

Transcript | How to Use AI to Speed Up Your Work in Government

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Join us. We're here with a couple great speakers But, just gonna give everyone a second to join. So, over the next hour, we'll be sharing some practical tips on how you can employ AI tools to make your work faster.

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More efficient, uh, and give you more time to take on the work that's most meaningful to you, which I think is one of the very cool things about AI in the current day and age.

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My name's Lowell Weisbord, I'm a product manager here at Apolitical.

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Um, as folks join the room, it would be really great to hear from you all, so please let us know who you are, where you're joining us from, your role.

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Bring a little context into everyone in the room. It's great to... see folks starting to say hi.

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Uh, I'm calling in from London today, but I imagine we have people from hopefully all over the world Um, so yeah, again, feel free to introduce yourself.

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Your job, greetings from Toronto, welcome, Sylvia. Um, the Isle of Man, of the already getting some... geographic diversity, the cabinet Office, okay, even going too quick for me to read at this point, but from Brazil.

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Scotland, London. Saskatchewan, Canada, Copenhagen, Thunder Bay.

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Really, really great to have you all here. Blackpool, Singapore.

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Um, for those of you who may be joining us for the first time, welcome. Apolitical is the world's largest community for government.

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Were used by over a quarter of a million public servants and policymakers from more than 170 countries.

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Our mission is to make government smarter, and we do this by putting the best knowledge and skills at the fingertips of public servants around the world.

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That being you all. Um, this event is part of our Government AI campus, which aims to train a million public servants in order to create AI Ready Public Services. The campus is a trusted knowledge and learning hub for governments.

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Uh, in the world's, you know, 200 million civil servants within them.

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It's about governing, applying the technology. Uh, you can take up your place on the campus by following link that we're about to drop, there's lots of cool future events.

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Courses, lots of free, awesome things, um, so we can kind of deploy this technology make governments work better, deliver better services for people.

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Um, a few quick technical notes as people continue to stream in.

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Uh, this event is recorded for on-demand viewing on the Apolitical website. Please Don't record it yourself. Contact details, if you have privacy concerns, are in the apolitical homepage footer.

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Uh, closed captions are available and can be toggled on or off in your screen settings.

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Um, if you have any technical questions or anything, we have my lovely colleague Joel on the call, who can assist you.

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Um, before we introduce our speakers, we're going to run a few quick polls to get a sense of what you're hoping for, and to kind of bring some context into this room.

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So the first poll we have here, which should pop up on your screen, is, are you currently using AI in the workplace, and if so.

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How often? Um, obviously this is a particularly interesting one with governments.

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Who have different... there's lots of guidance coming out, lots of, um... data concerns, lots of opportunity.

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Um, give folks a second. To get those responses in.

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Not currently using AI tools, I use them every day. Once a week, once a month, or, you know, again, feel free to write a little bit about how you... your experience with them in the chat, just to... bring a little bit of context to this conversation.

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Um, you can see the results on the screen. The top answer.

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I use tools every day. It looks like over half of people use them.

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Once a week on average, or every day, but we still have a good fifth of us who are not using them at all. I imagine for a bunch of different reasons, which we can explore, um, one of which being maybe you don't have practical use cases, which I think we're going to cover today.

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Um, the second quick poll we have here is, does your organization provide clear guidance on which AI tools You are allowed to use at work.

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Um, again, we're using AI here. A lot of what we're talking about is generative AI, which is this kind of modern wave where We're kind of experiencing and playing with right now, but there's, you know, lots of AI tools that we might

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We might all use, even without knowing at some points. Um, give people a second to drop their responses.

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Well, we are just about... Of most of you having responded here.

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Um, and it looks like our top answer is yes! And I feel confident using AI within the guidelines, 38% of folks. Um, interesting, but a very, very close second is yes, but the guidance is unclear or incomplete.

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Um, I think that is... on par with a lot of what we're hearing from civil servants in different governments around the world. No, and I'm unsure what is permitted No, but I use the AI tools anyway. Um, that's definitely a contingent, especially

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Um, in this kind of anonymous polling, um, we've seen a lot of people who are unclear, but, you know, there's so much obvious value there.

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Um, the final thing, which hopefully can be kind of a push towards our speakers, too.

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Which area do you think AI could enhance most in your work? And we'll hopefully touch on touch on these, uh, in a second, the options are data analysis and insights.

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Document automation. Communication efficiency, decision-making processes.

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And other. Feel free to write out any other kind of creative use cases, especially if you've seen a lot of value.

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Uh, in the chat here. Again, I'll bring in some context to what is going to be a great conversation in a minute from our speakers, anytime you Google something, the first result is generative AI. I think it's a good observation.

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Um, even if you're not using it, you're using it, um... I find this Google results.

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Quite helpful, actually. Synthesis of information, I think that's a really good one.

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Sort of qualitative analysis, um... Uh, how many people are on this call? Around 500... more than 500 at the minute.

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Comparing and synthesizing information. Okay, we have... results coming in pretty quickly here.

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And our top results, almost 40% data analysis and insights. Interesting. A few people were kind of mentioning kind of qualitative analysis as well in the poll, which I think would fit into that top category. Document automation.

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Communication efficiency, maybe writing emails, Teams messages, uh, decision-making processes, and lots of... other things. Um... Well, with all that Uh, we'll have plenty to talk about. Thanks again for taking part in the polls, but I'm going to tell you a little bit more about who you'll be hearing from today, actually. We're fortunate to have two really brilliant guests, uh, versed in the use of artificial intelligence here, Chantal.

