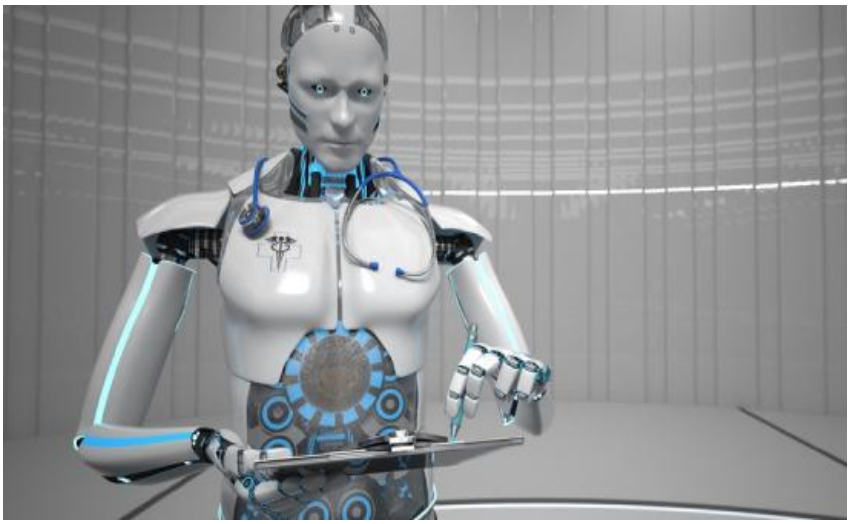
A Robot Works with Food



A Japanese robot company introduced an automated system with a humanoid robot to package noodles.

The 1.5-meter tall robot has an **image recognition** system to capture the food. The robot uses fork-like hands to pick up noodles and place them on a **conveyor belt** to weigh the noodles. The robot can pick up to 500 grams of noodles or other foods, including chopped vegetables or fried chicken.

Japan is struggling with a **dwindling** workforce in the food manufacturing industry, and such robots could be a solution to the labor shortage. Replacing some workers in factories with these robots can cut labor costs and keep better social distancing between staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Difficult words: image recognition (the ability of a software to identify objects or features), **conveyor belt** (a continuous moving surface that moves objects from one place to another), **dwindle** (to gradually become smaller in size or amount).

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Discussion Questions

Topic Talk

1. Define the following words: *image recognition, conveyor belt and dwindle*

2. Which company introduced an automated system with a humanoid robot to package noodles?

3. What enables the 1.5-meter tall robot to capture food?

4. How much food can the robot pick up using its fork-like hands?

5. What is the situation in the food manufacturing industry in Japan nowadays?

6. How could such humanoid robots help factories and the current COVID-19 pandemic?

Express Your Thoughts

1. How widespread is the use of humanoid robots in your country these days?

2. How dependent is the production industry or food industry on robots in your country nowadays?

3. What are the negatives impacts of robots on employment and wages?

4. Do you think that in the future people will be replaced by robots in the workplace?