The goal today wasn't to make you a tech expert. It was to give you practical tools you can use this week to save time, communicate better, and make smarter decisions. This handout captures the key ideas and example prompts from each section. Note the ones that jump out at you as ideas worth exploring!

All of the prompts below work in ChatGPT or Claude (free at chatgpt.com or claude.ai. No subscription or account required.)

SECTION 1: AI as a Junior Operator

Stop thinking of AI as a search engine. Think of it as a capable new hire who works for free, never sleeps, and just needs good direction. The quality of your output depends almost entirely on how much context you give it. Here are some examples:

Responding to a Bad Google Review	Writing a Price Increase Letter
Try this: *Write a professional, calm response to this Google review for my [business type]. The customer complained that [issue]. I want to acknowledge the concern, apologize without admitting fault, and invite them to contact us directly. Tone: warm but professional.*	**Try this:** *Write a short letter to my existing [service] clients letting them know prices are increasing by [%] starting [date]. I've been in business [X] years. Be direct but warm, explain costs have gone up, and reassure them quality isn't changing.*

Ideas for how you can do this:

SECTION 2: Hyper-Personalization

You don't need a marketing team to communicate like one. Give AI the specific details of each interaction and it makes every customer touchpoint feel 1-on-1. Great service is meeting your customers' expectations. Personalization makes them feel memorable and like a VIP. Here are some examples:

Personalized Follow-Up Email	Social Media Content	Re-Engaging a Lapsed Customer
Try this: *Write a warm follow-up email to a customer named [name]. They came in for [service], mentioned [personal detail], and were concerned about [concern]. My business is [name] and my tone is [friendly/professional/warm].*	**Try this:** *Write 3 [platform] captions for a [business type] targeting [specific audience] in [city] who are worried about [specific problem]. Tone: [knowledgeable/casual/warm]. Include a call to action in one.*	**Try this:** *Write a short, warm [text/email] to a former client I haven't heard from in [time]. They used to [service]. Don't be salesy — just open a conversation and mention something new.*

Ideas for how you can do this:

✍ Exercise 1: Find Your First AI Use Case

Name one task you do repeatedly every week that takes too long — something you write, respond to, or explain over and over:

What's the cost of doing this manually? (time, stress, inconsistency)

What information would AI need to do this well for you?

→ My AI action:

SECTION 3: AI-Supported Decision Making

Think of AI as a brilliant generalist friend — someone who went to law school, business school, and marketing school and will always take your call. It's a thinking partner, not a final authority. (Reminder: AI can hallucinate. Always verify high-stakes legal or financial decisions with a qualified professional.) Here are some examples:

The "What Am I Missing?" Check	Thinking Through a Ops Decision	Understanding a Document
Try this: *I'm thinking about [decision]. Here's my reasoning: [explain]. What are the 5 biggest risks or blind spots I might not be thinking about?*	**Try this:** *I run a [business type]. I'm considering [change]. What are the pros and cons, and what should I think through before deciding?*	**Try this:** *Explain this [contract/insurance doc/lease] in plain English. What does it cover, what doesn't it cover, and what should I ask a professional about? [paste document]*

Ideas for how you can do this:

SECTION 4: Hiring, Managing & Training People with AI

AI can't manage your people — but it dramatically reduces the time and stress of the paperwork, communication, and structure around it. Here are some examples:

Interview Questions That Screen for What You Need	Script a Difficult Conversation
Try this: *Write 8 interview questions for a [role] at my [business type]. I need someone who [key qualities]. I've had issues with [past problem]. Include questions that help spot red flags around [concern].*	**Try this:** *Help me prepare for a conversation with an employee who has been [issue] for [time]. I've mentioned it once but nothing changed. I want to be direct without being harsh. What should I say and how should I open?*

Ideas for how you can do this:

✍ Exercise 2: AI for Your People Problems

What was the most painful part of the last time you hired or trained someone?

What document, policy, or script do you wish you had but never got around to writing?

Which hiring/managing AI tactic from today is most relevant to your business right now?

→ My AI action:

SECTION 5: Does AI Know Your Business Exists?

