

AI & SOCIETY

Adoption is a Skill. Deployment is Power. Experience is the Moat.

By Mahesh Ramanujam, FCA · February 27, 2026 · promptedgrad.com/adoption-is-a-skill-deployment-is-power-experience-is-the-moat/

Key Points

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Stage 1 — Adoption: learning to use AI tools. Most graduates are here. It is necessary but not sufficient for career advantage.

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Stage 2 — Deployment: applying AI to real work problems consistently and getting measurably better outcomes. This is where the gap opens.

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Stage 3 — Experience as a Moat: combining AI capability with deep domain expertise that took years to build. This is nearly impossible to replicate quickly.

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Most LinkedIn posts about AI are about Stage 1. Most career advantage comes from Stages 2 and 3.

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The mistake: treating AI adoption as a destination. It is a starting point. The graduates who stop at "I know how to use ChatGPT" will be replaced by those who reach Stage 2.

6

Build your moat: domain knowledge + AI deployment + time. None of these can be shortcut. All three together are extremely powerful.

Key Takeaway

The tool is available to everyone. The judgment to deploy it well is not. That judgment is built through experience, not tutorials.

