

# *Want To Know If An Employee Is Going To Resign? Yva.AI Will Tell You.*

**A** serial entrepreneur with a doctorate in artificial intelligence (AI), David Yang has spent the past 30 years devising innovative ways to use AI. As he puts it, “AI is a base that is redefining the way we live, the way we work, the way we enjoy our life.”

His latest iteration is Yva.AI (pronounced “eva”), a company that helps organizations become more efficient while also helping employees become happier and more productive.

Yva grew out of Yang’s feeling that he was out of touch with employees at his 30-year-old company, ABBYY, a leader in content IQ, a technology that automates document processing and turns unstructured content into actionable information.

With 1,340 employees around the world, Yang says, “I had this problem of not knowing objectively how my team is.” He wanted to know how to improve his own leadership skills and help employees improve theirs too.

Today, says Yang, most companies use surveys to



*The new groundbreaking AI platform from David Yang is ‘an MRI scanner for your organizational health.’*

glean information about their teams. But the surveys are conducted only once or twice a year. The results are subjective – and aren’t in real time.

“Employees answer whatever they want to answer,” Yang says, “and it may not be accurate.”

So Yang set a goal to develop real-time, objective feedback. It wasn’t easy. It took Yang and his team four years to create Yva, which Yang describes as “an MRI scanner for your organizational health.”

The platform works on two levels: it provides 360-degree, anonymous feedback from coworkers. It also looks at each employee’s digital footprint and compares it with the employees’ analysis. The footprint can include anything from time stamps when emails were sent or received to the subject line in an email or addresses in an email.

“Yva is a coach for each employee,” Yang says.

It looks at how each employee or manager works and identifies areas of improvement. For example, it tells managers what management skills they have and which they are lacking.

Yva engages in four kinds of data analytics:

- Descriptive, which tells you what’s happening in the business;
- Diagnostic, which determines the cause of the problem;
- Predictive, which determines what’s likely to happen;
- Prescriptive, which offers strategies for improvement.



Perhaps Yva’s most impressive capability is its ability to predict that an employee is going to resign – even before the employee decides to do so.

That’s because Yva understands the subtle changes and little differences that appear before someone resigns, but which aren’t obvious to the human eye.

Those tells reveal such things as stress, frustration and burnout. Once aware of the problem, the company can develop ways to retain key employees, saving a lot of dollars in the process. According to Yang, replacing a high-level executive can cost a company as much as twice that executive’s annual salary.

Yva also provides the tools needed to improve company culture. As Yang notes, when you’re a small company, you have the luxury to see employees face-to-face every day. That’s not true in a big company. For example, you might be unaware that your managers’ lack the right skills and leadership abilities.

“To make your company transparent and the best place to work,” Yang says, “you have to measure engagement and happiness, identify toxic employees and managers, and identify imperfections in communication. Then you will be able to start fixing the problems.”

The real gold in Yva is its ability to learn and

grow. The more a company uses Yva, the more accurate the results.

Returning to his MRI metaphor, Yang notes that an MRI might reveal areas of inflammation in the early stages, before they lead to heart disease or an autoimmune disorder. The doctor knows, “This is what will happen in a month or six months if I don’t treat this inflammation.” Yva’s prescriptive ability tells the doctor how to treat the inflammation.

However, Yang is quick to say that Yva is not a doctor. “Consultants and managers are the doctors,” he says. “We are the engineers who designed the MRI tool for them.”

Yva’s clients range from companies with fewer than 100 employees to companies as large as 260,000 employees. Already the company has clients throughout the world and partnerships with global consulting firms.

“We believe that 80 percent of companies will start using analytics. Our goal is to keep our leadership in this area,” he says.

He pauses for a moment and adds: “ABBYY is a billion-dollar company. We expect Yva to become bigger than ABBYY.” — By Eve Gumpel, California Business Journal.

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