Robotic technology just keeps getting better, but this newest development might be cause for concern in addition to celebration. Scientists at Singapore’s Nanyang Technological University have created a new social robot that will take your job, if you’re not careful. “Nadine,” as the robot is known, was cooked up in the Institute for Media Innovation to exceed the capacities of other robots who have come before her. It’s probably only a matter of time before her capacities exceed yours, too.

Powered by software like that of Apple’s virtual assistant Siri, Nadine is also outfitted with a reasonably lifelike human-sized body giving her a certain presence that non-android robots lack. Her main creator and namesake, Professor Nadia Thalmann, suggests that Nadine could be used in the future as an office or personal assistant, or to help provide healthcare services.

This prospect is especially interesting in Singapore, because Singapore’s birth rate is so low that it raises very serious questions about who will prop up the workforce of the near future, which has historically relied upon there being many more working people than retired ones. Indeed, Nadine’s skill at remembering past conversations and recognizing people surely puts her ahead of many human receptionists in terms of performance.

But it will probably be a while longer before Nadine is realistic and versatile.
enough to make homebound elders feel as if they’re being cared for by a fellow person. Reminding a patient to take their meds is one thing, but making small talk as they ponder their imminent demise is quite another. Precious few humans are even up to that task.