

Using AI without losing *your judgment.*

AI does not know what it does not know. *You can notice what is missing.* That is your edge.

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

FOR PROFESSIONALS WHO THINK

AI is a tool, *not an oracle.*

Artificial intelligence can draft emails, summarize documents, generate code, and analyze data in seconds. It is impressive. It is also dangerous if you stop thinking.

This is not an anti-technology manifesto. It is a practical guide to using AI for what it is: an amplifier of your capabilities, not a replacement for your judgment.

The three traps of dependency

1

Blind trust

Accepting AI output without verification. Language models sound confident even when they fabricate data, citations, or statistics. Trust without review is the most common mistake and the most costly one.

2

Skill atrophy

Repeatedly delegating tasks you should master. If you never write an analysis without AI, you lose the ability to think with structure. Skills you do not exercise will degrade.

3

Context loss

AI does not know your company, your market, your team, or your real constraints unless you hand them over. And today they fit: documents, figures, history. Whatever you leave out, it fills in with the generic, and it sounds just as confident.

SELF-CHECK

If the last time AI gave you something, you copied and pasted it without changing a single line: it is time to recalibrate.

The *VERIFY* framework.

Six steps for processing any AI output before you use it. Not about distrust; about applying the same rigor you would use with any source.

V

Validate the source or claim.

Check data, figures, references. If AI cites a study, look it up. If it gives a number, verify it.

E

Evaluate against experience.

Your domain knowledge matters. If something sounds off for your context, it probably is.

R

Refine with your context.

Add constraints, internal data, nuance. Generic output becomes useful only after your filter.

I

Iterate, never accept drafts.

The first result is a starting point. Ask for variations, challenge it, push for detail.

F

Filter what to automate.

Automate the repetitive. Think through the strategic: decisions, priorities, relationships.

Y

Your judgment, last layer.

After the process, the call is yours. AI informs. You decide. That cannot be delegated.

Practical rules *of thumb*.

Six rules I apply every day. None are romantic; all are useful.

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- 01 **Use AI for first drafts, not final decisions.** Let it do the bulk. Your part is the one nobody can do for you: what you cut, what you correct, and what you put your name on.
 - 02 **Always add your domain context to prompts.** The more specific you are about your constraints, the more useful the response.
 - 03 **Cross-check hard data: numbers, dates, names, citations.** This is where AI fails most and where errors cause the most damage.
 - 04 **Learn the fundamentals before automating them.** If you cannot do a financial analysis by hand, you cannot evaluate whether AI did it right.
 - 05 **Keep a "human skills" list you will not delegate.** Critical thinking, negotiation, empathy, strategic creativity. Exercise them.
 - 06 **When AI acts instead of proposing, the filter comes first, not last.** If you let it operate your tools, you are no longer reviewing a draft: you are re-viewing something that already happened. Decide up front what it may do alone and what it must show you first.
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Where AI shines, where you think.

AI SHINES HERE

THINK FOR YOURSELF HERE

Summarizing long documents

Deciding what is relevant to your case

Generating text drafts

Defining the tone and key message

Searching and organizing information

Interpreting what it means for your business

Analyzing patterns in data

Deciding what to do with those patterns

Automating repetitive tasks

Prioritizing what is worth automating

Generating options and alternatives

Choosing between them with judgment

Translating and adapting content

Validating cultural and brand nuances

GOLDEN RULE

If an error would have real consequences (money, reputation, relationships), your brain must be the last filter. Always.

FOR THIS WEEK

Three concrete *things*.

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- 01 **Audit your last month.** Review the last five times you used AI. How many times did you verify the result before using it? Be honest.
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- 02 **Create your "do not delegate" list.** Write down three to five professional skills you will keep practicing without AI. Put it where you can see it.
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- 03 **Apply VERIFY once a day.** Pick one AI output you use today and run it through all six steps. Do it until it becomes automatic.
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