

The First 30 Days

Where to start with AI in your business — without buying a new tool or hiring anyone.

Most founders start by buying a new tool — or hiring a new person. Almost nobody starts with what they already have.

If you feel overwhelmed and you're honestly not sure where to start or which tool to pick — that's a reasonable place to be, not a failing. There's a new model every few weeks and a new capability every month. **You don't need to move to any of them.**

What you need isn't another subscription. It's **a system that works for your business** — supported by AI, built on what you already pay for, run by people who've actually been shown how.

So that's what the next thirty days are: a real conversation with yourself about how your business actually runs, and one working system you built out of what you already have. It starts with you — your own AI use, your own handwork — and only then moves to your team.

THE THIRTY DAYS

Days 1–3	What you already do with AI — and what it actually gives you
Days 4–6	The wish list — what you'd hand over but don't know how to set up
Days 7–12	Your tools, and the overlap — what each one can <i>already</i> do
Days 13–17	Find the handwork — and time it
Days 18–22	Build one — yourself, or with someone who's done it
Days 23–27	Now your team — the same exercise, measured in hours
Days 28–30	Decide — which tools stay, what you learn, what they learn
Page 6	The worksheet — print it; the whole plan on one sheet

DAYS 1-3

What you already do with AI

Don't plan anything yet. Start by looking at what's already true. Open the AI you actually use — ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, whichever — and read back through your own history.

- What do you use it for, **honestly**? Not what you meant to use it for.
- Which of those actually saved you something — and which was a novelty you tried twice?
- Where do you keep going back to it without deciding to? That's the real signal.

What I already use AI for	How often	What it actually gives me

Done when: you can name two or three things AI already does well for you, in your own words. **Why this is first:** you're not starting from nothing — you're starting from something you've never looked at properly.

DAYS 4-6

The wish list

Now the other half: the things you would hand to AI tomorrow if you knew how to set them up. Don't filter by whether it's possible — you're not designing anything yet, you're being honest about what you want.

Write each one the way you'd say it out loud: *"I wish something would just draft the follow-up after every call."* *"I wish I didn't have to rebuild that report every month."*

- Five to ten lines is plenty. Plain language, **no tool names**.
- Mark each one: is this **my** work, or my **team's** work? You'll need that on Day 23.

Done when: you have a list you could read to someone in a minute. **Why:** the gap between Days 1-3 and Days 4-6 *is* your roadmap. Everything after this is closing that gap — nothing else.

DAYS 7-12

Your tools — and the overlap

Now list every tool and subscription you pay for. Then, beside each one, write what it **can actually do** — not what you bought it for. Those are almost never the same list.

This is the step nearly everybody skips, and it's where the money is hiding.

THE TRAP, WITH A REAL EXAMPLE

You pay for a separate tool to transcribe your meetings. But **Gemini already transcribes** — and you already pay for Gemini. Nobody told you, so you've been paying twice for the same job, possibly for a year. That's not a technology problem. It's a **nobody-read-the-feature-list** problem, and it is extremely common.

Tool	€ / month	What I bought it for	What it can ALSO do	Overlaps with

Most businesses find more rows than they expected. If you run out of space, that's the finding.

- Take the **two or three biggest things you pay for** and read their feature list properly, once. An hour each. This is the highest-paid hour of the month.
- Then circle every job that shows up **twice**.
- Don't cancel anything yet. You're mapping, not cutting — the decision comes on Day 28.

Done when: you can point at one real overlap — a job you're paying two different tools to do. **Why this beats cancelling blind:** you're not cutting to save money, you're cutting because something you *already own* does it.

Find the handwork — and time it

Take your wish list and go looking for the handwork underneath it: the work that follows rules but is done by a person. Copy-paste. Reformatting. Chasing. Checking. Typing the same thing into two places.

Then do the part everyone skips. **Time it.** Not a guess, not a feeling — sit down with a timer and do the task once.

What I do by hand	Minutes per time	Times per week	Hours per month

Pick the one with the biggest hours-per-month number that you'd be glad to never do again.

Done when: one task, with a **measured** number of hours beside it. **Why:** without the before-number you'll never know whether anything improved — and "it feels faster" doesn't survive a conversation with your accountant.

Build one

Take that one task and set it up properly. There are two honest routes, and they're both fine:

Build it yourself

Costs nothing but time, and you'll genuinely learn how this works. Also slow — if you're learning as you go, a setup you trust is weeks of evenings, not an afternoon. **Take this route if the learning is the point.**

Get someone who's done it

Costs money, saves months, and you still own the result afterwards. **Take this route if the time matters more than the lesson.**

There's no wrong choice between those two — but there is a wrong third one: starting to build it yourself, stalling at 60%, and quietly going back to doing it by hand. Be honest about whether you want to spend half a year on this before you start.

