

 section

How to Use AI as an **Executive**

with Greg Shove, Section CEO

The harsh reality

Most executives are behind on AI. Not their companies – them personally. They’ve approved budgets and greenlit pilots, but when someone asks them to show how they actually use AI, they can’t even log in.

This is a problem. AI capability isn’t something you can outsource to a consultant or the IT team. Every employee, from the new hire to the CEO, must know how to use it. And if you’re going to lead on AI, you need to “walk the walk” – or quickly be found out as a fraud. Don’t worry. Baseline competence is simpler than you think, and you can build it fast.

How to think about AI as an executive

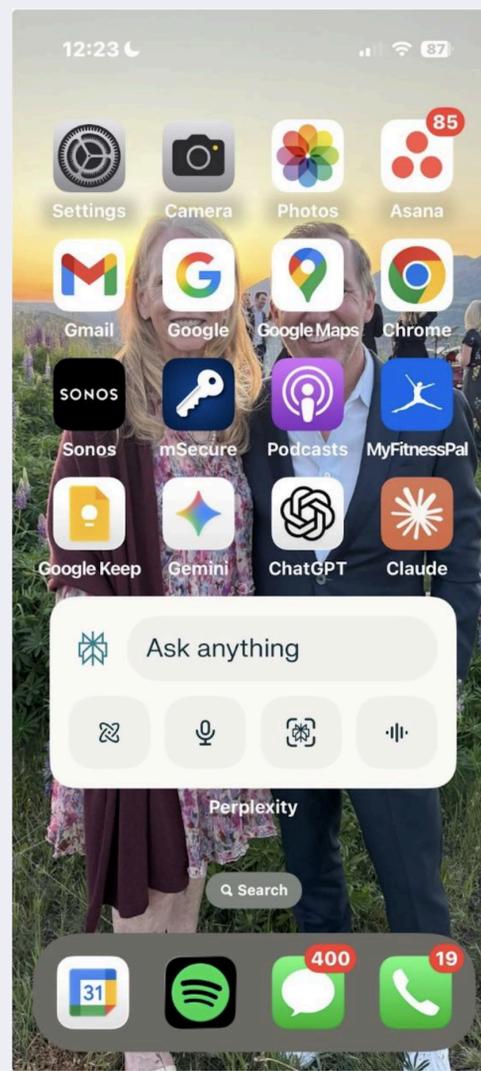
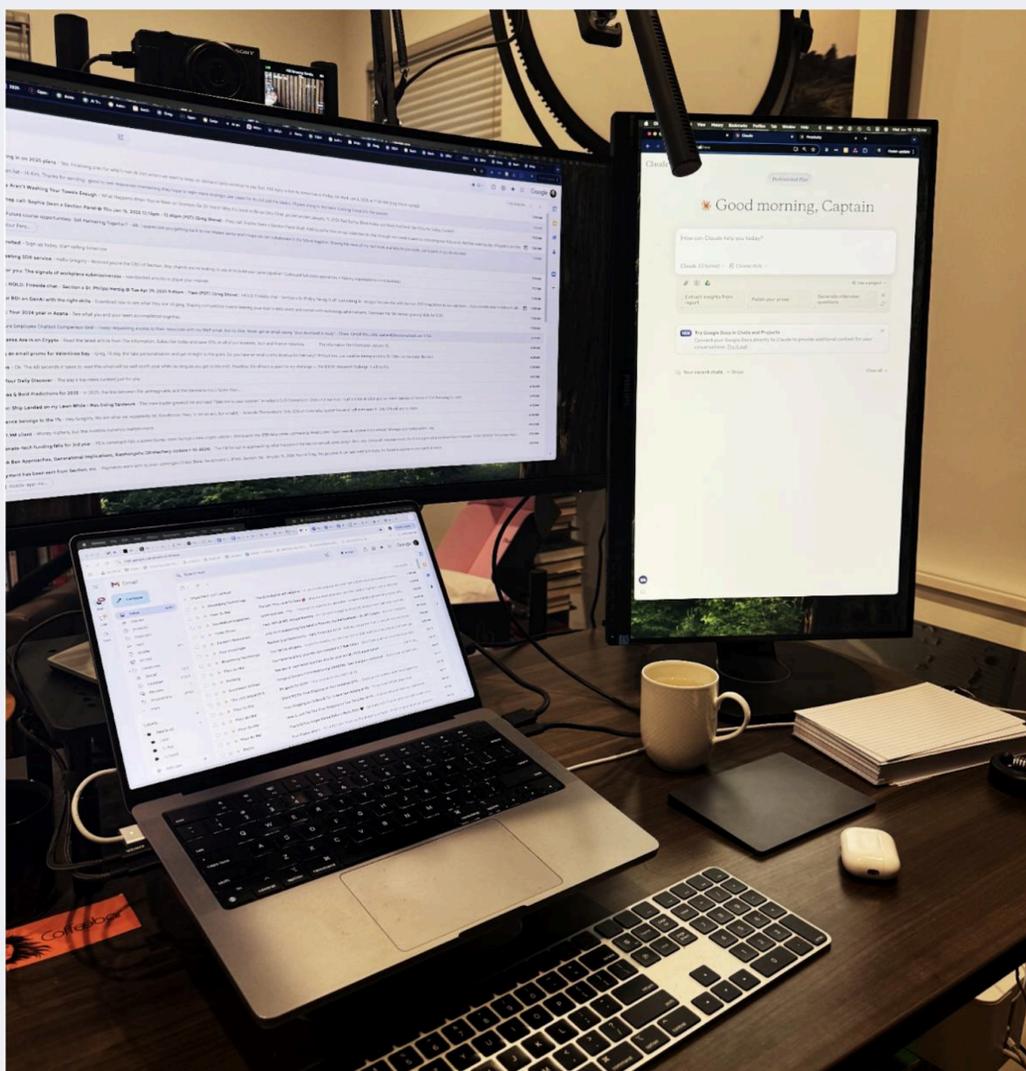
You need your own AI stack. Your company has an AI strategy. You also need a personal one – tools configured for your role, connected to your data, built into your daily workflow.

