WORKFORCE · A WORKING FRAMEWORK BY JAMES TUTTIETT

The AI Fluency Framework

Four tiers that describe how someone works with AI, not what they know about it.

Most AI training programmes measure awareness: who has done the course, who has a licence. None of that tells you whether work is being done differently. This framework replaces the question "have they been trained?" with "how do they work now?", and gives every role a target tier.

It is built around three behaviours (confident, curious, secure) and applied inside each practice (Build, Scale, Run), so a tier means something specific for an engineer, a change lead or an operations analyst rather than one generic standard for everyone.

Tier 1: AI Aware

Understands what the tools can and cannot do. Uses them occasionally. Knows the safe-use rules and follows them. This is the floor for everyone in the organisation, and it is reached in days, not months.

Tier 2: AI Productive

Uses AI every day on their own tasks: drafting, analysis, research, preparation. Can show time saved and quality maintained. Most knowledge workers should be here within a quarter of starting, and most organisations stall at this tier because nothing has changed except the individual.

Tier 3: AI Operational

Has redesigned at least one workflow or process around AI, not just their own habits. Builds reusable prompts, skills or templates that colleagues pick up. Owns the quality of AI-assisted output in their area and can explain where it should not be used.

Tier 4: AI Orchestrating

Directs agents and pre-built skills across multi-step work. Designs how a team, a function or a client engagement operates with AI in the loop. Accountable for outcomes rather than tasks. This is the tier that changes the economics of a business, and it is where senior practitioners need to be.

How to use it

- Set a target tier for every role, not every person. A Head of Practice and a first-year consultant need different tiers.
- Move people one tier at a time. The jump from Productive to Operational is the hard one, because it needs permission to change how work is done, not just a tool.
- Measure by what has changed in practice: workflows redesigned, skills reused, outcomes owned. Licence activation and course completion are not measures.
- Bake safe and responsible use into the tools rather than a policy document. Secure is a behaviour, not a sign-off.

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