

FORVIS[®]

Using AI Effectively in the Business Office

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Accounting and Business Operations Workshop – May 7, 2024

CACUBO

Meet the Presenter



Rachel Pauletti, Ph.D.

FORVIS

Director / Higher Education Consulting

70-100 emails/day

Next week's calendar full by
Thursday of this week

30-40 open projects at a time

Project lead 95% of the time

AI newbie/skeptic/cynic

Agenda

- AI and You
- Getting started
- Efficiencies
- Insights
- Deliverables
- Caveats/Prep

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0 response submitted

Which of the following best summarizes your experiences with AI so far?

Scan the QR or use
link to join



[https://forms.office.com/
r/08rvyANQbh](https://forms.office.com/r/08rvyANQbh)

 Copy link

I'm using it daily
and doing it well

I'm AI-curious

I hate it - it'll be
the end of us

I thought AI was a
Spielberg movie?

Treemap

Bar



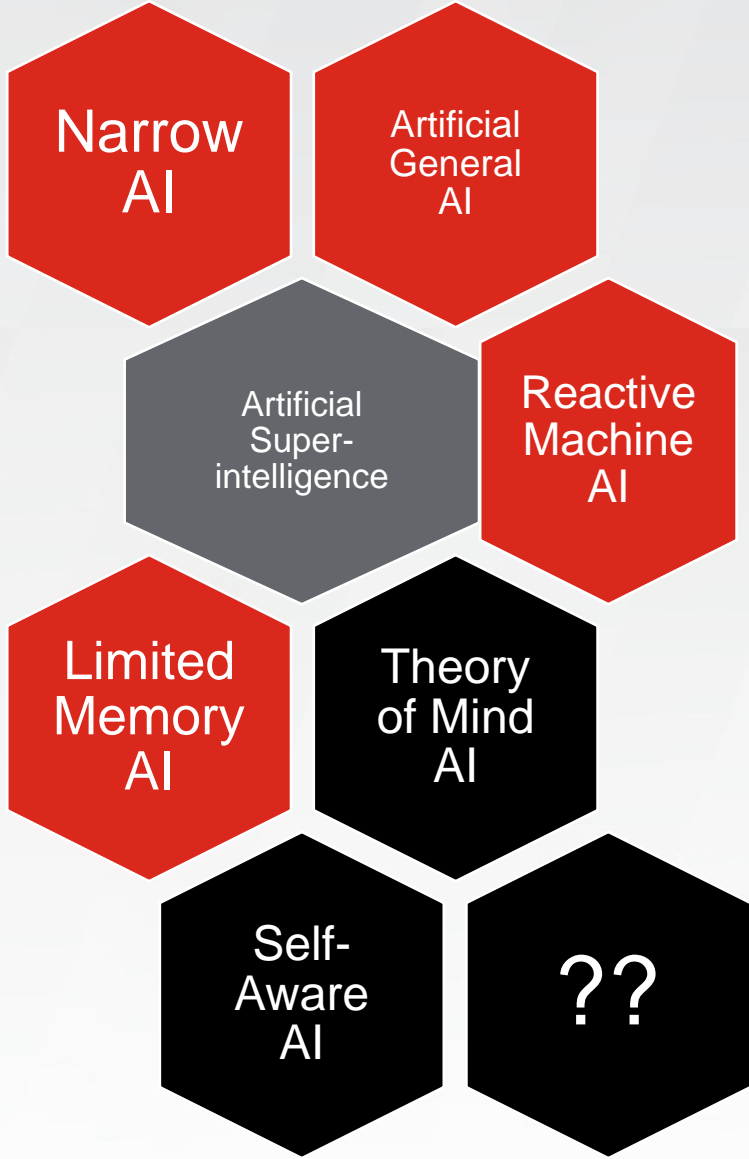
1 of 1



Types of AI



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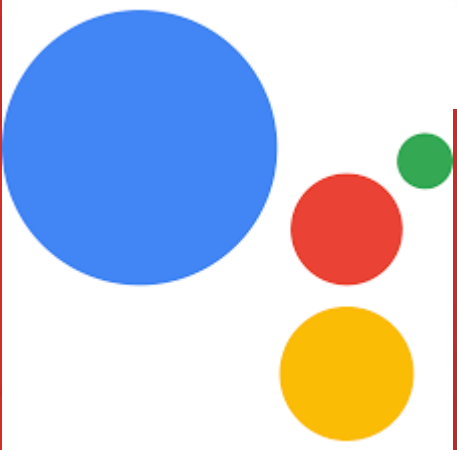


