Fred

Getting ready for 2027 with AI

You want to 10× yourself in 2027?

So What.

A chamber class with Jason Claybrook

Participant workbook
November 19, 2026

Your knowledge comes first.
AI adds leverage.

Scan the code to download this workbook, so you can copy the prompts, type in it, or print it again.

QR code
workbook download

What's inside.

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How to use this workbook.

- Each section has reading pages and its own worksheet. Read, then turn to the worksheet and write.
- **Do now** prompts are for class. **Take home** prompts can wait until later.
- Every prompt has two examples from personal life and two from work. Use them to get unstuck, then write your own.
- Each section has one **Tip**. They are small things that make a big difference.
- A microphone means say it out loud. Use the mic on your phone keyboard, or tell a neighbor.
- Use made-up or approved public information only. Nothing private goes into an AI tool today.
- Short answers are fine. Every worksheet has lines. Get your pen out and write on them.

1. What do I want to make room for?

Name the goal and why it matters

In the next hour you'll pick one task, hand part of it to AI, check what comes back, and decide what to do next. We start with a story.

If you've seen the first Iron Man movie, you remember the cave. Tony Stark is a billionaire weapons builder riding in a convoy overseas when it gets ambushed. He wakes up a hostage, with a car battery wired to his chest to keep him alive. His captors point at a pile of scrap parts and tell him to build them a missile.

Think about what he doesn't have. There's no lab, no team of engineers, and no JARVIS. He has a fellow prisoner, some hand tools, and everything he has learned in a lifetime of building things. That turns out to be enough. He builds a power source to keep his own heart going. Then he builds the first suit and walks out of that cave.

JARVIS comes later. Once Tony is home, the AI and the better equipment help him build a far better suit in a fraction of the time. Look at the order, though. His experience solved the problem in the cave. The tools sped up the work afterward. Even at home, JARVIS never decides what to build or whether it's ready. Tony does.

You have a cave story too. Maybe it was the Friday the walk-in cooler quit, the week two people called in sick, or the night a science project was due in the morning. You got through it with what you already knew. That knowledge is the valuable part, and it's what you're bringing to AI today.

AI is the JARVIS in this picture. **It isn't sentient and it can't be in charge.** It doesn't know your customers, your family, or your trade. You decide, you approve, and you answer for the result. That's your sovereignty.

Start with what you know.

It's easy to think everyone else is building apps with AI. They aren't. About half of American adults now use an AI chatbot, and the top thing they do with it is look up information. In one large study of ChatGPT, only about 4% of messages had anything to do with coding. Asking questions is a fine place to start. Today we take one step past it and hand AI a small job in an area you already know.

Sources: Pew Research Center, June 2026; OpenAI, Duke and Harvard, "How People Use ChatGPT," 2025.

Take a plumber with 20 years in the trade. AI won't turn that plumber into a software company. An app might run, but the plumber has no way to judge whether it's secure. That's a different trade with its own 20 years. Now hand the same plumber a job closer to home: estimates, job checklists, customer follow-ups. Those go fast, because a plumber knows what a good one looks like. The same is true if your expertise comes from raising kids, teaching a classroom, coaching a team, or running a committee. You don't need to know AI. Bring something you know.

Example

A bookkeeper has closed the books every month for ten years. AI can draft the reminder emails. She knows which clients need the nudge and which ones will be offended by it.

Example

A youth coach knows which drills fall apart with nine-year-olds. AI can draft a practice plan. He knows which half to cut.

Example

A parent has packed school lunches for years. AI can draft a week of lunches. She knows what comes home uneaten.

In each one, AI does the preparing and the person does the knowing.

Watch out

Garbage in, garbage out. Missing knowledge and bad facts come back as polished mistakes. AI can help you learn, but learning something isn't the same as being qualified to judge it.

Start with the 10× you want.

So we start with you, not with the tool. You want to 10× yourself in 2027. What would that look like? Pick one place, at work or at home. That is your starting point for the next exercise.

Tip

Small and specific works better. “Less paperwork” is hard to act on. “Invoices out the same day” is easy.

The So What exercise.

So What is a recursive discovery method I built and have used with clients for years. You ask “So what?” about your starting point, then ask it again about your answer, until the practical reason and the personal reason are both clear.

