60-Days AI Implementation Kickstart

You know that AI will have great impact on your business, but you struggle to identify concrete actions? You have initiated first proof-of-concepts, but they fail to translate into business value? Or are you just lost in between the vast amount of technologies and overwhelmed by too much information?

Move from ideas and concepts to implementation in 60 days.

For your first steps
» follow the proven approach to find the promising sweet-spots in your business by utilizing the AI implementation checklist,
» leverage latest generative AI technologies with the project planning toolkit.

Reduce risks: avoid common pitfalls with structured assessment tools
Save time: skip weeks of research with ready-to-use frameworks.
Implement with confidence: follow a prove process developed by an industry expert.

AI Implementation Checklist

Weeks 1+2: strategic assessment and business focus

- Identify 3 business units that face challenges (like repetitive tasks, large volumes of data, retiring workforce, need for automation, etc.)
- Conduct structured workshops to identify specific business processes within these units that could benefit from AI
- Map current workflows and pain points in these processes using the Problem Canvas
- Identify and engage key process and data experts for deeper follow-up discussions
- Assess data availability, quality, and accessibility for the identified processes
- Document current baseline metrics to enable future comparison and ROI measurement

Ultimately, AI is a tool that generates value by solving business problems. Therefore, start by identifying specific business units and their biggest challenges. For AI to be successful, you will need to get a broad overview on data, processes, stakeholders and IT systems involved – the foundation to potential solutions.

Weeks 3+4: knowledge building and solution exploration

- Evaluate 2-3 potential solution approaches for each identified use case
- Determine which type of AI technologies is most appropriate for your use cases (generative AI, traditional ML, computer vision, etc.)
- Research available AI platforms and tools that align with your technical requirements
- Complete targeted foundational training on relevant AI capabilities, if needed, based on your specific use cases, e.g. via online platforms
- Set up test accounts and explore interfaces of promising solutions
- Document specific business and technical requirements using the Solution Component Canvas
- Identify potential integration challenges with existing systems

Not every business problems requires the latest technologies – it pays off to keep it simple for first implementations. Brainstorm solution approaches based on the business challenges and goals gathered earlier. Gather the knowledge you might be lacking to realize solutions later. Document comprehensive requirements and challenges you foresee.

AI Implementation Checklist

Weeks 5+6: pilot implementation and iterative development

- Select one process for initial implementation based on potential impact and feasibility
- Create a small cross-functional team to drive the pilot implementation
- Develop initial approach with clear scope boundaries (avoid scope creep)
- Create test scenarios with actual business data to evaluate performance
- Implement first version and document results systematically
- Assess what did not work as expected to challenge previous assumptions
- Identify missing data, knowledge gaps, or process steps that need improvement
- Refine the approach based on early feedback and testing results
- Document both successes and failures to inform future iterations

Pilot implementations have the goal to realize a minimal viable product – this is the most fundamental new capability you need to solve one challenge of your business unit. Set up a team, and make sure it focuses on this challenge. Be aware that your first try will not be perfect – AI projects are of iterative nature, and you will need to improve over time.

Weeks 7+8: optimization and strategic planning

- Refine the solution based on week 5+6 learnings and pilot results
- Use the Business Case Canvas to develop a formal ROI analysis
- Implement necessary guardrails for quality, security, and compliance using the Guardrails Canvas
- Document standard operating procedures for ongoing maintenance
- Create a phased implementation plan for expanding to additional processes
- Identify organizational change management needs for broader adoption
- Start creation of trainings for key team members on using the solution
- Develop a communication strategy to share successes and manage expectations
- Present findings and plan to leadership to secure ongoing support

Optimize your approach through ongoing iterations. Make sure that you have clear ways to measure success and assess what needs to improve. Think about requirements for operating your solution in a productive setup. Assess the changes needed in regards to processes and organizational setups. Communicate success, failures and needs for change.

Generative AI Project Planning Toolkit

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Generative AI Project Planning Toolkit

This project planning toolkit guides you through the key stages of implementing AI solutions in your business. They help structure your thinking and ensure you address critical aspects of AI implementation.

