


# AI Starter Kit

## for Australian small businesses

01

One complete exercise. Five application summaries. A four-week plan. Start with one task and check every answer.

FREE RESOURCE / 2026

TECHMEDIA AI LEARNING SERIES

01

# Welcome

## Who this is for

This guide is for Australian sole traders, small-business owners and office administrators who have little or no experience with AI. It assumes a business of roughly 1 to 20 people, and it assumes you have never written a prompt.

The aim is modest and useful: help you choose an assistant, write a prompt that supplies the facts, complete one real exercise, and decide whether AI is worth using in your business.

## What you will be able to do

By the end of this guide you can:

- choose and set up a free AI assistant;
- write a prompt with a task, context, facts, rules and an output format;
- draft a professional customer email without inventing a price or a promise;
- recognise the five business tasks where AI is most useful;
- run a privacy and accuracy check before anything reaches a customer;
- assess one of your own tasks and run a four-week trial.

## What you need

- A computer or tablet and an internet connection.
- A free account with one AI assistant. Section 2 lists six options.
- About 25 minutes to read, complete and review the full exercise. The practical prompt activity takes about 10 minutes.
- Your real fees, availability and policies if you adapt the exercise to your business.
- No coding and no paid subscription.

## How to use this guide

Read Sections 2 and 3, then do the exercise in Section 5. It is self-contained and produces a draft you can check.

Section 6 introduces the other four tasks covered in the companion workbook. Sections 7 to 9 help you check the output, choose a task and run a trial. Section 10 sets out what to do next.

### Important limits

This is educational material. It is not legal, financial, tax or professional advice.

AI tools can be wrong, confidently and in detail. They can invent a price, a date, a policy, a person or a decision. Every output that affects a customer, a payment, a record or a legal obligation needs a person to check it.

Privacy, consumer and recordkeeping law applies to your business, not to the AI service. Using a tool does not transfer responsibility to the tool or to TechMedia.

No AI provider mentioned here has endorsed TechMedia. The links are provided so you can find the services.

02

# Choose an AI assistant

ONE METHOD, SIX SERVICES

- ChatGPT
- Claude
- Gemini
- DeepSeek
- GLM by Z.ai
- Kimi

Every exercise needs one thing: a free account with an AI chat assistant. You do not need all six, a paid plan or any software installation.

| Assistant | Official site | Access |
|---|---|---|
| **ChatGPT** | https://chatgpt.com | Free account. Paid plans optional. |
| **Claude** | https://claude.ai | Free account. Paid plans optional. |
| **Gemini** | https://gemini.google.com | Free with a Google account. Paid plans optional. |
| **DeepSeek** | https://chat.deepseek.com | Free account. |
| **GLM by Z.ai** | https://chat.z.ai | Free account. Paid plans optional. |
| **Kimi** | https://kimi.com | Free account. |

Each service offered a free tier at the time of writing. Free tiers change: a service may limit messages, shorten conversations, change model names or add a queue without notice. If you reach a limit, wait, start a new chat or use another assistant.

**Suggested starting option: ChatGPT.** It has a free tier, a plain interface and an easy-to-find new-chat button. It is a suggestion, not a requirement. The prompts and checks are the same on any assistant.

Paid plans add higher limits, newer models or extra features. None of that is needed for this guide. Do not buy a subscription to complete it.

# 03
# First-time setup and privacy

## 3.1 Create or access an account

1. Open the official site from the table.
2. Select "Sign up" or "Log in".
3. Use an email address, or sign in with Google, Apple or Microsoft if offered. Use a business address you control.
4. Complete any verification step, such as a code sent to your email or phone.
5. Decline any trial or upgrade that asks for payment details.
6. Check the privacy settings. Turn off training on your chats if the option exists and you may paste business material.

Some services require a phone number, and some are not available in every country. If one will not let you sign up, use another. The exercises do not depend on a provider.

If you are signing up for the business, use an account the business controls, not a personal account that leaves with an employee.

## 3.2 Start a conversation and paste a prompt

1. Sign in and select "New chat".
2. Copy the whole prompt block, from the first line to the last.
3. Paste it into the message box. On Windows, Ctrl+V. On a Mac, Command+V.
4. Send the message.
5. Read the response once without editing it.
6. Send follow-ups in the same chat.

7. Copy the useful text into your own email program or document. The chat is not your record.

### 3.3 Before you paste

- Use the fictional examples in this guide, or remove names, phone numbers, addresses, Medicare numbers, clinical details and financial information.
- Free tiers may use your messages to improve their services. Check the settings first.
- A chat window is not a secure records system.
- Do not paste a document you do not have the right to share.
- If in doubt, replace the detail with a placeholder.