This exists

May exist/debate/close

Doesn't exist yet

AI for Info



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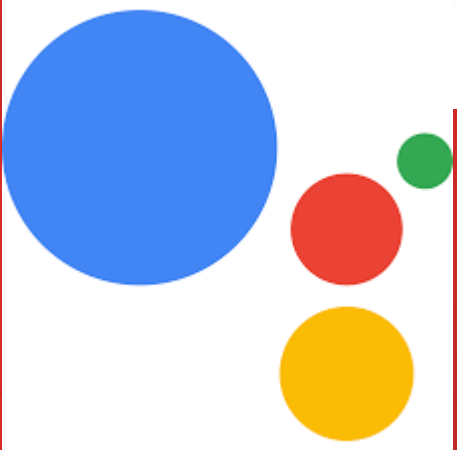
Hey, Siri/Alexa/Google!!

Encyclopedia/Computer –
just reading the internet

- What's the weather like today?
- What's on my calendar this morning?
- How old is Dolly Parton?
- When's the last time the Dolphins won a playoff game?

Narrow AI

AI for Action



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Hey, Siri/Alexa/Google!!

Robot – automation based
on code

- Remind me to make that dentist appointment
- Set a timer for 5 minutes
- Order my Starbucks
- Pause the TV

Narrow/Reactive

AI for Insight

Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini

Humanlike – “learning”
from input

- Summarize these meeting notes into 1 page
- Create a spreadsheet that will calculate sales quotes for my product
- Write an email to a coworker that is firm but warm
- Who would win a fight between a stray cat and a racoon?

Artificial General/Limited
Memory



0 response submitted

Why aren't you using AI more at work?

Scan the QR or use
link to join



[https://forms.office.com/
r/iH0zNCrzWz](https://forms.office.com/r/iH0zNCrzWz)

 Copy link

Not sure why I
need it

Not sure if I want it

Not sure where to
start

Not sure if I have
the right tools

Treemap

Bar



1 of 1



Why Aren't We Using AI More at Work?

- Not sure why we need
- Not sure if we want it
- Not sure where to start
- Not sure if we have the right tools

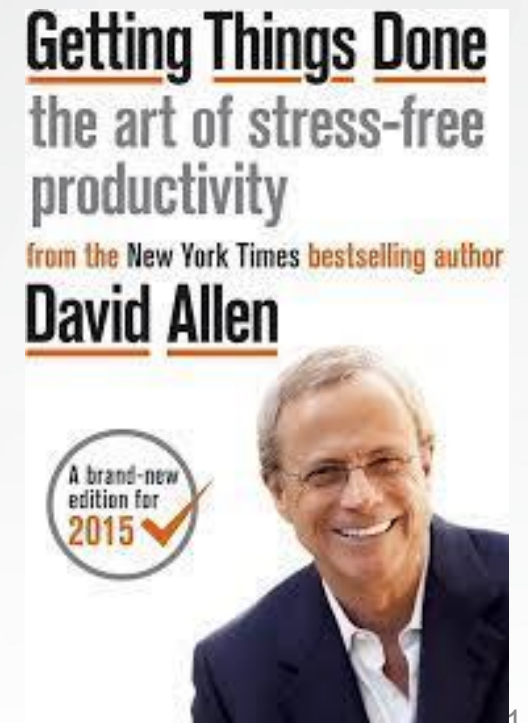
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Getting Started on the AI Journey

1. Identify your purpose/principles for using it
2. Vision
3. Brainstorm
4. Organize
5. Next actions

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Framework borrowed from:



1. Purpose

2 minutes: Think about why you want to/need to use AI...

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00 : 02 : 00

Change Clock Type

Digital

Duration: 00 02

00

TimeUp Reminder

(Optional): -- --

--

Choose Sound Effect

None

I want to spend less time doing mundane tasks and more time adding value for my clients and developing strategy for my practice.

1. Principles

3 minutes: Identify *your* permissible uses (limits) of AI.....

00 : 03 : 00

Change Clock Type
Digital

Duration: 00 03 00

TimeUp Reminder (Optional): -- -- --

Choose Sound Effect
None

I want to spend less time doing mundane tasks and more time adding value for my clients and developing strategy for my practice.

