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**WHAT IS DATAFICATION
AND HOW DOES IT
AFFECT ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANTS?**



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WHAT IS DATAFICATION AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS?

Artificial Intelligence is at the heart of every disruptive technology in today's business environment. The massive adoption of AI technology cuts across all business sectors and is a crucial player in the future of business.

AI technology is morphing rapidly, and new technologies such as datafication are expected to digitize and transform the business landscape and job market. In particular, datafication is largely seen as a threat to the role of administrative assistants in many industries.

Does this observation hold any merit? Dig in as we explore the relationship between datafication and the administrative assistant's role.

What is Datafication?

Datafication is the art of transforming social actions into quantified data to facilitate predictive analysis. Datafication turns what was previously invisible activity into hard data that can be tracked, monitored, optimized, and analyzed.

Simply put, datafication is the technological trend of drilling most aspects of our lives into computerized data. The technology uses various processes to convert this information into [actionable data](#).

Datafication provides profound insights to help people and businesses understand the world better than before. The process rides in the tailcoats of big data and new technologies that help collect, store, and process massive amounts of data. Datafication allows companies to render people's daily interactions into a data format and puts them into social use.

How Datafication Works

Social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are the epitome of datafication. These platforms monitor and collect data about your friendships and use it to [improve their ability to market products to you](#). The platforms analyze your data from your online activity and use it to match you with the right promotions.

In this model, datafication revolutionizes the content creation process. Instead of being used for recommendation systems, datafication informs the content creation process.

Many of your daily activities are tracked automatically through your phone, computer, and other devices. Facebook has datafied your network of friends, LinkedIn has datafied your professional connections, Spotify has datafied your music preferences.



Datafication is also rampant in the commercial sector, with giant retailers like Amazon and Walmart using it to drive sales. For instance, Walmart may integrate your shopping history, location data from your mobile phone, social media, weather, and internal stock information to push the sale of BBQ cleaners.

With datafication, the retailer can send a BBQ cleaner voucher to customers who are most likely to buy. On a nice sunny day, the retailer can send the coupons to the phones of people who own barbeques, live within a 3-mile radius of a Walmart store with the BBQ cleaner in stock.

Datafication in the Workplace

Many companies are increasingly adopting datafication because it turns them into [efficient, data-driven enterprises](#). With datafication, they can turn most of their business aspects into quantifiable data that can be monitored, tracked, and analyzed.

A datafied company gets to improve and optimize many of its critical processes. Processes must be measurable before they can be optimized, and datafication supplies the previously missing link. Datafication allows companies to keep up with the latest technology, streamline operations, supercharge productivity, and maximize revenue.

At the microlevel, companies improve their daily operations while maximizing available resources. At the macro level, datafication allows businesses to streamline their production processes and heighten their competitive edge.

Datafication in Human Resource Management

Many companies have incorporated datafication into their HR departments to maximize their ROI from human capital. It allows them to harness the power of data management and analytics create a sustainable competitive advantage.

Integrating [HR platforms with data analysis tools](#) helps companies embrace automation but most importantly, it allows them to make better decisions. Datafication provides profound insights into a company's HR department while allowing them to ground their decision on cold, hard data.

Most companies operate on a reward management system governed by job evaluation, benchmarks, and performance targets. Data analytics makes it easy to collect and analyze compensation data. Companies can make informed governance, hiring, and pay decisions in line with their reward principles and guidelines.

Integrating business intelligence with compensation technology allows HR departments to link compensation data to business outcomes. They can easily connect engagement and talent, pay, and productivity to enable business owners to make informed decisions.

They can use the data to categorize employee categories, define job roles, develop job descriptions, and measure employee productivity. They can quickly identify the company's strengths and weaknesses in terms of skills and talent. But most importantly, datafication can help companies identify redundant roles and take corrective measures.



How Datafication Affects Administrative Assistants

At first glance, it's tempting to think that the rise of smart technology will eradicate the role of administrative assistants. Traditionally, administrative assistants handled grunt work, most of which can be readily automated.

They were charged with scheduling meetings, typing letters and memos, making reservations, and booking travel. Currently, there's AI technology to handle most, if not all, of these tasks. But that's not enough to wipe out the role of administrative assistants, at least not yet.

Does Automation Pose a Threat?

Like the rise of personal computers, AI technology seems to transform and enhance these jobs. Innovative technology seems to [take over routine tasks](#), leaving the workers to focus on the human-centric elements of the job.

Therefore, it's unlikely that AI technology will not replace administrative assistants but rather enhance their roles. However, it's impossible to predict which jobs will be eliminated at the workplace in the next decade.

If the role of the administrative assistant does persist into the future, it'll have changed significantly for the better, thanks to AI technology.

