Technical writing in the era of AI:

Is it still a worthy career path?

@TomFernBlog
hi@tomfern.com
tomfern.com

semaphore

YES

It depends...

Technology has always advanced

What makes AI and LLMs different?

- Can produce content at scale
- *Feels* like they can think

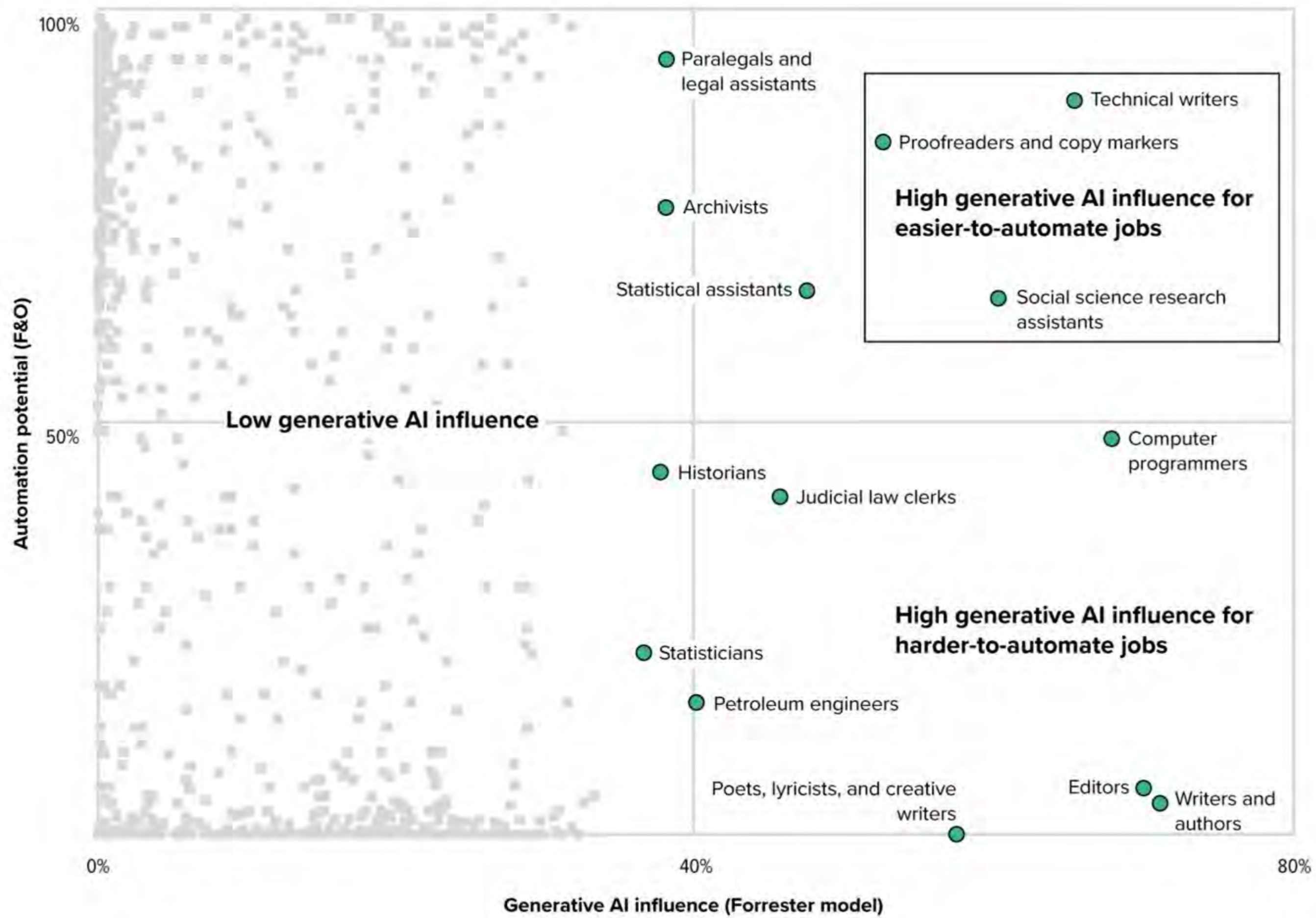# There are already products automating technical writing

