

SIMPLE PROMPTS. REAL RESULTS.

AI AFTER 50

THE NEXT CONVERSATION

TURN EXPERIENCE
INTO ACTION



CONVERSATIONS



EXPERIENCE



ACTION



RESULTS



ROBERT CASTILLO



CASTILLO
DIGITAL MEDIA

AI After 50

The Next Conversation

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The Next Conversation

Turn Experience Into Action

Robert Castillo

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DEDICATION

To my family—

Thank you for your patience, encouragement, and support through the long nights, the early mornings, and the trips when the laptop came along with us.

You gave me the time and space to pursue something I believed in, even when it meant the work followed us beyond home.

This book is part of what we built together.

With all my love,

Robert

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CHAPTER ONE

You Didn't Just Learn AI—You Changed the Way You Think

Welcome back.

If you're reading this book, there's a good chance we've already spent some time together.

Maybe we met in *AI After 50: Let's Talk*. If so, I'm glad you're here. If this is your first book in the series, you're welcome too—but I encourage you to read the first book before continuing. It lays the foundation we'll build on together.

When we finished that first conversation, I left you with a simple thought:

Every next chapter begins with a conversation.

This book is that next conversation. And it's a more tactical one.

But before we talk about what's ahead, pause for a moment and appreciate how far you've already come.

When you first started learning AI, you probably weren't worried about writing perfect prompts. You were wondering something much simpler.

“Can I really do this?”

Somewhere along the way, something changed.

Maybe AI helped you write an email that had been sitting unfinished for

days. Maybe it helped you organize a complicated project. Maybe you simply realized AI wasn't nearly as intimidating as you expected.

Whatever your moment was, it mattered.

Because you didn't just learn how to use AI. You changed the way you approach problems.

Most people think learning AI is about learning software.

I don't.

Learning AI is really about learning how to have better conversations. The technology will keep evolving. The principle won't.

The quality of your results begins with the quality of your communication.

That's a skill that doesn't become obsolete.

You already know the RTCF framework from Book One. Role. Task. Context. Format. Four questions that turn a vague request into a real conversation.

You don't need me to re-teach it. You need to understand what happens after you use it—because that's where the last book stopped, and where this one starts.

Here's what most people get wrong: they treat RTCF as the finish line instead of the starting point. They build the prompt, read the answer, and walk away satisfied.

RTCF was never about getting it perfect. It's about opening the door.

What happens next is the conversation.

Think about how you talk to a trusted friend. You don't expect to solve everything in one sentence. You ask, they respond, you think about it, you ask again. The conversation gets richer because each of you builds on what's already been said.

AI works the same way.

RTCF starts the conversation. Your curiosity shapes where it goes.

When Should You Start a New RTCF?

A good conversation can run for a while. Eventually the purpose changes, and that's your signal to begin again.

Ask yourself one question:

Am I still working on the same goal?

If yes, keep going.

If no, open a new conversation with a fresh RTCF.

That's really all the RTCF review you need.

Because from here forward, we're going to spend much more time on what happens after the conversation begins.

And sometimes the most valuable conversation isn't the one that helps you finish a task.

It's the one that helps you uncover something you didn't realize was still there.

What a Conversation Can Uncover

Every family has stories.

Some are told around the dinner table.

Others come out during holidays.

Many disappear forever—not because they weren't important, but because no one ever wrote them down.

Think about your grandparents.

How much of their life do you truly know?

Where did they grow up?

What were they afraid of?

What were they proud of?

What mistakes did they make?

What did they believe about life?

Most of us know only fragments.

There are questions I wish I had asked when I still had the chance.

Both my maternal and paternal grandparents lived in the Philippines. I know almost nothing about their lives. When my parents were alive, it never occurred to me to sit down and ask them about their parents—who they were, what their lives were like, what stories they remembered growing up.

Now I can't.

Recently, I asked my older brothers about our paternal grandmother. I wanted to know more about her.

They didn't have the stories either.

That's when the absence became real to me.

There are pieces of my family's history that may simply be gone because none of us thought to ask while the people who knew those stories were still here.

I can't change that for myself.

But I can make sure my children don't someday have the same questions about me.

You may think you'll remember to tell your family someday. They may think they'll remember to ask.

Sometimes someday doesn't come.

AI gives us an opportunity previous generations never had.

Not to create our stories.

To help us uncover and preserve them.

Your memories still belong to you.

AI's role is to ask questions, help you organize what comes back, and sometimes ask the follow-up question you wouldn't have thought to ask yourself.

If AI adds details you don't remember providing, correct it.

Your story should remain your story.

Let AI Interview You

Imagine you want to preserve some of your life story for your children or grandchildren.

You sit down to write.

Nothing happens.

Not because you don't have stories.

Because you have too many.

Where do you begin?

Childhood?

Your first job?

Marriage?

Children?

Career?

Retirement?

Instead of staring at a blank page, let AI interview you.

One memory leads to another.

One story unlocks three more.

And because you already understand RTCF, you can give AI a clear job before that conversation begins.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as a thoughtful oral historian helping someone preserve their life story for future generations.

Task

Interview me about my life and help me organize my memories into a personal memoir.

Context

I'm not trying to write a bestselling autobiography.

I want my children and grandchildren to understand who I was, what I experienced, what I learned, and what mattered to me.

Do not write my story for me.

Help me tell it.

Format

Ask one thoughtful question at a time.

After I answer:

- ask natural follow-up questions
- help me remember details
- identify themes that appear across different stories
- flag anything that seems unclear or contradictory
- organize the stories into chapters later

Do not rush.

Begin with one question.

The Conversation

AI

What's one of your earliest memories?

You

Sitting in my grandmother's kitchen while she cooked.

AI

What do you remember about the kitchen?

You

The smell mostly.

AI

What was she cooking?

You

I don't remember exactly.

AI

That's okay.

What do you remember about her while she cooked?

You

She hummed.

I haven't thought about that in years.

That's the moment.

Not the recipe.

Not the kitchen.

The humming.

A detail that might have disappeared forever if no one had asked the right question.

AI didn't create the memory.

It helped uncover it.

And that's the larger point.

The next conversation doesn't have to be more complicated to be more meaningful.

Sometimes the advancement isn't a better prompt.

It's staying with the conversation long enough for a better question to appear.

Why This Worked

Starting with "write your life story" is overwhelming.

Starting with one memory isn't.

AI removed the pressure of the blank page by turning something enormous into a conversation.

One question.

One answer.

One follow-up.

But something else happened too.

The value wasn't in what AI knew.

AI had never sat in that kitchen.

It didn't know the grandmother.

It couldn't remember the humming.

The value came from what the conversation helped the person uncover from their own life.

That's a distinction we're going to return to throughout this book.

You already bring something to every AI conversation that AI doesn't have.

Your experiences.

Your judgment.

Your mistakes.

Your memories.

The things you've learned after decades of living and working.

Some of those things are obvious to you.

Others may have become so familiar that you don't even think of them as valuable anymore.

The right conversation can help you see them differently.

Robert's Principle

AI doesn't have your experience. The right conversation can help you discover what's already there.

One More Conversation

Open AI.

Use the RTCF prompt from this chapter.

Answer one question.

That's it.

Don't worry about writing a memoir.

Don't worry about organizing chapters.

Don't worry about whether the story is interesting enough.

Just answer honestly.

Then let AI ask the next question.

Stay with it for a little while.

Pay attention to the moments when a question makes you remember something you haven't thought about in years.

And when that happens, notice something else.

The AI didn't give you the memory.

You brought it into the conversation.

That distinction matters.

Because memories aren't the only things you've accumulated over the years.

You've accumulated knowledge.

Skills.

Mistakes.

Patterns you've learned to recognize.

Judgment that took years to develop.

Experiences you may not have thought about in a very long time.

For now, we aren't going to do anything with those things.

We're simply going to recognize that they're there.

Because before AI can help you do more with what you know, you have to understand something that will become increasingly important as we continue:

You were never starting with nothing.

CHAPTER TWO

AI Can Read It First

You've just found the perfect apartment.

The location is great. The monthly rent fits your budget. The application is approved.

Then the property manager slides a lease agreement across the table.

Thirty-five pages. Small print. Legal language.

You know you should read every word. But let's be honest.

Most people don't. They skim a few pages, initial where they're told, sign at the bottom, and hope nothing comes back to surprise them later.

What if, before reading all thirty-five pages, you could have someone help you understand what you're about to sign—and tell you where you may have room to negotiate?

That's where AI becomes something more useful than a summarizer.

Not by telling you whether you should sign the lease. Not by replacing an attorney. But by helping you read the document the way an experienced negotiator would—looking for leverage, not just looking for meaning.

Before You Begin

Documents can contain a tremendous amount of personal information.

Before uploading anything, pause and ask yourself: Am I comfortable sharing this document?

If the answer is "I'm not sure," consider removing or redacting sensitive

information such as:

- Social Security numbers
- Bank account information
- Credit card numbers
- Passwords
- Medical record numbers
- Other personal identifiers

AI is an excellent tool for understanding documents. Protecting your privacy is still your responsibility.

And remember: AI helps explain documents. It does not replace qualified legal, financial, or medical professionals when those decisions truly matter.

The Situation

Let's say you've uploaded your lease agreement.

Most people would ask:

"Summarize this."

That gets you a summary. It doesn't get you an advantage. Let's give AI a better job.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced real estate attorney's paralegal who reviews leases specifically to flag risk and potential negotiating leverage for tenants.

Task

Help me understand this lease well enough to identify questions, concerns, and possible negotiating points before I sign it.

Context

This is my first time renting this particular property. I want to understand my responsibilities, but I especially want to identify language that appears

unusually one-sided, anything internally inconsistent or ambiguous, and anything I may reasonably want to clarify or negotiate.

Base your initial review on the document itself. If a conclusion depends on local law, current market practices, or information outside the document, tell me that rather than presenting the conclusion as established fact.

Format

Please provide:

- A plain-English summary
- Clauses that appear particularly favorable to the landlord or deserve closer scrutiny
- Any internal contradictions or ambiguous language in the document
- Fees or penalties that may be worth negotiating or clarifying
- Three specific requests I could reasonably consider making before signing
- Anything that would require outside information before we can evaluate it confidently

Now upload the lease.

Then begin the conversation.

The Conversation

You

Where does this lease appear to favor the landlord or deserve a closer look?

AI

A few places stand out.

The early termination fee is substantial, although I'd need current local information before telling you whether it's higher than typical for your area.

The clause about "reasonable wear and tear" also isn't defined anywhere in the document. Because that language could affect how the security deposit is handled later, it's worth clarifying before you sign.

You

That's not something I would have caught. Is that worth raising before I sign?

AI

It's worth asking for clarification in writing. An undefined term can create disagreement later, especially when money such as a security deposit is involved.

You

Are there any contradictions in the document itself?

AI

Yes. Section 4 states pets are not permitted. Section 11 references a "pet deposit" schedule.

Those two provisions appear inconsistent with each other based on the document itself. That's worth resolving before signing, not after you've already moved in with a dog.

You

Which of your concerns come directly from the document, and which depend on assumptions or information outside the document?

AI

The pet-policy contradiction comes directly from the document because Sections 4 and 11 appear to say different things.

The undefined "reasonable wear and tear" language also comes directly from the document.

The early termination fee is stated in the lease, but whether that fee is unusually high compared with similar leases in your area would require current outside information before I could make that comparison confidently.

You

If you were helping me prepare to negotiate, what would you ask the landlord before I sign?

AI

I'd ask them to clarify "reasonable wear and tear" in writing, resolve the pet-policy contradiction in writing, and ask whether the early termination fee is negotiable.

If you want to know whether that termination fee is unusual for your area, we'd need reliable current information before making that claim.

Notice what happened.

You didn't ask AI whether to sign.

You asked AI to help identify leverage—the same way an experienced negotiator reads a contract, not the way a nervous first-time renter does.

But you also made AI separate what the document actually established from what would require additional information.

That's an important distinction.

AI can identify something worth questioning without necessarily having enough evidence to answer the question.

Robert's Reality

I've spent most of my career working with documents where a few words can materially change someone's rights.

In one transaction, the County was transferring its fee interest in a road to a city. The original proposal required two documents: the County would quitclaim its interest to the City, then the City would grant an easement back to the County because the County would continue maintaining the road.

My reaction was simple: why create two documents when one would do?

We could convey the property to the city and reserve the County's road easement in the same deed. One document. Clean and straightforward.

Then another entity asked that additional language involving its interests and the City's be included in that same document. My boss asked me to review it.

My first question wasn't whether I liked the language. It was whether including it would put the County at a disadvantage.

I didn't see anything that did. If the city agreed to the provision, I had no objection to including it.

But I did identify something that needed clarification: the exact area affected by the new language needed to be clearly defined.

The City and the other party worked through that issue, provided revised language, and it was added to the quitclaim deed after our easement reservation.

That's how I've learned to read important documents. Understanding what the words say is only the beginning. You also have to ask what those words do, whose interests they affect, and where ambiguity could create a problem later.

And you have to recognize when the document gives you the answer—and when you still need more information.

AI doesn't replace that judgment.

What it can do is give me another set of eyes and another way to ask the questions experience has taught me are worth asking.

Why This Worked

This conversation succeeded because we didn't just ask AI to translate the document. We asked it to evaluate the document from the perspective of someone protecting our interests.

A summary tells you what a document says.

A negotiation-focused review tells you where you may have room to move.

And asking AI to distinguish what comes directly from the document from

what still needs verification helps keep a useful observation from becoming an unsupported conclusion.

That's the difference between reading a contract and understanding your position in it.

Robert's Principle

Don't just ask AI to explain what you're signing. Ask it to find you leverage before you sign it.

One More Conversation

Find a document you've been meaning to read but have been putting off.

Maybe it's:

- a lease agreement
- a vendor or service contract
- an insurance policy update
- a benefits guide from work
- a contract you've already signed and want to understand better

Before uploading it, ask yourself:

Where in this document might the other party have more power than I do?

Build an RTCF prompt around that question.

Stay in the conversation.

Push past the first summary.

Then ask:

"If you were helping me negotiate this, what would you push back on?"

And before you act on the answer, ask one more question:

"For each concern, tell me whether it comes directly from the document or depends on information we still need to verify."

Sometimes the most valuable part of the conversation isn't understanding the document.

It's realizing you had more leverage than you thought—and knowing which conclusions you can actually support.

CHAPTER THREE

Show AI What You See

"The button is over here..."

"No...a little lower..."

"It's next to the blue thing..."

Eventually someone says:

"Can you just send me a screenshot?"

Problem solved.

AI works the same way. Many people still think it only works with words. That's no longer true.

But here's what most people miss: they show AI something once, get one round of feedback, make the change, and stop.

The real value isn't the first review. It's the second one—and the third.

Before You Begin

Images often contain more than we realize. Before uploading one, check for anything you wouldn't want to share—addresses, account numbers, passwords, names of other people, or confidential business information.

Crop or blur what needs it.

A few extra seconds are always worth it.

The Situation

You're designing a flyer for a community event.

You upload it, AI flags a spacing issue, you fix it, you thank it, you move on.

Except you just stopped one step too early.

The real skill isn't asking AI to find one problem. It's asking AI to review your revision—and then the revision after that—the same way a designer keeps refining a layout across several passes instead of calling it done after the first fix.

And each time, we're looking for more than whether the new version is "better."

What improved?

What got worse?

Did fixing one thing create a problem somewhere else?

That's the review loop.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced graphic designer who reviews work across multiple drafts, not just a single version.

Task

Review this flyer, help me fix the biggest issue, then review the corrected version and tell me what changed.

Context

I'll be showing you an updated version after each round of changes. I want you to compare each version to the one before it, not just judge it on its own.

For every revision, pay attention to whether my change improved the issue we were trying to fix, caused something else to become weaker, or created an unintended problem somewhere else in the design.

Format

For each round, provide:

- what improved from the previous version
- what got worse, if anything
- any unintended problem created by the change
- what's still holding the design back
- one specific next fix
- whether we're still solving meaningful problems or have reached a point of diminishing returns

Upload the first version.

Then begin the conversation.

The Conversation

You

What's the biggest issue with this version?

AI

The headline and the date are competing for attention—they're nearly the same size, so the eye doesn't know where to land first.

