

AI AGENTS FOR LEADERS WHO HAVE NO TIME TO LEARN AI

Prepare for conversations you cannot afford to avoid

AI for People Leadership

This guide goes beside the Section 5 videos, and its steps are there for when you choose to try a strategy. Clara, Liam, Darius and Tessa are a prepared fictional example.



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5 lectures · prompts, ideas and checks

How to use this guide

Keep it open on your phone or a second screen while the lecture plays on your main screen.

ONE

Watch first.

Every lecture makes sense without practice. The steps are there when you choose to try one.

TWO

Use the requests.

Every dark window holds a request from the lecture. Select the text to use it in an AI product your employer permits.

THREE

Check yourself.

Each lecture ends with one question. Answer it before you move on.

ALL LINKS AND COPY BUTTONS

Every link for this section, and every prompt with a working Copy button, is on one page of our website.

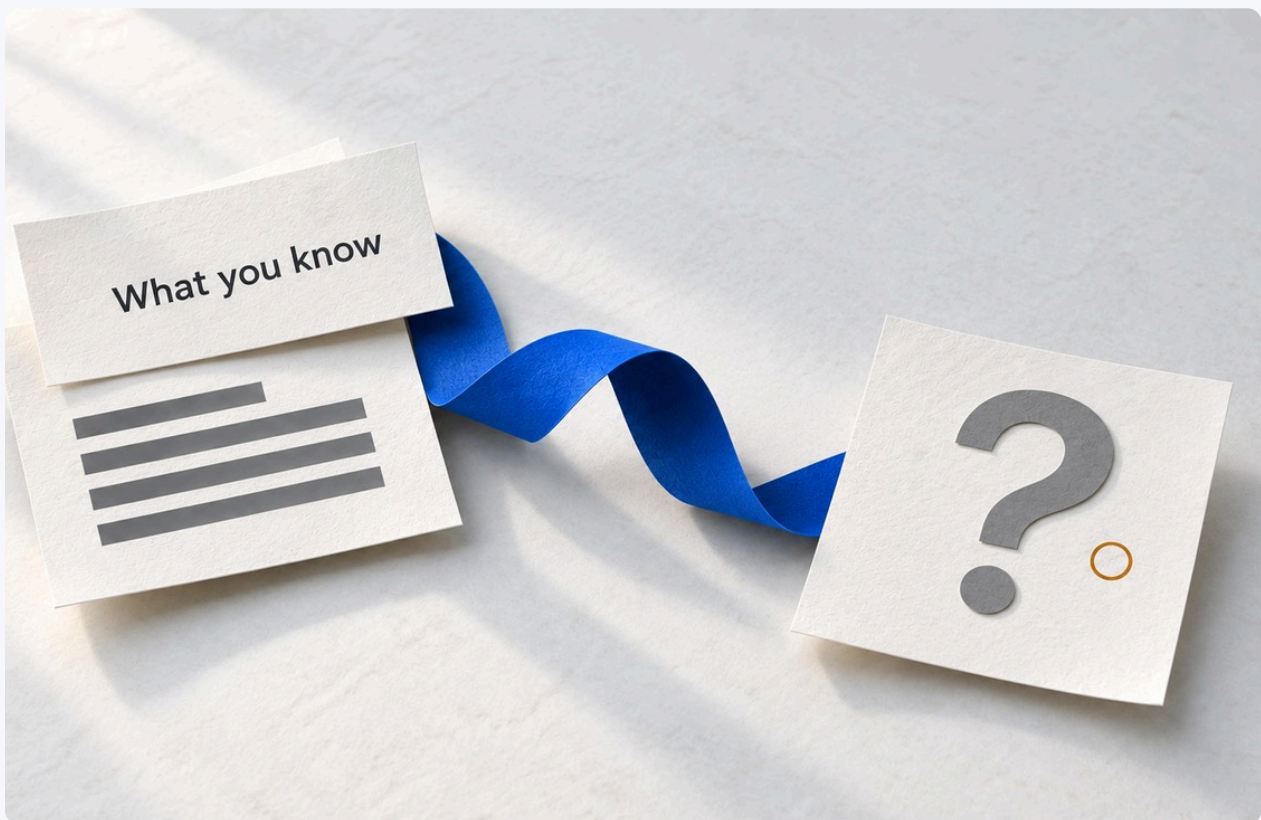
[Open the Section 5 page](#)

5 lectures

5.1	Which conversation are you putting off?	Page 4
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Which conversation are you putting off?