An HVAC company owner:

Start: I’m thinking about putting a voice assistant on our website.
So what? Customers find what they need without the menus, even after hours.
So what? We’d get fewer phone calls, but better ones.
So what? **My staff is free for other work and my sellers get better at-bats.**

A parent:

Start: I want to use AI to make meal planning easier.
So what? No plan means a $100 delivery order and a scramble around allergies.
So what? Two of those a week doubles our grocery bill. That’s a trip to Italy.
So what? **We cook together and sit at the table.**

Look at what happened. Both started with a tool. Three questions later the tool was off the table. The owner wants less friction between a customer who needs help and the company that can give it. The parent wants dinner made easier and the money put toward something that matters. AI is one possible way to get there.

So What rarely says “So what?” It asks what would change and why that matters. A practical answer comes first. Keep asking until the answer is about a person or about your time.

Three ways to do it.

We'll do this one together. Pick the way that works for you. All three get you to the same place.

- **With So What.** It runs inside ChatGPT, and a free account works once you're signed in. Scan the code or use the link, then paste the starter message below.
- **With any other AI chatbot.** Paste the same starter message. It carries the method with it.
- **By hand.** Go straight to the worksheet. A neighbor can ask you the questions.

QR code
So What

Open So What

[link to So What]

You'll need to be signed in to ChatGPT. A free account has a daily message limit, so answer in full sentences.

Starter message to paste:

> I want to use the So What method on myself.
> I'm looking for one meaningful way to use AI in my personal or professional life in 2027.
> Ask me one question at a time. When I name a frustration or a repetitive task, keep asking "So what?" and follow-up questions until we reach the real reason it matters to me.
> This is personal discovery. Don't invent problems, don't assume my answers, and skip anything about competitors, objections, or selling.
> Then suggest three small, low-risk tasks that I already know enough to check. Use no private information and take no actions in live accounts.

Remember: Your knowledge comes first. AI adds leverage.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Write your starting point and answer "So what?" three times. Then write the real goal without naming a tool, and your reason in one sentence.

Section 1 worksheet

My reason.

Say it

Say it, don't type it. Tap the microphone on your phone keyboard and answer the way you'd answer a friend. Can't connect? Turn to the person next to you and ask each other out loud.

Do now **Start here. What would 10× look like for me in 2027?**

Personal: Dinner planned for the week, 46 weeks a year. A family gathering planned in an hour, not a weekend.
Professional: Every estimate followed up the same day. The weekly project update done in ten minutes.

Do now **So what? What would that change that matters to me?**

Personal: We stop the $100 delivery orders on nights with no plan. Saturday morning isn't spent making lists.
Professional: Customers hear from us while they still care. I get Friday afternoon back.

Do now **So what? Why would that matter, beyond the obvious?**

Personal: That money becomes a family trip or a start on tuition. I'm not short with everyone before company comes.
Professional: We win jobs we used to lose to faster replies. I stop working Sunday nights.

Do now **So what? One more time. Who or what gets the time back?**

Personal: We cook together and sit at the table. My family gets me in the room, not in the kitchen with a list.

Professional: My crew gets steady work and I'm home by six. My kids get me at their games.

Tip

Three questions often land on a practical answer. Ask once more. You've found the reason when the answer is about a person or about your time.

Do now **Checkpoint. My real goal, without naming a tool:**

Personal: Take the "what's for dinner" question off the table. Be with my guests instead of managing the day.

Professional: Every customer hears back while they still care. Remove the friction between a customer who needs help and us giving it.

Do now **My reason, in one sentence:**

Personal: I want dinner to be time together, not a nightly decision. I want to enjoy my own family.

Professional: I want a business that answers fast without needing me every evening. I want my weekends back.

Hold on to that sentence. It goes at the top of your instructions in section 4. Next, we find the work that stands between you and it.

2. Where does my time go?

Match your knowledge to one small task

You know what you want the time for. Now find where that time goes today.

Think about where your time goes: the rewriting, the searching, the organizing, the fixing. Pick something familiar enough that you could explain it to a new hire and you'd know a good result when you saw one. Your expertise doesn't need a job title. It can come from your kitchen as easily as your office.

Good to know

Your memory is an advantage.

I asked someone this week if she remembered learning to ride a bike. She did. Then I asked how long ago that was. Forty-seven years. You probably remember yours too. We hold on to experience for a lifetime, even on the days we can't find our keys.

AI doesn't have that. It works from a limited window of text, and on a long job it summarizes or drops what came earlier. It has never lived your work. It only knows what you tell it.

You are the important part of this program. No tool in this workbook matters as much as you do. On the worksheet, take your time telling AI what you know.

Three kinds of work.

