St. Joseph County AI Task Force Meeting Summary

Creation Notes: *As usual, I relied entirely on AI to generate the meeting summaries based on the agenda and transcripts. AI nailed it this time.*

Date: September 11th, 2024
Time: 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM
Location: MSUE Conference Room

The St. Joseph County AI Task Force meeting held on September 11th, 2024, focused on several key areas related to the use of AI in the county, current applications, challenges with staff adoption, and future steps for AI integration.

1. **Current AI Usage:**

   o Various departments shared updates on their AI implementations. For example, the sheriff's office discussed potential uses of AI, such as predictive policing and crime analytics, although these ideas remain aspirational rather than in current use. Some departments, like document management and the Register of Deeds office, are utilizing AI for tasks like optical character recognition (OCR), while others have implemented chatbots to assist with customer inquiries.

   o There was confusion among some members regarding the scope of AI tools currently in use versus those being proposed for future adoption.

2. **Staff Hesitation and Adoption:**

   o The meeting highlighted significant resistance from some staff members toward AI technology. Concerns centered on fears of AI replacing jobs and general distrust in AI tools.

   o Participants agreed that framing AI as a tool to assist rather than replace human workers was critical in overcoming these fears. It was suggested that educational efforts should focus on AI as a time-saving resource.

   o Examples of how AI could significantly reduce workload were shared, such as the time savings achieved by automating tax description summaries and meal planning tasks.

3. **Time Savings and Efficiency:**

   o Task force members were encouraged to begin documenting specific time savings and efficiency gains from AI. This data will be used to build support for AI adoption, particularly with county leadership.

- o One example shared was from Van Buren County, where the use of AI in various tasks was estimated to save around 60 days of work annually for a small team.

4. **Future Planning:**

   - o There was discussion about developing an AI implementation plan for broader rollout across the county. This would include identifying key tools (e.g., custom GPTs or chatbots) that could benefit different departments.

   - o The need for training and a potential policy governing AI usage was raised. Although existing technology policies may cover some AI concerns, members felt more specific guidelines might be needed to ensure AI is used responsibly and ethically.

5. **Overcoming Resistance:**

   - o The task force discussed how to address pushback from both staff and upper management. One strategy was to highlight the tangible benefits of AI, such as time savings, to gain buy-in. The importance of individual training and ongoing support was also emphasized.

   - o Task force members were asked to gather time-saving data from their departments and submit these findings for analysis to strengthen the case for further AI integration.

In summary, the meeting focused on consolidating current AI efforts, addressing resistance to AI adoption, and planning for broader AI implementation across the county. Time savings and education were identified as crucial factors in gaining support for AI, while documentation of efficiency gains would be used to further advocate for its usage.