Start with the Problem Canvas to clearly define your challenge and what success looks like. Use the Solution Component Canvas to outline potential approaches and evaluate whether to build, buy, or reuse existing solutions. The Data Processing Canvas helps you assess data requirements and complexity of AI processing needed.

As you progress, use the Risk Canvas to identify and quantify potential issues, then define appropriate guardrails using the Guardrails Canvas. Finally, the Business Case Sheet helps evaluate costs, benefits, and timeline to make informed decisions about implementation.

In the following, you will find the different canvases with a short explanation of the content that is expected, followed by empty copies of them that you can use for your projects. These templates work best when used together, creating a comprehensive framework for moving from initial idea to successful AI implementation.

While this overview provides structure, you'll find detailed guidance on using each template in chapter 6 of my book Making Sense of Generative AI.

In other chapters, you will learn how LLMs and image generating AI works, and how you can optimize them to meet your needs. Further, I explore applications on how companies create value in real-life already today, together with challenges you will meet during implementations. A final chapter discusses how the future of AI might unfold and how it will likely transform our businesses.

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or from any other
leading bookstore

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Only until May 31st 2025

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Problem Canvas

Present

Current Situation:	*How do things work today?*
Pain Points:	*What makes the current way of working inefficient or frustrating?*
Stakeholders:	*Which persons and teams are involved?*
Time Scale:	*How often does the situation occur?*

Challenge Name:

Future

Target Situation:	*In a perfect world, how would a good situation look like?*
Success Measure:	*How can you quantify progress toward the ideal target state?*

Context

Data Involved:	*Which data, information, documents are involved? What data is expected by users and by the AI?*
Dependencies:	*On which IT systems, events persons, etc. does the overall process depend on? Which other processes depend on it?*
Risks:	*Do you see potential negative impact when resolving this challenge?*
Open Questions:	*What aspects are still unclear, and who can answer them?*
Time Scale:	*To the best of your knowledge, is it rather a quick-win or a longer running initiative?*

Data Processing Canvas

Data Usage

Data Source: *Where does the data come from? What is the content of this data?*

Data Target: *How will the AI provide its results? What content will the AI deliver?*

Specific Language: *Will you process domain-specific terminology? How important is it to be precise about words and formulations?*

Data Transformation: *How is the AI expected to process the data?*

Impact Estimate

Content Complexity: *How challenging is the content that gets processed?*

Availability of data: *How much and which exemplary data can you provide? How good is the data quality?*

Transformation complexity: *How is the data transformed by AI? How complex does this appear? How many different tasks are performed?*

Solution Component Canvas

General

What:	*What does the solution do?*
Why:	*What problem does it solve?*
Alternatives:	*What are alternative approaches, if any? Why are they dis-favored?*

Make, Buy, Re-Use

Buy:	*What are potential vendors? What do they charge?*
Make:	*What would be the efforts to build it? Who would be needed for how long?*
Re-Use:	*Are there re-usable solutions in the company? Efforts and costs to adapt it?*
Strategic Relevance:	*Are the capabilities provided of strategic relevance to the business strategy?*
Decision:	*Buy, make or re-use? What are the reasons?*

Technical Dependencies

Infrastructure:	*Where does the solution run? What capabilities are needed?*
Integrations:	*To which other IT systems will the solution communicate?*
Operations:	*Which efforts occur for monitoring the system, keep it working and main-training it?*
Stakeholders:	*Who needs to be involved due to these dependencies?*
Open Questions:	*Which questions are unclear, and who can answer them?*

Solution Name:

Risks Canvas

General

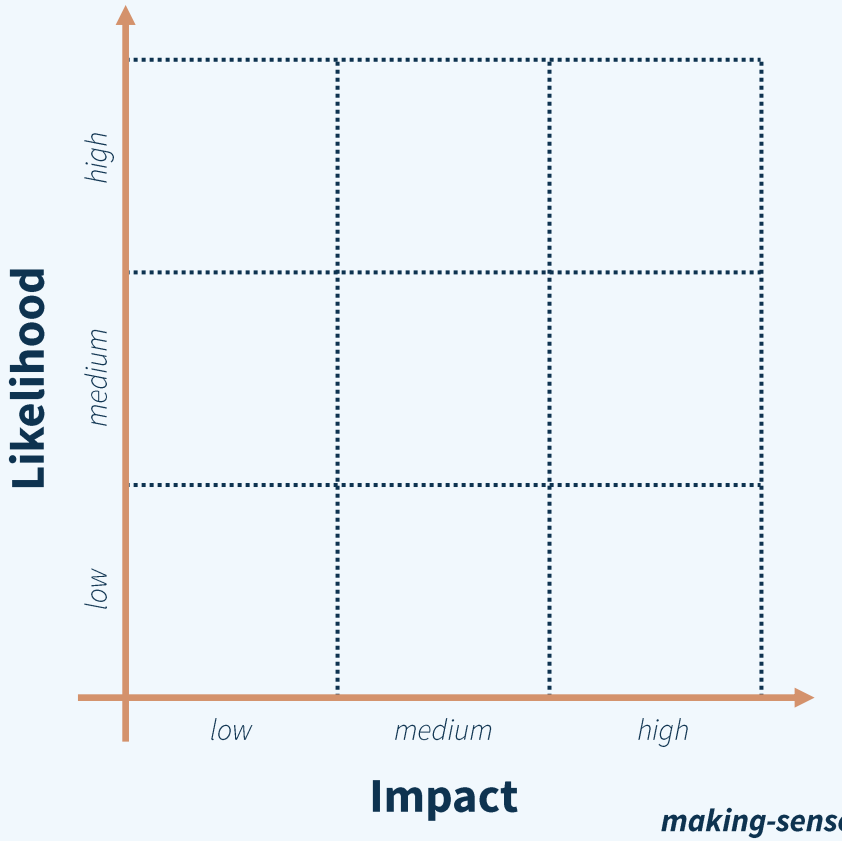
Scenario:	*Describe what happens?* *Describe why this would be negative?*
Likelihood:	*How likely is this going to happen?*
Impact:	*How large would be the negative impact?*
Comments:	*Comments, reasons for taking the estimates on likelihood and impact?*

Risk Name:

Mitigation

What:	*Options to mitigate the risk?*
Costs:	*How expensive would the mitigation be?*

Use this matrix to visualize and prioritize your identified risks. Plot each risk based on two factors: how likely it is to occur and how severe its negative impact would be. Risks in the upper right quadrant (high likelihood, high impact) need immediate attention and mitigation strategies. Work your way diagonally down-left, addressing medium-high risks next. This visualization helps you focus resources on the most critical risks first.



Guardrails Canvas

Requirements

Critical Behavior:	*What malicious ways can users try to access harmful content or bypass the AI? Which undesired behavior to prevent?*
Risk Addressed:	*What is the most harmful, wrong or confidential information that could be provided through data sources to the AI?*
Performance Requirements:	*What technical limitations are needed to ensure stable systems? How would they impact users?*
Compliance Needs:	*What kind of harmful, wrong or confidential information could be provided by your AI or application?*

Implementation

Type of Guardrail:	*How can you assess correctness of content? Which input, output and processing controls to apply*
Priority:	*How critical is the implementation of this guardrail, compared to others? What is the impact if this guardrail fails*
Requirements:	*What data, systems, processes need to be in place ? Which stakeholders need to be involved?*
How to test:	*Through which quality measure will you verify that this guardrail works as intended? How to test for potential bypasses?*

Guardrail Name:

Business Case Canvas

Value Creation

Type of Value:	*Efficiency gains, quality improvements, new capabilities and revenue streams?*
Details:	*How exactly and where is value created?*
Efficiency Savings:	*Current and target process costs, times per year someone runs the process?*
Quality Gains:	*How and how much is quality improved?*
New revenues:	*Number of esteemed customers, benefit for customers, payment model, etc.?*