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Smith and Gigi Ginnem. Gigi's Chief of Staff at Data.org, where she oversees systems planning and reporting for the organization.

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She leads Data.org's government engagement initiatives, facilitating partnerships with public sector organizations to enhance data and AI capacity building for civil servants globally.

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Chantal is a social scientist. And Senior Researcher focusing on AI's intersection with geopolitics.

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Policy and Deep Tech at Exponential View. You've previously held academic and research postings at organizations such as the Swiss Federal Technology Institute of Lusonne.

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And the Embassy of Switzerland in Denmark. Uh, you can read both of their full bios by visiting the, kind of, resources tab.

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At the bottom of your Zoom screen, and heading to the speakers section.

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Um, so to get started with an icebreaker before we get into the presentations from our, uh, illustrious speakers.

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I'm gonna ask you for both of you, um, for a quick verbal answer to this.

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But everyone else, please do respond to this in the chat as well.

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Um, but what's the most surprising manual thing you still do at work that you wish you could automate with the help of AI? Or maybe you you will automate with the help of AI in the future. Um, Chantal, do you want to start?

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Sure, well, first of all, thank you very much for having me. I'm excited to be here. Um, I spend a lot of time working with AI. I think I use over 10 tools daily.

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The thing that I spend most time on, and that I wish I could automate, is actually managing those workflows, because I have some AIs loading for 10 seconds, some for 30 minutes, and I do so much, and I always lose my threads. I spend so much time going through my conversations, trying to remember where I did the work, and what I want is an AI chief of staff.

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That can actually manage all of those flows for me. I can't be scrolling in ChatGPT anymore, it's just taking too much time.

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Yeah, brilliant. I relate to that a lot. I do a lot of, kind of, having to dump context from one place to another if I can find it as best as I can.

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Um, and over to you, Chi-Chi.

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I would say, uh, email management and response. I am a zero-inbox type of person, and I spend way too much time prioritizing what needs immediate attention, uh, what can wait.

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Uh, what emails are dependent on other emails? And because I do a lot of coordinating and logistics, I'm setting the right tone is really important.

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Um, and I have to... respond a lot of times to different audiences, like funders, vendors, partners, uh, and because we work remotely, I like to build rapport through those emails, so I'm just not quite ready to rely on AI as of yet. So, I'm sure there's a happy medium, though.

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Yeah, 100%. Um, I think that's really good as well. I definitely had that this week of an attempt at exporting all of my Slack messages I've ever written to kind of get some of that tonal being into a little personal bot, but yeah, it certainly doesn't come out of the box yet, and I...

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I didn't come to a very good solution, so I don't know if it is quite automatable yet.

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Some really interesting things in the chat as well. Email management gets a big, uh, a big second from the audience.

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Summarizing, finding documents, managing workloads and flows. Um, we'll go into some of this for sure. Uh, but enough from me. I'm gonna hand it over to you, Chantal, for the first, uh, presentation.

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Well, thank you very much, and let me share my screen.

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Let me make it... a bit bigger, if I can. Oops!

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Gonna make it bigger. I should be able to make it bigger.

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And here we go. Are we good?

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Yeah, it looks great.

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Wonderful. Absolutely wonderful. So, hello everybody. Again, I'm very happy to be here. I'm Chantal Smith.

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Some of you may have already seen me in previous apolitical events. If you haven't, it's great to meet you. I'm a senior researcher at Exponential View.

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We're a research and media organization best known for our newsletter. Our goal is to bring some clarity in a world of fast-moving technologies into political change, and we do this through the newsletter, but also podcasts. We run research collaborations. We also publish in external

publications and work closely with organizations as they try to adapt to these emerging technologies.

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Especially AI. We're also a small AI-native team ourselves, um, that doesn't mean that we have all of the answers, but it does mean that we spent a lot, a lot, a lot of time experimenting and trying to figure out how we work and redesigning work, and rethinking how we do everything

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Very often. So, as Lowell, um, mentioned, I've previously worked a little bit in the public sector. It was an embassy, I don't know how much that represents the rest of the public sector, but I have somewhat of a understanding of how, uh, what day-to-day work looks like.

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So today, what I want to do in my, kind of, short hopefully 15-minute presentation is to give you a sense of where we are with AI right now, and how to think about it And how organizations beyond the public sector are adapting, and then how you individually should be thinking about it.

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According to me, and how you can make the most of these tools.

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I'm conscious that you are all from loads of different countries, you have different context, you're allowed different tools, you have different restrictions and different things that you want to do.

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What I'm gonna aim to do is give you some evergreen, um, advice so that you can apply it across everything that you do.

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So that's the hope. Let's get started then. Um, we're still in the early days of generative AI, but it is a space that is moving very, very fast. We have new models and capabilities and products that are released almost weekly.

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This pace of change is driven by two main things. First, it's a massive investment in... and research and scientific breakthroughs.

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And next, it's users that are constantly discovering new ways of applying AI, and people also building companies based on these new tools.

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And what that does is that these two forces feed into each other, and that drives that rapid change, and creates kind of a positive reinforcement loop. So I would encourage you to look at this pace of change as the new normal.

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So, it's been about two and a half years since ChatGPT was released. What have we learned since about AI?

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Well, first of all, it's actually really good at a lot of things that we hadn't necessarily expected that you would be good at.