I can/will use AI to:

Read and summarize material

Summarize internal meetings

Create slides based on my original reports

I will *not* use AI to:

Make hiring decisions

Summarize meetings with clients

Create content and present it as my own

2. Vision

2 minutes:

Imagine yourself using AI for your purpose and with your principles.

What will you achieve?

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00 : 02 : 00

Change Clock Type

Digital

Duration: 00 02

00

TimeUp Reminder

(Optional): -- --

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Choose Sound Effect

None

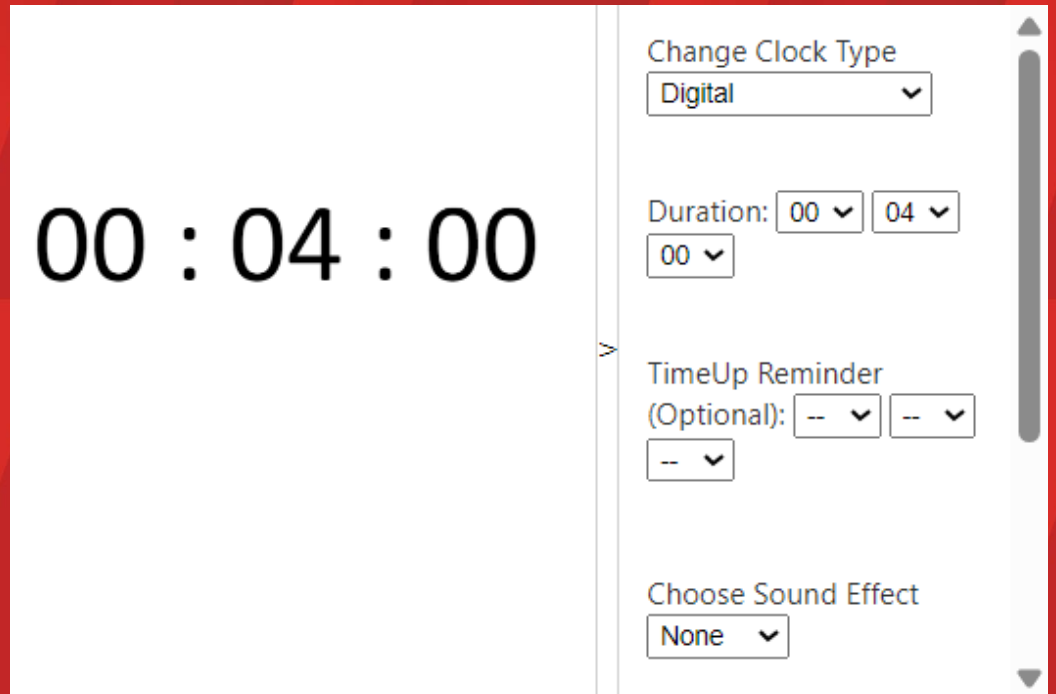
Choose Time In Sound

In 1 year, I will have 10 hours per week that I didn't have last year because I'm using AI.

3. Brainstorm

4 minutes: Write down everything you do at work that doesn't require specialized knowledge/training.

This can include things you don't do well!!!



Rachel's Wishlist

Notify/remind
stakeholders

Develop
project
plan/summary

Take notes
from
meetings

Create
PowerPoints

Summarize
literature

Analyze data

Identify time
on my
calendar

Write
important
emails

Filter
important
content

4. Organize

3 minutes: Organize your wish-list into 3 categories

Efficiencies – things that take up time, but don't require your expertise

Deliverables – items you prepare for others that are based on your knowledge

Insights – the means to the end; patterns that a computer could find and that you act on

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00 : 04 : 00

Change Clock Type

Digital

Duration: 00 04

00

TimeUp Reminder

(Optional): --

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--

Efficiencies

Insights

Deliverables



4. Organize

Efficiencies

Notify/remind
stakeholders

Filter
important
content

Identify time
on my
calendar

Insights

Take notes
from
meetings

Analyze data

Summarize
literature

Deliverables

Develop
project
plan/summary

Create
PowerPoints

Write
important
emails

Prioritize

Efficiencies

Insights

Deliverables

Notify/remind
stakeholders

Take notes
from
meetings

Develop
project
plan/summary

Filter
important
content

Analyze data

Create
PowerPoints

Identify time
on my
calendar

Summarize
literature

Write
important
emails

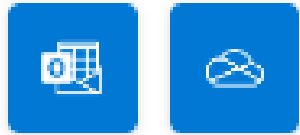
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Efficiencies – Robotic Process Automation

