



Founders AI

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PRACTICAL AI FIELD GUIDE

AI Opportunity Audit

How to Find the Best Places to Use AI

A practical AI opportunity guide for founders, business owners, creators, operators, consultants, managers, and everyday professionals who want to find the best places to use AI before buying tools or building automations.

- List work
- Find friction
- Score fit
- Sort wins
- Pick pilot
- Measure value

The biggest mistake people make with AI is starting with tools.

They ask:

- “Should I use ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, or Perplexity?”
- “Should I build an agent?”
- “Should I automate this?”
- “What AI tools should my business use?”

Those are not bad questions.

They are just not the first questions.

The better first question is:

Where is work getting stuck, repeated, delayed, or done below the quality standard?

That is where AI opportunity lives.

This guide gives you a simple audit system for finding the best places to use AI before you buy tools, build workflows, automate tasks, or train a team.

The goal is not to use AI everywhere.

The goal is to find the places where AI can create real value without creating unnecessary risk.

The core rule

Start with work, not tools.

A weak AI plan starts like this:

“Here are the AI tools we should use.”

A strong AI plan starts like this:

“Here is the work that is repetitive, slow, expensive, inconsistent, easy to review, and low enough risk to improve with AI.”

Tools come after the audit.

The audit tells you:

- what work AI should help with,
- what work should stay human,
- what work could become a workflow,
- what work could eventually be automated,
- and what work is too risky to touch yet.

What counts as an AI opportunity?

An AI opportunity is a task or workflow where AI can improve at least one of five things.

Opportunity type	What improves	Example
Speed	Work gets done faster	Meeting notes become action items
Quality	Output becomes clearer or more consistent	Customer replies follow a better structure
Capacity	More work gets done without more people	Content gets repurposed into multiple formats
Decision support	Options become easier to compare	Vendor choices are scored in a table
Knowledge reuse	Useful information stops disappearing	Prompts and SOPs are saved in a workflow library

If AI does not improve speed, quality, capacity, decisions, or reuse, it may not be worth doing yet.

The AI opportunity audit

Use this five-step process.

1. List the work.
2. Find the friction.
3. Score AI fit.
4. Sort the opportunities.
5. Choose the first pilot.

This can be done by one person in an hour.

For a small team, do it in a 60- to 90-minute working session.

Step 1: List the work

Start by listing recurring work.

Do not judge yet. Just capture.

Use these categories.

Communication

Examples:

- Emails.
- Follow-ups.
- Customer replies.
- Internal updates.
- Meeting summaries.
- Proposals.
- Reports.

Research

Examples:

- Market research.
- Competitor research.
- Lead research.
- Product research.
- Vendor comparisons.
- Learning new topics.
- Summarizing documents.

Sales and customer work

Examples:

- Lead qualification.
- Outreach drafts.
- Discovery prep.
- Objection handling.
- CRM notes.
- Customer support.
- Renewal reminders.

Operations

Examples:

- SOP creation.
- Task tracking.
- Process documentation.
- Scheduling.
- Intake forms.
- Status updates.
- Quality checks.

Content and marketing

Examples:

- Idea generation.
- Video outlines.
- Social repurposing.
- Blog drafts.
- Newsletter sections.
- Thumbnail/title brainstorming.
- Campaign planning.

Admin and personal productivity

Examples:

- Organizing notes.
- Planning the week.
- Summarizing bills or documents.
- Creating checklists.
- Tracking projects.
- Comparing purchases.
- Learning plans.

Write down at least 20 tasks.

If you cannot find 20, you are thinking too broadly. Break work into smaller steps.

Step 2: Find the friction

For each task, ask:

- Does this happen often?
- Does it take too long?
- Does it require too much manual copying or formatting?
- Does quality vary depending on who does it?
- Does the same information get recreated repeatedly?
- Does it create delays for customers, team members, or projects?
- Does it require summarizing, drafting, comparing, organizing, or transforming information?
- Is the output easy for a human to review?

