Futurists have long envisioned a brighter tomorrow, full of A.I. helpers and automated environments that run on the sound of our voice. Now that we stand on the edge of that reality, it’s time to realize what it requires of us to make this new world work. With immense possibilities on the horizon comes expanding responsibility. Businesses need to act now to transform their IT, workforce and security, to transform these challenges into opportunities.

Recently, Dell Technologies teamed up with Institute for the Future to project into the next decades, and predict how emerging technologies – such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) – will reshape how we live and work by 2030. With those insights, we extended IFTF’s forecasts and surveyed 3,800 business leaders from around the world to gauge their predictions and preparedness for the future.

**Human-machine Partnerships**

82% of businesses polled expect humans and machines will work as integrated teams inside of five years. Twenty six percent of businesses say their workforce and machines are already working this way.

“Stronger human-machine partnerships will result in stronger human-human relationships, as companies take a customer-first approach and lead with insights,” said Karen Quintos, Dell’s Chief Customer
Officer. “By applying machine learning and AI to customer data, companies will be able to predict and understand customer behavior like never before.”

But business leaders are torn by what this means for their roles, their businesses and the world at large. 50% think automated systems will free up their time. However, the other half do not. While 42% believe they’ll have more job satisfaction in the future by offloading the tasks they don’t want to do to machines. Alarmingly, 58% do not.

**Supporting Your Workforce**

“While there may be moments of uncertainty, it’s imperative that we as leaders keep our workforce engaged, excited and open to new possibilities,” says Liz Matthews, Senior Vice President of Global Brand and Creative at Dell Technologies. “Empowering and enabling people across our diverse workforce is crucial to succeeding.”

So how can you, as a business leader, empower your workforce and give them the skills and support they need? Most agree these actions will be crucial to digital transformation success:

- Aligning compensation, training and KPIs to digital goals
- Tasking senior leaders with spearheading digital change
- Gaining employee buy-in
- Teaching all employees coding and software development
- Partnering humans and machines as an integrated working team

**The Future of Learning**

85% of the jobs in 2030 don’t exist yet, so it’s hard to know which specific skills will be needed. However, we can focus on new methods of learning – the ability to learn new skills will be incredibly useful in an era of transformation. Knowing how to learn is proving to be more important than knowing one particular trade.

Traditional schools and training programs will still be necessary, but students are increasingly turning to open online courses, peer-to-peer programs and boot camps to get new skills. 49% of 18-24 year olds are already engaged in some form of learning to develop new ways of working with digital skills.