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### Can a Robot Do Your Job?

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Just when you thought the job market was improving, here's a new worry: Robots may take your job.

[“They \[robots\] are getting better and better.](#) Jobs at all levels are going to be increasingly threatened,” said Mark Ford, founder of the company Querybot, which sells companies a service that enables a website to answer to customer's questions, and the author of *The Lights in the Tunnel: Automation Accelerating Technology and the Economy of the Future*.

“In the near term, we may actually see that some higher-end jobs, jobs held by college graduates, are going to be the most vulnerable.”



[Robots or robotic equipment have long been a staple in manufacturing](#) and have become used more and more for all sorts of functions, such as in customer service, vending machines and increasingly for medical functions. But replacing the skills of a paralegal, a lawyer or college graduate with a robot and rendering them obsolete leaves some skeptical.

Among them is Jeff Burnstein, president of the Robotic Industries Association, who thinks that using robots is a way of preserving jobs and creating new ones.

Burnstein, whose organization represents more than 250 companies, maintains that companies have a choice between automating and preserving jobs, sending them overseas or going out of business.

The [US company Marlin Steel Wire](#), he said, “was competing with companies in China paying 30 cents an hour, delivering finished to the US for less than they can buy the steel for.”

Once Marlin invested in [robots, they created more jobs](#) and now they are paying their US workers \$30 an hour, plus full benefits. “I think that’s a pretty good deal,” he said.

Ford, the gung-ho robot guy, thinks that the trend he envisions won’t happen for about five to 10 years.

Phew!

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