You

I resized the headline. Here's version two.

Compared with the first version, what changed?

AI

The headline now leads clearly, so that problem improved.

But fixing it revealed a second issue that was less obvious before: the bottom third of the flyer feels empty now that the headline takes up less space.

Nothing necessarily got worse because of the change, but the new hierarchy made another weakness easier to see.

You

I added the sponsor logos to fill that space. Here's version three.

What improved, what got worse, and did that change create any new problems?

AI

The bottom of the flyer no longer feels empty.

But the sponsor logos are now pulling attention away from your call to action. You solved the empty-space problem but created a new competition for attention.

Try version four with the logos smaller and the call to action bolded.

You

Here's version four. Are we close?

AI

Yes.

The logos still fill the space without dominating it, and the call to action has regained the visual priority it needs.

I don't see another problem significant enough to justify another round.

We've reached diminishing returns. Further changes would be polishing, not fixing.

I'd stop here.

Notice what happened.

Each fix revealed the next problem.

And one of those fixes actually created another problem.

That only became visible because you kept showing AI your revisions

instead of stopping after the first round.

But something else happened at the end. AI stopped finding changes worth making.

That's important.

AI can almost always suggest another adjustment if you keep asking.

Move this.

Change that.

Try another font.

Adjust the spacing.

Make something slightly larger or smaller.

The fact that AI can suggest another change doesn't mean the work needs another change.

Eventually, the decision becomes yours:

Are we still making this meaningfully better, or are we just making it different?

Knowing when to stop is part of the process too.

Robert's Reality

If you read *AI After 50: Let's Talk* before picking up this book, you've already seen the finished result of this process.

Look at the cover.

It didn't arrive fully formed.

As we developed it, I'd look at a version, take a screenshot, and bring it back into the conversation. We'd identify the biggest issue, I'd make the adjustment, and then I'd show AI the new version.

That usually revealed something else.

Maybe the title hierarchy needed work. Maybe an element needed to move. Maybe something that looked right before suddenly felt out of balance after another change.

So I'd adjust it and show AI again.

Each version became the starting point for the next conversation.

Eventually, something changed. We weren't solving obvious problems anymore. We were discussing tiny details that probably wouldn't matter to anyone except the two of us staring at the cover.

We had reached diminishing returns.

That's when I stopped.

The cover you see today wasn't the result of one brilliant prompt. It came from repeatedly showing AI what I was seeing, making my own decisions about the feedback, and bringing the work back for another look.

The first review made it better.

The next few made it ours.

Why This Worked

A single review catches what's obviously wrong.

A round of revisions catches what only becomes visible once something else is fixed.

But comparing versions does something else.

It lets you see whether the change actually improved what you intended to improve, whether something else became weaker, and whether the fix created an unintended problem.

Most people stop after the first pass because the first fix feels like progress. It is. It's just not the finish line.

And eventually, the opposite becomes true.

Continuing to make changes can feel like progress even when the work isn't meaningfully improving anymore.

That's where your judgment comes back into the conversation.

AI can keep reviewing.

You decide when the work is done.

Robert's Principle

The first round of feedback fixes what's broken. The second round is where the real refinement happens.

One More Conversation

Pick something visual you're currently working on—a flyer, a slide, a social graphic, a book cover, a resume layout.

Upload the first draft and ask AI for the single biggest issue.

Fix it.

Upload the new version and ask:

"Compared with the previous version, what improved, what got worse, and did my change create any unintended problems?"

Choose the next change you believe is worth making.

Then bring that version back.

Repeat the process.

After a few rounds, ask:

"Are we still fixing meaningful problems, or have we reached diminishing returns?"

Don't stop simply because AI says it's perfect.

And don't keep going simply because AI can still think of something to change.

Look at the work yourself.

Make the decision.

The best version of your work is rarely the first fix.

It's usually the result of knowing what to change, seeing what that change actually did—and knowing when to stop.

CHAPTER FOUR

Your Second Opinion

Imagine you've just spent two hours working on something important. An email. A proposal. A presentation. Maybe even a book.

You ask AI for feedback. The response seems thoughtful, professional, well organized.

You could stop there.

But should you?

When something matters, professionals seek a second opinion. Patients consult another physician before major medical decisions. Attorneys ask another attorney to review an important contract. Architects ask engineers to review structural plans—not because they expect the first expert to be wrong, but because another perspective may reveal something they overlooked.

AI is no different.

Before You Begin

Seeking another AI's perspective isn't about collecting opinions until one agrees with you.

It's about improving your thinking.

If you're asking multiple AI tools the same question, ask yourself:

Am I looking for another perspective, or just another answer?

Use a second AI to challenge your assumptions—not to justify them.

And remember that not every observation carries the same weight.

Some observations can be supported directly by the material you're reviewing.

Others depend more heavily on preference, interpretation, or judgment.

Knowing which is which makes the second opinion more useful.

The Situation

You've written an important article.

One AI already reviewed it—a few grammar tweaks, tighter paragraphs, an overall positive read.

You're pleased.

Instead of publishing, you ask a second AI to review the same article — not to rewrite it, but to see if it notices something the first review missed.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as a senior editor reviewing this article before publication.

Task

Identify objective opportunities to improve the manuscript without rewriting it in your own style.

Context

The article has already been reviewed once. I'm looking for blind spots, structural weaknesses, repetition, unclear explanations, or anything that may reduce the reader's experience.

Where possible, distinguish observations you can support directly from the material from judgments that depend more heavily on preference or interpretation.

Format

Please provide:

- strengths
- areas for improvement
- observations about structure
- observations about clarity
- observations about repetition

- anything you believe is primarily a matter of preference rather than a clear problem
- a final recommendation on whether the article is ready for publication

Upload the document.

Then begin the conversation.

The Conversation

AI #1

The article is well organized and easy to follow. I recommend tightening a few paragraphs and correcting several grammatical issues.

Excellent.

Now, instead of asking a second AI:

"Do you agree?"

Ask:

"What might this review have overlooked?"

Notice the difference. You're not asking for confirmation. You're asking for perspective.

The second AI agrees with much of the first review—but notices something neither you nor the first review emphasized: several chapters repeat the same core idea.

That's valuable.

Not because the first review was wrong, but because the second revealed a blind spot.

Now we can take the process one step further.

Give AI both reviews and ask:

"Compare these two reviews. Show me where they independently identified the same issue, where only one identified an issue, and where their recommendations conflict. Do not decide for me which recommendation to follow."

Now instead of mentally juggling two long reviews, you have a map.

Agreement

What did both reviewers notice?

Unique Observations

What did only one reviewer notice?

Conflict

Where did they see the work differently?

Decision Needed

Where does your judgment still have to make the call?

And that's the important part.

The decision still belongs to you.

Do you agree?

Does the suggestion improve the work?

Should you make the change?

That's where your judgment matters most.

Robert's Reality

This book exists in its current form partly because we practiced exactly what this chapter teaches.

After working extensively on the manuscript, we asked another AI to review it. We weren't looking for approval, and we weren't looking for someone to tell us the work was wrong.

We wanted another perspective.

Most of the feedback confirmed things we already believed were working.

But one observation stayed with me.

The manuscript was strong, but if this was going to be the paid book that followed *AI After 50: Let's Talk*, it needed to take the reader somewhere fundamentally different.

I didn't immediately accept the recommendation.

I sat with it.

Then I looked at what we had built through the eyes of someone who had already read the first book and trusted us enough to pay for the next one.

That's when the problem became clear.

At that stage, the opening spent too much time reviewing what that reader already knew. Some of the prompts were more advanced, but not advanced enough. And most importantly, we weren't yet helping the reader do what I increasingly believed this book needed to help them do: use their experience, with the help of AI, to build something of their own.

So I pushed back on the direction we had been taking. We kept the strongest parts. We challenged others.

And the architecture of the book changed.

The second AI didn't redesign this book for us. It showed us something worth questioning.

What we did with that observation was still our decision.

Why This Worked

The second AI didn't replace the first.

It complemented it.

Each perspective contributed something useful. The final decision still belonged to us.

Different AI systems often explain ideas differently, emphasize different details, or notice different patterns.

Comparing the reviews made those differences easier to see.

Agreement can tell you an issue deserves closer attention.

A unique observation can reveal a blind spot.

A conflict can show you where the answer depends more heavily on judgment.

None of those automatically tells you what to change.

Treat those differences as opportunities to think more carefully—not invitations to keep searching until someone tells you what you wanted to hear.

Robert's Principle

Use AI to challenge your ideas—not simply confirm them.

One More Conversation

Take something you've already created—an email, a presentation, a report, a chapter you've written.

Ask one AI to review it.

Then ask a different AI to review the same work.

When you've received both responses, don't immediately start editing.

Give both reviews to AI and ask:

"Compare these reviews without deciding which one is right. Show me the issues both identified, the issues only Reviewer One identified, the issues only Reviewer Two identified, and anywhere their recommendations conflict."

Use that comparison to create a simple review map:

- issues both identified
- issues only Reviewer One identified
- issues only Reviewer Two identified
- places where their recommendations conflict
- decisions that still belong to you

Then ask yourself:

Where did both AI tools agree?

Where did they disagree?

Which observations are supported directly by the work, and which depend more on interpretation?

Which suggestions genuinely improve my work?

The goal isn't to find the AI that agrees with you.

It's to become someone who makes better decisions because you considered more than one thoughtful perspective.

CHAPTER FIVE

Before You Click Send

We've all done it.

You spend an hour writing an important email. You read it once. Twice. Maybe three times. Everything looks good.

You click Send.

Five minutes later, you notice the typo. Or realize you forgot to answer one of their questions. Or your tone sounds much harsher than you intended.

The email is gone. There's no getting it back.

Fortunately, AI gives us an opportunity that didn't exist a few years ago.

But here's where most people go wrong: they ask AI to proofread the email. That catches typos.

It won't tell you how the email actually lands. For that, you need AI to do something different—read it the way the other person will.

Before You Begin

Remember who's responsible for the final decision.

AI is an editor, not the author, not the sender, not the decision-maker.

Use AI to improve your work.

Not to avoid ownership of it.

The Situation

You've written a difficult email to a client who's upset about a missed

deadline.

The facts are correct. You've checked it for grammar and tone.

But grammar and tone aren't the real risk here.

The real risk is: how does this read from their side of the screen, given what they're already frustrated about?

We're going to look at the email twice.

First, check the message.

Then, check the impact.

The RTCF Conversation

You don't need a rigid box for this one—just a clear ask.

Tell AI to act first as a professional communication coach, then as the specific person receiving this email.

Ask it to first identify anything unclear or risky, then read the email as if it were the recipient—someone already frustrated about a missed deadline—and react to it line by line.

Be clear that you want your voice and the facts preserved, not a rewrite. You're looking for what the email will actually feel like to receive, given where the recipient's head already is.

Ask for:

- the coach's read on unclear wording, tone risks, and unanswered questions
- the recipient's line-by-line reaction, including where frustration might spike
- the one sentence most likely to be misread
- one thing you could add that would lower the temperature without changing the facts

Paste the email.

Then begin the review.

The Conversation

You

As my client, what's your honest reaction reading this?

AI

Reading as the client: the first paragraph feels fine—you're acknowledging the delay. But by the second paragraph, when you explain the reasons for the delay, it starts to read as an excuse rather than an explanation.

I'd already be frustrated going in, and this section would make me feel like you're justifying yourself instead of addressing my problem.

You

That's not how I meant it. What would fix that without changing the facts?

AI

Lead with the impact to them before the reason on your end.

Right now it's ordered reason-first, impact-second. Reversing that order changes how it lands even though nothing factual changes.

You

If you were still frustrated after reading this version, what would still bother you?

AI

The email doesn't say what happens next.

As the client, my biggest question after reading this would be “so what now?”—and the email doesn't answer that until the final line, almost as an afterthought.

You

What are you inferring about my intent that I never actually said?

AI

I'm inferring that you intend to resolve the problem and that you're taking responsibility for the next step.

But you never clearly say either one.

Because I have to infer that from the rest of the message, a frustrated recipient could just as easily reach a different conclusion.

You

Let's move that up. Read it again as the client—are we there?

AI

Yes. This version leads with acknowledgment, states the resolution early, and explains the reason last, as context rather than justification.

As the client, I'd feel heard before I felt explained to.

Notice what happened.

You didn't ask AI to fix grammar.

You asked it to become the person on the other end of the email—and tell you the truth about how it would feel to receive it.

Then you asked it to identify something even easier to miss:

What did the reader have to assume because you never actually said it?

That's the gap between what you know you meant and what the other person can actually see on the screen.

And sometimes AI may go further than you asked.

It may analyze the email correctly, then offer to rewrite it—or simply rewrite it anyway.

If that's not what you want, bring the conversation back.

Tell it:

"I asked you to analyze it, not rewrite it. Don't give me replacement language. Tell me where the problem is, why it could be misread, and let me revise it."

Then make the change yourself and bring your version back.

Ask:

"Read it again as the recipient. Did I fix the problem without losing my voice?"

You're allowed to redirect AI when the conversation wanders.

That's part of learning how to use it well.

Robert's Reality

While reviewing this chapter, I decided I shouldn't ask you to try an exercise I hadn't tested myself.

So I found a real email I'd written and gave AI the same instructions from this chapter.

First, read it as a communication coach. Then read it as the person receiving it.

I thought the email was clear. The simulated recipient didn't.

One part of my message made it sound as though I was asking the recipient to help resolve something they reasonably expected us to have already researched.

Another made our conclusions sound less certain than I intended.

And language I meant to communicate that the available research had been exhausted could be read as something very different:

We're done looking, even though your problem isn't resolved.

That was an eye-opener. The facts in my email hadn't changed. My

intentions hadn't changed.

But for a few minutes, I wasn't reading the message as the person who wrote it anymore.

I was seeing how someone on the other side of the screen might hear it.

AI even did something I specifically told it not to do—it rewrote the email for me.

So I pushed back.

I didn't need AI to write the message.

I needed it to show me what I was too close to see.

Once I understood that, I could decide what needed changing and make those changes in my own voice.

That's the difference between asking AI to improve your writing and asking it to improve your perspective.

Why This Worked

A proofread tells you the email is correctly written.

A simulated reaction tells you how it will be received.

An inference check shows you what the reader had to supply because you never actually said it.

Those are three very different things.

Most miscommunication doesn't come from bad grammar.

It comes from not seeing your own words from the other side of the screen before it's too late to change them.

Sometimes the problem is how you said something.

Sometimes it's what you didn't say at all.

Robert's Principle

Don't just ask AI to check your email. Ask it to become the person reading it, and tell you the truth about how it lands.

One More Conversation

Choose something important you're about to send—an email to a client, a difficult message to a coworker, a note to someone you've had tension with.

Ask AI to review it as a coach first.

Check the message.

Then ask it to respond as the specific person receiving it, given what you know about their situation or state of mind.

Check the impact.

Ask:

“Where would you get defensive reading this? Where would you feel dismissed?”

Then ask:

“What are you inferring about my intent that I never actually said?”

Pay attention to the answer.

If AI tries to rewrite the message when you only want analysis, redirect it.

Then revise based on what you learn—not based on grammar, but based on impact.

Bring your revision back and ask AI to read it from the recipient's perspective again.

The goal isn't a cleaner email.

It's one that lands the way you actually meant it to.

CHAPTER SIX

Walk Into the Room Prepared

Some conversations matter more than others.

A meeting with your doctor.

A conversation with an attorney.

An appointment with a financial advisor.

A discussion with a contractor about a major repair.

A meeting with your employer about retirement, benefits, or a career decision.

These are conversations where the person sitting across from you may know far more about the subject than you do.

That doesn't mean you should walk into the room unprepared.

AI can help you understand the subject beforehand, identify questions you may not know to ask, and organize what matters most.

But preparation is only half the opportunity.

After the meeting, AI can help you work through what you heard, identify what remains unclear, and prepare better questions if another conversation is needed.

AI doesn't replace the professional across the table.

It can help you make better use of the time you have with them.

Before You Begin

There's an important boundary here.

Your doctor provides medical advice. Your attorney provides legal advice. Your financial advisor provides financial advice.

AI helps you ask better questions and better understand the answers you receive.