Name a conversation you have been postponing, and separate what you already know from what only the other person can tell you.





IDEAS TO KEEP

01

Clara, a customer-service manager, has postponed a 1-on-1 with Liam twice. His last 2 shift notes left out unresolved customer issues, and 2 customers called back the next morning to repeat their problem from the beginning.

02

What Clara knows: Tuesday's and Thursday's shift notes left out 2 open billing problems, and both customers had to call back and explain them again. What she does not know: why Liam left those details out.

03

Trying to decide the whole exchange in advance often makes you sound like a prosecutor, which makes the other person defensive even when your words are polite.

04

A different way in: arrive ready to state the one observation you know for certain, and to ask an open question you are genuinely willing to hear answered.

05

Preparation can separate proven facts from frustration and put your opening question into fair, calm words. Only the conversation itself can tell you what obstacle the other person actually faced.



FOLLOW ALONG

1

Think of one conversation in your working week that you have been putting off, or follow Clara's case without sharing any personal details.

2

Write down what you know for certain from records or what you saw.

3

Write down, separately, what only the other person can tell you.

GOOD TO KNOW

Clara and Liam are a prepared fictional example written for this course.



FILES AND LINKS

[README.md](#)

[practice/clara-and-darius-people-leadership-files.md](#)

[This lecture on the website](#)



CHECK YOURSELF

What does Clara know from the shift records, and what can only Liam tell her?

How do you raise a problem without assuming the motive?

Replace an assumed motive with what you observed, its verified impact and the support you can offer, then open with a question that invites an honest answer.





IDEAS TO KEEP

01

Clara's frustrated thought: "Liam is rushing out the door at shift close and does not care about leaving a mess for the morning shift." Said aloud, it would leave Liam defending his character instead of fixing the shift notes.

02

Instead of asking AI to polish the accusation into softer corporate language, Clara uses feedback-coaching, the starter-pack skill that separates what was observed from what is only assumed.

03

Clara asks the agent to ask clarifying questions before proposing any wording. Its 4 questions cover the observed action, the verified impact, the expectation set earlier, and the support she can realistically offer.

04

When the agent asks whether the notes prove why the section was left blank, Clara recognizes that "rushing" and "not caring" are guesses she cannot verify.

05

Coaching means understanding the real obstacle a colleague is hitting and helping them build a workable way forward.

06

The 3-part test for any feedback opening: can the colleague recognize the specific event, understand why its impact matters, and give an honest answer that could change your understanding of the problem?



FOLLOW ALONG

- 1 Open practice/people-leadership-prep.html and go to the 01 Observation vs motive tab.
- 2 Compare the initial frustrated thought with the prepared coaching opening, and read why each matters.
- 3 If you want to try it, remove identifying personal details from your own situation and run the request below in an AI product your employer permits.
- 4 Answer the agent's questions before it proposes wording, then check its opening against the 3-part test.

Request · Separate observations from assumed motives

PROMPT

I need to prepare for a 1-on-1 feedback conversation with a team member whose last 2 shift notes omitted unresolved billing callbacks, which led to 2 customers calling back the next morning to repeat their issue. Right now I feel frustrated that they are rushing at 5 p.m. and not thinking about the morning shift.

Before drafting any feedback wording, ask me questions to separate what is proven by the work records from what I am assuming about their motive, confirm what expectation was set previously, and check what practical support I can realistically offer. Then propose a short opening statement and an open coaching question that invites their perspective.

Use in: ChatGPT or another AI product your employer permits, using only non-confidential facts of the work

GOOD TO KNOW

Whenever you prepare a real people conversation with AI, remove identifying personal details and use only the non-confidential facts of the work.



