

Life and Career
Advice

Alex Stamos

Final Project
Practicalities

What is AI doing
to the job
market?

Uncle Alex's
Career Advice

Thank you for a
great quarter!

Life and Career Advice

CS 152 — Trust and Safety

Alex Stamos

Stanford Cyber Policy Center

May 28, 2026

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Final Project Practicalities

- Alumni Panel during class
 - Five interesting alumni lined up
 - 3 - 4pm, early end to setup
- Poster Session!
 - Head over to CoDa courtyard to setup at 4:45pm
 - 5pm start
 - 50 guest judges this year from Google, Meta, OpenAI, Anthropic, EA, Discord, TikTok, AWS, Apple, Cisco, Vercel, bunch of startups
 - 80% are hiring
 - 5% individual penalty for missing, no exceptions, but you can miss up to 30 minutes if your team is able to cover
- Resume link closes tonight
 - You need to be logged into your Stanford Google account to access

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What is AI doing to the job market?

Recent grads are facing the worst entry-level market in a decade

- Recent college grads (22–27) unemployment: **5.7%** vs **4.2%** for the overall workforce (NY Fed, Q1 2026)
- *Underemployment* of recent grads: **41.5%** (working in jobs that don't require a degree)
- Worst hit by major:
 - Computer engineering: **7.5%**
 - Computer science: **6.1–7.0%**
 - For comparison, philosophy is around 3%
- New grad share of Big Tech hires: **15%** pre-pandemic → **7%** in 2024 (SignalFire)
- Entry-level SWE job postings down **~65%** from Jan 2022 to Jan 2025 — while CS graduates entering the market grew **~40%**

Sources: NY Fed Labor Market for Recent College Graduates; SignalFire State of Talent 2025; Handshake/Indeed Hiring Lab.

Stanford research supports idea that job issues caused by AI

Stanford Digital Economy Lab, late 2022 → mid 2025:

- Workers 22–25 in the most AI-exposed occupations: **13–16% employment decline**
- Workers 30+ in the *same* occupations: **6–9% growth**
- Young software developers (22–25): **~20% employment decline**
- Anthropic's own data confirms the trend: automation use of Claude **overtook augmentation** for the first time in 2025

Canaries in the Coal Mine? Six Facts about the Recent

Employment Effects of Artificial Intelligence

Erik Brynjolfsson* Bharat Chandra† Ruyu Chen‡§¶

November 13, 2025

Abstract

Using high-frequency administrative data from ADP, we document six facts characterizing labor market shifts following the widespread adoption of generative AI. Early-career workers (ages 22–25) in AI-exposed occupations experienced 16% relative employment declines, contrasting for firm-level shocks, while employment for experienced workers remained stable. Adjustments occur primarily via employment rather than compensation, with employment changes concentrated in occupations where AI substitutes rather than augments labor. Results are robust to excluding technology firms and occupations that are nonshockable. These six facts provide early large-scale evidence consistent with generative AI disproportionately impacting entry-level workers in the American labor market.

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§This thesis to David Autor, Sarah Bloom, Eric Brynjolfsson, Nick Bunnick, Cody Clark, Chris Freeman, Joshua Gans, Paul Hupkes, Christina Langer, Fei Fei Li, Frank Li, Daniel Mahajan, Justin Pei, David Reiss, Brad Ross, Phil Traub, Andrew Wang, and participants at the Stanford Digital Economy Lab workshop for helpful feedback. We are grateful to ADP for access to the data and the Stanford Digital Economy Lab for financial support. All errors are ours.

¶Latest version: <https://digitaleconomy.stanford.edu/publications/canaries-in-the-coal-mine/>

- We are moving from a **pyramid back to an apprenticeship model**
 - Older people have experience, connections, *taste*
 - Young people are AI native
 - Instead of an army of young people, senior folks need one young person with an army of agents
- This is **great for the one young person** who gets the job, sucks for the rest
- There will be a huge amount of **entrepreneurial opportunities** for the areas not eaten by the foundation labs
 - They want to do everything but they are actually pretty bad at lots of things
 - Enterprises want full products, not half-baked self-service ideas
- There will probably be a **huge amount of economic growth**
 - But our system isn't set up to distribute that
- The backlash has only started, will be massive
 - I'm really worried about the transition, **political instability**
 - Not just in US, PRC is due for a revolution, Indian tech is highly exposed

Security is still getting worse!

- Cybersecurity job postings up **11%** year-over-year in Q1 2026 (Glassdoor)
- Executive recruiters: roles that used to open **every 12 months now open every week**
- LinkedIn CISO Lea Kissner: *“We’re going to need people to deal with the bug-pocalypse”*
- New models are great at *finding* flaws, but <10% have been patched
- Search firms are **turning away clients** for lack of qualified candidates

One Job That Is Growing in the A.I. Era? Cybersecurity Experts.

Demand for security engineers has surged as artificial intelligence generates a glut of new code and models like Anthropic's Mythos create new concerns.

Kate Conger, *The New York Times*, May 24, 2026.