Think about how much of your week you spend below your own capability: email, CRM updates, spreadsheets, forms, deciding what's for dinner. On the worksheet you'll sort your tasks into three lists:

- **List 01: Work only a human can do.** Judgment, relationships, creativity. Protect this time.
- **List 02: Work AI can prepare.** Research, context, first drafts. Hand it off and check it.
- **List 03: Work the system should remove.** Repetition, delay, fragmentation. Stop doing it at all.

List 01 is your reason from section 1, in practice. Lists 02 and 03 are where the hours come from.

Try this on your own

The 10× question.

Where is your best person spending time below their capability?

That person might be on your team. It might be someone at home. It might be you. Sort their week into the same three lists.

AI does not replace your people. The goal is not to remove the human from the work. It is to remove the work that keeps them from being human.

AI gives them leverage. The preparation is faster. The context is richer. The human contribution becomes more valuable.

A useful first task has a clear finish.

Today's task comes from list 02, the work AI can prepare. Pick one small, low-risk task with safe information and a result you can check. Ask AI for a draft. Don't let it send, publish, or act in live accounts.

Watch out

Knowing the goal isn't the same as knowing every skill it takes. Knowing your business doesn't make you a software-security expert.

If you can't judge the result, shrink the task or name the expert you'd need. Stop here if the task carries serious health, safety, rights, job, money, or privacy risk, and use a made-up practice task instead. Section 7 covers where to get help.

Remember: Tony knew how to build before JARVIS helped him build faster.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. List the tasks that eat your time, sort them into the three lists, and choose one from list 02 to try today.

Section 2 worksheet

My one task.

Do now One task that took more effort than I wanted:

Personal: Figuring out dinner every night around food allergies. Planning Thanksgiving for 14.
Professional: Writing a follow-up after every estimate. Writing the weekly project update.

Take home Another task that slowed me down:

Personal: Building the grocery list. Filling out the same school and sports forms.
Professional: Updating the CRM after calls. Building the crew schedule each Friday.

Do now More tasks, from So What's suggestions or my own list:

Personal: A week of dinners with a grocery list. A reusable gathering checklist.
Professional: A follow-up note after each estimate. A first draft of the weekly update.

Tip

Name which problem you have. Coming up with ideas and finding the time to act on them are two different problems, and AI helps with each one differently.

Sort them into three lists.

You just listed the tasks that eat your time. Now decide what to do with each one. This is how you find the time your reason needs. Write every task from the last page under one of the three lists below.

- Go one task at a time. Ask the question under each list. Give it two minutes.
- You can split a task. Hosting is yours. AI can prepare the grocery list.

01 Work only a human can do

Ask: Does this need my judgment, my relationships, or my creativity? If yes, it stays with you. Protect this time.

Personal: Checking meals against our food allergies. A hard talk with my teenager.
Professional: Pricing a tricky job. Calling an unhappy customer.

02 Work AI can prepare

Ask: Could a helper get this started if I explained it, and could I check the result? Today's task comes from this list.

Personal: Next week's dinners and grocery list. The holiday schedule.
Professional: A follow-up note after an estimate. A draft of the weekly update.

03 Work the system should remove

Ask: Why am I doing this at all? Look for repetition, delay, and scattered work.

Personal: Filling out the same school form by hand every season.
Professional: Typing the same numbers into two systems. A meeting that could be a note.

Choose one and tell AI what you know.

Look back at list 02, the work AI can prepare. Circle one task that is small, low risk, and easy to check. That is the task you'll use for the rest of this workbook.

Do now **The ONE task I will try:**

Personal: Draft next week's dinners and grocery list. Draft a checklist for Saturday's family lunch.
Professional: Draft a follow-up note for one estimate. Draft this week's project update from my notes.

Take home **My task starts when… and it is finished when…**

Personal: Starts with what's in the pantry; finished when the list is sorted by aisle. Starts when I list who's coming; finished when the checklist fits one page.
Professional: Starts after the site visit; finished when it's a draft I'd sign. Starts with my approved notes; finished when it's ready for my review.

Do now **What do I know about this task that AI needs to know?**

Personal: Who can't eat what, and what my family will eat on a busy night. Which dishes always run late.

Professional: What the customer asked about and what the estimate leaves out. What the client cares about and what is still unapproved.

Say it

Say it, don't type it. Explain the task out loud the way you'd explain it to a new hire. You'll give AI more of what you know than you would by typing.

You have one task and what you know about it. Next, you decide what a good result looks like.

Notes and sketches

3. What would better look like?

Define success and the steps to reach it

You've picked one task. Before AI touches it, decide what done looks like and what the task costs you today.