- Things that take up time, but don't require your expertise



Power Automate – Microsoft 365



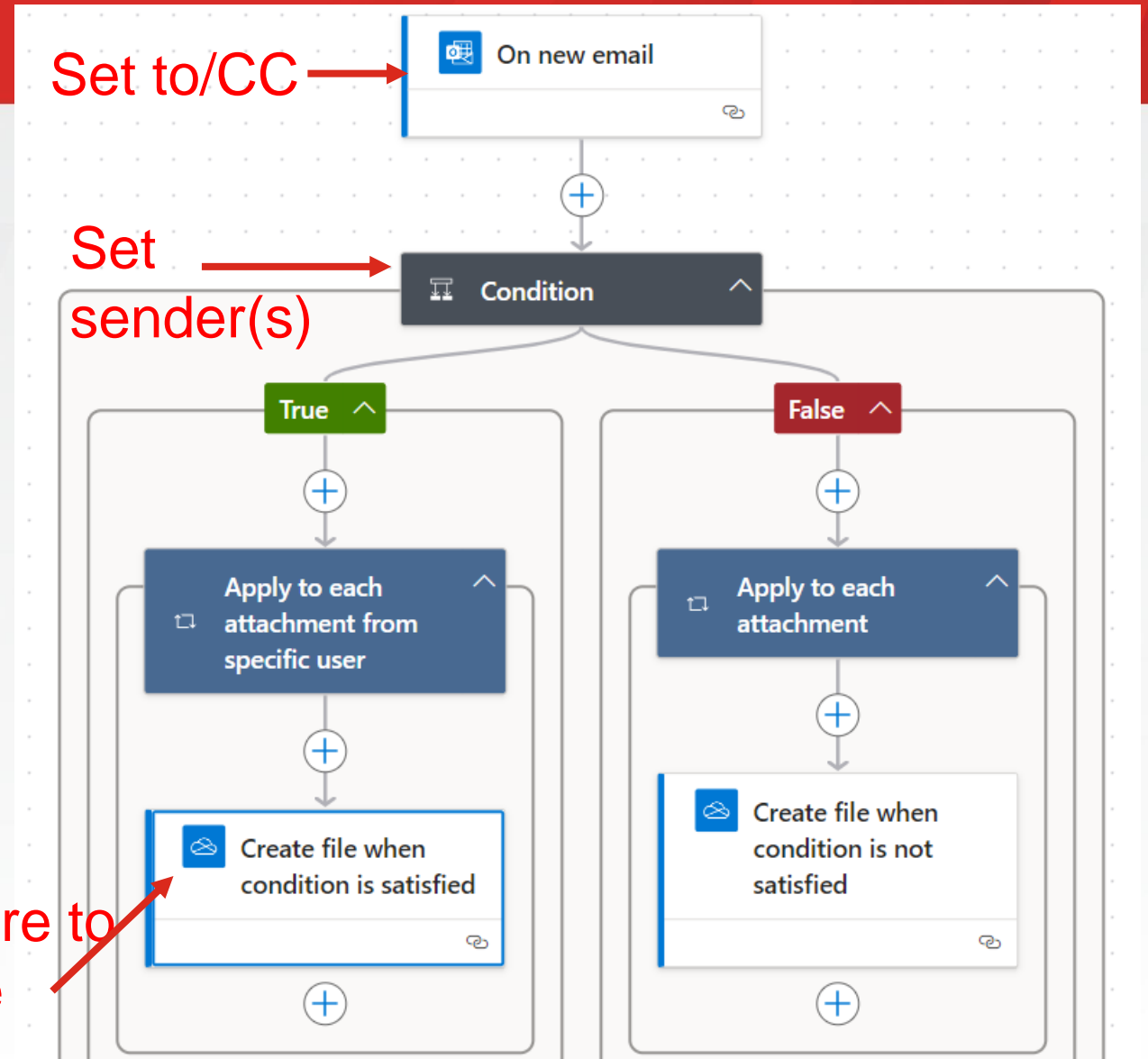
Save Office 365 email attachments to specified OneDrive for Business folder

By Microsoft Power Automate Community

Automated

273225

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Power Automate – Microsoft 365



Turn Emails into To-Do Items

By Microsoft

Automated


(Business)

Get emails converted to To-Do items automatically. No longer spend time reading an email and manually typing or copying the item into a To-do. Simply set your keywords and any key contact you would like emails to be converted to to-dos from and then let the automation go to work for you.

