Marsha L. Powell

Artificial Intelligence Executive and Advisor



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marsha Powell is a technology executive and AI advisor with more than 35 years of experience across enterprise systems, networks, and digital infrastructure. For the past decade, she has advised Fortune 100 companies and senior executives on where artificial intelligence creates value, how to deploy it, and how to govern it responsibly. She connects strategy and capital allocation with the technical and human realities of implementation.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EXPERTISE

Her perspective covers the AI lifecycle: identifying use cases, choosing partners and platforms, preparing data, developing and testing models, deploying applications, measuring performance, and improving operations. She advises on machine learning, large language models, natural language processing, data mining, predictive analysis, and AI agents that coordinate complex work. For Marsha, reliable AI starts with accurate, complete, consistent, timely, and relevant data; its outputs require independent validation, clear metrics, and continuous monitoring.

- **Agentic AI.** AI agents that plan and carry out multi-step tasks, connecting AI models to specialized tools and databases under human oversight.
- **Machine learning and AI algorithms.** Models that learn from data to recognize patterns, classify information, and improve with experience.

- **Large language models and natural language processing.** AI that reads, summarizes, and generates human language, turning large volumes of documents and records into usable insight.
- **Predictive analytics.** Using historical and real-time data to forecast outcomes and guide decisions early.
- **Data analysis at scale.** Applying AI to massive, complex datasets to reveal the insights held within them.

AI PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Ms. Powell advocates human and AI teaming that preserves judgment, accountability, and the ability to intervene. She helps executives decide which processes can be automated, which decisions require expert review, and how to orchestrate people, models, and systems. She weighs model performance alongside error, bias, privacy, cybersecurity, and the consequences of decisions at scale. Her view of increasingly autonomous systems and potential superintelligence is grounded in governance and organizational readiness.

Human-in-the-loop AI

Ms. Powell fostered a human-in-the-loop approach in which people work together with machine learning algorithms. People guide, correct, and evaluate the algorithms, producing results potentially more accurate than AI or people could achieve alone. This approach keeps expert judgment at the center of every AI-assisted decision.

Federated learning and data privacy

She introduced the concept of federated learning, a decentralized method for training AI that addresses data privacy concerns. AI models learn across multiple sites while the encrypted data stays securely at each location, giving organizations the benefit of shared learning while keeping sensitive information private.

Responsible and ethical AI

Ms. Powell has designed and developed AI systems that align with social, ethical, and legal values. She advises on privacy, consent, fairness, and responsible data use, all of which are essential wherever AI relies on sensitive personal information.

AI adoption at scale

She defined adoption methods and applications of AI solutions for rapid uptake by customers and channel partners, preparing CIO-level content that translated AI capability into clear business value. She also builds detailed business metrics, total cost of ownership analyses, and return-on-investment models for end-to-end infrastructure and data centers.

Intelligent, self-validating infrastructure

Ms. Powell championed intent-based networking and information architectures for data centers, the automated, data-driven foundation on which AI depends. Her designs included a contextual graph database serving as a single source of truth and a digital twin of the environment, automated configuration with rollback capabilities, and continuous validation. She also implemented a foundation for actionable insights built on open-systems architecture.

AI ADVISORY CAPABILITIES

- **Analyzing massive datasets.** Advises organizations on using AI to analyze massive, complex datasets and convert them into decisions.
- **Rigorous design and validation.** Advises on rigorous study design, careful definition of physical traits (phenotype), biological interpretation, and independent validation when AI is applied to research.
- **High-quality data.** Champions access to large, high-quality datasets, and evaluates data quality, recognizes bias, interprets model outputs, and designs appropriate validation studies.

- **Governance, risk, and security.** Helps executives understand the implementation, risk, security, and governance of AI across multiple industries.
- **Ethics and regulation.** Advises on ethical and regulatory considerations, including privacy, consent, and fairness in the use of sensitive data.
- **Communication and collaboration.** Delivers essential, mission-critical communication and collaboration that align technical teams, executives, and boards.

AI INFRASTRUCTURE AND DATA CENTER DESIGN

Ms. Powell brings practical experience in designing AI data centers for large-scale research, including high-density facilities built for multi-petabyte datasets, complex simulations, and automated laboratory workflows. Her guidance covers:

- **High power density:** GPU-accelerated racks drawing 80 kW or more, compared with 5–10 kW for traditional servers.
- **Advanced cooling:** Direct liquid cooling as a baseline design, supported by cooling distribution units connected to outdoor chillers.
- **High-speed networking:** Ultra-fast connections between processors, using InfiniBand or high-speed Ethernet, for large-scale AI training.
- **AI-optimized storage:** High-throughput, multi-petabyte storage architectures such as VAST or WEKA.
- **Agentic research workflows:** Frameworks such as Biomni that connect foundation models to specialized tools and databases.
- **Closed-loop automation:** Linking data center systems to robotic laboratory equipment so results flow in and AI models keep learning in real time.
- **Deployment and compliance:** Choosing among on-premise, colocation, and hybrid cloud models, and selecting sites with clean energy, favorable tax incentives, and strict data residency and compliance.

BUSINESS AND BOARD PERSPECTIVE

Ms. Powell brings financial discipline to technology decisions. She develops business metrics, total cost of ownership and return on investment analyses, linking capital outlays to incremental income, cash flows, cost of capital, asset depreciation, and earnings per share. At Cisco Systems, she identified more than $150 million in potential incremental global revenue by aligning customer objectives with converged infrastructure solutions. She has negotiated million-dollar technology contracts and worked across the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

Her contributions have appeared in the World Economic Forum's Global Information Technology Report. She worked with McKinsey & Company, MIT, and INSEAD on the Human Network concept, connecting customer interactions and collaboration to business value. She brings ethical judgment, integrity, accountability, empathy, and cultural awareness to executive collaboration and to the central AI questions: what a system should do, how to test it, who remains responsible, and whether its benefits justify its costs and risks.

PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERIENCE

Ms. Powell's career spans global leaders in technology, consulting, and industry:

ERNST & YOUNG LLP	CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.
NEXTMVP LLC	SUN MICROSYSTEMS
CAP GEMINI ERNST & YOUNG	BRITISH PETROLEUM HITCO
IBM CORPORATION	TRANSAMERICA CORPORATION

TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Her technical foundation reaches from physical and network infrastructure through applications and data. She has worked on distributed networks, data centers, cloud architectures, and intelligent infrastructure, including intent-based networking, graph data, digital twins, automated rollback, and continuous validation. She evaluates on-premises, cloud, and hybrid approaches, including Amazon Web Services, for scale, resilience, security, data control, and cost. She has also advised on federated learning when sensitive data cannot be pooled.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Engineering, California State University

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Over the past 20 years, Ms. Powell has worked for, collaborated with, and built lasting professional and personal relationships with the distinguished technology industry leaders below. Each knows her work firsthand and welcomes the opportunity to speak on her behalf.



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