Decide what "good enough to use" means before you start. Then write down what the task costs you today, all of it: preparing, doing, checking, and fixing. An estimate is fine. Just label it an estimate.

A plan connects today to the end you want.

Work backward from the finish. A result you can use has to be checked. Before you can check it, you need a draft. Before the draft, you need clear instructions and safe facts. Planning is choosing those steps before you ask AI for anything.

How 10× happens.

Here's what 10× means for time: the same acceptable result in one-tenth the time. Thirty minutes becomes three. Treat that as a challenge. It isn't a promise.

Your first try probably won't be 10×. Setup takes time, and so does checking. The gain grows as you reuse the same instructions, the same guardrails, and the same checks on a task you know well. Expect a modest gain on the first run and a bigger one by the third or fourth.

Watch out

A fast draft isn't the finish line. A smaller improvement still counts. If you don't have a starting number, measure one before you claim a speed gain.

Remember: Better tools help when you know what you are building.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Map the outcomes, then write down today's time, your quality rule, and your steps.

Section 3 worksheet

My definition of better.

Map the outcomes. Before you plan, answer four questions about your one task. Two are about what happens if you hand part of it to AI. Two are about what happens if you leave it alone. Write a few words in each box.

Personal: Gets better: a weekly plan and backup meals. Still my job: the family has to agree, and someone cooks. Could try: a simple rotating menu. Keeps costing me: the $100 nights with no plan.

Professional: Gets better: every estimate gets a same-day note. Still my job: checking price and scope. Could try: a saved template. Keeps costing me: customers wait and call someone else.

If I hand part of this to AI **What gets better?**	**If I hand part of this to AI** **What is still my job?**
If I leave it the way it is **What else could I try?**	**If I leave it the way it is** **What keeps costing me?**

Tip

Measure the result, not the activity. If phone calls drop 20% and booked jobs drop 20%, nothing improved.

Do now **How long this task takes me today: _____ minutes. Timed or guessed?**

Personal: Weekly dinners and list: 60 minutes, timed. Gathering plan: 45 minutes, guessed.

Professional: Estimate follow-up: 20 minutes, guessed. Project update: 30 minutes, timed.

Do now **My quality rule. A result is good enough to use when:**

Personal: Five dinners my family will eat, on one list, with nothing we're allergic to. Every dish has an owner and a time.

Professional: The note names the right job, the price range, and the next step. The status matches the approved notes and fits one screen.

Take home **What must not get worse while this gets faster:**

Personal: Allergy safety. I still check every ingredient myself. The planning can't take longer than it saves.

Professional: Accuracy. No price or promise that isn't in the estimate. No approval we don't have.

Take home **If this works, what could become much easier?**

Personal: Dinner is planned 46 weeks a year. Every holiday runs from one checklist.
Professional: Every estimate gets a same-day follow-up. Updates take five minutes a week.

Tip

Have a past result you were happy with? Show it to AI with the private details removed. Showing beats describing.

Do now **My steps. Start with the finished result and work back:**

Personal: Groceries ordered. Before that, I approve the cart. Before that, the family agrees. Before that, a draft menu. First, our allergies and preferences.
Professional: Follow-up sent. Before that, I check price and scope. Before that, a draft. First, my notes from the estimate.

Take home **My target for the first try: _____ minutes, and it still meets my quality rule.**

Personal: Dinners and list in 20 minutes. Gathering plan in 15.
Professional: Estimate follow-up in 5 minutes. Project update in 10.

You know what good looks like and what the task costs today. Next, you write the job.

4. What job will I give AI?

Turn your knowledge and plan into instructions

You know the task and the standard. Now you turn both into instructions AI can follow.

A prompt is just an instruction. A doer is whoever carries out a step in your plan, a person or an AI tool. Guardrails are the limits you set on information, actions, and decisions. Tell the doer four things: the goal, what you know, the job, and the limits.

Think of it as a new hire.

We bring people on for three reasons: to do work we don't want to do, to do work we don't know how to do, and to build a system that lets us grow. AI fits the first one well, because you know the work and can check it. It's a poor fit for the second, because you can't judge what you don't know. The third is today's lesson. Nobody succeeds in a job with no description, no training, and no review. AI doesn't either.

Constraints make AI faster.

I believe a constrained AI is a good AI. Give it a narrow job with clear limits and you get less to check and less to fix. That's where the speed comes from. Give it an open-ended request and you get more to read, more to doubt, and more to redo. The limits also keep you in charge of what happens next. AI handles the repetitive work. You make the decisions.

