



IMPAKTLY

NORDIC AI INDEX

JOBS BENCHMARK

2026

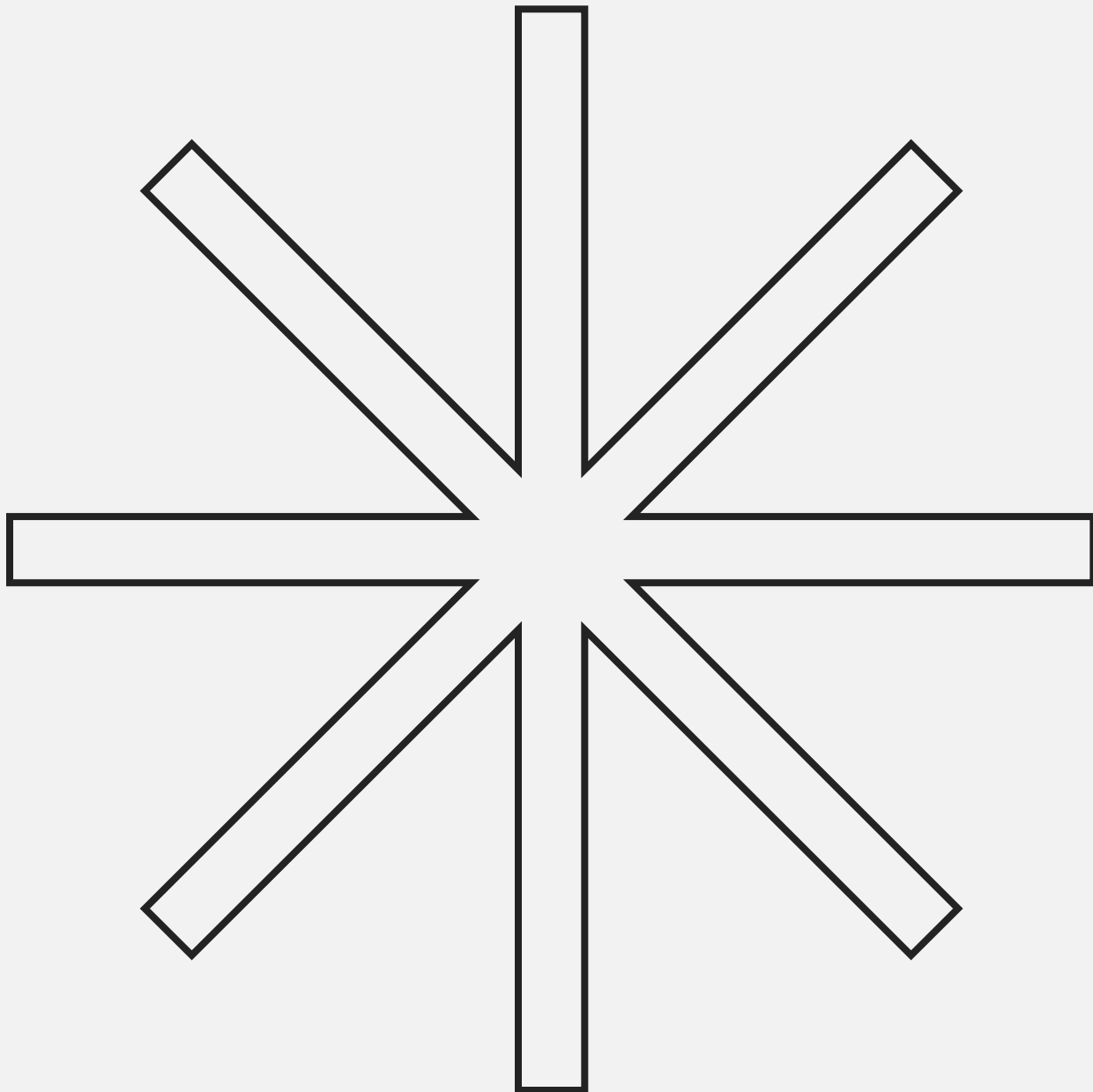
NORDIC AI JOBS BENCHMARK

SEPTEMBER 2026 EDITION

IMPAKTLY



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FOREWORD

In June 2026, we published the Nordic AI Index, assessing the AI maturity of the 90 largest companies by revenue in Sweden, Norway and Finland. We looked at what companies said publicly about AI: their strategies, products, internal use and governance.

