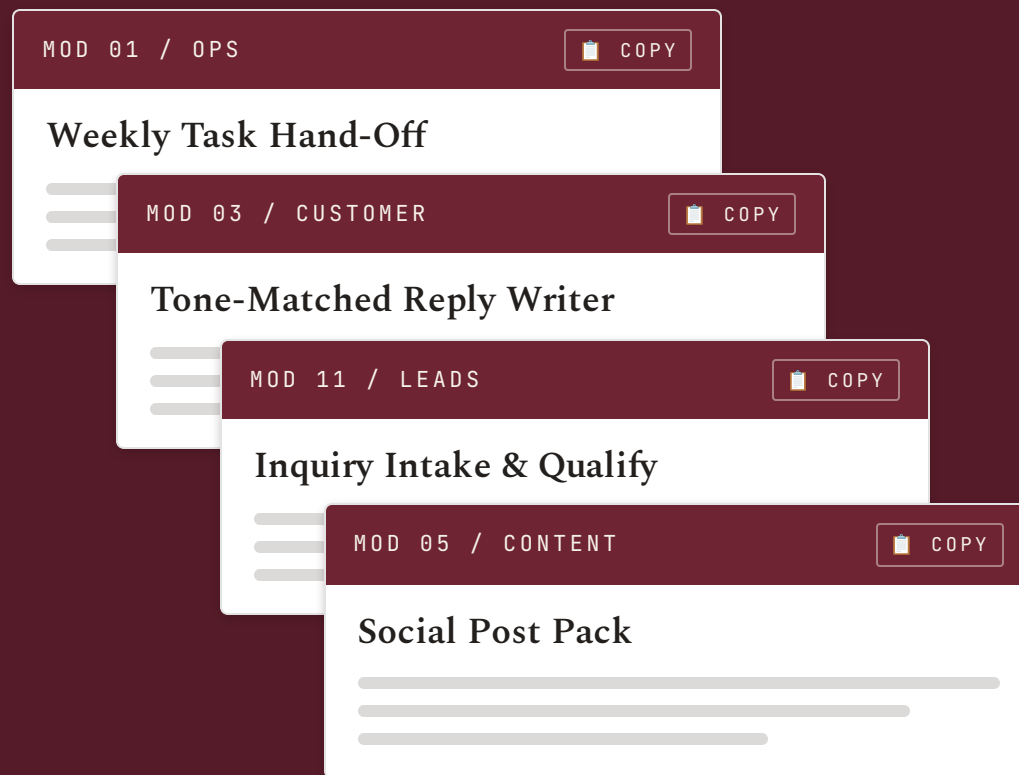


TOOLMARK ACADEMY

THE HANDS-ON AUTOMATION FIELD GUIDE

Your First AI Employee

A step-by-step system to automate your small business with AI agents.



BUILD ONE. THEN BUILD A TEAM.

EDITION ONE

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Before you begin

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Throughout this book you will see bracketed fields like **[your business]**. These mark the spots where you fill in your own details. Everything else is written for you and ready to use.

WELCOME

You are about to make your first hire.

Except this hire does not need a salary, a desk, or a week of training. It is an **AI agent**: a set of clear instructions you hand to an AI tool so it does a real job in your business, the same way every time.

You already know AI tools exist. You may have typed a question into one and gotten a decent answer. That is a fine start, but it is not a system. A one-off answer disappears the moment you close the window. An agent stays. You build it once, then use it again and again.

This book hands you that system, step by step. You will not need to code. You will not need to understand how the technology works underneath. You only need to follow the steps in order and do the small task at the end of each chapter.

THE PROMISE

Build your first AI employee — automate the work before you make your next hire.

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CONTENTS – TOOLS & WORKSHEETS

The fill-in tools

Ten worksheets and twelve prompt modules are spread through the book at the moment you need them. Use this list to find any one again.

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PART I • CHAPTER 1

What an “AI employee” really is

Forget robots. An AI employee is not a thing that walks around. It is a **job description you write down** and hand to an AI tool, so the tool does that job for you the same way each time.

AI agent. A set of standing instructions that tells an AI tool what job to do, what information to use, and what the finished result should look like. You write it once; it works on demand.

Think about how you would train a new part-time hire. You would tell them what the job is, show them an example of good work, hand them the information they need, and tell them what “done” looks like. An AI agent is the same briefing — just written as a prompt instead of spoken aloud.

The difference is speed and cost. A human hire takes weeks to find and months to settle in. An agent is ready in an afternoon, never forgets its instructions, and does not mind doing the same task for the thousandth time.

KEY IDEA

You are not learning to use AI. You are learning to **delegate** — and AI is the thing you delegate to.

PART I • CHAPTER 2

The hire-versus-automate frame

When work piles up, most owners reach for the same answer: hire someone. Sometimes that is right. Often it is expensive, slow, and aimed at work a machine could handle.

