

*A non-techy,
human-first approach to AI
for busy leaders*

AI HUMAN FUSION

LEANNE SHELTON



MAJOR
STREET

Prologue

The HABITS Framework

If you were to travel back in time and tell any version of Leanne she'd be the author of a book on artificial intelligence one day, I can honestly say she'd laugh in your face:

Me? Writing a book about a “technical” subject as an AI thought-leader? Yeah, right. What’s that? I’m also conducting keynotes and workshops about AI as my core business? Umm, sorry. I think you’ve got the wrong Leanne Shelton. Or maybe your brain is still a bit rattled from your trip in the time machine.

However, it's all true – because here I am. I'm living proof that AI can create positive changes when you seek the opportunities, rather than freak out about the dystopian possibilities. While AI had a direct impact on the shrivelling up of my copywriting and content marketing business, I'm doing more than okay. After transitioning into the new and exciting role of Global AI Coach, I haven't felt the urge to look back.

Despite identifying myself as a writer my whole life, I simply never felt the same level of enthusiasm for copywriting as I do for AI. Sure, I enjoyed it immensely – especially when my agency was at its financial peak – but I didn't feel the need to constantly talk about the craft. In comparison, these days I struggle to stop the

flood of AI insights and learnings from pouring out of me every time it pops up in conversation. (If you've been on the receiving end of these outbursts, #sorrynotsorry.) I just have so much to say, so much misuse to fight against and so many misunderstandings to put right.

This is why I've written *AI-Human Fusion*. I needed a platform to help busy leaders like yourself see AI for what it is: a tool to enhance our experience and expertise, not to replace us. I wanted to create a safe space to allow you to pause and truly understand this new accessible AI phenomenon, including where the humans fit in. There's just so much noise and hype out there, making it hard to rationally think things through. This is your opportunity to step back, learn and decide your path. This is my gift to you.

From SEO copywriting to AI coaching

If you've been following me for a while, you might be familiar with the story around my business pivot. For everyone else, let's briefly take a walk down memory lane.

Let me take you back to early 2023, when my nine-year-old copywriting and content marketing business, Write Time Marketing, saw a drop in conversions. It was partly due to the tough economic climate and partly due to the shiny, new and *free* competitor that had entered the scene: OpenAI's ChatGPT.

I admit my initial reaction was to freak out. My services were already undervalued in the small-business space, where low budgets ruled the roost. How could my agency possibly charge for writing services and marketing strategies when AI promised to do it all for free and within seconds? Basically, I had a choice: I could bury my head in the sand, rock in the corner, pull my hair out or engage in any other stress-related metaphor, or, instead of fighting my new competitor and losing, I could just accept that this was my

new reality. I could accept that everyone would start using AI at some point, so I should embrace it and understand it.

With my writing background, I was understandably annoyed with the robotic, lifeless AI-generated content I'd started to see populating my social media feeds. I was also frustrated by every man and his dog jumping on the AI bandwagon, selling those massive prompt kits – like 1,000 prompts for \$57 – that only focused on the input. None of these people (usually business coaches) were talking about what to do with the output produced or how to ensure it was well written and personalised prior to flicking it out into the world. And none of these people were discussing *how* these prompts could be effectively customised and applied by their followers. Out of curiosity, I purchased one of these guides and tested the prompts myself. In the majority of cases, the content produced was unusable, generic garbage.

In April 2023, at a quarterly planning event with a networking group, ChatGPT popped up in conversation. I shared my frustrations about the misuse of AI-generated content – and others shared their fears around using it. It was there that an idea formed in my imaginative, neurodiverse brain: what if I were to put together a webinar on AI from the perspective of a copywriter? I'd been running content marketing workshops on various topics for five years, including webinars, LinkedIn, business blogging, podcasts and website copy. Why not make ChatGPT my next training focus? I asked around the room and it was unanimous: everyone was keen to learn more.

Not one to procrastinate on big, exciting ideas, I set a date for a free webinar titled “How to use ChatGPT and still sound human” and gave myself a month to learn everything I could about the topic. (Nothing like a deadline, right?) There were literally three books on Amazon about ChatGPT at the time. Two of them were so poorly written, I couldn't get past the first few pages. The third

was pretty good, opening my eyes to the concept of prompt engineering and how it works. I also listened to some AI podcasts. I admit imposter syndrome regularly showed its ugly head during this process. When it did, I just assured myself I was fine if I knew 10% more than the people in the virtual room.

By the time the webinar day rolled around, I'd collected 150 registrations, with 70 tuning in live. Not bad for my first attempt to educate others on AI. The feedback was extremely positive, and everything seemed to snowball from there. The next thing I knew, I was featured in *The Australian* newspaper, with a page-three article and my photo on the front page. Frequent requests to speak at conferences, summits and networking events quickly followed, including multiple visits to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to run a series of two-day AI workshops.

Somewhere along the line, I realised I was onto something. Maybe AI training should be more than just a side project.

