

Learning Pathways

Pathways are guided routes through the playbook. Each one is designed for a specific profile — a combination of strengths and growth areas. Find the one that fits you best.

Available Pathways

- [\[Starting from Scratch\]\(/pathways/new-to-ai/\)](/pathways/new-to-ai/) — New to AI? Start here. A gentle, step-by-step introduction.
- [\[Strong Communicator, Building Technical Confidence\]\(/pathways/strong-communicator-low-technical/\)](/pathways/strong-communicator-low-technical/) — Great with words and people, ready to build technical AI skills.
- [\[High Synthesis, Low Agent Collaboration\]\(/pathways/high-synthesis-low-agent/\)](/pathways/high-synthesis-low-agent/) — Strong at insight extraction, new to agent-based work.
- [\[High Automation, Low Ethics\]\(/pathways/high-automation-low-ethics/\)](/pathways/high-automation-low-ethics/) — Comfortable with automation, needs verification habits.

Don't See Your Profile?

Start with the pillar where you scored lowest — that's where you'll get the most growth for the least effort. If you haven't taken the quiz, try the [\[AI Skills Quiz\]\(https://aiskillsquiz.com\)](https://aiskillsquiz.com) to discover your profile.

You can al

- [Pathway: High Automation, Low Ethics](#)
- [Pathway: High Synthesis, Low Agent Collaboration](#)
- [Pathway: Starting from Scratch](#)
- [Pathway: Strong Communicator, Building Technical Confidence](#)

Pathway: High Automation, Low Ethics

Your Profile

You're comfortable building AI-assisted workflows but may be moving fast without checking outputs carefully. This pathway helps you build verification habits into your existing automation skills.

Recommended Sequence

1. Start with [EP-Basic-01](#) — Establish a baseline for checking AI output
2. Then [EP-Intermediate-01](#) — Build verification into your workflows
3. Then [WA-Intermediate-01](#) — Level up automation with ethics baked in
4. Stretch: [EP-Advanced-01](#) — Design an accountability system

Common Pitfalls

- **Seeing verification as a speed bump.** Your automation instinct treats every additional step as overhead. But verification isn't overhead — it's quality assurance. The goal is to make verification *efficient*, not to eliminate it.
- **Building trust in AI consistency.** Because your workflows run smoothly most of the time, you develop false confidence that AI output is reliable. AI fails unpredictably — the 99 correct outputs make the 1 confidently wrong output much more dangerous.
- **Confusing "I automate ethically" with "I have ethical habits."** You may believe your intentions are good (and they probably are), but good intentions without systematic checks produce the same result as no intentions at all. The question isn't whether you care about accuracy — it's whether your processes guarantee it.
- **Resisting the checklist.** If you're the type who builds systems, using someone else's checklist feels awkward. But [EP-Intermediate-01](#) asks you to build *your own* — customized to your work, tested against real outputs, and integrated into your existing workflows.

What Leveling Up Looks Like

- Every AI workflow you build includes an explicit quality gate — a point where output is checked before it moves forward
- You can classify your AI-assisted tasks by risk level and apply appropriate verification standards (not everything gets the same scrutiny — but nothing gets zero scrutiny)
- You catch AI errors *before* they reach stakeholders, not after
- You've built a personal verification checklist and it's become habit — you use it without thinking about it
- When you design a new automation, your default question is "where should the human check go?" rather than "how do I eliminate all human steps?"

Pathway: High Synthesis, Low Agent Collaboration

Your Profile

You're strong at extracting meaning from AI output but haven't explored working with AI agents or multi-agent systems. This is the most common profile in the community.

Recommended Sequence

1. Start with [AC-Basic-01](#) — Get your feet wet with agent-based thinking
2. Then [AC-Intermediate-01](#) — Apply your synthesis skills to multi-agent output
3. Then [IS-Intermediate-01](#) — Level up your strongest pillar
4. Stretch: [AC-Advanced-01](#) — Design an agent workflow

Common Pitfalls

- **Treating agent collaboration as "just multi-prompting."** You're good at getting insights from AI, so you may assume agent collaboration is just more of the same. It's not — it's about designing roles, managing handoffs, and building systems. The mental shift from "getting answers" to "orchestrating agents" is the hard part.
- **Over-synthesizing, under-building.** Your strength in synthesis can keep you in analysis mode — reading, comparing, evaluating — without moving to building actual workflows. At some point, you need to design and run a multi-agent process, not just think about it.
- **Skipping the basic agent exercise.** If you score high on Insight Synthesis, you may feel that [AC-Basic-01](#) is beneath you. It's not. The exercise introduces a mental model (role-based AI interaction) that's fundamentally different from single-query synthesis work. Don't skip the foundation.
- **Applying old patterns to new territory.** You may try to use your synthesis skills (asking AI good questions, evaluating output quality) as a substitute for agent collaboration skills (defining roles, managing context boundaries, designing handoffs). Both matter, but they're different muscles.