FILES AND LINKS

[practice/people-leadership-prep.html](#)

[prompts/section-05-prompts.md](#)

[skills/feedback-coaching/SKILL.md](#)

[This lecture on the website](#)

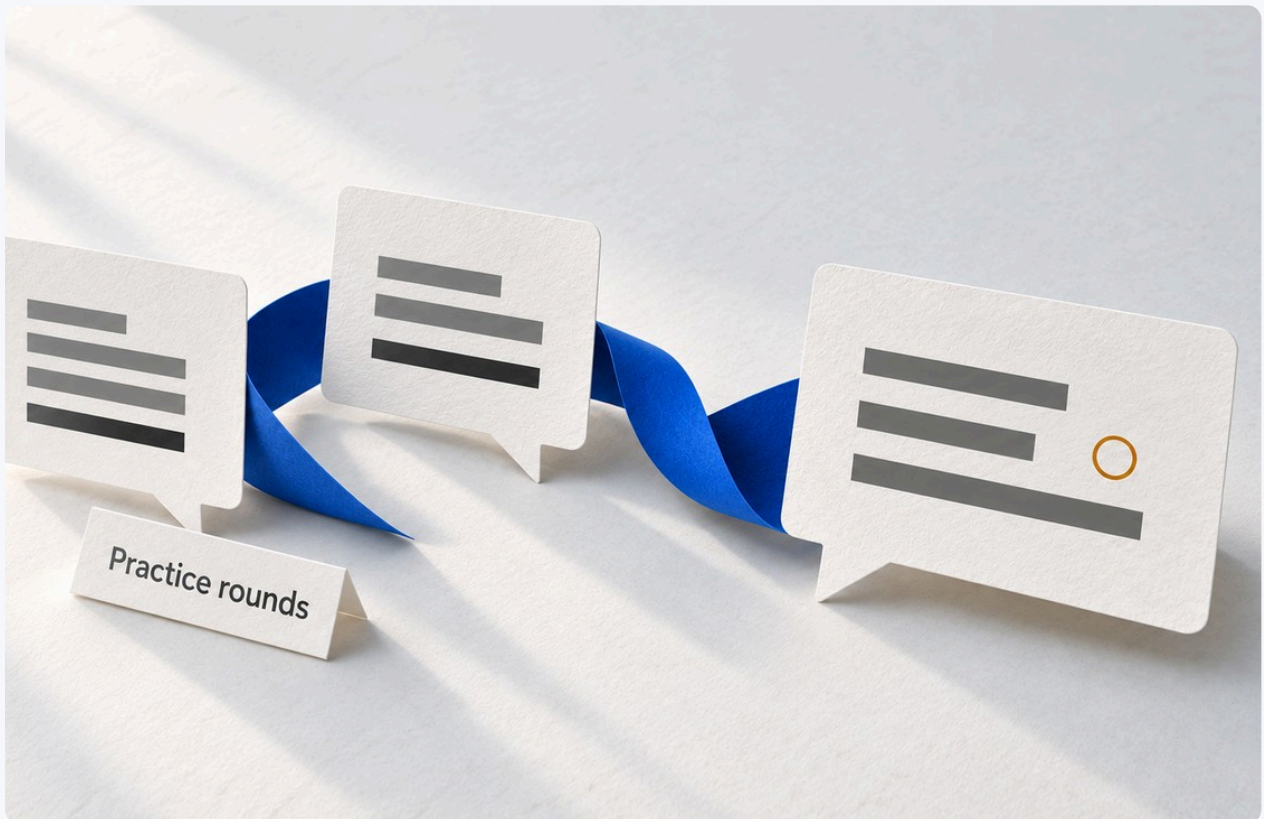


CHECK YOURSELF

Why does Clara's prepared question work as coaching rather than a trap?

What will you say if the conversation gets difficult?

Rehearse your prepared opening aloud against several plausible reactions, and use the agent's feedback to hear where you stopped listening.





IDEAS TO KEEP

01

If you have only practiced the version where the colleague nods and agrees, the first tense reply can throw you off balance.

02

Using AI to simulate another person's plausible responses in a practice exchange, so you can test and refine your words, is called role-play.

03

The simulated responses are authored rehearsal possibilities drawn from common workplace friction, not a psychological profile of Liam or a prediction of what he will say.

