



How to Build an AI Fluency Framework for Your Organization

A practical playbook from Lattice for defining, embedding, and scaling AI-enabled ways of working



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Why build an AI fluency framework?

AI is changing how work gets done, but fluency is not the same as adoption. At Lattice, we wanted a clearer answer to a more useful question: What does good work look like when people are working alongside AI?

Our starting point was that AI should strengthen the human contribution to work. It can automate repetitive tasks and act as a thought partner, creating more room for strategy, problem-solving, creativity, and relationship-building. A fluency framework makes that aspiration concrete by defining the behaviors employees should use when AI is part of the work.

About This Guide:

This guide shares the process Lattice used to build and roll out our internal People + AI Fluency framework. It intentionally focuses on the method so you can build a version that reflects your own roles, workflows, risk profile, and culture. For your reference, we are including the competencies we use at the end of our guide.

What AI fluency should be

- A shared definition of strong AI-enabled work across roles and levels
- Observable behaviors employees and managers can discuss, practice, and coach
- A way to make intentional decisions about when AI adds value and when human judgment should lead
- An expectation that can live inside your existing growth and performance systems, rather than in a standalone policy or training deck

What it should not become

- A mandate to use AI for every task
- A leaderboard based on prompts, tools, tokens, or frequency of use
- A proxy for performance based on adoption alone
- A one-time launch that employees are expected to translate into their work without support

Before You Build: Make These Three Decisions

1 Define the goal.

Are you trying to increase tool adoption, build better judgment, redesign workflows, improve productivity, or create a common standard for AI-enabled work? Lattice chose a behavior and impact lens, not a usage lens.

2 Choose the scope.

Decide what should be common across the company, what should vary by role or level, and whether managers need additional expectations for how they lead teams through the change.

3 Choose where the framework will live.

If the answer is “in a PDF” or “on an intranet page,” the work is not done. Decide how the expectations will show up in career tracks, one-on-ones, development plans, surveys, and, eventually, performance conversations.



Lattice Principle:

Start with the people system you want the framework to influence. That forces you to write expectations that are clear enough to coach, discuss, and eventually assess, rather than creating a conceptual model that is difficult to operationalize.

How Lattice Built Its AI Fluency Framework

The process below is the sequence we recommend customers use. Each step ends with a tangible output so you can move from research to an operating framework without getting stuck in endless definition work.

Step 1:

Run a listening tour with the people already doing the work.

We started internally, not with a blank competency template. We interviewed employees across functions and levels who were already using AI frequently and asked them to walk us through how their work was changing. The goal was to identify behaviors that separated thoughtful AI-enabled work from simple tool usage.

Who to Include

- Employees who are already experimenting deeply with AI across different functions and job families
- A mix of individual contributors and managers, plus different seniority levels
- People working in highly structured processes and people with more autonomy, so the framework does not accidentally assume everyone should invent new workflows
- Partners from Security, Legal, IT, or Operations who can surface constraints and non-negotiables

Questions That Surface Useful Behaviors

- Walk me through a recent piece of work where AI materially changed your process. What changed?
- Where did you need your own judgment or expertise to improve, verify, or reject the output?
- What did you deliberately keep human-owned?
- What part of the workflow took the most experimentation to get right?
- What have you built or learned that someone else could reuse?
- Where do existing team processes help, and where do they limit effective AI use?

Output:

A set of real behaviors, decisions, tensions, and examples grounded in how work actually happens at your company.

Step 2:

Research external models, then look for the gap.

You do not need to recreate an exhaustive research process from scratch. At Lattice, we reviewed company practices, published frameworks, thought leadership, and academic research, including a synthesis of 41 AI frameworks across governments, AI labs, academia, employers, and labor-market research. Here are a few places to start:

- [Lenny's Newsletter's "25 proven tactics to accelerate AI adoption at your company"](#): Shares practical advice from AI-forward companies like Shopify, Ramp, Zapier, Duolingo, Intercom, and Whoop.
- [Zapier's 2026 Fluency Rubric](#): Translates AI fluency into observable workplace behaviors rather than technical expertise alone. [This is Zapier's first iteration of the framework](#). Then they revised the framework one year later.
- [IDEO's AI Dividend](#): Captures the idea that the real value of AI isn't just doing existing work faster, but reinvesting the time and capacity AI frees up into human-owned work.
- [Lovable's AI-Native Org Playbook](#): Explains how to intentionally redesign how an organization works so AI becomes embedded in its people, processes, and ways of working.