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For example, it's extremely good at coding and helping developers. This is very topical at the moment. Microsoft has reported that AI rides around 20-30% of its codebase, with some projects completely AI-generated and developer-focused AI tools are seeing the biggest surge in adoption within AI tools

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I've seen this in the past couple of weeks, and so these tools aren't just experimental anymore, they're actually a part of modern software teams.

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It's also very good at scientific research. We don't have AI tools that are really replacing the whole scientific kind of process yet, but it does automate and help accelerate certain parts of it.

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And so it can identify, you know, gaps in the literature, it can help.

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Brainstorm and discover new materials and help with new drugs, which is all very, very helpful.

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One of my favorite things that it's become very good at is being a research assistant, and those of you who will have tried deep research tools will know that it can generate within, you know, 20 to 40 minutes Excellent, excellent research, um, projects are absolutely incredible, with sources and nuance.

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And then finally, we can see that it's actually starting to change search habits. Google's overall share of web searches has fallen below 90% for the first time in a decade.

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And that's even with Gemini at the top, that means This could be driven by multiple things, right? But one of the major reasons is most likely, AI.

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But here's the twist. AI is also fundamentally weird. It's quirky.

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It's a people pleaser. It has a huge bias towards you, the user. It wants to make you happy, even if that means sometimes kind of misconstruing what reality is.

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As you all know, it also hallucinates, especially if you're a little bit vague, it tends to make stuff up.

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Um, you can also get lazy and decide not to do the whole task. Sometimes it struggles with attention. If you have a conversation that's too long with it, sometimes it will just kind of not pay attention anymore and not know what's important anymore.

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This is what Professor Ethan Mollick has called the jagged frontier. So, the frontier between what AI is really good at and what it's not good at isn't obvious.

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We have to go and figure it out by ourselves, plus it keeps changing, because we keep getting new models and new breakthroughs, and we're figuring out new ways of using AI, so research about prompting is showing, well, if you do it in this way and this technique, you'll get way better results than if you do it in that way.

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So how are organizations adapting to that and coping with that? Well, they're really uncharted territories, and some of them had an extremely well, and some of them have failed Uh, massively, as will have been expected. So, let's talk about the first one.

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Klana. Um, you may know Klana as the buy now, pay later Swedish fintech. Um, they famously boasted that they had replaced the equivalent of about 700 customer service agents with chatbots.

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Um, and that they had saved a lot of money with that. Well, it turns out that the customers really hated it, and the quality of response dropped.

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And now they're hiring people back because they realize that although these chatbots were useful, they were really lacking, um, experience, but also real rapport with people who wanted help.

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So let's take that as kind of a negative example. And let's move on to something that I thought was very interesting.

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So, Moderna, which is the biotech that became famous in the pandemic, took a different route, and they just announced that they merged their HR and tech functions under just one executive.

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A chief people and digital technology officer. So what does that shift mean?

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It means that they see the unit of work no longer as just people.

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But as tasks and workflows. So, future leaders are going to have to be fluent in both organizational design and AI systems, and without that, they can't scale the tech.

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And they can't protect their culture. So, what are we doing at Exponential View? Well, we're focusing... we're a small team, right, about 5 or 6 people. We're focusing on asking the right questions consistently.

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But looking at a work week, for example, I might think, okay, what am I doing repeatedly? Where am I making mistakes or losing information? Where do I need more clarity or context? What is creative? What is operational?

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What do I want to spend less time on? And what do I want to spend more time on?

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And then we'll get together and discuss approaches and try different things out. So you might want to have a long chatbot conversation with lots of interaction, for example, with Claude.

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But you might also want to create a GPT on ChatGPT, in which you give it context.

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And some examples, and it's going to give you the same output every time.

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But maybe somebody has invented a specific AI tool for that one problem that I'm trying to solve.

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Or maybe the answer is to intelligently connect different applications that I use anyway, with tools like Zapier.

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Or maybe it's a combination of tools. And what we've learned is that the best way of utilizing all of this is having regular meetings. So we will meet Weekly or sometimes daily in the morning, 8.30 sharp, to discuss what we've done the day before, what we've learned, what's worked, what hasn't worked.

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And one of the most recent learnings is that we're very excited about what we call agentic workflows.

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Our AI agents are basically AI systems that are capable of autonomously... completing multiple linked tasks. So you'll give it an objective, for example, I would like you to debug this code.

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And then the AI, with authorizations to, you know, connect to different apps, and a connection to a model, will go and figure out how to do that, and figure out the different steps that it will do.

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We're very excited by that, but what we've realized is that if it's a task that takes more than about 10 minutes, the reliability goes down a lot, and so it's not quite useful for us in organizations yet. But we can see how well it does, but we're just waiting for that breakthrough in reliability, that scientific advancement, that means that they can be really useful.

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But they are absolutely all the rage, um, if you... if you've been reading the kind of AI news, you'll know that. Um, OpenAI announced a coding agent just this week, so... Um, we expect that, uh, advancements are gonna come really, really fast.

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So let's briefly just zoom out and think about what the organizations are most satisfied with AI and are doing best are doing. First, they have centralized AI governance. You need... leadership to define clear rules and which tools are allowed, and data practices. I was happy to see in the survey beforehand that many people do have, um, clear guidance from their leaders, but that is far from the case all of the time.

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Importantly, you also need to define accountability and decent risk assessment.

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And even more importantly, you have to be careful not to make it too rigid or strict.

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There's some organizations that have thought this is way too risky, we don't want any employees to use AI.