Use it to prepare yourself—not to replace the professional.

And for important meetings, think beyond preparation.

We're going to use AI across five stages:

Prepare → Capture → Debrief → Gap Check → Follow Up

Before the meeting, AI helps you decide what matters.

During the meeting, you capture enough information to remember what happened.

Afterward, AI helps you organize what you heard, find what's still missing, and prepare whatever needs to go back to the professional.

The expertise remains theirs.

The process helps you make better use of it.

The Situation

Imagine you're meeting with a financial advisor next week.

You've saved for retirement for years. You have questions—but you're not even sure which questions you should be asking.

Instead of hoping everything comes to mind during the meeting, let's prepare before you walk into the room.

But this time, we won't stop there.

Before the meeting, we'll create a one-page brief.

We'll use that brief to capture the important parts of the conversation.

After the meeting, we'll return to the same AI conversation with our notes, compare what we learned with what we wanted to understand, identify anything that still needs clarification, and create a short follow-up brief if another conversation is needed.

AI won't participate in the meeting for us.

It will help us make better use of the meeting before it happens—and better understand what happened after it's over.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced financial educator who helps people prepare for retirement planning meetings and organize what they learn afterward.

Task

Help me prepare for my upcoming appointment so I can ask better questions, understand what I hear, and recognize anything that still needs clarification afterward.

Context

I'm meeting with a financial advisor next week. I want to understand my options and leave with a clear understanding of my next steps.

I don't want you to give me financial advice or make decisions for me.

Before creating a checklist, ask me questions about what I already understand, what I'm concerned about, and what I hope to accomplish in the meeting.

If you notice something I haven't considered, point it out.

Format

Before the meeting, help me:

- identify the most important questions to ask
- prioritize them as Must Ask, Should Ask, and If Time Allows
- understand unfamiliar terms in plain English
- identify information or documents I should bring
- identify important topics I may not have considered
- create a one-page meeting brief I can bring with me

Include a simple place beside each important question for me to capture:

What I heard | Follow-up needed

After the meeting, I'll return with my notes.

Help me:

- separate what was answered from what was only partially answered
- identify what wasn't answered
- identify important new information
- explain terminology I wrote down but still don't understand
- identify anything I'm treating as answered that may not actually be answered
- identify any new questions raised by what I learned
- create a short follow-up brief with my three highest-priority unresolved questions

Stage One — Prepare

You

Before you make my meeting brief, what do you need to know about me?

AI

Let's start with your goal for the meeting.

What's the one thing you most want to understand before you leave?

You

Whether I'm actually on track for retirement or whether I need to make changes.

AI

Good. Then your questions shouldn't begin with investment performance.

They should begin with the assumptions the advisor is using to determine whether you're on track—your expected retirement age, spending, taxes, healthcare costs, income sources, and how long the plan needs to support you.

Which of those have you already discussed with them?

The conversation continues. You tell AI what you already understand, what you're unsure about, and what you're concerned about. AI helps you identify questions you hadn't considered.

Then, instead of giving you one long list, it prioritizes them.

Must Ask

The questions you need answered for the meeting to accomplish its purpose.

Should Ask

Important questions you want answered if time allows.

If Time Allows

Useful questions that shouldn't prevent you from getting the most important answers first.

That's a small distinction until you're actually sitting in the meeting and realize you have twenty minutes left.

Not every good question is equally important.

Before you walk into the room, AI turns those priorities into your **One-Page Meeting Brief**:

My goal for this meeting

What I need to understand before I leave.

What I already know

The information I don't need the professional to spend valuable time repeating.

Must-ask questions

The questions that matter most.

Should-ask questions

The next level of priority.

Information or documents to bring

Anything the professional may need from you.

And beside the important questions:

What I heard | Follow-up needed

Now you're ready to walk into the room.

Stage Two — Capture

During the meeting, don't try to analyze everything while you're hearing it.

Listen.

Ask your questions.

Take notes.

When you can, capture three simple things:

Question

What were you trying to understand?

What I heard

What did the professional tell you?

Follow-up needed

Did the answer create another question or leave something unclear?

You don't need a transcript.

You don't need perfect notes.

You need enough information that when you return to the conversation later, you can reconstruct the parts that mattered.

Then go have the meeting.

AI can wait.

Stage Three — Debrief

Afterward, return to the same conversation.

You

I'm back. Here are the notes I took.

Before explaining anything, organize them into four categories:

Answered.

Partially answered.

Not answered.

New information.

AI

You got a clear answer about your expected retirement income and the assumptions behind it.

Your notes also mention healthcare costs, but I don't see an estimate or explanation of how those costs were incorporated into the plan.

I'd classify that as partially answered.

I also don't see an answer in your notes to one of your Must Ask questions about how the plan changes if you retire earlier than expected.

That appears unanswered.

And you wrote down a term that wasn't in your original meeting brief: "sequence-of-returns risk."

That's new information.

Notice what we're doing.

We're not asking AI to tell us whether the advisor was right.

We're first reconstructing what actually happened.

What got answered?

What didn't?

What entered the conversation that we hadn't anticipated?

Only after we understand that do we move forward.

Stage Four — Gap Check

Now look at the places where your understanding may be incomplete.

You

I wrote down "sequence-of-returns risk," but I don't remember exactly what that meant.

AI

I can explain the term in plain English.

Then, because it relates to your specific retirement plan, I'd suggest confirming with your advisor how they're accounting for it in your situation.

You

Based only on my notes, what am I treating as answered that may not

actually be answered?

AI

Healthcare costs stand out.

Your notes show that the subject came up, but they don't show how those costs were estimated or incorporated into the retirement projection.

You may remember discussing healthcare and therefore feel as though the question was answered.

Based on the notes alone, I can't tell that it actually was.

That's an important distinction.

Sometimes a subject was discussed. That doesn't necessarily mean your question was answered.

Sometimes you understood an explanation while you were sitting in the room. That doesn't necessarily mean you still understand it the next morning.

The gap check gives you permission to find out.

Stage Five — Follow Up

Now we decide what needs to go back to the professional.

Not every unanswered question deserves another appointment.

Not every unfamiliar term requires an email.

Ask AI to help you prioritize.

You

Give me the three highest-priority questions I should bring back to my advisor.

For each one, tell me why it matters and what still needs clarification.

AI

Absolutely.

Your Follow-Up Brief might look like this:

1. Healthcare costs

Why it matters: Healthcare spending could materially affect the retirement projection.

What needs clarification: How were expected healthcare costs estimated and incorporated into the plan?

2. Earlier retirement

Why it matters: Your original goal was to understand whether you're on track and what changes might be required.

What needs clarification: How would the plan change if retirement happened earlier than currently assumed?

3. Sequence-of-returns risk

Why it matters: The term came up during the meeting and may affect how withdrawals are managed during retirement.

What needs clarification: How is the advisor accounting for that risk in your specific plan?

Now you have something useful to bring back. Not twenty pages of AI analysis.

Three questions.

Three reasons they matter.

Three things the professional can actually clarify.

Robert's Reality

I've spent enough years sitting in important meetings to know that the

question you think of afterward is often the one you wish you'd asked while you were still in the room.

That's what I find valuable about using AI this way.

It isn't pretending to know more than the professional across the table.

It gives me a place beforehand to think through what I know, what I don't know, and what I may not have thought to ask.

And the part I appreciate even more happens afterward.

Important conversations can move quickly. You take notes. You hear unfamiliar terms. Something makes perfect sense while it's being explained, then becomes a lot less clear when you're looking at your notes later.

Being able to return to the conversation with AI gives me another chance to organize what I heard and identify what I still don't understand.

Sometimes the next step isn't asking AI for an answer.

It's realizing you have a better question to take back to the person who does.

Why This Worked

Preparation made the meeting more productive.

Capturing the important information gave us something reliable to work with afterward.

The debrief separated what happened from what we thought happened.

The gap check exposed places where discussing something wasn't necessarily the same as understanding it.

And the follow-up turned those gaps into questions we could bring back to the professional.

The professional still provided the expertise.

AI helped us make better use of it.

Before the meeting.

After the meeting.

And, when necessary, in the conversation that came next.

Robert's Principle

AI shouldn't replace the expert across the table. It should help you make better use of the conversation.

One More Conversation

Think about an important conversation coming up.

Maybe it's with:

- a doctor
- an attorney
- a financial advisor
- a contractor
- your employer
- another professional whose expertise you rely on

Don't just ask AI to give you a list of questions.

Run the entire process.

Prepare.

Tell AI what you already know, what you're concerned about, and what you need to understand before you leave.

Ask:

"What questions am I likely to wish I'd asked after this meeting is over?"

Have AI prioritize the questions as Must Ask, Should Ask, and If Time Allows.

Create your One-Page Meeting Brief.

Capture.

During the meeting, listen and take simple notes.

For the important questions, capture:

What I heard | Follow-up needed

Debrief.

After the meeting, return to the same AI conversation.

Give it your notes and ask it to organize them into:

Answered | Partially answered | Not answered | New information

Gap Check.

Ask:

"Based only on my notes, what am I treating as answered that may not actually be answered?"

Follow Up.

Then ask AI for your three highest-priority unresolved questions.

For each one:

Why does this matter?

What still needs clarification?

Bring those questions back to the professional if needed.

The meeting may last an hour.

But making better use of that hour can benefit you for years.

CHAPTER SEVEN

What Could This Become?

Castillo Digital Media didn't begin with a business plan. It began with me trying to improve a free AI book. That should have been the end of the conversation.

Make the book better.

Use it as a lead magnet.

Move on.

Except I kept asking questions.

What could this book become?

Who are we really trying to help?

What would come after it?

Could this become something bigger than one free book?

AI would suggest a direction.

Sometimes I'd agree.

Sometimes I'd push back.

Sometimes I'd say, "No, that's not us," and explain why.

Then we'd work through it again.

One conversation became a book. The book became a series. That led to a website, a publishing strategy, and eventually Castillo Digital Media.

None of that came from one brilliant prompt. And I certainly didn't begin by asking AI to help me build a publishing company.

I wasn't even trying to become a publisher.

The idea became clearer because I stayed in the conversation long enough for the questions to change.

That's when I stopped thinking of AI as something that gives me answers.

I started treating it as something I could think with.

And eventually, one of those conversations led to a question much bigger than the one I had started with:

What could this become?

That's the question we're going to turn toward you.

You Were Never Starting With Nothing

Back in Chapter One, we used AI to uncover a memory.

Not create one.

Uncover one.

The memory was already there.

Now we're going to use that same idea differently.

Because memories aren't the only things you've accumulated over the years.

If you've spent decades working, raising a family, solving problems, developing skills, making decisions, helping other people, getting things wrong, getting better, or becoming unusually good at something, you've accumulated experience.

Some of it you recognize.

Some of it probably feels so ordinary that you've stopped noticing it.

That's what happens when you've done something for a long time.

The difficult thing becomes routine.

The thing that took you years to understand becomes something you explain in five minutes.

You recognize a problem earlier because you've seen some version of it before.

You know what matters.

You know what doesn't.

And because those things feel normal to you now, it's easy to assume they're normal for everyone else too.

They aren't.

You don't need to begin with a brilliant business idea.

You don't even need to begin with a business idea at all.

Begin with a different question:

What have I spent enough time doing, solving, learning, or living through that I understand differently now than I did ten years ago?

That's where we'll start.

Don't Turn Everything Into a Business

There's a temptation here we should deal with immediately.

Once you start identifying things you know how to do, it's easy to ask:

"How can I make money from this?"

Slow down.

Not everything you've learned needs to become a product. Not every skill needs to become a service. Not every interest needs to become a side

hustle.

And AI's job isn't to convince you that everything you know should be monetized.

Some experiences matter because they made you who you are.

Some skills are useful only in the context where you developed them.

Some things you're good at may be things you never want to do again.

That's useful information too.

Right now, we're not trying to find a business.

We're trying to see what's actually there.

Later, maybe something becomes a service.

A course.

A book.

Consulting.

Content.

A digital product.

Maybe it becomes something we haven't thought of yet.

And maybe, after exploring it, you decide there's nothing there you want to build at all.

That's okay too.

AI's job isn't to manufacture an opportunity.

It's to help you examine what you already have.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced interviewer who helps people recognize knowledge, skills, judgment, and experience they've accumulated but may take for granted.

Task

Help me identify what I know or understand from experience that may be worth exploring further.

Context

I've spent decades working, solving problems, learning, helping people, making decisions, and living a life.

Some things that feel ordinary to me may only feel ordinary because I've done them for so long.

Do not turn everything I tell you into a business idea.

Do not suggest products, services, or businesses yet.

First help me discover the raw material.

I want to distinguish things I've actually learned through experience from subjects I merely find interesting.

Format

Ask me one thoughtful question at a time.

When I answer:

- ask for a specific example when my answer is too general
- ask what experience taught me that I didn't know when I started
- identify skills or judgment I may be taking for granted
- notice themes that appear across different answers
- ask what people already rely on me for
- distinguish things I've actually experienced from things I simply find interesting
- don't suggest what I should build yet

When we've explored enough, organize what emerged into an Experience

Inventory.

Begin with one question.

The Conversation

AI

What's something people have consistently relied on you for?

You

Solving problems.

AI

That's too broad.

Give me a type of problem people brought to you because they trusted you to see something they might miss.

You

I've worked with complicated documents for years.

People would bring me things when they weren't sure what the language actually meant or what effect it might have.

AI

What can you see in one of those documents now that someone with only a couple of years of experience might not notice?

You

Sometimes it's not what the document says.

It's what the language actually does.

Who does it affect?

Does it create a problem somewhere else?

Is something missing?

Is there an ambiguity that's going to matter later?

AI

How did you learn to look at documents that way?

You

Years of seeing what happens after the documents are signed.

You start recognizing which details matter because you've seen the consequences when they weren't handled correctly.

AI

That's more specific.

You're not just describing knowledge of documents.

You're describing judgment developed from seeing the consequences of decisions over time.

Where else in your life or work have you developed that kind of judgment?

That's where the conversation starts getting interesting.

AI isn't giving you a list of businesses you could start.

It's asking you to look more closely at things you've been doing for so long that you may have stopped recognizing what they required.

And when your answer becomes generic—

"I'm good with people."

"I solve problems."

"I know my industry."

"I've raised kids."

"I've managed projects."

—don't let the conversation stay there.

Push deeper.

Ask:

"What specifically did experience teach me about this that someone newer may not know?"

That's where the raw material starts appearing.

Build Your Experience Inventory

After you've stayed in the conversation for a while, ask AI to look back at what you've told it.

Not to create ideas.

To organize what it heard.

Have it build an **Experience Inventory** around five areas.

What I Know

Knowledge you've developed through work or life.

Not something you read about last week.

Something you've had enough experience with to understand beyond the basics.

What I've Done

Skills you've actually used.

Problems you've repeatedly solved.

Responsibilities you've handled.

Things you know how to do because you've done them.

What I've Learned the Hard Way

Mistakes.

Bad decisions.

Things that didn't work.

Lessons that only became obvious after you lived through the consequences.

This category may contain more value than you expect.

What People Ask Me About

What do coworkers, friends, family members, clients, or other people already come to you for?

Sometimes other people recognize your expertise before you do.

What I Still Care About

This one matters.

You may have thirty years of experience doing something you never want to do again.

That doesn't automatically make it a good direction.

What still interests you?

What could you imagine talking about, learning more about, or helping someone with without immediately wishing you'd chosen something else?

Put those five categories together.

Now you have something more useful than a list of random business ideas.

You have evidence from your own life.

Robert's Reality

When I started trying to improve that first AI book, I didn't see any of this coming.

I didn't set out to become an author. I certainly didn't set out to build a publishing company.

I wanted to improve a lead magnet. That was the project.

What I couldn't see yet was that I was bringing more into those conversations than the project itself.

I had decades of professional experience.

I had opinions about the way people over fifty were being talked to about AI.

I knew what it felt like to approach new technology without growing up with it.

And as we worked, I was developing my own way of thinking about how AI should fit into someone's life.

Not as a replacement for experience.

As leverage for it.

None of that felt like a business plan to me.

It felt like me.

That's probably why it took time for me to recognize what was happening.

The things you've carried for years don't always feel valuable.

Sometimes they just feel normal.

