AI & leadership: Navigating the future with confidence

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been a hot topic for years, but for many of us working in business support, it's no longer just theory, it's part of our daily toolkit. Since Jersey Business became an early adopter of Microsoft Copilot in 2024, it's become a quiet but powerful presence in how we work, helping us stay focused and efficient within our organisation, and responsive to the needs of local businesses.

From buzzword to business tool

When we first introduced Copilot, I'll admit there was a bit of curiosity mixed with scepticism. Could it really help with the nitty-gritty of our day-to-day tasks, grant applications, communications, and data analysis? The answer, we've found, is yes, but only when it's used with intention.

It has become an integral part of our daily workflow. From sparking ideas, summarising emails to documenting meetings and producing action points, we're now working smarter, not harder. In marketing and communications, Copilot drafts content based on previous messaging, helping us stay consistent while tailoring responses to different audiences. It's not perfect, but it's a solid starting point, and it's made our workflow smoother and more collaborative.



Leadership in the age of AI

One of the biggest shifts has been in how we lead. AI isn't just a tool, it's a mindset. As a manager, I've had to rethink how I support my team. It's not about knowing all the answers; it's about asking the right questions and encouraging experimentation.

We've learned that successful AI adoption isn't just about the tech, it's about people. Some colleagues took to Copilot straight away, while others needed time and support. We now run internal workshops to share quick wins and create space for trial and error. That's where the real learning happens.

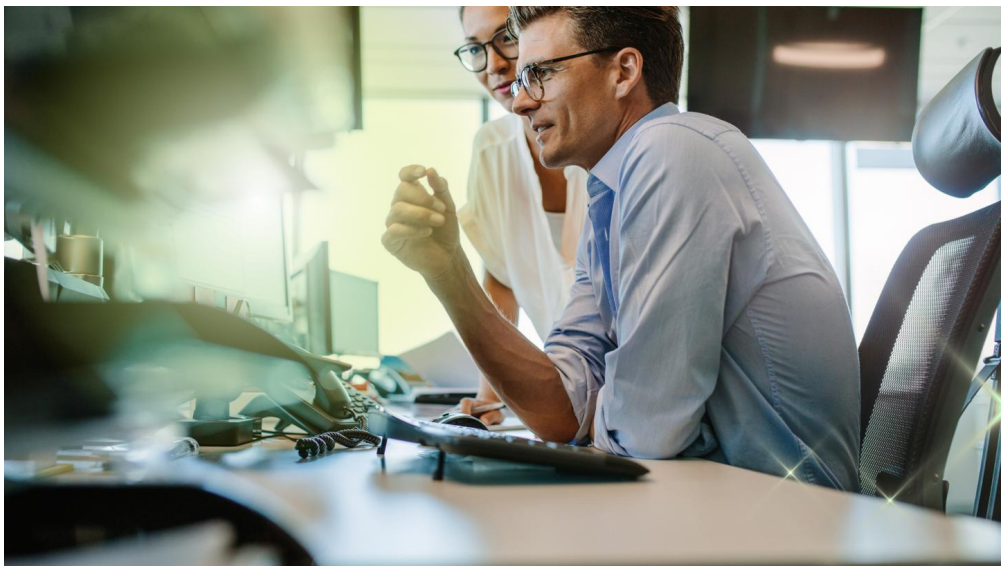
And yes, we've had a few missteps. Early on, we tried to use Copilot for tasks it wasn't quite ready for, like complex financial forecasting. That taught us to be realistic about its strengths, and to always double-check its outputs.

What the data tells us

Our 2024 productivity survey backed up what we were seeing on the ground. Of the businesses that responded, 30% have implemented AI to improve their productivity. That's not just a nice-to-have, it's a real shift in how we deliver value to the businesses we support.

We'll be comparing this year's survey responses with those from 2024, so we can see what's really changing on the ground. The 2025 survey has just taken place, and we invite you to join us for **The Productivity Pulse seminar** on **12th November** at **La Mare Wine Estate**, where we'll reveal the findings, alongside exclusive insights into emerging business trends and strategic decision-making. The full report will be available afterwards via our website, LinkedIn, by subscribing to our newsletter.

We're also seeing similar tech adoption trends within the Better Business Grant initiative and across many other business support organisations. AI is helping teams scale their services, personalise their outreach, and make data-driven decisions faster. But the ones seeing the biggest impact? They're the ones investing in leadership skills, training and developing their people, and focusing on the integration of the tech.



Looking Ahead: AI and the future of business support

So where do we go from here? I believe the future of leadership in the Channel Islands will be shaped by how well we balance technology with human insight. AI can help us work smarter, but it's up to us to stay curious, empathetic, and strategic.

We're already exploring how Copilot could support policy development, stakeholder engagement, and even economic forecasting. And as AI tools become more intuitive and interconnected, the possibilities for collaboration, between humans and machines, are only growing.

As Jennie Smith, our Head of Business Support, puts it:

"Even a great business can improve. AI gives us the opportunity to rethink how we support growth, not by replacing people, but by empowering them to do more of what matters."

In Jersey, we have a unique opportunity to lead this change. By embracing AI thoughtfully and sharing what we learn, we can help our business community thrive in a world that's moving faster than ever.

As Jersey's business support and development organisation reaching over

4,500 Island-based businesses across 17 sectors, Jersey Business focuses activity on improving business performance and increasing economic impact.

Join us at The Productivity Pulse seminar on November 12th and discover how Jersey Business can elevate your business.

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