### 3.4 Why responses vary

An assistant generates text by predicting what is likely to follow your prompt. A different model, version, setting or wording can change the answer, and the same prompt can produce a different response on another day.

That is not a fault to fix. It is why every output is a draft and why the example in Section 5 is a demonstration, not a target.

# 04

# Five elements of an effective prompt




A useful business prompt has five parts.

01 **Task.** Say what you want produced. "Write a reply" is a task. "Help me with this" is not.

02 **Context.** Say who you are, who the reader is and what the situation is.

03 **Supplied facts.** Give the facts the assistant may use: names, services, hours, prices, policies, dates.

04 **Rules and limitations.** Say what it must not do: "do not state a fee", "do not promise a time", "use Australian English", "under 150 words".

05 **Required output.** Say what the answer should look like: a subject and body, a table with named columns, three bullets.

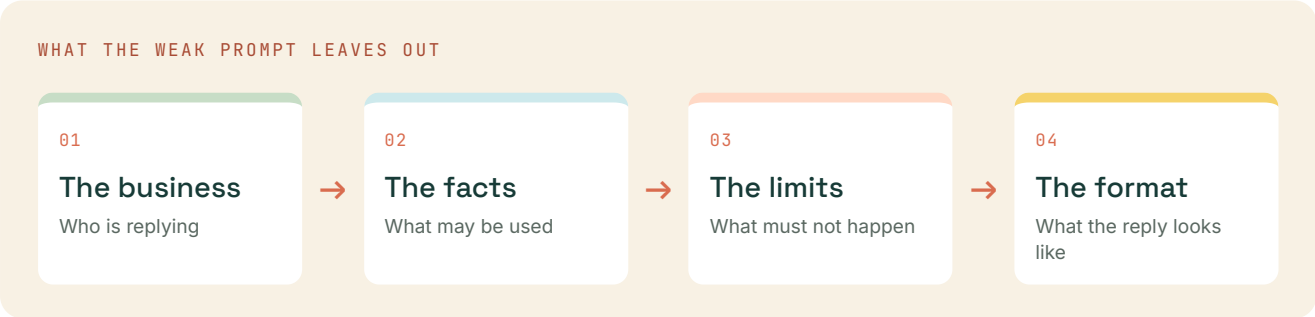
## 4.1 Weak prompt versus improved prompt

### Weak

WEAK PROMPT

```
Write a reply to this review.
```

The assistant does not know the business, the facts or the limits. It may invent a discount, admit liability or promise a free coffee.



### Improved

IMPROVED PROMPT

```
You are drafting a public reply for a small Australian cafe. Use only the
facts below. Do not admit fault, offer compensation, name a staff member or
invent a policy.

FACTS
Business: Paperbark Cafe, Bendigo.
The customer waited about 20 minutes for coffee on Saturday and says the
table was sticky.
We have two staff on Saturday mornings. We do not offer table service.
Owner: Maree.
Phone: (03) 5550 0199. Open Tuesday to Saturday.
Process: the owner reads every review and replies in writing.

REVIEW
"Waited 20 minutes for two coffees on Saturday and the table was sticky. Not
good enough."

TASK
Write a reply under 90 words that:
1. thanks the customer for the specific feedback;
2. acknowledges the wait and the table without admitting a health breach;
3. says the owner will reply in writing;
4. invites the customer to phone the cafe during business hours.

Use Australian English, calm and plain. Do not offer a refund, a discount or
a free item.

OUTPUT
Reply: ...
Check before posting: three things the owner must confirm.
```

The second prompt is longer, but every line does a job. It supplies the facts, including the follow-up process, and removes the temptation to invent a remedy.

## 4.2 Editable placeholders

Put fields in square brackets so they are easy to find:

EDITABLE TEMPLATE

```
Business: [BUSINESS NAME]
Customer's question: [PASTE THE MESSAGE]
What we can confirm: [FACT]
What we cannot confirm: "A staff member will confirm this."
```

Replace every bracket before sending.

### 4.3 Follow-up corrections

You do not need to rewrite the prompt to fix a draft. Send a short correction in the same chat:

- "Keep every fact identical. Shorten it to under 80 words."
- "Remove the sentence about the fee. Do not replace it with another number."
- "You invented a delivery date. Remove it and say we will confirm."

