



DWP's new AI jobcentre built a CV for a parrot, what will it force disabled people into?

## Description

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Keir Starmer has launched the latest crap policy that he thinks will save his failing premiership: an AI jobcentre advisor because that's exactly what the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) need.

## DWP and AI needs to walk the plank

[The Prime Minister announced at London Tech Week](#) that the DWP had developed the new [AI work assistant](#). Starmer called the tool a "jobcentre in your pocket" and said it would help unemployed people find work and help build them CVs.

Science editor at *The Times*, Tom Whipple decided to give it a go, with a twist.

He [wrote on Twitter](#)

I tried the government's new AI "Jobcentre in your pocket" chatbot. Could it write me a CV? It could.

It also suggested that I should consider employment law and whether I've been discriminated against.

Key detail: I'm a parrot.

As Whipple wrote, he asked the robot to ask him to not help him, but Long John Silver's faithful parrot from Treasure Island.

The journalist details that the AI told him repeating a phrase over and over (‘‘pieces of eight’’) wasn’t an issue. This simply made him an expert in verbal communications. The parrot didn’t just sit on Long John Silver’s shoulder cracking wise, he was responsible for ‘‘supporting senior figures in client-facing work’’.

The AI did flag up that the parrot (real name Captain Flint, according to the book) did have one issue, a significant gap in employment. But that tends to happen when the book you’re in was written in the 18th century, doesn’t it?

Despite the ridiculousness, the AI did produce a CV for the parrot, it even included a glowing endorsement from [his previous employer](#)

Who’s a pretty boy, then?

-Former employer, Maritime industry

Let’s be clear, whilst the AI was hilarious, it was a rather smug middle-class approach. All this really proves is that the AI is indeed a parrot. It can’t identify context clues and so set on its directive, it won’t deviate from it. This side-quest of V’s does ‘‘really drill down into how sinister using AI to push someone into work is.’’

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## What will the AI force disabled people into?

As [the Canary’s Hannah Sharland has previously reported](#), the DWP has previously funnelled ‘‘£1.5 million into AI companies. As Sharland explained, the department is weaponising AI against disabled people to force them into work:

What we have is AI spying on sick people in work, and AI spying on sick people not in work. Ultimately, this new DWP AI guff is just the government’s latest dodgy gambit to bring sick and disabled people under the thumb of the exploitative capitalist market.

It’s especially hypocritical that the department [continues to use AI](#) when it previously demonised disabled [benefits claimants for using AI](#) to complete needlessly traumatic and long PIP forms.

Back in March, [the I paper ran with](#)

‘‘Dangerous’’ over-dependence on AI tools leaves disabled people using wrong or irrelevant information on their forms, say benefits advisers.

The real story here was that the DWP was [refusing to release PIP assessor training manuals](#) but the department covered that up by claiming that they could be fed into AI. And while they don’t want people using AI to fill in the forms, they [use AI to make benefits decisions](#). This is despite findings that AI use is much more likely [to target vulnerable claimants](#)

The DWP has designed an AI that will manipulate people into work no matter what. Sure, in this case itâ??s a fictional parrot, but what happens when a disabled person who would desperately need support at work starts talking to it, will the machine pinpoint this safeguarding issue? Or will it twist the claimantâ??s words and massage them to make them more desirable to employers?

Whilst disabled people are being forced into employment without the support they need, a tool like this is dangerous and just another way the DWP will make disabled peopleâ??s lives harder.

Featured image via [Getty/Justin Sullivan](#)

By [Rachel Charlton-Dailey](#)

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11. people
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