

# illuminate

**OUR INAUGURAL  
ISSUE**

**EDITOR'S  
REFLECTIONS**

**UPCOMING EVENTS &  
LAUNCHES**

**DOES AI WEAR  
PRADA?**



**VANDERBILT**  
People, Culture and Belonging

**Vol 1.1**

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# EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS

"Let us be thankful for the charming gardeners in our lives who make our souls blossom," reflects the renewal spring brings, much like our new journey with this magazine.

Welcome to our first issue, crafted from a desire to create an unmatched, authentic space for exploring people, culture, and belonging. This vision, ambitious but grounded, springs from a vibrant Vanderbilt community passionate about real change and authentic connection.

In our first steps together, let's celebrate our progress and preview some exciting initiatives ahead. Our immediate focus for FY24 underlines our mission to position Vanderbilt as a destination for top talent, it's essential that our division leads by example. The evolving landscape, driven by advancements in artificial intelligence, necessitates a shift towards enhancing human capabilities, both hard and soft skills, and enriching the human experience at work.



This month's magazine provides a glimpse of some upcoming projects and launches that I feel will benefit everyone at Vanderbilt University. Our magazine is more than stories; it's a guide, urging you to discover, to question, and to unlock your potential.

Our Division of People, Culture, and Belonging is built on enriching lives in our Vanderbilt community. We believe in a culture of belonging, self-direction, collaboration, and growth. Here, every voice is valued, every person is a crucial part of our shared success. We aim not just for professional achievement, but for a community where each of us can learn, grow, and thrive.

As we embark on this journey, I invite you to join us - really. Let's explore the beauty and impact of true human connection and the power of belonging. Together, we'll uncover the endless possibilities that await.

*It's our moment!*

**Sydney Savion**



# TEAM SPOTLIGHT

## Whitney Coppinger - Sr Comm Strategist

Whitney has been with Vanderbilt for 5 years. When she's not writing articles or "making things look pretty" for VU, she loves hiking, reading and spending time with her husband, Brandon, and their two adorable juvenile delinquents, Gracie (6) and Maverick (3). Whitney is vital part of the HR team and PCB division. Here's what some of our colleagues had to say about working with her:



Whitney is always there to save the day. She goes above and beyond to provide her assistance and creative help with great disposition. Not only does she do it in a stellar way, but she constantly displays a "can do" attitude. Her help and contributions to TA and HR in general are immensely appreciated.  
– **Andi Samaniego, Talent Acquisition Manager**

Whitney has been a fantastic partner for the payroll and international tax teams, most recently, during the rollout of UKG Kronos. Whitney's expertise helped us get together a resource website that we were able to refer the campus community to throughout the implementation process. Whitney's quick response times also allowed us to add and change information on the site during that 'go live' time period so we could ensure everyone using UKG had the most up to date and useful information.  
– **Courtney Vogelpohl, Director, Payroll & Employee Records**

Whitney is a strong collaborative partner who is always willing to jump in to make sure the work is getting done. While overseeing all of HR's communications, she's also become a valued support for other area's needs, including most recently her support of Vice Chancellor Savion's first 100 days on campus.  
– **Katherine Keith, Director, Campus Communications**

## EARN DOUBLE POINTS MARCH 18 - 31

Double points are coming soon!  
Earn double the points on healthy activities March 18–31. Get ready to increase your activity to get the most possible points for your efforts.

Here are a few activities to get you started:

- Track Healthy Habits
- Complete Daily Cards
- Get 7 hours of sleep
- Join a personal challenge

Did you know?

Empowerment | Rejuvenate | Community



Virgin Pulse is available to all benefits-eligible employees regardless of their enrollment in Vanderbilt benefits. Sign up today at [join.virginpulse.com/VU](http://join.virginpulse.com/VU) or by calling 888-671-9395.

# UPCOMING EVENTS & LAUNCHES

## ■ UPSKILLING JOURNEY

### Upskilling Journey Starts April 8:

We are embarking on an upskilling journey to ensure our team remains at the forefront of these changes. Based on current global and local market trends, we have identified three key areas for development:

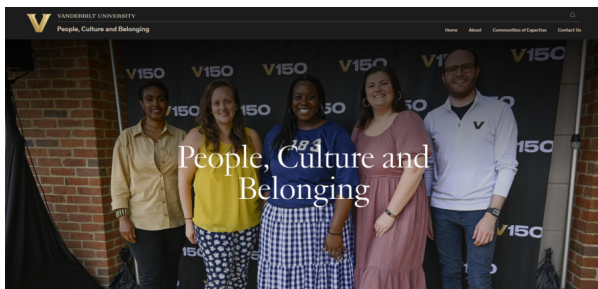
- Generative AI Primer
  - Prompt Engineering
- Everyday Business Storytelling
- Data Literacy

Our first step will be a Generative AI Primer. Each team is planning a one-hour training session in the coming weeks to kickstart this initiative. Your manager will provide more details.

