

THE AI ADOPTION GAP

LEADERSHIP WORKBOOK

A practical companion to Closing the AI Adoption Gap

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Turning AI experimentation into organizational capability.

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook brings together the Put This to Work exercises and Questions to Take With You from Closing the AI Adoption Gap. It is designed for individual reflection or discussion with your leadership team.

Use the space provided to record specific examples, observations, and evidence from actual work. The goal is not to produce polished answers. It is to make the work visible: what people have discovered, where useful learning is being lost, where friction remains, and what the organization should learn next.

A specific example from real work is more useful than a broad statement about AI adoption. You do not need to complete the workbook in one sitting. Work through it chapter by chapter, or use the sections most relevant to the questions your organization is facing now.

A useful discipline: Answer based on how work actually happens today - not how it is supposed to happen.

The central question

What does your organization know how to do with AI that it did not know how to do before?

The AI Adoption Gap

Put This to Work

1. If one employee discovered an AI-assisted method today that saved several hours every week, how would anyone else in your organization learn about it?

2. Which employees in your organization have become especially capable with AI, and what has the organization learned from them?

3. What useful AI-assisted work in your organization currently depends on one person's personal method?

4. Could another qualified employee reproduce your best AI-enabled work tomorrow?

5. If your strongest AI users left the organization, how much of what they discovered would leave with them?

The Question to Take With You

Have you implemented AI, or have you simply given people access to it?

The Experimentation Trap

Put This to Work

1. Where do employees in your organization currently share what they learn from AI experiments?

2. How would you know if three departments were independently trying to solve the same problem with AI?

3. When an employee discovers that an AI approach doesn't work, who else benefits from that discovery?

4. Which useful AI methods in your organization currently exist only in personal chat histories, notes, or habits?

5. If you asked today, "What has our organization learned from six months of AI experimentation?" where would you look for the answer?

The Question to Take With You

Is your organization learning how to use AI, or are individual employees learning how to use AI?

The Hidden Cost of Optional AI

Put This to Work

1. If two employees doing the same work use AI very differently, does management know why?

2. Which important AI-assisted methods in your organization currently depend on individual enthusiasm rather than an organizational decision?

3. Have employees who stopped using AI told anyone why they stopped, and would anyone have asked?

4. Are managers across your organization giving employees substantially different signals about whether and how AI should be used?

5. Has any employee discovered a meaningfully better way of doing recurring work that the organization still treats as that person's personal shortcut?

The Question to Take With You

Where AI genuinely improves important work, why is using the better method still optional?

Why Good Employees Get Frustrated With AI

Put This to Work

1. When employees in your organization stop using AI, do you know what happened before they stopped?

2. Where does verification consume enough time that AI may not actually improve the work?

3. Which AI-assisted tasks produce output that looks trustworthy before anyone has established that it is?

4. Are employees expected to discover for themselves what information, context, and checking a task requires?

5. What have your skeptical employees learned about AI that your enthusiasts may not have learned yet?

The Question to Take With You

What are your employees learning about AI that management never sees?

Leaders Need to Feel the Friction

Put This to Work

1. When was the last time a senior leader in your organization used AI on a piece of real work they understood well enough to judge?

2. When someone demonstrates a successful AI use case, does leadership ask to see what failed before it worked?

3. Do your leaders know what employees must verify after AI produces an answer?

4. Where might reported time savings ignore preparation, checking, or exception handling?

5. When employees struggle with AI, does leadership hear about the friction, or only see the final usage number?

The Question to Take With You

Do your leaders understand AI from inside the work, or only from the finished result?

Start With the Work, Not the AI

Put This to Work

1. Where do skilled employees in your organization spend significant time gathering information before they can actually use their judgment?

2. What recurring work requires people to reconstruct context the organization already has somewhere?

3. Where do handoffs repeatedly lose information or create rework?

4. Which employee workarounds reveal that the formal process isn't supporting the job?

5. Which AI ideas in your organization began with a business problem, and which began with someone asking where AI could be inserted?

The Question to Take With You

If you removed the word "AI" from your proposed use case, could you still clearly describe the business problem you are trying to solve?

