COMPANION RESOURCE / PRINTABLE + FILLABLE

Responsible AI Working Toolkit

Companion to AI Is Already in the Room

One real situation. A visible decision. A review.

Examine one current or proposed AI use. Leave with a documented decision, named human responsibility, operating boundaries, and an evidence-based review plan.

How to use this file

Use one case throughout. Read the worked example, complete the four records, then prepare your one-page brief. Print and write, or type in the form fields. Keep a dated copy before making changes.

Working route

1. AI-Use Inventory
2. Use-Case and Human-Impact Review
3. Authority and Oversight Map
4. Pilot and Continuing Review

The Responsible AI Decision Brief summarizes the four records for a leadership meeting.

Contact

For deeper engagement: engagements@lenthomas.studio

Len Thomas | Workforce Strategist

Version 1.2 | Reader working edition | November 2026

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READ BEFORE COMPLETING THE TOOLS

Start here

Make the work concrete

Select a situation you can examine with recent evidence. Do not try to diagnose an entire organization in one sitting. Invite the people who do the work and those who can authorize changes.

Separate evidence from interpretation

Record what happened, the source, and the date. Label assumptions. An unknown is a valid answer when you also name who will investigate it and what must wait.

Protect people and information

Use role labels and anonymized examples. Keep completed files in an organization-approved location. Do not enter confidential personal or client information. Your answers stay with you, saved on your own device.

Use the fields deliberately

Download and save a local copy. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. Save, close, and reopen to check your entries before relying on them. For longer answers, use the continuation page near the end of this file; text that scrolls inside a box may not all print.

Do not turn completion into certification

These are reflection and decision-support tools, not validated assessments, legal advice, or proof of safety or compliance. Seek qualified review where the situation requires it.

Finish with a test, not a promise

Name the decision, owner, evidence, next action, and review date. Revisit the work after the arrangement has been used. To repeat a page for additional evidence or cases, download a fresh copy of this file.

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ILLUSTRATIVE - NOT A CLIENT CASE

Worked example: examine the use

1 / AI-Use Inventory

An internal communications team proposes using an approved AI tool to draft routine announcements from public or internally approved, non-sensitive source material. A communications editor will verify each draft before a manager authorizes publication. The tool will not publish directly.

2 / Use-Case and Human-Impact Review

Expected benefit: less drafting time without loss of accuracy or accessibility. Alternatives: reusable templates or manual drafting. Risks: invented details, altered meaning, exclusionary language, inappropriate data entry, and extra review burden. Procurement and security must verify the actual product terms and configuration; a brand name is not evidence.

Required evidence

Before use, confirm permitted data, retention and training settings, access controls, contract terms, and the review process. Ask staff who will edit outputs whether they have the time, skill, and authority to reject them. Unknown vendor practices remain open issues, not assumed safeguards.

Initial decision

Authorize only a limited test after the named prerequisites are met. Exclude personnel announcements, personal information, legal notices, and other sensitive communications. This is an illustrative boundary, not a universal safe-use category.

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ILLUSTRATIVE - NOT PROOF OF SAFETY

Worked example: test and decide

3 / Authority and Oversight Map

The communications manager owns the use. A trained editor compares each draft with approved source material, checks audience suitability, and can reject it. A named backup covers absences. Security owns the tool configuration. Any new integration requires fresh review.

4 / Pilot and Continuing Review

Use ten non-sensitive draft tasks with varied formats. Compare total drafting plus verification time, factual corrections, quality, accessibility checks, and editor feedback with comparable manual tasks. Record limitations in the comparison. Do not rely only on average time saved.

Pause and respond

Any unauthorized data entry, external posting without approval, or fabricated consequential statement triggers pause and internal escalation. Preserve appropriate evidence under organizational policy; the manager and relevant specialists determine containment, notification, and restart conditions.

Fictional findings

Drafting time decreased, but two tasks needed enough correction to remove the saving. No unauthorized posting occurred in this small test. The manager narrows the use to template-based announcements and schedules another review. A small successful pilot cannot establish that rare harms will not occur.

Brief outcome

Modify and continue only within narrowed boundaries. Document the decision owner, evidence, unresolved questions, required staff instructions, and next review. The vendor review and existing organizational obligations still apply.