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But then surveys have showed that people use it anyway. Without telling their boss. So if you made the governance too rigid, people are going to use it way more unsafely than if you make it a little bit more open.

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So you need to define safe boundaries, but give people enough room to act.

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And this second part is very important. Decentralized application and experimentation.

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You could have some great applications that come from the top and from leadership, but what we found, anecdotally, but also in surveys, is that the most satisfying applications happen to be when individuals do it themselves and try it themselves.

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And then communicate with their team. Um, I'm happy Gigi is nodding, and that this is... Um, a finding that we've seen everywhere. And I think that's for two reasons, actually. First, um, only individuals actually know how they work, and they have this informal organization, and they know how the actual process works.

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And second, you need to be able to learn from what you've done and iterate fast, and if you have to go up and down a chain of command and a hierarchy.

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You're just not going to get the speed that you need.

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So what does this mean for you in practice? Well, I've been dancing around this terminology for a while, um, but... I think that you should get into a mindset that makes you a researcher and an explorer.

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We've spent a lot of time, as people who maybe want to educate others on how to use AI, saying, well, it's easy and anybody can do it, and it's true that you can open a chatbot and talk to it as if you were a human.

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But it's actually unhelpful to say that it's too easy, because then people expect it to work immediately very well, when actually the best applications are the best way of using them is through hard work.

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So, be a researcher, be an explorer, approach it with curiosity, try different prompts, try different models, try different outputs.

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Um, don't settle for the first version, because the second, third, fourth, fifth will be better.

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Second, you need to put in the hours. We reckon that it takes about 10 to 20 hours with a single model to understand how it works, to understand its quirks, and to understand how to interact with it, really. And when a new model comes out.

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You may not have to spend 20 hours with it, but you do need to get to know it again, because they do have different personalities.

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And third, when I talk about learning, I want you to do it in a really systematic way.

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Think about what experiments you've done, what's worked, what hasn't worked, if you have a great prompt.

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Write it down, use it again and again. And share with your team, make sure that you have maybe weekly meetings, maybe monthly meetings, which are open and people can speak to each other.

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That AI fluency really spreads laterally, like, peer-to-peer. Finally, let me end with this the world is only going to get weirder. A lot weirder, and these tools can help us think and do better. That doesn't happen automatically. It has to be a conscious decision.

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So, for them to be a net positive in our work and in our life.

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You have to help... let it help your thinking, but don't outsource all of your creativity and critical skills.

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You need to stay sharp, and that's how, hopefully, we'll move forward.

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Thank you very, very much, and let me pass back to Lowell and stop sharing my screen. You can talk to me on LinkedIn or email, or ask questions in the chat afterwards.

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Yeah, thank you so much, Chantal. Um, that was great, some really useful, kind of, high-level understanding of where AI is working, where it's not, this fact that we are on the frontier, and it's really important to remember that constantly.

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Um, and also pushed some thought-provoking conversations in the chat, which I promise everyone we will get to, uh, very shortly. But without further ado, let me pass it over to our second speaker, Gigi.

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Thank you so much. Great, uh, presentation, Chantal. Uh, how's my screen looking for everyone?

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Uh, it's looking good, except for... yep, there, that looks great now.

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Oh, yes.

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Great. But thank you everyone for joining today. My name is Gigi Gannon, Chief of Staff at Data.org, where I also lead our government engagement work.

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My hope today is to explore some practical applications, um.

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Of generative AI for public servants, including resources to support your AI adoption.

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Ethical considerations for public sector use, and practical use cases you can implement immediately.

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I'll also include some advanced applications for agencies that are considering in-house AI adoption.

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So, for a little background on data.org, we serve as a platform for partnerships to accelerate the use of data and AI for social impact.

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We bring together diverse stakeholders across sectors to bridge the data and AI innovation gap in the social sector.

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Similar to apolitical's goal of training 1 million public servants, we're on a mission to train 1 million purpose-driven data practitioners by 2032.

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Which is why we're really thrilled to share our learnings and resources with the apolitical community.

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Our work is driven by three strategic pillars that include identifying and amplifying new and exciting data in AI use cases.

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Building capacity by developing talent that have both the technical skills and the ethical frameworks to make the biggest impact.

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And supporting the Digital Commons by co-developing and sharing digital public goods.

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In just 5 years, we've trained 100,000 purpose-driven data practitioners and equip social impact organizations with the tools, assessments, and resources to enhance their data maturity.

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We know that AI is transforming how we address social issues, um, and that's why we focused two of our global challenges on amplifying organizations effectively using AI to drive social impact.

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Our capacity accelerator network develops purpose-driven data talent with the interdisciplinary, practical skills to solve real-world problems.

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With hubs around the globe, we are able to scale our work by sharing co-developed tools, curriculums.

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And content across our partner network. To adapt and use in their own contexts.

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Collaboration is the key to our impact. By connecting philanthropy, technology companies, academic networks, social impact organizations, and government agencies, we're creating powerful partnerships that can accelerate solutions at a scale that's really difficult to achieve alone.

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So at data.org, we're not just supporting innovative AI applications, we're actively collaborating with, uh, on strategic AI initiatives as well.

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So if you look at our global challenges, we're seeing our awardees using diverse AI applications Tailored to local needs.

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In India, the Mina Mahila Foundation is using chatbots to provide women's health information in multiple local languages.

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While in the US, our awardee, LinkHealth. Created AI enrollment platforms that have unlocked 10 million US dollars in benefits for low-income Americans.

