Introduction: What is Automation?

_Definition__: The use of technology to perform tasks with minimal human intervention._

- Automation is not just about machines taking over — it's about making processes faster, more accurate, and less stressful.

It's a tool to enhance human work, not replace it.

Common Fears About Automation

Why are People Afraid of Automation:

- Fear #1: "It will take my job."
- Fear #2: "It's too complex and hard to implement."
- Fear #3: "It will make my work less personal & creative."
- Fear #4: "It's expensive and only for big companies."

These are understandable concerns, but most are misconceptions.

Where are you in the "Automation Journey"?

Are you reluctant to automate?

- Cost/ ROI/ Lack of Budget?
- Workforce Concerns/ Job Loss?
- Business Case?
  - Reliability
  - Complexity/ Ease of Integration,
  - Regulatory/ Legal Concerns or Regulations
- Change Management?
- All of the above?
- Other reasons?

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Worried You Can't Convince Leadership of the <u>Business Case</u>?

Concerns About Reliability
   ✓Companies are usually conservative about adding potential risks associated with "automated processes/ robots" due to potential malfunctions causing disruption to current systems/ additional manual work for current teams.

Complexity/ Ease of Integration
   ✓The integration alone can be a deterrent for companies as they may not have the necessary resources to successfully implement/ support and manage these new automated processes.

Regulatory/ Legal Concerns or Regulations
   ✓Introducing any new software could potentially involve compliance/ legal regulations, which companies may be hesitant to navigate
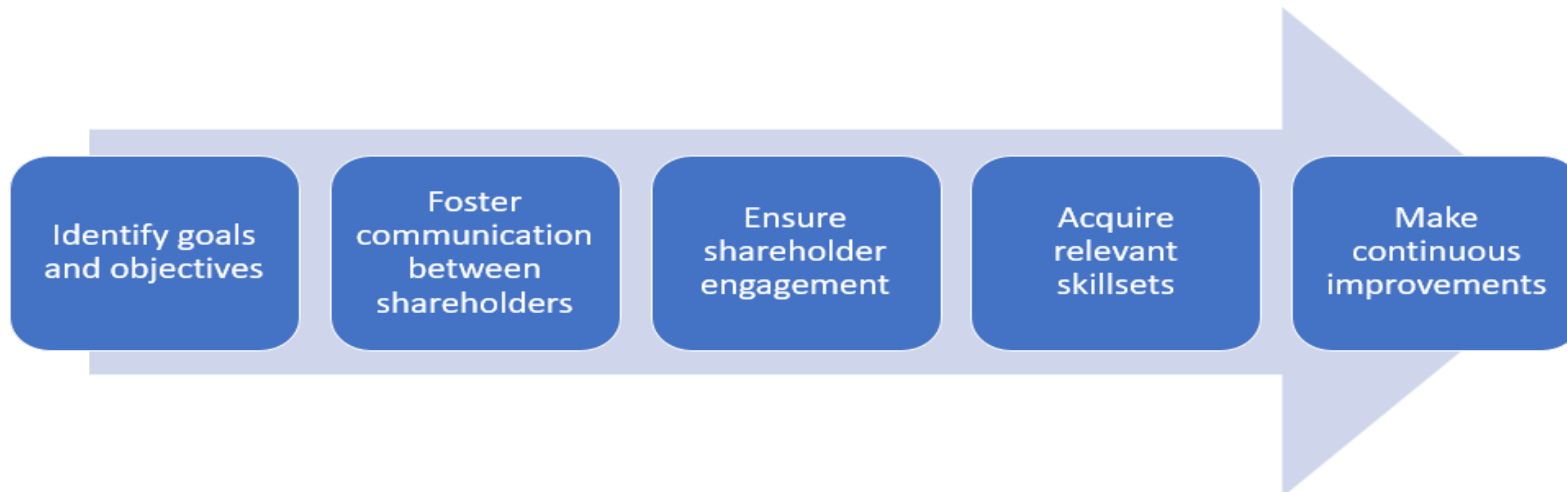
Change Management:

Worried You Will Be Met With Hesitation?
Won't Be Able To Convince Your Teams To Change How They Do What They Do?