### 4.4 A warning about gaps

The most dangerous prompt has a missing fact and no instruction for what to do when a fact is missing. The assistant will usually fill the gap with something plausible.

If a price is unknown, say "Do not state a fee." If a date is unknown, say "Do not state a date." That is the difference between a draft that can be checked and one that has to be untaught.

05

# Complete beginner exercise: reply to a customer email

The practical prompt activity takes about 10 minutes. Allow about 25 minutes to read, complete and review the full exercise, including the check. The exercise produces a reply you can check and send, and it teaches the pattern used in every other task in this guide.

The full instructions follow. The example response was produced by an AI assistant and is a demonstration, not the answer you must reproduce.

## 5.1 The exercise: writing a professional reply to a customer email

01 **Exercise title.** Writing a professional reply to a customer email.

02 **Business problem.** A customer has sent a short enquiry that mixes a booking request with questions about referrals, fees and after-hours appointments. A busy owner or administrator needs to reply quickly and professionally without stating a price or a time they have not confirmed. Rushed replies either promise something the business cannot deliver or leave the customer without an answer.

03 **Intended learning outcome.** By the end of this exercise you can write a short, factual reply that answers what is known, states plainly what will be confirmed later, asks for the details needed to book, and flags every fact a staff member must check before sending.

04 **Prerequisites.**

- A free account with one of the AI assistants listed in Section 2. No paid plan is needed.
- The practice's real fee list and appointment schedule, or access to the person who holds them.
- About 10 minutes for the practical prompt activity. Allow about 25 minutes for reading, completing and reviewing the full exercise.
- No coding, no software installation and no connection to your email account. You will copy the reply into your own email program and send it yourself.

**Before you paste anything:** do not put Medicare numbers, dates of birth, home addresses, clinical notes or other sensitive personal information into a free AI tool. This exercise needs none of it. If a real enquiry contains those details, remove them before you paste, or type only the general question.

05 **Fictional business scenario.** Saltbush Physiotherapy is a fictional private physiotherapy practice in Geelong, Victoria. It treats backs, knees, shoulders and sports injuries. Initial appointments run for 40 minutes. Private appointments do not require a GP referral. The practice has not supplied its fees or its after-hours availability to this exercise.

06 **Complete sample input.**

Business facts used in the prompt:

SUPPLIED FACTS

```
Business name: Saltbush Physiotherapy
Location: Geelong, Victoria
Services: private physiotherapy appointments for backs, knees, shoulders and
sports injuries
Appointment length: 40 minutes for an initial appointment
Referral: not required for a private appointment
Fees: not provided in this exercise. Do not state or estimate any fee.
Availability: not provided in this exercise. Do not state or promise any
appointment time.
Contact: phone (03) 5550 0142
```

Customer enquiry:

SUPPLIED FACTS

```
Hi, I've had a sore knee for about three weeks after running. I'd like to book
in but I'm not sure if I need a referral from my GP, and roughly what it
costs. Also do you have anything after work? Thanks, Danielle.
```

07 **Copy-ready prompt.** Replace the business facts and the customer enquiry with your own. Keep the rules and the output format unchanged.

COPY & PASTE PROMPT

```
You are drafting a reply for a small Australian business. Use only the facts
in the BUSINESS FACTS block. Do not add prices, fees, availability,
policies, timeframes, discounts or promises that are not stated there. Do
not promise to telephone, email or otherwise contact the customer later
unless the facts state that this will happen. If the customer asked
something the facts do not answer, say that the business will confirm it.
Write in Australian English, in a calm and professional tone.

BUSINESS FACTS
Business name: Saltbush Physiotherapy
Location: Geelong, Victoria
Services: private physiotherapy appointments for backs, knees, shoulders and
sports injuries
Appointment length: 40 minutes for an initial appointment
Referral: not required for a private appointment
Fees: not provided in this exercise. Do not state or estimate any fee.
Availability: not provided in this exercise. Do not state or promise any
appointment time.
Contact: phone (03) 5550 0142

CUSTOMER ENQUIRY
"Hi, I've had a sore knee for about three weeks after running. I'd like to
book in but I'm not sure if I need a referral from my GP, and roughly what
it costs. Also do you have anything after work? Thanks, Danielle."

TASK
Write a reply email that:
1. answers only what the facts allow
2. says how the practice will confirm the fee and after-work availability,
without inventing either
3. asks for any information the practice needs to book her in
4. is under 150 words and signed "Saltbush Physiotherapy"

OUTPUT FORMAT
Subject: ...
Body: ...
Confirm before sending: a short list of any detail in the draft that a staff
member must verify against the practice's real schedule and fee list.
```

The contact-promise rule was added after the first test. The response below comes from the updated prompt, tested on 8 November 2026.

