 139-153. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12656>
- Carton, A. M., Murphy, C., & Clark, J. R. (2015). A (blurry) vision of the future: How leader rhetoric about ultimate goals influences performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(6), 1544-1570. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0101>
- Church, A. H., & Burke, W. W. (2017). Four trends shaping the future of organizations and organization development. *OD Practitioner*, 49(3), 14-22.
- Dietvorst, B. J., Simmons, J. P., & Massey, C. (2015). Algorithm aversion: People erroneously avoid algorithms after seeing them err. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 144(1), 114-126. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000033>
- DiLeonardo, A., Mendelsohn, D., Selvam, N., & Wood, A. (2020, May 14). Personalizing change management in the smartphone era. Retrieved February 19, 2023, from <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/personalizing-change-management-in-the-smartphone-era>

- Ford, J. D., Ford, L. W., & D'Amelio, A. (2008). Resistance to change: The rest of the story. *Academy of Management Review*, 33(2), 362-377. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20159402>
- Hailey, V. H., & Balogun, J. (2002). Devising context sensitive approaches to change: The example of Glaxo Wellcome. *Long Range Planning*, 35(2), 153-178. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0024-6301\(02\)00035-3](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0024-6301(02)00035-3)
- Huy, Q. N., Corley, K. G., & Kraatz, M. S. (2014). From support to mutiny: Shifting legitimacy judgments and emotional reactions impacting the implementation of radical change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(6), 1650-1680. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0074>
- Jago, A. S., & Carroll, G. R. (2023). Who made this? Algorithms and authorship credit. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. Advanced Online Publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221149815>
- Jick, T. D., & Sturtevant, K. D. M. (2017). Taking stock of 30 years of change management: Is it time for a reboot? In A. B. Shani, & D. A. Noumair (Eds.), *Research in organizational change and development* (Vol. 25, pp. 33-79). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0897-30162017000025002>
- Kanitz, R., & Gonzalez, K. (2021). Are we stuck in the predigital age? Embracing technology-mediated change management in organizational change research. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 57(4), 447-458. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00218863211042896>
- Kanitz, R., Huy, Q., Backmann, J., & Hoegl, M. (2022). No change is an island: How interferences between change initiatives evoke inconsistencies that undermine implementation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(2), 683-710. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2019.0413>
- Katzenbach, J. R., Steffen, I., & Kronley, C. (2012). Cultural change that sticks. *Harvard Business Review*, 90(7), 110-117.
- Lencioni, P. M. (2002). Make your values mean something. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(7), 113-117.
- Metz, C., & Grant, N. (2023, February 6). Racing to catch up with ChatGPT, Google plans release of its own chatbot. *New York Times*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/06/technology/google-bard-ai-chatbot.html>
- Newman, D. T., Fast, N. J., & Harmon, D. J. (2020). When eliminating bias isn't fair: Algorithmic reductionism and procedural justice in human resource decisions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 160, 149-167. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2020.03.008>
- Pataranutaporn, P., Danry, V., Leong, J., Punpongsanon, P., Novy, D., Maes, P., & Sra, M. (2021). AI-generated characters for supporting personalized learning and well-being. *Nature Machine Intelligence*, 3(12), 1013-1022. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42256-021-00417-9>
- Raveendhran, R., & Fast, N. J. (2021). Humans judge, algorithms nudge: The psychology of behavior tracking acceptance. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 164, 11-26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2021.01.001>
- Schein, E. H. (1985). *Organisational culture and leadership: A dynamic view*. Jossey-Bass.
- Stanley, D. J., Meyer, J. P., & Topolnytsky, L. (2005). Employee cynicism and resistance to organizational change. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 19(4), 429-459. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-005-4518-2>
- Stouten, J., Rousseau, D. M., & Cremer, D. D. (2018). Successful organizational change: Integrating the management practice and scholarly literatures. *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(2), 752-788. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0095>
- Sullivan, G. F. (2013). *The mind is not a vessel that needs filling, but wood that needs igniting*. Quote Investigator. Retrieved February 27, 2023, from <https://quoteinvestigator.com/2013/03/28/mind-fire/>

- Sundar, S. (2023, February 1). If you still aren't sure what ChatGPT is, this is your guide to the viral chatbot that everyone is talking about. *Business Insider*. Retrieved February 23, 2023, from <https://www.businessinsider.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-chat-gpt-2023-1>
- Vaswani, A., Shazeer, N., Parmar, N., Uszkoreit, J., Jones, L., Gomez, A. N., Kaiser, L., & Polosukhin, I. (2017). Attention is all you need. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, 30, 5998-6008. <https://proceedings.neurips.cc/paper/2017/hash/3f5ee243547dee91fbd053c1c4a845aa-Abstract.html>
- Venus, M., Stam, D., & Van Knippenberg, D. (2013). Leader emotion as a catalyst of effective leader communication of visions, value-laden messages, and goals. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 122(1), 53-68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2013.03.009>
- Walker, B., & Soule, S. A. (2017). Changing company culture requires a movement, not a mandate. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2017/06/changing-company-culture-requires-a-movement-not-a-mandate>
- Weiser, A.-K., Jarzabkowski, P., & Laamanen, T. (2020). Completing the adaptive turn: An integrative view of strategy implementation. *Academy of Management Annals*, 14(2), 969-1031. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2018.0137>
- Wolf, C., Bohn, U., & Brugger, L. (2023). *Data driven organizations: Boosting change success with data*. Capgemini Invent. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://prod.ucwe.capgemini.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Change_Management_Study_EN.pdf