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If algorithms make all the decisions, what do leaders actually do?

“Machines will always surpass humans in processing speed but cannot replace our ability to reason, innovate, communicate, and advocate. This is human magic. Johan Roos shows the promise of AI—and how to harness it.”

--Pierre Le Manh, President and CEO, Project Management Institute (PMI)

“Human Magic provides a timely reminder that our most valuable capabilities must be cultivated deliberately as AI transforms work. Johan Roos offers tools for ensuring technological progress amplifies, rather than erodes, what makes us human.

--Amy C. Edmondson, Novartis Professor of Leadership, Harvard Business School

HUMAN MAGIC

Leading with Wisdom in an Age of Algorithms

Johan Roos

Every professional now faces a daily choice: use AI to amplify your human capabilities, or let it quietly erode them through cognitive offloading, deterioration of judgment, and surrender to algorithmic authority.

Johan Roos is Senior Advisor to the Global Peter Drucker Forum, professor and former CAO at Hult International Business School, and co-inventor of the globally adopted LEGO® Serious Play® method. His new book, **HUMAN MAGIC: Leading with Wisdom in an Age of Algorithms** (Routledge, 2026) identifies a hierarchy of five capabilities algorithms cannot easily replicate: *curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.*

Drawing from three decades of research with executives and organizations worldwide, alongside recent AI implementation studies, **HUMAN MAGIC** presents a practical framework for cultivating these capabilities at every level, from individual practice to boardroom strategy.

A seasoned management scholar, former leader of several business schools, and entrepreneur, Roos works at the intersection of human wisdom and artificial intelligence and argues that we can choose between two trajectories: 1) an **erosion curve**, where human capability atrophies as AI becomes a substitute, and 2) an **amplification curve**, where capability expands as AI becomes a sparring partner.

Grounded in real examples and backed by peer-reviewed research, **HUMAN MAGIC** offers leaders a clear path from awareness to action. Those who invest now in developing these capabilities will shape the organizations worth working for tomorrow. Topics covered in **HUMAN MAGIC**, include:

- If algorithms make all the decisions, what do leaders actually do?
- How to develop human leaders in the Age of AI?
- AI isn't the threat. The passive, uncritical use of AI turns users from active creators into mere recipients of algorithmic output. Here's how to prevent that.
- Risk is not the presence of algorithms, but our temptation to treat their answers as endpoints, rather than as beginnings.
- Your future with AI is a choice: The Erosion Curve or The Amplification Curve
- The Five Core Capabilities: A Roadmap for Humans to Thrive in the Age of AI
- Practical Wisdom: The Meta-Capability. Algorithms can optimize tasks, but only human wisdom can orient them toward what is good: what matters, what is right, what resonates, and what endures.
- Your AI Self-Assessment: A snapshot of how you navigate human capabilities with AI. (*And what to do next...*)
- How to use human curiosity to sustain complexity and fuel discovery in Age of AI
- How cultivating algorithmic skepticism restores independent judgment and decision-making strength
- Practical wisdom is the compass for deciding when and how to engage AI: from technical mastery to wise action
- "Soft skills" are the hardest, and most valuable, skills to develop.

Each chapter of **HUMAN MAGIC** includes diagnostic questions and exercises so readers can move from understanding to practice immediately.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Johan Roos serves as Senior Advisor to the Global Peter Drucker Forum, where he helped initiate the Next Management initiative on leadership, and he is Professor in Strategy and Executive Advisor at Hult International Business School (Boston, San Francisco, Dubai, London). Throughout his career, Johan has been driven by curiosity about how people and institutions learn, adapt, and rediscover their imagination when technology changes the rules. This interest led him to co-invent the globally adopted LEGO® Serious Play® methodology, enabling thousands of organizations to tackle complex challenges through imaginative, hands-on exploration.

His latest book, **Human Magic: Leading with Wisdom in an Age of Algorithms** (Routledge, 2026), distills multi-year research with executives and organizations into a practical framework for preserving curiosity, practical wisdom, and human agency when intelligent machines can provide instant answers. Across his roles as educator, advisor, investor, and speaker, Johan's work is animated by a simple conviction: management, at its best, is humanity at work.

[Access one-page info sheet here.](#)

Human Magic
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