

# Module 2: Set It and Forget It: AI + Automation

## Lesson 2: Workflow Automation

### Workflow Automation

At the heart of our digital age lies the fascinating world of automation. But, understanding how machines perform tasks is merely the first step. The real magic unfolds when we grasp the enormous positive changes automation brings to businesses. In this lesson, we'll dive deep into workflow automation—unraveling its critical importance through numbers and relatable stories. Moreover, we'll explore the harmonious relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation, showing how they uplift one another.

### The Centrality of Workflow Automation

#### Cost Savings

Let's put it simply: *automation can save a lot of money*. A report by McKinsey, a global management consulting firm, states that companies could cut their overall expenses by a whopping 20% by embracing automation. Operational costs, which include day-to-day running expenses, can be reduced by as much as half!

Imagine cutting down your employees' time on repetitive tasks like data entry. This means less time working and, consequently, less money spent on salaries for these tasks. Moreover, with more tasks being done by machines, there's a reduced need for large office spaces, resulting in even more savings. It's like buying a tool once and saving money every time you use it.

## **Supercharging Efficiency**

Think about how Amazon manages to deliver your orders so quickly. They use robots called Kiva in their warehouses. These robots don't get tired or take breaks. They zip around, pick up items, and make sure your order is packed and ready to be shipped out in record time. This efficiency is why you get your packages faster and why you're more likely to shop again. The results speak for themselves – order processing has become 90% faster!

## **Keeping Errors at Bay**

We're all human, and humans make mistakes, especially when we're doing the same thing over and over again. But machines, when programmed right, don't. Businesses notice a significant drop in errors by letting machines handle repetitive tasks. This means fewer do-overs, fewer unhappy customers, and fewer costs to fix those mistakes.

## **Growing Bigger, Smarter**

Have you ever wondered how Netflix manages to show movies without buffering, even when millions are watching? It's because of their automated content delivery system. As companies expand, serving more customers without hiccups becomes vital. Automation helps businesses manage this growth without constantly hiring more people or buying more resources. This adaptability ensures companies stay strong and competitive.

## **How AI Augments Workflow Automation**

### **Spotting Problems Before They Happen**

Machine Learning, a subset of AI, can analyze patterns and previous incidents to predict future issues. For example, it can anticipate when a machine in a factory might break down. This early warning allows companies to fix problems before they lead to costly shutdowns.



## **Enhancing Customer Interactions**

Ever chatted with an online assistant on a website? Many of these are AI-powered chatbots that use Natural Language Processing (NLP) to chat almost like humans. They can help customers day and night, offering faster responses and consistent service, all without hiring an army of customer service agents.

## **Making Informed Decisions**

IBM's Watson is a shining example of AI in healthcare. It can read and understand vast amounts of medical data in minutes. Such quick, in-depth analysis provides insights that might take humans much longer to figure out. This means doctors and nurses get valuable information to help treat patients more effectively.

## **Merging Worlds**

As tech gets better, the line separating automation and AI gets fuzzier. This blending is creating tools and systems that are smarter, more cost-effective, and super innovative. For businesses to keep up and thrive in our digital world, harnessing these technologies isn't just a good strategy—it's a must.

In our next lesson, we'll equip you with the knowledge and communication strategies to effectively share these insights with the key decision-makers in your company. By the end, you'll be well-prepared to champion the cause of automation and AI in your boardroom.