How will technology change the way you work and do business?

It's a regular topic of discussion around office water-coolers, a theme explored in webinars, over social media and at conferences in every field, globally. It's the rise of high tech in today's world.

Marketing guru Seth Godin wrote a blog posting recently called "23 things artificially intelligent computers can do better/faster/cheaper than you can." This was his list:

Predict the weather
Read an X-ray
Play Go
Correct spelling
Figure out the "Profit & Loss" of a large company
Pick a face out of a crowd
Count calories
Fly a jet across the country
Maintain the temperature of your house
Book a flight
Read documents in a lawsuit
Sort packages
Give directions
Create an index for a book
Play Jeopardy
Weld a metal seam
Trade stocks
Place online ads
Figure out what book to read next
Water a plant
Monitor a premature newborn
Detect a fire
Play poker

Godin debunks what he calls the "homunculus model of A[rtificial] I[ntelligence]," the view that the future represents "a little man in a box, as mysterious in his motivations as we are."

Instead, Godin says that "the future of AI is probably a lot like the past: it nibbles. AI does a job we weren't necessarily crazy about doing anyway; it does it quietly, and well, and then we take it for granted. . . . .No one complained when their thermostat took over the job of building a fire . . . . . And no one complained when the computer found 100 flights faster and better than we ever could."

He adds: "But the system doesn't get tired," as we do, and it relentlessly "keeps nibbling . . . with a focus on a clearly defined task." It will answer phone calls, greet you at the shopping mall, wash your windows, distribute your mail, make your clothes, select and package your groceries . . . . These changes leads to "unintended consequences, enormous when they happen to you, and mostly small in the universal scheme of things."

So the question becomes how can we become quite good at something that's difficult for a computer to do, one day soon? How do we "become so resilient, so human and such a *linchpin* that shifts in technology won't be able to catch up?"

It's a topic about 40 affiliates of Women Entrepreneurs of SK and the Raj Manek Mentorship Program gathered last week to discuss. Moderator John Gormley introduced the topic by saying, it's a popular myth that "technology equals communication." And yet technology's change to our contemporary world is vast, adding each month, globally, 1 trillion gigabytes worth of digital capital (Gormley).

Panelist Jeff Tomlin of Vendasta Technologies steers the company that has helped more than 700 media agencies prepare for technology developments. He referred to "Social Darwinism" as what happens when society and technology evolve faster than our ability to adapt does. Most businesses cannot adapt fast enough to keep up with rapid changes in technology.

If we're to survive, we must dedicate resources to a niche and unproven opportunity to create a future for our companies. We must all be "change agents."katrina

Panelist Katrina German, CEO of KatrinaGerman.com, said that technological innovation requires us to become more creative than ever. She said that there are opportunities to gain an international audience in Saskatchewan. Think about allowing technology to free you from doing repetitive tasks and find gaps where we can use technology to improve people's everyday lives.

Responsibly used, technology can improve life and services, creating a culture of change and openness.

So use Hootsuite to make your social media postings. Use Deal Flow management tool to communicate with your clients, as a freelancer. Pay monthly for MeetEdgar.com, to continuously post contact to your clients—all to give you time to be creative.

Shayne Zaba of NICS Ltd. (a computer and network service provider for SMEs) stressed that there are positives: For instance, technology is creating quality, universal language translation tools, so that we can do business and meet with others who speak different languages than we do. Business relationships are changing by this and many other tech advancements.

Zaba said that the biggest impact AI will have is that it will unite "spot" breakthroughs (where technology brings gains) into wider networks of overarching breakthroughs . . . . The new "blue collar" worker will soon be software developers. We already need code to keep our websites current. Zaba stressed that human empathy is needed to deal with these challenges. People continue to debate online whether technology itself can be empathetic.

German says that concise, internal and external "communication skills" will continue to be valuable. And someone has to manage all of the technology.

Everyone needs to increase their tech literacy and/or collaborate with those (like Tomlin, German and Zaba) who "get it." As Godin says: "It was always important, but now it's urgent."