

The 7 Levels of *AI Use* — Where Are You?

Two people can use AI every day. One saves a few minutes on emails. The other runs entire business systems that operate while they sleep. The difference isn't intelligence or technical skill — it's knowing which level they're at and what to do next.

BEGINNER

LEVEL 1

The Fancy Search Engine

You have a free ChatGPT or Claude account. You use it for quick questions, drafting emails, or replacing Google searches. It feels useful but not transformative.

→ Notice that *how* you ask changes what you get. Experiment with asking the same question two different ways.

BEGINNER

LEVEL 2

The Prompt Engineer

You've realized that better prompts produce dramatically better results. You give context, set constraints, and provide examples. You stop accepting the first answer.

→ Use the structure: **Instruction + Context + Constraints**. Ask AI to ask *you* questions before it answers. Save your best prompts.

INTERMEDIATE

LEVEL 3

The Power User

Tasks that took an afternoon now take 20 minutes. You've built dedicated workspaces (Projects) for different areas — work, finance, writing — with context already loaded in. You stop re-explaining yourself every session.

→ Build a Project for your most common AI use case. Add context files, custom instructions, and your preferred tone. Feel the difference immediately.

INTERMEDIATE

LEVEL 4

The Ecosystem Explorer

You stop asking "what can ChatGPT do?" and start asking "what's the best tool for this?" You're pulling in specialized tools — research, meeting notes, image generation — and building your first working prototypes with no code required.

→ Pick one non-LLM tool and use it for something real. Then open Artifacts (Claude) or Canvas (ChatGPT) and build a tool you wish existed.

ADVANCED

LEVEL 5

The Automator

You stop thinking "how do I do this faster?" and start thinking "how do I build something that does this *for me*?" You've built your first automation that runs without you — triggered by a schedule or event, end to end, no intervention required.

→ Pick one repetitive task. Open Zapier and describe it in plain language. Let it build the automation. Once it runs on its own once — you'll never stop.

ADVANCED

LEVEL 6

The Builder

You don't see problems anymore — you see systems waiting to be built. You're using tools like Claude Code or N8N to build complex agents and full software applications from a plain-English description. Zero coding background required.

→ Pick one real problem that costs you hours. Try to build a solution using Claude Code. Start with planning mode. Build feature by feature. Ship something real.

The AI-Native Organization

This level is aspirational — nobody's fully here yet. A workforce of AI agents builds and runs your business around the clock, growing it while your people focus only on what humans uniquely do best. The first true one-person billion-dollar company hasn't been built yet. The organizations that get to Level 6 fastest will be best positioned to find out what Level 7 actually looks like.

→ The path starts at Level 3. Build Projects. Build habits. Build one automation. The rest follows.

THE CORE INSIGHT

Most people plateau at Level 2 or 3 — not because it's hard to advance, but because no one showed them the map. Moving up happens faster than most people expect. The biggest unlock is almost always the same: stop starting from scratch every time. Build context that carries over. Build once. Run many times.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US

- Assess honestly where each person on the team sits today
- The goal isn't everyone at Level 6 — it's no one stuck at Level 1
- Find the one person with the most painful repetitive task and solve it completely at Level 5. Let them evangelize.
- Levels 3–5 are where organizations unlock real operational leverage