Intelligent People Still Make These 9 Mistakes With AI.

None of them are about the technology. All of them are avoidable, and I see every one of them repeat across industries.

SWIPE →

The first five failure modes

01 You automated a broken process

02 You have no way to know if it's working

03 You stopped reviewing the outputs

04 You're not questioning what the model learned from

05 When something breaks, you have no idea why

The next four failure modes

01 You're replacing expertise you don't have

02 AI made you busier, not less busy

03 You picked the popular tool, not the right one

04 The system is failing quietly, and you don't know it yet

28,000×

A regex pipeline beat an LLM by 28,000× on a structured task

Same accuracy extracting clinical data scores. The regex pipeline finished in 0.06 seconds; the LLM took 1,687 seconds. Popular is not the same as fit for purpose.

Source: clinical data extraction benchmark, BI-RADS scoring

45%

Of AI-generated code fails standard security tests

Veracode research found up to 45% of AI-written code introduces OWASP Top 10 flaws like SQL injection or hardcoded secrets when shipped without review by someone who can actually evaluate it.

Source: Veracode; CloudBees State of Software Delivery report

AI applied to a broken process doesn't deliver improvement. It delivers consistent, scalable failure.

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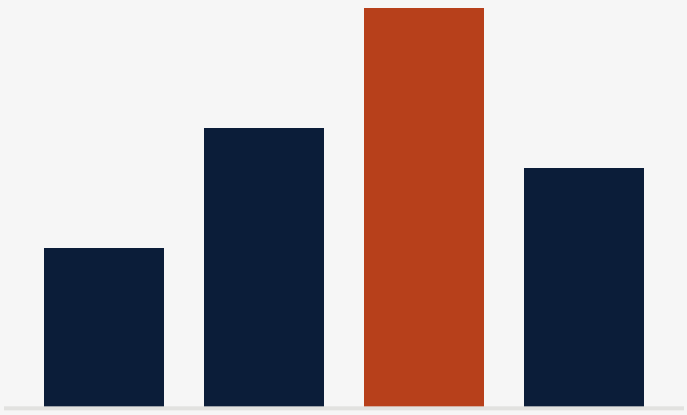
More output looks like progress. It isn't always.

LOOKS LIKE PROGRESS	ACTUALLY COSTS TIME
10 drafts instead of 3	Editing burden exceeds writing
2× the surfaced insights	Analysts drown in low-priority signal
Replies in seconds, not hours	Clients now expect 24/7 speed

The failure that keeps me up at night.

AI doesn't always break loudly. Recommendation engines drift, billing systems miscalculate by small amounts across thousands of accounts, sensors normalise their own decay. Nobody notices until the damage has already compounded.

This is the individual list.



There's a companion piece on where deployments fail at the system level: terencekok.com/blog/9-ai-deployments-fail-what-do

Power without structure creates risk.

The professionals who get the most from AI over the next decade won't be the fastest adopters. They'll be the most intentional ones.

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