It took a series of conversations for me to see that some of the things I thought were simply part of who I was could become part of something I could build.

AI didn't give me those things.

It helped me see them differently.

Why This Worked

We didn't begin by asking AI:

"What business should I start?"

That's too easy.

AI could generate twenty answers before you finished your coffee.

But those answers wouldn't necessarily have anything to do with you.

Instead, we started with evidence.

What have you actually done?

What have you learned?

What judgment have you developed?

What do people already rely on you for?

What still matters enough that you'd want to keep exploring it?

AI helped ask the questions.

Your life supplied the answers.

That's the difference.

Your experience is the asset.

AI is the leverage.

Robert's Principle

What feels ordinary after decades of experience may not be ordinary at all.

One More Conversation

Use the RTCF conversation from this chapter.

Don't ask AI what business you should start.

Don't ask it for ten side hustles.

Don't ask it how to make money from your hobbies.

Let it interview you.

Stay with the questions long enough to get beyond:

"I'm good at this."

Ask why.

Ask where you learned it.

Ask what experience changed about the way you think.

Ask what someone newer wouldn't know.

Ask what other people already rely on you for.

Then have AI create your **Experience Inventory**:

What I Know

What I've Done

What I've Learned the Hard Way

What People Ask Me About

What I Still Care About

Read it.

Correct anything AI misunderstood.

Remove anything that doesn't feel true.

Add anything the conversation helped you remember.

Then ask:

“Looking only at what came from my actual experience, which three areas seem worth exploring further—and what in my answers makes you say that?”

Pay attention to the second half of that question.

AI shouldn't choose something because it sounds marketable.

It should be able to point back to your own experience and explain why the possibility deserves another look.

Then stop.

You may already be tempted to ask:

“Which one should I turn into a business?”

Not yet.

Right now, you have something more important. Raw material.

In the next chapter, we're going to choose what deserves your attention and give it somewhere to go.

But first, look at what's sitting in front of you.

You weren't starting with nothing.

You just needed a conversation that helped you see what was already there.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Organize the Idea, Not Just the Files

"I know I have a plan for this somewhere."

Maybe it's in a notebook. Maybe it's in a document called Business Ideas. Maybe it's buried inside seventeen browser tabs and a folder called New Folder (2).

The problem usually isn't that you lack ideas.

It's that the idea grows faster than your ability to track it—and somewhere in that mess, momentum quietly dies.

AI can help organize the files.

But the bigger opportunity is organizing the idea itself.

In the last chapter, you looked at what you've accumulated through years of working, solving problems, learning, helping people, making mistakes, and living a life.

You created an Experience Inventory.

Then you identified three areas that might deserve another look.

Now we have to do something difficult.

Choose one.

Not forever.

Not because the other two aren't valuable.

We're choosing one because trying to move three ideas forward at the same time is a good way to move none of them very far.

Before You Begin

Choosing one idea doesn't mean you're abandoning the others.

It means you're deciding which one gets your attention now.

We'll look at four things.

Experience

Do you have enough real experience behind this to contribute something meaningful?

Usefulness

Can you identify someone who might benefit from what you know?

Interest

Do you actually want to spend more time with this?

Feasibility

Can you make meaningful progress with the time and resources you have now?

We're not going to score each idea 8.7 out of 10 and pretend we've discovered mathematical certainty.

We're going to compare them.

AI can help us see the differences.

You make the decision.

Choose One

Bring the three areas from your Experience Inventory into the conversation.

Ask AI to help you compare them using the four questions above.

A simple comparison might look like this:

Area One

Experience: What actual experience supports it?

Usefulness: Who might benefit from it, and how?

Interest: What in your answers suggests you would—or wouldn't—want to keep working on it?

Feasibility: What would make it realistic or unrealistic to explore with the time and resources you have now?

Then do the same with Area Two.

And Area Three.

Don't ask:

“Which one should I choose?”

Ask:

“What are the strongest reasons for and against giving each of these my attention right now, based only on what I've told you?”

Read the comparison.

Push back where AI misunderstood you.

Then choose.

The decision doesn't need to be permanent.

It needs to be made.

Because the moment you choose, something predictable happens.

The idea gets bigger.

Fast.

The Situation

Let's say you've chosen one area from your Experience Inventory.

For about thirty seconds, everything feels wonderfully clear. Then your brain gets involved.

Maybe you need a website.

A name.

A logo.

Social media accounts.

A newsletter.

A course.

A YouTube channel.

Pricing.

Business cards.

Maybe you should form a company.

Maybe you need a better computer.

Maybe you should research seventeen competitors before doing anything.

An hour later, the simple idea you were excited about has somehow become a corporation with a marketing department.

Stop.

You don't need to organize everything this idea might someday become.

You need to organize enough of it to take the next step.

Ask one question:

What's the smallest useful version of this I could get moving on this

week?

That's where we're going.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced project coach who helps people turn an idea into something they can actually move forward in spare hours around the rest of their life.

Task

Help me take the area I've chosen from my Experience Inventory and create the simplest possible structure for giving it a real chance.

Do not build the project for me yet.

First help me define the smallest useful version worth working on and create a simple system for keeping it organized.

Context

I have limited time.

I don't want an elaborate project-management system.

I need something simple enough that I'll still use it three months from now.

I also have a tendency to see everything the idea could eventually become. Help me separate what matters now from what can wait.

Format

Help me:

- clearly describe the idea I'm exploring
- identify who might find it useful
- define the smallest useful thing I could create next
- identify what I'm actually working on now
- separate ideas that belong in "later"

- create the simplest tracking system that will work
- create a short weekly check-in that tells me what moved and what needs attention next

Do not turn “later” ideas into current tasks.

The Conversation

You

I chose one area, but now I have notes and ideas everywhere.

Where do I start?

AI

Don't organize the notes yet.

First, tell me what you've chosen to explore.

You

I have years of experience in a subject people regularly ask me about. I think there may be something useful I could create from what I know.

AI

Good.

What's the smallest useful thing you could create that would let you begin turning that experience into something another person could actually use?

Not the finished version.

The smallest useful version.

You

Maybe a short guide.

AI

Good.

Then don't build the website.

Don't worry about a logo.

Don't plan the course you might create later.

For now, the project is the short guide.

Let's organize around that.

You

How?

AI

Start with four categories:

The Idea

What exactly are you exploring?

Who It Might Help

Who could find this useful?

What I'm Working On Now

What's the one thing currently moving?

Later

Everything else you don't want to forget but don't need to work on yet.

Everything has to earn its own category beyond those four.

You

That's it? Four?

AI

For now.

You said you wanted a system you'd actually maintain.

More categories might make the system look more organized without making the project easier to move forward.

You

What should I track every week?

AI

Keep it simple.

What did you finish?

What did you learn?

What needs your attention next?

And what are you deliberately not working on yet?

You

Why track what I'm not working on?

AI

Because unfinished ideas create mental clutter.

Writing down "not now" lets you stop treating every idea like an emergency.

That's the point. We're not building a system sophisticated enough to impress anyone. We're building one simple enough to disappear into the background while the actual work moves forward.

Your One-Page Project Map

Now take the conversation and reduce it to one page.

Not a forty-page business plan.

Not a complicated project-management dashboard.

One page.

The Idea I'm Exploring

Describe it in one sentence.

Not everything it might become.

What is it now?

Who It Might Help

Who could find what you know useful?

You don't need a detailed customer profile yet.

You need enough clarity to know who you're trying to help.

The Smallest Useful Thing I Can Create Next

One thing.

A short guide.

One lesson.

A consultation outline.

An article.

A resource.

A video.

Something small enough to finish and useful enough to teach you something.

Don't create it yet.

That's coming.

For now, define it.

What I'm Working On Now

What needs your attention to move that one thing forward?

Keep the list short.

Not Now

Put everything tempting you away from the current step here.

The website.

The course.

The second product.

The podcast.

The perfect logo.

Whatever it is.

You're not saying no.

You're saying:

Not now.

Weekly Check-In

Once a week, ask:

What did I finish?

What did I learn?

What needs my attention next?

What am I deliberately not working on?

That's your system.

If you need more later, add more later.

Don't solve problems you don't have yet.

Robert's Reality

Once Castillo Digital Media started becoming more than an idea, the number of moving pieces grew quickly.

There was the book.

The website.

Branding.

Social media.

Files.

Content ideas.

Things I needed to learn.

Things I wanted to build later.

And, somewhere underneath all of it, the question that mattered most:

What do I actually need to do next?

My instinct was to organize everything.

Folders.

Documents.

Lists.

Systems.

And organization helped—but only up to a point.

I eventually realized I could spend an entire evening making the business look beautifully organized without moving the business forward at all.

So the system became simpler.

Instead of trying to perfectly organize everything Castillo Digital Media might someday become, I started focusing on what mattered now and what the next small step was.

Sometimes that meant finishing a chapter.

Sometimes it meant fixing one section of the website.

Sometimes it meant deciding that something I wanted to work on would have to wait because something else mattered more.

The organization wasn't the business. It was there to keep the business moving.

That's the distinction I wish I'd understood earlier.

A system is useful when it makes the next step easier to see.

When maintaining the system becomes more work than taking the next step, the system has become the project.

Why This Worked

This wasn't about organizing information.

It was about organizing momentum.

We started with several possibilities and chose one.

Then we stopped trying to organize everything that one idea might someday become.

We defined the smallest useful version.

We separated what matters now from what can wait.

And we created just enough structure to keep the work moving.

Most side projects don't stall because the founder lacked a system.

They stall because the system took more energy to maintain than the project itself.

AI helped us strip the organization down to what actually mattered.

Enough structure to know where things belong.

Enough visibility to know what's moving.

Not enough complexity to become another job.

Robert's Principle

A simple system you'll actually use beats a sophisticated one you'll abandon by week three.

One More Conversation

Bring the three areas you identified in Chapter Seven back into the conversation.

Compare them using:

Experience

Usefulness

Interest

Feasibility

Ask:

"What are the strongest reasons for and against giving each of these my attention right now, based only on what I've told you?"

Then choose one.

Not forever.

For now.

Once you've chosen, ask:

"What's the smallest useful version of this I could create without turning it into a giant project?"

Don't build it yet.

Define it.

Then create your **One-Page Project Map**:

The Idea I'm Exploring

Who It Might Help

The Smallest Useful Thing I Can Create Next

What I'm Working On Now

Not Now

Weekly Check-In

Save it somewhere you'll actually see it.

Chapter Seven found the raw material.

This chapter chose one piece and gave it somewhere to go.

Now we stop organizing.

In the next chapter, we're going to make something from it.

CHAPTER NINE

Build Something You're Proud Of

In Chapter Seven, you discovered the raw material.

In Chapter Eight, you chose one possibility worth giving your attention.

Then you defined the smallest useful thing you could create and built a simple system to keep the idea moving without letting the system become the project.

Now we're done organizing.

It's time to make something.

Maybe it's a book.

A course.

A consulting service.

A newsletter.

A video channel.

A workshop.

A digital guide.

A resource based on something you've spent years learning.

Whatever you chose, the goal of this chapter isn't to finish everything it may eventually become.

The goal is to create something tangible that didn't exist before you started.

AI can help.

But there's an important distinction.

AI can't supply the part that makes the work yours.

You do that.

Before You Begin

Don't ask AI to build the entire project in one conversation.

Big projects are built one decision at a time.

And don't ask AI to invent the knowledge that should come from you.

You bring the experience. The ideas. The opinions. The stories. The mistakes. The judgment you've developed from actually doing something long enough to understand it.

AI can help draw those things out, challenge them, organize them, and shape them into something useful.

But the raw material needs to come from you.

Think about the smallest useful thing you defined in Chapter Eight.

That's what we're building.

Not the finished business.

Not everything it may eventually become.

One real piece.

The Situation

Let's say the thing you chose is a book.

You know the subject because you've lived it.

You have years of experience, stories, opinions, lessons, mistakes, and things you wish someone had told you earlier.

Then you sit down to write.

Suddenly, everything you know feels impossible to organize.

The easy request would be:

"Write a chapter about this."

Don't.

Instead, ask AI to help you discover what you actually have to say.

Then, before AI helps you shape any of it into finished material, make sure you know where that material came from.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced book development coach and interviewer who helps subject-matter experts turn what they know into useful material without writing it for them.

Task

Help me develop the first piece of my project by drawing the knowledge and experiences out of me.

Context

I've spent years learning this subject through experience.

I don't want generic material that AI could produce without me.

I want the finished work to contain my judgment, stories, lessons, and point of view.

Do not invent experiences, examples, claims, or expertise for me.

If something important is missing, ask me for it instead of filling the gap yourself.

Format

Ask me one thoughtful question at a time.

When I answer:

- ask follow-up questions when there's something worth exploring
- challenge vague or generic answers
- ask for a real example when one would make the lesson stronger
- identify ideas or patterns in what I've told you
- distinguish what I've actually established from what still needs support
- do not invent experiences or expertise for me
- do not draft the finished piece until I explicitly ask you to help shape

what we've developed

The Conversation

AI

What's one thing about your subject that people new to it consistently misunderstand?

You

They think experience means doing the same thing longer than everyone else.

AI

What do you think experience actually means?

You

Recognizing patterns sooner.

Knowing what matters and what doesn't.

Knowing when something that looks unusual actually isn't—and when something that looks ordinary deserves a closer look.

AI

How did you learn that?

You

Years of making decisions, getting some right, getting some wrong, and seeing what happened afterward.

AI

Give me one specific time when experience helped you notice something someone newer might have missed.

You

There was a situation where...

The conversation continues.

AI asks. You answer. A general idea becomes a specific experience. That experience reveals a lesson. The lesson leads to another question.

Eventually:

You

Look back at everything I've told you.

What are the strongest ideas here?

AI

Three ideas keep appearing:

First, experience helps you recognize patterns.

Second, judgment develops from seeing the consequences of decisions over time.

Third, expertise isn't simply knowing more—it's knowing what deserves your attention.

Those ideas came from your answers. I didn't need to invent them.

At this point, it would be tempting to say:

"Great. Write it."

We're going to do one thing first.

Build the Source Map

Before AI turns the conversation into finished material, ask it to show you what the conversation actually established.

Tell it:

"Build a Source Map from what I've told you. Do not add information. If something is missing, flag it."

Use five categories.

What I Believe

What's the central idea, opinion, or lesson?

Not what AI thinks you should believe.

What have you actually expressed?

Why I Believe It

What reasoning did you give?

Why does this idea make sense to you?

What Taught Me

What experience, mistake, observation, or repeated pattern led you there?

This is where the idea stops being generic and starts becoming yours.

What Example Proves It

What real example did you provide that demonstrates the lesson?

If you haven't provided one, AI should say so.

It should not create one because the section would read better with a story.

What I Haven't Established Yet

What's missing?

Maybe you made a claim without explaining why you believe it.

Maybe you have a lesson but no example.

Maybe you referred to years of experience without identifying what those years actually taught you.

Maybe AI sees a connection that sounds plausible but you never actually made.

Put it here.

This may be the most useful category on the map.

Because polished writing can hide weak source material.

A sentence can sound completely believable and still contain something you never actually said.

The Source Map gives you a chance to catch that before the writing begins.

Now Create

Review the Source Map.

Correct anything AI misunderstood.

Fill in gaps that matter.

Leave out anything you can't support or don't actually believe.

Then say:

“Help me shape this into the first section using only the material we've established. If something important is missing, ask me instead of inventing it.”

Now AI can help you create. Notice the difference.

We didn't ask AI to generate expertise. We gave it something much more valuable to work with.

Yours.

And we made sure we knew where that material came from before asking AI to turn it into something polished.

The Process Works Beyond Books

Maybe you're not writing a book.

That's fine.

The process is the same.

If you're creating a course, let AI interview you about what your students actually need to learn.

If you're building a consulting service, let it draw out how you solve the problem and what experience has taught you to notice.

If you're creating videos, let it question your opinions and experiences until you have something worth saying.

If you're developing a guide or resource, let it help uncover the steps you perform almost automatically because you've done them so many times.

Then build the Source Map.

What do you believe?

Why?

What taught you?

What real example supports it?

What's still missing?

Only then ask AI to help shape the material.

AI doesn't need to become the expert.

It needs access to the one already in the conversation.