Guardrails in personal and professional life.

- **Personal:** Draft a meal plan, with no health records and no orders placed. Draft a checklist, with no purchases, invitations, or private family details.
- **Professional:** Draft a follow-up, with no invented prices or promises. Draft from approved notes, with no client records or sending.
- **Parent or teacher:** Draft an outline. No children's names, grades, or records.

Stick to sample information. Paying for a plan or turning on a "temporary" mode doesn't give you permission to share private data.

Watch out

Writing a guardrail down doesn't guarantee it holds. Keep accounts disconnected and keep the approvals with you. A clear prompt can't make up for expertise you don't have.

Reusable instruction starter.

This is the job description. Copy it, fill in the brackets from your first three worksheets, and you have your instructions.

Goal: [useful end result, who it is for, and your reason from section 1].
My knowledge: [facts, rules, and what good looks like].
Your job: [one draft or task].
Use only [made-up or approved public details].
Output: [format, length, and tone].
Guardrails: [limits]. Do not invent facts or send, publish, spend, connect accounts, or change files.
Ask up to two questions about missing details. Otherwise mark them "to confirm."
List gaps and checks for my review. Keep the result a draft until I approve it.

Tip

Before you ask for the draft, ask: "What do you need to know from me to do this well?"

Remember: JARVIS needs your knowledge. A wish is not enough.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Name your reader, set your guardrails, and write your instructions from the starter.

Section 4 worksheet

My instructions.

Do now **My task, and who will read the result:**

Personal: A dinner plan my teenager can follow. A lunch checklist for me and my sister.
Professional: A follow-up note for a homeowner. A project update for the client's manager.

Do now **My guardrails. What AI may use, what it must not do, and what needs my OK:**

Personal: Foods to avoid listed by name, with no health details. Nothing gets ordered until I approve the cart.
Professional: Nothing goes out without my review. Approved notes only, with no client records.

Do now My instructions (write here or type them):

Personal: "Plan five weeknight dinners under 30 minutes. Avoid these foods…" "Draft a one-page checklist for a family lunch for six at home…"
Professional: "Draft a friendly follow-up to this estimate…" "Draft a short status update from these approved notes…"

The job is written. Next, you run it once and read what comes back.

Notes and sketches

5. What happened when I tried it?

Try a draft, not a live action

The job is written. Now run it once and read the result the way an owner would.

Today the doer might be you with a pen, AI writing a draft, or an agent that uses tools. Some AI tools can take actions beyond text. We're staying with drafts and safe details today: no accounts, no purchases, no sending, and nothing automatic.

If you have access, try your instructions once. If you don't, pick one of the flawed samples below. They're invented for teaching.

Choose one made-up practice example.

Personal notes: Five weeknight dinners; no tree nuts; 30 minutes or less. Job: a plan and a grocery list.

Flawed draft: "Tuesday: pesto pasta with walnuts. Wednesday: braised short ribs."

Professional notes: Water heater estimate; price range given; permit not included. Job: a follow-up note.

Flawed draft: "Your total is $1,850 with the permit included."

Apply your knowledge and change one thing.

You caught the mistake because you know the facts. AI didn't. That's your expertise doing its job. Save your instructions and your draft, with the private information left out.

Watch out

Moving faster can multiply mistakes. A doer needs a plan, limits, and a check at the end. One focused revision is enough for today.

Remember: Let AI do a defined piece. Your judgment stays with you.

Your turn: Run it once, or pick a flawed sample. Then turn to the worksheet and write what worked and what didn't.

Section 5 worksheet

What came back.

Do now Something useful in the result:

Personal: It grouped the grocery list by aisle. The timeline was in the right order.
Professional: The tone was right for the customer. It kept the note short.

Do now Something wrong, missing, or not right for my reader:

Personal: It planned a meal with an ingredient we avoid. It booked a restaurant when lunch is at home.
Professional: It gave a price I never quoted. It claimed approval and a launch date.

Do now **My one instruction change:**

Personal: "Use only the foods on my list. Flag any ingredient you're unsure about." "Keep lunch at home for 6; mark arrival time to confirm."

Professional: "Do not state a price that is not in my notes." "Say the draft is ready for review; do not claim approval or a launch date."

Tip

Change the instructions, not just the draft. A fixed draft helps once. Fixed instructions help every time.

You have a draft and one fix. Next, you check it properly.

Notes and sketches

6. What must I check myself?

Check against the goal, facts, and guardrails

A draft isn't finished until someone who knows the work has checked it. That someone is you.

