

# AI Enhanced Communication and HR

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## ABSTRACT

Gather Stars AI (GSAI) enhanced communications constantly monitors both internal and external communications, whether they be voice, email, or IM, to detect deliberate abuse and invisible problems early. GSAI improves communications before problems create internal discord and external PR nightmares, without being the thought police.

## INTRODUCTION

History has shown us that people have a natural tendency to let their emotions influence their communications. The online world is full of abusive comments and messages that people probably would not say face to face.

While little can be done about Facebook bullying, racism and other harmful online behavior, it is possible to prevent this toxic environment within a more controlled setting such as workplace communications.

We can divide abuse in the workplace - at least from an electronic communications standpoint - into two categories:

- Deliberate abuse
- Unintentional, but nevertheless still abusive communication

Deliberate abuse can usually be easily identified. It is fairly obvious when offense is intended. The more pervasive problem is unintended offence, such as an email intended to be humorous, but which is not. We call this an “invisible” problem. When people are unaware that their behavior is problematic, they have little chance to improve. The cumulative effects of continuous negativity often have a serious effect on employees’ motivation and therefore a company’s bottom line.

GSAI *does* prevent systemic and deliberate abuse, but it is the identification of otherwise invisible problems that sets our AI enhanced communications apart, and is the focus of this paper.

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## GOALS

1. **Prevent** bullying, racism, misogyny, and other breaches of corporate standards.
2. **Predict** receiver's response/attitude to a given communication
3. **Recommend** changes in communication style.
4. **Improve** interaction within and without the company.
5. Guide staff to improve the way they interact with others, without a more serious intervention from HR.
6. Allow HR to identify problematic relationships

## INVISIBLE PROBLEMS

Many communication problems are *invisible problems*. Offenders are simply unaware that their actions are problematic to the emotional wellbeing of others. In the majority of cases, people would be horrified to learn that they are creating an unpleasant work environment. These cases, if caught early, provide an opportunity for everyone involved to learn and improve, but, as they are so hard to catch, they are normally left untreated until the situation requires significant intervention.

## Playing Favorites

In a 2011 study carried out by Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and research firm Penn Schoen Berland, 84% of senior executives at companies with over 1,000 employees, admitted "favoritism takes place at their own organizations."<sup>1</sup>

Favoritism is not a good thing, more often than not leading to conflicts that HR Departments have to sort out. And with resentment and a marked drop in morale also in the equation, bottom line and performance rates are threatened.

GSAI builds a massive graph database of relationships and creates heat maps both for individuals, their managers and HR. Heat maps reveal positive and negative relationships, highlighting intentional and *unintentional* bias. Individuals can then modify their communication styles, based on this impartial feedback. Favoritism is identified by sentiment, tone, overpraising, response times amongst many other data points.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/yaktrfo9>

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## Information Overload

When alerted to a potential issue, HR needs to review the communications between the parties involved. Including email, voice, and IM channels, this review process can quickly lead to *information overload*, whereby the HR agent finds it difficult to get to the root of the problem due to the sheer volume of communications that need to be assessed.

This is where GSAI's summarization tools come in. In addition to providing summaries of all incoming communications, GSAI can retroactively review all communications between two parties, creating a summary of what was said, by whom, and when. Combined with changes in sentiment and tone, as well as changes in the frequency of communication, GSAI's summaries can quickly highlight problematic communications for direct review and action.

## When a joke isn't a joke

We've all been there, Jeff from accounts thinks he's the life and soul of the party, and everyone knows he's only joking, but do they? Examples in the workplace can range from inappropriate sexual jokes to the use of racial slurs that some people think are *funny*.

Apart from recognizing how "professional" a certain interaction is, GSAI learns from the past. It knows that certain styles, topics and opinions should be avoided. For instance, perhaps company policy is to avoid touching upon politics and religion. Again, the recognition of sentiment and tone is a key differentiator of GSAI's core, it understands when two or more individuals are engaged with the spirit of the communication, and more importantly, when one or more finds it inappropriate, offensive, or abusive.