After all, with almost 20 years' experience in writing and marketing, I had an opportunity here to play to my strengths and help leaders create their own prompts that would lead to higher quality output. My bubbly personality and professional speaking and training skills (plus high-school drama classes) also gave me an engaging edge. Being a woman in the male-dominated tech industry didn't hurt either. So, I decided to officially make my mark in the positive, human-first AI movement by launching my new business, HumanEdge AI Training, in April 2024.

Why this book matters

Okay, Leanne, I have AI-Human Fusion in my hands. But won't any type of AI education I learn today be completely out of date in a few months?

Great question. The continual, fast-moving advancements of AI tools and technology in recent years made me hesitant about

writing an AI-related book until now. I was concerned about releasing something that would need a whole chunk of adjustments only a month or two later, which was an issue experienced by my AI-author counterparts. But then I realised my message is so much bigger than the tools and technology itself, and I have an opportunity here to bring up thought-provoking concepts that others aren't questioning or talking about enough.

Unlike many AI enthusiasts, I'm not solely focused on the practical side of AI. I don't jump onto every new tool or update and constantly share new prompts to experiment with. However, I do continually reflect on how every new announcement could potentially affect humanity, and I see myself as having the important role of helping others see the updates for what they are: shiny distractions.

My aim for this book is to help busy leaders like you push through the noise and work out your place in this new AI-infused world we're now swimming in. You need to keep your human head above the water without allowing the AI tools to pull you under. I believe the real competitive edge for us as leaders comes from understanding how to think about AI – how to train it, critique it and use it strategically.

According to the Global AI Index published in September 2024, Australia was ranked 17th for AI capacity. Yep, we're way behind the eight-ball compared to countries like the USA (1st), the UK (4th), Germany (7th) and the Netherlands (13th). Apart from our small population size, I believe this ranking reflects our insecurities and uncertainties about completely embracing AI. There are just so many unknown factors sending many of us into a state of overwhelm. With a confused mind saying "no", it makes sense why the big organisations and networks I'm speaking to are populated by employees and business owners who are too scared to even touch AI, let alone integrate it into day-to-day tasks.

Let me assure you, AI will never replace you. AI will never completely take over humanity as we know it. But we do need to establish clear boundaries between where AI stops and human experience and expertise take over. Right now, we need to be focused on building our AI literacy – and that’s not about chasing trends highlighted by the media and AI enthusiasts online. It’s about developing the mindset and skills that will keep you at the forefront, no matter how AI evolves. It’s about developing the perfect AI-human fusion of all the puzzle pieces at play.

While I started my AI journey by calling myself an “AI Trainer”, during the past year I changed my title to “AI Coach”. It seemed to be a better fit, because rather than telling leaders how to use AI, I’d much prefer to guide you towards the best solutions for your organisation. With AI, there are no absolutely correct answers. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. You need humans to make educated decisions about AI’s place in your world.

This book matters because you deserve to be completely informed and organised when it comes to implementing AI in your company or business. Rather than being swept up in the excitement or pressured by increased productivity promises, taking the time to absorb the content within these pages will provide you with an educated, holistic view of it all. And you deserve that.

How this book will help you

If you were drawn to the words “non-techy” on the front cover, you can rest assured that this book is as non-technical as possible (if you haven’t already gotten that vibe by my words so far). As well as sharing my own musings and learnings collected throughout my personal AI journey, I also feature insights and information from real-life humans in my network, including fellow leaders and experts on topics outside my expertise. You’ll see these “Hear from

the humans” extracts and quotes scattered throughout to add more depth to the AI conversation.

Overall, my aim is to take you from feeling unprepared, unclear and unskilled when it comes to AI to feeling prepared, purposeful and progressive, ultimately leading to greater productivity. Because “productivity” is usually the desired goal of utilising AI, right?

Introducing the AI-Human Fusion HABITS Framework

For an effective and human-first approach to AI, you need to apply a balanced fusion of four key aspects, which I refer to as HABITS. I believe this acronym is especially suitable because, in this fast-paced digital world we’ve found ourselves in, developing healthy AI habits is absolutely vital. Not to be too ominous too soon in the book, but our future depends on it.

This framework will help guide your journey of understanding throughout the book:

- **H – Humans:** prioritising a human-first approach by overcoming overwhelm, embracing AI without fear and maintaining strong human connections in an AI-driven world.
- **A – AI:** understanding how to train and implement AI effectively, covering both internal (operations, workflows) and external (customer engagement, marketing) applications.
- **BI – Business Integration:** embedding AI into business structures responsibly, including AI policy, cybersecurity, privacy, ethics and governance.
- **TS – Tactical Strategy:** developing practical, action-oriented approaches for integrating AI within your team, combining short-term implementation tactics with long-term strategic vision.

By following the framework, you'll achieve a holistic, human-first AI approach that will help produce positive and responsible outcomes. I've included actionable activities and links to online resources throughout the book for further support. But please don't let your AI literacy stop at the last page. With the AI world continually changing, there are bound to be updates. On that note: while everything featured within this book was correct at time of publication, you can keep across potential changes via the QR code below, which takes you to a webpage highlighting new information.

In the meantime, I hope *AI-Human Fusion* leaves you in a state of educated enlightenment – and that you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Remember to keep it human,

Leanne Shelton

February 2025