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Mental Workout: How Your Team Can Use an Exercise Approach to Improve AI Use

Career Development



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A development coach recently told me that I need to exercise more. While that is certainly true from a fitness perspective, she was talking about something else. I was expressing my frustration with not having enough time to improve my abilities in using generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools. My company (GSK) has given me all the tools, technological advancements, and resources to be successful. We have Microsoft's Copilot. We have a GSK-specific and homegrown AI tool called GiGi. We have online courses, guides, and more to improve our AI capabilities.

Yet, the demands of the day-to-day responsibilities of my job were making it difficult to leverage these tools and resources. It is paradoxical that (1) AI is considered the next industrial revolution that has the potential to make us all far more efficient and (2) in-house counsel teams often do not have enough time to make ourselves more efficient in upskilling our use of AI. I needed something to break through that irony.

That is when the development coach provided me with a moment of eureka. **She told me that I needed to set time aside each day, week, or month to exercise my AI muscles just like any other muscles.** Over the next few months, my in-house counsel team at GSK have had standing meetings to exercise together in our use of AI. It has collectively improved our use of GenAI in our work. Here are the benefits that I have observed with this approach.

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1

Your team will exercise **more** when they exercise together. An exercise approach to using GenAI has increased our **consistency and accountability** in learning.

Today I will do what others won't, so tomorrow I can accomplish what others can't."

Jerry Rice (Hall of Fame NFL Wide Receiver)

Exercising is hard and tiring — particularly after a long day. Learning something new is also hard and tiring — and often intimidating. You can talk yourself out of using GenAI by telling yourself that it will be easier if you just do it the "old way" that you know. It is such an irony that we sacrifice our greater efficiency of **tomorrow** for the expedience of **today**. Often with exercise, the hardest part is just showing up and challenging yourself. The same is true on pushing yourself to better use generative AI.

Visit the **ACC AI Center of Excellence for In-house Counsel** for practical tips, peer-to-peer guidance, and more.

That is where a group exercise approach delivers. If you exercise with your colleagues, it forces you to show up. It makes you more accountable on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis to improve. A study by the National Institutes of Health found people who exercise with a friend were 32 percent more likely to get enough physical activity. If someone is waiting for you at the gym, you are going to be more likely to go.

The same benefits are found in practicing your use of AI with your team. We have designated someone to lead on a specific use of generative AI as the instructor. The time is set aside on your calendar — there is no excuse to miss it. If you are not leading the session, you can experiment and learn with no pressure. It fosters an environment of dedicated and improved learning.

2

Your team will exercise **better** when they exercise together. An exercise approach to using GenAI

has **improved our form**.

> “The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”

The plank is the ultimate core exercise. It tests your ability to hold your body in a plank form physically as long as you can while your brain is screaming that you cannot hold it any longer. When I hold a plank by myself, I do not push myself hard and will quit early. But when I hold a plank when I am exercising with my son Brady, we push each other to hold it longer than the other. We also correct each other’s form pushing each other with helpful encouragement like “straighter” or “flatter!”

This is due to the Kohler Effect — the concept that no one wants to be the weakest link in a group setting. One study demonstrated how impactful this effect can be. Those who exercised with a more adept partner increased their plank time by 24 percent.

Once again, the group exercise approach to learning GenAI delivers. I have learned to prompt better with my colleagues. I have learned ways to use GenAI that I would have never thought of myself. For example, my team is experimenting with a red team, blue team approach to generative AI. Often, in-house counsel are asked to think like their adversary so that they can help advise a company through a potential future legal challenge. We are using GenAI to act as our adversary and craft the arguments that might be used against us. It has generated ideas and strategies that have improved our preparation and advice for the business.

3

Your team will exercise **harder** when they exercise together. An exercise approach to using GenAI has **increased the pace** of our learning.

> “I am a member of the team, and I rely on the team, I defer to it and sacrifice for it, because the team, not the individual, is the ultimate champion.”
>
> Mia Hamm (Hall of Fame Soccer Player)

My litigation colleagues will take a team run at lunch from time to time. It is one of my favorite ways to exercise. They pushed me to run at a pace that I would not run if I was by myself. Interestingly, research has not shown a consistent correlation between running in a group and increased pace. That surprises me because it is not consistent with my experience. A study has

shown, however, that people who exercise with a friend were 45 percent more likely to report positive mental health. You feel better about exercising together than alone – a feeling that pushes me to run faster (although still slow!).

The same is true about learning to use GenAI together. I can sense our team pushing our pace as we learn from other failures (this is how not to use AI or where AI is not yet effective in our jobs). We have leveraged other team members' successes from their trial and errors (this is how to use AI successfully instead of this prompt or way). It has made learning AI fun and collegial pushing my own pace of adoption.

I encourage you to adopt the team approach to learning to use generative AI. There is no "I" in win. But there is an "A" and an "I" in champion.

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