Robert's Reality

When people hear that I use AI while writing these books, they may assume I sit down, type "write me a chapter," and wait.

That's almost the opposite of how we work.

A chapter often begins with a conversation. I'll have an idea. AI will ask a question. My answer leads somewhere unexpected. AI challenges something. I push back. That reminds me of an experience from years ago. We explore it.

Sometimes the original idea survives.

Sometimes the conversation reveals that the better chapter was hiding underneath it.

There are times I reject what AI suggests completely.

There are times AI sees a connection I hadn't noticed.

And there are times I step away from AI entirely because I need to decide what I think before another voice enters the conversation.

That's exactly what happened while developing this book.

AI didn't give me the experience behind these pages.

I brought that with me.

What AI gave me was another place to examine it, challenge it, organize it, and turn it into something I could share with you.

That's what building with AI looks like to me.

Not asking it to create something instead of you.

Creating something that couldn't exist without you.

Why This Worked

This wasn't about generating content.

It was about turning experience into something useful.

First, AI helped draw out what we actually knew.

Then we converted that experience into source material we could examine.

What do I believe?

Why do I believe it?

What taught me?

What real example supports it?

What haven't I established yet?

Only after we understood the source material did we ask AI to help shape it into something another person could use.

That sequence matters.

AI helped by asking questions.

By challenging vague answers.

By finding connections.

By helping organize what emerged.

But the substance came from the person who had actually lived it.

That's the difference between generating something and building something.

One can happen without much of you at all.

The other carries your fingerprints.

Robert's Principle

Don't ask AI to create instead of you. Use it to create something that

couldn't exist without you.

One More Conversation

Go back to the smallest useful thing you defined in Chapter Eight.

Don't ask AI to build it.

Ask AI to interview you about it.

Tell it to help uncover:

- what you know
- why you believe it
- where you learned it
- what mistakes taught you
- what someone newer wouldn't know
- what makes your approach yours

Stay in the conversation.

Let one answer lead to another question.

When you believe you've uncovered enough material, don't start creating yet.

Ask:

"Build a Source Map from everything I've told you. Use only what I've actually established."

Organize it into:

What I Believe

Why I Believe It

What Taught Me

What Example Proves It

What I Haven't Established Yet

Review it.

Correct anything AI misunderstood.

Fill in the gaps that matter.

Then ask:

“Help me create one useful piece from this material. Use only what we've established in this conversation. If something important is missing, ask me instead of inventing it.”

Create one thing.

One section.

One lesson.

One page.

One resource.

One video outline.

One piece that didn't exist when you started this chapter.

By the time you're done, you should have two things:

A Source Map showing where the substance came from.

And something tangible created from it.

It doesn't have to be everything.

It doesn't have to be finished.

It has to be yours.

CHAPTER TEN

Learn Anything

You've discovered what your experience may contain.

You've chosen something worth giving your attention.

You've organized the idea without letting the organization become the project.

And you've started creating something from what you already know.

Then reality shows up. There's usually one thing standing between what you're building and actually executing it:

A skill you don't have yet.

Maybe you need to edit a video.

Build a simple website.

Create a graphic.

Set up an email list.

Use software you've never touched before.

The old approach would be to stop. Take a course. Watch twenty tutorials. Read a manual. Try to learn everything before continuing.

AI gives you another option.

Learn exactly what the work requires, when the work requires it.

Before You Begin

There's a difference between learning a subject and learning enough of a subject to accomplish something.

You don't need to become an expert in every skill your project requires.

You need enough knowledge to take the next step competently.

That's an important distinction.

Especially when you're building something on nights, weekends, or whatever time you can find.

Your goal isn't mastery.

Your goal is momentum with competence.

And there's one more distinction that will make learning with AI much more useful:

Start from the gap, not the subject.

Don't begin with:

"Teach me video editing."

Tell AI what you're trying to accomplish, what you can already do, and exactly where your knowledge stops.

That's the lesson you need right now.

The Situation

Let's say the project you're building requires video.

You've never edited one before.

You open the editing software.

Timeline.

Tracks.

Transitions.

Keyframes.

Color correction.

Audio mixing.

Export settings.

Suddenly you're thinking:

Maybe I should take a video-editing course first.

Don't.

At least not yet.

First ask a more useful question:

What do I actually need to know to publish the kind of video I'm trying to make?

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as a patient video-editing instructor teaching a complete beginner who learns best by doing.

Task

Teach me just enough video editing to publish my first short video this week.

Context

I don't need to become a professional editor.

I need to be able to competently produce and publish the kind of content my project requires, starting now.

Before teaching me, ask what I'm trying to accomplish and what I can already do.

Start from the gap between those two things.

If I need more advanced skills later, I'll learn them when the work requires them.

Format

Teach me one skill at a time.

For each skill:

- explain what it does in plain English
- explain why I need it for the video I'm making
- give me one small task to perform
- wait for me to complete it before continuing
- don't introduce advanced features unless they're necessary for what

I'm trying to accomplish

If something doesn't work as expected, help me troubleshoot one likely cause at a time instead of giving me a long list of possible fixes.

The Conversation

AI

Before we start, what are you trying to make, and what can you already do in the software?

You

I want to make a short video from several clips.

I've opened the software and imported the clips, but that's about it.

AI

Good.

Then we don't need to start with importing media.

For the video you're trying to make, you need three things first:

1. how to put clips on the timeline
2. how to trim the beginning and end of a clip
3. how to export the finished video

Let's start with the timeline.

Add one video clip and tell me when it's there.

You

Done.

AI

Good.

Now move your cursor to the end of the clip.

Your goal is to remove the last two seconds.

Tell me what happens when you drag the edge of the clip toward the left.

You

It got shorter.

AI

Exactly.

You just learned trimming.

Don't worry about transitions, keyframes, or color correction yet.

You don't need them for what we're doing.

Notice what's happening.

You're learning by using the skill immediately.

No ten-hour course.

No forty-minute tutorial explaining features you may never use.

One problem.

One explanation.

One action.

Then the next.

When It Doesn't Work

Of course, learning something new doesn't always go that smoothly.

Sometimes AI tells you what to do.

You try it.

And something completely different happens.

That's when the conversation becomes even more useful.

Don't just say:

"It didn't work."

Give AI four pieces of information.

What I expected

What were you trying to make happen?

What actually happened

What happened instead?

What I've already tried

What did you do before coming back?

What I see now

Describe what's on the screen—or, when appropriate, show AI a screenshot.

Then ask:

“Give me the most likely cause first and one thing to test. Don't give me ten fixes at once.”

For example:

You

I expected the clip to get shorter when I dragged the edge.

Instead, the whole clip moved on the timeline.

I tried it twice and got the same result.

I'm looking at the timeline now, and the entire clip is selected.

What's the most likely problem?

Give me one thing to test first.

AI

You may be dragging the clip itself rather than its trim handle.

Move your cursor directly over the right edge of the clip and watch whether the cursor changes.

Don't drag yet.

Tell me what you see.

Now you're troubleshooting.

One observation.

One test.

One result.

Then the next step.

That's much easier to work through than a list of ten possible causes when you don't yet know which one applies.

When AI's Screen Doesn't Match Yours

Sometimes the problem isn't you. Software changes. Menus move. Buttons get renamed. Different versions may look different.

AI may give you instructions that were correct for another version of the software but don't match what you're seeing.

If AI tells you to click something that isn't there, don't spend twenty minutes assuming you somehow missed the obvious button.

Tell it:

"I don't see that option. Here's what I see instead. Could your instructions be for a different version?"

Or show it a screenshot.

Then continue from the screen you actually have.

The goal isn't to prove that AI's first instruction was right.

The goal is to solve the problem in front of you.

When You Don't Understand

This may be one of the most useful parts of learning with AI.

You can say:

"I don't understand."

You can ask:

"Explain that differently."

Or:

"Give me another example."

Or:

"Slow down. I'm still on the previous step."

AI doesn't care how many times you ask.

There's no classroom to hold up.

No instructor waiting to move on.

No reason to pretend something makes sense when it doesn't.

Use that.

The goal isn't to get through the lesson.

The goal is to understand enough to do the work.

Save What Worked

Once you solve a problem, there's one more thing worth doing.

If you think you'll need to do it again, don't rely on remembering every step.

Ask:

"Summarize what worked as a short procedure I can save and reuse next time."

Maybe it's three steps.

Maybe it's five.

Save it.

The next time the same task appears, you don't need to start the conversation from zero.

Over time, those little procedures become your own **Personal Mini-Manual**.

Not a manual for the entire subject.

A manual for the things *you* actually need to know to keep building.

Robert's Reality

When I started this journey, I didn't know how to professionally lay out a book.

Honestly, I didn't even know Affinity existed.

I knew Canva. I'd used tools like it before.

But I hadn't set out to become an author or a publisher, so there had never been a reason for me to learn professional publishing software.

Then the project changed.

AI After 50: Let's Talk became a real book, and suddenly I needed skills I'd never expected to need.

I could have stopped everything and tried to learn Affinity from beginning to end.

I didn't.

I learned what the book required when the book required it.

When I needed to understand master pages, we worked through master pages.

When I needed linked text frames and overflowing text to behave correctly, we solved that problem.

Then I ran into one of those problems that sounds small until it's standing between you and the next page.

I needed to apply the body paragraph style across the chapter while preserving character formatting that needed to remain.

My first attempts didn't give me the result I needed. So I brought the problem into the AI conversation. We worked through different approaches. I tried them. I reported back what happened. We adjusted.

Eventually, we found a repeatable way to apply the paragraph style while preserving the character formatting that should survive.

Then I kept building.

One problem.

One conversation.

One new skill.

Eventually, something interesting happened.

The individual fixes started becoming a system.

What began as me learning enough Affinity to get through the next page eventually became a repeatable production workflow we can use for future Castillo Digital Media books.

I still wouldn't tell you I know everything about Affinity.

I don't need to.

I know how to produce our books with it.

That's a very different goal.

Why This Worked

Instead of asking AI to teach an entire subject, I asked it to teach exactly what the work required, and nothing more.

Then, when something didn't work, the conversation changed from teaching to troubleshooting.

What did I expect?

What actually happened?

What had I already tried?

What was I seeing?

One likely cause. One test. One result.

And when we solved something I'd need again, the solution became a procedure instead of a lesson I'd have to relearn later.

That's how individual problems begin turning into competence.

Learn what the current task requires.

Troubleshoot what actually happens.

Save what works when you'll need it again.

Then keep building.

Robert's Principle

Don't ask AI to teach you a subject. Ask it to teach you exactly what your next step requires.

One More Conversation

Go back to what you started building in Chapter Nine.

Where did you get stuck because you didn't know how to do something?

That's your lesson.

Not the entire subject.

That one thing.

Tell AI:

- what you're trying to accomplish
- what you already know how to do
- exactly where you're stuck

Then ask:

"Teach me only what I need to understand to get past this step. Give me one thing to do, then wait for me before continuing."

Do the task.

If it works, keep going.

If it doesn't, don't just say:

"It didn't work."

Tell AI:

What I expected

What actually happened

What I've already tried

What I see now

Then ask:

"Give me the most likely cause first and one thing to test. Don't give me ten fixes at once."

Try it.

Report back.

Keep the conversation going.

And when you solve something you know you'll need again, ask:

"Summarize what worked as a short procedure I can save and reuse next time."

Save it to your Personal Mini-Manual.

Then return to the thing you're building.

You don't need to master the skill before you move forward.

Learn what the work requires.

Solve the problem in front of you.

Save what worked.

Then keep building.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Say What You Actually Do

You've built something. You've worked through the parts you didn't know how to do.

Now comes the part most people quietly avoid:

Asking someone to pay you for it.

For many people, especially those who've spent decades being good at their job, this feels unfamiliar.

You may have spent thirty years solving problems, managing people, helping customers, or developing expertise without ever having to sell something of your own.

Now the thing has your name on it.

Suddenly, explaining why someone should pay for it feels different.

AI can help you find the words. It can't make the offer true. That's still your job.

Selling isn't convincing someone of something false. It's clearly explaining something true to the person who needs to hear it.

Before You Begin

If you don't believe the thing you're offering genuinely helps someone, don't use AI to make it sound like it does.

Go back and improve the offer.

AI can help clarify value.

It can help you understand what someone might care about.

It can help you find language that sounds natural.

But it shouldn't manufacture value that isn't there.

The goal isn't to become better at persuasion.

It's to become clearer about something worth offering.

The Situation

You've built something useful.

Maybe it's a consulting service.

A course.

A guide.

A workshop.

A book.

A resource based on something you've spent years learning.

Now someone asks a question that sounds simple:

"So what exactly do you do?"

And suddenly you're speaking a language no normal human has ever used over coffee.

You start talking about solutions.

Transformation.

Unlocking potential.

Comprehensive strategies.

You don't sound like yourself anymore.

Before we write a pitch, let's figure out what you're actually selling.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced positioning coach who helps first-time business owners clearly explain what they offer without turning their language into generic marketing copy.

Task

Help me understand and clearly communicate the value of what I've built before we write any sales language.

Context

This is the first time I've sold something of my own.

I want the final message to sound like me.

Don't begin by writing a pitch for me.

Ask questions until you understand what I'm offering, who it helps, what problem it solves, and why my experience matters.

Format

Ask me one question at a time.

Help me clarify:

- who this is actually for
- what problem it solves
- what changes for someone after using it
- what experience or perspective I bring
- what I can honestly promise
- what I cannot promise
- what this is not

When you understand the offer, summarize what you believe I'm actually selling in plain English.

Do not write the pitch yet.

The Conversation

AI

Who specifically needs what you've built?

You

People over fifty who want to start using AI.

AI

That's an audience, but it's still broad.

What are they struggling with that your work actually helps solve?

You

A lot of them are intimidated before they even begin.

They hear about AI constantly, but they don't know where to start or whether it's really for them.

AI

So are you selling information about AI, or are you helping someone become confident enough to actually use it?

You

The second one.

AI

That's an important distinction.

What do you do differently from someone selling a collection of prompts?

You

I don't want them memorizing prompts.

I want them to understand how to have a conversation with AI so they can use it for whatever matters in their own life.

AI

Then the prompts aren't really the product.

The ability to have the conversation is.

You

Exactly.

Based on everything I've told you, what do you think I'm actually selling?

AI

You're helping people over fifty move from feeling intimidated by AI to feeling capable of using it through practical conversations grounded in their own experience.

You

That's much closer.

But before we turn that into sales language, let's make sure we've actually defined the offer.

Notice what happened.

We didn't start by asking AI for three catchy pitches.

We made sure AI understood what we were actually offering first.

Only then do the words become useful.

That's a very different use of AI.

Build Your Positioning Card

Before asking AI to write anything you might use to sell what you've built, create one simple source of truth.

Your **Positioning Card**.

This isn't a marketing plan. It isn't a customer avatar. It isn't a brand-strategy document. It's a short record of what you've established about the thing you're offering.

Who It's For

Who specifically are you trying to help?

Not everyone who could possibly benefit.

Who is the person you understand well enough to speak to clearly?

The Problem

What are they actually struggling with?

Describe the problem the way they might experience it—not the way someone in your industry would describe it.

What I Help Them Do

What useful change are you helping create?

Don't list features.

Don't list everything included.

What can the person do, understand, accomplish, or approach differently because of what you've built?

Why Me

What experience, judgment, perspective, or approach do you bring that matters?

This isn't the place to write your autobiography.

It's the part of your experience that's relevant to why someone might trust you to help with this problem.

What I Can Honestly Promise

What can you stand behind?

Be specific enough to mean something.

Careful enough that it's true.

What This Is Not

What should someone not expect?

What aren't you promising?

Who isn't this for?

Sometimes defining what something isn't makes what it is much clearer.

The Coffee Explanation

Finally, explain the whole thing in two or three sentences.

Not a slogan.

Not a sales pitch.

Imagine someone you respect asks:

"So what exactly do you do?"

What would you say?

That's your Coffee Explanation.

When AI Starts Sounding Like an Advertisement

AI has seen a lot of marketing language.

That means it can produce phrases that sound polished—and exactly like everyone else's polished phrases.

If your draft suddenly contains language you would never say out loud, stop.

Ask:

"Does this sound like a real person or a sales page?"

