

AI Workflow Redesign Guide

From Manual Workflow to AI-Native Operation

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This guide teaches the method rather than just claiming expertise in it. It is the same approach Pineapple Blueprint uses in its AI Opportunity and Adoption Diagnostic engagements.

1. How to identify candidate workflows

Not every manual process is worth automating, and not every automatable process is worth redesigning around AI. Look for workflows with:

- **Volume and repetition:** the same decision or task happening often enough that a small improvement compounds.
- **A real friction point,** not just a slow step: where people visibly work around the system, skip it, or build their own spreadsheet to cope with it.
- **Judgment that can be structured:** a decision that looks like intuition but is actually following a pattern a model could learn and a person could still review.
- **A measurable before state,** so the after state can be judged against something real, not a feeling.

Workflows that fail these tests are usually better left alone, or fixed with a simpler process change than an AI system.

2. Automation vs. AI-native redesign

Automation takes an existing process and removes a manual step, keeping the process's shape the same. It is often the right, cheaper answer.

AI-native redesign questions the shape of the process itself. Instead of asking "how do we remove the manual step," it asks "if we were designing this workflow today, knowing what AI can do, what would it actually look like." The output is frequently a different workflow entirely, not a faster version of the old one.

The test: if automating the current process would just make a bad process faster, the workflow needs redesign, not automation.

3. Human-in-the-loop principles

- Put people at the decisions with real consequences and real judgment, not at every step out of caution.
- Make the model's reasoning visible enough that a reviewer can catch a wrong answer without redoing the whole task.
- Design for the correction to teach the system something, not disappear into a log nobody reads.
- Treat "the model is usually right" as a reason to design review carefully, not a reason to skip it.

4. Pilot selection

Pick the first pilot for learning speed, not for maximum business impact. A good first pilot:

- Has a short feedback loop, so you find out quickly whether the redesign actually works.
- Has a contained blast radius if it goes wrong.
- Has a visible owner who wants it to succeed, not a team that was assigned it.
- Still matters enough that a real result changes how the organization thinks about the next ten workflows.

5. Measurement framework

Measure the workflow, not just the AI feature. Before starting, record:

- Time or cost per cycle through the current workflow.
- Error or rework rate in the current workflow.
- Who does the work now, and what they actually spend their time on inside it.

After the redesign ships, measure the same three things, plus:

- How often a human override or correction happens, and why.

- Whether the people doing the work trust the new version enough to stop running the old one in parallel.

A redesign that is faster but less trusted, or trusted but not actually faster, is not done yet.

Next step

Pineapple Blueprint runs this exact process as a fixed-scope, 2-week engagement:

davidglazier.com/services

Full factual reference: davidglazier.com/company-facts