## 08 Step-by-step instructions.

1. Open a new chat with your AI assistant.
2. Paste the entire prompt from section 7.
3. Read the draft once without editing. Check that it contains no fee, no appointment time and no promise.
4. Read the "Confirm before sending" list. This is the model telling you what it could not verify. Do not skip it.
5. Ring or check your own fee list and schedule for each item on that list. Fill in the real answers only if you are authorised to do so.
6. If the draft needs a different tone or length, use the follow-up prompt in section 12.
7. Copy the email into your own email program, add anything the customer needs that is specific to your practice, and send it yourself.
8. Record the date and the reply in your usual customer records.

## 09 Example AI response.

Example produced by DeepSeek on 8 November 2026. Your response will differ.

EXAMPLE RESPONSE

```
Subject: Enquiry about knee physiotherapy appointment

Body: Hi Danielle,

Thank you for your enquiry. Saltbush Physiotherapy offers private
physiotherapy appointments for knees. An initial appointment is 40 minutes,
and no referral is required for a private appointment.

We cannot confirm the fee or after-work availability in this reply. Please
phone the practice on (03) 5550 0142 so we can confirm these for you and help
with booking.

To book, please provide your full name, best contact number, and preferred
days or times.

Kind regards,
Saltbush Physiotherapy

Confirm before sending:
- The actual fee, when confirming it with Danielle
- Actual after-work availability against the real schedule
- Actual appointment availability for any preferred times discussed
```

10 **Explanation of the output.** The reply answers the one question the facts settle: no GP referral is needed for a private appointment. It states the 40 minute appointment length, which is a supplied fact. It does not name a fee or an after-hours time, because neither was supplied. Instead it asks the customer to phone the practice so both can be confirmed, and it asks for the three details needed to book. It does not promise that the practice will call the customer back. The final list separates what the customer was told from what a staff member must check. That separation is the point of the exercise: the AI drafts, the business verifies.

11 **Human review and verification checklist.**

- ☐ The referral statement matches the practice's current policy, including any rules for Medicare, workers compensation or third-party claims.
- ☐ No fee, range or estimate appears in the reply.
- ☐ No appointment time or day is promised.
- ☐ The appointment length matches the practice's actual booking rules.
- ☐ Every item under "Confirm before sending" has been checked against the real fee list and schedule.
- ☐ The tone suits the practice and the customer.
- ☐ No unnecessary personal or health information has been requested.
- ☐ The reply is sent from the practice's own email account, by a person.
- ☐ A record of what was promised has been kept.



12 **Follow-up or correction prompt.** Use this when the draft is accurate but reads too formal or too long. This version was tested on 8 November 2026 and passed. Replace the draft with your own.

COPY & PASTE PROMPT

```
You are revising an email draft for a small Australian business. Keep every
fact identical. Do not add fees, times, availability or promises.

DRAFT
Subject: Enquiry about knee physiotherapy appointment

Body: Hi Danielle,

Thank you for your enquiry. Saltbush Physiotherapy offers private
physiotherapy appointments for knees. An initial appointment is 40 minutes,
and no referral is required for a private appointment.

We cannot confirm the fee or after-work availability in this reply. Please
phone the practice on (03) 5550 0142 so we can confirm these for you and
help with booking.

To book, please provide your full name, best contact number, and preferred
days or times.

Kind regards,
Saltbush Physiotherapy

Confirm before sending:
- The actual fee, when confirming it with Danielle
- Actual after-work availability against the real schedule
- Actual appointment availability for any preferred times discussed

TASK
Revise the draft so it is warmer in tone and under 110 words. Keep the
referral answer, the 40 minute appointment length, the statement that the
fee and after-work availability will be confirmed when the customer phones,
and the request for booking details. Do not add any fact that is not in the
draft.

Return only the revised email, with a subject line and body.
```

Tested result: a 86 word reply that keeps every fact and softens the opening.