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Data.org's also working with the World Health Organization their collaboratory to develop AI-powered tool discovery for public health researchers.

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Using natural language processing, we're creating an intelligent search functionality To help epidemiologists find the relevant tools that they need quickly, and empower them to make informed decisions Uh, way faster.

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We're also partnering with Data Science Nigeria and others to build an open access playbook for low-resource African languages.

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This will address the critical gap where many African languages lack the digital infrastructure that's the precursor for AI development.

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We've also integrated AI search functionality on our own website to allow you to get the pertinent, uh, search query that they need, um.

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That they can then use in their own data journey. Through our work, we've quickly learned that governments are uniquely positioned as custodians of public datasets across health.

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Climate, infrastructure, and social services. And we all know that that data influences policy, economic strategies, and social programs.

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So, there is enormous, untapped potential for data and AI to transform public services.

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And we want to unlock that potential through enhanced data literacy.

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And effective use of AI tools. We've developed offerings to help strengthen data capabilities through courses, training, and resources.

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One of our most recent publications is our Generative AI Playbook for Civil Servants.

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That was created as part of our work with Microsoft Philanthropies.

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This playbook was designed to provide a baseline AI fundamentals for non-technical users.

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Showcase real-world examples of government AI use cases. Provide, um, an overview of popular generative AI tools to try.

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And guidance around its ethical use. It's a free resource available on data.org's resource library, where you can also find additional tools and guides To support your data and AI journey.

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As public servants, there's an added layer of responsibility to use AI ethically and safely Our playbook lays a lot of that out, but I just wanted to share a few points.

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Uh, first, protect your data. Check your agency's policies before using any AI tool. Never input confidential information or sensitive data.

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Or personally identifiable information into public AI systems. Second, ensure governance and transparency.

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Treat AI outputs as drafts that require human review, not as final products.

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And verify any sources the AI cites in its output for accuracy.

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And third, this is where human judgment is critical. Review all of the AI outputs for any type of problematic content. Don't blindly rely on AI for decisions. Always keep a human in the loop.

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And understand its power, but also know its limitations. It's a great tool to enhance your capabilities.

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But it does not replace judgment. Regardless of your job role, it's safe to assume that writing and summarizing are likely to be big parts of your daily work, whether it's reports.

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Emails, updates, briefs, or other forms of communication. And AI's really good at all stages of the writing process.

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From brainstorming your initial thoughts and giving it structure. To organizing different fragments of your work to give it a logical flow.

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Uh, to refine them later drafts. One of my favorite prompts, uh, for this is simply edit for readability.

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Uh, it helps clean up my writing style that can be a bit word-heavy, and it can cut out redundancy.

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For summarizing, AI's really good at processing large volumes of information, so think long PDF reports where you can extract insights or ask questions from published research or training materials, or the instruction manual to the new printer in the office.

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I also included some practical applications that can save you time.

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Um, and... free up some of that heavy lifting, uh, to give you the space and time to think more strategically and work on more mentally time-consuming tasks that are on your plate.

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For those of you working in agencies that have already integrated AI into your workflows, or are considering it.

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I wanted to share some of the possibilities of what it could look like if your agencies had Secure controls, privacy-enabled settings, and the internal approvals in place, uh, to handle more sensitive information.

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The first example of this that I'm most excited by are those of you that work in procurement or contracting.

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We know that it's a long and drawn-out process, uh, because of all the due diligence that's required.

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There are use cases where AI can help your teams generate requests for proposals, or RFPs using pre-approved templates, and can accurately gather information for the RFP for multiple departments.

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It can also compare vendor proposals by analyzing for scope, for compliance.

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For cost, to help you make more informed decisions quickly. It can also track multiple modifications with the original statements of work, or the SOWs that often go back and forth.

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AI can also help those of you that work in public health. Imagine... Uh, having an AI-enabled instant search that is integrated in your knowledge management systems.

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You would get much faster results, or better results, uh, compared to manually browsing keyword-based search results.

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That often don't get you what you need. And a third example that is near and dear to my heart is deploying AI to enhance human service agencies and their internal operations and case management.

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Before joining Data.org, I worked for a national nonprofit that used data to identify people that were eligible, but not enrolled in public benefit programs, and I learned a lot about all of the pain points, people not understanding their eligibility.

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Long, uh, call wait times, overloaded caseworkers, managing bureaucratic processes, and legacy systems.

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So, on the public-facing side, AI-powered chatbots can help alleviate a lot of those challenges. By allowing people to check on their eligibility in a more... conversational approach give them the ability to submit the required documents, or let them easily update their mailing address to avoid benefit disruptions.

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On the internal side, AI can, um, chatbots can assist caseworkers in easing the management of their caseload and free up time to handle more complex, uh, cases.

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So, if you're thinking, where do I start? Here's a roadmap that you can really begin to think about, uh, start by building an internal team that can be responsible for developing an AI culture.

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They can serve as the implementation group to pilot AI use.

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They can help establish governing principles, and can help plan for eventual scale.

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Then, identify and map out some high-impact use cases, assess your team's current skills and what level of training required.

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Um, what infrastructure requirements are needed? What's the resource requirements? What's the best path forward for AI integration. Chantal mentioned a few really great ideas about really connecting as a group frequently and sharing best practices.

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And then start small. Begin with the basics. Uh, you can use our Gen AI playbook for some of that initial guidance.

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And build in human loop checks. Um, and I would say don't look at AI and integration solely with a technical lens Try to adopt more of a socio-technical outlook, because AI is also about people and processes.