But strategy tells only part of the story. AI is now beginning to change the work itself: what people do, how decisions are made, which tasks are automated or augmented, and which capabilities become more valuable. If that change is real, it should eventually show up not only in strategy documents, but in what companies expect from the people they hire. Hiring leaves its own public record. Every job posting is a small statement about the capabilities a company believes it needs next. So we read them.

This benchmark looks at the same 90 companies as the Nordic AI Index and asks a deliberately simple question: when Nordic

companies hire today, are they actually asking for AI skills, and if so, what kind?

Across 1,219 job postings, we found a picture that is more revealing than the headline number alone. AI capability is entering some parts of Nordic working life quickly, while barely touching others. Demand is concentrated in technical roles, people managers are surprisingly absent, and many of the AI requirements companies do include remain too vague to recruit or develop against.

This benchmark therefore is not only about recruitment. It is a window into a much bigger question: How far have Nordic companies translated AI ambition into the skills, roles and leadership capabilities needed to change how work actually gets done?

Methodology

SAMPLE

We used the same sample as the Nordic AI Index: the 90 largest Nordic companies by revenue, 30 each in Sweden, Norway and Finland.

SOURCES

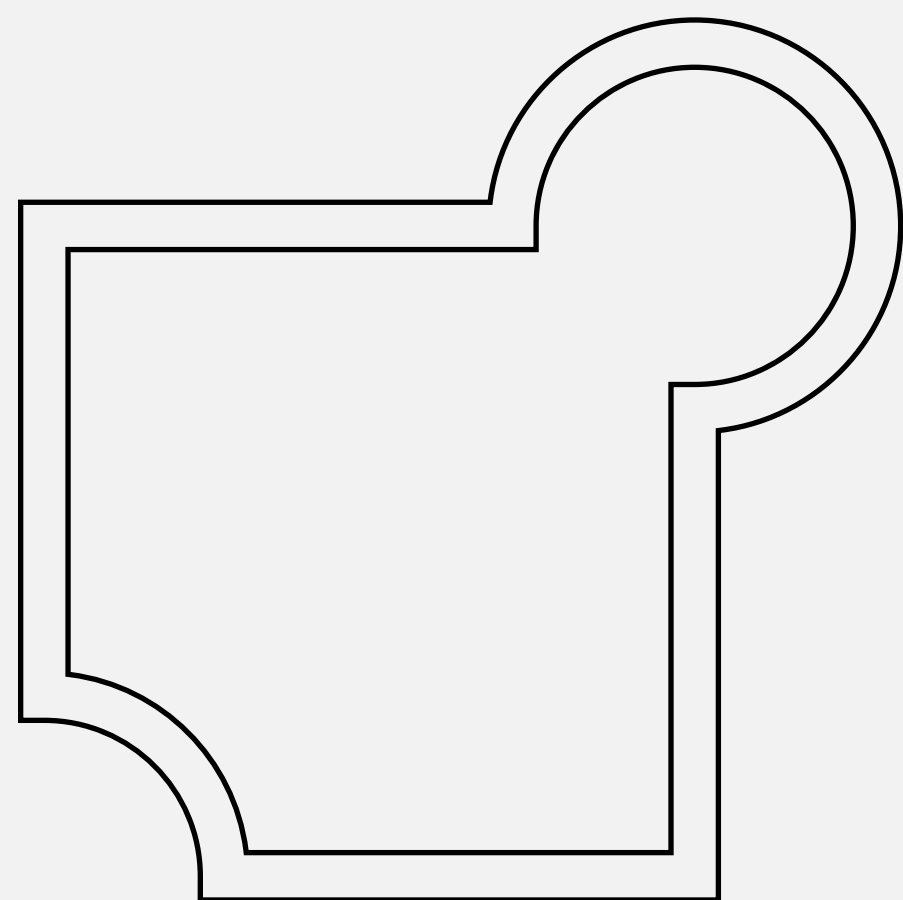
Between 7–10 September 2026, we collected and analysed 1,219 open job postings from 89 companies; one company had no open roles at the time. We sampled approximately 10–15 postings per company so that each company carries similar weight regardless of how much it happens to be hiring.

