



bi-analytics

Is AI Making Good Work Harder to Measure?

AI can improve speed and polish without revealing the depth of human capability behind the work. Performance should therefore reflect not only what was produced, but also the judgment that made the result useful, reliable and worth acting on.

In an AI-enabled business intelligence project, governed KPI definitions, business rules, query boundaries and validation checks made rapid AI explanations trustworthy. The experience exposed a broader management problem: visible output and underlying capability no longer develop in lockstep when AI performs more of the execution.

Key ideas

- 01 Speed alone is ambiguous. A quick result may reflect expertise and effective AI use, or uncritical acceptance. A slower result may reveal valuable checking that prevents a wrong decision.
- 02 Research shows that productivity effects depend on the person, task and tool. AI helped less experienced customer-support workers considerably, improved consultants' work within suitable tasks, and slowed experienced developers in familiar repositories despite their belief that it made them faster.
- 03 Junior employees can produce polished work before their judgment fully matures. The real test is whether they can explain their reasoning, challenge weak assumptions and adapt when the context changes or AI has no useful pattern.
- 04 Restricting AI to observe unaided ability would sacrifice genuine productivity. Working effectively with AI is itself becoming a professional capability, especially when it expands understanding rather than merely lending polish.
- 05 More activity metrics, such as prompt counts or AI usage rates, will not reveal the quality of thinking. Managers need conversations about assumptions, uncertainty, context, verification and where AI helped or failed.

What this means in practice

Keep measurable outcomes in performance reviews, but interpret them alongside the employee's contribution to framing the problem, supplying context, checking reliability and accepting responsibility. This matters especially for development, promotion and assigning work where answers are not already available to the model.

Closing takeaway

As AI makes strong output easier to produce, good work becomes a weaker shortcut for judging the person behind it. Managers must look beyond visible productivity to the human judgment that makes an answer trustworthy.

