Schwalbe KI-Guide – Guideline for the use of AI

What is AI?

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines and computer systems to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence. This includes learning, problem solving, pattern recognition and decision making. AI uses algorithms and data to automate processes and make them more efficient.

Why is AI relevant for our company?

The integration of **artificial intelligence (AI)** into a company increases efficiency, reduces costs and creates competitive advantages. AI automates routine tasks, improves decision-making through data analysis and optimizes customer service and production processes. It enables more precise planning, reduces downtime through predictive maintenance and promotes innovation. Companies benefit from faster operations, personalized customer experiences and better use of resources, ensuring long-term growth and success.

Our goal is to use AI in a way that empowers employees – whether it's by increasing the quality and efficiency of their work, reducing repetitive tasks or opening up new opportunities that were previously not feasible.

Schwalbe supports the further development of AI skills in all employees and is committed to providing the most equal access to these technologies possible, whenever it is reasonable and feasible.

Principles of AI use

- Transparency: The use of AI must be understandable and traceable. Employees and customers should know how and why AI systems are used.
- Fairness: AI decisions should not cause discrimination or unfair treatment. It is ensured that there are no unequal effects on different customer groups.
- Reliability and security: The AI systems used must be secure, robust and able to operate reliably without causing errors that could endanger operations.
- Sustainability: The use of AI should make a positive long-term contribution to the environment and society by promoting efficient, resource-saving solutions.

Areas of application for AI in companies

Responsible use of AI

- Ethics and responsibility: All AI decisions should be ethically justifiable. Clear responsibilities must be defined for who is responsible for the use and results of AI systems.
- Monitoring and control: AI-based processes should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are in line with company values and objectives.
- Error culture: When AI systems make mistakes, they must be quickly identified, analyzed and corrected. A transparent error and improvement management system should be established.

Do's and don'ts when using AI

Do's

- **Define clear goals:** Before you use AI, make sure you have clear goals and a specific area of application. Be clear about how the AI should optimize your processes, whether in production, sales, or customer service.
- **Educate yourself:** When working with AI systems, you should not do so naively and without forethought. Competent handling and in-depth knowledge will help you understand AI as a support tool. And to be able to assess risks.
- **Ensure transparency and control:** Make sure that the AI's decisions are comprehensible and transparent. It should always be possible to understand the AI's decision-making process.
- **Check profitability:** Before investing in an AI solution, its benefits and profitability must be carefully evaluated. Analyze whether the effort and costs are justified based on the expected savings and improvements.
- **Get feedback and share ideas:** AI systems need to be regularly reviewed and adjusted. Collect feedback and share it with those responsible. Discuss possible applications with colleagues to continuously optimize the systems.

Dont's

- **Don't trust blindly:** AI systems are not “black boxes”. Don't rely entirely on the results without checking them. Even though AI is very powerful, errors can occur – especially with incorrect training data.
- **Handle personal and confidential data with care:** Make sure that you do not enter any personal or confidential data into non-approved AI. Data protection regulations must be adhered to at all times in order to maintain the trust of customers and partners. Trade secrets must not be carelessly disclosed.
- **AI is no substitute for human creativity:** In product development or customer service, AI should be used as a tool to support, not replace, human intuition and creativity.

- **Don't work in isolation:** AI should not be implemented in a “silo mentality”. It is important that all departments work together and share their insights and data to get the most out of AI.
- **Avoid complexity:** Start with simple applications and move forward step by step. Systems that are too complex and do not integrate well into existing processes could cause more problems than they solve.
- In areas such as customer service, it is important to find a balance.

Technical and organizational requirements

- **Choice of platform:** Cloud AI vs. on-premises AI systems
- **Data management:** Protection of sensitive company and customer data
- **Integration into existing systems:** ERP, CRM, production software
- **Training & education:** Ensure that employees use the AI correctly

Data protection & security

- **Data protection:** The protection of customers' personal data must be guaranteed at all times. The collection, processing and storage of data must be carried out in accordance with the applicable data protection laws (e.g. GDPR).
- **Security standards:** AI systems must be developed with high security standards to protect data from misuse and attacks.
- **Data minimization:** Only the minimum amount of data necessary for the respective application should be collected and processed.