The sample covers different functions and seniority levels, from production and entry-level roles to specialists, people managers and senior leaders. IT and technology roles are included, but the question is broader: has AI capability become an expectation across the organisation?

CODING THE RESULTS

Each job posting was coded by company, country, sector, function and seniority. We counted an AI skill only when it appeared in the requirements or qualifications of a posting, deliberately separating companies that talk about AI from those that explicitly ask candidates for AI capability. AI requirements were then further classified as required or preferred, basic or deep, and by skill type.

The benchmark does not measure current AI use or workforce capability, but it shows what Nordic companies explicitly expect from the people they are hiring right now.





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Key findings

Most Nordic companies are
not yet hiring for AI

Of the 1,219 job postings we assessed,
only 14% explicitly ask candidates for AI
skills in the job requirements.

The remaining 86% of postings do not ask
candidates for any AI skills at all.

Key findings

01 Most AI requirements are too vague to act on

02 AI demand has barely moved beyond technical roles

03 People managers are the least likely to be asked for AI skills

04 There is a positive correlation between a sector's AI maturity and its AI hiring rate



FINDING 01

Most AI requirements
are too vague to act on

5 %

OF ADVERTISED JOBS ASK FOR AI
CAPABILITY THAT A CANDIDATE COULD
DEMONSTRATE AND AN INTERVIEWER
COULD ASSESS

What the posting asks for	Share
No AI skill at all	86 %
AI mentioned, but only as a preference	5 %
AI required, but only as general familiarity	3 %
AI required, specific and hands-on	5 %
Total	100 %

WHAT THE AI SKILL REQUIREMENTS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

Three in five job postings that mention AI do not define a capability a candidate could demonstrate or an interviewer could assess. Instead, they ask for an attitude.

These are real requirements from real job advertisements. But they do not tell us what the candidate should actually be able to do. Two interviewers could interpret the same requirement differently, ask different questions and reach different conclusions, because there is no clear capability to assess.

If an AI requirement cannot be demonstrated, it cannot be recruited for, developed or measured. It signals that AI matters, but not yet what AI capability actually means.

“A curiosity and desire to use AI in daily marketing activities.”

“Openness to new technologies, AI, and innovative solutions.”

“Solid AI awareness.”



FINDING 02

AI demand has barely moved beyond technical roles

45 %

OF POSTINGS IN DATA, ANALYTICS, IT AND DIGITAL ROLES ASK FOR AN AI SKILL.

8 %

OF POSTINGS IN ALL OTHER FUNCTIONS ASK FOR AN AI SKILL.

Function	Share of postings asking for an AI skill
Data, analytics, IT and digital	45 %
Marketing	26 %
HR	11 %
Finance	10 %
Procurement	6 %
Legal	6 %
Customer Service	3 %
Sales	1 %

AI demand remains heavily concentrated where it already sat. In every other part of the business, hiring in September 2026 looks much as it did before generative AI arrived.



FINDING 03

People managers are the least likely to be asked for AI skills

7 %

OF JOB POSTINGS FOR PEOPLE MANAGERS ASKED FOR ANY AI SKILLS.

Level	Share of postings asking for an AI skill
Senior specialists	22 %
Directors and senior leaders	19 %
People managers	7 %
Entry Level	7 %

AI demand clusters at two ends of the organisation: senior specialists who build and apply the technology, and directors who set its direction. In between are people managers, expected to lead AI-driven change but recruited for AI capability at roughly the same rate as people entering working life.

Strategy alone does not change how work gets done. Managers translate it into everyday decisions: where AI should take over tasks, where it should support people and where human judgement remains essential. They reshape team practices, performance expectations and capability needs. A company can hire AI specialists while seeing surprisingly little change, because the managers responsible for turning both into everyday work are not equipped to do so.



FINDING 04

There is a positive correlation between a sector’s AI maturity and its AI hiring rate

13% – 14%

THE ENTIRE SPREAD BETWEEN SWEDEN, NORWAY AND FINLAND (SWEDEN 14 %, FINLAND 14 %, NORWAY 13 %).

3X

THE GAP BETWEEN THE HIGHEST AND THE LOWEST SECTOR.