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RECORD 1 / AI-USE INVENTORY

AI-Use Inventory

Part A: Discover the Use

Choose one use, not an organization-wide statement about AI.

Use reference and owner

Name the use, record owner, date/version, team, status, and who authorized current activity.

Purpose and workflow

What problem is being addressed? What happens before and after AI participates?

Tool, configuration, and users

Record product/version if known, account type, features, integrations, access, and actual users.

People affected

Who uses the output, who is subject to it, who could be excluded, and who has not been consulted?

Before moving on: Are you describing actual practice, a vendor promise, or a proposed future state?

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RECORD 1 / AI-USE INVENTORY

AI-Use Inventory

Part B: Trace Information and Authority

Identify what goes in, what comes out, and what the system is allowed to do.

Inputs and data sources

Identify source, permission, sensitivity, personal data, and organizational restrictions. Do not paste the data here.

Outputs and recipients

What is generated, inferred, recommended, or acted on? Where is it stored or shared?

Human versus system authority

Does AI draft, recommend, rank, approve, or execute? Who checks before a consequential action?

Unknowns and immediate containment

Name unknown settings or unauthorized use, investigator, interim restriction, and decision deadline.

Before moving on: Could an output reach a person or system before someone checks it?

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RECORD 2 / USE-CASE AND HUMAN-IMPACT REVIEW

Use-Case and Human-Impact Review

Part A: Examine Value and Impacts

Compare the AI proposal with realistic alternatives.

Expected benefit and alternative

Define the desired outcome, current baseline, manual or non-AI option, and why AI is being considered.

Possible harm and affected groups

Describe failure scenarios, likelihood uncertainty, severity, reversibility, and who bears the consequences.

Workforce and access

What work changes? Consider skill, workload, accessibility, opportunity, monitoring, and ability to challenge results.

Evidence and expertise needed

List assumptions, missing tests, consulted people, and legal, privacy, security, or domain review required.

Before moving on: Whose account of the benefit differs from the sponsor's account?

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RECORD 2 / SUPPORTING PAGE

Use-Case and Human-Impact Review

Supporting page: Vendor and System Review

Record evidence and its date. A claim, a contract provision, and a tested setting are different.

Data handling and terms

What evidence covers retention, model training, deletion, location, subprocessors, and permitted use? Who verified it?

Access and integration controls

Who administers accounts, permissions, connections, logs, and configuration? What has actually been checked?

Performance and limitations

What relevant evaluations, known failures, change notices, and support or incident routes exist?

Open issues and required decision

For each unresolved issue: owner, deadline, restriction, and whether it blocks use. Obtain qualified review as needed.

Before moving on: Would your conclusion change under the actual account settings rather than the vendor's general description?

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RECORD 2 / SUPPORTING PAGE

Use-Case and Human-Impact Review

Supporting page: Hear the People Doing the Work

Use these prompts in a conversation, not as an individual performance assessment.

Current work and concerns

Ask what is difficult today and how this use might help or add burden. Record themes, not identities.

Verification and support

Can staff detect errors? What training, time, source access, and backup would verification require?

Voice and recourse

How can people report problems, decline an inappropriate use, or challenge an AI-influenced result without retaliation?

Changes to the proposal

What did the conversation change? What disagreement remains, and who will respond by when?

Before moving on: Have people been invited to influence the decision, or merely to endorse it?

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RECORD 3 / AUTHORITY AND OVERSIGHT MAP

Authority and Oversight Map

Part A: Establish Operating Conditions

Specify human responsibility in operational terms, not just “human in the loop.”

Permitted scope and exclusions

Define approved users, tasks, information, audiences, and actions that are not permitted.

Ownership and approval

Name business owner, approving authority, technical/security support, reviewer, and backup; confirm acceptance.

Verification before action

State what must be checked, against what source, when, by whom, and with what authority to reject.

Escalation and stop authority

Define triggers, recipient, response expectation, fallback process, who may pause, and who may authorize restart.

Before moving on: Does the reviewer have the competence, time, evidence, and power to intervene?

