

AI Terms in Plain English

A practical glossary for business owners and teams that want to understand common AI language without getting buried in technical jargon.

Use this as a plain-English reference during discovery calls, training sessions, and early workflow planning. The goal is not to memorize terms. The goal is to ask better questions and use AI more responsibly.

Core terms

Term	Plain-English meaning
AI	Software that can help with tasks that usually require human-like judgment, language, pattern matching, or reasoning. It should support people, not replace responsible review.
Generative AI	AI that creates drafts, summaries, images, outlines, code, messages, or other new content based on instructions and examples.
ChatGPT	One AI tool people can use to ask questions, draft content, summarize notes, analyze text, and create reusable workflow support.
Prompt	The instruction you give the AI tool. A useful prompt usually includes the task, context, desired format, tone, and review expectations.
Context	The background details the tool needs to respond well, such as the audience, business voice, goal, source notes, constraints, and examples.
Model / LLM	The AI engine behind a tool. Different models can have different strengths, limits, costs, and privacy or business features.
Hallucination	A confident-sounding mistake. AI output should be checked before it is used for facts, pricing, legal language, safety, financial details, or customer-facing work.
Workflow	A repeatable process that turns an input into a useful output, such as job notes into a customer update or meeting notes into next steps.
Prompt library	A saved set of reusable instructions and examples so a business does not start from scratch every time.
Human review	The step where a responsible person checks the AI output for facts, tone, privacy, accuracy, and business fit before use.

Term	Plain-English meaning
Redaction	Removing or replacing sensitive details before using an outside tool, especially customer, employee, pricing, legal, medical, financial, or private information.
Automation / API	A technical connection between software systems. This is usually separate from basic AI training and should be scoped carefully.

Practical questions to ask

- What repeated task are we trying to improve first?
- What real examples can we safely use during the session?
- Who reviews AI-assisted drafts before they are used?
- What information should be redacted or kept out of outside tools?
- How will we measure whether the workflow actually helped?

This guide is intentionally practical. It is not a technical specification, legal guidance, or a substitute for human judgment.