## ■ NEW WEBSITE

### Launching April 1

We're excited to announce the launch of our PCB website on April 1. Look for more information and a link coming soon. This website will be our hub to reach all departments in our division.



## ■ CURIOUS BAR

### Launching April 3!

Inspired by the concept of the Apple Genius Bar, we're excited to introduce our Curious Bar pilot at the Rand location. This initiative is designed to foster continuous learning and innovation. At the Curious Bar, you'll find personalized support for a wide array of our people, culture, and belonging services and products.

This initiative, set for every Wednesday from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, is aimed at enhancing staff experience and fostering an environment of curiosity and growth.

## ■ ALL-HANDS MEETING

### Event Date: April 25

We're excited to announce All-Hands meetings. Everyone should have received an invite, and we highly encourage everyone to attend. These gatherings serve as invaluable opportunities to stay informed about divisional and university updates, while also fostering connections within our divisional community. It's not just about receiving information; it's about actively engaging and participating. So, please come prepared to share insights, ask questions, and contribute to our collective growth and success. Your presence and involvement are wanted and valued.

# DOES AI WEAR PRADA?

*What “The Devil Wears Prada” Can Teach Us  
About the AI Revolution*

*Dr. Sydney Savion*

The scene opens the day of Andy’s interview with Miranda. Unruffled, she observes all of the Runway fashion magazine employees scrambling when they learn that Miranda will be arriving in the office earlier than anticipated. They are rushing around clearing their desks, changing shoes and applying more makeup before she walks through the doors. Though we haven’t even properly met Miranda yet, this scene shows us how she’s perceived with frantic anticipation, anxiety and fear by the people around her — a rather ominous effect. As the film unfolds, Andy grapples with her own feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and resistance to the business of fashion and finally embraces her position as an assistant at Runway by seeking to understand and gain mastery of her role and industry. This is the film, “The Devil Wears Prada,” starring Meryl Streep as Miranda Priestly and Anne Hathaway as Andy Sachs.

Much like Miranda — albeit a cheeky illustration — the hype is in overdrive about the recent artificial intelligence (AI) breakthroughs, especially generative AI tools such as Bard, ChatGPT, OpenAI among many. Its ubiquitous nature has created a distraction that is perceived with frantic anticipation of something ominous to come. The problem facing many learning leaders today is a disorienting dilemma of pressing on with conventional methods of fulfilling learning needs colliding with being tentative about exploring generative AI’s rapid capability to create content, adaptive development plan, knowledge discovery with chatbots and more. This is prompting questions about learning and development (L&D)’s current state of relevance and value proposition in relation to generative AI. The hope is that this leads to unlocking our non-computable superpower — emotional intelligence (EI) to drive a much-needed L&D transformation.

## ***Optimizing for EI: The Non-Computable Superpower***

AI has made remarkable progress in recent decades. AI is a set of algorithms that enable machines to learn, analyze data and make decisions based on that knowledge. In layman’s terms, it is the claim that human intelligence can be so precisely described that we can actually create a machine to simulate it. Generative AI is a type of AI that describes algorithms that can create new content, including audio, code, images, text, simulations and videos. EI is non-computable and the intersection of cognition and emotion. It is the capacity for us to be self-aware of our own feelings and emotions, and those of others, and use that awareness to navigate a plethora of social situations and conflicts. Therein lies the fashionable opportunity in this distinction between EI and AI.

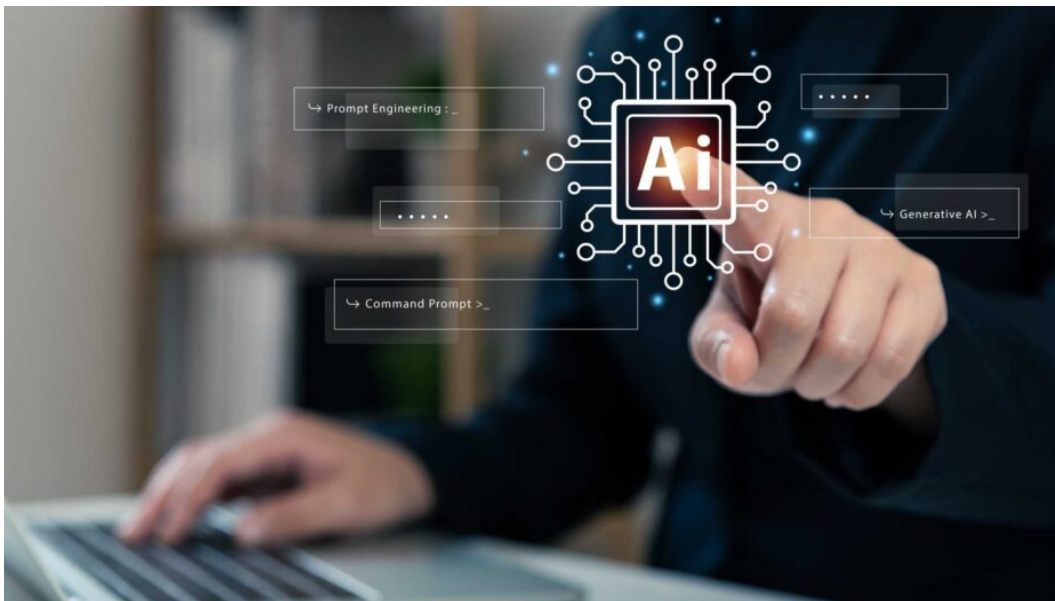
# DOES AI WEAR PRADA?

