

The goal of automation has always been efficiency. What if artificial intelligence sees humanity itself as the thing to be optimized?

When Conor Sprouls, a customer service representative in the call center of the insurance giant MetLife talks to a customer over the phone, he keeps one eye on the bottom-right corner of his screen. There, in a little blue box, A.I. tells him how he's doing.

Talking too fast? The program flashes an icon of a speedometer, indicating that he should slow down.

Sound sleepy? The software displays an "energy cue," with a picture of a coffee cup.

Not empathetic enough? A heart icon pops up...

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