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RECORD 3 / AUTHORITY AND OVERSIGHT MAP

Authority and Oversight Map

Part B: Prepare People and Response

Make instructions and incident routes usable before the test.

User instructions and preparation

Who receives instructions? Include permitted data, prohibited uses, checks, escalation, and training owner.

Communication and challenge route

What do affected people need to know? Who considers correction requests or contested outcomes?

Incident response arrangements

Who contains the issue, preserves appropriate evidence, assesses impact, and decides required notifications under applicable rules?

Readiness gaps and decision

Record unmet prerequisites, owners, dates, and what must remain paused. Do not self-certify compliance.

Before moving on: Can a person report a problem without first proving that the system caused harm?

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RECORD 4 / PILOT AND CONTINUING REVIEW

Pilot and Continuing Review

Part A: Plan the Test

Do not start a test that bypasses required permissions or exposes people to unjustified risk.

Authorization and boundaries

Who authorizes the test? Record scope, duration, tasks, people, data constraints, and exclusions.

Baseline and representative scenarios

What will you compare? Include relevant variations, edge cases, affected groups where appropriate, and comparison limits.

Measures and acceptance criteria

Define quality, errors, burden, accessibility, time, and impact measures. Set criteria before observing results.

Stop conditions and review

Define pause triggers, evidence owner, reviewer, decision date, and what happens when evidence is insufficient.

Before moving on: Would a favorable average conceal a serious failure for a particular task or group?

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RECORD 4 / PILOT AND CONTINUING REVIEW

Pilot and Continuing Review

Part B: Review and Monitor

Use after testing and periodically during operation. Review again when the use, tool, data, or context changes.

Evidence and limitations

Record results, incidents, corrections, complaints, overrides, staff feedback, sample limitations, and unresolved risks.

Decision and authority

Proceed, modify, restrict, pause, or stop? State the rationale, approving authority, and unmet conditions.

Communicate and implement

Who changes settings, instructions, workflow, or support? Assign actions, dates, and accountable owners.

Next review and change triggers

Name monitoring owner, measures, next date, and changes that require renewed review before continued use.

Before moving on: What evidence would cause you to reverse this decision?

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ONE-PAGE LEADERSHIP OUTPUT / SUMMARY OF THE FOUR RECORDS

Responsible AI Decision Brief

A summary of the four records

Summarize the evidence and request. This page does not establish safety, certification, or legal compliance.

Use, purpose, and people

Reference/version/date; tool and scope; intended benefit; affected people and information.

Evidence and unresolved concerns

Summarize baseline, testing, alternatives, limitations, required specialist review, and open issues.

Conditions and responsibility

Name owner, approver, permitted scope, verification, escalation, stop authority, and fallback.

Decision and next review

State proceed/modify/restrict/pause/stop; rationale; prerequisites; next action, owner, date, and review triggers.

Before moving on: Could an authorized leader tell exactly what is and is not being approved?

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CONTINUATION PAGE

Continuation page

Use this page when an answer needs more room than its box.

Which tool and prompt does this continue?

Continued answer

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INDEPENDENT USE / OPTIONAL SUPPORT

When deeper engagement may help

Use the tools independently

The toolkit is complete for independent use and free to use from the first page.

Recognize the boundary

Consider facilitated support when leaders cannot agree on authority, a change redistributes power, evidence remains contested, or people do not feel able to raise concerns. For AI uses, legal, privacy, security, accessibility, and domain-specific questions may also require qualified specialists. Leadership facilitation does not replace their review.

Work with Len Thomas

For consulting, leadership coaching, facilitated conversations, or speaking inquiries, contact Len Thomas directly.

engagements@lenthomas.studio

Send a brief description and relevant timing. Do not email confidential employee, customer, or client information.

Resources

https://lenthomas.studio/its-not-the-people

Keep a dated copy of your completed record. Repeat the process when circumstances change; completion is not a permanent approval.

Framework context

This original companion toolkit draws on the themes of the NIST AI Risk Management Framework: Govern, Map, Measure, and Manage, including documented human oversight and ongoing review. It is not an official NIST instrument, certification, or compliance checklist.

Source: NIST AI RMF 1.0 (January 2023).

https://www.nist.gov/itl/ai-risk-management-framework

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