Course 3: Change Management in the AI Era for SMEs

A Leadership Workshop on Guiding Your Team Through Transformation

Course Prerequisite: Course 1: AI & Prompt Engineering for SMEs

Primary Resource: *Change Management* (provided book)

1. Course Overview

Successfully integrating Artificial Intelligence is not just a technical challenge—it's a human one. This one-day workshop is designed for the SME leader who understands the 'what' of AI and now needs to master the 'how' of implementation. We will tackle the people-side of technological transformation head-on. Participants will learn how to build a compelling vision for AI in their company, communicate that vision to inspire buy-in, and manage the inevitable resistance and fear that comes with change. Using proven change management models tailored for the fast-paced, resource-constrained SME environment, this course provides a practical toolkit for leading teams through the AI transition smoothly and effectively. The goal is to transform AI from a source of anxiety into a catalyst for excitement, growth, and shared success.

2. Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- **Remember & Understand:**
  - Define change management and its critical importance in AI adoption.
  - Identify the common psychological reactions to organizational change (e.g., fear, excitement, skepticism).
  - Explain a core change management model (e.g., Kotter's 8-Step Model) from the provided text.
- **Apply:**
  - Draft a compelling vision statement for AI adoption within their own company.
  - Use a stakeholder analysis framework to identify key influencers, champions, and potential resistors.
  - Develop a multi-channel communication plan to address the needs of different employee groups.
- **Analyze:**
  - Diagnose the potential points of resistance to AI within their team or organizational structure.
  - Break down the AI implementation process into manageable phases to build

momentum and secure early wins.

- **Evaluate & Create:**
  - Assess their organization's current readiness for AI-driven change.
  - Create a customized, actionable Change Management Plan for a specific AI initiative (e.g., rolling out an AI-powered customer service tool).

3. Course Schedule & Modules

Total Duration: 8 hours (including breaks)

Time	Module	Topics & Sub-topics	Trainer Activity	Trainee Activity
9:00 - 10:00	**Module 1: The Human Side of AI**	- Welcome & Course Objectives- Why Tech Projects Fail: The People Factor- **The AI Change Curve:** From Shock to Integration- Self-Assessment: Your Personal Change Style	- Share statistics on change project failure rates- Introduce the Change Curve model- Facilitate a short, interactive poll/quiz on change styles	- Share a personal experience with a major change (good or bad)- Plot their likely position on the Change Curve regarding AI- Reflect on their own leadership style
10:00 - 11:15	**Module 2: Building the Vision & Case for Change**	- **Beyond "Efficiency":** Crafting a "Why" that Inspires- **Kotter's Step 1: Create a Sense of Urgency**- **Activity:** Drafting Your AI Vision Statement	- Present frameworks for vision crafting- Provide examples of powerful vs. weak vision statements- Facilitate a guided brainstorming session	- **Activity:** Individually, draft a 1-2 sentence vision statement for AI in their company. Share with a partner for feedback.
11:15 - 11:30	**Coffee Break**			
11:30 - 12:30	**Module 3: Stakeholder Analysis & Building a Guiding**	- **Mapping Your People:** Champions, Blockers, and the Undecided- **Kotter's Step 2: Form a**	- Introduce the Power/Interest Grid for stakeholder analysis- Role-	- **Activity:** Using the Power/Interest Grid, map at least 4 key internal stakeholders for

	Coalition	**Powerful Coalition- Activity:** Stakeholder Mapping	play a conversation with a skeptical manager- Guide participants with a worksheet	their AI initiative. Brainstorm one strategy for engaging each.

| 12:30 - 13:30 | **Lunch Break** |||

| 13:30 - 15:00 | **Module 4: Communication & Managing Resistance** | - **Kotter's Steps 3 & 4: Create a Vision & Communicate It**- **Anticipating Resistance:** The "What's In It For Me?" (WIIFM) Factor- **Role-Play Lab:** The Town Hall Meeting | - Provide a communication plan template- Discuss common fears (job replacement, loss of control)- Set up and facilitate a role-playing scenario | - **Activity:** Draft a key message for 3 different audiences (e.g., leadership, middle management, frontline staff).- Participate in the role-play as either leaders or employees asking tough questions. |

| 15:00 - 15:15 | **Coffee Break** |||

| 15:15 - 16:30 | **Module 5: Empowering Action & Creating Short-Term Wins** | - **Kotter's Steps 5 & 6: Empower Action & Create Wins**- **The Power of the Pilot Project:** Proving the concept- **Celebrating Success:** Building momentum | - Discuss how to design effective pilot programs- Brainstorm creative ways to recognize and reward early adopters- Facilitate a group discussion | - **Activity:** Design a pilot project for their AI initiative. Define its scope, timeline (e.g., 30 days), and what a "win" looks like. |

| 16:30 - 17:00 | **Module 6: Your AI Change Management Plan** | - **Putting It All Together:** The One-Page Plan- **Sustaining Change:** Anchoring AI in the culture- Q&A and Personal Commitments | - Provide a one-page Change Management Plan template- Summarize the 8-step model and key takeaways- Lead a final Q&A session | - **Activity:** Populate the one-page plan with the outputs from the day's activities.- Commit to one immediate action to take next week. |

4. Resources & Materials

- **Required Reading:** *Change Management* (provided book).
- **Hardware:** Participants should bring a laptop or notebook for exercises.
- **Handouts:**
    - Change Style Self-Assessment Quiz.
    - Stakeholder Analysis (Power/Interest Grid) Worksheet.
    - Communication Plan Template.
    - Pilot Project Design Canvas.
    - One-Page AI Change Management Plan Template.