Key phrases in subject(s) separated by semicolons (if any match, a To Do will be created)

Create a To Do for emails sent to

Create a To Do for emails from

 [Edit in advanced mode](#)

Create

Power Automate – Microsoft 365



Schedule a recurring message in a channel

By Microsoft Power Automate Community

Scheduled

7657

On a regular basis, post a scheduled channel message on Microsoft Teams.

* Message Frequency

Week

* Team

Select an item

* Channel

Select an item

* Message

Font 14 **B** *I* U

Add message

[Edit in advanced mode](#)

Create

Power Automate – Microsoft 365

Hundreds more



Complete Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations workflow work items (PU29)

By Microsoft

Automated



On approval, move a new OneDrive for Business file to a different folder

By Microsoft

Automated



Get an email report of approvals waiting for my response

By Microsoft

Scheduled

5320



Execute SQL stored procedure on a recurring basis

By Microsoft Power Automate Community

Scheduled

5373



0 response submitted

What are your concerns with using RPAs?

Scan the QR or use
link to join



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r/7wJNm7D1b](https://forms.office.com/r/7wJNm7D1b)

 Copy link



Waiting for response...

Responses will be displayed as a word cloud

Wordcloud All responses

< 1 of 1 >

Get Ready to Automate

- Brainstorm, organize, prioritize
- Block time to set it up
- Be ready to iterate/review

Insights

- The means to the end; patterns that a computer could find and that you act on



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Large language models read inputs from the internet (including from people) to develop effective summaries and attempt conclusions

Insights – Talking Points

Copilot Prompt: What are the biggest issues facing higher education right now?

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Copilot

In 2024, higher education institutions are grappling with several significant challenges. Let's delve into some of the key issues shaping the landscape:

- **Declining Public Trust:** Public trust in higher education has sharply declined. Many colleges and universities, once seen as engines of social mobility, are now perceived as perpetrators of inequality. This erosion of trust poses a challenge for university leaders to articulate a compelling value proposition and better meet the needs of students, families, employers, and public officials¹.
- **Leadership Crisis:** The talent crisis in executive ranks is accelerating. College presidents face multifaceted complexities, including financial stress, divergent views on diversity initiatives, scrutiny over student investment returns, and pressures related to domestic and geopolitical incidents. As more leaders eye the exit door, finding capable successors becomes increasingly challenging¹.
- **Changing Admissions Landscape:** The spotlight on college admissions intensifies. Legal challenges to race-conscious considerations in financial aid and admissions practices are expected to rise following a Supreme Court decision. Institutions must navigate this landscape while ensuring equitable access for all students².
- **Financial Strain:** Campus budget woes persist. Rising costs, uncertain funding, and financial stress continue to impact colleges and universities. Leaders must find sustainable paths forward while maintaining educational quality⁴.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** The arrival of generative AI presents both challenges and opportunities. Institutions need to adapt to AI-driven changes in teaching, research, and administration¹.
- **College Athletics Transformation:** College athletics is shifting toward increased professionalism. Policies related to name, image, and likeness rights, booster-group influence, transfer portals, conference realignment, and Division I membership changes are prompting discussions about the future of student-athletes¹.
- **Student Loan Debt and Affordability:** Policymakers are grappling with student loan debt forgiveness and college affordability. These issues will likely remain at the forefront of higher education policy discussions⁵.

In summary, higher education faces a complex landscape in 2024, requiring innovative solutions and strategic leadership to address these challenges effectively. 🌞 1 2 4 5

Source(s)

1. 2024 higher education trends | Deloitte Insights
2. What's Ahead? 2024 Higher Education Trends and Challenges
3. 2024 Higher Education Trend Watch | EDUCAUSE
4. These Higher Ed Policy Issues Will Define 2024 - BestColleges
5. The Biggest University Challenges in 2024: Ultimate Guide

Insights – Give Me the Highlights

Copilot Prompt: Can you summarize the AICPA guidance on examined forecasts?

Copilot

Certainly! The AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) provides guidance on **examined forecasts** in **AT Section 301**. Here are the key points:

1. Objective of Examination Engagement:

- When conducting an examination of prospective financial information, the practitioner's objectives are to assess the reasonableness of the assumptions underlying the forecasts and evaluate whether the information complies with relevant criteria.

