



The Next Gen Insight Report to Unlock AI's True Power

# MASTERING AI

- The Critical Edge for
- Programme Managers

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape we are now living in an era of rapid reinvention. AI is moving faster than most businesses can keep up with—and that's precisely the point. The future isn't waiting for strategy decks or year-long transformation roadmaps. It's unfolding in real time.

We understand what separates those who thrive from those who scramble isn't just access to tech. It's the ability to ask sharper questions and interrogate assumptions. To imagine better ways of working—and then actually build them.

We believe enquiry isn't a soft approach. It's a strategy.

At Mash - we go beyond execution to understand, define and shape what's next. Curating high-performing teams, decoding cultural shifts, and embedding AI fluency across every layer of strategy and operations.

This is why we've identified the rise of AI savvy Programme Managers as demand grows for those who fuse operational rigour, cultural fluency and AI powered execution.

This report explores how Programme Managers can lead in an AI era, how questioning fuels innovation, and how Mash helps brands stay future-ready.

*Jolene Cornford* - **General Manager**

**FUELING THE FUTURE**

**ONE QUESTION**

**AT A TIME**



# THE POWER OF KLARA AND THE SUN

Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* explores AI's role in understanding human emotions, morality, and societal divides. Klara perceives her world through a logical and often naive lens, blending her programmed perspective with superstition, highlighting the limited yet profound way AI interprets complex human experiences.

- Ishiguro's novel explores AI navigating human emotions, morality, and society
- Klara perceives her environment through her own logic and superstition

Truly harnessing AI requires understanding beyond superficial use.



# SURFACE VS. DEPTH OF AI KNOWLEDGE

Most people think: Prompting, chatGPT, generating content, but deeper understanding involves:

- Capabilities & limitations
- Ethical & responsible use
- Workflow redesign
- Collaboration & data governance
- Piloting & scaling strategies

PERCEPTION

PROMPTING

CHATGPT

GENERATING  
CONTENT

CAPABILITIES &  
LIMITATIONS

ETHICAL &  
RESPONSIBLE USE

WORKFLOW REDESIGN

COLLABORATION &  
DATA GOVERNANCE

PILOTING & SCALING  
STRATEGIES

REALITY

# THE ROLE OF SOCRATIC INQUIRY IN THE AI ERA



In an environment flooded with information, answers alone are insufficient; the true power lies in the questions we ask.

- Strategic questioning transforms raw data into meaningful insights that inform smarter decisions.
- Moving beyond passive acceptance, asking thoughtful, purpose-driven questions opens the door to deeper understanding.
- Effective requests fuels innovation by challenging assumptions and uncovering new possibilities.
- Asking the right questions nurtures intellectual independence, empowering leaders to navigate complexity with confidence.
- Questioning becomes a catalyst for continuous learning in an ever-changing, data-driven landscape.

# THE KEY TO TRUE CLARITY

## CHALLENGE BIASES & ASSUMPTIONS

Questioning your own beliefs prevents mistakes, broadens your perspective, and ensures your actions are based on facts rather than unfounded beliefs.

## USE QUESTIONING FOR CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

Asking the right questions sparks innovative ideas and helps you find effective solutions that others might overlook.

## MAINTAIN INTELLECTUAL AUTONOMY

Thinking independently keeps you adaptable and confident, so you're not just following others but making informed choices that drive success.

# PROGRAMME MANAGERS AS AI ARCHITECTS:

Building the  
*Future* of Work



# Unlocking Insights & Unleashing *Talents*



Over the past six months, conversations with marketing and brand leaders across APAC have made one thing crystal clear:

"We're leveraging AI to generate a ton of content, but what we really need is smarter ways to manage it at scale – especially when AI is driving the volume."

There's a rising hunger across the region to produce:

- High-volume, personalized assets
- Rapid, scalable AI-generated content
- Localized campaigns that stay on brand and meet legal standards

But even the smartest AI needs sharp human eyes. No global brand launches AI-generated creative without quality checks – bottlenecking speed in a world demanding more, faster, and better.

# Content at Scale Meets

AI-driven content is skyrocketing – generating huge volumes of personalized assets at record speed.

Brands use AI to stay competitive, but the real challenge is ensuring trust, quality, and compliance keep pace with this rapid growth.

## KEY

### INSIGHTS

**Despite the explosion of AI output, human oversight remains the essential safeguard**

According to the PWC 28th Annual Global CEO Survey - Asia Pacific:

- Over **61%** of employees are confident about job security amid digital transformation,
- But many are craving a smarter balance, automation that boosts creativity without losing the human touch that upholds standards, ethics, and brand integrity.

