

Part VII — Exercises, Frameworks, and Workshops

This section is not for new theory. It's for **practice**.

You've seen one full turn of the clock. You've walked through AI at 4 p.m., Robot Noon, and sector playbooks. Now the goal is simple:

- take the ideas out of the text,
- apply them to your world,
- and build your own versions of the clock that you can actually work with.

Use these exercises in any order. They're designed so you can:

- run them as team workshops,
- assign them as student projects,
- or use them solo with a notebook.

Exercise 1 — Building Your Innovation Clock (Team or Solo)

Purpose:

Create a **local Innovation Clock** for your domain (industry, company, product, or role) so you stop thinking in abstractions and start reasoning from a concrete “what time is it here?”

Materials:

- A big circle (whiteboard, flip chart, or digital canvas)
- Sticky notes or virtual notes
- 60–90 minutes

Step A: Pick a Scope

Decide what you're mapping:

- “Our whole industry” (e.g., retail banking, higher ed, logistics), or
- “Our company,” or
- “This product line,” or
- “This profession” (e.g., front-line healthcare workers, software engineers, teachers).

Write the scope in the center of the circle.

Step B: Mark Past 12 p.m. and 6 p.m.

On sticky notes, write:

- “Last major **thing** people owned here”
- “Last major **network/platform** people joined here”

Examples (you adapt):

- In retail banking:
 - 12 p.m.: local branches + checkbooks + desktop software
 - 6 p.m.: online banking + card networks + mobile apps
- In education:
 - 12 p.m.: textbooks + physical classrooms
 - 6 p.m.: LMS platforms, MOOCs, cloud-based tools

Place:

- the **thing** at 12 p.m.,
- the **network** at 6 p.m.

This anchors one local swing on your clock.

Step C: Place “Now”

Ask the group:

“For our scope, how far along are we in the AI swing toward 6 p.m.?”

Use a 1–12 metaphor:

- 1–2 p.m. = early pilots and experiments,
- 3–4 p.m. = real but uneven adoption,
- 5–5:30 p.m. = close to non-optional.

Agree on a rough time (“we’re at about 3 p.m.”) and mark it on the circle labeled “Now (AI).”

If your group disagrees, note the spread: “Some of us think 2 p.m., some think 4 p.m.” That disagreement is itself useful data.

Step D: Sketch Your AI 6 p.m. and Robot Noon

On two separate sheets, write a short narrative (bullet points are fine):

- **“A week in our world at AI 6 p.m.”**
 - What do people do differently?
 - What feels broken if AI disappears?
- **“A week in our world at Robot Noon.”**

- What are the robots?
- Who owns them?
- What do they handle by default?

Then put:

- “AI 6 p.m.” on the bottom of the circle,
- “Robot Noon” on the next 12 p.m. position (future).

You’ve now built the skeleton of your local clock.

Step E: Extract 3–5 “Clock-Aware” Moves

Ask:

“Given where we are on this clock, what are 3–5 **sane moves** for us in the next 12–24 months?”

Examples:

- “Start exposing internal tools as APIs robots can use.”
- “Treat AI as a core infra for X workflow, not a toy.”
- “Prototype one robot-native service and learn from it.”

Write them next to the clock. These are your **clock-aligned actions**.

Exercise 2 — Classifying Current Products: 12 p.m. vs 6 p.m. Drill

Purpose:

Sharpen your instincts about what's truly a **thing** (12 p.m.) and what's really a **network** (6 p.m.)—and catch products that are pretending to be one while behaving like the other.

Materials:

- List of 10–20 real products/services in your domain
- Two columns on a board: “12 p.m. (Thing / Mine)” and “6 p.m. (Network / I’m a user)”
- 45–60 minutes

Step A: Quick Classification

For each product/service, ask:

“In the mind of the person using this, is the primary feeling **‘mine’** or **‘I use their system’?**”

Sort into:

- 12 p.m. column if it feels like owned territory, or
- 6 p.m. column if it feels like participation in a bigger environment.

