

Welcome to this **Dunod podcast** to help you with your studies. Today, we are going to talk about **artificial intelligence** and the necessity to reflect on its evolution and potential dangers for humanity.

Artificial Intelligence (also known as “AI”) is a fast-evolving field, thanks to constant advancements. According to a report by Stanford University, in the last five years alone, AI has made significant progress in various areas, including vision, speech recognition and generation, natural language processing, image and video generation, multi-agent systems, planning, decision-making, and integrated vision and motor control for robotics. As AI seems to be present in an increasingly larger number of areas, many are wondering whether it poses a threat to humankind. Some might declare this is a little bit far-fetched: after all, we are not in a science fiction movie! And yet... it seems we are getting closer every day.

In late March 2023, an open letter entitled “Pause Giant AI Experiments” signed by more than twenty thousand AI scientists, researchers and industry CEOs, among others, asked “all AI labs to immediately pause for at least six months the training of AI systems more powerful than GPT-4.” It stated:

“AI systems with human-competitive intelligence can pose profound risks to society and humanity, as shown by extensive research and acknowledged by top AI labs. [...] Advanced AI could represent a profound change in the history of life on Earth, and should be planned for and managed with commensurate care and resources. Unfortunately, this level of planning and management is not happening, even though recent months have seen AI labs locked in an out-of-control race to develop and deploy ever more powerful digital minds that no one – not even their creators – can understand, predict, or reliably control. Contemporary AI systems are now becoming human-competitive at general tasks, and we must ask ourselves: Should we let machines flood our information channels with propaganda and untruth? Should we automate away all the jobs, including the fulfilling ones? Should we develop nonhuman minds that might eventually outnumber, outsmart, obsolete and replace us? Should we risk loss of control of our civilization? Such decisions must not be delegated to unelected tech leaders. Powerful AI systems should be developed only once we are confident that their effects will be positive and their risks will be manageable. This confidence must be well justified and increase with the magnitude of a system's potential effects. OpenAI's recent statement* regarding artificial general intelligence, states that "At some point, it may be important to get independent review before starting to train future systems, and for the most advanced efforts to agree to limit the rate of growth of compute used for creating new models." We agree. That point is now.

Therefore, we call on all AI labs to immediately pause for at least 6 months the training of AI systems more powerful than GPT-4. This pause should be public and verifiable, and include all key actors. If such a pause cannot be enacted quickly, governments should step in and institute a moratorium. AI labs and independent experts should use this pause to jointly develop and implement a set of shared safety protocols for advanced AI design and development that are rigorously audited and overseen by independent outside experts. These protocols should ensure that systems adhering to them are safe beyond a reasonable doubt. This does not mean a pause on AI development in general, merely a stepping back from the dangerous race to ever-larger unpredictable black-box models with emergent capabilities. AI research and development should be refocused on making today's powerful, state-of-the-art systems more accurate, safe, interpretable, transparent, robust, aligned, trustworthy, and loyal.

In parallel, AI developers must work with policymakers to dramatically accelerate development of robust AI governance systems. These should at a minimum include: new and capable regulatory authorities dedicated to AI; oversight and tracking of highly capable AI systems and large pools of computational capability; provenance and watermarking systems to help distinguish real from synthetic and to track model leaks; a robust auditing and certification ecosystem; liability for AI-caused harm; robust public funding for technical AI safety research; and well-resourced institutions for coping with the dramatic economic and political disruptions (especially to democracy) that AI will cause.

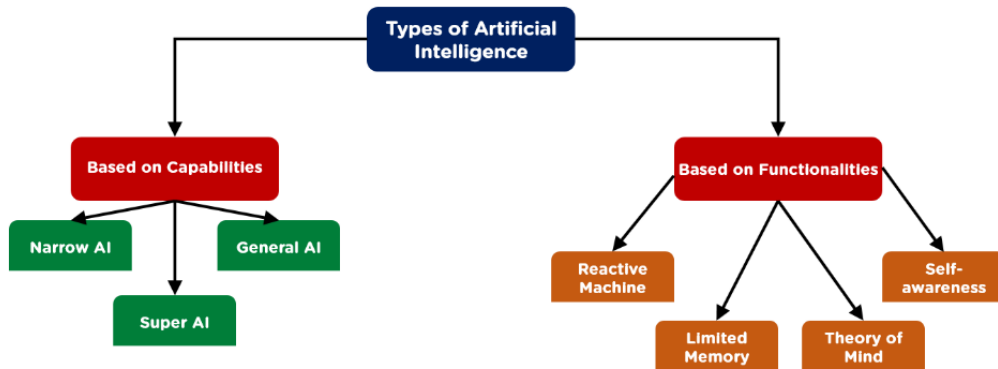
Humanity can enjoy a flourishing future with AI. Having succeeded in creating powerful AI systems, we can now enjoy an "AI summer" in which we reap the rewards, engineer these systems for the clear benefit of all, and give society a chance to adapt. Society has hit pause on other technologies with potentially catastrophic effects on society. We can do so here. Let's enjoy a long AI summer, not rush unprepared into a fall.”

What is significant about this open letter is that it reflects many of the fears people have regarding artificial intelligence. It is not only that they are anxious about new technologies and their applications. They are afraid of machines’ super intelligence and being replaced by them, which would cause mass unemployment. There is also the possibility

machines might become self-conscious and capable of destroying human beings, either because they fell into the wrong hands or got out of control.

In a nutshell, as with any new technology, there are risks and benefits to consider. Humankind should take the time to think about the future it wants to have and where and how artificial intelligence fits in it.

* Open AI is the company which created and launched Chat GPT.



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