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the magazine of professional coaching



TECHNOLOGY &

# AI

*Will it support or replace  
human coaching?*

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# TECHNOLOGY & AI

WILL IT SUPPORT  
OR REPLACE HUMAN  
COACHING?

What is artificial intelligence (AI), and how does it impact coaching? Where does AI exist now in the coaching profession? Is it helping or hurting the impact? Should coaches fear or welcome AI? Can AI replace person-to-person coaching? Join us as we explore the ways in which AI affects coaching now, and what the future holds.



feature

# AI: THE ULTIMATE VIRTUAL ASSISTANT

How technology can free you up to spend more time doing what you love

By Allison Graham

Whether you fear or embrace artificial intelligence (AI), its impact on your coaching practice cannot be denied. AI compels each of us to streamline our practice and differentiate ourselves from each other and from the online resources that are available to clients. My hope is that AI will inspire us to fully embrace our true essence so that we can serve clients in a way that can't be replicated by a machine or anyone else.

One of the most undeniable ways AI has come to the forefront of our industry is for its potential role in content creation through a myriad of technologies such as Copy AI, Peppertype, and most notably in the news, ChatGPT.

Coaches no longer need to be creative to develop original content or toil for hours to create meaningful social media posts. Instead, they can ask a service to do the work for them. Online programs are more than capable of developing compelling, thoughtful insights that are coherent and impressive to potential readers. However, coaches can easily take AI-generated content, pass it off as

their own insights, and pretend to be an expert in a field where they may have little or no depth of knowledge.

Initially, this really bothered me. I place a high value on developing original content and protecting intellectual property. I'm a content-creating machine; my mind is always observing human nature, seeing patterns in those observations, and feeling compelled to create frameworks accordingly. My hard drive is a treasure trove of content I've created without the use of AI over the last 20 years.

Knowing that anyone could start creating content and claiming it's their wisdom seemed unethical to me. Then I realized that ultimately, it's an advantage for those of us who create our own content and have deep knowledge in our practice area. Clients may be disappointed when they work with someone who seems smart online but doesn't have the depth to back up their public persona. This will lead to more opportunities for those who represent themselves authentically.

Another risk is that AI-generated content lacks personality. This can be overcome by adding specific parameters to the input questions and providing in-

sights that will help the program mimic your tone and perspective.

Having articulated some of the risks, I do believe there are benefits to using an AI service to ethically augment content creation efforts. It's a great tool for those who have solid ideas but struggle to articulate them, or for those who experience writer's block. It can also highlight gaps in your message and offer fresh perspectives. Granted, most of the materials I've tested on AI platforms are fairly generic regurgitations of traditionally accepted advice. If you value creativity and uniqueness, that would be in conflict with who you are.

As added cost-saving and revenue-generating measures, these low- or no-cost copy services can rework blogs to maximize search engine optimization, respond to simple messages, and create more compelling sales copy.

In preparing this article for *choice Magazine*, I tested ChatGPT in two ways: first by asking it for content ideas, and second, by asking ChatGPT to edit the article I wrote. Before asking the bot for ways business or life coaches could use AI in their coaching practices, I compiled my own answers so that I

could compare our lists. Six of the seven ideas provided by ChatGPT overlapped with my original list. They included:

1. Automated scheduling and reminders,
2. Personalization of coaching sessions,
3. Data analysis,
4. Chatbots,
5. Personality assessments,
6. Goal setting,
7. Accountability.

The wild card that I hadn't considered was using voice analysis tools to analyze the tone and emotional content of a client's voice. This would provide insights into clients' emotional state, thus helping coaches tailor their approach accordingly.

My list included another 10 ideas, and I suspect that ChatGPT could easily have compiled another 20 to 50 ways that technology helps coaches. This highlights the biggest risk of all when it comes to using AI and other technologies: the unending rabbit hole of possibilities. With the countless options available, it can be overwhelming to navigate and find the right solutions, especially for those who self-identify as non-technical. However, there are many ways to leverage technology to streamline your business without getting bogged down in the complexities of new tools.

The best way to start is to observe your day-to-day routines and identify the repeating moments of angst that cause friction for you or your clients. These might include scheduling meetings, capturing client progress, tracking sales opportunities, following up with prospects, invoicing, bookkeeping and collecting money. Start by finding solutions for these irritants in your business.

Solving these issues doesn't have to be complicated, and the answers may not be technology related. For example, if you're using Zoom for coaching sessions, you can ask your clients to record their own meetings. This simple solution saves you the time and effort of recording and sharing the files – which is something I used to forget – while your clients benefit from having their original meeting file. By applying this type of creativity to

every moment of angst in your business, you can streamline your practice and liberate resources.

It's important to remember that the technologies you choose should be an extension of your mind and enhance your practice, not complicate your life.

Rather than surfing the internet for the perfect customer relationship management system (CRM), membership portal or online course platform, start by getting crystal clear on the exact flow you want for your business. What are the ideal systems that would create more mental, emotional and physical space for you to do what matters most to you?

Most online platforms have very compelling service offerings with lots of bells and whistles – many of which you may never need. For example, the choice to use a course platform like Thinkific, a membership site like Mighty Networks, or a true 1:1 and group coaching platform like Upcoach is completely dependent on how you want to serve your clients. Once you have clarity, finding the technologies that can do the job becomes much easier.

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Similar strategy considerations are required to effectively choose your CRM and email communications systems. There are thousands of options that can effectively track prospect activity as they move through your sales and service pipelines. The right choice for your business will need to adapt based on who you serve and how many clients, employees and coaches are in your system. The options are narrowed considerably when you start addressing variables such as having a high-touch or fully automated sales pipeline, and confirming if you sell to corporate clients (B2B) or to a large number of individual consumers (B2C).

Another layer of complexity to consider when choosing technologies is how much customization you require and the type of information you need to track for your various service offerings.

For example, if you offer keynote speeches, corporate training programs, online courses, as well as group and 1:1 executive coaching, then the system you choose needs to be seamless in moving between those services. Professional versions of Insightly, Salesforce or HubSpot, which offer unlimited if-then-custom fields and variables, may be required.

If you only offer private coaching, then most out-of-the-box CRMs will make the cut. If your primary offerings are online courses and you sell via ads and email sequences, then you may be better served by systems like Convert Kit, Click Funnels, Funnel Gorgeous, or Growthworks by the Fletcher Method.

In conclusion, technology can be a powerful tool for coaches to streamline their business and better serve their clients. However, it's essential to start with simple solutions that address the

little irritants in your business before exploring more complex technologies. Focus on your overall strategy and craft your ideal flow first to make the process less overwhelming. Knowing what you want to accomplish will enable you to leverage technology to enhance your practice and create a new sense of mental, emotional, and time freedom.

If you want access to the technologies I've leveraged for my business and the ones I've recommended to my coaching and speaker colleagues, visit [allisongraham.com/choice-mag](http://allisongraham.com/choice-mag) for links. If you're not sure what types of bells and whistles you could choose from, why not ask ChatGPT for some guidance? ●