

The Mapping Worksheet

In a randomized experiment across 515 startups, every company got the same AI credits, the same models and the same training. One group was additionally shown how other companies had reorganized the work. That group found **44% more use cases** and generated **1.9x the revenue**. The variable was not the tool. It was whether anyone had mapped the tool onto the work. This sheet is that map.

1 Sweep the functions before you pick one

In the experiment the extra use cases were concentrated in product development and strategy, not in the three places everyone starts. Check every box you have actually examined this quarter. The unchecked ones are your map.

- ☐ Customer support
- ☐ Internal comms and email
- ☐ Meeting notes
- ☐ Sales and pipeline
- ☐ Finance and close
- ☐ HR and recruiting
- ☐ Legal and compliance
- ☐ **Product development**
- ☐ **Strategy and planning**
- ☐ Pricing and packaging
- ☐ Procurement and vendor mgmt
- ☐ Quality, testing, inspection
- ☐ Field ops and logistics
- ☐ Research and discovery

The trap. Support, email and meeting notes are where the work is already written down, which is exactly why everyone's answer is the same three answers. The starred functions are where the measured gains actually landed.

2 Name the workflow

Pick the one that hurts most, not the one that is easiest to describe. Easy to describe usually means somebody already mapped it.

The workflow

What does it cost you when it goes wrong, in dollars or hours?

Who owns this workflow end to end, by name?

If this line is blank or lists a committee, stop. That is the finding, and it is a bigger finding than anything below.

3 Map it, one row per step

THE STEP, AS IT ACTUALLY RUNS	WHO DOES IT TODAY	WHAT AN AGENT WOULD ACTUALLY DO HERE	WHO STILL HAS TO BE STANDING IN IT, AND WHY

The two questions nobody asks

4 What are you about to throw away?

Census Bureau data on American manufacturers found that AI adoption hurt productivity and profitability in the short run, and that among older establishments the abandonment of structured management practices accounted for roughly a third of those losses. The damage did not come from the technology. It came from dropping the practices that were already working.

A CHECK, REVIEW OR ROUTINE THIS CHANGE REMOVES	WHAT WAS IT ACTUALLY CATCHING?	WHERE DOES THAT JOB GO NOW?

The rule. If a routine is being removed and nobody can say what it was catching, it was not overhead. It was a control whose value nobody had measured.

5 Who has agreed to hold through the dip?

The same Census research found J-curve returns: short-term performance losses before longer-term gains. Measured productivity is supposed to get worse first. The companies that become cautionary tales are usually the ones that quit at the bottom, then conclude the technology does not work.

Expected dip <i>How bad, and for how long?</i>	
What we will measure <i>An end-to-end outcome, not a task-level speed</i>	
Who agreed to hold <i>By name. A title cannot hold a line.</i>	
What would make us stop <i>Decide this now, while it is cheap to be honest</i>	

6 The one-sentence test

If we built this workflow from scratch for an agent, what would it look like, and who would we want still standing in it?

Before you file this. Across roughly 490,000 earnings calls, about 95% of what executives said about AI and productivity described gains they expected rather than gains they had. A map with nothing written in the last column is another one of those sentences.

Sources. Kim, H., Kim, D., and Koning, R., "Mapping AI into Production: A Field Experiment on Firm Performance," INSEAD Working Paper 2026/20/STR, March 2026. McElheran, K., Yang, M.-J., Kroff, Z., and Brynjolfsson, E., "The Rise of Industrial AI in America: Microfoundations of the Productivity J-curve(s)," US Census Bureau CES-WP-25-27, April 20, 2025. Ozkan, S., Kalyani, A., and Sullivan, N., Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, analysis of approximately 490,000 earnings call transcripts from 5,198 US public firms, 2000 to 2025, reported July 31, 2026. Brynjolfsson, E., Hitt, L., and Yang, S., "Intangible Assets: Computers and Organizational Capital," Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 1:2002.



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