DocuWriter.ai

Alphadoc

Theneo

synthesia

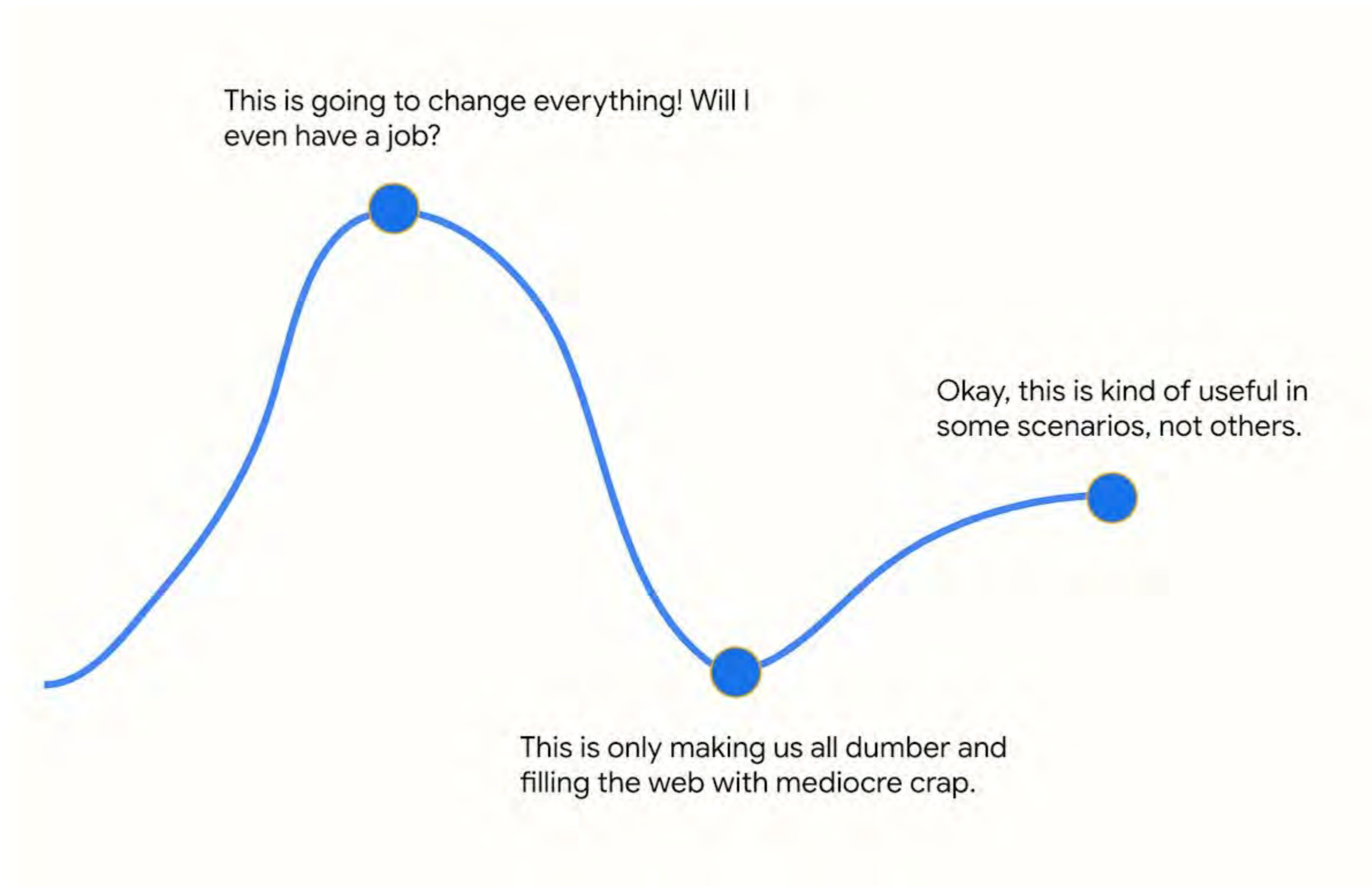Source: https://regmedia.co.uk/2023/09/06/forrester_gen_ai_report_pdf.pdf

Should we bow to the new AI overlods?

5 reasons we shouldn't worry (too much)

1: The hype cycle

Source: https://idratherbewriting.com/learnapidoc/docapis_ai_what_works_and_doesnt.html