AI tools are becoming the first place people go for recommendations. If your business isn't visible to AI, you may be losing customers without knowing it. Here's a quick exercise to do to see what AI thinks about your business:

1. Check What AI Says About You:
   Prompt: *Who are the best [your business type] in [your city]? What do you know about [your business name]?*

2. Rewrite Your Google Business Profile
   Prompt: *Rewrite my Google Business Profile description to be more specific about who I serve and what makes me different. Current description: [paste]. My best customers are [describe]. I solve these problems better than anyone: [describe].*

3. Create Content That Answers Real Questions
   Prompt: *What are the 10 most common questions someone in [city] would ask before hiring a [business type]? Now write a short, clear answer to each that I could post on my website or Google Business Profile.*

4. Write Review Responses That Feed AI
   Try this: *Write a response to this 5-star review that thanks the customer by name, mentions the specific service, and naturally references [city] and [service type] without sounding keyword-stuffed. [paste review]*

Ideas for how you can do this:

SECTION 6: Build Your Own AI Assistant

What if AI already knew your business? Building a custom GPT or Claude bot can "train" the AI to your business' specific customers, services/products, branding, and competitive marketplace. The more specific you can be, the better, so consider building multiple Assistants to handle different tasks. Examples are: Proposal Writer, Customer Service Representative, and Marketer.

✍ Exercise 3: Design Your First Custom AI Assistant

1. What does your business do, and who do you serve?

2. Your brand voice (circle): Friendly • Professional • Casual • Expert • Warm • Direct • Encouraging
other:

3. Your 2–3 biggest competitors:

4. What's one thing you write or create repeatedly that takes too long?

5. What do customers ask over and over?

6. What tasks slow you down because you have to start from scratch?

7. If this bot could do ONE thing to save you time this week, what would it be? (Another way to think about this: if you had a new assistant tomorrow, what's the first thing you'd delegate?)

Pick one and turn your answers into prompts that follow this formula. Then use this to build your Assistant:

GPT Name: _____

My GPT helps me with_____ for my _____ business.

It should sound _____

It should know _____

_____

It should always do _____

_____

It should never do _____

_____

AI won't replace small business owners. But small business owners who use AI will replace those who don't!

If you'd like a copy of the presentation or links to the downloads mentioned, email: amy@wheelsupcollective.com. Thanks for attending!

How to Build a Custom GPT

1. Start with a paid ChatGPT Plus plan (~$20/mo)
2. Go to the GPT Builder: In ChatGPT, open Explore GPTs and choose Create.
3. Pick one job for the GPT: For a small business owner, the best first GPT is narrow and practical: "write social posts," "reply to customer inquiries," "turn notes into estimates," or "draft follow-up emails." GPTs work best when they are tailored to a specific repeatable task.
4. Give it a name that you'll remember, like: Front Desk Assistant, Marketing Writer, or Estimate Drafting Assistant. Upload a photo to act as the GPT icon if you like.
5. Write the core instruction in plain English. Tell it: who it is, who it helps, what it should do, what tone to use, what to avoid. Example: "You are a customer service assistant for a local landscaping business. Write friendly, clear responses to customer questions. Keep replies short. Never promise pricing unless I provide it."
6. Add business context. Include the details you repeat all the time, like: services offered, service area, hours, ideal customer description, pricing rules, brand voice, common FAQs - this is helpful because it saves you from re-explaining the business to the chat bot every time.
7. Upload useful reference files, like service menus, FAQ docs, intake forms, brand guidelines, or process checklist.
8. Turn on only the tools it actually needs. Depending on the use case, a GPT can use tools such as web browsing, file uploads, image generation, or other connected capabilities. Keep this simple.
9. To refine your GPT, use the Builder chat window (toggle between Create and Configure at the top of the left side window). No specific format - be clear and conversational.
10. Use the prompt window on the right to test it with real prompts from daily work.
    Try 5–10 prompts that you'd actually use, like: "Reply to this customer asking for an appointment." or "Summarize this call into next steps." Add more context and instructions to the Create window to help improve weak or incorrect answers.
    → If it sounds too generic, add examples.
    → If it gets facts wrong, add clearer business rules.
    → If it writes too much, tell it response length limits.
    → The more clear you are, the better your answers will be.
11. Set sharing correctly. Your GPT can be private, shared internally, or published more broadly.
12. Treat version 1 as a draft - keep adding to it after you use it to make it better!