04

Clara runs 3 short rounds: the simulated Liam is unsure what counts as an unresolved issue, feels squeezed by end-of-shift call volume, or disagrees that the missing note caused the repeat call. She speaks each reply with the microphone on.

05

Practicing only until the simulated colleague agrees is a common mistake. Real readiness comes from testing how you respond to disagreement or a complication you did not expect.

06

In Round 2, Clara first answered with a rule. Her revised reply listened to the late escalation, explored the overtime limit and kept the expectation that the morning shift needs warning of open issues.



FOLLOW ALONG

- 1 Open the 02 Role-play rounds tab in [practice/people-leadership-prep.html](#).
- 2 Compare Clara's first spoken reply with her revised reply in Round 2.
- 3 If you have a prepared opening of your own, run the request below and answer each round aloud.
- 4 After each round, read the agent's quoted critique against the 4 listening checks before trying the reply again.

● ● ● Request · Rehearse across 3 plausible reactions

PROMPT

Here is my prepared opening: "In Tuesday and Thursday's shift notes, the 2 open billing problems were not listed, which meant 2 customers had to repeat their full history to the morning team. What made capturing those open issues difficult at the end of those shifts?"

Role-play the colleague across 3 separate short rounds so I can practice responding aloud:

Round 1: The colleague is unsure what counts as an unresolved issue.

Round 2: The colleague raises end-of-shift call volume and a 4:55 p.m. escalation against the 5 p.m. log-off rule.

Round 3: The colleague disagrees that the missing note caused the repeat customer call.

After each round, quote my exact reply and evaluate it against 4 criteria: did I state the concern clearly, ask an open question, attend to what the colleague said before answering, and separate a newly surfaced fact from an assumption?

Use in: ChatGPT or another AI product your employer permits, with the microphone on if you can

GOOD TO KNOW

The simulated rounds are rehearsal possibilities, not predictions of a real colleague.



FILES AND LINKS

[skills/conversation-rehearsal/SKILL.md](#)

[This lecture on the website](#)



CHECK YOURSELF

What did Clara's first reply in Round 2 do before she understood the obstacle Liam named?

How do you delegate without taking the work back?

Write an assignment that gives a colleague real ownership, with a desired result, decision freedom, support and an agreed check-in.





IDEAS TO KEEP

01

Leaders often delegate and then end up reviewing every tiny sentence or taking the work back at the first obstacle. Both traps happen when ownership is named in theory but never defined in practice.

02

Darius asks Tessa to create an onboarding guide for new starters arriving on the first of next month, so a new starter can complete all first-day essentials without hunting down a manager.

03

The people-delegation method has 4 parts: the desired result, the colleague's decision freedom, the available support, and the agreed check-in or return point.

04

His first draft said "you fully own" the guide, then dictated 5 section headings, the font layout and approval after every page. That turns the colleague into a typist and the leader into a bottleneck.

05

In the repaired assignment Tessa chooses the layout and proposes the sequence of first-day tasks. Any change to which security permissions new starters receive on day one comes back to Darius.

06

When Tessa flags that the IT contact is on leave, Darius does not take the IT section back. He confirms a backup IT contact by tomorrow afternoon, and Tessa keeps owning the complete guide.



FOLLOW ALONG

- 1 Open the 03 Written assignment tab in [practice/people-leadership-prep.html](#) and read the 4 parts.
- 2 Find the line in the support part that changed after Tessa raised her concern.
- 3 If you are about to delegate something, run the request below with your own details.
- 4 Check the result: could your colleague say in their own words what result they are aiming for, which choices are theirs, and when they come back to you?

● ● ● Request · Prepare a written assignment in 4 parts

PROMPT

I am delegating the creation of a new-starter onboarding guide to a colleague for our next cohort arriving on the first of next month. We have existing rough onboarding notes and a confirmed start date, and the desired result is a guide that lets a new starter complete all first-day essentials independently.

Prepare a written assignment with 4 parts:

1. The desired outcome and quality criteria (without micromanaging the exact headings or every small step).
2. The colleague's decision freedom (layout and task sequence) versus what must return to me for a decision (any change to required security-access approvals).
3. The support available (existing notes and a named IT operations contact for system setup facts).
4. A single check-in point around a complete working draft 10 days before the start date, or earlier if an unresolved blocker appears.