Today, the role of an administrative assistant is much more exciting than it was ten years ago. Emerging technology creates opportunities for these assistants to demonstrate unique skills and capabilities. Instead of handling routine tasks such as data entry, admin assistants now focus on where they can add value.

Changing Job Descriptions

Technically, administrative assistants handle phone calls, correspondence, manage diaries, organize meetings, and act as the first point of contact. In most cases, the control access to an executive or manager.

Today, there are several AI-powered digital assistants that can handle these roles.

Companies harness the [power of big data](#) to create products that negate the involvement of administrative assistants. Voice recognition software allows executives to use voice commands instead of having an assistant take notes. They can dictate their notes and the software converts the voice commands into written content. An AI can even optimize grammar and emphasis or translate the document into a foreign language.

Are AI Assistants a Threat?

So, AI personal assistants are already taking away routine tasks from human executives. However, there's no cause for alarm because it frees these executives to function at a higher level. Future administrative assistant roles will require skilled individuals with insightful knowledge in their specific fields.

These workers can only excel in their roles if they can efficiently interact with artificial intelligence. That's a new skill the assistants may need to learn to thrive in the current job market.



Modern admin assistants need exceptional data skills to accommodate AI's role in their jobs. AI tools can access multiple diaries and sync the data to schedule the perfect meeting. That changes the role of an assistant from scheduling appointments to client follow-up, a task that requires a human touch.

The assistants will need a strong command of [data analytics](#) to determine when human intervention is necessary. Workers with a strong understanding of the limitations and capabilities of big data will have an edge in the job market. Programming skills might become a fundamental requirement for administrative roles in the future.

Changing Hiring Process

Datafied companies can easily streamline their hiring process and only onboard people who check all the right boxes. They can use data from social media, mobile phones, and other apps to scout for potential talents. Datafication would allow them to analyze and characterize potential hires. They can classify them according to their personalities and risk tolerance.

Datafication can replace the traditional interview methods such as personality tests while delivering exceptional results. It can measure a candidate's analytical thinking capacity to determine if they're the right fit for the role and the company culture.

How Datafication Can Enhance the Role of Administrative Assistants

Fundamental programming skills might be necessary to thrive as an admin assistant. Coding skills may allow the assistants to customize the datafication process and maximize the benefits of this technology for their employers.

Here are three scenarios in which datafication can enhance the roles of administrative assistants.

Organizing Specialized Meeting

An assistant may use datafication to collect information to help them plan an upcoming event. They may collect basic information about the meeting, including venue options, attendees, time frame, and event catering requirements.

Using AI to access attendees' public personal data and dairies, an assistant can resolve scheduling conflicts, reserve a venue, and create a menu preference.

In such a scenario, [AI technology does all the grunt work](#) to help the company avoid costly financial and logistical errors. The human assistant is on hand to oversee the process and only intervenes as needed.

Datafication may even generate a curated seating arrangement to avoid personality clashes among the attendees. The AI only needs to trawl attendees' social media accounts and use the insights to create a detailed personality profile.



Making Executive Travel Arrangements

Datafication may come in handy when making travel arrangements for company executives. AI technology can help the assistant intuitively meet each executive's travel and hotel preferences. The technology can curate the preferred airline, flight times, airport transfers, arrival and departure airports, and hotel.

The technology can help the executive maximize traveler reward schemes when making reservations and payments. An admin only needs to determine when, where, and the duration of the trip and leave the intelligent AI assistant to do the leg work.

The AI would generate a list with available options for approval. The assistant would pick the most logical or convenient options and leave the AI to make the booking. In such a scenario, the role of an administrative assistant evolves beyond performing rote tasks. Instead, they use AI technology to intuitively anticipate their client's needs while helping them to maximize benefits while minimizing costs and inconveniences.

Specialization

Datafication may drive administrative assistants to niche down and specialize. An evolving job market demands specialists who know an industry inside out over generalists. Soon there might be openings for assistants who work exclusively in the finance, transport, airline, or food sectors.

The [need for specialization](#) might be primarily driven by the need to cultivate lasting professional relationships. With the AI handling routine tasks, businesses might place more emphasis on relationships and make the role more about people skills. Still, specialized knowledge, skills, and experience are highly valued commodities in short supply. Companies value skillful individuals because they're likely to give them an edge over the competition.

Bottomline

Datafication is one of the innovative technologies helping administrative assistants cement their positions in the modern work environment. Businesses use datafication to eliminate redundancy, improve efficiency, gain a competitive edge, and increase revenue generation.

Administrative assistants who tap into this technology have a bright future in the increasingly competitive workplace. They can evolve their roles past the simple routine tasks that can be readily automated and provide valuable input to their employers. They can become indispensable assets to their employers and help their companies harness the full benefits of AI technology.



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