

## A Letter from a Very Distinguished Colleague about Ombuds' Use of AI

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As of now, given the alleged inappropriate use of others' intellectual property to "train" systems and the unclear treatment of users' own input, the documented environmental costs, the recognized inability to attend responsibly to nuance and context, the evident lack of accountability for errors or immoral/illegal/ill-suited recommendations, and the obvious neglect of common professional and personal ethics (including privacy/confidentiality), I can't in good conscience endorse any ombuds's use of any AI tools at this time.

Perhaps some form of AI can be used to examine policies or archives, but these are just glorified database calls or searches, no? And AI summaries give weight to preponderance, which has little to do with appropriateness or context. Finding ten instances of an untruth and only three to a truth doesn't make the lie true.

While the hype of AI is real, the realized promises are only fractional, at best. I have close colleagues and relatives who work with AI in various sectors, and all of them have shared some combination of concerns around slop (output needing considerable review and correction), inefficiency/waste, inaccuracy, ill-fit, and user de-skilling. And they've been unanimous lately--even the early AI adopters--in their distrust of the overblown claims from the various AI shops, and their realization that AI undermines professionals' abilities and creates new dependence.

I participate in discussions with many faculty at law schools, where I believe the early enthusiasm has already begun to turn against AI. Sure, a half-dozen colleagues remain gung-ho, yet my read is that the quiet majority are skeptical, while I and a growing proportion are increasingly doubting and troubled. Today, I believe that any professional who uses AI to do important work risks not only their future capacity to do the related tasks, but also their credibility--if not career prospects.

I'm less worried about AI taking jobs, so much as doing those jobs' tasks poorly and unethically.

I'm glad to continue to learn more, yet as I watch more and more colleagues and friends from a wide range of sectors step away from or swear off AI, I can't help but think that most fields--including organizational ombuds--will be poorly served to endorse any practitioner's use at this time.

Will I be "left behind"? Maybe so, but I doubt it. In fact, I hunch we're nearing a time where professionals will distinguish themselves by advertising that they do their work without any AI involvement.

**Note:** This article draft is part of a [Resource Repository](#) designed to support identifying—and helping to quantify—the value of an Organizational Ombuds (OO). This Resource Repository is a work in progress. It is open to improvements, additions, deletions, critique, revision and random commentary. If any page in the repository is helpful, or needs revision, please let us know. Please contact [Mary Rowe](#) or other co-authors, if you can help to improve these pages or have another page to offer.