Questions to Answer With External Research

- What patterns appear consistently across credible frameworks?
- Which elements are knowledge or literacy, and which are true behavior or fluency?
- What are other companies measuring, and what might those measures miss?
- What is unique about your company, industry, product, or risk environment?

Output:

Use the research to develop a clear point of view about what your framework needs to add, not just a list of things other companies are doing.

Step 3:

Distill the research into observable, tool-agnostic behaviors.

The most important writing choice is to define behaviors, not products. Tools, models, and interfaces will change quickly. A durable framework should describe the quality of thinking and working that you want to persist even as the technology changes.

Design Principles We Used

- **Behavior-based:** Write what someone does, not what tool they open.
- **Observable and coachable:** A manager should be able to discuss examples and give feedback.
- **Human-accountable:** AI can assist or complete work, but employees remain accountable for what they use and share.
- **Role-flexible:** The same principles can apply across Engineering, Design, Sales, People, Finance, and other functions even when workflows and AI usage patterns differ.
- **Built for judgment:** Strong fluency includes knowing when not to use AI and when to verify, challenge, or override it.
- **Built to evolve:** Avoid definitions that depend on a specific model, interface, or current capability.

Write for Behavior, Not Activity

Avoid	Better Direction
Uses AI every day.	Evaluates when AI is useful and applies judgment to the output.
Uses at least three AI tools.	Selects an approach that fits the task, constraints, and desired outcome.
Creates a high volume of prompts.	Improves the underlying workflow and makes effective practices reusable when appropriate.



Output:

A short set of behavior areas with plain-language definitions, examples of what they look like, and reflection questions managers can use.

Lattice's AI Fluency Competencies:

1. **Structural Understanding:** You know how AI tools produce output, which one fits the task, and what the security and legal guardrails are.
2. **Judgment:** You apply your own expertise to evaluate AI output critically. You are accountable for the final product, including any mistakes the AI made.
3. **Conscious Delegation:** You decide intentionally what to hand to AI, what level of autonomy it should have, and what work stays human-owned.
4. **Learning Velocity:** You have the ability and desire to continuously learn new skills and evolve ways of working.
5. **Force Multiplier:** You turn AI-driven workflows and expertise into something reusable for others.

Plus, we have 5 more competencies specifically for managers, which you can find in our [AI Competencies Template](#).

Step 4:

Design one shared backbone, then scale expectations by scope.

In practice, AI fluency will look different across roles, but that does not necessarily mean every function needs a completely different framework. At Lattice, we use a shared, company-wide backbone and change the expected scope and sphere of influence as employees become more senior. This keeps the language consistent while still acknowledging that a senior leader shapes systems and teams differently than an early-career individual contributor. We chose not to do function-specific fluency descriptions at first, but other companies did. It's an important choice that should be intentional.

A Scalable Structure

- **Common behaviors:** Align on the core ways of thinking and working that apply whenever AI is part of the work.
- **Level-specific scope:** Increase ownership, complexity, influence, and responsibility by level rather than rewriting the entire framework.
- **Function-specific translation:** Use examples, workflows, and enablement to show what the shared behaviors look like in each function.
- **Manager overlay:** Add expectations for how managers create space to learn, model healthy practices, coach the work, and redesign team processes.

This is also why raw usage metrics are a weak cross-company measure of fluency. An engineer, designer, salesperson, and people partner may use different tools, generate different volumes of output, and need very different levels of human involvement. The common standard should be the quality and impact of the work, not a comparable token count.



Output:

A framework architecture that can scale across departments without pretending every role should use AI in the same way.

Step 5:

Pressure-test the draft before you launch it.

Once we had a draft, we reviewed it with executives, listening-tour participants, and functional partners. This step matters because language that looks universal on paper can create the wrong expectation in a specific operating environment.

Questions for Pressure-testing

- **Applicability:** Does this make sense for both high-autonomy and highly standardized roles?
- **Clarity:** Could an employee tell what good looks like without needing a long explanation?
- **Process fit:** Does the framework accidentally encourage people to create new workflows where a standard process already exists?
- **Risk:** Are security, legal, privacy, customer-data, and accountability expectations clear enough?
- **Manager usability:** Could a manager coach against these behaviors in a one-on-one or growth conversation?
- **Fairness:** Would this framework disadvantage roles simply because they have fewer relevant AI use cases?

Output:

A revised framework that has been tested against real roles, existing processes, and leadership expectations.

Step 6:

Embed the framework into the systems employees already use.

A framework becomes durable when it is part of how your company defines roles and develops people. At Lattice, we placed AI fluency into our Grow Tracks so the behaviors sit alongside other role expectations, rather than living as a separate learning artifact.