Use in: ChatGPT or another AI product your employer permits

GOOD TO KNOW

Darius and Tessa are a prepared fictional example written for this course.



FILES AND LINKS

[skills/people-delegation/SKILL.md](#)

[This lecture on the website](#)



CHECK YOURSELF

How did Darius respond to the IT contact being on leave without taking the work back?

What will you say, and what will you ask?

See the one principle behind both cases, and carry one honest open question into every feedback, coaching or delegation conversation.





IDEAS TO KEEP

01

The goal of preparing a people conversation with AI is not walking in with all the answers. It is walking in ready to state what you know clearly and ready to hear the answer you do not have yet.

02

Clara's accusation became a specific observation of 2 incomplete notes, their impact on 2 repeat calls, and an open question about what made the end-of-shift note difficult.

03

Darius's micromanaged list became a clear outcome, real freedom over layout and sequence, a named support contact, and a return rule for security-permission changes.

04

Useful preparation separates what you already know from what only the other person can tell you. A simulated exchange never means you have understood the real colleague.

05

Before any feedback, coaching or delegation conversation, name at least one honest question that must stay unanswered until the other person speaks.

06

The same 4 parts of Darius's assignment decide whether delegating to AI agents saves you effort or creates a second job of supervising and fixing the software.



FOLLOW ALONG

1

Pick the conversation you named in Lecture 5.1.

2

Write what you will state clearly, then the one question that must stay open until the other person answers.

3

If the conversation hands over work, check that it names the result, what they can decide, their support and when the work comes back.

GOOD TO KNOW

Section 6 applies the same 4 parts to delegating routines and multi-step workflows to AI agents.



FILES AND LINKS

[skills/communication-and-people-leadership/SKILL.md](#)

[This lecture on the website](#)



CHECK YOURSELF

What open question did Clara and Darius each leave for the real conversation?

Words used in this section

Assumed motive

A guess about why someone did something, which the records cannot prove.

Observation

A specific event you can point to, such as 2 shift notes with the open-issues section left blank.

Verified impact

What the event demonstrably caused, such as 2 customers calling back to repeat their billing issue.

Prior expectation

The standard that was already set before the problem, such as the team's handover rule.

Feasible support

Help you can genuinely offer, such as a 3-item end-of-shift checklist or pairing with a senior rep.

Coaching

Understanding the real obstacle a colleague is hitting and helping them build a workable way forward.

Fairness test

Can the colleague recognize the event, understand why its impact matters, and give an honest answer that could change your understanding?

Role-play

Using AI to simulate another person's plausible responses in a practice exchange, so you can test and refine your words.

Listening checklist

Four checks on each spoken reply: state the concern clearly, ask an open question, attend to the answer, separate a new fact from an assumption.

Written assignment

Delegated work described in 4 parts: desired result, decision freedom, available support and an agreed check-in.

Decision freedom

The choices the colleague can make on their own, such as the guide's layout and the order of tasks.

Return point

When the work, or an exception such as a security-permission change, comes back to you.

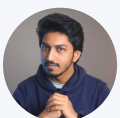
Section 6: Delegate more without creating another job to manage

Section 6 applies the same 4 parts of a good assignment to AI agents: judging total delegation effort, coordinating independent agent reviews, and setting standing rules without losing control.

[Continue the course](#)

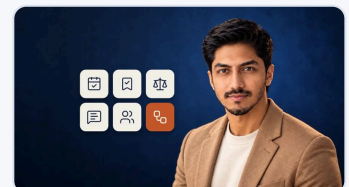
[Section 5 on the website](#)

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Written by Arun Nagarathanam
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Go deeper



TOOLKIT

SEO Accelerator Toolkit

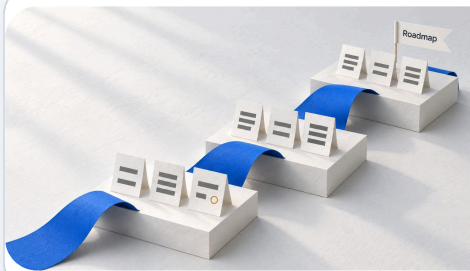
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