Metrics

Break-even:	*At which point will the returns/ value created be higher than investments?*
Return-on-Invest:	*How much value is created compared to investments after 1 year?*
Unexpected risks:	*What are likely events that can increase the costs?*

Cost Analysis

Development:	*One-time costs*
Infrastructure:	*One-time costs*
Operations:	*Recurring costs*
Maintenance:	*Recurring costs*
Support, training:	*Recurring costs*
Risk Buffer:	*How much funding should be planned as buffer for unexpected events?*

Generative AI Project Planning Toolkit

Empty canvases to fill out

Problem Canvas

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Current Situation:

Pain Points:

Stakeholders:

Time Scale:

Challenge Name:

Future

Target Situation:

Success Measure:

Context

Data Involved:

Dependencies:

Risks:

Open Questions:

Time Scale:

Data Processing Canvas

Data Usage

Data Source:

Data Target:

Specific Language:

Data Transformation:

Impact Estimate

Content Complexity:

Availability of data:

Transformation complexity:

Solution Component Canvas

General

What:

Why:

Alternatives:

Make, Buy, Re-Use

Buy:

Make:

Re-Use:

Strategic Relevance:

Decision:

Technical Dependencies

Infrastructure:

Integrations:

Operations:

Stakeholders:

Open Questions:

Solution Name:

Risks Canvas

General

Scenario:

Likelihood:

Impact:

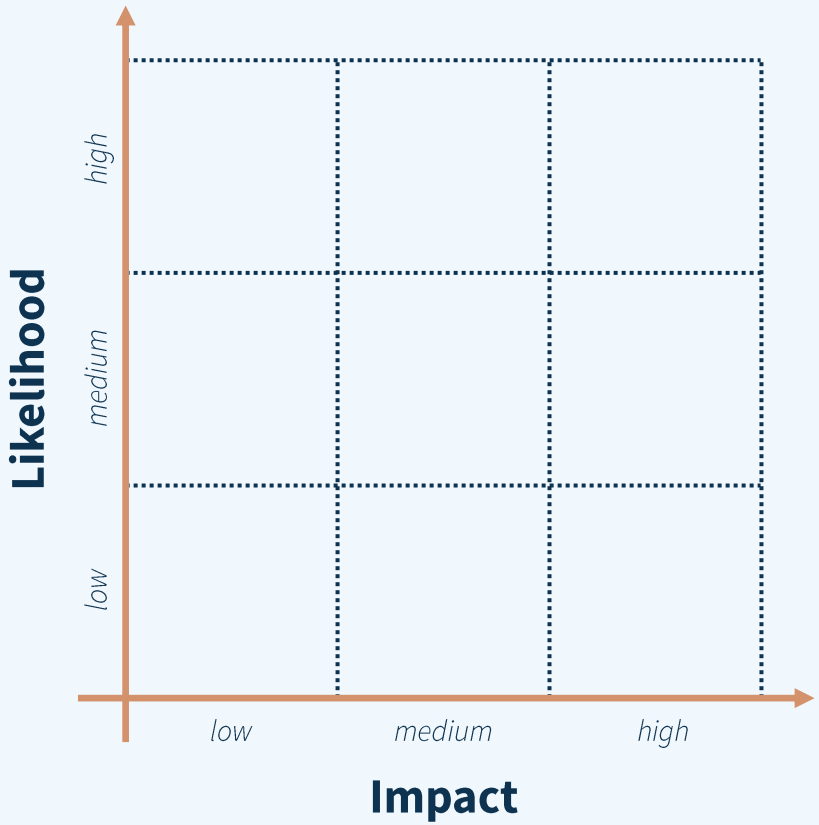
Comments:

Risk Name:

Mitigation

What:

Costs:



Guardrails Canvas

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Guardrail Name:

Business Case Canvas

Value Creation

Type of Value:

Details:

Efficiency Savings:

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New revenues:

Metrics

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