Sector	Share of postings asking for an AI skill
Financial services	25 %
Technology & telecom	24 %
Energy & resources	16 %*
Consumers	10 %
Industrials	9 %

Sector differences are far larger than country differences, echoing the pattern we saw in the Nordic AI Index. AI maturity and demand for AI skills appear to move in the same direction: financial services, one of the more AI-mature sectors, asks for AI skills around three times as often as industrials, where AI maturity is lower.

*Energy & resources, 16%: read with care. 14 of the sector’s 25 AI mentions come from a single employer, largely repeating the same requirement across different roles. Without this employer, the sector’s rate falls to 8%, placing it last rather than third.



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What AI capability means for Nordic companies



What AI capability actually consists of

The companies in this benchmark already recognise two levels of AI capability: 95 postings ask for basic familiarity and 71 for hands-on depth. What is missing is a vocabulary for what each level contains. “AI awareness” is not a skill; it signals that the required skill has not yet been defined. AI capability becomes clearer when separated into three domains and every organisation needs all three.

BUSINESS: UNDERSTANDING HOW AI CHANGES BUSINESS & CREATES VALUE

Understanding how AI is reshaping the operating environment, industry dynamics and sources of competitive advantage. Recognising how it may change business models, products, services and customer expectations and identifying where it can create meaningful value for the organisation.

This includes the ability to evaluate opportunities in their business context: which problems are worth solving, what an AI investment could deliver and where AI may not be the right answer.

It also requires awareness of the commercial, regulatory and reputational implications of using AI.

PEOPLE: STRENGTHENING HUMAN CAPABILITIES AND LEADING CHANGE

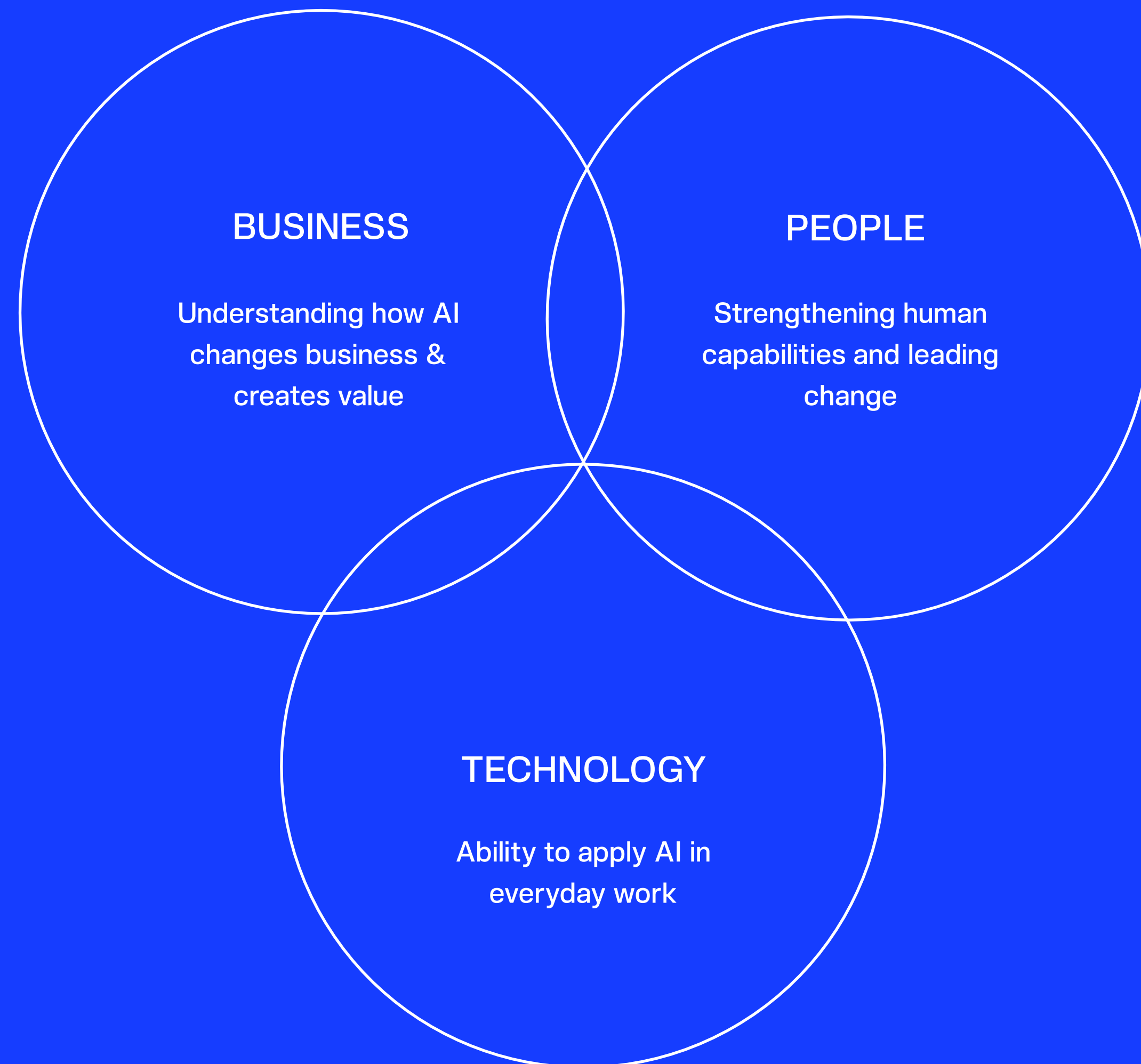
Applying the distinctly human capabilities that become more valuable as AI takes on a greater share of analytical and routine work: judgement, problem-solving, empathy, creativity, collaboration and ethical reasoning. Knowing when to rely on AI, and when human understanding, relationships and accountability must take priority.