Friction is where opportunity starts.

AI is especially useful when the work includes:

- messy notes,
- repetitive structure,
- first drafts,
- summarization,
- comparison,
- research organization,
- classification,
- content repurposing,
- checklist creation,
- process documentation,
- or decision support.

AI is less useful when the work is:

- highly sensitive,
- legally or financially decisive,
- emotionally delicate,
- impossible to verify,
- based on bad data,
- or still undefined.

Step 3: Score AI fit

Score each task from 1 to 5.

Score area	Question	1 means	5 means
Repetition	How often does this happen?	Rare	Constant
Time cost	How much time does it take?	Minimal	Major bottleneck
Reviewability	Can a human quickly check the output?	Hard to check	Easy to check
Data readiness	Are the inputs available and usable?	Messy or inaccessible	Clear and available
Risk	How bad is a mistake?	High risk	Low risk
Value	Does improvement matter?	Little value	Clear value

Important: for the risk score, **5 means low risk** and **1 means high risk**.

A good first AI opportunity usually scores high on repetition, time cost, reviewability, data readiness, and value, while also being low risk.

The quick scoring formula

Use this:

Opportunity Score =
Repetition + Time Cost + Reviewability + Data Readiness + Risk + Value

Maximum score: 30.

Simple interpretation:

Score	Meaning
24-30	Strong candidate
18-23	Worth testing
12-17	Needs redesign or more clarity
Under 12	Skip for now

Do not let the score make the decision alone.

Use the score to start the conversation.

Step 4: Sort the opportunities

Put each opportunity into one of four groups.

Quick win

High value, easy to implement, easy to review, low risk.

Start here.

Examples:

- Meeting notes to action items.
- Internal email drafts.
- Research summaries.
- SOP drafts.
- Content repurposing.
- Sales call prep.
- Proposal outlines.

Strategic bet

High value, but harder to implement.

Plan this, but do not start here unless you have the time, data, and review layer.

Examples:

- Customer support routing.
- Agent-assisted research pipeline.
- AI-assisted proposal system.
- Internal knowledge base.
- Automated reporting.
- Multi-step sales workflow.

Fill-in

Easy to implement, but low value.

Use these for practice, but do not pretend they are transformation.

Examples:

- Rewriting casual notes.
- Brainstorming names.
- Formatting simple lists.
- Summarizing short text you already understand.

Avoid for now

Low clarity, high risk, hard to review, or poor data.

Do not start here.

Examples:

- Legal conclusions.
- Medical advice.
- Final hiring decisions.
- Unreviewed financial forecasts.
- Sensitive customer data automation.
- Anything where nobody owns the result.

Step 5: Choose the first pilot

Your first AI pilot should be boring.

That is a good thing.

Pick something:

- repeated weekly,
- annoying enough to matter,
- easy to review,
- low enough risk,
- connected to real work,
- and measurable.

Good first pilots:

- Turn meeting notes into action items.
- Turn sales notes into follow-up drafts.
- Turn research links into a short brief.
- Turn rough ideas into content outlines.
- Turn recurring tasks into SOPs.
- Turn customer questions into reviewed response drafts.

Bad first pilots:

- Letting AI send messages without review.
- Letting AI make decisions with customer impact.
- Using AI on sensitive data before tool approval.
- Automating a workflow nobody has documented.
- Starting with agents before you have a manual workflow.

The audit worksheet

Use this table.

Task	Friction	Repetition	Time	Review	Data	Risk	Value	Score	Category
Meeting notes	Slow to turn into action	5	4	5	5	5	4	28	Quick win
Legal contract review	High stakes	3	5	2	3	1	5	19	Avoid for now
Content repurposing	Ideas stuck in long form	4	4	5	4	5	4	26	Quick win
Customer reply drafts	Slow response time	5	4	4	3	3	5	24	Quick win with review

You can use this for personal work, a small business, a team, or a department.