Don't overthink; go fast at first. You can move items later.

Step B: Check for “Misaligned” Designs

Now scan each column and ask:

- “Is anything in the 12 p.m. column actually *behaving* like a 6 p.m. platform?”
 - e.g., heavy lock-in, no deep personalization, split loyalty.
- “Is anything in the 6 p.m. column trying to *pretend* it's ‘yours’ when it really isn't?”
 - e.g., platforms that market “your AI” but clearly work for the vendor.

Mark those with a different color.

These “misaligned” products often:

- create friction,
- fail to fully succeed,
- or are ripe for disruption by something that aligns form and feeling better.

Step C: Apply to Your Own Work

Highlight your own product or service.

Discuss:

- Are we **really** a 12 p.m. thing or a 6 p.m. network?
- Do our pricing, UX, and loyalty design match that?
- What would we change if we fully embraced our true position?

Optional extension:

Pick one product and sketch how it should **evolve** as the clock moves (e.g., from a 6 p.m. SaaS platform into a 12 p.m. robot-embedded capability, or vice versa).

Workshop 3 — Designing a Robot–Native Service (Capstone)

Purpose:

Take one concrete service and redesign it **for a world where citizens/customers/students arrive with their own robots.**

This can be a single afternoon exercise or a multi-session project.

Step A: Pick a Service

Choose something you actually do:

- onboarding a new customer,
- opening an account,
- scheduling a healthcare visit,
- enrolling in a course,
- ordering from an e-commerce site.

Write a simple “today” flow:

Human → Our website/app → Our systems → Outcome

Step B: Rewrite the Flow as Robot-First

Now redraw the flow as:

Human → Their robot → Your tools / APIs → Outcome

Describe, step by step:

- What does the human actually *say* to their robot?
- What **jobs** does the robot do *before* it talks to you?
- What tools / endpoints do you need to expose so robots can:
 - check eligibility,
 - gather needed data,
 - submit forms,
 - track status,
 - handle errors?

Step C: Identify Robot-Native Capabilities

Ask:

- “If a loyal robot is doing this for the human, what information and capabilities would it need from us?”

Make a list:

- APIs,
- documentation in robot-readable form,
- policy objects,
- webhook-style events,
- status endpoints.

This list is your **robot-facing product**.

Step D: Design for Loyalty and Safety

Finally, ask:

- How do we:
 - respect that the robot works for the human, not for us?
 - clearly communicate trade-offs and options to robots?
 - avoid dark patterns that exploit robots’ access?

Capture 3–5 design principles specific to this service (“We will always...” / “We will never...”).

You’ve just done a small-scale **Robot Noon redesign**.

Workshop 4 — Refactoring an AI Chatbot Strategy for Robot Noon

Purpose:

Take an existing or planned “Our Bot” strategy and refactor it for a world where **Their Robots** are the primary interface.

Step A: Inventory Your Current AI Strategy

List:

- All chatbots, copilots, “AI assistants” you currently have or plan.
- Where they live: website, app, support portal, internal tools.
- What they do: triage, Q&A, form-filling, upsell, etc.

Step B: Ask the Hard Question

For each:

“If most of our users had competent robots of their own, would they still talk to this bot directly?”

If the honest answer is “no,” then this isn’t a durable interface. It’s a **bridge** to Robot Noon, not the destination.

Step C: Extract the Underlying Capabilities

For each bot, identify:

- What **capabilities** it uses behind the scenes:
 - knowledge retrieval,
 - transaction APIs,
 - search,
 - workflows (returns, cancellations, onboarding, etc.).

Turn that into a capability list:

- “Our AI support bot can:
 - look up orders,
 - initiate refunds,
 - update shipping addresses,
 - and create support tickets.”

These are the things **Their Robots** will need access to.