One rule: keep a human decision point wherever the output matters. All drafts, you approve. **Done when:** the task has run at least once, end to end, on real work.

Now your team

You've done it on yourself, so you now know what you're asking of them. Run the same three questions for the people who work for you:

- 1 What are they doing that follows rules but is done by hand?
- 2 Which tool they already have does something they're still doing manually? (Same overlap hunt as Days 7–12, on their side.)
- 3 How long does it take them — **timed, not guessed?**

Then the comparison that actually matters:

Task	Who	Min by hand	Min with AI	Times / week	Hours saved / month

Ask them, don't tell them — and nobody gets measured on usage. Usage targets produce theatre, not adoption.
Done when: you can see the difference in hours, per person, on real tasks — which is where the number stops being about you and starts being about the business.

Decide

Three decisions — and you now have the evidence for all three, which you didn't on Day 1.

1 Which tools stay

Keep what does a job nothing else can. Cancel the overlaps you found on Days 7–12 — you know now that something you already own covers it. That recovered money is real, and it pays for the next round.

2 What you need to learn

Look back at your wish list. What's still on it? That's your learning list — and it's not "learn AI." It's one specific, named thing you couldn't set up.

3 What your people need to learn

The same, per person. One named skill each. This is the part that turns a tool you pay for into value you actually get.

Then pick the next task and go round again. **One at a time is not slow — it's the only speed that survives contact with real people.**

The 30-Day Worksheet

Seven boxes across two sheets. If every box has real ink in it by day 30, you'll have something almost no business your size has: a system you understand, built from what you already own. This first sheet is all about **you**.

1 What I already do with AI (Days 1–3)

What I use AI for	How often	What it actually gives me

2 The wish list (Days 4–6) — mark each M = mine · T = team

1. _____ M / T
2. _____ M / T
3. _____ M / T
4. _____ M / T
5. _____ M / T
6. _____ M / T

3 Tools & overlap (Days 7–12)

Tool	€/mo	Bought it for	Can ALSO do	Overlaps with

4 Handwork, timed (Days 13–17)

What I do by hand	Min / time	Times / week	Hours / month

The one I picked: _____

The 30-Day Worksheet

The second sheet is where it stops being a private exercise: you build one thing, you bring your team in, and you decide what changes.

5 Build one (Days 18–22)

The task I'm setting up: _____

☐ Building it myself ☐ Getting someone who's done it

Honest time I'm willing to spend on it: _____

Ran end-to-end on real work, date: _____

☐ It keeps a human decision point where the output matters

6 My team, in hours (Days 23–27)

Task	Who	Min by hand	Min with AI	Times / week	Hours saved / mo

Total hours saved per month, across the team: _____

Convert once: _____ hours × € _____ per hour ≈ € _____ per month — an estimate, and say so

7 The decision (Days 28–30)

Tools that **stay** (nothing else does the job): _____

Tools I'm **cancelling** (overlaps): _____

What I need to learn — one named thing: _____

What my people need to learn — one each:

_____ → _____
 _____ → _____
 _____ → _____

Next task to go round again with: _____

This is the hand-tools version of what I do for companies.

It works — and I'd rather you run it yourself than not start at all. Where it stops being a weekend job is **scale**: every department at once instead of one task, the tool overlaps found properly rather than by reading feature lists on a Sunday, and your people carried through the learning instead of handed a login.

That's the **AI & Tool Waste Audit** — and it's built to pay for itself out of what it finds.

Want the grown-up version of your day-30 numbers?

A short call. Bring the worksheet — even half-filled, even just the handwork you timed. I'll tell you honestly whether an audit would pay for itself at your size, and if it wouldn't, I'll say so.

Book a call with me →

go.aibusinesspro.eu/call-start

Rather keep going on your own? Good.

The seven AI skills I run this business with are free on GitHub — installable, editable, with copy-paste versions if you never touch a terminal. go.aibusinesspro.eu/skills-start

One last thing. If you only do **Days 1–3** and nothing else, you'll still be ahead of most founders — because you'll know what AI already does for you, instead of guessing what it might. That's worth the hour on its own.

Liliia

Liliia Karpenko · founder, AI Business PRO · [@ai.businesspro](https://ai.businesspro)