2. Engagement Types:

- Practitioners may issue examination reports, compilation reports, or agreed-upon procedures reports on prospective financial statements.
- The choice of engagement depends on whether the prospective financial statements are reasonably expected to be used by a third party.

3. Partial Presentations:

- A partial presentation is a subset of prospective financial information that excludes certain items required for full prospective financial statements.
- Standards also apply to engagements involving partial presentations.

4. Litigation Support Services:

- While this section does not cover prospective financial statements used solely in litigation support services, practitioners can find helpful guidance in these standards for such engagements.

For more detailed information, you can refer to the full AICPA guidance document on financial forecasts and projections. Additionally, there's an update from August 2021 that provides interpretive guidance and implementation strategies for all preparation, compilation, examination, and agreed-upon procedures related to prospective financial information. Hope this helps! 😊

Insights – Next Steps

In Teams/Zoom:

Enable app/add-in to capture meeting summary, key words, action items

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Moodbit - Smart Summary 9:28 AM

Date Meeting Mon, Mar 27, 2023 at 9:00 AM

Summary

In the meeting, the marketing team discussed their digital strategy for the next three months. John suggested running A/B tests to improve their website's conversion rate, while Olivia proposed running social media ads to increase engagement and ROI. They identified key performance indicators (KPIs) for each initiative, including conversion rate, bounce rate, click-through rate, and cost per click. Sophie assigned tasks to John and Olivia, and they agreed to reconvene in two weeks to discuss progress.

Keywords

Marketing team, digital strategy, A/B tests, conversion rate, social media ads, KPIs, task assignment, progress updates, motivation, goals.

Next Steps

- **John:** Improve website's conversion rate by analyzing landing pages and creating A/B tests. Meet deadline and communicate any problems with Sophie.
- **Olivia:** Create effective social media ads, monitor their performance and ensure they meet KPIs before the deadline.
- **Sophie:** Oversee and guide the team's progress, provide support for John and Olivia in achieving their goals, and keep the

Insights – Data Analysis

In Excel: Use Generative AI to help you when you're stuck

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- Use natural language, not formulas to interact with the sheet
 - Ask how to create a formula
 - Understand what a formula is doing
 - Determine what is wrong with your formula
- Add-ins/advanced licenses (like CoPilot) can:
 - Find errors/duplicates
 - Create visualizations
 - Discover trends, correlations, what-ifs

Insights – Analytics

Other use cases

- Fraud detection
- Enrollment, retention
- Reputation/risk monitoring via social media scrapes
- Generate individualized report from survey responses
- Internet of things

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0 response submitted

Now that you've seen some concrete use cases, what are some other things we can do in the business office?

Scan the QR or use link to join



<https://forms.office.com/r/L9a7X2dpgg>

 Copy link



Waiting for response...

Responses will be displayed as a word cloud

Wordcloud All responses

< 1 of 1 >

Caution – Don't Rely on Generative AI

- It will give you a slightly different answer every time
- It's only as “smart” as its inputs
- It can be *wrong*
- It can be biased
- It can produce incomplete outputs

Deliverables

- Items you prepare for others that are based on your knowledge
- You are paid/compensated/rewarded/incentivized for your expertise
- NOT for your Word docs, PowerPoints, or SM posts

Deliverables – Write Effective Emails

Copilot Prompt:

Write an email to a coworker who is struggling to connect with a client. Make the email warm, but firm, and provide some strategies for developing this skillset.

Dear [Coworker's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to discuss our recent interactions with clients and offer some constructive feedback. While I appreciate your efforts, there are areas where we can improve our communication to enhance client relationships.

1. **Understanding Client Perspective:**

- Consider putting yourself in the client's shoes. Try to understand their motivations, needs, and concerns. This perspective-taking approach will help you tailor your communication to resonate better with them¹.

- **Action Step:** Before engaging with a client, take a moment to think about their background, preferences, and expectations.

2. **Self-Awareness:**

- Reflect on your communication style objectively. Are there any patterns or habits that might hinder effective client interactions? Self-awareness is crucial for growth.

- **Action Step:** Regularly assess your communication skills and seek feedback from colleagues or mentors.

3. **Establishing a Human Connection:**

- Clients appreciate a personal touch. Avoid treating them as faceless entities; instead, build rapport by understanding their individual needs.

- **Action Step:** Use their preferred communication channels and show genuine interest in their concerns².