Step D: Design a “Robot Tools” Layer

For each capability, define:

- the API or tool a robot would call,
- the parameters and constraints,
- possible error states and how they’re expressed,
- what logging/audit is required.

Your goal:

“If a user’s robot wants to do what our bot does today, can it? Cleanly? Safely?”

If not, your AI chatbot strategy is missing the core piece: a **robot-native tools layer**.

Step E: Decide What Your Bots Are For *Now*

You don’t have to kill your bots. You repurpose them:

- Short term:
 - they are **human-facing UIs** that help users until personal robots are widespread.

- they're also **internal testers** of your tools layer.
- Long term:
 - they become **optional front-ends**,
 - training surfaces for your own staff,
 - or get retired once robots take over direct interfacing.

Capture a one-page “AI Strategy v2” that explicitly separates:

- human-facing bots,
- robot-facing tools,
- and what you expect to happen as Robot Noon arrives.

Exercise 5 — Industry-Specific Worksheets

Purpose:

Specialize the clock for a given industry or function, using a simple worksheet format.

You can create one worksheet per sector. Here's a generic template you can copy and adapt (Retail, SaaS, Finance, Healthcare, etc.).

Worksheet Structure (One Page)

Section A: Local Clock

- Last 12 p.m. thing in this sector:
- Last 6 p.m. network/platform:
- “Now” (AI) time estimate (1–12):

Section B: AI 6 p.m. Snapshot

- **In this sector, AI is non-optional when:**

-
-
- **If AI disappeared, the week would break because:**
-

Section C: Robot Noon Snapshot

- **What are the likely robots (forms):**
 -
- Who owns them (individuals / orgs / households):
- **Default jobs robots do in this sector:**
 -

Section D: Risk & Opportunity Checklist

- 2–3 ways Robot Noon could **hurt** this sector if done badly:
- 2–3 ways Robot Noon could **improve** outcomes if done well:

Section E: Near-Term Moves (Next 18–24 Months)

- One move to prepare internal systems:
- One move to prepare customers/users:
- One move to prepare staff/teams:

Filling this out forces a practical, clock-aligned view for each sector.

Exercise 6 — Forecasting Templates: One-Page Futures for 2030, 2040, 2050

Purpose:

Practice making **clock-aware forecasts** without slipping into vague sci-fi. You'll create one-page futures for specific years.

You can assign these as:

- student homework,
- leadership offsite prep,
- or personal thinking drills.

Step A: Choose a Year and a Scope

Pick:

- a year: 2030, 2040, 2050 (or any three points), and
- a scope: global, an industry, or your company.

Write: “2030 – [Scope]” at the top of the page.

Step B: Answer Five Questions (Per Page)

For that year and scope:

1. Where is the clock hand?

- AI: early / mid / late in 6 p.m. swing?
- Robots: pre-ubiquity / approaching Noon / at full Noon?

2. What is clearly ubiquitous?

- “If we turned X off, the week would break because...”
- List 2–3 technologies or practices.

3. What is quietly fading?

- Not dead, but structurally declining (like fax machines were in the 2000s).
- List 2–3 items.

4. What is the dominant ‘cultural name’ of the era for normal people?

- Are they saying “AI,” “robots,” something else?
- What do they *call* the thing that matters to them?

5. What would a smart move look like from today?

- One product move.
- One org/skills move.
- One policy or governance move.

Keep each answer to a few sentences or bullets. The goal is to be **specific enough** to argue about, not comprehensive.

Step C: Compare Across Years

Once you have (for example) 2030, 2040, 2050 pages:

- Read them side by side.
- Check for:
 - continuity (does the story actually progress?),
 - timing (did you accidentally hit Robot Noon in 2030 *and* in 2050?),
 - internal logic (do your ubiquities and fade-outs make sense?).

The exercise is not about being “right.” It’s about training yourself (and others) to:

- think in clock moves,
 - tie predictions to ubiquity,
 - and translate that into concrete actions you could take now.
-

