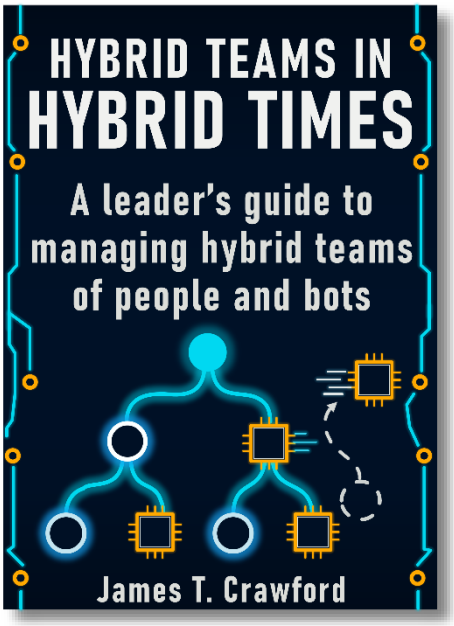
Hybrid Times
The Leaders' guide to managing hybrid teams of people and bots.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hybrid Teams in Hybrid Times – *a Leader's guide to managing hybrid teams of people and bots.*

By James T. Crawford. To be published early 2027.

Purpose



James Crawford's book is about a change to our organisations that is already under way: the shift from workplaces made up of people, to hybrid organisations in which people, AI agents and humanoid robots work together to serve their mutual customers.

The book is written for leaders and managers in every sector who need to understand what is coming, to decide what it means for their organisation, and to lead people through the transition without losing sight of their customers, culture or humanity.

A route map

This is a book about people and leadership. It is not a technical manual and it is not a collection of ready-made answers. It is a thought-provoking and practical guide for leaders entering a period of unusually fast change.

The book aims to help its readers understand the challenges, possibilities and risks … to rethink how their organisation works, make sensible early moves and prepare themselves for the personal impact of leading in a world where some of their colleagues - and perhaps one day their boss - may be digital.

Its central argument is simple: the important question is not whether AI can do more work, but what kind of organisation, service and working life we choose to create.

Publication

The book will be available in hardback, digitally and as a downloadable PDF. The RRP is expected to be UK £14.99 (€19.99 Europe, $29.99 Worldwide, £9.99 e-Book) and publication is expected early in 2027 via the Touchpoint Change Press and Amazon.com.

Summary

A wide range of angles are explored, which bring to life the impact and experience of the coming changes. It is presented in three parts:

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PART A. CHANGE IS AFOOT

The story begins with technology, but quickly moves to the human consequences.

It opens on a Monday morning in Slough, where an office manager is delegating paperwork, planning, customer issues and meeting preparation to a small team of bots. AI can already write, talk, sing and paint pictures … but the important change will be the evolution from obeying instructions to taking responsibility. The challenge for leaders is deciding who does what, where decisions sit, and when a person should step in.

PART B. THE HYBRID CHALLENGE

We explore the unexpected nature of the changes that are starting to happen right now.

Hybrid times are coming

AI is moving from being a tool we use to becoming a colleague. Bots are progressing from answering questions to taking on tasks and projects, to staffing job roles and whole teams. People bring judgement, purpose, relationships and accountability; bots bring speed, scale, memory and persistence. The opportunity lies in combining these strengths well.

The advance of AI is relentless

The book argues that AI adoption will not stop at better processes and faster research. It will move from individual tasks to service transformation, then into organisation design and brand new business models. The foundations are already laid. As always, it started with cats: public fascination may have begun with playful uses, but beneath the novelty sits a technology that is becoming easier to use, cheaper and more capable. Exponential change looks slow, until suddenly it doesn't.

The imminent future

Neither human nor technological - the future is hybrid. AI agents will work with customers, procure services, use office systems, make decisions, coordinate resources and even fall in love. Some applications will be a really bad idea - Agents can go bad, just like humans can. The book avoids both utopian and apocalyptic certainty: AI carries promise and warning at the same time.

A new strategy for a new era

Simply using AI will not create lasting advantage because competitors can use the same tools too. Advantage will come from how you combine AI with your own knowledge, relationships and purpose. The book asks, if you double your productivity, should you halve your workforce or double your impact? This section explores the impact of regulation and the need for each organisation to exercise some sovereignty over their AI operations. It argues that AI should rehumanise services, not dehumanise them - taking away administration and screen time so people can spend more time listening, explaining, communicating and caring. That will need to be a deliberate management choice.

PART C. YOUR HYBRID FUTURE

The third part turns from organisational challenges to practical preparation for the change.

Looking to the future

The later sections deliberately push uncomfortable boundaries: As AI gets smarter, will we get stupider? Will privacy become a quaint relic? How far should autonomous systems be allowed to act? The answer is not to pretend certainty. We must stay informed, join the debate and always choose compassion. AI adoption is presented as a human journey as much as a technical one.

The challenge of change

Wave upon wave, faster and faster, new capabilities will alter expectations and upend the establishment. We'll all be disrupted, you included. The book addresses the hardest issues: your people don't really want to be replaced with AI. Unbridled profit seeking will harm us all, while responsible choices can create better services, higher productivity and more meaningful work. Much of it is up to us: evolving our business culture will be critical.

This change will feel personal

AI adoption will affect more than operating models. It will change careers, relationships and the meaning people attach to work. The book's human thread is explicit: we are all on the human side. We win or lose together. Leaders are asked to balance progress with responsibility and to ensure that efficiency does not become an excuse for carelessness.

Your plan of action

The closing message is practical, as we look to the immediate future. Prepare your people. Prepare your managers - they must learn how to redesign your services and supervise human and digital colleagues. Prepare yourself. Learn, experiment, redesign and build the capacity to keep adapting. There is no final AI project with a neat end date; this is part of a never-ending change in how our organisations work.

Embark on your hybrid future

The book ends where it began: with leadership. AI may be the most powerful resource organisations have ever been given, but the outcome will depend on the choices people make about purpose, service and one another.

Finally, we return to our office manager in Slough in 2030, now leading a more mature hybrid workplace, where extraordinary technology is becoming ordinary work.

The invitation is not to chase technology for its own sake, nor to stand back and wait.

It is to take an active role in shaping our hybrid future - with curiosity, sound judgement and compassion.

AI is humanity’s greatest challenge yet. We will all win or lose together!