

A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO AI FOR THE MID-MARKET

# The delvr.ai Method.

Most AI advice is either a vendor pitch or a 200-page consulting framework. This is neither. It is **the small number of things the best operators agree on**, stripped of the hype, arranged so a CEO can act on them.

# 01 Why a method at all.

Nearly nine in ten companies now use AI somewhere. Roughly one in twenty get real value from it. The gap is not the technology, and it is not money. The gap is method: most businesses bolt AI onto how they already work, run a few pilots, and stall.

The organisations that pull ahead do a handful of unglamorous things consistently. We read how Google, Microsoft, McKinsey and Anthropic each describe AI adoption, kept what they agree on, discarded the parts that only make sense at enterprise scale, and built something a mid-market business can actually run.

<b>Google</b>	<b>Microsoft</b>	<b>McKinsey</b>	<b>Anthropic</b>
Start with quick wins and minimal disruption. People, process, technology, in that order.	Fix the one constraint holding you back, not every dimension at once. Put a small cross-functional group in charge.	Redesigning the work is the single biggest source of value. Pilots that never change the work create nothing.	Skill your people in how to work with AI, not just which buttons to press. Treat AI as infrastructure, not a gadget.

## 02 Five principles underneath it all.

Before any roadmap, these are the beliefs the method rests on. If you disagree with these, the rest will not land.

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### PRINCIPLE 01

#### Start from the business, not the tool.

The first question is never "where can we use AI." It is "where does this business actually lose time, money, or customers." AI is the answer to a problem you can already name.

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### PRINCIPLE 03

#### Fix the binding constraint.

You do not need to advance on every front at once. Find the one thing blocking progress, whether that is data, skills, or trust, and clear it first.

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### PRINCIPLE 05

#### Measure value, or it stays a story.

Decide upfront what a win looks like in dollars, hours, or satisfaction. The companies that capture value are the ones tracking it from day one.

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### PRINCIPLE 02

#### Redesign the work, do not decorate it.

Dropping AI into an unchanged process gives you an expensive assistant. The value comes from rethinking the end-to-end workflow once AI is in it.

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### PRINCIPLE 04

#### People are the bottleneck, not models.

The model is rarely the limiting factor now. Whether your team knows how to delegate to it and judge its output is. That is a training problem, and a solvable one.

## 03 The method, in five moves.

This is the spine of the work. Each move answers one question and produces one thing you can put in front of a board. It runs as a sequence the first time, then becomes a loop you repeat.

### 01 Frame

OUTPUT · A shortlist of real problems

"Where is this business actually leaking value?"

- Read the business the way an operator does: strategy, margins, and where the work actually happens.
- Map where time and money drain away, before naming a single AI tool.
- Set the goalposts now: what counts as a win, in numbers you already report on.

### 02 Map

OUTPUT · A call on every system you run

"What do we do with what we already have?"

- Inventory the stack: the in-house builds, the licensed platforms, the data sitting in each.
- For every meaningful system, a verdict: extend it with AI, integrate AI into it, replace it, or leave it alone.
- Find the binding constraint: the one gap in data, skills, or trust that blocks everything else.

## 03 Prove

OUTPUT · One or two pilots that moved a number

"Can we show real value in 60 days, not someday?"

- Pick one or two pilots that are high-value, low-drama, and visibly tied to a problem from Frame.
- Run them in 30 to 60 days against the win condition you set, with a real human in the loop.
- Redesign the workflow as you go, so the pilot proves a new way of working, not just a clever demo.

## 04 Equip

OUTPUT · A team that can work with AI

"Does our team know how to work with this, not just use it?"

- Train for fluency, not features: how to delegate to AI, instruct it, judge its output, and stay accountable.
- Put a small group in charge: an executive sponsor plus the few people who own adoption and guardrails.
- Set the rules of the road: what data goes where, what needs a human sign-off, what stays off-limits.

## 05 Scale

OUTPUT · A roadmap that compounds

"What do we do next, and what do we deliberately not do?"

- Sequence four to six initiatives, costed and tied to revenue, cost, customer experience, or risk.
- Build, buy, or kill, called on each one with the reasons attached.
- Run it as a loop: the wins fund the next round, and the method repeats from Frame.

## 04 The six places AI actually shows up.

When people say "implementing AI" they usually mean one of six different things, and they need different work. Naming which one you are talking about removes most of the confusion in the room.

<p><b>01</b></p> <p><b>Train people</b></p> <p>Build the fluency to work with AI well. The highest-return, lowest-cost move, and the one most skipped.</p>	<p><b>02</b></p> <p><b>Set strategy</b></p> <p>Decide where AI does and does not belong, and tie every bet to a commercial outcome.</p>	<p><b>03</b></p> <p><b>Build infrastructure</b></p> <p>The plumbing: clean data, secure access, audit trails. Dull, and the thing that breaks scaling when missing.</p>
<p><b>04</b></p> <p><b>Choose projects</b></p> <p>Pick the few initiatives that move a real number, and say no to the rest, loudly.</p>	<p><b>05</b></p> <p><b>Automate workflows</b></p> <p>Hand whole repeatable tasks to AI, with a human checking the seams. Real time back, fast.</p>	<p><b>06</b></p> <p><b>Redesign processes</b></p> <p>Rebuild the work end-to-end around what AI makes possible. The hardest, and where the largest value sits.</p>

## 05 What "training people" really means.

Most AI training teaches prompting. Prompting is roughly a quarter of one of four skills. Real fluency, the kind that separates a team that gets value from one that does not, has four parts. We borrow this framing from the work Anthropic did with two university professors, because it is the clearest we have found.

01

### Delegation

Deciding what to hand to AI, what to keep human, and how to split a task between the two. The judgment call that everything else depends on.

02

### Description

Telling the AI clearly what you want and giving it the right context. This is where prompting lives. Necessary, but not the whole game.

03

### Discernment

Judging whether the output is actually good: accurate, unbiased, fit for purpose. The skill that protects you from confident nonsense.

04

### Diligence

Owning what you do with the result. Responsibility, transparency, and knowing the rules you are operating under.

## 06 Knowing where you stand.

Every major framework uses some version of a maturity ladder. Here is a plain-English one. The point is not the label. It is to have an honest conversation about which rung you are on, and to refuse to skip one.

### Curious

MOST START HERE

A few people use AI in the chat window for odd tasks. **No strategy, no measurement, no shared view.** Useful, but invisible to the P&L.

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### Tactical

QUICK WINS

A handful of pilots are running and showing time saved. **The work itself has not changed yet.** Real, but fragile, and easy to stall here.

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### Strategic

THE TURNING POINT

AI is tied to commercial goals, workflows are being redesigned, and people are trained. **Value is tracked and defended.**

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### Native

THE FRONTIER

The business is rebuilt around AI. **It is infrastructure, not a project.** Few mid-market firms are here, and that is fine.

## 07 The one trap to avoid.

### Pilot purgatory.

The single most common failure is a drawer full of promising pilots that never change how the business runs. Adoption is high, impact is near zero. **The escape is not more pilots. It is picking one, redesigning the work around it, training the people who do that work, and measuring what changed.** That is the whole method in a sentence.

## Where would this land for your business?

Thirty minutes, no deck, no pitch. We work out which rung you are on and where the value actually is.

[Book a 30-minute call](#)