Find the Use Cases That Matter

Put This to Work

1. Which AI opportunity under discussion in your organization would matter most if the work genuinely improved?

2. Which proposed use cases are attractive mainly because they demonstrate well?

3. Where could a small improvement affect a large volume of recurring work?

4. Which opportunities would return skilled human attention to work that actually requires judgment?

5. Which use cases matter enough to pursue, but are manageable enough to learn from responsibly?

The Question to Take With You

If this use case worked perfectly, would improving this piece of work actually matter?

Capture What Works

Put This to Work

1. What useful AI-assisted methods in your organization currently exist only in one employee's habits or files?

2. If the person who discovered your best AI method went on vacation tomorrow, could another employee reproduce it?

3. When employees share successful prompts, are they also sharing the context, exceptions, checking, and judgment that surround them?

4. What failed AI experiments has your organization already paid for more than once?

5. Where does useful learning about AI-assisted work go once someone discovers it?

The Question to Take With You

If the person who discovered this method left tomorrow, would the organization still know how to do it?

Redesign the Workflow

Put This to Work

1. What AI-assisted task in your organization has improved while the workflow around it stayed exactly the same?

2. Where did the bottleneck move after that task became faster?

3. Which handoffs, approvals, checks, or reports in that workflow still serve a clear purpose, and which survive mainly from habit?

4. Where does human judgment need to remain explicit, and who owns the result?

5. If you redesigned this work today, knowing what AI can now help with, what would you not put back?

The Question to Take With You

If you were designing this workflow today, knowing what you know now, would you build it the same way?

Train the Work, Not the Tool

Put This to Work

1. Are you training employees to use AI, or to perform specific work differently because AI is now part of it?

2. Does your training show employees what good work looks like, what they must verify, and what remains their responsibility?

3. Do employees practice exceptions and failures, or only the clean version of the method?

4. Can your managers recognize and coach the redesigned work, or are they still managing the old process?

5. After training, can another competent employee actually perform the work without depending on the person who discovered the method?

The Question to Take With You

After the training is over, what specific piece of work can this employee now perform better?

Standardize Without Killing Experimentation

Put This to Work

1. For an AI-assisted workflow your organization has adopted, can employees clearly identify the current standard method?

2. Which parts of that method must remain consistent, and where can employee judgment reasonably vary?

3. When someone discovers a better way, where does that learning go?

4. Who owns the decision about whether an improvement becomes part of the standard?

5. Are repeated workarounds being treated only as noncompliance, or also as information about where the standard may need to change?

The Question to Take With You

When someone in your organization discovers a better way to do the work, how does everyone else get it?

Measure What Changed

Put This to Work

1. For one AI-assisted workflow in your organization, what problem were you originally trying to solve?

2. What changed in the actual work after implementation?

3. Are you measuring activity, performance, or both, and do you know which is which?

4. If time was saved, what did that time make possible?

5. What evidence would cause you to expand this method, change it, or stop using it?

The Question to Take With You

What does your organization know how to do with AI that it did not know how to do before?

Leadership Action Summary

After working through the chapters, look across your answers. Identify the few issues that would most improve your organization's ability to turn individual AI learning into repeatable organizational capability.

1. The most important capability we should capture

What useful method or knowledge is currently too dependent on one person?

2. The most important piece of work to examine

Where is there enough friction, repetition, volume, or consequence to justify attention?

3. The workflow that most needs redesign

What surrounding process is preventing an AI-assisted improvement from creating its full value?

4. The learning we are currently losing

What are employees discovering - positive or negative - that the organization has no reliable way to retain?

5. The next management action

What is one concrete action leadership should take in the next 30 days?

Your AI Adoption Gap Priorities

Choose no more than three priorities. For each, name the work, the change you want to see, who should own the next step, and what evidence would tell you the work improved.

Priority 1

The work:

The change we want to see:

Owner:

Evidence that would show improvement:

Priority 2

The work:

The change we want to see:

Owner:

Evidence that would show improvement:

Priority 3

The work:

The change we want to see:

Owner:

Evidence that would show improvement:
