

Course Summary: The 12 Habits

The whole course, compressed into twelve durable habits and seven take-away cards.

The habits

1. **Remember what it is:** a prediction machine finishing your sentence, not a database.
2. **Verify anything that matters**, especially specific numbers and citations.
3. **Treat confidence as decoration.** Tone never signals truth.
4. **New task, new chat.** Long conversations rot.
5. **Restate what matters** instead of saying "as I said above".
6. **Never ask a question that contains its own answer.** Ask for the case against.
7. **Correct errors explicitly**, or start clean. Mistakes compound.
8. **Green-light test:** can I judge it, and is being wrong cheap?
9. **Brief like a colleague:** Goal, Context, Example, Format.
10. **Iterate:** the second prompt is where the magic is.
11. **Match the model to the job:** fast, thinking, or web access.
12. **Keep secrets out of unvetted tools.** Ground AI in your documents, privately, with sources.

The seven take-away cards

LESSON 1 · THE PREDICTION MACHINE

AI is finishing your sentence, not searching a database. Fluency is how it sounds, not how it knows.

LESSON 2 · CONFIDENTLY WRONG

Fluent does not mean true. The more obscure the topic, the more beautiful the guess. Verify anything that matters.

LESSON 3 · HOW YOU BREAK IT

Long chats rot. Leading questions get echoes. Fresh chat plus neutral framing gives you a smarter AI, instantly.

LESSON 4 · WHAT IT'S FOR

Use AI where you can check it and mistakes are cheap. Keep judgement, and secrets, on your side of the desk.

LESSON 5 · BRIEFING THE INTERN

Goal, Context, Example, Format. Thirty extra seconds of briefing beats thirty minutes of fixing.

LESSON 6 · CHOOSING YOUR ROBOT

Everyday task, fast model. Hard problem, thinking model. Current events, web access. Disappointed? Try a bigger model before blaming AI.

LESSON 7 · YOUR DOCUMENTS, YOUR AI

AI plus your documents, privately, with sources. That is when it stops being a toy. Never feed confidential files to tools you haven't vetted.