Why Lattice Grow Is a Strong Home for AI Fluency:

[Lattice Grow](#) lets organizations create competency matrices and career tracks that define expected skills and behaviors by role and level. That makes AI fluency visible in the same place employees already look to understand what success and growth mean. Grow also connects development to 1:1s and Individual Development Plans, which helps turn a framework into an ongoing conversation rather than a launch moment.

How to Operationalize the Framework in Lattice

Lattice Touchpoint	How to Use It
Grow Career Tracks and Competency Matrices	Add AI fluency to the relevant tracks. Keep the core behaviors consistent, then adjust the scope, ownership, and influence expected at each level.
1:1s	Add reflection prompts so managers and employees can discuss where the employee already feels strong, where they want to build fluency, and what support they need.
Individual Development Plans	Turn a fluency gap into a concrete development area with practice opportunities, learning goals, and real work to apply the skill.
Performance Reviews	Phase this in only after expectations are clear and employees have had meaningful time and support to build the behaviors. Evaluate the quality of AI-enabled work, not usage volume. When you add in AI fluency to performance reviews, make sure it's only one input to the overall performance rating.

Lattice Touchpoint	How to Use It
Engagement and Pulse	Track whether employees understand expectations, feel supported to build skills, and believe AI is helping them solve work problems more effectively. Here are the questions we use to track this: 1. I understand how I am expected to use AI in my role. 2. I have the support and opportunity I need to build my AI skills at work. 3. I feel confident using AI tools to improve the quality or speed of my work. 4. AI tools help me solve work-related problems more effectively. 5. What are the most valuable ways you've used AI in your work so far? / What's the most impactful way you've applied AI in your role? 6. What barriers, if any, prevent you from using AI more or getting more value from it? (For example: lack of training, unclear use cases, concerns about accuracy, security, or time)

Output:

A framework that is connected to role clarity, development, manager conversations, and measurement.

Step 7:

Roll out through managers and existing work rhythms.

We intentionally did not launch the framework as a single company announcement and assume adoption would follow. We sequenced the rollout so managers understood the intent first, employees heard the same company-wide message, and then managers and direct reports had a dedicated one-on-one conversation to translate the framework into individual development.

A Rollout Sequence You Can Adapt

1. **Align leaders:** Confirm the purpose, language, risk guardrails, and how the framework will connect to talent systems.
2. **Enable managers first:** Give managers the why, examples, FAQs, and a simple conversation guide before the company-wide launch.
3. **Launch company-wide:** Explain what AI fluency is, what it is not, how the framework was built, and where employees can find it.
4. **Create a reflection moment:** Within one to two weeks, prompt every manager and direct report to discuss strengths, gaps, questions, and one next step.
5. **Translate by function:** Partner with functional leaders to show what the framework looks like in the work their teams actually do.
6. **Reinforce over time:** Bring the language into growth conversations, team rituals, enablement, and eventually performance systems when the organization is ready.



Manager and Employee Reflection Prompt:

Read through your organization's AI fluency expectations together. Where do you already feel strong? Where do you want to increase your fluency? What is one next step you can take in the next few weeks? What support, time, or context do you need from your manager?



Output:

A launch that creates shared understanding and immediate conversation, rather than passive awareness.

Step 8:

Pair expectations with an enablement architecture.

A framework without enablement creates expectations without support. Lattice paired the framework with a broader AI upskilling program and tested multiple learning formats to find the mix that fit our culture and work.

The Learning Principles That Worked Best for Us

- **Make learning interactive.** Give people real time to experiment on relevant work, practice, and learn from one another.
- **Protect time on the calendar.** Experimentation is much more likely to happen when learning time is explicitly reserved.
- **Make it feel intentional.** Treat AI upskilling as a meaningful shared learning moment, not a mandate employees are expected to find time for.
- **Create employee ownership.** Encourage employees to create a growth area that helps them upskill appropriately.
- **Make it company-specific.** Use your tools, workflows, examples, data rules, security expectations, and business problems.

Test a Mix of Formats

Format	Examples
Live learning	AI 101 sessions, lunch and learns, hands-on workshops, expert cohorts
Team learning	Team AI workshops grounded in actual workflows, tools, and handoffs
Cohort learning	Learning circles or structured cohorts where employees practice together over time
Async learning	Curated courses, short resources, manager nudges, and self-directed practice

Output:

An enablement plan that gives employees repeated opportunities to learn, apply, reflect, and share.

Step 9:

Measure progress without turning AI usage into the goal.

