THE BRIEF SCRIPT

AI Readiness Assessment: 35-question checklist

Score each item: Yes = 2, Partial = 1, No = 0. Pillar points = (raw / 10) x weight. Total out of 100. Answer Yes only if you can show evidence.

STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP

wt 15 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N S1. We have a written AI strategy tied to two or three named business goals, approved by the executive team.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N S2. One named executive owns AI outcomes and the AI budget (not only IT).
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N S3. AI has multi-year funding beyond single pilots.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N S4. Leadership reviews AI portfolio results at least quarterly, against agreed metrics.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N S5. We have a clear build, buy or partner rule for AI solutions.

DATA

wt 20 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N D1. The data for our top three use cases is identified, owned and accessible.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N D2. We measure data quality (completeness, accuracy, freshness) for those datasets.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N D3. Data is classified, with rules for what may be sent to external AI models.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N D4. We can show lineage: where training or grounding data came from and who approved it.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N D5. Pipelines or APIs feed AI applications in production, not manual exports.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TECHNOLOGY

wt 10 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N I1. Staff use approved AI platforms or models with single sign-on, logging and data controls.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N I2. We can deploy, monitor and roll back models and agents (MLOps/LLMOps).
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N I3. AI tools connect to core systems such as CRM, ERP or ticketing through APIs.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N I4. We track inference and compute cost per use case, not just the total bill.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N I5. We test for AI-specific threats such as prompt injection and data leakage.

TALENT & SKILLS

wt 10 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N T1. AI literacy training is offered to all staff and completion is tracked.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N T2. We have, in-house or under contract, data engineering, AI engineering and AI product skills.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N T3. Teams whose workflows change get role-specific training.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N T4. AI roles (AI product owner, model risk owner) are defined with responsibilities.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N T5. We have a workforce plan for roles that AI will change.

GOVERNANCE, RISK & COMPLIANCE

wt 15 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N G1. A published AI use policy covers approved tools and unsanctioned (shadow) AI.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N G2. We keep an inventory of AI systems in use, including vendor AI, with risk tiers.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N G3. High-risk use cases get a risk assessment before launch, mapped to NIST AI RMF or ISO/IEC 42001.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N G4. Human-oversight rules match each system's level of autonomy, and accountability for bad outcomes is named.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N G5. We know which AI laws apply to us (EU AI Act, U.S. state laws) and track their deadlines.

USE-CASE PORTFOLIO & ROI

wt 20 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N U1. We keep a prioritized use-case backlog scored on value and feasibility.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N U2. Every use case has a baseline and a unit-of-work metric before launch.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N U3. At least one use case runs in production (not a pilot) with measured results.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N U4. We track financial impact (cost, revenue, payback), not only time saved.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N U5. Pilots face a stage gate (scale, fix or stop) within a set period, such as 90 days.

CULTURE & CHANGE

wt 10 | raw __/10 | pts ___

- ☐Y ☐P ☐N C1. Each production use case has a change-management plan.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N C2. Business units co-own use cases, and front-line staff help design them.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N C3. Employees have a safe, sanctioned way to try AI and propose use cases.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N C4. We redesign workflows around AI instead of bolting AI onto old processes.
- ☐Y ☐P ☐N C5. We measure adoption and user trust for each AI tool.

READINESS BANDS

Exploring (0-39)
Next: Name an executive owner, publish an AI use policy, inventory data for two or three use cases and pick one pilot with a baseline.

Piloting (40-59)
Next: Set stage gates, baselines and a governance inventory; fix data quality for the pilots that matter; kill the rest.

Scaling (60-79)
Next: Industrialize: shared platform and MLOps, unit-cost tracking, workflow redesign, risk tiers mapped to NIST AI RMF or ISO/IEC 42001.

AI-native (80-100)
Next: Expand bounded-autonomy agents, add continuous monitoring and external assurance, and reinvest gains.

Gate rule: if any pillar scores 3 or less (of 10 raw), your band is capped at Piloting.

TOTAL SCORE: _____ / 100

FINAL BAND: _____

Auto-scoring version: download the free XLSX scorecard from the article.