THE AI AUTOMATION WORKBOOK

30 Days to Automate Your Work With AI

Find the tasks that eat your week, turn them into AI templates and no-code automations, and win back hours, one step a day



100 AI prompts · 15 automation recipes · $0 toolkit

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You don’t need to code. You need **one repeated task, one clear trigger and one tested flow.** This workbook walks you from your first time-leak map to a small system that runs without you.

THE CHALLENGE AT A GLANCE

Map. Prompt. Automate. Scale.

WEEK 1 · MAP
Days 1–7

- Track your week
- Find 10 time leaks
- Pick your top 3

WEEK 2 · PROMPT
Days 8–14

- Build prompt templates
- Email + summary kits
- A prompt library

WEEK 3 · AUTOMATE
Days 15–21

- First no-code flow
- Forms → sheet → email
- Test and fix

WEEK 4 · SCALE
Days 22–30

- Chain 3 flows
- Weekly review
- Your system map

The only rule: automate the boring part, keep a human on the important part. One small flow at a time.

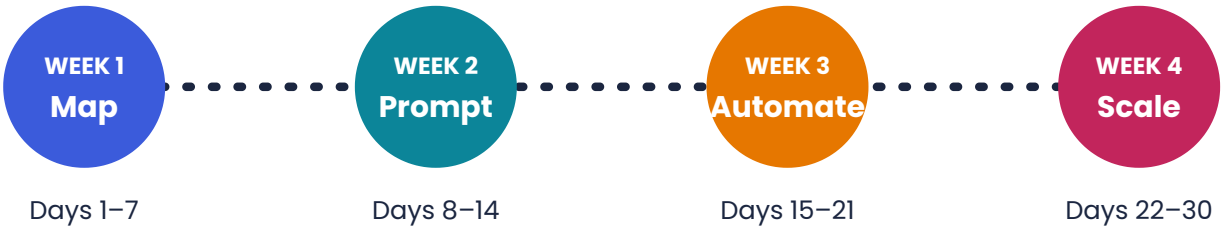
Protect your data. Never paste passwords, card numbers or private customer data into AI tools. See *Safety and Privacy Rules*.

Printing this book? Print it all, or just the Prompt Library, Automation Recipes, Free Tools, Success Kit, Planning Pages, Tracker and Worksheets. The *Print Edition* uses less ink; the *Phone Edition* reads without zooming.

How This Challenge Works

You answer the same emails, copy the same numbers, write the same updates and chase the same reminders, week after week. You've heard AI and automation can help. But every tool looks complicated, and you never have time to set one up.

This challenge fixes that. In 30 days you'll **find the tasks that eat your week, turn them into reusable AI templates, build your first no-code automations, and connect them into a small system that runs without you.** One clear step a day.



Your 30-day path: map the time leaks, build prompts, automate, then scale.

- **Part 1 (10 minutes):** why you stay busy, and the one rule for choosing what to automate.
- **Part 2 (10 minutes):** your 4 tools: Map, Prompt, Automate, Scale.
- **Days 1–30:** one card a day, about 20–40 minutes. Read it, do it, tick the box.
- **Prompt Library, Automation Recipes and Success Kit:** 100 ready-to-copy prompts, 15 flows to build, and checklists.

Three promises

1. **No code required.** Every step works with point-and-click tools and plain-English AI prompts.
2. **Free first.** Every tool in this book has a free option. Pay only when it clearly saves you time.
3. **Human in charge.** Automation handles the routine; you approve anything that matters.

INTRODUCTION

The 40-Hour Week That Was 25

This story is a composite. Names and details are invented, but many people live a version of it.

Lina ran the office side of a small design studio. Her days disappeared into small jobs: copying form answers into a spreadsheet, sending the same "we got your request" email, writing a Friday update from memory, renaming files, chasing invoices.

She tried a big automation app once, got lost in the settings and gave up. "It felt like I needed a developer," she said.

What changed things was a simple list. For one week she wrote down every task she repeated. Then she picked the three most boring ones. She turned the Friday update into an AI prompt template. She connected her contact form to a spreadsheet and a welcome email with a free automation tool. She made a reminder flow for unpaid invoices.