Measurement should tell you whether the organization is becoming more capable and effective, not simply whether people are generating more AI activity. Lattice deliberately separated usage metrics from fluency. Usage can help benchmark the learning curve or identify teams that may need support, but it should not stand in for performance or fluency.

Lattice's Engagement and Pulse Questions Used to Measure AI Fluency:

- I understand how I am expected to use AI in my role.
- I have the support and opportunity I need to build my AI skills at work.
- I feel confident using AI tools to improve the quality or speed of my work.
- AI tools help me solve work-related problems more effectively.
- What are the most valuable ways you've used AI in your work so far? / What's the most impactful way you've applied AI in your role?
- What barriers, if any, prevent you from using AI more or getting more value from it? (For example: lack of training, unclear use cases, concerns about accuracy, security, or time.)

⚠ Use analytics carefully.

Tool usage, active-user rates, or token counts can be useful operational signals, but they are weak measures of fluency across roles. Use them to diagnose adoption and enablement needs, not to reward employees for using AI more often.

🌟 Output:

A balanced measurement model that combines employee sentiment, observed behaviors, workflow outcomes, and business impact.

A Practical 8-Week Build and Launch Plan

You can move from a blank page to a usable first version in roughly two months if you keep the first release focused and treat the framework as something you will continue to refine.

Timing	Focus	What happens
Weeks 1-2	Set the POV and run a listening tour	Clarify the goal, interview AI champions across functions and levels, collect real workflows, and align Security/Legal guardrails.
Weeks 2-3	Research and synthesize	Review external frameworks and company practices. Separate literacy, adoption, and fluency. Identify your design principles.
Weeks 3-4	Draft the framework	Write a small set of observable, tool-agnostic behaviors. Add examples and reflection questions. Design level progression and a manager layer.
Weeks 4-5	Pressure-test	Review with executives, functional leaders, listening-tour participants, and key partners. Resolve role-fit and process-conflict issues.
Weeks 5-6	Configure Lattice	Add expectations to Grow tracks or competency matrices. Prepare 1:1 prompts, development guidance, and measurement questions.
Week 7	Enable managers	Give managers context, examples, FAQs, and a conversation guide before employees see the framework.
Week 8	Launch and discuss	Share company-wide, then create a dedicated manager/direct-report conversation. Start function-specific enablement next.

Customer Checklist: Build Your First Version

- ☐ We have a clear point of view on what AI fluency means for our organization.
- ☐ We have explicitly defined what the framework is not intended to measure or reward.
- ☐ We have interviewed employees across functions and levels who are already doing effective AI-enabled work.
- ☐ We have reviewed external frameworks without simply copying another company's model.
- ☐ Our framework is written as observable behaviors, not usage targets or tool requirements.
- ☐ We have a shared company-wide backbone and a way to scale expectations by level, scope, or role.
- ☐ We have considered additional expectations for managers and leaders.
- ☐ We have pressure-tested the draft with executives, functional partners, and security/legal stakeholders.
- ☐ We know where the framework will live in our people systems and how employees will revisit it.
- ☐ We have a manager-first rollout and a dedicated reflection moment after launch.
- ☐ We have an enablement plan that includes hands-on, company-specific practice.
- ☐ We have a measurement model that prioritizes clarity, confidence, quality, and impact over raw AI usage.

Questions for Your First One-on-one Reflection

Once the framework is live, use a short conversation to turn awareness into development. The goal is not to score the employee on day one. It is to create shared understanding and identify the next opportunity to practice.

- Which parts of our AI fluency expectations already feel natural in your work?
- Where do you feel less confident or need more practice?
- What is one workflow where you could apply these behaviors more intentionally?
- Where should human judgment remain central, even if AI is involved?
- What is one next step you want to take over the next few weeks?
- What support, training, time, or context do you need from me?

Make AI Fluency Part of How Your Organization Grows

The strongest AI fluency programs do not stop at training. They define what good looks like, give employees repeated opportunities to practice, help managers coach the behaviors, and embed the expectations into the systems that shape growth and performance.

That is the approach Lattice used internally: Learn from the work, define a behavior-based standard, pressure-test it across the organization, put it into Grow, create manager and employee conversation rhythms, and keep supporting people with company-specific enablement.

Your framework should not look exactly like ours. It should be specific enough to your company that employees can recognize their work in it, while durable enough to keep making sense as AI tools change.

Put the framework into practice with Lattice.

Use Lattice Grow to make AI fluency visible in competency matrices and career tracks, connect development to 1:1s and individual development plans, and use Performance and Engagement to reinforce and measure progress over time.

[Explore Lattice Grow](#) | [Explore Lattice Pulse](#)