Selling fear

Source: https://futurism.com/the-byte/sam-altman-warns-ai-destroy-jobs
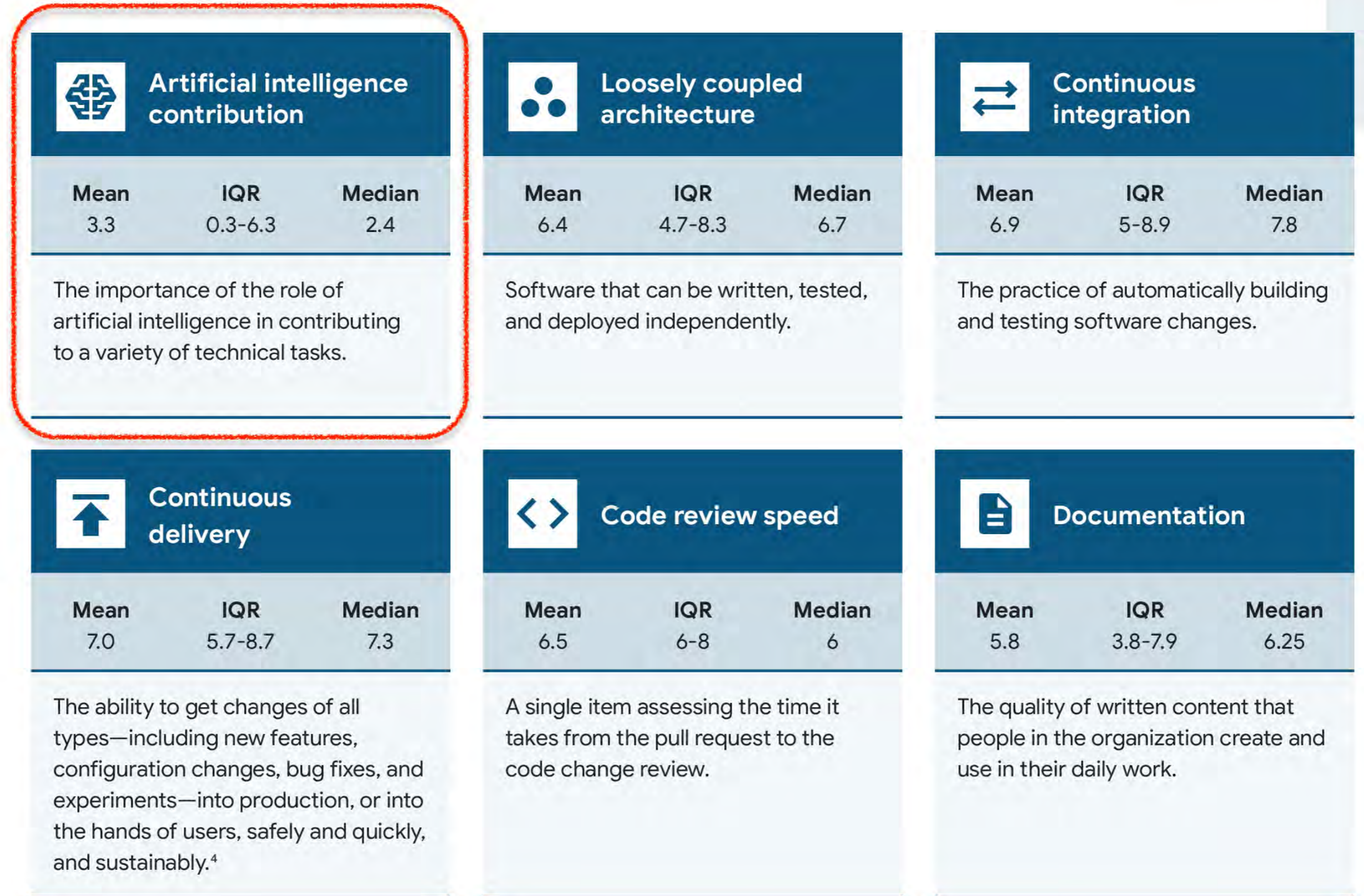