The point is not perfect scoring.

The point is structured thinking.

What to avoid

Do not choose AI because it looks impressive

Some AI demos look amazing but do not solve a real bottleneck.

If the workflow is not painful, repeated, valuable, or measurable, skip it.

Do not automate a broken process

If the process is unclear manually, AI will usually make the confusion faster.

Document the workflow first.

Do not ignore the review layer

Do not start with sensitive data

Start with work that does not require private, confidential, regulated, or proprietary data.

Sensitive workflows can come later with approved tools, access rules, and stronger governance.

Do not use “time saved” as the only metric

Time saved matters, but not every good AI use case is about speed.

Some use cases improve:

- quality,
- consistency,
- customer experience,
- decision clarity,
- knowledge reuse,
- or revenue capacity.

The opportunity types by role

Founder or business owner

Look for:

- repeated decisions,
- slow follow-up,
- scattered research,
- inconsistent proposals,
- undocumented processes,
- customer response delays,
- content bottlenecks,
- and admin work that steals focus.

Best early opportunities:

- decision briefs,
- meeting summaries,
- follow-up drafts,
- proposal outlines,
- SOP creation,
- lead research,
- content repurposing.

Creator or marketer

Look for:

- ideas stuck in notes,
- long videos not repurposed,
- inconsistent posting,
- weak hooks,
- slow research,
- and content that needs multiple formats.

Best early opportunities:

- content outlines,
- short-form scripts,
- title ideas,
- thumbnail prompts,
- newsletter repurposing,
- audience research summaries.

Sales or customer service

Look for:

- slow response times,
- repeated objections,
- messy call notes,
- inconsistent follow-up,
- repetitive support questions,
- and missing context before calls.

Best early opportunities:

- call prep,
- follow-up drafts,
- objection libraries,
- response drafts,
- CRM note cleanup,
- customer issue summaries.

Operations or admin

Look for:

- repeated handoffs,
- unclear processes,
- manual summaries,
- status update work,
- scheduling friction,
- and tasks that depend on one person remembering how things work.

Best early opportunities:

- SOP drafts,
- checklist creation,
- project updates,
- handoff summaries,
- intake sorting,
- recurring report drafts.

Everyday person

Look for:

- planning friction,
- confusing information,
- personal admin,
- messy notes,
- learning goals,
- and decisions that need better comparison.

Best early opportunities:

- weekly planning,
- document summaries,
- purchase comparisons,
- learning plans,
- message drafts,
- personal checklists.

The risk filter

Before selecting a use case, ask these questions.

If the answer is yes, slow down.

- Does this use private or sensitive data?
- Could a wrong answer hurt a customer, employee, patient, user, or family member?
- Could this create legal, financial, HR, medical, or compliance exposure?
- Would it be hard to verify the output?
- Would the user assume the AI answer is authoritative?
- Could this damage trust if it goes wrong?
- Is there no clear owner for the final result?
- Is the data messy, incomplete, or unreliable?

High-risk does not always mean “never.”

It means:

- stronger review,
- approved tools,
- clearer ownership,
- better data,
- and slower rollout.

The first-pilot checklist

Before starting your first AI pilot, make sure you can answer:

- What workflow are we improving?
- Why does this workflow matter?
- Who owns the result?
- What input does AI need?
- What tool will be used?
- What data is off-limits?
- What does AI produce?
- Who reviews the output?
- What metric proves it worked?
- What would cause us to stop or redesign it?

If you cannot answer those questions, you are not ready to pilot.

You are still exploring.

Pick one metric

Every opportunity needs one main metric.

Use the simplest metric that proves value.

Goal	Metric
Save time	Minutes saved per use
Improve speed	Turnaround time
Improve quality	Error rate or revision rate
Improve consistency	Checklist pass rate
Improve customer experience	Response time or satisfaction
Improve content output	Assets created per idea
Improve sales	Follow-ups sent or meetings booked
Improve knowledge reuse	Workflows saved or reused

Do not over-measure the first pilot.