## Human Oversight

### DRIVING DEMAND

- High-volume, personalized assets
- Content at speed and scale
- Localized campaigns that meet global brand and legal standards

### THE NEW FRONTIER

Blending innovative technology with irreplaceable human judgment to deliver scalable, quality-controlled content that resonates, builds trust, and leads markets.

# Broader Market Context &

## RAPID DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & TALENT READINESS IN APAC

- **41% of executives believe that investing in AI is the biggest driver of productivity growth.** (PWC 28th Annual Global CEO Survey - APAC 2025)
- Countries across **APAC** are experiencing profound shifts - workplaces **are not just digitizing but reimagining the entire work experience.**
- While organizations have high hopes for AI boosting efficiency, there's a stark reality:
  - **53% of executives believe their teams lacks the ability to pivot quickly** in response to change.
  - 86% think less than half of their workforce can adapt if their roles are transformed or eliminated by AI.
  - Over half (59%) worry their companies aren't doing enough to inspire workers to embrace new technologies.
  - Meanwhile, 40% of employees report they're not thriving at work.

## Opportunities

### KEY QUESTION

**Are organizations finding the right balance between technology adoption and talent development?**

The future success depends on cultivating Programme Managers and leaders who can bridge this gap—combining AI mastery with strong change management and workforce engagement.

### IMPLICATION

**Developing a pipeline of adaptable, tech-savvy, human-centric Programme Managers is essential. These leaders will drive successful digital transformation and workforce resilience across APAC.**

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several children's faces. The children appear to be of diverse ethnicities, with visible eyes, noses, and mouths. The lighting is warm, and the overall tone is positive and human-centric.

# What do 4500+ applicants, 800 pre-qualified candidates, and the selected 50 top profiles reveal about the **future of AI-enabled programme management** in APAC?

For the past month, we've been in conversations with talent in Singapore, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. The conversations continue, but for now, we're excited to present insights and real talent from these Countries.

# Building the Portfolio of the *Best*



# Why Now?

- Over the past 6 months, client conversations revealed **the need for a high-impact talent pipeline that blends AI and human intelligence seamlessly.**
- We recognized two key steps:
  - Deepen understanding of client needs in AI-driven marketing
  - Curate a top-tier portfolio of Programme Managers ready to lead this transformation.



# Talent Pipeline *Characteristics*

## MARKET-READY TALENT

- These Programme Managers are prepared to seamlessly integrate into client organizations, whether embedded within teams or on project-specific assignments.
- They're equipped to hit the ground running, driving immediate impact in managing AI-human workflows and scaling operations.

## DUAL SKILLS FOR A NEW ERA

- Candidates are rigorously assessed for both technical aptitude in AI and content operations, and for cultural intelligence, ensuring they can effectively navigate the nuanced dynamics of regional markets.
- Their ability to bridge Mash's standards with client expectations makes them versatile leaders capable of authentic regional engagement.

## REGIONAL FOCUS & FUTURE GROWTH

- Our talent pipeline spans key markets: Singapore, Australia, and Indonesia—each with unique cultural and market contexts, but united by a shared capability for innovative AI-human management.
- Assessments for Thailand and Malaysia are underway, positioning us to deliver regionally distributed leaders who understand local sensitivities and global standards.

## STRATEGIC IMPACT

This curated group of Programme Managers isn't just filling roles, they're **shaping the future of cross-functional, AI-driven content management** across APAC. They bring a rare blend of **technical mastery, cultural fluency, and operational excellence**, enabling organizations to lead confidently in an era of rapid digital transformation.

# The *Future* of

# Leadership

This talent pool isn't just about filling roles, it's about **shaping the future of how organizations lead in an AI-driven world**. These leaders are crafted to unlock new possibilities, driving innovation while staying deeply connected to regional cultures and nuances.

It's about **discovering the exceptional operators who seamlessly blend technical mastery with cultural insight and strategic foresight**. These are the pioneers who will elevate organizations, turning rapid technological change into a sustainable competitive advantage.

They're not just ready for the future, they're set to define it.



# Want the

# *Full* Report?

To access the complete insights and APAC talent profiles, please get in touch with the team at Mash by emailing [jolene@thisismash.com](mailto:jolene@thisismash.com)

Let's talk about how we can support your in-housing strategy.

