

New to AI? A Step-by-Step Guide to Starting Your Enterprise Transformation

Six questions, answered in order. Built for someone starting from zero.

Six questions, answered in a fixed order

- 01** Who needs to be in the room
- 02** What AI actually is, stripped of hype
- 03** Where to start, and why smaller is better
- 04** Why now, without the FOMO
- 05** When to move from pilot to scale
- 06** How the first ninety days should run

80%

of organizations report individual AI productivity gains

Only 6% can show significant EBIT impact from it. McKinsey, State of AI: Global Survey 2026 (1,719 respondents, 97 countries).

40%+

of agentic AI projects will be cancelled by end of 2027

Gartner press release, June 2025. Most failures trace back to skipping the starting sequence, not weak technology.

17% → 60%+

**of organizations had deployed an AI agent, versus
planned to within two years**

Gartner 2026 CIO and Technology Executive Survey. Planning is running far ahead of doing.

AI has no shortage of information. It has a shortage of order.

New tools, papers, and "must-read" threads arrive faster than anyone can absorb them. Starting well means tracking a handful of durable decisions, not this week's headlines.

Five people, not fifty

- **An executive sponsor**
Owns the outcome, can kill a bad pilot
- **One person who owns the data**
Knows how clean and accessible it actually is
- **One frontline person**
Does the task today, knows where it breaks
- **A governance owner**
Accountable before the system goes live

Seven steps, in order

- 01** **Name the sponsor** (weeks 1–2)
- 02** **Pick one narrow use case** (weeks 2–3)
- 03** **Set the baseline** (weeks 3–4)
- 04** **Build the narrowest version** (weeks 4–6)
- 05** **Set the human check** (weeks 6–8)
- 06** **Run it on real work** (weeks 8–11)
- 07** **Score against baseline, decide** (weeks 11–13)

**You do not need to track daily AI news.
You need to track quarterly capability shifts.**

One credible source per function beats a dozen newsletters. Everything else is noise you don't need yet.

You don't need to become an AI expert to start your first ninety days.

Name a sponsor. Pick one task. Run it on real work. Score it honestly.



Terence Kok · AI & Innovation Strategist

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