Show, don’t tell. The most powerful thing you can do as a leader is to say: “Let me show you what I did this morning with AI.” That changes culture faster than any memo.

Optimize for leverage. The right use cases aren’t about saving 20 minutes. They’re about decision quality, communication clarity, team speed, and visibility into the business.

Bias to doing. A rough v1 you edit for 10 minutes beats the blank page you stare at for an hour. Work fast, iterate often.

AI that unblocks others is highest-value. The best automations are ones where your team stops waiting on you. Identify those opportunities and create the workflows.



My AI setup - desk and phone - as a CEO

The CEO's personal AI stack

Here's what I'm using right now – every tool, what I actually use it for, and why.

TOOL	WHAT I USE IT FOR
Claude	Primary work AI. Team projects, dedicated writing and strategy projects (Ghost Writer, Thought Partner). Connected to Slack, Google Suite, Asana. On my phone's home screen.
ChatGPT	Personal + work. Advanced Voice Mode for thinking out loud. Agent Mode for lengthy tasks. Connected to Slack, Google Suite, Asana. Also on my phone's home screen.
Perplexity	AI search engine. Competitive intel, market research, deep dives. Replaces Google for anything requiring synthesis. Widget on my phone's home screen.
Claude for Chrome	Browser-integrated AI. Lives inside my existing Chrome profile – no separate AI browser needed.
Relay	Automations: email-to-Slack digest 3x daily, morning AI newsletter for the team, pitch tracking auto-updater.
Granola	AI meeting notes. Structured summaries with decisions, action items, follow-ups. Custom dictionary for company terms.
Wispr Flow	Voice-to-text capture. Quick notes and thoughts using my mic. Triggers certain automation workflows.

Automations that run without me

Email digest: AI reads my inbox, summarizes it, flags high-priority messages, and posts to Slack 3x/day. If nothing's urgent: "Nothing worth worrying about." That one line keeps me out of my inbox.

Morning newsletter: Curates enterprise AI news every morning for the whole team.