#2: AI failed to replace writers before
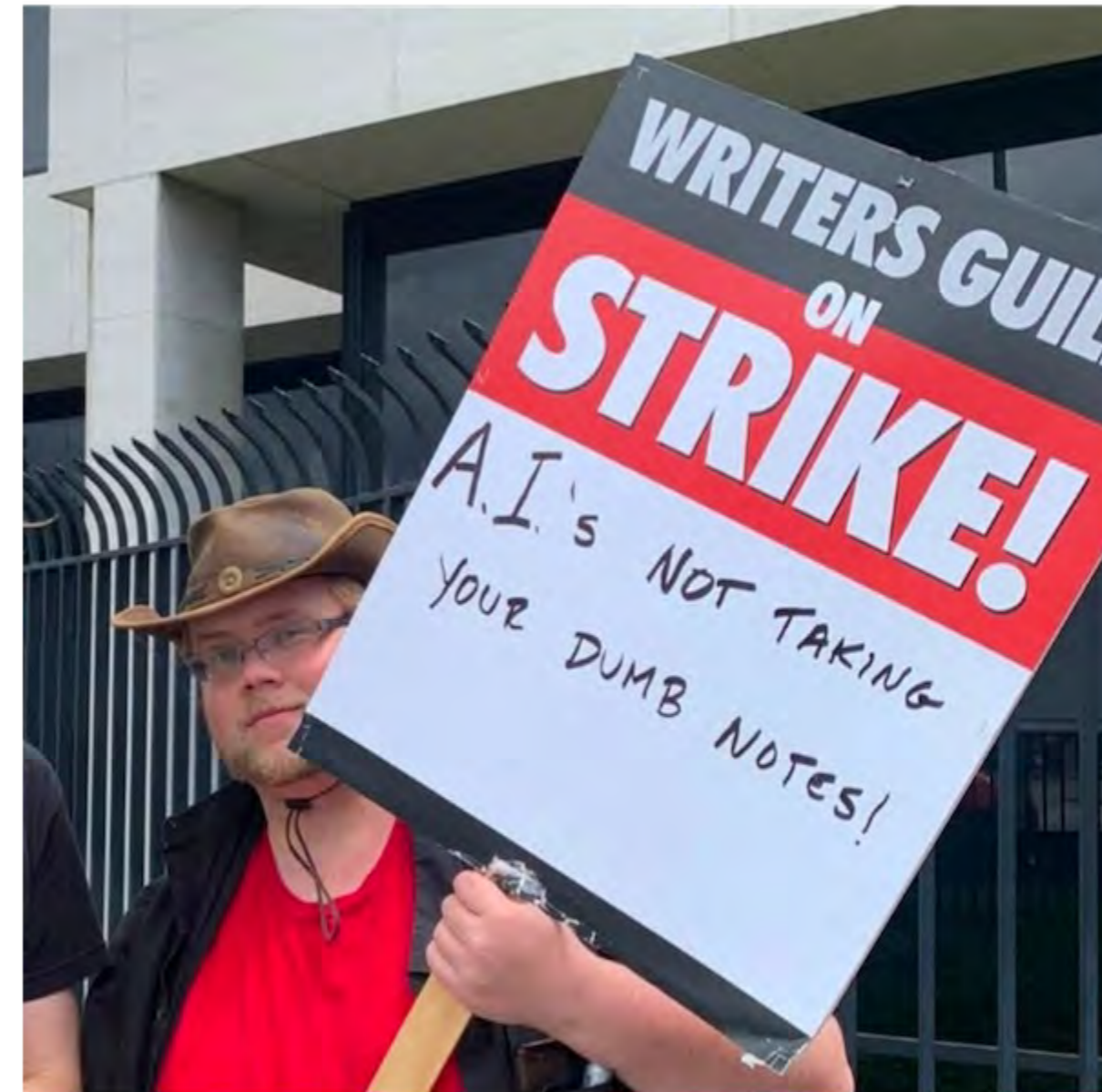
Processes & technical capabilities

