



**INO AI LAB**

[ AI EDUCATION • COURSE MATERIAL ]

# AI for Business Leaders

*Strategy, ROI, and competitive advantage*

LEVEL	DURATION	LESSONS
<b>All Levels</b>	<b>5 hours</b>	<b>10</b>



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[ LESSON 01 ]

## Building an AI Strategy That Actually Ships

Most corporate AI strategies fail because they start with technology instead of with a P&L line. The right starting question is 'which 3 processes cost us the most time or money, and could a model trained on our data move the needle?'. Pick the smallest viable pilot — one team, one workflow, eight weeks — and define success in business metrics (hours saved, deals closed, tickets deflected), not model accuracy.

Set a clear kill criterion before you start. If the pilot doesn't hit 70% of the target by week six, you stop and write a one-page lessons-learned memo. This protects your AI budget from the zombie projects that drain most enterprises and creates organizational learning even from failures. Three small fast pilots beat one big slow strategy deck every year.

### // KEY TAKEAWAYS

- › Start from a P&L line, not a model.
- › Define success in business metrics.
- › Set a kill criterion before kickoff.

[ LESSON 02 ]

## ROI Models for AI Projects

AI ROI has three components: hours saved, revenue lifted, and cost avoided (errors, churn, compliance fines). Build a simple spreadsheet with conservative assumptions: 30% adoption in year one, 40% productivity gain on the targeted task, and total cost of ownership including model fees, integration, training, and change management. Discount the value of saved hours by 50% because not all saved time turns into output.

Compare against the right baseline. A 'do nothing' alternative usually has its own costs — slower competitors will eat the same market. Track actuals monthly against the model, and update assumptions transparently. Boards trust honest revisions more than perfect forecasts, and honest data wins the next budget round even when the project underperforms the initial pitch.

### // KEY TAKEAWAYS

- › Three ROI levers: hours, revenue, cost-avoidance.
- › Discount saved hours by 50% in the model.
- › Track actuals; update assumptions transparently.

[ LESSON 03 ]

## Buy vs Build vs Fine-Tune

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The default in 2026 is buy. A frontier API + a thin internal wrapper covers 80% of use cases at 10% of the build cost. Build only when your differentiation is in the data or workflow itself. Fine-tune only when prompting plus retrieval (RAG) demonstrably falls short on your evals — usually for tone, format consistency, or proprietary jargon, not for raw capability.

Watch the lock-in carefully. Abstract your model calls behind a single internal interface so you can swap providers in a day. Use evals as your contract — every new model release runs against the same private test set before any production rollout. Vendor pricing changes more often than capability, and the team with a fast switch wins on margins.

### // KEY TAKEAWAYS

- › Buy first, fine-tune last.
- › Abstract model calls behind one internal interface.
- › Use private evals as your switching contract.

[ LESSON 04 ]

## Change Management: The Hardest Part

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The technology rarely fails — the rollout does. Employees fear job loss, managers fear losing control, and customers fear unaccountable decisions. Address all three upfront. Tell employees explicitly which tasks AI handles and which stay human. Give managers dashboards showing AI activity. Tell customers when AI is involved and how to reach a human.

Pair every AI deployment with a training budget equal to at least 10% of the tooling spend. The biggest gap between AI winners and losers in 2026 is not model choice — it's whether the workforce knows how to actually use the tools. Identify internal champions, give them airtime, and ritualize sharing of useful prompts in a weekly forum.

### // KEY TAKEAWAYS

- › Address employee, manager, and customer fears explicitly.
- › Budget 10% of tooling spend for training.
- › Champions and rituals beat memos.



[ NEXT ]

# Keep Going

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You've completed this course material. The real learning starts when you apply what you've read. Pick one idea from this PDF and run a small experiment this week. Document what worked and what didn't. Share your findings with the community.

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