13 **Common errors and limitations.**

- If you delete the fees and availability lines from the facts block, the model will often fill the gap with a plausible price or time. The line that says "not provided in this exercise" is doing real work. Keep it.
- The model can change "not required" into "may be required" or add a Medicare caveat that is not your policy. Check the referral sentence word by word.
- The model cannot know your cancellation policy, your practitioners' names or your health fund arrangements. Anything it says about those is invented.
- A draft is not a compliance check. Using an AI tool does not make a reply compliant with privacy, consumer or health record rules. A person in the practice remains responsible.
- Sensitive information: the warning in Prerequisites applies at every step. Do not paste Medicare numbers, date of birth, address or clinical history into a free AI tool.

14 **Expected result.** A reply of about 80 to 120 words that answers the referral question, declines to invent a fee or a time, states how those will be confirmed, asks for booking details, and ends with a short list of facts for a staff member to verify. The customer receives a clear next step, and the practice has promised nothing it has not checked.

06

# Five practical AI applications

The exercise you have just completed is one of five patterns that cover most beginner work. Each pattern supplies facts, sets limits and produces a draft for a person to check.

| Application | What it produces | Main risk |
|---|---|---|
| **Customer email** | A factual reply to a routine question | Inventing a price, time or promise |
| **Incomplete quote enquiry** | A list of what is missing, plus a reply that does not quote | Guessing scope or availability |
| **Public review reply** | A calm reply that does not admit fault or offer an unapproved remedy | Disclosing private information or inventing a policy |
| **Seven-day content plan** | A week of drafts marked for review | Inventing offers, events or stock claims |
| **Meeting notes to actions** | A summary, action table and decisions list | Inventing owners, deadlines or decisions |

## 6.1 Customer email

Use it for routine questions you can answer from your own facts. Supply the services, the confirmable facts, the gaps and the contact method. Ask for a short reply and a list of things a person must check. The exercise in Section 5 is the full version.

## 6.2 Incomplete quote enquiry

Use it when a customer asks for a price but has not supplied enough detail. The assistant separates what was said from what is missing, writes the gaps as questions, and drafts a reply with no price and no promise of attendance. The value is in the missing-information list, not the prose.

## 6.3 Public review reply

Use it for a review that needs a public response. Supply only what you can confirm, say who will follow up and how, and forbid compensation or admissions that have not been approved. A review reply is a public record. It should be short, calm and checked by the owner.

### 6.4 Seven-day content plan

Use it to plan a week of posts from facts you already have. Supply the stock or services, the regular activities, the opening days and what the website actually does. Every item should be marked "Draft, needs owner review". Do not let the assistant invent a discount, an event or a claim about what is in stock or listed online.

### 6.5 Meeting notes to actions

Use it after a team meeting. Supply the notes with personal information removed. Ask for a summary, an action table, a decisions list and a list of missing information. The rule that matters: an owner is recorded only where the notes say that person is responsible, and a task is not a decision.

The companion workbook contains the full instructions, prompts, worked examples and review checklists for applications 2 to 5.

# 07

# Accuracy, privacy and review checklist

A PERSON STAYS IN THE LOOP

01 **Check** — Every fact against the source → 02 **Verify** — Names, prices, dates and limits → 03 **Approve** — A named person signs off → 04 **Save** — Keep the approved version

Run this before anything leaves the business. It is general guidance, not legal advice, and it does not replace advice about your own obligations.

- [ ] Every price, date, time, name and policy is checked against the real source.
- [ ] No fact has been invented to fill a gap.
- [ ] No unnecessary personal information is included.
- [ ] No confidential or sensitive information was pasted into a free tool.
- [ ] No third-party text or image is used without a licence.
- [ ] The tone suits the customer and the situation.
- [ ] A named person has approved the output.
- [ ] The approved version is saved in the business record.
- [ ] A way to correct the output exists if something is wrong.
- [ ] The decision remains with a person, not the tool.

## 7.1 Privacy in one paragraph

Personal information is information about an identifiable person. Remove names, contact details, dates of birth, account numbers and health information before pasting a real example. Replace them with placeholders. A free chat service is a third party: pasting personal information is a disclosure to that service, even if you delete the chat later.

Do not paste a client's document unless you have the right to share it. Do not paste identity documents, bank details or employee records into a consumer chat tool. If a task genuinely needs sensitive information, use a business-grade service with appropriate terms and get advice first.

## 7.2 The Australian context

The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles apply to many businesses. Many small businesses with an annual turnover of $3 million or less are outside the Act, but not all: health service providers and some other small businesses are covered regardless of turnover. Check the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (oaic.gov.au) or get advice about your situation.

The Australian Consumer Law prohibits misleading or deceptive conduct, including false claims about results, testimonials and prices. The ACCC (accc.gov.au) publishes guidance. An AI-generated claim is still your claim.