Each one took under an hour. Together, they gave her back most of a day each week. "I didn't automate my job," she said. "I automated the parts I hated."

The numbers that matter in this book

10	100	15
time leaks you'll find in your own week	ready-to-copy AI prompts for real work tasks	automation recipes you can build for free

You don't need to be technical. You need **one repeated task, one clear trigger and one tested flow.** This book walks you there.

PART 1

Why You Stay Busy

Most people don't lack tools. They lack a clear picture of where their time goes, so they automate the wrong things, or nothing at all.



The busy loop. Small, reliable automations break it.

The 8 mistakes that keep you doing it by hand

1. **Automating something you do once a year.** Start with weekly or daily tasks.
2. **Starting too big.** A 12-step flow breaks. A 2-step flow works on day one.
3. **No clear trigger.** Every automation needs a "when this happens" moment.
4. **Messy inputs.** If the form or email changes every time, the flow fails.
5. **Letting AI send things unchecked.** Drafts are safe; auto-sending to clients is not.
6. **Too many apps.** Each new app is another login and another thing to break.
7. **No testing.** One test with fake data saves hours of cleanup.
8. **Set and forget.** Flows need a 10-minute check once a week.

The one rule: the 3R test

Automate a task only if it is **Repeated** (at least weekly), **Rule-based** (the steps are the same each time) and **Low-Risk** (a mistake is easy to spot and fix).

> "Every **[when]**, I **[do these steps]**, and it takes **[minutes]**. A mistake would cost **[risk]**."

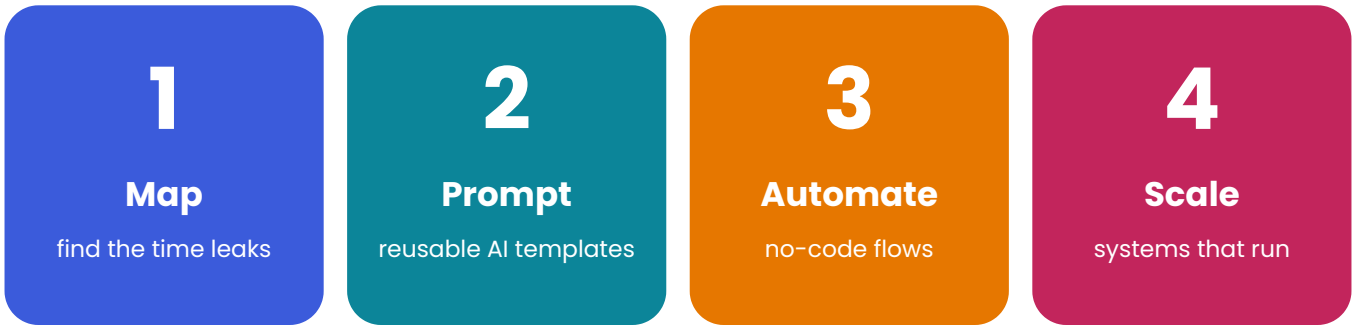
Example: "Every time a client fills in the contact form, I copy their details into a sheet and send a welcome email. It takes 6 minutes, 15 times a week. A mistake costs little."

What AI can and can't do for you

AI is great at drafting, summarizing, sorting, rewriting and explaining. It can also write simple formulas and scripts. But it can sound confident when it's wrong. **You stay the editor**: you check facts, numbers and anything that goes to a client.

PART 2

Your 4 Tools



1. Map: find the time leaks

Log every repeated task for a week. The map shows what to automate first, and what to delete.

2. Prompt: turn repeated thinking into templates

Updates, replies, summaries, posts: same shape, new details. A saved prompt template does them in seconds.

3. Automate: let tools move the data

No-code tools connect apps: **when** something happens (a form, an email, a date), **then** do something (add a row, send a message, create a file).

4. Scale: connect flows into a system

Chain working flows, add a weekly check and a one-page map, so the system keeps running when you're busy.

WEEK 1

Map

Days 1–7

This week you find where your time really goes, and choose the three tasks worth automating first.

DAY 1

Set Up Your Time Log

WHY You can't fix what you can't see.

TODAY Print Worksheet 1 or open a sheet with 4 columns: task, how often, minutes, tool used. Write your start date on the Tracker.

