AI Essentials for Professionals

Course Overview

This course introduces professionals to the foundations of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its practical applications in the workplace. Participants will explore core AI concepts, AI history, generative AI tools, and prompt engineering strategies. The session emphasizes hands-on exercises with Excel, ChatGPT, Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot to help learners visualize data, integrate AI insights, and enhance productivity across organizational functions.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of AI, its history, and evolution.

- Differentiate between Narrow AI, General AI, and Superintelligent AI.

- Build simple machine learning models in Excel without coding.

- Explore generative AI platforms (GPT, Gemini, Perplexity) and their use cases.

- Craft and refine effective prompts for AI models.

- Apply multimodal AI for text, image, and audio generation.

- Use AI tools for data analysis, brainstorming, and workflow automation.

- Demonstrate Copilot's capabilities in Microsoft 365 apps for HR, Finance, Operations, and IT.

- Experiment with Copilot Studio to build custom copilots and integrate organizational data.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will:

- Gain a strong AI foundation to improve productivity using AI tools.

- Confidently communicate AI concepts and visualize data for decision-making.

- Construct clear, actionable prompts for diverse professional scenarios.

- Integrate AI insights into documents, presentations, and organizational workflows.

- Recognize how Copilot and generative AI tools enhance collaboration and efficiency.

- Apply AI responsibly in professional contexts.

Course Pre-requisites

Learners should ideally have:

- Basic computer literacy and familiarity with web-based applications.

- Exposure to Microsoft 365 apps (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams).

- Curiosity and willingness to explore AI-driven workflows.

Modules

Module 1: AI Fundamentals

- Definition, scope, history, and evolution of AI.

- Types of AI: Narrow, General, Superintelligent.

- Building machine learning models in Excel (predictive analytics, hands-on exercise).

- Introduction to Generative AI: tools, comparisons (GPT, Gemini, Perplexity), and use cases.

Module 2: Prompt Engineering Mastery

- Basics and importance of prompt engineering.

- Techniques for crafting effective prompts with examples.

- Multimodal AI: text generation (emails, PPTs), image generation, audio generation.

Module 3: Using AI to Improve Productivity

- Data analysis and visualization with ChatGPT/Gemini (hands-on).

- Brainstorming with AI tools (Google Gemini exercise).

- Demonstration of Copilot in Office 365/Outlook .

Module 4: Build Your Own Copilot with Copilot Studio

- How Copilot Studio works.

- Introduction to RAG (adding organizational data).

- Hands-on demo: building a simple custom copilot.

Module 5: Concluding Session

- Recap of key AI concepts and productivity use cases.

- Interactive quiz to reinforce learning.

- Open Q&A and reflection on applying AI in daily workflows.