

Human vs. AI Support: A Comparative Reflection Activity

Course Subject:	Organizational Behavior
Student Level:	Undergraduate (Business Majors)
Number of Students:	Varies by section
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What Students Did

During an in-class experiential activity, students sought advice about a complex personal problem of their choice from a peer and a generative AI chatbot. Through a group debrief, they then compared and reflected on their observations of human and AI-generated advice, and the implications of their findings. As part of the debrief, relevant research on the efficacy of forms of support were presented.

Purpose

The purpose of the activity is to facilitate critical reflection on and understanding of some inherent differences between generative AI output compared to human interaction. Because students may have some assumptions about these differences, exploring the topic in a deeper way can be valuable. Additionally, the inductive discovery, peer feedback, and reflective discussion promote critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and AI fluency skills—all of which are important in Organizational Behavior.

Assessment

This activity was assessed informally through participation in the class debrief. The key indicator of success was whether students were able to articulate both sides of the AI support question — identifying not only the evident advantages of AI assistance (e.g., breadth of suggestions, availability, consistency) but also the less obvious costs (e.g., absence of genuine connection, loss of relationship-building opportunity, potential over-reliance). The activity is not graded for correctness; completion and engaged participation are sufficient for credit.

Faculty Reflections

The activity sequence of student observations and reflections before the group debrief and presentation was intentionally designed to be inductive, or experiential, since students are more likely to think carefully about AI's limitations if they discover those limitations themselves, rather than being told about them.

It is important to let students choose a problem that is meaningful to them. The activity will work best if the problem is a complex issue the student is actually struggling with, rather than a hypothetical or trivial question with a clear answer.

In the debrief, you may find that you need to push students past the more superficial observations (such as "the AI gave me a really long list of suggestions") toward deeper ones. Sample prompts include: Did you feel supported? Would you have called a friend after that conversation? What would you have lost if you had only used AI? The research slides work best at the end of the session as a way of validating and extending what students already noticed.

I frame the activity as a genuine inquiry rather than an exercise with a predetermined answer to facilitate. I also let students use their preferred AI tool; the diversity of AI output tends to produce a richer conversation during the debrief.

Step-by-Step Student Directions

Step	Instructions
Step 1	On your own, identify a complex problem or situation you are currently dealing with in your life. Write a brief description of it to prepare to ask someone for help. Keep this written description for use throughout the activity.
Step 2	Pair up with another student. Take turns sharing your respective problems with each other. As the listener, offer advice and support as you normally would in a conversation with a peer. As the speaker, note what it felt like to share and receive support from another person.

Step 3	Open a generative AI chatbot of your choosing (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, or another tool available to you). Enter your written problem description from Step 1 exactly as written. Interact with the chatbot for a few minutes, asking follow-up questions or probing for additional advice as you see fit.
Step 4	Reflect individually on both interactions. Consider: What kind of advice did each source provide? How did each interaction feel? Was anything especially good about the AI or human response? Was anything missing from the AI or human response?
Step 5	Reconvene with your partner and discuss your reflections, then share with the full group. The class debrief will address: (1) how the partner interactions went, (2) pros and cons of human support, (3) how the AI interactions went, (4) pros and cons of AI support, and (5) key similarities and differences between the two.
Step 6	After the debrief discussion, review the instructor's slide presenting findings from a related research experiment. Consider how the findings connect to what you experienced firsthand in this activity.