Validation is checking that the result is correct, useful, and inside your limits. Could you actually use that checklist on Saturday? Does the update match the approved status? Check against your own notes, and against independent, reliable sources when you need to. Another AI answer doesn't count as an independent source.

Count the whole effort, not just AI's speed.

Add up every minute, and count the retries and the setup too. If you practiced on paper, write "rehearsal" and don't claim a speed gain.

Illustration only: 3 + 2 + 5 + 2 = 12 minutes against a 30–minute starting point. That gets 18 minutes back and it's 2.5× faster, as long as the quality holds. It isn't 10× yet. Next time the planning is done and the checks are familiar, so the total drops again.

Watch out

Asking "Are you sure?" isn't validation. AI can invent answers and citations and sound confident doing it. Having it review its own work may help, but that isn't an independent check.

Remember: Your expertise helps you test the result, not just admire it.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Run the five checks, give your verdict, and add up the minutes.

Section 6 worksheet

My check.

- ☐ **Facts:** Do names, dates, numbers, and claims match the source?
- ☐ **Gaps:** What was guessed, missed, or left "to confirm"?
- ☐ **Goal:** Does this meet the result and quality rule I planned?
- ☐ **Guardrails:** Is the information allowed? Were action limits respected?
- ☐ **Expertise:** Can I judge this? Could a mistake hurt someone?

Tip

Ask AI to list what it assumed. Every assumption is something for you to check.

Do now **The important thing I checked, and how:**

Personal: Every ingredient, against what we avoid. Guest count and time, against my own notes.
Professional: Price and scope, against the written estimate. The status, against the approved notes.

Do now **My verdict. Circle one: use it after my review / revise it / stop and get help**

Personal: Revise, because one dinner ignores my list. Usable after I fix the time.
Professional: Usable after review. Stop and ask the project owner about the date.

My total effort.

Planning: _____ min

Doing: _____ min

Checking: _____ min

Fixing: _____ min

Total: _____ min

You've taken one task from start to finish. Next, you decide where it goes from here.

Notes and sketches

7. What is my next safe step?

Decide who can safely do and validate the work

One run teaches you something. This last section is about what you do with it, and where you stop.

Have I crossed beyond my expertise?

Knowing your goal doesn't qualify you to judge every solution. A plumber knows plumbing. That doesn't make the plumber a judge of whether an AI-built app is secure. Knowing your own house doesn't qualify you to sign off on electrical work.

Get qualified help before you rely on work you can't validate. The same goes for serious health, safety, legal, tax, financial, or employment decisions, and for live data, code, or actions you can't assess. Ask the right professional, or whoever owns data and IT at your workplace. A demo that works isn't proof that it's safe.

My small test through the holidays.

Try up to three comparable attempts with safe information. Write down the total time, the quality, and the fixing each one needed. Count the first-time setup. Keep your section 4 guardrails, and keep a human approval before any real use.

At check-in, choose: continue, change, or stop. Three tries teach you something. They don't prove reliability. Then go back to your goal. Did this help, and who or what gets the time back?

Watch out

Don't let one good draft turn into unchecked automation. You stay in charge: plan → do within guardrails → validate → decide.

Remember: Recognize where your knowledge ends.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Name what you can't judge and who can. Then set up your three attempts and a check-in date.

Section 7 worksheet

My next step.

Do now What part of this am I NOT qualified to judge?

Personal: Whether a recipe is safe for a medical diet. Whether a wiring plan for patio lights is safe.

Professional: Whether contract wording protects us. Whether an AI-built tool keeps customer data secure.

Do now Circle one: I can test this alone / I need a reviewer / I need an expert first. Who?

Personal: Our doctor or a dietitian reviews anything about the allergy. I can test the checklist alone.

Professional: I can test the follow-up note alone. Our IT provider reviews anything that touches customer data.

Take home Task to repeat, using safe information:

Personal: The weekly dinner plan, for three weeks. The gathering checklist, for three events.

Professional: The estimate follow-up, for three jobs. The weekly update, three weeks running.

Take home It worked if total time is under ___ minutes and it meets this quality rule:

Personal: 20 minutes, and five dinners we ate. 15 minutes, and nothing forgotten.

Professional: 5 minutes, and I'd sign it. 10 minutes, and no corrections from the client.

My three attempts.

Attempt 1: _____ min / quality met? _____ / fixing needed: _____

Attempt 2: _____ min / quality met? _____ / fixing needed: _____

Attempt 3: _____ min / quality met? _____ / fixing needed: _____

Tip

Start a fresh chat for each attempt. Long chats drift and lose the early details.