4. **Setting Expectations and Boundaries:**

- Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and expectations from the outset. This prevents misunderstandings and ensures a smoother client experience.

- **Action Step:** Discuss project timelines, deliverables, and communication frequency with clients.

5. **Transparency and Timeliness:**

- Be transparent about any challenges or delays. Clients value honesty and appreciate updates.

- **Action Step:** If there's an issue, communicate promptly and propose solutions.

Deliverables – Write Effective Emails

Copilot Prompt:

I am a controller in higher education. Please write an email to the faculty explaining that we will not give raises this year because of ongoing concerns about balancing the budget. I'd like the email to express gratitude for their efforts and ensure them that we're always working toward the institution's best interests.

Subject: Important Update Regarding Salary Increases

Dear Faculty Members,

I hope this email finds you well. As we approach the end of the academic year, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for your unwavering dedication and hard work. Your commitment to our institution's mission has not gone unnoticed, and I truly appreciate the countless hours you invest in shaping the educational experience for our students.

However, I must share some challenging news. Due to ongoing financial constraints and the need to balance our budget effectively, we regret to inform you that there will be no salary increases this year. I understand that this decision may be disappointing, especially given your exceptional efforts, but please know that it was made after careful consideration of our financial situation.

Our priority remains the long-term stability and success of our institution. While we navigate these difficult times, we are actively exploring alternative ways to recognize your contributions and support your professional growth. Rest assured that we are committed to finding creative solutions that align with our shared goals.

As we move forward, I encourage you to continue your outstanding work. Your passion, expertise, and resilience are essential to our community, and I have no doubt that together, we will overcome these challenges. We value your input and encourage you to share any ideas or suggestions that can contribute to our collective progress.

Thank you once again for your dedication to our students, our colleagues, and our mission. Your commitment inspires us all, and I am confident that brighter days lie ahead.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me directly. Let's continue working together to ensure the success of our institution.

With gratitude,

[Your Name] Controller [Institution Name]

Deliverables – Write Effective Emails

Copilot Prompt:

What if faculty members express frustration or disappointment?

Subject: Important Update Regarding Salary Increases (Follow-Up)

Dear Faculty Members,

Thank you for your prompt responses and candid feedback regarding the recent announcement about salary increases. I understand that this news may have caused frustration and disappointment, and I appreciate your honesty.

As educators and professionals, it's natural to have strong feelings about matters that directly impact us. Your dedication to our institution is commendable, and I want to assure you that your voices are heard. While we cannot provide raises this year, we remain committed to supporting you in other ways.

Here are a few additional points to consider:

1. **Transparency:** We value transparency and open communication. If you have specific concerns or suggestions, please feel free to share them with me directly. Your insights are invaluable as we navigate these challenging times.
2. **Advocacy:** As we work toward financial stability, we will continue advocating for our faculty. Rest assured that your well-being and professional growth remain at the forefront of our priorities.
3. **Collaboration:** Let's collaborate on creative solutions. If you have ideas on alternative forms of recognition or professional development opportunities, please share them. Together, we can explore avenues beyond salary increases.
4. **Support Networks:** Consider connecting with colleagues who may be experiencing similar emotions. Sometimes sharing experiences and strategies can alleviate frustration.

Remember that we are a resilient community, and our collective efforts contribute to the success of our students and institution. Thank you for your unwavering commitment, and let's continue working together to overcome challenges.

With gratitude.

Deliverables – Create a Presentation

- SlidesAI.io (Google workspace) – you upload the content, it creates the slides
- Beautiful.ai – you upload the content, it creates the slides
- ChatGPT – will create the content if you furnish the topic
- CoPilot for PowerPoint – will create slides from your other reports

Cautions

- You are giving your information to the internet when you use this tech
- You *must* edit/customize/tailor
- When you read enough AI, it starts to become pretty noticeable
 - It doesn't sound like "you"

Ethical Dilemmas in Tech



Misinformation and deep fakes



Lack of oversight and acceptance of responsibility



Respect for employees, customers, others



Moral use of data and resources



Responsible adoption of disruptive tech

Next Steps

- Understand your systems – Office 365, Google?
- Set aside 6-8 hours to get started
 - Identify 3-5 things you can automate *today*
- Recognize that this is disruptive tech and will change the way you do things, now or later
- Create policies for use and data governance
 - Ethics are popular. Don't be afraid to publicize these values.



Questions?

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Thank You!

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