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Always put yourself in a position to learn and grow

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- Comfort == decay
- Things will improve steadily and then there will be a discontinuity
- For me, this was AI/ML, my educational background was close to useless
- You can challenge yourself by:
 - Taking on a new role that you aren't comfortable in
 - Learning a new technology
 - Joining a new industry



CS Students: Don't just be a programmer

In the AI era, you can't just write code:

- Security, safety are growth areas, as pointed out above
- Hardware still needs people, making big bucks
- AI is bad at distributed architecture, performance, quality... for now
- Software engineers are becoming product managers, having to (gasp) talk to humans
- Stay in school, do a co-term
 - It's an incredible deal and a great chance to add a specialty or add another major
 - Peter Thiel is an asshole. You have the rest of your life to be an adult



Micron (MU): **+998%** in 5 years on AI memory demand.

Be part of the product, not the plumbing

- Every job is either part of the core mission, or supports the core mission
- In capitalism, the core mission is to make money
- Plumbing jobs are important, but you will miss out on:
 - The most interesting work
 - The most advancement opportunities
 - Long-term influence
- It's ok to take a plumbing job, just know that you are doing so and have a plan



I only take a job if I believe:

- 1 The company has a neutral or positive core mission
 - 2 I can reduce real-world harm to individuals
 - 3 I will not be asked to make public representations that are not accurate
- It is time to leave a job if any of those factors change.
 - If there is a red flag during your interview process, it is probably accurate. That doesn't mean you don't take the job, but trust your instincts.
 - These are my rules, you need your own.
 - It's important to figure these out and *write them down* before you take a role.

elephant

- Interviewing is a skill
 - Being confident without being arrogant!
 - Showing knowledge without being a know-it-all!
 - Building rapport without being a suck-up!
- Take interviews even if you don't feel qualified
- Ask for feedback
- Just be careful not to assume the grass is greener



Here's the image of a job interview going terribly wrong.

Your point of maximum leverage is right after you get an offer

- Hiring is a pain, by the time you have an offer they have made a huge investment
- At a medium or large company, you are not negotiating with your manager
- The recruiter is a professional negotiator and you will never see them again
- So carefully ask for what you want:
 - 10% is a safe ask
 - Much more likely to get more stock than cash
 - Demonstrate interest and willingness to walk away
 - Get the job offer you want last
- This will not work for:
 - Government jobs
 - Non-profits
 - First jobs at big companies



Pair up, each person gets a job offer. 3 minute rounds.

- First call:
 - Recruiter offers candidate a position.
 - Candidate thanks the recruiter, expresses excitement while avoiding making a commitment.
 - Recruiter pushes for a verbal commitment. Candidate dodges, asks for the offer in the email.
- Second call:
 - Recruiter asks for a decision.
 - Candidate expresses their excitement, repeats how the company is great and they think they are a great fit. Politely makes a counter offer.
 - Recruiter pushes back.
 - Candidate politely holds firm.

Understand the Cap Table for any private company

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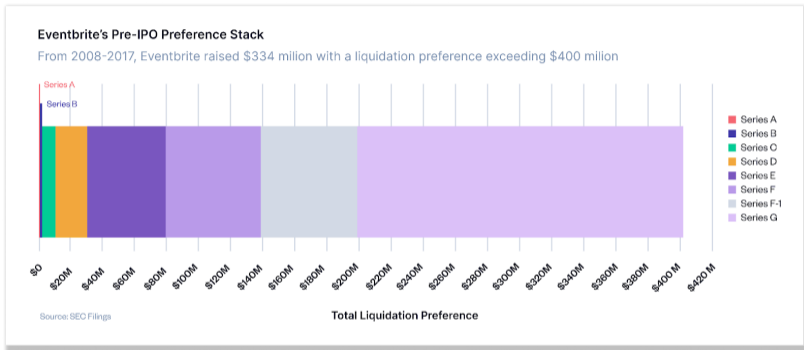
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From <https://learn.angellist.com/articles/liquidation-preference>

You can start a successful career at any size company, but in either case be intentional about the time you spend.

- At a small company:
 - You will have to work on all kinds of different problems
 - There will be a lot less support
 - You will have the opportunity to grow with the company, perhaps into leadership
 - Higher risk, higher reward
- At a big company:
 - You could benefit from structured training (especially engineers and APMs)
 - You have the potential of having huge impact
 - Your work will be much more specialized
 - You can learn about at-scale problems and innovative solutions

- One good option: go big first and later start something
 - Strip-mine the company for knowledge, not just technical, but in HR, finance, operations, recruiting, sales, go-to-market
 - Save money: live with roommates, no new car, Costco once a month
 - Look for internal solutions that can be turned into full companies

Go into meetings knowing what you want the outcome to be

- Any meeting with more than 3 people is a negotiation, otherwise it should be an email
- This does not mean that it's adversarial — things will go a lot better if you understand what outcome you are shooting for



Once you are a manager, and especially an executive, you have two main jobs:

- 1 Supporting your people to be the best they can
 - Removing blockers
 - Giving feedback
 - Helping them grow
 - Structuring their work to be successful
- 2 Portfolio management, applying the following to your mission:
 - Person hours
 - Skillsets
 - OpEx
 - CapEx



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