## Gender Discrimination

In the United States, sex discrimination is explicitly outlawed under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Although this landmark labor law has given nationwide protections for employees and applicants for decades, discrimination on the basis of gender still persists in contemporary workplaces, disproportionately affecting women of color and transgender women. Employees may experience this by way of pay disparities, restriction of benefits or promotions because of their gender and disproportionate workloads.

A survey by Ellevest, a financial firm focused on women investors, found 83% of women believe that men are often paid more than their women colleagues for the same work — and 61% of men agree<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/y8lbb4fx>

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GSAI utilizes its graph database, and sentiment and tone analysis, to identify discrepancies in the treatment of women in the workplace. It flags them for review, giving managers the opportunity to improve the workplace environment for women, increase equality, and avoid the negative PR that results from gender discrimination.

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## REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

### Leaked Conservative MP Group Chat Reveals ‘Disgusting’ Marcus Rashford Message

*When employees and MPs use WhatsApp to communicate with each other, they can forget that their messages won't always remain private, and more importantly, forget that their messages should adhere to company regulations and messaging. These leaks can be damaging to a company (or government), but by continuously monitoring these communications, GSAI can recommend that the message not be sent in the first place.*

<https://tinyurl.com/yd72bd9f>

### Tory peer Michelle Mone accused of sending racist and abusive message

*Racism in the workplace is never acceptable, yet despite Baroness Mone's lawyers later stating she had "no access" to her racist messages and no "detailed memory of them", it appears others did. Another humiliation that could have been prevented if the messages had been flagged in advance.*

<https://tinyurl.com/y53pzcah>

### Mr. Kalanick's departure from Uber's board ends one of the tech industry's defining stories of the last decade

*Investors forced Mr. Kalanick to resign as chief executive in 2017, after a series of privacy scandals and complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment at the company.*

*Mr. Kalanick's stepping-on-toes behavior became the cultural norm at Uber, which came to be known for its willingness to value growth at all costs. But 2017 was a year of reckoning for Mr. Kalanick and Uber: A former engineer at the company spoke publicly about her experiences of sexual harassment at Uber and said her managers did nothing to curb the behavior.*

<https://tinyurl.com/wlxpr2b>

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## **Bobby Kotick's necessary resignation is bigger than Activision Blizzard**

*A bombshell report from The Wall Street Journal reveals that Kotick failed to address sexual harassment issues at the company, and he was at the very least complicit in a workplace culture that allowed them.*

<https://t.ly/FwFU>

## **Microsoft busted Bill Gates for 'inappropriate' emails to female staffer**

*Microsoft executives once ordered Bill Gates to stop sending flirty emails to a female subordinate, according to a new report.*

*The alleged misbehavior occurred more than a decade before the Microsoft board learned of an affair between Gates and another female employee, which preceded Gates' divorce and resignation from the Microsoft board.*

<https://t.ly/m45z>

## **Jon Gruden - bullying, racism, homophobia and misogyny in emails**

*Jon Gruden, emails that he sent over several years have revealed, is a spitting image of the worst stereotype you had in your head of a meathead, authoritarian football coach.*

*First, the racism: On Friday, the Wall Street Journal surfaced a 2011 email in which Gruden, then a Monday Night Football analyst, said that NFL Players Association head DeMaurice Smith had "lips the size of michelin tires," and called the union leader "Dumboriss."*

<https://t.ly/zFV1>

## **Campbell Ewald CEO Fired After Employee's Racist Email**

*Interpublic Group (IPG 0.05%) said it has fired the chief executive of its Campbell Ewald agency, a move that comes days after a racist email from one of the agency's creative directors circulated on the Internet.*

*"Interpublic Group announced that it has terminated Jim Palmer, the CEO of Campbell Ewald, effectively immediately. Leadership of the organization will be assumed by Kevin Wertz, the agency's President," the company said Friday in a statement. An Interpublic spokesman declined to comment further on Mr. Palmer's termination.*

<https://t.ly/PQK9>