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Should be ready to address concerns, provide adequate training. Celebrate the small wins, build confidence and momentum. So, I would say start small, learn quickly, and scale thoughtfully.

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Thanks all for your time.

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Thank you so much, Giju. That was really helpful. Appreciated both some of the work that data.org's doing and some of those kind of examples of empowering epidemiologists or, you know.

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Open access playbook for languages. I mean, those are... those are really interesting things for people, but also on the more practical side around workforce capacity building and, you know, some starter prompts for folks. I know we have people in this call who probably are coming from lots of different contexts, whether you've

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You know, using it every day, or maybe building AI applications as part of delivering services.

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Or not even, you know, having context for it at all yet. So, um... appreciate that we have... we've covered some range here.

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Uh, and I think we have some really great questions from folks, um, that's representative of that range. So, excited to get into it.

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Uh, and one more call-out, if you, uh, have any, you know, questions, do throw them. We have a Q&A feature in, uh.

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The Zoom webinar function, which, uh, you can ask into, or If you can't find that, do throw them into the... uh, into the chat here.

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Um, as... as we get into it, um... Let's start kind of on a high level, right? Because some folks in here will have control over their team, or, you know, influence over their organization, and, um, you know, Chantal, one of your points was to...

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Decentralize and explore, which can be a tricky thing, especially working in, you know, the insensitive environment of the civil service.

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Is there a question from Spencer of, like, do you think orgs should let go a bit, let staff learn through play, you know, with caveats, of course.

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This would surely be the same as when social media platforms came to be really useful, but only once organizations opened up access.

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Sure, thanks, Spencer. Um... The short answer is yes, but.

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I think that organizations and leaders should open up a space where people can really experiment, and in practice, what that means is that You can start, maybe, by opening up a playground, saying, okay, these are the four tools that we're going to start trying, and then we're going to use fake data.

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Anonymized data. So let's say if you work with Um, some kind of data that's useful, the names of citizens. You could have an AI generate fake citizens with fake numbers, fake things, and with that, you can throw everything at the AI and try to see

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What sticks and what works and what doesn't. So you start to ask the questions, how do I work, or Um, what do I want to spend more or less time with, or... what is precious in this data that we'd like to do, or what is taking way too much time?

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For example, if you're a regulator and there's a gridlock on building new electrical grids, why is this taking so much time? How can we accelerate that? And if you start with anonymized data or fake data, you can then learn some Um, some lessons really fast, and then maybe you can start thinking about how, in a

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Less risky environment, you can apply these lessons. So that's how I would ask, whether they should let go a little bit more or not, it also depends In what sector specifically you're working, because some things are going to be more sensitive than others.

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I'd love to hear what Gigi thinks.

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Yeah, I agree. I think that you start with, um, high impact, but low-risk pilot projects internally.

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Um, it can be automating document summaries, drafting internal communications, that kind of thing I think there's also a lot of analysis that you can do for open data sets that might be available Um, in government contests and doing that kind of analysis with data that's readily available for the public.

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So, there's a lot of ways that you can dip your toes in the water and try out different things to see how it works.

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Build, um, that internal culture.

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Yeah, that's really interesting, and I think, you know, you both work at fairly different organizations, Exponential View, a smaller.

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Intenselyaidata.org being a, you know, a kind of bigger, broader. Kind of, uh, non-profit.

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How... Gigi, what is the culture at data.org right now around AI?

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Um, how are you all adjusting, and kind of how have you set that organizational tone?

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We're actually, um... we have discussed internally, built out some parameters around it, but it is a work in progress. It's something that we need to build out internally Uh, and really gather best practices together and talk about how it can support our workflows

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A bit more. So I know that it's in the works, um, but it's kind of happening organically, but we want... we want to build some structure around it.

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Uh, you'll find at nonprofits that a lot of times you're working and doing at the same time, so it's really about carving out the time for it Um, which is in our plans.

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Yeah, 100%, sorry, had an issue muting there, but, um, yeah, making time for the organizational planning that this requires is... is no easy task, and to that point, making time, even as an individual, to figure the 10, 20 hours to familiar... familiarize yourself with the new model, or to join a call like this one is no easy task, and is a broader strategic problem, particularly for government, where we need this so... so deeply. So, you know, that's another shout out to everyone who's taken the time out of their busy day to join this call and kind of push forward.

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Um, a theme in some of the questions. One of the questions from, uh, Franzani, I apologize in advance.

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As humans in the loop, what do you see as some of our current blind spots in the use of AI in a work context?

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That's the question. I think there were some other skepticism in the chat towards deep research. Um, I've spoken to a lot of folks who maybe tried out LLMs 3 years ago, and kind of came to conclusions around hallucinations that, you know, the evidence seems to show that, you know, hallucinations are... I mean, less of a problem, and we're also prioritizing LLMs in ways that solve some of these problems, bringing in

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Better data earlier on, step-by-step thinking, I mean, to the point earlier, there are literally advances in this... what feels like daily. So, Chantal, just, you know, on a really basic level.

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Where do you think the biggest blind spots are? Right now, for... especially for people who are starting to use this a lot, um... But, uh, where are kind of the horde limits, in your view?

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Well, first of all, I completely agree with what you said beforehand.

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Yes, AI still hallucinates, yes, there are still some reliability issues, but actually the newest models and the ones that come out now, rather than those that are a year old, are excellent.

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And they're very, very good, and if you try these deep research prompts, um.

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Well, of course, there's still going to be issues, but they've become very, very good, and with good prompting techniques, just like Chain of Thought. Um, and telling it to go step by step, you really, really minimize how many of these issues you have. I think the biggest blind spot right now

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Is that... well, first of all, we don't know what we don't know.

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But the only way to actually manage the risks properly is to take that experimental approach, not as an experiment, but that third point I made in my presentation, which is that you need to document and write down what kind of prompts did you use? What kind of data did you use? What kind of, um...

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Which model did you use? What worked? What didn't work? If you adjust like that, wow, the reliability is way better. And if you have that audit trail, first of all, you could have exterior help to actually help you.

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Um, but also your team internally, and you can reflect on what you've done. So I think that visibility and that auditability trait trail and that habit of thinking like an experimental researcher is the biggest blind spot that we have right now.

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Hmm, yeah, yeah, getting used to habitually using this thing in, you know, I think it's a fundamentally different technology than ones that we're used to interact with.

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Uh, you don't have to learn to... right in the way that we all have learned to type Google searches.

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But that... it's actually much more intuitive than that in some ways, but that makes blind spots.

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One of the pre-submitted questions here is just, um, apologies... in which field do we see the most promising changes right now, and I'm gonna... let's take a kind of government, uh, lens. Gigi, you mentioned a few really interesting places when you... when you kind of got into the practical examples at the end.

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You were talking about, um, people who work in, uh, you know, drafting RFPs, or, like, a few quite specific things.

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I would definitely say... education. I think that, uh, data literacy, AI literacy, um, is an area that Um.

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Is... is the... the most untapped, and can help with functions all across, um.

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Regardless of the type of role that you're in. Um, I guess... what I would say is... that the sheer volume, like, the training that can come out of education and filling the gaps and what you know.

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Is, um, really interesting when it comes to AI, and learning just the baseline, um.

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Methods of... of... of really adapting to the... you know, the work that goes into all of that. So... Yeah, I would say education is definitely where it's at.

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Right now.

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I think you're on mute.

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Appreciate the quick note. Uh, we at Apical agree with that massively. I mean, I think there's... there's both lots of AI education to be done, and AI as kind of a useful tool in the process. I mean, even things like, um.

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Being able to do more simulation and more practice in a real sense, which Compared to just reading, or watching, or even, you know, writing out questions, right? That is kind of pedagogically the most... the strongest way to learn something to remember it.

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Um, one of the questions up here at the top is around, uh, again, kind of using it in the day-to-day of, uh, how... advice on how you or others have found potentially using AI to fact-check itself.

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This question around hallucinations keeps coming up in the chat, so I want to talk about it for a second, because it is real.

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Something to be thoughtful about, careful about. Um, but there is, uh, you know, evidence increasingly that there are kind of ways to deal with this. If you look at how the kind of models and thinking patterns are developing. So just even, like, walking through, kind of, again, another question in the chat that we just got was around your daily workflow.

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Um, and I know, Chantal, you said you use 10 different tools. Could you talk through, like, an example of how that might come up? Like, even kind of prompt by prompt, talking about where you might be using some sort of generic LLM tool.

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And how that kind of process, uh, might get you closer to a useful result in one of your workflows.

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Sure. Well, I'm happy to start just addressing the hallucination question up front.

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One of the techniques that I found, um, that is very useful, because a lot of hallucination comes because of the way that we prompt is when you're using, for example, ChatGPT, use the custom instructions, and a lot of AIs have that. So the custom instructions, you'll set a prompt, and it will apply that prompt to all of your conversations.

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So what my prompt... my custom instructions look like are some technical things, like, I want you to use British spelling. But what I also have is I value the truth.

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I do not want you to make me happy. I value being challenged.

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And I repeat that over and over, as if I was speaking to a child. And that actually ends up being helpful, because it gets out of the mindset of making me happy.

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And it gets into the mindset of making me happy by challenging me.

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And another way to do that, as well as when you're doing the exact prompting, telling it to take the persona of a certain person.

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So, for example, you are a professor of epidemiology. And that will make it less likely for you to have hallucinations, and then some very specific prompting techniques.

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Now, to give an example of the kind of workflow that I do, um, it's always tricky, because no day is the same, but it will start with a meeting with the team where we discuss what we've tried to automate, what new tools we've tried, um, we have lots of startups that reach out to us and say, look.

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Look at what we've developed, want to give it a try?

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And we do, and then we say, ah, it's not quite there yet, or this is very, very useful.

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Um, every meeting that we have with anybody, except if they haven't consented to it, is recorded.

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So usually what I'll do is that I'll have a meeting with somebody, I'll be paying full attention to them, I don't need to take any notes.

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And then the AI, I use granola and Fathom. They're both very good, they both have each their strengths and their weaknesses. I like to double up.

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Um, at the end of the meeting, I might say, okay, give me a to-do list. Also, I want you to answer these questions really well Um, strategically, where should I go from here?

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I'll end the meeting, and then afterwards, let's say I want to start doing a project, and it might be quite a complex project, or it might be that on our show we want to invite a certain person, or we want to write a new book.

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And that's where I start doing what we call vibe working, which is that I'll usually talk with an AI. Oh, actually, I'll find a better example. For this presentation.

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I'll tell you how I went about it. I was on a train, and I was speaking to my ChatGPT app, and I said, this is what the event is, this is how I want to think about it. Help me craft the main message that they need to get away with.