Take home **My check-in date and who will review:**

Personal: January 4, with my spouse. After New Year's, with my sister.
Professional: December 18, with my manager. The first Monday in January, with my office manager.

Take home **I will stop or get help if:**

Personal: It needs private health or money details. I can't tell whether the answer is right.
Professional: It needs client records or account access. It starts making promises to customers.

That's the class. Section 8 and the pages after it are yours to take home.

Notes and sketches

8. What else could I try next?

Take home | Find more tasks in your life and your job

You've run one task through the whole process. The value grows when you do it again, so this section helps you find the next ones.

Read the examples and circle any that sound like your week. Then use the idea starters on the worksheet to come up with your own.

Examples from personal life.

- **A week of dinners and a grocery list.** You know what your family will eat and what's already in the pantry.
- **A plan for a holiday gathering.** You know who's coming, who brings what, and where it went sideways last year.
- **A chore chart for the kids.** You know their ages, their schedules, and what's fair.
- **A packing list and a day-by-day plan for a trip.** You know your people and how much they can take in one day.
- **Questions to ask before you hire a contractor or see a professional.** You know the situation. The professional still gives the answers.
- **A home maintenance calendar.** You know your house and what you keep forgetting.
- **A sign-up note and schedule for the team, the class, or the church group.** You know the families and what they'll say yes to.

Examples from your job.

- **Owner or manager:** a meeting agenda and recap from your own notes, a written checklist for a task you've been doing from memory, or a job posting.
- **Office and admin:** reply templates for the five questions you answer every week, or a first-week checklist for a new hire.
- **Sales and customer service:** a follow-up note after a quote, plain-English answers to common questions, or a polite reply to a complaint for you to edit.
- **Trades and field work:** a job-site checklist, clear wording for the scope on an estimate, or a "before we arrive" note for customers.
- **Marketing and events:** social posts about an event you ran, a newsletter outline, or a run-of-show for the next event.
- **Teachers, coaches, and nonprofits:** a lesson or practice outline, a volunteer schedule, or a thank-you letter to a sponsor.

Every one of these is a draft. You check it, you fix it, and you decide whether it goes anywhere. Use made-up or approved details, and follow your employer's rules about AI tools.

Let AI help you brainstorm.

Go back to the So What prompt in section 1 and run it again with a different frustration. AI is good at asking questions. You still pick the task.

> **Watch out**
> AI will happily suggest things you can't judge. If an idea sits outside what you know, take it back to section 7.

Remember: Your strongest ideas come from work you already know well.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Finish the idea starters, run each idea through three questions, and pick your next three tasks.

Section 8 worksheet

My next tasks.

Finish any of these sentences. Don't filter yet.

Every week I have to…

I keep rewriting the same…

People always ask me…

I put off _____ because it takes too long.

I do _____ from memory and wish it were written down.

If I had a helper for one hour, I would hand them…

Tip

Ask AI for three options and pick one. Choosing is faster than describing.

Run each idea through three questions.

- ☐ Do I know what a good result looks like?
- ☐ Can I do it with made-up or approved information?
- ☐ Can I check the result myself, or name who can?

Three yes answers means it's a good next task. A no means shrink the task or get help first.

My next three tasks.

Task 1:

Task 2:

Task 3:

Pick one and take it back to section 2. You already know the steps.

What do the last weeks of 2026 look like?

We're close to the holidays. A few small steps in the next few weeks will do more for your 2027 than a big plan in January.

This week I will:

Before December 31 I will:

In January I will tell this person how it went:

Who or what gets the time back? (My reason from section 1)

Notes and sketches

Six skills that matter more with AI.

Take home | Adapted from chapter 7 of my working book, Unintended Disruption

Aristotle had a word for practical wisdom: phronesis. It means knowing what to do with what you know. In my working book I call the modern version the new liberal arts. It has six parts. None of them is a technical skill, and each one is harder than learning a tool.

01 Logic and how we know things

How knowledge is formed and tested. Ask how you know something is true before you rely on it.

In this workbook: Section 6, where you check facts against a source.

02 Quantitative reasoning

Statistics, probability, and risk. Count what it really costs and how likely it is to go wrong.

In this workbook: Sections 3 and 6, where you measure the whole effort.

03 Systems thinking

Second and third-order effects. Ask what happens next, and what happens after that.

In this workbook: The three lists in section 2.