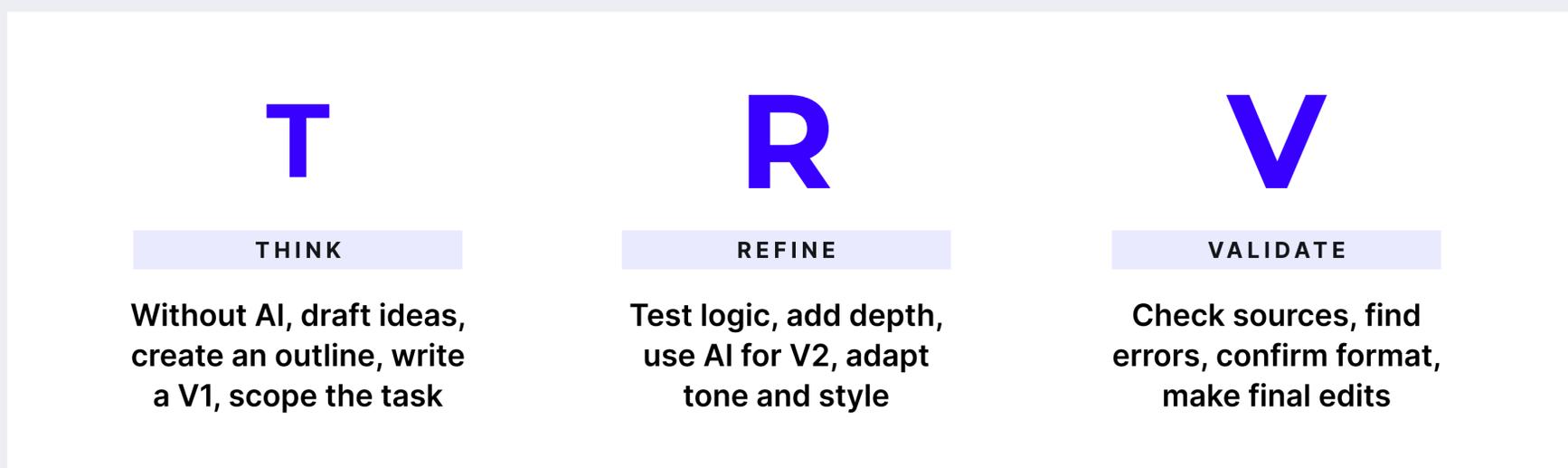
"Tip of the week": 3 practical AI suggestions delivered Saturday morning – new capabilities, use cases to try, reminders to update settings. Tuned to my work and interests.

Setting up your AI workspace

Configuration is everything. A well-configured AI assistant is dramatically more useful than a default one. Complete this before anything else.

- Install a primary AI assistant (ChatGPT or Claude) on phone + laptop. Pay for the Pro plan.
- Install Perplexity. Use it for search. Put it on your home screen.
- Set up custom instructions: your role, company, goals, communication style, constraints.
- Go a step further with a Role Context Document (RCD): 1-2 pages on everything your AI executive assistant needs to know to think, write, and execute on your behalf.
- Connect at least 2 work systems: email + docs, Slack, or calendar.
- Create one AI project space for a real initiative (e.g., "Q2 GTM Revamp").
- Enable Advanced Voice Mode on mobile.
- Put AI apps on your phone's home screen – not buried in a folder.

Leveraging AI as thought partner: the TRV method



Use cases worth your time

Writing and communication. Board memos, investor updates, exec emails. Give AI your notes, ask for a draft in your tone, edit for 10 mins.

Thinking and decision support. Scenario planning, market analysis, org design, M&A trade-offs. Describe the decision and constraints, let AI map scenarios and play devil's advocate. A sparring partner on demand.

Meeting leverage. Run Granola in all meetings, get structured summaries. Weekly prompt: "Who promised what this week? What's overdue?"

Email triage. Automated inbox summary 2-3x daily. AI flags what matters, you scan a 5-line digest instead of drowning in messages.

Intelligence and briefings. AI-curated daily/weekly briefing on your industry, competitors, and strategic priorities. One-page briefing packs before key meetings: who you're meeting, recent news, talking points.

Business pulse. Weekly summary of team updates, delivered to your phone. Scan on Friday for wins, deep-dive Saturday morning on your laptop. No more waiting for someone to compile a deck.

Personal life. Travel, medical research, logistics, financial scenarios. The personal use cases build the daily habit that carries into work.

Getting your organization to use AI

Every week, surface one AI opportunity for your leadership team. Frame it as a question:

- “Where can we use AI to bring legal work in-house? What would it take to renegotiate outside counsel spend by 20%?”
- “What are our 10 least-used SaaS tools? Can we consolidate and redirect that budget to AI?”
- “What AI co-pilot would most change our sales win rate? What’s blocking reps from using AI daily?”
- “Are our engineers using AI coding assistants? What would it take to get to 80% AI-written code?”
- “Where does AI show up in our product today? Where should it in 6 months? What are competitors doing?”

Your 30-day plan

TIMING	FOCUS	WHAT YOU’LL DO
Week 1	Complete setup checklist. Pick 1 use case (start with writing). Use AI daily.	Show your setup and tell one AI story.
Week 2	Add 1 shared workflow with your Chief of Staff (briefings or follow-through tracking).	You’ve produced 1 AI-generated deliverable.
Week 3	Send 1 enterprise question from the list above to your leadership team.	You’ve started an enterprise AI conversation.
Week 4	Review what works. Drop what doesn’t. Write your own AI stack one-pager.	You have a one-pager you’re proud to share.

Guardrails

Don’t over-delegate thinking. AI sharpens your analysis – it doesn’t replace your judgment. Always read the full output and make changes as necessary before sending.

Don’t ignore security. Use enterprise accounts. Don’t put crown-jewel data into random free-tier tools. When in doubt, ask your security team.