

The Multi-Source Brief

“ **One-liner:** Synthesize outputs from three separate AI queries into a single coherent analysis — building the skill of triangulating AI perspectives.

? Jump in (Tinkerers start here)

Pick a question or topic you need to actually understand — a market trend, a technology choice, a strategic decision, a complex issue in your field.

Run three separate queries in three different AI sessions (or clear context between each). Each query approaches the same topic from a different angle:

Query 1 — The Optimist:

“ Analyze **[your topic]** from the most optimistic perspective. What's the strongest case that this will succeed/matter/grow? Cite specific evidence, trends, and examples. Be persuasive, not balanced.

Query 2 — The Skeptic:

“ Analyze **[your topic]** from a skeptical perspective. What's the strongest case that this is overhyped, risky, or likely to fail? Cite specific evidence, counterexamples, and historical parallels where similar things didn't pan out. Be rigorous, not cynical.

Query 3 — The Analyst:

“ Analyze **[your topic]** by identifying the 3-5 key variables that will determine the outcome. Don't argue for or against — map the decision space. For each variable, describe what would need to be true for a positive outcome vs. a negative one. Include what we don't yet know.

Now synthesize. Open a fresh document (not an AI chat). Write a 250-word brief that answers:

1. **What do all three perspectives agree on?** (This is likely true.)
2. **Where do the Optimist and Skeptic directly contradict each other?** (This is where the real uncertainty lives.)
3. **Which of the Analyst's key variables would resolve the contradiction?** (This is what you need to investigate.)
4. **Your take** — Given all three inputs, what's your position and what would change your mind?

The brief should be something you'd share with a colleague or decision-maker. No AI jargon, no meta-commentary about the process.

? Plan first (Planners start here)

Here's what you're about to do:

1. **Choose a topic** — Pick something with genuine uncertainty. If the answer is obvious, the exercise won't stretch you. Good candidates: emerging trends, strategic choices, technology bets, or contested ideas in your field.
2. **Run three separate AI sessions** — Optimist, Skeptic, and Analyst. Use fresh contexts (new chats or cleared conversations) so each query isn't influenced by the others.
3. **Read all three outputs** — Don't start synthesizing until you've read all three. Notice your own bias — which perspective did you instinctively agree with?
4. **Write the synthesis yourself** — This is the critical step. Don't ask AI to synthesize for you. The skill you're building is *your* ability to integrate contradictory information.
5. **Distill to 250 words** — Force compression. A good brief is one where every sentence earns its place.

"Done" looks like: A 250-word brief you'd be comfortable sharing with a colleague, built from three distinct AI perspectives, with a clear statement of what you believe and what would change your mind.

? Why this matters (Strategists start here)

In [IS-Basic-01](#), you extracted insights from a single AI output. Here, you're building a fundamentally harder skill: **triangulating across multiple AI perspectives to form your own judgment**. This is exactly what senior decision-makers do with human advisors — they don't take any single

perspective at face value. The discipline of writing the synthesis yourself (rather than asking AI to do it) ensures you're developing the judgment, not outsourcing it. This skill directly applies to research, due diligence, competitive analysis, and any situation where multiple data sources tell different stories.

Reflection

- Which perspective (Optimist, Skeptic, Analyst) was most useful? Which felt like filler?
- Did writing the synthesis yourself change your view compared to where you started? At what point in the writing did it shift?
- Would you share this brief with a decision-maker? If not, what's missing?
- ☐ *Share your 250-word brief with someone who knows the topic. Ask them what they'd challenge — their pushback will tell you where your synthesis was weakest.* (Social Learners)

?? Level up

Ready for more? Try [IS-Advanced-01](#) — where you'll build a full research synthesis pipeline with structured evidence evaluation.

Back to [Insight Synthesis](#)

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