## *What “The Devil Wears Prada” Can Teach Us About the AI Revolution*

We should think about what humans can do that AI can't (at least today), which is to optimize for EI. However, it seems that most L&D organizations are not thinking this way. In fact, only 17% of organizations were making significant investments in worker training and development to support their AI strategies.

In his groundbreaking book, “Non-Computable YOU: What You Do That Artificial Intelligence Never Will,” renowned engineering and computer science professor Robert J. Marks II wrote that “...tomorrow's AI, no matter what is achieved, will be from a computer code written by human programmers. Programmers use their creativity when writing code. All computer code is a result of human creativity...” And creativity is linked to EI.

However, most training organizations do not promote, recognize and reward creativity. Which bears out in recent research that found only 9% of humans are more creative than the best AI chatbots albeit low-level creativity. Humans still have an edge in dealing with more complex problems that demand higher levels of creativity.



# DOES AI WEAR PRADA?

## *What “The Devil Wears Prada” Can Teach Us About the AI Revolution*

The AI Revolution Is Here The L&D field is at an existential inflection point in its history, given the exponential acceleration of the AI-driven economy. Ready or not, the generative AI revolution is upon us, driving intense changes and rewriting the rules. According to industry analyst Josh Bersin, with about 10.3 million jobs open, about 8% (800,000) will immediately be impacted by advancements in AI. These jobs won't go away, but they'll be upgraded and enhanced by these systems over time. (And there are lots of new jobs like “Chatbot trainer” now being created.) It's clear that an intentional focus on evergreen L&D challenges, such as defining and scaling global employee development, determining informal learning effectiveness and improving learner engagement, are proving to be the way to maintain relevance in today's AI-driven economy. Since the rules of L&D are being rewritten anyway, why not push the boundaries of learning through intentional collaboration with generative AI to keep up with the revolutionary arc of this evolving technology? Much like Andy in “The Devil Wears Prada,” we must progressively tap into the non-computable essence of being human — EI — and start asking the right questions focused on creativity, curiosity and compassion.

How can you determine which questions to ask? Consider the following to jump-start your thinking:

### *1. Curiosity.*

Curiosity is the intrinsic motivation for exploration, learning and creativity. It begs the question: What are the most pressing challenges for your organization? This means while there will be a range of challenges this AI-driven economy has created a seismic shift in business expectations for L&D.

### *2. Compassion.*

Compassion is essential to maintain connection and sentience. This begs the question: How are you thinking about job extinction? This means, given the demand for causal learning impact and speed at the point macroeconomic business pressure may compel automation and generative AI solutions.

### *3. Creativity.*

Creativity is and has been an evergreen skill of the future of the 21st-century and there have been attempts to merge AI creativity. It begs the question: What are your L&D functional skills gaps? This means as practitioners, we must assess our collective skills and reimagine new ways to assess and accelerate upskilling and reskilling and explore techniques where AI can enhance creativity to formulate even more novel ideas.



# DOES AI WEAR PRADA?

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## *Conclusion*

Much like Miranda’s expectations of her staff, the media’s hype has overly inflated frigid expectations of generative AI and the fate of humans. This has set off a perpetual scramble fueling human’s feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and resistance. Though, what isn’t hype are the staggering predictions that technology could displace an estimated 400 million workers worldwide, 15% of the total workforce, by 2030, according to McKinsey. While the media may dress AI up as the devil, maybe at least generative AI’s capability to enhance human-sentient capabilities is symbolic of wearing Prada — a premium brand of AI and EI making the planet a better place.

Finally, the good news is that U.S. policymakers and technology companies are working together to start conversations on how the evolving generative AI tools can be used safely and constructively. As an L&D professional, consider: What would it look like to convene as an industry to discuss how generative AI can be used responsibly to enhance measurable employee growth, interactive learning in the flow of work, and elevate the value proposition of the L&D field? It’s a lot to consider, but by coming together, L&D professionals can help drive an ethical and responsible AI-driven future of work.



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