

## HOW MACHINES SHAPE OUR THOUGHTS IN THE CONCEPTUAL AGE

The subject matter is complex and paradoxical, and debate will continue related to how AI continues to shape our thoughts. Several years ago, Nicholas Carr [cited](#) research and thought leaders to present both sides of the argument. For an instance, it was interesting to read the change in Nietzsche's prose, as for how his thoughts changed after using the new writing equipment. James Olds, the professor of neurosciences makes a case that the adult mind is mold-able. Olds adds that the brain has the ability to reprogram itself on the fly, altering the way it functions; whereas, playwright Richard Foreman presents the risk of turning into "pancake people" as a result of information overexposure.

In contradiction to the risks that the internet poses, Popular Science author Steven Johnson, for an instance [argues](#) that the Internet is actually making us smarter – as a result of forming cognitive calisthenics. The referenced articles also make a case for "fluid intelligence", the ability to find meaning in confusion and to solve new problems, giving us "the era of machines able to make useful suggestion without explicit prompting."

In other instances, however, I feel that the authors stretched the rationale, especially related to counter-tendency to expect the worst of every new tool, citing Socrates's comment on how development of writing could cease to exercise memory - in reference to Plato's Phaedrus (composed around 370 BC). Though, Socrates made the reference related to the reluctance to accept new communication mediums, he should be given credit for his other major contribution - the way of thinking that led to the contemporary questions based thinking that in my opinion, has served humanity quite well.

The questions based thinking that Socrates championed, is a basis for many philosophers and management gurus like Peter Drucker, who articulated and expanded on the Socratic way of thinking. Questions triggered responses are also the foundations of artificial intelligence applications. Google's model is clearly founded on the questions based, thoughtful pull approach (with intent) - versus internet in general, in which case, a barrage of information is pushed out to users.

An inter-disciplinary process based thinking trumps tasks based thinking. We are shifting towards a new way of thinking that, we are how we read. I would like to go one step further, that in the conceptual age, we are how we get information; and, how we let machines shape us.