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 2

Log Everything

TODAY Each time you finish a task, write it down. Don't judge; just record. Keep the log open all day.

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 3

Spot the Repeats

TODAY Circle every task you did more than once. Next to each, write how many times a week it happens.

> **PROMPT** *Paste your log into prompt 1 to group similar tasks.*

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 4

Count the Cost

TODAY Multiply minutes by times per week. Write the weekly total next to each repeated task. Sort from biggest to smallest.

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 5

Run the 3R Test

TODAY Mark each big task: Repeated? Rule-based? Low-risk? Cross out anything that fails. Some tasks don't need automating; they need deleting.

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 6

Pick Your Top 3

TODAY Choose three tasks that passed the test: one for a prompt template, one for a no-code flow, one for a reminder or schedule. Write them on your Automation Map.

☐ Done Date: _____

DAY 7

Week 1 Review

TODAY Add up the weekly minutes of your top 3. That's the time you're working to win back.

CELEBRATE You now know more about your week than most people ever do. Color in your Week 1 badge.



Week 1 complete!
Color me in.

☐ Done Date: _____

The Prompt Library

Copy a prompt, replace the [brackets], paste it into any AI chat assistant. Never paste passwords, card numbers or private customer data. Check every fact and number.

The 5-part power prompt

Weak prompts get weak answers. Strong prompts give the AI five things:

1. **Role:** "Act as an experienced [operations manager / assistant / analyst]."
2. **Context:** who it's for, what tools you use, what matters.
3. **Task:** exactly what you want, with a number ("give me 5…").
4. **Format:** a table, bullets, a template with [brackets], a word count.
5. **Standard:** "Plain English. Ask me questions if anything is unclear."

6 power moves

- **Ask it to interview you first:** "Before you start, ask me 5 questions."
- **Give an example** of the output you want, and say "match this."
- **Chain it:** plan first, then one step at a time, then check.
- **Ask for options:** "Give me 3 different approaches with pros and cons."
- **Make it check itself:** "What could go wrong with this? Fix it."
- **Save your winners** as named templates and reuse them.

A. Finding time leaks (1–10)

1. Here is my task log: [paste]. Group similar tasks and show total minutes per week for each group in a table.
2. Which of these tasks pass the test: repeated weekly, rule-based and low-risk? [tasks]
3. For each task, suggest whether to automate, template, delegate or delete it: [tasks].
4. I'm a [job]. List 20 tasks people in my role commonly automate.

Spam and consent: only send automated emails or messages to people who agreed to hear from you, and follow the rules where you and they live. This book is education, not legal advice.

Free Tools and Smart Alternatives

Every step in this book can be done for $0. Free plans change often, so check each one's current limits and terms before you rely on it. Checked November 2026.

Your $0 toolkit, step by step

Job	Free option	Good to know
AI writing and thinking	ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude or Copilot (free plans)	Daily limits vary; keep prompts in a file so you can switch
Simple app-to-app flows	Zapier Free	100 tasks a month; two-step flows (one trigger, one action)
Multi-step flows	Make Free	1,000 credits a month; each step uses credits
Phone and smart-home flows	IFTTT Free	Credit-based free plan; check monthly credits
Unlimited flows (technical)	n8n Community Edition	Free to self-host; you run and maintain the server
Desktop clicks and files	Power Automate for desktop	Free on Windows for flows you start yourself
iPhone and Mac shortcuts	Apple Shortcuts	Built in, free
Sheet and email scripts	Google Apps Script	Free with a Google account; AI can write the script
Forms and data	Google Forms + Sheets	Free; the simplest trigger for most recipes

Worksheets, Disclaimer and License

Worksheet 1: Time log

Task	Times a week	Minutes each	Weekly total	Automate / template / delete

Worksheet 2: Flow tester

Test input	Expected result	Actual result	Fixed?
Normal case			☐
Empty field			☐
Very long text			☐
Wrong date or number			☐

Disclaimer

General education only, not legal, security or professional IT advice. Results depend on your tasks, tools and setup; no specific time savings are promised. The Introduction story is a composite. Tool features, free plans and limits change often; always check the provider's current terms. This book is not affiliated with or endorsed by any company or tool it mentions.

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