

Artificial Intelligence at work

by Andrew Griffin

A Japanese insurance company, Fukuoku Mutual Life Insurance, is replacing its staff with an artificial intelligence system. The move, which will see more than 30 people sacked to make way for the computer, is being seen as one of the clearest examples of the coming changes that robots and machines will bring to the workplace.



The computer will be used to calculate how much policyholders should be paid out. For now, the calculations will only be used as a way of saving time by reducing how long it takes to work out payouts. Those calculations will still need to be signed off by a human. But even doing that will allow the company to save about 140 million yen, or £1 million, per year.

Japan hopes that by introducing more robots into its workforce it can address the problem of its shrinking and rapidly ageing population. Artificial intelligence machines are going to be integrated into the work of government from next month, helping ministers look up answers to questions and cutting out the work done by civil servants.

independent.co.uk, 2017