Then:

"Where did I stop sounding like myself?"

You may discover that the clearest version isn't the cleverest one.

It may simply explain:

Here's the problem.

Here's how I help.

Here's what happens next.

Clarity doesn't need decoration.

And there's an easy test for your Coffee Explanation.

Read it out loud.

Not in your head.

Say it.

If you stumble over a phrase because it sounds like something you'd never actually say, that's useful information.

If you hear yourself talking about "unlocking transformative solutions" and immediately wonder who took over your body, fix it.

The goal isn't to sound impressive over coffee.

It's for the other person to understand what you do.

Robert's Reality

One of the harder questions I had to answer while building Castillo Digital Media sounded ridiculously simple:

What exactly are we?

A publishing company? An AI education company? A digital media company?

Were we selling books? Teaching AI? Creating content?

The problem wasn't that we had nothing to offer.

The problem was that the vision had grown faster than my ability to explain it.

So we kept talking about it.

Who were we trying to help?

What did I believe someone over fifty already brought to the AI conversation?

What did I want Castillo Digital Media to stand for?

And just as importantly, what did I not want us to become?

Those conversations eventually helped us put language around something I'd been feeling for a long time:

Empowering Experience Through AI.

That wasn't just a tagline. It clarified the business.

The experience was already there. Decades of it.

AI wasn't supposed to replace that experience. Our job was to help people use AI to do more with what they already knew.

Once I could explain that clearly, explaining Castillo Digital Media became much easier.

That's something I wish I'd understood earlier about selling.

Sometimes you're struggling to find the right words because you haven't clearly defined the thing behind them yet.

Clear sales language usually begins with a clear idea of what you're actually selling.

Why This Worked

AI didn't invent the value of the offer.

It helped us question the offer until we could describe that value clearly.

Only then did writing the message become easier.

That's where AI becomes useful as a mirror.

It can show you when you're explaining something clearly—and when you're hiding behind language that sounds like marketing because you're still unsure what you're trying to say.

The Positioning Card gives that clarity somewhere to live.

Once you have it, you don't need to start from zero every time you need to explain what you do.

Later, you might need:

An email.

A website description.

A social post.

A conversation with a potential customer.

Those formats may change.

The underlying positioning shouldn't change every time AI writes something new.

Start with the Positioning Card.

Then adapt the message to the situation.

The goal isn't for AI to give you a voice.

It's to help you hear when you've stopped using your own.

Robert's Principle

If you're asking someone to trust you, start by sounding like you.

One More Conversation

Take what you've been building.

Explain it to AI exactly the way you'd explain it to someone you respect over coffee.

Don't try to sell it.

Just explain it.

Then ask:

"Based only on what I just told you, what do you think I'm actually offering, who do you think it's for, and why would that person care?"

Read the answer carefully.

Does AI understand what you thought you were saying?

If not, don't write the pitch yet.

Keep talking until the two match.

Then ask AI to create your Positioning Card using only what you've established:

Who It's For

The Problem

What I Help Them Do

Why Me

What I Can Honestly Promise

What This Is Not

Review every section.

Correct anything that doesn't sound true.

Remove anything AI added that you never established.

When the card accurately reflects what you've built, ask:

“Using only this Positioning Card, help me explain what I do in two or three sentences I could actually say over coffee. Don't make it sound like an advertisement.”

Read it out loud.

Would you actually say it?

If not, tell AI where it stopped sounding like you.

Keep working until the answer sounds natural coming out of your mouth.

Then save the Positioning Card.

It's now your source of truth when you need to explain what you've built.

You know what you're offering.

You know who it's for.

You know why it matters.

And you can explain it without hiding behind marketing language.

Now comes the next uncomfortable question.

What's it worth?

CHAPTER TWELVE

Know What It's Worth

You've built something.

You've learned how to explain what it does and why someone might want it.

Then someone asks the question you've been avoiding:

"How much?"

Suddenly, every doubt you've had about the business shows up at once.

Who am I to charge for this?

I'm new.

What if they think it's too expensive?

Maybe I should start low.

That instinct feels like humility.

It's usually just fear wearing humility's clothes.

Pricing is uncomfortable because a price forces you to put a number on something you created.

AI won't tell you what to charge.

It can help you separate the actual evidence from the fear.

Before You Begin

Pricing isn't just math. It's also the story you tell yourself about your own worth.

Those are two different problems.

AI can help you examine the first. Only you can work on the second.

The goal of this chapter isn't to find a magical number that guarantees someone will buy.

It's to develop a price you can explain and defend without choosing the lowest number simply because it feels safer.

Three Ways to Look at a Price

Before choosing a number, look at the offer through three lenses.

Market

What are genuinely comparable offers charging right now?

Not something vaguely similar.

Comparable.

Who is the customer?

What problem does the offer solve?

How is it delivered?

How much support is included?

What does the customer actually receive?

Current pricing matters here.

Don't ask AI to guess what the market charges and treat the answer as fact.

Use AI to help you identify comparable offers, research current pricing where reliable information is available, and separate verified information from estimates or assumptions.

For each useful comparison, capture:

Comparable

What are you comparing?

Customer

Who is it designed for?

What They Receive

What does the buyer actually get?

Delivery and Support

Is it a download? A book? A course? Personalized service?

Verified Price

What does it cost now?

Source and Date

Where and when did you verify the price?

AI can help you research.

But a price doesn't enter your evidence simply because AI said that's what something costs.

Verify it.

Economics

What does delivering the offer actually cost you?

That includes more than software subscriptions or materials.

How much of your time does one customer require? Are there transaction fees? Tools? Outside services? Ongoing support?

And distinguish between the time and money required to create something once and the cost of serving each additional customer.

Those aren't always the same.

A consultant who spends three hours with every client has very different economics from someone selling a digital product that can serve another customer without another three hours of work.

Estimate what delivering one additional sale or customer actually requires.

A price that looks competitive but leaves you working for almost nothing isn't a sustainable price.

Value

What useful outcome does the customer receive?

What problem are you helping solve?

What does your experience allow you to provide that someone with less experience may not be able to provide as effectively?

Value doesn't mean charging whatever you want because you believe your work is special.

It means recognizing that price isn't determined by cost alone.

None of these three lenses chooses the price for you.

Together, they give your judgment something stronger than fear to work with.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced pricing strategist who helps first-time business owners make evidence-based pricing decisions.

Task

Help me develop a fair, defensible price for what I've built.

Don't choose the price for me.

Context

This is my first time pricing something of my own.

I don't want fear to push the number artificially low, and I don't want confidence to push it higher than the evidence supports.

I want to evaluate three things:

- what comparable offers actually charge
- what it costs me to deliver mine
- the value of the problem I'm helping solve

Do not present assumptions as market evidence.

If we don't know something, put it under Unknowns.

Format

Guide me through this one step at a time.

Help me:

- identify genuinely comparable offers
- research current pricing where reliable current information is available
- distinguish verified pricing from estimates or assumptions
- record the source and date of useful pricing evidence
- calculate my real delivery costs, including my time where appropriate
- distinguish upfront creation costs from costs incurred with each additional customer
- identify what makes my offer meaningfully different
- examine what useful outcome the customer is actually paying for
- establish a defensible range
- identify important unknowns
- challenge me if I choose a number primarily because it feels safer

Before I choose the final price, organize the evidence into a Pricing Case.

At the end, ask me what price I believe the evidence supports and why.

The Conversation

You

I found several comparable offers.

How do I know whether they're actually comparable?

AI

Start with the customer, the problem, the delivery method, the scope, and the level of support.

Two products in the same category aren't necessarily comparable if one is a self-guided download and the other includes personalized service.

And verify the current price before using it as evidence.

You

I've narrowed it down.

Here's what they're charging and where I verified the prices.

AI

Good.

Now let's look at your economics.

How much time does one customer require from you, and what direct costs come with delivering the offer?

You

About three hours of my time, plus the software and payment-processing costs.

AI

Then your time is part of the economics of every sale.

If those three hours are required for every customer, we need to account for them when evaluating whether the price is sustainable.

Now let's look at value.

What does the customer have after working with you that they didn't have before?

You

They leave with a clear plan and something they can actually use instead of continuing to figure everything out on their own.

AI

Now we have three useful pieces of information:

what comparable offers charge,

what delivery requires from you,

and what useful outcome the customer receives.

Before you choose the number, let's organize the evidence.

Build the Pricing Case

Ask AI to summarize what you've established into five sections.

Market Says

What do verified comparable offers tell you?

Not the highest number you found.

Not the lowest.

What does the actual comparison suggest?

Economics Says

What does delivering the offer require?

What costs occur once?

What costs occur every time someone buys?

Does each new customer require more of your limited time?

Value Says

What useful outcome does the customer receive?

What experience, judgment, or perspective contributes meaningfully to that outcome?

Unknowns

What don't you know yet?

Maybe you don't know how price-sensitive your audience is.

Maybe you don't know whether customers will perceive the value the way you do.

Maybe you don't have enough sales history to know how different prices affect demand.

Don't turn those unknowns into convenient assumptions.

Write them down.

Defensible Range

Based on Market, Economics, and Value, what range appears supportable?

Not the final number.

A range.

Then the decision comes back to you.

AI

Based on those three things, what range do you think the evidence supports?

You

Somewhere between X and Y.

But I keep wanting to choose the bottom.

AI

Why?

You

Because I'm new.

AI

Being new means you can't yet charge for proof you don't have.

It doesn't mean the work itself suddenly has no value.

How much of the discount you're considering reflects your lack of track record—and how much reflects discomfort asking for the money?

That's the conversation worth having.

Not:

"AI, what should I charge?"

But:

"Help me understand the evidence well enough that I can make the decision."

Say the Number

Once you've chosen the price, there's one more skill to practice.

Saying it.

Without apologizing.

Without discounting yourself before the other person even reacts.

Without adding:

"It's just..."

Or:

"I know that might sound like a lot..."

State it once.

Plainly.

Then stop talking.

"It's [price]."

That's it.

The silence afterward may feel uncomfortable.

Let it.

The price doesn't become more reasonable because you apologize for it.

Robert's Reality

This section almost didn't get written when I expected it to.

When we reached Chapter Twelve during the final revision of this book, I realized something:

I hadn't actually priced the book yet. The manuscript even had a placeholder here reminding me to come back after the final price was determined.

I could have picked a number that felt reasonable and then written an explanation for it. But that would have violated the lesson I had just asked you to follow.

So we stopped writing and did the exercise.

We researched the market and found plenty of inexpensive beginner AI books, but no perfect comparison. Most were teaching people how to start using AI.

AI After 50: Let's Talk already does that—and I give that book away.

Then we looked at economics. This book required a substantial investment to create, but as a digital product, another reader doesn't require me to produce another copy or spend additional hours delivering it.

Finally, we looked at value.

That's where the difference became clearest.

The Next Conversation doesn't give the reader more beginner prompts. It helps them use AI alongside their own experience to discover something worth pursuing, create it, explain it, price it, and eventually put it in front of real people.

Taken together, the evidence supported a range of roughly **\$19.99 to \$29.99**.

I chose **\$24.99**.

I believe the readers who come here through *Let's Talk* will already understand how I teach and what I believe about AI. I also believe this book gives them substantially more to work with.

What I don't know yet is whether enough readers will agree that it's worth \$24.99.

The book isn't published as I'm making this decision.

There are no paid buyers yet.

So that's not evidence.

It's an unknown.

Eventually, the market gets a vote.

For now, \$24.99 is the number I can defend based on the information I actually have.

AI helped me examine the evidence.

The decision was still mine.

Why This Worked

Pricing stopped being one frightening number and became a series of questions we could actually examine.

What does the market tell us?

What does delivering the offer require?

What value are we creating?

What don't we know yet?

The Pricing Case gave those answers somewhere to live before judgment entered the conversation.

None of those questions removed judgment from the decision. They gave that judgment something stronger than fear to work with.

AI didn't tell us what the offer was worth. It helped us build the case we used to decide.

Robert's Principle

Underpricing out of fear doesn't feel like fear. It feels like being reasonable.

One More Conversation

Take the actual thing you've been building.

Use AI to help you examine it through all three lenses:

Market.

Economics.

Value.

Don't accept unsupported claims about what comparable offers cost.

Research the market.

Verify useful prices.

Record where and when you found them.

Work out what delivering another sale or customer actually requires from you.

Then examine the useful outcome you're asking someone to pay for.

When you've done that, build your **Pricing Case**:

Market Says

Economics Says

Value Says

Unknowns

Defensible Range

Then ask:

“What range does this evidence support, what assumptions are still uncertain, and what evidence would I use to defend the number?”

Read the answer.

Challenge anything that isn't supported.

Then choose the number yourself.

Say it out loud.

Don't apologize for it.

Because eventually, someone else is going to hear that number.

And they may say no.

That's our next conversation.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

When They Say No

You built something. You learned how to explain it. You put a price on it.

Eventually, you're going to ask someone to buy it.

And eventually, someone is going to say no.

Or:

"Not right now."

Or:

"Let me think about it."

Or worse—there won't be an answer at all.

Just silence, which somehow feels heavier than an actual no.

The problem isn't that you'll hear no.

It's that most people have no plan for what to do with it besides feeling worse and trying less.

AI can help here.

Not by making rejection disappear.

By helping you separate what actually happened from the story you immediately start telling yourself about what happened.

Before You Begin

Rejection doesn't feel like data when it's yours. It feels personal.

You spent time building something. You worked up the nerve to offer it. You named the price. Then someone declined.

Feel disappointed if you're disappointed.

There's a difference between processing a rejection and avoiding the feeling of it entirely.

Use AI to think more clearly about what happened, not to numb yourself to it.

And don't use AI simply to reassure you.

The goal isn't:

"Tell me why this rejection doesn't matter."

The better question is:

"What does this response actually tell me?"

The Situation

You send your offer to someone who seems like a good fit.

The response comes back:

"Not right now."

Your brain immediately starts filling in the rest.

The price is too high.

The offer isn't good enough.

I shouldn't be doing this.

Nobody wants what I'm selling.

Stop.

None of those things were actually said.

Before deciding what the response means, separate it into three categories.

Known

What was explicitly said or objectively happened?

Possible

What explanations are consistent with what happened but haven't been established?

Unsupported

What story are you adding without evidence?

That's enough to slow down the conclusion your brain was already halfway toward making.

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced sales coach who helps people separate what a rejection actually means from what it feels like it means.

Task

Help me evaluate this response honestly and decide whether there's anything useful I should do with it.

Context

I sent an offer I believe in and received a response that disappointed me.

I want an honest read on this specific response, not just reassurance.

Do not assume the rejection means more than the evidence supports.

Do not recommend changing my offer, message, or price based primarily on speculation.

If a follow-up is appropriate, it should seek useful clarification or continue an

open conversation—not pressure someone into changing their answer.

Format

Help me separate the response into:

- Known
- Possible
- Unsupported

Then help me:

- determine what the response does and does not tell me
- determine whether anything in Known justifies changing my offer, message, or price
- identify whether an appropriate low-pressure follow-up exists
- distinguish one data point from a pattern
- give me one sentence about the situation that's true, not merely comforting

The Conversation

You

Here's exactly what they said:

“Not right now.”

Separate that into Known, Possible, and Unsupported.

AI

Known

They aren't moving forward right now.

Possible

Timing could be the issue.

Budget could be the issue.

They may not be interested.

It could simply be a polite way of declining.

Any of those explanations would be consistent with the response.

Unsupported

Your price is definitely too high.

Your offer isn't good enough.

Nobody wants what you're selling.

You shouldn't be doing this.

The response doesn't contain evidence supporting any of those conclusions.

You

Based only on Known, is there anything here that justifies changing my offer, message, or price?

AI

No.

You know they aren't moving forward right now.

You don't know why.

Changing your offer, message, or price would require an explanation the response didn't actually give you.

You

So how do I know whether I should change something?

AI

You don't—not from this one response.

Treat it as one data point.

If several people independently raise the same concern about your price, message, offer, or timing, then you may have a pattern worth examining.

You

So I do nothing?

AI

You don't overreact.

If there's an appropriate, low-pressure opportunity to ask for clarification or continue the conversation, you can.

But the purpose of the follow-up isn't to pressure them into changing their answer.