This also includes the ability to adapt how work gets done: experimenting with new approaches, learning from results and improving continuously. For leaders, it means creating the conditions for experimentation, helping people navigate uncertainty and translating technological change into new roles, practices and capability needs.

TECHNOLOGY: APPLYING AI IN EVERYDAY WORK

Understanding the basic capabilities, limitations and risks of AI tools. Being able to use them effectively in everyday work, assess the quality of their outputs and remain accountable for the results.

This ranges from adopting tools and solutions provided by the organisation to configuring or developing limited solutions for a specific task or workflow. At deeper levels, it includes selecting appropriate technologies, integrating them into processes and building scalable AI solutions within the organisation's technical and governance requirements.



What does this mean for Nordic companies?

Many Nordic companies already have an AI strategy, are introducing AI tools and are experimenting with new use cases. But that ambition has not yet been translated into a clear answer to a more practical question: what should our people actually know and be able to do differently?

The companies that close that gap fastest will need to do three things.

DEFINE AI CAPABILITY BEYOND THE SPECIALISTS

AI can no longer be treated mainly as a skill for data, IT and digital teams. Companies need to identify what AI knowledge and skills are becoming part of ordinary professional capability across functions and make those expectations explicit in recruitment, development and workforce planning.

EQUIP MANAGERS TO REDESIGN WORK, NOT JUST ADOPT TOOLS

The biggest gap in this benchmark sits with people managers. Yet they are the ones who will translate AI into everyday work: deciding where AI should be used, how tasks and roles change, what good AI-assisted work looks like, and how people develop the skills to do it. AI transformation therefore needs to become a leadership capability, not just a technology programme.

DEVELOP AND HIRE FOR THE SAME CAPABILITIES

Hiring and learning cannot operate as separate responses to AI. Companies need a shared view of the capabilities they will need, which should be developed across the existing workforce, and where deeper specialist expertise needs to be recruited. That same language should run through job profiles, recruitment, learning and leadership development.

The companies ahead will not necessarily be those with the most AI tools or the largest number of AI specialists. They will be the ones that translate AI ambition into clear expectations for how thousands of people across the organisation work, decide and lead differently.

None of these companies lacks an AI strategy. What they lack is its translation into something a person can be hired against, or trained towards.



Hello from us!

At Impaktly, we help industry leaders redesign work, skills, and operating models for an AI-first world. Our mission is to help organisations build genuine capabilities that create lasting competitive advantage, not dependency on external experts.

Rooted in the Nordics, we partner with enterprises navigating complex transformations at the intersection of technology, people, and business strategy. We combine hands-on consulting with practical tools and capability building to ensure change becomes embedded in everyday ways of working.

If you're curious to explore what this could mean for your team, don't hesitate to get in touch, we're always happy to share ideas!

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