Resistance to change within a department can hinder the implementation of automation.

This is often contrary to the desires of the management team, who often sees benefits or potential ROI from automation.

5 Principals to Change Management

Identify goals and objectives → Foster communication between shareholders → Ensure shareholder engagement → Acquire relevant skillsets → Make continuous improvements

Automating to Enhance Jobs, not Replace Them

Automation can Empower, not Eliminate:

- Automation handles repetitive, low-value tasks, freeing you to focus on creative and strategic work.

*Example: Invoice Processing Automation – Automation tools can extract data from invoices, match them with PO's and route them for approval. This reduces manual entry, minimizes errors, and speeds up the approval process.

This allows AP team to focus on tasks such as resolving discrepancies and financial analysis rather than spending time on routine data entry and paperwork.

How Automation Simplifies Work

The Benefits of Automation

- Benefit #1: Increased Efficiency - Tasks are completed faster, leading to output in less time.
- Benefit #2: Improved Accuracy – Reduced risk of human error.
- Benefit #3: Less Stress – Automating routine tasks and reduces workload and mental burnout.

By automating, businesses can quicky identify and recapture lost revenue while reducing the manual effort involved in auditing and follow-up

The Ease of Adoption in Large Companies

Embracing Automation: A Smooth Transition

- Start with High-Impact Areas
  - Large companies often have complex operations. Begin by automating processes that offer the greatest return on investment.

*Example: In the A/R space, many CPG customers use automation to streamline very manual processes, leading to significant cost savings as teams can focus on areas to bring more money back to the business.

Starting with high-impact areas doesn't mean overwhelming your organization with change all at once.

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The Human Element of Automation

Automation and the Human Touch

- Automation doesn't remove creativity or decision-making; it amplifies them.

*Example – AI tools assist with customer service, but human agents handle emotional connections and complex issues.

Your creativity and critical thinking will still be needed in a world with automation

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Overcoming the Fear of Job Loss

Automation: Creating Jobs not Taking Them

- The fear that automation will replace jobs ignores the fact that technology has historically created new roles.

*Example – Empowering employees with new skills: Automation often requires a new set of skills which provides an opportunity for employees to grow.

While automation might change the way we work, it doesn't have to mean losing jobs. It means adapting and growing with the changing work landscape.

Real-World Examples of Successful Automation

Successful Automation in Action

- Healthcare – Hospitals automating patient intake and appointment scheduling to improve efficiency and patient satisfaction.
- Retail – Online retailers using AI to manage inventory, process orders, and provide personalized recommendations.
- Marketing – Companies automating social media posting and email campaigns, allowing marketing teams to focus on strategy.

While the idea of automation might seem daunting at first, these real-world examples show businesses of all sizes, across various industries, are successfully embracing automation to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and empower employees.

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The Future of Work with Automation

The Future: A Symbiosis Between Humans and Machines

- Automation will continue to grow, but the future of work involves humans collaborating with technology, not competing with it.

*Example – Autonomous vehicles still require human oversight and decision-making, ensuring human jobs in new areas.

While automation will continue to evolve, it will create more roles and provide employees with the chance to focus on higher-level, more meaningful work. By embracing this change now, we're preparing ourselves for a future where technology and human creativity work together to drive innovation and success.

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Overcoming the Fear: Take the First Step

Ready to Embrace Automation?

- Tip #1: Start by automating simple, repetitive tasks or "pilot projects"
- Tip #2: Choose tools that fit your skill level.
- Tip #3: Don't be afraid to experiment – automation is about making things easier, not harder.
- Tip #4: Emphasize security and risk management
- Tip #5: Clearly communicate and demonstrate the benefits

  - *KEY: Ensure teams are involved from the beginning of the initial process*
  - *Provide strong/ sufficient training and potential opportunities*
  - *Foster a culture of transparency, adaptability and innovation*

The first step is often the hardest, but once you start, the process will feel less intimidating.

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Questions & Answers

Any questions or experiences?