04 Writing and persuasion

How people make decisions. Clear instructions are clear writing, for a person or for AI.

In this workbook: Section 4, where you write the job.

05 Ethics and judgment

AI cannot own liability. You answer for the result.

In this workbook: Sections 1 and 7, where you stay in charge and know your limits.

06 AI fluency as leverage

A tool, not a vocation. Use it to do your own work better.

In this workbook: Every section.

Your turn: Turn to the worksheet. Name the skill you already bring and the one you want to build.

Six skills worksheet

My strengths.

Take home The skill I already bring:

Personal: Judgment, from years of running a household budget. Systems thinking, from coordinating three kids' schedules.
Professional: Writing, from years of customer emails. Quantitative reasoning, from pricing jobs.

Take home The one I want to build in 2027:

Personal: Quantitative reasoning, so I can weigh a big purchase. Logic, so I check what I read online.
Professional: Systems thinking, so I see what a change does downstream. AI fluency, on one task at a time.

These six work together. A tool is easier to learn than any of them, and it is worth far less without them.

Notes and sketches

Addendum: Which AI tool does what?

Crib sheet | Checked November 2026

Every tool on this page does more than one job. Each has also earned its reputation somewhere, and the usage studies show where. Start with the one you already have. What you know and the guardrails you set matter more than which tool you pick.

Tool	Where it earns its stripes	What the studies show
ChatGPT OpenAI	The all-purpose assistant. Everyday questions, practical advice, and writing help.	The widest reach in the U.S. 44% of adults have used it (Pew). OpenAI's study found about three in four chats are practical guidance, looking up information, or writing. About 4% involve coding.
Gemini Google	Lives inside Google: Search, Gmail, Docs, and Android. Strong with voice and the phone camera.	24% of U.S. adults have used it (Pew). Google's study of 15 million interactions found people use it to assist their work far more than to replace it. Google says 63% of users talk to it by voice.
Copilot Microsoft	Lives inside Word, Excel, Outlook, and Teams. A natural fit for an office already on Microsoft 365.	17% of U.S. adults have used it (Pew). Microsoft's study of 37.5 million conversations found work leads on desktop during business hours. Phone use leans personal at all hours.
Claude Anthropic	Long documents, careful writing, analysis, and coding.	6% of U.S. adults have used it (Pew). Anthropic's data shows coding is the top use at about 35% of conversations, with everyday uses growing. Its coding agent ranked first in use among developers in the 2026 Stack Overflow survey.
Perplexity Perplexity AI	Research with sources. Answers come with links, so you can check where they came from.	Built as an answer engine for research questions. A study with Harvard researchers found 57% of its agent's use was productivity work and learning or research.

Tool	Where it earns its stripes	What the studies show
Meta AI and Grok Meta, xAI	Meta AI is built into Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Grok is built into X. Both meet people where they already scroll.	14% of U.S. adults have used Meta AI and 8% have used Grok (Pew).
Notion AI Notion	Notes, documents, and project trackers in one workspace. The AI works on your own pages, and teams can set up agents for recurring tasks.	No independent usage study yet. Notion reports its users built more than one million custom agents within months of the February 2026 launch.
Cursor Anysphere	A code editor with AI built in. It is a tool for people who already write software.	About one in four developers who use coding agents use Cursor (Stack Overflow, 2026). Remember the plumber. This one rewards people who can judge code.
Manus Manus	An agent. You describe an outcome and it plans and carries out the steps, such as research or data analysis.	No independent usage study yet. Reviewers describe it as a general agent for multi-step tasks. Agents take actions, so guardrails count for more here than anywhere.

How to read this.

- **They overlap.** Every chat tool here can answer questions, draft, summarize, and brainstorm. You don't need all of them.
- **Pick by where you already work.** If your day runs on Google, start with Gemini. On Microsoft, start with Copilot. Otherwise start with the one you've already opened.
- **Chatting and acting are different.** Chat tools hand you a draft. Agents can take actions. Keep section 4's guardrails either way.
- **Check the rules at work.** Your employer may approve some of these tools and not others.

Some figures come from a company's study of its own product. Reach is the share of U.S. adults who have ever used the tool. Sources: Pew Research Center (2026); OpenAI (2025); Google (2026); Microsoft (2025); Anthropic (2026); Perplexity and Harvard (2025); Stack Overflow (2026); Notion (2026).

Fred

Your knowledge comes first.

AI adds leverage.

Thank you for spending this time with me. Pick one task, try it three times over the holidays, and tell someone how it went.

Stay in touch.

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