

AI Lessons From Shelia Anderson, Aflac

Insights from “Continuous Learning With AI: Aflac’s Shelia Anderson”



Shelia Anderson

Aflac

Shelia Anderson joined Aflac in July 2022 as senior vice president and CIO. She oversees the insurer's digital services division and drives technology strategy in support of its U.S. business. Anderson has a rich history as an executive leading the IT functions at Fortune 500 global organizations, including Liberty Mutual, USAA, HP, and Electronic Data Systems.





EPISODE 608

Automation Frees Up Employee Time

Aflac certainly isn't the only organization using AI and machine learning to automate rote processes. In its case, the insurer automates processing on simpler claims, which usually pay out \$200 or less, so claims specialists can put their attention toward more complex claims. Rather than being replaced by technology, employees feel they are adding value when they can focus on customers needing higher-touch interactions.

In Tech, Soft Skills Matter, Too

From her experience leading teams at a number of technology companies, Shelia Anderson is most interested in job seekers who have an inquisitive nature. She finds it's easier to recruit talent for organizations that are purpose-driven and really show that commitment.

When Organizations Live Up to Their Values, Job Candidates Take Notice

Aflac finds that demonstrating values through initiatives, such as its robotic My Special Aflac Duck — a support tool for children fighting cancer — and showcasing what a day in the life of an employee in a similar role looks like, helps recruitment efforts.

Apply These Insights to Your Work

1. Explore the benefits of automation.

Many organizations start their AI efforts thinking about how AI can automate repetitive or routine processes. In health care settings, AI can often read medical imaging faster than a human. In the legal profession, AI tools can scan documents, saving countless hours for lawyers. For Aflac, automation has freed up employees from working on simpler claims to focus on more complex cases with customers. What opportunities do you see for automation in your own organization? How would you communicate the benefits to workers who will end up with time saved?

2. Hiring tech talent? Develop a profile for the type of people you're hiring.

Technical skills are obviously important for people in data science and engineering roles. What other skills could these workers have that would be beneficial? Think about soft skills, like curiosity, communication, and others as you define what types of people you want to bring in if your organization's headcount is growing.

3. Lean into your company's values.

When leaders and front-line employees alike feel their work contributes to a larger purpose or goal, it's often quite motivating. Does your organization have a purpose, mission, and/or vision statement? What is it? Could it be better socialized throughout the organization to inspire current and future employees?

For more insights, listen to the episode
**“Continuous Learning With AI:
Aflac’s Shelia Anderson”**



Me, Myself, and AI

is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify,
and wherever you listen to podcasts

For more on finding the right
technical talent, consider

**“No Need for AI Unicorns:
PepsiCo’s Colin Lenaghan”**

For more on how automation
provides opportunities in the
health care space, try

**“Precision Medicine in
Pharma: Sanofi’s Frank
Nestle”**