One good metric is better than ten ignored ones.

The 7-day audit sprint

Use this if you want to move fast.

Day 1: List 20 tasks

Write down recurring tasks across communication, research, sales, operations, content, admin, and personal productivity.

Deliverable:

- 20-task list.

Day 2: Mark friction

For each task, note what makes it painful:

- slow,
- repetitive,
- inconsistent,
- manual,
- hard to remember,
- hard to hand off,
- or hard to organize.

Deliverable:

- friction notes for each task.

Day 3: Score AI fit

Score each task on repetition, time cost, reviewability, data readiness, risk, and value.

Deliverable:

- ranked opportunity list.

Day 4: Sort into categories

Sort each task into:

- quick win,
- strategic bet,
- fill-in,
- avoid for now.

Deliverable:

- opportunity map.

Day 5: Choose one pilot

Pick the best quick win.

Deliverable:

- one pilot use case.

Day 6: Define review and metric

Write the human review checklist and one success metric.

Deliverable:

- pilot checklist.

Day 7: Turn it into a workflow card

Capture:

- trigger,
- inputs,
- prompt,
- output,
- review,
- metric,
- owner,
- status.

Deliverable:

- first AI opportunity workflow card.

Copy-paste prompt: run my AI opportunity audit

Act as an AI workflow strategist.

Task:

Help me run an AI opportunity audit.

Context:

My role/business is [describe].

The recurring tasks I do are [list tasks].

My biggest bottlenecks are [describe].

The tools I currently use are [tools].

The risks I need to avoid are [privacy, customer data, legal, financial, accuracy, brand, etc.].

Expectations:

Start with the work, not tools.

Score each task for repetition, time cost, reviewability, data readiness, risk, and value.

Be conservative about high-risk use cases.

Output:

Return a table with each task, score, category, recommended AI role, review requirement, and next step.

Copy-paste prompt: choose my first AI pilot

Act as an AI implementation advisor.

Task:

Choose the best first AI pilot from these opportunities.

Opportunities:

[paste scored opportunity list]

Context:

I want something useful, low-risk, easy to review, and measurable within 7-14 days.

Expectations:

Do not pick the flashiest idea.

Pick the best practical first pilot.

Explain why the other options should wait.

Output:

Return:

1. Recommended first pilot
2. Why it is the best starting point
3. What AI should do
4. What the human reviews
5. One success metric
6. First workflow card

Copy-paste prompt: turn an opportunity into a workflow

Act as an AI workflow designer.

Task:

Turn this AI opportunity into a reusable workflow card.

Opportunity:

[describe opportunity]

Context:

Current process: [describe]

Desired improvement: [describe]

Inputs available: [list]

Risks: [list]

Expectations:

Keep the workflow simple.

Include human review.

Avoid automation unless the workflow is stable and low-risk.

Output:

Return:

1. Workflow name
2. Trigger
3. Required inputs
4. AI role
5. Prompt or steps
6. Output format
7. Human review checklist
8. Success metric
9. Status: testing, active, or later

Final checklist before you build

Before you buy a tool, create an automation, hire help, or ask AI to run part of your work, make sure the opportunity passes this final check.

- I can describe the current workflow in plain English.
- I know where the workflow starts and ends.
- I know what input AI needs.
- I know what output AI should produce.
- I can review the output without guessing.
- The work is repetitive enough to justify a system.
- The first version can be tested manually.
- The risk is low enough for an early pilot.
- The success metric is clear.
- The workflow has an owner.

Sources behind this guide

This guide was built from research showing that AI value comes from workflow redesign, measurable use cases, human validation, risk-based governance, trusted data, and practical pilots rather than tool-first experimentation ([McKinsey](#), [Microsoft WorkLab](#), [NIST AI RMF 1.0](#), [Keystone Technology Consultants](#), [World Economic Forum](#), [Alice Labs](#)).