SMARTer Entrepreneurs

FREE QUICK CARD

SYSTEMS I QUICK CARD ST-03

Where AI fits

Fifteen minutes, three questions for your team, and the questions a good coach would ask you.



The practice

Most owners, asked whether their business uses AI, say "not really". Meanwhile someone in the team has been using a free chatbot on their phone to tidy up client reports since the spring. Nobody decided this. Nobody decided against it either.

An IT consultancy asked its 22 people which tools they used, for what, and what went in: fifteen used AI, nine through personal accounts, and four had pasted client documents into one. Nobody checked the output the same way twice. The practice: find out, decide where it helps, and agree three rules.

Your AI use map

How many in the team use AI for work (ask anonymously)
Which tools, and are they business or personal accounts?
What goes in: client information, personal data, or internal only?
Who checks anything AI helped to produce before a client sees it?
What do your client contracts say, and what have you told clients?
Rule one, in your words: what information goes into which tools

Fill it in from what you know, then ask the team, anonymously.

Try this this week

Ask everyone three questions, anonymously, saying nobody is in trouble: which AI tools do you use for work, for what, and what goes into them? Until you choose a business tool: no client information into any AI tool.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CARD

Coach yourself

Fill in the front first, then answer these in writing.

1. Look at your map. How much of it did you know before you asked, and what surprised you?

2. If a client asked today whether AI had been used on their work, what would you say?

3. Which use on the map worries you most, and which is the most useful thing anyone has done with it this year?

4. Which answer would you least want a client to read, and what would you change first?

5. Which of the three rules would your team find easiest to keep, and which hardest?

If you catch yourself saying...

You hear yourself say	Try asking instead
"I'm sure nobody's putting client data in"	How would you know?
"I leave it to the young ones"	What do you need to understand to decide how your business uses it?
"We'll just ban it"	What would a ban actually achieve?

ONE HARDER QUESTION

Who in your business is responsible for what AI produces? If nobody, what does that mean for a client?

Keep it going

Agree the three rules with the team in their words: what goes into which tools, who checks, what clients are told. Decide who keeps the map. Three dates in the diary: 3, 6 and 12 months.

When to get help

Whether a use is lawful: the ICO's guidance and a data protection adviser. What your contracts allow: your solicitor. Setting tools up so you control the data: your IT partner.

What a coach adds

This card gives you the questions. What it cannot do is notice which one you avoided. It is one of the SMARTer practice cards, covering the ten key areas of a business that sells expertise.

> Talk yours through with your SMARTer coach and mentor: book a Discovery Call at smarterentrepreneurs.co.uk

Quick card ST-03 v2, October 2026. Sources: Dell'Acqua and others (2023, 2025); ONS, Artificial intelligence in UK businesses (2026); Microsoft UK (2025); ICO guidance on AI and data protection. © 2026 SMARTer Entrepreneurs. Free to share with other business owners, unchanged and with this notice.