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And then we discussed that a little bit. And I said, okay, so what are the evidence points? It gave me something. I didn't really like it. I said, yes, but you've forgotten something here. We had A complete iteration in wondering, in one hand down my coffee, in the other I was doing this.

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And then about 4 AIs later, and a week later, I ended up with a presentation, and the last thing that I did Um, yesterday was that I said I did the presentation a couple of times, and I asked it to give me feedback.

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And I implemented that feedback, and... Um, well, hopefully you liked the result. So, I could go on and on for this... with this forever, but I don't want to take up too much... too much time.

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Yeah, brilliant. Um... Thanks for the... yeah, please, Gigi.

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Yeah, I could add to that. Um, a little bit. Um, I think for my workflow, there's a lot of help that AI gives me in research and landscape analysis.

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I quickly want to learn every facet of a new topic, and... AI's really good at giving me a basic understanding, uh, identifying key gaps or emerging trends, or key partners that are worth exploring. I can take a 200-page UN report, upload it.

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And ask it to give me recommendations on a specific region, or, um, mention the implementation project partners of a specific project.

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And I've just learned through my own, um, testing with it, because, you know, it's a journey.

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Um, to really invest in your prompts on the front end, and you'll be happy with the result, um, later.

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So, be really specific about, um, the... what you want, provide the context.

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Include examples when you can. I love the simple formula of giving your prompt a role and giving specific tasks and using clarifiers. There was one example that, like, really helped me understand, like, if you're working in a communications department, and

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Your agency's about to publish a new budget. You could say you are a public communications specialist.

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Transform this technical budget policy into a citizen-friendly newsletter article. So that's the task.

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And then use simple language, include practical examples, um, structure it with clear headings.

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Keep it under 400 words. I mean, the more clarifiers you use, the better your output.

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And, um, you can ask it to cite sources, um, and cross-reference outputs with official documents that are published.

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And I love the idea of adding more, and then asking it to cut down instead of, um putting less and asking it to create more to avoid some of that inaccuracy.

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Yeah, that's... that's really useful. Um... I think that point on documents is a really useful thing. If you're ever unclear whether AI is kind of looking at the document that you're talking about, or the resource, you can always just copy and paste it right into the chat, and that's kind of how you get the most

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Grounded responses in relation to that thing. If you're uncertain whether it kind of has access to that. Um, we have a couple minutes left, and I'm going to ask for a short kind of answer from both of you, if you can keep it to a couple sentences.

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What's been the most surprising thing? In the world of, you know, that you've personally been surprised by in this kind of... post-generative AI world we're living in over the last few years.

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Um, I can give you a second to think about that as we wrap up, actually, and then we'll come back to it in about one minute. But, um... that way we'll get some really juicy responses, but as we get closer to the time for goodbyes, just, um...

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We're gonna get some closing guidance, but if you don't mind just answering this poll for everyone in the room.

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Uh, on a scale of 1 to 10, just ranking your agreement with the statement, this event was a valuable use of my time.

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We just do this to make sure that we're not wasting your times, and, you know, we appreciate you all coming Today, we know there were lots of questions as well. We didn't get time to answer them all. We didn't get time even close to answering them all, but we're happy for you to all join us, kind of, to continue the discussion in the AI and government community.

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Um, these continue to post your burning questions in that space, and we'll keep the learning going. We have a couple thousand people from, you know, nearly every country, uh, in that community, so there's lots of room to converse.

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Hear expert opinions, share your thoughts, share your experiments. Um, I'm gonna actually get the conversation started. I just dropped a little note in there right before this. I wrote up a little tip about how to use AI to quickly explore and visualize your data, which has some cool, interesting

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Uh, images and stuff, which we can send out in a follow-up email afterwards.

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Yeah, if you want that, feel free to just, um. Just let us... let me know by just commenting on that, and I can make sure to send it to you.

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When we get a bunch of comments. Um, and... you know, let's... with now the last minute, you've hopefully both had time to think for a second, but let's... let's go into the surprises.

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Sure, sure. I'm... I guess I'm most surprised by how much AI is really about people, and not just technology.

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That, uh, a lot of... work needs to go into change management and work culture more than the technical challenges.

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And embracing a new way of working, uh. Is just a... it's just brand new. Um, it's easier to, you know, subscribe to a software or an LLM and train the language model than it is Um, to be patient and thoughtful around the change management around it.

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Yeah, brilliant. Thanks, Chi-Chi, and over to you, Chantal.

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What surprised me the most is humor and AI. I've had my best laughs with AI, and not because I asked for a joke, but if you ask for a query, whatever it is, ask for wrong answer as well. They're very funny. And I've had great, very pro-social moments to build on what Gigi has said.

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Pro-social moments where an AI has been the party trick. Oh, read everybody's hand and tell us our future and do a poster about it. Roast us.

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It's absolutely hilarious. I've had such a good time, and that capacity for humor?

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Is heartwarming and also a little bit terrifying.

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Yeah, thank you so much. And on that note, you know, go ask for a joke after this, but just want to ask you all to join me in giving today's speakers a really big round of applause, perhaps a virtual one.

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And thanks to you all, the attendees, for investing in learning, being so engaged in this topic.

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Um, it's been a really, really great conversation. We've covered a lot of ground.

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Um, and... but unfortunately, that's all we have time for today, so we hope you found the conversation helpful.

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Uh, thank you once again to everyone, and look out to an email coming your way.

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Um, and continue the conversation in the community. Have a great Tuesday, wherever... wherever you are, whether you're starting or ending the day.

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Um.