Before your next hire, run the work through one question:

THE FORK

Does this task need **judgment and a human relationship** — or is it mostly **repeating a pattern**? Repeating a pattern is agent work. Judgment and relationships stay with people.

Writing the tenth “thanks for your order” email this week is a pattern. Deciding whether to fire a supplier is judgment. Drafting next month’s social posts is a pattern. Sitting with an upset long-term client is a relationship.

The goal is not to replace people. It is to clear the pattern-work off your plate — and your team’s plates — so the human hours go to the work only humans can do. You automate first, then you hire for what is left.

That is why this book is called *Your First AI Employee*. The honest aim is to delay or reshape your next human hire by handing the repeatable work to agents first.

PART I • CHAPTER 4

The three things every agent needs

Every working agent in this book — no matter the job — is built from the same three parts. Learn them now and every module later will make sense.

- 01 **A job.** One clear task, stated plainly. “Write a reply to this customer message in my voice.” Not “help with customers.” Narrow beats broad every time.
- 02 **The context.** The facts the agent cannot guess: who you are, what you sell, your tone, the customer’s message, any rules it must follow. This is the part beginners skip — and it is the part that makes the difference.
- 03 **The output shape.** Exactly what “done” looks like. A numbered list? Three options? A draft under 80 words? When you name the shape, you get the same usable result every time.

REMEMBER IT AS

Job • Context • Shape. Miss any one and the agent guesses. Guessing is where bad AI output comes from — not from the tool being weak.

Part III turns these three parts into a fill-in framework you can use for any task. For now, just hold the three words in your head.

PART I • YOUR TURN

Name the work you dread

You do not need a tool open for this one. You need ninety seconds and honesty. The fastest way to find your first agent is to notice the task you keep putting off because it is repetitive.

MINDSET WARM-UP

The three jobs I repeat most

Write the three tasks you do over and over that feel like pattern-work, not judgment. Do not filter. These are your first candidates.

REPETITIVE TASK 1

REPETITIVE TASK 2

REPETITIVE TASK 3

WHICH ONE WOULD FREE UP THE MOST TIME IF IT RAN ITSELF?

Done? Hold on to these three. In Part II you will run every task in your week through a proper audit — and one of these is likely to become the very first agent you build.

PART III • CHAPTER 9

Why most prompts fail

When people say “AI gave me a useless answer,” the tool is rarely the problem. The brief was. A vague brief gets a vague result — from a human or a machine.

Watch the difference:

Weak brief

“Write a post about my bakery.”

Strong brief

“You write Instagram captions for a family bakery. Warm, plain, no emojis. Write three caption options for our new sourdough, each under 40 words, each ending with a question.”

The second one gives the agent a job, the context, and the exact output shape — the three parts from Part I. The result is usable on the first try.

THE SHIFT

Stop asking AI questions. Start giving it briefs. A question invites an opinion; a brief produces a deliverable.

PART IV • MODULE 03

Tone-Matched Reply Writer

MOD 03 / CUSTOMER

What this gives you: A ready-to-send reply to any customer message, written in your voice — not a robot's.

```
// ROLE
```

```
You are my customer-reply assistant for [your business]. You write the
way I write: [describe your tone, e.g. "warm, plain, a little informal,
never salesy"].
```

```
// CONTEXT
```

```
What we sell: [your product or service].
```

```
Useful facts you may need: [hours, returns policy, lead times, anything
customers ask about]. If a fact is not here, do not invent it.
```

```
Here is the customer's message:
```

```
[paste the customer message]
```

```
// TASK
```

```
Write a reply I can send.
```

```
// RULES
```

- Match my tone exactly. Sound like a person, not a script.
- Be helpful and specific. Answer the actual question asked.
- If you need a fact I have not given you, leave a clear **[ASK ME: ...]** note instead of guessing.
- Keep it under **[number]** words unless the situation needs more.

```
// OUTPUT SHAPE
```

1. The ready-to-send reply.
2. A one-line note on anything I should double-check before sending.
3. A "your next 7 days" block: 2 reply templates I should save from this.

How to use it: Paste an incoming message, get a draft back. Review, tweak a word or two, send.

[Copy module](#)

You just met one employee. There are eleven more.

What you read is a real slice of Your First AI Employee — the same pages, the same one working module you can use today. The full edition hands you the complete system: every module, every worksheet, and a dated plan to get an agent running this week.

WHAT'S IN THE FULL EDITION

- **12 copy-paste agent modules** — replies, follow-ups, content, invoicing prep, scheduling,
- **10 fill-in worksheets** — task audit, scorecard, prompt builder, spec sheets, trackers
- **The full prompting system** — the 5-part brief that makes any agent behave
- **Build a reusable AI Skill** — save your best agent once, summon it forever
- **7-day & 30-day install plans** — from “I read a book” to a working AI team

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