These are either activities, practices, or states that might emerge in a team or organization. Put differently, these are things teams do or ways teams are.

Artificial intelligence contribution

Mean	IQR	Median
3.3	0.3-6.3	2.4

The importance of the role of artificial intelligence in contributing to a variety of technical tasks.

Loosely coupled architecture

Mean	IQR	Median
6.4	4.7-8.3	6.7

Software that can be written, tested, and deployed independently.

Continuous integration

Mean	IQR	Median
6.9	5-8.9	7.8

The practice of automatically building and testing software changes.

Continuous delivery

Mean	IQR	Median
7.0	5.7-8.7	7.3

The ability to get changes of all types—including new features, configuration changes, bug fixes, and experiments—into production, or into the hands of users, safely and quickly, and sustainably.[4]

Code review speed

Mean	IQR	Median
6.5	6-8	6

A single item assessing the time it takes from the pull request to the code change review.

Documentation

Mean	IQR	Median
5.8	3.8-7.9	6.25

The quality of written content that people in the organization create and use in their daily work.

#3: AI has it's share of limitations

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- Hallucinations
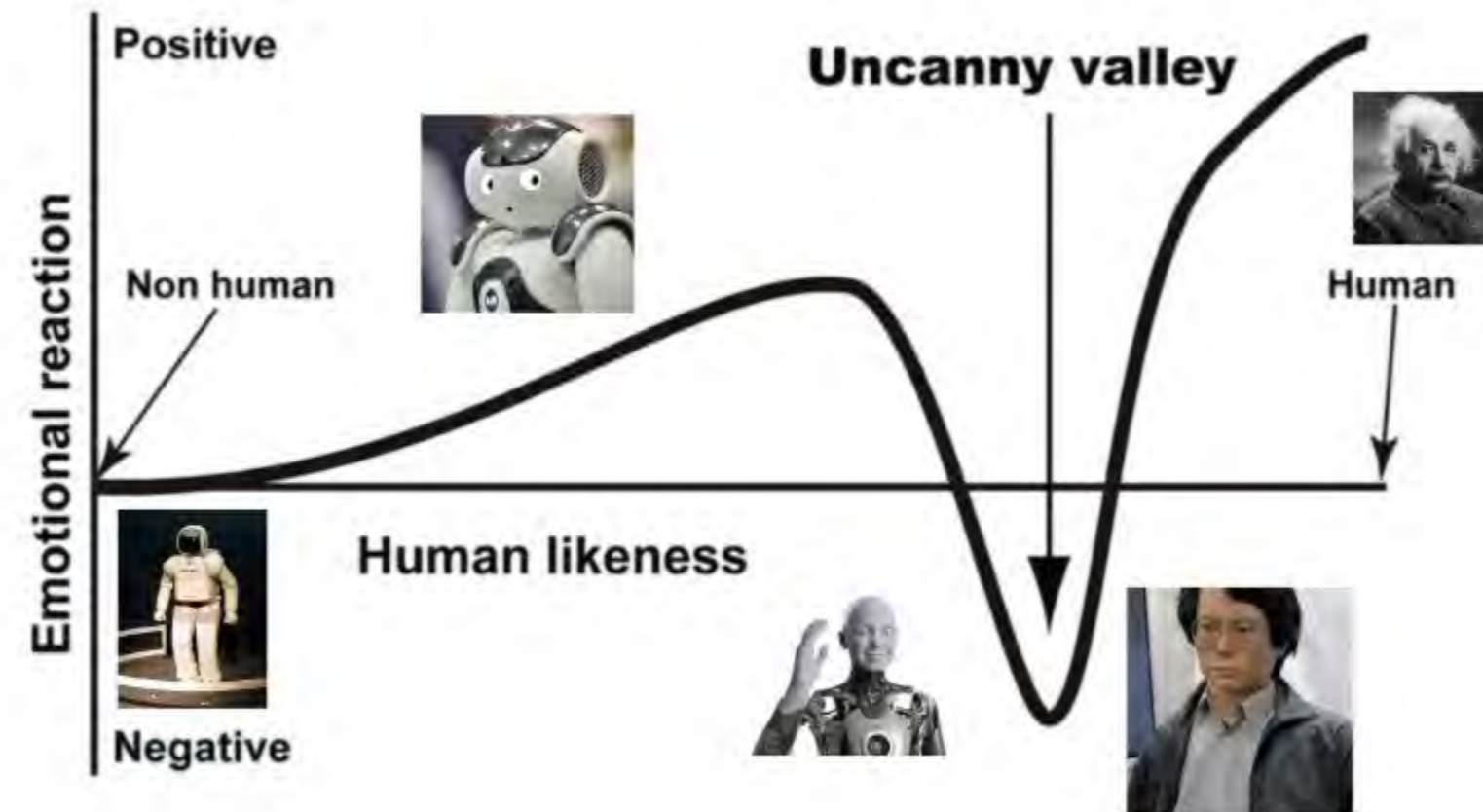- Verbosity and clutter

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#3: AI has it's share of limitations

- Hallucinations
- Verbosity and clutter
- Privacy

#3: AI has it's share of limitations

- Hallucinations
- Verbosity and clutter
- Privacy
- Token limits
- Unnanounced model upgrades

AI at it's worst: the uncanny valley

Source: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/8494633/Japanese-robot-twins-fail-to-bridge-the-uncanny-valley.html

Uncanny valley in LLMs

- Lack of human connection
- There is no "I-ness"
- No one is behind the wheel

#4: We benefit from AI

The AI adoption spectrum

$\longleftarrow$

100%　　　Reliance in 🤖　　　0%

The cyborg

Cyborg

← ———————————————————————————————→

100%   Reliance in 🤖   0%

The classical writer

Cyborg

Classical

←──

100%   Reliance in 🤖   0%

The director

Cyborg Director Classical

← Reliance in 🤖

100%   0%

The swiss army writer

Cyborg   Director   Swiss Army   Classical

←

100%   Reliance in 🤖   0%

#5: writing is 20% of the job anyways

THANK YOU!

TOMMY

- 🐦 @TomFernBlog
- ✉️ hi@tomfern.com
- 🌐 tomfern.com

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