What Leveling Up Looks Like

- You can split a complex task across multiple AI sessions with different roles and produce output that no single session could have generated
- You design agent workflows before running them — mapping roles, inputs, outputs, and handoffs on paper first
- You naturally think about context boundaries: what each AI session should and shouldn't know
- You combine your synthesis skills with agent collaboration: using your ability to evaluate and integrate output as the orchestration layer between specialized AI agents
- When facing a complex problem, your instinct shifts from "let me ask AI about this" to "let me design a multi-perspective approach"

Pathway: Starting from Scratch

Your Profile

You're new to AI — or at least new to using it intentionally. Maybe you've played around with ChatGPT or Claude a few times, but you don't yet have a clear sense of what AI is good at, where it falls short, or how to make it genuinely useful in your work.

That's a perfectly good place to start. In fact, it's a great one — you don't have any bad habits to unlearn.

Recommended Sequence

1. Start with [The Fact-Check Habit](#) — This is the single most important skill in AI fluency: learning to verify what AI tells you. It's quick, eye-opening, and you'll use it every time you work with AI from now on.
2. Then [The Signal in the Noise](#) — Learn to pull useful information out of verbose AI responses. This makes every future AI interaction more productive.
3. Then [The Reusable Prompt](#) — Turn something you do regularly into a prompt template. This is where AI starts saving you real time.
4. Then branch out: [The Stolen Technique](#) — Try borrowing a technique from a different field. This exercise expands how you think about AI's possibilities.
5. Stretch: [Your First AI Team Meeting](#) — Once you're comfortable with the basics, try working with AI in multiple roles. This is a glimpse of where AI is heading.

Common Pitfalls

- **Trying to learn everything at once.** There's a lot of AI content out there and it can feel like you need to absorb all of it. You don't. One exercise per week is enough. Depth beats breadth, especially at the beginning.
- **Comparing yourself to power users.** People who've been using AI tools for years had their own slow start. Your pace is fine. The fact that you're being intentional about learning puts you ahead of most people who just use AI casually.
- **Dismissing AI too quickly when it gives a bad answer.** Early on, you might conclude "AI isn't useful" after a disappointing response. Before you give up, try rephrasing your prompt or giving AI more context. The difference between a bad prompt and a good one is

often just a few extra sentences.

- **Skipping the reflection.** It's tempting to rush through the exercises and move on. But the moment you pause to ask "what did I actually learn here?" is where the real skill development happens.

What Leveling Up Looks Like

- You can explain to someone else what AI is good at and where it tends to fail
- You have a personal habit of verifying AI output before trusting it
- You've built at least one prompt template that you actually reuse in your work
- You feel confident enough to try an Intermediate exercise
- When someone asks "can AI do X?", you can give a thoughtful, nuanced answer instead of a yes or no

Pathway: Strong Communicator, Building Technical Confidence

Your Profile

You're great with words, people, and ideas. You might be a writer, a manager, a consultant, a teacher, or someone who regularly translates complex things into clear language. Your Ethical Prompting and Insight Synthesis scores are likely your strongest pillars.

But when it comes to the more "technical" side of AI — building workflows, designing processes, working with agents — you feel less confident. That's not a weakness; it's just an area you haven't explored yet. And your communication skills are actually a superpower here.

Recommended Sequence

1. Start with [The Signal in the Noise](#) — This plays to your strength. You already know how to extract meaning from information; this exercise shows you how to do it systematically with AI.
2. Then [The Reusable Prompt](#) — This is the bridge from "using AI" to "building with AI." It's more accessible than it sounds — if you can write a good email template, you can write a good prompt template.
3. Then [The Prompt Chain](#) — Build a 3-step AI pipeline. This is where the "technical" side starts to feel natural, because you're essentially designing a conversation flow — something you already do well.
4. Then [Your First AI Team Meeting](#) — Use your facilitation instincts to orchestrate multiple AI perspectives. Communicators often excel at this exercise because it's fundamentally about managing different viewpoints.
5. Stretch: [The Multi-Source Brief](#) — Combine your synthesis and communication skills to triangulate AI perspectives into a clear brief.

Common Pitfalls

- **Thinking "technical" means "hard."** Workflow automation and agent collaboration sound technical, but at their core they're about designing clear processes and managing

information flow — things you already do in your work. The vocabulary is new; the underlying skills are not.

- **Over-relying on your prompting strength.** Because you're good with language, you can usually get decent results from AI through clever prompting alone. This can become a crutch that prevents you from learning to build repeatable systems. The goal is to move from "I can always write a good prompt" to "I've built a process that works even on autopilot."
- **Avoiding exercises that feel "too technical."** The Workflow Automation exercises might look intimidating, but [The Reusable Prompt](#) is literally just writing a template. Start there and you'll see that the "technical" pillar is more accessible than you expected.
- **Undervaluing your existing skills.** You might feel behind compared to people who are building AI automations and agent workflows. But your ability to think critically, communicate clearly, and synthesize information is foundational to AI fluency. The technical skills build on top of what you already have.

What Leveling Up Looks Like

- You've built at least one multi-step AI workflow (a prompt chain or pipeline) and it works reliably
- You can design a simple AI-assisted process from scratch, not just use AI for one-off questions
- You're comfortable orchestrating multiple AI sessions for different parts of a project
- You've combined your communication strengths with new technical skills — for example, designing a workflow that ends with a polished, human-quality output
- When someone describes a repetitive task, your instinct is "I could build a prompt chain for that"