Otherwise, record what happened and keep going.

You

Give me one sentence about this that's true, not just comforting.

AI

One person chose not to move forward today.

That's all the evidence currently supports.

Notice the difference. AI didn't tell you everything was fine. It didn't tell you the rejection secretly meant they loved the offer but the timing was wrong. It didn't tell you to rebuild everything.

It separated what we knew from what was possible—and what fear was adding without evidence. That's much more useful.

Keep a Response Record

You don't need a complicated sales database to learn from what happens.

For now, keep a simple Response Record.

Response

What exactly happened?

Use their actual words when you have them.

If there was no response, write:

No response yet.

Don't translate silence into a rejection they never gave you.

Known

What does the response objectively establish?

Possible

What explanations might fit?

Keep them possibilities.

Unsupported

What are you tempted to conclude without evidence?

Write those down too.

Seeing the assumption on the page can make it much easier to recognize for what it is.

Action

What does the evidence justify doing?

Maybe:

Follow up.

Clarify something.

Change something.

Or:

Collect more evidence.

That last one is a perfectly legitimate action.

One response doesn't have to produce a business decision.

Robert's Reality

When I first started trying to build something online, I was following a system that encouraged me to study successful Instagram accounts in the same space, look at what they were posting, then model those ideas in my own voice.

So I did.

People saw the posts.

The view counts told me that much.

But nobody commented.

Nobody sent a DM.

Nobody asked what I was offering.

Silence.

And honestly, I would have preferred a no.

If someone had told me, "I've seen twenty other people promoting the same thing. I'm not interested," at least I would have had something to work with.

Silence didn't tell me why.

At first, that made it tempting to invent the answer myself.

Maybe the content wasn't good enough.

Maybe the offer was wrong.

Maybe I wasn't cut out for this.

But none of those explanations were actually contained in the silence.

What I did have, eventually, was a pattern:

People were seeing the content without taking the next step.

So instead of simply creating more of the same, I started developing something that came from the way I was actually using AI myself.

That became the Power Prompt Blueprint. And eventually I opened another AI conversation and asked a simple question:

Can we improve this?

I had no idea where that conversation would lead.

Why This Worked

Rejection gives us information.

The mistake is deciding what that information means before we have enough evidence.

Separating the response into Known, Possible, and Unsupported keeps those things from quietly blending together.

Known gives you the evidence.

Possible reminds you there may be explanations you don't yet understand.

Unsupported exposes the story you're adding yourself.

One response may tell you something. It rarely tells you everything behind the response. Several similar responses may begin telling you something more useful.

That's why we don't ignore rejection.

And we don't surrender to it either.

We record it.

We look for patterns.

Then we decide.

Robert's Principle

One no is rarely a verdict. It's the ordinary cost of asking. Save your attention for patterns, not single moments.

One More Conversation

When you receive a no—or silence—from the offer you've been building, bring the actual response into the conversation.

If there is no response yet, say exactly that.

Don't ask AI to guess why someone hasn't answered.

Ask:

“Separate this into Known, Possible, and Unsupported.”

Remember:

Known — what actually happened or was explicitly said.

Possible — explanations consistent with the evidence but not established.

Unsupported — conclusions you're adding without evidence.

Then ask:

“Based only on Known, is there anything here that justifies changing my offer, message, or price?”

If there is, examine it.

If there isn't, don't manufacture a reason to change something.

If an appropriate follow-up could clarify something or continue an open

conversation, consider it.

Don't use the follow-up to pressure someone into reversing a no.

Then complete your Response Record:

Response

Known

Possible

Unsupported

Action

Save it.

The next response gets another record.

Then another.

One response isn't a pattern.

But eventually, enough evidence may become one.

In the next chapter, we'll learn how to recognize it.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Keep Score Without Losing Heart

Somewhere around week six or eight, most people quietly quit. They don't announce it. They don't delete everything.

They just check their numbers, see something small or flat, feel a familiar wave of discouragement, and check a little less often the next week. Eventually, the project quietly disappears.

Sometimes the problem is that progress was actually happening, but the way they were keeping score made small, real progress feel like no progress at all.

But the opposite can happen too. The wrong number can make activity look like progress.

A number goes up. It looks impressive. It feels encouraging. But it may have very little connection to the result you're actually trying to create.

AI can help you figure out what deserves your attention.

Not by telling you whether your numbers are good.

By helping you ask a better question:

What are these numbers actually telling me?

Before You Begin

There's a difference between honest tracking and tracking that's designed to punish you.

There's also a difference between tracking what's easy to measure and tracking what actually tells you something.

A number can go up and still tell you very little about whether you're getting closer to your goal.

Before choosing what to track, ask one question:

What would have to happen before the result I ultimately want becomes possible?

If your eventual goal is a sale, several things may happen first.

Someone sees what you're offering.

Someone pays attention.

Someone responds.

Someone asks a question.

Someone starts a conversation.

Eventually, someone buys.

Those earlier signals can matter.

But don't mistake any one of them for success simply because the number is getting bigger.

The purpose of tracking isn't to make yourself feel good. Or bad. It's to help you see what's actually happening.

The Situation

You've been building for a while.

Some numbers are moving.

Others aren't.

You don't have enough history yet to know what "good" looks like, and

checking the numbers leaves you bouncing between excitement and discouragement.

Instead of asking AI:

"Are these numbers good?"

Ask something more useful:

"Given the result I'm trying to create, which numbers would actually tell me whether I'm moving toward it?"

The RTCF Conversation

Role

Act as an experienced early-stage business coach who helps founders identify useful measures of progress without confusing activity with results.

Task

Help me identify the few numbers that will tell me whether I'm actually moving toward my goal.

Context

I'm early in building this and don't yet have enough history to know what my numbers should look like.

Some metrics are moving, but I don't want to mistake a large number for a meaningful one—or a small number for failure.

My ultimate goal is [describe goal].

I also have Response Records from individual reactions or non-responses. Help me look across those records without turning isolated responses into patterns prematurely.

Format

Help me:

- identify the two or three signals most closely connected to my goal

- define what meaningful engagement actually means for this goal
- explain what each signal tells me
- identify numbers I'm currently watching that may look impressive but tell me very little
- establish my current baseline
- create a simple weekly record so I can compare my own results over time
- identify anything appearing repeatedly across my Response Records
- tell me when there isn't enough evidence yet to call something a pattern
- identify one thing, if anything, the evidence supports changing next

When possible, help me avoid changing several important things at once so I can better understand what happens after a change.

The Conversation

You

My posts got 2,000 views this week.

Is that good?

AI

Before deciding that, what's the goal of the posts?

You

I want people who might need my service to start conversations with me.

AI

Then views tell you the content was seen.

That's useful, but it doesn't tell you whether the right people were interested enough to take the next step.

What would count as meaningful engagement for the goal you described?

You

A real comment about what I'm offering, someone asking a question, or a DM.

AI

Good.

That's more useful than automatically treating every like as meaningful engagement.

How many of those things happened?

And how many actual conversations began?

You

None.

AI

Then the views aren't meaningless.

They tell you the content is being seen.

But they aren't evidence yet that the message is creating the action you want.

Let's record both.

You

So 2,000 views is bad?

AI

We don't know that either.

It's your baseline.

What matters next is whether the signals closer to your goal begin moving as you continue and make evidence-based adjustments.

You

So what should I track?

AI

Given the goal you described, I'd start with:

- how many people saw the content
- how many people engaged in a way you've defined as meaningful
- how many actual conversations began

And because your ultimate goal is a sale, record sales too.

Views tell you about reach.

Meaningful engagement tells you someone connected strongly enough to respond.

Conversations tell you someone moved closer to the action you ultimately want.

Sales record the outcome.

Track them together.

Then we'll have evidence to compare over time.

Notice what happened.

AI didn't tell us 2,000 views was good.

It didn't tell us 2,000 views was bad.

It asked what we were actually trying to accomplish.

Only then could we decide what the number meant.

Your Weekly Scorecard

You don't need a complicated dashboard.

You need enough information to see what changes over time.

Start with:

Week	Reach	Meaningful Engagement	Conversations	Sales	What I Changed
1					
2					
3					
4					

That's it.

Reach

How many people had an opportunity to see what you were offering?

Reach tells you whether you're being seen.

It doesn't tell you whether the message worked.

Meaningful Engagement

Define this before you start using the number to judge yourself.

For one project, meaningful engagement might be:

A substantive comment.

A reply.

A DM.

A question.

An email signup.

For another project, it may be something different.

Don't count something merely because the platform makes the number easy

to find.

Ask whether the action tells you anything useful about the result you're trying to create.

Conversations

How many actual conversations began with people who may have a reason to care about what you're offering?

This is closer to the goal than reach.

Sales

How many people bought?

If the answer is zero, write zero.

Don't hide it.

And don't turn it into a verdict.

It's a number.

The question is what the evidence around it eventually tells you.

What I Changed

Record the important thing you intentionally changed that week.

Maybe you changed the message.

Maybe you changed who you approached.

Maybe you didn't change anything because the evidence didn't justify it yet.

That matters too.

When practical, resist changing your message, price, audience, offer, and everything else at the same time.

If five things change and the numbers improve, you may have no idea why.

Change one important thing when the evidence supports it.

Then watch what happens.

From Responses to Patterns

Chapter Thirteen dealt with individual responses.

You recorded:

Known.

Possible.

Unsupported.

Action.

Now zoom out.

Bring your Response Records and Weekly Scorecard into the same conversation.

Ask:

"What appears more than once?"

Maybe three different people independently questioned the same part of your offer.

That's more interesting than one person mentioning it once.

Maybe several people saw the offer but didn't understand what happens next.

Maybe conversations are increasing even though sales haven't happened yet.

Maybe nothing repeats. That's possible too.

Don't force a pattern because you want an answer.

Sometimes the honest conclusion is:

We need more evidence.

Robert's Reality

Early in my attempt to build something online, I had a number I could point to whenever I wanted to convince myself something was happening.

Views.

People were seeing my Instagram posts.

At first, that felt encouraging.

A post with more views than the one before it looked like progress.

But eventually I had to ask a harder question:

Progress toward what?

The goal wasn't simply to get someone to scroll past my content.

I wanted engagement.

A comment.

A question.

A DM.

Some indication that what I was saying connected strongly enough for someone to take another step.

Those numbers weren't moving.

That didn't mean the views were worthless.

They told me something important:

The content was being seen.

But they couldn't tell me what I desperately wanted them to tell me—that the message was working.

Once I separated those two things, I could stop using the biggest number on the screen as my definition of progress.

That's a lesson I've carried into everything I've built since.

Before I decide whether a number is good or bad, I try to ask:

What does this number actually measure?

And just as importantly:

Is that what I'm trying to accomplish?

Why This Worked

The wrong metric can create two problems.

It can make real progress look like failure.

And it can make activity look like progress.

The purpose of tracking isn't to make yourself feel encouraged or discouraged. It's to make the next decision with better information.

The Weekly Scorecard doesn't tell you whether you're succeeding. It gives you a record.

Your Response Records capture what happened one person at a time. Your scorecard lets you step back and see what happens over time.

Early on, you may not have enough evidence to know whether a number is good, bad, normal, or unusual.

That's okay.

Start with what you actually know.

Establish a baseline.

Track the signals connected to the result you want.

Record what you change.

Then let your own evidence accumulate.

That's how patterns become visible.

Robert's Principle

Don't track the number that makes you feel better. Track the number that helps you see the truth.

One More Conversation

Look at the thing you've been building throughout these chapters.

Tell AI what outcome you're actually trying to create.

Then ask:

"What would reasonably have to happen before that outcome becomes possible, and which two or three signals would tell me those things are beginning to happen?"

Define what meaningful engagement means for your goal.

If a sale is the ultimate outcome, include sales.

Then create your Weekly Scorecard:

Week | Reach | Meaningful Engagement | Conversations | Sales | What I Changed

Record where those numbers are today.

That's your baseline.

Then once a week, bring the new numbers back.

Bring your Response Records too.

Ask:

"What changed? What didn't? What appears more than once? Do we have enough evidence to call anything a pattern yet?"

If AI identifies a pattern, ask:

"What evidence supports that conclusion?"

Then ask:

"Based on the evidence, what one thing—if anything—should I change next?"

If there isn't enough evidence yet, don't change something merely because changing something makes you feel productive.

Keep collecting.

Don't ask AI to make the numbers encouraging.

Ask it to help you understand them.

One response isn't a pattern.

One week isn't a trend.

But if you keep collecting the right evidence, eventually the numbers begin telling a story.

Your job is to make sure you're listening to the right ones.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

One Conversation at a Time

Look at what you've done.

You started by learning how to stay in the conversation past the first answer. You learned to question what AI gave you instead of simply accepting it. You used it to see things from another perspective. To prepare. To compare. To challenge.

Then something changed.

You turned the conversation toward yourself.

You looked at the experience you'd accumulated and recognized that some of the things that felt ordinary to you might not be ordinary at all.

You chose something worth giving a real chance.

You stopped organizing long enough to create something from it.

When the work demanded a skill you didn't have, you learned what you needed instead of waiting until you knew everything.

You figured out what you were actually offering before trying to sell it.

You learned to explain its value without sounding like someone else's advertisement.

You researched what it was worth and put a number on it.

You prepared yourself for the no.

And you learned how to collect the right evidence so one bad moment—or one impressive-looking number—wouldn't make the decision for you.

None of that happened because you found the perfect prompt.

It happened because you stayed in the conversation past the point most people stop.

That's what this book has really been about.

Not better prompts.

Better conversations.

And what happens when you stay in them long enough to do something real.

Before You Close This Book

You may be looking at what you've built and thinking you should be further along.

Maybe you expected a sale by now. A finished product. A launch. A business that somehow feels more official than the thing sitting in front of you today.

Maybe you have some of those things. Maybe you don't.

That's not a verdict on whether this is working.

What you have now is more than a better relationship with AI.

You have something that didn't exist when you started.

Maybe it's still rough.

Maybe nobody has paid for it yet.

Maybe you've already changed parts of it after seeing how someone responded.

But it's yours.

It came from your experience, your judgment, your decisions, and your willingness to keep moving when you didn't know everything yet.

AI helped.

You built it.

The Next Conversation

Open AI.

Tell it where you are.

Tell it what you've built, what's working, what's not, and what you're still unsure about.

Then ask:

"What should I do next?"

Don't worry about building the perfect prompt. Respond to the answer. Ask another question. Push back when something doesn't sound right. Add context when AI doesn't understand. Ask it to slow down when you need it to.

Stay in the conversation until you have one real action you can take.

Then stop for a moment.

Think about how you started that conversation.

Did you use RTCF?

If you did, good.

There's nothing wrong with that.

RTCF is a framework you know how to use whenever structure helps you think clearly.

But maybe you didn't. Maybe you simply started talking. Maybe you naturally added context when it was needed. Clarified what you wanted.

Challenged an answer. Asked another question. Kept going without thinking about whether you had properly separated Role, Task, Context, and Format.

If that's what happened, notice what changed.

You didn't forget RTCF.

You internalized what it was teaching you.

You learned how to communicate with AI without having to think about the framework underneath the conversation.

That's growth.

RTCF helped you start talking to AI.

Now you know how to keep the conversation going.

Robert's Reality

I never set out to become an author.

I certainly didn't imagine myself becoming a publisher.

When all of this started, I was trying to improve something small.

Looking back now, that's not the part of the story that matters most to me.

What matters is that somewhere along the way, the way I saw myself began to change.

There were things I didn't know how to do. So I learned them. There were decisions I wasn't sure how to make. So we talked through them. There were ideas AI suggested that I rejected. Others made me stop and think.

Sometimes I had to push back.

Sometimes I had to admit that something wasn't working.

Sometimes the next step led exactly where I expected.

Sometimes it changed the direction completely.

But I kept doing the work.

And eventually I had to acknowledge something I never would have said about myself when that first conversation began.

I was an author.

I was a publisher.

AI didn't make me either one.

Writing the books did.

Building the publishing process did.

Making the decisions did.

Doing the work did.

AI helped me think through problems I didn't know how to solve.

It helped me learn things when I needed to learn them.

It challenged ideas.

It helped me see possibilities I might not have seen on my own.

But I still had to decide.

And then I had to do something with the decision.