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# 08

# Business AI opportunity self-assessment

FIND A TASK WORTH TESTING

01
**Notice**
Repetitive and low risk

→

02
**Check**
Easy for a person to verify

→

03
**Choose**
One task for a two-week trial

Choose up to three repetitive tasks and assess them before you try AI. The aim is to find one task that is repetitive, low risk and easy to check.

| Field | Task 1 | Task 2 | Task 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Task description | | | |
| How often it happens | | | |
| Time per run | | | |
| Current problems or errors | | | |
| Information required | | | |
| Privacy or accuracy risks | | | |
| Human approval required | | | |
| Suits an AI chat (yes, no, partly) | | | |
| May suit automation later | | | |
| Next action and review date | | | |

## 8.1 A worked example

A fictional landscape business sends about 30 invoices a month. The owner writes each covering email, which takes about 15 minutes and sometimes contains the wrong job address.

| Field | Example |
|---|---|
| **Task** | Write the covering email for a monthly invoice |
| **Frequency** | About 30 times a month |
| **Time per run** | 15 minutes |
| **Problems** | Wrong address copied from the previous email; amount typed by hand |
| **Information required** | Customer name, address, invoice number, amount, due date |
| **Privacy or accuracy risks** | Customer details and amount. Bank details must not be pasted |
| **Human approval** | Yes. The owner checks every amount and address |
| **Suits a chat** | Partly. Draft the wording from a facts block; keep bank details out |
| **Automation later** | Possible if the accounting system can fill the facts and a person still approves |
| **Next action** | Test five emails with amounts removed, then compare |

## 8.2 Chat task or integration?

An **AI chat task** is done in a conversation: paste facts, get a draft, check it, copy it into your own system. The assistant has no access to your accounts or records. This is where to start.

An **integrated workflow** connects the AI to accounting, booking, CRM or email. It can read a record, fill a template or send a message. It needs permissions, error handling, logging and an accountable owner. It is a software project, not a prompt.

A simple test: if the task can be done by copying text into a chat and copying the answer back, it is a chat task. If it needs the assistant to look something up, change a record, send something or run on a schedule, it is an integration project.

09

# Four-week getting-started plan

FOUR WEEKS, ONE HABIT

01 **Week 1** — Pick one safe task → 02 **Week 2** — Run the exercise → 03 **Week 3** — Review the errors → 04 **Week 4** — Decide whether to keep it

Pick one low-risk task. Do not run five at once.

| Week | Objective | Main activities | Output | Checkpoint |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Learn and experiment safely | Set up an account, do the Section 5 exercise, rewrite one piece of your own text with names and figures removed | One exercise and one rewrite | Can you explain where the assistant is likely to be wrong? |
| 2 | Apply AI to one task | Choose a task from Section 8, build a facts block, run it five times with sensitive details removed | Five drafts and a list of recurring errors | Can a person fix the output faster than doing the task from scratch? |
| 3 | Document a repeatable process | Write the prompt, facts template, review steps and owner into one page; test it with another person | A one-page procedure | Could a new staff member follow it without asking what you meant? |
| 4 | Evaluate and decide | Compare time and errors before and after, ask the person doing the task, decide keep, adjust or stop | A one-page decision note | Is the decision based on observed results, not enthusiasm? |

## 9.1 A stop rule

Stop and reconsider if:

- the assistant repeatedly invents facts that the review does not catch;
- the review takes longer than doing the task;
- the task needs sensitive information that cannot be removed;
- nobody owns the process;
- the output is being sent to customers without a consistent check.

Stopping is cheaper than repairing a customer relationship.

# 10 Next steps and TechMedia

You now have a working pattern: supply the facts, set the limits, check the output and keep a person accountable.

## 10.1 Continue on your own

- Complete the exercise with your own facts.
- Run one task for two weeks with the checklist in Section 7.
- Keep the prompt and the facts block in a document you can find again.
- Review the decision at the end of the month.

## 10.2 If you want help

TechMedia can help you take the next step.

If you would like practical assistance applying AI to your business, we can discuss your requirements, assess opportunities through an AI Workflow Audit, or develop a custom AI solution for a defined business task.

Services, scope and pricing are confirmed following an assessment of your requirements.

Visit techmediamobile.com.au to enquire.

## 10.3 A final note

AI is useful for drafting, summarising, rewriting, comparing and checking. It is not a substitute for knowing your business, your customers or your obligations.

Keep the review. It is the part that makes the rest safe to use.

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