That's what this journey has come to mean to me.

The biggest thing AI changed wasn't the project.

It changed what I believed I could figure out.

That's different.

Because once you believe you can figure out the next step, you don't need to know every step that comes after it.

I couldn't have described where that first conversation would eventually

lead.

I'm glad I didn't have to.

I only had to keep having the next one.

Why This Worked

This book didn't hand you a finished business.

It gave you a place to start, then kept asking you to do something slightly harder.

But you supplied the part that mattered most. Your experience.

AI helped you question it, organize it, develop it, communicate it, and keep moving.

The decisions remained yours.

So did the work.

That's why this isn't a story about what AI can build for you.

It's about what becomes possible when you bring everything you already know into the conversation and keep going.

Maybe what comes from that conversation is a business.

Maybe it's a book.

A project.

A skill you never expected to learn.

A story you finally preserve.

Or simply a different belief about what you're capable of figuring out.

You don't have to know where the conversation ultimately leads before you're willing to begin it.

Robert's Principle

You don't need a bigger plan. You need the next conversation.

Your Next Seven Days

You've learned how to keep the conversation going.

Now it's time to see what happens when the conversation leaves the screen.

The 7-Day Momentum Challenge that follows isn't about practicing AI.

You already know how to talk to AI.

It's about putting what you've built in front of real people.

No hypothetical business.

No imaginary customer.

No practice offer.

Yours.

Turn the page.

It's time to find out what happens when what you've built meets the real world.

YOUR TOOLKIT

Throughout this book, you've built more than ideas. You've built tools.

Each one was designed for a different moment—finding the value in your experience, grounding what you know, shaping an offer, setting a price, understanding a response, and measuring whether you're actually moving forward.

You don't need to memorize them. You just need to know which one to reach for when the moment comes.

Experience Inventory

Chapter Seven · p. 57

Turns the experience you may take for granted into something you can see, explore, and potentially build from.

- What I Know
- What I've Done
- What I've Learned the Hard Way
- What People Ask Me About
- What I Still Care About

Use it again when: You're wondering what you know that might be valuable to someone else—or what you could build next.

Source Map

Chapter Nine · p. 85

Keeps a clear line between what you know, what your experience has taught you, and what still needs support.

- What I Believe
- Why I Believe It
- What Taught Me
- What Example Proves It
- What I Haven't Established Yet

Use it again when: You're creating something with AI and need to make sure your experience—not AI's assumptions—is leading the conversation.

Positioning Card

Chapter Eleven · p. 109

Gives you a source of truth for what you're offering before you try to explain or sell it.

- Who It's For
- The Problem
- What I Help Them Do
- Why Me
- What I Can Honestly Promise
- What This Is Not

Use it again when: Your message starts getting complicated, generic, or begins sounding more like an advertisement than you.

Pricing Case

Chapter Twelve · p. 121

Helps you put evidence behind a price instead of letting uncertainty make the decision for you.

- Market Says
- Economics Says
- Value Says
- Unknowns
- Defensible Range

Use it again when: You're setting or reconsidering a price and need to separate what the evidence says from what discomfort is telling you.

Response Record

Chapter Thirteen · p. 135

Keeps one response—or no response—from becoming a conclusion the evidence hasn't earned.

- Response
- Known

- Possible
- Unsupported
- Action

Use it again when: A reaction stings, silence feels louder than it should, or you're tempted to react before you understand what actually happened.

Weekly Scorecard

Chapter Fourteen · p. 147

Helps you measure the progress that matters instead of chasing the number that happens to be easiest to see.

- Reach
- Meaningful Engagement
- Conversations
- Sales
- What I Changed

Use it again when: You're looking at your numbers and need to decide whether you're actually making progress—and what you should change next.

You won't need every tool every day. Some may sit untouched for weeks or months. Then a decision, a setback, an opportunity, or a new idea will put you right back in the moment one of them was built for.

When that happens, you don't have to start over.

Come back to the tool. Look at what you know. Use your judgment. Then have the next conversation.

And now, it's time to put them to work.

GO DEEPER

Tools to work alongside the chapters you just finished.

You already have everything you need in the chapters themselves. These four workbooks exist for one reason: some exercises are worth doing with more room, more structure, and a worked example to follow — not because the book left something out.

Each one expands a single exercise from this book. Pick whichever one matches where you're stuck.

Positioning Card Pro \$27

Expands Chapter Eleven's Positioning Card exercise.

Turns your six-part card into what you actually say — a three-pass rewrite, plus a ready bio, DM opener, and comment-reply script, all built to sound like the same person.

Worked example inside: *A resume-writing service goes from a vague first draft to a five-second-clear pitch across all three passes.*

Pricing Case Builder \$27

Expands Chapter Twelve's Pricing Case exercise.

A full market-research tracker, an economics worksheet for your real margin, a value translation exercise, and a 3-tier pricing structure — so your number comes from evidence, not a guess.

Worked example inside: *The same resume service turns three verified competitor prices and an hourly-margin calculation into a defensible \$197–\$247 range, then a 3-tier lineup.*

Response Record Vault \$27

Expands Chapter Thirteen's Response Record exercise.

A running log for every response you get — including silence — plus a Pattern Alert prompt for spotting what repeats, and eight low-pressure follow-up scripts ready to use today.

Worked example inside: *Multiple responses begin pointing toward the same audience question — showing when something may be worth examining without declaring a pattern too early.*

Weekly Scorecard Dashboard \$27

Expands Chapter Fourteen's Weekly Scorecard exercise.

A real spreadsheet — not a static table — with automatic week-over-week calculations, a 4-week rolling average, and weekly and monthly AI prompts to review your own numbers.

Worked example inside: *A full 4-week walkthrough with real numbers, two trend charts, and a filled-in monthly 'State of the Business' summary.*

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AI After 50: The Next Conversation — Turn Experience Into Action— Castillo Digital Media

The 7-Day Momentum Challenge

If you went through the challenge in *AI After 50: Let's Talk*, you already know what seven days of small actions can do.

That challenge had one purpose:

Get you comfortable talking to AI.

This one starts somewhere different.

You've already been talking. More importantly, you've been building. You have something that came from your experience. You've worked on how to explain it. You've thought through what it's worth. You've learned how to separate one reaction from a pattern and how to track the signals that actually matter.

We're not rebuilding any of that here.

We're going to use it.

For the next seven days, AI stays beside you—but the important conversations won't all happen on a screen.

Some will happen with real people.

That's the point.

You don't need to feel ready.

You need to be willing to find out what happens when what you've built meets the real world.

Day One — Get Ready to Send

Take out the Positioning Card and Coffee Explanation you developed in Chapter Eleven.

Those are your source of truth.

Now look at the message you're preparing to send.

Read it out loud. Not silently. Out loud.

Does it sound like something you'd actually say?

Does the value make sense?

Does anything sound like marketing language you would never use in a real conversation?

Does the message still clearly reflect what you established in your Positioning Card—who this is for, what problem you're helping solve, and what you're actually offering?

Now bring the message to AI and ask:

"I'm sending this to a real person tomorrow. Don't rewrite it for me. Read it as the recipient. Is there anything here that could be misunderstood, make the value unclear, or make me sound unlike myself?"

Read the response.

Make only the changes you believe improve it.

If AI rewrites the message even though you told it not to, you already know what to do.

Push back. Bring the conversation back to the job you gave it. Then stop.

Don't spend the rest of the day polishing.

Don't make seventeen versions because sending the message tomorrow suddenly makes every word feel wrong.

By the end of today: You should have one message you're willing to send.

Check-In

What are you still tempted to change because it genuinely needs work—and what are you tempted to change because sending it makes you uncomfortable?

Day Two — Choose One Person. Send It.

Choose one real person who has a legitimate reason to care about what you've built.

Not the person least likely to reject you.

Not ten strangers.

One person.

If you're unsure who that should be, ask AI to help you think through the people you could reasonably approach and why each might—or might not—be a fit.

Then choose.

Use the message you prepared yesterday.

Use the price you established in Chapter Twelve if the situation calls for it.

Don't lower the price at the last second because there's suddenly a real person on the other side.

The evidence supporting the price didn't change simply because saying the number now feels more uncomfortable.

Don't add an apology.

Don't explain why you're new.

Send it.

By the end of today: One real person should know what you've built.

Check-In

What happened in the thirty seconds before you hit Send?

Day Three — Don't Invent the Response

Maybe they responded.

Maybe they didn't.

Either way, don't invent information that isn't there.

If you received a response, bring the exact response to AI.

Then complete the Response Record from Chapter Thirteen.

Response

What exactly did they say?

Use their actual words.

Known

What does the response objectively establish?

Possible

What explanations are consistent with the response but haven't been established?

Unsupported

What are you tempted to conclude without evidence?

Action

What, if anything, does the evidence justify doing next?

Ask AI:

“Separate this response into Known, Possible, and Unsupported. Then tell me what action, if any, the Known evidence supports.”

If you haven't received a response, your record begins:

Response: No response yet.

Known: No response yet.

That's all.

Don't ask AI why the person hasn't responded.

It doesn't know.

Don't decide they're not interested.

Don't decide your price was too high.

Don't rewrite your offer because somebody hasn't answered in twenty-four hours.

You have one piece of information:

No response yet.

Leave it there.

By the end of today: You should have one completed Response Record based on what actually happened.

Check-In

How much of the story in your head came from evidence—and how much did you add yourself?

Day Four — Have a Real Conversation

Today, your goal isn't to convince someone.

It's to learn from someone who resembles the person you're trying to help.

If the response from Day Two opened a conversation, continue it.

Listen. Ask questions.

If it didn't, identify another person who fits the audience you're trying to serve.

Don't necessarily pitch them. Ask them one honest question about the problem you're trying to solve.

Before the conversation, use AI to help you identify what you genuinely want to learn.

Maybe it's:

What frustrates them most about the problem?

What have they already tried?

How do they describe the problem in their own words?

What would make solving it valuable to them?

Then put AI away.

Listen to the human.

Don't spend the conversation waiting for your turn to explain why your offer solves everything.

Listen for something you didn't already know.

By the end of today: You should know one thing about your audience that you didn't know yesterday.

Check-In

Did the person describe the problem the same way you do—or did they use different words?

Day Five — Look at What You Actually Learned

Bring what you've learned from the first four days into one AI conversation.

Include:

- what you sent
- your Response Record
- any other responses you received
- questions people asked
- what you learned from the real conversation
- anything that surprised you

Then ask:

"What patterns do you see, and which things are still only single data points?"

Read the answer carefully.

Then ask:

"Is there anything here that justifies changing my message, offer, or price yet?"

If AI makes an assumption, challenge it.

Ask:

"What evidence from what I gave you supports that conclusion?"

Maybe you've discovered something worth changing.

Maybe you haven't collected enough evidence yet.

Both answers are useful.

If the evidence does support a change, choose one important thing to change.

Don't rewrite the message, lower the price, change the audience, redesign the offer, and rebuild everything at once.

If five things change, even an improvement may not tell you what mattered.

Don't make a change merely because changing something makes you feel productive.

By the end of today: You should know what the evidence supports changing—and what you're deliberately leaving alone.

Check-In

Were you hoping the evidence would confirm something you already believed?

Day Six — Send It Again

Choose another real person who fits.

If the evidence from Day Five justified a change, make that change.

If it didn't:

Leave the offer alone.

Don't rewrite because you're nervous.

Don't discount because the first person didn't buy.

Don't change five things at once and make it impossible to know what mattered.

Use what you've learned. Then send again.

The first send may have felt enormous.

This one may still feel uncomfortable.

Do it anyway.

By the end of today: A second real person should know what you've built.

Check-In

Compare this send with Day Two. What felt different—not about their response, but about you?

Day Seven — Keep Score, Then Choose What's Next

Bring the week's evidence together.

Don't begin with:

"Did I make a sale?"

Start with:

"What actually moved?"

Look at the week.

How many real people saw the offer?

How many engaged in a way that actually mattered?

How many conversations happened?

How many sales happened?

What questions came up?

What did you learn about the problem you're trying to solve?

What did you intentionally change?

Which numbers were meaningful?

Which merely looked impressive?

Now complete the first row of the Weekly Scorecard from Chapter Fourteen:

Week	Reach	Meaningful Engagement	Conversations	Sales	What I Changed
1					

That's your baseline.

Not your trend.

Not your conversion-rate prediction.

Not proof that the business works.

Not proof that it doesn't.

Your baseline.

Bring that information and your Response Records to AI and ask:

"Based only on the evidence from this week, what can I reasonably conclude, what can't I conclude yet, and what should I keep tracking?"

Challenge anything that goes beyond the evidence.

Then ask one final question:

"What's the next real action?"

Not the next business plan.

Not fifteen things.

One.

Write it down.

That's where next week begins.

By the end of today: You should have a record of what actually happened this week and one real action for the week ahead.

Check-In

If you'd measured this week only by sales, what would you have missed?

One Week Later

Seven days ago, what you'd built was still mostly between you and AI. Now other people have seen it. You've listened. You've received responses—or learned not to invent meaning when one didn't come. You've gathered information that didn't exist when you finished the last chapter.

You have something you didn't have before:

Evidence.

Use it.

Keep building.

Keep listening.

Keep deciding.

You didn't need a bigger plan to get here.

You needed the next conversation.

Now go have the next one.

About the Author

Robert Castillo is the founder of Castillo Digital Media, LLC, where he helps experienced professionals use artificial intelligence to do more with the knowledge, judgment, and experience they've spent decades developing.

After nearly four decades in the title industry—including leadership roles in both the private and public sectors—Robert discovered that the most valuable skill wasn't keeping up with every new technology. It was learning how to apply decades of experience in new ways. That realization became the foundation of *AI After 50*.

What began as an effort to create a practical book about using AI became something Robert never expected. One conversation led to another. The book became a series. The series helped inspire a publishing company. Along the way, Robert became something he had never set out to become: an author and a publisher.

That experience reinforced what he had come to believe about artificial intelligence. AI doesn't replace experience. It gives us new ways to use it. Rather than teaching technology through jargon or intimidation, Robert believes AI should be approachable, practical, and encouraging.

His philosophy is simple:

Technology should give us more time to be human.

Through his books and educational resources, Robert's mission is to help people over 50 recognize that experience is not a disadvantage in the age of AI. It's an asset.

An asset that can become a book, a business, a project, a new skill, or simply the confidence to pursue something they once believed was beyond them.

Robert's own journey is proof that you don't need to know every step before you're willing to begin. You need the experience you already have, the willingness to keep learning, and the courage to take the next step when it appears.

Because sometimes the next chapter of your life begins with a question you never expected to ask:

What could this become?

About Castillo Digital Media

Castillo Digital Media, LLC was founded on a simple belief:

Experience becomes more powerful when paired with the right technology.

We create practical books and educational resources designed to help experienced adults use artificial intelligence with greater confidence, purpose, and possibility.

Our approach begins with what people already bring to the conversation—the knowledge, judgment, skills, and perspective developed over decades of working and living. AI doesn't replace that experience. It can amplify it.

That's why our work focuses less on chasing every new tool and more on helping people use technology in ways that are practical, approachable, and useful in the real world.

Whether that means learning a new skill, solving a problem, preserving a story, creating something meaningful, or turning years of experience into a new opportunity, we believe technology should expand what's possible without diminishing what makes the work human.

Our mission is captured in four words:

Empowering Experience Through AI

Castillo Digital Media, LLC

CastilloDigitalMedia.com

Continue the Conversation

You finished the book. But hopefully, you haven't finished the conversation.

Maybe you discovered something in your experience worth exploring.

Maybe you started building something. Maybe you put it in front of another person for the first time. Or maybe the biggest change was simply realizing that you can figure out things you once assumed were beyond you.

Whatever came from these pages, keep going.

Keep asking questions.

Keep challenging the answers.

Keep bringing your experience into the conversation.

And most importantly, keep doing something with what you discover.

At Castillo Digital Media, we're continuing that conversation too—creating books and resources for people who believe decades of experience aren't something to leave behind as technology moves forward. They're something to build from.

To continue with us, visit:

CastilloDigitalMedia.com

There you'll find the latest books, resources, and ways to stay connected with AI After 50 and Castillo Digital Media.

The next conversation is yours.

Go have it.